



Newsline

Lieutenant colonel selects

Congratulations to Maj. **Kevin Scharff**, 366th Medical Operations Squadron and Maj. **Karen Church**, 366th Medical Group on their selections to lieutenant colonel.

Award Winner

Congratulations to Maj. **Bradford Montgomery**, 366th Services Squadron, for winning the ACC Services Field Grade Officer (IMA) of the year award.

Promotion ceremony

Enlisted promotion ceremony at the Gunfighters Club today at 3 p.m. Promotees need to be in battle dress uniform.

Change of command

The 391st Fighter Squadron change of command ceremony is May 7 11 a.m. in Hangar 201.

Safety class

The wing safety office is conducting the American Automobile Association's Driver Improvement Course May 21 at 8 a.m. This course is taught to help drivers reinforce driving skills and build skills for new drivers. The class is eight hours long and is open to all. There is a 30-seat maximum for the class. To schedule a seat contact wing safety at 828-1805.

Heritage celebrations

The Asian-Pacific American Heritage Committee is hosting various events throughout the month of May to include the Asian Pacific cake cutting ceremony May 7 at Liberty Chapel at 3 p.m. and Expo at the youth center May 14 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A passport youth event at the youth center is scheduled for May 20 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. For more information contact the military equal opportunity office at 828-2751 for more information.

Club function

The next officers' spouses' club social function will be a combined OSC/ESC & First Command scholarship reception May 11 at the Gunfighters Club. An induction ceremony for the newly elected OSC officers will start at 5:45 p.m. and the scholarship reception will begin at 6:30 p.m. Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served at the scholarship reception at a cost of \$8.75, Gunfighter club members receive a \$1 discount. Please call Mrs. Kyna Williams at 832-2503 to make reservations before Wednesday.

Finance closed

The finance office will be closed May 7 starting at 11:30 a.m.

Free ATV lessons

The 366th Fighter Wing is teaching two free ATV lessons May 26. Seats are limited to the first 16 people signed up. Times for training are given upon signing up with TSgt. Jeff Oyer at 828-1803 or Jeffrey.oyer@mountainhome.af.mil. Military members have priority, followed by Department of Defense civilians and family members. Once satisfactorily completed, each member trained receives a Specialty Vehicle Institute of America certification card.

Lounge open

Afterburners Sports Lounge, located in the community center, will resume Friday and Saturday night operations beginning May 7. Lounge opens at 5 p.m. The Afterburners All-Nighters will continue on a monthly basis. Doors open at 9 p.m. All-Nighters are free to all club members and \$5 for non-club members.



Photo by SSgt. Chris Campbell

Firefighters extinguish a fire during a live burn April 21. The burn was used as a training tool to better prepare the firefighters for aircraft fires. Col. Ted Thompson, 366th Fighter Wing vice commander and Col. Robert Lemmon, 366th Mission Support Group commander, assisted the base fire department in a formal ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open the new aircraft firepit.

Firefighters receive new training tool

By 1st Lt. Lucas Ritter
Gunfighter public affairs

The fire department here recently put out a fire, which was consuming one of the aircraft here on base April 21.

The fire was set intentionally by fire department personnel and luckily the aircraft was not an operational jet, but a mock-up built as a trainer for the base firefighters.

This training demonstration was done to showcase the realistic training capability the new 15-ton steel mock-up of an F-15C will give to fire fighters.

The new model replaces the old F-111 model that has been in use at the base fire training pit since 1984.

It offers the fire department an array of mechanisms including a working canopy that gives fire fighters the most realistic training possible.

"This new model gives our guys state-of-the-art training that is very realistic," said Mr. Kevin Staebler, base fire chief. "This type of training is invaluable and can help save lives in the event of an accident or mishap. Kudos to Larry Rodgers and the vertical shop, he and his team built the model from scratch."

The mock-up was built entirely from steel and very close to actual dimensions of an F-15C.

Given the isolated nature of the base, the fire pit here is

one of only four in the Air Force that has the capability to burn JP-8 jet fuel.

The Environmental Protection Agency monitors the pit and the fire department ensures that the site is kept within regulations.

The fire department is also building a new structural trainer.

Firefighters will be able to train in confined spaces, stairwells and even an elevator shaft. It also has two class A combustible burn rooms that allow the fire department to burn wood, paper and other household items to simulate house or building fires.

The new structure is still under going construction and should be completed in mid-May, according to the chief. "This new building is a multi-faceted structure that offers a lot of training for our fire fighters," said Chief Staebler. "We can even extract people out the elevator shaft to practice our confined space training."

It is our hope that with the aircraft mock-up, the new structural trainer and other plans that are in the works it will allow the base's fire training pit to become a regional training center.

"We would be able to host other departments from around the area to come in and use the facilities," said the chief. "It is a great place to train and a real testament to the way Gunfighters train and fight."

Commander's Hotline

This Hotline is your direct line to me.

It's your opportunity to make Mountain Home AFB a better place to live and work.

I review every response to Hotline questions, but functional experts prepare most responses.

If possible, you should first contact the organization responsible for the problem or function.

Your first sergeants, commanders and agency chiefs want to help, so please let them try.

If you do not know how to proceed or if you have already tried your chain of command, then do not hesitate to contact the Hotline at 828-6262 or CommandersHotline@mountainhome.af.mil.

Not all Hotlines are published, but if you leave your name and phone number or e-mail address, I will make sure you get a reply.



Col. Hansen

Col. Blair Hansen
366th Fighter Wing commander

Last DUI:

(As of noon Thursday)

366th Medical Support Squadron

Days without a DUI:

10

AADD made 22 saves in April, 95 in
2004

Old Glory — More than meets the eye

By Col. Helen Horn-Kingery
366th Medical Group commander

Have you every thought about why we use the American flag in so many of our daily events?

From promotions to retirements, funerals to retreats, changes of commands and even the beginning of a movie at the base theater, we play the national anthem and pay tribute to the American flag.

Someone not familiar with the military might ask, why such devotion to the flag?

I hope that all Airmen could proudly explain that the devotion is not to the flag itself, but what the American flag symbolizes in our lives and gives us the reason to pay our respects to it in our significant daily events.

I have often wondered what it would be like to live in a country where we did not have that freedom, or even what it would be like to have that privilege taken from us, even temporarily. That is when I think about Mr. Mike Christian.

Mr. Mike Christian was born in a small town near Selma, Alabama. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the age of seventeen and later earned his commission. He came from a meager upbringing and in fact didn't own a pair of shoes until he was thirteen.

I'd venture to guess, however, that he was raised with a strong set of core values.

He had a deep appreciation for the opportunities in America and our military and the ability for people to work hard and succeed. He worked hard and became a naval aviator.

In 1967, he was shot down and captured in Vietnam.

He spent many years in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton", a prisoner of war camp.

In 1971, the North Vietnamese started changing the way POWs were treated.

They moved POWs from isolation cells to large rooms with as many as 30-40 men to a room.

This was a welcomed change. Prisoner uniforms were a blue short-sleeve-shirt, pajama-like trousers and rubber sandals.

About the same time, the prison guards began allowing prisoners to receive some packages from home containing simple clothing articles and the like.

Mr. Christian got pieces of cloth, in both white and red. He made himself a bamboo needle and over a period of several months, he sewed an American flag on the inside of his shirt.

He shared this with his fellow prisoners and every afternoon he would hang his shirt up and they would all say the pledge of allegiance.

This may not seem like a big deal, but when you are being held in captivity, it was an enormous boost to morale.

Unfortunately, the guards eventually discovered his flag and took him out of the cell and physically beat him for several hours within hearing distance of his cellmates.

When they returned him to the cell, he was severely beaten with his eyes nearly swollen shut like a boxer after a fight. His comrades tried to comfort him.

As night set in and they settled down to sleep, Mr. Christian was seen sitting in the corner of the cell peering through his swollen eyes as he started sewing an American flag inside his "new" jacket. I don't know about you, but I find Mike Christian an inspiration.

Duty, honor, country.

Let us not forget those who with their courage, sacrifice and lives made those words live for many.

The next time you listen to our national anthem and look at the flag, remember what it stands for and the Mike Christians of the world.

Flag etiquette:

Military in uniform, indoors: stand at attention and face the flag if it is present, otherwise, face the music. You do not salute unless under arms.

Military in uniform, outdoors: stand at attention; face the flag (or band if flag isn't visible) and salute. If the music is recorded and no flag is visible, face front and salute.

Military in civilian or athletic clothes: stand at attention; face the flag (or band if flag not visible). Hold your right hand over your heart. Maintain until the last note of music.

Civilians: face the flag and hold your right hand over your heart. Maintain this position until the last note of music.



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Coverage: Coverage of upcoming events should be arranged in advance by calling the public affairs office at 828-6800 or by sending an electronic message to pa.news@mountainhome.af.mil.

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Welcome to Gunfighter
Country — home of a
winning attitude!



Deck 'em up — Annual Gunfighter winners



Air Combat Command Awards 18



12th Air Force 3

Air Guard helps test stackable cargo pallets

By 2nd Lt. Anthony Vincelli
124th Wing public affairs officer

As part of an ongoing Air Expeditionary Force Battlelab initiative, a team of Air Force personnel tested a new bi-level aircraft loading system aboard an Idaho Air National Guard C-130 at Gowen Field April 22.

The AEF Battlelab, a think tank for new and innovative ideas, made the 50-mile trip to Gowen Field to test its new system as part of an ongoing process to assess its fitness for use in the field.

The bi-level loading system works by taking existing pallets already used by the Air Force and attaching a frame and vertical rails to make a second tier. The base of the unit is designed to hold up to 6,000 pounds of equipment while the upper pallet can hold up to 3,000 pounds.

The system is very simple yet innovative because it would dramatically increase the efficiency of airlift missions such as the Air Expeditionary Force rotations into the regions of southwest asia, said MSgt. Forrest Wood, BALS project officer from the AEFB.

MSgt. Wood, a loadmaster by profession, said the beauty of the system is that it will be able to use the upper tier of cargo aircraft that was previously unused.

"This system will allow the Air Force to

fill its airlifters with more equipment, which will result in having to use fewer planes to haul the same amount of cargo," MSgt. Wood said.

These new stackable pallets are an innovation to be sure, but everyone involved with the project seems to say the same thing: why wasn't this thought of sooner? According to Mr. Norman Maynard, program manager for the design team from the Air Force Flight Test Center Instrumentation Division based at Edwards AFB, Calif. who designed and constructed the system, the idea was first theorized in the 1970s, but it was never created.

"Nobody could get it to work," Mr. Maynard said.

This latest initiative, however, does work. The battlelab has already completed an intense round of dynamic testing at Robins Air Force Base, Ga. and passed with flying colors.

"We ran this system through a number of worst-case scenarios, including crashes, uneven loading and even hanging the pallets upside-down. It seems to handle whatever we throw at it," Mr. Maynard said.

Now in the static test phase, the team is in the process of loading and unloading the system into cargo aircraft to ensure they fit into the aircraft correctly. They have completed testing on the C-141 and C-17 and their visit to Gowen Field marks the first test on the C-130. The tests on all three



Photo by Mr. James Diefenderfer

MSgt. Forrest Wood from the AEF Battlelab shows the space saving by using the bi-level airlift loading system. BALS only takes one pallet position as opposed to the two pallet positions required to floor load the same equipment.

have proven successful. They visited Gowen Field because its proximity to the battlelab. Mr. Maynard and other members of the BALS/AEF Battlelab design team say this initiative has been an exercise in teamwork among the guard, active duty and Air Force civilians.

"This entire project was conceived, designed and patented by the Air Force. It is

a totally 'blue' project," Mr. Maynard said.

If approved for use in the field, Mr. Maynard says the system will be relatively inexpensive — between \$8,000 and \$10,000 apiece.

"If all continues to go well and we get the support we need from Air Force leadership, we may see these in the field in less than a year," Mr. Maynard said.

Officials discuss new civilian system in open letter

By Mr. Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

A letter signed by the Department of Defense leaders asks defense department civilian employees to be patient as teams work to make the new National Security Personnel System a reality.

The April 1 letter, signed by Mr. David Chu, undersecretary for personnel and readiness, and Navy Secretary, Gordon England, stresses that the defense department sees the new personnel system as a combined effort.

The system, passed as part of the fiscal-year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, allows defense department officials to transform the civilian personnel system to make it more agile and responsive.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the new sys-

tem would make it easier for the department to make new hires and keep highly skilled employees.

It also would allow the department to move workers to shortage specialties as national security concerns change, he said.

In the letter, Mr. Chu and Secretary England state, "We are determined to take the time necessary to do the job right."

Taking time will allow the department to consult with employees, managers and unions, a department spokeswoman said. The letter encourages people interested in the system to present their thoughts, ideas, views and concerns. Department officials are also working with other government agencies as they develop the new system.

They are consulting with people at the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Management and Budget and the Government Accounting Office as the new system takes shape. They are also taking lessons from the

Department of Homeland Security, which built its own personnel system after it was formed last year.

Five teams within the defense department are looking at process, personnel, programs, requirements and communications, officials said.

A sixth team will draw recommendations from these five together in one package. That proposal is scheduled to be presented to Secretary Rumsfeld and other senior leaders in April. Once approved, senior leaders will work with Congress on implementing the system.

Mr. Chu and Secretary England said that the system still is being formed, and few details about how the system would work are available because there is no system yet.

Concepts and proposals will change over time and department leaders will do their best to keep employees informed, they said. Information is available on the defense department and DefendAmerica Web sites, the Pentagon Channel and local commanders'.

Gunfighters to receive Pentagon channel, more defense news

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, public affairs is expanding access to The Pentagon Channel to all U.S. department of defense installations, and subsequently, to local cable providers and anyone wishing to receive TPC via satellite throughout the United States. The goal of the expansion is to make TPC available for distribution on all stateside commander's access channels.

Providing TPC service to local cable providers will also reach audiences who otherwise wouldn't have access, including military and civilian employees and their family members who do not live on a Depart-

ment of Defense installation, national guard and reserve members and their families, veterans, military retirees and the extended families of those who are deployed overseas.

TPC is a daily television program service of The Pentagon cable system for building employees and for service members stationed overseas.

Originating in the Department of Defense newscenter in Alexandria, Va., TPC features the flagship television news programs from each of the military services and the daily news and information products of the defense department newscenter and the

American Forces Network weather center, as well as other internal information television products from across the department of defense. In addition, TPC carries live defense news briefings and other news events originating in The Pentagon and Baghdad. The TPC expansion is phased with the first phase is to begin broadcasting TPC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to the existing audience.

The next phase to provide military installations the tools needed to receive TPC on their installation cable system. The official TPC launch is scheduled for May in conjunction with military appreciation month.

During the summer, a campaign will be launched to introduce TPC to off-base cable providers throughout the nation so that the wider audience can have access to the same defense news and information.

OSD-PA is leasing connectivity from Alexandria, and satellite capacity through the Defense Information Services Agency for transmission of TPC and reception of the TPC service by satellite dishes between 80 and 120 centimeters in size.

The TPC service will not be encoded or encrypted; therefore, an off-the-shelf digital satellite receiver along with the correct satellite dish can receive TPC. (AFPN)

Theater hosts *Letters from the Front*

By Mr. Ron Dillon
366th Services Squadron

The base community can see *Letters From the Front: WWII* at the base theater May 8 at 7 p.m. Known as "The World's Most Decorated Play," the show has been touring the United States and overseas military installations since 1991. The American themes have always been appreciated by military audiences, but after the events of September 11, 2001, the story depicted in the play took on added significance.

"We are often asked about the more profound aspects of our show and so I think most people are surprised by how entertaining *Letters From the Front: WWII* is — and how funny," said Ms. Marsha Roberts, the show's producer. "The biggest misconception is that the play is only about reading war correspondence, when in fact the letters are really the centerpiece of a two-hour 'dramedy' revolving around two very dynamic characters. Mr. Bob Curren's character, radio comedy star Johnny Chastain, cracks up audiences throughout the show. Ms. Bobbi Kravis plays Katharine Hartgrove, a war mom everybody

can relate to.

"There's also music and even a lively dance number. The results are poignant, funny, and moving — a terrific night of theater."

"By interweaving actual letters written from both the war and home fronts, the creators invite the audience to take a tear-jerking, hand-clapping, mind-blowing, two-hour stroll through history," said Ms. Michelle Pinkard. Her review for the Shreveport Times referred to the play as a 'Broadway-style production'

"We realize that our show is a powerful morale-building tool - a responsibility we take very seriously," says Ms. Roberts. "With so many Airmen deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and other difficult areas, obviously emotions on the home front are running high. Many of our audience members don't know whether or not their loved ones are safe. Without exception they tell us after seeing the show that the play gave them hope and comfort - and a good laugh - which might be the most important thing we do."

The story of *Letters From The Front: WWII* is told through actual war correspondence written by everyday Americans in major conflicts going back to the Revolutionary War.

"Hearing how other generations were able to maintain their vision of freedom, their sense of dignity and their love not only for family and friends, but for their fellow Americans is what gives people hope," states writer and director Mr. Robert Rector. "What it basically says is: we went through the worst of times and we not only survived, we grew in purpose and in strength."

Mr. Bob Curren returns for a fourth season this year.

"Obviously there are echoes of what's happening in the world right now in the words and themes of the play," said Mr. Curren. "The show really points out the sacrifices of the families and I think, coupled with what's going on in hot spots around the globe, it has a greater impact than ever. We just want the troops who are in places like Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan, and those who are getting ready to go, to know how much we're behind them. And, the families, well, we're staying here to bring a great show to them - to let them know how much they are appreciated - and hopefully leave them feeling better all the way around."

The show is suitable for middle school ages and up. Those wishing to sample authentic war letters or learn more about this extraordinary play, can do so on the Internet at www.letters-from-the-front.com.

Showing affection: Key to military families, community

Commentary by TSgt. Jane Terrell
Gunfighter Military Equal Opportunity office

When I was in basic training, one thing I looked forward to was free time.

As soon as we were allowed to socialize, the instructors started in with reminders about "public displays of affection". If you danced there were specific guidelines about how close you were allowed to be others while dancing. After coming from a parochial school - it was nothing new to me. The emphasis at basic military training school is on professional behavior because we are representatives to our country and the Air Force. So why bring this

up now? People may not realize that one of our duties in the Military Equal Opportunity office is to keep a pulse on the climate.

We work with other agencies on base and keep our eyes and ears alert to things that could hurt the morale and welfare of the Gunfighters.

It was brought to our attention recently that an Senior NCO stopped an Airman at the child development center and told them they could not kiss their child good-bye because this was considered PDA.

This is not an inappropriate form of PDA.

Let me repeat: This is not an inappropriate form of PDA. In today's world climate, there is nothing more important than for our gunfighters to maintain healthy happy family

ties. In order to accomplish a "bombs-on-target" mission people must be at the top of their game. Living the core values is essential to who we are and what we do. Taking care of your family is part of that.

I cannot imagine how morale would be affected if Gunfighters stepped off the plane from deployment and had to just shake hands with their children and spouses. I spoke with a representative at BMTS about the issue. He emphatically told me that the intent behind PDA emphasis is not in any form intended for children. Military children lead lives vastly different from their civilian counter-parts. That doesn't mean they should lack the attention and love they deserve. We are a community of military families. The emphasis here is on family.

Library offers Chief of Staff of Air Force reading list

By Mr. Ron Dillon
366th Services Squadron

The Mountain Home AFB library staff continues to add services; recently they added a new book and video review program. Now they have added a reading list from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. John Jumper.

This program established a suggested list of books that all active-duty Air Force personnel should read.

Gen. John Jumper personally reviews each book that goes on the reading list. Thoughtful discussion and debate over the various works is encouraged.

To help facilitate this, the base library Web site has a section that connects to a wealth of information is readily available about each book. Posted is a synopsis of each book, an overview of the author and comments about the book.

There is also a chat room in which anonymous comments about the book can be

posted and discussed.

"We are constantly striving to enhance our library and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force reading list will expose many readers to some very powerful works," said librarian Mr. Dave Patterson. "Gen. Jumper wants the Air Force to be well-read and in sync with each other as much as possible. We also have an excellent movie collection, and we are currently offering our first-term airmen a free, six-month membership. This is an incredibly affordable way to watch a lot of great films."

In addition to the movie collection, the library also houses more than 30,000 books, 475 musical CDs and hundreds of audio books, tapes and CDs. The library also has a Web site on the local area network at: <http://library.mountainhome.accqolnet.org/library>.

To view the site, a library card is needed and is available for free at the library.

There is a "what's new" icon at the site that offers library information in an ongoing basis.

Assistance Fund helps those in need

By A1C Amy Poseley
366th Contracting Squadron

(Editor's note: The campaign to raise funds for these organizations has collected more than \$24,600. This figure is 43.4 percent of the wing goal of \$56,594. The campaign ends May 14).

Many people cannot quite afford the brand new car they want or a brand new house in a really nice neighborhood. Imagine being someone who is unable to afford even a cheap car, or who lives in a small apartment knowing that they cannot even afford to live in a mediocre house.

These are people that the Air Force Assistance Fund helps. A family who needs a vehicle but can't afford it or a single parent that needs a little help putting food on the table. Sometimes the unthinkable happens and a loved one passes away unexpectedly. In these situations the Air Force Aid Society has pitched in and helped out.

Three other means of help through the Air Force Assistance Fund are the Air Force Village Indigent Widows' Fund. The General and Mrs. Curtis E.

LeMay Foundation and the Air Force Enlisted Foundation. The village helps with financial support and housing for those widows or widowers of Air Force officers. Also These groups help Air Force members in need and ensure members are taken care of with dignity and respect.

All four of these organizations help numerous people each day. Some may not think that they would ever need the assistance but no one knows what could happen. Just think of the fact that tomorrow may hold something totally different than what people expect and that they might be the ones in need of help and support. These organizations are a good way for members to give back what, if any help, has ever been given to them.

Many people in the Air Force talk about helping out and taking care of others, but without members helping these organizations they cannot continue to help those in need.

The willingness of members to help each other shows the bond Gunfighters have. Where there is a bond, there is strength.

The more members help each other the stronger the Air Force will be.

Stack'em high, stack'em deep



Photos by SSgt Kathy Myles

Members of the 366th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron quick fix team guide pallets into place for inspection during the 04-01 Sharpshooter exercise April 28.



A1C Gregory Stewart, 366th Logistic Readiness Squadron, tightens the straps on pallets before they are loaded.



Right: SSgt. Joseph Alvarez, 366th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, checks for discrepancies on the bottom of a pallet during the Sharpshooter 04-01 exercise.