

Staff Sgt. Tony Hironaka, 16th Medical Group dental lab technician (left), adjust a hard neck guard in the lab. (above) Staff Sgt. Lenita Robinson, 16th MDG medical laboratory journeyman, plates a throat culture.

16th MDG named best in the Air Force

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
Public Affairs

The Air Force Chief of Staff's 2002 Team Excellence Surgeon General Award was presented to the 16th Medical Group Jan. 27 in Washington D.C. The annual award, which was presented to Col. Kevin Pollard, 16th MDG commander, by Maj. Gen. James Roudebush, Air Force deputy surgeon general, honors the best military treatment facility in the Air Force. Colonel Pollard was attending the annual Department of Defense TRICARE conference in Washington, when General Roudebush announced the

16th MDG as the award winner. Although the commander knew the medical group was competing for the award, he had no idea the 16th MDG had won. He was surprised and delighted when he was called to the stage by the general, he explained. "The impact of some of the medical group's accomplishments paint a very clear picture of why they were selected for the award," the general said during the presentation. Some of those accomplishments include:
 ○Processing more than 4,000 deploying personnel in support of Operation Enduring Freedom through various Force Health Management activities at a 99.9 percent rate of accuracy.
 ○Leading DoD in the Anthrax vaccination program

implementation, exemplified by educating and vaccinating 2,100 people in a five-day period.
 ○Enrolling 15,800 people in TRICARE Prime, which is 105 percent of the maximum achievable enrollment goal established by the Air Force Surgeon General.
 ○Being number one in the Air Force for patients seen; with a relative visit unit metric of 31 visits per provider, per day. The success of any unit comes from the hard work and dedication of the people within that unit, Colonel Pollard said. "Mission success at the 16th Medical Group is founded on exceptional teamwork. Our terrific

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News

Prescribed burn

A prescribed fire burn is scheduled on Hurlburt Field in the near future. The burn will be approximately 500 acres just west of base housing and extending to range road 253. The burn will be conducted by Eglin Natural Resources Division, Hurlburt Field Fire Department and the 16th Civil Engineer Squadron Environmental Flight. Exact date for the burn will be determined later due to weather conditions.

Installation Excellence

Hurlburt Field welcomes the following Installation Excellence Selection Board Members

- Brig. Gen. Bernard Skoch
- Col. Judith Fedder
- Col. Donald Alston
- Col. John Miller
- Col. Darren McDew
- Mr. Jayson Ilic

Sports



Commandos vs Tigers

Base team wins weekend matches to take top spot
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VIEWPOINTS

Open Line

The Commander's Open Line is your direct line to me for questions or suggestions about subjects of concern to the Hurlburt Field community. I really appreciate your feedback.

To receive a response, leave your name, unit and telephone number. Open lines of general interest will be printed in the **COMMANDO**. I'll answer the others by letter or phone call. Remember, the quickest and most efficient way to resolve a problem is to talk directly to the agency responsible. This gives them an opportunity to help you, and perhaps improve their process. However, if you're not satisfied with the answer you receive, feel free to give me a call at 884-OPEN (6736), or e-mail your concerns to commando@hurlburt.af.mil.



Col. Frank Kisner
16th SOW commander

We've worked very closely with the county and state during this extensive project, but at this time, there isn't a firm completion date for this project.

Since the paving is scheduled for night work only, the colder temperatures we've recently experienced have prevented paving operations from being conducted.

Based on what we know and the projected weather, we expect it to be completed sometime in late February to mid March.

On a positive note, the project's contract contains incentive clauses to finish the job early. As soon as the weather permits, the contractor will continue with this project and when this happens, we'll be sure to get the word out. In the meantime, we'll closely monitor the condition of the road and promptly make any necessary repairs.

Road conditions

Comment: I have a concern about the road in front of the main gate by U.S. Highway 98.

When will it be finished? Potholes are starting to form and this not only makes it dangerous for motorists but

even more so for people who drive motorcycles. I hope the potholes will not just be patched, but the roadway will be repaved properly. Thanks for your time.

Reply: Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to address your question, as I'm sure many around the base and surrounding area share your concerns.

Career Advisors...

Back on the retention track

by **Master Sgt. Andrew Hollis**
16th SOW Career Advisor

Years ago the Air Force did away with base career advisors, a victim of the 90's era force reductions.

The responsibility for supervisors to provide career counseling for their airmen was now an additional responsibility. For many, this career counseling business was an abstract term and was greeted with apprehension and reluctance. Most supervisors didn't know where to go or how to find out about giving this type of advice.

The decision of making the Air Force a career is one of the most critical decisions we make. With the absence of the career advisor, airmen had to answer the question "should I stay or should I go?" often without proper guidance. We didn't always hit the mark. As a result of this and other factors, we had to replace thousands of qualified technicians with new ones.

In light of unprecedented recruiting and retention challenges, the Air Force has since reestablished the career advisor at every base. As the supervisor's primary ally in the retention war, career advisors educate and assist personnel on how to conduct effective career counseling.

Commando Connection, Commando Pride Airman Center, Airman Leadership School, supervisor workshops and commander's calls provide an ideal venue to introduce Hurlburt Field's finest to the newest retention tools.

Everyone should agree that the Air Force has a benefit package that's hard to beat.



Good luck trying to find 100% tuition assistance, 30 days annual paid vacation, and a 20-year retirement plan in the civilian sector. We've always been the envy of other military branches because of our emphasis on living conditions, people programs and lifestyle. Air Force technical training is second to none.

It's easy to talk about the tangible aspects of being in the Air Force, but that will not work in every case. It's not always what you say, but how you say it. Our airmen are looking at us to exhibit the right amount of enthusiasm to convince them that this way of life is for them. This is why our training covers not only the benefits, but the attitude necessary to make a positive and lasting impression.

The Air Force Personnel Center survey results show that three main reasons people leave the Air Force is lack of recognition, leadership at the unit level and job satisfaction. On the other hand, the main reason we stay is for patriotism. These are all factors that are within our grasp to influence.

Our professional military education tells us the most important job a leader has is to develop and mold subordinates. It's time for each and every one of us to get excited about being a member of the most elite fighting force on the globe. A very small percentage of people in the world have the opportunity to make such a huge impact on national and international affairs as we do. I venture to say that many would certainly trade places with us if they could.

Are you taking it all for granted? Don't let your airmen make the same mistake.



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Production

Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs Office. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photography unless otherwise indicated. The COMMANDO staff may include or exclude articles based upon the news value determined by the staff, impact on the wing's mission, and the space allotted for editorial content by the publisher.

Submitting articles

The deadline for submissions to the COMMANDO is 4 p.m. Wednesday, the week prior to publication. Articles may be submitted on IBM format computer disk or via electronic mail. Non-electronic submissions must be typed, double-spaced and all submissions must include the name and telephone number of a person to call for questions.

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To place a free non-business classified ad in the COMMANDO, customers must come to Building 90210, Room 326. Customers type their ads into a computer system located in the Public Affairs office.

NEWS



Photo by 1st Lt. David Ware

Chiefs gathering

Hurlburt Field inducted the Air Force's newest chief master sergeants during the 2003 Chief's Induction ceremony Jan. 17. The chiefs are standing behind nine candles which represent the nine enlisted ranks they've held throughout their careers.

AFSOC Special Tactics officers earn AF Lance P. Sijan Award

Courtesy of AFSOC Public Affairs

Two of Air Force Special Operations Command's Special Tactics officers have been honored with the 2002 Lance P. Sijan Air Force Leadership Award.

Maj. Robert Armfield and Capt. Jeffrey Marshall, Air Force Combat Controllers, are the senior officer and junior officer recipients of the award.

The Sijan Award is presented annually to airmen who demonstrate outstanding leadership abilities while assigned to organizations at the wing level or below.

Major Armfield was recognized for leading his squadron through exercise and contingency planning and training, while serving as the director of operations at the 24th Special Tactics Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

The major was also cited for his role as the mission commander and operations officer during the early months of Operation Enduring Freedom. Major Armfield has since been reassigned to the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

As the junior officer recipient of the Sijan Award, Captain Marshall was hailed for managing 24 combat and support personnel, \$2 million in facilities and equipment, and a training budget of

\$250,000. He was a key leader in his roles as flight commander, operations officer and mission commander during Enduring Freedom. He led troops into battle on the first night of the ground war. Captain Marshall is assigned to the 24th STS, Pope.

"Major Armfield and Captain Marshall have proven their mettle – both on the battlefield and in garrison – time and again. They are truly leaders among leaders, and are viable members of the Special Operations team," said Col. Craig Rith, 720th Special Tactics Group commander. The 720th STG oversees all Combat Controllers, Pararescuemen and Combat Weathermen assigned to AFSOC.

"It has been an incredible year of honors for Special Operations," said the colonel. "Operation Enduring Freedom afforded all Special Tactics operators the opportunity to prove their value added to the Air Force, joint, and coalition communities as air power enablers. Having two Combat Controllers recognized for their leadership among all officers in the Air Force is a true reflection of the dedication, training and commitment of Major Armfield and Captain Marshall," he said.

The Lance P. Sijan Award was first given in 1981. Named in honor of the



first Air Force Academy graduate to receive the Medal of Honor, Captain Sijan was shot down over Vietnam Nov. 9, 1967 and successfully evaded capture for 45 days despite severe injuries. He later died while in a Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camp. He was presented the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroism.

The Air Force Chief of Staff will present Major Armfield and Captain Marshall, as well as the other Sijan Award winners, their awards at a ceremony later this year. (Information courtesy of Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas)

Spotlight on ...



Christopher Barber

Rank/Duty Title: Staff Sergeant/NCO in charge, Electronic Systems Security Assessment Operations

Organization: 25th Information Operations Squadron

Hometown: Chapin, Ill.

Hobbies: Sports

Contribution to the mission:

Sergeant Barber is the driving force for the 25th IOS ESSA. As the NCO in charge, he's directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of ESSA, by providing dedicated force protection and communications security support to Air Force Special Operations Command, 16th Special Operations Wing and other Special Operations assets locally and deployed.

He stepped into a section decimated by retirement and permanent change of stations and was immediately thrust into a position of great responsibility.

Through exceptional motivation and initiative, he has ensured the continued success of the ESSA mission.

(Editor's Note: The COMMANDO highlights airmen, junior NCOs, company grade officers, Department of Defense civilians and volunteers in units who do a great job, and should receive day-to-day recognition. Supervisors can call the 16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs Office at 884-7464 for more information on nominating an individual for the "Spotlight on..." column.)

AIR FORCE NEWS

Two airmen among seven lost in shuttle disaster

SAN ANTONIO – Two Air Force officers were among the seven astronauts lost when the Space Shuttle Columbia apparently broke apart at 9 a.m. EST Feb. 1 in the area over north central Texas. Col. Rick Husband was the mission commander and Lt. Col. Michael Anderson was the payload commander.

The shuttle was preparing to land at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida when NASA's Mission Control in Houston lost contact with the crew. The space vehicle was at an altitude of about 203,000 feet and was traveling at approximately 12,500 miles per hour, or Mach 18, when contact was lost.

Other members of the crew included Cmdr. William McCool, pilot for STS-107; Navy Capt. David Brown, mission specialist; Dr. Kalpana Chawla, flight engineer and mission specialist; Cmdr. Laurel Clark, mission specialist; and Israeli air force Col. Ilan Ramon, payload specialist.

NASA has put out an urgent request to the public to not pick up or disturb any debris that might be found. Also, a call has been made for any amateur video or film that might be helpful in the investigation. For either situation, the public is asked to contact their local law enforcement agency. (AFPN)



NASA photo

The STS-107 crew includes, from the left, Mission Specialist David Brown, Commander Rick Husband, Mission Specialists Laurel Clark, Kalpana Chawla and Michael Anderson, Pilot William McCool and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon.

Air Force extends current, upcoming deployments

by Master Sgt. Rick Burnham
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – Currently and soon-to-be deployed airmen will remain deployed longer than the previously targeted three-month rotation, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper announced Jan. 28 in a message to all airmen. The change was made to meet the needs of combatant commanders.

Specifically, active-duty and mobilized reserve-component airmen deployed with Air and Space Expeditionary Forces 7 and 8 and those deploying as part of new taskings ordered by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on Dec. 24 should anticipate remaining in place until further notice, General Jumper said in the message.

Airmen in some "stressed" career fields have already been extended beyond three months.

The need for additional forces is part of a buildup of air power in Southwest Asia, ready to achieve national security objectives if directed by the president.

"We must interrupt our normal three-month AEF rotation cycle because the resources in a single AEF pair can no longer satisfy the needs of our combatant commands," General Jumper said.

The general said that the change would likely increase the amount of time many airmen are deployed. But, he added, it is a necessary move and one he feels will be taken in stride by airmen everywhere.

"I know this is a lot to ask, and I am confident that every airman understands we have been called upon once again by our nation," he said. "Our success as an Air Force depends on how we prepare for and execute operations."

General Jumper's words echoed those in a message sent by Secretary Rumsfeld the same day to people in the Department of Defense.

"In recent weeks and months, the president has called the world's attention to Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq," Secretary Rumsfeld said. "He has rallied the United Nations to enforce its resolutions calling for the regime's disarmament."

In light of these developments, DOD leaders recognize the uncertainty longer deployments

may create for those in uniform, the civilians who work beside them, and their families, Secretary Rumsfeld said.

"Be assured that the president will not decide to commit forces unless conditions require it, and only as a last resort," Secretary Rumsfeld said. "Should action be necessary, you will have what you need to carry out the missions assigned."

General Jumper said every effort will be made to relieve those deployed in a way that accommodates mission requirements.

"I assure you that we'll continue to assess the evolving situation and develop rotation plans which seek to relieve our forces in the most equitable fashion while still meeting combatant commanders' warfighting requirements," he said. "Although AEF rotation timing will change, we'll make every effort to preserve the AEF sequence which will give us the ability to sustain our operations over the long term."

"When able, we'll return to a more normalized three-month AEF battle rhythm."

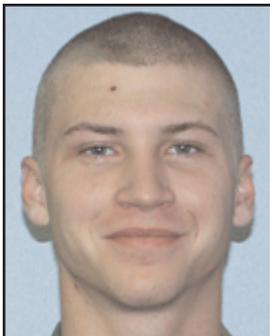
Although that rhythm is intended to provide airmen and their families with a predictable schedule for deployments, resulting in a more normal lifestyle, an implicit understanding is that increased operations tempo changes everything, General Jumper said.

"Sustaining on-going requirements with three-month rotations has become part of our Air Force culture," Jumper said. "But we need to remember that the AEF structure also allows us to posture for a full range of combat operations, including major theater contingencies that require more forces than can be provided by one AEF pair on a three-month rotation."

It's a national security matter, he said, one in which the efforts of the entire Air Force will be needed.

"I have never been (more proud) of our Air Force and of the great men and women that bring America's resolve to the doorsteps of those who would seek to inflict harm upon us and our allies," he said. "I know you are all equal to the task, and I look forward to seeing our great Air Force continue to successfully defend American values and freedoms." (AFPN)

Look who's talking: What is your most embarrassing military moment?



"In basic training I was in the shower and a female captain walked in. No one yelled female in the dorm and I came out and my towel dropped."

**Airman 1st Class
Matthew Short**
16th Aircraft
Maintenance Squadron



"After my technical school graduation, I was presented a coin. On my way out of the ceremony, I accidentally dropped it. I thought I'd damaged it, but later realized I had just coin checked everybody."

**Airman 1st Class
Jeremiah Tillery**
16th Component
Maintenance Squadron



"When I got the 10K fork-lift stuck in about two feet of sand."

**Airman
Bryan Thompson**
16th Equipment
Maintenance Squadron

RED HORSE deputy named AF best

by Airman 1st Class Sam Taylor
Public Affairs

An 823rd RED HORSE Squadron member has been named the Air Force Outstanding Civil Engineer Senior Military Manager of the Year for 2002.

In addition, to this award, Lt. Col. Michael Conner, 823rd RED HORSE was awarded the Bronze Star Medal during Operation Enduring Freedom.

According to his award citation, Colonel Conner decisively led 282 combat engineers in the execution of the Air Force's largest war-time construction effort since the Vietnam War.

They completed more than \$26 million of construction in support of OEF, directly supporting air component and Special Operations forces.

In addition to a plethora of other accomplishments, his horsemen constructed a \$9.1

million aircraft parking ramp in seven months, a project that would normally take three years to accomplish, said the colonel.

"The 823rd RED HORSE Squadron made the impossible look easy," said Colonel Conner. "While doing so they made me look good."

The 823rd RHS was awarded more than 250 awards for 2002, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for June 2001 to May 2002, said Colonel Conner.

For the squadron, supporting OEF "was similar to making it to the Super Bowl and playing a perfect game," said the colonel.

"From bed-downs to constructing aircraft parking ramps to repairing bomb damaged runways, (the 823rd RHS) got the job

"No other civil engineer unit or mission comes close to the 823rd RHS."

*Lt. Col. Michael Conner,
823rd RED HORSE Squadron civil engineer manager*

done ahead of schedule, despite heavy equipment and material shortfalls and adverse weather."

During the Kosovo campaign, former President Jimmy Carter bestowed the title "legendary" on the 823rd RHS for its efforts during Operations Noble Anvil and Shining Hope, and the name fits, said the colonel.

"No other civil engineer unit or mission comes close to the 823rd RHS," said Colonel Conner.

"It's been a pleasure and an honor to serve the squadron – truly the best combat construction unit in the Department of Defense."

Aspiring journalist

The COMMANDO welcomes submissions from aspiring Hurlburt Field journalists who want to take a shot at writing a story.

The staff is always looking for stories concerning a base news or a human interest story highlighting a Hurlburt Field member.

To submit a story or a story idea, call the COMMANDO editor at 884-7464 or e-mail commando@hurlburt.af.mil.



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Special OPERATORS



Photo by Capt. Douglas Everson

The Air Intelligence Agency recently recognized from left, Tech. Sgt. Charles Simpson, Staff Sgt. Patrick Mahoney and Tech. Sgt. John Suter as medalists in the Sensor Olympics. The olympics are an annual enlisted skills competition for AIA and AIA-supported units. The three NCOs competed against all other AIA NCOs in their career fields to earn silver Sensor Olympics medals, placing them in the top two of their respective specialties. All three are instructors at the 39th Information Operations Squadron where they provide initial qualification training to future Information Warfare Flight members worldwide.

Military, civilian W-2s available on myPay

ARLINGTON, Va. – American military members and Department of Defense civilians can now view, save and print their W-2 wage and tax statements from myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Military retirees and annuitants can view, save and print their tax form 1099s as well.

The myPay service provides a secure way for servicemembers, defense civilians, military retirees and annuitants to manage their pay account information. Available around the clock, customers can make changes online that previously needed to be made by visiting offices.

Customers can also help the Department of Defense save money by volunteering to turn off the print copy of their leave and earnings statements and checking it online. The Defense Department can save up to 34 cents for each LES that is delivered electronically instead of in hard copy. (AFP)

Do Something Good For Tomorrow
RECYCLE TODAY!

February is African American History Month



Courtesy graphic

Did you know?

Shelby Davidson (1869 - 1931) developed the adding machine to make work in the U.S. Postal Service more efficient. Mr. Davidson began work in a Washington D.C. post office in 1893 and found the adding of long columns of figures a tedious task. After an intensive study of applied mechanics, Mr. Davidson first sketched, then modeled in cardboard, a working version of his invention.

Electronic filing, is it worth it?

Courtesy of the 16th SOW Legal Office

On Jan. 16, 2003 the Internal Revenue Service unveiled a page on its Web site linking to 12 commercial vendors offering free electronic filing services for federal and some state individual income tax returns. While these services are available to assist military personnel and their families in filing their tax returns, the Air Force recommends that military personnel use local base tax centers to file their federal income taxes instead. The reason? Money.

The Judge Advocate General's Department of the Air Force conducted an evaluation of the companies listed by the IRS and the services they provide. What the department found was that many times the services advertised as free were not always free and the companies offered frequent exposure to refund anticipation loan programs, which can subject customers to unnecessary fees and diminish potential tax returns.

Most of the companies offering filing services on the IRS Web site provide the service for free to customers meeting certain eligibility requirements. Most often, the requirements are tied to a filer's adjusted gross income. Because adjusted gross income is not something a filer typically knows prior to filling out a tax return form, many filers may complete filing their taxes on one of the advertised Web sites only to find out after the fact that their adjusted gross income exceeded the limit for a free filing, leaving them the option of

either paying a fee to the company to complete the filing or abandoning the electronic filing altogether.

In addition to possible filing fees, most of the companies listed on the IRS Web site also participate in refund anticipation loans, which, for a fee, offer an immediate or expedited tax refund. Such loans are generally unnecessary due to the speed at which the IRS will process an electronically filed return and issue a refund.

The local base tax center provides customers all the benefits associated with a commercial electronic filing service without the danger of hidden filing fees or pressure pitches to sign up for a refund anticipation loan.

The Hurlburt Field Tax Center, located in building 90205 near the 16th Special Operations Wing Headquarters, offers base personnel and their families free advice, assistance, preparation, and electronic filing of federal income tax returns. Taxpayers using the base tax center will generally receive refunds in 10 to 14 days.

The success of the Hurlburt Field Tax Center consistently contributes to the overall success of the Department of Defense Tax Program, which last year won the IRS Exemplary Electronic Return Originator Award in 2002. The award recognizes electronic filing programs filing a high volume of returns with low error rates.

The tax center is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Call 884-7542/7544 to schedule an appointment.

Dress and appearance change

Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance, prohibit individuals from pursuing body alterations or modifications that disfigure, deform or otherwise detract

from a professional military image.

The change covers such alterations or modifications as forking or splitting tongues, filing teeth or implanting objects under the skin.

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FEATURE

TWO EAGLES IN ONE DAY



Courtesy Photo

Nicholas Vasquez, Hurlburt Troop 509 Eagle Scout stands with his father, Col. Pedro Vasquez, 16th Maintenance Group deputy commander.

by Airman 1st Class Heidi Sawyer

Public Affairs

On Dec. 30, 2002, two special events occurred for the Vasquez family—the father pinned on the rank of colonel in the Air Force, and the son became an Eagle Scout.

Col. Vasquez, 16th Maintenance Group deputy commander, enlisted into the Air Force in 1975 as an Airman Basic. By 1980, he had received his commission through the Officer Training School.

Col. Vasquez continued his education at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington D.C. and graduated with a master's degree in National Resource Strategy in 2000.

After receiving his degree, Col. Vasquez was assigned to the Joint Chief of Staff at the Pentagon.

During his assignment, he served as the logistics planner on the J-4 Logistics staff as well as a strategic planner on the J-5 Strategy and Policy staff.

Moving forward in his career, Col. Vasquez reported to Hurlburt Field in July 2002, making it his third

assignment to the base since he began his military career.

Col. Vasquez said some of the challenges he faces each day at the 16th Maintenance Group are “leading, taking care of our people and maintaining the competitive edge of our specialized airpower...Anytime, Any place.”

Despite the military challenges, Col. Vasquez said he's honored to be part of the Special Operations Wing.

Much of Col. Vasquez's determination and perseverance on his path from enlisted to officer is credited to his wife.

“LaVonne encouraged me to compete for a

commission in the Air Force,” he said.

He also said the “incredible assignments, the privilege of leading and taking care of Air Force personnel and their families as well as the mission” made the family separations bearable.

Nicholas Vasquez said, “My dad came a long way from airman basic to colonel. What a feat! I'm proud of my dad; I want to follow in his footsteps and maybe surpass him.”

Nicholas, looking for “an opportunity to take on a challenge” of his own, joined Hurlburt Field Troop 509 in 1995.

“I wanted to see if I could accomplish something meaningful,” Nicholas said.

Since he has been with the troop, Nicholas has taken on several leadership roles. From patrol leader to junior assistant scout leader and now an eagle scout, he has learned how to plan, lead and execute several scout projects.

Through his Eagle Scout project, Nicholas was able to learn the management aspect of leadership.

His plan was to assemble picnic tables and benches to be set up on cleared areas along the Grace Brown Nature Trail.

He organized meetings, gathered necessary supplies and led both his troop and a number of adults in completing the project.

“(I) was extremely proud of him and the mere fact that he accomplished this all by himself

— a true self starter,” Col. Vasquez said when his son was pinned.

With so many opportunities to be both a leader and a follower, Nicholas uses his scout training as a supplement with the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps to prepare him for his future in the military.

“If my dad can do it, why can't I? Who knows, I could be a future Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” Nicholas said.

Before Nicholas jumps into his military career, he would like to further his leadership training and become an Assistant Scout Master.

Nicholas accepts his role as an Eagle Scout with exceptional professionalism. “It's an honor and privilege to walk among my fellow eagles. It's a once in a lifetime event,” he said.

Whether it is

wearing the eagle or being called one, Col. Vasquez and his son both demonstrate dedication and leadership abilities in completing their missions.

Col. Vasquez would like to think that his father set the standard for the family when he dedicated himself to 31 years in the Air Force, before retiring as a chief master sergeant.

For that reason, Col. Vasquez would like to give honor to him by naming that celebrated day as “Two eagles in one day—with the Chief leading the way.”

“It was an opportunity to take on a challenge and see if I could accomplish something meaningful.”

*Nicholas Vasquez
Hurlburt Troop 509 Eagle Scout*



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson

Col. Pedro Vasquez Jr., 16th MXG, discusses an important matter with Lt. Col. Alan Vafides, 16th MXG.



Capt. Nicholas Petrone, 16th MDG clinic nurse manager, performs an ear exam on Capt. Craig Keyes, 16th MDG group practice manager.

AWARD, Continued from Page 1

ic Commando Medics supported by our wonderful volunteers, accomplish extraordinary things every day.”

The teamwork Colonel Pollard speaks so highly of includes great support from the 16th Special Operations Wing commanders, staff and support agencies, Air Force Special Operations Command Surgeon’s office, the medics from the 16th Operations Support Squadron, the 96th Medical Group, Eglin AFB and the TRICARE managed

care support contractors – Humana Military Health Services.

“While I’m incredibly proud of our current medical team, it’s important for us to remember individuals who may no longer be assigned here, but who contributed significantly to this medical group’s exceptional achievement,” Colonel Pollard said. “My predecessor, Col. Mark Ediger, readily comes to mind, and there are many others.”

Although the medical group commander is extremely pleased with his staff and the success they’ve achieved, he said the medics’ job is made a little easier because the customers really appreciate the care they receive, and they say so.

“I’ve had many customers go out of their way to compliment our staff members for their courtesy, sensitivity and professionalism. That means so much,” Colonel

Pollard said.

“The medics of the 16th Medical Group have established a reputation throughout the Air Force as caring innovators, whose top priority is support to the warfighter, their families and the patients,” said Col. James Dougherty, AFSOC surgeon general. “Everything they do is world class.”

“The unit’s motto is very simple and straightforward,” General Roudebush said. “Most of all it is appropriate – Any time, Any place, That pretty much sums up the efforts of this year’s Air Force Surgeon General Award winner.”



Senior Airman Patrick Percifield (left) and Airman 1st Class Jason Hamilton both ambulatory medical technicians load a gurney back into an ambulance. Capt. Mindy Davison, 16th MDG pharmacist (below), refills a prescription for a patient.



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LIFESTYLE

Military

vRED goes live

The virtual record of emergency data is up and running on the virtual military personnel flight website. vRED replaces the form flow version of the Department of Defense Form 93, Record of Emergency Data. Completion of vRED is mandatory for all active duty, National Guard and Reserve members. Groups should complete vRED during the following dates: 16th Maintenance Group, by Sunday; 16th Medical Group and all tenant units, Monday through Feb. 16. All remaining Hurlburt Field members must complete vRED by March 2. To access the vMPF and vRED, visit www.afpc.randolph.af.mil and click on the vMPF link.

ALS instructor candidates

The Hurlburt Field Airman Leadership School is looking for a dedicated, motivated, fired-up person to fill an instructor position. ALS instructors conduct instruction as outlined on Air Force directives including:

- Prepare for instruction through group review and self-study. Prepare facility, classroom and auditorium for instruction.

- Maintain lesson plans, textbooks, test and measurement devices, student workbooks, handouts and lesson aids.

- Supervise, counsel, evaluate, and advise students. Administer examinations, maintain student records and document student actions.

- Assist with in- and out-processing and graduation tasks.

Qualifications: Applicants must be staff sergeants or selects, with an associates degree or higher, SPECAT guide item number six. For more information, call Master Sgt. Shelina Frey at 884-6255.

Special Tactics test

The next Physical Ability Stamina Test for retraining into Special Tactics is scheduled for Feb. 28 at 7 a.m. at the Hurlburt Field pool. Interested persons will be tested in a 20-meter underwater swim, a 500-meter surface swim, a 1.5-mile run and other callisthenic events, pull-ups, flutter kicks, push-ups and sit-ups. For more information or to sign up for the test, contact Special Tactics Recruiter Tech. Sgt. Brian Hicks at 884-3346 or brian.hicks@hurlburt.af.mil.

Community

2002 annual awards banquet

In honor of military traditions, Hurlburt Field provides special recognition to individuals whose superior duty performance, dedication and efforts have led them to become top-notch professional military leaders. Feb. 21, at 6 p.m. in the Freedom Hanger, more than 130 people who have shown they are "Simply the Best" will be honored at the 2002 annual awards banquet.

The 16th Services Squadron's Soundside staff is catering the event. People are invited to attend and show their support for Hurlburt Field's outstanding performers by contacting unit first sergeants for reservations.

Price for the meal is \$23, and sign-up sheets are due by noon today. Dress for military members is mess dress or semi-formal uniform, civilians should wear coat and tie attire. For more information, call Master Sgt. Mickey Wright at 884-4158.

African-American heritage trip

The Eglin Air Force base African-American Heritage Committee is sponsoring a trip to historical sites in Selma and Birmingham, Ala., which depicts significant events that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement. The trip date is Feb. 15-16 and the cost is \$38 per person, by groups of four. For more information, call the Eglin AFB Ticket and Tours travel office at 882-5930. Seating is limited.

Employment Orientation

People who need information about the local job market can come to Employment Orientation at the family support center to get help. The class includes job listings, books, videos, computer rooms, résumé assistance and more. For more information, call the FSC at 884-5441.

Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month. The 16th Special Operations Wing Military Equal Opportunity office invites volunteers to assist in organization, preparation and support for the observance period. Currently, there are no officers or appointed positions held, and the positions of chairperson, vice-chairperson and treasurer need to be filled. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Natasha Hollomon at 884-8746.

Overpass closure

The pedestrian overpass across U.S. Highway 98 and associated ramps will close for repairs and painting Monday. Estimated time for the completion of this project is dependent on the Florida Department of Transportation and weather conditions. During this time, children who live in Soundside housing and use the overpass to get to the school bus will be blocked. Parents must find alternate means for their children to get across the highway. Barricades will be installed to remind people of the closure. For more information, call Gary Ross at 884-7524.

Extra child care

Deploying servicemembers and their families are now entitled to 16 hours per child of extended duty childcare upon the deployed member's return. For details, people can visit www.af.mil/news/Sep2002/90902265.shtml. For more information, call Erica Charity at 884-2168.

Commissary scholarship

The Scholarship for Military Children program deadline is Feb. 21. Applications are due to the nearest commissary by close of business. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with a qualified applicant. For more information or to apply visit the Web site at www.commissaries.com.

Free spouse makeovers

Hurlburt Field spouses are invited to the second-annual Hearts Apart Valentine's Spouses Spa Day Feb. 15 at the family support center from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The event is limited to the first 50 spouses who sign-up. For reservations, call 884-5441.

Hurlburt Field Chapel 884-7795



Catholic Mass

Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 7:15 and 10 a.m.
Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 to 5 p.m., or by request.
Youth: 5 p.m. Sunday
Religious Education: September– May

Protestant Services

Sunday, 8:30 a.m. (praise & worship),
11:30 a.m. (traditional),
12:45 p.m. (Gospel)
Religious Education: August – May
Youth and Singles groups available
Jewish Services (882-2111)
Sabbath services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Eglin Chapel Center
Havdallah services: next-to-the-last Saturday of each month, 7 p.m., Chapel annex
Muslim Services (882-2111), Eglin Chapel Center
Jumuah: Friday, 12:45 p.m.
Qurian: Saturday, 6 p.m.

At the movies

Prices are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children. Movies start at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Hurlburt Field 884-7648

Friday – (PG-13) "Drumline," starring Nick Cannon and Zoe Saldana – Devon, a street drummer from Harlem, enrolls in a southern university, expecting to lead its marching band's drumline to victory. He initially flounders in his new world, before realizing it takes more than talent to reach the top.

Saturday – (PG-13) "Star Trek: Nemesis," starring Patrick Stewart and Jonathan Frakes – The Romulan Empire is thrown into disarray when Shinzon, an exiled slave on the sister planet of Remus, murders the entire senate of the Romulus homeworld. Now, the mad man wants to use the crew of the Enterprise in his scheme to incite a revolution.

Sunday – (R) "Empire," starring John Leguizamo and Denise Richards – Victor, a Puerto Rican drug-dealer, works the violent streets of the South Bronx. With an eye for money and a head for business, he dreams of one day achieving the wealth and success of a legitimate businessman.

Eglin 882-1066

Friday and Saturday – (PG-13) "Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," starring Elijah Wood and Sean Astin – The second in the Tolkien trilogy. Frodo the hobbit, braves terrible dangers in an attempt to have the evil ring destroyed.

Saturday Matinee at 2 p.m. – (PG) "The Wild Thornberrys" (Animated film) – Eliza and Debbie are two sisters who don't always get along. But their relationship is put to the test when Debbie's life is in danger, and Eliza might have to give up her power to talk to animals.

Sunday – (PG-13) "Two Weeks Notice," starring Sandra Bullock and Hugh Grant –

George doesn't make a move without Lucy, his Chief Counsel at Wade Corp. It's not the job that's getting to her – it's George. After five years of calling the shots on everything, from his clothes to his divorce settlements, Lucy is calling it quits. Is it ever too late to say 'I love you'?

(Editor's note: Movies are subject to change. Telephone numbers are provided for patrons to confirm scheduled play-dates.)

Commissary closed

The Hurlburt Field Commissary will be closed Feb. 17 in observance of the President's Day holiday, but will reopen Feb. 18 at 9 a.m. – resuming normal hours of operation.

Business expo

More than 100 health care professionals and supporting businesses will hold the Northwest Florida Business Expo Feb. 15 and 16 at the Santa Rosa Mall at 10:15 a.m. The opening ceremony will be the Hurlburt Field Honor Guard posting the colors. The event will feature the largest free health fair in the area with more than 50 different free health screenings. For more information visit the Web site at www.paradisexpos.com.

Annual game tournament

The annual "Bid Whist, Spades and Dominoes Tournament" is scheduled for Saturday at 4 p.m. at the Enlisted Club, sponsored by the African American Heritage Committee. For more information, call Mr. Leroy McRae at 729-8195.

Relay For Life schedule

Relay For Life is a volunteer-driven team event to fight cancer. All groups of people are welcomed to participate in making a difference in the local community. For more information, call (850) 244-3813 for upcoming meetings in your community. The next community event is scheduled for April 4-5 in Niceville.

Munch and Mend

The Hurlburt Chapel is offering a free home-cooked meal and free minor repairs or stripes, patches or name tags sewn on to one article of clean clothing Monday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call Bill White at 884-7371 or Jimmie Thomas at 881-3344.

Hurlburt Field Toastmasters

The Hurlburt Field Toastmasters Club holds meetings Wednesdays from 11:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. in classroom G in the Hurlburt Field Education Center (Building 90220) for those interested in joining. The Toastmasters assist individuals in developing speaking, listening and leadership skills in a mutually supportive and positive learning environment. For more information, contact Marty Mears at 884-1815 or marty.mears@hurlburt.af.mil. The Toastmasters Web site is www.toastmasters.org

Resume Writing Workshop

For those seeking assistance in writing a resume, cover letters, thank you letters or translating skills into the corporate language, the base is offering workshops Monday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and Feb. 25 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Reservations are required; call 884-6281.

HOSC luncheon

The monthly luncheon is scheduled for Feb. 18 at 10:30 a.m. at the Soundside Club offering hors d'oeuvres with brownies or petit fours for desert. The cost for members is \$10.25 with gratuity included. Guests are also welcome, but are not eligible for prizes. This month's program is Silver/Crystal/Pewter Bingo. Childcare is available at the Hurlburt Child Development Center from 10:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. for \$3 per hour, per child or \$5 per hour for two or more children. Childcare reservations can be made no later than Feb. 11 and luncheon reservations by Thursday. Call Marsha Babe at 678-4473 or visit the Web site at HOSCReservations@COX.net.

Dental health month

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. The dental staff at the 16th Medical Operations

Squadron will be at the Child Development Center Tuesday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., and at the Family Support Center for the "Moms, Pops and Tots" activity Feb. 18 & 19 at 10 a.m. There will also be tooth-related "goodie bags" at the dental clinic front desk and an informative table display in the Medical Group lobby throughout February.

Classes

FSC classes

For more information on family support center classes or to sign up, call 884-5441.

Employment Orientation – Monday, 9 a.m.

Sponsorship training – Monday, 1 p.m.

Moms, Pops and Tots – Tuesday and Wednesday 10 a.m.

Bundles for Babies – Wednesday, 1 p.m.

Employment Orientation – Wednesday, 1 p.m.

Federal Employment – Thursday, 9 a.m.

Heart's Apart Valentine's Spouses Spa Day – Feb. 15, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Sports

Basketball tournament

Eglin's African American Heritage Committee will be sponsoring a 3-on-3 basketball tournament Saturday at 9 a.m. at the Hurlburt Field Main Fitness Center. For more information, or to sign-up, call Senior Airman Slaughter at 883-9127.

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SPORTS

Commandos beat Tigers in weekend battle

by Master Sgt. Robert McKinney
823rd RED HORSE SQUADRON

The Hurlburt Field Commandos and Tyndall Air Force Base Tigers often referred to as the two top teams from the Southeastern Military Athletic Conference (SEMAC) waged battle at Hurlburt Field's main fitness center Feb. 1 and 2.

Hurlburt Field won both games 86-73 and 76-72 respectively. The two weekend games determined which team would head into the final week of the season as the first place team in SEMAC.

The Tigers scored the first seven points of game one but a three-point bomb by George Hines, Air Force Special Operations Command, energized and motivated the players, coaches and fans.

Byron Young, 16th Helicopter Maintenance Squadron, kept Hurlburt Field close during the first half by scoring 15 points, but Tyndall controlled the tempo going into the second half with a slim 38-37 lead.

Hines dominated the second half by scoring 21

points and finished the game with 30 points after substituting for the injured Jason Brown, 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Walter Fitzgerald, 16th HMXS, who scored 13 points, added timely scoring combined with the tough inside rebounding of Yeta Holloway, 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Reginald Jefferson, 16th Communications Squadron and Louis Koin, 16th AMXS.

"Yeta sealed the victory by hitting 10 of 10 from the free throw line in the second half and scoring 16 points," said Larry Harmon, 16th LRS and assistant head coach.

Marcus Baucom, 325th Communication Squadron, Tyndall AFB, scored 19 points and Israel Figueroa, Aerial Target Squadron, Tyndall AFB, scored 18 points, both led the Tigers in scoring.

The Commandos controlled the opening 30 minutes of game two, by dominating the defensive boards, Jefferson (12 rebounds), Holloway (10 rebounds) and Koin (9 rebounds) were the catalyst.

Young (8 points) and Fitzgerald (7 points) controlled the scoring in the first half as the Commandos built a 43-33 halftime lead.

Tyndall started the second half by pressing Hurlburt Field's guards into turnovers, which quickly erased the halftime deficit, taking a 54-52 lead with 11 minutes remaining.

Hines and Holloway would lead the scoring and rebounding efforts to overcome Tyndall's momentum. Key reserves Demetrius Billups, 16th Component Maintenance Squadron and Terrance Taylor, 15th Special Operations Squadron, provided the starters with needed breaks.

The game would rest with the sweet stroke of Young who put the team on top with 35 seconds to play.

Jefferson called the game winning play during the timeout, after Baucom's shot put Tyndall up 72-71. Team defense denied Tyndall the game in the final moments.

Hines scored 24 points, Holloway 16, Young and Fitzgerald both finished with 12 points each.

Prior to game one, the players and coaches discussed the type of team effort required to win both games. Starting with dominating the



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson

Tyndall Air Force Base started strong winning tipoff possession during Saturday's game against Hurlburt Field, but the Commandos came back to win both weekend games.

glass, playing big and giving an all-out effort.

Hurlburt Field's varsity team had been counting on contributions from Fitzgerald, who's the 2002 SEMAC Tournament Most Valuable Player, Young, "Big Regg" Jefferson, Antwon McPhail, 16th Security Forces Squadron, Billups, Taylor and Nick Herzog, 823rd RED HORSE Squadron.

The versatile addition of newcomers Holloway with his strong inside presence, Tony Whitley, 16th Maintenance Operations Squadron, point guard and combination guards, Saul Bookman, 16th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, Hines and Brown made the Commandos early season favorites.

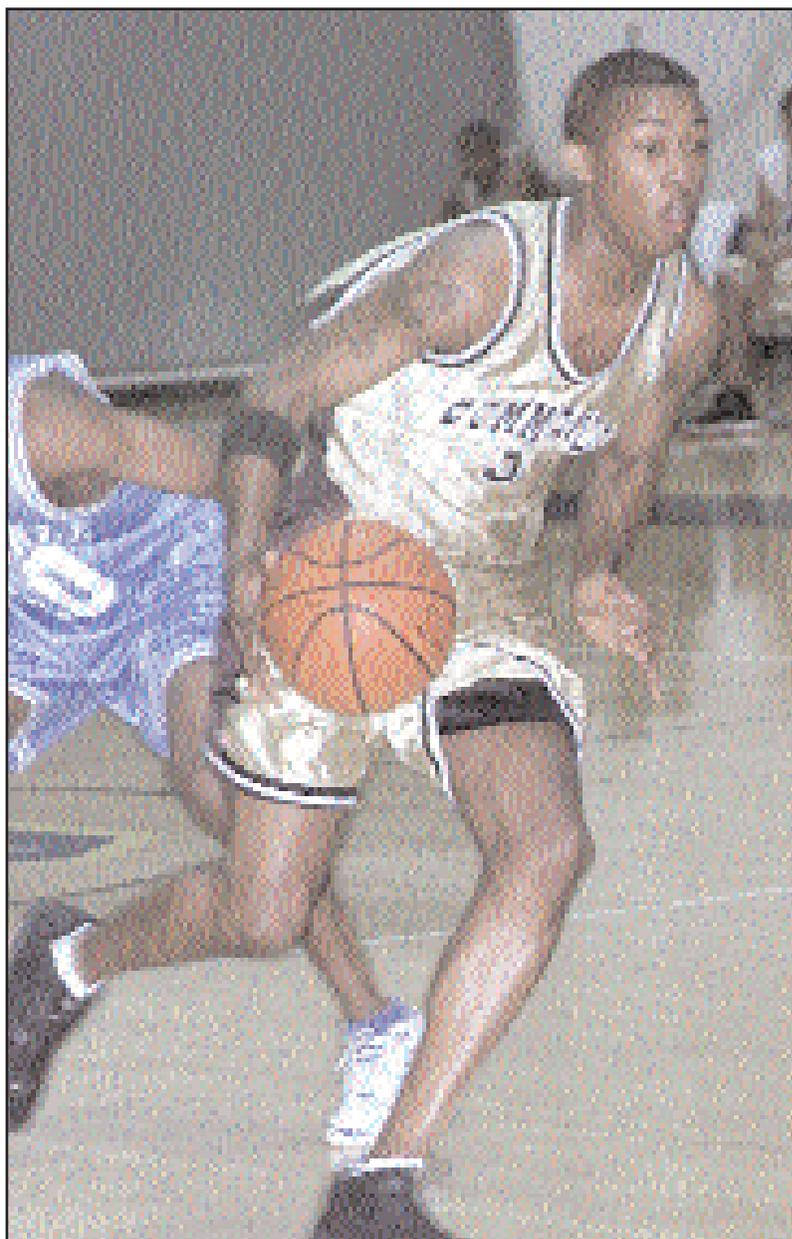
"The late season additions of Koin and forward Jamel Madison could provide the depth to win it all in 2003," said Kirk Perry, 16th Operations Support Squadron and assistant coach.

The team's hope of an undefeated season was shattered early with the deployments of McPhail and Herzog coupled with the season ending knee injuries to Whitley and Bookman.

The Commandos will finish the regular season against Keesler AFB, Miss., with home games Saturday and Sunday. The wins would lock up the regular season championship for the base team.

The SEMAC tournament will be played Feb. 15 through 17 at Tyndall AFB.

Currently the Commandos are in the number one SEMAC position with a record of 18-4, followed by Tyndall AFB 17-5, Eglin AFB 14-8 and Keesler AFB 12-10.



George Hines, Air Force Special Operations Command, drives down court for the basket.