

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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June 2007

McConnell AFB, Kansas

Vol.12, No. 6

OUTSIDE THE BOX



BY STAFF SGT. K.L. KIMBRELL
931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Do you live within the red box displayed in the graphic above? If so, you are now entitled to be reimbursed for one roundtrip mileage, to and from your residence, when on official orders.

Previously, 931st Air Refueling Group members who resided within the commuting vicinity of McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., were not eligible to receive this benefit.

According to McConnell Air Force Base Instruction 65-601, the vicinity of the base is now north to Highway 56, East to Highway 99, south to Oklahoma State Highway 60 and West to U.S. Highway 281.

The boundaries include: McPherson, Kan., Eureka, Kan., Pratt, Kan. and Ponca City, Okla.

A travel voucher isn't required to claim the mileage, but...

"The orders will have a mileage statement the member can complete to claim their travel entitle-

ment," said Ms. Mary Borst, of the group finance office. "This is used in lieu of completing a travel voucher," she continued.

Two copies of the completed order must be submitted and the member must file the claim for mileage no later than five duty days after completion.

Integrity and accurate assessments come into play as well.

"Members must ensure the mileage claimed is accurate," said Ms. Borst.

The change may also affect certain group members who reside in the commute area, but their commute is routinely longer than an hour.

"The group commander can allow a member to be considered a non-commuter if it is established that the member's safety or unit requirements warrant it," said Ms. Borst.

Individuals that wish to be considered for an exception should contact their supervisor to see if they meet the requirements.

THIS UTA

HRDC

There will be a 931st ARG Human Resources Development Council meeting on Saturday at 3 p.m. in the Southwind Conference Room (Bldg. 850).

Family Days Planning Group

There will be a Family Days planning group meeting on Saturday at 1:30 p.m. in room 128, Bldg. 850. All volunteers and those who would like to volunteer are asked to attend.

Dining Facility

The hours of operation for the Chisholm Trail Dining Facility are:

Breakfast: 6:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

Lunch: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Dinner: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Retirement Ceremonies

Lt. Col. Matt Archer:
Saturday, 4 p.m. in the Kanza conference room

Master Sgt. Lloyd Thompson:
Sunday, 2 p.m. at the 931st Civil Engineer Squadron classroom.

Master Sgt. Beth Sauer:
Saturday, 1 p.m. in the Southwind conference room.



VOL.12 NO.6

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DEADLINES

The deadline to submit articles and newsbriefs for publication is close of business of the UTA.

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the *Kanza Spirit* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government of the Dept. of the Air Force. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 931st Public Affairs Office. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

The *Kanza Spirit* is mailed each month to all 931st ARG members on file with Personnel. Members not receiving their copy should check with their administration section to ensure their filed address is correct.



The Enlisted Perspective
By CMSAF Rodney J. McKinley

The Importance of Physical Fitness

Our mission requires us to be physically fit. Being fit can prove to be the deciding factor between life and death for Airmen and their fellow Wingmen when combat actions require extreme physical exertion. Airmen must constantly hone their physical abilities to withstand and overcome the demanding rigors of deployment and combat.

It's been more than three years since the current fitness program was implemented. I am pleased with the progress our Airmen have made. Physical fitness has truly become a part of our warrior ethos. Fitness facility use across the Air Force is up, and everywhere I travel I see Airmen participating in unit-led and individual physical training programs.

I applaud our Airmen who realize the importance of peak physical fitness. However, I realize there are also Airmen who are not living up to their health and fitness potential. With every Airman critical to completion of Air Force air, space and cyberspace missions; we need all Airmen physically capable of performing at the highest level.

Maintaining physical fitness and dress and appearance standards are individual responsibilities. Air Force fitness standards must be maintained, and compliance with these standards may soon be documented on Air Force performance reports. As with any area where Airmen don't meet the established standards, failure to meet physical fitness standards can result in a referral performance report.

While working to improve fitness levels, it's important to realize that passing the annual fitness test is not the Air Force fitness goal. Training to the test won't help as much as a mix of cardiovascular, muscular and flexibility training. To successfully boost fitness levels, we must all make regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle a part of our daily regimen.

The benefits of a fitter force extend beyond individual fulfillment. The Air Force spent \$3.9 billion on health care last year. By improving overall Airmen fitness levels, we can decrease these health care expenditures and keep our Airmen out of medical treatment facilities and on the job.

I encourage you to establish personal fitness goals as you participate in unit and individual-based physical training programs and provide assistance to those needing encouragement. The rewards will be obvious and beneficial to all.

Who do you know?

The **Kanza Spirit** staff is looking for story ideas about 931st members who have unique hobbies or jobs, especially those that offer opportunities for unusual and interesting photos. Please contact Staff Sgt. K.L. Kimbrell at (316) 759-3686 or kenny.kimbrell-02@mccconnell.af.mil with your ideas.

UTASCHEDULE

Next UTA: July 14-15

Aug. 12-13

Sept. 15-16

Oct. 13-14

Keep Safety a Priority

Well, I have addressed a couple of pretty intense topics in my first two Kanza Spirit articles and so this time I want to keep it on a practical level. My topic this month is ground safety. A few things prompted me to address this now. We had a DUI (driving under the influence) in the group, and the 22nd Security Forces caught a few of our members not wearing their seat belts, or driving on base while talking on their cell phones. These are all big no-no's! Come on, you are all smarter than that.

There will not be anything new in the following paragraphs. I know we have all been brought up throughout our Air Force careers hearing about adhering to good ground safety practices in work and play, and you are all tired of it, but I have got to address it again. I do want you to understand that I am very sincere when I make my request that you follow good ground safety practices. This is an easy win for the team when you just do the smart and right thing when it comes to work and play safety.

Come on, pay attention. This is important stuff. You, your co-worker or your family member's life or well being counts on it! We cannot afford for you to get complacent. Too much depends upon you concentrating on doing things the smart way and using good Operational Risk Management. We in the Air Force and the 931st have too much invested in you to lose your service. Your family needs you, and your country needs you too. You have got to pay attention, not take unnecessary risks, weigh the benefits against the risk, follow checklists, apply the common sense test, wear proper protective gear and plan and prepare. I could go on and on, but you know this already. Most of this you learned as a child, but now you are old

enough and wise enough to make sure you follow it.

Here is the bottom line. It is summer. We are busy. You are hot and tired. You want to get your work done as fast and easily as you can. You want to have some fun. It is just too easy to get complacent! Stop. Think about it. Don't do something stupid just because it is easier or quicker than doing it the right way. Do it the right way! Also, watch out for your co-workers, friends and family members. Just because you may be smart enough to do it right doesn't mean they are. We are a team, we count on each other. The mission cannot succeed if we don't conduct it in a safe manner and we lose valuable team members or equipment.

The mission must succeed and it can't without all of you. Now go out there and work and play hard and smart. Have a safe summer, and then we can all come back in the fall for our winter safety discussion.



William T. Cahoon

William T. Cahoon, Colonel
931st Air Refueling Group Commander

Integrity



Service



Excellence

Destination: AFGHANISTAN

931st CES Commander deploys to Bagram Air Base

BY STAFF SGT. K.L. KIMBRELL
931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

When the commander of the 931st Civil Engineer Squadron packed his bags for deployment he only packed one hat, but found himself wearing many at his deployed location.

While deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, Lt. Col. Kimberly Thompson fulfilled five different roles during his assignment with the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group.

Before departing on his deployment Lt. Col. Thompson spent some time with the Army down at Fort Sill, Okla. completing a 30 day Combat Skills Training course.

“It was great training,” said the colonel. “I was sent there to see how the Army did things.”

The weather cooperated nicely for the CST class with the temperature (high) only dropping below 100 degrees on four of the 30 days.

“It was hot there, we had 10 consecutive days when the temperature reached 110 degrees,” said Lt. Col. Thompson. “It was good preparation for my deployment.”

As the colonel sat on the tarmac and prepared for departure to the Area of Responsibility he thought about the coming months.

“I knew I was going to have a lot of hats and knew it wasn’t going to be



Lt. Col. Thompson, the 931st CES commander was deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan during his deployment. The colonel commanded the 755th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron (U.S. Air Force Graphic)

just an Air force mission,” said the colonel. “I went there prepared for seven day work weeks working 14 hours per day.”



The colonel was presented with a lot of responsibilities, which began on September 23, the day the 931st CES commander arrived at Bagram Air Base.

Lt. Col. Thompson was named Commander of the 755th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron.

“This was actually an add-on to the original tasking,” said the colonel.

Being a newly formed squadron, Lt. Col. Thompson had the honor of being the units’ first commander.

“I really wanted to get the unit off to a good start,” said Colonel Thompson

A squadron patch was created along with other things bearing the new image.

“We had a squadron patch created and some coins made over there as well,” he said.



The colonel also had other titles and duties, serving as the Air Force Facility Engineer Team chief, Director of Public Works for the U.S. Army’s 23rd Area Support Group, Senior Engineer Liaison for the Corps of Engineers in the Afghanistan engineer district, fire marshal and also served as the senior engineer on station.

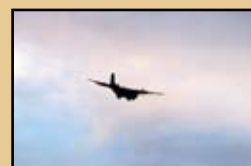
“I wore a lot of hats,” said Colonel Thompson.

April 3 rolled around and it was time to put the ‘hats’ back on the rack and head home.

As Lt. Col. Thompson waited to begin his journey back to the United States, he thought to himself ‘there’s no place like home.’

Deployment Photos

Photos courtesy Lt. Col. Kimberly Thompson





BY TECH. SGT. JASON SCHAAP
931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Sometimes you have to take the good news with the bad. First, the good.

Lt. Col. DeAnn Lehigh, the 931st's Staff Judge Advocate, has been named the Air Force's Outstanding Reserve Judge Advocate of the Year.

Colonel Lehigh earned the annual honor with a resume that included, among other accolades, a "superior performer" designation from a unit compliance inspector and a short-notice tour in Iraq in 2006.

Much of what she was judged on was her success as the leader of a Joint Task Force legal team at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq. She was charged with oversight for every aspect of legal proceedings relating to all detainee operations within Iraq. It was, at first, an overwhelming and "exhausting" task. "It was like drinking from a fire hose," she said.

The first step toward success, she said, was to start thinking like a soldier at war. Enemy tracer fire came into the camp her first night there. Three days prior, she was sitting at home with her family. "It's so surreal," she said.

The next step involved something she had little control of, getting a good staff. She was blessed, nonetheless. "I had some really sharp JAGs and paralegals," she said.

Her staff credited their success to her being the "dam" that stopped minutia from coming down the proverbial hill above and slowing their work. Colonel Lehigh credited her "dam" abilities to her 20 years

Lt. Col. DeAnn Lehigh listens to a fellow 931st Air Refueling Group officer at a meeting during the May Unit Training Assembly. Colonel Lehigh was named the Air Force Reserve Command's Outstanding Judge Advocate of the Year. (Air Force Photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap)



in the Air Force. From her beginnings as an enlisted admin troop, to being the only weapons safety officer in AFRC, she has had plenty exposure to people and the multiple personalities that make up a deployed environment.

Colonel Lehigh went to law school about the same time she started her Air Force career. But she didn't become a JAG until she was ready for a change from her executive officer position for a wing in California in 1999.

"You know, I have this law degree," she said to her husband. "Maybe I should use it."

Colonel Lehigh has since made many friends in the JAG corps, which was a big reason she volunteered for four months in Iraq. She raised her hand to go, she said, because her family situation was

better suited for a deployment than her friends'

"For a long time I felt a desire to do something," she said.

Now, for the bad news.

Well, bad news for the 931st, good news for Colonel Lehigh. She has switched units and her talents will soon be serving the Group's parent unit, the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. The 507th not only offers her more opportunities, it is closer to her home near Little Rock, Ark.

Don't say goodbye to her just yet though. AFRC's JAG of the Year plans to split her training weekends between McConnell and Tinker until the 931st finds her replacement. Until then, she's been reminding Group members she is just a Blackberry message away.

vPC-GR

Air Force Reserve members can now request corrections to their awards and decorations or submit their personnel for an award or decoration online. You also can make corrections to duty history, apply for retirement, and request other personnel support. Log on to vPC-GR today and learn how to accomplish all this without leaving the office.

For more information or to register and begin accessing vPC-GR, log on to:

[HTTPS://ARPC.AFRC.AF.MIL/VPC-GR/](https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vpc-gr/)



DEERS up to date?

It is important to keep your Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) file updated with current spouse information to ensure proper charges and avoid accruing debt. Learn the difference between FSGLI and Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI), how to update the DEERS file, and how to reduce or decline coverage by visiting:

[WWW.DFAS.MIL/MIL-NEWS/MAY2007/FS-GLI.HTML](http://www.dfass.mil/mil-news/may2007/fs-gli.html)

Submissions?

Have something such as an announcement, request or photograph you would like to see in this or another section of the Kanza Spirit? All submissions are subject to editorial review. Please email submissions to: kenny.kimbrell-02@mcconnell.af.mil

Services Agency Scholarships

Air Force Services Agency officials are offering \$25,000 in scholarships for club members and eligible family members. For more information about the Air Force Club Membership Scholarship Program, visit:

[WWW.AFCLUBS.NET](http://www.afclubs.net)

Services Agency Scholarships

The Air Force Association is offering a full 4-Year Online Degree Scholarship to an Air Force Dependent, an AFA Member, or a dependent of an AFA Member. Scholarship is a full four-year scholarship to Grantham University, total value of approximately \$28,000, including required books and software. To be eligible, candidates must have a high school diploma or GED and must meet certain eligibility criteria. Find out more on their website:

[HTTP://WWW.AFA.ORG/ABOUTUS/MEM-BEN/GRANTHAM.ASP](http://www.afa.org/aboutus/members/grantham.asp)

REAP the benefits

Have you been on Active Duty for 90 days or more since 2001? If so, you might qualify for the new Montgomery G.I. Bill benefit referred to as REAP. REAP is a new benefit providing educational assistance to members of the Reserve component who are called up to active duty in response to war. You could earn between \$430 and \$860 a month as a full time student for serving. Contact Staff Sgt. Shannan Hughes at 743-6082 to check eligibility.

And the Winner is... CAROLYN WALLACE



Former 22nd Air Refueling Wing vice-commander Col. Harrison Smith presents the 2007 McConnell Air Base volunteer service award to Mrs. Carolyn Wallace of the 931st Air Refueling Group in a ceremony held at the Robert J. Dole Community Center. Mrs. Wallace is the current President of the African American Heritage Association. The group has been

instrumental in coordinating time and money for inner city youth who have dreams of becoming pilots. For many years Mrs. Wallace has been involved in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the oldest civil rights organization in the world. She currently serves as the second Vice President and Veteran's Affairs Chair. Mrs. Wallace's has worked with the Wichita Children's Home for the past two years. She arranged and led the collection of hundreds of dollars worth of clothing, hygiene supplies and monetary donations and obtained numerous donations of labor, materials and discounts from many local businesses to improve the children's home facility. (Courtesy Information/Photo)



WICHITA WEEKEND

Wakefest 2007

June 8 - 10 — Don't miss this special event featuring some of the top names in the sport like two-time Wakeboarding World Champion Andrew Adkison, Danny Harf, Rusty Malinoski and more. Admission is \$10 dollars .

WWW.WICHITAWAKEFEST.COM

Wichita Wild

June 9 — Indoor professional football: Wichita Wild takes on the Oklahoma Rhinos at the Kansas Coliseum at 7:05 p.m. Tickets cost between \$12 and \$24, and are available at select-a-seat outlets or by visiting:

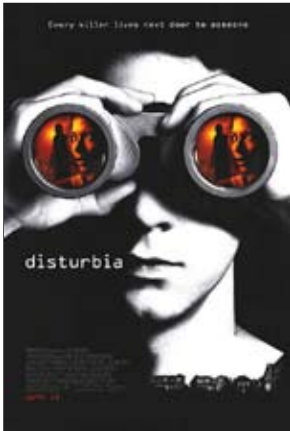
WWW.WICHITAWILDFOOTBALL.COM

Wrangler Baseball

June 9 & 10 — AA Baseball: Come see the Wichita Wranglers take on the Tulsa Drillers in a weekend series at Lawrence Dumont Stadium. Saturday's game begins at 7 p.m. and Sunday's game at 4 p.m.

WWW.WICHITAWRANGLERS.COM

At the Movies



DISTURBIA

FRIDAY, June 8, 7pm

1 hr. 44 min. Kale's mother works night and day to support her son, only to be met with indifference. He becomes a voyeur as his interests turn outside the windows of his suburban home towards those of his neighbors, one of which Kale begins to suspect is a serial killer.

MPAA Rating: PG-13, terror, violence, sensuality



THE INVISIBLE

SATURDAY, June 9, 7pm

1 hr. 34 min. Nick, in a tragic case of mistaken identity is brutally attacked by a troubled girl, Annie, and his body is left for dead. Now in limbo, his spirit can only watch as his mother and the police search frantically for him, unaware that he is only hours away from truly perishing.

MPAA Rating: PG -13, violence, criminality, sensuality

Movies are shown at the McConnell Air Force Base Theater and are subject to change. Admission is \$3.50 for adults, \$1.75 for children 11 and under. Doors open 30 minutes prior to showtime.

McConnell Movie Line – (316) 759-4181

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Interested or know someone interested in a rewarding part time job?

The 931st Air Refueling Group is looking for sharp individuals to fill vacancies in the following career fields: Security Forces, Communications/Navigation Technician, Hydraulic Technician, Electro-Environmental Technician, Jet Engine Technician, Structural Technician, Liquid Fuels Technician, Environmental Technician, Medical Administrative Technician, Lab Technician, Optometry Technician, Dental Technician and Medical Technician.

If interested, please contact Senior Master Sgt. David McCormick at 316-759-3830 or Master Sgt. Stephan Kimbrough at 316-759-3766.