

KEESLER NEWS

Keesler Air Force Base
Biloxi, Mississippi

Vol. 66, No. 1
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Develop America's Airmen today ... for tomorrow



Dragons deployed
— 90

INSIDE

COMMENTARY

Looking back, ahead, **2**
Safety No. 1 concern, **3**

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Lodging challenge, **4**

NEWS AND FEATURES

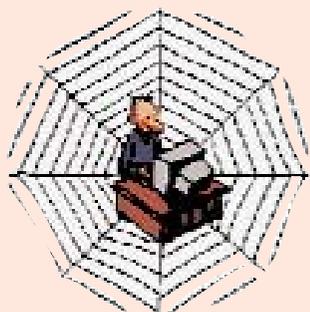
Formal retreat today, **8**
2005 in review, **16-17**

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Dorm World 3, **26**

SECTIONS

Commentary.....**2**
Training and education..**4-7**
News and features.....**8-25**
Sports and recreation...**26-27**
Digest.....**28-29**
Classifieds.....**31**



Keesler News on Web:
<http://www.keesler.af.mil>

Remember when?



Photo by Kemberly Groue

From left, Staff Sgt. Pat Malone, Senior Airman Thomas Gerhart and Airman 1st Class Matthew Osborn, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron, scrape up damaged flooring in the Keesler Community Center in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The facility now serves as a temporary commissary. For a look back at Katrina and other major events of 2005, see Pages 16-17.

BAH changes are beneficial to base troops

By Senior Airman Sarah Stegman

Keesler News staff

Keesler military personnel entitled to basic allowance for housing see a significant spike in the amount they receive this year.

An airman basic with dependants now receives \$1,033 — \$228 more than last year. That's slightly more than what a chief master sergeant with dependants received in 2005.

The 16-percent influx is mostly due to housing shortages and rent increases since Hurricane Katrina mangled Keesler and the surrounding Mississippi Gulf Coast.

"Rates are determined by median current market rent, average utilities and average renter's insurance," said Brett Long, assistant base housing chief.

"During the April-June time frame, the housing office gathered data from the local community and put the information into a database," he added.

After Hurricane Katrina hit, the cost of living inflated due to damage and the limited number of habitable places to live. Defense

Please see **BAH**, Page 9

Keesler civilians receive 2.8 percent pay hike

American Forces Press Service
and Keesler News staff

The upcoming pay period for Defense Department civilian General Schedule employees reflects a 2.1 percent across-the-board pay raise.

Combined with a locality rate increase of .7 percent, GS civilians at Keesler receive a total increase of 2.8 percent.

DOD-wide, GS civilians receive up to 5.62 percent in overall pay hikes, an Office of Personnel Management spokesman said.

The 2006 federal pay raise goes

into effect with the first full pay period of the year, which for most DOD employees began Sunday, Mike Orenstein told the American Forces Press Service.

President George Bush signed into law Nov. 30 the legislation that provides for the federal pay raise.

Pay charts on the OPM Web site show new annual and hourly rates for General Schedule workers, DOD's white-collar work force and special geographically unique charts cover increases in 31 designated locality pay areas. Wage-grade or blue-collar

workers, who make up a small percentage of the DOD work force, receive comparable increases for their areas, Mr. Orenstein said.

The GS workers not in a designated locality pay area come under the "rest of the United States" designation on the charts and receive a 2.83 percent pay increase, Mr. Orenstein said.

The exceptions are GS workers in Alaska, Hawaii and U.S. territories, who receive a non-foreign cost of living allowance that was first introduced in the mid-1940s to attract workers, he said.

Among GS workers in designated locality pay

Please see **Pay**, Page 9

COMMENTARY

Recalling memorable 2005, looking ahead to new year

By Gen. William Looney

AETC commander

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — By any measure, 2005 was a memorable year ... a year marked by unprecedented disasters, excruciating sacrifices and dramatic aspirations for peace, freedom and dignity.

The world mourned the passing of prominent figures such as Pope John Paul II, Rosa Parks and Simon Wiesenthal. Among the honored American dead in the global war on terrorism, we laid to rest one of our own, Airman 1st Class Elizabeth Jacobson.

Reminding us of the need to remain vigilant in this war, in 2005 the forces of violent extremism struck again — in London and then in Jordan. In addition to this man-made scourge, we witnessed natural disasters that defied imagination, from the horrible destruction wrought by the Asian tsunami and South Asian earthquake to the painful images of our own people suffering in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

In the midst of these gut-wrenching tragedies, we were privileged as Airmen to join countless others in saving lives, providing comfort and offering hope.

Other stories of heroism shone brightly throughout the turbulent year.

As a result of their Orange Revolution, the people of Ukraine won a victory for democratic principles and the rule of law. The crew of the Space Shuttle Discovery returned to space. In just a single year, the people of Iraq elected a transitional national assembly, ratified a constitution and elected their first permanent government since the toppling of Saddam Hussein. Likewise, the people of Afghanistan inaugurated their first elected parliament in more than three decades.

Of course, we can't forget the brave American servicemen and women who made these monumental events possible.

As it was with the rest of the world, 2005 was a landmark year for the First Command. We faced a number of challenges and achieved tremendous success as we fulfilled our mission to develop America's Airmen today for tomorrow. Our recruiters nimbly shifted operations to help the Air Force meet our congressionally mandated end-strength, bringing on 20,000 new enlisted and officer personnel in the process.

In addition to graduating nearly 22,000 enlisted members, we initiated a profound shift in the way we conduct basic military training. It resequenced its schedule to mirror the air expeditionary force cycle and provide more readiness and combat skills train-

ing to our new enlisted Airmen.

Executing the Air Force's largest flying program, 19th Air Force organizations flew nearly 560,000 hours to graduate more than 20,000 aircrew members. We've nearly completed our seamless conversion to the T-6A and the T-38C, and made it possible for Air Combat Command to declare initial operational capability for the F-22A Raptor.

In the arena of initial and advanced skills training, 2nd Air Force and our technical training units graduated nearly 190,000 students.

Finally, Air University provided military, continuing and academic education to 179,000 graduates via residence and distance learning programs.

Bottom line, the First Command recruited, trained and educated 432,000 Airmen last year. Just for some perspective, think of everyone who attended this year's Rose Bowl — then quadruple that number. That's how many Airmen we developed for our Air Force and the joint warfighter in 2005. We did it while deploying 3,822 Airmen to fight the global war on terrorism. We did it while responding to and recovering from the worst natural disaster in the history of our country.

Looking back, I'm amazed by what we've accomplished. Looking forward, I'm more optimistic than ever. The First Command has a strong strategy for the future. We're going to continue to develop America's Airmen by delivering a highly qualified, expeditionary focused force, by quickly responding to the needs of gaining commanders and by championing the Air Force story.

We'll concentrate our talent, energy and resources through programs and initiatives that deliver measurable payback in recruiting, training and educating our force. And we'll continue to strengthen our foundation — our people. By developing and supporting our people, we'll not only accomplish our mission, we'll make AETC the Air Force's "command of choice."

Thank you for your commitment and sacrifice as we continue to deliver unrivaled education and training to the greatest air and space force the world has ever seen. And thank you for your integrity, service and excellence in defending the precious people and values of America. I can think of no greater calling ... no greater privilege ... no greater reward. This year is going to be great for AETC, the Air Force and the nation. Marilyn and I hope 2006 is great for you and your family, too.

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.

Thumbs up, Keesler!

Comment — This is to let you know how much I appreciated the Air Force hospitality from Sept. 14 to Dec. 2 while I was working with the Army Corps of Engineers in Wolfe Hall.

I was fortunate to be able to stay on base during my stay. Whether it was "spartan" Simmons House during the first 30-plus days or the "luxury" of Tyre House later, it was great. The same goes for the dining facilities throughout the base. They were all very accommodating, down to Thanksgiving dinner.

As a retired officer, I've been fortunate to stay on base several times previously, including a weekend shopping trip from my home in Vicksburg prior to Hurricane Katrina's arrival. I've always had good experiences at Keesler, and despite the turmoil of Katrina, that didn't change.

Response — The food service and lodging operations take great pride in providing the best customer service possible.

Thank you for your kind words and your appreciation of their efforts during these challenging times.



KEESLER NEWS

No. 1 in Air Force,
2004, 1997.

No. 1 in AETC,
2004, 1998, 1996;

No. 2, 2003, 2001,
1999, 1997, 1991;

No. 3, 2002, 1995.

81st Training Wing commander

Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

Public affairs director

Lt. Col. Claudia Foss

Editor

Perry Jenifer

Staff writers

Susan Griggs

Staff Sgt.

Lee Smith

Senior Airman

Sarah Stegman

Staff photographer

Kemberly Groue

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Safety our No. 1 priority in 2006

By Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

81st Training Wing commander

Happy New Year and welcome back to Keesler.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. The new year is upon us, bringing new opportunities and challenges to each and every one of us.

First, thank you for the great work you do in serving our nation. You're the true guardians of freedom around the world and you carry the flame of hope to those less fortunate. You should be very proud of what you do.

Our goals for 2006 are simple: We're going to build upon your successes of 2005 and rebuild Keesler to the "center of excellence" for which it's known, to deliver unrivaled air and space training and education, and to empower our Airmen with the knowledge and skills so we can dominate any battle space.

To be successful, I'm going to need each and every one of you working together and taking care of each other. It requires leadership at every level of the organization. Leadership means many things, and I'm sure each of us has a different perspective on what it means to be an effective leader. I want to take this discussion on leadership to a different level, to go back to the basics and talk about one of our unwritten core values: "the value of safety leadership."

Safety is an integral part of our Air Force core values: "Integrity first" is the willingness to do not only the right thing but the safe thing, even when no one is

looking. "Service before self," with its accent on always doing one's duty, points to the understanding that professional conduct dictates we exercise good judgment and perform our duties as safely as possible. While "excellence in all we do" stresses we should constantly strive for personal and operational excellence, it's equally important to remember the best way to do things is always the safest way.

When safety is a value, the people in the organization take each injury personally, whether it's on or off the job and leaves the organization unsatisfied with its performance. When safety is a core value, you strive for absolute perfection; you set your goals at zero injuries.

I'm happy to report we're off to a great start. Over the holidays, Keesler had no mishaps and no fatalities. Thank you for showing you care for yourself and your family by coming to duty alive, well and ready to serve again.

As we move forward, safety has to be the absolute No. 1 priority in taking care of our people. It's plain and simple. If people are really what's most important to this organization, then you don't let anything bad happen to your most valuable asset. Safety is one of the few items where it takes 100 percent performance by each person to establish an accident-free record. The Air Force can provide world-class facilities, equipment and the right processes, but individuals have to exhibit safe behavior every day, every hour, every minute.

Two of our most important processes I believe we can use to help our folks with their individual safety responsibility are operational risk management, and intervention and observation.

Operational risk management requires us to spend just a few minutes thinking about the task we're about to do, visualizing what it entails, then deciding the safest way to do it before we do it.

Observation and intervention is about establishing a culture where it's OK to intervene if you see someone committing an unsafe act. In fact, it's an environment where each of us expects help. I'm absolutely confident these simple activities have and will continue to save countless injuries and lives.

Safety is a shared responsibility. With the help of commanders, supervisors and individuals alike, we can drive and put value into safety excellence. As we go into this new year, I ask you to carry these four messages with you as we take on the challenges and opportunities that confront us:

Make safety a core value.

Make safety a best business practice.

Make every employee feel safe at work and home.

Make safety a competitive and asymmetric advantage.

Success begins with safety leadership. Make safety your "bottom line" in 2006.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Lodging challenges carry over into new year

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News staff

A bedspread is a major tool in Keesler's return to its pre-Katrina training mission.

Actually, it's a bed-spread — a spreadsheet designed to ensure that Keesler has enough beds every single day to accommodate an increasing load of temporary-duty students.

The document breaks down the number of TDY students each day during upcoming calendar quarters in order of course priority based on the master course schedule.

Before the Aug. 29 hurricane clobbered the base, Keesler had more TDY students than non-prior service trainees, according to Col. Deborah Van De Ven, 81st Training Group commander.

Beds at a premium

"We have the instructors, equipment and classrooms — now we need beds," the colonel said. "The bed-spread is a vital vehicle as we work with our mission support group to make sure we have places for incoming TDY students to stay."

"Lodging remains our biggest challenge," she continued. "We turned over one of our dorms in the Triangle to Services to house TDY students, but they're two to a room, not the normal standard of living," she continued. "Services has also been contracting for additional lodging off-base as it becomes available."

"We've also had some instructor issues," Colonel Van De Ven pointed out. "We lost several instructors with dependents in the exceptional family member program who had to relocate so necessary medical support could be provided. Others lost homes and made permanent changes of station moves, since we didn't think we'd get so many courses up and running so quickly."

Manning assistance on the way

The 81st TRG is receiving manning assistance from across the Air Force to bring courses up to full capacity.

"Former instructors are easier to get back in the classroom quickly," the colonel said. "We have 20 coming in for air traffic control in the 334th Training Squadron. They won't be in front of the classroom, but we have a whole group of students ready to move on to the hands-on simulator side, and you don't have to actually be an instructor to teach students at the machine."

Manning assistance is also aug-



Photo by Kemberly Groue

The "bed-spread" is a focal point for a Jan. 5 planning session about accommodating increasing numbers of TDY students. Clockwise from left are Lt. Col. Elia Sanjume, 335th Training Squadron commander; Lt. Col. Dale King, 81st Training Support Squadron commander; Col. Bruce Bush, 81st Mission Support Group commander; Maj.

Aaron Albers, 336th TRS director of operations; Lt. Col. Shane Courville, 81st TRG deputy commander; Chief Master Sgt. Samuel Foster, 81st TRG superintendent; Ken Radford, 81st TRG training manager; Maj. Anthony Williams, 332nd TRS commander; Colonel Van De Ven, and Lt. Col. Randy Coats, 333rd TRS commander.

menting information management courses in the 336th TRS, where 26 trainers are coming in.

"They're in front of the classroom, so if they have prior instructor experience, they can go on line to refresh and get back in place," Colonel Van De Ven stated. "And, even if they're starting from scratch, we have permission for a fast-track version of the five-week basic instructor course, followed by some classroom observation to complete the process."

Keesler has been able to rescind its request for supplemental manning for the 335th TRS' weather school by "being more creative with our resources and obtaining a couple of PCS replacements," she added.

As 2005 ended, virtually all of Keesler's enlisted and officer courses that award Air Force Specialty Codes are up and running.

"That includes all 26 of the enlisted initial skills courses and all seven of the officer initial skills courses," the colonel explained. "We're still dealing with a few manning issues, so we're not quite 100 percent yet."

For advanced, supplemental and 7-level courses designated as Priority 1 through 3 by Air Staff, 33 of 34 enlisted courses and 15 of 16 officer courses are in place.

For Priority 4 courses, 14 of 38 enlisted courses and five of 20 officer courses are now being conducted.

"Some are being taught off-base by mobile training teams," Colonel Van De Ven commented. "We'd like to bring them back, but some are easier to take on the road than others. Some of our high-level courses won't return for a while — for instance, Scope Eagle will be taught at Scott (Air Force Base, Ill.) for the time being, in

the hopes of bringing it back this May."

The colonel explained that a Tiger Team comprised of representatives from Air Staff, the Air Force Personnel Center, Air Education and Training Command, 2nd Air Force and all technical training bases continues to guide the restoration of Keesler training mission. The group meets via teleconference twice a week.

"As we exchanged greetings at the end of our last meeting before the holidays, one of the leaders remarked that she really appreciated everything Keesler and its people had done to get the training mission going again," recalled Colonel Van De Ven, who took charge of the 81st TRG just a month after Katrina hit. "I've become so engrained in the reconstitution of our training mission that for a few seconds I forgot that I wasn't even here for the storm."

TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

Testing

To make appointments for tests administered by the education office, visit Room 212, old Cody Hall or call 377-2323 or 2171.

Testing is in Room 118, Airman Leadership School, 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday-Thursday.

Civilian tuition aid

College tuition assistance is available for permanent civil service employees at Keesler.

Courses must be mission (job) related and through accredited schools.

For more information, call or visit the education office, 377-2323, Room 212, old Cody Hall.

CCAF online

Visit the Air Force Virtual

Education Center, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod>, to create My-AFVEC accounts to access online customer service tools.

With the tools, people can request Community College of the Air Force transcripts, track receipt of civilian transcripts, view degree progress reports and check if a course counts toward a CCAF degree.

Grants increase

General Henry H. Arnold Education Grants have been increased to \$2,000 by the Air Force Aid Society.

Children of active duty, retirees, Title 10 reservists on extended active duty, Title 32 performing full-time active duty and deceased Air Force members are eligible to apply. Spouses of active duty, Title

10 reservists residing and attending school in the continental United States and widows and widowers of active duty and retirees.

Applications are available at the family support center, Room 118, old Cody Hall. The application deadline is March 10.

Physician assistants

Phase I physician assistant training classes begin in January, April and August 2007.

Completed applications must be sent by military personnel flights and arrive by Jan. 27 at HQ AFPC/DPAMW, 550 C Street West, Suite 27, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4729.

For more information, call the military personnel flight or education office or visit <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/med->

www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/BSC/Education/PAapplication.htm.

Virtual education

The Air Force Virtual Education Center has been transferred to the Air Force Portal.

To access AFVEC, use the AFVEC URL, <https://afvec.langley.af.mil>, or go directly to the Air Force Portal, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod/>. Use your Air Force Portal user identification and password to log on.

First-time users are prompted to re-register some of their profile information and then are taken directly into their AFVEC profile.

Troops to Teachers

For information on Mississippi Troops to Teachers, call Chris Carey, 1-800-MISS-TEACH.

Officer records

For officers to update their academic records, the Air Force Institute of Technology requires an official transcript sent to this address:

AFIT/RRE, 2950 P St., Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-7765.

Enlisted-to-AFIT

WASHINGTON — The Air Force Institute of Technology offers noncommissioned officers a chance to earn an advanced science, engineering or management degree.

These onsite AFIT programs are available at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

For more information, visit <https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/> or e-mail robert.hale@pentagon.af.mil.

NEWS AND FEATURES

Pre-deployment pizza party

Staff Sgt. Delbert Smith, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron, enjoys pizza with his wife, Raquel, and their two daughters, 8-year-old Aeriell, left, and 4-year-old Delaina, at the family support center Jan. 5. He's among the Keesler Medical Center staff members preparing for deployment to Southwest Asia.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



Finance center distributing year-end pay, tax statements

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

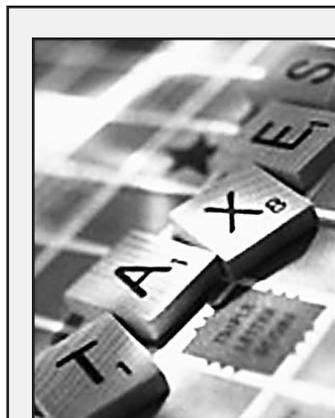
WASHINGTON — Service members, military retirees and annuitants and federal civilian employees paid by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service can expect to receive their 2005 tax statements by mail soon, a DFAS official said.

In fact, most retirees and annuitants already may have received theirs, with the last hard-copies mailed Dec. 31, the official confirmed.

Mailing of active-duty Army, Navy and Air Force W-2 forms won't begin until Jan. 24, but service members can access their forms on the "myPay" Web site beginning Jan. 21.

W-2 mailings for reservists from the Army, Navy and Air Force began Jan. 4, but the forms were available online by Dec. 31.

Active-duty and Reserve Marines can check their mail-



Base tax office opens Jan. 23 in new location

Keesler's tax office opens Jan. 23 on the second floor of Vandenberg Community Center.

For more information, see page 22.

boxes today. Forms have been available through myPay accounts since Tuesday.

W-2 mailing for Depart-

ment of Defense civilians also began Tuesday, and forms have been posted on myPay since.

An increasingly large percentage of the almost 6 million people the finance agency serves now receive their pay and tax statements electronically through myPay, the official said. By doing so, customers get their statements quicker and more securely, said Pat Shine, director of DFAS military and civilian pay services.

A state-of-the-art encryption technology incorporated into the myPay system, which users access through a personal identification number, safeguards personal information that's more vulnerable to theft when transmitted by mail.

DFAS clients who have never set up their myPay accounts or have forgotten their PIN numbers can set up or get new ones through the myPay Web site.

IN THE NEWS

Monthly formal retreats start today

Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, 81st Training Wing commander, has directed that monthly formal retreat ceremonies begin today at 5 p.m. at the flagpole in front of wing headquarters on Chappie James Avenue.

In case of rain, ceremonies move to the next duty day.

Each group performs three ceremonies per quarter:

Staff agencies — today, Feb. 9 and March 9.

81st Training Group — April 13, May 11 and June 8.

81st Mission Support Group — July 13, Aug. 10 and Sept. 14.

81st Medical Group — Oct. 12, Nov. 9 and Dec. 14.

Town hall meeting

A town hall meeting is 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in Welch Auditorium.

Restricted area access change

As of Jan. 1, only personnel issued the green Air Force Form 1199A are authorized access into Keesler's restricted areas, including specific flightline areas and the 81st Training Wing Command Post.

Personnel with previous versions of the badge should contact their unit security manager.

Report violations to the 81st SFS control center, 377-3040.

Fence replacement begins

A six-month perimeter fencing replacement project begins this month.

Fences are being replaced along Judge Sekul, Forrest Peters and Tuxedo avenues; Iberville and Meadows drives; Hollywood Boulevard, Lafayette Street and Oaklawn Place.

Tree limbs are trimmed to prepare for new fences.

"Workers will make every effort to remain on the government side of the fence," said Master Sgt. Vivian Burgess, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron. "We ask residents not to place any loose items within 5 feet of the fence and to move any plants or vines growing along the fence line to avoid destruction. Also, we request that pets be restrained for their safety, as well as that of the workers."

For more information, call Sergeant Burgess, 377-5858, or Michelle Craft, 377-5861.

Temporary driver license office

A temporary Mississippi Department of Public Safety driver license office opens Monday in a double-wide trailer south of D'Iberville High School's football field on Lamey Bridge Road.

Hurricane Katrina took out the Biloxi and Gulfport offices.

Services sends out surveys

Air Force Services is sending out random surveys to assess customer satisfaction with its programs.

Recipients are urged to respond to help with future policy and program decisions.

Early Keesler News deadline

The deadline for submissions to the Jan. 19 Keesler News is noon today, four days earlier than usual, due to the Martin Luther King birthday federal holiday Monday.

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

BAH,

from Page 1

Department officials, their contractor and representatives from Keesler discussed raising the BAH rate more than originally planned.

"The group flew to New Orleans Dec. 7, drove to

Keesler and then left by helicopter Dec. 9 to ensure their assessment covered all aspects of the damage," Mr. Long explained. "The assessment was approved before the Dec. 14 deadline to have the new rate in place Jan. 1."

Under the new BAH plan, Airmen also benefit from geographic and individual rate protection.

"When Airmen sign a lease,

they're locked into paying a specific amount, which is now significantly higher than pre-Katrina rates. If the BAH rate decreases in 2007, Airmen will continue to receive the higher rate," said Master Sgt. Eileen Boles, 81st Comptroller Squadron.

"If an Airman is assigned to Keesler, they receive the rate that's in place at the time of arrival," she added.

Pay,

from Page 1

areas within the continental United States, those in the Raleigh-Durham-Cary, N.C., region are this year's biggest winners, receiving a 5.6 percent increase, Mr. Orenstein said.

This is the first time this area is a designated locality pay area, and the 2006 pay hike is designed to help bring

that region's salaries more on par with those offered in the private sector, he said. Future pay hikes for the region aren't likely to be as high.

Other locality pay areas to receive significant hikes this year are San Francisco-San Jose-Oakland, 3.95 percent; New York-Newark, 3.77 percent; Buffalo, 3.75 percent; Hartford, Conn., 3.62 percent; and the Washington-Baltimore-Northern Virginia region, 3.44 percent.

Locality pay is based not

on the cost of living, but on the cost of labor in a particular area, Mr. Orenstein said. By offering locality pay to workers in those regions, government agencies can be more competitive in recruiting and retaining qualified workers, he said.

For more information and pay chart information, go to <http://www.opm.gov>.

Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service, and Senior Airman Sarah Stegman, Keesler News staff, contributed to this report.

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.

Income tax information

Five-year tax information is available through myPay for active-duty military by Jan. 19 and hard-copy W-2s mailed by Jan. 27, according to finance officials.

To ensure all service members receive W-2s this year, members aren't authorized to change their delivery method from an electronic copy to a hard copy during December and January.

Service members are urged to review their leave and earnings statements and make changes by filling out W-4s on myPay at their computers or self-help terminals in the finance office.

Those who claim exempt are required to complete new W-4s by Feb. 15 or the Defense Joint Military Pay System automatically converts them to single and zero exemptions.

W-5s for earned income credit advance payment certificate expire Dec. 31. To apply for 2006 advances, fill out another W-5.

Changes for 2006:

Effective Dec. 31, Turkey is no longer a combat zone tax exclusion location.

As of Jan. 1, Ohio is no longer a state tax exempted if you live outside of the state.

For more information, call 1st Lt. Jeff Smith, 377-7251, or Master Sgt. Eileen Boles, 377-3845, or visit <http://www.irs.gov>.

Force shaping

For information on force shaping, visit the Air Force Personnel Center Force shaping Web site, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape.htm>, or call the AFPC contact center, 1-800-616-3775.

Verifying deployment credit

For information on verifying deployment credit, call the Air Force Personnel Center's field activities office, DSN 665-2671 or commercial 1-210-565-2671.

Sexual harassment hotline

The Air Force wants military and civilian employees to remain aware of the service's sexual harassment hotline.

AFPC operates the hotline to receive sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination inquiries. The numbers are 1-800-558-1404, DSN 665-2949, or commercial 1-210-565-2949.

An AFPC call center representative answers each call to the hotline. Callers with a sexual harassment or discrimination concern are forwarded to a qualified military equal opportunity counselor.

Counselors ensure callers understand the avenues available to them and complaints are channeled to the proper authority. Counselors take calls during normal duty hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CDT. After normal duty hours, voice mail is available to leave messages for emergencies.

Emergency contacts for civilians

The emergency management data system is a Web-based method for civilians to input personal emergency contact information.

For more information or to register, visit <https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/emds/default.htm>.

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.

Keesler NEWS

Keesler Air Force Base
Biloxi, Mississippi

Vol. 65, No. 39
Thursday, Nov. 3, 2005

Develop America's Airmen today ... for tomorrow

Base improves safety record in fiscal 2005

By Susan Griggs
Keesler News Staff

The 81st Training Wing's annual mishap summary and analysis for fiscal 2005 shows marked improvement, especially during the critical summer months.

Operation Summer Survivor Xtreme Challenge, Air Education and Training Command's version of the Air Force's 101 Critical Days of Summer "was a huge success for Keesler," said Lt. Col. Lawrence Averbek, the 81st TRW safety chief.

That period from Memorial Day to Labor Day usually has more accidents due to summer travel and recreational activities.

"During this period, the wing had no Class A or B mishaps, and our four Class C mishaps were a 43 percent decrease, compared to FY04," the colonel said. "This could be attributed to the culture change of operational risk management by all personnel throughout the wing and to increased emphasis from leadership."

Class A mishaps include a fatality, a permanent total disability, destruction of a Defense Department aircraft or an accident with a total cost of \$1 million or more.

Class B mishaps include a permanent partial disability.

Please see Safety, Page 9

Congress reviews new civilian personnel system

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Ending a nearly two-year process, the Defense Department sent Congress the final national security personnel system regulation.

Acting Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England said Oct. 26 that members of Congress have 30 days to review the final regulations.

The regulations take effect Nov. 25. Changes to the regulation ultimately affect 650,000 of the 750,000 DOD civilian employees.

Once adopted, the labor-relations portion of the system takes effect immediately.

"The human resources portion — the new pay bands, the pay-for-performance system, etc. — is scheduled to progressively begin in February," Mr. England said.

Some 600,000 employees are in the first group to come under the new program, officials said. But human resources officials are being very deliberate in how the program goes, Mr. England said.

In fact, the system goes through a six-month "mock period" before becoming effective.

"That is, at the end of six months, we'll evaluate," Mr. England said. "We'll act as if this was for real, but it will be a mock exercise in terms of the results we can learn."

Please see Personnel, Page 9

Their first look at Keesler



Photo by Herb Welch

Some of the 312 basic training graduates who arrived at Keesler Monday for technical training walk from their buses to dormitories in the Triangle. This was the largest one-day influx of students in at least two years, according to 81st Training Group officials.

INSIDE COMMENTARY	What hope looks like, 2
	Peevish parent, 2
TRAINING AND EDUCATION	Degrees within reach, 4
	Training to deploy, 6
NEWS AND FEATURES	Iron hull questions, 8
	Force-shaping board, 10
	Medical services, 11
	Self-help store opens, 12
	Hurricane relief funds, 14
	Salute to Military, 16
	Song of support, 19
	Domestic abuse, 20
SPORTS AND RECREATION	Cycling for causes, 25
SECTIONS	Commentary, 2
	Training and education, 4-7
	News and features, 8-23
	Sports and recreation, 23
	Digest, 24

For
Keesler News
delivery
or newspaper
display racks,
base facilities
managers call
377-3163.

Force-shaping fallout

Civilian personnel offices assist military with transition

By 1st. Lt. Martha Petersante-Gioia

66th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

HANSCOM Air Force Base, Mass. — For those facing force-shaping boards and the possibility of separating from the Air Force, civilian personnel offices are ready to help military members transition to government civilian employment.

People may apply for civilian positions 120 days before separation. It takes about 60-90 days to receive notification after applying for civilian positions and, if selected, 30-45 days until applicants start working.

Military time isn't wasted — it counts toward work experience and for leave accrual or retirement.

Those who recently separated or retired may be eligible for veteran's preference points. Disabled veterans are eligible for up to 10 points. Veterans with an honorable or general discharge who served during a war may claim five points.

For a detailed listing of veteran's preferences, visit <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>. Disabled veteran's counseling is also available from AMVETS.

The three steps to applying for civilian positions are submitting a resume, searching job postings and self-nomination.

Resumes can be submitted to the Air Force Personnel Center through the online resume writer, e-mail or mail.

Submitting through Resume Writer is the preferred method, according to the AFPC civilian employment application guide job kit at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>. Users can post resumes and have them

AT KEESLER

For more information, call June Clemenens, chief of the civilian personnel flight's position and personnel management element, 377-7966.

"Ron Bublik at the family support center also helps military members during the transition period with resumes and finding employment," Ms. Clemenens said. "He also conducts transition briefings for all military who are about to separate or retire."

Mr. Bublik's number is 377-8592.

processed into the personnel system within 24 hours and can edit and review resumes at any time. Resumes remain active in the system for one year.

E-mailed or mailed resumes take up to five days to process. Resumes can be e-mailed to Ext.Resume@randolph.af.mil.

"Applicant information" must be in the subject line of the e-mail and resumes shouldn't be sent as attachments. Applicants can't review, print or update resumes when using this method.

To search for a federal job, AFPC links to various Air Force postings and also to <http://www.usajob.opm.gov>, which hosts various federal jobs all over the world.

AFPC also offers the Civilian Announcement Notification System, an e-mail service that notifies users of Air Force civilian job openings meeting their criteria. Information is stored in the system for up to 180 days

and users may use up to 20 criteria combinations.

After finding a job and making sure all supplemental data and a resume are active in the system, applicants may self-nominate online at the AFPC civilian employment home page or over the Air Force job line, 1-800-616-3775. Applicants must have their Social Security number, a personal identification number and the 11-digit job announcement code when self-nominating via the job line.

AFPC offers these tips:

Be sure to see the self-nomination confirmation before exiting the Web site. If you don't, the self-nomination wasn't completed. Print a copy of the confirmation. Applicants can log on to the AFPC Web site or call the job line to check on a self-nomination.

Self-nominate before updating a resume. Applicants can't self-nominate while a resume is being updated.

Keep track of the job close-out date when applying.

Remember to fill out the knowledge skills and abilities section of a job if required.

External candidates whose resumes have expired and were submitted through Resume Writer can access the AFPC Web site and select the Resume Writer menu option. Click on "update resume," make changes, then click "submit." The system requires 24 hours to refresh before the resume enters the system, but then applicants can self-nominate for vacancies.

Submit other supporting documents, such as transcripts, Defense Department Form 214 (Statement of Service) and applicable licenses or certifications as required. They may need to be provided before an official job offer can be made.

Hurricane Hunters close out record season

By Tech. Sgt. James Pritchett

403rd Wing Public Affairs

The 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron's Hurricane Hunters flew their last mission of the record 2005 Atlantic hurricane season in December.

Squadron aircrews flew more than 145 missions into 25 storms and logged more than 1,500 flight hours while flying a new aircraft and operating from another base.

The hurricane season typically runs from June 1 to Nov. 30, but the 2005 season started early and ended late.

The unit flew into Hurricane Adrian in the Pacific Ocean in the third week of May.

In early December, aircrews flew into Hurricane Epsilon — the season's 14th Atlantic hurricane and only the fifth December storm recorded in more than 120 years.

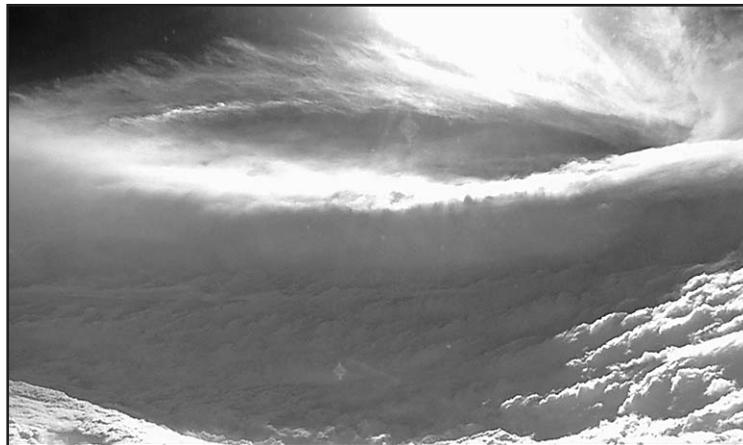
The Hurricane Hunters didn't have to fly when Tropical Storm Zeta formed in the Atlantic Dec. 30, since the storm posed no threat to land. It's only the second tropical storm to develop so late in the year since record-keeping began 154 years ago.

The unit met another milestone during the 2005 season, flying every mission in the new WC-130J Hercules. This ushered in a new era in weather reconnaissance for the Hurricane Hunters, part of Keesler's 403rd Wing.

"We completed conversion to the J-model two years ahead of schedule," said Brig. Gen. Richard Moss, 403rd Wing commander. "This is the culmination of a lot of work enabling the WC-130J to perform its mission."

General Moss said his crews are excited about the new aircraft and that they improved the unit's ability to provide data to forecasters and decision-makers when it was most needed.

"Increased situational awareness of the crew and the increased safety of the J-model's performance enhance the unit's ability to locate and



Air Force photo

This photo, taken when Katrina was at its peak intensity as a Category 5 storm, displays the "stadium effect" in which the wall cloud arches completely around the eye of the storm, resembling a football stadium made of clouds.

Squadron aircrews flew
more than 145 missions
into 25 storms and logged
more than 1,500 flight hours
while flying a new aircraft
and operating from another base.

monitor the intensity of these dangerous storms," he said.

Hurricane Katrina, which struck Aug. 29, provided the biggest challenge. When the massive storm crashed into the Gulf Coast, it caused widespread damage to facilities and infrastructure at Keesler and in the surrounding communities.

At Keesler, the Hurricane Hunters' home base, many of the unit's facilities were damaged, including the 403rd Wing's headquarters. Repairs are estimated to total between \$30 million and \$40 million.

Aircraft were evacuated before the storm to locations in Texas. The Hurricane Hunters continued flying reconnaissance missions from Ellington Field, near Houston, throughout the storm.

Initial damage assessments in Mississippi made it clear the wing's aircraft wouldn't be able to return home immedi-

ately. While many reservists and civilians working for the 403rd Wing returned to begin cleanup, the aviation mission was moved to a temporary location.

"We deployed all our aircraft to Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., and continued supporting the hurricane reconnaissance mission without a single missed tasking," General Moss said.

More than 200 people also went to Dobbins. Many had lost their homes to Katrina, yet knew the importance of keeping the mission going. More than 25 percent of the 403rd Wing's people suffered severe loss or total destruction of their homes.

Before the hurricane season ended, the Hurricane Hunters were already tracking winter storms to help forecasters determine the severity of "nor'easters" and other winter weather activity off both coasts.

Airman reinforces security during deployment to Kuwait

By Master Sgt.
Roger Drinnon

Keesler Public Affairs

In today's expeditionary Air Force, Airmen can expect to serve in a variety of roles outside their technical specialties while deployed.

One such role — vital to force protection — is third-country national escort duty.

Senior Airman Reginald Demps, an aircrew life support technician with the 45th Airlift Squadron, deployed to Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, as a TCN escort last spring.

He returned home recently to take care of his family in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

TCNs of various nationalities are employed by a host nation to provide support services at a deployed base. Their escorts ensure force protection by constantly monitoring TCNs as they enter, work on and leave the installation.

While deployed, Airman Demps ensured no weapons, explosives or other potentially harmful items entered the base via TCNs. He also made sure TCNs didn't engage in potentially harmful actions against Ali Al Salem personnel.

"My work environment was sometimes stressful, and most days, it was pretty fast," said Airman Demps. "You knew exactly what you were going to do each day. We were mainly watching the TCNs coming on and off the base to protect the assets on the base. You would watch them working the entire day."

Airman Demps said the 12-hour shifts helped his deployment pass quickly.

"That's what motivated me — knowing that I'd be home soon," he said. "This was my second deployment, so I knew what to expect. Our mission was 'boots on the ground' — to get everybody in and out of Iraq."

His first deployment as a TCN escort was to Al Jabbar AB, Kuwait, Sept. 16, 2001, to Jan. 15, 2002. Ali Al Salem is home to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing. The 386th AEW provides the combined forces air compo-



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Airman Demps, 3-year-old daughter, Deasia, and his wife, Brittany, enjoy the "welcome home" cookout for deployed troops and their families, Dec. 9 at Vandenberg Community Center.

nent commander with intra-theater combat airlift while conducting airbase operations and theater casualty evacuation. The wing carries out combat support in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility

Airman Demps said thinking about his family back home helped him deal with the fears and anxieties inherent to being deployed.

"I knew as long as I'd be careful at all times, stay focused and watch what I was doing, I'd get home safely," he said.

Airman Demps' wife, Brittany, said time passed slowly for her while her husband was gone.

"It was stressful and depressing," she said. "We had just gotten married, and I missed him very much."

But Mrs. Demps said she received overwhelming emotional reinforcement from the people of the 45th AS.

"I had plenty of support," she said. "I had people calling me all the time; I spoke with one of the (45th AS) people every day, so (the support) was good — very good."

Airman Demps said the deployed environment helped him see the big picture of the Air Force's mission.

"Every day (back home), we go to work, and we don't see the fruits of the labor we do.

To see everything in full motion is really good," he said.

The 45th AS senior leadership sees the fruits of Airman Demps' labor as well.

"Airman Demps has proven again and again the selfless dedication needed to fight and win this war on terror," said Lt. Col. Christopher Miceli, 45th AS commander. "This was Reggie's second deployment, and both times, he was a volunteer because he felt it was his duty to contribute."

In addition to supporting its deployed mission requirements, the 45th AS conducts formal training for Learjet C-21A aircraft initial qualifications training and instructor qualification upgrade training, as well as the initial standup of the C-130 J-Model Hercules at Keesler.

The squadron also develops, publishes and implements curriculum for 10 courses, including academics and flight training.

The C-21A aircraft allow worldwide placement and efficient delivery of foreign and domestic dignitaries while providing pilots the flying experience essential to transitioning to major weapons systems throughout the Air Force.

Keesler Kaleidoscope — 2005 was year of change, challenge



Staff Sgts. Brian Shaw, left, and Doren Kolasa, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron, stood by as Spanish Lt. Col. (Dr.) Jose Peralba, center, and his medical team unloaded a severely burned Afghan girl at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, to await transport to a burn hospital in Spain. Sergeants Shaw and Kolasa, assigned to the 376th Expeditionary Medical Group, were among 563 Keesler Airmen deployed around the globe in 2005.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Chuck Marsh



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Hurricane Katrina's storm surge flooded Keesler Medical Center's basement, destroying the backup electrical system, key elements of the power grid, fire suppression and alarm systems. This resulted in the closure of the medical center and immediately impacted medical care to more than 56,000 people eligible for care in the Air Force's second largest medical center. Since then, the 81st Medical Group has provided primary care to as much of the eligible population as possible. As a result of the storm, many beneficiaries evacuated to safe havens. The 81st MDG's main focus is to restart inpatient services by the fall of 2006 and medical training programs

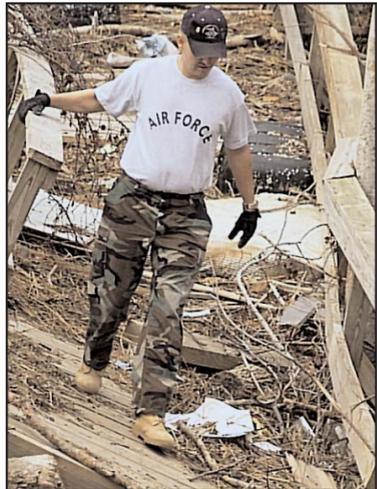


Photo by Kemberly Groue

Master Sgt. Scott Sipple, 338th Training Squadron, walked across a destroyed bridge looking for displaced canoes at the Boy Scouts' Camp Wilkes in Biloxi Nov. 4. More than 200 Keesler volunteers were involved in cleanup of the camp Nov. 4, one of more than 300 humanitarian missions undertaken by Keesler volunteers since



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike Buytas

In Hurricane Katrina's aftermath Sept. 1, Keesler students were evacuated to Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, aboard a C-17 Globemaster III from Altus AFB, Okla. Three weeks later, training resumed in the 81st Training Group, nearly six months sooner than originally projected. By year's end, 1,962 non-prior serv-

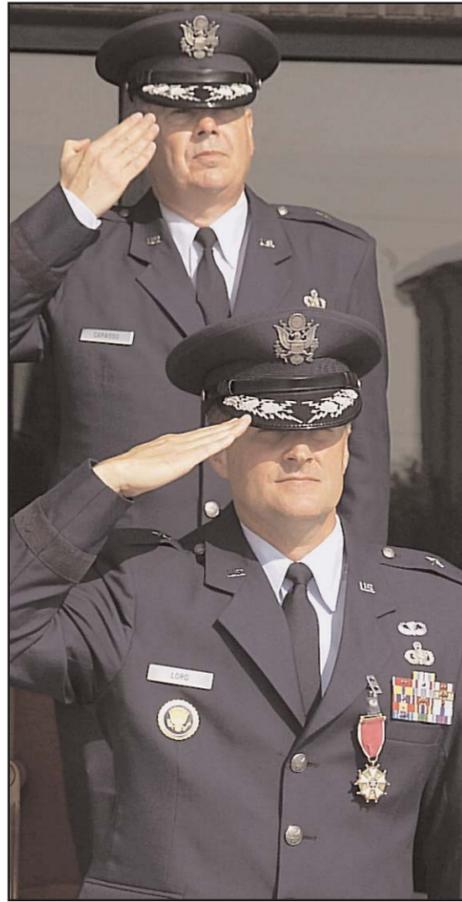


Photo by Kemberly Groue

Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, top, assumed command of the 81st Training Wing Nov. 15 from Brig. Gen. William Lord. General Capasso came to Keesler from Scott AFB, Ill., where he was director of command, control, communications and computer systems for U.S. Transportation Command. General Lord is now director of information, services and integration, Secretary of the Air Force Office of Warfighting Integration and chief information officer at the Pentagon.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Keesler's runway underwent a \$2.8 million facelift, its first major rehabilitation project since 1986.



Jake Bering, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron, asked a question following the A-76 tentative decision announced Aug. 18 in Welch Auditorium. After five years of research, planning, proposals and postponements, future operating support services at Keesler were split between a contractor and the government. DynCorp won a \$280 million 10-year contract for functions such as civil engineering, supply, services, weather station and certain mission support functions. Communications services stay in-house with the government's "most efficient organization" at a cost of \$54 million over 10 years. Implementation of the decision has been delayed by Hurricane Katrina.

Photo by Michelle Freeck



The new Army and Air Force Exchange Service mini-mall opened last January. The eighth new student dormitory was completed in the Triangle and a second new training facility replaced the old Cody Hall as part of the Triangle. Old Cody Hall was slated for demolition, but is being used to accommodate several displaced offices in Hurricane Katrina's wake.

Tricare services now available in medical center

81st Medical Group

The Tricare office is now in Room 1A-200 of the medical center.

The staff provides patient registration, Tricare Prime enrollments (active duty and family only), eligibility and medical evaluation board information.

For patient registration or eligibility, call 377-6149 or 6276. For Tricare enrollments or MEB, call 377-9962.

The referral management office is in Room 1A-201. Call 377-6177.

For health benefits advisers, visit Room 1F-306 or call 377-6580.

Hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. working Fridays.

Tricare Prime beneficiaries may call 1-800-700-8603 to book appointments at Keesler Medical Center and leave telephone consults for their primary care managers or request authorizations for any non-emergency services.

The medical center doesn't have the capability to accept "space-available" Tricare Standard and Extra beneficiaries.

The appointment line is open for all beneficiaries, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. to noon Sunday. Active-duty personnel may begin calling at 5 a.m. Monday-Friday.

To access care on the first floor of the medical center, enter through the "A Tower" at the top of the steps leading from Fisher Street. Signs directing patients to the respective clinics are posted along the route from the entrance to the clinic areas. The security staff is also available to provide directions.

Clinic hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. working Fridays. The family practice, internal medicine and pediatric clinics see patients 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. compressed work schedule Fridays.

The family practice staff, in the former medical specialties clinic, sees acute uncomplicated illnesses, handles personal health assessments and provides medication refills. Urgicare and walk-in services aren't available. A case management and social worker are available.

The clinical laboratory is in its medical center location. The lab's phlebotomy station is open in the main lab and routine blood testing is provided for Tricare Prime patients seen at the medical center.

The blood donor center is open. To arrange to donate blood, call 377-9324.

Radiology is back in its previous location. Provided are routine radi-



Photo by Steve Pivnick

Staff Sgt. Loretta Scott, assistant noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the 81st Medical Operations Squadron Immunization Clinic, administers a flu shot to Staff Sgt. Tadyrall Jarrett, 81st Communications Squadron.

ographs, computerized tomography and ultrasounds for Tricare Prime patients seen at the medical center.

The immunization clinic in the former urology clinic provides all inoculations to active duty, retirees and dependents. Flu shots are available, but allergy services aren't.

The temporary pharmacy is in the medical photo/oral surgery area. Hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. For remaining refills from on-base prescriptions, call 377-6360. Pick up refills about four duty days later at the temporary pharmacy distribution area in Building 5 of the Biloxi Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Veterans Boulevard, just off Pass Road. To renew prescriptions, see your primary care manager or another Tricare network provider. The pharmacy is unable to fill prescriptions from off-base providers.

The first aid station is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week. Ambulance coverage for Keesler is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the on-base 911 line. Patients are taken directly to off-base medical facilities. For emergencies, go to the nearest coast emergency room. Active-duty sick call at the first aid station is scheduled through the central appointment line. The first aid station only treats new acute health care problems.

Internal medicine on the first floor

sees active-duty, dependents and Tricare Prime enrollees. Services are acute medical care, limited evaluation and treatment of chronic medical illnesses, medical consultation and referral for select subspecialty services.

The optometry clinic is on the first floor within the internal medicine clinic area. The staff sees active duty patients only. All exams are by appointment only through the Tricare appointment line, 1-800-700-8603. The clinic can order spectacles and gas mask inserts for active duty and eligible retirees provided they have a current prescription (within two years).

The pediatric clinic in the former oncology/hematology clinic area provides scheduled acute medical care for children, well baby/child visits, routine appointments, Q Code exams, and exceptional family member program and special needs family paperwork. For appointments, use the Tricare appointment line. A child psychologist and social worker are available. Appointments are by PCM referral.

Women's health in the former general surgery clinic, next to the new flight medicine clinic, provides routine women's health care to active duty, dependents and Tricare Prime enrollees. Other patients are seen on a space-available basis. Services are general gynecological problems, annual Pap smear exams, birth control and

follow-up of abnormal Paps (dysplasia). No obstetrical services are available. The clinic can initiate profiles for pregnant active-duty patients. Eligible patients call 377-6920 for appointments for routine annual exams. Call the appointment line for all others.

Flight medicine in the surgical specialties clinic furnishes walk-in acute care, duties-not-involved-in-flying paperwork, profiles and physical health assessments. Call 377-6668.

General surgery and orthopedics share the former orthopedic clinic. Surgery is available by primary care manager consult only.

Medical records are in the Wylie Auditorium. Original records are maintained by the medical center. For copies, complete a request form at the outpatient record's customer service desk. Allow five to seven days for copies.

Endocrine services are available by appointment only in the internal medicine clinic. Call 377-6665 or the Tricare appointment line.

New dermatology patients are seen by referral only. Established patients may be seen by calling 377-1673 or the appointment line.

Mental health flight elements — life skills, family advocacy/exceptional family member program and alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment — services are in Suites H and J in the dental clinic. Patients may use the entrance at the west end of the building. Call 377-7006 or 6216.

The Triangle clinic, Levitov Training Support Facility, sees only non-prior service students.

Services at the dental clinic include routine care, cleanings and routine outpatient oral surgery for active-duty members only. Dental emergencies for all patients are seen through dental sick call. Call 377-4510 for appointments.

Physical and occupational therapy see patients at the health and wellness center. Physical therapy sees active duty only; occupational therapy sees active duty, retirees and adult dependents. Services include assessment and treatment of musculoskeletal disorders such as upper and lower extremity dysfunction and neck and back pain. Treatment is limited to gym and home exercise programs, heat, ice and ultrasound modalities. Call 377-1886 for physical therapy and 377-6264 for occupational therapy.

For the director of customer relations, call 377-9498.

Keesler medical team fills in at Landstuhl for troops in Pakistan

By Steve Mraz

Stars and Stripes European edition

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Recent natural disasters have upended the lives of a group of airmen working at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

An expeditionary medical support unit from Keesler is serving a 120-day stint at Landstuhl, backfilling for soldiers sent to Pakistan to help with recovery from the Oct. 8 earthquake there.

The deployment of the 58 Keesler nurses, medics and doctors comes just months after Hurricane Katrina made landfall Aug. 29, devastating the Gulf Coast and inflicting severe damage on Keesler.

The Keesler team replaces soldiers with the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital who normally work at Landstuhl.

“We were sent here specifically to backfill (for troops) sent downrange to Pakistan to cover the earthquake,” said Lt. Col. Frank Glenn, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron, who commands the Keesler contingent.

Katrina flooded Keesler Medical Center’s basement where the pharmacy, dining facility, generator and inpatient records are located.

“Keesler Medical Center took a big hit,” Colonel Glenn said. “For most of us who are here, we wouldn’t have had a job probably until about October. That was one of the reasons that we were sent here. We have some surgeons with us that need to be cutting to keep their skills up.”

Those at Landstuhl appreciate the Airmen’s presence.

“We certainly have the population to support their skills maintenance,” said Army Lt. Col. Bryan Boyea, head of Landstuhl’s physical therapy clinic.

Several Keesler Airmen at Landstuhl had homes and vehicles damaged by Katrina.

Staff Sgt. Alana Rayon, 81st Medical Operations Squadron, had a flooded car and a dam-

“For most of us who are here, we wouldn’t have had a job probably until about October ... We have some surgeons with us that need to be cutting to keep their skills up.”

— Colonel Glenn

aged master bedroom as a result of the hurricane. She lived with a co-worker for three weeks because of mildew in the bedroom.

With so much to take care of at home, Sergeant Rayon wasn’t overjoyed about coming to Germany.

“I wasn’t happy to come here because I was leaving all this stuff behind to take care of, but then I thought, ‘OK, the mission still continues regardless, so I have to suck it up,’” she said.

“Now that I see the team I’m with from Keesler — the doctors, the nurses, the medics — I’m glad to be here.”

Professionally, the deployment to Landstuhl has an up side.

“We rarely get people from downrange, especially this fresh,” Colonel Glenn said. “A day or two after the accident they were in.

“This will be just an invaluable, unique opportunity for all of us, but especially the young Airmen that are here. This will go a long way in their development.”

Safe haven per diem coverage extended

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News staff

There's good news for Keesler dependents whose families are still staying in safe haven locations in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Another 30-day extension to the safe haven per diem rates payable to dependents of uniformed members was approved Dec. 22, said Maj. Richard Fogg, 81st Comptroller Squadron commander.

That brings coverage for Keesler families to 150 days, or through Jan. 24.

Reimbursement rates are 100 percent for dependents 12 and older and 50 percent for those under 12.

Lodging reimbursement is limited to the actual cost not to exceed the authorized amount; receipts are required.

Receipts aren't required for the meals and incidentals expense that's reimbursed as a flat amount.

Here's a list of other assistance sources.

Air Force Aid Society

Hurricane Katrina assistance requests are accepted at the family support center, Room 118, old Cody Hall.

Air Force active-duty members, retirees, widows of Air Force retirees, and Army retirees and their widows must complete the entire application and provide supporting documentation.

Checks are written to the person or company providing the repair or service. Requests are decided on a case-by-case basis, and the customer is asked to provide supporting documentation, such as written estimates for tree removal, home repairs and proof of insurance deductibles.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Jeffrey Cartier, 377-2593.

BAH

Base housing residents who received basic assistance for housing after Hurricane Katrina and have returned to a habitable unit need to stop by the base housing office in Chapel One east of the dental clinic to stop their BAH.

Residents should check their leave and earnings statements to verify they aren't receiving BAH anymore.

Please see **Aid**, Page 21



Mrs. Hayes, holding Kiera, hands the phone to Kion so he can talk to his dad in Korea. Sergeant Hayes received emergency leave after his family was forced to evacuate Keesler before Hurricane Katrina hit the base. Like a thousand other Keesler families, they lost their base home to the storm.

Family grateful for aid in Katrina's wake

By Master Sgt. Orville Desjarlais Jr.

Air Force Print News

SAVANNAH, Ga. — While many people wish for big-screen televisions, money and electronic games this holiday season, one Air Force family here would be content with sleeping in their own beds, in their own bedrooms, in their own home.

When Hurricane Katrina ravaged Keesler, it displaced many Airmen, including the family of Staff Sgt. Herbert Hayes Jr.

While he was, and still is, stationed at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, his family had to flee the largest hurricane to ever visit the shores of America.

The same day Sergeant Hayes, an air traffic controller, left for South Korea last year, his wife, Diane, and two children evacuated Keesler to dodge a hurricane that eventually never struck.

Later, the same thing happened. They left. No hurricane.

When authorities advised Mrs. Hayes to evacuate the impending doom of Hurricane Katrina, she thought she might not leave right away. It could just be another false alarm. She thought she would stick it out until she felt certain the storm would strike.

Her husband felt differently. Concern for his family's safety kept him awake at night.

"Diane wanted to wait another day and I told her no, leave. She left with the kids and a friend," Sergeant Hayes said.

So she packed a week's worth of clothes and diapers, grabbed some milk and moved into a Memphis, Tenn., hotel Aug. 28, the day before



Photos by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson
Sergeant Hayes controls air traffic at Kunsan AB, South Korea.

the Category 4 monster slammed into the coasts of Mississippi and Louisiana. On Aug. 29, the storm surge flooded the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

With 1-year-old son, Kion, and 3-year-old daughter, Kiera, Mrs. Hayes stayed in Memphis until Aug. 31.

By then, the Internet was alive with photos from Keesler. One showed a submerged commissary and base exchange.

"I felt overwhelmed," Mrs. Hayes said. "We lived right behind the commissary and I just knew we lost everything. I didn't know what to do — for a place to live, what to do about our home, what to do about our kids. I was a mess."

Little did she know then, but the final tally would be 1,000 base homes lost of the 1,800 on Keesler.

"I didn't have my husband to pick

up where I was failing, to be strong where I was weak," she said.

So she moved in with her mother in Savannah and called the Red Cross to assist in getting her husband back to the states for a short time to help.

While Sergeant Hayes' unit approved his emergency leave and bought him a plane ticket to the states, his wife carried her daughter everywhere because she had left all of Kiera's special equipment at home, including her wheelchair.

Kiera has cerebral palsy. She's unable to speak or walk properly and has muscle stiffness.

After a week, Mrs. Hayes knew she had to do something. She couldn't continue to carry Kiera everywhere, and her daughter needed to resume her physical, occupational and speech therapy. Fortunately, she found a school that could help her daughter.

By now, the media was also getting involved. Her aunt told them of her niece's plight, and soon clothing, diapers and money donations started coming in. Her church loaned her a wheelchair, but it was so big a car seat had to be used to allow her daughter to use it.

Fortunately, she only had to use it once. When Kiera arrived for her first day of school, the school loaned her a wheelchair that fit her just right. She still uses the chair today.

"Diane had her hands full," Sergeant Hayes said. "I love her with all my heart and really appreciated the job she did with the kids without me being there."

By the time Sergeant Hayes returned Sept. 9, the day before his son's first birthday, his wife had taken

Please see **Family**, Page 21

Family,

from Page 20

care of the family's basic needs. The couple dreaded the next move — returning to their Keesler home.

Although they'd lived on the Gulf Coast for more than two years, nothing looked the same as they drove back to Keesler. Landmarks were missing.

"When I saw all the damage, I really couldn't believe it," Sergeant Hayes said. "My heart completely went out to all those people with no place to go."

When they finally made it to their home in Pinehaven, the first thing they saw was that the hurricane had twisted her car at an angle.

When they opened the front door, it looked like a crime scene.

"It was unbelievable," Mrs. Hayes said. "It was like someone came in and threw everything around."

The refrigerator was face-first against a wall. The 4 feet of floodwater scattered chairs about like a bad western movie's bar-fight scene. When Mrs. Hayes went into the garage, she saw a jacket had somehow draped itself over Kiera's wheelchair. It looked OK until she lifted the coat and saw the chair ravaged by mildew.

"I was doing good until I saw my baby's wheelchair," she said. That was when she cried.

"We lost everything downstairs," Sergeant Hayes said. "The things we did save from upstairs were mostly



Mrs. Hayes wheels Kiera from school to physical and speech therapy here. Her daughter's school loaned Kiera a wheelchair until renter's insurance can replace the one ruined by Katrina.



Photos by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson
Mrs. Hayes and Kion share a moment at her mother's home in Savannah.

clothes, a computer, two televisions and bedroom furniture."

They put what they could salvage in storage and continue to try to get back to where they were before the storm. Renter's insurance will replace all of Kiera's special equipment, and with both their parents living in Savannah, they receive a lot of help from friends and family.

Sergeant Hayes has returned to finish his remote tour in South Korea which ends in July. After the hurricane, the Air Force canceled his follow-on assignment to Keesler because the base could no longer provide care for Kiera. He still anxiously awaits his next assignment.

So far, the Hayes family has been on television four times and on the radio constantly. A radio station picked them for a 12 days of Christmas promotion, which included gifts and a certificate for clothing. A Savannah hospice adopted them for Christmas. Instead of exchanging gifts among employees, they bought gifts for the family.

Since Katrina, the family has received help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross and various area churches and agencies.

"The attention has been wonderful because I didn't have to worry about what to get the kids for Christmas," Mrs. Hayes said. "Everyone has been so good to us. There's no place like home."

All the gifts and money are fine, but she said the only thing they're truly thankful for is their health and well-being.

"We're just thankful to God that we got out," Mrs. Hayes said.

Aid,

from Page 20

Civilian assistance

The Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund Emergency Assistance Program may provide assistance to federal civilian employees affected by Hurricane Katrina.

For more information, call Sheila Noel, 377-7973, or go to <http://www.feea.org/emergency.shtml>.

Civilian employees and their families are eligible for six free post-hurricane counseling sessions.

For more information, call Larry Williams, 377-4638.

Civilian employees may donate unused annual leave to other employees adversely affected by the hurricane.

Up to 104 hours of leave can be donated, but it can't be given to a specific person. Submit an Office of Personnel Management Form 1638 through the civilian personnel flight.

Coins, patches

The sale of Operation Dragon Comeback coins and patches benefits the base's Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund.

Coins are \$7 and patches are \$5.

Contact unit representatives to purchase.

Starting Monday, e-mail orders may be placed with Tech. Sgts. Eric Alvarez, eric.alvarez@keesler.af.mil, or Anthony Bellocq, anthony.bellocq@keesler.af.mil.

Diploma replacement

To replace Community College of the Air Force or professional military education diplomas lost or damaged due to the hurricane, call the education office, 377-2171.

Extended child care

Military and civilians who are eligible for on-base day care and work more than 50 hours a week are eligible for free or subsidized child care under the Air Force's extended duty child care program.

For more information, call 377-3189 or 5935.

Government travel card

People who used GTCs for prepaid transactions that weren't used as a result of Hurricane Katrina can dispute the charge for credit.

Before filing a dispute, try to contact the merchant to see if charges can be credited to the account. If that isn't possible, submit the dispute form found at <https://www.gcsuthd.bankofamerica.com/forms/maintenance.asp>. Use reason code 10 for "other" and use

your own words to reference Hurricane Katrina. To fax the form, call 1-888-678-6046.

Income tax relief

For information about the Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005, call the Internal Revenue Service, 1-866-562-5227, or visit the agency's Web site, <http://www.irs.gov>.

Katrina relief fund

The Keesler Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund a central location for money donated by other bases and sources.

To apply for assistance, visit Keesler's secure Web site, <https://wwwmil.keesler.af.mil> and click on the red Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund icon on the right side of the screen. The brief application asks for personal contact information, rank, unit and an assessment of personal loss and insurance coverage.

All military and civilian members should complete the form, whether they want to receive financial donations or not, because responses will be used as historical data to determine the actual number of Keesler people who had losses and the extent of their losses.

For more information, call Maj. Teresa Roberts or Master Sgt. Jeffrey Cartier, 377-2179.

Retirees, annuitants

Military retirees and annuitants who've relocated or changed banking information, call 1-800-321-1080, 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. weekdays. They can also use myPay to update information; call 1-800-390-2348.

Changes to mailing and banking information can be sent by fax to 1-800-469-6559, with "Hurricane Katrina" at the top of the page and a contact phone number listed.

SGLI

The Defense Department extended the deadline for reducing or declining increased Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage for service members affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Sept. 1, eligible members were automatically insured for the maximum coverage of \$400,000.

These changes don't affect coverage under Family SGLI, which continues under previously existing elections.

Those who wish to keep the \$400,000 coverage with the same beneficiary designations don't need to take any action.

To decline or reduce coverage, members must complete a new SGLV 8286 at <http://www.insurance.va.gov>, indicating the amount of coverage desired.

Base facilities update

Tax assistance office opens in Vandenberg

By Senior Airman Sarah Stegman

Keesler News staff

Keesler's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program office opens Jan. 23 on the second floor of the Vandenberg Community Center.

The previous location in Sablich Center is closed due to hurricane damage.

Hours are 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m. workdays.

For more information, call 377-4454.

Open base facilities are:

81st Services Division

Arts and crafts, frame and engraving shops — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Auto skills center — 1-7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and non-working Fridays. The car wash is open 24 hours a day.

Child development center — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Space is available at the center and for the preschool program. For more information, call 377-2211.

Dining facilities — Until further notice, lunch meals in all dining facilities are provided only to military personnel with meal cards, those at Keesler on temporary duty orders and those normally authorized to eat in these facilities.

Civilians, other than those displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina, aren't authorized to use the dining facilities during the lunch meal.

Azalea Dining Facility serves only non-prior service students for all meals.

Family child care — five providers are accepting children in their homes. Children are also being accepted at the mildly-ill family child care home.

For more information, call 377-3189.

People interested in becoming licensed family child care providers, call the family child care office, 377-5935, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Inns of Keesler — open 24 hours.

Half Time Café — 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Information, ticket and travel office — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays-working Fridays in the customer service area of Vandenberg Community Center.

Vandenberg Community Center — open for senior airmen and below 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 10 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Rachael Utman, left, loads groceries into Margaret Jones' car at the temporary commissary located on Meadows Drive. Mrs. Jones' late husband, Buster Jones, was an Air Force retiree. The commissary's new hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week.

Wood shop — 1 to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and non-working Fridays. Planers and drum sanders aren't available at this time.

Youth center — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. workdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. Before- and after-school program is 6-8:30 a.m. and 3:30-6 p.m. for children in kindergarten through grade 6.

Triangle Fitness Center, the marina, Keesler Club, Warrior Lounge and Keesler Community Center are closed.

AAFES

Car care center — 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Service bays close at 3:30 p.m.

For more information, call 432-2404.

Class Six/Shoppette — open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays as a one-stop holiday shop, with toys, clothing, decorations and gift items.

The main exchange, dorm shoppette

and medical center exchange are closed indefinitely.

Home furnishings store — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at 220 Ploesti Drive with an entrance on Hercules Street.

Welch Auditorium — movies shown 7 p.m. Friday; 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday. For more information, see Digest, Page 29.

Banking

BancorpSouth — bank lobby is now open during normal business hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday.

The drive-up automatic teller machine is operational 24 hours a day, and the mini-mall ATM is also operating during business hours.

Keesler Federal Credit Union — open during regular banking hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, in the trailer located in the credit union's parking lot. ATMs on base are now

operational 24 hours a day.

Gates

Oak Park Gate is open 5:30-7:30 a.m. and 3:30-5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday to help alleviate traffic due to road closures caused by Hurricane Katrina. Pass Road, White Avenue and Meadows Drive gates are open around the clock. Judge Sekul Gate is closed.

Housing

The housing office in Chapel One is reassigning homes to families whose base housing is uninhabitable. For a list of available off-base housing, call Mary Krystosek, 377-9741.

The office is the focal point for military housing residents to request portable storage units or labor assistance.

Mini-mall

Alteration shop — noon to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Please see **Facilities**, Page 23

Facilities,

from Page 22

At Ease embroidery/unit apparel — noon to 7 p.m. daily.

Barber shop — 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Beauty shop — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday.

CZee Zone Internet Café — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Dawg Daze hot dog cart — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Laundry and dry cleaners — noon to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday, noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Military clothing sales — 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Seattle's Best Coffee — 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. daily in the mini-mall.

Subway — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Moves

Area Defense Counsel — Keesler's office is now in Room 5703, Locker House. The office, an independent office of the Air Force Legal Services Agency, provides representation for investigations, administrative actions and discharges, nonjudicial punishment, courts-martial and other adverse actions. For appointments, call 377-2429.

Contracting — now located in Room 101, old Cody Hall.

Education office — now located in Room 212, old Cody Hall. For assistance, call 377-2323 or 2171.

Family support center — now located on the first floor, old Cody Hall. A student office remains open in the Fishbowl.

In Chapel One, there's an annex with supplies for all ranks and base civilians including clothes, food, baby items and cleaning supplies. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. working Fridays.

Finance — now located on the second floor, Vosler Center. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. working Fridays.

For military and travel pay questions, call 377-7272 or 4212.

Legal office — aid is available 9 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m. workdays in Room 246, Levitow Training Support Facility. A claims briefing is 10 a.m. daily, with filing from 8 a.m. to noon. For appointments, call 377-3510. For Katrina claims, call 377-3630. The fax number is 377-3630.

Personal finances — The personal financial management program is now located in Room 119, old Cody Hall. For more information, call 377-8601 or 2179.

Personnel offices — now located in Room 218, old Cody Hall. The civilian personnel office has relocated to the Airman Leadership School building.

Retirees, annuitants — the retiree activities center has moved from Thrower Park to Room 104, old Cody Hall.

Traffic management office — TMO for technical training students in Room 211, Levitow Training Support Facility, is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call 377-0174, 1263, 7448 or 3147.

The main TMO has returned to Sablich Center, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Phone numbers are inbound personal property, 377-7813; outbound counselors, 377-7815; outbound documentation, 377-2326; non-temporary storage, 377-7810; quality assurance, 377-2969; passenger travel, 377-2600; N&N Travel, 432-5825; TMO officer and administrative staff, 377-7825.

Pets

Veterinary clinic — open 8 a.m. to noon Mondays-Fridays for over-the-counter sales. For appointments to have pets vaccinated or for sick pets, call 377-6883.

Self-help store

The self-help store is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday for facility managers, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for housing residents and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays. For more information, call 377-5397.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Once the MILCON project begins in June, these waterfront houses in Bay Ridge will be demolished and new homes will be built across the street.

MILCON project provides 1,067 base housing units

By Senior Airman Sarah Stegman

Keesler News staff writer

When Hurricane Katrina's wrath subsided, about half of military family housing units were damaged and uninhabitable.

Currently, 612 housing units are habitable.

"Keesler will receive funding to repair a sufficient number of damaged homes to bring the housing inventory up to 865 habitable homes," said Lt. Col. Ray Mottley, 81st Civil Engineer commander. "The remaining unsalvageable homes will be demolished because repairs are cost prohibitive."

Keesler homes are planned to be replaced by an estimated \$300 million military construction project that provides 1,067 homes.

In this plan, waterfront homes are rebuilt across the street, with a street reconfiguration in Bay Ridge housing area.

Other housing areas are also undergoing changes.

Thrower Park — North Thrower Park is being vacated in preparation for MILCON replacement. Salvageable South Thrower Park home will be repaired.

Northwest Falcon — homes are being vacated for MILCON replacement.

West Falcon — salvageable homes will be repaired.

Maltby Hall — will be vacated for MILCON replacement.

Bay Ridge — a portion will be vacated for MILCON replacement and salvageable homes will be repaired.

Shadowlawn — salvageable homes will be repaired.

Northwest Pinehaven — will be demolished to support the construction of the new commissary and base exchange complex.

Northeast Pinehaven — remains until MILCON home replacement is completed.

Harrison Court, Oak Park — both areas are being demolished.



Airman Evan Osbourne, 334th Training Squadron, takes photos of Santa Claus holding Sydney Penn, 10-week old daughter of Toni and Charlie Penn of St. Martin, at the Biloxi Community Center Dec. 19. While Airman Osbourne photographed children who visited Santa, other Keesler volunteers distributed Christmas gifts to victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Holiday helpers

Airmen 1st Class Lavonia Winford, left, and Jennifer Phillips, 334th TRS, help Djenaba Keyes select some Christmas gifts from toys donated for hurricane victims at the Biloxi Community Center Dec. 19. The 7-year-old is the daughter of Lawoynda Handford and Deltber Keyes of Biloxi.



Staff Sgt. Kristi Williams, left, a Salvation Army volunteer from the 81st Mission Support Squadron, and Airman Basic John Krebs, 336th TRS, load donated bicycles Dec. 20 at Gulfport Salvation Army headquarters for families who suffered hurricane losses.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



SPORTS AND RECREATION

Monday fun run, walk latest Dorm World event

By Staff Sgt. Lee Smith

Keesler news staff

Keesler hosted a fun run/walk Monday, one of several Dorm World 3 events the base will have in the coming weeks.

The base also hosted a bowling competition at Gaudin Lanes Dec. 20.

According to Renee Roberson, assistant director of Vandenberg Community Center, the program was late in getting started.

"The hurricane delayed things for us here," she said. "But the bowling event was a success nonetheless."

In the past, these competitions were held for single, permanent party residents to promote camaraderie, competition and fun while developing strategies to earn prizes for their respective dorms.

"The bowling, the fun run/walk, as well as future events, will not be an organized competition," Ms. Roberson said. "These events are strictly for fun."

Dorm World 3 is an Air Education and Training Command-funded event.

Upcoming events include dodge ball, 2 p.m. Jan. 20, and a dormitory party, 2 p.m. Feb. 9.

For more information, call Roberson, 377-3308; Bradley Belford, 377-1730 or Jessica Childs, 377-3958.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

From left, Tyree Randall, 81st Medical Support Squadron; Amy Rock, 81st MDSS; Heather Littleton, 81st Training Wing; Brittany Bell, 81st Supply Squadron; Kierra Luster, 81st Training Support Squadron; Lillian Rios, 81st Medical Operations Squadron; Heather Chase, 81st MDSS, and Michiyo Litynski, 81st MDSS, walk on the Crotwell Track

part of Monday's Dorm World 3 Fun Run/Walk. In the past, events were competitions between residents of the base dormitories. Competing members received points for their dorms, with the winner receiving a party at their residence. This year, the events are friendly competition with no scoring.

Base intramurals on hold; Triangle Fitness Center still closed indefinitely

By Staff Sgt. Lee Smith

Keesler News staff

Sports activities and facilities are still feeling the effects of Hurricane Katrina four months later, although plans are being made to bring back both in 2006.

In the absence of an intramural flag football season, athletics officials have been working on a pre-Super Bowl base flag football tournament for the end of this month.

This tournament, along with others planned for

later in the year, are being held due to the postponement of intramural sports indefinitely for the lack of a contract for officials.

Air Force Instruction 34-266 requires bases to have certified officials to properly call games. The hurricane produced a shortage of officials across the Mississippi Gulf Coast, thus athletics officials have received no bids for the contract.

Normally, intramural football would be over by now. With no officiating contract, there can also be no intramural basketball, soccer, volleyball or softball seasons.

In addition to the football tournament, similar events are being developed for soccer in February, basketball in March, volleyball in April, and softball in May, June and July.

Facility-wise, Blake Fitness Center is open, but the Triangle Fitness Center remains closed and the basketball court area in Dragon Fitness Center is off-limits until repairs can be made. A contractor is scheduled to repair the basketball court late this month or in early February.

Triathlons are lieutenant's passion

By Senior Airman
Nick Przybyciel

446th Airlift Wing Public Affairs
McCHORD Air Force Base, Wash. — Completing a 26-mile marathon, as opposed to just succeeding at the 1.5 mile Air Force fitness evaluation run, can be a lofty goal.

But not for Kristi Porter, a first lieutenant with the 446th Logistics Readiness Flight here.

For her, competing in marathons — like the Seattle Marathon she ran Nov. 27 — is just a way to stay in shape.

Since the winter is the off-season for triathlon competitions — where Porter's real passion lies — she stays fit by participating in other endurance events.

"I do marathons in the winter to stay in shape for triathlon season," said Porter, who has completed five marathons and about 30 triathlons.

She participated in the Florida Ironman Triathlon in 2004. Athletes had to complete a 2.4-mile open ocean swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26-mile run.

"I've always been into fitness, but never competitively," she said.

She ran her first marathon while in logistics school in 2003.

"I was just looking for ways to stay in shape and work on my running over the winter," Porter said. "Rather than just doing arbitrary workouts at the gym every day, I thought that giving myself a goal would help keep me on track — even when it was cold and dark and rainy outside.

"It's really easy to let stuff like that convince you to stay in bed," said the 32-year-old reservist.

Although it requires determination to compete in events like triathlons and marathons, Porter stresses that it shouldn't be the competition that drives people to enter the races.

"My take is to go there and make it enjoyable," she said. "You don't have to be serious and be so competitive. You



Photo by Capt. Drew Steadman
Porter participated in the Olympic district triathlon race here. Open water swimming is one of the three legs in the triathlon.

just have to go there and do it. That's your accomplishment."

Porter adopted this mindset before participating in her first triathlon. She and a friend camped out on the beach the night before the event, foregoing the usual "carb" loading most endurance athletes swear by. Their diet that night consisted of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches washed down with cheap beer, she said.

"I would look around at the people and many of them got so mad at not finishing first, and I thought it was just too bad," Porter said.

The 13-year Air Force veteran (including active-duty time in the enlisted and officer corps) understands that

although an Ironman or a marathon may not be in the cards for everyone, the point is getting — and staying — in shape."

It shouldn't just be something a person has to do for the Air Force, she said.

"It should be a part of your life because it's fun and because it's a goal you set and accomplish for yourself. No one can take that away from you, or take credit for any of your hard work. And, darn it, it makes you feel good," Porter said.

"Whether it's walking your dog for a half-hour a day, or riding your bike to work one day a week, or even climbing Mount Everest — whatever your goal is, stick to it.

"Make it realistic and

make it happen. And choose to enjoy it; life is all about choices," she said.

Porter's flair for fun is obvious to any spectator watching an event she competes in.

She's been known to wear dresses while on the bike leg of triathlons or sport a pink cowboy hat, like at this year's Danskin Seattle Women's Triathlon.

While Porter jogs between 20 and 30 miles per week, she hasn't had the opportunity to complete the long distance runs that are crucial for endurance training. This usually includes three 20-mile runs in the weeks leading up to the competition, she said.

"It normally takes between 12 and 16 weeks to train for a triathlon," she said.

While she didn't get much time for her own training in the past year, Porter has contributed significantly to help members of the 446th Airlift Wing remain "fit to fight."

Aside from teaching spin classes at the base health and wellness center, Porter encourages other Airmen to participate in endurance events. She began inspiring others when she started coaching in North Carolina, privately and through a fitness center.

Carla Pelster, a major with the 446th Operations Support Flight, planned and competed in her first half-marathon with Porter in May. Porter served as a source of motivation for her fellow reservists during the 13-mile event.

"She's just an inspirational person," Pelster said. "I spent six months training for the event and (I) think she decided she was going to enter it six weeks beforehand. She's a very motivated, very positive person."

Porter, who attends night school for massage therapy, plans to compete in the Grand Colombian's Iron-distance Triathlon in eastern Washington in September.

SCORES AND MORE

Fitness centers

Blake Fitness Center — 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Mondays-through 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 Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.; closed non-working Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The basketball court area isn't available.

Triangle Fitness Center — closed until further notice.

Football

Pre-Super Bowl flag football tournament — 5-9 p.m. Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at the football/soccer field. Single-elimination for the first 10 teams to register. For more information, call 377-4409.

Golf

The front nine holes of the Bay Breeze Golf Course open at 7 a.m., and free for walkers only, pull carts and golf clubs available. Driving range opens at 7 a.m. daily, for free use.

Outdoor recreation

Katrina Kantina — a lounge for adults age 21 and over is in the main marina building. Opens at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. For more information, call 377-3160.

Fam camp — available for mission-essential active-duty, civilian and contractors, and non-mission essential active-duty who've been displaced. For more information, call 594-0543.

Back bay pontoon boat tours — 9 a.m. to noon Jan. 28. \$5 per person. Minimum four, maximum eight people.

Children's wildlife poster contest — for all ages. Enter by Jan. 31. First prize \$100 savings bond, second prize \$50 bond.

January special — 10 percent off all rental equipment.

January fishing tournament — weigh in the largest catfish for the month and win a \$100 savings bond.

Youth center

Open recreation — Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., ages 6 and older.

Junior National Basketball Association youth basketball league registration — sign-up ends Saturday, ages 6-12. Practice in January, season runs February-March. \$25 for members, \$30 nonmembers.

DIGEST

HONORS

Student honor roll

332nd Training Squadron

Electronic principles — Airmen Basic Joseph Alcocer, Charles Allen, Joshua Armstrong, Brandy Baxter, Abigail Bjorkman, Jose Charlesworth, Timothy Clinkscales, Nicholas Conklin, Kristopher Dahlke, Christopher Davis, Joseph Davis, Kyle Dehart, Christopher Dipietro, Timothy Ely, Michael Ford, Luke Greiner, Daniel Hallimen, Robert Higham, Saul Houston, Alexia Hughes, Andrea Hunzeker, Kenziel James, Patrick Kinney, Troy Kurek, Jenno Mabellin, Christopher Mahieu, Michael Moulin, Ryan Nicholson, Timothy Ogburn, Donald Rainville, Jason Shelor, Jason Shortell, Sean Slay, Matthew Smither, Kurtis Stadsvold, Antonio Tirado, Jason Unovitch and Michael Willis; Airmen Bobby Brazwell, Aaron Broyles, Cory Elenbaas, Lee Fischer, Derek Gauldin, Elizabeth Healey, Stephen Liska, Tyler Martin, Francisco Martinez, Marie Ostro, Guillermo Salced and Christopher Stroup; Airmen 1st Class Jeremy Ames, Dennis Anderson, Justin Atkins, Michael BaBa, Eric Braun, Christopher Brewer, James Casson, Christopher Flesner, Scott Gray, David Henderson, Juan Johnson, Jonathan Kready, Nicholas Kynett, Kristopher Miller, Michael Morrow, Ferdinand Nacin, Ian Ouimet, Nile Pollock, Brian Schmedlin and Corey Shaffer; Senior Airmen Joshua Cadle, Scott Campbell, James Casson, Emre Dogru, Tashauna Gipson, Ian Handley, Nathan Hines, Robert Holcomb, Tom Kwiczor, Jack Lalone, Joel Lisec, Charlie Lorenzo-Rodriguez, Zane Nelson, Andrew Sauer, Ayron Solomakos and William Walker; Staff Sgts. Gerald Blatt, Kenneth Gardner and Joshua Kersker.

335th TRS

Weather training flight — Airmen Basic Beverly Bailey, Nathan Bezner, Christopher Dearborn, Houston Green, Dustin Hawthorne, Charles Henderson, Matthew Marlow, Philip Primmer and Cody Weakland; Navy Airmen Recruit Sarah Hebbeln and Larry West; Navy Airmen Apprentice Justin Brauch, Micaela Maurtua and Stella Swartz; Airmen 1st Class Nathan Bezner, Philip Carnathan and Sean Doyle; Navy Airman Heidy Cundiff; Navy Seaman Lindsay Moore; Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jesus Suarez; Marine Cpl. Eric Demeritt; Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Karen Aquino.

336th TRS

Communications-computer systems training flight — Airmen Basic Michael Logsdon, Steven Lybbert and Kenneth Nihart; Airmen 1st Class James Buchanan, Corey Legg, Andrew Reindl and Aaron Roberts; Staff Sgt. Jonathan Eastwood.

CHAPEL SERVICES

Roman Catholic

Sunday Mass

Larcher Chapel10 a.m.

Daily Mass

Larcher Chapel.....11:15 a.m.

Protestant

Sunday worship

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

Fishbowl student contemporary service.....10 a.m.

Larcher Chapel praise and worship service11:30 a.m.

Larcher Chapel gospel service.....1 p.m.

Islamic

Building 2003 — for international students, temporary duty and permanent party; 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, 3 p.m. Sundays, Fishbowl. Family home evenings, 7 p.m. Mondays, Fishbowl Student Center.

338th TRS

Computer, network, cryptographic systems course — Airmen Basic Matthew Bauman, Mark Harrison, Thomas Kimmel, Richard Scott and Preston Smith; Airmen Nicholas Hazen, Zachary Hitchcox, David Johnson, James Little, Kyle McNally, Katherine Mendez and Jeremy Simmons; Airmen 1st Class Edwin Aviles, James Byrd, David Decker, Edward Goeh, Diana Haggard, Daniel Howell, Keith Kuzniar, Dustin Lee, Shawn McMurray, Thomas Morgan, Shanna Pence, Michael Perkins, Nathan Swift, David Thompson and Joshua Williams; Senior Airman Kelly Finn; Staff Sgts. Dante Adams, Jason Bouchard and Darin Burtlett.

CLASSES

Airman Leadership School

Class 06-B — Jan. 23-March 1.

Class 06-C — April 3-May 9.

Class 06-D — May 22-June 27.

Class 06-E — Aug. 1-Sept. 6.

Class 06-F — Sept. 18-Oct. 25.

Class 06-G — Nov. 1-Dec. 12.

First Term Airmen Center

Classes resume Tuesday through Jan. 26.

Keesler NCO Academy

Upcoming schedule has not been announced.

Chapel

Journey to financial freedom — 6-9 p.m. Feb. 24, continuing 8:30-noon Feb. 25, Fishbowl Student Ministry Center. For more information, call Chaplain (Capt.) John VanderKaay, 377-2331.

Family support center

Editor's note: All briefings in Room 122, old Cody Hall, unless otherwise stated. To register or for more information, call 377-2179.

Thrift savings plan for the uniformed services briefing — 4 p.m. Tuesday and 1 p.m. Jan. 31.

Smooth move/traveling overseas — 9-11 a.m. Jan. 19.

Pre-separation counseling — Jan. 19 or 26; 1 p.m. for those separating; 2:30 p.m. for retirees. Bring a copy of orders.

Sponsor training — 9-10 a.m. Jan. 20.

Career assessment class — 9-11 a.m. Jan. 23.

Resume writing — 9-11:30 a.m. Jan. 24.

USAA Foundation financial management class — 1 p.m. Jan. 24. Call 377-2179 to reserve seat.

Successful job interviews — 9-11 a.m. Jan. 25.

Federal job applications — 9-11:30 a.m. Jan. 26.

Own your own business — 9-10:30 a.m. Jan. 31.

Students on the move — 3:30 p.m. Jan. 31, Briefing Room 3, Levitow Training Support Facility.

McBride Library

Orientations — 6:30 p.m. Thursdays for commanders, first sergeants and instructors.

Thank your customer day — Jan. 18. Stop by for punch and cookies.

Teddy bear tea party — 10 a.m. Jan. 18 and 25 for ages 2-5.

International creativity month — arts and crafts center and book displays throughout the month.

Orientations and tours — for more information, call 377-2181.

Arts and crafts center

Mold pouring — 10 a.m. Jan. 13. \$25.

Kids' crafting class — 11 a.m. Jan. 14. \$10. Snowman projects.

Mini-scrapbook making — 6:30 p.m. Jan. 19. \$10.

Beginning intarsia woodworking — 5 p.m. Jan. 20. \$15.

Advanced intarsia — 10 a.m. Jan. 21. \$20.

Advanced matting class — 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Jan. 27. \$25.

Beginning cake decorating — 1 p.m. Jan. 28. \$10.

Health and wellness center

Sensible weigh — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. today, Jan. 19 and 26. For

SHUTTLE BUS SCHEDULE

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

Minutes after hour	Bus stop
:00	:30
:01	:31
:02	:32
:04	:34
:07	:37
:08	:38
:09	:39
:10	:40
:11	:41
:12	:42
:13	:43
:14	:44
:15	:45
:16	:46
:17	:47
:18	:48

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 or have excess baggage, call 377-2432 for the base taxi. For more information, call 377-2430.

more information or to register, call 377-5305.

Tobacco cessation — noon and 5 p.m. Wednesday and Jan. 25. For more information or to register, call 377-5305.

Stress management class — 4 p.m. Jan. 24. For more information or to register, call 377-5305.

TRANSITIONS

Workshops, briefings

Veterans benefits briefing — 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. today, Feb. 16, March 16, April 6, May 11, June 15, July 13, Aug. 17, 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. Feb. 13-15, March 13-15, April 3-5, May 8-10, June 12-14, July 10-12, Aug. 14-16, 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.

Web sites

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>.

Please see **Digest**, Page 29

Digest,

from Page 28

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.

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

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.

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.

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

Karaoke — 6 p.m. Thursdays before nonworking Fridays.

Late night dance and DJ — 6 p.m. to midnight Fridays and Saturdays. \$3.

Youth center

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

Self-directed activities — 3-7 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays for ages 9-18. Free for members, 50 cents daily guest fee.

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

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 — 6 p.m. Wednesdays.

Torch Club — 5 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. \$4 members, \$5 nonmembers.

Super Saturdays — 2-5 p.m., ages 6-12; 6-10 p.m., ages 13-18.

Junior youth basketball league registration — sign up through Saturday; ages 6-12.

Read by mail program — 4:30 p.m. Jan. 19.

Boys and Girls Club fine arts competition — entry deadline today. Ages 9-18. For more information, call 377-4116.

Free home alone safety workshop — 6 p.m. Jan. 19 for ages 10 and older. Parent must accompany child.

TICKETS AND TOURS

Shopping tour to New Orleans — 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Jan. 21. \$15. Sign up and prepay by Wednesday.

New Orleans Iris and Tucks Mardi Gras parades — 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 25. \$15. Sign up and prepay no later than Feb. 16.

MEETINGS

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

At Eze Toastmasters Club — noon 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>.

Keesler Christian Home Educators Association — 7-9 p.m. second Tuesday of each month, September-May, Larcher Chapel. Open to all military home educators. For more information, call Michelle Durkin, 872-9393, or e-mail chelleIrn@yahoo.com.

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

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., Aeon Flux (PG-13).

Saturday — 2 p.m., Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (PG-13); 7 p.m., Saw II (R).

Sunday — 2 p.m., Just Friends (PG-13).

DINING HALL MENUS

Today

Lunch — orange-spiced pork chops, braised liver with onions, fried fish, rissole potatoes, rice, gravy, broccoli, peas and carrots, wax beans, fruit salad, potato salad, chicken and wild rice soup, chili buffalo wings and cream of broccoli soup.

Dinner — baked chicken, pepper steak, pasta primavera, mashed potatoes, rice, gravy, mixed vegetables, fried okra, green beans, potato salad, fruit salad, cream of broccoli soup, chicken and wild rice soup, chili, buffalo wings and roast beef subs.

Friday

Lunch — seafood newburg, bean and corn pie, roast turkey, cornbread, franconia potatoes, pea and pepper rice, corn on the cob, stewed tomatoes, mustard greens, pasta salad, three-bean salad, clam chowder, vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork and burritos.

Dinner — corned beef, cornbread, pineapple chicken, Yankee pot roast, potato wedges, simmered potatoes, gravy, fried cabbage, carrots, blackeyed peas, three-bean salad, clam chowder, garden vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork sandwich and burritos.

Saturday

Lunch — baked chicken, Swedish meatballs, creole shrimp, baked potatoes, rice, gravy, creamed corn, asparagus, steamed squash, fruit salad, kidney bean salad, country bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and chicken nuggets.

Dinner — baked fish, Hungarian goulash, barbecue chicken, potatoes, rice, gravy, stir-fry vegetables, baked beans, creamed corn, fruit salad, kidney bean salad, country bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and chicken nuggets.

Sunday

Lunch — loin strip steak, baked chicken, baked ham, gravy, rice pilaf, baked potato, black-eyed peas, collard greens, corn on the cob, summer squash, fruit cocktail salad, candies, shrimp cocktail, split pea with ham soup, fruit salad, potato salad and cheese pizza.

Dinner — stir-fry beef with broccoli, turkey nuggets, loin strip steak, mushroom and onion sauce, baked potatoes, rice pilaf, gravy, corn on the cob, green beans, jellied spring salad, tomato salad, vegetable beef soup, Italian wedding soup, frontier chicken chili and cheese pizza.

Monday

Lunch — fried catfish, barbecue ribs, fried chicken, baked ham, baked fish, macaroni and cheese, rice, gravy, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, fried okra, corn fritters, mustard greens, black-eyed peas, cornbread, chicken gumbo and steak and cheese subs.

Dinner — chili macaroni, cornbread, beef canelloni, fried chicken, cottage fries, mashed potatoes, gravy, steamed squash, glazed carrots, peas, cottage cheese salad, macaroni salad, chicken dumpling soup, minestrone soup, chili with beans, grilled sausage and steak and cheese subs.

Tuesday

Lunch — teriyaki chicken, veal parmesan, salmon cakes, garlic toast, filipino rice, parsley buttered potatoes, gravy, fried cabbage, succotash, mixed vegetables, fruit cocktail salad, spinach salad, bean with ham soup, chicken noodle soup, white chicken chili, barbecue beef sloppy joes and roast beef subs.

Dinner — country captain chicken, meatloaf, turkey a la king, rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, garlic toast, harvard beets, mustard greens, okra tomato gumbo, fruit cocktail salad, spinach salad, bean with ham soup, chicken noodle soup, white chicken chili, barbeque beef sloppy joes and roast beef subs.

Wednesday

Lunch — lasagna, garlic toast, 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 — lemon-herb chicken, barbecue ribs, jalapeno cornbread, stuffed pork chops, scalloped potatoes, rice, gravy, cauliflower combo, Mexican corn, tempura vegetables, Mexican coleslaw, frijole salad, pasta fagioli soup, chicken tortilla soup, vegetarian chili, cheese fishwich and Monte Cristo sandwich.