



Airmen return to Kingsley Field from around the globe

Story by Senior Airman Riley Johnson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Fighter Wing is welcoming home Airmen deployed with the wing's first ever large-scale deployment throughout the spring of 2017.

The group of Kingsley Field Airmen deployed under a new process called Reserve Component Periods (RCP) in which they support the active component with operations throughout the world.

"This is the first time we have conducted a deployment of this scale," Tech. Sgt. Kalani Koli, the program manager for the deployments.

This RCP sent Airmen to countries around the world including United Arab Emirates, Djibouti, Qatar, and Kuwait among others.

"Being our first RCP deployment, it was a learning experience," said Koli "There were a lot of lessons learned and it sets us up for success with future deployments."

The deployed Airmen were from many career fields and represented nearly every organization on Kingsley Field.



Master Sgt. Osten Coaty embraces two of his sons after returning from a six-month deployment to the United Arab Emirates, May 2, 2017. Coaty spent nearly 40 hours in transit but seemed wide awake and lively when reunited with his wife and three children. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Riley Johnson)

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Kingsley Fire saves lives after auto accident

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. -- When a vehicle traveling erratically and at excessive speeds on Highway 97 collided head-on with a Dodge pickup in the southbound lane the ensuing accident left one fatality and six serious injuries in its wake.

Such a catastrophe requires an immediate response from emergency medical technicians to administer life-saving aid, but local, first responders in the largely rural area were located miles from the accident scene. It is fortunate for those survivors that the Kingsley Field Fire Department has

entered into a partnership with Klamath Falls Fire District 1 and they were able to be on-scene within minutes of taking the call.

"We have a fire district of about 192 square miles that we cover with four stations, and a big part of our district is south of the south-side bypass," said Craig Andresen, Klamath County Fire District No.1 Division Chief-Fire Marshal. "Kingsley Field responds "first-due" most of the time, which is a big help to cover that part of our

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Col. Jeff Smith, the 173rd FW Commander, coins each of the firefighters who responded to an major accident on Highway 97 saving several lives. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)



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Command Chief's Corner



Does your service reflect military maturity?

**Commentary by
Chief Master Sgt. Mark McDaniel,
173rd Fighter Wing Command Chief**

I would like to share with you an article that was written by Master Sgt. S. Boyd, a First Sergeant for the 127th Fighter Wing, Selfridge Air National Guard base. Boyd specifically titles the article "Military Maturity and how it applies to specific areas of military life."

Military Maturity - As First Sergeant and Wing Fitness Program Manager I have members come to me with reasons why they are not attaining and maintaining an excellent physical condition, so much that I have coined the term "Military Maturity." Webster defines military as: of, for or pertaining to the armed forces, war, or soldiers; befitting, characteristic of, or noting a soldier. He further defines maturity as: ripeness, fully developed, perfected condition. So, "Military Maturity" is the armed forces soldier's state of being in fully developed perfected condition, befitting, characteristic for, or pertaining to war.

By no means is this another rant on the necessity of passing your fitness test. What I want you to do now is ask yourself the question, "Am I fully developed and in perfected condition for war? Have I developed the befitting leadership character qualities to support our war fighting machine?" Our creed says, "I am" six times. Does your life style support our creed? We need to be honest about our level of military maturity since we answered our nation's call. Our military is steeped in discipline, tradition, honor, and valor. These are not normal terms that describe civilian life. These terms apply to the men and women of our military and are befitting and characteristic of the fully developed traits required to be called a Warrior! Warriors don't need to be reminded to cut their hair, shave, or how to properly wear the uniform.

Warriors certainly don't need to be told to be physically fit. We learn this in basic training.

George Orwell perhaps said it best, "People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." Ask yourself, "Do I really stand ready?" Mature Airmen have read the "Little Brown Book" and know the responsibilities of every level within the enlisted force structure. They follow AFI's, TOs, and checklist. They maintain the highest level of technical, physical, mental, and spiritual readiness to meet mission requirements. If it's legal, moral, ethical and by the book it can be done. Mature Airmen have viewed the Air Force fitness assessment requirements and know the proper technique for performing each of their fitness components. Mature Airmen participate in a year-round fitness program not just to pass their annual fitness test, but to maintain their highest state of physical readiness. Military Maturity defines the core of our being and should be the mindset of our Airmen. It is that inner knowing that we are called and held to a higher standard and expectation than our civilian counterparts. Our standard of dress, appearance, customs, and courtesies set us apart from mainstream society. The ultimate sacrifice is intrinsically tied to our service and stated in our creed, "I defend my country with my life!" Military Maturity speaks to our character of selfless service.

It has been said, "Talent will take you but character will keep you." Consistency of character over time develops credibility. Mature military members are honored because they have exhibited loyalty discipline, courage, integrity, service, and excellence throughout their military career.

Outside the front gate lies a society with a particular view of the military in their minds that causes them to treat us with the highest

respect. Military Maturity says, "I saw in me what you see in me before you ever met me. I desired the discipline, authoritative structure and accountability inherent to this structure. I have researched and studied the leadership characteristics in this unique arena and decided this is what I want because this is who I am. No one forced me. I volunteered. There are standards levied upon me in the military that are not expected of civilians. I don't press toward the mark of the minimums but I strive for the excellence of the maximums. I am an American Airman. I am a warrior. I am faithful to a proud heritage. I am military and I am mature."

The character qualities of mature Airmen are to be accountable, honorable, courageous, loyal, and standard bearers. To reverse these qualities would begin the slippery slope to immaturity. It's so easy to find fault, criticize and condemn but the militarily mature find solutions, edify and support their leadership. So, the next time you're tempted to excuse yourself from any of your military duties or responsibilities ask yourself, "Am I fully developed and in perfected condition for war?" I say, "Yes you are." No more excuses! Your life and lifestyle are changed. You are in the military and your maturity is required! ~Master Sgt. S. Boyd

How do apply this article to you? How does your approach fit into the "Land of No Slack?" I honestly believe that there is only one person that can go home, look in the mirror, and answer the questions that have been put forth in this article. That person is you! Here at Kingsley Field we have an exceptional reputation to live up to whether it's at the national or local community level. We are in the "Profession of Arms" and as the article by Master Sgt. Boyd points out, we are held to a different standard. Civilian communities across the country never question

these standards because they trust in the fact that we live up to these expectations every day. They depend on us to do so. Kingsley Field is an awesome place to be and we are extremely fortunate to be able to do what we do. I ask you to periodically look in the mirror and objectively see where you think you are. Give yourself credit you are due but also see where you may need to make adjustments. Thank you for being part of the team!

**Does your life
style support our
creed? We need
to be honest
about our level
of military
maturity since
we answered our
nation's call**

--Master Sgt. S. Boyd,
127th FW 1st Sgt. &
Fitness Monitor

Wing teaches innovation class to all Airmen



From Left: Staff Sgt. Diana Pena, Tech. Sgt. James Hubbard, and Master Sgt. Melissa Monson work together on an exercise during the 8-Steps to Problem Solving course offered at the 173rd Fighter Wing, April 6, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson)

Story by

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

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The United States Department of Defense is navigating budget turmoil which began in 2013 with sequestration, and continues today with a six-year congressional stalemate on passing a defense appropriations bill.

Instead, congress has relied on continuing resolutions to fund the DoD and avert government shut downs, which can occur when neither side can agree to its terms going forward. Those six years have taken their toll, with readiness numbers trending down along with retention numbers, while the average age of weapons platforms and equipment is trending up.

The Air Force is hard-hit in this environment due to its charter of air power and thus the reliance on airborne platforms including fighter aircraft and airlift capability.

These challenges visit difficulties upon many units including the 173rd Fighter Wing where F-15C pilots begin their careers. Currently, this unit copes with an ageing airframe that, unless extensive refurbishment programs are undertaken, will continue to soak up increasingly more maintenance and repair efforts to keep the mission capability rate high. Additionally, high attrition rates of fighter

pilots are leaving cockpits empty and so the active-duty Air Force is asking Kingsley Field to ramp up pilot production as high as possible.

Squeezed between these competing realities, the 173rd Fighter Wing has responded with a drive to innovate processes and workflow. The first initiative offered at the wing is open to any who would like to participate—it's called the 8-Steps to Problem Solving. The title of the class may invoke images of communications principles, or of working through personality conflicts in between coworkers, but in reality this training is a very scientific and data driven approach to analyzing one's workflow.

"This course gives a systematic way to view everyday tasks as a process," said 2nd Lt. Jeremy Riblett, the project officer. "By turning activities into a process, and using tools from the course, areas in our own process can be identified where we are creating waste."

In the past, training like this has been called Quality Air Force, AFSO21, and some current practices include Lean/Six Sigma among others. The underpinning philosophy of all of these is that there potential efficiencies lie in understanding what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how we are doing it.

Lt. Col. Keith Townsend, the courses instructor, stresses that ef-

iciency is not necessarily looking at what we do and finding ways to do it faster, instead he says, "Efficiency is killing waste."

He explains that when we analyze our processes using hard data we can start to identify wasteful parts of the process. One local example of eliminating waste is the new process for creating appointment letters. In the past, appointment letters were carefully formatted official memorandums and required a commander's physical signature. As often as not, the back-and-forth to get the formatting just right took longer than the actual drafting process. The 173rd FW commander has chosen to remove this waste by moving the process to email and requiring a simple "approve" or "disapprove" response from the commander.

"This was a fantastic example of eliminating waste," said Riblett. "An outdated, time consuming process was changed allowing for a much quicker turn around in letters from the commander being signed."

Riblett hopes that by spreading this kind of training members from all over the wing will help eliminate time consuming and less productive activities, making room for the critical work of flying aircraft and training new pilots.

The next offering of the 8-Step course is planned for September.

RISE Team seeks innovators

Story by

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

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore.-- As members from around the wing are introduced to the 8-Step Process to Problem Solving course the Airmen who are coordinating the training see it as a launch pad for a much larger program—The Rise Team.

"We are an undermanned, over-worked, underfunded force," said 2nd Lt. Jeremy Riblett, the project officer. "We have to learn to make every dollar of our money and every minute of our time pull double duty. We cannot afford to waste any of our resources especially if it's doing something that doesn't make sense,"

And the Research and Innovation for Section Empowerment Team is one way the 173rd Fighter Wing is searching to fill the gap in between mission demands and thin funding resources. Armed with the initial 8-Step training he and others are hoping to stir ideas for improving operations at Kingsley Field.

"The mission of the RISE team has two parts," he said. "The first is to have a core group of members who are experienced in practicing and implementing Lean/Six Sigma practices, which they learn in the 8-Step course. The second half of the goal is to be a team that can help promote innovation across base."

The long-term vision sees this team growing to 12 members, eight of which are Six/Sigma Green Belt certified and four of which are black belt certified. Riblett

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Kingsley Fire races to local accident, saves lives



The driver of this late-model truck was a victim when another driver collided head-on after attempting to pass another vehicle; the accident created a debris field that stretched for more than 200 yards down Highway 97. (Photo courtesy Rees Thomas, 173rd FW Firefighter)

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district.”

And in this case that partnership—formalized in a memorandum of understanding—meant lives were spared.

“It was absolute chaos ... whew,” said Derrick Laughlin, a 173rd Fighter Wing Firehouse Captain, when

thinking back to the scene of the accident. “I couldn’t describe it really, even on the radio at the time.”

The road was littered with debris including mangled pieces of the three vehicles and their contents spreading down the road for more than 200 yards, said Laughlin. This field was both a crime scene and held human remains, which meant the firefighters could not drive their engines through it to reach one of the victims at

the far end. Were it not for the fact that Kingsley Field has a recently acquired battery-operated extraction equipment, in fact they are the only firehouse in the county that does, the victim would have died, trapped in a crushed vehicle.

“The reason every single one of us are in this profession is so we can help and protect our community,” said Laughlin. “It really is a feeling of accomplishment.”

Rees Thomas, a Kingsley Firefighter said he looked back at the call logs from that day and they arrived three minutes before the next responders. In that time, he said they extracted a man from a vehicle who was drawing his last breaths. They performed lifesaving CPR and he was airlifted to a Medford, Ore. hospital. He walked out of that hospital four weeks later, April 27.

Andresen says the partnership paid dividends in this instance and he the partnership as a critical piece of public safety.

“We are the only two fire departments in Klamath County that have paid staff so it’s a big deal to help each other out,” he said.

Beale AFB Explosive Ordnance Disposal Visits 173rd Fighter Wing



Left: U.S. Air Force explosive ordnance disposal technicians assigned to the 9th Civil Engineer Squadron, EOD Flight detonate a hung flare from an F-15 Eagle March 15, 2017, at Kingsley Field, Oregon. A Hung Flare occurs when a flare fails to discharge properly and remains on the aircraft becoming a safety hazard. The EOD technicians traveled from Beale Air Force Base, California to support 173rd Fighter Wing. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Riley Johnson)

Inset: U.S. Air Force explosive ordnance disposal technicians assigned to the 9th Civil Engineer Squadron, EOD Flight detonate a hung flare from an F-15 Eagle March 15, 2017, at Kingsley Field, Oregon. A Hung Flare occurs when a flare fails to discharge properly and remains on the aircraft becoming a safety hazard. The EOD technicians traveled from Beale Air Force Base, California to support 173rd Fighter Wing.

Kingsley sees innovation as a resource

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says, once established, this nucleus can grow on its own as established members train new members to replace those who retire or move on. He hopes to see a diverse membership bringing people from across the base, from every status including active-duty, drill status, technician and civilian as well as different professional backgrounds.

The impetus behind this program are those seemingly intractable problems that plague any organization. For the 173rd Fighter Wing he wants to first address the long close-out process for performance reports.

Currently it's not uncommon for EPRs to remain incomplete until the Airman is due for a subsequent review—as long as a year. Fixing

this will require a team to track the problems to their root cause, working across base organizations and the Air Force Personnel Center in San Antonio, Texas.

Should the RISE Team identify improvements it would save time for every single unit on Kingsley Field as may well serve as a roadmap for tackling future problems.

The new team consists of: Master Sgts. Ryan Ricketts, DeMarques Mitchell, Kevin Olson, , Melissa Monson, James Schols, Tech. Sgts. Ryan Manfull, and Christopher Knight, and Staff Sgt. Jared Boyer

Riblett is still looking for two more members who would like to participate from the sup-

port side of the Wing including the medical group.

“We need self-motivated members willing to take the ‘8-steps’ course and put in additional time each week to work on problems across base,” he said. “The time commitment can vary, but the current plan is to meet as a large group once a month. However, members would meet more frequently to work on their projects.

If you have a problem or a concern you believe well suited for this group, drop it in the nearest commander's comment box with a note that it is for the RISE Team, or contact one of the members directly.

173rd Airmen return

(Continued from front page)

“I have been in contact with the deployed members of the command section and I am proud of the job that they have done,” said Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, 173rd FW command section deployment manager. “They have really worked hard and served in a way that represents our wing very, very well.”

The first 173rd FW Airmen departed in October of 2016; and six have returned as of May 5, 2017.

Klamath Falls community members and Kingsley Field Airmen gathered at the Crater Lake – Klamath Regional Airport on May 2 to welcome home Master Sgts. Osten Coaty and Monika Wilder, who are both 173rd FW Airmen.

“I couldn't imagine what transpired at the Airport,” Coaty said of the more than 60 people from the local community gathered to welcome him and Wilder home when they stepped off an aircraft. “Our community goes above and beyond to make us feel welcome.”

Coaty, a chaplain assistant with the wing, deployed to Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates.

“Coming home brings a huge sense of relief and accomplishment,” Coaty said. “I wanted to do as much as possible over there for the 4,000 Airmen stationed there.”

Strings of 12-hour days and few days off over his six-month deployment left him tired upon his return but also satisfied with the accolades earned including the first IG inspection in 25 years which netted his section an “Outstanding” rating and several best practices.

“I received nothing but support throughout this deployment and it is a great feeling to be home,” Coaty said.

Deployed Airmen will continue to return throughout 2017 and even into 2018.

For many, these deployments are part of military service something the Oregon National Guard emphasizes in the mission statement, which reads; “A ready force equipped and trained to respond to any contingency. When we are needed, we are there.”

Kingsley Airmen host Enlisted Leadership Symposium

Story by

Senior Master Sgt. John Goold,
173rd Aircrew Flight Equipment

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore.--

The 173rd Fighter Wing Mentorship Committee hosted an enlisted leadership symposium, April 8.

The committee provided the three-hour event to enlisted members from Oregon Joint Force Headquarters-Air, the 142nd Fighter Wing and the 173rd Fighter Wing. The symposium was the first time the wing mentorship team hosted an event for personnel from across the Oregon Air Guard.

The idea of the Mentorship Committee began almost two years ago when Senior Master Sgt. Adam Rising, Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark McDaniel, and Chief Master Sgt. Mike Zalunardo began discussing the possibility of bringing the message of the Air Force's Profession of Arms Center of Excellence (PACE) to Kingsley Field. Since that time, the mentorship committee, chaired

by Senior Master Sgt. Diana Junker, has evolved from “Brown Bag” leadership and mentoring talks during lunch to last year's successful PACE event, “Enhancing Human Capital”, which was hosted at the OIT Auditorium for Kingsley Airmen and also local community business and civic leaders.

This year's event, “Legacy and Leadership”, opened with remarks from Brig. Gen. Jeff Silver, the commander of the Oregon Air National Guard and Col. Jeff Smith, the 173rd Fighter Wing Commander. The presenters, Master Sgt. Carrie Deboer, Staff Sgt. Jared Boyer, Master Sgt. Daniel Waller, and (me) Senior Master Sgt. John Goold discussed the need for creating positive legacies through leadership and the importance of appreciating and understanding the concept of sacrifice in our unique military calling.

In addition to the mentorship portion of the symposium, the event also included



Master Sgt. Daniel Waller leads a portion of the symposium, April 8. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jenn Shirar)

a presentation on the Blended Retirement System by Mr. Gary Kjensrud and a very informative question and answer session with a first sergeants' panel comprised of Master Sgts. DeMarques Mitchell, Paul Allen, Jesus Rodriguez III, and Senior Master Sgt. Chris Barnett.

The Symposium was well attended with nearly 70 participants from around the state and feedback was positive, encouraging committee members to look toward to similar events in the future.

New Airman & Family Readiness Manager introduction

Letter by
Mr. Joe Scriven,
173rd Airman & Family Readiness

Coming to Kingsley Field as the new Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager is a dream job for me and my family. Growing up in Riddle, Oregon makes this is a homecoming after spending ten of the last eleven years at Camp Humphreys, South Korea where I worked for Army Community Service and Military Personnel. In close to two months of being here I have learned that Kingsley Field is special and here is why:

We are special because of our people—from the first day I have learned that you are some of the most helpful, caring, people around.

We are special because of our mission—to be able to train the best air-to-air combat pilots in the Air

Force requires teamwork and unity in each area. This really is the Land of no Slack!

We are special because of our community—I have seen an outpouring of support from people in Klamath Falls. You don't have that type of support everywhere.

My goal is to support mission readiness by ensuring that, not just our core programs are supported, but that we meet some of the unique needs of our community. A few of those are:

Supporting Our Returning Heroes; this year we have several returning from deployments overseas. We want to ensure that their whole family is supported as they return home. We also want to ensure that we maintain a robust Transition Assistance Program to ensure each person has the tools they need for employment. While away, we

want to ensure their families here are supported through morale calls and anything else we can do to help.

Kingsley Spouse Connect—there are many spouses who are looking for ways they can build relationships with other spouses. We hope to have one connecting event each month where spouses and their children get the opportunity to interact and build connections with other spouses.

Comprehensive Airman Fitness Wellness Initiative; the Comprehensive Airman Fitness Wellness Initiative looks to promote wellness and resilience through a holistic approach. That approach is through physical, social, spiritual, and mental enrichment events.

It is an honor to be here. I have enjoyed meeting many of you and look forward to meeting more in the coming days, weeks, and hopefully, years.



Mr. Joe Scriven
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Troop housing undergoes a renovation improving rooms, kitchen

Story by
Senior Airman Riley Johnson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- Local contractors and 173rd Fighter Wing members completed renovations to the Airman housing building March, 2017 on Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

Airmen of the 173rd Force Support Flight Services kicked off the renovations in July 2016 with fresh coat of paint for most rooms and hallways of the dormitory. A local business installed new carpet and 173rd Civil Engineer Squadron members wrapped up the remodel with a revamped kitchen area.

“The customers have said they appreciate it,” said Airman 1st Class Alexandra Bakie, 173rd Force Support Flight Services. “It also cuts back our cleaning time and it just looks nicer all together.”

Room doors now have electric keycard access locks so billeting guests won't have the



need to fumble with old room keys anymore.

In addition to the physical improvements, the 173rd FSF Services

now has an online room reservation system.

“It takes less time for the troop camp staff and it is user-friendly for

the (guests) as well,” Bakie said.

To make a reservation, visit:
www.lodgingforce.com/orang173

Kingsley Kid's Day organized to thank dependent children

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

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Fighter Wing Airman and Family Readiness Program collaborated with the State Youth Outreach Program the Oregon National Guard Child and Youth Program, and the Starbase program, to provide children of Kingsley Airmen an afternoon of hands-on learning designed to be interactive and fun.

More than 30 children took part in the second Kingsley's Kids' day April 1, 2017.

Kingsley's Kids day is one of many ways the Oregon Air National Guard celebrates during the month of April, officially designated as the month of the military child.

"The impetus behind Kingsley Kid's Day is recognize that these kids directly support their parents in mission readiness," said Joe Scriven the new Airman and Family Readiness Center Program Manager. "It is an opportunity for them to see what mom and dad are doing every day. It is also a chance for the Wing to say thank you for the sacrifices they often make."

Starbase partnered with this effort and with their focus on STEM: science, technology and math, they led the kids through an exercise where they built

very large paper airplanes and then tested their aerodynamics.

"It went super far!" said six-year-old Bella, one of the participants.

The exercise also served as an ice-breaker helping these members of Kingsley Field's extended family get to know one another before taking a bus onto the airfield to watch real aircraft take to the skies. The kids hunkered down a safe distance from the runway and covered their ears as the jets roared past.

Scriven said they saved the best for last for all these children of servicemembers of Kingsley Field.

"The most fun part of the event was giving the kids an opportunity to be recognized by our Wing Commander, Col. Jeff Smith with a coin and a picture," he said. "Hopefully, it will be something they can place on their wall and inspire someone to be a future pilot."

"I got to see Mommy and Daddy's work," said Bella. "And I got a coin like Mom has on her desk."

Those photos are available to those with access to the base network at the following location: \\MFUK-FS-001p\General_Repository\Artwork&Graphics\2017_Kingsley_Kids_Day\

Right: Col. Jeff Smith, 173rd Fighter Wing Commander, takes a photo with Bella and Christian during a ceremony to recognize the sacrifice that children of military families make when their a military member is deployed, TDY or working long hours, April 1, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason van Mourik, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

Bottom: The first activity the kids participated in was to create very large paper airplanes and then see how far they would fly. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason van Mourik, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs)



Squadron revitalization leads to EPME changes



**Story by
Secretary of the Air Force
Public Affairs**

WASHINGTON -- The reenlistment and extension ineligibility requirement will be removed from the enlisted professional military education program effective March 15, 2017 according to Air Force officials.

Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso, approved the change, removing the automatic reenlistment or extension ineligibility status for Airmen who fail to complete their enlisted professional military education distance learning course tests by their suspense dates.

“We continually review and evolve personnel policies to ensure it provides equity for Airmen, aligns with our Air Force strategy, and supports our Airmen’s ability to execute the mission,” Grosso said. “While originally intended to drive increased development and professionalism, the previous EPME approach created a higher standard, particularly when compared

to recent changes to our officer PME model. Additionally, as we grow the force the policy added unnecessary challenges and distractions to our Airmen. We certainly heard and listened to Airmen on this matter.”

The former policy stated that if an Airman exceeded the suspense date for course completion, he/she automatically became ineligible for reenlistment or extension, until the course was complete. This meant impacted Airmen were required to separate or retire on their date of separation. Although PME completion is expected and tied to promotion, non-completion is not directly tied to continued service under the officer system. This change brings both systems back into alignment.

The need for this policy change was confirmed during the Air Force Chief of Staff’s Squadron Revitalization effort. “Airmen clearly identified this as an issue in both the Air Force Revitalization Survey and during the recent field interviews conducted at Joint Base Andrews,” said Brig. Gen. S.L. Davis, Team Lead for the squadron revitalization effort.

The policy adjustment places authority and responsibility for reenlistments back at the squadron level and provides flexibility for commanders to retain high-performing experienced Airmen who meet the Air Force’s mission needs, in line with revitalizing Air Force squadrons.

“As we work to revitalize our squadrons, it remains important that commanders and supervisors who are closest to an Airman have a say in whether or not an Airman should be allowed to re-enlist,” Grosso said. “It has been a squadron commander’s decision, and this policy adjustment restores that authority, placing the retention decision back in the hands of the local commander.”

With the change in policy, Airmen who were previously impacted due to EPME non-completion will now be eligible to re-enlist or extend (unless otherwise ineligible), and should see their ineligibility code removed from their record in the Military Personnel Data System within 24-48 hours.

In line with placing the retention decision authority back in the hands

of squadron commanders, the approval authority for EMPE distance learning course deferrals has also been changed and now rests with squadron commanders.

“General Goldfein has been clear – we succeed or fail in our missions at the squadron level where we develop, train and build Airmen,” Grosso said. “We must promote best practices, identify improvements and remove barriers, real or artificial, in order to support our squadrons – the most essential level of command.”

No changes were made to the policy regarding promotion eligibility. Grosso said that was a deliberate decision as PME is critical to the development of all Airmen, both officers and enlisted, as leaders.

Airmen with questions about their individual situations are encouraged to contact the Total Force Service Center at (800) 525-0102.

Stay informed on the most current EPME information on the Force Development page on myPers, or select “Active Duty Enlisted” from the dropdown menu and search “EPME.”



173rd Fighter Wing hosts and represents at annual ORANG Awards Banquet

173rd Fighter Wing

Airman of the Year
Senior Airman Zach Hamilton



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Zachariah Hamilton, 173rd Operations Group, is recognized as the 173rd Fighter Wing and overall Oregon Air National Guard Category 1 Airman of the Year for his outstanding performance in the Aircrew Flight Equipment shop, performing above and beyond his assigned duties.

NCO of the Year
Tech. Sgt. Melissa Wohlers



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Melissa Wohlers, 173rd Fighter Wing Headquarters, is recognized as the 173rd Fighter Wing Category 2 Airman of the Year for her superior performance in 2016.

Senior NCO of the Year
Master Sgt. Nate Morehouse



U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Nathaniel Morehouse, 173rd Maintenance Group, is recognized as the 173rd Fighter Wing and Overall Oregon Air National Guard Category 3 Airman of the Year for his superior performance as the accessories element superintendent.

Civilian of the Year
Mr. Howard Owens



Mr. Howard Owens, 173rd Fighter Wing Fire Department Deputy Fire Chief, is recognized as the Oregon Air National Guard Civilian Employee of the Year for performing above and beyond his assigned duties.

Wingman of the Year
Tech. Sgt. James Hubbard



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jim Hubbard, 173rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, is recognized as the Oregon Air National Guard Wingman of the Year. He was presented the award by Brigadier General (retired) James Cunningham, former ORANG Commander.

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – Members of the Oregon Air National Guard gathered in Klamath Falls to celebrate the achievements of the annual award winners April 8, 2017. Airmen from the 173rd Fighter Wing, 142nd Fighter Wing, and Joint Forces Headquarters were honored for their success and achievements during the banquet.

The ceremony began with the presentation of colors by the Joint Fighter Wing Honor Guard and singing of the National Anthem by Tech. Sgt. Matthew Smith of the 142nd FW. This was followed by the invocation by 173rd FW Chaplain, Maj. Kraig Kroeker.

Attention was then focused on the empty table at the front of the room reserved to honor Prisoners of War and the Missing in Action. The table was set for five places representing each of the five branches of the Armed Services – Army, Marine Corp, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard.

“This honors ceremony symbolizes that they are with us, here in spirit,” said Master Sgt. Joe McKenzie, 173rd FW Honor Guard.

Following remarks by Maj. Gen. Michael Stencil, the Adjutant General, Oregon, and the ceremony’s presiding officer, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Silver, Commander for the ORANG, dinner and cake were served.

Multiple Airmen from the 173rd Fighter Wing were recognized at the Wing and State level for their outstanding achievements in 2016. Congratulations to all.

Company Grade Officer of the Year
Capt. Richard Schuster



U.S. Air Force Captain Richard Schuster, 173rd Maintenance Group, is recognized as the 173rd Fighter Wing and overall Oregon Air National Guard Company Grade Officer of the Year for his exceptional performance as the 173rd Maintenance Operations Flight commander.

Field Grade Officer of the Year
Maj. Ryan Bocchi



U.S. Air Force Major Ryan Bocchi, 173rd Operations Group, is recognized as the 173rd Fighter Wing and overall Oregon Air National Guard Field Grade Officer of the Year for his highly regarded expertise as the chief of F-15 syllabus development.

Chester E. McCarty
Overall Superior Performance
Senior Airman Michael Daniel



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Michael Daniel, 173rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, was recognized as the Oregon Air National Guard Chester E. McCarty Overall Superior Performance Award. Daniel is currently deployed, and Tech. Sgt. Jim Childs accepted the award on his behalf.

173rd FW Airman greeted by local news, supporters



Master Sgt. Monika Wilder is greeted by Master Sgt. Summer Jordre and a local news camera upon her return to Klamath Falls from the United Arab Emirates where she was deployed for six-months, May 2, 2017. Wilder is part of the largest deployment from the 173rd Fighter Wing in recent memory and returners will continue to come in over the coming months. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Riley Johnson)

May Drill weekend lunch menu

Meal cost for all Officers, AGRs, and Civilians \$5.40, Holiday Meal \$8.78

Saturday

- Meat Loaf**
- Grilled Chicken Breast**
- Mashed Potatoes**
- Wild Rice**
- Balsamic Blend Vegetables**
- Sweet Corn**
- Split Pea Soup**
- Salad Bar**
- Desserts**

Sunday

- Chicken Tamales**
- Beef Tacos**
- Refried Beans**
- Mexican Rice**
- Chuck Wagon-Corn**
- Southwest Style-Split Pea Soup**
- Salad Bar**
- Desserts**

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SENTRY EAGLE 2017

JULY 22, 2017

KINGSLEY FIELD, OREGON



The 173rd Fighter Wing

State Commander in Chief
Governor Kate Brown

The Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. Michael Stencil

ORANG Commander
Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Silver

173rd Fighter Wing Commander
Col. Jeff S. Smith

173rd Vice Wing Commander
Col. Jeff Edwards

Wing Command Chief
Chief Master Sgt. Mark McDaniel

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Members of the 173rd Fighter Wing and their families are encouraged to submit articles and story ideas. Stories from any source, military or civilian, are accepted. Letters to the editor are also welcome. All submissions must include the author's name, mailing address and daytime phone number. Names may be withheld in print upon request. All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication. The Public Affairs staff reserves the right to print or reprint submissions at any time. For publication schedules, or for any other questions contact 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office or the editor at the e-mail address listed above.

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