

KANZA SPIRIT

931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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March 2005

McConnell AFB, Kansas

Vol. 10, No. 3

photos by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap



East Side Story

Jay Agnew watches from the sidelines while coaching a home game for East High School's girls varsity basketball team in Wichita, Kan. Agnew is also the full-time athletic director at East, the school from which he graduated after he moved to Wichita from east St. Louis when he was a teenager.

TECH SGT. JASON SCHAAP

931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

When the East High School varsity girls' basketball team in Wichita, Kan., won a mid-season tournament last month, people took notice. The city newspaper wrote a story about it. The thing was, no one could remember the last time they did it. Jay Agnew, the team's coach, didn't know. Not even teachers who had been at the school for more than 15 years recalled such a victory.

To Agnew's young players, it

probably didn't matter. They were looking forward, not backward through a history of losing records and disappointing seasons. Not looking back isn't as easy for their elder coach, however. East's sports history is

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Engineers head south

TECH SGT. JASON SCHAAP

931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Air Expeditionary Force participants weren't the only Group members to deploy from McConnell AFB last month. Airmen from the 931st's Civil Engineer Squadron left Feb. 20 for two training events.

More than 25 engineers headed to the Expeditionary Combat Support-Training and Certification Center at Dobbins ARB, Ga. There they were scheduled for "hands-on training with equipment that (CES) would use to support building an encampment in austere conditions," Senior Master Sgt. Tamara Askren, CES program analyst, said.

The group was scheduled to be picked up the following week by an 18th Air Refueling Squadron aircrew and some more of their CES comrades for

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Commander,
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Deadlines

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

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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

First off, I would like to congratulate Lt. Col. Jim Brock on his assumption of command of the 931st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. The men and women of the squadron are consummate professionals and are truly one of the premier maintenance squadrons in the Air Force. Special thanks to Vicki Hayden for a wonderful job organizing and producing the assumption of command.

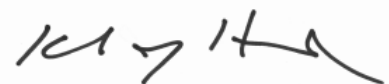
When I wrote this column, our civil engineers were deployed for two weeks of training that included the Silver Flag exercise at Tyndall AFB, Fla. I know they will perform in an outstanding manner! They love the challenge and the chance to showcase their skills. Wish them well if you see them around the campus.

Checkout the 931st's newly recharged Web site (see address at bottom of page). Master Sgt. Anna Kasl from the Group's Plans office did a terrific job revamping the site. She also built the page advertising our 10th anniversary shindig May 21. From that page, we can all sign up for the celebration.

The celebration is really starting to come together. Thanks to those on the organizing committee. I can't wait to see you all there when we remember 10 years of this great unit.

Finally, thanks to all of our folks presently deployed to Turkey. You are doing a superb job over there. We are all proud of you.

Have a safe and productive March UTA!



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.

UTA SCHEDULE

Next UTA: March 12-13

April 16-17

May 21-22

June 11-12

July 16-17

New AMXS commander takes over

STAFF SGT. DAVID SEVART

931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Lt. Col. James P. Brock Jr. assumed command of the 931st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron during the February unit training assembly.

He comes to the 931st from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., where he was the commander of the 482nd Maintenance Squadron.

Those who now fall under his command can expect leadership that focuses on the individual Airman, Lt. Col. Brock said. "Take care of the people and the people will take care of the mission," he said. "If your people have issues to worry about, they can't focus on the job."

Lt. Col. Brock also said his squadron's active-duty counterparts can expect an emphasis on improving their relationship with the 931st, which is one of his more-immediate goals for his new position. Another



Lt. Col.
James Brock Jr.

is stressing "back-to-basics" compliance with aircraft standardization and over the shoulder inspections.

Lt. Col. Brock said he's looking farther down the road as well. Eventually, he'd like to increase manning in maintenance to make it more like the active-duty force.

A Samford University graduate with a degree in biology, Lt. Col. Brock entered the active-duty Air Force in 1985. He entered the ready reserve in 1994 as an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to McConnell's neighbor installation to the south, Tinker AFB, Okla.

While serving as the military chief for B-1/B-52 production at Tinker, he managed the largest bomber workload ever seen in the Air Logistics Center. He also won the highly-coveted Air Force Materiel Command Outstanding IMA Officer Award for 2001.

Lt. Col. Brock and his wife Tammy have three children, Traci, Trey and Jason.

MPF troop praised for helping maintainers

TECH SGT. JASON SCHAAP

931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Senior Airman Julie Bally is one of the 931st's newest troops. She joined the Military Support Flight less than a year ago and she's wasting no time impressing her peers and leadership.

Airman Bally's information management skills were recently needed at the Group's Maintenance Squadron. Chief Master Sgt. Robert Stephenson, AMXS Superintendent, said "she went over and above" the requirements given her, which included computer configurations beyond her training and assembling an extensive welcome book for the squadron's new commander.

"He really liked (the book)," he said. "This was his first impression of us

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Senior Airman Julie Bally and some fellow Airmen from the Military Support Flight assemble mobility bags during the February unit training assembly. Airman Bally's performance since she recently joined the Air Force is impressing her leadership.

photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

part of his history. Agnew was one of the players that led East to its last state football championship, long before any of his girls were hoop dreaming in their mother's tummy.

But Agnew's East-side story didn't start with his current alma mater. Before he was a state football champ and before he was a father, husband, coach, high school athletic director and Air Force reservist, he was a young boy enduring life in east St. Louis.

"It was a rough neighborhood," Agnew said, just once, as if that was all he wanted to say about that aspect of his youth. Telling of childhood sports in St. Louis, on the other hand, brought out a smile.

Almost according to urban-American tradition, Agnew and his childhood playmates devised their own version of three-man baseball, requiring a minimum of a bat, ball, glove and logistical pre-planning.

"We could borrow a glove from somewhere and someone usually had a ball," he remembered. "We would get Cardinals tickets from school if we did well. I always went on bat day. That's how we would get a bat to play."

The one ball, sometimes another souvenir from sitting in the stands at a Cardinals game, also was cause for some strategic problem solving.

"It was just like you see on TV," he said. "One guy would go around and distract the dog and I'd jump over the fence to get our ball back."

Basketball and track were among his other favorite escapes, Agnew said. Football didn't come until later when a coach noticed Agnew and his buddy goofing off. Rather than reprimand them, the coach noticed they were bigger than their peers and recommended they go out for football. Agnew followed the advice but his days in St. Louis were soon numbered.

His sister had married an Airman stationed at McConnell AFB. Agnew visited her and soon decided moving to Wichita was a step in a better direction. He relocated and enrolled at East High School.

A state championship, a college education and 20 years of coaching later, sports is still a huge part of Agnew's life. He's the full-time athletic director at East. His 15-year old son plays basketball and golf and his 7-year-old daughter plays basketball.

But the biggest sports nut in his family, Agnew said, is the woman responsible for trying to juggle being at all their games, his wife.

"She loves everything; she really follows Wichita State," he said. "She'll want to watch the Shockers and I will want to watch NYPD Blue or something.

"So we'll fight for the remote," he joked.

Agnew is a technical sergeant with the Group's Civil Engineer Squadron. He chuckled when he described a time when some of his male students reminded him during weight training that gym class "isn't the Army."

He actually doubts if some of his players know

he's even in the military. A drill instructor mentality isn't what he is about.

Before an important home game last month, a young East student braved her way through the national anthem as hecklers jeered her from the stands every time her voice struggled with a note. Agnew was the first one to approach,

reassure and thank her.

When his players' names are announced before a game, Agnew raises his fist in the air to meet theirs as they run out to the court.

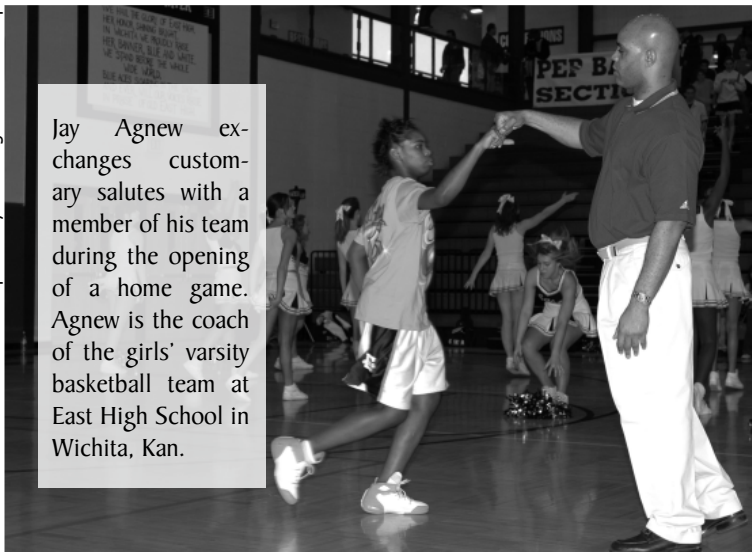
"I tell them how sports can help them in life," he said. "I want to see these kids do well; I want them to succeed."

Agnew has shared parts of his life with his students. How he listened when an inner voice told him "to go west, young man." How sports offered him a path to better things.

Now it's his turn to be that coach that offers understanding rather than chastisement. His turn to lift them up when they feel pulled down. Now he's part of creating their East-side story.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaeap

Jay Agnew exchanges customary salutes with a member of his team during the opening of a home game. Agnew is the coach of the girls' varsity basketball team at East High School in Wichita, Kan.





SECURITY ***SWEEP***

Staff Sgt. Tyrel Askren (recently promoted), Master Sgt. Gary White and Tech. Sgt. Lawrence Nash (from left to right) were named the 931st's Airman, Senior Noncommissioned Officer and NCO of the Year, respectively. All three are members of the Group's Security Forces team.

STAFF SGT. DAVID SEVART *931ST ARG PUBLIC AFFAIRS*

It was a clean sweep. When this year's Airman, Noncommissioned Officer and Senior NCO of the Year were announced, Security Forces' Staff Sgt. Tyrel Askren (recently promoted), Tech. Sgt. Lawrence Nash and Master Sgt. Gary White had claimed all three titles, respectively.

"We are all very proud of the Security Forces members for winning these awards," Capt. Martha Kuder, Military Support Flight Commander, said. "They usually don't receive recognition for all the work they do."

Sgt. Askren, an Ames, Kan.

native, is a section trainer for the Group's cops. "I was really surprised," he modestly said about receiving the award that was given partially based on his volunteer work with the Special Olympics and degree completion in criminal justice through the Community College of the Air Force.

Sgt. Nash, a native of Wichita, Kan., is a Security Forces supervisor. He also said he was surprised to receive such an award. "It was very flattering and yet humbling," Sgt. Nash said. He credits people skills for helping him succeed in his job. "I took care of my people and they took care of me," he said.

Both Sgt. Nash and Sgt.

Askren were nominated by their boss, Sgt. White, the Senior NCO of the Year. The decision who to nominate wasn't easy, Sgt. White said. He has other cops he considers outstanding performers as well.

Sgt. White was nominated by his boss, Capt. Kuder.

"Sgt. White is a very steady influence on the troops," she said.

Sgt. White, also a Wichita, Kan. native, volunteers for a number of local events, including the Combined Federal Campaign and food drives for the Lord's Diner and the Wichita Food Bank.

He attributes the Security Forces' success to good command and teamwork. "We learn and grow off each other," he said.

Anniversary celebration sign-up on new 931st web site

Group members are invited to visit the 931st's redesigned Web site and sign up for the 10-year anniversary celebration scheduled for the May unit training assembly. The celebration sign-up and more information can be found by clicking on the tab labeled "Special Events" on the home page. The Group's Web address is:

www.afrc.af.mil/931arg

AFAS offering college grants

The Air Force Aid Society is offering as many as 4,500 college education grants to Air Force family members. Applications for the \$1,500 need-based grants must be received by March 11. Call (800) 429-9475 for an application brochure or visit the AFAS Web site for directions at:

www.afas.org

Assistance fund campaign

The Air Force Assistance Fund "Commitment to Caring" campaign runs through May 6. Airmen are invited to contribute to any of the Air Force's four official charitable organizations which benefit active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired servicemembers, surviving spouses and families. Charities receive 100 percent of designated contributions. Call (316) 759-3657 for more information.

'Andro' supplement prohibited

Airmen are no longer allowed to take androstenedione to increase muscle mass. Under a new law, 'andro,' as it is commonly called, is classified as a Schedule III controlled substance, meaning the government defines it as having a potential for abuse. Group members can contact the Aero Medicine Flight at (316) 759-3435 for more information.

PlayGroup extended to Group family members

PlayGroup was created to give McConnell AFB's military spouses and their children an opportunity to meet, make new friends and get involved with field trips and other activities. The group, which normally meets in building 338 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10-11:30 a.m., is scheduled to be available the same time on unit training assembly Saturdays, starting the March UTA. Contact the 931st Family Readiness Office at (316) 759-6037 or the McConnell AFB Family Support Center at (316) 759-6020 for information.

Toll-free number changed

The McConnell AFB toll-free number for official business is now (888) 708-3885. To reach Family Readiness dial "1," the UTA billeting manager dial "2," and the operator dial "9."

SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT

Staff Sgt. Allison Clark is a Clearwater, Fla., native who has been in the Air Force for more than four years.

Job Title: Instrument and Flight Control Specialist

Civilian job: Stay-at-home Mom

Favorite way to relax: Hot bath

What annoys me: Making me late

Most influential person in my life: My husband. He's devoted so much time and effort into building us a home. He is tireless.

What I'm listening to: Frank Sinatra

Favorite movie: Love Actually

What I'm reading: Cracking Da Vinci's Code

If I won \$1 million, I would: Pay off my home and take my family and my husband's family on a long vacation



Welcome Newcomers

LtCol James Brock Jr.
Maintenance Squadron

SSgt Jon Blahnik
Maintenance Squadron

SSgt Beau Michaelson
Civil Engineer Squadron

SrA Ashley Carpenter
Aero Medicine Flight

A1C Erick Turley
Maintenance Squadron

Promotions

MSgt Clifford Rosen
Maintenance Squadron

MSgt Vincent Walburn
Maintenance Squadron

TSgt Christopher Corkins
Maintenance Squadron

TSgt Cherry McCord
Aero Medicine Flight

TSgt Brent Robinson
Civil Engineer Squadron

SSgt Tyrel Askren
Security Forces

SSgt Kevin Hoheisel
Maintenance Squadron

SSgt Freddie Kincaid II
Security Forces

SSgt Linda Kissire
Aero Medicine Flight

SrA Julie Bally
Military Support Flight

SrA Angela Hardy
Military Support Flight

SrA Ryan Larson
Civil Engineer Squadron

SrA Ngan Kim Tran
Aero Medicine Flight

SrA Crystal Willis
Aero Medicine Flight

Engineers head south from page 1



Tech. Sgt. Erin Hubbard goes through the equipment she was scheduled to take with her during a two-week training trip. She was one of more than 35 Civil Engineer Squadron members scheduled for the trip.

photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

a short hop to Tyndall AFB, Fla.

The second half of their scheduled journey is called Silver Flag, an exercise designed to certify their ability to meet their wartime mission. “The first three days are in the classroom training and preparing a plan,” Sgt. Askren said. “Then we spend two days implementing it with cadre throwing some obstacles in our way just to keep things interesting.”

Big surprises weren’t expect-

ed, one CES troop said.

“It’s basically the IGX without the inspectors breathing down our neck,” Tech. Sgt. Erin Hubbard said, referring to the inspection exercise civil engineers are regularly required to participate in. She is an electrical systems specialist who was scheduled to take part in both parts of CES’ two-week journey south. Sgt. Hubbard and other participants were scheduled to return to McConnell AFB March 5.

MPF troop praised from page 3

and she did a great job.”

Chief Stephenson said he was especially impressed by the young Airman’s demeanor.

“She has a way of passing her positive attitude on to those around her,” he said. “That’s what we need with today’s fast pace and high operations tempo.”

Staff Sgt. Cynthia Hoffman, Airman Bally’s supervisor in the MSF, said she has been a “stellar performer” since joining the unit.

“I knew the leadership in maintenance would be impressed by Airman Bally,” Sgt. Hoffman

said. “She has the potential for a great future with the 931st.”

Airman Bally said she appreciates the opportunity to expand her training beyond the Group section she’s assigned. “They kept me busy and I learned a lot,” she added

When Airman Bally isn’t learning more about her Air Force job at McConnell AFB, she lives, works and goes to college in the Wichita community. True to her can-do reputation, she adds a full-time schedule working at a cosmetics store on top of her full-time school schedule studying journalism.

WICHITA WEEKEND

Toughman Contest

March 11 — The Original Toughman Contest comes to the Cotillion Ballroom at 8 p.m. Admission is \$22.50 and \$12.50 from Select-A-Seat outlets, \$25 and \$15 at the door. Tickets available by calling (800) 362-3247, or online at: www.selectaseat.com

Texas Hold'em

March 12 — The poker craze continues on base at the Robert Dole Center through Apr. 2. Games start 5 p.m. Club members play free, \$3 for nonmembers. Call (316) 759-6002 for more information.

Aida

March 11 — The Wichita Grand Opera presents Aida at the Century II Concert Hall at 8 p.m. Tickets available by calling (800) 362-3247, or online at: www.selectaseat.com

Thunder Hockey

March 11 & 12 — The Wichita Thunder host the Memphis River Kings Friday and the Topeka Tarantulas Saturday. Games start 7:30 p.m. at the Kansas Coliseum. Call the McConnell ITT office at (316)-759-6344 or Select-A-Seat at (800) 362-3247 for ticket information.

Beatlemania

March 12 — The Fox Theatre in Hutchinson presents the Fab Four, one of the most sought after Beatles tribute bands. Call (877) 369-7469, for tickets. Go online for more information to: www.hutchinsonfox.com

Steven Curtis Chapman

March 13 — One of the biggest names in Christian music is scheduled to appear 7 p.m. at the Kansas Coliseum. Call the McConnell ITT office at (316)-759-6344 or Select-A-Seat at (800) 362-3247 for ticket information.

At the Movies



THE WEDDING DATE

FRIDAY, MARCH 11 7pm
1 hr. 30 min. Debra Messing plays a young woman who hires a male-escort for her sister's wedding where she will be forced to re-encounter her ex-fiance.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for sexual content including dialogue



PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

SATURDAY, MARCH 12 7pm
2 hr. 23 min. A disfigured musical genius who haunts the catacombs beneath the Paris Opera is smitten with a young soprano. He nurtures her extraordinary talent but becomes enraged when she falls in love with her childhood acquaintance.

MPAA Rating: PG-13 for brief violent images

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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