

News in Brief

Memorial run/walk

A group of community members in Del Rio has organized a memorial run/walk for Sunday. This event is free and open to the public.

Runners will meet at 11 a.m. at Calderon School to register with an 11:30 a.m. start time.

The course starts at the school, goes to Bedell, turns right to 2nd Avenue, turns left to Veterans Boulevard, turns right and ends at the parking lot between Luby's and K-Mart. Local police will be on hand to ensure safety along the route and provide traffic direction.

Walkers will be able to enter the course from either the Aaron's rental store on Veterans Boulevard, or the Del Rio Civic Center.

No transportation will be provided. Participants may park at the school, the civic center or the mall and will need to arrange their own transportation back to their vehicles.

Mission status

(As of April 18)

Days ahead or behind with mission capable rate

T-37	1.33	86.0%
T-1	1.00	80.1%
T-38	0.47	79.2%
T-6	-2.35	71.8%



Photo by Jim Teet

Thanks for fighting...

U.S. Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) and John Cornyn (R-Texas) greet (from right) Staff Sgts. Sebastian Aboki and Kenneth Orie, Tech Sgt. Ervin Curtis and Master Sgt. Rob Ochs, 47th Operations Support Squadron air traffic controllers, during a visit to Laughlin Tuesday. The four airmen returned from deployments in support of Operations Enduring Freedom..

More Iraqi key leaders captured, Army takes over control Baghdad

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – At least one more leader of Saddam Hussein's regime is in custody, and another has allegedly turned himself in to the Iraqi National Congress.

Coalition forces captured Hussein's former minister of higher education and scientific research, Humam Abd alKhalik Abd al-Gafar. He was the “4” of hearts in the American card deck listing the 55 most-wanted Iraqi officials. Central Command officials would not reveal where he was taken or who captured him Saturday.

Jamal Mustafa Abdullah Sultan al-Tikriti, the “9” of clubs and the son-

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Laughlin doctor helps Ecuador children

By Airman 1st Class

Yvonne Conde

Staff writer

While most military members are contributing their efforts towards the conflict in the Middle East, one Laughlin member recently took part in a humanitarian mission in South America.

Col. (Dr.) Chuck Hardin, 47th Medical Group commander, joined five other service members from other bases to perform 40 surgical operations on 29 patients in a medically underserved area in Cuenca, Ecuador.

Armed with their own medical supplies, the crew included two Air Force plastic surgeons, one Army

and two Air Force surgical assistants and an Air Force anesthesiologist.

They performed a variety of surgical operations in two weeks, mostly to improve congenital defects such as cleft lips, cleft palates and limb abnormalities. Most of the patients who received the free care were between 4 months and 10 years old.

“The smiles, the cards and the hugs are the real pay back,” said Colonel Hardin.

“I remember examining a 10-year-old girl after cleft lip and palate surgery, and she had her doll at her side,” he said. “I imagined this little girl being able to grow up into a happy, healthy woman, and just the thought of

knowing I somehow contributed to her happiness made it all worth it.”

Colonel Hardin said he took part in the program for three reasons: to help people, to keep current on his surgical skills and to provide a significant contribution in South America since he wasn't able to assist with the war effort in the Middle East.

The surgical procedures were performed on civilians in an Ecuadorian military hospital. The hospital typically only treats active-duty military members and their dependents, but the Ecuadorian military opened its doors to civilians for these

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Commanders' Corner

Lt. Col. Robert Craven
47th Operations Support Squadron commander

Watching wars on television

I've watched several wars on television – Desert Storm, 9/11 and the resulting war on terrorism, Operation Iraqi Freedom and many conflicts in between. I happened to be assigned to pilot training bases or the staff when many of these significant events took place.

Just months after I left an A-10 assignment for a T-37 instructor pilot assignment at Williams Air Force Base, Ariz.,

Desert Storm kicked off and my A-10 friends were rolling in on Iraqi forces fleeing from Kuwait.

One pilot was shot down earlier in the war and was a prisoner of war, another didn't return. Together, we trained, deployed and shared hopes and dreams. I felt like I should be there with them. I wanted to get back into the "Hog" and into the fight.

Many of my fellow T-37 instructors felt the same and wanted to get back to the "real Air Force" where they could contribute and make a difference. After all, we were at war and surely they needed fighter, airlift and tanker pilots more than T-37 instructors. Our commander responded with, "When the Air Force feels it's more important for us to be there than here, they'll let us know. And you'll have to get in line behind me."

Sure enough, the Air Force kept all of us in place and the training mission continued uninterrupted. Good thing too, since the combat force developed in training during that period is the backbone of our combat capability today. Although we weren't putting bombs on target or eating

meals ready-to-eat in the field, our training mission at Williams, and other training bases a dozen years ago, was as critical and essential as any.

Without training, there is no combat capability. What we do in Air Education and Training Command everyday prepares the world's greatest combat force to respond decisively in times of crisis – crises yet

undetermined and as unimaginable as 9/11 was just a few short years ago.

The feelings and reactions we experienced during Desert Storm

flooded back more powerfully than ever on 9/11. I was serving as operations officer here with the Panthers flight at the time. TV news was filled with compelling images of Americans rallying for America. Charity drives and help committees popped up everywhere and people lined up for blocks to donate blood.

Many in the Panthers flight felt as I did. They felt like they weren't pulling their weight; like they needed to be more directly involved in relief and retaliation efforts.

At times like this, it's important to remind yourself of the selfless commitment you've already made and the critical role you play in the defense of our nation and freedom-loving people all over the world. For those who felt they hadn't done enough, I asked them to consider this: caring Americans lined up for blocks to give blood, but how many lined up at the recruiters office like you did? Thousands gave an afternoon, weekend or even hundreds of

hours of volunteering, but how many raised their right hand and committed their lives for the same cause?

You signed up for something much larger than yourself and you truly exemplify "Service before Self." If you feel like you're not doing enough by training pilots, who are now engaged in the war against terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom, think again.

One thing has changed significantly in AETC over the past few years. Most in the command still watch the war on television, but many are now more directly involved and many more will be involved in the future. Not only are we fully engaged in our critical training mission, which must continue uninterrupted, but over 20 people from Laughlin are currently deployed in direct support of combat operations in and around Iraq and Afghanistan. Our wing's mission statement accurately reflects this change, "Train the world's best pilots and deploy expeditionary forces to fight and win America's wars ... period!"

Today, we're able to watch the war on television "real time." It's a 24/7 reminder of what's happening. To those who feel they are not involved enough, I offer the same response my commander gave at Williams, "When the Air Force feels it's more important for us to be there than here, they'll let us know. And you'll have to get in line behind me."

So as you watch the war, don't feel left out. You are very much in the "real Air Force." Be proud of your pivotal role in making that mission possible. Support those from Laughlin who are there, and be proud they serve on your team.



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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.conde@laughlin.af.mil.

Laughlin celebrates volunteers – spirit of America

By Aida Gutierrez

Family Support Center volunteer program manager

Since the earliest days of our nation's history, the spirit of volunteer service reflects neighbors helping neighbors overcome obstacles in the pursuit of happiness.

The Laughlin community will honor all Laughlin volunteers with a volunteer appreciation ice cream social at the Fiesta Community Center Thursday from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Volunteers will receive a certificate signed by Col. Dan Woodward, 47th Flying Training Wing commander, and a small gift from the Family Support Center.

The freedom and individual rights at the core of our society comes from a shared responsibility for the health and well being of our communities and for each other.

For millions of Americans, vol-

unteering is the key to healthy, fulfilling and meaningful lives. Volunteering is giving, but there is so much we can receive. Volunteering renews our connection to our community, and builds self-worth and social responsibility in our children.

Through volunteering, we learn compassion, tolerance, and hopefully, a sense of duty to respond when people are in need.

Volunteering may not always be easy, but it is always necessary. What would our lives be like without it? What would our community and our nation be like? The simple fact is volunteers can provide the compassion that government cannot always provide to everyone. Volunteers are the helping hand and human face of private and individual enterprise. They are the conscience of our society. They are thoughtful, committed citizens who continue to change our

world one activity at a time.

Part of the volunteer world is in Laughlin, where people such as Diana Adkins, 47th Mission Support Squadron volunteer; Master Sgt. John Sanders, 47th Communications Squadron planning and implementation flight superintendent and volunteer; and Jenetta Hockless, Book Mark Library volunteer, are making a difference. Mrs. Adkins volunteered over 1,000 hours during 2002 to the 47th Mission Support Squadron, the Book Mark Library, orphanages in Acuña and many other organizations. Sergeant Sanders volunteered many hours with the Boy Scouts, Ruben Chavira Elementary School and as a head coach for the Del Rio Soccer League. Mrs. Hockless volunteered many hours in support of the story time program and the summer reading program at the base library.

May 3 starts National Volunteer Week with the theme: Celebrate Volunteers - the Spirit of America. The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network sponsors National Volunteer Week to put people like Diana Adkins, Sergeant Sanders and Mrs. Hockless in the spotlight. They represent America's 109 million men and women who are engaged in volunteer efforts to help solve many of the social problems found in our communities and make them happier, healthier places to live.

Working together as volunteers, we must create a new sense of community and shared responsibility for our future. That future has begun. Celebrate volunteers – the spirit of America this week and every week.

For more information on the celebration, contact Aida Gutierrez at 298-5222.



Col. Dan Woodward
47th Flying Training
Wing commander

Actionline

Call 298-5351

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 at-

tempt 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.

AAFES	298-3176
Accounting and Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252
Civilian Personnel	298-5299
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
Equal Employment Opportunity	298-5879
FWA hotline	298-4170
Hospital	298-6311
Housing	298-5904
Information line	298-5201
Legal	298-5172
Military Equal Opportunity	298-5400
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810

Gym temperature

Comment: I'm calling because the heat, which I know is regulated by the 47th Civil Engineering Squadron, is still on at the gym. Outside for the last week or so, the temperature has been about 85 degrees roughly. So with the outside temperature and the heat on in the gym, it has become to-

tally unbearable. As we all know, it's very unhealthy to exercise in high temperatures, so I was hoping they would make an exception and turn the air conditioning on in the gym. They have opened the windows and also called CE, but of course they can't prop the doors open in force protection condition bravo. I was hoping that you could fix that, turn off the heat and turn on

the air again. Thank you.

Answer: Thank you for your concern and interest in the welfare of others. You are correct that the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system at the fitness center is monitored and controlled by CE.

The boilers at the fitness center were deactivated March 7. In an effort to save energy during the transition pe-

riod, the base follows a series of guidelines to determine when to deactivate the boilers and when to activate the air conditioning.

Unfortunately, we experienced several unseasonably warm days following the shut down of the boilers that resulted in very warm and uncomfortable facilities. The air conditioning was activated March 14.

'Iraq,' from page 1

in-law of the former Iraqi dictator, gave himself up to the president of the Iraq National Congress. He surrendered to Ahmad Chalabi Sunday.

CENTCOM officials said they have seen the reports of the surrender but cannot confirm it. Saddam's son-in-law is described as the regime's deputy chief of tribal affairs.

Other regime officials in custody are Hikmat Mizban Ibrahim al-Azzawi, deputy prime minister and finance minister, arrested by Iraqi police April 18 and turned over the Marines in Baghdad; Samir abd al-Aziz al-Najim, handed over to coalition special operations forces April 17; Barzan Ibrahim Hasan al-Tikriti, captured April 16; and Watban Ibrahim Hasan, taken April 13 in northern Iraq reportedly trying to flee to neighboring Syria.

Coalition special operations forces also captured Abu Abbas on April 14. Abbas is the terrorist who engineered the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985.

'Ecuador,' from page 1

operations. "There have been two instances of military ammunition depots blowing up in Cuenca," said Colonel Hardin. "The media exposure the Ecuadorian military received for their efforts in helping these civilians really helped them improve public relations."

While the Ecuadorian military improved public relations by allowing these procedures in their facility, Colonel Hardin said he receives an incredible amount of self-satisfaction by helping those less fortunate with these types of missions. He has helped hundreds of children over the years during his participation in 15 humanitarian missions to Ecuador and Honduras.

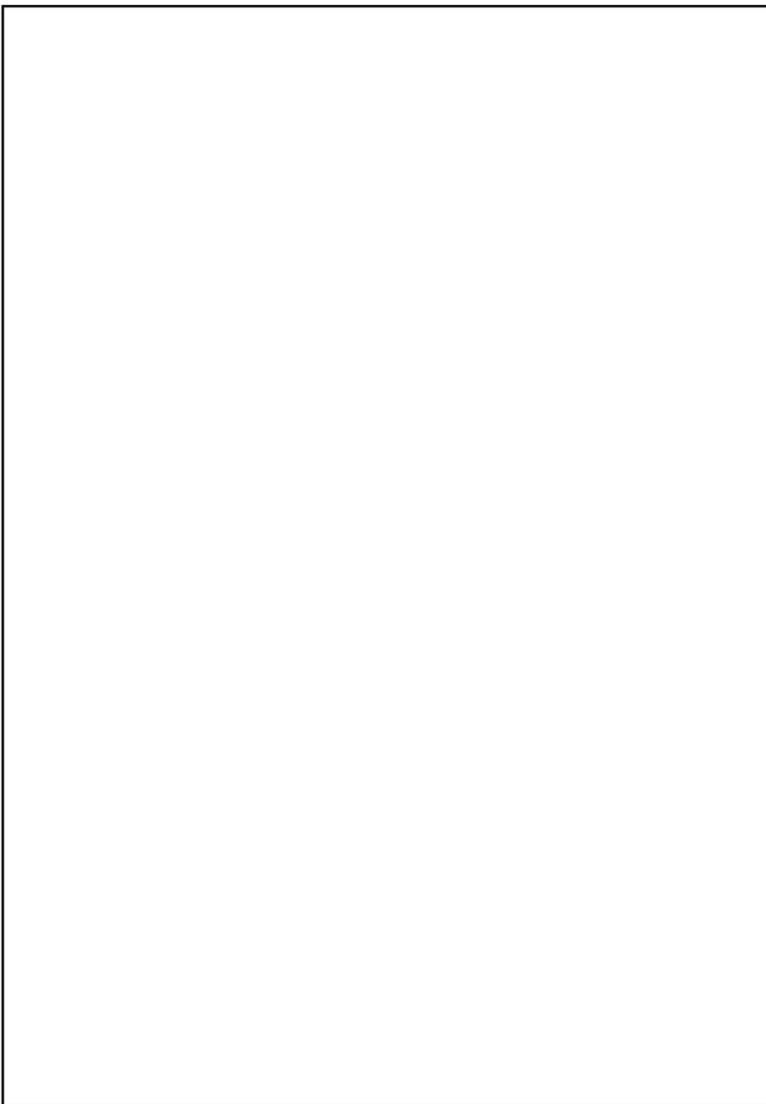
"The reason I went into medicine was to help people," said Colonel Hardin. "It just gives me a feeling of euphoria knowing I had a part in helping someone. When I wake up in the morning, I think I'm one of the most fortunate people. I'm part of the world's best Air Force, and I help improve people's health. When you combine these two with such an important mission like this, it's really a satisfying experience. It reaffirms what I do."

Elements of the 3rd Infantry Division relieved units of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Baghdad over the weekend. Officials said it was a simple "relief-in-place" maneuver. "This provides unity of command for the city," said DoD officials.

The Army's 5th Corps – which consists of the 3rd, the 101st Airborne Division and the 4th Infantry Division – are now responsible for Baghdad and its environs. Before, the Army controlled the western half of the city and the Marines the eastern. The Army also took over the Civil Military Operations Center in the Palestine Hotel, CENTCOM officials said.

The Marines moved to the southeast and are situated around Al Kut, Nasiriyah and Karbala. British forces are providing security in the southern part of the country.

U.S. soldiers discovered \$640 million in U.S. currency in a tool shed at a regime headquarters in Baghdad, Central Command officials said. The currency has been taken to a secure location.



Courtesy photo

Col. (Dr.) Chuck Hardin, 47th Medical Group commander, operates on an Ecuadorian child while on a humanitarian mission to Ecuador. Colonel Hardin helped perform 40 surgeries on 29 patients during the two weeks he was in Ecuador.

Newslines

Suicide awareness

There will be suicide and workplace violence training at 3 p.m. today in Anderson Hall for all who have not attended training this year. Attendance will be taken.

For more information, call 298-5166.

Sick call

The Family Practice Center at the clinic will no longer conduct walk-in morning sick call beginning Thursday. Sick call will be conducted by appointments. The appointment line, 298-3578, will be dedicated to active-duty members from 7 to 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. During this time, active-duty members may call for a same-day appointment for acute illnesses, conditions or injuries.

This does not pertain to members on flight status.

For more information, call Capt. Hugh Kenrick at 298-6430.

Youth drug awareness

Coordinators for Drug Education for Youth here are accepting applications for participants and volunteer mentors.

DEFY seeks to produce 9-12 year-olds with character, leadership and confidence so they are equipped to engage in positive, healthy lifestyles as drug-free citizens.

It also provides the necessary skills to be successful in their lives through coordinated community participation, commitment and leadership.

Applications are open to Department of Defense dependents only. Call 298-6495 for more information. A maximum of 20 participants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis.

Volunteer positions include a team leader, assistant team leader, administrative assistant, mentor, youth advocate, sports coordinator and adult staff member. Application deadline is May 30.

For more information about volunteer positions, call Drug Demand Reduction at 298-6495.

Contracting closure

The 47th Contracting Squadron will close at 3:15 p.m. for a squadron picnic.

Anyone needing to get a hold of the contracting squadron can call 703-0174.