

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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May 2003

McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas

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photo by Staff Sgt. Cherie A. Thurby

A B-2 Spirit participating in a mission over Iraq receives fuel from a KC-135 Stratotanker flown by 931st Air Refueling Group crew members. B-2s can carry up to 40,000 pounds of weapons.

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap
931st Public Affairs

36 hours.

That's how long it took a B-2 stealth bomber from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., to deliver up to 40,000 pounds of payload to Iraq.

Non-stop.

That's how much flying the 931st Air Refueling Group's KC-135 Stratotanker crews averaged during the

first three weeks of Operation Iraqi Freedom to help keep B-2s and the other "shock and awe" components of the air campaign in the sky.

By April 12, deployed members of the group's 18th Air Refueling Squadron had flown 1865 hours and 371 sorties to help fuel the fight and continue to prove the invaluable worth of the KC-135 in today's air missions.

"Our guys at one of our deployed locations haven't

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**Commander,
931st Air Refueling
Group**

Col. Jeffery Glass

Spirit Staff

Maj. Dave Fruck
Chief of Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap
Editor

Tech Sgt. David Brumley
Staff Writer/Photographer

How to reach us

Kanza Spirit
931st Air Refueling Group
53280 Topeka Street
Suite 221
McConnell AFB, KS 67221
Commercial Phone:
(316) 759-3616
DSN: 743-3616
Fax: (316) 759-3393
e-mail:

David.Fruck@mccconnell.af.mil

Deadlines

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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.

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

As everyone can see on the news, Operation Iraqi Freedom has been a complete success. Much of that success has come compliments of the 931st and its flying squadron, the 18th ARS.

Tanker support proved to be invaluable during this conflict. At both of our deployed locations, our men and women accomplished great things and the accolades have been non-stop from senior leaders at both locations. Hopefully, some of our warriors will be returning home shortly. We all must remember, unlike conflicts in the past, the war in Iraq is only one part of our ongoing global war on terrorism.

I would like to thank our maintenance squadron for putting on the Chili Cookoff last unit training assembly. Everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves. My congratulations to the squadron's Master Sgt. Ray Patterson on his outstanding chili. I've been told some of the operations guys have put out their own creative chilis in the past, so we might have to do this again after they get home to give them their fair chance.

It is hard to believe that one year ago I took command of the group. The past year has just flown by. The 931st has done some incredible things during that time. Hopefully, the next year will not be quite as busy and we can find some time to have some fun. Finally, my family and I would like to thank each and every member and their families for letting us be part of the 931st family.



Jeffery Glass, 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: May 3-4
June 7-8
July 19-20
August 9-10

TRICARE to change for remote reservists

AFRC News Service

Families of reservists mobilized for more than 30 consecutive days may now opt for the military's best form of healthcare insurance. In a pending change, families who live with their military sponsors at the time of their mobilization will be eligible for TRICARE Prime Remote when the mobilized reservists deploy outside the area.

"It's important that we take care of the families of our reserve component members," said Thomas F. Hall, assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs. "We want to ensure that our mobilized National Guard and Reserve members aren't worried about who's caring for their families while they're gone, and to return them to families whose health care needs have been met by the military health system."

Previously, reservists had to be placed on military orders for 179 days or more for their families to get TRICARE Prime, the most advanced form and lowest cost healthcare insurance, which includes preventive health care, no deductibles, no enrollment fees and no cost-shares. If reservists were activated for less than 179 days, their families were automatically covered under TRICARE Standard or TRICARE Extra without having to send enrollment forms to TRICARE.

Families lose their eligibility for TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote for Active-Duty Family Members coverage when reservists deploy outside the immediate area, so officials in the TRICARE Management Activity are working to implement the change.

In the future, families will still have to "reside with" the reservists at the time of mobilization to qualify for TRICARE Prime Remote for Active-Duty Family Member coverage, which allows them to obtain medical care 50 miles or more

from a military medical treatment facility. TRICARE Prime Remote was originally designed to provide medical care for recruiters and their families if they live and work outside a military medical treatment facility area.

Hall and Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, announced the policy changes March 12. The change in qualifying days for TRICARE Prime took effect March 10. As of March 24,

TRICARE Management Activity officials said the effective date of the TRICARE Prime Remote policy change was yet to be determined but said the change would not be retroactive.

Congress recognized the concerns of reservists and their families, so it mandated the changes in the fiscal year 2003 National Defense

'These are significant changes that open the door to numerous health services at the lowest possible cost that were previously unavailable to reserve component families in remote areas.'

**-- Lt. Col. Alexander Alex
Command Surgeon Associate Administrator
Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.**

Authorization Act.

"These are significant changes that open the door to numerous health services at the lowest possible cost that were previously unavailable to reserve component families in remote areas," said Lt. Col. Alexander Alex, associate administrator for the command surgeon at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.

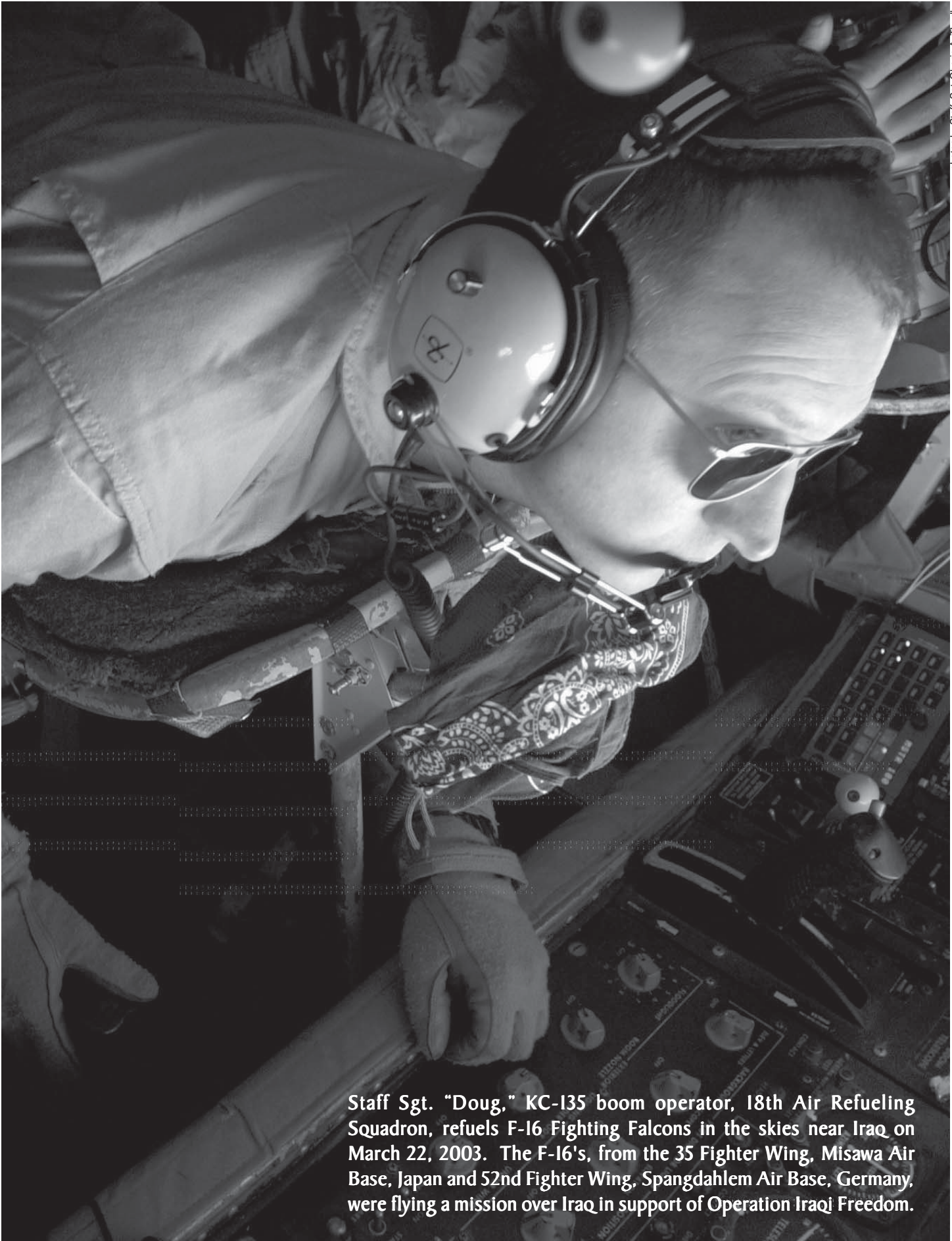
To qualify for TRICARE benefits, Guard and Reserve sponsors need to verify the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System information for themselves and their fam-

ily members is accurate and up-to-date. They are encouraged to contact DEERS at the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office

toll free at (800) 538-9552. Sponsors and family members may also update their addresses in DEERS on the TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil> under "DEERS."

A list of frequently asked questions about benefits for reservists and their families can be found on the TRICARE Web site under "reserve," and fact sheets are available under "factsheets."

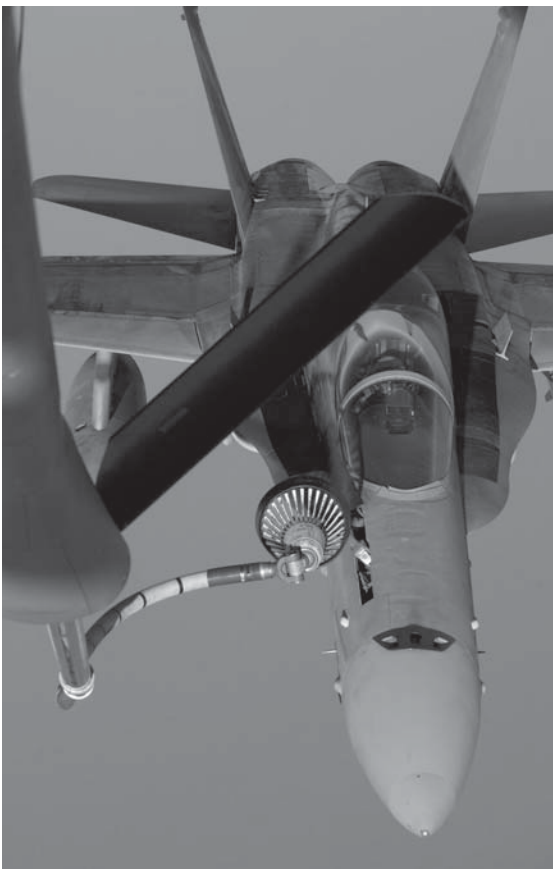




Staff Sgt. "Doug," KC-135 boom operator, 18th Air Refueling Squadron, refuels F-16 Fighting Falcons in the skies near Iraq on March 22, 2003. The F-16's, from the 35 Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan and 52nd Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, were flying a mission over Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



18th Air Refueling Squadron pilots Maj. "Charlie" (left) and Maj. "Louis" conduct a preflight check of their KC-135 Stratotanker prior to flying a mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom on March 22, 2003.



A U.S. Navy FA-18 Hornet takes fuel from an Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker in the skies near Iraq on March 21, 2003 in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Hornet, which is the nation's first strike fighter, is primarily used as a fighter escort and fleet air defense.

FREEDOM, from page 1

had much time off due to the (high) pace of flying operations," Col. Jeffery Glass, 931st commander, said. "We're flying all types of missions, usually anywhere from three to 10 hours in length and we're refueling all types of coalition aircraft to include fighters, bombers and airlifters."

Despite the long hours, Glass said spirits seem high among those deployed and he's proud of the professionalism his airmen have carried with them overseas.

"Everyone seems to be enjoying themselves," he said. "And I've heard nothing but accolades from other commanders over there. We're showing how good we really are."

The deployed crews aren't the only members contributing to current U.S. military operations and making the 931st look good while doing it. The few 18th ARS crews that remained stateside have continually been tasked to support Operation Noble Eagle.

Glass said he's especially proud of his airmen in current operations, who have been "running the process for the entire base."

As the air campaigns over Iraq slow down, Glass hopes to see his deployed airmen return in the next few months. But though the air needs in Iraq may shrink, the war on terrorism will continue.

Until command authorities tell them to come home, 931st members will be fueling the flames of freedom wherever it's needed.

Visit the video links (on the right side of the web page) at www.af.mil/news/opscenter to see refueling clips of a 931st ARG crew

SPIRIT SHORTS

Activated reservists may be GI Bill eligible again

Reservists who reenter active duty for at least 90 days can earn a new 10 years of Montgomery GI Bill eligibility if their original 10 years has expired. For more information, contact Senior Master Sgt. Pamela Summers at (316) 759-5423.

West Gate closed for UTAs

McConnell Air Force Base's west gate entrance will not be open during the July, Aug. and Sept. unit training assemblies.

All group members will need to enter the base through the east gate off of Rock Rd.

Employer Day postponed

Employer Appreciation Day has been postponed indefinitely due to the groups current commitment to U.S. military operations.

Applications already received will

be honored when a rescheduled date is decided. Further applications will continue to be accepted.

Application forms are available at the 931st ARG public affairs office. To request a form via fax or e-mail, call (316) 759-3704.

Web link to troop support

For information about ways to support our troops log on to: www.af.mil/news/opscenter/troop_support.shtml

DOD offers free protection software for home PCs

A new website will allow active Department of Defense military and civilian employees to access anti-virus, anti-hacker and anti-spam software from their home computers. Home use of security products lessens the threat of employees transferring malicious logic onto DOD networks.

McAfee's VirusScan 7.0 Home

Edition software is available to Department of Defense employees free of charge for their home use.

With McAfee VirusScan, users can scan and protect their computers from the thousands of viruses, Trojans and other malicious code that may harm PCs.

DOD users can download these services at www.mcafee.com/dod/.

Questions or issues regarding the website can be directed to Randy Valentine at rvalentine@mcafee.com.

New council needs members

The group commander is looking for sharp, motivated junior enlisted members to join a new Unit Advisory Council.

Members who want to share their independent thoughts and ideas concerning the 931st are considered prime candidates to join.

Call Tech. Sgt. Bob Lorenz at (316) 759-3625 for more information.

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

This month's selectee is a Deadwood, S. D. native who has been in the Air Force 13 years.

Job title: Utilities Technician

Civilian job: Plumbing Codes Inspector for Wichita

Favorite way to relax: Create sculpture

Easiest way to annoy me: Don't do your share of the work

Most influential person in my life: Sculptor Frank Jensen, he just keeps creating and never stops

What I'm reading now: International Mechanical Code

What I'm listening to now: Alternative, Train, 3 Doors Down

If I won \$1 million, I would: Buy some property and start a business



Tech Sgt. Frank Ritter
Civil Engineer Squadron

Just Chili-n

(Right) Group members enjoy the entries at the 931st Maintenance Squadron's annual Chili Cookoff during the last unit training assembly. Master Sgt. Ray Patterson's "Smack Your Momma" Chili was voted the Cookoff's best tasting chili out of the 13 entries. Vickie Hayden's "MMMBetter" and Master Sgt. Jeff Schrier's "Cookin YarNoodle" chilis shared second place and Tech Sgt. Jon Reisch's "P&J's Atomic" chili finished third. Honorable mentions went to Staff Sgt. Torrin Reed, Senior Master Sgt.'s John Boulett, Greg Bourgeois and Lloyd Campbell, Master Sgt. Eric Smith, Chief Master Sgt. Robert Stephenson and Maj. William Eaton. (Below) Maj. Dave Lind, group Judge Advocate General, was one of the many group members who attended the Cookoff and helped raise more than \$400.



photos by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap



New POC for Family Readiness

(Right) Tech. Sgt. Edwin Woolson is now the main point-of-contact for family issues at the group. Woolson has been a family readiness technician with the group for more than a year. He has taken over for Master Sgt. Tina Proulx, who transferred to another unit closer to her hometown. To reach Woolson with family issues, call toll free at 1-888-708-3885 or locally at (316) 759-3593.



WICHITA WEEKEND

Arena Football

May 3 – The Wichita Stealth host the Hawaiian Islanders at the Kansas Coliseum at 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at Select-A-Seat and the Coliseum

AA Baseball

May 2-4 – The Wichita Wranglers host the San Antonio Missions at Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. May 3 is Mascot Mania and Fireworks night. All games begin at 7 p.m.

Base Bowling Center

Fridays– Super Cell (Cosmic) bowling from 7 – 11 p.m. Pizza, Pins & Pop special from 5– 9 p.m.

Christian Concert

May 4 – Contemporary Christian artist Phil Keaggy is scheduled to be in concert at the Oprheim Theatre at 7:30 p.m.

Call (316) 263-0884 for more information.

Wichita Symphony

May 3 – The Wichita Symphony Orchestra Spring Pops Concert is scheduled to be held at Century II in downtown Wichita at 8 p.m. The concert theme will be “Octoberfest in May.”

Call (316) 267-7658 for ticket information.

Polkatennial

May 2-4 – The 28th annual Kansas Polkatennial is scheduled to be held at the The Cotillion.

Events run noon to midnight May 2-3, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. May 4. Admission at the door is \$9 May 2-3 and \$11 May 4.

Bluegrass Festival

May 1-3 – The 10th annual Park City Bluegrass Festival is scheduled to be held at the Kansas Coliseum.

Tickets available at Select-A-Seat locations. More information available at:

www.ParkCityBluegrass.com

At The Movies



THE HOURS

FRIDAY, MAY 2 7pm

1 hrs. 54 min. The stories of three women – a book editor in New York, a young mother in California and author Virginia Woolf – are interwoven in this film based on a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for mature thematic elements, disturbing images and brief language



BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

SATURDAY, MAY 3 7pm

1 hr. 45 min. Steve Martin is a lonely guy who meets an imprisoned Queen Latifah on the internet. She breaks out to be with him and turns his middle-class life upside down.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for language, sexual humor and drug material

*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.*

931st ARG/PA
53280 Topeka Street
Suite 221
McConnell AFB, KS
67221-3767

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