

# KANZA SPIRIT

## 931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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# Exercise, Exercise, Exercise

## Group completes first of three prep exercises

By Tech Sgt. Jason Schaap  
931st ARG Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Erron Hogue was on the flightline when the “fireworks and smoke” showed up for last month’s Injured Walker exercise at McConnell Air Force Base. As a noncommissioned officer, he instinctively headed for the nearest bunker. But when “Alarm Black, MOPP-4” soon sounded, Sergeant Hogue took out his gas mask and started a process not so familiar.

“Those suits are uncomfortable,” the 931st Maintenance Squadron Airman quickly realized about the ensemble used to protect Airmen from chemical and biological weapons. Sergeant Hogue’s stint with the Air National Guard, before joining the 931st, did not involve much practice with mission oriented protective posture (more commonly “MOPP”) situations. “Any chance we got for some ventilation (from MOPP gear) was really nice,” he said.

Sergeant Hogue and more than 130 Group members are preparing for an Operational Readiness Inspection next June. Injured Walker was the first of three preparation exercises leading up to the ORI.

Overall, the 931st’s commander, Col. William



Capt. Mark Villacis (1st in line), Tech. Sgt. Greg Carron (2nd) and Lt. Col. Tony Fazzino (3rd) exit an operations center bound for a KC-135 Stratotanker. The three 18th Air Refueling Squadron crew members took part in Injured Walker, an inspection preparation exercise at McConnell AFB in November. (Below Left) A 22nd ARW Security Forces member provides security during the exercise.

Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

Cahoon, was “very pleased” with how his troops performed during Injured Walker. Lt. Col. Keith Kontz said during an ORI preparation meeting after the exercise. Colonel Kontz is in charge of the 931st’s preparations.

“Obviously, we don’t have everything perfected yet,” Colonel Kontz said, referring to the issues discovered during Injured Walker that members of the 931st and the 22nd Air Refueling Wing are working to fix before the next preparation exercise in March. More than 500 Airmen from the 22nd, the 931st’s host wing at McConnell, are also scheduled to take part in June’s ORI.

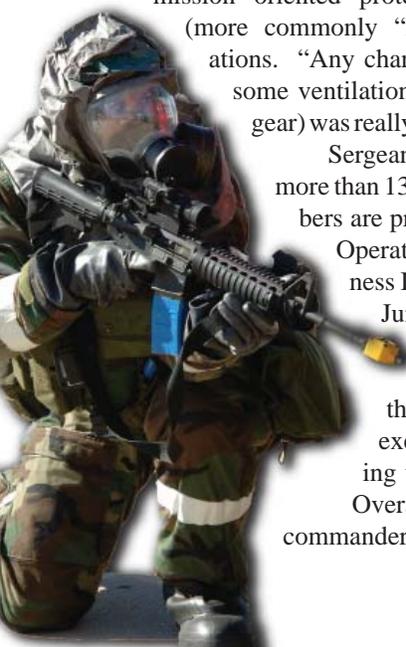
The Maintenance Squadron’s Master Sgt. James Wade served as an evaluator during Injured Walker. “I think (the exercise) went well,” he said the day Injured Walker ended. “People were hustling; they were not screwing around.” Sergeant Wade, a fellow hydraulics

mechanic in his squadron with Sergeant Hogue, said much of his squadron’s training before the ORI will be related to the Ability to Survive and Operate (more commonly “ATSO”) in a combat environment.

Senior Airman John Springston said he could relate to Sergeant Hogue’s account of MOPP introduction during Injured Walker. For Airman Springston, pavement and equipment journeyman for the 931st Civil Engineer Squadron, Injured Walker presented a “whole new challenge” in flightline repair while trying not to “back over anybody.”

Airman Springston was responsible for fixing simulated craters left by simulated bombings. Operating an excavator in close proximity with other repair vehicles was a new challenge that took a lot of getting used to, he said, especial-

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# COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

## WORK STILL TO BE DONE BEFORE INSPECTION

Well, we have completed our first solid round of ORI (now officially called an Inspector General Exercise or IGX) preparation. Our mandatory November UTA and three days of directed Annual Tour provided us a good opportunity to practice most scenarios covering all inspectable areas from Initial Response through Redeployment. It was also our first good opportunity to work closely with our 22nd ARW counterparts, and it was much appreciated by them all; our experience was noted by the 22nd leadership. In addition, many members of the 134th ARW from Knoxville, TN, were present to observe how both the 22nd and we performed, as well as take notes on our processes and procedures. The 134th will share in the IGX with us and the 22nd next June and they want to be in tune with us.

Overall, the exercise was a success. We accomplished everything we set out to do. I was very pleased with everyone's positive attitude. We all know IGX preparation is not much fun, but you dived in, and did your jobs—gas mask, simulated attacks and all. For those of you not in the exercise play area, I was very pleased at how you embraced your training activities in your normal work areas, and learned (or re-learned as the case may be) along with your co-workers in the "play" area. This all proved to be very valuable as it not only helped prepare us for the IGX, but it better prepared us for real world contingencies and deployments as well. Individual readiness is our Group's number two priority right after mission accomplishment, and so it is critical that we all take our training seriously as we never know when we will be called upon to deploy for real into a threat area. Many of our members are new to the Air Force and this was their first opportunity to participate in such an exercise. Therefore, this training, and that to follow in the coming months, will prove particularly useful for them and us.

So, how did we do? It depends upon what aspect of the exercise you are talking about. Overall, if it were the real IGX, we would have failed. However, it would not be because we don't know how to do our specific functional jobs. It was the overarching deployment and Ability to Survive and Operate (ATSO) tasks that caused difficulties. That does not mean it was not worthwhile. Of course, I would have loved us to have been a well-oiled machine, but that did not always happen. We had some specific problems with our initial response in identifying cargo requirements, personnel to be deployed, and how to get from an item

or name on a list to a piece of equipment or team ending up at a "deployed" location. Better to identify those challenges now. We can fix those processes, practice them again several times, and be ready for the IGX. We don't do large scale deployments very often at McConnell, and so this was a challenge, but we need to be prepared if we ever have to do it for real. The 931st members were well prepared to mobilize, and for the most part went through the mobility line without problems. Keeping your mobility folders and bags current is critical, as is keeping your shots and training up to date. Going through the mobility line is not the time to find out you need a physical or dental exam, or forgot to complete some required training item.

With regard to ATSO, we just need more practice. We generally know how to do what we are doing, we just need to do it faster and more accurately. We need to ensure we display a sense of urgency to all "attacks" and communicate more up, down, and across the organization throughout the exercise. We need to know the Airman's Manual cold. The "buddy system" needs to be a way of life from start exercise to end exercise. Regardless, we will have more chances to practice. Our next mandatory UTA is in February and we will have many training activities going on group-wide. In March, we have directed AT on 6/7 Mar followed immediately by mandatory UTA on 8/9 Mar. That will allow us to have another full-blown exercise with the 22nd ARW. If you are available and interested, we will offer man-days on 4/5 Mar to help us better set-up for the exercise and begin our group efforts in the exercise. Lastly, the practice IGX will be held the first week in April for those scheduled to actually participate in the IGX.

Thanks again for your hard work, patience, effort and positive attitude. We still have a long way to go, but I am confident we can do this, and be prepared for anything the bad guys, or the IG for that matter, can throw at us.



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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](http://www.931arg.afrc.af.mil)

# All the way from Michigan

## *New executive officer joins 931st ARG HQ staff*

By Senior Airman Connor Elayan  
931st ARG Public Affairs

Chances are you have already noticed a new face on the 931st Air Refueling Group's headquarter's staff.

One of the unit's newest additions, Lt. Col. Lawrence Lee, 931st ARG executive officer, recently moved from his home state, Michigan, to begin his assignment here.

Colonel Lee was commissioned into the Air Force Reserve in 1983 as a traditional reservist. He took his first air reserve technician position in 1992 as an aircraft maintenance officer assigned to Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Pa.

"I liked the Reserve so much, I decided I wanted to do it full time," Colonel Lee said.

Prior to joining the 931st ARG, Colonel Lee served as the 927th Maintenance Group commander at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich.

The Base Realignment and Closure

Commission announced that the 927th ARW would be transitioning from Selfridge ANGB to MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., to become an associate unit to the 6th Mobility Wing.

As part of his responsibilities at Selfridge, Colonel Lee was a key player in the beginning phases of preparing the unit for BRAC.

"I worked on setting up integration with the 927th and the 6th Air Mobility Wing," Colonel Lee said.

Now as the group executive, Colonel Lee is hoping to assist the group in anyway he can.

"I'm going to play a bigger role in the unit's day-to-day operations allowing (Col. William Cahoon, 931st ARG commander) to focus on policy and the big picture," Colonel Lee said.

The new executive officer also encourages anyone in the unit to come to him for assistance if there is something he can help with.

"Having gone through the BRAC experience, I had put myself out there to my old unit to help in any way I could," Colonel Lee said. "I'd like to do the same here."

"I'm going to play a bigger role in the unit's day-to-day operations..."

--Lt. Col. Lawrence Lee



## **UTA Schedule**

**Next UTA: December 8 - 9**

**January 12-13**

**February 9-10**

**March 8-9 (March 6-7 Mandatory Annual Tour,  
March 5 Optional)**

*DATES IN RED DENOTE MANDATORY UTAs*

## Exercise, Exercise, Exercise from page 1



Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaaap

Chaplain (Capt.) James Hicks (left) finds times during Injured Walker to get a laugh from his assistant, Staff Sgt. Schavonne Wilson. Between them is Chaplain (Capt.) Travis Sears from the 22nd ARW, the Group's host wing at McConnell AFB. The 931st is preparing for an Operational Readiness Inspection in June with the 22nd and the 134th ARW, an Air National Guard wing at McGhee-Tyson Airport Air Guard Station, Knoxville, Tenn.

ly in a full MOPP suit. "You have to turn your head more; you have no peripheral," he said about driving with a gas mask on. "And you can't feel the pedals as well with the (over) boots."

Like Sergeant Wade, CES' Tech. Sgt. John Bryan was asked to be an evaluator during Injured Walker. During the exercise, there was too much communication breakdown "up, down and sideways" within the chains of command, he said, but many of the individual Airmen he evaluated performed well.

Sergeant Bryan noted that those who had stuck colorful tabs inside their Airman's Manuals had an easier time finding answers to evaluators' questions. Airman's Manual familiarization is one of three keys to an Airman's successful completion of an ORI, he said. Learning Mission Essential Task Listings (more commonly "METLs") and sticking to the rules of engagement are the other keys.

"If you have a good working knowledge of these three," the superintendent of CES' Emergency Management and Readiness Flight said, "you'll fly right through it."



Senior Airman John Springston uses an excavator to repair simulated damage to the McConnell AFB flightline during November's exercise. Driving heavy equipment vehicles with chemical and biological protection suits was an added challenge for Airman Springston and other 931st Civil Engineer Squadron troops. (Courtesy Photo)



## SPIRIT SHORTS

### Children's Xmas Party

All 931st Airmen are invited to bring their children to a Christmas party on the Sunday of the December Unit Training Assembly (Dec. 9). The party is scheduled from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Kanza Conference Room in building 850 and will feature a visit by Santa, games and crafts. The party is sponsored by the Group's Human Resource Development Counsel. Donations of \$1 are being accepted to enter a drawing to win a Pearl Harbor 60th Anniversary Flag (with authentication letter) flown over Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 2001. All proceeds go to the Christmas party. Contact Tech. Sgt. Lange at 316-759-5484 for more information.

### End of year for military pay

The last 2007 Military Pay will be processed on Dec. 17. The next Military Pay cycle will be processed on Dec 27 and will pay out Jan. 4. The down time allows DFAS to reconcile accounts and issue appropriate tax documents (W-2's).

All earnings processed prior to Dec. 17 will be reflected on the 2007 W-2, Wage and Tax Statement. Duty performed after Dec. 17 will be reported as 2008 income.

As a reminder, a member cannot submit pay documents if the end date of the duty is the same as the pay run date (i. e., AF Form 938 block 15). Also military pay cannot process pay if

an AFTP, RMP, or RUTA is performed on the same date of the pay run date.

### New Base Entry Policy

Leadership at McConnell Air Force Base has made it easier for Airmen and civilian employees to bring guests on base. Those with valid identification (CAC card) can now vouch for guests entering the base in the card holder's vehicle and avoid the process of obtaining a pass for each guest at the base visitor's center. The new policy is only valid from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Guests entering the base between 11 p.m. and 6 p.m. are still required to obtain a pass.

## WICHITA WEEKEND

### Ozzy Osbourne & Rob Zombie

**Dec. 8** — The headbanging tunes of Osbourne and Zombie come to the Kansas Coliseum in Park City, KS. The Crazy Train is scheduled to arrive at 7:30 p.m.

[WWW.OZZY.COM](http://WWW.OZZY.COM)  
[WWW.ROBZOMBIE.COM](http://WWW.ROBZOMBIE.COM)

### Shocker Basketball

**Dec. 7** — Wichita State University's men's basketball team takes on the Mavericks of Texas Arlington at Charles Koch Arena in Wichita. Tip off is scheduled for 7:05 p.m.:

[WWW.GOSHOCKERS.COM](http://WWW.GOSHOCKERS.COM)

### Tribute to the Beatles

**Dec. 8** — Relive "Hey Jude" with American English, a Beatles tribute band, at the Wichita Orpheum. The invasion is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m.

[WWW.WICHITAORPHEUM.COM](http://WWW.WICHITAORPHEUM.COM)  
[WWW.SELECTASEAT.COM](http://WWW.SELECTASEAT.COM)  
[WWW.AMERICANENGLISHBEATLES.COM](http://WWW.AMERICANENGLISHBEATLES.COM)

## At the Movies



### MARTIAN CHILD

FRIDAY, Dec. 7, 7pm  
1 hr. 48 min. *A science fiction forms an unlikely bond with a close friend and a young adopted boy who claims to be from Mars. Strange occurrences lead the new couple to believe the claim might be true.*

**MPAA Rating: PG** for thematic elements and mild language



### AMERICAN GANGSTER

SATURDAY, Dec. 8, 7pm  
2 hr. 37 min. *Russell Crowe is Richie Roberts, a lawman on a quest to bring down Frank Lucas, played by Denzel Washington, a kingpin making a million dollars a day in drug sales.*

**MPAA Rating: R** for violence, pervasive drug content and language, nudity and sexuality

*Movies are shown at the McConnell Air Force Base Theater and are subject to change. Admission is \$3.50 for adults, \$1.75 for children 11 and under. Doors open 30 minutes prior to showtime.*

McConnell Movie Line - (316) 759-4181