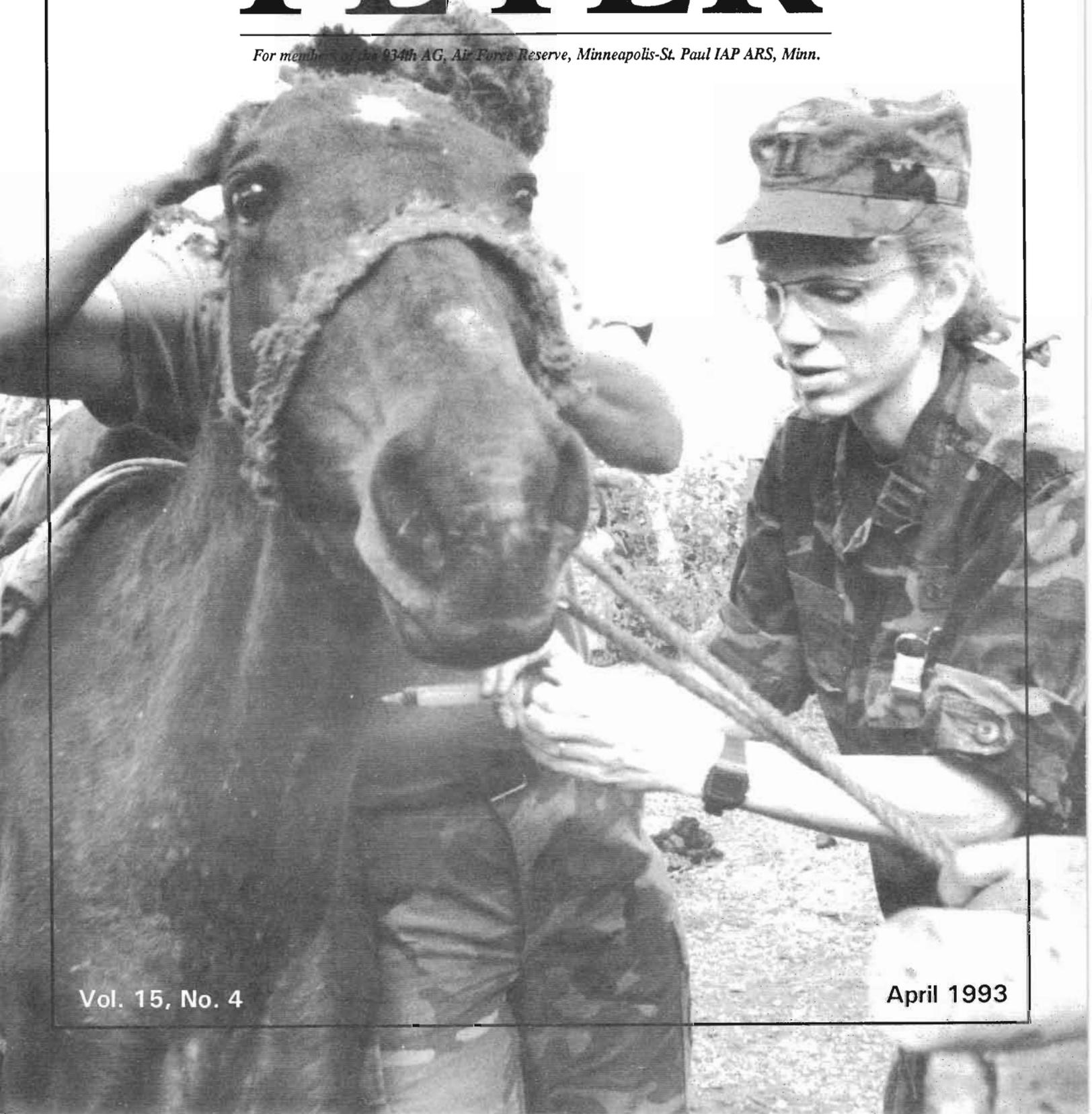


# VIKING FLYER



*For members of the 934th AG, Air Force Reserve, Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn.*



Vol. 15, No. 4

April 1993

# VIKING FLYER

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## On the cover



Capt Libby Erickson, 934th MedSq, inoculates a horse during a medical exercise in Honduras. For more on the unit's annual tour, see story, pages 8-10.

(Photo by MSgt. Tim Turner)



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## Hustle, but don't get hurt

# Safety first

by Col. Michael Gjede, commander

Many of you may be reading this issue of the *Viking Flyer* from one of our four deployed locations during our Patriot Viking exercise.

As you well know we are "simulating a wartime scenario" to fine-tune ourselves for our Operational Readiness Inspection in June. The dictionary defines simulate as "to assume or have the appearance or characteristics of." That means we are going to do everything feasibly possible to create the atmosphere of a combat environment.

In combat, sometimes corners are cut, and other things go by the wayside in an effort to accomplish the mission. However, one area which we cannot afford to simulate is safety.

Over the years, many outstanding units have been downgraded because of safety violations. I don't for one minute think that anybody sets out to deliberately be unsafe. More than likely, the effort to get the job done causes us to stop thinking about getting the job done safely.

In real combat, you will hear about "acceptable losses." In peacetime or a combat simulation, there are **ZERO** acceptable losses. In fact, zero safety violations is the only acceptable rate.

Safety violations seem to occur most often around aircraft and the cargo marshaling area. Safety is everybody's business. If it looks like it might be unsafe, it most likely is. Don't let it happen. Say something to somebody. Simple things like rings, gloves, steel-toed shoes, hearing protection and eye protection are easy to forget in the heat of battle. Speeding on the flightline and flightline driving procedures in general are other areas we constantly read about in Inspector General reports.

As we go through this exercise and the ORI in June, we should constantly be evaluating what we are doing and what's going on around us. Ask yourself: is the environment I'm working in a safe one?

Remember, our goal is zero safety violations. Our human resources are far too valuable to compromise safety and risk personal injury.

## Equal opportunities

by Maj. Gen. John Closner, commander, Air Force Reserve

One of the strengths of the Air Force Reserve is its ability to blend the diverse talents and capabilities of our many people to achieve a common purpose, the defense of our nation.

Recognizing that minorities and women are becoming an ever larger and more important part of the team, I want to ensure everyone is treated fairly and given

an equal opportunity to succeed. At every level of our organization, I am looking for mentors and role models who will do the "right thing" and help our next generation of leaders achieve their full potential. We recently established the Air Force Reserve Human Resources Development Council to support this objective.

I think we all want to work in an environment where any person can advance based upon performance and dedication. As with every other aspect of quality, it takes effort, but the results are well worth it.

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# Excellence

## Civil engineers maintain their high-flying tradition while staying mobile, flexible

by Lt. Col. Shu-Mei Hwang,  
commander, 934th CES

**B**ase Engineer Emergency Force -- that's where the 934th Civil Engineering Squadron gets it's Prime BEEF. Our primary mission is worldwide combat support and combat services roles.

As we look at the past, present and future, it becomes obvious that we have to continue maximizing the abilities of everyone in the squadron. Our requirements to meet our expanding, changing role grow on a daily basis. In order to meet those requirements we have to depend on all our people to understand them and take the initiative to meet them. This is more true today with the limited resources we're seeing in today's world.

In the 19 years I've been associated with CES, the squadron has always maintained a fine reputation throughout the Air Force and Reserve. We've received outstanding civil engineering unit awards two times in the past five years. Many of our senior NCOs have been chosen as outstanding contributors in the Reserve. The

number one reason for those successes is the hard working, dedicated people we are fortunate to have in the squadron.

Last year was a roller coaster ride for the squadron. Our unit went through a Mission Capability Validation (MCV) at Savannah, Ga. Even though the overall ratings were not as high as everyone wanted, I know CES personnel gave it 100 percent. Of the three civil engineering squadrons tasked, we were the only one having all our required supplies and equipment. We met or exceeded all required taskings. Even though the return trip was delayed 24 hours, our people took the news in stride.

As we downsized by 33 percent in 1992, our squadron had to make some really tough decisions. We had many NCOs who had to change positions and cross-train. Some elected to retire. Again, our people understood the necessity for the change and worked together to make the best of it.

One of the bright spots in '92 was have the disaster preparedness function join the squadron. It's a real pleasure working with this unit, which was selected as Outstanding Small Installation Program for the Reserve last year.

As we prepare for our May annual tour

to Eielson AFB, Alaska, I think of how fortunate we are to continue accomplishing so many requirements while also meeting the needs of the base. This tour will give us an excellent opportunity to work directly with an active duty civil engineering squadron and assimilate into their daily activities. We expect this tour to be especially rewarding from an on-the-job-training standpoint.

This year, our primary focus has to be training. With our reorganization, we have many people cross-training into new and combined Air Force Specialty Codes. We're now implementing the Certification and Testing Program (CERTEST), an interactive computer and video training program. Our shops are using outside resources, including Northern States Power, Central Region Fire Association and Dakota Technical College to enhance skills and knowledge. With a squadron consisting of people from 18 different AFSCs, the coordination of training becomes critical.

This will be a challenging year for the squadron. Even with limited resources and additional new requirements, I know the 934th CES has the people and plans to meet our primary mission: mobility.

## Easter: time of joy, hope

by Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Peters,  
installation chaplain

Mark 16:6 " . . . He has risen! He is not here."  
I Corinthians 15:55 "Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?"



**E**aster is the time of year when we are reminded that there is more to life than what we see before us. The cross, which was once a symbol of punishment and execution, now is a symbol of love, hope, courage and obedience. The tomb, which was once a symbol of death and finality, now is a symbol of victory and a doorway into eternal life.

Because of Easter, we can face tomorrow with hope, expectation, courage, comfort and peace. Our final enemy -- death -- has been defeated. Because of this, we can live for God to the fullest. Easter is our guarantee that death is not the end, but that we will rise again.

Be filled with joy, hope, peace and expectation, because not only is death just a heartbeat away, so is a glorious resurrection into life eternal. May you have a blessed Easter.



*One letter that means a lot --  
but for now, it means  
"question" to many of us*

by Maj. Kristin Rudin,  
934th quality officer

**T**otal Quality Management, Total Quality, Quality Air Force -- what is the mystery of Quality? What is this process that we have heard about for the past couple of years, that has changed names several times and that everyone has made such a big deal about?

I'm sure some of you don't have the slightest idea what it is and are already sick of hearing about it. Actually, there is no mystery behind Quality. Call it what you want, Quality is about solving problems before they become problems. It's about doing things right the first time -- all the time. It's about providing processes to get there.

The processes you'll be learning are the Problem Solving Process (PSP) and the Quality Improvement Process (QIP). You'll learn these processes by working on a simulated problem, then testing for understanding by working on an actual problem of your choice.

The training is accomplished in "family groups" of co-workers, so that when you pick an actual problem to work on, the group has a common understanding and interest. Now that the first 934th family group, our commanders, have started their training, it's a matter of mere months before we begin the cascade of training.

By the end of calendar year 1993, we should have several hundred people trained -- and the mystery will begin to be solved.

## Reserve briefs

### Bosnia airlift

Air Force reservists and C-130 aircraft are busy in Europe supporting humanitarian relief efforts in Bosnia. Approximately 70 reservists, all volunteers, operate out of Rhein-Main AB, Germany.

Reserve units at the following bases are involved at press time: Dobbins AFB, Ga.; Gen. Mitchell IAP ARS, Wis; Maxwell AFB, Ala.; Pittsburgh IAP ARS, Pa.; Niagara Falls IAP ARS, N.Y.; and O'Hare IAP ARS, Ill. (AFRNS)

### Homosexual ban

President Bill Clinton set the wheels in motion Jan. 29 to change the military's ban on homosexuals. An executive order is due by July 15, which may end the policy of barring homosexuals from the military as well as establish strict standards of sexual behavior for all military members.

The following actions have been taken:

- \* The question regarding sexual orientation on the enlistment application will be deleted in future versions and won't be asked in the meantime.

- \* In general, administrative separations in progress are placed on hold, and new cases can be processed up to the point of discharge if the action is contested. Individuals in the process of discharge will be removed from active duty and placed in standby reserve status. (AFIS)

### Benefits packages

The fiscal year 1993 Department of Defense Authorization Act contains three hot benefits packages, but DoD has not decided when and how to serve them.

The packages are severance pay, 15-year retirement and reduced retirement annuity for reservists. Officials say that as soon as they determine how or what parts of the packages to implement, all units will be notified.

The severance pay benefit features a one-time payment, applying to reservists with at least six but less than 15 years satisfactory service. The 15-year retirement still involves waiting until age 60 to draw retired pay. Finally, the reduced annuity pertains to members with 20 years satisfactory service. They would receive 5

percent of their annual basic pay, plus 0.5 percent for every year served past 20 years, capped at 10 percent of annual basic pay. This would be paid for five years or until age 60, whichever comes first. Then at 60, normal retirement pay would begin.

Authority for these programs expires Oct. 1, 1995. (AFRNS)

### No ROTC slots

Air Force reservists cannot be Reserve Officer Training Corps instructors. The fiscal year 1993 DoD Authorization Act permits up to 200 Army Reserve and Army National Guard members to perform the duty, however. Those services received the slots because about half of all Army ROTC graduates enter reserve components. (AFRNS)

### Unique astronaut

Maj. Susan Helms of Air Force Space Command became the first military female astronaut to fly in space.

She flew upon the space shuttle Endeavor for a six-day flight in mid-January. She was selected to be an astronaut in January 1990 and completed her training in July 1991. (AFNS)

### C-17 name

The Air Force C-17, the nation's newest military airlifter, has been named officially the "Globemaster III." The name continues a tradition of Globemaster transporters produced for the Air Force by McDonnell Douglas, from the first one, the C-74 in 1945, to the C-14 in 1949.

The aircraft will replace the aging C-141 Starlifter, delivering about twice the cargo for roughly the same cost. The Air Force plans to buy 120 C-17s, with delivery of the first aircraft to Charleston AFB, S.C., later this year. (AFNS)

### No more checks

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Denver announced that pre-certified annual tour pay now goes directly to your financial institution. Instead of receiving a check from a unit paymaster following the group tour, the money comes in the form of a direct deposit.

# 'Hurry up and wait' may be a thing of the past with personnel's new whiz-bang system:

# PC III

by MSgt. Tim Turner

At one time or another, we've all endured a wait at the Consolidated Base Personnel Office trying to review our personnel records. Perhaps we wanted to find out what ribbons we're authorized to wear, the date we enlisted or an effective promotion date.

Now a new computer system may mean all that waiting is a thing of the past. Over the past several months, the CBPO here has been implementing Personnel Concepts III, or "PC III," a system giving each unit the capability of updating personnel items for its own members.

"In a nutshell, it means that when a base member wants to review or change certain data items in their personnel records, they don't have to go to CBPO to do it," explained MSgt. Mike Burns, 934th personnel systems manager. "They can go right to the administrative or personnel specialist assigned to their orderly room and do it."

Some of the records reservists will be able to access with PC III include awards and decorations, date of service, marital and family status, home address, and training and academic reports. "However, base members will still have to stop by CBPO if they have changes to their military records or emergency data card," Burns pointed out.

According to Burns, one advantage of PC III is fast and accurate updating of personnel records, which in the long run will mean sizable cost savings to the 934th and other Reserve bases. "Air Force Reserve bases began installing PC III about two years ago, and so far, about 25 of 40 Reserve bases have the system up and running," Burns said.

The primary advantage of PC III, however, is that unit commanders can get immediate information on their people, which saves them time, according to 1st Lt. Troy Vonada, chief of the 934th CBPO. "For example, before PC III, unit commanders had to wait as long as 24 hours to get some reports from CBPO on their people," Vonada said. "Now they can

print out that information right from their orderly room, thanks to PC III."

Burns added that about 35 base administrative and personnel specialists will eventually learn to operate the PC III system. "We began training people in November and expect to have most unit personnel trained by early summer," Burns said.

He said that the feedback received from those people who have learned PC III so far has been positive. "The system is very user friendly, and you don't have to be a computer expert to operate it," Burns indicated.

One personnel specialist who speaks highly of PC III is SSgt. Ann Bolton, of the 934th Operations Support Flight. "The

great thing about PC III is that I no longer have to search to find a hard copy of someone's personnel file -- it's all on computer," she said. "Also, I don't have to call CBPO every time I have a question about a record of one of the people in my unit -- I just punch up PC III and there it is."

Vonada concluded by saying that the PC III system is the first step in a long process of putting Reserve CBPOs into more of a service-oriented mode. "Reserve personnel offices have traditionally been reactive rather than proactive," he explained. "With PC III, the personnel data system is in the units, and -- when it's fully operational -- it will enhance customer service."



(Photo by Mark Davidson)

*MSgt. Marlina Gilbert, 27th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron, soon will be learning PC III, making much of her personnel work easier and more efficient.*

# Benefits update

**Check out these changes in insurance and benefits coming to your loved ones should you pass away**

**T**he Veterans Benefit Act of 1992 made significant changes to the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI), Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI), and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) programs.

The Air Force Military Personnel Center recently released answers to some of the most-asked questions to help people better understand the programs.

**Q. What are the basic changes to the programs?**

**A.** In a nutshell, dependency and indemnity compensation went from a grade-based rate to a flat rate Jan. 1. For those in the ranks above technical sergeant, this means a significant loss in monthly payments that would go to spouses and children.

To help compensate for this loss in estate benefits, both the SGLI and VGLI maximum coverage was raised to \$200,000 as of Dec. 1. Under the old law, VGLI provided five-year nonrenewable insurance protection. Now, it is a five-year renewable term insurance with an option to convert to a permanent policy with one of the insurance underwriters or to renew VGLI coverage at the end of each five-year period.

**Q. I've never heard of the DIC program. What is it, and how does it apply to me?**

**A.** The DIC program applies to every service member, active or reserve. The program is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and it authorized monthly payments to surviving spouses and certain other dependents of service personnel or veterans who die from service-connected causes. Basically this means that your primary next of kin will receive monthly payments if you die while on active or inactive duty, whether you have insurance or not.

**Q. How much are the DIC payments to my spouse?**

**A.** Beginning Jan. 1, monthly payments to a spouse are \$750. DIC payments used to be based on grade. For instance, the spouse of an E-3 would receive \$634 a month under the old law, and the spouse of an O-3 would receive \$888 a month. The new flat-rate of \$750 means that people in the grade of E-7 and above will receive substantially less than under the previous program.

Spouses with children receive higher DIC payments. Child-additive payments are \$100 per child per month. In fiscal 1994, the payments will increase to \$150 per child per month; and in fiscal 1995 and subsequent years, the payment will be \$200 per child per month.

**Q. If I die, do payments to my dependents begin automatically?**

**A.** A casualty assistance representative from the nearest Air Force installation assists the next of kin in applying for the proceeds. The 934th has its own casualty assistance office, run by Don Lynch and his assistant, Steve Maytan.

**Q. I'm not married, and I don't have any children. Who receives my DIC payments?**

**A.** DIC may be paid to parents. The VA will make the determination. The monthly rates of DIC for parents depend upon the annual income of the parents and whether there is only one parent, two parents not living together or two parents together or remarried with a spouse. The annual income limit for two parents together or remarried is \$11,313; the income limit for one parent or two parents not together is \$8,414 annually.

**Q. If I'm a single parent, would my children receive DIC payments? In what amounts?**

**A.** Yes. As long as your death is considered by the VA to be service connected, your children younger than 18 (as well as certain helpless children and those ages 18 to 23 attending a VA-approved school) are eligible. The nearest VA office can provide the current amounts to be paid.

**Q. What is VGLI and who is eligible to apply for it?**

**A.** SGLI may be converted to VGLI. It is a level term insurance policy which all retiring and separating members may apply for. SGLI is free for 120 days after retirement or separation. During that period, members may convert the amount of SGLI they had in force to VGLI.

**Q. How much does the new SGLI cost?**

**A.** SGLI premium levels remain at 80 cents a month per \$10,000 coverage. Coverage is available in \$10,000 increments to a maximum of \$200,000. The maximum premium is \$16 per month for the full \$200,000 coverage.

**Q. Now that the March 31 deadline to complete a new SGLI form has passed, what do I need to do to increase my coverage?**

**A.** Members who elect to increase coverage are required to provide a statement of health before the increased amount of insurance is approved. VA Form 29-8285 is needed, along with a physical or doctor's statement. The names of the beneficiaries may be changed at any time without a statement of health.

**Q. What does "by law" mean as it pertains to beneficiaries of my SGLI policy?**

**A.** The proceeds will be paid in order following these five steps:

- \* Proceeds go to the widow/widower, but if there are none then the proceeds are payable to;
- \* A child or children in equal shares, but if there are no children, then the proceeds are payable to;
- \* The deceased's parent(s) in equal shares, but if there are no parents then the proceeds go to;
- \* A duly appointed executor or administrator of the insured's estate, but if there is none then the proceeds go to;
- \* Other next of kin.

**Q. Are SGLI, VGLI and DIC payments made for deaths due to any cause, or is a suicide exempt?**

**A.** SGLI and VGLI proceeds are paid provided there was no willful wrongdoing by the member, i.e., committing a felony and being killed in the act. Of course, if the primary beneficiary killed the member, then the proceeds would go to his estate or to contingent beneficiaries. SGLI and VGLI proceeds are payable even if the member commits suicide. DIC is paid only if the member died from a service-connected or -related injury or illness, as determined by the VA. (AFNS)

# Flying 'Herk Airline'

by SSgt. Larry Dean

When the Minnesota winter gets you down, there is something you can do to leave it far behind. Face it, you're a reservist and can enjoy the benefits that go with that title. That means Space Available travel, more commonly known as "Space A."

According to operations flight clerk Rosie O'Neal, there are an average of three flights a month with about 10 seats open for Space A. "Many of these flights are to southern, warm-weather states. Even if the destination isn't exactly where you're going, you might be able to catch another Space A flight from the first location to get you there."

O'Neal said that the winter months are when most people take advantage of Space A travel, and almost all of these flights originate from here. "Transient flights from other bases are very rare here. We usually don't get more than two days' notice which doesn't allow much time for people planning to take advantage of the flights."

The rules for flying Space A are relatively basic. Travelers must have a current military identification card, they must travel in uniform and they must have a current DD Form 1853, Authentication of Reserve Status for Travel Eligibility. This form is valid for only six months.

Dependents may also fly Space A if the destination of the flight is outside of the United States, unless they are taking part in a special program. For example, when normal training flights permit, some bases offer special holiday flights to bring college-student dependents home for the holidays.

When you have a Space A reservation you should park your vehicle in an overnight parking area on base. Security police can direct you to the nearest parking area. Also, if you would like a meal on the flight, you should bring your own food.

Once you've parked on base, go to the base operations counter at the appropriate check-in time. Show your I.D. card and DD Form 1853, and your name is placed on the passenger manifest. You then proceed to the waiting lounge so you can receive a

safety briefing and ear plugs, and your bags can be checked for prohibited items -- and soon it's time to board your aircraft.

"The only don'ts to remember are don't pack anything like weapons or anything you couldn't bring on a commercial flight," O'Neal said. "Always remember to bring money in case the mission changes or the flight is canceled at either end of your travel. We're only responsible for booking the flights. Destination billeting and ground transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the traveler."

To find out what Space A flights are coming up or to verify check-in times, call the 24-hour Space A line at (612) 725-8018.

Presently, only one Space A flight is scheduled for April: Little Rock AFB, Ark., on the 13th. Ten seats are available, for one-way travel only.

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**Maybe travel via the 'proud bird with the big green tail' doesn't entice you -- but what you lose in plush comfort, you gain in the ticket price**

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(Photo by Mark Davidson)

SSgt. Cara Anderson at base operations gives MSgt. Gregory Wright, 934th Civil Engineering Squadron, some Space A information to look over. Earlier this year, Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rescinded the policy of collecting passenger fees, making Space A travel free in most cases. Travelers are still required to pay any applicable federal inspection fees, taxes or charges.

# Roughing it, medical style

*This annual tour took place far from the polished "halls of medicine" -- and some of the patients didn't always rest comfortably (they clucked, barked, mooed and whinnied their medical woes)*



by MSgt. Tim Turner

**T**wo years ago, U.S. armed forces fought a battle in the deserts of Southwest Asia against Saddam Hussein, and their weapons were bullets and bombs. Two months ago, the 934th Medical Squadron (MedSq) fought a battle against disease in the mountains of Central America -- and their weapons were needles and syringes.

From Jan. 30 to Feb. 14, 23 members of the squadron spent their 1993 annual tour at Soto Cano AB, Honduras, a joint U.S. and Honduran military installation located in the center of the country.

They were there to assist Soto Cano's Medical Element (MEDEL), which provides a full range of medical care to the Honduran people and the 2,000 or so American service members stationed at the

base. Reserve and Guard medical units from all branches of the military rotate in two-week shifts to provide this assistance.

The medical personnel who deployed to Honduras represented about one-third of the squadron. "But even though our entire unit couldn't come, we still brought a good cross section of the squadron," said MSgt. Paula Calkins, MedSq medical technician and NCOIC during the tour.

According to Calkins, this diverse group included doctors, nurses, medical technicians, dentists and dental assistants, and preventative medicine, bioenvironmental and public health specialists. "But we also brought along a pharmacist, X-ray technician, medical equipment repair specialist, an administrative clerk and even our supply sergeant to help carry out MEDEL's missions," she added.

#### Diverse missions

One of MEDEL's missions is operating a 21-bed hospital, dental office and

*Top, Maj. James Schreiner (left), MedSq dentist, and SrA. Angela Fuerst (right), MedSq dental technician, perform a tooth extraction for a farmer during the San Jose de la Moors MEDRETE. Right, Capt. Libby Erickson, MedSq nurse, inoculates a dog against rabies while an Army veterinary technician restrains the animal.*





Photos by MSgt. Tim Turner



*Right, MSgt. Beth Axtman (center) gets a mock plaster cast sawed off by TSgt. Jeff Irving (left, off-duty volunteer) while TSgt. Laurie Wollschlager assists in one of the unit's training classes during the tour. Top left, the women and children of San Jose de la Moore wait in line for their immunizations during the MEDRETE to the village. Top right, Col. John Rauenhorst, chief flight surgeon, shows photos of his snow-laden Minnesota home to a group of Honduran children.*

laboratory at Soto Cano. But that's only a part of the many tasks the 100-plus members of the unit are charged with, said Lt. Col. Linda Hoge, MEDEL's active duty chief nurse. "One of our most important missions is traveling throughout Honduras to give free medical care, immunizations, dental assistance and veterinary services to indigent Hondurans," Hoge explained. "Honduras is the poorest country in Central America, and we'd have a tougher time accomplishing our mission without the help of reserve medical units like the 934th."

During their tour, the 934th MedSq was involved in virtually all of MEDEL's missions, handling everything from fixing broken bones and assisting in the operating room to conducting sanitation inspections of the food and water at Soto Cano's dining facilities.

#### Lots of 'MEDRETES'

But a good deal of the squadron's work revolved around serving the medical needs of rural Hondurans through Medical Readiness Training Exercises, or MEDRETES for short.

"The medical personnel on a typical MEDRETE include a team of U.S. and Honduran doctors, dentists and veterinarians," explained Col. John Rauenhorst, MedSq's chief flight surgeon and officer-in-charge during the tour. "This team travels to dozens of villages located mainly in central Honduras to give immunizations, pull teeth and inoculate farm animals."

The MEDRETE team sets up a bare bones hospital and dental clinic at each village and opens up for business. Immunizations on each MEDRETE usually include inoculations against those diseases most common to the Hondurans, such as typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, smallpox, polio and tuberculosis. Dental care is usually limited to extracting rotten or decayed teeth, while animal inoculations include rabies, distemper and tapeworm.

"MEDRETE teams visit as many Honduran villages as they can, returning to the same village about every seven weeks to repeat the process," Rauenhorst said.

#### A day to remember

One MEDRETE took Rauenhorst and several other MedSq members to the village of San Jose de la Moors, situated on the side of a mountain some 3,000 feet above the valley where Soto Cano sits. The villagers there earn a meager living planting and harvesting coffee on a privately-owned plantation near the village.

During the MEDRETE, Rauenhorst, who speaks fluent Spanish, interviewed the villagers to determine if they needed medical attention beyond their regular immunizations and dental care. "I must have seen over 60 people that day," he recalled.

"When you're doing a health assessment for that many people, you don't have a lot of time to devote to each patient -- probably a minute to a minute and a half," Rauenhorst continued. "Fortunately, most of the illnesses weren't that serious -- usually upper respiratory problems, headaches or stomach aches caused by parasites like tapeworm. For those cases, we usually prescribed aspirin or antibiotics."

#### Looking ahead

The reservists worked hard during their two weeks in Honduras, according to Col. Robert Killebrew, Soto Cano's commander of U.S. military forces.

"I think it was great that the 934th Medical Squadron came here to help us, and it looks like they may get a chance to return for an even more challenging assignment in the next few years," he said.

Killebrew explained that plans are underway to rotate Reserve and Guard medical units into Honduras' Mosquito Coast region, located along the Caribbean Sea in the northeastern part of the country. The Mosquito Coast is one of the most primitive places on earth, with an almost impenetrable jungle. The area is so remote that the Miskito Indians who live there don't even speak Spanish, instead conversing in their native tongue.

"We may deploy our MEDEL unit and Reserve/Guard medical units to the Mosquito Coast on two-week rotations to give medical care to the Miskitos," Killebrew said. "If this plan becomes a reality, we hope the 934th Medical Squadron can come back and help us."

(More stories, next page)

# After work was done . . .

*No one wants to lounge around the "hooch" (bare-base type barracks) when there are children to help, sights to see*

by MSgt. Tim Turner

Not all of the 934th Medical Squadron's experiences in Honduras centered around needles and illness.

On many of the exercises, squadron members handed out used clothing to children living in the villages and orphanages of Honduras. In fact, many members packed children's clothes and toys in their luggage for just this purpose. Capt. Libby Erickson, 934th Medical Squadron nurse, helped distribute clothing at San Jose de la Moors.

"It was a very humbling experience," she noted. "Some parents stood in the hot sun with their kids for over an hour just to get a used dress or a pair of shoes for them. And many of those parents would get to the front of the line only to find that none of the remaining clothes or shoes would fit their kids. Instead of getting angry, they'd smile, thank us anyway and walk away."

When they weren't providing medical care or distributing clothes to the children, many squadron members tried to soak in the Honduran culture. Several visited Our Lady of Suyapa, the Honduran national cathedral located in the capital of Tegucigalpa. Others took shopping excursions to buy Honduran leather goods, blankets and jade.



Photo by MSgt. Tim Turner

Capt. Libby Erickson (left) and MSgt. Brandy Fulton (center) distribute clothing to the children of San Jose de la Moors during a visit to the village.

## Chickens to burros, they made a beeline for help

by MSgt. Tim Turner

Though most of the medical squadron's patients had two legs and a human vocabulary, still others had beaks, hooves and webbed feet -- and they spoke only "animalese."

The veterinary portion of the Honduran MEDRETES consisted of inoculating the dogs, goats, horses, cattle and poultry of the villagers. TSgt. Bruce DeBoer, 934th Medical Squadron bioenvironmental engineer, inoculated chickens and geese against fowl pox during one MEDRETE.

"I must have done a couple hundred in one day," he said. "The villagers would bring their poultry to the inoculation site any way they could get them there," DeBoer continued. "Some would stuff a bunch of chickens in a burlap sack. And one farmer brought about a dozen of his chickens with their legs tied together around a stick about eight feet long, with a person on each end carrying it. It was unreal."

## Open up and say 'ah'

The dental folks faced a major task in tackling tough tooth taskings

by MSgt. Tim Turner

"What's amazing about performing dental care in Honduras is that the people don't even flinch when you pull their teeth," said Maj. James Schreiner, a dentist with the 934th Medical Squadron. "Even though they've been numbed with novocaine beforehand, it still had to have hurt. They must have a higher threshold of pain than Americans."

Schreiner and his small team had their work cut out for them during the dental portion of the Honduran MEDRETES. Assisting was Wilmar Amador, a Honduran dentist, and SrA. Angela Fuerst, dental technician with the medical squadron.

Amador explained that there is no dental maintenance per se in the Honduran villages because by the time the villagers are seen by a dentist, the condition of their teeth is beyond repair.

"This is due primarily to poor oral hygiene and malnutrition," he indicated. "But what we do on every MEDRETE is educate the villagers on the importance of taking care of their teeth, and we hand out tooth brushes every time we visit a village," Amador added.

Fuerst said it was a challenge working in such primitive conditions, rather than in the confines of a modern dental clinic. "It was definitely 'Dentistry 101,'" she admitted.

# Wave of the future

## Will this new technology wash away navigators in its path?

by MSgt. Darrell Habisch

**F**lying C-130s for the 934th Airlift Group has entered a new era. It's an era promising vastly increased navigational accuracy and tactical capability and reducing -- possibly eliminating -- the navigator's role.

This is the era of the Self Contained Navigation System (SCNS), commonly called "skins."

"We've been using technology dating back to World War II and Korea," explained Maj. Grey Williams, a 96th Airlift Squadron navigator. "The SCNS is a great advancement in navigation. We now know precisely where we are, anywhere in the world, without relying on outside information."

This advancement in technology, according to the SCNS definition, is an integrated navigation and radiomanagement system. In a combat threat environment, this system provides three independent navigation solutions, flight guidance and advisory information, and communications and navigation radio control.

That means the SCNS consolidates radio communications and pinpoints navigation accuracy within one unit on the airplane. "You can feed your latitude and longitude information into the

**"I don't think we'll be eliminated, but we may evolve into a combo navigator/ weapons system officer position."**

*Maj. Grey Williams, 96th Airlift Squadron navigator*



*MSgt. Dave Hammer uses test equipment to perform an in-shop "bench check" of a SCNS component, the small unit with an alphabet keypad pictured at wrist level.*

Photo by TSgt. Tom Dyer

aircraft, plotting its location. When coupled with latitude and longitude information, Doppler radar and the auto pilot, SCNS accurately "flies" the plane from destination to destination.

"This type of technology brings our aircraft into the '90s," said MSgt. Dave Hammer, avionics technician in the 934th Maintenance Squadron. "Going to SCNS technology is like going from radio to color television." He added that previous navigation

relied heavily on commercial radio signals, as well as major landmarks, beacons and sextants.

In a threatening environment such as Sarajevo, no navigational aids exist to help aircraft locate airfields or time arrivals. Using SCNS, an inbound pilot can time the aircraft's arrival within a one-minute window.

"The window at Sarajevo was five minutes," said Williams. "But I understand the window in Somalia is one minute. We can do that."

Another ability of SCNS is not only pinpointing the location of a drop zone for either troops or cargo, but to release a cargo load when the aircraft is in the proper position. "We can use SCNS to drop to within a half-mile and better of the target," said Williams.

This amazing increase in navigational technology and accuracy may be the beginning of the end for military navigators. "I wouldn't expect to see any decrease in navigator positions until after the turn of the century," said Williams. "But with an additional inertial navigation system, a navigator isn't required for transoceanic flights. Someday that might be true for all flights.

"I don't think we'll be eliminated," he continued, "but we may evolve into a combo navigator/weapons systems officer position. Navigators have a love-hate relationship with SCNS. We love the technology and realize that it's the wave of the future, but we also know it will eventually eliminate the traditional methods and role of the navigator."

SCNS for each stop of a long flight," said 1st Lt. Toby Hammer, 96th Airlift Squadron pilot, "and SCNS will tell you exactly where you are during every portion of that trip without having to constantly calculate, using the old methods."

By way of an inertial navigation system, SCNS reads the movements of the

# Coming clean

**From landfill woes to natural flower gardens, the 934th has worked through it's share of tough environmental challenges**

by Mark Davidson



As environmental cleanup gets even more attention than usual as Earth Day approaches on April 22, the 934th can report that it has the first-ever Air Force site on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Superfund" to be listed as clean.

"It couldn't have been done without a concerted and cooperative effort on everyone's part," noted John Bialke, 934th chief of engineering and environmental planning. Bialke credits the many federal and state agencies who took part in the work at the cleanup site and points to the 1989 written agreement, known as the Federal Facilities Agreement, for cleanup with the U.S. EPA as a key to the program's success.

## Starting with a landfill

The story really begins in the 1960s, when most Americans were unaware of how standard practices could eventually pollute the environment. From 1963 to 1972, base waste was transported to the base landfill near the Minnesota River, where it was burned, buried and covered. That landfill is now located near the base small arms firing range.

Then in 1983, the base initiated a record search and preliminary site assessment under the Air Force Installation Restoration Program (IRP). The results of that search showed that wastes disposed at the landfill were not normal household wastes.

"Investigative work at the site indicated paint-related wastes in addition to buried leaded aviation gas sludge were buried at the landfill," said Joanne Bentley, base remedial project manager. "Paint-related chemicals were from paint thinners, removers, filters and paint sludge."

The main environmental and health concern was the potential contact with contaminated landfill materials or contaminated ground water.

## Finding a solution

"Reaching a final decision as to what should be done at the site was not as easy as it seemed," Bentley pointed out. "After a great deal of investigative work, the final decision for handling the site had to be the consensus of officials at the U.S. EPA, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Headquarters Air Force Reserve and the base."

The chosen remedy for the site, which was agreed to last spring, consists of letting naturally-occurring microorganisms degrade the existing site contamination. The base will monitor the ground water for two years, ensuring no hazardous substances remain on the site that are above the minimum drinking water standard. A fence has also been constructed around the site to limit access.

## From landfill to hiking trail

Bialke said that the base has come a long way since the landfill of the 1960s, noting that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has been coordinating plans to construct a hiking trail in the area because of its natural beauty.

"We believe that we have one of the most energetic and conscientious staffs in the Air Force," said Bialke continued. "A general heightened awareness of environmental issues by base personnel has led to innovative means to solve ordinary problems."

Bialke cited as an example the current Native Prairie Grass Restoration Project -- three acres seeded over with a dozen types of native grasses and wildflowers, reducing the requirements to "weed and feed and mow and grow."

Although the 934th commander, Col. Michael Gjede, is new to the installation, he has already noted the effort, dedication and commitment the base places on the environment. "My environmental knowledge, interest and awareness is increasing," he said. "The base continually explores every opportunity to utilize new and advanced technologies in pollution prevention, resource recovery/recycling and site remediation."

# A fool for firefighting

by SSgt. Janet Byerly

Like many airmen in basic training, Dave Skirka didn't know what career path he should take. He just knew he had to fill out a form and list four career choices, and he had three choices and needed a fourth.

"How about a fireman?" the guidance counselor asked.

With that chance suggestion, the young airman began a career in fire protection. Even though he didn't know it at the time, it would become his life's work.

Now, 28 years later, MSgt. Dave Skirka is reserve fire chief for the 934th Civil Engineering Squadron, and fire captain for the Airport Commission Fire Department, AND assistant chief of the Fridley Fire Department. For him, fire protection is a full-time, part-time and volunteer job.

"You kind of get hooked on it," explained Skirka. "Some guys are really into playing softball, because that's just what they like to do. It's the same kind of thing, except I'm hooked on the fire service."

"Sometimes my wife asks me why I'm so hooked on it," he continued. "Part of it is to do a service. I have the experience and I like to share that experience with others."

That experience includes service during the Vietnam War.

"For some strange reason, I volunteered to go to 'Nam," said Skirka. "Being involved in fire protection in a combat area taught us a lot about the do's and don't's of the fire service."

"We used to keep our vehicles parked very close together in the secured compound there," he continued. "One night a mortar attack hit our vehicle yard, and that thing burned for days. After that we disbursed our vehicles and equipment so they weren't all in the same place. A lot of things were learned in the fire service during the war that they later incorporated into our training."

Skirka has seen many changes in the fire service at the 934th, too.

## No disrespect intended, this man loves his job -- three times over



(Photo by Mark Davidson)

### Skirka

"We've gone from a 12-man team to a 24-man team," he said. "We've gone from having no equipment to being well-equipped."

With three similar but different jobs, the mission may be slightly different, but the training and protective equipment are the same.

"The Reserve job and the airport job are most similar in that our equipment and our main responsibilities are for aircraft fire service," Skirka explained. "My experience in the Reserve is a benefit to my other jobs and vice versa; all three tie together."

One would think that a man who is so focused and involved in fire service that he rarely has a weekend off, would have a hard time relaxing or making room for family

activities. But that's not the case.

"When I go away on vacation and days off, I don't think about my jobs at all, unless I happen to see an emergency situation," he said. "Then it will click on, but otherwise it's turned off. It must be like an escape mechanism for me."

Perhaps that "escape mechanism" is also a subconscious concern for his family. "When I'm with my family, they don't need me to talk about my work; they get enough of it," he said. "I go to my kids' sporting events and make sure I'm there the whole game. It's important I'm there for them."

"I'm busy, but I enjoy what I do," Skirka concluded. "When I stop having fun or enjoying it, I'll leave the fire service."

# Viking Victors: Civil Servants of the Year 1992

## Marilyn Olson



**Unit:** 934th Operations Group

**Job responsibilities:** Host operations systems manager. Maintain the flight records for the 934th Airlift Group, 96th Airlift Squadron, 47th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and 934th Operations Support Flight.

**Education:** Graduated from Central High School, Minneapolis.

**Hobbies:** Spending time with grandson, reading, enjoying family cabin in northern Minnesota.

**Professional organizations:** Neighborhood Watch block leader.

**Goals:** "Continue to be flexible and grow with the new challenges that are in the near future."

**Family:** Husband, Larry; three daughters, Pamela, Kimberly and Melissa; son-in-law Mike and grandson Marques. Live in Minneapolis.

**Comments:** "I've worked in operations for almost 20 years, so obviously it's a great place. I work for and with a group of wonderful friends."

## Pete DeSanctis

**Unit:** 934th Maintenance Squadron.

**Job responsibilities:** Avionics guidance and control technician (Air Reserve Technician).

**Born:** Aug. 22, 1959.

**Education:** Two-year technical degree, Lincoln Technical Institute, computer repair. Working towards Community College of the Air Force degree in avionics systems technology.

**Hobbies:** Running, fishing, golf and bowling.

**Professional organizations:** Religious education instructor at St. Bridgettes Parish, River Falls, Wis.; youth little league and soccer coach for River Falls Recreation Department; 1992 Combined Federal Campaign coordinator for the base.

**Goals:** "To finish my CCAF degree and raise four responsible young boys!"

**Family:** Wife, Susan; four sons: Mathew (10), Ryan (8), Christopher (6) and Peter (4). Live in River Falls.

**Comments:** "Receiving this award was a great honor for me. Everyone here on base and in my community gave my family such great support when Ryan was sick. I'm just trying to give a little of myself back."



## LaRae Koopman



**Unit:** 934th Logistics Group Contracting Office.

**Job responsibilities:** Purchasing agent, purchasing supplies and equipment.

**Born:** June 27, 1963.

**Education:** Three years of college; associate's degree in computer programming, Penn Valley Community College, Kansas City, Mo.

**Hobbies:** Woodworking, walking, craft classes.

**Professional organizations:** Union steward and area women's coordinator; Civilian Welfare Fund Council.

**Goals:** "Try to get my B.A. degree before I turn 40!"

**Family:** Husband, Will (just married in September 1992); live in Brooklyn Park, Minn.

**Comments:** "I really enjoy my job here in contracting. I always try to get the best deal for the government, search out vendors with the best products for the least amount of money. I love talking to different people all day long, both new people and regulars I deal with all the time."

## Kudos

### Awards

#### Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Donald Anderson      AG

#### Aerial Achievement Medal

SSgt. Robert McMenoman      AS

#### Air Force Commendation Medal

Lt. Col. Curtis Breeding      OSF

SSgt. Patricia Cox      AS

Capt. Thomas Hansen      OSF

TSgt. John O'Brien      Ret.

Lt. Col. Douglas Pederson      OSF

Lt. Col. Larry Snider      AS

#### Air Force Achievement Medal

SSgt. Cara Anderson      OSF

TSgt. George Bannigan      AES

SSgt. Andrew Cveykus      CF

SSgt. Amy Dickenson      APS

TSgt. William Doty      APS

SSgt. Donald Gustafson      APS

MSgt. Gerald Ilstrup      Ret.

TSgt. Genel Kampf      OSF

SSgt. Scott LeClair      CES

SSgt. Robert Linder      CES

SSgt. Lawrence Lyman      OSF

MSgt. John Nirschl      CES

SSgt. Thomas Overman      CES

TSgt. Keith Wolfe      CES

### Newcomers

SSgt. Randy Anderson      MS

Sgt. Kelly Bochniak-Williams      AES

SSgt. Curtis Calabretto      CES

SrA. Van Johnson      MS

SSgt. Michael Leary      SPS

SSgt. Paula Lovelady      AG

Sgt. John Martin      SPS

SrA. Michael Mattison      AS

TSgt. Sterling Meyer      LSS

Sgt. Gary Vick      MS

SSgt. Richard Welter      MS

### Flying hour milestone awards (2500 hours)

Maj. Mark Arnold

Maj. Paul Beasley

Capt. James Carlen

Maj. Richard Gabe

SMSGT. Gary Gustafson

MSgt. James Hagan

Capt. Thomas Hansen

SSgt. Mark Janey

Maj. Barry Johnson

SSgt. Thomas Martin

TSgt. John Otremba

Capt. Thomas Robinson Jr.

Maj. John Rudin

Capt. Craig Scott

Maj. Grey Williams

# Bosses' Day

## Sept. 11, 1993



EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF  
THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Invite your boss for an orientation flight with the 934th Airlift Group!

Reservist's Rank/Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Mailing Address w/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Newsletter: \_\_\_\_\_

Ground Rules: Each reservist may submit TWO employers or supervisors. You may not nominate anyone who has flown with us in the past TWO years. Completed forms must be received by public affairs, Building 760, Room 210, by Sunday, Aug. 8. Forms may be mailed to: 934 AG/PA, 760 Military Hwy., Minneapolis, MN 55450-2000. Your nominated boss(es) will receive a detailed letter and map by Aug. 27.

Think that one mile a month you've been walking has gotten you fit? You can fool yourself, but you can't fool

## Microfit

by SSgt. Janet Byerly



**H**ow fit are you? Get ready to put your fitness to the test on the new Microfit system in the base fitness center, starting April 5.

This high-tech, computerized fitness system measures your strength, aerobic capacity, heart rate, blood pressure, body fat and body weight. The test results, along with information about your lifestyle, are entered into the computer to produce a health risk appraisal.

The appraisal includes an interpretation of your fitness profile, identifies good habits and areas of improvement, and gives general recommendations.

If you're wondering how well you would do on the cycle ergometry fitness test the Air Force Reserve will implement soon, that can be predicted based on your health risk appraisal.

If your appraisal suggests you need a little work to get ready for your fitness test, the folks at Morale, Welfare and Recreation can give you information on setting goals and starting an exercise program. Keep in mind, however, that body fat measurement via Microfit is not accepted as an official measurement for reservists' weight and fitness records.

Interested individuals must call MWR to schedule an appointment, and the test takes approximately 45 minutes. Workout clothing is suggested for wear during the test.

For more information or a test appointment, contact MWR at base extension 5316.

## Tips for new walkers, runners

by Cherie Huntington

**A**nyone aspiring to get in shape via walking or running should keep four critical things in mind, according to John Bergeland, a 52-year-old who has been running for 31 years and has completed 27 marathons.

At a walking and running seminar hosted by Morale, Welfare and Recreation on the March UTA, Bergeland addressed fitness concerns from his viewpoint as an athlete and trainer. He is also a staff sergeant in the 934th MWRSS. Here were his key points:

- \* **Get a physical before you begin.**
- \* **Know your body and its limitations.**
- \* **Realize you can't become physically fit or healthy until you eat right.** "The way you eat right is to count calories," Bergeland stressed. Items to avoid include pork and red meat, as well as foods high in salt, sugar, caffeine, fat or cholesterol. He also emphasized the need for at least a half-gallon of water a day, or eight full glasses.

\* **Finally, make sure you have good shoes for your sport, whether it's walking or running.** "Eighty-five percent of the people I train have the wrong shoes," he said. He suggested people go to a reputable sports store where the staff takes ample time finding the proper shoe, considering factors like weight, training level and footstrike pattern.

For walkers, he emphasized that walking shoes should have more buildup in the heel for support. Also, the heels should be rounded off to help absorb shock.

As for clothing, he said cotton is rarely the best fiber, contrary to popular belief. Cotton socks retain blister-causing moisture. Even cotton sweats, particularly in winter, can be a poor choice. "Cotton gives a false sense of being warm," said Bergeland. "You get wet and then chilled, so you need a fabric like polypropylene to wick moisture away from your body."

Bergeland plans to run his 28th marathon at Grandma's Marathon, to be held June 19 in Duluth, Minn.

# MWR BRIEFS

## Softball

A men's tournament will be held Saturday, 10 July, at an off-base site. Also, a coed recreational tournament will be held on two Saturdays, Aug. 7 and Sept. 11, on the base. More information will be available this UTA. Any squadrons wishing to participate must turn in a team roster to MWR.

## Fitness center

Hours for the fitness center are: Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3:30-5:30 p.m.; UTA Saturday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-10 p.m.; UTA Sunday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Showers are available in each restroom, and a free towel service is also available. 'Herk Hustle'

Registration forms for the Herk Hustle 5K Fun Run/Walk are available at the MWR office in building 852. The event is set for 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 1, and entry is free. Celebrate National Sports and Physical Fitness Month in May by participating! Herk Hustle T-shirts are on sale at MWR.

## Holiday camping

The 96th Airlift Squadron invites everyone to go camping on the July 4th weekend at Big Island Veterans Camp on Lake Minnetonka. Camp out Friday, July 2 through Monday, July 5, or any combination of those days. There will be fireworks over the lake, and families are welcome. For more information, contact Mike Erickson at 725-5562.