

Base Briefs

POW/MIA DAY

Vandenberg AFB honors service members held prisoner of war or missing in action and their families at 2 p.m. Sept. 19. The base's National POW/MIA Day recognition ceremony takes place at the POW/MIA memorial in front of the base library.

NCS PROGRAM

One percent of new airmen will be able to sign up for a 15-month enlistment, as a part of the National Call to Service Program. The congressionally mandated program is designed to let people serve their country who might otherwise shy away from a regular four- or six-year active-duty enlistment. The 15-month obligation does not begin until the airman completes basic military training and technical training school.

OSI RECRUITING

The Air Force Office of Special Investigations is actively recruiting new agents in grades E-4 through E-7 with less than 12 years total active federal military service. First term airmen must be within their retraining window in order to apply. A cross-flow board is scheduled for November 2003 for active duty officers in the grades of O-1 through O-3. Call special agent Casey Fitzpatrick at 606-1852 for more information.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Officer volunteers are needed for Fresno State University's Reserve Officer Training Corps Career Day from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Oct. 16 at Fresno State University. Personnel in space and missile operations, security forces and intelligence are needed. Call public affairs at 606-3595 to volunteer.

START ESCORTS

The 30th Space Wing Treaties office needs airmen, staff sergeant and above, to act as escorts during START inspections. Training includes one hour in class and one practical demonstration. Volunteers must be available for approximately two days at a time. Call 606-8727 to sign up.

RUNNERS NEEDED

The Space & Missile Times staff is looking for Team Vandenberg members who are running in the seventh annual Air Force Marathon Sept. 20. Participants are asked to call the SMT sports writer, Tech. Sgt. Mark McKinney, at 606-3595.

UNIFORM UPDATES

The new metallic nametag will be mandatory beginning Jan. 1, 2004. Units will provide one initial issue nametag for enlisted members.

E-BOOKS

The Vandenberg Technical Library has e-books available, including a dictionary for reading online or downloading at

See BRIEFS Page

Minuteman III Launch Successful

ICBM soars down range

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

The 30th Space Wing, the 576th Flight Test Squadron here and a task force from the 91st Space Wing, Minot AFB, N.D., launched an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile at 4:31 a.m. Wednesday from North Vandenberg as part of a flight test for Air Force Space Command's Force Development Evaluation Program.

Launch activities were directed by Capt. Rob Light, 576th FLTS. Lt. Col. James Cardinal, 91st Maintenance Squadron commander, was the task force commander. Lt. Col. Anthony Blaylock, 576th FLTS commander, was mission director for this launch. Col. Wayne Louis, 30th Space Wing vice commander, was the spacelift commander, or final go/no-go authority for the launch.

"I'm extremely proud of Team Vandenberg's 100 percent mission success rate," Louis said. "The men and women of Team Vandenberg prove over and over again that they have what it takes to go to infinity and beyond!"



PHOTO BY 30TH SPACE COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON

Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles are test launched from North Vandenberg AFB. The Central Coast's prevalent fog made viewing difficult for Wednesday's 4:31 a.m. launch.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. EDWARD BRALY

The pre-existing El Rancho bridge is being replaced because of seasonal flooding which deposited a buildup of silt around its abutments. The new bridge is designed to solve those problems.

Bridge set to open mid-December

By 2ND LT. THERESA CUNNINGHAM
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

El Rancho Bridge re-opens Dec. 19, marking the culmination of a \$12M-effort by engineers, biologists, archaeologists and Chumash Indian experts here.

For Tom Cugini, 30th Civil Engineer Squadron chief of engineering, this will be the second El Rancho Bridge construction project he's been involved with. In the mid-eighties, Cugini designed a temporary bridge to solve structural deterioration on the initial WWII-era timber bridge connecting north and south Vandenberg.

The pre-existing bridge raised the initial one just five feet. Seasonal flooding deposited a build up of silt around its abutments.

"The (second) bridge fixed structural problems but not the problem of flooding," Cugini said, "The bridge was meant to be temporary. We built it up as much as money would allow."

The 2,100 linear foot Military Construction, or MILCON, project now in progress took 10 years from submission to the beginning of construction. Straub Construction, Inc. won the contracting bid and began work on the bridge earlier this year. Although construction was estimated to take two years, Straub won the bid with a fast track plan to finish in one season, Cugini said.

Closure of the El Rancho Bridge for construction necessitated transporting test missiles off base and onto a main highway to get them to their North Vandenberg launch facilities, said Michael Woods, 576th Flight Test Squadron flight development evaluation planner.

"It will have a big impact on our squadron," Woods said. "Transporting the missiles on large trucks on and off base is unusual. We had to adjust procedures and also bring in additional security personnel for escort and to control traffic."

The bridge provides a direct route for transportation of missiles, Cugini said, and its construction posed an environmental challenge. The bridge crosses the often fog-shrouded San Antonio Creek, home to at least two endangered species. Federal regulations protect the red-legged frog and the unarmored three-spined stickleback fish. They also include the preservation of wetlands.

"A biologist, archaeologist and Chumash expert is on hand for every dig," said Scott Adamson, project manager for Straub Construction. "Our biologist sweeps the site virtually every morning and evening...and we've requested a representative for the Chumash Indians to bless the bridge after it's completed. This is my first brush with

See BRIDGE Page A4

Keeping airmen from driving while intoxicated is a top priority because...

Alcohol plus driving equals danger

By AIRMAN 1ST CLASS BRYAN FRANKS
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

"If you want an audience with the wing commander, just get a DUI," said 1st Lt. Allan Bigtas, 30th Medical Group.

Not only does the offender get an audience with the wing commander, but so does his entire chain of command. But that's not all. Along with that honor, the offender also gets to change the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program signs at all five base entrances. They may even be entered into the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program.

This may seem a severe punishment, but it doesn't compare to the harm offenders could do to someone on the road.

"The ALCON program was not developed to discourage people from drinking alcohol," Bigtas said. "Instead, it's to educate and increase awareness on the responsible use of alcohol."

If people don't drink responsibly, then drive and get caught, they're in for more than just a bad hang over.

"The person who is charged with a DUI will have an audience with the wing CC, along with his chain of command, to discuss his or her misuse of alcohol," Bigtas said.

After that, the offender is evaluated by the ADAPT program staff for placement in an alcohol prevention program.

"One of the ways we're trying to increase awareness about alcohol misuse is by displaying ALCON

signs at the base gates, displaying the last DUI and by which unit," Bigtas said.

These tasks give the offender a way of seeing the consequences of their actions Bigtas said.

To help promote awareness of drinking responsibly the ALCON program suggests awarding units for not having alcohol related incidents.

"Our goals are to encourage responsible alcohol use and decrease DUIs," Bigtas said. "We're making preparations to reward responsible units with recognition certificates for 180-, 270- and 365-day periods with no alcohol-related incidents."

"There's nothing wrong with having a good time, however, we must always exercise sound judgment when using alcohol," he added. "This includes having a plan for transportation before going out and having alcoholic beverages."

For Staff Sgt. Stacy Wilfong, 30th Mission Support Group, her DUI experience has given her a different outlook on drinking and driving.

"I always felt that I could judge my state of being when I was out drinking, but for me this was like hitting a wall," Wilfong said. "I had all these things going for me and this one decision has affected all of it. Even today my DUI affects my life."

"We're trying to bring about a 'cultural shift' in the way we view alcohol use," Bigtas said. "We should view responsible alcohol use as our responsibility. It's wrong to drink and drive and take other people's lives into our hands."



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. EDWARD BRALY

Roll out

The Vandenberg AFB Atlas launch team rolls the mobile service tower away from an Atlas IIAS rocket on the pad at Space Launch Complex-3 East. The roll back facilitated a prelaunch check of the umbilical booms, which provide electrical, air conditioning and other utilities to the rocket until it launches. The rocket is set to launch Nov. 20 carrying a National Reconnaissance Office payload into orbit.

In this issue of the



Also view
The Space & Missile Times at
www.vandenberg.af.mil and click
the Space & Missile Times button.



The 381st Training Support Squadron commander receives the bronze star for meritorious service. See Page A5.



Destinations Central Coast stays local at Lompoc's Olde Towne Market on South H Street. See Page B1.

Weekend forecast
Saturday sunny with afternoon low clouds Sunday.

Low/High
52/79

For a full Vandenberg weather report, visit
www.vandenberg.af.mil/30sw/organizations/30og/weather/weather

This Week in History...

COMPILED BY AIRMAN JUANIKA GLOVER
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ The following events are moments of the past that have helped shape America into what it is today.

September 7...

1864 - Union General Phil Sheridan's troops skirmish with the Confederates under Jubal Early outside Winchester, Virginia.

1942 - The Red Army pushes back the German line northwest of Stalingrad.

September 8...

1863 - Confederate Lieutenant Dick Dowling thwarts a Union naval landing at Sabine Pass, northeast of Galveston, Texas.

1955 - The United States, Australia, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Thailand sign the mutual defense treaty that established the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

September 9...

1970 - U.S. Marines launch Operation Dubois Square, a 10-day search for North Vietnamese troops near DaNang.

September 10...

1963 - President John F. Kennedy federalizes Alabama's National Guard to prevent Governor George C. Wallace from

using guardsmen to stop public-school desegregation.

September 11...

1777 - General George Washington and his troops are defeated by the British under General Sir William Howe at the Battle of Brandywine in Pennsylvania.

2001 - Attack on America - At 8:45 a.m. on a clear Tuesday morning, an American Airlines Boeing 767 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. Then, 18 minutes after the first plane hit, a second Boeing 767—United Airlines Flight 175 sliced into the south tower at about the 60th floor. As millions watched in horror the events unfolding in New York, American Airlines Flight 77 circled over downtown Washington and slammed into the west side of the Pentagon military headquarters at 9:45 a.m. All told, 125 military personnel and civilians were killed in the Pentagon along with all 64 people aboard the airliner. Less than 15 minutes later the horror in New York took a catastrophic turn for the worse when the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed in a massive cloud of dust and smoke. At 10:30 a.m., the other Trade Center tower collapsed.

Close to 3,000 people died, including a staggering 343 firefighters and 23

policemen who were struggling to complete an evacuation of the buildings. Meanwhile, a fourth California-bound plane, United Flight 93, was hijacked about 40 minutes after leaving Newark International Airport in New Jersey. The passengers fought the four hijackers and are suspected to have attacked the cockpit with a fire extinguisher.

The plane then flipped over and sped toward the ground at upwards of 500 miles per hour, crashing in a rural field in western Pennsylvania at 10:10 a.m. All 45 people aboard were killed.

At 9 p.m., President George W. Bush delivered a televised address, declaring "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America."

September 12...

1944 - American troops fight their way into Germany.

1969 - President Richard Nixon orders a resumption in bombing North Vietnam.

September 13...

1851 - U.S. Army doctor Walter Reed is born. Reed discovered a cure for yellow fever.

1905 - U.S. warships head to Nicaragua on behalf of American William Albers, who was accused of evading tobacco taxes.

Load 'em up



PHOTO BY AIRMAN BRIDGET RAPP

Nearly 30 community members boarded a 30th Transportation Squadron bus Thursday for Vandenberg's first public tour since Sept. 11, 2001. Tour guides from the 381st Training Group lead visitors on a two-hour tour of the base including a trip to the Space & Missile Heritage Center. Visitors also stopped by the base's World War II and Korean War Veteran's memorials at the corner of California Boulevard and Nebraska Avenue. Future tours are planned for the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Reservations must be made at least two weeks in advance by calling 606-3595.

BRIEFS:

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www.netlibrary.com. The user name and password is FL2827. For more information, call the technical library at 606-9745.

VIRTUAL MPF

Military members can view their personal information on-line. Available applications include the virtual record of emergency data, verification record, duty history, assignment

information, reenlistment information and templates for humanitarian reassignment applications. The military personnel flight offers training classes for the virtual military personnel system. For more information, send an e-mail to catherine.braxton@vandenber.af.mil and sign up for one of three introduction classes.

TRAVEL VOUCHERS

All military members using a government travel card are required to split disburse all charges made on the card.

Travelers are also required to have their supervisor or approving official sign all travel. Travel vouchers without split disbursement or supervisor signature will not be accepted. For more information, contact 2nd Lt. JoAnne Finan at 606-4606.

TRICARE ONLINE

Tricare Online is available to 30th Medical Group Tricare beneficiaries at www.tricareonline.com. In order to schedule appointments; each person must build a

profile and establish a password online.

TRESPASSING

The 30th Security Forces Squadron Combat Arms Range Complex located off San Antonio Road West is off limits to all unauthorized personnel. Danger signs are posted around hazardous areas of the range complex. Entering into the area is illegal and dangerous. Those who need access should call the combat arms section at 606-5025 for assistance.

IN/OUT PROCESSING

All unaccompanied housing in- and out-processing appointments are scheduled from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Thursday.

Call the appropriate manager to schedule an appointment.

MUNITIONS CUSTOMERS

All munitions expenditures must be received by Sept. 25. This will enable accounts to be balanced and munitions to be ordered fiscal year 04. Any expenditures received after this

date will go against FY04 allocations. The 576 FLTS Munitions Storage Area will be closed for a wall-to-wall inventory Sept 26 thru 30. Please coordinate as needed. Contact TSgt Greg Danet at 606-4199 for more information.

GATE OPENINGS

The Utah Gate is open from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. The Lompoc Gate is open 24 hours through Sept. 14. The Titan Gate is open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

Editorial Staff

Col. Frank Gallegos
30th Space Wing commander
Maj. Stacey N. Bako
Chief, Public Affairs
2nd Lt. Theresa Cunningham
Chief, Internal Information

Staff Sgt. Rebecca Danét

Editor

1st Lt. Michelle Mayo
Airman 1st Class Bryan Franks
Airman Juanika Glover
Master Sgt. Lloyd Conley
Tech Sgt. Mark McKinney
Staff Writers

Staff Sgt. Edward Braly

Photographer

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For information about the Space & Missile Times, call the staff at (805) 606-2040.

Comment...

Service today brings hope for better tomorrow

Commander reflects on Sept. 11 effects on today's force

By COL. FRANK GALLEGOS
30th Space Wing commander

Yesterday marked the two-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on our homeland, Sept. 11, 2001. I am sure that all of you will agree that we will never forget those events that changed America and the world.

Many lives were forever changed by that horrible day because they lost loved ones. Others were changed because they felt the terror firsthand, and still others were changed because we couldn't believe that it could happen to us.

"The reason we are the world's premier air and space force is because we have the best people, period."

COL. FRANK GALLEGOS
30TH SPACE WING COMMANDER

Whatever the response, the effect was instantaneous and powerful.

If the purpose of the terrorist actions were to change America, it worked.

We became stronger, united and defiant in the face of those who sought to damage our nation. We banded together, helped one another and fought to make sure this would not happen again – today you continue that fight. I urge all of you not to

waiver from this commitment.

You are all patriots in the war on terrorism and the reason our nation enjoys the freedoms it does is because of your chosen profession of arms. You epitomize our core values, integrity first, excellence in all we do and service before self with your actions.

Because of our mission to deliver space power and provide assured access to space, we are critical to protecting our nation and you are the wizards that make it all happen.

The key to commanding the future of space is not in the technology or funding, but rests with you. The reason we are the world's premier air and space force is because we have the best people, period.

Through your service to this Air Force and this nation, you provide hope to many Americans.

Hope for a future free of terrorism.

Hope that our children will never have to experience a terror like

that again.

And hope that those people who lost loved ones on that tragic day will find comfort as they stand in the shadow of the American flag we have sworn to support and defend.

We are dedicated, selfless, determined professionals who willingly put our lives on the line so others may have a better tomorrow. We are sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers and we are proud to serve this nation.

This nation's freedom rests in unleashing the human talent in our Air Force and I know that each and every one of you make a difference.

I am proud to serve with you all as we progress toward a better tomorrow.



Commander's Action Line

Call 606-7850

or

E-mail your message to actionline@vandenberg.af.mil



Col. Frank Gallegos
commander

By performing Vandenberg's mission safely and effectively, Team V provides proof of its commitment to do the right thing.

Two-way communication is paramount to continued mission success. The 30th Space Wing Commander's Action Line is your direct link to me.

Through the action line you can congratulate your teammates on a job well done, affect change and express productive points of view.

I want your input and I am personally involved in every response.

The action line is always available and it's an excellent tool, but remember to use your chain of command.

Working together, we will enrich the 30th SW mission performance and the quality of life of our airmen.

When calling the action line, leave your name and phone number in case more information is needed.

Q: I'm calling on behalf of the residents of Catalpa Street concerning our bulk pickup not being made on July 28. This isn't the first time this has happened. I've contacted the housing and contracting offices and feel I'm receiving the run-around.

A: Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention. Our civil engineer squadron is looking into the matter to ensure it doesn't occur again. As a reminder to Team V, below is the policy for bulk trash pick-up:

Bulk trash pick-up for oversized trash items is scheduled for the second and fourth Monday of each month.

Items for pick-up must be out by 7 a.m. on the morning of scheduled pick up.

Recyclable items are not picked up as part of bulk pick-up, but should be put out on Wednesdays as part of the recycling pick-up.

Hazardous waste such as TVs, computer components, and propane tanks cannot be placed in the trash. These items must be dropped off at the Hazardous Waste Consolidated Accumulation Point in building 6830.

Operating hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or by appointment at 606-6014. This is another avenue for disposing of items such as used motor oil, oil filters and anti-freeze.

If you have any problems with trash or bulk collection in the future, please call the CES service contracts section at 606-1927 or 606-1928.

Maintaining battle rhythm - 9/11 remembered

By GEN. LANCE LORD

Commander, Air Force Space Command

Sept. 11, 2001 will forever remain etched in our hearts and our minds. Let us pause and remember those murdered by terrorist attacks in New York, at the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania and honor those patriots who lost their lives saving others that day. We also honor all those who continue to fight the war on terror.

In the two years that have passed since these terrorist attacks, our nation's resolve has not faltered and we have focused our efforts to target the very heart of terrorism. Through tragedy, we renewed the fight to defend our way of life and give hope to those suffering under repressive regimes that support terror.

Our nation's efforts in Afghanistan have transformed a country run by terrorism to one that is liberated from brutality and oppression. In Iraq, we've toppled the regime of terror and are providing the tools to ensure Iraq becomes a free and democratic nation.



"I'm proud of the contributions of our service and our command to this effort, and I know that your efforts will continue to shine."

GEN. LANCE LORD
COMMANDER, AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

I'm proud of the contributions of our service and our command to this effort, and I know that your efforts will continue to shine.

The war on terrorism will not be won quickly or without cost. We will continue this courageous battle and we will prevail.

We must ensure Air Force Space Command continues to provide the asymmetric advantage our nation

expects.

Remain diligent to security practices in your work areas and continue to be vigilant. Report any and all suspicious activity to the proper authorities.

Thank you for your hard work – it is truly making a difference. AFSPC is producing valuable effects in the war on terrorism each and every day.

May God continue to bless you, your families and our great nation.

ALCON: Normal

A general condition reflecting responsible alcohol use. No alcohol related driving incidents have occurred recently and no additional external factors exist.

Days since last DUI: 4

DUI totals for the Year: 13

AADD saves this Year: 233

30th OG	1	14th AF	0
30th MXG	1	381st TRG	2
30th MSG	5	576th FLTS	1
30th MDG	0	Det. 9	1
30th SW	0	Others	2



CLIP AND SAVE!

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

Call Airmen Against Drunk Driving

For a free and confidential ride home, call Airmen Against Drunk Driving at 606-AADD or 605-AADD (2233).

Be Aware! Anti-Terrorism Force Protection is an Individual Responsibility!

Report unusual or suspicious activity to the 30th Security Forces Squadron Control Center by calling 606-3911.

All reports are taken seriously!



Nov. 1 at the Pacific Coast Club. Stay tuned to Team Vandenberg Network and the Space & Missile Times for more details.

Home base preparation can make deployments easier

By LT. COL. BART HEDLEY
30th Civil Engineer Squadron

My views, as a deployed vice wing and mission support group commander – be mission ready here to deploy at a moment's notice and have no loose ends once you get there!

My deployment as part of Air Expeditionary Force seven was supposed to be for three months. We were going to close, wrap up the base, reconstitute tents and turn WRM back into storage and then come home.

Things in the world changed.

Turkish basing rights and Saudi over flight clearances forced us to reopen. We did this in two weeks! We responded with a positive "Can Do" spirit and we accepted aircraft, which flew their first combat sortie the third day after beddown.

Why was this successful?

We had the right people, attitude, equipment, and assets on the ground first, which allowed us to become operational before mission aircraft landed. Those aircraft and their associated personnel had mobilized without advance teams or prior knowledge of requirements!

Expeditionary support is key to survival and success.

"I encourage each and every warrior at Team V to think about the conditions they may face in the next conflict once they step off the plane."

LT. COL. BART HEDLEY
30TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

When one remembers Gen Patton's response to logistics as the key to success in any war, having hot food, tents set-up with running secondary distribution systems, or adequate power, functioning environmental control units and hot showers for hygiene, make all the difference.

Tactical combat communications kept us linked with hourly air tasking orders and daily Secret Internet Protocol Routed Network information with U.S. Central Command forward. The expeditionary medical group, or EMEDS, gave us the best doctor to patient ratio one would ever want.

Our defenders ensured zero camp penetrations of explosive devices through a dedicated search pit and dog team outside our compound.

We achieved the highest vehicle in commission rate ever with an average vehicle fleet age of 18 years.

None of this could have succeeded without the fantastic ambassador relations with our host country and wing commander, and the positive and ready attitude of our deployed airmen. I encourage each and every warrior at Team V to think about the conditions they may face in the next conflict once they step off the plane.

Have your home environment stable. We rely heavily on our spouses and children to carry the load while we're gone, but we can't forget the reason we are employed as military members, to support and defend the constitution of this great nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Deploy ready, be ready. Waiting to get in shape, training once you get there and hoping to get your shots or your chemical gear in country really don't pass the giggle test.

Trust me, we had many airmen show up off the rotator flight in BDUs and black boots with no C-bags. This was quickly solved by our proactive expeditionary logistics readiness commander, but

didn't work for those front-line warriors who landed close to the Iraqi border.

I was fortunate that I took everything – plus. I can remember when Lt. Col. Patrick Burns was called at 9th Air Force at RAF Mildenhall, England to deploy to the first Gulf War in less than 12 hours.

He told us he grabbed an empty footlocker, wiped his desk clean of binders, grabbed his Air Force Institute of Technology contingency expedient references and uniforms from the cleaners, and bolted onto an awaiting C-5.

I thought about this in November and did the same, but was blessed with CD ROMs, the Airmen's Manual, and quick reference guides on expedient beddown. When we expanded the camp, these items were in hot demand.

I encourage Team V warriors to think about the scenarios they could encounter, whether it be in the rain forests of West Africa or the burning sand of East Asia, and train, practice, and prepare for the unexpected. You'll never know how long you could remain in place.

The assurance of leaving your home station ready to deploy and your family with the authority to act as primary care provider will allow you to concentrate on our nation's mission and success.

BRIDGE:

From Page A1

having to do something as challenging as a bridge without stepping on plants, animals and amphibians," Adamson said, "We've set the bar very high and everybody's living up to that bar."

"In construction, we're generally unconcerned with environmental issues. Here we have construction men pointing out frogs outside our 'frog zone,'" he said, "It's a successful teaming of efforts."

Cugini said the project is on track despite one setback July 3. A road gave way under a 180-ton drill rig and it fell into the federally protected wetlands.

"We had the necessary equipment on hand because we've been aware of environmental concerns," said Cugini. Adamson said less than two quarts of oil were spilled and testing showed contamination was contained.

"The project was well-planned," Cugini said. "There have been no cost overruns." The fourth and final pour is slated for Sept. 19. Adamson said the bridge will encompass electrical and communication lines.

"There will be no more overhead lines," he said, "and when the bridge is complete, we will never have to enter the wetlands again."

Editor's Note: Mike Tharp, Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, contributed to this story.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. EDWARD BRALY

The elevated El Rancho bridge spans El Rancho Creek to provide unrestricted access to North Vandenberg.

Team V's senior leaders serve up birthday treats

Airmen meet commanders, first sergeants face-to-face

By AIRMEN 1ST CLASS BRYAN FRANKS
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

Some airmen have reported rumors about airmen being served cake and coffee by their first sergeants or prime rib and shrimp by their commanders. Well in the case of Vandenberg's birthday meal, the rumors are true.

The quarterly birthday meal begins at 5 p.m. Thursday in the Breakers Dining Facility's history room.

The birthday meal has been around in some form or fashion for more than 15 years, said Calvin Tucker, 30th Services Squadron.

Originally, the program catered to only those airmen who were on the subsistence-in-kind, meal card program, but now it's expanded to encompass all enlisted members, even those who may not want their age to be known.

The birthday meal is also a time when airmen, first sergeant and commanders can get face time with each other, said Staff Sgt. Bethany Lopez, 30th SVS.

"We have to turn away some first sergeants and commanders because so many want to serve the airmen at the meal," Tucker said.

Team Vandenberg's birthday meal is held quarterly. The next birthday meal is scheduled for 5 p.m. Thursday in Breakers Dining facility's history room.

The 30th SVS sent out invitations via e-mail to all enlisted members whose birthday falls between July and September.

Tucker said he'd like to see participation pick up for the birthday meal, after the last one had to be canceled due to lack of participation on the enlisted side.

"In the past we had as many as 50 people signed up for the event," Tucker said. "Only five people signed up for the last birthday meal, so we had to cancel it."

For the airmen who are on the subsistence-in-kind program, the meal doesn't cost anything extra.

So instead of getting the same old patty melt or pasta, they can enjoy their choice of shrimp, prime rib or Cornish game hen with cake and coffee, Lopez said.

For airmen not on the SIK program, a special price will go

along with the special meal.

The invitation the members received includes a menu, Tucker said.

Members attending can also bring an authorized guest to the dinner.

Besides the shrimp, prime rib and cake, the birthday members are also entered into a drawing for a chance to win gift certificates from different services on base, he added.

For one airman who's attended the event, the chance to attend again is a clear-cut answer.

"I've been at Vandenberg since January 1999 and attended the Quarterly Birthday Meal every year," said Senior Airman Henry Medina, 30th Comptroller Squadron.

"I really enjoyed the food and the idea of having the colonels from each squadron come out and serve is pretty awesome. I'm sure plenty of people would hesitate spending their birthday evening at the dining facility, but if they knew the 'spread' that was served, they would reconsider! One should never say 'no' to steak and shrimp!"

Crimebeat ...

COMPILED BY MASTER SGT.
WESLEY ASLESON
30th Security Forces Squadron

Sept. 4

Traffic complaint – 8:10 p.m.

An airman reported a vehicle driving recklessly adjacent to the Fitness Center. Investigation revealed the driver was an airman.

Vehicle on fire – 9:06 p.m.

A Vandenberg Fish and Game unit reported a Honda Prelude on fire on Santa Lucia Canyon Road. The fire department responded to extinguish the vehicle. The owner was not injured.

Sept. 5

Suspicious activity – 10:12 a.m.

An airman reported his wife telephoned him from their home on Heath Street and stated unknown persons were rattling windows outside their quarters. The culprits could not be found.

Sept. 6

Custody dispute – 6:36 a.m.

An airman reported he was attempting to take custody of his daughter from a home on Entrada Court, however, his wife refused to answer the door and telephone. A patrolman responded to the scene.

The airman's first sergeant was contacted and stated the airman's wife telephoned him and explained the circumstances. The wife subsequently exited the residence and turned over the child.

Vehicle damage – 1:39 p.m.

An airman reported a tree fell on his private vehicle parked at the Softball fields adjacent to the Fitness Center. The windshield sustained a crack.

Suspected breaking and entering – 4:14 p.m.

An airman reported damage to his home on Claremont Court. He discovered the front door open and the door jam damaged upon arriving home. A preliminary check did not reveal anything missing. The matter is under investigation.

Sept. 7

Domestic dispute – 8:50 a.m.

An airman residing on Countrywood Court reported his wife struck him during a disagreement and he was concerned for his child's safety. Patrolmen responded and determined a domestic dispute occurred. The airman and his wife were transported to the security forces control center for processing. The unit first sergeant responded.

Sept. 8

Drunk driving – 12:04 a.m.

A patrolman suspected an airman of drunk driving after stopping him adjacent to Timber Lane gate for a traffic violation. The airman failed a Field Sobriety Test and was apprehended. His breath alcohol content was .12. He was released to his first

sergeant.

Government property damage – 11:32 a.m.

The dormitory manager reported an airman damaged a wall in the Minuteman Dormitory to facilitate personal use of the Internet with a government phone line. The airman was apprehended for the damage and failure to obey an order. He was released to his first sergeant.

Marijuana possession – 7:51 p.m.

The Main gate sentry reported detecting the odor of marijuana from a private vehicle. Patrolmen responded to assist. Investigation revealed the non-base affiliated civilian's vehicle possessed burnt marijuana remains, a glass pipe and a bag of marijuana. He was cited and removed from base..

How does the Air Force honor a lieutenant colonel who spent 124 days in the desert, encountered scud missiles, live fire and was part of a liberating U.S. force?

The Bronze Star

By AIRMAN JUANIKA GLOVER
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

A Team Vandenberg member made his mark as the recent recipient of the bronze star medal for exceptionally meritorious achievement of service while assigned to Combined Joint Task Force IV, Coalition Forces Land Component Command and Joint Task Force 7.

Lt. Col. Samuel Epperson, 381st Training Support Squadron commander, was presented the award by surprise during a recent commander's call here. Epperson was deployed at Camp Doah, Kuwait and served time in, Baghdad, Iraq and several other Iraqi towns.

Epperson spent 124 days overseas as one of only two Air Force members assigned to the task force.

"With less than 24-hour notification, Epperson hit the ground running and was quickly selected by unit leadership and peers to lead a 13-person operation," said U.S. Army Col. Martin Stanton, Coalition Forces Land Component Command Civil Affairs assistant chief of staff.

His job was to assess the damage in Iraq and make infrastructure analysis of three regions, 18 governorates, and 27 major cities, Stanton said.

"Not only did Epperson complete his assessment task, but also helped in developing a common operational picture for civil military operations in Iraq as well as providing coordinates to power facilities in Baghdad, Iraq so the Marines could provide power to the city when it was secure," he said.

After his selection as squadron commander of the 381st TRSS, Epperson's six-month deployment was

cut short and he was allowed to return to the United States to meet PCS commitments.

"This was my first overseas deployment," Epperson said. "I've been volunteering for deployments since Desert Storm and was never selected to go. I've had several CONUS-deployments, however, it's not the same as getting forward into the fight."

As the son and grandson of two Vietnam Veterans, Epperson said he always wanted to serve his time fighting for freedom.

"My philosophy is I've got freedom that most people in the world don't know, and I'm going to fight to keep that freedom," Epperson said. "I hope that in the outcome of all this there will be one less tyrant in the world for us to have to deal with."

Epperson said when he found out he received the bronze star he was surprised, overwhelmed and honored. But he shows modesty when talking about his role during his deployment.

"I did my job the best I could and I came home," Epperson said. "I don't feel that I sacrificed any more than anyone else who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, especially the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who commanded the skies and cleared our path to Baghdad in 21 days."

"We had a tremendous opportunity to end the rule of a tyrant madman and make a difference for the entire Middle East, if not the world," Epperson said. "I don't want my kids to have to go over there and complete the job I didn't finish when I had the opportunity.



Lt. Col. Samuel Epperson



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lt. Col. Samuel Epperson, 381st Training Support Squadron commander, spent 124 days on deployment. Some of that time was spent in Baghdad assessing damage.

"The people of this country entrusted me with millions of dollars of equipment and the very lives of their sons and daughters," he said. "I never take this responsibility lightly. Living the Air Force core values, earning the very freedom I'm provided everyday at home, and doing my duty was the only option."

The commander's wife, Suzie Epperson, said the deployment was her husband's life long dream to serve his country.

"My husband received the award on his birthday here at the house because we were in the process of moving, Suzie said. "I felt it should have been presented to him and so I made several phone calls. In the end we surprised him with the presentation. He had no idea.

"I think it's a great honor that he won

this award," she said.

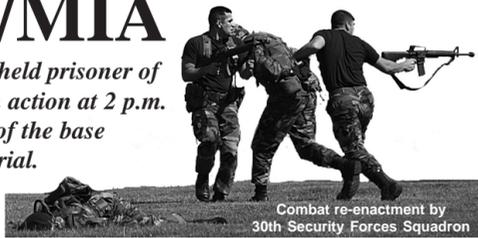
Epperson said his advice to airmen expecting to be deployed is to be ready for anything.

"As a space and missile officer, I never expected to be driving a humvee around the streets of Baghdad, standing armed watch at an enemy prisoner of war camp or listening to patriot missiles fire from my location to intercept incoming enemy missiles," Epperson said. "Pay attention to training! It can and will save your life. Know where you're going and learn as much as you can about the people who live there."

"I was presented with some great opportunities; however, I'm no one's hero. The heroes are the men and women who did their job in Iraq and never made it home.

POW/MIA

Remember those held prisoner of war or missing in action at 2 p.m. Sept. 19 in front of the base POW/MIA memorial.



Combat re-enactment by 30th Security Forces Squadron

VANDEMBERG CHAPEL WORSHIP SERVICE TIMES

Sunday 8:30 a.m. Praise and Worship, Chapel 2 10 a.m. Catholic Mass, Chapel 1	11:30 a.m. Traditional Protestant, Chapel 1 11:30 a.m. Gospel, Chapel 2	11:30 a.m. Catholic Mass, Chapel 2 Saturday 5 p.m. Catholic Mass, Chapel 2
Monday - Friday		

Around the Air Force

Titan IV blasts off from Cape Canaveral

By AIRMAN 1ST CLASS SHAUN EMERY
45th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ **CAPE CANAVERAL AFS, Fla.** — A Titan IV B rocket successfully launched from here Tuesday.

The rocket carried a National Reconnaissance Office payload into orbit. The classified payload will help enhance national security for the United States and support deployed forces, according to 45th Space Wing officials.

The mission had been scheduled for Aug. 18 but was delayed after a fuel leak Aug. 12.

"In the launch business, you only get one try at success once the rocket leaves the ground, so that makes every job important," said Master Sgt. Lou Moyer from the 3rd Space Launch Squadron. "This is why sometime we delay launches to ensure that the one shot we get is our best shot. Failure is not an option."



PHOTO BY CARLETON BALIE

■ **CAPE CANAVERAL AFS, Fla.** — A Titan IV B rocket takes off from here Sept. 9. The rocket carried a National Reconnaissance Office payload into orbit.

Renovations continue at the scarred Pentagon

By K.L. VANTRAN
American Forces Press Service

■ **WASHINGTON** — Reflective arrows sit at crawl-level, about a foot up from the floor, hugging the lightly colored walls. Sparkling floors lead to escalators, elevators and well-lit hallways. Renovations, completed nearly a year ago, still give the Pentagon's Wedge 1 a fresh look. Yet, for all its newness, this area will carry the scars of Sept. 11, 2001, forever.

Maj. John Beaulieu, from the Air Force history office, said he often thinks about that morning, especially when he is near the Pentagon's chapel that honors the victims.

"You can't help but think about it," he said. "There are photos of people who worked here and of children from the plane. It's a sober (reminder) of what happened."

Beaulieu and some co-workers were watching the "horrific" events unfold in New York City on a small television in their office when they felt the building shake and heard the alarms sound.

"It was like being on the side of a road when a tractor-trailer goes by," he said. "We didn't know what had happened. At first, we thought it was a bomb. We just didn't make a connection (to what had happened in New York)."

The major said it was not until later, when he ventured outside and the acrid smoke filled his lungs, that he realized how tragic the story was.

"There was black soot everywhere, and you could smell the burned wreckage," he said.

Beaulieu's office sits across the courtyard from the impact area and was in line with the path the plane took. He said that he is "very thankful" the Boeing 757 stopped when it did. He credits the "stronger construction" of the newly renovated Wedge 1 with saving his life.

A \$2.1 billion renovation of the 60-year-old Pentagon began in 1993, and Wedge 1 was nearly completed when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the building that fateful morning.

The Pentagon, dedicated in 1943, is laid out in five concentric pentagonal "rings," the "E" being the outermost and "A" the innermost. The plane hit the renovated wedge as well as an adjoining section before stopping at "B" ring.

Renovations that included structural improvements such as blast-resistant

windows and steel framing saved many lives, according to Brett Eaton, communications team leader for the Pentagon's renovation program.

The renovated area had a new sprinkler system that Eaton also credits with saving lives. The fire in Wedge 1 burned out in a matter of hours, while Wedge 2, which had no sprinklers, burned for more than two days.

Work began on Wedge 1 in 1998, and the final touchups were being done, he said.

"We were five days away from completion," he said. "After 9-11, we basically had to start all over again."

What just days before had been a routine renovation became known as the Phoenix Project. Construction crews worked tirelessly to rebuild Wedge 1 by Sept. 11, 2002. In February, the last group of employees returned to work in this area. In July, part of Wedge 2 was finished, and employees have returned to offices there as well.

"Before 9-11, I think (workers) were proud to be part of the Pentagon Renovation," said Eaton. "After 9-11, it took on a whole new meaning — to make America's military headquarters safe."

After Sept. 11, Eaton said, there was a need to modify ongoing construction. Additions include reflective arrows on walls and doors that can help people reach exits.

"There was oily, thick smoke, and people couldn't see" in the aftermath of the attack, said Eaton. "The brightly-colored exit signs (above the doors) might as well have been a mile away."

Boxes containing emergency escape masks are now available in the renovated hallways.

Another addition is the creation of "half corridors." The glass causeways connect Pentagon rings, and can withstand hurricane-force winds. Renovated areas also contain backup water pipes to help ensure sprinkler systems will operate in the event of an emergency.

Today work continues, although the pace is not quite as fervent as during the Phoenix Project.

Construction workers are rebuilding the second phase of Wedge 2. As this nears completion, work will begin sequentially on Wedges 3, 4 and 5. Each area will be demolished, taken down to "bare bones," said Eaton. Work includes removal of hazardous materials, replacement of building systems, addition of elevators and escalators, and installation of new security

and telecommunications systems.

In an effort to get life-saving measures in place as soon as possible, the remaining renovation has an aggressive schedule, with a completion projected in 2010. The installation of "smart walls" about every 20 feet for phone and data lines will save some time, he said.

"We have the same goal — to be on cost, on schedule," said Eaton. "It's not quite the same urgency (as with Phoenix) but it's an aggressive schedule. We'll do what we need to and overcome challenges as we meet them."

Hunt continues in 'their' back yard

By STAFF SGT. RUSSELL WICKE
455th Expeditionary Operations Group Public Affairs

■ **BAGRAM AB, Afghanistan** — Two years after America took a sucker punch from terrorists at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S. military is still actively hunting down al-Qaida and Taliban forces in their own back yard.

Col. James Whitmore, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander here, reminds those back home this war cannot be won quickly.

"We will remain in Afghanistan as long as it takes," Whitmore said. "Terrorists are people you have to deal with sooner or later. We'd prefer to take care of business in their back yard, not ours. We're not going to wait for them to come to us again."

Whitmore, who was in the Pentagon during the Sept. 11 attacks, said he is glad to be here taking the fight to the terrorists.

"A lot of this is personal to me," he said. "We lost many great co-workers on that day."

Whitmore said he believes there is a need for the U.S. military to be in Afghanistan.

"September 11 was our wake-up call," he said. "That's when we decided to proactively and aggressively go after the terrorists. They put zero value on human life, especially Westerners. They've proven that they won't hesitate to take the lives of innocent people."

Although results from this war are sometimes difficult to see from here, Whitmore said there has been significant progress since American boots hit the dirt here in December 2001.

The U.S. military has taken control of terrorist strongholds in this country. For example, Bagram Air Base was once used as an al-Qaida refuge.

"We're successfully denying terrorist sanctuary in Afghanistan," said Army Maj. David Rasmussen, 10th Mountain Division 2nd Battalion 87th Infantry Regiment executive officer.

Rasmussen is serving in Afghanistan for the second time since Operation Enduring Freedom began. He said there has been noteworthy change for the better in the fight against terrorism: The terrorists have resorted to more hiding and less fighting.

"They know they can't take us on directly, so they are trying to fight us asymmetrically," Whitmore said. "We monitor their activities very closely here, and they know that. Anything that we can do to keep them off balance and unable to organize is helpful."

Brute force, however, is not the only advantage U.S. forces have.

"We also have economic pressure being applied to these terrorist groups," Whitmore said. American forces are widely welcomed here because of the stability and economic growth that has developed in the past two years, he said.

"Our mission is to disrupt their activities and deny them sanctuary," Whitmore said. "We've made a significant impact on their ability to orchestrate and execute sustained operations."

According to Whitmore, it is necessary for the United States to provide humanitarian aid so Afghanistan can speed up the process of developing a stable government. And that is the path that is being taken with provincial reconstruction teams.

"We're building schools, digging wells,

Lightning fast



PHOTO BY JAMES SHRYNE

■ **EDWARDS AFB, Calif.** — Lightning strikes on the horizon behind the flightline here during a thunderstorm Sept. 3. During the storm, power in some areas of the base was interrupted for a few minutes.

providing reconstruction and even providing medical assistance to the people here," Rasmussen said. "It is a slow and deliberate improvement for the lives and infrastructure of the Afghan people."

"The sooner we can help get the people here self-sufficient, the sooner we can go home," he said.

Canine defenders keep warfighters safe

By CAPT. MIKI KRISTINA GILLOON
447th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

■ **BAGHDAD, Iraq** — A 12-inch-long mortar round lay partly hidden in the overgrowth near a checkpoint at Baghdad International Airport. It was found and safely destroyed thanks to the keen senses of a four-legged member of the 447th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

Rudy, one of several military working dogs deployed supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, alerted his handler, Staff Sgt. Albert Branch, of his find. Branch, deployed from the 60th Security Forces Squadron at Travis AFB, Calif., recognized the instant change in his dog's behavior.

"(He moved side to side trying to locate the scent) — something he's been trained to do," Branch said. "He knew something was there, but he was trying to pinpoint exactly where it was."

The mortar round, along with other dangerous items — improvised explosive devices, rocket propelled grenades, and shell casings from small arms fire — are routinely found by 447th ESFS military working dog teams. The dogs also support the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division by patrolling at and near the airport checkpoints.

"We're helping them out by conducting explosives detection and making a physical presence at the gate," said Staff Sgt. Michael Renner, 447th ESFS kennel master and handler. He is deployed from the 21st SFS at Peterson AFB, Colo.

When items are found, they are marked and identified for the Army's explosive ordnance disposal team, which destroys the objects.

Working as a team, a dog and handler's typical day averages 13 to 14 hours working air-base defense and force protection.

"We're here as a physical deterrent and to keep people from either trying to smuggle explosives in or infiltrating the base," Renner said. "But our main purpose here is explosives detection."

The military working dog teams search vehicles daily at the Air Force checkpoint. "If it comes into our section of the base, we're searching it to make sure that it's explosives-free," he said.

When U.N. employees were treated here after the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in downtown Baghdad on Aug. 19, the military working dogs were the first line of defense. The animals played a critical role in ensuring the safety and security of 447th

Air Expeditionary Group airmen.

"(The dogs searched) for explosive devices or weapons of any kind when patients came in, and another dog patrolled the 447th Expeditionary Medical Squadron for security," Renner said.

Along with foot patrols around the base, searches and real-world events, the handlers are constantly training their dogs. The dogs are given various explosive-detection scenarios and controlled-aggression training, where a "suspect" is pursued or attacked by the dog.

One type of training scenario consists of having the dogs search for simulated explosives in a vehicle. The dogs' reactions upon finding the "planted" scents also help train 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron airmen.

It is important to be familiar with the dogs' reactions, according to Senior Airman Rob Cook, 447th ECES explosive ordnance disposal team member. He is deployed from the 452nd Civil Engineer Squadron at March AFB, Calif.

"We try to learn from them, and we take it back to train our squadron," he said. "The dogs pinpoint what they find — if they find it in the front quarter panel, that's where we're going to detonate the explosive. So the dogs help us as well as (helping) security forces."

Temperatures in Baghdad soar higher than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, but Renner said the animals have acclimated well. When the dogs and handlers arrive on station, the handlers give them a couple of days to adjust and limit their movement in the heat.

"We basically give them one hour on when they're searching, and a two-hour down time period where they can go and do scattered searches. (This gets the dogs) used to the heat in small amounts," he said.

The dogs are also provided air-conditioned shelters and are kept as cool as possible during daytime activities to prevent heat stress injuries.

The biggest challenge for the handlers is keeping the dogs motivated, Renner said.

"Going out every day doing the same thing is very monotonous for them, and they really start to get discouraged with it," he said. "So ... (we) try to play with them as much as possible to get them really positive and motivated about what they're doing here."

Whether it is walking the dogs or taking out their favorite chew toys, the handlers are always coming up with new ways of making everything a game for the animals.

Branch has worked with Rudy for about three months, and watching his dog progress has been rewarding despite the challenges.

"Rudy is turning out to be a better dog each day, and it's good to see the both of us growing as a team," he said. "He definitely has the potential to be even greater than what he is right now as we work together more and more."

Being raised on a ranch in Texas can cause a person to develop a love for being a cowboy, but what if at the same time they have a desire to serve the country? How does someone do both?

Lead a double life

By Tech Sergeant Mark McKinney
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ The Air Force and unit commanders encourage personnel to maintain a healthy lifestyle, to include involvement in physical activities. 30th Security Forces Squadron Senior Airman James Murray took this encouragement and ran away with it ... make that, rode away with it.

Murray, born and raised in Texas, is also a professional cowboy. Yes, that's right, he is a professional cowboy and a member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. The PRCA is the equivalent of football's NFL or basketball's NBA. Murray being a cowboy is not a hobby or favorite pastime, it is part of who he is.

"I grew up in Texas on a ranch watching my father and grandfather ride bulls, it's kind of a family tradition," Murray said. "Ever since I was real small, I always wanted to become a cowboy and ride bulls."

Although Murray is one in a line of family tradition, his involvement in rodeo and becoming a professional cowboy is not something that was forced on him.

"Being a cowboy and becoming a professional takes more than a passing thought," Murray insisted. "There has always been a deep personal desire on my

part that has driven me to the point where I am today. I've been bull riding for eight years and my desire to improve and become the best grows stronger every day."

Recently, over a six-month span of time Murray drove over 30,000 miles to compete in 40 rodeo events. On one of these occasions, he finished up at work, stopped by his house to pick-up food from his wife and headed up the coast to Oregon, stopping by Sacramento on the way to pick up a traveling partner. After competing in Oregon, he proceeded to Nevada and returned to California to compete in two other events. This was all done in one weekend. "Strong personal desire" appears to be a serious understatement.

Murray's event, bull riding, is part of what's known as rough stock. In rodeo you have rough stock events and timed events. The rough stock events consist of bronco riding and saddleback, along with the bull riding. Examples of timed events are calf roping and barrel racing.

In bull riding, the object is to stay on the back of an untamed bull for as long as possible without getting thrown. A testament to Vandenberg's cowboy is the fact that in only his second year as a professional, Murray has been invited back



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY 30TH SPACE COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON

The objective of bull riding is to stay on the back of an untamed bull as long as possible without getting thrown off. The bull riding championship finals is scheduled for Sept. 19 through 20 in Chico, Calif.

to the sports premier event, the National Bull riding Championship Finals. The event is scheduled for September 19-20 in Chico, California. This contest brings together the top 80 bull riders in the country to

compete for over \$10,000 in prize money and a solid gold buckle.

"The finals is for the top riders and the top bulls," Murray stated. "I'm happy that I'm being recognized with the best at what

we do, but my goal is to be the best. I love my sport and I love being a cowboy. My challenge is to continue to move up the ladder and at some point, challenge the best in this business."

Team Vandenberg airman takes a punch at boxing championships

By Tech Sergeant Mark McKinney
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ Senior Airman Jorge Hernandez was at it in the ring again. Hernandez, a member of Vandenberg's Boxing Club and a member of the All-Air Force team, recently returned from competing in another national-level tournament.

The Blue & Gold Tourney, held at the Baldwin Park Community Service Complex, Baldwin Park, Calif., pits eight of the top fighters from each weight class against each other.

Competing in the 165 lb class,

Hernandez once again represented the Air Force and Vandenberg well, winning the title and championship belt that comes along with it. Coach Don Green of Vandenberg's Boxing Club continues to be amazed at the rise of his prize pupil.

"Jorge just keeps growing and improving," Green insists. "This young man has direct sight on his goal and he is doing all the things necessary to reach his goal of being the best amateur at 165 lbs."

Coach Green made it clear that the Blue & Gold Tourney has true significance.

"There are four regional



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

competitions that are the most prestigious, leading up to the national championships," the

coach informed. "Along with the Blue & Gold in the Western region, there is the Black Gloves for the

Senior Airman Jorge Hernandez, 30th Services Squadron, is a member of Vandenberg's Boxing Club and the All-Air Force team.

He won the Blue and Gold Tourney championship in his weight class.

Hernandez prepares for the Police Athletic League Tournament for a chance at qualifying to fight at the 2004 Olympics.

Southern-central region, Ringside Tournament for the Midwest region, and the Mayor's Cup for the Eastern region."

Hernandez is well aware of where he is and where he is headed if he continues to follow the sage advice of his mentor.

"Coach has me feeling strong again," Hernandez noted. "When I was at 156 lb, I was always the stronger fighter, but when I moved up to 165 lb, I didn't feel as strong. I've been working really hard to get that strength back and I think I'm almost there."

Every fighter in this class is taller than I am, but I'm still stronger than most and have good enough speed to win my fights. Coach wants me to bring the pressure and keep going after them."

The final event of the fight year for Hernandez is the Police Athletic League tournament. The PAL tournament is one of the Olympic qualifier tournaments, where the top two finishers in each weight class automatically qualify for the Olympic trials in early 2004.

Sports Brief

This week's intramural flag football schedule is as follows:

Monday
30th SW vs. 30th
CES 6:30
30th SFS vs. 30th
SCS 7:30

Tuesday
30th CES vs. 533rd
TRS 5:30
30th MDG vs. 576th
FLTS 6:30
381st TRS vs. 614th
SOS 7:30

Wednesday
30th SW vs. 30th
SFS 6:30
30th SCS vs. 30th
LRS 7:30

Thursday
30th CES vs. 576th
FLTS 5:30
381st TRS vs. 30th
MDG 6:30
614th SOS vs. 533rd
TRS 7:30

Destinations

CENTRAL COAST

SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

Sept. 12, 2003

Olde Towne Market brings past to life

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS BRYAN FRANKS
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

Unlike most of my destinations this one began at work. My supervisor asked me what my destination was going to be about.

Being honest, I told her I couldn't think of a place I was dying to go to. Having said that, she told me that I should be dying to go to the Lompoc Olde Towne Market.

What could I say to that but yes?

Promptly after work Friday, I headed to Lompoc to find out what the Old Town Market consists of.

The market begins at 5 every Friday beginning in July till the end of October. It's located in the downtown area of Lompoc at the end of H Street and Cypress Avenue. Now that I got that out of the way.

Walking toward the market I observed the painted murals on the walls around old town Lompoc and the smell of fresh tri-tip along with a host of other foods that I would soon enjoy.

Before I reached H Street, I could hear the band jamming away on the corner and I could see what I thought was the whole town roaming the street.

My nose led me in the direction of the Redneck Barbecue stand. Being half redneck myself, I had to get me one of their tri-tip sandwiches. For someone who's been in California for less than a year, I



PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. REBECCA DANET

Master Sgt. Stephen Hrkach, 532nd Training Squadron, deep fries funnel cakes to raise funds for the Vandenberg Top 3 Association Sept. 5 at Lompoc's Olde Towne Market.

think of myself as a tri-tip specialist, not an expert but a specialist, and the redneck sandwich is one of the best I've had.

Having polished of the tri-tip, I wandered around, going to each booth to see what they had to offer.

People from all walks of life were there selling everything from flowers to homemade soap.

There were politicians, environmentalists and animal lovers trying to get people to help their cause. There were even people trying to recall the recall.



Clara Caro, 4, takes in the fragrance of the flowers at the market before selecting a bouquet to take home to her mom.

I made it to the end of the street where I found another band playing and a small farmers market.

Not being able to resist a good deal, I bought two pounds of peppers for two dollars and I was able to get a pound of garlic at no cost.

And no, I won't tell you my secret. Besides, ya'll don't have the right accent to pull it off.

I headed back toward the food, or I should say my stomach led me back toward the food, where I encountered some wonderful Guamanian cooking in the form of fried rice. The person who sold it said it was her mom's recipe and though I'm not an expert at Guamanian cooking, I will say it was very good and that

if you decide to go you must try the fried rice.

My last food stop was at a Mexican food booth. Now to give you a little history, I've been to almost every state in this union and for the most part have had a chile reno in most of those states. In fact I generally judge a Mexican restaurant by the quality of the chile reno. I guess all I should say about this is that I rank it in my top ten and since I've probably had more than 200 of them... well you get the picture.

As night approached, the people began to thin out. Probably due to the lack of food since most booths had already sold out.

As I made my way to the car,

the clown making balloon animals was still hard at work for the children and the coffee shop was beginning to fill up with people settling in for a relaxing night.

Almost to my car, my nose picked up the faint scent of marinara sauce in the wind. Following it to the source, I arrived at Sissy's Uptown Café.

Walking in I realized that I was underdressed, but it didn't stop me from asking what was in their sauce, before I left.

On the way back to Vandenberg, I made a couple of



Marcia Bonilla checks out the selection of juicy red tomatoes available at the Olde Towne Market.



Perry Fife of Fife Farms in Visalia, Calif. brings fresh grapes to the market.

mental notes. One: Anytime nachos are left on the ground at the market dogs will come. Two: There is no substitute for fresh vegetables. Three: Always go early and ask for two tri-tip sandwiches instead of one, because the Redneck Barbecue stand sells out first.

Community Calendar

12 FRI **Tastes of Mexico** – 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. today at the Veteran's Memorial Community Center, Santa Maria. Call 805-925-0951 ext. 268.

Pick your lavender – through September in Los Olivos. Call 805-688-7505.

Santa Maria Speedway – 6 p.m. Saturday's through Oct. 12. Call 805-466-4462 for tickets and reserved seating information.

Homeschooling curriculum – the Lompoc Unified School District offers a new program for 2003 to 2004 to serve grades K-5. Call 736-2371.

Pair, Partners Assisting in Reading – begins in September at Crestview Elementary. Call 734-1651 to sign up.

Hebrew, Bar Mitzvah – classes are available. Call 734-3311.

Veterans in need – bins are located at the base-exchange entrance for the Los Angeles Veterans hospital. Call 606-3562.

12 FRI **"Other Faces, Other Worlds – Images of Russia, Nicaragua and Mexico"** – 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3

p.m. Friday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday in the Learning Resource Center on the Allan Hancock College Santa Maria campus.

Free car seats – to E-4 and below. Call 606-5338.

Got School Supplies – Boxes are located at the Commissary and Base Exchange to donate school supplies to the Homeless Education Liaison Project in Lompoc.

Space and Sea Girl Scouts – accepts members ages 6 to 18 and needs adult volunteers. Call 606-1119.

CLEP tests – College-Level Examination Program pre-tests are available online at www.peterson.com/airforce/testprep.html. Register using activation code FL4610.

12 FRI **The Vandenberg Airmen's Attic** – needs donations of items necessary to set up a household. The program is open to military personnel E-5 and below with an Air Force Form 552 from their first sergeant. Call 606-5484.

G.I. Java seeks

12 FRI **musicians** – G.I. Java is looking for local musicians to play at the coffeehouse during business hours. Solo performers and bands are welcome. Call the Chapel at 606-5778 for an audition.

Gift of Groceries program – The Defense Commissary Agency offers a gift certificate program that allows anyone to purchase commissary gift certificates to donate to military families through charitable organizations or give directly to military friends and family. Gift certificates are available online at www.commissaries.com.

Marriage enrichment counseling – offered on a one-on-one basis for married and unmarried couples. Call 606-9958.

Dads-to-New Dads and Moms-to-New Moms programs – These mentorship programs offer support to new moms and dads. Call Nancy Sias at 606-5338.

13 SAT **Girl Scout ice cream social** – 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday in grass area in front of Surf Lanes. Call 606-1119.

13 SAT **Twilight beach horseback rides** – at Pacific Dunes Ranch in Oceano. Beginners are welcome. Call (805) 489-8100.

14 SUN **Sunday school** – 10 a.m. Sunday in building 16140. Call Sharon Eagon 606-2523.

15 MON **Office closure** – The family support center is closed for staff training from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Mondays. Those requiring emergency Air Force Aid will be assisted. Call 606-0801.

AHC Connect – Monday and Tuesday. Call 1-866-DIALAHC for registration.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly – 7 to 8 p.m. Mondays at the Vandenberg Health and Wellness Center.

Relaxation room – 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at the HAWC. Call 606-2221 for an appointment.

16 TUE **Fashion Show** – 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Pacific Coast Club. Call 734-0956 or 734-1081.

Deployed Spouses Support group – 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Family Services area. Call 606-0039.

Vandenberg Retiree

Activities Center – Open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Friday in building 10346 in the Vandenberg Base Exchange shopping center. Call 606-5474 for more information.

17 WED **Manage your move** – 8:45 to 11 a.m. Wednesday at the family support center. Call 606-0039.

Catholic summer fellowship – noon Wednesdays at Cocheo Park.

30th Medical Group Spouses meeting – 11:30 a.m. Wednesday in the auditorium.

Winning interviews, setting a professional image – 1 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday at the family support center. Call 606-8557.

18 THU **Potluck luncheon** – noon Thursday at the Retiree Activities Office. Call 606-5474.

War history talk – 7 p.m. Thursday at the Veterans Memorial Building in Lompoc.

Chapel singles group – 6:30 p.m. the second and fourth Thursday of the month at G.I. Java.

Risk reduction classes – 2 to 4 p.m. Thursdays at the Vandenberg Health and

Wellness Center. Call 606-2221 to sign up.

19 FRI **CAL-VET Home Loan Class** – 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sept. 19 at the family support center. Call 606-0039.

Olde Towne Faire Weekend – Sept. 19-20 in Lompoc.

Ethel Pope Auditorium Foundation fundraising event – 5 p.m. Sept. 20 at the Santa Maria Inn.

20 SAT **Kid's Fire Camp** – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 20 and 21 at the Vandenberg Fire Department Station 2. Call 606-2152.

27 SAT **Old Days 2003** – Sept. 27-28 at the Los Alamos park.

Frankenstein traveling exhibition – Sept. 27 through Nov. 1 at the Allan Hancock College Santa Maria Library.

Quilt show – Sept. 27-28 at the Veterans Memorial Building in Lompoc.

Worldwide case lot sale – 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 27 and 10 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 28 at the commissary.

29 MON **San Luis Obispo Plein Air Painting Festival** – Sept. 29 through Oct. 5 in San Luis Obispo.

Movie Corner

Hi-Way Drive-in
Santa Maria Ph. 937-3515
GEN. ADM. \$5 KIDS 4-11 \$1

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO R
OPEN RANGE R 7:45 p.m.

Parks Plaza Buellton
Buellton Ph. 688-7434

DICKIE ROBERT PG-13
DAILY 2:00-4:30-7:00 FRI. 9:30 SAT-SUN 11:30-9:30

WHALE RIDER PG-13
DAILY 2:00-4:30-7:00 FRI 9:30 SAT-SUN 11:30-9:30

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO R
DAILY 2:00-4:30-7: FRI 9:30 SAT-SUN 11:30-9:30

MATCHSTICK MEN PG-13
DAILY 2:00-4:30-7:00 FRI 9:30 SAT-SUN 11:30-9:30

SEABISCUIT PG-13
DAILY 4:00-7:00 FRI 9:30 SAT-SUN 1:00-9:30

Call Edwards Santa Maria 10 for movie listings (800) 326-3264

Vandenberg Thrift Shop

The Vandenberg Thrift Shop is open Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 606-3128 to find out more.

The shop is located next to the skills development center in Bldg. 11180. They always need volunteers.

The Vandenberg Food Pantry

Needs food donations

Items needed are:

sugar, Bisquick, pasta sauce, pancake mix, Hamburger Helper, evaporated milk, Chicken Helper, baby wipes, crackers, soups, complete meals, macaroni & cheese, brown sugar, canned vegetables, rice, flour, pasta, peanuts, mixed nuts, tuna, peanut butter, jelly, diapers; sizes 3, 4, 5, juice boxes, cake mixes, frosting, canned fruit and vegetables

The food pantry is located behind the family support center. For more information on hours of operation, call 606-2960.

30th Services News

GOLF COURSE

Saturday
Men's Club, 8:08 to 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday
Ladies Priority, 8:32 to 9 a.m.

Thursday
Barbecue Lunch Special
Get a barbecue sandwich with beans, chips and a drink for only \$5.



For more information, call the golf course at 734-4376/606-6262.

VET CLINIC

Special clinics are being offered for pet care:
Monday
12 to 6 p.m. by appointment only.
Tuesday
9 a.m. to 6 p.m. by appointment only.
Call 606-3019 for more information.

YOUTH CENTER



Casting Call!
We need kids ages 8 to 18 for 24 slots to stage the upcoming production of "The Dragon's Lair." Auditions take place Tuesday, 6 p.m. at the youth center. There are 8 speaking parts. Registration is free for participating youth. Performance held Oct. 27 to 30. For more information, contact Kristi at 606-9374.

LIBRARY



Teen Mystery Month
at the Library starts **September 29** with a **pizza party at 6:30 p.m.**
Sign up today!

Dial-A-Story
This week's story is "Goats in the Wheat Field." This no-cost service is for children of all ages and is available 24/7. Call 606-4300 to hear Dial-a-Story!

FITNESS CENTER

The fitness center is looking to establish a customer focus group in order to gain customer feedback. We are looking for enlisted, officers, dependents, retirees and civilians who are interested in providing feedback pertaining to the fitness center such as equipment, intramural and varsity sports, fitness and facility issues. We plan to establish a "Town Hall"-type meeting at least quarterly. If you are interested in being part of this group, please contact Pam Coffey at 606-3832.

Did you know..
Group fitness classes are held at the Services Center Monday through Saturday? They offer indoor cycling, box aerobics, intermediate step, total body conditioning and more. Stop by the fitness center or the Services Center for a full schedule of classes.

PACIFIC COAST CLUB

Book your holiday parties now!
The club has dates available for your holiday parties. Plan your unit holiday extravaganza for one of the PCCs open dates, and deduct \$2.00 per club member plus another \$2.00 if you schedule your party Sunday through Thursday. Don't miss out on this holiday special... the dates won't last long!
Please contact the Pacific Coast Club for more information at 734-4375 or 606-6330.

PACIFIC COAST CLUB

Come on out for FOOTBALL TOSS! FOOTBALL GAMES! DRAWINGS! Monday Night FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

- Sept. 15 - Dallas at N.Y. Giants, 6 p.m.
- Sept. 22 - Oakland at Denver, 6 p.m.
- Sept. 29 - Green Bay at Chicago, 6 p.m.
- Oct. 6 - Indianapolis at Tampa Bay, 6 p.m.
- Oct. 13 - Atlanta at St. Louis, 9 p.m.
- Oct. 20 - Kansas City at Oakland, 6 p.m.
- Oct. 27 - Miami at San Diego, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 3 - New England at Denver, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 10 - Philadelphia at Green Bay, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 17 - Pittsburgh at San Francisco, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 24 - N.Y. Giants at Tampa Bay, 6 p.m.
- Dec. 1 - Tennessee at N.Y. Jets, 6 p.m.
- Dec. 8 - St. Louis at Cleveland, 6 p.m.
- Dec. 15 - Philadelphia at Miami, 6 p.m.
- Dec. 22 - Green Bay at Oakland, 6 p.m.

Sponsored by:
United States Air Forces Clubs, Members First, USAF Services, Miller Lite, American Airlines, Double Tree Inns
No Federal endorsement intended.



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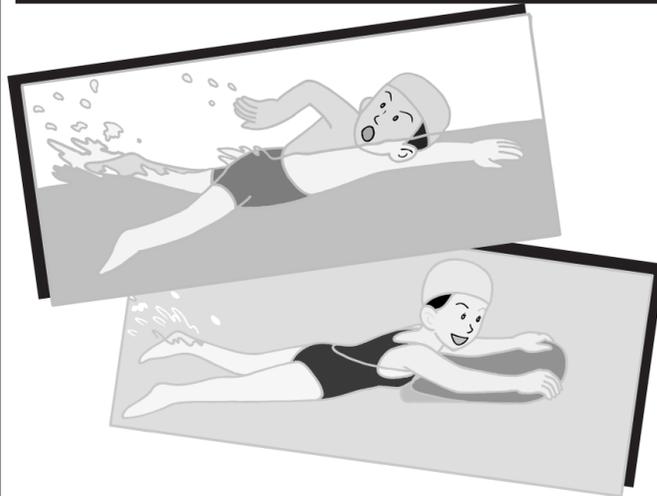
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SIGN UP TODAY AND YOU COULD WIN YOUR DREAM VACATION!



No Federal endorsement intended.

AQUATIC CENTER



OPEN SWIM • Saturday & Sunday
1 to 4:45 p.m.

YOUTH SWIM MEET

for ages 5 to 18-years
September 27 • 10 a.m.
(Warm up at 9 a.m.)
Event is free to participants.
Preregistration is required. Registration is ongoing at the pool, Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
For more information, call Jennifer at 606-3581.

OUTDOOR REC

VOLKSSPORT TRIATHLON



WALK • BIKE • SWIM
SEPTEMBER 20 & 21
8 a.m. to 12 noon

\$6 per person before event • **\$7** day of event
Equipment Checkout Parking Lot, Bldg. 10250
Corner of Washington Ave. & Alaska, VAFB

Contacts:
Bill Uttenweiler, 606-2017 • Curtis Dunster, 606-5908