



908TH FSS SERVES UP SUCCESS DURING EXERCISE



Year of the Airman here at the 908th Airlift Wing

As we start to bring Fiscal Year 2021 to a close, which ends on 30 September, we are in the process of planning for Fiscal Year 2022. The second half of FY20 and all of FY21 have been dedicated to preparing our Airmen and the wing for the largest deployment in our illustrious history. The wing has been absolutely superb as we faced an adversary like none we had ever faced before: COVID-19. You adapted, improvised and overcame, developing tips, techniques and procedures to mitigate risks so we could prepare our wingmen for deployment. Thank you for taking care of each other and ensuring our deploying Airmen were trained and ready to go. You should be very proud of yourselves for this accomplishment. For years to come, you can reflect back on what you accomplished as a wing during the pandemic.

It was clear our top priorities the last eighteen months have been the health and wellbeing of our airmen and deployment preparation. As we work to develop the FY22 Strategic Plan for the wing, I've decided it will be the Year of the Airman. After ensuring the health and wellbeing of our Airmen and their families, we will dedicate our resources to developing the individual Airman. For far too many Airmen, COVID and deployment preparations got in the way of personal, professional and career development. We are going to correct that in the new FY.

Part of the plan to focus on the Airmen will be putting the wing back on what has been our normal battle rhythm. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, we will have one UTA per month which will almost always be the first full weekend of the month. Excusals and re-schedules will be the rare exception, not the norm. You

will be able to plan on Fitness Assessments each month along with medical appointments, CBRNE classes and weapon qualifications. We also will make time for mentoring and career development sessions along with new CDC testing procedures in our Wing Training Office. We are going to focus our energy and resources on building skill levels, ensuring professional development and career progression (read more responsibility, additional promotions and more pay).

COVID continues to be an advisory that we battle in every element of our lives. We are awaiting guidance from the AFRC Surgeon General on how we will implement mandatory COVID vaccinations. Hopefully, by the time this reaches you we will have seen a reduction in cases so we can plan a couple of wing-wide celebrations in FY22 to increase the opportunities to enjoy the company of our fellow Airmen. Our goal is to celebrate the accomplishments of the last year, observe our holidays and recognize the wing's distinguished history. It all starts with you, that's why FY22 will be the Year of the Airman.



COL. CRAIG DRESCHER
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing



Knowing your Why

Airmen, Wingmen, Warriors,
We often are asked to know our "why," but do we take time out to understand it and put into action?

I recently visited Kitty Hawk, NC. It had been several years since I visited that area. While there, I went on my daily run. On this day in particular, my run took me to the Wright Brothers Memorial. As I ran through the park, I took a few minutes to pause and reflect on what this memorial meant to me as an American and an Airman, and my "why."

Wilbur and Orville Wright came to North Carolina with a dream and a plan. They were often questioned about their wild dreams of flying something heavier than air. I'm sure they were often criticized and made fun of because of this. They didn't allow that to stop them! They weren't deterred from the constant distractions received by those who didn't share the same dreams. Through adversity, setback, and disappointment, they stayed the course. I truly believe the Wright Brothers were able to stay the course because they knew their "why." Although they couldn't fully explain or put it into action what their dreams of powered flight were prior to coming to Kitty Hawk, they knew they couldn't stop until they had exhausted every opportunity and acted on every idea that they had thought of.

As I entered the park, I felt a sense of pride and humility. I had to stop and remind myself, this is where our modern day airpower began. On one end of the park stands a 60' memorial honoring the Wright Brothers. At the bottom of the monument are inscribed the following words, "In commemoration of the conquest of the air by the brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright conceived by Genius, achieved by Dauntless Resolution and Unconquerable Faith." When I read the inscription, I truly believe the Wright Brothers understood that failure and setback would be part of their journey in succeeding in powered flight. It also strengthened my belief in that they knew the "why" behind what they were doing. Wilbur and Orville understood that failure would result in success one day. They continued to innovate and push forward.

After spending a few moments reflecting at the memorial, I ran down the hill and onto the grounds to where the Wright Brothers actually flew the glider that they had hand built, affectionately named the "Wright Flyer." As I ran past the markers on the ground, I realized how much work it took to make the multiple flights

on December 17, 1903. The Wright Brothers made a total of 3 flights that day at three different distances of 120', 175', and 200' respectively. This resulted in the first successful powered flight of any human. I then asked myself, what if they would have given up on their quest for powered flight after the first attempt at 120'? What if they didn't know their "why" and continue to innovate after every flight so that they could go further and higher?

Let's translate that into what we do here at the 908th Airlift Wing. The last 18 months have been tough. However, when I reflect over this past year and a half, I think about Wilbur and Orville Wright and what you all have done. I see some comparisons in knowing our "why" and continuing to innovate as the Wright Brothers did. You, the Airmen of the 908th Airlift Wing, are much like the Wright Brothers in that respect. Over the past 18 months you have proven time and again what it means to know your "why" while you continued to innovate. Col Drescher and I have watched many of you take a complex set of issues and continue to innovate until you were successful. Some of those issues are the ever changing pandemic requirements, largest deployment in the history of the Wing, and the proposed remission. I believe you were able to succeed at all of these things at the same time because you know your "why" in the Air Force Reserve and in this Wing.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all for what you have done, especially the last 18 months, and what you continually do every day. It's obvious you know your "why." I would give you one more challenge as we move forward. Take your "why" and map it all the way back to the more strategic picture of what we do for our country every day. Each and every one of you play an important role in what we do here and abroad. Knowing your why and where it fits into the larger picture will bring you continued success in the future.



CMSGT. TRACY CORNETT
Command Chief, 908th Airlift Wing

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“The 908th is made up of service members who are Capable, Innovative Citizen Airmen ... Ready Today, Leading Tomorrow who Provide Combat Capability Anytime...Anywhere.”

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908th FSS Trains to Improve Readiness, Survivability in Contingency Operations

by Senior Airman Shelby Thurman
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – The 908th Force Support Squadron conducted an exercise during the unit’s July super Unit Training Assembly at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, that simulated them playing their part as if the wing were to deploy to deliver humanitarian aid to a fictional local populace.

The purpose of this exercise was for the members of the 908th FSS to practice setting up bare-base operations and supporting contingency operations to a deployed area, said Lt. Col. Mark Morris, 908th FSS commander.

The unit was tasked with deploying personnel, receiving the deployed personnel, assigning command and control procedures, assigning lodging, sustaining contingency feeding, reacting to all warning sounds per Air Force Instruction, and donning Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear as needed. Their leadership even had them attend intel briefings to make the threats feel real so that Airmen stayed motivated and vigilant throughout the exercise.

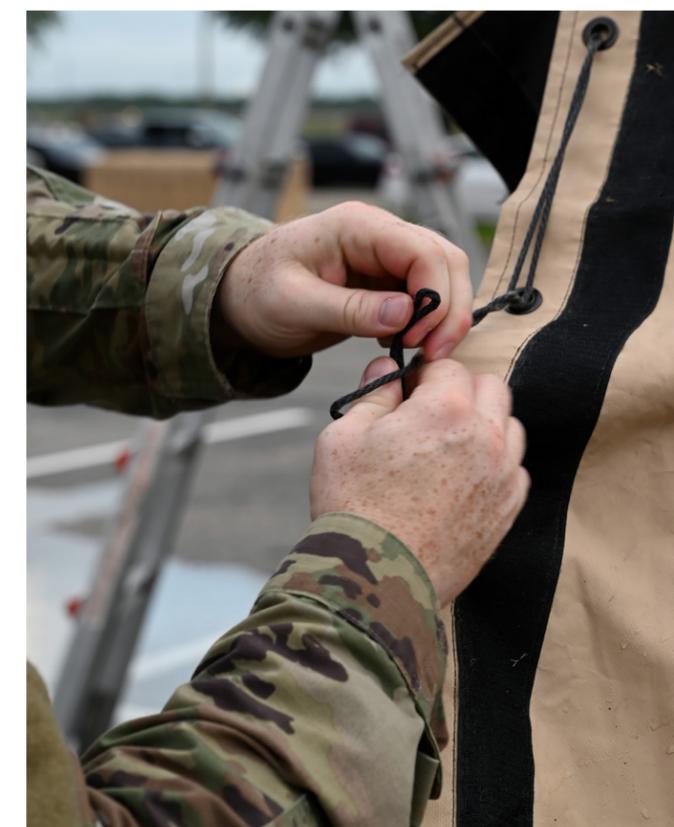


Each section of the 908th FSS had a specific role in the multi-day exercise.

Personnel Support for Contingency Operations focused on personnel accountability, logistics, in-processing, and out-processing. Lodging services ensured that all those in-processing were assigned to quarters. Food service specialists set up a single pallet expeditionary kitchen that included sanitization stations, tray ration heaters for unitized group rations, and food serving stations. Finally, Airmen from the communications office and fitness specialists provided support by contributing extra hands on deck as needed and acting as non-FSS troops.

All of these shops required on-the-job training to ensure that they were ready for deployed environments.

“You never know when the time is going to come that we are called up to serve, so we do need to be ready,” said Morris.



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COVER PHOTO:

From left, Tech. Sgt. Carl Cooper, Tech. Sgt. Octavius Ausbon, and Tech. Sgt. Trayunne Lucas, all members of the 908th Force Support Squadron, secure a doorway in a tent July 12, 2021, at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Airmen from the 908th FSS built a Single Pallet Expeditionary Kitchen inside the tent to feed troops as part of a squadron exercise. (U. S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Shelby Thurman)



24-hour operations for the U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules maintainers



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Tyler Dowland, a crew chief assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, hands bolts from a C-130 Hercules panel to U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christian Pettus, a crew chief assigned to the 386th EAMXS and deployed from Maxwell AFB, at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, July 20, 2021. The EAMXS works 24-hour operations year-round to keep the C-130 Hercules in flight to accomplish the mission of fight to win today and to provide warfighter support in the area of responsibility. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Senior Airman Helena Owens)



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Hall, a propulsion technician assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Cecilia Nguyen, a propulsion technician assigned to the 386th EAMXS and deployed from Maxwell AFB, change a propeller on a C-130 Hercules at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait. The EAMXS works 24-hour operations year-round to keep the C-130 aircraft in flight to accomplish the mission of fight to win today and to provide warfighter support in the area of responsibility. (Courtesy Photo)

Members deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron change a propeller on a C-130 Hercules at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait. The EAMXS works 24-hour operations year-round to keep the C-130 Hercules' in flight to accomplish the mission of fight to win today and to provide warfighter support in the area of responsibility. (Courtesy Photo)



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christian Pettus, a crew chief assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, removes bolts from a panel on a C-130 Hercules at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, July 20, 2021. The EAMXS works 24-hour operations year-round to keep the C-130 Hercules' in flight to accomplish the mission of fight to win today and to provide warfighter support in the area of responsibility. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Senior Airman Helena Owens)



Fitness testing signifies a return to “normal” for Reserve Citizen Airmen



by Maj. John T. Stamm
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – The 908th Airlift Wing has not held Physical Fitness Assessment testing for its members since March 2020 due to Center for Disease Control and Department of Defense guidance restricting mass gatherings to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus disease.

The situation changed when units across the United States Air Force Reserve Command were directed to resume testing in July 2021. Over the Unit Training Assembly weekend of July 10-11, more than 100 Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 908th participated in the testing here, which provided wing leadership with important data.

“The fitness assessment provides us with more information than just how fast a member can run or how many push-ups they can do,” said Col. Craig W. Drescher, 908th AW commander. “It can also be an indicator of potential medical issues which may need addressed. We want our Airmen to be healthy, and the fitness test is a part of a holistic approach to ensure their health and wellness.”

Healthy and fit Airmen are better equipped to mitigate the stressors of living and working in the austere environments often encountered at deployed locations. However, social distancing protocols limited the options Airmen had to participate in physical training. Combined with postponed testing, some Airmen experienced a lack in the motivation to stay fit because they couldn’t participate in their preferred activity or sport. Now that restrictions have been lifted and testing has resumed, some Airmen have regained the incentive to maintain an exercise regimen and healthier lifestyle.

“I think it’s a significant event in the return to a state of normalcy,” said Master Sgt. Michael Sneddon, 25th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation specialist and one of the first wing members to participate in the testing. “Now that facilities are more readily available, and we’re testing again, I think you’ll see an improvement in fitness levels.”

One of the main issues over the past few months was the fitness testing program resumption date being pushed back. Originally, testing was supposed to resume

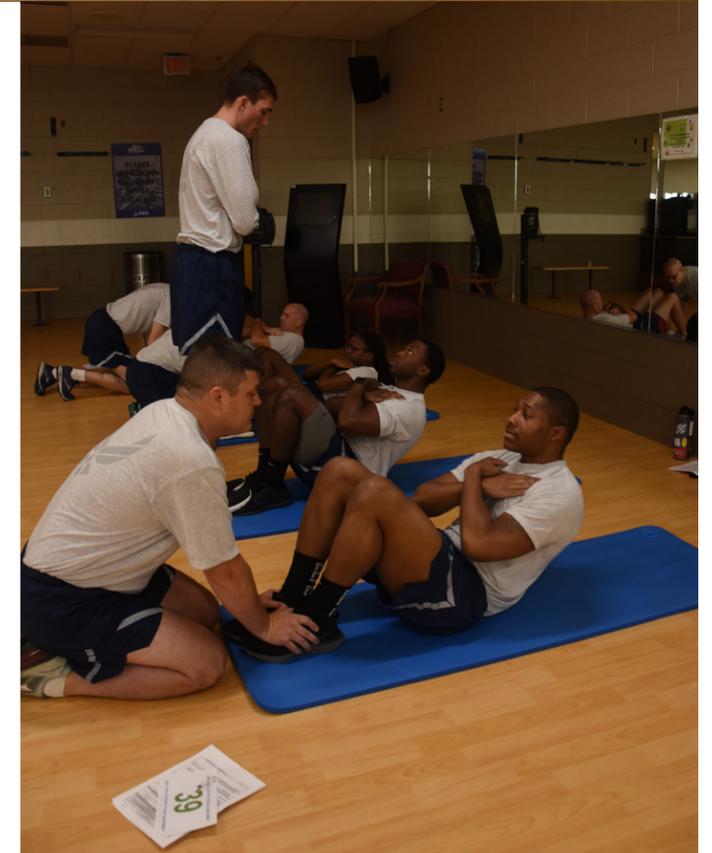


in January, but then it got postponed until April. Then the April start date was moved to July.

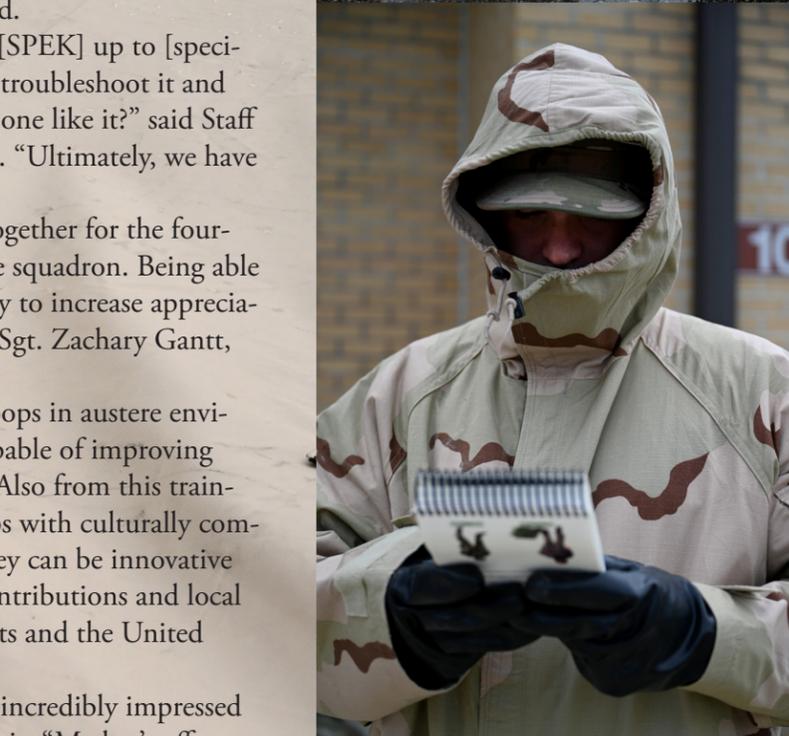
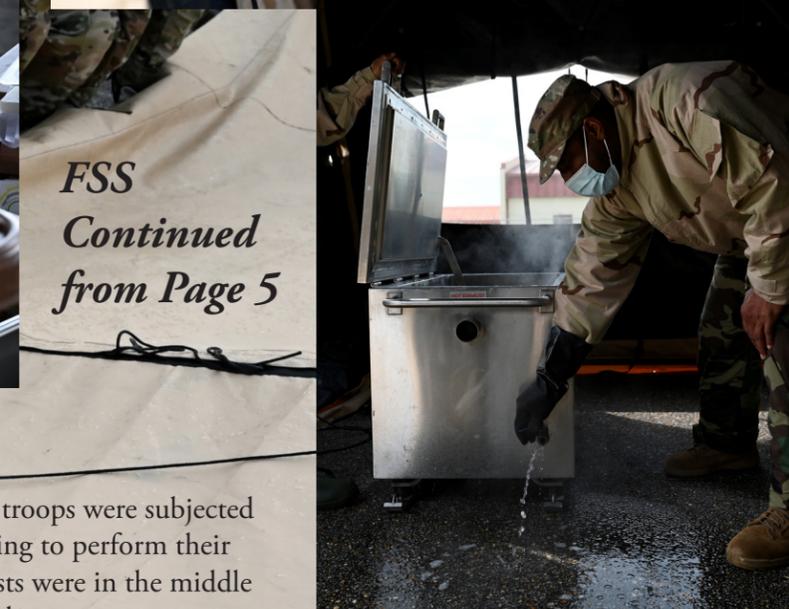
The scoring system also changed, with age groups broken down into 5-year segments instead of 10. The scoring for the waist measurement was deleted and scoring for push-ups and sit ups increased from 10 points each to 20 points. The waist measurement will resume in October 2021, but currently will not be scored. Alternatives to the aerobic and strength portions of the test are slated to be available in January.

“There will be more testing options in January 2022,” said Senior Master Sgt. Ce’Drea Young, 908th Sustainment Flight operations manager and wing fitness program manager. “These options will help many Airmen by allowing them to choose activities they may be better at or have more interest in.”

Airmen will be able to select from the traditional 1.5 mile run, one-mile walk or the High Aerobic Multi-shuttle Run to meet the cardio requirement. They can then perform either traditional push-ups or hand release push-ups for one strength component, and from sit-ups, the cross-leg reverse crunch, or plank to complete the comprehensive fitness assessment.



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Part of meeting that readiness requirement meant that troops were subjected to biohazard alerts being called at random times while trying to perform their jobs. One of the instances was when food services specialists were in the middle of grilling meats when a MOPP level four threat was called.

“If we are dropping boots on the ground and we get a [SPEK] up to [specifications] and it’s not working, then what are we doing to troubleshoot it and get it up and running since we likely do not have another one like it?” said Staff Sgt. Andrew Hampton, 908th FSS food services specialist. “Ultimately, we have got to get people fed.”

Having all of the sections within the squadron come together for the four-day exercise was a way to ensure readiness across the entire squadron. Being able to see others in person from different offices was also a way to increase appreciation for each other and the roles they provided said Tech. Sgt. Zachary Gantt, 908th FSS cyber systems operations specialist.

By having the 908th FSS train to support deployed troops in austere environments they are able to ensure that their Airmen are capable of improving readiness and survivability in contingency environments. Also from this training, they are able to strengthen and build new partnerships with culturally complex populations. And lastly, they are able to show that they can be innovative with their resource management by leveraging military contributions and local resources to multiply value and cost savings for participants and the United States.

“The entire squadron did a phenomenal job and I am incredibly impressed and proud to have seen how you all performed,” said Morris. “My hat’s off to everyone.”

What to do with old ABU's? 908th Airlift Wing Airman has the answer

by Maj. John T. Stamm
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs
MAXWELL AIR FORCE

BASE, Ala. – The basic United States Air Force uniform has changed a couple times over the past 15 years, moving away from the standard Battle Dress Uniform (woodland camouflage pattern) which Airmen had worn for nearly 30 years prior.

On October 2, 2007, Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas began issuing trainees the Airman Battle Uniform; then April 1, 2018, marked the beginning of the end of the ABU in favor of the Operational Camouflage Pattern, shared with the U.S. Army.

No longer authorized for official wear, many Airmen don't know what to do with their old ABU's. Some have discarded them or relegated them to work clothes. Others have stuffed them into storage. Senior Airman Michael A. Sanchez, a passenger services agent with the 908th Airlift Wing's 25th Aerial Port Squadron, had a better idea: collect and donate them to the Civil Air Patrol.

The CAP, whose mission is to "transform youth into dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders," is a congressionally-chartered, federally-supported non-profit corporation. The all-volunteer organization serves as the official civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force and provides community support such as search and rescue missions, disaster relief, humanitarian services, as well as an aerospace education program. Their official uniform is the ABU.



Sanchez is a former cadet who now serves as the Group II noncommissioned officer advisor and historian in CAP's Georgia Wing.

"It's an outstanding program to be involved in as kid," he said. "It not only taught me how to live by the core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all I do, but it taught me discipline, attention to detail, and how to be a better citizen."

However, Sanchez noted, many young Americans don't join because they can't afford the uniforms.

The CAP doesn't solicit donations, but will accept them with the exception of boots and socks. So, when Air Force Reserve Command officially transitioned from the ABUs to the OCPs, it dawned on him that the National CAP Headquarters, located on Maxwell AFB, could distribute them to units around the country and help get more kids involved.

He began by placing two large

donation boxes in his building to receive donations from his teammates and enlisting the help of the Reserve and Active Duty Public Affairs offices to spread the word. Since then the boxes have filled up nearly as fast as Sanchez can empty them.

Chief Master Sgt. Tracey J. Piel, 25th APS aerial port manager, couldn't be prouder of the Reserve Citizen Airman's initiative and creativity.

"When one of my Airmen approaches me with an idea that he or she wants to develop, or a problem with a solution, it is like winning that enormous stuffed animal at the county fair," she said. "I'm excited because I appreciate their forward thinking and I recognize that these are the men and women who will one day be at the top of our organization."

Piel explained the USAF and the CAP are on the same team but with different approaches in our efforts to defend the U.S. and its citizens. A

firm believer in helping where and when capable, she views the ABU donation effort as a way to strengthen the Air Force-CAP relationship.

"Airmen are uniting for a cause while providing for our CAP partners who in turn provide the Air Force and community with invaluable support," she said. "It's a win-win."

The Civil Air Patrol has five congressionally mandated missions:

To provide an organization to encourage and aid citizens of the United States in contributing their efforts, services, and resources in developing aviation and in maintaining air supremacy; and encourage and develop by example the voluntary contribution of private citizens to the public welfare.

To provide aviation education and training especially to its senior and cadet members.

To encourage and foster civil aviation in local communities.

To provide an organization of private citizens with adequate facilities to assist in meeting local and national emergencies

To assist the Department of the Air Force in fulfilling its non-combat programs and missions.

According to CAP Col. Jayson A. Altieri, past Chairman, CAP Board of Governors and Alabama Wing member, Senior Airman Michael Sanchez's efforts to put the phased out ABUs into the hands of CAP members is both a cost-saving measure for volunteers and is in keeping with the spirit of the Total Air Force.

"CAP, through our congressionally mandated Aerospace, Cadet, and Emergency Services programs, saves the total US Air Force millions of dollars annually by freeing up Active Duty, Air National Guard,



and Reserve assets for other critical homeland security missions," he said. "Airman Sanchez's efforts to help equip members with serviceable field uniforms means our CAP volunteers can refocus their efforts and financial contributions to other lines of effort."

Captain George Yarchak, CAP Maxwell Composite Squadron deputy commander for cadets, is grateful for the donations of field uniforms which are important to supply cadets who range in age from

12 to 18 years old.

"I am proud of the tradition and relationship we share with the Active, Guard, and Reserve Units of the USAF," he said. "We are honored to wear the ABU field uniforms."

Items should be clean, serviceable, and free from name tapes, but there's no requirement to have them dry-cleaned or remove any unit patches, rank, or service tapes. Donations of dress blues and shoes are also accepted.



908th Wing Inspection Team recruits new members



by Senior Airman Shelby Thurman

908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

MAXWELL AIR FORCE

BASE, Ala. – In an effort to continue to keep the 908th Airlift Wing combat capable and in accordance with Air Force Reserve Command guidance, the 908th Inspector General's office has recruited new members to the Wing Inspection Team.

“The Wing Inspection Team consists of Subject Matter Experts who augment the Wing IG by conducting inspections and exercises under the authority of the Wing Commander,” said Master Sgt. Julian Swann, 908th AW IG inspection coordinator.

The WIT members are guided by Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*, Air Force Instruction 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System*, the *Commander's Inspection Handbook*, the IG office,

the Commander's Inspection Program, and the senior members of the WIT.

Senior Master Sergeant Monica Lorenzo, 908th AW training manager and new WIT member, said that she was used to being the inspected, not the inspector.

Lorenzo recently was a part of the WIT for the 908th Force Support Squadron's four-day exercise this past July Unit Training Assembly. She used to be a member of the 908th FSS, so as a SME in 908th FSS-related tasks, it was only natural for her to be chosen as a WIT for this particular exercise. While there she noted that she was thankful to be on the inspection side of the exercise for once.

“We have to learn from our own errors; so, constructive criticism is always needed and very important,” said Lorenzo. “These reasons are why

it is necessary to have the WIT.”

Even though the IG office was recruiting people to join WIT, this did not mean that all of them were new to the concept

One of those individuals was Major Rebecca McKenzie, 908th AW executive officer. Prior to joining the 908th AW, she used the Inspector General Enterprise Management System to focus on exercises and deployment lines as part of her job as an Installation Deployment Officer.

“We exist as a wing, and as an Air Force, to organize, train, and equip,” said McKenzie. “This is why we have to make sure that we are organizing, training, and equipping our people properly so that when we go down range we can execute our training properly. This is why the whole purpose of the IG office and the WIT is to make sure that we are ready to go when we need to.”



Fly, Fight, Swing?

By: SSgt Danielle Hamilton

908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs contributor

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. - The Airmen of the 908th Airlift Wing 25th Aerial Port Squadron had their fair share of flying through different obstacles, fighting to get to the top of those obstacles, and swinging on to the next, here, on Saturday, July 10.

It was all in fun (as well as team-building and physical training), as they completed the U.S. Air Force Officer Training School Assault Course.

The Airmen experienced the grueling 27-obstacle course, gaining a first-hand glimpse at some of the physical stringency that it takes to be an officer in the United States Air Force. The entire course consists obstacles with names like "Tangle Foot," "The Dirty Name," "Island Hopper," and "The Tarzan." Officer trainees at the school usually take part in the course, held during a week of training that simulates a deployed environment,

to not only challenge themselves physically, but mentally as well.

"I had to think logically to complete this course," said air transportation journeyman Senior Airman Ryan Williams. "It pushed me and the other participants to be the best versions of ourselves."

This location serves as one of two of the Officer Training School Assault Course locations, with the other being in a remote location just outside of Wetumpka, Ala. The location outside of Wetumpka is the one that is more frequently used.

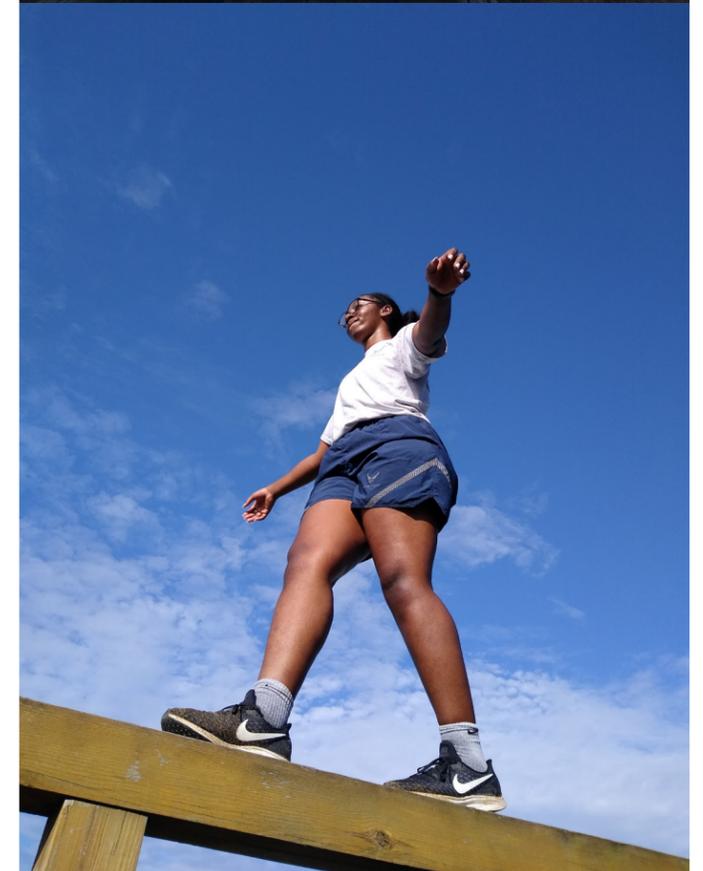
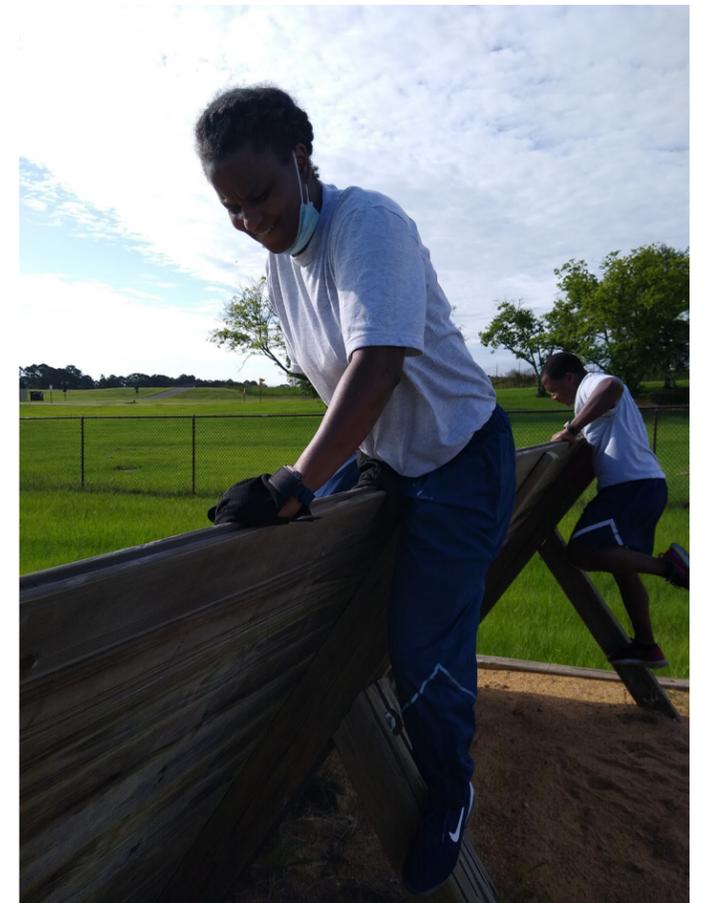
The aerial porters were bussed from their unit on Maxwell to the course and given a thorough safety briefing that consisted of the proper wearing of personal protective equipment on certain obstacles, hydration and exertion limits, and being vigilant if a fellow Airman is in distress.

Although the exercise was meant to serve mostly as a morale booster, the Airmen of 25 APS benefited from the various obstacles because of the physicality of the air

transportation career field.

"Participating in the obstacle course was an enjoyable and beneficial opportunity," said Tech. Sgt. Jacob Dorminey, 25 APS cargo services supervisor. "Communication was key as came together as a team to figure out different ways to complete each obstacle. The course was also physically challenging, which helped us to gauge our physical fitness levels. We're all eager to do it again."

Airman Cody Varner, 25th APS air transportation specialist, coordinated the entire event through the Officer Training School. The course is free and open for all to use as long as you receive prior approval from Master Sgt. James Tett, medical operations and training superintendent and the installation obstacle course program manager.



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TO THE FAMILY OF:

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Hall, a propulsion technician assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, trouble shoots a bleed air leak on a C-130 Hercules. The EAMXS works 24-hour operations year-round to keep the C-130 Hercules' in flight to accomplish the mission of fight to win today and to provide warfighter support in the area of responsibility. (Courtesy Photo)