

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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July 2003

McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas

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New Hurdle for 931st

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

931st Public Affairs

Col. Karl J. Hurdle has been selected to take command of the 931st Air Refueling Group during a change of command ceremony scheduled for the August Unit Training Assembly.

Hurdle, a command pilot with more than 4500 hours of flight time and more than 26 years in the Air Force, is currently the operations group commander for the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

Col. Jeffery Glass, the 931st's current commander, has been selected to be the next reserve advisor to the commander of Air Mobility Command at Scott AFB, Ill. Glass thinks his successor will be a great fit for the 931st.

"I didn't expect to be leaving quite

so soon, but the needs of the Air Force come before my own desire to remain at McConnell, and I've known John (Col. Hurdle) a long time and I genuinely believe the 931st family will enjoy working for him."

The 931st's former commander and Hurdle's current commander at the 507th, Col. Dean Despinoy, said his OG is ready for the job.

"I have worked with John for a little over a year and have discovered that we have very similar leadership styles," said Despinoy. "John completely understands the Tanker mission and possesses a deep commitment to the people."

Hurdle graduated the Air Force Academy in 1977, attended undergraduate pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., and then reported for KC-135 technical training in 1978 at Castle Air Force Base, Calif.

His first duty station was Blytheville Air Force Base, Ark., where he was a KC-135 pilot for the 97th ARS from 1979 to 1983. He later was a T-37 pilot instructor, a KC-135 instructor and a safety

chief before leaving active duty in 1992.

Hurdle began his reserve career in 1993 as a KC-135 standardization/evaluation pilot with the 15th AF at March/Travis Air Force Base, Calif. Maj. Hurdle moved to the east in 1994 to become the assistant chief of tanker training for Air Force Reserve Command at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Lt. Col. Hurdle was back on the west coast two years later as the training flight chief for the 336th ARS at

March Air Reserve Base, Calif. In 1997, he became the 336th's operations officer before heading to the Midwest in 2001 to join the 507th at Tinker AFB.



Col. Karl J. Hurdle

New leader for Maintenance

Maj. William Eaton is scheduled to turn command of the 931st Maintenance Squadron over to Maj. Joel R. Clay July 20 at the Emerald City ballroom at 1 p.m. All group members are invited.

**Commander,
931st Air Refueling
Group**

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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

The heat of the summer has arrived and with it comes more outdoor activities than any other time. We are well into the 101 Critical Days of Summer and so far we have done very well. Let's make sure we remain sensible so that we've had a enjoyable and safe summer come September.

Our mobilization of the 18th Air Refueling Squadron continues, but maybe a light at the end of the tunnel can be seen. Our deployed individuals have done some amazing things over the last few months with accolades from all levels.

Returning warriors will be given a month prior to demobilization to reconstitute. What is reconstitution? It is a time for our deployed folks to come home and complete training that might be overdue, i.e. physicals, check rides and other overdue ground training, along with using any leave that may be remaining. When our demobilization is complete, our members can return home to their families and civilian employment without having to immediately return to complete training events.

Many have heard rumors about my future at the 931st. I will be leaving to accept a job at Air Mobility Command headquarters. The change of command is scheduled for August. We will keep everyone informed on the details. My replacement is coming from Tinker Air Force Base. Col. Karl Hurdle is a long-time KC-135 guy and will be a great addition to the 931st family. If everything falls into place, Maj. Dave Fruck and the rest of the public affairs staff will only have one more month to worry about me making my deadline for the monthly article. Until next month!



Jeffery Glass, Colonel
931st ARG Commander

Got a story?

Send story ideas for the
Kanza Spirit to:
david.fruck@mccconnell.af.mil
or call (316) 759-3704

UTASCHEDULE

Next UTA: July 19-20
August 9-10
September 13-14
October 18-19

Civilian personnel modernization proposed

Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample

American Forces Press Service

The “time is here and now” to modernize Defense Department personnel practices with changes to the civil service system, said David S. C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, during a Pentagon briefing June 10.

In a step that will transform the way the Defense Department does business, Chu said a bill before lawmakers would bring the civil service system into the 21st century and into place with modern business practices.

Chu is the senior policy adviser for recruitment, career development, pay and benefits for all active-duty military, Guard and Reserve personnel and roughly 700,000 civilians.

He said some measures in that bill will eliminate policies of guaranteed annual pay raises and general schedule pay step increases. The bill would also seek changes in the way government workers are hired, fired and promoted.

“This is not a new set of developments,” Chu said, adding that the call for change comes from “decades of calls that we need to modernize these processes.”

He said two proposals are aimed at changing hiring practices and the pay schedule for federal employees. The federal government places too many restrictions in the hiring of new workers and that those restrictions need to be relaxed if the government is to compete with outside industry for new talent, he said.

Chu said that the department cannot “compete in the modern marketplace for talent with the tools that we have.” He cited examples in recruiting.

“If you go to a college job fair ... and you tell (a candidate) it’s going to take three months before I give you an answer, that young man or young woman is typically not going to wait for you,” he said. “They’re going to have to be awfully committed to your cause to sit it out that long.

“We have all sorts of restrictions of who we can hire and how we can hire. So we’re asking in the proposed statute that we relax some of those restrictions,” he said.

The current general schedule pay system of automatic annual raises — regardless of performance — and rewards based on longevity is running backward and “not meeting the marketplace standards,” Chu said.

“The one thing that our own people criticized about our system (in Office of Personnel Management Surveys) is that the good performers are resentful in that they get the same reward as the person who is just sort of getting by,” he said.

Chu said a system of pay bands would better reflect personal practices the Defense Department is seeking. Career fields would be assigned a salary range based on entry, journeyman and executive levels, he said. Managers and supervisors would then determine what salaries to offer based upon a budget.

“(Under the proposed system) we’re constrained not by the general schedule, which is the way we do it today,” Chu said, but the manager and supervisor is “constrained by the budget, which is the way we should operate — the way the law of the land operates.”

The top personnel chief also discussed the “controversial aspect” of pay banding: performance.

“You create a pay pool with the money you would otherwise have for the so-called within-grade increases,” Chu said.

“Indeed, with an annual salary increase and the bonus pools, you have a great pool of money and you allocate that disproportionately to your best performers. And the mechanics of how you do it can differ among various systems.”

Another benefit of the pay band system is that managers can change a person’s job duties and compensate them accordingly without going through the time-consuming process of “recompeting” the job, he added. Chu pointed out that despite rumors, the department does not seek to end collective bargaining with unions. He said the Defense Department is, however, moving to bargain with national unions on those issues that are “cross-cutting,” issues that affect more than one local union.

There are 1,366 local unions in the Defense Department, and “that is a recipe for long delays in taking needed steps,” he said.

“It’s more constructive to bargain at a national level. So this is not an end to collective bargaining. It is a change in how we conduct collective bargaining. We think it is a change that would be better for our people,” Chu said.

Chu also said the bill before Congress addresses the status of some 300,000 jobs that are now conducted by uniformed military people.

“A number of slots now occupied by military personnel will probably be converted to civil service status — in fact, quite a significant number,” he said. “We have quite a bit of military doing things we don’t absolutely have to have military people doing.”



Tech Sgt. Darren Demel, boom operator, 18th Air Refueling Squadron, receives a warm welcome-home greeting from a loved one. All of the 18th's crews were expected to be home by mid-July and demobilized in the next few months (photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap).



HOME *SWEET* HOME

Crews come back, demobilization in sight

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

931st Public Affairs

About 80 percent of the 18th Air Refueling Squadron's crews were home in time to celebrate their country's Independence Day, with those still deployed expected back soon after the holiday, said Maj. Clint Burpo, 931st Planning and Operations chief.

Although demobilization dates hadn't been officially established, Burpo said he was optimistic that "reconstitution would begin around mid- to late July with most people being deactivated with a two-month window from that date."

News of the mass return came a bit sooner than expected, but of course, few family members were complaining about the surprise, said Tech Sgt. Edwin Woolson, family readiness chief, Military Personnel Flight.

"We heard on a Friday there was a chance some people might come home soon and then the following week the flood gates opened and I started calling families in bunches," said Woolson. "Of course, the earlier return made families happy. It makes my job a lot easier when I get to talk to families who learn their loved one will be home sooner than expected."

According to Burpo, the 18th ARS had logged more than 1000 flight hours since deployments began in March. Reconstitution for returning deployers will consist of training updates and tying up other loose ends to ensure crews are up to speed once demobilized.

For some 18th ARS members, another deployment isn't too far off. Burpo said the group has received several requests for Air Expeditionary Force rotations and already has volunteers.

SPIRIT SHORTS

Family Picnic Scheduled, volunteers needed

The 931st Family Day Picnic is scheduled for Sept. 14, the Sunday of the September Unit Training Assembly, at the McConnell Air Base pool pavillion from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Admission is to be determined and will depend upon fundraisers to offset picnic costs. Those interested in volunteering to help organize the picnic should call Penny Ricketts at (316) 759-5551.

Cruise discount for military

Norwegian Cruise Lines is marking down prices for the military. Some of the discounted sailings include a 14-night "Exotic Caribbean" itinerary aboard the Norwegian Dawn for just \$399, and seven night New York-Bermuda voyages (aboard the Norwegian Sea) also for \$399.

Visit www.cruisesonly.com or a local cruise agency for more information.

West Gate closed for UTAs

McConnell Air Force Base's west gate entrance will not be open during the July, Aug. and Sept. unit training assemblies. All group members will need to enter the base through the east gate off of Rock Rd.

Promotions

Congratulations to the following promotees:

Senior Airmam

Jeremiah Babcock

931st AMXS

Master Sgt. Aaron Baker

931st AMXS

Tech Sgt. Yendis Bolling

18th ARS

Senior Airman Angela Bonnell

18th ARS

Chief Master Sgt. Dail Bruce

931st AMXS

Airman 1st Class Howard Burns

931st CES

Master Sgt. Edwin Craig

931st CES

1st Lt. Douglas Crow

931st HQ

Staff Sgt. Douglas Dick

18th ARS

Senior Airman David Dixon

931st CES

Maj. Rebecca Fox

931st HQ

Staff Sgt. Travis Johnson

931st CES

Master Sgt. David Lofton

931st CES

Maj. Marco Moor

18th ARS

Maj. Link Newton

931st OSF

Tech Sgt. Joseph Reid

931st AMXS

Master Sgt. Johnny Stephenson

931st ARG

Master Sgt. Jeffery Schrier

931st AMXS

Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Struve

931st ARG

Master Sgt. Victor Vaughan

931st CES

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

This month's selectee is a Topeka, KS., native who has been in the Air Force 12 years.

Job title: Jet Engine Mechanic

Civilian job: Airframe and Powerplant Technician at Bombardier

Favorite way to relax: Just give me seven hours of sleep

Easiest way to annoy me: Don't return my phone calls

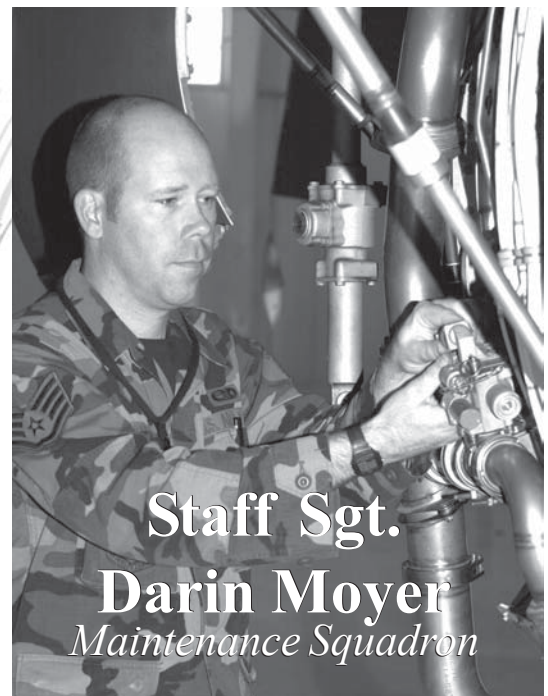
Most influential person in my life:

My father; he taught me about honesty and hard work

What I'm reading now: D-Day by Stephen Ambrose

What I'm listening to now: German Kinder Music (we have a 4 month-old son)

If I won \$1 million, I would: Buy a new home and invest the rest



Staff Sgt.

Darin Moyer

Maintenance Squadron



Last of the Supporting Cast



photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

Maj. Randy Russell, pilot, 18th Air Refueling Squadron, is surrounded by his family upon his arrival home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. Russell and his crew were among the first crews from the 18th to depart for OIF and the last to return from the squadron's initial deployed location. Russell and most of his fellow airmen in the 18th remain activated, but were all scheduled to be home by mid-July and expected to be demobilized in the next few months.

Refer a Friend



Help the unit recruit.
Refer someone to recruiter
Master Sgt. David McCormick
(316) 652-3766

WICHITA WEEKEND

Concert at Bradley Fair

June 18 – Admission is free to see *Sol Y Sombra* mix roots of Puerto Rican salsa and hot Latin rhythm with fiery brass blend and up-beat percussion and features a variety of exhilarating Latin styles. Performances are scheduled from 8-10 p.m.

Rails and Trails Rowdy Roundup

July 19 – Enjoy dinner, live auction, live music and dancing at the Old Cowtown Museum in Wichita. Begins at 6:30 p.m. and costs \$25.

Call (316) 264-0671 for more information.

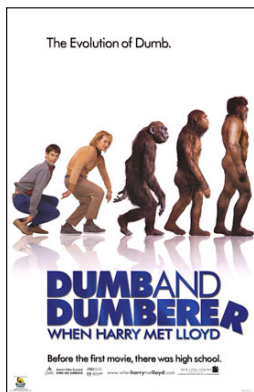
Wichita Stealth Arena Football

July 19 – The Wichita Stealth host the Bakersfield Blitz at the Kansas Coliseum at 7:30 p.m.

Call Select-A-Seat for tickets at (316) 755-7328 or visit:

www.selectaseat.com.

At The Movies



DUMB AND DUMBERER: WHEN HARRY MET LLOYD

FRIDAY, JULY 18 7pm

1 hrs. 19 min. It's the first day of high school and Harry, who previously has been home schooled by his mother, needs someone to show him the ropes. Lloyd, turns out to be just the guy.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for crude and sex-related humor, and language



2 FAST 2 FURIOUS

SATURDAY, JULY 19 7pm

2 hr. 17 min. Former cop Brian O'Conner teams up with his ex-con pal Roman Pearce to transport a shipment of "dirty" money for a shady Miami-based import-export dealer, while actually working undercover to bring the dealer down.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for racing, violence, language and some sexuality

Movies are shown at the **McConnell Air Force Base Theater** and are subject to change.

Admission is **\$2.25** for adults, **\$1.50** for children 12 and under.

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