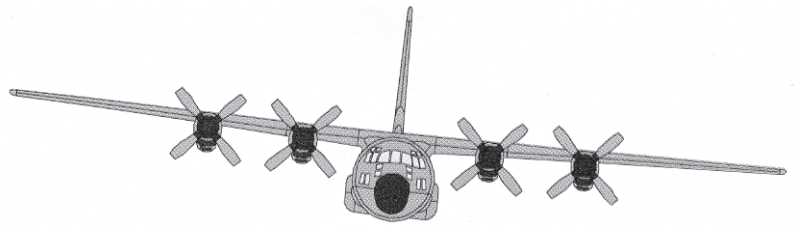


The 914th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA

FRONTIERSMAN



AUGUST 2008

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION

VOL 45, NO 7

Niagara Says “Good-bye” To An Old Friend



The last of Niagara's C-130 H3 model aircraft departs Niagara Falls for the final time, July 11. As part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission, the 914th Airlift Wing exchanged its eight C-130H3 aircraft for 12 C-130 H2 models. (Photo by Mr. Michael Harvey)

Power of words

By **Lt. Col. Timothy McCoy**
Mission Support Group Commander
 Why am I here?

Do you ask yourself this question every Saturday morning of every UTA? Do you ever wonder what to write when your supervisor asks you for EPR or OPR bullets? Maybe that's because you don't have a plan. Here are a couple of ideas on what to do to make you competitive, promotable and successful.

Write your EPR or OPR a year before it's due. Actually write the bullets you want and write it on the form so you know it fits. Now, use this as a plan for your future. This gives you a specific purpose for each UTA - you clearly know why you are here and what you need to do. With advance planning, you can seek out and find the high visibility additional duties (security manager, UDM) and special projects (UCI, SAV project, NCO/OIC) that will give you the bullets you need to get ahead.

Not every additional duty has to be a glorious position. Many people I know have made a pretty good name for themselves by taking on the ugly, hard to do jobs that nobody else wanted. As you begin writing there are a few things to consider.

Word choice is critical. Use words that best describe the duty you have performed. Use hard hitting statements about how you positively impacted your unit's mission. Use as many numbers and statistics as you can. This gives your performance tremendous credibility and adds a great deal of breadth and depth to how you are presented on paper; very important for promotion boards and future job selections. Phrases such as "significantly improved" or "dramatically impacted" are good but don't have the same wow factor as specific measurable facts such as "reduced GTC delinquency by 43 percent in a six-month period." Plus, putting down on paper that you "reduced late EPRs by 30 percent" gives a positive direction for each time you're out here. Now that you have written your performance report, put it into action.

Plan out each UTA and annual tour day to fulfill specific bullets on the performance report you already wrote. To paraphrase out of an old adventure novel, "nothing happens



Lt. Col. McCoy

unless it's written down." Put your plan on a calendar and stick to it. This provides you with the exact road map for the next 10 or 11 months of what you will do and when. Make sure you give yourself enough time to get every bullet done before the end of the rating period. Review your written EPR/OPR and you plan the week before your UTA or AT so you know what you need to do. Well, does writing scare you?

Many top performers don't get recognized or don't capitalize on their success because of poor writing and documentation. Writing is really hard work; don't give up. Ask someone to help you. There's no shame in asking. After they've captured what you want to say keep a copy and then practice changing it around and using different words. I highly urge you to own a thesaurus and to use it.

Don't just rely on what the word processing software gives you (that's what everyone else does). Sometimes the difference, on paper, between people is simply better word choice. Collect writing samples from other people and benchmark their style of writing.

In most cases you won't be able to use the entire bullet, but sometimes you just need that certain word or phrase to get you started. As you interview people for positions keep their resumes on file so you can use words and phrases for your own. If you are a supervisor always keep what you've written on other people - it may come in handy in the future.

Now, what are you going to do? It's time to start writing your future! This may take a couple of weeks and you don't have to have a perfect EPR/OPR to get started. Write down whom and where you want to be, plan it out on a calendar and take action to meet your objectives. Good luck and I look forward to congratulating you at your next promotion.



NIAGARA FRONTIERSMAN

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914 AW HOTLINE

Global Address under:
 Niagara Falls IAP AW Hotline

The Hotline will be used for problems, issues, suggestions and or ideas that have a wing-wide impact. All senders will remain anonymous and issues having wing-wide impact will be addressed in Commander's Call or future additions of this paper unless requested otherwise.

914th First Sergeant embodies new Air Force slogan: “Above All”

By Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya

The Air Force has selected Master Sgt. Jeffrey Gray as the winner of the 2008 First Sergeant of the Year Award.

Sergeant Gray, a traditional reservist assigned to the 328th Airlift Squadron as well as a City of Buffalo firefighter in his civilian capacity, could not believe he was chosen for this honor.

“I was in disbelief when I found out I won,” he said. “It was great to represent the wing at the Numbered Air Force (NAF) level and a pleasant surprise to win for Twenty Second Air Force. I didn’t expect to win at the Air Force Reserve Command level or even the Air Force level,” added Sgt. Gray.

Chief Master Sergeant Steve Larwood, command chief of the 914th Airlift Wing was astonished when he received the news that one of his first sergeants was chosen for this honor.

“Sergeant Gray was the first reservist to ever win this award,” said Chief Larwood. “I wasn’t at all surprised when he won here at the wing or for 22nd Air Force or even at the AFRC level because I knew he was head and shoulders above his competition,” he added.

“I was surprised when he won going up against Active-Duty and Air National Guard first sergeants, simply because tradition has it that Active-Duty Airmen usually win because they are performing this job 365 days a year and reservists approach it from a part-time basis. However, if you looked at Sergeant Gray’s accomplishments then it should be no surprise that he won,” said Chief Larwood.

The Air Force established the First Sergeant of the Year Award in 1985 to recognize the important contributions and leadership qualities exhibited by Air



Master Sgt. Gray poses in front of a mountain range during his most recent deployment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (courtesy photo)

Force members in this special-duty career field. Nominees are considered for their areas of leadership and job performance in their primary duty, significant self-improvement, and base or community involvement.

“Sergeant Gray will be the first to tell you that it wasn’t about him, he would say he was just doing his job,” stated Chief Larwood.

“I make mistakes but I work as hard as I can for the Airmen I take care of. I believe it’s that hard work that is recognized with this award. I just try to be consistent and work hard. Outside of that, the only things that stick out in my mind are those I feel I could have done differently,” said Sergeant Gray.

“I believe this an award all first sergeants should strive for,” said Chief Larwood. “But one of the things I tell first sergeants who interview for the job is in order to be an effective first sergeant, they have to be at the point of their career where they are done winning things for themselves. Your success comes through the success of the people you take care of,” the Chief added.

“My only goal has been to do the best I can for the people in the squadron

and I can always do better,” said Sergeant. Gray.

“The Air Force is ‘total force’ and the Air Force Reserve is an equal partner with the Air National Guard and Active Duty,” said Chief Larwood. “If you put us on the job stateside or in a war zone, there is no difference between Active Duty, Guard or Reserve when it comes to performing on the job. Sometimes we even outperform because (being in the Reserve) we can bring another set of skills from our civilian capacity to the table that will help accomplish the Air Force mission,” he added.

“Sergeant Gray is the kind of person who will always take care of the people he is around, not only as a first sergeant but also with the City of Buffalo’s Engine 31 on Buffalo’s east side,” said Chief Larwood. “This award has not changed him one bit, he is still marching on, doing the job the exact same way whether or not this award came his way,” said Chief Larwood. “He is a very humble man.”

“I’m very proud of him. It’s great for our command and great for our wing,” concluded Chief Larwood.

Air Force Selects Reservists For Aircrew Flight Equipment Awards



Members of the 914th Aircrew Flight Equipment Shop stand with their awards after a commanders call during the June Unit Training Assembly (Photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya)

By Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya

The Air Force has selected two 914th Airlift Wing reservists to bring home the 2007 Outstanding USAF Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) of the year award.

Senior Master Sgt. Steve Patterson was selected as the 2007 Outstanding USAF Air Reserve Component Aircrew Flight Equipment Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the year and Senior Airman Rosemary Warner was selected as the 2007 Outstanding USAF Air Reserve Component Aircrew Flight Equipment Airman of the Year.

Airman Warner earned the USAF Air Reserve Command AFE Airman of the year award for her outstanding ability and professional skill while being qualified in all five level assigned tasks and is fully integrated in all aspects of inspection, employment, and storage of Aircrew Life Support Equipment. The results of her efforts

will affect the way Aircrew Flight Equipment trains for years to come. The outstanding contributions of Airman Warner in a demanding profession reflect great credit upon herself, the Air Mobility Command and the United States Air Force.

Formally known as Air Crew Life Support, the Airmen of Air Crew Flight Equipment inspect, account for and maintain aircrew and passenger life support equipment such as parachutes, inflatable life preservers, Night Vision goggles, life rafts and survival kits. Additionally, Aircrew Flight Equipment members also instruct aircrews in water and combat survival as well as chemical warfare survival. Additionally AFE trains the Aircrew on all of the equipment in the plane.

As the 914th's AFE Superintendent, Sergeant Patterson said "The 914th AFE shop is by far the very best in all of Air Force Reserve Command. "I'm proud to serve with distinction with my fellow Airmen, NCOs and

SNCOs. I consider this award, a team accomplishment that everyone contributed immensely for."

In addition to the two individual Airmen awards, Niagara's AFE shop received the 22nd Air Force Outstanding Small Program of the Year – 328th Airlift Squadron (Team Niagara).

"I'm very proud of Niagara's AFE shop in their accomplishments in winning the 22nd AF level award," said Sergeant Patterson. "Without the whole AFE shop working together to form a 'one-team, one fight integrated shop' I don't feel we would have won. Everyone has a stake in the outcome of the shop's accomplishments."

"These awards are a huge deal," said Chief Master Sgt. Les Davy, 22nd AF Aircrew Flight Equipment functional manager. "You are competing with all the AFRC units and winning these awards speaks volumes on both the professionalism and work ethic of Niagara's Aircrew Flight Equipment Shop."

The selection process was pretty competitive. Individuals were chosen from unit level packages that were submitted to 22nd AF where a board convened to select winners in each category. The winners were then forwarded to HQ AFRC for MAJCOM level competition and then on to Air Force level competition.

It can be said Airmen like Sergeant Patterson, Airman Warner and the Team Niagara AFE shop that exemplifies hard work and dedication to the overall Air Force mission. "I'm not one who bangs my own drum, but as far as my shop goes, I'll put anyone of my troops against anyone throughout the command and I'm confident that Team Niagara AFE will come out ahead," concluded Sergeant Patterson.

Above and Beyond: not just words, but a work ethic



On one of the stops on the way back to Niagara, members of the Operations and Maintenance Groups stand beside one of the C-130s they maintained and flew multiple critical missions in the AOR. (Courtesy Photo)

By Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya

One phrase that describes the United States Air Force Reserve is “Above and Beyond”. It also can describe two exceptional groups in the 914th Airlift Wing.

Members of the Operations and Maintenance Groups did an outstanding job flying and maintaining eight C-130’s during their 30-day deployment to South West Asia, taking part in Operation Enduring Freedom, according to Colonel Terry Lawrence, the 914th Operations Group Commander.

The deployed Airmen met opportunities and challenges in their area of responsibility, such as maintaining three different types of C-130 aircraft with their active-duty counterparts who they had never met or worked with before.

“The 914th brings experience and a great attitude to the fight and that helped us overcome those issues in the AOR,” said Maintenance Superintendent, Chief Master Sgt. Frank Barone.

Every week Chief Barone said he received maintenance data collection numbers and mission capable rates. During their deployment, maintenance stayed at 100 percent mission effectiveness. “That is attributed to the aircrew as well as maintenance,” said Chief Barone. “It’s really a phenomenal record.”

“As the numbers come back to us it’s obvious that they not only did what they were expected to do, they went above and beyond,” said Col. Lawrence.

Those reports portrayed Niagara’s great work ethic said Col. Lawrence. Commanders and supervisors of different bases who deployed with Airmen of the 914th have time and again contacted Col. Lawrence and told him they are “very comfortable knowing that Niagara is on duty and flying a certain mission.” “914th Airmen are setting the example, even for active-duty crews and showing them how to do the job, and do it right,” said Col. Lawrence.

After grueling 12 hour missions all over the AOR, the C-130s would land with little or no discrepancies. Then with little downtime, a different crew would come onboard the aircraft and fly out for another mission. “That can be credited to the good maintenance practices of the people working on the plane,” said Chief Barone.

“An active-duty aircrew member said to one of my maintainers ‘That is the best airplane I have ever flown in,’” said Chief Barone with a laugh. “Our active-duty counterparts really liked our C-130s.”

“Overall, the professionalism and work ethic of the 914th in this deployment really set a high watermark to meet,” said Col. Lawrence. “The crews from our maintenance and operations groups created an excellent example to follow and made Niagara proud.”



914th Airlift Wing commander Col. Reinhard Schmidt reads Capt. John R. Bastian his oath of office during a ceremony in the commander's office. Before Capt. Bastian took this position here, he worked in a catholic seminary for the Army and has served the Catholic Church as an ordained priest for 13 years before deciding to receive a commission in the Air Force Reserve. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya)

Integrity, Service, Excellence Undergirded by Faith By Chaplain, Lt. Col. Weldon G. Thomas

Faith is a common denominator for all people who profess a belief in God, a supreme being, or a higher power. Faith is a belief or trust; a devotion to, or a loyalty and allegiance to somebody or something. I advance the proposition that all of us can experience and exhibit faith. In fact, the concept of faith is most closely associated with God and religion, but it can have a far deeper application than just a religious context.

Most, if not all of us who dawn the Air Force blues, or B.D.U.s (battle dress uniform) surely display faith in our nation and our Air Force. The calling to serve our nation in the greatest air force in the world is an act of faith. That is, faith in the prospects that we each make a difference while carrying out our mission.

Faith compels us to do our best each and every UTA, sharpening our skills and preparing us for service and for the unexpected during our *global war on* to our

country. And perhaps most important, by virtue of our commitment to serve, our faith is what helps us to live out the three Air Force core values—integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do.

The Contemporary English Version of the Holy Scriptures, reminds us in Hebrews 11:1, that, **“Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see.”**

1) By faith, we maintain *integrity* – that inner quality that’s grounded in a high moral character. By faith we should operate with sound professional principles and steadfastness that - what and who we are on the inside, will be manifested on the outside, in our deeds, actions and service.

2) By faith, we generously put *service before self*. Our commitment to the Air Force is an act of faith that compels us to put *service before reward*, *service before praise*, and *service before awards and decorations*. After all, faith makes us sure of what we hope for, and it gives

us proof of what we cannot see. When we’ve done our best in service, we shall receive our just reward.

3) By faith we strive for *excellence in all we do*. We should always do our best because it’s the right thing to do! Nothing less than our best *will do*. Even when we may not be able to see how our particular commitment and responsibility fits into the larger scheme of things, we still strive to excel at what we do. As professional airmen, this occurs as an act of faith. In fact, the *King James Version* rendering of our key scripture, Hebrews 11:1, more succinctly conveys the mystery of faith and the challenging expectation we are all called to fulfill. *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* It is this understanding of faith that powerfully undergirds our ability of living out our core values of integrity, service and excellence.

The Rev. David Ring, III of El Paso, Texas, tells the story about several decades ago, a famed circus aerialist successfully walked across a high wire strung across the raging torrent of Niagara Falls. Hundreds cheered as he completed this amazing feat. When he was back on solid ground, the assembled crowd fell silent as he announced that he planned on the next day to perform an even more difficult task. Tomorrow, he would cross the wire, pushing a wheelbarrow with a man in it. “It cannot be done,” most of the onlookers murmured, but one young man in the crowd called out,

“You are the greatest! I know you can do it! I have faith in you!”

The aerialist called the young man to his side. “I am glad to know you believe in me,” he said.

“You are just the man I have been looking for! I need a volunteer to ride in that wheelbarrow I will be pushing! Let’s test the faith you say you have!”

Everyday, our faith is tested. We are expected to reach higher heights, give our best service and perform difficult tasks, and exude integrity at all times as we live out our core values and live by faith. Whether through God or self, let us live and serve by faith.

Around Niagara...



21 members of the 914th Civil Engineering Squadron were deployed in late March in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Airmen have been working at a tremendous pace, completing many projects at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Look for a full-length feature about their deployment in upcoming issues of the Frontiersmen. (Courtesy Photo)



Above: Security Forces Operations Officer Major John McDowell sends off one of his Security Forces Airmen. Below: Part of the Niagara Security Forces team prepare to board a C-130 for their deployment to Southwest Asia in mid-July in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photos by Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya)



914th Airlift Wing Commander Col. Reinhard Schmidt presents Col. James DiFrancesco with plaque commemorating Col. DiFrancesco's hard work and dedication over his 24 years of service to the 914th. Col. DiFrancesco, the Director of Operations for the 328th Airlift Squadron will be departing Niagara Falls ARS, for McGuire Air Force base, New Jersey to take over as Operations Group commander there. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Caya)



In Brief

Attention TRICARE Patients

TRICARE RESERVE SELECT -

TRS offers coverage comparable to TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra and features open enrollment, increased availability to survivors and no activation requirements.

Tiers, service agreements and differing premium levels are no longer elements of the program.

The only restriction is that Selected Reserve members eligible for the Federal Health Employee Benefits program, or currently covered under FEHB, may not participate in TRS.

Monthly premiums are \$81 for service members and \$253 for member-and-family coverage.

Reserve members can find out more about TRS and download the information through "My Benefits" portal at www.tricare.mil <<http://www.tricare.mil/>>.

Additional information is available on the "Entitlements" Web page at www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/entitlements <<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/entitlements>>.

Tuskegee Airman Award recognizes reservist

Tech. Sgt. Christopher McArdle, a 914th Airlift Wing firefighter, received the 2008 Tuskegee Airman Inc. Award. The Tuskegee Airman Inc. Award is presented to Airmen who help further the goal of the Air Force through effective training, mentoring, motivation and community outreach.



Space available

Travel for families, spouses and children of reservists deployed 120 consecutive days or longer can use military transport in the continental United States, to and from CONUS and within/between theaters, provided they have a verification letter from their sponsor's commander.

The space-available travel is only good during the period of the deployment.

Officials stress that this is a privilege, not an entitlement or guarantee.

Family members may travel unaccompanied in a Class IV status. More information about Space-A Travel can be found at <http://www.amc.af.mil/questions/topic.asp?id=380>.

What do you think?

The Niagara Frontiersman has returned to eight page format. Comments and suggestions are welcome and encouraged to help us tell the story of the 914th. Over the next several months, this publication will evolve based on your input. Please contact the Public Affairs Office at base ext. 2136 to submit your ideas.

We are now recruiting to fill these vacancies

The Webpage for viewing job announcements and applying is located at <https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/resweb/> (for current federal AF employees) or www.afrc.af.mil/jobs (for ART positions). All external applicants have to apply through USA Jobs at www.usajobs.opm.gov. The rules for applying for civil service positions can be complicated or confusing, so if you or someone you know is interested, they should contact the Civilian Personnel Office at 236-2218.

WING:

Admin Support Asst (ART), GS-303-05 (Public Affairs)

OPERATIONS:

Aircraft Loadmaster (Instructor) (ART), GS-2185-09

Operations Technician (ART), GS-303-07

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP:

Disaster Preparedness Specialist, GS-301-07 potential 09

Firefighter, GS-0081-06/07 (several positions)

Environmental Engineer, YD-0819-02

Police Officer, GS-0083-05

Training Specialist, ART, GS-1702-09

Automotive Equipment Dispatcher, GS-2151-05