

CE's bivouac
Photo gallery
Page 4

Family Readiness
Wilson's program
Page 5

50-1 Dining Out
Rules to know
Page 7

September 1996
Vol. 1, No. 3



Air Force Reserve's first Associate KC-135 Unit

AMC boss welcomes new reservist and unit

by Maj. Ray Kozak
18th ARS UPAR

During his recent visit to McConnell AFB, Gen. Walter Kross, Commander of Air Mobility Command, took time out from his busy schedule to extend a welcome to a new member of team McConnell. Saying he was "never to busy" to recognize such an event, Gen. Kross administered the commissioning oath to Capt. Galdino A. Leon.

Leon was making the switch from active duty to Reserve officer on his first day as a member of the 931st Air Refueling Group.

In his brief remarks before the commissioning ceremony, Gen. Kross welcomed Capt. Leon to Air Mobility Command and Team McConnell. Kross quipped that the Reserve component was the Air Force's "secret weapon," referring to the wealth of experience and capability contained in the Air Force Reserve. Capt. Leon, for example, is typical of the highly experienced pilots of the 18th Air Refueling Squadron in the 931st, who average 2,800 military flight hours.

Many members in the 18th ARS's "Can Do" squadron are experienced instructor pilots who have joined the Air Force Reserve immediately after seven to 12-years of active duty service. In addition to the squadron's extensive experience in tankers, several in the 18th also have experience in tactical fighters, strategic reconnaissance, airlift and naval patrol aircraft and missions.

Capt. Leon is a graduate of the



Photo by Capt. Phil Blahut

Gen. Walter Kross (r) speaks to Capt. Galdino Leon (l) after commissioning him into the 931st. (center) Col.s' Vik Malling, 931st ARG commander and Larry Stevenson, 22nd ARW commander, look on.

Air Force Academy with over 3,000 flight hours. Formerly a Combat Crew Training School KC-135 Instructor Pilot at Castle AFB, Calif., he has just returned from a European tour of duty where he piloted C-20 Gulfstream V.I.P. operational support aircraft. Capt. Leon said, "he was honored to meet Gen.

Kross on his first day at McConnell and with the 931st."

Col. Vik Malling, 931st ARG commander, thanked Gen. Kross for taking time to visit the 931st headquarters and presented Kross a new squadron scarf which featured 'People of the South Wind,' our Kanza unit logo.

Unit flies first UTA shuttle flights

This drill weekend marks the first time the 931st will provide reservists a UTA shuttle service to their weekend drill training location. Departing McConnell, Reserve aircrews will fly to Altus AFB, Okla., then to Richards Gebaur Airport, Kansas City, Mo., to pick up 931st Reserve members and fly them here for weekend duty.

This unique approach allows unit

members who have geographic challenges to get to McConnell and back home. Additionally, it provides aircrew training while flying this support mission.

After this first flight, the unit will evaluate and if effective, more flights will be planned.

931st reservist who live near these locations are encouraged to use and evaluate this new service.

UTA BILLETING
Beginning Oct. 1, commuting 931st reservists who make lodging reservations through their unit liaison will not have to check in with McConnell AFB's billeting office. Go directly to our contract hotel: The Comfort Inn, Wichita, Ks.

LAN, ALMOST

Our 931st local area network or LAN is almost complete. This month, AFRES contractors finished the necessary cabling that was needed for computer connectivity. Soon the 931st will be on the Information Highway.

LINQUISTS NEEDED

Any 931st member who can read and speak Italian should contact Lt. Col. Tom Teal at 652-3812.

It's time to assess ourselves, measure

Over the past few months the Unit Self Assessment writing team and others have done a tremendous amount of documentation of their processes and are putting their first draft of this Quality document together. The USA is a collection of information gathered from the unit during a very compressed year of planning and preparation. Leading the 931st in this effort is 1st. Lt. Joe Wible, our Quality Officer.

My hat is off to Lt. Wible for his hard work in training, facilitating and leading us in our Quality journey. Hopefully, this process wasn't too painful for our new group.

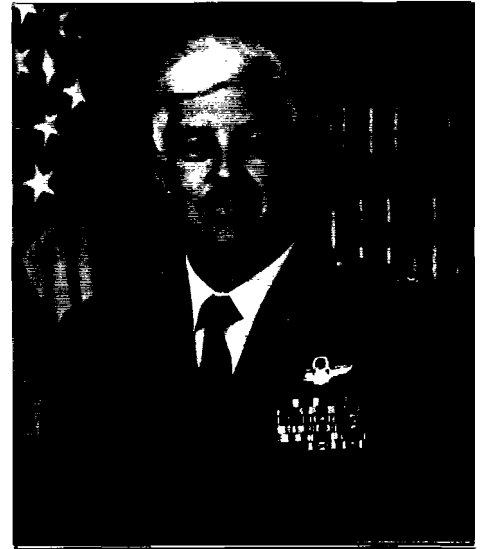
Others were active during the process as well. The Executive Steering Committee and each squadron are to be commended for your organizational work efforts too. We have come a long way down the Quality road, and we are on the home stretch as we publish our first report.

So why am I making a point of all of this? In recent days I've heard, "Isn't all this quality stuff and inspection activity something colonels take care of?" The answer is "No!"

Topics like empowerment, continuous improvement, metrics, team building and customer focus when used by us will contribute to making the 931st a Quality world class unit of choice.

Our USA report will be finished soon and will be sent to the Air Force Reserve Inspector General before October 1st. But that is just a start as a mini-IG team will take a look at us in two months. During November 14-19, we'll receive a Mini-QAFA (Quality Air Force Assessment), where the team takes a look at where we are with Quality. They want to see if we are using our training, implementing our plans and to see if information is flowing from the top down and visa versa. In short, they want to see if Quality is used as a tool to manage our unit and to serve our customers and each other.

While the team is here, you can expect to be asked questions like, "What's the unit's Mission Statement, its Goals and



Col. Vik Malling

Values?" Do you know them? Over the next few months, supervisors will be talking about more specifics of the QAFA and the role you play.

Until then, please think "safety first," keep a good attitude, keep up the great work and continue to strive to be the best. Your positive "can do" attitude will carry us through any inspection or task that comes our way.

Kanza Spirit

Volume 1, No. 3

Monday, October 7, is the deadline for articles in the October 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.

Group Commander
Col. Vik Malling

Chief, Public Affairs
Capt. Phil Blahut

Public Affairs Specialists
Staff Sgt. David Brumley
Senior Airman Barbara Davis

Administrative Assistant
Vacant

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Team synergy pays off as 931st recruits

by **Capt. Phil Blahut**
931st Public Affairs

Last month, the 931st kicked-off an intensive recruiting effort and it is starting to pay off. It seems that when minds get together and unit members cross over from their functional areas and work together, things happen. Experts call it synergy.

Because of synergy, 931st maintenance, recruiting and public affairs staff worked together to develop a way to get the word out that our unit is hiring reservists.

As a result, a news release and editors survey was created and mailed to more than 200 small to large rural-based newspapers. Today, we are receiving news clippings and favorable survey responses that indicate our story was run or will be soon. Our market reach curiosity is high.

This simple but timely team effort can pay some dividends. If we don't get any recruits, then at least we got our message out to a new audience that may learn more about our roles and missions in the Reserve.

Another synergy is taking place to the south. Our 931st maintenance staff have spent some time recruiting folks from Altus

AFB, Okla., a place where a new government contract aircraft maintenance is starting. Their efforts may attract enough aircraft mechanics to fill our current vacancies and bring our unit manning up to 100 percent

More 931st kudo's

Dear Vik,

July 8, 1996

Congratulations!

On behalf of the Kansas Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (KSESGR) I wanted to let you know that I recently read with great interest the articles on the 931st in the June issue of "Citizen Airman". These articles were fantastic!

You and your entire unit should be very proud of the job you are doing and how far you have come in such a short period of time.

Please pass on my sincere best wishes to everyone in your group. Keep up the great work!

Robert N. Salmon
ESGR State Chairman
Topeka, Kansas

Phone manners offer better customer service

Customers now expect more service for their money. Service request volume at some companies is up more than 25% on the same sales volume. Challenge: To make sure the front-line customer-service personnel handle each call quickly and effectively.

Direct but polite language is the best time-saver and a plus for the units image. A chatty good morning, comments on the weather and other initial small talk do not help the company.

Guidelines for managers to set for efficient customer-service telephone users.

◆ Always identify yourself by both first and last name. Callers take Sergeant Smith or Ms. Jones as a put-down. Representatives who use their first name get more abuse from customers. The full name conveys dignity and professionalism.

◆ Avoid excuses: That's not my department. Say: You're asking a specialized question and Jane Smith has that information. I'll transfer you to her on extension 25.

◆ Never say: You have to. That immediately raised hackles. Ask instead: Will you call Mary Jones on extension 34 for that information?

◆ If it is necessary to put the caller on hold, explain that you already started to help another customer. This softens possible annoyance. When returning to the line, do not apologize. Say: Thank you for waiting. How can I help you.

◆ Do not ask the customer to call back. Volunteer to call back yourself, and specify when. (People are put off by 'as soon as possible'.)

◆ When answering someone else's phone, always identify that person and then give your own name and function. Do not give information about that person's whereabouts.

◆ Work out solutions or explanations that do not entail blaming someone else. No one is helped by statements such as: That person should have told

you there would be a three-week delay on your request. When in doubt, say you will check out the problem and call back.

Sounding better on the phone

Make a better impression on the phone by opening your mouth wider as you speak and moving your lips. Most people move their lips too little, flattening the voice tone. Do not squeeze the phone between your neck and shoulder. This tenses your throat and makes you talk from one side of your mouth.

Keep your voice and throat relaxed on the phone by talking with your head straight. When the throat is bent, it becomes tense. Also, speak in your lower vocal range. Telephones transmit lower pitches more truly than high ones.

(The above article contains major excerpts from *The Book of Business Knowledge* offered by Boardroom Publishing, Inc., August, 1996.)

Phone, voice-mail, E-mail tips offer efficiency

As we start our Quality journey, communication basics must be considered. We must convey to our customers and suppliers professionalism, timeliness and efficiency. Below, some tips are listed that will help you develop good techniques and habits.

◆ To get a voice-mail message returned: Convey a sense of urgency, such as, "I need to speak to you before my afternoon meeting" ...leave a message saying that the recipient will benefit from calling you back - because you can solve a problem or fulfill a need...or stimulate the recipient's curiosity with a statement that implies you have information that will be of great interest to him or her.

◆ The voice that answers voice mail is a key element of customer contact that is often neglected. The voice must wel-

come callers- genuinely-and make them feel that the unit appreciates their calling.

Helpful: Conduct voice auditions throughout the unit or work section to find the right voice-mail voice. Even though most of us want to use our own voice when setting up our recordings, a more professional approach uses someone else, and mentions your name.

Voice-mail is often the first impression a caller gets of a unit or company. It should be the best impression possible.

◆ Phone Maintenance: Most of the 931st telephones are new and they have speaker phone capability. It's a good idea to clean your phone regularly with a damp alcohol cloth. This cleans the handset of body oils, dust and germs.

◆ Voice-mail maintenance should include retrieving your

voice mail messages, daily. Currently, 931st voice-mail accounts are set at a three minute recording capacity. If your mail account is full, then no one else can deliver their message, which may be important in nature.

◆ E-Mail Trap. Users of E-mail, typically think of it as being informal in comparison to written correspondence and often enter offhand comments and opinions that they would not want to see appear in formal correspondence.

In reality, E-mail is more permanent than paper correspondence. It can stay in computer files forever. E-mail also can be forwarded, duplicated, distributed or "broadcast" much more easily and quickly than anything written on paper. Tip: Anything included in E-mail may end up being read by unknown persons. Draft messages accordingly.

Who are 931st customers

- All potential recruits
- McConnell AFB employees and contractors
- Active duty counterparts
- Air Force Reserve unit counterparts
- AFRES headquarters
- 4th and 15th Air Force counterparts
- All off-base callers, suppliers and local citizens
- your family members
- retirees
- Congressional liaisons and staffers
- Reserve employers, supervisors
- 931st reservists
- 931st full-time staff
- Off-base emergency agencies
- High schools, college students, teachers, advisors
- Contractors
- Other Government agencies
- News media, radio, TV and print

QAFA reminders

Mission: To provide mission ready reservists to fly, maintain and support Global Reach for America.

Vision: To improve our culture so integrity, patriotism, teamwork, respect and customer focus are a way of life in the 931st Air Refueling Group.

Our Goals: (PRPLE)

People
Readiness
Planning
Leadership
Environment

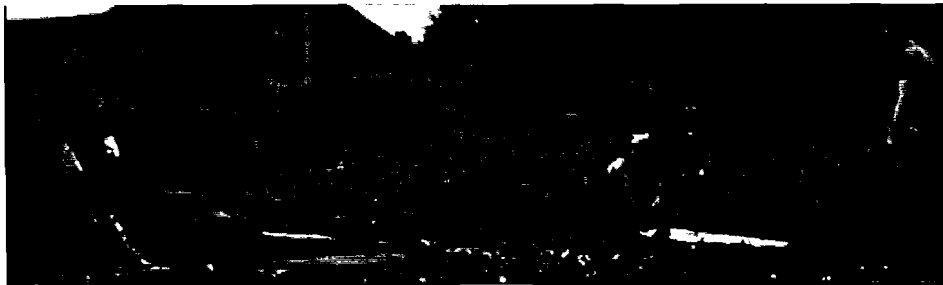
Our Values: (PCTRIIP)

Professionalism
Customer Focus
Teamwork
Respect
Integrity
Patriotism

Bivouac training

Photos by Staff Sgt. Randy Brown

During the August UTA, 931st Civil Engineers completed deployment training phase II. It included classroom briefs, a convoy, simulated attacks, chem-gear and tent living conditions.



Family Readiness, a 931st 'best kept' secret

by Senior Airman David Brumley
931st Public Affairs

The best kept secret within the 931st Air Refueling Group is its Family Readiness Program. Within this program is a one stop shopping center of information and referral services.

Sharing that secret is Tech. Sgt. Victoria Wilson, a new unit member and the one chosen to put this program together.

"We can get into the community where reservists live and find out what community services are there. We can tell these Reservist where they can go to get answers to their questions, from A to Z," says Wilson.

"During war time, our role is to ensure all emergency information is up to date."

Information referral covers all the local agencies where ever the member is from and if they are from another city we also are able to tell them where they can go in that city."

Information referral covers all local community services from local child day care services to medical services and anything in between.

As a new family readiness department, Wilson and others want to move the 931st towards full development and desires to be the unit focal point that prepares reservist and their families in case the military member deploys.

Some of the 931st reservists experienced Family Support programs while they served during Desert Storm. However, the 931st Family Readiness program is different from the active duty Family Support program.

According to Wilson, "Our readiness program is geared toward the support of the Reserve community. The difference in our missions is that active duty and retirees have access to Family Support Centers. A Reserve readiness program provides mission support for the reservist and their families. This function is a major part of the Air Force Reserve's overall responsibility; to ensure reservists are ready to deploy.

Working with the Air Force is not new to Wilson. Born in South Bend, Indiana, Wilson enlisted into the Air Force after High

School and served for more than ten years. Her last assignment was here at McConnell AFB, where she worked in military personnel.

After she left active duty in June 1995, she joined the 931st last February and started with the military personnel flight as a customer service representative. When the new Family Readiness Program started, Wilson was chosen for the position. Since then, she's developed her work section from the ground up.

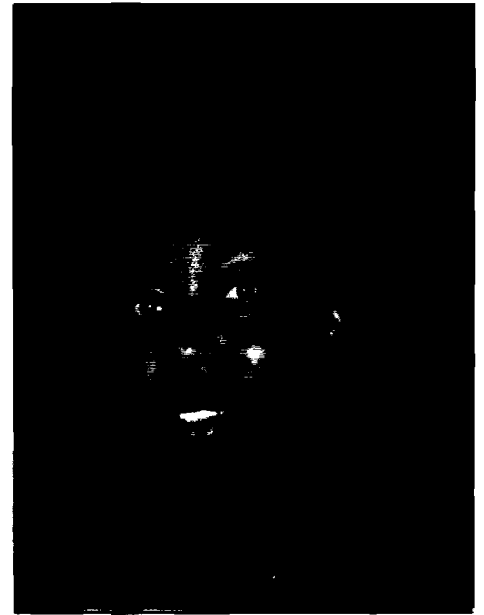
Since Desert Storm, Family Readiness has gained major support from unit members and commanders. It proved to be vital in providing family assistance while the spouse was not there to help. Yet wartime requirements differ greatly from a peacetime family readiness office

According to Wilson "family readiness has different roles for peace and war time. During peace time the member is given different briefings for TDY's and also workshops are offered for different situations.

"During war time, our role is to ensure all emergency information is up to date." Readiness became a major focal point in getting base support for Reserve families.

She also emphasized that another advantage Reserve Family Readiness offers is weekend UTA support. This service provides reservists with current information about area jobs, medical services and even the climate. This helps our people prepare for deployments, locally or worldwide.

In the future, Wilson and her staff plans to hold stress management, social actions, and chaplain services workshops. She is in need of volunteers to assist in developing a telephone tree (similar to the military's pyra-



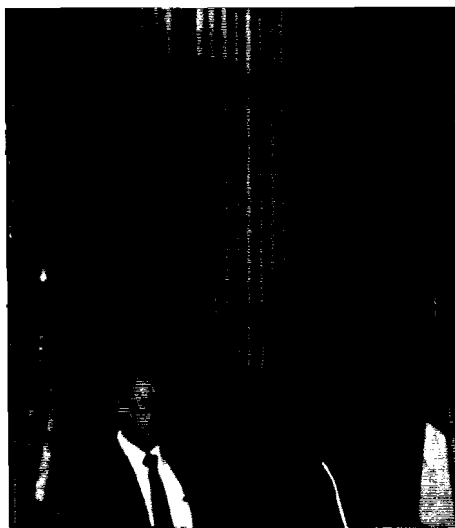
Tech. Sgt. Victoria Wilson

mid recall system), clerical help, and anyone with a specialty they feel would be of assistance. This includes professional and manual labor skills as well.

"I just want people to stop by, ask questions and request information. Also, we want to make sure our unit members have their documents in order and in a safe place," said Wilson.

Wilson who lives in Wichita is married and is a proud parent of two girls, ages four and nine. She believes that if she was mobilized, her family would be cared for and hopes that others trust the process as well.

For additional information on how to become a 931st Family Readiness volunteer or to receive more about the program, call Tech. Sgt. Wilson at 652-3774.



Chap. (Maj.) Charles Peters, the 931st Chaplain, regularly conducts Sunday Christian services during UTA's at McConnell AFB's chapel. Peters and his new assistant, Tech. Sgt. Scott Fletcher have published and will distribute their new chapel schedule and hours of assistance to all 931st members this drill weekend. Members are welcomed to drop by their office or to call them for personal assistance. Their services directly support the 931st Family Readiness program.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Randy Brown

Elmer Fudd's delight starts with safety

by the 931st Safety Office

The coming of Fall means a myriad of things to people. The changing leaves from the deep green of summer to honey yellow, halloween orange and scarlet red; crisp temperatures and the mountain fresh smell of the first cold front; plump pumpkins and anemic corn stalks arranged with hay bales to decorate the lawn; football games with friends on a gray Saturday afternoon.. Yes, fall is a season of many and varied pleasures and for many, their favorite time of year.

As we approach the autumn equinox, we also hale the beginning of a new hunting season. It's time to get up early to get out the long handles and the wool socks. Put on that old flannel shirt that your wife has tried to throw out during spring cleaning each of the last three years. Don't forget a cap for warmth, your rifle and hot coffee.

And take that old floppy-eared hound who loves to eat, sleep, hang his head out the window of the truck, and most of all he loves to hunt. You arrive at your favorite spot; the woods, the lake, or the meadow or wherever you enjoy hunting. Your hunting choices are pheasant, ducks, quail, dove, or to just sit and enjoy some peaceful time. Some would say this is the life and with all the stress in our lives today, who would argue?

So, why spoil this serenity with a careless accident when you could follow some simple rules when hunting.

1. Make sure someone knows where you are and when you should return. If possible go with a partner.
2. Never attempt to cross a fence, ditch, or other obstacle while holding a loaded weapon.
3. Never take a hasty shot, be sure of your target and surroundings.
4. Never fire at a movement, a noise, a flash of color, or into rustling brush.
5. Never allow debris in the barrel of your weapon.

Remember, a hunter's safety course is required for persons born on and after January 1, 1957. For course information, check with your county extension agency or parks and recreation services.

The 931st Safety Office wishes you safe and happy hunting! And watch out for those wask-a-wee wabbits!

Failure to pay AMEX card bills can hurt careers

The American Express Card is to be used for official TDY expenditures. Only official TDY expenditures claimed on your travel voucher, such as food, lodging and transportation will be reimbursed. However, Air Force Reserve card managers are being notified of personal use charges and these are strictly prohibited.

According to Ms. Laura Brusca, the 931st AMEX card administrator, "The primary reasons why DoD contracted with the American Express Company is to provide a benefit to Reserve employees who travel on official business. It provides access to cash and charge privileges worldwide and as a benefit to the government, it reduces the amount of cash it handles daily.

Brusca outlines how the AMEX card should be used for all temporary duty assignments. If the TDY is longer than 30 days, you should file an interim travel voucher for expenses incurred to that point. This reimbursement would then be used to pay that

month's AMEX bill. The member is responsible for keeping their account current at all times.

American Express Card abuse and delinquency have consequences. AMEX abuse and delinquency may result in a Letter of Counseling, a Letter of Reprimand, administrative demotion, administrative discharge, and an Article 15. AMEX delinquency will result in non-eligibility for re-enlistment, awards and promotions.

It is of utmost importance that all 931st members use the AMEX card properly and pay their AMEX credit card obligations in a timely manner. Not doing so will adversely affect your credit rating and your military and civilian career.

If you should have any question related to the use of your AMEX card, contact the 931st Financial Management office at 652-3677 or call the AMEX 1-800 phone number printed on the back of your card.

Check with billeting office before beddin' down

Billeting at this base stinks! I'm going to the Marriott Courtyard, downtown. "Woah, partner!" says the 931st Financial Staff.

Can a member do this and be reimbursed for lodging? It depends on how you answer the next question. Did the member get a non-availability letter or a contract call letter from base billeting that stated they could check into the Marriott Courtyard?

If you are on temporary duty orders at another location, one hard rule has never changed. You must check in with on-base billeting regardless of whether you are staying on base or off.

The only way for a member to be reimbursed for lodging off-base is to have a non-availability letter, a contract call letter or a non-availability number on the members orders. A confirmation number or a reserva-

tion number on the orders is not a non-availability number.

Travel pay personnel will no longer accept a statement on the travel voucher by the member stating they were authorized to stay off base. Each base has contracted with local motels and hotels and if you are authorized, you'll be directed to use one. You won't know which one or if you can unless you check with billeting first.

The only exception to the above rule is if you are ordered to a specific motel or hotel for the TDY period, or you are at a location less than 24 hours, or if aircrew integrity is in force.

If you have any questions about billeting it is best to ask before finding out you just paid for lodging out of your own pocket.

School's back in session, watch kid crossings

School is back in session and its time again to watch for those hidden school crossing signs. KAKE-10 TV provided on their September 4, 1996 broadcast that if you're caught doing 25 m.p.h. in a school zone, it could cost you \$52. At 40 m.p.h., the cost will be \$90, and 50 m.p.h., the cost will be \$112.

And know one can agree more than Master Sgt. Greg Bourgeois, of the 931st Ground Safety office. "We need to watch our speed because those little ones do not always think before they act." He goes on to say that, "In

and around residential areas, watch out at corners for children crossing, look for school bus stops, and the possibility of children crossing between parked vehicles."

He also adds that if providing transportation for your children and other children, ensure they have their seat belts on before the vehicle is placed in motion. If you see a school bus loading or unloading, watch for children walking out in front of the bus or running to catch the bus. Paying attention is your best prevention.

Obey Dining Out rules, they save trips to the Grog

by the 50-1 Dining Out Committee

Remember when you were in grade school and your teacher caught you talking out of turn. Your teacher pointed you out in front of every one, you blushed and became totally embarrassed. Even though we're older now, the 931st 50-1 Dining Out may bring back similar memories. That is, if you break the rules.

As with most civil functions, there has to be rules. And Capt. Terri Kett, Special Activities Coordinator says that this year's Dining Out is no exception. "Violators are subject to the wrath and mischievousness of Mister Vice," she said. "All assigned penalties will be carried out before the membership and swiftly."

So advice to those who have forgotten, read and heed. The 931st 50-1 Dining Out is our first formal function. There are bound to be some glitches, however, the recipe of the day includes fun. Here are rules to follow.

1. Thou shalt arrive within 10 minutes of the appointed hour.
2. Thou shalt make every effort to meet all guests.
3. Thou shalt move to the mess when thee hears the chimes and remain standing until seated.
4. Thou shalt not bring cocktails into the mess.
5. Thou shalt not eat thy salad until the invocation is given.
6. Thou shalt smoke only on the patio.
7. Thou shall not leave the mess whilst convened. Military protocol overrides all calls of nature.
8. Thou shalt participate in all toasts unless thyself or thy group is honored with a toast.
9. Thou shalt ensure that thy glass is always charged when toasting.
10. Thou shalt keep toasts and comments within the limits of good taste and mutual respect. Degrading or insulting remarks will be frowned upon by the membership. However, good natured needling is ENCOURAGED.
11. Thou shalt not murder the Queen's English.
12. Thou shalt always use the proper toasting procedure.
13. Thou shalt not fall into disrepute with thy peers if the pleats of thy cummerbund are not properly faced.
14. Thou shalt also be painfully regarded if thy clip-on bow tie rides at an obvious list.

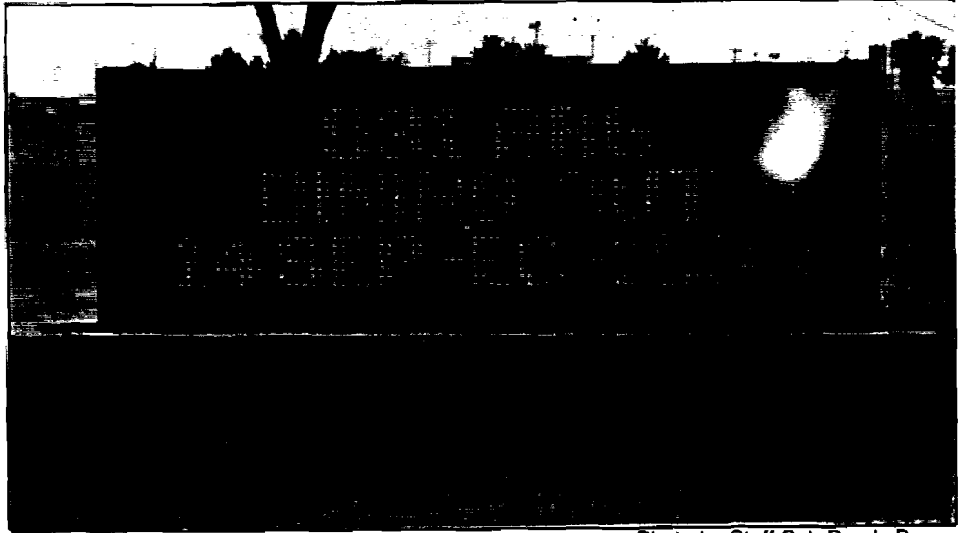


Photo by Staff Sgt. Randy Brown

Thou shalt be forgiven, however, if thee also ride at a comparable list.

15. Thou shalt consume thy meal in a manner becoming of gentle persons.
16. Thou shalt not laugh at ridiculously funny comments unless the President first shows approval by laughing.
17. Thou shalt express thy approval by tapping thy spoon on the table. Clapping of thy hands will not be tolerated.
18. Thou shalt not question the decisions of the President.
19. When the mess adjourns, thou shalt rise and wait for the President and head table guests to leave.
20. Thou shalt enjoy thyself to thy fullest.

Violations of protocol

Violations of protocol may warrant a trip to the grog bowl as punishment.

1. Arriving late at the cocktail lounge.
2. Carrying drinks into the dining room.
3. Miss-wearing the cummerbund.
4. Wearing an ill-fitting or discolored mess jacket.
5. Wearing clip-on bow tie at an obvious angle.
6. Wearing non-issue suspenders.
7. Toasting with an uncharged glass (wine or water may be used).
8. Improper toasting procedure.
9. Starting a course before the President.
10. Applauding a particularly witty, sarcastic, or succinct toasts (unless following the example of the President).
11. Loud and obtrusive remarks in a foreign language or in English.
12. Discussing business, referred to as

"opening the hangar doors."

13. Talking while another person has the floor.
14. Caviling or quibbling.
15. Hagglng over date of rank.
16. Using foul language.

Toasting

1. The person making the toast shall be recognized by the President first.
2. Thou shalt always stand when toasting.
3. Their response to the first toasts shall be as follows:
 - a. A Toast to the colors, Group response: "To the Colors"
 - b. Toast to the President, "To the President"
 - c. Toast to Sec of Defense, "To the Secretary"
 - d. Toast to Sec of USAF, "To the Secretary"
 - e. Toast to Gen Fogleman, "To the Chief of Staff"
 - f. Toast to Maj. Gen. McIntosh, "To the Chief of Staff"
 - g. Toast to the POWs/MIAs, "May we never forget"
4. The response to all other toasts shall be: "Hear, Hear".

Now that shouldn't be too difficult. Just remember, it is an evening of fun for the 931st members and their dates.

Featured entertainment at 50-1 Dining Out will be the Air Force Academy Show Choir and an Air Force Reserve Bagpiper. The event starts at 6:00 p.m.

As a reminder, let's have fun, but let's be responsible during and after the Dining Out.

A 931st Safety Bulletin

Static electricity from gasoline kills

Los Alamos Labs issued a warning message on 20 Aug. 96 concerning gas cans exploding while being filled. The following excerpts were contained in that warning.

An individual was filling a gas can that was inside the bed of his pick-up truck which contained a bed liner. The gasoline "spontaneously" ignited, burning him in the process. The investigation determined that this was caused by static electricity buildup from the plastic bed liner. It is not uncommon, and in fact there are two technical bulletins out on this. One is from Ford Motor Corp. and the other is from Standard Oil Co. The recommendations from both are that you should never fill a gas can in the bed of a truck with an installed bed liner. Place the container on the ground to fill it.

A Ford bulletin also stated that placing a rubber mat under the bed liner would alleviate this problem, however there are still cases of cans igniting even though a rubber mat was under the liner.

Chevron USA has also reported several instances of metal gas cans exploding while being filled in the backs of pick-up trucks at service stations. Chevron said that the insulating effect of the plastic liners found in the back of many pick-up trucks prevents the static charge generated by gasoline flowing into the metal can from grounding. As the charge builds, it can create a static spark between the can and the gas nozzle. Chevron is advising that all cans should be placed on the ground away from vehicles and people when being filled.

Finally, a flame specialist speaking during a recent seminar told that there have been 23 injuries/deaths because of pick-up truck owners fueling a gas can/tank that was sitting in the back of their truck. The specialist went on to relate that the plastic bed liners do not provide a ground and that the fuel generates a static charge that can cause the fumes to ignite. There is currently pressure on the bed liner manufacturers to put a warning label on their product.

The newer gas cans are made of plastic which should help to alleviate the problem. However, there are still old metal cans out there which will develop a static charge as the fuel is flowing into the can. It doesn't have to be the back end of a pick-up truck, so make sure you always ground the can. Being aware of the dangers involved in fueling small cans can save your life.



Photo by Capt. Phil Blahut

Staff Sgt. Aaron Savage, a 931st Civil Engineer, finishes painting labels on the units new trash recycling trailer. The recycling program was kicked off by Maj. Steve Kett, the 931st Intel Officer, to promote environmental stewardship. Located within Bldg's 1218 and 642 offices are white, blue and green collection bags for white paper and yellow bags for colored paper. These collection bags will be weighed and dumped regularly into the trailer unit. In addition, plastic and cardboard will also be recycled. The trailer will be located south of Bldg. 1218's hangar.

Upcoming UTA dates

Sept. 14-15
Oct. 19-20
Nov. 16-17



Dec. 7-8
Jan. 11-12
Feb 8-9

Kanza Spirit

931st Air Refueling Group/PA
53447 Kansas Court, Suite 221
McConnell AFB, KS 67221-3723

To our 931st family member:

Look for us on the Internet at: <http://www.mccconnell.af.mil/931aug/931.htm>

Uniform tip of the month

Uniform items already phased out are the olive green T-shirt; Oct. 1, 1994 and the satin/oxidized U.S. insignia and the U.S. insignia with circle; June 1, 1995.

Uniform items planned for phase out are the service dress coat, Shade 1549; officers service dress coat, Shade 1620 with officer sleeve rank and no epaulets; Sept 30, 1996.

Also planned is the long and short-sleeved blouse with fly-front closure with rounded collar, and the OG 107/507 field jacket; Jan. 1, 1997.

Ready Reserve income insurance starts Oct. 1

On or after October 1, 1996, members of the Ready Reserve will be provided the opportunity to enroll for the basic benefit amount of \$1,000 per month worth of mobilization income insurance. Reservists will be given 60 days to increase, decrease, or decline the election. A member who fails to complete the enrollment process within 60 days after being automatically enrolled or after being notified of eligibility to enroll will be considered as having declined the insurance.

Members of the Ready Reserve will only be given one opportunity to enroll and select a level of coverage required to replace lost income. All members must complete a "RRMIIP Certificate" to confirm their acceptance of coverage, or to change their name, designate or update a beneficiary, and/or designate recipient, change the amount of coverage, or decline coverage. For more details call Tech. Sgt. Thelma Herrera, Chief, Customer Service, at ext. 3593.