

# Kanza SPIRIT

December 1997  
Vol. 2, No. 11

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Air Force Reserve's first Associate KC-135 Unit

## 931st member nominated for Service Award

By Staff Sgt. Barbara  
Davis  
931st Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Cody Smith, 931<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Group safety superintendent has been named as the Air Force Nominee for the 1997 Government Employees Insurance Company (GEICO) Public Service Award in Traffic Safety and Mishap Prevention.

His civilian employer, the 71<sup>st</sup> Flying Training Wing at Vance Air Force Base, Okla. nominated Smith for the award.

Smith or "Mr. Safety," as he is known around Vance, was nominated for his innovative thinking and safety outreach programs he initiated upon his transfer to Vance AFB in January 1996 from the 507<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing, Air Reserve Technician program as the Ground Safety Manager.

Each year GEICO recognizes

four federal employees and one retiree that have made significant contributions in the areas of traffic safety and mishap prevention, fire safety and fire prevention, and drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

When DOD directed the use of safety helmets for all bicycle riders on all DOD installations, Smith procured and distributed over 170 helmets to dependent children of Vance AFB members.

Smith created the Fitting Education Awareness Training (FEAT) program, where children were fitted with a helmet (free of charge).

Parents were educated on the proper wear and care of helmets, as well as being made aware of the potential harm of not wearing a helmet.

He was praised for his involvement with the many safety coalitions, councils and committees in Oklahoma. In fact, he is currently serving his eighth consecutive term as the chairman of

the Oklahoma Federal Safety and Health Council.

Smith currently holds the position of Chief of Civilian Personnel at Vance AFB.

Smith was notified in July by General Lloyd "Fig" Newton, Air Education Training Command (AETC)/CC of his selection as the AETC nominee. "I credit the Air Force Reserves for my success in my civilian career, because of the training I received," Smith said.

The notification of his selection as the Air Force nominee was recently received by the 71<sup>st</sup> from Gen. Newton. The nomination package is now at GEICO where it will compete against the packages submitted by other federal agencies.

Final selection will include an all expense paid trip for two to Washington, D.C and a \$2500.00 honorarium to be presented at an awards presentation and reception in early March 1998.

### Not Yet?

...to move to the new building ... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

### Toys for Tots

The Chaplain's Office is sponsoring the Toys for Tots program. Look for the boxes during the November and December UTAs to donate toys for Christmas.

Make Christmas merry by providing a present for a needy child.

### Gift of Love

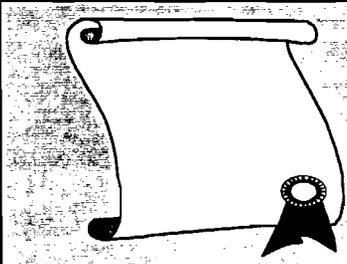
The 8th ARS is supporting military families by providing Thanksgiving dinners.

Boxes for donations (canned and boxed items only, please) will be stationed in several highly visible locations in building 1218.

If you don't have time to shop, money will be accepted.

Donations and money will be collected during the Dec UTA. Please let us share "A gift of love" with our extended military families who have not been as fortunate or as blessed as you and I.

For further information please contact Carolyn Wallace during the week at ext. 3741 or Senior Airman Mindy Mulich on the Dec UTA.



**See CCAF graduates  
on page 3.**

## Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays From the Despinoy Family Dean, Judy, Jennifer, and Natalie

By Col. Dean J. Despinoy  
931st commander

It is hard to believe that the holiday season is upon us once more. I know that this year has been very busy and eventful for my family as I know it has been for all of you. It has become traditional to stop during the holidays and reflect on the year's activities. The 931<sup>st</sup> has much for which it can be proud.

This year has been highlighted by the continued growth of the 931<sup>st</sup> with the ever-changing manning documents, stand-up and shut-down of the 44th, the beginning of the super squadron, and the unit deployment to Pisa. The building of latrines and shelters for the parks department, countless roller runs, expresses, and air refuelings. Also, the honoring of the Kaw nation in ceremony and flight, the change of the com-

mander, dining out, building dedication, and hosting of the Chief of the Air Force Reserve. And yes, almost moving into our new building. (Well you have to save something for next year.) If all that wasn't enough, the 931<sup>st</sup> had a very successful standardization evaluation and won the "Kansas Award for Excellence."

None of this could have happened without a unit of dedicated professionals. In the short time I have been your commander, I have attended several functions, both military and civilian, throughout the Wichita area. The 931<sup>st</sup> has an outstanding reputation, and it gives me great pride to receive the accolades and respect that comes with commanding and representing this world class unit.

Next year is filled with opportunities and challenges and I know that we will meet them with the "spirit" that is the hallmark of the 931<sup>st</sup>. But now is the time for everyone to enjoy their friends and families and the warmth and spirituality of the holiday season. Enjoy, be safe, and be proud.



Col. Dean J. Despinoy

**Kanza Spirit**  
Volume 2, No. 11

Wednesday, Dec 16 is the deadline for articles in the January 1998 issue of the Kanza Spirit. All articles and photographs must be turned in to the 931st Public Affairs office, Bldg. 1218, Room 221 by 2 p.m.

**Group Commander**  
Col. Dean Despinoy  
**Chief, Public Affairs, GS-12, ART**  
Capt. David Fruck  
**Editor, GS-7, ART, Public Affairs, NCOIC**  
Tech. Sgt. Brian Bowman  
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All photos are Air Force unless otherwise indicated.

## Reservists- bridge between both worlds



Maj. Gen. Robert McIntosh

the end of the war in Vietnam because of the draft. Lately, increasing numbers of the populace have no contact with the military at all.

**"You do good work and the country benefits -- don't keep it a secret."**

**Maj. General Robert McIntosh**

Reservists are the bridge between military and civilian worlds because we are inherently part of both.

You are the windows through which friends, neighbors, and your communities see military life.

Community outreach programs are important, but real understanding of what we do hinges on your interaction with the people around you.

You do good work and the country benefits -- don't keep it a secret.

There is a perception by some that the American people and the military may be losing touch with each other.

Military service was the norm for most able-bodied males from World War II until

## A message from AGS.....

Welcome back to the 6-7 December 1997, UTA. First I want to make sure all of you and your families have a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year. All of

you and your family members are very important to us. Again, please be safe.

see AGS page 3

# 931st sends congratulations to our CCAF graduates

Five members of the 931st Air Refueling Group received their degrees from the Community College of the Air Force in a ceremony

Nov. 17, in the Emerald City Ballroom.

Master Sgt. Alex Clemena, 931st Air Generation Squadron; Master Sgt. Dallas Jones, 931st Civil Engineering Squadron; Tech. Sgt. Linwood Cottner, 931st Air Generation Squadron; Tech. Sgt. Johnathan Wood and Staff Sgt. Tracy Marshall, 931st Mission Support Flight. These five members of the 931st ARG received Associates in Applied Science degrees.

"We had five confirmed this time which was a super improvement from the Spring graduation where we had only one - he was

our first," said Master Sgt. Pam Summers, 931st Mission Support Flight, training manager.



Tech. Sgt. Johnathan Wood



Staff Sgt. Tracy Marshall



Master Sgt. Alex Clemena

All photos by Tech. Sgt. Brian Bowman



Master Sgt. Dallas Jones



Tech. Sgt. Linwood Cottner

## CONGRATULATIONS!!!

**Congratulations to the Airman and NCO of the Year winners:**

**Airman of the Year:**  
Staff Sgt. Barbara Davis

**NCO of the Year:**  
Tech. Sgt. Angela Chatmon

### AGS, cont. from page 2.....

I want to congratulate a few members from the AGS. Master Sgt. Alex Clemena and TSgt Linwood Cottner on receiving their degree from the Community College of the Air Force. Also, looks like we will be losing one of our members to the officer ranks. I want to congratulate 2nd Lt. David Eastham, formally Master Sgt., one of our Com/Nav ARTs, on his graduation from AMS on Nov. 20. He will be leaving us going to Grissom

ARB, IN. If you need assistance on how to plan things long term, you need to talk to Tech. Sgt. Chuck Croninger. He was able to miss November's UTA. Congratulations are in order for him and his wife. They now have a baby girl. She was born Nov 14.

All of the AGS members did a great job last UTA assisting the 22nd AGS. They really appreciated all of the help. Have a safe Holiday.

## Promotions authorized for AFRC Staff Sgts.

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Air Force Reserve Command staff sergeants who are blocked from promotion consideration because of the authorized grade of their assigned position can compete for tech. sergeants. Starting Dec. 1.

"These talented members deserve the

opportunity to compete for promotion to tech. sergeant and this policy provides that opportunity," said Maj. Gen. James E. Sherrard III, AFRC vice commander.

The new policy applies to air reserve technicians and traditional reservists.

To qualify, reservists must have four or

more year's time in grade as a staff sergeant and 16 or more year's satisfactory service. They also cannot have an unfavorable information file or outstanding personnel incident notification files, or be on the unit control roster. Staff sergeants who are overages are not eligible for the program. see **Sgts page 5**

## Actual expense allowance available to travelers

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Air Force Reserve Command travelers can now ask their wing commanders to approve an actual expense allowance for trips to high cost areas.

Before Oct. 1, units had to request the allowance from Headquarters AFRC. The allowance has a 150 percent cap on all actual per diem expenses.

AFRC people assigned to the headquar-

ters at Robins, Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver and the Office of the Air Force Reserve in the Pentagon request the allowance through their appropriate chain of command.

Travelers can request the extra allowance if actual expenses will likely exceed the maximum per diem allowance by \$5 per day. Allowable expenses are those usually covered by per diem; expenses for personal conveyance are not allowed.

ence are not allowed.

Commanders and financial services offices will work together to establish local procedures for requesting actual expense allowances. Justification for the request should include reason for travel, identity of senior member and other members of party, proposed itinerary, reason for additional allowance, and point of contact. (AFRC News Service)

## New law goes into effect Oct. 1998 to recoup G.I. Bill payments

Washington - The office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs has issued a change to the previous recoupment policy regarding Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

The law actually affects reservists who do not fulfil their six-year service obligation.

Reservists who receive Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve benefits and fail to complete their six-year service obligation will have to pay back to the government a portion of the education benefits they received while on duty.

Under provisions of a new law, effective Oct. 1, 1998, all reserve components, including Air Force Reserve Command, will begin recouping benefits from people who

dropped out of the Selected Reserve after Oct. 1, 1997.

The law does not affect people who are medically disabled or who leave the Selected Reserve under the Reserve Transition Assistance Program.

Names of former Selected Reserve reservists who have received benefits will be identified in the Personnel Data System and forwarded to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service for future "collection action" against them.

The amount of benefits owed to the government is determined by a mathematical formula, using the number of months remaining in the person's reserve obligation and dividing by 73 (the number of months in a six-year contract).

That percentage is then multiplied by the amount of Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve benefits received during the eligibility period.

Finally, a flat rate interest charge, which is determined at the time the debt is processed, is added to the total amount.

For example, if a person leaves the Selected Reserve and has 23 months left in his or her reserve obligation, the 23 months divided by 72 equals .32.

If the person received \$2,400 in benefits, the math is \$2,400 multiplied by .32 equal \$768.

If the interest rate is 15 percent, the amount owed to the government equals \$883.20 - \$768 plus \$115.20 in interest. (AFRC News Service)

## Team searches for reservists who served in Gulf War

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Reservists who served in the Kuwaiti theater of operations during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm are again being asked to help the Air Force.

In August, the Gulf War Declassification Team asked the active force and reserve components to help. The team went out with another request in November. It is attempting to complete a database of Air Force mem-

bers who deployed to the Gulf War region including Saudi Arabia, Iraq or Kuwait between August 1990 and December 1991.

"Since the mobilization and deployment of Air Force Reserve members was at the direction of the gaining major commands, we do not have the specific information the team needs," said Paul Clement, chief of personnel readiness operations, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command at Robins. "In addition, aircrew, aeromedical and support personnel moved in and out of the area of operations on a daily basis without actually bedding down.

"The best source of information for the team is from reservists themselves," said Clement. "We need everyone's help in getting this word out to every reservist, including those who retired or separated."

The team needs a complete copy of deployment orders or decoration citations sent

see *Search* page 5

### 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 one their area recruiters listed below:

**MCCONNELL AFB, KS**  
**MSgt Terry Gosh (316) 652-4350**  
**MSgt Lester Shaw, Jr. (316) 652-3766**

**TINKER & VANCE AFB, OK**  
**MSgt Al Garza (405) 734-5331**  
**ALTUS AFB, OK & Lawton, OK**  
**MSgt Larry Giles (405) 357-2784**  
**SHEPPARD AFB, TX**  
**MSgt Bob Wright (817) 676-3382**

**MIDWEST CITY, OK**  
**MSgt Linda Smith**  
**TSgt Erick Glick**  
**(405) 733-9403**

## Search , cont. from page 4.....

by fax or mail. The information should include social security number, deployment location, pay grade at the end of deployment, duty status, deploying Air Force specialty code, date of birth, and dates in theater.

The orders can be mailed to SAF/AAZG c/o AFAHA, 600 Chennault Circle, Maxwell AFB, Ala. 36112-6424 or faxed to 1-334-953-6356.

Additional information for Gulf War veterans is available on the Internet at <http://www.dtic.mil/gulflink/>.

The site contains the latest press releases, congressional testimony, Office of the Special Assistance for Gulf War Illnesses organization chart and other documents related to Gulf War illness issues. (AFRC News Service)

## Tuition assistance available to Reservists

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Air Force Reserve Command now offers college tuition assistance to reservists and free college credit tests to civilian employees at all of its training offices.

On Oct. 1, AFRC became the first Department of Defense component, active or reserve, to authorize the entire spectrum of education programs offered by Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. On Feb. 1, the command will fund Certified Professional Program tests, giving participating reservists free national credentialing tests in 32 specialties.

The command has offered free College Level Examination Program tests and DANTES Standardized Subject Tests for college credit to Reserve spouses since February 1996. It now makes these tests available to AFRC civilian employees at no cost as well. The DANTES Distance Learning Program with tuition assistance provides reservists a new avenue for completing degrees at all levels.

"We're offering unprecedented education opportunities to our reservists, their families and our civilian team members," said Maj. Larry Lee, chief of the base support branch

in Headquarters AFRC's directorate of personnel. "We see this as one cost-effective solution to the readiness and quality of life issues facing our force."

The Distance Learning Program covers vocational education, independent study and external degrees ranging from certificates to doctoral programs in hundreds of subject areas. Most participating colleges and universities have no residency requirements, and offer open enrollment throughout the year.

During this first year, the Reserve will offer tuition assistance only in conjunction with baccalaureate degrees but will expand the program to graduate degrees as funds become available. The Reserve will reimburse participants 75 percent of the tuition costs, up to \$1,500 per person per year, for course work successfully completed toward their degrees as determined by their institutions.

"The Distance Learning Program and tuition assistance are available now at all AFRC sites," said Tech. Sgt. Mike Ferrari, NCO in charge of the education programs at the Reserve headquarters and lead architect of the initiative. "Fourteen AFRC locations have

already been certified by DANTES to conduct testing, and the remaining 24 locations will be on-line and offering all programs by Feb. 1."

For this effort to succeed, both AFRC and DANTES had to make changes. AFRC restructured the base training function in its military personnel flights, establishing formal responsibilities for distance learning and education. DANTES built new management systems to support this effort and will offer custom-tailored training in Pensacola, Fla., to all AFRC site managers in January on how to run their programs.

"We're thrilled with the output from this remarkable partnership with DANTES," said Lee. "We think the overall impact will be bigger than originally expected. Never before have our people had this extreme flexibility in working towards their educational goals. It's the only kind of user-friendly learning that will work with our high operations tempo and personnel tempo."

Ferrari agrees. "The DANTES program will likely spur renewed participation in the Montgomery GI Bill, bringing real synergy to both programs." (AFRC News Service)

## Sgts., cont. from page 3.....

During each promotion cycle, unit commanders review a roster to determine whom they approve for promotion under this pro-

gram. These promotions do not count against a unit's overall technical sergeant unit vacancy promotion manning.

Reserve military personnel flights have more information about this program. (AFRC News Service)

### VEHICLE TALK by MSgt Alejandro Clemenña, VCO

The speed limits for routine traffic on the flight line are: *Special Purpose Vehicles 10 MPH, General Purpose Vehicles for perimeter roadways, taxiway ramps and parking areas 15 MPH, AGE towing single units 10 MPH, AGE Towing multi units 5 MPH, Aircraft being towed 5 MPH, All vehicles in the vicinity of aircraft 5 MPH.* Direct your questions or ideas to improve our service to your Unit VCOs. **Thank you and drive safely!!!**

# Personnel News You Can Use



## Military Personnel Flight Hours

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

Monday – Friday 0730 – 1600  
Saturday – UTA 1000 – 1600  
Sunday – UTA 1000 – 1600



## Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93)

This is the single most important source of information within your personnel record for dependent data and notification of next-of-kin in an emergency. If data is incomplete or incorrect, the Air Force cannot extend dependent benefits, and timely or proper notification cannot be made in the event of injury, serious illness, or death while on duty. You are the only one who can keep this document current. Remember, there is no such thing as a minor error on this form. Check the form in your mobility folder. If any information is in error or out of date, come by the MPF *Customer Service* to update the information. You may be one of the lucky ones who escape injury or illness, but can you afford the risk?



**Effectively IMMEDIATELY, it now takes 9 unexcused absences to be involuntarily reassigned to the inactive reserve. Another action which may occur is involuntary demotion!**



## 931<sup>st</sup> Airman / NCO of the Quarter

Nominations are due to the MPF Career Enhancement office NLT 7 Dec 97. Board will be on 10 Jan 98 at 1400.

The Airman / NCO of the Quarter Schedule:

Nomination Quarter	Due to DPMSC	Board Date
Oct – Dec	Dec UTA	Jan UTA
Jan – Mar	Mar UTA	Apr UTA



## Be aware of the Unknown in Life Insurance Policies

By law, all reservists are automatically covered under SGLI for \$200,000 unless they elect, in writing – using SGLV-8286, increase or decrease coverage or decline coverage. This form is completed at Customer Service in the MSF. Your monthly Leave & Earning Statement (LES) will reflect the amount collected from the UTA pay. Additional information about the SGLI may be found in the ARPC Guard & Reserve Personnel Fact sheets which are available on the internet at <http://www.arpc.org/newsinfo>. Additionally, check your civilian life insurance policies to make sure you are covered during training periods. Some policies contain *exclusion clauses* while performing active duty; particularly during a conflict, war or aboard a military aircraft (other than an AMC contract flight). Frequently, an insurance rider is available for an extra premium to cover flying on “other than commercial aircraft”.



*Happy Holidays !!*



## PEP Nomination Packages

**ATTENTION SUPERVISORS:** PEP packages are due to the MPF Career Enhancement office NLT 11 Jan 98. PEP rosters were sent to each unit for the Jan UTA. Nomination format can be obtained from the Career Enhancement office.



## Outprocessing

All personnel scheduled to do any of the following items **MUST** outprocess through *Personnel Relocations*:

- \*TDY for 30 day or more
- \*Retirement
- \*Separation *from unit*
- \*Assignment
- \*TDY to School tour

Contact MSgt Dee Melvin at X-3637 for more information



## Humanitarian Service Medal (HSM)

The HSM has been approved for the 1997 North Central States Floods disaster relief operation. Those personnel that directly participated in the disaster relief in the following locations and dates may be eligible for the HSM:

North Dakota	7 Apr 97 – 3 Jun 97
South Dakota	7 Apr 97 – 6 May 97
Minnesota	9 Apr 97 – 29 Apr 97

Direct participation is defined as being physically present at the designated location and having directly contributed to the influenced the action. Specifically excluded from eligibility are members who were present for duty at the specified location, but did not make a direct contribution to influence the action. If you need further guidance, stop by the MPF Career Enhancement office or bring documentation for this medal.



## Professional Military Education

### **Airman Leadership School:**

We have one ALS quota left for class dates: 28 Jul – 28 Aug 98. Interested SRA may obtain an application from *Base Training*.

### **AFRC NCO Leadership Development Program (NCOLDP):**

Carswell has offered our members space in their classes. Dates are: 14 – 22 Feb 98, 11 – 19 Apr 98, 13 – 21 Jun or 8 – 16 Aug 98. Interested SSgt's and TSgt's should contact *Base Training* for further information. Tinker has also offered us slots. Their dates are 12-16 Jan 98 & 2 – 6 Feb 98. Members going to Tinker must attend BOTH sessions.

### **Command NCO Academy (in-residence):**

Classes will be held at Goodfellow AFB, TX. Our dates are: 24 Feb – 2 Apr 98, 1 Jun – 9 Jul 98, or 3 Aug – 10 Sep 98. Interested TSgt's (and SSgt's with 8 years time in service) should complete and AFRES Form 129 (available at *Base Training*). Applications for February dates must be turned in NLT December UTA.

### **SR NCO Academy (in-residence):**

Dates have been announced for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of FY'98. They are: 13 May – 24 Jun 98, 29 Jul – 19 Aug 98 and 8 Sep – 20 Oct 98. Interested MSgt's should contact *Base Training* for application procedures (X-3587 or X-3673).



## Ancillary Training for Newcomers

Because we WON'T be moving into the new building this month, we will still hold these classes in the CES building on Saturday afternoon. Time will be from 1230 – 1615





### Not Knowing Affects Retirement

The ANG/USAFR Point Credit Summary (Point Credit Accounting Reporting System – PCARS), formally known as AF Form 526 is not an actual form, but now a computer product/printout which lists your participation points credited during your inactive and active duty training, special tours, MPA tours, ECI courses and membership. You should receive an AF Form 526 within 60 days after your reserve retirement (R/R) date. So check your V-file or distro box on the UTA. The summary shows the current year total points earned, totals points credited for retirement, and satisfactory years credited towards retirement. Within 30 days of receipt, compare your personal record of participation with the annual form to detect errors. Contact Customer Service for corrective actions. Be sure to provide appropriate source documents. **Did you know**, the required minimum points for a satisfactory year for retirement is **50** (total inactive and active duty points)? Also, are you aware that if your R/R date is after 23 September 1996, you are now allowed to have a maximum of **75** points inactive vs **60** per R/R year?



### Reserve Dental Program

Humana Military Healthcare Services of Louisville, KY (1-800-211-3614), has been awarded the contract to administer the Defense Department's TRICARE Selected Reserve Dental Program (TSRDP). This is a basic dental care insurance program for reserve members effective 1 October 1997. **PARTICIPATING** members who choose to enroll will pay 40% (\$4.36) of the monthly premium with the government paying the other 60%. Family members are **not** entitled to any benefits under this program. The maximum annual benefit for services under the plan is \$1,000 worth of paid allowable charges per year. See Customer Service for more details.



### Gortex Jacket

FYI – wear of this jacket in **ONLY** authorized for wear with the service uniform when authorized by the gaining MAJCOM.

**AMC:** Must be authorized for wear by the installation commander (must be in the installation supplement) and issued through local organizational channels. Personnel will not sew or attach any item onto this jacket that could damage it's waterproof integrity.

Officers and enlisted will wear subdued metal grade insignia centered on the front tab.

Enlisted subdued metal grade insignia will be worn immediately upon availability through local supply channels.

Non-subdued metal grade insignia may be worn by officers and enlisted personnel centered on the front tab

while in garrison, if authorized by the installation commander.

Grade insignia will not be worn if safety requirements prohibit.

(Ref: AMC Sup 1, AFI 36-2903, 25 Jul 97)

**AFRC:** The installation commander will provide wear instructions for authorized functional clothing in their local base supplement.



### Vanguard NCO Award

Nominations for the Vanguard Award are due to the *Career Enhancement* office NLT 30 Dec 97. For more information on this award and submission requirements, contact MSgt Corinna Seitz at X-3665.



### Leadership Today & Tomorrow Seminar

A professional development seminar opportunity for Majors and Lt Colonels to be held in Washington DC on 24 – 26 Jan 98. Each base is allotted one quota. See Base Training for more details!

