

**Empowerment**

Putting it to work  
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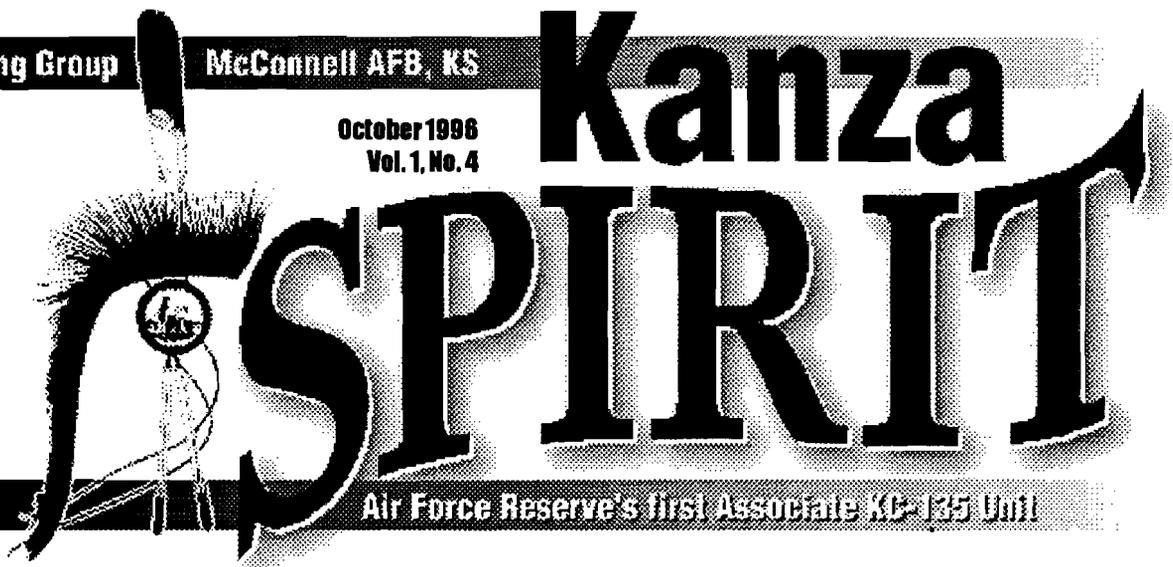
**Basic trainee**

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October 1996  
Vol. 1, No. 4



Air Force Reserve's first Associate KC-135 Unit

**Vote Nov. 5th**

In order to vote November 5, you must be registered. Exercise your right.

**North to Iceland**

931st Air Refuelers will soon head to Iceland to support a Joint Military Task Force. This is another first.

**Pisa planning**

Efforts are under way to plan and prepare for the February '97 Pisa deployment. The 931st ARG will take the lead in air refueling support of the Bosnia Peacekeeping missions. Reservists should now prepare their employers, wills, shot records, passports and personal affairs.

**Child care is here**

Child care is available for 931st ARG members during the UTA weekend and annual tours. Contact Family Readiness at 316-652-3577 for a list of child care providers and the hourly, daily and weekly rate.

## Construction begins for 931st headquarters

by Capt. Phil Blahut  
Public Affairs Staff

One thing for certain, that is change. But change can be good or bad. For the 931st Air Refueling Group, change is what many have come to know and accept.

A known stress factor is moving, a change in work environment. And after July 1997, a majority of the Reserve unit is poised to move again and to occupy our new headquarters building. It will be a move that gives us permanence, visibility and hopefully, additional room.

"This construction is very important to our unit," said Col. Vik Malling, commander of the 931st Air Refueling Group.

"Even though Building 1218 has been nicely restored and currently is our home, I believe that people want to be a part of something new. And we need the room," he said.

If you haven't noticed it yet, the bulldozers and graders have been cutting out a large slice of earth just east of the base Shoppette and gas station. This will be your new home within the year.

During a traditional ground breaking, Col. 's Larry Stevenson, 22nd Air Refueling Wing commander and Vik Malling, the 931st commander, unearthed the first shovel of dirt to begin the new construction.

The \$4.9 million building project was awarded to a Wichita-based company, Snodgrass Construction. Snodgrass officials plan to complete the project on or before the July 1997 deadline.

The new two-story 34,000 square foot facility is just across the street from an active duty construction project, McConnell's new Squadron Operations location.

When the 931st headquarters is complete, the state-of-the-art complex will include extra parking spaces and break areas and much needed office space for the growing unit.

It will include modern systems furniture, meeting rooms, computer and cable TV installed hook-ups and a shower area for those who workout or have to prepare for duty. It will house the 931st command and support staff and the 18th and 44 Air Refueling Squadrons and operational personnel.

The exterior of the new headquarters will be based on the "Prairie School" architecture, which is prevalent on McConnell and throughout Wichita. The "Prairie School" theme was a popular midwestern design, a creation of the renown architect, Frank Lloyd Wright.

In addition to the 931st headquarters, McConnell officials will be monitoring more than \$40 million in major construction projects during



Photo by Airman 1st Class Jeana Gimball

Col. 's Larry Stevenson, 22nd Air Refueling Wing commander, (L) and Vik Malling (r), 931st ARG commander dig the first ceremonial shovel of earth to begin construction of the 931st headquarters building.

1997. The new 931st facility was approved and funded by Congress in 1995.

With the amount of construction taking place at McConnell, it looks like the 931st won't be the only unit on the move. In this case, change is and looks good.

# Employers are key to unit readiness

We have a very busy schedule of events that will take place during the next few months. I would like to point out some of their significance and what they mean to you and the 931st.

During the November unit training assembly, we are involved in two major activities. One will be our participation in our first Mini-Quality Air Force Assessment and inspection and the more exciting event, our Employer Appreciation Day. Both are important, however we've been preparing for the QAFA and I believe we are ready to learn how we compare to other like units. I'm ready for our report card scores.

I'm more excited about the latter event. I personally want to meet and know your civilian supervisors and employers, to show them how we train, our teamwork and many other solid reasons why they should support you and the Air Force Reserve.

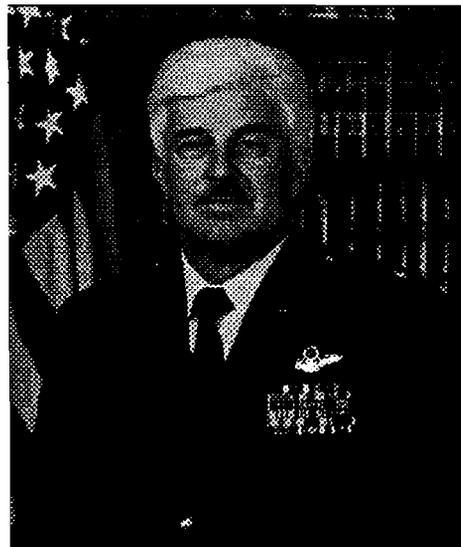
We plan to go all out for your bosses. First, I want to gather them into one ice-breaker setting, welcome them and present to them an important Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve briefing. The National ESGR folks have surveyed more than 1,200 Reserve and Guard employers across the U.S. and have prepared a favorable fact-filled briefing that should open your employer's eyes. Our employers should know the quality within our Reserve, our unit and its people.

Next, we plan to let you show the "sizzle in the steak" to your bosses. Each functional work area should be able to demonstrate training and let employers get hands-on experience within your shops. You're creative! I'll let you entertain them.

And after we have regrouped, we'll feed them at Emerald City and prepare them for their KC-135 orientation flights that includes refueling two Kansas Air National Guard B-1's.

I can't emphasize how important a strong Employer-Reserve relationship should be and how it can effect our war-time readiness. We have to continue cultivating the positive seeds that have grown from our employee-employer relations.

On Saturday, November 16th, Employer Appreciation Day, let's give our best effort yet. While you're at it, let's show not only how professional we are, but how much fun we can have as a team.



Col. Vik Malling

A major personnel change has taken place in the 931st. I am excited to announce that Chief Master Sgt. Billy Mead is the new unit Senior Enlisted Advisor.

Chief Mead will be actively involved with you and your work areas. He performs an important advisory role to me and the Air Force Reserve. I encourage all unit members to meet him, to be open and honest. He has a direct line to me for support and he can provide timely help.

Mead replaces another dynamic person, Chief Master Sgt. Joel Williamson, who reluctantly left the unit last month for a less time consuming IMA position that allows him to be closer to his family. I wish him well. He will be missed.

## Kanza Spirit

Volume 1, No. 4

Monday, October 4, is the deadline for articles in the November issue of the **Kanza Spirit**. All articles and photographs must be turned in to the 931st Public Affairs office, Bldg. 1218, Room 221 by 4 p.m.

**Group Commander**  
Col. Vik Malling

**Chief, Public Affairs**  
Capt. Phil Blahut

**Public Affairs Specialists**  
Staff Sgt. David Brumley  
Senior Airman Barbara Davis

**Administrative Assistant**  
Vacant

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## Who walks the dog when your gone

There are important legal issues to take care of prior to deployment, such as canceling the newspaper, stopping mail delivery, selling your house and abandoning your cat.

If you have a legal partner, i.e. spouse, then usually, that person is a joint owner and able to handle the legal issues that arise during your absence. If not, or even if you might consider formally appointing someone to stand in for you, you will have use legal document called a power of attorney.

A power of attorney is an important document as it gives the person you appoint power over your affairs. Even between spouses, it can be useful, especially in dealing with government agencies where you have a right to privacy. It is another step towards preparing to deploy and helps give peace of mind knowing someone is there to handle your affairs.

You should be careful to appoint only

someone you trust! Anyone relying on the power of attorney is legally protected. If you make the wrong choice, you may be left to try and get your money back from your buddy who took your paper, read your mail, stole your cat, along with your savings account and was last seen heading south.

As a reservist, you are entitled to use the McConnell legal office whose phone number is 316-652-3590. Powers of attorney and notary services are available: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wills and other legal questions are worked on Monday and Friday from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. and Wednesday from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. In addition, if you have questions regarding the need for a power of attorney or a Last Will, please contact Maj. Tom Pyle, at ext. 3804 or stop by the 931st Legal Office during UTA weekends.

# Empowerment is often feared, yet a leadership necessity

by 1st. Lt. Joe Wible  
931st Quality Officer

In organizations there are procedures to be followed and orders to be obeyed. In most cases these are designed to get the mission accomplished or to get the job done smarter and better. There is also a great deal of "empowerment" going on, especially at the shop/worker level.

In every organization, many front-line and support employees also need empowerment. They too need freedom to maneuver. They need to be put in charge of their particular situation.

Generally speaking, employees are over managed and over controlled by a plethora of rules, regulations and procedures of every sort.

Are we afraid of employee resourcefulness, initiative, and common sense? Are we afraid that, absent a mountain of rules, they will "give away the store?" What is the problem? We trust our employees', don't we?

Since empowerment is about "power," it scares the daylights out of some people. When first approached with empowerment, managers and supervisors may balk; they may see themselves as losing control. On the other hand, some employees may experience stage fright; they don't want more "power."

Empowerment is not about losing control — managers and supervisors remain in charge. Empowerment is not a God-given right to everyone on an equal basis.

Management has great flexibility in varying degrees of employee empowerment. For empowerment to work managers need to assess each of their employees capabilities and the seriousness (or consequence) of what they do (or fail to do) impacts on the amount of empowerment a managers is willing to grant.

Empowerment is a series of levels in which management and the employee can establish to help focus the organization towards a work environment that encourages initiative, resourcefulness, and teamwork in a structured process of mission accomplishment.

The following is a listing of those levels, with definitive examples of how to apply this structured approach to empowerment.

## **Level 1: Totally Empowered**

"Take charge — handle it on your

own." Example: A very capable night clerk at the hotel desk receives a call from a guest who complains that a leaky faucet is keeping him awake. The clerk expresses an apology and sends up a key to another room. If available, another person goes to help the guest move.

## **Level 2: Post Approval**

"Go ahead and handle it on your own — inform me of action taken later on."

Example: A capable plumber answers a house call to fix a clogged lavatory. During the call the occupant asks if he will also fix a leaking shower head. The plumber checks his schedule and decides he has just enough time to fix the shower head. To account for work performed and parts expended, he informs his supervisor later on.

## **Level 3: Guidelines**

"Help the customer but follow guidance." Example: A very capable first-line supervisor in the utilities branch notices that electrical usage is surging and that power needs to be shifted to a system that can handle it. The cut-over will knock power out for a few minutes to one-third of the community.

Given the seriousness of this requirement, the supervisor follows guidelines before acting. He notifies top management and ensures that key facilities are prepared to use auxiliary power, etc.

## **Level 4: Pre-Approval**

"Check with me before doing that."

Example: A capable employee is assisting a family in arranging for a move to another town as a result of a transfer.

When informed that Hauler Van Lines would move them, the member and his wife protested. They informed the employee that Hauler Van Lines moved them twice before and both were disasters.

The member's wife was near tears. (Per guidance and in fairness to acceptable commercial carriers, the employee has a sequential roster she uses.) Hauler's selection was the luck of the draw.

After listening to this family, the employee explained the situation to her supervisor and recommended that another company be used.

The supervisor agreed and stated that in fairness, Hauler Van Lines would get the next two shipments. Hauler has a good reputation in this area. The shipment was transferred to the relief of the member and the family.

## **Level 5: Not Empowered**

"You aren't allowed to handle this situation. Decisions in these matters are reserved exclusively with me or top level management."

Example: A new employee in the transportation section was asked to provide three vans and two trucks to pick up people and baggage from an incoming flight two hours hence.

The employee took the information and replied that he would have to check with his supervisor. The supervisor called the requester and asked for more information.

After a discussion, it was determined that two vans and one truck could easily handle the job. The supervisor was glad because he was nearly out of vehicles for customers. The supervisor also praised the employee for not committing the vehicles without authority.

Managers and supervisors need to look inward at the organization and find out what employees and customers already know about it — how the place really operates.

Employees especially, the best ones, can help here. They know what keeps them in strait jackets. They know what burns customers up. They know what should be changed in order to help people.

Finally, empowerment without leadership and reinforcement will send mixed signals to employees. It is of no use whatsoever if management stresses employee empowerment, initiative, etc., and then continuously tells the employee what to do, when to do it, and how to do it.

Although employee empowerment is not an affront to authority, weak managers will not survive with empowered employees. This is a good thing.

Almost by definition, weak managers have little capital invested in leadership. What authority they do have is usually at the expense of subordinates and is laden with strict adherence to bureaucratic norms regardless of circumstance.

Weak managers drag down organizations; they need to be put on the "endangered species" list. Strong management requires leadership. Leadership should want empowered, customer-oriented employees, employees that will become real business associates.

Empowered, self-confident, strong managers will facilitate employee success. This success is Quality that works.

# Hatch Act limits federal workers participation in politics

Federal law derived from the 1939 Hatch Act limits the political activities of federal employees. Known as PL 103-94, it made significant changes in the restrictions imposed by the original law.

While PL 103-94 permits some activities which were previously prohibited, it is a good idea for each of us to become familiar with what we can and cannot do in partisan politics. The list below spells out the "do's" and "don'ts."

## Federal Hatch Act Do's

Federal employees covered by the 1993 amendments may:

- be candidates for public office in non-partisan elections.
- register and vote as they choose.
- assist in voter registration drives

- express opinions about candidates and issues.

- contribute money to political organizations.

- attend political fundraising functions.

- attend and be active at political rallies and meetings.

- join and be an active member of a political party or club.

- sign nominating petitions.

- campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments and municipal ordinances.

- make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections.

- hold office in political clubs or parties.

## Federal Hatch Act Don'ts

Federal employees covered by 1993

amendments may not:

- use official authority or influence to interfere with an election.

- solicit or discourage political activity of anyone with business before their agency.

- solicit or receive political contributions (This may be done in certain limited situations by federal labor or other employee organizations.)

- be candidates for public office in partisan elections.

- engage in political activity while -

- on duty.

- in a government office.

- wearing an official uniform.

- using a government vehicle.

- wear political buttons on duty.

# Quality, compliance checklists are guides to inspection

by 1st Lt. Joe Wible  
931st Quality Officer

During the November Unit Training Assembly, an Air Force Reserve Inspector General team will be reviewing how the 931st Air Refueling Group measures up to other units throughout the Reserve. Below is a checklist that can be a helpful guide. It contains key areas that the team will be looking at and should help you in your pre-inspection preparation.

Visiting inspector team members will be validating the 931st Air Refueling Group's Unit Self Assessment report. But prior to the inspection, each 931st commander and Air Reserve Technician will have received a USA copy and should have read it thoroughly.

What should you expect to happen during our first inspection. Primarily, 931st commander's, First Sgt.'s, Chief Master Sgt.'s and shop chiefs will be interviewed by the team about the following:

## Their knowledge of the units quality initiative.

### Mission statement

-- how do you and your organization support the mission statement

### Goals and objectives

--are they part of the organization's process of "managing by facts"

--support of the process "what get measured gets done"

### Values

--are they real and part of the day-to-day culture

### Strategic Plan (Annual Plan - Long Range Plan)

--category 3.0 of the USA Report

--understand the linkage to 4.1

### Human Resource Plan

--category 4.1 of the USA Report

--understand the linkage to 3.2

### Education and Training Plan

--category 4.3

--understand the linkage to UTA Planning

## Their commitment to the quality process.

- key areas of commitment:

--constancy of purpose

--leadership's visible involvement

--participative management style

--employee involvement, empowerment, recognition

## Verify and validate responses in the USA Report by the leadership. Verify leadership's awareness of the section/shop responses in the USA Report.

--the process owner's key result areas within leadership's section

--level of importance to customer and mission accomplishment

--level of review, evaluation, and/or improvement.

Each member of the organization has the possibility of being approached by a team member about:

## Knowledge of the organization's mission statement, goals, objectives, and values.

--not so much what the words are, but how your job/position supports in the accomplishment of the mission

--where are these items posted within the section

## Knowledge of workcenter's key processes.

--where the section keeps their continuity binder for the key processes

--the key processes

--the customer of those processes

--the method of measurements

## Knowledge of the organization's annual plans.

- Strategic Plan

--Review Category 3.0 of the USA Report

- Education and Training Plan

--Review Category 4.3 of the USA Report

- Human Resource Management Plan

--Review Category 4.1 of the USA Report

## Knowledge of the Executive Steering Committee.

- the members, at least the members from their organization on the committee

- the committee's purpose, activities, and outcomes

## Knowledge of the organization's formal suggestion program.

- the "Voice of the 931st"

If you have any questions concerning issues identified in the assessment checklist contact 1st Lt. Joe Wible at ext. 3865.

# Safety is home for first 931st basic trainee

by Capt. Phil Blahut  
Public Affairs Staff

Where in the heck is Ulysses, Kansas? You can ask that question to Airman 1st Class Hugo Hurtado, a new 931st Information Management Specialist who just returned here from technical school. What's so unique to Hurtado is that he holds the distinction of being the "First" basic trainee since the 931st Air Refueling Group started up in 1995.

After completing basic training this August, Hurtado joined others at Keesler AFB, Miss. for the Information Management school and graduated in September.

Asked why did he join the Reserve, Hurtado said, "I thought the Air Force would be a challenge and so far it has been. I considered the other services, however I believed the Air Force was the best."

But Hurtado was not alone in this assessment. What was supposed to be two brothers signing up to join the service in Salina, Kans., turned out to be different than expected. His younger brother Carlos was accepted in the Air Force, but Hugo was too old.

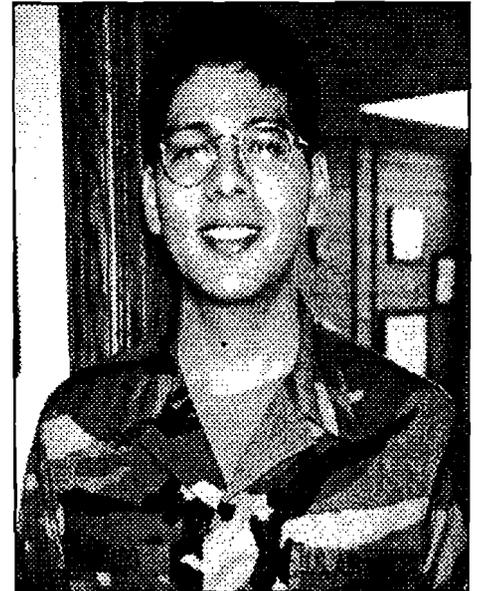
"I was disappointed to find out that I was too old to join the Air Force," said Hurtado. "But I was relieved to here the recruiter say that I could join the Reserve. I didn't even know there was a Reserve unit in Kansas until I was referred to Wichita," said Hurtado.

After meeting with Master Lester Shaw, the McConnell based Reserve recruiter, Hugo went off to basic training. As a reminder to other 931st enlisted members of what Lackland AFB is like, Hurtado shared his recent experience.

"Basic training was just as Master Sgt. Shaw had said it would be. However, I didn't know there was female training instructors. I also found the new meaning to the word recycle," he said.

Hurtado, a reservist who works in the 931st Safety Office, is trying to learn his new job, meet people and to find his niche here at the unit. But Hurtado won't be here for too long. His plans are to finish his electrical engineer degree in Salina and eventually, to apply for Officer Candidate School when he has some experience under his belt.

If you are wondering about Ulysses, Kans., he'll probably tell you that it is in the



Airman 1st Class Hugo Hurtado

extreme Southwest corner of Kansas. And he'll tell you about his remaining siblings who are part of a great family. They include five brothers and two sisters.

Welcome to the 931st, Hugo.

## 931st Toys for Tots collection to start Nov, Dec UTA

by Tech Sgt Scott Fletcher  
931st Chapel Manager

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* Proverbs 22:6

Our primary mission is the defense of our great country. However, we also have an obligation to support our community in as many ways possible. As we look forward to the joy of the upcoming holiday season let us not forget that some people are not as fortunate as us. With political debates set aside, and personal biases forgotten, let us focus on a very innocent group of Americans that sometimes are easily forgotten and neglected—children.

The 931st Air Refueling Group Chaplain's Office is kicking off what will become a proud annual tradition of the 931st. We are combining our efforts with the local Marine Corps Reserve unit to support a worthy cause better known as Toys for Tots.

Toys for Tots not only provides under-privileged children with toys, it helps children develop their value system. These children are growing up in homes where the necessities of life are not guaranteed; let alone anything extra. Hopefully, the children who receive these gifts will grow up remembering that when times were difficult, their community came to their aid.

If we touch a life and replace a future of bitterness and crime with one of determination to be a responsible, productive citizen, isn't the cost of a toy worth it?

We ask that 931st members purchase new toys for various ages of children and bring them during the November and December UTAs. Collection boxes will be available on both floors of Building's

1218 and 642. Retail store managers in the past have been willing to give a discount and possibly donate toys if you let them know it's for Toys For Tots—just ask!

My Marine Reserve counterpart, Staff Sgt. Hayles, and I are also looking for some help to deliver toys or work at collection points please come by the 931st Chaplain's Office, Building 1218, Room 220, or call 316-652-3820.



Photo by Maj. Tony Gussman

Last month, the 931st "first" Dining Out commemorated the 50th anniversary of the United States Air Force. Shown here are (l) Capt. Phil Blahut, and wife Patty, (r) Maj. Tom Pyle, and wife Carol. Maj. Pyle, the 931st Legal Officer, performed a skit in which he played the role of former President Harry S. Truman.

## Travel computation changes, dining hall open to all ranks

by Senior Master Sgt. Diane Hiebert, 18th ARS

Do you want to know the latest? Government dining facilities are now open to all military personnel, regardless of rank. It's true!

Even though that affects officers, changes in per diem computations will affect everyone who are using travel orders. It may pay you to carefully read your orders and the information below.

Effective October 1, 1996, there became three per diem rates: Basic, Partial, and Full. Even though this information is new, it is important that you understand what you are entitled to and when different rates apply.

1. **Basic Rate:** "All government meals are available and directed." The conditions are:

- you are quartered on base;
- the dining facility is open for all meals;
- using the dining facility will not adversely impact the mission. You'll receive an allowance of \$9.00 per day.

2. **Partial Rate:** "Partial government meals

are available and directed." The conditions:

- your quarters are on base;
- some government meals (dining hall) available. Remember, not all bases have a dining facility, or possibly their facility is not open for some meals on certain days. You may also get this if you can't get to the dining hall without adversely affecting the mission. You'll get the average of the basic rate and a full rate which may vary by locality.

3. **Full Rate:** "Government meals not available or not directed." The conditions are:

- your quarters are off base; or,
- government meals or dining hall is not available; or,
- government meals are not directed due to adverse affect on mission.

When lodged off installation in either contract or commercial quarters, your meals are not considered available and will not be directed for you. You'll get the full rate listed for that location.

What if things don't go as planned? If you should miss a meal, use AF Form 2282,

Statement of Adverse Effect - Use of Government Facilities.

If you were supposed to lodge on base and your order directed some or all government meals, but you were sent off base, you will get full per diem. You will have to attach a contract quarters call slip or non-availability statement to your travel voucher as proof.

There are also situations where amendments could be issued after the fact. However, the only way your per diem entitlement could be reduced is if some or all meals were provided at no cost.

Officers will find a big difference when they're on annual tour and are using the basic rate. The unit will pay lodging costs and there will be no per diem. You will pay the basic meal rate at the government mess.

Civilians - While you may not be directed to eat in a government mess, if you choose to do so, it must be indicated on the travel voucher. Your per diem settlement will be adjusted accordingly.

## Race for food campaign is started, more items needed



Carolyn Wallace (l) and Senior Airman John France (r), of the 18th Air Refueling Squadron orderly room, collected an estimated \$250 in non-perishable food goods in an effort to help the less fortunate of Kansas. They hope to gather more food items during the October UTA for the "Race for Hunger" Kansas Food Bank campaign. 931st reservists and civilians who want to donate money or food should drop off canned or dry packaged food items at the 18th ARS orderly room located in Bldg. 1218. So far, the 931st has collected more goods than any other McConnell organization during this campaign. France and Wallace express their sincere thanks to those who've donated.



Photos by Capt. Phil Blahut

## Weight management is yours, unit responsibility

As a reservist, we have one more thing that we know is for certain besides death and taxes. It's weight management and the annual May weigh in. The 931st Personnel Flight has outlined some specifics about this personal encounter. Perhaps it will save an embarrassing situation.

According to Air Force Weight Management Instruction 40-205, "All personnel are weighed and, if appropriate, measured for body fat percentage not less than once each 12 month period. Additional weight checks and body fat measurements may be conducted at the commander's discretion."

According to Senior Master Sgt. Dave Malenky, 931st Military Support Superintendent, "We in the 931st have a mandatory weigh-in during the May time frame. A commander may also measure for body fat any individual who appears to exceed body fat or who doesn't present a professional military appearance."

"During inspections, weight management is a high visibility area. Inspectors can re-

quest random weigh-in for the entire Group or specific individuals. At this time, you can be put on the program," said Malenky.

If you are put into the unit weight program, a monitor will enter your Initial Entry Body Fat Loss Period for the amount of body fat you were over for body fat standards.

The recommended loss is one percent per month. During this period you are not eligible for promotion, reenlistment, or off-station temporary duty assignments. If you satisfactorily complete the IEBFLP, you will be entered into the Reserve Probation Period. This is a 12-month probationary period where you are placed into a special program to ensure you remain committed to staying at or below your body fat standard.

At any time during the IEBFLP and RPP you do not lose the body fat or stay at or below body fat standards, you will be reassigned to the Air Reserve Personnel Center, or discharged if you are within six months of your estimated time of separation.

## A change, commanders must approve retirement

Your retirement has more impact on a unit than you know. Personnel, planning and mission accomplishment may be seriously impacted if a key person is needed and plans to leave unannounced. It was this very reason that the Air Force Reserve recognized such a situation and has published guidance for commanders and reservists who plan to retire.

All applications for transfer to retired reserve status as of September 10, 1996 or later, must now include unit and wing commander's recommendations. This new change lets commanders learn of the upcoming personnel action that is soon to follow.

Prior to this change, Reserve members could apply for transfer to the retired-Re-

serve without the knowledge or recommendation of the unit commander.

As an interim measure, unit and wing commanders will submit their recommendations as attachments to the current AF Form 131, the Application for Transfer to the Retired Reserve. The form is currently being modified to include commander's recommendation blocks.

In cases where a member is not recommended for retirement, the military personnel flight must forward specific justification to the Air Force Reserve for final approval/disapproval actions.

Questions about the new guidance can be addressed to Tech. Sgt. Alise Talley, Chief of Personnel Relocations at ext. 3625.

## NCO Academy courses announced for 1997

Opportunities exist for enlisted professional military education. Of interest to most Reserve airmen is the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy Course, a professional military education program designed to prepare NCO's for increased leadership and supervisory responsibilities.

This five and a half week course is worth 11 semester hours which can be applied to a Community College of the Air Force or a civilian college degree. Eligible NCO's should take advantage of the opportunity to attend this course in-residence.

Interested NCO's in the grade of Staff Sgt.

and Tech. Sgt. should see their unit training manager or contact Tech. Sgt. A.J. Brown at ext. 3587 for more information.

Below is a list of 931st ARG allocated quotas and class dates. Class location is at Goodfellow AFB, Texas.

<u>Class #</u>	<u>Class Dates</u>	<u>Quota</u>
97-1	961101-961212	1
97-2	970106-970213	1
97-3	970225-970403	1
97-4	970415-970522	1
97-5	970602-970710	1
97-6	970804-970911	1
97-7	970922-971030	1

## Promotions and reenlistments

Congratulations to the following Lieutenant Colonel selectees:

Maj. Allen B. Simmons, Jr., 18 ARS

Maj. Virgil W. Youngers, 18 ARS

Maj. William M. Brantley, 931 OSF

A pin-on ceremony is pending Senate confirmation.

### Promotions

#### 18 ARS

Master Sgt. William B. Byer

Staff Sgt. John B. Austin

Sergeant Gary H. Cook

#### 931 MSF

Master Sgt. Dee Melvin

Tech. Sgt. Victoria L. Wilson

#### 931 AGS

Tech. Sgt. Milton J. Willhight

#### 931 ARG

Staff Sgt. David E. Brumley

#### 931 CES

Chief Master Sgt. Robert A. Minard

Master Sgt. Lloyd R. Thompson

Staff Sgt. John D. Smith

Staff Sgt. Vernon R. Sheaffer

Senior Airman Kurt M. Smith

### Reenlistments

#### 18 ARS

Chief Master Sgt. Donald L. Askren, Jr.

Master Sgt. Daryl R. Pettis

Staff Sgt. Mark R. McGougan

#### 931 MSF

Senior Airman Anthony M. Reyes

#### 931 AGS

Staff Sgt. Joseph A. Gonsalves, Jr.

Senior Airman David L. Kienzle

Senior Airman Kelly B. Martin

Senior Airman Cole D. Rogers

Senior Airman Richard S. McShane

#### 931 ARG

Senior Airman Barbara L. Davis

## Foreign language proficiency pays

Foreign language proficiency pay has always been an incentive for Air Force Reserve linguists. Once an individual is determined to be bilingual or multilingual, additional pay will be available to selected Reserve members regardless of their duty position.

All 931st Air Refueling Group members will be given a "Report on Individual Person Assessment" to be completed and returned no later than sign-out on October 20. This assessment will help the unit determine who is bilingual and unit requirements.

## Furnace check brings peace of mind

by Maj. Randy Foster  
931st Safety Officer

As winter approaches there are many household chores that must be done in preparation for the cooler temperatures. We all think about the easy things like changing the anti-freeze in our cars, and insulating the pipes under the house so they won't freeze. But the following true story about a 931st reservist provides a reminder about what can happen if you do not take proper precautions with your home furnace.

*...Last December, as we prepared for the Christmas Holidays, and our son's first Christmas, we had a near fatal experience. My six-month old son was very lethargic and constantly sleeping. When he wasn't sleeping he cried almost all the time. I was very concerned so I took him to the doctor. He could find nothing wrong. We made three trips to the doctor in December, all with the same diagnosis: nothing was wrong with my baby.*

*About two weeks after my son started crying, I started having severe headaches. For some this may not be unusual but for me it was very unusual. Up to this time I had less than a handful of headaches in my entire life. On Christmas day, I felt so sick that I could vomit. To make matters worse, my son cried all day. What a memorable Christmas!*

*Then two days after Christmas, Kansas Gas & Electric workers came to my door. They said they needed to turn off the gas for a couple of hours to move gas meters for neighbors down the street. When they had completed their work they came back to my house to light my furnace and hot water heater. As the furnace was lit they noticed the flame was not the proper color indicating a gas leak. The workers tested the air in our house and discovered dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. They immediately shut off the gas supply valve and called the fire department as a safeguard against an explosion. Then they explained that in order to safely turn on the natural gas, our furnace had to be inspected.*

*Needless to say, we spent a couple of days at grandma's house until the furnace repairman came to see what the problem was. We moved back into our house a few days later with a new furnace, no headaches, and a happy quiet baby.*

*We were very fortunate. This visit from the gas company almost certainly saved my son's life and probably saved mine too. We thank God for this miracle.*

That family was lucky. If you think this can't happen to you, you had better think again. There are numerous examples of fami-



**Master Sgt. Donna Lorenz, a 931st supply liaison was one of the winners of the 1996 Air Force Reserve Supply and Fuels Personnel Superintendent Award. But there is more for Lorenz. Her package has been forwarded to the Air Force for further competition. Go Donna!**

lies losing loved ones. The prevention is as simple as an annual checkup of your heating system by a qualified professional. It may cost you 50 to 100 dollars, but what price tag do you put on yourself and your family? In the long run it's money well spent.

## Halloween child safety, some often ignored tips

from the 931st Safety Office

Do you know what it means when the local Walmart store has all the Halloween costumes and candy on display? The correct answer is not "It's the end of May." The correct answer is that it's October and time to think about those little ones darting into the street during Halloween.

And we also have to think about the big kids who play pranks or even may want to sacrifice your pet poodle on an altar. Below are some tips for a safer, happier Halloween:

- Have your children carry a flashlight, not only to help them see, but to help others see them.
- Watch out for dark costumes. If your child is dressed in black, add a white face if it is appropriate.
- Walking in lit areas with a flashlight will help prevent accidents.
- Trick or treat at homes your child knows.

If you can, join your child. Children unaccompanied by an adult should always go in groups.

Make sure your child wears a flame-resistant costume. Keep costumes short, or hold up long ones as he or she walks. Remind your child to keep an eye out at all times. He or she may find candies, forgotten tools, or broken or loose steps in other peoples yards.

Watch out for other peoples pets. A thoughtless neighbor may leave his dogs out to roam. Be sure to shield your child from pets you don't know.

Try to dress the children in their own shoes. Wearing high heels or shoes that are too large can be dangerous and uncomfortable.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission encourages parents to remind children not to dart between cars. Trick or treating is often done at night when lighting in the streets can be poor. Drivers should be

watching for trick or treaters but sometimes they don't. Try not to leave this to chance - prepare your children by reminding them to stay on the side walks and to cross the streets with an adult.

The Commission also warns children not to eat any candy before their parents check it out. It's unfortunate that this care must be taken, but it's a reality of life today.

Always check for possible tampering with packages before letting children start on their treats. Some area hospitals and clinics are offering a free x-ray of bagged candies.

If a sword, cane, or stick is a part of your child's costume, make sure it's not sharp or too long. A child may be easily hurt by these accessories if he stumbles or trips.

Keep your pets safe and tied up inside your yard or house. The increased yard traffic may arouse them and a child may get attacked by an overly friendly animal.

Do so unless of course, you won't miss the poodle.

**931st Employer Appreciation Day  
November 16, 1996**

October 15, 1996

All 931st Reservists,

The 931st ARG and the Air Force Reserve want to recognize and thank your employer and supervisors by hosting an **Employer Appreciation Day, on Saturday, November 16 (UTA)**. We've planned an exciting and rewarding day which all starts with you. Please review the schedule, complete and answer the questions listed below and return the bottom portion to the 931 ARG/PAO, NLT October 20th.

- 0700-0730     Employer/Reservist arrive
- 0730-0800     931st mixer (donuts, rolls, coffee, juice)
- 0800-0810     Col. Malling Welcomes
- 0810-0820     ESGR Briefing (Capt. Blahut)
- 0820-0830     ESGR and You (ESGR Omsbudsman)
- 0830-0845     Break Out to 931st Functional Areas (Bus provided for CE)
- 1115-1200     Assemble at Bldgs 1218 & 642 for lunch  
                  Bus Employers w/reservists to Emerald City
- 1200-1210     Pax Briefing - Emerald City
- 1215-1230     Depart for 3-cell aircraft, Launch orientation flights
- 1600-            Arrival
- 1630            Dismissal, Critique and Signout

Note: Please inform your employers that media may accompany them during the day. If this is a problem, please call the 931 ARG/PA office at 316-652-3704.

Employers who can't make the November ESGR Day, can fly with us on Thursday, October 24th. Show time 1700 at Bldg 1218, 18th ARS Nav training room. If you need to schedule your boss, call the 931st PA office before Oct. 20th.

Here's what we need from you. We need to know who and how many will be participating in our Employer Appreciation Day. Please limit your invites to two, however, call the 931st Public Affairs office at 316-652-3704 if you need to invite additional employer guests.

Name	Company	Title	ESGR flight (y or n)

Will your employer need lodging? \_\_\_\_\_ (This is not at Government expense.) Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Org: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this questionnaire before **October 20, 1996** to: 931 ARG/PA, 53447 Kansas Court, Suite 221, McConnell AFB, KS 67221-3723