

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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March 2008

McConnell AFB, Kansas

Vol. 13, No. 3

photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap



EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE (TAKE TWO)

Two officers from the 18th Air Refueling Squadron practice decontamination procedures as part of the 931st's ongoing effort to prepare for an Operational Readiness Inspection in June.

Group readies for second round of ORI prep

Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap
931st ARG Public Affairs

The opening credits will have long been over when 931st members participating in the Group's next exercise arrive for the big show.

The 22nd Air Refueling Wing, the Group's host unit, was scheduled to begin the initial response portion of the exercise March 3, while most 931st participants were scheduled to arrive for duty March 6. Limited availability of training days for Reservists made it difficult to include participants in the entire exercise.

"We're not participating as much as we would like," Lt. Col. Keith Kontz, the Group's Training Chief, said at the beginning of a meeting to discuss the exercise several

days before it was scheduled to begin.

The exercise has been named Triumphant Runner, and, appropriately, all the Group's non-civil engineering participants will start by sprinting to 22nd supply personnel for training gear first thing March 6. Then the race quickly becomes more marathon-like. Group members are scheduled to join their already-running, active-duty counterparts about five hours after they report for duty.

Because 931st members join the fray late, they will arrive as if they were stepping off the plane ready to go with in-processing and the mobility line already complete. "They want (us) to show up in MOPP-0," Colonel Kontz said, referring to the more commonly used acronym for Mission-Oriented Protective Postures. Group mem-

continued on page 7

THIS UTA

May UTA dates changed

The May Unit Training Assembly has been rescheduled to May 17-18 to accommodate a change of command ceremony. Col. Edsel "Archie" Frye, Jr., is scheduled to take command of the 931st from Col. William Cahoon. (see page 2 for more details).

Fitness test deadlines

Col. William Cahoon has directed Group members overdue for physical fitness testing to complete their test by the end of the March Unit Training Assembly. A Group-wide fitness test usually takes place in April, but a plan to accommodate the pending Operational Readiness Exercise has not been finalized. Contact your fitness monitor for more information.

vRed update required even if no changes

Every year, all Air Force members are required to review and update their Virtual Record of Emergency Data. About 38,000 Reserve members who have not completed the annual requirement must update their vRED by April 15, 2008, per a mandate from Air Force Reserve Command.

Members are required to access/update their vRED (even if information does not need to be changed) through the Virtual MPF.

Contact Master Sgt. Debroada Cornelius at 316-759-3587 for more information.



Vol.13 No.3

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Deadlines

The deadline to submit articles and newsbriefs for publication is close of business of the UTA.

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The *Kanza Spirit* is emailed each month to all 931st ARG members. Members not receiving their copy should check with their workgroup manager. The publication is also posted monthly on the unit website:

www.931arg.afrc.af.mil

Change of Commands



photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

Kathy Gilmour (*left*), and Ann Gilmour pin the rank of colonel to the uniform of Greg "Happy" Gilmour during a promotion ceremony at the Group headquarters building March 3. Some in attendance at the ceremony playfully yelled to push the rank in extra hard. Kathy is Colonel Gilmour's wife and Ann is his mother.

The command staff of the 931st ARG will have a whole new look in a few months.

Col. William Cahoon, the Group's current commander has been asked to take over as the vice commander of the 459th Air Refueling Wing at Andrews Air Force Base, Md. Col. Edsel "Archie" Frye, Jr., is scheduled to take command of the 931st during the May Unit Training Assembly. Colonel Frye is currently the operations group commander at the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla.

Heading to Tinker AFB is Col. Clay Childs, 931st Deputy Commander. Colonel Childs has been selected to take over as dep-

uty commander for the 507th and Col. Randy Foster, former 18th Air Refueling Squadron commander, is scheduled to be the 931st Deputy Commander.

Recently-promoted Col. Greg "Happy" Gilmour is transferring to the 507th as well to fill the operations group commander position to be vacated by Colonel Frye. A replacement for Colonel Gilmour has not yet been determined.

Colonel Frye's biography is online at:

[HTTP://WWW.507ARW.AFRC.AF.MIL/
LIBRARY/BIOGRAPHIES/](http://www.507arw.afrc.af.mil/library/biographies/)

Relevant Times

UTA SCHEDULE

March 8-9
April 5-6
May 17-18
June 21-22
June 28-29
August 9-10
September 13-14
October TBD
(Dates in red are mandatory)

DINING FACILITY

Breakfast 6:30 - 8:15 a.m.
Lunch 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Dinner 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

FITNESS CENTER

Mon/Sun 5 a.m. - 11 p.m.

SHOPETTE

Mon/Fri 6:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Sat/Sun 8:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.

COMMISSARY

Tues/Sat 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sun 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Mon Closed

BARBER SHOP

Mon/Fri 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sat 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sun 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

‘IT’S NOT JUST THE DESTINATION, IT’S ALSO THE JOURNEY’



LT. COL. JEFFREY J. PICKARD
*COMMANDER, 931ST AIRCRAFT
MAINTENANCE SQUADRON*

The 931st has been on a journey since the unit stood up in 1995. Each new person, section, or unit has added to the whole; has provided more manpower, leadership, and expertise to be relied upon. The desired destination is and has been full recognition as a wing within 4th Air Force.

Our maintenance folks are on the cusp of tripling their manpower; growing to more than 400 strong. As our group continues to grow, there will be a time when we will have the magic number of personnel assigned, in so many different career fields, at the right time, that we will spring forward and hopefully become a wing! When that time comes, will you be ready?

It's not just the destination, it's also the journey. As a group, I believe that we need to remain focused on our near term goals, while ensuring we position ourselves to be ready to leapfrog from a group to a wing. We should continue to focus on the near term, while not losing sight on longer term readiness. All of us need to be great leaders AND great followers.

Will you be ready to assume more responsibility, more leadership, and more authority when the time comes? The time is now.

When I was in basic training back in 1980, my squadron had a motto: "Lead, follow, or get out of the way!" Over the years, that motto has stayed with me and I believe it inspired me to go further than I thought I could; it has become part of me as a person, follower, and leader. I believe

that everyone in the 931st has found themselves in all of those roles...leading, following, or just getting out of the way. Since our unit has been so undermanned, we've all found ourselves wearing multiple hats in leader and follower roles.

As we continue to grow, our group needs all of us to step up and take leadership roles at every level; take followership roles at every level; and for those of us who find ourselves getting out of the way, we need to step up into both leader and follower roles. That is the only way we will be ready to be a wing when our time comes.

Here are some thoughts of mine that I believe can help you, should you choose to use them. It doesn't matter where you are in the chain.

Recruiting – We all need to be recruiters for our unit, tell our story and help bring folks onto our team. Once you know there is a new person joining our team, we need to get great sponsor's assigned to them (nothing beats a first impression); then we need to ensure they have all the uniforms they need to be successful (make them feel part of our team).

When you are sitting down with them for the first time, let them know what your expectations are for the next six months (give them a plan, let them know what to expect), then get them in the work area, doing the job (they joined to work airplanes, take blood pressure, repair runways, etc... not to die by powerpoint). Then get back with them at the end of every UTA for the first six months to see how

they are doing, what they learned, did they get paid....help them understand they are important to our future.

Retention – Now that they are firmly in our unit, with our shared view of the future ingrained into their thinking, we need to work on retaining our folks. As a leader, get to know your folks, find out about their families and lives when they are not on duty with us. If we don't take the time to understand them and their situations, they won't be with us long term. Make sure you train them to take your position, when you are gone...they need to be just as highly skilled as you on the job and need leadership training along the way too. Take the time to recognize them publicly.

When deserved, make sure you write a strong decoration package; nothing will inspire your folks more than when they are publicly recognized for their service. Help guide them towards promotions, ensuring they have opportunities for PME, leadership development, and other attributes that will help them be ready for promotion, when the time comes.

If you focus on the near term AND the long term, when the time comes....becoming a wing will turn out to be the "near term goal" and we will have find ourselves embarking on a new journey towards another destination.

So focus on the journey by making yourself and helping those around get you ready for the destination, you'll be surprised at how much you have grown personally and professionally.

Air Force 'chutes' down inefficient program, harnesses better way

Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap
931st ARG Public Affairs

Parachutes are designed to slow things down. Crew members forced to evacuate in-flight aircraft with parachutes, for example, tend to have much gentler impacts with the ground than those without.

But the only thing being slowed by parachutes aboard KC-135 Stratotankers, Air Force leaders recently decided, was the mission. So they got rid of them.

Removing parachutes from a military aircraft may sound peculiar, but KC-135s are not like other aircraft. They very seldom have mishaps and the likelihood a KC-135 crew member would ever need to use a parachute is extremely low.

However, a large amount of time, manpower and money goes into buying, maintaining and training to use parachutes. With the Air Force hungry for cost-saving efficiency under its Air Force for Smart Operations in the 21st Century Program (commonly called AFSO 21), the parachutes were deemed obsolete.



Tech. Sgt.
Chastity
Forrest

Tech. Sgt. Chastity Forrest is in charge of life support for the 18th Air Refueling Squadron, the 931st's flying squadron. She and the squadron's flyers were "thrilled" to learn hours of annual parachute training were disappearing as well, Sergeant Forrest said.

"It's one less thing for them to worry about," she said, referring also to the time saved by not having to include parachutes in preflight procedures.

And from a safety standpoint, Sergeant Forrest said, it is difficult to find a crew member who would grab a parachute and jump out of a KC-135 in trouble. It is statistically safer to stay with the aircraft, especially when flying over enemy territory. Master Sgt. John "Tex" Austin, 18th ARS boom operator, agreed.

"If the plane is under control, you are going to stay with it," Sergeant Austin said. "If it's out of control, you're not going to be able to get to the parachute anyway."

Col. Clay Childs, 931st deputy commander, said he has never thought about strapping on a parachute for evacuating a KC-135 in the 20 years he has been flying Stratotankers. In fact, the passenger planes he pilots for his civilian employer have never been equipped with parachutes.

Colonel Childs witnessed the advantage of parachute-less KC-135s when he first learned of the decision to be rid of them. He was serving as a deputy commander while deployed to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, when a KC-135 assigned to the base devel-



photo by Tech. Sgt. Shane Cuomo

A recent decision to remove parachutes from KC-135 Stratotankers eliminated the need for virtual (above) and other training that consumed much-needed time and money. (Below) The 18th Air Refueling Squadron's Tech. Sgt. Clay Dotson wears a harness that helps replace the need for parachutes on KC-135s.

oped a maintenance issue.

The aircraft's escape spoiler, a device used to block wind and allow evacuees to jump clear of an in-flight aircraft, was not working. The KC-135 was grounded, Colonel Childs said, until a maintainer pointed out there were no parachutes on it. With no need for a working spoiler, the aircraft became mission ready and a prime example how AFSO 21 thinking can benefit the Air Force.

A new piece of equipment, a harness crew members wear, is now required to be stored on KC-135s when parachutes are removed. The harness is used to attach flyers to aircraft during rare instances that create a potential for a flyer to be sucked outside. A warning light signaling a door is loose is a good but uncommon example, Sergeant Forrest said, of when a flyer might need to adorn the harness.

The harness is a new responsibility that life support technicians and flyers gladly accept in lieu of parachute maintenance and training, Sergeant Forrest said.

An entire parachute has to be unpacked for inspection, where a harness inspection can be done in minutes. The parachute class Sergeant Forrest taught for flyers was four hours long. Now she teaches how to wear the harness in about half an hour.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

(soon-to-be) Found in Translation

Guatemala-bound AMDF Airmen to help communication

Senior Airman Connor Burkhard
931st ARG Public Affairs

The upcoming deployment of 931st Aerospace Medicine Flight personnel to Guatemala is providing two traditional reservists a unique opportunity.

Out of the six 931st AMDF reservists who are scheduled to deploy in support of the Guatemala mission, two will be dedicated solely to translating.



Maj. Vito Carabetta

When Maj. Vito Carabetta, 931st AMDF flight surgeon, was not needed in his primary Air Force specialty code, he still wanted to get involved.

"They didn't need flight surgeons," Major Carabetta said. "(Translating) is the other thing I could do to contribute."

Similarly, Senior Master Sgt. Edwin Espinoza, 931st AMDF nursing superintendent, also wanted to get involved with the humanitarian mission.

Both Major Carabetta and Sergeant Espinoza were exposed to the Spanish language at a young age.

Major Carabetta grew up in Los Angeles, a son of Italian immigrants. He lived in an area that was heavily populated with other Italians, all who spoke different dialects of the language.

A neighbor spoke Spanish, and until he was about 10 years old,

he did not even realize that it was not Italian. From a young age, he picked up quickly on the Spanish language.

"When you learn as a child, it's easier," he said. Major Carabetta further developed his skills in high school and college.

For Sergeant Espinoza, his interaction with the Spanish language began in the home. He also took Spanish classes in high school and performed self study later on.

The humanitarian mission is slightly different from other translating opportunities because they need to not only be fluent in the language, but also be proficient in using medical terminology. The Guatemala deployment calls specifically for Spanish speaking medical personnel, as the translators will be helping to facilitate conversations between the doctors and the Guatemalan patients.

The deployment, scheduled for April, will be the first time fulfilling a role as a translator for both Major Carabetta and Sergeant Espinoza.



Senior Master Sgt.
Edwin Espinoza



photo by Master Sgt. Ruby Zarzyczny

Guatemalans stand in long lines to receive medical attention during a 10-day visit by Air Force Reserve Command medical teams deployed to Guatemala for a medical readiness training exercise. Medics treated nearly 1,000 people a day during the deployment. Six members of the 931st Aerospace Medicine Flight are scheduled to deploy in April to support another humanitarian mission in Guatemala.

SPIRIT SHORTS

TaxCut free to Airmen

Military OneSource has teamed with H&R Block to offer TaxCut Basic Online free to all Airmen and their families. The software, available through the OneSource Web site, includes tax-relevant questions about issues like deployment and relocation. The deadline for filing taxes in 2008 is April 15.

WWW.MILITARYONESOURCE.COM

Space-A Travel expanded for dependents

Spouses and children of deployed servicemembers are now authorized to use Space Available Travel aboard military aircraft when the servicemember's deployment is for 120 consecutive days or more. A letter signed by the servicemember's commander that verify's the servicemember's deployment must be presented when making reservations. The documentation must also be in family members' possession during travel.

AMXS Chili Cook Off

The 931st Maintenance Squadron's annual chili cook off is scheduled for the Sunday of the March Unit Training Assembly. The competition is scheduled to begin at

11:30 a.m. upstairs in building 1185. A \$5 fee includes all the chili one can "handle." Contact the AMXS orderly room at 316-759-6228 for entry and other information.

Bonuses made retroactive

All eligible Airmen in Air Force specialty codes with a selective reenlistment bonus or those with a critical skills retention bonus who reenlisted Jan. 1 or later are authorized retroactive payment.

Affected Airmen do not need to take any action. Military personnel flights have the responsibility of notifying them. The bonus programs expired Dec. 31, 2007, because Congress had not yet approved a fiscal 2008 budget. Call the 24-hour Air Force Contact Center at 800-616-3775 for more information or log on to:

HTTP://ASK.AFPC.RANDOLPH.AF.MIL

AFRC Youth of the Year

High schoolers of Air Force Reservists are eligible to participate in an annual Youth of the Year competition that rewards 9th through 12th graders for leadership and service. More information and entry forms were emailed to the military email addresses of all 931st members. Contact Lt. Col. Kerry Lehman at 316-759-3788 for more information.

PA reps designated

Members from each section of the 931st have volunteered to be Unit Public Affairs Representatives, or UPARS, as they more commonly known in the Department of Defense. UPARs serve as points of contact for informing the Group's public affairs office about what is happening with the people in their sections. Below are the names of each volunteer UPAR and their phone extensions (first dial 316-759 from off base).

18TH ARS-MSGT "TEX" AUSTIN: 3381

CES-SMSGT-CRONINGER: 5294

AMXS-MSGT LAWLEY: 6252

OSF-LT COL EATON: 1599

AMDF-SSGT GEIHSLER: 3435

MSF-MSGT LORENZ: 3625

HQ-TSGT SCHAAP: 3686

AAFES program rewards those who 'Make the Grade'

Military students who maintain at least a "B" average are eligible to receive rewards through "You Made the Grade," an Army & Air Force Exchange Service program. Rewards include free Burger King kids meals, movies and magazines. Visit the McConnell AFB Exchange or call the Exchange at 316-685-0231 for information.

— SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT —

Senior Airman Brian Reed is a San Diego, Calif., native who has been in the Air Force for 4 years.

Job Title: Computer Systems Operator

Civilian job: "Not so much."

Favorite way to relax: Sleep...seriously

What annoys me: Ruin my sleep...also serious

Most influential person in my life: My mom. She's my only family. She took care of me, had three jobs and went to school full time...a lot to look up to.

What I'm listening to: Blindsight

What I'm reading: Captain's Fury by Jim Butcher

Favorite movie: Army of Darkness

If I won \$1 million, I would: Put \$900,000 in a savings plan and spend the rest like a (grown-up) child.



Mission Support Flight



Fundraising Flag

The Human Resource Development Council gave Senior Master Sgt. John Boulett (second from left) a Pearl Harbor commemoration flag during the February Unit Training Assembly. The flag flew over Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 2001, 60 years after attacks there drew the United States into World War II. Sergeant Boulett, 931st Maintenance Squadron member, became eligible for the giveaway after donating to HRDC.

Take Two from page 1

bers not bound for the Operational Readiness Inspection in June will not participate directly in the exercise, but Colonel Kontz said they still can expect Ability to Survive and Operate training.

“Col. Cahoon wants non-players to be in ATSO mode,” he said, referring to the 931st commander.

Permission has also been granted for exercise participants to be pulled from Triumphant Runner to complete training that is required for successful participation in June’s ORI.

Group members selected for the ORI need to think in terms of a 45-day deployment, according to Lt. Col. William Dorsey, 931st Logistics Plans Officer. Even though the inspection lasts less than a week, Airmen will be expected to simulate a 45-day deployment. Training that expires within those 45-days will be considered unsatisfactory by inspectors.

Unit Deployment Managers are responsible for ensuring training is current for all Reservists and should schedule any training due to expire. UDMs are also the points of contact for questions about ORI preparation. Here is more Triumphant Runner information:

The Schedule

Operations are scheduled to run from **9 a.m. to 9 p.m.** The exercise

should end before 4:30 p.m. Saturday.

Transportation

Shuttle buses should arrive at designated stops **every 30 minutes** during hours of operation.

Parking

Airmen can park their vehicles on the **west side of building 1090** for access to an entry control point at building 1107.

Gear

Be sure canteens are filled with water. Airmen are starting the exercise at MOPP-0, so all M-9 simulation tape should be removed from gear and added after the exercise begins.

Food

Airmen will be allowed two MREs per day. Officers and enlisted will be required to pay **\$3.85 per MRE with cash or check only**. MREs will be free for enlisted Group members in UTA status Saturday.

Personal Bags

Group members are not required to bring personal bags to Triumphant Runner. The bags will be required for ORE and ORI.

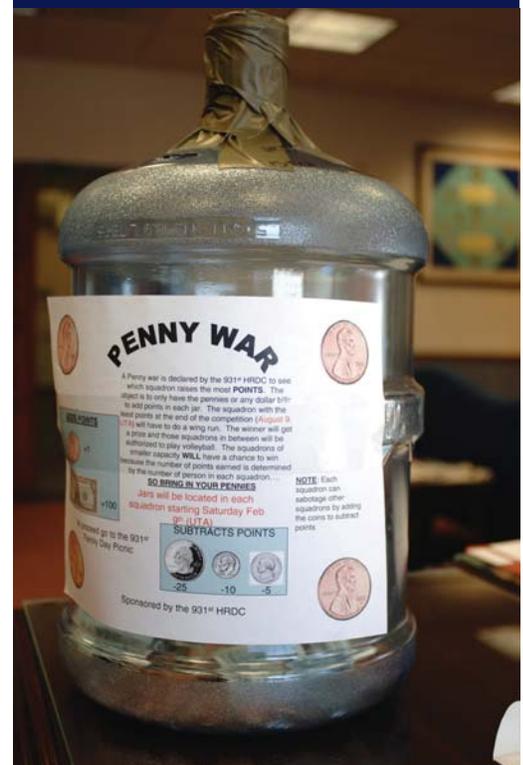
Penny War Update

from HRDC’s
Senior Master Sgt. Pamela Summers

Currently, Mission Support Flight is leading the Penny War with the most donations – Congratulations! We will have a specific count of donations raised (per person, per unit so all are on equal footing) in the April *Kanza Spirit*.

Remember, during the August drill, the winning unit gets a prize (yet to be announced), the losing unit gets to partake in a “fun run,” and the remaining units will get to participate in fun fitness activities.

All proceeds go toward Human Resource Development Council projects such as the Family Day Picnic and annual Children’s Christmas Party, so bring in those pennies!



WICHITA WEEKEND

Keith Urban and Carrie Underwood

March 6 — Two of country music's biggest stars are scheduled to appear at the Kansas Colliseum. Shows start at 7:30 p.m. Call 316-755-7328 for tickets or log on to:

WWW.SELECTASEAT.COM

WWW.KEITHURBAN.COM

WWW.CARRIEUNDERWOODOFFICIAL.COM

George Thorogood & The Destroyers

March 6 — The legendary live sounds of George Thorogood & The Destroyers come to The Cotillion more than 30 years after the band burst on the Rock scene. Doors open at 7 p.m. Call 316-722-4201 for tickets or log on to:

WWW.THECOTILLION.COM

Wichita Thunder host Jersey/Autograph Night

March 9 — The first 1,000 fans through the door will receive a youth Thunder jersey before the Thunder take on the Youngstown Steelhounds. After the game, fans can meet Thunder players signing autographs. Game starts at 5:05 p.m.

WWW.WICHITATHUNDER.COM

IN THE FIGHT



931st Air Refueling Group BY THE NUMBERS

Missions Flown: **285**

Overall Time Flown: **948**

Passengers Flown: **241**

Cargo Delivered: **114,950 lbs.**

Aircraft Refueled: **235**

Fuel Transferred: **202,119 gallons**

The above information pertains to the period of OCT. 1, 2007 TO FEB. 24, 2008.