

Kanza Spirit

Super squadron discussed
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Marathon man
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Air Force Reserve's first Associate KC-135 Unit

Fundraiser

Debra Hocker, a prior member of the 931st Civil Engineers Squadron, has emphysema and is in need of a lung transplant. The Military Support Flight is planning a fund-raiser in her name - pending legal reviews - during the November UTA. Point of contact for this fund-raiser will be Lt. Martha Murphy, Ext. 3577.

Flight surgeon notes

If any personnel visit their civilian doctor for any reason, they will need to bring a copy of any medical problems, any treatments given and any medications prescribed to the 18th ARS flight surgeon's office during the next UTA so it can be filled in your medical records.

BEWARE! Any month now, the Flight Surgeon's office will be starting the urine analysis testing.

Uniform wear

Officers are not required to wear rank insignia on the organizational baseball caps if rank insignia is visible. If rank is worn on the hat, it must be subdued metal rank unless the installation commander has authorized bright metal insignia for contingencies while "in garrison."

Diary of a 'channel run'

Editor's Note: In August, the author traveled with a crew made up of primarily 931st members during a mission as part of the Aviano Eagle.

By Tech. Sgt. Brian
Bowman
931st Public Affairs

Friday, Aug. 15, 10 a.m.
McConnell AFB

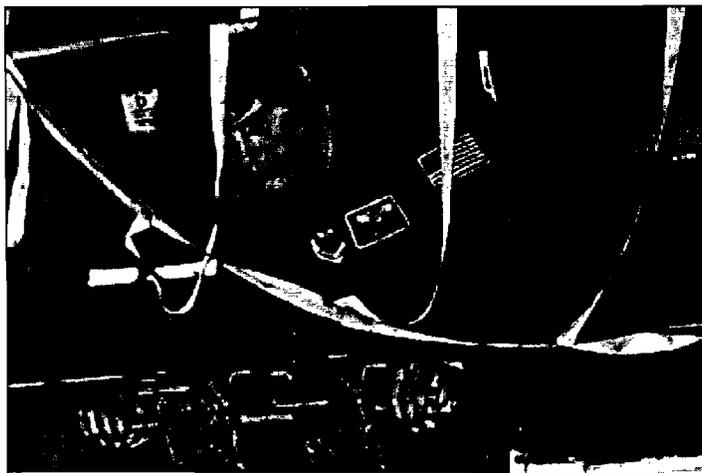
The mission hasn't even started and already adjustments are being made. Word came down Thursday afternoon to alter the takeoff from 1800 to 1230 to accommodate a refueling mission on the way to Dover. Not everyone got the word however, causing at least one of the crew of 10 to be late.

The mission is the Aviano Eagle (commonly known as the Atlantic Express), a cargo run that will take the crew to Dover, Del., to pick up cargo, fly to Mildenhall, England, then make stops in Ramstein, Germany, and Aviano, Italy before retracing their steps to home. A frantic five days. Too bad we can't get frequent flyer miles - we'll be piling up some 20,000 or more on this run.

The crew consists of two pilots, two navigators, two boom operators and three crew chiefs.

Friday, 1:15 p.m.
Refueling somewhere over
Springfield, Mo.

No one disputes the amount



Tech. Sgt. Brian Bowman

Staff Sgt. Debra Lee, a boom operator, helps load cargo during a stop at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

of time crew chiefs spend around their aircraft surpasses any other portion of the crew on a mission such as this. But to be a member of the crew is to understand that one member's prime time is another's down time. The crew chiefs typically report to the aircraft six hours before takeoff in preparation. However, once airborne, the chiefs can relax and it is the pilots, navs and booms' turn.

This reality was accentuated during the refueling run of the four F-16s. While the booms delicately went about the business of refueling, the chiefs played with a computer "bass caster," which simulated fishing. While Staff Sgt. Billy Presson was landing a cyber 8-pound bass with his furious reeling of the handheld computer cast,

Staff Sgt. Debra Lee was delicately operating the boom in a real-life refueling mission just a few feet away.

The chiefs' fun was short-lived, however. Not long after refueling was complete, the outer cockpit windshield cracked. Although not imminently dangerous, a replacement shield would need to be found once the KC-135 touched ground at Dover.

It was eerily ironic - and not lost among crew members - that the plane they were operating was the same plane that had nose art dedicated to it and the late Kaw Indian Johnnie Ray McCaullie just days before. The nose art had been painted over just 24 hours earlier.

The consensus - only half-

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Super squadron status -- what it means for now

By Col. Dean J. Despinoy
931st commander

I stated at the last Commander's Call that I thought a decision would be made as to our structure by 1 October. Indeed a decision was made on Sept. 18. The 931st will go to a "super squadron" structure. Additionally, we will stay a group with a normal group structure — meaning that we will have a commander responsible for operations, support and maintenance.

The senior staff and I have already started to look at the manning and will be leveling positions and adjusting authorizations within the 931st. The bottom line is that we will have enough people to do the job. If we discover a shortfall, it will be identified and we will push to have it taken care of. The actual operation will continue much as before, however we are going to be very sensitive to one-deep shops. In some of the key areas such as the chief pilot, nav and boom, one-deep shops will not be able to handle the increased personnel management of 32 crews. Therefore, these positions will be manned

with a full-time assistant.

Now that the structure decision has been made, we can step out with certainty. Many of the personnel problems we had stemmed from the fact that we were not manned as a group or wing, but something in between. We will still look a little different with one large squadron as opposed to two, but as they say, "viva la difference."

With the increase in crews there will be an increase of flying time. We will be allocated 5,000 hours on 1 Oct., going to 7,000 hours next year. This will mean an immediate change from flying 70 hours per week to flying 100 hours per week. The 931st has been given some time to grow but now AFRC is looking to us to pull our fair share within the AFRC tanker community. This will mean mission allocations consistent with the allocated hours. It will also mean that there will have to be a more even distribution of the flying work load. I have been a trougher and a traditional reservist in my career and understand the special problems and stresses. I also know that in today's peacetime augmenting reserve that it takes an average of 6 periods of availability per month per crew member (including UTAs)



Despinoy

to perform the mission.

I look to the entire 931st team to work together to find the best use of manpower and processes to get the job done. Keep 'em flying—SAFELY.

Kanza Spirit
Volume 2, No. 9

Tuesday, Nov. 4 is the deadline for articles in the November 1997 issue of the **Kanza Spirit**. All articles and photographs must be turned in to the 931st Public Affairs office, Bldg. 1218, Room 221 by 4 p.m.

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More changes alter uniform appearance

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Several major changes concerning proper wear of the Air Force uniform have or will occur in the next few years.

Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command personnel officials here say the following actions will take effect Oct. 1:

- * Air Force and name tapes will be mandatory on the battle dress uniforms.

- * Embroidered badges and specialty insignia worn on dress uniform combinations will be phased out.

- * All enlisted members must wear the new chevrons on all uniform combinations. Senior airmen and sergeants will both wear the new senior airman chevron.

- * The women's blue and white service dress hat will be phased out.

Effective Oct. 1, 1998, the Air Force will phase out the following:

- * Miniature highly polished and chrome finish badges and specialty insignia, except for wings and missile badges; and

- * Satin and oxidized finish belt tips and buckles, and badges and specialty insignia, both regular and miniature sizes.

Air Force officials have extended the

mandatory wear date for the new women's service hat for field grade officers to October 1998.

Beginning Oct. 1, 1999, wear of the new service dress uniform will be mandatory, and the phaseout date for the old mess dress blouse has been extended to January 2000.

A number of uniform changes have been recently implemented with immediate effective dates. Here's a summary:

- * In Air Force Instruction 36-2903 (Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel), the reference to enlisted BDU wear was changed to read that members should ensure their rank chevron is visible. This is different from the original "ensure chevron is fully visible" wording.

- * Security police members assigned to units above the group level may wear the security police shield and blue beret with all authorized uniform combinations.

- * Members may carry gym bags, clothing bags, back packs and similar type items over the left shoulder or in the left hand.

- * Members must wear all or some of their ribbons on the service dress coats. The option to wear no ribbons is no longer available.

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jokingly – was that the spirit of Johnnie Ray was not particularly happy to have the nose art painted over.

“The window is toast,” one chief said before touchdown. “I hope (Kaw ritual leader Paul) Littlevoice’s blessing is with us ... and not hexed by painting over that nose art.”

Littlevoice had blessed the plane in a ceremony the previous Saturday.

Meanwhile, more adjustments – and long work days for the chiefs – awaited.

**Dover, Del.
Sunday, 2 p.m.**

After being delayed 24 hours to find and replace the windshield, the crew is scheduled to be alerted to fly at 4:45 p.m. Takeoff would be at 8:45 p.m. – exactly 24 hours after scheduled. If the plane hadn’t been ready, the run could have been canceled.

The chiefs’ odyssey of the past 48 hours was hardly an enjoyable one. With no part available in Dover, a windshield had to be located, ordered, picked up and installed. This job, of course, fell to the crew chiefs.

“We sent (Staff Sgt.) Greg Kuntz up to Philadelphia to pick up the windshield,” said Tech. Sgt. Clarence Slater. “The part was six hours late arriving there ... so he wasn’t able to get back (to Dover) until 8 p.m. (Saturday) ... That pushed us back.”

Slater, Kuntz and Presson got the window installed by 11 p.m. and went to get some much-needed rest before returning Sunday morning to ensure everything was good for a new lift-off time.

“That’s all part of our job,” Slater said. “Sometimes on these (channel runs), you can bust your tail on these. ... But if we couldn’t get the airplane fixed, we couldn’t complete the mission.”

**Dover AFB
Monday, 8:45 p.m.**

Another schedule, another change. This time, mother nature has slowed down the Express crew as a thunderstorm brings rain and – worse for the planes – lightning. The delay is nearly two hours. The plane, with miscellaneous cargo loaded and nine passengers on board, lifts off at about 10:20 p.m.

Loading the cargo and passengers is the primary responsibilities of the booms, with the pilots and crew chiefs doing most of the pre-flight checks. The booms conduct safety briefs for the passengers, ensure the cargo is loaded properly on the pallets and locked properly into place on the aircraft.

Compared with what has happened on this mission so far, the 6 ½ hour flight to Royal Air Force Mildenhall is uneventful.

“Welcome to England,” Pilot Lt. Col. Mark Brantley says to me as we survey the tarmac from the VIP stand brought to the plane to let off passengers.

Of course, the stay wasn’t a long one. Already 10 a.m. at Mildenhall, the crew are scheduled for alert in a scant 16 hours, will lift off in a scheduled 20 hours. Today is for resting, as Tuesday will start early and end late. For the three crew chiefs, who of course stay behind after the landing and will beat the rest of the crew back to the plane, the turnaround is even shorter. They have enough to time to find their rooms, shower and sleep.

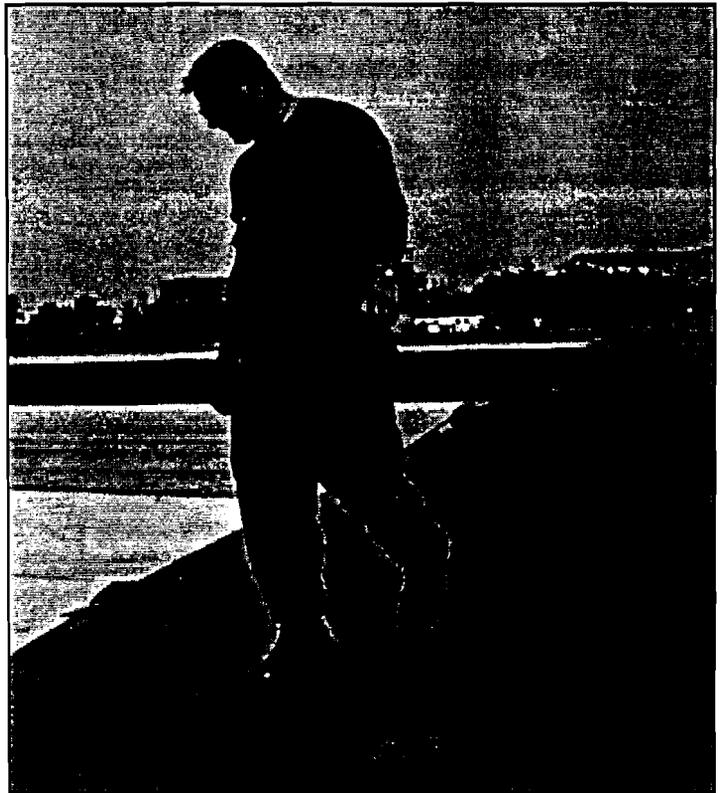
Welcome to England.

“There’s a joke in the airlift world,” Brantley said, “that we travel the world and see it from Base Ops.”

The rest of the joke might be, “If you’ve seen Base Ops here, you’ve seen it everywhere.”

**Mildenhall, Ramstein, Aviano
Tuesday**

Up and at ‘em at 2 a.m. By 3:15 a.m., the chiefs are giving the stratotanker the final checks for our 6:30 takeoff. Today’s schedule is Ramstein Germany, Aviano Italy and back to Mildenhall.



Tech Sgt. Brian Bowman

Staff Sgt. Billy Presson makes pre-flight checks to the wings of the KC-135 at Aviano, Italy.

But of course, like everything else on this mission, little goes as planned. In fact, with all the changes and mishaps on the mission and the jokes about it being Johnnie Ray McCauley’s revenge, the crew chiefs are calling the mission “Trail of Tears II.”

The hitch to Ramstein goes off with minimal difficulty, but in Aviano the schedule is altered that would send the crew to Naples with an alternate cargo. After hours of haggling, the mission appears on. But then a severe thunderstorm struck, leaving Trail of Tears II stuck in the mud – and the crew near its 16-hour crew day limit.

Instead, it’s a night in the nearby city of Pordenone, a beautiful town in the shadow of the Dolomites mountains, the pre-Alps. For a worn out and frustrated crew, it’s a shower, meal and off to bed. There’s no energy or much time to explore the city.

**Aviano AB
Wednesday 2 p.m.**

More haggling ... now with the mission 48 hours off schedule, a push is underway to just leave here and head straight to Dover ... but Naples is still in the picture. And to think today was supposed to be the mission’s final day.

Finally, a decision is reached. The crew will take several U.S. – bound passengers back to Dover. No stop in Naples, no stop in Mildenhall. Suddenly, things move quickly and by mid-afternoon we depart on a 10 1/2-hour flight. With time changes, however, we land in the early evening. The flight is uneventful, and the biggest excitement is catching co-pilot Maj. Randy Foster tinkering with the bass caster. After a fruitless few casts, he’s heard to say he didn’t have enough line to catch any fish, being 30,000 feet above the ocean.

**Dover AFB, Dover, Del.
Thursday-Friday**

The plane lands ahead of impending inclement weather. Not long after landing, rain comes down heavily. The crew, after post-flight work, beds down for the night by 10 p.m.

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931st member completes initial Air Force marathon

By Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis
931st Public Affairs

A 931st Air Refueling Group member lined up to pay tribute to the 50th Anniversary of the Air Force on Sept. 20, 1997. Major Rick Sage, Plans/Operations Officer, 931st ARG, participated in the First Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

The Air Force was the only service without a service-sponsored marathon. "The people at Wright-Patterson decided to put together the 26.2 mile marathon, and what an appropriate time," Sage said.

Sage decided on his own to take the trip

to Wright-Patterson and to run in the marathon. "I initially got into shape for the local River Run. They started advertising for the Air Force Marathon in May so I decided maybe I'll take it to the next level and see if I can run that far," he said.

Over 2,000 people from 48 of the 50 states participated in the marathon. "The only two states not represented was Idaho and Montana," he said.

Sage's time was 3 hours, 45 minutes. The winner finished around 2 hours, 26 minutes.

"I averaged about 8 1/2 minutes a mile," he said. "The good runners averaged about five minutes a mile."

Honorable Shelia Widnall, Secretary of the Air Force, was present at the marathon. She rode her bike around the course. "She is a bicyclist not a runner," commented Sage.

Each participant was given a number to wear across their chest. Dr. Widnall was given the number 1947. "She took the number around the course and then it was retired, supposedly to honor the POW/MIAs and the 50th Anniversary of the Air Force," Sage said.

Maj. Sage successfully completed the first Air Force 26.2 mile marathon. "I think I should be signed off for my three mile walk for this," he chuckled.

Flu shots scheduled for this UTA

Contrary to popular myth, you cannot get the flu from the flu shot. You can, however, get some aches and pains. The 18th ARS flight surgeon recommends two Tylenol just before the shot; sometimes a little Vitamin C helps, too.

Shots will be given on Sunday, by squadron/flight in the medical office, Bldg. 1218, Rm. 137.

Schedule:

1200-1300—AGS
1300-1400—CES
1400-1500—ARG/MSF/OSF
1500-1600—ARS

Catalog offers alternative method of shopping

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Reservists in Air Force Reserve Command who have difficulty making it to a military clothing sales store can shop at home through the latest Army and Air Force MCSS Catalog.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service offers the catalogs at all MCSS locations worldwide. It issued the latest catalog in November, which features an American eagle in the foreground and a U.S. flag in the background.

The catalogs carry the latest dress, service, physical training and battle dress uniforms, as well as boots, shoes, shirts, insignia and more. Other merchandise includes luggage, watches, sunglasses, award cases, bronze figurines, knives, lanterns and stoves, T-shirts, and day and night vision binoculars. New items in the

catalog are marked with a star in front of the item code.

Customers may contact exchange catalog sales representatives by telephone or telefax 24 hours a day. The toll-free phone number in the 50 states and Puerto Rico is 1-800-527-2345, and fax number is 1-800-446-0163. Customer can also write to Exchange Catalog Sales, P.O. Box 660211, Dallas, Texas 75266-0211.

DIARY cont. from Page 1

After a good night's sleep, the crew heads for the airfield and the final leg of the trip late Friday morning. A short flight, compared with what the crew has been doing the past few days, and it's back to McConnell.

Brantley, the pilot for the mission, said it was one of the more difficult channel runs he had worked.

"Primarily because of all the changes," he said. "The airlifters ... they've been doing this regularly for years and expect to get sent somewhere different every day. Depending on the customer's needs, the mission can change daily."

But, with a Reserve crew, extending the mission several days is not as much of an option as for active duty crews.

"We talked to C-5 pilots at Dover ... who had been extended again and again and didn't know when they were going home," Brantley said. "Reservists must get back to their employers."

"Col Despinoy (the 931st commander) brought up a good point that, on our mission identifier, we need to make sure it is clear that there's a Reserve crew working the mission."

Brantley said that, with the phasing out of the C-141s, the KC-135 will be used more and more on runs like the Aviano Eagle and its sister run in the Pacific.

"Usually it is pretty smooth," Brantley said of cargo runs. "When it's not ... well you saw how it was when it's not."

Read the Spirit

REFER A FRIEND !!

There are positions available within the 931st ARG. Help your unit recruit by providing them a name of a friend or have them contact one their area recruiters listed below:

MCCONNELL AFB, KS
MSgt Terry Gosh (316) 652-4350
MSgt Lester Shaw, Jr. (316) 652-3766

TINKER & VANCE AFB, OK
MSgt Al Garza (405) 734-5331
ALTUS AFB, OK & Lawton, OK
MSgt Larry Giles (405) 357-2784
SHEPPARD AFB, TX
MSgt Bob Wright (817) 676-3382

MIDWEST CITY, OK
MSgt Linda Smith
TSgt Erick Gilck
(405) 733-9403



Participation



Participation - A voluntary way of Life

As a lean, mean, fightin' machine, we voluntarily take the challenges handed to us to meet the criteria of the Air Force Reserve:

- * Medical standards and qualifications
- * Dress and appearance standards
- * Physical fitness requirements
- * Participation requirements

We want to be in the Reserve and after 20 satisfactory years of service, we are rewarded with a retirement that starts paying us at age 60. Since this is a voluntary force, there should be no problem in meeting any of these standards. The only standard that may be out of our control may be the medical standards. As we get older and our bodies change, things like diabetes, thyroid glands, and such come into play. These and other factors may ultimately end a reserve career, involuntarily. Dress and appearance, physical fitness, and participation should not be a problem. If you volunteered to be a Reservist, there should be no reason why you cannot meet these three standards.

Dress and appearance

The Reserve ensures that enlisted members are provided with uniforms and helps in making sure stripes and so forth are properly sewn on. All you need to do is make sure its clean and ironed. You should take pride in your appearance in the uniform. People will take notice of how neat and professional you look. Think back to when you've seen an individual with a crisp looking uniform and boots that you can see your reflection in or those in "blues" with neatly pressed shirt and pants. These people look competent. Now think about the ones who look like they've slept in their uniform, do they inspire confidence?

Physical fitness

Now come on here....we all should have no problem here. A three mile walk is a piece of cake; unless there is something medically wrong, this is not taxing on anyone. Hand in hand with physical fitness, is the concern about weight management. Yes, the older we get, the harder it is for the pounds to come off. We need to watch what we put into our bodies. For some it's not a problem, but for others it can be a constant battle. Physical fitness and proper diet should help control weight. If not, you may want to seek medical advice.

Participation

It is the responsibility of every reservist to have satisfactory participation, according to AFMAN 36-8001, Table 1.1. **Satisfactory participation** is defined as completing the following per fiscal year:

48 days of UTAs

14 days of annual tour

48 days of AFTP (aircrew positions only)

You are considered an **unsatisfactory participant** if you have 5 unexcused absences or have not completed an annual tour in a fiscal year. Actions that may be taken on reservists that fall into this category are:

Delay or defer promotion

Administrative demotion

Reassignment to inactive reserve status

Discharge

Things can happen in one's life that may disrupt planned UTA's, annual tours, and AFTP's. UTA schedules are provided well in advance and each unit should give ample notification for annual tour training. Let's start the new fiscal year off on the right foot. We all volunteered to be here. If you find it hard to continue participation, talk with your supervisor, unit career advisor, or your retention manager. We want you happy and participating instead of unhappy and not participating.

More Training Tidbits

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME)

PME opportunities continue to be available for 931st members. Below is a current listing:

Airman Leadership School:

Required for SRA to make NCO status. We have 1 quota for the 28 Jul - 28 Aug class. Interested members may pick up an application at DPMAT.

AFRES NCO Leadership Development Program (NCOLDP):

Provides SSgt & TSgts with an academic foundation in leadership and management principles. Also provides 2 credit hours toward the LMMS category of a CCAF degree. NAS JRB, Ft. Worth, Carswell Field has graciously offered our members participation in their classes. Dates are:

14-22 Feb, 11-19 Apr, 13-21 Jun, 8-16 Aug 98

Classes are also available at Tinker AFB, OK. We'll let you know as soon as we receive their dates. Interested members should request a slot through their Unit Training Manager.

Command NCO Academy:

Required to make MSgt. TSgts or SSgts with 8 years time in service may attend.

All 3 quotas are at Goodfellow AFB, TX.

Dates:

24 Feb - 2 Apr, 1 Jun - 9 Jul, 3 Aug - 10 Sep 98

Interested members need to complete an AFRES Form 129 (available at DPMAT). Quotas must be confirmed *by name* NLT 60 days before the beginning of the class so members wishing to attend the February class should have their application back to DPMAT *by the end of the Dec. UTA.*

SR NCO Academy:

Although we've not received them yet, members may start preparing their packages for the second half of fiscal year '98

class dates. Packages include a current records review rip, AFRES Form 129 and an 8x10 photo. Because the suspense was so short for the first dates available, we had no applicants go forward. Members interested in attending this fiscal year need to prepare *in advance* in case we, again, have a short suspense for submissions.