

102nd INTELLIGENCE WING

# Seagull



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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011

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**102nd COMPLIES  
with 99% Overall  
Rating! | pg. 6**

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**SEAGULL IDEAS?**

Do you have an idea for a Seagull article? Would you like to be the subject of a story? Births, marriages, sympathy notices and other information are always welcome. Let us know what is going on in your organization. *(Please limit articles to 500 words.)*

**The next Seagull deadline is Saturday, Dec 3, 2011.**



Select stories and news from this publication can also be found online at <http://www.102iw.ang.af.mil> or Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/102IW>

**ON THE COVER >>**



The 102nd Intel Wing electronic marquee at sunrise depicts the headline of the Nov/Dec 2011 issue of *The Seagull* to highlight the achievement after a UCI was conducted from October 28 to November 4 on Otis ANGB. *(National Guard photo by Senior Airman Jeremy Bowcock)*

**UPCOMING UTAs >>**

Unit Training Assembly duty hours are 0700-1530 Saturday and Sunday

DECEMBER 2011						
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JANUARY 2012						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2012						
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

MARCH 2012						
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**FROM THE DESK OF THE  
102d Intel Wing  
COMMANDER**

By Col. Anthony Schiavi



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
102D INTELLIGENCE WING (ACC)  
MASSACHUSETTS AIR NATIONAL GUARD  
OTIS AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE MASSACHUSETTS

**102d UCI; in the pursuit of excellence**

"To be recognized as the Air National Guard's premier Intelligence Wing, universally recognized and respected for performance and reputation." This is not only how I started my in-brief to the Inspector General, but, also my commander's call as the IG team was departing the base. Why? Because these words represent our wing vision, what drives us in our pursuit of excellence in all that we do. Our recent performance on our wing-wide Unit Compliance Inspection provided an important benchmark in that pursuit. The results from the inspection provided us additional, independent verification that we are not only on the right track, but, one of the finest wings in the ANG or USAF. In fact, the AFISRA team chief, Col Robert Spitznagel, stated at the out-brief that, "this was the best inspection that my IG team has seen in the past year", and highlighted our Operations, Security, Professionalism and Can-Do attitude as positive strengths. The ACC team was equally as impressed and expressed by Col Robert "RC" Craig, by saying, "The overall impression from my team is that the 102nd is a very strong, highly motivated and well-led organization; which is clearly evident in the presentation of the 102nd Intel Wing programs. Wing discipline is clearly reflected with a 99% overall compliance rating".

I know that at times, getting here was a challenge and appeared to be a mountain too high to climb, but, everyone chipped in and did their part knowing that outstanding results can only be achieved by a team effort and not as purely individuals. With this mindset, you have made the term "Team Otis" a continued reality. The wing overcame the challenge of the change in UCI protocol less than 30 days prior to our inspection with some units not getting checklists until 30, 15 and in some cases 7 days out from the inspection. In at least one case, the ACC IG team showed up with checklists that had yet to be published. Even so, you all maintained your composure, were highly confident in your programs and displayed the kind of professionalism that only exists in units of the

highest caliber. Although, we debated several times early in the inspection about whether to raise the "flag" with the IG over these last minute surprises, in the end you all had my fullest confidence that you had prepared well and could show the IG that the 102d doesn't let anything shake us up and we never fold. Why was I so sure? Because I told the IG team when they arrived that they would, without a doubt, find the following characteristics within the members of our wing. They were the following: A dedicated and motivated work force, coordinated processes, a commitment to compliance, a great attitude and teamwork, and leadership at all levels.

So, my hat is off to all of you for your hard work, dedication and professionalism shown to the three inspection teams from ACC, AFISRA and Global Strike Command. For a wing who has gone through a transition like we have and being three and a half years new, achieving a greater than 99% compliance rating across the three inspections could not make me more proud of the over 900 airmen and civilian employees who made this inspection such a success. It was a total team effort from start to finish. We will continue to show the Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force that the 102nd Intelligence Wing is committed to its vision and the Air Force Core Values each and every day. We will continue to go about our business with a quiet, yet determined effort to provide our respective combatant commands with top notch airmen and civilian employees whose performance and dedication to duty is second to none. Always remember, that world class organizations can never rest on success, but must continue to be visionary, innovative and committed to continuous improvement. The 102d will continue to exemplify these important characteristics now and in the future. I wish you and your families much happiness for the upcoming holiday season and please take the time to thank them for the support they give to you and our mission.

## 102nd adds Director of Psychological Health to its ranks

By Tech. Sgt. Kerri Cole  
102nd Intelligence Wing Public Affairs



In 2010, Air National Guard leaders created new, wing-level positions to provide behavioral health support to Airmen and their families.

The wing welcomes Dr. Gretchen Breyller-Hegeman as the 102nd Intelligence Wing Director of Psychological Health, or WDPH. According to Gretchen, the three main tasks of the WDPH are to promote balanced psychological health in times of increased stress,

provide comprehensive education and clinical assessments, and to be an in-house behavioral health SME [subject matter expert].

In her role as WDPH, Gretchen supports the readiness of 102nd Intelligence Wing airmen through the promotion of psychological health and resilience. Gretchen also consults with commanders regarding the psychological health of their members and units. As a member of the team of helping professionals, she supports and provides consultation to resiliency efforts, suicide prevention, traumatic stress response, and other programs supporting positive and mission-focused emotional wellbeing. She is available to provide presentations to your unit or group on a variety of

topics to enhance wellness; such as stress management, communication, conflict resolution, and relationships.

"Everyone is always welcome to make an appointment or drop by to talk," Gretchen said. She meets with airmen to provide a clinical interview and referral to local providers and other resources to address any issues hindering a member's wellbeing. With case management, Gretchen provides continuity and helps the member address any challenges in receiving services. Gretchen also collaborates with and assists with training local community providers regarding military culture, providing information relating to best practices and treatment.

Gretchen's office is co-located with the Family Readiness Program office in the wing headquarters building, 158 and she also has an office in building 197, Room 10. She can best be reached on her Blackberry, at 508-237-6652 and her email address is [Gretchen.Hegeman.ctr@ang.af.mil](mailto:Gretchen.Hegeman.ctr@ang.af.mil).

Gretchen has over 25 years experience and began working with the military following her brother-in-law's death in the Pentagon on 9/11. Previously, she was the State Director of Psychological Health for the Maine National Guard where she created psychological health programs for the 101st as well as the Army Guard.

Fun facts about Gretchen: She is a "Foodie" and loves to cook or try new gourmet recipes and restaurants. She is also a Sprint Triathlete "to offset her Foodie weight," she added, a wife, mother of three, and grandmother of two.

## AIRMAN'S COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR VOICE

By Tech Sgt. Kerri Cole  
President, Airman's Advisory Council

The Airman's Council serves as a forum for those in the rank of Technical Sergeant and below to make our voices heard about issues that concern us. These issues involve educational benefits, training, billeting, transportation, unit training assembly scheduling, and any other issues concerning junior enlisted members. The group meets each Saturday during UTAs.

In addition to instant gratification you may feel after raising some of your concerns, you can be assured that your issues and questions will not simply be dismissed. Instead, the Airman's Council serves as your direct channel to the senior leadership here at the 102nd Intelligence Wing.

While each unit has already designated a representative to the Airman's Council, and member of the unit with an issue to raise is encouraged to attend the meetings.

Those who cannot attend the meetings are encouraged to make their concerns known to their representatives. If you have an issue to raise and a voice to be heard, please attend the next meeting on December 3 at 2 p.m. in the Bldg 158 Wing Conference Room. I also invite you to join

the 102nd Intelligence Wing Airman's Advisory Council Facebook page for current news, events and meeting minutes.

If you would like to nominate someone for an Airman's Council Coin (pictured below) please submit a nomination form available on the Airman's Council CoP or myself.

If you are interested in becoming an Airman's Council chair member the following positions are open: Web/CoP/ Facebook administrator, Treasurer, Secretary (alternate) and may contact myself, Tech. Sgt. Kerri Cole, at (508) 968-4516 for more information.



## Airman in the Spotlight



### Staff Sgt. Ashley Davin

Staff Sgt. Ashley Davin works for the 102nd Security Forces Squadron as a Journeyman, and has been a member of the Air National Guard for the last 4 and a half years. In her military career thus far she has deployed twice. Once to Saudi Arabia in 2008 and then to Iraq in 2010.

**Background:** Staff Sgt. Davin grew up in Topeka City, Kansas.

After graduating High School, she moved to El Dorado, Kansas, where she attended 2 years of College Majoring in Secondary Education, then moved to New Hampshire, where she stayed for another year. She finally landed in Massachusetts, when she decided to join the Air National Guard.

Staff Sgt. Davin likes to be deployed overseas, because from her point of view, "deployments open your eyes for the

big picture, and enable the one to a better understanding of the different cultures, religious contrasts and social interaction between its inhabitants. I learned a lot from my military deployments and I am willing to use my teaching background as a tool to share my experience with the local youth Community".

Staff Sgt. Davin explained she loves mixed martial arts, where she used to teach boxing on base. She looks forward to re-opening a Center for martial arts and to become a coach for the youth class. "My goal is to use my military and martial arts background as a role model to help shape their bodies and develop their minds" said Davin.

**For fun:** In her free time Staff Sgt. Davin enjoys going to MMA Championships, exercise her body with running and workouts, and going out with her boyfriend.

**Her favorite travel spot:** Staff Sgt. Davin's favorite place to visit is Tahiti, in the South Pacific.

By Airman 1st Class Luiz Vicentini  
102nd Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

If you would like to nominate a 102nd Intelligence Wing member for the monthly "Airman in the Spotlight" feature, contact Maj. Nicole Ivers at (508) 968-4664 or e-mail [102iw.pa@ang.af.mil](mailto:102iw.pa@ang.af.mil).

## 102d SFS ARMEN RECIPROCATE APPRECIATION TO LOCAL BUSINESS

By Erin Creighton  
102nd Intelligence Wing Family Readiness Program Coordinator



**Pictured Above:** Members of the 102nd Security Forces Squadron present a flag and Certificate of Appreciation to the British Beer Company, from Sandwich, Mass. The company raised funds and shipped Christmas stockings and other items to deployed SFS members, including those from the 102nd, over the 2010 holiday season.

For years, owner Harry Gngong and his employees at the British Beer Company (BBC) Restaurant and Pub in Sandwich, Mass. have frequently served military customers. When one of their fellow employees, Senior Airman Michele Copeland of the 102nd Intel Squadron, joined the 102nd Intel Wing, their personal connection to the military again grew. Then, with the deployment of the Security Forces Squadron, an opportunity was born for the Sandwich BBC to demonstrate their years of appreciation to local military forces.

The employees raised funds to send an acoustic guitar with stand, a popcorn machine with all the fixings, and 155 individual stockings to the entire Squadron (three-quarters of whom were not 102SFS members), over to Iraq for Christmas.

During October's Field Training, the 102nd Security Forces Squadron were able to

return the favor and show the employees of the Sandwich BBC their appreciation. In a special presentation, with many of the stocking recipients on hand, Caroline Irving, Manager at the Sandwich BBC, was presented a Certificate of Appreciation with a flag flown over Sather Air Base, Baghdad, Iraq, on Christmas Day 2010 in their honor.

# 102nd COMPLIES with 99% Overall Rating

Story by the 102nd Intelligence Wing Public Affairs office

The Air Guardsmen of the 102nd Intelligence Wing are in the fight every day. They deploy to the Middle East, train at several CONUS locations, and operate a 24/7 ISR mission. Despite their rigorous schedule, Massachusetts Guardsmen were still able to prepare and pass a major inspection focusing on processes and documentation.

Representing a variety of functional areas, a team of 39 inspectors from Air Combat Command (ACC), a team of

of compliance within each functional area, and logistical planning for the actual CI inspection. Bi-weekly updates to the command staff were performed, allowing every unit to brief on their compliance status. This was the 102nd's first Compliance Inspection since its re-designation as an Intelligence Wing in 2008.

Lt. Col. Tim Gordon, Wing Inspector General, who assisted in the planning and coordination of the inspection, pointed out that "The next challenge will be to maintain an emphasis on compliance while continuing the mission after the inspection team leaves".

Mother Nature also threw a curve ball at the wing when a rare October snow storm resulted in the governor declaring a state of emergency for western Massachusetts resulting in the activation of the National Guard, including members of the 102nd Intelligence Wing.

"We took it all in stride and were able to provide important forces to the governor and aid our fellow citizens while still focusing on and completing this important inspection," said

Col Anthony Schiavi, 102nd Intelligence Wing Commander, "This clearly validates the high degree of professionalism and dedication that exists within the members of the 102d Intelligence Wing."

In addition to a resounding passing grade, the following individuals and teams were singled out for notable contributions:

## SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE AWARDS

### ACC

#### Teams:

Antiterrorism Office  
Exercise Evaluation Team

#### Individuals:

1Lt Randy Bonneau  
MSgt Diane Basom  
MSgt Brenda Juarez  
TSgt David Mendoza  
TSgt Kawailehua Vadnais  
SSgt Bruce Anderson  
SrA Allen Nancarrow  
Mr. Gerald Demeusy  
Mr. Arthur Eddleston  
Mr. William Lynch  
Mr. Greg Nancarrow  
Ms. Andrea Rossignol  
Mr. Christopher Segura

### AFISRA

#### Teams:

Configuration Management  
Ready Intelligence Program  
Weapons & Tactics

#### Individuals:

Capt Sean Andersen  
MSgt Brian Savage  
MSgt Scott Coppinger  
MSgt Paul Perry

#### Coin Recipients:

MSgt Richard Evers  
MSgt Daniel Savary

**"We can tell you guys worked 'wicked hahd' "**

*jokes Col. Robert Spitznagel, AFISRA IG, in his best Boston accent.*

11 inspectors from Air Force ISR Agency (AFISRA), and 9 inspectors from the Global Strike Command came to Otis ANGB to ensure the 102nd Intelligence Wing is mission ready, which people of the unit proved beyond question.

CIs, which used to be called UCIs, are conducted to assess areas mandated by law as well as mission areas that are critical or important to the health and performance of an organization and to help standardize the way the Air Force conducts operations across the board, including active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. The inspection was based on Air Force Instructions, local, state, federal, and Department of Defense requirements.

Leading the ACC inspection team was Col. Robert Craig. Through his experience he has found that it is an inspector's job to not just inspect and write reports, but also to teach and educate Airmen across the globe how to better do their jobs. "These inspections are a tool for commanders to provide insight and give them areas to improve on," says Craig.

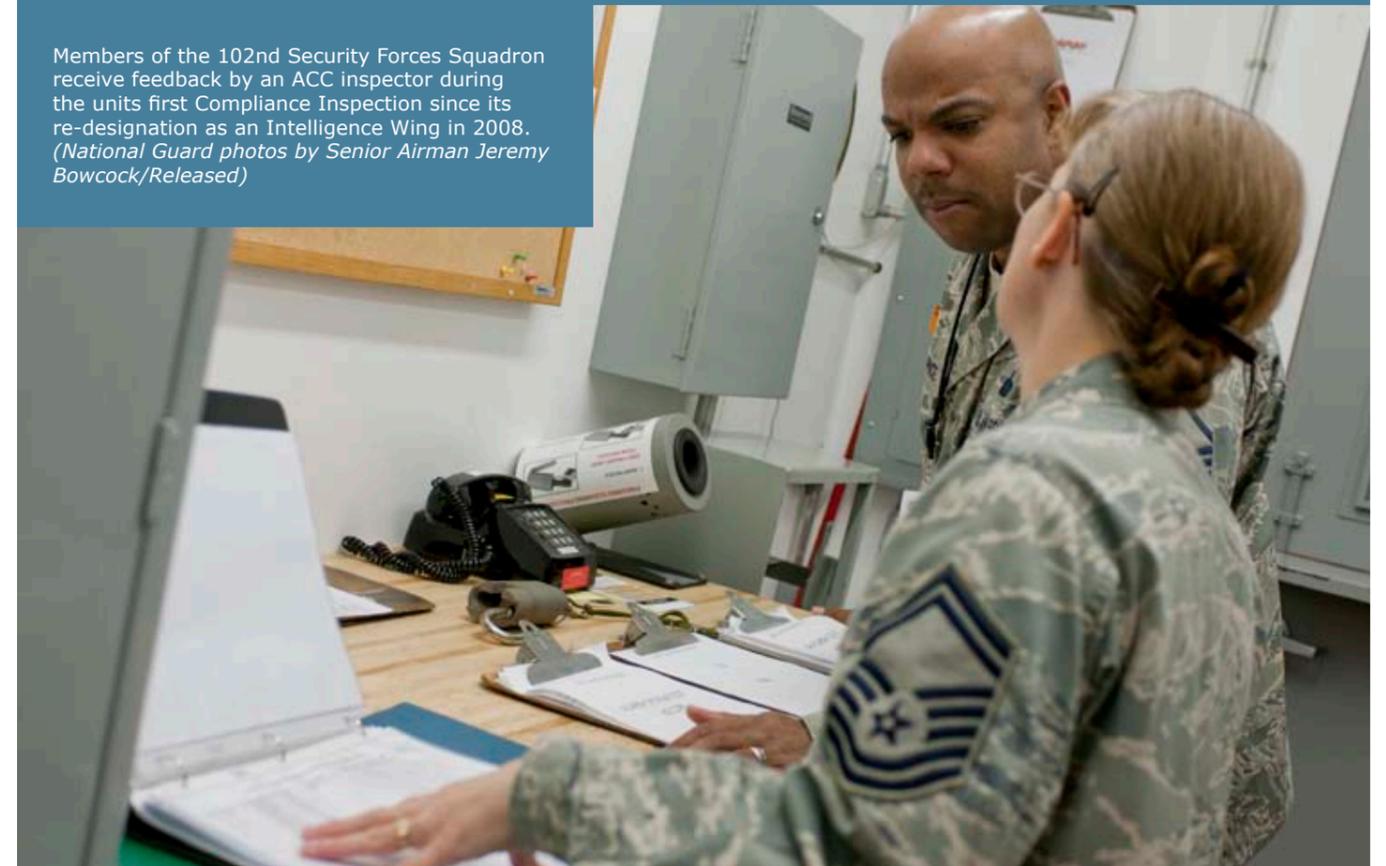
During the out brief, Col. Craig expressed "The overall impression is that this is a very strong, highly motivated and well-lead organization; which is clearly evident in the presentation of the 102nd Intel Wing programs. Wing discipline is clearly reflected with a 99% overall compliance rating".

Col. Rob Spitznagel, AFISRA Team Chief, highlighted his inspection results as "the best seen by his IG team in the past year."

Preparations and logistical support started back in 2010 with a CI preparation team which had representation from every 102nd Group. Preparation included an assessment



Members of the 102nd Security Forces Squadron receive feedback by an ACC inspector during the units first Compliance Inspection since its re-designation as an Intelligence Wing in 2008. (National Guard photos by Senior Airman Jeremy Bowcock/Released)



## 2011 Thomas Flynn Award: TSGT Michael Adduci, 102d CES

By Captain Andrew Smith  
102nd Civil Engineer Squadron



I've been associated with the Air Force for over twenty years and during that time I've seen the men and women of the military do extraordinary things in support of their military organization, their community, and one another.

So, it doesn't surprise me anymore to see military members go the extra mile to mentor junior airmen, support Wing activities, help families of deployed airmen, donate their time to a good cause, or put together a fund raiser to help someone less fortunate than themselves. One thing that does surprise me though, is a person who does all those things and has done so for many years. THAT'S someone special! One such person is Tech. Sgt. Michael Adduci of the 102nd Civil Engineer Squadron and if you haven't heard, he's the 102nd Intelligence Wing Thomas Flynn memorial award winner for 2011.

The Thomas Flynn memorial award recognizes the accomplishments of an individual assigned to the 102nd Intelligence Wing who best displays the highest ideals of patriotism, morale, and dedication to duty. To give you an idea of why he was picked as this year's award winner here's just a small sampling of Tech. Sgt. Adduci's

accomplishments. He volunteered and was called to State activation for Operations Big Ice, Rising Waters, and Hurricane Irene; volunteered to become the Civil Engineer Squadron Utilities shop training NCOIC, mentored junior airmen while deployed to Fort Indiantown Gap and Silver Flag regional training sites, and is a key member of a team of civil engineers who have supported the Pan-Mass challenge for seven years running. He has also helped raise over \$5000 for a local construction worker injured and unable to work, and helps organize an annual motorcycle ride fund raiser for the Jamie A. Smith Foundation to provide financial support for his two surviving children. His accomplishments are truly outstanding!

Recently, I sat down with Tech. Sgt. Adduci to see what motivates him to do such an outstanding job. He told me that his strong desire to help others, a sense of personal gratification, and the ability to spend time with those he loves while helping others is all the motivation he needs.

As Tech. Sgt. Adduci said, "There are so many people that have greater issues than myself—such as cancer, autism, a house that has burned

down—I just want to give back as much as I can." On top of that, "It's very gratifying knowing I've helped on some kind of level, whether large or small."

One special benefit of helping others is the quality time that he's able to spend with friends and family while doing so. He and his girlfriend Christina Harrington perform many of the accomplishments together. Just ask anyone in the Civil Engineer Squadron and they'll tell you Christina and Mike are a great team who continually support military members and their community.

There's much to be said about the many selfless acts accomplished by Tech. Sgt. Michael Adduci. Please congratulate him the next time you see him on a job well done!

**Pictured Above:** Tech. Sgt. Michael Adduci receives recognition for winning the Thomas Flynn memorial award during Family Day on October 2, 2011. Pictured left to right: Col. Anthony Schiavi, Major Gen. Leon Rice, Tech. Sgt. Michael Adduci, Chief Master Sgt. Wayne Raymondo (National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Kerri Cole)

## A New Life for Hawk found injured on Otis ANGB

Photos and story by Tech. Sgt. Kerri Cole  
102nd Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

It took a little convincing to get her out of the cage, but on October 21, a re-habilitated female Red Tailed hawk was released back into the wild on Otis Air National Guard Base, where she was originally found injured and unresponsive.

On September 25, 2011 the hawk was spotted on her back, unconscious, at the corner of Granville St. and Reilly St. at the telephone pole. The 102nd Security Forces Squadron responded to the call about the disabled bird and came to the scene.

Staff Sgt. David Patistea of the 102d SFS secured the area to protect the hawk which, by that time, was conscious and alert but too injured to fly. Sgt. Patistea contacted the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and spoke to Sgt. Matthew Bass, a Mass. Environmental Police Officer, to find out how the bird could be best

transported to safety.

Sgt. Bass responded to the scene himself and transported the hawk to the Cape Wildlife Center, which is operated by The Humane Society in partnership with The Fund for Animals, and promotes and protects the health and well-being of native wildlife and their habitats.

"The facility did a great job bringing the hawk back from its injury and the bird is surely grateful for the helping hand" said Bass. The cause of the injury was undetermined.

**Pictured:** Sergeant Matthew Bass of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection holds the re-habilitated Red Tailed hawk that was found injured at Otis ANGB on September 25. The hawk was released back into the wild on October 21 at the same location she was found.



## Notes from the JAG

By Maj. David Jaffe  
102nd Intelligence Wing Staff Judge Advocate



In September 2011, Staff Sgt. David Offutt, Jr. joined the legal office as a paralegal. Prior to his service with the 102d Legal Office, Sgt. Offutt served on active duty as a field operator in the Marine Corps, including three deployments (two to Iraq and one in Afghanistan). Sgt. Offutt is a traditional guardsman and works as a Brockton Fire Fighter and a realtor with Equity Realty Plus during the month. Sgt. Offutt will assist other legal team members in the provision of legal services including, but not limited to:

- Wills, living wills, advanced medical directives and powers of attorney,
- Notary services,
- Dependent care plans,
- Employment problems arising from the performance of military duty and subject to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA),
- Landlord-tenant problems
- General information on state adoption laws and requirements,
- Financial Responsibilities

If you have any questions regarding the scope of legal assistance, please contact our office at 508-968-4336.

## Who's Who?

- **Maj. David Jaffe** is now the 102nd Staff Judge Advocate
- **Staff Sgt. David Offutt** is a new Paralegal in the 102nd IW JAG office
- **Dr. Gretchen Hegeman** is the new Wing Director of Psychological Health
- **Tech. Sgt. Kerri Cole** is the new Public Affairs/Visual Information Manager

Have someone new in your organization you would like everyone to know about? Submit their name, rank, and office/position to [102iw.pa@ang.af.mil](mailto:102iw.pa@ang.af.mil)

### SCHOOL HONORS >>

#### CONGRATS Distinguished Grads:

**TSgt Norman, Sara**, 3E631 @ Sheppard (102 CES)  
**SSgt Bonzagni, Christopher**, 1N131 @ Goodfellow (101 IS)  
**A1C Spero, Dylan**, 3D131 @ Keesler (102 ISS)  
**A1C McEachern, Juliann**, BMT @ Lackland (102 IW)  
**A1C McEachern, Juliann**, 6F031 @ Keesler (102 IW)

### PROMOTIONS >>



#### 2 Dads, 2 Sons, 2 Senior Airman Promotions

Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Booker of the 101st Intelligence Squadron (left) and Senior Master Sgt. Kevin McDonough of the 102nd Air Operations Group pin Senior Airman on their respective sons, Aaron Booker and Sean McDonough, who are both in the 102nd Intelligence Support Squadron.

#### Technical Sgt.

Benjamin T. McCabe  
Keith E. Ledin

#### Senior Airman

Aaron M. Booker  
Brian J. Kentris  
Alexander D. Duff  
Michelle L. McKeen  
Lindsay M. Mollen  
Sean McDonough

#### Staff Sgt.

David A. Goyette  
Timothy A. Gregoire

### ANNOUNCEMENTS >>

#### PA JOURNALIST VACANCY

Do you like to talk to people? How about write news stories and take photos? The 102nd Public Affairs Office has a Journalist (3N0X1) vacancy. This is a traditional/part-time position for E-6 and below. Interested personnel should contact Maj. Nicole Ivers at 508-968-4664 or email [nicole.ivers@ang.af.mil](mailto:nicole.ivers@ang.af.mil).

#### "LEGACY" DVD



A documentary film "Legacy", the history of the 102nd Fighter Wing and the 101st Fighter Squadron is available for sale. You may obtain a copy by making a minimum \$25 contribution to the Massachusetts Air National Guard Historical Association Museum. (Check payable to: "MA ANG Historical Association", 331 Sandwich Rd, East Falmouth, MA 02536)

#### FULL-TIME HOLIDAY PARTY

The Full-Time 102nd Intelligence Wing Holiday Party will be on December 16th, 1130 at the Aerospace Dining Facility. There will be a raffle for \$10 per ticket. For more information or to purchase tickets, see MSgt Andrea Burgo. Wear a unique hat!

#### OTIS HERITAGE PLAZA BRICKS

The Otis Heritage Plaza brick program is still alive! You may now contact TSgt Kerri Cole to purchase a brick for \$50. 508-968-4516 or [kerri.cole@ang.af.mil](mailto:kerri.cole@ang.af.mil). Perfect gift for a retiree or friend of the 102nd Intelligence Wing. Proceeds go to future Morale, Welfare and Recreation efforts as well as upkeep requirements for the plaza. *\*\*Because of recent changes in ownership of this project, some previous order forms have gone missing. Contact TSgt Cole for a list of current order forms waiting for engraving and installation. If you are not on the list you may have to re-submit the order form.*

## CHAPEL CALL

By Chaplain (Capt.) Mary Scheer  
102nd Intelligence Wing Chaplain

## "Humpty According To Grace"

I was so excited while Christmas shopping this year because this is the first year our 18 month old granddaughter will be with us for Christmas.

One of the things we bought her is a Mother Goose Nursery Rhyme book. With my children grown, this was my first glance through the book in more than two decades. I grew nostalgic reading those long forgotten poems. However, I also noticed how sad and hopeless some of the messages can be. For instance, consider Humpty Dumpty.

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;  
All the King's horses and all the King's men cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again.*

Mother Goose depicts Humpty as an egg wearing a blue one piece suit with a red bow tie, sitting high up on a brick wall...and after?...well, if you've ever seen a dropped egg, you get the picture.

That's a sad story for a nursery rhyme. I couldn't help but wonder what caused Humpty's fall? That he "Had a great fall" describes the "results" of the fall, but not "how" he fell. Was he leaning back to far on the wall and fell by accident? Was he trying to balance too many things and he just fell? Did he jump? Was he pushed? Isn't it human nature to want to know what caused the fall? Because if we knew then we could try to avoid it, learn ways to prevent it or figure out how to minimize the damage and recover quicker. However, regardless of what caused the fall, the end result is the same, Humpty's a mess and he cannot be fixed. Things were hopeless for Humpty.

But hopelessness isn't a message I want my granddaughter to learn. Even as the military promotes resiliency, I want her to learn that early on as well.

We've all made mistakes. In a million different ways every day it's possible for us to fall off the wall so to speak, to fall short in our relationships, our families, and our work and so on. There are people who can identify with poor Humpty when something in their life felt like a broken mess. But, those times of disappointment and failure don't have to leave us or our situations hopelessly broken.

Faith tells us that we are not alone, that there is help that reaches beyond what we can do on our own. We draw strength from each other, from our faith and our understanding of God, and from

a gift that we can offer each other in the form of grace. Grace is forgiveness, undeserved favor, and unconditional acceptance. Grace gives us the ability to live a new way and a real way to help others. Through grace we remember the times we needed and received another chance, a fresh start, or a new way to deal with something. The gift of grace is another tool in building spiritual resiliency, because with grace there is hope. Our past, our mistakes and our circumstances don't have to define or defeat us! Grace has the power to accomplish the impossible, to hold things together, to restore what has been lost, to repair what has been damaged and to heal what has been hurt. In receiving grace, we are forgiven and healed and restored, and in giving grace, we are forgiven, and healed and restored. What would happen if families, neighbors, states and nations could commit to new ways of living and giving according to grace? Imagine what could happen.

So I wrote another version of Humpty Dumpty for my granddaughter. "Humpty according to grace."

"Humpty Dumpty, sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty, indeed had a fall;

When all the kings' horses and all the kings' men came to put Humpty together again, they realized their limits and called in the king whose love and grace changed everything. Maybe not all at once or in a way they could see but they knew first hand graces mystery. They remembered their fall, and the king's intervention. So thankful they were of his gracious intention. He saved them for sure, forgave their sins too and accepted each one just as they were. They stayed there with Humpty and helped with his needs, tended his cracks with love and good deeds. They spoke such kind words and encouraged his heart, extending God's grace from the very start. Because they too had fallen and needed the king, they now had extra love to bring. They saw past the pieces strewn about where he lay, and loved him and held him while the king worked his way. Sharing the hope and good news they'd been given, they encouraged each other in a new way of living. So the next time that humpty should sit on a wall, if the wind blows just right and threatens a fall, then all the kings horse and all the kings men, will all stand together protecting their friend."

For me, this version reflects grace, offers hope and resiliency found and strengthened through faith and community and that's a message I want my granddaughter to grow up with.

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