SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

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VANDENBERG REMEMBERS POWS

The Vandenberg POW/MIA Day ceremony is set for 2 p.m. today at the memorial in front of the Vandenberg Library. The ceremony includes the unveiling of a new plaque with the names of local service members listed as prisoners of war or missing in action. The event is open to all base members.

COMMANDER CALLS SPACE WING

Col. Wayne Louis, 30th Space Wing vice commander, is conducting a Wing Commander's Call Thursday at the base theater. Attendance is mandatory for all 30th SW members. Civilians are highly encouraged to attend. Members of tenant units are welcome. Times are as follows: 8 a.m., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

AIRMEN MEET TOP CHIEFS

Former Chiefs Master Sgt. of the Air Force Paul Airey and Sam Parish will be on base next week for the Senior NCO Induction Ceremony. During their visit, the chiefs will meet with base technical sergeants and below at 2 p.m. Sept. 27 in the Western Range Operations Control Center. They will meet with base Top 3 members at 3 p.m. These will be question and answer sessions. Participants with questions for the chiefs are asked to stand, speak clearly, say who they are and then ask a question.

LEADERS SERVE BIRTHDAY MEAL

The quarterly birthday meal at the Breakers Dining Facility begins at 5 p.m. Thursday. Since the last birthday meal was canceled, this one will include enlisted members with birthdays between April and September. Base senior leaders will serve the meal. First sergeants have menus and are taking sign-ups or call 606-3219.

FINANCE CLOSES FISCAL YEAR END

The finance office closes at noon Oct. 4, for an official end-of-year function. Staff will be available for emergency services. To reach a finance officer in an emergency, call 698-7603 or use the pager number, 169-0056. Finance will open Oct. 7 at 8 a.m.

CIVIL ENGINEERS INSTALL FENCES

Beginning Monday, civil engineers are re-installing fences that were removed for sewer system cleaning and inspection in East Housing. Residents are asked to help by providing workers access and controlling pets. The point of contact for this project is Mike Bird, 606-2080.

See BRIEFS Page 3

PHOTO BY STAFF. SGT. JENNIFER WALLIS

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JERRY CLEMENS, JR.

(Above) Fourth graders from Crestview Elementary School here perform the patriotic song, *"America, My Home,"* during a Sept. 11 remembrance concert entitled United We Stand. The students sang with the Lompoc Pops Orchestra during the concert at Chapel 1 Sept. 11. The concert, which included vocal performances by Team Vandenberg personnel, capped a full day of observances on the base. (Right) Staff Sgt. Eryn McConnell, 381st Training Support Squadron, prays and reflects on the events of the last year during the 381st Training Group's rememberance service at Chapel 1, September 11.

Team V remembers Sept. 11 victims

By Senior Airman Brian Hill and 2nd Lt. Jennifer Whitaker
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ Vandenberg's airmen, civilians and retired community paused Sept. 11 to pray for and remember the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The base hosted two events at Chapel 1: a memorial service and a remembrance concert for personnel and their families.

The memorial service featured an ensemble from the Lompoc Pops orchestra and a special remembrance message from Chaplain (Col.) Charles Locklin, who was inside the Pentagon when it was struck by a plane.

Later that evening, the full Pops orchestra played to a packed house during the remembrance concert. The orchestra, conducted by noted Maestro Rodolpho Fernandez, performed patriotic music with the help of a group of Crestview Elementary School fourth graders, who sang two songs.

The 381st Training Group held a remembrance service at 9 a.m. in Chapel 1. About 300 space and missile students, permanent party and civilians attended. Staff Sgt. Eryn McConnell performed an a cappella rendition of the National Anthem and Master Sgt. Quinn Johnson performed *"America the Beautiful."* Locklin was the guest speaker at this event.

Lompoc citizens also remembered America's fallen heroes in a 9/11 memorial ceremony Wednesday.

Called As We Unite, the Taller We Stand, the service featured patriotic music by Jonathan Wild, the First Southern Baptist Church choir, Jack Pierce on bagpipes, Vandenberg's own Honor Guard, Patriot Voices and Staff Sgt. Chad Smith. Keynote speakers included Mayor Dick DeWees, 30th Space Wing Commander Col. Robert M. Worley II, Lompoc Police Chief Bill Brown, Lompoc Fire Chief Linual White, Lompoc Battalion Chief Stanley Hart and Red Cross volunteer Colleen Hefley.

DeWees made a proclamation that September 11 would always be a day of remembrance, mourning, reflection, volunteerism and community service in Lompoc. He also said that citizens of the "little town with the big heart" should dedicate themselves to foster understanding, lift each other up and build awareness.

Worley's words fostered reflection and spurred citizens to action. He called the reaction of the American people since 9/11 the "triumph of the American spirit." He said that Vandenberg has contributed to the war on terrorism by launching mission critical satellites and continuing to maintain our nation's missile defense system.

Patriot voices summed up the general feeling of the day when they sang, *"Let us live to make men free."*

30th SW turns to combat structure

By Senior Airman Brian Hill
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ The 30th Space Wing will undergo a major transition beginning Oct. 1.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. John Jumper, has directed every wing in the Air Force to establish a new standard combat wing organization structure.

"Our service has witnessed dramatic change over the past decade," he said. "Beyond our transitioning to an expeditionary construct to address this new environment, we have made few changes to our organizational structure."

The restructuring here, called the New Standard Wing Structure 30SW I-Plan 02-05, is very similar to what was in place from 1978 to 1991, an organization that brought with it mission capable rates greater than 90 percent during the Gulf War.

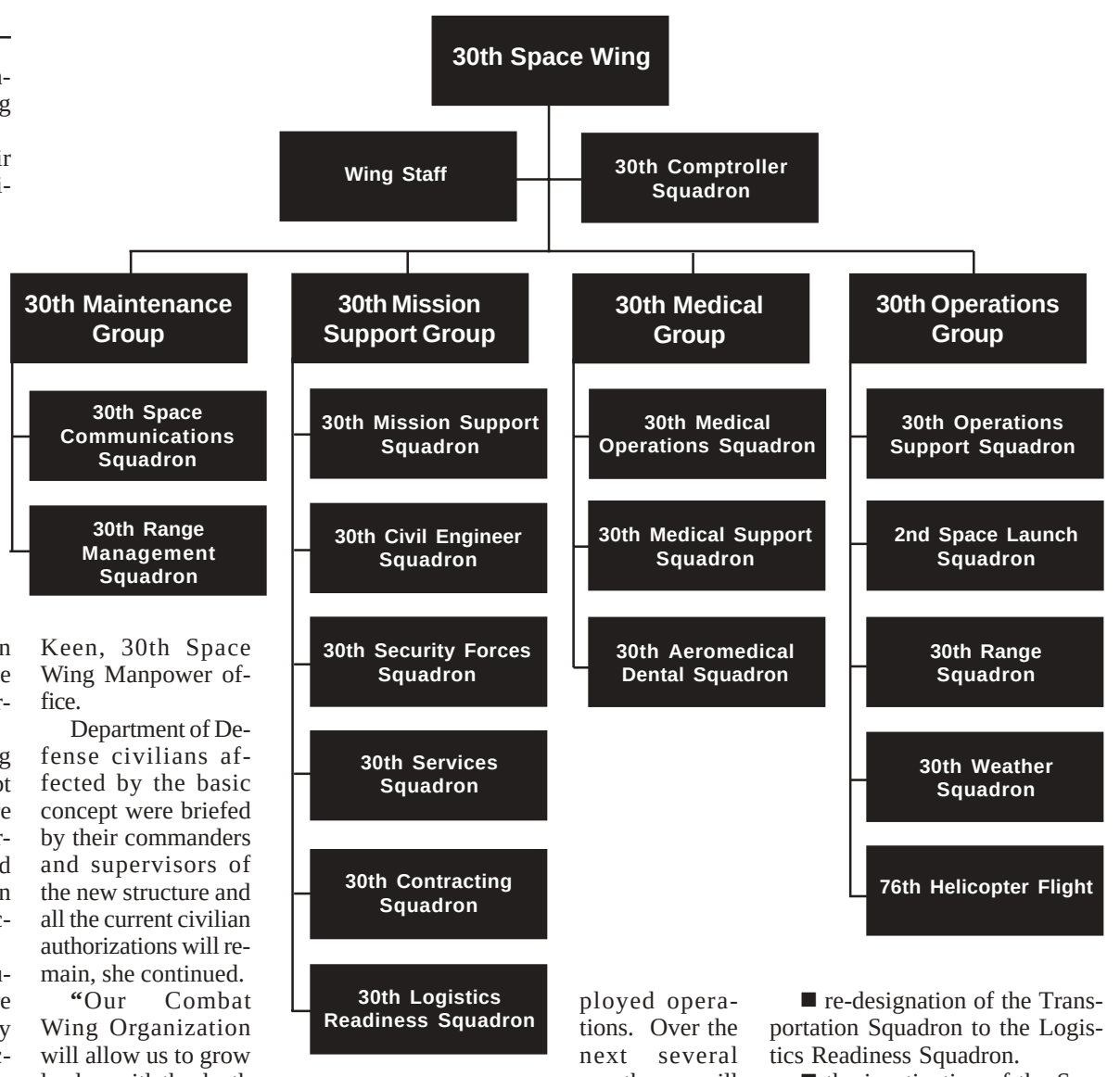
However, the combat wing structure is based on the concept that a wing's mission systems are aircraft. Space warning, space surveillance, satellite operations, and space launch missions dictate an adjustment to the standard structure.

The maintainers of the communications-electronic equipment are primarily contractors overseen by in-house communications electronic engineers and technicians. AFSPC launch wings will assume some development and sustainment responsibilities via the Launch and Test Range System Program Office.

Members of the 30th and 45th Maintenance Groups, assigned to the Range Management Squadron, will be responsible to wing commanders for mission system maintenance management and their primary interface to the LTRS for mission system sustainment and modernization, said Staff Sgt. Patricia Keen, 30th Space Wing Manpower office.

Department of Defense civilians affected by the basic concept were briefed by their commanders and supervisors of the new structure and all the current civilian authorizations will remain, she continued.

"Our Combat Wing Organization will allow us to grow leaders with the depth of experience and expertise needed to plan and execute in the full spectrum of deployment, combat planning, execution, and sustainment," Jumper said. "Although the reorganization is called the Combat Wing Organization this is not just about the wings that fly – almost every unit in the Air Force supports our Air Expeditionary Force in some way. Our support unit leadership will be trained in the dynamics of contingency support with the opportunity to command during deployed operations. Over the next several months, we will identify the way ahead for increased training opportunities for leaders of these new groups."



Included in the 30th Space Wing re-organization will be:

■ re-designation of the Logistics Group to the Maintenance Group.

■ the establishment of the Range Management Squadron under the Maintenance Group.

■ a re-designation of the Support Group to the Mission Support Group.

■ re-designation of the Transportation Squadron to the Logistics Readiness Squadron.

■ the inactivation of the Supply Flight (functions realigned to the LRS).

■ the realignment of the Contracting Squadron from the LG to the MSG.

■ the re-designation of the Communications Squadron to the Space Communications Squadron.

A Combat Wing Organizational Structure activation ceremony begins at 10 a.m. Oct. 1 at the parade grounds. A reception will follow in the Pacific Coast Club ballroom. All are invited to attend.

ID cards prepare airmen to deploy

By Capt. Amie Brockway
ACC Public Affairs

■ **LANGLEY AFB, Va.** – An airman's projected deployment information can fit inside his or her wallet thanks to the new air and space expeditionary force identification card available online.

Officials at the AEF Center here recently introduced the cards as a way to help airmen understand the details of their deployments.

"The cards were designed because many airmen don't know when they are deploying," said Master Sgt. Tonya Brinkley, the NCO in charge of Web site development and maintenance for the center. "They can now be more aware of the details so they can plan better and get the training they need to deploy."

A visit to AEF Online results in a personalized card that can be printed on any printer and kept in a wallet or purse. The site must be accessed from computers in the dot-mil domain. People should see their unit deployment managers to receive their cards, which take only a few minutes to complete, Brinkley said.

See CARD Page 3

In this issue of the

First sergeant hits the road running. ***See Page B2.***

Commander signs up to donate ***See Page A3.***

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

Low/High 53/65

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

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

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY YEN DEANDA

Pitchin' in

(left to right) Cub Scouts Thomas DeAnda, Vincent Moschelle and Tyler Warren from Pack 102 help Sister Jean Marie feed the goats on the sisters' ranch Aug. 24. The scouts, along with the Vandenberg Lady of the Stars Catholic Parish, organize a monthly outreach activity with the Carmelite Sister's of the Divine Mercy outside Buellton. Volunteers feed the goats, weed the corn field, pick fruit and move rocks into a ravine to prevent erosion. To sign up for the next outreach activity, call Senior Master Sgt. Sam Warren at 734-7414. To join the cub scouts, call Chad Melone at 734-2668.

Check out Outdoor Rec!

PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KARA MCCORMICK

Outdoor Recreation staff stand ready to check out camping gear, gardening equipmement and more during the grand opening at the newly renovated Outdoor Recreation facility here. Information on outdoor recreation opportunities is available by calling 606-8579.

Improved writing center provides environment to develop creative skills

BY SONJA OGLESBY

Allan Hancock College Public Affairs

■ For Hilario Pastrana, the Writing Center at Allan Hancock College was a good thing that just got better.

"It would be bad if we didn't have the Writing Center," said Pastrana, who started using the student support facility when he took his first English as a Second Language (ESL) class in 1998.

To better accommodate students, the college's Writing Center—already one of the model writing labs in the state—was restructured and reorganized over the summer. A wall was built through the center of the large room to create two distinct areas. Students can get one-on-one tutoring or tutoring for groups of up to six people on one side of the wall. Writing and reading assignments are done on the other side of the wall, where all of the computers are located. The large counter that had split the space into two work areas is gone.

In its new configuration, the Writing Center offers more services to more students than before in a quieter and more functional setting. "We can work with about 25 percent more students now," said Professor Bob Isaacson, who helps oversee the Writing Center. "And the extra room makes it more comfortable for everybody."

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE

Allan Hancock College instructor Randy Davis helps student Hilario Pastrana, at a computer used for reading assignments.

Eventually the center, which is used by all English students including ESL students, will become an "integrated language arts center," as another focus on helping students with foreign languages grows, Isaacson said.

The Writing Center staff now offers help to students with reading, writing and English as a second language. The Foreign Language Lab is located in an adjoining space.

Pastrana, 21, of Santa Maria, uses the center twice a week. His goal is to earn a bachelor's degree in electronic engineering from Cal Poly. He does his reading in the center, because it's much quieter now, and writes assignments and essays there. People who staff the center help him perfect his work. "They show me what's wrong, and how to fix it," he said.

Pastrana said benefits of the Writing Center have been improving his English language skills as well as reading and writing skills. He has a 3.3 grade point average and attributes much of his academic success to "the help I get at the Writing Center," he said.

There's more to come at the Writing Center. "It's changing. It's no longer simply for writing," said Isaacson, who is also language arts department chair. The Writing Center no longer only serves the language arts department, he said.

"We're starting to serve students from all across the campus," said Isaacson. "Students in any class or discipline can come here and learn."

In the past, instructors, facilitators and tutors mainly assisted students with writing. Now they are helping students improve their reading skills. Eleven Macintosh computers are dedicated to reading. Students can write assignments on the other 23 Macintosh computers.

The new wall and its windows are specially constructed so the writing lab is virtually soundproof. Students on one side of the wall are not affected by noise generated in the other room.

Eventually, the Writing Center may be relocated to the Learning Resources Center. At that time, it would grow even more. "We would then integrate speech into our services," Isaacson said, "and we would have room to accommodate even more students."

Because most assignments from instructors must be done on computers, students are "building comprehension, writing skills, and computer skills all at once," Isaacson said.

Hero poster hits big

BY RUDI WILLIAMS

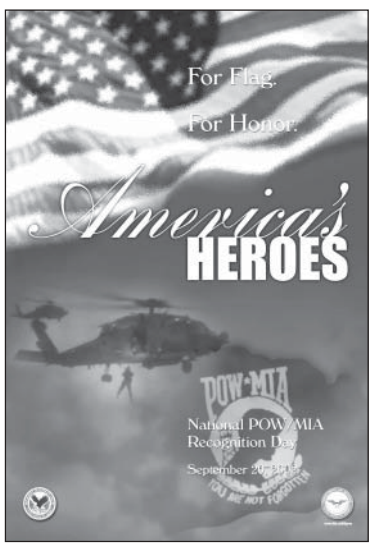
American Forces Press Service

■ **ARLINGTON, Va.** — So many people are asking for this year's Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day poster that the fastest, easiest — perhaps only — way to get one is to download it, according to Larry Greer, spokesman for the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office.

Greer said the response to the annual poster has been overwhelming. It's available at http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/powday/pow_rec_day_02_poster.htm.

"It made a big hit because of its strong colors — red, white and blue — and its clean, simple message," he said. "We printed 150,000 posters this year," he added. "They went to all military installations and ships at sea worldwide and to veterans' organizations, Veterans Affairs medical facilities and family organizations. We're nearing the end of our supply."

The poster features an American flag across the top, a troop rappelling from a helicopter in the middle, and the words: "For Flag. For Honor. America's Heroes. National POW/MIA Recognition Day. September 20, 2002."



The dominant theme — the red, white and blue — symbolizes a history and a dedication that "inspires heroes to carry that banner forward," Greer said.

He pointed out Sept. 20 is a day when each American should "pause to honor those who have gone before us, those who never returned and those who today serve on foreign battlefields."

Around the Air Force

F-22 re-designation reflects combat role

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker
Air Force Print News

■ **WASHINGTON** — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper announced a change in the designation of the F-22 Raptor at the 2002 Air Force Association National Convention here Sept. 17. The change is meant to more accurately reflect the aircraft's multi-mission roles and capabilities in contemporary strategic environments.

"Secretary (of the Air Force Dr. James) Roche and I have decided to adopt the name F/A-22, using the A (or attack) prefix to emphasize the multiple roles and many dimensions of the Raptor," Jumper explained. "The Raptor will feed on prey both from the sky and from the (ground)."

Advances in technology and emerging Air Force doctrine make today's Raptor very different from the fighter envisioned when the program was first planned. Technological advancements in the fire control radar and integrated avionics, combined with the advent of smaller, very precise munitions, create a far more powerful air-to-ground strike system, Jumper said in a written statement.

"Indeed, the Raptor's most significant contributions over the next 30 years will be (in) its attack role, particularly against the most lethal next two generations of (enemy) surface-to-air missiles," Jumper said.

The F/A-22 will enable the Air Force's other stealth assets to operate 24 hours a day and will "sanitize the fly corridors" for airlift aircraft to re-supply ground forces deployed in enemy territory, the general said.

Roche said in a written statement that the Raptor has been transformed, in line with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's priorities, to a multi-mission, joint system that will change the way the United States and its allies conduct war.

"Therefore, a re-designation will increase the focus on this transformation and allow people to better grasp this overall evolution," Roche said.

The F/A-22 has evolved into an air dominance aircraft capable of "kicking down the door" in anti-access situations, and the re-designation simply better reflects the inherent air-to-ground and air-to-air capabilities of the Raptor, Roche said.

"Transformation is changing our thinking, but not necessarily throwing everything old away," Jumper said. "It's building on what we have but using it in very new ways."

The F/A-22 is a prime example of the Air Force's approach to transforming by combining air dominance, precision attack, networked intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and joint close air support into an unprecedented single platform, he said.

"Its sensors will provide valuable information regarding precise target location and characteristics into a common network for all to use — both air, land and sea," Jumper said. "In short, it will be its own intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform."

The F/A-22 will be the only system able to reliably engage cruise missiles and will be delivered to replace fighters that have been in active service longer than any fighter the Air Force has ever had in its inventory, Jumper said. He added that the F/A-22 will be able to deploy with a fraction of the logistics footprint and manpower required to sustain the service's current 25-year old platforms.

"(Secretary Roche and I) believe that the combination of these capabilities is transformational and that this transformational weapon should be called the F/A-22," Jumper said.

Air Force participates in South Africa exercise

By 2nd Lt. Rosaire Bushey
458th Air Expeditionary Group

■ **AIR FORCE BASE WATERKLOOF, South Africa** — Air Force people arrived here Sept. 17 to participate in the first bilateral exercise between the air forces of South Africa and the United States.

More than 200 airmen from Royal Air Force Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath in England, Ellsworth AFB, S.D., and the Oklahoma Air National Guard are participating in the exercise Sept. 23 to 28.

Besides the exercise, aircraft will also be participating in the African Aerospace Defense Exhibition, which is held every two years in Pretoria, the nation's capitol.

"Aside from our participation in the exhibition, the exercise is broadscope with the South African air force," said Capt. Tony Principi, 3rd Air Force operations directorate chief of logistics plans and programs.

The exercise will include F-15E Strike Eagles from RAF Lakenheath and KC-135 Stratotankers from RAF Mildenhall, as well as B-1 Lancers from Ellsworth. Oklahoma ANG C-130 Hercules will airdrop South African paratroopers, and C-9 Nightingales from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, will take part in an aeromedical evacuation exercise.

Even though this is the first exercise of its type between the two countries, Principi said the planning has been smooth.

"We started the site survey and planning conferences in July and it has come together fairly quickly but it's taken the work of a lot of people," he said.

"A lot of hours have been put in by people on both sides of this exercise. The South African air force has been superb in helping us get information and providing us with everything we need," he said. "The fact we were able to put such a large exercise together so quickly is really a reflection of how enthusiastic the South African air force has been. They were great hosts before we even arrived."

Although this will not be the first time Air Force units have taken part in the aerospace exhibition, or flown operationally from South Africa, it is the first time a major exercise has taken place in the nation.

"The goal is to improve defense cooperation between us and South Africa," Principi said. "By broadening the operational understanding of operations in Sub-Saharan African, it provides our folks with tremendous training opportunities." *(Courtesy of U.S. Air Forces in Europe News Service)*

Airmen may be able to carry 'use or lose' leave

■ **RANDOLPH AFB, Texas** — Active-duty airmen who were unable to take annual leave this past year because they were supporting contingency operations will be allowed to accumulate more than the normal 60 days after the fiscal year ends.

Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members who performed full-time training or other full-time duty for more than 29 days are also eligible for this special leave accrual.

Those affected can retain up to 90 days of leave until the end of fiscal 2003, according to personnel officials.

"When possible, servicemembers are encouraged to use their leave in the year it is earned," said Charles Abell, assistant secretary of defense for force management policy.

Those who meet the criteria for having excess leave should apply for special leave accrual through their command channels. For more information, contact the local military personnel flight. *(Courtesy of Air Force News Service)*

Hangin' out!

Courtesy photo

OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH — Airman 1st Class David Perleberg from the 363rd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron lowers an aging security camera down from the top of a 100-foot communications tower at a deployed location supporting Operation Southern Watch. A new camera was installed and will assist security forces in monitoring the base. ***(Courtesy of Air Force News Service)***

The unit coin: the history, the game and the rules

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
90th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ **F.E. WARREN AFB, Wyo.** – Military members can hold a piece of military history in the palm of their hand.

Coins are used at many units to identify their mission and build camaraderie among its members. But origins of the coin as a military tradition are not as obvious. The most prevalent saga of coin origin comes from World War I when American volunteers joined newly formed flying squadrons in Europe.

A wealthy American lieutenant pilot ordered solid bronze medallions, imprinted with the squadron emblem, for every member of his squadron. He carried his medallion in a small leather pouch that hung from his neck. During the war, the lieutenant's aircraft was severely damaged by German ground fire and he was forced to land behind enemy lines. The German army captured him and confiscated his personal identification, allowing him to keep only the small leather pouch around his neck. After being moved to a small French town, he found an opportunity to escape during a nighttime bombardment and reached the front lines, eventually stumbling into a French outpost.

The French did not recognize the young American pilot as an ally and prepared to execute him. Remembering the medallion around his neck, he showed it to his would-be executioners. They recognized the squadron insignia and delayed the execution. They offered him a bottle of wine instead of shooting him.

When he returned to his squadron, all members were required to carry their medallion or coin at all times. The coin challenge, a tradition continued today, was born. A challenger would ask to see the coin. If the challenger could not produce his coin, he was required to purchase a drink of choice for the member who had challenged him. If the challenged member produced his coin, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink.

As with most stories of interest, there are always versions of variance.

Another tale, also from World War I, regards units using bullets rather than coins. During the war, pilots carried handguns for self-protection and often had a bullet specially engraved with their unit insignia. These bullets became conversation pieces in the English pubs and the practice of showing off one's bullet evolved into slamming the bullet down on the bar, primer end down, in a challenge to a fellow squadron-mate to see who would buy the next round. Commanders felt that slamming live ammunition down on a hard wooden surface was unsafe, so they issued a formal proclamation instructing airmen to use dud ammo instead. This still led to problems, as it was difficult to determine if the bullet was live or if its charge had been fully removed. Commanders did not want to discontinue one of the flyers' favorite off-duty pastimes, so they brought the unit coin into being, becoming a new piece of the challenge custom.

Yet another history of the unit coin comes from guerrilla forces fighting the Japanese in the Philippines in 1944. The guerrillas used the coin to identify comrades that had never met before. Supposedly, if two people met in a public place, either might reach into their own pocket and remove a handful of change. The change would contain a certain coin imprinted with their unit emblem. If both members displayed their unit coins they knew they were allies. Many stories exist that attempt to uncover the heritage and history of the unit coin. Today however, military members identify with the unit coin as a symbol of pride. If presented a coin as a memento from a superior, it's known as an accolade for a job well done.

So the next time servicemembers gather to let off some steam, and a sharp slap of metal on wood snaps through the air, dig deep into your pocket and produce your unit coin. You, my friend, are being challenged with a long-standing tradition of the United States military. *(Courtesy of Air Force Space Command News Service)*

Helicopter accident report released

■ **LANGLEY AFB, Va. --** There were several factors contributing to the May 30 crash of an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter, according to Air Force officials in an accident investigation board report released Sept. 17.

These factors are inaccurate performance-planning data, cumbersome performance-planning charts, changing winds, the pilot's delayed execution of a planned escape route and use of a decertified method for confirming power numbers.

At the time of the crash, the helicopter was assisting in the rescue of three critically injured climbers on Mount Hood near Portland, Ore.

The pilot, co-pilot, flight engineer and four pararescuemen escaped safely with nonlife-threatening injuries. The helicopter and its crew were assigned to the 939th Rescue Wing at Portland Air National Guard Base.

According to the report, the aircraft was hovering over the rescue site when the main rotor slowed and the helicopter began to descend. The pilot tried to recover the aircraft and guide it away from the rescue operation. When he realized the helicopter was not recoverable, he attempted to land. During the landing attempt, the main rotor blades hit the terrain. The helicopter rolled seven-and-a-half times down the mountain before coming to a rest. *(Courtesy of Air Combat Command News Service)*

Charges preferred in Canadian friendly fire incident

■ **WASHINGTON** -- Criminal charges were preferred Sept. 11 against the two F-16 pilots involved in the April 17, 2002, friendly-fire deaths of four Canadian soldiers and injuries of eight others near Kandahar, Afghanistan. The pilots are from the 170th Fighter Squadron based in Springfield, Ill., part of the 183rd Fighter Wing, Air National Guard. Both officers have been recalled to active duty in response to the charges in accordance with Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 802.

Maj. Harry Schmidt is charged with four counts of involuntary manslaughter and eight counts of assault. He is also charged with failing to exercise appropriate flight discipline and not complying with the rules of engagement in the Afghanistan area of operations. The charges were filed under Articles 119, 128, and 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, respectively.

Maj. William Umbach is charged under the same Articles, including the allegation that as flight commander he negligently failed to exercise appropriate flight command and control and to ensure compliance with the rules of engagement.

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Stephen Sargeant preferred the charges. He was the co-president of the Coalition Investigation Board that examined the friendly-fire incident. These charges are only accusations. Both officers are presumed innocent.

The United States Central Command has released its final investigation report into friendly fire incident involving Canadian ground forces in Afghanistan. The report is available at *http://www.centcom.mil/News/Reports/Tarnak_Farms_Report.htm.*

For questions on the investigation report, contact Central Command at 813-827-5894. For questions on military justice issues, contact 8th Air Force Public Affairs at 318-456-2145/2982/2156.

30th Space Wing Mission:

To defend the United States through launch, range and expeditionary operations.

Bush calls Iraqi offer a 'ploy'

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

■**WASHINGTON** — President Bush said Saddam Hussein's offer to let U.N. inspectors back into Iraq is "his latest ploy," and said a strong U.N. resolution was still necessary.

Bush spoke following a breakfast meeting with members of Congress. "We talked about … how it was important for us to work with Congress to pass a strong resolution," he said. "I told the members that within the next couple days, this administration will develop language that we think is necessary, and we look forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats to get a resolution passed."

House Armed Services Committee staffers said they expect a congressional resolution before the November election.

The Bush administration is also working with U.N. Security Council members on a resolution that will make Iraq live up to past resolutions, set deadlines for that compliance and specify options available to the world body.

Iraq delivered a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Sept. 16 saying it would allow the return of U.N. weapons inspectors. Bush said Hussein has used this delaying tactic time and again.

"I'm convinced that the world understands the ploy," Bush said. "One of the jobs the United States has is to remind people about not only the threat but the fact that his defiance has weakened the United Nations.

"And the United Nations, in order for the world to be a more peaceful place, must rise up and deal with this threat and hold him to account. That's what we expect out of the Security Council."

Myers: Terrorists not interested in the diversity that makes U.S. great

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

■**FORT MYER, Va.** — Air Force Gen. Richard Myers said international terrorists killed more than 3,000 people on Sept. 11, 2001, and if they had their way, they'd gladly kill more innocents — "10,000 or tens of thousands."

"Their goal is to destroy our way of life and the things we hold dear, such as freedom," the general said. "Freedom means a lot of other things too. It means that we're a tolerant people, contrasted to the terrorists who aren't very tolerant. We think diversity helps make us great. Terrorists are not interested in much diversity.

Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke at the American GI Forum's Seventh annual Salute to Hispanic Veterans at the Fort Myer Community Club Sept. 14. The event was held the eve of the start of Hispanic American Heritage Month, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. The 2002 national theme is "Strength in Unity, Faith and Diversity."

The forum singled out four persons for their outstanding contributions to the nation. Albert C. Zapanta, chairman of DoD's Reserve Forces Policy Board, received the American GI Forum's Founders Award. The National Commander's Award went to Army Command Sgt. Maj. Maria Martinez of the Baltimore Recruiting Battalion. Rep. Thomas Davis III of Virginia was recognized with the Public Service Award. The organization's Special Merit Award went to Erwin "Swede" Huelsewede, a special assistant and senior adviser to Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi.

A predominantly Hispanic American veterans organization, the American GI Forum is dedicated to addressing problems of discrimination and inequities endured by Hispanic veterans. Established after World War II, the organization's motto is "Education is Freedom and Freedom Should be Everybody's Business."

Myers, the keynote speaker, went on to say that because of worldwide terrorism, "It's going to take a long time before the things we hold dear are secure."

Emphasizing that everyone must stay patient and keep abreast of events, the chairman said people must talk to their families, friends and co-workers — especially the veterans who understand and have been through this before."

He pointed out the percentage of Hispanics in uniform is greater than in the U.S. population in general. Noting a couple of Hispanics who made noteworthy contributions to the nation, Myers said Brig. Gen. Luis Esteves was the first Puerto Rican to graduate from West Point.

"He was the first person out of his West Point class of 1915 to become a general officer," Myers said. "That's notable because Gen. (Dwight) Eisenhower and (Gen.) Omar Bradley were also in that class. (Esteves) was the founder of what is today the Puerto Rican National Guard."

Myers cited the Korean War heroism of Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Ambrosio Guillen. "He and his platoon fought hand-to-hand against the enemy," the general said. "He became critically wounded but refused medical aid and continued to direct fire until the enemy was defeated." Guillen died of his wounds shortly after and received a posthumous Medal of Honor for his valor.

Calling America's response to terrorism "complex," Myers said, "This has really been a different type of war."

And, he said, America's response is more than a military one — it includes diplomatic, economic and intelligence actions.

"This points to the need to keep the coalition of 90 countries working on the war on terrorism together," he said. "People are helping in many ways all over the world."

For example, he said, Japan is prohibited by its constitution from sending its military forces to participate, but the Japanese government has provided 48 million gallons of fuel for U.S. Navy ships in the Pacific.

Myers asked the American GI Forum veterans to serve again by being patient and encouraging others to be patient.

"You know about combat and war. This is a different kind of war, but you know enough about it to say, 'We've got to be patient and have got to see this through.' The stakes are really too high. It's kind of like the last man standing rules. If we don't get this right, then what our veterans have fought for and our young people today are fighting for will all be for naught."

"Your freedoms are threatened by terrorists, but you probably understand that more than any group I speak to," Myers said.

Juan Mireles, the forum's national commander, said, "We're going to support those serving overseas."

Guardsman not afraid of warzone

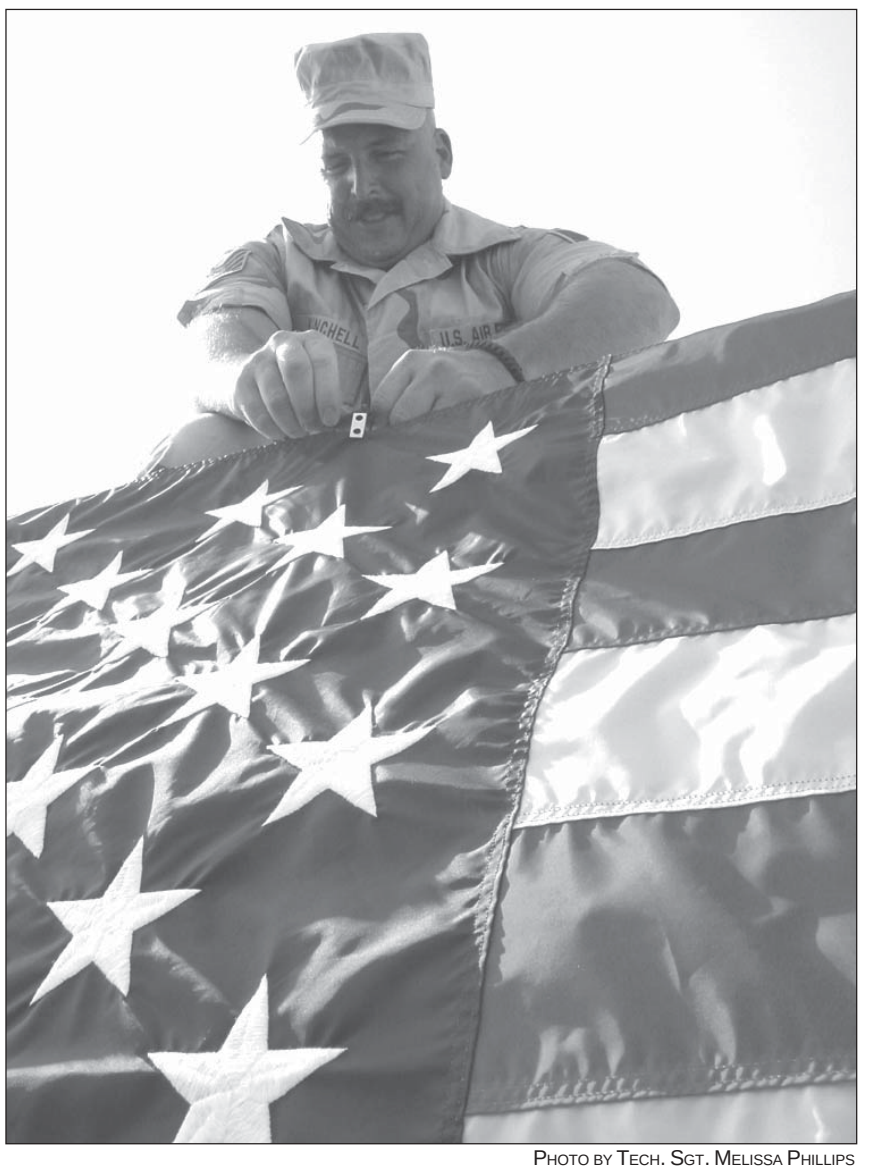


Photo by Tech. Sgt. Melissa Phillips

Tech. Sgt. Keith Winchell, a firefighter from the 380th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, ties the flag to a fire truck in preparation for a ceremony at a forward-deployed location supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. He is a guardsman deployed from Stewart Air National Guard Base, N.Y. Winchell's full-time job is protecting the Bronx as a New York City patrolman assigned to the 50th Precinct.

SPACE & MISSILE
FEATURES

Destinations *Central Coast @ Gaviota Hot Springs*

By 2nd Lt. Michelle Mayo
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

The sign that welcomes you to the upland portion of Gaviota State Park says, "Mountain Lion Country: Mountain lions are usually reclusive and avoid contact with humans, but they have been known to attack without warning."

"That's wonderful," I thought as I pictured myself being attacked by a mountain lion. The image played itself out in my head like a movie. You know the kind. Slow motion. The unsympathetic audience jeering the fool hiking alone in the forest — believing she deserves to be mauled.

Despite the imaginary insensitive audience, I began the ascent into the park. Gaviota State Park is home to Gaviota Hot Springs. The walk is short but fairly steep.

The hot springs are about half a mile from the park entrance.

The springs are actually two small pools. The water from the higher pool cascades gently into the second.

When I got there, the sun was high overhead. It shone down on the springs and lit up the small grove, which was nestled among the trees. It was beautiful.

Two older gentlemen were enjoying the warm water of the natural springs, which one of them said had healing powers.

I don't know if I believe that, but the men were friendly and told me a little bit about the place.

The freshwater pools are heated underground and the smell of sulfur hangs gently in the air.

The smaller of the two pools is about 94 degrees, said the more talkative of the two men. The larger remains a steady 87 degrees.

Photo by 2nd Lt. Michelle Mayo

The lower pool at Gaviota Hot Springs stays a pleasant 87 degrees.

I asked the men their names, but when I told them I was writing for publication, they declined to tell me. In fact, one of the men asked me not to write the article at all.

He said that when too many people come to the springs, they ruined its serenity. Careless visitors destroyed the small dams and left their trash.

"People who love this place," as he called them, take care of the area. It is they who pick up trash and rebuild the dams when necessary and keep the place beautiful. There are signs posted asking volunteers to maintain the area.

I stayed and talked to the men for a few more minutes. I didn't get into the water. It was a hot day, and I still had a long hike to the to the top of Gaviota Peak ahead of me, so the hot water didn't seem too refreshing. Also, I forgot my bug spray so I wasn't too eager to expose my unprotected skin.

However, I can imagine that on a cool, mist-shrouded Central Coast day, the warmth of the natural hot springs would be ideal.

I took my leave of the men and began the three-mile hike to Gaviota Peak. The first part of the hike is a relatively steady, easy uphill climb. There were one or two places where the path even leveled out a bit.

"Not too bad," I thought. "Considering how out of shape I am, I'm handling this pretty well. Not panting."

Depending on the time of day, there is relatively little tree cover for most of the hike and virtually none on the first mile, so sunscreen and a lot of water are a must.

Just as I began to pride myself on my physical prowess and how well I was doing, I got to the last mile or so of the hike.

This is a steep, strenuous uphill climb through the Los Padres National Forest. Even though I was in a forest, the trees still provided little or no shade.

It was about this time that I heard the rustling of the dry leaves from within the trees.

"Not lizards, but could be birds," I told myself. Meanwhile, my slow-motion horror movie played itself in my head one more time.

I would have never given the rustling a thought if it weren't for that sign. I knew I was being silly, but I was glad to have my trusty cell phone nonetheless.

But even though the odds of seeing a mountain lion are very slim, the park still has to warn hikers about possible dangers – even if it makes people like me a little jumpy.

But I made it to the top without incident.

What awaited me at the top was a stunning view of the coastline below. The day was clear, not a cloud in the sky. In the distant horizon, the Channel Islands jutted up from the Pacific.

I took in the view and relaxed a little.

I noticed a tin can that looked like a garbage can. In it were notebooks for visitors to jot down their thoughts. As for me, I was too tired to jot down anything.

I thought the hike was hard, but I also know the trail is popular with mountain bikers too.

That must be extremely difficult. The trail is rocky and crevassed and very steep in parts.

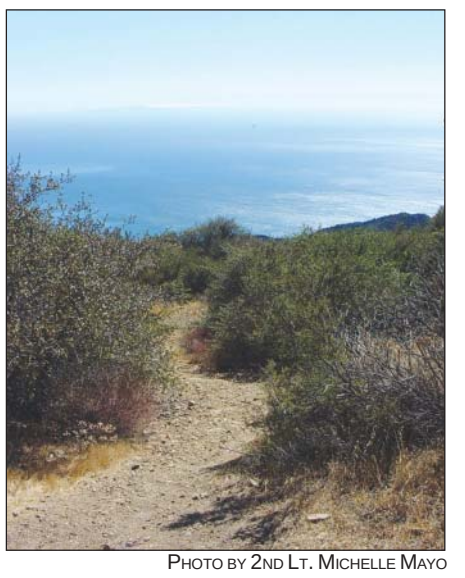


Photo by 2nd Lt. Michelle Mayo

A 3-mile trail leads to the top of Gaviota Peak.

In all, it took me about four hours to do the round-trip hike. That includes the stop at the hot springs.

Even though the park is right off the highway, it was quiet and secluded. I only saw a few people on the trail toward the hot springs and no one on my way to the peak.

It is a wonderful way to enjoy the natural beauty of the Central Coast. You may want to bring a mobile phone – just in case you meet a marauding mountain lion.

The park is only about 30 minutes from Lompoc.

To get to there from Vandenberg, take U.S. Highway 1 out of Lompoc toward U.S. Highway 101. Take the exit toward San Luis Obispo. Cross the highway, past the stop sign, and go to the end of the road and make a right. Then follow the short gravel road leading to the park. There is a $2 entry fee to the park.

Community Calendar

20 FRI

Tax volunteers – The American Association of Retired Persons needs volunteers to prepare tax returns. Volunteers receive free IRS-certified tax training. Call (888) 227-7669.

Santa Barbara trolley tours – 90 minutes, 10, 11:30 a.m.; 1, 2:30, 4 p.m. Call (805) 965-0353.

One-on-One marriage enrichment counseling - Call the family support center, 606-9958.

Military care packages – the family support center staff is accepting donations to support deployed troops. Call Master Sgt. JamieLopez, 605-8553, for details.

Orphans of the Storm – Presented by The Great American Melodrama through Sept. 22 in Oceano. Tickets cost $13 - $16.50. Call (805) 489-2499.

Chaps! – Presented by PCPA Theaterfest through Sept. 21 at the Marian Theatre in Santa Maria. Call (805) 938-7731.

20 FRI

Twilight beach horseback rides - at Pacific Dunes Ranch in Oceano. Call (805) 489-8100 for trail rides and boarding. Beginners are welcome.

Harbor and boat cruises - at Adventure Marina in Morro Bay. Call (805) 772-9463 for more information.

Space and Sea Girl Scouts – sign up by calling the Scout Hut, 605-2217, or leave a message, 734-5545.

Beginning Chinese Folk Dance for children – through Nov. 22 at the Allan Hancock Santa Maria campus. Call (805) 922-6966.

CAL-VET Home Loan class – 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. today at the family support center. Learn about pitfalls, application procedures and the basic home loan process. Call Sunny Park, 605-0134, to register.

The Nerd – Presented by The Lompoc Civic Theater plays weekends starting Today at the Lompoc Civic Auditorium. Show times are: 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are $10 at the door. Purchase tickets at the Vandenberg Services Center, Longs Drugs and Baker's Square.

21 SAT

Special Olympics Plane Pull – 9 a.m. Saturday at the Santa Maria Airport. The entry fee is a $200 donation to Special Olympics. The plane is a Navy F-4 fighter jet. Call Staff Sgt. Rebecca Faalzadeh, 605-0569, to register a team.

Mega Case Lot Sale – Saturday and Sunday at the commissary.

23 MON

P.A.I.R. orientation – 3 p.m. Monday in the Crestview Elementary School Library. Partners Assisting In Reading members read with children at Crestview for 30 minutes each week. The program begins Tuesday and runs for 12 weeks. Call 734-1651 to sign up.

Jiu-Jitsu self-defense classes - 7-9 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays at the Unified Center for Martial Arts, 1766 S. Broadway in Santa Maria. Call (805) 934-2158.

23 MON

Relaxation Room - 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday at the Health and Wellness Center. Call 606-2221.

Indoor cycling classes - 6 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; noon Fridays; 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and 8 a.m. Saturdays in the services center.

Self-defense workshop - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays for women and girls 12 years and older at the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center. Call 736-8535.

24 TUE

Cub Scout meeting – 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Crestview Elementary School. Call 734-1028 for details.

Motorcycle Club meeting – 3:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Vandenberg Services Center. Call Staff Sgt. Sheri Jones, 605-0751, to register.

Single parents support group - 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Tuesday in the services center. Call 606-9958.

24 TUE

Children's Center openings for 3 and 4 year olds – noon – 4 p.m. Tuesday – Friday at Allan Hancock College Children's Center in Santa Maria. Program focuses on kindergarten readiness and socialization. Call Kitty Young, (805) 922-6966 Ext. 3569.

Box aerobics classes - noon Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. Saturdays. Call 606-7979.

Pre-separation Briefing – 8 a.m. Tuesday in the family support center. This is a required briefing at least 90 days prior to leaving the service.

25 WED

Vandenberg Top Three – noon Wednesday in the services center. Call 605-6214.

Around the house bingo – 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Pacific Coast Club. The Vandenberg Spouses Club is accepting membership applications at the event.

AL-ANON – 7 - 8 p.m. Wednesdays at the family support center. Call 734-0784.

Hispanic Heritage

26 THU

Month Food Expo – noon – 3 p.m. Thursday at the services center. There will be free food samples from more than a dozen Latin American countries, drinks, music and movies.

Titan Toastmasters - 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Thursdays in the base library. Call 606-1541, Ext. 3722.

27 FRI

American Sign Language Skill Builder - Sept. 27 - 28 and Nov. 1 - 2. The class is offered through Allan Hancock College's community education program. Cost is $40

28 SAT

Mustang Waterslides - 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sept. 28 and 29. This is the last weekend until May 2003. For directions, visit www.mustang-waterslides.com.

OCT 1 TUE

Testing times change – Oct. 1 at the base education center for CLEP, DANTES and PME testing. New test times are as follows: 8 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call the education office, 605-5900.

Chapel Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE TIMES

Praise and Worship - 8:30 a.m. in Chapel 2
Traditional Protestant - 11:30 a.m. in Chapel 1
Gospel - 11:30 a.m. in Chapel 2
Catholic Mass - 10 a.m. in Chapel 1
Daily Mass - 11:30 a.m. in Chapel 2
Saturday Mass - 5 p.m. in Chapel 2

EVENTS

- **Protestant women's potluck** - 7 p.m. today at the Chapel 1 Annex. To sign up call Jill Hembroff, 734-1360.
- **Parish potluck** - following 5 p.m. service Sept. 28 in the Chapel 1 Annex.
- **Combined worship service** - 11:30 a.m. Sept. 29 in Chapel 1. The Protestant Women of the Chapel will lead the service. A fellowship luncheon follows.
- **G.I. Java coffeehouse** - open 5 - 9 p.m. Monday-Saturday in the Delta Dormitory. To volunteer, call Staff Sgt. William Spencer, 606-5773.
- **Vandenberg food pantry drive** - first weekend of each month. Call 606-5773.
- **Weekly Prayer Focus** - The chapel staff will pray this week for those who are currently TDY and for their families.
- For information on other chapel activities and religious denominations, call 606-5773.

PROTESTANT

- **Chapel Community Night** - 5:30 - 7 p.m. Sundays in the religious education classrooms.
- **Brothers and Sisters in Christ** – 5:30 - 7 p.m. Sundays in the religious education classrooms. Call Jill Hembroff, 734-1360.
- **Women's Evening Study** - Call Julie Wittkowski, 734-3788.
- The new **apologetics Bible study group** - 7 p.m. Monday in the REA building.
- **Protestant adult and youth Bible study** - 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Chapel 1 Annex. Call Tech. Sgt. Mark McKinney, 605-7564.
- **Men's weekly Bible study** - 6 p.m. Wednesdays in the Breakers Dining Facility. Call 606-5773.
- The **Vandenberg AFB Officers' Christian Fellowship** - 7 p.m. Wednesdays. Call Christy Keana, 734-0696.
- Protestant Women of the Chapel **beginner quilting classes** - 10 a.m. Thursday in the Chapel 1 annex. Call Lucille McLain, 733-2630.
- **Women's Saturday morning bible study** - 10 a.m. third Saturday of the month in the religious education admin building. Call Genette Howard, 734-1693.

CATHOLIC

- **New Bible study group** – 7 p.m. Mondays in the religious education administration building. Call Deborah Cotey, 734-4202.
- **Fellowship Thursdays** – 7 p.m. Thursdays in the religious education administration building. Call Deborah Cotey, 734-4202.
- **Tuesday daily Mass** - 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays throughout the summer in Chapel 2. Call Kelly Reape, 734-1437.

JEWISH

- **Jewish community Torah study session** - Sunday evening. Call Anita Friedman, 605-7564 or 736-5822.

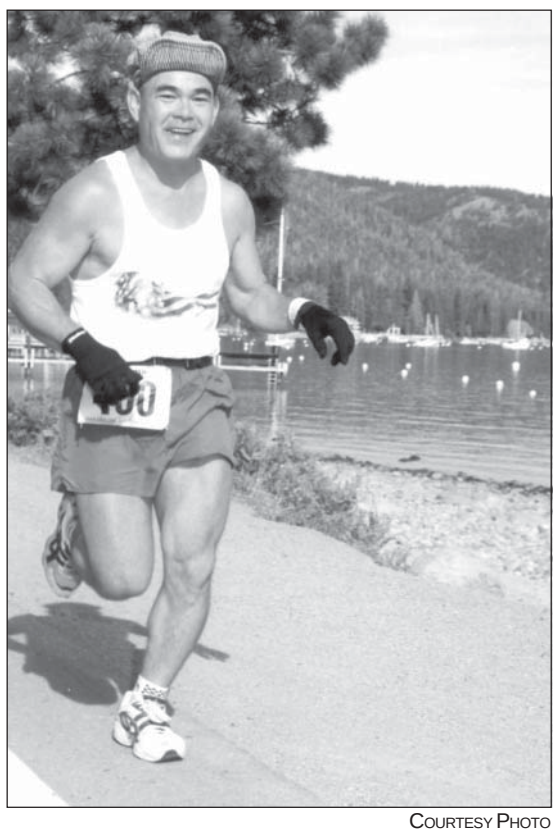
At The Movies

All movies start at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.
Doors are locked once show starts.

Today
Blood Work
Rated R
A retired FBI profiler is brought back into service under unusual circumstances involving his own blood analysis to track a ruthless serial killer.

Saturday
The Adventures of Pluto Nash
Rated PG-13
Pluto Nash is a nightclub owner on the moon in 2087 who finds himself in hot water when he refuses to sell his club to the local mob. Lunar gangsters help the mysterious Rex Crater mastermind a plan to take over the moon.

The theater is closed Sept. 22.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ramie Nakashima, 30th Mission Support Squadron first sergeant, will compete in the Air Force Marathon Saturday.

Team V's marathon man reaches milestone

BY MASTER SGT. TY FOSTER
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

In today's Air Force, "Hooah!" has come to be a spirited reply in response to a challenge.

For Vandenberg's Ramie Nakashima, it is a motivational punctuation. An exclamation of "I am here – proud to serve. I am alive – I'll give it my best shot."

At 39 years old, Nakashima doesn't run from challenges – he runs to them and outlasts them.

As a husband, father, grandfather and the first sergeant for the 30th Mission Support Squadron, he faces his fair share of challenges every day.

Saturday, he'll run down another challenge.

He'll compete in the 2002 Air Force Marathon for the first time.

This is a significant milestone for the 17.5-year veteran.

It marks the achievement of a personal goal – 12 marathons in 12 months.

Not bad for a former smoker who quit only three years ago.

He started running about six months later.

"I'd gained 20 pounds in four months," he said. At 5 feet 3 inches, 178 pounds was too much weight to pack around.

He began running a mile a day three times a week for two months. Soon, he was up to three miles a day five days a week and down to a lean 149 pounds.

"Basically, I run to stay in shape, take time to reflect and relieve stress," he said. "I feel really energized after a workout, too."

"A friend talked me into running the Air Force Marathon with him," Team V's marathon man said.

Naka, as his friends call him, enjoys a challenge.

"He set me up with a schedule and I was off and running," he said.

Soon, he was putting six miles a day behind him five or six days per week, the Monterey, Calif., native said.

By February 2001, he figured he was ready to take a shot at the Los Angeles marathon in March. He finished in 3 hours, 41 minutes, 3 seconds. His final pre-Air Force Marathon race was the June 2001 Suzuki Rock & Roll Marathon in San Diego. He finished with a respectable 3:23:56.

Sept. 11 put the kibosh on the 2001 Air Force Marathon, but it didn't stop Naka. A month later he began his series of ground-pounding 26.2 milers in Lake Tahoe, Calif.

At the Las Vegas event Feb. 23, he turned in his personal best time – 3:11:12.

For many runners, one marathon every six months is enough. So, how does Naka train for a marathon a month?

He runs – a lot.

With Vandenberg's 99,000-acre expanse situated along California's scenic Central Coast, Naka has nearly 300 miles of paved roads to train on.

"I try to run in the afternoon or the evening," the athlete said. He puts in about 40 miles per week.

"I have logged in close to a thousand miles in the past year and a half," he said.

Running that much obviously takes its toll on a pair of shoes. Naka forks out between $35 and $80 for a pair each month. Fit, rather than brand name, is critical.

"I buy the brand that fits my feet," he said. "Buying a pair of shoes is so important and can make a huge difference in the road races."

Wool socks and lightweight clothing round out his running attire. He pre-marathon prep kit includes Band-Aids, Duct Tape and Vaseline to reduces the chaffing that goes with long-distance running.

Diet is another key component to his ability to rebound so quickly from the arduous task of running 26.2 miles.

He eats a lot of carbohydrates and stays away from fried foods. Before a race, he eats pasta and salad. He also drinks plenty of fluid.

During a race, he said he drinks about 20 cups of water along the route. He also consumes six Gel Packs every 35 minutes. These high carbohydrate supplements keep him energized.

His mind doesn't wander when he's running a marathon, he said.

"I'm focused on my split times at miles 6, 13, 20 and 23," Naka said. "The rest is down hill to the finish line."

Running is a solitary pursuit, but Naka couldn't put in his monthly marathons without the support of his wife of 11 years, Cecilia.

While she supports his quest of 12 marathons in 12 months, there are times when Cecilia questions Naka's sanity, she said with a chuckle. There are also times when she and their daughter question their own sanity during a 3 a.m. wake up for a road trip to Naka's next event.

But, she's there, waiting at the finish line for him to break the tape.

When Ramie Nakashima crosses the finish line tomorrow, he'll shout, "Hooah!" In military jargon, the acronym "HUA!" represents "heard, understood and acknowledged.

Team V will hear, understand and acknowledge his spirit and accomplishment – "Hooah! Ramie, Hooah!."

Softball standings

Scores from Tuesday

30 SVS	15
Det 9	14
30 SFS	9
576 FLTS	8

Standings

SFS	2	0
Comm	1	1
576 FLTS	1	1
Det 9	1	1
SVS	1	1

Tuesday's Over 30 scores

Det 9	30
30 CES	0
614 SOPS	
381st TRG	forfeited
NRO	22
30 SFS	4

Standings

NRO	4	1
Det 9	4	1
30 SFS	3	2
576 FLTS	2	2
30 CS	2	3
614 SOPS	2	3
30 TRANS	0	4

Are you ready for some football!

BY COACH MCKINNEY
30th Space Wing Command Section superintendent

It's that time of year again; the smell of fresh cut grass is everywhere. The men of fall engage in a bone-rattling battle of wills. You guessed it; football season is upon us once again. The 2002 football season has already begun for the NFL and universities all around the country.

Classic battles such as the Pittsburgh Steelers versus the New England Patriots (defending Super Bowl champs) and the Florida Gators versus the Miami Hurricanes (defending NCAA Div I champs) have already taken place. Yes, the football junkies who are often referred to as husbands and sons (also wife and daughters in my house) are in the beginning stages of a 5 month euphoric ride.

Now that I have your attention and curiosity peaked, maybe you'll consider a different level of football. One that's easily accessible, costs far less than any pro or college game, and has a local flavor—high school football. All across the country Friday nights represent a community revival with a sole focus; to root for the home team.

In the states of Texas, Pennsylvania and Ohio, just to name a few, Friday night high school football takes on a life of it's own. In Texas it is not uncommon for a crowd of 10,000 fans to pack a stadium. In Ohio, generations gather to cheer against a bitter rival. In Pennsylvania, names such as Joe Namath, Joe Montana, Jim Kelly, and Dan Marino mark the glorious history of that state's high school football tradition.

What does that have to do with me? I'm glad you asked the question. The Cabrillo High School Conquistadors have been in the doldrums for several years. However, under the leadership of relatively new coach Pat Foster the Conqs are beginning to show signs of life and you can almost feel the ache of expectation.

Coach Foster has assembled a new staff of proven coaches who are eager to create some Friday night excitement here on the Central Coast. A new defensive coordinator from Texas and a new offensive and defensive line coach from the University of Idaho are definite steps in the right direction. The players spent the entire summer rising before dawn participating in voluntary workouts. Participating in camps and passing tournaments gave the staff a true gauge on the progress of their charges.

Off-season workouts, experienced staff, and a new attitude of success, I would say the future of Conquistador football is looking up.

Taking to heart the proven method of "stepping up" the competition, coach Foster and team are embarking on a bold course that can only strengthen them. Traveling to the big City of San Diego to the south to take on an experienced team expected to contend for a title and playing in a restructured league that now has perennial arch rival Lompoc High School as a member … "stepping up" may be an understatement. Viewing the team in preparation for the challenges ahead, they appear to be brimming with confidence. Either they have lost part of their sanity or this area could be in for a treat.

Having played on many championship teams and coached several others, take my word for it when I say that a competitive high school football team does wonders for a community. A couple of special undefeated championship teams at SHAPE Headquarters in Casteau, Belgium not only inspired the backing of military members and families, but even the local Belgians became ardent supporters. Make no mistake, there's nothing like a crushing tackle to bring a community together.

The final piece to the puzzle may very well have absolutely nothing to do with what goes down on the field. Fans…hundreds and hundreds of fans adopting the school that most represents this base might be that missing piece. Coach Foster, in a meeting with players' parents said that, "we need for everyone associated with the program to try and generate support for our guys." If you stop to think on it for a moment, what better way to show the youth of Vandenberg AFB that we want to see them succeed, than to go out and support their activities.

There is a strong possibility that a neighbor, co-worker, or someone else you know from around the base has a child on the team. They may not want to ask you, but I guarantee you they will appreciate knowing you were "at the game."

Football is not the only fall sport that is starting up and maybe you have another sport which strikes your fancy. Contact the office at Cabrillo High School and they will be happy to provide you with a schedule and list of sports that are competing this fall.

Any positive activity that our youth are interested in pursuing is an activity that is well worth supporting. Brisk Friday evening, clear sky, the smell of fresh cut grass, and the spirit and exuberance of youth…I know I'm ready for some football!

Want to see more sports in your

SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

Tell us what your team's up to! Submit stories and ideas to:

space&missiletimes@vandenberg.af.mil