

FREEDOM FLYER

514TH AIR MOBILITY WING

MAY 2011



**RESERVE NURSE REUNITES
WITH DISABLED MARINE**

**AIRMEN FIND SUNSHINE,
HARD WORK IN PUERTO RICO**

BOMB SQUAD RECREATES AFGHAN BATTLE CONDITIONS



Freedom Flyer

Two KC-10 Extenders meet in mid-air, as one delivers fuel to the other April 15 over the Atlantic Ocean between Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., and Puerto Rico. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

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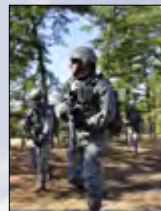
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On the cover

After departing a Blackhawk helicopter, explosive ordnance technicians from the 514th Civil Engineer Squadron proceed on foot toward their mission objective as part of a training exercise March 26. Aviators from the New Jersey Army National Guard flew the Blackhawk.



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Freedom Flyer to serve as 'touchstone'

Commentary by Col. Michael Underkofler
514th Air Mobility Wing commander

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Freedom Flyer, the new monthly magazine of the Freedom Wing. It probably seems "old school", and needlessly expensive, to use print medium in an e-world, but I want to make it easy for you and your family to read, re-read, and cherish a publication which captures some of the achievements and milestones of citizen Airmen and units in the 514th Air Mobility Wing. I think you're worth it and I'm hopeful it will become a valued keepsake.

Each month we will endeavor to produce work which equals the time and talent you give us, but we need your help. As a minimum, each unit should have a Unit Public Affairs Representative to help facilitate us telling your stories. But even an aggressive UPAR can't be on every deployment or here every unit training assembly. Every



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

Col. Michael Underkofler

Airman can help by whipping out a camera or a note pad to document everything from the serious to the silly.

Writing a story also helps to make you a better Airman and leader. Don't be intimidated as our staff will help guide you through the publication process. Also remember, pictures can serve as a touchstone for you, but more importantly for your family, long after your service here is done or you are on this earth.

So buy a binder or a magazine box. Put a sticker on it with bold letters spelling out Freedom Flyer. Put it where you and your family will frequently see it and each month proudly put the latest edition in it. I know I will, as I've worked to get to serve here with you most of my professional career. There's no other place my family and I would rather be. Thanks for all you and your family does to make us great and take care of each other.

professional career. There's no other place my family and I would rather be. Thanks for all you and your family does to make us great and take care of each other.



Top Left: Col. Michael Underkofler's two sons and wife look on during the 514th Air Mobility Wing change-of-command ceremony here March 27. Bottom Left: The wing's honor guard stands ready prior to presenting the colors during the ceremony. Right: Colonel Underkofler addresses the assembled Airmen and guests at the ceremony immediately after becoming wing commander.

New commander takes charge of wing

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

Leadership of the 514th Air Mobility Wing changed hands as Col. Michael Underkofler became the wing's 23rd commander in an official ceremony here March 27.

Becoming acclimated to his new position shouldn't pose a large challenge for the colonel. Since April 2010, he had been serving as vice commander to the wing's former commander, Col. Giordano McMullen. As vice commander, Colonel Underkofler was not just the wing's number-two officer. He was also the wing's top full-time Airman.

Colonel McMullen, who was a traditional reservist, had the challenge of balancing his duties as commander with his employment as a civilian airline pilot. It is rare for a traditional reservist to maintain an independent civilian career while serving as a wing commander, but Colonel McMullen has done it twice - once with the 514th AMW and once with the 913th Airlift Wing at Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Pa.

"It demonstrates the respect and admiration senior leaders have for his capabilities and his personal model of

service," Colonel Underkofler said.

Balancing a civilian career with an Air Force Reserve career is not a challenge Colonel Underkofler must personally overcome as a full-time employee of the Reserve, but he said one of his top priorities will be helping the wing's Airmen to find balance among their various professional and personal commitments.

"Our Citizen Airmen serve at great personal expense; many often travel great distances, and all take time away from their families, communities and civilian employers to perform military duty," he said.

Colonel Underkofler said he wants to ensure his Airmen are properly rewarded for their sacrifice.

"My goal is to make sure we use their time and talent productively while also having fun, ensuring professional growth and sustaining esprit d' corps," he said.

Colonel Underkofler has also served as the chief of staff for the 22nd Air Force at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., and commander of the 908th Airlift Wing at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

New vice commander knows Freedom Wing

By Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

When Col. Michael Underkofler was promoted to commander of the 514th Air Mobility Wing, a vacancy was created in his former position. That vacancy was filled by an Airman with deep roots in the wing.

Col. Jonathan Spare, the wing's new vice commander, returned to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, a duty station where he served 22 of his 27 years of military career.

He earned his commission in 1984, spending his first year of active-duty service as a student pilot at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas. In 1985, he reported to his first duty assignment at McGuire Air Force Base. After six years of service at McGuire, Colonel Spare joined the Air Force Reserve as a C-141 Starlifter pilot with the 732nd Airlift Squadron. He served in various positions within the wing between 1991 and 2007, including stints as the wing's flight safety officer and the commander of the 76th Air Refueling Squadron.

Colonel Spare said that his familiarity with the installation gives him a rare perspective.

"I've seen where this place once was and feel I have a sense of where it's going," he said. "While we don't ever want to be stuck in the old ways of doing things, I believe it's beneficial to understand from where we came in order to move forward."

Though Colonel Spare has spent much of his career here, Airmen who are new to the wing may not be familiar with him. He is coming off a four-year assignment as an emergency preparedness liaison officer with the Air Forces Northern National Security Emergency Preparedness Directorate. In this position, he served as a liaison between Air Force leaders and civil authorities for matters related to disasters and other emergencies. He said his time as a liaison officer taught him the importance of building and maintaining relationships.

"The saying (in the emergency management field) is, 'You don't want to be exchanging business cards in the middle of a disaster,'" he said.

Colonel Spare's local ties aren't just related to military service. He grew up across the Delaware River, in Bucks County, Pa., where he developed some "ailments" related to being a Philadelphia Eagles football fan.

"I discovered during my childhood that if I cut myself, I bleed green blood," he said. "I've also suffered heart damage through the years as the Eagles frequently toy with me, providing hope for a Super Bowl Championship, and I end up ripping my heart out of my chest, throwing it on the ground and stomping on it."

Pulse Check: What are you doing to secure your financial future?



Senior Airman
Hedai Chan
514th
Maintenance Squadron

"I make sure I pay my bills on time, set aside emergency funds and invest in my 401K."



Capt.
Darrin McDermott
514th Aeromedical
Evacuation Squadron

"Invest conservatively, mainly 401K and Thrift Savings Plan. I also own rental property and I'm looking at refinancing my house."



Lt. Col.
Bertha Jackson
514th Aeromedical
Evacuation Squadron

"I own four rental properties and have made an effort to invest in a 401K, bonds and CDs."



Tech. Sgt.
Omar Miele
514th
Maintenance Squadron

"Paying off all debt in a timely manner to establish better credit. Also setting up savings accounts for my family."



Master Sgt.
Theresa Cooper
514th
Operations Group

"Through my civilian and Reserve jobs, I have the Thrift Savings Plan and my husband and I have other investments."

Left: Lt. Col. Todd Brace helps Capt. Matt Houck to don a flotation device as part of water survival training in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, April 16. Both Airmen are members of the 78th Air Refueling Squadron.



Right: Tech. Sgt. Jay Rosa, a boom operator with the 76th ARS, watches a demonstration during the water survival training class.



Left: Maj. Ralph Marshall, 78th ARS, helps demonstrate the proper wear of a rescue device.

Right: Captains Tom Conley (left) and Jermaine Boyd return to shore while participating in a water survival exercise.

The efficiency of paradise

Story & photos by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

Sunshine, sandy beaches and bright blue seas weren't enough to distract more than 125 Reserve Airmen from a weekend jam-packed with training.

The Airmen, most of whom were from the 76th and 78th Air Refueling Squadrons here, packed into three KC-10 Extenders April 15, and flew to Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, for three days of air, ground and water training. The annual event is known as a "fly-away" and its purpose is to remove Airmen from the routine of their typical duty locations so that they may better focus

on refreshing their skills and learning new ones.

"Once away from base, we are able to aggressively schedule every minute of each member's day and ensure that all training needed for the year is available," said Lt. Col. Dan Edwards, 78th ARS commander.

Colonel Edward's statement can be taken quite literally. The training began before the Airmen left the runway. An extra large contingent of maintainers, boom operators and loadmasters worked together to prepare the jets and

load them with passengers and cargo. Those with more experience were able to share their tricks-of-the-trade with newer Airmen.

Once airborne, the aggressive training pace continued. The primary role of the KC-10 is to provide aerial refueling to other aircraft. An aircrew needs to be proficient at both giving and receiving fuel. The flight to Puerto Rico took more than three hours, which provided ample time for multiple pilots and boom operators to gain necessary experience at their respective functions.

The Airmen found further ways to maximize their time by conducting training courses while in-flight. One team taught skills necessary for surviving in a hazardous chemical, biological or radiation environment. Another team provided an expanded intelligence briefing.

Upon reaching Aguadilla, the pace continued. The Airmen held many of their training sessions at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen. The station offered several amenities, such as on-base lodging and a community center which served as a classroom, that helped to minimize the overall cost of the trip, said Capt. Michael Petruska, one of the fly-away's primary organizers from the 78th ARS. The station's geography contributed to the training efficiencies as a combat survival class was taught in a jungle-like wooded area on-base and a water survival class was taught on a nearby beach.

Finally, the station's long runway and dry weather provided conditions that allowed for more flight-training opportunities. Flights carrying heavy loads and formations of more than two aircraft require certain runway conditions that aren't always available on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Since so many Airmen were scheduled to participate in flight training in such a short time frame, the fly-away's planners couldn't afford the risk of wet weather, said Capt. Sean Flynn, who led

the fly-away planning for the 76th ARS.

Captain Petruska emphasized the efficiency and convenience of the location.

"This fly-away enabled us to offer nine different ground training classes combined with nine training sorties to maximize our readiness," he said. "The Puerto Rico location enabled us to get

Once away from base, we are able to aggressively schedule every minute of each member's day and ensure that all training needed for the year is available.

Lt. Col. Dan Edwards
78th Air Refueling Squadron commander

these events accomplished without the necessity of long travel times."

Though the trip allowed the Reserve Airmen to maximize their training requirements, it was no easy event to pull off.

"It is very challenging to generate three aircraft in these days of high operations tempo and an aging fleet," said Colonel Edwards. "We couldn't have had such a successful training weekend without the support of the maintenance team, our partners in the 305th Air Mobility Wing and all of the trainers who went on the road with us."

Captain Petruska said he received a lot of support and assistance in the

planning and organization of the fly-away.

"Without the great help of 514th Operations Support Squadron in conjunction with the 514th Maintenance Group we would not have had the jets to do this," he said.

Despite the challenges of organizing the event, Colonel Edwards explained why the fly-away is important for a Reserve unit.

"All flying squadrons with Air Mobility Command have people scattered around the globe every day, so it is a rare occasion when a squadron can be together," he said. "This is especially challenging for a Reserve flying squadron whose members don't live in the local area."

Maximizing training isn't the only benefit of the three-day fly-away.

When not actively involved in a class or training exercise, the Airmen were able to socialize and network with one another in a casual environment, Captain Flynn said.

"When we assemble as a whole, we have the opportunity to share our collective experiences and learn things about one another that might not rise out of the occasional cockpit conversation," Colonel Edwards said. "Most importantly, the fly away gives us the opportunity to reflect on the past year, celebrate our successes, and say farewell to those of us who are moving on."



A UH-60L Blackhawk Helicopter full of Reserve Airmen descends on a landing zone within Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst's vast training range March 26. The helicopter was flown by Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard.



A WEEKEND LIKE WAR

Story & photos by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

The sound of chopping rotor blades grew steadily for several moments, announcing the Blackhawk's arrival just before it burst into view over the thick canopy of green pines. It flew a quick path around an opening in the woods as its crew searched for bad guys and a good place to land. The chopper briefly hovered above the landing zone, kicking up dead grass and dust, before the crew lowered it firmly to the ground. Airmen poured out of each side of the Blackhawk, crouching down into defensive positions with rifles raised. The chopper then quickly ascended and flew out of sight, leaving the Airmen with the fading sound of chopping rotor blades.

Explosive ordnance disposal technicians of the 514th Civil Engineer Squadron go to great lengths to ensure their weekend drills provide enough training to prepare themselves for war. During their monthly unit training assembly in March, they performed a training exercise that simulated some of the battlefield challenges they face when deployed.

Afghanistan is covered with rugged mountain ranges, which can make ground transportation slow and inefficient for EOD teams who must respond quickly to potentially explosive emergencies. Helicopters are being used more frequently in the war zone, and the EOD technicians here aim to ensure they know their way around the rotors before they get there.

None of the on-base Air Force units here fly helicopters, but serving at a joint base has its advantages. When the EOD Airmen reached out to some of their neighbors who wear different uniforms, a helicopter battalion from the New Jersey Army National Guard agreed to help.

"Now that we are a joint base, training opportunities have been expanded and



Top Left: Senior Airman Michael Vallejo, an explosive ordnance disposal technician with the 87th Civil Engineer Squadron, walks toward a mission objective during a training exercise March 26.

Top Right: Senior Airman Sean Barrett, an EOD technician with the 514th CES, awaits fellow team members before setting off for their mission objective.

Right: EOD technicians climb into a Blackhawk helicopter as part of a training exercise at one of the Joint Base's training ranges.

Top: EOD technicians buckle up in the Blackhawk prior to take off.

Left: Aviators from the New Jersey Army National Guard prepare to land their Blackhawk in a landing zone on the Joint Base while training with EOD technicians from the 514th Air Mobility Wing.

Right: Staff Sgt. Salvatore DiGiacomo, an EOD technician with the 514th CES, prepares his gear.

are significantly easier to coordinate with other services than they ever were in the past," said Lt. Col. Joel Branosky, 514th CES commander.

The joint base's concentration of air, land and sea assets allows the Airmen to add more realism and intensity to their training exercises.

"EOD Airmen across the Air Force train to a high level of intensity," said Tech. Sgt. Dustin Heines, the EOD flight chief. But he admitted that a typical EOD unit isn't afforded the convenience of sharing a base and training with

an Army aviation unit.

The training exercise helped familiarize the reservists with some unique aspects of using helicopter transportation.

"It was great training for the younger guys who have never flown in a helicopter before," Sergeant Heines said. "In a combat environment, you're trying to get out of the bird and get to your objective as fast as you can, and if you don't have any training, you might fumble your way out of there."

The EOD technicians and the Army aviators weren't the only warfighters to benefit from the training exercise. An active-duty EOD technician from the 87th Civil Engineer Squadron participated in the mission as well.

Additionally, Colonel Branosky joined his Airmen in order to gain first-hand exposure to an EOD training exercise. He said that most civil engineer officers typically concentrate on the traditional engineering and financial aspects of the career field, but he is hoping to broaden his

familiarity of all the units within his command.

"As a commander, I am making a conscious effort to attempt to learn as much about what our folks do as possible," he said.

He said he was impressed by the EOD technician's attention to detail, their sense of camaraderie and their willingness to place themselves in dangerous situations in order to accomplish their mission.

"It was an honor to watch these professionals in action," Colonel Branosky said.



Col. Paulette Schank, 514th Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander, talks with Marine Sgt. Kenny Lyon April 9 in Fredericksburg, Va. Sergeant Lyon is a disabled veteran who was under Colonel Schank's care after being seriously wounded while serving in Iraq in 2006.

During emotional reunion, Reserve nurse gives disabled Marine keys to new life

Story by Master Sgt. Donna T. Jeffries and photos by Senior Master Sgt. Chryl Ruff

The story ended in Fredericksburg, Va., April 9 at a ribbon-cutting ceremony where a crowd of 300-plus witnessed a Purple Heart recipient enter his new home. Few in the crowd held back tears as they watched the emotional reunion of Marine Sgt. Kenny Lyon and Col. Paulette Schank, 514th Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander, as she handed him the keys to a new life. Their brief encounter five years ago played a vital role in Sergeant Lyon being alive today to receive the keys to his new home built by "Homes For Our Troops."

Flashback to Balad Air Base, Iraq, May 2006

The story began in 2006 at Balad Air Base, Iraq, in what was the war's busiest trauma center. Medical staff from 332nd Expeditionary Group worked tirelessly there to care for and save the lives of an average of 300 patients per month. Correspondent Scott Pelley from 60 Minutes visited Balad while covering a story about combat medicine. His segment called "A Fighting Chance" first aired October 2006 and featured Colonel Schank and her patient, Sergeant Lyon. The young Marine was brought in with life threatening injuries sustained during a mortar attack to include a shattered jaw and nerve damage to his left arm and hand.

"By the time he reached the hospital, half his blood was gone already. His pressure was critically low and his life was slipping away through three lacerated arteries and too many wounds to count," Pelley reported. Sergeant Lyon also required an amputation of his left leg above the knee. While being interviewed by Pelley, Colonel Schank assisted with Lyon's medical treatment and became part of the story.

Sergeant Lyon was a particularly hard case to handle. The team worked hard to stabilize him. It took more than 50 units in blood transfusions to complete his critical surgery. Colonel Schank spent just a few hours with Sergeant Lyon, but as with many patients, his image was forever etched in her memory.

Fast forward to Fredericksburg, Va., April 2011

Author's Note: The following are the questions I asked Colonel Schank about the follow-up to the 60 Minutes segment, "A Fighting Chance," and her reunion with Sergeant Lyon at the ribbon cutting ceremony. As I read her answers, I became overcome with emotion envisioning the reunion of warfighter and medical provider years later and continents away from the trauma center. I found myself not wanting to cut any part of her story as she took us full circle with a win in the fight for life and the loving gift of quality of life that "Homes For Our Troops" provide in the aftermath. I hope you too become transformed and are uplifted by this heartfelt account.

Question: Before leaving the theater did you spend any time with him after surgery?

Answer: I never got to see Kenny Lyon after his surgery, because he was air evacuated to Germany within hours after his surgery. The strange and yet wonderful thing about Balad's theater combat hospital is the fact that we had the world's most efficient example of "through-put". That is the term applied to the care of our servicemembers. Our wounded were transported via aeromedical evacuation to Germany within 24-48 hours and from there, if needed, they are flown back to the states for further treatment.

Once a wounded servicemember arrived, most often by

chopper, (sounds you never forget), they are rapidly triaged in the emergency department, taken to X-ray for a CAT scan and then taken to the operating room. It all happens so quickly. The golden hour and speed of care are the essence of the 98 percent survival rate our wounded depended on. The work in the OR was my battlefield. It is here where our special operations team of highly trained nurses, surgeons, surgical technicians and anesthesia providers fought their battle to keep our members alive. It is absolutely amazing when I look back on those days at the skill and teamwork it took to win those battles every day. They say an orchestra sounds so magnificent when they play in complete harmony with each other. That is what exists in Balad's OR - teamwork that cannot be explained, only witnessed in that daily fight. That is what is meant by the term "through-put".

Question: Did you maintain any contact with Sergeant Lyon after he left your care?

Answer: No, I never once had contact with Sergeant Lyon again until this past Saturday, and wow just doesn't begin to explain the rush of emotions I felt. So you know now just how special this day was for me. I tried to locate him for a while after the 60 Minutes special aired, but never could find him.

Question: You donated your own blood to help Kenny. What compelled you to do this amongst your many duties?

Answer: Kenny had required massive numbers of blood transfusions. I can't remember the total number, but it was greater than 50 units of blood. We called for a whole blood drive on the base, and anyone with his specific blood type

would line up and donate. We actually had a loud speaker system which we would broadcast for anyone with Type A, B or O blood types to please report to the hospital to donate. Fortunately, I am Type O negative and am a universal donor, meaning my blood type can be given to everyone.

One of the problems that start to develop from massive blood transfusions is the lack of clotting factors not found in units of packed red blood cells. When we replace lost blood with units of fresh whole blood, you can replace all the deficient clotting factors. This results in the patients not being able to form blood clots at their bleeding sites, with even further blood loss resulting. It can become a vicious cycle until you can control the bleeding both surgically and hematologically. This is what had happened to Sergeant Kenny Lyon, and that would explain the need for urgent fresh whole blood replacement.

Question: How did you get the honors of handing him the keys to his new home?

Answer: A fellow by the name of Steve Norris, a Gold Star Dad (a father who lost his military child in the line of duty), was helping Kenny box his belongings at his apartment last week, when he came across the 60 Minutes tape. After Steve saw the show, he set out to find me. He tracked me down at my civilian employer, St. Mary's Medical Center, and left a message for me to please contact him. I called him back on my break and couldn't believe what he said. A group called "Homes For Our Troops" had built a home for Kenny Lyon and were going to present it to him that

weekend ("Homes For Our Troops" is a non-profit organization that builds fully furnished, custom homes for wounded military members to accommodate the injuries they sustain in combat). The home was mortgage free, newly built with all the adaptive devices in place, fully furnished and decorated. This task was accomplished with a group of 400 volunteers called the "build brigade" who worked around the clock to complete the construction in a record-breaking four days. Time, labor and materials were all donated. This non-profit organization has been building homes for several years in an effort to care for our returning disabled vets. Kenny's house was the 100th house built and given away. Steve Norris made our connection happen. The founder of "Homes For Our Troops," John Gonsalves, planned on surprising Kenny with our meeting. John asked me to present Kenny with the keys because I guess he felt I made a difference in Kenny's life. Little does he know what a difference Kenny has made in mine.

Question: What features of the home have been adapted to fit his medical condition?

Answer: The counters in the kitchen are cut out across the bottom to allow for wheelchairs to access the cabinets closely. The bathroom toilets are motorized with an automatic cleansing system to assist wounded vets with arm amputations; the shower is designed to be wheelchair accessible. There are no steps. The driveway is level with the first floor and the house is designed as a ranch house. There are three bedrooms to allow for a future family if there is one, and a ramp in the back to extend down to a stone patio with

see Reunion, Page 14

I didn't know what to think. What do you say to someone who gave their blood to keep you alive while on the operating table?

Marine Sgt. Kenny Lyon



Spotlight: Master Sgt. Jim Vigilante

Unit: 35th Aerial Port Squadron

Position: Assistant Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of Passenger and Fleet Services

Civilian employment: Commercial construction manager

Hometown: Parsippany, N.J.

Favorite movie: The Hangover

Favorite musician: Elvis Presley

Pet Peeve: Hypocritical people

Most influential person in my life: My father. He gave me the foundation of the person I am today.

Little known fact: Sergeant Vigilante has an aviary with seven talking birds in his home. He also served as a councilman for the Township of Parsippany for 12 years.

If I won \$1 million dollars: I would buy my mother a Lincoln Continental and I would build transitional housing for homeless veterans.

Outstanding community service: Sergeant Vigilante performs a wide variety of community service activities, paying particular attention to the needs of homeless military veterans. Once per month, he organizes a restaurant meal for as many as 25 homeless veterans living in northern New Jersey. He identifies restaurants that are willing to host and feed the veterans and he coordinates with the Department of Veterans Affairs to secure transportation to the event. Additionally, Sergeant Vigilante also organizes an ongoing clothing drive to provide the homeless veterans with attire that could be worn during job interviews.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

Reunion

Continued from page 13

a grill and patio furniture in place.

Question: What did you say to him while handing him the keys?

Answer: We just hugged! So much for military PDA. It was the strongest hug. I whispered in his ear how proud I was of him and told him "Yes, you are strong." When I was pumping the unit of my blood into him, I remember saying to him, "This is really strong blood so you need to keep fighting. This is really strong blood!" Weird what you say in those times of desperate fighting.

They kept me hidden inside the house during his initial arrival and initial dignitary fanfare. While I was watching him through the drawn blinds my heart felt like it was going to race out of my chest, I even had butterflies in my stomach; strange to have such a physical response to see someone from your past. I thought about the day Kenny arrived at Balad, and how badly he was injured. Then I would remember his 60 Minutes interview where he was so positive about life. This was during an interview in the physical therapy department where he was trying to learn to walk on a new prosthetic leg. His face was still mangled with metal devices stabilizing his shattered jaw.

Question: What did he say to you in return?

Answer: "Thank you, thank you so much, Colonel Schank." It was not so much the words he said as much as the huge hug that he didn't let go of. His tears flowed as swiftly as mine. These are moments that occur very rarely in a lifetime, the chance to reunite and share our lives together once more. He

then introduced his mother to me who could not stop hugging me and thanking me as well. There were very few dry eyes that day. Kenny then told the crowd how the two of us met and forever became bonded in a combat tent hospital during a war called Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Question: How did it feel to see one of your patients manage his disability and begin a new era in his life?

Answer: The feeling of coming full circle is a great way to put something so difficult to put in words. As nurses and medics, we see our wounded soldiers for such a short, yet tumultuous time, usually less than 24 hours as they are transferred to Germany so quickly. There is a certain emptiness to the information void that occurs with no follow-up contact. You never know if your troop survived or succumbed to their injuries and so you always are left with that question and hope. I would try to tell myself that all the servicemembers that I had cared for survived. The fact remains that I never really do know. That void became closed for me when Kenny and I met and hugged. He is strong, happy, positive and has a sense of humor in spite of all the things he has gone through. He is better than just OK, he is doing great!

Author's Note: A week after the ceremony, I had the opportunity to talk with Sergeant Lyon on the phone. He says Colonel Schank's appearance at the ribbon cutting ceremony was a complete surprise. Although his only conscious recollection of her came from the 60 Minutes segment, as soon as he heard her voice, he instantly knew who she was. As she handed him the keys and they hugged, he said he was pretty much speechless.

Amongst hundreds of onlookers, outfitted in their military dress uniforms, their hugs and tears said it all.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Monica Dalberg

Random drug tests become more frequent

Senior Master Sgt. Osmond Silvera, serving in the role of urinalysis observer, looks on as Staff Sgt. Elvin Paulino, 514th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, completes a form after being selected for a random urinalysis. Observers ensure proper procedures are followed throughout a urinalysis test. Air Force Reserve Command implemented a new instruction for urinalysis that randomly selects 25 percent of members per month for testing, up from two percent with the old policy. The Air Force Reserve does not permit illegal or improper use of drugs by personnel under any circumstances.

News Briefs

Combat stress counseling

Free help is now available for members experiencing symptoms of combat related stress. The Trenton Veterans Center is conducting workshops and offering individual counseling sessions beginning May 7 at 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Warfighter Family Readiness Center. Sessions will be held every Saturday of drill weekends until November 2011. For more information, contact the 514th Airmen and Family Readiness Office at (609) 754-8229.

Freedom Flyer seeks contributions, ideas

The wing's magazine is ready and willing to accept submissions from its readers. If you would like to submit a news article, feature story, commentary or photos, contact the public affairs office at (609) 754-3487 or 514amw.pa@us.af.mil. Also, the staff of Freedom Flyer is always looking for story ideas and reader feedback.

After-hours clinic moves

The after-hours clinic is now located on the Deborah Hospital campus at 212 Trenton Road in Browns Mills, N.J. Those needing medical care will be assisted by Lourdes Family Practice staff on the second floor of the Cymrot Building. Patients can be seen Monday through Friday, 4:30 to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; and Sunday and holidays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The clinic can be reached at (609) 735-2030.

Virtual learning seminars

There are upcoming online classes to provide transition assistance to demobilizing members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families. The classes include *Building Better Resumes*, *Financial Planning for Transition* and *Landing a Federal Job*. These courses can be taken at any time and place. For more information, visit www.TuboTAP.org.



The following enlisted Airman were promoted in April, and the following officers were selected to be promoted at a future date.

Airman 1st Class

Balewattie Bandhu, 514 AMDS

Senior Airman

Matthew Abernathy, 714 AMXS
Lisandro DeJesus, 88 APS
Daniel Florio, 514 CES
Shirley Layer, 88 APS
Leah Maldonado, 514 AES
Louis Matos, 714 AMXS
Caitlin Mettler, 514 AMDS
Erika Negrón, 514 AMXS
Jeremy Swindell, 714 AMXS
Eric Zapple, 514 AMXS

Staff Sergeant

Salvatore DiGiacomo, 514 CES
Hector Ramos, 514 AES
David Ross, 514 AES
Genesis Santiago, 514 AES
William Simurra, 514 AES

Technical Sergeant

Christopher Cich, 42 CBCS
Joseph Domicolo, 35 APS
Erika Hertel, 714 AMXS
Dustin Heines, 514 CES
Jason Miller, 35 APS
Sayapheth Phomphakdy, 514 ASTS
Steven Robles, 88 APS
Joshua Singer, 42 CBCS
Abraham Tupe, 714 AMXS

Master Sergeant

Tanya Anderson, 514 ASTS
Joseph Kelly, 514 ASTS
Kasey LaPlume, 514 LRF
Ernest Nikolaus, 514 AMXS
Robert Rodriguez, 78 ARS
Sean Tierney, 514 AMXS
Raymond Tom, 88 APS
Eugene Wallace, 714 AMXS

Major Selectees

David Allen, 76 ARS
James Besmer, 514 FSS
Ray Blanco, 514 ASTS
Jermaine Boyd, 78 ARS
Bradford Dungan, 514 AES
Michael Gibbs, 514 SFS
Kellie Kavanaugh, 76 ARS
Brady Ohr, 76 ARS
Desmond Powell, 78 ARS
Patrick Prepetit, 514 AMDS
Kelly Ann Smyth, 514 AMW
Kerry Thurston, 514 ASTS
Joseph Trynosky, 514 MXS
Edward Yeash, 732 AS



Freedom Flyer

514th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs
2217 W. Arnold Ave.
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ 08641

For the family of:

Pictured: Members of the 514th Air Mobility Wing honor guard present the colors during the singing of the national anthem prior to the Philadelphia Phillies' victory over the Houston Astros April 2 at Citizens Bank Ballpark in Philadelphia.

Photo by Heddy Bergsman/Philadelphia Phillies