

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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December 2004

McConnell AFB, Kansas

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North Pole native at 931st



Not many people can say they've had a drink with Santa Claus. One of the 931st's pilots can.

Maj. Byron Rager is from North Pole, Alaska, a name that was suppose to attract manufacturers who could say their toys were made at the North Pole.

The plan failed but the town is home to the Santa Clause House Toy Shop. A shop employee, complete with big belly and white beard, has changed his name to Kris Kringle.

Maj. Rager met Mr. Kringle at a drinking establishment in North Pole.

"He's a nice guy," Maj. Rager said. "He drinks 7 & 7."



In the Fast Lane

WITH THREE 931st AIRMEN

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt.
JASON SCHAAP
931st ARG
Public Affairs



(Above) The M&M car of Tech. Sgt. Martin Curry (pictured left) races on the inside of a car owned by Master Sgt. Alma Fewlass. Both are Group members who are avid participants in the Kansas Modified Racing scene.

Sparks from the cutting light up the surrounding shadows until the metal is severed. Then it stops and the light quickly escapes to the far corners of Lloyd Campbell's warehouse-like car shop, and the dimness creeps back in.

The engine and transmission want to go into their new home, a frame Campbell just bought off a fellow racer in the next town over. But there isn't enough room for

the supporting hoist to move them forward. After little hesitation, the obvious answer is to remove the front bumper that blocks the way.

It's the night before High Plains Thunder, a three-day main event for Kansas' Modified Car racers. But Campbell's new car won't be ready for the race.

His old car sits in the back of the garage severely bent from a

continued on page 4

photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap



Maj. Byron Rager is an 18th Air Refueling Squadron pilot from North Pole, Alaska.

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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

What a fantastic year for the Kanza family! You all should be very proud of all of your accomplishments. The IGX was a great success. The many months of planning and training paid off. I am so proud of all the IGX players and planners. You kicked butt!

Earlier this year our flyers put on quite a show for the AMC Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation Visit inspectors. The flyers earned high marks on our Aircrew Training and Stan/Eval programs. They also excelled on their inflight checks and testing. Those were the big inspections for the year. Lets not forget the pride and excellence all of you display daily as you perform the mission. From the daily routine to volunteering for duty in the desert you have done an awesome job this year. Thank you.

This Unit Training Assembly is the final chance for getting the "Fit to Fight" test done. Right now we have about 82 percent of the Group complete. Let's push this UTA to get the remainder done.

The Holiday Season is upon us. Please take a look around. Make sure we take care of all the members of our family. This time of year can be very stressful for various reasons. Think back to October's suicide prevention training, we don't want to lose any of our friends.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your families a wonderful Holiday Season! Be safe—I want everyone back next year.



Karl J. Hurdle, Colonel
931st ARG Commander

Who do you know?

The *Kanza Spirit* staff is looking for story ideas about 931st members who have unique hobbies or jobs, especially those that offer opportunities for unusual and interesting photos. Please contact Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap at (316) 759-3686 or jason.schaap@mccconnell.af.mil with your ideas.

UTA SCHEDULE

Next UTA: Dec. 11-12

January 8-9

February 12-13

March 12-13

AFRC looking to increase AEF tour length

TECH SGT. JASON TUDOR

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The leader of Air Force Reserve Command said Airmen volunteering for duty are leading his command's ability to support the war effort; however, changes to the amount of time people will be asked to be overseas are coming.

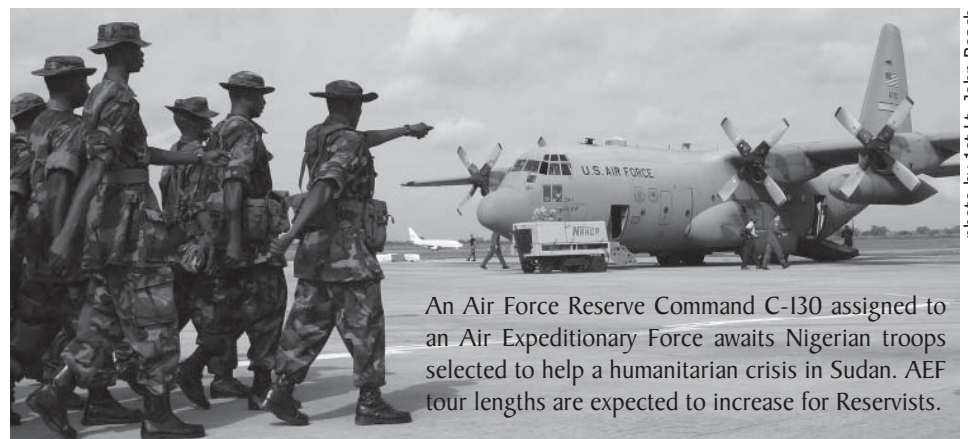
Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of the Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, praised his team's effort to have people in theater in as little as 24 hours. More than 4,000 Air Force reservists served in more than 44 locations worldwide as of Nov. 8. Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 27,000 Reservists have been mobilized.

General Bradley said the days of Reservists serving 15-day tours, however, may be over. He said Air Force officials have allowed the Reserve to manage its requirements. Air Force officials are asking that the minimum time for Reservists to serve in an air and space expeditionary force be increased to 30 days.

"It's easier and better for ev-

erybody if you can have people for a longer period of time. It costs more to rotate people in and out," he said. "However, not everyone can get away from (his or her) job on a voluntary basis for more than 15 days. Some can't. So, there will be some drop in volunteers."

Reservists fill 12 to 16 percent of nonflying support jobs within the air and space expeditionary



An Air Force Reserve Command C-130 assigned to an Air Expeditionary Force awaits Nigerian troops selected to help a humanitarian crisis in Sudan. AEF tour lengths are expected to increase for Reservists.

photo by 1st Lt. John Beach

force. Reserve fliers occupy as much as 24 percent of the flying billets. General Bradley said those "are about the right numbers." Reservists are raising their hand to go rather than being pushed into service, he added.

"The policy is that we don't

mobilize people for those efforts. We find volunteers," he said. "I think the AEF Center (at Langley Air Force Base) in Virginia is hopeful that we can keep those numbers fairly stable; that we can continue to do the same level of effort that we've done in the past."

Overall, General Bradley said he is encouraged by the powerful role Air Force reservists are taking

in the war on terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I'm proud of the work they are doing. I'm proud of what they contribute," he said. "And our retention is up because our people feel they are contributing to something important."

Pin program expanded to include Air Force spouses

Air Force officials have expanded the pin program to recognize and thank those who support the efforts of Airmen around the world by introducing the Air Force spouse pin. This pin joins the Air Force employer pin and parent pin as one of the service's most visible public outreach programs.

The spouse pin -- a blue star cradled in the Air Force symbol -- is a contemporary adaptation of a wartime tradition. Beginning with World War I, families hung service flags in their windows to display a blue star for each family member serving in the armed forces.

The new pin is given to spouses of American Airmen and civilians in recognition of the sacrifices they make for their spouse's service, Colonel Geisel said.

Besides the 1-inch silver lapel pin, the spouses will receive a personalized letter signed by Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche and Air Force Chief Staff Gen. John P. Jumper.

Airmen and civilian employees can register for a spouse pin and letter through a Web-based program at:

www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com





(Above) Marty Curry watches cars scream around the track as he gets ready in the pits for his turn. (Right) Lloyd Campbell watches as Curry's crew refuels his car with methane, the fuel of the Modified Series racers that costs about the same as regular unleaded. Curry and Campbell work together in the 931st's Maintenance Squadron.

head-on collision with a concrete wall at a nearby track. Campbell said he hit the wall after overcorrecting the car on a turn at more than 70 miles per hour.

"I had enough time to say 'This is gonna hurt' and 'Oh (expletive)' and then bang," the 931st Maintenance Squadron senior master sergeant remembered. "I hit pretty hard. I wasn't out cold but I was close."

The crash impact was so strong it forced him down into his seat, causing deep bruising on the back of his legs. His torso also was blackened and gashed from the harness that held him in. He credits a neck brace for preventing a serious injury. "I've already ordered a bigger one," he said joking, yet serious.

His body badly bruised and his car bent and broken, Campbell said he never consider quitting the sport he loves so much. "I was just glad to walk away," he said somberly. "That's just part of racing."

WWeeks later, Campbell was back at the track where he crashed. His new car still was not ready but that didn't matter. His Maintenance Squadron workmate, friend and fellow Modified Racing addict, Tech. Sgt. Marty Curry, was racing and Campbell joined his crew to help in the pits.

It's the last day of the race season. Construction workers, a chiropractor and a teenage female who's "been putting the guys to shame" are among the drivers looking to end the year with a win.

The flag drops and for eight very loud and muddy minutes, these weekend warriors thunder around the track. There are no scheduled stops. NASCAR-type crews and stops cost money, something the cars themselves already ask enough of.

Campbell watches his friend's progress from the inside of the pit wall. The car racing on the outside of Curry's belongs to Master Sgt. Alma Fewlass and retired Senior Master Sgt. Carroll Summervill. Fewlass is part of the 931st's Military Support Flight and Summervill was once part of the Group's Maintenance Squadron. He



bought the car when he retired and agreed to maintain the car during and between races if his friend would drive it.

“We bought it Feb. 14,” Fewlass said. “So I got a dozen roses from Carroll and Eddie (the driver) got a \$3500 frame.”

Campbell nicknamed his now-wrecked car “The Black Hole,” partly for its midnight finish and partly for its sucking power for hard-earned cash. “You just keep putting more in, and more in, and more in,” Campbell said, motioning with his hand as if he were feeding the car ritual offerings of currency. “It’s supposed to be a cheaper way of racing but it isn’t like it used to be. It’s getting pretty technical and expensive.”

Curry has been racing eight

years but not continuously. The rising cost of his addiction forced him to take some time off. “It’s all about getting sponsors,” he said. Next year he hopes to sponsor himself with his own business.

Family support is what often keeps the sport going. While on the track the racers maneuver against each other, in the pits a bond has been forged. They help each other make fixes. They trade parts. It’s all part of keeping the costs down.

“People reach inside their trailers to help you get back on the track,” Fewlass said. “This is our rookie season and people really made us feel welcome; they weighed our car, told us what adjustments to make ... they truly become your second family.”

Back in the pits, dirt flies up from Curry’s rear tires when he slams the gas pedal in frustration coming into park. Soon after, his season over, he watches the other racers from the top of his trailer. Summervill and his driver walk by.

“Couldn’t get any traction,” Curry shouts down to them, referring to the track’s sloppy state caused by recent resurfacing. Same thing happened to them, they respond.

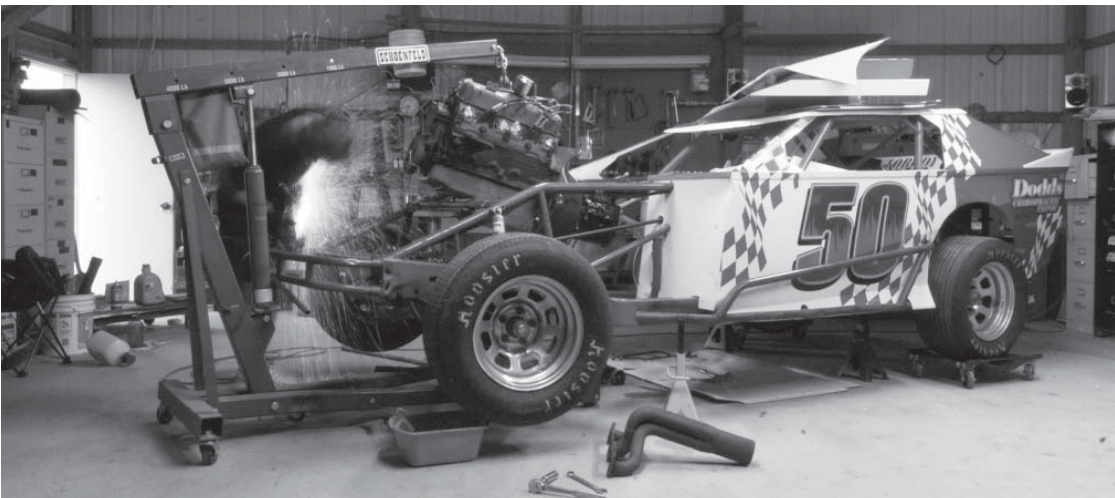
Curry and Campbell go with Summervill to the stands. It’s been a disappointing day and thoughts are of what will be next season. Still, they sit with their wives and children and cheer for their family members still on the track. After all, that’s just part of racing.



Alma Fewlass stands near the back window of her SUV where she proudly displays a decal of a Modified Series race car, the same type of car she owns and races at 81 Speedway in Park City, Kan. Fewlass is part of the Group’s Military Support Flight and has been involved in car racing all her life.



(Above) Campbell watches the Modified Series racers from the pits. (Left) The hoist holding an engine and transmission doesn’t have room to move forward so Campbell cuts off the car’s front bumper.



SPIRIT SHORTS

Medals ok'd for wear while awaiting updates

Airmen who meet the proper criteria to wear decorations do not have to wait for updates to the personnel data system.

Eligibility requirements for each decoration can be found at: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/awards/Recently%20approved%20awards.htm>

Government offers financial education online

The federal government has a new multiagency Web site devoted to financial education. It covers savings, investing, credit and social security benefits and is recommended as a good way to explore financial options. Visitors can also order a free financial tool kit which takes two to three weeks to arrive. Visit the site at:

www.mymoney.gov

Commissaries promoting, accepting internet coupons

The Defense Commissary Agency is helping customers increase their savings by making Internet coupon links available on the agency's Web site. Along with top Web sites for military grocery coupons, the new section links to a site that offers traditional coupons. Another link offers an opportunity to sign up for coupons by mail.

Commissaries and other grocery retailers stopped accepting home-printed coupons in September 2003 because of instances of fraud. All 273 commissaries world-wide now accept computer-generated Internet coupons if they have a bar code for scanning purposes, and the coupons do not offer free products.

The address for the DeCA is below. A links button is on the left side of the home page:

www.commissaries.com/links.htm

Breakfast burrito sale

The Military Support Flight is scheduled to sell sausage, egg and cheese burritos from 7 to 8 a.m. Saturday of the December Unit Training Assembly. Burritos will be available in the building 850 break room, as well as the CES, AMXS, and AMDF orderly rooms. Cost is \$3 for a burrito and orange juice, \$2 for just a burrito. Contact Master Sgt. Bob Lorenz at (316) 759-3625 for more information.

SNCO/NCO ceremony

All Group members are invited to the 931st's Staff Noncommissioned Officer/NCO Induction Ceremony, scheduled to be held at the McConnell AFB theater Sunday of the December Unit Training Assembly at 10 a.m. Group Command Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Tytanic will be the guest speaker. Contact Maj. Becky Fox at (316) 759-4736 for more information.

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

Senior Airman Scott Perkins is a Berryville, Ark., native, who has been in the Air Force for 4 years.

Job Title: Maintenance Crew Chief

Civilian job: Construction Worker

Currently studying: Business management full time at North Arkansas College

Favorite way to relax: Watch TV

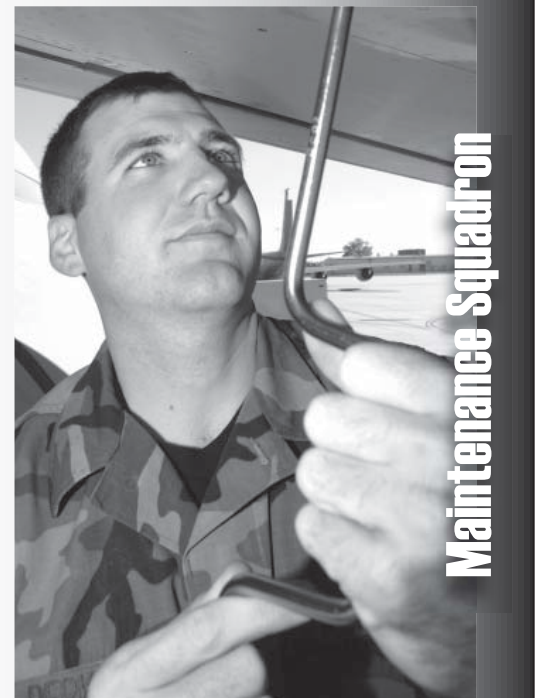
What annoys me: Talking on the phone too long

Most influential person in my life: My parents, they've always been there for guidance and as an example for me

What I'm listening to: Country

What I'm reading: Plato

If I won \$1 million, I would: Invest in stocks, bonds, and land



ROUND THE GROUP

Courtesy photo



(Left to right) the Group Security Forces' Master Sgt. Gary White, Senior Master Sgt. Charles Smith and since-promoted Tech. Sgt. Lawrence Nash teamed up with the Military Support Flight's Senior Airman Tanya Lange to bring cheer to last year's 931st holiday party. See the schedule at right for times of this year's holiday happenings.

Dec. UTA Events

Commander's Holiday Reception
Saturday, 3:30 p.m.

Children's Holiday Party
Sunday, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

All Group members are invited to the Commander's Reception and all their children are invited to the Children's Party. Both events are scheduled to be held in the Kanza Conference Room in building 850.



'Celebrating' people with HRDC

MAJ. BECKY FOX
931st ARG

Every two years the Air Force Reserve Command's Human Resources Development Council holds a workshop to discuss the myriad of issues that affect retention, recruiting and mentoring.

Traditional reservists, Individual Mobilization Augmentees and Air Reserve Technicians from across the command came together in Colorado Springs, Colo., for the most recent meeting in October.

HRDC representatives from the 931st ARG who attended the Colorado workshop brought numerous ideas and resources back to incorporate into the group's council. The emphasis throughout the workshop was celebrating the people of AFRC and appreciating

all that they do, as well as making sure the command retains these outstanding people.

Many speakers also pointed out the fact that the more diverse our reserve force is, the more we will succeed in the future. Mentoring is a key step in the process of growth throughout an organization and takes leadership at all levels within the units to be successful. Our people are the flight to the future in our command, but they need constant refueling so they stay in our force.

Group leaders can learn more about these and other issues highlighted at the AFRC workshop at an HRDC meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for the Saturday of the December UTA at 2:30 p.m. in the Southwind Conference Room in building 850.

Welcome Newcomers

Staff Sgt. Phillip King
Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman
Avive Breazile
Aero Medicine Flight

Senior Airman
Brandon Ingram
Maintenance Squadron

Congratulations

Senior Airman Tanya Lange, pictured above, was named 22nd Air Refueling Wing Airman of the Quarter while on orders with the 931st's host unit.

WICHITA WEEKEND

Thunder Hockey

Dec. 10 & 12 — The Wichita Thunder continue their hockey tradition at the Kansas Coliseum against the Memphis Riverkings at 7:30 p.m. Friday and the Bossier Shreveport Mudbugs at 5 p.m. Sunday. Tickets available at the McConnell AFB ITT office (316-759-6344) or all Select-A-Seat locations, by calling (800) 362-3247, or online at: www.selectaseat.com

Nutcracker Ballet

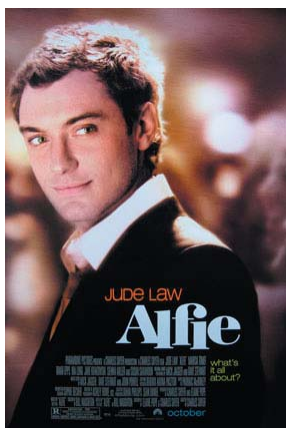
Dec. 10-12 — Guest artists Wendy Whelan and Nikolaj Hubbe from The New York City Ballet are scheduled to appear in this Christmas classic at Friends University's Alexander Auditorium. Performances start 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. on Sunday.

Call the Friends University Fine Arts office at (316) 295-5877 for tickets and information.

Seussical

Dec. 10-11 — The Wichita Music Theatre for Young People presents Seussical the Musical, which weaves several Dr. Seuss stories, including Cat in the Hat, Horton Hears a Who, Horton Hatches an Egg, Thing One and Thing Two, and many more. Shows start at 7:30 p.m. at the Mary Jane Teall Theater at Century II. Call (316) 262-6897 for more information.

At the Movies



ALFIE

FRIDAY, DEC. 10 7pm
1 hr. 40 min. Jude Law is a British playboy in New York City forced to think hard about his life when confronted by the serious consequences of womanizing and his carefree lifestyle.

MPAA Rating: R for sexual content, some language and drug use)



RAY

SATURDAY, DEC. 11 7pm
2 hr. 32 min. Blind by age 7, Ray Charles (played by Jamie Foxx) fights Jim Crow racism, drugs, infidelity and cruelty toward the blind to discover his own sound and revolutionize American popular music.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for drug addiction, sexuality and thematic elements

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.

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