

Snapshot

944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

August 2015 Newsletter



Improving upon last inspection

Blood Brothers

**Selva confirmed as Joint Chiefs
vice chairman**

**Operation Patriot Angler gets off
to cool start**

944 commander visits 414th FG



944th Fighter Wing

Monthly SnapShot

www.944fw.afrc.af.mil

Bringing the Heat

August 2015

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander

Col. Robert D. Whitehouse

Command Chief

CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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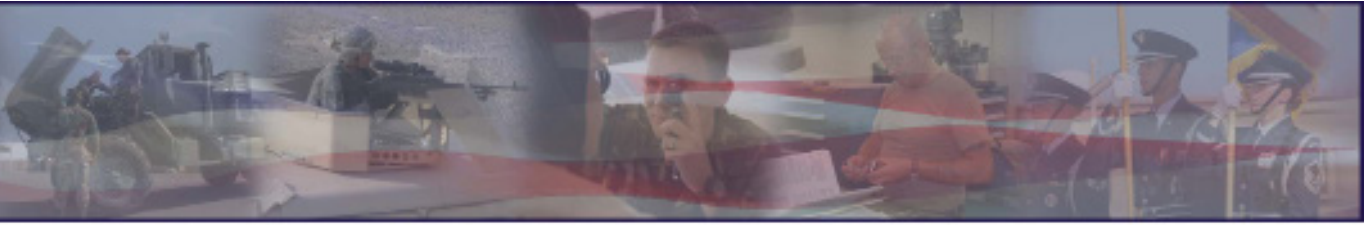
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944th Mission

Train and provide Combat-Ready Airmen.

Mission ■ Airmen ■ Family



Command Commentary

Improving upon our last inspection

By Colonel Kurt J. Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing Commander

Welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed the break and time with family and friends.

As we wind down the 101 days of summer and the kids go back to school we must not let our guard down. Remember to stay safe and vigilant in everything we do. This summer, our neighbors, the 56th Fighter Wing here at Luke Air Force Base, endured the loss of an Airman in a motorcycle accident and recently suffered its second suicide.

I want you to remember that there is 24/7 help out there. Take care of each other and use the resources available to you like the Wingman Tool Kit. Talk to someone if you are

having a hard time. Remember that no matter how bad things seem we, your wingmen, want to help. All you have to do is reach out.

As we swing back into work mode we only have two UTA's until the Capstone inspection and the end of fiscal year 2015. It is going to be a very demanding next couple of months but this is nothing we haven't seen before. I know each of us will step up to the challenge and "bring the heat," improving upon our last inspection. I appreciate all your hard work and know that it will pay off.

This month we have a busy three day UTA. Some of the highlights include a bone marrow drive, officer's call, commander's call, and an aircraft extraction exercise.

Also, mark your calendars, during the November UTA we will have Boss's Day which will include a ride in a KC-135 to experience a mid-air refueling. The deadline to nominate your civilian boss for Boss's Day is coming soon. August 31st is the last day to sign your boss up and show him or her, what you do here during the UTA's.

Finally, I would like to congratulate recently promoted Chief Master Sgt. Chin Cox, 944th ASTS, Chief Enlisted Manager. She has done a lot for the Wing and the promotion is well deserved. Thanks for all you do!

More information on suicide prevention: *Wingman Tool Kit*-<http://www.wingmantoolkit.org/resources/orU.S.AirForceWingmanonline-suicideprevention-https://www.wingmanonline.org>; *Military Crisis Line*: 1-800-273-8255



The importance of being resilient

By Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944th Fighter Wing Command Chief
944th Warriors!

It's hard to believe summer is almost over. I hope each and every one of you took the time to relax with friends and family. What better time to develop resilience through mental, social, physical and spiritual fitness than summer vacation and activities with those we cherish most in our lives.

Throughout my tour in this amazing Wing I have stressed the need to make Comprehensive Airman Fitness a regular part of our lives. To help with this, there is a new mobile app available for your phone which you can find online at <http://www.wingmantoolkit.org/>. The "Wingman Toolkit" has a bunch of great features that includes tools that allow you to track your physical training and sleep patterns, generate reminders that help you maintain a positive mindset and help you refocus from work to family at the end of the workday and to focus on the good things that happen. The Wingman Toolkit is a great way to build self-reliance into your resiliency efforts.

So, why am I stressing resiliency so much? Because it's important! Being resilient helps us be strong and positive in our day to day lives, to live our core values, and to prepare for the more stressful life events as they occur. This past May the Air Force released its Strategic Master Plan. One message that came through loud and clear is that Total Force is the way we will be successful in the future. As Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody has traveled the world this summer he has stressed the need for total integration of the various components of our Air Force and to have deep familiarity with all components to be a successful leader. The Active Component will no longer have the resources to meet its missions alone and, as we have learned over the last decade plus, the Reserve and National Guard Components are vital pieces of Air Force mission success. Look at our own Wing. We are already a critical component of the F-35 integration plan. In a speech to the Air Force Association last month, Lt. Gen. James Jackson, Air Force Reserve commander, discussed the critical contribution of the Reserves in overcoming manpower shortfalls, especially in maintenance and he cited the great integration of Active and Reserve Airman here at Luke Air Force Base in bringing the F-35 on board.

What does this mean to you? First, it's a great reminder of how much we bring to the Air Force as its Reserve Component and how important our performance is to the Air Force's success. It is a great reason to feel good about our service; we are contributing much to the Air Force we all choose to serve. It's also a reminder that we must be on our game when we are here. We must be ready to work hard, to learn, to grow and to meet the challenges ahead of us with the strength and optimism we have always drawn on to be such an amazing Wing. We must also be ready to embrace the changes that are coming as opportunities to improve the greatest Air Force in the world and not view these changes with fear or as threats. Know your anchor point, be connected through strong relationships, care for others, commit to being a better person and a better Airman, never be afraid to speak up (communicate) whether you are in need or you are being a good Wingman and remember to celebrate all that is good in your life, in our great Nation and in our amazing Air Force! Til next month



Final rule puts more teeth Into Military Lending Act

MLA
Military Lending Act
Protecting service members and their dependents from predatory lenders

<p>MLA STANDARDS AFFECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payday loans Vehicle title Refund anticipation, deposit advance and installment loans Unsecured open-end lines of credit Credit cards 	<p>FINANCIAL PRODUCTS CAPPED</p> <p>36% Military Annual Percentage Rate (MAPR)</p> <p>All-inclusive rate, capturing fees, charges and the sale of credit-related products</p>	<p>MLA RULE INCLUDES</p> <p>No longer will banks require service members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit to mandatory arbitration and tedious legal requirements Waive their Service-members Civil Relief Act rights Provide a payroll allotment Allow continual refinancing of a payday loan Provide a post-dated check Access a bank account or a car title 	<p>FINANCIAL READINESS</p> <p>These new rules are intended to help service members, but it is strongly recommended that all service members become better educated about the types of credit they can receive. Financial readiness is a critical part of overall readiness for America's soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.</p>
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EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2015

Courtesy Photo

By Terri Moon Cronk, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- The Defense Department today closed loopholes to protect U.S. men and women in uniform from predatory lending practices, President Barack Obama said July 21 at the 116th Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Pittsburgh.

The heightened level of financial and consumer-rights protection against unscrupulous practices, called the final rule of the Military Lending Act, covers all forms of payday loans, vehicle title loans, refund anticipation loans, deposit advance loans, installment loans, unsecured open-end lines of credit and credit cards, DOD officials explained.

"We're going to keep fighting to give our troops and veterans a chance to enjoy the American freedom you helped defend," the president told the veterans.

"There's already a lot to protect our troops and families against unscrupulous predatory lenders, but some of the worst abusers -- like payday lenders -- are exploiting loopholes to trap our troops in a vicious cycle of crushing debt," Obama said.

The president commented on the new rule saying that "it is the right thing to do."

"With this action, the department takes an important stand against companies that can prey on our men and women in uniform," Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work said in a news release after the president's announcement.

"This new rule addresses a range of credit products that previously escaped the scope of the regulation, compromising the financial readiness of our troops. Today, with our regulatory and enforcement partners, we stand united in support of our service members and their families," he continued.

Final rule results from three-year study

The revision began with a three-year study by the Defense and Treasury departments, Federal Trade Commission, and financial regulators such as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., Federal Reserve Board, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the National Credit Union Administration, DOD officials said.

Congress passed the Military Lending Act in 2006 to provide specific protections for active-duty service members and their families in consumer credit transactions.

Among other protections, the law caps at 36 percent the interest rate on covered loans to active-duty service members, requires disclosures to alert service members of their rights, and prohibits creditors from requiring a service member to submit to arbitration in a dispute.

New rule adds protection

The latest rule allows for industry compliance by Oct. 1, followed by a staggered implementation period, DOD officials said.

The rule will help protect all active-duty service members and their families from committing to loans with excessive fees and charges.

Service members still will have access to no-interest loans, grants, and scholarships from the four military relief societies, and not all credit products will be affected by the regulation -- notably residential mortgages and purchase-money loans to buy cars, for example, which are excluded from the MLA's definition of consumer credit, officials said.

August 2015 promotions: Congratulations to the following 944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman Basic:

Amn Desiree N. Abrams, 944th FSS
Amn Ishbel N. Gonzalez Alvez, 924th MXS

From Airman:

A1C Katherine Carrillo, 924th MXS
A1C April A. Delgado, 944th FSS
A1C Kasandra M. Rodrigues, 944th FSS

From Airman First Class:

SrA William Bibbus, 924th MXS
SrA Davon Draughon, 414th MXS
SrA Olga Jonaitis, 944th FSS
SrA Shawn Keaton, 414th MXS
SrA Corey J. Mayo, 414th MXS
SrA Ashley N. Menendez, 944th LRS
SrA Timothy R. Morris, 924th MXS
SrA Lucio A. Murillo, 924th MXS
SrA Joshua R. Petit, 414th MXS
SrA Nathan Saiffer, 924th MXS
SrA Michael C. Wahl, 924th MXS
SrA Kasheika Wallace, 414th MXS
SrA Stewart Whittley, 414th MXS
SrA Sharaya Zwierlein, 924th MXS

From Senior Airman:

SSgt Vanessa N. Aguilar, 924th MXS
SSgt James C. Alvarado, 944th SFS
SSgt Charles S. Cerdena, 944th FW Det 1
SSgt Eric W. Jameson, 924th MXS
SSgt Gilberto Saucedo, 924th FG Det 2
SSgt Timothy G. Suan, 944th SFS
SSgt Jon M. Wilson, 924th MXS

From Staff Sergeant:

TSgt Michael D. Dorsett, 924th MXS
TSgt Cody M. Poole, 944th FSS
TSgt Jessica G. Rivers, 414th FG
TSgt Sade A. Villareal, 924th MXS

From Technical Sergeant:

MSgt Michael Mindziak, 924th FG



Blood brothers

By Airman Connor J. Marth,
366th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, Idaho-

When it comes to aircraft maintenance, everything must be exact. A simple miscalculation can create threats in the sky and on the ground, but sometimes, those threats aren't always apparent. Even missing a step by a few inches can create a life-threatening situation. This was the case for Airman 1st Class Saul Vasquez, a 366th Equipment Maintenance Squadron crew chief.

"I was changing the nose landing gear actuator in the wheel well (of an F-15E Strike Eagle) when it happened," said Vasquez about his experience on April 2.

As Vasquez stepped down, he slipped off his stand causing a small bolt to puncture his skin just below his elbow. He said he dangled by the sharp piece of metal while blood dripped onto his face before he lifted himself to the ground.

"When I looked down at my arm and I saw the blood shoot out and hit my coveralls, I knew just how bad this was," Vasquez said. "I grabbed it and just started to run for the hangar door."

He had torn his radial artery -- one of two primary channels crucial to supplying blood to his arm. A tear like this can cause death in a matter of minutes.

As he ran across the bay, his fellow Airmen rushed to his

side.

"I heard him fall and when I turned around, I saw him crawl out of the hole with blood all over his face," said Staff Sgt. Stephen Young, a 414th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief. "He started beelining across the floor. My first thought was to stop the bleeding."

Young grabbed the first thing he could find to absorb the blood: some clean soak-up pads normally used to collect oil from leaking aircraft.

Master Sgt. Jason Aaron, the 366th EMS phase section chief, was sitting in his office when he heard the commotion.

"As I rounded my desk to see what was going on, I see this guy walking in front of me, blood gushing out of his forearm," Aaron said. "I cleared the door and squeezed his arm as tight as I could."

Aaron started barking out orders, trying to take control of the frantic situation.

"I had (Staff Sgt. Frankie Hearn II) grab a first-aid kit and I told someone to call 911," he said. "But I knew there wasn't enough time for that."

Young and Aaron ran outside still clutching Vasquez's arm as it spurted out blood. They needed a vehicle and fast, something Staff Sgt. Joshua Pearson and Senior Airman Violette Zeimet from the 366th EMS were able to help with.

"We saw sergeant Pearson and airman Zeimet pull up in a (pick-up truck)," Aaron said. "We lifted him into the bed of the truck and we took off."



Courtesy Photo

They were far from an urgent care center and time was running out.

"We realized we couldn't contain the bleeding with just direct pressure. I beat on the top of the truck and yelled 'go faster!'" Aaron said. "(Young) and I switched positions in the cramped truck bed and I told Vasquez 'This is going to hurt.' I wrapped my belt around his arm and cranked it as tight as I possibly could."

Aaron said that despite the overwhelming pain Vasquez endured, he sat still and let them apply the tourniquet.

"At this point we could see the color leaving him and we were doing everything we could to keep him awake," Aaron said.

Aaron said they started asking Vasquez questions, like what was his name and what did he eat for breakfast. It helped keep Vasquez's mind alert and conscious.

The truck rocked them back and forth as it roared down Gunfighter Avenue, heading toward the urgent care center. In the middle of the turmoil, Vasquez

said all he could think about was getting to the hospital.

"I had just gone through some pretty extensive training at the Air Advisor Academy and they always warned you about shock," Aaron said. "He demonstrated all of the signs of it."

As he shifted around in the truck bed, Vasquez said he began to fade in and out of consciousness. He said time seemed to stand still as everything slowed down, but just as the world became stagnant, the truck slammed on its brakes.

They made it.

"As soon as the truck stopped in front of the UCC we were yelling 'Get him out of this truck now!'" Aaron said.

"(Vasquez) was trying to help us but airman Zeimet grabbed both of his feet and ripped him out of that bed by herself. By the time somebody had a hand in to help her, They knew this was going to be serious.

"They laid me on the bed ...continued on page 6...

Welcome Home!!

Maj. James Hunt, 45th Fighter Squadron, returned home from Southwest Asia

Lt. Col. Bryan Wieland, 47th Fighter Squadron, returned home from Camp Turzii, Romania



Selva confirmed as Joint Chiefs vice chairman

By Cheryl Pellerin, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- The Senate confirmed Air Force Gen. Paul J. Selva as the 10th vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff last week.

The nation's second highest ranking military officer is a pilot and most recently was commander of U.S. Transportation Command at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

The Senate also confirmed Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. as chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Defense Secretary Ash Carter congratulated both leaders in a July 31 statement.

Strategic perspective

Carter said both men had proved "their mettle throughout their careers, from General Dunford's first years as an infantryman to his leadership both in Afghanistan and of the Marine Corps, and from General Selva's early days as a pilot to his leadership of our military's Transportation Command."

The secretary added, "I know that President (Barack) Obama and I, and our nation's security, will benefit greatly from their sage counsel and strategic perspective gained over years of opera-

tional experience."

Selva is a command pilot with more than 3,100 hours in the C-5 Galaxy, KC-135A Stratotanker and other aircraft. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering in 1980 from the U.S. Air Force Academy and later earned Master of Science degrees in management and human relations, and in political science.

Passionate advocate

From October 2008 to October 2011 he served as assistant to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Navy Adm. Mike Mullen.

Selva expressed his gratitude and that of his wife, Ricki. The two met while attending the Academy, and Ricki also served in the Air Force.

"It is truly humbling to represent the men and women who wear the uniform of our nation and our civilian workforce," Selva said. "You exemplify the best our country has to offer, and I promise to be a passionate advocate to ensure we remain the best-trained, best-led, best-equipped and most capable military in the world."



Blood Brothers continued from page 5...

and I'm scared as hell, I'm not going to lie," Vasquez said. "People were holding me down while sergeant Aaron was next to me telling me I'm going to be alright. I wasn't so sure."

As the situation grew increasingly overwhelming, Vasquez said he started to listen to what the doctors were saying around him.

"I remember hearing, 'I don't think we can perform that procedure here,' and that scared the hell out of me," Vasquez said. "I thought, 'Well who's going to do it?'"

Aaron said he noticed just how terrifying everything was becoming for Vasquez.

"He was going into shock, his heart rate was crazy, and his blood pressure was dropping. There was only one thing I could do," Aaron said.

"I very much invaded his personal space. I was about an inch from his face not letting him focus on anything but what I was saying to him."

Vasquez said he listened to every word out of Aaron's mouth and nothing else could get to him. When Aaron told him he was going to be just fine he thought, "Damn, I hope so."

Once he was stabilized, the UCC staff rushed him into surgery.

"We get into the surgery room and I looked up and there was stainless steel everywhere and tools all over the place," Vasquez said. "I thought I was in a horror movie."

Vasquez said that was the last thing he remembered at the UCC. The doctors had de-

termined that he needed more advanced surgery to ensure his artery would heal. They made the call and a helicopter landed outside the hospital.

He awoke five hours later nearly 60 miles away at St. Alphonsus Medical Center in Nampa, Idaho.

More than 15 stitches laced his arm back together. The surgeons at St. Alphonsus had to create several incisions to access his battered arteries but had no trouble handling the situation.

"I opened my eyes and a big window was in front of me. I remember seeing mountains really close to the building and I thought, 'I'm not in Mountain Home anymore.'" Vasquez said. "I looked at my hand as I realized what happened to me. I started trying to move my fingers, making sure they all still worked. When they started moving I was like, 'Okay I'm good.'"

Filled with relief, Vasquez said he realized he had dodged a bullet; coming within minutes of losing his life. He said without the quick and confident actions of his wingmen, he might not be alive today.

Aaron and Young said there's a lot to take away from what had happened. They now see military self-aid and buddy care training in a different light.

"You won't know how important SABC is until you have to use it," Aaron said. "Learn it, pay attention and treat it as seriously as you can because it can be the difference in some-

one's life."

SABC revolves around resourcefulness, but there isn't always time to improvise medical tools from everyday materials.

"People say they won't need a trauma kit because they work in an office," Aaron said. "Got a paper cutter? Got a shredder? Is there a window that was manufactured wrong 20 years ago and suddenly decides to slam apart the next time a 50-mph wind hits? We just don't know when these things will happen and we need to be prepared."

Aaron said he won't rest until he sees a trauma kit in every workplace at every assignment he goes to. He doesn't want to think about what might have happened if he hadn't paid attention during his medical training. His quick response with an improvised tourniquet may have played the biggest role in keeping Vasquez alive.

Young said he's still surprised by how such a small bolt can cause so much damage. It just goes to show life-threatening situations aren't exclusive to gunfire and explosions.

Vasquez has tried to thank the two for being there for him when he needed them most, but every time he tries, he's met with a laugh and a crude joke in the true crew chief fashion.

"I've never thought about it as being a hero, I just told him, 'Hey, you bled on me, so now we're blood brothers,'" Young said. "It doesn't matter that I was one of the people who saved him, my brother is still here, that's all that matters."



Operation Patriot Angler gets off to cool start

By Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARSON, Alaska--944th Fighter Wing members departed Luke Air Force Base on Saturday leaving behind temperatures closing in on the century mark and were greeted five hours later at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska by a breezy 65 degrees which was a great start to the 944th Logistics Readiness Squadron 2015 annual tour.

The 944th LRS was given the opportunity to actually deploy, integrate with, and provide and receive training with their active duty counterparts from the 673rd and the 773rd Logistics Readiness Squadrons during this year's deployment.

"The best compliment I can get is to be asked back," said Colonel Kurt Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing commander, as he spoke with the group before take-off. "Don't forget who you represent. There are three things we [Air Force Reservist] bring: experience, continuity, and cost effectiveness. Show them what the 944 Fighter Wing is made of, have fun, and don't forget your wingman."

While in Alaska the 944th LRS will be divided into two groups. Fuels, supply, and vehicle maintenance will work with the 673rd LRS and readiness, traffic management office and vehicle operations will work with the 773rd LRS. The team also comprises support members including, training, commander support staff, 944th Forces Support Squadron personnel, and wing staff agencies.

As part of the 673rd Logistics Readiness Group, the 673rd and 773rd LRSs with a combined staff of over 500 personnel are responsible for the operation and maintenance of a vehicle fleet in excess of 1,500 vehicles worth \$121 million; deployment operations for nearly 3,000 tons of Air Force equipment, 1,100 pieces of Army rolling stock and 600 storage containers; supply operations for nearly 48,000 line items valued at over \$408 million; storage and distribution of 12.5 million gallons of fuel; and traffic management support for 12,500 cargo shipments, 5,300 household good shipments and 10,630 ticketed travelers.

"Off station annual tours are such an important part of being a reservist; this is a time when Airmen can put into action all their training and skills working side by side their active duty counterparts, said Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Mahan, 944th LRS, Fuels noncommissioned officer in charge and assistant project officer for the trip. "Working in a real environment provides absolutely irreplaceable training, something which is very difficult to replicate in a simulated situation at home station."

"I am definitely excited to be outside Arizona. I'm a big fisherman so I hope to get in some fishing as well as working," said Airman Michael Prado, 944th LRS, TMO. As a fulltime student at Glendale Community College who has been with the unit for less than a year, this is his first squadron deployment. "The [deployment] process has been really smooth so far; my supervisor really helped me to get ready."

During their time in Alaska fuels personnel will receive training on Airborne Warning and Control System planes, hydrant systems, pump house, storage, laboratory, cryogenics, and accounting.

Members from the readiness section will assist with the Deliberate and Crisis Action Planning and Execution Segments Program and Air Expeditionary Force Reporting Tool and provide training in those areas. Additionally, they will receive 7-level upgrade and continual training and backfill their active duty counterparts.

Supply individuals will spend their time backfilling the active duty shop and receive on-the-job training and continual upgrade training.

Airmen from the transportation section are going to be providing and receiving vehicle operations training, TMO and continual upgrade training. They will also be assisting active duty with vehicle maintenance.

The training section will coordinate with active duty LRS training managers to provide and receive training and they will work with 944 LRS supervisors and trainers on any upgrade training and Training Business Area matters.

For the LRS, day one for this deployment began about a year ago when Readiness started working to get approval for the trip, coordinating airlift support and planning out the deployment and redeployment process.

"Our job is to carefully and efficiently get everyone to the destination, get them properly settled in and then rewind and do everything in reverse to get everyone home safely," said Senior Master Sgt. James Lindsay, 944th LRS, NCOIC of Plans and deployment project officer.

"I want everyone to be safe, continue to learn and represent the [Air Force] Reserve proudly," said Maj. Cedric Finnen, 944th LRS, Vehicle Maintenance Flight commander and Operation Patriot Angler deployment commander.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante

BRINGING THE HEAT

944 FIGHTER WING



944th members discuss life as a dual-military couple

Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARSON, Alaska -- Staff Sgt. Adam Jenkins and Senior Airman Cassandra Jenkins are a dual-military couple fresh off of active duty who decided to continue serving their country by joining the Air Force Reserve. They joined the 944th Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, where both serve in the 944th Logistics Readiness Squadron and together work as maintainers in the refueling vehicle maintenance shop.

It must have been fate when Cassandra was assigned to be Adam's military sponsor in 2009 when he was new to Holloman AFB, New Mexico. They met, fell in love, and have been married for over three years.

Adam, originally from Ohio, began his military career in 2007. While on active duty he deployed twice, once to Iraq and once to Afghanistan. Currently, he is a full time student at Universal Technical Institute, studying automotive technology. He joined the military for travel, education benefits and to serve his county following a long family tradition.

So far his career highlights include his deployments, "I feel like I was involved with mission support by not only the type of vehicle I would maintain but also the quality and quantity of my work,"

said Adam.

Cassandra, a native of Arizona, joined the military in 2008. While on active duty she did not get to travel much or deploy down range but is very interested in getting the opportunity while serving with the 944th FW. She joined the military as a way to help take care of her mother.

Her career highlights include being the only Airman to be a primary Unit Environmental Coordinator at Holloman AFB and being a superior performer during her units 2013 Unit Compliant Inspection where they received an "Excellent" rating.

According to the DoD demographics report, there are about 90,000 military-married-to-military couples in the United States armed forces. The Air Force has the highest percentage of those with 11.6 percent.

The military treats each member of the dual-military couple as an independent entity despite the couple making decisions jointly so being a member of a dual-military couple can present a unique set of challenges, however this couple chose to overcome the adversities and continually work to find a balance between their marriage and their careers.

Working in the same unit on the same type of vehicles could prove to be difficult for some couples but not this one.

"People think we are crazy

because of how much time we spend together but after five years of being together we still really enjoy each other's company," said Cassandra. "Military life is hard but we both understand it, know what to expect, and speak the same "military" language."

It did take the pair a little while to find a good balance between work and home life. "We have learned not to bring the job home," Adam commented.

As a couple they made a joint decision to leave active duty but their reasons were different. He was seeking more education to broaden his skill sets.

"With a 4.0 GPA I have been very successful in achieving my goal so far," said Adam. "Next I want to get a good job in the maintenance career field and take that knowledge and apply it to my Air Force Reserve career and hopefully teach other Airmen."

Cassandra wanted to be closer to family. "Leaving the security of active duty was a scary decision but my husband and family have been very supportive," she said. Her long term goal is to go to school for criminal justice and find a job in that career field.

They picked to serve in the 944th FW because it was close to home and family. There were a few bumps along the way but overall the transition was a



smooth one. Adam indicated the Reserve was a great fit for the couple. "The best part of the switch is convenience; the Air Force Reserve really works with my schedule."

As a couple, the Reserve allows them to better focus on things that are important to them, their civilian careers and getting to spend more time with family.

Starting over again has been the hardest thing about the transition for the couple. "Not having the stability of a fulltime jobs and making decision about careers and school has been a challenge," said Cassandra.

They have only been in the Reserve for a few months however both agree their long term goal is to serve in the military until retirement.

On the home front, Cassandra who comes from a very large family said they would eventually like expand their family with a couple of children. Adam agreed with a large smile, "A couple of kids would be great."

 **944TH FIGHTER WING** 
COMMANDER'S CALL
SATURDAY, AUG 8, 2015
1500 HRS

BRINGING THE HEAT

944th BASE THEATER
PLEASE BE SEATED 15 MINUTES PRIOR
TO START TIME

 **OUR VISION**
The 944th Fighter Wing will provide premier integrated Airmen to support and defend our nation.

   **OUR MISSION**
Train and provide combat ready Airmen
MISSION ■ AIRMEN ■ FAMILY



944 FW commander visits 414 FG

By Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr. 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs
SEYMOUR JOHNSON AIR FORCE BASE, North Carolina-

944th Fighter Wing leadership headed to North Carolina to visit with the 944th Airmen stationed at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base last month.

Col. Kurt Gallegos, 944 FW commander and a few members of his staff including Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944 FW command chief, Col. Paul Theisen, 944th Mission Support Group commander, and Lt. Col. James Goodwin, 944 FW Judge Advocate General (JAG), visited one of the wings geographically separated units, the 414th Fighter Group at Seymour Johnson AFB during their July unit training assembly.

The main purpose of the trip was to meet with Col. Christopher Freeman, 414th Fighter Group commander, to discuss issues of concern and visit with Airmen face-to-face to hear what they had to say. The group toured the units different facilities and were briefed on the 414th total force integration (TFI) effectiveness and each sections capabilities and accomplishments. They also attended a pilot graduation ceremony during the visit. "The 944th Fighter Wing commander and command chief were able to witness first-hand why we are the best," said Freeman. "They

were given an insight into the incredible responsibility we deliver every day to ensure F-15E aircrew and Intel students are poised to be successful in the combat squadrons they will ultimately serve. Overall, we demonstrated to our Fighter Wing leadership how our small but lethal Fighter Group does it the right way, the first time, every time."

During the tour, Airmen from the 414th FG provided various demonstrations and Gallegos and Hutson recognized superior performers by presenting them with the wing coin.

"I realized just how elite and special the F-15 Strike Eagle community is after attending the B-course graduation," said Hutson.

"The community here is rightly proud of their multi-faceted mission."

The B course graduation is a ceremony honoring new pilots as they move on into their respective flying communities and was one of the engagements the group attended.

"I truly appreciate what these warfighters bring to the forefront of air superiority," continued Hutson.

The visit ended with a 414th barbecue where Hutson participated in a "cornhole" tournament and Gallegos led a mentor motorcycle ride.

"It is always a treat visiting the 414th Fighter Group," said Gallegos. "Their performance and production is second-to-none. They are such a presence in our continuous efforts to make life better for our Airmen while strengthening the Wing and the Air Force Reserve Command."



414th Fighter Group
Seymour Johnson, North Carolina

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.



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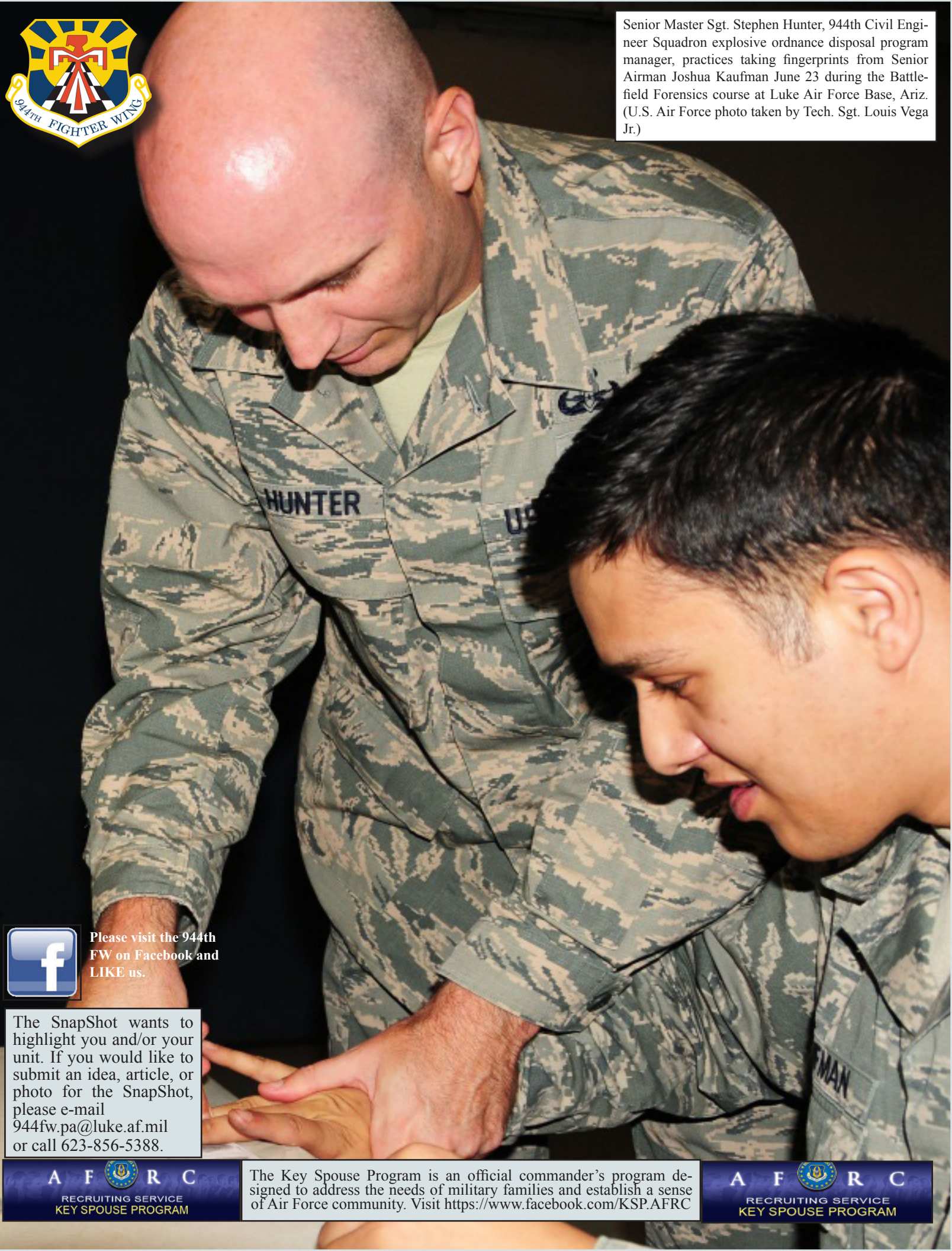
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Senior Master Sgt. Stephen Hunter, 944th Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal program manager, practices taking fingerprints from Senior Airman Joshua Kaufman June 23 during the Battlefield Forensics course at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. (U.S. Air Force photo taken by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)



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