

## From the commander: Don't miss out on earned benefits for periods of active-duty service

Currently, the 512th Airlift Wing has hundreds of Airmen that are eligible for a Department of Defense Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty." Your unit will tell you if you are on the list, or feel free to ask your chain of command.

The first DD Form 214s were issued in 1950 and have been a big part of the military ever since.

The DD Form 214 is one of the most important military service documents, as it represents a complete, verified record of a Reserve Airman's active-duty military service, awards and medals, and other pertinent service information, such as promotions, combat service or overseas service, AFSC identifiers, and it's a record of training and schools completed. It also provides civilian and government agencies with authoritative information they need to administer the federal and state laws that apply to Airmen who seek veterans' benefits, reemployment rights, and unemployment insurance.

As a Reserve Airman, you qualify for a DD Form 214 to document your active-duty service in the following cases: active-duty service of 90 consecutive days or more, initial basic military training and technical school or active-duty service in support of a contingency, regardless of the number of days.

Effective June 15, 2007, Air Force Reserve Command identified the virtual Military Personnel Flight as the primary system to complete the DD Form 214. The vMPF application retrieves pertinent data from MilPDS, calculates the member's service dates and has the capability to attach and send documents electronically. The Airman reviews the worksheet and submits any required supporting documentation (active-duty orders certified by finance along with any



**Col. Raymond A. Kozak**  
512th Airlift Wing commander

## Commander's Call dates changed

The wing commander's call dates, originally scheduled for the July unit training assembly, has been changed to the June UTA to coincide with the Wingman Day, biennial picnic, Galaxy Adventure and Ultimate Fitness Challenge. Details about these events will be distributed as it becomes available.

## Prepare for MilPDS shutdown

The MilPDS shut down begins Feb. 25, and many force management processes are affected, including classification actions, unit training assembly participation adjustments for March and April UTAs, classification actions such as AFSC upgrades and duty information, and point credit summaries. Any actions not received in advance of the shutdown will be in a hold status during shutdown. For more information about the MilPDS shutdown, call the 512th Force Management Office at (302) 677-3518.

## Newest E-7s to be inducted

The RSVP deadline to attend the Senior NCO Induction Ceremony is March 3. Tickets are \$35. The event to induct new master sergeants into the senior enlisted corps is scheduled to take place from 6-8 p.m., April 13, at the Duncan Center in Dover. Each unit has a designated representative selling tickets for this event.

amendments, paid travel voucher summary and awards and decoration printout) data directly to the Military Personnel Section.

The Force Support Squadron has posted a number of tools on their FSS Enterprise Information Management site to better assist wing Airmen in the processing of DD Form 214s.

In summary, it is clear that we have many Airmen who have completed seasoning training tours or basic military training but have not clicked on the vMPF link to get things started for their DD Form 214.

Let's work together to ensure our Airmen are able to receive the benefits they are entitled to.

## The fight of her life Reservist's wife battles MS with mixed martial arts

**Master Sgt. Veronica Aceveda**  
512th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**D**awn Fiore has been studying martial arts for 17 years, but it was only last year she went public about her toughest opponent -- multiple sclerosis.

The wife of Maj. Christian Fiore, a Reserve C-17 pilot assigned to the 326th Airlift Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Del., was diagnosed with MS in 2005 and can still remember what she was doing when she felt her first symptom.

"I got up from my desk one day, about to go to lunch with some friends," said the then-34 year old. "And, I had this horrifying experience of vertigo; everything was spinning around me, to the point where I was holding on to a wall."

She said that feeling continued through lunch. Six weeks later, the mother of three, ages 25, 14 and 9, had to take a leave of absence from work, because the vertigo continued to worsen.

After a year of research, tests and mistreatments, Fiore received a spinal tap, which revealed some of the indicators for multiple sclerosis, a degenerative disease of the central nervous system. MS can cause mild to severe neural and muscular impairments.

"(The doctor) saw lesions in my brainstem, and he told me I needed to take a daily injection of MS medication," she said. "I didn't believe or accept the diagnosis until I had three reputable neurologists confirm its accuracy."

That affirmation came in 2005 after a trip to Maryland, where she saw the head of the MS Center for the Johns Hopkins Health System.

"I was horrified at first," she said. "But, I quickly learned the shots weren't as bad as I thought. I'll have to take them for the rest of my life."

She said her immediate family was in disbelief.

"My mother and brothers were terrified and very worried for me," she said. "I think they were thinking of the worst case scenario. I actually found myself consoling them."

Her husband of 16 years said his initial reaction was fear of the unknown.

"We didn't know where this would lead

us or how it would affect our lives," said Major Fiore. "But, then we began the learning process."

"MS is not a death sentence," said the victim of MS, who is a first degree black belt.

She maintains the highest degree of competency in Taekwondo, a martial art which combines combat and self-defense techniques. She also holds a yellow belt in Haidong Gumdo, also known as Korean sword fighting.

Currently, she's a student of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Judo and Mixed Martial Arts at a school in Newark, Del., where she trains under Jeff Mitchell, a first generation black belt of Robson Moura, who Fiore said is considered one of the greatest Brazilian Jiu Jitsu masters of all time.



**Dawn Fiore, the wife a Reserve pilot assigned to the 326th Airlift Squadron strikes a fighting stance Nov. 16, 2012, at the base fitness center. Fiore discreetly battled multiple sclerosis for eight years until an on-line interview in 2012, when she went public about wrangling her medical illness with fitness and martial arts. After being diagnosed with MS, Fiore went on to earn a first degree black belt in taekwondo and practices other martial arts, including Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Judo and Haidong Gumdo. (Photo by Roland Balik)**

She said she acknowledges how far she's come from watching her 7-year-old son participate in a six-week trial membership Taekwondo class, which is what moved her to enroll herself.

"I was also painfully shy growing up," Fiore added. "And, the idea of being able to fight with competency and confidence really prompted my passion for learning how to fight."

Last year during an interview by a retailer known for promoting female fighters, Fiore credited practicing martial arts for her multiple sclerosis' lack of progression. Aside from her im-

mediate family and friends, it was the first time she spoke publicly about the disease she has been battling for eight years.

"Accepting the invitation to do the interview and telling the world was a huge step for me," said the MMA practitioner. "People were shocked, especially in my MMA and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu classes. It's hard to believe that I often fight with guys younger than my oldest son; other students in my class had no idea."

Despite MS, Fiore said she leads a normal life and strongly feels it's because of her level of fitness.

"Being active has an extraordinary effect on your mental capacity, your nervous system and your body's ability to regenerate cells," said the 134-pound exercise enthusiast. "And, the endorphin rush promotes your body's sense of well-being, which is often challenged by the daily stressors we all experience."

Fiore said she recognizes her resilient situation is not always the case.

"As I understand it, statistics show a high percentage of those diagnosed move to the progressive stage, and my heart goes out to those who are suffering," she said.

The full-time graphic designer said she knows her quality of life is a gift, and she feels compelled to give back.

"I want to help others," she said. "I feel driven to move in this direction, and I feel very positive about the future."

Fiore has created a workout program called KICKinetics, which blends traditional martial arts, kickboxing and some high-impact jump training.

She said her goals include leading a class at the base fitness center and sharing her story with several fitness related magazines.

"Staying fit and healthy to the level she has taken it to is awe inspiring," her husband said. "Obviously, I wish she

wasn't diagnosed with MS, but she's doing a great job holding it at bay. She is the ultimate lesson of perseverance."

No longer silent about her battle with MS, Fiore has her diagnosis displayed on the opening page of her KICKinetics website, where she offers exercise tips, links to MS-related topics and other information about health and well-being, including empowering quotes.

"Hopefully, one day there will be a cure for MS," she said. "But, until that day comes, I'll keep fighting."