

Base Briefs

FRIDAY FAMILY SAFETY DAY

Gen. Lance Lord, Air Force Space Command commander, has declared Friday as a family safety day. This is a down day for all AFSPC military personnel. Commanders are encouraged to approve liberal leave for civilian personnel.

BEACH HOTLINE OFFERS UPDATES

The Surf Beach violation total continues to stand at 16 while Minuteman Beach carries one. The maximum limit at Surf Beach is 25 violations. The maximum at Minuteman is five. If the limit is reached, the respective beach will close until Sept. 30, the end of the Western Snowy Plover nesting season. The open-area boundaries are clearly marked and base officials will issue citations to people who enter closed areas. Normal beach hours for Wall, Minuteman and Surf beaches are Friday through Monday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information regarding beach access or status, call the Beach Hotline at 606-6804.

HONOR GUARD NEEDS SENIOR NCO

The Vandenberg Honor Guard needs a volunteer to serve as NCO in charge of the team. The position is open to Vandenberg senior NCOs. The NCOIC manages up to 60 people. Applicants must be able to balance normal duties and honor guard commitments. For more information, call Capt. Brian Holbein at 606-1542, Ext. 3219 or 2nd Lt. Sandra Quinones at 606-3653.

TOP THREE OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

The VAFB Top Three Association has three \$200 scholarships for active-duty enlisted members assigned to Vandenberg. Papers on an aspect of enlisted military history will be accepted from July 5 to Aug. 5. Submission requirements may be found at: intranet/prof_assocations/top3/scholarship/index.htm. For more information, call Master Sgts. Barbara Henson at 606-7387 or Jeffery Sherrill at 606-5595.

COMMISSARY CLOSES THURSDAY

The Commissary and the Mini-Comm are closed Thursday in observance of Independence Day. Both stores are open Friday. For more information, call Paige Zuniga at 734-3354, Ext. 225.

BASE INFORMATION MANAGERS CALL

There is an information manager's call Thursday from 8 to 10:30 a.m. in Bldg. 7025 auditorium. Topics to be covered are the new Air Force 3A briefing, upgrade training, AEF process and quarterly 3A awards presentation. For more information call Senior Master Sgt. Doug Fischer at 606-3077 or Master Sgt. Quinn Johnson at 606-9054.

Launch crews ready SLC-4 West for next-to-last Titan II launch

By CAPT TOM KNOWLES
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

Only days after successfully launching a civilian weather satellite, Space Launch Complex-4 West launch crews are wasting no time in turning the pad around for yet another launch scheduled for October.

"We've never done this before," said Lt. Col. Clint Crosier, 2nd Space Launch Squadron commander, referring to the quick pace which the pad is being readied for launch. "Most of the time when we get one launch out, the spacecraft and the booster aren't ready yet. So we usually have months to conduct refurbishment work and get set up for the next launch."

But this launch was different, in that both booster and payload have been awaiting launch since technical issues delayed previous attempts in January of 2001. At that time, both were stacked on the pad and ready for launch. At T-minus three minutes, the operation was scrubbed for 24 hours after identifying a ground support equipment malfunction. The next day, at T-30 seconds in the countdown, it was postponed once more after being unable to confirm if an oxidizer pre-valve sensor had opened.

After resolving these issues, the launch team discovered a leaky thruster on board the satellite, causing further delays and eventually requiring crews to remove the spacecraft from the Titan on Feb. 5 to resolve the issue. All four spacecraft thrusters were eventually replaced, but not before crews accomplished the unprecedented task of de-fueling and de-stacking the Titan without incident, making the pad available for G-14,



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN APRIL MUNIZ

The G-9 mission Titan II first-stage booster, once on alert at Little Rock AFB, Ark, is raised into position Tuesday morning at Space Launch Complex 4-West. The Titan II booster will put a weather satellite into low-earth orbit in September.

the next mission. The G-14 booster, carrying a National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration weather satellite, was successfully launched June 24.

Having made post launch repairs to the pad, the G-9

booster was transported to Space Launch Complex-4 West on Monday, seven days after the NOAA launch. The team, led by the 2nd Space Launch Squadron, then turned right around and began stacking the

Titan II booster on Tuesday.

"The incredible efforts of the 2 SLS/ Lockheed Martin team have been fantastic," said Capt. Carlos Dalmau, Generation

See TITAN Page 3

DoD set to restart anthrax vaccination program

By ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS KATHLEEN RHEM
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense Department officials announced today they are restarting a modified Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program now that the vaccine provider has passed Food and Drug Administration scrutiny.

Only service members, essential civilians and contractor personnel going to or serving in high-threat areas will receive the vaccine, said Dr. Bill Winkenwerder, assistant defense secretary for health affairs. This is because half the contractor's vaccine production will be stockpiled for civilian use.

"We recognize there is a domestic need for access to the vaccine," Winkenwerder said during a news conference at the Pentagon. "In collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Homeland Security, we are reserving a portion of the anthrax vaccine for stockpiling ... to use in the event of a domestic emergency."

In 1998, the DoD began a plan to vaccinate all military members against the deadly, potential biological weapon. The program was pared down several times in the intervening years as the sole provider of the vaccine shut down its factory for renovations and then had problems gaining FDA approval of its production process.

Vaccine shortages eventually caused the DoD to vaccinate only limited numbers of service members serving in "designated special mission units."

The contractor, Bioport of Lansing, Mich., gained FDA approval of its renovated facility in January and is now ready to begin providing additional stocks of the vaccine to DoD.

Winkenwerder said the new policy is "more targeted" than the previous plan to vaccinate the total force. He said the numbers of service members and essential civilians vaccinated will jump, but he would not say how high. Nor would he say what areas of the world are considered "higher threat."

"We will identify those areas to the ser

See DOD Page 4



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN APRIL MUNIZ

Mitch Jones, Vandenberg fire engineer, risked his life and used his live-saving knowledge to save an 11-year-old girl from certain death at Jalama beach June 14.

Base firefighter saves girl from drowning

By STAFF SGT. REBECCA BONILLA
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

He's a father and a son. He's a California native. He's a surfer. He's a member of the team. He's a firefighter.

June 14, Mitch Jones became a hero.

Jones is a fire engineer and a 24-year veteran of the Vandenberg Fire Department. June 14 he was camping at Jalama Beach with his parents and 5-year-old son, Mitch Jr.

Jones and his son were playing on the beach when he noticed two children playing in the water about 150 yards away.

The children were alone. The wind was whipping the sand into a frenzy. "It wasn't a good time to be on the beach," Jones said.

About 100 yards out, 15-year-

old Erika, swam while her 11-year-old brother caught 6-foot swells on his boogie board.

"They looked like they were having a good time," the soon-to-be rescuer said. "But after a while, I noticed they were trying to come in and they weren't making any progress."

"I noticed they were in a rip tide." Growing up on the Southern California shore gave Jones his expertise in identifying the treacherous undertow.

With his son in tow, Jones raced down the beach. He heard the boy in the water yelling for help so he tore off his hat and glasses and jumped into the 58-degree water.

As he swam up to the children, Jones said a wave hit

See HERO Page 4

Base goes to ALCON Alpha

Team V takes steps to combat alcohol problems

By STAFF SGT. ANDREW LEONHARD
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

For the first time in the history of the U.S. Air Force, leaders will implement Alcohol Condition Alpha here today.

Col. Robert M. Worley II, 30th Space Wing Space commander, issued the order to go to ALCON Alpha upon the recommendations of a task force made up of several base agencies.

The order was based on the association of people enjoying alcoholic beverages during the Fourth-of-July holiday weekend and the increased risk of alcohol related misconduct.

According to Worley this continues to be a serious issue facing the base.

"Offenses for driving under the influence of alcohol are occurring in unacceptable numbers," said the commander. "We must attack this problem more aggressively."

In 2001, Vandenberg had 36

DUI's and more than 50 underage drinking incidents. To date this year, the number of DUIs stands at 16, a pace that could eclipse last year's numbers.

Worley formed the task force to help stop this growing problem.

"We lost two Team Vandenberg members last year due to alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents," said Master Sgt. James Richardson, 30th Space Wing Ground Safety NCO in charge.

"That is two too many."

According to Richardson, who facilitates the task force, the system mirrors force protection and information conditions used

Various units change commanders in July

Several of Team Vandenberg's senior leaders are soon leaving here for the next chapter in their careers. All Team V members are invited to attend the following ceremonies. Attire for each event is duty uniform for military members and daily attire for civilians.

532ND TRAINING SQUADRON

Lt. Col. John Anderson relinquishes command of the 532nd Training Squadron to Lt. Col. Paul Irwin Jr. during a brief ceremony at 9 a.m. July 9 in the Bldg. 8250 high bay. Col. Kenneth Van Sickle, 381st Training Group commander, will officiate. There is a reception in the high bay immediately after the ceremony. For more

Alpha	
A general threat of possible alcohol abuse or DUI activity exists (i.e., holidays, three-day weekends or special events).	
DUI totals for the Year 16	
Ops Group	0
Log Group	2
Spt Group	4
Med Group	0
30 SW Staff	1
14 AF	0
381 TRG	1
576 FLTS	1
Det. 9	1
Others	6

GRAPHIC BY STEVE HEURING

throughout the Air Force.

"This program is designed to bring about alcohol awareness for Vandenberg personnel and ultimately to help bring about a cultural shift," Richardson said.

See ALCON Page 4

information, call Capt. Timothy Millett at 606-2724 or Virginia Battle at 605-2137.

614TH SPACE OPERATIONS GROUP

Col. Suzanne Vautrinot relinquishes command of the 614th Space Operations Group to Col. Jay Santee during a brief ceremony at 10:30 a.m. July 9 at the flagpole in front of Bldg. 10577. Maj. Gen. Michael Hamel, 14th Air Force commander, will officiate. In case of inclement weather, the Pacific Coast Club is the back-up location for the event. There is a reception in the Pacific

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In this issue of the



Medal of Honor recipient Pitsenbarger exhibit unveiled at Maxwell. See Page 3.



New York police department officer turns in shield for stripes. See Page 4.

Weekend forecast
Low clouds in the morning and evening with clear afternoon skies.

Low/High
51/73

For a full VAFB weather report visit www.vandenberg.af.mil/30sw/news/30swweather/weather_index.html

Also view The Space & Missile Times at http://www.vandenberg.af.mil/30sw/news/space_times/index.html

Flower Festivities



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN JOHNATHAN POMEROY

Col. Robert M. Worley II, 30th Space Wing commander, his wife Lori and their daughter Grace ride in style during Saturday's Flower Festival's parade through Lompoc. The annual parade was part of the festival's 50th anniversary celebration.

Commander celebrates forefathers' vision, courage

By COL. ROBERT M. WORLEY II
30th Space Wing commander

Thus be it ever when free men shall stand
Between their lov'd homes and the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!"

These inspiring words from the fourth verse of our National Anthem remind us of the ultimate sacrifice so many have made to preserve the freedom our forefathers so nobly and boldly declared some 226 years ago.

"The power that hath made and preserved us a nation!" is not power born of politics, technology or armies; it is the power born of the human spirit and its enduring quest for freedom. It is a power undergirded by faith, perseverance and courage.

To me, this is the essence of Independence Day – a celebration of the vision and courage it takes to pursue the more difficult path, because it is the right path.

I thank God our forefathers had that vision and courage.



As we find ourselves today, once again, applying that power that preserves us as a nation, we find determined courage in President John F. Kennedy's words, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to ensure the survival and success of liberty."

Lori and I wish you all a happy and blessed Fourth of July holiday. And, as always – **Make safety a mindset.**

Commander's Action Line



Col. Robert M. Worley II
Commander,
30th Space Wing

Mission success is our top priority, and the talented men and women of Team Vandenberg get it done with excellence.

Key to the effectiveness of any great team is good communication. The 30th Space Wing Commander's Action Line is your direct communication link to me.

It provides an avenue for you to voice your concerns, share constructive ideas, or give your Vandenberg teammates a pat on the back.

I appreciate your input, and I am personally involved in every response.

While the Commander's Action Line is a great way to communicate, don't forget there are many other avenues to get answers to your questions including your chain of command, first sergeants, base services officials and other base professionals.

Thanks for helping to make Vandenberg such a great place to work and live. When calling the action line, please leave your name and phone number in case more information is needed.

Call or e-mail: **606-7850** E-mail your message to actionline@vandenberg.af.mil

EMERGENCY.....	911
Command Post	606-9961
Poison control.....	800-876-4766
Clinic appointments.....	606-2273
Information.....	411
After-hours urgent care.....	888-252-3299
TRICARE services.....	800-242-6788
Health Care Information Line.....	800-611-2883
Pharmacy Assistance	606-7440
Pharmacy Refill (recording)	605-0200
Law enforcement.....	606-3911

Liberty's flame lives in us

By GEN. LANCE LORD
Commander of Air Force Space Command

Independence Day is a day of celebration – a time when families and friends gather to spend quality time with one another. It is also a day of remembrance – a time when we reflect on the courage that brought 56 men from 13 states together to sign our Declaration of Independence. More than 225 years ago a group of visionaries put forth their idea for a democratic nation. They pledged their

reputations and their lives to a republic founded on the principle of freedom.

As military members, we are charged with protecting that vision. We often hear that the price of freedom is not free and the events of September 11th have reminded us just how true that is. Now more than ever we know that this responsibility is not just a lofty concept, but a real mission. We are America's guardians, keepers of the flame of liberty. Know that when you report for duty – whether it is to an operations center or a dining

hall, whether at home station or a deployed location – you are serving your country and all it represents.

As you spend time with family and friends this holiday weekend, be mindful of the legacy we are charged with preserving. I'm proud of the work you do every day to that end. I want to make sure we're all preserving a personal legacy as well. By that, I want each of us to look out for each other during this statistically dangerous time of year. Beccy and I hope you enjoy the long weekend, but please think about safety when you celebrate.

SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

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Send submissions to: 30SW/WA, 747 Nebraska Ave., Room A-105, VAFB, CA 93437; via fax at DSN 276-8303 or commercial (805) 606-8303; or by e-mail to Space&MissileTimes@vandenberg.af.mil

Questions regarding the paper can be directed to the Space & Missile Times staff at (805) 606-2040.

DON'T DRINK & DRIVE! If you're drinking alcohol -- you need a ride home. Don't hesitate. For a free, no-questions-asked ride home, Call Airmen Against Drunk Driving 698-8823 or 698-8822

Team Vandenberg salutes 120 promotees during monthly ceremony

■ Promotions signify that one has demonstrated the ability to do the job right, is ready for increased responsibility, up to the challenge of leading others or all of the above.

Monday, Team Vandenberg recognized 120 people for their achievements and potential during the monthly promotion ceremony in the Pacific Coast Club.

This month's promotees are:

AIRMAN
Dario Arino 30th Security Forces Squadron
Jennifer Arnold 30th SFS
Maria Aviles 30th SFS
Bryan Bassett Det. 1, 345th Training Squadron
Larry Bent Det. 1, 345th TRS
Justin Bierbower Det. 1, 345th TRS
James Boivin Det. 1, 345th TRS
Jedidiah Brown Det. 1, 345th TRS
James Carter 532nd TRS
Kimberly Caspersen Det. 1, 345th TRS
Daniel Coleman Det. 1, 345th TRS
Marcus Craig 532nd TRS
Robert Culmer 392nd TRS
Andrea Dority 532nd TRS

Joseph Dulong Det. 1, 345th TRS
Garret Dunn Det. 1, 345th TRS
Adrian Garcia Det. 1, 345th TRS
Daniel Gaskins Det. 1, 345th TRS
James Gilsdorf Det. 1, 345th TRS
Joshua Guffey Det. 1, 345th TRS
David Harris 532nd TRS
William Harvey Det. 1, 345th TRS
Alberto Hernandez Det. 1, 345th TRS
Jonathan Hix Det. 1, 345th TRS
Joshua Holcomb Det. 1, 345th TRS
Aaron Jacobson Det. 1, 345th TRS
Jennifer James 532nd TRS
Tanganika Johnson 392nd TRS
Jesse Koenigstein Det. 1, 345th TRS
Jesse Lomonaco 532nd TRS
Steven Marshall 32nd TRS
Che Mason 532nd TRS
Nathanael Maudlin 532nd TRS
Christopher McKinney 532nd TRS
Michael Metcalfe Det. 1, 345th TRS
Christopher Miller Det. 1, 345th TRS
Mitchell Newman Det. 1, 345th TRS
Jason Ortiz Det. 1, 345th TRS
Natalie Papuga Det. 1, 345th TRS
Brian Pimentel Det. 1, 345th TRS
Duane Salas 532nd TRS
Paul Salmons Det. 1, 345th TRS
John Seller 30th TRNS
Charles Shuff 532nd TRS

John Songco Det. 1, 345th TRS
Corey Sundquist Det. 1, 345th TRS
Mark Torres Det. 1, 345th TRS
Norman Wathey Colon 532nd TRS
AIRMAN FIRST CLASS
Bridget McLaughlin 30th Communications Squadron
David McQuistan 30th Civil Engineer Squadron
Karyna Mitchell 30th Range Squadron
Jenny Ramos De Lima 30th SFS
Angelica Ryan Det. 1, 345th TRS
Michaela Wendlandt 30th CES
Rochelle Winston 30th Medical Support Squadron
SENIOR AIRMAN
Angela Brown 30th SFS
Todd Chapman 30th SFS
David Choy 534th TRS
John Cote 30th CES
Dayshawn Grant 30th SFS
Sean Henderson 30th CS
Joseph Henneman 30th SFS
Carlos Hernandez 30th SFS
Terrance Jones 30th CES
Robert Knapp 30th MDSS
Derick Lake 30th TRNS
Julianne Lujan 30th TRNS
Henry Medina 30th Comptroller Squadron

Lalita Miller 30th MDSS
Kamek Moorehead 30th Mission Support Squadron
Jerica Pace 30th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron
Joseph Payne 30th CES
Carl Ross 576th Flight Test Squadron
Theodore Strycharz 30th CES
Tanay Williams 30th Medical Operations Squadron
Christopher Winchell 30th SFS
STAFF SERGEANT
William Blodgett Det. 1, Launch Communications Office
Anthony Creazzo 30th SFS
Christopher Ford 576th FLTS
David Goodnight 576th FLTS
Michele Higdon 30th MDOS
Darryl Lyles 30th SFS
Travis Marks 532nd TRS
Nicholas Marzan 30th SFS
Heather May 30th SFS
Matthew McCloskey 30th CES
Gary Morgan 30th SFS
Fitzroy Munroe 30th ADOS
Kristen Tombs 30th MSS
Jerome Vahalik IV 30th SFS
Kelly Williams 30th Operations Group

TECHNICAL SERGEANT
Donte Anderson 30th Space Wing
Amber Bowser 30th SW
Anthony Calderon Det. 9, Space and Missile Systems Center
Brian Dalton 533rd TRS
Andre Killkelley 30th TRNS
Robert Leal 30th TRNS
Robert Lowery 614th Space Operations Squadron
Daniel Reyes 14th Information Warfare Flight
MASTER SERGEANT
Edward Hayes Det. 9, SMC
Kevin Schnicker 2nd Space Launch Squadron
SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT
Gerald Young 30th SFS
CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT
Fred Miller 30th CS
FIRST LIEUTENANT
Matthew Curtin 30th CES
Thomas Filosi Jr. 576th FLTS
Steven Swiderski 30th CPTS
CAPTAIN
Sandra Quinones 30th SVS
Kevin Staples 30th MDSS
MAJOR
Luong Nguyen 30th MDOS

Lawrence Graham IV 76th Helicopter Flight
GS-02
Crystal McIntyre 30th MSS
GS-03
Emelie Lima 30th MSS
GS-04
Anthony Bester 30th CES
GS-05
Joaquin Monjaraz 30th CES
GS-06
Scott McMann 30th CES
GS-07
William Burch 30th CES
Juanita Garrett 30th CES
GS-09
Andrea West 30th MSS
GS-12
Judy Calloway Det. 9, SMC
Aubrey Baure 30th CES

**America's Air Force --
No One Comes Close!**



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JENNIFER WALLIS

Team Vandenberg Spotlight

Name: Master Sgt. Cindy Hasty
Assignment: 30th Security Forces Squadron first sergeant
Hometown: Las Vegas, Nev.
Time on Vandenberg: 2 years, 2 months
Time in service: 18 years
Command Chief's comments: "Master Sgt. Hasty is a motivated, enthusiastic first sergeant and a real team player," said 30th Space Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Mike Morey. "She personifies our Air Force core values and is committed and dedicated to the people she is responsible to and for in all endeavors. Cindy's spirit and professionalism allow her to fully commit her abilities and resources to making our team its best."

Send your super troop's spotlight to space&missiletimes@vandenberg.af.mil

Bank opens in Vandenberg BX

By STAFF SGT. ANDREW LEONHARD
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ A full-service bank will open for business in the Base Exchange cashier's cage Wednesday at 9 a.m.

Armed Forces Bank, a national bank with average assets in excess of \$466 million, has been specializing in military banking since 1907 and serves active-duty members, retirees and civilians.

"We are really excited to have an opportunity to serve the Vandenberg community," said P.K. Robinson, Armed Forces Bank regional manager.

"I believe our Vandenberg customers will be pleased with the military banking expertise Armed Forces Bank brings," the AFB regional manager said. "We will continue to perform normal check cashing and other services for Army and Air Force Exchange Services customers in addition to providing banking products and services."

"This is a win-win situation," said Steve Riesbeck,

Vandenberg's AAFES general manager. "It's good for both AAFES and the base.

"AAFES will save time and money, reducing operating costs, which in turn puts more money into morale and welfare recreational funds," Riesbeck said.

The Armed Forces Bank "in-store," seven-day-a-week branches serve customers at many AAFES locations.

The bank operates full-service branches inside the Main Exchanges of 20 other military installations.

Including Vandenberg, the bank currently has branches in 16 states and serves 23 military installations.

There will be three ATMs located on base: one at the Base Exchange, another at the Shoppette and one at the Breakers Dining Facility.

Additional information about services Armed Forces Bank offers can be found on the bank's Web Site: www.afbank.com.

TITAN: Team preps former ICBM to carry DMSP

From Page 1

Flight Commander. "On the very same day G-14 was launched, we started refurbishment of the pad in order to be able to bring G-9 to the pad to meet our aggressive schedule. Working around the clock, our crews have just one goal in mind -- successfully launching G-9 and putting our final DMSP safely in orbit."

According to Crosier, the launch team is carrying out an aggressive turnaround schedule in order to fly out the Titan II fleet and avoid any potential personnel and resource conflicts associated with the Titan IV launch in Dec.

"These will be the last Titan II's ever to fly in the United States Air Force arsenal," Crosier said.

The rocket will place an Air Force weather satellite, part of the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program, into polar orbit. The satellites are used by all branches of

the military for world-wide operations.

When placed into orbit, the 4,400-pound, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Space-built DMSP satellite flies in a low earth polar orbit about 458 nautical miles above earth. At all times there are two DMSP satellites in orbit, collecting weather data for U.S. military operations. The DoD has operated DMSP for almost four decades. Military weather forecasters use the data to monitor and predict regional and global weather patterns, including the presence of severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, and typhoons.

Filled with excitement and anticipation regarding the impending launch, Tech. Sgt. Robert Dunn, Booster Mechanical Maintenance Controller, commented "Third time's a charm!

"As the booster Controller that put G-9 on the pad the first time,

I'm proud to be a part of this mission again," said Dunn. "Last time around we put many hours into two launch attempts. We're launching the last of the Silent Sentinels. This rocket deterred the Cold War and now it's playing another role in a different kind of war. I am glad to personally put it back on the pad and set it up for a successful launch."

The last Titan II is scheduled to launch two Department of Defense satellites into orbit January 2003. Vandenberg's mission is unique in that it's the only location where the venerable boosters are launched.

"Given G-9's history, this is one of the most anticipated launches of the year," said 1st Lt Kendall Jordan, a Launch Controller Officer assigned to the mission. "And having had two years' practice, it should be perfect. It's time for this bird to leave the nest."



FILE PHOTO

A Thor IRBM with a DMSP satellite ready for launch from SLC-10 in the 1960s.

SLC-10: Did you know...

■ The Thor SM-75, Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile was the first rocket to place a DMSP satellite into orbit.

The liquid fueled rocket, measuring 63-feet long and 8-feet in diameter, was launched from Vandenberg's Space Launch Complex-10 West until 1980.

The rocket was originally commissioned as the nation's first IRBM capable of delivering a 1.44 megaton warhead to targets 300 to 1500 miles away.

The booster achieved many

other firsts, including: the first missile to be launched from Vandenberg, the first to launch a spacecraft into polar orbit; and the first to launch a communications satellite into orbit.

In July 1981, the Air Force terminated the Thor program.

Since that time, SLC-10 has since been placed on the National Register of Historic Places for its role in aerospace history and was voted the best surviving example of a launch complex built in the 1950's at the beginning of the American effort to explore space.

Group focuses on base teens

By MASTER SGT. LLOYD CONLEY
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ With the arrival of summer, most schools are closed for recess. That means Team Vandenberg's youth may be in need of some safe and wholesome activities to keep them occupied while school's out.

"That was the primary reason the Teen Focus Group was held a few weeks ago," said Kim Saheim, Vandenberg Youth Center recreation director of operations.

"The Air Force has always had excellent childcare and school-age programs, but now we're beginning to focus more on what we can do to augment middle and high schools," said Saheim.

Saheim said that while the youth center staff does provide safe, fun and educational activities for Vandenberg's younger children, teenagers needs differ slightly.

The focus group addressed those issues central to Vandenberg's teens with the priority of making life easier for them.

The focus group panel was comprised of 10 teens, ages 13 to 18, Youth Center members and nonmember children who use the

youth center and those who don't.

The basic questions asked of the focus group were, "What can we do?" "What would you like us to do at Vandenberg to make your life here more enjoyable and enriching?" "What issues do you have?" "What fears do you have?"

Saheim said the focus group had some interesting results, but the primary issue the teens communicated was the desire to have a separate teen center.

"That's not possible right now but we're going to do everything possible to get them a separate center and concentrate right now on getting them most everything else that they want," she said.

Services is working with the 30th Civil Engineer Squadron to get the ball rolling.

"We're in the midst of putting together a funding package to send to space command and then on to Headquarters Air Force for approval," said Lt. Col. David Cannon, 30th Services Squadron commander.

Another item of interest that came out of the meeting was that the teens wanted a grill area. The Youth Center has a snack bar that

serves microwavable food and various other foods. On Friday and Saturday nights, in particular, they'd like hamburgers, hotdogs and French fries. The Youth Center purchased a small counter top grill and deep fryer to offer a grill menu on Friday and Saturday nights.

Transportation is also an issue for some of the children, Saheim said.

"It's not like they can just go to Burger King or to the base Bowling Center. Saheim said.

Another thing the teens wanted were field trips away from Vandenberg.

Saheim said that's something the Youth Center already does. "We sponsor field trips on base to places like the swimming pool, the bowling center and the tide pools.

The Youth Center also has field trips to putt-putt golf courses, amusement park and arcade in Santa Maria and Magic Mountain.

"Taking care of our youth is a top priority for the wing, and asking the teens what they want puts us on the right track to meeting their needs," Cannon emphasized.

Institute unveils 'Pits' exhibit

By CARL BERGQUIST
Air University Public Affairs

■ MAXWELL AFB, Ala. — A new display honoring an Air Force hero was recently unveiled at the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute here.

The display honors Airman 1st Class William Pitsenbarger, who died April 11, 1966, near Cam My, Vietnam.

He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk to life and beyond the call of duty."

During the unveiling ceremony, Chief Master Sgt. David Hamel, director of the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute, said 108 of 136 men engaged in the firefight that day at Cam My lost their lives, and it could have been worse had it not been for Pitsenbarger's heroic efforts.

Retired Lt. Col. Hal Salem, pilot of the HH-43 helicopter Pitsenbarger was assigned to in Vietnam, said the rescue mission April 11 took them directly into one of the "fiercest firefights" of the war.

When problems arose during the attempted rescue of a wounded Army soldier, Pitsenbarger asked Salem to lower him to the jungle floor so he could organize a ground rescue attempt.

Salem said he agreed to do it on the condition that Pitsenbarger return to the helicopter as soon as he had the situation under control, said Salem.

Once on the ground and amidst total chaos, Pitsenbarger attended to wounded soldiers.

Within an hour and a half, Pitsenbarger was dead.

Though seriously wounded, Pitsenbarger was credited with sav-



PHOTO BY CARL BERGQUIST

Retired Lt. Col. Hal Salem (from left), Alice Pitsenbarger, retired Chief Master Sgt. Roy Boudreaux and William Chivalette view the display honoring Airman 1st Class William Pitsenbarger at the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute at Maxwell AFB, Ala.

ing the lives of at least six members of U.S. Army Charlie Company that day."

You had to hold down his exuberance," said Salem. "He was afraid of nothing."

Salem said Pitsenbarger, or "Pits," would be very proud of the exhibit and glad that his efforts made people aware of the assistance the Air Force provided Army troops in Vietnam.

Pits believed in our mission to save people," Salem said. "And he worked hard at it."

"Pits was a character," said Roy Boudreaux, his Vietnam roommate.

Boudreaux said he means no disrespect in that comment; it was just that Airman Pitsenbarger was a mischievous, fun-loving young man from Piqua, Ohio, who "loved cold beer, raw oysters, his skateboard and country music."

Billy was from a patriotic family," said Alice Pitsenbarger, his

stepmother. "He and his father, Frank, raised the flag every day, and he was very special to his dad."

She said her stepson loved the outdoors and was a "very determined young man" who joined the Air Force right out of high school.

"Billy has to be looking down on us today," she said.

William Chivalette, Enlisted Heritage Hall curator, said he first envisioned the exhibit more than six years ago. It shows Pitsenbarger kneeling next to and treating an Army soldier.

In the interest of authenticity, Chivalette spent much of the past six years procuring Vietnam-era artifacts such as knives, uniforms and canteens.

The display incorporates vines similar to those found in the jungles of Vietnam and a painting portraying the firefight as the backdrop. (Courtesy of Air Education and Training Command News Service)

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One blue to another



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN JIMMY HARPER

Staff Sgt. Steve Velji, who is deployed at Incirlik AB, Turkey, with the 106th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron from the New York Air National Guard, inspects a parachute pack. Velji is a three-year veteran of the New York Police Department and was at the World Trade Center soon after the second building came down following the terrorist attack Sept. 11.

HERO: Loses sight of girl, then she surfaces 10 feet from him

From Page 1

them. It sent the boy on his boogie board hurtling toward shore where he ran for help. The girl, on the other hand, drifted farther out to sea.

Jones continued to swim after her.

"A couple waves went by and I lost her," he said. "She went down and I thought I was going to have to dive down and start searching for her."

"But I heard her gasp for air and she popped up about 10 feet in front of me."

Jones was then able to reach her. Holding onto her from behind, the 26-year-old surfer towed the girl parallel to the shore until they reached the end of the rip.

"I told her everything's O.K., I'm here to save you, but there was hardly any response," Jones said.

Finally he got her to waist-level water where he asked her if she was able to walk.

"She couldn't walk," he said. "She could barely answer my questions."

Jones carried her to shore where he laid her on dry land.

At that point park rangers Sherman Hansen and Ron Kinney arrived on scene. The trio wrapped the shivering girl in blankets and

moved her to a campsite where they took her vital signs and called an ambulance.

Jones saw Erika and her mother safely into the ambulance before returning to his family. And just where was little Mitchell Jr. during all this? He stayed put right where his father told him to, on dry land, watching his "rescue ranger" dad save the day.

Erika's family was camping at Jalama that weekend too. So Saturday, with a clean bill of health, she went to Jones and thanked him.

"She came over the next day and called me her guardian angel," Jones said.

While Jones is doubtful of his hero status, his friends and co-workers are singing his praises. "I love this guy," said Base Fire Chief Mark Farias. "I think the children were extremely fortunate to have the right person there during their time of need."

Whether Jones considers himself a hero or not, there's little doubt in the chief's mind that Erika was a very lucky girl that day.

"This was an awesome thing that very few of us could have done," Farias said. He also said he plans to put Jones in for the firefighter's Medal of Valor.

ALCON: Task force tools reinforce responsible alcohol use

From Page 1

"We are saying that you should not drive after drinking nor should anyone let you," continued Richardson. "We also want everybody to get involved in the culture shift."

The mission of the task force is to reinforce responsible alcohol use in the Air Force. It is a reactive and proactive program, said Richardson.

The ALCON program consists of alert levels Normal through Delta, just like FPCON. Each level has different information and actions that must be implemented by Team V. The levels are based upon information received from various base agencies and recommendations from the ALCON task force.

Some things that may cause the ALCON levels to increase are DUIs with or without injury, death or property damage, said Capt. Chad Johnson, task force member and ADAPT program manager for Vandenberg. Johnson said that ADAPT program personnel advises the ALCON Task Force about the increased risks associated with holiday weekends.

A few of the actions taken during ALCON Alpha are to increase the promotion of the Airman Against Drunk Driving program base-wide by distributing cards with

phone numbers and display of informational posters at points of sale in high traffic areas, such as the shoppette. Also the 30th Security Force Squadron will implement DUI checkpoints at designated gates.

Other changes Team V will see is more senior leadership visibility during higher ALCON alerts. In the forms a possible Charge-of-Quarters program could be implemented and Pacific Coast Club employees will be more vigilant about people who have had too much to drink.

Johnson said one of the goals for the ALCON program is to provide prevention education and training for supervisors at all levels. ADAPT conducts workshops for members of the sales staff on Vandenberg that work in points of sale of alcohol.

"In order to change the culture, we have to provide regular reminders to all of Team Vandenberg by providing prevention education and training," Johnson said.

"I strongly urge all members of Team Vandenberg to take personal responsibility in efforts to eliminate DUI accidents and deaths," said Worley. "With heightened awareness and renewed commitment we can enforce our high standards, avoid tragedy, and protect our most valuable resource, our people."

DOD: Vaccinations to start 45 days prior to deployment

From Page 1

The Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences — a very august, prominent body — has said in a very large, in a very important, comprehensive report that the vaccine is safe and effective," Winkenwerder said during an earlier interview with American Forces Press Service. "And the reason is, we don't intend to give our adversaries an indication of exactly who and when and where we've immunized people. We would like that to be a further deterrent to anybody who might think about using anthrax as a weapon."

The doctor said DoD medical officials hope to start vaccinating targeted service members 45 days before they deploy. The anthrax vaccine requires six shots over an 18-month period for maximum immunity, but a relatively high level of immunity is reached after the first three shots, he explained.

Individuals who started the six-shot series under the previous guidelines will resume the series where they left off.

Others who started the shots previously but are not currently covered under the new program will receive the rest of their shots "later into 2002, possibly as late as 2003, and that's because the supply of the vaccine is limited," Winkenwerder said.

He insisted there is no danger in stopping and restarting the series of shots. "Protection lasts months to years at some level," he said.

"The Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences — a very august, prominent body — has said in a very large, in a very important, comprehensive report that the vaccine is safe and effective," Winkenwerder said earlier. Several other studies by reputable independent agencies have released similar conclusions.

The Defense Department is working with HHS to develop a new anthrax vaccine that would require fewer shots and be made using a different, easier method, said William Raub, deputy director of public health preparedness at HHS. The two departments are also examining the current vaccine to see if its protocol can be changed.

"We fight and win as teams," he said. "If a team of people are in an environment deployed in a military situation, I think the commander as well as all the individuals want to know are we all protected."

The anthrax attacks on the East Coast last fall may have silenced some critics.

"I think the attacks last fall brought home the point that this is a real threat and that it's possible to manufacture this kind of bioweapon, and it's not altogether difficult to disseminate it," Winkenwerder said. "This is something that's not just in people's imagination. It is real." (AFPS reporter Jim Garamone contributed to this report.)

CGOC takes title in Top Three softball tourney

By MASTER SGT. TY FOSTER

30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ The Company Grade Officers' Council softball team bested the Airman Leadership School Class 02-E team by a score of 15-10 in the inaugural Vandenberg Top Three Softball Tournament here June 28.

The Top Three team and the First Sergeants-Chiefs' Group team also vied for the title in the single-elimination tournament.

In the first match up, the CGOC met the Top Three. The CGOC set a blistering pace the Top Three team just couldn't keep up with. The Top Three's three-run rally in the fifth proved to be too little and too late as the CGOC's 14-4 win ousted the Top Three from contention.

Next on the field, the Shirts-Chiefs jumped to an early 5-0 lead over the ALS team. The ALS team roared back with 15 runs in the bottom of the first inning and never looked back. But the Shirts-Chiefs were undaunted. At the top of the fifth inning with game time dwindling, they mounted a nine-run threat. In the end it wasn't enough as ALS topped the Shirts-Chiefs 23-15.

Final round play pitted the CGOC against ALS in a heated battle for the title. The hour-long game was filled with tight defensive plays and some solid hitting. Scoring remained sluggish until the third inning when the CGOC team ran the score to 4-1. Although ALS continued to challenge CGOC, the officers played good heads-up ball. Going into the seventh, the score sat at 12-10 with CGOC in the lead. After scoring three more runs, CGOC held ALS scoreless in the bottom of the seventh for the 15-10 win.

Sponsored by the Top Three and organized by Master Sgt. Mark Long, Top Three president, the tournament was aimed at bringing Vandenberg's various private organizations together for a day of fun and recreation.

Sports Briefs

COMPANY GRADE OFFICERS HOLD TOURNAMENT JULY 12

The Vandenberg Company Grade Officers' Council annual golf tournament is July 12 at Marshallia Ranch. The cost is \$50 per four-person team or \$15 per single player plus greens fees and cart. Get a hole-in-one and win a new car. To sign up, call Capt. Brian Simonis at 606-1939 or 2nd Lt. Nick Menza at 605-6461.

GOLF COURSE NEEDS GOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

The Vandenberg Golf Advisory Committee is seeking a field grade officer to replace the current chairman who is moving. The committee meets quarterly. If interested call the base Golf Course at 606-6262.

EXCELLENCE IN COMPETITION PISTOL MATCH JULY 12

The 30th Security Forces Squadron is sponsoring an Excellence in Competition pistol match July 12. Sign up for the match during normal duty hours. The competition is open to all active-duty and reserve Air Force personnel. Only

the first 100 shooters will be allowed to compete. To sign up for the competition, call 605-5025 or e-mail Staff Sgt. Erik Skrudland. People may also stop by the Combat Arms Range, Bldg. 21308, on San Antonio Road West. For more information, call 605-5007, 605-5005 or 605-5009.

YOUTH BASEBALL FIELDS CLOSE FOR MAINTENANCE

The youth ball fields are closed for maintenance until Aug. 1. The closure is necessary in order to prepare the fields for the upcoming sports seasons. To assist with repairs to the fields, call Kristi Bonneau at 606-9374.

BASE BOXING CLUB HOLDS 'SMOKER'

The Vandenberg Boxing Club is holding a boxing smoker in August. The date of the event will be announced later. The event is open to anyone who is willing to get in the boxing ring, no experience is necessary. The Boxing Center is located across from the Commissary in Bldg. 14019. It's open from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call Don Green at 606-2878 or 733-2245.

CHANGE: More changes of command from July 12 to 15

From Page 1

Coast Club immediately after the ceremony. For information, call Capt. Kevin Brooks at 605-0660 or Chief Master Sgt. Velma Hunt at 605-6416.

30TH COMPTROLLER SQUADRON

Lt. Col. Delane Aguilar relinquishes command of the 30th Comptroller Squadron to Maj. John Coulahan during a brief ceremony at 10:30 a.m. July 12 in the Pacific Coast Club. Col. Robert M. Worley II, 30th Space Wing commander, will officiate. There is a reception after the ceremony.

30TH RANGE SQUADRON

Lt. Col. Joe Hogler will relinquish command of the 30th Range Squadron to Lt. Col. Jeffrey Follansbee at 1 p.m. July 12 in the Western Range Operations Control Center. Col. Edward Bolton Jr., 30th Operations Group commander, will officiate. There is a reception immediately after the ceremony.

DET. 9, SPACE AND MISSILE SYSTEMS CENTER

Col. John Wagner III relinquishes command of Det. 9, Space and Missile Systems Center to Lt. Col. Randy Turner at 3 p.m. July 12 in the 381st Training Group Auditorium. Lt. Gen. Brian Arnold, commander of Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles AFB, Calif., will officiate. There is a reception after the ceremony. For more information, call 1st Lt. James Helle at 606-4938 or Jody Bacon at 606-6771.

30TH SERVICES SQUADRON

Lt. Col. David Cannon relinquishes command of the 30th Services Squadron to Maj. Thomas Reppart during a brief ceremony at 3 p.m. July 15 in the Pacific Coast Club. Col. Steven Robinson, 30th Support Group commander, will officiate. For more information, call 2nd Lt. Malisa Myers or Beverlyn Villegas at 606-5031 or 5033.

Around the Air Force

Friendly help



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JOE PEARCE

Staff Sgt. David Owens (left), gets help putting on his chemical gear from Tech. Sgt. Joel Westendorf. Both airmen are assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron at Ali Al Salem AB, Kuwait. The squadron recently practiced a "bunker-diver" exercise, which helps airmen respond fast and effectively against a real-time attack of chemical agents. Ali Al Salem AB is one of the primary bases supporting Operation Southern Watch which enforces the no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

CMSAF Finch retires after 28 years of service

BY TECH. SGT. SCOTT ELLIOTT

Air Force Print News

■ WASHINGTON — The service's 13th chief master sergeant of the Air Force retired June 28 in ceremonies at Bolling AFB, D.C.

Though Jim Finch served more than 28 years in the Air Force, he will be remembered most for his three-years as the service's senior enlisted member.

"No matter what branch they're in, all of our servicemembers and their families are better off today thanks to Chief Finch," said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley. "He understood their issues and ensured their concerns were heard and acted on by leaders both in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill. He made a difference, and he will be missed — our military is stronger today thanks to him and the work he did."

As an advocate for Air Force enlisted members, Finch dedicated many hours to testimony on Capitol Hill.

"During my tenure as chief master sergeant of the Air Force, there were a number of important issues that crossed my desk," he said.

"Through the collective efforts of many people, we were able to make some positive improvements."

Those "big ticket" items included the elimination of the "Redux" retirement system, embracing the aerospace expeditionary concept, increasing basic allowance for housing, targeting pay raises, and approving a new dormitory design for single airmen. Other improvements include turning around low recruitment statistics, improving retention, establishing the "First Term Airmen Center," and several advancements in educational opportunities.

"This job is a sprint," Finch said. "The job of the chief master sergeant of the Air Force is to come in and do as much as you can, as fast as you can. You then pass the baton to somebody else, and move out of the way." (Courtesy of Air Force Print News.)

Band of Mid-America goes national

■ SCOTT AFB, Ill. — New York City will be decked out in red, white and Air Force blue this Independence Day.

Members of the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America stationed

here are providing the music for two nationally broadcasted events July 4. They will be performing the national anthem for the Yankees vs. Indians game to be broadcast at 1 p.m. EDT on select CBS affiliates, and on ESPN2.

Later that evening, they will be playing traditional American classics as part of Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular, to be broadcast 9 p.m. EDT on NBC.

Viewers should check local listings for more details. (Courtesy of Air Mobility Command News Service)

'Friendly fire' investigation complete

■ MACDILL AFB, Fla. — The Coalition Investigation Board has issued its findings on the "friendly fire" incident that occurred April 17 near Kandahar, Afghanistan.

According to the report, soldiers from Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, were engaged in night live-fire training at Tarnak Farms Range. While the Canadian soldiers were training, two U.S. F-16 Fighting Falcons were returning from a mission over Afghani-

stan. As the fighter aircraft passed south of Kandahar, the flight leader noticed what he described as fire-works coming from an area a few miles south of Kandahar.

Perceiving this as surface-to-air fire the flight leader asked and received permission from an airborne warning and control system aircraft to determine the precise coordinates of the source of the activity.

While attempting to obtain the coordinates, the wingman requested permission to fire on the location with his 20 mm cannon. An AWACS official told him to standby and later requested that he provide additional information on the surface-to-air fire while also directing him to "hold fire."

The wingman provided the requested information to the AWACS official and immediately declared that he was "rolling-in in self-defense." Thereafter, the wingman released a 500-pound laser-guided bomb that hit a Canadian firing position at the Tarnak Farms Range. Four Canadians were killed and eight wounded. All the wounded soldiers were immediately evacuated from the area for medical treatment.

The board found the cause of the friendly fire incident to be the failure of the two pilots to exercise appropriate flight discipline, which resulted in a violation of the rules of engagement and an inappropriate use of lethal force. The board further found that failings within the pilots' immediate command structures, while not causing the incident, were contributing factors.

Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. Central Command, has approved the Report of Investigation. As matters of discipline are a service responsibility, Franks has returned the report to his Air Force component for disciplinary action as may be appropriate. Franks has forwarded the report to all of his subordinate commands to review the safety and operational efficiency suggestions of the board and to ensure that the lessons learned are incorporated into future operations. (Courtesy of Air Force Print News.)

Some TRICARE travel expenses reimbursable

BY ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS KATHLEEN RHEM

American Forces Press Service

■ WASHINGTON — Travel expenses incurred while seeking specialty care are reimbursable in certain circumstances under new TRICARE rules.

Nonactive-duty TRICARE Prime beneficiaries can be reimbursed for "reasonable travel expenses" when they are required to travel more than 100 miles from their primary care manager's office, according to TRICARE officials. This benefit is retroactive to Oct. 30, 2000.

The new rules also allow one nonmedical attendant to accompany the nonactive-duty patient. This benefit is retroactive to Dec. 28, 2001.

Some specifics must be met for

reimbursement:

— The primary care provider must refer the patient for the specialty care.

— The travel distance for specialty care must be at least 100 miles from the primary care manager's office, regardless of the distance from the patient's home.

— To qualify for reimbursement for a nonmedical attendant's expenses, the patient's primary care manager must indicate the attendant is medically necessary. The attendant also must be a parent, guardian, or other family member 21 or older, TRICARE officials said.

Actual expenses for lodging and meals will be reimbursed up to the government per diem rate for the location of the specialty care. Receipts are required for amounts more than \$75. Government per diem rates can be found on the Internet.

Travel reimbursement is handled by each service, so the program may vary slightly among services, TRICARE officials said. They recommend patients with questions or seeking reimbursement contact their local TRICARE beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator. To locate the nearest coordinator, go to the BCAC directory on the Internet. (Courtesy of Air Force Print News.)

Officials pick eight Air Force NCOs for AFIT

BY TECH. SGT. TIM DOUGHERTY

Air Force Print News

■ WASHINGTON — Eight senior noncommissioned officers from across the Air Force have been accepted into master's degree programs and will start school in August at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Five will study computer science, two will study electrical engineering and one will pursue a degree in information systems management. All come from the communications and information career field.

"Our Air Force continues to become more technically oriented all the time," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Eitnier, enlisted professional military education chief at the Pentagon. "Graduate education for these [senior] NCOs brings greater technical competencies across their Air Force specialties, which benefits our high-tech Air Force."

Selected were: Chief Master Sgt. Donald Clabaugh, 412th Flight Test Squadron, Edwards AFB, Calif.; Senior Master Sgt. Stephanie Carroll, 78th Communications Squadron, Robins AFB, Georgia; Senior Master Sgt. Francis Szabo, 786th Communications Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany; Master Sgt. Charlie Cruz, 61st Communications Squadron, Los Angeles AFB; Master Sgt. James Kuntzelman, 60th Communications Squadron, Peterson AFB, Colo.; Master Sgt. Edward Mathews, Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas; Master Sgt. Duane Sorgaard, Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB; and Master Sgt. Daniel Swayne, AFPC.

Those selected for this program must agree to serve an additional three years on active duty following graduation, Eitnier said. All degree programs for senior NCOs will be resident only. Future-year quotas will be based on degree program availability and whether the applicant is reassignment eligible, as determined by AFPC officials.

AFIT is the Air Force's graduate school of engineering and management and its institution for technical professional continuing education. (Courtesy of Air Force Print News.)

Multiple-fatality accidents highlight need for safety

BY MASTER SGT. RON TULL

Air Force Print News

■ WASHINGTON — The first weekend of summer brought with it three separate car accidents that resulted in seven Air Force people losing their lives.

John Russell, the Air Force's chief of ground safety at the Air Force Safety Center at Kirtland AFB, N.M., said the accidents, two of which killed three Air Force members each, should serve as a startling reminder of the importance of safety.

"It's quite alarming, particularly because it's the first time that my staff can recall multiple fatality mishaps of this magnitude in such a short time frame," Russell said.

The first mishap of the June 22 to 23 weekend was a weather-related single car accident during a storm in Jacksonville, Fla., that killed Staff Sgt. Lindsey Renee Atchison, 22, from the Florida Air National Guard's 125th Fighter Wing.

In the second accident, an airman and his two passengers died when their automobile hit a concrete overpass. All were stationed at Shaw AFB, S.C. They were identified as 19-year-old Airman Dijon Williams, Airman Coy Vickers, also 19, and Senior Airman George Ellis, 24.

The third accident involved a vehicle driven by 1st Lt. George Hernandez, 25, crossing the center line of a highway near Ciudad Acuna, Mexico, and hitting a bus head-on, killing Hernandez and 1st Lts. John Raber, 24, and Scott McEwan, 25. All three were stationed at Laughlin AFB, Texas.

Preliminary indications are that excessive speed and loss of control were contributing factors in the last two.

"It's quite devastating," Russell said. "Many of the co-workers and friends are significantly impacted by these types of events. Particularly when a base or squadron has to deal with multiple fatalities at once."

While the circumstances that create these tragedies come together in the blink of an eye, Russell said that input from the passengers could have made a difference.

"There were other opportunities in the vehicle that could have helped minimize the situation or even prevent it from occurring," he said. "Passengers can take responsibility for their safety by being another set of eyes on the road and assisting the driver."

A common factor the Air Force officials identified in off-duty accidents is the primary age group of those involved. The typical victim is male and younger than 26.

Air Force studies have found that younger members lack driving skills, caused in part by a decrease in driver education classes that were once a traditional rite of passage in high school.

Officials hope to combat this with a major overhaul of Air Force driving safety programs, including a curriculum that is customized to an individual's driving lifecycle.

As Air Force members hit the road for the Fourth of July weekend, Russell said everyone must apply their on-duty safety standards to their off-duty activities.

"It's just so unfortunate that we are losing valuable resources as a result of these types of events," he said.



DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE
Call Airmen Against Drunk Driving at 698-8822 or 698-8823.

