

KANZA

SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



Inside

• Kansas reservists fight mock war

Page 3

• Catch the latest from around the Air Force!

Page 4

• Go wild at this year's Family Day Picnic!

Page 6

McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas

April 2001

DOD to pay health care premium for called up employees

WASHINGTON -- Department of Defense civilian employees serving in the Reserve and National Guard will get help in maintaining affordable health care if called up and deployed in support of a contingency operation.

Under a new personnel policy established by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, DOD organizations, agencies and the military services will pay the employee's share, in addition to the government's share, of the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program premium.

DOD and the Office of Personnel Management worked together in this policy effort to encourage all federal agencies to provide this assistance to employees serving their country as reservists or members of the National Guard.

"DOD is setting the standard for all federal employers by helping their employees called to active duty for more than 30 days for a contingency operation,"

Wolfowitz said. "This policy will help reduce the financial burden incurred by our Reserve and National Guard members when they are part of a call-up."

The undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness is developing specific implementation procedures to ensure consistency among the services and agencies. The policy is expected to take effect by October.

The policy will affect members who have been called up to support ongoing contingency operations in Bosnia, Iraq and Kosovo and those who may be called up for future operations.

During the air war over the former Yugoslavia, more than 1,000 Air Force reservists were mobilized. Most of them came from Air Force Reserve Command KC-135 units, and many of them were federal employees who worked in the unit or other federal agencies. (AFRC News Service)



Staff Sgt. Jason Whited

Spring swing

Staff Sgt. Todd Ashley tees off at the 931st Air Refueling Group Golf Tournament held March 23 at Twin Lakes Golf Course. The tournament, which was sponsored by the 931st ARG Airman's Advisory Council, raised more than \$500 for the group's annual Family Day Picnic and this year's McConnell Enlisted Dining Out.



Resource management is our key to readiness

By Maj. Gen. James Sherrard
Chief of Air Force Reserve

The men and women of the Air Force Reserve Command continue to be key players in our nation's involvement around the world and at home. In daily support of the Air Force mission and Expeditionary Aerospace Force, reservists can be found at work on -- or over -- every continent in the world.

The greater our participation, the broader our experience base becomes. Reserve skills become sharpened with use, and we are better able to serve the nation. Readiness is nothing new to us.

We have demonstrated our readiness for years, responding, mission-ready, on short-notice, exactly as advertised. However, we must closely monitor our resources in this era of aging

aircraft and constrained budgets to preserve our current readiness through:

Proper resource allocation

Congress has expressed concern that the reserve components are assuming additional missions without additional resources -- **facilities, equipment, funds and personnel.** This issue becomes increasingly important as the country places more reliance on the Reserve. We are eager to assume new missions and taskings but must receive the accompanying funds and personnel.

Military construction

To recruit, train and retain the best and brightest, the Air Force Reserve must have adequate, modern facilities. Without



Maj. Gen. James Sherrard

proper facilities, the Reserve would experience a long-term degradation of readiness due to reduced recruiting and retention of personnel who would not want to work or train in inadequate facilities. Money spent on construction now will provide future dividends.

Get the facts on reprisal

By Lt. Col. Ralph Rissmiller
931st ARG Inspector General

Allegations of reprisal are one of the most common types of complaints received within IG channels. AFI-301 defines *REPRISAL* as "taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action against a military member for making or preparing to make a protected disclosure." Let me explain this definition. A protected disclosure is a lawful

communication that you as a military member have the right to make. Examples include contacting the IG, reporting an issue up the chain of command, and writing your elected officials. No one may deny you that right.

A reprisal occurs when someone either threatens you with an unfavorable action or actually takes such action as a punishment because you elect to exercise your right to lawful communication. What do you do if you feel you are a victim of

a reprisal? Contact us in the IG office. We will investigate and do our best to determine if a reprisal occurred. If the allegation of reprisal is substantiated by the facts determined in the investigation, the case is then given to the appropriate commander for disciplinary action.

If you have questions about reprisal or any other IG matter, feel free to give us a call.
Primary IG: Lt. Col. Ralph Rissmiller, 759-3684
Alternate IG: Lt. Col. Steve Kett, 759-5853.



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Wisconsin warriors

McConnell airmen fight mock war on 'frozen tundra' of Volk Field

By Staff Sgt. Jason Whited
931st ARG Public Affairs

Senior Airman Rachel King knew she would need a good attitude and a lot of perseverance to get through a deployment to Volk Field, Wis. After all, the McConnell network training technician knew the trip was going to be nowhere near a boondoggle – this little “vacation” was going to involve a lot of long hours. Hours spent either hard at work or hiding under a desk while wearing a gas mask and enduring simulated missile attacks. King was under no illusions – this deployment was meant to test her “warfighting” skills and prepare her and her fellow airmen for an upcoming inspection. As far as the Air Force was concerned, it was serious business.

An early start

For the McConnell active-duty troops and reservists who took part in the deployment, the



Lt. Col. Ray Kozak, 18th Air Refueling Squadron operations officer, helped direct the action in the squadron operations center.

serious business began March 7 at somewhere around 0’ dark thirty. Jets, cargo and personnel began rolling down the flightline before dawn and didn’t stop until well into the afternoon. In all, more than 450 McConnell airmen participated in Operation Cold Start – this exercise designed to test their mettle and ready them for an Inspector General Exercise later this spring.

For five days, active-duty airmen, reservists and Guardsmen lived together, worked together and fought together, more or less gelling as one unit. More than two dozen units from across the country sent troops and materiel to the “fight,” and when the last bomb had fallen, the smoke had finally cleared and the last jet had touched down back in Kansas, many participants agreed the deployment had served its purpose – to get everyone used to blending together to work as one wing with one purpose.

“I think there’s no question that this exercise was beneficial,” said Lt. Col. Ray Kozak, operations officer for McConnell’s 18th Air Refueling Squadron, who served at Volk Field as part of the Squadron Operations Center command staff. “It was more intense than the real thing – it exposed you to many different things at once, but that (type of) exposure prepares you...and is necessary.”



Photos by Senior Airman Valerie Arriaga and Airman 1st Class Brent Gienapp

McConnell reservists and active-duty troops worked side by side at Volk Field, preparing for the IGX in May.

Kozak and his fellow Kansas reservists provided five crews and three jets, as well as two personnel specialists, two public affairs personnel, three intel technicians and one chaplain. This group of almost 30 reservists folded in with the hundreds of active duty airmen from McConnell, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., Seymour Johnson AFB, N. C., and other locations for the exercise.

A tight timeline

Everything at Volk Field happened on an extremely tight schedule. After arriving Wednesday and checking into their rooms, most airmen spent Thursday either attending training classes on everything from self-aid and buddy care to facility management or setting up their offices for the war (which was to start at 6 a.m. sharp the next morning).

Friday morning, troops donned their helmets, flack vests,

See VOLK, Page 7



Airmen began arriving at Volk Field early on the morning of March 7. The exercise was full of early mornings and late nights as airmen worked around the clock.



Around the Air Force



Pilot achieves milestone with support from past pioneers

MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE, Calif. -- Social barriers broken more than half a century ago and encouragement by the men who made it happen helped propel an Air Force Reserve woman's military career to new heights.

Lt. Col. Stayce Harris assumed command of the 729th Airlift Squadron here Feb. 24, becoming the first black woman to command an Air Force flying squadron. She replaced Lt. Col. Steve Brandsberg, who stepped up to be deputy commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing's operations group.

"I want to make the squadron a place where people want to come and serve their country as well as accomplish a mission,"



Master Sgt. Bill Kimble
Lt. Col. Stayce Harris sits at the controls of a C-141 Starlifter aircraft belonging to the Air Force Reserve Command's 729th Airlift Squadron, March Air Reserve Base, Calif. Harris became the first black woman to command an Air Force flying unit when she assumed command of the 729th AS Feb. 24.

said Harris, a traditional reservist who flies Boeing 747s for United Airlines. "I believe my job as commander is not only to lead but also to serve. We have to remember that everyone is a volunteer."

Commissioned through the Air Force ROTC, Harris graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in engineering. Her first assignment in the Air Force was with the civil engineering squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

With encouragement from her family, friends and her mentors, the Tuskegee Airmen, as well as her love for travel, she focused her sights on becoming a pilot. Her philosophy was: "Why ride when I can fly?"

She continued to receive encouragement in February when members of the Tuskegee Airmen turned out to watch her assume command of the C-141 flying unit at March. The Tuskegee Airmen battled Germans in the sky and prejudices on the ground during World War II.

After Harris graduated from pilot training, she flew C-141B's at Norton AFB in Southern California. In 1990, she separated from the active force and joined the Reserve, spending nearly four years at March as a C-141 pilot. She transferred to the Pentagon as a mobility force planner and was an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force before returning to March.



Scott Spitzer

Flying soldiers

Paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne jump from a C-141 Starlifter at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., on June 3, 2000.

Harris is a resident of West Los Angeles. Her airline route takes her from San Francisco, where she is based, to Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. She has been a pilot for United for more than 10 years.

When she is not flying for United or working at the base, she assists the Rotary Club of Los Angeles with charities and mentors three female college students. (AFRC News Service)

Commissary to eliminate Social Security numbers on checks

FORT LEE, Va. -- Starting in May, the Defense Commissary Agency will no longer require customers to put their Social

Security numbers on checks when paying for their groceries.

"Our customers are telling us they are increasingly concerned about disclosing personal information on their checks that may result in 'identity theft,' violations of personal privacy, fraud or personal financial loss," said Col. Ed Jones, DeCA's comptroller. "We are listening to our patrons and are taking the steps needed to reduce their exposure to these risks."

"The results of this re-engineered business process will ensure transaction confidentiality and appropriate audit trails are maintained with the assurance that individual identity is protected," said John Goodman, DeCA official.



GO WILD AT THE FAMILY DAY PICNIC!

You and your family are invited to attend this year's 931st Air Refueling Group Family Day Picnic Sunday, June 10 at the Sedgwick County Zoo!

Admission and lunch are free for kids 3 and under; \$6.98 for kids aged 4 to 11 (price includes admission — \$4 and lunch — \$2.98); and \$12.48 for adults (price includes admission — \$6.50 and lunch — \$5.98). Don't let the cost of this event limit your desire to participate -- there are many fundraisers being held during the April and May UTAs to help offset costs.

Please fill in the following info so the picnic committee can estimate the number of zoo admissions and number of meals to purchase. Return your completed form to your unit's picnic rep no later than the May UTA.

Member's Name: _____

Unit: _____

Total # of family members attending: Ages 3 and under _____

Ages 4 and 11 _____ Ages 12 and up _____

Picnic Reps

- DeBroada Cornelius, MSF
- Charlene Slater, AGS
- Tammy Askren, CES
- Lloyd Robinson, OSF
- Ken Dodd, ARG
- Jim Winningham, ARS





Spirit Shorts

Hails and farewells

Welcome to **Mary Borst**, the new head of the Finance Office; **Jeremiah Babcock**, who will join his dad, **Tech. Sgt. Jeremiah Babcock**, at the 931st Aircraft Generation Squadron; **Master Sgt. Darrell Smith**, 931st Air Refueling Group; **Maj. William Diessner**, 18th Air Refueling Squadron; **Staff Sgt. John Babbitt**, 931st AGS; and **Airman 1st Class Mark Williams**, 931st AGS.

Movin' on up

Congratulations to the following reservists on their recent promotions: **Airman 1st Class Christopher Norris** and **Tech. Sgts. Roger Horton** and **Sean Lafave**, all with the 18th ARS.

Big Brains

The following Kanza warriors recently completed Professional Military Education: **2nd Lt. Douglas Crow**, 931st Air Refueling Group, recently completed the Academy of Military Science. Congratulations on your commission, Doug!

Also completing PME were: **Tech. Sgt. Ralph Babcock** and **Staff Sgt. Michael Haggitt**, both with the 931st AGS, who both recently completed the NCO Academy; and **Tech. Sgt. Suzanne Germain**, 18th ARS, who recently completed the NCO Leadership Development Program.

MPF cuts back on service

Military Personnel Flight staffers will only be able to provide limited service during the

April and May UTAs because of unit participation in upcoming exercises and inspections.

NCO Leadership Development Program

The 931st ARG Training Office has received fiscal 2001 class dates from both Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., and Ft. Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas. Interested staffs and techs may contact Group Training at Ext. 6082 for specifics.

Golf Tourney results

Group officials would like to thank everyone who helped make the 931st ARG Golf Tournament a success. Coming in first place were the

team of Staff Sgt. Bill Barfknecht, Chris Ewalt, Capt. Dave Streeter and Staff Sgt. Todd Ashley. The victors each picked up a free round of golf (including green fees and cart rental) from Hidden Lakes Golf Course in Derby.

Group officials would like to also thank Staff Sgt. Bill Barfknecht who was the mastermind behind the tourney, as well as the following sponsors: Golf Headquarters (Nevada Bob's), Ross Golf, Hidden Lakes Golf Course, Golf Discount and McConnell Air Force Base.

Free tickets to Enlisted Dining Out

All 931st E-1s through E-4s

NCO Academy at Tyndall

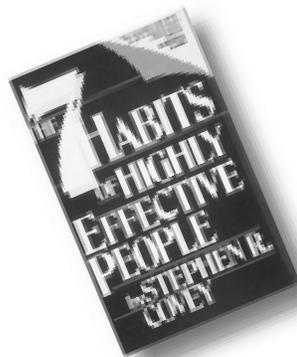
For staff sergeants with eight

can now pick up a free ticket to McConnell's Enlisted Dining Out. Tickets are being provided for free by a Reserve officer; those interested in picking one up should contact Master Sgt. Chuck Smith at Ext. 5989.

As a reminder, the Enlisted Dining Out is scheduled to be held April 20 in the Emerald Ballroom. The guest speaker will be Lt. Gen. Charles Coolidge (former 22nd Air Refueling Wing commander).

Tickets cost \$15 for NCOs. The uniform will be either mess dress or semi-formal attire.

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE WORKSHOP



Maybe you've heard about the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Now, you and your spouse have a chance to learn how to implement these 7 habits in your life by attending workshops based on the famous book. The 7 Habits workshop is a dynamic training session for personal and professional effectiveness. You'll learn about how to transform your life, becoming more productive, learning how to really develop and nurture key relationships, develop strong team unity and balance your life.

The workshop will consist of interactive exercises, case studies and video segments designed to help you learn from the experience of other participants. Your seat is reserved. Call Master Sgt. Pam Summers at Ext. 5423 to RSVP.

<p>Reserve Spouse Class Aug. 18, 19 Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.</p>	<p>Reservist Class Aug. 13 to 17 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to noon</p>
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Spirit Shorts

years' time in service and tech sergeants. The last scheduled quota for this fiscal year is Sept. 24 through Nov. 1.

Blood donors needed

Local American Red Cross officials are looking for people to become so-called "pheresis donors." In the procedure, medical technicians remove platelets from the blood to fill shortages for needy burn patients and certain infants.

To volunteer to be a donor, call the Red Cross at 268-0875.

Construction at the BX

The west half of the BX parking lot will be closed for construction through mid-April. The east half of the parking lot will remain open to routing traffic and parking.

Senior NCO Leadership

Development Program

Fiscal 2001 dates for all Top 3 (the group receives four slots per class): June 23, 24 at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., Sept. 22 and 23 at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., and Dec. 15 and 16 at Kelly AFB, Texas.

Human Resource Development Council

Did you know that your Human Resource Development Council has purchased an extensive lending library on a wide variety of topics? Group training has a detailed book previewing all the topics available in video, audiocassette, or book format. This list of titles (without descriptions) is also

available on the 931st bulletin board.

While in Outlook, open "public folders," then open "McConnell Tenant Units." Next, open "931 ARG," then "bulletin board." Finally, single click on "group training." You should see a list of 11 different folders. The HRDC folder is the eighth one from the top.

Please stop by and take advantage of the wealth of information available to you for free! The HRDC meets every other month on UTA Saturdays at 3:30 p.m. If you have an idea to bring forward to one of our subcommittees (Mentoring/Career Development, Recruiting or Retention), please contact your unit representative! Commanders, first sergeants, and Unit Career Advisors are welcome to attend. Our next full council meeting will be on Saturday, Apr. 7, at 2:30 p.m. in the commander's conference room.

Family Support Center

The McConnell Family Support Center provides free seminars on a wide variety of topics each month, and 931st members may attend!

To schedule yourself, just call Ext. 6020 -- it's that easy! Upcoming topics include:

Planning for Retirement -- Apr. 3; Understanding Mutual Funds -- Apr. 24; Understanding Morningstar Mutual Funds -- May 1; Financing a home -- May 22; Understanding the Stock Market -- June 5; and Resume/Interview Tips -- June 18.

Please stop by Group Training for a complete listing of classes available along with a brief description of each.

VOLK

Continued from Page 3

web belts, grabbed their chem gear and headed off to war. The next two days were a blur of mock chemical attacks, frantically grabbing for gas masks and a lot of hard work. Evaluators watched McConnell airmen carefully to see how they reacted under pressure and tested their ability to continue to perform the mission even under the most strenuous conditions. Attacks were made as realistic as possible, complete with exploding ordnance, smoke filled buildings and screaming victims -- lots of them.

King said she thought the realism of the exercise helped prepare her for things inspectors at the IGX might be looking for. "I was reminded that you really have to have a sense of urgency," she said. "If you want to do your best, you've got to act as if it's real."

McConnell officials praised the dedication and professionalism of those who deployed -- Col. Fred Roggero, 22nd Air Refueling Wing Commander, even made

personal trips to the flightline to welcome airmen home on Sunday.

Colonel Jim Bouska, 931st Air Refueling Group Commander and McConnell's top reservist, added his gratitude not only to the deployed troops but also to the families of these citizen airmen. "I truly appreciate the time and dedication each reservist family has shown this unit -- all of them give up so much so that our men and women in uniform can participate and make this the best unit in the Reserve."

With Volk Field behind them, McConnell airmen now must prepare for the IGX in May. A lot of hard work remains to be done to ensure Team McConnell is ready to meet the challenge, but base officials have repeatedly expressed their confidence in their troops' ability to "dig deep" and do their best. King said she knows what will help McConnell personnel perform well at the inspection this spring. It's very simple, according to King.

"A good attitude will go a long way," she said.

Annual Fitness Walk

The first Fitness Walk of the year will be held on Sunday, Apr. 8, at 3 p.m. at the track by CE.

Bring your walking shoes and exercise duds and come join us before the weather gets too hot!

Special Olympics vols wanted

The 2001 Special Olympics Dinner and Dance is scheduled to be held on base June 3, and vols are desperately needed.

The event brings together competitors and their friends,

family and coaches in a celebration after each year's competition. To volunteer your time, contact Master Sgt. Bryan Lawley at Ext. 5824.

Bored during UTAs?

Are you spending Friday and Saturday nights of the UTA sitting in your dorm room? Wanna participate in group activities like bowling, going to the movies, having dinner, etc.? An activities group is now forming. Call Master Sgt. Angela Chatmon at Ext. 3381 for details.



Wichita Weekend

WSU College of Engineering Open House

April 6, Wichita State University, College of Engineering and the Nation Institute of Aviation research have labs available for touring.

Student projects are on display from the departments of Mechanical, Electrical and Computer, Industrial and Manufacturing and Aerospace engineering. Hands-on activities for kids of all ages.

See the latest and technological engineering advances right here in your community!

Participation is free. Call 978-3400 for more information.

Wichita Wings

Come watch the Wichita Wings soccer team take on the Toronto Thunderhawks in playoff action Saturday at 7:35 p.m.

Call 262-3545 for ticket info.

Birding Basics

April 7, Wichita Audubon Society, Chaplin Nature Center, between Oxford & Arkansas City, Shawn Silliman, 442-4133. An intro to birdwatching skills and a chance to practice on the trails. 7-9 a.m.

Metropolitan Ballet of Wichita

April 7, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount in

Miller Concert Hall, 978-3233. Experience in an entirely new way the legends of Merlin the magician and Morgan le Fey the enchantress brought to life through ballet. The performance is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

The Emperor's New Clothes

Through April 7 at the Crown Uptown Theatre, 3207 East Douglas. For cost or more information or to make reservations, call 681-1566.

Antique and Collectibles Auction

April 7 at 9 a.m. -- sale location: 12417 S. Victory Rd. Call 316.465.3378 for details.

Flick picks

Here's what's showing at the base theater during the April UTA:

Friday, April 6

"Recess; School's Out"

Rated G, 1 hour, 35 minutes

Saturday, April 7

"3000 Miles to Graceland:

Rated R, 2 hours, 5 minutes

Other area theaters:

Cinemas East 6: 684.2805

Towne East 4: 685.1121

Towne East 2: 681.2717

Northrock 14: 636.5432

Northrock 6: 636.5431

Warren Theater: 721-9545

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