

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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Full commissary use,
other benefits approved

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January 2004

McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas

Vol. 9, No. 1

18th ARS Mission

Pumped Up



photos by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

931st only reserve '135 unit operating Multipoint System

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

931st Public Affairs

It's no secret the 931st Air Refueling Group and its 18th Air Refueling Squadron are unique.

As an associate unit, the 931st doesn't possess any of its own aircraft and is the smallest refueling unit in Air Force Reserve Command. Yet the 18th ARS has more air crews than any refueling squadron in the Air Force.

But that's not the only aspect of the 931st's associate status that sets it apart. The group is the only KC-135 Stratotanker unit in AFRC designated to use the Multipoint Refueling System, a configuration that permits the refueling of aircraft not equipped to receive its central boom. The MPRS (commonly pronounced "mipers")

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Tech. Sgt. James Yokom, 931st Operations Support Flight boom operator, monitors the mirrors that allow him to see the operations of a Multipoint Refueling System, the configuration that permits refueling aircraft not equipped to accept the KC-135 Stratotanker's refueling boom. The system uses refueling lines that extend from the wing tips (see top photo) and is usually used for U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aircraft. (Top photo) A U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornet accepts fuel from a MPRS operated by Yokom during a joint exercise over Kansas.

**Commander,
931st Air Refueling
Group**

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COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

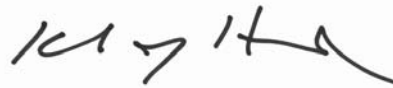
Happy New Year and welcome back! I hope your holidays were filled with joy and happiness. 2004 looks to be a busy year for the 931st, although not in the league 2003 was (knock on wood).

The first event of 2004 to have a major impact on the 931st is the retirement of Command Chief Master Sergeant Billy Mead. Chief Mead has provided our group with incredibly strong leadership and mentoring for eight years. He began his military career in July 1963 when he enlisted in the Air Force.

He served on active duty with the Strategic Air Command and Tactical Air Command in missile and aircraft maintenance. He was discharged July 1969 after completing his six-year obligation. Chief Mead reentered military service in 1977 with the Army Reserve until March 1987. Thankfully, he transferred to the Air Force Reserve in March 1987. Chief Mead, cheers to an awesome career! The men and women of the 931st and Team McConnell will miss you. Don't become a stranger.

The 931st will face challenges in 2004. The flyers will step up to an Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation inspection from the recently reactivated 18th Air Force. Many of us will also face an Inspector General Exercise this summer. All of us will jump into the new Air Force culture of fitness. Expect to be tested for fitness during the year so practice your running, pushups and crunches.

One last note. Congratulations to our newly-inducted noncommissioned officers and senior noncommissioned officers. You provide the skill and leadership necessary for a strong military organization. The 931st is a better place because of you.



Karl J. Hurdle, Colonel
931st ARG Commander

**FRAUD, WASTE
& ABUSE**

To file a fraud, waste or abuse complaint with the Air Force, call (316) 759-3192 or toll free (800) 424-9098.

UTASCHEDULE

Next UTA: January 10-11

February 7-8

March 13-14

April 17-18

Full commissary use, other benefits approved

Air Force Reserve Command News Service

The fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act offers reservists and their families unlimited commissary privileges, better health benefits and an overall average military pay raise of 4.15 percent.

President Bush signed the defense bill Nov. 24. It allows reservists in the Selected Reserve, reserve retirees under age 60 and their families to have access to commissaries on the same basis as active-duty people, retirees and their families. The act authorizes a minimum pay hike of 3.7 percent to everyone with additional increases to mid-grade and senior NCOs and mid-grade officers.

To improve readiness, the law permits the Department of Defense to provide immediate medical and dental screenings and care to reservists who are assigned to a unit that has been alerted or notified of mobilization. Reservists can obtain improved TRICARE coverage until Dec. 31, 2004, under the following circumstances:

- Non-mobilized reservists and their families can enroll on a cost-share basis if the reservist is unemployed or the employer does not offer health insurance.
- Coverage for mobilized reservists and their families can begin up to 90 days before the start of the reservists' active duty. Previously, coverage started only when the active-duty period began.
- Coverage can continue up to 180 days after separation from active duty. Previously, coverage lasted

up 60 or 120 days after separation, depending on the years of service.

Another change expands eligibility for family members to enroll in Department of Defense Dependent Schools on a space-available, tuition-free basis. In the past, this benefit was limited to families of reservists who were recalled from an overseas location. The change also permits DODDS enrollment if reservists are recalled from a continental United States location.

On Sept. 30, the president signed the FY 04 DOD Appropriations Act, which allocates \$368.2 billion to operate and man all of DOD during the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30, 2004. The funding represents a \$51 billion increase in last year's spending.

This year Air Force Reserve Command gets \$3.47 billion, which permits a Selected Reserve end strength of 75,800 – 74,140 traditional reservists, and a full-time Active Guard and Reserve cadre of 1,660 members. Last year the command received funding for an end strength of 75,600, which included 1,498 AGRs.

Under the reserve personnel appropriation, the Air Force Reserve receives nearly \$1.29 billion to cover pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, travel and other related expenses. Last year's RPA budget was for nearly \$1.24 billion for the Reserve.

Another \$2.18 billion goes to operation and maintenance funding to train, organize and administer the command this year.

2004 Reserve Pay for Four Drills

Years of Service

Pay Grade	2 or less	Over 2	Over 3	Over 4	Over 6	Over 8	Over 10	Over 12	Over 14	Over 16	Over 18	Over 20	Over 22	Over 24	Over 26
O-7	858.76	898.64	917.12	931.80	958.32	984.56	1,014.92	1,045.20	1,075.56	1,170.92	1,251.48	1,251.48	1,251.48	1,251.48	1,257.80
O-6	636.48	699.24	745.12	745.12	747.96	780.00	784.28	784.28	828.84	907.64	953.88	1,000.12	1,026.44	1,053.04	1,104.72
O-5	530.60	597.72	639.12	646.88	672.64	688.16	722.12	747.04	779.20	828.48	851.96	875.12	901.44	901.44	901.44
O-4	457.80	529.96	565.32	573.20	606.04	641.24	685.04	719.20	742.88	756.48	764.40	764.40	764.40	764.40	764.40
O-3	402.52	456.32	492.52	536.96	562.68	590.88	609.16	639.24	654.84	654.84	654.84	654.84	654.84	654.84	654.84
O-2	347.76	396.08	456.20	471.60	481.32	481.32	481.32	481.32	481.32	481.32	481.27	481.27	481.27	481.27	481.27
O-1	301.92	314.20	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80	379.80
O-3E	0	0	0	536.96	562.68	590.88	609.16	639.24	664.56	679.04	698.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
O-2E	0	0	0	471.60	481.32	496.64	522.48	542.48	557.36	557.36	557.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
O-1E	0	0	0	379.80	405.64	420.60	435.92	450.96	471.60	471.60	471.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E-9	0	0	0	0	0	0	502.56	513.96	528.32	545.24	562.20	589.48	612.56	636.88	673.96
E-8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	411.40	429.60	440.84	454.36	469.00	495.40	508.76	531.52	544.16	575.24
E-7	286.00	312.16	324.08	339.96	352.28	373.52	385.48	397.36	418.64	429.28	439.40	445.56	466.40	479.88	514.00
E-6	247.40	272.16	284.16	295.84	308.00	335.48	346.16	358.04	368.44	372.12	374.64	374.64	374.64	374.64	374.64
E-5	226.68	241.80	253.48	265.48	284.08	300.12	311.96	315.72	315.72	315.72	315.72	315.72	315.72	315.72	315.72
E-4	207.76	218.44	230.24	241.88	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20	252.20
E-3	187.60	199.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40	211.40
E-2	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36	178.36
E-1	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12	159.12

MPRS, from page 1

refuels U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and NATO aircraft through the use of a “hose and drogue” system contained in pods mounted near the wing tips. The 931st assumed the MPRS mission when its host unit, the 22nd Air Refueling Wing, received the systems in 1999.

Despite having the mission for several years, many people don’t seem to realize the group is MPRS-capable, said Tech. Sgt. James Yokom, Operations Support Flight operator. But that may change as the necessity for multipoint refueling gains more attention as military operation tempos, especially those in the air, continue to rise.

“The system was needed quite a bit for earlier operations in Afghanistan because Marine aircraft provided most of the close-air support,” Sergeant Yokom said. “(MPRS-equipped aircraft) are much more valuable when they’re in the air because there’s no worry about what kind of receiver to send to them.”

The system can also serve for more efficient planning. Another option when the “hose and drogue” is needed is to attach a similar device to the KC-135’s central boom. But that eliminates the capability to refuel most Air Force aircraft.

“For example, if we get a mostly Air Force package (the list of aircraft to be refueled on an upcoming mission) that includes a Navy Prowler for radar jamming, we usually have to send up two tankers if one isn’t equipped with the MPRS,” Sergeant Yokom said.

The reason for simply not equipping all KC-135s with the system is cost. “It’s just too expensive,” Sergeant Yokom said. “The wings have to be completely gutted.”

Once installed, however, training



A KC-135 Stratotanker from McConnell AFB, Kan., refuels two U.S. Navy F-14 Tomcats with the Multipoint Refueling System, a configuration that permits the refueling of aircraft not equipped to receive a '135's boom.

crews to use the equipment is relatively quick and cheap. The 18th has developed an MPRS-training program that certifies boom operators in a week. Pilots also undergo a few days training to learn the nuances of the system.

“The biggest difference is controlling the plane’s center of balance,” said Maj. J.T. Tarr, 18th ARS pilot. “You don’t have control over weight distribution like you do with the boom.”

Pilots control the offload of fuel after the operator hooks up to receivers with the KC-135’s boom. But that responsibility becomes the boom operator’s when using the MPRS.

“It’s an entirely different checklist,” Sergeant Yokom said. “And it’s more work keeping an eye on two airplanes.”

The MPRS can deliver fuel to just one aircraft, but two aircraft usually show up, he added.

Adding to operators’ workload, they have to rely on mirrors in the boom pod to monitor refuelings because the wing tips are out of their

sight. A mirror on the operator’s left shows aircraft approaching on the right wing and a mirror on the right shows activities on the left. Fortunately, operators are used to tricking the brain.

“We’re used to doing things backwards—this is my left hand,” Sergeant Yokom joked, holding up his right hand then lifting his other arm. “And this is my right.”

Having the capability, both mentally and physically, to refuel two airplanes rather than one with the MPRS has a definite advantage. The system’s 1600 pounds-per-minute transfer rate is slower than the boom’s 7000 pounds-per-minute. By offering a second drogue, a tanker can return home sooner and receiving aircraft don’t have to wait in line before getting back in the fight.

So when the Navy’s Top Gunners and the Corps’ Leathernecks need to gas and go back to laying rounds down range, there’s only one MPRS-equipped Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve that can make that happen, the 931st ARG

Command chief says goodbye

Tech. Sgt. David Brumley
931st ARG Public Affairs

A career that has spanned five decades will close in January for the 931st Air Refueling Group Command Chief Master Sergeant.

After joining the Air Force in July 1963, Command Chief Master Sgt. Billy Mead's career has spanned eight presidential administrations.

Starting out at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont., Mead began his career in missile maintenance support. "When I joined on active duty it was my intention to stay in as a career," said Mead.

Mead's career would take a change in 1967 toward the end of his initial enlistment. While stationed with the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing at Torrejon Air Force Base, Spain, a family emergency occurred.

*All group members are invited to the retirement ceremony for **Chief Master Sgt. Bill Mead** 931st ARG Command Chief at the McConnell AFB Theater **Jan. 10 at 2 p.m.** A reception will follow in the base NCO Club at 3:30 p.m.*

"My grandmother died while I was overseas. When I got back home none of the farm work had been accomplished, so my brother and I set out to complete it." Mead said.

After serving two years in the inactive reserves, Mead was out of the military for eight years working in finance at various locations. It wasn't until he moved to Parsons, Kan., when he decided to rejoin the military, this time with the Army Reserves. "When I moved to Parsons I new I was going to stay there, so I started looking for a reserve unit. The Air Force didn't have a unit in the area so I contacted the Army and they had a unit in Parsons."

He served in the Army for nine years before finding his way back to the Air Force when a reserve civil engineering position opened up. "It was always my intention to get back into the Air Force if a unit opened up. In 1986, I located a CE unit here at McConnell, and in 1987 I signed in with them."

According to Mead, his proudest moments have been helping new airman grow through the units he served in. "When I was at CE, I had the chance to bring in a couple of new people and they are master sergeants now," Mead said.

With his military career behind him, Mead wants to pay his family back for all the time he has spent away from them. "I'm going to do what I want to do when I want to do

Chief Master Sgt. Billy Mead, 931st ARG command chief, speaks with an airman new to the group. Mead's retirement is scheduled for the January Unit Training Assembly.

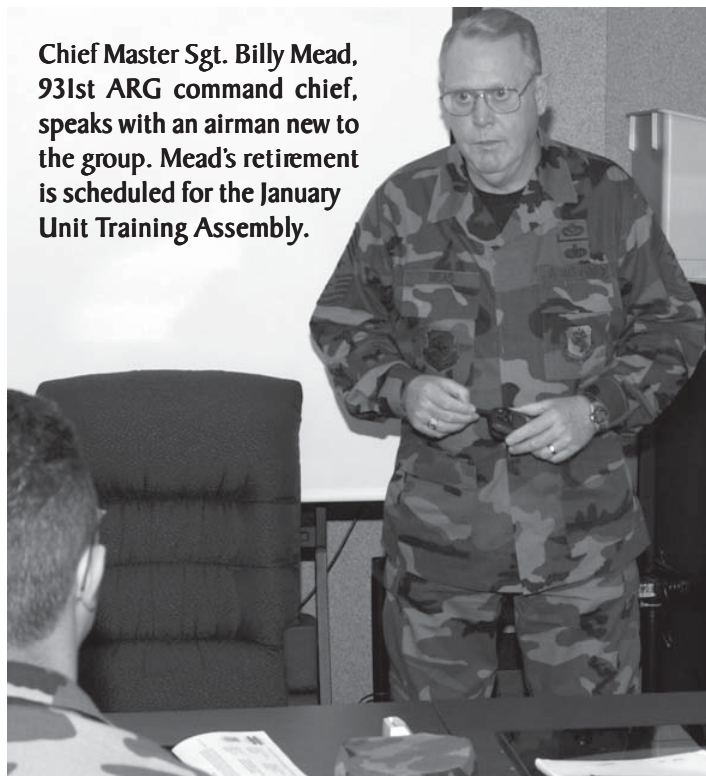


photo by Tech. Sgt. David Brumley

it. It's time for me to pay back my wife," he said. "My wife would sacrifice for me during my 5 a.m. study sessions. When I would prepare for an exam in my civilian job my wife would help me out. She was there with me all the way."

As one of the founding members of the 931st, Mead has seen the unit grow and complete many triumphs. "I've been very fortunate to work with great commanders and great people here. The people in this unit are outstanding people. I consider myself very fortunate to work with these people," Mead said. "When it comes down to the bottom line, these people will suck it up and get the job done and get it right."

Courtesy photo

Mead (far right holding guidon) was part of a flight assigned to Spain in 1966 to search for nuclear missiles.



SPIRIT SHORTS

Nametag needed in new year

Effective **Jan. 1**, the new metallic nametag must be worn on the wearer's right side of the service dress jacket with the bottom of the nametag level with the bottom of the ribbons. It should be centered between the sleeve seam and the lapel.

When the maternity jumper is worn as the maternity service dress, the nametag should be centered on the right side and placed even to, or 1/2 inches higher or lower than, the first exposed button.

The nametag will also be worn on all pullover sweaters on the wearer's right side with the bottom of the nametag level centered between the middle of the sleeve seam and the seam of the neckline. It will not be worn on the cardigan sweater.

Call the Military Personnel Flight at (316) 759-3458 for more information about the wear of the new nametag.

Group members earn unit award, ribbon

All airmen assigned to the 931st ARG between Sept. 1, 2002 and Sept. 30, 2003 are immediately authorized to add the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award ribbon or device to their military decorations.

The 931st was among 10 Air Force Reserve Command units to receive the award. Member records should be automatically updated by the military personnel flight.

Cell phones with cameras prohibited from AF facilities

Cellular phones equipped with digital cameras are not authorized for use or possession within any Air Force classified processing facility, a physically definable area that contains classified information-processing equipment.

For further guidance, visit:

<https://www.afca.scott.af.mil/ip/>

Reservists needed for force protection duties

The Air Force needs about 3,000 volunteers from any specialty code for installation force protection duties to replace Army National Guard soldiers called to other duties. Air Force reservists, E-1s through E-6s, can apply for installation force protection duties as well as lodging and per diem if outside the commuting area. For more information, visit:

<https://vrs.afrc.af.mil>

May UTA dates changed

The May Unit Training Assembly has been rescheduled from May 15-16 to May 1-2.

Welcome newcomers

Staff Sgt. Cherry McChord

Aero Medicine Flight

Staff Sgt. David Severt

Public Affairs

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

This month's selectee moved around as a military dependent all of her life. Her parents now live in Deatsville, Ala. She has been in the Air Force for 10 years, three on active duty.

Job title: Boom Operator

Civilian job: Boom Operator (Air Reserve Technician for 931st)

Favorite way to relax: Gardening

What annoys me: Don't do your job

Most influential person in my life: My husband

What I'm listening to now: Norah Jones

What I'm reading now: Books on aviation law, personal law and ethics (for school)

If I won \$1 million, I would: Pay off my house and go on a very long vacation



ROUND THE GROUP



(Above) Airman Basic Luke Mahoney, the newest member of the 931st's Security Forces, holds the coin he received as a Distinguished Graduate of his Air Force Specialty school. Mahoney received the coin for finishing in the top 10 percent of his class. (Right) Group members prepare crafts for the children's holiday party that was held during the December Unit Training Assembly. Volunteering their time were (clockwise starting from bottom left) Tech. Sgt. Suzanne Tarr, 18th Air Refueling Squadron, Senior Master Sgt. Charles Smith, Security Forces, Mrs. Kathleen Rivers, Mission Support Flight, Maj. Rebecca Fox, Headquarters, Master Sgt. Christine Lewis, 18th ARS and Master Sgt. Lloyd Thompson, Civil Engineer Squadron. Also present but not pictured were Tech. Sgt. Bob Lorenz, MSF, and Senior Airman Linda Sutter, Aero Medicine Flight.



Congratulations to those honored at the induction ceremony for the 931st's new noncommissioned and senior noncommissioned officers held during the December Unit Training Assembly. From left to right: Staff Sgt. Edward Cropper, Staff Sgt. Brian Caley, Staff Sgt. Travis Johnson, Master Sgt. Aaron Baker, Staff Sgt. Douglas Dick, Master Sgt. Barbara Bulger, Staff Sgt. Travis Potter, Master Sgt. Edwin Craig, Master Sgt. Arthur Shamburger, Master Sgt. Troy Powers, Master Sgt. Kurt Smith, Master Sgt. Johnny Stephenson, Master Sgt. Victor Vaughn, Jr., Master Sgt. Gary White, Jr., Master Sgt. David Lofton.

WICHITA WEEKEND

Joe Diffie

Jan. 9 – The Kansas State Troopers Association presents Joe Diffie & Southern Grace at the Century II Convention Hall at 7 p.m. Call (866) 444-5782 for tickets and information.

Texas Hold'em

Jan. 10-March 27 – A 12-week tournament to be held Saturday nights in Emerald City on McConnell AFB. Registration begins 6 p.m., games begin 7 p.m. First and second place weekly finishers earn a seat in the final, March 27 tournament. Free for Club McConnell members, \$3 for non-members. Call (316) 759-6002 for more information.

Miss Saigon

Jan. 9-11 – Broadway's unforgettable love story set in the backdrop of the Vietnam War comes to the Century II Convention Center. Shows begin at 8 p.m. Call (316) 755-7328 or visit www.selectaseat.com for tickets.

Hot Rod Thunder Nationals

Jan. 9-10 – Metal, rubber and concrete collide at this 17-year tradition of monster truck madness and mayhem at the Kansas Coliseum. Activities begin at 8 p.m. Admission is \$13.50 for adults and \$5.50 for children. Call (316) 755-7328 or visit www.selectaseat.com for tickets.

Funny You Don't

Look Like a Grandmother

Jan. 9-10 – Combine dinner and a “hilarious” musical that looks at three women who put a new perspective on being grandmothers before they are ready. They've thrown away the granny glasses, shapeless dress, Red Cross shoes and replaced them with laptops, cell phones, kickboxing and condos in Florida.

Before the show, guests enjoy a relaxing dinner served as an all-you-can-eat, three-entrée buffet. Doors open at the Crown Uptown Theater at 5:45 p.m. Dinner begins 6 p.m., show starts 7:30 p.m. Call (316) 681-1566 for tickets.

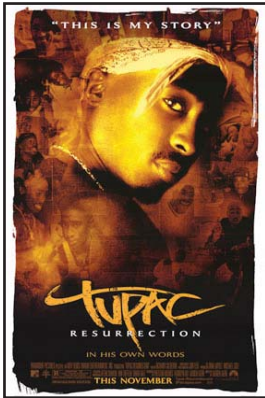
At The Movies

IN THE CUT

FRIDAY, JAN. 9 7pm

1 hr. 55 min. A documentary narrated entirely in the words of Tupac Shakur himself. Includes interviews, journal readings, poetry performances, private home movies and never-before-seen concert footage.

MPAA Rating: R for strong language and images of drugs, violence and sex

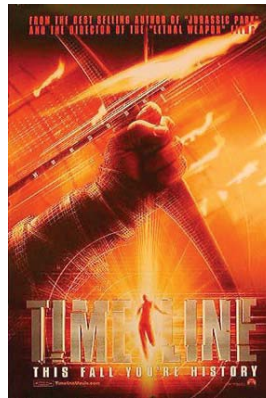


TIMELINE

SATURDAY, JAN. 10 7pm

1 hr. 56 min. Based on Michael Crichton's best-selling novel, a group of archaeology students go from digging up the past of medieval France to living it while searching for their missing professor.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for intense battle sequences and brief language



Movies are shown at the **McConnell Air Force Base Theater** and are subject to change.

Admission is **\$2.25** for adults, **\$1.50** for children 12 and under.

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