

BUCKEYE FLYER



Wright-Patterson AFB, OH | Volume 66, No. 5 | May 2026

445 AW Command Chief Change of Responsibility



Page 3

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson

IN THIS ISSUE





Historian's Corner

By Dr. Tara Simpson
445th Airlift Wing Historian

In May, we remember. We pause to honor our nation's fallen by honoring their service and keeping alive the memory of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The tradition of Memorial Day dates to the spring of 1866 when ceremonies took place in Columbus, Georgia. Flowers were placed on the graves of both Confederate and Union soldiers as "a lesson in conciliation, forbearance, and brotherly love."

In 1868, General John A. Logan, of the Grand Army of the Republic, named "Decoration Day," to commemorate those who died while defending their nation. Congress passed legislation that officially established May 30 as Memorial Day, a federal holiday.

A century later, the Uniform Monday Holiday Act designated Memorial Day as a federal holiday assigned to the last Monday in May.

Over time, Americans viewed the three-day May weekend as the kickoff to summer. A Gallup poll conducted in the mid-1990s revealed that three-quarters of Americans could not identify the true purpose of Memorial Day.

To champion Americans awareness of fallen service members, in 2000 President Bill Clinton also signed the National Moment of Remembrance Act. This designated 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day as a moment to honor U.S. troops who died while in service to their nation.

The words of Dayton poet Paul Laurence Dunbar in his "Ode for Memorial Day," inspire us to not forget: "Ah, but this joy which our minds cannot measure,/ what did it cost for our fathers to gain!/ Bought at the price of the heart's dearest treasure,/ Born out of travail and sorrow and pain;/ Born in the battle where fleet Death was flying/..."

Core values vital to successful team building

By Maj. Christopher Foti
445th Security Forces Squadron Commander

As Airmen, the Core Values are the first thing instilled upon our joining the Air Force. We continue to be guided by these tenets throughout our service; as we grow in our career, our understanding of their application evolves.

In a career field that is inherently dangerous and often requires decisive action, these standards are critical in effective team building. I'd like to shed some light on how they've shaped me over the years.

"Integrity first" is often framed in the guise of doing the right thing when no one is looking. Although crucial, it negates a key element. Though we strive for perfection, taking accountability when we fall short is far more important – someone that will tell me they messed up when no one is looking.

This opens the door for learning and growth that would otherwise remain closed. I learned this lesson for myself early in my career as a young lieutenant in the missile field and South Korea.

During my time in Montana, my flight was being evaluated on a recapture/recovery exercise. Things certainly went awry and my commander reamed me out.

With the support of great senior NCOs looking out for me, I took responsibility for my shortcomings, learned from my mistakes, and we grew as a team to be better for the next round.



"Excellence in all we do" would be easy to generalize as peak performance 110% of the time, but that's unsustainable and often detrimental to our well-being.

We've all been there physically in pain, emotionally and mentally exhausted whether through our job or life. It is vital to our mission that you pull back and recollect yourself rather than push to your breaking point.

I personally chose to pull back from my active-duty career when faced with an assignment that would've prevented me from showing up for my leadership role or for my family at 100% capacity.

The pursuit of excellence as a team mandates that we are constantly as-

See SFS, Page 4

Buckeye Flyer 445th Airlift Wing

Editorial Staff

Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr. - Commander
Capt. Mary Begy - Chief of Public Affairs
Capt. Rachel Ingram - Assistant Chief of PA
Amanda Dick - PA Specialist
Patrick O'Reilly - PA Assistant
Tech. Sgt. Joel McCullough - PA Specialist
Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson - PA Specialist
Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Quiñones - PA Specialist
Staff Sgt. Angela Jackson - PA Specialist
Senior Airman Bernard Puller - PA Specialist
Senior Airman Ethan Lamb - PA Specialist

U.S. Government Printing Office 5-00001-445AW

This funded Air Force Reserve newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the Buckeye Flyer are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of the Air Force or Department of Defense. Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the 445th Airlift Wing Office of Public Affairs. Photographs are U.S. Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

5439 McCormick Ave.
WPAFB, OH 45433-5132
Building 4010, Room 171
937-257-5784
445AW.PA2@us.af.mil



445th Airlift Wing welcomes new command chief

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Chief Master Sgt. Jennifer G. Greer assumed responsibility as 445th Airlift Wing command chief from Chief Master Sgt. Gordon M.R. Wager during a change of responsibility ceremony April 12.

Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr., 445th AW commander, presided over the ceremony, highlighting the importance of the

event as the wing's first change of responsibility ceremony. Perry thanked Wager for his contributions, calm demeanor and dedication to the development of the enlisted force.

"The wing command chief is the most senior enlisted leader to the wing commander – their key advisor on all enlisted matters, good order and discipline, welfare, morale, training, readiness and utilization," Perry said in his remarks. "The command chief ensures the connectivity in the commander's intent, policy, execution, driving forth development and the warrior ethos across the wing at all echelons. As Chief Wager's tenure in the 445th nears its end, ... he has, without any doubt, taken this wing's enlisted corps to the next level.

"Thank you, chief, for your unwavering commitment to the team, selfless sacrifice and ongoing support," Perry continued. "I fully expect great things are still yet to come."

Wager took the opportunity to express his gratitude to his family members and colleagues, imparting his final wisdom to the personnel of the 445th AW.

"Here are my three Cs for growth: choices, chances, and changes," Wager said. "You must make a choice to take a chance, or your life will never change."

Wager then concluded with one last inspirational thought.

"Never underestimate your impact to the war fighter or the mission because of your proximity to the fight," Wager advised. "I promise you, you are defending our nation, and you are making a difference."

Perry then officially installed Greer as his new senior enlisted leader and wingman.

"Selecting the right person for the right job at the right time has always been challenging," Perry said. "Chief Wager and I realized Chief Greer is the right person for this job at this time. She brings new ideas and high energy to the table and is ready to execute. I can guarantee she is going to enable this wing to continue to advance and develop the force, innovate and drive strong readiness and the warrior ethos. Welcome to the team."

Greer came to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base from Joint

Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, where she was the senior enlisted leader of the 446th Mission Support Group. In her civilian role at JBLM, Greer works within the Engineering Services Division for the Directorate of Public Works.

During her remarks, Greer expressed her confidence in the talent, dedication and grit of the 445th Airmen and promised to connect with them and provide support.

"My commitment to you is that I will protect this culture, strengthen it and ensure that it continues to grow," the new command chief said. "I will be your biggest advocate. I will listen to each one of you, and if there are barriers that keep you from being your best self, I will be right by your

side breaking them down."

Greer is now the senior enlisted leader of more than 1,700 assigned wing personnel from 16 units. The wing supports Air Mobility Command's global airlift requirements in peace, war, national emergencies and humanitarian efforts by providing strategic transport of personnel and equipment as well as aeromedical evacuation with their inventory of nine C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.

As command chief, Greer will advise the wing commander and staff on mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale and the welfare of the 445th AW's enlisted personnel while serving as their liaison to the commander.

Serving as the wing's senior enlisted leader for the last three years, Wager relinquished responsibility as he moves to his next assignment at the 927th Air Refueling Wing at MacDill AFB, Florida.



Chief Master Sgt. Gordon M.R. Wager, left, 445th Airlift Wing outgoing command chief, and Chief Master Sgt. Jennifer G. Greer, right, 445 AW incoming command chief, listen as Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr., not pictured, 445 AW commander, provides opening comments during the wing's Command Chief Change of Responsibility ceremony at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 12, 2026. Responsibility changed from Wager to Greer. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson)



SPOTLIGHT

Rank/Name: Senior Master Sgt. Keric Johnson

Unit: 445th Maintenance Squadron

Duty Title: Assistant Superintendent

Hometown: Covington, Kentucky

Civilian Job: Air Reserve Technician as the 445th MXS Assistant Superintendent

Education: Bachelor of Science in Professional Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and Associate in Applied Science Aviation Maintenance Technology from the Community College of the Air Force



Hobbies: Traveling the world (experiencing different cultures), private pilot, yard work, assembling 3D Lego puzzles

Career Goal: To someday make chief master sergeant

What do you like about working at the 445th? Since being at the 445th for the past 22 years, I've met and mentored many people. I feel proud to see the growth of all my fellow family members – both enlisted and officers. They make it enjoyable to come to work.

Why did you join the Air Force? I joined the Air Force for my interest in aviation and travel and to also better my quality of life and secure stable healthcare and pay.

I needed a challenge and improvement to my personal discipline. The Air Force has definitely made me a better man/husband/father/uncle/(newly pawpaw)!

87th APS, 89th AS conduct ramp training on C-17

Members of the 87th Aerial Port Squadron Ramp Operations section conduct a static aircraft training scenario alongside loadmasters of the 89th Aircraft Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 12, 2026. The training focused on making APS Airmen more proficient in their skills on an aircraft and was organized by Senior Master Sgt. Kody Novak, 87th APS Ramp Operations flight chief, and led by Master Sgt. Jordan Garcia, 87th APS Ramp Operations supervisor, and Master Sgt. Eric Hollopeter, 87th APS Ramp Operations supervisor. (Courtesy photos from Master Sgt. Eric Hollopeter)



SFS from page 2

sessing our limitations so that we can better support one another. Negating our own needs often only keeps us out of the fight longer.

In the military, we rely on one another to push the mission forward. In Security Forces, a squad is the basic fighting unit, consisting of 13 Airmen, each with a specific job, each equally crucial to our success.

One Airmen cannot cover 360 degrees; they rely on the Airmen to their left and right and cover each other. If they do not inherently trust each other, the team falls apart and the mission suffers.

Our Core Values provide the foundation needed to advance both individual resiliency and mission success.



News Briefs

Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant
Timothy Daniel, 89 AS

Master Sergeant
Ryan Hughson, AMXS

Technical Staff Sergeant
Marissa Castillo, 87 APS
Calvin Clutter, MXG
Ryan Faris, ASTS

Staff Sergeant
Zachary Feroah, ASTS
Patrick McLaughlin, AMXS

Senior Airman
Brayden Ault, AMXS
Wyatt Johnson, MXG
Brandon Sheasby, ASTS
Valerie Sipah, 87 APS
Corey Wells, CES
Fei Yu, FSS
Rediat Zeleka, MSG

Airman
Abraham Choba, 87 APS

Airman 1st Class
Exocene Baseme, 87 APS

Quarterly Foundation Course Graduations

Junior Enlisted 300
SrA Diegan Rhodes, 89 AS
SrA La Keia Webb, ASTS

NCO 500
TSgt Nathan Boyer, AES
TSgt Alexis Hymer, AES
TSgt Emilee Munson, ASTS
TSgt Kelsey Weiss, AMDS

Senior NCO 700
MSgt Bradley Green, MXS
MSgt Aaliyah Lovett, AES
MSgt Sarah McAlister, LRS

2026 Employer Appreciation Day

Reservists, it's time to nominate your employer for the 2026 Employer Appreciation Day that will take place Saturday, Aug. 1.

If you would like to nominate your employer, please fill out the online form at <https://forms.osi.af.mil/r/NtH2zNDPy2> by the Sunday of the July UTA, July 7.

AFSA Golf Classic

Join the 17th Annual Air Force Sergeants Association Kittyhawk Chapter 751 Golf Classic! You are invited to participate May 29 at the Sugar Isle Golf Course. Check-in begins at 8 a.m. with a 9 a.m. shotgun start for this 4-person scramble.

The cost is \$60 per player, which includes 18 holes of golf with a cart, a light breakfast, lunch, and drinks throughout the day. For more information or any questions, please email AFSA751@yahoo.com.

To secure your spot, please sign up using the QR code attached to the event flyer in the Blue Pages.

BAH Recertification

BAH recertification is a triannual requirement for all members receiving with dependent rate BAH. Members have from now until the Sept. 30 to recertify or face a BAH reduction.

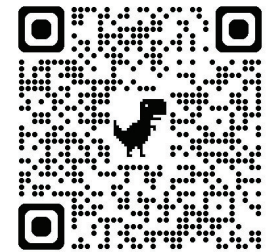
Emails with documentation to recertify must be sent from af.mil email address to 445aw_fm.bahrecert@us.af.mil. Don't wait until the last minute.

Stork's Nest

The First Sergeant Council has introduced Stork's Nest Family Link – an initiative focused on supporting 445th Airlift Wing Airmen with diaper-aged children across the wing.

The program connects Airmen in need with voluntary, wing-based support through a structured quarterly cycle. To register to receive items, please scan the QR code below.

First Sergeants will validate the requests to remain anonymous and discreet. Reach out to your unit First Sergeant for more information.



Support an Airman & their Family

As part of Stork's Nest, members can sponsor an Airman and their family by donating the items. Pick up a Nest Egg for a family in need, purchase the items and return them back to the Stork's Nest.

This will be a quarterly program to continue to support 445th families. For Calendar Year 26, please have items back by June 6, the Saturday of the June training assembly weekend.

Please see the email sent April 16 for more information or reach out to your unit First Sergeant.



87th APS Port Dawgs highlight skills at biennial challenge

By Capt. Mary Begy
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

DOBBINS AIR RESERVE BASE, Ga. -- Every two years aerial port squadrons from around the Air Force Reserve Command and the world gather to compete in the Port Dawg Challenge.

Six Airmen from the 87th Aerial Port Squadron tested their strengths and knowledge of the core skills of a 2T2 air transportation specialist April 14-16, competing in 12 events with the ultimate goal of taking home the trophy.

"It's a fantastic opportunity to bring a tight-knit community together, to learn from each other, to grow the network for our community, and to honor some of the legends of the 2T2 family who have advanced the Port Dawg career field," said Maj. Michael Harrison, 87th APS commander. "The 87th has been sending teams to the Port Dawg Challenge for quite some time, but the Bulldog trophy has always eluded us. Our best showing was in 2019 when we placed top five overall."

Each team is composed of one first term Airman, one master sergeant and four other members who must be technical sergeant or below. However, the Port Dawg Challenge is more than a fun competition, it highlights the unique skillsets that 2T2s bring to the fight.

"Competition is what brings us together, but some of the broader value is in the opportunity for relationship building and networking," added Harrison, who went to support the 87th APS team. "It's a great opportunity to see how other people do business, but it's also a fun reminder of how small our Air Force family is. It provides a chance to see old friends and past members of our unit who are doing great things across the Air Force."

"Events like the Port Dawg Challenge allow for the shar-



Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Ngo, 87th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation specialist, competes in the 2026 Port Dawg Challenge at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, April 14-26, 2026. (Photo by Capt. Mary Begy)

ing of strengths and processes that sharpen the skills of the collective team and grow the bonds of our Air Force family ever stronger," he added.

While the 87th APS did not win the competition, they were praised by the event coordinators for their ability to communicate and their attention to safety standards.

"We received a lot of positive feedback about how well our team communicated," said Chief Master Sgt. Brian Anders, 87th APS aerial port manager. "One of their stand-out events was the pallet build-up where they received immediate accolades for both the speed and effectiveness in which they performed the task. Our Port Dawgs deploy to contested environments, and these lessons learned help them move faster, decrease the time on the ground for the airlift and keep the materiel moving."

Harrison stressed the alignment with the priorities of Lt. Gen. John P. Healy, Chief of Air Force Reserve and Commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

"Lieutenant General Healey directed the Air Force Reserve to prioritize stress inoculation in our training to help prepare us for contested environments," Harrison said. "The environment of competition helps breed a sense of urgency that translates directly into our operational capabilities."

While the Port Dawg Challenge is put on by AFRC, historically many international partners also join in the competition.

"This year we had observers from the Philippines, as well as a team each from the United Kingdom and Canada who directly competed against the teams from across AFRC," Harrison explained. "The United Kingdom team performed particularly well, placing in the top three in several different events."

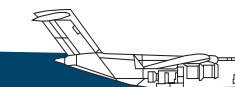
"Getting to engage with our international partners in events like this is one of my favorite aspects," he continued. "It's a unique opportunity to get a glimpse into how our partners operate, but also a reminder of how we can come from different parts of the world and still come together towards a common goal."

Anders added that of the 30 plus teams that competed, many trained specifically for this competition while others assembled weeks prior.

"You always go into a competition wanting the victory, but the Port Dawg Challenge is not something you can expect to claim the title for without high performers who are focused on winning," said Anders, who also went to support the unit's team. "Our goal is to start identifying a team early and begin training for the next challenge now with lessons learned from this year's competition."

Harrison stressed the exceptional work of the 445th Airlift Wing's Port Dawgs.

"The 87th receives accolades everywhere we go, praising our performance and culture," the APS commander said. "I think it's high time we bring the bulldog home to the 445th and cement our place as one of the premier aerial ports in the Air Force."



445th Airmen build partnerships in Guyana during LAMAT 2026



Left: Lt. Col. John Fortunato, 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron chief of aerospace medicine, left, and a Guyanese healthcare professional transport a neonatal patient in an ambulance in Georgetown, Guyana, March 20, 2026. The Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team 2026 mission strengthened partnerships by bringing U.S. Air Force and Guyanese healthcare professionals together to deliver care across multiple specialties while working through complex patient scenarios. (Courtesy photo by Staff Sgt. Dakota Carter)



Right: Staff Sgt. Brooks Lyle, 445th AMDS medical technician, greets a Guyanese child prior to performing a sinus rinse at Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation in Georgetown, Guyana, March 18, 2026. (Courtesy photo by Master Sgt. Albert Rullan)



Left: Col. Theodore Liszeski, right, Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team 2026 mission director and 445th AMDS commander, delivers remarks during the University of Miami Mass Casualty Management Training Workshop opening ceremony as Col. Brandon Christensen, U.S. Air Force Surgeon General psychological health consultant, looks on at the Civil Defense Commission Headquarters in Georgetown, Guyana, March 23, 2026. The MCM Training Workshop forms a critical component of the broader Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team 2026 mission, underscoring the enduring partnership between the governments of Guyana and the U.S. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Albert Rullan)



Right: Lt. Col. Laura Swanson, 445th AMDS optometrist, conducts an eye exam at West Demerara Regional Hospital in Vreed en Hoop, Guyana, on March 19, 2026. Swanson participated in the Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team (LAMAT) 2026 mission, a collaborative effort between the U.S. and partner nations designed to enhance medical readiness while strengthening teamwork between U.S. Air Force medical personnel and Guyanese healthcare providers. (Courtesy photo by Master Sgt. Albert Rullan)



445th units hold change of command ceremonies



Top Left: Lt. Col. Ryan Armstrong, right, assumes command of the 445th Operation Support Squadron from Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr., 445th Airlift Wing Commander, during a ceremony at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 11, 2026. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joel McCullough)



Top Right: Maj. Carol Read-Arce, right, assumes command of the 445th Maintenance Squadron from Col. Karen Gharst, 445th MXG commander, during a ceremony at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 12, 2026. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Johnathan Quiñones)



Right: Maj. Joshua Coffman, right, assumes command of the 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron from Col. Karen Gharst, 445th MXG commander, during a ceremony at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 12, 2026 (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Johnathan Quiñones)

More content can be found at www.dvidshub.net/unit/445-AW.

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/445aw and Instagram at www.instagram.com/445awpa/



445TH AIRLIFT WING/PA
BUILDING 4014, ROOM 113
5439 MCCORMICK AVE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OHIO 45433-5132

FIRST CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
USAF PERMIT NO. 1161