

WARRIOR

Serving the Whiteman Community - Vol. 4 No. 11
March 22, 2013

Year of the B-2

**No TA?
No need to panic
Pg. 2**

**Egress:
Integrating
safety,
services
Pg. 11**

**For the
love of
rugby
Pg. 5**

**ATCs:
On the watch
around
the clock
Pg. 7**

Rockin' and Rollin'

Whiteman spouses hold dining-in, Pg. 3

The Whiteman Education Center – Helping Airmen finance their future

By 1st Lt. John Cooper
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

With the suspension of the Tuition Assistance program, Airmen across the service have been left wondering the same question – “How am I going to pay for my education?”

The Whiteman Education Center’s answer – “Come see us.”

“People that had approved TAs are going to be honored,” said Darla Rush, 509th Force Support Squadron force development flight chief. “But now, they’re at the point where they’re wondering ‘How am I going to fund it in the future? How am I going to continue to go to school?’”

Though one major source of financial aid is no longer an option for Airmen, the good news is that numerous others, though perhaps less well-known, are available, and can help fully fund a quality education. The counselors at the Education Center are ready and able to help Airmen make the most of these opportunities.

The first thing that education center specialists tell Airmen about is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, which determines how much federal aid - most notably, Pell grants - an individual is eligible to receive.

“We explain to them the criteria the federal government is looking for,” said Mark Carter, 509th FSS education specialist. “Are you married? Do you have children? Are you the only breadwinner? We explain to them, if they fall in that category, the likelihood of getting a full Pell, which is \$5,500 an academic year, is great.”

When it comes to filling out the FAFSA, Carter also encouraged Airmen to stay away from websites that supposedly help individuals complete the form, as most of them charge service fees. Instead, Airmen should visit the Education Center, where counselors will help them fill it out, or they can visit fafsa.ed.gov, the official government site.

Another option is the G.I. Bill, both the Montgomery and the Post-9/11 versions. Though these packages differ in some ways, they both offer substantial benefits for Airmen, helping cover numerous expenses. The Education Center offers assistance in activating those benefits.

Scholarships are also a key component of financing an education. Hundreds of organizations, both public and private, regularly post aid opportunities on scholarship database sites such as Fastweb.com and Schoolsoup.com. Overall, there are more than 200 such sites that Airmen can visit, though they should check with the Education Center to get a list of which sites are credible and which are fraudulent.

Also, Airmen should make sure they



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Alexandra Boutte

are not missing out on scholarships offered by the school they are attending, as many are often available to individuals who meet certain criteria.

Financial relief is available even after members may have paid for it, in the form of tax benefits. One of these is the Lifetime Learning tax credit, which offers taxpayers a 20 percent credit on tuition expenses. Individuals can receive up to \$2,000 on the first \$10,000 in expenses.

For example, if an Airman spends \$5,000 a year on tuition, he or she can receive a \$1,000 credit, assuming eligibility requirements are met. Of course, always file taxes through a certified, respected tax company or professional to ensure adherence to U.S. tax laws.

The greatest obstacle to Airmen pursuing and receiving these myriad benefits is simply lack of knowledge, said Carter.

“With the good team that we have, we have the resources, so we show them. In the beginning, we literally walk some of them through it, because it’s unknown territory,” he said.

Carter worked at State Fair Community College for several years before coming to Whiteman, and has acquired a wealth of experience in helping students chart a path to paying for their education. As a former ALS instructor, he has valuable insight on the budgeting challenges that Service members often face.

“He has been extremely valuable to us. He worked at State Fair Community College doing just this – finding aid for civilians trying to go to school – so we have an expert at our hands,” said Rush, a former ALS instructor and commandant.

In this fiscally trying time, many Airmen may be tempted to take on loans to help pay school expenses. Given the numerous other opportunities available, however, such action is unwise and unnecessary.

Indeed, going into debt to fund an

education can end up causing more financial hardship down the road than the costs the Airmen is seeking to avoid in the first place.

“Use loans as you’ve been taught to use a tourniquet – as a very last resort,” said Carter.

Rush stressed that Airmen’s first stop on the road to achieving a degree should be the Education Center, as experienced counselors can provide them with a wide variety of services. Some of these include interest surveys to help students figure out what they are most interested in, and therefore what degree they should pursue; counseling on what type of school the Airman should attend; and information on financial aid, commissioning and other topics.

“Anytime Airmen have questions, that’s what we’re here for,” she said. “We’re here to help them to find what will get them to their end goal.”

Education is a priority for many members of Team Whiteman. As of March 11, when the Air Force announced the suspension of the TA program, 24 percent of active-duty Airmen here were receiving TA funds—907 Airmen overall.

Airmen can visit the Education Center from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, and walk-ins are welcome. Whiteman’s dedicated team of education professionals is always eager to help individuals come up with an education plan and the strategy to pay for it.

“There’s just such a wide variety of things that we talk with students about every day. I don’t ever want an Airman to leave here not feeling like they’ve gotten the best,” said Rush.

The strength of the counseling team is that everyone shares the same information, so Airmen know they are getting the right answers, no matter who they talk to.

“We’re all on the same sheet of music. We’re all sopranos here,” Carter said.

THE WARRIOR

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The deadline for article submissions to the Warrior is noon Friday. If a holiday falls on Friday, the deadline then becomes 4 p.m. Thursday. Articles will be published on a space-available basis. Submissions does not guarantee publication.

For more information, call the Warrior office at 660-687-6123, email: Whiteman.Warrior@whiteman.af.mil, fax us: 660-687-7948, or write to us at: 509th Bomb Wing, 1081 Arnold Ave., Bldg. 59, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305.

To advertise in *The Warrior*, call the *Sedalia Democrat* at: 1-800-892-7856.

On the cover

U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson
Susie Osborn, Shannon Scott and Julie Umfleet show off their costumes at the Spouses' Dining-in at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 16, 2013. The event was funded with donations given to each of the 509th Bomb Wing's key spouse organizations and included food, games, skits and a dance hosted by a live DJ.

NEWS BRIEFS

1-135th ARB deployment ceremony

The 1-135th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion is holding a deployment ceremony March 24 at 1 p.m. It will be held in the University of Central Missouri multi-purpose building. The address is 500 S. Washington Street in Warrensburg. Military members should wear their duty uniform and civilians should wear casual. For more information, please contact 2nd Lt. Ben Hoemann at 660-687-6658 or benjamin.d.hoemann.mil@mail.mil

FIRST Robotics

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Whiteman Warrior Story Ideas

The Public Affairs Office accepts story ideas for news and feature articles on people and organizations to help provide recognition of excellence in performance and set forth norms for mission accomplishment.

To submit an idea, call 660-687-6123, or email whiteman.warrior@us.af.mil

For more news briefs, visit <http://www.whiteman.af.mil/news/announcements/index.asp>

WEATHER

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Sunday	Monday
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Lo 30	Lo 24

Courtesy of National Weather Service

Rockin' and rollin' at Spouses' Dining-In



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Spouses of members from the 393rd Bomb Squadron dress as "Men in Black" during Whiteman Air Force Base's first annual Spouses' Dining-In at Mission's End, March 16, 2013. The event was put together to strengthen morale and team-building among Team Whiteman spouses.

Senior Airman Brigitte N. Brantley
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

At the first-ever Whiteman Spouses' Dining-In held here March 16, more than 190 spouses took the opportunity to cut loose, strengthen their friendships and compete for prizes.

This event, designed "by spouses for spouses," gave them the chance to experience some traditional military customs, while also dressing up and building camaraderie.

"This event was to celebrate the sacrifices spouses make all the time, as well as to encourage esprit de corps," said Julie Umfleet, wife of Senior Master Sgt.

Mark Umfleet, Airman Leadership School instructor. "From the first event of table-decorating in the morning, you could just feel the excitement in the air. The dining-in exceeded all expectations we had."

Umfleet was one of the event's main organizers, along with Susie Osborn, wife of Master Sgt. Matthew Osborn; and Shannon Scott, wife of Tech. Sgt. Daryl Scott.

When the groups of spouses from different squadrons showed up that night, they debuted their outfits inspired by different movies. They included everything from "Grease" and "Top Gun" to "Austin Powers" and "Snow White."

The event started off with toasts to the first lady and spouses of the secretary of

defense and chief of staff of the Air Force. The 20th Reconnaissance Squadron spouses were named victors of the table-decorating contest, and spouses from the 509th Medical Group won the award for the best skit.

"The highlight of this event for me was the feedback we got from the spouses," said Scott. "They were over-the-top appreciative."

"As military wives, we sacrifice a lot of our own goals and aspirations to follow around the military member," Scott added. "It's important to have a sense of self and a sense of community, so who better to rely on than other spouses? This event brought us so much closer together."

Additional photos may be found on page 4



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Key spouses from the 509th Medical Group, dressed as characters from the 1961 romantic comedy, "Breakfast at Tiffany's," receive an award for "Best Skit" during Whiteman Air Force Base's first annual Spouses' Dining-In at Mission's End, March 16, 2013. Prizes were given out to the key spouse organizations that had the best skits and the best table decoration. Brig. Gen. Thomas Bussiere, 509th Bomb Wing commander, and one of the mayors from the local community judged the table decorations.

For more photos from the dining-in, visit our Facebook page"



Spouses' Continued from Page 3

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U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Dena Laxson, 509th Force Support Squadron key spouse and wife of Master Sgt. Joseph Laxson, Airmen Leadership School instructor, performs during Whiteman Air Force Base's first annual Spouses' Dining-In at Mission's End, March 16, 2013. Each unit's key spouse organization put together a skit that included poems, songs and role-playing during the event.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Key spouses from the 509th Bomb Wing dance during a party hosted by a live DJ during Whiteman Air Force Base's first annual Spouses' Dining-In at Mission's End, March 16, 2013. The event was put together to help build a network of support among the wing's key spouse members.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Spouses of 20th Reconnaissance Squadron members perform a toast while performing an "Alice and Wonderland" skit during Whiteman Air Force Base's first annual Spouses' Dining-In at Mission's End, March 16, 2013. More than 190 spouses attended the event, which included a three-course dinner, skits performed by the spouses of each squadron and a live DJ.



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For the love of rugby



The Kansas City Blues Rugby Club and University of Kansas Jayhawks fight for control of the ball during a game in Kansas City, Mo., March 16, 2013. In rugby, if a player is tackled, a teammate kicks it away and play continues.



ABOVE: Zachary Hildebrand, Kansas City Blues Rugby Club player, tries to evade a tackle during practice in Kansas City, Mo., March 14, 2013. A U.S. Air Force staff sergeant stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Hildebrand plays rugby for its physicality, brotherhood and chaotic, yet organized, nature.



Eirik Hartley, Kansas City Blues Rugby Club player, kicks a successful 2-point conversion during a game against the University of Kansas Jayhawks in Kansas City, Mo., March 16, 2013. Rugby is a highly physical sport played with little protective equipment.

LEFT: Kevin Schwartze, Kansas City Blues Rugby Club player, catches the ball while being supported by teammates during a line-out while practicing in Kansas City, Mo., March 14, 2013. Equivalent to a soccer throw-in, line-outs happen when a player takes the ball out of the field of play.



Scan for
more
rugby
photos

Story and photos by
Senior Airman Brigitte N. Brantley
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

"Bring the heat, bring the pain."

These demands from the captain of the Kansas City Blues Rugby Club set off another no-holds-barred match of colliding bodies, shouted expletives and bloody injuries.

This sport, played worldwide by men hell-bent on barreling through any opponent who dares get in their way on the field, is known for both the vicious nature of its matches, as well as the sense of brotherhood it promotes. It also has its followers at Whiteman Air Force Base.

"I love the feeling of just running over someone or tackling them so hard you hear the air leave their lungs," said Staff Sgt. Zachary Hildebrand, who plays Division III for the Blues sporting club.

At any time, he can be found filling the position of prop, hooker, flanker or his favorite, "8-man."

Whiteman, located 65 miles east of Kansas City, is Hildebrand's home. He makes the two-hour round-trip three times a week to practice and play rugby with the Blues. As the only professionally backed rugby club in America, a lot is expected of its players.

Rugby attracts a motley crew of individuals -- this team in particular comprises lawyers, molecular biology engineers, and Soldiers and Airmen from around Missouri.

"First and foremost, the physicality of the sport is what draws me to it," said Hildebrand.

"It reminds me of when I was a little boy playing backyard football with my best friends without a care in the world, except rugby is a lot more structured. The brotherhood in this sport is second to none!"

First-time fans of the game would find this hard to believe -- physical and verbal confrontations often erupt on the field. Long-time fans have come to expect them.

"The type of friendship in rugby just isn't found in traditional American sports," said Eirik Hartley, a former senior airman who now plays as a back on the Blues. "I could literally punch a guy in the face in a rugby match, and then be drinking with him two hours later in the bar. That's what I love about the game."

Most rugby teams will play in any condition -- rain, shine, hail, snow, lightning or thunder. Hildebrand's favorite rugby memory comes from one of these bad-weather moments.

"Our Division I team was out playing in Utah, so our coaches organized a 'friendly match' for us against the Rogues, another team in Kansas City," said Hildebrand, who also scored his first try that day. "They were short-manned, so we gave them three players. We had no coaches, so we self-coached. It was raining so hard you could hardly see a foot in front of you, and it was lightning and thundering. It was surreal to be playing in those conditions, but it never crossed our minds to cancel it."

"That day, we played for the love of rugby."

Although football and rugby share com-

mon beginnings, the modern sports bear little resemblance to each other. In football, 11 players at a time are on the field for a game of four 15-minute quarters. During these 60 minutes of play, the clock stops to let teams organize and teams can substitute players at will, with no limitations.

In rugby, 15 players will play for two 40-minute halves. The clock does not stop, and substitutions are limited.

"It's an all-out battle for 80 minutes," said Hildebrand. "If someone is seriously injured, then we'll stop the clock, but a lot of us will continue playing through the pain. If you get a bloody nose, you run to the sideline, shove some cotton up there and get back out on the field."

"During the match with the Rogues, I got a thumb in the eye and it hurt so bad I thought my eye was out of socket, but it was just bleeding. The only pain in rugby is regret."

Hildebrand has been invited to trials for the Air Force rugby team and if selected, will travel and represent the service in matches around the country.

Another difference between football and rugby is the protection. In football, it is helmets and pads from head to knee; in rugby, the most protection available is the option of a soft covering for the head. Known as a scrum cap, it helps prevent cauliflower ear -- an unsightly and permanent deformity.

A scrum is when the eight forwards (the biggest and most powerful players on the field) from each team link into a specific formation and at the command of the referee,

smash into each other. The thud of the collision is audible across the field.

Although rugby is potentially dangerous, the players rely heavily on each other to make sure safety is not compromised.

"Rugby is the ultimate team sport," said Capt. Christopher DarCaronte, another Airman stationed at Whiteman who is currently deployed to Southwest Asia. "In a scrum, if all eight forwards don't work together, the entire formation will collapse. In football, a decent quarterback, receiver or running back can carry the team. In rugby though, any weakness in your line will be exploited by your opponent."

Although action on the field looks chaotic, it takes practice to make that chaos organized. Although practice is only done at about 80 percent intensity, it takes the same characteristics to make the time worthwhile.

"To someone who doesn't play or understand rugby, the sport appears to be a chaotic mess. It's 30 men running around chasing a ball and hitting each other," said DarCaronte. "But if you go in with the mindset of just wanting to hit someone, you will quickly find yourself falling behind and watching from the sideline. Rugby is complicated and each player needs to be thinking ahead about where the ball will be and predicting the type of play the opponent is trying to run."

Hildebrand, Hartley and DarCaronte all agree -- they do not play rugby to lose.

"Winning isn't everything ... it's the only thing," said Hildebrand. "Rugby is like war -- easy to start, difficult to stop and impossible to forget."

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Spirit Auto: Going the distance



Rafael Ramirez, 509th Force Support Squadron Spirit Auto manager, places tools back into a toolbox after performing self-help service on a vehicle at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 13, 2013. Spirit Auto works to accommodate customer's needs so they can continue to stay focused on the mission.

Story and photos by Heidi Hunt

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Car problems are awesome. Said no one ever.

While vehicle trouble is inevitable, many find it challenging to be without their own transportation.

When these troubles leave Airmen without their own wheels, getting to and from work and tackling daily errands can become an issue. Fortunately, the 509th Force Support Squadron provides Team Whiteman with auto care services so individuals can keep their mind on the mission.

"Our goal and values are to provide the community with reliable, efficient, affordable and quality customer service," said Rafael Ramirez, 509th FSS Spirit Auto manager. "We offer two main types of services – self-help and services by appointment."

Customers benefit from having a one-stop, on-base location, where they can get their vehicles repaired and continue working without interruption, said Ramirez.

"Customers don't have to worry about tak-

ing their vehicle somewhere else and losing valuable mission hours," Ramirez said. "Since we are on base and readily available, customers can drop off their vehicle and pick it up at the end of the duty day."

Spirit Auto also aims to build a trusting relationship with its customers to avoid worries about the quality of service. They consistently provide solid customer service, and treat patrons how they would want to be treated.

The four-man team stays busy year-round, especially during the peak seasons – winter and summer.

In addition to providing services to private vehicles, Ramirez said they also accommodate squadron vehicles, saving the Air Force money.

"We service slow-moving vehicles so people don't have to put them on trailers and take them downtown, which ends up costing more money," Ramirez said.

Whatever the issue, technicians at Spirit Auto work diligently to find the root cause of the problem and try to save the customer money; they never take shortcuts, said Ramirez.

"Sometimes a job may take a little longer only because we take our time and ensure it's done right the first time," Ramirez added. "We don't cut corners and we don't rush jobs."

Recent upgrades to the facility include an additional car lift and a new tire-changing machine. They also added new vacuum cleaners, heated rails and cement floors to the automatic car wash so the bay floors do not freeze in the winter months.

Services at Spirit Auto also include, but are not limited to: oil changes, tire rotation, tune-ups, strut and shock absorber replacement, scanner hook-up, component replacement, brake replacement, tire mounting and balancing, diagnostic checks, wheel alignment and state inspections.

Some people prefer to do their own maintenance. Customers can utilize a web-based program at Spirit Auto, free of charge, to research "how-to" information on their vehicles.

If patrons do not see a service offered, they can contact Spirit Auto at 660-687-5689 for more clarification.

Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday (by appointment only); 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday; and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. Customers are required to clean up 45 minutes prior to close, and are advised to give themselves adequate time to perform vehicle maintenance.



Frank Judkins, 509th Force Support Squadron Spirit Auto automotive technician, pours windshield wiper fluid into a vehicle at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 12, 2013. Spirit Auto offers both self-help services and maintenance by certified automotive technicians, and aims to save customers money.



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ATCs: On the watch around the clock



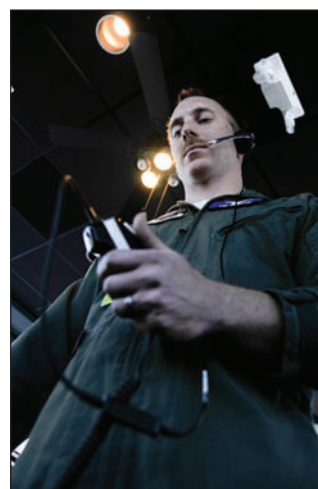
Staff Sgt. Blaine Caudill, 509th Operations Support Squadron air traffic control watch supervisor, scans the skies around Whiteman Air Force Base for birds, March 11, 2013. Scanning for birds is an important procedure that helps prevent accidental strikes by aircraft.



Staff Sgt. Blaine Caudill, 509th Operations Support Squadron air traffic control watch supervisor, reviews a crash grid map at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. In the event of an aircraft crash, the map is used to provide a detailed location of the crash site.



Airman 1st Class Seth Lewis, 509th Operations Support Squadron air traffic control apprentice, brings controller records to the tower, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. Air traffic controllers have to study daily to stay sharp and be prepared for any circumstances.



Major Tim Sutton, 509th Operations Support Squadron flying supervisor, communicates using a headset at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. Air traffic controllers rely on headsets to deliver their messages concerning take-off and landing statuses.

Story and photos by
Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Despite the ease with which they carry themselves and the cool, calm and collected attitude they display to the public, pilots have one of the most intense jobs in the world—flying multi-million dollar aircraft to their destination.

Part of being a pilot is possessing excellent vision, but even then, they cannot always see everything. They often need a second pair of eyes to help them execute missions successfully.

That second pair of eyes is known as Air Traffic Control.

Air traffic controllers maintain expeditious flow of air traffic within a safe environment, said Staff Sgt. Blaine Caudill, 509th Operations Support Squadron air traffic control watch supervisor.

“We have a lot of training just like the pilots,” said Caudill. “Each position is manned; you have one controller who monitors another controller. As soon as you get out of basic training and technical school, you come to your first base and get on-the-job training.”

Air traffic controllers monitor the skies every day to ensure pilots are able to safely leave and return.

“We are a 24-hour facility, so we are pretty much on-call all the time, including holidays,” said Caudill. “Here at Whiteman, it is a unique situation because we have the B-2 Spirit; its mission is constantly changing. We control when they depart and land. We clear them for take-off here at Whiteman to perform their duties, and when they are done with their missions, we will land them safely. We are directly responsible for that happening.”

Established procedures for making this happen involve direct communication between the pilots and the air traffic controllers, said Senior Airman Kyle Ellis, 509th OSS air traffic control journeyman.

“As soon as the pilot starts the aircraft, he will call for engine start-up,” said Ellis. “We guide him to the runway and make sure it is clear of any vehicles and animals. Then another controller visually scans for birds and clears him for take-off.”

Any air traffic controller can scan for birds and clear taxi runways, said Caudill. These are mission-essential tasks each air traffic controller must perform, but members of the unit also have specific tasks for which they are responsible.

“There are five positions in the tower. There is a ground controller who taxis the aircraft to and from the runway and directs vehicle crossings,” said Caudill. “The watch supervisor oversees all operations and can ‘over-key’ other controllers to fix mistakes.

“The flight data [supervisor’s] job is to coordinate information to outside agencies, as well as between controllers. The local controller is in charge of separating and sequencing aircraft in the air to include take-off and landing clearances. The coordinator’s primary job is to help direct the flow of information to the local controller as well as flow of traffic when the local position is busy.”

Air traffic controllers also use displays to see weather, examine the cloud layer and obtain information on aircraft that are inbound or outbound through a resource called pilot reports, or ‘pi-reps,’ said Ellis.

“If I am flying around and I take on any weather, I have to relay that to the controller who then relays that to a B-2 preparing for departure,” said Ellis. “When pilots call and they get their plan and route of flight, they get pi-reps. So if a plane lands and there is icing, we will give pi-reps to all the pilots so everyone knows there is icing in the area.”

This dedicated group of professionals oversees thousands of flights on a regularly basis; 3,000 to 5,000 planes take off from, and land at, Whiteman every month during the spring and summer. During fall and winter, the flight numbers are lower, but changing weather conditions can keep the job challenging.

Although staying on watch around the clock is an incredibly demanding task, the 509th OSS continues to ensure pilot safety and mission success.

509th sign shop: Whiteman's third base coach

By Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

(Editor's note: This is part three of a three-part series about the 509th Civil Engineer Squadron Heavy Repair section.)

"Halt!"

A base police officer stops a civilian wandering past a restricted area sign. The restricted area sign helps establish boundaries on base, providing notification to individuals that entry beyond a certain point is unauthorized.

In total, there are thousands of signs all over Whiteman Air Force Base that let people know where they are, where they should or should not be going, and how fast they should be driving.

In baseball, the third base coach is responsible for providing signs to players at the plate and on the bases, and his ability to relay the coach's intent directly impacts the outcome of the game.

Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, functions as the equivalent of the third base coach for Whiteman.

"If an Airman is on the flightline bumbling around in areas he shouldn't be, he's going to kiss the pavement," Jones said. "So my signs help keep people out of trouble."

Jones works alone in the sign shop, where he spends all of his time drilling, cutting, printing and painting the signs that visitors and members of Team Whiteman see everywhere.

Without these signs, there would be numerous vehicle accidents, safety mishaps, security breaches and all kinds of craziness across the base, causing police officers to bend over backward trying to keep people in line, said Jones.

"They make it easier for police officers to do their jobs," said Master Sgt. Sean Ring, NCOIC of police services. "If we get those law-abiding citizens who follow what the signs say, then we don't need a presence in the area. It's the same

as when we're driving our vehicles off base and we're coming into a town. We look for the speed limit signs on the side of the road so we're not speeding through town."

The signs Jones creates also help visitors on base, such as those who attend air shows, find the roads they are looking for. Last year, during the 2012 Wings over Whiteman open house and air show, more than 40,000 spectators from all over the region attended. The signs that directed attendees where to go helped contribute to the success of the air show, said Ring.

"When you have that many people who are unfamiliar with the installation, they know all they have to do is follow the detour and parking signs, and they're going to be headed in the right direction," Ring said. "You can't funnel that many people on and off the installation without some sort of sign flow to lead them to the direction they need to be. So if we didn't have those signs, there would've been chaos."

A large part of Jones' job is producing the highest quality product possible. To do this, Jones spends most of his time laying out signs on his computer software, ensuring verbiage is correct and transferring sign material to metal.

"The most challenging part about the sign shop is meeting the customer's needs while still upholding the base standards for signs," said Staff Sgt. Joe Schick, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron structural supervisor. "We want our signs to look professional and Bernie always makes sure that happens."

Jones said the most rewarding part about his job is the wide range of challenges he has tackle. He has the ability to create signs for everything from duty section entryway signs to the warning markers seen on the installation perimeter fence line.

"I could work on three or four projects at once," Jones said. "I could lay out designs on my

computer for half a day and then I could be cutting aluminum blanks and applying vinyl the rest of the day. I'm never bored in here because there is so much diversity all over the base."

The busiest parts of each year are during nuclear operational readiness exercises, and inspections that require visitors to come on base, he said.

"I'll get tasked to make last-minute entry control point signs or restricted area signs that keep the inspectors pointed in the right direction," Jones said. "A month before a major inspection is usually the most challenging time of the year for me because there are usually signs that are damaged or faded that need to be fixed before the inspectors arrive."

One of the most challenging parts about working in the sign shop is trying to save resources and keep customers happy simultaneously, said Jones.

"Sometimes I'll get customers who want certain text on their signs, but they don't know what they want the sign to look like," Jones said. "So I'll use my software to create a graphic of my interpretation of what they want and try to tailor it their needs."

Jones receives work orders from the 509th CES customer service desk.

"I cannot make any signs without a direct job order through customer service," Jones said. "It comes down to me with a work order number and that's what I charge my time to when I'm working on a job. That's also how I get my direction on what I'm working on."

Jones' dedicated work is yet another evidence of the value that Air Force Global Strike Command places on safety throughout the command in all things, large and small.

"If there isn't a stop sign at an intersection, and a small child runs across and gets hit, then the base can be at fault," Jones said. "I don't want that child to get hit. I want a sign there to keep children and drivers safe."



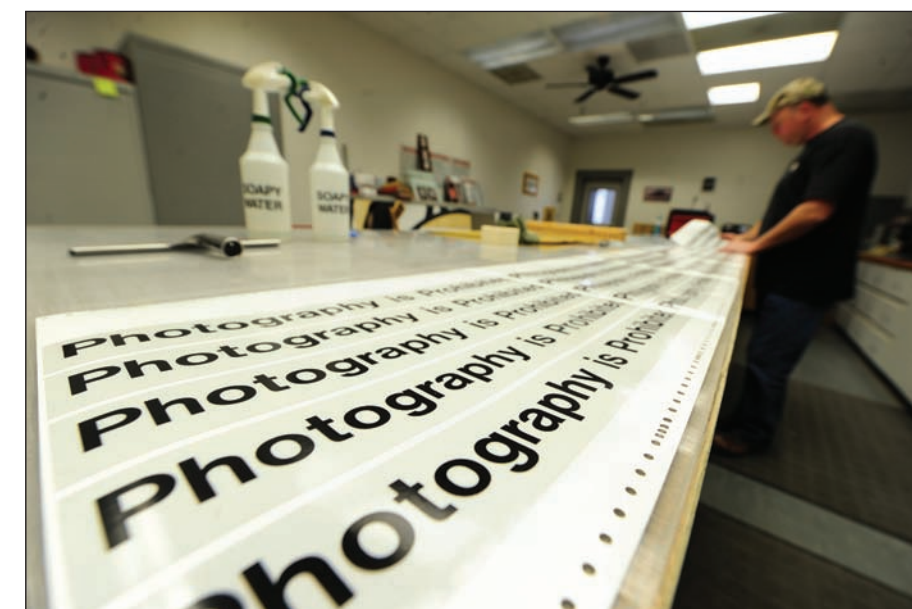
Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, prepares a restricted area sign for vinyl coating at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. The vinyl coating acts as an adhesive that enables personnel to attach the banner to the aluminum sign frame.



Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, uses a nibbler to cut away excess aluminum from a Global Strike Command insignia at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. MAJCOM signs help show visitors and newcomers the command's ownership of the installation.



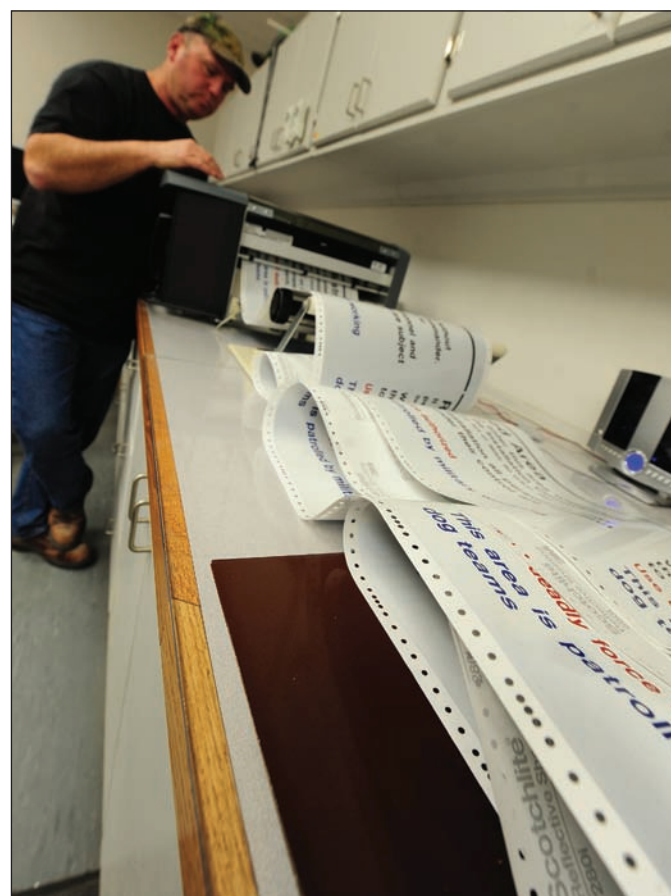
Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, removes a screw to dispose of an unusable sign and replace the stanchion holding it, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. The stanchion is used to support signs for special occasions such as air shows, inspections and exercises.



Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, weeds sign material and visually checks for flaws on a sign at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. The flaws Jones is checking for are errors in colors, spelling and other blemishes.



Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, ensures the blade of a plotter machine lines up with the material being cut for a sign, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. Almost every sign on base has been cut using this machine.



Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, prints restricted area signs for a customer at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. Each year, Jones prints out thousands of signs for buildings, offices, events and various areas on base.



Bernard Jones, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron sign maker, cleans an Air Force Global Strike Command sign at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 11, 2013. Signs of MAJCOMs, such as this one, are posted at the front gate to identify the command to drivers as the pass by.

U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

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HOW:
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WHAT: Poker Run/Walk 5K

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AFAF kicks off for 2013



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

Brig. Gen. Thomas Bussiere, 509th Bomb Wing commander, signs a check for the Air Force Assistance Fund as Master Sgt. Frederick Statton, 509th Bomb Wing Staff AFAF representative, looks on, Whiteman Air Force Base, March 19, 2013. The AFAF campaign is an annual, on-the-job fundraising appeal conducted by Air Force personnel for the benefit of Air Force members.



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Egress integration shop – the pilot’s last line of defense

Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Bryan Crane
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

If a mishap occurs during flight, it is vital that pilots be able to safely eject from the cockpit. The 509th Maintenance Squadron egress shop is responsible to ensure they can accomplish just that.

The egress shop’s mission is to handle required maintenance for all parts of the ejection seats in the B-2 Spirit and T-38 Talon.

“We are responsible for all explosive maintenance, time changes and scheduled maintenance on the egress systems for both the B-2 and T-38,” said Tech. Sgt. Jacob Bavin, 509th MXS egress section chief.

The egress shop consists of only 18 members, including two full-time 131st Bomb Wing Air National Guard members who have been fully integrated into the mission.

“We began our integration back in 2009,” said Tech. Sgt. Adam Grant, 131st Maintenance Squadron egress section chief. “It was tough at first figuring out positions for everybody and how to effectively use each other’s skill sets. I think after the first few months, the process has gone incredible smooth, and now we feel there is no difference between the active guys and the Guard guys.”

Overall, the members of the shop feel they are one of the most integrated groups on the base.

“We have become a very cohesive team,” Grant said. “If we need support on a drill weekend, they will give us a few bodies to help us out. We in turn help them by working 12-hour shifts, working late and really anything else to help the shop succeed.”

All members of the 131st MXS egress shop can complete any task with the same degree of professionalism and competence as active members, he said.

When it comes to the pace of their schedule, the shop goes through up and downs throughout the year.

“The amount of work we do really varies,” said Bavin. “It all depends on the flights and when a part has to be changed out.”

All parts on the egress systems have a different life expectancy, which can cause a buildup in maintenance work.

“Some of the parts may last for six years before being replaced,” said Bavin. “Other parts may last nine years. So sometimes you may get stuck with multiple parts that need to be changed out at the same time and it can create a busy schedule for us.”

One example why the egress team stays busy is the amount of effort required to perform work on the B-2’s

cockpit seat. It takes the shop around two and a half days to take a seat out of the jet and complete proper maintenance.

“The B-2 takes a lot longer to get the maintenance done because it is a more complicated jet,” said Grant. “It only takes an hour to get the seat out of an F-16 Fighting Falcon.”

In addition to changing parts when their life expectancy has expired, the egress shop must also send someone with 7-level training certification out to check on all egress systems every 30 days.

The 18-man shop has Airmen working day shifts, swing shifts and also a weekend shift.

“Our schedule can change based off of flying schedules,” said Bavin. “If they have a different flying schedule, we will accommodate them and change our schedule up.”

Although it is a smaller shop with a large workload, the Airmen of the egress shop accomplish their job with the highest degree of skill, said Grant.

“I know all jobs on base are important and must be done right,” said Grant. “But this job is unique in the aspect that we are the absolute last resort. We don’t have a backup engine if the egress system fails. We have to do our job perfect every time and pay 100 percent, full attention to every detail, because that pilot’s life literally rides in our hands.”



Airman 1st Class Christopher Amsel, 509th Maintenance Squadron egress systems journeyman, inspects a retaining pin on a training ejection seat parachute at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 19, 2013. The egress shops work schedule varies depending on flight operations each week.



Senior Airman Patrick Hatcher, Airman 1st Class Matthew Roberts, and Airman 1st Class Christopher Amsel, 509th Maintenance Squadron egress systems journeymen, inspect a training ejection seat at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 19, 2013. Every 30 days, the B-2 Spirit cockpit seat must be inspected by someone with a 7-level training certification.

LEFT: Airman 1st Class Christopher Amsel, 509th Maintenance Squadron egress systems journeyman, places a pin in a training ejection seat at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., March 19, 2013. The egress shop has been fully integrated with members of the 131st MXS egress shop since 2009.

A dream made into reality!

By Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Senior Airman Nia Newton is one of those Airmen who strive to accomplish any goals that cross her mind. She was recently chosen to fill one of only 32 positions on the 2013 Tops in Blue tour.

Her dedication and motivation were the main reasons she came this far.

For Newton, this is more than just an opportunity; it is a childhood dream come true.

"When you pick up a microphone at 5 years old, you know are going to be doing it for the rest of your life," said Newton, 509th Force Support Squadron force management representative. "Once I set my mind on something I know I can do, then I am going to get it done."

Many of her close friends, family and co-workers have witnessed her talent and feel she will go far.

"Newton can hit high notes really well," said Airman 1st Class Sherry Ramirez, 509th FSS. "When I see her videos, she is confident in her voice and with being on stage."

Newton was inspired to join the Tops in Blue band even before she joined the Air Force.

"I was researching the band while in high school," said Newton. "I was a 'music head,' I was in show choir and already knew about premiere bands in the military. My uncle told me about Tops in Blue, so I researched it and asked my recruiter about joining, but and he didn't know much about it. Toward the end of my basic military training, I found out Tops in Blue was based on Lackland Air Force Base, Texas."

So I got the phone number and put it on my military training instructor's computer. I taped the number to his screen every night but he never called. I wasn't upset about it," said Newton. "I stopped worry-

ing about it until I came to Whiteman. I researched the band and went to audition."

It was not easy for Newton to join Tops in Blue; she did not make it the first time. "The first time around, I was just an R&B singer," she said. "You have to be successful in all genres in order to make the band."

When it came time for me to compete, I was not prepared in the other genres."

Newton did not let the critique and words of disappointment discourage her from trying again the following year.

"I do not take criticism to heart," she said. "It is like going to BMT; you are under pressure and you have to adapt and fix things about yourself so you are more suitable for the environment. When you make things better, the MTIs see a change in you. That's what happened to me when I first tried out."

I took those critiques, dissected everything they said, took myself apart and built myself up with improvement. I did not let my first time discourage me from my dream, I kept going."

Tops in Blue has taught Newton how to present herself more professionally in both her musical performances and the workplace. Her appreciation for what the Air Force has done for her can be expressed in many words.

"I already have a lot of respect for the Air Force and all it has done for my family and me," said Newton. "This experience will make as a better Airman because of the discipline that they make you maintain. It is like basic training on steroids; and is a big challenge not many people can meet. As this reflects on my career, it is going to make me come back more focused, determined and not wanting to be lazy; this makes me want to do my job even better."

This is going to be one big journey, both mentally and physically, for Newton, but she is well motivated to conquer this year with everything she's got.

This Week in 509th Bomb Wing History: B-2 anniversaries

David Easley
509th Bomb Wing historian

March 22, 2011: Three B-2 Spirits from the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., supported Operation Odyssey Dawn, striking targets in Libya and returning to Whiteman. During the 25-hour mission, crews employed 45 joint direct attack munitions against hardened aircraft shelters.

March 24, 1999: B-2 crews supported Operation Allied Force, flying the first manned aircraft to engage in hostilities during the conflict. In the combat debut of the

B-2, crews employed the 2,000-pound variant of the GBU-31 JDAM, the Air Force's newest GPS-assisted weapon. This was also the combat debut of JDAM. The B-2 crews flew fewer than 1 percent of the total

mission, but dropped 11 percent of the bombs during the 78-day conflict.

March 25, 1998: Two B-2s deployed to Andersen Air Base, Guam, for Exercise Island Spirit. The exercise tested the ability of crews to operate and maintain the aircraft in a deployed environment.

March 25, 1999: Flying at 25,000 feet over the precision impact range area, a B-2 crew successfully released the first AGM-154 joint standoff weapon (JSOW) guided munition from a B-2.

March 26, 2003: During the course of a separations flight, testers successfully released 16 lightweight JDAMs from four smart bomb rack assemblies.

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THURSDAY 3/28

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Join us at the A&FRC for information about infant care, and receive help with any questions you may have regarding bringing a baby into your home. For more information please call the Airman & Family Readiness Center at **687-7132**.

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UPCOMING FEATURED EVENTS:

MARCH 1-31

WHITEMAN AFB FITNESS CENTER

ROWING CHALLENGE

Whiteman's Rowing Challenge will last the full month of March!

1st and 2nd place male and female participants with the most meters rowed will receive a trophy, the top 2 squadrons will also receive a trophy!

Times allowed for rowing, will be the hours of operation of the Fitness Center is open, 7 days a week for the month of March!

Rowers are allowed 30 mins. of rowing time, and then the next person can start if someone is waiting. The Fitness Center Staff will start the stopwatch at the beginning and record meters rowed at the end of the 30 minute row.

Please contact the Fitness Center front desk before beginning your rowing, the only rower that will be used for the challenge is located near the front desk.



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**The FCC hours of operation have changed to:
0900-1300hrs : Please Call 687-5590 for more.**

FCC NEWS

Returning Home Care:

Military members returning from home from a 30 day or longer deployment are entitled to 16 hours of free child care for each child 12 years old and younger. Come to the FCC office for an application prior to participation. Reservations need to be made at least a week prior to the care date. Call the FCC office for more details at **687-5590**.

PCS Care:

Arriving or departing from Whiteman? The Air Force Aid Society pays for 20 hours of care per child for all ranks to help with your transition. Child care is authorized in AF licensed or affiliated FCC homes. The Airman & Family Readiness Center issues certificates which are good for child care within 60 days of PCSing. Call the FCC office for more details at **687-5590**.

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**509 FSS PAGE EDITOR: KYLE C. HAMRICK
CONTACT US! 687-7929**

Whiteman marks three combat anniversaries for B-2

By Capt. John Severns
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

In a historic coincidence, this third week of March marks not just one anniversary, but the anniversary of three separate combat engagements by the B-2 Spirit bomber.

The first occurred 14 years ago, when B-2 bombers flying from Whiteman AFB were the first manned aircraft to engage in hostilities during Operation Allied Force on March 24, 1999. Operation Allied Force was a NATO military operation launched to force Yugoslavia's president, Slobodan Milosevic, to end a campaign of violence by Serbian forces against the people of Kosovo.

Ten years ago, B-2s operating from Whiteman Air Force Base and other forward locations participated in the opening salvos of Operation Iraqi Freedom, dropping dozens of bombs on high-value targets in Baghdad on March 20, 2003. Operation Iraqi Freedom marked the highest-intensity bombardment ever conducted by B-2s, with the aircraft dropping over a million pounds of ordnance during the opening days of the war.

Finally, and most recently, three B-2s took off from Whiteman AFB on March 22, 2011, and flew more than 6,000 miles to Libya, where they took part in Operation Odyssey Dawn, a NATO operation enforcing a UN no-fly zone to prevent Muammar Gaddafi from using his air forces to attack civilians. The aircraft destroyed a series of hardened aircraft shelters at an airfield near Sirte, and resulted in the near-complete destruction of Gaddafi's air forces.

All three anniversaries highlight the enduring contributions of the B-2 Spirit to our nation's defense, said Brig. Gen. Thomas Bussiere, commander of the 509th Bomb Wing.

"This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the arrival of the B-2 'Spirit of Missouri' at Whiteman Air Force Base, and this week we commemorate three of the B-2's four combat employments," said Bussiere. "In Serbia, Libya and Iraq, we witnessed professional warrior Airmen employing the world's most advanced aircraft from locations around the world successfully destroy targets with pinpoint precision. The B-2's ability to enter the most restricted airspace anywhere on the planet, decimate critical targets, and then fly home, is unmatched in any other air force in the world. Our Airmen deserve to be proud of their outstanding accomplishments and significant contributions to nation's defense."

This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the delivery of the first B-2 Spirit, the Spirit of Missouri, to Whiteman Air Force Base on Dec. 17, 1993. Air Force Global Strike Command has designated 2013 as the "Year of the B-2," and throughout the year the wing will be marking a variety of important dates

in the B-2's history.

Over the years, many of the Airmen who participated in the combat operations as pilots later went on to leadership positions in the B-2 community. One such pilot, then-Lt. Col. Scott Vander Hamm, was commander of the 325th Bomb Squadron here when Operation Iraqi Freedom was launched.

"Our mission was to go after Saddam's critical infrastructure, to degrade his ability to respond," Brig. Gen. Scott Vander Hamm, now the director of Plans, Programs, Requirements and Assessments at Air Education and Training Command, said during an interview last week with the British newspaper The Telegraph. "Our priority of course was avoiding Iraqi civilian casualties, but we were bombing office buildings in the wee hours of the morning."

"It was a 38-hour-long flight from Missouri and back again, with five mid-air refuels. As we were flying over Iraq towards Baghdad, we could see the precision strikes by the Navy's Tomahawk missiles, but otherwise the night sky was very quiet and I could see the outlines of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers where they converged," he continued.

The B-2's first combat employment, in Kosovo, was a nerve-wracking time for the mission planners back in the states, but for the pilots in the air, job one was to focus on the mission.

"Once you get into the target areas, the target runs, you are doing a lot of aiming, a lot of radar scope interpretation, so you are very busy," said then-Lt. Col. Eric Single, who was commander of the 393rd Bomb Squadron at the time, in a book by Rebecca Grant on the B-2's actions in Kosovo, "The B-2 Goes to War."

"You don't have time to think about anything but getting the weapons out," he continued.

"The B-2 was designed to deliver weapons on the first day – yesterday was the first day of the war and the B-2 was there," said Col. Tony Imondi, who was the 509th Operations Group commander during Operation Allied Force.

More recently, during Operation Odyssey Dawn, the B-2 Spirit demonstrated its incredible flexibility as a platform for conducting global strike operations. The three aircraft flew more than 25 hours to their target in Libya and joined a coordinated assault involving U.S. Navy and other Air Force assets.

Although Libya's air defenses were considered antiquated by modern standards, the B-2 Spirit gave U.S. commanders a degree of certitude that only comes with a precise, stealthy aircraft. During all three engagements being remembered this month, the men and women of sWhiteman Air Force Base demonstrated the full spectrum of American air power.

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- Free ads are for one-time sale of personal items only. Free ads can't be placed for churches, groups, clubs, organizations or friends not affiliated with the military. Each item must be sold for \$150 or less.
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- Print legibly, and place punctuation and spaces where necessary. Use only one word per line.
- Free ads aren't taken over the phone. They must be dropped off at or mailed to the 509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs Office, 1081 Arnold Ave Blvd, Bldg 59, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305. Ads may also be faxed to 660-687-7948.
- Many offices on base are using old forms**. If you would like a copy of the new ad form to keep in your office, call 687-6123 and we'll fax a new form for your use. Or, you can download it at <http://www.whiteman.af.mil> and click on "Whiteman Warrior Classified Ad Form."
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