

The Development of Combat Power and Efficiency

Vol. 26, No. 13 - Friday, July 12, 2002 - Brooks AFB, Texas

Through the Many Facets of Aerospace Medicine

## Alternate parking in effect during Brooks City-Base ceremony

By Rita Boland

Discovery staff writer

Brooks employees who park in the Bldg. 150, 100 and 180 parking lots will have to park in different locations July 22, the day of the Brooks City-Base Conveyance Ceremony.

The ceremony will begin at 9:30 a.m. at Bldg. 150 on the parade grounds by the flagpole. All Brooks personnel are invited to attend.

The horseshoe parking lot around Bldg. 150 will be blocked off to accommodate media and emergency medical services.

The parking lot of Bldg. 180 is reserved for corporate sponsors and VIP invitees, and the Bldg. 100 parking lot is reserved for spill-over VIPs.

All 100-area personnel have been asked to park in the TARMAC parking lot on Tuskegee Road on the east side of Brooks.

Additional civilians who are attending the event can also park at the TARMAC.

Four 15-passenger vans are scheduled to run continuously between the TARMAC and Bldg. 150 from 7:15 a.m. and 2 p.m., when normal parking will resume, according to authorities.

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Poisonous plants pose danger

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SDC ensures environmental safety

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jim Varhegyi

### Hail to the Chief

Commander of troops, Senior Master Sgt. Branford Edmunds (center) of the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard, escorts Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald Murray (left) and

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper on a troop inspection during Murray's welcome ceremony July 1. Murray is the 14th chief master sergeant of the Air Force.

## Flood 2002 claims life of Brooks' employee-base chapel plans memorial service

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence engineer Gilbert Miller died July 4 from a heart attack he suffered while evacuating his Seguin home during widespread flooding that has devastated several South Texas counties.

Miller, 54, is the tenth person to die as a direct result of area flooding.

A memorial service is scheduled for 2 p.m. today at the Brooks Chapel. Anyone wishing to eulogize Miller at the memorial service should contact Chaplain Dennis McCarty at 536-3824.

According to Miller's widow Teresa, her husband suffered the fatal heart attack while loading their truck with personal belongings during the couple's evacuation. The incident occurred shortly after Miller had transported his motorcycle to higher ground.

"He left Brooks early on Tuesday during the heavy rains. They (Millers) stayed the night in a shelter, went home the next day and were told

(by authorities) to evacuate on Thursday," said Jackie Lemke with the 311th Air Base Group's Civil Engineering Division. She said the stress and strain of the evacuation contributed to his death.

Further compounding the tragedy was Guadalupe River flood waters had completely inundated the Millers' home July 6.

Their house was one of about 800 homes damaged in the Seguin area.

No damage to homes or property at Brooks has been reported, said Staff Sgt. John Walls with the base Command Post.

According to the Kelly Weather Station, Brooks received a total of 13.9 inches of rain from June 29 through July 7.

Miller is the only known Brooks employee to become a flood fatality.

During the great flood of 1998, the only reported Brooks worker affected was Master Sgt. Steve Skipper with the Air Force Research Laboratory. Skipper's New Braunfels home sustained more than \$60,000 in damage when the Guadalupe River flooded.

Miller is remembered by co-work-

ers as a quiet, soft-spoken person who was willing to accept new challenges.

"We're all shocked, as is his family," said Miller's supervisor Perry Potter, chief of the Housing Privatization Division of AFCEE's Design and Construction Directorate.

Potter said Miller had only been assigned to AFCEE since April 7.

Miller previously served with the 311th Civil Engineering Squadron as a supervising civil engineer.

Potter described Miller as diligent in his work as project manager for the Lackland II housing privatization initiative that later included Brooks housing. At the time of his death he was involved in an Air Education and Training Command housing privatization project for Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

The Miller family requests no flowers be sent, but prefers donations be made to contributor's favorite charities on behalf of Gil Miller.

Anyone wishing to help Miller's widow, in terms of flood recovery, should contact Jackie Lemke at 536-3861.

Rudolph.Purificato@brooks.af.mil



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**311th Human Systems Wing Commander**

Brig. Gen. Lloyd Dodd

#### **Director of Public Affairs**

Larry Farlow

#### **Editor**

Cerise Fenton

(cerise.fenton@brooks.af.mil)

#### **Assistant Editor**

Dale Eckroth

#### **Public Affairs NCOIC**

Staff Sgt. John Jung

#### **Staff Writer**

Rita Boland

#### **Photography**

Senior Master Sgt. T.C. Coaxum

Tech. Sgt. Pedro Ybanez

Senior Airman Brandy Bogart

*Discovery* logo by Arlene Schirmer



Sylvia Black, Publisher

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# Commentary



**Roche**

## SECAF reflects on past year, looks to future

*(Editor's note: The following is a message from the secretary of the Air Force to Air Force members around the world.)*

By James G. Roche

To the men and women of the U.S. Air Force:

One year ago this month, I was sworn in as your 20th secretary of the Air Force and became, on that day, a proud member of a magnificent team of active duty, Guard, Reserve, and civilian airmen. During this time, I've had the deep honor and pleasure to serve alongside Gens. Mike Ryan and John Jumper, and our Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Jim Finch. It is impossible to imagine three more dedicated and professional Air Force leaders.

As I reflect on the year gone by, my first thoughts are with the airmen of our force who made the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of our nation and the freedoms we hold dear. Remember them and their families. Their supreme sacrifice, along with the countless heroes who have gone before them, is why we live free in this great nation.

Each of you should be extremely proud of your achievements and service this past year, from combat operations and homeland defense in the war against international terrorism to your admirable and noble daily endeavors that guarantee the readiness, health, security and morale of our fighting force. In my travels around our Air Force, I've been impressed and humbled by your ingenuity, commitment and willingness to serve. Thank you for everything you've done to make our Air Force the best the world has ever known.

Of utmost importance to me is our continued focus on warfighting, and honing the edge that enables us to remain expeditionary and responsive to the needs of our nation. The American people trust and admire what you do. They know that America's Air Force provides a full spectrum of air and space capabilities that deliver unprecedented firepower, mobility, awareness and deterrence to our joint forces. And, once again, they've witnessed first hand your truly remarkable performance during operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle.

Through your incredible efforts in this campaign, from deploying troops and building bases to coordinating fires and engaging targets, you've again demonstrated the unrivaled skill of airmen. Consider what we've done for just a moment.

In the first eight months of our war on terrorism, we flew more than 35,000 sorties, employing 78 percent of the total munitions used and damaging or destroying nearly three-quarters of the coalition targets. Our tanker force flew more than 10,000 refueling missions, supporting aircraft from all services.

Our intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets, manned and unmanned, have flown more than 2,000 missions and, when combined with our indispensable space systems, delivered unprecedented battlefield awareness as well as a vision of the exciting future in this evolving mission area. Our heavy-lifters (cargo aircraft) delivered more than 2.5 million humanitarian daily rations to the people of Afghanistan. Our combat support units have occupied, established, or rebuilt

bases throughout Southwest and Central Asia.

And we accomplished all this despite the challenge of waging a combined campaign in a land-locked nation.

Through your efforts, you confirmed to our nation and the world the unmatched value, flexibility and promise of air and space power.

While we've achieved many of our objectives, there remains much work to be done. The fight continues, with many of you going into harm's way daily. Our ongoing missions and your unrelenting sacrifices testify to your commitment to eradicate this threat to our nation and freedom-loving people everywhere. Most important, we need to prepare and resolve ourselves to see this through to the finish, regardless of where the fight takes us.

Many of you are deployed around the world at remote and inhospitable settings, spending extended time away from your families. Many more are scheduled to deploy in the months ahead. Some of you no longer are benefiting from the air and space expeditionary force schedule and are facing more frequent deployments. We've asked many of you to put in long hours well beyond your normal schedules and we've stretched our force to cover expanded missions in new locations. Many of our people are affected by Stop-Loss.

We're working to mitigate the numbers affected as soon as possible, but until we do, our folks' lives will remain on hold until we complete this campaign. And we have thousands of Air National Guardsmen, Air Force Reservists, and Individual Mobilization Augmentees who are serving for extended periods at great personal cost to their civilian jobs and their family lives. I recognize your sacrifice and commend you for your service.

Our nation needs its Air Force as never before, and your Air Force needs each and every one of you, your talents and your service as never before. Yet, regardless of these challenges, you continue to train, maintain and fight with a level of professionalism unmatched by any force ever assembled.

As I look to the journey ahead, I'm excited at the opportunities we have to serve our nation as we face the challenges posed by our evolving security environment. I look forward to continuing that journey with you.

I remain focused on developing new strategies for air and space power in this new millennium; delivering innovative and effective capabilities to the warfighters; improving Air Force retention, professional education and leadership development; eliminating the inefficiencies in how we do our business; and transforming our acquisition processes to ensure innovation and competitive vibrancy within our defense industrial base.

Most important, I want to ensure we care for our people and their families through these challenging times. Communication, engaged leadership at all levels, and a genuine concern for the value of our people and their daily sacrifices are vital to building and sustaining a motivated and capable force.

On that day one year ago, I committed myself to serve in a manner befitting of the great men and women of our Air Force and to serve just as each of you do every day all around the globe — with integrity, selflessness and in the earnest pursuit of excellence. Your entire leadership team — General Jumper; my talented undersecretary, Peter Teets; our vice chief of staff, Gen. Robert "Doc" Foglesong; and myself — is firmly committed to these values.

Your service and sacrifices the past year have been truly magnificent and have earned the justifiable admiration of our nation and the respect of the world.



## City-Base

Continued from Page 1

"The (event) will probably be finished by 1 p.m.," said Senior Master Sgt. Steven Smith.

"To play it safe we went with 2 p.m."

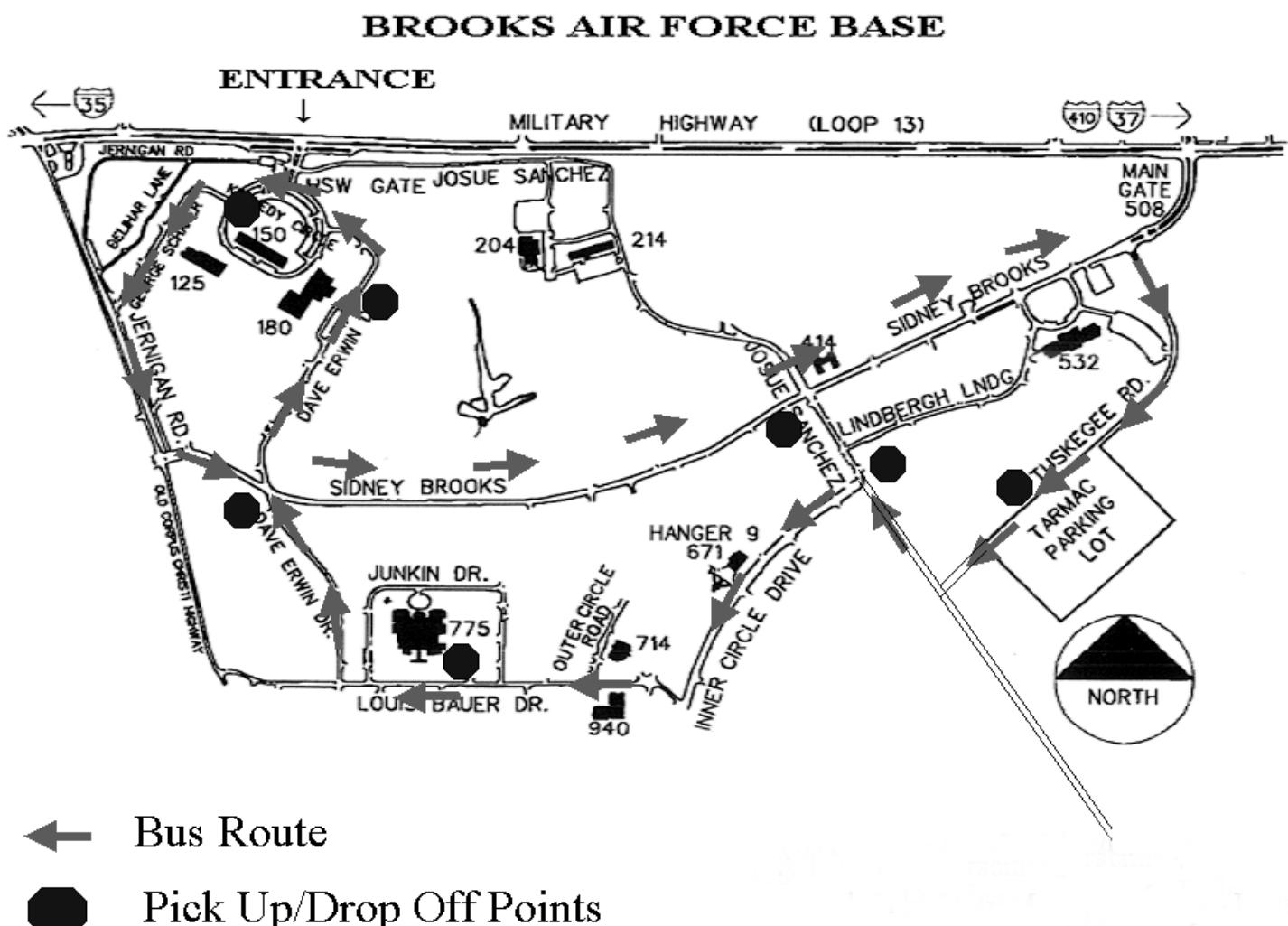
Smith is a member of the 311th Security Forces Squadron and the coordinator of the parking arrangements.

To accommodate additional Brooks personnel who want to attend the ceremony, two shuttles will run continuously around the base.

The pick-up/drop-off points are at the corner of Sidney Brooks and Josue Sanchez, the corner of Lindbergh Landing and Josue Sanchez by Inner Circle Drive, in front of Bldg. 775 on Louis Bauer Drive, the corner of Sidney Brooks and Dave Erwin Drive, Dave Erwin Drive across from Bldg. 180, and Bldg. 150 and the TARMAC.

Signs will be posted at each shuttle pick-up/drop-off point.

Rita.Boland@brooks.af.mil



## Long-term healthcare enrollment began July 1

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE — Air Force active-duty, selected Reserve, appropriated-fund civilian employees, retirees and qualified family members now have the opportunity to purchase long-term care insurance during an open season enrollment period, July 1 to Dec. 31.

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program is a benefit authorized by Congress in September 2000 to help federal employees, including military, defray the rising costs of long-term care.

It helps pay for services such as home

care, nursing home care, or assisted living facilities for people no longer able to perform the normal daily activities of living because of chronic mental or physical conditions.

"Long-term care is a subject many young folks don't see a need for," said Robin Conner, Air Force long-term care program monitor.

"In reality, many people not yet eligible for retirement find themselves in this situation every year."

According to published statistics, more than 40 percent of people needing long-term

care are between the ages of 18 and 64.

Premiums for long-term care insurance are based on age when the application is received and the benefits chosen.

People who apply during the open season will pay premiums based on their age as of July 1.

"We suggest that individuals take the time to educate themselves on this insurance program," said Conner.

"It's not something people like to think about, but if they or a family member need it, they'll be glad they did."

Officials from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the sponsor of the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program, contracted with two major companies to provide coverage. Metropolitan Life and John Hancock Life insurance companies formed Long Term Care Partners, which will be the exclusive operators of the program.

More information on the insurance program is available online at the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program Website at: [www.LTCFEDS.com](http://www.LTCFEDS.com) or by calling (800) 582-3337.



# '101 critical days of summer' warning: Poisonous plants pose deadly danger at Brooks

**By Rudy Purificato**

311th Human Systems Wing

Besides the garden-variety assortment of poisonous plants that produce skin irritations and allergic reactions, there are a few deadly species that thrive in some highly trafficked areas at Brooks.

Among base flora that can potentially cause death is Nerium oleander, which flourishes directly across the street from the Brooks Chapel and in some sections near the golf course.

"It's a common ornamental landscaping shrub. It's deadly poisonous," said Mary Anderson, an Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence botanist. If ingested, the plant's toxins produce severe mouth pain followed by nausea, vomiting, intestinal cramping and diarrhea.

Nerium oleander can grow to a height of 20 feet. It has long narrow leaves with flower clusters in white, pink or red. Every part of the plant is toxic, including its bark, seeds and roots. It's so toxic that the plant's poisonous chemicals are contained in the smoke produced from burning it and even in water in which the flowers have been placed.

Anderson said the best protection against this plant is to not even touch it. "Don't use its wood for fuel or as skewers for barbecuing hot dogs or marshmallows," she advised.

While there are no known poisonings from this plant at Brooks, oleander's reputation as a killer has been established for centuries.

Another deadly denizen that resides on base is wild carrot, a member of the same poisonous plant family as the 'serial killer' western



**Wild carrot**

waterhemlock. "If ingested, the chemicals from this plant affect the central nervous system, causing (brain) damage and death," Anderson said. This two to four-foot tall poi-

sonous weed, which flourishes in uncultivated meadows and pastures, primarily grows in undeveloped areas on base. It has a strong carrot odor and rosettes of small white flowers.

While Anderson believes this plant's kin, western waterhemlock, does not exist on base at the FamCamp pond or along golf course water hazards, people must be especially cautious about this indigenous member of the parsley family.

Western waterhemlock is considered one of the most poisonous plants in North America, and is often mistaken for water-parsnip or other edible members of this family.

The most recent local death from this plant occurred earlier this year when a 13-year-old Dallas girl died at University Hospital in San Antonio.

According to a March 12, 2002 San Antonio Express-News story by Zeke MacCormack, "A nature-loving Dallas teen-ager wasn't expected to survive after eating what officials believe was the poisonous plant hemlock during a weekend hike along the Medina River at a resort near Bandera."

waterhemlock.

"If ingested, the chemicals from this plant affect the central nervous system, causing (brain) damage and death," Anderson said. This two to four-foot tall poi-

The girl was diagnosed as brain dead. Anderson said the victim mistook the waterhemlock for parsley.

Waterhemlock, which thrives near ditches, canals and along waterways, has another way of causing human death other than consuming it.

"Channels in its roots contain a liquid chemical that if you get it on your skin will kill you," Anderson noted.

There are, however, edible plants at Brooks that potentially can cause accidental poisonings and in extreme cases possibly death. "We have (wild) mushrooms growing on base. I don't recommend eating them," Anderson said.

Indigenous throughout the U.S., the Amanita verna or 'death cap' mushroom is the most deadly. This chalky white mushroom with a bulbous base causes sudden and severe abdominal pain when eaten, leading to profuse vomiting, diarrhea, distorted vision, excessive thirst, circulatory failure, coma and death.

"We also have a lot of ornamental shrubs that have poisonous berries," said Anderson, dispelling the popular belief that plant berries are safe to eat if birds eat them.

"Sometimes birds can eat berries that humans can't," she noted, cautioning parents of children to teach their kids to not eat or put in their mouths any wild plant food, including berries.

The most common, poisonous plants are poison ivy, oak and sumac. Annually, 10 to 50 million Americans develop an allergic rash from these plants.

Botany's rule of thumb in recognizing these plants is: "Leaves of three, leave me be."



*Photo by Rudy Purificato*

**A wary bird perched above Oleander bushes on base instinctively knows to stay away from the deadly plants.**

All parts of these plants are poisonous. Stems and leaves contain a topical toxin oil that affects the skin and can also infect the bloodstream, requiring steroid therapy.

"Don't burn it. When you're outside (gardening or weeding) wear long sleeves, gloves and a facemask. You don't want to inhale the toxins. The oil on the surface of the plant leaves can get on your clothes and pets," Anderson explained. She said if you don't wash all your affected clothes separately in hot water with detergent, you can easily re-infect yourself.

*Rudolph.Purificato@brooks.af.mil*



## Brooks selectees

The following Brooks captains were selected for promotion to major. The list is broken down by organizations.

### **311th Human Systems Wing Office of the Staff Judge Advocate**

Sara Achinger

### **311th Human Systems Program Office**

Brian Collins

Pamela Howard-Whitehurst

### **U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine**

Beth Ann Gambill

Robert Gholson

William Jones

Juan Ubiera

### **311th Medical Squadron**

Sara Hartwich

### **Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis**

Eugene Sheely

Donald Johnston

### **Air Force Medical Support Agency**

Richard Cutts

Louis Ferrucci

### **Air Force Research Laboratory**

Brandon Doan

# Brooks scores a "10" with AFMC annual awards

**By Rita Boland**

*Discovery staff writer*

Brooks personnel were recently honored with 10 Air Force Materiel Command awards - nine personal awards and one team award.

The Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis took home half of the awards, including the AFMC and Air Force Laboratory Team of the Year award. That honor, and a plaque, was given to the Air Force Clinical Reference Laboratory Team. The team consists of 110 military, civil service employees and contract personnel.

The other members of AFIERA to receive an AFMC award were Maj. Carol Walters, AFMC and Air Force Clinical Laboratory Manager

of the Year; Benny Murphy, AFMC Resource Management Civilian of the Year; Master Sgt. David Martin, AFMC Outstanding Bioenvironmental Engineering Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; and Staff Sgt. Lureca Jones, AFMC Laboratory NCO of the Year.

Each received a letter signed by Col. George Seignious IV, command surgeon for Air Force Material Command.

"It was truly an honor to win at that level of competition," Martin said.

The 311th Medical Squadron won three awards. The recipients were 1st Lt. Nora Merritt, AFMC Resource Management Officer of the Year; Master Sgt. Sandra Hawkins-Cooper, AFMC Senior NCO Pharmacy Technician of the

Year; and Airman 1st Class Anna Lall, AFMC Patient Administration/Managed Care Airman of the Year.

The U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine earned the final two honors. Senior Master Sgt. Connie LaPage was named Ophthalmology Senior NCO Recipient of the Donald D. Dunton Award for 2001 and Maj. Ronald Tutt was named AFMC Optometrist of the Year.

"I was humbled, yet proud to represent the 4V career field," LaPage said. "It is difficult to distinguish the best in our career field, being selected is the best compliment I could have ever received."

The winners received their awards on June 18 from Brig. Gen. Lloyd Dodd, 311th Human Systems Wing commanding officer.



# Upcoming changes make TSP more user friendly

By Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen Rhem

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—Upcoming improvements to the Thrift Savings Plan for both military and federal civilian employees will make the program easier to use.

Lt. Col. Tom Emswiler, an Army lawyer who directs the Armed Forces Tax Council in the Pentagon, said the most significant change is that accounts will be daily valued, instead of monthly valued. All transactions will be updated daily, he said.

Other changes include better online access to accounts and participant statements expressed in shares and dollars, instead of just dollars as the current statements are.

All changes take place Sept. 16. Emswiler said no action is required from participants. However, there will be a two-week period from the end of August until Sept. 16 when participants will be unable to make certain changes to their accounts or make withdrawals.

"For that two-week period when they're actually transferring accounts into the new record-keeping system, there's going to be a pause in your ability to do certain things," he said. "But otherwise, this is basically going to be seamless."

TSP participants will gain the ability to make changes daily, "but this isn't meant to make you a day trader," Emswiler said. "Think about your long-term investment needs and don't move your accounts simply based on short-term market fluctuations."

He said TSP is intended to be a retirement investment plan. "That means it's a long-term investment, you don't want to just jump around based on short-term needs," he said. "You want to develop your investment strategy based on what level of risk you're willing to accept, whether your needs are long-term or short-term, and then stick with that plan."

For more information on the Thrift Savings Plan, visit [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov). A chart outlining the upcoming changes is available online at [www.tsp.gov/forms/tsplf11.pdf](http://www.tsp.gov/forms/tsplf11.pdf).

# Officials release officer promotion board video

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE—In an effort to educate all airmen on officer promotion boards, the Air Force Selection Board secretariat has produced a new video to counter common misunderstandings of the process.

Four hundred copies of the 19-minute-long video have been distributed to all Air Force installation public affairs offices and a 19.5 MB video file can be downloaded from the selection board home page.

The video, "How Officers Are Promoted," provides an updated insider's view of boardroom activity at the Air Force Personnel Center, including how records are scored and what board members actually do when evaluating candidates for promotion.

"It's important for officers and supervisors to know how the Air Force promotes officers," said Capt. Bill

Conley, video production coordinator.

"The video is another means to share this knowledge and increase the understanding of the promotion process throughout the Air Force."

The video explains the process from the choice of who sits on selection boards to how board members endorse the final promotion list.

One point of emphasis is the importance of each officer keeping his or her records current and correct.

"We have a great promotion system and there are many safeguards in our promotion process to ensure it remains great," said Col. Wendy Campo, chief, selection board secretariat.

"The video highlights the various safeguards as well as other important promotion topics, to ensure Air Force members receive fair and equitable consideration."



# ACTION LINE

## 536-2222



The COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE is your opportunity to make Brooks a better place to live, work and play.

If you have a suggestion for improvement, a complaint or a problem that you have not been able to resolve through normal complaint channels or the chain of command, call the COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE, 536-2222.

Only items of general interest will be published, so please leave your name and number for a personal response.

The base agencies listed below can be contacted directly:

311th Security Forces Squadron.....	536-3310
SFS after duty hours.....	536-2851
311th Civil Engineer Squadron.....	536-3861
311th Communications Squadron.....	536-6571
311th Air Base Group Logistics Division.....	536-3541
Safety.....	536-2111
Housing Maintenance.....	536-7000
Housing Office.....	536-1840
311th Services Division.....	536-2545
311th Medical Squadron (Clinic).....	536-4715
Military Personnel.....	536-1845
Civilian Personnel.....	536-3353
Military Pay.....	536-1851
Civilian Pay.....	536-2823
I.G. (FWA).....	536-2358
Military Equal Opportunity.....	536-2584
EEO Complaints.....	536-3702
Base Exchange.....	533-9161
Commissary.....	536-3549
Brooks City-Base Office.....	536-6626



## Brooks Family Support Center activities

Call 536-2444  
for information

### Digging out of debt

July 17, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Bldg. 537

Attend this seminar and learn how to live debt-free and stick to it. Find out if you have too much debt, the consequences of your debt, and how to get out of debt.

### 3-Day transition seminar

July 30 - Aug. 1, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Bldg. 537

Making the transition from the military to the civilian sector can be a big undertaking. This seminar allows us to better serve separating and retiring members and their spouses. Topics include job search preparation resume writing, interviewing skills to include appropriate dress, veteran's benefits, and more. Members should attend at

least 180 days prior to retirement/separation. For more information, call the Family Support Center at 536-2444.

### Sponsor Training

Aug. 13, 10-11 a.m., Bldg. 537

In accordance with Air Force Instruction 36-3011, sponsor training is mandatory of all first-time sponsors and those who have not sponsored within the past year. However, others are more than welcome to attend. Learn about tools and resources available for sponsors.

### HELPFUL WEBSITES

[www.afcrossroads.com](http://www.afcrossroads.com) - The Air Force's official community website with information on relocation, parenting, eldercare, family separation and readiness, education, financial, employment, and spouse network.

[www.af.mil/sites](http://www.af.mil/sites) - Official links to all Air Force public websites, from Air Combat Command to Yokota Air Base.

[www.dtic.mil/perdiem](http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem) - Check the per diem and lodging rates for your next TDY.

[www.afas.org](http://www.afas.org) - The official website of the Air Force Society.

[www.tricare.osd.mil](http://www.tricare.osd.mil) - Information on TRICARE.

[www.mysanantonio.com](http://www.mysanantonio.com) - Check this site for news and what to do in San Antonio.

[www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) - Get door-to-door directions and maps to anywhere in the U. S.

[www.hotjobs.com](http://www.hotjobs.com) and [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) - General employment opportunities and advice.

Don't have a computer with internet access? Stop by the computer resource room at the Family Support Center, Bldg 537.



# AFIERA lab soothes air contamination fears

By Rita Boland

Discovery staff writer

When an airplane smashed into the side of the Pentagon September 11, 2001, the focus was on terrorism and the immediate attack, but people had to return to work. Dealing with the fear that absorbed the nation after that day, those people didn't need the added fear of contaminants in their air. And to ensure the safety of their working environment, the personnel in the chemistry division at the Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis located at Brooks analyzed samples of the air for asbestos and dangerous metals.

"We analyzed samples of air simulating what people would breathe," Kurt Greebon said. Greebon is a chemist at AFIERA and the acting Technical Branch Chief for Inorganic Industrial Hygiene.

Since no packages were going in or out of Washington, D.C., at the time, the Surveillance Directorate Chemistry Division at AFIERA tapped into their chemical laboratory network to find a suitable lab nearby that could analyze the samples quickly.

The SDC at AFIERA, which handles more than 60,000 samples a year, works with 10 contract labs throughout the country to analyze hazardous waste, water and soil samples from 250 military bases around the world. They work with the Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserves as well as other branches of the service.

"We analyze samples to ensure health and safety in the workplace and the environment," said Juanita Gilliland, Chief of Program Management for SDC.

During the anthrax scare, AFIERA chemists analyzed many samples of white powder from different locations to determine the identity of the substances.

"We can support people on any environmental or occupational analysis," Gilliland said. "If we can't do it (at Brooks) we send it to one of our contract

labs."

SDC sends assessment teams to the contracted labs periodically to ensure the work meets Department of Defense standards.

CENTAF is one of the important customers they support by analyzing air and soil samples to ensure a safe environment for those deployed.

SDC has also worked on projects with JP-8, the fuel in jets, and aviator's breathing oxygen. They analyzed samples of JP-8 in the air and on clothing to determine how much had been absorbed by people working with the planes. Those results helped develop guidance for safer clothing and protective gear for the workers.

SDC checks that companies who provide oxygen for pilots don't supply contaminated canisters. They have also analyzed oxygen samples after crashes to see if it were contaminated and played a role in the accident.

In certain cases, SDC sends equipment for gathering and analyzing out to the site, so the material doesn't have to be shipped or contaminate anyone in the lab.

SDC once received a package that a chemist identified as a chemical warfare object before it was opened. The sample was returned to the sender.

"I didn't want to open it," Greebon said.

The chief of SDC, Lt. Col. Dave Gibson, has been working with the FBI and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to establish a system for chemical response in the event of a chemical weapons attack. According to Gibson, such a system is still speculation and many logistical aspects must be arranged.

"We want to prompt the system and say 'Are you guys ready for to handle a chemical event?'" Gibson said.

Despite SDC's role in recent events, its mission is mainly unchanged from the pre-9/11 era. The chemists still focus on providing timely and valid analyses to keep people safe in their working environments.



Courtesy photo

**Kurt Greebon, right, demonstrates the operation of a Flash Point Analyzer to the new Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis director, Col. James Neville.**

"Nothing has consistently changed," Greebon said.

SDC used to examine mainly drinking water, but with new regulations, drinking water has become safer and the examination requirements moved from one year to two years. The chemists now analyze more soil, air, hazardous waste and charcoal tube samples, though they still work with drinking water samples occasionally. They study the samples to ensure they meet standards determined by the Environmental Protection Agency and occupational health organizations.

The equipment used by SDC is valued at around \$6 million and has names like gas chromatographs and mass spectrometer. All of the tools break down samples into individual chemicals to identify the amount of pollutants or hazardous materials in a particular environment, natural or occupational.

Rita.Boland@brooks.af.mil

## Changes create bigger pool for leader selection

By Chief Master Sgt. Deborah Healey

AFMC Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Getting the right person for the job is the fundamental reason why selecting materiel management leaders will now be a function of the Command Screening Board.

The change will personally affect a small percentage of the Air Force Materiel Command family, but the implications touch everyone, AFMC officials said.

The CSB, a centralized process, has in the past several years, supplied a list from which wing and group commanders across the Air Force are screened for placement.

September 10, the CSB's list will also become the source for the materiel management community's leaders.

Gen. Lester Lyles, AFMC commander, is pleased this integration will finally happen.

"This is a significant step for the Air Force," he said. "It's the right thing to do to make available the best candidates for these positions as well as recognize the significance of the leadership roles in this command."

Lyles has championed this change so the materiel leaders will be recognized as equivalent to wing and group commanders, both in visibility and responsibility. Last December, that effort paid off when Gen. John Jumper, Air Force chief of staff, directed the acquisition and logistics leadership communities to participate in the CSB instead of a jointly-chaired AFMC, AF/IL, SAF/AQ functional selection process known as the Materiel Managers Board.

Air Force Senior Leader Management Office officials administer the CSB screening process. This office is a combination of the former General Matters Office, Air Force Colonel Matters Office and Air Force Senior Executive Management Office.

The screening board has multiple panels of qualified members which oversee specific functional categories. To ensure the right criteria are used in the selection process for the materiel leaders' slots, there will be a Materiel Leaders Panel at the CSB with Lt. Gen. Stephen Plummer, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for

acquisition, serving as chairman. Lt. Gen. Charles Coolidge, AFMC vice commander, will be one of seven to nine other panel members.

Coolidge applauds the initiative as "a fundamental shift from an internally-focused functional management process to one aligned with the chief of staff's existing method of identifying and choosing our Air Force Leaders."

He cites two of its most important points as providing a bigger pool of eligibles for the materiel leaders positions, and broadening the pool for the wing and group positions.

According to Col. Vincent Snyder, AFMC senior officer management division, AFSLMO will send a message to each military personnel flight July 15 listing who is eligible for the CSB. They, in turn, will notify the affected colonels and colonel-selects of their eligibility.

"A critical point for the eligible officers to realize is that if you accept eligibility to compete, you are vulnerable for all categories - if you decline, you decline them all," he said. "You can't choose which list you want to be on. This allows Air Force officials to best match your skills with Air Force leadership requirements."

"There are sure to be a lot of questions about the CSB, how the MMB will fit into it, and who it will affect how," said Snyder. "This command's leadership will be here every step of the way to answer questions and provide the right information at the right time. Just because we've passed the torch to AFSLMO on the screening process doesn't mean we're passing on our responsibility to our people."

Headquarters AFMC Senior Officer Management Division officials have established a website with frequently asked questions, point papers on how the CSB is administered, eligibility criteria, accept and decline rights, and other pertinent data. The website is: [www.afmc-mil.wpafb.af.mil/HQ-AFMC/DP/dpo](http://www.afmc-mil.wpafb.af.mil/HQ-AFMC/DP/dpo).

"This integration emphasizes one of the Air Force's core competencies - 'Service before self,'" Coolidge said. "Air Force leaders are looking for the best person to fill every job. Sometimes it may not be exactly what the individual wants, but it will be what's best for our service and our nation."

## NEWS briefs

### AFA Alamo scholarship

The Alamo Chapter of the Air Force Association will award three \$500 scholarships to Air Force active duty, full-time Guard or Reserve Air Force Association members and their immediate family in early September. Packages must be postmarked by Aug. 15 and sent to the Alamo Chapter AFA at 118 Broadway, Ste. 234, San Antonio, Texas 78205.

For more information, contact Capt. Brian Collins at 536-6296.

### Comptrollers luncheon

The American Society of Military Comptrollers luncheon, hosted by the Headquarters Air Force Security Assistance Training is July 25 at the Randolph Air Force Base Officers' Club. Corporate Members will be recognized and Annual Scholarship winners announced at this luncheon.

For tickets call Betty Ann Rosales at 536-1135 by July 19.

### Technology and crime

Special Agent William Perez, Federal Bureau of Investigations, is scheduled to speak July 18 during the joint Billy Mitchell Chapter of Old Crows and the Alamo Chapter Armed Forces Communications Electronics Association luncheon at Dave and Busters at I-10 and I-410 July 18. The event begins at 11 a.m., with lunch served at 11:30 a.m.

Reservations must be made by July 15 on the BMCAOC website at: [www.bmcaoc.org](http://www.bmcaoc.org), or call Marsha Ocain at 732-7697.

### Combat Dining In

The Brooks Airman's Council hosts the Enlisted Combat Dining In at the base park pavilion from 6-11 p.m. July 26. Tickets are \$5 for E-4 and below and \$7 for E-5 and above. Contact Airman First Class Crystal Ray at 536-4967, or Airman First Class Kathryn Krekelberg at 536-2300 for tickets.

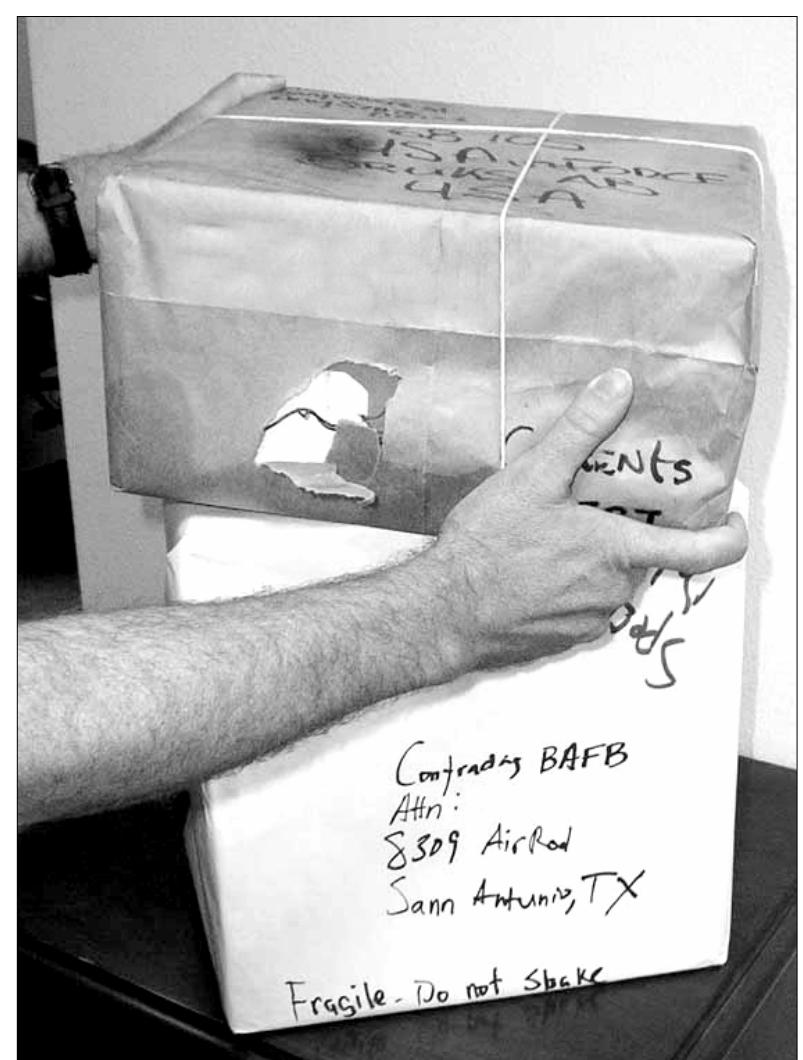


Photo by Staff Sgt. John Jung

### **What's wrong with this picture?**

This person receives a box in the mail but who is the intended recipient? There is no name or organization listed in the address and the street address is wrong. Additionally, the city is misspelled and the zip code is missing. The top of the box is soiled and doesn't display a legible return address. The string tied around the package is unacceptable and the loosely wrapped contents look suspicious enough without the partially torn wrapping with the wires protruding from the side. The misspellings, improper format and overall poor appearance of the package should trigger a cautious response. After all, the label warns "Fragile: Do not Shake." Be cautious with suspicious packages.



## Graduation marks a day of giving for USAFSAM students

**By Rita Boland**

*Discovery staff writer*

Graduation day is a day for presents, but usually the graduates get the presents, not give them. However, when Aeromedical Apprentice Class 020404 graduated from the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine June 27, they gave the Air Force a gift as part of their class legacy.

Class 020404 donated \$800 to the Air Force Aid Society in honor of their instructors.

"We felt it was important to donate to an organization that gave back to the enlisted members of the Air Force who are in need," Master Sgt. David Myers said. Myers was the class leader and presented the check to Master Sgt. Melvin Gilchrist, the Brooks Superintendent for the Family Support Center as well as the AFAS Officer.

"It's wonderful," Gilchrist said. "I think it says a lot about their caring. It will be greatly appreciated and put to good use. It will go a long way to helping us continue our mission."

The donated money came out of the pockets of the 49 members of the class. The students range in rank from airman basic to master sergeant.

"We raised the money by asking for donations every payday from people in our class," Myers said. "Everybody gave freely. Everyone was very enthusiastic."

The class voted to decide on the charity.

The AFAS helps military people like widows and retirees in emergencies, with car prob-



*Photo by Senior Airman Brandy Bogart*

**Air Force Aid Society officer Master Sgt. Melvin Gilchrist, left, accepts an \$800 donation from Aeromedical Apprentice Class 020404 leader Master Sgt. David Myers during the recent class graduation at USAFSAM.**

lems, with funds for food and rent and with deaths. They also provide phone cards to troops who are deploying or going TDY for 90 or more days.

The class legacy of making a charitable donation began with the Dec. 1999 Aerospace Apprentice class. Each class that has given money since then, seven in all, put their class month, year and their charity on the plaque.

The plaque is dedicated to the instructors of the course, who encourage each class to raise and donate funds. The plaque hangs in the Aeromedical Apprentice classroom. Class 020404 also gave to their community through volunteer work. The students logged 226 volunteer hours outside of the classroom during their 12-week training. Volunteer projects included a clean-up at Cathedral Park downtown, participation in the Fiesta kickoff at Brooks and a military breakfast.

*Rita.Boland@brooks.af.mil*

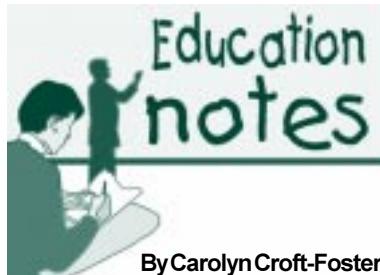


## Yards of the Month

(Top photo) Major Kevin Culp, of the Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis, receives July Yard of the Month honors from Col. Terry Nelsen, 311th Air Base Group commander. Culp resides at 103 Vinsant. Meanwhile, Tech. Sgt. Vladimir Fuentes, also of AFIERA, accepts July Yard of the Month honors for his residence at 113 Royce. Yard of the month winners receive a \$25 gift certificate from Services and a \$10 gift certificate from the Army and Air Force Exchange Service. They also receive a flag and certificate.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Pedro Ybanez



By Carolyn Croft-Foster  
Brooks Education  
Services Office  
536-3617

## CCAF graduation deadline Aug. 23

Nominations for Community College of the Air Force Fall 2002 graduation must be received by CCAF at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., by Aug. 23.

Students who believe they are a degree candidate need to contact Education Services at 536-3618 to ensure their nominations have been submitted.

## CLEP English Essay exam set

The English with Essay exam is offered July 17 at 8 a.m. Reserve a seat at 536-3618.

## AWC/ACSC recruits for non-resident seminar

Recruitment is beginning for the Air War College and the Air Command and Staff College non-resident seminars. AWC enrollment is open to lieutenant colonel selects and above and GS-13s and above.

Registration forms are available at: [www.au.af.mil/au/awc/enrolppr.htm](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/enrolppr.htm)

Forms should be brought to Education Services. Seminars begin at the end of July.

ACSC enrollment is open to major selects and above and GS-11s and above. Registration forms are available at the Education Services customer service desk.

## UTSA class offers human anatomy

Human Anatomy, a prerequisite for many health-related professional degree programs, is offered at Brooks this fall. For registration information, call 536-3618.

## Embry-Riddle rep visits base

An Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University representative visits Brooks every other Wednesday morning. To schedule an appointment to review degree options, call 536-3618.

## Montgomery GI Bill increases benefits

Active duty members enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill can increase Chapter 30 GI Bill benefits by \$5,400 for a maximum contribution of \$600. This increases the full-time monthly rate one dollar for every four dollars contributed. The minimum payment is \$20 per month. Contribu-

tions can be started and stopped at any time while on active duty.

This benefit is only open to members who first entered active duty on or after July 1, 1985, and elected to participate in the MGIB. It is not open to Vietnam-Era or VEAP convertees.

Call 536-3618 for details.

## Webster University

The Webster University representative is at Brooks Wednesdays from 8 a.m. - noon for new and continuing students. Webster also offers Master's level courses on base. Contact the university for more about graduate degree programs.

## ACT exam offered

The ACT exam is scheduled for Aug. 5 at 8 a.m. at Brooks. Students must call 536-3618 to reserve a seat.

## ACCD registration

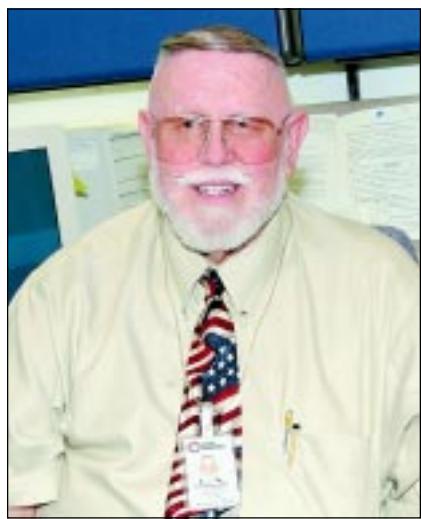
Alamo Community College District registration is underway for fall classes on base. The ACCD representative takes appointments Tuesdays at Brooks.

## AWC/ACSC meeting

The Non-resident AWC organizational meeting is Aug. 6 at 4 p.m. in Bldg. 558 conference room. The Non-resident ACSC meeting is Aug. 7 at 4 p.m., also in Bldg. 558.



## Feature



Wilson

# Q&A

**FULL NAME:**  
*Ira Don Wilson, civilian contractor, major, USAF, MSC, retired*

**DUTY TITLE, ORGANIZATION:**  
*Aeromedical evacuation consultant, 311th Human Systems Program Office*

**WHAT IS MY JOB?**  
*I find new solutions to aeromedical evacuation and combat medicine problems and provide them to the Warfighter Requirements and New Technology sections of the SPO.*

**BIRTHDAY:**  
*Dec. 14, 1936*

**HOMETOWN:**  
*Snyder, Oklahoma*

**FAMILY STATUS:**  
*Married, two sons, three grandchildren*

**NICKNAME:**  
*Others have called me Iravac*

**MOTTO:**  
*Since my name means "always faithful" in Hebrew, I've chosen "Semper Fidelis."*

**INSPIRATIONS:**  
*Jesus Christ, Medal of Honor winners, the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces, the U.S. Air Force, and my wife of 43 years, Esther Lynn Wilson.*

**HOBBIES:**  
*Studying scripture, photography, hunting, fishing, reading, public speaking.*

**PET PEEVE:**  
*I live in Austin and commute on I-35. Inconsiderate drivers do bother me some.*

**BOOK(S) AT BEDSIDE:**  
*The Holy Bible; Slipping the Surly Bonds; Taking the High Ground; Holy War, The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World; The Gates of the Alamo*

**I JOINED THE MILITARY BECAUSE:**  
*I grew up on the old Comanche Indian Reservation, went to school and hunted with them and heard them talk about being a warrior so I think I wanted to find out if I was a warrior, and I did, in Vietnam.*

**MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT:**  
*Playing a role in moving and caring for some 2.5 million wounded, sick and during my time in Vietnam, and my association with some of the greatest Aeromedical Evacuation Crews in history.*

**MY MOST PRIZED POSSESSION:**  
*I'm not much hung up on possessions. I like my little Jack Russell terrier named Dandee, but I'm not sure I possess him. I guess the next on the list would be the color slides I took in Vietnam, because I know they could never be replaced.*

## Brooks Personality PROFILE

**By Rita Boland**

*Discovery staff writer*

Once upon a time there was a man named Ira Wilson. Wilson can tell a story. And as this man relives his experiences, his story comes out.

Wilson's woven tales surround and envelop the listener, pulling them into worlds full of cowboys, rodeos, broken engagements, pretty nurses and Viet Cong. He can talk for an hour before his audience becomes aware that any time has passed in the world that exists outside his tales. His Vietnam memories come complete with slide shows of rockets, shrapnel, bomb sites and hospital conditions so intensely disturbing that even the most gruesome war movies omit such scenes.

Wilson originally took the pictures for his own use but they were later converted into the slide show and have recently been digitized for a POW/MIA project at the 311th Human Systems Program Office.

"The slides took on a historical value of their own," he said.

Wilson was an aeromedical evacuation technician, an aeromedical evacuation operations officer, and an aeromedical evacuation liaison officer to the U.S. Army and Marine Corps for the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Wilson estimates medical personnel moved some 2.5 million wounded during the ten years of the war.

Wilson had almost nine years of missions, both in and out of Vietnam, including several missions flown into North Vietnam. The wounded total is not an exact number because the technicians were allowed only to count American wounded.

Wilson said it wasn't unusual on an aeromedical evacuation aircraft to have wounded from many nations on board.

According to Wilson, American troops were never more than three minutes from a medic and in 17 minutes could be transported to a field hospital.

In Wilson's slides patients were two to a bed, with entire families living underneath because they had nowhere else to go.

Patients bandaged patients because three doctors and seven nurses staffed a hospital with 1,000 beds that now held 2,208 patients. Rats crawled on the floor through the human waste, fluids, garbage

# The memories of a true American hero

and used medical supplies. The meals of rice and fish were delivered on a bicycle cart covered with trash can lids. It was into these conditions that Wilson had to leave patients with burns, gun shot wounds and the inability to use their limbs, if they still had them.

"I don't have a weak stomach, but it's sad," Wilson said.

He estimates that twenty-five

"It wouldn't cost more than a harrier," Wilson said. "We're now forced to move patients on a KC-135 tanker, a flying gas tank. What happens when a bullet hits a gas tank?"

If a nuke hits a major city in this country, it will leave a 25-mile hole

and there will be no hospital and doctors. There will be one hundred to five hundred thousand casualties

around that hole. How are we going to move and take care of

*Photo by Tech. Sgt. Pedro Ybanez*

percent of the patients in that hospital died.

Wilson came close to being a casualty himself on several occasions. Once, while evacuating an injured pilot from North Vietnam, his helicopter had to leave because of enemy troops on the ground. Wilson got the pilot on board before the gunner told him he was surrounded and needed to get out of there.

"I saw a stream when we were flying in, so I made a beeline for that," Wilson said. "I spent the night there alone. Two North Vietnamese soldiers stood on the bank above me and talked and smoked. I was scared to death. I didn't know if they were going to come back for me."

He was rescued the following morning.

Wilson recalls another experience when a rocket exploded in front of him. It destroyed the jeep he was climbing into and injured a friend behind him, but he escaped unscathed.

"All I saw was a big flash," Wilson said. "I still have parts of that rocket that I picked up afterward."

Wilson retired from the Air Force as a major while serving as the executive officer at the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine.

Due to budget restraints the number of aeromedical evacuation aircraft has been reduced. Because of the reduction in the number of Air Force Aeromedical Evacuation aircraft, Wilson has conceptualized a new multi-role aircraft.

them?"

According to Wilson, medics moved 370 wounded casualties during the Gulf War. In one day during Vietnam, Wilson once evacuated 286 people. Many days the evacuation total was above 200.

Despite his war experiences, Wilson is a happy, friendly man, with a handle bar mustache and has a deep store of amusing stories as well as war tales.

Wilson has been engaged five times. One of his fiancees threw her ring into Lake Michigan and another threw hers into the English Channel.

After the fourth engagement, Wilson made a list of questions his father would ask if looking for a match for him. Wilson applied these questions to the available American women - he was in England at the time - and narrowed his choice down to Esther Lynn James, a nurse in the Air Force.

He drove to her house at 10 p.m. after deciding on her and when she asked what he was doing there - he was an airman at the time - he responded:

"You're the girl I'm going to marry and I think you should let me date you so we can get to know each other."

After 43 years of married life, they're now living happily ever after.



# Brooks wrestled with 'full-Nelsen' moves

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Don't let his dour demeanor fool you. Lingering just beneath the surface of Col. Terry Nelsen's countenance is a "wild and crazy guy" yearning to be let loose with Steve Martin-like comedic frivolity.

After significantly enhancing the Brooks community's morale, welfare and quality of life through his re-energizing antics and initiatives, this departing 311th Air Base Group commander

will soon have an even tougher audience to win over. Nelsen's next gig in the Ukraine will focus a lot more on diplomacy than self-deprecating humor.

"Dad's creativity and humor must have rubbed off on me," admits Nelsen about his father who taught him that laughter universally communicates ideas. Says Nelsen, "You have to get people's attention or they'll get bored. They learn through entertainment."

With a gleam in his eye and a mop-looking wig crowning his receding hairline, Nelsen morphed into entertainer-educator while portraying TV's Jeopardy game show host Alex Trebek during a recent 311th Human Systems Wing commander's call. His skit amused the crowd while getting them actively involved in answering questions designed to showcase ABG initiatives.

"We used the quiz show to convey highlights of what we've done," admits Nelsen. He has helped facilitate base improvements featuring a major



Photo by  
Rudy Purificato

fitness center renovation; new Child Development Center playground equipment and sunshade awnings; construction of the base's first rollerblade track; conversion of the old dining hall into a student activity center; establishment of VIA bus routes on base; introduction of Saturday movie matinees at Sidney's; inauguration of the base's first Commander's Access TV Channel and implementation of the Automated Digital Information Outprocessing System. More importantly, Nelsen worked diligently with various stakeholders on the City-Base conversion, focusing on maintaining or improving services that support the Brooks community.

"He has changed the whole complexion of the base," said Nelsen's deputy Rita Fox, adding,

"We both want to see progress by making changes. He is not afraid to do different things."

Describing him as funny and witty, Fox said, "Anyone who can negotiate with Russians can succeed in just about anything."

Before Nelsen became ABG commander in August 2000, he had developed a resume filled with extraordinary experiences. Premiering on the planet July 11, 1951 in the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park, the future Air Force leader became the fifth of seven children born to Leonard and Francis Nelsen.

"I spoke only Italian. I learned English at age six," recalls Nelsen about his early language development as the child of a career federal worker who frequently lived abroad. Consequently, Nelsen is fluent in German, Russian and Italian and is proficient in Dutch, Norwegian, French and Polish.

Nelsen admits being greatly influenced by his father who was an accomplished electrical engineer, inventor and storyteller. "When dad was stationed in Naples, Italy, he met deported mobster Lucky Luciano. Dad described him as a 'real slick' character," Nelsen conveyed.

Nelsen's affinity for languages eventually led him to a military career. "I surprised my folks by

joining the Army," Nelsen said of his 1971 decision to serve with the U.S. Army Security Agency as a Russian language cryptologist. "Dad wrote me a letter telling me I had picked the toughest language (to learn). He wrote, 'If you don't make it, I'm proud of you for shooting for number one. It's better than shooting for nothing at all.'"

Nelsen's philosophy "of doing your best" is based on his father's tutelage.

Nelsen was one of 13 of 45 students to graduate from the Defense Language Institute's Russian language class. "The great motivator was if you didn't pass, you became an infantryman," recalls Nelsen about many of his classmates' Vietnam War fate. By 1977, Nelsen had earned an Air Force ROTC commission and political science degree from the University of Minnesota.

Nelsen's early exposure to foreign diplomacy occurred in 1984 while stationed at U.S. Air Force - Europe headquarters. "I worked with the French Liaison Office. I met French Foreign Legionnaires who were tough."

A subsequent Pentagon assignment in 1987 provided Nelsen with an opportunity to learn "the language of politics" while working with congressional staffers on behalf of the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

One of Nelsen's most important assignments was working as deputy director of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA.

"I investigated Cold War (aircraft) shoot downs over the Soviet Union. My job was to determine whether missing Americans from WWII, the Korean and Cold Wars had been transferred to or interred in the Soviet Union." His job required frequent deployments to Russia and its Eastern European satellite republics. Nelsen conducted 1,200 interviews that included discussions with Russian labor camp survivors and the son of American U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers. Detective' Nelsen found and analyzed evidence that eventually provided closure for some American families of POWs/MIA.

Nelsen's next great adventure will be serving as defense/air attache at the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine. Nelsen will be required to learn Ukrainian. "I believe I'll be the first non-rated (pilot) colonel to serve as defense attache there," he said.

Ultimately, Nelsen envisions a post-Air Force career running a bait shop. He jokingly asks, "Have you ever seen a bad earthworm?"

Rudolph.Purificato@brooks.af.mil

# Nelsen's sidekick 'crazy like a Fox'

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Coiffured in a Little Orphan Annie-like red wig and adorned in an outfit that Broadway impresario Florenz Ziegfeld would have gladly embraced, Rita Fox looked every bit the show girl she portrayed.

After tap dancing across the Josephine Theater stage with a vigor few women of her maturity could attempt with the help of a respirator, she showcased her trademark personality brilliantly in a recent San Antonio revival of the Gershwin musical comedy "Crazy For You."

While Col. Terry Nelsen didn't witness his 311th Air Base Group deputy's latest theatrical escapade, he knew Fox's irrepressible enthusiasm and do-or-die-trying spirit would play well among audiences outside of the Brooks community.

"This woman is gutsy," Nelsen said. "She came back for a second interview after wearing that outfit." The 'outfit' to which he referred was suitable only in applying for a job with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

"It was Rodeo Week. I went to the interview looking like Dale Evans. I said to myself, 'This guy is going to think I'm nuts,'" recalls Fox about her initial meeting with a seemingly stoic Nelsen. She didn't know then that Nelsen was a kindred spirit. "He told me that's what got me the job," admits Fox about her projecting confidence while clad as a cowgirl."

The former 2001 Brooks Ambassador soon became Nelsen's accomplice in on-base shenanigans to entertain the Brooks community while informing them and gaining their support for several base quality-of-life initiatives.

Nelsen's "Girl Friday" has been subsequently cast in roles that demonstrated the pair's 'out-of-the-box' thinking. Commander's call audiences have seen them star in an unusual video as belly-bopping sumo wrestlers wearing giant inflatable rubber suits, and in live-action skits in which Fox

has been the announcer-foil in Nelsen's "The Weakest Link" and "Jeopardy" game show skits. Born on "Flag Day," June 14, 1955 at San Antonio's Nix Hospital, Fox confessed, "I'm very grateful mom didn't name me Betsy (Ross)." The only child of Carl and Margie Fox, the future Air Force leader did not initially want to follow in her mother's footsteps as a federal civil servant.

"I wanted to be a TV producer," said the 1973 Incarnate Word High School graduate. Fox's interest in television production is based on her lifelong fascination with TV commercials. "I could recite any commercial jingle by heart," she quipped before spontaneously singing some classic tunes. After college, Fox ventured into show biz working for a media production house that produced training films for Church's Fried Chicken. She was a 'Jill of all trades' writing and editing scripts, and hauling equipment as a photographer's 'grip' for on-location shoots. "To this day, I can't stand the smell of chicken," clucked Fox.

Eventually, family legacy prevailed upon Fox to launch her Air Force civil service career in 1979. Her reassigned to Wright-Patterson

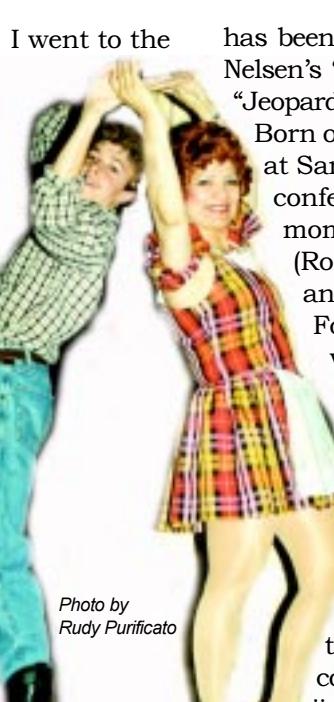


Photo by  
Rudy Purificato

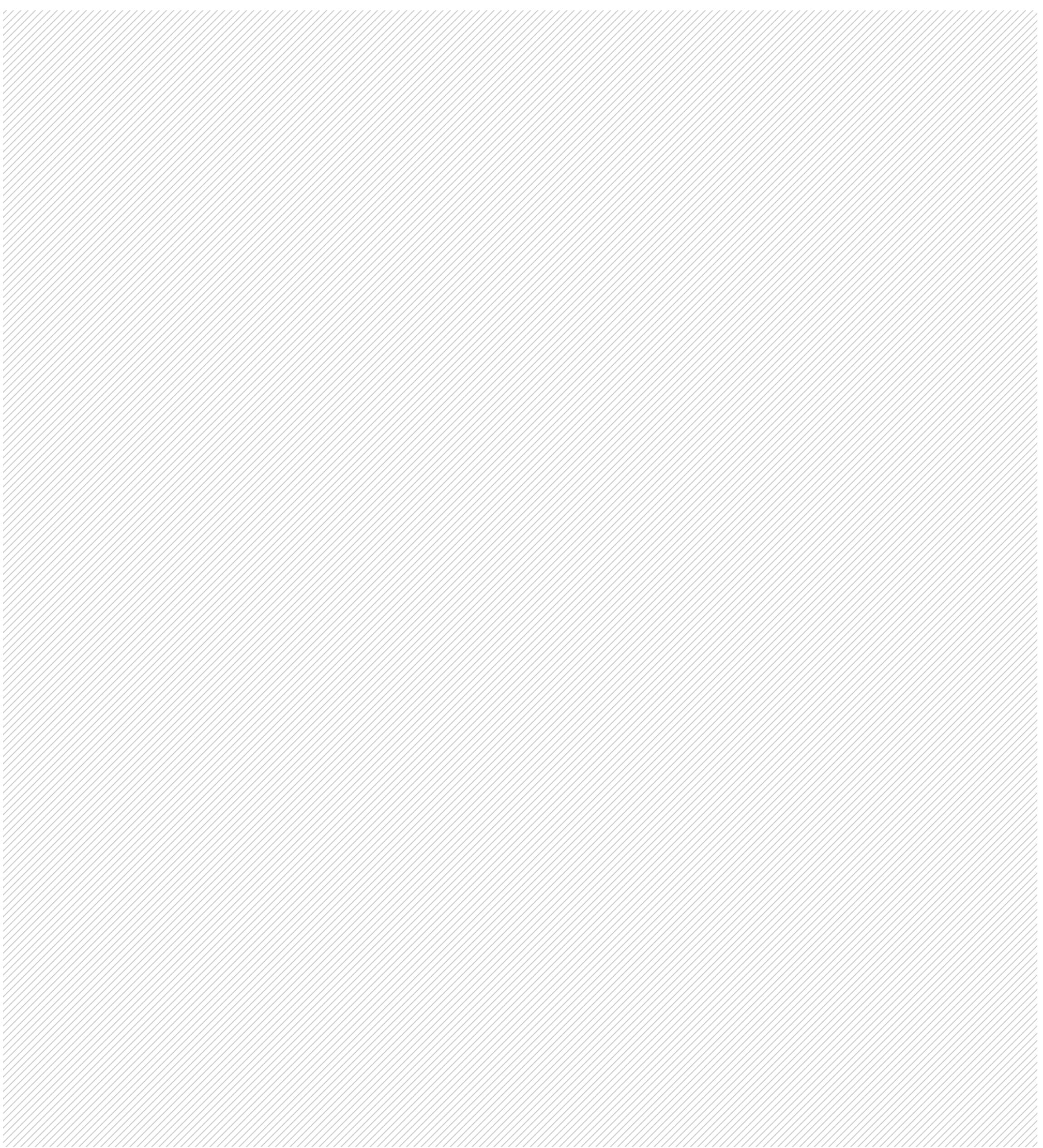
Rita Fox with her dance partner during the musical revival of "Crazy for You."

Air Force Base, Ohio, was chilling. "It was culture shock. I had never lived away from home before," she admits. Adding to the adventure was the challenge of working in a management career field nearly devoid of women. "Someone said at a meeting, 'anyone here to take the minutes.' They looked at me to take notes." She declined the unofficial stenographer job, opting instead for a career brimming with leadership challenges. While her career is rewarding, what really enriched Fox's life is theater.

Billing herself as "the second oldest chorus girl in America," Fox revels as a character on stage. Her love of musical theater also led Fox to her true love. She recently married actor Michael Duggan at the Josephine Theater where they both frequently performed.

Today, Hangar 9 is the stage for the final curtain call of the Nelsen-Fox act, prompted by the ABG change of command. What will not change is the mutual admiration and respect the twosome have for one another. "She's a person who is not afraid to tell you what others are afraid to tell you. I like people willing to take that chance," said Nelsen, who especially values Fox's opinion about his dancing. She says, "He tried to dance to meringue music in his office. It's bad!"

Rudolph.Purificato@brooks.af.mil





# BROOKS

## SPOTLIGHT

Things to do around Brooks

By Jan McMahon  
Brooks Services Marketing Office  
536-5475

### Golf Course

**Bldg. 821, 536-2636**

#### Tee for two

Learn the lifetime sport of golf with a family member, friend or coworker. The Brooks Golf Course is offering a two-for-the-price-of-one, learn to golf program Aug. 10, 17, 24 and 31. Instructions will focus on all basic aspects of the game.

In addition to weekly lessons, participants will receive special discounts in the Pro Shop and a Duffer's pack valued at \$50. This includes a practice swing stick, special ball to aid in perfecting putting, a pack of step down tees and a ditty bag containing additional tees, ball markers, repair tool and minor first aid items. Team price is \$100.

Call the Brooks Golf Course for more details.

#### Annual golf tourney

Join us on Aug. 2 for our annual tournament. The tournament will be

played using a Florida scramble with a noon shotgun start.

Cost will be \$20 for club members and \$25 for non-members. This includes cart and green fees plus a barbecue plate at the end of the tournament. Enjoy brisket, potato salad, baked beans, cole slaw and Texas toast. Trophies will be awarded for first, second and third place.

Call the golf course or Brooks Club at 536-3782 for more details.

### Brooks Club

**Bldg. 204, 536-3782**

#### Night out on the town

Second Nature will perform jazz and R & B for your dining pleasure July 13 from 6 to 11 p.m.

Dinner buffet menu includes steamed around of beef, honey glazed ham, California blend vegetables, french style green beans, roasted new potatoes, rice pilaf, apple/peach cobbler, dinner rolls and coffee, tea or water.

Cost is \$10 for members and \$12.50 for non-club members. Purchase tickets from the club staff.

### The FrameWorks

**Bldg. 1154, 536-8648/2120**

Here are some great deals in July. Find sale prices on moldings and mats that are sure to fit your pocketbook.

Save 30-70 percent on a select group of moldings and mats. There will be 50-foot and 100-foot bundles of moldings sold at a discount price during July. Make plans to stop by and select both mats and moldings to frame your favorite posters or photos.

### Sidney's

**Bldg. 714, 536-2077**

Enjoy pizza and a free movie every Wednesday starting at 5 p.m. Call to find out the week's scheduled movie. Family Movies are shown every Saturday at 1 p.m. Snacks are available.



# Brooks cop earns MVP, All-Star football honors

**By Rudy Purificato**

311th Human Systems Wing

Airman 1st Class Ronald Hennessey's "Rookie of the Year-like" performance as starting quarterback for the San Antonio Rush semi-professional football team has earned him his team's Most Valuable Player Award and selection to play in the United Professional Football League All-Star game.

Hennessey, a 311th Security Forces Squadron patrolman, will represent the UPFL's northern conference in the league's All-Star game scheduled for 4 p.m. July 20 at Loos Stadium in Addison, Texas.

"I've had a good first year, but it (winning MVP) surprised me. I give credit (for the honor) to the linemen," Hennessey said, referring to his offensive line.

The 20-year-old rookie sensation made a name for himself on the five-year-old franchise that had switched from the AA-level Texas Football League to the AAA-level UPFL during Hennessey's inaugural year. The move to a higher level as the farm club of the NFL-affiliate Texas Coyotes pitted Hennessey's talents against former Division I collegiate and NFL players.

Rush head coach Anastacio Galvan praised Hennessey's work ethic and commitment to the game.

"This kid has so much heart for the game. He's done so much for the team and played a big part in our success."

Besides serving as starting quarterback, Hennessey played other positions,

including offensive and defensive running back and safety. He was also involved in punt and kickoff returns.

"It's a lot faster at that level. The guys (players) are bigger. You really have to be an athlete," confessed Hennessey who was a high school football star in his hometown of Buffalo, Texas. Hennessey's talents as a scrambling quarterback who possesses a strong, accurate arm, helped him carry his team to the league playoffs.

The two-year Air Force veteran accomplished what he had set out to do when he made the team as a pre-season walk-on.

"I am looking to play college ball," he said, referring to his future plans after his Air Force enlistment is up in four years. A number of college coaches, who have scouted Rush games, are interested in recruiting him.

So far, Hennessey has been contacted by Southwest Oklahoma State University, McMurray State University and Sol Ross State University.

His performance at the All-Star game undoubtedly will lead to more interest from colleges who first recruited him during his high school career.

As a senior, Hennessey earned All-District and All-Region honors as a quarterback and was further recognized as one of the best Texas high school football players when he was named a Dave Campbell Texas All-Star blue chip prospect.

He initially postponed his college athletic career in favor of helping his family, subsequently joining the Air

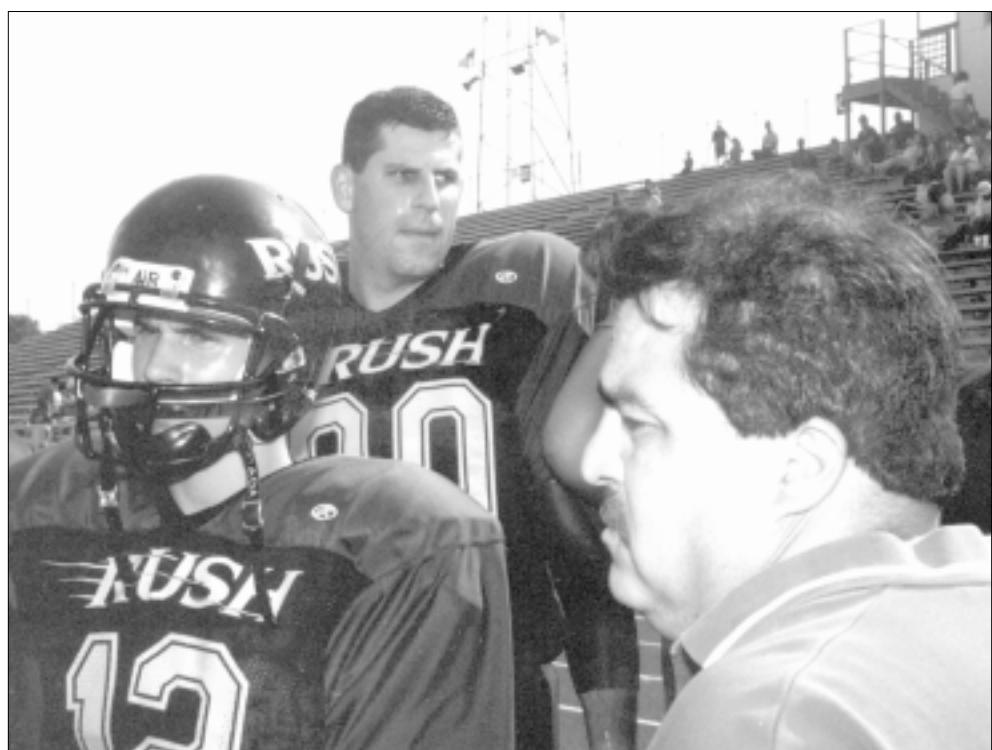


Photo by Rudy Purificato

**Ronald Hennessey (left), watches from the sidelines with teammates and former head coach Thomas Salas during a game at Harlandale Memorial Stadium.**

Force in 2000.

Now Hennessey has been given a second chance to fulfill his dream of playing college ball, and perhaps achieve his ultimate goal of getting an opportunity to play in the NFL.

"I have been told by the (league) commissioner that they are considering me for the UPFL All-Star team," Hennessey said, explaining that the squad will be composed of the top All-Stars from the league's northern and southern conferences.

To become a 'top' All-Star, Hennessey will have to elevate his game as a northern conference All-Star against southern conference All-Stars next week. He will go head-to-head with players from the Rush's archrival, the San Antonio Stampede. Hennessey helped the Rush defeat the Stampede

twice during the regular season.

Should he be selected to the UPFL All-Star squad, Hennessey will get to play against the Mexican Football League All-Stars in two games scheduled for August in San Antonio and Cancun, Mexico.

Rudolph.Purificato@brooks.af.mil

**“ I've had a good first year, but winning MVP surprised me. ”**

**Ronald Hennessey  
San Antonio Rush MVP**