

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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September 2004

McConnell AFB, Kansas

Vol. 9, No. 8

(Right) The Aero Medicine Flight's Tech. Sgt. Hugo Hurtado is one of the many 931st members honored during Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15-Oct. 15. An optometry technician for the Group, between Unit Training Assemblies he's a full-time student double majoring in Latin American literature and biology.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

Looking into the 931st's Hispanic Heritage



Mexican folk hero Pancho Villa was an acquaintance to the grandmother of a Maintenance Squadron NCO.

TECH. SGT. JASON SCHAAP
931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

At 11 p.m., in every city and town in Mexico, the celebration begins. The Mexican president shouts, "Mexicanos, Viva Mexico," fireworks blanket the skies and country-wide festivities ensue. It's the eve of Sept. 16, the day Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1810.

Senior Airman Marina Coronado remembers celebrating Mexican Independence Day in her homeland.

"It's a huge event, nobody works," she said. "The best singers in Mexico sing for free; there are big traditional dances. The Mexican children participate, making shows and

reciting poems. I always did that. Every year I learned a new poem."

Mexico isn't the only country that starts celebrating Sept. 15. Five other Latin American countries celebrate their independence the same day. In the United States, a month-long celebration begins to honor the Hispanic Heritage of people like Airman Coronado, who now lives in Liberal, Kan. Like her Group comrades, the Operations Support Flight information manager is gearing up for the busy Septem-



Senior Airman Marina Coronado

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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 mailed each month to all 931st ARG members on file with Personnel. Members not receiving their copy should check with their administration section to ensure their filed address is correct.

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

This UTA weekend is going to be a real busy one. On Saturday the Group will be hosting the employers of our reservists. The day should be fantastic, with a three-ship formation flight followed by lunch and visits to our work areas.

That evening we will be joining our host wing at the Air Force Ball to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of McConnell AFB. The ball will be in downtown Wichita at the Century II. There will be many displays depicting the heritage of McConnell throughout the years. In fact, I hear there will be an actual pitched tent showing the crowd how we live and fight in the desert.

But wait, there is more! Sunday afternoon the Group will be honoring our families by hosting our annual Family Day. This year the party will be at O.J. Watson Park. Looks to be a great time with many activities for both kids and adults. Thanks to all the folks who are working to put on the event.

We have some new residents in building 850. Several weeks ago, 11 members of the 22nd Operations Group set up shop along side our operations scheduling shop. Team McConnell now works closely together scheduling our flying operation. This move will make the entire operation work more efficiently. Active duty and reserve folks will have the opportunity to learn more about each other. Each will begin to understand the limits and advantages of each others' situation. This is a good thing that will pay dividends in the future.

Thanks for all you do. Have a great UTA!



Karl J. Hurdle, Colonel
931st ARG Commander

BUSY UTA

Employer Day

Registered employers need to arrive at McConnell AFB by 7:15 a.m. Saturday. Lunch with their reservists is scheduled for **11:30 a.m. at Emerald City**. Call (316) 759-3704 for more information.

Family Day Picnic

This year's picnic is scheduled to begin noon at the O.J. Watson Park in Wichita. **Alcohol beverages are prohibited** on park grounds. Call (316) 759-4736 for more information.

Leave and earning statements to go paperless

2ND LT. KATHERINE KEBISEK

AIR MOBILITY COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Starting Oct. 1, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will no longer issue printed copies of military leave and earning statements. Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. John P. Jumper are urging all Airmen to register with myPay by that date.

MyPay is an automated Web-based system that allows members to conduct pay transactions, even when deployed, in a secure electronic environment 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To ensure everyone has access to their personal financial information after Oct. 1, Air Mobility Command has kicked off a campaign to get all of its Airmen signed up for myPay.

“The use of myPay empowers military members and translates into increased capability for the Air Force,” said Gen. John W. Handy, commander, U.S. Transportation Command and AMC in a recent memorandum. “Please encourage your troops to get on board and sign up for myPay as soon as possible.”

Personal identification numbers are used to control access to personal accounts and ensure privacy for all users.

Airmen can get access to myPay through desktop computers at work, home, the base library and orderly

rooms. Col. Tony Levy, chief of AMC Financial Services Division, said myPay gives Airmen the flexibility to manage their pay and make personal adjustments to their finances at their convenience, rather than only when the finance office is open.

“Feedback is good,” Col. Levy said of the kiosks. “The newer Airmen want to be able to manage their pay like they can manage their bank accounts and their investments, all online.”

Senior Master Sgt. Mary Taitano, AMC Financial Services Division, added that myPay is a user-friendly system, and that all bases will provide unit training.

MyPay enhancements this fall will allow Airmen to make allotments to financial institutions online and issue “informational” PINs to family members. The informational PINs allow family members to view and print pay statements when the military member is on temporary duty or deployed.

Although myPay will be mandatory only for military members, civilians are encouraged to use the system. Live support will still be available through base finance offices to answer questions or provide customer service and pay transactions when necessary.

The Web site for myPay is <http://mypay.dfas.mil> or members can use the myPay menu on any AMC base comptroller Web site. Personnel can sign up for a PIN on the myPay Web site or through the customer service section at their finance office.

Welcome to the 931st Family

Ben Sciortino, Sedgwick County Commissioner in Kansas, was named Honorary Commander of the 931st ARG during a ceremony held at McConnell Air Force Base in August. Sciortino is pictured in the middle with his wife, Mary. At left is Col. Karl J. Hurdle, 931st Commander, and his wife, Kay. Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Tytanic (at far right) is the command chief of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, the 931st's parent unit in Oklahoma City, Okla.



Courtesy photo



photos by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

Master Sgt. Ken Girty has been playing the guitar for 24 years and since joining the military in 1979, rarely has his guitar not accompanied him wherever he was sent. Sgt. Girty is a boom operator and first sergeant of the 18th Air Refueling Squadron.

FIRST LOVES OF A FIRST SERGEANT

BY TECH SGT. JASON SCHAAP,
931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rubik's cube was the Toy of the Year and everyone wanted to know who shot JR. The year was 1980 and in the small town of Cherokee, Okla., Ken Girty was visiting a friend of his family. He was there to study the guitar, something he "always wanted to do."

Also in the room was Laura, a teen beauty who was instantly drawn to. She needed help and Girty, who had picked up playing guitar quick, had his in.

"I did that classic move where I put my arms around her to show her," he remembered, describing the event with a clever smile and laugh in his voice. The unsuspecting young lady didn't mind the trick.

"I was a teenager...all I could think was, 'This really cute guy has his arm around me,'" she said.

They started dating and Ken kept playing. Within a year he was playing the guitar in church to back his own unique voice.

It's that voice of Master Sgt. Ken Girty, the

18th Air Refueling Squadron first sergeant, which many 931st members may know him best by. His renditions of the Star-Spangled Banner before Group events are all their own. Pinning him down isn't easy.

"I don't sound like anybody," he agrees. "I never have."

Music and military have always gone hand-and-hand for Sgt. Girty. Rarely since he joined the Army National Guard in 1979 has he not taken his guitar wherever he was sent. When he recently deployed overseas as a boom operator, his guitar went with him.

While family separation is never easy, deploying offers an advantage for Sgt. Girty: time for two of his favorite activities. With flying a close second,

Sgt. Girty's preferred way to unwind is with his guitar.

"I feel better when I play. It's how I get away from things," he said.

Laura, now Sgt. Girty's wife of 22 years, concurs.

"Ken is a pretty serious guy most of the time," she said. "But when he has his guitar he becomes very peaceful, especially when he plays

classical."

Girty grew up listening to the likes of Jethro Tull, the Eagles and Boston. And he said he hasn't lost his taste for rock, especially the sounds of Chet Atkins and other guitarists with a "blues or jazz feel to (their music)."

But his true-loved style now lies elsewhere.

"I enjoy classical the most," he said. "I see the music; I can see what the director was trying to do ... there's a warmth to it."

His favorite classical guitarists include John Williams ("not the guy who did the Star Wars music," he's quick to point out) Andre Segovia and Sharon Isbin.

When he's not listening to classical guitar he's playing it. "Once a goal now becoming more of a

reality," Sgt. Girty is part of a quintet that performs classical music in a concert hall in Enid, Okla., (near Cherokee, where he grew up and now resides).

Some nights he does duets with a friend at a coffeehouse in Enid, a "more relaxed" outlet that lets him get back in touch with those rock and folk roots.

Performing has also become a Girty-family affair. He and his wife sing together in his church's choir and his favorite pupil (he's also made the transition from guitar student to teacher), his 11-year-old son Joshua, has backed him up while singing solo in church.

Like the military, his family, his faith and his guitar have always been in sync with one another. A life-long Christian, Sgt. Girty said nothing touches him like giving praise through music.

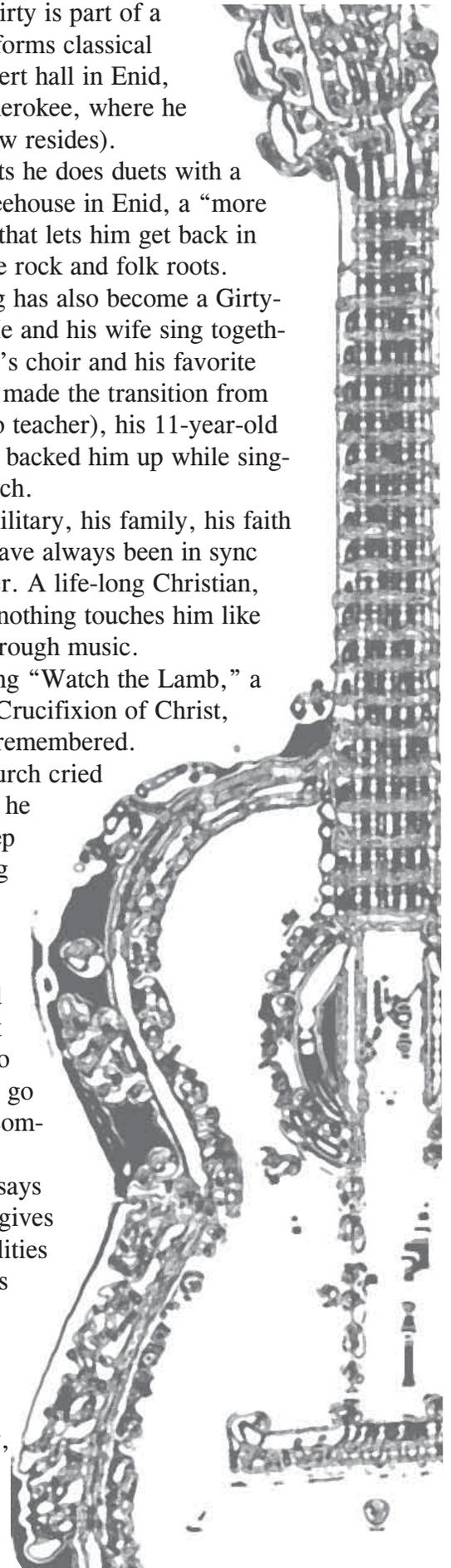
"I once sang "Watch the Lamb," a song about the Crucifixion of Christ, in church," he remembered.

Many in the church cried in response and he struggled to keep focus on playing and singing.

"I got through it," he said, but he had to make a quick exit backstage to let his emotions go and regain his composure.

The Bible says the Holy Spirit gives men special abilities according to His will. Sgt. Girty has no doubt.

When it comes to his music, he'll say, "It's the gift God has given me."



'It's the gift God has given me.'

-Master Sgt. Ken Girty

Cardholders beware hackers

DOD officials are warning government credit card holders that computer hackers are trying to collect sensitive information posing as U.S. Bank, Citibank, Nations Bank and Bank of America.

A legitimate bank should never attempt to contact you directly for account information. Fraudulent emails requesting such information should be deleted immediately.

Pay increases approved

Servicemembers are scheduled to receive a 3.5 percent across-the-board pay raise Jan. 1.

Other pay provisions of the fiscal 2005 Defense Appropriations Act include eliminating out-of-pocket housing expenses and permanently raising the family separation allowance from \$100 to \$250 and the imminent danger pay from \$150 to \$225 per month.

DOD looking for employer information

Reservists are being asked to register their civilian employer information on the Defense Manpower Data Center Web site before the end of 2004.

The information will be used to protect the rights of reservists and civilian employers of reservists, and to lessen the impact of activations or mobilizations on civilian communities. The data center is located online at:

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/index.jsp>

Cell phone/pager reminder

According to Air Force instruction, black is the only authorized color for cell phones, pagers or PDAs clipped to belts of Airmen in uniform. Questions about uniform policies can be directed to personnel offices or first sergeants.

New information 'Source' offered to servicemembers

"Military One Source" is a "one-stop" place to go whenever servicemembers or family members need assistance with any kind of problem anytime, worldwide.

Military One Source provides information on a gamut of situations: from needing a plumber in the middle of the night to fix a broken pipe, to needing veterinary service for a sick dog.

People should not be afraid or embarrassed to seek help from Military One Source. The person at the other end of the phone is not going to be judgmental about the situation.

Military One Source toll-free numbers are (800) 342-9647 in the United States, (800) 3429-6477 outside the United States (where available) and (484) 530-5747 to call international collect.

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

Airman First Class Crystal Willis is a Wichita, Kan. native, who has been in the Air Force for a year.

Job Title: Medical Technician

Civilian Job: Associate at Target

Currently studying: Nursing at Cowley Comm. College

Favorite way to relax: Sun tanning

What annoys me: Talking to me like you think I'm stupid

Most influential person in my life: My mother, she's been through so much and works so hard, yet she still can smile

What I'm listening to: Brad Paisley's "Whiskey Lullaby"

What I'm reading: My five-level CDC's

If I won \$1 million, I would: Pay off bills for my parents and myself, give my best friend her dream wedding, and give to charity



Aerospace Medicine Flight

ROUND THE GROUP

Hispanic Heritage continued from page 1

ber Unit Training Assembly. She will miss the celebrations in her native land (“Maybe I’ll try to go back next year,” she said.) Still, she said she’s grateful her heritage is honored in her new home.

‘Spanglish’-Speaking Spainard

Hispanic is Tech. Sgt. Hugo Hurtado’s heritage of choice.

“I like calling myself Mexican even though my mom’s parents came from Spain, and my dad’s mother was from Germany,” the Aero Medicine Flight optometry technician said. “My dad’s father was from Mexico.”

Born in southern Texas, he initially learned “Spanglish,” the mixing of Spanish and English.

“It’s funny, you can go to San Antonio and hear people mix every other word,” he said. “They have their own language.”

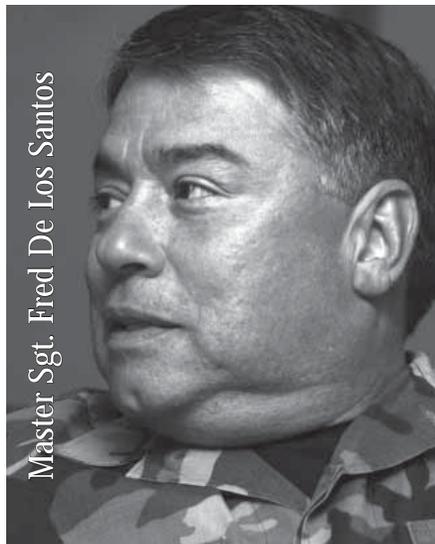
Sgt. Hurtado said he remembers his family making the transition to straight English when they moved to Kansas during his childhood. Now, he’s a college student studying the other component of his native-mixed tongue.

“I wanted to learn how to speak Spanish properly,” he said. “So I’m working on a degree in Latin American literature.”

Sgt. Hurtado graduates this Diciembre with dos mayores. His other degree will be in biologia.

Grandma Ran into a Renegade

Pancho Villa is said to be the only man to “successfully” invade the United States. A legendary revolutionary leader, Villa opposed Mexico’s government early in the 20th century. When the U.S. took sides with his enemy, Villa’s



Master Sgt. Fred De Los Santos

bandits crossed the border and sacked the small town of Columbus, N.M. It was the first attack on American soil since 1812. The U.S. sent cavalry to get Villa. But almost a year later, they declared, “Villa is everywhere, but Villa is nowhere.”

The search was stopped, but Villa continued crossing the border. During one visit to a small Texas town, he met a teenage girl named Maria, the grandmother of Master Sgt. Fred De Los Santos, a Maintenance Squadron communications/navigation craftsman.

Sgt. De Los Santos said how well his grandmother knew the renegade is a bit of a mystery.

“There was a joke within my family that Grandma had a fling with Pancho Villa,” Sgt. De Los Santos said. “But she didn’t like that. She only would say they met on several occasions and then would leave it alone.”

Sgt. De Los Santos said his grandmother carried her secret with her all the way to her death at the age of 104. Pancho Villa was assassinated during his retirement in 1923. He was 44.

Welcome Newcomers

Maj. Susan Lehigh
Headquarters

Capt. Chad Thompson
Aero Medicine Flight

Tech. Sgt. Victoria Wilson
Military Support Flight

Senior Airman Lesa Fabiszak
Military Support Flight

Airman 1st Class Scott Perkins
Maintenance Squadron

Promotions

Tech. Sgt. Erin Hubbard
Civil Engineer Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Travis Potter
Civil Engineer Squadron

Staff Sgt. Brian Caley
Civil Engineer Squadron

Staff Sgt. Angela Monreal
18th Air Refueling Squadron

Senior Airman Ryan Jarboe
Security Forces

Senior Airman Justin Linot
Aero Medicine Flight

Senior Airman Patrick Strange
Security Forces

Airman 1st Class Colby Shepherd
Civil Engineer Squadron

WICHITA WEEKEND

Kansas State Fair

Sept. 10-19 — The biggest celebration in the state featuring top of the line entertainment at the Hutchinson Fairgrounds.

Tickets available at all Select-A-Seat locations or by calling (800) 362-3247. Tickets also available at the Fair Ticket office, Box 3200 in Hutchinson or by calling (800) 362-3247. For more information, visit www.kansasstatefair.com

Bluegrass Festival

Sept. 15-19 — The Walnut Valley Festival, one of the most popular annual bluegrass festivals in the country, takes place just an hour south of Wichita in Winfield, Kan. A list of this year's performers and more information about the festival can be viewed at:

www.wvfest.com

Tickets and information also available by calling (620) 221-3250.

Body Building Championship

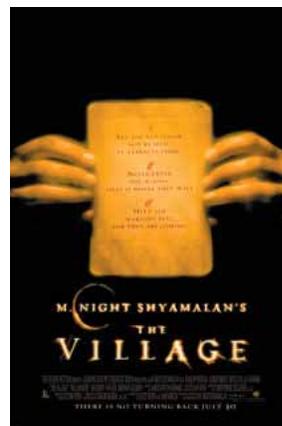
Sept. 18 — Wichita's premiere body building contest, The Natural Diamond Classic Body Building Championship, comes to the Mary Jane Teall Theater at Century II. Prejudging is scheduled 8 - 11 a.m. and championships are scheduled 6-10 p.m. Tickets are available at Genesis Health Clubs in Wichita. For more information, call Robert Green at (316) 788-3081.

At the Movies



THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

FRIDAY, SEPT. 16 7pm
2 hr. 10 min. Denzel Washington must convince a fellow war hero running for office that their memories of a battle are illusions planted in their brains as part of a conspiracy to gain control of the White House.
MPAA Rating: R for violence and language



THE VILLAGE

SATURDAY, SEPT. 17 7pm
2 hrs. Joaquin Phoenix is a young man who questions the policy of keeping citizens completely confined to his small village in rural Pennsylvania, despite being surrounded by woods inhabited by "mythical creatures."
MPAA Rating: PG-13 for a scene of violence and frightening situations

*Movies are shown at the McConnell Air Force Base Theater and are subject to change.
Admission is \$3 for adults, \$1.50 for children 11 and under.*

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