

VIKING FLYER



934th Airlift Wing (AFRC)
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Sweetest kiss

Tech. Sgts. Jason and Mary Rebholtz, both of the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, share a kiss after Jason and other ASTS members returned from a deployment in Southwest Asia March 7.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Nick Olson

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated. The newspaper is distributed on Friday before the unit training assembly.

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

Recruiting

Senior Master Sgt. Michael Formica will transfer to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in August.

Civil engineer

The Damage Control Center was activated recently for a wing-wide exercise. Several unit members received training on how to operate the center.

Members of the equipment shop spent a portion of the March UTA removing snow around the base.

The unit welcomed back Tech. Sgt. Tom Whiteford, who completed a 139-day deployment in Qatar.

Approximately 50 unit members deployed to Honduras in support of New Horizon, a multi-service military exercise.

Maintenance

Master Sgt. Richard Karpinski received the Meritorious Service Medal.

Master Sgt. Lonnie Gillespie was promoted to senior master sergeant. Tech. Sgt. Patrick Donahue was promoted to master sergeant. Staff Sgt. Steven Davis was promoted to technical sergeant. Senior Airmen Henry Franco and Joseph Niesen were promoted to staff sergeant.

Congratulations to Senior Airman Chantell Chase on the birth of her son. Congratulations also to Staff Sgt. Tom Murphy and his wife on the birth of their son.

The unit welcomed maintainers who returned from Southwest Asia.

Logistics

Staff Sgts. Roxanne Daggins and Colleen Kramp were promoted to technical sergeant. Senior Airmen Tyrell Hoyer and Marcus Erickson were promoted to staff sergeant.

Communication

Staff Sgt. Robert Taylor was promoted to technical sergeant. Staff Sgt. Trent Baker re-enlisted.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Cory Demuth and his wife Nicole on the birth of their daughter, Genevieve Augusta, who was born March 5.

Aerial port

Staff. Sgt. John Siemieniec was recognized for scoring a 92 percent on his

five-level Career Development Course test.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Cory Grape and Senior Airman William Trost, who were both selected for promotion.

Tech. Sgt. Jesse Hagen, Senior Airman Mickey Semantel and Senior Airman William Livingston volunteered to serve as security forces augmentees.

Welcome to new unit members Master Sgt. Steve Lindberg, Senior Airman Neil Schlosser and Senior Airman Lisa Gonsalves.

Aeromedical

Unit members who were deployed in Southwest Asia returned in March. Two unit members will deploy this month.

Tech. Sgt. Ricky Olson was promoted to master sergeant.

Chief Master Sgt. Donald Hohn and Senior Master Sgt. Jean Hohn completed their last UTA in March. The unit will attend the Hohns' retirement ceremony this month as well as retirement ceremonies for Lt. Col. Alan Lawver and Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth Plummer.

Nine unit members participated in the wing's annual bowling tournament.

Welcome to new unit members 1st Lt. Anniesa Selimos, Staff Sgt. Karla Provost, Senior Airman Elizabeth Devin and Airman 1st Class Micah Trexler.

Security forces

Staff Sgt. Scott Flaherty was promoted to technical sergeant and Senior Airman Kevin Hegner was promoted to staff sergeant.

Mission support

Tech. Sgt. Louis Herbes was promoted to master sergeant and Master Sgt. Michael Ginapp was promoted to senior master sergeant.

Services

Tech. Sgts. Kenneth Kruger and Erica Twardy were promoted to master sergeant.

Aerial squadron

Staff Sgt. Dean Grothem was promoted to technical sergeant and Airman Justin Watts was promoted to airman first class.

Former wrestler's show of support for troops inspires master sergeant

By Master Sgt.
Robert Keldsen
934th Mission
Support Flight

I met Stan "Killer" Kowalski one morning.

I arrived at work at 5 a.m. Feb. 9 to help run the processing line for some of our troops who were deploying that day.

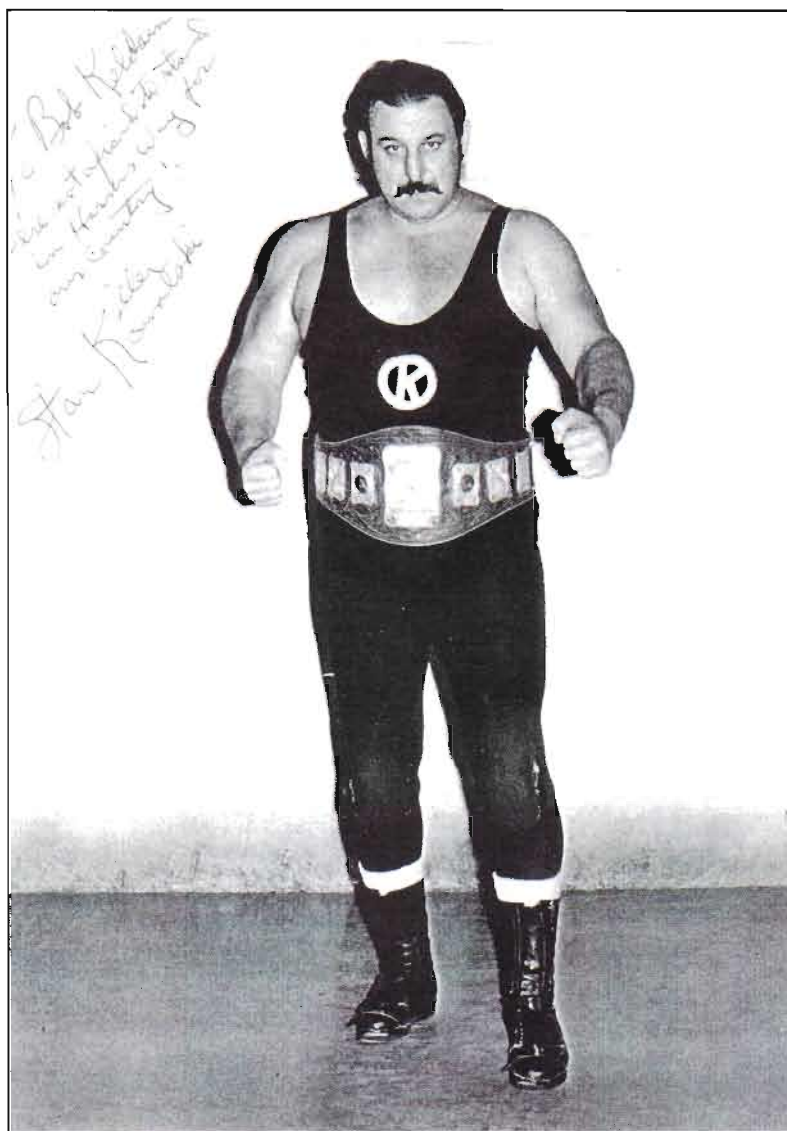
I was introduced to Kowalski, a veteran, who was there to talk about the Veterans of Foreign Wars and give the airmen free overseas calling cards.

He is the current commander of District 7 of the VFW in the Twin Cities. He is close to 80 years old, tall but trim.

He stood slightly stooped but proud, with his emblazoned VFW cap worn over shaggy black hair. He wore a black turtleneck sweater with a medal on a chain around his neck.

He was a very friendly bloke. He told me he was promoting the VFW and wanted to encourage the deploying folks to sign up with the organization now that they were going overseas to support a war.

He gave me his calling card and told me he was in the Navy in World War II. I told him Stan was a good name and that it was also my father's name. Then I looked at his last name



Courtesy photo

Stan "Killer" Kowalski posed for this picture during his wrestling days in the 1950s. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

and commented that it too was a good Polish name, and I had a lot of Polish friends in my hometown of Chicago. He told me casually that he wrestled after he got out of the service in 1946. He said he wrestled for a long time.

I looked again at his name and, knowing that

I could not be right in guessing, asked if he was Killer Kowlaski. He said he was.

"I watched you on TV! In the 50s!" I exclaimed.

He did not want to make too much of that, but proceeded to unbuckle his belt and pull out the end hanging past

the buckle. There was about two feet of extra belt. The belt was old and all of the holes had been used. The black finish had begun to wear away to the natural brown of the leather.

"My doctor told me to lose all that weight or my knees and ankles were going to give out,"

he said. "So I started eating only chicken. I hate it now. And only sunflower seeds after 6 p.m."

After that, we did not talk anymore about his wrestling career, which lasted 26 years and involved more than 6,000 bouts.

He wanted to talk about the military and what we were doing that day. But I got him to talk about his stint in the Navy.

He served from 1942 to 1946, and was on nine wartime deployments in submarines. One of his last deployments was in Tokyo Bay, where his sub lay beneath the waters for three days, undetected, coming up for fresh air only a few times.

Eventually, they were discovered by the enemy, who dropped depth charges while he was listening to the sonar. That was when he lost most of his hearing.

I signed up with the VFW as a lifetime member. I never had a good reason for doing it before. It is just that somehow Killer inspired me with his dedication and resolve. You see, he fought in a war that he believed in, and he still believes.

I asked him to sign the back of his calling card and he wrote: "To Bob, Never Forget, Stan Killer Kowalski."

AF leaders call for re-energized efforts, assessments in suicide prevention

By Cristina Oxta
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

After 11 active-duty suicides since Jan. 1 and 14 during the final quarter of 2003, Air Force senior leaders are asking commanders and leaders across the service to assess and re-energize suicide prevention efforts at all levels.

The 2003 suicide rate of 10.5 per 100,000 people was the lowest of all the military services and one-half the rate of a comparable civilian population of males between the ages of 20 and 50. None of the suicides occurred during operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom.

As of Feb. 24, the service's suicide rate was 18.1.

In a letter sent to all major commands, the Air Force's acting assistant vice chief of staff urges all airmen to continue pitching in to reduce the number of suicides.

"Suicide is not stopped by medical personnel in emergency rooms; it is stopped by addressing quality-of-life issues in the unit on a daily basis," Lt. Gen. Richard E. Brown III wrote. "The major components of the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program are active leadership involvement, an emphasis on community involvement and a focus on prevention throughout the life of airmen and their families, not just when they are suicidal. Pay special attention to the quality of your suicide prevention briefings."

The Air Force requires active-duty, reserve and civilian

personnel to attend suicide prevention briefings every 15 months. The training is required annually for those who are on mobility.

This training is important, said Tech. Sgt. Shirley Houin, noncommissioned officer in charge at the mental health section of the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

"The Air Force wants to

one, divorce, serious medical, financial or legal problems or loss of employment; a dramatic change in attitude or appearance; withdrawal from social activities or giving up sports or hobbies; giving away prized possessions or emptying out their desk; or turning to or increasing use of alcohol or other drugs.

"The key is that the indi-

"Suicide is not stopped by medical personnel in emergency rooms; it is stopped by addressing quality-of-life issues in the unit on a daily basis."

*- Lt. Gen. Richard E. Brown III,
Air Force acting assistant
vice chief of staff*

keep its members healthy," said Houin, who conducted the 934th AW's suicide prevention training Feb. 19. "We are a team and should look out for each other. Everyone is a valuable asset."

According to Houin, there were 37 suicides in the active-duty Air Force in 2003, and 13 suicides in the Air Force Reserve in 2003.

"Even one suicide is too much, especially since death by suicide is preventable," Houin said. "Hindsight is always 20/20, and with suicide prevention training, we hope to provide individuals with a little bit of foresight. There are always signs that someone is heading down the path to suicide."

Houin said these signs may include major life difficulties, such as a death of a loved

individual is overwhelmed with a life situation and feels his or her life is out of control or over. We know that life events are temporary, but in the middle of trouble, it doesn't feel that way," Houin said. "The best thing you can do for this person is listen to and be there for him or her.

"If the person is suicidal, get help. Call 911 and wait with the individual until help arrives or get someone else to do so if you cannot," Houin continued. "Never leave alone someone who is considering suicide. Afterward, make sure you check up on the person to let him or her know you are there if you are needed."

Reservists, civilian employees and family members who may have thoughts of suicide can get help. Mental health per-

sonnel and flight doctors are available during Unit Training Assembly weekends for initial contact. Individuals can also speak to the chaplains or Family Support Center staff.

"If you do not live in the local area, you can get help through your county services or local clergy. Many of the counties in Minnesota offer a variety of classes and other resources," Houin said. "It's best to get help before you think you need the help. The only people who truly lose their military career are those who never sought help."

The Air Force Medical Service has issued the 2004 Leader's Guide for Managing Personnel in Distress, which is geared to help commanders, first sergeants and other leaders recognize when their people are distressed and how to respond appropriately. It also helps them link their people to resources and get them help as soon as possible.

The guide was distributed as a CD-ROM to every squadron commander and first sergeant in the Air Force. It can be viewed on the restricted Air Force Suicide Prevention Program Web site at <https://www.afms.millafsp>.

Other suicide prevention tools include the Air Force Guide for Managing Suicidal Behavior: Strategies, Resources and Tools, Air Force Suicide Prevention Web site, 2003 Community Suicide Prevention Briefing and 2003 Leadership Suicide Prevention Briefing.

G.W. Pomeroy, Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs, contributed to this article.

Wing volunteers will help build Habitat home for local family

By Cristina Oxta
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Twin Cities federal employees, including members of the 934th Airlift Wing, will team up to build a Habitat for Humanity home this spring.

This is the first time Twin Cities federal employees have come together to participate in the program.

Construction of the home, which will be located near the state capitol in St. Paul, is scheduled to start May 10 and will be completed July 23.

The 934th AW volunteers will assist with the home's construction May 12 and July 16 and 19.

"We will need about 10 to 15 volunteers to help with the project on those dates," said Roger Hanson, wing coordinator for the project. "Many volunteers are also needed in other areas, including fundraising, providing food, working on publicity and being part of the T-shirt committee."

Col. James J. Muscatell Jr., 934th AW commander, said he hopes many wing members will get involved with the project.

"This is a great project and a wonderful opportunity for us to give something back to our local community," the colonel said. "It's for a terrific cause. Our hard work will go toward helping make a family's dream of owning their own home come true."

Hanson echoed this sentiment.

"It takes a lot to make this happen, and this is open to civilian and reserve personnel along with family members and retirees. If you're looking for a way to make a difference in the community, this is one good way to do it," Hanson said.

According to Hanson, the idea for the wing's participation came about last year when Jim Scheibel, former St. Paul mayor, challenged local federal employees to build a house for Habitat for Humanity. Diane Langer, chairperson of the



Courtesy photo

Habitat for Humanity volunteers build a home. Habitat works in all 50 U.S. states and 81 countries. It has built more than 114,000 homes worldwide.

Federal Executive Board at the time, took on that challenge and brought the federal community together to work on the project.

Habitat for Humanity was established in 1976 by lawyer and businessman Millar Fuller. The organization works in all 50 states and in 81 countries.

More than 114,000 homes have been built by Habitat worldwide. Approximately one-third of all Habitat houses are built in the United States.

Habitat for Humanity began its work in the Twin Cities in 1985. Since then, Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity has built or rehabed 500 homes. It is currently ranked among the top five U.S. Habitat affiliates in number of homes built.

For more information or to volunteer, call Hanson at (612) 713-1091 or visit the Minnesota Federal Executive Board Web site at www.doi.gov/febtrcl/index.

Habitat for Humanity



Twin Cities Habifacts

- * It takes an average of 4,000 volunteer hours to build or rehab a Twin Cities Habitat home.
- * A homeowner works between 300 and 500 sweat equity hours before moving into a Twin Cities Habitat home.
- * The average monthly payment for a Twin Cities Habitat home, including mortgage, insurance, taxes and maintenance escrow is \$450 to \$550.

Governor honors Navy reservists

By JO2 Michael Sheehan
Navy/Marine Corps Reserve Center

Nearly 500 people joined Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty at the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center March 13 to honor 267 Navy Reservists who had been mobilized since Sept. 11, 2001.

Reservists who normally drill in Minneapolis were mobilized in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom.

In his speech to the reservists as well as their families, friends and shipmates, Pawlenty quoted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and said the measure of a person is best gauged "during times of challenge and moments of controversy."

Pawlenty added, "...Those who serve our nation's military, particularly those in the Reserves, have clearly risen to the current times of challenge and controversy."

The crowd also heard words of support from retired Master Chief Petty Officer Darrell Tutt and from Kathy Lee Wever, wife of a mobilized reservist.

Tutt, who served in the Navy from



Courtesy photo

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty speak with Navy officials at the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center March 7. The governor and an estimated 500 people gathered at the center to honor 267 Navy reservists who had been mobilized in support of operations since Sept. 11, 2001.

1940 through 1983, spoke of his service in World War II, during which he served aboard three ships that were attacked and sunk. Tutt's comments were greeted with a standing ovation by the enthusiastic sailors and family members.

Kathy Lee Wever, spoke about her experiences with her two daughters while her husband was mobilized.

All but 12 of the reservists have since gone off active duty and rejoined their families and civilian jobs.

U.S. forces get tax break for combat-zone service

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces
Press Service

WASHINGTON - American forces serving in designated combat zones supporting the war against terrorism continue to get a tax break.

Depending upon rank, eligible servicemembers can exclude from federal income tax either all or some of their active-duty pay and other pays earned in any month during service in a designated combat zone.

The Internal Revenue Service's Armed Forces' Tax Guide for 2003 states, "A combat zone is any area the president of the United States designates by executive order as an

area in which the U.S. armed forces are engaging or have engaged in combat."

Servicemembers who serve one or more days in a designated combat zone are entitled to federal tax exclusion benefits for that entire month.

Current designated combat zones include Afghanistan, Iraq, parts of the Kosovo area and other specified parts of the Persian Gulf region. This includes Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Servicemembers in other areas specified by law as "qualified hazardous-duty areas" are eligible for the same tax breaks. Bosnia-Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia have

been listed since 1995.

The downloadable Armed Forces' Tax Guide for 2003 can be accessed on the IRS Web site. It lists many, but not all, designated combat zones.

Servicemembers providing direct support for military operations within a designated combat zone or qualified hazardous-duty area, such as Djibouti, Africa, Turkey, Yemen and the Philippines, are also eligible for income tax exclusions.

To be in direct support of a combat zone, a servicemember must be serving in an area the secretary of defense determines is directly supporting a combat zone. Those who were deployed from March 19 to Aug. 1 in Mediterranean waters east of 30 degrees east longi-

tude also are eligible for combat zone tax relief as an "in direct support" area.

Servicemembers who served in Israel from Jan. 1 to Aug. 1 were also serving in an "in direct support" area.

While servicemembers can use the tax guide in preparing their 2003 federal tax returns, those who have specific questions should contact their unit personnel, pay officials or unit tax-assistance officer.

Servicemembers normally do not need to claim the combat-zone exclusion or subtract eligible earnings on their federal tax returns. The services usually have already excluded combat-zone earnings from the taxable gross income reported on servicemembers' Form W-2s.



Photo by Christine Dale

All aboard!

(Left) Members of the 934th Airlift Wing board an awaiting C-130 as their friends and loved ones, like Samantha Nupson, 3, **(right)** look on. Approximately 25 warfighters from the wing left the base March 1 for a 120-day deployment in Southwest Asia in support of the continuing war on terrorism.

War on terrorism medals introduced

WASHINGTON - Military members serving at home and abroad in the war on terrorism will now be recognized for that service. Department of Defense officials announced Feb. 26 the final approval of two new medals and their criteria.

Those who have deployed for operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom can receive the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

The Global War on Terrorism Service Medal will be awarded to those who served in airport security operations

in the United States following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks or who supported operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle or Iraqi Freedom.

"These medals recognize the significant contributions members of the armed forces bring to bear in combating terrorism in all forms throughout the world for both current and future operations," stated a DOD news release.

To be awarded the expeditionary medal, individuals must have been deployed outside the U.S. for OEF or OIF for 30 consecutive days or 60

non-consecutive days. The time requirement is not needed if the individual engaged in combat, was wounded or killed in action, or was medically evacuated for any reason, officials said.

The area of eligibility encompasses the U.S. Central Command area, (excluding the lower Horn of Africa) Middle East, eastern Turkey, Philippines, Diego Garcia and all air spaces above the land and adjacent water areas. Each day aircrew members fly sorties into designated areas counts as one day of deployment toward the

30- or 60-day requirement.

Individuals engaged in actual combat may be eligible for battle stars on the expeditionary medal. Only a combatant commander can initiate a request for a battle star, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the approving authority for them, the release stated.

Eligibility dates for the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal are from Sept. 27, 2001 to May 31, 2002. The same 30- or 60-day requirements apply to the service medal as to the expeditionary medal. *(Air Force Print News)*



Source: Department of Defense Talking Points
 Courtesy of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs

On March 19, 2003, Coalition forces launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. One year later, Saddam Hussein's regime is out of power, the former dictator is sitting in prison, and the Transitional Administrative Law has been signed. Because the Coalition enforced the will of the international community: America is more secure; the Iraqi people are free and democracy in Iraq has begun; and the principled action taken by the U.S. has sent our enemies a clear signal of our resolve in the Global War on Terror.

Our nation is more secure because a dangerous regime with a history of aggression and links to terrorist organizations is no longer in power. This was a regime that developed and used weapons of mass destruction against its own people and against others in the region.

Today, America has demonstrated its resolve in the Global War on Terror. This historic effort has been achieved thanks to brave and selfless sacrifices by American troops and their Coalition allies. As democracy in Iraq succeeds, a message will be sent forth that freedom can be the future of every nation, and that freedom improves the peace and security of the United States.

FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY

One year ago, Iraqis had no voice in their government or their nation's future. Today, millions of Iraqis are shaping their own destinies by participating in Iraq's political process. Iraqis have signed a Transitional Administrative Law that is unprecedented for Iraq.

This framework guarantees the basic rights of all Iraqis, including women, and includes freedom of religion and worship, the right to free expression, the right to peacefully assemble, the right to be treated equally under the law, the right to stand for election and cast a ballot secretly, the right to privacy, and the right to a fair, public and speedy trial. Discrimination based on gender, nationality, religion or origin is strictly prohibited. Hundreds of democratic meetings have been held across Iraq, and the nation is on a path to sovereignty on June 30.

VIKING FLYER

"We had a choice: either take the word of a madman or take action to defend the American people. Faced with that choice, I will defend America every time. September the 11th, 2001 was a lesson for America, a lesson I will never forget, and a lesson this nation must never forget. We cannot wait to confront the threats of the world, the threats of terror networks and terror states, until those threats arrive in our own cities. I made a pledge to this country; I will not stand by and hope for the best while dangers gather. I will not take risks with the lives and security of the American people. I will protect and defend this country by taking the fight to the enemy."

- President George W. Bush
 Feb. 5, 2004

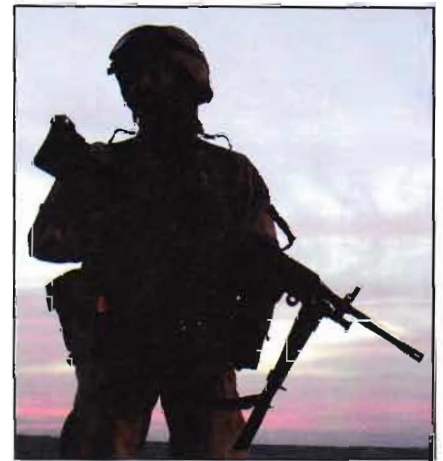


Photo by Senior Airman James C. Dillard
Senior Airman Dustin Treadwell waits by for his convoy to depart in Southwest Asia.

SECURITY

The new Iraqi police and security forces are taking greater responsibility for protecting their new nation and the Iraqi people. More than 150,000 Iraqis, including 75,000 new Iraqi police personnel, are now protecting their fellow citizens. Security in Iraq is improving and attacks against Coalition elements continue on a downward trend. Saddam Hussein's ties to terror have been shattered, and 46 of the 55 most wanted regime members have been captured or killed.

However, as the recent communications of al Zarqawi (a senior al Qaeda associate) show, there are many terrorist elements that hope to return Iraq to its dark past. As democracy and freedom expand in Iraq, terrorists and their tactics will become more desperate. To combat these terrorist elements, America's armed forces, with our Coalition allies, will continue to mount aggressive offensives against the remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime and foreign terrorists. We will never allow the tyranny of the past to return to Iraq.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE IRAQI PEOPLE

Saddam Hussein and his regime led a life of privilege and luxury, while leaving the Iraqi people with a services infrastructure shattered by decades of malign neglect and mismanagement. Those out of favor were denied the simplest public services, with hunger and denial of essential services used as weapons of tyranny. As a result, northern and southern Iraq suffered a severe lack of electricity, water, health care, education facilities and other vital resources.

While it will take years to fully modernize Iraq's infrastructure in the wake of Saddam's decades of neglect, much progress has been made as the Coalition and the Iraqi people have worked hand-in-hand to improve Iraq's essential services.

- * Food and electricity are now distributed more equally across the country. The international community has pledged at least \$32 billion to improve schools, health care, roads, water, agriculture and electricity.

- * Electricity levels exceeded pre-war capacity in early fall of 2003.

- * Schools and clinics have been renovated and reopened. Power plants, hospitals, water and sanitation facilities, and bridges and roads are being rehabilitated.

- * Iraq's oil infrastructure is being rebuilt. The Iraqi industry is already producing 2.5 million barrels of oil per day.

- * The Saddam Hussein regime spent \$16 million in 2002 on health care, less than one dollar per Iraqi per year. Today, the 2004 budget for the Ministry of Health has been dramatically increased to \$950 million.

- * More and more Iraqi children are attending ever-improving schools where they are now free to learn new ideas. Attendance in the 2003 to 2004 school year is as high as or higher than pre-conflict levels. More than eight million textbooks have been distributed around the country.

- * Iraqis now have access to an ever-growing number of independent sources of news, including newspapers, radio stations and satellite television networks.

- * Small businesses are thriving in the streets of Iraq, creating new jobs for Iraqis.

- * Iraq has a stable currency and the value of the new Iraqi dinar has already risen 25 percent.



Airman 1st Class Ryan Bryson hugs his son, Chad, for the first time in four months. Bryson returned home March 6 to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., after a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Lanie McNeal

Deployed servicemembers can vote

By Staff Sgt. Nicholas Olson
934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

When service members are deployed, some may feel they are missing out on their right to vote in an election.

But thanks to an absentee ballot system, deployed servicemembers can still cast their votes.

The state of Minnesota offers the opportunity for military members to register to vote and receive voting information at their deployed location.

According to Col. Kristin Rudin, 934th Airlift Wing voting officer, the military offers resources for reservists to find out more about their voting rights.

"The essential thing is for people to get out there and vote," Rudin said. "If the reservist has an address, they can vote."

Absentee voting is available for both major elections, such as presidential and congressional, as well as local referendum issues. Servicemembers can also register to vote before they deploy

and have the ballots sent either to their home address or to an overseas address.

"If someone is eligible to vote in their district on local issues, then they can be sent a ballot to voice their position," Rudin said.

For information on voting, call Rudin at (612) 713-1298 or speak with a unit voting representative.

Resources on voting include the Federal Voting Assistance Program at www.fvap.gov and through the state at www.sos.state.mn.us.

Operation Homelink helps families stay connected

By Master Sgt. Jim Randall
379th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA - One organization is helping deployed military members and their families stay in touch. Operation Homelink is a non-profit organization that facilitates e-mail communication between deployed servicemembers and their loved ones by providing free, refurbished computers to families of junior enlisted servicemembers deployed overseas.

"Military families want to know their loved ones are safe when they're deployed overseas," said Dan Shannon, founder and president of Operation Homelink. "Many (families of junior enlisted personnel) do not own computers and must rely on slow postal mail service and expensive long distance. E-mail can solve this problem."

The all-volunteer organization was formed in February and has received so many requests for computers that it has had difficulties keeping up with the demand.

"Although we have successfully linked hundreds of military families since launching our operations, word has quickly spread and we now have more than 2,500 families waiting for a computer," Shannon said.

"The backlog is a problem because

it takes time to process orders and we want to get computers out to families as quickly as possible," Shannon said.

Besides processing orders, Operation Homelink faces the challenge of acquiring donated computers and coordinating their refurbishment and shipping. The organization depends on defense contractors and other large American corporations to donate used computers. It does not accept individual donations.

Corporations benefit from the program by retiring used computers in a cost-effective, secure manner, protecting the environment from unnecessary waste and showing appreciation for servicemembers overseas.

To qualify for a free computer, applicants must reside in the continental United States and be a spouse, parent or guardian of an active-duty servicemember who is deployed for 90 days or more. Spouses, parents or guardians of a servicemember who works aboard an active U.S. Navy ship or is a mobilized member of the Reserve or National Guard on recall orders of at least one year and is currently outside the continental United States also qualify. The organization cannot guarantee all qualified applicants will receive a computer.

To reach Operation Homelink, go to <http://www.operationhomelink.org>.

Congratulations to the following medal recipients:

Meritorious Service

Maj. Maureen Banavige,
Maj. Michael Burns, Maj. Brian Petersen, Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Nyhus, Master Sgt. Lonnie Gillespie, Master Sgt. David Hunter, Master Sgt. Richard Karpinski, Master Sgt. La Verne Terwey and Tech. Sgt. Charles Olson

Air Force Commendation

Maj. David Mohr, Capt. Terri Egesdal, Capt. Erick Holman, Senior Master Sgt. Hilary Schyma, Master Sgt. Craig Molm, Staff Sgt. Barbara Atwood, Staff Sgt. Todd Rice and Staff Sgt. Steven Ward III

Air Force Achievement

Maj. Kirby Bauer, Maj. Donald Kom, Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Ferrin, Senior Master Sgt. Douglas Johnson, Senior Master Sgt. Rebecca Ogden, Senior Master Sgt. Clarenece Super Jr., Master Sgt. Pamela Russell, Master Sgt. Sally Sahr, Staff Sgt. Robert Doyle, Staff Sgt. Aaron Fisher, Staff Sgt. Stefan Haluska, Staff Sgt. Shawn Moore, Senior Airman Andrew Haldin and Senior Airman Troy Wagner

Donation program hailed successful, goods for people in need delivered

American troops help local villagers in Iraq by providing needed supplies.

By Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams
506th Air Expeditionary Group
Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq - American forces in Iraq, with the help of families and friends back home, are doing what they can to help those in need.

Since the beginning of Air Expeditionary Force Silver in November 2003, the base chapel at Kirkuk Air Base collected gifts of clothes and school supplies for the local citizens of Kirkuk.

All of the donations were collected and shipped by the families and friends of AEF Silver base personnel, and was not paid for by taxpayers.

A storage container was completely filled during the collection period,



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams

Tech. Sgt. Ralph Cook, 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, and a Kurdish girl look at a camera during a recent humanitarian trip to villages in Kirkuk, Iraq. With the help of a base chapel program that was established in November 2003, military members at Kirkuk Air Base collected and delivered donated clothing, school supplies and other items to those in need in nearby villages.

with the donations having a retail value in excess of \$100,000. Clothes, school supplies and stuffed animals were the most received items.

According to Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary Garvey, 506th Expeditionary Group chaplain, the goods were donated for and

were given to anyone in need, regardless of their ethnicity.

"...We want to make a difference," Garvey said. "It doesn't matter who they are, whether Kurd, Muslim or Assyrian. If they're hurting, we're here to help."

The first items were delivered to local

villagers March 5, followed by a delivery to a school the following day.

Garvey hopes that through it, the villagers will better understand that the American troops are there to help them.

"Iraq is not going to be changed overnight. After 35

years under Ba'ath party rule, these people don't have much. This gives them an opportunity to see what we're really about. It went the way I expected it to go," Garvey added.

The program is expected to continue during the next AEF rotation.

Women in Aviation encourages more women to join aviation field

By Senior Airman
Curtis Holden
934th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

Statistics indicate aviation is a male-dominated industry. But one organization is trying to change that by seeking the contributions of women, including Air Force reservists.

Senior Airman Jacqueline Burns, 934th AW Operations Support Flight intelligence analyst, recently returned from the Women in Aviation International's 15th annual conference, which was held March 11 to 13 in Reno, Nev.

Women in Aviation International is a non-profit organization that was established in 1994 to encourage women to seek opportunities in aviation.

WAI's members include astronauts, corporate pilots, maintenance technicians, air traffic controllers, business owners, educators, flight attendants, students, air show performers and airport managers, just to name a few.

Burns said attending the organization's conference helped her obtain information that will allow her to follow her dream of obtaining a private pilot's license and becoming an Air Force Reserve pilot.

"It gives me a chance to broaden my knowledge of aviation organizations and to seek out scholarships and other financial aid offered to help women pursue careers in aviation," Burns said.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration, less than six percent of the nearly

700,000 active pilots in the United States last year were women. Women accounted for slightly more than two percent of the more than 540,000 non-pilot aviation jobs in the U.S.

WAI officials said the organization would like to

Force members.

The conference, which is organized as a trade show, also gives Air Force recruiters and more than 100 organizations a chance to showcase various aviation job opportunities. In addition, the conference included many

Council member.

"Since this was my first Command HRDC meeting, I had a lot to learn," Maki said. "My experiences included meeting the Command HRDC senior leadership, staff, and council members and observing the meeting process... During the convention itself, my experiences included learning about the wide variety of education and job opportunities for women in aviation-related career fields... While working in the AFRC recruiting booth, I had the experience of networking with other reservists as we greeted the convention attendees and I talked to potential reserve recruits."

Maki also attended seminars that were personally interesting to her.

According to Burns, the WAI Conference "gives the 934th recognition and representation among other Air Force and aviation groups."

She added that as a result of her attending the conference, she was able to bring the information gathered from these seminars and workshops back to the wing and share it with the wing and HRDC leadership.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in aviation, including aviation professionals, enthusiasts and students.

For membership details or to learn more about Women in Aviation International, visit the WAI Web site at <http://www.wai.org>, call (386) 226-7996 or e-mail wai@wai.org.

"Women in Aviation plays a big part in helping women around the world follow their dreams. I'm proud to be a member."

- Sandy Campbell
historian & educator



boost these numbers by advancing women in all aviation career fields.

Col. Kris Rudin, 934th AW inspector general, said the WAI conference promotes aviation heritage and instills pride among Air

speakers, such as Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche.

Maj. Susan Maki, 934th Mission Support Flight, attended the WAI Conference as a 934th AW Human Resources Development



Viking Vibes



Golf tournament

The National Weather Service will host a golf tournament benefiting Habitat for Humanity. It will be held at the Chaska Town Course at 1 p.m. May 12. The cost is \$80 and includes food, cart and prizes. For more information, send an e-mail to Andy Miller at Andy.miller@noaa.gov.

Buffet

The Enlisted Club offers a variety of buffet specials with an international flair. April's menu will include an Italian buffet April 1 and 29, Oriental buffet April 8, Mexican buffet April 15 and a German buffet April 22. The cost is \$5.95 for club members and \$6.95 for non-members.

Call the Enlisted Club at (612) 713-1655 for more details.

Clothing drive

The Federal Diversity Council will conduct a business clothing drive April 1 to 27. The event will benefit agencies in the Twin Cities area that help men and women transition into the workplace.

Donations of "gently used," clean business and business casual clothing for men and women can be dropped off from 8 a.m. to noon April 28 at the lower parking lot at the Fort Snelling Officers' Club located at Post Road and Highway 5. Call (612) 713-4004 or Shirley Willis at (952) 277-2332.

Blood donors

The new hours of opera-

tion at blood donor center at the Veterans Association Medical Center are 1 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays.

The center is located on the fourth floor at Ward 4D.

To schedule an appointment, call (612) 725-2275.

IA training

Information Assurance, or IA, specialized training is available. Call (612) 713-1259 or 1244 for points of contact or to schedule training.

Training is conducted by the Network Control Center, Wing IA Office or COMSEC Account 669010.

Go online to https://private.afca.af.millip/training_menu.cfm or <https://private.afca.af.mil/optnl>, or call Deborah Carriger at the Wing IA Office located at Bldg. 761 at (612) 713-1244.

Aviation camp

The Minnesota Aviation Career Education Camp is offered to children of federal employees. The camp is open to Minnesota students who will be entering 10th, 11th or 12th grade.

It allows students to explore a variety of aviation careers and various aspects of the aviation and aerospace industries through tours and hands-on projects. Campers are also given the opportunity to fly in a helicopter, pilot a single-engine aircraft and take the controls of a glider.

For an application, go to <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/>

aero/aved/students/aceinfor.htm.

'One Source'

Air Force One Source is designed to help military members and their families by giving them support, information and resources they need. Whether it is for planning a deployment or reunion, preparing for a baby, coping with a family problem or personal issue or just dealing with the ups and downs of everyday life, One Source can help.

To learn more about One Source, call the wing Family Support Center at (612) 713-1516, go online to <http://www.airforceonesource.com> or call (800) 707-5784.

Recycling

The recycling center in Bldg. 733 is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Items accepted include cardboard, aluminum, scrap metal, plastic bottles and other recyclables. For large items, call (612) 713-1955.

Dinner

The Minnesota Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve will host its 20th Annual Employers Recognition Dinner at the Sofitel Hotel in Bloomington May 23.

Social hour starts at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. The awards presentation and entertainment starts at 7:30 p.m. The guest speaker is First Lady Mary Pawlenty.

Entertainment will be

provided by vocalist and former Miss America Dorothy Benham and the Army Jazz Band. Dress is Class A uniform or civilian business attire.

For more information, call retired Brig. Gen. Dennis Schulstad at (952) 927-9822 or Lt. Col. Jeffrey Johnson at (651) 282-4466. Reservations must be made no later than May 1.

Volunteers

The League of United Latin American Citizens will hold a conference in San Antonio, Texas, July 6 to 10 and the Tuskegee Airmen will hold a conference in Omaha, Neb., Aug. 3 to 7.

Individuals who would like to represent the wing at these events are asked to call Maj. Susan Maki at (612) 713-1500.

Fun run

A free fun run/walk will be held May 1. It will start at the beach house at Lake Nokomis at 5 p.m. Sign up at the base fitness center.

Employer award

Reservists can nominate their civilian employer for the "My Boss is a Patriot" Award for supporting their employees' participation in the Guard and Reserve. For more details or to nominate an employer, go online to <http://www.esgr.com>.

Nominees will receive the "Patriot" award and be eligible for other awards, such as the Above and Beyond, Pro Patria and Employer Support Freedom awards.



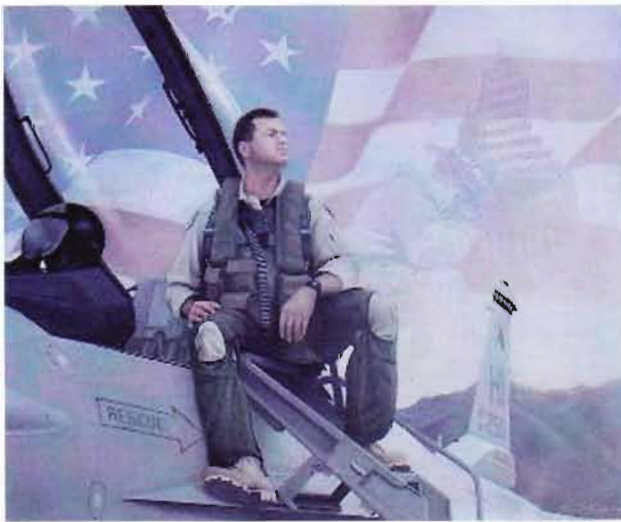
Join the Gen. E.W. Rawlings Chapter of the Air Force Association.

The Air Force Association is a nationwide, independent, non-profit, civilian organization promoting public understanding of aerospace power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation.

AFA's mission is to advocate aerospace power and a strong national defense; support the United States Air Force and the Air Force family; and promote aerospace education to the American people.

Founded in 1946, AFA has more than 142,000 members and at least 200 chapters. Membership is open to veterans of all military branches and their spouses.

All active-duty military and spouses are also eligible. Other interested persons may join under the status of patron.



*Join and support the
Air Force Association, and
help promote aerospace power
and a strong national defense.*

Membership fee is \$36 a year. Members receive numerous benefits, such as financial services, group insurance, travel services and education and career assistance. They also receive 12 monthly issues of Air Force Magazine, a must-read aerospace and defense publication, news on national symposia and programs.

To learn more about AFA, go to <http://www.afa.org> or contact the Gen. E.W. Rawlings Chapter by e-mail at onebluefox@earthlink.net.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Troy Novak

Rollin', rollin', rollin'

Staff Sgt. Stacy Foster (left) and Senior Airman Christina Perrault (right), both members of the 934th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, take a shot at the bowling pins at the wing's annual bowling tournament, which was held March 6 in Burnsville. Perrault made the highest score in the women's division with 106. The winner in the high series men's division was Daniel Fitzmaurice with a 186 average. He also had the tournament's highest overall score of 245. The winner in the high series women's division was Master Sgt. Sherrill Beecher with an 88 average. The top team was made up of Col. James J. Muscatell Jr., Todd Lawson, Master Sgt. Sherrill Beecher and Master Sgt. August Funaro. The team had an average score of 486.



Are you fit enough?

This free class is offered to all military and civilians who want to be prepared for the new Air Force Fitness Test.

Fitness trainer Susan Schaumann will teach class participants how to build upper body strength for push-ups and crunches and cardiovascular strength for the 1.5-mile run.

Classes will be held April 19 from 4 to 5 p.m., April 28 from 6 to 7 p.m., May 8 from 4 to 5 p.m., May 17 from 5 to 6 p.m. and May 25 from 6 to 7 p.m.

For more details, call the fitness center at (612) 713- 1496.

Club Catering

The Enlisted and Officers' Clubs cater weddings, graduation, anniversary and promotion parties, and other special events. Both clubs can accommodate groups of up to 200 people. Book a party and receive a 10 percent member discount. No tax is charged at military clubs.

2004 Air Force Scholarship Program

High school students are encouraged to write a 500-word essay that addresses the theme "What Freedom Means to Me" and submit it to the 934th Services Squadron by July 15. Applicants can stop by Bldg. 852, Room 213, or call (612)713-1662 for an application.

Upcoming Events:

- April 3 - DJ Saturday Night from 8 p.m. to midnight
- April 11 - An Easter Buffet will be held at the Officers' Club. RSVP by April 6.
- April 15 - Celebrate Month of the Military Child with a family buffet, children's activities and clown from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The buffet cost is \$8.95 for adults and \$3.95 for children ages 5 to 10. Children under age 5 eat free.
- April 15 - Lunch Tax Day Surprise at the Enlisted Club
- April 16 - Boss and Buddy Night from 4 to 6 p.m.
- April 20 - 2-4-1 Top sirloin
- April 21 - Administrative Professional Day Breakfast at the Enlisted Club
- May 22 - Back to the 50s Party - Enjoy music and entertainment. Prizes will be awarded for the best outfit.

Enlisted Club (612) 713-1655

- Call Bingo: This is offered Friday nights from 5 to 7 p.m.
- Bonanza Bingo: This is available during lounge hours.
- Sunday and Monday: Closed
- Lunch: Served Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Daily specials offered.
- Dinner: Available at the Officers' Club Wednesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Lounge: Wednesday and Thursday 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 4 p.m. to midnight.
- Fridays: Bar menu served 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: Navy "A" April 3 and 4; Navy "B" April 17 and 18; Lunch is from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Officers' Club (612) 713-3678

- Sunday: Closed
- Lunch: Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Dinner: Wednesday through Saturday 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Lounge: Monday through Thursday 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 4 p.m. to midnight; Lounge menu served Tuesday through Saturday 4 to 8:30 p.m.
- Monday: Dining room closed. Lounge open 4 to 11 p.m.

Tuesday: Dining room closed for dinner; Lounge menu available from 4 to 8:30 p.m.

- Wednesday: April 7 - Pork chop with monche sauce; April 14 - Chicken primavera; April 21- Meatloaf; April 28 - Chicken breast Modesto
- Thursday: April 1 - Chicken stir fry /fried rice; April 8 - Wienerschnitzel; April 15 - Calf liver with bacon and onions; April 22 - Veal cordon bleu; April 29 - Shrimp tempura with sweet and sour sauce
- Friday: (salad bar available.) April 2 - Shrimp scampi; April 9 - Grilled salmon with roasted bell pepper sauce; April 16 - Peel and eat shrimp; April 23 - Lobster tail; April 30 - Catfish fillet cajun style
- Saturday: (salad bar available.) April 3 - Prime rib; April 10 - Picata milanese with risotto; April 17 - Prime rib; April 24 - New York strip with green pepper corn and cognac

Officers' Spouses' Club

- April 15 luncheon: Style Show - The luncheon will be held at the Officers' Club at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$12 per person. Call (763) 494-3517 or (952) 544-1828.
- Tuesday bridge: This is held at 10 a.m. on the second and third Tuesday of each month. Call (952) 881-0107.
- Evening bridge: This is held at 7 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Call (952) 935-4467.

North Country Lodge (612) 713-1983 or 1984

- Guests can take advantage of the facility's book exchange. Books are donated by individuals and libraries. Guests may take a book home with them or donate a book for others to enjoy.
- For lodging reservations, call 1(888) AF-Lodge or (612) 726-9440 or go online to <http://www.afrc.af.mil/934aw/Lodgingweb/lodging.htm>.

Fitness Center (612) 713-1496

- The new Saturday hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- For federal employee discounted ticket prices to see the Minnesota Timberwolves, go online to <http://www.minnesota.sellout-vbo.com/fedemp.htm>.

Discount Tickets (612) 713-1496

- Camp Snoopy full-day wristbands are available for \$17.95.

Outdoor Recreation (612) 713-1496

- The new equipment building will be completed some time in the spring.
- Armed Forces Vacation Club: Go to www.afvclub.com.
- Air Force Travel: Visit www.aftravelonline.com.
- Colorado R&R U.S. Air Force Academy travel service: Go to www.coloradorandr.com.