



KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train to Fight. Train to Win.

DEC. 2, 2010 VOL. 71 NO. 47



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It's time for us to lose the training wheels

By Col. Scott Brewer

386th Expeditionary Operations Group commander

SOUTHWEST ASIA — I first taught my daughter to ride a bicycle using training wheels. The added support gave her the confidence to take off like a daredevil. She was content for awhile, until she realized her training wheels were holding her back. It was time to ride like her big brother — without training wheels.

Over the next few days we tried, but didn't make progress. She just couldn't balance on her own.

I struggled to figure out why, and then it hit me. I was getting in the way. My fear of her falling kept me so close that as soon as she began to tip I'd steady her. I had become her training wheels, and if she was going to learn I'd have to let her go, both figuratively and literally.

We both had to find balance. How should I support and guide her without causing unnecessary injury? Should I catch her before she skinned her knee and possibly give up, or was she just leaning and could recover? A tricky dilemma that

meant I had to time my engagement just right.

That problem — determining when and how to engage — is the central challenge we face as leaders. It's the sweet spot between balancing the success of our mission with the risk of failure so young leaders can learn how to spot mistakes early and correct them.

While it's quite natural to try to avoid failure, doing so can limit one's opportunity to learn. Just like learning to ride a bike, no one starts off as an expert. It takes trial and error to learn to get your balance. When you step out of your comfort zone to do something new and fall short you are rewarded with feedback. It's this process of making decisions, and living with the consequences, that enables our Airmen to grow and improve.

So what should you do when someone doesn't meet your expectations? Ask what they were thinking and then have them reengage? Identify their good ideas and interject only what is needed to strengthen their ability to handle the project? Make it a collaborative effort and do it with them? Take it and do it yourself? There's a wide

range of options, so how do you choose?

One way is to ask what tools need to be added to this individual's problem-solving toolbox so they can recover themselves. Are they falling or simply leaning? What will help them regain their balance so this can be an effective learning experience and build their confidence?

Finally, be sure to reflect on your own actions. Are you getting in the way and limiting others' ability to develop and grow?

I made all kinds of excuses when I started teaching my daughter to ride without training wheels, like "she's too young," or "I'm pushing her too hard." I couldn't resist my instinct to come to her rescue. I needed the courage and poise to let her lean closer to the ground so she had the opportunity to catch herself.

As soon as I changed my approach I created a learning opportunity to help her gain self-reliance, freeing her to learn to balance herself. Within days she mastered her bike and gained the confidence to explore the neighborhood without being limited by her — or my — training wheels.

View of followership from NCO's perspective

By Staff Sgt. Brandon Harris

335th Training Squadron

Isn't it hard to be a follower? Every day we go about our business and we question other people and their actions. Why do we do this? Shouldn't we be more concerned with ourselves and doing what is right? To be a follower is to go along with someone else's ideas and actions. Sure, there's always the time to make a statement or question a decision, but shouldn't we sometimes just shut up and color?

Being a follower is one of the toughest and yet most rewarding experiences in our lives. When you follow someone, you have to learn to trust them and put your faith in their decisions. As Americans and humans we like to be in control. We don't want others to dictate what we do. The truth is when we learn to be good followers; we learn to be good leaders. Trusting in something or someone and doing as you are told is not always a bad thing.

People are placed in leadership positions for a reason. Followers should not question that position as long as nothing illegal is suspected. In the military, we all have someone

who outranks us. We may feel these individuals do not deserve to outrank us; however, this not our call, nor our decision. The decision is whether or not to make the best of the situation or to be a "complainer." By putting our game face on and not questioning the decision that's been made, we're setting an example to others. If the decision turns out to be a bad one, then take the opportunity to teach those less ranking what should have been done differently. Also, take the time to explain that you didn't question the decision because it was not your place to do so.

Followership is possibly the toughest part of becoming a leader. Sure, it's easy to question authority, but what kind of credibility does that give you with those that are going to be following your leadership? Is there ever going to be another perfect leader? No! Each one of us at all ranks is still learning and making mistakes. So pick up your bat and ball and follow the leader that's been appointed to you. By doing so, you're enhancing yourself and everyone who follows you in their leadership abilities. It takes fewer muscles to smile than to frown. It also takes less character to complain than to follow!



Congratulations, Team Keesler,
for pledging
\$182,513.29
during this year's CFC.
That's nearly 135 percent
of the base's
2010 goal of \$135,542!

ON THE COVER

From left, Staff Sgt. Lamar Gardner, 334th Training Squadron; Airman Basic Colby Cox, 336th TRS; Staff Sgt. Jennifer Hamilton, 81st Training Group; Airman Basic Bryar Cole, 336th TRS; Tech. Sgt. Julie Hammond, 81st TRG; Airman 1st Class Shawn Scott, 334th TRS; Tech. Sgt. Terrance Boyd, 336th TRS; Airman 1st Class Megan Lima, 338th TRS; and Tech. Sgt. Steven Clinton, 81st TRG, are among the Team Keesler members affected by 2nd Air Force's new phase program. Sergeants Gardner, Hamilton, Hammond, Boyd and Clinton are military training leaders and Airmen Cox, Cole, Scott and Lima are students. Story and photo, Page 4.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

KEESLER NEWS

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DRAGONS ON THE STREET

By Adam Bond

Keesler News photographer

What do you want Santa Claus to bring you for Christmas?



"A pink Barbie car."
Kacey Martin, 5, daughter of Staff Sgt. Charles and Catherine Martin, 85th Engineering Installation Squadron.



"An X-Box 360 Kinect."
Kenny Lasker, 9, son of Tech. Sgt. Erin Lasker, 335th Training Squadron



"A Babysitting Mama game for our Wii."
Kylie Limrick, 8, daughter of Staff Sgt. Kimberly Moore, 81st Training Wing Public Affairs

Air Force implements new transition program

By Staff Sgt.
Kimberly Moore

Keesler Public Affairs

The Air Force's new technical training transition program was implemented Nov. 15, after test periods at Keesler and Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.

"Over the past 18 years, the enlisted phase program had transformed into a bloated management tool used to control and manage Airmen," said Chief Master Sgt. Edward Bradley, 2nd Air Force's military training chief, in explaining why the change was necessary.

In an effort to create a more descriptive way to explain the duties of their position, military training leaders have gone through a few title changes, from student training advisor to military training managers to MTLs.

"Unfortunately, the management philosophy did not change with the titles, so a new transition program was developed," the chief said.

The new transition program will better help Airmen ease into the Air Force lifestyle. A few noticeable differences between the old program and the new are the number of phases, phase backs, MTL workload, physical training testing and tobacco use.

"Previously, in the three-phase system, if an Airman met all requirements, Phase II was granted on Day 15 and Phase III was granted on Day 36," Chief Bradley explained. "The new two-phase transition program uses an initial transition period and an advanced transition period that employs a core values approach to adapt Airmen to the military lifestyle.

"During the ITP, the goals are to indoctrinate technical training lifestyle, set the standard and define expectations," he continued. "Airmen must meet requirements such as excelling in performance in dormitory and dress and appearance inspections, display

knowledge of the unit mission and core values and exhibit academic excellence prior to transitions into the ATP.

"During the ATP, MTLs will continuously monitor and mentor focusing on the whole Airman," he pointed out. "They will inspire Airmen's behavior through their own actions and rehabilitate Airmen when required, providing appropriate counseling. The new program allows MTLs to act as leaders rather than just managers, to get away from their desk to provide more supervision and utilize their personal and military experiences while mentoring."

Once Airmen reach the ATP, they'll remain there. Gone are the fears of phase backs, in which a student would be reassigned to a previously completed phase and have to re-accomplish requirements to "phase up."

"Phase backs will no longer be in place," Chief Bradley said. "Rather, those identified would undergo a remedial transition period which will run parallel with their current ITP or ATP. The specifically identified behavior will be focused on and corrected. MTLs will work in conjunction with squadron senior leadership to tailor corrective measures."

The remedial transition period, a temporary measure tailored to raise performance to meet standards, should last no more than 15 calendar days. A flight chief may extend the RTP another 15 days, not to exceed 30 consecutive days. Subsequent RTPs may be applied whenever performance falls below standards.

Workloads of MTLs will also change. To allow MTLs to better interact and lead, a unit may have to instill three shifts; days, swings and mids. Additionally, with academic success as a requirement to advance into ATP, MTLs will have to work closely with the Airmen's academic instructors. "Previously, there was little to no interaction between



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Students in the 336th Training Squadron march toward the Triangle after classes with their military training leader, Tech. Sgt. Terrance Boyd. A new technical training management system was implemented by 2nd Air Force Nov. 15.

the two," Chief Bradley said.

"Through the old phase system, Airmen took physical training tests to 'phase-up' and prior to departing for their first duty station," he noted. "In the new transition program, Airmen will take monthly PT appraisals and PT three days per week."

Another noticeable change from the phase system to the transition program is the smoking policy. Under the old phase program, students weren't allowed to smoke on base.

"Not allowing students to smoke presented a huge obstacle with our local communities," according to Chief Bradley. "Unfortunately, Airmen were smoking right outside the gates or in front of

people's residences. They were also smoking in the woods and dormitories, creating a fire hazard. With the new program, students can use tobacco in designated tobacco use areas within their training area during non-academic hours and while not in uniform."

Students smoking, PT standards, phases and MTL workloads are just a few areas undergoing changes with the new transition program, and tweaks are expected to be made.

"This is the way we're going to do business," the chief said. "Are there things that'll have to be tweaked? Yes. However, we need to implement and give the program a chance."

"While in tech training,

Airmen will employ the skills taught in basic military training," Chief Bradley stated. "Furthermore, they have a responsibility to continue to learn and adapt to the military profession while conforming to military standards and customs and courtesies, all in a manner commensurate with the Air Force core values."

"On the surface, the students will love the new program because they see privileges granted at an earlier stage," he added. "However, upon completion of technical training, they will have experienced an MTL who has actually mentored and led them. It should be a positive, long-lasting impression on their careers."

Air Force delivers 1,700 paratroopers in exercise

By Lance Bacon

reprinted from *Air Force Times*

FORT POLK, La. — The Air Force has pulled off the largest paratrooper airdrop in more than a decade — and the largest ever here.

Twenty-nine aircraft from five bases delivered 1,700 paratroopers in about 2½ hours the night of Oct. 18.

“There is nothing more natural in the C-130 community than dropping the 82nd Airborne,” said Col. Michael Minihan, commander of the 19th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark. “This training opportunity is realistic, difficult and essential to honing joint combat power.”

While the jump made history, it also allowed the Army to take its first steps into “full spectrum operations,” which will be the centerpiece of future combat operations.

The subsequent training scenario had the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, land in a fic-

titious nation threatened by conventional forces and freedom fighters. Most of the paratroopers have done multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the infrastructure is well in place and the task is clear. This time, they hit a hostile landing zone in a harsh environment. There were no established supply lines, communication sites or operating bases.

There were, however, 156 Airmen specially trained and equipped to establish airfield operations in remote areas — and to do so within 12 hours of notification.

Their units — the 615th Contingency Response Wing at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., and the 621st Contingency Response Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. — are hot commodities. The 615th has supported more than a dozen major exercises and pulled tours in Afghanistan and Haiti this year alone, said wing spokesman Capt. Paradon Silpasornprasit.

Keesler plays role in exercise

403rd Wing Public Affairs

The 815th and 345th Airlift Squadrons from Keesler sent three C-130Js and 19 crew members, including pilots, crew chiefs, maintainers and loadmasters to participate in the paratrooper airdrop exercise.

The Keesler participants flew in a mass formation of 11 J-model aircraft. A separate formation of E- and H-model aircraft flew at the same time.

Here, the airmen were the lifeline that kept the beans, bullets and Band-Aids flowing as the nine-day Noble Gladiator exercise intensified. And throughout, these airmen were turning and burning. A combat

controller brought in three aircraft every two hours, on average, and engine-running offloads took only five to seven minutes. The team moved about 76 tons and 150 passengers on the first day alone, according to Tech. Sgt. Lee Fletcher, who came from McGuire and was overseeing aerial port operations.

By contrast, Fletcher’s team handled 1.2 million pounds and 1,500 passengers on an average day in Haiti not long ago. This Fort Polk operation, though, was chock-full of night ops and enemy fire, which makes every landing unique and challenging.

“We’re used to going into austere environments, putting up tents and living off of MREs,” said Maj. Charles Gilliam, ops officer of the contingency response element out of McGuire. “But hearing the mortar fire just outside — it certainly puts a new perspective on these operations. And this really prepares the young airmen for any scenario they may face.”

The Air Force contribution on the ground and in the air was not lost on Army Brig. Gen. James Yarbrough, commander of the Joint Readiness Training Center. He described the Air Force involvement as “off the charts.” Beyond the massive coordination required for the airdrop, Yarbrough was pleased to have close-air support assets providing 20 sorties a day for eight straight days — something he has not seen in more than two years in this command.

“My compliments to all our blue-suit brothers,” he said. “We couldn’t do this alone.”

Col. David Chandler, 570th Contingency Response Group commander, echoed the sentiment.

“The Army and Air Force were in lockstep on this one,” he said. “As Brigadier General Yarbrough stated, airborne troopers and airlifters are from the same tribe, knuckle-dragging workers who get it done.”

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Dietitian selected to attend medical school

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group

First Lt. Justin Hyde, a dietitian with the 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron nutritional medicine flight, has been selected to attend the University of Mississippi's School of Medicine in Jackson starting in August.

He was accepted to the program after applying online in July using the American Medical College Application Service® website. AMCAS is a non-profit, centralized application processing service only available to applicants to the first-year entering classes at participating U.S. medical schools.

"I started preparing to apply in 2009

while I was deployed to Balad (Air Base, Iraq from July 2009-January 2010) and took the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test)," he said.

The lieutenant earned a bachelor of science degree with majors in biology, physiology and nutrition from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, in 2007, while an enlisted member of the Minnesota Air National Guard. He received a direct active-duty commission in May 2007. He arrived at Keesler in June 2008 following completion of a one-year dietetic internship at Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Lieutenant Hyde hopes to specialize in emergency medicine after completing

medical school and residency.

He plans to join the Air Force Reserves as a dietitian to maintain his association with the Air Force, performing his reserve duties while attending school.

The lieutenant is both excited and relieved with his acceptance.

"I'm excited to start school and relieved the selection process is over," he said. "It was a long and difficult effort to prepare for school. This is a major commitment of time and energy but all part of the process of lifelong learning."

Lieutenant Hyde calls the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., area home. He and his wife Mari-Laure, who currently reside in Ocean Springs, plan to eventually return there.



Lieutenant Hyde

www.jetairmen.af.mil
New website with information about the
Joint Expeditionary Tasking and the Individual Augmentee programs

TRAINING, EDUCATION NOTES

Parking lot closed

The Mathies NCO Academy parking lot is closed 7-10:45 a.m. Dec. 7 for drill evaluations.

ROTC at USA

The University of South Alabama offers a four-year ROTC program for qualified students wishing to pursue an Air Force commission.

The campus is 60 miles from Keesler and offers Alabama in-state tuition rates to residents of George, Greene, Harrison, Jackson, Perry and Stone Counties in Mississippi.

For more information, call 1-251-460-7211 or e-mail robertpatt@usouthal.edu.

OTS boards

The Officer Training School recruiting services board schedule is:

11OT01 — rated board; application cutoff is today; Dec. 2; board date Jan. 24-28, estimated release date Feb. 25.

11OT02 — nonrated board; application cutoff Feb. 24; board date April 11-15; estimated release date June 2.

11OT03 — rated as needed; application cutoff June 23, board date Aug. 8-12; estimated release date Sept. 9, 2011.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell

DOD leaders endorse working group report

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Tuesday, Defense Secretary Robert Gates urged the Senate to repeal the so-called “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law this year.

Secretary Gates and Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke at a Pentagon news conference unveiling the recommendations of the working group tasked with looking at the issues associated with implementing a repeal of the law that bans gays from serving openly in the military.

Secretary Gates said any change causes short-term disruptions, but that the military can handle longer-term impacts. He added that he’s recommending repeal of the law after fully studying the potential impact on military readiness, including the impact on unit cohesion, recruiting and retention, and other issues critical to the performance of the force.

“In my view, getting this category right is the most important thing we must do,” the secretary said. “The U.S. armed forces are in the middle of two major military overseas campaigns — a complex and difficult drawdown in Iraq, a war in Afghanistan — both of which are putting extraordinary stress on those serving on the ground and their families. It is the well-being of these brave young Americans, those doing the fighting and the dying since 9/11, that has guided every decision I have made in the Pentagon since taking this post nearly four years ago. It will be no different on this issue.

“I am determined to see that if the law is repealed,” he continued, “the changes are implemented in such a way as to minimize any negative impact on the morale, cohesion and effectiveness of combat units that are deployed, or about to deploy to the front lines.”

Secretary Gates acknowledged concerns from troops in combat units raised in a survey on the potential impact changing the law, but added that he believes they can be overcome if a repeal is handled properly.

“In my view, the concerns of combat troops as expressed in the survey do not present an insurmountable barrier to successful repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” the secretary said. “This can be done and should be done without posing a serious risk to military readiness. However, these findings do lead me to conclude that an abundance of care and preparation is required if we are to avoid a disruptive and potentially dangerous impact on the performance of those serving at the tip of the spear in America’s wars.”

The working group, co-chaired by Army Gen. Carter Ham, commander of U.S. Army

Europe, and Defense Department General Counsel Jeh Johnson, took nearly 10 months to research and analyze data in drawing its conclusions. The mission was to determine how best to prepare for such a change should the Congress change the law.

Secretary Gates said he wanted the group to engage servicemembers and their families on the issue — not to give service members a vote, but to get an idea how best to implement the changes.

“I believe that we had to learn the attitudes, obstacles and concerns that would need to be addressed should the law be changed,” he said. “We could do this only by reaching out and listening to our men and women in uniform and their families.

The survey results found more than two-thirds of the force don’t object to gays and lesbians serving openly in uniform.

“The findings suggest that for large segments of the military, repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’ though potentially disruptive in the short term, would not be the wrenching, traumatic change that many have feared and predicted,” the secretary said.

But the data also show that service members in combat arms specialties — mostly in the Army and Marine Corps, but also in the special operations from the Navy and Air Force — have a higher level of discomfort and resistance to changing the current policy, Gates said.

“Those findings and the potential implications for America’s fighting forces remain a source of concern to the service chiefs and to me,” he said.

The working group also examined thoroughly all the potential changes to the department’s regulations and policies dealing with matters such as benefits, housing, relationships within the ranks, separations and discharges. The report says that the majority of concerns often raised in association with the repeal — dealing with sexual conduct, fraternization, billeting arrangements, marital or survivor benefits — could be governed by existing laws and regulations.

“Existing policies can and should be applied equally to homosexuals as well as heterosexuals,” Secretary Gates said. “While a repeal would require some changes to regulations, the key to success, as with most things military, is training, education, and, above all, strong and principled leadership up and down the chain of command.”

The secretary called on the Senate to pass legislation the House of Representatives passed earlier this year, which calls for the president, defense secretary and chairman of

IN THE NEWS

Ploesti Drive closes for repairs

81st Infrastructure Division

Ploesti Drive from the Pass Road Gate to just west of Triangle Chapel is closed for repair of a gas leak near the intersection of Ploesti and Hercules Street.

Hercules Street is closed south of Falcon Street to Ploesti. The work should be completed by Dec. 13.

Saturday is Christmas on the Water

The Keesler Dolphin participates in Biloxi’s 25th annual Christmas on the Water boat parade, 5:45 p.m. Saturday.

About 75 lighted and decorated vessels are expected to participate. Recommended viewing areas are along U.S. Highway 90 from the Biloxi Lighthouse to the Isle Casino.

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, 81st Training Wing commander, and his wife, Keri, are among the parade judges.

Mississippi Bowl is Sunday

The 2010 Mississippi Bowl, the national bowl for community and junior college football teams, is 2 p.m. Sunday at the Biloxi High School Stadium.

The game features No. 3 Grand Rapids Community College of Michigan and No. 7 Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College

Military members receive free admission if in uniform or by showing an active-duty or retired military identification card.

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, 81st Training Wing commander, and other base leaders will attend. Other Keesler participants include 81st Training Group students, drum and bugle corps, 50-flag team, squadron mascots, wounded warriors and families of deployed members will be on hand.

Segment of Larcher closes Dec. 13

Northbound traffic on Larcher Boulevard between C Street and the exchange pharmacy’s drive-through entrance is rerouted from Dec. 13 through Jan. 13.

Northbound traffic on Larcher will be redirected either to go west on C Street and north on Third Street or east on C Street and north on Commissary Road.

All entrances to the commissary and exchange remain open. Southbound traffic on Larcher is not affected.

Clinics close for warrior training

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group conducts warrior training, noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 9.

Staffing is reduced in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics general surgery, pharmacy, radiology and laboratory services. For urgent situations, call central appointments at 1-800-700-8603 or report to the emergency room.

For emergency situations such as shortness of breath, chest or abdominal pain or bleeding with pregnancy, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 for an ambulance.



Prisoner of war tells her story

Army Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Rhonda Cornum, director of comprehensive soldier fitness in the Army G-3/5/7 and wife of 81st Medical Group Commander Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Kory Cornum, stands in front of a photo showing the remains of the Blackhawk helicopter she was aboard when it was shot down. The general addressed 81st MDG "Dragon Medics" and several senior 81st Training Wing staff members Nov. 17 in the hospital's Don Wylie Auditorium. She spoke about her experience as a prisoner of war in Iraq at the end of the Persian Gulf conflict. General Cornum was assigned as the flight surgeon to the 2/229 Attack Helicopter Battalion. During the last week of February 1991, her helicopter was shot down while performing a search and rescue mission for a downed Air Force F-16 pilot. Five of the eight-person crew were killed. The three survivors, including General Cornum, were captured by Iraqi forces. She was repatriated on March 6, 1991. She wrote a memoir about the conflict and her eight days in captivity. "She Went to War: The Rhonda Cornum Story," was published in 1992.

Photo by Steve Pivnick

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Don't Ask, Don't Tell

from Page 8

the Joint Chiefs of Staff to certify that the military can handle repeal without a lessening of combat effectiveness before a repeal takes effect.

"What is needed is a process that allows for a well-prepared and well-considered implementation – above all, a process that carries the imprimatur of the elected representatives of the people of the United States," he said. "Given the present circumstances, those that choose not to act legislatively are rolling the dice that this policy will not be abruptly overturned by the courts."

The working group's plan, with a strong emphasis on education, training and leader development, provides a solid road map for a successful full implementation of repeal, assuming that the military is given sufficient

time and preparation to get the job done right, the secretary said.

"The working group surveyed our troops and their spouses, consulted proponents and opponents of repeal and examined military experience around the world," Admiral Mullen said. "They also spoke with serving gays and lesbians."

The chairman called the working group's recommendations "solid, defensible conclusions."

Admiral Mullen said he was gratified that the working group focused their findings and recommendations "rightly on those who would be most affected by a change in the law: our people."

The chairman recommended repeal of the law during testimony before Congress in February, and he called for research into how best to do this. "For the first time, the [service] chiefs and I have more than just anecdotal evidence and hearsay to inform the advice we give our civilian leaders," he said.

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

DOD condemns leaks, outlines prevention efforts

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Government officials condemned the publication of hundreds of thousands of sensitive, classified State Department cables by WikiLeaks Sunday.

The website published the documents that detail private U.S. diplomatic discussions with foreign governments. The cables are candid reports by diplomats, and seen by themselves, can give an incomplete picture of the relationship between the U.S. and the foreign governments, White House officials said. The cables are not

expressions of policy, nor do they always shape final policy decisions, officials said.

“Nevertheless, these cables could compromise private discussions with foreign governments and opposition leaders, and when the substance of private conversations is printed on the front pages of newspapers across the world, it can deeply impact not only U.S. foreign policy interests, but those of our allies and friends around the world,” said White House spokesman Robert Gibbs. “To be clear, such disclosures put at risk our diplomats, intelligence professionals, and people around the world who come to

the United States for assistance in promoting democracy and open government.

“This reckless and dangerous action runs counter to that goal,” Mr. Gibbs said. “By releasing stolen and classified documents, WikiLeaks has put at risk not only the cause of human rights but also the lives and work of these individuals. We condemn in the strongest terms the unauthorized disclosure of classified documents and sensitive national security information.”

Sunday’s posting is the third WikiLeaks publication of sensitive U.S. documents. The last publication included military and intelligence reports from Afghanistan, and another contained similar documents from Iraq. Journalists in the U.S. and Europe received and reviewed the documents from WikiLeaks and have written stories on their content.

Pentagon officials have put in place methods to minimize such thefts of classified materials.

“It is now much more difficult for a determined actor to get access to and move information outside of authorized channels,” said Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman, following publication of news articles on the documents.

The theft of the materials traces to the lack of sharing of

information and intelligence prior to and after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, officials said. The commission studying the environment at the time found that agencies weren’t sharing enough information with each other.

While stopping short of saying better sharing could have prevented the attacks, the 9/11 Commission pointed this out as a weakness that needed to be closed.

Federal officials responded by working to push out more information and intelligence in an effort to strike a balance between the “need to know” and the need to “share to win.”

“Departments and agencies have taken significant steps to reduce those obstacles, and the work that has been done to date has resulted in considerable improvement in information-sharing and increased cooperation across government operations,” Mr. Whitman said.

The effort backfired by making it easier for individuals or groups inside the process to steal the information. DOD officials said they responded by putting in place policies to prevent such occurrences, while still giving information and intelligence to the people who need it most: those confronting the realities of terrorism.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates ordered two reviews of information and intelligence sharing in August. The reviews called on DOD systems to disable all “write” capability for removable media on classified computers to mitigate the risks of personnel moving classified data to unclassified systems, Mr. Whitman said. The reviews also direct DOD organizations to have a limited number of systems authorized to move data from classified to unclassified systems, he said.

Officials within DOD organizations are also implementing two-person handling rules for moving data from classified to unclassified systems to ensure proper oversight and reduce chances of unauthorized release of classified material, Mr. Whitman said.

DOD officials are also taking a page from credit card companies which monitor patterns and detect suspicious or anomalous behavior. Some 60 percent of DOD’s classified net is now using a host-based security system — an automated way of controlling the computer system with a capability of monitoring unusual data access or usage. Department officials are speeding deployment to the rest of the classified system, Mr. Whitman said.

PERSONNEL NOTES

Health insurance open season

The open season for health benefits runs through Dec. 13. During this period, employees can enroll or change your plans in the Employee Benefits Information System by logging on to <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil> or calling 1-800-525-0102.

For more information, visit Room 214, Sablich Center, or call 376-8326.

Classes for job hunters

Job hunters can improve their chances for success with several upcoming classes at the airman and family readiness center.

Classes are held in the center’s conference room in Sablich Center. There’s a limit of 10 per class, and registration is required.

Interview skills and salary negotiation — 9 a.m. Jan. 20 or Feb. 24.

Federal format resume writing — 2 p.m. Wednesday and 9 a.m. Jan. 19 and Feb. 2.

Civilian format resume writing — 2 p.m. today and Dec. 16; 9 a.m. Jan. 25.

Career skills assessment — 9 a.m. Jan. 26, Feb. 10, or March 10. This class is particularly valuable for upcoming high school graduates or those entering college.

For more information, call 376-8728.

Transition assistance briefings

The airman and family readiness center has a number of upcoming programs for members planning to separate or retire.

Mandatory pre-separation briefings — 1 p.m. Tuesdays for those separating with honorable discharges and 2:30 p.m. for retirees; Room 110, Sablich Center. Bring one copy of separation or retirement orders. This appointment is required by law, and must be accomplished 90 calendar days before the separation or retirement date. For short-notice separations or retirements, the briefing should be done as soon as possible.

Transition assistance program workshop — 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Dec 13-15, Room 108A, Sablich Center. Dress is business casual; no jeans, T-shirts or uniforms.

Veterans benefits briefing — 8-11 a.m. Dec. 16, Room 108A, Sablich Center.

Retirement briefings — intended for those with less than a year until retirement, 1-3:30 p.m. Dec. 16, Room 108A, Sablich Center.

To pre-register or for more information, call 376-8728.



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81st Force Support Squadron

Jamey Simmons, 81st Force Support Squadron, is retiring this month with more than 37 years of federal service at Keesler.

Mrs. Simmons, chief of student assignments in the military personnel section, manages permanent change of station assignment processing for more than 6,000 nonprior service students annually.

A Biloxi native, Mrs. Simmons was hired into civil service after her graduation in 1973 from Sacred Heart Girls High School in Biloxi.

Her first position was a clerk-typist at the School of Applied Aerospace Sciences. Later that same year, Mrs. Simmons moved to the consolidated base personnel office within the 3380th Air Base Group as a suspense control technician.

In 1974, Mrs. Simmons moved to manning control, and 1980 transferred to CBPO



Mrs. Simmons

administration.

Ten years later, Mrs. Simmons said she found her calling by moving to permanent party. In 1995, she was promoted and became the assignment lead, trainer and passport agent. She assumed her current position in 1998.

"I've seen our unit's designation change five times — from 3380th Air Base Group

to 3380th Mission Support Squadron to 393th Mission Support Squadron to 81st Mission Support Squadron and finally to the current 81st Force Support Squadron," she pointed out.

During her career, she earned two quality step increases and won numerous quarterly and annual awards, including the 81st Training Wing's outstanding civilian of the year for 1999 and 2008.

Mrs. Simmons and her husband, Henry, have been married since 1973 and have three children and five grandchildren.

She's a lifetime member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in d'Iberville where she serves as scripture reader, commentator, eucharist minister and a member of the parish's school advisory committee. She's involved in the Hearts from Home campaign, Airman's Attic and area shelters and youth programs.

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Keesler controller ensures safe air traffic flow

By Staff Sgt. Tim Jenkins

379th Air Expeditionary Wing

Editor's note: Air Force air traffic controllers are trained at Keesler in the 334th Training Squadron.

SOUTHWEST ASIA — Poorly-planned transportation systems can cause significant delays that are evident from the millions of Americans facing deadlocked traffic on daily commutes. But there's no room for traffic delays when the vehicles include several facets of American air power.

The 379th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron air traffic controllers are on hand here 24/7, avoiding jams by directing the constant ebb and flow of aircraft traffic at the most diverse and active hub in the area of responsibility.

The air traffic control tower is manned all day, every day. Several positions within the tower maintain several specific responsibilities: the local controller, ground controller and watch supervisor. A fourth



Photo by Senior Airman Katie Gieratz
Staff Sgt. Tyrone Edwards, deployed from the 81st Operations Support Flight, documents arrival and departure times on a flight progress strip Oct. 18 at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia.

position, supervisor of flying, works directly for the operations group commander, serving as the eyes and ears for a pilot who may be experienc-

ing difficulty.

Together, the team maintains the installation's five-mile airspace, safely directing aircraft on the ground and air.

The installation runs more than 5,000 operations monthly, meaning an aircraft takes off, lands or moves roughly every 10 minutes. With such a high operations tempo, it's crucial each member of the air traffic control team fills his or her role, making sure air tasking orders take flight without a hitch.

Keeping traffic flowing on the ground, the ground controller directs traffic by talking to vehicles and aircraft moving from parking spots to the runway, and vice versa.

“(The ground controller) helps the aircraft get to the runway and back to their parking spot,” said Senior Master Sgt. Tad Cahow, the 379th EOSS control tower chief controller. “Once he gets them to the runway, control is handed to the local controller.”

The local controller clears the aircraft to take off and land, maintaining the separation between aircraft to ensure they land and take off safely.

Timing is critical in

orchestrating aircraft movements, said Staff Sgt. Tyrone Edwards, a 379th EOSS air traffic controller deployed from Keesler's 81st Operations Support Flight.

“One has to be off the runway before one can land,” he said. “You kind of anticipate separation to make sure one will be off the runway by the time the incoming one lands. We keep them safe in the air and on the ground. They wouldn't be able to go without us.”

Sergeant Edwards, who's been an air traffic controller for eight years, is deployed from the 81st Operations Support Flight at Keesler. He said the fast-paced atmosphere here is what makes this such a great deployment.

“I've been to two bases stateside, and this location is definitely fast paced,” Sergeant Edwards said. “We have something going on every 10 min-

Please see **Controller**, Page 13

Controller,

from Page 12

utes, whether it is an aircraft landing, taxiing or taking off.”

Tech. Sgt. Anthony Accoo, 379th EOSS noncommissioned officer in charge of air traffic control training, serves in the watch supervisor position.

Acting as a third set of eyes, he oversees the ground and local controllers, ensuring the overall operation runs smoothly and according to rules and regulations. For Sergeant Accoo, serving here is rewarding, knowing his contributions are sending aircraft straight to the fight.

“I enjoy getting to see the ins and outs of everyone going into the war zone, especially going straight into Afghanistan and places like that,” said Sergeant Accoo. “Just knowing that you’re in support of something like that gives a realization of what really is going on and why everyone is flying.”

It’s the standard layout for any Air Force air traffic con-

trol tower in the world, but what really makes the air traffic controllers here unique is the they work closely with those from the host nation.

“We work side by side with host nation controllers,” said Sergeant Cahow, a 23-year veteran to the field. “It’s definitely a coalition effort pushing our gas and bombs forward and delivering people to the AOR.”

The air traffic control tower is a host-nation building. Eventually, this location will be the host nation air force’s central base, at which point they’ll start taking a bigger piece of the responsibility. In the meantime, host-nation controllers serve in the local and ground controller positions.

“Since the watch supervisor can only be an Air Force NCO, all the (host nationals) fall under the watch supervisor and have to perform to the watch supervisor’s standards,” Sergeant Accoo said. “So we’re pretty much molding them to make sure they can maintain what we’d maintain at any facility.”

Host-nation controllers

undergo their own training process to become certified. According to Sergeant Cahow, there is no segregation between U.S. and host nation controllers — the roles are virtually indistinguishable. The partnership is in working together, making sure they support the needs of the host nation here.

“We get to work with our coalition partners and forge alliances with those people in pursuit of our nations’ will,” he said. “I know there are valuable friendships made, too. It’s truly a forging of friendships.”

“Air traffic control is a language all in its own; so as long as we all know our job, we can all speak the same language,” Sergeant Accoo said. “So usually, that all works for us because when we can’t communicate, we just put it in air traffic control terms and everything becomes clear. It’s really that easy.”

Sergeant Accoo added working with them offers a great learning experience in how the host-nation controllers operate. The arrange-

ment doesn’t establish a training environment, but rather an exchange of knowledge. Because host nation controllers are trained within International Civil Aviation Organization standards, and the Air Force uses the Federal Aviation Administration, both of those standards are merged together to affect the mission.

“Working with them is fun,” he said. “They influence us by giving us their methods and teaching us how they do things and the reasons why. We share the comparisons based on the FAA rules. So we see where the two standards meet. Usually, the FAA rules are more stringent than ICAO rules, but it’s only because we have higher airspace criteria.”

Working within a joint environment has challenges.

According to Sergeant Edwards, procedures are typically the same, but there are minor differences.

“Equipment wise, it’s not the same as what we normally use,” he said. “So you have to get familiar with the equipment. Also, each airport has a

different runway configuration and taxiways.”

Despite the challenges of working in a joint deployed environment, the mission takes center stage here.

“At a stateside base, it’s all training and you’ll have constant aircraft in the air all the time, whether practicing on the range or practicing touch and go’s or low approaches,” Sergeant Cahow said. “Here, it’s all strictly mission. It’s take off, go, deliver whatever it may be, come back here and land, refuel and start over. We’re the first to say hello, and the last to say goodbye, executing our mission of getting them there and getting them back safely.”

Sergeant Cahow added the performance of all the controllers here is incredible.

“Air National Guard, active duty and host nation air force are all working together to affect the 379th mission, which is incredible,” he said. “It’s amazing that those three groups can come together and do such a phenomenal job.”

Phishing scam targets military families

By Richard Brock

Legal office

A new phishing scam is targeting service members and their families.

As reported in an Esecurityplanet article, the scam is based on unsolicited e-mails which appear to be from USAA which attempt to trick people into divulging personal information to identity thieves.

USAA and the Navy Federal Credit Union were used in a similar scam which sought Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, birth dates and other personal information.

The current scam uses titles like “USAA Notification” or “Urgent Message for USAA customer” as lures to get recipients to click on a link embedded in the e-mail.

Those victims who do click on the link are taken to a fake login page that looks like USAA’s legitimate website where they are requested to provide further personal information. Security experts describe the scam as one of the more intricate and widespread phishing schemes they have seen.

This is just one of many fake financial websites created to obtain personal information from individuals. According to the

Anti-Phishing Working Group, more than 126,000 fake websites designed to steal sensitive personal data were discovered in the first half of 2010 alone.

It’s important to realize that financial institutions never request personal information via e-mail.

Airmen and their families should ignore suspicious, unsolicited e-mails and never click on any attachments or links contained in them. They should communicate with their banks or credit unions using listed telephone numbers or trusted published websites.

For more information, call the legal office, 376-8716.



A place like home

Volunteer — get connected!



Photo by Airman 1st Class Heather Holcomb
Staff Sgt. Tawny Crutcher from the chapel staff pairs students with their host families on Thanksgiving Day at the Fishbowl Student Center. This year's Home Away from Home program saw a record number of students and host families participating — 74 host families and 246 students, up from 235 students in 2009. The chapel program seeks to bring a bit of home into the lives of nonprior service students at Keesler during Thanksgiving. Many of the families who welcome students into their homes are retired military. "I believe this is why families are so eager to open their homes," said Chaplain (Capt.) Ruben Covos. "They've been there and want to make it better for upcoming Airmen."

Many thanks served with Thanksgiving dinner



Photo by Airman 1st Class Heather Holcomb
From left, Master Sgt. Carrie Pogue, 81st Medical Support Squadron first sergeant, works the serving line as Chaplain (Maj.) Henry Close greets Airman 1st Class Peter Chan, 338th Training Squadron, during the Thanksgiving meal Nov. 25 at the Magnolia Dining Facility.



Photo by Steve Pivnick
From left, Col. Glen Downing, 81st Training Wing vice commander; Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Kory Cornum, 81st Medical Group commander; Col. David Garrison, 81st MDG deputy commander; and Chief Master Sgts. Deborah Strickland, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron superintendent, and Michael Anderson, 81st MDG superintendent, serve a traditional Thanksgiving meal to hospital cafeteria patrons, Nov. 16. The 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron nutritional medicine flight prepared 340 pounds of turkey, 95 pounds of ham, 200 servings of stuffing and assorted desserts for more than 600 customers.

Fire department offers decorating safety tips

Keesler Fire Department

According to the National Fire Protection Association, December and January are the peak months for overall number of home fires, deaths and injuries. Each year an average of 240 home fires start with Christmas trees and an additional 1,300 begin with various other seasonal decorations.

Many of our favorite decorations carry the risk of fire or electrical injury if not used carefully. Each year fires occurring during the holiday season claim the lives of more than 400 people, injuring 1,650 others and causing more than \$990 million in damages, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.

The Keesler Fire Department recommends these holiday decorating tips.

Christmas tree

When you bring a Christmas tree home, cut one or two inches off the bottom and place the tree in water with one full cup of sugar as soon as possible.

Keep your tree base filled with water at all times. Left unwatered over time, a tree's needles can dry out and catch fire more easily.

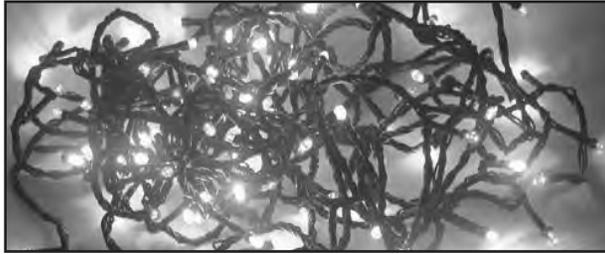
Keep your tree at least 3 feet from heat sources, space heaters and heating vents.

Don't place lighted candles on your tree.

Make sure the tree doesn't block an exit or exit access.

Lights

Carefully inspect electrical decorations before plugging them in. Cracked sockets and frayed, bare or loose wires can cause a serious electrical shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items with new Under-



writers Laboratory-listed decorations.

Use light strings that bear the UL mark. It means that UL has tested samples of the product for the risk of fire, electrical shock and other hazards.

Don't connect more than three midget light string sets together. Light strings with screw-in bulbs should have a maximum of 50 bulbs connected together.

Turn off all electrical light strings and decorations in your home before leaving or going to bed.

When unplugging electric decorations, use the gripping area provided on the plugs. Never pull the cord to unplug a device from the electrical outlets. Doing so can damage the cord's wire and insulation and even lead to an electrical shock or fire.

Workplace decorations

When deciding how to decorate your office or work area for the holiday season, it's very important to be mindful of potential safety hazards. The same safety considerations that apply to seasonal home decorations at home also apply in the workplace.

Before starting the process of decorating your office for the holiday, verify that all of your fire safety equipment is in proper working order. Make sure that all of your decorations are fire or flame

retardant before placing them in your office space.

Decorations shouldn't disguise, cover or interfere with any safety device, fire extinguishers, standpipes, exit signs, fire sprinkler heads and alarm boxes.

Decorations of any composition aren't permitted in elevators, elevator foyers or stairwells.

Decorations, including trees, aren't permitted in emergency exit routes or exit access. Only flame-retardant or noncombustible decorations may be placed on bulletin boards on the walls of corridors. All trees must be fire retardant or flame resistant.

Use only UL approved lights and six outlet surge protectors for electrical use. Electrical extension cords are highly discouraged for use with electrical decorations.

Don't place any type of lights on a metallic tree, which may cause a shocking hazard.

Decorations shall not cover more than 10 percent of a door in corridors.

Make sure that all illuminated items are turned off at the end of the work day to prevent the risk of a fire breaking out when the building is unattended.

In the base hospital, no electrical decorations are allowed on Christmas trees in patient rooms. Tree must be artificial and flame retardant.

Cut live trees are prohibited in all dormitory living quarters.

For more information, call the fire prevention section, 377-3230 or 8440.

Information from the National Fire Prevention Association, Air Force Occupational Safety and Health Standard 91-501, Keesler Instruction 32-2001, U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Protection Association was used in this report.

Gift cards simple way to give presents overseas

Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

DALLAS — A favorite time of year for thousands of military members serving overseas is just around the corner. While the holiday season and the gifts that accompany them always bring a sense of joy, time is running out for those considering sending mail to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

According to the Military Postal Service Agency, Friday is the deadline for parcel airlift mail; Dec. 10 is the deadline for priority and first-class mail, letters and cards; and Dec. 18 is the deadline express mail military service.

Regardless of the date sent, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service offers fast,

easy and convenient gift cards that anyone can include in a package or even have sent directly to loved ones serving overseas.

Exchange gift cards can be used at stores or food vendor partners such as Subway, Burger King and Pizza Hut to ensure troops get a taste of home.

AAFES makes the gift cards both convenient for those looking to send support and the deployed troops who receive it. In fact, the exchange has developed partnerships with organizations including the American Red Cross, United Service Organizations, and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to ensure donated gift cards reach serv-

ice members who need them.

"For many deployed service members a package is the closest they will get to their family this holiday season," said Army Col. Virgil Williams, AAFES chief of staff. "Exchange gift cards are a great way to ensure Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are able to get what they want at any of 81 stores and more than 200 food vendors in contingency locations including Afghanistan and Iraq."

Friends, family, and even civic groups can send AAFES gift cards ranging from \$10 to \$500 by calling 1-800-527-2345 or logging on to <https://shop.aafes.com/gcs/default.aspx>.

2 sweepstakes under way for AAFES customers

Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

DALLAS — The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is offering two giveaways to authorized shoppers.

Shoppers may enter through Dec. 24. Winners are selected Jan. 28.

Washington D.C. trip

AAFES and Sandberg and Sikorski Jewelry are partnering to provide a trip to Washington D.C. to one lucky shopper.

Through Dec. 24, the Exchange is accepting entries for the opportunity to win a five-day four-night trip to the nation's capitol valued at \$10,000.

The winner receives accommodations, airfare and an arranged tour to visit some of Washington D.C. and the surrounding area's most famous monuments.

Authorized shoppers ages 18 and older may enter at their nearest exchange.

Diamond rings

AAFES, in partnership with Paul Winston, is giving away three 14-karat gold ¾-karat engagement rings to authorized shoppers worldwide.

No purchase is necessary. Shoppers may fill out an entry form at a participating AAFES location for a chance to win.

403rd Wing celebrates annual 'Employer Day'

By Senior Airman
Tabitha Dupas

403rd Wing Public Affairs

Reservists know that one weekend a month and two weeks a year, they may have to ask their civilian employers for a few extra favors.

The 403rd Wing hosted an event to show employers that their sacrifices and support play a huge role in accomplishing the military's mission.

"Employer Day is important because we are able to show appreciation for the support our employers have for the military," said Maj. John McKee, 403rd Aeromedical Staging Squadron nurse. "Sometimes we have to miss work for drill, and this event gives them the understanding of what we do and why we do it."

From department store managers to doctors, police officers to plant workers, employers of Citizen Airmen participated in Employer Day activities.

The group began with a tour of the 403rd Wing, starting at the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, where they were given a wing mission briefing. With the new knowledge that not all Air Force members fly, they moved on to see the wing's support components. The tour

included the maintenance facility, fire department, headquarters building and the 815th Airlift Squadron.

By touring the different shops and listening to their individual missions, Major McKee's employer Jim Bridges, nurse manager at the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center in Jackson, Miss., said he had a better understanding of what Major McKee does when he is away from work.

After the tour, the employers enjoyed a catered lunch at the Bay Breeze Event Center, provided by Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

During lunch, an honorary commanders' induction ceremony took place. This program allows community members to shadow a 403rd Wing commander. Through this program, the military and the surrounding communities learn from one another and apply it to their everyday work.

"Building the relationship with the military helps us to understand the direction in which they are taking," said Dr. Alfred Trappey, emergency management specialist at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center. "All we see is what is being said by the media. Through events like this, we hear about the



Jim Bridges, a nurse manager with Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, looks out the window of a C-130J-30 aircraft during Employer Day. Bridges said he now has a better understanding of what is going on while his employee is attending drill.

pre-stages of deployment, what is being phased-in and the work being done by our employees."

At the end of the day,

employers and honorary commanders were able to fly with the 815th Airlift Squadron in a training route along the Gulf Coast.

By Senior Airman Tabitha Dupas

The event was an opportunity for the 403rd Wing to thank employers for the showing their continuous support of the Air Force Reserve.

"Building the relationships between our citizen warriors and the community is important because each individual is part of the community, and when they (deploy), their families are still with us," said Mr. Bridges.

"The military provides defense, and by honoring those who support us, we gain a better understanding of each other," said Major McKee.

"I think today helps us as employers realize the duties of our employees," said Dr. Trappey. "With their discipline, physical fitness, organization, family and work, we see the hard balancing act and it takes certain individuals to do this."

Freedom award nominations accepted through Jan. 11

ARLINGTON, Va. – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency, is accepting nominations through Jan. 17 for the 2011 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for the outstanding support of their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve.

Guard and Reserve service

members and their families are encouraged to nominate employers who have provided exceptional support of military employees above federal law requirements. To nominate an employer, log on to www.FreedomAward.mil.

The 2011 recipients are announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. Sept. 22, 2011.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the Guard and Reserve. DOD shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers,

many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. The 2010 recipients included CEOs from seven large American corporations, a governor, a mayor, a state police director, the chancellor of a university, and four small business owners. Recipients of the Freedom Award provide an outstanding range of support to these shared employees, including maintaining their full salary, continuation of benefits, providing care packages and

family assistance to employees fulfilling their military obligation.

ESGR's mission is to develop and promote employer support for Guard and Reserve service by advocating relevant initiatives, recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of applicable laws and resolving conflict between employers and service members.

For information, visit www.FreedomAward.mil, call 1-703-696-1171 extension 539 or e-mail ESGR-PA@osd.mil.



Photos by Adam Bond

Katherine Carruthers, wife of Staff Sgt. Terik Carruthers, 81st Medical Support Squadron, plays Turkey Bingo with her daughter Jennaya, 1½, during the airman and family readiness center's Thanksgiving celebration for families of deployed members at the Sablich Center, Nov. 19.

Families gather for food and fun



Gift baskets stuffed full of goodies coordinated by Key Spouses were donated by squadrons, Keesler Federal Credit Union, Top III and 81st Medical Group Spouses Club to thank the families of deployed Airmen for their support. Following a traditional turkey dinner for the 130 family members who attended, children played games while their parents played Turkey Bingo for a chance to win one of the 26 gift baskets.

Energy, space initiatives make top priority list

By Staff Sgt.
Mareshah Haynes

Defense Media Activity
San Antonio

COCOA BEACH, Fla. — When the Air Force saves energy, it also saves money, the environment and possibly even lives, according to Undersecretary of the Air Force Erin Conaton.

Ms. Conaton discussed ongoing service energy initia-

tives, as well as Air Force space programs, during a recent visit here Oct. 27 for Air Force Week Cocoa Beach 2010.

"Every gallon of fuel that we have to take over to Afghanistan is one more gallon of fuel that has to be moved by convoy, in potentially dangerous situations," Ms. Conaton said. "So our first imperative is to reduce our use of energy so that we're not putting people at risk in

delivering it to the warfighter."

It's a time when Air Force officials are focused on making every dollar count, she said.

"Every dollar we're not spending on fuel is a dollar we can spend on benefits for our Airmen and their families, on readiness and on new weapons systems," Ms. Conaton said. "So for both those reasons, I think it's really important to focus on energy in addition to all the environmental and greater societal benefits that go with it."

The Air Force's energy initiatives include an effort to shift the way Airmen think about both their personal energy footprint and that of the service, she said.

"We've got a strategic plan in the Air Force that talks about reducing demand, increasing supply and changing the culture," Ms. Conaton said. "We're trying to spend as little as possible on energy and find ways to decrease that demand while finding alternative sources for that supply."

Officials are looking at solar arrays, wind-power sys-

tems and both synthetic and bio-fuels for aircraft, the undersecretary said.

"The Air Force is the largest consumer of energy in the Department of Defense, which itself is the largest consumer in the federal government," she said. "During a time when budgets are tight, we want to decrease the amount of money we're spending on fuel and increase the amount we're spending on Airmen, their families and our readiness."

In preparation for a "greener" Air Force, officials have been making strides to prepare for the day when commercial vendors are ready to supply synthetic and bio-fuel to the service on a larger scale.

"We're working on making sure we can certify all the various airframes in the Air Force fleet to run on those types of fuels, so when the private sector is ready to sell this in bulk, we'll be a ready user of that capability," Ms. Conaton said.

Since 2006, Air Force engineers have certified different airframes on synthetic fuels and, in

the last 6 months, certified the A-10 Thunderbolt II on a bio-fuel mix, Ms. Conaton said.

As Air Force officials make progress with energy consumption, they also continue to maintain excellence in space, the undersecretary said.

"Space is not just something the Air Force relies upon," Ms. Conaton said. "It is something the nation relies upon, and certainly something our joint warfighting partners rely upon."

Whether it is navigation and timing data or communications links, none of the forces fighting in Afghanistan today could operate as effectively without the capabilities Air Force operators provide in space, Ms. Conaton said.

"We're also very focused on our launch operations," she said. "We've had a 10-year-plus success rate, and we're very focused on keeping that going."

Ms. Conaton said the Air Force officials are working closely with their partners in the National Reconnaissance Office and at NASA to ensure continued successful space operations.

New \$5.3 million facility moves small arms training indoors

By Airman 1st Class Heather Holcomb

Keesler Public Affairs

Currently everyone on Keesler who needs weapons training has to travel 17 miles to the Navy's combat arms training and maintenance facility at Camp Keller.

There's now a plan to build an indoor small arms firing range on Chappie James Boulevard near the Larcher Chapel.

The \$5.3 million project is scheduled to be completed by December 2011.

Tech. Sgt. Barry Hardy, 81st Security Forces Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge said, "The new indoor range will incorporate state of the art technology to train base personnel on shoot, move and communication techniques that are vital to the war-fighting effort."

The new range the construction contractor, will also allow the use of high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles that enables Airmen to practice

firing techniques used during convoy operations.

At Camp Keller, inclement weather has hindered training, caused a loss of 1,736 man-hours in 2009 and resulted in one instructor being struck by lightning twice. Being indoors will allow the new CATM facility to remain operational through everything short of a tornado or hurricane.

The new facility will also save in transportation costs. Currently, Keesler uses a 44-passenger bus to transport an average of 21 students and five instructors along with their weapons to Camp Keller each day. Ammunition is transported separately on a six-passenger truck.

This costs 26 man-hours as well as 34 miles-worth of fuel for both vehicles.

The contractor, Northwind Inc., is preparing to begin construction, but is awaiting final approval to remove trees from the area. If tree removal is delayed, the project's schedule may be extended.

Payments start on new Agent Orange claims

Department of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON — Department of Veterans Affairs officials have begun distributing disability benefits to Vietnam veterans who qualify for compensation under recently liberalized rules for Agent Orange exposure.

"The joint efforts of Congress and VA demonstrate a commitment to provide Vietnam veterans with treatment and compensation for the long-term health effects of herbicide exposure," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki.

Up to 200,000 Vietnam veterans are potentially eligible to receive VA disability compensation for medical conditions recently associated with Agent Orange. The expansion of coverage involves B-cell (or hairy-cell) leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease.

Secretary Shinseki said VA officials have launched a variety of initiatives, both technological and involving better business practices, to tackle an anticipated upsurge in Agent Orange-related claims.

"These initiatives show VA's ongoing resolve to modernize its processes for han-

dling claims through automation and improvements in doing business, providing veterans with faster and more accurate decisions on their applications for benefits," Secretary Shinseki said.

Providing initial payments, or increases to existing payments, to the 200,000 veterans who now qualify for disability compensation for these three conditions is expected to take several months, but VA officials encourage all Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and suffer from one of the three diseases to make sure their applications have been submitted.

VA officials have offered veterans exposed to Agent Orange special access to health care since 1978, and priority medical care since 1981. They have been providing disability compensation to veterans with medical problems related to Agent Orange since 1985.

In practical terms, veterans who served in Vietnam during the war and who have a "presumed" illness don't have to prove an association between their illnesses and their military service. This "presumption" simplifies and speeds up

the application process for benefits.

The three new illnesses — B-cell (or hairy-cell) leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease — are added to the list of presumed illnesses previously recognized by VA officials.

Other recognized illnesses under VA's "presumption" rule for Agent Orange are:

Acute and subacute transient peripheral neuropathy.

Chloracne.

Lymphocytic leukemia.

Diabetes mellitus (Type 2).

Hodgkin's disease.

Multiple myeloma.

Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Porphyria cutanea tarda.

Prostate cancer.

Respiratory cancers.

Soft tissue sarcoma other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma.

Amyloid light chain (AL) amyloidosis.

Veterans interested in applying for disability compensation under one of the three new Agent Orange presumptives should go to www.fasttrack.va.gov or call 1-800-827-1000.

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Core Values



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Raise your voice — honor your country.
If you're interested in singing the national anthem
at base or community ceremonies,
call YoLanda Wallace, 377-1179.

eight days a week

Arts and crafts center

Friday — noon to 2 p.m., framing class. Bring in 5x7 photo for framing. \$30 materials fee.

Saturday — 8:30-10:30 a.m., beginning woodworking. \$25 material fee; 2-3 p.m., children's penguin decorating. \$5 per child.

For more information or to register, call 377-2821.

Bay Breeze Golf Course

Tuesday — registration deadline for Santa Scramble tournament. Two-person, select shot with handicap. For more information, call the pro-shop, 377-3832.

Monday-Dec. 9 — 2 p.m., twilight special. Play unlimited golf until closing. For more information, call 377-3832.

Monday-Saturday — golf lessons with a professional. \$30 per half-hour. By appointment only.

Gaudé Lanes

Today — club member special, \$1.50 per game with free shoe rental.

Friday — 9 p.m. to midnight, glow bowling.

Saturday — 7 p.m. to midnight, glow bowling.

Keesler Club

Editor's note: Must be 18 or older to enter collocated lounge.

Saturday — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., dance night in the lounge. Free admission.

Sunday — noon to 5 p.m., tailgate brunch. \$8.50, members receive a \$2 discount. Watch NFL Sunday Ticket in the lounge.

Vandenberg Community Center

Friday — 8 p.m., all night country blowout, prizes for best dressed country male and female, part of the late night dance. \$3 admission, nonprior service students only.

Saturday — 8 p.m., midnight karaoke, part of the late night dance. \$3 admission, nonprior service students only.

Dec. 9 — 5 p.m., holiday movie night, free popcorn and beverages.

Youth center

Saturday — 4-10 p.m., "Give Parents a Break". Complimentary dinner provided. For more information, call 377-4116.

Airman and family readiness center

Editor's note: To register for classes, call 376-8728.

Wednesday — 9-11 a.m., survivor benefit briefing for single and married members and their spouses; 1-2:30 p.m., smooth move seminar, advice on making relocation easier; 2-4 p.m. federal resume writing, learn techniques for preparing a resume for federal employment.

Dec. 9 — 10-11 a.m., sponsor training for those sponsoring inbound personnel.



U.S. AIR FORCE
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KEESLER NOTES

Project Cheer benefit

A bowl-a-rama, noon Friday at Gaudé Lanes, benefits the Project Cheer program that provides the food for a holiday meal for junior enlisted families who need assistance.

There's a 9-pin no tap format. There's a limit of 20 five-person teams. Team trophies are presented to the first and second place high series teams.

The \$10 fee per person fee includes shoes and three games. Participants are also asked to donate one non-perishable food item to be donated to an area food bank.

Sign up by noon today.

The event is sponsored by the Keesler First Sergeants.

For more information, e-mail rogers.trahan@us.af.mil or call 377-4157.

Toys for Tots

This year's Toys for Tots campaign runs through Dec. 17, but at Keesler, toys must be turned in by Dec. 11 for Dec. 12 pick-up by members of the Marine Corps Reserve, sponsor of the annual drive.

Collection boxes are available in Room 107 or 110, Sablich Center, where donations will be turned in this year.

For more information or to volunteer, call 376-8501 or 209-7052.

Healthy eating classes

The health and wellness center offers two classes to plan more healthful during the holiday season:

Dec. 9 — 11 a.m.-noon, Holiday Eating.

Dec. 16 — noon to 1 p.m., Eating on the Run/Dining Out.

To sign up, call 376-3170.

Top III meeting

Top III meets at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 14 at Bay Breeze Event Center, third floor.

Finance closes

The 81st Comptroller Squadron closes at 11:30 a.m. Dec. 16 for a unit function.

Airman's Attic

Airman's Attic, at the corner of Meadows Drive and 1st Street, assists junior enlisted members with obtaining free basic household items.

Donations are needed such as furniture, area rugs, cutlery, dishware, infant wear and maternity clothes which are clean and in good condition. Bring donations to Airman's Attic during regular hours, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, non-training Fridays and the last Saturday of the month.

Thrift shop

The Keesler Thrift Shop, operated by the Keesler Spouses Club, is at the corner of Meadows Drive and First Street.

Profits benefit base and area charities and provide scholarships.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Consignments are accepted 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays.

Pickup is available for donations, such as kitchen items, small appliances, furniture, rugs, household items and infant and children's items.

For more information, call 377-3217.

Supply classes

Quarterly supply classes are held in Room 109, Taylor Logistics Building .

Block I basic supply class is 9 a.m. Dec. 15.

All newly-assigned supply custodians and resource managers are required to attend.

For more information, contact Patrick Governale, 377-5998 or patrick.governale.ctr@us.af.mil, or Paulette Powell, 377-2270, paulette.powell.1.ctr@us.af.mil.

Block IIA-Bench Stock is 9-9:30 a.m. Dec 9. To schedule an appointment, call Crystal Simpson, 377-9955.

Block IIB-Repair Cycle is 10-11 a.m. Dec 9. To schedule an appointment, call Nathaniel Parks, 377-2310.

Block III training is 1 p.m. Dec. 15. All newly-assigned supply equipment custodians are required to attend as well as all other custodians annually.

For more information, contact Willie McDonald, 377-2660 or willie.mcdonald.1.ctr@us.af.mil or Ms. Powell.

Peridontal patients

The 81st Dental Squadron periodontics department is seeking people with gum problems for the general dental residency

teaching program.

Limited numbers of patients, including retirees and eligible military dependents, accepted as teaching cases receive free periodontal care at Keesler.

Patients accepted for periodontal care will be treated by

our Air Force general dentistry residents under specialty supervision. Patients must be readily available for lengthy recurring appointments, generally Monday afternoons and Tuesday mornings.

For more information, call 376-5225.

Battle begins for intramural basketball supremacy

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

Keesler's intramural basketball season tipped off Monday at Blake Fitness Center.

Seventeen teams are in the hunt this year — nine in the Eastern Conference and eight in the Western Conference.

Last season, the 81st Communications Squadron led the Eastern Conference and took the league title,

but won't be fielding a team this season.

The 81st Medical Group, the Western Conference regular-season leader, joins the Eastern Conference this time around. The conference's other teams are the 332nd Training Squadron B-team, 345th Airlift Squadron, 81st Training Support Squadron, 81st Force Support Squadron, 81st Security Forces Squadron, 81st Dental Squadron, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron and a Navy

team from the Seabee Base in Gulfport.

Western Conference teams are the 403rd Wing, 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron, 332nd TRS-A, 333rd TRS, 334th TRS, 335th TRS and 338th TRS A and B teams.

Eastern Conference games are 6, 7 and 8 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, and Western Conference games are 6, 7 and 8 p.m.

For more information, call 377-2444.



FIT TO FIGHT !

It's time for a change. We're getting back to basics.

Together through exercise, nutrition and coping strategies, we're staying fit for freedom!

For our team, our families, ourselves.