

Honor guard shows pride, dedication, page 10

Border Eagle

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Dec. 19, 2003

Runway repair project begins

By Airman 1st Class
Yvonne Clark
Staff Writer

While flying operations are down during the holidays, contractors will be working around the clock today through Jan. 4 to complete phase one of a two-phase runway-repair project.

Phase-one repairs consist of placing 300 feet of new concrete on the center runway from the north threshold, including a drainage crown and ensuring the concrete is leveled to meet regulations.

See Runway, page 4



Photo by Airman 1st Class Timothy J. Stein

And the winner is...

Maj. Gen. James Sandstrom, 19th Air Force commander, shakes hands with Mark Hewitt, 47th Maintenance Directorate deputy director, on the flightline Wednesday. The general visited Laughlin and presented the directorate with the Maintenance Effectiveness Award for being the best aircraft maintenance organization in the command for 2003.

Base team addresses education issues

By Capt. Dawnita Parkinson
Public affairs

Laughlin's tiger team on education issues convened Nov. 14 and Dec. 10 to discuss ongoing issues of concern to base parents. The cross-functional team, chaired by Col. Keith Traster, 47th Flying Training Wing vice commander, has been working with local school officials to improve the quality of education in the community.

Parents are encouraged to become actively involved at their child's school so issues may be addressed at the grass-roots level.

The following is a report on new initiatives and the status of other ongoing issues.

New initiatives

Air Force Day: The base is spearheading "Air Force Day" at the new middle school, which is scheduled for Feb. 18. Plans are under way for Top Flight, part of the Air Force Band of the West, to perform a drug-free concert. There also will be a drill team/honor guard demonstration, various information booths and refreshments. More information will be publicized in the *Border Eagle* as the event approaches.

Partners in Education: Laughlin's Top 3 organization has spearheaded this program, which will allow base volunteers to perform various maintenance projects for local schools, to include basic carpentry, tile,

painting, or computer projects. A story will be published in a January edition of the base paper.

Music teachers: The base is looking for music teachers who would be willing to conduct lessons for base children. Interested teachers should register with the base library or Family Support Center. A database will be maintained at the library for those families looking for a teacher.

Ongoing issues

Issue: Bus schedule for new middle school

Status: The bus schedule and any other information parents need to know about the new school will be

See Education, page 4

Newslines

Wing run, safety day set

Jan. 5 will be a wing safety day with a wing run in the morning.

All military members need to report to the flightline side of hangar 4 by 7:30 a.m. for a 1.7-mile base run. Parking is available at the Fam Camp.

All base members must also attend one safety briefing during the day. Times and groups are as follows:

9 a.m. Anderson Hall: Maintenance day-shift employees

9:45 a.m. Base theater: Medical group, operations support staff, fire department and wing staff agencies

10:15 a.m. Anderson Hall: Instructor pilots and radar and tower controllers

11:30 a.m. Anderson Hall: Student pilots and life support

1 p.m. Anderson Hall: Safety investigation board training

2:15 p.m. Anderson Hall: Mission support group civilians and wing staff agencies

3 p.m. Base theater: Maintenance swing-shift employees

3:30 p.m. Anderson Hall: Mission support group military and wing staff agencies

Deployment stats

Deployed: 46
Returning in 30 days: 1
Deploying in 30 days: 0

Mission status

(As of Dec. 5)

Days behind or ahead

T-37: -1.96 T-1: 3.27
T-38: 1.24 T-6: 0.00

Mission capable rate

T-37: 89.9% T-1: 78.8%
T-38: 70.3% T-1: 84.2%

AETC commander reviews 'an extraordinary 2003'

By Gen. Donald Cook
Air Education and Training Command
commander

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – As we close out another very eventful year, I thought it appropriate I share some thoughts with you regarding the command's performance this past year.

I'm proud to report the men and women of Air Education and Training Command met the goal in providing well-trained, combat-ready airmen for our Air Force. We all know the future security environment remains uncertain. But I am very confident that because of the outstanding work each of you has done, and will continue to do, the First Command will ensure our Air Force is ready with the right people, skills and training to address any contingency.

AETC continues to be engaged in operations in Iraq, as well as Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Since the shocking events of 9-11, AETC has deployed more than 9,300 people in direct support of the war on terrorism. Considering our education and training mission and our small pool of 22,000 deployable positions, this substantial contribution represents about 1,000 people deployed at any given time.

At present, we have nearly 2,000 people deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Among those numbers are AETC security forces, communications specialists, transportation engineers and emergency medical care professionals, to name only a few. Our airmen, many of them instructors in their respective career fields, are committed to expeditionary operations and are doing their jobs exceedingly well.

A short e-mail written by an AETC instructor nurse who was crewed with two new medical

technicians serves to illustrate the point.

"We flew our first mission the other day," the nurse wrote. "We picked up a 26-year-old security policeman with an AK-47 gunshot wound in the abdomen – a lot of internal injuries. Met him at the back of the C-130 with engines running. Took off standing up while resuscitating him. He looked good by the time we landed. A fairly routine mission, post severe trauma resuscitation – no big deal!"

The nurse's e-mail is representative of how well our people have done and continue to do. Though an instructor, it was like second nature to this nurse and the med-tech team – they did what they were trained to do. In doing so, they saved the life of an American soldier. Other teams have treated more than 350 critically hurt soldiers and airmen and medically evacuated nearly 2,500 injured with an unprecedented low mortality rate of less than 1 percent.

The men and women of AETC have played a significant role in the war on terrorism on the home front as well. Our intelligence schoolhouse at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo now translates and exploits captured terrorists documents. Our instructors are working side by side with students to decipher and analyze real-world intelligence, providing invaluable experience for the students.

What our airmen were able to accomplish during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom would not have been possible if not for America's ability and drive to exploit technology and spur innovation.

Among the extraordinary events we witnessed this past year, two come to mind as defining moments in our Air Force: the centennial observance of manned flight and the introduction of the F/A-22 fighter into our training inventory.

These events share a common thread in

America's history: Our enthusiasm and willingness to exploit technology and innovation to guard the freedom generations of Americans have sacrificed so much to secure for our nation.

For our Air Force, the seminal event that triggered the past century of rapid technological advancement began with the courage and bravery of the Wright brothers. This year's observance of the Centennial of Flight celebrates and honors those who made it possible for us to employ the awesome air and space power of today.

What began with a 12-second flight in the Wright's Flyer Number 1 on Dec. 17, 1903, has grown exponentially during the past century into America's unsurpassed commercial aerospace industry and the equally unsurpassed global air and space defensive power of the U.S. Air Force.

It is fitting, as we celebrate the deeds of those early air pioneers, we also mark the dawn of an exciting era in AETC and the Air Force with the introduction of the first operational F/A-22 Raptor into our training curriculum at the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

The command's first F/A-22 was delivered Sept. 26. Since then, we've received our second aircraft and expect to receive one additional aircraft every four to six weeks.

The F/A-22 is an order of magnitude leap in offensive and defensive airpower. With its first look, first shot, first-kill capability, the F/A-22 is a national asset engineered to guarantee soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, and our allies and coalition partners, the great advantage of freedom from air attack, freedom to attack and freedom to return home safely. The

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Border Eagle

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Deadlines, Advertising

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Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Submissions can be e-mailed to: timothy.stein@laughlin.af.mil or yvonne.clark@laughlin.af.mil.

2003, from page 2

F/A-22 is essential to America's national defense strategy and will guarantee America's military air dominance well into the future.

We have started our F/A-22 maintenance training and expect to launch the Raptor pilot training program this spring when enough aircraft are on hand. The mission-ready aviators and maintainers we produce will represent a new era in airpower – an era that begins on the heels of our nation's observance of 100 years of powered flight.

We are never far from our heritage as a flying and fighting force because aviation development is still a relatively modern phenomenon. To go from getting an airplane off the ground for the very first time to the tremendous capabilities the Raptor represents in less than 100 years is truly amazing.

Yet as great as the technological advances are, we have become the world's most powerful air and space fighting force because of our people – past and present. Whether it is engaging fully in the war on terrorism, preparing F/A-22 aircrews and maintainers or teaching a new recruit to march for the first time, the men and women of AETC remain linked to our heritage and focused on the future innovations, technologies and techniques that will sustain us as the best Air Force in the world.

Thank you for the tremendous job each of you has done this past year for our command, for our Air Force and for our nation. As you prepare to celebrate this special season, I ask you to keep our deployed colleagues in your thoughts and prayers.

The men and women serving at the headquarters join Diane and me in wishing you and your family the very best during this holiday season. Enjoy time with your families and friends, but be safe. We need you on our team as we embark on what I anticipate will be another eventful year in 2004.

Holiday message: Life is too precious

By Lt. Gen. John D. Hopper
Air Education and Training Command
vice commander

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – As the festive holiday season quickly approaches, my family and I, like most people, look forward with anticipation to the fellowship of sharing with each other all this special season has to offer.

But I am also aware, concerned and saddened that during such a cheerful time, there are some in our Air Force family who succumb to feelings of loneliness, hopelessness and that their lives are inconsequential. These feelings can be triggered by any number of circumstances, but the emotional stress it causes is sometimes the catalyst that drives people to intentionally hurt themselves.

As a family, we all must be concerned about this. We are collectively responsible for the health and well-being of all our Air Force family members. When one of our own has lost connectivity to our family we have a moral obligation to do all we can to nurture them and help them overcome feelings of despair. But above all else, we must help them understand that harming themselves is not the answer.

If you are aware of someone who is experiencing feelings of depression or loneliness, especially during this time of

year, it is paramount you take them under your wing and make sure they know they are not alone. There are people to turn to, such as life skills support centers, family, friends, chaplains, mental health professionals, family support, child and youth services, health and wellness centers and family advocacy. These teammates are nearby with the professional capabilities and a commitment to help. But making the choice and the conscious effort to connect with those who can help is often the toughest job. That's why all of us must stay engaged with our people over the upcoming holiday season, and remain vigilant to any signs of loneliness or depression that could result in suicidal behavior.

Every person in our Air Force family is invaluable to the Air Force mission. We could not be the world's most respected air and space force we are today without each and every one of you. Each individual's value as a person is unique and precious. We must cherish that and ensure all our people understand the singular worth they have.

In the spirit of this special season, I ask you to take special care of each other. I ask that if a situation warrants it, you make the hard choice and take the responsibility to prevent any loss to our Air Force family. My family joins me in wishing each of you the very best this season has to offer. Stay safe, stay engaged and please take care of each other! (General Hopper is also the chairman of the AETC Community Action Information Board).

AF's top chief sends holiday greetings

By Chief Master Sgt.
Gerald R. Murray
Chief Master Sgt. of the
Air Force

WASHINGTON – To our airmen stationed at home and abroad and

their families, Sherry and I send our warmest wishes to you this holiday season. It is an honor for us to serve in our U.S. Air Force with each of you.

The holidays bring to mind families gathered

around tables covered with food and children opening gifts while parents look on. We know that deployments will cause many military families to have an empty seat at the table this year.

If you are one of those families, please know that your sacrifice does not go unnoticed. It is because of you and fellow airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen that Americans can gather, worship, and celebrate in freedom.

As we celebrate this holiday season and prepare to usher in a new year, Sherry and I thank you for your continued dedication and commitment. May God richly bless you, your family and our great nation.



Actionline
298-5351

Col. Dan Woodward
47th Flying Training Wing commander

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been

solved through normal channels. By leaving your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also very useful in case more information is needed in order to pursue your inquiry. If you give your name, we will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Before you call the Actionline,

please try to work the problem out through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

AAFES 298-3176
Accounting and Finance 298-5204
Civil Engineer 298-5252
Civilian Personnel 298-5299

Clinic 298-6311
Commissary 298-5815
Dormitory manager 298-5213
EEO 298-5879
FWA hotline 298-4170
Housing 298-5904
Information line 298-5201
Legal 298-5172
MEO 298-5400
Military Personnel 298-5073
Public Affairs 298-5988
Security Forces 298-5900
Services 298-5810

Education, from page 1

published in the Del Rio News-Herald before children head back to school next year.

Issue: Quality of substitute teachers

Status: In November, the school district conducted a substitute-teacher training session on base, which was extremely successful. The school district plans to conduct four more sessions over the next year at the Family Support Center. These sessions will be publicized by the Family Support Center and in the base paper.

Issue: Community outreach for base members to help teachers with relocation into new middle school

Status: The school has sufficient manpower and resources to relocate to the new school. The base will provide a few volunteers to assist with the hook-up of computers and other equipment.

Issue: Implementation of a wing mentoring program between Laughlin members and individual children in junior high and high school.

Status: The "One Person Can" mentoring program has been implemented, and volunteer mentors are being sought for Del Rio children. Mentors will work with at-risk children in middle or high school for one hour a week. Applications are available via the Laughlin home page and should be completed and submitted to Judy Rhinesmith in the 47th Medical Group.

Issue: Grade scale policy for advanced placement classes

Status: The grade-scale policy has changed to give students more credit for pre-Advanced Placement (5 points) and Advanced Placement courses (6 points). This will not affect those already in high school, but will be implemented beginning with next year's 9th graders.

Issue: Compiling a list of tutors to work with home-schooled children on specialized subjects such as languages, advance math and science

Status: Volunteer tutors should register with the base library or Family Support Center. A database of volunteers is maintained at the library for those families requesting a tutor.

Issue: Can there be a stronger presence at the high school by the Air Force recruiter?

Status: The recruiter has a challenging job because his area of coverage is large, and he must travel great distances to reach all the schools he is responsible for. While he tries to go to the Del Rio High School once every two months, he is not always successful. The base has offered administrative support by airmen who are pending retraining or other actions, which may give the recruiter more time to focus on visiting schools.

Parents wanting to know more about the local school district or schools can go to www.sfdrcisd.org.

Runway, from page 1

"The repairs will provide a much safer runway," said 1st Lt. Meaghan White, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron project manager.

Rated a No. 4 priority in Air Education and Training Command, Laughlin's airfield pavement repairs are a high-priority project, said Lieutenant White.

"One of the biggest reasons for the construction is to

include a crown, which will take care of the drainage issue here and decrease [foreign-object damage] potential," she said.

According to Maj. Vincent Alcazar, 47th Flying Training Wing center runway closure project officer, the lack of a drainage crown to the center runway accelerated its deterioration.

"Like everything about infrastructure at Laughlin [the drainage crown] is needed for

the mission," he said. "Our runways must be in the best possible condition so it does not dictate the tempo of student pilot training."

The \$6.5 million project, which was awarded to Reece Albert Inc., also will include further repairs from Feb. 21 through May 5 during phase two of the project. Phase two will consist of resurfacing and replacing the remainder of the center runway.

"Sections of the runway

that are in good structural condition will be milled and resurfaced with asphalt," said Lieutenant White. "The other sections of the runway will have the base, subbase and pavements completely replaced."

Other work includes runway lighting, pavement laying, joint sealing, pavement marking and completing work on the drainage crown.

Although phase two of the repairs is expected to impact runway availability, Major

Alcazar said flying must continue throughout the expected 75 days of construction to avoid the risk of interrupting the pilot training time line.

"Members of the closed center runway operating plan working group have worked very hard to build a successful, efficient and collaborative plan that enables the operations group to stay on the training time line and ensure the on-time graduation of student pilots," he said.

Newslines

Speaker to address safety

The Laughlin safety office is providing training by a top motivational safety speaker today in the Anderson Hall auditorium.

There will be presentations at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. It is highly recommended all military and civilian members attend one of the sessions.

For more information, call 298-5681.

Paper on hold until January

The next edition of the *Border Eagle* will be Jan. 9. Anyone wishing to submit material for the Jan. 9 paper must submit it by Dec. 31.

For more information, call 298-5393.

Flu shot temporarily rationed

Due to lack of availability, the

flu shot will only be available to active-duty and high-risk individuals until approximately Jan 5.

High risk individuals include infants ages six to 23 months, adults 65 and older, pregnant women with more than 14 weeks gestation, and children older than two with underlying chronic medical conditions.

For more information, call 298-6469.

Simulator open house set

The 47th Operations Group is having a simulator open house available to Laughlin military members and their families today and Monday. Simulator rides will be available in the T-1, T-6, T-37 and T-38 simulators.

Those wishing to attend should contact their group point of contact: 47th Maintenance Directorate, Hilda Vasquez, 298-5315; 47th Medical Group, Capt. Michael Russell, michael.russell@laughlin.af.mil; 47th Operations Group, Maj. James Patterson, 298-5990; 47th Mission

Support Group, 1st Lt. Paula Schoch, 298-5304.

Commissary closed Dec. 26

Due to the presidential declaration that Dec. 26 will be a federal holiday this year, the commissary will be closed Dec. 26. The store will resume normal hours Dec. 27.

The commissary will also be open Dec. 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mentoring seminars scheduled

Two mentoring seminars are set for Jan. 9.

The morning seminar is designed for first-level civil-service supervisors and is set for 8 a.m. in building 211's blue room. To R.S.V.P., please call 298-5015.

The afternoon seminar is geared toward NCOs and company grade officers. It will be held at 2:30 p.m. at Club XL. To R.S.V.P., call 298-5496.

MSG service hours set

Beginning Jan. 12, the new hours

of operation for any customer service agency throughout the 47th Mission Support Group (with the exception of the 47th Communications and Security Forces squadrons) will be 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

For more information, call 298-5856.

Security forces hours change

Because of deployments the 47th Security Forces Squadron customer service hours have changed.

Pass and Identification hours are 9:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 2:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. For more information, call 298-5349.

Security clearance assistance is available by appointment only. For more information, call 298-5861.

Weapons training will be conducted Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more information, call 298-5151.

Education matters ...

Local school district encourages base people to share experience, knowledge in public schools

By Airman 1st Class
Yvonne Clark
Staff writer

Laughlin and the San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District have joined forces in an initiative to get base family members more involved in the public school system.

"Involvement in this specific arena will not only lead to employment opportunities for our [family members], but it will also promote base and community relations," said Bobby Barrera, Family Support Center director.

Mr. Barrera said the ini-

tiative can benefit base people and the community.

"Our school system will gain from the diverse learning experiences our mobile families [can] bring to the classroom," he said. [Laughlin] families, in turn, develop a deeper understanding of the unique operations of our diverse school system. It's an obvious win-win situation."

Although applicants may not hear back for up to several months from the time of application, Lindsey Brennan, Laughlin spouse, said her patience paid off when she was hired as a teacher's assistant with Irene Cardwell

Elementary's Headstart program in September.

"In the school I work in, we give children a head start in life," she said. "We prepare them socially and academically for the other schools they'll go to. We promote early childhood development."

As a parent of children in the public schools, Mrs. Brennan said she believes the initiative is a great opportunity for the children as well as base people.

"Laughlin people have a wide range of experience," she said. "They travel often and can share the knowledge and

cultural experiences they have gathered."

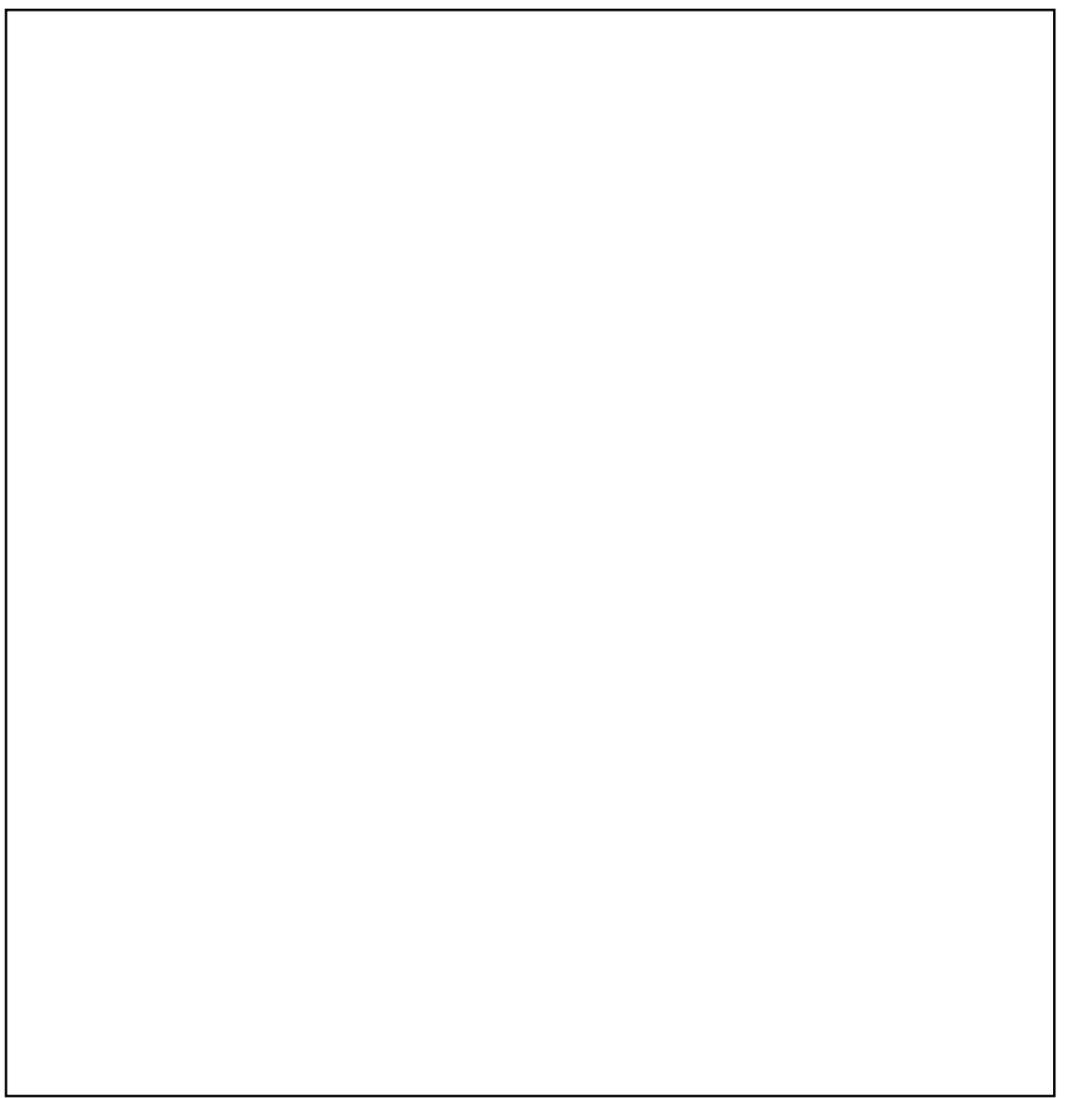
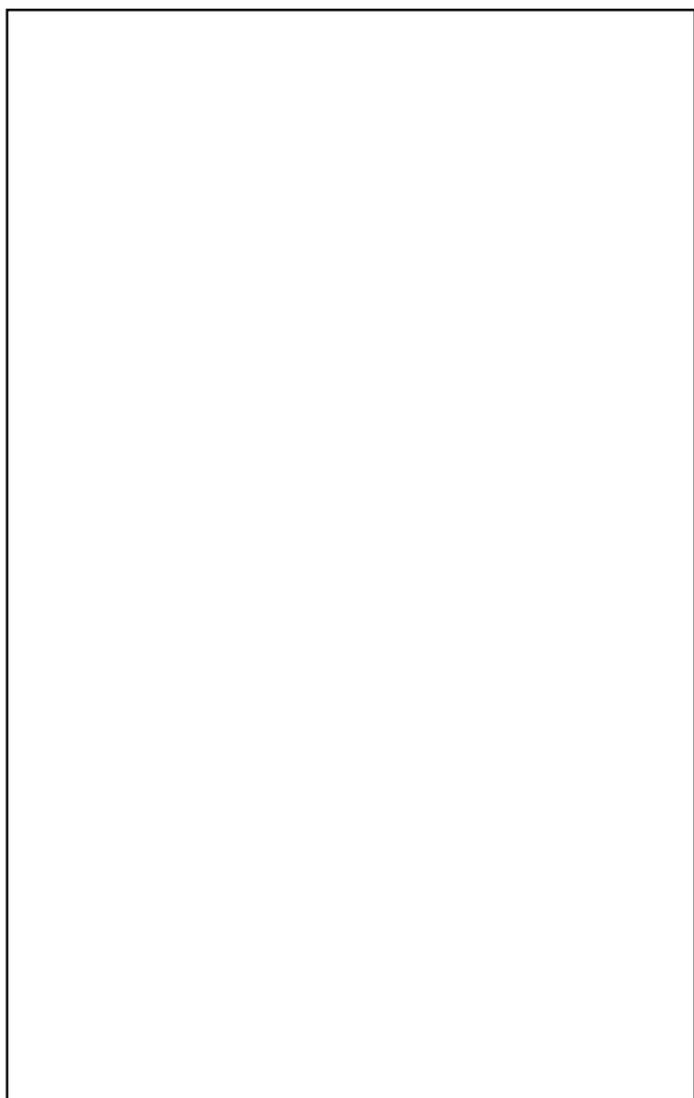
In addition to positions as teachers' assistants, Del Rio schools have a variety of temporary positions people may apply for, such as substitute teaching, instructional aides, bus drivers and security guards.

"Sometimes family members seek part-time employment knowing their stay at Laughlin will be limited to a short period of time," said Mr. Barrera. "Short-term employment [can] certainly present an opportunity to expand one's vocational experience."

Base people interested in applying for employment in the public schools may do so

at the district's administration building, 200 Memorial Dr., or through the school district's Web site, www.sfdr-cisd.org. The human resources department is scheduled to conduct four substitute teacher orientations over the next year at the Family Support Center. All sessions will be publicized in the *Border Eagle*.

For more information, call the Family Support Center at 298-5620.



Enlisted dorm members compete in Dorm World

By Airman 1st Class
Timothy J. Stein
Editor

Laughlin enlisted dormitory residents have been given plenty to do over the holidays as they compete in Dorm World.

Dorm World is an Air Education and Training Command idea to provide permanent-party dorm residents an avenue for camaraderie during the holiday season, an awareness of opportunities on base and a chance to win prizes and a party for their dorm, said David Leighton, 47th Services Division.

"It is a great way for dorm residents to get out and have a good time,"

Mr. Leighton said. "What the program does is have the two dorm buildings compete against one another in friendly competition."

The dorms compete against each other in events such as bowling, puzzle assembly, fun runs and holiday decorating.

There also is a contest to see which dorm can get the most of its members to volunteer in the community. One point is given for each hour volunteered.

The winning dorm gets a party with a DJ and free T-shirts. Since Laughlin has only two dormitories, the losing dorm also will receive a party.

"The contest rules state that the first place dorm gets a DJ while the

second place dorm receives only the party," said Mr. Leighton. "With Laughlin only having two dormitories, everyone wins."

So far in the competition, building 256 is ahead of building 255 after winning the bowling competition and the puzzle competition. Building 255 won the holiday decorating competition.

The final competition will be held Jan. 10 when the dorms face off in a series of athletic events to include a water bucket brigade where contestants get wet while carrying water over their heads, a balance beam competition and a tricycle rally.

The winner of the competition will be announced Jan. 20.

Reservists advised to save medical receipts

The Tricare Management Activity is working to quickly implement enhanced Reserve Component medical benefits.

Some beneficiaries may incur health care costs before the Reserve Component Health Benefits Pilot program is implemented. For this reason, Reserve Component members who are to be called to active duty or who are deployed in support of a contingency operation are encouraged to save health care-related receipts, claims and explanation of benefit forms for themselves and their families dating from Nov. 6

Airmen bring holiday cheer to remote village

By Staff Sgt.
Connie Bias
3rd Wing Public Affairs

ARCTIC VILLAGE, Alaska – Every now and then, people see the true embodiment of the Christmas spirit – gifts given with no associated commercialism, joy shared with no negative undercurrents and help offered with no expectation of return.

The airmen and spouses of the 517th Airlift Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, made those tidings happen Monday during their annual trip to Arctic Village, a native village 75 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

Weighted with food and presents, almost 40 participants from the squadron arrived for the 37th year of a growing union.

“Living in a village, you’re living in a world that seems separate from the rest

of the world. When a plane comes with Santa and gifts, it’s very exciting for the village. It’s the highlight of the year for many of the young people.”

There are about 60 children in the village of 150, and a large portion of them were waiting for the squadron’s C-130 Hercules when it landed on a small patch of snow-covered land. Santa received a festive welcome – adults and children alike clamored to hug, photograph and speak with the guest.

After the initial greeting in wind chills hovering near minus 20 degrees, villagers took the airmen on a 10-minute snow-machine ride from the makeshift landing pad to the village community hall. There, the rest of the villagers offered the guests a feast of local cuisine and handmade gifts.

Mrs. Handy was one of

the many people who helped make the trip a success, officials said. The trip’s planning is a joint effort between the squadron’s spouses and airmen, and started in June. The airmen solicited donations from local businesses, and once the donations were received, the spouses auctioned the donations.

This year, the auction raised more than \$7,000, and that money was spent on the food and gifts for the village. The airmen held a pretrip gift-wrapping party, and gifts were ready to be delivered.

The food will be used to supply a daily meal during the Christmas break, said Trimble Gilbert, the current village chief, who provides guidance and ceremonial leadership. The holiday meals and festivities, also held in the community hall, are “where we make our community ties stronger,” Gilbert



Photo by Staff Sgt. Connie Bias

ARCTIC VILLAGE, Alaska – Santa hands out Christmas gifts to the children Monday. Airmen and their spouses from the 517th Airlift Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, visit the village every December to donate gifts, food and supplies.

said. The entire village will participate in daily holiday get-togethers from Dec. 26 to Jan. 2.

“The gifts and food you bring us sparks off the Christmas holiday, because it’s right before Christmas and our holiday break,” Peter said.

“The biggest impact I’ve

come away with is how willing the Elmendorf community is to go out of its way to support an unknown entity,” said Tech. Sgt. Peter Dibbern, 517th AS loadmaster superintendent. “I think that’s a testament to the quality of the people we have here.”

Advisory board seeks reservists' input

By Maj. Ricard Sater
4th Air Force Public
Affairs (deployed)

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan – When reservists on the Air Force Reserve Advisory Board meet at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, Jan. 23 and 24, they can add another success story to their list of accomplishments.

President George W. Bush signed the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act on Nov. 24, immediately granting reservists and their families unlimited access to military commissaries.

The board was created as a mechanism to address questions, big and small, about life and service in the Air Force Reserve, including issues such as unlimited commissary use, officials said. The board is set up to change the system for the better by improving the command policies and procedures that affect military life – training, career progression and retirement.

“Our purpose is to make a difference,” said board chairman Brig. Gen. Robert Lytle, assistant vice commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

People can help by visiting the board's Web site from a military computer. The secure address is <https://wwwmil.afrc.af.mil/special/afrab/afrab.htm>. People need to provide their name, contact information and the nature of the problem. Members of the board take it from there.

The board formed in 1995 when it was manned by a single civilian. About 25 people serve on the current board. They are a cross-section of officer and enlisted reservists from various career fields.

Airmen remain on the board for about three years, so there is a constant influx of

new people and new points of view, invaluable when faced with a variety of issues.

Being on the board is “informative and eye-opening,” said Chief Master Sgt. Brenda Asher, a board staffer. She makes initial contact after e-mail inputs are received.

After a concern is received, the board assigns a case number and adds the issue to the roster for the next quarterly board meeting. The last board meeting was Oct. 19 to 25 in Washington. Besides October and January, the board also meets in April and July.

The first thing on the agenda is a discussion of concerns submitted by Air Force reservists from around the world, officials said.

The discussion is “a combination of opinion, personal experience and expertise,” General Lytle said.

After the discussion, the members vote on how to resolve an issue. They look at who needs to be involved in the process, such as officials at the Air Force Reserve Command, the Air Reserve Personnel Center, the Air Reserve Personnel Policy Committee or in the secretary of the Air Force's office. They also determine if a policy or law needs to be changed, officials said.

An officer is assigned to ensure that item is kept on track, resolved and closed out with the results reported to the reservist who asked the question. The board serves a clearinghouse. The process is deliberate but thorough, officials said.

“We don't try to rush it,” General Lytle said.

Recent topics include the government travel card, space-available travel, medical benefits for activated reservists,

See **Board**, page 9

Need the latest Laughlin information?
Call Laughlin's Information Line at 298-5201.

Board, from page 8

college-tuition assistance, meals on drill weekends and even the inspector-general complaint process.

"We've had hundreds of issues and policies clarified and put back into the proper channels for action," said Lt. Col. Roger Daugherty, a board staff officer.

However, "we are not a complaint hotline or an alternative to the Air Force suggestion program," he said. Daugherty commands the 952nd Reserve Support Squadron at AFRC's headquarters at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

"We deal with a lot of issues," General Lytle said. "Each one is a legitimate concern for at least one person" – and perhaps for many others who serve.

The board's challenge is to examine each issue within the context of the total Air Force Reserve to determine actions that will benefit the

greatest number of people.

Success stories include establishing a toll-free telephone pay-information service for reservists without computer access and implementing a promotion enhancement program for individual mobilization augmentees. The board also sorts out of a variety of issues relating to mobilized reservists' benefits, including per diem and lodging while in "leave" status.

"We're very close to completion" on several key concerns, Colonel Daugherty said. One major recommendation to be resolved is reforming the reserve component retirement-pay system.

General Lytle urges reservists to get involved.

"Give me your insight to problems, impediments, opportunities or other facets of Reserve life that, if changed, could make the Air Force Reserve a better, more effective organization," he said. "I personally solicit your inputs to the process."

Commissary facts:

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Honor guard honorable additional duty

Members say time, effort worth sense of pride, satisfaction from giving back

By Staff Sgt. Chance Babin
Public affairs

Professionalism, pride and dedication are just a few of the qualities it takes to be a member of the base honor guard. But maybe a more important trait is the willingness to give one's time to honor those who bravely served our country.

Laughlin's squad currently has 28 members, but that number fluctuates from month to month due to the nature of military deployments and assignments. So they are always looking for new members.

"There are no general requirements to join," said Staff Sgt. Jerry Dunn, 47th Medical Group optometry assistant. "All we need are people who are motivated about the Air Force and willing to represent themselves and the Air Force in a positive light and are willing to give their time to pay respect to those who served and died for the flag."

The honor guard team performs more than 120 details a year with events ranging from change-of-command ceremonies, retirements, retreat, distinguished visitor events as well as off-base events like parades and any military-related function they are requested for. Their primary duty, however, is military funerals. The honor guard's area covers most of Southwest Texas.

"It's heartwarming doing funerals and seeing the families," said Senior Airman Shannon Custer, 47th Mission Support Squadron personnel journeyman. "Last military honors mean a lot to the families."

An honor guard member's discipline is often tested at funerals as the flow of human emotion reaches the members in the detail.

"Funerals are very emotional. I haven't met a member yet to say otherwise," Sergeant Dunn said. "But you have to control your emotions. It's very difficult because it's hard on family members. After details, I've seen members of the

honor guard tear up and break down. But we have to keep our military bearing at all times."

While keeping one's military bearing can be tough, keeping one's military job in line can be an equally challenging juggling act.

"I'm a one-person shop, so it takes a lot of coordination between me and my doctor," Sergeant Dunn said. "Sometimes I go to work in my ceremonial blues and see patients. But I like the challenge of having to make time for both."

His patients are also impressed with the man in blue. "They love it!" he said. "Every patient I've had, when they see me (in ceremonial blues), they are in awe. It's one of the best uniforms the military has to offer. When people see you, they see you in a different light. We're doing something that others aren't willing to do."

Serving in the honor guard also has a few perks other than the gratification it gives members. Upon joining they receive a free ceremonial uniform, battle dress uniform and are authorized to wear an honor-guard patch. Once members perform 50 details, they are eligible to receive an achievement medal.

Membership on the honor guard is open to both enlisted and officers. The team currently has 24 enlisted and 4 officer members. "It's not unusual. Most honor guards have an officer-enlisted mix," Sergeant Dunn said. "The way we do it here is the main part of the (funeral) ceremony is performed by an enlisted member and an officer presents the colors to the next of kin. It's not a requirement, though."

The team practices once a week and is currently working on starting a drill team. Anyone with drill team experience, such as college drill team or ROTC, is encouraged to help get this new team started.

Even though the team practices weekly, and the crowds they perform for don't notice any imperfections, the members still get together after details to discuss what went right



Courtesy photo

Honor guard members Senior Airman Heinzel Jno-Baptiste (left), Tech Sgt. Wesley Morris (center) and Airman 1st Class Ronette McBean prepare to post the colors during a recent base ceremony.

and what went wrong. "We always notice nitpicky things that the audience doesn't see," Sergeant Dunn said.

Sergeant Dunn recalled his first experience as a member of an honor guard when he was stationed in Turkey four years ago.

"My first detail ever, we were doing a promotion ceremony," he said. "We were posting colors and were supposed to do a right face and the person next to me did a left face. So there we were, staring face to face at one another."

Sergeant Dunn said he initially thought he'd made the wrong turn and then realized he hadn't. He said it took all the concentration in the world not to laugh as the other member did an about face and they

got off the stage.

"After we got off the stage, (the other guy) said my face looked like I'd seen a ghost," he said.

In a way, Sergeant Dunn said his dad, who retired from the Air Force after a 21-year career, thought he had seen a ghost when he first saw his son perform on the honor guard team.

"It was one of the happiest times for him," he said. "He knows the dedication it takes and he had never seen that from me before (as a child growing up). He was really proud."

For more information on joining the Laughlin Air Force Base Honor Guard, contact the NCO in charge, Staff Sgt. Steven Taylor, at 298-5159.

Chapel information



Holiday schedule

Catholic

- Monday* ● Parish reconciliation, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday ● Christmas family mass, 5 p.m.,
 ● Midnight liturgy: Christmas carols, 11:30 p.m., Midnight Mass, midnight
Dec. 31 ● New Year's Eve mass, 5 p.m.
Jan. 1 ● New Year's Day mass, 9:30 a.m.

Protestant

- Wednesday* ● Candlelight service, 7 p.m.

(Weekend services will be held as scheduled)

Regular schedule

Catholic

- Monday - Friday* ● Mass, 12:05 p.m.
Saturday ● Mass, 5 p.m., Reconciliation, 4:15 p.m. or by appointment
Sunday ● Mass, 9:30 a.m., Religious Education, 11 a.m.
Thursday ● Choir: 6 p.m., Rite of Christian Initiation, 7:30 p.m.

Protestant

- Wednesday* ● Choir, 7 p.m.
Sunday ● General worship, 11 a.m., Contemporary worship, call 298-7073

Chaplain Staff

- Wing chaplain:* Chap. (Lt. Col.) Joseph Lim, Roman Catholic
Senior Protestant: Chap. (Capt.) Terri Gast, Presbyterian Church, USA
Protestant: Chap. (Capt.) Alex Jack, Independent Christian Church
Protestant: Chap. (1st Lt.) Kenneth Fisher, Evangelical Church Alliance

For more information on other denominations, chapel events or services, call 298-5111.

Daughter flaunts singing talent at base events

By Staff Sgt.
 Chance Babin
 Public affairs

Although she did some singing in school growing up, Fiona Y. Gentle never really aspired to sing in front of an audience. Then one day out of the blue, about a year and a half ago, she told her father she wanted to sing the National Anthem.

Fortunately for Fiona, her dad was just the man to set up her first public singing engagement.

For Master Sgt. James Martin, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron readiness flight chief, and a previous coordinator of the wing quarterly awards banquet, the opportunity to have his daughter, who is now 17, sing the National Anthem in front of his Air Force peers during the ceremony made him proud. But in order to perform the gig, Fiona would have to audition for the quarterly awards committee.

"I was a little nervous at first," the Del Rio High School senior said, "but once I started, my nerves got better, and I got the job."

The first event Fiona performed at tested her nerves even more than her tryout. She had met with the honor guard before she was supposed to sing, but there was an obvious communication problem during the ceremony.

"The first time I sang I messed up," she said. The honor guard was holding the flags in position waiting for her to sing the anthem, but Fiona thought she was supposed to wait for them to post the flag before starting.

"So everyone was just standing there waiting for me. They thought I froze up. I finally looked at my dad, and he gave me the look to start singing."

Fiona said she still gets a little nervous every time she sings. She's performed about 10 times at events ranging from change of commands, retirements, quarterly awards and a dining-out. But it was that first time when she really felt her nerves.

"The first time I sang I was very nervous," she said. "I could feel my voice shaking."

She may get nervous, but it's her father who really feels the anxiety with each chord.

"I think I'm more nervous than she is," Sergeant Martin said. "I'll be in the crowd telling people that's my daughter. Then if she messes up, I feel bad for her, not to mention the fact that I was just bragging [about] her. I sweat when she's up there."

Sergeant Martin said he literally lives "note by note" when she's singing. "I find I'm more critical than everyone else."

Although Fiona has been doing a lot of singing on base, she doesn't have any aspirations to pursue singing as a career. Her older sister, Naomi, who attends college in Orlando, Fla., is the one in the family who wants to be an entertainer. She currently has a song on the NBA's Orlando Magic Tribute Album.

"She's always wanted to pursue a singing career," Fiona said. "But not me. If the opportunity came up, I'd take it. Who wouldn't?"

For now, the high-

"I was a little nervous at first, but once I started, my nerves got better, and I got the job."

— Fiona Y. Gentle, daughter of Master Sgt. James Martin, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron readiness flight chief

school senior is staying busy with school. She is her senior-class president, in the top 10 percent of her class, president of the physics club and a member of "Who's Who Among American High School Students." Her future goals are dependent on her getting good grades.

"She'll lock herself in a room for six hours sometimes to study," Sergeant Martin said.

The reason Fiona studies so feverishly is because she wants to get a scholarship to college and pursue a career in the medical field.

"My dream is to be a nurse practitioner," Fiona said. She also added that she would eventually like to become a doctor, something Sergeant Martin said he'd like too because he's going to need someone to take care of him when he gets old.

Looking for the current time and temperature? call 775-0212





Photo by Tech. Sgt. Robert Wieland

You've got mail...

Airman Spencer Chambliss carries bags of mail into the postal center at Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq. Postal center workers recently off l o a d e d , sorted and delivered 43,496 pounds of mail. Airman Chambliss is assigned to the 354th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron.

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comm.

The *XLer*

Carla Rincones
47th Mission Support Squadron

Hometown: Lumberton, N.C.

Family: Husband, Daniel
Time at Laughlin: Four years

Time in service: Five years active duty and 10 months civil service

Greatest accomplishment: Completing my master's degree in June 2004

Hobbies: Running and working out with friends

Bad habit: Taking on a lot at once

Favorite movies: "Smoke Signals" and "The Hours"

Favorite music: Contemporary Native American

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why? My great-grandmother. She was like a novel with so many more pages to turn.

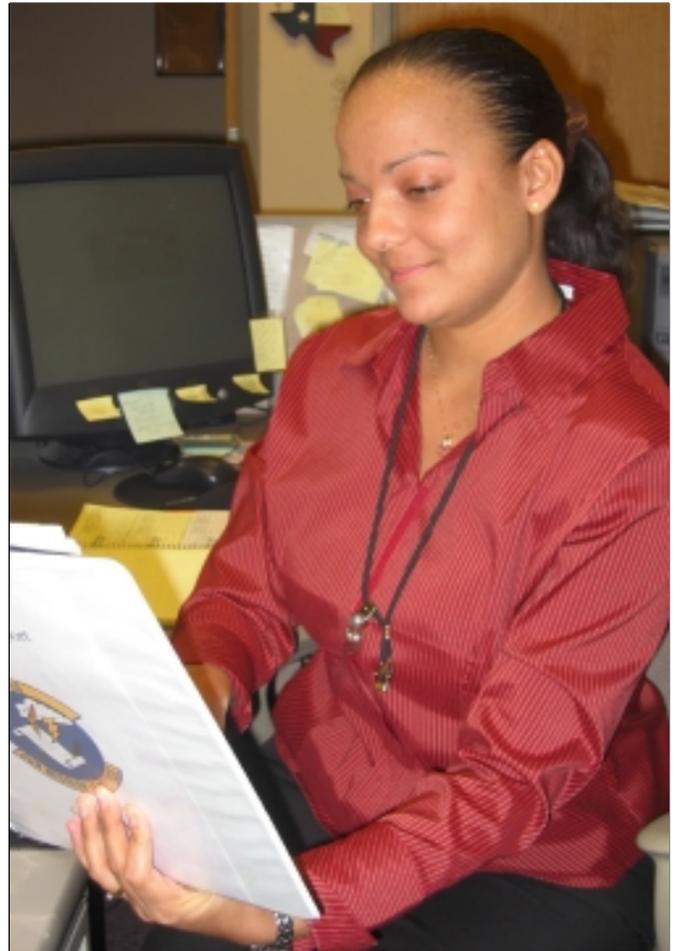


Photo by Airman 1st Class Yvonne Clark

3x4 del rio loan co.

Senior master sgt. picks 14, wins week

Last week, Senior Master Richard Conerly, 47th Mission Support Squadron superintendent, won the weekly prize by picking 14 of 16 games correctly. Two other contestants came close by guessing 12 games.

To enter the weekly contest, individuals can put their names in contest boxes located at various Services locations for a chance to forecast winners of weekly NFL football games in the *Border Eagle*.

Drop boxes are located at Club XL, Club Amistad, Cactus Lanes, Silver Wings and the Chaparral Dining Facility.

Weekly winners may call Andrew Furman at Club XL at 298-5134 to claim their prize.

Prizes include a free round of golf or lunch at the club.



Sergeant Conerly

Games:

Atl. at T.B.
K.C. at Minn.
N.E. at N.Y.J.
Mia. at Buff.
Det. at Car.
Wash. at Chi.
Bal. at Cle.
N.Y.G. at Dal.
Tenn. at Hou.
N.O. at Jax.
Cin. at St.L.
S.D. at Pitt.
S.F. at Phi.
Ari. at Sea.
Den. at Ind.
G.B. at Oak.

**Staff Sgt.
Joe Banks**

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Minnesota
New England
Buffalo
Carolina
Chicago
Baltimore
Dallas
Tennessee
New Orleans
St. Louis
Pittsburgh
Philadelphia
Seattle
Denver
Green Bay

**Airman 1st Class
David Althoff**

Tampa Bay
Minnesota
New England
Miami
Carolina
Chicago
Baltimore
Dallas
Tennessee
Jacksonville
St. Louis
San Diego
Philadelphia
Seattle
Indianapolis
Green Bay

**Airman 1st Class
Brenna Gorney**

Tampa Bay
Kansas City
New England
Buffalo
Carolina
Washington
Baltimore
Dallas
Tennessee
New Orleans
St. Louis
Pittsburgh
Philadelphia
Seattle
Indianapolis
Green Bay

**Airman 1st Class
Dustin McCabe**

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Minnesota
New England
Miami
Carolina
Washington
Baltimore
Dallas
Tennessee
New Orleans
St. Louis
Pittsburgh
Philadelphia
Seattle
Indianapolis
Green Bay

**Airman 1st Class
Anthony Michels**

Tampa Bay
Minnesota
New England
Miami
Carolina
Chicago
Cleveland
Dallas
Tennessee
New Orleans
St. Louis
Pittsburgh
Philadelphia
Seattle
Indianapolis
Oakland

AF releasing new fitness instruction

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – One of the most noticeable changes to the Air Force's new fitness program is that it will be defined by an operational rather than a medical instruction.

The change shows that senior leaders consider fitness an important part of operational readiness, said Maj. Lisa Schmidt, the Air Force chief of health promotions operations.

"As we support the aerospace expeditionary force and the environments we now deploy to, fitness becomes a readiness issue," Major Schmidt said. "If a person is fit, they are going to be able to tolerate austere environments, the fatigue and the temperature changes."

The full text of the Air Force's new fitness instruction will be available to the force before Jan. 1, she said. The planned release comes less than five months after the service's highest ranking officer told airmen

there would be changes in the way the Air Force looked at physical fitness.

"The amount of energy we devote to our fitness programs is not consistent with the growing demand of our warrior culture," wrote Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper in his July Sight Picture. "It's time to change that."

Besides making physical fitness a readiness requirement, the new instruction also puts an emphasis on commander involvement in unit fitness programs.

"If you look at the July Sight Picture, General Jumper says fitness is a commander's responsibility," Major Schmidt said. "This instruction puts more responsibility on the commander, not the medical community."

Among other things, the instruction requires unit and squadron commanders to implement and maintain a unit physical-training program and to offer the program at least three times a week.

The instruction also details methodology for conducting fitness evaluations.

Major Schmidt said the instructions for conducting the push-up and crunch portions of the evaluation should be no surprise to airmen. They are the same instructions that have been used at the end of the cycle-ergometry test for the last two years.

"The only change is that the push-ups and crunches will be evaluated for one minute, instead of two minutes," major Schmidt said.

The instruction also specifies how to conduct the aerobic portion of the test. Airmen will run on an outdoor course approved by the wing commander. During inclement weather, an indoor running track may be used. Treadmills will not be authorized for fitness evaluations.

The new fitness instruction takes effect Jan. 1 and will make obsolete the current fitness and weight-management instructions, Air Force Instruction 40-501 and AFI 40-502.

XL Fitness Center holiday hours

Monday - Tuesday:
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Wednesday:
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Thursday:
Closed

Dec. 26 - 30:
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Dec. 31:
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Jan. 1 - Jan. 4:
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.