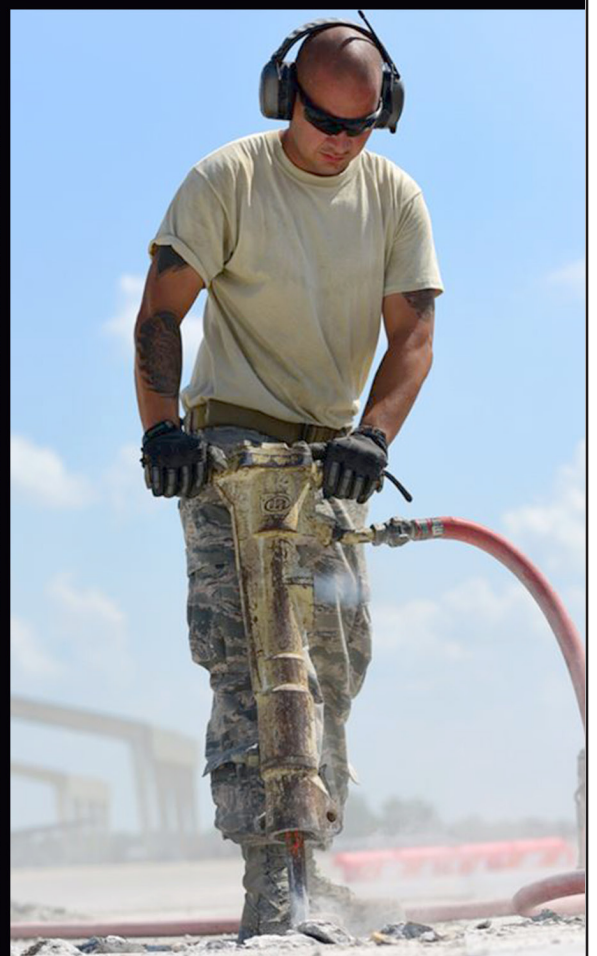
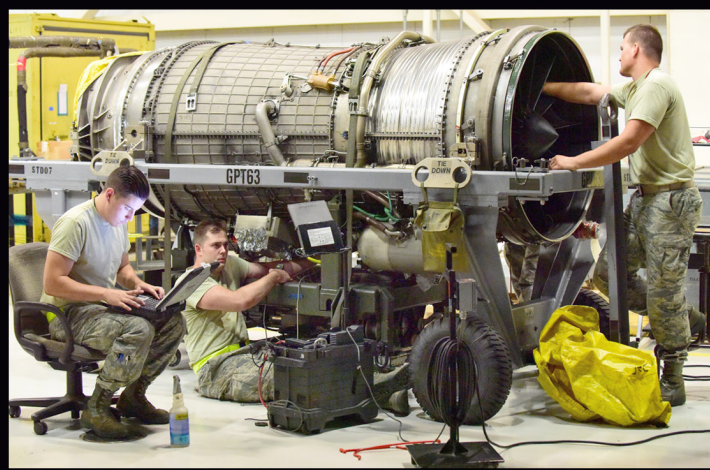


WARRIOR

2017



YEAR IN REVIEW



Friends visiting from out of ... the country?



Foreign visitor entry procedures for Whiteman AFB

- Sponsor must provide a minimum of 14 days of advance notice to the Visitor Control Center

- The requesting sponsor will complete the sponsor form and provide two original forms of valid government ID for each foreign national for background checks

Acceptable forms of ID include, but are not limited to,
a visa, passport, or a driver's license

What's next?

- Once the check is complete, there is a wait period for the request to be approved and signed by the 509th Mission Support Group commander
- If further review is needed, it is routed to the 509th Bomb Wing commander for approval.

If you have questions or need more information please contact the Visitor Control Center at (660) 687-6164

Foreign visitors who cannot produce valid identification or those that have not been properly validated will be denied entry.

Congratulations to Whiteman's newest Captain & Major selects!

1st Lt. Christine Carson
509th OSS

1st Lt. Kyle Cassady
394th CTS

1st Lt. Nicolas Fontalvo
509th LRS



1st Lt. Andrew Huellemeier
509th OSS

1st Lt. Dylan Kay
394th CTS

1st Lt. Cassandra McKinney
509th OG

1st Lt. Jason Pigg
509th MDG

Capt. Felicia Craddieth
509th MDG



Capt. Joseph Harvey
509th MDG

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 do not guarantee publication.

For more information, call the Warrior office at 660-687-5727, email 509.bw.pa@us.af.mil, fax 660-687-7948, or write to us at Whiteman Warrior, 509th Bomb Wing, 509th Spirit Blvd. Suite 116, 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 illustration by
Senior Airman Jazmin Smith

The Whiteman Warrior 2017 year in review edition features the mission, Airmen and family events that took place at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. Highly trained and disciplined Airmen executed the global strike mission while continuing to support their families and the community.

NEWS BRIEFS



U.S. AIR FORCE
EagleEyes

WATCH.REPORT.PROTECT.

U.S. Air Force Eagle Eyes provides service members and civilians a safe, discreet and anonymous option to report criminal information, counterintelligence indicators or force protection concerns.

To submit a web tip go to the AFOSI web page at <http://www.osi.af.mil>.

How to report an anonymous tip using a smart phone:

1. Open the smart phone app
2. Manually select an agency
3. Choose USA then Federal Agency then select AFOSI

4. Create a passport, select New Tip and fill out the form with as much information as possible.

How to report an anonymous tip via text message:

Text "AFOSI" plus your tip information to 274637 (CRIMES)

Stealth Lounge

If you are a young Airman, let the Stealth Lounge make your time at Whiteman more enjoyable. Stop by after work to play some pool, darts, foosball, or the newest games on Xbox One or Playstation 4. The lounge opens at 4 p.m. during the week and noon on weekends. There is free dinner every Thursday at 5:30 p.m., with an optional discussion on spiritual resilience to follow at 6:30 p.m. There are also free premium snacks and Wi-Fi. Come for the free stuff, stay for the fun and friends.

Like the Stealth Lounge on Facebook to stay up to date on special events and tournaments.

Found property

Keys, wallets, bicycles, jewelry and other items have been turned in as found property to Security Forces Investigation Section. To inquire about lost property, go to building 711, room 305, or call Detective Steven Scott at 660-687-5342.

WEATHER

Today	Saturday
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny
Hi 26	Hi 32
Lo 9	Lo 8

Sunday	Monday
Showers	Mostly Sunny
Hi 42	Hi 40
Lo 28	Lo 28

442d MXG gains new chief



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Missy Sterling
U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Kellie Askew, 442d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron deputy superintendent, presents his mother and granddaughter flowers during his promotion ceremony at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, Jan. 7, 2017. Askew left active-duty in 1996 and joined the Air Force Reserve unit at Hill AFB, Utah.

Reservists return from deployment



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Missy Sterling
Family of deployed members of the 442d Fighter Wing greet their loved ones at the Kansas City International Airport in Kansas City, Mo., July 19, 2017. More than 160 members of the Mission Support Group deployed to multiple regions in Southwest Asia for six months.

Reel Time Theaters

We're saving a seat for you.

FRIDAY, JAN. 5 • 7 p.m.

Wonder Wheel (PG-13)

Adults - \$7.00, children - \$4.75

SATURDAY, JAN. 6 • 7 p.m.

Studio Appreciation

Advance Screening

Free Admission – Rated *.

Tickets available at your local

Exchange Food Court.

Seating open to non-ticket holders

30 minutes prior to showtime.

SUNDAY, JAN. 7 • 3 p.m.

Last Flag Flying (R)

Adults - \$7.00



No sight ... no flight



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Taylor Phifer

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christian Anthony, an electrical and environmental specialist assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, reads the next step of a technical order (TO) before moving forward at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Aug. 3, 2017. The TOs are the step-by-step process of a task to ensure work is done properly.

By Senior Airman Jovan Banks

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Now imagine your car being a multi-billion dollar aircraft flying at 50,000 feet in the air. This is what the B-2 Spirit pilots would be faced with if not for the Airmen of the 509th Maintenance Squadron (MXS) Electrical and Environmental (E&E) Shop.

Airmen like U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christian Anthony, an E&E systems technician assigned to the 509th MXS, work with electrical panels that control all the interior and exterior lighting of each B-2 at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

“My shop works on a list of electrical components for the B-2,” said Anthony. “We maintain electrical panels, lighting control units, strobe lights, as well as a variety of less specific but still very important components of the B-2.”

With each job comes different challenges, whether it be time, manning or severity of the problem at hand.

“One of the challenges we face is limited personnel,” said Tech. Sgt. Thomas Corona, the electrical and environmental section chief. “We are a small section and our daily workload can change at a moment’s notice, but long days, heavy

workloads, deadlines and busted knuckles never stop us from moving forward to get the job done.”

With only 10 Airmen assigned to the shop split between different shifts all Airmen must be able to make repairs in a timely manner. But repair times as well as toolsets can vary depending on the component.

“Some may take a few minutes, some can take hours,” said Anthony. “For example a full test on an Ice Detector Unit takes about 10 minutes to complete, but some specific lighting control units take an upward range of an hour if it flows smoothly.”

Without E&E ensuring all electrical components are serviceable, night missions similar to the strikes on multiple ISIS camps in Libya, would be nearly impossible. This collaborative effort is a characteristic of how the Whiteman mission is accomplished with no part being greater than another.

“Our phase inspections and repair work save the B-2 from excessive maintenance downtime,” said Corona. “Our section, as well as all of the 509th MXS community are committed to the stewardship and longevity of this fleet and the mission of the 509th Bomb Wing.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Taylor Phifer

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christian Anthony, an electrical and environmental specialist assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, grabs a breakout box to test an overhead lighting control panel at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Aug. 3, 2017. The overhead lighting control panel controls the interior and exterior lights of the B-2 Spirit.

B-2 Spirits destroy ISIS camps in Libya



[Left and right] On Wednesday, January 18, 2017, Whiteman's Total Force team executed precision strikes against two Daesh camps in Libya. The strikes, which were completed by two B-2s over the course of a 30+ hour mission, were enabled by the dedication and professionalism of every Team Whiteman member. The strikes were conducted in coordination with the Libyan Government of National Accord, authorized by the President of the United States, and validated our ability to strike targets across the globe anytime, anywhere.



Bomber presence displays global strike capability



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Armando Torres, a fuels distribution technician assigned to the 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron, monitors the control panel to ensure he maintains proper nozzle pressure and revolutions per minute while refueling a B-2 Spirit at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Jan. 17, 2017.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Taylor Lang, a 509th Security Forces Squadron security response member, stands guard at the entry control point at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Jan. 16, 2017.



U.S. Air Force maintenance technicians assigned to the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., communicate with a B-2 Spirit pilot during pre-flight checks prior to a local training mission at Anderson Air Force Base (AFB), Guam Jan. 12, 2017. Close to 200 Airmen from Whiteman AFB, Mo., and Barksdale AFB, La., deployed to Andersen AFB, in support of U.S. Strategic Command Bomber and Deterrence missions.

U.S. Air Force photos/509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

FSS, MUNS Airmen receive Diamond Sharp Award



Courtesy photo

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Jones, a unit deployment manager assigned to the 509th Force Support Squadron (FSS) is presented with the Diamond Sharp Award for the month of October at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 20, 2017. Jones assisted the spouses of two deployed members. He assisted one member's wife with moving into a new home and repaired a vehicle for another member's spouse. The vehicle repair saved over \$2,000 in repair costs. He also helped three squadrons save \$34,000 in purchases by repurposing items from the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office, to include storage containers as well as cold weather gear for the FSS snow team to use during snow removal details.



Courtesy photo

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Jheran Stuczynski, third from left, an information and administrative specialist assigned to the 509th Munitions Squadron, is presented with the Diamond Sharp Award for the month of November at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 21, 2017. Stuczynski maintained an excellent working relationship with Warrensburg by serving as the volunteer coordinator for the Early Childhood Hunger Operation. She personally moved over 300 pounds of food to be stored, organized, and shelved. She also coordinated 72 volunteers who put in a combined 100 hours. As the Airmen Driving Airmen coordinator, Stuczynski provided 20 Airmen with rides, totaling 825 miles in November. She dedicated more than 20 hours of off-duty time coordinating, marketing, and driving for Airmen Driving Airmen. Lastly, she coordinated 12 volunteers to provide work for a Habitat Humanity housing project in Sedalia.

EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO

Year of the Family

Community and family involvement throughout 2017



Senior Airman Kevin Brodbeck, a competitor from the 509th Maintenance Squadron, reaches for a ring during the Alpha Warrior Challenge at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., July 22, 2017. The challenge is an Air Force-level event where competitors face eight obstacles testing their physical and mental limits.



Members of Team Whiteman participate in various activities during a mock deployment, known as Operation Spirit, held at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., May 6, 2017. Participants had the opportunity to go through the deployment center line, pose for a photo in front of a B-2 Spirit, and advance to the obstacle course, where they also had the opportunity to get hands-on learning about several units on base.



Members of Team Whiteman attend a deployment party at Ike Skelton Park at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., May 25, 2017, as part of the Air Force Global Strike Command Year of the Family initiative. The party celebrated Airmen who have recently returned, as well as those leaving soon with prizes, games, face painting and more.



Members of Team Whiteman met current Kansas City Chiefs players, ambassadors, cheerleaders, and the mascot, KC Wolf, during the 2017 Draft Day event at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., April 29, 2017. From setting up the festivities in 5 Bay and Hangar 52 to providing security and medical readiness, more than 100 volunteers ensured the event was a success.



Members of Team Whiteman met current Kansas City Chiefs players, ambassadors, cheerleaders, and the mascot, KC Wolf, during the 2017 Draft Day event at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., April 29, 2017. From setting up the festivities in 5 Bay and Hangar 52 to providing security and medical readiness, more than 100 volunteers ensured the event was a success.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Marco Cardenas, a pharmacy technician assigned to the 509th Medical Support Squadron, participates in the fishing competition held at Ike Skelton Lake at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Oct. 6, 2017. In addition to the various sporting events and competitions, Airmen and their families were invited to enjoy food catered by the USO.



Members of Team Whiteman gather to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Sept. 23, 2017. During the annual Air Force Ball, guests had the opportunity to hear from retired U.S. Air Force Col. Carlyle "Smitty" Harris, a pilot who was held as a Vietnam prisoner of war. Harris shared his story and the importance of the communication between himself and his fellow captives utilizing the now historic "Tap" code. Attendees also witnessed the tradition of having both the highest-ranking Airman and the lowest-ranking Airman cut the cake with a saber, in addition to watching the Honor Guard render the colors and perform a POW/MIA table ceremony. A B-2 Spirit served as a backdrop to the event and guests were afforded the opportunity to take their photo in front of the stealth bomber.

Missouri Army National Guard supports hurricane relief efforts



U.S. Air Force photo/ Airman 1st Class Taylor Phifer

Members of the Missouri Army National Guard help load Humvees, UH-60 Black Hawks and other essential gear onto three C-17 Globemaster IIIs and four C-130 Hercules Sept. 23-24, 2017, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. About 30 Soldiers were sent to the U.S. Virgin Islands to support hurricane relief efforts.

Defying gravity over Whiteman AFB



U.S. Air Force photos/509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Pilots swap Korea for Missouri



An A-10 Thunderbolt II attack aircraft sits on the tarmac during the total solar eclipse Aug. 21, 2017, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. The eclipse was the first to pass over Whiteman since the annular eclipse of 1994.

By 2nd Lt. Emily F. Alley
442d Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 442d Fighter Wing recently hosted their counterparts from the other side of the world.

Two U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II pilots assigned to Osan Air Base in South Korea visited Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., from April 15-30 to upgrade their flying capabilities. The Korean pilots gained training, while the 442d FW's pilots broadened their perspective on the role of the A-10 in modern warfare.

"This exchange between our two units has been fantastic and mutually beneficial for both sides," said Lt. Col. Nick Radoescu, commander of the 25th Fighter Squadron out of Osan AB, South Korea.

Pilots in South Korea overcome challenges including weather issues, airspace issues and a uniquely fluctuating operations tempo. For example, Maj. Brian Leiter, the 442d FW's assistant director of operations for the 303d Fighter Squadron, was at Osan Air Base last year during a North Korean nuclear test.

"He was able to see how our posture changed to react

to that event," said Radoescu. "Some of the missions that we do here in Korea are fairly non-standard A-10 missions. This gives the Whiteman pilots a slightly different perspective and it increases their bag of tricks if they ever come across similar situations, whether it's in this theater or another."

With that perspective in mind, the 303d FS was able to host Radoescu's pilots, give them a training environment, augment their needs and allow them to focus on upgrade requirements.

The ongoing program, with quarterly personnel exchanges, is called the "Boar Swap" as a play on the A-10's nickname, the "Warthog." One of the training emphases is Combat Search and Rescue, the ability to locate and recover lost personnel. The 442d FW, as a Reserve wing, retains an unusual number of instructor pilots who are capable of certifying CSAR pilots. By comparison, the 25th FS is comprised of younger and less experienced active-duty pilots who still need to earn those certifications.

"I went out there in January," said Lt. Col. Aaron Linderman, a 442d FW A-10 pilot and project officer for

the Boar Swap. As an experienced pilot, Linderman was able to help certify the 25th FS in not only CSAR, but also the capability to perform search and rescue in hostile environments during his two-week visit to Osan AB. "We doubled their capability. These guys can go out to rescue somebody who's bailed out behind enemy lines."

The benefit of the Boar Swap does not end once the pilots leave the aircraft.

Linderman explained that he enjoyed getting to know the younger generation of A-10 pilots and hearing how their experience was different from his own. For example, he and the other Reserve A-10 pilots have historically deployed to locations like Iraq and Afghanistan and fly in relatively uninhibited airspace in Missouri.

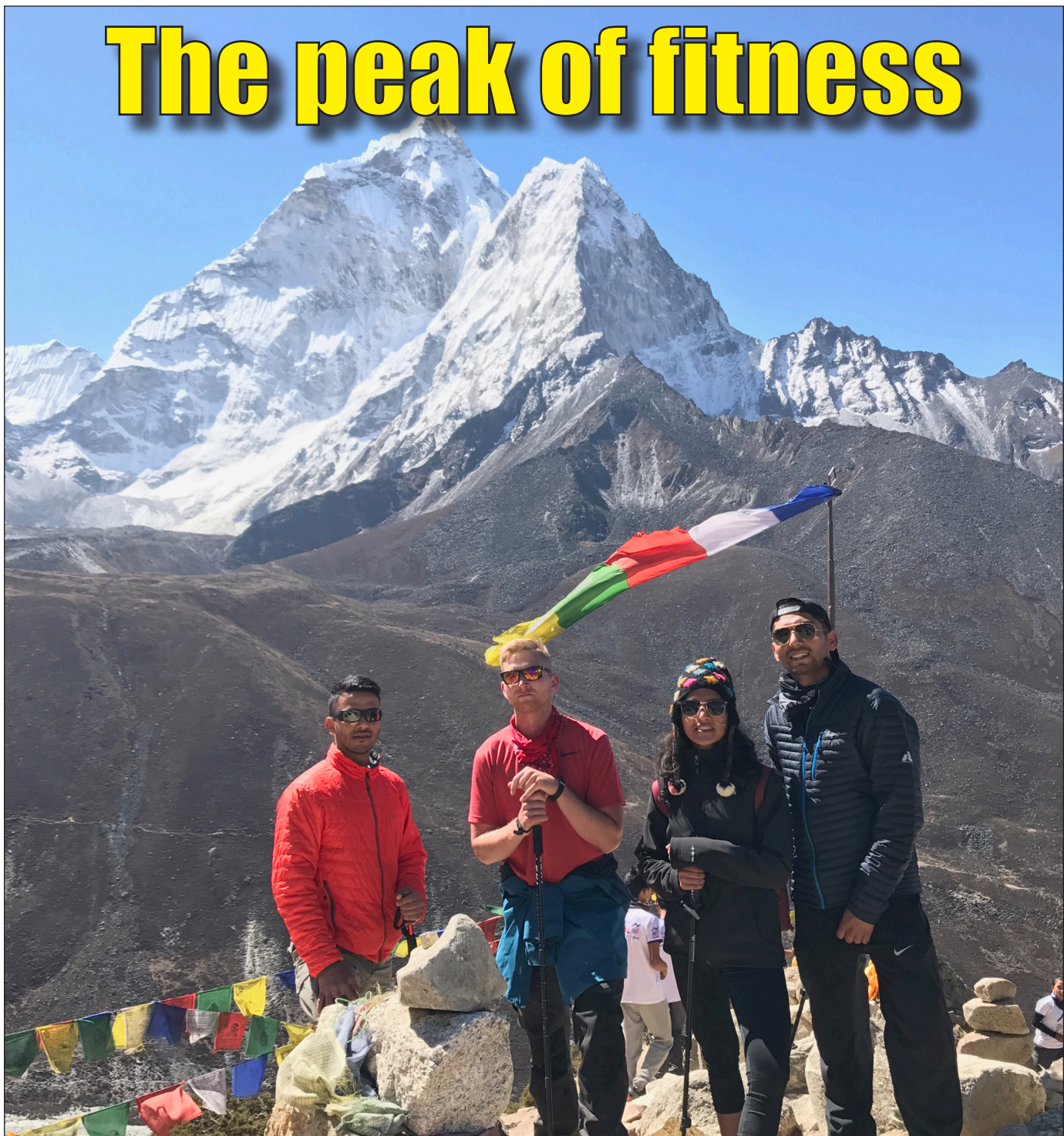
"They have the experience in flying near the demilitarized zone in Korea," said Linderman. "It's a different set of tactics, techniques and procedures and we can compare and contrast how to accomplish different missions."

The commercial flight from Missouri to Korea is 15 hours long, but to the A-10 pilots it's a worthwhile experience.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Lesley Kleyh



The peak of fitness



Courtesy photos

Members of Team Whiteman stand over the mountains on the Mount Everest South Base Camp trail May 18, 2017. There are two base camps on opposite sides of Mount Everest, South Base Camp in Nepal and North Base Camp is in Tibet.

Airman 1st Class Taylor Phifer 509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Their backs ached from the heavy gear and the bottoms of their feet blistered in their boots. After seven days of hiking, they finally reached their destination: Mount Everest South Base Camp in Nepal.

For three Airmen assigned to Whiteman AFB, Missouri, hiking to Mount Everest South Base Camp allowed them to maintain their physical, mental and social fitness for their Air Force careers.

“When I was there making the hike nothing else could bother me,” said U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron. “I was in my happy place and nothing could take that away from me.”

Alongside Bhandari, U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Anish Chauhan and U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Shane Hoag, both water and fuel systems management journeymen assigned to the 509th Civil Engineer Squadron, made the week long hike up to approximately 17,500 feet on Mount Everest in Nepal.

Bhandari and Chauhan were born and raised in Nepal. Bhandari moved to the United States when he was 14 years old and Chauhan when he was 19 years old.

“When I was younger and in Nepal, the thought of hiking to Mount Everest was never there, but later in life, when I was in the United States, I realized that it was something I wanted to accomplish,” said Chauhan. “I’m glad I went back to hike it, and I also got to see my family for the first time in years.”

Bhandari and Hoag have known each other since they went through Air Force basic military training. About three years

ago, they first started talking about the mountain. Later, when the two were stationed at Whiteman AFB, they were able to make their dream a reality.

“When I was young it was one of those things where I would spin a globe, point to a place on it and tell myself that I would go there one day,” said Hoag. “That’s how I came upon the thought of hiking Mount Everest.”

Their journey started on May 12, 2017, as they started their hike up the mountain. It took the group seven days to reach Mount Everest South Base Camp. Every day they woke up, ate, and were out the door by 8 a.m. They walked for about eight hours each day and made stops to eat and rest at small towns and discrete villages along the mountain trail.

For these Airmen, the hike was physically challenging. Each carried roughly 30 pounds of gear on their backs. Bhandari said he had so much gear he had to leave some of it at a hotel on the way up the mountain and pick it up on the way back down.

Along with the physical challenge of carrying several changes of clothes, hygiene products, food, and equipment on their backs, they also endured painful headaches and difficulty breathing with less and less oxygen the higher they hiked.

“It wasn’t as noticeable when we were hiking, but at night when we would go to bed it was so hard to sleep because we could feel the blood pounding in our heads,” said Hoag. “The air was so thin, it was like trying to breathe through a straw.”

The Airmen said with the gear on their backs and a hard trail to hike, they felt tiny compared to the massive mountains around them. Hiking to an altitude of approximately 17,500 feet they were surrounded by clouds at times, which made the visibility more difficult.

“We would be walking up the mountain through clouds and could feel the mist come around us,” said Hoag. “At one point we couldn’t see anything in front of us because of the clouds. It was a little eerie, but at the same time, it was exhilarating.”

Although the hike brought challenges, once they reached the base camp they realized why they started the journey.

“Getting to the base camp was a big deal for us,” said Chauhan. “Once we got up there on one side we could see four or five of the tallest mountains in the world, and that was amazing.”

The Airmen said the view was worth everything they went through during the seven-day trek up the mountain.

“I’d be smiling the entire time because of the view,” said Bhandari. “It felt like you could almost touch the mountain. You’d look around and see nothing but mountains covered in white snow so bright that you needed sunglasses to see.”

The snow-covered and rock filled trail was long and steep, but nothing less than beautiful. The Airmen said they will never forget the trip or the feeling once they reached the base camp.

“It was the feeling of success once we got there,” said Hoag. “I would look out over the mountain and think to myself, ‘wow I really did it.’”

Although this adventure was challenging, it was beneficial for their Air Force careers by keeping them physically, mentally and socially fit.

The Airmen agreed it was a surreal feeling and almost like a different world on Mount Everest. This hike gave them all a sense of pride and accomplishment.

“Now that we’ve completed that mountain, it’s on to the next,” said Bhandari.

Lending help: AMXS Airmen travel to Texas to provide hurricane relief



U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Airman Jazmin Smith

From left to right, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Eric Delay, Airman 1st Class Andrew Dutton, Staff Sgt. Ian Linker, Senior Airman Edwin Mendoza, Tech. Sgt. Thomas Reid, Senior Airman Juli Taylor and Senior Airman Shawn Thomson, all crew chiefs assigned to the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, embody the Air Force core value of Service before Self when they traveled from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Oct. 1 to 8, 2017, to Texas in support of hurricane relief efforts. During their eight-day trip, the AMXS team had a hand in about 25 houses between the two groups.

By Senior Airman Jazmin Smith
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Can you imagine the fear of knowing you lie in the path of a storm threatening to turn your world upside down? Of pondering how long you may be without food ... water ... electricity?

I know I can't.

Sweeping and powerful rains accompanied by thundering booms. The deafening noise of objects being forced by the wind against homes and other structures. The water slowly, but surely creeping in.

The fear in another's eyes as they wonder if they will survive.

Hurricane Harvey made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane on Aug. 25, 2017. The violent and catastrophic reach of Harvey produced as much as 61 inches of rainfall when it traveled up the Gulf Coast towards southeast Texas. Overtaken by floods, many of the residents were forced to evacuate – only to return to widespread destruction.

They were left figuring out how to pick up the pieces – literally.

Who would you turn to for help if you found yourself wondering how you would survive the outcome?

Through a non-profit organization called Team Rubicon, seven crew chiefs assigned to the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron departed Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri and traveled to Texas to provide support to the residents affected by the extent of the storm's wrath.

The following U.S. Air Force Airmen were amongst the members of Team Whiteman who made the journey:

Staff Sgt. Eric Delay
Airman 1st Class Andrew Dutton
Senior Airman Shawn Thomson
Staff Sgt. Ian Linker
Senior Airman Edwin Mendoza
Tech. Sgt. Thomas Reid
Senior Airman Juli Taylor

For some, the call to serve was driven by their own past experience from living near the coast.

"My family was affected in 2005 by Hurricane Rita in southwest Louisiana, so after seeing the devastation caused by [Hurricane] Harvey in the southeast Texas area, I immediately wanted to get down there and help somehow," said Reid.

At the recommendation of a coworker, Reid contacted the Team Rubicon organization and signed up to go. He extended the opportunity to members in his squadron, and six others took up the offer – using their own leave to make the trip.

The veteran-ran and operated organization flew the team down to their central location in Houston, Texas, where they were divided into the Beaumont and Kashmere Gardens areas.

For the other members of the Team Whiteman group, this was their first experience seeing firsthand what remains after a catastrophe strikes.

"Being there was heartbreaking," said Taylor. "You see it on the news but you don't really feel the effects of it until you're there."

The call to action for many came from a desire to aid the families and homes affected by natural disasters. The ongoing operation will be a life-long recovery process for the families impacted, said Reid.

"It was eye-opening for myself and I'm sure every person that goes," said Mendoza. "It's been over a month since the hurricane hit the city and some people still have not received any help – still living in tents in their backyards because their homes are destroyed."

The driven Airmen conducted house demolition for 10 hours a day, sometimes longer. As many of the homes were plagued with water and mold damage, volunteers had to tear everything down to the studs.

"Although it was physically draining, nonstop work, it felt like a walk in the park knowing you were expediting the process to give families a place to live," said Reid.

After removing the sheetrock, paneling, ceilings, cabinets and insulation from the houses, volunteers also cleaned up scattered debris from the areas surrounding the house.

While in the region overcome with hardship, families were left to find strength in the little things.

"There was one sweet old lady who had the most optimistic personality I have ever seen," said Dutton.

Many of the volunteers were inspired by the humbling experience with how kind and hopeful the locals were.

"After mucking out her house all day, ripping off the dry wall and insulation, then shoveling out her personal belongings that were drowned in the water for over two weeks, she comes to the house and has the biggest smile in the world to see so much work happen," added Dutton.

The resident shared how she had to escape the water by climbing through a hole in her roof and being evacuated by rescue boats when the water level was up to the ceiling of her house, and yet she was so thankful for everything going on.

During their eight-day trip, the AMXS team had a hand in about 25 houses between the two groups.

"Every second of it was worth it for the looks on the families' faces," said Taylor. "They were so appreciative. I would go back in an instant."