

HQ INDIVIDUAL RESERVIST READINESS & INTEGRATION ORGANIZATION

The Readiness Report

This holiday, take time to relax, but remember your wingmen

By Col. Carolyn A. Stickell, Commander, HQ RIO

As another year comes to a close, it's time to take a break and to reflect on some of our accomplishments. I'd like to take a moment to encourage you to spend time with your friends and family this holiday season, remind you to watch for those who may struggle, and to highlight just a few of HQ RIO's activities this year.



Col. Carolyn Stickell

So many of our Individual Reservists are hard-charging, proactive, get-it-done people! Sometimes, in our drive for mission accomplishment, we get wrapped up in what we're doing and forget to take a step back, relax and strengthen our relationships with our families, friends and support networks. The holiday season is a great time to do just that. I want to encourage everyone to put some projects on the back burner, unplug from your email at the end of the work day, and make a point to spend quality and quantity time with your loved ones. Not only will it make you feel good now, but it will also build that social pillar of resiliency that's so important when times get tough.

While this season is one of joy for many of us, for some the holidays are fraught with hardship and emotion. Look around you and be watchful for those who might need a friend or place to belong during the season. You may also wish to consider donating to a program that supports those in need. There are many people who need a little help during the holidays, and everyone can make a difference in one way or another.

As I reflect on 2016, it's evident that the professionals on my staff here at HQ RIO have worked extremely hard to improve things for both our Individual Reservists and our active-component customers. We received approval to permanently place orders writers in the Detachments, which will help streamline the orders process. We also received approval to move the IMA Travel Office from Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, to Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado.

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Happy Holidays! From the HQ RIO family to yours, best wishes during the holiday season and into the New Year. (U.S. Air Force Photo/Quinn Jacobson)

Det 3 volunteers at therapeutic riding center

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

The staff of HQ RIO Detachment 3, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, paid a visit to a local therapeutic horse riding center, Nov. 30, tackling several maintenance and housekeeping projects.

The detachment's 12 military and civilian Airmen spent the afternoon at the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center. They were joined by 13 Airmen from the 10th Force Support Squadron, which is located at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

"Anytime you can have a positive change in your community it's a good thing," said Col. Jennifer McGonigle, the Detachment 3 commander, of her team's time working at the riding center.

The volunteer day was driven by Staff Sgt. Nikolaus Rouse, a readiness management specialist serving on full-time orders at the detachment who is also a traditional reservist at the 380th Space Control Squadron. Rouse and his fiancé, Senior Airman Gabrielle Leora, an active-duty career development technician at the 10th Force Support Squadron, have given up part of each Saturday since October to volunteer at the riding center.

The center, located in nearby Elbert, Colorado, is a non-profit that provides a variety of therapeutic services that center around caring for and riding horses. Rouse and Leora have worked with the same eight-year-old child every week, helping him learn to ride and care for a horse and, in the process, strengthen the muscles in his core and hips.

The couple got involved when they were looking to put volunteerism in their lives. Rouse, who attended a nearby high school as a teenager, had heard good things about the program from friends. Leora, a Texan who has been stationed in Colorado Springs for four years, did some research online, found out there was an upcoming new-volunteer orientation and signed them up.

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HQ RIO Leadership



Col. Carolyn A. Stickell
Commander



CMSgt. Dolores Colella
Superintendent



MSgt. Wendy Barraza
First Sergeant

[Enlisted leader biographies](#)

HQ RIO Quick Links

- [HQ RIO Website](#)
- [Detachment Directory](#)
- [The Guide for IRs](#)
- [Travel Companion for IRs](#)
- [Wingman Toolkit](#)
- [MyPers](#)
- [AROWS-R](#)
- [Defense Travel System](#)

Connect with HQ RIO

Email | arpc.det1.rio@us.af.mil
www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/hqrio.aspx



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www.youtube.com/HeadquartersRIO

News briefs

HQ RIO and TFSC holiday operations

The HQ RIO and Total Force Service Center phone operations will have limited assistance available to customers from Dec. 26, 2016 through Monday, Jan. 2, 2017 in observance of the holidays. Phone counselors will resume normal operations beginning Tuesday, Jan. 3 from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m. MT. To reach HQ RIO, dial 720-847-3746. To reach the TFSC, call 210-565-0102.

Airmen can request assistance 24/7/365 by logging onto myPers, selecting "Incidents and Messages" (top left-hand side of the page under "My Account" heading) and then selecting "Email Us" on the next page.

Nominations for IR of the Year due by Jan. 13

Individual Reservists who wish to nominate themselves for the IR of the Year program must submit their packages to their servicing HQ RIO Detachment no later than Jan. 13, 2017.

The award program recognizes enlisted members in three categories—Airman, NCO, SNCO—and officers in two categories—CGO and FGO. The award period is Jan. 1, 2016—Dec. 31, 2016.

Additionally, the enlisted winners will advance to compete in the Air Force Reserve Command Outstanding Airmen of the Year award program

For details on how to self-nominate for the 2016 IR of the Year awards, please visit the Awards and Boards section of the HQ RIO website at www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/hqrio/awards-boards.aspx.

All Individual Reservists must obtain flu shot by Jan. 1

Flu season is back and all Individual Reservists (Individual Mobilization Augmentees and Participating Individual Ready Reservists) must obtain their vaccination by Jan. 1, 2017.

Members who receive the flu vaccination from a civilian provider must ensure they submit proper documentation in order to have their Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) updated. Additionally, all IRs must be in duty status (pay and points or points only) to utilize a Military Treatment Facility.

Only the inactivated (no live virus) vaccine, administered intramuscularly in those up to age 65, will be provided by MTFs.

IRs should note that if they receive the vaccination from a civilian provider, the FluMist form is no longer approved for DoD personnel. Any other form of the influenza vaccine is acceptable. Additionally, they must provide one of the following documents to their servicing MTF or the HQ RIO/IRM (afrc.rmgsg@us.af.mil):

- Civilian proof of vaccination, or
- a letter from a doctor recommending the vaccine not be received and why.

In accordance with AFI 36-2254, Vol. 1, Reserve Personnel Participation, if a Reservist's IMR status turns red (overdue), their HQ RIO detachment commander may disapprove any further participation, or subsequent orders may direct them to obtain the vaccine while in status. Historically, the Air Force Reserve Command vice commander has also called for members who fail to receive their vaccination to be placed in a "no-pay, no points" status until they have received the vaccine.

Members should direct any questions to their servicing MTF or the HQ RIO/IRM office. Questions regarding orders should be directed to the member's servicing HQ RIO Detachment.

RDEDB results announced

Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center officials announced selection results from the academic year 17-18 Reserve Developmental Education Designation Board. The selection board convened at the center Oct. 17 - 21 to match selected members to their respective schools based upon the needs of the Air Force Reserve followed by consideration for the individual's school preferences. Board members selected 53 of 161 officers considered.

A list of those selected can be found on the myPers and ARPC websites.

NOTE: The Close-Hold Release published to Commanders Wednesday, Nov. 30 is INVALID and has been replaced with the list posted to the websites as of Dec. 2.

For more information, call the Total Force Service Center at DSN 665-0102 or 210-565-0102. Questions specific to the RDEDB process can also be addressed by emailing arpc.dpaf.rdedb1@us.af.mil.

Did you know? | Tips for the Individual Reservist

Did you know all IMAs are required to update their Civilian Employment Information annually? Updated CEI provides Defense officials visibility into who can be called up for active military duty without jeopardizing the civilian forces responsible for safeguarding our country.

To update civilian employment information, visit <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/esgr/>.



IMA leaves legacy at AF personnelist apprenticeship school

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

When an instructor at the Air Force's personnelist apprenticeship course asked his class if anyone was interested in painting a mural of the school's mascot, Tech. Sgt. Michael Byczynski volunteered on a whim.

Tech. Sgt. Amanda Gallegos, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the course, said she had been looking for an artist for about three months, bringing it up to each class to come through Keesler Air Force Base's Wolfe Hall, where the course is held. Byczynski, an Individual Mobilization Augmentee who attended the course from September to October, was the first to step up.

The project was part of a larger initiative by the 335th Training Squadron commander, Lt. Col. Elizabeth Aptekar, whose goal is to have student legacies all around the school house.

Byczynski is not an artist in the traditional sense and had never attempted a mural before but volunteered because he needed something to keep him busy when not in class. He said his civilian job as a dental lab aesthetician – recreating patient's mouths and teeth to look natural – involves a lot of artistry and he was confident he could execute the work successfully.

Byczynski got his start as a dental aesthetician when he was on active duty for 10 years and continued in that line of work as a civilian when he left active duty. Byczynski, who originally enlisted in 1984, has been an Air Force Reservist on and off since 1994, serving as a firefighter until 1997 when he entered the Inactive Ready Reserve. He left the Reserve altogether until 2013, when a retiring friend told him he could still serve. He returned as a Traditional Reservist, working as a dental assistant. He made the transition to the Individual Reserve as an IMA about a year ago, after he began working on full-time orders at the Air Reserve Personnel Center.

IMAs are Air Force Reservists assigned to active-component organizations. They are required to serve between 24 and 36 days each year, depending on their position but, as is the case for Byczynski, may volunteer to fill additional needs. There are more than 7,200 IMAs assigned to major commands, combatant commands and government agencies around the world.

To successfully complete the mural at the 335th TRS, he had to render the school's mascot, a bull, as friendly and approachable – traits important for personnelists. He began by sketching several different concepts based on a computer generated image the school had and came up with eight different designs; the faculty and leadership voted on their favorite sketch. He said that after going through this part of the creative process, he was certain he could finish the project successfully. He then bought his supplies and waited for a day off to begin painting.

He started on a Friday that the school house was closed and there were no classes. He spent about four hours painting that first day and then worked on it in smaller increments thereafter, for a total of about eight hours. He said another Airman helped him with the lettering. The finished painting is about five feet tall and three feet wide and is outside the instructor supervisor's office.

"He did an awesome job," said Gallegos, adding that the artwork is a legacy that will be seen by all new personnelists who come through the school house in the future.

Aptekar also praised Byczynski's work and provided him with a letter of commendation that read, in part, "Our team is grateful for the hard work that went into this mural which will be seen by thousands of Airmen who walk our halls. As we continue to train and develop our next generation of leaders, we know your work will inspire others..."

Byczynski said the project started out of boredom turned into something he feels good about.

"I left my mark on the school and hopefully teachers and students who look at it can be inspired," he said.



Top—The beginning phase of Tech. Sgt. Michael Byczynski's depiction of the 335th Training Squadron's mascot



Left—Byczynski's finished painting. The 335th TRS requested a depiction of its mascot as friendly and approachable.

Bottom—Byczynski receiving his certificate of training from the Air Force's Personnel Apprenticeship Course.



(Holiday, continued from page 1)

This will allow our Reserve Pay Office and IMA Travel Office to be co-located, while also providing direct commander and ARPC/FM oversight of all our financial operations. While moves like this always come with some bumps in the road, we ultimately expect to greatly enhance the pay and travel reimbursement functions for our IRs. Another big accomplishment this year has been an organizational restructure that eliminated our integration cell and created our force management team, a shift designed to streamline our internal processes in order to better serve IRs. Along with ongoing process standardization at the detachment level, these changes should make it faster and easier for IRs to accomplish the personnel tasks that keep their careers moving forward.

Please, take time to relax this holiday season, recharge your batteries, build your resiliency and be ever vigilant for the wellbeing of your wingmen. I look forward to another successful year in 2017!

Happy Holidays!



The Detachment 3 staff, pictured here from left to right are: Staff Sgt. Nikolaus Rouse, Senior Airman Gabrielle Loera, Senior Master Sgt. Karen Rouse, Master Sgt. Raul Gonzalez, Senior Master Sgt. Ruth Altman-Burnett, Alba Palacio, Staff Sgt. Veronica Gomez, Kurt Grogan, Carri Boswell, Col. Jennifer McGonigle, Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Maine, Master Sgt. Tonge, Senior Master Sgt. Sonia Balas .



(Left to right) Senior Master Sgt. Ruth Altman-Burnett, Staff Sgt. Veronica Gomez, Alba Palacio, Carri Boswell and Staff Sgt. Nikolaus Rouse spread fresh dirt on an outdoor riding coral at the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center, Nov. 30. The HQ RIO Detachment 3 staff spent the afternoon performing a variety of maintenance and housekeeping projects for the local non-profit. (Courtesy photo)



Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Maine and Senior Master Sgt. Sonia Balas, both of HQ RIO Detachment 3, spread fresh dirt on an outdoor riding corral at the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center, Nov. 30. (Courtesy photo)

(Detachment 3, continued from page 1)

While Rouse had spent time working on a horse ranch during high school, Leora said she had not ridden a horse since she was a young child and was anxious about being around them.

The orientation calmed her fears and the couple was soon helping a young child grow stronger.

In addition to supporting the patient as he rides, the two Airmen help teach him about grooming the animals, play games with him and perform various other therapy actions, as directed by the therapist who is also present during their sessions. After a couple weeks of this, Rouse and Leora asked if there was anything the riding center needed help with, since it is largely a volunteer-run organization. They took the list they were given back to their respective organizations and asked if they could get a group together to help out at the center.

The Detachment 3 commander was already planning to implement a quarterly group-volunteer activity, so Rouse's proposal was a perfect fit, said McGonigle.

The morning of the 30th was a cold one and McGonigle said she thought the group would freeze working at the partially-outdoor riding center. But by midday, the weather was 50 degrees and sunny.

During the three-hour window the group of Airmen was at the center, they were able to complete all of the projects they were assigned, said Leora. They spread fresh dirt around an outdoor corral that needed to be resurfaced, cleaned the tack room where the riding equipment is stored, and filled in holes caused by erosion. They also helped decorate the center for the holidays.

McGonigle said the time her detachment spent together volunteering was a great way to build teamwork and pride in the organization, adding that shoveling dirt with someone really creates a bond.

Detachment 3 is located at Peterson Air Force Base and is one of seven HQ RIO detachments. It is responsible for IMAs assigned to Air Force Space Command, North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Strategic Command, Air Force Global Strike Command, the U.S. Air Force Academy, and U.S. Cyber Command.



(From left to right) Kurt Grogan, Staff Sgt. Veronica Gomez and Col. Jennifer McGonigle fill holes created by erosion at the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center, Nov. 30. (Courtesy photo)



Avoid online scams this holiday season with tips from AFOSI

Department of Defense members and their families should be wary of various online, social media, phone and work from home scams which take place during the holiday season.

Reference the infographic on the right for details on what some of the most common online and social media scams look like.

Situational awareness is typically the best mitigation for most of these scams. Avoid clicking and opening unsolicited emails from unknown senders; this includes being cautious of unknown email attachments. When receiving tracking numbers, check with the original shipper or vendor to ensure that is not a fraudulent tracking number. Make sure to check bank and credit card statements regularly and only buy merchandise from a reputable source. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Additional information concerning phishing and social engineering scams can be found at: <https://www.ic3.gov/preventiontips.aspx>.

WATCH OUT FOR THE GRINCH cyber

ONLINE SCAMS – Designed to steal bank and personal information under the guise of discounted brand name products, bank scams and fake tracking numbers. Avoid paying for goods in unusual manners, such as gift cards are releasing banking information. Also watch for scammers claiming to represent FedEx, UPS and local charities.

SOCIAL MEDIA SCAMS – Appear as gift cards, vouchers or other promotions but are actually surveys designed to steal personal information. Also avoid posting photos of event tickets as the bar codes can be copied and used to recreate the tickets for sale.

SMARTPHONE SCAMS – Fraudulent applications which mirror storefront applications. The types of apps may seek elevated and unnecessary privileges to personal information.

EMPLOYMENT SCAMS – Advertised as quick ways to make extra cash during the holiday season and usually require the prospective employee to spend money up front on training or startup kits. Often advertised as work from home positions. Carefully research individuals or companies before providing any personal information and never provide personal information when first interacting with a potential employer.

Source: AFOSI 2016 Holiday Scam Public Awareness bulletin

Some early filers may not receive tax refund until after Feb. 15

By Defense Media Activity

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. (AFNS) -- Many taxpayers plan their holiday shopping and other purchases on the fact they will get their tax refund from the IRS at the earliest possible date.

In 2017, that may no longer be the case.

The Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act, signed into law December 2015, requires the IRS to hold tax refunds which include Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until Feb. 15, 2017.

This law requires the IRS to hold refunds until mid-February in 2017 for people claiming the EITC or the ACTC. Also, new identity theft and refund fraud safeguards by both the IRS and individual states may mean some tax returns and refunds face additional review.

Some refunds delayed in 2017

Beginning in 2017, the IRS must hold the entire refund — even the portion not associated with the EITC and ACTC — until at least Feb. 15. The IRS says this change helps ensure taxpayers get the refund they are owed by giving the agency more time to help detect and prevent fraud.

"This is an important change, as some of these taxpayers are used to getting an early refund," said John Koskinen, the IRS commissioner. "We want people to be aware of the change for their planning purposes during the holidays. We don't want anyone caught by surprise if they get their refund a few weeks later than in previous years."

As in past years, the IRS will begin accepting and processing tax returns once the filing season begins. All taxpayers should file as usual, and tax return preparers should submit returns as they normally do. Although the IRS cannot issue refunds for some early filers until at least Feb. 15, the IRS reminds taxpayers most refunds will be issued within the normal timeframe: less than 21 days after being accepted for processing by the IRS. The Where's My Refund? tool on IRS.gov and the IRS2Go phone app remains the best way to get the status of a refund.

Happy Holidays from AFRC



Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller shares holiday message and highlights Citizen Airmen's tradition of giving. <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/494968/afrc-cc-holiday-message-2016>