



KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train to Fight. Train to Win.

FEB. 10, 2011 VOL. 72 NO. 6



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Leaders face force management challenges

By Gen. Norton Schwartz

Air Force chief of staff

Fellow Airmen, Secretary (of Defense Michael) Donley and I recognize and appreciate the tremendous sacrifices asked of you and your family, and we are proud of your exceptional contributions to our nation in a time of war.

As you may recall, last March, the Secretary and I announced a force management plan intended to size and shape the officer and enlisted force to align the Air Force within our congressionally authorized personnel ceiling.

Through the force management actions we took last year, we met our enlisted goal in fiscal year 2010; however, we remain approximately 2,300 officers above our authorized ceiling.

Our Air Force is now at a 16-year high in retention at a time when we already exceed authorized personnel strength levels. It is for this reason that the Secretary and I made the difficult, but fiscally responsible, decision to continue force management measures. This will not be easy, and we do not take this decision lightly.

First, in an effort to minimize the impact to our current force, we will reduce active duty accessions as much as prudent. In addition to the previously announced voluntary programs, we will also implement involuntary programs to include enlisted date of separation rollbacks, officer retention boards and reduced officer promotion opportunities. Our over-strength situation is such that offers of selective continua-

tion for twice deferred officers may be limited. More information on this multi-tiered force management plan is available on the Air Force Personnel Center website and will be communicated by your base-level force support squadrons in the near future.

This is a difficult time. The results of last year's reductions are no doubt affecting units and lives across our Air Force family. With a very talented, all-volunteer force answering our nation's call in a variety of global commitments, it is not easy to select Airmen for early transition from the active-duty force.

For those of you choosing or selected to transition from active duty, I sincerely thank you for your service and encourage you to stay with our

Air Force family through our Guard and Reserve programs. Leaders at all levels are committed to assisting you through transition to the next phase of your careers, and our Airman and Family Readiness Centers are standing by with valuable resources to support your transition.

As I stated last March, the Secretary and I have carefully considered all options and their impacts. In the end, we arrived at the conclusion that these additional force management measures are necessary for the Air Force to reduce personnel strength to authorized levels over the next two years. In short, we seek to do the difficult now in order to put this dilemma behind us, returning to more predictable career paths for all Airmen.

Is it important, or is it urgent?

By Lt. Col. Sara Beyer

375th Operations Support Squadron commander

SCOTT Air Force Base, Ill. — I am a person who hates clutter. Anyone who walks in my office will be surprised at the lack of items on my desk. I do, however, continuously have one piece of paper visible. It is an old, yellowed copy of a base paper article from several years ago.

Unfortunately I don't remember where I got it anymore, but I owe the author, Col. Mark Blum, the 212th Field Artillery Brigade commander, a debt of gratitude. His article, "Important vs. Urgent," speaks to the importance of balance in your life. Defining the difference between those two words has been a source of guidance and reason to me on more than one occasion.

The word "important" has synonyms such as critical, significant, vital and essential. "Urgent" on the other hand is subtly different in its meaning: pressing, pleading, burning, demanding. Urgent appears important at the time, but does not have as long lasting consequences. If you pull back a layer, urgent has a lower priority than important.

Understanding this distinction can help juggling competing demands on your time.

Everyone in the military is busy. With reduced resources and personnel, it is easy to lose balance in one's life. Maintaining an equilibrium between home commitments and work commitments is difficult. It is far too easy in our quest to accomplish every task to 100 percent and take part in every opportunity, to tip the balance scales away from family and focus on work.

This isn't to say there aren't times when the people at home aren't going to be put on the back-

burner. Our profession asks for sacrifices from us and our families constantly. However, don't make the default setting to be the family is second.

The decisions on priorities should be made consciously. That sounds simple, but it is deceptively easy to always choose the urgent work rather than the important event.

To make a conscious decision, a set of rules or guideline can be helpful. Colonel Blum identified three criteria for determining if an event is important.

It is important to someone who's important to you.

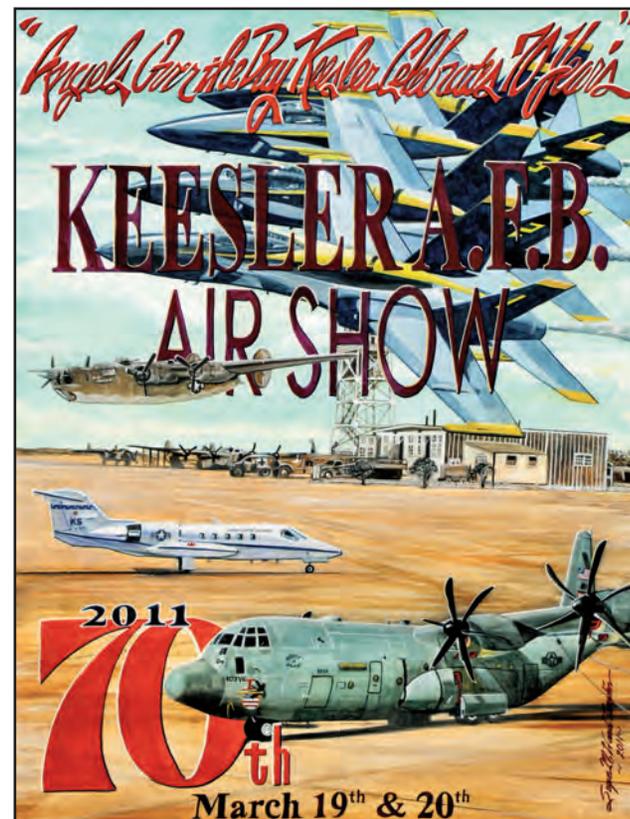
Your personal presence makes a difference.

The opportunity is not going to come around again.

If those three conditions are satisfied, you have an idea what should be the priority.

The same event can be urgent and important at the same time. We deal with important projects constantly. Many of those projects, tasks and assignments have long-lasting implications and consequences. At the same time, there are instances when another, more personal, event may be of greater importance. A look at the three criteria helps to refocus on which events really need attention at that moment. The point is to realize those instances when home life, or personal time, must take a priority. The point is to distill what is urgent now from what is truly important.

With those thoughts, I'm going to head off to my daughter's basketball game. Yes, there is urgent paperwork that still needs attention and the endless taskers won't stop, but this is her first game and she's starting, and she specifically asked me to come. Sounds pretty important to me.



Scheduled performers include the Navy Blue Angels, Army Golden Knights parachute team, a B-25 Mitchell Bomber, an F-16 demonstration, the Air Force Honor Guard and other unique performances. Displays include a C-17 Globemaster, MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft, OH-58 Kiowa and many more. Gates open 9 a.m. both days — Free admission!

ON THE COVER



Gen. Edward Rice Jr., Air Education and Training Command commander, surveys technical training students from the 81st Training Group before his speech Monday on the Triangle parade field. General Rice visited Monday and Tuesday to meet with 81st Training Wing and 2nd Air Force leaders, become familiar with the base's training programs and facilities and get acquainted with some of Keesler's students and organizations. He was accompanied by his wife, Teresa, and AETC's command chief, Chief Master Sgt. James Cody, and his wife, Athena. Additional photos and story appear in the Feb. 17 issue of the Keesler News.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



DRAGONS ON THE STREET

By Kemberly Groue

Keesler News photojournalist

What is your favorite dessert?



"My mom's homemade, handmade peach cobbler."
Retired Senior Master Sgt. Elijah Lewis



"A 'sock it to me' cake."
Sharon Floyd, 338th Training Squadron



"Cheesecake."
Maria Taylor, CSC

More news, videos, information and photos on the Web at <http://www.keesler.af.mil>

KEESLER NEWS

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TRAINING AND EDUCATION

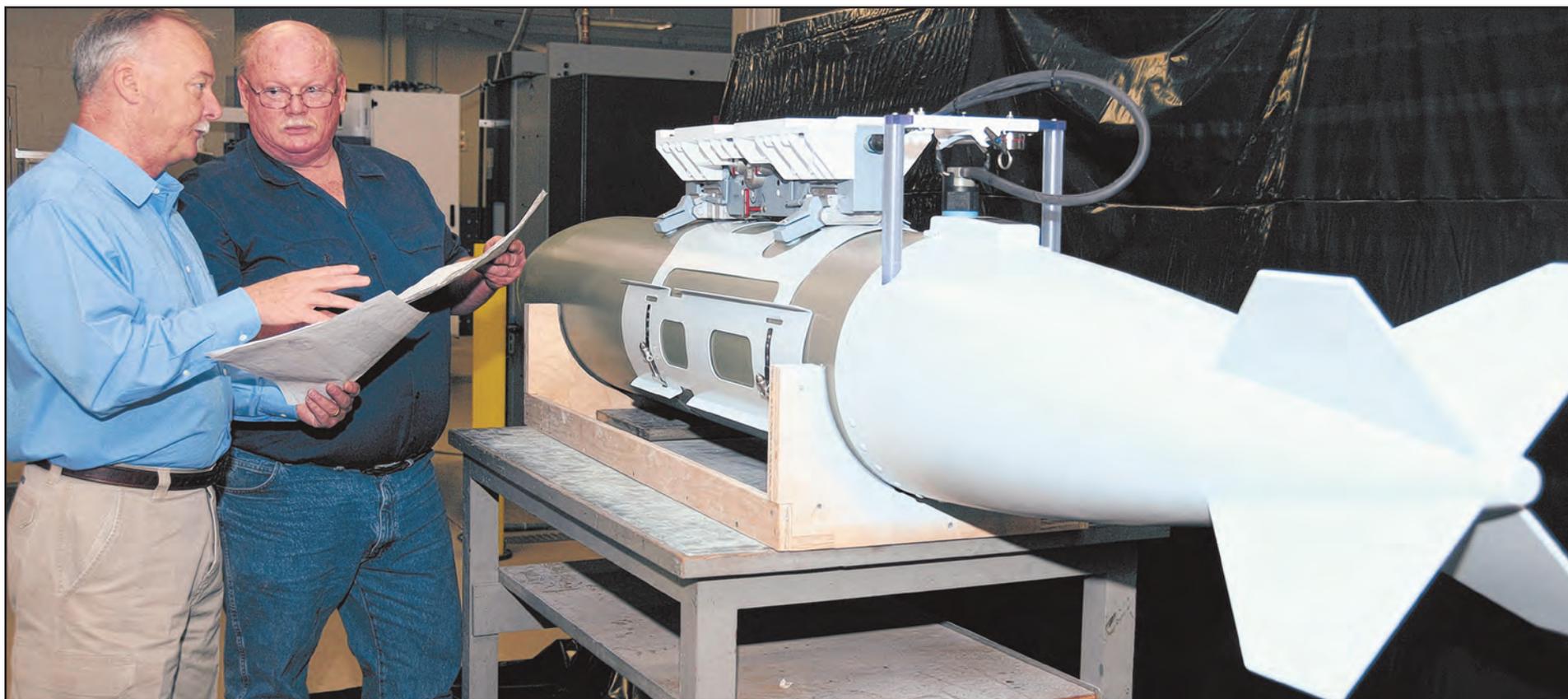


Photo by Kemberly Groue

Mr. Shook, left, and Mr. Capers verify design specifications Feb. 2 for the model constructed for Tyndall at the trainer development facility.

Bombs away!

Trainer development flight hits target for Tyndall

81st Training Support Squadron

The 81st Training Support Squadron's trainer development flight has fabricated a full-scale model of a GBU-32 guided bomb unit with its newly-acquired fused deposition modeling process.

The model consists of an MK-83 bomb combined with a joint directed attack munitions tail section – JDAM for short — and the associated BRU-46 bomb release unit.

Keesler's customer for this project is the 325th Operations Support Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. It will be used in the F-22 "B" course that trains student pilots in performing pre-flight inspections of a JDAM.

Fused deposition modeling is a relatively new process that produces high-quality three-dimensional objects from a polymer material with computer control of the finished product. Once the machine is programmed and loaded, it can run unattended for several days, operating very much like a three-dimensional printer.

Project manager Larry Shook said, "Our trainer development flight has done some amazing things on smaller scales with this new build technology, but this was our first large scale, detailed build and the

end result is absolutely astonishing."

The current trainer in use at Tyndall is an inert MK-83 and JDAM, and an actual BRU-46 with a combined weight of more than 1,000 pounds, which normal classroom floors wouldn't support. This restricted the location for training to a noisy aircraft hangar with little climate control. The total weight of the new full scale trainer is about 100 pounds, allowing it to be placed in any classroom while still replicating the full 10-foot length of the real thing.

Larry Simek, 325th OSS quality assurance representative, explained that the full-scale JDAM/BRU-46 trainer developed by the 81st TRSS will provide a hands-on training device that enables the instructor pilot to point out the important items and allows the student pilot to get a size and placement perspective as they prepare to perform pre-flight JDAM inspections.

Mr. Simek also noted a cost savings of more than \$100,000 by using the newly-fabricated trainer.

"The total cost of this project was \$61,000, including labor, but since we're a government-owned government-operated organization, the true cost to the customer was just for materials, about \$16,200," Mr. Shook reported.

The engineering, design and fabrication took six months, well within the time frame requested by the customer, he added.

"Unlike some past projects that involved only one or two of the flight's work centers to complete, the JDAM/BRU-46 project required the skills of various crafts," Mr. Shook pointed out.

One of the fabricators, Tom Capers, has years of experience in machining all types of metals, but this was his first time working with polymer material.

"I found this project challenging but interesting and realized that it is possible to teach an old dog new tricks," Mr. Capers remarked.

Other trainer development work centers contributed significantly to getting the job done on time and within budget, including engineering and the paint, sheet metal and woodworking shops.

"The new technology we've added to trainer development, along with the new facilities, has greatly increased our ability to support the needs of the 81st Training Wing and other units across the Air Force," emphasized Lt. Col. Janet Pattison, 81st TRSS commander.

The trainer is scheduled for delivery to the customer later this month.

MTIs mold lives, careers of tomorrow's Airmen

By Mike Joseph

502nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs

LACKLAND Air Force Base, Texas — There's a commonality that unites the men and women who serve as the 737th Training Group's Military Training Instructors - service above self in transitioning the more than 35,000 civilians a year who enter Air Force Basic Military Training into Airmen.

It's an MTI's professionalism and commitment to Air Force core values in basic military training that molds those civilians into successful Airmen; role models to be followed and at the end of 8.5 weeks, often imitated.

Their effectiveness as leaders, teachers and mentors has changed lives and inspired Airmen for more than 60 years. Those attributes and mission objectives beyond just marching flights and teaching drill prompted the Air Force to quickly change from the original term in 1947 of "flight marchers" to "military training instructors."

It was the leadership, teaching, mentoring and recognition skills of an MTI that not only changed the life of Staff Sgt. Carmen DeLeon-Acosta but served as a catalyst to her

Air Force career.

"My TI changed my life in a lot of ways, more personally I think," Sergeant DeLeon-Acosta said. "He was not only my mentor but someone in whose footsteps I wanted to follow."

Sergeant DeLeon-Acosta said her father left when she was a child, she had no relationship with her step-father or mother and was on her own at a young age.

It was her MTI who changed her perception that every man leaves their family and children.

"He changed that attitude in me," said Sergeant DeLeon-Acosta, now an MTI recruiter and a former instructor. "He showed me that not every man leaves (his family and children).

"I thought if my MTI could make me start talking to my father again and make my life better, I wanted to come back and do something similar. And I have," she said.

"He changed my life. To this day we still talk (since entering BMT in February 2002). That's a long time to have someone in your life."

Master Sgt. Eric Gaona, MTI recruiting team flight chief, agreed that not only did his MTI change him, but his



Photo by Robbin Cresswell
Staff Sgt. Kenneth Dancer, a military training instructor with the 321st Training Squadron, leads a group of Air Force basic military trainees carrying state flags during the BMT graduation ceremony at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, Jan. 7. MTIs mold recruits through an 8½-week BMT program focusing on basic war skills, military bearing, discipline, physical fitness, drill and ceremonies and Air Force core values.

time as an instructor also served as a career springboard.

"I clearly remember the day when I came to basic training with no discipline and didn't know where I wanted to go in life," Sergeant Gaona said. "That man (now Chief Master

Sgt. William Dambacher, his current supervisor) made a difference. He inspired me greatly."

Sergeant Gaona, an instructor from 1993-1997, returned to the MTI Corps in a supervisory role last April.

"I had an itch again to make a difference before I retire," he said, adding the intangibles of the special duty assignment had a huge impact on his career.

"There is no measure of how much you get from being an MTI," he said. "I came in 1993 as a senior airman. When I left and compared myself to other senior airmen, the difference was amazing.

"The (MTI) experience is invaluable. Supervisors single you out because you're more professional. Your career just takes off."

Staff Sgt. Scott Weimer said the skill set he developed as an MTI and MTI recruiter would be beneficial when he returns to the missile maintenance career field in April.

"It doesn't matter what rank you leave (the MTI Corps) as, you leave performing two stripes higher," Sergeant Weimer said. "The different people to deal with, the responsibility, time management, work ethic and counseling skills you develop as an MTI will make you an unparalleled asset to whatever job you're assigned."

For information on the MTI Corps, call the MTI recruiting office, DSN 671-1018.

Faculty development flight offers career enhancement opportunities

By Lessie Daniel

81st Training Support Squadron

It's possible for civilian and military faculty and staff of the 81st Training Group to earn college credit while doing their jobs at Keesler. This credit can be documented on a Community College of the Air Force transcript and used to meet professional qualification requirements of military and civilian positions.

Opportunities through the 81st Training Support Squadron's faculty development flight fulfill professional requirements of CCAF faculty and staff and may open doors to careers in public education as well.

As an affiliated school of CCAF and college of Air University, the 81st Training Group is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award college credit.

The faculty development flight qualifies civilian and military instructors and staff for technical training responsibilities at Keesler and other locations.

The flight provides cradle-to-grave professional development opportunities including the basic instructor course, an internship course, continuation courses and professional certifications. Instructors and staff attain qualifications and apply new skills to teach, develop, manage, evaluate or supervise the college curriculum of the 81st TRG.

The basic instructor course imparts teaching and learning management skills to new instructors who have already mastered the technical skills of their disciplines. It prepares them to integrate technology in the classroom and to apply the instructional systems development process to design, implement and evaluate curricula. Graduates of the course are awarded nine

Upcoming events

Feb. 17 — 9-10 a.m. and 3:15-4:15 p.m., faculty development opportunities seminar, Wolfe Hall Auditorium, Room 254.

April 7-8 — instructional systems career field briefings and counseling. For more information, call 377-5311.

semester hours of college credit.

The year-long teaching internship provides practical teaching experience and classroom management opportunities under the mentorship of a seasoned instructor. Instructors exercise newly-acquired skills and gain practical experience in classroom or laboratory instruction, lesson plan and multimedia preparation, test development and administration, and academic counseling. Internship graduates earn 12 semester hours of college credit.

The faculty development flight offers a variety of continuation courses essential to ongoing professional development and the mission of the 81st TRG. Courses include training supervisor (three credit hours), training management (three credit hours), training development (three credit hours), objectives and tests (one credit hour), technical writer (two credit hours), fundamentals of instructional systems development (two credit hours) and career development course writer (six credit hours).

Professional certifications are encouraged. Those offered through the faculty development flight include teaching internship certification (12 credit hours), instructional system development certification (12 credit hours) and

master instructor certification for course curriculum developers and managers assigned to the 81st TRG.

CCAF faculty may also complete three levels of CCAF instructor certification to recognize their professional accomplishments.

Certifications in education and other disciplines are important to career advancement in the military and civil service. The skills and knowledge acquired through the certification process enhance instructor and staff performance and may facilitate employment opportunities after retiring or separating from civil service. CCAF credit may be awarded for some certifications.

To learn more, visit the CCAF credentialing programs flight website at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/certifications.asp> or call DSN 749-5020.

CCAF credit hours earned by faculty and staff can add up quickly. They may be applied with credits from other colleges to qualify for employment in the instructional systems career field, also known as the GS-1750 Series.

Applicants must have a bachelor's or graduate degree in any discipline and a minimum of 24 semester hours of college credit in four of five areas — learning theory, psychology of learning and educational psychology; instructional design practices; educational evaluation; instructional product development and computers in education and training. For assistance to evaluate your course work, call the Air Force Personnel Center force support career field administrator, DSN 665-1706.

Career management is an individual's responsibility. The faculty development flight is a valuable resource available to 81st TRG instructors and staff. For more information, call 377-5076.

William Carey term

William Carey University's spring trimester begins Feb. 21.

The university offers flexible degrees that allow for the transfer of many Community College of the Air Force credits. Courses are also available to complete Civil Service 1750 qualification requirements.

Discounted tuition rates are available for active-duty military, dependents, retirees and Defense Department civilians.

For more information, call 376-8480 or visit Room 219, Sablich Center.

Annual tech expo

The 16th annual Training Technology Products and Information Services Expo is 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Feb. 24 at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

The expo is devoted to all types of distance learning and resident education and training. Civilian and military vendors display the latest in technical and support gear. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call 377-7799.

CCAF graduation

Feb. 25 is the last day to apply for the Community College of the Air Force spring graduating class.

By that date, all supporting documentation must be on file with CCAF at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., including your nomination action request.

For more information, visit the education services office, Room 224, Sablich Center, or call 376-8708 or 8710.

MGCCC spring term

Pre-registration is under way for active-duty military members for the spring session for Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College-Keesler Center.

Visit
www.jetairmen.af.mil
for information about
joint expeditionary
tasking and
individual augmentee
programs.



Academic ace

Airman Basic Christopher Vidal graduated Feb. 3 from the electronic principles course in the 332nd Training Squadron with a perfect score. Airman Vidal, from Newark, Del., continues his training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, for 17 weeks in the avionic instrument and flight control systems apprentice course.

All others may register Monday through Feb. 28, when the term begins.

The spring schedule is found on the college's website, www.mgccc.edu.

For more information, call 376-8477 or visit the office in Room 221, Sablich Center.

DeCA scholarships

Applications for the Defense Commissary Agency's 2011 Scholarships for Military Children program are available at the commissary, online at <http://www.commissaries.com> under the "news and info" tab under "scholarship info" tab; or at www.militaryscholar.org.

Hap Arnold grants

The application deadline for the 2011-2012 General Henry H. Arnold education grant program is March 11.

Application forms and eligibility requirements and other information to apply for the \$2,000 grants are found at the Air Force Aid Society's website at www.afas.org.

KSC scholarships

Applications are now being accepted for 2011 Keesler Spouses Club scholarships.

Eligible applicants include high school seniors entering a college, university or vocational studies as well as spouses pursuing a degree or vocational studies.

Applications and more information are available at www.keeslerspousesclub.com or call 273-2489 or 243-7133.

Swan scholarship

May 31 is the deadline to apply for the Hurricane Hunters \$2,000 Swan 38 scholarship.

The scholarship is open to active and retired 403rd Wing members and their dependents.

For more information, log on to www.hurricanehunters.com.

Manager certification

The Community College of the Air Force awards professional manager certification that formally recognizes an individual's advanced level of education and experience in leadership and management, as well as professional accomplishments.

The program provides a structured professional development track that supplements enlisted professional military education and the career field education and training plan.

For more information, log on to <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/certifications.asp> or call the education office, 376-8708 or 8710.

Drill downs, parades

Drill downs — 8 a.m. Feb. 18, April 29, June 24, Aug. 19 and Oct. 28.

For more information, call 377-2103.

Parades — 6 p.m. March 17, July 21 and Sept. 29 and during Special Olympics, May 13-15.

For more information, call 377-2789.

Air Force announces more personnel cuts

Air Force News Service

Feb. 2, Air Force leaders announced involuntary force management programs to reduce personnel as a supplement to the voluntary programs announced in December.

These measures are part of the Air Force's multi-year Force Management Program aimed at shaping and sizing the force. With more Airmen choosing to stay in the Air Force, retention is at the highest level in 16 years.

Air Force leaders implemented a tailored, multi-year program in 2010 to reduce the number of personnel to operate at the service's authorized end strength levels. According to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz, even with those efforts, the Air Force ended fiscal year 2010 approximately 2,300 officers over end strength.

"Retention projections for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 continue to be high," General Schwartz said. "Without additional measures, we could grow to 7,000 over our authorized end strength by the end of fiscal year 2012. Based on these projections, and our need to operate within our means, the Secretary of the Air Force and I made the decision to intensify force management actions to meet our congressionally mandated ceiling by the end of fiscal year 2012."

The fiscal year 2011 involuntary force management efforts predominantly affect officers.

"We were successful in managing enlisted end strength levels last year using a combination of voluntary programs, accession reductions, technical training eliminations and date of separation rollbacks," explained Brig. Gen. Sharon Dunbar, director of force man-

agement policy. "We plan to continue use of this strategy over the next year."

For all Airmen, there will be programs to reduce personnel at various phase points along a career.

"Reducing officer and enlisted accessions will help us minimize the impact on active duty personnel who are currently serving," General Dunbar said.

For junior officers, the plan includes force shaping boards beginning this May. The FSB will initially consider year groups with excess officers in judge advocate general, biomedical science corps and medical service corps competitive categories. The May FSB impacts officers in the 2006 through 2008 commissioned year groups. Officers not selected for retention by this FSB will be required to separate no later than Oct. 1.

The Air Force will also conduct a reduction in force board in September for mid-grade officers. In lieu of meeting the board, eligible officers will have a one-month window in March to apply for voluntary separation pay, with separation by Oct. 1. The RIF will consider all year groups with excess officers in the line of the Air Force, chaplain, JAG, BSC, and MSC competitive categories. This impacts officers in the 1999 through 2005 commissioned year groups. Officers not selected for retention by the RIF will be required to separate no later than Feb. 1, 2012.

For both the RIF and the FSB, Air Force leaders decided to apply a quality review of the entire competitive category, instead of the methodology used in past retention boards which focused only on certain Air Force specialties.

The boards will retain the top 90 percent of officers within the affected competitive categories in eligible year groups. Following retention board results, the Air Force will use the recently-announced officer crossflow process to rebalance between line specialties as needed.

Officer over-strength challenges will require the Air Force to conduct selective early retirement boards for lieutenant colonels who have been twice deferred for colonel and for colonels with four or more years time in grade who have not met a SERB in the last five years. These boards will occur in October 2011 and January 2012 and will consider officers in the LAF, chaplain, and MSC competitive categories. Officers not selected for retention by the SERB will be required to separate no later than March 1, 2012 for lieutenant colonels and June 1, 2012 for colonels.

"Air Force leaders announced last year that promotion opportunities would be reduced to 95 percent to captain and 90 percent to major," General Dunbar said. "In addition to reduced promotion opportunities, our over strength situation is such that offers of selective continuation may be limited."

"We fully understand how difficult these actions are on the Airmen affected by them," General Dunbar said. "This is why leaders at all levels will be engaged to assist Airmen with transition options."

General Dunbar continued that Airmen are a trained and ready resource possessing the skills needed by the Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard and almost every Airman tran-

Please see **Force cuts**, Page 9

IN THE NEWS

Chiefs induction ceremony

Keesler's chief master sergeant induction ceremony is 6 p.m. Saturday at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

More information and tickets are available from any active duty chief.

Wingman Day planned

From 1-4 p.m. Feb. 23, units of the 81st Training Wing stand down from technical training, support activities and non-emergency operations to observe Wingman Day.

The focus of Wingman Day is resiliency, which is defined as "the ability to withstand, recover and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands."

Wingman Day activities will start with a 30-minute commander's call, followed by 90 minutes of small group discussion and conclude with an hour of team building exercises.

Squadron points of contact have more information on Wingman Day activities, including event locations and small group assignments.

Wing annual awards dinner

The 81st Training Wing's annual awards dinner is Feb. 24 at the Bay Breeze Event Center ballroom.

Cocktails are at 6:30 p.m., with the meal starting at 7. Dress is mess dress or semi-formal for military and dress casual for civilians.

Tickets are \$25.20 for club members and \$28.80 for nonmembers for the London broil meal. Tickets are available from Master Sgt. Sheila Hanley, 81st Medical Group, 376-4419; Tech. Sgt. Jay Cook, 81st Training Group, 377-0121; Master Sgt. James Gross, 81st Training Wing staff agencies, 377-5445; and Master Sgt. Jessica Woodruff, 81st Mission Support Group, 376-8508.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Jakelyne Kamarakafego, 377-7338.

Clinics close for warrior training

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group conducts warrior training noon to 5 p.m. today.

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, please go to the nearest emergency room. If this is an emergency, contact 911 for an ambulance.

Early Keesler News deadline

The deadline for the Feb. 24 issue of the Keesler News is noon Feb. 17 because of the President's Day federal holiday, Feb. 21.

Reserve has opportunities for separating Airmen

By Master Sgt. Ralph Bitter

Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs
ROBINS Air Force Base. — Air Force Reserve officials want separating Airmen to consider opportunities as a reservist. Becoming a traditional reservist or an individual mobilization augmentee offers them the opportunity to pursue a civilian career and still serve their country.

Traditional reservists join a Reserve unit, usually near their homes, and train with the unit one weekend a month and perform two weeks of annual training a year. TRs also deploy with their units and have opportunities to cross-train into a new career field. Many remain in their unit for their entire career, but they can transfer to another unit if a position is available.

IMAs are assigned to active-duty wings or major commands throughout the world where they work alongside their active duty counterparts.

IMAs are not members of a Reserve unit and don't work the traditional one weekend a month.

They're required to do 12 continuous days of annual training and 24 periods of inactive duty training, or IDTs. The annual training must be done at the same time, but the IDTs are more flexible. An Airman and his or her supervisor create a specific training schedule.

IMAs also may transfer to a different position for career enhancement, but the opportunities to cross-train are limited.

Reservists normally keep their previous rank and may have opportunities for promotion. They also continue to accrue retirement benefits. Reservists have access to base facilities such as the exchange, gym and unlimited commissary privileges.

The Reserve also offers educational opportunities. Reservists can take courses with the Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning. They can attend professional military education schools and technical schools or pursue an associate degree at the Community College of the Air Force.

To become a reservist, Airmen can call Master Sgt. Charlene McCombs, Keesler's in-service recruiter, 377-7116. She can explain the program and help locate available positions. Airmen also can log on to www.afreserve.com or call 1-800-257-1212. Individuals interested in becoming an IMA should contact the IMA administrator at Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

Required documents include an Air Force Form 1288, Application for Ready Reserve Assignment; the last three performance reports; the last Air Force fitness assessment score; and a preventative health assessment completed within the last 12 months. Applicants also need a resume or a copy of their verification of military experience and training which is accessible on the Air Force Portal.

To see what positions are available, go to AFPC secure applications on the Air Force Portal and click on the "reserve vacancy finder" page.

Force cuts,

from Page 1

sitioning as a result of force management is eligible to continue serving in the total force.

"The years they've invested in the Air Force so far can pay off for them," said Chief Master Sgt. Larry Giles, Force Requirements Policy chief, Reserve Personnel Directorate, Air Forces Reserve Command. "The Air National Guard or the Air Force Reserves are a great alternative for Airmen who don't want to leave the Air Force altogether."

Airmen are also uniquely qualified for many federal civilian positions and receive veterans preference when applying for federal service, General Dunbar said. Transition to the reserve component or an Air Force civilian position allows Airmen to remain a part of the Air Force family.

Airman and family readiness centers around the world host the Department of Labor Transition Assistance Program, offering Airmen information about the GI Bill and vital resources for a successful transition from the Air Force.

For more information on force management programs, call the Total Force Service Center, 1-800-525-0102, or visit the Air Force Personnel Center website.

PERSONNEL NOTES

Classes for job hunters

These upcoming classes are held in the airman and family readiness center in Sablich Center.

To register and for more information, call 376-8728.

Resumes for non-government jobs — 9-11:30 a.m. March 22, Room 108A. Maximum of 15 people per class; pre-registration is required no later than the day prior to the class.

Resumes for government or federal positions — 9-11:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 16 or March 30, Room 108B, 9 am until 11:30 am. Pre-registration is required no later than the day prior to the class.

Skills assessment class — 9-11:30 a.m. March 10, Room 108A. Pre-registration is required no later than the day prior to the class.

Interviewing and salary negotiation class — 9-11 a.m. Feb. 24 or March 24, Room 108A.

Resume writing and job fair preparation — special class to assist in preparing for April's Southern Region Military and Civilian Job Fair in April; 2-4:30 p.m. March 29, Room 108 B, or 9-11:30 a.m. March 31, Room 108A.

Upcoming special classes — in May there'll be special civilian job resume writing, federal job resume writing and interviewing classes for instructors or other personnel with inflexible work schedules. Each topic's class will be 45 minutes each day for three days. Participants are expected to attend all three class days.

MTI opportunities

The military training instructor corps has received authorization to pursue 18-month time-on-station waivers. First term Airman must be within their career job reservation window.

For more information, call the MTI recruiting team, DSN 473-1016 or 1018.

Use-or-lose leave guidance

For guidance on special leave accrual for members in use-or-lose leave status, call the military personnel section's customer service element, 376-8347 or 8348.

Identity theft is a personal nightmare and security risk. Shred bills, statements, letters, old journals, records, outdated application forms and any documents that contain your full name, Social Security number, duty title and job information, credit card, bank account numbers and names of family members. If you see documents being removed from trash cans, call the 81st Security Forces Squadron law enforcement desk, 377-3040.



Flippers in flight

Animal trainer Corinne Hammel, left, and biotechnician Dylan Gaudet from the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center's Pacific biosciences division in San Diego check on Buster, one of two dolphins transported via Keesler's airfield Feb. 1. The U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program is providing two of its trained bottlenose dolphins for a cooperative extended breeding loan to the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport. The institute, a research and rehabilitation facility, provides care to stranded animals. The two dolphins were involved in a variety of capability demonstrations and bioacoustics research projects for the Navy. Keesler personnel assisted in the transfer.

Photo by Senior Airman Eric Summers Jr.



Makeup artist Candy LeBlanc from Gilbert's Salon and Day Spa in Biloxi gives Julie Smith a makeover. Her husband, Tech. Sgt. Clyde Smith from the 403rd Wing, is deployed to Afghanistan.

Spa night indulges spouses of students, deployed members

Left, Staff Sgt. Amanda Margavich, 81st Force Support Squadron, gets a massage from Michael Rivers, a massage therapy student from Blue Cliff College. Her husband, Staff Sgt. Brian Margavich, 333rd Training Squadron, is deployed to Cuba.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



From left, Bath Junkie owner Brooke Odom shares a bath product sample with Jessica Petramala and Heather Kinney at Saturday's Spa Night at Sablich Center sponsored by the airman and family readiness center. Their husbands, Airmen 1st Class Noah Petramala and Joshua Kinney, are students in the 338th TRS.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



Don't drink and drive.

Call
Airmen Against
Drunk Driving,
377-SAVE,
for a
safe ride home.

Black History Month observance continues

Volunteer — get connected.

Black History Month events continue in February and spill over into March and April.

Bowling tournament — 11:30 a.m. Friday, Gaudé Lanes. The event benefits the Col. Lawrence Roberts Scholarship Fund. The cost is \$50 for a five-member team for the nine-pin no-tap event. For more information, call Kurt Higgins, 377-5250, or Master Sgt. Yolanda Jerry, 377-1201.

Soul food sampling — 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Feb. 25, youth center. Donations are accepted. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Rochelle Harden, 376-8662, or Staff Sgt. Ashley Brunson, 377-0378.

AAHC golf tournament — March 11, Bay Breeze Golf Course. \$50 per person for four-person team. For more information, call Mr. Higgins, 377-5250.

Sickle cell 5-kilometer run/walk — April 8, Blake Fitness Center. Registration 6:45 a.m., race time 7:30 a.m. Coast is \$10-\$15. For more information, call Sergeant Jerry, 377-1201, or Tech. Sgt. Tyrone Deckard, 376-6603.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Kurt Higgins, left, African-American Heritage Committee president, presents gifts of appreciation to Rip Daniels, guest speaker at the annual Black History Month luncheon, Feb. 3 at the Bay Breeze Event Center. Mr. Daniels owns WJZD-FM Radio in Gulfport.

AAFES offers new shops, brands in '11

AAFES Public Affairs

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is building a better benefit with a host of initiatives for 2011.

The popularity of concept shops continues to grow as 42 were opened on Army and Air Force installations in 2010. Based on the success of shops such as Izod, Michael Kors, Lauren Ralph Lauren, Vera Bradley and Pink by Victoria's Secret, more than 20 additional concept shops are scheduled to open this year.

The exchange plans to continue the expansion of its "beauty bar" concept. Featuring onsite makeup artists and skin care consultants, Beauty Bars include innovative brands of prestige cosmetics. The men's "grooming bar," which features shaving and skin care products, will also continue expanding this year.

The exchange is expanding its toning/shape-up shoe category with four brands, along with toning flip-flops and sandals.

New fashion jewelry brands are being added with seasonal colors, hoop earrings, stretch rings in bold colors and y-neck necklaces with fringes.

PowerZones will see the introduction and expansion of new products and consumer technologies including iPads, computer tablets, netbooks, eReaders and their accessories.

Two savings initiatives for military shoppers, social media and Price Cuts, will enjoy high visibility this year. AAFES' Facebook at "AAFES, Your Military BX/PX" and those who have opted-in to the mobile marketing program by texting "EXCHANGE" to 95613 continue to receive coupons through those venues.

Mardi Gras 2011

Merrymaking, masking mark annual Gulf Coast festivities

Language of Mardi Gras



Airman 1st Class Steven Holbrook, a cyber transport student in the 338th Training Squadron, cuts a slice of king cake. This Mardi Gras tradition is new to Airman Holbrook, who hails from Lincoln Park, Mich.

Beads — necklace thrown at parades.
Carnival — festival season which runs from the Feast of the Epiphany, Jan. 6, to Mardi Gras.

Colors — purple for justice, green for faith and gold for power.

Court — royalty for a carnival krewe or club.

Doubloons — commemorative coins.

King cake — crown-shaped pastry embellished with decorations in the Mardi Gras colors of purple, green and gold. King cakes resulted from European celebrations for Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, which commemorates the visit of the Wise Men to the Christ Child. To choose the king and queen for the festivities, a bean was tucked into the cake, and the person who found it received a year of good luck and the opportunity to pick a person to serve with him or her as royalty. Today's king cakes have a tiny plastic baby instead of a bean, so be careful when you bite into your slice of the treat. Many are filled with fruit, nuts or cream cheese. The finder of the baby traditionally has luck for a year, rules for the day — and has to supply the king cake for the next party.

Krewe — Mardi Gras organization.

Laissez les bon temps rouler — French phrase which means "let the good times roll."

Lent — a 40-day period of reflection and repentance observed by Christians preparing for Easter.

Mardi Gras — French for "Fat Tuesday," signifying celebration or overindulgence before Lent begins. The date varies depending on when Easter falls during a particular year (first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21, the spring equinox).

Throw me something, Mister — traditional cry of parade-goers to catch the attention of someone riding on a float to toss them a trinket.

Throws — necklaces, plastic cups, stuffed animals, candy, toys, coupons, pens, pencils, doubloons, paper flowers and other items tossed to parade spectators.

Gulf Coast Carnival Association

The celebration of Mardi Gras goes back to pagan rites of spring taken over by the early Catholic Church for a day of feasting before the beginning of Lent and weeks of fasting preceding Easter.

As the years passed, in addition to feasting, many added mummery with its masking and merrymaking — a sort of letting go of all inhibitions before taking on the somber penitence of Lent.

Some countries in Europe celebrated this day of feasting on different dates, but the French restricted it to the day preceding Lent, and this custom was adopted by the French colonies in the New World. In French, "Mardi" means "Tuesday" and Gras means "fat," or "to eat meat," thus Fat Tuesday or Shrove Tuesday.

Biloxi claims the first Mardi Gras celebrated in this area was at the newly-established Fort Maurepas, for wherever there was a Frenchman, a holiday and a bottle of wine, there was a celebration.

New Orleanians claim some of D'Iberville's men were exploring the mouth of the Mississippi River, and on the morning of Mardi Gras in 1699, formally took possession of the area and named a small stream near the mouth of the river — Bayou Mardi Gras — a name still printed on maps of that region.

The boisterous buffooneries of the garrison at Mobile, Ala. generally made Ash Wednesday a day for military as well as priestly discipline. It was a completely American innovation to organize the carnival, to substitute regular parades for the old impromptu mummings in the streets and to unite into many social groups for the masked balls scattered throughout the season.

The first recorded carnival celebration other than private parties or balls was New Year's Eve in Mobile in 1831 when a group of young men, following an evening of wine and dining, saw an intriguing array of rakes, hoes, tubs, buckets and cowbells in a hardware store window. They unceremoniously borrowed the implements and with cowbells clanging and tubs booming, paraded through the sleeping town serenading their friends.

Mobile's mayor graciously invited them in for refreshments, thereby giving official sanction to what turned out to be the organization of the Cowbellion de Rakin Society, forerunner of Coast Carnival Krewes and the fabulous parades themselves.

In New Orleans, the French colonists had their casual carnival balls and the Spanish found the custom well established when they took over the city in 1766.

But they noticed with alarm that many residents were devoting the day to boisterous violence, so the Spanish put a stop to the custom of masking. Orleanians, masked or unmasked, continued to enjoy gallivanting around in costume.

In 1820, a group of young Creoles educated in Paris decided to liven things up with a masked procession of substantial size. But it soon got out of hand, and the celebration was suppressed until 1857, when a new organization was formed to present a parade with floats and torch lights. The group was the Mystick Krewe of Comus, and there were two main floats, one carrying the king and the other showing Satan in a blazing hell. A new Mardi Gras was born with strong American overtones.

The older carnival traditions are carefully preserved. Rules of the "krewes," the men's organizations, dominate the lives of the city's social circles.

In New Orleans, Mardi Gras has become two celebrations — the first a genial free-for-everyone affair, and the other the revelry of exclusive societies.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

In this area, Christmas trees are often transformed into Mardi Gras trees to mark the carnival season, like this tree at the Azalea Dining Facility.

The oldest krewes dominate, with membership ranging from one to 200. The man who really dictates is the krewe captain, not the king. No sooner is one season ended than work begins on another. For many workmen, Mardi Gras is a year-round job.

A king is chosen, a man who can afford the expense of providing his own costume, jeweled train and accessories. The king gives suppers and parties and buys gifts for the queen and her maids. In smaller towns, the king also pays for the cost of his float.

The queen is usually chosen from among the current season's debutantes. The expense is great, but so is the honor. In this area, Mardi Gras is a school holiday, instead of Presidents Day that is celebrated in other parts of the country.

Biloxi was the first Mississippi Gulf Coast city to celebrate with a formal parade of floats in 1908. Now other towns celebrate with parades, but they space them at different times during the carnival season so all may come and enjoy each celebration. Biloxi still has its traditional carnival on Mardi Gras Day.

Let the good times roll — parades take center stage

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News staff

This year, Mardi Gras Day is March 8. Keesler units marching in specific parades are listed.

Feb. 19

Ocean Springs Elks, 1 p.m.; 872-2501; flag team, drum and bugle corps and honor guard.

Orange Grove Carnival Association, 2 p.m.; 832-0079.

Krewe of Little Rascals children's parade, Pascagoula, 1 p.m.; 938-6604.

Feb. 20

Lizana Mardi Gras parade, 1 p.m.; 234-7992.

Feb. 26

Krewe of Kids, Bay St. Louis, 11 a.m.; 216-0506.

Second Liners Mardi Gras Club, Biloxi, 1 p.m.; 209-8113; flag team.

Mystic Krewe of Pine Island, 1:30 p.m., Vancleave; 990-0270 or 219-8805.

Timber Ride Women's Club, Pass Christian, 2 p.m.; 452-6236.

Long Beach Carnival Association, 6 p.m.; 547-5890.

Gautier Men's Club, 7 p.m.; 327-1817 or (251) 583-8818.

Feb. 27

Krewe of Nereids, Waveland, 1 p.m.; 586-2505 or 806-6471.

March 4

Ocean Springs Carnival Association, 7 p.m.; 872-5455.

March 5

City of Biloxi children's walking parade, 11 a.m., 435-6339.

Krewe of Legacy, Pass Christian, 1 p.m.; 216-2097.

Krewe of Gemini, Gulfport, 2 p.m.; 539-9692.

Jackson County Carnival Association, Pascagoula, 1 p.m.; 497-3269.

Krewe of Diamondhead, noon; 255-9966.



Maj. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, 2nd Air Force commander, accepts a crepe paper flower from a member of the Ole Biloxi Marching Club at last year's Gulf Coast Carnival Association parade in Biloxi.

March 6

Pass Christian Mardi Gras parade, noon; 547-4873.

North Bay Area Mardi Gras Association, D'Iberville, 1:30 p.m.; 396-1869; flag team, drum and bugle corps, honor guard.

March 8

Gulf Coast Carnival Association, 1 p.m., Biloxi; 432-8806; color guard. Krewe of Neptune follows; 432-8806.

Krewe of Diamonds, Bay St. Louis, 1 p.m.; 671-1471.

Krewe of Gemini night parade, 6 p.m., Gulfport; 539-9692.

eight days a week

Arts and crafts center

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-2821.

Saturday — 10 a.m., beginning woodworking, \$25; 10 a.m. to noon, intarsia woodworking, \$25; 10:30 a.m. to noon, glass painting, \$25; 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., pottery, \$30. All classes include supplies.

Wednesday — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., pottery, \$30 includes supplies.

Bay Breeze Golf Course

Monday — 6 a.m. to dusk, Valentine's Day special, your sweetie plays free with the purchase of one player rate. For more information or tee time, call 377-3882.

Monday-Feb. 17 — 2 p.m., twilight special, play unlimited golf until closing. For information on fees or tee time, call 377-3832.

Monday-Feb. 19 — golf lessons with a professional, by appointment only. \$30 per half-hour.

Daily — 6-9 a.m., breakfast in the snack bar.

Bay Breeze Community Center

Friday — 7 p.m., father/son pool tournament, take a shot at family fun. Free to enter. For more information, call 377-2509.

Tuesday — 7-8 p.m., ballroom variety dance. Learn the cha-cha, swing, foxtrot and waltz. \$10 per class, per person. For more information, call 377-2509.

Gaudé Lanes Bowling Center

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

Saturday — 5 p.m., sweetheart mixed doubles tournament, 9-pin no-tap tournament. Prizes awarded to the top three teams.

Monday — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Valentine's bowling special. Bring in your sweetie and they'll bowl a

game free with every game you bowl. Sponsored by Budweiser – Responsibility Matters.

Weekdays — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., bowling lunch special, buy any combo meal at the 11th Frame Café and get one free game of bowling.

McBride Library

Monday — 3:30 p.m., healthy smiles dental program, ages 5-9. For more information, call 377-2181.

Wednesday — 10 a.m., children's story time, ages 3-5.

Nonappropriated fund sale

Today — at the former shoppette on Meadows Drive. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Open to all Department of Defense card holders. All sales are cash and carry. Limitations apply. For more information, log on to <http://www.keeslerservices.us> or call 377-3160.

Bay Breeze Collocated Club

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

Today — 5-8 p.m., Mongolian barbecue in the ballroom; 95 cents per ounce for club members and \$1.10 per ounce for nonmembers.

Monday — 5-8 p.m., Valentine's dinner in the ballroom. Music provided by jazz pianist Red Velvet. \$30 per couple for members, \$34 per couple for nonmembers. To purchase your tickets or for more information, call 377-2334. Sponsored by Mississippi Coast Coliseum.

Saturday — 4-7 p.m., social hour in collocated lounge.

Wednesday — 4 p.m., Wingman Wednesday in the lounge. \$5 domestic draft pitchers. Wings and things free for members, nonmembers pay \$3 at the door.

Weekdays — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., all-you-can-eat

lunch buffet and salad bar in the casual dining area. \$6.95 members, \$8.95 nonmembers. For more information, call 377-2334.

Vandenberg Community Center

Editor's note: Activities are part of the late night dances, \$3 admission; nonprior students only.

Weekdays — 6-7 p.m., tae kwon do for ages 18 and older; \$75 per month per person.

Today — 6-9 p.m., "That's My Line," we provide the props and you provide the line. Free to participate.

Friday — 9-11 p.m., "V" dance squad competition, squadron crews compete for a trophy and \$100 gift card. Free to compete.

Airman and family readiness center

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

Monday — 10-11 a.m., sponsor training, for those sponsoring inbound personnel. Learn about resources, AETC deadlines and tips for making newcomers feel welcome.

Monday-Wednesday — 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., transition assistance workshop. Three-day workshop conducted by the Department of Labor to assist in transition to the civilian work force. Open to those 12 months or less from separation or 24 months from retirement. Spouses are invited to attend.

Tuesday — 9-11:30 a.m., career skills assessment.

Wednesday — 9-11:30 a.m., federal resume writing/job search. Learn how to prepare a resume for federal employment. Limit 15 per class.

Feb. 17 — 1-4 p.m., retirement benefits briefing.

Fitness centers

Friday — Noon, 5K healthy heart run/walk at Blake Fitness Center. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. Free to participate. Participants encouraged to wear red for National Heart Month.

Keesler Open House and Air Show — March 19-20

Worship schedule

Roman Catholic

Daily Mass, 11:15 a.m.,
Triangle Chapel.

Sunday Mass, 9 a.m.,
Triangle Chapel.

Protestant

Traditional service,
8:30 a.m. Sunday, Larcher
Chapel.

Contemporary service,
10:30 a.m. Sunday, Trian-
gle Chapel.

Gospel service, noon
Sunday, Triangle Chapel.

Jewish

Services take place at 8
p.m. Fridays at Congrega-
tion Beth Israel, 12277
Three Rivers Road, Gulf-
port.

Saturday services are
scheduled at 10 a.m. this
week, March 19 and April 9.

For more information,
call 377-4050, 207-2196,
539-1655 or 1-405-740-
9077.

Islamic

Prayer is five times
daily; Salaat ul-Jummah
congregational prayer,
noon on Friday, Building
2003.. For more informa-
tion, call 377-2520.

Latter-Day Saints

Student group service,
2 p.m. Sunday, Triangle
Chapel. For more infor-
mation, call 396-5274 or
1-616-881-1994.



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Keesler fan
on Facebook!**

**81TRW
Keesler AFB, MS**

Financial seminars

Keesler Federal Credit Union offers free financial seminars on base during Military Saves Week, Feb. 21-25:

Feb. 23 — 10-11 a.m., Room 108B, Sablich Center, Investing for your financial goals.

Feb. 24 — 9-10:30 a.m., budgeting your expense and debt; 10:45-11:45 a.m., home buying, both at Bay Breeze Event Center Function Room 1.

Feb. 25 — 10-11:30 a.m., Room 108B, Sablich Center, how to prevent identity theft.

Register by Feb. 18 at www.kfcu.org/militarysavesclasses. For more information, call Jessica Bartels, 385-5500, extension 6353, or e-mail jessica.bartels@kfcu.org. Include phone number in e-mail.

Singers sought

Vocalists are needed to sing the National Anthem at base or community ceremonies.

For more information, call YoLanda Wallace, 377-1179..

Tax office

The base tax office in Room 229, Sablich Center, is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on training Fridays.

For more information and appointments, call 376-8141.

Office moves

The 81st Medical Group Hospital's Tricare patient registration and outpatient records customer service office has moved from Room 1A222 on the first floor to Room GF400 on the ground floor.

The new location is just off the outpatient clinic lobby behind the information desk.

Hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday. The phone number for Tricare patient registration is 376-4742 and the phone number for outpatient records customer service is 376-4754.

DBIDS registration

Registration continues for Defense Biometric Identification System cards.

Active-duty members and Defense Department employees register through March 31. Registration for retirees and dependants is April 1 through June 31, but the pass and ID office won't turn away those wishing to register earlier.

Register at the pass and registration office in the visitor center across from the White Avenue Gate, the military personnel section in Sablich Center, the exchange pharmacy, the 81st Medical Group Hospital's information desk and A tower lobby, 403rd Maintenance Squadron, Hewes Hall and the Levitov Training Support Facility.

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.

Airman's Attic is also open on a trial basis, 5-7 p.m. Tuesday.

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.

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

For more information, call 377-3217.

Speakers bureau

The public affairs office is looking for people who enjoy public speaking to tell the Air Force story.

For more information, call YoLanda Wallace, 377-1179.

Chapel hikes deliver food, good will to remote villages

By Staff Sgt. Kimberly Moore

Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs

Editor's note: Sergeant Moore is deployed from the 81st Training Wing Public Affairs office.

SOTO CANO AIR BASE, Honduras — Joint Task Force-Bravo's Jan. 22 chapel hike was the third for Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Seligman since his arrival to Soto Cano Air Base in October, but the base has been conducting these hikes since 2007.

Chapel hikes allow members from Soto Cano Air Base to interact with Hondurans while providing them with necessary sustenance foods, the chaplain explained. The Soto Cano Air Base Friendship Chapel sponsors monthly hiking trips that partners JTF-Bravo members with local community leaders, city hall officials and the World Food Program to provide support to surrounding villages in need of food and supplies.

"The amount of food we provide is directly reflective of the generous donations from personnel assigned to Soto Cano Air Base, a true testament of the American spirit," said Chaplain Seligman, who's deployed from Keesler. "Once we know how much money we have to purchase food, we have our (non-government organization representative) at the World Food Program locate a village in need, then we meet with the patronato (town father) and he chooses families to receive our donations, we schedule the hike and volunteers sign up to transport the donations."

"January's hike was to the villages of Las Delicias and Guayabal where we hiked through a coffee plantation owned by retired Lt. Col. Arturo Buxo. Mr. Buxo is a former JTF-B DCO who owns the coffee plantation. There is a lot of need in the two villages so this location



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kimberly Moore
Chaplain Seligman hands a donated bag of food to a villager.

just felt like a good fit," said Chaplain Seligman.

The donations included rice, salt, oats, sugar, soup, pasta and flour, just to men-

tion a few. Many of the hike participants disbursed hygiene items as well, the chaplain said.

"This was the first time we donated hygiene items," he said. "I asked participants to bring items we take for granted every day; items like soap, lotion, toothpaste and toothbrushes can become a luxury when resources are scarce, so the hike participants provided these items."

And there was a lot to hand out.

"This was probably the largest attendance in recent history — we had 107 members volunteer to go on the hike and we received more monetary donations than ever before," Chaplain Seligman said. "On November's hike, we probably only had half as many bags to donate and the bags themselves weren't as full as January's hike. The people we visited were blessed beyond what we've ever been able to do before."

Both JTF-B and the local people benefit from chapel hikes, he said.

"We do these because there is a need and the people of Honduras are a precious people," the chaplain said. "Chapel hikes are valuable to JTF-B in promoting security through friendships. We get to meet each other, shake hands, play soccer and have fun together, in turn promoting democratic values. All of this is important for regional stability where there's strength in unity."

"I couldn't believe the turnout," Chaplain Seligman said. "Everyone here is so eager to be part of positive activities. It reveals a lot about the volunteer spirit of America; we pull together and accomplish amazing things."

"Our Chaplain Corps calls us toward an outward ministry focus and a posture of servant leadership," he said. "Chapel hikes are a great way to accomplish this mission."

Fallen Marine's best friend adopted

By Randy Roughton

Defense Media Activity

LACKLAND Air Force Base, Texas — “Whatever is mine is his,” Marine Corps Pfc. Colton Rusk wrote about Eli, his military working dog, in the final days of their deployment in Afghanistan. On Feb. 3, Private Rusk’s family helped prove his words true when they adopted the black Labrador retriever in a retirement and adoption ceremony at the military working dog school here.

After 20-year-old Private Rusk was killed Dec. 5 in Helmand province, Afghanistan, by Taliban sniper fire, Marines officials told Darrell and Kathy Rusk, his parents, that Eli, his infantry explosives detector dog, crawled on top of their son to protect him after he was shot. The Rusks drove to Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, from their home in Orange Grove, Texas, along with their sons, 22-year-old Cody and 12-year-old Brady; Private Rusk’s aunt, Yvonne Rusk; and Jan Rusk and Katy and Wayne O’Neal, Private Rusk’s grandparents.

Marine Staff Sgt. Jessy Eslick of the Department of Defense Military Working Dog Research and Development Section praised Eli as “a dog that brought Marines home to their families,” as he handed the leash to the family. Eli immediately began licking Mrs. Rusk’s palms



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bennie Davis III
Brady Rusk, 12, hugs Eli, a bomb-sniffing military working dog, during a retirement and adoption ceremony Feb. 3 at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The Labrador retriever was assigned to Brady’s older brother, Marine Pfc. Colton Rusk, who was killed Dec. 5 in Afghanistan. DOD officials granted the Rusk family permission to adopt Eli following his “retirement from the U.S. Marine Corps.”

and fell into the arms of his former handler’s father.

“In his last letter we got the day before we buried him, at the very top was a little smudge that said ‘Eli’s kisses,’” said Mrs. Rusk, who wore a two-sided pendant with a photo of her son on one side and another snapshot of him with Eli on the other. “He thought whatever was Colton’s was Eli’s.

“Like Colton said, ‘what’s mine is his,’” she said. “We’re Colton’s family, so it’s just right that we’re Eli’s family now.”

Eli, who was trained in the military working dog program at Lackland, is reportedly the second military working dog the Marines discharged to permit adoption by a fallen handler’s family. Cpl.

Dustin Lee’s family adopted his German shepherd, Lex, after the Quitman, Miss., Marine died from wounds he received in a mortar attack in Al Anbar province, Iraq, on March 21, 2007. The corporal’s family worked for nine months with an online petition and congressional help.

Mrs. Rusk said her family didn’t have as many obstacles in their quest to adopt Eli. Texas Gov. Rick Perry started the process of working with the Marines on the dog’s discharge, and Scooter Kelo, who trained Eli and also taught Private Rusk on working with the dog, also worked on making the adoption possible.

“It gets our mind off the sadness of losing Colton,” Mrs. Rusk said, “just knowing we’re going to have a little piece of Colton in Eli. I just wished he could talk and tell us some stories. Just to know we’re going to be able to share the love we have for our son with something that he loved dearly.”

Private Rusk joined the Marines after he graduated from Orange Grove High School, and committed himself to the Marines the same week that his best friend, Lance Cpl. Justin Rokohl, lost both legs in southern Afghanistan. Private Rusk deployed to Afghanistan on

Best friend,

from Page 23

his 20th birthday, with Eli, as part of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

“He wanted to be a Marine since he was 10 years old,” his mother said. “We talked to him about maybe going to college first, but he said he had to fight for his country first.”

Private Rusk often told his parents how dogs like Eli were well-trained at the DOD Military Working Dog School at Lackland and in South Carolina, where he was trained as an improvised explosive device detector dog handler.

“We’ve had dogs all of our lives,” Mr. Rusk said. “Since all of the boys were babies, they had one. Colton was probably the better handler of the bunch. When he went to train in South Carolina, he said, ‘Dad, we don’t know how to train dogs. These dogs here will bring you a beer, they’ll open the can for you, but sometimes they’ll drink it for you, too.’ He said that was how well-trained the dogs were, and he was really amazed how much you can do with a dog once you’ve worked with them.”

The dog Private Rusk liked to call “my boy, Eli,” earned a reputation for wanting to be wherever his handler was.

“He told a story of when they were in the chow line one time,” Mr. Rusk said. “One of the Marines kicked at the dog one time and told him to get the dog out. Colton and the Marine got into a little scuffle. They told Colton he could stay inside and leave the dog outside, but from then on, Colton and Eli ate outside. That’s how tight he and the dog were.”

The family met Eli once when they visited Private Rusk at Camp Pendleton the week he deployed.

After the retirement and adoption ceremony, the Rusks took Eli to their home on more than 20 acres of land, which he will share with the family, as well as their horses and three German shepherds.

More news, videos, information and photos on the Web at <http://www.keesler.af.mil>

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Super Bowl game on!



Airman 1st Class Kristina Friley, 338th Training Squadron, competes in the punt, pass and kick challenge during Sunday's Super Bowl party at Bay Breeze Event Center.

Airman 1st Class Robert Fraki, 338th TRS, declares his love for the Green Bay Packers by balancing a block of cheese on his head. Airman 1st Class Jonathan Gingas, 338th TRS, joins his fellow Packer fan to cheer on their favorite team.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



Left, Pittsburgh Steelers fan Barry Newman, 81st Training Wing, reveals his true black and gold colors hoping to see his team win its seventh Super Bowl title. But with a smile on his face, it's likely this picture was taken before the end of the game in which the Steelers lost to the Green Bay Packers, 31-25.

Last hurrah for 2010 Super Bowl champs



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Michael Lewis, former New Orleans Saints player and team ambassador, signs his autograph on a Saints poster for Brandi Hardin and her mother, Carolyn Hardin, a base exchange employee, at the exchange Friday. The Saints' 2010 Super Bowl trophy was also on display.

Feb. 26 race benefits Fisher House

The Fighting for Freedom race is Feb. 26 in Gulfport at 9138 Carl Leggett Road at Cowan-Lorraine Road.

The race benefits Keesler's Fisher House.

The 5-k starts at 9 a.m. and the 1 mile "fun run" begins at 9:30.

The race is open to run-

ners, joggers and walkers of all ages and abilities.

Early registration is \$15 and must be post marked by Feb. 1.

Late registration, available up until race day, is \$20.

For more information call 604-2227.

Keesler hopeful heads to wounded warrior camp

Air Force News Service

WASHINGTON – The Air Forces Services Agency has invited 32 athletes to the 2011 Air Force Warrior Team training camp Feb. 7-11 in San Antonio.

Damian Orslene, a retired chief master sergeant from Keesler, a member of the 2010 Air Force team, will be at the training camp, hoping to be selected for this year's games.

"It's an honor to be considered for selection again," the chief said.

Of the athletes attending the Air Force Warrior Team training camp, 25 will be selected to represent the Air Force in the 2011 Warrior Games, an Olympic-style competition open to wounded, ill and injured military members and veterans, May 16-21 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

"I'm confident we'll have a great team this year," said Capt. Courtnee Cruz, the Air Force warrior and survivor care policy chief. "We're looking forward to getting an outstanding team together and represent the Air Force well at the games."

This year's team will consist of 25 Airmen from a variety of backgrounds.

"It is my hope to be given the privilege to represent my United States Air Force in this spirited competition between the U.S. services," said Tech. Sgt. Francis Reilly, a 2011 Air Force Warrior Team hopeful from Hurlburt Field, Fla.

About 200 warriors from all services will compete in the 2011 games in such events as archery, cycling, basketball, shooting, swimming, track and field and volleyball.

"The goal of these games isn't necessarily to determine the best athletes," Captain Cruz said. "The goal is to maximize wounded veterans' abilities and to show them their true potential through competitive sports."

The Warrior Games are developed through the partnership of the U.S. Olympic Committee, Department of Defense and sponsors. For information, visit www.woundedwarrior.af.mil.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Desiree Palacios
Orslene, top center, and his Air Force team members throw their hands in for a quick cheer before playing a wheelchair basketball game during the Warrior Games bronze medal match against the Navy May 12, 2010, at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. The Air Force won the game, 13-10.