



Photo by Senior Airman Ebony Pierre

The 823rd RED HORSE Squadron Fit Eagle team competes in the tug-of-war event at the Aderholt Fitness Center, Feb. 20. The team finished in second place overall in Fit Eagle. For more information on the competition, see Page 21.

Inside the office of the wing commander

By Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
Public Affairs

In a special ceremony held Oct. 24, representatives from four groups and 26 squadrons stood front and center when they welcomed the new 16th Special Operations Wing Commander, Col. O.G. Mannon, during the wing change of command.

Since that time, much has been accomplished in the name of keeping the Air Commando promise to provide reliable, precise, Air Force Special Operations air power...Any Time, Any Place!

In a recent interview, the Commando editor met with Colonel Mannon to discuss some of the highlights of his first 90-days as commander, to include his personal goals for the wing and the challenges he's faced since assuming command. The following is a complete transcript of that exclusive interview:

Q: How was the transition from being the 352nd Special Operations Group commander to becoming the 16th Special Operations Wing commander?

A: "I must say (jokingly) it was like going from the frying pan into the fire. It was an exciting transition. I expected it to be busy, but I've never been in a job with this high of an operations tempo. I'm so proud to be here and working in this wing and working with the professional people

See **COMMANDER**, Page 5

Hurlburt Field kicks off AFAF campaign

By Airman 1st Class Heidi Davis
Public Affairs

The Air Force Assistance Fund "A Commitment to Caring" campaign kicks off Monday at the 20th Special Operations Squadron auditorium from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

To get the campaign underway, all Hurlburt Field personnel as well as the 45 base campaign representatives are encouraged to attend the rally for free food, drinks and details pertaining to the campaign charities provided through words from Col. O.G. Mannon, 16th Special Operations Wing commander, and an informational video.

During the rally, representatives will be available with donation

forms and information concerning the four AFAF charities that directly support the Air Force community.

In 2003, Hurlburt Field personnel donated more than \$56,400 to the AFAF and received more than \$302,600 in direct assistance. As a whole, the Air Force raised \$5.9 million, but the AFAF needed to disperse more than \$22 million to assist the more than 30,000 people in need.

In order to provide for the growing Air Force, the AFAF requests a large participation rate from Hurlburt Field and the rest of the Air Force for this year's goal of \$5.2 million, which was recently announced by the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

"Contributions are vital for the Air Force Aide Society to sustain this kind of help – it's truly an airmen-helping-airmen program," said retired Lt. Gen. Mike McGinty, Air Force Aid Society chief executive officer. "To make up the difference (from last year's deficit), the AFAF was forced to cut community programs and reduce education grants by \$1,500 each. If possible, the top priority for this year will be to restore those reduced programs/grants for the troops and their families."

The AFAF was established in order to provide assistance to the Air Force family (active duty, Guard, Reserve, retirees and their

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News

ATSO exercise

16th SOW shows ability to survive, operate

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Feature

Talent competition

Hurlburt Field children take top honors in talent show

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Motorcycle event

Mandatory motorcycle briefing

There will be a mandatory Motorcycle Mentorship Concept of Operations safety briefing for all Hurlburt Field motorcycle riders at the base theater Monday from noon to 1:30 p.m. A motorcycle rally ride to Eglin's Beach Club will follow directly after the briefing for all interested riders. The rally ride is optional, but highly encouraged. Snacks will be served at the beach club. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. David Sharon at 884-6463.

Weather

Weekend forecast

Today – partly cloudy, High 53 Low 39

Saturday – sunny, High 59 Low 34

Sunday – partly cloudy, High 61 Low 37

www.hurlburt.af.mil/milonly/weather/5day



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. O.G. Mannon

One hundred-percent seat belt use policy

By Col. O.G. Mannon
16th SOW commander

Everyone at Hurlburt Field understands that the local roads around our base are extremely dangerous.

In fact, U.S. Highway 98 continues to be one of the most dangerous sections of roadway in the Florida panhandle.

Florida Highway Patrol records indicate that of the 33 fatalities that occurred in Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties on Highway 98 in 2003, 18 weren't wearing seatbelts. We can't accept the loss of a single airman to preventable injuries. The risk is real and unavoidable, so we must mitigate it to the utmost of our ability.

To encourage everyone to develop the habit of buckling up, beginning March 15, Hurlburt Field will implement a 100-percent seat belt use policy for all people entering or

driving on base. This policy will apply to all military, civilian, and contractor personnel.

All people, both drivers and passengers, will wear seatbelts while in a moving motor vehicle. Penalties for violating this policy are as follows:

■ First violation: Citation, four points against the offender's on-base driving record, and suspension of driving privileges for seven days. Suspensions will become effective seven days after the date of the citation or, if an administrative hearing with the 16th Mission Support Group commander is requested, the day after the administrative hearing.

■ Second violation: Citation, four points, and suspension of driving privileges for 60 days.

■ Third violation: Citation, four points, and suspension of driving privileges for one year.

Drivers are required to ensure

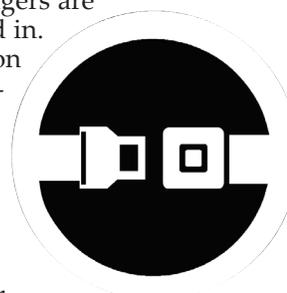
their passengers are also buckled in.

Any violation by a passenger will result in the driver receiving a citation and four points against their driving record.

Current Florida state law requires seat belt use for front-seat passengers and any children under 16, wherever seated. While our policy is more expansive than Florida's, the need for additional safety demands nothing less.

One hundred percent seatbelt use is reasonable, easy to do and saves lives.

Please join me in supporting this effort by ensuring you, your family and your co-workers buckle up for safety.



Spouses' clubs help community

By Brenda Paprocki
Hurlburt Officers' Spouses' Club

If you're looking for a way to get involved in the community, meet new people, or just have fun, check out the Hurlburt Field Spouses' Clubs.

Today's military has evolved and so have the spouses clubs. White-gloved teas are a thing of the past. The clubs today are geared towards giving back to the community – both civilian and military – and they focus on enriching the lives of its members with a plethora of activities and volunteer opportunities.

Hurlburt Field spouses are active volunteers at the base thrift store, youth center, child development center and the airman's attic.

They've also branched out into the community and volunteered for local charitable organizations such as PAWS, Sharing and Caring, the American Red Cross, SOCKS, the Wildlife Refuge and the Oasis.

Additionally, both spouses' clubs offer scholarships for military family members. The HOSC also gives monetary donations to numerous organizations both military and civilian. They recently provided funding for a "pond and bog" for the CDC's schoolyard habitat – when certified it will be the first CDC in the Air Force to have such a project. The HOSC also helps sponsor the annual base Family Fest.

Besides offering numerous opportunities to volunteer, the officers' spouses' club also has a number of specialized activities for its members, such as: Mah Jong, golf, Bunko, scrap booking, quilting, bowling and a book club.

There's also a special activities committee to organize evening activities throughout the year, which is especially good for members who work during the day and can't attend the monthly luncheons.

The spouses' clubs are non-profit organizations and raise all their

funds from membership dues and fundraisers.

The most well-known fund raiser is the annual HOSC Craft Bazaar. This year we're expanding the theme of the bazaar and it will no longer be "just a craft bazaar." They hope to attract new vendors who'll offer a variety of products, not just crafts.

The military spouses' clubs have evolved through the years but one aspect remains unchanged. The clubs can't exist without members.

Any spouses interested in joining the HESC can contact Elaina Cron at 581-1468 or Daniela Alicea at 936-4089. The HESC is also sponsoring its annual membership drive through a "bingo night" April 22, at 6 p.m. at the base chapel.

The clubs hold monthly luncheons and the next one is at 11 a.m. March 25 at the Soundside. For more information, call Membership Chairperson Susie Shaffer at 863-4939.



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Submitting articles

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DUI Tracker

Feb. 19-25: 3 DUIs
(This year: 12)

DUIs for 2003: 53

Last DUI: 16th Helicopter
Maintenance Squadron

Airmen Against Drunk Driving
Don't Drink and Drive. Call 884-8844
Potential saves this year: 65



Individual groups get a down
day for 60 consecutive days
without a DUI.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Karin Wickwire-Krause

www.blue_flag_exercise

Participants in Blue Flag 04-2 man their duty positions in the Air and Space Operations Center during the exercise held at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. Feb. 5-13. Hurlburt Field's 505th Exercise Control Squadron, part of the Air Force Command and Control Training and Innovation Group, designed and executed the exercise to provide AOC training for the 12th Air Force to prepare them to assume AOC duties in Southwest Asia. Blue Flag is a command and control exercise designed to provide AOC personnel a chance to sharpen their war-fighting skills and give them valuable hands-on experience before they have to make decisions in an actual conflict. Blue Flag 04-2 brought together more than 700 people from across the Air Force and the Department of Defense as well as coalition partners from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. The first Blue Flag was held in 1976 and they've been held as many as four times a year since then.

Wing continues to test ability to survive, operate

By Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
Public Affairs

Through the donning of chemical masks and diving under tables during numerous simulated enemy attacks, the 16th Special Operations Wing honed its ability to survive and operate during an ATSO exercise here Feb. 19.

The exercises are designed to test and evaluate the wing's ability to survive, operate and carry out the mission despite periods of chemical or conventional attacks.

In the next two months, the wing is scheduled to conduct more exercises in preparation for the final evaluation in early April.

"The purpose of these exercises is to prepare us for an Air Force Special Operations Command Inspector General Operational Readiness Assessment," said Lt. Col. Greg Pyle, 16th SOW exercise project officer. "They're going to assess our performance and application of the Air Force's new Counter-Chemical Warfare procedures."

The hub of activity took place in the survival recovery center, where the watchful eyes of Hurlburt Exercise Evaluation Team members monitored the urgency and proficiency of the participants while injecting a variety of scenarios.

During the 12-hour exercise each functional unit had obstacles to overcome, while reporting to their respec-

tive unit control centers, which in turn relayed information to the SRC.

The SRC evaluated the inputs from the field and directed follow-on courses of action.

Several units were key players in the exercise and overall things went well, according to Colonel Pyle.

"We've done some things well," he said. "But, this was our first ATSO exercise in quite some time so some actions were a little rusty. The important thing is we learned from the exercise and we'll apply those lessons to the next one. Overall, the participants' attitudes and professionalism were top-notch, and I have no doubt we'll do very well for the I.G."

The next ATSO exercise is scheduled for March 25.

Spotlight on ...

Jimi Smoot

Rank/Duty Title: Airman 1st Class/AC-130H Gunship loadmaster

Organization: 16th Special Operations Squadron

Hometown: Yreka, Calif.

Hobbies: Surfing, playing the guitar and cars

Contribution to the mission:

Airman Smoot single-handedly averted a Class A mishap with his discovery of a fire onboard an aircraft while he was performing preflight duties.

He alerted personnel to the emergency situation and bravely fought the fire in an extremely confined space without regard for his own safety.

Airman Smoot prevented the injury, loss of life and saved a \$132 million Gunship.

He was recently awarded the 16th Special Operations Wing Safety Award.

As a member of the unit airmen's council, he's instrumental in the organization of multiple squadron fund raising events.

(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.)

Civilian personnel system moves forward

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon's personnel chief said recently that he hopes to bring the first 300,000 civilian Defense Department employees under the new National Security Personnel System within the next six months.

The system, authorized by the Fiscal Year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, will introduce sweeping changes to the way the department hires, pays, promotes, disciplines and fires its civilian employees.

David Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, told American Forces Radio and Television Service Feb. 19 that progress in introducing the new system is continuing on all fronts.

Meetings between management and nine unions representing the department's 400,000 employees covered by bargaining units were slated for Thursday and today.

Mr. Chu said the new system will give the department "more

flexibility" to manage its civilian work force, while making civil service a more attractive career option.

He noted that surveys of young Americans show high interest in military service, but not civil service.

"I would like to see us...get to the point where people are as excited about the civil opportunities we have to offer as they are about the uniformed opportunities we have to offer," Mr. Chu said.

Among the new system's incentives is that it rewards top performers.

"Pay, which now is often driven largely by tenure and longevity," Mr. Chu said, "will be much more tied to what one contributes to the mission and the organization."

In addition, the new system will open up opportunities often not available to civilian employees. When a new task comes down the pike, Mr. Chu said, the standard response is to establish a military task force or call on a contractor.

"They don't say, 'Let's stand

up a civil service unit," Mr. Chu said. "There's something wrong with that."

The new system will also eliminate many current rules that hamper effective personnel management. Under the current system, it takes too long to hire people – an average of three months, Mr. Chu said.

The current system also makes it hard to pay people properly or move them around, Mr. Chu said.

Furthermore, Mr. Chu said that the Department of Defense is "at the very beginnings" of implementing the NSPS, but is basing the transition on 25 years of proven experience.

More than 30,000 DOD civilians are participating in demonstration projects to test some of the new policies to be implemented department wide, he said.

After the initial transition, Mr. Chu said most employees involved in the demonstration projects "are much more satisfied with their opportunities in the federal civil service than they were before."

Famous African American inventors

Mark Dean and Dennis Moeller created a microcomputer system with bus control means for peripheral processing devices.

This development allows IBM and compatible PCs to use high performance software and to work in tandem with peripheral devices.

The first commercial use of their patents was marketed in 1984 in the IBM PC/AT computer.

Their work enhanced the PC by enabling components to communicate with each other in a high-speed, efficient manner.

Mr. Dean's and Mr. Moeller's invention paved the way for the growth in the information technology industry, by allowing people to plug into computers peripherals disk drives, video gear, speakers and scanners.



Mark Dean

Identity protected with LES changes

ARLINGTON, Va. – Leave and earning statements for all servicemembers and Department of Defense civilians, and paychecks for military retirees will soon have more identity theft protection.

Over the next several weeks, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will drop the first five digits of a person's social security number from all pay statements and checks to guard against identity theft.

"The changes apply to everyone," said Patrick Shine, acting director of DFAS. "The proposal originated internally and will be phased in over the next couple of pay periods."

Reports of identity theft have substantially increased in recent years, according to the Federal Trade Commission, which monitors the issue.

This change is to be for all hard copy LES'. This doesn't apply to electronic copies of statements found on "myPay," the online system for access and control of customers personal pay information.

Five years ago, the number of identity theft complaints to the FTC was roughly 23,400. By 2001, the rate had more than tripled to about 86,200.

Based on figures released in January, the number of complaints of identity theft nearly topped 215,000 for 2003.

The Social Security Administration also has taken the same step of eliminating the first five social security numbers on the millions of checks it issues. (AFPN)

News Briefs

Local News

JSOU course

The Joint Special Operations University invites all Special Operations personnel preparing to live in or deploy to the Middle East region, who work with individuals from this region, or those with a professional or analytical interest in the Middle East region to attend the Middle East Orientation Course March 8–12. For more information, call Joyce Weber at 884-4731 or Capt. Brett Seiling at 884-7133 or visit <https://www.hurlburt.af.mil/milonly/tenantunits/jsou/>

Also, the JSOU will hold a Foreign Area Officer program brief March 11 from noon to 1 p.m. for all Special Operators interested in learning a foreign language, becoming a regional expert or helping the Air Force fill Political-Military/Attaché billets worldwide. For more information, call 1st Lt. Walker Moody at DSN 425-8337.

TAP program

The Air Force's Transition Assistance Program enhances the transition from the military. Military members separating may start their TAP 12 months from separation; retiring members may begin 24 months from retirement. Briefings are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. For more information, visit the separations/retirements office in Building 90210 or call 884-6281.

Former Lowry AFB employees

The Air Force Real Property Agency wants to interview people who were employed or stationed at the former Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, Colo.

The AFRPA is conducting the interviews to ensure all environmental conditions on the base have been investigated. For more information, call 1-800-725-7617 or e-mail doug.karas@afarpa.pentagon.af.mil



Air Force News

Zero mishaps

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force has set a new safety goal for airmen: Zero mishaps. As part of the renewed initiative to prevent accidents, the Air Force will work to:

- Turn around the rising trend in motor-vehicle collisions, which is the number one killer of airmen
- Raise motorcycle safety awareness and skill level
- Decrease the rate of aviation accidents

To oversee safety matters, CSAF has established the Air Force Operational Safety Council. Chaired by the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the safety council will:

- Monitor safety performance
- Examine new or emerging technologies, from operational as well as safety perspectives
- Direct required changes in Air Force policy, programs and investment

AFAF, *Continued from Page 1*

family members) in three major areas of need – emergency assistance grants and zero interest loans, education grants and community programs. Through donations to the four charitable organizations – the Air Force Aid

Society, the Gen. and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation, the Air Force Enlisted Foundation and the Air Force Village Foundation – the AFAF is able to provide members with emergency assistance and funding for education, and a secured retirement home for widows and widowers.

During the six-week campaign, which ends April 9, donation payments can be made by cash, check or payroll deduction.

For more information, call the AFAF installation project officers, 1st Lt. Nichole Marshall at 884-2703 or 1st Lt. Darin Wheeler at 884-3013.

COMMANDER, *Continued from Page 1*

that we have here at Hurlburt Field."

Q: What is an average day like for you?

A: *"My day usually starts somewhere around 4 or 5 a.m. with some kind of physical training. I'm in the office by 6:30 or 7 a.m. checking e-mails until the first appointments start around 8:30. From that point on I'm pretty much on a schedule of appointments throughout the day and sometimes during the evening hours. Of course I couldn't do it all alone. I have a great vice commander and executive staff that assist me every day and help ensure every task is accomplished."*

Q: During your initial commander's call back in November, you spoke about the Milk Stool of Success (professional development, relativity and family support). Since that time, how well do you think the wing has done balancing those three areas? Are any areas in need of improvement?

A: *"Overall we do a good job of accomplishing the mission and doing things that are relative to the mission. We also do a good job of taking care of our people and families. But, some of our "house keeping functions" as I like to call them, we can continue to improve upon. The daily functions that keep our foundation solid is something we need to ensure we continue to improve."*

Q: What are some of your goals for the wing?

A: *"I'd like us to increase our combat readiness, while maintaining sustained combat arms. Also, becoming a little more efficient in our training and creating ways to measure our effectiveness here on base. Another goal is for us to win the Air Force Installation Excellence Award in 2005. You all did it in 2003 and I've had the opportunity to visit three bases that are competing in 2004. I'm hoping to bring some of what they're doing back here to Hurlburt Field."*

Q: Upon assuming command, was there anything that stood out, either good or bad, that you felt needed to be changed or improved upon at the Wing?

A: *"The professionalism and the sense of teamwork of the people here really stood out to me. I'd like to encourage and enhance those qualities throughout the entire base. On the other hand, one thing I'd like us to get better at is for people to take ownership of our facilities and provide feedback to leadership so we can make the base a better place to work and live. For example, if you see something that needs fixing, fix it. Or if you have a suggestion regarding how we can improve existing programs and facilities bring it to the attention of your chain of command or send your comments to my OPEN LINE at 884-(OPEN) 6736.*

Q: What is your favorite part about being the wing commander?

A: *"The people, the young people in our Air Force are so excited. I believe our Air Force is in good hands, because of the exceptional talent and enthusiasm our young people display."*

Q: What is the hardest part about being the wing commander?

A: *"Up to this point the hardest part has been the loss of lives. The aircrew members we lost Nov. 23 in the MH-53M PAVE LOW crash in Afghanistan and a tragic suicide on base. Those things are always difficult and it's something I'll always have a hard time dealing with."*

Something that has also been hard is discipline. While it's necessary, it's one of the hardest parts of my job. For example, we must hold people accountable for things such as driving under the influence.

We have to encourage our young people to take care of each other. Around Nov. 17 there was a noticeable decline in the base DUI trend, and it was looking encouraging all the way through the Super Bowl weekend. But, just within the last 15 days we've had 11 DUIs. Overall, I don't think percentage-wise we're any higher or lower than any other base, but one is too many."

Q: What is being done to deter future DUIs?

A: *"There are several steps we're taking in order to create additional awareness for this issue. For example, we'll be creating CQ duty in the dorms this weekend and installing signs and a wrecked car at both gates as a visible reminder. I've also directed some of the airmen recently charged with DUI offenses to speak with their peers about lessons learned."*

Q: How do you feel Hurlburt Field people are handling the constant deployments in support of the war on terrorism?

A: *"As a whole I think people are doing an exceptional job dealing with the stresses of family separations and going into harms way. I'm extremely proud of the way everyone enthusiastically goes about accomplishing our critical mission."*

Q: Any final comments?

A: *"I have to say thank you to everyone in the wing for their professionalism. I'm humbled and grateful to sit in this position and facilitate in some small way the success of the wing. All of us in positions of leadership will continue to look to our young folks to provide inspiration as well as feedback on how we can help ensure job satisfaction and reach their career goals. I'm proud and thankful to be where I am."*

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Special Ops goes to Tallahassee

By Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
Public Affairs

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Public Affairs representatives from Air Force Special Operations Command and the 16th Special Operations Wing participated in the Fourth Annual Northwest Florida Legislative Day at the state capitol building Feb. 18.

The annual legislative day provides the opportunity for the 16 regional counties to promote the quality of life found in Northwest Florida to the state legislature and cabinet.

Hurlburt Field, which is part of Okaloosa County, was one of the military installations represented at the event, along with Eglin Air Force Base, Duke Field and Pensacola Naval Air Station.

“This is the fourth year we’ve all come together to promote the uniqueness and quality of life found in Northwest Florida,” said State Senator Charles Clary III. “The day provides us with the opportunity to feature our 16 county region’s characteristics at their best.”

As one of the many Okaloosa County participants, Hurlburt Field representatives set up displays highlighting the unique Special Operation’s mission, handed out pamphlets, and briefed Florida legislators and people visiting the capitol about the importance of the installation.

More than 2,000 people visited the capitol courtyard and not only learned about the military, but also about archeology, wildlife, area beaches and the growing industries.

Shortly after the event got underway, a small welcome home ceremony was held for four military members who recently returned from a deployment in support of the war on terrorism. It was followed by an F-15 flyover by the 33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, which appeared to catch every one by surprise.

Similar events throughout other regions of Florida such as Dade Day and Ybor City Day are held for the same reasons as Northwest Florida Legislative Day, according to Senator Clary.

“It provides a wonderful learning experience for all who attend,” he said. “It’s an honor to be involved in activities that promote some of the culture that the Northwest Florida region has to offer.”

Retirees have newsletter

The *Afterburner* is a newsletter for Air Force retired personnel. The distribution is for individuals entitled to Air Force retired pay and unmarried widows or widowers of retirees who receive an annuity. The newsletter is published January, May and September each year and provides information on all retiree issues.

Those who are eligible and would like to receive the *Afterburner* newsletter, should e-mail list.manager@listserver.afpc.randolph.af.mil with the subject as “subscribe afretire” or write to:

HQ AFPC/DPPTTR
550 C Street West, Suite 11
Randolph Air Force Base, TX 78150-4713



Photo by Bill Thorton

The Seal of the State of Florida is displayed in the rotunda of the state capitol.

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Everybody responsible for continued vigilance

Courtesy of Air Force OSI Public Affairs

The terrorism attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, taught us that the enemies of the United States are capable of striking high-value targets on American soil, and they're willing to stop at nothing to do so.

With more terror attacks promised by the enemies of the United States, vigilance is called for like never before. For that reason, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations continues to promote the "Eagle Eyes" program.

At the heart of the program is the understanding that terrorist acts are simply not spontaneous activities that "just happen." Rather, they require careful planning and are rehearsed in advance.

This point was stressed considerably when investigations into the Sept. 11 attacks revealed that the perpetrators lived in our cities and communities, conducted surveillance, planned their attacks and rehearsed their operations in the midst of our everyday way of life.

Yet not enough people were able to recognize the planning activities and contact the right people to prevent the tragedy.

That's why "Eagle Eyes" was created - to better educate Air Force personnel and ordinary citizens on the planning activities associated with terrorist acts and to encourage them to notify authorities when they see something suspicious.

Specifically, "Eagle Eyes" encourages people to recognize the following activities as potentially suspicious and to report them to authorities:

Surveillance - someone recording or monitoring activities. This may include the use of cameras (either still or video), note taking, drawing diagrams, annotating on maps, or using binoculars or other vision-enhancing devices.

Elicitation - people or organizations attempting to gain information about military operations, capabilities

or people. Elicitation attempts may be made by mail, fax, telephone or in person.

Tests of security - any attempts to measure reaction times to security breaches or to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures, in order to assess strengths and weaknesses.

Acquiring supplies - purchasing or stealing explosives, weapons, ammunition, etc. Also includes acquiring military uniforms, decals, flight manuals, passes, badges (or the equipment to manufacture such items) or any other controlled items.

Suspicious persons out of place - people who don't seem to belong in the workplace, neighborhood, business establishment or anywhere else. Includes suspicious border crossings, stowaways aboard ship or people jumping ship in port.

Dry run - putting people into position and moving them around according to their plan without actually committing the terrorist act.

This is especially true when planning a kidnapping, but it can also pertain to bombings. An element of this activity could also include mapping out routes and determining the timing of traffic lights and flow.

Deploying assets - people and supplies getting into position to commit the act. This is a person's last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs.

The U.S. Air Force belongs to the citizens of this great nation, and their continued vigilance helps protect Air Force people and resources from terrorist attacks.

"Eagle Eyes" puts them all on the antiterrorism team by teaching them what to look for. Doing so makes the world a smaller, more difficult place for terrorists to carry out their missions.

If any of the previous suspicious activities are observed, call AFOSI Detachment 309 at 884-6102 or the 16th Security Forces Law Enforcement desk at 884-7777.

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National Children's Dental Health Month: *Children loosing teeth*

What should a parent do if a child's tooth is completely dislodged from the mouth?

A tooth has the highest chance of being saved when quick action is taken; the best results occur when patients are seen by a dentist within 30 minutes of the accident.

It's also critical to transport the tooth correctly. Parents shouldn't handle, rub or scrape the root of the tooth. It needs to be placed in a container of some type of liquid, such as milk, saliva or water.

Following these suggestions can improve the chance that a dislodged tooth can be saved.

Officials limit re-enlistment window

By Staff Sgt. Melanie Streeter
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – Air Force personnel officials are changing the re-enlistment eligibility window beginning March 5.

The new policy requires active-duty airmen to re-enlist within three months of their term of service expiring – a change from the 12-month window currently in effect.

“In our effort to shape the force, we continue to seek areas that’ll give us greater management oversight,” said Master Sgt. Maria Cornelia, the Air Force’s chief of retention and bonus programs at the Pentagon. “We want our airmen to understand that we’re not discouraging re-enlistments. By reducing the eligibility window, Air Force officials will have a

better picture of how many re-enlistments we can expect within a given period.”

Narrowing the window will also assist officials with forecasting requirements for personnel programs such as selective re-enlistment bonuses, career job reservations and retraining, Sergeant Cornelia said.

This policy shift isn’t something new, but a return to the policy in place before 2001. The eligibility window was expanded from three to 12 months during a low-retention period.

Airmen will still be authorized to re-enlist earlier than three months from their term of service expiring because of service-related requirements, such as a reassignment and promotion.

For more information, call the military personnel flight at 884-5251.

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Customs and Courtesies

The official Air Force colors of ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are reflected in the Air Force Seal; the circular background is ultramarine blue, and the trim is Air Force yellow.

The 13 white stars represent the original 13 colonies. The Air Force yellow numerals under the shield stand for 1947, the year the Department of the Air Force was established.

The band encircling the whole design is white edged in Air Force yellow with black lettering reading "Department of the Air Force" on the top and "United States of America" on the bottom.

Centered on the circular background is the Air Force coat of arms, consisting of the crest and shield.

Selection board date changes

Air Force officials have approved the following changes to the schedule for selection boards convening in calendar year 2004.

The Senior NCO Supplemental Boards originally scheduled to convene Aug. 23 have been moved to Aug. 30 to allow for conduct of the Command Screening Board, which has been moved from Sept. 20 to Aug. 16.

For more information, call 1st Lt. Nicole Marshall at 884-2703.



Soldiers still help keep base secure

By Senior Airman
Sam Taylor
Public Affairs

After more than a year, Army National Guard soldiers remain at Hurlburt Field, augmenting the 16th Security Forces Squadron.

Since their arrival here Feb. 11, 2003, soldiers of the 146th Signal Battalion Company, Jacksonville, Fla., have been performing normal security duties alongside security forces.

"Without a close look at the uniform, it would be hard to tell a soldier from an airman," said Capt. Mark Walsh, 16th SFS. "They've fully embraced the mission here and are excelling daily."

Without the 62 soldiers' assistance, 16th SFS troops would be working 12-hour

shifts and vital training would take a back seat, said Captain Walsh.

"The impact on our unit has been huge," said the captain. "The soldiers brought to the table a lot of skills, which have greatly enhanced our unit. We even have a soldier on the (Air Force Special Operations Command) Elite Guard staff."

The Army Guardsmen are projected to remain at Hurlburt Field until February of 2005.

"It's awesome the way we've integrated together," said Private 1st Class Sean Hennen, a soldier here.

"Some people, on both sides, didn't expect the Army and Air Force to work well together at first. Now, we're pretty much a big family.

"We're here to do a job,

and enforce the laws," he said. "So far I love it – it's beyond anything I've ever experienced."

Army Sgt. Lorraine Lordy said Air Force people have been very friendly and have looked out for their Army brethren.

"We're liking it," said Sergeant Lordy. "It's different; earlier mornings than some of us are used to. But, the Air Force has been great to us."

Captain Walsh said he asks the people of Hurlburt Field to thank the soldiers for their efforts.

"Whether checking IDs in the rain at the main gate or patrolling the base perimeter, these professionals are always there and can be counted on to protect our base and its people," he said.

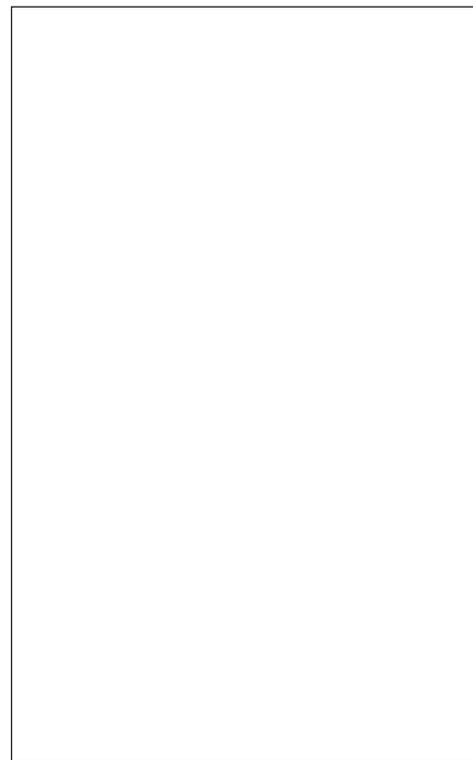


Photo by Senior Airman Sam Taylor

Army Specialist Kimberly Kelsey, Bravo Company, Ellyson Field, Pensacola, Fla., checks identification cards at the main gate. Specialist Kelsey is one of many Army National Guard members augmenting the 16th Security Forces Squadron.

919th welcomes active duty to wing

By 2nd Lt. Marnee Carlson
919th SOW Public Affairs

People looking to leave active duty can now do so a little earlier than expected, due to a new program that provides opportunities for active-duty members to continue their military careers in the Air Force Reserve.

The Air Force's new Force Shaping Program has projected active-duty numbers to drop by 3,900 officers and 12,700 enlisted airmen by Sept. 15, in order to meet the authorized end-strength of 359,300 airmen.

As the active force tries to reduce manning, the Air Force Reserve's 919th Special Operations Wing at Duke Field is seeking to hire many of those experienced airmen to fill critical positions within the wing.

The 919th SOW is in need of qualified airmen to work as navigators, electronic warfare officers, airborne communications and electronic systems specialists, flight engineers and loadmasters, said Master Sgt. Jim Inskipt, the 919th SOW's In-Service recruiter at Eglin Air Force Base.

One way active-duty members can transition to the 919th SOW, or any Reserve unit, is to use the Palace Chase Program, said

Sergeant Inskipt. Palace Chase is a program for airmen to trade their active-duty service commitments for Air Force Reserve service commitments.

"The Palace Chase Program Force Shaping is a valuable tool for individuals wanting to remain in the military, but leave active duty to pursue their education on a full-time basis," said Master Sgt. Bobby Gaston, Hurlburt Field In-Service recruiter. "This opportunity is open to all Air Force Specialty Codes at Hurlburt Field and shouldn't be mistaken for a force reduction. The Air Force simply has more members than authorized by Congress, and the relaxation of qualifications to apply is only through March 12."

Previously, first-term airmen with a six-year enlistment had to wait until their third year of service before being eligible to apply for Palace Chase. Now, these airmen can apply during their second year of service. Some Air Force Academy graduates may be approved for the program.

Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets may also apply to be commissioned directly into Air Force Reserve jobs for six-year commitments, instead of the typical four-year tour of active duty.

In addition, active-duty members

who were notified of a permanent change of station and people who were previously disapproved for the program can now apply.

In order to qualify for this program, applicants must have graduated from their technical schools, be qualified as a three-level in their career field, have a re-enlistment code approved for continued military service and meet all the Palace Chase eligibility criteria under the Force Shaping rules.

To be approved, applicants must separate from active duty between May 15 and Sept. 15. Though the normal application process is from seven to eight weeks, under the new rules, officials at the Air Force Personnel Center expect to be able to notify applicants of their results within four to six weeks.

For individuals who are moving out of the Panhandle area and aren't willing to travel far, another option is to become an individual mobilization augmentee.

IMAs are Reservists assigned part time to active-duty units, backfilling or deploying when required. Being an IMA is a flexible way to be in the Air Force, serving a minimum of 12 days throughout the year and two weeks of annual tour each year.

IMAs may be mobilized by the

president during wartime or contingency operations, but aren't assigned directly to active-duty units instead of Reserve squadrons.

Hurlburt Field's Air Force Special Operations Command has many openings available in the IMA Program with availabilities of training at bases other than Hurlburt Field, said Sergeant Gaston.

Air Force members applying for and approved for transfer to the Air Force Reserve are able to retain many of the full-time benefits they enjoy on active duty, such as full unlimited commissary and base exchange privileges, Thrift Savings Plans and educational benefits such as 100 percent tuition assistance, said Sergeant Gaston.

Those members separating under their normal separating procedures also have the same opportunities to join the Air Force Reserve as through Palace Chase.

For information concerning Palace Chase or the Palace Front Program, call Sergeant Gaston at 884-2656 or email bobby.gaston@hurlburt.af.mil. To request an application and information online, visit <https://intranet.eglin.af.mil/AFReserve/>, follow the link at the bottom of the Web site to Hurlburt Field. **(AFRC)**

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March:

National Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month. The military equal opportunity office invites volunteers to assist in organizing, preparing and supporting the observance period. Positions include: chairperson, vice chairperson and treasurer. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Natasha Hollomon at 884-8746.

Week in History

The following are a list of extraordinary events in military history that occurred several years ago this week:

Feb. 23, 1912 – The War Department officially recognized the Military Aviator rating.

Feb. 24, 1969 – An enemy mortar shell struck an AC-47 Gunship on which Airman 1st Class John L. Levitow served. Although seriously wounded, he ejected a smoking flare and became the first enlisted airman to receive the Medal of Honor in Vietnam.

Feb. 26, 1940 – The Air Defense Command was created to integrate U.S. Army Air Force defenses against an air attack.

Feb. 27, 1920 – An official world altitude record of 33,113 feet was set at McCook Field, Ohio.

Feb. 28, 1947 – An F-82B set a record, flying non-stop from Hawaii to New York in 14 hours and 33 minutes.

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Top-notch talent takes AF awards

Story and photos by
Vanessa Adame
Public Affairs

Hurlburt Field can now boast top-notch talent thanks to seven Hurlburt Field youth who danced, sang and hit the right notes all the way to Air Force-level recognition.

The youth, ranging from ages 8 to 17, beat out hundreds of contestants when they competed in the 2003 Family Teen and Talent Show last November in the base theater. As a result, the winners will receive U.S. savings bonds ranging from \$100 to \$250.

"They deserve all the accolades they've been given for their fabulous performances," said Trisha Barrett from 16th Services Squadron. "We just provided them a place...they did it all," she said.

Brother and sister duo Jessey and Alina Burroughs, ages 10 and 8 respectively, earned third place honors with a tribute to their maternal Japanese heritage with a traditional Okinawan drum and dance routine.

"The kids were really surprised when they found out," said Master Sgt. Richard Burroughs, 16th Services Squadron (Jessey and Alina's father). "They immediately wanted to know how much money they won," he added.

"They won't be spending the cash anytime soon, it's going straight into their savings account for college."

Twelve-year-old Diane Beckius may also have some cash to stash into her account. She struck all the right keys with her piano performance of Beethoven's *Fur Elise* wooing the crowd and earning second place in the Air Force-level contest.

Following closely in third place, Audry Zierden, 15, earned \$100 with her piano rendition of *Ballade for Adeline* and *Rowdy Rodeo*.

Brothers Luke and Mike Millikin and Chris Smalley also rocked to third place with an original guitar and vocal performance which was a hit among local contest judges who deemed it "Judges Choice" in the November showcase.

The Millikin brothers and Smalley, along with Zierden, are being considered for acceptance to the Missoula Children's Theater performing arts camp in July. All applicants are required to audition for the one week camp, which teaches lessons in voice, acting and dance.

The next talent contest is planned for November. For more information, call Chuck Lowery at 884-3821.

Jessey Burroughs (top), who won third place in the Air Force-level talent competition, performs an Okinawan routine at the Family and Teen Talent Contest in November. (left to right) Chris Smalley, Luke Millikin and his brother Mike, also earned third place in a separate category for their guitar and vocal performance.

Club finds camaraderie, secret message in quilting book

Story and photos by **Vanessa Adame**
Public Affairs

Two days out of the week, a small group of people gather at the base library to discuss a historical event.

However, the subject of this meeting won't be found in school textbooks.

Instead, the topic is hidden in the pages of a book that tells the story of how slaves made quilts encoded with maps of secret paths on how to navigate escapes through the Underground Railroad.

Seated around a conference room table, Shirley Sims of the African American History Month committee, is helping bring the secret story of quilting to light.

"Hidden in Plain View" by Jacqueline Tobin is the book that started it all.

"The book was enlightening for me," said Ms. Sims. "It raised my awareness on what my ancestors went through to overcome slavery and we wanted to pass the message along."

During their lunch hour gatherings, Ms. Sims and the other participants discuss what they

know of similar codes hidden in African American culture and how they apply to their own experience.

Lee Thompson, a guest who attended the reading, recalls seeing her mother carefully sew quilts that at times took as long as two years to make.

"I remember coming home from school to find my mother teaching a group of women to sew the quilts," said Ms. Thompson, who wonders if those quilts served another purpose other than a work of art or keeping warm.

"It's helping us learn more about our culture and the Underground Railroad," said Ms. Sims. "Our meetings are fun, but they're also educational."

Michelle Hayes, Joint Special Operations University, says she became interested in the small group when she first heard of it through an advertisement.

"I never knew that secret codes existed within quilts, and I wanted to learn more about it," she said. "I'm glad I came."

Ms. Sims hopes that after people finish reading the book and long after, they'll pass the history of the message long kept hidden along to their



Earline Bess, 16th Communication Squadron, compares patterns on her quilt to those noted in the book.

children. As for Ms. Hayes, she'll soon be passing the story on to her 5-year-old daughter.

For more information about the book club, call Ms. Sims at 884-4936.

"Hidden in Plain View" is available for check-out at the base library.

Community

APAH

The Hurlburt Field Asian Pacific American Heritage Association will meet Tuesday at noon in the library conference room to begin planning festivities leading up to an Asian Pacific American observance period in May. Everyone is welcome to attend. The APAH's mission is to promote awareness and increase understanding of the Asian American culture through education and celebration, offer volunteer services to Air Force Special Operations Command and help charitable activities. For more information, e-mail helen.cason@hurlburt.af.mil

Education grant

Air Force Aid Society Education Grant applications are still available at the family support center. Applications can also be downloaded from www.afas.org. Deadline to apply is March 12.

Work-study program

The Veteran's Administration Work-Study Program has positions available at Hurlburt Field. The program provides part-time employment to veterans who participate three-fourths or full time in a college degree, vocational, or professional program and are using VA educational benefits. Work hours will not exceed 25 hours per week and work schedule is flexible. For more information, contact the transition assistance office at 884-6280/81.

Summer hire program

The Hurlburt Field summer hire program is accepting applications. To qualify, students must be enrolled in high school, technical or vocational school, college/university and taking at least a half-time course load. Students must be at least 16 years old by the work start date, which begins in the May and June timeframe. A résumé is required for consideration. For information on how to apply, visit www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afjobs or stop by the civilian personnel office located in Bldg 90210, Room 135. For more information, contact Pat White at 884-5212.

School clean-up

Mary Esther Elementary School is holding a campus clean-up day March 13 at 9 a.m. If your child is a student at the school and you plan to attend, please provide the student's and teacher's names so the class may receive credit for your participation.

Mary Esther Elementary is located on U.S. Highway 98 between Animal Hospital of the Emerald Coast and Target. Lunch will be served to all volunteers at 11:30 a.m. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Cynthia Turzak by March 9, at 884-5341.

Education survey

The Hurlburt Field Education Services Center is conducting a survey through April 30 to help determine the needs of our students. The survey is available online at <https://afvec.langlely.af.mil/afvec>. For more information, contact Jannie Benson at 884-6000.

OU Summer registration

The University of Oklahoma begins summer registration Monday. OU offers nationally accredited graduate degrees in International Relations, Human Relations and Managerial Economics. For more information, call 581-3000.

Enlisted Hooch Clean-up

The Hurlburt Field Top 3 and Chief's Groups are sponsoring the Enlisted Hooch Cleanup and Repair Day March 12 beginning at noon. Volunteers are needed to help with repair plans including replacing the deck screening, clearing the landscaping and painting the inside of the Hooch. Volunteers should bring gloves and tools. For more information, contact Chief Master Sgts. Kevin Thurman at 884-3414; Brooke McLean at 884-5889 or Master Sgt. Mike Garrouette at 884-4161.

Lenten lunches

The base chapel will be holding Lenten lunches every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. through April 7 in the chapel annex. Various pastors from local community will share devotions on the seven last words of Christ. Everyone is invited to share in this time of worship, teaching and prayer. A light lunch will be served following the service. The event is sponsored by the Protestant Parish.

Munch & Mend

The base chapel invites all airmen to Munch & Mend March 8 from 5 to 7 p.m. Airmen are invited to a free dinner while having minor repairs done on one article of clean clothing or to have stripes, patches or name tags sewn on. For more information, contact Bill White at 884-7371 or Jimmie Thomas at 881-3344.

Self Help closure

The Self Help store will close March 17 and 18 for semi-annual inventory. The store will re-open March 19. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Ramirez or Staff Sgt. Anderson at 884-2378 or 884-7130.

NCOA meeting

Hurlburt Field's Commando Noncommissioned Officer Association chapter will be meeting tomorrow at 6 p.m. at JR Rockers' Daytona Room. Members are invited to bring a friend. We are undergoing a membership recall to gather former and current members. For more information, call Master Sgt's. Bob Love at 884-4995 or Charles Glotzbach at 884-7964.

New degree program

The University of Arkansas at Hurlburt Field offers a Master of Science degree with a major in Operations Management. Registration for Term 4 continues through March 9. Degree requirements can be completed in one year. For more information on the degree program, call 884-3844 or e-mail uafgrad3@uofa.gccoxmail.com

ERAU registration

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University is currently holding Spring II term registration through March 12 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Spring II term runs from March 15 through May 15. For more information on registration, call 581-2106.

Home buying/selling seminar

The Hurlburt Field Housing Office will host a home buying/selling seminar March 8 from 8 to 11 a.m. at the family support center. Topics of discussion will include tips on buying and selling a home, getting the best financing, home inspections and more. Call 884-5441 to register.

Air Force TV and Radio News



To check out Air Force TV or Radio News visit: <http://af.feedroom.com> or www.af.mil/news and click on TV or radio to find out what's happening around the Air Force.

Hurlburt Field Chapel



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.

Qur'an: Saturday, 6 p.m.

For more information, call 884-7795

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 and Sunday – (PG-13) *Chasing Liberty*, starring Mandy Moore and Matthew Good – Tired of being followed every moment of the day, the 18-year old daughter of the president of the United States ditches her Secret Service handlers and sets out on a romantic road trip through Europe with her boyfriend Ben.

Saturday – (PG) *Disney's Teacher's Pet* – Spot is a dog who can talk and read and longs for more than a doggy life. He masquerades as a human and sneaks into school with his master Leonard, posing as fellow student Scott Leadready II. Pretending to be a boy isn't enough for him, he wants the real deal.

Eglin 882-1066

Friday – (PG-13) *Along came Polly*, starring Ben Stiller, Jennifer Aniston – Reuben's best-laid plans for life and love careen wildly off track when his bride dumps him on their honeymoon. Stunned and humiliated Reuben plans to play it safer than ever. But an encounter with a childhood friend shoots him into a whirlwind of living in the moment activities.

Saturday – (PG-13) *Big Fish*, starring Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney – Edward has always exaggerated his exploits and experiences when he left his small town for adventures near and far. Nearly everyone has been spellbound by his tales over the years, everyone but his estranged son, who comes home to care for his dying dad and separate fact from fiction.

Sunday – (PG-13) *Torque*, starring Ice Cube, Jay Hernandez – A motorcycle racer is framed for murder by his long-time nemesis, bringing the most notorious biker gang and its leader after him for revenge, with the FBI in pursuit of all of them.

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

Volunteer recognition

The annual volunteer appreciation ceremony will be held April 23 from 9 to 11 a.m. at The Soundside. Any group, volunteer agency or individual may nominate volunteers to be recognized for Angel or Volunteer Excellence Awards. Nomination packages are available at the family support center. Completed packages must be submitted by March 26. For more information, call Heather Gerlach at 884-1533.

Base Tax Assistance

The base tax center, located in Building 90229, is available to assist military personnel with filing their taxes. Hours of operation are as follows:

Mondays and Fridays, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wednesdays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

1040EZ forms are completed on a walk-in basis – all other tax forms by appointment only. To make an appointment, call 884-7542/7544.

Items to bring for appointments:

Military identification card, all W-2 forms, interest and dividend information, names, birthdates and social security numbers for yourself and family members, bank routing and account numbers, power of attorney, childcare expenses, deduction receipts and any other tax-related items.

Give Parents a Break

Give Parents a Break offers eligible parents a few hours break once a month through the child development center. Spouses of

active-duty members who are TDY or on a remote assignment may qualify for the program. For more information on the program and qualification, call family childcare at 884-2893.

Classes

FSC classes

For information on the following family support center classes call 884-5441.

Sponsorship Training – Monday, 1 p.m.; reservations required

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

Sponsorship Training – Monday, 1 p.m.; reservations required

Employment Orientation – Monday, 9 a.m.; Wednesday 1 p.m.; reservations required

Mapping Your Career – Monday, 1 p.m.; call 884-6281 for reservations.

HAWC classes

To reserve a seat in the following health and wellness center classes, call 884-4292.

All classes are free of charge and held at the HAWC, Building 90232, Classroom A.

Body Composition Improvement Program – Tuesday, 9 a.m.

Body Composition Improvement Follow-up Program – Thursday, 9 a.m.

Healthy Living Workshop – Tuesday, Wednesday, 1 p.m. and Thursday, 1:30 p.m.

Lean and Healthy Eating – Wednesday, 3 p.m.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson

An MH-53 PAVE LOW helicopter similar to this one is at the center of investigation by an Accident Investigation Board.

MH-53 AIB continues

The Accident Investigation Board investigating the Nov. 23, 2003, crash of an MH-53M PAVE LOW from the 20th Special Operations Squadron, has re-convened at Hurlburt Field to continue gathering and analyzing evidence.

The Board President Brig. Gen. Steven Speer, commander of the 193rd Special Operations Wing, Harrisburg, Penn., has been tasked by Air Force instructions to provide a publicity release of the facts and circumstances surrounding the accident.

In addition, the AIB President is required to state in the report his opinion concerning the cause or causes of the accident and describe those factors that may have contributed to the accident. After the report has been approved by the commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, it will be presented to the family of each deceased crewmember, passenger and seriously injured person. After the family has had an opportunity to be personally briefed, the report will be released to the general public.

FILLER

Fit Eagle 2004: The winners

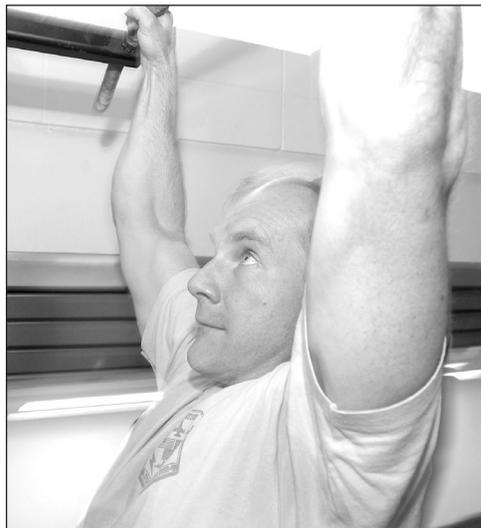


Photo by Senior Airman Ebony Pierre



Photo by Senior Airman Ebony Pierre

Tim Hoyer, James Johnson, Charles Hodges, Carrie Bryant and Sinserria Collazo, all 23rd Special Tactics Squadron (above), do "popsicle push-ups" during the Fit Eagle Challenge, Feb. 20, at the Aderholt Fitness Center. (left) Edward Linch, Air Force Command and Control Training and Innovation Group, does pull-ups during the competition.

23rd STS dominates Fit Eagle

By Senior Airman Sam Taylor
Public Affairs

After competing against 10 other teams, the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron team brought home the Fit Eagle Challenge crown at the Aderholt Fitness Center Feb. 20.

An annual inter-squadron fitness competition, Fit Eagle pits teams of five against one-another in feats of strength and skill. Teams were made up of one male over 40 years old, one male over 30, one male any age and two females any age.

Although the 23rd STS team finished first in only one event – pull-ups – consistent placing in the top three drove their final score well above the second-place team.

"We just tried to do the best we could in every event," said Charles Hodges, 23rd STS team member. "It feels good to win, but we just went out there to have fun."

The 23rd STS does pull-ups as part of their regular fitness routine, said Hodges. The team also had an advantage during the mystery team-building event, which they had done before, during Combat Control school and throughout their training

pipeline – "popsicle push-ups," where team members interlock and do pushups as one big unit.

The last time the squadron won Fit Eagle were back-to-back wins in 1999 and 2000. The winning team received an overall team trophy to take back to their squadron display case.

Fifty-five people on 11 teams competed in Fit Eagle, which consists of a three-mile run, push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, flexibility, the tug of war and a team-building mystery event, said Chris Myers, 16th Services Squadron, Hurlburt Field sports director.

"Fit Eagle is an opportunity for units to compete to see who's the best at regular Air Force exercises," he said. "It's the second-biggest fitness competition on base, next to Super Day, and is designed to reflect

the high levels of fitness required of Air Force Special Operations Command people."

Myers said this year's competition went well.

"We were hoping for more participants, but some units had trouble getting teams together," he said. "Overall it was a good turnout and a good competition."



Photo by Senior Airman Ebony Pierre

Jennifer Bush, 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron (above), does situps during Fit Eagle. (left) Runners take off at the start of the three-mile run.



Courtesy photo

Sports shorts

Varsity softball tryouts

Tryouts for the Hurlburt Field men's varsity softball team have begun. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Chuck Shepherd at 884-5774, or Master Sgt. Scott Bowen at 884-2358.

Bowling tournament

The annual Relay for Life mixed bowling tournament is scheduled March 4 and 5 at Hurlburt Lanes. Games will be played in two shifts; 9 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Events include five-person teams and a handicap team event. Entry fee is \$60 per

team, with proceeds going to charity organizations. This event is sponsored by the Hurlburt Officer's Spouses' Club. For more information, call Hurlburt Lanes at 884-6941.

Men's baseball league

Registration for the 6th season of the Okaloosa Men's Baseball League is scheduled at 3 p.m. at the Twin Oaks Baseball Field, in Niceville. The field is located on Highway 85 North, just north of College Boulevard, near the Mullet Festival grounds. Registration is for both the 18-and-over

and 30-and-over divisions. League fees are \$130 for players 18-29, and \$150 for players 30 and over. Game season begins in early May and is played locally in the Okaloosa area. For more information, call the league hotline at 864-7529, or visit the league Web site at www.ombl.org.

Intramural golf season

Intramural golf will begin early this year, kicking off April 1. For more information on golf or other intramural sports programs, contact your unit sports representative.