



U.S. Senator visits 183d

by Maj. Nancie Margetis
Public Affairs

U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., visited the 183rd April 1 for a fact finding tour of the unit. During his tour, Kirk was updated on the 183d's missions, needs and future concerns. It provided him information regarding the wing's infrastructure, working conditions and capabilities.

He was first briefed by Col. Mike Meyer, 183d Fighter Wing Commander, with a general overview of the unit's mission, facilities and capabilities. He then was transported to the Air Operations Group (AOG) training suite, building P-23. There he was briefed by Col. Rick Yoder, Commander 183AOG, on the capabilities of the AOG as he toured the facility.

The Senator concluded his visit with a windshield tour of the base and a guided tour of newly renovated jet engine Centralized Repair Facility (CRF), building P-1. He was greeted by maintenance personnel Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey A. Baer and Master Sgt. Richard H. Shanner who gave him a personal tour of the updated facility. During his tour of P-1, they explained the mission of the CRF and its capabilities and addressed the capabilities for expansion.

After the P-1 tour, various media outlets were present for a question and answer session with the Senator.

First, he wanted to talk about the 183d. He started with remarking how tremendously impressed he was with the 183d's facilities, people and capabilities. He went on to say that he wants to work with U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., to bring a new flying mission to the 183d. He hopes the 183d can either get a C-27J cargo plane or a Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) mission.

He was quoted as saying, "A C-27J aircraft that would be able to lift cargo in very rough airfields, if not highways, I think are critical for the emergency response capabilities of the nation. Basing them in Springfield, Illinois is basing them in the center of the country. It allows them to get faster to any potential contingency than any other place in America. That's the argument that I hope Senator Durbin and I will make with the Air National Guard and the Pentagon soon."

Brig. Gen. James W. Schroeder, Adjutant General-Air, Illinois National Guard, echoed the Senator's desire to place C-27Js at the 183d. He believes that having the C-27J here would add to the homeland defense mission by being centrally located in the State of Illinois and in the middle of the country to enhance the federal mission.

Before the Senator's departure, Col. Meyer graciously thanked him for his visit and involvement with the unit. Col. Meyer and Brig. Gen. Schroeder both presented him with a coin, which was accepted with genuine enthusiasm. Once again the 183d rose to the occasion and left a favorable impression.



Master Sgt. Richard Shanner (right) explains the engine repair facilities capabilities to U.S. Senator Mark Kirk, R-Ill. (left), during a private tour of the base in April.

Photo by Master Sgt. Shaun Kerr

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Important Information

Unit Training Assembly Schedule



and pay dates



<u>Duty Performed</u>	<u>Pays out (approx.)</u>
APR 30-MAY 1	MAY 11
JUN 4-5	JUN 15
JUL 9-10	JUL 20

PLEASE NOTE: Duty hours for each UTA/SUTA will be 0800-1200 and 1300-1700 unless otherwise scheduled in advance. Mark your calendar! For more pay information, see the DFAS website at <http://www.dfas.mil/index.htm>. Pay information is under the Money Matters heading.

May Lunch Menu

Saturday

Sunday

<i>Homemade Meatloaf</i>	<i>BBQ Beef Cubes</i>
<i>Brown Gravy</i>	<i>Steamed Rice</i>
<i>Parsley Potatoes</i>	<i>Corn</i>
<i>Green Bean Casserole</i>	<i>Vegetable Medley</i>
<i>Broccoli Normandy</i>	<i>Apple Crisp</i>
<i>New York Style Cherry</i>	<i>Tossed Lettuce</i>
<i>Cheese Cake</i>	<i>Salad Fresh Fruit</i>
<i>Tossed Lettuce Salad</i>	
<i>Fresh Fruit</i>	

Attention!



The deadline for the
MAY issue of the Falcon's View
is **SATURDAY, APRIL 30,**
1200 hrs.

On Base Emergency

CALL 911 FOR ALL YOUR
ON-BASE EMERGENCY NEEDS.

Important Contacts

Commercial (217) 757-1XXX
on base use 3-digit Ext.

Main Gate.....	205
Base Commander.....	219
Base Operations.....	202
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Chaplain	367
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Toll Free Number

1-800-392-1797

Saturday and Sunday Short Order

**Menu subject to change*

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Unit members support Lincoln-Memorial Half-Marathon in more ways than one

by Maj. Nancie Margetis
Public Affairs

The 47th annual Lincoln Memorial Half-Marathon held April 2, marked another successful notch in the belt for the city's premier race. Sunny, temperature around 44 degrees at the start, little wind...as a runner, the weather was perfect. As a volunteer, the weather was perfect, no rain, no snow, and no wind to blow all the cups everywhere.

More than 1,170 participated in the picturesque 13.1 mile challenging run that takes

participants through historic Springfield including sites such as the Old State Capitol where Abe Lincoln gave his House Divided speech, and the only house that Lincoln ever owned. After mile 9 runners entered Oak Ridge Cemetery where Lincoln is buried.

And the 183d was there. We were there as runners and we were there as volunteers—two vital entities for a successful race. Over 25 runners from the unit endured the race, and rose to the challenge of being “Fit to Fight.” Runners might consider the last five miles of the course a “fight” due to the notorious first big hill at mile 8 and

hills of Oak Ridge and Lincoln Park that continue throughout the course until mile 12.

Anyone can put on a race, but it is the volunteers that do such a good job, that bring runners back to run even a grueling race, such as the 13.1 mile Lincoln Memorial. This year was no exception. The unit volunteered to man one of the most appreciated water stops on the course—at mile 10. Master Sgt. Douglas Smith from the 183d



Photo by Master Sgt. Shaun Kerr

Maintenance Group led the charge provided the 24 unit volunteers.

“It was my first time volunteering and it inspired me so much seeing all kinds of people running the race that I’m thinking about running it next year,” said Staff Sgt. Megan R. Hayward from the 183d Comptroller Flight.

There were quite a few unit member “first-timers” for the race. It was

encouraging for first-timer Master Sgt. Stacy Ferguson from the 183d Comptroller Flight. She said each one of them (unit members) gave very helpful advice and information of what she should expect. She does not think she could have finished it without their support.

For Chief Master Sgt. Erin L. Roesch, 183d Communication Flight, and winner of last year’s “Run to Remember” she had a great experience. “My family came out to help with the National Guard water station; I knew I had accomplished something when I saw them at mile 10. They were so proud and happy to see me...what an incredible feeling! I’m grateful that we had the opportunity to show community involvement and, for some of

us, push ourselves beyond what we thought we do.”

It was my fourth year running the race, and being relatively new to the unit, it was a definite motivator when I heard our unit members yelling, “Go Maj. Margetis!” It helped me through to finish in a personal best time.

Chief John A. Jordan, 183d Command Chief Master

Sgt., participated for his third year. He felt the unit had a great turn out. “I am very proud of the members that participated in the run. It is very encouraging to see the number of Airmen embracing the fitness culture. I am also very grateful to the unit members that manned our water station during the run. It was a positive way for our unit to interact with the community and an incredible

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217th Engineering Installation Squadron awarded best of the best

by Maj. Nancie Margetis
Public Affairs

It was announced late March that the 217th Engineering Installation Squadron (EIS), a tenant unit of 183rd Fighter Wing, was awarded the 2010 Charles R. Stahl Award. This award recognizes the best squadron in the 251st Combat Communications Group (251CCG), the parent unit of the 217th EIS.

The award was named after Maj. Charles R. Stahl who commanded Headquarters, 251st CCG, which at the time of their conception in October 1952, consisted of five people. Of the existing ANG communications groups and remaining three active duty groups (if you count the 1st), the 251st CCG is the oldest. It is also the parent of two other ANG combat communications groups: the 226th CCG in Alabama and the 254CCG in Texas. At their inception, the group had twelve subordinate units in Ohio, North Carolina, Missouri, Illinois, Texas, Alabama, and Arkansas.

The mission of the 251st initially was a composite of missions of today's engineering and installation squadrons and combat communications squadrons. While the organization was charged with providing, installing, operating and maintaining communications equipment for deployed flying units, it did so from "scratch," with a greater variety of small components than today's relatively complete mobile and modular facilities.

Beginning in 1953, the headquarters planned and directed joint group-wide exercises at locations across the country, beginning with annual training at Stewart AFB, New York in August of that year. In 1954, the organization was authorized its first fulltime officer air technician: Captain (later Lt Col) Herbert E. Moore. In that year, the headquarters strength increased to nine officers and nine enlisted personnel. Charles R. Stahl remained the military commander until he retired as a Colonel in 1968.

The unit motto was: "Be part of the solution, not

part of the problem!"

Col. Norman A. Poklar, commander of the 251st, sent his congratulations to the men and women of the 217th EIS.

"Between their request for forces support and taking the lead for the EIS community in Afghanistan, the 217th has been instrumental in a number of EIS community wide initiatives in 2010," he wrote in a congratulatory email to the 217th EIS.

This year will be the last award under the old group alignment for communications squadrons assigned to the 251st Communications Group, Springfield, Ohio. They will be transitioning future consideration to units under their new Wing/Group structure beginning with the 2011 award.

TROOP MOVEMENT

As you all are aware, many changes are happening around the base. The hangar has been remodeled and is now home for the engine repair mission.

The first stages of construction on the new front gate have kicked off and P-35 and 36 are patiently awaiting fund allocation to start the project for the Air Operations Group.

The Communications Flight's building P-8 has been long overdue for a remodel and updates from its 1960s design. Thanks to the great work of our Civil Engineering Squadron and the Contracting Office, this project has been approved and will kick off in early Summer 2011.

The plans for our new communications building are being bid on for the next 30 days which puts P-8 being vacated by the end of May. Comm Flight will be moving to various office spaces in P-15 and using P-23 for workshops and storage.

Unfortunately, with any move there are expected and unexpected problems that will arise. The Comm Flight will maintain it's outstanding service to the Wing, but during the next 60-90 days we would ask for a little patience.

For any communications issues that arise please use your CSA to put in a job with the communications focal point. *Submitted by 183rd Communications Flight*

The 183d's Air Force Blue is going Green.... Green Energy that is

*By Lt Col Charles Coderko
Commander, 183d Civil
Engineering Squadron*

SPRINGFIELD – When the Airmen of the 183d Fighter Wing tell people they are “going green,” they are talking about Green Energy.

The Illinois Air National Guard Base at Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport (ALCA) is one of the first out of over 500 Department of Defense installations in the United States and the first military installation out of the 52 in the State of Illinois to have 100 percent of its power coming from renewable “green” energy sources. Even though the Wing is leading the way for the Department of Defense, the 183d refuses to rest on its successes. With an immediate goal of reducing the Base’s energy footprint 30% by 2015, the Wing has already reduced its energy consumption by 15% over the past 3 years and continues to look at ways to not only reduce energy consumption, but explore other renewable energy methods as well.

“The Illinois National Guard has always been a leader in environmental stewardship,” said Col. Michael Meyer, 183d Commander. “Being energy conscious and being a good steward of this nation’s resources has become a part of the Wing’s culture and it is second nature for our Airmen.”

Currently, the 183d has a partnership with a local energy company, Springfield City Water, Light, and Power (CWLP), and purchases all of its energy from renewable energy

sources. This means the 3.5 million kilowatt-hours consumed at the ANG base each year will not be coming from traditional coal power plants that emit environmentally harmful pollutants. Instead the power that runs the bases comes from renewable energy sources like wind energy solar and collector panels.

“The Wing has completed several projects over the past couple years that have significantly reduced the base’s carbon footprint,” said Lt. Col. Chuck Coderko, the Wing’s Base Civil Engineer. “Over the past three years we have partnered with local engineering firms and construction contractors to upgrade our facilities with new high efficiency heating and cooling systems, energy efficient water heater systems, lighting systems, and most importantly upgrading and sealing up our building envelopes to stop unwanted energy loss. Over the next couple years we have roughly \$34 million in construction projects planned. A few of these projects include the modernization of four facilities that are designed to achieve Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) certification from the United States Green Building Council.”

The new missions at the 183d have brought growth and a very bright future for our guardsmen and these projects go hand-in-hand with the Illinois National Guard’s plans to promote environmental stewardship as it modernizes its force. “As public servants we need to be smart and vigilant stewards of the resources and environment entrusted to us,” said Col. Stephen Baggerly, 183d Mission Support Group Commander. “The initiative to go green and reduce our environmental impact is a big part of our strategy.”

In addition to using renewable energy, Capt. Bob Mitchell, Commander, 183d Civil Engineering Squadron is busy researching, planning and implementing many different projects that will reduce the amount of energy consumed at the ALCA. “The civil engineering staff has installed smart metering in almost all of its main facilities across the base. These meters monitor all the electric, water, and gas usage around-the-clock to provide data on how to efficiently govern energy and utilities. Although a large part of energy savings is replacing hardware, its also about changing our behavior and how we use our resources. With those two ingredients, the Wing is leading the way and doing its part in preserving resources for generations to come,” said Capt. Mitchell.

One of the larger projects being explored is the acquisition of light-emitting diode fixtures. LED fixtures may be the future of energy efficient lighting as Airmen at the base overhaul fighter aircraft engines and support air operations for United States Southern Command. Currently, a fluorescent light bank costs approximately \$68 per year to operate while a new LED bank operates annually on just \$12. The lights are just as bright as traditional lighting and operate on 60 percent less energy. With the amount of lighting on base, the cost savings in the long run may significantly lower the base’s daily operating cost to the taxpayer.

Col. Meyer added, “One of the Air Force Core Values is ‘Excellence In All We Do’. Reducing our energy consumption and providing more economically affordable force to the community is part of that Core Value and simply the right thing to do.”

Unit News

Promotions

Lieutenant Colonel
Maurice M. McKinney
Jon D. Brown

First Lieutenant
Aaron R. Boyles
Andrew M. Payne

Master Sergeant
Jason M. Bennett
Michelle L. Ladd

Staff Sergeant
Jason S. Lee

Senior Airman
Justin H. Hamilton
Tyler J. Pier

Welcome Aboard

Staff Sergeant Heather C. Hill	183d Air Support Squadron
Staff Sergeant Joshua A. Siudyla	183d Civil Engineering Squadron
Staff Sergeant Andria J. Sapp	183d Fighter Wing
Airman 1st Class Nicholas R. Schafer	217th Engineering Installation Squadron
Airman 1st Class Eric J. Marks	183d Civil Engineering Squadron
Airman 1st Class Rachael Nyilas Blasko	183d Force Support Squadron

Retirees

Chief Master Sgt. Barbara J. Kenzel HQ/ILANG April 1, 2011

If you are interested in buying Six Flags tickets please stop by and see Master Sgt. Stacy Ferguson in building P-46. The prices for the tickets are as follows:



1 Day Child/ Adult pass= \$27.00
2 Day Adult pass= \$47.00
2 Day Child pass = \$37.00
Season pass= \$51.00

Second Annual "Run to Remember"

5K Walk/Run
Sunday, June 5th, 9 a.m.

*Come out and help us remember
those of the 183rd we have
lost over the years.*

Registration will be open to current Air and Army Guard members, retirees, and family. All personnel not in military status will be required to sign a waiver. Registration will be open until the day prior to the race. **No race-day registration will be accepted.** Registration is \$20 (Race shirt not guaranteed if registered after May 27th).

Course: The run will consist of a flat course on the perimeter road.

Awards: Overall male and female winners will receive a special plaque and \$20 gas gift card. Male and female age group winners will receive \$10 gas cards. Age groups will be as follows: 17 and Under 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+
Contact: 1st Lt. Payne or Master Sgt Stults at ext. 275, or Chief Master Sgt. Erin Roesch at ext. 365

Hosted by: NCO Academy Graduates Association

Retiree News

Breakfast Gathering: Retirees gather on the first Tuesday of each month to share breakfast and talk about the good ol' days. Join them at King Pin Lanes, on the corner of Sangamon Ave. and Dirksen Parkway, Tuesday, May 3. They say they meet at 8 a.m. but if you're not there by 7:30, the early birds have taken the good seats!

Spring semi-annual retirees luncheon: Come join the retirees for a get together to share stories of days-gone-by and catch up on what is new. It will be Apr. 29, 11:30 a.m., located at the Diamond Buffet, 2441 S. MacArthur Blvd. Cost is \$7.50 per person which covers a meal, drinks, dessert and tax. (A gratuity basket will be available). For more information contact Mr. Walter Pierce at (217)787-1226.

Discovering Love

By Chaplain (1st Lt.) Jon Mark Bormann, 183rd FW Chaplain

At times it seems that life throws insurmountable challenges unto our path and finding a means to move forward is impossible. Feelings of helplessness and defeat refuse to leave our brains. Quickly we reach places of despair and hopelessness, thinking there is no way out; that the pain and hurt will never subside.

Many have been taught to hide their hurt and pain, to appear invulnerable. Therefore, when we view others we do not see their personal hardships and torment and think our suffering is unique. When those moments of suffering come we feel absolutely alone.

We are in the midst of 101 Days of Suicide Prevention. There is always much training on how to care for our fellow Airmen if we sense they are contemplating suicide. But suicide prevention begins throughout our daily lives.

Every day we have the opportunity to extend real love. Most have only experienced a conditional love that is given when we have done something good or commendable. If we do not meet expectations we can see the disappointment in the face of others. But real love does not wait for someone to act, but rather it is given for the person they are and not who we want them to be.

It is also our responsibility to seek out persons who can love our true self. Around us there are



people who know how to love, but rarely are we vulnerable and honest enough to experience their love.

I consider it a privilege to work with two loving persons in Fathers Laible and Barry. Do not hesitate to visit the chaplains' office (no matter your religious preference if any); there you will find a place where you can be loved.

A great resource on finding real love is a book with that title: Real Love by Greg Baer, MD. As my wife and I received a diagnosis this past month that our eldest son is autistic I have found his books to be a valuable guide. Because instead of hiding my devastation and pain I have been able to find persons who have been in my life, but now I have allowed them to supply me with a sustaining love.

Whatever life sends our way we can make it through when we are truly loved. Seek persons who can offer you unconditional love and you will find greater joy than you can even realize. Love unconditionally and life's meaning will be clear.

Chaplains' Information:

Roman Catholic Chaplains:

Lt. Col. Bob Barry
3700 103rd Street
Chicago, IL 60655
phone: 773-296-3857
email: RLBarry@att.net
or robert.barry@ang.af.mil

Lt. Col. Jeff Laible
316 S. Logan Street
Lincoln, IL 62656
phone: 217-732-4019
email: Frlaible@hotmail.com

Protestant Chaplain:

1st Lt. Jon Bormann
16595 N. Meadow Ln.
Petersburg, IL 62675
phone: 217-361-8833
email: jonbormann@gmail.com

Religious Services

Protestant Service:
Saturday 1500 hrs Chapel
Catholic Mass:
Saturday 1600 hrs Chapel

Base Chapel Office:
Bldg. P-48, Room 302
Phone 217-757-1367
DSN 892-8367
Fax (217)757-1509



What is CERF-P and why should I care?

by Lt. Col. George Vukotich
183d Medical Services Officer

CERF-P stands for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package. While the name may be confusing the mission is not. The Illinois CERF-P is a force of approximately 200 individuals made up of Army and Air National Guard members.

The mission of the CERF-P is to respond to a CBRNE incident and support local, state, and federal agencies and to manage the consequences of a natural disaster or terrorist attack by providing interim emergency support capabilities. The CERF-P is made up of groups of individuals with specific functional responsibilities called elements. The elements are Command and Control, Search and Extraction, Decontamination, Medical, and Fatality Search and Recovery.

Elements:

Command and Control: Establishes an area of operation and coordinates the sharing of information.

Search and Extraction: Find casualties and remove them from the area of incident. Confined space rescue operations.

Decontamination: Ambulatory (walking) and non-ambulatory (not walking) identification and decontamination.

Medical: Triage, injury identification and tagging, emergency medical treatment, injury stabilization, and staging for evacuation.

Fatality Search and Recovery: Incident site search and recovery of



fatalities. Recovery and movement of fatalities to designated transfer points.

The CERF-P function is primarily manned with M-Day Soldiers and Airmen. They can be called on to support local, state, and federal incidents which are natural disaster or terrorist based. The CERF-P function comes in to support existing resources dealing with an incident and work with the local incident commander in response to an Incident Action Plan and the identified objectives. The goal is to have the CERF-P deploy within six hours of notification on an incident. It is designed for self-deployment by ground transportation and includes trailers that contain tents, generators, equipment and medical supplies to support its mission.

In the event of an incident, the CERF-P commander works in conjunction with a local incident commander to identify the type of incident and the area of the event and its surroundings, for purposes of setup and support. A site survey is conducted in order to determine where each of the elements will set up operations. This is important since it is a coordinated effort in which individuals and casualties go through a process. In operation the flow consists of three zones:

Hot – where the incident actually happened, the building blown up, the contaminated area.

Warm – where casualties are collected and decontamination takes place.

Cold – the safe zone, considered out of danger.

In the case of an air-borne incident things such as wind direction and its changes need to be kept in mind. The CERF-P Medical Element is composed of personnel from the Illinois Army National Guard and members of all three Illinois Air National Guard units. The Medical Element consists of doctors, physician's assistants, nurses, medical service corps officers and other support personnel to round out the 47 member Medical Element. Recent activities of the IL-CERF-P included the Prairie North exercise this past June which took place in the Chicago area. A number of scenarios including a plane crash, terrorist release of poison gas in a subway, drug lab explosion, and chemical plant disaster were simulated and responded to. The CERF-P worked in conjunction with a number of state and local agencies which included over 20 organizations such as Illinois Emergency Management Agency, City of Chicago, Rush Medical Center, Nalco Chemical, and the City of Oak Lawn and their police and fire departments.

More recently the IL-CERF-P traveled to Camp Blanding, Florida to conduct its ExEval (ORI equivalent) and despite the frigid weather conditions successfully conducted its operations in which it was recognized for how well things went and how well the operation functioned. As one evaluator stated, "This is the best level of teamwork I have seen between Army and Air." As more focus continues to be placed on homeland security the CERF-P function will continue to grow and expand.

Rollout approaches for Young Adult TRICARE enrollment

*by Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service*

3/30/2011 - WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- TRICARE will soon allow qualified young adults, up to age 26, to purchase military health plan coverage on a month-to-month basis.

TRICARE officials announced plans to roll out the new Young Adult Program, including an option to make coverage retroactive to Jan. 1, in the near future. This will ensure military families aren't left out as the new national health care reform law extends parents' health insurance for their children up to age 26, officials said.

The new program will allow qualified, unmarried children of service members without access to employer-sponsored health care coverage to buy health care coverage under their parents' TRICARE plans through age 26. That's up from the current maximum age of 21, or age 23 for full-time college students whose parents provide more than half of their financial support.

The fiscal 2011 National Defense Authorization Act, which President Barack Obama signed Jan. 7, gave the Defense Department the authority it needed to extend TRICARE coverage to young adults, TRICARE spokesman Austin Camacho said. This ensures benefits extended are in line with those all American families receive under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which took effect in March 2010.

"We've been working hard to make sure we could put TRICARE Young Adult on a fast track," said Navy Rear Adm. (Dr.) Christine S. Hunter, the director of the TRICARE Management Activity. "Fortunately for our beneficiaries concerned about health care coverage for their adult children, the law signed by the president includes opportunities for military families to elect this new premium-based plan retroactive to Jan. 1."

TRICARE officials expect to announce premium

costs shortly, before enrollment begins. But because the 2011 defense authorization specifies that the rates must cover all program costs, Camacho said, premiums will be based on commercial insurance data about the costs of providing care.

Once premiums are determined, officials encourage eligible beneficiaries to explore all of their health care coverage options to choose a plan that makes sense for them.

Hunter estimated that the program, once in place, could extend TRICARE coverage to several hundred thousand additional beneficiaries.

"The premium allows us to provide the excellent benefit to our military families while responsibly addressing the impact of health care costs on the DOD budget," she said.

Officials plan to roll out the new program in two phases, first offering a premium-based TRICARE Standard/Extra benefit, Camacho said. Then, later this year, they plan to introduce the TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote plan, including overseas options, and the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan.

Once the program is in place, eligible beneficiaries may submit an application and premium payment to the appropriate regional or overseas contractor for processing, Camacho said. Cost shares, deductibles and catastrophic caps will vary based on the plan selected and the sponsor's status.

Young adult beneficiaries will receive an enrollment card after they buy coverage and their payment is reflected in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System, Camacho said.

The new beneficiaries may choose to pay premiums back to Jan. 1, which will entitle them to file claims for any health care costs they have accrued since that date. To do so, officials advise beneficiaries save all receipts to ease claims processing.

For adults who need health insurance coverage but no longer qualify for TRICARE coverage, officials advise exploring the Continued Health Care Benefit Program. This premium-based program offers temporary, transitional health coverage for 18 to 36 months.

Coverage must be purchased within 60 days of losing TRICARE eligibility. Information about the program is posted on the TRICARE website.

Family Readiness

If you have a member of your family that is a past or current member of the 183rd, or have information that a current or past member of the 183rd has passed away recently, please contact Mr. Joe Ward, Family Program Coordinator. We want to ensure that no one is forgotten for the annual Wreath Laying Ceremony commemorating all past and current members that have lost their lives each year. The Family Support Group is still sending sympathy cards to all deceased members' families, as well, but once again, we need the information. You can contact Joe by e-mail at joe.ward.1@ang.mil or by calling 217-757-1569.

Application Period Open for Operation Purple Summer Camp

Operation Purple camps offer a free week of summer fun for military kids with parents who have been, are currently, or will be deployed.

These free week-long camps are provided through the generous support of Goldman Sachs Gives, the Sierra Club, and the Sierra Club Foundation.

The goal of the Operation Purple camp program is to give military children tools to help deal with the stresses that result from a parent's deployment, through a memorable camp experience in a "purple" environment.

Operation Purple camps are open to military children of all ranks and Services: active and reserve components—and give priority to children whose parents are deployed or deploying anytime between September 2010 and December 2011.

At Operation Purple camps, military children experience an exciting week of outdoor fun and adventure.

2011 Operation Purple camps will be held in 25 states as well as Okinawa, Japan. Host camps are chosen annually and locations often change from year to year.

For more information and instructions on how to apply, contact Joe Ward, 183rd Family Program Coordinator, or visit the National Military Family Association website at: www.militaryfamily.org.

In the Spotlight



Who: Staff Sgt. Forrest B. Lipe

What: ASuS Contracting Specialist

When: 29SEP05

Why: I joined the Air National Guard because of the all the benefits. I was also getting older and at the time it was a now or never type of decision.

Civilian Employment: I work for the Illinois Department of Corrections at Graham Correctional Center (High Medium) as a Correctional Officer.

Civilian/Military Correlation: There is no correlation between my civilian/military jobs and for me, that is the best thing about the ANG. Once a month I get the pleasure of doing something completely different. Therefore keeping a diverse resume and skill set.

Recent/Favorite Deployment: In 2010 I was assigned to the 380th ELRS as a Supply Journeyman at Al Dafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates. Working in supply I got to know almost everyone on base and had the pleasure of working with them. The people in my shop also made the experience a positive one from leadership down to the E-2 in the shop.

Additional Comment: I really enjoy being at the 183d FW and feel that it is one of the best kept secrets in the Illinois Guard.

Spring into Safety!

*Submitted by: Senior Master Sgt.
Steven E. Stewart
183rd Base Safety*

For many of us, working outdoors on the lawn and in the garden is a great way to exercise and to relax. Experts warn that if you are not careful with lawn and garden tools, you could be spending more time indoors, starting with a trip to the hospital emergency room. The most frequent injuries are from lawn mowers.

Statistics tell us that each year lawn mower accidents send 84,000 people to the emergency rooms. Nearly 15,000 others need medical treatment for injuries from trimmers and other power garden tools. As lawn and garden work begins this spring, we have found some precautions recommended by safety professionals when working with power equipment.

Lawn Mowers:

- Read your lawn mower's owner's manual and know how to stop the mower instantly in an emergency.
- If you have a gasoline-powered mower, store the gas in an UL-Listed safety can.
- Always start the mower outdoors. Never operate the mower where carbon monoxide can collect, such as in a closed garage, storage shed or basement.
- Do not operate an electrically powered mower on wet grass.
- Use an extension cord designed for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of the mower.

- Keep your hands and feet away from the mower's blades. Never reach under the mower while the mower is running. Make all adjustments with the motor off.
- Ensure all safety guards are in place. If you hit a foreign object or have a malfunction, turn off the mower (and disconnect the power cord from electric mower's) before inspecting the damage.
- Never leave a lawn mower 'ON' while unattended.
- Keep other adults, children and pets clear. Mowers can fling rocks at up to 200 miles per hour.
- Do not allow children to operate lawn mowers.
- Make sure your shoes provide good traction and have sturdy soles to resist punctures and protect toes. Never work barefoot or in sandals, canvas shoes, etc.

Lawn and Garden Tools:

- Use lawn and garden power tools bearing the UL Mark, which means that representative samples of that product have been tested to stringent safety standards with regards to fire, electric shock and related safety hazards.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's use and care instructions.
- Before use, inspect tools for frayed power cords and cracked or broken casings. If the product is damaged, have it repaired by a qualified repairman, or replace it.
- Always wear safety glasses.
- Always wear proper attire. Keep your clothing, hands and feet away from cutting blades at all times. Never wear loose jewelry when you are working with tools.
- Never alter a tool or remove safety features such as blade guards or electric plug grounding pins.

- Use only properly rated outdoor extension cords with outdoor electrical tools.
- Check the switch on a power tool or garden appliance to make sure it is 'OFF' before you plug it in.
- Unplug all portable electrically operated power tools when not in use. These tools contain electricity even when turned 'OFF' but still plugged in.
- Pay attention to warning markings. Do not allow tools to get wet unless they are labeled "Immersible." When using tools outside, make sure they are appropriate for outdoor use.
- Use and store power tools and garden appliances away from water sources to avoid electric shock. Never use power tools and appliances in the rain.
- Never carry an appliance by the cord, and never yank the cord when removing it from the receptacle. When disconnecting the cord, always grasp the plug – not the wire. Keep the cord away from heat, oil and sharp edges.

Here are a few safety reminders before digging, even if it is just planting flowers.

Call J.U.L.I.E. 1-800-892-0123, in Illinois before you dig. It is free. The utilities that are members of J.U.L.I.E. will come out and locate their lines. You are responsible for your own privately owned lines. Look up before you prune trees or shrubs to make sure there are no wires around.

Spring is kite season; educate your children to fly kites in open areas and not around power lines.

Keep these tips in mind this spring so everyone can enjoy the summer to come.

Need Help?

by 2nd Lt. Stephen Unverzagt
Public Affairs

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is an organization that can help. The primary purpose of the ESGR is to protect employment rights of person who also serve in the uniformed services. They are here to protect your level of seniority, status, pay and benefits that would be earned if not for service in the military. That being said you, as a member of the uniformed services, have certain responsibilities to your employer:

- Provide prior notice to employer
- Serve under honorable conditions
- Return to work in accordance with USERRA guidelines

Your workplace also has a larger responsibility to you as a service member to include:

- Military leave of absence
- Prompt reinstatement of employee

- Restore seniority
- Reinstatement employment benefits
- Training or refreshing of skills
- No discrimination or retaliation

Military obligations cannot be used as a motivation factor not to hire, promote or deny a pay raise as well when interviewing or applying for employment or advancement. All of these factors apply to full-time as well as part-time employees. Even if you are the only employee of a company they must still follow the guidelines whether you are regular military, Guard or Reserve. The two caveats to the law are state active duty such as floods, fires, hurricanes, security, etc... and students (who are now covered under the Department of Education with USERRA like coverage).

With that ground work laid out, the take home message should be: communication is the key. According to Col. Tom Murgatroyd, USAF (Ret.), ESGR Area Chair, "Keep your employer informed about your military involvement. An informed employer is a supportive employer."

Col. Murgatroyd also stated that the resources for military members are numerous. The first place to reference should be their website www.esgr.mil, you can look under "about ESGR", "USERRA FAQ" or "Tips for G/R".

If you need legal answers to specific USERRA questions you can also email USERRA@osd.mil. As a last resort or in a time sensitive situation you can call 1(800)336-4590 which is a direct way to contact the ESGR offices in Washington, D.C., which will result in being put in touch with a ombudsman to open your case for your protection and questions.

The bottom line according to the ESGR is this: Service in the military should never be a reason for discrimination. Know your rights and requirements. For further information follow the above advice or contact your area chair member, Col. Murgatroyd at 1(217)494-7269 or Lt. Col. Tim Franklin at 1(217)761-3642.

The ESGR is here as a no cost service to those who serve.

Feature Story cont.

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boost to the 183d runners as we were navigating through a difficult part of the course," said Chief Jordan.

Special mention for Senior Airman Daniel J. Dunbar, Jr., 183d Air Communications Squadron (ACOMS), who finished the race in 1:17:03, fifth overall, and 1st Lt. Andrew M. Payne, 183d Maintenance Group who finished in 1:18:32 for a ninth place finish.

Another first-timer, 2nd Lt. David Rivera, 183d ACOMS, sums it all up by saying, "Experiencing the support from the Wing members erased the pain and provided the motivation to finish."



Photo by Master Sgt. Shaun Kerr



Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Martin

Osteoporosis--Are you at risk?

*Submitted by Tech Sgt. Amy Murphy
183rd Medical Group*

Osteoporosis is a condition where your bones become weak and can break more easily. In serious cases, just a simple sneeze can cause a bone to break. About 10 million Americans already have this disease and 34 million are at risk.

Estimates suggest that about half of all women older than 50 will break a bone because of osteoporosis and up to one in four men will too. Breaking a bone can be a serious thing, especially when you are older. Broken bones due to osteoporosis are most likely to occur in the hip, spine and wrist, but other bones can break too. Broken bones can cause severe pain that may not go away.

Some people lose height and become shorter. It can also affect your posture, causing you to become stooped or hunched over. This happens when the bones of the spine, called vertebrae, begin to break or collapse.

In 2005, osteoporosis was responsible for an estimated two million fractures and \$19 billion in costs. By 2025, experts predict that osteoporosis will be responsible for approximately three million fractures and \$25.3 billion in costs each year.

While osteoporosis is not curable, it is treatable. There are many steps you can take to manage the disease and reduce your chance of breaking a bone. It is important to work with your healthcare provider to learn

about your risk for osteoporosis and broken bones.

A medical evaluation to diagnose osteoporosis and estimate your risk of breaking a bone may involve one or more of the following steps:

- Medical history
- Physical examination
- Bone density test
- Laboratory tests

Additional tests to learn information about your bone health may include:

- X-rays
- Bone scans

After reviewing the results of your medical history, physical examination, bone density test and any other tests related to your bone health, you and your healthcare provider can develop a plan to protect your bones.

If you have already broken a bone due to osteoporosis, you can take steps to slow or stop bone loss and prevent broken bones in the future.

Most people with osteoporosis need to take an osteoporosis medicine to prevent broken bones. If you have osteoporosis or have broken a bone, your healthcare provider may also refer you to a physical therapist (PT). A therapist who works with osteoporosis patients can teach you safe exercises to improve your strength,

balance and posture. APT can also help you prevent falls and broken bones.

Thirty years ago, most people thought osteoporosis and the broken bones it can cause were a part of normal aging. Researchers today know a lot about how you can protect your bones throughout your life. We have learned that getting enough calcium, vitamin D and regular exercise are important for your bones.

Eating fruits and vegetables is also good for bone health. On the other hand, eating poorly, smoking, drinking too much alcohol or not exercising can cause bone loss and osteoporosis.

You are never too young or too old to improve the health of your bones. Osteoporosis prevention should begin in childhood. But it should not stop there.

Whatever your age, the habits you adopt now can affect your bone health for the rest of your life. Now is the time to take action. For more information, visit www.nof.org/aboutosteoporosis.

