

Border Eagle

Servicemembers honor President Reagan

By Kathleen T. Rhem
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Servicemembers nationwide are working to honor a former commander in chief this week.

The death of former President Ronald Reagan on Saturday set into motion a plan that will end up involving countless servicemembers from all the armed forces.

As a past commander in chief, President Reagan is being afforded many military honors, officials from the U.S. Army's Military District of Washington said. The military district is responsible for coordinating arrangements for the many events leading up to President Reagan's official state funeral here today.

Traditionally, the president directs the secretary of defense to oversee funeral arrangements. This responsibility is further delegated through the secretary of the Army to the military district's commanding general.

In this role, the military district's commander, currently Army Maj. Gen. Galen B. Jackman, will escort President Reagan's immediate family members during the formal events.



Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Jon Gesch

An Airman assigned to the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard at Bolling Air Force Base, D.C., stands watch as people pay their respects to former President Ronald Reagan at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, Calif. A state funeral takes place today for President Reagan who died Saturday.

A military honor guard provided security for President Reagan's remains during periods of lying in state, until Tuesday at the Ronald Reagan

Presidential Library in Simi Valley, Calif., and at the U.S. Capitol for 24

See Reagan, page 4

Standard AEF deployment length now four months

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

WASHINGTON – Most Airmen scheduled to deploy in upcoming air and space expeditionary force packages will see their orders expand from 90 to 120 days.

The change in deployment length will begin with AEF cycle 5 in September. Those who deploy as part of AEF 1 and 2 should prepare for a 120-day deployment.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper announced the change in his "Sight Picture" on June 4. The reason for the change is that the requirement

for deployable forces is not expected to decrease in the foreseeable future, he said.

"Simply put, the demands on our deployable forces have not diminished and are not expected to decline for some time," the general wrote. "Further, the Air Force component commander in the Central Command area of operations has asked us to deploy people for longer tour lengths to allow greater continuity for expeditionary commanders in the field."

To help extend tour lengths to 120 days, the entire AEF cycle was adjusted. The new cycle, now 20 months in length, allows for a four-month eli-

gibility window and a 16-month training window.

General Jumper also said he intends to increase the pool of Airmen eligible for deployment. Currently, the Air Force has about 272,000 Airmen earmarked as deployment-eligible.

"I have asked all of our major commands to aggressively review the assumptions upon which they exclude Airmen from our AEFs and take immediate steps to maximize those postured (for deployment)," the general said.

The changes to the AEF cycle,

See AEF, page 4

Newslines

SUPT Class 04-10

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 04-10 will graduate at 10 a.m. today in Anderson Hall auditorium.

All base members are invited to attend.

Changes of command

The 47th Security Forces Squadron will hold a change command at 3 p.m. today at Club Amistad.

The 86th Flying Training Squadron will hold a change of command at 8 a.m. Monday on the flightline outside of Anderson Hall.

All base members are invited to attend.

Clinic closure

The 47th Medical Group will be closed for normal operation today.

Personnel will be available for return to flying status/DNIF sick call at 7:30-9:30 a.m. today and Saturday. A stand-by flight surgeon and ambulance crew will also be available for coverage of in-flight emergencies.

For more information, call 298-6204

Civilian call

The civilian personnel flight is holding a civilian call at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Thursday in the Anderson Hall auditorium

All base civilians are invited to attend.

Deployment stats

Deployed:	15
Returning in 30 days:	11
Deploying in 30 days:	0

Mission status

(As of Tuesday)

Days behind or ahead:	
T-37, -9.07	T-1, 1.24
T-38, -4.88	T-6, -10.18
Mission capable rate:	
T-37, 82.2%	T-1, 78.5%
T-38, 78.2%	T-6, 72.2%

Commander reflects on life before deployment



**Commander's
Corner**

By Lt. Col. Timothy Sowin
47th Aeromedical-Dental
Squadron commander

(Editor's note: Lt. Col. Timothy Sowin deployed June 2)

It's interesting how life's milestones afford us an occasion to reflect.

On the eve of deployment to a location within 10 miles of ongoing ground combat, my mind has wandered wide horizons and stirred unexpected emotions.

I'll be chief of preventive medicine on a base with over 10,000 military personnel. I'll be flying helicopter medical evacuation missions supporting soldiers and marines who have put it all on the line for our country. Someone could die if I fail. Someone could die even if I am "spot-on." U.S. Military physi-

cians and flight surgeons are very well trained, still God's will for us outweighs any and all past training. I know I am not "good enough." I know God is. Hearing that I was going to be gone for several months, someone at the commissary said to me, "I hop you come home in one piece." I hope that too, but I'd rather come home wounded and knowing I put service first, than unscathed and knowing I let fear make me put me first. One of the housekeepers at the medical group offered, "Don't worry. Worry does not come from God. We will pray for you and you will be protected by God."

Isn't it amazing how God can talk to us in everyday life when we take the time to listen?

I wonder if I'll miss Wal-Mart while I am gone? I know I'll miss lots of people here at Laughlin. I know I'll miss flying with the pilots and students pilots of the 86th Flying Training Squadron. At the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine they teach that, "the value of the flight

surgeon goes up markedly in the combat environment." I wonder if that's true. I should find out soon.

I'll pin on O-6 in an environment where alcohol is prohibited. That fits. I'd give those eagles back if it would bring back my troop who died trying to fell better by drinking alcohol. Six months after his death, that still hurts. Fellowship is better when you're sober. Happiness comes from God, not from drinking. Sometimes I'm not sure of much, but I'm sure of that.

What matters is not who dies with the most toys. What matters is who has faithfully followed God's plan for their lives. I think I'll still miss my toys while I am gone. But I can feel God leading me and I can feel the peace that comes only from Him. It's odd to feel peace on the threshold of the winds of war. Still I do feel it. Service before self is not only the right thing to do, it is what God wants us to do.

May God richly bless you Team XL.

Core values, life's lessons learned at early age

By Staff Sgt. Nolan Hildebrand
52nd Operations Support
Squadron

SPANGDAHLEM AIR BASE, Germany – When we think about the classrooms in life, I'm sure the bathroom is not at the top of the list, but the bathroom just happens to be where I learned my first core value.

I was taught "Excellence In All We Do" by my father. My father isn't a retired chief. He didn't serve in the Air Force; he wasn't even in the military. But through his daily actions, and his shaving mug, I learned an important life lesson. See, my father's shaving mug had a motto inscribed on it, "What Is Worth Doing Is Worth Doing

Well."

As a young boy, I would frequently eyeball that shaving mug in hopes of one day putting the lather on my face and sliding the razor across my soon-to-be whiskers. As a boy, I paid little attention to the motto. Now, as a man, I look back and realize that even though I didn't think about the motto, I internalized it as a core value.

I've been guided by that simple, yet powerful motto every day of my life. I strive to do my best with every task entrusted to me and take pride in the successful completion of the job.

As Air Force members, we should all feel pride in our jobs. From fuels to finance, from the post office to the pharmacy, we

all have important tasks that are critical to Air Force mission accomplishment.

We should treat each and every task as mission essential, because the Air Force core value "Excellence In All We Do" doesn't afford us an option of when to give 100 percent. It demands that we give our very best, everyday, in everything we do.

While not everyone has a shaving mug to remind them that "What Is Worth Doing Is Worth Doing Well," what we do have is the core value internalized and displayed by the "blue suit" we wear. Our actions and attitudes must represent "Excellence In All We Do" and shine as a beacon of light to the entire world.

Border Eagle

Editorial Staff

Col. Dan Woodward
Commander

Capt. Paula Kurtz
Public affairs chief

2nd Lt. Sheila Johnston
Internal information chief

Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill
PA NCO in charge

Senior Airman Timothy J. Stein
Editor

**Airman 1st Class Olufemi
Owolabi**
Staff writer

The Border Eagle is published every Friday, except the first week in January and the last week in December, by the Del Rio News-Herald, a private firm in no way connected with the U. S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 47th Flying Training Wing, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

This civilian enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services.

Contents of the Border Eagle are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or the Del Rio News-Herald of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 47th Flying Training Wing. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

Deadlines, Advertising

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

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
sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil

AEFs: longer deployments, more forces



Actionline
298-5351 or
actionline@laughlin.af.mil

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 including your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also useful if more information is needed to pursue your inquiry. We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved. Please keep e-mails brief.

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.

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
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



Chief of Staff's
Sight Picture

By Gen. John P. Jumper
Air Force Chief of Staff

For the past 12 years, our Air Force has adapted to the demands of a changing world.

Beginning in the early 1990s, we developed composite wings, expeditionary organizations and crisis-response packages that allowed us to rapidly deliver combat capability to Combatant Commanders.

In 1998, we formalized the structure into 10 Air Expeditionary Force packages. These responsive air and space capabilities allow us to present forces in a consistent manner and conduct military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Throughout the late 1990s, our AEF concept of operations has proven itself time and again. Even with the high demands of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, our AEFs surged to support the Combatant Commanders' warfighting and deterrence missions, employing nearly eight AEFs of combat forces.

When major air and space operations diminished last year, we began the process of reestablishing the AEF battle rhythm. Our reconstitution target was March of this year, but the continued demands of global operations, additional contingencies in other theaters, and a tasking to support Army operations with 2,000 of our expeditionary combat support forces required us to reassess our planning assumptions, and to adjust our AEFs to a new mission set.

Simply put, the demands on our deployable forces have not diminished and are not expected to decline for some time. We have a new rotational requirement for nearly 20,000 Airmen – about three times the demand prior to September 11, 2001. Further, the

Air Force Component Commander in the Central Command area of operations has asked us to deploy people for longer tour lengths to allow greater continuity for expeditionary commanders in the field. To adapt to this new set of circumstances, I've directed a change to the AEF rotational cycle and have asked our Major Commands to expand the pool of deployable Airmen in each AEF.

Beginning with AEF Cycle 5 in September, the baseline deployment will be 120 days vice 90, and the AEF cycle will change from a 15-month rotational cycle to a 20-month cycle. We will continue to expect that each Airman will deploy only once during each cycle, although some stressed specialties will deploy longer, and in greater frequency, until manpower levels are adjusted or the theater requirements diminish. For those already deployed in AEFs 7/8 (March - May) and those deploying in AEF 9/10 (June - August), it is our intent to stick to our 90-day deployment cycle. For those identified to deploy in AEF 1/2 (September - November), you should prepare to be gone a minimum of four months. This evolution of the AEF is not a temporary adjustment. More appropriately, it is recognition of new demands around the world for air and space power.

It is important to remember several fundamental principles regarding our AEF concept of operations. First, we are not changing the basic composition of each AEF; each will continue to provide about 5 AEWs and 6 AEGs of capability during each vulnerability period. Our low density/high demand units will continue to follow DoD-approved deployment guidelines. Finally, Air Force global mobility forces will continue to follow our AEF Presence Policy, with mobility aviation units postured in multiple AEFs to support the USTRANSCOM mission and other Combatant Commander needs.

The 20-month cycle will continue to provide commanders and Airmen the ability to plan ahead, allowing a sense of pre-

dictability while providing greater continuity to the in-theater commander. Still, I recognize longer deployments will present challenges to our Reserve Component, possibly affecting the number of ARC volunteers, and requiring selected use of Presidential mobilization authority. We will manage these matters very carefully, ensuring equity and fairness across the Total Force.

In addition to extending tour lengths, it is my intent to expand our pool of deployable Airmen from our current level of about 272,000. I have asked all of our Major Commands to aggressively review the assumptions upon which they exclude Airmen from our AEFs and take immediate steps to maximize those postured in the Air Force Worldwide UTC System and our AEF libraries. The MAJCOMs will posture the maximum number of manpower authorizations into standard UTCs, and if required, we will develop new ones to provide additional expeditionary capabilities. Residual authorizations will be postured into associated UTCs and will be coded to support AEF requirements across the range of military operations.

Let me be perfectly clear – in our Air Force, every Airman is expeditionary, every Airman will know his place in the AEF system and every Airman will be prepared to support the Combatant Commander, whether deployed, in CONUS via reachback, or employed at home station. If you are wearing the uniform of the United States Air Force, you are a part of the AEF.

We are at war today, and will remain engaged around the globe against a brutal and resilient enemy. Our job is to deploy and deal with terrorists wherever they are in the world so we never again have to deal with them on our own soil. You will be the difference between our success and failure in this vital cause. Once again, I want to thank each and every one of you for your dedication, professionalism, and service to our nation.

*“Train the world's best
pilots and deploy
expeditionary forces world-
wide to fight and win
America's wars ... period!”*

– 47 Flying Training
Wing motto

New procedures to speed overseas absentee balloting

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Absentee ballots from servicemembers overseas will move faster and with greater control for the 2004 elections, Department of Defense and U.S. Postal Service officials said June 2.

Charles S. Abell, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, and Paul Vogel, the Postal Service's vice president for network operations management, discussed the changes made in the absentee balloting process for 2004.

"We've had a year of getting ready for the upcoming federal election, focusing on how we can help military personnel, their families and civilians overseas to exercise their right to vote," Mr. Abell said. "As we have looked at every sort of situation, problem and impediment, and tried to resolve them, we have come to another resolution to help us move ballots and ballot-request materials from the hand of the overseas Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine or family member to (his or her) county boards

of elections."

Mr. Vogel said Postal Service officials have been working with the Military Postal Service Agency to improve the process, "because it is that important, especially with a presidential election year coming up. If it's even as remotely close as the last election was, every ballot really counts."

The combined team has put together a process that will expedite the overseas absentee balloting mail flow and give greater accountability, Mr. Vogel said.

The Postal Service has no special program in place for servicemembers voting absentee in the United States.

"The Postal Service does a great job within the United States," Mr. Abell said. "Our problem has always been more with the overseas voters."

Essentially, Postal Service officials will ask local postmasters to contact the officials in counties that are responsible for mailing ballots and to whom completed ballots are returned.

"Traditionally, 30 to 45 days in advance of the elections, the blank ballots will be mailed out from those coun-

ties," Mr. Vogel said.

Postal Service officials are asking county officials to hold out the military ballots. Local postmasters will take those ballots and sort them for three different destinations: San Francisco for servicemembers based around the Pacific Rim, New York for Europe and the Middle East, and Miami for Central and South America. The balloting materials will go to those destinations via the Postal Service's Express Mail service, Mr. Vogel said.

Once at these military mail "gateways," Postal Service managers will log in the Express Mail pieces and sort them to the different military ZIP codes.

"All the balloting materials will be sorted first," Mr. Vogel said. They will go into specially marked mail trays and handed over to the airlines.

Airline workers will identify the trays that have voting materials, and those trays will again receive priority, officials said.

In theater, military postal officials will ensure balloting materials are given priority as they travel to the servicemember.

Once a servicemember votes, the reverse process is the same – balloting materials receive priority, and ballots are placed in specially marked trays. One change, however, is that when ballots are received at the APO or FPO,

mail clerks will put postal cancellation marks on the envelopes. This gives an accurate measure of the date and time a ballot is received.

At the postal gateways, ballots will go back into the normal mail flow in the United States that allows for a three-day delivery, Mr. Vogel said.

On Oct. 30, postal officials will again segregate balloting materials and use Express Mail to send ballots back to county officials. Election Day is Nov. 2, but these special-handling procedures will continue through Nov. 8, Mr. Vogel said; however, some ballots received after Election Day may not be counted, because different jurisdictions have different voting requirements.

To be on the safe side, DOD and Postal Service officials recommend servicemembers and their families follow Federal Voting Assistance Program guidelines. Program officials are designating the week of Sept. 6 as Get Out the Vote Week. By then, "if servicemembers haven't already requested their ballots, that's the week to do it," Mr. Abell said.

They are also designating the week beginning Oct. 11 as Overseas Voting Week.

"If you vote that week, your ballot should arrive ... before Election Day, which will qualify your ballot to be counted," Mr. Abell said.

AETC revises mission, vision statements

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AETCNS) — The commander of Air Education and Training Command approved a revised mission and vision statement May 25.

In his announcement, Gen. Don Cook said the new wording incorporates the expeditionary nature of today's operations in AETC and the Air Force.

"Whether we are deployed or in garrison in the schoolhouse, we should be thinking and teaching with an expeditionary mindset," the commander said.

The revised statements now include the wording "expeditionary minded" to convey that focus. The word "Airmen" has also been capitalized in accordance with Air Force chief of staff policy announced earlier this year.

Mission statement: The First

Command ... Recruiting, training, and educating professional, expeditionary minded Airmen to sustain the combat capability of America's Air Force.

Vision statement: Professionals integrating innovation and technology to recruit, train, and educate tomorrow's expeditionary minded air and space leaders.

The changes to the mission and vision statement are the result of the command's development of a 2005-2006 strategic plan, said officials in the AETC Directorate of Plans and Programs here.

Organizations in the command should change documents and presentations as necessary, officials said.

(Courtesy of Air Education and Training Command News Service)

Reagan, from page 1

hours Wednesday.

At every point in the journey, a joint-service honor guard performs an arrival or departure ceremony to honor the fallen president.

After President Reagan's remains were moved to the East Coast, they were carried at least part of the way to the Capitol by a military caisson from the 3rd U.S. Infantry, the Army's ceremonial "Old Guard" from Fort Myer, Va. The caisson is

AEF, from page 1

while possibly difficult for some, should be considered by all Airmen as part of their commitment to the Air Force, General Jumper said.

"Let me be perfectly clear – in our Air Force, every Airman is expeditionary, every Airman will know (his or her) place in the AEF system, and ev-

a converted transport wagon for a 75 mm cannon drawn by six horses of the same color.

A riderless horse followed the caisson. "A pair of boots are reversed in the stirrups of the empty saddle to symbolize that the warrior will never ride again," according to information on the district's Web site.

Also as part of honors owed to a previous president upon his death, all U.S. flags flown on government installations will be flown at half-staff for 30 days from the date of death.

ery Airman will be prepared to support the combatant commander, whether deployed, in (the continental United States) via reachback, or employed at home station," General Jumper said.

Airmen currently deployed as part of AEF 7 and 8 and AEF 9 and 10 will still be held to the 90-day deployment schedule.

Total-force effort supplies Operation Enduring Freedom

By Master Sgt. Andrew Gates
455th Expeditionary Operations
Group Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan – Every day, between 50 and 100 tons of equipment and supplies arrive here, flown in around the clock by a constant stream of cargo aircraft.

Since this is a combat environment, getting the aircraft down, unloaded and quickly off the ground again is extremely important. Keeping that logistical pipeline running smoothly and efficiently falls to the people of the Air Terminal Operations Center here.

“We do all the aircraft load planning, passenger terminal operations, logistics, loading and unloading that happens at a regular airport,

except at a much higher pace,” said Master Sgt. Janet Coomes of the 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. Sergeant Coomes is from the 67th Aerial Port Squadron, a Reserve unit at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

The entire center is made up of 28 guardsmen and reservists. Six of them come from Sergeant Coomes’ unit; two reservists are from the 69th APS in Maryland. The remaining Airmen are from the 109th Aerial Port Flight at Stratton Air National Guard Base, N.Y.

The center operates around the clock.

“I don’t think we have had a day when we didn’t have aircraft in,” said Master Sgt. Mark Mann, of the 455th

ELRS who is here from the 109th APF. “We have to keep aircraft moving in and out quickly because we have a limited number of aircraft spaces on the ramp, so we have a pretty high tempo here.

The high operations tempo sometimes requires the team to perform an engine-running offload. It is a challenging maneuver where the airplane parks, keeps the engine running while the Airmen remove the cargo and load any new cargo, and the aircraft immediately takes off. This speeds up the process and minimizes the time an aircraft spends on the ground, Sergeant Coomes said.

Loading and unloading cargo takes up much of the day. The most common aircraft are C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster IIIs, with an occasional C-141 Starlifter.

“Our favorite aircraft is the DHL Worldwide Express L-10,” said Sergeant Coomes. “That one brings in the mail and food, so we know people appreciate the cargo coming in.”

To unload the L-10, the team uses the next-generation small loader, or NGSL. That loader, which carries 25,000 pounds, is the only one that can rise 18 feet to the L-10’s cargo deck. For the rest of the aircraft, the team can use any loader.

“We prefer the NGSL because it has a roller system that automatically moves the pallets to the back of the loader,” Sergeant Mann said. “The rest

of the loaders you have to physically push the pallet all the way onto the equipment.”

It takes the team up to an hour to unload an aircraft, depending on exactly what is aboard.

“When you have rolling stock, it takes a little less time, because you can drive the equipment off,” Sergeant Mann said. “We have this process down to an exact science, so when we have more than one aircraft on the ramp, we can break into three-person teams to get the job done quicker.”

One of the oddest pieces of cargo the team recently unloaded was the Burger King van for Army and Air Force Exchange Service.

“That took a lot of time because it was somewhat awkward,” Sergeant Coomes said. “We had to use a lot of material to shore the van up as we stair-stepped it off the aircraft.”

Besides cargo, the Airmen also move more than 9,000 passengers in and out of the area each month. Although the people can “self-load” onto an aircraft, “cargo doesn’t talk back,” Sergeant Mann joked.

With the amount of traffic on the flightline, the large numbers of inbound and outbound aircraft, and large numbers of passengers moving into and out of the area, safety is extremely important while on the flightline.

“We have to make sure we adhere to all Air Force load-

ing instructions. We can’t load people on an aircraft carrying ammunition, for instance, or with a pallet of hazardous material,” Sergeant Coomes said.

Safety is also a major concern during nighttime operations, because much of the activity must be done in the dark.

“There have been some nights when you can’t see your hand in front of your face,” Sergeant Mann said. “We have a lot of briefings on safety practices, and we make sure that all the teams stay in constant communication. Everyone on the team also stays in contact with each other, and the team chief keeps track of everyone.”

Sergeants Coomes and Mann said they have a lot of pride in what they are currently doing and how they are affecting the ongoing operations against terrorists in Afghanistan.

“This is a big change from the stereotypical one weekend a month and two weeks a year,” Sergeant Mann said. “This isn’t the typical 9-to-5 job. We have all kinds of great challenges.”

This feeling pervades through the entire deployed team from New York – all of who volunteered for the year-long assignment. The 22-person Guard team spent four months at Dover AFB, Del., deployed to Bagram for four months, and then will return to Dover for the final four months.

“This is also a great opportunity to get out and see new locations,” Sergeant Coomes said. “I get a great deal of satisfaction knowing that I am helping another country become safer and give the people the opportunity to enjoy a number of those freedoms we have in the United States.”

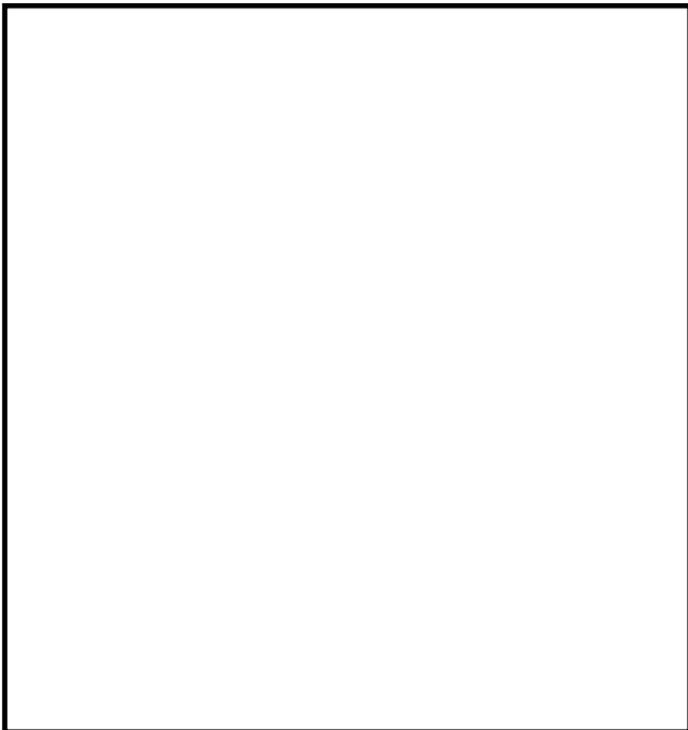




Photo by Mark Bates

Ruff competition ...

Borris, a military working dog, shows he means business as his handler, Staff Sgt. Steven Redmond, holds him back during the Pacific Air Forces Military Working Dog Competition at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. The pair is from Misawa Air Base, Japan.

New Tricare retiree dental program now providing added value

For almost six years, the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program has been helping nearly 750,000 Uniformed Services retirees – including retired members of the Guard and Reserve – and their families meet their dental health care needs.

The TRDP provides its enrollees with a comprehensive scope of benefits, including coverage for crowns, bridges, dentures, orthodontics and dental accidents as well as for routine cleanings and exams, fillings, root canals, gum treatment and oral surgery.

Service under the TRDP is available in all 50 United States as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Canada.

Enrollees in the TRDP can receive care from any licensed dentist of their choice within the service area. However, they can realize even greater savings by choosing to receive their dental care from one of the thousands of DeltaSelect USA and DeltaPreferred Option USA dentists providing treatment for TRDP enrollees.

Delta Dental of California has been administering the TRDP contract since 1998 and was awarded a new contract

with the Department of Defense last May to continue serving as the TRDP administrator through January 2008. Under this new contract, the TRDP continues to offer the same great scope of benefits, as well as:

- an increase in the annual maximum and lifetime orthodontic maximum, to \$1,200 each;
- a family deductible cap of \$150 annually;
- an enrollment commitment of only 12-months;
- a waiting period of only 12 months for coverage of crowns, bridges, dentures and orthodontics at 50 percent of the program allowable amount; and
- an expanded network of dentists in over 67,000 locations nationwide.

“We are excited about the impact the enhancements that went into effect with the contract renewal have had on the program. These enhancements have made the TRDP an even greater value to our current and potential enrollees,” says Tom McDavid, director of Federal Marketing and Communications for Delta Dental. “Since the program began in 1998, not only have we far exceeded our initial enrollment projections, but we have retained a large percentage of our original enrollee base—which means that enrollees are satisfied with the TRDP, opting to remain enrolled beyond their initial commitment, and using their program benefits.”

To receive a complete enrollment package or for more information about the TRDP, visit the web site at www.trdp.org, or call Delta toll-free at 1 (888) 838-8737.

**Please
recycle
this
newspaper**



Graduation



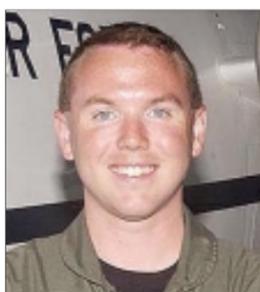
SUPT Class 04-10 graduates



1st Lt. Matthew Dudderar
C-21
Ramstein AB, Germany



1st Lt. Catherine Gillespie
T-6
Laughlin AFB



1st Lt. Sean Howlett
C-21
Peterson AFB, Colo.



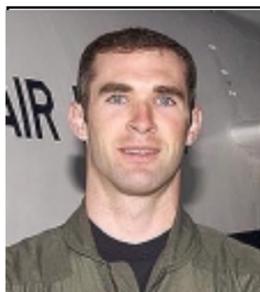
1st Lt. Ken Kirkpatrick
C-17
McGuire AFB, N.J.



1st Lt. Andrew Korsmo
T-6
Laughlin AFB



1st Lt. Alec Menoni
A-10
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.



1st Lt. Bradley Percy
KC-135 (ANG)
Phoenix



1st Lt. Benjamin Staats
F-16C
Luke AFB, Ariz.



1st Lt. Gary Wells Jr.
KC-135
Fairchild AFB, Wash.



2nd Lt. Joel Gorham
C-17
McGuire AFB, N.J.



2nd Lt. Keith Krejchik
F-16 (ANG)
Truax Field, Wis.



2nd Lt. James Lee
KC-10
McGuire AFB, N.J.



2nd Lt. Jason Little
KC-135
Grand Forks AFB, N.D.



2nd Lt. Bryan Lucero
T-1
Laughlin AFB



2nd Lt. David Myrick
C-17
McChord AFB, Wash.



2nd Lt. Daniel O'Keefe
C-17 (AFRES)
McChord AFB, Wash.



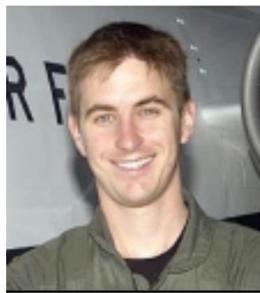
2nd Lt. Jay Pease
A-10
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.



2nd Lt. Matthew Preston
HC-130 (ANG)
West Hampton Beach, N.Y.



2nd Lt. Matthew Sayers
KC-135 (AFRES)
Selfridge ANGB, Mich.



2nd Lt. Daniel Schreck
RC-135
Offutt AFB, Neb.



2nd Lt. Bryan Struthers
KC-135
Robins AFB, Ga.

Air Force officials approve force shaping Phase II

WASHINGTON (AFP) — As personnel officials review the last remaining applications for retirement or separation under the force-shaping program, a more extensive second phase of the plan has begun.

The new initiatives include expanded waivers for a number of programs including active-duty service commitments and transferring to the Guard or Reserve through the Palace Chase program. It also includes a few new ones, most notably the return of the career job reservation program. The CJR program limits re-enlistments into the career force by constraining Air Force specialties for some first-term Airmen, officials said.

In addition, Phase II requires commanders to consider a number of quality-force factors when considering Airmen for retention. Those include correctional custody, referral reports, unfavorable information files, Article 15 action, control roster restrictions, confinement, alcohol- or drug-related offenses, and financial irresponsibility or mismanagement.

Phase II widens the aperture on the Phase I initiatives, which netted almost 2,500 Airmen approved for retirement, separation or Palace Chase, said Maj. Gen. John M. Spiegel, director of personnel policy at the Pentagon.

"Phase II is the next step in our force-shaping program to move us closer to the authorized end strength of 359,700 while rebalancing the skills," he said. "Phase I put us on a glide slope to reduce the size of the force without (worsening) manning shortages in the specialties," said Maj. Dawn Keasley, chief of retirement and separation policy at the Pentagon. "Phase II increases that momentum."

The initial goal of force shaping was to have 16,600 Airmen leave the Air Force, 3,900 officers and 13,700 enlisted. Those numbers are projected to increase to almost 19,000 by Sept. 30, and to 24,000 by Sept. 30, 2005, because of record retention rates.

General Spiegel said Phase I of the program met its objective.

"Phase I did exactly what it was supposed to do," the general said. "It allowed us to assess the level of interest and recalibrate for Phase II. Our goal is to do this drawdown as

smartly while rebalancing the force and improving manning in stressed career fields."

Phase II of the program is designed to do just that. For example, Phase I required individuals to have a minimum of 24 months on active duty before applying to Palace Chase. Phase II dropped the minimum requirement to 12 months. This modification expands the opportunity to another part of the population that might be interested in serving in the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve, Major Keasley said.

Further, the active-duty service commitment following a permanent

change of station in Phase I could be waived up to 18 months. Phase II allows for a full waiver of the commitment, officials said.

Those colonels and lieutenant colonels who would like to retire but who do not have the three-years time in grade previously required to do so are also in luck, officials said. Phase II reduces the minimum mandatory time in grade to two years for a limited number of eligible people.

The CJR program has returned for the first time since 1999. It serves a two-fold purpose, Colonel Hayden said, helping draw down the force and balance career field numbers at the

same time.

Because of this change, a greater percentage of applications will be approved in Phase II, officials said. Additionally, as part of Phase II, enlisted accessions will drop by about 11,000 to reach authorized end-strength levels by the end of fiscal 2005. Thus, about 24,000 new recruits will join the Air Force rather than 35,000 as originally planned, officials said.

"This accession cut would occur for one year only," said Maj. Gen. Peter U. Sutton, director of learning and force development at the Pentagon. "Then we will resume normal accession rates."

Laughlin prepares for 2nd phase of force shaping

Compiled from staff reports

As Phase II of the force-shaping program gets underway, Laughlin personnel officials are preparing to assist people who will be affected by any voluntary or involuntary procedures.

Involuntary separations will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and commanders, supervisors and people affected will be individually briefed, said Capt. Patricia Rodriguez-Rey, Laughlin's military personnel flight commander.

"But, the larger piece of Phase II consists of voluntary programs that personnel can apply for," she said.

The voluntary programs that will affect most people at Laughlin are the Limited Active Duty Service Commitment Waiver Program and the loosened Palace Chase restrictions, according to 1st Lt. Sara Birnbaum, MPF chief of relocations and employment.

"Everyone should have a two-year active duty service commitment from the time they arrived at Laughlin," she said. "Officers and enlisted members can apply to waive selected ADSCs, permanent change of station included, in order to pursue separation or retirement."

The lieutenant noted that just because the ADSC is waivable, doesn't necessarily mean applicants will be approved.

"The whole idea of force shaping is to selectively trim certain career fields, maintain others and make the critical career fields more robust," she said.

Other commonly-waived ADSCs include:

- Officers on their extended active duty, which is their initial ADSC, depending on their commissioning source:

- o No U.S. Air Force Academy time can be waived
- o Officer Training School can be waived for four years
- o Reserve Officer Training Corps can be waived for two years
- o Direct commissioning is fully waivable

- 18 months of enlisted promotion ADSC

- 24 months of Air Force Institute of Technology

- Expiration Term of Service is fully waivable, but there will be recoupment of unearned portions of bonuses

- Technical training ADSC is fully waivable

Other Phase II programs include:

- Increasing Palace Chase transfers to the Reserves or Air National Guard: All Air Force specialty codes are eligible to apply, including Air Force Academy graduates and officers once deferred for promotion.

- Career job reservation: Gives first-term airmen an option of retraining into critical career fields, going into the Reserves or Guard, or separating.

- Blue to green: Provides an opportunity for eligible enlisted members (E-1 to E-5) and officers (O-1 to O-3) to transfer into the active-duty U.S. Army instead of separating or applying for Palace Chase.

- Enlisted date of separation roll back: An involuntary acceleration of the DOS of airmen with specific reenlistment eligibility codes, assignment availability codes or assignment limitation codes. The Air Force Personnel Center will establish a mandatory DOS of January 15, 2005 for enlisted personnel possessing those specific codes.

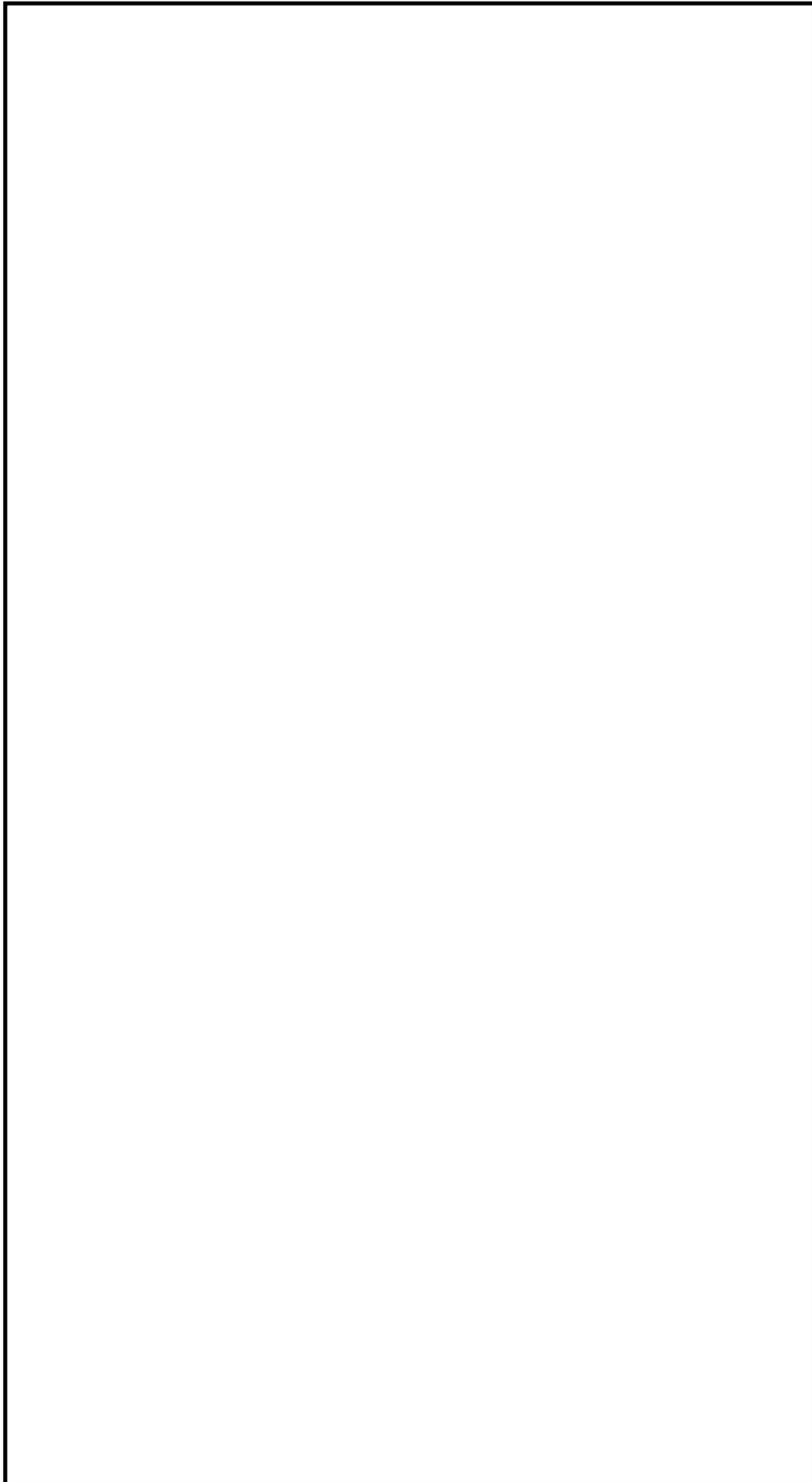
- Reclassification: An involuntary method used for enlisted members and some officers that are eliminated from training.

- Officer continuation will be restricted: For example, if a captain is going up for promotion for major and has been deferred twice for promotion, that person will only be selectively continued in the grade of captain if in a critical career field.

- High-year of tenure extensions will be restricted.

- Civil service: Personnel who want to continue to serve in the Air Force, but not in uniform, are encouraged to apply for a civil service job.

For more information about force shaping and the many options available in Phase II, call the military personnel flight at 298-5487.



Chapel information



Catholic

Monday - Friday

- Mass, 12:05 p.m.

Saturday

- Reconciliation, 4:15 p.m. or by appointment; Mass, 5 p.m.

Sunday

- Religious Education, 11 a.m.; Mass, 5 p.m.

Thursday

- Choir: 6 p.m.; Rite of Christian Initiation, 7:30 p.m.

Protestant

Wednesday

- Protestant Women of the Chapel Ladies' Bible Study, 9 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

Sunday

- Contemporary worship, 9 a.m. in the base theater; General worship, 11 a.m.

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. (Capt.) Kenneth Fisher, Evangelical Church Alliance

For more information on other denominations, chapel events or services, call 298-5111. For information on special events, see the Community Calendar on page 16.



Old Glory symbolizes America's h

Country observes Flag Day on Monday, local Airmen share personal reflections

By Capt. Paula Kurtz
Public affairs officer

Freedom. Liberty. Democracy. Service. Sacrifice.

Ask any American what the U.S. flag symbolizes, and chances are these are some of the words you'll hear.

Monday is Flag Day – the 55th annual national observance which pays tribute to the birth of the Stars and Stripes, and gives Americans an opportunity to reflect on our country, our ideals, and the personal meaning our nation's symbol holds for each of us.

When she was 16, Airman 1st Class Nellie Durkee started a morning ritual of raising the U.S. flag

in her front yard with her step father, a U.S. Army veteran who fought in Vietnam. For her, Old Glory symbolizes the heritage of our country.

"We should remember our history and where we came from, and how we had to fight to get where we are right now," said Airman Durkee, a fitness specialist assigned to the 47th Services Division.

For others, like Airman Eric Sylvester, a communications project manager in the 47th Communications Squadron, our flag symbolizes America's response to more recent events, such as the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

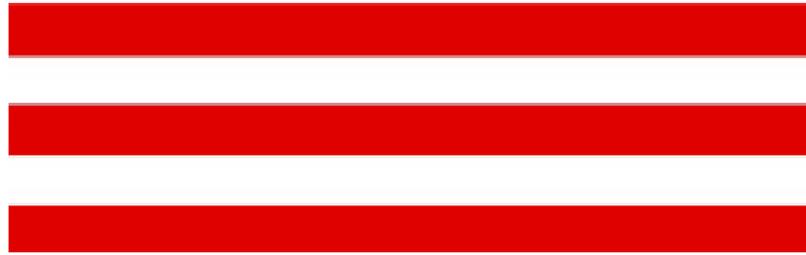
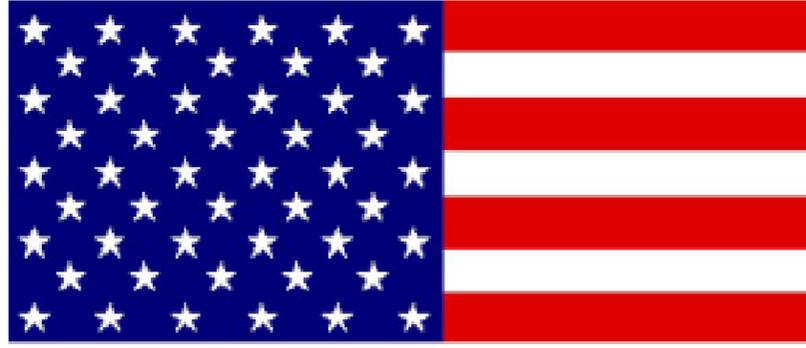
Airman Sylvester joined the Air Force last November,

"to serve my flag and my country — to serve a greater cause."

When he was young, he recalls his father paying to have a 25-foot flagpole installed in the front yard of their home, just so they could fly the red, white and blue. Although his father never served in the military, he describes him as a patriotic citizen who "served the country in other ways."

"On the way home from school, I would always stop and look up at the flag," Airman Sylvester said. "Everyone should take a moment to reflect when they pass the American flag – not just when the national anthem is playing."

Master Sgt. Jeff Scott



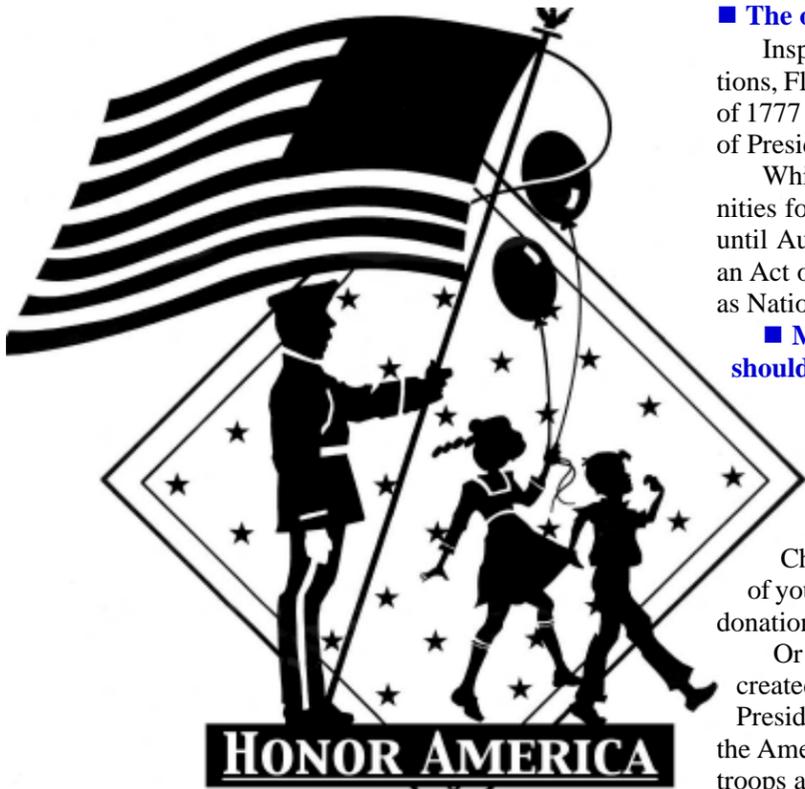
learned about honoring the Stars and Stripes in grade school, when his class would stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance every morning. When he was in fourth and fifth grades he served on a retreat detail, charged with

retiring the colors every afternoon when school was dismissed.

In 1999, nearly 30 years later, then-Technical Sgt. Scott had the honor of serving on another detail...presenting a retire-

ment fla... Pete Ho... mainten... on beha... Air For... worked... three ye... retired c...

U.S. Flag Rules and Customs



■ The origin of Flag Day

Inspired by three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially established by the Proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson on May 30, 1916.

While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as National Flag Day.

■ My flag is old and ready to be retired. What should I do?

Section 8k of the Flag Code states, "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." We recommend that you contact your local VFW Chapter and ask them for help properly disposing of your flag. And be sure to consider providing a small donation to them for their assistance.

Or you can contact your local Elks Lodge (who created the idea of Flag Day, established officially by President Truman, himself a member of the Elks) or the American Legion. Some Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops also can provide this service.

■ Is it appropriate to fly a flag that has fewer than 50 stars?

Yes. There is nothing wrong in flying a historical flag.

■ Is it okay to fly a flag that was used to drap a coffin?

The Flag Code makes no reference to this use, but consensus among experts is that yes, it would be an honor to display the flag to show patriotism.

■ My flag touched the ground. Do I need to destroy it?

No. You should try to avoid having the flag touch the ground. But if it does, correct the situation immediately. If the flag has been dirtied, clean it by hand with a mild soap solution and dry it well before returning it to use.

■ What does the fringe on the flag represent?

The gold trim is found on ceremonial flags, but is used indoors and for ceremonies only. They originally were used on military flags. The fringe has no specific significance, but is considered completely within the guidelines of proper flag etiquette.

There is nothing in the flag code indicating that the fringe is for federal government flags only. The Internet contains many sites that claim that the fringe indicates martial law or that the Constitution does not apply in that area.

These are entirely unfounded (usually citing

All information on U.S. flag protocol is courtesy Internet source:
<http://www.holidayinsights.com/other/flagday.htm>

Heritage, freedom, unity as nation

sionally to catch up on things.

“That’s something I’ll always cherish,” Sergeant Scott said of his role in the retirement ceremony. “Being able to present the flag to someone who has served for 30 years, to someone I have a lot of respect for, and knowing that flag sits on display in his house...it’s just an honor and I feel lucky to have been able to take part [in presenting it].”

Two years later, while deployed to the now closed Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, Sergeant Scott came by another flag with special meaning.

“It’s amazing the number of flags they sold at the base exchange in Saudi,” Sergeant Scott said. “People would buy them and send them up with aircrews on missions, then send them home to friends and family.”

During a period when the BX was temporarily out of

stock, a deployed friend’s father sent over some American flags from Texas. Sergeant Scott took one and sent it up on a fighter mission. Today that flag waves proudly atop a flagpole in his front yard.

While America’s citizens – both military and civilian – pay tribute to our nation’s colors in a variety of ways everyday, there is one team of individuals whose existence centers around the red, white and blue: the military honor guard.

Whether posting the colors at sporting or entertainment events, memorial ceremonies or dedications, military retirements, promotions or reenlistments, the honor guard brings with it a quiet dignity, grace and respect.

“Everything revolves around the flag,” said Technical Sgt. Anthony Williams, personal financial manager for the 47th Mission Support Squadron and Laughlin Honor Guard

trainer. “It symbolizes unity, honor, respect, history. It’s a symbol of our great nation and our symbol as Americans.”

Sergeant Williams, who has been with the Laughlin Honor Guard since 1995, recalls seeing the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery when he was just 11 years old. A New York native, he also remembers attending local July 4th parades as a kid, where local firemen, policemen or boy scouts would carry the flag down the streets lined with cheering citizens.

“The honor guard is all about carrying on a tradition,” said Sergeant Williams, who ran the 25-member all-volunteer Laughlin unit for more than two years. “And paying respects to the fallen.”

Indeed, veteran and active duty funerals are the true primary mission for the military honor guard. Laughlin’s

team members work tirelessly to perfect the folding of the flag and its presentation to family members while maintaining professional bearing – an exercise that Laughlin’s members have already repeated 17 times this year.

“It’s very difficult to present the flag to the next of kin,” said Williams, who has performed the duty on several occasions. “You don’t usually know the family, but you know it was a fellow soldier.”

Monday, as we honor the birth of our star-spangled banner, take a few moments to reflect upon its more personal meaning.

Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, delivered a 1914 Flag Day address in which he repeated words he said the flag had spoken to him that morning: “I am what you make me; nothing more. I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of color, a symbol of yourself.”

nt flag to Chief Master Sgt. te Hodge, former chief of intenance for the 47th CS, behalf of the United States r Force. Sergeant Scott rked with Chief Hodge for ee years, and says the ired chief still calls occa-

historic Executive Order 10834 and inventing text that is not part of the order) and should be dismissed as urban legends.

■ Is Texas’s the only state flag allowed to fly at the same height as the US flag?

No, this is an urban legend. All state flags may fly at the same height as the U.S. flag. The U.S. flag must be on its right (the viewer’s left), however. Texas’s laws are consistent with those of the other states.

■ Is it okay to have a flag t-shirt with words written on it?

No. Section 8d: “The flag should never be used as wearing apparel.” Section 8g: “The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.”

■ What does the Flag Code say about displaying the flag horizontally, as before a football game?

Section 8c. reads, “The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.”

However, it has become a familiar sight to have the flag carried horizontally onto a field of play as a show of patriotism.

Properly displaying the American flag

There is a right way and a wrong way to display the flag.

The American flag should be held in the highest of regards. It represents our nation and the many people who gave their lives for our country and our flag.

Here are the basics on displaying the American flag:

■ The flag is normally flown from sunrise to sunset.

■ In the morning, raise the flag briskly. At sunset, lower it slowly. Always, raise and lower it ceremoniously.

■ The flag should not be flown at night without a light on it.

■ The flag should not be flown in the rain or inclement weather.

■ After a tragedy or death, the flag is flown at half staff for 30 days. It’s called “half staff” on land, and “half mast” on a ship.

■ When flown vertically on a pole, the stars and blue field, or “union”, is at the top and at the end of the pole (away from your house).

■ The American flag is always flown at the top of the pole. Your state flag and other flags fly below it.



■ The union is always on top. When displayed in print, the stars and blue field are always on the left.

■ Never let your flag touch the ground, never...period.

■ Fold your flag when storing. Don’t just stuff it in a drawer or box.

■ When your flag is old and has seen better days, it is time to retire it. Old flags should be burned or buried. Please do not throw it in the trash.

Did you Know? There is a very special ceremony for retiring the flag by burning it. It is a ceremony everyone should see.

Your local Boy Scout group knows the proper ceremony and performs it on a regular basis. If you have an old flag, give it to them. And, attend the ceremony.

America, France pay tribute to airborne heroes

Countries honor those killed during invasion of Normandy

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

SAINTE-MERE-EGLISE, France – As the United States and France paid tribute to those killed in airborne operations during the Normandy invasion, everyone was brought close to tears and every person's chest swelled with pride here June 5.

Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, saluted the World War II veterans in the audience – most now older than 80 – and said the new generation of servicemembers is living up to their legacy. General Myers said it was a “great and deep honor and privilege to be in the company of those who made history here 60 years ago.”

He told the veterans that the United States is “grateful for your service then and your presence today.”

Part of the salute came when almost 700 of today's Soldiers and Air-

men jumped into the same drop zone that many of the veterans jumped into late June 5, 1944. Then, Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division jumped from C-47s. Today's Soldiers and Airmen jumped from C-130 Hercules, HC-130s and C-17 Globemaster IIIs.

The aircraft made three passes and every time the U.S. paratroopers began jumping, the veterans applauded.

“The best thing about this whole week has been the veterans,” said Army Sgt. Charles Cooper, an infantryman with the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Airborne Regiment of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vincenza, Italy, who was among the jumpers. “We've had some time to meet with them and hear their stories. There are men here who made four combat jumps during the war. I can't even imagine that. Anything we can do is a tribute to them.”

The airborne veterans were stunned at the reception they received from the French and from today's servicemembers.

As the veterans walked to the

grandstand at the drop zone the crowd applauded. The veterans looked around to see who famous had just walked in.

While they clearly enjoyed the attention, many seemed embarrassed by it.

It was many veterans' first time back in France since 1944. Many looked out at the peaceful fields and compared it to the first time they saw it.

“The Germans flooded this whole drop zone,” said Tom Pelluca, a 508th Infantry Regiment veteran. “They tell me about 40 guys drowned in the fields. When I landed, I was able to find three other guys. It took us four hours to get out of the water.”

Mr. Pelluca and the rest of the airborne troopers liberated Sainte-Mere-Eglise and held it against numerous counterattacks. He said he went on to fight in Holland and in the Battle of the Bulge before being wounded.

At the beginning of the tribute, the 101st Airborne Division Band played the French and American national anthems. The veterans came

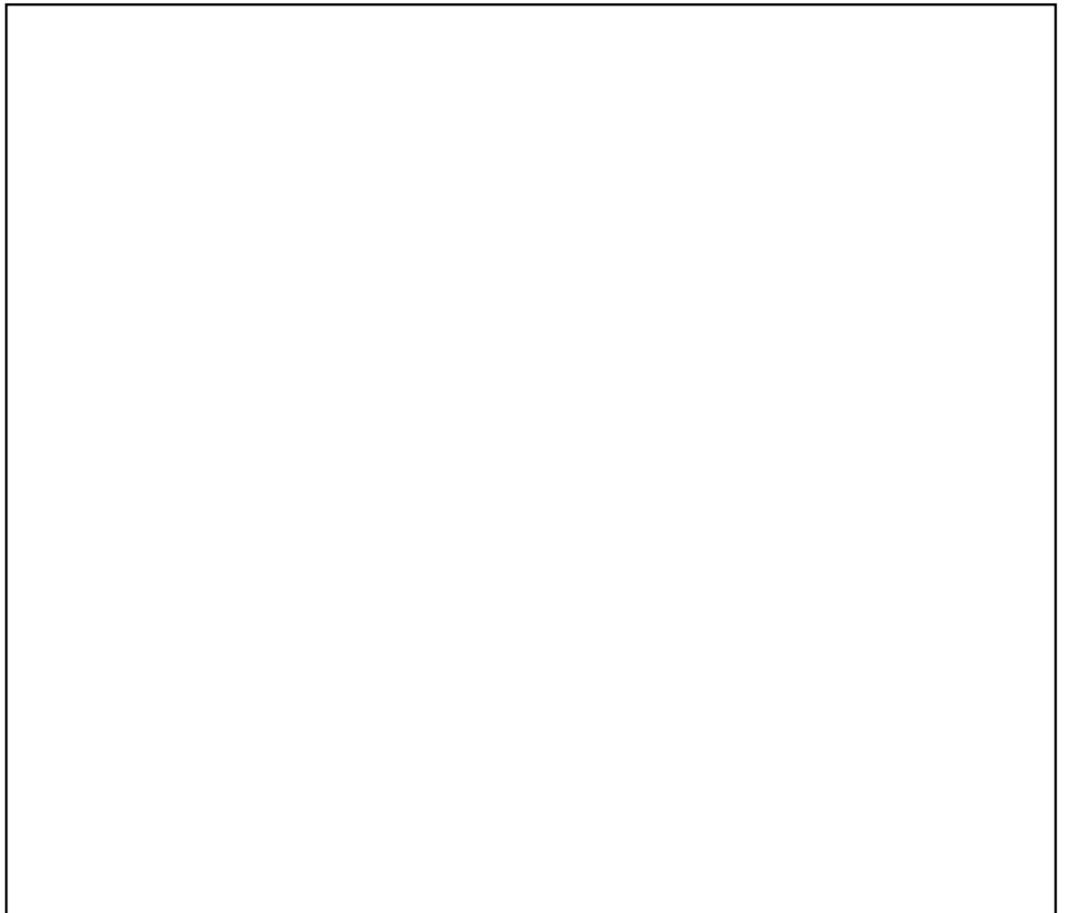
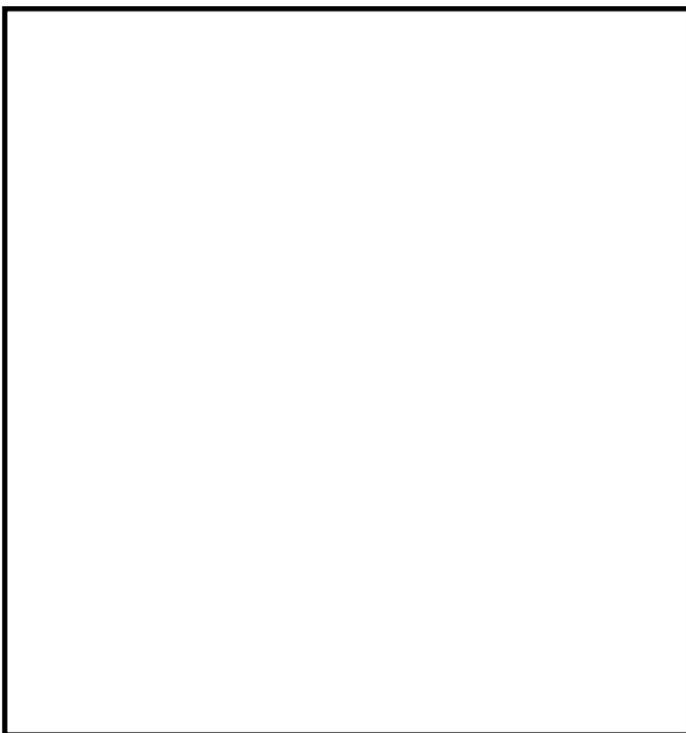
to attention and saluted, and belted out “The Star Spangled Banner” with such obvious pride and respect that many others in the crowd could not sing because they were choked up.

“These veterans are thanking us for all that we're doing for them,” said a private first class medic. “I tell them, ‘Don't thank me. I'm the one who should be thanking you.’”

Following the tribute at the drop zone, the veterans and today's paratroopers went up the hill to the statue of “Iron Mike” – the French memorial to those airborne troopers killed in the liberation of France. The mayor of Sainte-Mere-Eglise spoke of the “honor and courage” of the airborne troopers of 1944. He said his people will never forget the cost of their liberation.

Veterans joined General Myers and local officials in placing wreaths at the memorial. Veterans and today's paratroopers saluted as a bugler played “Taps.”

“People call us heroes,” said Robert Murphy, an 82nd Airborne veteran. “I wasn't a hero. The guys that didn't come back, now they were the heroes.”



The *XLer*

Senior Airman Anna Mayo
47th Flying Training Wing



Photo by Senior Airman Timothy J. Stein

Hometown: Edison, N.J.

Family: Dog, Roscoe

Time at Laughlin:

Three years and three months

Time in service:

Three years and six months

Greatest accomplishment:

Getting accepted to Angelo State University through ROTC

Hobbies: Watching football and reading

Bad habit: Trying to do too many things at one time

Favorite musician:

Hilary Duff (my guilty pleasure)

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?

Elvis, he was the king.

World War II pilot reunited with airplane

By Carl Bergquist
Air University Public Affairs

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – The year was 1946, and then Lt. Col. Ralph Knapp climbed out of his P-38 Lightning aircraft for the last time. Nearly 60 years would pass before he would again see one of his beloved airplanes.

Recently, Mr. Knapp had the thrill of revisiting one of the few remaining operational P-38s. The privately-owned aircraft lined up with other military airplanes on display here for Air War College's National Security Forum.

During World War II, Mr. Knapp, who is a volunteer at the base pharmacy, flew escort duty for American bombers flying out of England and North Africa. He was assigned to the 14th Fighter Group, 8th Army-Air Force Fighter Command.

Being around the classic fighter again brought back memories of his war experience.

In the summer of 1942, his fighter group flew from the United States to England, where they escorted B-17 Flying Fortresses, B-24 Liberators and B-26 Marauders on bombing missions over Germany and France.

Later that year, he was transferred to North Africa, flying escort for B-26 raids on islands in the Mediterranean and striking German "targets of opportunity" in the vast African desert.

While searching for targets in the desert one day, he said he discovered four German JU-88 bombers coming straight at him. The

aircraft were bombing Faid Pass in the mountains south of Tunis, Tunisia. He fired at the group of bombers, destroying one and catching the attention of the German ME-110 fighters escorting the bombers. One of the ME-110s hit his plane, forcing him to crash land in the desert.

Another close call came when one of his aircraft engines was hit during a dogfight over Tunis. He was apprehensive about trying to fly the P-38 back to his home base in Tunisia, but the aircraft took the loss of one of its two engines in stride and got him home safely.

"The P-38 was the 'Cadillac' of airplanes," said Mr. Knapp. "I had also flown P-40 Warhawks, which were hard to maneuver and hard to land. The P-38, however, was responsive and smooth, making it a joy to fly."

He said the P-38 was a remarkably durable airplane that could stand a lot of punishment; a fact appreciated by the pilots who flew the fighter during the WW II.

Steve Hinton, who operates the nation's oldest air museum and has flown vintage aircraft in many Hollywood movies, flew the P-38 to the National Security Forum aerial demonstration. He said it was a thrill to show the aircraft to Mr. Knapp and others like him who once flew the P-38.

"I enjoyed watching his face and seeing that 17-year-old smile return," he said. "When I saw that look on his face, it is obvious he was thinking back to the good times he had in the P-38."

If you know of or suspect fraud, waste and abuse, call the FWA hotline at 298-4170.

Commander's Access Channel
Tune to **Cable Channel 34** for up-to-date information about events and activities at Laughlin.



The Air Force rewards good ideas with money.

Check out the IDEA Program data system at [https://](https://ideas.randolph.af.mil)

ideas.randolph.af.mil or call Tech. Sgt. Thomas Mayo at 298-4355.

Software helps Airmen track fitness progress

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

WASHINGTON – The Air Force recently released a tool to help Airmen keep track of their fitness efforts.

The Air Force Fitness Management System is available to all Airmen through the Air Force Portal. The system provides a history of their fitness scores and allows unit fitness managers to enter new scores. It is now the official method to track fitness progress within the Air Force, said Maj. Maureen Harback, the system's program coordinator.

"The purpose of the (system) is to track fitness-assessment results and provide data to commanders," Major Harback said. The system is intended for active-duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen.

The system will keep a history of each Airman's fitness scores. The data is not stored on paper in an Airman's record or even on a computer at an Airman's installation, but rather in an Air Force-wide database. This allows

fitness scores to travel with Airmen automatically as they change stations. The universal availability of the data helps ensure Airmen stay current on their fitness assessments, Major Harback said.

"If an Airman transfers to another base and is not current on their fitness assessment, they will show up as not current in the (system)," Major Harback said. "Unit fitness program managers and commanders will then need to take action on those members." Many units are still doing monthly practice assessments so Airmen can get themselves into shape for an official assessment. The system does not record practice assessments, but it does include a calculator allowing Airmen to enter in numbers from their practice assessments to see how they would score, Major Harback said.

"Airmen will have better visibility of their fitness over time, and they can take actions to address their deficiencies or continue working on their strengths," she said.

This fall, commanders will be able

to generate reports to track an Airman's progress through education and inter-

vention programs, Major Harback said.

Test results give snapshot of fitness level, disease risk

By Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill
Public Affairs

The Air Force Fitness Management System, accessed through the Air Force Portal, does not necessarily track a member's fitness, according to Bill Goins, Laughlin's exercise physiologist. The system tracks fitness test results.

Mr. Goins emphasized that the test is just a tool to give a snapshot of an individual's fitness and disease risk level.

"That snapshot cannot imply that an individual should be comfortable with their fitness level," he said. "Everyone can strive for improvement regardless of their test results."

The exercise physiologist said that the classes and programs aimed to help members improve their fitness are very beneficial.

"However," he said, "it still comes down to the individual making healthier lifestyle choices."

Mr. Goins added that the new Air Force Fitness Program involves three unit, squadron physical training sessions per week, but for those people who need to improve, that will not cut it.

"Three times per week is great for maintenance, but it will not result in the marked improvement the individual expects," he said. "They must build in an extra day or two per week on their own."



Photo by Senior Airman Timothy J. Stein

It's in the hole ...

Lew Nunley, Lear Seagler Inc., attempts a putt on the ninth green of Leaning Pine Golf Course June 5 during the Maintenance Director's Golf Tournament. Mr. Nunley made the shot giving his team a birdie on the hole.

Use protection when playing outdoors

Health commentary by
Bill Goins

47th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron exercise physiologist

How many of you have fallen asleep in the sun at one time or another and paid for it? You remember, that sunburn that turned your skin a shade past red to almost purple. It hurt to even lie in bed and try to sleep. How about the attempt at a shower the next day? OUCH!

Well, if you haven't heard, there is a neat thing called sunscreen that can prevent that unbearable feeling. But what is it about sunscreen that allows it to ensure your safe and comfortable enjoyment in the sun?

The ingredients in sunscreen protect the skin by either absorbing or blocking and scattering ultraviolet radiation. Sunscreens are rated by the Sun Protection Factor system. The SPF rating is primarily the amount of UVB protection the sunscreen provides. The rating indicates how much longer a person can be in the sun before burning than when not wearing sunscreen.

For example: Suppose you are like me, and about 10 minutes in the sun results in smoke, and 15 minutes is a guaranteed bar-b-que if I don't wear sunscreen. When using sunscreen, I can stay in the sun for 10 minutes multiplied by the SPF rating. So if I use a sunscreen rated SPF15, I should be able to stay in the sun for approximately 150 min-

utes before beginning to burn. Re-applying sunscreen reinforces the protection although it does not extend the time you can remain in the sun.

Don't forget a hat and sunglasses! People that do use sunscreen tend to smear it all over their body and then do not cover their head. A hat is like sunscreen for your melon. Sunglasses are like sunscreen for your eyes. Those same UV rays that burn your skin also damage your eyes.

If you felt a sunburn on your eyes the same way you do on your skin, you would definitely wear sunglasses.

It is still advisable to try to remain as covered as possible when in the sun to prevent skin cancer or the aging effects of the harmful UV rays.

Remember, you should always consult your physician when choosing the proper sunscreen. Especially if you are taking any medications that could result in photosensitivity.

Bottom line is this: Have fun in the sun ... but do it wisely. Getting a little extra burn so you have some color can be very dangerous over time. Slap on the sunscreen to protect yourself from skin cancer and aging.

If you have a question for the exercise physiologist, please send your written question (please print legibly) to 47ADS/SGGZ, Attn: Mr. Bill Goins.

87th FTS defeats 84/85th FTS in volleyball championship

By Senior Airman
Timothy J. Stein
Editor

The 87th Flying Training Squadron held on to defeat the combined team of the 84th and 85th FTS in the championship match of the 2004 intramural volleyball season at the XL Fitness Center June 3.

The 84/85th, having lost one match in the playoffs al-

ready, would have had to win two best-of-three matches against the undefeated 87th squad in order to take the title. They won the first and came within five points of winning the second.

The first match went down to the wire. The 84/85th won the first game 26-24 in a contest which took almost half the time off the 50-minute clock. The 87th

rebounded with a 25-21 win, tying the match. With only 7:19 to play the final match, the 84/85th pulled out the victory in the game when the clock ran out and they were up 13-8. They got the game and the match.

After a 15-minute break the teams took the court again for the second match.

The 84/85th again stole the first game 26-24. The second match came down

the wire with both teams playing their best volleyball of the night. The 87th kept a slight lead for the entire match until the 84/85th tied it up at 23. With their backs to the wall, the 87th pulled off two massive spikes in a row to take the game 25-23.

With plenty of time on the clock, the third and deciding game would be played to 15 points. The 87th jumped to a quick 4-1

lead, but the 84/85th quickly came back and tied it up at 5. The teams battled back and forth for a minute with the 87th taking a slight 10-7 advantage.

The 84/85th couldn't hold off the surging 87th any longer.

With some excellent spikes and unfortunate serves by the 84/85th, the 87th took the game 15-10, and the championship 2-1.