



## Air Guard Medical Team Provides Care in Africa

by Lt. Col. Don Accamando, Public Affairs Officer

As citizens in the tri-state area fret over the effects of the H1N1 virus, Airmen of the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Medical Group were treating life threatening illnesses this country has not experienced in decades.

Fifteen airmen assigned to the Wing deployed to Uganda, in western Africa to participate in a humanitarian medical mission, as part of Operation Natural Fire 10 (ONF10).

The team deployed in early October and is part of a larger Air National Guard medical element made up of 28 total airmen from five different states. Their mission, provide a variety of medical services to citizens in Northern Uganda. Once on location, the team visited three separate rural villages in the Ugandan countryside.

This all-Guard contingent served as part of a joint interoperability exercise and coupled its expertise with local doctors of the East African Community (EAC).

Their work was not routine, in fact malaria, sickle cell, worms and parasitic disease plague the population. Often time working in austere conditions with minimal equipment and substandard medical supplies, the medical team overcame many obstacles to provide care.

“This work is challenging, because these are diseases not normally seen and have severe health consequences for the population. The most severe being cerebral malaria, carrying a 20% mortality rate,” said Col. Alan Hodgdon, medical element commander.

On a routine day the medical element consisting of two dentists, two optometrists, and six medical providers, would examine more than 1,000 patients.

*Top right: Maj. Russell Adams, a physician with the 171st Medical Group, checks a Ugandan woman's vitals.*

*Bottom right: The line of people waiting to see medical personnel never decreased in size.*

*(U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Samara Scott)*



See “Care in Africa” on page 6

## On the Road Update

by Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, Wing Commander

Throughout the past several weeks I have been on the road attending several key events. I engaged my fellow wing commanders at the KC-135 Weapons System Council in Washington, visited the Airlift/Tanker Association Convention in Tennessee, and I had a chance to address a number of the Air National Guard's senior non-commissioned officers at their symposium in Texas in my capacity as the Air Directorate Field Advisory Council Chairman. So allow me to throw out some thoughts from leaders I had the chance to see.

Air Force Chief of Staff General Schwarz reaffirmed his top priorities of reinvigorating the Air Force nuclear enterprise and winning today's fight with the joint coalition. As an Air Force body, approximately 40,000 airmen are deployed, but another 135,000 are essentially deployed in place conducting war time operations. This certainly explains why our 171st ARW continuously fields approximately 110 members on active duty orders on base. General Schwarz emphasized the tightening budget, and the need for newer systems and planes. Forty percent of procurement goes to maintaining and modifying legacy systems. I know in another five to eight years, the cost of KC-135 maintenance is going to skyrocket due to mandatory repair work on our aging fleet. This is particularly worrisome to me because at the other end of the seesaw is our growing labor costs. So, we have equipment costs on one side and labor costs on the other. Both are rising fast and drawing unfavorable attention. Both are dependent on each other! General Schwarz expressed tremendous appreciation for all active, guard and reserve members of the Air Force. He proudly proclaimed to us that this is why 82% of all Americans feel our servicemen are the most trusted men and women in America today.

Lt Gen Wyatt, director of the Air National Guard (ANG), made the point that the Air Guard is, "Always Ready, Always There." He continues to push for concurrent proportionate recapitalization of our Air Guard. He believes a fair amount of the newest aircraft and systems should come our way due to our experience and affordability. He told us Gen Schwarz has given the ANG a seat at the table to make future strategic basing decisions. This means that in the future, the ANG could further set its course without necessarily going through major commands such as Air Mobility Command. Lt Gen Wyatt has been engaged in the final stages of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) which is the Secretary of Defense's report to congress. Numerous budget drills and a lack of funds are an ongoing challenge he is fighting.

Chief Chris Muncy, the ANG Command Chief, is concerned about our manning documents that have many over-grade airmen billets. He believes an over-grade review will be presented to the Adjutants General for possibly difficult decisions to better align the Guard with the Air Force manpower. For example, he highlighted we have double the number of Chiefs in the Guard as does the Air Force. The driver is money. Over \$70 million was spent last year for over-grade personnel.

The Command Chief of the USAF, Chief James Roy talked about the burdensome ancillary training we have all faced. There is a corporate panel process that struggles to review training requirements and sets the appropriate amount of time for it. Unfortunately, some ancillary training does not come from the air force. Some of it comes from Congress.

All of our leadership is engaged in solving problems that are compromised by limited resources, namely time and money. From Gen. Schwarz to Chief Muncy, I assure you they care, they are willing to share and they are aware of what we do for carrying out today's mission and preparing for tomorrow's Air Force.

So, there is a glimpse of what I have been hearing. I also want to wish each of you a joyous holiday season and ask you to be careful in your cars and at home in the winter weather. On behalf of our Wing, we wish you well during the festive season.

# Commander's CORNER



### "Editorial Staff"



Brigadier General Roy E. Uptegraff, III Commander

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# Always There

by Command Chief Master Sgt. Vic Guerra

This is the time of year in which we often reflect and give thanks for what we have. Sometimes, I suppose because they're always there, we forget about those who sit on the other side of the dining room table from us and the essential part they play in supporting us and our mission – our families.

Serving our nation takes dedication, desire and determination, from both ourselves and our families. Our families often go beyond these qualities by also providing inspiration, comfort and support. Being a family member of a Guardsman is not easy. From demanding duty schedules, to missed birthdays, anniversaries and holidays, we ask a lot of our families. Their willingness to stand by us and support us in the face of these challenges is vital to our success. I know I would not be successful in my career without the support and encouragement from my family, and I'll bet you would not be either.

We at the 171st ARW would like to extend our thanks to the families of our Airmen. We appreciate your dedication and support, and the sacrifices you make while your family member is serving with us. We would also like to thank you for sharing your family member with us, and we are glad to have each of you as part of our 171st family.

While on this subject, I would like to remind everyone of the Hometown Heroes Salute (HHS) program that we will be conducting soon. This program is about recognizing and thanking our Airmen and their families for their service and support. The HHS program will initially recognize Airmen who have deployed away from home station for more than 30 consecutive days in support of contingency operations such as Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Noble Eagle, as well as all other contingency operations since 9/11. The HHS program includes recognition awards for family, friends and employers as well. Spouses and children will receive commemorative awards. In addition, a "Center of Influence" award can be given to a family member, an employer, someone in the community – anyone of the Airmen's choosing to say thanks for their support as well. Our awards should be delivered by the time you read this, and those receiving awards will be notified and their families invited to our HHS ceremony.

So take the time to recognize your family's sacrifices, enjoy some family time and be there for your family like they have been there for you. Show them your appreciation for being always there.



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## Stop Loss Special Pay Compensation (AFRC/ANG)

Reservists and Guardsmen involuntarily extended on active duty beyond an approved separation or retirement date as a result of Stop Loss between Sept. 11, 2001 and Sept. 30, 2009 may be eligible for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay compensation. The Air Force used stop loss during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001-2002 and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Eligible members will receive \$500 per month for each month or portion of month they were retained on active duty as a result of stop loss. The payment is also payable to legally designated beneficiaries of deceased or incapacitated Airmen.

Individuals have until Oct. 21, 2010 to file their claim. ARPC officials will evaluate claims based on historical records as well as any supporting documentation submitted by the applicant. If the Air Force rejects a claim, the application will be returned along with a letter detailing appellate procedures.

Those eligible may download and submit a stop loss claim application from the Air Reserve Personnel Center's virtual Personnel Center - Guard and Reserve (vPC-GR) Web site at <https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR>, or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102 for assistance. For Local assistance contact your Commander's Support Staff or Military Personnel Section.

## Briefs FYI

### NEW! - December Family Day to honor Hometown Heroes from the 171st

In August 2008, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, sanctioned the ANG Hometown Heroes Salute (HHS) recognition program. The purpose of this program is to celebrate and honor Airmen, families, communities and those special supporters who have significantly contributed to supporting our Airmen and the ANG's mission. The 171st may have as many as 500 unit members and their immediate family recognized in this program.

Each awardee will be notified, but the awardees are Guardsmen who have deployed for 30 consecutive days or more in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle and other peacekeeping operations across the globe.

The ceremony will commence at 9 a.m. on Dec. 6, and when finished, lunch will be held in the Steel City Cafe (\$4.25 for non-military members, officers and AGRs).

You may change into civilian clothes to enjoy the festivities following the HHS ceremony.

SANTA arrives in the afternoon and photos with Santa will be taken until 2 p.m.

The Tree Decoration Contest will be judged at 1:30 p.m.

At 2 p.m. door prizes will be given away - winners MUST BE present.

We ask that everyone bring one dozen of your favorite cookies for the snack table.

Parking pass - EVERYONE needs one if you will be arriving after 8:30 a.m.

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Estimated pay date for the  
December UTA:  
December 10

Estimated pay date for the  
December SUTA:  
December 21

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# Honorary Commanders Mock Deploy

by 2nd Lt. Chris Preffer, Public Affairs

The Honorary Commanders Association (HCA) is a cooperative effort of the Airport Area Chamber of Commerce, 171st Air Refueling Wing, 911th Airlift Wing and 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command. Each year, approximately 15 local business professionals are paired with commanders and senior officers of military units stationed in the local area. The purpose is to educate the local business community about the Guard's and Reserve's role in the total force structure for national defense. The HCA also encourages employers to support their employees who are members of the Guard and Reserve. The organization strives to foster better understanding and community support for military units in the airport area. In October, we had the opportunity to host the honorary commanders, showcasing the KC-135, and provide a taste of life in the Air Force.

When determining how we could help increase the understanding of the military for these 15 civilians, it was suggested that we could simulate the mobilization process during their time with us. To do this the 171st had to train these civilians in a very short time.



Tech. Sgt. Jason Snyder instructs an honorary commander how to properly don a gas mask. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Shawn Monk)

To start the day off, they received an educational briefing from Brig. Gen. Uptegraff on the history of the 171st ARW. The general was followed by Senior Master Sgt. Katcher who exclaimed, "You all are being deployed!" He then explained the military's system for tracking who and what materials go where. This briefing was followed by Lt. Col. Stoebe's Intelligence briefing on Afghanistan and some of the key problems America's military is facing in the region. The crowd showed a keen interest and desire to truly understand the military as they bombarded Brig. Gen. Uptegraff and Lt. Col. Stoebe with questions on the problems in the Afghanistan region.

After the briefing the HCA members were transported to the KSPAN, a warehouse for military deployment equipment. Tech. Sgt. Jason Snyder and Senior Airman Melissa Peace explained the Air Force's Chemical Protective Mask and proper wear of the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology (JSLIST). Once the HCA members had an understanding of protective equipment utilized by the military, they received training to protect their deployed location at the Fire Arms Training Simulator (FATS) facility.

In the FATS facility HCA members were instructed in weapons qualification and simulation firing by Staff Sgt. Roger Miller. Here, HCA members received first-hand the training to qualify on an ArmaLite 15 (M-16). All members had the chance to test their shooting skills. At the closing of the day it was time for the group to board a KC-135 to simulate flying to their deployed location.

Their day's mission complete - the HCA members gathered for a group photo and toured the KC-135 Stratotanker. Their questions were answered by pilots, boom operators and crew chiefs.



Tech. Sgt. John Frazier prepares donated supplies to be packed and shipped overseas for deployed troops. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Sara Kaufman)

## Unit Members Help Pack Care Packages for Troops

by Senior Airman Sara Kaufman

What a better way to start this Christmas season than to help bring joy to others! The Greater Beneficial Union (GBU) of Pittsburgh invited members of the 171st Air Refueling Wing to help send joy to deployed troops this year. GBU has taken it upon itself to make this event happen for the past three years. Its goal this year was to package 900 boxes of snack foods and necessary toiletries by noon. Amazingly enough, after starting around 9am and filtering through 50-60 volunteers, they were able to package 915 boxes, labeled and ready to mail. The volunteers included many members of GBU, representatives from the mayor's office as well as other political representatives. Over the past three years that this event has happened, GBU members have donated all supplies needed. The GBU board has passed approval to run this event again in 2010. Jim Stoker (CEO) and Matthew Blistan (National Vice President) were very involved in the set-up, execution and follow through to create a successful event. Because of the kind hearts and generous nature of GBU members, these volunteers will have a positive impact on deployed military members this holiday season.

# Chili Cook-Off

by Tech. Sgt. Stacy Gault, Public Affairs

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) kicked off their 2009 drive Oct. 23, at the 171st Air Refueling Wing with the first-ever Chili Cook-Off. Sixteen unit members created their own special chili and presented it to the unit members for tasting in the wing dining facility while simultaneously raising money for charity.

The CFC's mission to promote and support generosity through a program that is employee focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

Unit members voted by a ballot for their favorite chili and raised nearly \$150 through donations for admission. In addition to having their chili judged, the cook was also responsible for decorating a table based on the theme of their chili.

Tech. Sgt. Ray Biddle was awarded first place for his 'Shotgun Chili,' with 2nd Lt. Ty Shott's 'Ty One On' coming in a close second place. Airman 1st Class Lisa Weiss and Staff Sgt. Lindsey Duncan's table decorated with Hershey Kisses and cheesy pick-lines received the award for best table.

"It was a lot of fun and a definite change of pace," Weiss said, "and I was surprised by how enthusiastic people were and how everyone really got into it." Top chef Biddle said not only did he enjoy making his chili, but also tasting everyone else's.

"There was some tough competition and it was a great way to get people involved in the CFC," Biddle said. He is looking forward to competing next year, but doesn't want to be greedy and said he'd like to see someone else take the crown. Not Weiss though, she's stepping up her game next year.

"I'm already thinking about how I can top this year," she said with a smile, "They better watch out; we will dominate next year."



Top right: Tech. Sgt. Ray Biddle serves samples of his first place chili. Bottom right: 2nd Lt. Ty Schott anxiously awaits customers to try his chili. Left: The 'Half-time Foody Call Chili' table was a hit with voters winning the prize for 'Best Decorated Table.' (U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Shawn Monk)

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We hope this issue reaches all of you expecting it. There have been some problems in the past but hopefully everyone expecting to receive this periodical will be satisfied.

We hope all of you had a good Thanksgiving and wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Our brunches in July and October were well attended and we were delighted to see a lot of new faces. The big surprise was having Bill Lofink and Bernie Adams attend the last one. The next brunch will be January 18, 2010. At this time we will once again be going to Hoss' in Moon. Same time 11:30 and same rules (no reservations and bring a friend.)

Happy Birthday to anyone celebrating in December and to any of you we may have missed in the previous months.

Congratulations to our new retirees: Chief Master Sgts. Richard Pechatsko and Thomas Lattimer, Master Sgts. Gary Cirillo, James Bloom Jr. and John Buchko and Technical Sgts. Randy Vasbinder, Timothy Stevic and Michael Trueblood. Our office is open if you need any help. Be advised; ID cards are no longer issued at Oakdale. The commissary and exchange are open but most all of the other facilities are closed. Support of the commissary and exchange are encouraged. Also the TRICARE service (Betsy Clark) is expected to remain open until September 2010.

Please advise this office if you have moved or had a phone number change. We know there are errors in our roster but if you don't provide the current info we have no idea of any change.

## Care in Africa continued from Page 1

"These team members are used to working with the best equipment and help, but were confronted with the challenges of a third world country," Col. Hodgdon said, "seeing these types of patients brought a special sense of accomplishment, because the specialists were able to help patients in their native setting."

Regardless of the outcome on patient health, one thing was obvious, the success of the mission came about because of the basic similarities of medicine regardless of the patient.

A standard day consisted of a 12-14 hour work shift, followed by dinner, medical de-brief, a hand bath with bottled water and some restless sleep in tents. "Quite the experience with mosquito netting; I'd do it again, everyone enjoyed it!" said Col. Hodgdon.

"The professionalism, courtesy and empathy of the entire medical team epitomize the humane nature of the talented men and women of the 171st Medical community," said Lt. Col. Bill Post, 171st Medical Group, Operations Officer and deployed team member.

The conclusion of the medical endeavor gave pause for team members to reflect on the significance of their efforts. "I had no idea what to expect because I had nothing to base it off of. I've been to many third-world countries but I'd never been to Africa before," said Staff Sgt. Sellinger, a medical technician. "It's always eye-opening to know what other countries are going through. It gives you a new perspective on how you view your own life. The people were so appreciative for us being there."

The short lived but outstanding efforts of the medical team did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. The Kitgum District Government Sub-County of Mucwini, Chairperson, Olanya Ford Francis wrote, "On behalf of the people of Mucwini Sub-county and on my own behalf, I would like to put in black and white our esteemed appreciation for the humane and enormous support rendered for the people of Mucwini Sub-county. The people of Mucwini will always live to remember your solidarity as manifested in the support given, and may the good Lord guide you always in your endeavors in supporting the vulnerable community like Mucwini."

Medical care is just one part of ONF10. In Kampala and Entebbe, two other cities visited by ONF10 senior military and civilian officials underwent a tabletop exercise to test their skills in a disaster relief scenario.

The exercise, called Natural Fire, offers a chance for African and U.S. militaries to work together and improve capabilities to respond to complex humanitarian emergencies. The 10-day exercise focuses on training and civic assistance.

Natural Fire was first held in Kenya in 1998, with U.S. partnership. Since, then it has been held every two years. In 2000, it grew to include Tanzania and Uganda, as well as the U.S. and Kenya.

## Taxable Benefits and Incentives



GI Bill and GI Bill Kicker money is not considered taxable income. PA Education Assistance Program, (EAP) tuition payments are not taxable income either. Cash Bonus payments are taxable. Income from Cash Bonuses will be included on your W-2 with your other military pay. However, Student Loan payments are taxable income and a separate W-2 will be sent that includes only that income. If you have received a Student Loan payment from the ANG during calendar year 2009, you should wait for that W-2 before filing your tax return.

You have just entered the ...

# RECRUITER ZONE

Our Recruiting Team -- (412) 776-7495

Master Sgts. Sue Smith and Skip Powell, Tech. Sgt. John Frazier, Senior Airmen Shayla Pollard and Senior Airmen Lindsey Duncan  
Contact us toll free at 1-877-249-5193 or through the web [www.papitt.ang.af.mil](http://www.papitt.ang.af.mil)



## The 171st Recruiting Office is open for business

As many of you know, the 171st is currently 114% manned. The Air National Guard is approximately 4,000 over its authorized manning nationally. Funding is the major concern of the excess in manning, and in order to get the numbers down to where they need to be, ANG Recruiting Offices are now only permitted to fill valid vacancies only.

Currently the 171st does not have any valid vacancies. The system in place now, is a waiting list. In order to get on the waiting list a potential recruit must make an initial appointment with a recruiter, take the ASVAB test and complete and pass a physical. Once they have completed these requirements we place them on the waiting list. The waiting list is first come first serve, and at the time of this article we have 29 people on the list.

The waiting list is not an obligation to enlist. As career opportunities become available, the recruiters will contact those on the list and let them know which AFSC's are open, and it will be up to the recruit to decide if they want they want that career field or want to continue to wait for another opportunity.

So, please don't think the Recruiting Office is closed. We are still taking appointments and processing potential recruits through MEPS. With the projected losses coming up in Fiscal years 10 and 11, we are hoping to have our folks who are on the waiting list now, enlisted in the 171st by the end of spring.

## Are you fit for service?

by Lt. Col. Bryan McGann, 171st Medical Group

The numerical designators reflect a military medical evaluation of an individual's ability to work in a military environment. A number is placed in each of several categories and then a composite number is listed on the form, which is based on the ability of the individual to deploy worldwide. This profile form is an important tool for commanders at all levels to assess the ability of their combat force to deploy. This is critical for the ANG as all but a very few positions in the ANG are deployable at any time. The meaning of each number is listed below.

(1) An individual having a numerical designation of "1" under all factors is considered to possess a high level of medical fitness.

(2) A physical profile designator of "2" under any or all factors indicates that an individual possesses some medical condition or physical defect that may require some activity limitations.

(3) A profile containing one or more numerical designators of "3" signifies that the individual has one or more medical conditions or physical defects that may require significant limitations. For those applying for military service, this designation is usually a disqualification. For individuals already in the service, the individual should receive assignments commensurate with his or her physical capability for military duty (i.e., limited duty/assignments)

(4) A profile serial containing one or more numerical designators of "4" indicates that the individual has one or more medical conditions or physical defects of such severity that performance of military duty must be drastically limited. Definitely a disqualifier for both entering the military, and for continued military service, if already in the military.

What are your responsibilities if profiled anything other than a P-1 or P-2?

You are to keep the medical group informed of any/all changes to your medical condition.

If you are profiled a P-3, or P-4. You are required to see a medical group physician each UTA and bring with you copies of any and all medical documentation from your healthcare provider. To be released from a P-3 or P-4 status your physician must provide medical group with a letter which addresses the following: diagnosis, prognosis, limitations, restrictions and your ability to deploy to an austere environment. Once that letter is received please see the medical group physician who will validate and place you in the appropriate profile category.

Congratulations on your  
promotion!



William S. Paull



Shawn P. McCreary

Scott E. Haythorn

Michael J. Riggle

Wesley Cowfer

Nicole L. Yakovich

Hilary Drogus

Jeffrey S. Boleware

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## 171st members make worthwhile donation

by Capt. Karen Knoerdel, Maintenance Group

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Andrulonis of the 171st Maintenance Group's Aerospace Ground Equipment shop accepts a check from First Sergeant Shawn Boyle and Chief Master Sergeant Terry Malley representing the nearly \$2000 collected through donations for the medical care of Jeff's cousin, two-year-old Jaden Duttine, at the Senior Enlisted Recognition Ceremony on Sunday morning, November 8, 2009.



Photo by Senior Airman Sara Kaufman

Jaden was diagnosed on August 7th, at only 27 months of age, with metastatic neuroblastoma after complaining of back pain. It was then that it was discovered that he had a tumor pressing on his spine. Metastatic neuroblastoma is a cancer of the nerves that developed in Jaden's adrenal gland, bone marrow, skull, lumbar and thoracic vertebrae. At only two years old, he has undergone surgery to remove the tumor, five of six scheduled rounds of chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant procedure. He and his family were scheduled to be on base to accept the check in person, but Jaden is back in the hospital due to complications from the chemo.

In addition to Jaden being the cousin of Jeff, he is the grandson of Bill Andrulonis, who many of you may remember as he retired just a few years ago after 31 years of service with the 171st. Bill also worked in the Maintenance Group, he ran the training office. Those of you who know Bill may recall that his daughter struggled with cancer just a few years ago, near the end of Bill's career here. This daughter, Julie, is Jaden's mother.

When asked to share some details about Jaden, Bill's wife, Debbie, responded quickly and explained how resilient and shining Jaden is. He, like his grandpap (Bill), loves to golf and is quite good at it. But then with a caddy like his "pappy," who wouldn't be successful on the links? It is reported that Jaden cannot go to the hospital without his golf club. In addition to golf, Jaden is a fan of baseball, basketball, bowling and fishing. He is, it sounds, an all-American boy!

While Jaden's favorite color is blue, his older brother, Joey (4), prefers red. Keeping in line with the all-American theme it seems. The two are said to be the best of friends.

Debbie goes on to say that they are happy to have Bill at home to help with the boys as well as Julie. They had wanted to come out to the base for the presentation in order to meet "Bill's other family who has been so great to us." Let's hope that opportunity presents itself soon.

**HIGH**  
Flyer

Aircraft: 58-0099  
Hours Flown: 57.2  
Sorties Flown: 14



Crew chiefs: Phillip Good, Joseph Steimer, Andrew Little and Daniel Jablonski