

WARRIOR

Year of the B-2

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President Obama

Touches down at Whiteman, Pg. 8



Leap to your limits

By Lt. Col. Oliver K. Leeds
92nd Air Refueling Squadron

FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE, Wash. -- One of the lessons I carry around with me every day is something I learned from the jumping events in high school track and field.

I was intimidated by the high jump. Unlike the long jump, where every leap into the sand pit could be measured and faults were not embarrassing, the high jump presented a daunting binary challenge: clear the bar or make an embarrassing spectacle. Knocking the bar down could hurt if it landed between me and the mat, and the groans from spectators could be ego devastating.

Some of my long jumps were better than others, but none felt like failures. In the high jump, however, failure was certain. Every competition has the same sequence: jump, succeed; jump, succeed; jump, fail. It was always there, stalking me. Eventually, my limits prepared me to announce to the world, "I failed!"

One day, at my more comfortable long jump pit, my attitude swung 180 degrees. Simply put, I was discontented not knowing if I had done my best. Could I have run faster? Did I jump too far behind the line? Should I have waited for the breeze to shift directions? The second guessing went on and on. I didn't have this problem in the high jump. In the high jump, I always knew I did my best, because I pushed myself until I failed. Eureka!

Had I found comfort in failure? Yes, because it assured me

I had done my best, and removed regrets for not having tried.

My thoughts turned immediately to the sealed and addressed, yet un-mailed, envelope on my desk at home. It was college application season, and I had been accepted to all four schools to which I had applied. But the application on my desk was different -- it was to "the long-shot school" -- the school I would go to if I could, but seriously doubted I had a chance.

Wasn't it smarter to avoid failure? I could spend the rest of my life thinking I wasn't rejected, rather than apply and remove all doubt. But that day, 23 years ago, I glanced over my shoulder at an unusually inspiring high jump bar. I walked out of my uncertain sand, went home and mailed the application. Sure enough, two months later I was rejected. It was my first true failure in the road of life, but I have spent the decades since confident that I have done my best and grateful that I had learned to live a life without regrets.

Some of my fellow Airmen surprise me for not seeing that lesson. I have known people not applying for jobs for fear of rejection. I've known NCOs and officers alike retiring before finding out if they were selected for a promotion. All kinds of challenges are declined for some form or flavor of failure avoidance.

Life is short, and an Air Force career is fast. Not failing does not mean you are successful; it means you traveled too cautiously. Leap to your limits, learn from failures and live without regrets. That is a successful journey!

Protect yourself, your family from whooping cough

Master Sgt. Jessica Settle
110th Bomb Squadron senior medic

In 2012, Missouri had an increase in confirmed and probable cases of pertussis. It is a year-round disease that typically peaks in the fall and winter during cold and flu season.

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable, respiratory disease that can be passed easily from person to person. It is caused by a bacteria found in the mouth, nose and throat of an infected person, and is spread when that individual coughs, sneezes or talks.

But, there is a way to protect yourself and your family from pertussis. That way is vaccination.

The recommended pertussis vaccine for infants and children is called DTaP. For maximum protection against pertussis, children need five of the DTaP shots.

- * The first three shots are given at 2, 4 and 6 months old

- * The fourth shot is given between 15 and 18 months old

- * The fifth shot - the booster dose - is given when a child enters school, at 4 through 6 years of age

Once through childhood, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a single booster (Tdap) for those 11 years old through adulthood. The shot is highly recommended for those who are in close contact with a baby, including parents, siblings, grandparents and caregivers. Tdap boosters are also required for students beginning in the eighth grade.

Additionally, pregnant women should receive a Tdap during each pregnancy, regardless of previous history of receiving a Tdap. Ideally, the vaccine should be given between weeks 27 and 36 of the pregnancy. However, it may be given at any time during the pregnancy. A woman who did not receive a dose of Tdap dur-



U.S. Air National Guard photo/
Airman 1st Class Nathan Dampf

Senior Airman Brian Scheer, 131st Medical Group medical technician, administers a vaccine to a member of the 131st Bomb Wing July 20, 2013, at Whiteman Air Force Base. The pertussis vaccination is a required vaccine for military personnel, but all Airmen are encouraged to make sure their families are vaccinated, as well.

ing her pregnancy should get a dose of Tdap immediately post-partum. The shot (Tdap) can protect the mother at the time of delivery, making her less likely to transmit pertussis to her infant.

Additionally, pertussis most commonly affects infants and young children and can be fatal. Unvaccinated children are more likely to get pertussis than fully immunized children. If left unvaccinated, pertussis can be fatal, especially in babies under 1 year old. It is the adults

who are responsible for transmitting more than half of the whooping cough cases diagnosed in infants and young children.

Some signs and symptoms of pertussis are:

- * Cold and flu-like symptoms, including a runny nose, an occasional cough, sneezing and a low-grade fever.

- * After about two weeks, the coughing becomes more severe and rapid, resulting in shortness of breath.

- * After a coughing episode, someone with pertussis needs to take deep breaths, which often times can result in a "whooping" sound.

- * After an episode, the patient commonly vomits and feels tired. Oftentimes, children may turn blue due to coughing and shortness of breath.

Pertussis can last for weeks and even months if not treated early, and it is not uncommon to experience no signs of illness between episodes. That said, it is important to remain aware of the symptoms and the possible consequences of not getting the vaccine.

I encourage you to talk to your health care provider about getting your family vaccinated against pertussis today.

For more information about pertussis, visit the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' web site at www.health.mo.gov/pertussis.

About the Author:

Master Sgt. Jessica Settle is a traditional Guardsman from Jefferson City. In her full-time employment, she is a planner for the Bureau of Immunization Assessment and Assurance within the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Her job duties include school and child care requirements, as well as immunization education and training. She has been with the 131st Bomb Wing since 2008.

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On the cover

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

President Barack Obama waves farewell to Whiteman Air Force Base, July 24, 2013. The president visited the state to give a speech at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Mo.

NEWS BRIEFS

2013 Community Assessment Survey

The 2013 Community Assessment Survey is your opportunity to contribute to community action plans at your base, MAJCOM and the Air Force!

Starting 5 April 2013, you may be one of those chosen to receive an email invitation to participate in a survey concerning your experiences as a member serving in the Air Force. Sharing your experiences and opinions in this survey is voluntary and will help us improve life for families in the Air Force Active Duty, Reserve components and DoD Civilian workforce.

The survey's subject line will be '2013 Community Assessment Survey (Survey Control Number AF13-141SGHW)' and it will be from afcasurvey@ipsosresearch.com.

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact this survey's POC, Lt. Col. Wendy Travis at afmoa.communityassessmentsurvey@us.af.mil.

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.

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AF Housing

Visit www.Housing.af.mil to find your new home with the Air Force. This website serves as a one-stop shop for airmen and their families to obtain information about the housing options and support services available to them at Air Force bases world-wide.

Correction

In last week's story about the 509th Maintenance Operations Squadron inactivation ceremony, we wrongly identified the commander as Maj. Nathan Bradley when it is in fact Maj. Michael Bradley. We apologize for the mistake.



WEATHER

Today		Saturday	
Chance of Storms		Mostly Sunny	
Hi 81		Hi 79	
Lo 66		Lo 61	
Sunday		Monday	
Mostly Sunny		Chance of Storms	
Hi 81		Hi 83	
Lo 59		Lo 65	

To will, or not to will?

Airman 1st Class Nathan Dampf
131st Bomb Wing Public Affairs

During the 131st Bomb Wing's annual training week, I had the opportunity to visit with Lt. Col. Jason Klumb, 131st Bomb Wing staff judge advocate, and Master Sgt. Erika McFarlane, the unit's superintendent, to discuss what services the JAG office provides.

While the legal office provides counsel to the 131st Bomb Wing commanders, it also supports Guardsmen by providing general legal assistance to all wing members.

McFarlane stated the office helps Airmen with deployment-related concerns, landlord and tenant issues, Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act guidance, and general legal questions.

Two services the legal team highly encourages Airmen take advantage of are drafting of wills and powers of attorney. To clarify some common misperceptions of these legal documents, Klumb and McFarlane offered some great tips during our question-and-answer session.

Dampf: First, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to sit down and explain the services of the legal office. I was hoping we can we start off by discussing simply, what is a will?

McFarlane: I always say, it's your voice after you die. It says what you want to have happen to your stuff when you're gone.

Dampf: How would you explain the difference between a will and a trust?

Klumb: Your will is your voice from the grave, a trust is your hand from the grave. They are complicated, costly and appropriate in some circumstances. Most things can be taken care of with a will.

Dampf: That being said, what would you say needs to be included in a will?

Klumb: Basically, who gets your things or who will take care of your children. Beneficiaries will receive your possessions, while guardians will be responsible for your children. You also need to name the executor of the will so that person can shepherd the estate and make sure everything in the will is given to the appropriate people. The executor is also in charge of paying your funeral expenses, court costs and any fees associated with your estate debts. You also need to include an alternate executor if your appointed executor is unwilling or unable to serve. This means the person you choose to be your executor will have a lot of responsibility. You should think very carefully about who you pick to be your executor.

McFarlane: Additionally, you can clarify when your beneficiaries receive the possessions or liquid assets. For example, if a divorced Airman dies and wants to leave her financial assets to her 8-year-old son, she can clarify in her will that the executor of the will can give all assets to her son once the son is 21 years old. This way, the executor is in control of the money, not the ex-spouse, even if the child lives with the ex-spouse. The will can also have language in it that allows the executor to withdraw funds to help support the minor child until they reach the age of majority



U.S. Air National Guard photo/Airman 1st Class Nathan Dampf
Master Sgt. Erika McFarlane, 131st Bomb Wing law office superintendent, reviews legal manuals July 20, 2013, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. McFarlane and Lt. Col. Jason Klumb, 131st BW staff judge advocate, encourage every Airman to contact the legal office for help in drafting wills or powers of attorney documents.

and receive the remainder of the estate.

Dampf: With the significance of everything involved in a will, what are some consequences if a person does not have one?

McFarlane: The court will decide who gets your physical and liquid assets. A court will probably give your possessions and/or children to the next of kin. However, you may not like that individual or agree with giving your possessions to your next of kin. You also may disagree with having your children go to the court-named next of kin. That is why it is so important to have a will.

Klumb: That's also why it is most important for Airmen with families and minor children to have a will. If you don't say who will be the guardian, the court will make the decision for you.

Dampf: In addition to wills, are there any other documents you encourage Airmen to have?

McFarlane: Healthcare decisions can be taken care of in living wills. If you are in a vegetative state, who will make your end-of-life decisions? Or, if you are incapacitated and a doctor offers a new medical procedure as an option to help you, who will tell the doctor to perform the procedure since you can't? A person can grant someone, through a living will or healthcare directive, the power to make those decisions for them. It should be someone they trust and have already discussed their wishes with.

Klumb: That brings up another good point. Powers of attorney are very important, especially for deploying Airmen. If you want your brother or spouse, for example, to sell your vehicle or house, you can give them that power. Some of that can also be done with joint bank accounts or transferrable titles. You can clarify that a title can be transferrable on death. Or, by having a joint bank account, you ensure that the person has access to that money if you were to die.

McFarlane: Powers of attorney are re-

quired for single military members with a child, or military-married-to-military with children. Family care plans are also required through your first sergeant. Those members must have a plan in place before deployment so the child can be taken care of. A power of attorney can be drawn up that allows an individual, appointed by the parent, to take the child to the hospital if injured and do things like enroll the child in school. These are the most common powers of attorney we see in our unit.

Dampf: That all sounds important. And, as a parent, I can't tell you I have thought of most of what you just mentioned.

McFarlane: They are important but, if not done correctly, they can be dangerous. General powers of attorney can be very broad. They basically say, "Whoever I'm giving the power to can, in essence, be me." That means you better be able to trust that person, because he or she can sell your car or your house, open up credit cards or apply for loans in your name. But, because of how broad they are, some places do not accept general powers of attorney even if they are being used legitimately. You should consider getting a special power of attorney. Special powers of attorney specify what you are allowing your appointed representative to do in your name, such as care for your children, sell your car or complete your taxes, but are not overly broad and won't allow someone to sell your life while you're gone.

Dampf: I'd like to think my little brother wouldn't sell my car, but he may after all the trouble I gave him growing up. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Klumb: During the unit training assembly (UTA) weekends, Airmen can come up to Bldg. 509, Room 203. Our walk-in hours are 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Sundays during UTAs. During the month, Airmen can call the 509th Bomb Wing legal office at (660) 687-6809 and ask them to leave a message for us.

Dampf: Thank you both so much for answering our questions and clarifying so many points.

CE crushes SFS 16-6

Jesus Guerra, Security Forces-A team member, rounds third base before scoring a run against the Civil Engineering team at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 22, 2013. SF-A hit one home run in the loss but was overpowered by CE which hit two home runs.



Jake Davis, Security Forces-A catcher, catches a ball at home plate as Matthew Mattes, Civil Engineering outfielder, slides in safely at home plate, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 22, 2013. With the win, CE took first place in the Whiteman Intramural Softball League.



Delray Moore and Breyden Gardner, Civil Engineering team members, are congratulated by teammates after scoring runs against the Security Forces-A team at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 22, 2013. The game concluded after six innings because of the 10-run rule stating any team winning by 10 or more runs after five innings automatically wins the game.

*U.S. Air Force photos/
Airman 1st Class Bryan Crane*



Corey Kraus, Civil Engineering pitcher, waits to throw a pitch against the Security Forces-A team at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 22, 2013. Whiteman Intramural Softball League games are played Monday through Thursday starting at 6 p.m.

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Airsave vest provides peace of mind to aircrews

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

Just like computer programmers upgrade their technology to make processes more efficient, the Air Force upgrades flight equipment to ease daily procedures and save time, effort and expense.

The 509th Operations Support Squadron airfield flight equipment shop recently received two brand-new Airsave vests from Air Combat Command. The vests were sent to AFE shops worldwide so Airmen could research their advantages and disadvantages as compared to older vest styles.

"I have worn the old vest and it was kind of bulky and the pockets would flop around, but that isn't the case with the Airsave," said Lt. Col. Timothy Hale, 509th OSS director of operations.

The vests are expected to substantially improve the processes of both aircrew members and AFE members, and ACC first sent

the vests to Whiteman and other Air Force bases with fighter or bomber aircraft.

"The vests are in the testing phase right now," said Senior Airman Ethan Mason, 509th OSS AFE journeyman. "We're looking for any problems the vest may have and ways to make it better for the pilots. We input everyone's ideas and thoughts. Once we send the vests back to ACC, they will bring all of that into consideration before improving and releasing them Air Force-wide."

The vest is made of modular lightweight load-carrying equipment (MOLLE), which assists in making critical items easier to access. The MOLLE equipment consists of a basket weave-type strapping system that allows for the addition of various attachments and accessories.

"When equipment is interwoven onto the vest, it's a lot less likely to fall off," Hale said. "Having equipment on the vest move around less makes the items less susceptible to separation and also reduces the risk of air-

crew injury in the event of an ejection."

With the new design, aircrew members can also customize the location of equipment on the vest to their liking, a feature unavailable on previous versions.

Being able to customize how equipment is loaded and accessed, such as a radio or a sidearm, is a dramatic improvement for aircrew members who must endure long flights.

Any improvement in pilot comfort is a welcome improvement, especially for B-2 aircrew members who are often called upon to fly sorties totaling 20 or more hours, said Hale.

"The Airsave vest not only allows for more comfort, it also makes for a less fatiguing environment because I'm not bumping into things or moving in unnatural positions to get to flight controls," Hale said. "You can move the attachments around so they suit your body type and required movement in the airplane."

Not only is the Airsave vest an improve-

ment from an aircrew perspective, it is also an enhancement for aircrew flight equipment personnel, who said they are enthusiastic about being able to work with the flyers to customize it.

"One aspect of the vest that makes work easier for AFE Airmen is how the components make the vest's surface more even and flat," said Tech. Sgt. Damian Bunch, 509thOSS NCO in charge of AFE. "This makes it 100 percent easier and quicker for us to maintain."

Since the vests pilots are currently using are more than a decade old, the vests represent a robust improvement for aircrew members and AFE Airmen alike, said Bunch.

"We now have an opportunity to tell ACC, 'This is how we would like this vest to be, and these are the inputs we think are necessary to make it more efficient,'" Bunch said. "This vest will not only be more comfortable, but also more reliable for those who wear it."



Airman 1st Class Dalvin Washington, 509th Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment apprentice, dons Airsave vest during a training scenario at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 16, 2013. The vest is made of modular lightweight load-carrying equipment consisting of a basket weave-type strapping system that allows for the addition of various attachments and accessories.



Airman 1st Class Dalvin Washington dons an Airsave vest with assistance from fellow 509th Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment members Airman 1st Class Eric Mitchell and Senior Airman Ethan Mason at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 16, 2013. Mason is showing Mitchell how to fit a member using a modular lightweight load-carrying equipment system.



Technical Sgt. Damian Bunch, Senior Airman Ethan Mason, and Staff Sgt. Josh Riffe, aircrew flight equipment members from the 509th Operations Support Squadron pose with a fully constructed Airsave vest at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 12, 2013. Along with Airman 1st Class Matthew Ford, 509th OSS aircrew flight equipment journeyman, these Airmen were the first individuals on base to be trained on the Air Force's new Airsave vest system.

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

A day in the life of a first sergeant

Complete dedication, pure selflessness

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

Being a first sergeant is a challenging duty, but for Master Sgt. Lafoundra Thompson, 509th Operations Group first sergeant, it is also a joy.

First sergeants advise their squadron commanders and keep them up-to-date on disciplinary, morale and health issues affecting their assigned Airmen. They also routinely inspect Airmen's dorm rooms to ensure they are taking care of government property.

Their primary goal is to support the Airmen and ensure they are taken care of, both at work and at home, said Thompson.

To accomplish this, first sergeants must interact with their personnel to learn more about their daily lives.

"At least once a week, I visit all four of my squadrons and talk to the Airmen there," Thompson said. "I ask them about their weekends, how their families are doing and about their home lives. For some people, it's easy for them to talk to me because I am a first sergeant. When I'm talking to someone, I like to add humor and make them feel comfortable with talking to me about any issue."

Because first sergeants must juggle their administrative duties with taking care of their Airmen, time management skills



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry
Master Sgt. Lafoundra Thompson, 509th Operations Group first sergeant, reviews a family care plan at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 16, 2013. First sergeants review family care plans and powers of attorney quarterly to make sure they are current and realistic.

are essential.

"I often have people walk into the office or peek their heads around the door," said Thompson. "If I'm busy talking to someone else, they will either wait or choose to send me an e-mail about their issue. I will finish up whatever I'm doing and meet them at their squadron when I'm finished."

First sergeants must try their best to assist their Airmen and always get them the help they need.

"If someone comes to me with an issue I can't provide an answer for, I will call someone to get the answer," she said. "I won't give the person's name out to the assisting individual, but I always try to get

him or her where they need to be."

Knowing that personnel are the primary focus is a part of being a first sergeant, said Thompson.

"This job requires complete dedication and pure selflessness," she said. "It cannot be taken lightly because people's personal and professional lives are involved, and they must be treated with the utmost respect and care."

Thompson's impressive reputation is recognized by her Airmen, who said they appreciate her dedication.

"I recently had a personal issue and she went above and beyond to help me," said Airman 1st Class Tamila Reid, 509th Operation Support Squadron combat crew communications apprentice. "Her patience and professionalism about my situation showed me she values her job and her Airmen."

Thompson said her job as first sergeant is to remain dedicated to ensuring her squadron personnel are mentally and emotionally fit to get the job done.

"Being a first sergeant has its challenges, but they are mostly rewarding," she said. "I have been a first sergeant for two years and I enjoy the time I get to spend with my people, learning about their lives and helping them through their hurdles. Those are the rewards of being a first sergeant."

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509th MXS change of command



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Bryan Crane
Major Edwin Germosen, 509th Maintenance Squadron commander, accepts the guidon from Col. Chase McCown, 509th Maintenance Group commander, during the MXS change of command ceremony at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 19, 2013. Germosen took command from Maj. Randy Schwinler.

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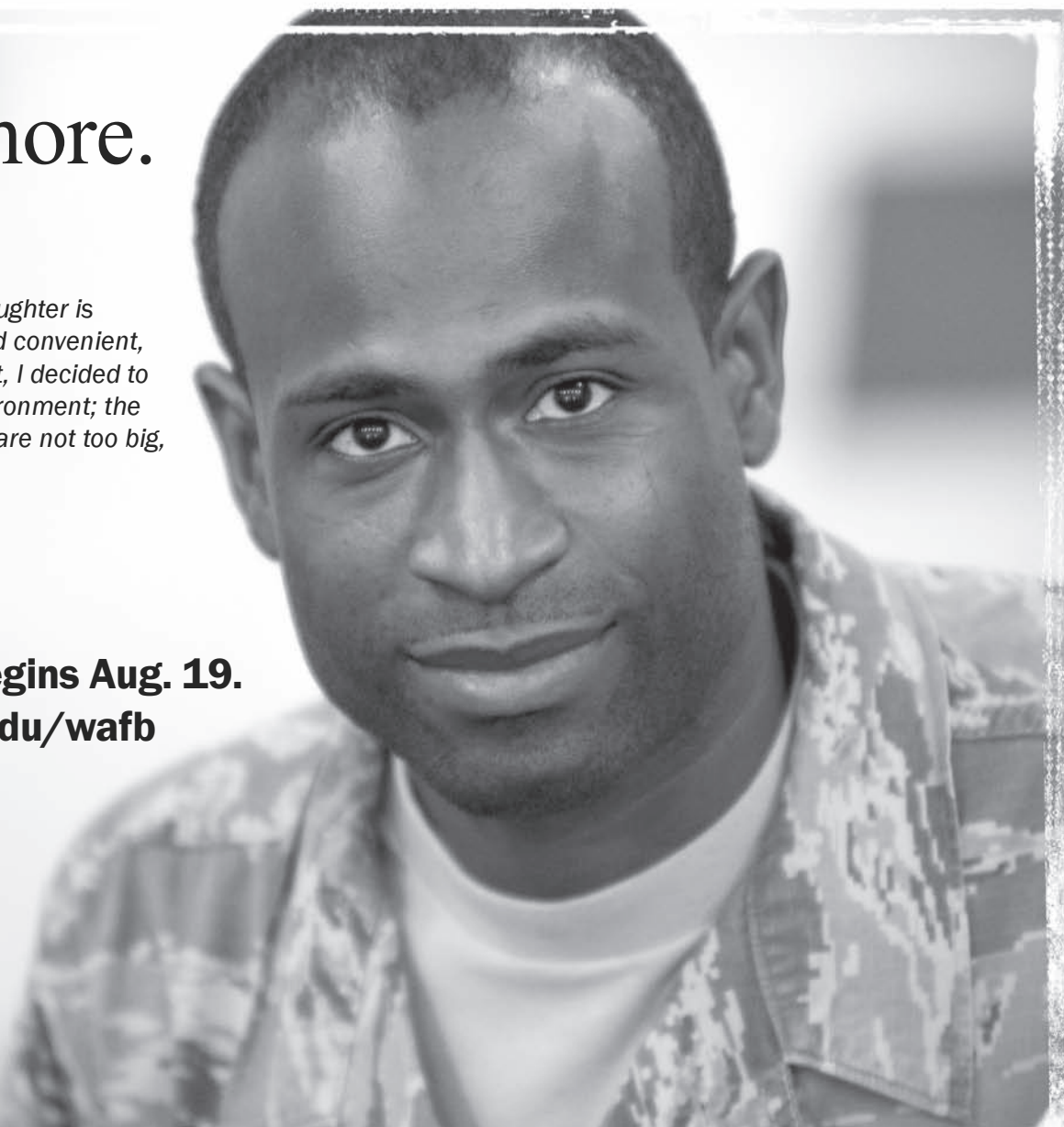
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President Obama touches down at Whiteman



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

President Barack Obama lands at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013 prior to visiting the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Mo., for an official speech.



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

Staff Sgt. Cole Adams, 509th Maintenance Squadron aerospace ground equipment technician, lays chocks for Air Force One, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013. This was Pres. Obama's first visit to Whiteman as commander in chief.



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

President Barack Obama shares a humorous moment with members of Team Whiteman, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013. The president had reached up and grabbed a boom microphone hovering closely over a child's head.

Staff Sgt. Brigitte N. Brantley
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

President Barack Obama touched down at Whiteman Air Force Base July 24, 2013, on his way to give a speech at the University of Central Missouri in nearby Warrensburg.

Once he stepped off Air Force One, Obama greeted 509th Bomb Wing leadership before greeting more than 50 Whiteman warriors who are responsible for operating the world's only B-2 Spirit fleet.

"I saw the president of the United States get off Air Force One and make his way over to the crowd, but actually shaking his hand was a surreal moment," said Airman 1st Class Eric Olivero, a customer service technician with the 509th Comptroller Squadron. "It's still hard to believe it happened. I was so honored to be one of the select few from Whiteman who got the opportunity to meet him."

Another Airman at Obama's arrival played a key role in parking Air Force One – Staff Sgt. Cole Adams, a 509th Maintenance Squadron aircrew ground equipment specialist who laid down the chocks.

"It was such an honor to be chosen by my leadership to be a part of this. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Adams.

Although the crowd was full of Airmen of all ranks who were excited for a chance to see the president, some were more thrilled than others.

"As a younger Airman, it's exceptionally exciting to shake the hand of our commander in chief," said Airman 1st Class Mason Meherg, also a 509th CPTS customer service technician. "It will be a great story to tell throughout my Air Force career."

Obama's speech at UCM was the first-ever visit there by an incumbent president, and his first visit to Missouri since 2011. The final stop on his three-state tour will be Jacksonville, Fla.



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



Air Force One taxis on the flightline at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013. The mission of Air Force One is to provide air transport for the president of the United States. The presidential air transport fleet consists of two specially-configured Boeing 747s with tail numbers 28000 and 29000. When the president is aboard either aircraft, or any Air Force aircraft, the radio call sign is "Air Force One."



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Bryan Crane

President Barack Obama shakes an Airman's hand after landing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013. The president landed at Whiteman en route to Warrensburg, Mo., for an official speech.



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

President Barack Obama and Col. Kristin Goodwin, 509th Bomb Wing vice commander, walk across the flightline at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 24, 2013. The president visited the state to give a speech at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Mo.



509th CES change of command



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Bryan Crane
Lt. Col. Aaron Wilt, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron commander, accepts the guidon from Col. Christopher Darling, 509th Mission Support Group commander, during the CES change of command ceremony at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 19, 2013. Wilt took command from Lt. Col. Randy Boswell.

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Load crews battle for bragging rights

Airman 1st Class Shelby R. Orozco
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

There is no room for error.

Every step and every hand movement made by the crews loading munitions onto B-2 Spirit stealth bombers is deliberate and steady, and every thought must focus on what to do next.

When B-2s are called upon to provide a rapid, forceful response, Air Force officials know they can count on the load crews at Whiteman to get the bombers ready for the fight – and to do it quickly and accurately.

Honing the skills behind that confidence requires a great deal of practice, and the quarterly load crew competition here gives Airmen in the 13th and the 393rd Aircraft Maintenance Units a chance to showcase them.

The most recent face off held July 18 was no different, with both teams racing against the clock to be crowned the best. At the end of the competition, the Airmen of the 393rd AMU walked away victorious.

“The four competitors in each crew are hand-selected every month based on zero deficiencies and the best loading times,” said Staff Sgt. Lee Smith-Whaley, 509th Maintenance Group squadron lead crew team member. “Sometimes it’s the same crews each quarter, but generally each quarter has different crews competing.”

The crews are judged on their dress and appearance, toolkit inspections, a 25-question test and the overall timed load of a practice munition. This quarter’s winners were determined by overall score, with the

393rd winning by 97 points.

“It felt pretty great to be announced the winners,” said Airman 1st Class Daniel Villarreal, 393rd AMU aircraft armament technician and load crew team member. “It was good to know we did our best and came out on top.”

To stay ready while not competing, both AMUs are required to perform monthly proficiency loads, along with examining technical data and the practice munitions themselves.

“We were all pretty confident going into the competition,” said Villarreal. “We just had to review with each other what we had to do.”

The monthly practices and the quarterly competitions are identical to how the Airmen are expected to perform during a real-world mission, said Smith-Whaley.

“Not only does the competition let the Airmen show excellence in all they do, it also builds pride,” said Smith-Whaley. “It shows good teamwork and communication between the crew members.”

“Being on a load crew is like having a close knit group of friends in a way,” said Villarreal. “The more you load together, the more comfortable you are. Our load crew is very comfortable with each other and we know how to work together efficiently. We are going to continue to practice and always perform our best.”

The winners from all four quarterly competitions will face off during the annual competition in early 2014 for bragging rights as the best of the best. Until then, it will be more training and more quarterly displays of mission readiness.



Airmen 1st Class Daniel Villarreal and Ryan Lose, 393rd Aircraft Maintenance Unit load crew members, prepare a practice munition for loading onto a mock B-2 Spirit stealth bomber weapons bay during a load crew competition at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 18, 2013. These quarterly competitions help the Airmen maintain their mission-readiness, ensuring they can do their job at a moment's notice.



ABOVE: Airman 1st Class Ryan Lose, 393rd Aircraft Maintenance Unit load crew member, uses a jammer to transport a practice munition from a trailer to a mock B-2 Spirit stealth bomber during a load crew competition at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 18, 2013. Team members with zero deficiencies and the best overall load times are selected to compete in the quarterly competitions. **RIGHT:** Senior Airman Keandre Lowe, 13th Aircraft Maintenance Unit load crew member, guides a jammer into position under a practice munition during a load crew of the quarter competition at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 18, 2013. The Airmen must work quickly but efficiently to showcase their loading skills.

*U.S. Air Force photos/
Airman 1st Class Shelby R. Orozco*



Senior Airman Keandre Lowe guides Airman 1st Class Daniel Rexius, and the practice munition he is transporting, into place during a load crew of the quarter competition at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 18, 2013. The load crew competition uses practice munitions and a mock B-2 Spirit stealth bomber to simulate real-world loading conditions. Both Airmen are load crew team members from the 13th Aircraft Maintenance Unit.



Airman 1st Class Daniel Villarreal, 393rd Aircraft Maintenance Unit load crew member, examines an impulse cartridge during a load crew competition at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 18, 2013. The Airmen were judged on dress and appearance, toolkit inspections, overall load time and a 25-question test.

Chief's choice award



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Jason Huddleston
Airman 1st Class Clayton Alexander, 509th Security Forces Squadron installation entry controller, was awarded the Chiefs' Choice Award by the Whiteman Chief's Group, July 18, 2013, for his duty performance. The monthly award recognizes Airmen through the grade of staff sergeant who exemplify "service before self," and dedication to the mission, fellow Airmen and their families.



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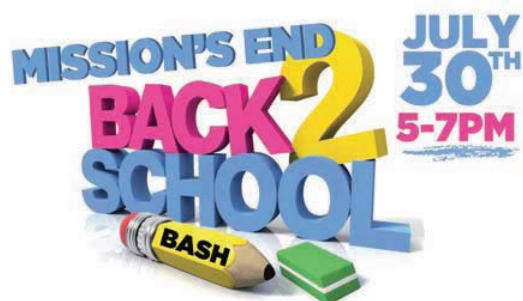
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Classifieds *continued from preceding page*

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Cute 2bed/2bath home. New cabinets, flooring, fixtures, air & heat. Big corner lot with workshop. Attached garage is heated. Could be used as extra bedroom. Call Rick at 660-221-4234 or Gary at 660-596-8446 for showing. **Price: \$65, 500**



Lake Ozarks Home, 1800 Ft. 3BR 2.5 Bath, Dock, new roof on blacktop, \$153,500. Can Add adjacent lot 3 BR 1200 sq. ft. home, \$85,000. Retiring - both \$235,000. Want to travel. Consider RV Trade. Call 1-660-438-9593



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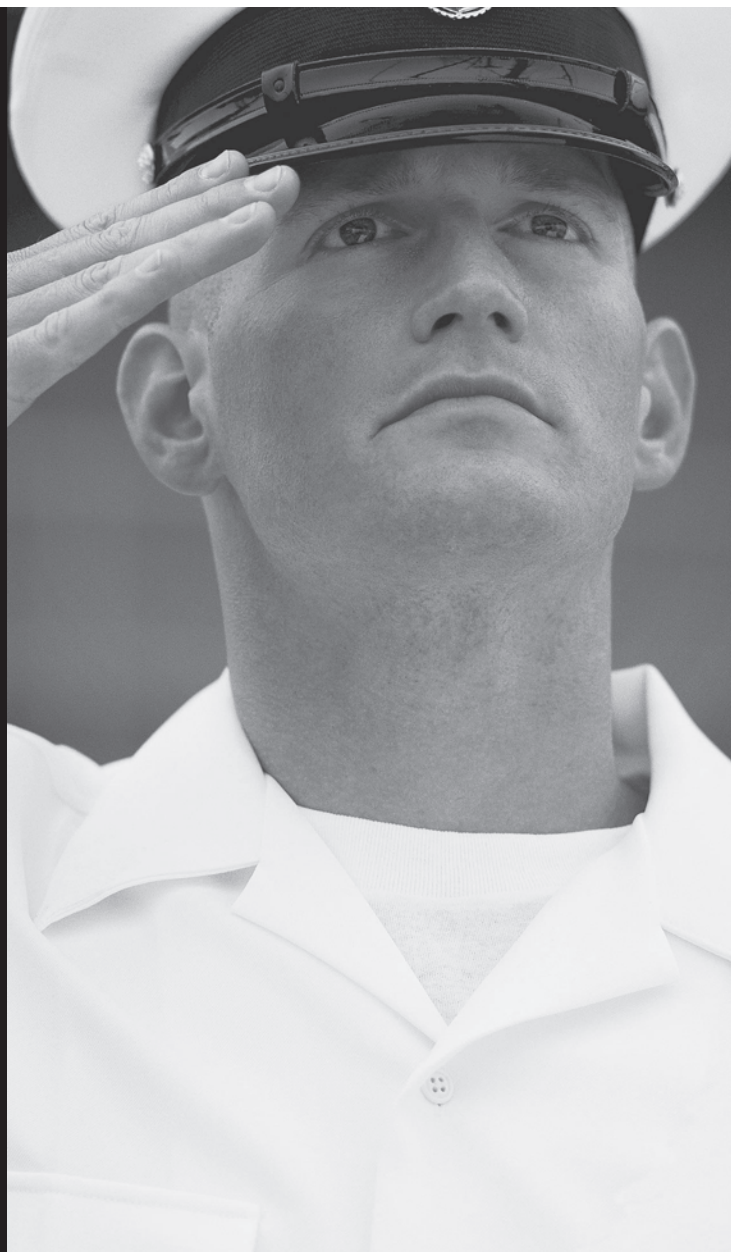
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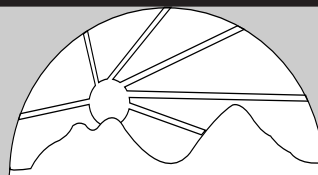
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Professional Women's Organization—1st Mon. of each month - Basement of City Hall
Lion's Club—2nd & 4th Mon. 7 p.m. - Jubilation Center
Chamber of Commerce—2nd Thurs. of each month.
Call Husineh Curtis @ 660-238-6201 for more info.
Masons—2nd & 4th Thurs. 7:00 p.m. - Knob Noster Masonic Lodge AF & AM
Garden Club—1st Thurs. of each month 6:30 p.m. - Trails Regional Library - Knob Noster Branch

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)—Every Fri. 8 p.m. - Basement of Methodist Church
Knob Noster Board of Aldermen—1st & 3rd Tues. each month - Basement of City Hall
Whiteman Area Piecemakers Quilt Guild—3rd Thurs. each month 7 p.m. - Methodist Church
AMVETS—Membership Dinner 1st Tues. each month 6 p.m. - AMVETS Building

VFW—1st Fri. each month 7 p.m. - VFW Building
VFW Auxiliary—1st Fri. each month 7 p.m. - VFW Building
Boy Scouts - Troop 509 Methodist Church, Peter Blaszczyk, 660-563-6333
Cub Scouts - Pack 405 Bill Sander 687-1154
Cub Scouts - Pack 509 Methodist Church
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