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VIKING FLYER

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

VIKING FLYER

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934th MSF (934th UPAR of the Year 1993) *

* Indicates this month's contributors.

On the cover



TSgt. Curtis Henke, 27th APS, helps Army Reserve troops load their personal equipment during a recent exercise. For a special focus on aerial port, see pages 5-12.

(Photo by Mark Davidson)



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Commentary

Time-out for thanks

by Col. Michael Gjede
group commander

By the time most of you read this, we should be in the throes of final preparation for a visit from our Inspector General friends at Headquarters Air Force Reserve. I know that once all is said and done, the 934th will continue to shine.

As stressful as the last few months have been, I would like to ask that each of you take a few moments to pat yourselves on the back. The 934th has been in high gear for what seems like a long time with our participation in Operation Provide Promise, a perpetual state of change, Quality Air Force Assessment preparation and a high level of Reserve participation.

This pace probably won't slow down any time soon, with our upcoming participation in Coronet Oak in Panama, and possibly deployment to Turkey for Operation Provide Comfort, the Kurdish relief airlift. Your successes have been many, and your participation has been outstanding.

Locally, it's not hard to notice the construction going on all over the base. It

may not seem like it now, but repaving the roads and parking lots, along with the renovation of Bldg. 852, certainly will enhance the appearance of the place where many of us spend a significant amount of time. And let's not forget our new Base Exchange -- construction should start later this year.

Another significant change for us has been our smooth transition from 4th to 10th Air Force. I've received a letter from Maj. Gen. David Smith, 10th AF commander, welcoming the women and men of the 934th, assuring us he and his staff will make every effort to support our needs. I feel very positive about our new NAF, and I hope to "show off" the 934th when General Smith visits in the near future.

You, as a member of the 934th, have a lot to be proud of. I see it -- and I know that the 70 visitors coming in a couple of weeks will see it, too! □



Gjede

Maintenance readiness

Slipping rates call for renewed vigilance

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

There are indicators throughout the Air Force, including the Air Force Reserve, that maintenance readiness may be slipping. We see this in reduced aircraft mission capable and increased cannibalization rates.

The flying safety and maintenance record of the Air Force Reserve has been excellent, but with reduced funding, we need to guard against complacency.

We have made a number of organizational and procedural changes in the past two years that affect flightline maintenance, but our strategy consciously

addressed the goal of no compromise in safety.

Although resources and manpower continue to decline, ops tempo has not. Flightlines and maintenance buildings are not places for shortcuts. Be careful, be thorough, and above all, be safe. □



UTA schedule

✂ Aug. 13-14 (Quality Air Force Assessment)

Sept. 10-11 (Employers' Day, Family Day)

Oct. 1-2

Nov. 5-6

Dec. 3-4

Briefs in blue . . .

Eye surgery could mean trouble

Active-duty and Reserve blue-suiters who opt for eye surgery so they can toss unwanted glasses or contact lenses may be chucking their careers at the same time.

According to Air Force medical officials, members who undergo radial keratotomy or photorefractive keratoplasty cannot be on flying status, inducted, commissioned or enlist. People found to have had a PRK are disqualified for continued military service.

Reservists who had an RK procedure before March 1994 will be placed on a P-3 profile where they can participate in UTAs only. Those who had an RK after that time will be placed on a P-4 profile, prohibited from participation for pay or points, until they have had a complete ophthalmological exam and have Reserve officials determine fitness for continued service.

For additional information, contact the 934th Medical Squadron, Ext. 5587. (AFRESNS)

Reserve seeks to boost employer support

Concerned that the magnitude of current Air Force Reserve operations could impact readiness, Reserve leaders support current congressional efforts to help reservists and their employers.

Of interest in the bill, H.R. 71, is a tax credit for employers of Guard and Reserve members, and mobilization insurance to protect reservists against income loss incurred by extended military duty. (AFRESNS)

GAO urges tougher fitness standards

Physical fitness training standards for some reservists and the record keeping of all results may get tougher if Congress adopts General Accounting Office recommendations.

In a study on medical and physical fitness standards of the reserve forces, the GAO sought to determine if the Department of Defense had corrected a readiness problem from the Gulf War, when some troops had been identified as being unfit for deployment. It recommended adopting

mission-specific physical fitness testing programs and improved controls over physical fitness testing and reporting. (AFRESNS)

Bosnia support scales back

U.S.-based C-130s are now back home from support of Operation Provide Promise as airlift support there switches to C-141s and C-130s from Rhein-Main AB, Germany. A cease-fire settlement now permits C-141s to land at the Sarajevo airport, and they carry more than twice as much cargo as the C-130. Also, the need for relief goods during the summer is less than during winter months.

Previously planned early summer deployments of 934th people in support of the 302nd Airlift Wing, Peterson AFB, Colo., were cancelled. (AFRESNS)

Errors found in SGLI deductions

Service members should check their leave and earnings statements to ensure the right premium is being deducted for Servicemen's Group Life Insurance, according to officials at Randolph AFB, Texas.

Some errors have been discovered where too little money was being deducted, and the money will have to be paid back by the member. Cost is 9 cents per \$1,000 of coverage, or \$18 for full coverage.

To change amount of coverage, forms must be completed at the 934th Military Personnel Flight's customer service desk. (AFNS)

Brief briefs ...

Air Force reservist CMSgt. John Stacey, a C-141 loadmaster from March AFB, Calif., became one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 1994 ... **A shorter Squadron Officer School**, four weeks instead of seven, is being tested this summer, enabling more Reserve officers to attend ... **Two Air National Guard officers** at Kelly AFB, Texas, have been discharged following investigation into a sexual harassment complaint. The fighter squadron commander and operations officer lost their careers, and three pilots are to be reprimanded ... **An explosion in the AC-130H Spectre** gunship's cannon caused the aircraft to crash-land off the coast of Kenya March 14, according to the accident investigation release last month. (Compiled from AFNS and AFRESNS) □



In memoriam

Steven Wayne Norby

Feb. 26, 1950 - June 10, 1994

Steve started working for the 934th on June 18, 1978, in supply. On Feb. 2, 1986, he came to work in transportation, working as a driver until 1989, when he was the only employee separated due to a Reduction-in-Force. He was recalled to supply on Sept. 30, 1989, as a materiel handler for the War Readiness Kit and weapon storage until his tragic death.

Steve had been the treasurer for the American Federation of Government Employees Local 1997 and was an

outstanding member for many years, donating much of his time. His fellow workers and friends in both supply and transportation will feel the loss, as will many others.

The AFGE Local 1997 is going to donate and plant a tree on base as a memorial for Steve. We hope to plant the tree where it can be enjoyed by everyone on the base for many years to come.

— Steve Wickham, president, AFGE Local 1997 □

by Cherie Huntington
public affairs

Family first

New family readiness director eagerly starts first 'official' support program

A diabetic mother goes into insulin shock. She's near death, but her husband's away on business, and her two children are mere babies.

With no relatives or friends checking by, she dies, leaving her helpless children to the same sad fate. There is simply no one there to know, no one there to help.

What makes this heart-rending, true story hit home, however, is that the mother was a military wife, and the business her husband was tending to was Operation Desert Storm.

"That's a worst-case scenario to show how important it is to keep in contact with families," said Patricia Botkins, the 934th Military Personnel Flight's first director of family readiness.

Family readiness will be headed by Botkins on a full-time basis, with two traditional reservists assigned, SSgt. Daniel Bergin and SSgt. Paige Pieterston.

"The active-duty force started family support centers in the early '80s," Botkins said, adding that one of the Reserve's earliest centers started a year ago at Willow



Botkins

Grove ARS, Pa. In fact, Botkins recently returned from a week-long orientation there.

"I'm so excited about getting started here!" she said. "This program is all about readiness -- making sure everything's in place before a contingency happens."

Her four top priorities for now are:

▣ A survey assessing what the Reserve community's needs are,

▣ A newsletter to publicize available programs and services,

▣ Developing proactive, informative programs to offer throughout the year, and

▣ Visiting all the units, letting everyone know the new office is open for business -- "or a friendly visit among friends and family."

Botkins is eager to become a source of help and information for reservists, civilian employees and their families. As the wife of an Air Force retiree who served in F-111s over Iraq during the Gulf War, she knows what it feels like to have a loved one deployed.

"I know how important it is to have a contact, just to be able to talk about all those fears," she said, stressing she wants singles and single parents to feel equally welcome.

She has served in family support for 10 years, first with the Army at Kaiserslautern, Germany, then with the Air Force at RAF Upper Heyford, England.

Botkins and her husband, Randy, have two children: Bridgette, a recent graduate of Maryland University, College Park, Md.; and Ryan, a sophomore at Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. They plan to settle in either Eagan or Burnsville, Minn.

Botkins' office is located in Room 254, Bldg. 760. At present, the phone number is Ext. 8057, but a 24-hour 1-800 number should be established in the near future. □

Viking Victors: Dave Lilja

New position: Director of services, 934th Support Group. (Also rose to this position during previous years here, 1976-1989, prior to accepting an overseas assignment.)

Job responsibilities: Oversee the management of the Officers and NCO Clubs, lodging and recreational activities.

Hobbies: Golf, tennis, yard work.

Professional organizations: International Military/Community Executive Association.

Goals: "To improve customer service and quality of product offered by the services division."

Family: Wife, Carole, of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; just moved to Rosemount, Minn.

Comments: "I just returned from four years at RAF Lakenheath, England, where I served as chief of Morale, Welfare and Recreation, and deputy to the 48th Services Squadron commander." □



Aerial port focus, Pages 5-12:

'We live and die by mobility'

by MSgt. Darrell Habisch
public affairs

Two cargo parachutes were stretched on the concrete floor looking like long strings of spaghetti. A group of 27th Aerial Port Squadron members moved up and down the lines, removing burrs -- a necessary but tedious task.

"What we do in 'real life' isn't what we do here," said MSgt. Philip Smith, squadron first sergeant. "Most people see us packing parachutes and loading airdrops. We load pallets here because that's all that we can do here."

What they do in "real life" is deploy to a bare base, set up an aerial port and conduct business. "We either stay and load aircraft, including army paratroopers and tactical drops, or roll up and move on," said Smith.

Exercise, then exercise some more

Since most of their real work is performed elsewhere, exercises are a constant reality for members of the 27th APS. According to CMSgt. Jim Rethwill, chief of operations, exercises and 'fly-aways' are a constant reality for members.

"Our last shot with 4th Air Force was Patriot Express," he explained, as Reserve C-130 units moved to 10th Air Force this month. "Pikes Peak '94 is coming up at Peterson AFB and Fort Carson, Colo. We also have a chance to replace an active-duty strategic aerial port squadron during Patriot Partner at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, in April 1995.

"Our people have a heck of a good time at these exercises," he continued. "Occasionally they feel burned out after an exercise, but those are the same people who are the first to volunteer for the next fly-away. It's hard work, but it's really the only way to train our members, especially the new people, in what we do."

Making rank

With 126 enlisted members and four officers assigned, Smith explained that the squadron is always experiencing vacancies. "We lose about 18-20 people per year either through retirement or people moving to other units," Smith said. "The people who stay with us learn to love this job and work well under pressure. Competition between members does tend to flare up sometimes and occasionally there is a loud exchange of ideas."

Eighty-five percent of aerial porters are staff sergeant and below, according to Rethwill. "It's tough to make E-6," he said. To help make the selection process a little more equitable to the many people eligible for promotion, an internal grading process designed by the first sergeant and the members is used.

"This enables the reservists to have a say in the promotion selection process and assures both management and those eligible for promotion agree that the best candidate was chosen," he explained.

Another ray of hope for those wanting to advance in rank is a maturing force, according to Smith. "More members are coming up on 20 years in the service, and others are hitting the maximum retirement age," he said. "This opens even more vacancies."

Valuable training

Training becomes a major factor in managing squadron vacancies and how to fill them. "With the year of training," said Rethwill, "it doesn't matter if people come in off the street or cross-train; they still have to attend a six-week technical school in San Antonio, Texas. Even though this takes the member out of the loop for a few weeks, it does get them up to speed on what we really do much faster than we could train them here."

So next time you see the 27th APS members cleaning burrs from parachute lines or loading airdrop platforms onto C-130s, remember they're doing just some of the few things they can while on base. "We live and die by mobility," stated Smith. "We're the ones who make every deployment happen. We get there first and sometimes we're the last to leave." □



(Photo by Mark Davidson)

SSgt. John Anderson helps tie down a load in the C-130.

From muddy fields to desks

Though they're sometimes called 'box kickers,' their work requires a variety of special skills and offers lots of challenges. (So do their civilian jobs -- see Page 10.)

by SSgt. David Mattson
27th APS UPAR

Variety. From people ankle-deep in mud, recovering parachutes and loads on the drop zone, to people handling loads of paperwork in administration and training, the 27th Aerial Port Squadron holds a variety of people.

Simply put, the unit consists of several sections of specialized people who prepare cargo to go from one location to another. These sections are Air Terminal Operations Center, aerial delivery, ramp services, cargo processing, special handling and vehicle maintenance. Here's a rundown:

Air Terminal Operations Center, better known as ATOC, serves as a single point of contact for all the work centers. This section consists of load planners and information controllers. Providing aerial port work centers

with information to manage available resources to receive, document and move passengers, cargo and mail is the responsibility of ATOC. (See story, Page 12.)

Aerial delivery section members are riggers, responsible for caring for and preparing cargo parachutes. Riggers carefully retrieve each "chute" from the drop zone, then inspect and prepare it for the next airdrop. (See stories, Pages 10-11).

Ramp services is one of the most visible of the APS teams. This section is responsible for moving cargo from the terminal to all types of aircraft, according to MSgt. Gerald Torseth. "The ramp crews also perform their flightline duties while watching for hazards on the flightline, such as debris," he said.

Cargo processing handles the storage, palletization and marshaling of cargo. "We process military freight, rolling stock and household goods for military members world-

wide," said SSgt. Oris Wegner, air cargo specialist. Depending on the size of the cargo and aircraft configuration, Wegner said it usually takes between 10 minutes and a half hour to prepare a pallet for shipment.

Special handling resembles cargo processing in many ways, but it differs in that it inspects and handles more out-of-the-ordinary items. This special cargo includes hazardous shipments, which could be explosives, corrosives or solvents; firearms; registered mail; refrigerated cargo; blood shipments and even human remains. Special handlers require a five-level skill quotient, in-depth technical school training and recertification every two years.

Vehicle maintenance ensures the various types of Materiel Handling Equipment are always operational and mission-ready. "Vehicle maintenance also assists in preparing vehicles for air shipment," explained MSgt. Tony Polisen, section chief. "Each vehicle has its own set of challenges for preparing it for a safe ride on the aircraft. It's our job to overcome those challenges." □

Special equipment

by SSgt. Larry Dean
public affairs

Forty-thousand pounds of cargo moved in one swoop. That's a lot of cargo on one vehicle, but for the 27th Aerial Port Squadron, it's just another day on the flightline during deployments.

Moving mountains of cargo from storage sites to the close confines of the C-130 Hercules and various other military cargo planes takes the know-how of 27th APS load crews who train at home and abroad to use Materiel Handling Equipment, such as the elongated 40K and 25K cargo loaders, 10K forklifts, trucks and trailers. The importance of the cargo loaded by the crews make it a business they take very seriously, and their training reflects that.

"The 934th doesn't own a 40K loader, since we don't deal with 40,000-pound loads on our C-130 flights," said TSgt. David Roach, 27th APS vehicle instructor. "But we still need to know how to use these vehicles for loading C-5s, C-17s, C-141s or C-130s. We train on the 40K loaders and other types of equipment not found at the 934th

They move mountains of cargo with rugged, unique vehicles

when we deploy on annual tours to help us meet our wartime taskings, and keep up to date with training on all of the equipment we could use when we're back at the 934th. The Air Force will soon have a 60K loader that carries six pallets. We're looking forward to training on that loader during future annual tours."

The 40K loaders carry five pallets, almost double the amount of pallets handled by the crews using the 25K loader owned by the 934th. The loaders are conveyor platforms which can be driven right up to the rear of the aircraft, where pallets can be pushed smoothly and quickly aboard and delivered on time to destinations around the world.

The 27th APS crews also move cargo using a combination of forklifts, tractors and flatbed trucks. For example, the all-terrain forklifts and flatbed trucks are used at the Jordan, Minn., drop zone to recover the airdrop platforms and Container Delivery System loads dropped in training missions.

Supporting weekly airdrops helps keep unit members proficient at driving the equipment during peacetime. Wartime taskings dramatically multiply the amount of equipment and cargo handled by 27th APS crews for movement abroad -- and that's when the training pays its greatest dividends. □

Women in aerial port *They blend in as respected colleagues*

by MSgt. Tim Turner
public affairs

A member of the 934th in the '70s probably would have done a double take upon seeing a female reservist doing a "man's job" here.

But the '90s are here, and the sight of a woman firing an M-16, preparing Army paratroopers for a C-130 airdrop or driving a 40,000 pound front-end loader never warrants a second glance. Fact is, there are only a handful of Air Force occupations not open to women -- and even those are currently under discussion.

No restricted positions exist at the 27th Aerial Port Squadron, however. "The women here are really capable of handling every job the men in the unit handle, including the physical tasks," said MSgt. Marlee Gilbert, 27th APS management assistant, speaking on behalf of the nine women in the squadron.

Among the physical tasks the women in 27th APS regularly perform are packing parachutes, driving the massive front-end loaders that haul cargo to and from various aircraft, recovering loads after an airdrop and firing the M-16 rifle.

"In addition, because aerial port is a deployable unit, we have to know how to handle the combat-related tasks unique to our specialty," said SSgt. Jody Knight, an air cargo specialist.

"For example, during a war, the women in our unit will deploy with the men to a bare-base facility in the middle of the desert or jungle,"

Knight continued. "Once there, we'd be required to protect various cargo and supplies from an air or ground attack."

In order to prepare for that possibility, several 27th APS women have gone through ground combat readiness training, a two-week course where members learn how to protect a bare-base facility against enemy attack.

"The training usually involves a bivouac -- digging foxholes, conducting chemical warfare training exercises and learning camouflage techniques," explained SSgt. Cheryl Costello, an air cargo specialist who went through the course several years ago. "It's a lot of hard work, regardless of your gender."

While many jobs the unit performs are hard work, both physically and mentally, 27th APS women appreciate the support they receive from their male colleagues. "I spend a lot of my Reserve weekends packing parachutes right alongside the men," said SSgt. Geraldine Garoutte, air cargo specialist. "I appreciate the fact that they treat me as they would any other member of the unit."

Roughly 6 percent of the 130 people in 27th APS are women. Given those statistics, one might believe the female members of the unit would form their own clique, excluding their male counterparts. "That really isn't the case," Gilbert pointed out. "While I've formed close friendships with some of the women here, I have some very good male friends, also."

"I think most people in 27th APS, whether they're men or women, will tell you that the friends they've made here are because they happen to work in the same section, or they share a common interest or hobby," Knight said.

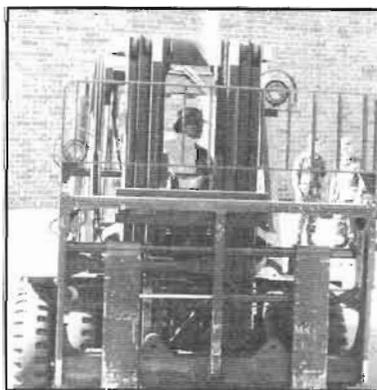
In closing, Gilbert, Knight, Garoutte and Costello indicated that they enjoy the positive attitude and morale of the unit. "Over a third of our people have been in the unit for eight or more years," Gilbert noted. "That's a phenomenally high rate of retention, and it certainly speaks well of the 27th APS." □



(Photo by MSgt. Darrell Habisch)



(Photo by SSgt. Janet Byerly)



(Photo by Mark Davidson)

Far left, SSgt. Geraldine Garoutte splices a damaged parachute line.

Above, SSgt. Jody Knight (right) helps SSgt. Randy Hanson inspect a parachute for damage.

Left, SSgt. Martha Grimes gets some practice driving the 10K forklift.

TRAINING FOR WAR

Though the 27th Aerial Port Squadron seems most visible dealing with parachutes and airdrop loads, that's just the peacetime side of their mission

by MSgt. Tim Turner
public affairs

Training for war.

While none of the 130 members of the 27th Aerial Port Squadron relishes the idea of leaving home to serve in time of war, without sound training they may not have a home to return to once the dust settles.

"Like a lot of 934th units, we spend a good part of each UTA and annual tour preparing for our wartime taskings," said SMSgt. Mike Dressen, air transportation superintendent for 27th APS.

SSgt. Louis Jaeger sweeps leaves, dirt and other debris out of the chute with the help of SSgt. Jody Knight and a floor fan to hold the chute open.



(Photo by SSgt. Janet Byerly)

"During a typical UTA, we marshal vehicles and pallets, and practice loading aircraft," he continued. "We also support the C-130 airdrop training mission. Normally, each year we have five or six annual tour deployments with some of the trips to overseas bases to assist and train with active-duty aerial port squadrons or participate in tactical field activities with other Reserve and active-duty aerial port units."

Critical training

An important peacetime training activity is supporting the 96th Airlift Squadron's airdrop training requirements, according to Dressen, by rigging heavy equipment airdrop platforms and Container Delivery System loads and loading this equipment on the C-130s. After the drop, squadron members recover airdrop loads at the drop zone in Jordan, Minn., field pack the parachutes and haul the loads by tractor and trailer back to the 934th.

Squadron members also spend their UTAs staying proficient on the various Materiel Handling Equipment used to load or unload cargo from the aircraft. "The two most common vehicles we use are the forklift and K-loader," said MSgt. Phil Smith, first sergeant for 27th APS. (See equipment story, page 6.)

While learning to move cargo is crucial to the squadron's mission, knowing how to operate in a high-threat area is equally important, according to Dressen. "We put some of our members through engine running off-load (ERO) training to accomplish this," he indicated. "During an ERO, the aircraft lands, keeps its engines running, and we have to load or off-load the cargo as quickly as possible so that the aircraft can be airborne again as soon as possible."

Going 'bare base'

Aerial port members here must also be prepared to handle their job at bare-base locations, where a C-130 might have to land on a remote dirt airstrip in the jungle or desert. "Some of our primary functions at bare-base locations is to be highly mobile and flexible," Dressen said, "and to know how to operate under austere conditions. That means we have to know how to provide continuous airlift support and self-defense capability. That's why we send unit people to Phoenix Ace at Little Rock AFB, Ark., for realistic ground combat readiness training. We'll be sending 13 people for two weeks in September."

Some of the skills 27th APS members will learn at Little Rock include camouflage concealment, confidence course, map reading, first aid, escape and evasion, field leadership, tactical movement and firing the M-16 rifle in a pop-up target course.

Traveling the globe

For all members of the squadron, training on annual tour status often means deploying to Alaska, Europe and even the Far East to work alongside an active-duty aerial port squadron. Past



This human chain ties off the canopy

Viking Flyer



(Photo by Mark Davidson)

An aerial port member marshals an Army Reserve HUMVEE on the 934th flightline during exercise Patriot Viking last spring.

tours have included trips to Kadena AB and Yokota AB, Japan; RAF Mildenhall, England; Rhein-Main AB and Ramstein AB, Germany; and Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

SSgt. Cheryl Costello, assistant ramp chief, was one of 14 squadron members who has deployed to Mildenhall to train with the active-duty aerial port squadron stationed there. "The Mildenhall tour gave us the chance to familiarize ourselves with loading and unloading aircraft other than the C-130, such as the C-141, C-5, KC-10 and even commercial planes like the DC-8 and 747," she said.

The active-duty connection

"I think it's important for all 934th reservists -- not just those in 27th APS -- to work with their active duty counterparts whenever they have the opportunity," Costello emphasized. "If there ever is another war, we'll all have to work together, hand-in-hand."



(Photo by SSgt. Janet Byerly)

specified intervals as part of repacking.



SSgt. John Anderson, left, and SSgt. Lowell Olson tie together shroud lines with couplers, which help keep the lines from tangling.

(Photo by Mark Davidson)



(Photo by MSgt. Tim Turner)

This mess represents the challenge of a chute entangled in pine trees after a winter airdrop. Aerial port members have special cold-weather gear, including mukluks, to help protect them from the Minnesota elements.

Working with the active duty during a war became reality for during the Persian Gulf War. "During the Gulf War, several of our squadron members were stationed at various locations such as Ramstein AB; Rhein-Main AB; Zaragoza AB, Spain; McGuire AFB, N.J.; Dover AFB, Del.; and Cherry Point NAS and Pope AFB, N.C., to assist active-duty aerial port units," Dressen pointed out.

"It used to be a luxury for an active-duty aerial port squadron to get help from a reserve aerial port unit during a conflict," Smith said. "But with the recent downsizing of the active duty, aerial port squadrons like 27th APS are now a necessity for the full-time force. That puts even more emphasis on our squadron and other Reserve units to be trained for war." □

Aerial delivery

Where the pallet hits the zone

by **SSgt. David Mattson**
27th APS UPAR

An aircraft approaches slowly, at low altitude, lining up with the drop zone for an airdrop. From the rear emerges the parachute, pulling out the airdrop platform, quickly opening and descending to the ground.

Gathered below are 934th reservists and their equipment, awaiting arrival of the load. That "crowd" is from the 27th Aerial Port Squadron's aerial delivery section, tasked with retrieval, repair, repacking, storage and preparation for airdrops. Local airdrops are accomplished at a drop zone in Jordan, Minn., about 30 miles west of the base.

The parachute with its load floats toward a bank of trees on the far side of the drop zone. The APS team spends the next few hours extracting the parachute from the trees. They soon discover tree branches have poked a hole in the parachute canopy.

"Any hole in the parachute, no matter how small, must be repaired," said **SSgt. George Erler** with aerial delivery.

Retrieving the load and the various elements of the airdrop package is sometimes a tough task. Airdrop platforms have been retrieved out of the lake or one of the many trees lining "the zone," as well as from fences, roads or -- as happens rarely -- from the horns of a longhorn bull.

Once retrieved, the pallet and parachute are loaded onto a flatbed trailer and returned to the base, where further inspection for damage and necessary repairs are conducted. From there, the airdrop platforms are returned to the ready line at the squadron to await another drop.

If the parachute from the drop has gotten wet, it must be hung up to dry in dry in the drying tower located in Bldg. 821. Depending on how damp the parachute is, it may take several days before it's dry enough to repack.

After the chute is dry, it's inspected for tears, rips or other damage. The inspection for a "bad" chute is the same as that of a "good" chute, which is done by laying out the parachute to examine it.

When repair is needed, the technical order

is consulted for guidance on the specific type of repair. A patch of ripstock nylon is cut to size and pinned into place. Using thread and sometimes a special tape as a substitute, the patch is sewn onto the chute.

"The vast majority of parachutes have at least one patch on them," said Erler. "Eventually, one out of every 10 parachutes dropped will need some sort of repair."

Also "sewing it up" at the squadron is **SSgt. Geraldine Garoutte**, whose duties in aerial delivery include mending parachutes. Erler and Garoutte mend 12-15 parachutes, parachute bags and canvas bags every six months.

"By repairing equipment and making it usable again, we can save the unit time and money," said Garoutte.

A careful repacking of the parachute follows next, documented in a log book accompanying the parachute wherever it goes. The parachute then either enters storage to be used at another time, or it quickly reenters the system, stowed on another airdrop bundle in the aerial delivery section. □

Civilian jobs: 'Reserve-enhanced'

by **SSgt. Shannon Armitage**
934th Group/MSF UPAR

Many reservists hold civilian jobs similar to their military jobs, such as a number of pilots, nurses, mechanics and others.

But what about the 27th Aerial Port Squadron reservists? Very few civilian jobs call for loading and unloading C-130s or packing parachutes. Many aerial port reservists, however, say the skills they learned in the Reserve benefit them in some way or another.

Aerial port members hold varied civilian jobs. From a survey of 65 members, the unit has everything from an aircraft mechanic to a vice president of a bookstore. There are teachers, police officers, firemen, bus drivers, machinists and even a draftsman, bringing a wealth of civilian education and experience to the 934th.

SSgt. Jody Knight, air cargo specialist, is an insurance agent for State Farm Insurance during the week. "I learned from the Reserve how to deal with people and how to handle pressure situations quickly and successfully," she said.

SSgt. Bradley McLain is an aerial port specialist. Besides uploading and downloading air cargo, McLain services and inspects parachutes during his Reserve weekend. In civilian life, he repairs,

modernizes and installs elevators for Otis Elevator Company. "Both occupations," he said, "stress safety, safety, safety."

SrA. Michael Sanoski, air transportation and cargo processing specialist, is a nursery attendant at Fair's Garden Center, Maple Grove, Minn. "My military experience taught me discipline," he said. "If you start the job, you finish it."

1st Lt. David Mattson is the officer in charge of the 27th APS Air Terminal Operations Center. In civilian life, he attends graduate school at the University of Minnesota. "The time management and computer skills I gained from the Air Force help me with my studies," he said.

MSgt. David Ziesmer, unit career adviser, operates an offset press at Mankato State University, Mankato, Minn. Ziesmer said both his civilian and military careers involve customer service. "My attendance at leadership schools aids me in decisions, and I enjoy talking with people about their careers, because it helps me work well with people at work," he said.

SSgt. Martha Grimes, cargo processor, teaches in a Minneapolis public school. "I teach elementary children physical fitness and social skills through a variety of game experiences," Grimes said. She added that the key skill she learned in the military used in her civilian job is "patience." □

Floating free and easy

Parachutes make the job of delivering cargo look simple, but for the people behind the scenes, it's not play -- it's science

by SSgt Larry Dean
public affairs

Each year, 27th Aerial Port Squadron load crews prepare airdrop loads totaling 350,000 pounds for the 934th Airlift Group. That's around 175 tons worth of equipment dropped by local C-130s for tactical training flights annually.

It takes 27th APS crews approximately three hours to prepare each airdrop load, including rigging them with one of four parachute types used here:

▣G-11, 100-foot diameter canopy, the largest parachute in the Air Force inventory,

▣G-12, 64-foot diameter canopy, the most common cargo parachute used for training missions,

▣G-13, 34-foot diameter canopy, commonly used for Container Delivery System loads, and

▣High Velocity Ring Slot Parachute, a 26-foot diameter canopy used to stabilize a CDS load as it free falls.

Three hours of preparation time may not seem like much, but consider that it takes only seconds to be dropped from a C-130 -- about four seconds to be extracted from the aircraft and 20 seconds for it to reach the ground.

During the normal weekday, drop crews may use the Standard Air Training Bundles, nicknamed "bean bags," simulating paratroop or cargo airdrops. The 934th drops nearly 300 bean bags locally a year.

The 27th APS crews also prepare CDS and heavy equipment loads for airdrops. CDS loads weigh approximately 1,000 pounds. While heavy loads average 3,000 pounds, they could weigh as much as 8,000 pounds and use three of the giant G-11 parachutes to safely return them to the ground.

The size of the CDS loads here are about 48 inches by 48 inches, though the height varies. Generally, these are slinged loads of plastic drums filled with sand to simulate the weight of such things as food, ammunition or medical supplies.

By contrast, the heavy loads are aluminum platforms varying in length from 8 to 12 feet. They simulate drops of larger equipment, such as Army vehicles.

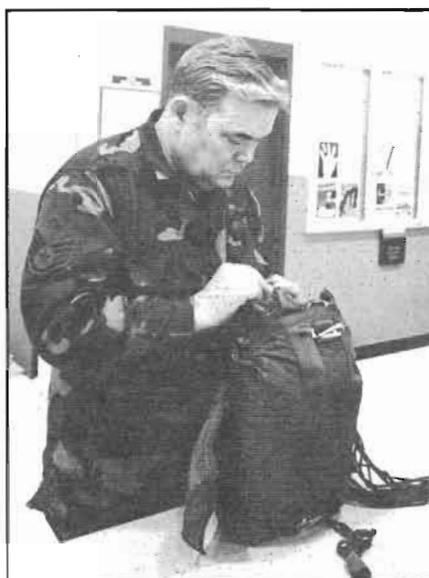
Local C-130s drop a combined total of nearly 170 CDS and heavy loads annually at the Jordan, Minn., drop zone. □

Left, top and bottom, SSgt. Patrick Driscoll shows the tedious handiwork required in packing a 15-foot extraction parachute, a small parachute that helps deploy the main chutes.



(Photo by MSgt. Darrell Habisch)

SrA. James Eicher (standing) and SSgt. Mark Pierson (kneeling) straighten out suspension lines of a cargo parachute prior to repacking.



(Photos by SSgt. Janet Byarby)

ATOC: 'brains' of aerial port

by Mark Davidson
public affairs

Fast-paced and high-pressure -- these are the words used to describe the action in the 27th Aerial Port Squadron Air Terminal Operations Center, otherwise known as ATOC.

"ATOC is the brains of an aerial port operation," said TSgt. Curt Henke, the ATOC co-chief controller. "The high volume amount of information and the quickness of the information flow make it a high pressure, fast-paced work environment."

The ATOC controllers coordinate and keep track of information such as aircraft load plans, cargo weights, aircraft tail numbers, parking spots, and inbound and outbound flight times.

"All of this critical information must be coordinated with different sections on base, such as the command post," said Henke. ATOC must also coordinate this information with the following aerial port sections: special handling, ramp services, cargo processing and passenger services.

The eyes and ears of the ATOC on the flightline is the ramp coordinator, otherwise known as RAMPCO. "The RAMPCO is the person on the flightline who actually monitors the cargo or passengers," explained Henke. "The RAMPCO is constantly calling into the ATOC with information on aircraft ground handling status."

Miscommunications and not prioritizing problems are the two biggest hazards that face ATOC, said Henke. "ATOC personnel must be assertive and able to make decisions to prevent mission delays."

Getting the right people in the ATOC to make the right decisions is the job of their NCO in charge, MSgt. Mike Webster. "When we have openings in the ATOC, I am looking to fill the opening with an aerial porter who is multi-skilled, multi-qualified and able to think on their feet," said Webster.

A teamwork attitude and a wide spectrum of experience in the cargo loading business are two other key assets to be an ATOC member, added Webster. Only 15 of the 130 aerial porters work in the ATOC, the "brains" of aerial port. □

Fire!

Port reservist responds to emergency

by SSgt. Larry Dean
public affairs

"**C**all 911!" Those words may echo in the mind of SSgt. Dan Addabbo, 27th Aerial Port Squadron member, for years to come.

This spring, the sergeant was waiting for his salad and a liver-and-onion dinner



Addabbo

at Sandy's Restaurant, Colorado Springs, Colo., when the drama began. He was TDY to Peterson AFB to attend Transportation of Hazardous Material School.

"It was around 6 p.m., May 17, when the cook yelled out for a fire extinguisher and to call 911," Addabbo said. "I ran outside and around back to see where the fire was coming from and if I could help."

"The cook emptied a fire extinguisher on the flames coming from the duct above one of the grills and thought he might have put it out, but the fire was going too good," he continued. "So I ran in to tell the seven people dining there to get out of the restaurant."

The restaurant was immediately evacuated and the upstairs home of the owner and his son was checked for signs of anyone who wasn't aware of the spreading inferno.

"The cook went upstairs, filled a wastebasket with water from the bathtub faucet and brought it down and threw it on the fire," said Addabbo. "The fire was still cooking. I went out and grabbed a garden hose, but there wasn't enough pressure to douse the flames either."

With winds outside blowing at a steady 15 mph, the fire quickly spread, and the concern turned to a nearby propane tank. Fortunately, the wind was blowing the fire

away from the tank, and about 15 minutes after the call to 911, the fire department arrived to battle the blaze.

"The fire burned for more than an hour before it was finally put out, and the restaurant and home were a total loss," Addabbo said. "I just wish we could have saved the place."

He said he doesn't believe the word hero applies to what he did. "You really don't have time to think; it's simply reacting and drawing from your life's experiences -- anything from Air Force fire extinguisher training to common sense," Addabbo said. "Afterwards, you have time to think about it, and the shock really sets in. I kept thinking, 'What if the fire had been in the basement or upstairs, and we were trapped? What about my family back home?' You think of fate and the chances of being in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Addabbo returned home from school on May 27, relieved to rejoin his wife, Fran, and children, Daniel (8) and Nicole (3).

The fire is believed to have been electrical in origin and is being investigated. But thanks to a cool head and quick reactions by Addabbo, no lives were lost. □

Combat Survival Training teaches aircrew members valuable skills that could give them an edge in a life-or-death situation

Will to survive

No one warned them about the swamps.

For 38 aircrew members in May, however, it was a case of either facing the pursuing enemy or plunging on through swampland to reach safety.

This year, no one had an advantage in Combat Survival Training -- it was new territory for all. This was the first time CST took place at Camp Ripley in central Minnesota, according to life support specialists.

"Basically, they're put into a scenario of flying to Camp Ripley [via C-130]," explained SSgt. Troy Puckett. "From that point on, they're crash victims. They're given coordinates to follow in escape and evasion to the safe area."

Once "safe," the crews received briefings from life support experts on topics including flares, will to survive, building

a fire, procuring food and water, shelters and signaling devices.

"Just the fact we could fly helped make it more realistic," said SSgt. Daniel Murphy. Normally, training is held in nearby Rosemount, Minn.

Aircrews do CST every three years. □



(Photos by SrA. Robert Lee)

Map orientation is one of a number of areas covered by life support instructors. Pictured are Capt. Steven Chapman (left), standardization evaluation officer, and Maj. Wade Farris, operations officer, prior to the escape and evasion exercise.



MSgt. Jamie Caniff, NCO in charge of life support, has served in the career field for 23 years. Here he gives a briefing on "will to survive."



SSgt. Jason Velasquez, 934th Operations Support Flight, gave the intelligence briefing.



Capt. Mark Vjums (front), pilot, and Capt. Craig Trammel, navigator, shed their soggy boots after "escaping" via swamp.



TSgt. Gary Scheff (left), loadmaster with the 27th Aerial Port Squadron, and TSgt. Larry Hall, loadmaster with the 96th Airlift Squadron, build a fire from scratch.

Viking Victors: New senior recruiter, group historian

MSgt. Sheldon Sandmann

New position: Senior recruiter, 934th Airlift Group.

Previous position: Recruiting office manager, McClellan AFB, Calif.; was a recruiter for the 934th from 1981 to 1989.

Hobbies: Outdoor activities, fishing, horseback riding and travel.

Goals: "Achieve success for myself and members of the 934th."

Family: Wife, Ursula; daughter, Heidi (20); live in Sacramento, Calif., and will relocate soon.

Comments: "I'm excited about my new job and the opportunities I'll have to fulfill the challenges of constant changes we're all experiencing in the Air Force Reserve in support of our mission. I'm also looking forward to getting to know and work with as many people on base as I possibly can. Working together as a team is the key to success in our business."



MSgt. David Hammer



New position: 934th Airlift Group historian.

Job responsibilities: Complete periodic histories of the 934th for Headquarters Air Force Reserve, also assist with and maintain all documentation pertaining to unit emblems, lineage and honors.

Previous position: Avionics technician for 14 years in the 934th Maintenance Squadron.

Education: Bachelor's in management information systems, Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, Minn.; associate's in avionics system technology, Community College of the Air Force. Three associate's from Normandale Community College, Bloomington, Minn.

Hobbies: Photography, biking, working on turning a 1970 U.S. Army Surplus M561 "Gamma Goat" truck into a fire truck for fighting grass fires.

Civilian occupation: Programmer/analyst for Minnesota Department of Economic Security; and volunteer fire fighter in Eagan, Minn., as well as management information systems officer and assistant administration officer.

Professional Organizations/Affiliations: Merit badge counselor, Boy Scouts; Metro Paint-A-Thon co-team leader for the base team.

Goals: "To continue the excellent work my predecessor, TSgt. Lisa Goetsch, has done; work on creating a book on the history of the unit and base; and categorize and organize old data and records in the history office.

Family: Wife: Denise; children: Natalie, Nicholas and Stephanie; live in Eagan. □

ROA meeting

There will be a general membership meeting of the Flying Viking Chapter of the Reserve Officers Association, **Sunday, July 31**, at 11:30 a.m. in the ballroom of the Fort Snelling Officers Club.

For more information, call **Capt. Deborah Buonassisi**, 934th executive officer, Ext. 5335.

Employers' Day

Employers' Day nominations are due in to public affairs by **Sunday, July 31**, with no exceptions. Activities are set for Saturday, Sept. 10, starting with a light breakfast and briefings, a

C-130 orientation flight and visit to your unit. Nominees should receive invitations by Aug. 12. Forms are available in unit orderly rooms, including guidelines for invitation.

For more information, call public affairs, Ext. 5337.

Trespass warning

The 934th Airlift Group firing range located on Fort Snelling grounds is off-limits to unauthorized people. Trespassing is illegal and dangerous.

For additional information, contact the 934th Security Police Squadron, 760 Military Highway, Minneapolis, MN 55450-2000, or call Ext. 5420. □

Kudos

Awards

Meritorious Service Medal

MSgt. James Hagan (Ret.) AS
MSgt. Michael Koch (Ret.) MXS

Air Force Achievement Medal

TSgt. Lynn Blackwell LSS
TSgt. Scott Brady (1 OLC) AES
TSgt. Joseph Brinza (1 OLC) AES
SSgt. Shawn Dentz MXS
MSgt. Timothy Donnay CES
1st Lt. Shawn Gregg AES
1st Lt. Michael Johnson AES
TSgt. Karen Jones (1 OLC) AES
SSgt. Larry Kuehl CES
MSgt. Sharon Lake AES

SrA. Scott Koennicke SPS
SSgt. Michael Kuntze APS
SSgt. Shane Lohmann AES
TSgt. John Maki APS
SSgt. Philip Neil LSS
SSgt. Larry O'Connell APS
TSgt. Dean Ostlund CES
SMSgt. Charles Pollock AS
TSgt. Colleen Raskob OSF
MSgt. David Rau CES
Sgt. David Redepenning MXS
SSgt. Martin Stevens CES
SSgt. James Trent APS
Amn. Greg Thaemert CES

Retirements

SMSgt. Joseph Armitage, 934th Communications Flight, has retired after 25 years of service, 20 with the 934th. He began his career on active duty and served in Vietnam. As a civilian, he is the on-base communications contract manager with Rothe Development. He and his wife, Marlene, live in Minneapolis and have two children, Erin and Shannon, who is also a staff sergeant in the 934th Staff Judge Advocate Office.

SMSgt. Robert Cripe, 934th Maintenance Squadron, retired after nearly 41 years of service, 30 years with the 934th. He joined the Air Force in 1953, serving first as an aircraft mechanic, then as a flight engineer and finally in the propulsion section as the aircraft engine mechanic foreman. An air reserve technician, he also retired from federal civil service. He and his wife, Iada, live in Cottage Grove, Minn., and have one son, Daniel.

MSgt. Paul Jacobsen, 934th Mission Support Flight, has retired after 21 years of service, 13 with the 934th. He started his career with the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam. He also served in the Minnesota Army National Guard prior to joining the 934th, with his last assignment as career advisor. He and his wife, Janet, live in Maple Grove, Minn., and have three children, Kate (19), Becky (13) and Linda (11).

MSgt. Laurence Larson, 934th Logistics Support Squadron, retired after nearly 21 years of service. He served seven years with the active-duty and the remainder of his career with the 934th. As a civilian, he is a partsman with Schwing America in White Bear, Minn. He and his wife, Kim, live in Chisago City, Minn., and have two children, Jason (14) and Jenise (11).

MSgt. Sandra Strom, 934th Civil Engineer Squadron, retired after 24 years of service, 21 years with the 934th. As a civilian, she is a legal secretary with Faegre and Benson, Minneapolis. She is a member of the Air Force Sergeants Association, National Association of Legal Secretaries and Professional Secretaries International. She and her husband, Richard, live in St. Louis Park, Minn., and have one son, Chris Blouin.

Certificates of service

20 years:
William Pietersen CE
10 years:
M. Lavern Ginigeme CE □

Honor graduate

TSgt. Rebecca Bean CF
Radio Communications Systems Apprentice Course, Keesler AFB, Miss.

Newcomers

Sgt. Bruce Butteruff CES
SSgt. Sandra Dudley MSF
SrA. Randall Ellis CES
SrA. Jonathan Garcia AES
AIC Cindy Gauthier AES
SrA. Chay Klinger SPS
AIC Shawn Legreid AS
SSgt. Jonathan Shelton MXS

Reenlistments

SSgt. John Bergeland SVF
SSgt. Dennis Billadeau CES
SSgt. Rafael Carrero-Sune MDS
MSgt. Frederick Crimmins APS
SSgt. Kenneth Engle SVF
SSgt. Lorne Eshelman MXS
TSgt. David Fischer AG
MSgt. Eugene Kirk CES

Play it safe

Summer accidents can be avoided
by using common sense

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



We're in the middle of the "101 Critical Days of Summer." During this three-month span -- from Memorial Day to Labor Day -- Americans experience the most injuries and deaths by accident. The majority of these accidents occur during recreational activities and often involve alcohol. Tragically, none need to occur.

I urge all of you to enjoy the summer months fully but wisely. For example: Don't mix alcohol with boating, cycling or driving. Don't add fuel to already-lighted charcoal. Don't stay out in the sun without proper sunscreen protection. Plan long trips thoroughly, but don't drive beyond your capacity to remain fully alert.

You've all worked hard these past months and truly deserve some rest and relaxation. I wish you all a happy -- and safe -- summer. □

Quality

It's not just for military duty

by Cherie Huntington
public affairs

"Take it home" could be the next catch phrase for Quality, to hear Lt. Col. Doug Pederson, group Quality officer.

"I've been involved in Quality for nearly three years now," Pederson said. "Just this last winter, I used several of our processes for solving some family discordance and scheduling problems -- and it worked!"

Those processes will be second nature to every member of the 934th in the near future, according to Pederson.

"As of July 1, the 934th is approximately 30 percent complete with initial training," said Pederson. "We anticipate having all reservists and full-

time staff trained by December 1995."

He pointed out that not only will reservists have Quality tools handy for home life, but also back on the civilian job.

"We've already seen where reservists have taken what they've learned and used it in their civilian work," Pederson said. "They can teach their co-workers -- free of charge. We've had wonderful feedback."

He said initial training is just the beginning, however, as many changes are coming in the way daily business is done. "This will require our use of the Quality and team-building skills we're learning," Pederson said.

"Quality has direct benefits to us as people," he said. "It's an excellent way of resolving problems." □

SERVICES BRIEFS

Softball standings

Men's winners. Winners' Bracket: SPS, MS #1, CES. Losers' Bracket: MXS #2, APS #1, LSS.

Co-Recreational winners. Winner's Bracket: APS. Losers' Bracket: LSS, MXS.

July softball schedule

Men's: SPS vs. LSS, Field #1, 4:45 p.m.

August softball schedule

Men's: MXS #1 vs. CES, Field #3, 4:45 p.m.; APS #1 vs. SPS or LSS, Field #1, 4:45 p.m.

Co-Rec: AS vs. LSS, Field #2, 4:45 p.m.; MS vs AS or LSS, Field #2, 5:45 p.m.; SVF vs. APS, Field #1, 5:45 p.m.

Hangar dance

This year's hangar dance will be held Saturday, Sept. 10, featuring music by the Air Force Band, "Night Wings." Admission will be \$3 per person. The social hour starts at 6 p.m.; dinner, at 7 p.m.; and dancing, 8 p.m. to midnight, all in the fuel cell hangar.

Family Day

Family Day is set for Sunday, Sept. 11, with lots of activities planned. There will be games, displays, music, collector car display (see below) and a living history program at the Minnesota Air Guard Museum. More information will be available soon.

Volunteers are needed to help with kids' games, the dunk tank and pop wagon. Call recreation services at Ext. 5316 to sign up for an hour or two.

Collector cars

A display of collector cars is being organized for Family Day. Anyone from the 934th is welcome to show their vintage vehicles. Call Dave Pudney, Ext. 5490, for details.

Services relocation

The 934th Services Flight has seen some relocation action in the past month:

▣ The orderly room and commander's office have moved back into the remodeled Bldg. 852.

▣ The fitness center and recreation specialists' office remain on the second floor of Bldg. 802, the fire station, and hours of operation remain the same.

▣ Equipment rental is now located in Bldg. 720.

For reservations and rental information, call Ext. 5316. □