

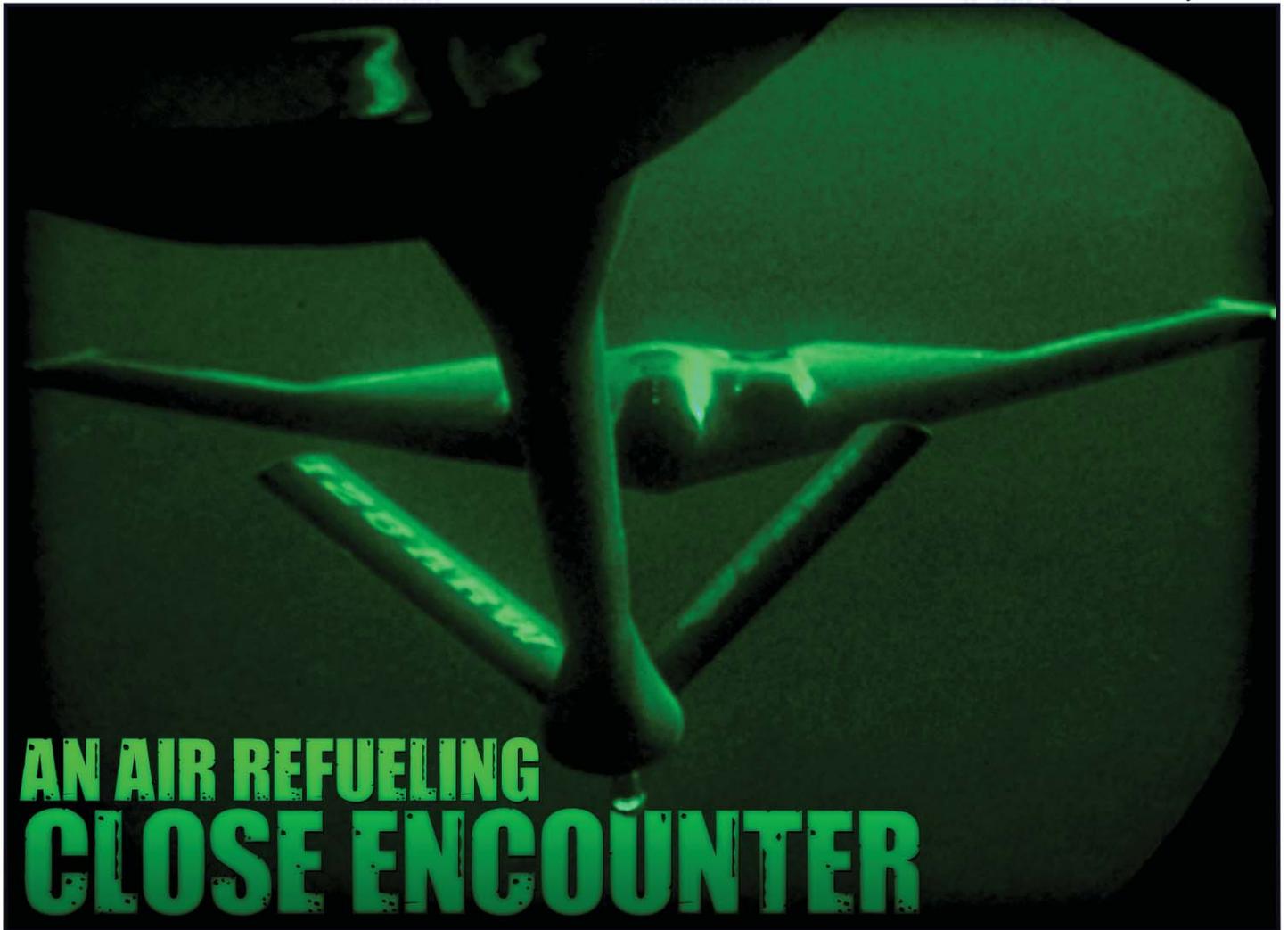


THE TANKARD

Newspaper of the 128th Air Refueling Wing - Milwaukee WI

VOL XXXIV NO. 1

January 2009



AN AIR REFUELING CLOSE ENCOUNTER

Stratotanker In The News

Photo By: Staff Sgt Jeremy Wilson

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THE COMMANDER'S COLUMN

Looking Back at 2008, Ahead to 2009



Col. Murry Mitten
128 ARW Commander



I hope this past holiday season found you and your family healthy and happy. As busy as this past year has been for all of us, I hope you take a moment to reflect on what is truly important. The time we spend with our extended family, although it can sometimes get stressful, is also a blessing during the holidays.

I often refer to the 128th ARW as a family, and as a family, we've had quite a busy year serving in Milwaukee's Air Guard.

Over the past 12 months we've spent more than our fair share of time and energy preparing for two large inspections that ultimately resulted in less-than-desirable outcomes. As I stated months ago at the ORI Outbrief, although these results were disappointing and discouraging - the effort and the commitment that I saw from everyone within our Wing was anything but.

I often refer to the 128th as a family and just like my immediate family, I wouldn't change this one for any other.

No family is perfect, but just like my immediate family, I wouldn't change this one for any other. Things in life don't always go as we planned or how we would have liked, and it is when our plans go astray that a person's true character is revealed. In the face of these ADJ. results I have no doubt at all about the character of the men and women of the 128th.

Looking back on 2008, I realize that we all have much to be proud of from the past year and I can be nothing but grateful for the outstanding men and woman who serve in the 128th.

While we pause to reflect on the year just passed, let us also not forget that some members of our 128th family were not able to spend time at home during the recent holiday season because they're deployed overseas in support of the Global War on Terror.

The safe return of our deployed Airmen is a great gift any time of year. To our deployed members I want to say to you that you and your families are in our thoughts and prayers as we begin this new year.

One additional item that I am requesting of you as we begin 2009 is to please remember be safe. In the military it seems we talk about safety every single day and just how important it is to play it safe and do your own Risk Management.

However, these words of caution are perhaps even more true at this time of year. Whether it be driving during dangerous road conditions, celebrating on the town on a frigid night or roasting chestnuts on an open fire; please, remember to be careful. Nothing would be worse than to hear that one of our family members was injured just as we begin our 2009 chapter - especially if the injury could have been prevented.

A note to all of our retirees: I thank you for all your continued support this past year and I look forward to seeing more of you in 2009 with some much needed new office space in our headquarters building.

2009 will also be a busy year with an Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) Rotation coming up, an always busy Armed Forces Week in May, some Squadron-Level Inspections, and what is now considered a "normal" ops tempo.

Enough about work - thanks for a fantastic 2008 and everyone... let's make it a memorable and great 2009.

ON THE COVER:



PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. JEREMY WILSON

A B-2 Spirit aircraft attached to the 509th Bomb Wing out of Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., moves into refueling position behind a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft from the 128th Air Refueling Wing out of Milwaukee, Wis., during a low visibility training exercise enhanced by night vision technology over Wisconsin Sept. 9, 2008.



THE CHIEF'S COLUMN

What is Done and What is Next



Chief Master Sgt. Joe Parlato
128 ARW Command Chief

As we embark on a new year, I find myself looking back at the many accomplishments of our Wing and reflecting on the outstanding people we have.

Year after year it seems that we are given more and more to do, yet we still continue to get the job done and take care of each other.

Our Wing's retention, recruitment, reputation and overall performance are outstanding, and this is

something we are all responsible for and something we can all be proud of.

I like to believe that out here at the 128th Air Refueling Wing we are special in that we have always had outstanding people among us throughout our history.

These notable Airmen have influenced and inspired us during our careers and helped instill in us a family atmosphere, while at the same time, understanding the responsibilities we have as members of the military for being prepared for both our state and federal missions.

For us, 2008 was filled with inspections, evaluations, audits, and a host of other obligations and challenges that all proved successful. But it is our continued commitment to our members serving here in Wisconsin, or halfway around the globe, that keeps us focused on what is truly important.

This new year will again find many of our own defending our nation from locations near and far, proving once again why the National Guard is such an important component of our nation's military successes.

Please keep all our members and their families in your thoughts and/or prayers while we prepare for the continued challenges we have yet to encounter.

I'm proud to serve with you and wish everyone a blessed and joyous New Year!

Year after year it seems that we are given more and more to do, yet we still continue to get the job done ...

...this is something we are all responsible for and something we can all be proud of.

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Public Affairs / Multimedia Manager

Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Rohloff

Tankard Editor

Staff Sgt. Nathan Wallin

Administrative Support

Staff Sgt. Aimee Unteutsch

Wing Commander

Col. Murry Mitten

Public Affairs Officer

1st. Lt. John Capra

Community Manager

1st. Lt. John Capra

Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Mark Barthel

Master Sgt. Ken Pagel

Master Sgt. Todd Peck

Tech. Sgt. Tom Sobczyk

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilson

SrA Ryan Kuntze



AIRMEN OF THE QUARTER

If you want to get a task completed and executed flawlessly, just get a hold of SrA Valencia Helm.

Helm, a Supply Journeyman in the Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) has been described by her Commander, Capt. Steven Botsford as someone who has "displays initiative, sound judgment and outstanding professional ability in all aspects."

When the Transportation Management Office was understaffed, Helm assisted in the creation of Passenger/Cargo Manifests and Load Plans during the deployment phase of the ORI, ensuring strict compliance with the Deployment Schedule of Events (DSOE) resulting in a swift and efficient deployment of ORI aircraft.

Botsford has described Helm as someone with an "outstanding work ethic and who has consistently been a loyal and determined Airman, giving unselfishly of her time to get the job done.

Helm also stepped up to the plate by volunteering to assist in the completion of the COMSEC/Classified Equipment Inventory directed by the National Guard Bureau when the individual responsible for this task was unexpectedly hospitalized.

On the civilian side, Helm is currently completing her undergraduate degree, maintaining a 3.5 Grade Point Average, in Criminal Justice with a certificate in Program Management. She also volunteers her time to College Readiness 21, a youth mentoring organization.



**SrA
Valencia Helm**

Tech. Sgt. Anthony Walter, an In-Flight Refueling Specialist (Boom Operator) in the 126th Air Refueling Squadron, has deployed for 1 CONUS Medevac mission and 2 OCONUS Pacific Media missions.

Walter has performed seven sorties totaling 14.0 flight hours, ensuring the safe and timely transportation of multiple patients from Andrews AFB to Scott AFB, Colorado Springs CO, and Travis AFB and also has performed 8 sorties 36.5 flight hours allowing the transfer of multiple patients from Travis AFB to Hickam AFB, Hawaii and Kadena AB, Japan.

Walters has successfully accomplished an Evaluation Flight during Nuclear phase of the Operational Readiness Inspection.

He has energetically carried out Increment Monitor duties to maximum extent of allowable duty day (15 hours).

Walter's Commander, Lt Col. Dan D'Addio said that Walters "constantly sets positive examples by volunteering for short notice local flights and temporary duty assignments and various additional duties."

D'Addio continued, "Walters ensures a guaranteed pool of future motivated, intelligent, and high-caliber flight instructors.

"He continuously studies and reviews Technical Order Data and associated Flight Operation's Directives while seeking out advanced instruction from the unit's flight instructors.

He also increases the unit's flexibility when tasking crew members to exceedingly difficult operational missions by providing an individual with a broad scope of knowledge and technical skills.



**Tech. Sgt.
Anthony Walter**

Senior Master Sgt. Steve Schweiss, a Stan/Eval Boom Operator, has developed numerous checklists and operating procedures for the establishment and operation of the Squadron Operation's Center (SOC) and the Operation's Unit Control Center (UCC) that were used during the Wing's Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI).

Schweiss's actions were recognized as greatly enhancing his Squadron's overall performance during the ORI.

He also has provided management guidance and coordination for handling numerous changes to aircraft Technical Orders, Operating Procedures, and Associated Directives that were released by Air Mobility Command during a time of a dramatically increased Unit Ops Tempo.

Schweiss has deployed and participated in all ORI planning and organizational TDYs and meetings, providing invaluable insight, recommendations, and ideas that were adopted by all sections within the Wing.

He was deployed to Geilenkirchen Air Base in Germany in support an air refueling mission of NATO AWACS, providing critical training during a period of reduced Tanker availability due to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Schweiss has developed an idea and has begun coordination for the building, acquisition, and placement of a large-scale model of a Milwaukee KC-135 aircraft and accompanying mural for display in the Operation's building atrium.

In his community, Schweiss serves as a substitute teacher in his church's Sunday Christian Youth Educational Program.



**Senior Master Sgt.
Steven Schweiss**



SECURITY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

An Update from In-Theater

STORY BY
SRA RYAN KUNTZE

Thirty two members of the 128th Air Refueling Wing's Security Forces Squadron (SFS) deployed to Afghanistan recently. The deployment constituted the single largest deployment 128th SFS has seen in recent years, said a security forces representative.

Many of the deployed SFS personnel volunteered to go, some of whom were deploying for the first time, the SFS representative said.

While on deployment the 128th SFS members have conducted a wide variety of missions. Members have coordinated flightline security for Secretary of Defense Robert Gates during a September visit to Bagram Airfield. They have also provided mobile security for aircraft assets, safeguarding 2,188 passengers and 842 tons of cargo as of September, said security officials.

The team's mission requirements also involved training with new vehicles. A sergeant from the 128th SFS coordinated and organized training with the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, said security officials. The MRAP is designed to protect U.S. servicemembers from improvised explosive devices and small arms fire.

Some accomplishments were done on members' own time. An Airman from the 128th SFS helped to establish the Defender Association, a program that serves junior enlisted security personnel, said a security police representative. The Defender Association's goal in Afghanistan is to improve the lives of and boost the morale of 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron members.



Other missions being accomplished by 128th SFS members include base protection, dignified visitor protection and escort, and security escort operations designed to provide off-base security to personnel.

All deployed 128th SFS personnel are expected to return soon.

ABOVE RIGHT: **The Afghanistan Campaign Medal**, awarded to members of the US uniformed services who serve or have served in Afghanistan or contiguous air space, as defined by such regulations, on or after 24 October 2001 to a date to be determined as prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

(LEFT PHOTO) SRA KATY MARTELLO AND **(RIGHT PHOTO)** STAFF SGT. DAVID SKONIECZSNY ARE PRESENTED WITH CHALLENGE COINS BY BRIG. GEN. HOLMES IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR ACTIONS WHILE RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT ON BASE.



FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE

128th Officer Inducted into WIANG Hall of Fame

STORY BY STAFF SGT. NATHAN WALLIN

Former 128th Air Refueling Wing member, Lt. Col. Jim Waters (Ret.), was inducted into the Wisconsin Air National Guard's Hall of Fame in October.

Waters enlisted in the Air Force in 1972 and came to the 128th in 1974. He would spend almost the next 30 years with the 128th, retiring in 2004.

During his years with Milwaukee's Air Guard Unit, Waters first served as an enlisted Airman working as a Recruiter and a Personnel Specialist. Following his graduation from Carroll College in 1981 with a degree in Business Administration, Waters received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in October of 1981. He would later earn his Master's Degree in U.S. History in 2002.

As an Officer at the 128th, Waters worked as the Personnel Officer, Disaster Preparedness Officer, Logistics Officer, Director of Personnel, Commander, 128th Mission Support Flight, and lastly as the Wing's Community Manager.

Looking back on his years with the 128th, he considers his work with the 128th ARW Family Support Program, his deployment to England during the Kosovo Operation and his support of the six families who lost their loved ones after the aircraft explosion here in December 1993 as just a few of the notable events of his distinguished career in uniform.

Since his retirement from the 128th ARW, Waters has begun a new career as an Expediter and Independent Contractor working for Brills Regional Transport. He is presently enrolled in a two year certificate program in Lay Ministries at Cardinal Stritch University and will complete this program in May 2009. Both he and his wife are actively involved in ministries with their local parish, St. Mary's in Menominee Falls.

The Hall of Fame Award was established on June 15, 1982 by then Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond A. Matera. Any member, regardless of rank, who has served in The Wisconsin Air National Guard, is eligible for nomination. The criteria for selection to the WIANG Hall of Fame are service that is considered outstanding or exemplary.

RIGHT: WATERS RECEIVES HIS 2ND LT. BARS PINNED IN THE EARLY 1980S BY LT. COL. BLUMGREN AND LT. COL. URBANIAK.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

BELOW: WATERS WITH COL. JOHN MCCOY, DEPUTY ADJUTANT - AIR AT THE INDUCTION CEREMONY.



PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JOHN CAPRA

“Going far beyond the call of duty, doing more than others expect - this is what excellence is all about. It comes from striving and maintaining the highest standards, looking after the smallest detail, and going the extra mile. Excellence means caring – it means making a special effort to do more.”

– An excerpt from the Induction Ceremony's program



A LIFE SAVED

Boom Operator Saves Young Child From Fire

**STORY BY
SRA RYAN KUNTZE**

He heard a young voice scream from inside the smoke-filled room. Acting quickly, he pulled his mask on and called out for the trapped person. There was no response.

His mind made up, he moved into the bedroom. Debris cluttered the floor, and smoke effectively made him blind. Using touch alone, he made his way forward.

He held his breath. A whimper came from nearby. There was a closet, and, beside it, a dresser. Sheltered from the fire, tucked behind the dresser, was a young girl.

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Lipinski, an instructor boom operator from the 128th Air Refueling Wing, received two awards in November for saving the life of a two-year-old child.

"I had the fortune to be in the right place at the right time," Lipinski said in reference as to why he received the awards.

The Milwaukee Fire Department's (MFD) Class B award was given to Lipinski due to the danger he placed himself in while saving a life. There are three classes of MFD awards, and the Class B is given to individual firefighters who place themselves in harm's way to go above and beyond the call of duty.

The American Legion's William Schaefer award is given annually to a Milwaukee firefighter based on that individual's actions while on duty, said Robert Singer, the post commander for American Legion Post 426. Three legionaries review the nominees and, based on internal criteria, select the most deserving firefighter.

The fire occurred on May 24, 2008, and was a short distance from the firehouse where Lipinski is stationed. Lipinski's duty was to enter the apartment building and search for survivors. He said someone outside the burning building had mentioned a trapped child on the second floor, and he focused his efforts on locating and saving the child.

Smoke, debris and heat were obstacles Lipinski had to overcome during his search and rescue. His breathing mask made too much noise for him to hear the subtle sounds of someone trapped, so he said he had to hold his breath when he stopped to listen.

Upon finding the child, Lipinski said he did his best to prevent any further injury to her and immediately made his way outside.

Paramedic units had not arrived at the fire's location yet, so Lipinski said he left the two-year-old child in another fireman's care and returned to the building to search for other survivors. The rescued child was the only trapped survivor.

"There are people who just have a badge, and there are firefighters," said Master Sgt. Jeff Venus, the Assistant Chief of Operations for the 128th ARW Fire Department. "Mark Lipinski is a firefighter."

Lipinski has been a member of the Wisconsin Air National Guard for 30 years, and has been with the Milwaukee Fire Department for 25 years.

Lipinski was doing his job on that day in May. It was a job he had trained for. He acted as only a professional can, and he chose to do what was necessary to save a life.

It just so happens that his actions proved the type of character he possesses, and they showed our city that heroes still exist.



PHOTO BY
MASTER SGT. TODD PECK

LIPINSKI WITH HIS MILWAUKEE FIRE DEPARTMENT CREW.

"There are people who just have a badge, and there are Firefighters, Mark Lipinski is a Firefighter."



THE LEGAL EAGLE

JAG Superintendent Tasked with a Pair of High-Level Assignments

STORY BY
SRA RYAN KUNTZE

Senior Master Sgt. Jo-Ann Decker, Superintendent for the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) office at the 128 Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee, recently accepted a national-level position as the Senior Paralegal for JAG's Legal Information Systems.



Senior Master Sgt.
Jo-Ann Decker

One day after Decker assumed her Senior Paralegal duties, she was asked to fill a position as the Air National Guard's (ANG) Officer Liaison for Legal Information Systems, which is abbreviated JAS, a responsibility normally reserved for O-6 Colonels.

Decker's dual role within JAS will mark the first time an enlisted service member has held both the Senior Paralegal and Officer Liaison to JAS position.

"The senior paralegal to JAS position works with all information technology functions within the ANG JAG corps," Decker said.

Working as the officer liaison to JAS involves being in

charge of the IT certification process, maintaining a roster for JAS personnel, adding content to the JAS web site, working in concert with JAS at Maxwell Air Force Base and reporting directly to the Major General in charge of JAS, Decker said.

Both of the JAS positions handle the ANG's IT concerns across the entire country, Decker said.

Decker said she will travel to Denver, Colo., in a few weeks to attend the Annual Survey of the Law, a gathering of approximately 500 legal representatives from the ANG and the Air Force Reserve. Her role in the survey will be a three-hour presentation discussing information technology practices.

"I always support people who work for me who strive for higher things," said her commander Lt. Col. Scott Letteney, the Judge Advocate General for the 128 ARW. Letteney said Decker had the opportunity to retire after 22 years of service but instead chose to cross train as a paralegal.

National-level paralegal slots usually go to career paralegals, Letteney noted. The fact Decker has done so well after only four years (compared to a career's worth) of experience with the JAG office speaks volumes as a testament to her personal motivation, Letteney said.

BOOMER GOES OUT WITH A SPLASH

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. NATHAN WALLIN

Master Sgt. Dan Schmidt, an In-Flight Aerial Refueling Specialist (Boom Operator) at the 128th ARW, took his final flight in a KC-135 during the January Drill Weekend.

Schmidt served 24 years with Milwaukee's Air Guard unit, beginning his career as a Jet Engine Mechanic in 1985. He has been a Boom Operator since 1990.

During his career Schmidt has participated in numerous missions including Allied Force in Kosovo and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

"Most of my civilian vacation time in the past 18 years has been happily, willingly and unregretably devoted to my military service," he said when asked for a comment on his Air Guard career.

In the photo at right, Schmidt is ceremoniously hosed down with water by Senior Master Sgt. Mark Lipinski and Lt. Col. Dan D'Addio. For more photos of this and other 128th events, please visit the new 128th ARW website at: www.128arw.ang.af.mil/

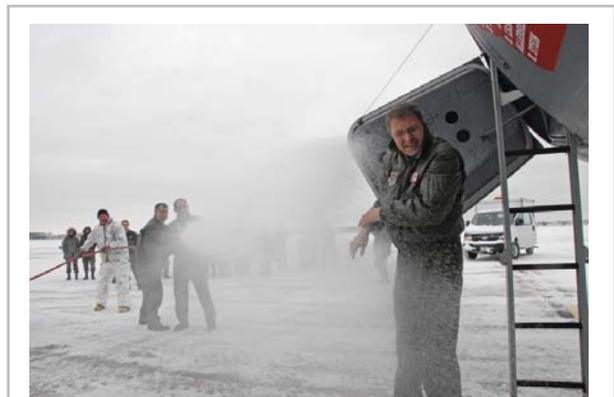


PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. NATHAN WALLIN

A festive aviation-related custom, the "Fini-Flight" is a time-honored practice of both the United States and Royal Australian Air Forces.

This tradition calls for a crowd of Squadron comrades to greet the retiring aviator on the ramp as they de-plane and to douse them with water before they are toasted with champagne.



POLITOWSKI WINS SIJAN AWARD

**STORY BY
STAFF SGT. NATHAN WALLIN**

Tech. Sgt. Rebecca Politowski of the 128th ARW's Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) was recently awarded the Wing's 2008 "Lance P. Sijan Award" in recognition of her standout performance in a number of different areas.

During the recent Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI), Politowski was recognized by the Inspector General (IG) team as an "outstanding performer."

While in the early phases of the ORI, she successfully shepherded the deployment of 282 Airmen and the accompanying 50 short tons of cargo.

With her sharp eye for detail, Politowski also was responsible for the error-free aircraft Load Plans and Passenger/Cargo Manifests.

However, success is nothing new to her - her recent "pat on the back" by the IG team was the third straight time she had been spotlighted by the IG team.

Politowski's positive attitude, military bearing and professionalism also often bring her praise.



PHOTO BY
1ST LT. JOHN CAPRA

She is well known for her ability to translate complex and confusing orders into common sense, easy-to-understand instructions for her Airmen.

Air Force Captain Lance Sijan was a Milwaukee native and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery during captivity in the Vietnam War.

'A FLYING PIECE OF HISTORY'

From Air Force News:

JJ Sutherland, Pentagon correspondent for National Public Radio, climbed aboard a KC-135 Stratotanker at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., recently for a report on the aging aircraft.



PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. NATHAN WALLIN

Titled "The Stratotanker: A Flying Piece of History Endures," the radio report includes interviews with the crew and with maintainers who keep the plane ready to fly and in the air.

The in-depth report covers the history of the Stratotanker and describes in detail the process of refueling another aircraft while in flight.

Sutherland finishes his report at Tinker AFB, Okla., the Depot where the planes are refurbished every five years.

The entire segment, along with a two-minute audio slideshow of photos can be heard on the National Public Radio Web site, NPR.org.

For the NPR story, please visit: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=95484569>



PROMOTIONS



Chief Master Sergeant	2nd Lieutenant	1st Lieutenant	Captain	Lt. Colonel
Christopher Chatham	Richard W. Willard	Erika Johnson	Christopher T. Triplett	Cynthia K. Pelegrin
	Jeannette L. Jasinski	Paul Matthews	Joseph J. Van Wie	
	Sarah A. McMullen	Josh Gscheidmeier	Steven Ketterhagen	



Airman 1st Class	Senior Airman	Staff Sergeant	Tech Sergeant	Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant
Aaron J. Wahlgren	Steven V. D'Addio	Anna D. Nowakowski	Jason A. Swanson	Albert Wilson Jr.	Joann Decker
Kelly R. Mackenzie	Jaclene R. Clark	Eric Contreras	Keith J. Lauzon	David MacCudden	Anthony Karwacki
Joshua R. Allen	Kevin A. Clark	Rian R. Brassell	Rhonda R. Karpinski	Jeffrey Mather	Antonio Marrero
Amanda J. Betz	Joseph T. Moore	Brandon S. Gumm	Jeffrey Lampe	Martha Mikulcik	
Christopher G. Nauta	Ward A. Lyon	Thomas William Sinclair II	Anne Rivera	Jennifer Wasik	
Roldan S. Poserio	Joshua Thorn	Krysta R. Carlson	Amy Nagan	Craig Yonkovich	
Miranda R. Wester	Julio Rodriguez	Jennifer L. Carpenter	Brian Opalewski		
Brianne L. Kulick	Eric Deford	Michael A. Goriesky	John Hanson		
Jared M. Glaze	Jefferson Harkleroad	Stephanie Marie Sinclair	Kristina Villwock		
Jared W. Vander Velde	Pablo Badillo	Todd M. Kroeze	Jeremy Stokes		
Justin Henrichs	Joshua Kronwall	Ryan R. Wick	Kurt Paskewic		
India Galloway	Ward Lyon	Daniel J. Voegeli	Barry Thompson		
Harley Schneider	Zachary Burton	Sean P. Dailey	Erica Lemahieu		
Colleen Sexton	Jennifer Steinle	Moises A. Fonseca	Jeremy Wilson		
Brent Werlein	Kasey Stumvoll	Matthew S. Parco	Chad Ehnerly		
Crystal Bullard	Derek Sizer	Noreyma Torres	Rebecca Politowski		



OUR FAMILIES

The Chosas



NAME: Thomas Anthony

DATE: Monday, May 5 2008
at 8:30 a.m.

WEIGHT: 7 pounds, 9 ounces

LENGTH: 21 inches

MOM N' DAD: Linda and Anthony
(Lt. Col. - Maintenance Squadron)

The Gulczynskis

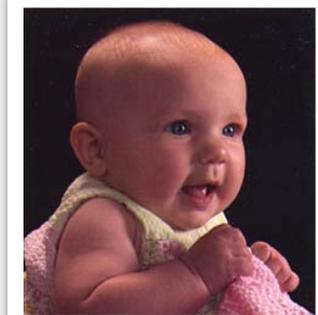


NAME: Luke and Caleb

DATE: Sunday, May 11, 2008
at 6:30 a.m.

MOM N' DAD: Michelle
and Aaron (1st Lt. - Logistics
Readiness Squadron (LRS))

The Mielcareks



NAME: Madelynn Jean

DATE: Wednesday, April 9, 2008

WEIGHT: 8 pounds 1/2 ounce

LENGTH: 21 inches

MOM N' DAD: Jennifer and
Thomas (Mom - Community Office,
HQ Dad - Capt., Communications
Commander)



THE GRADUATE

Tech. Sgt. Kerry Abdullah, an Aerospace Medical Technician with the 128th Air Refueling Wing, recently completed his Master's Degree in Business Administration at Olivet Nazarene University in Illinois.

Abdullah said that his ultimate career goals are to obtain an Officer slot in the Air Guard and to land a Director position in Public Administration in order to start a public Health Consulting business.

Abdullah has served with the 128th Air Refueling Wing since 2001.



ABOVE: ABDULLAH WITH DAUGHTER PAIGE ON GRADUATION DAY BACK IN MAY.



RIGHT: WITH SON KALEOB.



PORTRAIT OF AN AIRMAN



A1C Justin Gruber

ORGANIZATION: Maintenance Squadron - Flight Line.

JOB TITLE: Crew Chief.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES: Fix planes

CIVILIAN JOB: Student at U.W.-Milwaukee.

EDUCATION: Working on Bachelor's of Business Administration from UW-Milwaukee in Human Resources.

MILITARY HISTORY: Enlisted in the 128th Air Refueling Wing in September 2007.

HOMETOWN: Cedarburg, WI.

MOST MEMORABLE MILITARY MOMENT: "I don't have one yet, but I'll let you know."



Staff Sgt. Aaron Ritchie

ORGANIZATION: Fire Department.

JOB TITLE: Firefighter - Crash Fire Rescue Specialist.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES: Provide fire suppression for aircraft, base buildings and provide emergency medical services for all personnel.

CIVILIAN JOB: Firefighter/Paramedic.

EDUCATION: Goodfellow AFB 18 weeks Fire Protection Apprentice. Greendale High School.

MILITARY HISTORY: Six years with the 440th Airlift Wing, one year in Madison with the 115th Fighter Wing and at the 128th ARW since November of 2007.

HOMETOWN: Milwaukee, WI.

HOBBIES/FAVORITE ACTIVITIES: Enjoys dining out, is avid Harley rider, plays volleyball and kickball.

FAMILY INFORMATION: Married for four years. Ritchie's father served for 30 years in the military - two years in the Marine Corps and 28 years in the Air Force.

MOST MEMORABLE MILITARY MOMENT: Being in London on the day of the terrorist bus and subway bombings in July of 2007.



PORTRAIT OF AN AIRMAN



Tech Sgt. Dani Hetrick

ORGANIZATION: 128th Headquarters.

JOB TITLE: Personnel Specialist.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES: HQ personnel requests, roll call, fitness testing, Personal Information Folder maintenance, EPR's, OPR's, Retirements, etc.

CIVILIAN JOB: Executive Assistant Sales and Marketing for Klement's.

EDUCATION: Central Regional High School in Bayville New Jersey, one and a half years at Ocean County Community College in Toms River, New Jersey.

MILITARY HISTORY: Four years Active Duty in the US Navy as a Cook; six years in the US Navy Reserve at Glenview, Great Lakes, and Milwaukee; five years with the 440th Airlift Wing, and the last two and a half years here at the 128th.

HOMETOWN: Waterford, WI (Born and raised in Warsaw, Poland).

FAMILY INFORMATION: Married for 23 years to Al, two children - Danielle (22) and Robert (17).

MOST MEMORABLE MILITARY MOMENT: "When I burned rolls in a galley and they ended up in my car, all 50 of them!"



Senior Master Sgt. Anthony Karwacki

ORGANIZATION: Maintenance Squadron.

JOB TITLE: Fabrication Foreman.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES: Oversee operations of the aircraft structural repair, non-destructive inspection and metals technology shops.

EDUCATION: Some college.

MILITARY HISTORY: Joined the 128th Nov. 1984 as an ISO mechanic.

HOMETOWN: Milwaukee, WI.

HOBBIES/FAVORITE ACTIVITIES: Boating, ice hockey, spending time with family and friends.

FAMILY INFORMATION: Married, 18 years to Mary, two kids. My daughter Alison is a freshman at Clemson and is in Air Force ROTC. My son Ken is a sophomore at Oak Creek H.S.

MOST MEMORABLE MILITARY MOMENT: While deployed to Geilenkirchen Germany, I was able to find the location of my uncle's grave and the battle site where he was killed in action during The Battle of the Bulge in 1944.



NOW YOU KNOW...

Wing Coins Available

128th ARW Wing Coins are again in stock and available.

The coin features on one side the National Guard Minuteman symbol and on the reverse side, a KC-135 Stratotanker flying across the iconic red Wisconsin "W," with the phrases "Milwaukee's Hometown Air Force," and "Ready Stateside - On Call Worldwide" set in a red border.

Wing Coins, often referred to as "Challenge Coins," are part of a proud military tradition and are often exchanged among units or given as recognition for a job well done.

The coin was designed by Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilson of the Public Affairs Office in 2006.

128th ARW Wing Coins are available for purchase in the Community Office of the Headquarters Building. Contact Community Manager, 1st Lt. John Capra, at (414) 944-8539 or e-mail john.capra@wimilw.ang.af.mil.



Milwaukee's USO - An Update

Milwaukee's USO office will not be closing. Originally slated to be closed early this year, The USO is attempting to comply with the organization's national standards to maintain its presence here. The local office was found to be too small by national standards, and may have to relocate to include a center for visitors to relax in.

As a private non-profit organization, the USO has supported servicemembers' morale by providing free tickets to local events and attractions, as well as assisting Wisconsin military families. It is located at the War Memorial on Milwaukee's lakefront and is the only USO office in Wisconsin.

The USO was created in 1941 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and has had an office in Milwaukee for 34 years. It is chartered by Congress as a non-profit charitable corporation.

While the USO is not a part of the United States government, it is endorsed by the president of the United States and the Department of Defense. Since its inception, each sitting president has served as the USO's honorary chairman. To contact the Milwaukee USO, call (414) 271-3133



New 128th Website

The 128th Air Refueling Wing has a new public website.

Featuring an expanded assortment of videos, photo galleries and news stories covering the 128th Air Refueling Wing, the new web site is a useful tool for Milwaukee Airmen and their families.

In addition, the new website offers other useful information to Air Guard members and the public. This site will include worldwide Air Force and Air National Guard news as well.

The web address for the new website is:

<http://www.128arw.ang.af.mil/>

To comment on or submit material for the new web site, please call (414) 944-8715 or send an e-mail to: EMAILADDRESS@tankard.mil





... AND KNOWING IS HALF THE BATTLE

A Professional Image

By order of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, all Air Force personnel are now required to wear their blue uniform on Mondays.

Because of the scheduling of our work week here in Milwaukee, 128th ARW personnel will observe the new order on Wednesday.

"Our image, culture and professionalism are instilled in our blues," General Schwartz said when commenting on the new uniform guidelines.

Schwartz implemented this policy for the active duty Air Force in early September. Command Staff at both the Wisconsin Air Guard and 128th ARW are in agreement with Schwartz's directive.



Regarding the order, 128th ARW Wing Commander, Col. Murry Mitten, said "I will NOT be going around the base pulling 341s from Airmen that are not wearing their blues. It will be on your supervisors to ensure the new policy is followed and, more importantly, your own integrity."

Exemptions can be made for career fields which are labor-intensive. The final decision will be made by your supervisor.

Established in 1961, The Combined Federal Campaign is a program allowing select charitable organizations to solicit donations Federal Government employees.

The CFC is the largest workplace charity campaign in the United States and the only campaign authorized to solicit and collect contributions from federal employees in the workplace on behalf of charitable organizations. The CFC runs from Sept. 1 from Dec. 15 each year.

If the Weather Outside is Frightful

The 128th's Snow Information Desk is a way for Wing members to find out if the base will have a delayed starting time in the morning when Wisconsin's weather turns uncooperative.

A recorded message is updated daily at 4 a.m. when inclement weather is possible.

However, the automated phone line can only handle a limited number of incoming calls at a time, if the line is busy, simply try to call again later. The Snow Desk number is: (414) 944-8SNO (8766).

Note: DO NOT CALL THE COMMAND POST FOR WEATHER INFORMATION OR FOR BASE CLOSURE INFORMATION.

CFC 2008: Giving 110%, Literally

The 128th ARW's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) for 2008 raised over \$35,000 for charity.

In all, 207 Wing members (79%) participated, bringing in \$37,502.55, 110% of the target goal. Of this amount, The Association for Families will receive \$11,604.55

CFC Lead Key Worker, Chief Master Sgt. Patti Winter-Schmidt wanted to recognize the following Wing members for their invaluable support with 2008's CFC: Brian Bauer, Mandi Hilke, Fred Cornell, Danica Elahi, Jack Fudge, Rick Hopkins, Gene Lawrence, Matt Noll, Joe Parlato, Steve Valentine and Jim Zaleski.



The USAF Thunderbirds Coming to Milwaukee July 25-26, 2009

PHOTO BY
MASTER SGT. KEN PAGEL



128th Air Refueling Wing
1835 East Grange Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53207-6142



WING PHOTO: 2008



PHOTO BY
JOE OLIVA

128TH AIR REFUELING WING 2008 LITHOGRAPHS ARE AVAILABLE FOR \$5 IN THE WING'S ORDERLY ROOM IN THE HEAD-QUARTERS BUILDING. LITHOGRAPHS ARE 16" X 34" AND SUITABLE FOR FRAMING. CALL 414-944-8454 FOR MORE INFORMATION.