

A SOONER AIRLIFTER

April 2011



Photo by Travis Caperton, State Capitol Public Relations Office

Former WRANGB commander tacks on new rank, new responsibility

Col. Greg Ferguson, with the help of his wife Kathy, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, and the Ferguson's sons Kyle and Cody, is promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in the Oklahoma Air National Guard Feb. 23, at the Oklahoma State Capitol. With the increase in rank, comes an increase in responsibility, as Gen. Ferguson assumes the role of Chief of Staff of the Oklahoma Air National Guard.

Deserving Airman wins award for excellence

By 1st Lt. Cody Hawkins & 1st Lt. Jessica Chapa
137 ARW Public Affairs

One of WRANGB's own is the National Guard Bureau's 2010 Outstanding Air National Guard Chaplain Assistant of the Year Award – Minuteman Award recipient.

Tech. Sgt. Joshua Barry of the 137th Air Refueling Wing was honored with the award for his outstanding service both at Will Rogers and while on a 6-month deployment to Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Here at his home base, Sgt. Barry is a standout performer and has been recognized for his hard work and outstanding service.

While deployed to Dover in support of the Air Force

Mortuary Affairs Operations Chaplain's Office from January 29, 2010 to July 1, 2010, Sgt. Barry tirelessly worked to aid the mortuary staff in processing and preparing the remains of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen killed in conflicts around the world. He organized morale trips for the mortuary affairs team, along with weekly dinners.

Sgt. Barry also assisted the families of dead war heroes as their remains were sent home to be buried. Sgt. Barry recalled one of those trips in which a grieving wife was unable to console her two daughters.

"I felt like I was their big brother," said Sgt. Barry, "All I could do was hold them while they cried through the

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Tremendous year for WRANGB improvements



By Col. Jon Scott, 137th Operations Group Commander

If you drive around the base, avoiding closed streets and other obstacles of progress, you will notice the tremendous year we've had improving WRANGB.

From renovating building 1009, starting construction on the 146th ASOS building, repairing critical base streets, the base has undergone quite a transformation.

Furthermore, in support of the Global War on Terrorism,

we have deployed and safely returned numerous guardsmen, all of whom were provided exceptional support before and after their deployments.

The above accomplishments obviously took dedicated, exceptional efforts by many people across the base.

A number of functions on base are undermanned and their personnel resource constraints are compounded by skill level challenges, budget cuts and deployments.

No, we are not the only base in this situation so hopefully this doesn't sound like whining, it's just a statement of fact. However, the other real fact is that things get done at a high level of achievement everyday regardless of the situation.

This being said military actions on the home front are just as important as those operators going down range. So those of us deploying remember to thank those staying in place to keep the mission back home successful.

Continue to work hard, and thank you for your service.

ORTP update

**By Maj. David McCormack
137 ARW Wing Plans Officer**

A big thanks to all those who helped make ORTP 1 and 2 a huge success!

We were able to overcome sub-zero temperatures, slick roads and near-blizzard conditions. The hard work was apparent. The total team effort, professionalism and dedication were

noticed by many.

ORTP 3 is scheduled for April 11-13 here at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base.

If you're in need of a list of required participants, contact me, Maj David McCormack at David.McCormack@ang.af.mil or by phone at (405) 686-5240. I can also provide in-depth information on ORTP 3.

ORTP 4 is scheduled for Aug 1-8 at Volk Field. Designated person-

nel and equipment will deploy from WRANGB for a full-scale exercise.

The actual location and date of the ORI is still undetermined at this time.

If you would like ORI/ORTP updates, please join the 137ARW.ORI mailing list by contacting MSgt Tippett at Christina.Tippett@ang.af.mil.

Thanks again for your hard work. I appreciate the extra efforts by many of you. I promise to let you all know as I know any more.

137th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Staff

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For consideration, all submissions must be provided to the PA Office, at 137ARW.PA@ang.af.mil or in Bldg. 1046, 686-5227, no later than 10 a.m. Saturday of drill weekend. The PA Office distributes the Airlifter ten months each year according to training needs.

PA Officers: 1st Lt. Cody Hawkins, 1st Lt. Jessica Chapa; NCOIC: Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Tucker; public affairs specialists: Staff Sgt. Lindsay Roe and Senior Airman Patricia Baker; information manager: Senior Airman Angela Smith; photographers: Master Sgt. Roberta Thompson and Staff Sgt. Caroline Hayworth; videographers: Master Sgt. Jun Kim, Airman Basic Dustin Wheeler

First Sergeants provide care and guidance



By Master Sgt. David Hollis, 146th ASOS First Sergeant

My overall perspective of a First Sergeant is a person who takes care of the needs of Airmen and their families.

The morale, physical needs, and emotional needs of Airmen are essential to them completing the mission. Simply put, happy Airmen are productive Airmen. We all know that sometimes things are not going to be ideal and that is part of being in the military.

We have to adapt, adjust, and overcome. If everyone has what they need to perform the job and they are willing to perform it, then it should be a success. I think this is most critical during a deployment when stressors are obviously at the highest.

First Sergeant's are a sounding board and a link between the enlisted and commander to accomplish the mission. It is challenging being a Guardsman today.

We have the same requirements as active duty in the Total Air Force, but two days a month to maintain those requirements. We also deploy in the same cycles. As a First Sergeant, I see the need to help keep the morale up during a drill that is consumed with "must accomplish" items.

A First Sergeant needs to be aware of any issues that

prevent accomplishments and help resolve them.

There will be incidents that occur resulting in negative or punitive outcomes. I see the First Sergeant's role during these times as to help supervisors and commanders determine the cause and look for any underlying factors that contributed. Is it just a mistake or is there something else going on that caused judgment to be clouded?

We all make mistakes and they are good learning tools. I believe these incidents should be a bump in the road. We can ensure mistakes do not reoccur and walk away with a positive change in behavior.

First Sergeant's should mentor and pass along information pertinent to the needs of Airmen. Here's an example, I'm a police officer. When I respond to a call, people expect me to solve a problem in five minutes that may have taken years to create.

I can only deal with the now and try to make them understand the root cause from long ago. Often times, we make bad uninformed decisions. Having a good mentor and the right information are keys to success and can help prevent any short falls or mistakes.

Everyone has had at least one person who showed them the ropes and made them a better Airman. If you do not mentor you are leaving behind Airmen that are less likely to succeed.

We all learned from someone and looked up to them. It is important to acknowledge Airmen that are exceeding expectations by quarterly and yearly awards. This continues excellence and promotes others to strive for it.

A First Sergeant is there for Airmen no matter the circumstance. Good or bad, available 24/7. They are willing to give to help Airmen succeed. I consider it a privilege to be selected to perform the duty.



Did you know?

**By 1st Lt. Paul Blankenship
137 FSS Personnel Officer**

The Military OneSource Tax Program has begun! The program provides free access to a customized version of the basic H&R Block at Home® electronic tax- filing product.

This customized product allows for FREE federal filing and FREE state

filing (up to three states). In addition, FREE telephonic tax consultations are available to help with tax-related issues at 1-800-730-3802.

H&R Block At Home® is FREE to active duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members and their families. For more information visit militaryonesource.com.





Photo by 1st Lt. Jessica Chapa

Master Sgt. Debbie Bright, assigned to the 146th Air Support Operations Squadron here, looks on as members from several different units take part in a joint, simulated Self Aid Buddy Care scenario during an Operational Readiness Training Program held on base Feb. 13. The exercise included members from the 146th and 137th here, along with members from the Tennessee Air National Guard's 164th Airlift Wing and the AF Reserve's 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker AFB.

Air Force Core Values

Integrity First
 Service Before Self
 Excellence In All We Do

WILL ROGERS MISSION STATEMENT

“To enhance global reach by serving our nation, state and community through the unique capabilities of the 137th Air Refueling Wing, the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron, and the 146th Air Support Operations Squadron.”

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