

## Conaton Sworn In

Erin C. Conaton has officially become undersecretary of the Air Force. She was sworn in March 15, 11 days after the Senate confirmed her to fill the service's No. 2 civilian post.

The undersecretary position had been vacant since Ronald M. Sega left in August 2007. Conaton came to USAF after serving for three years as staff director of the House Armed Services Committee.

Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley predicted Conaton would be a "tremendous asset" to the service as a result of her Congressional work and her long experience in national security matters.

President Obama nominated her last November. Her confirmation was delayed because it became ensnared in unrelated Senate maneuvering with respect to the hotly contested KC-X tanker competition.

## C-5A Retirement Plan Set

The Air Force would like Congress' blessing to retire 17 C-5A transports in Fiscal 2011 as part of a plan to shed excess strategic airlift capacity that drains funds from other USAF priorities, Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz said Feb. 23 on Capitol Hill.

To make this plan possible, Congress would have to lift its prohibition on retiring any of the service's 111 C-5s that form the strategic air arm along with 223 planned C-17s. The Pentagon's new Mobility Capabilities and Requirements Study 2016 found that this fleet provides more than enough capability to meet projected demands.

Under the retirement plan, one Air National Guard wing and one Air Force Reserve Command unit would lose their C-5s and get C-17s. AFRC's 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, was identified on March 12 as one of the two units; it would phase out its 10 C-5As over two years and replace them with eight C-17s.

## MC-12W Basing Search Starts

The Air Force announced March 19 that it had formally started its search for basing locations for the MC-12W Liberty Project intelligence-surveillance-

reconnaissance aircraft. The MC-12s are already supporting ground troops in Afghanistan and Iraq by providing live streaming video and electronic eavesdropping capability.

Currently, the only Stateside-based MC-12s are with the Mississippi Air National Guard's 186th Air Refueling Wing at Key Field in Meridian. The Air Force tapped this site in early 2009 to serve as a temporary training hub to help speed delivery of crews to combat operations.

This summer, USAF expects to release its preferred locations; in April 2011, the service should issue its list of final selections. Air Combat Command's basing criteria includes mission and training requirements, airspace, infrastructure, environmental concerns, and cost.

## Medics Deploy to Chile

The Air Force on March 8 dispatched an expeditionary medical support team of more than 80 airmen aboard a C-17 transport aircraft from Lackland AFB, Tex., to Chile to aid local medics in treating victims of the massive earthquake that rocked the South American nation on Feb. 27.

On March 13, these medical specialists had a mobile hospital fully operational in Angol, Chile. Less than two weeks later, on March 26, the airmen completed this humanitarian mission, having treated more than 300 patients and performed about 40 surgeries side by side with Chilean medics.

US officials donated the field hospital to the local Chilean medical community. The EMEDS team was part of US Southern Command's broader relief efforts to Chile after the disaster.

## Sustainment Gaps Noted

The Air Force's proposed base budget for Fiscal 2011 covers only about 65 percent of the service's weapons sustainment needs, Gen. Carrol H. Chandler, Air Force vice chief of staff, told members of the House Armed Services Committee's readiness panel March 16.

Factoring the dollars in the service's request for overseas contingency operations would increase this level to 82 percent. However, Chandler said another

USAF photo by Chad Bellay



\$337 million would be necessary to reach 85 percent and offset a potential “bow wave” in the Air Force’s ability to put aircraft and engines through periodic depot maintenance.

Chandler said, when asked, that this is one of the issues facing the Air Force that concerns him the most, along with the costs of maintaining the all-volunteer force, and “accelerating” expenditures for the high-tech weapons systems needed for the future.

#### **Raytheon Wins OCX Contest**

The Air Force on Feb. 25 awarded the contract for the Next Generation Global Positioning System Control Segment, known as OCX, to Raytheon. The company beat out Northrop Grumman for the rights to supply OCX, which is designed to improve the accuracy of information from GPS satellites.

The company will develop and install hardware and software in control centers at Schriever AFB, Colo., and

Vandenberg AFB, Calif., and deploy advanced monitor stations at remote sites.

The contract’s initial value is \$886 million, with sustainment options that could take it to \$1.5 billion over five years, said Air Force officials. OCX will also enable the control of future GPS Block III space vehicles.

#### **C-5M Proved in Tests**

The Air Force Operational Test and



*This F-16, flying from Edwards AFB, Calif., banks over nearby Isabella Lake. The fighter is fitted with special radio frequency identification tags. It trails a KC-135 tanker during an aerial flight test of the Automatic Receiver Aircraft Identification system on the tanker. Engineers at the Air Force Flight Test Center were testing ARAI, which scans a receiver aircraft, identifies it, and gauges the amount of fuel it will need. If it proves out, ARAI would make refueling much more efficient.*

**04.07.2010**

## Robert M. White, 1924-2010

Retired Maj. Gen. Robert M. White, the first Air Force pilot to earn astronaut wings, the first man to fly faster than Mach 4, 5, and 6, and a developer of key Air Force systems, died March 17. He was 85.

In 1958, White was chosen to be the primary Air Force pilot on the X-15 project, in which a rocket-powered airplane was launched from a bomber, flew at high speed and altitude, and made an unpowered, conventional landing. White made his three record-setting flights in 1961, and was among a group of X-15 pilots to receive the Robert J. Collier Trophy that year.

On July 17, 1962, White flew the X-15 to more than 59 miles of altitude, becoming the first man to reach space in a controlled, rather than ballistic, craft. He was awarded command pilot astronaut wings by Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, then USAF Chief of Staff. He also received the Harmon Trophy and NASA's Distinguished Service Medal for his X-15 work.

White became an aviation cadet in 1942 and received his wings and commission in 1944. He flew P-51 Mustangs in Europe during World War II, but was shot down and was a prisoner of war for the last three months of the war in Europe.

He left active duty later that year, but remained in the Air Force Reserve while he earned a degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in business administration. Recalled to active duty for the Korean War, White was soon back in fighters, flying missions out of Japan.

After the Korean War, White served as a systems engineer before being selected for the Air Force's Experimental Test Pilot School. During his testing years, he flew the F-86, F-89, F-102, and F-105, before being chosen to fly the X-15.

After the X-15 program ended, White served in a number of fighter squadron command positions in Europe, ultimately returning to Air Force Systems Command to work on the F-111 program. However, he was soon back in action as commander of the 355th Tactical Fighter Wing at Takhli RTAB, Thailand, flying F-105s.

He received the Air Force Cross in 1967 for leading a strike against the heavily defended Paul Doumer Bridge in Hanoi. He was then transferred to become chief of the Attack Division at Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam. In all, White flew 70 combat missions in the Vietnam conflict.

Upon returning to the US in 1968, White took over the F-15 system program office, directing its development and production planning. In 1970, he became the head of the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, Calif., supervising the testing and evaluation of a wide variety of projects, including the A-X program (which became the A-10) and the E-3 AWACS. During that assignment, he also earned his parachutist badge after completing the Navy Test Parachutist Course.

In 1972, White became head of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, and in 1975, became chief of staff of the 4th Allied Tactical Air Force. He retired in 1981.

White was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 2006. Plans called for a burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

—John A. Tirpak

Evaluation Center rated the C-5M Super Galaxy transport aircraft as "effective, suitable, and mission capable," based on results of operational testing that concluded in January, C-5 prime contractor Lockheed Martin announced March 10.

This testing "was a resounding success" because of the teamwork of the Air Force-industry partnership, said Col. John Scorsone, Air Mobility Command's director of test and evaluation, in the company's release.

The Air Force has three C-5Ms that are being integrated in normal operations and performing combat missions. It intends to upgrade 49 more C-5Bs to

this configuration by 2016, giving it 52 C-5Ms in all. C-5Ms sport new engines, avionics, and additional modifications for greater unrefueled range and reliability.

### Unfunded Priorities Revealed

The Air Force on Feb. 19 issued its \$548 million list of unfunded priorities for Fiscal 2011. The document details for Congress the top five areas where the service would spend extra dollars if it had them.

Topping the list is \$337.2 million for logistic support, including programmed depot maintenance on B-2A bomber, C-5 transport, and KC-135 tanker aircraft.

Second is \$70 million for expeditionary airfield equipment including some fuel gear.

Third is \$55 million to bolster the distributed common ground system. Fourth is \$28.7 million for battlefield airmen equipment and joint terminal attack controller modeling and simulation. Fifth is \$57.1 million to procure 674 ground vehicles and some support equipment for the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve.

### F-35 Makes Vertical Landing

BF-1, the inaugural F-35B short takeoff/vertical landing test aircraft, on March 18 performed its first vertical landing during a flight at NAS Patuxent River, Md. Program officials hailed this event as an important accomplishment for the F-35's test program, which is trying to rebound from schedule delays.

"Today's vertical landing onto a 95-foot-square pad showed that we have the thrust and the control to maneuver accurately both in free air and in the descent through ground effect," said F-35 lead STOVL pilot Graham Tomlinson, in prime contractor Lockheed Martin's release that day.

On the previous day, BF-1, which is built in the configuration that the Marine Corps will use, demonstrated its hover capability for the first time, executing a STOVL landing. Later that day, it made the first F-35B short takeoff. The Air Force's conventional F-35A is also in flight testing.

### Eglin Lawsuit Settled

The Air Force on March 1 reached a settlement with the city of Valparaiso in northwest Florida over basing F-35 strike fighters for training at nearby Eglin Air Force Base. City officials had sued the Air Force in September 2008 over concerns about F-35 noise levels and their impact on citizens' health and Valparaiso's economic viability.

Under the terms of the settlement, the Air Force has agreed to explore reasonable operating alternatives to using a main runway that would have placed F-35s over the heart of the city, according to local press reports. USAF will also set up a noise committee with local officials and pay \$60,000 toward Valparaiso's legal fees.

With the settlement, Okaloosa County, which had favored the F-35 schoolhouse, was set to withdraw the lawsuit it had filed against Valparaiso after the city took its legal action against the Air Force.

### Incentive Pay for RPA Operators

Air Force officials announced Feb. 24 the approval of a plan that awards incentive pay to officers who commit to flying remotely piloted aircraft and enlisted airmen who pledge to operate RPA sensors.

The incentive pay is equivalent to current aviation incentive pay programs and

**Air Force By the Numbers**

For Fiscal 2010, the Air Force's approved Total Force end strength is 686,944 personnel, Daniel B. Ginsberg, assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and reserve affairs, told the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel panel March 10.

This includes 331,700 active duty airmen, 106,700 Air National Guardsmen, 69,500 Air Force Reservists, and 179,044 civilian employees.

For Fiscal 2011, the Air Force seeks Congress' blessing to expand that number to 702,669, said Ginsberg.

Under this plan, the active duty component would increase by 500 airmen, the Air Guard would remain the same size, there would be 1,700 additional Air Force Reservists, and the civilian sector would swell by 13,525 persons.

Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley said March 2 the service has no plans to significantly grow or reduce, for that matter, the size of its active duty end strength.

"Our plan is to hold at about 332,000 going forward," he told reporters in Washington, D.C.

In fact, the end strength is scheduled to hit 332,800 in Fiscal 2012—600 airmen more than in Fiscal 2011—and remain at that level, according to USAF personnel officials.

However, inside that fixed-size force, there are growing career fields competing for manpower, and the service faces the challenge of freeing up the personnel for them, said Donley.

As an example of how this is being done, Donley cited the decision in 2009 to reduce the size of the fighter force and shifting manpower to address growing intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance requirements, including generating more remotely piloted aircraft operators.

In that process, "the manpower pieces were just as important" as the dollars that were shifted, he said.

Of the current Total Force end strength, there are some 40,000 airmen deployed "on any given day" in Southwest Asia supporting the fight there, Gen. Carrol H. Chandler, USAF vice chief of staff, told House lawmakers March 16.

In addition, there are about 5,300 airmen serving in joint expeditionary taskings with the Army and Marine Corps and another 131,000 or more airmen "performing deployed-in-place missions for combatant commanders," he said. This includes tasks such as manning ICBM launch centers.

is available to officers in the 18X RPA pilot career field and enlisted members on the new 1U0X1 RPA sensor operator track, they said. These incentives are scaled based on an airman's time within these fields.

"This represents a significant step forward in building a career field of RPA professionals," said Lt. Col. David DuHadway, USAF's rated force policy chief. There are slightly more than 400 airmen in RPA career fields today, a number expected to grow to more than 1,000 over the next few years to support burgeoning wartime demands.

**USAF Feels NASA Cuts**

The Obama Administration's plan to cancel NASA's Constellation human spaceflight program might end up sharply increasing the price that the Air Force has to pay for the rocket motors used on its own space launch vehicles, said Gary E. Payton, deputy undersecretary of the Air Force for space programs, March 10.

"The information we've seen is that the propulsion systems ... might double in price," Payton told the Senate Armed Services Committee's strategic forces subcommittee. The reason: a significant downturn in orders if NASA's Ares rockets go away as part of Constellation's demise.

Payton said first-stage RS-68 engines on Delta IV rockets would be affected, as would Atlas V upper-stage RL10s. Pratt & Whitney supplies both. He said the Air Force is studying how to minimize the price impact.

**Bombers Extend Pacific Stay**

The Air Force is going to extend the now-routine deployment of B-2A and B-52H bombers to Andersen AFB, Guam, from four months to six months, said Maj. Gen. David J. Scott, the Air Staff's director of operational capability requirements.

Scott told the Senate Armed Services Committee's strategic forces panel March 17 that the deployments for the service's continuous bomber presence mission that supports US Pacific Command would be "growing from a 120-day to a 179-day period."

The bomber deployment has been ongoing since 2003. Currently, B-2 and B-52 units share the rotation, with two B-52 turns for every one B-2 tour. In February, more than 240 airmen and a contingent of B-2As from the 393rd Bomb Squadron at Whiteman AFB, Mo., arrived at Andersen in the most recent rotation.

**Wind Turbines Impede Radar**

Gen. Victor E. Renuart Jr., commander of US Northern Command and commander of NORAD, told House lawmakers March 18 that he has "real

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## Is the Pentagon Taking Aim at Joint STARS?

The Air Force's plans for re-engining its 17 E-8C Joint STARS ground-surveillance aircraft are in limbo, the Air Force's leadership told Congress in March.

The issue is not really about the merit of the new engines. They clearly would add performance and reliability improvements. Rather, it boils down to how long the Air Force intends to keep flying E-8Cs and whether this is long enough to justify the investment in the new Pratt & Whitney JT8D-219 engines, said Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz in testimony on March 10 and March 4, respectively.

Already the E-8C test bed aircraft is fitted with these new power plants and the service intends to install them on four more aircraft as reflected in its Fiscal 2011 future years defense plan.

But beyond that, the path is unclear for several reasons, said Schwartz.

Among them, "there are issues with respect to the longevity of these airframes that raise questions in our minds," he said. These aircraft are based on refurbished 707 airliners.

Also, the service is conducting an analysis of alternatives (AOA) to identify the best options beyond the APY-7 radar on Joint STARS aircraft today for tracking moving surface objects and persons in coming years.

Accordingly, Schwartz said, "I think the wise thing to do here is to proceed cautiously to re-engine the four airplanes ... and get the AOA and decide what the best way forward is."

Dave Nagy, Northrop Grumman vice president of business development for battle management and engagement systems, said in an interview that the company, which leads Joint STARS sustainment efforts, believes the E-8C airframes are sound. This is based on the investments made in them to date and the robust upkeep activities in place.

With marginal investments in the engines and radar improvements, they could remain the nation's premier wide-area ground-surveillance platform "for the next 30 to 40 years," he said.

"in many cases block the picture." This creates risk for aircraft and the nation's defense, he said.

Although the Department of Defense has been able to get some sites repositioned, some still pose a problem, said Renuart. To address these concerns, DOD is working with the FAA, other government agencies, and industry to create "assessment tools" so that developers may ascertain if new wind projects would obstruct radar sites.

### Osan Gets First A-10Cs

The 25th Fighter Squadron at Osan AB, South Korea, on March 3 received the first three of its A-10C ground-attack aircraft, an updated, more potent version of the A-10A model that the unit has been flying.

Capt. Matthew Kaercher, one of Osan's A-10 pilots, in a *Stars and Stripes* report March 17, said, "We're excited that ... we've got increased ability."

The new C configuration allows pilots to deploy satellite-guidance-aided bombs and use sophisticated targeting pods. It also features new cockpit displays, new stick and throttle controls, and new communications gear.

### F136 Hits Full Afterburner

The General Electric-Rolls Royce Fighter Engine Team developing the F136 power plant for the F-35 strike fighter announced March 22 that it had successfully hit full afterburner during testing with the third production-configuration F136 unit.

The F136 is pitted against Pratt & Whitney's F135 engine, which is already in production, to power future F-35s. Despite continued Congressional interest in sustaining the F136 program, the Pentagon remains adamant in wanting

concerns" about the growing use of wind turbine farms for energy since they interfere with the radars needed for comprehensive awareness of the air domain over North America.

"The turbines themselves have a very real effect on the radars," he said, explaining that "they distort radars" and



**Little Wing:** Right, members of the 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron perform an operations check on a Raven unmanned aerial vehicle in Iraq. The UAV carries cameras, sensors, and communications tools and performs a host of ISR duties. Above, MSgt. Bryon Griffin launches the Raven.



USAF photos by SSgt. Tabitha Kuykendall

## The War on Terrorism

### Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghanistan

#### Casualties

By April 15, a total of 1,034 Americans had died in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes 1,032 troops and two Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 754 were killed in action with the enemy, while 280 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 5,564 troops wounded in action during OEF. This number includes 2,405 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 3,159 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

#### Airmen Offer Avalanche Help

Airmen with the 33rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron operating from Bagram Airfield were among the first responders to a series of avalanches in Afghanistan's Salang Pass in February.

Flying on Army CH-47 helicopters, these airmen operated in subzero temperatures to aid more than 1,500 injured people, many of whom were trapped in their vehicles.

After initially evacuating about 80 healthy survivors, these pararescuers, deployed from the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick AFB, Fla., focused on the trapped survivors.

### Operation Iraqi Freedom—Iraq

#### Casualties

By April 15, a total of 4,394 Americans had died in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The total includes 4,381 troops and 13 Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 3,482 were killed in action with the enemy, while 912 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 31,775 troops wounded in action during Operation Iraqi Freedom. This number includes 17,839 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 13,936 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

#### Iraq Air Force Secures Skies on Election Day

The Iraqi Air Force provided intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance support over several Iraqi cities for the March 7 national elections, marking the first time since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003 that the IqAF carried out an autonomous air support effort for voting day.

Kirkuk Regional Air Base's Squadron 3 launched all six of its aircraft, three RC-208s and three AC-208s, transmitting ISR data to the operations centers throughout the country, with the capability to download full-motion video.

This information allowed security forces on the ground to gain critical intelligence on threats, said USAF officials with the 321st Air Expeditionary Advisory Group.

#### MC-12s in Iraq Hit 2,000 Combat Sorties

The Air Force's fleet of six MC-12W intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance aircraft operating with the 362nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron out of Joint Base Balad surpassed 2,000 combat sorties, Balad officials announced in mid-March.

The first MC-12 combat mission over Iraq took place in June 2009.

Lt. Col. Phillip Stewart, commander of the MC-12 unit, praised his airmen, saying they "are constantly in situations where ... in a split second, they have to be able to decide if the guy they are looking at is holding a shovel or a rifle and then transmit it to the ground."

Yet, "they perform under this pressure extremely well," he said.

debris or satellites will re-enter the atmosphere, recommend a safe launch period, and prevent potential satellite collisions, he said. Already there have been more than 50 instances where satellite owners maneuvered their spacecraft to avoid collisions, based on USAF information.

#### Boeing To Supply QF-16

The Air Force on March 8 selected Boeing to convert up to 126 retired F-16 fighters to unmanned full-scale aerial targets designated QF-16s. They will succeed the Air Force's inventory of QF-4 targets used today to help develop weapons and tactics.

Boeing is scheduled to start delivering QF-16s in 2014 under the terms of the contract. The company received the first \$69.7 million increment that day for the initial engineering, manufacturing, and development activities.

Boeing will design and develop the QF-16 in St. Louis. Production and testing will occur at the company's facility in Cecil Field, Fla., near Jacksonville. Boeing's team includes BAE Systems, prime contractor for the QF-4.

#### Plan To Open Airspace to UAVs

The White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy on March 4 issued a new National Aeronautics Research and Development Plan that sets the integration of unmanned aerial vehicles into the national airspace system as "an important new goal" for the nation.

The plan, which builds upon the 2007 iteration, states that addressing the "growing demand" for UAV use within the NAS "depends on a complex set of regulatory, technical, economic, and political factors."

However, "it is becoming increasingly clear" that the demand requires "full integration of manned and unmanned systems throughout the NAS," the document continues. Accordingly, the plan lays out the research and development necessary to achieve that integration.

#### General Defends Bid Process

With the changes that the Air Force has instituted in the past few years, its means of assessing contract bids and then choosing winning proposals is sound, Lt. Gen. Mark D. Shackelford, military assistant to USAF's acquisition executive, said Feb. 23.

"We don't have a fundamentally flawed source-selection process," he said during an Air Force Association-sponsored Air Force Breakfast Series presentation in Arlington, Va. His comments came on the eve of the release of the KC-X tanker solicitation.

In fact, said Shackelford, in 2009, there was only one industry protest

to stop F136 work, saying the business case for maintaining two engine suppliers isn't convincing.

#### Traffic Jam Hits Space

The US military's global network of terrestrial-based radar and optical sensors currently keeps tab on approximately 21,500 objects orbiting the Earth, Lt. Gen. Larry D. James, commander of 14th Air Force (Air Forces Strategic) and

commander of US Strategic Command's Joint Functional Component Command for Space, said March 10.

Of these, there are nearly 10,000 pieces of debris, 6,800 unknown objects, 3,700 dead satellites and rocket pieces, and more than 1,100 active satellites, James told Senate lawmakers in written testimony.

The Air Force is now able to track all active satellites, predict when pieces of

## Senior Staff Changes

**AFRC RETIREMENT:** Brig. Gen. James L. **Melin**.

**CHANGES:** Brig. Gen. Mark A. **Barrett**, from IG, ACC, JB Langley, Va., to DCS, Strat. Plans & Policy, NATO, Allied Command Transformation (Norfolk), Norfolk, Va. ... Brig. Gen. Ian R. **Dickinson**, from Cmdr., 81st Tng. Wg., AETC, Keesler AFB, Miss., to Dir., Comm. & Info., AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo. ... Maj. Gen. David W. **Eidsaune**, from Dir., Air, Space, & Info. Ops., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Dir., Strat. Plans, Programs, & Analyses, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. Carlton D. **Everhart II**, from Dep. Cmdr., Political-Mil. Affairs, Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, CENTCOM, Kabul, Afghanistan, to Vice Cmdr., 618th Tanker Airlift Control Ctr., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Brig. Gen. David S. **Fadok**, from Dir., Policy & Strategy, SOUTHCOM, Miami, to Vice Cmdr., AU, AETC, Maxwell AFB, Ala. ... Brig. Gen. Barbara J. **Faulkenberry**, from Cmdr., 15th Expeditionary Mobility Task Force, AMC, Travis AFB, Calif., to Dep. Dir., Log., AFRICOM, Stuttgart, Germany ... Brig. Gen. Randy A. **Kee**, from Vice Cmdr., 618th Tanker Airlift Control Ctr., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Cmdr., 379th Air Expeditionary Wg., ACC, Al Udeid, Qatar ... Brig. Gen. Charles W. **Lyon**, from Dir., Jt. Integration, DCS, Ops., P&R, USAF, Pentagon, to Dir., Air Component Coordination Element, CENTCOM, ACC, Kabul, Afghanistan ... Brig. Gen. Frederick H. **Martin**, from Dep. Dir., Log., AFRICOM, Stuttgart, Germany, to Cmdr., 15th Expeditionary Mobility Task Force, AMC, Travis AFB, Calif. ... Maj. Gen. James O. **Poss**, from Dir., ISR Strat., Integration, & Doctrine, DCS, ISR, USAF, Pentagon, to Asst. DCS, ISR, USAF, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Steven M. **Shepro**, from Cmdr., 316th Wg., AF District of Washington, JB Andrews, Md., to Dir., Policy & Strategy, SOUTHCOM, Miami ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Jay B. **Silveria**, from Cmdr., 48th FW, USAF, RAF Lakenheath, UK, to IG, ACC, JB Langley, Va. ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) William J. **Thornton**, from Cmdr., 412th Test Wg., AFMC, Edwards AFB, Calif., to Dir., Air, Space, & Info. Ops., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. Stephen W. **Wilson**, from Cmdr., 379th Air Expeditionary Wg., ACC, Al Udeid, Qatar, to Dir., Jt. Integration, DCS, Ops., P&R, USAF, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. Margaret H. **Woodward**, from Vice Cmdr., 18th AF, AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Cmdr., 17th AF, USAF, Ramstein AB, Germany. ■

sustained over an Air Force contract decision, and only two in 2008. The Air Force's guiding principles in selecting a winning bid are whether the source-selection process was conducted correctly and if the decision is defensible, he said.

#### Malmstrom Land-use Study Starts

Local government officials in Cascade County, Mont., which encompasses Great Falls and Malmstrom Air Force Base, in March launched a year-long land-use study of the areas around the base, which is today home to a major ICBM force.

The *Great Falls Tribune* reported March 16 that the Matrix Design Group, a Phoenix-based company, will lead the effort, aimed at exploring existing and potential development around Malmstrom's facilities, which are in the north central part of the state, and potential conflicts such as wind farms and cell-phone towers.

**A Dog's Life:** (l-r) *Doc, Kisma, and Jampy, military working dogs assigned to the 56th Security Forces Squadron, take a break from the obstacle course at the military working dog kennels at Luke AFB, Ariz. All three dogs served for a decade or more, and were to be retired in April due to old age.*

USAF photo by SSgt. Jason Colbert



## Rescue Helicopter Modernization Outlined

Plans for the Air Force to field a fleet of combat search and rescue helicopters to replace its aging HH-60G Pave Hawk fleet have begun to solidify in the wake of last year's cancellation of the Combat Search and Rescue Replacement Vehicle (CSAR-X) program, which the Air Force had hoped would produce the successor platforms.

Testifying before House defense appropriators March 10, Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley said the service has an initiative in place to replace by mid-decade the HH-60G combat losses that it has incurred since 9/11. Then it will begin recapitalizing the Pave Hawk fleet with nondevelopmental new helicopters acquired competitively.

"What we have agreement on is to recapitalize those HH-60 aircraft, not with the new start, but essentially with an off-the-shelf kind of capability," thereby allowing for the fielding of these new airframes "in an affordable manner," he said.

According to Fiscal 2011 budget documents, the Air Force is planning to procure 15 Army new-build UH-60s between Fiscal 2010 and Fiscal 2012 and convert them to the Pave Hawk configuration to replace the combat losses and restore the current fleet to 112 airframes.

Beyond those replacements, the Air Force has earmarked \$1.5 billion in its future years defense plan from Fiscal 2011 to Fiscal 2015 to recapitalize the rescue helicopter fleet with a new platform now dubbed the "Personnel Recovery Recapitalization" aircraft.

This amount would cover the buy of the first 36 of those new airframes, according to budget documents.

On March 23, the Air Force issued a notice seeking industry input on suitable platforms. Among the attributes, this aircraft must be capable of sustaining 130 knots true air speed and have an unrefueled combat mission radius of 220 nautical miles.

The service would like to issue the first production contract in Fiscal 2012, enabling it to have four trainer assets and four combat-ready aircraft in the fleet no later than Sept. 30, 2015, according to the notice.

The goal is to identify guidelines to limit encroachment on Air Force operations while encouraging well-planned growth in the area, according to the newspaper. In 2009, Cascade County received a Pentagon grant for this study.

### Condor Questions Remain

Maine's Congressional delegation March 16 sent a letter to the FAA, urging the agency to hold a hearing in Maine over the Air National Guard's proposal to extend low-level fighter training routes

in the Condor military operating area. "Holding a hearing in Maine would help ensure that local residents and other stakeholders have the opportunity to voice their concerns directly to aviation officials," wrote Sen. Susan M. Collins (R), Sen. Olympia J. Snowe (R), Rep. Michael H. Michaud (D), and Rep. Chellie Pingree (D) in the joint missive.

The Air Guard wants the additional low-level routes, which lie over western Maine and a portion of New Hampshire, to train fighter units from Massachusetts and Vermont. However, after the final public meeting last fall, Maine Gov. John E. Baldacci (D) said he did not believe that the Air Guard had answered all relevant questions.

### Luke Squadron Reactivated

Air Force Reserve Command reactivated the 69th Fighter Squadron March 5 at Luke AFB, Ariz. From 1969 to 1983, the squadron operated out of Luke as the 69th Tactical Flying Training Squadron, teaching German pilots to fly F-104s.

It was deactivated in 2001 at Moody AFB, Ga. In its new form, the 69th FS is organized under Luke's 944th Fighter Wing. It is constituted with members of Luke's 301st FS who changed their patch during the reactivation ceremony.

They will work with Luke's active duty 56th FW to train F-16 pilots. The 301st FS is transferring to Holloman AFB, N.M., to join active duty airmen there in operating F-22s. Its standup was scheduled for April.

### ANG Shifts Aeromedical Unit

The West Virginia Air National Guard's 167th Airlift Wing at Martinsburg, W. Va.,

### WASPs Honored

The Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II on March 10 received the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor that Congress may bestow upon civilians, at a gala ceremony in the US Capitol building attended by the Air Force leadership and senior members of Congress.

More than 200 WASP members, many wearing their World War II uniforms, were there in person, along with family and friends, to receive the award. It recognized the trailblazing contributions of the more than 1,100 WASPs who flew military aircraft in noncombat roles during the war to free up male pilots for combat.

On March 9, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Air Force Memorial in Arlington, Va., to honor the 38 WASPs who died in the line of duty. A reception followed at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.



**Getting Greener:** An A-10C Thunderbolt II from Eglin AFB, Fla., powered by a biomass-derived jet fuel blend of 50 percent Hydrotreated Renewable Jet fuel and 50 percent JP-8, follows the Florida coast on March 25. This was the first flight of an aircraft powered solely with such a blend.

USAF photo by SMSgt. Joy Josephson

## **Air Force Takes Lead in MOP Testing**

The Air Force in mid-March conducted the first flight test of the 30,000-pound Massive Ordnance Penetrator under an initiative aimed at integrating the bunker-busting behemoth on the B-2A stealth bomber and fielding this capability as soon as possible.

Boeing is under contract to supply the MOP, which would give the US the powerful non-nuclear means of taking out deeply buried and hardened facilities such as weapons labs that may be beyond the reach of existing bunker busters. Potential foes are believed to be tunneling ever deeper in an attempt to evade US reach.

During the mid-March quick-reaction-capability test, a MOP was actually dropped from a B-52H bomber as a prelude to seven planned flight tests from the B-2.

"Data about individual tests are not being released at this time," said Air Force spokesman Capt. Dave Faggard on March 23.

The Air Force took the lead for MOP testing from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which concluded a MOP technology demonstration in January.

That demonstration featured five test drops from the B-52. Three of these flight tests featured MOPs with live warheads, said a Pentagon spokeswoman March 15. At least some of these test activities occurred at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

Here, too, the details are sketchy on the performance of the munition.

Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz told a House oversight panel March 10 that the Pentagon had had "mixed results" with MOP up to that point.

Despite that, they said they were "closely monitoring" MOP's progress, and "future successes likely will result in a reprogramming request to accelerate its development in Fiscal 2010."

The Pentagon was staying mum on when the first MOPs might be available for operations.

will be transferring its aeromedical evacuation squadron to the West Virginia ANG's 130th AW at Yeager Airport in Charleston, according to local press reports in late February.

The *Charleston Gazette* reported Feb. 24 that the 167th AW, having completed the conversion from C-130 transports to much larger C-5 airlifters in April 2009, can no longer support the aeromedevac mission. Accordingly, its 167th Aeromedical Evacuation

Squadron will move to Yeager Airport beginning this fall to be housed in existing buildings used by the 130th AW, which flies C-130s.

### **Airman's Remains Identified**

The Department of Defense announced March 16 that it had identified the remains of Maj. Curtis Daniel Miller of Palacios, Tex., an airman whose AC-130A gunship was shot down over Laos on March 29, 1972.

On the 38th anniversary of his loss, his remains were laid to rest with full military honors in Dallas.

Miller was part of the 14-member crew aboard the gunship, which took off from Ubon RTAB, Thailand, on an armed reconnaissance mission over southern Laos. During the flight, an enemy surface-to-air missile downed the aircraft; heavy enemy activity prevented more than a few days of search and rescue efforts.

In 1986, a recovery team excavated the crash site, finding remains that led to identification of nine crew members. In 2005 and 2006, additional excavations took place that found more remains and enabled the identification of the remaining crew members, all of whom have now been accounted for, according to DOD.

### **Former Academy Superintendent Dies**

Retired Lt. Gen. Albert P. Clark, sixth superintendent of the US Air Force Academy, whose exploits as a POW during World War II helped to inspire the Hollywood classic "The Great Escape," died March 8 in Colorado Springs, Colo. He was 96.

Clark was born in 1913 in Hawaii. He became a pilot after graduating from West Point in 1936. Flying with the 31st Fighter Group out of Britain during World War II, his fighter was shot down in July 1942 over France, and he spent the next 33 months as a POW at Stalag Luft III in what is now Poland.

He is credited with playing a critical role in the escape of 76 POWs from the camp in 1944, according to his *Los Angeles Times* obituary on March 16. Clark was USAFA's top general from August 1970 to July 1974. He was buried at the academy on March 17. ■

## **News Notes**

■ Retired Col. Francis X. Kane, a leader in the development of Global Positioning System satellites, was inducted into the Air Force Space and Missile Pioneers Hall of Fame during a ceremony March 2 at Lackland AFB, Tex.

■ An F-16C fighter assigned to the 36th Fighter Squadron at Osan AB, South Korea, crashed during landing Feb. 25 during a routine training mission. The pilot ejected safely, said Osan officials.

■ President Obama on March 1 signed an executive order restoring the Army, Navy, and Air Force Secretaries to the second, third, and fourth positions, respectively, behind the deputy

defense secretary in the Pentagon's order of leadership succession.

■ The New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing at Hancock Field near Syracuse said goodbye to its final two F-16 fighters on March 6, as part of its transition, per BRAC 2005, to operating MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft.

■ Four junior and 20 sophomore US Air Force Academy cadets on Feb. 25 received the first unmanned aerial systems-remotely piloted aircraft wings awarded in the institution's 55-year history.

■ Airmen on March 10 dedicated the street and new house at JB Andrews, Md., where the current Chief Master

Sergeant of the Air Force resides, in honor of Paul W. Airey, first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, who died March 11, 2009.

■ Maj. William Gottenberg, a pilot assigned to the 99th Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif., on March 9 completed his 100th combat mission in the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. He flew a sortie that day over Southwest Asia.

■ The House voted 410 to zero on March 19 to designate the memorial under construction at March Field Air Museum in California as the Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial to honor all current and former DFC recipients. ■