

F.E. WARREN AIR FORCE BASE

PEACEKEEPER

JAN 2021



Staff Sgt. Amber Alderman, 90 MSOS, tries on the new improved outer tactical vest in the 90 LRS Individual Personal Equipment section Dec. 11, 2020 on F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. The armor was created as a collaboration between several Air Force organizations to ensure a more comfortable fit for female defenders to increase lethality. (U. S. Air Force photo by Glenn S. Robertson)

Airmen from the 90th Security Forces Group were among the first to try on the new female body armor at Logistics Readiness Squadron's Individual Personal Equipment Section, Dec. 11, 2020 on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo.

The equipment differs from the standard tactical

ICBM Airmen receive phone calls from CSAF over the holidays

Story and photos by Capt. Ieva Bytautaite

U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, General Charles Q. Brown, made calls to missileers on alert over the holidays to discuss their mission and thank them for standing watch during COVID-19.

During the calls, Gen. Brown discussed the important role missile alert force Airmen play in the vital intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) mission and their incredible response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Gen. Brown was very personable," said Capt. Zachary Todd, 741st Missile Squadron instructor, Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota. "He asked about my family and home life, specifically with regards to how COVID operations have affected the holidays."

Todd, a Navarre, Florida native and a United States Air Force Academy graduate, likes to bring simple comforts from home, like board games, a cozy bathrobe and lots of books, to help pass time and make being on alert more enjoyable.

Missile alert crews from all three missile wings, located at F. E. Warren AFB, Wyoming, Malmstrom AFB,

Montana and Minot AFB, N.D., made drastic changes to alert schedules to ensure the force stayed healthy, without any degradation in readiness. These changes were historic - for the first time in ICBM history, alert crews were pulling two to one week alert tours.

Extended alert tours mean that the Airmen are spending more time in the missile field, but also limit the amount of changeover a Missile Alert Facility (MAF) experiences, greatly reducing the chances of transmitting the virus. Additionally, longer alert tours increased schedule predictability, allowed for more recovery time and increased integration with Defenders and MAF facility managers.

"Meeting people from all sorts of different backgrounds is definitely the best part of being a missileer," said Todd.

Lastly, Brown thanked the Airmen for their dedication to the mission, even during the holidays, when others are spending time with family or enjoying time off.

First deployed in 1970, with an expected 10 year service life, Minuteman III (MMIII) ICBMs have been operating for 50 years from bases deep in the American heartland. Having undergone multiple life extensions, the Minuteman

New female body armor arrives at F.E. Warren

Story and photos by Glenn S. Robertson

"Outfitting the security forces members who protect the ICBM mission is a priority," said Murphy. "We are conducting a test run by giving female troops the Improved Outer Tactical Vest to ensure it meets mission standards, then outfit all security forces troops on base."

The IOTV is going through a test run and at three other Air Force bases: Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Minot AFB, N.D., and Moody AFB, Ga.

The first Airmen to try on the IOTV noted its benefits over the standard body armor produced with the male frame in mind.

The first Airman to try it on, Staff Sgt. Amber Alderman from the 90th Missile Security Squadron, acknowledged that trying it on was not the same as wearing the armor operationally; however, she was hopeful that it would be beneficial to female defenders to better execute the mission.

"It's a bit difficult to get a good gauge on how it feels without everything on it," said Alderman. "I'm hopeful that since it's geared toward females it will be more comfortable."

The expectation of the body armor is that it will better fit the female frame, countering a common problem of ill-

fitting armor that can cause discomfort or even injury.

"On any given day, Defenders wear required gear for 12-13 hours, and when the gear doesn't fit properly, it takes a toll on the body," said Chief Master Sgt. Mary Trent, Security Forces Manager for the 90th Security Forces Squadron. "This new equipment is going to provide female Defenders needed relief and not be a distraction from being able to focus on the mission."

Female Defenders will now be able to choose armor made with their frame as the standard, keeping them from having to select a size that was the next closest size available.

"Typically women are forced to go up a size to accommodate the armor fitting their chest and the gear ends up being too loose, leaving unevenly distributed weight; or, we are forced to downsize leaving our mid-sections exposed," said MSgt Alana Lynn, of the 90th Security Forces Squadron. "As Defenders, we are often plagued with back and knee issues due to our gear and the way it is worn, but with better fitting gear, lighter and designed to fit our body, there is a potential for fewer injuries while allowing females to be more focused on their job rather than constantly being uncomfortable."

In addition to the overall readiness benefit, there is also a tactical benefit while firing a weapon.

"Firing from a prone position is difficult with improper fitting gear and being able to find that sweet spot for the butt of your weapon to sit is often times difficult," said Lynn. "However, new body armor designed for women will increase our lethality and allow for a more comfortable and controlled shot."

The rollout across the Air Force will consist of several phases, with the last bases expected to receive the armor in fiscal year 2022. The 536 vests received by the wing will be disseminated to the female defenders across the six security forces squadrons, according to Murphy, which will in turn create a more capable, lethal defender force ensuring nuclear surety.

The creation and procurement of the female IOTV was a collaboration between The Human Systems Division of the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, the Air Force Materiel Command's Combat Ready Airmen office and the Air Force Security Forces Center.

III will be replaced by a new, more survivable, and more cost-effective weapon system: the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD).

The Air Force maintains 400 land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles in the Department of Defense's nuclear triad. These ICBMs are deployed in hundreds of silos and can be launched and reach targets within minutes, creating a nearly insurmountable targeting problem for adversaries.

U.S. ICBMs are the most responsive leg of the Triad, on day-to-day alert 24/7/365, and controlled by iron-clad nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3). The hardened and dispersed nature of U.S. ICBMs requires a potential adversary to commit to a massive attack on the U.S. homeland to even have a chance of disabling all U.S. ICBMs - thus enhancing deterrence of an attack.

20th Air Force, the missile numbered air force for Air Force Global Strike Command, oversees three ICBM wings and one nuclear operations support wing, 377th Air Base Wing, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, and is responsible for operating, maintaining, securing and supporting the U.S. ICBM force.

Helping out in difficult times

Story by Airman 1st Class Darius Frazier

“We got a call to our clinic from a concerned mother who knew at this point she was positive for COVID-19,” said Major Andrew Ellis, Chief of Dental Services at the 90th Operational Medical Readiness Squadron. “Typically when someone tests positive they’re supposed to isolate with their family members but she called the clinic feeling as if she had nowhere else to turn.”

Ellis describes an incident that occurred where a young girl was distressed and could not be seen off base due to being in contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19. With nowhere else to turn, the girl’s mother reached out and sought help at the base dental clinic.

“The daughter had braces and a wire ended up coming loose from where it should be and was poking her in the cheek,” said Ellis. “So, ultimately, using our field readiness capabilities we were able to provide a treatment arena.”

Despite the girl potentially carrying COVID-19, Ellis didn’t hesitate to serve and provide treatment for the girl in pain.

“It didn’t put the base facility or the rest of the population at risk and we were able to head out there in appropriate [personal protective equipment] and had everything we needed,” said Ellis, emphasizing the safety of others. “The daughter wasn’t in the chair for more than five minutes and it was very quick and efficient and we were able to adhere to all of our standard COVID prevention safety procedures to take care of all the instruments and to disinfect the treatment area.”

Ellis wasn’t alone for the treatment of the young girl as Staff Sgt. Jessica Flick, an Oral Prophylaxis



Major Andy Ellis and Staff Sgt. Jessica Flick, both from the 90 OMRS, pose for a photo Nov. 6, 2020 outside the clinic on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. Ellis and Flick helped a dependent who had tested positive for COVID-19, using a modified facility and personal protective equipment.

Assistant at the 90 OMRS was right beside him helping and ensuring everything ran smoothly.

“We didn’t hesitate. We were told there was a patient that needed to be treated and had to be examined under special circumstances,” said Flick. “It’s still a patient that needed our care, so we treated them like any other patient we would normally have.”

The two embodied service before self while showing compassion but no fear to the distressed girl.

“I think it really is just doing our job in regards to the idea that the call to serve within the military context is more involved than the civilian side,” said Ellis. “We’re always mission ready and ready to do our job in any environment, including a pandemic environment. We have the appropriate training and capabilities.”

To them it didn’t seem like they were doing anything more than just their job, but it could be

argued that they displayed significant bravery in putting aside a fear of contracting a virus during a pandemic to help a troubled person.

“I don’t think either of us were doing anything heroic and I think sometimes what gets lost in the shuffle of the routine is that many don’t really think of the readiness impact that dentistry has,” said Ellis. “Dentistry is one of the most highly utilized deployed services because things go wrong.”

According to Ellis, half of all Department of Defense (DoD) military recruits are in Dental Readiness Class 3 and 96% require dental care.

“With so much emphasis on mission readiness, Staff Sgt. Flick and I were able to very quickly and efficiently provide a platform for care that was safe and effective,” said Ellis. “We’re fortunate to be able to work at the capacity that we are.”

90th Missile Wing honors troops of Mogadishu Mile

Story and photos by Glenn S. Robertson

Beginning at 5:42 a.m., October 4, 1993, U.S. Army Rangers, and soldiers of Delta Force and the 10th Mountain Division began retreating from Blackhawk helicopter crash sites after the Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia.

Nineteen Americans died and 73 more were injured in the battle, but those who survived the initial firefights were not out of harm’s way. They had another hurdle – exfiltration to a rally point held by the 10th Mountain Division and an awaiting convoy.

A convoy of UN troops driving more than 100 vehicles entered the city to extract the survivors; however, a group of Rangers and Delta operators, along with soldiers from the 10th Mountain would have to join the convoy on foot after the wounded had been loaded onto the vehicles.

Thus began the Mogadishu Mile, where the convoy and troops on foot conducted a tactical retreat from the crash site to a location on National Street where more vehicles awaited to take them to secure locations all while under attack from small arms and rocket propelled grenade fire.

Twenty-seven years have passed since the battle and the extraction, but Airmen of the 90th Missile Wing held a Mogadishu Mile ruck march Oct. 9, 2020 at the parade field on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo., to honor the sacrifice and bravery of those who fought and died that day.

October 3, 1993

3:42 p.m. : Assault teams strike the Olympic Hotel target site in an attempt to capture two lieutenants of Mohamed Farrah Aidid, the leader of a combatant force in opposition to UN peacekeeping efforts. Four Delta assault “chalks” drop from helicopters and move to the four corners of the hotel.

PFC Todd Blackburn falls while fast roping from Super 67 in the first moments of the operation, suffering multiple injuries. He is evacuated by a ground support convoy, and Sergeant Dominick Pilla, a Ranger assigned to the convoy, is killed while taking Blackburn back to safety.

“We’re doing this as a memorial to those 18 Rangers and Delta Force operators who died,” said Senior Master Sgt. Ron Bartsch, who organized the event. “However, we’re also here to honor the sacrifice and heroism of all



Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Manning, 90th Communications Squadron Commander and 1st Lt. Landon Gardner participate in a Mogadishu Mile ruck march Oct. 9, 2020 on the Parade Field on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. The ruck march was organized as a memorial to the servicemembers who fought at the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993. Twelve Airmen, mostly from the 90th Communications Squadron, participated in the inaugural event.



Staff Sgt. Anthony Stancil, Senior Master Sgt. Ronald Bartsch and Staff Sgt. Alejandra Chavez participate in a Mogadishu Mile ruck march Oct. 9, 2020 on the Parade Field on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. The ruck march was organized as a memorial to the servicemembers who fought at the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993. Twelve Airmen, mostly from the 90th Communications Squadron, participated in the inaugural event.

of those present, including three Airmen.”

4:20 p.m. : Blackhawk Super 61 is shot down by an RPG. Both pilots are killed in the crash and their crew chiefs wounded. Delta Staff Sgt. Daniel Busch and Sgt. Jim Smith survive the crash and begin defending the site. Busch later dies of his injuries, having been shot four times while defending the crash site.

Eleven Airmen, mostly from the 90th Communications Squadron, donned rucksacks and marched 2.8 miles around the parade field to match the distance from the site of the downed helicopter to the site called the Pakistani Stadium, a secure UN facility set up with medical support for the special operators.

4:40 p.m. : Super 64 is downed by an RPG. Sergeant First Class Randy Shughart and Master Sgt. Gary Gordon, who had been providing cover fire from the air, request to be inserted into the crash site. After several denials of their request, they are allowed to drop into the site to protect the crew of 64.

Many of those Airmen participating were not even alive during the events of the Battle of Mogadishu, but that fact was no deterrent to them paying their respects through the event, even if they had never done anything like it before.

5:40 p.m. : Shughart and Gordon run out of ammunition and are overrun by Somali combatants. They and the pilots and crew of 64 are killed, except for pilot Chief Warrant Officer Mike Durant, who is savagely beaten and then taken prisoner. He will be released after 11 days in captivity.

“I came out because the squadron was doing it and I’d never done a memorial ruck before,” said 2nd Lieutenant Adam Nelson. “It was a new experience and I wasn’t really sure what to expect.”

5:45 p.m. : Ninety-nine men remain trapped and surrounded in the city around Super 61. They fight off wave after wave of hostile Somali fighters.

Though for some it was a desire to increase camaraderie by participating in an event with their unit, some saw it as an appropriate capstone to their own career through honoring those who came before.

9:00 p.m. : Joint Task Force Command organizes “The Rescue Convoy,” composed of 10th Mountain Troops, the remainder of Task Force Ranger,

Pakistani tanks and Malaysian armored vehicles. They move out in less than thirty minutes but are stopped by a large explosion close to the crash site. They reach the trapped soldiers just before 2 a.m.

“I participated as a way to remember the sacrifices and the lives of those who came before me, and this was a perfect way to end my active duty career with a humbling event where everyone there took time to remember and reflect on the battle and give some of us newer Airmen a way to learn our history and give back in a sense,” said Staff Sgt. Anthony Stancil. “Although it was before my time, it was a significant event that embodied warrior ethos, courage, and heroism.”

October 4, 1993

5:30 a.m. : Elements of the Rangers and Delta Force soldiers begin the “Mogadishu Mile,” exfiltrating to a rendezvous point just over a mile away on National Street, all while taking withering small arms fire and RPG attacks.

To kick off the march, Bartsch quoted Tech Sgt. Tim Wilkinson, a pararescuer who earned an Air Force Cross for his heroism during the battle from a statement he gave upon receiving the medal.

6:30 a.m. : The force returns to the stadium. Of the 99 Americans on the ground, 18 Americans will be confirmed dead and 73 injured.

“Today you have honored us and we are humbly grateful – humbly grateful because although we are privileged to enjoy the honors you have bestowed upon us, one must be humbled by the sacrifices of our comrades who are no longer with us – our fallen teammates who have given the fullest measure,” said Wilkinson. “There is no greater love than for one man to give his life for another, and we would ask that as you have honored us today that you remember our fallen teammates and when you remember these events of Oct. 3 and 4, you remember them, their families and their loved ones.”

Editor’s Note: Wilkinson, along with pararescuer Master Sgt. Scott Fales and combat controller Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Bray, were among those 99 men fighting for their lives and the lives of their comrades through the streets of Mogadishu in 1993. Fales and Bray earned Silver Stars for their valor in the face of unyielding attack. During the fight, Bray innovated tactics on the spot that would become instrumental in urban combat in the post-9/11 combat area. Bray passed away in 2017. [An article about their experience can be found here.](#)

Wyoming Air National Guardsmen mobilize to support 90th Missile Wing

Story by Airman 1st Class Anthony Muñoz

“I was deployed to Germany for a COVID mission that got cut short, so I came here,” said Tech. Sgt. Andrew Chester, NCOIC of Medical Readiness at the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. “I felt like I was missing out, so I wanted to volunteer.”

Troops from the Wyoming Air National Guard were activated Nov. 2, 2020, to assist the 90th Medical Group with COVID-19 testing.

“Currently, we have three activated Guardsmen,” said Tech. Sgt. Brittany Souder, NCOIC of the 90th Medical Operations Squadron’s respiratory clinic. “One of them is serving as a registered nurse who is helping us maintain the telephone triage, and she’s also been assisting with testing.”

Capt. Mary Burkett, a registered nurse with the 153rd Airlift Wing, volunteered

to assist the 90 MDG after Col. Bonetti reached out to their wing commander for volunteers.

“I looked at it as a great volunteer opportunity to go over and help the active duty side of the house,” said Burkett.

The other two Guardsmen are service technicians who run test specimens from the respiratory clinic at the Military Personnel Flight building to the 90 MDG building.

“That running position is important for us because the COVID samples need to be ran within one hour after collection,” said Souder.

The increase of COVID-19 cases in Wyoming has dramatically affected the base and staff members, according to Souder.

“One thing that’s really important for medical personnel is making sure our own resilience is on point,” said Souder. “We’re here – and we need to continue being here – for the patient.”

Col. Peter Bonetti Wing Commander
Col. Deane Konowicz Vice Wing Commander
Maj. Victoria Hight Chief of Public Affairs

Editorial Staff

Joseph Coslett Public Affairs Operations Chief
Master Sgt. Juaacklyn Jackson Superintendent
Glenn S. Robertson Designer & Chief of Command Information
Tech Sgt. Tyler Placie NCOIC, Command Information
Airman 1st Class Darius Frazier Photojournalist
Airman 1st Class Anthony Muñoz Photojournalist
Airman Faith MacIvaine Photojournalist

F. E. WARREN AIR FORCE BASE

PEACEKEEPER

90th Missile Wing Public Affairs
 5305 Randall Ave. Ste. 201,
 Cheyenne, WY 82005
 307.773.3381
 90MW.PA@US.AF.MIL



* This Department of Defense newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the DoD. Contents of The Peacekeeper are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the DoD, or the U.S. Air Force. The Peacekeeper is published digitally by the staff of the 90th Missile Wing Public Affairs Office. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 90th Missile Wing Public Affairs Office.

CROW CREEK CHALLENGE 2020



Minuteman III test launch demonstrates safe, reliable deterrent

Air Force Global Strike Command Public Affairs

A team of Air Force Global Strike Command Airmen launched an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile equipped with a test reentry vehicle at 12:27 a.m. Pacific Time Oct. 29 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

The test demonstrates that the United States' nuclear deterrent is safe, secure, reliable and effective to deter twenty-first century threats and reassure our allies.

"Like previous test launches, this event demonstrated the Air Force's commitment to the Nation's nuclear enterprise while ensuring the United States' nuclear deterrent is safe, secure, and effective to deter our adversaries while reassuring our allies and partners," said Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Charles Q. Brown, Jr. "We must continue to invest in this viable deterrent, and the Airmen who support this mission, as part of the most responsive leg of our nuclear triad."

The ICBM's reentry vehicle traveled approximately 4,200 miles to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. These test launches verify the accuracy and reliability of the ICBM weapon system, providing valuable data to ensure a continued safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent.

"We have had a busy test launch schedule the last few months, and our team has worked very hard to successfully execute each mission," said Col. Omar Colbert, 576th Flight Test Squadron Commander. "Today's launch sends a visible message of deterrence to the world, and I couldn't be more proud of the dedication and professionalism of our team."

The test launch demonstrates that even during the pandemic, AFGSC maintains this capability. The missile came from the 91st Missile Wing, with men and women supporting the launch from all three AFGSC missile wings as well as the 576th Flight Test Squadron.

"This test took a missile and an incredible team of maintainers and launch crews, all pulled from active missile wings, and that really demonstrates the continued readiness and reliability of both the Minuteman III and the professional men and women who support it," said Lt. Col. Brock Sargent, Task Force Commander. "Together we make up a weapon system that stands on continuous alert, defending the United States and our allies 24/7, just as we have for the last 50 years."

The ICBM community, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and U.S. Strategic Command, uses data collected from test launches for continuing force development evaluation. The ICBM test launch program demonstrates the operational capability of the Minuteman III and ensures the United States' ability to maintain a strong, credible nuclear deterrent as a key element of U.S. national security and the security of U.S. allies and partners.

The launch calendars are built three to five years in advance, and planning for each individual launch begins six months to a year prior to launch. Test launches are not a response or reaction to world events or regional tensions.

Air Force Global Strike Command is comprised of more than 33,700 Airmen and civilians assigned to two numbered air forces, 11 wings, two geographically-separated squadrons and one detachment in the continental United States, and deployed to locations around the globe. The command oversees all bomber and Intercontinental Ballistic Missile operations for the U.S. Department of Defense.

[More information can be found here.](#)



Memorial to Buffalo Soldiers relocated to place of honor

Story and Photos by Glenn S. Robertson

Airmen of the 90th Logistics Readiness Squadron relocated a memorial honoring the Buffalo Soldiers to a place of honor at the Base Cemetery, Oct. 6, 2020 on F. E. Warren Air Force Base.

The memorial had stood near the main gate on base since 1993, until a decision was made to place the three-ton stone and marker in a more prominent position on base.

"We felt it was important to honor the sacrifice of these soldiers by moving the stone closer to the cemetery," said Col. Deane Konowicz, 90th Missile Wing Vice Commander. "Seeing as there are Buffalo Soldiers buried in that hallowed ground, it seemed fitting that the stone should be moved closer to their resting place."

There was also a sense of maintaining a long tradition started in the early years of the installation, with Airmen sharing some of the same living and work spaces as those Buffalo Soldiers who came before.

"The men and women of the 90th Missile Wing serve this great nation on the foundation of service and sacrifice that the Buffalo Soldiers established at the turn of the last century on these same parade grounds, dorms, homes, and training areas," said Konowicz. "We are proud to be part of that tradition and grateful to be able to recognize them in a more prominent way."

From 1887 – 1916, hundreds of soldiers from the 9th and 10th Cavalry as well as the 24th Infantry, were stationed on Fort D. A. Russell, the Army post that would become F. E. Warren Air Force Base.

Those units comprised three of the four considered Buffalo Soldiers, and several of those soldiers are buried in the base cemetery.



Senior Airman Jacob Cabana loads the Buffalo Soldier memorial stone onto a forklift while Master Sgt. Ronald Barnett guides him during the stone's relocation Oct. 6, 2020 to the base cemetery on F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. The memorial stone was relocated to a location of greater prominence in honor of the sacrifice of the Buffalo Soldier units who served at Fort D. A. Russell from 1877 to 1916. Three of the four Buffalo Soldier units served at various times at the U.S. Army post that would become F. E. Warren AFB. (U. S. Air Force photo by Glenn S. Robertson)

"There are 19 Buffalo Soldiers interred in the base cemetery," said Kyle Brislan, Historian for the 90th Missile Wing. "those soldiers intermittently supported the mission at Fort Russell, protecting the people of Cheyenne and its neighboring regions for three decades."

The stone and plaque memorialize the efforts of those soldiers who served the United States, even in an era of segregation and hostility.



GLOBAL THUNDER 2020



F. E. WARREN

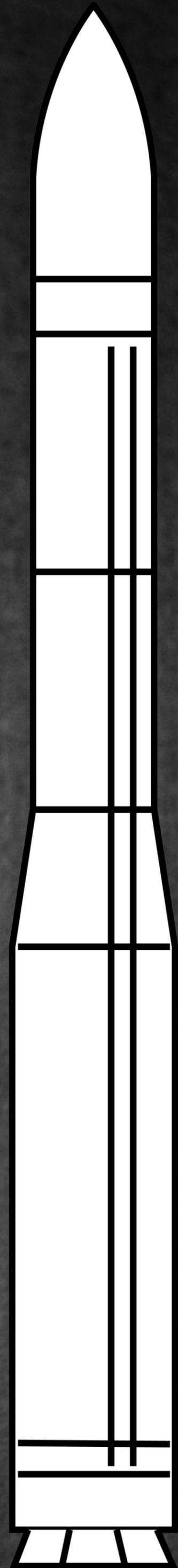
AIR FORCE

BASE

WYOMING



90TH
MISSILE WING



M
I
N
U
T
E
M
A
N
III