

# KEESLER NEWS

Keesler Air Force Base  
Biloxi, Mississippi

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Thursday, Aug. 31, 2006

Develop America's Airmen today ... for tomorrow

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Keesler News on Web:

<http://www.keesler.af.mil>



Dragons deployed —  
63

## Keesler one year after Katrina:

### Recovery beyond all expectations, says commander

By Perry Jenifer

Keesler News editor

Bent but not broken by the worst natural disaster in the nation's history, Keesler's recovery continues to exceed expectations.

"The damage to the base by Hurricane Katrina was a staggering \$950 million. With that in mind, no one imagined in the days immediately after Aug. 29, 2005, we'd be where we are just one year later," said Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, 81st Training Wing commander.

The general sees Operation Dragon Comeback, the recovery effort, in terms of mission, community outreach, people and assets. For him, training, Keesler's primary mission, has led the way back.

"The initial thinking was that it would be at least six months before training would be back" he recalled. "In fact, it never went away entirely — training was going on in base shelters during the height of the storm. Few realized it at the time, but I believe that was a sign of things to come."

Indeed, Sept. 12, two weeks and a day after the storm, 81st Training Group officials reported most of its dormitories and facilities were in

Please see **Recovery**, Page 9

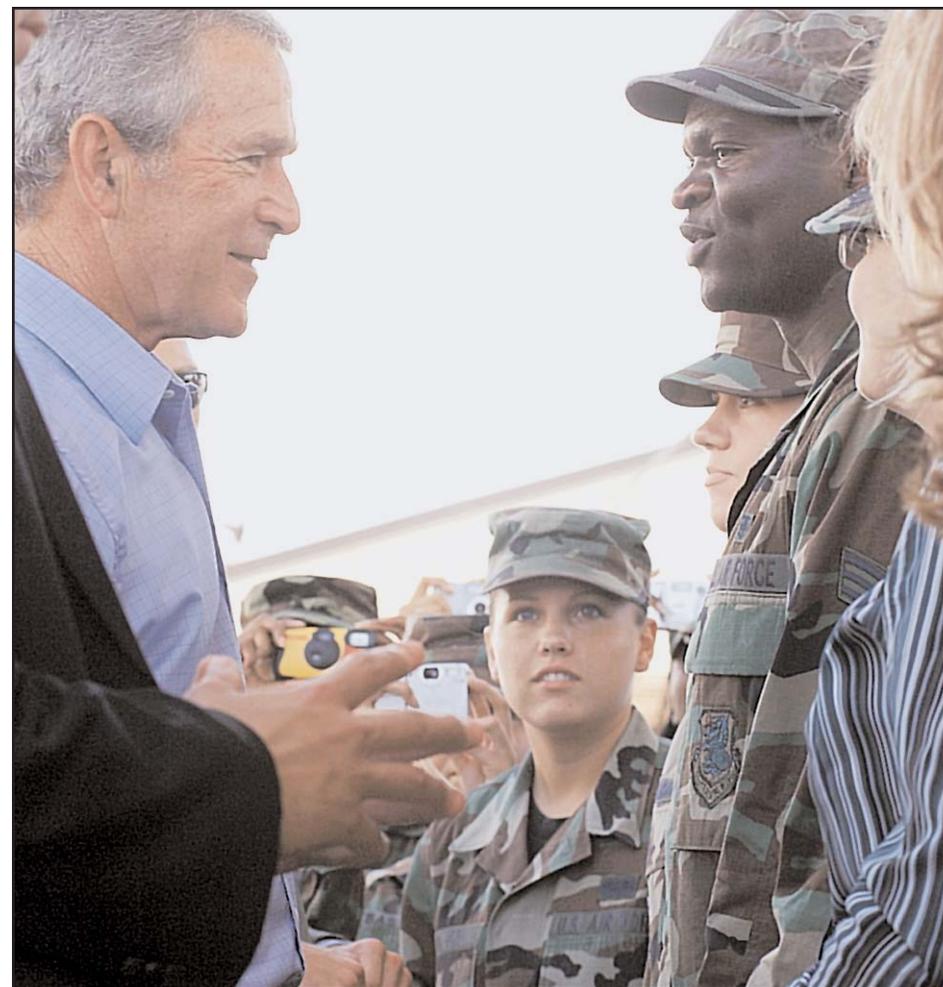


Photo by Tech. Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo Jr.

President George Bush exchanges greetings with Senior Airman Ngwa Ntumngia, 81st Medical Operations Squadron, on the flight line Monday. The president toured the base briefly before looking in on post-Katrina rebuilding efforts in surrounding communities. For in-depth reports on the recovery efforts of base organizations, see Pages A1-12.

## This week in the Triangle

Ground radio communications, 10 a.m. today, Jones Hall.  
Level 2, global command and control systems, 11 a.m. today, Stennis Hall.  
Financial management and comptroller, 9 a.m. Friday, Allee Hall.  
Airborne missions systems specialist, 9 a.m. Friday, Dolan Hall.,  
Computer networking cryptographic systems, 10 a.m. Friday, Bryan Hall.  
Communications-computer systems operations, 10 a.m. Friday, Thomson Hall.  
Communications-computer systems programming, 10 a.m. Friday, Thomson Hall.  
Ground radio communications, 10 a.m. Friday, Jones Hall.  
Communications security manager, 11 a.m. Friday, Stennis Hall.  
Emissions security manager, 11 a.m. Friday, Stennis Hall.  
Aerospace control and warning systems operator, 9 a.m. Wednesday, Bryan Hall.



July Honor Flight

### Student numbers

Total students — 3,471

Non-prior service — 2,157

Temporary duty — 1,285

Combat controllers — 29

Non-prior service arrivals — 169

Guard, Reserve — 786

International — 43

Fiscal 2006 graduates — 23,105

Total since 1942 — 2,231,166

# COMMENTARY

## Moseley: We're working hard to transform, reshape force

**Editor's note:** The following "Letter to Airmen" from Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley and other senior leader viewpoints can be found on the library section of Air Force Link.

SAN ANTONIO — In his latest "Letter to Airmen," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley discusses measures that shape and transform the Air Force.

General Moseley said Airmen today are engaged in a vast array of missions from operating satellites in deep space to applying air power to the surface battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq, and launching an Air Mobility Command aircraft every 90 seconds, every day.

"We're working hard to put the right people, plans and programs in place to transform and reshape the Air Force while continuing to lead the Department of Defense's transformation from an 'industrial' to an 'information' age force — all while heavily engaged in a global, long war on terrorism," General Moseley wrote.

"Our initiatives focus directly on increasing our ability to operate in joint and coalition environments, while looking to achieve even higher levels of access, agility and lethality."

The general expects Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st century to allow the service to work smarter, not harder, and to cut

contract and operating costs. These savings free more resources for recapitalization and modernization.

"We operate the oldest air and space inventories in the history of the Air Force. It's therefore absolutely imperative we modernize and replace these old aircraft and spacecraft to ensure our dominance across those warfighting domains," General Moseley wrote.

He expressed his gratitude that Airmen are the most "important piece of the equation," and said many warfighting enhancements and initiatives directly improve the ways the Air Force trains and prepares for combat.

Airmen fly, operate, maintain and support this modernized, more lethal air and space equipment with a more flattened personnel structure and with fewer people.

"To stay within our allocated budgets and to increase our investment accounts, the reality is we have to draw the force down," General Moseley wrote. "This current 12-percent drawdown is realistic and certainly doable.

"Even with the 12-percent reduction in manpower, we can get more of the total force in (air and space expeditionary force) 'buckets.' We can get more combat-focused and trained. We can get more deployable and more expeditionary in every thing that we do. We owe that much to the country."

## ACTION LINE ... 377-4357

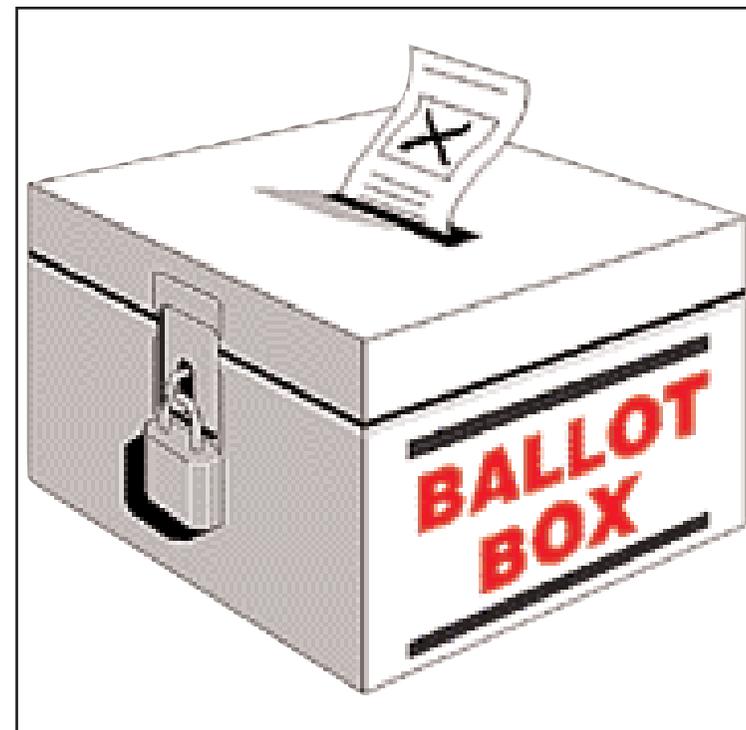
By Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

81st Training Wing commander

First, try to work concerns through the proper chain of command. When you've exhausted this recourse, turn to the commander's action line for assistance.

We welcome any suggestions to help make this a more valuable and useful tool. You may call the commander's action line at 377-4357, write to Commander's Action Line, 81 TRW/PA, Keesler AFB, MS 39534-2603, e-mail 81 TRW Commander's Action Line (on-base) or commanders.line@keesler.af.mil (off-base). For a personal response, include your name, address and phone number.

Items of general interest may appear in this column.



## Mission demands it

# Our ethics must be of highest degree

By Lt. Col. Edward Rimback

742nd Missile Squadron commander

MINOT Air Force Base, N.D. — Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "The true measure of a man is not how he behaves in moments of comfort and convenience, but how he stands in times of controversy and challenge."

Daily we make decisions that challenge us to distinguish right from wrong. The great majority of these decisions are clear and uncomplicated, while others involve a great degree of soul-searching.

The Air Force's mission demands we apply the highest degree of ethics or our mission effectiveness will suffer the consequences. Retired Gen. John Jumper, former Air Force chief of staff, said people create a new lower standard when they walk past a problem and

don't actively address the situation.

Our leaders, peers and subordinates expect nothing more than an honest attempt to do the right thing, to make the right call during moments of controversy and challenge. Our duties are too important to do otherwise. Our mission can only be performed by professionals who possess the highest ethical standards. It's those standards that ensure we do our duty even when the times get tough.

As military members, we serve as "trusted agents" of the American public. As such, we're challenged to apply the highest level of ethical behavior in the performance of our daily tasks and duties. Behaving ethically is a way of life that promotes ideals such as honesty, integrity and trust.

We've heard it all before. Do the right thing; don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal. They're simple rules to live by, but standards that are demanding and nearly impossible to maintain if a person doesn't truly commit to them.

Ethics and the art of being ethical aren't as simple as processing a demand and response checklist. Rather, they're a way of life shaped by our upbringing, life experiences, role models and spiritual beliefs.

So, when you see something wrong, do the right thing and correct it. Be the guiding light that promotes the highest ethical standards.

The American public maintains an unwavering trust in every Airman to do the right thing each and every day. Let's not disappoint them.

Drinking  
+  
driving  
=  
deadly  
duo.

## KEESLER NEWS

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2004, 1997.

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2004, 1998, 1996;  
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1999, 1997, 1991;

No. 3, 2005, 2002,  
1995.

### 81st Training Wing commander

Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

Public affairs director

Lt. Col. Claudia Foss

### Editor

Perry Jenifer

### Staff writers

Susan Griggs  
Senior Airman

Jake Gard

### Staff photographer

Kemberly Groue

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## STAY ALERT. STAY ALIVE. HURRICANE AWARENESS

Phone numbers and Web sites  
for information and accountability

for Keesler members:

### Keesler Accountability Team

1-800-673-9356

### Air Force Personnel Center

1-800-435-9941

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/ndw>

### 81st Civil Engineer Squadron readiness

377-3811 or DSN 597-3811

### Mississippi Emergency Management Agency

<http://www.msema.org>

### National Weather Service

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov>

### Keesler Public Web site

<http://www.keesler.af.mil>

## Keesler's 2006 safety goals

Make safety ...

a core value,

a best business practice,  
a competitive and asymmetric  
advantage.

Make every employee ...  
feel safe at work and home.



If you've had too much to drink,  
call Airmen Against Drunk Driving,  
377-7283,

10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Thursdays  
before down Fridays,  
working Fridays and Saturdays.



To start, stop,  
increase or decrease  
Keesler News delivery,  
or for display racks,  
facility managers call  
377-4130.

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION



Airman 1st Class Christopher Small navigates the low crawl.



Senior Airman Neil Isder scrambles across the horizontal rope.

## Combat control training — limitless challenges

By Senior Airman Jake Gard

Keesler News staff

Combat control training students must test their physical fitness limits and mental sharpness to complete the combat control operator course in the 334th Training Squadron.

Combat controllers are highly-trained Air Force personnel who complete the same training as all air traffic controllers. Before arriving at Keesler, combat control students have completed the combat control orientation course at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, passed the physical ability and stamina test, and completed either the Army's airborne school at Fort Benning, Ga., or the Air Force's basic survival school at Fairchild AFB, Wash.

"Keesler is where combat control students get their combat control base," said Tech. Sgt. John Wylie, air traffic control noncommissioned officer in charge. "That's the whole point of this school. Air traffic control is what sets us apart from other battlefield (Air Force specialty codes). We are certified air traffic controllers."

From 6-8:30 a.m. five days a week, combat control students work on physical fitness to improve endurance and strength. Obstacle courses, weight training and water confidence drills are part of the students' exercise regimen.

"A typical Monday would include a five-mile run followed by work at the pool for an hour," said Sergeant Wylie. "It's all working toward bettering physical standards, becoming more physically agile and building core strength."

Students complete a series of obstacle courses every Friday morning, in addition to a "ruck," a long foot march carrying full rucksacks.

"Every down Friday, the students go through the obstacle course twice after a ruck," Sergeant Wylie pointed out. "Figure a five-mile ruck carrying anywhere up to 80 pounds, then they'll run through the obstacle course twice. It's a pretty good smoker that day."

"The commando crawl is pretty tough," commented Staff Sgt. Yuri Miller, a recent combat control graduate. "There's a 25-foot horizontal rope, and you have to climb across it upside down using arm strength. It's the last obstacle, so you're pretty much hurt at that point. The obstacle by itself

wouldn't be so bad, but you're hurting."

The training at Keesler for combat control students is physically demanding and mentally challenging, testing each student's limits.

"(Attrition rates) vary for each team," Sergeant Wylie pointed out. "We lose a few every class — less than five. It's mostly guys who don't want to be here any more. They can't deal with either the physical or academic standards. About 98 percent of the people that come through can make it if they choose to, but most people relieve themselves."

"It's not for the faint of heart or weak," said Staff Sgt. Delorean Sheridan, another recent graduate. "Just about any guy will tell you, it's not so much the physical part, but it's the mental thing that will push you through."

About 180 students complete the combat control operator course at Keesler each year. Sergeant Wylie said Keesler holds eight classes per year for combat control students. The 15 1/2-week course provides students a base knowledge of skills such as air navigation aids, airport traffic control, communication procedures, radar procedures and aircraft recognition. Classes are held at Cody Hall.

Aside from academics and physical training, members of each combat control team participate in several team-building exercises.

"Each team finds its own rock," said Sergeant Wylie. "Basically, we treat the rock like a downed teammate, so (students) know never to forget it. They take it everywhere with them. If they do forget the rock, it's then replaced with something more strenuous to carry: weights, kettlebells — it used to be a log — or dive tanks. We want the students to be aware that there is always something that we need to grab."

For people interested in cross-training into the combat control career field, specialtactics.com is a Web site that lists preparatory workout routines. The Web site also lists what information may be needed by the military personnel flight, what to expect during survival, evade, resist, escape training, and combat weather.

"The only regret I've had is not doing combat control sooner," said Staff Sgt. Robert Pate, a recent successful cross-trained graduate.



Photos by Kemberly Groue  
Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Ordway descends the caving ladder on the confidence course.

# Medics combine training, humanitarian aid

By 2nd Lt. David Herndon

**59th Medical Wing Public Affairs**  
ESMERELDAS, Ecuador  
— A medical team recently conducted the first medical readiness training exercise held here.

The two surgeons, a nurse anesthetist, two medical technicians and an anesthesiologist were led by Maj. (Dr.) Matthew Talarczyk, 859th Surgical Operations Squadron plastic surgeon at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio.

The team's anesthesiologist was Capt. (Dr.) Jason Lee of the 81st Surgical Operations Squadron at Keesler.

## Deployment training

The team was slated to perform more than 37 operations, primarily cleft lips and cleft palates, at an Ecuadorian naval hospital in Esmeraldas, a province in the northwest part of the country.

MEDRETE provides Air Force medical units with deployment training, improving United States capabilities to conduct unilateral or combined operations in theater. By maintaining a presence to support regional stability, and conducting humanitarian and civic assistance in conjunction with military operations, the program enhances the image of the United States.

"It is very important we are here ... it is important that we help our brothers and sisters who don't have the same resources that we do in the United States," said Maj. Flavia Casassola, Wilford Hall surgery center flight commander and nurse anesthetist.

## Screening process

"The first thing we had to complete was screening about 90 patients. Of those 90, we were able to select around 37 who were good surgical candidates," said Col. (Dr.) Charles Hardin, a Wilford Hall surgeon.

Colonel Hardin and Major Talarczyk arrived on July 14 to begin screening patients who had come from all over Ecuador seeking medical



Photo by 2nd Lt. David Herndon

**Capt. (Dr.) Jason Lee checks the functionality of an anesthesia machine in Esmeraldas, Ecuador. Captain Lee was part of a medical readiness training exercise team performing cleft lip and cleft palate surgery on children of the region this summer. He's an anesthesiologist with the 81st Surgical Operations Squadron at Keesler.**

attention.

"The criteria for patient selection focused on cleft lip and cleft palate patients, and we included congenital and acquired malformations, such as burn victims," said Major Talarczyk.

The rest of the team arrived July 16 and organized supplies from Wilford Hall in the Ecuadorian hospital. The team unpacked nearly 1,500 pounds of supplies and equipment to conduct operations on the Ecuadorian patients before performing any surgeries, said Master Sgt. Darlena

Mathis, 59th Surgical Operations Group operating room noncommissioned officer in charge of staffing and scheduling.

"The equipment here is modern, clean and similar to ours, just a little different," Major Casassola said. "We purposely scheduled our smaller cases to better acclimate ourselves to this facility."

"For this operation we only brought relatively simple instruments," Colonel Hardin said. "That's part of the beauty of this whole trip.

The things we did are very simple, but the effect is very large and very long-lasting."

The first day of surgeries included lip repair on a 1-year-old girl, a scar revision on a 29-year-old, and cyst removal on a 15-year-old.

"When you see kids with the kinds of problems that the doctors are operating on, and to know we are making a change ... it indirectly combats many problems here in the area," said Army Maj. Keith Anthony, Security Assistance Command counter-narcotics adviser.

Major Anthony, who's under the operational control of the U.S. MilGroup in Ecuador, served as a liaison for the team in Esmeraldas.

"The MilGroup was fantastic working with us. Anytime you take a few tons of medical supplies and eight people, it takes great support to move them into a fairly remote area like Esmeraldas," Colonel Hardin said.

## Made to feel at home

Esmeraldas has a population of nearly 100,000 and is a port city where fishing and petroleum exports play a major role in the infrastructure of the economy, Major Anthony said.

"The key hospital personnel, commanding Ecuadorian admiral and the citizens of Esmeraldas went to great lengths to make us feel at home. It was a wonderful experience being welcomed in such a fashion," said Major Talarczyk.

Working with limited capabilities and seeing a high volume of medical cases fulfills many of the MEDRETE objectives for the team, including improved combat readiness.

"I've been on eight missions. On these types of missions, you are limited with time you can spend here and you also have to get things done faster. It absolutely prepares you for working in wartime operations," Sergeant Mathis said.

## Overcoming obstacles

The team faced obstacles such as performing operations in hot and humid weather conditions and working through language barriers with the patients and their families. The success they achieved in working through these problems is due in part to the team's experience with humanitarian missions in South America.

"The entire team was excited to have another opportunity to work with Colonel Hardin. This is his 18th humanitarian mission, and we are so lucky to have him here with us," Major Talarczyk said.

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

## HAZMAT training

Hazardous waste management training, is 8-11 a.m. today in Room 254, Wolfe Hall.

For more information, call Thomas Minton, hazardous waste manager, 377-3004.

## Virtual assistant class

Sept. 26 is the deadline for active-duty military spouses of any service assigned to Keesler to apply for an October course to help them learn how to be "virtual assistants."

The course is Oct. 3 and 5, with an evening "spouse with a mouse" session Oct. 4 for the spouse and military member.

Self-employed virtual assistants provide offsite business support services to their clients, including administrative tasks, competitive research, Web site design, resume writing, account-

## New leader for Navy unit

Cmdr. Dean Sadanaga takes command of Keesler's Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit, 10 a.m. Friday at Welch Auditorium.

He replaces Cmdr. Ken Schwingshaki, CNATTU's leader for the past year, who heads to Maritime Civil Affairs, Norfolk, Va.

The new commander has spent the past two years at Stennis Space Center in Hancock County. His first assignment was deputy assistant chief of operations for Naval Meteorological and Oceanographic Command, followed by an emergency role as the Navy's housing director following Hurricane Katrina. In January, he became the command's director of information technology.

ing, bookkeeping services, marketing support, translation, and graphic design.

Work assignments are communicated through e-mail, phone, fax, mail, diskette transfer, and real-time online messag-

ing, methods which lend themselves easily to the transient lifestyle of military families.

Instructor Lana Smith from the airman and family readiness center is certified to train virtual assistants.

The online application is at [http://www.msvas.com/application\\_keesler.htm](http://www.msvas.com/application_keesler.htm).

For more information, call Ms. Smith, 228-377-2179 or 8593.

## Physical therapy

### Air Force Print News

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — Air Force officials are taking applications for the physical therapy doctoral program which begins Dec. 18, 2007, at the Health Science Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Only active-duty Airmen with a baccalaureate degree or who are in the final semester prior to receiving a degree that includes this program's prerequisites may apply. Applicants also must be medically qualified for worldwide duty.

Qualified applicants, call

DSN 665-2775 or 1-210-565-2775 for applications.

## Parking lot closure

The parking lot on the southeast side of the Keesler NCO Academy is closed 7:15-10:45 a.m. Sept. 13 for drill evaluations.

In the event of inclement weather, the lot is open.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Rosetta Lee, 377-2740.

## AFOSI training

The Air Force Office of Special Investigations is recruiting to fill Reserve individual mobilization augmentee staff and technical sergeant special agent positions.

For more information, contact OSI Reserve Affairs, 1-240-857-0866, DSN 857-0866 or [mary.mesa@ogn.af.mil](mailto:mary.mesa@ogn.af.mil).

# NEWS AND FEATURES

## Surgical services return to Keesler Medical Center

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

As inpatient services returned to Keesler Medical Center Aug. 15, members of the 81st Surgical Operations Squadron were prepared to put their skills to work.

A nine-person team performed the first surgery in the facility since Hurricane Katrina forced the Air Force's second largest medical center to shut down Aug. 29, 2005.

Among the staff were two medics who had assisted with the last surgical procedure that fateful day. Certified registered nurse anesthetists Maj. Betsy Majma and Capt. Aaron Holloway participated in a caesarian-section performed at the height of the storm using flashlights as a light source.

The Aug. 15 surgery was almost a year later and carried out in a much more routine manner in a brand new surgical setting. It was one of six cases scheduled for the day.

The team repaired an umbilical hernia in the medical center's recently-opened labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum wing's operating room. The two LDRP operating rooms are being used while the facility's operating suite is under renovation, a project planned before Katrina struck. They are expected to open in late fall.

The surgical team consisted of Maj. (Dr.) Dolan James, primary surgeon; Col. (Dr.) David Jenkins, who assisted; anesthesiologist Maj. (Dr.) Jules Gamache; Major Majma and Captain Holloway; Capts. Robert Colella and Cherie Copeland, operating room nurses; and Senior Airman Raheem Winnickerson and Airman 1st Class Cara Hammond, surgery technicians.

"The staff was scheduled to be in the OR at 7:30 a.m.; we were in place at 7:28," Major Majma said. "With the new equipment and so many new



Photo by Steve Pivnick

**Captain Holloway, left, and Major Majma monitor equipment during the first surgery performed at Keesler Medical Center since Hurricane Katrina forced facility to stop inpatient care. Ironically, both had assisted with the last surgical procedure Aug. 29, 2005, a caesarian-section performed at the height of the storm using flashlights as a light source.**

faces, I thought we might be delayed, but everything went well and we beat our deadline."

Colonel Jenkins noted the nearly two-hour procedure was performed as same-day surgery, allowing the patient to be discharged and return home later the same day.

The first scheduled "overnighter," a hysterectomy, was scheduled the following week.

"The surgery went well from my perspective," the colonel said. "There was great cooperation among the staff. It was the same as before Katrina."

"There was a colossal effort among many, many people to get the operating rooms operational," Major Majma added.

As of Aug. 21, Keesler medics were performing an

average of two surgeries daily.

"As the staff increases, so will the caseloads," observed Major Majma.

"Our working relationship is excellent — the staff's morale is up because they're doing what they're trained to do," Colonel Jenkins said, referring to the duration between the halt to inpatient service last August to its Aug. 15 return.

Major Majma echoed the feeling. "We're back home!"

The Aug. 15 surgery was also a landmark for Major Majma. It was the last time she assisted as an Air Force CRNA; she retires Sept. 30 after 20 years of service.

Colonel Jenkins also leaves Keesler in September for a new assignment at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

## IN THE NEWS

### Civilian shopping at commissary

Today is the last day Keesler civilian employees may shop at the base commissary, according to Lee Hathorn, civilian personnel officer.

### No more walk-in fingerprinting

The 81st Security Forces Squadron no longer accepts walk-ins for fingerprints.

For an appointment, call Staff Sgt. Tiffany Simmons, 377-4660 or 5404.

The office is in Room 151/156, Avery Manor, Building 7502, 805 Hercules Street adjacent to the golf course.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Monica Harris, 377-5404.

### Airman dies in Afghanistan

Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO — An Air Force combat controller from Hurlburt Field, Fla., died Aug. 19 when his vehicle came under hostile fire in Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province.

Senior Airman Adam Servais, 23, of Onalaska, Wis., was assigned to the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron at Hurlburt Field. He deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

### Air Force still hiring

Air Force Recruiting Service Public Affairs

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — The Air Force is still hiring, even in light of force-shaping initiatives.

The Air Force seeks 27,760 high school graduates or the equivalent, ages 17-28, to join its enlisted ranks from October to September 2007 in more than 20 career fields. For the officer corps, 482 college graduates are sought.

For more information, visit <http://www.airforce.com>.

### Heroes on Web site

Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO — A nonprofit organization's Web site is letting people pay tribute to Air Force heroes.

A section in the Air Force Memorial Foundation's Web site, Air Force Heroes, allows people to honor an Airman with a paragraph about what makes them extraordinary.

To post a tribute or browse tributes already posted, go to <http://www.airforcememorial.org/heroes/>.

### Early Keesler News deadline

The deadline for submissions to the Sept. 7 issue of the Keesler News is noon today, four days earlier than usual.

The early deadline is due to the Labor Day federal holiday Monday.

The newspaper office is closed Monday in observance of the holiday.

### Off-limits establishments

Off-limits establishments for military members are:

**Biloxi** — Blue Note Lounge, Boulevard Nightclub and Henry Beck Park. The park is off-limits except during daylight hours or official events.

**Pascagoula** — Carver Village, Bunksmall Apartments and H&H Hideaway.

**Moss Point** — Toni's Lounge.

# Recovery,

from Page 1

good shape and all instructors were back to work. Four days later, basic military training graduates from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, arrived to begin technical training.

By the time General Capasso took command of the wing Nov. 15, nearly 2,000 non-prior service students were in training — more than before the storm. The numbers continue to grow.

Another milestone was reached one week ago with the return of the last student whose initial skills training was interrupted by Katrina, prompting General Capasso to declare, “Today, our training mission is back 100 percent, thanks to the hard work of our Airmen.”

## Keesler gives

Even in the infancy of recovery efforts on base, Keesler’s military, civilian employees and family members were also attentive to the post-Katrina needs of their neighbors on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. One year later, this is still true.

Nearly 8,500 volunteers have performed more than 600 humanitarian missions along the coast, according to John Lowe, community readiness technician in the Keesler Airman and Family Readiness Center.

“Volunteers have put in almost 56,000 hours,” Mr. Lowe said. “According to a formula used by a national volunteer organization in Washington, D.C., the dollar value of all that labor is more than \$1 million.”

## Keesler receives

Mr. Lowe said humanitarian missions have run the gamut from rescue operations and cleanup immediately after the storm to home repairs and construction today.

“Keesler people are leaving a huge footprint in the coast community,” he said.

A similar footprint has been left on the Keesler community by its extended Air Force family. Personal property losses from Katrina were horrific for individuals and



**Lt. Gen. James Roudebush, Air Force surgeon general, addresses officials at the ceremony marking the return of inpatient services to the medical center Tuesday. Brig. Gens. Paul Capasso, 81st Training Wing commander, and James Dougherty, 81st Medical Group commander, also spoke at the event.**

Photo by Kemberly Groue

families. What 130 mph winds didn’t blow away, a storm surge of more than 30 feet in some locations washed away.

The response to the plight of Keesler people was nearly overwhelming. The Air Force Aid Society alone paid \$2.1 million to military members and families, according to Jackie Pope, community readiness consultant.

Military and civilians have received another \$500,000 in grants of up to \$500 per individual or family from the Katrina Relief Fund, which was established to manage cash contributions from around the world. Much of this money was raised through special offerings by Air Force chapels.

## Big ticket items

Another \$6,000 in assistance has been raised to date from the sale of Operation Dragon Comeback coins and patches. This is a joint effort by Chief Master Sgt. Aliquippa Allen, the wing command chief, chapel and family support staffs, and first sergeants.

Most of the nearly \$1 billion in damage inflicted by Katrina covers physical assets. The big ticket items include military family housing, \$313 million; the medical center, \$66.3 million for restoration and \$25 million for a central energy plant; Sablich Center, \$7 million; base exchange and satellite pharmacy, \$40 million; commissary, \$38.6 million; post office, \$2.5 million; multipurpose Services facility,

\$23.3 million; marina, \$3.6 million; McBride Library, \$5.5 million; fire station, \$19.6 million; and flight line, \$1 million.

Katrina destroyed or damaged beyond repair 1,067 of 1,820 military family housing units. Replacing those units involves the largest military housing construction project in history. Contracts are pending. Meanwhile, the demolition and clearing of home sites moves forward.

Emergency services returned to the medical center Monday, followed Tuesday by a ceremony marking the re-opening of inpatient services. A temporary satellite pharmacy opened July 31 in a modular building adjacent to the Class Six store at Meadows Drive and Second Street.

## Repair, replace, restore

Work is under way at Sablich Center to repair the roof, replace the air conditioning system and restore the interior which sustained extensive water damage. The building, two stories high and a city block long, housed offices of the 81st Mission Support Group and several 81st TRW staff agencies. Scattered across the base now, those offices will return to Sablich Center when restoration is completed.

Both the base exchange and commissary were flooded by Katrina’s storm surge. Both are scheduled to be rebuilt on higher ground.

AAFES’ mini-mall was up

and running three days after the storm passed, followed in short order by military clothing sales, a furniture outlet and the expansion of goods available at the Four Seasons store.

A mini-mart is under construction on M Street between the 81st Civil Engineer Squadron complex and Pecan Dining Facility. When completed early next year, the facility “will allow AAFES to expand our merchandise assortment and offer many more categories that are typically found in a base exchange,” according to Danny Schmidt, general manager.

## Grateful for efforts

A shopping mall and satellite pharmacy four times the size of the 40,000 square foot mini-mart is being designed.

A temporary commissary has been open in the former Keesler Community Center since Sept. 29. A site south of McBride Library has been designated for a 106,000-square-foot permanent commissary.

“Thanks to the efforts of our exchange and commissary folks, Keesler people were able to get essential goods shortly after the storm,” said General Capasso. “They didn’t stop there, but have continued to expand their inventories.”

The new post office site is on Meadows Drive across from the Four Seasons store.

The severely damaged Bay Breeze clubhouse and maintenance facility have been lev-

eled. The recreation triplex is in the planning stage.

Sixteen of the 18 holes on the golf course have been playable for months. Work began earlier this month on reconstruction of the No. 4 and 7 fairways and No. 4 green.

With the Keesler Club closed due to storm damage and the Keesler Community Center converted to a temporary commissary, the base was without a social gathering place immediately after Katrina. Enter outdoor recreation, which moved out of its main building at the marina and into the enclosed pavilion in marina park to make way for the Katrina Kantina.

## ‘Lot to be done yet’

Outdoor recreation has resumed fishing trips and pontoon boat rentals. Rebuilt boat docks and piers are expected to be available next spring.

McBride Library’s new location is northeast of Lott Hall, the C-130J simulator facility.

A “fire, crash and rescue” facility near the flight line replaces the storm-damaged fire station.

Flight line repairs include hangar roofs and doors, and the air traffic control tower.

“There’s a lot to be done yet, but we’ve come a long way in a short time,” General Capasso said. “Katrina was one for the record books. So is Keesler’s comeback.”

# PERSONNEL NOTES

**Editor's note:** This column is a service of the Keesler News. Contributors include the Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, and the 81st Mission Support Squadron's military and civilian personnel flights.

## Protecting service members' rights

**American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON — The Department of Justice has launched a Web site to protect service members' rights.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez, speaking to the Disabled American Veterans annual convention in Chicago, said the Justice Department has made it a priority to enforce civil rights laws for American service members.

The government promises that service members' jobs will still be theirs when they come home, and that they can't be discriminated against by their employers because of their military service. The United States vows service members will be able to vote and that their vote will be counted, and it promises service members "will have procedural protections in civil actions, like lawsuits or property repossessions, when serving overseas."

The Justice Department Web site, <http://www.servicemembers.gov>, outlines the rights service members have under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

## One-stop pay, personnel service

One-stop customer service for pay and personnel information is available all day, every day by calling toll-free 1-800-616-3775 or online at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cst/>.

## Civilian career information

Air Force civilians can access the virtual Civilian Career Brief through the AFPC secure Web site, <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afpcsecure/default.asp>.

Once on the AFPC secure Web site, select "Civ Career Brief" from the button menu.

New CCB users need to establish an account.

## Transforming travel processing

**81st Comptroller Squadron**

The Defense Travel System is an electronic travel order and settlement voucher producing system that's transforming the Defense Department's current processes into a single, streamlined, paperless system.

With DTS, travelers can input travel authorizations, review and pick available flights, make hotel and rental car reservations, electronically fill out travel vouchers, pay Government Travel Card accounts and receive direct deposit reimbursements in about one week.

For more information or training needs, call your unit DTS representative or visit <http://www.dtstravelcenter.dod.mil/>

## Long-term care insurance

For information on the long-term care insurance program and how to enroll, go online to <http://www.ltcfeds.com> or call 1-800-582-3337 or TDD 1-800-843-3557, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays.

## Mailing care packages

**American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service and Military Postal Service Agency process mail for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For more information, call 1-800-275-8777 or visit <http://www.usps.com>.

# Testing window expands for Airmen

Air Force Print News

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — Air Force officials are expanding the testing windows for Airmen beginning with the 07E6 and 07E7 cycles.

The changes are part of an ongoing process to improve the enlisted promotion testing system, according to officials at the Air Force Personnel Center here.

“Some factors that drove this change were the increasing number of non-weighable Airmen due to deployments and temporary duty assignments testing outside the established window,” said Chief Master Sgt. Rusty Nicholson, enlisted promotion and military testing chief at AFPC. “In reality, our testing cycle is practically year round.

“Plus, large bases couldn’t complete testing under the current testing cycle,” the chief added. “This expanded testing window will help alleviate out-of-cycle testing, daily multiple testing sessions and weekend testing.”

The testing window for promotion testing is expanded as follows:

**07E6/07E7:** Feb. 1 through March 31, 2007.

**07E5:** May 1 through June 15, 2007.

For more information contact local military personnel flight’s military testing branches.

## Two officers gaining rank

Two Keesler officers have been selected for promotion.

They are:

**To colonel** — Lt. Col. Charles Dunn II, 81st Mission Support Group.

**To major** — Capt. Tera Carter, 81st Medical Support Squadron.

# Mission unchanged

## Air and Space Expeditionary Force Center now under Air Force Personnel Center

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### Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — The Air and Space Expeditionary Force Center is assigned under the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley announced.

The reassignment, which becomes effective Tuesday, synergizes operations between the two centers and focus on merging permanent authorizations, wartime requirements and assignments under a single commander.

“This merger allows AFPC total visibility of Air Force requirements spanning home station to the front lines,” said Lt. Gen. Roger Brady, deputy chief of staff, manpower and personnel. “The assignment process will have clearer vision into the true requirements and be able to set realistic priorities to execute assignment policy.

“We’ll be able to better refine and target personnel policy and programs within our expeditionary force structure,” the general added.

The AEF’s mission to execute the Air Force battle rhythm and deliver versatile air and space power doesn’t change. Maj. Gen. Tony Przybylski, AFPC commander, understands the expeditionary culture, having been the commander of the AEF prior to his arrival at AFPC.

“This will be a seamless transition,” General

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“This will be  
a seamless transition,  
because you don’t get  
a second chance  
when it comes  
to supporting  
the warfighter.”

— **General Przybylski**

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Przybylski said, “because you don’t get a second chance when it comes to supporting the warfighter.”

“The AEF Center’s continued focus has been on making the AEF better for our Airmen and the combatant commanders,” said Col. Brian Kelly, AEF commander. “Combined with AFPC’s personnel expertise and worldwide data systems, it will allow our Air Force to better integrate total end-to-end warfighter support.”

## Coming soon: National elections



Photo by Kemberly Groue

**Maj. Aaron Albers, left, looks on as Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, 81st Training Wing commander, fills out an absentee ballot application for the national elections in November. Major Albers, 336th Training Squadron, is Keesler's voting officer. He urges service members to ensure they're able to exercise their right to vote by registering to vote and obtaining absentee ballots for their home states.**

## Continuing to serve



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Lonnie Arnold, left, director of the 81st Training Wing Retiree Activities Program for the past 13 years, briefs Ivan McAllister, who took over the position Aug. 15. The office, located in old Cody Hall, assists retirees and family members of all branches of the uniformed services. The program provides information, counseling and referrals on retiree benefits, survivor benefit plan and casualty assistance, Tricare information/assistance and enrollment in the Tricare Delta Dental Program. Mr. McAllister, a retired master sergeant, is now responsible for Keesler's annual Retiree Appreciation Day program and two newsletters a year. Mr. Arnold, a retired chief master sergeant, continues to serve as the Air Force's National Retiree Council representative for military retirees and family members in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee.

The Keesler Honor Guard  
needs new members.  
For more information,  
call 377-1986 or 2081.

# Hispanic observance begins with chapel service Sept. 17

By Senior Airman Jake Gard  
Keesler News Staff

A Hispanic service is the first of several events from Sept. 15-Oct. 15 to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at Keesler.

The service is 1-2 p.m. Sept. 17 at the Larcher Chapel.

"We're going to have a Hispanic service as a kickoff event," said Maria Ochoa, project officer. "It is a service to welcome the Hispanic month. We will have a speaker talk about our culture and diversity."

All events during the observance are open to all Keesler

personnel, family, civilians and retirees.

The Hispanic Heritage Committee has planned events to showcase this year's theme, "Hispanic Americans: Our Rich Culture Contributing to America's Future."

Other events include:

**Food tasting** — a free Hispanic food tasting is hosted by the committee, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 21 at the youth center. The committee members provide several homemade Hispanic dishes and walk-ins are also welcome. Entertainment includes dancing, and a performance by the band Mariachi Sol Del

Valle of Mobile. For more information, call Ms. Ochoa, 377-2211.

**Luncheon** — noon to 1 p.m. Oct. 12 at El Rancho Restaurant, Pass Road, Biloxi. The menu is chicken or steak fajitas or salad selected at time of reservation. Yolanda Johnson of Biloxi is the guest speaker. Music is provided by Mariachi Sol Del Valle. For reservations and to make menu choices, call Ms. Ochoa, 377-2211, by Oct. 5.

"We usually have over 200 people at both the food tasting and luncheon events," said Ms. Ochoa. "Further events are in the making."

## \$2,000 good deed



Photo by Adam Bond

Members of the American Legion Post 75 motorcycle club from Crestview, Fla., pose outside Fisher House after donating \$2,000 to the facility Monday. From left are T.K. Johnson, Rick Tyler, Janice Tyler, Angela Humbert, Dave Humbert and Russell Chamberlain. Mr. Johnson is the club director.

# Alcohol

## Separating myth from fact may be life or death issue

### Safety office

Misconceptions about alcohol and its effects on safe driving are widespread.

Knowing the truth may mean the difference between life and death.

**Myth:** "Alcohol is a stimulant."

**Fact:** Alcohol is a depressant. It acts on the nervous system like an anesthetic to lower or depress the activity of your brain.

**Myth:** "Drinking coffee sobers me up."

**Fact:** Coffee can't rid your system of alcohol. It just makes you a nervous, wide-awake drunk. Only time reverses impairment.

**Myth:** "I always stay away from the hard stuff."

**Fact:** Alcohol is alcohol. Beer has the same effect as straight scotch. One 12-ounce beer has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey or a 5-ounce glass of wine.

**Myth:** "I'm bigger, so I can handle my liquor better."

**Fact:** Size is only one factor in how much you can drink. Metabolism, amount of rest and food intake all play a part in how you handle liquor.

Impairment in motor reflexes and judgment can begin with the first drink.

**Myth:** "Once I roll down the car window, I'm OK."

**Fact:** No amount of fresh, cold air can reverse impairment. You gain nothing by rolling down a window or turning on the air conditioner. Again, only time can reverse impairment.

**Myth:** "I'll just drive slower."

**Fact:** Many people do, believing they actually compensate for being impaired by creeping along at 22 mph. This can be very dangerous. Others race along at 75 mph. The truth is, impaired drivers are unsafe at any speed.

**Myth:** "All I have to do is splash cold water on my face."

**Fact:** Splash all you like. You can even take a cold shower. It may make you cleaner, but it won't sober you up or make you a safe driver.

**Myth:** "A drink or two and I'm a better driver."

**Fact:** Even small amounts of alcohol can impair your judgment and put you and others on the road at risk of death or a disabling injury.

## Board openings

The Keesler Fisher House board of directors has volunteer openings for treasurer and secretary.

For more information, call Larry Vetter, Fisher House executive director, 377-8264, or cell 806-5878.

## Patients sought

The pediatric dentistry clinic is looking for patients for the advanced education in general dentistry residency.

Patients should be between 4-10-year-old dependents of active duty or military retirees and not enrolled in the dental insurance plan. They're required to be available for treatment on Thursday mornings.

For more information or to make a screening appointment, call 376-5164.

## Hurricane guides

Copies of the Keesler News' 2006 hurricane guide are available in the base newspaper office.

To reserve copies, call 377-4130, 3837, 3163, 7340 or 9966. Pick copies up 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. work days in Room 113, Taylor

Logistics Center, L Street.

## Victim advocates

The sexual assault prevention and response office is seeking applications for victim advocates.

This voluntary additional duty is open to active-duty or Department of Defense civilians of any grade, rank, age, race or gender.

Selection is based on the application, commander's statement of understanding, background check, personal interview and training.

Training is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 4, 5, 11 and 12.

Submit completed applications to the office by Sept. 7.

For more information, call 377-8635 or 7278.

## SARC program

The sexual assault prevention and response office presents Relationship Safety and Your Teen, 6-7 p.m. Sept. 19 at the youth activities center.

The course is designed to assist parents whose teens are dating or who have pre-teens talking about relationships

with the opposite sex.

For more information or to sign up, call 377-8635.

## Tax office

The tax office, Room 234, old Cody Hall, remains open through Sept. 15 due to filing deadline extensions resulting from Hurricane Katrina.

Extensions apply to federal and state tax returns.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m. work days.

For more information, call 377-4454.

For Katrina-related questions, call the Internal Revenue Service, 1-866-562-5227.

## Couples program

A free educational program for couples is 4:30-9 p.m. Sept. 16 at the Larcher Chapel.

The program is sponsored by the family advocacy office. Couples are required to register. Some couples may be eligible for free child care.

For more information, call Paula Tracy, 376-3456.

## PT uniform wear

In organized physical training, any combination of the

PT gear is worn as a set and not mixed with civilian clothes.

At other times any combination can be worn with civilian clothes.

Commanders or equivalents determine which PT events are "organized."

For more information, call Master Sgt. Jay McKenzie, 377-1091.

## Pedestrian gate

The pedestrian gate to Jeff Davis Elementary School operates only to allow base children to walk to the school.

A patrol is in place from 3:15 p.m. until the school's crossing guard departs.

For more information, call Staff Sgt. Andrew Inczauskis, 377-3762.

## 'Palace' briefings

Palace Chase briefings are 10 a.m. the first two working Fridays of every month in Room 203, Garrard Hall.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Joseph Walker, Air Force Reserve recruiter, 377-7116, or visit Room 229, old Cody Hall.

## Thrift shop

The thrift shop is located in the former Chapel One building adjacent to Sablich Center.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, with consignments accepted from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays. Donations are accepted during regular hours.

For more information, call 377-3217.

## Zero overpricing

Submit zero overpricing items on Air Force Form 1046 to 81SUPS/LGSPQ, Attn: Kevin Lane, 377-8891, or e-mail to kevin.lane@keesler.af.mil.

## Preschool playgroup

A preschool pals playgroup is offered 9:30-10:30 a.m. Thursdays in Room 100-B of the former Chapel One.

The group is a joint venture of the chapel and the family support center. The hour offers toys, games, music and a chance for parents to visit.

For more information, call Chap. (Capt.) John Vander Kaay, 377-2520, or the family support center, 377-2179.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Ellis, who won the female age 40-49 category, switches to running shoes after completing the bike ride.

## Mini-triathlon champions break 40-minute barrier

By Senior Airman Jake Gard

Keesler News Staff

Wade Swenson and Naomi Henigin were the top male and female finishers overall in Keesler's second annual mini-triathlon Friday.

Swenson was the overall male winner, turning in the triathlon's best time of 34 minutes, 24 seconds. The overall female winner was Henigin, with a time of 39:36.

Affiliations of the competitors weren't available.

"Participants competed in three events for the triathlon," said Linda Marinovich, fitness program manager. "They completed a 200-yard swim at the Triangle pool, followed by a six-mile bike ride, then a two-mile run."

Military personnel, retirees, and civilians 18 and older were allowed to participate in the event. The competition began with the 200-yard swim at the pool, which was the staging area for the rest of the triathlon, said Marinovich.

After finishing the swim, the 54 competitors quickly put on their gear for the six-mile bike ride, which began at the pool, looped around I-81 and finished at the youth center.

From the youth center, participants rushed

to change into running shoes to begin the last event in the mini-triathlon: the two-mile run. The finish line brought the athletes back to the Triangle pool.

Participants were grouped by age and split into male and female categories, according to Marinovich. Women were put in one of three groups: ages 18-29, 30-39, and 40-49. Men were placed in four groups: ages 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50-59.

Top finishers in the female age groups:

**18-29** — Jennifer Lepper, 40:55; Sarah Penny, 41:48; and Amanda Smith, 49:40.

**30-39** — Shannon Howard, 42:19; Brandie Dickerson, 47:40; and Rachel Lemons, 56:59.

**40-49** — Barbara Ellis, 45:24; and Lori Orslene, 54:00.

Top finishers in the male age groups:

**18-29** — Nick Vanni, 35:32; Merrill Alley, 40:35; and Michael Matt, 42:40.

**30-39** — Dwayne Huffman, 36:21; Nathan Goeke, 37:57; and Jimmy Shields, 40:03.

**40-49** — Matt O'Donnell, 37:11; William Dunn, 40:38; and Danny Dillon, 41:38.

**50-59** — Bob Clark, 39:40; Daniel Ploetz, 41:33; and Mike Deaton, 41:44.

## Contractor wins title in softball

By Senior Airman Jake Gard

Keesler News Staff

Davis Construction won the Keesler Men's Classic softball tournament championship at the Triangle field Saturday.

The champs needed eight innings to dispose of the 81st Medical Support Squadron, 22-21.

"It was a back-and-forth slugfest," said Angelo Plaza, 81st MDSS.

Six teams of military personnel and civilians participated in the double-elimination tournament.

Other participants were the 81st Civil Engineer Squadron, 338th Training Squadron, 338th Military Training Flight and Naval Construction Battalion Center-Gulfport.

# Falcons reinstate coach

## Air Force Print News

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Offensive line coach Pete Hurt was reinstated to the Air Force Academy football team Monday by director of athletics Hans Mueh.

The reinstatement followed an internal inquiry into the coach striking a player during a practice Aug. 9. Hurt was suspended with pay Aug. 16 and wasn't allowed to have contact with the team.

"The inquiry showed that this was a one-time incident and not something consistent with Pete's coaching methods or character," Mueh said. "I'm confident that this will not happen again and we consider the incident closed."

Hurt is in his second season as offensive line coach at the academy.

He came to the Falcons from Clinton, Miss., High School, where he was head football coach and athletic director, 2002-04.

Prior to that, he was the head coach at Division I-AA Samford, 1994-2001, where his record was 42-39-1.

# In the swim

## Academy professor strokes world record

By John Van Winkle

**Air Force Academy Public Affairs**  
AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — An Air Force Academy professor has set a world record in long-distance swimming.

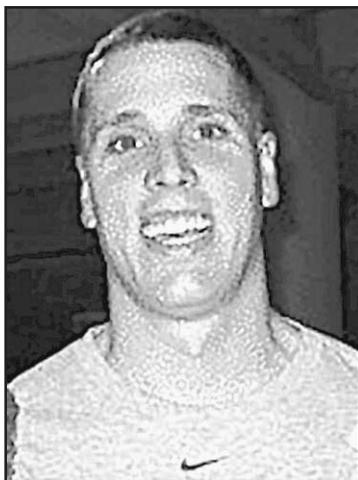
Tim Lawrence of the Department of Astronautical Engineering became the first American to swim the 14.8 nautical miles from Britain's Jersey Island to France.

In the process, he lowered the best overall time by more than three minutes to 8 hours, 21 minutes, 17 seconds. Lawrence is only the sixth person in the world to successfully complete this long-distance swim solo.

He set off the morning of July 23 from La Coupe Point.

"The weather here can be so unstable," Lawrence said. "It started out with hellacious conditions, with torrential rain and a downpour."

After about half a mile, the wind and tide aligned.



Lawrence

"Then it was a dead calm sea," said the 1988 academy graduate. "All the long-water swims I've done have been in choppy waters, but the wind and tide were aligned until the last three miles. Then the tide turned and I had to fight my way in."

Weather is only one of the challenges long-distance swimmers face making the trek from the British channel

island to France.

Swimmers can't wear wetsuits, but water temperatures are between 59 and 64.5 degrees Fahrenheit during June and July. Thus, a swimmer can't switch to a backstroke to rest, as they must generate a continual amount of body heat. Hypothermia sets in when one's body temperature drops from the normal 98.4 degrees to about 95 degrees.

After battling the last few miles and setting foot on the western shore of France's Cherbourg peninsula, Lawrence was greeted by 75 people with an American flag.

Only then did he learn he was the new world record holder. The old record of 8 hours, 26 minutes and 28 seconds was set in 2005.

Lawrence's record also beats the best relay team time. Only four teams have completed the Jersey Island-France swim via relay.

## SCORES AND MORE

### Bowling

**Gaude Lanes** — closed through Sept. 30 for Hurricane Katrina restoration.

### Fitness centers

**Blake Fitness Center** — open 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Mondays-working Fridays; 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. non-working Fridays; 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

**Dragon Fitness Center** — open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. workdays. Basketball court is open. Free classes in aerobics, kickboxing, yoga and spin cycling. Parent/child fitness room open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays-working Fridays. Parental supervision required.

For more information, call 377-2907.

**Triangle Fitness Center** — open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays-working Fridays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. compressed work schedule Fridays and weekends; closed holidays.

For more information, call 377-3056.

**Towel service** — at Blake and Dragon fitness centers is discontinued. Customers furnish their own towels.

For more information, call 377-8380 or 7858.

### Golf

**Bay Breeze Golf Course and driving range** — open 7 a.m. to dusk daily. No greens fees. Electric carts \$10 for 18 holes, \$5 for nine holes. Pull carts, \$2. Club rental: \$5 for 18 holes, \$3 for nine holes. Driving range opens 7 a.m. daily. Beginning today, bucket of 30 balls, \$2.

**Local course support** — St. Andrews, Gulf Hills and Great Southern Club courses offer reciprocal playing privileges to current members of Bay Breeze.

Bay Breeze members are required to show identifica-

tion to verify their names are on the membership roster. Once their membership is verified, members pay only the golf cart fee for a round of golf.

For more information, call 348-7569.

### Outdoor recreation

**Back Bay of Biloxi fishing trips** — 7 a.m. to noon Saturday. Cost: \$15 per person. Minimum of six people, maximum of eight. Mississippi fishing license required.

**Deep sea fishing** — reserve boat for up to six people for \$600, including the captain and tackle. Bring your own refreshments. Fishing license isn't required.

**August fishing tournament** — weigh in the heaviest red drum for the month and win \$100 savings bond.

**Disk golf** — fairway, multi-purpose, putt and approach disks for rent or sale.

**Camping package available** — includes sleeping bags, lanterns, camp stove and tent.

**Pontoon boat training** — required before rental.

For more information, call 377-3160.

**Marina park pavilions** — to reserve, call 377-3160.

### Pools

**Main pool** — open noon to 6 p.m. weekends. Closed Wednesdays.

**Triangle pool** — open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily except Wednesdays.

### Youth center

**Classes** — taekwondo, 6-7 p.m. Mondays and Wednesday for ages 6 and older. For members, \$35 per month; for non-members, \$40. Register for gymnastics, karate.

For more information, call 377-4116.

# DIGEST

## HONORS

### Student honor roll

#### 332nd Training Squadron

**Electronic principles** — Airmen Basic Michael Archer, Erwin Armstrong, Richard Bloodgood, Rolfy Caceres, Eric Coovert, Wallace Dawkins, Manuel Desouza, William Eliason, Robert Evans, Daniel Foster, Geoffrey From, Shawn Greggs, Eric Hall, Christopher Harris, Cody Hartzell, Mario Hernandez, William Hirner, Reco Jefferson, Jason Johnson, Beau Jordan, Michelle Kleffner, Jerred Lute, Richard Marshall, Marquiz Montgomery, Christopher Moore, Tyler Mousner, Zachary Murray, Cordan Norris, Jacob Nichols, Mark Pritchett, Michael Reyes, Standley Riley, Nicholas Russell, David Schutz, Nicholas Skroch, Christopher Smith, Ian Stahr, Derek Steinberg, Erich Strickbine, Joseph Strowd, Richard Vengels, Nathan Wigington, Alponso Williams and William Woosley; Airmen Rodney Baumer, Derek Deboer, Adam Dryden, Robert Duenas, Aaron Gemalsky, Anthony Howard, Jeremy King, Eric Landon, Gary Palladino and Adalberto Rodriguez; Airmen 1st Class Kyle Barber, Paul Barber, Sean Campbell, Brian Cavender, David Devoe, Paul Donahoe, Brian Duchek, Nathaniel Eaton, Ian Fitchpatrick, Andrew Gropp, Adam Haas, Elizabeth Horn, Nicholas May, Ian McAlister, Jeffrey McElhinny, Robert Mixon, Adam Nelson, Huor Ong, Shane Peacock, Jason Price, Jeffrey Skarski, Vicki Smith, Souraphone Souriyaseng, David Staffeld, Daniel TerHaar, Daniel Thomas, James Tracy, Mark Valdez and Claude Wiggins; Senior Airmen Jesus Espinoza, Daniel Gruber and Anthony Perkins; Staff Sgts. Ricardo Camacho, Michael Castillo, Omar Catolico, Christopher Cheatham, Joel Cook, Matthew Doyal, Gregory Jordan, Richard Wysong and Justin Young; Tech. Sgt. Nathani Bartnick, William Hardee and Aaron Smith; Master Sgts. Khalid BaniHani and Hong Jeoag; Chief Master Sgt. Jae Jeon; Joseph McCloskey.

#### 334th TRS

**Air traffic control operations training flight** — Airmen Basic Joshua Batman, Morgan Buckland, Joshua Holzman and Justin Huffman; Airmen 1st Class Jeron Anderson, Justin Bowers, Skyler Burns and Gregory Gutierrez; Senior Airman Joseph Kliebert; Staff Sgt. Ashley Barnett; Senior Master Sgt. Young Sohn; Capt. Lazar Zorin

#### 335th TRS

**Comptroller training flight** — Airmen Basic Lani Burkhardt, Christopher Cravotta, Kristin Cunningham, Karla Kincaid De Pena, Melina Levesque, Kimberly Peck and Abigail Wright; Airman Ryan Schlabach; Airmen 1st Class Brandon Bednarski, Aleshia Bradford, Jessica Chiles, Julie Flowers and

Mark Simpson; Senior Airmen Charlotte Baker, Terrence Pride, Sharon Salvador, David Tallman and Latesha Taylor; Staff Sgts. Shane Bastable, John Cody, Michael George, Bethany Lanski, Jennifer Restey, William Simmons and Dennis White; Tech. Sgt. Lawrence Little; Master Sgt. Matthew Massengale.

**Weather training flight** — Airmen Basic Corwyn Bickel and Joshua Humphrey; Airman Kip Anderson; Airmen 1st Class Michelle Barto, Todd Harris, Lindsey Pleasant, Shane Sutton and Andrew Watson; Navy Airman Jesse Gray; Navy Seaman William Corless; Tech. Sgts. Bill Barry, Christopher Canarina, Kelly Conley, Timothy Mecalis and Joseph Williamson; Master Sgt. David Paul.

#### 336th TRS

**Communications-computer systems training flight** — Airman Basic Matthew Theerman; Airman James Harris; Airmen 1st Class Bernard Baum, Jack Dervin and Richard Pilcher; Senior Airmen David Nunes and Todd York; Staff Sgts. Robert Baker, Jesse Beinhower, Patrick Goupil, Eric LaFrance, Viet Nguyen, Jason Oliver and Charles Trimer; Master Sgt. Ralph Lucas; Maj. Sameer Al Thodan.

**Communications and information training flight** — Airmen Basic Sean Graham, Rodney Hill and Mercedes Swenson; Airmen 1st Class Donovan Barnes and Julian Miller; Senior Airmen Tinisha Graham, Keisha Lee and Jennifer Zortman; Staff Sgts. Eugenie Hinson and Daniel Jones; Tech. Sgt. Bertley Hunt.

#### 338th TRS

**Computer, network, cryptographic systems course** — Airmen Basic John Filleau III and Craig McGuire; Airmen Joshua Donati and Luis Vasquez; Airmen 1st Class Joshua Baird, Jason Hultgren, Christopher Primmer, Thomas Russo, James Spevack, Ivan Trejo and Ryan Underwood; Senior Airman Steven Bik; Staff Sgts. Oliver Bugarin, James Davis and Keith Downey.

**Radar systems** — Airman Christopher McClanahan; Airmen 1st Class Joshua Deamusategui, Brian Housholder and Joseph Rutledge; Senior Airman Chris Edwards; Staff Sgt. Ray Parrish.

## HOLIDAY HOURS

### Labor Day

**Editor's note:** Hours for these base facilities reflect changes in observance of the Labor Day federal holiday, Monday. Any exchange facilities not listed are closed.

**Keesler News** — closed Monday.

**Inns of Keesler** — open 24 hours.

**Car wash** — open 24 hours.

**Fam camp** — open 24 hours.

**Mini-mart** — open 24 hours.

**Magnolia Dining Facility** — 7:30-9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**Live Oak Dining Facility** — 7:30-9 a.m., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**Azalea Dining Facility** — closed.

**Blake Fitness Center** — 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

**Vandenberg Community Center** — noon to 6 p.m.

**Half Time Café** — closed.

**Bay Breeze Golf Course** — 7 a.m. to dusk.

**Outdoor recreation** — 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Arts and crafts center** — closed.

**Auto hobby shop** — closed.

**Katrina Kantina** — closed.

**McBride Library** — closed.

**Dragon and Triangle fitness centers** — closed.

**Information, ticket and trip office** — closed.

**Youth center** — closed.

**Child development center** — closed.

**Family child care** — closed.

**Gaudé Lanes** — closed.

**Veterinary clinic** — closed.

**Mini-mall** — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Furniture store** — closed.

**Class Six** — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Please see **Digest**, Page 24

## SHUTTLE SCHEDULE

### 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays

Minutes after hour	Bus stop
:00	:30
:01	:31
:02	:32
:04	:34
:06	:36
:08	:38
:09	:39
:11	:41
:12	:42
:13	:43
:14	:44
:15	:45
:16	:46
:17	:47
:18	:48
:19	:49
:20	:50
:21	:51
:22	:52

### Technical training route

#### 5:10-5:37 a.m. weekdays

Minutes after hour	Bus stop
:10	Building 5025
:12	Building 5022
:14	Shaw House
:16	Muse Manor
:18	Tyer House
:20	TLQ east side 2000 block
:21	TLQ east side of Locker House
:25	332nd TRS
:28	Welch Auditorium
:33	Thomson/Dolan/Cody Halls
:34	McClellan Hall
:36	Allee/Wolfe Halls
:37	Stennis Hall/Weather

### Prior-service students lodged off-base

Call 377-2432 for transportation needs. Traffic in the local area impacts base taxi times.

**Editor's note:** Duty passengers have priority over "space available" riders. Schedule may be impacted by increased official operations or severe weather. Those who are physically challenged, have excess baggage, medical appointments at off-base hospitals or clinics or unable to ride the base shuttle, call 377-2432 for the base taxi. For more information, call 377-2430. Until further notice, weekend shuttle service isn't available. Taxi service is available on an "as needed" basis.

## COAST AREA TRANSIT

**Keesler Express** — runs between the Triangle and Edgewater Mall. Bus service begins from the base, 5:50-8:30 p.m. work days, 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. down Fridays and Saturdays, and 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sundays.

The route is limited to specific pickup and dropoff points:

Minutes after hour, bus stop	
:30	Hercules Street bus stop
:32	Welch Auditorium
:45	Pass Road Wal-Mart
:54	Arrive Edgewater Mall
:00	Depart Edgewater Mall
:09	Pass Road Wal-Mart
:22	Welch Auditorium
:24	Hercules Street bus stop

The regular adult fare is \$1. An unlimited one-day pass is \$5 and one-month pass is \$45.

For more information, call 896-8080.

## CHAPEL SERVICES

**Editor's note:** For more information, call 377-2520.

### Roman Catholic

#### Sunday Mass

Triangle Chapel .....9 a.m.

#### Daily Mass

Triangle Chapel.....11:15 a.m.

### Protestant

#### Sunday worship

Larcher Chapel traditional service.....8:30 a.m.

Triangle Chapel contemporary worship service...10:30 a.m.

Triangle Chapel gospel service.....Noon

### Islamic

**Building 2003** — prayer five times daily; Salaat ul-Jummah congregational prayer, noon Friday.

For more information, call 377-2520 or 0327.

### Latter-Day Saints

**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** — student group service, 2 p.m. Sundays, Triangle Chapel. For more information, call 396-5274 or 1-661-747-4738.

# Digest,

from Page 23

**Service station** — 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. gas.  
**Military clothing sales** — closed.  
**Katrina Pizza** — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**Dawg Daze** — closed.  
**Seattle's Best Coffee** — closed.  
**Mobile units** — closed.  
**Subway** — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**General Nutrition Center** — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
**Beauty shop** — closed.  
**Barber shop** — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
**Laundry and dry cleaning** — closed.  
**At Ease Apparel** — closed.  
**Force One Rental** — closed.  
**Enterprise Car Rental** — closed.

## CLASSES

### Airman Leadership School

**Class 06-E** — graduation Sept. 7.  
**Class 06-F** — Sept. 19-Oct. 27.  
**Class 07-1** — Nov. 2-Dec. 14.

### Keesler NCO Academy

**Class 06-6** — graduation Sept. 14.  
**Class 06-7** — Sept. 18-Oct. 26.  
**Class 07-1** — Nov. 2-Dec. 14.

### Arts and crafts center

**Advanced pottery** — For more information, call 377-2821.  
**Engraving shop** — custom items for gifts, mementos and squadron awards.

### Auto skills center

**Beginners auto care** — \$5 per class. Change oil, brakes, tune ups, tire changing and more. For dates and times, call 377-3872.

**Auto air conditioners** — serviced at a reasonable price.

**24-hour coin-operated car wash** — features foamy brush wash, high pressure rinse, wax system, towelettes and Armorrall and vacuum station.

**Vehicle resale lot** — behind the Keesler Club on Larcher Boulevard. Register vehicles, recreational vehicles and boats at the arts and crafts center. For more information, call 377-2821.

### McBride Library

**Orientations** — 4:30 p.m. Wednesdays.

**Tours** — for more information, call 377-2181.

**Gale Group data base** — reference use in library includes Opposing Viewpoints, Infotrac I, Student Resource Center Gold and full text periodicals for research or personal use.

## TRANSITIONS

### Workshops, briefings

**Veterans benefits briefing** — 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 14, Oct. 19, Nov. 16 and Dec. 14, Room 122, old Cody Hall. To pre-register, call Ron Bublik, 377-8592 or e-mail ronald.bublik@keesler.af.mil.

**Transition assistance program workshop** — 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 11-13, Oct. 16-18, Nov. 13-15 and Dec. 11-13, Room 122, old Cody Hall. To pre-register, call Ron Bublik, 377-8592, or e-mail ronald.bublik@keesler.af.mil.

**Palace Chase briefings** — 10 a.m. first two working Fridays of the month, Room 203, Garrard Hall. For more information, call Master Sgt. Joseph Walker, 377-2116.

### Computer use

**Government computers** — commanders may authorize their use for preparation of personal resumes by people separating or retiring from the service on an "as available" basis as long as use doesn't adversely affect the mission.

**Transition employment opportunities public folder** — go to e-mail "public folders" and click on "transition employment

opportunities" for job opportunities for active duty and family members. For more information, call 377-8592 or 8593.

### Employment opportunities and Web sites

**Reserve opportunities** — for members separating from active duty interested in the Air Force Reserve or the Palace Chase programs, call Master Sgt. Joseph Walker, 377-7116, for an appointment. The in-service recruiting office is in Room 229, old Cody Hall.

**Defense Manpower Data Center** — <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dors> or <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/tbb>.

**Air Force Blue to Corporate Gray** — <http://www.blue.togray.com>.

**Air Force Federal Employment Resume and Information** — <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/resweb>.

**Civilian job certification and licensing requirements for military personnel and veterans** — <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets>.

**Department of Veterans Affairs** — <http://www.vba.va.gov/efif/index.htm>; for members returning from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

**Southern Region Military and Civilian Job Fair** — <http://www.mesc.state.ms.us/jobfair>.

**New military spouse career center** — <http://www.military.com/spouse>. Extensive job board including jobs from public and private sectors. For more information, call Vince Patton, 703-269-0154, or e-mail at [vince@militaryadvantage.com](mailto:vince@militaryadvantage.com).

**Military Connection** — online resources database for military family members seeking civilian employment at <http://www.militaryconnection.com>

**America's Job Bank** — <http://www.ajb.dni.us>.

## CLUBS AND CENTERS

### Vandenberg Community Center

**Eight-ball pool tournament** — 6-9:30 p.m. Mondays.

**Nine-ball pool tournament** — 6-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

**Free dance revolution pad** — 6 p.m. Wednesdays.

**Game night** — 6 p.m. Wednesdays. Board games, ping pong tournament and more.

**Karaoke** — 6 p.m. Thursdays.

**Late night dance and DJ** — 6 p.m. to midnight Thursdays before nonworking Fridays, Fridays and Saturdays. \$3.

**Half Time Café** — open for lunch and dinner. Buffet specials 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.: Wednesdays, Italian, \$5.95; working Fridays, catfish, \$6.50.

### Katrina Kantina

**Taco Tuesdays** — two tacos for \$1.

**Random cash giveaway** — \$50 cash to a club member, once a week between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m.; must be present and have club card to win.

### Youth center

**Annual membership** — \$25, ages 6 and older. Receive discounted prices for programs, classes and sports.

**Registrations accepted** — for before- and after-school and back-to-school programs, dance, gymnastics, guitar and karate.

**Taekwondo** — 6-7 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, ages 6 and older. For more information, call 377-4116.

**Creative corner** — 4:30 p.m. Aug. 31. Art projects.

**Free home alone safety workshop** — 6 p.m. today, ages 10 and older. Parent must accompany child.

**Self-directed activities** — 3-7 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, ages 9-18.

**Instructors needed** — for programs including those for ages 3-5 and special classes. For more information, call 377-4116.

**Movies and snacks** — 5 p.m. Mondays, ages 9 and older.

**Pediatrics playgroup** — 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays, ages 2-5.

**Smart girls** — 5 p.m. Tuesdays, ages 9-16; girls-only topics.

**Training responsible adolescents in leadership/Keystone Club** — 6-7 p.m. Tuesdays, ages 13-17.

**Game room tournaments** — 5 p.m. Wednesdays.

**Torch Club** — 3 p.m. Thursdays, ages 9-12.

**FitFactor fitness club** — 5 p.m. Fridays, ages 9-18.

**Friday dances** — 6:30-10 p.m., ages 9-15.

Please see **Digest**, Page 25

## DINING HALL MENUS

### Today

**Lunch** — herbed baked chicken, cornbread, stuffed cabbage rolls, fried catfish, blackeyed peas with rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, baked sweet potatoes, mixed vegetables, peas, fruit salad, potato salad, cream of broccoli soup, chicken and wild rice soup, chili, cannonball sandwich and Italian pepper beef sandwich.

**Dinner** — roast pork loin, cornbread, jaegerschnitzel veal, glazed cornish hen, potato halves, orange rice, gravy, carrots, pinto beans, corn combo, fruit salad, potato salad, cream of broccoli soup, chicken and wild rice soup, chili, cannonball sandwich and Italian pepper beef sandwich.

### Friday

**Lunch** — Mexican baked chicken, Swiss steak, stuffed peppers, macaroni and cheese, rice, gravy, corn on the cob, beans, peas and carrots, pasta salad, three-bean salad, clam chowder, garden vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork sandwiches and burritos.

**Dinner** — lasagna, spaghetti with meat sauce, Italian sausage, garlic toast, mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli polonaise, cauliflower, Italian baked beans, corn O'Brien, pasta salad, three-bean salad, clam chowder, garden vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork sandwiches and burritos.

### Saturday

**Lunch** — crispy baked chicken, cajun meatloaf, ribeye steak, baked and mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli, French peas, glazed carrots, fruit medley, kidney bean salad, bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and buffalo wings.

**Dinner** — fish almondine, stir-fry chicken with broccoli, pork chops, rissole potatoes, rice pilaf, gravy, calico corn, club spinach, fried okra, fruit medley, kidney bean salad, bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and buffalo wings.

### Sunday

**Lunch** — tuna and noodles, sauerbraten, chicken breast filet parmesan, au gratin potatoes, rice, gravy, cauliflower combo, peas, fried cabbage, tomato salad, jellied spring salad, vegetable beef soup, Italian wedding soup, frontier chicken chili and cheese pizza.

**Dinner** — ginger barbecue chicken, fried shrimp, spinach lasagna, orange rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, black-eyed peas, lima beans, corn O'Brien, tomato salad, jellied spring salad, vegetable beef soup, Italian wedding soup, frontier chicken chili and cheese pizza.

### Monday

**Labor Day cookout** — barbecue ribs, grilled loin steak, barbecue chicken, cole slaw, baked potatoes, baked beans, corn, pastries, fruit, canned drinks and candy.

**Dinner** — turkey, cornbread, ham, raisin sauce, fish and fries, mashed potatoes, cornbread dressing, gravy, succotash, tempura vegetables, green beans, garden cottage cheese salad, macaroni salad, chicken dumpling soup, minestrone, chili with beans, cannonball sandwich and chicken nuggets.

### Tuesday

**Lunch** — onion lemon baked fish, pork schnitzel steak, beef and spaghetti, garlic toast, baked and mashed potatoes, gravy, pinto beans, spinach, stewed tomatoes, spinach salad, waldorf salad, white chicken chili, seven-bean with ham soup, chicken noodle soup and steak and cheese subs.

**Dinner** — paprika beef, barbecue beef cubes, chicken fajitas, garlic toast, O'Brien potatoes, rice, gravy, cauliflower, corn on the cob, lima beans, waldorf salad, spinach salad, white chicken chili, seven-bean with ham soup, steak and cheese subs and tacos.

### Wednesday

**Lunch** — lasagna, spaghetti with meat sauce, chicken cacciatore, noodles, baked potatoes, baked beans, green beans, simmered squash, Mexican coleslaw, frijole salad, pasta fagioli soup, chicken tortilla soup, vegetarian chili, cheese fishwich and Monte Cristo sandwich.

**Dinner** — pita pizzas, jalapeno cornbread, country-style steak, fried chicken, oven-brown potatoes, mashed potatoes, gravy, fried cauliflower, bean combo, cabbage, cole slaw, cottage cheese salad, pasta fagioli soup, chicken tortilla soup, vegetarian chili, cheese fishwich and cheese pizza.

# Digest,

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**Super Saturdays** — 2-5 p.m., ages 6-12; 6-10 p.m., ages 13-18. Games, sports and crafts.

**Instructors needed** — for programs for ages 3-5 and special classes. For more information, call 377-4116.

## TICKETS AND TOURS

**Editor's note:** Located inside Vandenberg Community Center.

**Tour to New Orleans Saints home football games** — beginning Sept. 25; \$60. Sign up by Sept. 19.

**Discounted tickets** — for many attractions including Gulf Islands Water Park in Gulfport, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays. For more information, call 377-3818.

**Free brochures** — information on area and out-of-state attractions.

## MEETINGS

**Editor's note:** To list time, place and contact for organization meetings, call 377-3837 or e-mail KN@keesler.af.mil.

Recurring

**African-American Heritage Committee** — 3:30 p.m. second Tuesday of the month, Room 109, Taylor Logistics Building. For more information, call Paulette Powell, 377-2270, or Kurt Higgins, 377-1390.

**Air Force Sergeants Association** — 11:30 a.m. third Tuesday of the month, Vandenberg Community Center. For more information, call Master Sgt. Scott Sippel, 377-2337.

**Air Force Sergeants Association Auxiliary** — 6 p.m. third Thursday of the month, youth center, J Street. For more information, call Desarae Chereskin, 341-0988.

**Airmen Against Drunk Driving** — 3:15 p.m. first Tuesday of the month, Vandenberg Community Center second floor conference room. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Mark Harrell, president, 377-2293, or e-mail keesler.aaddofficers@keesler.af.mil.

**At Eze Toastmasters Club** — 11 a.m. Tuesdays, Building 1101 conference room. For more information, call Chief Master Sgt. Don Seaton, 377-5958, or Fred Blache, 377-1048, or visit <http://www.toastmasters.org>.

Exceptions to Keesler's  
25 mph  
speed limit:  
15 mph  
in housing areas, flight line  
and unpaved surfaces;  
10 mph  
in close proximity to  
marching formations and  
when waved through  
base gates;  
5 mph  
in parking lots,  
and  
35 mph  
in some sections  
of perimeter roads.

**Keesler Amateur Radio Club** — 6:30 p.m. Mondays, Hangar 3, Room 215. Check out the club repeater on 146.79 negative offset. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Justin Meyer, 377-4149 or 324-5806, or e-mail justin.meyer2@keesler.af.mil.

**Keesler Christian Home Educators Association** — meets 7-9 p.m. second Tuesday of the month, September-May, Larcher Chapel. For more information, call Michelle Durkin, 872-9393, or e-mail chelle1rn@yahoo.com.

**Keesler Spouses Club** — meets the second Tuesday of the month. For time and location, call Tammie Searfass, president, 273-4324, or visit <http://www.KeeslerSpousesClub.com>.

**Native American Heritage Committee** — for more information, call R.I. Whiteside, 863-0479, or Capt. Elizabeth Taillon, 377-6242.

**Retired Enlisted Association Magnolia Chapter 81** — 6:30 p.m. second Thursday of the month, Vandenberg Community Center. For more information, call Larry McKean, president, 377-3252 or 374-5922.

**Rising VI Association** — 3 p.m. third Wednesday of the month, Keesler NCO Academy auditorium. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Shanda Yarborough, 377-3653, or Tech. Sgt. Kevin Benjamin, 377-7924.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Movies

**Editor's note:** Movies are shown at Welch Auditorium. Tickets are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children for regular features, and \$2.50 for adults and \$1 for children for matinees. For a recorded message about current features, call 377-6627.

**Friday** — 7 p.m., Clerk II (R, 97 minutes).

**Saturday** — 2 p.m., My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13, 96 minutes); 7 p.m., John Tucker Must Die (PG-13, 87 minutes).

**Sunday** — 2 p.m., Monster House (PG, 91 minutes).

### September weather outlook

September marks the transition from summer to fall. Temperatures and thunderstorms decrease. Total rainfall increases slightly and an increase in cloudiness occurs. Hurricane activity peaks in early September, causing wide variations in precipitation. Personnel should pay close attention to any tropical disturbances in the Gulf of Mexico during the month.

Extreme maximum temperature (F).....	98
Mean daily maximum temperature (F).....	86
Mean daily minimum temperature (F).....	72
Extreme minimum temperature (F).....	45
Mean relative humidity (percent).....	73
Mean monthly precipitation (inches).....	6.36
Mean number of days with precipitation.....	8
Mean number of days with thunderstorms.....	8
Maximum 24-hour rainfall (inches).....	10.22
Percentage of observations with ceiling less than:	
2,000 feet.....	1.8
1,000 feet.....	0.7
300 feet.....	0.1
Percentage of observations with visibility less than:	
6 miles.....	17.5
3 miles.....	0.1
1 mile.....	0.1
Percentage of observations with wind:	
0-3 knots.....	37.3
4-10 knots.....	57.9
11-21 knots.....	4.5
22 knots or greater.....	0.3

Base personnel can access radar and satellite data and a general forecast on the local area network in the public folders under 81 OSF Weather.

# "OPERATION DRAGON COMEBACK"

DRAGON

MISSION  
Community

PEOPLE  
Assets

S. Templin '06



# 81<sup>ST</sup> TRAINING GROUP

## Tenacious trainers triumph in Katrina's wake

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News staff

One of Keesler's most remarkable Hurricane Katrina success stories is the resurgence of the 81st Training Group.

Training, Keesler's primary mission, has not only rebounded, but has flourished in the past year, according to Col. Deborah Van De Ven, who took command of the 81st TRG a month after Katrina's landfall.

"At our peak early in the year, we had more than 3,600 students," the colonel said. "We've been averaging 3,400 students, nonprior service and temporary duty, a 26 percent increase over the pre-Katrina average."

### Shelter studies

While sheltered, some instructors conducted classes, often without benefit of electricity, computers and their usual training aids. This enabled about 300 initial skills students to graduate or to progress in training to a point where they could move on to their new assignments.

Early projections indicated that it would take at least six months for Keesler's training mission to resume. Keesler was initially faced with reconstituting 107 resident courses being taught at the time the storm came ashore.

However, three weeks later, the 332nd Training Squadron's enlisted aircrew and electronic principles courses, the 336th TRS' information management course, and the 81st Training Support Squadron's basic instructor course were up and running, and other classes weren't far behind.

### Quick action makes difference

Walt Hack, 81st TRSS resource flight chief, said the aircrew instructors were an example of the dedication and commitment of Keesler trainers.

"As soon as possible after the storm, they moved training simulators and classroom equipment from Garrard Hall's damaged second floor to an alternate location in Dolan Hall," Mr. Hack explained. Their prompt action prevented most equipment damage and training disruption.

"Not only did they resume training only three weeks after the storm, they even brought on a new merged course in October," he continued. "Now their mission has come full circle as they prepare to move to Lackland (Air Force Base, Texas) by year's end to join that center of excellence."

Second Air Force took the lead in



Photos by Kemberly Groue

From front, Staff Sgt. Terry Roundtree, Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sean Nesburg, Tech. Sgt. Taite Randolph, Airman Basic Jeffrey Echeverry and Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Theodore Persing use the aircrew maintenance trainer equipment for the 332<sup>nd</sup> TRS' airborne mission system specialty course in Dolan Hall. Sergeant Randolph, their instructor, arrived at Keesler a week before Katrina struck the base and sheltered with students in Dolan Hall.

Keesler's training resumption. Air Education and Training Command formed a Tiger Team headed by Col. Susan Helms to work with the 81st TRG to deal with training issues and establish priorities in standing up 142 courses as determined by Air Staff.

"The Tiger Team included representatives from all training wings," Colonel Van De Ven said. "Daily teleconferences became weekly teleconferences as things progressed, then we just met as needed."

"We created a 'scorecard' that listed the courses in priority order with status details and student/instructor numbers," she remarked. "We published the last one May 2, with the assurance that Keesler was up and running and back on its own."

"We're capable of teaching all of our courses now," the colonel added. "Some haven't been taught because the need isn't there yet, but we're ready."

The 81st TRG took extraordinary actions to meet fiscal 2006 student production rates. After the storm, the number of staff members dropped by 10 percent as the student population continued to rise.

cise learning point where they left off in the course."

So far this year, 66 international students from 15 countries have trained at Keesler, with a current population of 40 students, getting close to the normal average of about 50 to 60 in-residence students, although currently without their family members.

### Housing hassles

Housing is still a big issue for the 81st TRG, particularly for the TDY students who officially began returning to Keesler in January.

"We turned over Connor Manor, one of our nonprior service student dorms, to house TDY students," Colonel Van De Ven noted. "That means, as of Aug 8, 435 initial skills students had to be triple-bunked. They just came out of basic training so it's not a huge hardship, but it's not the standard we want and not very conducive to studying."

"We're really anxious to get Connor Manor back," she went on. "But off-base lodging still hasn't come back sufficiently to support our needs."

Repairs to academic facilities and student dorms have been completed, except for minor work at Cody Hall. The cost topped \$5 million for training buildings and almost \$800,000 for dorms.

### Sharing spaces

The 81st TRG has also given up space in some of its buildings to accommodate personnel from the 81st Mission Support Group who were relocated from other damaged facilities.

Old Cody Hall, a vacated training facility awaiting demolition, accommodates many of the support services formerly housed in Sablich Center. The 81st Security Forces Squadron is headquartered in Avery Manor, a dormitory slated for demolition next year, until repairs to its building are completed. The legal office was relocated to the Levitow Training Support Facility and the 81st Comptroller Squadron is operating from the Vosler Building.

Whether to shelter is a big issue facing the 81st TRG if and when another hurricane targets Keesler.

"Based on timing and storm predictions, more often than not we're going to have to shelter," Colonel Van De Ven commented. "Evacuating approximately 4,500 students by ground or air takes considerable time that a storm may not provide. Our evacuation plan now calls for unity of command for

Please see **Training**, Page A3

## Training,

from Page A2

our six training squadrons/shelter commanders. We want to keep the integrity of each squadron either on Keesler or at their evacuation base for command and control, followed by the capability of continuing or standing up training.

“At the same time, we understand Mom and Dad’s perspective of ‘What do you mean you left my son in harm’s way during a storm? What were you thinking?’”

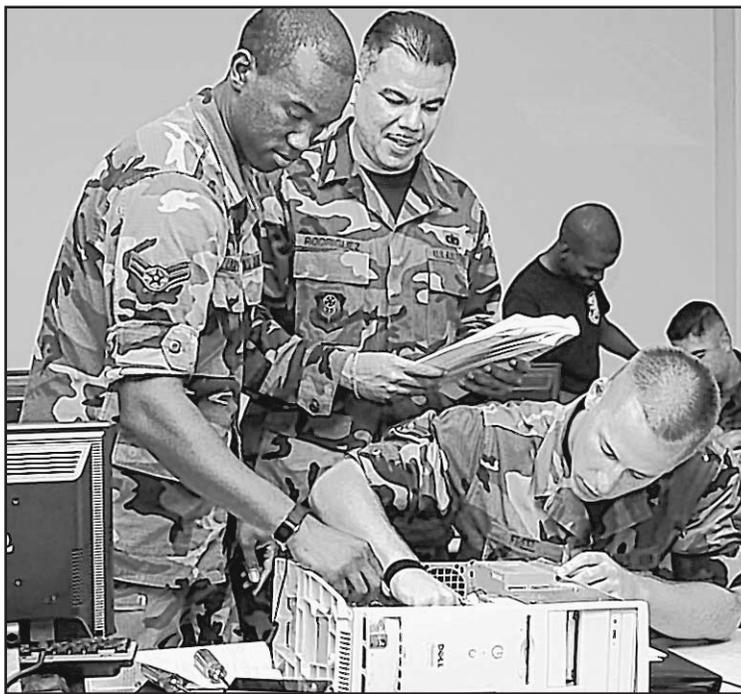
Compared to last season, the 81st TRG plans for more of its military instructors to be mission-essential and shelter or evacuate with their students. Any military instructor that has an active class at the time of a storm becomes mission-essential.

As the 81st TRG’s leadership has changed, there are fewer commanders in place with Katrina experience. Four of the seven squadrons received new leaders this summer.

“Those that went through



Senior Airman Lesley Smith, left, an information management student in the 336th TRS, and her instructor, Master Sgt. John Cook, review course information. Airman Smith, from Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., returned to Keesler Aug. 21, the last pre-Katrina initial skills student to resume training.



Photos by Kemberly Groue

From left, Airman 1st Class David Carter, Tech. Sgt. Gilbert Rodriguez and Airman 1st Class David Freel install a hard drive during the client support administration block of the information management course. Airmen Carter and Freel are Sergeant Rodriguez’ students. Sergeant Rodriguez, from Hurlburt Field, Fla., is at Keesler on a six-month temporary duty assignment augmenting the 336th TRS training team.

the hurricane together shared a special bond,” Colonel Van De Ven observed. “Six of the seven squadron commanders have dual roles as shelter commanders — hopefully we won’t have another hurricane bonding experience.

“I’ve been so involved with Katrina after the fact that sometimes I feel like I went through the storm myself,” she remarked. “When you talk to people about their experiences, you can empathize, but you can’t truly appreciate what it was like.

“Most military people are accustomed to change and moving on, so there’s always light at the end of the tunnel after something like Katrina,” Colonel Van De Ven said. “But for our civilians who went through Katrina and are rebuilding, it’s long-term — it’s forever for them.”

Within the 81st TRG, of the 356 members still at Keesler that had significant damage to their houses, 67 are still repairing their homes. Mr. Hack added that “in addition to participating in community efforts, training group members have devoted more than

1,600 hours to assist their fellow coworkers in home cleanup and repair.”

The 81st TRG also played a significant role in Keesler’s humanitarian outreach program. Tech. Sgt. Julie Sargent, 332nd TRS, headed the base’s humanitarian relief efforts for several months before returning to the classroom.

Incoming students participated in cleanup efforts, construction and repair work and distributing supplies and stocking shelves at several community distribution centers.

“Keesler seems to be leaps and bounds ahead of many surrounding communities in its recovery efforts,” Colonel Van De Ven stated. “We have some big advantages compared to off-base communities that must deal with a mix of public, private, residential and business properties; various bodies of regulation; and independent insurance companies.

“At Keesler, our chain of command makes centralized decisions for the entire base. Our leadership sets priorities and provides the authority and resources to get things done.”

## Professional military training overcomes Katrina setbacks

The Keesler NCO Academy transferred its classes to Maxwell AFB, Ala., in early November.

“About 15 Keesler staff members went to Maxwell to conduct that first class,” said Master Sgt. Clifford Nicholson, the academy’s superintendent of test and data analysis. “For the second class, we had manning assistance from other bases, so only eight or nine of us went from Keesler. The same number went up for the smaller class that graduated April 5.”

Since classes resumed at Keesler April 26, students and staff have done more than 550 hours of hurricane recovery community service, including working on a combat control instructor’s damaged home, Habitat for Humanity, Urban Life Ministries, Hands on America and a community beach cleanup.

Airman Leadership School, which cancelled two classes due to Katrina, resumed in January with 41 students in three flights, one of its largest classes ever. The class included 17 staff sergeants with promotion waivers because of the hurricane.

ALS not only eliminated its

student backlog and met its production goals, but also trained 36 additional students identified on the most recent staff sergeant promotion release.

The school lost three instructors due to Katrina-related hardships, but was able to rely on manning support from other bases and the Keesler NCO Academy.

“Our first post-Katrina class hoisted all the state and territory flags that line Larcher Boulevard — it brought a sense of normalcy and beauty back to Keesler,” said Staff Sgt. Susan Tennant, a flight instructor and “sole survivor” from the original pre-Katrina staff. “Another class began repairs on three homes devastated by the storm.”

“Keesler’s senior enlisted leadership gave us outstanding support once ALS operations resumed,” said Lt. Col. Paul Valenzuela, 81st Mission Support Squadron commander. “They provided us with our most precious resource — the students. It’s amazing that they were able to spare the troops from their work centers, considering the sheer amount of recovery work in Katrina’s wake.”

## Associate trainers undeterred

The 45th Airlift Squadron returned to 100 percent operation 34 days after Katrina.

Of the 19 people assigned at the time, some flew the unit’s C-21 aircraft to Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., and the rest evacuated.

Lt. Col. Christopher Miceli, commander, was the only one who remained at Keesler.

“One of my senior instructors and I were pressed into duty as Keesler went from the Air Force’s 99th busiest airfield to the 10th busiest in only three days, with distinguished visitor flights, student evacuations, food and water deliveries, helicopter rescue operations, marine aviation unit bed-down and other activities,” Colonel Miceli pointed out.

“Four squadron members lost everything and we helped salvage what we could and gut the rest,” the colonel recalled.

“Then we helped our friends in the local community.

“Our planes returned 13 days after the hurricane, and every student scheduled for training in 2005 received it,” Colonel Miceli added.

Keesler’s Marine Corps Detachment is back in full swing, according to Maj. Byron King, commander.

“We have 150 Marines on deck, including 100 students,” the major said.

“All 50 permanent personnel who were affected by Hurricane Katrina have their affairs in order,” he added.

The Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit, commanded by Cmdr. Ken Schwingshaki, has maintained its pre-Katrina training load of about 250 students at a time for an annual total of about 1,100 in all schools with its staff of about 80 members.

# 81ST MISSION SUPPORT GROUP



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Pitched roofs are replacing damaged flat roofs on several buildings on base. The peak makes roofs less vulnerable to hurricane-force winds.

## Base bolsters infrastructure, people, programs

By Master Sgt. Roger Drinnon

### Keesler Public Affairs

In Hurricane Katrina's wake, the 81st Mission Support Group continues to restore base infrastructure and reach out to the community, while maintaining its mission of taking care of Keesler's people.

"Through a lot of great effort from our people and from some unique ways of making things work, we're operating at 100 percent — our personnel are being served," said Lt. Col. Charles Dunn II, 81st MSG deputy commander. "I'm elated with the progress and appreciate what our folks have put into recovering the base."

The colonel said mission recovery has involved using buildings across the base as alternate facilities for many of the 81st MSG's units and agencies.

"Our mission support functions are spread out all over the base," he said. "We have no central location, no 'people center,' so we're operating out of old buildings, some of which were scheduled for demolition prior to the storm."

After Katrina, old Cody Hall became the temporary location for many personnel and administrative offices previously located in Sablich Center, a key facility for base support services. Sablich Center sustained significant damage from Katrina.

"We have (Army and Air Force Exchange Service) facilities spread out all over the base," said Colonel Dunn. "We have a (temporary) commissary in a very tight space," he continued. "Security forces are temporarily housed at Avery Manor as we rebuild their facility on Larcher Boulevard."

Avery Manor, an old student dormitory, was scheduled for demolition before the storm.

The colonel said he was amazed how quickly key services and facilities rebounded following the hurricane, as the base also supported humanitarian operations in surrounding communities.

"For the 'care and feeding' of our personnel, we're at 100 percent — the dining facilities are open," he explained. "We've expanded our lodging avail-



**Master Sgt. Scott Sippel, 338th Training Squadron, walks across a destroyed bridge at the Boy Scouts' Camp Wilkes looking for displaced canoes. About 200 Airmen volunteers spent their day off in November cleaning the camp.**

ability with 550 additional bed spaces to serve primarily the (81st) Training Group, so they can meet their training requirements. We still have the Army Corps of Engineers here — though they lodge here and work out of borrowed classroom space in Wolfe Hall, they serve the local community outside the gates."

The 81st MSG continues to support volunteer disaster relief agencies through the airman and family readiness center, the base's focal point for these efforts. Nearly 8,500 Keesler volunteers have performed more than 600 humanitarian missions along the Coast, totaling nearly 56,000 service hours, according to John Lowe, community readiness technician.

While supporting surrounding communities, base leaders are committed to taking care of the base populace, as personnel wrestle with post-Katrina limitations on facilities and recreational activities.

"When it comes to morale, welfare and recreation (activities and facilities), we aren't providing anywhere near the capability we had prior to the storm," Colonel Dunn said. "However, we're rebuilding the marina, the golf course, the club and community center. All are funded and either under construction or in some phase of design."

"We tried to bring most of our activities back as quickly as we could, but in some cases, we weren't able to do that," said Donald Cook, 81st Services Division chief. "So we brought back events like amateur boxing and Texas Hold 'Em' poker tournaments — those things aren't really traditional for us, but we try to do things to bring the base together."

Other morale-boosting events since Katrina included a country music concert by the band Lonestar and a show by the Air Force's Tops In Blue.

"Tops in Blue was scheduled to perform here last November, but because of the circumstances, they came in March instead," Mr. Cook said.

While the recovery of some Services buildings and activities continues, other repairs already have been completed.

"The child development center was back in operation two weeks after the storm, and the youth center is back on line, too, both with renovations and additions completed since the storm," Colonel Dunn said. "The Keesler Community Center is now a temporary commissary, but we've been able

Please see **Support**, Page A5

# Support,

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to do more with Vandenberg Community Center in the Triangle.”

“Outdoor recreation has been a real challenge for us, but we’ve started some fishing trips in Biloxi’s Back Bay and added more deep sea fishing trips, and we’re getting ready to offer one- and two-day Chandeleur Island trips,” Mr. Cook commented.

“In terms of the marina, we’ll bring up some capability this summer,” Colonel Dunn noted. “We’re replacing the Keesler Dolphin with a comparable boat that will travel almost twice as fast. We won’t fully return the marina this summer, but we’ll have some capability, including fuel pumps and a place to temporarily moor private vessels.”

## Free golf

“The golf course has been an extreme challenge,” Mr. Cook pointed out. “We’re offering free play, and we have a reciprocal agreement with three area courses to give our golfers an opportunity to play on courses that are in better shape than ours.”

“Blake Fitness Center was the only one we had on line initially after the storm,” he continued. “Dragon Fitness Center had floor damage, but it’s now open. The Triangle Fitness Center reopened Monday.”

The Crotwell track was resurfaced earlier this year, but Triangle track repairs continue. The I-81 track is also available for physical training or related activities along the flight line perimeter.

“Arts and crafts have really stepped up — we’ve got a lot of programs in a renovated facility with a new look,” Mr. Cook commented. “Working with the youth center, we’ve been able to provide lots of alternatives for kids.”

## Retail construction on horizon

A construction contract is pending for a new commissary and base exchange complex.

“Since we opened the (temporary) commissary last Sept. 29, we’ve added 3,500 line items to the store stock assortment,” said store director Gordy Harris.

Recent additions include nine frozen food cases, two chilled lunchmeat cases, a produce case, a milk display case, 72 feet of shelving for soft drinks in the kitchen area and 72 feet of shelving to the mass display area.

Danny Schmidt, AAFES general manager at Keesler, said in addition to the construction of an AAFES mini-mart, other services might be available



Photo by Kemberly Groue  
From left, Staff Sgt. Pat Malone, Senior Airman Thomas Gerhard and Airman 1st Class Matthew Osborn, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron, scrape up flooring in the Keesler Community Center. The building is now being used as a temporary commissary.

from AAFES in the near future.

A toyland/trim-a-tree-store is slated to open in mid-September with the Class VI/Four Seasons store on Meadows Drive. Mr. Schmidt said the former Pecan Dining Facility may be converted to an AAFES facility featuring fast-food such as Charley’s Steakery and Man Chu Wok, while becoming the eventual relocation site for the current AAFES optical shop, nail salon, barber shop and beauty shop in the mini-mall.

“Providing adequate living quarters is a primary concern,” Colonel Dunn said. “This includes dorm rooms for our permanent party personnel and lodging for students and temporary duty personnel. Our housing office continues to track and form relationships with local property managers to make sure we can help our people find suitable off-base housing. The assistance provided here is probably more appreciated than ever as non-concurrent travel is still in effect due to continued limited housing availability both on and off base.

“At the same time, we’re working diligently to award a contract for the design and construction of up to 1,067 new homes,” he continued. “We’ve actually brought back, in a temporary status, roughly 800 homes as ‘swing space’ as we build the new homes.”

“It’s a very complex effort to demolish homes as we phase-in the new construction,” the colonel pointed out. “It’s our intent to limit family relocation to only one move. Home demolition is in full swing with more than 500 homes already removed, and others on the schedule for the near future. When families are displaced due to planned demolition and new construction, we move them into other ‘swing’ homes on base. These families are our first priority.”

Colonel Dunn said in addition to lodging and housing, another priority issue for the 81st MSG is planning Keesler’s response to future storms with the safety of personnel and their families as the key factor.

“In our hurricane preparedness activities, we’ve worked tirelessly on

our concept of operations,” he explained. “We now have a liaison with the Harrison County Emergency Operations Center, and we’re more tightly coupled with the surrounding communities. We’ll be better able to watch and listen to the folks outside the gate and see what they’re doing.”

In terms of visible damage to Keesler from Katrina, some visitors might be fooled by the overall appearance of the base.

## Seeing isn’t believing

“We continue to recover the infrastructure lost during Katrina,” Colonel Dunn said. “From an appearance standpoint, the base looks remarkably healthy, and we receive comments repeatedly from folks visiting the base that it looks as if it has been untouched.”

“True, the effort has been herculean, but most of the money appropriated will repair or ‘build new’ some of our largest facilities such as the Sablich Center, commissary and base exchange. We’re making do with the capabilities we lost from those facilities, but it’s definitely not up to Air Force standards or what we’re accustomed to.”

As rebuilding and repairs to base facilities continue, Colonel Dunn said civil engineers look for ways to mitigate future storm damage.

“We’re looking to the future to build back stronger, with less risk from future storms,” he said. “We’re basically looking at the designs and engineering that held up during the storm.”

## Raising the roofs

“As the budget permits, we’re installing roofs differently,” he continued. “Examples would be the 81st Contracting Squadron building and the 403rd Wing headquarters building, where we’re putting on pitched roofs rather than flat roofs.”

“Specifically for the medical center, we’re installing special doors to prevent storm water from entering the facilities and sump pumps for any water that may enter,” Colonel Dunn stated. “For buildings in areas prone to flooding, we’re looking at every avenue that water might enter and remediating those in the rebuild.”

Since he arrived at Keesler in October, Colonel Dunn said he’s been awe-struck by personnel and their contributions toward Keesler’s recovery from Katrina.

“I continue to see folks leaning forward, thinking about the future of the base, visualizing what they’d like the base to be like,” he said. “Rather than finding the simple solution, they find the best solution in absolutely every project we work.”

# HURRICANE KATRINA TIMELINE

Aug. 23, 2005 — National Hurricane Center reports the birth of Tropical Depression 12 southeast of Nassau, Bahamas.

Aug. 25 — From Tropical Depression 12 to Hurricane Katrina in about 48 hours, the storm makes its first landfall between Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Aug. 26 — Hurricane Katrina enters the Gulf of Mexico, prompting activation of Keesler's crisis action team.

Aug. 27 — At 6 p.m., all Keesler personnel are directed to evacuate or take shelter.

Aug. 28 — Tracking toward the north central Gulf Coast, Hurricane Katrina strengthens to a Category 5 storm (winds in excess of 155 mph). Approximately 10,000 Keesler personnel evacuate. Base shelters open at 9 a.m. Within 12 hours, 6,000 personnel have taken refuge in them.

Aug. 29 — Hurricane Katrina makes landfall as a strong Category 3 storm (125 mph winds) on the Mississippi-Louisiana state line at 10 a.m. Keesler endures hurricane force winds for 12 hours. More than 50 percent of the base is inundated by a storm surge of 18 feet.

Aug. 30 — Keesler's runway reopens 11 hours after the storm passes. Four hours later, dining facilities are serving hot meals to the 6,000 sheltered personnel.

Aug. 31 — Units from sister bases arrive, enabling air evacuation of students, other personnel and their dependents; handling incoming aircraft delivering humanitarian aid; bringing supplies and heavy equipment to clear downed trees, remove debris and provide safe shelter; and serving evacuees and emergency personnel hot meals.

Sept. 1 — Generators enable the Triangle mini-mall and a small, temporary base exchange to open.

Sept. 2 — Keesler becomes a staging area for disaster relief organizations.

Sept. 3 — Base service station reopens. Tech. Sgt. Daryn McMullen and LaVerne Hawkins are married outside Wolfe Hall. The entire wedding party wears reflective safety vests.

Sept. 9 — The base post office reopens.

Sept. 14 — The child development center reopens.

Sept. 16 — Basic military training graduates are airlifted to Keesler, the first to arrive since the storm.

Sept. 19 — Aircrew, electronic principles, weather, ground radio and air traffic control courses are back in business.

Sept. 22 — The Keesler News publishes its first issue since Aug. 25, an interruption of three weeks.

Sept. 29 — Keesler Community Center reopens as a temporary commissary.

Sept. 30 — Most initial skills courses are back online, and by the following day, 1,300 students have returned for training.

Oct. 31 — More than 1,700 nonprior service students are in training, 200 more than before Katrina.

Nov. 4 — Keesler personnel are treated to a free concert by country and western band Lonestar.

Dec. 1 — Keesler Medical Center's appointment phone line resumes taking calls from Tricare Prime beneficiaries.

Dec. 15 — The Hurricane Hunters of the 403rd Wing close out a record hurricane season — more than 145 missions totaling 1,500-plus flight hours into 25 storms.

Jan. 24 — Keesler Medical Center's pharmacy begins accepting civilian prescriptions.

Feb. 7 — A Kuwaiti staff sergeant reports to Keesler for training, the first international student since Katrina.

March 13 — Tops in Blue delivers on its promise to reschedule a November performance canceled due to hurricane damage to the Mississippi Coast Coliseum. The weather is good, so the show is held on the base parade field.

April 17 — Hurricane Katrina Homeowner Grant Program Service Center opens in the 2nd Air Force headquarters conference room, processing applications through May 5.

April 26 — Keesler personnel, who received \$2.1 million in post-Katrina assistance from the Air Force Aid Society, show their gratitude during the Air Force Assistance Fund drive, raising \$121,670, nearly double the base goal.

May 5-7 — Not even Katrina keeps Keesler from hosting the Mississippi Special Olympics Summer Games and hundreds of special athletes and their coaches for the 21st consecutive year.

May 8 — Outpatient clinic entrance to the medical center reopens.

June 15-22 — Keesler passes the first test of its hurricane preparedness plan since before Katrina during a weeklong exercise.

July 27 — Nearly 11 months after Katrina, more than 3,000 Keesler victims of the hurricane have received \$500,000 in cash grants from a relief fund established to manage donations from around the world.

July 31 — Temporary satellite pharmacy opens in a refurbished modular building at Meadows Drive and Second Street.

Aug. 15 — Surgery is performed in the medical center for the first time since Katrina.

Aug. 28 — Triangle Fitness Center reopens, completing the return to operations of the base's three fitness facilities.

Aug. 29 — One year to the day after Katrina slammed into Keesler, inpatient services return to the medical center.

# 81ST MEDICAL GROUP

## There's light in medical center's tunnel

### Rapid return of services continues

By Steve Pivnick

#### 81st Medical Group Public Affairs

Keesler Medical Center, the second largest Air Force medical center, has made great strides in rebounding from the damage inflicted by Hurricane Katrina.

The facility is rapidly returning to its pre-Katrina status, both from the standpoint of the physical plant and services. Full inpatient service and associated care are on target to return in October. In fact, the facility began limited inpatient services Aug. 15, marking the milestone with a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony on the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's Aug. 29, 2005, assault on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

#### Medics coming back

"I'm so proud of the efforts of our medics and the contractors who have worked tirelessly to meet our objectives," said Brig. Gen. (Dr.) James Dougherty, 81st Medical Group commander, of the progress made over the past year. "It's been heartening to see the remarkable achievements made in repairing and improving the medical center's infrastructure."

Increasing numbers of physicians, nurses, medical technicians and support personnel are arriving to allow the 81st MDG to offer the best possible care to the approximately 30,000 active duty, retired military and their family members who rely on the medical center. Included are more than 3,400 students, among them almost 2,100 nonprior service Airmen in the 81st Training Group. The 81st MDG provides a team of medical providers to support the nonprior service students in the Triangle Clinic.

#### Services expanding

The limited inpatient operations that started on Aug. 15 include medical and surgical inpatient beds, intensive care beds, operating rooms and ambulatory surgery. The scope and size of services continue to expand throughout this fall. The long-term outlook has officer and enlisted train-



Photo by Steve Pivnick

**Family practice nurse practitioner Capt. Marli Magnet, 81st Medical Operations Squadron, examines Rebecka Rogers, holding daughter Alyssa, 3, during an appointment in the family practice clinic. Rebecka's husband,**

**Senior Airman Christopher Rogers, is assigned to the 338th Training Squadron. Family practice, pediatric and women's health are scheduled to return to their pre-Katrina basement location next month.**

ing returning January-July 2007. One dental residency, advanced education in general dentistry, returned Aug. 7; the other two, general practice and endodontics residencies, resume in 2007-2008.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center and the Air Force Medical Service signed a landmark agreement June 16 to maintain medical residency programs at Keesler Medical Center. Under terms of the agreement, the School of Medicine at UMC oversees all four residency programs at Keesler — general surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics and obstetrics-gynecology — that were relocated after Hurricane Katrina. The Air Force supplies the faculty and

residents for the program, scheduled to begin again in July 2007.

Other officer training is scheduled to resume over the next two years. The nurse transition program, which trains nurses with less than one year of clinical experience, is scheduled to return in January. The certified registered nurse anesthetist program is back in the summer of 2008. The orthopedic physician assistant is expected to resume then as well.

Phase II training for enlisted technicians returns incrementally over the next 18 months with laboratory and pharmacy technician training restarting in October. Plans call for radiology technologist training for X-ray, ultrasound and nuclear medicine to

resume in January. Aerospace medicine service and surgery service training are also on line to resume then. Training for cardiopulmonary technicians is expected to be restored next summer.

Throughout the process of returning the medical center to its pre-Katrina capabilities, the 81st MDG continued to have deployment responsibilities. Nearly 120 Keesler medics have deployed in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom since Katrina. While the medical center was damaged and services limited, these medics were in specialties that couldn't be used here.

Please see **Medics**, Page A9



Airman 1st Class Eduardo Caetano, a pharmacy technician with the 81st Medical Support Squadron pharmacy flight, hands a prescription to retiree Charley McNaron at the temporary satellite pharmacy drive-through window.



Josh Spurlin, left, and Paul Mitchell, contractors from Atlanta, install one of 28 custom-made flood doors by the loading dock near the Keesler Medical Center kitchen Aug. 1.

Photos by Steve Pivnick

## Medics,

from Page A8

Although many of those medics suffered personal losses due to the storm, they deployed to areas where they were desperately needed. At the same time, they were able to maintain the skills that would be required once Keesler Medical Center reestablished inpatient care.

More medics are preparing to support air expeditionary forces 3 and 4 which deploy in the September-December time frame. Additionally, Keesler personnel have been tasked to support a medical rapid response force team, which provides medical personnel and equipment to meet specific operational requirements of the U.S. Northern Command commander.

Throughout the past year, the medical staff kept the Keesler and coast civilian communities informed of changes and improvements to available services through articles in the Keesler News and information provided to coast and regional civilian media. The 81st Medical Support Squadron Tricare operations and

patient administration flight used its resources to update beneficiaries about Tricare issues.

Currently, the 81st MDG provides medical care with a staff of more than 700 people, less than one-third of the more than 2,220 assigned on Aug. 28, 2005. By October, the group is expected to nearly double to more than 1,200 people, and by the time the graduate medical education programs return in July 2007, to more than 1,770.

The Air Force and Air Education and Training Command have allocated more than \$138 million to pay for repairs to the medical center and replace Katrina losses with new state-of-the-art equipment and furniture.

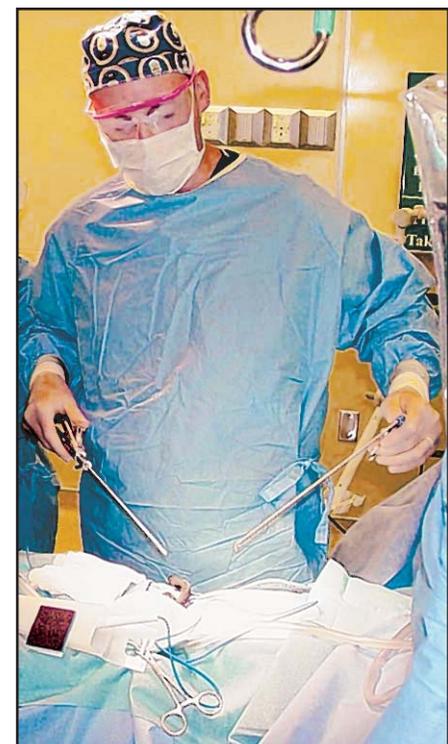
The basement-level outpatient services entrance reopened May 8, after installation of a new escalator and elevator for easy access to the first floor. The main pharmacy for new prescriptions from Keesler providers reopened June 5. Three weeks later, a temporary outpatient pharmacy for refills and civilian prescriptions opened adjacent to the Class VI store on Meadows Drive. A new blood donor center opened July 13 in the Arnold Hall Annex, near the tennis courts and auto hobby shop. Prior to that, the blood

donor team collected 500 units of blood per month through mobile blood drives.

Several pieces of high-value equipment lost to Hurricane Katrina's storm surge are being replaced, including MRI, mammography equipment, linear accelerator and photorefractive keratectomy laser. This equipment is being located above the basement floor to prevent future water damage. An exception is the linear accelerator which goes into a watertight area.

Renovation of the basement, including many of the primary care clinics and dining facility, continues. The clinics should return to their former locations soon and the dining facility is expected to reopen in October.

An in-place flood mitigation plan has been developed to protect electrical substations, switchgear, generators, fire pumps, medical gas/vacuum, heating, ventilation and air conditioning and computer servers from future disasters. This includes installation of 28 custom-made flood doors to protect these critical assets, 16 flood hatches to prevent water from entering through the basement floor and 16 sump pumps to remove water if the doors or floor are breached.

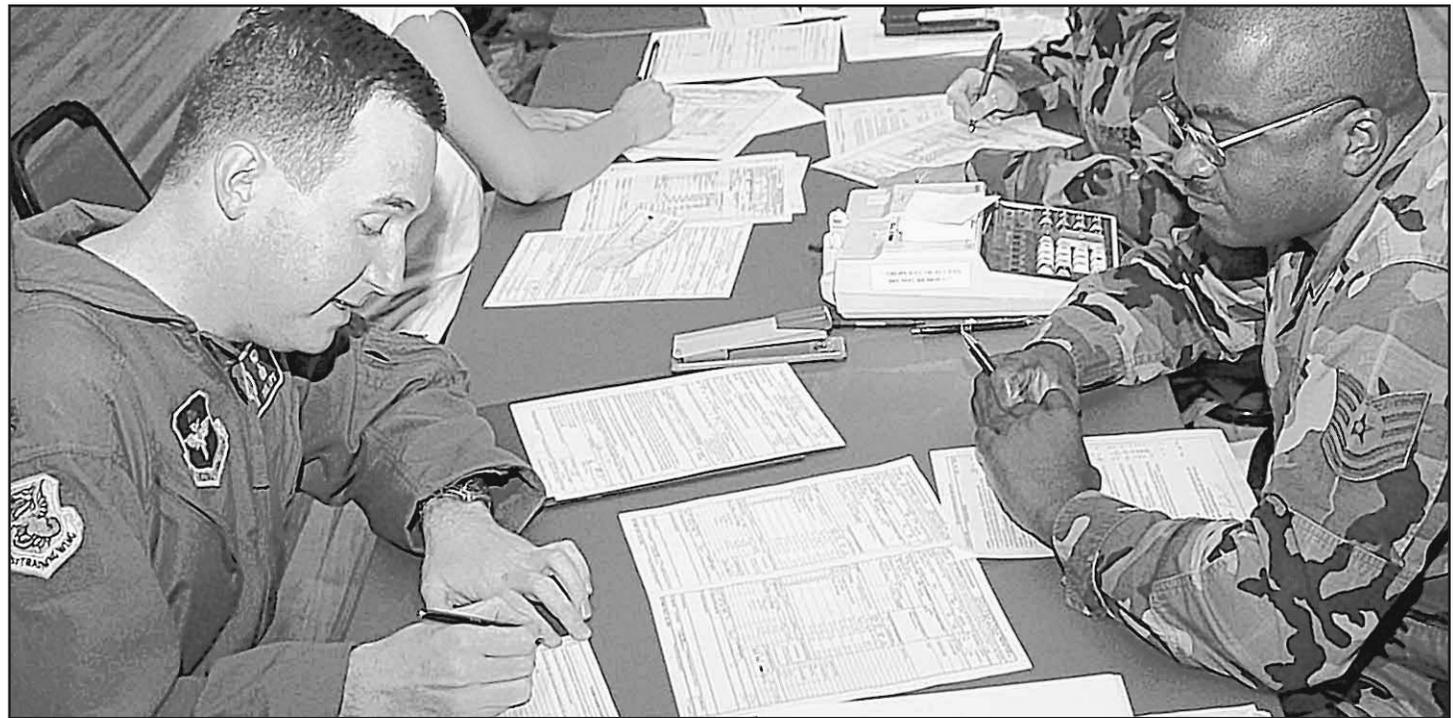


Maj. (Dr.) James Dolan, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron "operates" on Col. (Dr.) Virgil Jefferson, his commander, during a "dry run" prior to the Aug. 15 reopening of surgical services.

# WING STAFF AGENCIES, ASSOCIATE UNITS

Maj. Paul Lipps, left, 81st Training Support Squadron, fills out a hurricane related travel voucher with the assistance of Tech. Sgt. Everett Callaway, 81st Comptroller Squadron. The finance office processed and paid a total of 11,514 vouchers worth nearly \$21 million in Katrina's wake.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



## Wing staff, associate units in key recovery roles

By Tech. Sgt. Dan Neely

### Keesler Public Affairs

While virtually every 81st Training Wing organization rallied its forces to meet Keesler's post-Katrina needs, some of the clearest examples of Keesler's recovery challenges and successes are illustrated by its associate and staff organizations.

Leaders of some of these organizations provided a glimpse of their early and ongoing roles in support of Keesler's recovery.

### 81st Comptroller Squadron

The post-Katrina recovery mode presented challenges never before faced by the Air Force. How could agencies help fellow Airmen recover when they themselves were impacted by storm-damaged work facilities, homes and property losses?

Loss of the 81st Comptroller Squadron's Sablich Center offices forced a move to the Vosler Academic Development Center where the unit remains today.

Additionally, 36 percent of the unit's Airmen suffered either significant or total loss of their homes.

Despite these post-storm challenges, the 81st CPTS went above and beyond to satisfy the financial needs of Keesler people.

"We never closed," emphasized Lt. Col. Robert Gurner, commander. "We were open for business before, through and after the storm."

The unit provided continuous open dialog for entitlements and opened a satellite office for filing evacuation travel vouchers to ensure prompt settlement.

Right after the storm, use of the Government Purchase Card was severely limited in the local area. Unit paying agents operated under contingency rules to provide large cash payments — even the security necessary when carrying such large sums — for local purchase items needed for recovery.

"We made several entitlement changes to assist members in recovering some losses due to evacuation and other circumstances left by Katrina," the

colonel said. "Communicating these changes and ensuring members complied with the changing guidelines proved to be challenging."

Pivotal to the base-wide recovery operations, the 81st CPTS worked to validate and report to Air Staff the staggering \$1 billion in hurricane reconstitution and recovery requirements.

Due to Katrina, the finance office processed and paid 11,514 vouchers worth nearly \$21 million.

Since Katrina, many 81st CPTS Airmen have supported community recovery in home rebuilding projects, helping establish clothing and furniture collection and distribution, and providing bedrooms in their own homes for storm-displaced people.

### Chapel

Katrina exacted varying degrees of physical, emotional and spiritual distress on Air Force families.

The chapel staff coordinated with support agencies such as family support, Keesler Integrated Response Team and life skills to help people cope with their losses and begin their personal recovery journey.

Flexibility was key in the early stages of response, said 81st Training Wing Chaplain (Col.) David Cote.

As shelters began to release people, the staff rallied at the Fishbowl Student Ministry Center in the Levitow Training Support Facility to plan its strategy.

"First, two chaplains were strategically located to provide information for those being bused to military family housing to assess damage to their homes," Chaplain Cote said. "Briefings focused on what they might see or feel upon entering the housing areas and counseling upon return."

Two other chaplains and a chaplain assistant were posted at the Fishbowl, which quickly became a hub of activity when the military personnel flight relocated to the Levitow building and large numbers of shelter residents were moved to the relatively undamaged Triangle dormitories.

The weekend following Katrina, the Triangle Chapel resumed services.

The chapel staff worked with family support and life skills to stand up the family assistance center, which served for months as a vital recovery support resource for Airmen and their families.

Just days after the storm, the chapel took the lead in providing humanitarian relief operations to surrounding communities until a joint task force could bed down here. The chapel provided approximately \$70,000 in cash and supplies in HUMRO support.

Chaplain Cote noted the Air Force chief of chaplains invited chapel teams worldwide to take up a special offering for Keesler people which provided more than \$500,000 for Keesler members.

The chapel's five facilities escaped with only minor water damage, and Chaplain Cote said staffing is finally at around 90 percent.

"Morale is good, our new staff is gelling and we're becoming more effective, I believe," he said.

### 81st Operations Support Flight

Keesler was able to reopen its storm-submerged airfield for relief and evacuation missions just 11 hours after hurricane-force winds subsided led by the 81st Operations Support Flight and supported by several other base recovery teams.

"Despite the airfield being covered with several tons of storm debris ranging from rooftops to dead fish, a massive (foreign object damage) walk was completed, repairs made, equipment brought back on line and the airfield opened for transport of patients to Wilford Hall Medical Center (Texas)," said Maj. Larry Evers, 81st OSF commander.

Keesler's volume of air traffic operations in the two months after Katrina skyrocketed from a monthly average of 1,200 to 4,686, climbing from the 99th busiest to the fourth busiest airfield as a result.

Traffic included more than 160 distinguished visitor missions and more than 70 search and rescue

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missions, resulting in 23 lives saved and 26 medical assists.

“Everyone worked 17-hour days to keep the airfield safe and ready for relief operations,” Major Evers added.

The unit suffered about \$500,000 in hurricane damages, but will be back to full operation when base operations gets a new roof, and carpet, dry-wall and ceiling tiles are replaced.

## Staff judge advocate

The staff judge advocate’s office quickly responded to help Keesler’s Katrina survivors begin the arduous task of replacing personal property.

“Hurricane Katrina impacted the claims and legal assistance portion of our mission especially hard,” said Lt. Col. Deborah Collins, 81st Training Wing judge advocate general. “The office had to brief hundreds of individuals who experienced property loss on base.”

Losses had to be substantiated, so the staff inspected base housing to document individual losses. Due to the nature of the disaster, inspections were especially complicated, the colonel explained. Legal assistance attorneys assisted more than 6,000 clients with home and property loss issues.

For the legal team, the task of carrying out those critical services was severely challenged by storm damages to their own offices in Sablich Center, causing them to relocate to two separate facilities.

More than 1,100 claims have been processed to date (filers have two years to do so) for a total claimed of more than \$8.1 million. Of that total, the Air Force has paid more than \$2.6 million, with more than 6,000 people assisted.

## 403rd Wing

The 403rd Wing, commanded by Brig. Gen. Richard Moss, showed it was up to the challenge of the nation’s worst natural disaster.

When Katrina struck, nearly 60 people experienced total property losses, including about 20 Hurricane Hunter aircrew members, according to Maj. Chad Gibson, 403rd Wing public affairs chief.

The unit suffered a nearly \$40 million blow to its headquarters, flying squadron and support unit facilities. Today, operations continue from trailers while repairs are ongoing.

When Katrina threatened Keesler, the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron Hurricane Hunters and 815th Airlift Squadron Flying Jennies evacuated, setting up temporary operations at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

Meanwhile, the 403rd Aerial Port Squadron moved all supplies, spare parts and equipment needed to maintain the unit’s mission twice — first from Keesler to two hurricane evacuation locations in Texas, then to two forward operating locations at Dobbins and Maxwell AFB, Ala.

Even with the challenges of operating from the offsite location, the Hurricane Hunters never missed a tasked flight into a storm during the busiest hurricane season on record, logging more than 1,500 total flight hours.



Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Buytas

**C-17 Globemaster IIIs from McChord AFB, Wash., and McGuire AFB, N.J., rest on the Keesler tarmac after airlifting relief supplies in Hurricane Katrina’s wake. The 81st OSF and other base recovery teams cleared the airfield of storm debris and reopened to urgent relief missions just hours after Katrina’s winds subsided.**

The Flying Jennies flew numerous relief supply missions and shuttled personnel to and from the Gulf Coast region.

## 85th Engineering Installation Squadron

Katrina had a significant impact on the 85th Engineering Installation Squadron, forcing many members to permanently relocate from Keesler and impacting the unit’s available technical expertise.

“Katrina caused us to cut short or stop ongoing projects and delayed projected communication installations at 21 locations worldwide,” said Lt. Col. Paul Farkas, commander.

“Our initial estimate was a 90-day recovery window, and though our unit suffered 24 displaced members, we were able to recover and get back to providing engineering and installation services to the Air Force and Defense Department within 30 days,” the colonel continued. “Currently, the 85th EIS is back to 100 percent operational status, projects and deployments are back up in full swing, though our manning levels have not fully returned to pre-storm levels.”

The squadron had about \$156,000 in roof damages, but several Airmen made a quick fix to safeguard \$1 million in other government assets that would’ve been damaged.

Members performed rapid repairs on damaged antenna support poles at the base fire department, restoring critical dispatch services within 12 hours. They partnered with the 81st Communications Squadron to reconstitute the airfield’s navigational aids system, providing special purpose generator support to critical airfield systems and helping to restore Keesler airfield operations. The unit also re-tensioned the base’s ground-to-air transmit/receive site radio antennas damaged by Katrina’s winds.

## 2nd Air Force

Despite storm damages to their primary facility, members of 2nd Air Force headquarters joined the 81st TRW in evacuating and returning thousands of Keesler students.

“We had over 2,500 students scattered over 10 different locations that had to be tracked, trained and then returned to Keesler,” said Capt. Kelly Bailey, 2nd Air Force chief of current operations. The captain noted 2nd Air Force oversaw hurricane recovery of 190 Air Staff-priority courses encompassing more than 4,300 students and equipment valued at \$61 million.

Maj. Gen. Mike Gould, 2nd Air Force commander, praised his people’s overall recovery efforts.

“The men and women of 2nd Air Force came together like a family to help each other personally and professionally,” the general said. “They provided the leadership necessary to reconstitute technical training six months ahead of initial projections.”

When asked what helped them overcome Katrina’s unique challenges, Lt. Col. Dave Babyak, 2nd Air Force’s deputy director of operations, responded, “What I remember best was the ‘can-do’ attitude of the 81st Training Wing, 2nd Air Force and Air Education and Training Command to take care of our Airmen, civilians and families — students and staff — while focusing on resuming training.”

Damage to 2nd Air Force’s headquarters’ roof and exterior surfaces has been completely repaired.

Assisting an even wider community, 2nd Air Force supported the Hurricane Katrina Homeowners Grant program, helping hundreds of active-duty, civilian and retirees who didn’t have flood insurance apply for assistance.

# COMMENTARY

General Capasso takes charge of an excavator to level a maintenance and inspection facility adjacent to the demolished munitions storage building on Ploesti Drive. Both buildings and an asphalt road were removed to make way for a new \$1.3 million munitions inspection and storage facility.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



## Thanks to you, future looks bright

By Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

81st Training Wing commander

When Hurricane Katrina slammed into South Mississippi last August, Keesler was just as battered as its neighbors.

Even so and almost overnight, the base became the center of the relief and recovery efforts along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Our Airmen mobilized on the spot, clearing debris, distributing aid and taking care of those victims of the storm who were unable to take care of themselves. Since Katrina, we've completed more than 600 humanitarian missions, totaling more than 55,000 man-hours. We've distributed nearly 123,000 meals ready to eat, almost 200,000 pounds of other food items and clothing, and about 250,000 gallons of water.

We did all this because it needed to be done, and we continue to do whatever we can to help our neighbors along the Mississippi Gulf Coast get back to normal.

"Getting back to normal" has been our battle cry ever since the hurricane. Our commitment to putting our base and our mission back on an even keel has been unprecedented.

We suffered \$950 million in damage from Katrina. With that in mind, skeptics were saying our training mission would be off-line for at least six months. Team Keesler knew better because we

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Our commitment to putting our base and our mission back on an even keel has been unprecedented.

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didn't allow our mission to go away entirely — instructors were holding classes in our shelters before, during and immediately after the storm.

Within three weeks of Katrina, training restarted with a vengeance. This remarkable resurgence was due to the herculean efforts by our military and civilian staff.

Right now Keesler's student load averages 3,400 per day, exceeding pre-Katrina numbers.

The only obstacle to increasing these numbers is our housing shortage. We're working on that. In fact, Keesler is in the midst of the largest military housing construction project in Air Force history. This project replaces 1,067 storm-ravaged military family housing units by 2010. Overall, reconstruction of our other damaged facilities is on track. Several rebuilding contracts are pending, with additional funding from Congress in the works.

We expect to award the contract for the construc-

tion of the new base exchange and commissary this fall. A new aircraft maintenance building and fire and rescue station are in the works.

The rebuilding of Keesler Medical Center is also on track. Just Tuesday, on the one-year anniversary of Katrina, we marked the return of inpatient services to the facility.

When all is said and done, we will have built an even better Keesler, one that will serve our country well into this new century.

When you look back over the 65 years of Keesler history, it's safe to say the last 12 months have been the base's finest hour.

What did we do? In the midst of the worst natural disaster in our nation's history, Keesler became the center of disaster operations for the entire South Mississippi region. At the same time, we launched the reconstitution of our training mission, the reconstruction of our facilities and a humanitarian mission that continues today.

This is an extraordinary feat, and I'm extremely proud of the men and women who've made it possible for Keesler to accomplish it. They've overcome enormous obstacles that would've discouraged even the most stout-hearted. Their courage is to be highly commended, and their actions in the midst of this disaster are in the finest tradition of the Air Force.

It's because of these efforts we can say the future looks bright for Keesler.