AIR BRIDGE

Vol. 11, No. 1 | 927th Air Refueling Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich. | January 2006

Wing first in AFRC to train chaplain candidate

Eric Brian
Editor

The 927th Air Refueling Wing made history when it became the first Air Force Reserve unit to train a chaplain candidate, according to the Air Force Reserve Command Chaplain Service.

Chap. (2nd Lt.) Joshua Stoley, 25, completed his Master of Divinity at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary in December and has finished all the requirements to be an Air Force chaplain except for ordination. Lieutenant Stoley plans to be ordained through his local church in the early spring and reappointed by the Air Force as a reserve chaplain.

Chap. (Maj.) Douglas DeWitt, 927th ARW chaplain, said he will bring Lieutenant Stoley aboard as the wing's third chaplain, in addition to himself and Chap. (Capt.) Steven Woodford. The slot came open when Chap. (1st Lt.) Kenny Walden transferred to March Air Reserve Base, Calif.

Technically, all chaplain candidates are reservists; they usually do their training with active duty commands, said Chap. (Col. select) Philip Miller, AFRC Chaplain Service chief of plans and programs. He said Lieutenant Stoley is the first chaplain candidate to be attached to a reserve wing.

"We're proud of Josh," said Chaplain Miller. "We're really appreciative of Chaplain DeWitt for taking him while he was still in school, grooming him, and providing him a good place to train."

PHOTO BY LOMAX LAGRAND JR., 127TH WG MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Chaplain candidate 2nd Lt. Joshua Stoley gives the invocation during the 927th Air Refueling Wing change of command ceremony Oct. 30 at Hangar 35. Lieutenant Stoley is attached directly to Air Force Reserve Command, but trains with the 927th. He is the first chaplain candidate to train with an Air Force Reserve unit, according to AFRC Chaplain Service officials.

"It just worked out for me to come here," said Lieutenant Stoley. "This is a perfect fit for me, too."

Chaplain candidates receive direct commissions, much like doctors and lawyers. Lieutenant Stoley was commissioned in February 2003. He completed Commissioned Officer Training that June

see **Chaplain candidate,** p. 5

Becoming a chaplain demanding, rewarding

People don't realize how much time goes into becoming an Air Force Chaplain, said Chap. (Col.) Philip Miller, Air Force Reserve Command chief of plans and programs.

"Seminary work after college takes as much time as a degree in law or medicine – usually 90 semester hours," Chaplain Miller said. "You're looking at three to four years of full-time study."

Roman Catholicism and Orthodox Judaism may require six years, he said.

"It's expensive," said Chaplain Miller. "It's demanding. It's a lot of sacrifice, the pay's not good, and there are no bonuses. It takes a lot of dedication."

Some religions, including Islam, do not have seminary. In that case, the government requires at least 72 credit hours for a master's degree.

Reserve chaplains may deal with the added tension of having a civilian congregation at home, and drill requirements on the weekend.

"Some churches don't have a problem. It depends on where you live and whether you have someone else who can cover your services," Chaplain Miller said. "They must also work this out with their wing commanders."

New rules to reinforce re-employment protections

WASHINGTON (AFPN) – The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is lauding the Labor Department announcement issuing rules clarifying re-employment rights for citizen-soldiers.

They said the Dec. 16 announcement is a major step forward for guardsmen, reservists and their civilian employers.

Labor Secretary Elaine Chao announced final rules interpreting the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Act that helps ensure job security for reserve-component members returning to civilian life from military duty. The rules were published in the Federal Register.

Speaking at the National Press Club here, Ms. Chao said this is the first time

see **Re-employment protections,** p. 7

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Take time for the important things

Col. Gary Beebe
Wing Commander

Happy New Year to the men and women of the 927th Air Refueling Wing. I hope you had the opportunity to spend time with your family and friends. For those who are deployed, we look forward to your return.

The sudden loss of my younger brother just before Christmas has driven home several points which are important to share with you. First, life is very fragile. We take for granted there will always be a tomorrow. There is no guarantee for tomorrow, so we need to live every day to it fullest.

Second is the importance of having everything set in the event of an untimely death. We don't like to talk about it, but death is inevitable for all of us, we just don't know when.

If you truly care for your loved ones, take some time to discuss finances, health issues (whether or not to have a do-not-resuscitate order) wills, legal issues, children from a past marriage, etc.

With 55 percent of all marriages ending in divorce today, the legal issues are mind boggling. For commanders and first shirts, please take the time to stress the importance of being prepared for these issues.

The Air Force makes you look at your emergency data card and asks you if your will is up to date every time we have a processing line, but we may not have another opportunity for years. Every married person who is getting close to retirement should have a very honest talk with his or her spouse about the Survivor Benefit Plan.

Third is the importance of our attitude toward others. I am willing to bet we all have someone in our lives who we harbor ill feelings toward. Take the time today to reconcile that relationship. Don't let time go by and suddenly wish you had said some things to that person or forgiven him … or even asked for forgiveness. You will be glad you did. Life is too short to hold a grudge.

Get a great start on the New Year and expect to hear more about Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) plans as we start to get information. Thank you for being a member of the 927th ARW.

PHOTO BY LINDA CHOKA, 127TH WG MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Senior Airman Richard Skrzyniarz, 927th CES, removes snow from around Wing Headquarters following a December storm. Wing Ground Safety Manager Master Sgt. Joseph Coll emphasized any and all wing members may remove snow and ice from wing facilities and areas for the safety of everyone this winter.

PHOTO BY LOMAX LAGRAND, 127TH WG MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Staff Sgt. Jessica Homann, 29th Aerial Port Flight, and her nephew were among those who enjoyed a joint Children's Holiday Extravaganza Dec. 3 at Building 780.

NEWS

PHOTO BY LOMAX LAGRAND JR., 127TH WG MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Col. Gary E. Beebe, wing commander, welcomes home Airmen of the 927th ARW Dec. 3 at Selfridge. About 120 members were deployed to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, fulfilling a major part of the wing's Aerospace Expeditionary Force rotation. Other members continue to serve worldwide in support of contingency operations and other missions.

Wing makes AEF deployment

Eric Brian
Editor

Turkey for Thanksgiving had little to do with a holiday feast this year for many members of the 927th Air Refueling Wing.

Nearly 180 Airmen deployed – 120 at a time – to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, this fall aboard the wing's KC-135Rs to help fulfill the wing's requirements for the current Aerospace Expeditionary Force cycle. The Airmen supported Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and a variety of other missions.

"This is the biggest deployment for us this cycle," said Col. (select) Michael Cole, 927th Operations Support Flight commander.

Colonel Cole commanded the 90th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron (EARS), part of the 385th Air Expeditionary Group, which all deployed 927th members served with at Incirlik. Pilots, boom operators, operations, maintenance, and administrative personnel were tasked for the AEF deployment.

The 90th EARS provides combat airlift and air refueling to the war fighter in direct support of OIF and OEF. Incirlik AB serves as a main hub for humanitarian airlift operations to Afghanistan, including KC-135 refueling missions and sustainment operations for deployed forces.

"Many of our people deployed more than 30 days," said Colonel Cole. "They qualify for the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal."

More than 75 other members of the 927th were deployed elsewhere around the world during the same time frame — from security details in the United States to pilots, civil engineers and medical personnel in Iraq.

Air Force releases new mission statement

WASHINGTON (AFPN) – The realities of the world have changed dramatically since the creation of the Air Force in 1947 and continue to change almost daily.

With these changes in mind, Air Force leaders released a new mission statement Dec. 7 that defines the current and future direction of the Air Force.

"Today, our world is fast paced, constantly shifting and filled with a wide range of challenges," Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley wrote in a joint Letter to Airmen. "Our mission is our guiding compass, and now more than ever we need it to be clear and precise."

The mission statement defines the "where and what" the Air Force accomplishes on a daily basis:

The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests – to fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace.

The statement includes two new concepts, "sovereign options" and "cyberspace," which the secretary and chief defined.

They said having sovereign options is the essence of being a superpower.

The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests – to fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace.

"Our task is to provide the president, the combatant commanders, and our nation with an array of options ... options that are not limited by the tyranny of distance, the urgency of time, or the strength of our enemy's defenses," they said. "With one hand the Air Force can deliver humanitarian assistance to the farthest reaches of the globe, while with the other hand we can destroy a target anywhere in the world."

The term cyberspace includes network security, data transmission and the sharing of information.

"We have quite a few of our Airmen dedicated to cyberspace ... from security awareness, making sure the networks can't be penetrated, as well as figuring out countermeasures," Secretary Wynne said. "The Air Force is a natural leader in the cyber world and we thought it would be best to recognize that talent."

Adversaries of the United States will use any method or venue necessary to contest America, and it is an Airman's calling to dominate air, space and cyberspace, the leaders said.

"If we can decisively and consistently control these commons, then we will deter countless conflicts," they said. "If our enemies underestimate our resolve, then we will fly, fight, and destroy them."

Using past air power pioneers as examples of understanding the mission, they said, " The Air Force's mission statement has evolved over time, but it does not change the nature of who we are or what we do."

NEWS

Sexual assault response coordinator protects troops

Staff Sgt. Kevin Tomko
Staff writer

It's showing its ugly head again. It first showed up in the Navy Tailhook scandal in the early 1990s. Most recently it reared its ugly head again at the Air Force Academy in March 2003.

Left unreported, it can ruin lives, careers, and embarrass leaders all the way up the chain of command.

It's called sexual assault and it may be happening in varying degrees on all of our military bases.

Since the sexual-assault incidents at the Air Force Academy surfaced, the Department of Defense launched an investigation of all branches of the military. It found that education on the subject was severely lacking. The Air Force, which has zero tolerance for this behavior, has been taking steps to ensure that its leaders are ready to deal with the problem.

One of those steps was to install a sexual assault response coordinator (SARC) at each of its bases.

Laura L. Gregory became the first SARC for the 927th Air Refueling Wing in October 2005. She worked for the Army for three years as a clinical social worker and is qualified to do therapy.

PHOTO BY LINDA CHOKA, 127TH WG MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Ms. Laura Gregory is the 927th Air Refueling Wing's first sexual assault response coordinator (SARC). She said one of her main concerns is that people may think sexual assault is not happening at Selfridge because people know each other, but "when friendships develop, boundaries get blurred or are not clearly defined."

"The Air Force is finally acknowledging that these sexual assaults are happening to its members," said Ms Gregory. "Sexual assault is not necessarily rape or violent behavior. It can be unwanted advances or using your rank to get sexual favors."

She said statistics show that the incidents span all ranks and age groups, but most are going unreported. Ten percent of the victims are male.

"Just because we don't know about it doesn't mean that it's not happening," said Ms. Gregory. "One of my main concerns is that people may be inclined to think that it can't happen here because they know each other. When friendships develop, sometimes the boundaries get blurred or are not clearly defined."

Ms. Gregory said she will be going to each unit to give a mandatory briefing which includes a video presentation and an open discussion.

"I usually get approached for more questions or comments after each briefing," she said.

She also said that she's not here to respond only to a recent event, but also to talk with victims who have previous unresolved issues.

"Confidentiality is my top priority, and I will do my best to make sure that is carried out," said Ms. Gregory.

Ms. Gregory can be reached at extension 5738 or by cell phone, 586-909-9108.

Senior Airman Brandi Williams, 63rd ARS life support technician, gets a turn on the intercom on a flight during the wing's recent deployment to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. Airman Williams is the wing's Airman of the Year.

Web-based system changes how orders are processed

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – Individual mobilization augmentees have a new way to get military orders.

Air Reserve Order Writing System-Reserve, a Web-based system, began Oct. 1 for IMAs. It allows them to initiate the orders process from any computer anywhere in the world. Units began using AROWS-R as early as Nov. 1, said Air Force Reserve Command officials.

"My maiden voyage into AROWS-R was a great," said Col. Rune B. Lillquist, an IMA assigned to 59th Maintenance Squadron at Lackland AFB, Texas. "It was easier than my first try at (the Web Orders Transaction System)."

WOTS is the previous program used by IMAs to generate military orders. They can continue to access WOTS for past duty information but must request all new orders through AROWS-R.

The new system combines WOTS and three existing personal computer-based systems to process reservists' orders.

"AROWS-R will revolutionize the way orders are published," said Col. Deborah Suski, AFRC comptroller.

STREET TALK

We have a new wing commander, which will mean some changes within the wing. What improvements or changes would you like to see?

SRA Adrian Angelovic, 927th CES

I would like to see an improvement in the lines to enter the base. In the morning, especially drilling with other units on base, the lines to enter are very long. A suggestion to improve the lines would be to have our own security forces personnel open up a new line. Also, there are two other gates to enter, the Joy Road gate, and the North River Road gate. Maybe informing members of the other two gates will eliminate some traffic.

TSgt Kathy McNeil, 927th MSG

I would like to see an improvement in the exposure of our younger airmen to participate in some wing programs. We invite the employers to come out and spend the day learning about our wing. Why not have an Airmen day where Airmen learn about the individual units, and get the chance to go on a refueling flight? By doing so, it will increase the sense of teamwork and will better educate them into how their jobs enhance our wing.

SRA Mark Kestner, 927th CES

I would like to see a change in the long dining facility lines. Sometimes you have to wait in a line outside the facility to get in. To solve this, maybe they can have an ID scanner for each serving line, instead of only one. I do understand the new dining facility is scheduled to open in February of 2006; maybe we will see this change in the near future.

SMSgt Harold Pool, 927th OSF

I would like to see an improvement in the flow of communication and information from top down. There are numerous things that take place in between the UTAs that are not communicated to the reservist. I would like to see an improvement in communicating information.

Chaplain candidate (continued)

at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and has since completed additional training, including a two-week Chaplain introductory course and two 35-day tours at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., and Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

Lieutenant Stoley said he began his chaplain candidate program early – before seminary, and needed to complete 35 drill points.

"Since I lived in Michigan and knew there was a reserve wing here, I requested that I be able to do those points here," he said. "Now, they're pretty excited about the prospect of letting other chaplain candidates train with reserve units."

"We hope it works," Chaplain DeWitt said. "The Air Staff is watching everything we do."

Lieutenant Stoley gave the invocation for the Wing Commander's Change of Command Oct. 30, while he was a chaplain candidate.

> ***'Since I lived in Michigan and I knew there was a reserve wing here, I requested that I be able to do those points here. Now, they're pretty excited about the prospect of letting other chaplain candidates train with reserve units.'***
>
> – 2nd Lt. Joshua Stoley, AFRC, chaplain candidate

"He was not nervous," Chaplain DeWitt said. "He stepped right up."

At age 25, Lieutenant Stoley was one of the youngest chaplain candidates to ever enter the program, said Chaplain Miller.

Lieutenant Stoley, who is married with two young children, hopes to become an active duty chaplain. To do so, the Air Force requires him to complete two years experience as a civilian minister.

"Almost all Air Force chaplains start in the Reserve," Chaplain Miller said. "More than half go active, but before they're on active duty they must do a couple years of civilian ministry."

Lieutenant Stoley is already working on those requirements.

"I'm teaching Bible and theology and fill in preaching at a small church in Haslett, Mich.," he said. "The ministry isn't full-time yet, it's volunteer. I'm hoping it will be soon. I have my resume in with my denomination to find me a full-time position."

Also, to make ends meet, Lieutenant Stoley is working full time for a painting company in Lansing.

FROM THE RANKS

Wing announces 2005 outstanding Airmen

Airman of the Year

Senior Airman Brandi Williams
63rd ARS

Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Christopher Colburn
927th SFS

Senior NCO of the Year

Master Sgt. James Malloy
927th SFS

First Sergeant of the Year

Senior Master Sgt. Janet Wescott
927th MSF

How did I miss that award opportunity?

Master Sgt. Ed Viverette
First sergeant, 29th Aerial Port Flight

We all have been there; at the award ceremony and wondered how that person got that award. We all make choices that have a profound affect on our lives. We all have had opportunities to excel and get awards; some folks see problems – others see chances.

Webster's dictionary defines chance as "the abstract nature or quality shared by unexpected, random or unpredictable events, an opportunity." Opportunity is defined as "a favorable or advantageous combination of circumstances."

With the current state of affairs – the nation at war and Selfridge Air National Guard Base facing realignment – we are faced with some challenging times ahead. This is the time when opportunity is at its peak and we need to take full advantage. Three key elements can assist us in going after such opportunities: having a positive attitude, being open-minded and, most important, staying focused.

With the upcoming challenges we are facing, such as units downsizing, changing of mission location, and new management, there will be plenty of opportunities and chances for being recognized for excellent work. This is the time to step up and take on a new challenge.

This is the time to step up and take on a new challenge

You can let things happen or be on the lookout for great challenges that will put you in the position to succeed. Accepting challenges and working outside of your comfort zone will make you a better person and expose you to more situations in which you can be rewarded and recognized.

One of the main purposes of the supervisors and even senior leadership is to point these situations out to our junior troops.

Opportunity is always disguised as hard work.

AIR BRIDGE

Volume 11, No. 1 January 2006

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Deadline for submitting items for publication is the first day of the unit training assembly (UTA) of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. To submit items, phone (586) 307-5575 or DSN 273-5575. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise noted.

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LEST WE FORGET

The great Clinton River bombing mission

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Louis Nigro
Executive director, Selfridge Military Air Museum

SELFRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, MI – Selfridge Air National Guard Base first became operational on July 1, 1917. On March 18, 1918, less than one year after the Base opened, an ice blockade in the Clinton River, swollen by spring thaws, gave way and sent flood waters rushing across the entire Base until water and mud stood three feet deep in the new buildings and tents.

The general order for retreat was sounded and soldiers in forlorn columns marched through the waters to Mount Clemens, where more than 1,000 men welcomed the hospitality of the city for the night.

Seven years later, the Clinton River was again plagued with water overflowing its banks. This time, the results were far different than in 1918.

Martin MB-2 bomber

On February 24, 1925, when officers at Selfridge were appraised of the seriousness of the situation by city officials, a Martin MB-2 bomber, piloted by Lieutenant Brady and crewed by Lieutenants Hunter, Meredith, and Batten took to the air to take a closer look at the situation.

Finding that the flooding of property along the river was caused by heavy ice jams, the flyers returned to Selfridge and in several trips dropped nearly 100 17-pound bombs from the air on the ice jams at the mouth of the Clinton River. The exploding bombs succeeded in breaking up the jams and allowing the rushing water to continue down the river and the high water to recede

After the mission, officers at Selfridge issued a warning against picking up of unexploded bombs on the river ice.

Selfridge Military Air Museum officials acknowledge the assistance of Deborah Larsen, Assistant Director of the Mount Clemens Public Library, for her help in researching the details of this bombing mission.

Information on the Selfridge Military Air Museum can be obtained by Internet: www.selfridgeairmuseum.org, by mail: Selfridge Military Air Museum, 27333 C St, Bldg 1011, Selfridge ANG Base, MI 48045, by phone: 586-307-5035 or e-mail: air.museum@miself.ang.af.mil).

Re-employment protections (continued)

since the law's passage in 1994 that regulations have been developed to enforce it.

The rules are particularly critical now, she said, when the United States has the largest group of mobilized guardsmen and reservists since World War II. Since 9-11, almost 530,000 reserve-component people have been mobilized, many for more than a year of duty.

The new rules, drafted in an easy-to-read question-and-answer format, explain how the USERRA law protects against discrimination and retaliation because of military service and prevents servicemembers from job setbacks from performing their military obligations. The law also ensures that guardsmen and reservists have ample time to report back to their civilian jobs after completing their military duty.

"Our citizen-soldiers put themselves in harm's way to defend our freedoms, and now it's our turn to be there for them," Ms. Chao said. "These regulations will ensure that the seniority, promotion, health care, pensions and other benefits of our citizen-soldiers are protected when they return home to the jobs they left to serve our country."

Putting teeth behind the USERRA law benefits citizen soldiers as well as their employers, said Maj. Rob Palmer, a public affairs officer with the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

"Anything that makes it easier for Guard and Reserve members to work with their employers and understand their rights and responsibilities under the law is a benefit to everyone," he said.

With more than 50 percent of the military's manpower in the reserve components, employer support is critical to U.S. national security, Major Palmer said.

But making the relationship work "is not a one-way street," he said. Guardsmen and reservists also have responsibilities under USERRA.

Among those responsibilities is keeping their employers informed about their military commitments.

"We encourage Guard and Reserve members to communicate early and often with their employers about upcoming military obligations," Major Palmer said.

Work-related complaints from returning guardsmen and reservist are down 30 percent since their last major deployment in the early 1990s. Officials said this is largely due to the efforts of the Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and solid support from employers.

During Operation Desert Storm, one in 54 demobilized troops filed work-related complaints with the Labor Department, officials said. During the war on terrorism, the rate has dropped to one in 81.

Officials hope this trend will continue and see the new USERRA rules as a big step toward that end.

Other Labor Department initiatives also are expected to help. These include providing briefings to more than 270,000 servicemembers and others about the law, responding to more than 36,000 requests for technical assistance and publishing information about the final notice on the department's Web site.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Promotions

Colonel (select)

Michael J. Cole, 927th OSF
William D. Jenne, 927th OG

To Master Sergeant

James F. Draper Jr., 927th MOF
Scott A. Lawson, 927th MXS
Aaron T. Wilson, 927th MXS

To Technical Sergeant

Matthew R. Cunningham, 927th MXS
Jason L. Peterson, 927th MXS

To Staff Sergeant

Mark A. Kestner, 927th CES
Matthew L. McCroskery, 927th SFS
Rodney D. McLarty, 927th LRS
Jonathan A. Osborne, 927th ASTS
Todd P. Spencer, 927th MXS
Christopher M. Tear, 927th MXS

To Senior Airman

Joanna G. Boyd, 927th ASTS
Renita C. Ervin, 927th SVF
Nathan E. Holtrop, 927th SVF
April E. Irland, 927th CES
Nikitis Kalafatis, 927th SVF
Shamika N. Owens, 927th CES
April M. Pintabona, 927th LRS
Corey J. Whitacre, 927th SVF

Retirements

Lt. Col. Virendra S. Mehta, 927th AMDF
Tech. Sgt. David B. Fisher, 927th SFS
Tech. Sgt. Bryan G. Sparks, 927th SFS

BIG PICTURE

January
21-22 Unit Training Assembly
February
11-12 Unit Training Assembly
March
18-19 Unit Training Assembly
April
22-23 Unit Training Assembly
May
20-21 Unit Training Assembly
June
10-11 Unit Training Assembly

PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. MIKE HAMMOND, 380TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Airman 1st Class Davon King, 927th Civil Engineer Squadron, removes the protective cover from a street light 40 feet above "Tent City" at a Southwest Asia air base Nov. 11. Airman King was an electrical repair technician assigned to the Utilities section of the 380th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. His expeditionary squadron maintains and repairs virtually all aspects of hundreds of facilities needed by servicemembers at the forward-deployed location. (Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike Hammond)

Finally . . .

PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. SCOTT LAFOREST, 927TH ARW/PA

The Air Bridge is published for reservists like Staff Sgt. Thomas Curtis, 927th Communications Flight.

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43087 LAKE ST
SELFRIDGE ANG BASE, MI 48045-5247

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 2006-750-371/00019

PRESORTED STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Addison, IL
Permit No. 1