



KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train to Fight. Train to Win.

JAN. 13, 2011 VOL. 72 NO. 2

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www.keesler.af.mil

Keesler — 70 years of training, caring, innovating

By Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller

81st Training Wing commander

This year marks 70 years of continuous technical training operations here at Keesler Air Force Base. In August 1941, the first Army Air Corps recruits arrived to newly-designated Keesler Field. Four weeks later, technical training began in the 301st, 302nd and 304th Technical School Squadrons.

By 1949, the base was widely known as the electronic technical training center of the Air Force, hosting training courses in specialized electronics such as radar and shortwave radios, as well as other skill sets including metrology and air traffic control.

In 1951, a \$44 million improvement brought several new facilities to the base, including a 350-bed hospital and two-story academic buildings,

later named Allee, Dolan and Wolfe Halls, that are still in use today.

Seventy years later, Team Keesler is still recognized for excellence in its technical training mission. However, how we do our mission today and the facilities we have to support this mission are a product of our 70 years of heritage in many ways. Within this heritage there are several enduring themes which still resonate today.

Training — Without a doubt, training is the foundation of our heritage. Since 1941, more than 2 million students have graduated from technical training courses taught at Keesler and earned initial qualifications in a variety of skill sets. You can be certain that providing relevant technical training is as important to the Air Force mission today as it was in 1948, when the 3380th Technical Training Wing was activated with Major Gen. Charles

Lawrence in command. The standards we set and the examples we provide serve as lasting examples for every Airman we train throughout their Air Force careers.

Caring — Since 1939, when the citizens of Biloxi donated the land, including the city airport, to build a technical training school on the Gulf Coast, taking care of our Airmen has been a dominant theme in our base heritage and our community partnership with the City of Biloxi. As early as 1949, the Air Force invested almost \$7 million dollars to build more than 800 homes for Keesler families. In 1973, the base was a key participant in Operation Homecoming, hosting Airmen returning home from Vietnam after several years of captivity as prisoners of war. From the hospital to the flight line, taking care of our Airmen is a cornerstone of our heritage.

Innovating — Bringing the newest and latest technology into the classroom and into the Air Force has been a mainstay in our heritage. For example, in 1962, Keesler was the first technical training center to introduce television technology into the classroom. In 1979, the Air Force took action to consolidate all computer programmer and operator training at Keesler. In 2010, the 81st Training Group launched undergraduate cyber training, bringing the newest cyberspace domain into the technical training curriculum.

Since 1941, Keesler has earned and maintained a reputation as a top technical training center in our Air Force, a reputation we proudly maintain today. Respect the 70 years of heritage which makes Keesler what it is today and take pride in your contribution to our rich heritage of training, caring and innovating. Train to fight, train to win.

Interpersonal violence is on rise with youth

By Paula Tracy

Family advocacy outreach manager

Whether you're the parent of a toddler, a teen or your kids are already grown, you need to listen up: there are some seriously scary things happening in the lives of American kids today.

It's no secret that interpersonal violence sometimes takes place between adults — even young adults — and Keesler's sexual assault prevention and response and family advocacy offices and the Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence all put a lot of energy and time into their prevention efforts. But did you know that relationship violence has become increasingly common with younger kids, as well?

Consider the following information from the Family Violence Prevention Fund:

About one in three adolescent girls in the U.S. is a victim of physical, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner — this far exceeds the victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth.

Nearly one in 10 high school students has been hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Approximately one in three sexually-active adolescent girls report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from a dating partner.

One in five young people ages 11-14 say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly half who are in relationships know friends who are verbally abused. Two in five of the youngest "tweens," ages 11-12, report having friends who are being verbally abused.



National Crime Prevention Council

58 percent of rape victims report being raped between the ages of 12-24.

Half of reported date rapes occurs among teens.

51 percent of teen girls say pressure from a guy is the reason girls send "sexy" messages or images, while only 18 percent of teen boys say pressure from a girl is the reason.

81 percent of parents surveyed don't believe or don't know if teen dating violence is an issue.

54 percent of parents have not even discussed dating violence with their child.

As a professional, these facts concern me; as a parent, I'm alarmed. At Keesler, we constantly strive to build prevention programs that effectively reduce the incidence of interpersonal violence on our base. Yet, given the research that demonstrates the climbing rates of violence within our teens, it's

clear we must introduce intervention efforts even earlier. But how?

As responsible adults, we must first educate ourselves on what is really happening "out there," then resolve to do our part to educate teens and young adults, participate in prevention efforts and be the watchful eyes and listening ears within our communities.

There is an enjoyable, educational way to start.

Jan. 28, Keesler is extremely fortunate to host Ben Atherton-Zeman, a spokesperson for the National Organization for Men Against Sexism. A gifted, dedicated educator on the issues of violence prevention, he brings 15 years of experience working with rape crisis centers, domestic violence programs and state coalitions. "Voices of Men" is a multimedia play that deals with such critical issues as sexual assault, date rape, dating violence, domestic violence and sexual harassment, he uses humor, celebrity male voice impressions and video clips to illustrate these topics in a manner that promotes learning and understanding.

The free event for all personnel takes place 9 a.m. and noon at the Bay Breeze Event Center ballroom. You can pick the time that best fits your schedule. A 3:30 p.m. session has been scheduled to meet the needs of 81st Training Group personnel, although they may register for an earlier session if preferred.

To register, call 377-8635, 3457 or go to the Keesler Integrated Resource Team page on Facebook to designate your preference for show times. See you there!



ON THE COVER

Suzy Templin, military fine artist for the 81st Training Wing, begins creating the poster for Keesler's Angels Over the Bay Open House and Air Show Jan. 6. The event is scheduled to take place March 19-20 and features an aerial performance by the Navy's Blue Angels. For more information, go to <http://www.keesler.af.mil/library/keeslerairshow/index.asp>.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



DRAGONS ON THE STREET

By Kemberly Groue

Keesler News photojournalist

What are you doing to economize in 2011?



"I'm putting aside money for my son for college."

Capt. Donna Burrowes, 81st Medical Operations Squadron



"I'm clipping coupons and eating out less."

Susan Dawson, 81st Training Wing historian



"I'm trying to car-pool more."

Staff Sgt. Peter Plete, 81st Medical Support Squadron

KEESLER NEWS

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TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Post-9/11 GI bill improvements announced

Air Force News Service

WASHINGTON — The Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 was recently signed into law.

Effective Aug. 1, 2009, but not payable until Oct. 1

Certain National Guard members mobilized on Title 32 orders on, or after, Sept. 11, 2001 are now eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill and any qualifying Title 32 mobilization may be used to increase your percentage of eligibility.

Effective Aug. 1

The Post-9/11 GI Bill will pay all public school tuition and fees; this includes graduate training, out-of-state tuition differential and related expenses.

For students attending private institutions of higher learning or foreign schools, the tuition and fee reimbursement will be capped at the lesser of net out-of-pocket cost or \$17,500 annually. However the Yellow Ribbon Program still exists.

College fund payments will be paid on a monthly basis instead of a lump sum at the beginning of the term. Those training at one-half time or less will be eligible for college fund payments.

Reimbursement will be available for multiple licensing and certification tests and fees paid to take national examinations used for admission to an institution of higher learning, such as the SAT.

Vocational rehabilitation participants will be able to elect the higher housing allowance offered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill if otherwise eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Break or interval pay will no longer be payable under any Department of Veterans Affairs education benefit program unless under an executive order of the president or due to an emergency situation such as a natural disaster or strike. Entitlement that previously would have been used for break pay will be available for use during a future enrollment. This means that if a semester ends Dec. 15, housing allowance is paid for the first 15 days of December only. Benefits will begin again when a new semester begins. Benefits will be paid for the remaining days of that month and term.

Students using other VA education programs are included in this change. Monthly benefits will be prorated in the same manner.

Effective Oct. 1

For those training at greater than one-half time, housing allowance will be prorated according to the training time those are enrolled in. For example, if a person's full housing allowance is \$1,000, and that person is attending three-quarters time, housing allowance would be \$750.

Housing allowance will be payable to students enrolled solely in distance learning. The housing allowance will be one-half the national average basic allowance for housing for an staff sergeant with dependents. The rate would be \$673.50 for 2011.

Non-college degree programs, on-the-job training and flight-training programs will be covered under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The book stipend will be payable to active-duty members.

Drug war, disaster relief other reasons to fight

By Steve Hoffmann

Keesler News staff

Where does your mind go when you think of being deployed to fight a war? Probably someplace in Iraq — sandy, windswept and barren — or to the rocky crags of Afghanistan. But what if deployment meant warm, lush green, coastal landscapes?

This is Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras, where Tech. Sgt. Carlos Hurtado spent the better part of 2010 deployed.

Soto Cano is home to Joint Task Force-Bravo under United States Southern Command. JTF-Bravo's mission is to "support and conduct joint, combined and interagency operations in the joint operations area, to enhance regional cooperative security initiatives and to support democratic development."

"That was probably the most challenging aspect of my deployment," Sergeant



Sergeant Hurtado

Hurtado pointed out. "Working in a joint environment, dealing with and trying to understand the different ways other branches of the military do the same thing. As an Airman, I'm trained to do it one way. As project manager, trying to get everyone on board to work a project the Air

"Honduras is a central hub for drug traffic. So ensuring that field operatives have reliable communications in their efforts to intercept and disrupt that trade is important."

— **Sergeant Hurtado**

Force way was challenging."

Sergeant Hurtado is a telecommunications project manager with the 81st Training Support Squadron. He's been in the Air Force for 19 years and stationed at Keesler for four.

During his deployment to Honduras, Sergeant Hurtado was responsible for overseeing and facilitating the implementation of reliable communication systems in support of JTF-Bravo's mission. Establishing and maintaining reliable communications systems is vital to performing one of the most critical aspects of JTF-Bravo's mission — counterdrug operations.

"Honduras is a central hub for drug traffic," Sergeant Hurtado explained. "So ensuring that field operatives have reliable communications in their efforts to intercept and disrupt that trade is important."

Sergeant Hurtado understood the language of the locals and was able to get them involved working on different installations.

"I was able to explain to them what needed to be done and how to do it," he said. "This has been the most

memorable and satisfying aspect of my deployment — living for a time in a third world country and learning the culture of the locals and how they live."

Disaster relief is another major component of JTF-Bravo's mission.

"Advanced, reliable communication systems become all that more important when responding to natural disasters, performing search and rescue missions and dropping supplies," Sergeant Hurtado explained. "I am very proud of the work we are doing down there."

"It's good for people to know that not everyone who gets deployed goes to Iraq and Afghanistan," said Lt. Col. Janet Pattison, 81 TRSS commander. "Many of our Airmen are doing vital work and serving in places other than the obvious, like Honduras."

Enlisted sought for nurse commissioning

Air Force Personnel, Services and Manpower Public Affairs

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — Air Force officials are seeking active-duty enlisted Airmen to apply for the fall 2011 Nurse Enlisted Commissioning Program.

The program offers enlisted members an opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in a high-need academic major.

Air Force Personnel Center officials will conduct the annual NECP board May 9 to 13 and select up to 50 enlisted members.

NECP students will complete their degree at a college or university with an Air Force ROTC detachment or a college or university with a cross-town agreement.

Students will commission after passing the National Council Licensure Examination and then attend commissioned officer training and the nurse transition program. Students will attend school year-round for up to 24 consecutive calendar months, including summer sessions.

A cross-town agreement is an agreement between a host school and an ROTC detachment and another school in the local area that contains a clause allowing students to attend a school while tuition and fees are paid by the ROTC detachment.

Interested Airmen must notify AFPC officials of intent to apply no later than Feb. 28. Transcripts for an academic evaluation should be sent no later than March 28, with a final application submitted by April 25.

Eligibility requirements are:

- Be an active duty senior airman and above .
- Be a citizen of the United States .
- Be commissioned by age 42.
- Be worldwide qualified.
- Meet all of the requirements for commissioning.
- Meet all prerequisites to complete an academic review.
- Should have completed 59 semester hours of graded col-

lege coursework from a regionally accredited college or university and completed general psychology, nutrition, statistics, anatomy and physiology I and II with labs, microbiology with lab and chemistry I and II with labs.

For more information, visit the base education office in Sablich Center.

**Don't drink
and drive.**

Call
**Airmen Against
Drunk Driving,
377-SAVE,
for a
safe ride home.**

**360 saves
in 2010**

Worship schedule

Roman Catholic

Daily Mass (except non-training Fridays), 11:15 a.m., Triangle Chapel.

Sunday Mass, 9 a.m., Triangle Chapel.

Protestant

Traditional service, 9 a.m. Sunday, Larcher Chapel.

Contemporary service, 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Triangle Chapel.

Gospel service, noon Sunday, Triangle Chapel

Islamic

Prayer is five times daily; Salaat ul-Jummah congregational prayer, noon on Friday, Building 2003.. For more information, call 377-2520.

Latter-Day Saints

Student group service, 2 p.m. Sunday, Triangle Chapel. For more information, call 396-5274 or 1-616-881-1994.

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81stTRW.Keesler

OTS board cancelled

Air Force Personnel Center

As part of the Air Force Management Program, the Air Force Recruiting Service is cancelling the January 2011 Rated Officer Training School board and possibly future boards until further notice.

Officials note that Air Force retention is at a 16-year high and the service is projected to exceed authorized officer strength.

Cancelling the board is necessary due to the Air Force's overall force management program to reduce the authorized end-strength, the maximum number of personnel each service is authorized annually by Congress and limited by Department of Defense budget constraints.

Officials said the Air Force is also imbalanced

across a number of Air Force specialties and must shape the force to better meet mission requirements.

Officials recognize the stress and uncertainty cancelling the boards will create for many of our applicants, but stress that the Air Force must make the difficult but fiscally responsible decision to stay within its authorized end-strength ceiling.

The OTS board cancellations aren't permanent and selection boards will be held in the future. I

Enlisted members interested in officer opportunities are advised to stay in contact with their counselor in the base education office for any program changes.

For more information, contact AFRSOTS@randolph.af.mil or log on to www.rs.af.mil.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

Education fair

The education office is partnering with the 81st Medical Group Hospital for an education fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 20 in the hospital's Don Wylie Auditorium.

There will be representatives from 25 area and distance learning schools on hand.

For more information, call the education office, 376-8710 or 8708.

CCAF graduation

Feb. 25 is the last day to apply for the Community College of the Air Force spring graduating class.

By that date, all supporting documentation must be on file with CCAF at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., including your nomination action request.

For more information, visit the education services office, Room 224, Sablich Center, or call 376-8708 or 8710.

Hap Arnold grants

The application deadline for the 2011-2012 General Henry H. Arnold education grant program is March 11.

Application forms and eligibility requirements and other information to apply for the \$2,000

grants are found at the Air Force Aid Society's website at www.afas.org.

Spouses club

Applications are now being accepted for 2011 Keesler Spouses Club scholarships.

Eligible applicants include high school seniors entering a college, university or vocational studies as well as spouses pursuing a degree or vocational studies.

Applications and more eligibility information are available at www.keeslerspousesclub.com or call 273-2489 or 243-7133.

Professional manager certification

The Community College of the Air Force awards professional manager certification that formally recognizes an individual's advanced level of education and experience in leadership and management, as well as professional accomplishments.

The program provides a structured professional development track that supplements enlisted professional military education and the career field education and training plan.

For more information, log on to <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/certifications.asp> or call the education office, 376-8708 or 8710.

NEWS AND FEATURES

81st Contracting Squadron earns three command awards

By Steve Hoffmann

Keesler News staff

The 81st Contracting Squadron received three command-level awards for fiscal year 2010.

The squadron received one unit award for outstanding contracting squadron of the year and two individual awards.

The two individual award winners are:

Mr. George Budz, outstanding contracting civilian of the year.

Master Sgt. Donald Crawford, Air Mobility Command contracting senior noncommissioned officer of the year.

The 81st CONS has done a lot with a little, efficiently performing behind the scenes duties that allows Keesler to operate, according to Lt. Col. Jonathan Wright, commander.

During 2010, the 81st CONS performed more than a thousand contract actions totaling approximately \$92 million.

One key innovation was the creation and implementation of software that has slashed the processing time for medical requirements by 98 percent. This software is now used throughout the Air Force.

The 81st CONS oversight led Keesler's food service contracting team to win the 2010 John L. Hennessy Award for multiple facility food service.

More than \$5 million was infused into the local economy as a result of contracts that were awarded to area businesses in 2010.

Mr. Budz is both director of business operations for 81st CONS as well as the administrative contracting officer, in which he administered \$225 million in base operating support. He was instrumental in engineering the correction of the base water supply when



Mr. Budz

failures were discovered in the system.

His leadership was key in spearheading a number of base construction and renovation projects. These included 50 facility projects valued at \$6 million, airfield renovations, fitness center renovations and the construction of new classrooms. His oversight has also led to significant cost savings in the construction of the new hospital addition.

Mr. Budz rebuilt the small business program after it had been vacant for almost a year. He also authored a 40-session copper cap training and rotation program.

Sergeant Crawford, a Keesler newcomer, comes to 81st CONS from the 62nd CONS at McChord Air Force Base, Wash., where he served as squadron superintendent.

Sergeant Crawford was named an "outstanding performer" as noncommissioned officer in charge during the base's Operational Readiness Inspection. His squadron received an excellent rating.

During McChord's migration to a joint base, Sergeant Crawford was instrumental in leading this transfer by facilitating 594 contract actions



Sergeant Crawford

totaling \$47 million. After the transfer, Sergeant Crawford coordinated with Air Mobility Command and Air Force Personnel Center to assist all Airmen in his squadron with obtaining first choice assignments after deactivation.

Sergeant Crawford also coached two Airmen who had fallen below Air Force standards in physical training and enabled them to receive an excellent rating. In fact, his squadron earned an average score of 93 percent after he revised its physical training program. In addition, after revamping his squadron's recognition program, it was successful in garnering three wing level awards.

Sergeant Crawford led his squadron's deactivation dining out and was the NCO in charge of a multi-organization wing retreat ceremony. He also served as a "rising four" mentor through the first sergeants council.

Sergeant Crawford also led volunteer operations which provided 97 holiday baskets to deployed Airmen's families and served close to 3,000 meals at a local homeless shelter.

IN THE NEWS

King memorial luncheon planned

The annual memorial luncheon honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is 11 a.m. today at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

The speaker is Rev. Eric Dickey, pastor of First Missionary Baptist Church, Gulfport.

Clinics close for warrior training

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group conducts warrior training noon to 5 p.m. today.

Immigration assistance

From 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. today, a representative from the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is in the legal office to meet with military members, their families, retirees and their dependents to answer questions about the immigration application process and how being a military member helps the immigration process.

Appointments are recommended, but walk-ins are seen as time allows.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the legal office, 376-8601.

Road closure for gas line repair

Z Street from L Street to M Street in front of Building 4705 (civil engineering) is closed Monday through Feb. 11 for gas line repair.

For more information, call Clabert Buillory, 377-5856.

Early Keesler News deadline

The deadline for the Jan. 20 issue of the Keesler News is noon today because of Monday's Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday.

Watch speed in school zones

Because of budget constraints, the Biloxi School District had to eliminate school crossing guards on Pass Road near Jeff Davis Elementary and Popps Ferry Elementary Schools.

The Biloxi Police Department has stepped up speed limit enforcement in these areas.

Off-limits list

These establishments have been declared "off-limits" to all armed forces personnel by the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board::

Biloxi — Ya-ya's, 2623 Pass Road.

Pascagoula — Bunksmall Apartments, 708 S. Pascagoula Street.

Ocean Springs — Pugs, 6213 Washington Avenue.

D'Iberville — Guitars and Cadillacs, 4031 Popps Ferry Road

Gulfport — Herbal Alternatives, 1909 East Pass Road and 11530 U.S. Highway 49.

Dragons deployed — 253

PERSONNEL NOTES

Use-or-lose leave guidance

For guidance on special leave accrual for members in use-or-lose leave status, call the military personnel section's customer service element, 376-8347 or 8348.

Stop loss special pay extension

American Forces Press Service

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for retroactive Stop Loss special pay has been extended to March 4.

Congress established the retroactive pay to compensate service members who served involuntary extensions or whose retirement was suspended between Sept. 11, 2001 through Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members and their beneficiaries are required to submit a claim to their respective military service to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in stop-loss status.

Service officials estimate 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries are eligible.

Because most of those eligible had separated from the military, the services have engaged in persistent outreach efforts throughout the year. Efforts, including direct mail, engaging military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets, will continue throughout the period of eligibility, Defense Department officials said.

Classes for job hunters

These upcoming classes are held in the airman and family readiness center's conference room in Sablich Center.

There's a limit of 10 per class, and registration is required.

Interview skills and salary negotiation — 9 a.m. Jan. 20 or Feb. 24.

Federal format resume writing — 9 a.m. Wednesday and Feb. 2.

Civilian format resume writing — 9 a.m. Jan. 25.

Career skills assessment — 9 a.m. Jan. 26, Feb. 10 or March 10.

For more information, call 376-8728.

Transition assistance briefings

The airman and family readiness center has mandatory pre-separation briefings for members planning to separate or retire — 1 p.m. Tuesdays for those separating with honorable discharges and 2:30 p.m. for retirees in Room 110, Sablich Center.

Bring one copy of separation or retirement orders. This appointment is required by law, and must be accomplished 90 calendar days before the separation or retirement date. For short-notice separations or retirements, the briefing should be done as soon as possible.

Permissive TDY procedures

All newly-arrived permanent party active-duty members, must report to their units upon arrival at Keesler.

Unit personnel coordinators assist members with completing permissive temporary duty requests and obtaining the commander's signature. Members may not depart on permissive TDY without in-processing the military personnel section and obtaining a leave number.

For more information, call 376-8347.

Military personnel contacts

Military personnel section phone numbers:

Customer support — 376-8738.

Career development — 376-8739.

Force management — 376-8740.

Student personnel center — 377-4111.

Testing — 376-4111.

New identification system gears up

Maj. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, 2nd Air Force commander, is registered for the new Defense Biometric Identification System by Staff Sgt. Kurt Rodriguez, 81st Security Forces Squadron. Registration takes five minutes and involves scanning an ID card's barcode, verifying information and taking an electronic fingerprint. Registration for active-duty members and Defense Department employees runs through March 31. Registration for retirees and dependants is April 1 through June 31, but the pass and ID office won't turn away those wishing to register earlier. Registration sites include the visitor center across from the White Avenue Gate, the military personnel section in Sablich Center, the exchange pharmacy and the 81st Medical Group Hospital's information desk. For more information, call 377-3844.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



Library, youth center launch “One Page at a Time” program for Keesler’s younger readers

By Diana Egler

CSC marketing

Are you looking for a way to expand your child’s mind, vocabulary and reading skills?

McBride Library and the youth center have joined forces to present “One Page at a Time,” a free motivational reading program for dependents of active-duty members, retirees, Defense Department civilians and contractors.

The program continues until March 14 and is open to children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Readers must turn in logs by this date to be considered for prizes.

The program allows participants to create their own reading lists from thousands of titles, log their literary successes and earn points for each book read.

In order to participate in the program, all children must register and pick up their reading logs and suggested reading lists from the library’s children’s room or download the forms from www.afyouthprograms.com.

Books can be checked out from McBride Library; any city, county or school library, or can be personally owned.

For more information on the program, call McBride Library, 377-2181, or the youth center, 377-4116.

Blood testing equipment upgraded

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group Hospital laboratory boasts new equipment that improves its ability to respond to physician requests for blood tests.

The new system, the cobas® 6000 analyzer series manufactured by Roche Diagnostics, was formally unveiled Dec. 20. The equipment analyzes blood samples for routine and innovative chemistry tests.

“The cobas 6000 analyzer series make our lab much more efficient,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Bessmer, 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron pathology flight commander. “This system provides broad testing capability to enhance our practice of laboratory medicine for years to come. This is another step in our commitment to continuously improve our quality of patient care, while providing our

medical staff with the tools they need.”

He continued, “The hospital decided to upgrade the laboratory as demand for more tests continued to grow. The highly compact system consolidates more than 95 percent of routine testing, therefore requiring fewer analyzers, which optimizes lab staff efficiency. With this system we save 1,200 manhours per year in maintenance alone and results in a 50 percent reduction of turnaround times for certain critical tests.”

According to Capt. Mary Caldwell, core laboratory chief, “We perform more than a million tests annually and that demand continues to grow. We found ourselves needing to accomplish more every day with fewer resources as we filled our deployment taskings and peo-

ple departed. With increased demand, we knew we needed to make improvements in order to maintain our goal of producing fast and accurate test results.”

The captain explained, “The analyzer integrates multiple technologies that provide efficiency and the flexibility to grow as our needs change.

“Upgrading the laboratory was a tremendous task, but the transition was so smooth few people in the hospital noticed it was going on. Whenever you take on this type of project, you worry how it will affect the daily workload and if it will impede the process,” she said. “However, the process was painless thanks in large part to the hard work and dedication of the core lab staff and Roche Diagnostics team who kept everything moving on schedule without much interference with our normal day-to-day processes.”

The contract was awarded July 1. The two analyzers, which replaced four separate pieces of equipment, arrived Aug. 16 and installation was completed Sept. 16.

“It was an incredible schedule that had us going live within six weeks of the analyzers hitting the ground,” she said. “It entailed countless hours of work by the (81st Medical Support Squadron) facilities staff to prepare the installation site and put in wiring and power for the new equipment. The effort also required training the staff and manually processing specimens for more than 30 days while the automation piece of the equipment was shipped in, validated and installed. This was accomplished while we continued to provide timely and accurate lab results to the providers for patient care.”

Captain Caldwell observed, “We’ve streamlined processes and increased efficiencies by going from four testing platforms to two. The project enables us to remain on the cutting edge of technology so we can offer the best lab results to providers as they care for our patients.”

Roche Diagnostics contributed to this report

Department of Defense officials begin pruning senior ranks, freeze staffing

By Karen Parrish

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Department officials will reduce senior ranks and freeze civilian staffing levels, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Jan. 6.

“The monetary savings from reductions in senior personnel will be relatively modest, and mostly consist of the extra staff and amenities that, by tradition, follow high rank,” Secretary Gates said.

The secretary and Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke to reporters at the Pentagon on the results of defense efficiencies initiatives begun in May to trim support costs and ensure funding for military modernization.

The primary purpose of reducing senior rank structure is “to create fewer, flatter,

more agile, and thus more effective organizations,” Secretary Gates said.

In announcing the second set of initiatives in August, Secretary Gates said he would appoint a senior task force to assess the number of positions for general and flag officers and senior executive service employees. As a result of that assessment, the department will eliminate more than 100 general officer and flag officer positions from the 900 it currently authorizes, the secretary said.

“Of those, 28 are billets that were created after 9/11, primarily for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,” he said. “They will be reduced as appropriate, as major troop deployments wind down.”

More than 80 other flag or general-officer positions spread among the services, the

Defense Department and the combatant commands “will be eliminated or downgraded,” Secretary Gates said.

Defense officials also will eliminate nearly 200 of the 1,400 civilian positions from the department’s senior executive service or equivalent positions, he said.

As department officials prune the senior ranks, they also will put a check on overall staff numbers by freezing the number of employees at current levels for the next three years, Secretary Gates said.

“Since the beginning of this fiscal year, which began Oct. 1, we’ve been operating under a freeze in the number of positions, with very limited exceptions within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the defense agencies and field activities and the combatant

commands,” the secretary said.

Secretary Gates said he instructed those organizations to “conduct a clean-sheet review” to rebalance resources, staff and functions within and across their components to reflect the department’s most pressing priorities.

“The resulting review produced a number of opportunities to trim the size of the work force, yielding more than \$4 billion in savings over the next five years,” he said. “I will recommend to the president that we hold to these limits in overall DOD staff levels for the next three years.”

While new requirements may emerge that require further staff support, the secretary said, those needs should be met by shifting personnel from other, less important activities within the organization.

Identity theft is a personal nightmare and security risk. Shred bills, statements, letters, old journals, records, outdated application forms and any documents that contain your full name, Social Security number, duty title and job information, credit card, bank account numbers and names of family members. If you see documents being removed from trash cans, call the 81st Security Forces Squadron law enforcement desk, 377-3040.

Two Keesler flying squadrons deploy as one

By Tech Sgt. Ryan Labadens

403rd Wing Public Affairs

For the first time since they began training side-by-side in August, the 815th and 345th Airlift Squadrons deployed together Saturday in support of overseas contingency operations in Southwest Asia.

Earlier this year, Reservists from the 815th AS "Flying Jennies" began training for the 120-day deployment alongside their active-duty counterparts in the 345th AS "Golden Eagles."

Lt. Col. Denson Tutwiler, 815th AS commander, said

about a third of the 403rd Wing's deploying members will be from the 345th AS, while the remaining personnel will be from the 815th. He stressed, however, that both squadrons train as one cohesive unit.

"We don't see ourselves as two separate squadrons; we train as one," said Colonel Tutwiler. "The integration is seamless."

The squadrons, along with maintainers from the 403rd Maintenance Group, will be one piece of the larger deployment puzzle when they link up with the active-duty 41st AS from Little Rock Air

Force Base, Ark. Having already embraced the spirit of cooperation, the Jennies and Eagles will continue to set the standard for total force integration downrange.

"The interaction between the 815th and 345th has been outstanding," said Lt. Col. Craig Williams, 345th AS commander. "And that is not just the politically correct answer, it's a fact of life and how we operate day to day."

Flying the C-130J-30 model aircraft, these squadrons have been training for airlift operations they could perform while in theater.

"Our training involves tactical missions such as assault landings on unimproved (rough) airfields and threat avoidance to evade small arms fire," said Maj. Rick Crist, 815th AS pilot. "That's typically the type of flight training we do for what we would encounter in the (area of responsibility)."

Tech. Sgt. Ricky Jackson, 345th AS loadmaster, said members of the unit have practiced all the airdrop and air/land delivery and recovery procedures normally performed while deployed.

"We train consistently throughout the year," said Sergeant Jackson. "Right now we're completing all the just-in-time training most people do just before deployment."

Colonel Williams said that



Members of the 403rd Wing give one last salute as the C-130J-30 departs. Reservists with the 403rd MXG and 815th AS and active-duty members from the 345th AS deployed for 120 days in support of overseas contingency operations in Southwest Asia.

some of their flight training was modified to prepare squadron members for the environment they will encounter in their deployed location.

"In the last six months, we sent local trainers to Utah, Arizona, and Nevada to train in areas with terrain similar to where we will be operating," said Colonel Williams.

The Flying Jennies already have several deployments under their belt. Most recently, they returned from another 120-day deployment in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We work well together," said Colonel Tutwiler. "This (upcoming) deployment will provide us with some great experience."



Photos by Staff Sgt. Yolanda Addison

Jamie Black, sister of Senior Airman Addison Black, 403rd MXS, holds back Grace Hernandez, Airman Black's niece, as she tries to walk on the flightline toward the C-130.

Formal officer cross-flow program announced

By Master Sgt. Amaani Lyle

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — In an effort to balance officer skills across the active-duty component, the Air Force will offer cross-flow options for nonrated line officers in specified career fields, officials said here Friday.

The nonrated officer cross-flow program is being announced as part of the fiscal 2011 Force Management Program. The application window opened Monday and closes Jan. 31.

Eligible officers in overmanned career fields will be able to retrain into undermanned career fields, personnel officials said. Officers can identify up to three Air Force specialties for consideration in their application packages.

While officers have been able to voluntarily retrain into different career fields for some time, this particular program involves a formalized procedure to ensure a fair, competitive process, said Mr. John Park, the force management division chief, deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services.

"The program evens the playing field and allows officers an opportunity to gain a breadth of experience," Mr. Park said. "The FY11 cross-flow cycle will consider volunteers first, but an involuntary selection process may be implemented if the Air Force does not meet its intended target numbers."

This process will then be institutionalized as an enduring, deliberate tool for managing the force in fiscal 2012 and beyond. Officials said its success will level career fields with quality officers to meet sustainment and mission needs.

A panel is set to convene at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, Feb. 14-18 to competitively select officers to cross-train into targeted career fields. The panel will consist of five Air Force officers in the rank of colonel. Panel members will use the whole-person concept, including professional development, when considering officers for cross flow. Training availability is also a consideration in the process.

Officers in select year groups from 2002-2007 in Air Force specialty codes 17D, 21A, 21M, 31P, 38F, 61A/B/C and 65F, and 2000-2001 for 38Fs only, can compete to cross-flow into the 13D/L, 14N, 35P, 62E and 63A career fields.

For more information about cross-flow opportunities, visit the Air Force Personnel Center personnel services website.

Sense of duty beckons reserve police officer

By Senior Airman
Kimberly Erickson

403rd Wing Public Affairs

Editor's note: This is the last story in a series on civilian jobs of 403rd Wing Reservists.

As a young active-duty Airman serving as a medical technician in the emergency room, he listened to them recount tales of heartache and heroism, traffic accidents and bank robberies. It was those stories told by Air Force security forces members in passing, detailing everything from the mundane to the obscure, that motivated him to become part of the thin blue line.

More than a decade later, Master Sgt. Bryan Vincent, 403rd Security Forces Squadron first, is no longer the Airman listening to the stories, but the one living and sharing them.

Sergeant Vincent first volunteered as a reserve police officer with the Biloxi Police

Department while still on active duty.

"After serving as a reserve police officer at the Biloxi Police Department for six years, I decided to separate from active duty to take a full-time position with the BPD," the Biloxi, Miss., native said.

Still wanting to be part of the military, Sergeant Vincent decided to join the Reserve and cross-train into security forces.

Following 9/11, he was activated for one year and served as part of a team responsible for transporting Taliban and al-Qaida prisoners from Afghanistan to Guantanamo Bay.

Vincent said being activated for a year reaffirmed his belief in the importance of his role as a security forces Reservist.

"We're the military's first line of defense," he said of security forces. "If we fail,



Photo by Senior Airman Kimberly Erickson
Sergeant Vincent shows Senior Airman Hampshire Collins, 403rd SFS, proper disassembly and cleaning of his M-9 after completing proficiency training.

people die. We train to succeed, protect our people and resources."

Whether serving as a Reservist or within the BPD, Sergeant Vincent is viewed by his colleagues as a leader.

"He's a very good police

officer," said BPD Maj. Charles Brit, who's worked closely with Sergeant Vincent for more than 15 years. "I think the military has given him leadership experience he wouldn't get here as a patrol officer."

Professionalism is what

makes Sergeant Vincent a well-rounded leader, stated Tech. Sgt. Kayetta Robert, 403rd SFS.

"Sergeant Vincent has a strong work ethic," she said. "Taking one uniform off to put on another doesn't change that in a person."

As first sergeant, he has worked to get his security forces Airmen recognition for their work, Sergeant Robert added.

"A lot of support units don't get the credit they deserve and Sergeant Vincent puts the spotlight where it needs to be: on the individuals in the unit," she said.

Taking care of his troops and community members is not the only thing that drives Sergeant Vincent to serve.

"My father was a Marine; my brother and sister served in the Army," he said. "I feel a strong sense of duty to serve my country and to serve for those who can't."

Purple Heart commander performs tough duty with tender heart

By Airman 1st Class Heather Holcomb

Keesler Public Affairs

While many people were tearing through wrapping paper, sipping cocoa and basking in the glow of twinkling lights, Joseph “Snake” Balanovich was thousands of miles away from home being Santa for wounded soldiers at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Mr. Balanovich is the commander of the Biloxi Military Order of the Purple Heart which is comprised solely of veterans wounded in combat operations. He started his 23½-year Army career as a sniper and then moved on to aviation. He also spent 3½ years fighting in Vietnam.

Even after he retired from the Army, Mr. Balanovich has never stopped serving his country. Now, he spends most of his time working with the MOPH to give back to past and present military members.

“The only thing we do is help other veterans,” Mr. Balanovich said.

Mr. Balanovich said that thanks to Brig. Gen. William Crisler, commander of the 172nd Airlift Wing, he had the most memorable Christmas of his life.

Dec. 23, he boarded “Spirit of the Purple Heart,” one of the 172nd AW C-17A Globemaster III aircraft, and flew from Allen C. Thompson Field Air National Guard Base in Jackson, Miss., to Joint Base Andrews, Md. There they picked up medical personnel who would assist the 23 wounded warriors on the trip home from Germany.

Mr. Balanovich said that when he went through German customs, he almost wasn’t allowed to bring the nearly \$20,000 of phone cards and gifts that the MOPH had acquired for the wounded veterans into the country.

“When the man working customs told me he would need to see a letter from my commander, I opened up my jacket and said, ‘I am the commander. Give me a sheet of paper,’” Mr. Balanovich said.

For him, the best way to give back to the troops is by allowing them the opportunity to talk to loved ones. Every year he collects and purchases as many phone cards as possible for deployed veterans.

“There’s nothing like hearing a human voice,” Mr. Balanovich said.

He spent the next two days talking to veterans and helping the chaplain and base leadership bring cheer to those restricted to the hospital for the holidays.

On the day after Christmas, Mr. Balanovich, the wounded service members, the medical staff and the C-17 crew returned to Andrews, where more extensive care awaited the wounded warriors.

“Their dedication and determination to bring our wounded home was a true inspiration,” Mr. Balanovich said.



“When the man working customs told me he would need to see a letter from my commander, I opened up my jacket and said, ‘I am the commander.’”

— Joseph “Snake” Balanovich

“As I was preparing to depart the plane, one of the surgeons told me that a triple amputee wanted to talk to me,” he said, “I leaned my ear next to his mouth because he had tubes coming from his nose and mouth and he said, ‘Thank you for coming and seeing me home. When I get up and around, will you come and visit me?’ I gave him my card and told him to call day or night and I would arrange to come.”

Mr. Balanovich said that when he returned home to Biloxi, he met with Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, 81st Training Wing commander, and told him about his trip. He said that when he told General Mueller about the amputee’s request, the general said, “The day he calls you, you call me and the Air Force will get you there.”

Mr. Balanovich doesn’t plan on slowing down any time soon. He retired from the Army, the fire department and construction and plans to continue to serve his country and give back to veterans with the MOPH as long as possible.

“I guess when I can’t get around anymore, then I’ll retire,” he said.



For more news, photos, information and videos,
log on to www.keesler.af.mil

\$4.3 million in contracts awarded in final quarter

81st Contracting Squadron

The 81st Contracting Squadron reported that in the last quarter of 2010, 31 contract actions totaling \$4,350,468.93 were awarded with businesses in the local areas such as Biloxi, Ocean Springs, D'Iberville, Gulfport, Pascagoula and Gautier.

In December alone, there were 11 actions valued at \$881,061.37 in the local area. This represents "prime" contract dollars only and doesn't include subcontract spending, according to Lt. Col. Jonathan Wright, 81st CONS commander.

"The squadron's contracts with local businesses generally reflect a wide variety of service requirements that support the installation," Colonel Wright said. "For instance, the variety spans services such as supporting the chapel to services in the transportation industry."

As the squadron reviewed its annual expenditures, it reported service contracts involving 618 service contract employees and 768 construction contract employees who reside in the local area.

Companies interested in bidding opportunities will find requirements for contracts valued at \$25,000 posted on the federal business opportunities website at www.fbo.gov. Keesler posts are found under Agencies, then Department of the Air Force, then search by location to find 81st CONS.

Tax office opens Tuesday

By Richard Brock

Legal office

The base tax office in Room 229, Sablich Center, opens Tuesday.

Hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on training Fridays. Taxpayers are asked to call for an appointment to ensure a preparer is available to assist them, said Richard Ess, tax office manager.

Almost all federal and state returns will be filed electronically. There are four filing stations at the tax office. Additionally, each squadron will have one or more tax preparers and a listing of names will be published as soon as it becomes available.

Electronic filing is in big demand as it lessens the time taxpayers wait for a refund. However, electronic filing requires that the taxpayer have:

All W-2 forms.

Social Security numbers for each family member claimed on a return.

All 1099 forms which reflect either interest you earned, dividends received or retired pay.

A copy of your tax return from last year.

A Form 8879 and state forms have to be signed by both tax filers, so both should be present or a taxpayer should be prepared to take the forms to be signed by the spouse.

Taxpayers who are going to electronically file with itemized deductions may have to wait until the middle of February when that form is available in the system.

Several changes have been made for 2010:

The adoption credit is now refundable.

Taxpayers can make a qualified rollover contribution to a Roth IRA regardless of the amount of their modified adjusted gross income.

Some state and federal return forms may be obtained at the same location. Distribution racks with some state and federal returns are located outside of the tax office.

For more information and appointments, call 376-8141.

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Leaders outline implementation plan

By Cheryl Pellerin

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Jan. 6, Defense Secretary Robert Gates described the Pentagon’s three-step process for preparing to allow gays to serve openly in the military services.

At a Pentagon news conference with Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary Gates updated reporters on the department’s plan for implementing repeal of the so-called “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law, which has been in effect since 1993 and remains in effect until the process is complete.

“Our goal here is to move as quickly, but as responsibly, as possible,” Secretary Gates said. “I see this as a three-step process. The first is to finalize changes in regulations (and) policies (and) get clearer definition on benefits.”

The second phase is to prepare training materials for use by personnel specialists, chaplains, commanders and other

leaders, and those who are in daily contact with service members, he said.

The third phase, the secretary explained, is the actual training for service members.

“We’re trying to get the first two phases of that process done as quickly as possible,” he said. “My hope is that it can be done within a matter of a very few weeks, so that we can then move on to what is the real challenge, which is providing training to 2.2 million people.”

The House of Representatives passed legislation in May that called for the president, defense secretary and Joint Chiefs chairman to certify the implementation plan before the repeal takes effect.

Nov. 30, 2010, Pentagon officials released the report of a working group that reviewed issues associated with a potential repeal. Dec. 18, the Senate voted 65-31 for repeal, and President Barack Obama signed the legislation into law Dec. 22.

Secretary Gates said Clif-

ford Stanley, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, is leading the effort.

“I have asked Undersecretary Stanley to accelerate the first two phases of this process as much as he possibly can so that we can get on with the training process,” the secretary said.

Admiral Mullen said the legislation specifies that the repeal will take effect only after he, Secretary Gates and President Obama certify that new policies and implementing regulations are consistent with standards of military readiness, effectiveness, unit cohesion and retention.

“From my perspective,” the chairman said, “now is not the time to ‘come out,’ if you will,” noting that even after the required certification takes place, the present law will remain in effect for 60 more days. “We’ll get through this. We’ll do it deliberately. We certainly are focused on this, and we won’t dawdle.”

Jeep-driving general



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Retired Maj. Gen. Jesse Allen of Biloxi, left, discusses his autobiography, "From Jeep Driver to General," with Capt. Jennifer Mack, 81st Training Group, and 2nd Lt. Bill Kiser, 81st Comptroller Squadron, during a company grade officers council book club meeting Jan. 5 at 81st Training Wing headquarters.

Military urged to make 'quit tobacco' resolution

Department of Defense

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — Each year, more than a million people successfully quit tobacco, and the Department of Defense wants more military personnel included in that number in 2011.

"We are asking our active duty and retired service members and their families to make a resolution to quit tobacco," said Dr. (Cmdr.) Aileen Buckler, chair of DOD's alcohol and tobacco advisory committee. "Tobacco use impairs military readiness and results in serious health problems, so New Year's is a great time to commit to stopping tobacco use."

With studies showing people are 10 times more likely to succeed in behavior change when acting on a resolution, the new year appears to be the perfect opportunity to start the process of quitting tobacco.

"But making a resolution to quit tobacco is just the beginning. Developing a strategic plan to overcome obstacles and stay on course is the ultimate key to successful quitting," Dr. Buckler noted.

Dr. Buckler refers to several Tricare resources, including Quit Tobacco — Make Everyone Proud, DOD's tobacco cessation campaign. The campaign website, www.ucanquit2.org, features Train2Quit, an online support system that uses interactive quit tools, self-assessment questionnaires, quizzes and other activities. The support system shows service members how to create a customizable quit plan with a calendar to track

progress and learn how to beat cravings, overcome weight gain and cope with the effects of nicotine withdrawal. The site also offers live help with links to personal quit coaches available 24/7 to get answers to questions about quitting tobacco and how to stay tobacco-free.

Currently, the website also features a New Year's resolutions page where individuals can post their resolution to quit tobacco. Individuals can send e-cards of their resolution to quit tobacco, and family and friends can also send e-cards of encouragement to those trying to quit. Free New Year's smoking cessation materials are available for health professionals and other installation leaders to order or download to help promote events. The site also has an "I made a resolution to quit tobacco in 2011" badge that can be downloaded to a Facebook page.

Users of the DOD website can sign up to receive quit tips via text messages or personal widget downloads. The site also has a savings calculator, games and blogs for peer support, as well as social networking links to Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The site provides medication information, news articles, podcasts, RSS feeds and special monthly features.

All non-Medicare eligible beneficiaries can receive assistance with smoking cessation through Tricare's toll-free smoking help line. Toll-free telephone lines are available in each Tricare region offering 24/7 support.

Hospital volunteers recognized

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group Hospital's Volunteer Services recognized its members during the organization's annual awards luncheon held Dec. 10 at the Bay Breeze Event center. Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Kory Cornum, 81st MDG commander, was guest speaker and helped present the awards.

The members are credited with providing a total of 11,717 hours of service during 2010.

Honorees were :

Less than one year — Monica Benjamin, chaplain's office; Katherine Cain, pediatric clinic; Katherine Chatham, women's health services; Jill Clayton, main pharmacy; Carolyn Davis, main pharmacy, book cart; Clair Davis, escort, main pharmacy; Spencer Goodwin II, exchange pharmacy; Jeanne Hawkins, exchange pharmacy; Elvin Kellum, escort; Ana McKitrick, BX pharmacy; Offelia Meffley, exchange pharmacy; Karen Miniotis, main pharmacy; Megan Nix, women's health services; Teresa Olague, main pharmacy; Tiffany Paige, exchange pharmacy; Josue Palumbo, pediatric clinic; Bernie Seal, main pharmacy, escort; and Dominique Woodfork, neurology.

One year — Donna Cifranic, exchange pharmacy; David Clark, escort; Bonnie Cotman, exchange pharmacy; Scott Cotman, exchange pharmacy; April Coy, exchange pharmacy; Patricia French, main and exchange pharmacies; Shirley Harrington, exchange pharmacy; Wayne Rupard, main pharmacy; Daniel Scott, exchange pharmacy; and Virginia Trease, main pharmacy, volunteer office.

Two years — Carmen Urbati, exchange pharmacy; Chester Urbati, escort.

Three years — Jessie Coker, main pharmacy.

Four years — Mary King, recovery room.

Six years — Nathaniel Perry, exchange pharmacy.

Seven years — Gilbert Camburn, escort; Ruth Taylor, main pharmacy.

Nine years — Clifford Dye, escort.

10 years — Helen Bristol, women's health service.

11 years — Richard Dunlap; exchange pharmacy.

12 years — Thomas Varble, escort.

13 years — Seconda Baker, book cart, volunteer office; Harry Crawford, main pharmacy; Christine Sharp, recovery room; Vernon Shaffer, exchange pharmacy.

14 years — Dean Huffer, escort.

15 years — Robert Holgate, exchange pharmacy; Raymond Lindsey, escort; Robert Meleady, exchange pharmacy.

17 years — Leo Auger; exchange pharmacy; Victor Chiolak, escort.

18 years — Thomas McLain, escort.

19 years — Grover Stuart, main pharmacy.

22 years — Rosalina Jackson, exchange pharmacy.

23 years — Margarite Edwards, main pharmacy.

25 years — Frankie Petty, chaplain's office.

26 years — Joseph LaFrance, exchange pharmacy.

29 years — Usa Jones (volunteer services director), main pharmacy, volunteer office, women's health services.

30 years — Dean Todd, escort.

38 years — Louise Turpel, chaplain's office.

Operation Homefront now accepting nominations for 2011 'Military Child'

By Elaine Wilson

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Operation Homefront, a troop- and military-family support group, is inviting people to nominate outstanding military children from all branches of service for the 2011 Military Child of the Year Award.

Each winner receives \$5,000 and is flown to Washington with a parent or guardian for a recognition ceremony April 7.

In the past, just one military child out of the services received the annual top honor. But this year, officials have expanded the program to recognize one child each from the

Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

Judges consider objective criteria, such as the number of months a child has dealt with deployments, and at subjective criteria, such as leadership, strength of character, resilience and ability to thrive in the face of challenges.

Last year's winner, 10-year-old Willie Banks, helped to care for his younger sister when his mother deployed to Iraq. His father, an Army major, died when Willie was a toddler. He also volunteers at church, school and on the athletic field.

The year before, Brittany Wallace took the title. When

her father was severely injured in Iraq, Brittany took over as head of the household while her mother tended to his rehabilitation. Brittany, who was 17 at the time, took care of her two younger siblings, cleaned the house and made meals, all while keeping up her grades at school.

Nominations are accepted online until Jan. 31 at <http://www.OperationHomefront.net/MCOY>. Nominees must have a valid military ID or currently be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System, be between the ages of 8 and 18 and able to travel to Washington for the April 7 ceremony.

eight days a week

Arts and crafts center

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-2821.

Friday — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., cartooning, \$30 includes supplies; 10 a.m. to noon beginning intarsia, \$25 includes supplies.

Saturday — 10 a.m. to noon, multi-media painting, \$30 includes supplies; advanced intarsia, \$35 includes supplies.

Sunday — 4-6 p.m., beginning ceramics, \$35 includes supplies.

Monday — noon to 2 p.m., framing class, bring a 5x7-inch photograph to frame, \$25 includes supplies.

Bay Breeze Golf Course

Monday-Jan. 20 — 2 p.m., twilight special, play unlimited golf until closing. For information on fees or tee time, call 377-3832.

Monday-Jan. 22 — golf lessons with a professional, by appointment only. \$30 per half-hour.

Daily — 6-9 a.m., breakfast in the snack bar.

Bay Breeze Community Center

Tuesday — 7-8 p.m., ballroom variety dance. Learn the cha-cha, swing, foxtrot and waltz. \$10 per class, per person. For more information, call 377-2509.

Gaudé Lanes Bowling Center

Today — Keesler club member special, bowl for \$1.50 per game including shoes.

Friday — p.m. to midnight, glow bowling.

Saturday and Sunday — Nine-pin, no-tap tournament, bowl as many three-game series as you want. \$15 per person, per series.

Monday-Jan. 21 — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., bowling

lunch special, buy any combo meal at the 11th Frame Café and get one free game of bowling.

Bay Breeze Collocated Club

Editor's note: Must be age 18 or older to enter collocated lounge.

Weekdays — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., all-you-can-eat lunch buffet and salad bar in the casual dining area. \$6.95 members, \$8.95 nonmembers.

Saturday — 4-7 p.m., social hour.

Wednesday — 4 p.m., Wingman Wednesday in the lounge. \$5 domestic draft pitchers. Wings and things free for members, nonmembers pay \$3 at the door.

Vandenberg Community Center

Monday-Jan. 21 — 6-7 p.m., tae kwon do for ages 18 and older; \$75 per month per person.

Airman and family readiness center

Editor's note: To register for classes, call 376-8728.

Today — 7-9 a.m., predeployment briefing for all individuals deploying. See your unit deployment manager to schedule attendance; 8-11 a.m., Veterans Administration benefits briefing, active-duty members and their spouses are invited to attend.

Wednesday — 9-11 a.m., survivors benefit briefing for members and their spouses; 9-11:30 a.m., federal resume writing/job search. Learn how to prepare a resume for federal employment.

Jan. 20 — 9-11:30 a.m., interview skills and salary negotiation in Sablich Center, room 110; 1-2:30 p.m., airmen on the move in Room 110, Sablich Center.

KEESLER NOTES

Supply classes

Quarterly supply classes are held in Room 109, Taylor Logistics Building.

Block I basic supply class is 9-10 a.m., March 17, Jun 16, Sept 22 and Dec 15.

All newly-assigned supply custodians and resource managers are required to attend.

Block IIA-Bench Stock and **Block IIB-Repair Cycle** are held 9-11 a.m. March 16, June 15, Sept. 21 and Dec 14.

Block III supplemental training is 1-2 p.m., Mar 17, Jun 16, Sep 22 and Dec 15. All newly-assigned supply equipment custodians are required

to attend, as well as all other custodians annually.

For more information, call 377-4480 or e-mail edmund.lee.3.ctr@us.af.mil.

Airman's Attic

Airman's Attic, at the corner of Meadows Drive and 1st Street, assists junior enlisted members with obtaining free basic household items.

Donations are needed such as furniture, area rugs, cutlery, dishware, infant wear and maternity clothes which are clean and in good condition. Bring donations to Airman's Attic during regular hours, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, non-training

Fridays and the last Saturday of the month.

Thrift shop

The Keesler Thrift Shop, operated by the Keesler Spouses Club, is at the corner of Meadows Drive and First Street.

Profits benefit base and area charities and provide scholarships.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Consignments are accepted 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays.

Pickup is available for donations, such as kitchen items, small appliances, furniture, rugs, household items and infant and children's items.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Keesler students enjoy Go Daddy Bowl



Photo by Kemberly Groue

From left, Jordan Sepetys, Shawn Smith and Nick Nodine, Keesler Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit students, cheer for the Middle Tennessee State University at the Go Daddy Bowl Jan. 6 in Mobile, Ala. The Blue Raiders lost to the Miami (Ohio) Redhawks, 35-21.



News tips?
Call the Keesler News,
377-4130,
or e-mail
keeslernews@us.af.mil