

173rd FW flies first combat injured veteran to summit Mt. Everest

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Fighter Wing hosted the first combat injured veteran to summit Mt. Everest, Nov. 14, 2016.

Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville, who is medically retired, climbed to the top of the world's highest mountain in May, despite having lost his lower right leg to an IED while stationed in Afghanistan in 2011.

His visit included a briefing for the Airmen of the 173rd Fighter Wing where he described both his injury and eventual recovery.

Following his briefing Linville donned a flight suit and climbed into the back seat of an F-15 Eagle in what would be another first for him.

"Wow, I got more than I'd hoped for," he said. "Experiencing the Gs, the speed, and the capability of the F-15 was a great experience—I mean holy America!"

Those capabilities made a lasting impression on the Marine.

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After surviving an IED blast in Afghanistan Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville, who suffered an amputation, PTSD and a lower spine injury sits aboard the F-15 Eagle waiting to take-off, Nov. 14, 2016. Among his achievements following his recovery, Linville is the first combat injured veteran to summit Mt. Everest in May, the world's highest peak. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)

173rd AMXS change of command

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- A change of command took place Nov. 18, 2016 at Kingsley Field for the 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Lt. Col. Carol Kohtz, who comes to Kingsley Field from the National Guard Bureau Readiness Center, took command in an official ceremony.

Kohtz served in the Plans and Programs Directorate (NGB/A8) at the Readiness Center, and was responsible for programmatic actions affecting all Air National Guard Air Superiority

programs. She has served many roles throughout the Air National Guard and is a Senior Pilot in the F-15 with more than 1500 total flight hours.

Kohtz says she is excited to take on her new role as the AMXS commander and looks to her past experiences to help guide her in this new role.

"Effective, consistent communication has probably been the number one area where there is

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U.S. Air Force Col. Chris Casson, 173rd Maintenance Group Commander, speaks to the 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron during a change of command ceremony for the 173rd AMXS.



Wing Commander

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**BAH & Saving
Time**



Wing's 1st female pilot

(Page 5)

**New AMXS
Commander**



Heavy Basin Snow!

(Page 12)

**14-inch
average**

Commander's Corner

BAH, additional duties, & ancillary training

Commentary by
Col. Jeff Smith,
173rd Fighter Wing Commander

Good news on the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) front! We just received the 2017 BAH rate tables for our AGR members, Title-10 Active Duty members, anyone on a deployment, and anyone on long-tour annual training (AT) or special training (ST) which is greater than 30 days. The percentage increases are significant! Many thanks to Lt. Col. Brad Orgeron (Lt. Col. Chris Clark before him), Senior Master Sgt. Adam Rising, Staff Sgt. Arloa Patrick, and Tami Naramore for their help with this at the local level.

For the technicians—I'm still fighting for you. Dale Williams and I are planning a trip to DC in early 2017 (and/or inviting some key players to visit us in Oregon) to discuss our way ahead with respect to technician locality pay or other wage increases. Through this BAH victory, DOD has verified that there are housing costs above and beyond determined rates from prior analysis. I hope to push that message aggressively to help on the technician pay front.

Please continue to critically evaluate additional duties and ancillary training in your work centers and provide suggested improvements through your chain of command to Lt. Col. Mark Smedra (working in Emergency

Operations Center, next to command post). We hope to start rolling out changes as early as the first week of January. Unit Training Managers—we'll need your help. Please work together to figure out how we'll track training differently as we implement non-standard recurrence timelines (different from what's coded in ARCNET, ADLS, and/or IMDS). This will not be simple, but I'm confident we can make it work!

Thanks for what you do every day. Despite the challenging weather pattern we're in right now, the wing continues to excel at mission accomplishment in-garrison, training F-15 students, and across the globe as we participate in RCP5.



ORANG leadership participates in global disaster exercise

Story by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Superintendent

DHAKA, Bangladesh -- As part of Oregon's State Partnership Program with Bangladesh, several members from the Oregon Air National Guard and Oregon Army National Guard participated in an emergency operations exercise in the capitol city of Dhaka from September 26-28, 2016. Referred to as the annual Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE), the event was co-sponsored by Bangladesh's Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division, and U.S. Army Pacific.

Col Donna Prigmore, 173rd Fighter Wing Vice Commander, led the delegation of seven people from the ORANG and ORNG. All members participated with the goal of better understanding the complexities of domestic operations and how to respond to natural disasters. With the prediction that a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake event will eventually occur over the coming decades, this information is useful for future domestic planning.

"Attending the DREE in Bangladesh was one of the highlights of my military career", said Prigmore. "Although as nations we all have our differences, it was rewarding to work at the multi-

national level with a common purpose...to understand how we can all help each other in times of dire need."

Since Bangladesh (and much of the south Asian region) is prone to cyclones, floods, tsunamis, and earthquakes, the area was perfectly suited for an international domestic operations and humanitarian relief exercise involving a (simulated) 7.0 earthquake. Participants in the exercise learned how to request civilian and military aid during a major natural disaster, and were educated on the importance of logistical support, damage assessment teams, communications, safety, water purification, medical support and disease containment, internal displaced personnel (people who lose their homes in a disaster), refugees (people who flee their home nations due to disasters), and much, much more.

The 2016 DREE was a multi-national effort and included representatives from India, Sri



U.S. Air Force Col. Donna Prigmore, 173rd Fighter Wing Vice Commander, poses for a photo with members of the Red Crescent team, an organization similar to the U.S. Red Cross, during the Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange held in Dhaka, Bangladesh September 26-28, 2016. This was a multinational disaster response exercise simulated a 7.0 earthquake and examined humanitarian relief and international domestic operations response.

Lanka, Nepal, China, Great Britain, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the United States. Multiple agencies were also involved, including members from the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, the Red Crescent (in Dhaka; equivalent to the U.S. Red Cross) and US AID.

Wounded warrior flies in F-15

(Continued from front page)

“I’ve put my body through some hard times, but nothing like nine Gs,” he said. “I went wheezy real quick...I have the utmost respect for the guys who fly these and protect us from above.”

Linville was in town to speak at a local Marine Corps Ball, Nov. 10 and an instructor pilot with the 173rd Fighter Wing thought it would be good for Airmen to hear a message of resiliency.

“I felt that our Wing needed to hear his story,” said Maj. William Sullivan, an F-15 Instructor Pilot for Det. 2, 56th Operations Group at Kingsley Field. “As a training base

most of us are not exposed to what can happen in war. We do not see what happens first-hand so the next best thing would be to hear from someone that has been through it and overcome its aftermath.”

Sullivan was also the driving force in helping Linville return to 30-thousand feet.

“I felt he deserved an F-15 ride for all that he has done for his country and for showing others that they can dig themselves out of a hole, so I put the paperwork together to get him a ride,” he said. “He did great. He was surprised by the G’s and loved every minute of it. His stomach got the best of him on final when we came in to land.”



Top: U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. (ret.) Charlie Linville is fitted with a helmet by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Thomas Howard, 173rd Fighter Wing Aircrew Flight Equipment, in preparation for an F-15 familiarization flight.

Bottom: U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville, walks to a waiting F-15 with Maj. William Sullivan for a familiarization flight.

U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville shares his story

*Feature story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville’s life changed with one fateful step in Afghanistan in 2011. As an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician he performed an incredibly dangerous mission, clearing land riddled with hidden explosives and mines so that others could safely operate there.

He describes the day beginning with hearing two detonations in the area and then suiting up and beginning to sweep for Improvised Explosive Devices where two Marines were injured.

“I got hit with what we call a legacy IED; it had been in the ground for a long time and I stepped on it,” said Linville. “It had a low metallic signature so you can barely hear anything from the metal detectors, it’s so faint—and that’s how good you have to be as an EOD tech.”

And the first thing he did as the pain began to set in was take a picture holding his mangled fingers up with a broad grin on his face, giving the camera a “high-five.” He gestures to the photo and says, “We call this a happy snap, I was still conscious and it had just started to hurt a little bit.”

Linville explains that his smile isn’t just courage in the face of terrible misfortune—it is that—but it is also a window into his comprehension of the battle field at that moment.

“I felt like I won the lottery at that point because I should be a triple amputee,” he says citing the fact that this bombs payload was degraded by moisture to about 30-percent. “Both my legs above the knee and my right hand somewhere around the elbow would have been traumatically amputated.”

He goes on to explain that getting medically evacuated from where he was at took an hour, but that a person suffering wounds that extensive has at most 30-minutes to reach the operating table or “else you do not make it,” he said. “The fact that I am here today speaking to you and all the things I’ve gotten to do with my life—it’s just a blessing.”

And one of those blessings was being recruited by Tim Medvetz of the Hero’s Project to climb Mt. Everest and be the first combat injured vet to do so.

But between him and the world’s tallest mountain yawned the wide chasm of psychological trauma, from PTSD, from the feelings of despair, from the constant pain of recovery, from the many, many surgeries to save his mangled right leg and after 18 months of recovery Charlie Linville’s life still hung in the balance.

“I was a young 26-year-old Marine, I was taking care of IEDs every day, I was taking the fight to the enemy, I loved my job,” he said. “The blast took away my manhood in a sense.”

He describes how bleak the rest of his life seemed to him then.

“I fell into a very deep place, a place I didn’t know if I was going to get out of because that’s what my life was going to be, it was going to be pain, I was angry, I wasn’t getting along with my family and my kids were asking why I couldn’t go play and I just hated life.”

The trending #22Pushupchallenge tells us we lose 22 Veteran’s a day to suicide, and while he doesn’t say it explicitly to the Airmen of the 173rd Fighter Wing, he makes it clear he was considering ending his life. The turning point for Charlie was making the decision to have his lower right leg amputated. He shows his audience a picture of him holding his leg up and once again smiling.

“I woke up about 10:20 that morning and I looked down at my leg and I had the biggest smile on my face,” he said.

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173rd FW maintainers exercise for real-life risks



Top: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgts. James Odom-Davidson and John Mitchell, 173rd Maintenance Group, work together to remove a simulated incapacitated individual from a confined space of an F-15 fuel cell during a training exercise at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon Nov. 5, 2016. Emergency Response Rescue Training is an annual requirement for all Airmen who work in confined spaces. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Col. Donna Prigmore)

Left: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Thorn, 173rd Maintenance Group, prepares to climb inside the aircraft fuel cell during an Emergency Response Rescue Training exercise where Airmen must show they are able to remove an incapacitated individual from the confined space of an F-15 fuel cell at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon Nov. 5, 2016. This training is an annual requirement for all Airmen who work in confined spaces. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Col. Donna Prigmore)

A story of injury, loss, and recovery

(Continued from previous page)

He said seeing others recover from their amputations gave him confidence, and within two months he ran his first triathlon.

“I needed to know what I was capable of,” he said. “I trained really hard and everybody told me I couldn’t do it and that’s when I started hearing words like ‘you can’t do this, it’s impossible.’”

Yet he did it, and that is when The Hero’s Project entered the picture asking him to tackle a year’s long project to summit the world’s highest mountain. Founder Tim Medvetz says he felt Linville demonstrated determination and resiliency in his choice to go into harm’s way in the Marine Corps, in his choice to pursue a dangerous career path in EOD and finally in his decision to amputate his leg when it was clear that its usefulness to him had passed.

More than three years later, with two thwarted attempts at the

summit one retired Marine Staff Sgt. Charlie Linville climbed Mt. Everest with his prosthetic leg.

That accomplishment is hard to quantify, but a few details help us see it clearly. It’s so dangerous that nearly 300 climbers have died in the attempt, most of them experienced professionals—a number that is roughly one-out-of-four. The air is so thin that above 26-thousand feet it cannot sustain human life, a climber’s body literally begins to die as they work their way up the mountain, making it necessary to race for the summit and descend back below 26-thousand-feet in a single push.

Those that never left the mountain have stories of raised winds that pinned them down, of pulmonary edema’s sudden onset—when the brain swells, of falls and slips and avalanches, of hypothermia, of fatigue holding them from the summit just a little too long and the resulting mental fog condemn-



ing them to remain there. The cold conditions preserve these climbers at their final resting place.

None but the most able can do this, and what Charlie proved is that some who suffer traumatic injuries, who nearly succumb to depression, who see their lives shredded in an instant, can gather themselves and remain among the most able-bodied

in the world.

This experience leaves him with hard earned wisdom, he puts it like this, “It’s not just about Charlie Linville, right? No matter what you’re going through, as long as you recognize it and ask for help and make that conscious decision to be happy you can do anything as a human being.”

Kohtz takes command of aircraft maintenance squadron

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Top: U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jeremy Wieder, outgoing 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander, speaks to the Airmen of the 173rd AMXS during a change of command ceremony for the 173rd AMXS.

Bottom: U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Carol Kohtz, 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander, talks about her expectations during a change of command ceremony for the 173rd AMXS.

always room for improvement, in every organization I've ever been a part of," said Kohtz. "I've seen the power and positive outcomes of great communication with great people, up close and personal while at NGB. I have a lot of respect for the core team of folks I worked with...at NGB, who attempt the seemingly impossible every day, and I'm confident that the knowledge and relationships I built there will have a direct and positive impact on the Aircraft Maintenance Squadron."

The AMXS falls under the maintenance group and is made up of three sections—crew chiefs, flight line avionics, and weapons.

"I've always been impressed with the can-do attitude in maintenance, and the personal sense of pride everyone takes in the aircraft and our mission," said Kohtz. "I'm honored to have an opportunity to contribute to continued AMXS successes by problem-solving and collaborating, mentoring people, and ensuring we have the right resources and manpower for the mission."

Kohtz took over the squadron from Lt. Col. Jeremy Wieder who is now the new safety officer for the Wing. Wieder says his time as the squadron commander was a great experience and he learned many things.

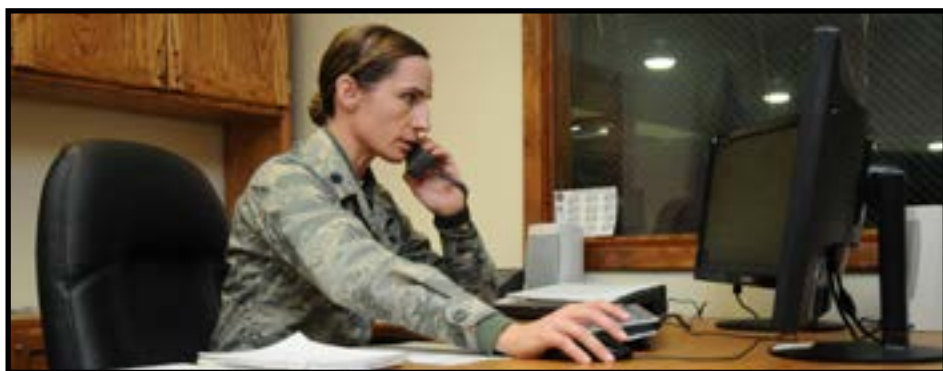
"I want to thank the men and women

of the 173rd AMXS for allowing me to work with you and be a part of your squadron," said Wieder. "My three years in maintenance has definitely been the highlight of my career. In this job I quickly learned if you prioritize taking care of the people that you work with first and foremost, the rest will take care of itself."

Kohtz takes a similar approach when asked about her goals as the commander. "My number one goal is to build leaders and mentors; to aggressively challenge, recruit, and promote top performers who strive for excellence as a standard," she said. "Additionally, my objective is to leave no one behind; to help those who might be struggling, for one reason or another, reach their full potential."

The official ceremony included the passing of the squadron guidon from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander. According to Air Force protocol, this ceremony is rooted in military history, dating to the 18th Century. During this time, organizational flags were developed representing the individual units. When a change of command took place, the outgoing commander would pass the flag to the individual assuming command. This took place in front of the entire unit so that all could witness the new commander assuming their position.

First female F-15 Eagle pilot assigned to Kingsley Field



U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Carol Kohtz, the new 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander, takes the reigns of an organization she says has a proved track record of excellence.

**Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- Lt. Col. Carol Kohtz arrived at the 173rd Fighter Wing Oct. 1, 2016, making her the first female F-15 Eagle pilot assigned to Kingsley Field.

For Kohtz that distinction is simply a byproduct of her lifelong desire to be a fighter pilot.

"I grew up wanting to fly fighters since I was very young," she said. "I've always just focused on that goal."

She reached that goal in July of 2004 upon graduating F-16 initial qualification at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. Her career took her from the F-16 to the F-15, and to a number of different assignments around the world, including Iraq and Korea.

"My main goal in life was getting to be a fighter pilot, so reaching that goal and finally looking up, thinking 'what's next?' was an interesting time for me in my career, and I found myself more and more interested in what was going on outside the fighter squadron."

Kohtz says although being a part of a fighter squadron is a unique honor and an exceptional experience, she has long been drawn to the extensive maintenance and support operations required to keep fighters in the air. When an opportunity to serve at the National Guard Bureau arose, Kohtz was optimistic there would be value in gaining perspective from a new vantage point, while serving the ANG fighter community in a Headquarters staff officer role.

While serving at NGB, Kohtz was assigned as an attached pilot to the 125th Fighter Wing, Florida ANG. After four years at NGB, the next step for Kohtz was to bring enterprise-level experience back to the front

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Computer lab now available in MXG

Story by
Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- Airmen working in the 173rd Maintenance Group now have a new computer lab set up with multiple network computers that can be used at any time to accomplish their computer needs.

When the 173rd Maintenance Training Office moved back into the upstairs of Hangar 219, Master Sgt. Michael Shirar, the maintenance training manager, saw an opportunity in the oddly shaped room that sat in front of his main office area.

"The way the room was uniquely shaped wouldn't make a great office or a storage area, but it is a perfect set up for a computer lab," said Shirar.

Currently there are four networked computers stations set up that can be used to accomplish

varied computer tasks such as email, computer based training, DTS, or AROWS. This is ideal because many offices around base have limited computer stations, and particularly during drill weekend there is frequently a long line to use these work stations.

"Sometimes Airmen spend much of their drill weekend waiting in line to do a CBT when they really should be going out receiving that critical on-the-job-training they need as well," says Shirar.

Shirar says this was something he had wanted to put together for a few years after seeing a similar set up over in the Security Forces building, and this space was opportune for it.

"We had used their computer lab for mass deployment briefings, and I knew this was something we needed for everyday use as well for instructor led trainings," he said.

The machines are on a first come

first serve basis. Shirar adds that members can call the training office at 885-6400 to see if any of the computers are available before they walk up there.

"We tried to make it a welcoming place, where people want to come," added Shirar. "We have instructions on the walls with how-tos and things like that; we have library with readings on military leadership and doctrine and we even have a coffee machine!"

Airmen are not currently allowed to remove library books from the lab, but that is something Shirar is working to change as he catalogues each book into a database as they arrive. There will be more information to follow on this program as it expands. In the meantime, if an Airman finds a book that they are interested in Shirar says he can help them order it free of charge.

1st Female Eagle Driver at Kingsley

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lines of fighter aviation, with an assignment to the 173rd Fighter Wing as the Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander.

Upon arriving at Kingsley, she notes that it's a lot like home—rural Southern Idaho where she spent her youth working on the family farm. The climate is very similar, and the work in AMXS harkens back to farm life, where if something needed fixing—they got the job done. "I grew up on a farm; I love turning wrenches. I love working on things and making them run," Kohtz says.

She inherits a squadron that is increasingly pioneering solutions to keeping an ageing and mixed fleet of Eagles airworthy.

"After four years at the National Guard Bureau I will say the reputation of the maintainers here is second to none," Kohtz said. "The folks here are dealing with the oldest fleet of F-15s, the most diverse fleet, with all kinds of issues coming up that you just cannot foresee," she adds. "Every step of the way there is something that comes up, you peel the onion back another layer and you find a new problem that no one has ever seen before." She mentioned NGB's ongoing reliance on Kingsley's maintenance expertise, while ANG and active-duty leaders work to manage serious fleet-wide sustainment issues such as parts availability, long-term cracks, and obsolete aircraft wiring.

She sums it up by saying that her role is to serve the men and women tasked with this difficult challenge; to remove obstacles from their path so they can continue to excel.

"I feel right at home here, and I have a lot of people to thank for making me feel welcome and a part of the Kingsley family."

Military & Federal pay increase for 2017

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public
Affairs

WASHINGTON -- The president signed the annual defense authorization act Dec. 23, 2016 making a 2.1-percent increase for military and federal workers official.

This is the largest pay increase since 2010 and according to military.com provides about an additional \$550 for junior troops in 2017.

Because the pay increase extends to all federal workers technicians at the 173rd Fighter Wing will also see the pay increase.

The FY2017 NDAA also provides for a small increase of overall end strength to the U.S. Air Force moving the total num-



ber to 321,000. Other parts of the legislation include a restructuring of Tricare with new costs and fees for Airmen who enter service in 2018.

For more information visit the Defense Finance and Accounting website at <https://www.dfas.mil/>



Do you vESD? Well you should be!

Feature by

Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Computers, printers, email.... these information technology items are designed to make our lives easier. No REALLY! They truly are. However, sometimes it seems like they are the bane of productivity and we spend more hours trying make things work right instead of actually doing our jobs. I know I have asked myself many times if it be easier to hand write a letter, stick it in the envelope, find a stamp (seriously...\$0.47 for a stamp!!!) and stick it in the snail mail, than try to get my Outlook to cooperate. (What do you mean my certificates are missing!???) Yes, we have all been there and have found ourselves banging our foreheads against the keyboard out of frustration.

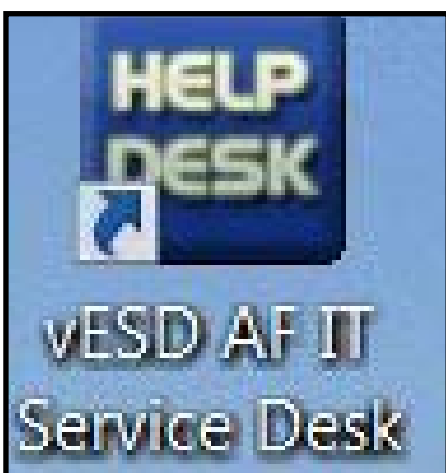
Then comes the phone call to the Comm Flight Helpdesk who patiently try and walk me through my technology woes.

“Did you try turning it off and on?”

“Of course I did! I.....oh wait... now it is working!”

Well, now there is an awesome, new tool that can help us out when we are in the throes of a technological meltdown. “PC load letter? What does that mean?!”

You may have seen the nifty new icon on your desktop that says HelpDesk and is labeled “vESD AF IT Service Desk”.



I know you ignored it like the rest of us as you quickly clicked close on the 217 pop ups that appear when you log in. But trust me, this is one tool that you don't want to ignore and it will really (really...no



REALLY) help you in those moments when your printer suddenly decides that, no...it will not print your document even though it was printing just fine 10 minutes ago and nothing has really changed except you are now in a time crunch and WHY DID IT SUDDENLY DECIDE TO STOP!! WHY?!?! WHY, I ASK YOU!!??....sorry...got a little carried away there.

The vESD tool, is a virtual Enterprise Service Desk desktop application that will trouble shoot your computer systems with a few clicks of a button. It's like having Master Sgt. Justin Schultz, the Comm Focal Point, sitting right next to you at your desk...which by the way, he won't do. I asked. But unlike Schultz who has more important tasks than being my right-hand personal computer fixer person, the vESD is always there for me and you. This tool will walk you through troubleshooting steps to fix minor problems with email, network, hardware, software, telephone, and other information technology related issues. It is so easy, even a caveman can do it (no trademark infringement intended.)

The best part of this tool is that if vESD cannot fix your problem,

it will automatically create a ticket which is routed to the Communications Focal Point and then it is assigned to the appropriate shop for resolution. The ticket includes details about the user, the computer system, a diagnostics report, and you can even add comments. You don't have to actually talk to anyone you anti-social socialite! And in the age of texting and social media, we know how appealing that is. Talking on a phone? That is crazy, nobody does that anymore.

So, how do you make it work? To start the vESD application, double click on the HELPDESK icon on your desktop. The application automatically runs a HealthCheck, which scans and assesses the user's email, access to the network, as well as the computer's hardware and software status in an attempt to identify any problems. If the HealthCheck finds issues with any of these services, the application will prompt the user and step through the troubleshooting process. It tells you what to do people!

But what if HealthCheck doesn't identify any issues but you know that there is something wrong when you suddenly find yourself unable to send that oh-so-important email? You can still run the troubleshooting process-

es by clicking on the corresponding icon and starting the troubleshooting wizard. Again, it walks you through it and all you have to do is click a few buttons. So simple.

And get this. Not only will it troubleshoot your computer for you so you can avoid talking to another living human being, there are a few other tools in it. The interface also has icons which users can use to track any tickets they have already submitted, provide feedback, access to MyGAL and ADLS, report cyber threats, or peruse the Frequently Asked Questions database. Plus, on the main screen of vESD is an Announcements section, split into two areas. The top area contains information disseminated from the Enterprise level, often regarding known and ongoing issues in the Enterprise. The lower area is specific to Kingsley Field and may be used by the CFP to provide information to users about the base network. So if you think the network might possibly be down, check there before calling the Help Desk first!

So, don't ignore the vESD button; it is your friend and is always there for you and does not judge you...kind of like coffee.

Det. 2 welcomes active-duty wing commander for 1st visit

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The commander of the 56th Fighter Wing made his first visit to the active duty Airmen stationed at Kingsley Field as a detachment of the 56th Operations Group, Dec. 19-20. Brig. Gen. Brooks Leonard toured base facilities and workspaces meeting the members of the total force integration which stood up just two years ago.

"I have a lot of thanks to pass out to the folks here," he said. "For taking care of these Airmen."

He went on to explain in an all call for Det. 2 Airmen his priorities, which began with valuing "people, ideas and then things."

Leonard was accompanied by his Command Chief Master Sgt. Randy Kwiatkowski who made his second journey to the base from Phoenix, Ariz., following an initial visit in July.

At meetings with various stakeholders, including commanders and supervisors from around 173rd Fighter Wing, they discussed the benefit the active association provides for them. A common theme during the discussions centered around the fact that many of the active duty slots in support roles are one-deep, which creates heavy workloads and sometimes shortfalls when a member is

absent for sickness or for annual leave.

Leonard responded that many of the decisions for manning at the detachment were made when the Air Force was lacking many resources including money and people, and that today's environment is improved and may help alleviate manpower shortages. He said this change may be facilitated by this detachment of Luke AFB becoming a squadron, perhaps as early as May of 2017.

He concluded his all call saying that it was important for members stationed at this small southern Oregon base to know that he and others are working to eliminate problems associated with being at an active association and that fixing BAH and providing Airman's Incentive Pay are two examples of that concern.

Top: Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, the 56th Fighter Wing Commander at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., stops to visit with several student pilots during a visit to members of Det. 2, 56th Operations Group who are the active duty side of the total force integration here at Kingsley Field, Dec. 19, 2016.

Right: During his visit Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard coined many outstanding performers for his detachment with a coin showcasing a warrior shield worn by the Greek Hoplites, he explained the significance of the shield was that it protected not the wearer but rather the person to their left and in turn every person in the formation was protected from the soldier next to them.



Pilot crosses rare threshold days before Christmas



Lt. Col. Jeremy Wieder, is greeted by newly returned Lt. Col. Jason Nalepa and a stream of chilled champagne on a 26-degree day following his crossing the 2,000-hour mark, Dec. 22, 2016. He began his military career at the U.S. Air Force Academy graduating in 1999 and began flying the F-15 in 2001 after graduating from the B-course at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. He spent a tour at Kadena Air Base, Japan and then transitioned to the F-117 Nighthawk in 2004 until 2008. In 2008 he joined the ranks of the 173rd Fighter Wing as an instructor pilot back in the F-15. Until recently he was the 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander and about a month ago he transitioned to the 173rd Fighter Wing Safety Office as the chief of safety. The average number of flying hours most instructor pilots are able to log is around 125/year meaning that even in a unit which flies as often as the 173rd, it takes 16 years to reach the 2,000 mark. It is increasingly rare for pilots to reach the 3,000 hour mark, although Col. Jeff Edwards, the 173rd Fighter Wing Vice Commander, recently crossed that threshold.

Exercise Mimics Reality, Starts With Unforeseen

Story by

Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Inspector General office conducts exercises at the base as a matter of requirement. On one recent exercise they chose a less routine fashion to kick things off.

They posted an announcement for Airmen at the base to join them in the base theater to learn about how exercises are performed (there was also a mention of doughnuts) and so around 10 people showed up and took their seats and Senior Master Sgt. Tod Bankston began the meeting.

“Does anyone here suffer from any PTSD effects?” he began. “Some of our training will be intense and, if you do, now would be a good time to leave.”

The audience looked at each other shaking heads in the negative and with that Bankston asked them to cover their ears and read the next slide.

In that instant a security forces member walked on to the stage and fired exactly 30 blanks toward the ceiling of the theater in front of a bewildered group of people. The slide read “EXERCISE, EXERCISE, EXERCISE! Active Shooter Exercise.”

That was how they were sitting at ground zero when the active shooter exercise commenced. They all received placards that detailed their simulated injuries and one of the survivors called security forces to report the incident.

“I thought I was going to a WIT exercise instruction course,” said Senior Master Sgt. K.J. Aubut who attended the meeting. “It turned out to be an active shooter exercise where I was shot in the face and neck.”

This approach provided some real-world effects to the exercise, for one thing Aubut is the base emergency manager, which meant he was among the “wounded” instead of heading up the emergency operations center like he normally would.

“Senior Master Sgt. Gadbury took over as the alternate EOC manager,” said Aubut. “It was very realistic, it was no-notice, and the



Top: Airman 1st Class David Garcia, 173rd Security Forces Squadron, searches the simulated active shooter, whose part Tech. Sgt. Clint Wells played, during an exercise Nov. 18, 2016. Security Forces responded to a 911 call from simulated victims who reported shots fired and injuries. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)

Right: Tech. Sgt. Clint Wells, a member of the 173rd Security Forces Squadron, plays his part in kicking off an active shooter exercise firing blanks toward the theater ceiling while surprised Airmen looked on, Nov. 18, 2016. The exercise kicked off in an unconventional fashion as those in the audience thought they were attending a meeting to discuss base exercises rather than participating in an actual exercise. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)

intensity level from security forces was high, especially from Sergeant Clary.”

Security forces proceeded to dispatch Airmen who quickly located the active shooter, in this case Tech. Sgt. Clint Wells who was outside the command building and was firing blanks toward it. Tech. Sgt. Brandan Stroh and Airman 1st Class David Garcia apprehended him and stepped through their procedures: disarming him, handcuffing



him, and checking him for explosives on his person.

Bankston summed it up saying, “We were looking for the element of surprise. The idea was to keep the exercise under wraps as much as possible—course next time we ask

for volunteers it might be harder.”

He went on to say that he was hoping for more people to show up, maybe as many as 50, but the high operations tempo precluded many from attending a voluntary meeting.

Kingsley supports annual downtown Snowflake Parade



Top Right: The 173rd Fighter Wing Honor Guard opened the 2016 Annual Snowflake Parade in downtown Klamath Falls, Ore., Dec. 8. Tech. Sgt. Sharee Kylmala, Staff Sgt. Shasta Petersen, Senior Airman Krista Galloway, Airman 1st Class Alexandria Bakie, Senior Airman Jacquelyne Bakie, Senior Airman Idaly Garcia took the blue ribbon for Government/Military floats.

Above: Deputy Fire Chief Howard Owens passes out candy to paradegoers while equipment from the 173rd FW Firehouse rolls down the parade route behind him.

Left: 173rd Fighter Wing Security Forces Members prepped a number of all-terrain vehicles with winter snow tracks in addition to other equipment for the parade.

**Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. -- Nearly every year, as fall turns wintery a group of volunteers from the 173rd Fighter Wing are hard at work putting the finishing touches on equipment and floats for the annual Snowflake Parade down Main Street. This year's entries featured the security forces squadron, fire department and the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron.

"We were scrambling on Wednesday to get all the tracks

mounted on the vehicles," said Tech. Sgt. Brandan Stroh, 173rd Security Forces member, of the numerous tracked vehicles they entered in the event. "This is the first year we've had those out there."

The tracks ensure they can patrol the perimeter around the base during and after heavy snows, and they make a statement during a winter parade.

The top float for the government/military entry went to the 173rd Fighter Wing Color Guard who opened the parade, walking the parade route in dress blues and carrying the U.S. Flag, the State of Oregon Flag, the Air Force Flag

and the POW/MIA Flag.

"I was surprised said Tech. Sgt. Dave Millard, who runs the 173rd Fighter Wing Honor Guard program, "because every member of the detail was brand new—this was their first detail."

He and Master Sgt. Joe McKenzie junior accompanied the new members but were not an official part of the detail.

The new honor members were: Tech. Sgt. Sharee Kylmala, Staff Sgt. Shasta Petersen, Senior Airman Krista Galloway, Airman 1st Class Alexandria Bakie, Senior Airman Jacquelyne Bakie, and Senior Airman Idaly Garcia.

The 270th brought several "deuce-and-a-halves," large trucks with two rear axles, festooned with white camouflage netting, and the fire department brought several vehicles featuring red and blue flashing lights.

"It's always fun to get out there and represent the wing," said Millard. "We look forward to the parade every year just like our kids who are all excited to get out there and see Santa Claus."

This year the parade featured 26 Santa's, and more than 130 individual entries. Organizers say it is the largest festival of its kind in the entire state.

Aspiring Engineers See STEM in Action at 173rd

*Commentary by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Fighter Wing has partnered with a local high school to show students how science, technology, and math subjects shape careers in the real world.

Henley High School has recently adopted a curriculum from Project Lead The Way, which emphasizes a learn-by-doing approach to STEM subjects.

“This engineering class is the first class in a new program offered at Henley High School,” said Dr. Kristi Lebkowsky, a PhD in Chemistry, who teaches the new curriculum. “The course’s title is Introduction to Engineering Design.”

Her students made a recent visit to the base.

“Coming to the base is such a great and unique opportunity we have by living in Klamath Falls and our wonderful partnership with Kingsley,” said Lebkowsky. “The visit to the base helps my students to see how engineering design has helped develop so many important products including...the new G-suit, the Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS) helmet, radar systems, safety systems, and overall aircraft design.”

The first stop for the 40 students who made the trip to the base, Nov. 3, was to see that aircraft design in action.

“It was cool just hearing the rumbling. It was exhilarating,” said 14-year-old freshman Braden Lawrie after watching take-offs from the taxi-way just outside the restricted runway area.

Incidentally, Lebkowsky is married to Maj. Quentin Lebkowsky, an F-15 Instructor Pilot with the 173rd FW, and his aircraft took off as the students watched and applauded.

Lebkowsky is setting the stage for next year’s course which is Aerospace Engineering.



Top: Henley High School engineering students watch F-15 Eagles take off at Kingsley Field, home of the Oregon Air National Guard’s 173rd Fighter Wing. (Photo by Samantha Tipler; Klamath County School District)

Bottom: About Forty Students from Henley High School’s new Aerospace Engineering Program visited the 173rd Fighter Wing to witness how engineering principles are applied in the real world. (Photo by Samantha Tipler; Klamath County School District)

“I want to get them something to be excited about,” she said. “They’re fun classes, but they’re hard. The students need to see the end result, why they’re doing it, before they do all that hard work.”

Lt. Col. Alaric Michaelis, a 173rd FW F-15 Instructor Pilot, addressed that while speaking with the

students on the bus.

“Learn as much as you can. Get interested in it. If you love it, it’ll come easy,” he said. “If it’s difficult and you keep pushing through, it will become easy, I promise. Just keep trying.”

If the course is successful students will learn, “To think like

engineers and ultimately be both inventors and innovators,” says Lebkowsky. “This country has a need for young innovators to keep us in the race and I know that they were inspired by the visit to the base. Watching the F-15’s launch sparked an interest from all students.”

Santa catches ride to Kingsley in F-15 Eagle!



Each year the 173rd Operations Group arranges to bring Santa Claus from his home at the North Pole to Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore. They say it's a real time saver because these Eagles are naturally much faster than even flying reindeer. Santa met up with Mrs. Claus and they visited with children of base Airmen and posed for photos as well. Word has it, he'll be back next year, riding on the wings of an Eagle! (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)

January Drill weekend lunch menu

Meal cost for all Officers, AGRs, and Civilians \$5.55, Holiday Meal \$9.05

Saturday

- Lasagna
- Orange Glazed-Chicken Breast
- Mixed Veggies
- Broccoli
- Jasmine Rice
- Roasted Potatoes
- Dinner Rolls
- Chili
- Salad Bar
- Assorted Desserts

Sunday

- Chicken Teriyaki
- Kalua Pig
- White Rice
- Roasted Potato-Wedges
- Grilled Asparagus
- Calico Corn
- Salad Bar
- Dinner Rolls
- Chili
- Assorted Desserts

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Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Nikki Jackson

Public Affairs Superintendent
Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar
jennifer.d.shirar.mil@mail.mil

Editor
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
jefferson.j.thompson2.mil@mail.mil



In a recent winter storm Kingsley Field and the Klamath Basin received an average of 14-inches, Jan. 3-4, 2017. However, on an open space like the ramp and runways wind piled drifts to more than four feet and members of the 173rd Civil Engineers Squadron worked around the clock to not only clear those surfaces but load the bulk of the snow on trucks for removal from the active airfield. Additionally, they plowed all of the parking areas for both the airport and base facilities. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Col. Jeff Smith, 173rd Fighter Wing Commander)



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