

# The NORTHWEST AIRLIFTER

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Connecting Team McChord with the Combat Airlift Mission

September 26, 2008

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## Civilian town hall addresses joint basing

By

Airman 1st Class Kirsten Wicker  
62nd Airlift Wing  
Public Affairs

Joint basing experts assembled here Wednesday for a civilian town hall to address concerns of civilian employees at McChord, answer questions and explain details of the pending merger between Fort Lewis and McChord.

More than 300 civilians attended the briefing and engaged in discussion of key topics of the town hall such as job security, salary, chain of command and issues related to the general realigning of the two installations.

Col. Jeffrey Stephenson, 62nd Airlift Wing commander, greeted the audience and introduced subject matter experts. He also took a moment to address the number one concern reflected in a recent civilian employee online survey.

"There is no intention of cutting our civilian workforce," said Colonel Stephenson. "I want to ensure everyone understands that up front. We are engaged now and will continue to be engaged. This is truly supposed to be a joint base. The mission that we execute is going to continue."



Photo by Abner Guzman

Timothy Downs, 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron, left, asks Col. Shane Hershman, Air Mobility Command Joint Base Lewis-McChord initiative director, a question concerning prescriptions at McChord's pharmacy.

Turning it over to Col. Shane Hershman, Air Mobility Command Joint Base Lewis-McChord initiative director, the event continued with formal background and briefs on

joint basing. For many, the town hall was the first official briefing on joint basing they had heard.

"We waited for guidance on what to brief our civilian workforce,"

Colonel Hershman said. "Finally, we went forward today to present what we know."

— See TOWN HALL, Page 14

## Wing airlifts fire truck to Mexico, delivers hope



Photo by Abner Guzman

Reservist Tech Sgt. Lance Nelson (in the truck) backs a 2,000-gallon fire tender onto a C-17 at McChord Sept. 19. The donated fire truck was delivered to Mexico by an Air Force Reserve aircrew from the 446th Airlift Wing as part of a Denton Amendment program to support humanitarian missions. Sergeant Nelson is a loadmaster with the 728th Airlift Squadron.

By

Staff Sgt. Grant Saylor  
446th Airlift Wing  
Public Affairs

Team McChord delivered hope recently, in the form of a bright yellow fire truck, and medical supplies to a village in the central Mexican state of Jalisco.

The donated cargo was flown by a crew of two pilots and three loadmasters from the 728th Airlift Squadron as part of the Denton Amendment program, which allows free transport of non-government relief supplies earmarked for humanitarian assistance.

The delivery of the surplus fire truck, a donation from the Sultan, Wash. Fire Department, is part of an ongoing effort to improve emergency services in the village of Ayutla. The

inspiration for the relief effort came after three villagers there died from injuries sustained in a car accident because there were no emergency vehicles to transport them to a hospital.

"We're all here trying to make the world a slightly better place," said Lt. Col. Christopher Von Thaden, 728th AS director of operations. "When we get to fly missions like this, you get that instant gratification knowing you're doing something good to help your fellow man."

Crews from the 446th AW are trained for worldwide operations, but this mission presented some unique challenges, said Colonel Von Thaden. The crew from the 728th AS flew the supplies into Guadalajara, where no U.S. Air Force plane has been for more than

— See FIRE TRUCKS, Page 14

### Weekend Weather

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Hi: 67 Low: 46	Hi: 67 Low: 46	Hi: 74 Low: 45

Forecast generated at 7 a.m. Thursday  
Courtesy of the 62nd Operations Support Squadron

### Countdown to success

Nuclear Surety Inspection .....	104	days
Rodeo .....	297	days
Operational Readiness Inspection .....	395	days

Don't miss it ...

### Wing promotions

The wing promotion celebration is 2 p.m. Tuesday at the club.



# Airman's Roll Call: Post traumatic stress disorder defined

*Editor's note: Airman's Roll Call is an Air Force leadership tool designed*

*for supervisors at all levels to help keep Airmen informed on current issues, clear up confusion, dispel rumors and provide additional face-to-face communication between supervisors and their teams.*

The war on terror significantly expanded the role of Airmen in combat, placing them closer than ever to the constantly-changing front lines. In fact, more than 20 percent of Airmen are exposed to serious traumatic events in theater, putting them

at greater risk for developing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD.

While battlefield trauma is most often associated with causing PTSD, it's important to remember that other events such as involvement in a car accident, violent assault or natural disaster can trigger or intensify PTSD.

Every Airman should know the symptoms of PTSD and how to get help so they can recognize it in themselves or others. Airmen are truly the greatest asset to the Air Force and we must take care of each other. PTSD symptoms usually start soon after

the traumatic event, but may not happen until months or even years later. Some symptoms include:

- Recurring bad memories or nightmares of the event
- Finding constant reminders of the event in daily life
- Feeling numb and having difficulty expressing feelings
- Suddenly becoming angry and irritable
- Constantly fearing for your safety and always feeling "on guard"
- Feeling hopelessness, shame or despair

These symptoms often manifest

themselves into other areas, including alcohol and drug abuse, workplace issues, relationship trouble, physical and medical issues, or even suicide.

Airmen need to know that there is no shame in dealing with PTSD, and with proper treatment, people can find relief. If you think you or someone you know is suffering from symptoms of PTSD, please don't wait to seek help.

Find out more about this program at <http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/landinggear> or more about PTSD at [www.ncptsd.va.gov](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov).

## Think road safety no matter what vehicle you drive

By

**Maj. Jennifer Barnard**  
62nd Maintenance Squadron  
commander

Just as skiers and snowboarders move differently but share the same snow covered slopes, four-wheeled drivers and two-wheeled riders move differently but share the same roads. If you drive a car or a truck, have you ever tried to count the number of motorcyclists you see? It's one of those eye opening experiences when you consciously try. There are more than you think! I have noticed many more motorcycles and scooters on the roads as fuel prices have risen.

Personally, I have a truck and a bike ('05 Harley-Davidson Softail Deluxe I call "Black Rose" due to her color). I don't ride the bike when I'm too tired or frustrated — only when I'm in the right

state of mind and when conditions are right. I strive to set a good example as someone who enjoys riding safely.

How do we look out for each other to ensure we're all safe? Here are some suggestions:

- There are a lot more cars and trucks than motorcycles on the road, and some drivers do not "recognize" a motorcycle, especially when checking traffic at an intersection.
- When a motorcyclist is in motion, do not think of it as a motorcycle, think of it as a person.
- Because of its small size, a motorcycle may look farther away than it is or appear to be going faster than it is. When checking traffic to turn at an intersection or a driveway, predict a motorcycle is closer than it looks. Take an extra moment to check blind spots or areas masked by objects or backgrounds (like the awesome trees around here).
- Don't assume all motorcyclists are speed

demons, especially cruisers.

- Motorcyclists often adjust lane position to be seen more easily and to minimize effects of road debris, passing vehicles or wind. Often, they'll travel in the left third of the lane to see and be seen.
- The stopping distance for a motorcycle is nearly the same as for cars, unless the roads are slippery. And the rainy season is approaching.
- When many motorcycles travel together, they will usually ride in formation. This actually stems from the military and is a safer way to ride, when the group has discussed and shared their riding habits. The first bike will be in the right third of the lane with the next bike approximately two seconds behind and in the left third of the lane and so on.

There is a lot of information out there; most of these pointers came from <http://www.msf-usa.org>. Visit the site for more information.

## The Sharp Airman ...

**presents a professional military image.**

Members will:

- Procure and maintain all mandatory clothing items.
- Review and follow local supplements and procedures.
- Keep uniforms neat, clean, pressed, buttoned, and properly maintained.

Members will not:

- Stand or walk with hands in pockets of any uniform combination, other than to insert or remove items.
- Walk in uniform while using cell phones, radios, or hands-free headsets unless required in the performance of official duties using a government issued device.
- Smoke or use smokeless tobaccos, drink, or eat while walking in uniform.

## Professionals of the week

### 62nd Operations Support Squadron

#### Tech. Sgt. Seth Hillman

**Duty title:**  
Noncommissioned officer in charge of loadmaster training

**Duty section:**  
Wing training

**Hometown:**  
Bristol, W.Va.

#### Why he's super:

Sergeant Hillman ensures that more than 400 aircrew members complete more than 6,000 training items each quarter. As wing training equipment account manager, he manages accountability of \$300,000 in assets, \$190,000 in training munitions, and \$20,000 in communications equipment. He completed a congressionally-mandated inventory of wing munitions with perfect accountability of all assets. He is also the coordinating liaison for the Army's mission orientation training on static C-17s. He coordinated and trained more than 300 troops for combat airlift.



#### Staff Sgt. Nathan Schasse

**Duty title:**  
Aircrew flight equipment craftsman

**Duty section:**  
Survival equipment

**Hometown:**  
Madison, Wis.

#### Why he's tops:

Sergeant Schasse is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the survival equipment shop. The section maintains the serviceability of aircrew parachutes, life rafts and C-17 seat refurbishments. Sergeant Schasse also oversees the squadron physical fitness program and disposable bag collection project for the CDC. He represented the Operations Group at McChord's first-ever Skunkworks teambuilding and survival competition. Academically, he is one quarter away from finishing his undergraduate degree and plans to apply to officer training school in 2009.



#### EDITORIAL STAFF

**62nd AW commander:** Col. Jeffrey Stephenson  
**Chief, Public Affairs:** Master Sgt. Dean Miller  
**NCOIC, Public Affairs:** Tech. Sgt. Chris Haylett  
**Chief of Internal:** Staff Sgt. Eric Burks  
**News Director:** Airman 1st Class Kirsten Wicker  
**Editor:** Tyler Hemstreet  
**62nd Services Squadron contributor:** Patti Jeffrey  
**Photographer:** Abner Guzman  
**Graphic artist:** Lisa Lemmer  
**62nd Force Support Squadron contributor:** Patti Jeffrey

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#### CONTACT NUMBERS

Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by 62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.  
**Mailing Address:** 62nd AW/PAI  
100 Col. Joe Jackson Blvd., Suite 1077  
McChord AFB, WA 98438  
**Phone:** (253) 982-5637 **Fax:** (253) 982-5025  
**E-mail:** [northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil)

# Spouses, agencies help Airmen, families during deployments

**By**  
**Tyler Hemstreet**  
Staff writer

With more than 800 Airmen currently deployed, McChord support agencies are making sure family members of deployed Airmen are being cared for while their loved ones are away.

Part of that support network starts with the all-volunteer Phoenix Spouse program within each unit. While the nature of each spouses' involvement will vary by unit, a group of Phoenix Spouses and wing leadership recently generated a list of best practices that aid in helping families either new to the base or those with deployed members, said Laila Christensen, a community readiness consultant with the Airman and Family Readiness Center who over-

sees the Phoenix Spouse training program.

The list included things such as making monthly spouse calls to check in with families, composing a monthly newsletter for families with deployed members, providing meals for families with newborns or medical issues and coordinating with the United Service Organization for deployment support packages.

"We're seeing a great commitment and lots of enthusiasm (by Phoenix Spouses) to the welfare of the unit," Christensen said of the trend she sees while overseeing the training. "We see interaction between leadership and unit spouses. Each knows that they are supported by each other."

The eight-hour standardized core training for the program is presented by Airman and Family Readiness Centers across the command.

Training focuses on resources available, building peer to peer relationships, providing support during deployments and strategies for dealing with stress. There is also training devoted to suicide awareness.

The base has nearly 80 Phoenix Spouses working to maintain an open dialogue with their respective unit's deployed Airmen.

The Chapel Support Center's outreach program is also contributing to reaching families new to the base and those with deployed family Airmen.

The themed quarterly deployed spouses dinner events draw positive feedback, said Chaplain (Capt.) Brian McCormack, 62nd Airlift Wing.

"It's neat because everybody gets involved in the event," Chaplain McCormack said. "Despite the fact that our people are busy, they love to support our families."

Organizations such as the

McChord Clubs and Community Center, the Top 3, the Airman and Family Readiness Center, Family Advocacy and commanders and first sergeants have all contributed to making deployed spouses dinners an enthusiastic forum where families feel welcome and find important support information, Chaplain McCormack said.

The presence of leadership at the events is also paramount, he said.

"Taking care of Airmen and their families is a top priority of Team McChord," said Col. Jeffrey Stephenson, 62nd Airlift Wing Commander. "Providing outstanding resources and support to our people — before, during and after deployment — is directly tied to readiness and is key to delivering on our promise and obligation to provide combat airlift on behalf of the nation."



Photo by Abner Guzman

## Seal of approval

Airman 1st Class Joseph Pirtle, 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron, tests the seal on Master Sgt. Chris Dahm's, 62nd CES, protective mask during an exercise to train and prepare Exercise Evaluation Team members for the upcoming wing-wide ability to survive and operate training and mobility exercise.



# Club membership highlights benefits, privileges during drive

By

Airman 1st Class Kirsten Wicker  
62nd Airlift Wing  
Public Affairs

The McChord Clubs and Community Center continues its annual membership drive through Oct. 15, offering two choices of club cards and other benefits. Interested members of Team McChord are encouraged to sign up to become a club member before the end of the drive.

“There are lots of benefits to being a club member,” said Wayne Bechard, 62nd Force Support Squadron club manager. “Members receive club benefits at over 120 Air Force clubs worldwide, plus other services’ clubs.”

There are two options for club member cards. A United States Air Force Services MasterCard through Chase banking offers a low annual percentage rate of five percent, a rewards program, emergency cash and card replacement, travel accident insurance and a credit line minimum of \$1,000. The MasterCard may be used on or off base. The card has no annual fee, offers a 25-day grace period and an automatic payment plan.

“The card also earns you military free cash rewards points for purchases made on or off base,” said Bechard.

Military free cash is a cash back rewards program similar to what many other credit card holders enjoy, he said.

The other option, the proprietary club membership card, does not have the MasterCard feature, but has a low APR of five percent and a \$500 credit limit maximum. Members who hold the proprietary card enjoy a free monthly membership appreciation buffet, discounted meal prices, use of club catering supplies, and special event discount coupons.

“I’ve been a club member for a number of years now,” said Ed Bernard, a recently retired master sergeant. “Throughout my career in the Air Force, the club has offered a lot of benefits like discounted meals and free use of the rooms to my family and me.”

The club has a lot to offer Team McChord, he said.

In addition to a choice of club card, club benefits include members only programs, members first discounts, no dues when deployed and low monthly dues.

“E-1 to E-4 receives one year free membership when they sign up and O-1 to O-2 monthly dues are just \$10,” Bechard said. “We offer free use of banquet rooms for birthdays, graduations, anniversaries parties and member meal discount in the dining room and for banquets.”



Photo by Abner Guzman

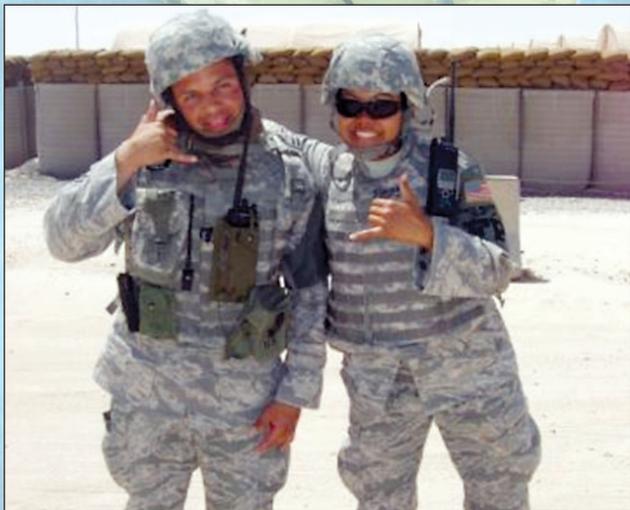
## Mentoring moment

The 62nd Airlift Wing’s new command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Cary Hatzinger, speaks with an Airman about readiness and the upcoming Ability To Survive and Operate Training. With 22 years of Air Force experience, Chief Hatzinger maintains a critical link between the 62nd Airlift Wing commander and enlisted Airmen of the wing. The command chief also ensures the commander’s policies are known and understood by the 2,900 enlisted Airmen assigned to the wing.



*McChord Airmen*

# AROUND THE WORLD



Courtesy photo

**SOUTHWEST ASIA** — Senior Airman Scott Alarcon, left, and Airman 1st Class Naomi O'Brien, both 62nd Force Support Squadron, take a break during a recent deployment.



Courtesy photo

**MANAS AIR BASE, Kyrgyzstan** — Master Sgt. Brian Poje, 62nd Airlift Wing, stands next to an unmanned aircraft system during a recent deployment.



# Berlin Airlift lays foundation for HUMANITARIAN AIRLIFT



Palletized cargo is airdropped from a C-17 Jan. 5 by a McChord crew of Reserve and active-duty Airmen. The C-17 air drop delivered a new engine and supplies to a stranded British fishing trawler in the Antarctic.



A McChord C-17 makes the first mid-winter airdrop over the South Pole during Operation Deep Freeze in 2007.



A crew member of a C-17 Globemaster III gives water to passengers on a Hurricane Gustav evacuation flight Aug. 31 at Louis Armstrong International Airport in New Orleans. Flights were provided to transport citizens to destinations safely away from the hurricane's path.

**S**ixty years ago, the fledgling United States Air Force airlifted its first of 2.3 million tons of coal, food and supplies to the besieged city of Berlin. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had cut off all ground transportation through Russian territory to the surrounded city of Berlin. The Berlin Airlift sustained a city of more than 2 million citizens for over a year and this first confrontation of the new Cold War was a symbol of America's commitment to democracy and a proving ground for our nation's airlift capabilities.

**BY**  
Theo W. Ramsey  
Air Mobility  
Command Public  
Affairs

McChord Airmen played an important role in the mission, as the 62nd Troop Carrier Wing deployed more than 100 Airmen from the 62nd Maintenance and Supply Group. According to the 62nd Airlift Wing historian, the Airmen worked out of either Germany or England where an old aircraft maintenance facility was reopened to help with maintenance needs. Although the McChord Airmen weren't familiar with the newer C-54 Skymaster, they likely gained experience working on them, which came in handy when the wing converted from C-82 Packets to C-54s in 1949.

Air Force airlifters may not have known in 1948 the broader political implications derived from the success of the Berlin Airlift, but they knew their humanitarian mission was important. Air Force Col. (ret.) Gail Halvorson said, "We knew Stalin was the new enemy and needed to be stopped. We had been briefed for about two years about the threat so we knew the mission was important. I didn't know just how important it was at the time."

The direct humanitarian impact of Airmen here is reflected through the 62nd AW's recent involvement flying supplies and equipment to Hurricane Gustav and Ike-affected areas in the south. In 2005, McChord Airmen also assisted in bringing relief to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. McChord brought more than 135,000 pounds of food and water into the region and brought more than 1,000 residents of the area out to safety. In December 2006, a C-17 Globemaster III from McChord made its debut airdrop to the South Pole, Antarctica, showcasing the aircraft's reliability and versatility in delivering critical cargo.

The success of the Berlin Airlift accelerated Allied plans to unite the West German tri-sector of Berlin and create the new German Federal Republic after World War II. "In my view," said Colonel Halvorson, "the Airlift saved Berlin, and along with the Marshall Plan in West Germany, it stopped Communism's spread west, leading eventually to the Wall coming down, and finally the dismantling of the Soviet Union. It did change post war history and the rest of my life."

The compassion of the United States and its Allies during the Berlin Airlift toward the same German people we had been at war with just three years prior, was deeply felt by a German public oppressed by Stalinist Russia. During the Cold War, Germany determined to never repeat history and slowly built up a large stockpile of food and supplies. When Germany was reunited in 1990, Andrei Cherner, a former White House speechwriter said, "West Berliners, imprisoned behind a wall by Russian soldiers and policies for forty years, might have been expected to look toward their defeated foes with something approaching hatred. Instead, they decided they would turn over their hoarded food and supplies, to the very people who had made that stockpile necessary."

Compassion and airlift made it happen. The impact of airlift and the Airmen who provide it is far-reaching. The Air Force and the 62nd AW, builds on its strong airlift heritage each day, consistently delivering combat and humanitarian capabilities with precision, speed, agility, commitment and technical skill.

The unprecedented accomplishments of the Berlin Airlift still stand as one of the greatest humanitarian and political missions in world history. The Air Force and 62nd AW take the lessons and insights from the Berlin Airlift and continue to apply them toward winning today's fight, taking care of our people, and preparing for tomorrow's challenges.

The 62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs contributed to this article.



West Berliners watch as a U.S. cargo plane delivers desperately needed supplies during the Berlin Airlift.



A Douglas C-133A Cargomaster sits on the McChord flightline Aug. 30 on a stopover before departing here on its final flight. The C-133A ended its flight at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., becoming the newest addition of the Jimmie Doolittle Air & Space Museum. Previously operated in Alaska for 30 years by Maurice Carlson's Cargomaster Corp., the aircraft had logged some 18,250 hours and more than 6,100 landings.

**Free seminar**

A free career planning seminar for officers and senior noncommissioned officers is from 8 to 11 a.m. today at the Chapel Support Center. No sign up is required.

**Community response**

Have a concern, question or complaint? E-mail through the McChord public web page at <http://public.mcchord.amc.af.mil/main/contactus.asp>. Public Affairs monitors the inbox daily and forwards inquiries to the appropriate agencies. Team McChord is encouraged to use this system for feedback, after first using their chain of command to resolve issues.

**MPF changes**

Customer service hours for passports and in-processing have changed. Passports are from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for walk-ins and 3 to 4 p.m. for appointments. In-processing is now 7:30 a.m. to noon for walk-ins and 1 to 4 p.m. for appointments. Additionally, the virtual out-processing application available online is now mandatory for active duty members. The military personnel flight no longer provides this service. Appointments for final out-processing, retirements and separations remain available. Call 982-9642 for details.



**McChord Chaplain Corps  
Faith & Worship  
Programs**

For more information on Chapel services and programs, please call 982-5556. To contact Duty Chaplain after duty hours, contact the Command Post at 982-2635

**CATHOLIC SERVICES and RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**

All Catholic services are in chapel two.

**Saturday:**

4 p.m. Confession: Chapel 2, Building 181

5 p.m. Mass: Chapel 2, Building 181

**Sunday:**

9:30 a.m. Mass: Chapel 2, Building 181

11 a.m. Mass: Chapel 2, Building 181  
12:30 p.m. Why Catholic? Small Group Study: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

**Monday:**

12:00 p.m. Why Catholic? Small Group Study: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

**Wednesday:**

6:30 p.m. Faith Formation: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Wednesday of the month: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

6:30 p.m. Why Catholic? Small Group Study: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

**PROTESTANT SERVICES and RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**

**Sunday:**

8:30 a.m. Liturgical Worship: Chapel 1, Building 180

9:45 a.m. Sunday School: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

11 a.m. Traditional Worship: Chapel 1, Building 180

11 a.m. Contemporary Worship: Chapel Support Center, Building 746

**JEWISH SERVICES:**

**Friday:**

6 p.m. Every 1st, 3rd & 5th Friday of the month: Ft Lewis, Chapel 5, Building T-2270

**OTHER PROGRAMS:**

The following Chapel programs take place at the Chapel Support Center, Building 746.

**Tuesday:**

9:30 a.m. Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS); 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month

6 p.m. Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) Bible Study; 1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday of the month

**Wednesday:**

11 a.m. Adult Bible Study



# Air Force officials up bonuses by \$93 million

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**By**

**Senior Airman Randi Flaugh**  
506th Air Expeditionary Group  
Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Officials have released the latest selective reenlistment bonus list containing 88 Air Force specialties, effective Sept. 15.

The new program includes a \$93 million budget increase, almost triple the amount of the previous

program. This allows for greater distribution of bonuses across Air Force career fields than in recent years. It includes all specialties that received bonuses under the current bonus list, and an additional 51 specialties.

Another change to the program is an increase in the maximum amount Airmen may receive per zone. The cap was raised from \$60,000 per zone to \$90,000, enabling the Air Force to impact critical skills already receiving high

multipliers in the bonus calculation, said Senior Master Sgt. Sandy LePine, manager of enlisted force management at the Pentagon.

“Our SRB analysis process is invaluable, and provides the opportunity to modify the list and apply bonuses to our most critical needs,” said Sergeant LePine. “Balancing the enlisted force is a constant challenge, and the SRB is one of the most effective programs we employ to retain our number one priority, our Airmen.”

The analysis process, which uses an optimization model and a “human-in-the-loop” review, ensures the right skills are targeted with the most cost-effective multiples, Sergeant LePine said.

Compared to those who re-enlisted under the current program, most Airmen will receive higher bonuses while a few may receive the same amount.

For more information, contact the local military personnel function reenlistment office.



# Strangers turn into pals at Puyallup Fair

By

**Bud McKay**  
62nd Airlift Wing  
Public Affairs

A passing Puyallup police officer walked by Airman 1st Class Jonas Pelayo, 62nd Communications Squadron, at the Puyallup Fair and said, “thanks for your service, Airman.” Airman Pelayo, who was helping cut the food for Doug Brown, from the Washington Soldiers Home, nodded to the police officer and said, “they should be thanking him (Brown) for what he did – not me.”

Airman Pelayo was one of 21 McChord Airmen who escorted 27 residents of the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting at the Puyallup Fair Thursday. According to Ileen Gallagher, a director at the home, McChord has been the exclusive chaperones for the residents at the fair for more than 35 years.

“We couldn’t bring the residents to the Puyallup Fair without the help from McChord,” Gallagher said. “This is one of the highlights of the year for our residents. When they see (the Airmen) in their full dress blue uniforms with all the ribbons, they get very excited.”

The residents of the Home enjoying the day at the state’s largest fair ranged from 50 to 95 years old. All but one of the residents had to use wheelchairs to get around, and the

McChord Airmen made sure the residents were able to see anything they wanted to see.

Once the residents arrived at the fair, the Airmen greeted them as they came off of the bus. One of the first people off the bus was Ken Masters. He was matched with Staff Sgt. John Havens, 62nd Medical Squadron. The two found out quickly they had more in common other than both serving in the military — they were both from Michigan.

“What do you want to see first?” Sergeant Havens said.

“The exhibits,” Masters said.

“That’s my favorite too,” Sergeant Havens said, and the two men from Michigan set off to enjoy the day.

Once the res-

idents came out of the bus, McChord Airmen all headed in different directions. Some of the residents had game plans on what they wanted to see. Others just pointed when they saw something they liked. Some were happy to have the Airmen lead the way.

“We walked all over the fair, and I mean all over,” said Staff Sgt. Rachell Martinez, 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron, who was helping a former Coast Guard Reserve member. “We looked through displays of paintings, drawings and spent a lot of time looking at the woodworking exhibits.”

Senior Airman Phillip Greene-Henry, 62nd Aerial Port Squadron, said he took his guest all over the fair as well and got to see the typical fair items – like animals, vendors and food – and some “extras.”

“He was quite the flirt,” he said. “I’d start to push him toward one area at the fair and he’d spot a pretty girl and tell me to take him over to see her, and he’d start to talk with her.”

While the soldiers and the Airmen were strangers when they first met, it didn’t take them long to form

friendships. Soon, conversations began to flow easier.

“I was in the Army in Vietnam for 2-and-a-half years as a truck driver and a mechanic,” Brown said. “The Air Force were good people.”

The Washington Soldiers Home opened in 1891 and has a residential capacity of 183. It provides long-term health care for honorably discharged veterans — and in some instances, their spouses – who are disabled and indigent, or likely to become indigent.

The McChord Airmen each had reasons why they wanted to help. Most just felt it was a way of giving back to the veterans for their sacrifices from World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam.

“When I first read about this opportunity, I jumped at it,” said Tech. Sgt. Joseph Nicosia, 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron. “I thought it was just a great chance to spend part of a day with veterans who gave so much for their country. It seemed the least I could do.”

But Sergeant Nicosia isn’t letting his friendship with his guest end at the fair.

“I took photos of us together on my cell phone and sent the pictures to my wife,” he said. “I knew this would be a rewarding experience, but I didn’t expect it to be so much fun. My wife and I are going to visit the soldiers home in a couple of weeks.”



Photo by Bud McKay

**Master Sgt. Eric Wentworth, 446th Civil Engineer Squadron, talks with Elbert “Al” Senyohl, from the Washington Soldiers Home, while at the Puyallup Fair.**



## From TOWN HALL, Page 1

According to joint basing officials, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 law mandated the creation of 12 joint bases, including Joint Base Lewis-McChord. In this instance, the Army was designated the lead in managing installation support functions, while operational missions are to remain separate. Additionally, the Air Force will transfer ownership of real property to the Army.

A minimum of 12 working groups are being considered for consolidation. These include facilities, fire protection and emergency services, environmental services, housing, community services, operational mission services, info technology systems management, supply logistics, community logistics, transportation logistics, command support and security services. Functional working groups have been established for each area. The civilian work force at Joint Base Lewis-McChord is expected to remain at the same level or

increase.

"There are 49 functional areas; and we have all [12] of those working groups out there," said Colonel Hershman, director for the joint basing implementation.

Recent survey results from nearly 300 civilian personnel indicated that 71 percent are very concerned about job retention. Additional major concerns about the alignment included 81 percent listing job security as a concern, 37 percent listing cultural differences and 43 percent listing seniority transference.

Civilian positions will be classified by the functional working groups, who are working to create the "to-be" – the final manpower states for the new base support organizations. Civilian positions will be classified as installation or mission support by Sept. 2009. Installation support positions will become Army civilians when the merger is complete in Sept. 2010.

Civilians who may transfer to a lower-grade position will be placed in grade retention or pay retention and retain their current salary, said

Colonel Hershman. Additionally, seniority is strictly based on service computation date (which includes all creditable federal service), so seniority will not be affected by a transfer.

"We set up the working groups," Colonel Hershman said. "I think we have made great strides. We still have a long way to go. We have a better level of cooperation going on and that should filter down."

A study is going on right now to determine mission versus installation support, it's not easy, he said.

While questions were answered for many at the town hall, leadership noted many new questions and issues from the audience to be resolved.

"My concern is about safety and quality of life," said Ken Heath, 62nd AW Safety. "Will the Air Force be forced to comply with Army standards or will our standards remain the same? This is going to be a challenge for the functional working groups to work out."

For fire fighters, the concerns are about cohesion and group dynam-

ics.

"For the fire department, the jobs are there," said John Harris, 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron deputy fire chief and veteran Air Force fire fighter. "But what are they?"

"The fire department is a family. We spend more time with each other than we do with our families at home," Harris said. "To go into joint basing and have a divided family, well, we are going to have to work through this to gain that same level of trust that is so crucial."

"We appreciate everyone's questions and will work hard to ensure our civilians have accurate information as we work through the joint basing process," said Colonel Hershman.

Wing leadership and planners will keep civilian personnel informed as updates arrive and future town hall events are scheduled. Additional information, guidance and questions and answers can be found on McChord's sharepoint Web site at <https://62aw.mchord.af.mil/jointbasing/default.aspx>.

## From FIRE TRUCK, Page 1

two years. Because of that, said the colonel, instrument approaches had to be reviewed for accuracy. The city lies in the middle of a valley with mountains on both sides, requiring pilots to be particularly alert and prepared. Also, when flying outside the U.S., diplomatic clearance issues often come into play.

"The wickets aren't necessarily going to line up," said Colonel Von Thaden. "But finding volunteers for this mission was not a challenge."

Those volunteers included specialists from

several domains within the wing.

"My squadron put out the call for volunteers to help support this mission, so I answered the call," said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Thomsen, a cargo loader with the 86th Aerial Port Squadron.

Sergeant Thomsen was at the wheel of an APS 60K loader (capable of transporting 60,000 pounds), and helped load the C-17 with 12 pallets of emergency medical equipment. Meanwhile, several of his squadron mates scurried underneath the 2,000-gallon fire tender to attach tie down chains to the floor of the aircraft.

"It always feels good to be a part of something that will help others in need," said Sergeant Thomsen, who works as a Pierce County corrections officer in his civilian job.

Humanitarian missions give crews from the wing an opportunity to make a difference in non combat-related missions.

"It's so nice to bring needed supplies to those people who need them," said Master Sgt. Richard Lutz, 728th AS loadmaster scheduler. "This is by far the most satisfying type of mission we fly."

A mission made possible by citizen warriors of the 446th AW.

