

Gulf Wing

The background image is a high-angle shot from inside a military helicopter, looking out through the open cargo door. Several soldiers in camouflage uniforms are visible, some standing on the metal floor of the cargo bay and others suspended in the air by ropes and harnesses. Below them, a vast landscape of green fields and a winding road is visible under a clear blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of active military operations.

403rd Wing, Keesler AFB, Miss.
Air Force Reserve Command

Home of the Flying Jennies & the Hurricane Hunters
Volume 26, Issue 6, July 2005

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Air Force Tweaks Fitness Test

Air Force and outside health officials have taken a good look at the service's new fitness program and made a number of recommendations for improvement, including adding height and weight into the standard for measuring abdominal circumference. **Read more on Page 6.**

"Jennies" Shine in City of Light

The C-130J-30 made its first appearance in the Paris venue at the 2005 Paris International Air Show, the world's oldest and largest air show. **Read more on Pages 8-11.**



AGE: Charged With a Mission

The 403rd Maintenance Squadron's Aerospace Ground Equipment shop is charged with providing a variety of equipment aircrews and maintainers needed to fly and make repairs. **Read more on Pages 12-13.**

Legend of the Dance

Visitors to Keesler's Asian American Heritage celebration learned more about the culture. The legendary Tinikling dance fluttered its way to the Keesler Club, where Asian reservists and active duty members celebrated their culture with a list of festivities at the Asian American Heritage Group's Cultural Extravaganza. **Read more on Pages 14-15.**

Register Civilian Employment Data

Time is running out for about 15,000 Air Force reservists in the Selected Reserve to comply with a DoD directive. **Read more on Page 16.**

Cover Page



Courtesy Photo

Jennies Deliver

The 815th Airlift Squadron is currently assisting Air Mobility Command in Limited User Tests with the Army. A crew recently traveled to Pope AFB, N.C. to conduct combination drops such as the one above. **Read more on Page 7.**

UTA DATE CHANGE

The November UTA is changed to Oct. 29-30.

Volume 26, Issue 7

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Gulf Wing Awards

1st Place, Best Magazine, Air Force Media Contest, 2003, 2004
1st Place, Best Command Publication, AFRC Media Contest, 2004
1st Place, Best Magazine, AFRC Media Contest, 1989, 2003, 2004

Gulf Wing Salutes

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Pay Date
Aug. 3
Next UTA
Aug. 6-7



Courtesy Photo

The Second Annual Chief Master Sergeant Darrell Klein Award was presented to Senior Master Sergeant Michael A. Watson during the last Wing Commander's Call. Sergeant Watson is an Evaluator/Loadmaster for the 403rd Operations Group. This annual award recognizes the aviator assigned to the 403rd Wing who best demonstrates aviation excellence, exemplary dedication to duty, and profound service to the nation as a Citizen Airman.



Photo by SSgt. James B. Pritchett



Photo by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce

(Top) Congressman Gene Taylor, talks with people from the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron during the June UTA. He presented the unit with a proclamation in honor of the Hurricane Hunter's work during the busy 2004 hurricane season. (Above) Lil' Bill, the 403rd Wing's miniature C-130 is getting a facelift. He will soon get a new tactical gray paint job to match his bigger siblings on the flight line.



Photo by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce

Flying Jennies attended a recent reunion in Biloxi to discuss airlift heritage with former Blind Bats who served during the Vietnam War. The Bats traveled from around the nation for their second official reunion, which was held at the Biloxi Beach Resort according to Ralph Kroch, reunion coordinator (left) as he reminisces with buddy, Charlie Kent. The code name Blind Bat was derived from their top-secret mission, which was to fly blacked out at night and drop flares from C-130s over Vietnam to light the sky for fighter air strikes.



Photo by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce

Lt. Col. Mike Odom (right), escorts a cameraman from WLOX on the flightline during a media event in June. Colonel Odom, who served as the Director of Public Affairs for the 403rd Wing since September 1993, recently left the unit for a new position as the Deputy of the Advocacy Division, Air Force Directorate Future Total Force. During his tenure at the 403rd Wing, he led the Public Affairs Office to more than 65 individual and team awards.



Photo by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce



Courtesy Photo, 403rd MXS

While at Maxwell AFB, Ala. maintainers from the 403rd MXS had a chance to see an F-117 Nighthawk precision strike aircraft on the flightline.

Getting a head start, Senior Airman David West, 81st Civil Engineering Squadron, boards up all the windows on the 403rd Wing building July 7 in preparation for Hurricane Dennis. When a hurricane poses a potential threat to Keesler, 81st CES boards up all shelters and squadron buildings.



Photos by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce

Chaplain (Capt.) Timothy Broughton, 403rd Wing, takes the sit-up portion of the fitness test. Exercise and healthy eating are key components of the service's fitness program designed to make the force healthier overall and more physically capable during contingencies.



Staff Sgt. Michael Coates, 403rd Maintenance Squadron, runs toward the finish line during fitness testing. The Air Force is revamping certain portions of the evaluation process including the addition of a height and weight standard.

Time for a Tweak

Officials propose changes to Air Force's fitness program

Air Force and outside health officials have taken a good look at the service's new fitness program and made a number of recommendations for improvement, including adding height and weight into the standard for measuring abdominal circumference.

The new fitness program encourages all members of the Air Force team to make exercising and eating right a permanent part of their lives. The program's new fitness test, implemented in January 2004, measures aerobic fitness with a 1.5-mile run, body composition with waist size, and muscle fitness with push-ups and sit-ups.

The overall maximum score possible is 100 points, with 50 points possible for the run, 30 points for the abdominal measurement, and 10 points each for the sit-ups and push-ups.

Air Force health officials and experts from a number of outside agencies and universities have completed their first assessment of the new fitness program and decided to award full points on the body composition component of the test if the body mass index is within a healthy range - between 19 and 25. This change is being made to accommodate Airmen unable to obtain the minimum abdominal circumference but who are still at a normal weight for their height.

The Air Force originally disregarded height and weight as part of the body composition standard based on the belief that waist size is an indicator of health, regardless of how tall a person is.

Personal fitness scores and information are available on the Air Force Portal. Look for AF Fitness Management System.

Air Force News Service

Jennies deliver in Army drop testing

The 815th Airlift Squadron is currently supporting Air Mobility Command in Limited User Tests of the C-130J-30.

These tests are designed to ensure the longer aircraft are able to meet the needs of the Army, a top user of the Air Force's airlift capabilities. Among the missions the unit has supported

recently are High Altitude Low Opening airdrop of personnel as well as combination drops of personnel and equipment such as Containerized Delivery System bundles and Special Forces' Combat Rubber Raiding Craft, a palletized boat filled with equipment the troops use for their missions. Super drops of 24 CDS bundles were also

conducted.

In addition, some of the unit's Procedures Development and Evaluation loadmasters are assisting at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. in testing of the aircraft's ability to drop heavy equipment and combinations of heavy equipment. All testing completed to date has been successful.



An Army jumpmaster from Special Operations Command gets into position to check conditions for his troops. These skilled paratroopers are able to exit the aircraft from the cargo ramp while most paratroops exit from the side paratroop doors.



An Army Combat Rubber Raiding Craft rolls toward the sky during a recent mission supported by the 815th Airlift Squadron. In addition to dropping the equipment, the crew also flew Special Operations troops from the Army who parachuted from the aircraft after the equipment was airdropped.



Master Sgt. Will Boedecker, loadmaster, 41st Aerial Port Squadron, assists Army Special Forces paratroopers during a recent test mission at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Loadmasters wear parachutes during airdrops or harnesses to ensure their safety while assisting the troops or preparing equipment for delivery.

Photos by SMSgt. Todd Patterson, 815th AS

"Jennies" shine in City of Light

By Tech. Sgt. James B. Pritchett
403rd Wing Public Affairs

Le BOURGET, France—Stronger muscles, a stretched body and a vastly more intelligent brain made the C-130J-30 an attraction at the 2005 Paris International Air Show. The U.S. Air Force's newest airlifter is making its first appearance at the Paris venue, the world's oldest and largest air show.

"This aircraft has more powerful and more efficient engines than previous versions of the C-130," said Maj. Brian Freeman, pilot and aircraft commander for the 815th Airlift Squadron's mission to France. "The stretched fuselage provides an increased cargo capacity that makes this version of the Hercules unique. In addition, the J-model has a robust avionics system that enhances situational awareness and allows us to operate with a crew of only three: two pilots and a loadmaster."

Aircrew from the 815th AS and crew chiefs from the 403rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron arrived here over the weekend to provide a static display in support of the Department of Defense's presence. In addition to these Reservists from Air Force Reserve Command's 403rd Wing, there were representatives from the U.S. Army and Navy as well as active duty Air Force. The DoD contingent was supported by U.S. European Command.

Thousands of trade and media visitors got their first look at the Herc on the opening day of the show. About 1,000 people per day toured the aircraft, asking questions and taking photos. The trade show and media visits ended after five days. Two additional days were set aside for the public show where crew members greeted throngs of visitors and told them about the enhanced cargo handling system, maintenance computer system and the modernized flight deck of the aircraft.

"The feature on the flight deck that gets the most positive reaction is the Heads Up Display," said Major Freeman. "The HUD places all the attitude, heading and navigation informa-

tion that we need to fly the aircraft right in front of our eyes, without having to look down at the instrument panel."

While the J-model appears similar to its predecessors from the outside, it is a wholly redesigned aircraft that builds on the reputation

of its lineage. The C-130 has long been respected for its ability to land and takeoff with heavy payloads under the most austere conditions.

Visiting military personnel found the culture and cuisine of Paris inviting. Air show visitors welcomed the American crews, stopping to talk with them and having their pictures taken with the aircraft.

Each member of the team from the 403rd Wing pitched in to do their part during the gruelling 7-day show.

Major Freeman and 1st Lt. William Miller conducted many tours of the aircraft for international visitors as well as interested aviation enthusiasts.

Crew Chiefs Tech. Sgt. Scott Sigworth and Tech. Sgt. Brett Keeley,

of the 403rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, used their skills to arrange and rearrange U.S. aircraft, moved heavy equipment such as generators, performed maintenance on some equipment and spent many off hours assisting with behind the scenes duties for the USAFE team in addition to helping out with visitors.

For one Co-pilot, the air show was an opportunity to practice his French. Capt. Todd Humphries called on lessons learned in high school and college French classes to converse with many visitors in their own language. Visitors were impressed with his willingness to engage them in conversation.

Loadmasters, Senior Master Sgt. Todd Patterson and Master Sgt. Dave Cooper spent much of their time on the tarmac talking with visitors, explaining the intricacies of the new cargo handling systems and offering American hospitality to international visitors. During the public days, Sergeant Patterson and Sergeant Cooper applied thousands of Flying Jennies temporary tattoos to children thronging around the U.S. Military corral.

"This event is the perfect platform for enhancing relationships with our NATO partners, laying the foundation for interoperability, and possibly developing future coalition partnerships," said Major Freeman.

The Hercules crew briefed leaders of international governments and air forces from the Czech Republic, Austria, Ireland, Lithuania, Canada and several others.

(Center) Tech. Sgt. Scott Sigworth ground guides the C-130J-30 into place. (Facing Page) The Eiffel Tower as seen from a Parisian Street. See more photos next page.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. James B. Pritchett



Tech. Sgt. Scott Sigworth, crew chief, 403rd AMXS, rides in the pilot's seat and steers the aircraft while airshow personnel tow the C-130J-30 into position for the 2005 Paris Airshow. Sergeant Sigworth and fellow crew chief, Tech. Sgt. Brett Keeley used their skills to assist DoD airshow participants in getting the U.S. military aircraft in place.



Aircrew for the 2005 Paris Airshow were (left to right) Tech. Sgt. Brett Keeley, Tech. Sgt. Scott Sigworth, Master Sgt. Dave Cooper, Senior Master Sgt. Todd Patterson, 1st Lt. William Miller, Capt. Todd Humphries and Maj. Brian Freeman.



(Top) Master Sgt. Dave Cooper spent many hours talking with aerospace industry representatives and the general public about the mission of the Flying Jennies and about the Air Force's newest airlifter.

(Above) Senior Master Sgt. Todd Patterson, applies a temporary tattoo of the 815th's squadron emblem on a child attending the air show. Patterson and other crew members applied thousands of tattoos over a two-day period.

(Top) After a rousing show for the public and U.S. troops providing support at the Paris Air Show 2005, the Liberty Belles (Linda Sue Moshier, Victoria Reed and Jennifer Johns) took a tour of U.S. military aircraft to include this C-130J-30 from the 815th Airlift Squadron. The Liberty Belles are a nostalgic 1940s USO troupe reminiscent of the "Andrews Sisters." They put on two shows sponsored by BAE Systems and talked and visited with hundreds of air show visitors June 17.

(Center) Capt. Todd Humphries, relied on his high school and college studies of French to ingratiate himself and the C-130J crew with the public. The captain was the only crew member with rudimentary French language skills which proved a benefit at the air show and during crew down time.

(Above) Joseph and Antoinette Kneeneighbor spent a day of their honeymoon at the Paris Air Show. The natives of Chapel Hill, N.C. received a full tour of all the U.S. aircraft in the Department of Defense corral and talked with the American crews from the Navy, Army and Air Force.

Behind the scenes team provides performance power to C-130 aircrews of the 403rd Wing

AGE: Charged with a mission

By SSgt. J. Justin Pearce
Staff Writer

It takes a whole team to keep the 403rd Wing's complement of C-130s flying.

There is a team working in the bowels of a hangar that gives them the juice they need to launch.

The 403rd Maintenance Squadron's Aerospace Ground Equipment shop is charged with providing a variety of equipment aircrews and maintainers need to fly and make repairs.

AGE troops fire up generators that supply power to the aircraft. One of their other missions is to main-

tain and provide heaters and air conditioners to control temperatures inside the aircraft when they are on the ground. They also furnish a host of machines like air compressors and maintenance stands used in inspection and repair processes.

"A lot of times mechanics working on aircraft need things too, things that we have, like an air conditioner for a C-130 because they have no cool air when they're parked on the flight line," said Tech. Sgt. Tom Henderson, an AGE mechanic.

Keeping all of their equipment up and running

is important to the Wing's mission. The AGE troops use a variety of test equipment to ensure peak performance.

Tech. Sgt. Clarence White uses a box-shaped device to test the integrity of generators.

"The machine is like a mini-plane," said Tech Sgt. Clarence White, as he adjusted the frequencies and volts on the power unit to see if it could handle the various stress loads it would encounter on a real aircraft.

With the Keesler flight line back in action, the familiar drone of AGE equipment once again fills the air.

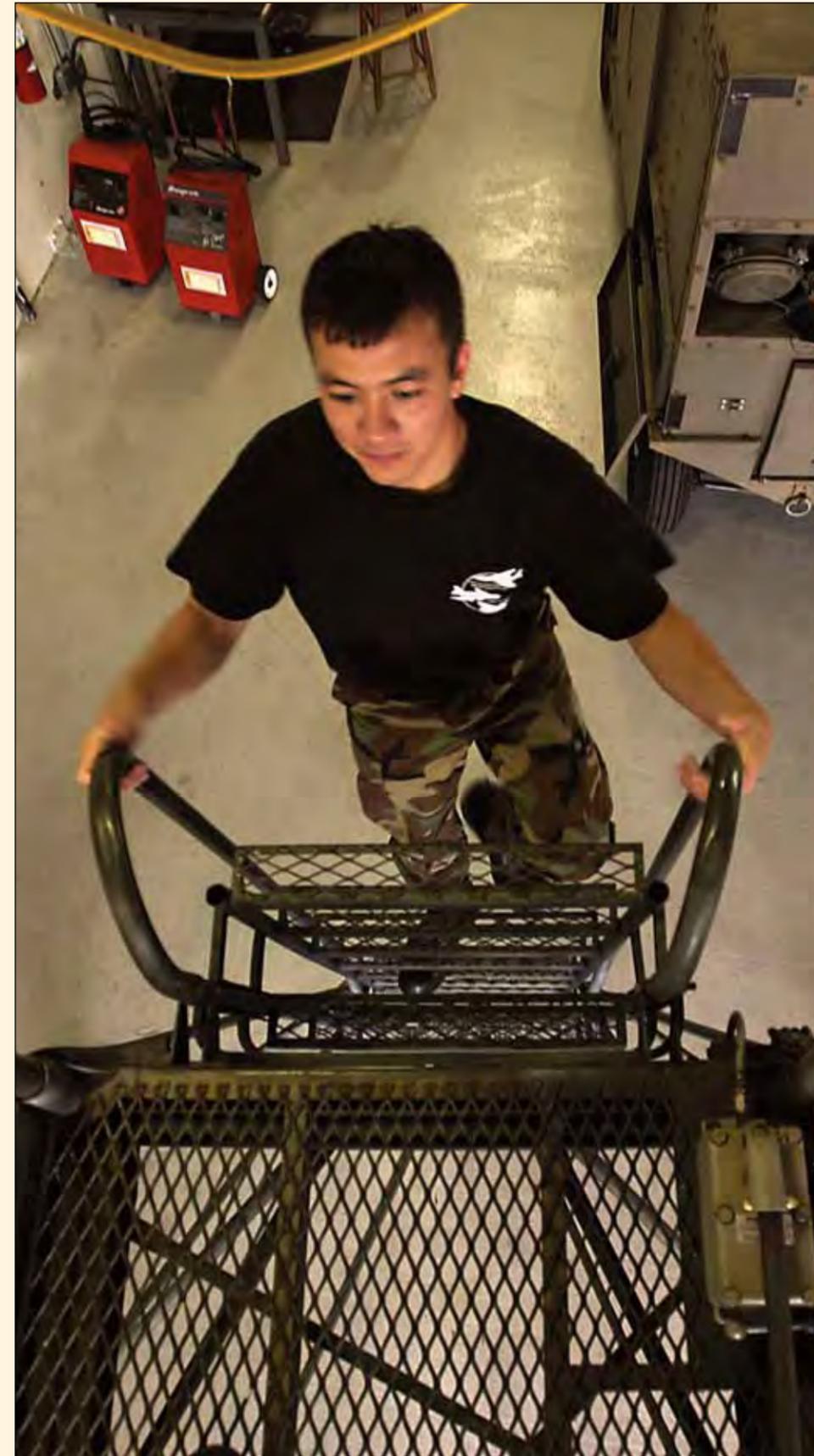


Making sure the equipment does what it's supposed to do is a whole job in itself for AGE. Mechanics must constantly check and monitor equipment to assure it performs how it should



Staff Sgt. Joe Heddings, an AGE mechanic at the 403rd Maintenance Squadron, installs an air compressor relay into an air conditioning unit. Sergeant Heddings attends the University of Southern Alabama and is an engineering major.

Photos by SSgt. Linda Baum, 403rd AMXS UPAR



Sergeant Heddings climbs a stand to check a hydraulic hand pump, which supplies hydraulic pressure used to raise the stand. Sergeant Heddings' interest in mechanics sparked at an early age from his father who owned an auto repair shop.

Legend Of The Dance

Reservists celebrate Asian Pacific Heritage Month

By SSgt. J. Justin Pearce
Staff Writer

For centuries, a tiny feathered fowl has lived on the farms of the Philippine Islands. Known as Tinikling birds, these playful creatures entertained farmers from sun up to sun down as the planters tended their fields. Blowing winds would sway bamboo trees like pendulums on grandfather clocks and as the shoots swayed, Tinikling birds fluttered gracefully through them like figure skaters in the air.

This simplistic observation eventually gave birth to the Tinikling dance, a dance that mimics the gracefulness of the Tinikling bird and embedded itself in the Filipino culture for centuries.

The Tinikling dance fluttered its way to the Keesler Club, where Asian Reservists and active duty Airmen cele-

brated their culture with a host of festivities at the Asian American Heritage Group's Cultural Extravaganza.

"We do this because we were raised overseas, but our children are growing up in the states, and this bridges the gap and allows them to become a part of the Filipino culture as well," said Master Sgt. Martin Young, an evaluator for the 81st Training Group. Sergeant Young and his family participated with others in the Tinikling dance.

After filling their plates with a variety of ethnic entrees and snacks stretched across a 20 foot table, attendees relaxed and watched performances like the Tinikling, Hawaiian and Hula dances, as well as Tae Kwon Do demonstrations. The Tinikling dance is performed with four or more people - one holding each end of a pair of bamboo sticks and two or more dancing. As the music plays, the dancers weave in and out of the bamboo sticks, and as the tempo increases, so does the dancers' speed.

The Tinikling dance has become a symbol of the Filipino culture. Now, adults and children participate in the dance, with ladies wearing traditional dresses and men wearing traditional clothing of the Filipino farmers.



Photos by SSgt. J. Justin Pearce



(Above) Sergeant Young and his family have danced the Tinikling dance for the second year in a row, and said they will continue to in honor of their heritage.

(Left) Master Sgt. Bienvenido Lumban, NCOIC of TRICARE, has been dancing the Tinikling dance with his family for five years. Sergeant Lumban said he loves the way the cultural extravaganza brings family, friends and the community together.

(Bottom left) Monti Young, 14, participated in the dance with her mother Master Sgt. Ruby Young, a Reservist with the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, and her brother Rynah, 16.

(Below) Members of the Tinikling dance perform throughout the year at various local events, including Our Lady of Fatima's Spring Festival and Stennis Space Center's cultural celebration.



Defense Department approves criteria, wear of decorations

The Department of Defense has approved several new medals and ribbons since Sept. 11, 2001 leaving Airmen with many questions about the criteria for earning these decorations and when they are allowed to wear them.

Air Force Personnel Center officials are currently conducting mass updates for eligible members. This process can take time before it is reflected on the personnel center's website.

Airmen who believe they are eligible for the decoration may wear it, but must be sure they meet the criteria for it. Wear of these decorations is on an "integrity" basis. Personnel officials are advising Airmen to keep all documentation (travel voucher, orders, etc.) that show justification and to purchase the medals and ribbons as they become available at clothing sales.

Once this mass update is completed, all future updates will be required to originate with the Airman's servicing Military Personnel Flight.

In March 2003, President Bush approved the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal for award to Air Force active duty Airmen, Reservists, and Guardsmen as recognition for their service in the Global War on Terrorism.

Original criteria for this medal was published in 2004, but a new directive was issued May 25 authorized by Executive Order 13289, that all United States Military members assigned to the Selected Reserve, Participating Individual Ready Reserve, AGR, Active Duty of the Air Force Reserve Command and Office of the Air Force Reserve Command on or after Sept. 11, 2001 to a date to be determined in the future are awarded the GWOT-S.

"AFPC conducted a mass update for all who qualify. There are no devices



associated with this medal and no preference points," according to 1st Lt. Shari Crenshaw, deputy, 403rd MPF.

"The MPF is in the process of obtaining medals for all members assigned, but the ribbons will have to be purchased at the Airman's expense. Any Airman who would like the medal, should contact their commander's support staff or unit awards and decorations monitor," she said.

In addition to this medal, many Airmen may qualify to wear the Afghanistan, Iraqi campaign medals which apply to active-duty Airmen, Reservists and Guardsmen deployed on or after Oct. 24, 2001, for Operation Enduring Freedom and March 19, 2003, for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Airmen must have been assigned, attached or mobilized to units operating in Afghanistan or Iraq for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days to be eligible.

There are specific criteria for these medals including rules regarding the number of medals issued for a specific action. For more information about these medals and the criteria for wear, see the article on AFPC's website at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/pubaffairs/release/2005/06/newmedals.htm

AFPC officials will do a mass system update in August to convert GWOT-E medals to campaign medals for Airmen who are eligible.

Airmen who do not want the GWOT-E medal converted need to notify their commander's support staff or unit awards and decorations monitor.

"The Afghanistan and Iraq medals are not currently available for distribution from the MPF, but the GWOT-E (medal only) is available and should be requested through your CSS," said Lieutenant Crenshaw.

"Airmen who deploy or were activated in support of any operation should retain a copy of their orders and/or paid travel voucher for verification," she said.

After update is complete, members should verify their records on the Virtual MPF to ensure it reflects the decoration.

Please direct any questions pertaining to these decorations to Lieutenant Crenshaw at shari.crenshaw@keesler.af.mil.

403rd MPF

Airmen required to register data on civilian jobs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Time is running out for about 15,000 Air Force Reservists in the Selected Reserve to comply with a Department of Defense directive.

Oct. 31 is the deadline for Reservists who are paid for training to register information about their civilian place of employment. Some 60,000 of these Airmen, roughly 80 percent of the force, provided that information as of May.

"This past year we've made significant progress in employment-related data collection," wrote Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, in a May 9 memorandum about the program.

"However, despite our collective efforts, we fell short of the established Department of Defense goal of 75 percent for the Selected Reserve by December 2004," he said.

The Air Force Reserve fell short primarily because of system problems during the program startup, which caused inaccurate data files and an ineffective management tool for commanders.

The general and his personnel staff believe these problems no longer exist and urge reservists to register online as soon as possible by going to <http://www.afrc.af.mil/reserveinfo.htm>

Unlike previous military service efforts to voluntarily gather employer data, the CEI program is mandatory. Reservists who knowingly fail or refuse to provide their employment-related information, or provide false information, may be subject to administrative action.

AFRC News Service

Changes to SGLI

President Bush signed into law May 11 an \$82 billion supplemental legislation raising the maximum Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage from \$250,000 to \$400,000 and providing payouts of up to \$100,000 for people with traumatic injuries.

In a new twist introduced through the legislation, troops with dependents must get their spouse's approval to purchase less than the full amount of SGLI coverage.

If a person is not married, the designated beneficiary will receive notice when the person purchases less than the maximum coverage.

The increased SGLI coverage will start Sept. 1, and the so-called "traumatic SGLI" benefit will begin Dec. 1.

The legislation directs that both benefits will be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001. Traumatic SGLI benefits will be retroactive for troops who have lost limbs, eyesight or speech or received other traumatic injuries as a direct result of injuries received during Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

The benefit does not apply to people suffering from disease.

One Stop TRICARE

The Air Force Reserve Contact Center in Denver is the sole point of contact for Air Force reservists to enroll in Tricare Reserve Select.

This is the first time the Air Reserve Personnel Center has been able to provide a service to all reservists under the Air Force Personnel Service Delivery Transformation Shared Services Organization model, a centralized personnel service.

The Fiscal 2005 National Defense Authorization Act established Tricare Reserve Select for reservists who served on active duty in support of a contingency anytime since Sept. 11, 2001. The Tricare website - www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve

/reserveselect- has further details.

Catholic Mass

The Catholic Mass schedule for base chapels is 8:30 a.m. at the Medical Center Chapel on the second floor of the hospital and 10 a.m. at the Triangle Chapel.

MPF Hours

Military Personnel Flight customer service hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday, and 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on UTA weekends.

This section serves as the initial point of contact between the customer and other MPF work centers. It also administers the casualty assistance program, family member dental plan, identification card benefits and privileges and assists personnel with immigration and naturalization services.

This section is also point of contact for the Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, establishing and maintaining the unit personnel record group, and awards and decorations.

Medical Jobs

A new Air Force Reserve Health Professions Recruiter, Tech. Sgt. George Adams, is now based at Keesler in the Sablich Center.

The Air Force Reserve is in search of qualified health professionals to join its highly skilled teams.

Unit members are encouraged to use the Get One Program www.afreserve.com/getone to submit potential applicants and receive recognition.

The following critical AFSCs are available in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida units: 44M3, 44Y3, 46F3, 46P3, 47G3, and 48R3.

Applicants may even be eligible for a signing bonus or loan repayment.

For information and eligibility criteria, contact Sergeant Adams at 228-377-8332 or e-mail george.adams@keesler.af.mil

Targeting Abuse

Servicemembers who are victims of sexual assault or who need information on the Defense Department policy on preventing sexual assaults can find the information at a new website launched by Joint Task Force Sexual Assault Prevention and

Response. The site can be located at sapr.mil - rather than use something like "sexualassault.mil" to prevent blocking by firewalls.

For more information, read the Air Force Print News story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123010819>.

Gulf Wing Reflections

Originally printed in the wing magazine, July 1990



File Photo

Combat Glide

Senior Airman Brian Johnston rides for life during the combat endurance course.

Record of Emergency Data: More than expected

By Maj. William Desjardins
403rd ASTS

Many of us look at the Record of Emergency Data (DOD Form 93) as just a mandatory form to fill out, so we complete the form to "check the box."

I pretty much felt the same way - until I completed Casualty Notification Officer and Casualty Assistance Officer training. Let me tell you, the form carries far more weight than most expect.

The Record of Emergency Data is one of the most important documents servicemembers will fill out in their careers.

The form is used by each service casualty notification process for notifying the next of kin of a servicemember's death, whether during wartime or peacetime. The form covers the death of National Guard, Reserve, active duty, retirees, DOD civilians OCONUS, dependents OCONUS, and those who have separated in their service in the past 120 days.

For National Guard and Reserve forces, the form contacts the next of kin for any deaths enroute to or from their unit during their Unit Training Assembly duties. It also covers them during their annual training, active duty for training, inactive duty training, and extended active duty.

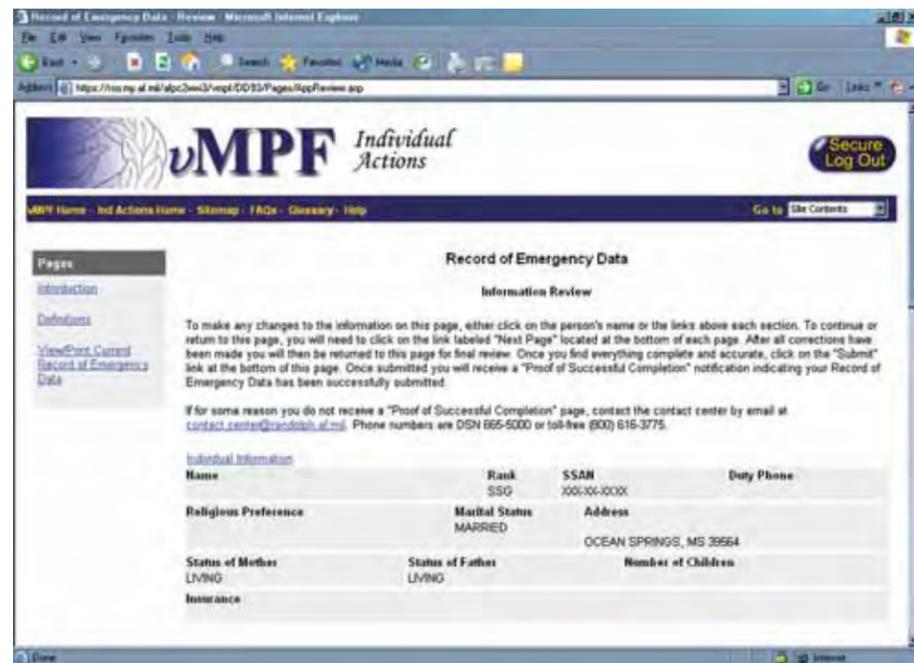
When information on the form is incomplete, outdated, or blank, notification becomes a virtual nightmare for the casualty notification office, which causes huge problems for your family.

The form should be updated every time there's a change in address, marital status and birth or death of family members.

Putting off that change has devastating effects when things go terribly wrong. You never know when they will.

The law is very specific as to how death benefits are awarded, based entirely on the DD Form 93. The number of divorced beneficiaries receiving death benefits is greater than you might imagine. Some of those horror stories you hear are basically true because the servicemember didn't update the form when the change occurred.

The next biggest problem is when servicemembers get married and don't update the form when the change occurs. The new spouse gets nothing, by law if he or she is not the designat-



Access your Virtual Record of Emergency Data on the Virtual MPF website available through a link on the home page of the Air Force Portal. Completing the form takes about five minutes if you have the names and addresses of your next of kin handy.

ed beneficiary.

The worst part of not keeping the form updated is the delay of notification and issue of benefits. When families move and do not have correct addresses, it can take days (or even months) to track the family down to deliver the notification and assistance. Delays are frustrating and agonizing for everyone, even the casualty notification office staff.

When the form has incomplete addresses or whereabouts unknown, the casualty notification staff leave no stone unturned to track down the next of kin.

In cases where there is inaccurate information, the staff assigns investigators to start a trail to find the next of kin to officially deliver the notification and provide assistance.

Service Members Group Life Insurance is a separate but equally important and integral part of the casualty notification and assistance process. When the two forms do not agree, the next of kin and family must take their dispute into the courts. Both forms should always be up-to-date. Even if there is a need to update it three times in one week, go ahead and get it done when the change occurs.

All Airmen have a responsibility to keep the whereabouts of their next of kin updated to ensure proper notification can occur. In some cases, it may also be important to notate the sequence in which notification occurs. Airmen have an obligation to his or her next of kin and the service to keep this information accurate at all times.

For example, if you elect to name your parents as beneficiaries and your parents are "snowbirds," such information is critical and should be on the forms. If the next of kin relocates to a different address during a servicemember's deployment, that information must be updated on the forms.

It creates so many hardships, especially on the next of kin and family when the DD Form 93 is not current, accurate and complete. This causes painful delays in notification and assistance, and can lead to legal battles over entitlements. Family Readiness is here to support Airmen and their families during deployment.

The current death gratuity for servicemembers' next of kin is \$12,420. That is an instant benefit paid to the next of kin listed on the DD Form 93. Make sure it goes to the person of your choice.

Effective Communication Making our team better

By Lt. Col. Bob Ariatti
Inspector General, 403rd Wing

Sometimes, military members think writing their congressman about a problem within their unit will successfully bypass the chain-of-command in order to get a problem resolved more quickly.

As your Inspector General, I know that in most situations this is not the case.

Upon the receipt of a complaint from a member of a military unit, such as the 403rd Wing, the representative's staff will contact the Secretary of the Air Force Office of the Legislative Liaison who will forward it to the Air Force Reserve Policy Integration Directorate at HQ USAF, also known as REI.

Staff at REI will then contact the appropriate office, which may be at the wing, Numbered Air Force or Major Command level, for a response.

The response then flows in the opposite direction back to the congressional office. If no investigation is deemed warranted, the process may take six-to-eight weeks, versus a speedier response from your unit commander.

When the Congressional inquiry warrants an investigation, REI will notify the representative's office and an investigation is conducted. REI will



Lt. Col. Bob Ariatti

coordinate with the Air Force Reserve Command IG in addressing the investigation and providing the final response to the complainant.

If an investigation is required, it could be anywhere from three-to-six months before you get an answer back from your representative.

Additionally, filing an IG complaint will not delay or prevent completion of any command actions such as reassignment, denial of reenlistment, retirement, discharge, or nonjudicial punishment.

The IG system is merely an investigative body which has no authority to place individuals on

administrative hold or take corrective action; only commanders can do this.

You are encouraged to first discuss any complaint or grievance that you may have with your supervisor, first sergeant, command chief master sergeant and/or commander.

You may also opt to discuss the matter with the Wing IG who will assist you in attempting to resolve your issues.

Experience has shown that the chain-of-command is comprised of people who are the closest to the problem, and therefore, have the best chance of successfully solving it in the most expedient manner.

However, you always maintain the right to contact your congressman or senator or to file an IG complaint at any level without notifying or following the chain of command.

I'm asking you to at least give the coach a chance to hear what you have to say before you complain to the commissioner.

This is a time-tested way for any successful organization to resolve problems, making the team stronger and its leaders better informed and more responsive to concerns from the least-ranking player to the superstar.

Most coaches start out as players, so they want to hear from you. Give them the chance.



Photo By Tech. Sgt. James B. Pritchett

Civic leaders from the Mississippi Gulf Coast visited Niagara ARS, N.Y. May 23-24 to learn more about the Air Force Reserve mission and interact with business and government leaders from that local area. Part of the tour, hosted by the 403rd Wing and the 914th Airlift Wing included a static display of a KC-135R Stratotanker. Ryan Giles, of AGJ Systems and Networks, was one of the people who tried out the boom operators station located in the aft of the aircraft.

Gulf Wing Go-Getter



Each month Gulf Wing is printed for people of the 403rd Wing, like A1C Brian Mitchell of the 403rd Communications Flight.

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To The Family Of: