



*"That Others May Live"*

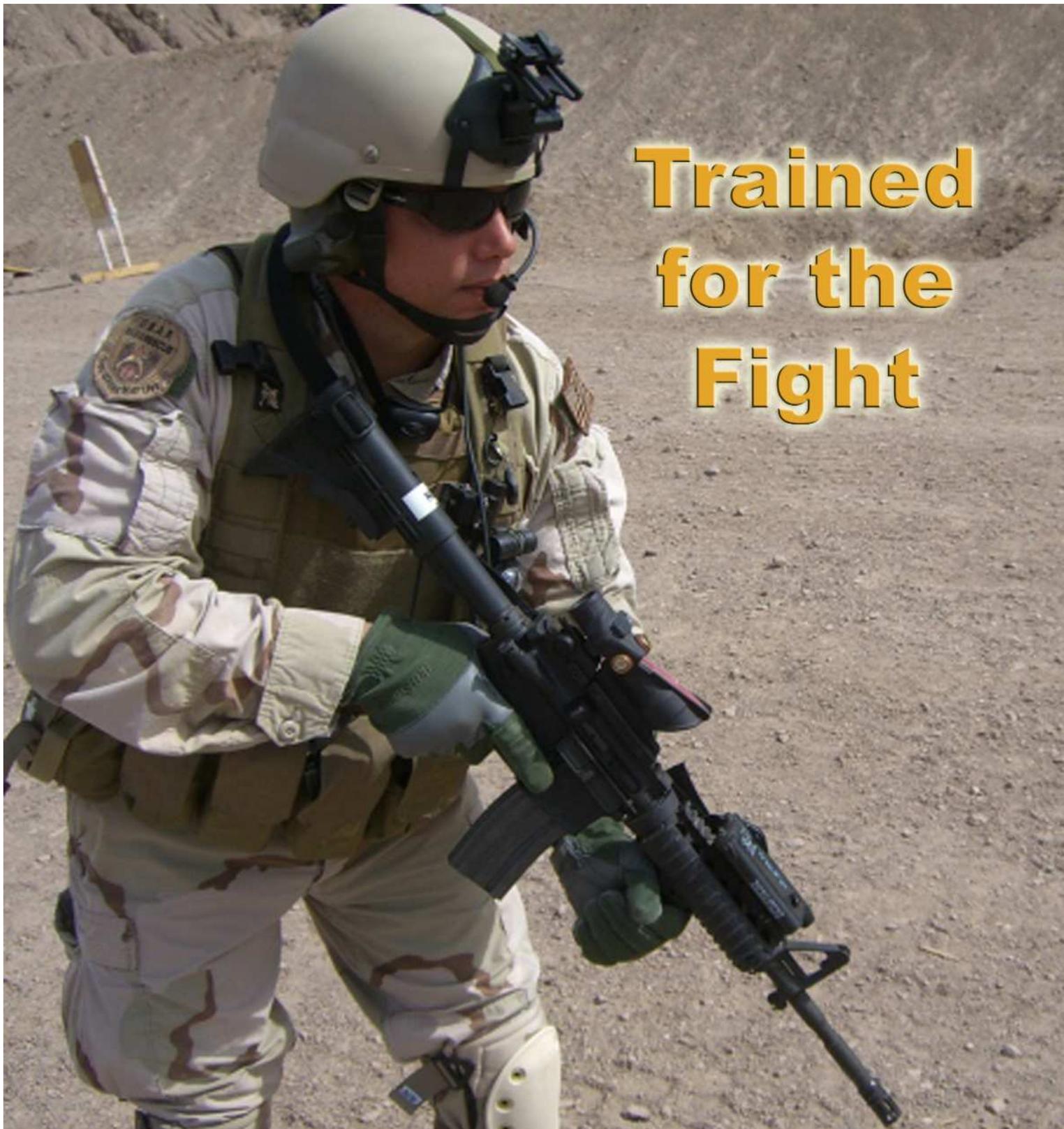
# ANGEL'S WINGS

*920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida*

*Volume 4, No. 9*

*920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.*

*September 2006*



# Angel's Wings

Volume 4, No. 9

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**On the Cover:**  
Pararescueman Master Sgt. John Shiman participates in rescue training while deployed to Djibouti.

# Surviving to achieve ignorance

**By Col. Robert Dunn**  
**943rd Rescue Group**  
**Commander**

**A**s I sat down to write this editorial, I wondered what an old timer like me might have to say that would appeal to a wide audience. I thought about a lesson on how we are destined to relive history if we don't study it...not much broad appeal there, and I get tired of all the old stories just like the rest of you. I figured I would do what I do best, be politically incorrect and just tell it like it is. So, it's time for some straight talk!

Before I explain the title of this article, know that I'm writing this at the end of the 101 Critical Days of Summer and by the time you read it, odds are, someone you know has done something incredibly stupid and is dead, severely injured or has put their career in jeopardy.

Every time a commander or supervisor has to go to a hospital, a funeral, or take judicial action there has been a failure somewhere along the way, and most

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***“Every time a commander or supervisor has to go to a hospital, a funeral, or take judicial action there has been a failure somewhere along the way”***

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**Col. Robert Dunn**

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likely by more than just the individual in question. This brings me to the title of the article.

We are all trying to survive to achieve conscious ignorance. Because once we understand just how much we don't know, we tend not to engage in those activities which will negatively effect our life, limb or liberty.

I don't know just how much

alcohol will affect me all of the time (it depends on my hydration level, whether I've eaten or not, etc) so I don't drink and drive. I have achieved "conscious alcohol ignorance."



I'm not a NASCAR trained driver. I don't always know road conditions, tire ratings, automotive handling characteristics or if my suspension is setup correctly for high speed turns, so I don't speed (not to mention not knowing who is out there talking on cell phone, eating a burger, drinking a soda and driving with their knees, all at the same time).

I'm not an expert motor-cross racer, so I don't drive like one on the streets. Also, I've never seen a motor-cross racer not fully padded up and with a helmet while he's driving amongst other professionals.

I could go on and on with examples in every aspect of life. Once you stop, think and survive long enough to know how much you don't know, your perspective will change dramatically on how, when and where you do things, thus achieving "Total Conscious Ignorance."

Now let's throw in human nature. I don't live in a dream world and I know few of us ever achieve Total Conscious Nirvana (TCN). Sometime, somewhere, we all get caught up in the moment and inevitably will do something dumb.

This leads me to two values not often talked about: accountability

*Cont. on Page 11*

# 920th member to sing at national ceremony

**By Tech. Sgt. Shane Smith**  
**920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs**

Senior Airman Jennifer Drake, 39th Rescue Squadron Radio Operator here, has been selected to sing the National Anthem at the 2006 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony.

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is hosting the annual ceremony and dinner Sept. 21 at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C.

Senior Airman Drake is also a proud member on the Patrick Air Force Base Honor Guard.

"I definitely feel honored to have been selected," said Airman Drake, who was chosen after submitting an audition video of her singing the National Anthem.



**Senior Airman Jennifer Drake**

She said she is very grateful to the base multimedia center for helping her create the audition piece.

The event will be another high-

light to her already impressive resume which includes work in Broadway productions, theatre, film and modeling. Additionally, she has extensive professional training in voice, musical theatre, acting, speech, dance, film, television and cabaret.

"We are very proud to have her represent the men and women of the 920th at such a high profile event," said Colonel Joseph Trippy, 920th vice wing commander. "She is a shining example of the talented servicemen and women of the Air Force Reserve."

The ESGR award ceremony highlights the importance of civilian support of Reserve component members.

Up to 15 civilian employers will be recognized for their support of service members beyond the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

## Squadron commander awarded Bronze Star

**By Master Sgt. Raymond F. Padgett**  
**920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs**

Lt. Col. Christopher P. Hannon was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in a ceremony held before the members of the 920th Rescue Wing here during the August Unit Training Assembly weekend.

Colonel Hannon's award nomination was for his 2005 service as the commander of the 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron.

Colonel Hannon's squadron, based out of Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, flew 128 combat hours with 90 combat sorties and 19 combat saves in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I may have received the bronze star, but all of the men and women who deployed, especially the pararescuemen, deserve the same credit," Colonel Hannon said following the ceremony.

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the military of the United States, distinguishes him or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States.

According to Colonel Hannon, many of the high risk missions were given to the Air Force rescue

crews because of their unique ability to operate in total

blackout conditions on moonless nights.

"To deploy and bring back 130 combat hours of accident-free flying really shows the professionalism and effectiveness of the entire team," Colonel Hannon said.

The combat missions flown in HH-60G Pavehawk helicopters were in direct support of Combine Task Force 76 and the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force.

His leadership was clearly evident during the high profile recovery of a Navy Special Operations Forces member killed in action.

"Because of altitude and temperature, we were really at the edge of our performing envelope. We were always making critical decisions, mitigating risk by constant changes in configurations," Colonel Hannon said.

Colonel Hannon currently serves as the commander of the 301st Rescue Squadron here.



# FEDS\_HEAL brings dental help to 920th

**Story and photo by  
2nd Lt. Jaime K. Pinto  
920th Rescue Wing Public  
Affairs**

Some members of the 920th Rescue Wing saw a new dental staff during the August Unit Training Assembly thanks to the Federal Strategic Health Alliance program.

FEDS\_HEAL is a joint initiative created by the Department of Defense, Veteran's Health Administration, and Federal Occupational Health to ensure Reserve forces are medically fit to deploy. The program provides medical support services to reserve units in an effort to maintain medical standards and requirements.

With only one dentist and two dental assistants on-hand, the 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron enlisted the help of the FEDS\_HEAL dental program.

"The FEDS\_HEAL program was established to allow civilian dentists to support the needs of the military to ensure 100% compliance; ensuring members are fully deployable," said Maj. Kevin Hachmeister, 920th ASTS dentist.

The 920th RQW has approximately 375 members categorized as Class 4 patients who require annual check ups.

Major Hachmeister enlisted the efforts of the FEDS\_HEAL program to help process these Class 4 patients.

Setting up shop in the 45th Space Wing Professional Development building, one dentist and two dental assistants from Milwaukee, Wis., processed approximately 50



**Bartley Bell, a FEDS\_HEAL volunteer dentist, discusses x-rays with Senior Airman Patrick Gonzales. The FEDS\_HEAL program provides medical support services to Reserve units in an effort to maintain medical standards and requirements.**

patients during the August UTA.

Most of the FEDS\_HEAL personnel work full-time civilian jobs and volunteer their time and services with the program.

Linda Gomez, a FEDS\_HEAL dental assistant, enjoys the time she donates to the program.

"Giving back to the people who protect and defend our country is

an honor and a pleasure."

The program gets volunteers from all over the world who are willing to donate their time and talent, said Master Sgt. Chris Pennington of the 920th ASTS.

"This group has been wonderful. They are very knowledgeable and have bent over backwards to help support the wing with long hours and no lunch breaks."

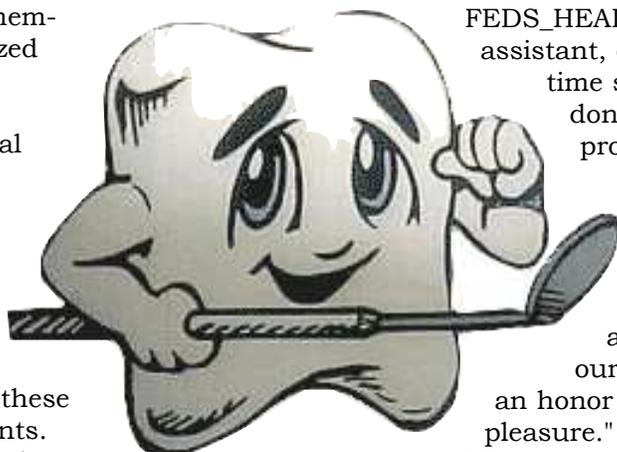
Members of the 920th RQW are required to get a check-up from the wing dental office once every three years.

Between those years, members can submit a DD Form 2813 from their civilian dentist to maintain compliance with their dental check-ups.

Members who do not submitting a DD Form 2813 cause an increase in annual check-ups required.

The 920th ASTS is working to recruit more dentists and dental assistants for the wing; however, dental recruitment is difficult with the dental career field shortage Air Force wide.

The FEDS\_HEAL volunteers will be back for the September UTA.



# New Safety chief joins wing staff

By Senior Airman Heather L. Kelly  
920th Rescue Wing  
Public Affairs

Major Paul Nevius, HH-60G helicopter pilot with the 301st Rescue Squadron, has assumed the chief of safety position with the 920th Rescue Wing.

Prior to joining the Air Force Reserve, Major Nevius served as an active duty pilot and safety officer in the Navy.

With over 5200 flight hours under his belt, Major Nevius has piloted 19 different aircraft over his 20-year military career.

During his time on active duty, the major participated in many accident investigations.

As first on scene, one in particular stands out in his mind.

"One of our helicopters crashed in the Sierra Nevadas after hitting power lines that were not depicted on the map. All five crewmembers

involved died," Major Nevius said. "It was a terrible accident," he added.

As the new chief of the safety shop, it is his goal to ensure the 920th's proud history of accident-free flying is maintained and to get members to take a second look at their processes and safety procedures.

"We all know what's safe and what's not safe, unfortunately sometimes safety is sacrificed for the sake of efficiency," said Major Nevius.

"It's easy to get caught in our routines and want to make things quicker, easier, faster, and each time we do that we can overlook safety," he continued.

"The bottom line is we are trying to get out and about and give people the tools to do their job effectively and safely," Major Nevius said.

"Safety isn't here to hammer anybody," he said, "we are here to help."



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jonathan Simmons  
Maj. Paul Nevius assumes the role of the new chief of safety. Major Nevius joined the unit in 2002 after serving 13 years on active duty as a Navy pilot.

## Profiles in Safety



# Djibouti Nights

**M**embers of the 920th Rescue Wing recently deployed into the heart of Djibouti where they provided support for Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

While in theater, they provide continuous pararescue coverage for the countries of Yemen, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.

At a moment's notice, these professionals are ready to rescue anytime, anywhere. These photos capture the training involved in their efforts.



Courtesy photos





# Guided by the stars

## Nav's destiny pointed skyward since birth

By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow  
920th Rescue Wing Public  
Affairs

**M**aj. Keith Treesh, an HC-130 P/N navigator with the 39th Rescue Squadron here has found his way back home.

It all started September 18, 1956, when Wilma Treesh gave birth to a baby boy at the Patrick Air Force Base Hospital on the anniversary of the Air Force's inception.

Ever since, Major Treesh's destiny has pointed him skyward. Although he said being born on an Air Force base on the Air Force's birthday by two parents who were in the Air Force wasn't exactly what pointed him toward his flying career path.

What did direct him skyward was an uncle who took him flying once. Major Treesh said he just really enjoyed it.

Shortly after he was born, the Treesh family left Patrick and finally settled in Orlando, where Major Treesh remembers growing up. He even attended college at the University of Central Florida where he earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics prior to joining the military.

Major Treesh said his 32-year-long military career has had a lot of twists and turns but it has always revolved around flying. In addition to being a navigator here, he has been a commercial airline pilot for Comair Airlines since 1997.

Prior to piloting civilian planes, he served on active duty, flying as

a weapons system officer on the F-4 Phantom and F-15 Eagle, and also served as an air liaison officer. Major Treesh spent ten-and-a-half years on active duty before joining the Air Force Reserve.

He said he even remembers the first three years of his military career when he joined the Army to fly. He was 17 years old and always the youngest guy. A few things have changed since then. "I'm usually the oldest guy now," he said.

Although he said turning 50 is just another day; he admits the irony in his full-circle return to Patrick to continue his military career flying.

His dad bet that not many people who are working on base were actually born there.

Major Treesh and his wife Kathy had their young son Michael nearby in Rockledge, Fla.

They reside in Viera and when asked how he plans on spending



U.S. Air Force photo/1st Lt. Cathleen Snow

**Maj. Keith Treesh, an HC-130 navigator, will celebrate his 50th birthday this month.**

his 50th birthday, Major Treesh said he'll probably be working, "either here or there. Maybe a cookout, nothing fancy."



Courtesy photo

**Baby Keith Treesh was born at Patrick Air Force Base Hospital in 1956.**

# Major challenges for major rewards

**By Maj. Jerome Cobb**  
**920th Communications Flight Commander**

I recently had the privilege of burying my grandfather. I say privilege because, if things follow their natural order, my children will one day, and hopefully certainly not any time soon, bury me.

My grandfather was a proud man and he grew up at a time in the South when some people placed more importance on tilling the land than on education. He never let this stand in the way of encouraging me to do more educationally than he'd done.

His passing was both a happy and sad occasion because I understand death is a part of life. It also made me think about the inspiration and example he, and some of the other great leaders who have passed my way, provided me.

When I was a kid growing up in rural North Carolina, I was not much different from most kids my age. I played lots of sports and was a pretty good student.

I worked at a local country store. While working at this store, there were several regular customers who provided great examples and a watchful eye. They always told me, "Keep your nose clean, work hard, believe in yourself and you can go places in America.

Of course, they were correct and for some reason it hit home with me. I did not know I was being led and probably did not realize these men and women cared. I fondly recall there was one particular gentleman who'd buy me a Dr. Pepper each time he came to the store. It was only a soda, but for a young kid it made me want to make him proud.

When my grandfather passed, it made me reminisce about him, the Gene Hardys, Thurman Coleys, and Herbert Richardsons and some of the others

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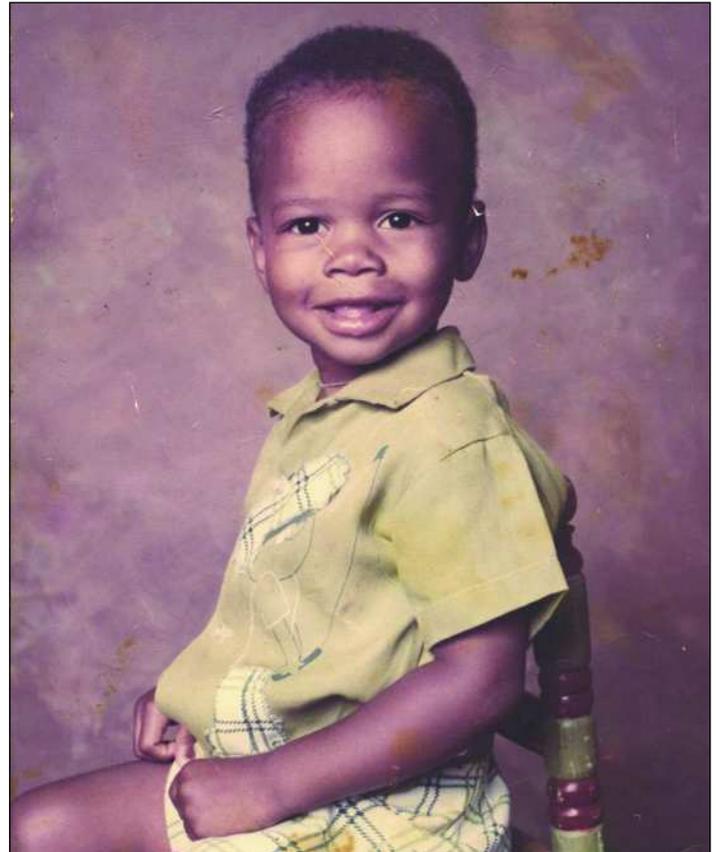
***"I challenge each of us, at all levels, to unlock our inner leader--not just at work, where we do it every day, but out in our communities."***

***Maj. Jerome Cobb***

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who provided inspiration to me and those around me.

I'm older now...and it's now my turn to provide some modicum of that example and (hopefully) inspiration.



Courtesy photo

**Major Jerome Cobb found inspiration in others while growing up in rural North Carolina.**

We are all busy folks. There are ORIs, UCIs, deployments, promotion ceremonies...the list goes on. We work hard, attend and study for PME classes, finish undergraduate and graduate degrees, protect Americans from those who wish to do us harm; and we all contribute a great deal to America and freedom across the globe.

However, we must not stop there. The continued prosperity of our democracy demands that we not stop there.

I challenge each of us, at all levels, to unlock our inner leader--not just at work, where we do it every day, but out in our communities.

You could be the difference in the life of that kid living down the street that doesn't have a father, or provide positive reinforcement to that young girl who maybe doesn't quite believe in herself.

Whether you know it or not, an awful lot of America admires those in uniform.

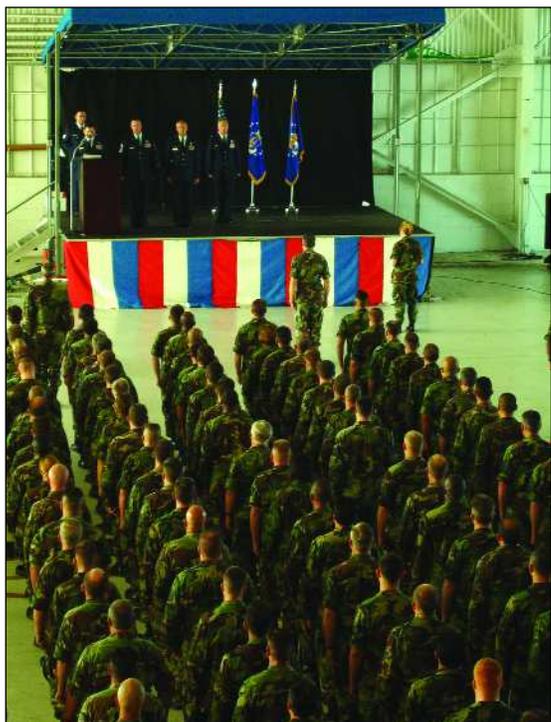
A pat on the back or a kind word may be all you can provide. However, know that it makes a difference. It made a difference for a once-skinny kid from rural North Carolina.

# Around The Pattern



Courtesy photo

Helicopter crewmembers who participated in a daring rescue while in Afghanistan capture a moment together. (Front Row, Left to Right) Staff Sgt. Chris Piercecchi, Master Sgt. Josh Appel, 2nd Lt. David Gonzalez, Maj. Jeff Peterson (Middle Row) Master Sgt. Mick Cusick, Staff Sgt. Josh Donnelley, Tech. Sgt. Jason Burger, Master Sgt. Brett Konczal, Maj. John Back, (Back Row) Airman 1st Class Ben Peterson, Tech. Sgt. John Davis and Col. Jeff Macrander. Colonel Macrander was recently awarded an Air Medal for his efforts during the deployment.



U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Shane Smith

920th RQW members assemble in formation during the August commander's call.



Courtesy photo

Members of the 45th Space Wing Honor Guard flew with the 920th Rescue Wing during an incentive flight in August.

*Commander's Column Cont.*

and responsibility.

As military professionals, these items are fairly well defined in our work environment. Through regulations and command structure, we are pretty sure as to who is responsible and accountable. Let's take it a step further here.

You are responsible and accountable not only for yourself, but for those around you. As far as the first paragraph goes, I have rarely seen an incident of stupidity involving a person by himself. We are usually in company of others when the failure occurs. Call it peer pressure, machismo, showing off, etc. Usually someone is there who could have prevented or mitigated the event. However brief the encounter, or short the interaction, your actions and more often than not, your inaction, impacts others now and in the future. You need to embrace your responsibility to take action, for failure to do so makes you equally accountable.

The profession of arms is dangerous enough without loss due to preventable actions. This is truly a military family and we need everyone's constant vigilance to protect our most precious resource: our people.

## BRIEFS

### Rescuers recognized for hurricane relief efforts

Dozens of Airmen from the 943rd Rescue Group will receive Air Force medals September 10, at 3 p.m., on the anniversary of their relief efforts after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The reservists, members of aircrew and maintenance from various units here, deployed in August 2005 to join rescue operations in the devastated areas in the aftermath of the hurricanes.

Members of the 305th and 306th Rescue Squadrons, 943rd Maintenance and other support units will be honored.

Notable political figures and key military leaders are scheduled to attend including Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup and a representative from Senator Jon Kyl's office.

The medals to be received by the Airmen include the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

The 943rd Rescue Group is the only Rescue Group in the Air Force Reserve. Their primary mission is to provide search and rescue operations anywhere in the world as directed.

### Replacement income begins Sept. 1 for reservists

Starting Sept. 1, some reservists began receiving Reserve Income Replacement Program pay.

Congress ordered the Department of Defense to develop the RIRP to aid members of the National Guard and Reserve who get less pay because they are involuntarily put on active duty.

The program helps people who on average receive at least \$50 less a month than their civilian pay.

The difference in pay is the average monthly civilian income before a person is mobilized and the person's total monthly military compensation after mobilization.

To get the money, reservists must be serving involuntarily on active duty.

Also, they must have served 18 consecutive months on active duty, completed 24 months of active duty during the previous 60 months, or been involuntarily mobilized for 180 days or more within six months of the previous involuntary period of active duty of more than 180 days.

People can learn more about the program and get help verifying eligibility by calling the Air Reserve Personnel Center's Contact Center at 800.525.0102.

### New procedures improve emergency accountability

If a national emergency occurs, Air Force Reserve Command has improved procedures in place for keeping track of its military people and their families.

The command developed the procedures to prepare for future disasters after hurricanes devastated the Gulf Coast last year.

Under the new procedures, commanders use a two-phase approach to account for their people.

Each phase - pre and post - will be completed within 48 hours of notification to begin the accountability process.

People assigned to or living in an affected area must check in with the unit.

They should check in at the first available opportunity, but no later than 48 hours after the start of the crisis.

People on temporary assignment or on leave in a disaster area should report their location and status to their unit of assignment.

Reporting instructions are available on the command's Web site <https://wwwmil.afrc.af.mil/>.

People can link to the instructions by selecting the "Hot & New Items" icon, going to the drop down menu and selecting "Personnel Accountability."

# All in a day's work



TSgt. Dan Starner, helicopter maintenance journeyman, 943rd Rescue Group, works on the tail rotor pitch beam after arriving in Portland, Ore.



Master Sgt. Mike Cusick, 305th RQS flight engineer, navigates for the pilots enroute to Portland, Ore.



U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Greg Gaunt

Tech. Sgts. Aron Finley (left) and John Finley (right), 304th RQS PJ's preparing aircraft FRIES bar for FAST rope training on the Columbia River in Oregon.