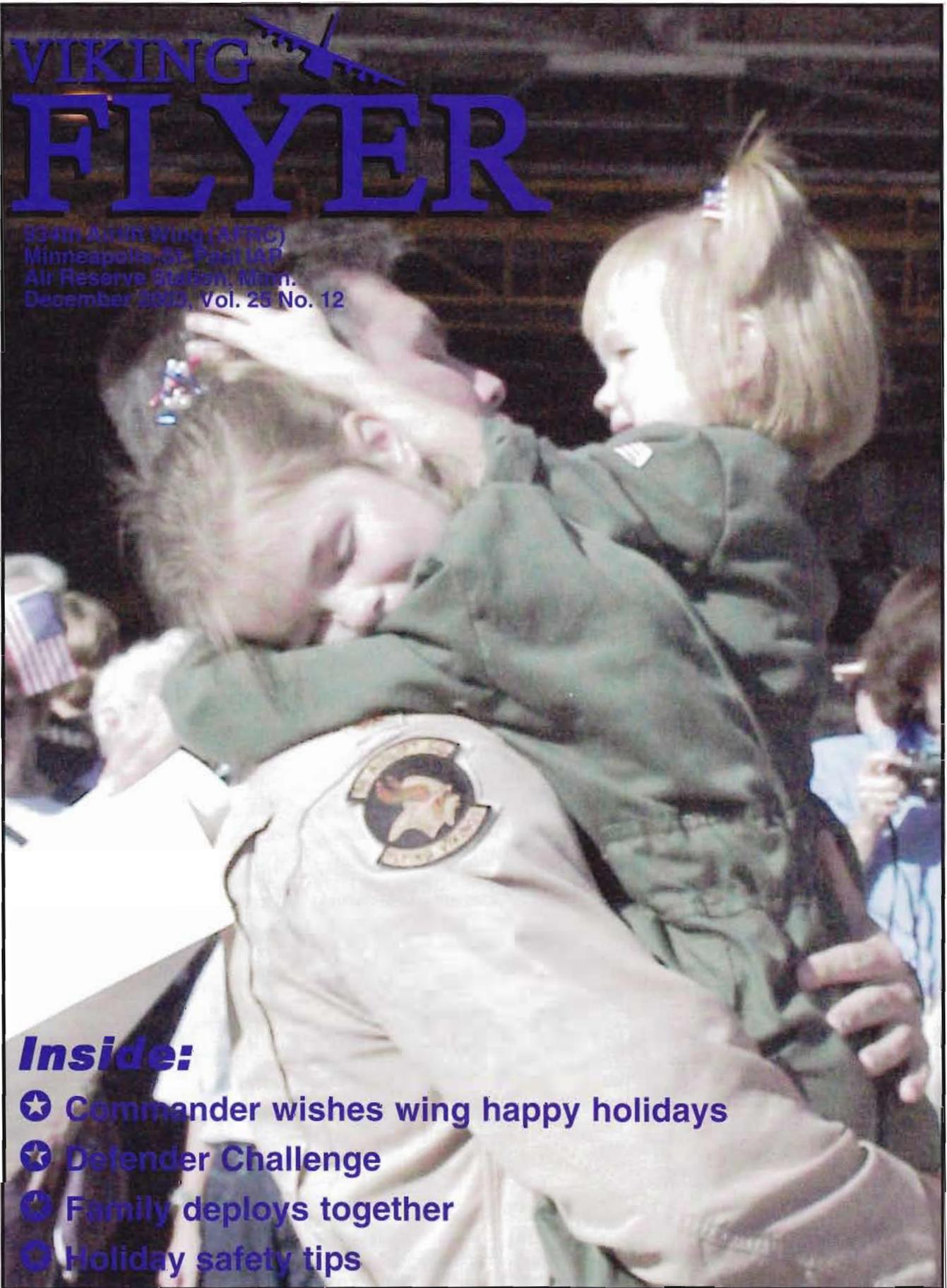


VIKING FLYER



934th Airlift Wing (AFRC)
Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP
Air Reserve Station, Minn.
December 2003, Vol. 25 No. 12



Inside:

- ★ Commander wishes wing happy holidays
- ★ Defender Challenge
- ★ Family deploys together
- ★ Holiday safety tips



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The deadline for unsolicited submissions is the Monday after the UTA.

On the cover:

Natalya Peterson, 7, and her sister Lara, 3, welcome their dad, Maj. Paul Peterson, 934th Airlift Wing, when he returned from deployment Oct. 19.

Photo by Cristina Oxta

VIKING FLYER

Wing helps Iraqi police train

By Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The road to stability and recovery in Iraq received a boost recently, thanks to the help of Minnesota Air Force reservists.

Six transportation specialists from the 934th Airlift Wing's 27th Aerial Port Squadron loaded 5 million rounds of 9mm ammunition onto a waiting C-5 from Dover Air Force Base, Del., Oct. 15 with one destination in mind – Baghdad.

"I got a call regarding a shipment of ammunition for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Dressen, air transportation manager at the 27th APS. "They needed this ammo to train the new Iraqi police force."

The ammo came from a Twin Cities manufacturer that was awarded the contract.

Due to the restrictions at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, where the unit is based, Dressen contacted the Air National Guard at Volk Field, Wisc., for assistance since it has better ammunition storage facilities.

"I'm very impressed with the Volk Field folks," Dressen said. "If they hadn't come through for us, this shipment wouldn't have gone the way it did."

Four semi-trailer loads of ammunition made the three-hour journey from the Twin Cities and then Dressen's troops took over Oct. 15. They took 50 skids of the ammo and combined them onto 17 military pallets before the C-5 arrived. When the plane arrived, the transportation specialists loaded the whole shipment, weighing a hefty 147,080 pounds, in an hour and a half.

On Oct. 19, an e-mail arrived from the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad that read, "The ammunition you sent here will be used to train and arm Iraqi police to bring security here and help get our troops back home sooner. Best wishes from Baghdad."

Dressen understood the importance of the mission.

"What we did was just a small cog in the wheel, but the exposure from handling a shipment like this did a lot of good in giving my guys experience," he said. "This was watched by a lot of important people at much higher levels, and we came through and accomplished this mission. If it will help get our boys home sooner by helping the Iraqi police force training, all the better."



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Michael Dressen

Transportation specialists from the 934th Airlift Wing's 27th Aerial Port Squadron load ammunition on a C-5 destined for Baghdad.

Commander shares holiday thoughts

By Col. James Muscatell Jr.
934th Airlift Wing
commander



The holiday season is upon us. It is a time to celebrate with friends and family, look forward to the new year and reflect on the events of the past year.

2003 was quite a year for the 934th Airlift Wing. In June, the world famous Thunderbirds put on an exciting show at the "Mankato Air Spectacular," much to the delight of thousands of awe struck spectators. In July, when our nation called on us at a time of great need, we re-

sponded and several hundred of our reservist warfighters deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. We also supported other missions in other parts of the world, including Coronet Oak in South America.

In September, our commander-in-chief, President George W. Bush, stopped at our base and visited the city. In October, a number of our warfighters returned home safely from their deployment while another group left in November to continue our mission in Southwest Asia. It has certainly been a memorable year for everyone.

The holiday season is also a time to let those who mean a great deal to us know that we care about them and appreciate all that they do for us.

I am grateful for the dedication and hard work of every member of the wing, both military members and civilian employees here at home as well as military members deployed around the world. Despite our high ops tempo and

tremendous workload, they remain steadfastly committed to doing their best to accomplish our mission.

No matter the task, no matter the challenges, no matter the sacrifices, the members of our wing perform impeccably. I am so proud of everyone and I appreciate all of the great things they do each day for our wing, our Air Force and our nation.

I am also grateful for our community leaders, local employers and the family members of our reservists, all of whom support our base and our mission so we can focus on accomplishing the vital work we must perform to meet our nation's needs.

Last, but certainly not least, I am thankful for my family, both my Air Force family and my own family. As you hurriedly try to accomplish many tasks in preparation for the holidays, such as finding your way through the obstacle-course like mall parking lots and figuring out how to hang a tangled mess of holiday

lights, keep in mind that no task is more important than spending time with your friends and loved ones.

In the big picture of life, the little things, like getting stuck in traffic, does not matter. Life is too short, so don't waste it getting stressed over the little things. Spend time with those you love and never pass up the chance to say "I love you" or "thanks" for the wonderful things they do for you.

My wife Nancy and I hope your holiday season is filled with a bounty of blessings, peace, happiness and the love of family and friends. Remember in your thoughts and prayers our military members who are spending their holidays far from home.

However you choose to celebrate, have a safe and joyous time. Don't forget to keep alive and share with everyone the spirit of the season not only this month, but throughout the new year as well.

Happy Holidays!

Commander's Hotline

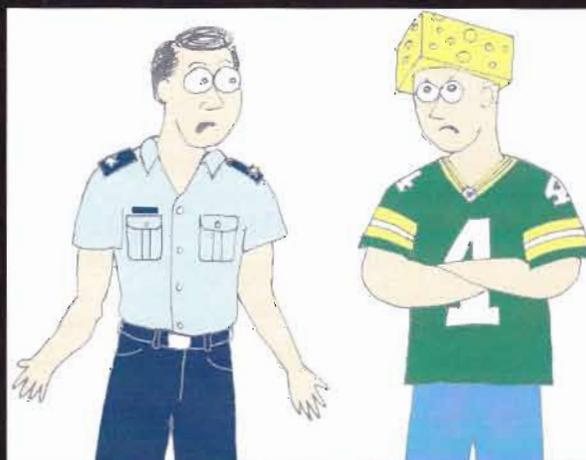
The Commander's Hotline is your direct link to the wing commander for kudos, questions, concerns or suggestions about matters related to the 934th Airlift Wing.

To use the hotline, call (612) 713-4685. Be sure to leave your name and phone number. Items of general interest will be printed in the Viking Flyer. When appropriate, some concerns and queries will be met with a personal response.

If you have a problem that needs to be resolved, call the responsible agency first, so it can have the opportunity to help you.

OUTSIDE THE REGS

By Staff Sgt. Nicholas Olson



I don't care if you don't like it. We are not changing our name to the "Flying Packers!"

Airman tests skills, places fifth in Defender Challenge competition

By Cristina Oxta
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

An air reserve technician at the 934th Security Forces Squadron placed fifth in the M203 grenade launcher event at this year's Defender's Challenge held Oct. 10 to 16 at the Army's Camp Bullis, Texas.

This was the first time Senior Airman Kevin Hegner competed in Defender Challenge and he was certainly proud of his accomplishment.

"It feels great," Hegner said.

Each year, Defender Challenge pits defenders representing each Air Force major command, the British Royal Air Force Regiment and the Department of Energy in intense individual and team competition involving marksmanship, physical endurance, tactics, teamwork and leadership.

According to Maj. Theodore Ruminsky, chief of security forces at the 934th AW, there are approximately 30,000 security forces personnel in the active-duty, guard and reserve Air Force and he was proud Hegner did so well competing with the best among the best in his career field.

"Only the best are selected to compete in Defender Challenge. They are hand-picked by units to send to the major command tryouts. We selected Senior Airman Hegner to represent the 934th at the AFRC team tryouts. Only 10 cops, plus one alternate, are selected to represent each MAJCOM, and Kevin was selected," Ruminsky said.

"It is a huge honor just to be selected for the MAJCOM team. These competitors are definitely an elite group of cops."

Senior Airman Hegner did an outstanding job representing his unit, Ruminsky added.

"It was a fantastic showing, especially given the level of competition!" Ruminsky said. "He is a warrior, motivated airman and team player, is technically proficient and always striving to improve his skills. We couldn't be more proud of him."

The two weeks that Hegner and his team spent in rigorous training and preparation before the competition paid off when they placed third in the Sadler Cup tactical exercise.

In this exercise, competitors used the Enhanced Tactical Automated Security System to collect and send real-time intelligence on activity in the area.

The scenario called for teams to provide security for a multinational peacekeeping effort. Their mission was to enter a small city and stop guerrillas preparing to shoot down a relief aircraft.

"Placing third in this event is a testament to the dedication and skills reservists and guardsmen bring to the table," Ruminsky said.

"Our team goal was to win and not give up. We didn't win the events we wanted to win in, but as a whole, we accomplished our goals for ourselves," Hegner said.

Defender Challenge is not



Courtesy photo

Senior Airmen Kevin Hegner (left) and Justin Hovancik, members of the Air Force Reserve Command team, perform buddy care on a mannequin at the 2003 Defender Challenge held Oct. 10 to 16 at Camp Bullis in Texas. The Department of Energy federal agents' team bested 11 others to be the overall team winners.

just a grueling contest to determine the top cops. It also provides participants an opportunity to test and learn about the latest equipment and technology, such as the ETASS used in this year's tactical exercise.

"We get to be test subjects and help determine how well the equipment works. In a way, we provide the direc-

tion of how they can be used or improved to accomplish the Air Force mission," Hegner said.

Hegner enjoyed his Defender Challenge experience.

"I'm happy for everyone who participated. Everyone came away with something they can use to help improve their units," Hegner said. "I'd do it again in a heartbeat."

Combined Federal Campaign wraps up

By Senior Airman Jennifer Johnson
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 934th Airlift Wing contributed an estimated \$15,000 to this year's Combined Federal Campaign.

Although the wing did not have a monetary goal, it did set and meet a goal of 100 percent contact, meaning all wing members were given the opportunity to contribute to the campaign.

CFC is the nation's largest annual fund-raising campaign. Since 1961, when CFC was established by former president John F. Kennedy, military members and other federal employees have given billions of dollars to support the many charities that make up CFC.



Combined Federal Campaign

According to Nancy Ripley, 934th AW secretary, the campaign offers thousands of organizations and charities from which contributors can choose to donate. The

choices include everything from after-school programs to the Humane Society, Ripley said.

"You never know what is going to strike a cord with people," she said. "There are a lot of good choices and people can usually find exactly what they are interested in."

Ripley said the campaign is wonderful because it gives her and other contributors a chance to support organizations that are near and dear to their hearts.

"I watched my mother die of Alzheimer's...so I always give money to organizations that focus on finding the prevention or cure for the disease," she said.

Alzheimer's can affect people in many different walks of life, and Ripley said this is her chance to make a difference while helping others.

"The campaign is great because it gives people an opportunity to give something back to local organizations in their community and to organizations that are unique in their service to the military community," said Senior Master Sgt. James Gustafson, 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron CFC point of contact.

**Thanks to everyone
who completed the
Air Force Climate Survey.
Everyone's inputs count.
Look for reports in Feb. 2004.**

Active, reserve forces reviewed

By K.L. Vantran
American Forces Press
Service

Recruiting and retention has "held up nicely despite stress on the force as a whole," said David Chu to members of the House Armed Services Committee Nov. 5. He is the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

A survey of active and reserve forces, which is done every four months, shows a "higher level of satisfaction with military life than three to four years ago. Their intentions to stay (in the military) remain strong," he said.

"The nation can be proud of the service of its citizens in military uniform today," Chu said. "The force has done extraordinary things in the last two years."

Chu explained charts showing the increase and decrease of deployments to the U.S. Central Command area of operations since Sept. 11, 2001. He said in the next "six months or so" as forces rotate out of Iraq, there will be a temporary increase in the number of reserve mobilizations as units

being prepared for deployment will be brought to active duty.

There have been a series of challenges in managing the reserve forces, Chu said. Even though the goal is to give reservists at least 30-days notice, Chu acknowledged that this was not always the case.

"We need to do better, and I think the next round will be better," he said.

Chu also spoke of the need to ensure that the same people are not called up time after time. Since 1996, only three percent have been called up more than once for involuntary mobilizations, Chu said, adding that the record is "quite good."

Chu also talked about getting the right balance in regard to types of units and individual skill sets.

Another challenge is to "set and meet expectations of reserve personnel regarding terms of service," he said. After Sept. 11, 2001, reservists were called up for one year.

However, based on advice from commanders in the field who said they needed continuity, the policy was changed so units in Iraq would serve "on the ground" for one year.

Don't forget to attend:

Wing Commander's Calls

Military - Jan. 11

at the Enlisted Club

Times TBA

Civilians - Dec. 10 at 1:30 p.m.

at the Enlisted Club

followed by civilian welfare party

Airman saves life

By Sandra Henry
919th Special Operations
Wing Public Affairs

DUKE FIELD, Fla. - A 919th Special Operations Wing reservist helped save the life of an Air Force retiree recently.

Senior Airman Sonya Brownhill, 5th Special Operations Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, hopped in her car at about 5:30 a.m. one Saturday to go to a convenience store.

When she arrived at the store's parking lot, she saw a woman in a vehicle yelling for someone to help her husband who was unconscious in the passenger seat of a vehicle.

"She was yelling that her husband was having a heart attack," Brownhill said.

Brownhill saw another man, a bystander, pushing on the man's chest. She ran to assist. Brownhill and the bystander pulled the unconscious man from the vehicle for better access.

"As soon as his back made contact with the concrete, I started trying to clear his throat to open his airway and began pumping on his chest," Brownhill said.

The bystander began

mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. After one good breath, the unconscious man started bubbling from the mouth. Brownhill said that made the bystander uncomfortable and he hesitated.

"He didn't seem sure what to do, so I just took over," she said.

Firefighters arrived on the scene moments later. Capt. Craig Keyes of the Florosa Fire Department and a flight commander at the 16th Medical Support Squadron, Hurlburt Field, was the first person from the fire department to arrive.

Keyes saw a man lying on the ground with two persons performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Brownhill was performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, he said.

"It makes me feel good... and maybe he'll be able to hug his grandbabies next week," Brownhill said.

Three days later, the man was recovering at a hospital.

"The selflessness demonstrated by Senior Airman Brownhill to assist someone in need made a huge difference in the lives of a family she never met before," Keyes said. "I was proud it was an airman who was able to do it!"

AF Reserves help extinguish California fires

By 2nd Lt. Lance
Patterson and
2nd Lt. John Fage
HQ AFRC Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Three reserve firefighters assigned to the 452nd Civil Engineer Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., assisted in the fight against three California wildfires that scorched more than 70,000 acres.

Fifteen Department of Defense civil firefighters, assigned to the 452nd Air Mobility Wing at March ARB, aided California Department of Forestry firefighters in their effort to extinguish the Old Fire, Grand Prix and Padua fires in the San Bernadino Valley area.

The 452nd firefighters also provided manpower support to March ARB's fire department during a unit training assembly weekend Nov. 1 to 2.

"These are times and situations that reservists can best be used," said Chief Master Sgt. Fletcher D. Dahman, senior enlisted fire protection manager, Air Force Reserve Command. "Our military training and discipline make us first-round draft choices for these types of situations."

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has tasked March to be a mobilization center because of the installation's existing infrastructure and support capabilities, Dahman said.

The 452nd AMW is also responsible for supporting Moreno Valley firefighters.

"Currently, there are four DoD civil firefighters still involved in fighting the Old Fire," said Capt. Donald Traud, 452nd AMW public affairs.

UTA Schedule FY04

Dec. 6 to 7 (make up Dec. 16 to 17)

Jan. 10 to 11 (make up Dec. 24 to 25)

Feb. 7 to 8 (make up Feb. 21 to 22)

March 6 to 7 (make up March 27 to 28)

April 3 to 4 (make up Dec. 17 to 18)

May 1 to 2 (make up May 22 to 23)

June 5 to 6 (make up June 12 to 13)

July 10 to 11 (make up July 24 to 25)

Aug. 7 to 8 (make up Aug. 21 to 22)

Sept. 11 to 12 (make up Sept. 25 to 26)

Airmen help Iraqi man return home

By Staff Sgt.
Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Central Air Forces
Forward Public Affairs

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM - U.S. airmen helped bring an Iraqi man back to his homeland now free of Saddam Hussein's rule.

As part of a U.S.-sponsored media trip Oct. 19 to 23, British-Arab journalists traveled to Basra and Baghdad, Iraq.

Khalid Kishtainy, an Iraqi columnist and novelist who has lived in London for many years, returned to his homeland for the first time in 14 years.

Kishtainy was last in Iraq in 1989 when he went to visit a fellow journalist, he said.

"When I got to Baghdad (in 1989), I met with this young admirer who liked my articles about Iraq. This admirer was a columnist in Baghdad," Kishtainy said. "Over the course of a few days, we went (to) some places, I visited with my family, and on the last night I was there, this young admirer, along with some of his friends, brought me to (an elegant) restaurant."

Kishtainy said that during that dinner, he could hear the others say to each other, "Should we tell Khalid? Should we tell him now?"

Kishtainy said after that, he could not eat any more. It was



Photo by Staff Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Iraqi columnist and novelist Khalid Kishtainy steps off a C-130 Hercules at Baghdad International Airport Oct. 21. In 1989, Kishtainy left Baghdad, where the former Saddam Hussein regime had two death sentences on him for a book he wrote about the regime.

not until they got to the taxi and started to roll away that Kishtainy was told the story his friends were withholding from him.

Once we were in the taxi, the young columnist told me that in a recent book I wrote ...the first chapter alone would get me two death sentences under the Hussein regime," Kishtainy said. "The young man also said that he just made mention of the book in one of his columns, and he (spent) six months in jail for it. He only got out of jail after his family pleaded for his release."

The next morn-

ing, Kishtainy's plane was due to leave then-named Saddam International Airport.

"I couldn't sleep that whole night thinking one of Saddam's security people was going to come and arrest me," Kishtainy said. "It was a very long night."

As he got to the airport that morning, he said everything seemed fine. As was customary, an airport official took everyone's passport to get the final stamp.

When the official came back, Kishtainy said his passport was the only one missing.

"An officer wants

to see you about your passport," Kishtainy said the officer told him. "After that, I thought I was done for."

Kishtainy said he waited for the worst once he got to where the officer was.

"I came in, all worried for my life, and this officer comes over and gives me a hug," he said. "As it turned out, he said my father was a friend of his father. When he saw the name, he wanted to meet me. From there, he handed me my passport back and I was on my way back to London."

Kishtainy said the terror of the former Iraqi regime followed him until he was almost back to Europe.

"It was well-known that Saddam would call an Iraqi Airways plane back even once it was in the air if there was someone on there that he wanted back in Iraq," Kishtainy said. "It wasn't until I switched planes and saw the European continent that I knew I was safe."

For a short time after that, Kishtainy continued to write from London about the regime and its brutality. But one day, he received a phone call from his sister begging him to stop writing about Iraq.

"I got the phone call from my sister who was at an Iraqi government intelligence of-

rice," Kishtainy said. "First, my sister talked to me and then an Iraqi intelligence officer spoke and threatened to rape her and make life very hard for my family. So then I promised not to write anymore."

Kishtainy said he kept that promise for more than 12 years, and shortly before the fall of the regime this year, he began writing about Iraq again.

"It had been too many years, and Iraqis needed freedom," Kishtainy said. "It was very coincidental, but not long after that, they (were free of) Saddam."

Kishtainy is referring to Operation Iraqi Freedom and the changes that have taken place since then. He said he is "very happy" that Saddam is gone, and his family can live in peace.

On his media trip, Kishtainy went to Basra and Baghdad aboard an Air Force C-130 Hercules, and met with old friends and family. He also met with members of the new Iraqi Governing Council and learned about progress the coalition has made since Saddam was ousted.

When the C-130 landed in Basra for its first stop, Kishtainy stepped off the plane and said only one line — "Thanks to America, I can return to my homeland."

C-130s provide Air Force presence in Basra

By Staff Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Central Air Forces
Forward Public Affairs

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM - For anyone flying into Basra International Airport, the feeling must be different than flying into Baghdad International.

First of all, anyone stepping off the plane is immediately greeted by British Royal Air Force airmen, which is certainly different than Baghdad.

In addition, the area in and around Basra is part of Multinational Division-Southeast, or MND-SE.

"We have more than 10 nations which comprise the MND-SE," said Flight Lt. Katherine McIntosh, British RAF media operations officer at Basra. "Since I've been here and seen the operations, I think we are making significant progress in the region."

The 10 countries that support operations for MND-SE include Great Britain, the United States, Portugal, Romania, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Poland, Italy, Denmark and the Netherlands, McIntosh said.

As for the U.S. involvement, McIntosh said much of it involves Marines who are doing missions in central-western Iraq and Umm-Qasr.

There, they help with river patrols looking for smugglers. There are also Marine helicopters that perform missions right out of Basra. The U.S. Army has liaison officers and others who work with the MND-SE in vari-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins

A C-130 Hercules crew from the 379th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron landed in Iraq recently to pick up patients and transport them to Germany. The C-130s multi-purpose capabilities make it a viable tool for many types of operations.

ous positions.

McIntosh said the Air Force does not have a main operational role in Basra, apart from flights from other areas into Basra.

"The Joint Helicopter Flight (in Basra) comprises British aircraft from the Royal Navy, Army and RAF," she said. "The aerial port of debarkation, or APOD, here is operated by the RAF. That said, as a member of the coalition forces, the U.S. Air Force does support multi-national operations in Basra."

Many of the multi-national missions supported are with the C-130 Hercules aircraft. The C-130's multi-purpose capabilities make it a viable tool for many types of operations.

Master Sgt. Thomas Kim, a C-130 loadmaster who has flown missions into Basra, said the Air Force's role in that region is important.

"Our role is very significant to support our British and other coalition allies there," Kim said. "We're in this together for the long haul."

Kim is deployed to an undisclosed base in Southwest Asia from the 96th Airlift Squadron at Minneapolis, Minn.

He said his plane's role throughout the theater and particularly at Basra provides something very special.

"You can't operate without the C-130," he said. "It's a key tool in getting troops and sup-

plies in and out of airfields that larger aircraft can't operate in."

Senior Airman Aaron Hillberg, also a C-130 loadmaster deployed from the 96th AS, said another capability of the C-130 around Basra is its support for the high operations tempo there.

"By having them (C-130s) work in and around Basra, you can support more missions in a shorter amount of time," he said.

Hillberg said the C-130 will continue to have a presence in Basra and elsewhere.

"The C-130 is very combat capable and was built for operations like we do in Basra," he said. "In my opinion, it will continue to be a big factor in (current and future) operations."

Viking Inn menu for Dec. 6 and 7

Saturday holiday meal - Turkey/ham, mashed potatoes, dressing, green beans and assorted desserts

Sunday - Stuffed manicotti and veal parmesan

Airmen find creative desert entertainment

By Staff Sgt. Troy R. A. Novak
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

The desert in the Middle East is nothing like Las Vegas or any desert oasis resort. It is at least 100 degrees every day and there is no excitement, glamour or star treatment.

So when airmen, like those of the 934th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, are deployed in the region, they must use some ingenuity to keep themselves entertained in between long work hours.

Approximately 90 members of the 934th AMXS were deployed in Southwest Asia from Aug. 1 to mid-October.

According to Tech. Sgt. Paul Owen and Staff Sgt. Thomas Murphy,

their time in the desert was monotonous at times, but they made the best of it and created their own fun.

Master Sgt. Dale Klein said the group worked long hours at night for three days on with one day off on the fourth day.

In their free time, the airmen had to get used to tent living. The desert wind howled and roared through the camp for the first month while they tried to sleep, shaking the tents and beds violently, Tech. Sgt. Ian Owen said.

"I got so used to the wind that when it stopped, I had trouble getting to sleep for a while," Staff Sgt. Kenneth Ferderber said.

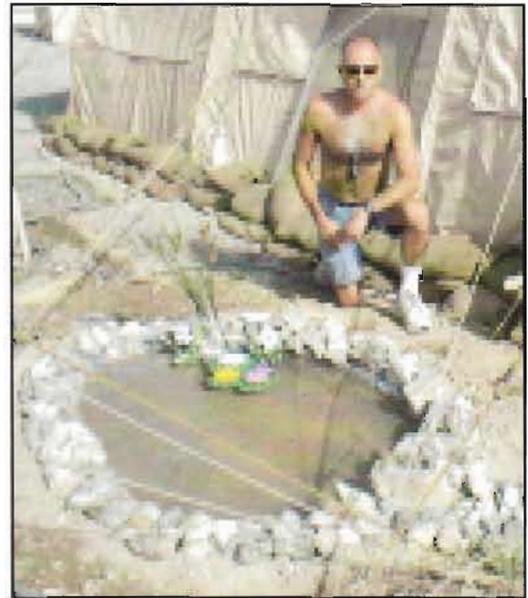
The tents were also used as a creative outlet. Many painted their make-

shift porches and planted greenery in the sand around the tents. Tech. Sgt. Timothy Giles even built a small pond filled with the condensation runoff from the air conditioning unit next to his tent.

Klein said the airmen did have a few "luxuries" available to them. For instance, Air Force News aired the first Minnesota Vikings game of the season and many watched it at the recreation center.

"Little things like the football game made tent life more tolerable," Klein said.

Besides showing sporting events, the recreation center held talent shows, bingo, Friday night dodge ball, volleyball and offered a wide selection of DVDs,



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. Timothy Giles, 934th Aircraft Maintenance, built a pond next to his tent

Giles said.

"This gave us the chance to blow off steam and be as normal as we could be while overseas," Giles said.

Another pastime for the airmen was taking photos of camel spiders.

"The spiders in Southwest Asia are huge," Ferderber said. "And it's not fun to worry about them crawling into beds, shirts and anywhere else they can fit."

Camel spiders are a cross between a scorpion and a spider. Some species have been known to feed on mice and birds.

When they were not marveling at spiders, the airmen volunteered for bag-drag detail, helped off-load dining facility deliveries and participated in base cleanups.

Tours of the area were not allowed, but at least the airmen got a trip

from the flight line to tent city everyday, Owen joked.

"The bus trip would knock your teeth loose," Klein said. "It was a very rough road."

Sometimes the airmen fed apples to wild donkeys roaming the bus route, Klein said.

"That was the only wildlife we saw that wasn't a spider or a snake," Klein said.

Now that he is home, Klein is happy to have the "creature comforts" he missed, without the spiders.

"I'm sleeping better, the bathroom is a few steps away, I have a comfortable bed, and I can't hear the wind," he said.

Despite the challenges of a deployment, Klein said if the Air Force asked him, he would return to the desert.

"I look at it as doing my job, doing my part," he said proudly.



Courtesy photo

Camel spiders are plentiful in the Southwest Asia region.

934th Air 2003 Memore



Courtesy photo

President George W. Bush waves farewell from the steps of Air Force One after stopping at the 934th Airlift Wing during his visit of Minneapolis in September.



Photo by Janet Hostetter

Reservist Tech. Sgt. Gino Marchetti (right), 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, was named the 2003 Minnesota Teacher of the Year at a banquet May 3. Marchetti is a fourth grade teacher at Lake Harriet Community School in Minneapolis.



934th Airlift Wing warfighters returning from deployment



Airlift Wing able Moments



Courtesy photo

ent wave an American flag from a taxiing aircraft.



Courtesy photo

A group of 934th Airlift Wing members reenlist during the Air Force Thunderbirds' visit in June.



Courtesy photo

Deploying warfighters from the 934th Airlift Wing wave goodbye to family and friends as they boarded an aircraft headed for South-west Asia in July in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Courtesy photo

Visitors at the "Mankato Air Spectacular" marvel at an aircraft.

All in the family: father, son, fiancée deploy

By Staff Sgt. Troy Novak
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

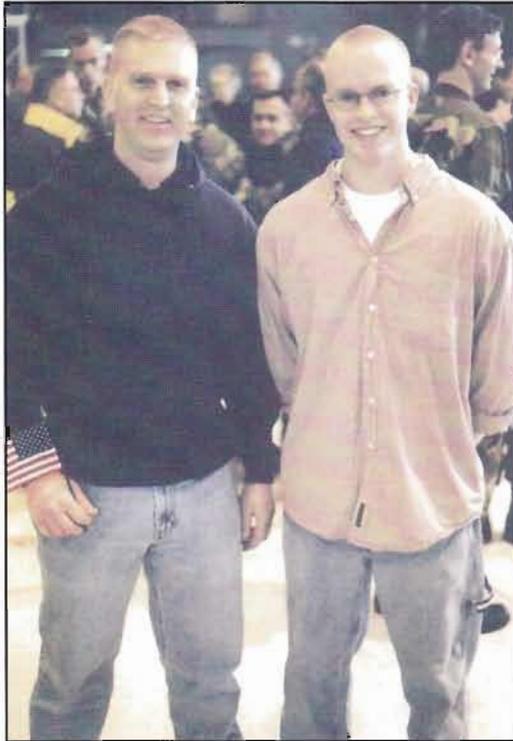
A deployment can be a lonely experience for those who must spend time away from their loved ones, but that may not be the case for three military members who deployed Nov. 1.

Sean, a senior airman; his fiancée Lisa, also a senior airman; and Sean's father, Mike, a master sergeant, are all members of the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron. They were three of the nearly 40 medics, nurses and doctors who deployed for 120 days in Southwest Asia.

"This is the largest overseas deployment in our unit's history," said Senior Master Sgt. James Gustafson, 934th ASTS.

This is also Sean's first deployment and he considered himself lucky to be with his father and fiancée.

"I'm more secure



Courtesy photo

Mike (left) and his son Sean left the base Nov. 1 for a 120-day deployment in Southwest Asia along with Sean's fiancée, Lisa. All three are members of the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron. According to Senior Master Sgt. James Gustafson, This is the largest deployment in ASTS' history.

because my father and Lisa are big parts of my life, and I'm thankful that I won't have to be without them," Sean said.

It is strange to deploy with his son, said Mike, whose last deployment to the desert was when Sean was 10.

"It's hard for me to believe how fast the years have gone and now my son and I are in the same boat, equals, experiencing the same thing," Mike said. "It's challenging to not constantly play the role of a father and I try to separate that and keep it professional since we're both in the military."

Mike shared his thoughts on deploying.

"Overall, it's a good experience because I'm surrounded by people who have beliefs and values similar to my own. I respect and honor what people have done in the past through sacrifice and service, and one of the ways I can show my appreciation is through giving back to my country by serving," Mike said. "Sean has the same beliefs as I do and that makes it even more special."

According to Mike's father and Sean's grandfather, Ron, Mike and Sean are "very devoted to the Air Force."

"I'm happy they're



Courtesy photo

Lisa is pleased to deploy with her fiancée, Sean. They plan to wed in 2005.

together. I know that their love for their country and their love for each other will carry them through," Ron said.

Lisa is thankful that she will not have to worry or miss Sean.

"I'll have a family around for the holidays," she said.

However, Lisa's family will miss her.

"I don't want her gone, but I'm glad she's with Sean," said Lisa's father, Mark.

** For security reasons, the last names of deployed military members cannot be used in articles or photos.*

Weather emergency procedures

In case of severe weather, members of the 934th Airlift Wing have four ways of obtaining information:

1. Watch **WCCO TV Channel 4.**
2. Listen to **WCCO Radio 830 AM.**
3. Go online to <http://wcco.com/schoolclosings/> all **(612) 713-5934** and listen to the base closure message.

In most cases, during severe weather, the base will be closed or a two-hour late start will be authorized.



Travelers show support for troops

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press

WASHINGTON - Nearly everyone has experienced it at one time or another: An airport bogged down by bad weather, delayed and cancelled flights, and cranky, overtired travelers wanting nothing more than to get to their destinations.

That was exactly what Will Ross, an administrative judge for the Defense Department's Office of Hearings and Appeals in Los Angeles, encountered Oct. 27 at the Baltimore/Washington International Airport.

But he said what he witnessed that day made him proud to be an American.

"(It) also told me why we will win this war (on terrorism)," Ross said.

Like many of his fellow passengers, Ross had been forced to spend the night in Baltimore. His outbound flight, scheduled for the night before, had been cancelled because of the California wildfires. They had forced the Los Angeles International Airport to close, and the ripple effect drove domestic travel nationwide into a tailspin.

When Ross reported to the airline counter the following morning for the next scheduled flight to Los Angeles, bad weather and aircraft mechanical problems made the prospect of a timely trip even grimmer.

Afternoon, one particular flight to Denver had been delayed several hours.

Airline agents kept asking for volunteers to give up their seats and take another flight, but with few takers, Ross said.

"We want all the soldiers to know...we respect what you're doing, we are here for you and we love you."

- Airline spokesperson at the Baltimore/Washington International Airport

As he waited in the terminal, Ross noticed many servicemembers in their desert camouflage uniforms, arriving from Southwest Asia. All, like Ross and the other passengers at the airport, were awaiting connecting flights. But in the servicemembers' case, it was to begin two weeks of rest and recuperation leave.

Flight delays continued and the airport had become, in Ross's words, "a zoo." By the

Finally, Ross said an airline spokeswoman for the Denver flight got on the public address system and made a desperate plea.

"Folks, as you can see, there are a lot of soldiers in the waiting area," the agent said. "They only have 14 days of leave and we're trying to get them where they need to go without spending any more time in an airport than they have to."

"We sold them all tickets

knowing we would oversell the flight. If we can, we want to get them all on this flight. We want all the soldiers to know...we respect what you're doing, we are here for you and we love you," the agent continued.

"The entire terminal of cranky, tired, travel-weary people—a cross-section of America—broke into sustained and heartfelt applause," Ross said. "We're talking about several hundred people applauding, a whole terminal."

"The soldiers looked surprised and very modest," he said. "Most of them just looked at their boots."

Many of the travelers in the terminal wiped away tears, Ross said.

"And, yes," Ross said, "people lined up to take the later flight and all the soldiers went to Denver on that flight."

Ross figured that 30 or 40 people had suddenly jumped at the chance to offer their seats to the servicemembers.

"I think people realized that this fight is going to be long and drawn-out, and these kids are in the thick of it," he said. "It was heartwarming to see their outpouring of support."

**Congratulations to the
karaoke contest winners from
2003 UTA weekends!**

First place (\$50) winners were:
Paul and Denise Long, Michelle Szydel,
Eugene Hendrickson, Douglas Hair,
Kristin Anderson, Brent Reichow,
David Hardy, Heidi Gibson,
Anita McColley and Elizabeth Rosales

**Winners compete to win \$500 at the
"Grand Sing Off" Dec. 6 at the Enlisted Club.**

**Thrift Savings Plan
Open Season
Now to Dec. 31**

Open season provides military members and federal civilian employees a chance to start or change the amount of their contributions to their TSP voluntary retirement savings and investment plan.

For share prices and rates of return, visit the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov or call the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777.

Wing safety offers holiday tips

By Senior Airman Curtis Holden
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The holiday season means celebrations, but it can also mean potential safety risks. The 934th Airlift Wing Base Safety Office offered tips to help wing members stay safe during the holidays.

"The winter holidays mean entertaining, more cooking and decorating," said Janet Dalton, 934th AW safety office.

As such, fire is one of her major safety concerns during the holidays.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, each year, more than 500 home fires in the nation are caused by the ignition of Christmas trees, resulting in an average of 33 deaths, 112 injuries and \$21 million in property damage.

Dalton provided these decorating safety tips:

- * Choose decorations made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.

- * Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials and do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees.

- * Purchase only lights and electrical decorations bearing the name of an independent testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories, and follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and maintenance.

- * Inspect new and previously used light strings and replace damaged items before plugging lights in.

- * Unplug lights before replacing light

bulbs or fuses.

- * Do not mount lights in any way that can damage the cord's wire insulation. Use clips, not nails.

- * Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations.

- * Turn off all lights and decorations before leaving the house or going to bed.

A holiday tree can remain relatively fire resistant if these steps are followed:

- * Re-cut the trunk at least one inch above the old cut as soon as it is taken home. This removes scar tissue of the old cut and allows the tree's veins to continue to pull moisture into its foliage.

- * Clean the stand with a capful of bleach mixed in water. This reduces the growth of organisms that can block the tree's intake of water.

- * Place the tree away from sources of heat, such as a heater outlet, wood stove or fireplace. Never leave a lighted tree unattended. Turn down the room heat at night.

- * Check the water level in the stand daily. Never let water go below the bottom of the trunk.

- * Carefully control lights on the tree. The use of miniature lights produces substantially less heat than standard-size Christmas tree lights and thereby reduces the drying effect on the tree.

- * Check light sets for frayed or cracked wires and broken sockets before placing them on the tree. Do not attempt to repair a worn light set. Throw it away and purchase a new replacement.

- * After the holiday, cut and bundle the tree. Take it to a recycling center or leave it

for the refuse collector. Never burn a tree in a wood stove or fireplace.

Dalton also advised everyone to take these safety measures when entertaining guests:

- * When cooking, keep an eye on the range.

- * Keep pot handles and electrical appliance cords out of children's reach.

- * Put a lid on a pot or pan to extinguish a food or grease fire. In the event of an oven fire, turn off the heat and close the oven door.

- * Provide plenty of large, deep ashtrays and check them frequently. Completely douse cigarette butts with water before discarding them or flush them down the toilet.

- * After a party, check on, between and under upholstery and cushions as well as inside trashcans for cigarette butts that may be smoldering.

- * Keep matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children. Ask guests to do the same.

- * Let guests know the emergency or fire escape plan. Make a plan before it is needed. Have at least two exits from every room and include all occupants of the home in practicing the plan. Choose a meeting place outside the home where everyone can meet when they get out of the house.

"It's human nature to believe it will never happen to us. However, that kind of thinking can lead to unsafe behavior," Dalton said. "Believing it's a possibility is a direct link to thinking and acting safer. It helps you get safe."



Staying safe in the cold

- * Limit exposure to cold, especially if it is windy or humid.
- * Do not smoke or drink alcohol before going into the cold.
- * Wear cotton or wool under-layers. Make sure the top layer is waterproof. Keep head, hands, feet and face covered.
- * Keep moving in the cold.
- * Dry or change wet clothing immediately.
- * Drink warm, non-alcoholic beverages.
- * Move to a warm area when feeling very cold or numb.

To learn more safety tips, read the 934th Airlift Wing Safety Office's newsletter, "Safety.Net News."

Recruiting

The recruiting office earned the **Goal Excellence Award**.

Master Sgt. James A. Fritzen was named one of the top 50 recruiters in Air Force Reserve Command.

Master Sgt. Mark J. Jones and **Tech. Sgt. Mark G. Cooling** both received "110 percent plus" production recruiting badges. **Cooling** was also promoted to master sergeant at a recent recruiting conference. **Master Sgt. Bernadette Lunde** was awarded the Recruiting Personnel Support Award.

Wing historian

Senior Master Sgt. David P. Hammer, 934th Airlift Wing historian, retires this month. **Tech. Sgt. August "Russ" Funaro** will take his place. **Hammer** also received the Air Force Reserve Command History Program Career Contribution Award.

Logistics Readiness

Senior Master Sgt. Larry Schyma was named the American Legion Outstanding National Guard/Reserve Enlisted Person of the Year.

For individuals or squadrons to be included in this section of the Viking Flyer, speak with a Unit Public Affairs Representative. For guidelines and deadlines, call the 934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs office at (612) 713-1216 or 1217.

Finance

Capt. David Hanten received the Meritorious Performance Award from the American Society of Military Comptrollers.

Maintenance Operations

The 934th Maintenance Operations Flight received the **Air Force Reserve Command Maintenance Effectiveness Award** and will compete at the Air Force level.

Aircraft Maintenance

The 934th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron received the **22nd Air Force Maintenance Effectiveness Award**.

Civilian

Welcome to the wing's new civilian members: **Michael Oringderff**, 934th Financial Management; **Cristina Oxta**, 934th Public Affairs; **Sherman Patterson**, 934th Communications Squadron; and **John Rowe**, 934th Security Forces Squadron.



Courtesy photo

See you home soon

Family and friends wave farewell to 934th Airlift Wing members who deployed to Southwest Asia Nov. 1



Army versus Navy game: Dec. 6 at 2 p.m. - Enjoy half time food. Members get in free. Non-members pay \$3. Game starts at 3 p.m.

New Year's Eve party: Reservations required - Meal includes choice of lobster or sliced tenderloin, champagne, party favors and breakfast buffet

Karaoke contest: Dec. 6 - \$500 grand prize - Call (612) 713-1655

2-4-1 Night: Not available in December

Book holiday parties now: Dates are booking up fast - 10 percent discount on parties held Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings

Officers' Club caterer: E-mail oclubcaterer@starband.net

Enlisted Club caterer: E-mail elizabeth.hill@minneapolis.af.mil

Enlisted Club (612) 713-1655

Winter schedule starts January - Bar closed Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays, except UTA weekends

Club closed Dec. 24 and 25 for holidays

Club closed for holiday break - Dec. 20 to Jan. 1

Call Bingo: Every Friday night from 5 to 7 p.m.

Bonanza Bingo: Available during lounge hours.

Sunday: Closed

Monday: Closed

Lunch: Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Dining: Friday night only from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. - New bar menu on Friday nights - Open until 9 p.m. on UTA Friday. Dinner at Officers' Club Wednesday through Saturday. Officers' Club dining room closed Dec. 26 - Bar menu at 4 p.m.

Lounge: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4 to 9:30 p.m.; Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 4 p.m. to midnight

Tuesday to Friday: Daily specials for lunch plus bar menu

Fridays: Bar menu available from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Saturdays/Sunday: Navy "A" & "B" same weekend - Open for lunch from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Dec. 13 and 14

Enlisted Club members are invited to eat dinner at the Officers' Club Wednesdays through Saturdays. The Officers' Club Lounge menu is available from 1 to 8:30 p.m.

Club membership applications are available at all Services facilities.

Officers' Club (612) 713-3678

Winter schedule starts January - Bar opens at 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday - No lunch on Saturdays

Bartenders available for special functions: Call the caterer

Wine and beer available on the lunch line:

Club closed Dec. 24 and 25 and Jan. 1

Salad Bar: Available Friday and Saturday when dining room is open

Sundays: Closed

Lunch: Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dinner: Wednesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Lounge: Monday from 4 to 11 p.m.; Tuesday through Thursday from 12 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 12 a.m. to midnight.

Lounge menu available from 1 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Mondays: Dining room closed. Lounge open from 4 to 11 p.m.

Tuesdays: Dining room closed for dinner. Lounge menu available 11-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays: Dec. 3 - Calf liver with onion and bacon;

Dec. 10 - Weiner schnitzel; Dec. 17 - Chicken parmesan;

Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve Party (reservations required)

Thursdays: Chef Special Nights

Fridays: Dec. 5 - Tempura shrimp; Dec. 12 - Tournados of salmon;

Dec. 19 - One-pound peel-and-eat shrimp; Dec. 26 - Dining room closed - Bar menu available from 4 p.m.

Saturdays: Dec. 6 - Cordon bleu; Dec. 13 - Prime rib; Dec. 20 - Beef medallions with blue cheese herb stuffing; Dec. 27 - Dining room closed

Officers' Spouses' Club

Luncheon: Dec. 18 at 11:30 a.m. - Guest speaker, Marilyn Lamkin, will share her experience and memories of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The luncheon cost is \$12. To make reservations, call Roberta Groneman at (763) 494-3517 or Jan Olson at (952) 470-8879.

Tuesday Bridge: This event is held on the second and third Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. Call Germaine Reuter Dahl at (951) 881-0107.

Evening Bridge: This event is held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. Call Roberta Gronemann at (763) 494-3517 or Innez Gugisberg at (651) 481-1983.

Flower and Garden Club

Holiday party: Dec. 13 - Tickers cost \$40 per person and includes cocktails at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m., with entertainment from a swing band afterward. Call John Sturmer at 651-457-6386.

North Country Lodge (612) 713-1983 or 713-1984

Reservations: Call 1(888)AFLodge or (612) 726-9440 or go online at <http://www.afrc.af.mil/934aw/Lodgingweb/lodging.htm>.

Installation of furniture and equipment at the lodging facility is going well and rooms should be available by Nov. 17. Fifty six more guest rooms should be completed by the end of 2004.

Hours of operation: From 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekends.

The lodging facility will close at noon Dec. 24 and at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 25, 26 and 31 and Jan. 1.

Fitness Center (612) 713-1496

Bench press contest: Dec. 6 and 7 at noon - Register with Tech. Sgt. Stacy Campbell at 713-1496.

Air Force cycling: Earn water bottles, golf towels, caps, T-shirts, fanny packs, patches and much more. Register at the fitness center front desk.

Annual Pig-Out Fitness Challenge: Now through Jan. 9 - Visit the fitness center for more details and to register. The center offers new challenges to earn prizes this year as well as new team competition.

Toys for Tots: Drop off Toys for Tots donations at the fitness center before Dec. 12. A location-by-location pickup day will also be conducted. Watch the e-bulletin board for more details.

Discount Tickets

Camp Snoopy: Discount coupons available

Underwater Adventures: The cost is \$9 for adults and \$5 for children.

Chanhassen Dinner Theater: Call the fitness center for details.

Minnesota Zoo and IMAX Theater: 20 percent discount card available

Outdoor Recreation (612) 713-1496

Storage issues: Due to storage issues, Outdoor Recreation equipment rental has been temporarily suspended. Call 713-1496.

Claron Resort Hotel: The hotel, located in Anaheim, Calif., next to Disneyland and Knotts Berry Farm, offers military discount of \$59 plus tax per night. Call Karen Egan at (800) 231-6215, extension 3204. This offer is valid through Dec. 20.

Armed Forces Vacation Club: The club offers time share units for \$249.99 per week. Go online to www.afvclub.com.

Air Force Travel: Go online to www.aftravelonline.com.

Colorado R&R U.S. Air Force Academy travel service: Go online to www.coloradorandr.com.