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Student Flight Preps New Recruits



photograph by SrA Jeremy Brownfield, 127th Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Michelle L. Steele, 127th Wing Student Flight NCOIC, guides new 127th Wing Airmen-recruits through drills while helping to build their Air Force knowledge at Selfridge Air National Guard Base during the February UTA. The Student Flight program prepares new Airmen for Basic Military Training, and many new recruits attend the optional program as a way to get a head start on their new military life. See story on page 6.



Commander's Column



by **Lt. Col. William Johnston**
127th Logistics Readiness Squadron Acting Commander

As I type this article the 127th Wing currently has 25 members deployed for various types of ECS (Expeditionary Combat Support). Additionally we also have 35 or so members who volunteered to deploy later on this year. First of all let me say that I am proud of all the Airmen who take the time out of their personal lives to deploy in support of our country and I would like to personally thank them. These ECS deployments are individuals who have raised their hands and filled various gaps in coverage in different parts of the world.

An important part of volunteering for these deployments is preparation. I would also like to plead with everyone to make sure that any conflict you might have with your family, employer, or anyone else is worked out prior to volunteering. Many times these deployments are arranged months in advance and inevitably a certain number of individuals will have issues arise that preclude them from filling the requirement. Once you raise your hand and say you will take a deployment, the unit owns it. If an issue does come up, the unit has to make arrangements to fill the short fall. History has shown us that this type of thing will happen and the only thing we can do is minimize how often it hap-

pens by ensuring that you are truly ready to deploy prior to raising your hand. Here are some specific suggestions:

1. Make sure you have supervisor approval before you volunteer. This applies to everyone regardless of who you work for. Your employer needs to be agreeable to you being away from your job for an extended period of time.
2. Please ensure that you have all your medical and dental requirements completed so that you don't become a burden on our medical staff to handle last minute things.
3. You need to be physically fit to deploy.
4. All ancillary training needs to be completed. This should be worked months in advance.

Your Unit Deployment Manager is the key link between the unit and the base deployment machine to ensure all unit personnel are ready to deploy. It takes the time and effort of many different base agencies like Readiness, MPF, the Clinic, TMO, and many others to deploy just one person. Please make sure you're not the one to increase this workload because you weren't prepared.



...From the Chief's Desk



by **Chief Master Sgt. Sandra Moss**
127th Wing Maintenance Operations Flight

We all desire to be successful in one way or another. Although success is different for each individual, one of the keys to success is preparation.

We begin preparing ourselves for life's journeys before we even realize it. Infants work on their motor skill in preparation to walk. Toddlers work on their language skill as they prepare to communicate. Preschoolers are already cliquing, bonding and learning social skills. Even in them you can see the preparation for their next undertakings.

In the military our preparation for success starts as early as Basic Military Training. Remember the first couple of days, asking your self, "What is all this for?" We are put in that precarious position of not knowing that we are really preparing ourselves for an excess of challenges and opportunities.

For me, BMT was a six-week-long regiment where I was taught the basic Air Force structure, rules of engagement, military history, customs and courtesies and was tasked with strict regulations and guidelines designed to inspire discipline and teamwork. We were all given the necessary tools that we would later use to be successful in our military career.

Throughout my military career I have witnessed a variety of individuals; some have been very motivated and consistently prepared for the opportunities that come their way. These are the Airmen who have set goals and are committed to achieving them.

They enroll in career development courses and Professional Military Education courses, finishing them in record time. Very early on in their careers these Airmen develop a professional reputation with superiors and peers that prove that they are punctual, dependable, and responsible, but, most importantly a part of the team (they get it).

How many times have you witnessed an Airman who has let the opportunity fall through their grasp because of lack of preparation?

Surrounding yourself with positively motivated peers and mentors can also prepare you for success. If your wingmen or support groups are the people that are always getting into trouble, consistently negative and are frowned upon by superiors and their peers, your rise through the ranks will, in all probability, be long and arduous. Don't forget your Air Force Instruction 36-2618, The Enlisted Force Structure (The Little Brown Book) gives you very helpful information for each step in rank along the way. Study and analyze it for yourself.

Do you live up to the responsibilities of the rank you hold and the rank that you aspire to attain?

Alexander Graham Bell is quoted as saying: "Before anything else, preparation is the key to success." The preparation you put into honing your craft, getting yourself in a position that opens doors and grabbing the chance to showcase your skills when the opportunity presents itself are the strategies needed to achieve success.



The Official
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of the 127th Wing

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Guard's Domestic Missions Must Not Suffer

The National Guard's domestic responsibilities must not suffer because of operational missions, Defense Secretary Robert Gates told the Senate Armed Services Committee today.

"The demand for Guard support of civil authorities here at home remains high," Gates said in a statement to the committee. "For example, the 'man-days' that Guardsmen have spent fighting fires, performing rescue and recovery, and other duties increased by almost 60 percent in 2008 as compared to 2007."

To compensate, the DoD has "substantially increased" support for the Guard and Reserve, which for decades had been considered a low priority for equipment, training and readiness.

"Today, the standard is that the Guard and Reserves receive the same equipment as the active force," Gates said. "For FY 2009, the base budget request included \$6.9 billion to continue to replace and repair the National Guard's equipment."

Gates said the Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, a panel created by Congress four years ago, has also helped to ensure that both reserve components are better trained, manned, and equipped for this new era.

"We have taken, or are taking, action on more than 80 percent of the commission's recommendations," Gates said.

For example, the panel suggested a combined pay and personnel system to fix problems that arise when Guard and Reserve

members shift from the reserve pay system to the active duty system. Gates said DoD is now launching that integrated system.

Shortly after he became the secretary of defense, Gates implemented mobilization policies that are more predictable and conducive to unit cohesion.

"I have tried to ease, to the extent possible, the stress on our reserve components," he said. "We have provided greater predictability as to when a Guardmember will be deployed by establishing a minimum standard of 90 days advance notice prior to mobilization. In practice, on average, the notification time is about 270 days.

"There is no longer a 24-month lifetime limit on deployment, but each mobilization of National Guard and Reserve troops is now capped at 12 months."

The goal is five years of dwell time for one year deployed. "We have made progress towards this goal but are not there yet," Gates said.

He added that the ratio of dwell time to mobilization for the Army National Guard this fiscal year is just over 3-to-1.

Finally, Gates said the percentage of Army Soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan who are Guardsmen or Reservists is currently about half what it was in summer 2005.

"Reliance upon the reserve component for overseas deployment has declined over time," he said.



127th Wing Ball April 4

Hotel and Shuttle accommodations are available to 127th Wing Airmen going to the Ball. Recommended hotel for the evening is The Shelby Twp. Hampton Inn located at 51620 Shelby Parkway in Shelby Twp, Mich. Reservations can be made at (586)731-4267. Shuttle services will be provided to the Palazzo Grande during the evening from the Hampton Inn.

The 127th Wing Ball will be held April 4 at the Palazzo Grande on 25 Mile Road and Van Dyke in Shelby Township, Mich.
Tickets \$25

Security Forces Conducts Mobile Operation Urban Training Exercise

by 2nd Lt. Anthony J. Lesterson
127th Wing Public Affairs

The 127th Security Forces Squadron conducted a Mobile Operation Urban Training (MOUT) exercise at Selfridge ANGB on Feb. 8 to ensure they maintain a high state of proficiency in close terrain and urban combat environments.

Security Forces Bravo Flight assaulted vacant building 907 with a total of 28 Airmen who received heavy resistance from fellow Security Forces personnel acting as enemy insurgents.

Bravo Flight responded to a mock terrorist event including a possible hostage situation. Six members of the 127th Wing student flight acted as hostages while Security Forces Airmen took necessary actions to rescue them from the enemy insurgents. The simulated insurgents' plan included holding a large weapons cache with plans for a larger scale attack against American citizens.

Two Bravo Flight teams stormed the apartment complex simultaneously and immediately took on small arms fire and dodged grenades and booby-trap explosives. While infiltrating the building they encountered situations such as insurgents wearing long camouflage trench coats and black masks, one wearing a bomb vest. Another insurgent used a hostage as a shield while to trying to prevent being shot or captured. Bravo Flight overcame the hostile situations and escorted the surviving enemies and hostages outside to perform search and seizures. The exercise was completed in less than one hour with all the hostages surviving and the insurgents dead or captured.

"I was definitely impressed with the Security Forces. One of the bad guys was using a hostage as a shield and the team that



photograph by SrA Jeremy Brownfield, 127th Public Affairs

127th Security Forces Staff Sgt. Jacob Elenbass maintains a line of site to provide cover while other Security Force members get into position to secure another room during the Mobile Operation Urban Training Exercise at Selfridge in vacant Building 907.

came in communicated very well and used teamwork to get the hostage free and capture the bad guy," said Katherine Sharp, a 127th Student Flight trainee acting as a hostage.

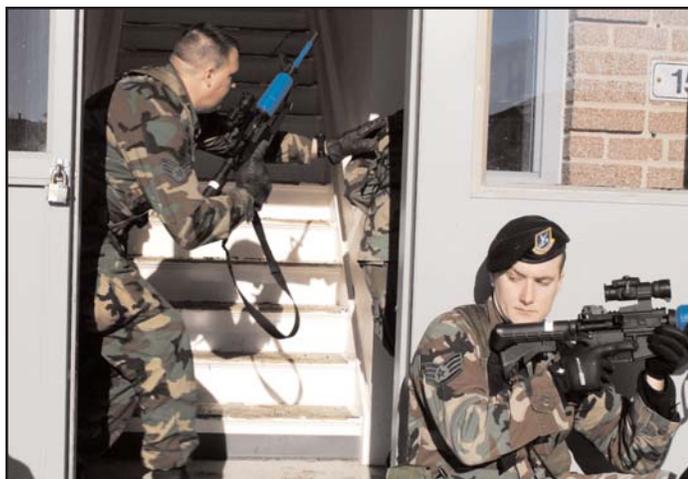
Urban combat is known to be the most dangerous form of combat. This is due to the element of surprise troops experience from engaging the enemy in an enclosed and unfamiliar environment. The engaging organization must take countless measures to decrease the loss of lives during response operations. Airmen must avoid silhouetting themselves in doors, windows or around corners. They must keep their eyes lined up with their firearm and focus on what is in front of them at all times. Ammunition usage must be monitored during firefights and noise is often a troubling factor. This kind of training for security forces personnel is crucial due to the kinds of enemy threats faced today.

"The units in Iraq are going through this right now; this training will help us to prevent mistakes when doing this in a hostile situation," said Senior Master Sgt. Douglas K. Powell, superintendent of Bravo Flight.

Working in such environments can be stressful, so during their down time security forces Airmen joke around and tease one another. But when the time comes to respond to response situations their professionalism and commitment to one another rallies.

"The guys joke around a lot, especially with me - being the new guy - but when it's time to do the job they get serious and do what needs to be done. I trust them completely," said Airman 1st Class Darian Neeley, the newest member to the Security Forces Bravo Flight team.

Security Forces Alpha and Bravo Flights take on the great responsibility of providing safety for the base and all the personnel here. Alpha Flight completed this same training earlier this year with each Security Forces Airmen going through MOUT training at least once every three months.



photograph by SrA Jeremy Brownfield, 127th Public Affairs

127th Security Forces Staff Sgt. Kurt Brinker covers the back door as Staff Sgt. Dane Thompkins enters Building 907 in formation at Selfridge during a Mobile Operation Urban Training exercise.

127th Wing Begins Thunderbolt Training

by TSgt. Dan Heaton
127th Wing Public Affairs

In an enclosed hangar on a snowy and cold Michigan winter day, seven camouflaged men struggled to feed the dragon. Standing on a platform, voices raised to be heard over a portable heater unit running at full tilt against the cold, the men reached and pulled and loaded - and learned - to feed the dragon.

The "dragon" is an ALA or Ammunition Loading Adapter, and it is the piece of equipment that allows Air Force munitions crews to feed the roughly 1100 rounds of 30 mm ammunition the A-10 carries for its distinctive seven-barrel Gatling gun.

"The gun is the biggest challenge," said Master Sgt. James Thomson, a member of the load standardization crew for the 127th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (AMXS) munitions unit, a part of the Michigan Air National Guard at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. "Loading missiles and munitions on the wing is similar on the A-10 to the F-16, but the A-10's gun is a new experience for our guys."

The 127th Wing is in the middle of transitioning from flying F-16 Fighting Falcons to becoming one of the Air Force's newest A-10 units. As part of the transition, the 366 personnel who make up the wing's maintenance squadron are getting initial qualification training in all aspects of the A-10. The Wing's last F-16 departed in the closing days of 2008.

"We've had a number of people who are really stepping up, anxious to get their qualifications done and to be ready to answer the call with the new aircraft," said Chief Master Sgt. Henry Ryan, superintendent of the maintenance squadron.

On Jan. 14, a field training team (FTT) of 22 active duty personnel from A-10 squadrons around the Air Force arrived at Selfridge to begin training the Guardsmen and women in the specialized skills and tasks required to maintain the A-10. In addition, the 127th sent a cadre of avionics technicians and munitions specialists to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona to earn initial qualifications on the A-10 and its related equipment, such as the dragon. The FTT will stay at Selfridge through April 28. Following the FTT's departure, Chief Ryan said nine Airmen from active A-10 units will spend six months on a temporary assignment at Selfridge to ensure that qualification standards are met.

Seven of the A-10s are now on temporary loan at Selfridge, until the 127th is ready to officially take ownership of the aircraft in late April. The aircraft at Selfridge now are being used as to get the maintainers fully qualified. Meanwhile, pilots from the 107th Fighter Squadron at Selfridge are rotating through flying tours at a Maryland Air National Guard unit near Baltimore, which also flies the A-10.

Pilots and crews from Maryland, Arkansas and Idaho are working together at various locations to ensure that the pilots are checked out in the attack aircraft and keep at the highest levels of readiness during the transition, said Col. David Augustine, vice wing commander for the 127th Wing.

"Active duty and Air National Guard personnel and aircraft are working together to ensure that this transition is done as smoothly as possible," Augustine said. "This is what the American



photo by MSgt. Clancey Pence, 127th Public Affairs

TSgt. Harold Hayes, TSgt. Jared Bicker, TSgt. Jim Ferguson and SrA Jeff Kohler of the 127th Wing's Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were selected to work with instructors TSgt. Bob Mitchell, TSgt. Mike Kerr and TSgt. Andy Amala in a Train-the-Trainer-style program at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Here they familiarize themselves with the Ammunition Loading Adapter, or Dragon, which racks the 1100, 30-millimeter rounds into the A-10 Thunderbolt. The 127th Wing is training on the A-10 as part of its ongoing conversion to the attack aircraft from the F-16.

people expect of us, that we are given an assignment and we carry it out efficiently."

For traditional Guard members of the 127th - those who generally perform two days of duty one weekend per month - the Wing's February Unit Training Assembly provided the first opportunity to actually begin to work with the A-10. Such was the case for four 127th Airmen who were undergoing familiarization training on the system that communicates the commands from the aircraft to the weapon system. Working with FTT instructor Staff Sgt. Brent Williams, who is normally assigned to Detachment 13 at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, the 127th personnel walked through the basic steps required to test the system. With Technical Sgt. Rena Jackman, 127th AMXS, in the cockpit monitoring system readouts, Technical Sgt. Jon Huerta, and Senior Airmen Jeremy Wesley and Otto Kelly ran through the checklist.

"This is the first time we have ever done this on this aircraft," said Huerta. "We have to learn the new systems and have a qualified FTT person to sign us off on them."

Ryan said he's pleased with the progress made so far by the maintenance group.

"Now that we've been able to have some A-10s here and have been able to get the panels off and really get into the aircraft, we've been able to move into high gear with our training," Ryan said. "We're all looking to that next big milestone, taking formal ownership of the aircraft and launching our first official flight in May."

Student Flight Preps New Recruits

By SrA Anna-Marie Wyant

127th Wing Public Affairs

When thinking of a birthday, cake, balloons, and parties may come to mind, but what about shouting, pushups, and anxiety? For Natasha Gieraltowski, who leaves for Basic Military Training (BMT) on Feb. 17, her 25th birthday, the latter is what she expects. After eight and a half weeks of arduous training at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas, Gieraltowski will attend intelligence specialist technical school at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas.

Gieraltowski, who enlisted in the Michigan Air National Guard at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in August 2008, has been drilling with the 127th Student Flight since September. Student Flight prepares new recruits for basic military training from the time of enlistment until the time they leave for BMT. They drill as trainees -- their title throughout BMT -- during regular Unit Training Assemblies of the 127th Wing and are paid at whatever grade in which they enlisted (E-1 to E-3). Created in 2007, the Student Flight at Selfridge has helped mold fresh recruits into Airmen.

Trainees must show up at 7:30 a.m. for the weekend duty and are usually punished with pushups if they are late. They carry two Excellence/Discrepancy Reports, better known as 341s, forms they will also have in BMT. Each trainee must wear a canteen belted around his or her waist, another BMT regulation. Trainees have a regular schedule that begins with reciting the Airman's Creed then singing the Air Force Song. Next, they exercise by doing pushups and sit-ups or running, if weather permits. After marching to and from the dining facility for lunch, they spend their afternoons attending training sessions

strongly suggested but not required, Gieraltowski said she feels more confident about BMT. "I have definitely seen improvement in my run time and pushups," Gieraltowski said. She has also memorized the Airman's Creed, Air Force Song, Air Force Core Values, and the rank structure. With this knowledge, Gieraltowski said she believes she will have an upper hand in BMT. She very well might: in 2008, Student Flight's first full year, 100 percent of 127th Wing Airmen graduated from BMT and three were honor graduates.

127th Mission Support Group and Student Flight Commander Lt. Col. Anne Dutcher said the program was created to properly coordinate with recruits, prepare them for training and keep them interested in serving.

"Before starting Student Flight, we lost 25 percent of our



recruits before they left for BMT," Dutcher said. "Our first year was phenomenal, and the program is a success." Dutcher said the Student Flight staff, consisting of 127th Wing personnel from various units, is making a "how to" book for the next group of trainers. The staff currently consists of Master Sgt. Michelle Steele, Staff Sgt. Gordon Starks, Staff Sgt. Ted Szenda, and Senior Airman Glenn Belcher. Airmen who have graduated from BMT but are awaiting further technical training also work in Student Flight.

With her boyfriend currently in BMT and her boyfriend's father serving as an intelligence chief in the Guard, Gieraltowski had some positive influences encouraging her to enlist. While working in an automotive factory and attending St. Clair Community College, Gieraltowski saw Michigan's unstable economy and rising college tuition costs, which led her to seek new opportunities at Selfridge.

She said leaving for BMT fills her with mixed emotions.

"My biggest fear is failing, but I'm excited to get in shape and work with this wing," Gieraltowski said. BMT has recently increased in toughness and intensity; many challenges await Gieraltowski and her Student Flight comrades. Happy birthday, Gieraltowski, and good luck!



teaching them everything from first aid to alcohol awareness to proper wear of the uniforms they will receive at BMT. Occasionally, trainees will be detailed to assist other units at the base, such as setting up for change of command ceremonies.

Because of her participation in Student Flight, which is

The Three Minute Workout

by MSgt. Ethan S. Boyd

127th Wing Fitness Information Manager

With all of the excitement and concern about our current Fitness Program requirements along with the lack of a gym at Selfridge, I thought I'd take a few minutes to tell you about an exercise program that could save you time and money while improving your fitness assessment score. It's called the three minute workout. Now, I have been promoting this workout ever since I returned from the First Sergeant Academy in Oct 2006. However, up to now it's only been verbal, so I'm putting it in writing to make it official.

It works like this: Look up how many push-ups and how many crunches you must do for your age and gender to max your fitness assessment points. You get one-minute to do that number of push-ups and one-minute to do that number of crunches. Then, first thing in the morning when you get out of bed set your watch or look at a clock and lock your feet under your dresser or couch and, for one minute, as fast as you can, start knocking out your number of crunches. When you are done rest for a minute then roll over onto your belly and start doing push-ups as fast as you can for one-minute. Now wash up and go to work. The key here

is to do this every day - that's right I said EVERY DAY! You say, "I knew there was a catch." I say, "I know you've got three-minutes."

This is a cheap and fast way to improve your fitness scores while preparing for your annual fitness assessment. It's also a base upon which to build your year-round fitness program. This simple three-minute program eliminates the excuses "I don't have time" and "I can't afford a spa membership." With today's economy we must find ways to still stay in compliance with our fitness requirements while managing our financial position.

I started this three-minute workout over three years ago. I was stuck at about thirty-five crunches in one-minute. After practicing the three-minute workout everyday I can now do fifty to sixty crunches in a minute. This program works! Get with your Unit Fitness Program Manager to look up your push-ups and crunches age/gender numbers and start today!

In a few weeks winter will be gone, the 1.5 mile track will be open and the annual fitness assessment fun-run will begin. You can begin to control your score results in just three-minutes a day. I have not stopped this program. I continue to get stronger, my score is now excellent and I'll be fifty this March. So, no more excuses, if I can do it you can too.

Briefly...

127th Wing Ball Information

The 127th Wing Ball will be on Apr. 4, at 6 p.m with a cost of \$25 a ticket. This year the ball will be held at The Palazzo Grande at 25 Mile and Van Dyke in Shelby Township. Complimentary valet will be offered for all those whom are attending the ball. There is an open premium bar included in the ticket price. A complimentary coat check is offered for everyone. Hotel accommodations are available at the new Hampton Inn in located at 51620 Shelby Parkway, Shelby Township, Mich. (586)731-4267 for more information. Shuttle services to the Wing Ball will be offered from the Hampton..

Job Fair

Dates: March 14, 2009

Location: Selfridge Dining Facility

This event will be held in the dining facility and is open to all 127th Wing members and immediate family members only. Come over and talk with some employers that are currently looking for employees and get some information on there organizations. Bring resumes to submit.

Marriage Retreats

Date: March 27 -29

Location: Crystal Mountain

Date: April 24 -26

Location: Boyne Mountain

Date: May 15 - 17

Location: Mackinac Island

All information regarding these retreats can be accessed by logging on to www.guardfamily.org. There are only have ten spots available per retreat, and registration is based on first come, first served. Register first on www.guradfami-ly.org, look for the scroll down menu to pull up the location you are interested in attending. No phone in registrations will be accepted.

127th Security Forces Squadron First Sergeant Vacancy

The procedures for applying for this position are: you must be a Master Sergeant or a Technical Sergeant immediately promotable to Master Sergeant. You will need to submit a: current resume, current biography, a copy of current (as of June 2009) Fitness test with a mini-

mum score of 75, personnel (vMPF) RIP and letter of intent addressed to CMSgt Edwards.

Application packages are due to CMSgt Edwards no later than 15 May 2009. The interview board will be held during the June UTA. Candidates are expected to know the Airman's Creed. The selectee will be moved into the position in January 2010.

Refer to AFI 36-2113 for further information and requirements.

ANG Bowling Tournament

The 46th Annual Air National Guard Bowling Tournament will be held May 6 - May 9 in Iowa. The room rate during the tournament is \$89 per night at the Renaissance Savery Hotel. Arrangements must be made by April 15. For registration and more information, log on to <https://cwp.marriott.com/dsmbr/airnation-anguardbowling>; or contact Josh Turner at jrtturner1@msn.com, (515)229-3789.

**Brigadier General Michael Peplinski
cordially invites you to the**

127th Wing Ball



TOGETHER, WE ANSWER THE CALL



**Date: Saturday, April 4, 2009
Time: 6 p.m.
Venue: The Palazzo Grande
25 Mile Rd. and Van Dyke
Shelby Township, Mich.
Price per person: \$25.00
For tickets please contact:
239-(4291/5445/2547/5079)**

