

Every Beginning is
another beginning's end

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September 1999
Vol. 4, No. 9

Kanza

SPIRIT

Air Force Reserve's first Associate KC-135 Unit

931st ARG welcomes new commander

Capt. David Fruck
931st ARG, Public Affairs Chief

September will be a month of change in leadership for the 931st Air Refueling Group. On Sept. 18, Col. Daniel E. Opp will assume command of the group from Col. Dean J. Despinoy. Following the 9:30 a.m. ceremony, Col. Despinoy will head north to take command of the 934th Airlift Wing, Minneapolis-St. Paul Air Reserve Station, Minn.

Col. Opp comes to McConnell Air Force Base from Scott AFB, Ill., where he was the operations officer for the 73rd Airlift Squadron, one of two flying squadrons assigned to the 932nd Airlift Wing. The 73rd AS has an aeromedical airlift mission flying the C-9A Nightingale aircraft.

"Command is an honor and I am privileged in the fact that I will be associated with an outstanding caliber of people that make up the 931st," said Col. Opp. "I am looking forward to meeting and working with each of you in the near future to continue the 931st ARG's record of excellence."

Col. Opp entered the Air Force in 1981 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He attended pilot training at Reese AFB, Texas, and was assigned to

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. Assigned to Detachment 2, 1401st Military Airlift Squadron, he flew both the T-39A and C-12F aircraft and was an instructor and evaluator pilot during his nearly three years at Wright-Patterson.

Following C-5 initial qualification school, Col. Opp moved on to Dover AFB, Del., as a member of the 3rd Military Airlift Squadron. He separated from active-duty in 1988, joining the 326th Military Airlift Squadron, also at Dover AFB. During the next five years he served as the chief of training, chief of standardization and evaluation, chief pilot, and the assistant operations officer for the 326th.

In 1993, Col. Opp moved to Dobbins AFB, Ga., as chief of strategic airlift branch for 22nd Air Force. After a little more than two years at Dobbins AFB, he transferred to Scott AFB and took over as operations officer for the 73rd AS.

Col. Opp is a command pilot with over 7,000 flying hours in the T-41, T-37, T-38, CT-39A, C-12F, C-5A/B, and C-9A aircraft.

Col. Opp and his wife, Gaylene, have five children. Amber (married to Brian Werner), Brandon, Jarrod, Sean, and Demi-Raine.

Another change taking place in September will involve the deputy



Col. Daniel E. Opp

commander position. Col. Mario Goico will be leaving the 931st on Sept. 20 to become the vice-commander for the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker AFB, Okla. Col. Goico has been with the 931st from its infancy, serving as the 18th Air Refueling Squadron commander before becoming deputy commander of the group.

**Don't forget Employee Appreciation Day, October 16th.
Nomination form can be found on page 7.**

Every beginning is another beginning's end

Col. Dean Despinoy
931st ARG, Commander

As the song goes, every new beginning is another beginning's end. The change of command is the traditional recognition of the end of one commander's time with an organization and a new commander's beginning. We are the products of every person we have known and every experience we have had. I truly feel richer for the period of time I was granted to know you and share experiences with you.

Upon taking command of the 931st I had one overarching goal. That goal was to create an environment that was fun to work in and was fair to all members of the organization. In my farewell speech at the change of command I will review all the magnificent accomplishments of the 931st. Although the commander many times gets the credit for accomplishments, we all know that credit can only go to the members of the organization. Everyone of you has done great.

The 931st has been formed for a sufficient period of time to have established traditions and a culture of its own. I have encouraged many of the events and philosophy that is the glue that holds a unit together. You all know what they are. Keep the interface going between the Squadrons. Never forget that you are not just a bunch of isolated organizations that just happen to come to the same location to perform your job. Collectively you are more than an individual, or a flight, or a squadron, you are the 931 ARG. That fact makes you someone special. You share common experiences and you share a patriotism that is unmatched anywhere. Keep the traditions of excellence, professionalism, and camaraderie alive.

We have successfully met many challenges in the past and you have the tools and leadership within you to meet the challenges of the future. If you give Colonel Opp half of the support and loyalty you have given me, his job will be easy. Although my career is taking me away to share my



experience and philosophy with others, I shall always be a member of the 931st. Good bye and good luck to you all, it truly has been my privilege and honor to serve as your commander.

Reserve announces senior office moves

WASHINGTON – The Office of Air Force Reserve here announced several unit changes of command in Air Force Reserve Command Sept. 2. All of the senior officer reassignments take effect Oct. 2.

Col. Peter T. Bentley, commander of the 433rd Airlift Wing at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, assumes command of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing, March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The C-5 unit commander replaces Brig. Gen. Clayton T. Gadd, who retires effective Sept. 12. The 452nd AMW flies

C-141 and KC-135 aircraft.

Col. Bernard J. Pieczynski, who commands the 302nd AW and its C-130 aircraft at Peterson AFB, Colo., transfers to Kelly to take Bentley's place. Replacing Pieczynski at Peterson is Col. Richard R. Moss, who commands another C-130 unit, the 934th AW, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn.

Headquarters AFRC at Robins AFB, Ga., announced two unit commander moves

Aug. 20. Col. Dean J. Despinoy, commander of the 931st Air Refueling Group, McConnell AFB, Kan., assumes command of the Minneapolis unit, on or about Oct. 2. The 931st ARG is a KC-135 associate unit. Col. Daniel E. Opp moves up to command the 931st ARG at McConnell on or about the same date. He is the operations officer for the 73rd Airlift Squadron at Scott AFB, Ill. The C-9 associate squadron is part of the 932nd AW. (AFRC News Service)

Kanza Spirit

Volume 4, No. 9

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931st Commander
Col. Dean Despinoy

Chief, Public Affairs
Capt. Dave Fruck

NCOIC, Public Affairs
Vacant

Editor
Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis

Staff Writer
Staff Sgt. David Brumley

Spirit Spotlight

Airman First Class Susan Hurst, Career Enhancement, 931st MSF

From: *Kentucky*
 Civilian Position: *Student*
 Favorite Food: *Pizza*
 Favorite Music: *R & B*
 Favorite Movie: *"Top Gun"*
 Hobbies: *Soccer and working out*
 Ideal Vacation: *Maui with a good looking guy*
 Best Way to Relax: *Laying out by the pool*
 Pet Peeve: *People who litter*
 What would you do with \$1



Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis, Editor

Million: *Invest half of it, pay off student loans, and buy a new car*

Personnel News

Military Personnel Flight Hours

The core hours of operation for the MPF are as follows:

Monday - Friday 0730 - 1600
Saturday - UTA 0800 - 1600
Sunday - UTA 1000 - 1600

OUTPROCESSING HOURS

If you, or any unit member you know, needs to out process for TDY, reassignment, or retirement, please keep in mind that on UTA weekends the Military Pay section (Ms Sharon Thayer) is only open for business on Saturdays from 0730 to 1300 hours. Thinking ahead can insure you do not have to come out during the week to finish your out processing. For further information contact TSgt Anick Wallace in Relocations at X-3665.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (HRDC)

We will resume our normal schedule of monthly meetings beginning in October. Anyone wishing to have an issue addressed to the council may forward it to the council through their unit representative. Commanders and First Sergeants are always welcome to attend. The next meeting will be in September.

See Personnel, page 4

UTA Schedule

Sep.	18-19
Oct.	16-17
Nov.	6-7
Dec.	5-6

Chapel Service

UTA Sundays, 0745-0815
 Bldg. 850, upstairs conference room
 Maj. Charles Peters, Chaplain
Everyone is Welcome!

Everyone must complete the 3-mile walk. September UTA is your last chance. The walk for HQ and MSF is scheduled for Sunday at 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Please contact your unit fitness monitor for times.

Refer a Friend

There are positions available within the 931st ARG. Help your unit recruit by providing them a name of a friend or have them contact Tech. Sgt. David McCormick at 652-4350, Master Sgt. Terry Gosh at 652-3766, or one of their area recruiters listed below.



Tinker AFB, OK

Master Sgt. Victor Bradford (405) 739-2980
 Technical Sgt. Rhonda Nolan (405) 734-5331

Lawton, OK

Technical Sgt. Nathan Bickle (405) 357-2784

Sheppard AFB, TX

Master Sgt. Larry Giles (817) 6763382

Midwest City, OK

Master Sgt. Linda Smith (405) 733-9403
 Staff Sgt. William Thompson

FROM THE IG

Primary IG: LtCol Ralph Rissmiller
Bldg 850, Rm 244 652-3684/743-3684
Alternate IG: LtCol Ron Johnston
Bldg 850, Rm 146 652-3812/743-3812

Mass Mailing

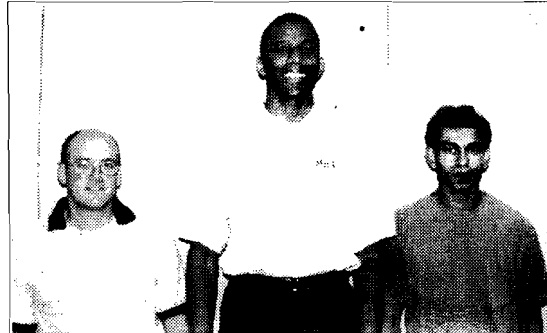
There are many agencies which you may contact, in addition to the local IG, in order to lodge a complaint or to get an issue investigated. These include the chain-of-command, numbered AF/IG, AFRC/IG, SAF/IG, DOD/IG, elected officials, and others.

Occasionally, someone decides that the best way to get the most action on their problem is to contact all of these agencies at the same time. This is what we refer to in the IG business as the "mass mailing." It is theoretically possible that all the agencies contacted could begin the investigation process. Sooner or later, however, it will become evident that several agencies are investigating the same incident. At that point the process would stop and a determination made as to the appropriate level which will handle the case. The result is that rather than speeding the process, a mass mailing may very well lengthen it.

You certainly have the right to contact any or all of these agencies to seek a resolution to your problem. You will generally receive a more timely response if you will start at the lowest appropriate level. This will also preserve your avenue of appeal to the higher levels if not satisfied with the outcome. If you have questions about this or any other IG issue, please call.

931st ARG on the WWW...
w3.afrc.af.mil/units/931aw/default.htm

NEWCOMERS



Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis/Editor

Top photo: Staff Sgt. William Robbins, 18th ARS; Technical Sgt. Charles Smith, 931st MSF; Captain Tsuyoshi Tung, 18th ARS.

Bottom photo: Technical Sgt. Edwin Craig, 931st CES; Senior Airman Clarence Blakley, 931st OSF; Senior Airman Ian Vanecken, 931st AGS.

Personnel *continued from page 3*

MPF IN-HOUSE TRAINING

The MPF is closed each Sunday of the UTA from 0730 - 1000 for In-House training. Classes are held in the TNET room (217), and all administrative personnel (3A0X1 and 3S0X1) are welcome to attend.

SENIOR NCOLDP

Applications are still being taken for the December 18 & 19 class at Mc Cord AFB, WA. We have 4 quotas. Suspense to DPMT is 5 Nov 99. All E-7s through E-9s, who have not attended an Academy in residence are welcome to attend. Interested members need to provide their name, rank, ssn, organization, home and work phone numbers, and their home address. Attendees must have their commanders endorsement. Questions may be directed to Group Training.

NCO ACADEMY DATES

NCO Academy slots/dates for FY'00 are here!! Tyndall AFB, FL. has four slots and Maxwell AFB, AL has two slots. See Group Training for dates. ARTs need to attend in civilian status, so please submit a DD Form 1556; reservists may request via the normal

military school request form. Quotas not filled by 90 days before the class start date will be returned to HQ.

RESERVE MANAGEMENT VACANCY SYSTEM (RMVS)

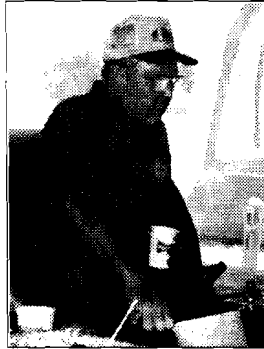
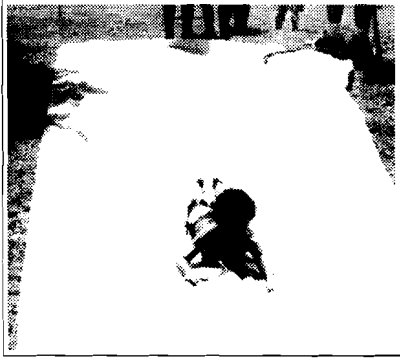
The RSVM is an on-line job reservation system. The program is available to reserve personnel managers at the MPF to effectively manage AF Reserve unit and IMA positions. It will identify vacancies through out the command and applies to all members in the grade of Lt. Col and below. If you are interested in taking a load at what's available, contact Technical Sgt. Anick Wallace in Relocations at X-3665.

SGLI UPDATES

Improved death benefits insurance: Terminally ill veterans are now allowed to receive accelerated death benefits. The Veterans Programs Enhancement Act establishes an option for the Veterans Affairs (VA) to pay these benefits under SGLI and VGLI programs. The option allows terminally ill policy holders to receive as much as half the face value of their coverage, up to \$100,000, during their lifetime. This benefit applies to anyone who is insured by SGLI or VGLI and who is terminally ill. For additional information contact your nearest VA office.

Eat, drink and be Merry

The 931st annual Family Day picnic
August 15, 1999



All photos by
Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis

Rules adapted to protect reservists' government jobs

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994 has been amended to protect the rights of reservists returning from active duty to government jobs.

Although few Guard and Reserve members have expressed a concern, DOD's increased reliance on the reserve components spurred the Office of Personnel Management to issue regulations concerning the act's application to federal civilians. The protections also apply for reservists employed by state and local governments and by private employers.

There are few incidences where a reservist would not be entitled to return to a position of employment, according to Col. Rowan Bronson, assistant director of personnel in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

Those incidences would include people who fail to give advance notice to employers

that they've been called to active duty, those who exceed five years' cumulative active duty time or who failed to report back in time, and those who are discharged under less-than-honorable conditions.

About 5 percent of the Ready Reserve — 73,000 people — hold federal civilian jobs, Bronson said. They may volunteer or be called up individually or with a unit, but still receive the same protections.

Another agency, the National Committee for Employer Support of Guard and Reserve, protects their rights, too, as well as the rights and concerns of employers. The committee uses ombudsmen in the field (at least one in every state) who act as mediators between reserve-component members and their employers and who explain to them the roles and responsibilities of each.

Before going on active duty, reserve component employees should notify their civilian employers, preferably in writing,

Bronson said, except when to do so would hamper military security or delay the employee from reporting to duty. While reservists are away from their normal jobs, their entitlements continue as if they were there.

"Benefits that are provided to all employees should continue to be provided to absent reservists," he said. "If the reservists are in positions that would automatically be upgraded during their absence, they should receive the upgrades. Pension and health benefits attached to the position as a normal course of the way the employers do business should stay in place."

Administration of the new rules will be applied uniformly across federal departments, although there could be some nuances depending on the reservists' branch of service and the department's human resources policies.

ART pilot retention pay seeks to keep full-time force

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. (AFPN) — To stem the exit of full-time air reserve technician pilots, Air Force Reserve Command recently implemented a command-wide retention allowance for GS-12 through GS-14 ART pilots.

As civil service employees, ART pilots provide a full-time cadre of personnel to perform day-to-day duties and train traditional reservists. Over the past three years, an average of 13 percent of the GS-12 to GS-14 ART pilots assigned to the command left civil service, primarily to take airline pilot jobs. In 1996, 55 of the 493 pilots assigned to the command gave up their civil service careers. The next year another 69 out of 497 departed. Last year the Reserve saw 70 out of 519 leave their GS jobs.

"In the past, we've had pilot retention pay available on a case-by-case basis but not as a group allowance," said Carolyn Burnam, personnel staffing specialist and program manager at AFRC. "The purpose of this program is to provide consistency across the command."

Under the new program, GS-12 and GS-13 pilots receive a 10 percent allowance every pay period, while GS-14s get a 5 percent

allowance. The percentage rate is based on the employees' basic pay, not including locality pay.

Since the retention allowance is not part of employees' basic pay, it is not used when determining promotion entitlement or calculating high-three salary for retirement purposes. It is also not part of Thrift Savings Plan contributions or included in Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance determinations.

Fixed-wing and helicopter pilots receive the allowance. Pilots not assigned to flying units — those are assigned to rated flying positions such as safety officers and air commanders — are also eligible for the allowance.

The retention allowance must be revalidated annually to determine if the allowance is still warranted. The command will discontinue the allowance if retention problems no longer exist.

According to command officials, the Reserve does not have a plan in place but is looking into establishing a pilot retention allowance for traditional reservists or full-time active Guard and Reserve members. (Courtesy of AFRC News Service)

Command sponsors "Why I Serve" essay contest

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Air Force Reserve Command is sponsoring an essay contest, "Why I Serve," with the top three essays to be printed in the April 2000 issue of Citizen Airman magazine.

The contest is open to all unit

reservists, individual mobilization aughtmentees and active-duty military members assigned to AFRC.

Submissions must be typewritten and limited to no more than 250 words. A person may enter only one essay, and

each essay must be the work of one individual.

All essays must include the author's full name, military rank, telephone number, home address and unit of assignment.

Entries may be submitted by regular mail to HQ AFRC/PAP,

255 2nd Street, Robins Air Force Base, GA 31098-1637; via e-mail to citizen.airman@afrc.af.mil; or by fax, DSN 497-0878 or (912) 327-0878. Deadline is Dec. 31. Entries postmarked before that date will be accepted.

931st Air Refueling Group Employer Appreciation Day, October 16
Employer Nomination Form

Reservists, we need your help. Here's your chance to let your boss see what you do in your military jobs and for them to understand the mission of the 931st ARG and the Air Force Reserve. Your boss will be invited to visit the group on Saturday, October 16, 1999. They'll get a mission briefing, find out about the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, visit your work center, have lunch and fly aboard a KC-135.

Reservists are required to be on duty status, in uniform, pay for their own lunch and provide a tour of their work centers and units.

Please complete the form below if you would like your civilian supervisor to participate. Priority will go to employers who haven't participated in previous employer events with the 931st. This form is for 931 ARG/PA use only.

Fill out and mail this form to 931 ARG/PA, 53280 Topeka Street, Suite 221, McConnell AFB, Kan., 67221-3723, or drop it off in the PA office on the second floor of the headquarters building by the end of the September UTA. You can also fax the form to (316) 652-3393.

Don't pass up this opportunity to play host to your employers and give them a taste of what the Air Force Reserve is all about.

YOUR NAME _____

RANK _____ SQUADRON _____

PHONE NUMBER() _____

YOUR EMPLOYER'S NAME _____

TITLE _____

COMPANY NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER() _____

Completion of this form is completely voluntary. Your cooperation is appreciated.

WICHITA WEEKEND

IN TOWN

Friday, September 17

Doobie Brothers and Styx -- Kansas State Fair, show starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$16.50 to \$19.50 at all Select-A-Seat locations or call 755-7328.

Bryan White Concert -- Kansas Coliseum. Call 755-1234 for additional information and tickets.

Great Plains Antique Show and Sale -- Sept. 17-19, Mid-America All-Indian Center, 650 N. Seneca. Fri. - Sat. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sun. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Over 25 antique dealers from around the country. Call 942-3499 for details

Saturday, September 18

Jennifer Paige and Mulberry Lane -- Kansas State Fair, show starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$16.50 to \$19.50 at all Select-A-Seat locations or call 755-7328.

Sunday, September 19

Leann Rimes and the Clark Family Experience - Kansas State Fair, show starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$16.50 to \$19.50 at all Select-A-Seat locations or call 755-7328.

LIVE THEATRE

Crown Uptown Dinner Theatre

"Social Security" through September 26th

Call 681-1566 for dinner and showtimes.

	MAFB	Gate
Thurs. & Sun.	\$21.45	\$24.30
Fri. & Sat.	\$24.45	\$27.48

ON BASE

UTA Movies

All Movies \$2.00; All times 7 p.m.; doors open 6:30 p.m.

Friday, September 17 -- THE HAUNTING -- (Liam Neeson, Catherin Zeta-Jones); A remake of the classic 1963 movie "The Haunting" a professor draws three subjects to the Hill House for a psychological experiment. During the course of the night some will unravel, some will question and will fight for their lives as the house fights back. **Rated PG-13** (*intense horror sequences*), 112 minutes.

Saturday, September 18 -- BLAIR WITCH PROJECT - (Heather Donahue, Michael Williams, Joshua Leonard); Three film students travel to Maryland's Black Hills Forest to shoot a documentary about a local urban legend... The Blair Witch. The three went into the woods on a two day hike to find the Blair Witch, and never came back. One year later, the students film and video was found in the woods, the footage was compiled and made into a movie The Blair Witch Project. **Rated R** (*language*), 87 minutes.

Sunday, September 19 -- DEEP BLUE SEA -- (Samuel L. Jackson, Stelan Skarsgard); Dr. Susan McAlester and crew members of the floating laboratory Aquatica have been experimenting on mako sharks, one of nature's most lethal killing machines. Now, they are more intelligent and powerful. The crew finds themselves being stalked by the new generation sharks. **Rated R** (*graphic shark attacks and language*), 105 minutes.

The Ticket and Tour office at McConnell Air Force Base has discount tickets on dozens of events in the Wichita Community and surrounding area, including movies, theatre, sports trips and other tours.

For information on what is available, contact the office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The numbers are (316) 652-6007 and 652-6038.

931st Air Refueling Group
Public Affairs Office
McConnell AFB, Kan. 67221