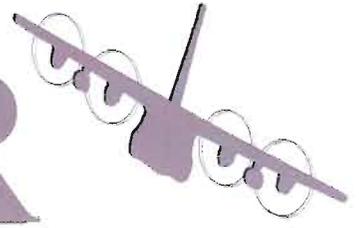




VIKING FLYER



934th Airlift Wing (AFRC)

Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP Air Reserve Station, Minn.

November 2004 Vol. 26, No. 11



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Herrick

Hero's welcome

Bronze Star recipient Master Sgt. Brian Iverson, 934th Logistics Readiness Squadron, accepts a flag from his niece, Katelyn, after returning home Sept. 30 from a six-month deployment in Iraq. Sergeant Iverson and other LRS reservists worked with American soldiers to protect convoys moving food, fuel, munitions and other vital supplies in Iraq. See article on page 5.

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The *Viking Flyer* is mailed to reservists' homes. Copies are also available at various locations on base. To receive an electronic copy of the *Viking Flyer*, send an e-mail to cristina.oxtra@minneapolis.af.mil.

All photos are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

The deadline for all submissions is the Sunday of the UTA.

Civil engineer

Senior Airman James Hocum scored 90 percent on his career development course test.

The squadron welcomed new member Airman 1st Class Matthew House to the fire department.

Members of the squadron's electrical and power production shops were presented certificates of completion for underground distribution training held at Dakota County Technical College.

Those who earned certificates were Senior Master Sgt. Larry Corrigan, Master Sgt. Mark Anderson, Master Sgt. Scott Leclair, Tech. Sgt. Chuck Hill, Tech Sgt. Mike Lein, Tech. Sgt. Chris Rumreich, Tech. Sgt. Jim Endres, Tech. Sgt. Brad Hegge, Tech. Sgt. Roger Latterell, Staff Sgt. Phil Podolsky, Senior Airman Jon Patterson, Senior Airman Don Saragosa and Airman 1st Class David Lein.

Members of the squadron's readiness shop were presented certificates of completion for Golden Medic training held at Fort McCoy, Wis. Certificates were awarded to Senior Master Sgt. Doug Johnson, Senior Master Sgt. Jerry Siehndel, Senior Airman Mason Barland, Senior Airman Carl Wiggins, Senior Airman Shaun Ramsett and Senior Airman Matthew Sutton.

Several squadron members received a Fit to Fight Certificate of Excellence for their initial fitness test results. The certificate recipients were Lt. Col. Stanley Thompson, Senior Master Sgt. Dave Nelson, Master Sgt. David Sowers, Tech. Sgt. Susan Sheveland, Tech. Sgt. Mike Story, Staff Sgt. Travis Hurley, Senior Airman Gabe Anderson and Airman 1st Class David Lein.

The squadron completed its annual bivouac requirement with a campout at Fort Snelling State Park during the October UTA. This year, the squadron was accompanied by members of the 934th Services Squadron, who provided hot meals in the field.

Several training objectives were accomplished. Senior Master Sgt. Jerry Siehndel was this year's camp builder and organized the details of the deployment.

Aerial port

Tech. Sgt. Bonny Jamison returned

from Noncommissioned Officers Academy where she was chosen from more than 180 students to make the Class Legacy Presentation. She and another student gave a presentation on the history of the Air Force Cross and those who received it.

Tech. Sgt. Lowell Olson, Tech. Sgt. Tim Thompson and Tech. Sgt. Mike Running helped a deployed unit member's family by painting their home.

The squadron participated in the functional area proficiency training during the October UTA. The training covered numerous areas, including aircraft configuration to unexploded ordnance recognition.

Aircraft maintenance

The squadron continues to support Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom as well as Joint Forge in Germany.

Tech. Sgt. Dave Bugni received the Air Force Commendation Medal.

Master Sgt. Michael Starr was nominated for the Marquez Award in the military supervisor category, while Dave Strand was nominated in the civilian technician category.

Tech. Sgt. John Sadlovsky graduated from NCO Academy.

The squadron welcomed new members Airman 1st Class Emily Miller, Paul Markus and David Hennick.

Communication

Tech. Sgt. Paul Gulenchyn received the Air Force Commendation medal.

Tech. Sgt. Jon Schmidt, Tech. Sgt. Christian Krug, Staff Sgt. Scott Inwards and Staff Sgt. John Herrick completed the 2004 Air Force Marathon Relay. See the article on page 15.

Staff Sgt. Anthony Blume attended the Fly-Away Kit satellite training at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Senior Airman Eric Harkness completed the Combat Communication Course at Robins AFB, Ga.

Senior Airman Inez Morales received a certificate of appreciation for her volunteer work at a Air Force Sergeants Association Dome Night fund-raising events.

Logistics

Capt. Brian McCullagh, formerly of the 27th Aerial Port Squadron, is the new supply officer for the 934th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Vice commander shares Veterans Day message

By Col. Stephen DeWerff
934th Airlift Wing vice commander



On Nov. 11, we celebrate Veterans Day.

It is a day that was chosen after World War I to celebrate the end of the Great War, "the war to end all wars," the last war we were

ever supposed to experience. The armistice ending World War I was signed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

Yet, here we are embroiled in another conflict, but with farther reaching borders and greater scope than ever imagined in 1918.

I know that in each and every one of you exists the spirit of veterans past, whether it be World War I, World War II, Korea or Vietnam. Each of us who serve in uniform today shares a sense of duty, honor and brotherhood with the men and women who served before us in all the branches of the military.

Unlike its portrayal in the movies, there has never been anything glamorous about war. War is full of cold damp days filled with hunger and fear and hot, blistering places where heat and thirst overpower one's body.

In wars past, soldiers, sailors, Marines and Airmen who came before us lived in trenches in the Marne Valley, fox holes in the Pacific Islands, the frozen tundra of Korea and the jungles of Vietnam. They slept in the dirt, ate poorly and shed their blood so others might not have to.

Today, anyone who has deployed to the Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom area of responsibility knows the desert is a harsh environment to live in.

And, just as in past wars, there is the ever present possibility of injury and death overshadowing everything and always on one's mind.

Despite this, the men and women of the 934th Airlift Wing and many other members of the United States military keep returning to that desert, or wherever they are sent, because they have a mission to accomplish and a sense of duty, pride and honor. We are honor

bound to not quit until our mission is complete.

So I thank you, the veterans of the 934th AW, you who have served in this war, our war, the war that is affecting all of us daily. Each of you has performed an historic role in the war on terrorism.

As Air Force Reserve members, we have played a larger part in this war than any war before. Whether you were a deployed aviator or maintainer, medevac or medical specialist, aerial porter or life support, or the mission support person who made sure it all came together in Minneapolis, you have all played an essential role in shaping the way America continues to fight this global menace.

I pray that once everyone has returned home safely and this war has been won, we can look back with pride not only on what we have accomplished but the way it was accomplished as well.

You have all served superbly, and I salute you. Congratulations, 934th AW veterans. You have earned your place in history and you have earned your day of recognition. Your sacrifice has not gone unnoticed.

Let us pray that this war will be our last, the Great War to end all wars.

Commander's Hotline

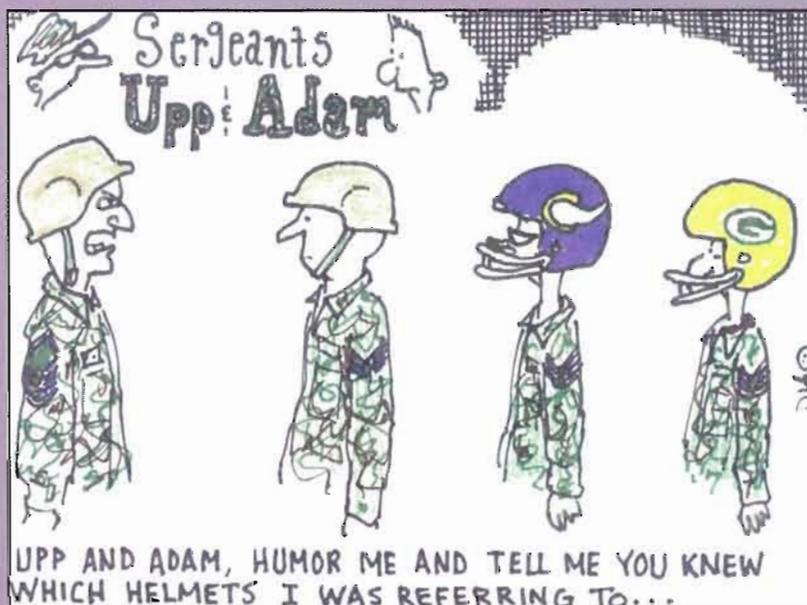
The Commander's Hotline is your direct link to the wing commander for kudos, questions, concerns or suggestions about matters related to the 934th Airlift Wing.

To use the hotline, call (612) 713-4685. Be sure to leave your name and phone number.

When it is appropriate, some concerns and questions will receive a personal response.

If you have a problem that needs to be resolved, use your chain of command or call the responsible agency first so it can have the opportunity to help you.

SERGEANTS UPP & ADAM



By Senior Master Sgt. Doug Johnson

Memo improves job protection for country's guardsmen, reservists

By Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Attorney General John Ashcroft and Labor Secretary Elaine Chao have signed a memorandum of understanding to ensure employment rights of people returning from military service are vigorously protected.

The memo streamlines and strengthens enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994.

Congress passed the act to safeguard the employment rights and benefits of servicemembers upon their return to civilian life.

"The brave men and women protected by (the act) voluntarily set aside the com-

forts of civilian life and stepped in harm's way," Mr. Ashcroft said. "We owe it to them to make sure that their employment rights and protections are fully and vigorously protected upon their return from military service."

"Our (servicemembers) have been there for us, so now it's our turn to step up our efforts for them," Ms. Chao said. "This agreement will strengthen enforcement of (the act) by ensuring faster resolution of (its) cases and quicker enforcement action by the government when it is necessary."

The memorandum deals exclusively with each department's role and responsibilities in the enforcement of the act. The attorney general

has delegated his responsibilities to the civil rights division of the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorneys' offices. The Department of Labor has delegated its responsibilities to the veterans' employment and training service and the office of the solicitor.

The memorandum will streamline the enforcement process, allowing the two agencies to work closely and effectively to ensure the protection of servicemembers' rights.

When a complaint raises an "issue of immediate and significant harm" and each agency agrees that the complaint appears legitimate, it may be referred for enforcement immediately, officials said.

This prevents two agen-

cies from working on the same issue, wasting time and resources.

Department of Labor officials also issued new regulations strengthening the act's protections. Besides the new regulations, Ms. Chao and the DOL's veterans' employment and training services have taken other steps to reduce the rate of violations, including:

- * Providing briefings to at least 158,000 servicemembers and others on the act.

- * Responding to almost 26,000 requests for technical assistance.

- * Distributing more than 240 televised public-service announcements.

- * Addressing most of the major human resource and employer organizations.



Photo by Maj. Kevin Olson

Award winning

Tech. Sgt. Glen Kramlinger of the 934th Security Forces Squadron (left) and Army Reserve Spec. Stacey Brown (middle) spent a day with Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty (right) Sept. 21. They also accompanied the governor and represented reservists at the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve banquet in Washington, D.C. During the event, ESGR honored Minnesota as a 2004 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award recipient. The award recognizes the contributions and sacrifices of America's employers of guardsmen and reservists. Besides being military members, Sergeant Kramlinger and Specialist Brown are state of Minnesota employees.

LRS war heroes return home

By Cristina Oxta
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Flags and banners waved, and family, friends, and well wishers cheered as four Airmen from the 934th Logistics Readiness Squadron arrived on base to a hero's welcome Sept. 30 after a deployment in Iraq.

One of the Airmen received the Purple Heart medal and another received the Bronze Star.

The unit members trained and teamed up with the U.S. Army, and for six months protected convoys moving food, fuel, munitions and other vital supplies in Iraq. It was a mission fraught with many dangers, including roadside bomb attacks.

"You just try to make it back to base alive," said Tech. Sgt. Michael Humenny, who received the Purple Heart.

The possibility of attack became a reality for Sergeant Humenny when he was injured after a roadside bomb blew up near his convoy. Despite this, he said that if he was given a chance to return to Iraq, he would.

Master Sgt. Brian Iverson, who received the Bronze Star for his meritorious service, was a platoon sergeant and convoy leader.

With the daily risks involved in his mission, he found confidence in his training and comfort in his family.

"You just keep watch on everything around you and I thought about home a lot," Sergeant Iverson said.

Master Sgt. Doug James said he also drew strength from thoughts of home.

"I thought of the people waiting for us back home and that they're looking forward to seeing us," said Sergeant James, who was married in December and deployed in February. He and his wife, Oksana, are happy to be reunited and are excited to plan a long-awaited honeymoon.

Staff Sgt. Marcus Erickson said he learned many lessons from his deployment, including one on leadership. When he became a noncommissioned officer in March, he said he was given more responsibility to include serving as the supply assistant and convoy assistant. At first, he was not sure he could take on the duties.

"Now I know that I am capable to



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Herrick

Master Sgt. Doug James, 934th Logistics Readiness Squadron, hugs his wife, Oksana. Sergeant James and three other LRS members, Master Sgt. Brian Iverson, Tech. Sgt. Michael Humenny and Staff Sgt. Marcus Erickson, arrived on base Sept. 30 after a six-month deployment in Iraq. Sergeant Humenny received the Purple Heart, while Sergeant Iverson received the Bronze Star. Another LRS member, Tech. Sgt. Colleen Kramp, who also received the Purple Heart, returned home Oct. 1.

lead," Sergeant Erickson said. "I wasn't that afraid to go out there. I thought more about what I needed to do to protect the convoy and the people on it. Surprisingly, I was very calm."

Another LRS member and Purple Heart recipient, Tech. Sgt. Colleen Kramp,

returned Oct. 1.

Col. Teresa Hams, 934th Mission Support Group commander, said she is thankful her unit members are home safely and added that she is proud of them.

"They've done a fantastic job," she said. "They are our heroes."

Air Force Reserve Command selects new command chief

By 1st Lt. Lance Patterson
Air Force Reserve Command
Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett will become Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant later this year, said AFRC officials Sept. 28.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, selected Chief Winsett from among 20 nominees for the position. Air Force reservists from all categories — traditional reservists, individual mobilization augmentees, air reserve technicians and Active Guard Reserve members — applied for the command's top enlisted position.

Chief Winsett has been the command chief for 10th Air Force at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, since May 2000. He will be the fourth command chief that AFRC has had since its inception as a major command in 1997 and the 12th person to hold the job in the Air Force Reserve since March 1973.

The position of AFRC command chief master sergeant is a three-year controlled tour at Robins AFB. The duties involve communicating with the commander on problems, concerns, morale and attitudes of the enlisted force and, in turn,



ensuring the commander's policies are known and understood by the enlisted force.

"My concern is for the enlisted force and the utilization of the force," Chief Winsett said. "I anticipate working hard for the next 36 months ensuring the needs of the enlisted corps are met."

Chief Winsett will succeed Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl D. Adams, who has served as the AFRC command chief master sergeant since February 2001. She was the first African-American woman to hold the title of command chief on active duty for a

major command. Chief Adams is being considered for a position within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. If selected, she will report for duty in the Pentagon as early as Dec. 1.

Chief Winsett entered the Air Force Reserve in 1981 after serving initially on active duty in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969 with tours in Berlin, Germany, and in the Republic of Vietnam.

His duties in the Air Force Reserve included assignments as an administrative specialist, military personnel flight specialist, group career advisor, first sergeant and command chief master sergeant.

He served as the senior enlisted advisor for the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., before becoming the command chief for 10th Air Force.

In his civilian career, Chief Winsett worked for the Federal Deposit Insurance Company and owned a consulting firm. He retired from both occupations, devoting the last three years to full-time service in the Air Force Reserve. Chief Winsett has lived in Lexana, Kan., since 1989 where he has been a traditional reservist.

He is married and the father of three children. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and business and a master of arts in business and counseling.



Congratulations to everyone selected for promotion!

Captain

Kristin Becker and Robert Jackson

Master sergeant

Robert Braesch II, Rick Ensenbach and Roy Goins

Technical sergeant

David Bugni, Timothy Giles, Paul Gulenchyn, Shirley Houin, Robert Knight, Dana Money and Thomas Murphy

Senior airman

Vickie Erdmann, Nolan Gartin, Lisa Janisch, Lucas Kelsey and Sean Sanford



Combined Federal Campaign starts

By Senior Airman Curtis Holden
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Members of the 934th Airlift Wing are getting into the spirit of the season of giving a little early by contributing to the 2004 Combined Federal Campaign.

Every One of Us is the theme of this year's campaign, which began at the wing Sept. 19 and ends Nov. 20.

It is a fitting theme because every contribution counts and each contributor can make a difference in the lives of those who are in need, according to Lt. Col. Selina Petaros, 934th Mission Support Group.

"I give to two charities and they provide food, water systems and wells, build hospitals, sponsor volunteer medical doctors and nurses, and provide spiritual en-



Combined Federal Campaign

couragement to recipients," she said. "I can make a donation once a year and it makes a difference all year."

CFC is the nation's largest fund-raising campaign. Since 1961, when CFC was established by then President John F. Kennedy, military members and other federal employees have given billions of dollars to the many organizations and charities CFC supports.

Last year, the wing contributed an estimated \$18,000 to CFC. The wing does not set a monetary goal each year, said Roger Hanson, wing CFC coordinator.

Instead, it ensures that it achieves 100 percent contact, meaning all wing members are informed about the campaign and given the opportunity to contribute to it.

Military members and civil service employees can contribute to CFC by making a one-time payroll deduction or providing a cash or check donation.

CFC donations are tax deductible and donors can choose which charitable organizations will receive their donations.

For more information about the campaign, call Hanson at (612) 713-1091 or go online to the CFC Web site at www.opm.gov/cfc.

Election, holiday peak to challenge mail delivery

By Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — The upcoming holiday peak mailing season and national elections may challenge Air Force postal workers, but recent improvements show delivery times are steadily dropping.

Air Force postal officials said Airmen deployed to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom are receiving mail in nine to 12 days, far below the 16-day standard set by U.S. Central Command officials. Sometimes it is faster.

"The amount of mail arriving in six to eight days is steadily increasing," said Chief Master Sgt. Jeffery Lane, superintendent of Air Force postal operations and policy. "This is mainly due to the hard work, dedication and superb efforts of our postal professionals. Mail service is tied directly to the morale of the troops. Faster delivery service keeps our Airmen connected to family members and friends back home."

The U.S. Postal Service is transporting the material in specially marked containers and processing it with Express Mail. Military postal clerks overseas are reporting any ballot material that is delayed because of a delivery or transportation problem. Postal supervisors are checking ballots daily to

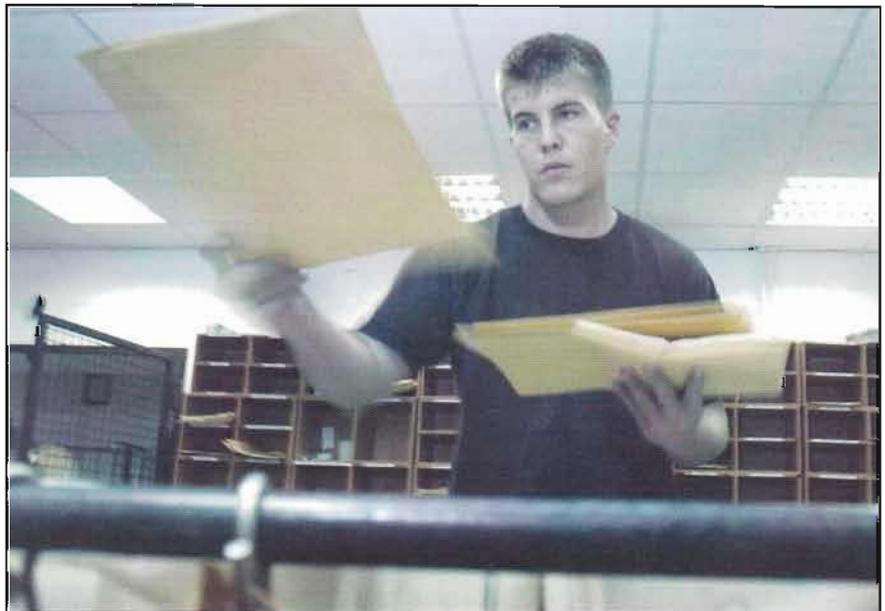


Photo by Master Sgt. John E. Lasky

Airman 1st Class Clayton Hobbs sorts the mail at the 86th Communication Squadron's official mail center in Ramstein, Germany, the largest official mail center outside of the continental United States.

ensure they are legibly postmarked, in the proper container and dispatched according to procedures.

Postal officials have also increased the number of charter flights to handle the enormous daily mail volumes to Southwest Asia, which averages to more than

180,000 pounds of mail per day.

Once the election is over, postal workers must still contend with the holiday mailing season. As in past years, additional people may be hired or volunteers solicited at each location based on the commander's discretion.

Serving those who have served the nation:

Wing members, local citizens volunteer to help area veterans

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

Since the war on terrorism began three years ago, Americans have given military members tremendous recognition and support.

Even the military motto of “taking care of our own” has reached new heights as military members work with non-military people to do what they can to help and support veterans of all ages.

There are many volunteer programs helping veterans in cities across the county, including in Minneapolis. Through these programs anyone can participate to give back to the veterans, both past and present.

Two of these volunteer opportunities are offered at the Armed Forces Service Center at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

In 1969, Scott Purdum, 21, a naval aviator from Minneapolis, told his mother, Marjery, about a servicemen’s center in Seattle, Wash. Inspired by her son’s story, Marjery helped establish a similar facility at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. The center opened on Nov. 22, 1970, after a year of planning and negotiation with airport officials and seven months after Scott died in a plane crash in Vietnam.

Since then, the airport’s Armed Forces Service Center has been operating around the clock, providing meals, shelter, Internet access and a place to relax for military members traveling through the airport. Each year, more than 20,000 military members use the center. It is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year, and is staffed entirely by volunteers.

Many of the center’s volunteers are veterans, but anyone can volunteer. A familiar sight at the center is Annie Olson, who has volunteered there for nearly two years. She restocks the food items, prepares meals, ensures the 30 beds are made and talks to the troops.

“Many people come through the center each year from all over the world,” Mrs. Olson said. “I feel like they are all my sons and daughters.

“I have always loved the military,” she said. “I wrote thousands of letters to troops in Vietnam, and I’m still writing to our troops in Iraq. I’ve been serving those who serve in any possible way I can for over 35 years.”

Since the funding comes from service organizations with space donated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission, she said the center does not have too many needs.

“The only thing we need are volunteers who love our servicemen and servicewomen,” she said.

Another volunteer opportunity is at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, located near Minnehaha Park. Members of the 934th Airlift Wing routinely volunteer at the home.

Recently, they escorted wheelchair-bound residents around the Minnesota State Fair. Last Christmas, wing members donated gifts to 66 residents at the home through the Adopt-A-Vet program.

“I talked about the Adopt-A-Vet program at a wing staff meeting this year and everyone said they wanted to participate again,” said Margo Leslie, 934th Services Squadron.

Like last holiday season, a list of veterans’ names along with requested items will be distributed throughout the wing this month. Wing members are encouraged to adopt a veteran, or maybe two, and purchase the gifts they asked for on their wish list.

Wing members also plan to lend a hand at the home’s bingo games throughout November. During the games, volunteers will help with various tasks, such as assisting residents with their cards, calling out numbers and handing out snacks.

“If we can get some people to do bingo, we hope to accomplish our goal of doing year-round events. Once a month, with over 12 squadrons will give us that goal,” Mrs. Leslie said.

The Minneapolis Veterans Home offers numerous other volunteer opportunities, ranging from escorting the residents to appointments within the building to feeding the residents during meal times.

“We could really use more help in the recreation area,” said Sharon Marshall, volunteer services coordinator for the home. “Eventually, we would like to get a Feeding Assistant Program established for people who have medical backgrounds, to help feed residents during meal times. We need people to help escort residents to bible studies on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. A big one is just to visit with the residents on a one-on-one basis.”

The contributions of wing members mean a great deal to the staff and veterans at the home, said Shirley Peterson, director of recreation therapy.

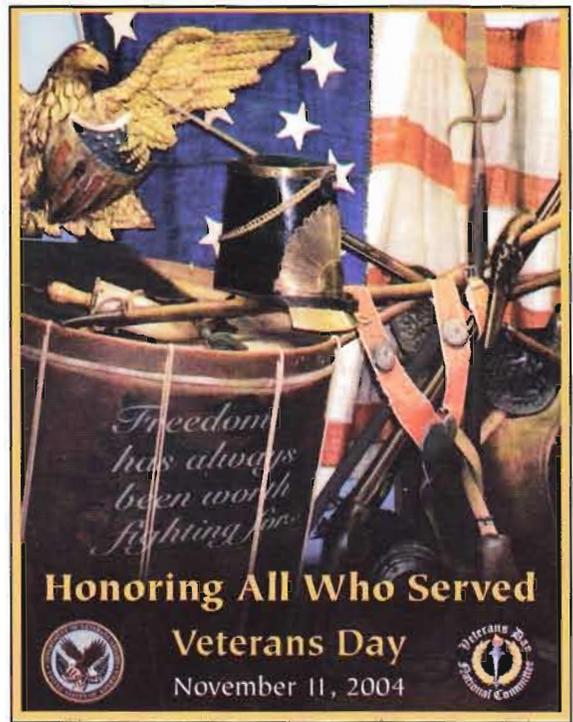
“They really appreciate the troops visiting and spending time with them,” she said. “It’s nice to have you guys around. The 934th Airlift Wing is so dependable. You do great work, so thank you from us. We really appreciate it.”

To volunteer at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, call (612) 728-7369.

For the Armed Forces Service Center, call (612) 726-9156.

To participate in Adopt-A-Vet, call (612) 713-1119.





Above: A poster honoring Veterans Day. Left top: Senior Master Sgt. Jim Gustafson (front) and Capt. Mike Vanhefty, both of the 934th Airlift Wing, escort residents of the Minneapolis Veterans Home at the State Fair.

Left bottom: Annie Olson, a volunteer at the Armed Forces Service Center at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, assists a military member. The center is open 24 hours a day and serves active-duty military members as well as guardsmen and reservists on active-duty orders.



Minneapolis Veterans Home needs:

- Wireless headsets for TV use
- Wall calendars with big numbers
- Pocket planning calendars
- Alarm clocks with big numbers
- Clock radios with big numbers
- Laundry hampers on wheels
- 21-inch color TVs and VCRs
- White tube socks, suspenders and belts
- Patriotic sweatshirts (size XL and XXL)
- Small suitcases on wheels
- Wrist watches and wallets
- Phone cards and books of stamps
- Electric razors (rotary head, plug in)
- Travel mugs
- Personal hygiene kits
- Large button remotes
- Large magnifying glasses for reading
- Newspaper subscriptions

General proud of Native-American heritage

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — When Brig. Gen. LaRita Aragon was growing up in Dale, Okla. — population about 300 — in the '50s, '60s and '70s, being a Native-American was not in vogue.

But Gen. Aragon was never discriminated against because her "Indianness" was not conspicuous.

"My great-grandparents chose not to be identified through four generations of marriages with Irish, Russian, German and British," Gen. Aragon said. She is the assistant adjutant general of the Oklahoma Air National Guard and ANG assistant to the assistant secretary of the Air Force for financial management. "I came out a green-eyed, dark-haired, skinny little girl. I'm no longer dark-haired and certainly not skinny.

"I was taught respect for elders, leaders and our land, but not for my Native (American) heritage," she said.

"When I entered the military 26 years ago, I made a conscious decision to declare my native heritage," said Gen. Aragon, the first female Native-American general in the military and the first female commander in the Oklahoma ANG. "I, along with my sister and three aunts, have researched our genealogy."

What they found was that they are of Cherokee and Choctaw descent. Her father, Rhoper Bly, is part Choctaw. Born in Pueblo, Colo., he retired after 38 years in the maintenance department at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Her Cherokee mother, Jimmie Bly, a native of Guinn, Ala., retired from Tinker as an aircraft inspector.

"My great-great-grandparents refused to give up their property to place themselves on the rolls as American Indians," Gen. Aragon said. "Therefore, I don't have a Bureau of Indian Affairs card, nor have I been able to acquire one."

The military's attitude toward Indians and women proved much different from societal attitudes and behaviors, Gen. Aragon said. She said being a woman has never kept her from being promoted in the military, and her



Graphic by Bob Goode

The above graphic was created in honor of Native-American Heritage Month, which is observed in the United States every November.

heritage was viewed as a plus.

"I believe that the military is one of the greatest leveling fields for equality that there is," she said.

At the age of 30, Gen. Aragon enlisted in the Oklahoma ANG and became a draftsman apprentice with the 219th Engineering Installation Squadron in Oklahoma City. At the time, she had a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in guidance and counseling, but she did not apply for a commission.

"In the Air National Guard, the vast majority of commissioned positions are attained by proving yourself in an enlisted position," Gen. Aragon said.

In setting the stage for her climb up the rungs of success, Gen. Aragon said she became a workaholic, taking every mission she could get from the engineering units. She also volunteered to serve on boards and for jobs no one else wanted to do.

"I built a reputation for getting the job done, and I had some great supporters in my squadron and in the wing," she said. "They gave me chances to train and be visible in mission assignments."

She also interviewed for every officer position that came open in her unit.

"After two guys failed at the commissioning academy, I got a shot at a slot," Gen. Aragon said. "I had applied

three times, but did not give up my hope of being an officer."

Gen. Aragon received her commission through the Academy of Military Science in Knoxville, Tenn., in October 1981. She returned to the 219th EIS as an administrative officer. In February 1989, she assumed command of the 137th Services Flight at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Okla. She taught kindergarten through seventh grade in her civilian life.

She said she enlisted in the Guard originally for financial reasons. She was a single mother and needed additional income. An elder in her church, who was a guardsman, suggested that she sign up.

"I fell in love with the people and the mission and found a whole new look at life," Gen. Aragon said. "I immediately gained about 1,000 big brothers, who looked after my children and my welfare. They were there through every upturn and down, and became an extended family I could lean on."

Gen. Aragon was recognized as the Oklahoma Woman Veteran of the Year in 1998 by the War Veterans Commission of Oklahoma. She said she was honored for her role in taking 100 military women to the opening ceremonies of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Arlington, Va. She also helped raise more than \$18,000 for the memorial in the name of the women who served in the armed forces from Oklahoma.

"We were the only state to take a military group to march in the opening ceremonies," she said.

The general never considered herself a "woman" soldier or Airman, but became a "poster child" young female soldiers and Airmen came to for advice and support. Retired and senior women veterans came to her when they needed help getting attention to issues, she said.

On her military success, Gen. Aragon said, "I was in the right place and the right time, and had great bosses who let me open some doors to diversity in the Oklahoma Military Department."

This article was published in Air Force Print News in 2003.

Talking turkey:

Food safety experts offer tips to prevent food borne illnesses

By Cristina Oxta
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

To many Americans, Thanksgiving means sharing a festive feast with family and friends. But all the fun, not to mention one's stomach, can sour fast if everyone becomes ill because the food was not prepared properly.

In 1997 in Pike County, Ohio, 13 people became sick at a Thanksgiving family get-together. Nine of them tested positive for the bacterium salmonella enteritidis. The microbe was found in turkey, gravy, stuffing, two pies and other foods served at the Thanksgiving dinner.

The finding suggested a food handler had transferred bacteria from one food to the next. In addition, the turkey had not been cooked to the proper temperature.

To prevent food borne illnesses, the Food Safety and Inspection Service and other food safety experts offered the following safe cooking tips.

Turkey roasting

* Set the oven temperature no lower than 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Preheating the oven is not necessary.

* Place the turkey on a rack in a roasting pan.

* Cook stuffing separately in a casserole. Use a food thermometer to ensure the internal temperature of the

stuffing has reached 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

* If stuffing a turkey, use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey and the stuffing.

* The temperature of a whole turkey must reach 180 degrees Fahrenheit in the innermost part of the thigh and the center of the stuffing must reach 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

* If the turkey has a pop-up temperature indicator, it is recommended that a food thermometer be used as well.

* When cooking only a turkey breast, the internal temperature should reach 170 degrees Fahrenheit.

* A frozen or partially thawed turkey will take longer to cook.

* The use of a foil tent for the entire cooking time can slow cooking. Putting a lid on the roasting pan speeds up cooking.

* Turkeys purchased stuffed and frozen with the USDA or state mark of inspection on the packaging are safe because they have been processed under controlled conditions. These turkeys should not be thawed before cooking. Follow the package directions for handling.

Basic food safety tips

* Wash hands in warm, soapy water thoroughly before preparing foods, after handling raw meat, poultry and seafood, and after switching tasks, such as

handling raw meat and then cutting vegetables. Dry hands with disposable paper towels, clean cloth towels or air dry.

* Keep kitchen surfaces, cutting boards and utensils clean with hot, soapy water. When juices from raw meats or germs from unclean objects touch cooked or ready-to-eat foods such as fruits or salads, cross-contamination occurs.

* Use one cutting board strictly to cut raw meat, poultry and seafood and another for ready-to-eat foods, like breads and vegetables. Do the same for plates.

* Wash all cutting

boards thoroughly in hot, soapy water after each use or put in dishwasher.

* Store raw meats, poultry and seafood on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so juices do not drip onto other foods.

For more food safety tips, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at (888) 674-6854 or (800) 256-7072, e-mail to mphotline@fsis.usda.gov or go online to www.fsis.usda.gov.

Turkey roasting times

This time chart is based on fresh or completely thawed turkeys at a refrigerator temperature of 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Use a thermometer to determine safe doneness.

Unstuffed turkey

4- to 6-pound breast	- 1 1/2 to 2 1/4 hours
6- to 8-pound breast	- 2 1/4 to 3 1/4 hours
8 to 12 pounds	- 2 3/4 to 3 hours
12 to 14 pounds	- 3 to 3 3/4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	- 3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	- 4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours
20 to 24 pounds	- 4 1/4 to 5 hours

Stuffed turkey

8 to 12 pounds	- 3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 pounds	- 3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	- 4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	- 4 1/4 to 4 3/4 hours
20 to 24 pounds	- 4 3/4 to 5 1/4 hours

Happy Thanksgiving!

Group supports airlift squadron, wing

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer A. Johnson
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

With high ops tempo, deployments, fund-raisers and events of all kinds, how can units deal with it all? The 96th Airlift Squadron and several other units at the 934th Airlift Wing get by with a little help from their friends at the 96th Associate Squadron.

The group was established in 1997 and is composed of 235 members who are retirees and active reservists from across the country.

"It was originally formed so people who had a direct impact on the flying mission could keep their ties and still impact today's Air Force," said retired Lt. Col. Richard Pavlasek, associate squadron president and former chief navigator for the airlift squadron. "We are the flying guys. That's our common bond. It's for anyone who has anything directly to do with the airplane getting from Point A to Point B."

The organization strengthens that common bond by supporting the airlift squadron in many ways. For instance, whenever airlift squadron members are deploying or returning from deployment, associate squadron members are present to show their support for the Airmen and their families.

When airlift squadron members return from deployment, the group teams up with the bases' Family Support Center to provide refreshments for those waiting for their loved ones.

"A number of crew guys would come up and thank us for being there for their families while they were on their way home or over in the desert," Colonel Pavlasek said.



Photo by Cristina Oxta

Maj. Jeffrey Higgins (left foreground), 934th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, and Lt. Col. Rob Ross (left background), 96th Airlift Squadron commander, thank 96th Associate Squadron members John Schleck (right foreground) and retired Lt. Col. Richard Pavlasek for free riverboat cruise tickets they donated to their units recently.

The associate squadron's helping hand does not only extend to the airlift squadron, but to other units, various base groups and the community as well.

For example, during Dome Nights, the group helps raise funds for a wing service organization called Friends of the Flying Vikings by assisting members in selling refreshments at concession stands at sports games at the Metrodome.

Recently, the associate squadron provided several free tickets to Airmen at the airlift and aircraft maintenance squadrons for the wing's riverboat cruise. The group also helped serve food at the wing's Family Day celebration and donated \$100 to pay for meals for a group of Minnesota Veterans Home

residents who attended the event.

"The associate squadron does a fantastic job for our wing and our community, and we appreciate all that they do," said Col. James Muscatell, 934th AW commander. "That's what our wing is all about — helping each other."

Colonel Pavlasek said being a part of the associate squadron allows him to give back to others and thank airlift squadron members for everything they have done for him.

"You can't spend 26 years flying with people all over the world without feeling like it's your life," he said.

Cristina Oxta, 934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs, contributed to this article.



This month in Viking history

Courtesy of Master Sgt. Russ Funaro, 934th Airlift Wing historian

1974

New pay raises took effect. A staff sergeant with more than four years of military service earned \$68.40 for a drill weekend. A captain with eight years of military service earned \$160.40

Team gives advice on coping with stressful events

By Airman 1st Class Katie Booher
5th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. — Life-altering events have different effects on people, and a team of stress management specialists at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., helps people deal with these events.

The critical-incident stress management team is composed of specialists trained to help prevent or mitigate stress when a sudden death, tragedy, serious injury or threatening situation happens.

People who witness or experience a traumatic event may experience thoughts and changes in their life they have a hard time understanding, and the team offers them the tools they need to adapt and overcome.

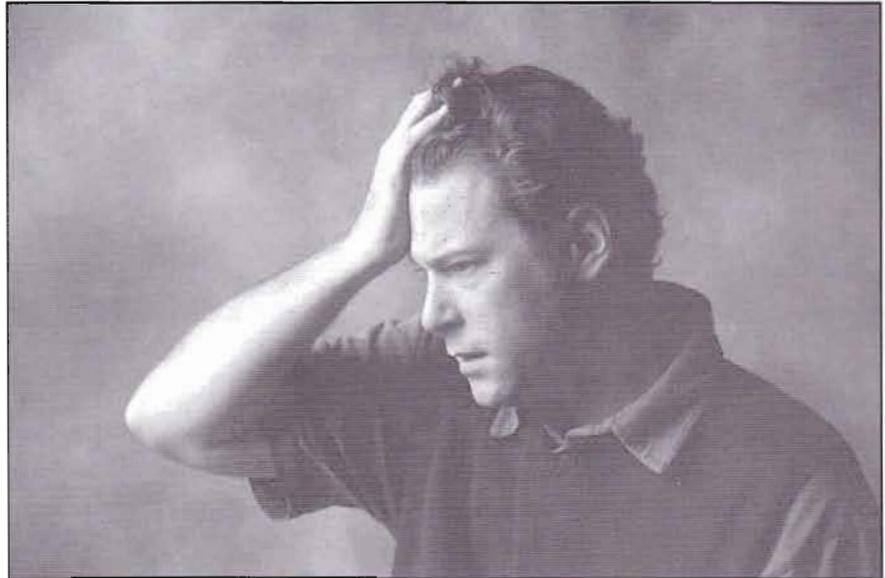
The best thing to do after a stressful incident is for people to take care of themselves, said Capt. Katharine Schaible, 5th Medical Operations Squadron family advocacy officer.

"After a very stressful event, it is important to get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise and talk to someone about what you are going through," she said. "If you find it difficult to talk with someone, write it down in a diary or journal. It is best to express what you are feeling in some fashion instead of repressing it.

"Avoid caffeine, tobacco and alcohol as much as possible," the captain said. "Caffeine and tobacco are stimulants and can interfere with your ability to relax, especially during events that are anxiety provoking. Alcohol, a depressant, can influence your judgment. People under the influence of alcohol sometimes do things they might not do when sober — things they may regret later."

Chaplains are also key members of the team since people experiencing extraordinary stress sometimes need to address their spiritual needs as well, said Chaplain (Maj.) Rex Williams, 5th Bomb Wing chaplain.

"The CISM team is led by a mental health-care provider. Peer support personnel also facilitate the debrief of the people under stress," he said. "The role



Courtesy photo

After experiencing a stressful event, a person should get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise and talk to someone about what he or she is going through, according to Capt. Katharine Schaible, 5th Medical Operations Squadron family advocacy officer.

of the chaplain is to flesh out the spiritual dimension of their reactions to stress and make sure the spiritual dimension is addressed."

Captain Schaible outlined steps people under serious stress can take.

"People should spend time with others and do things that feel good to them," the captain said. "They should keep their routine busy, but as normal as possible. Now isn't the time to make any big life-style changes."

After something bad happens, people sometimes believe they have lost control of their lives, Captain Schaible said. While people's ability to influence events going on around them is limited, they can always choose how they respond to life's challenges.

The key to relieving stress is to choose coping methods that have a long-term benefit. Besides sleep, diet, exercise and limiting substance use, people can also relieve stress by giving themselves permission to feel bad for awhile. They can share feelings with someone they trust and look for ways to make their lives more predictable or pleasant.

Captain Schaible recommended friends and family members be good

listeners when dealing with someone experiencing stress.

"Let them know you are there if they need you," she said. "Giving the person some private time, and helping with daily chores like cleaning, cooking and caring for the family can also ease a person's mind."

Who to call

In times of need, help is just a phone call away at the 934th Airlift Wing. Military members, regardless of their branch of service, and their families can call any of the following numbers to get assistance they may need.

Family Support Center
(612) 713-1516

934th AW chaplain
(612) 713-1226 or 1227

133rd AW, Air National Guard
(612) 713-2519 or 2520

**Army Reserve,
88th Regional Support Command**
(612) 713-3000



Viking Vibes



Operation Christmas Child

Each year, Operation Christmas Child collects shoe box gifts for children who are suffering because of war, natural disaster, poverty, illness or neglect.

The 934th Airlift Wing chapel is collecting gifts for this program from now until Nov. 15. Wing members are asked to find an empty shoe box, wrap it and fill it with toys, school supplies, hygiene items or other treats to be given to children in need.

Used items, war-related items such as guns and knives, chocolate or perishable food, liquids, medicine and breakable items will not be accepted.

For more information, call (612) 713-1226.

Bingo

Volunteers are needed to help with bingo at the Minneapolis Veterans Home. Volunteers will perform tasks, such as calling out numbers, assisting residents with their bingo cards and handing out snacks.

Bingo games will be held Nov. 6, 13 and 20 at 2 p.m. and Nov. 15, 22 and 29 at 7 p.m.

To volunteer, call Chief Master Sgt. Foss at (612) 713-1718.

Pass, ID

During UTA weekends, the Pass and ID office will only be open on Saturdays. The office's phone number is (612) 713-1100.

Health care

The Federal Employees Health Benefits open season is Nov. 8 to Dec. 13.

Health care representatives will be on base Nov. 16 from 1 to 3 p.m. in Building 760, room 130, to answer questions about health care plans.

Recreation

The daily recreation program is an important part of the lives of residents at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

Between 15 and 20 activities are offered each day for the residents to enjoy. The cost is 50 cents per resident, per day, or \$15 per month.

Individuals or squadrons interested in providing funds for the program can sponsor a veteran for one to 12 months. Call (612) 713-1119.

Officers' spouses

The Officers' Spouses' Club will host a wine tasting luncheon at the Officers' Club at 11:30 a.m. Nov. 18. The cost is \$12. Call Kay Mikwold at (651) 330-5991 or Jan Olson at (952) 831-2438.

For Tuesday bridge, call Germaine Reuter Dahl at (952) 881-0107.

For Wednesday bridge, call Roberta Gronemann at (763) 494-3517 or Diane Lerohl at (952) 935-4437.

For membership information, call Lee Claar at (952) 831-5252 for more details.

Diversity

The Human Resource Development Council needs volunteers. The HRDC makes recommendations to the Chief of Air Force Reserve on matters related to workforce development, diversity and career progression of reserve personnel. Call Col. Kristin Rudin at (612) 713-1298.

Tickets

Discount tickets for local attractions, including the Chanhassen Dinner Theater, Minnesota Zoo, IMAX The-

ater, Underwater Adventures and Camp Snoopy are available at the base fitness center. Call (612) 713-1496.

Lodging

Effective Nov. 25, North County Lodge will be open on all federal holidays from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Housekeeping services will be provided.

For more information, call (612) 713-1983 or 1984.

Holiday messages

The Army and Air Force Hometown News Service will open its Internet print holiday greeting program to military members of all branches worldwide. The program is open for submissions now through Dec. 5.

The program is Internet-based and military members can send a formatted holiday greeting to newspapers serving his or her relatives' community.

The program is free to the military member and community newspaper. The program is available at HometownLink at <http://hn.afnews.af.mil>. Access is restricted to dot-mil and dot-gov computers.

Fall 2004 to Fall 2005 UTA schedule

Primary UTA

Nov. 6 and 7

Dec. 4 and 5

Jan. 8 and 9, 2005

Feb. 5 and 6

March 5 and 6

April 2 and 3

April 30 and May 1

June 4 and 5

July 23 and 24

Aug. 13 and 14

Sept. 10 and 11

Alternate UTA

Nov. 13 and 14

Dec. 11 and 12

Jan. 22 and 23, 2005

Feb. 19 and 20

March 19 and 20

April 16 and 17

May 21 and 22

June 18 and 19

July 30 and 31

Aug. 20 and 21

Sept. 24 and 25

Wing members compete in marathon



Photo by Senior Airman Josh Nason

John Herrick of the 934th Communication Flight runs past a cheering crowd at the Air Force Marathon at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, Sept. 18.

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

For the second year in a row, the 934th Airlift Wing *Combat Jacks* laced up their running shoes and competed in the Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force

Base, Ohio, Sept. 18.

Participating in the 26.2-mile race as a relay team has become a tradition for John Herrick, Scott Inward, Christian Krug and Jon Schmidt, all members of the 934th Communication Flight.

After finishing fourth in the military relay division last year, the team wanted to improve on its time and finish in

the top three this year.

But after going head-to-head with some tough competition, the team could only finish in 12th place.

However, the team was not too disappointed. After all, it did finish the race in 3 hours, 15 minutes, a 12-minute improvement from last year. The *Combat Jacks* finished in the top 15 percent of the 228 relay teams.

"That alone shows the caliber of the people out there this year," said Krug, who attributed part of the team's success to the new Air Force fitness test.

Herrick agreed and said training for the new fitness test helped him stay fit and ready to race.

The race is open to the public, which makes it more competitive and highlights the Air Force to the everyone, Herrick said.

The race route wanders through Wright-Patterson AFB. Herrick, who ran the last leg of the race, said the route brought him through "the best museum in the Air Force," the National Museum of the United States Air Force

Herrick described his experience as surreal when he ran past the aircraft at the museum and heard the cheers from the crowd.

More than 3,800 individuals competed in the marathon.

"When it's all over, you and several thousands of other people all accomplished the same thing," Herrick said.

The *Combat Jacks* were not the only wing members at the race. Michael Murzyn of the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron placed 10th overall and first in the men's 50 to 59 age division with a time of 2:54.

This is not the first time

“ The benefits of physical activity are great, and it just makes you feel powerful. ”

- Michael Murzyn
934th Aeromedical
Staging Squadron

he has captured one of the top spots in the marathon. Murzyn took first place in the same division in 2002.

Murzyn has competed in numerous marathons and said running a marathon is "something very difficult, giving you a great sense of accomplishment."

He added that the Air Force Marathon provides a unique environment since it is "competitive, yet supportive." Murzyn said everybody cares about each other and cheers, and in turn, he cheers for them.

Murzyn could not compete last year because of an injury, but as soon as he was able to, he continued training, running nearly 60 miles per week.

He returned with a vengeance and improved his time by 3 minutes, averaging 6 minutes, 39 seconds per mile.

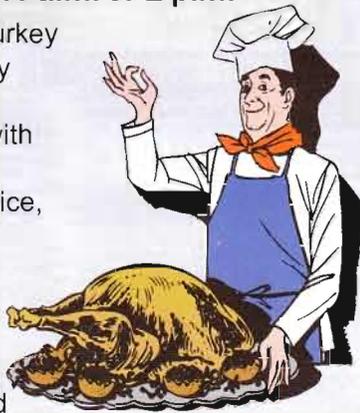
According to Murzyn, any form of physical activity, including running, provides many health benefits.

"The benefits of physical activity are great, and it just makes you feel powerful," he said.

Murzyn said this year's race "turned out to be one of the best marathons." And, like the *Combat Jacks*, he plans to compete again next year and perform even better.

**Thanksgiving buffet
 Nov. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

The menu includes turkey with gravy, stuffing, honey and maple syrup, glazed ham, roast beef carved with au jus, garlic mashed potatoes, garden blend rice, sweet potatoes, green beans with almonds and rolls with butter. Dessert includes pumpkin pie, apple pie, sweet potato pie, pecan pie, tortes and more.



For reservations, call (612) 713-3678. Meals cost \$18.95 for adults and \$9.95 for children under 12. Member discount are \$2 for adults and \$1 for children.

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**Officer & Enlisted Retiree Appreciation Day
 Nov. 9 at 3 p.m. at the Officers' Club**

Sponsored by the Consolidated Club System
 Join the fun at the Officers' Club Bar.
 Enjoy free hors d'ouvres and stay for dinner.

.....

Club catering

Call catering at the Officers' Club or Enlisted Club to set up your holiday parties.

Call Wendie Oringderff at (612) 713-1674 or e-mail wendie.oringderff@minneapolis.af.mil for catering at the Enlisted Club. For the Officers' Club, call Marge Hyatt at (612) 713-3672 or e-mail oclubcatere@starband.net.



**Air Force cycling
 continues all year.**

Earn water bottles, golf towels, caps, T-shirts, fanny packs, patches and much more!
 Register at the front desk at the fitness center.
 For more details about the program, call (612) 713-1496.

Officers' Club hours of operation

Dining Room

Lunch

Tuesday through Friday - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dinner

Wednesday through Saturday - 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Lounge menu available only on Tuesday.

Lounge

Monday through Thursday - 4 to 11 p.m.

Friday and Saturday - 4 p.m. to midnight

The club is closed on Sunday.

The lounge will open at lunch upon request.
 Minimum required.

For additional information, call (612) 713-3678.

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