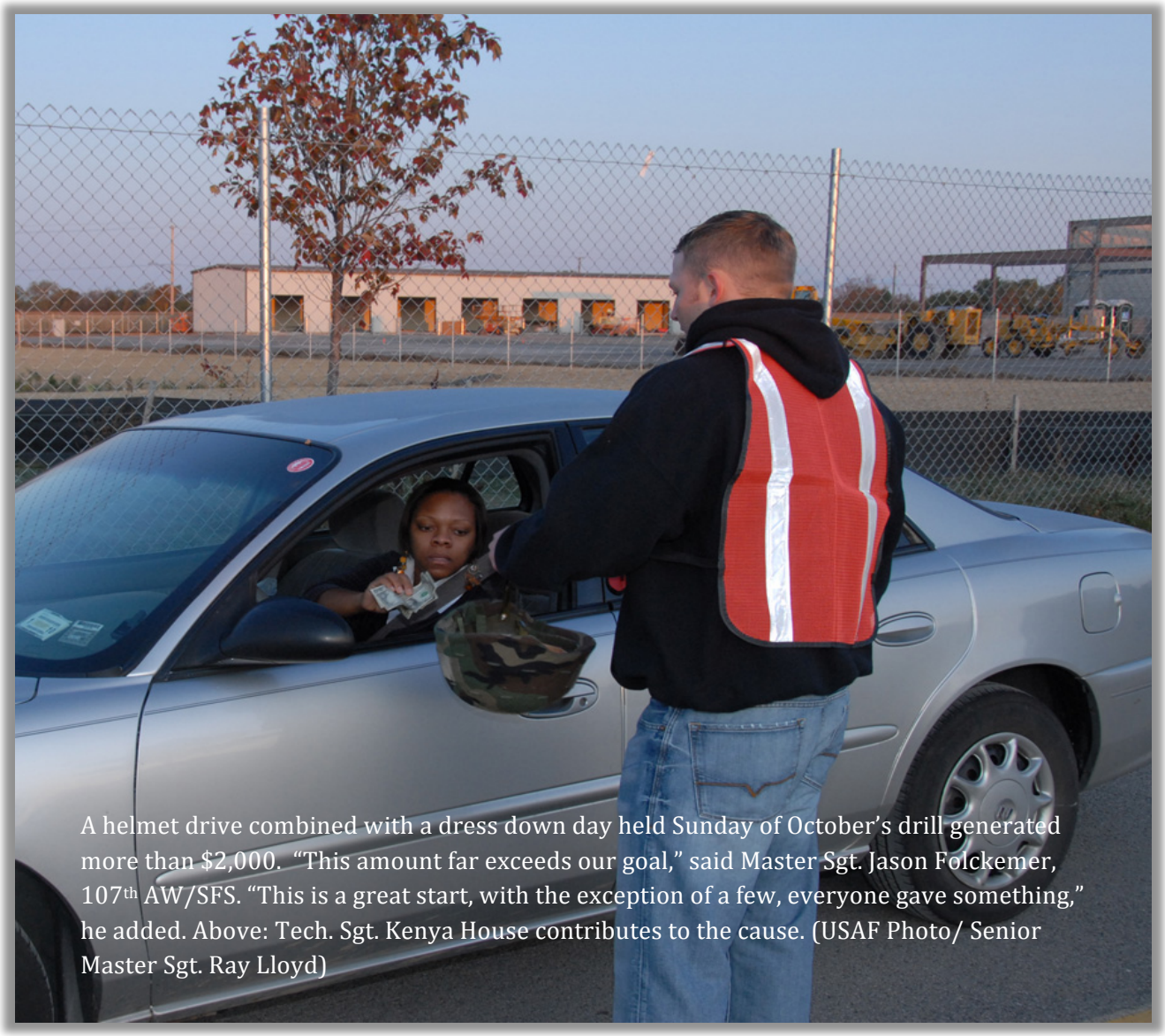
Thunder Bird
107th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard, Niagara Falls, NY
November 2009

CFC starts off with a helmet full of dollars



A helmet drive combined with a dress down day held Sunday of October's drill generated more than $2,000. "This amount far exceeds our goal," said Master Sgt. Jason Folckemer, 107th AW/SFS. "This is a great start, with the exception of a few, everyone gave something," he added. Above: Tech. Sgt. Kenya House contributes to the cause. (USAF Photo/ Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd)

Venison; the other red meat

It's been a whirlwind finish to the summer and start of the fall. I'd like to congratulate and thank all of the 107th members who pitched in to ensure our passing grade during the UCI. It was not the excellent or outstanding that we had aimed for, but we passed with a sat and live to fight another day. Informal channels inferred that the Inspector General was looking to reset their grades to a tougher standard. I know it felt like that during the daily out-briefs where it was mostly one way conversations. Regardless, programs were reviewed, lessons were learned, and areas for improvement were found, which is the purpose of that inspection.

October marked our first deployment in the C-130 going to Puerto Rico. In the spirit of the association we had a small cadre of 914th maintainers and operators helping show us the ropes in the Herc. Although the operations tempo was minimal, it was a valuable experience for numerous people in new career fields learning how to deploy in the new weapons system.

Last week saw the highly successful culmination to many months of planning with the exercise phase of Vigilant Guard. Multiple 107th members put in long hours to ensure the success of this massive disaster preparedness exercise. Hats off to Col Vaughan, his staff and all the wing agencies for the effort put into the planning and execution of such a valuable training experience.

Looking at future business, the September Weapons System Council (WSC), which is made up of C-130 Wing Commanders or their representatives, was dominated by the discussion of which AEF option we collectively want the NGB to put forward to HQ/AMC. Currently, the ANG is providing aircraft and crews for 45 to 60 day AEF rotations. It is all accomplished in a volunteer status with limited mid tour swap outs. Portions of the Active Duty C-130 force are projected to drop below their current 2:1 dwell to deploy (D2D) ratio. For example, if you are deployed a year, you have to be home two years after the deployment before you can be mobilized to deploy again.

Continued Page 3

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Staff Sgt. Peter Dean
Staff photographers
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Tech. Sgt. Justin Huett
Tech. Sgt. Catherine Perretta

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THUNDERBIRD

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Leader lines from Page 2

This drop below a 2:1 D2D ratio triggers the requirement for the NGB to present a two year plan to HQ/AMC with Partial Mobilization (PM) authority of the Guard C-130 AEF rotation, thus allowing the AD to get back over the 2:1 D2D ratio.

Five Courses Of Action (COA) s were presented at the WSC. They ranged from the current 60 days boots on ground (BOG) all the way up to 120 days BOG, with 120 days BOG being the preference voiced by AMC and the Air Staff. The selling points as presented to us were, a greater time between AEF buckets for the Wing, more forces to the combatant commander, and more closely aligning our rotation policy with that of the Reserves and Active Duty.

Lively discussions followed with the primary concerns over a 120-day BOG deployment being reduced volunteerism. Even with partial mobilization authority, we try to get individuals to volunteer to fill taskings vice telling them they have to go. For traditional guardsmen a 60 day deployment is an easier sell to their employer than 120 days. Add on to those, days to prepare, travel, and reconstitution time, and 60 or 120 day BOG quickly becomes 90 and 150 day mobilizations.

The planned proposal that the WSC agreed to have the NGB staff take forward is a 60-day BOG option. It provides the needed increase in aircraft and aircrews desired by HQ/AMC, while still maintaining the shorter tour length. Our projected AEF cycle is 3 / 4 which runs from September through December 2011. There are no mid tour swap outs planned in the 60 or 120 BOG options. If the option we requested gets approved then four wings fill the 120 day AEF cycle at 60 days per wing. The plan has not gotten to the level of detail to determine if we will fly the tails possessed by the 914th or if they will come from some other wing.

In an attempt to give the Guard and Reserves some long range stability with family life and employers, the Secretary of Defense has established a Reserve component policy ensuring personnel have orders in hand a minimum of 180 days prior to activation. He continues to press the Secretary of the Air Force and Air Force Chief of Staff to meet these timelines, and resolve the Active Duty D2D problem, so the final decision to this proposal will not lay idol. Hopefully this will shed some light on the direction future AEF deployments may be going, and as with any plan it is always subject to change.

Lastly, my safety input. We are rapidly approaching winter driving conditions and total darkness for the drive to and from work. Slow down, and give yourselves a greater margin for error, both yours and the other guy. Don't drive distracted by texting; use a hands free cell phone. As the holiday parties get into full swing have a plan, identify a DD before you get into the spirits and enjoy the season safely. Happy Holidays… eat more venison.

EMEDS play crucial roll

On 31 October 2009 the Medical Group joined by units from multiple states began their five-year Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS) certification. With Vigilant Guard as a foundation the EMEDS mission focused on homeland response. Both civilian and military casualties were transported from the incident site (Tonawanda, NY) via ground or helicopter to the EMEDS facility located behind the medical group. Although the core concept of EMEDS remained consistent, to triage and stabilize the patient, there was a shift in perspective because of the civilian casualties. The introduction of civilian casualties presented the opportunity to engage multiple state and local agencies, providing an excellent training opportunity. Airmen were introduced to systems and situations normally not encountered in a wartime scenario. More importantly, there was an overall understanding of what role EMEDS would play in homeland response. Looking forward, as we increasingly engage in joint operations the medical field will face new and exciting challenges. Whether we respond to a natural disaster, a terrorist incident, humanitarian assistance or in support of a wartime mission we are trained and ready. The EMEDS training we receive today could save lives tomorrow.

(Caption writer Capt. Jennifer Mills, USAF Photos/Tech. Sgt. Catherine Perretta)

Your Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station Base Honor Guard presented the Colors for an Enlistment / Re-enlistment Ceremony that took place at the Ralph on Oct 11th. On that same date, prior the start of the Bills/Browns game the Honor Guard presented the Colors during the singing of the National Anthem as Niagara Falls C-130's performed a flyby.

The Honor Guard's primary focus is Military Funeral Details but is also called upon to perform at civic events. If you are interested in honoring those who served before you with dignity while earning extra retirement points and pay, then the Honor Guard might suite you. Currently we are in need of 107th members who are in good standings with their units to attend a 5-day training course Nov. 17 through Nov. 21. We only ask that you be able to perform a minimum of 2 days per month.

If you would like to learn more about the Honor Guard or would like to become a member contact us at 716-236-3182 or our work cell phone at 716-622-0494.

Communications flight clears the air

By Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Pollow

107th Airlift Wing, Communications Flight

It seems the only thing that is constant around here anymore is that there will be change. If you don't like today's plan just stick around we'll change it tomorrow! And so it goes with the communications world also. There will be changes in the way users will request communications support in accordance with IAW new regulations and to clear up an UCI hit. I would also like to clarify the process for requesting services in collocated facilities. With 107th users in a 914th buildings and 914th users in 107th buildings, it has gotten to the point where you're not sure who owns what or who you would need to contact to request service or report outages.

First off, the communications branch will be standing up a new function called the Communications Focal Point or CFP. As the name implies, this function will be your go-to point for all your communications needs. All new requirements need to be submitted to the CFP using an AF Form 3215. The CFP will then review the 3215 for accuracy and completeness and solicit coordination with the appropriate TCO, EC and/or building manager. Once coordinated, the 3215 will be processed through the appropriate agency. The CFP will also be tasked with tracking the status of all work orders and trouble tickets and would be the section to contact for status of requests. Requests that should be submitted on a 3215 include phone/LAN relocates or additions and new equipment requirements to include radio and computer. Basically, if it's not broken it goes on a 3215. All troubles will be called into the CFP at ext. 2544, with the exception of computer issues which need to be directed to your CSA who will coordinate with the CFP if further guidance is needed. Your CSA is displayed as part of your log-in script and also should be posted on your section's bulletin board.

If you are a 107th member in a 914th building, which will soon include buildings 902, 907, 915 & 917, your communications requirements are handled as follows; Computer/Network issues contact your CSA as directed above. LMR issues contact the CFP. For troubles with telephones, public address systems or other communications equipment you will need to contact the reserve help desk at ext. 3310. New requirements, other than computer, will need to be submitted using an AF Form 3215 to the 914th SCXP office. You must also remember you are now in an AFRC facility and must follow their guidelines. This means, among other things, cordless phone are no longer authorized.

Individual offices will no longer accept requests for service except in the rare case that the CFP cannot be contacted and you have an emergency outage. Leaving a voice message with the CFP will ensure your call receives the proper attention. Using the proper procedures will insure that the request is being tracked, does not get lost in the shuffle and that man-hours are accounted for. If you have questions on any communications issue please contact the CFP at ext. 2544. Thanks!

Attention to orders

By First Sgt. Mathew Rose

107th Airlift Wing, Logistics and Readiness Squadron

So, there you are at Commander's call and someone in your unit is called to front and center for promotion. While the newly promoted Airman is getting his or her new stripes tacked on, you wonder to yourself, "What is the history of those chevrons?" or "Where did they come from?" Well, fear not because that is the topic of this article. Early military use of the chevron first appeared on knights' shields as part of a coat of arms design. As such, chevron became recognized as a symbol of honor. It is no surprise then that by the 18 century French soldiers were wearing up pointed chevrons on their coat sleeves as length of service and good conduct badges. However, their cross channel rivals, the British, opted for a down pointed chevron. They were worn then as insignias of rank. Even their Commissioned officers wore gold chevrons as rank indicators.

A century later, in the new world, the newly formed American Continental Army was wearing cloth chevrons as rank indicators. Through the first two decades of American Independence, both the Army and Marines wore different combinations and colors of chevrons depending on branch of service and enlisted or commissioned status. Some chevrons were worn above the elbow. Some were pointed up others were pointed down. By 1833 Company grade officers stopped wearing chevrons and wore only epaulettes as rank insignias. At this same time, Sergeants and Corporals of dragoons began wearing cloth chevrons on their sleeves, but all other NCOs wore epaulettes to show their rank. Finally, in 1852 all Army NCOs wore down pointed cloth sleeve chevrons until 1902. At that time the Army decided to point them up. They did adopt the basic design that they continue to use today. Though the Army of today wears a slip on tab chevron on the chest of their Combat uniform.

The basic design of the stripes worn by the Air Force today dates from 1948. General Vandenberg, who was then, the Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, adapted this design. It appears that the designer of the chevrons may have been trying to combine the Army Air Corp shoulder patch of WW2 and the insignia painted on the aircraft of the time. The Air Force has had some changes in chevron color and placement over the years. Many of us remember the white chevron on the solid green fatigue uniform. Others may recall the Aircrew Style Name Patch worn on the Battle Dress Uniform of the mid-1990s. This uniform was completely without chevrons, but had the wearer's name and rank patch Velcro'd on the chest. This uniform contributed to many missed salutes and was thankfully short lived. There were also changes to chevrons on the blue uniform as well. There was the Senior Airman vs. Sergeant 3 striped chevron with colored in star for the "Buck Sergeant." You may recall the enlisted top three being authorized to wear shoulder epaulettes as well as cloth chevrons. Of course, this practice has ended as the pendulum has swung back to the "stripes on sleeves" traditionalist.

You can be sure that the final chapter has not been written on the evolution of the chevron. While it continues to evolve, one can still see the link in the current stripes of today to those from days of old. The chevron is a part of our current military culture as well as a proud reminder of our long-standing military heritage.

Catholic Mass

Saturday 4 p.m., Base Chapel

Protestant Worship

Saturday 4 p.m.,
Wing Conference Room, Building 901

The Rosary

Fridays prior to UTA at noon,
Wing Conference Room, Building 901
For service schedules of **Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim,** and **Orthodox** communities, call extension 2395.

If you need to see a chaplain, please call Chaplain Services at extension 2395, or at the numbers listed below. Chaplains are always on call.

Catholic Chaplain

Lt. Col. James P. Jaeger
St. Mary's Church
32 E. Morris St.
Bath, NY 14810
Phone: (315) 597-4571

Protestant Chaplain

Maj. Jackie Ann Rose Kraft
Asbury United Methodist Church
3750 Millesport Highway
Getzville NY 14068
Office: (716) 688-8677
Home: (716) 625-6266

1st Lt. Keith A. Manry
Akron First United Methodist
7 Church St.
Akron, NY 14001
Office: (716) 542-2060
Home: (716) 542-9567

Army/Air Force Religious Support Team

By Chaplain (1st Lt.) Keith Manry

107th Airlift Wing, Chaplains Office

During the last days of September Chaplains Kraft, Manry, and Army Staff Sgt. Linda Nosbisch joined with green and blue chaplains and assistants from across the state in Greenwich, N.Y. in the colorful surroundings at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center for a purple event. The focus of the event was to better equip the religious support teams of the New York National Guard to become increasingly effective in their respective ministries.

Led by Chaplain Col. Eric Olson, the Join Forces Chaplain of New York State and Chaplain Lt. Col. Todd Luce the Join Forces Deputy Chaplain of New York State, the conference introduced and highlighted joint services efforts to serve our more than 19,000 New York Guard members in New York State.

Several speakers were featured over the course of the conference including newly hired State Psychologist, Dr. Joan Sincavage, Capt. Douglas Hedwig the Commander and Conductor of the 89th Army Band, Beverly Keating, the Family Support representative from the 109th Airlift Wing who explained their own version of the Army's Yellow Ribbon initiative (a reintegration program), Col. James Lettko representing the TAG, Naj Wycoff from Adirondack Healing Connections, and other guests.

One of the initiatives highlighted by Chaplain Olson was the Strong Bonds Training in which we were encouraged and offered resources to strengthen the marriages of our members in the process producing a better airman/soldier and a more efficient and successful military.

The conference equipped our office staff with tools to better serve our guardsmen and we are appreciative of the opportunity to be involved and connect with other chaplains from across the joint forces of the New York National Guard.

107th AW Military Ball '09

USAF Photos/Tech. Sgt. Charity Edwards

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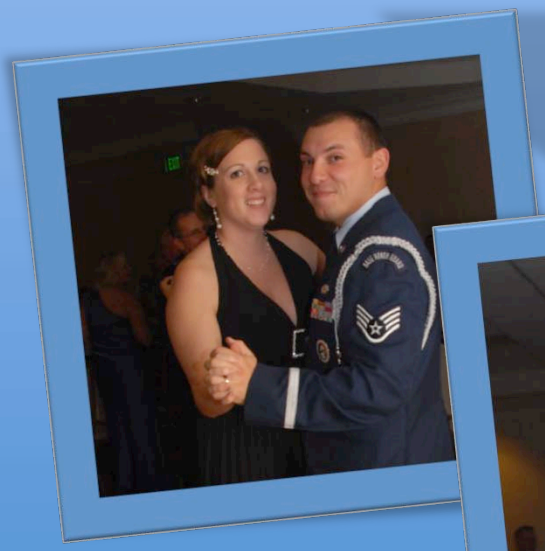
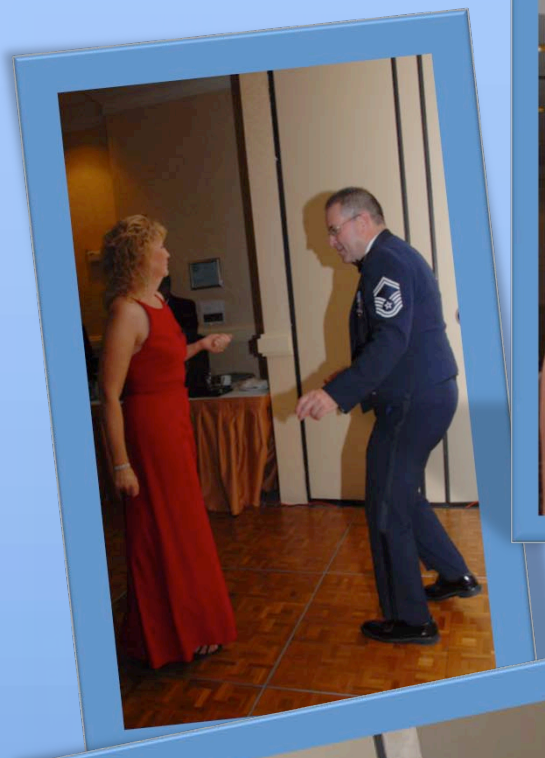
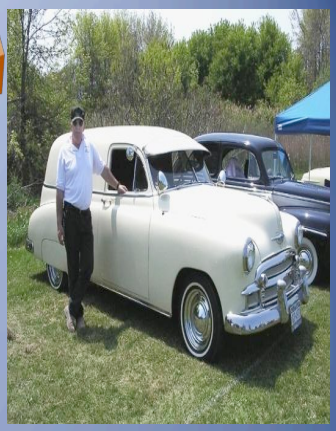
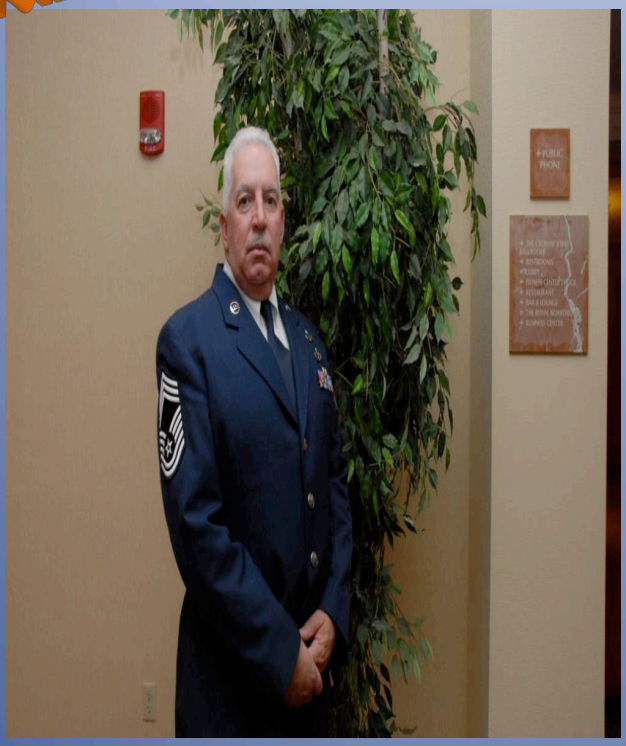




USAF Photos/Tech. Sgt. Charity Edwards

Retirement Party for CMSgt Al Clark





WHEN: JAN 23, 2010

WHERE: NIAGARA FALLS FALCON CLUB

TIME: 1700hrs-?

COST: $25 per person (includes gift, meal, drinks)

Please contact the following POC's:

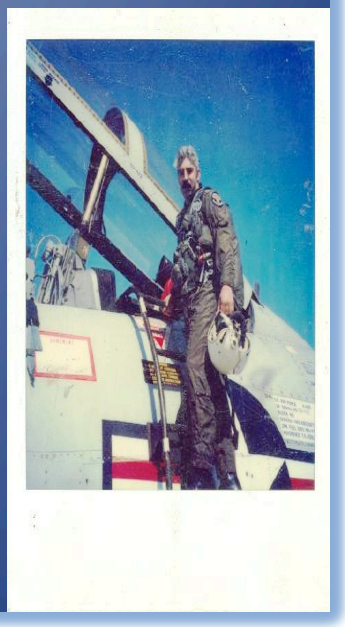
MSgt Ken Devole x2580

MSgt Melissa Shenefiel x2365

MSgt Vicki Weaver x2481

SSgt Sayers x2427

Sra Gouchie x3457

SMSgt Ballester x3235

MSgt Martin x2536