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Clouds, rain signal brightest day of year

By *Tech. Sgt. Collen A. Roundtree*
Wing Public Affairs

San Antonio wasn't warm and it wasn't sunny March 3rd. In fact, it was cloudy and it rained most of the day. For 6-year-old Biannca Recoder, this was the brightest day of the year. Today she got to leave school a little early to see her Dad come home from the war.

"42 minutes left," Biannca's brother, Elijah, said. He checked how many minutes were left to wait often. Elijah and Biannca looked up the flight arrival time posted on display screens in Terminal 2 at San Antonio International Airport more than twice.

"I think I see him," Biannca said to her aunts and her dad's camouflaged co-workers. Each time she said it her face lit up with a huge smile. Each time, the smile dimmed only a little when it wasn't him.

The third time there was no thinking. "I see him! There he his!" she shouted while the uniformed members of her dad's Air Force Reserve unit unfurled a banner featuring the Alamo Wing logo.

Staff Sgt. Carlos Recoder really was headed down the ramp towards Biannca and Elijah this time. Sergeant Recoder's wife, Cynthia, and his 12-year-old daughter, Mercedes, were walking with him.

Sergeant Recoder was one of four vehicle operators from the 433rd Logistics Readiness Squadron to return from a six-month deployment

within the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility that day.

Airport security now allows two family members through the security checkpoint to meet military members returning home from deployments at their arrival gate.

Staff Sgt. Frank Tellez, another returning LRS driver, said it was a great feeling to be able to see his family the moment he stepped into the airport.

The five-member team was activated in support of the Global War on Terror and deployed in August to serve as vehicle operators and dispatchers at a base formerly owned by the Soviet Union.

Co-workers, command staff and local news media were on hand to welcome everyone home. There were hugs, handshakes and for Staff Sgt. Timothy Dziak, another member of the returning team, there were a few cans of his favorite soda.

Sergeant Dziak is known by his co-workers to have what some might call and addiction for a certain soft drink. Versions of many American soft drinks are available at deployed locations but those who are die-hard



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Collen Roundtree
 Biannca Recoder holds up a sign as she and her brother, Elijah, right, wait with other family and unit members for her dad Staff Sgt. Frank Recoder, from the 433rd LRS, to return from his six-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

fans insist they don't taste quite the same.

Biannca's dad feels the same way about food and said cooks there are nothing compared to the cooks found in San Antonio.

"I want to go out to get something to eat and then catch up on some sleep," said Sergeant Recoder to local television news reporters who asked what he wanted to do first now that he was home.

Biannca didn't say anything. She didn't have to. She just smiled like it was the brightest day of the year, despite the clouds. 

Alamo members fly close support

Col. John C. Fobian

— Commander, 433rd Airlift Wing

We all know the basic concept of being each other's wingman.



We, as wingmen, fly close support for those around us. We take care of each other and try our best to be there when someone we know needs help. It is easy to look out for signs of trouble in the lives of people we know well. But, being a good wingman isn't always about looking for trouble. It can also be watching for opportunities and available benefits that are new or not known and passing the information on.

Since the need for Reserve participation in current operations has increased, many new benefits are available and many existing benefits are open to reservists for the first time. Take a look at the ones listed here and pass on the contact information to those around you who might gain from them. Many of them are designed to relieve specific stresses and help avoid problems before they start.

Child Care

Child Care Aware is a new program that offers cost reduction and locator service for families of deployed reservists who do not live near a military installation.

To take part in the program or to get more information, a family member can apply through the association on the operation's Web site, <http://www.childcareaware.org/en/operationchildcare/>, or by calling toll-free at (800) 424-2246. A program for Reserve families who are serving on active duty at home station is also about to launch through Child Care Aware.

Money/Credit

Due to the recent loss of information by Bank of America, the bank is offering a free credit report and a fraud alert service to military members. To take advantage of this, Government Travel Card holders can call (800) 493-8444 for more information about the loss of information and the free credit report and fraud alert services.

Take the information and pass it on. When you find other benefits, be they from civilian or federal groups, think about whom might need to know.

Alamo Wing

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Public Affairs Staff

Col. John C. FobianWing Commander
Maj. Elena T. MilfordChief, Public Affairs
1st Lt. Bruce R. Hill, Jr.Deputy Chief (ART)
Tech. Sgt. Collen Roundtree Editor (ART)
Staff Sgt. Kat A. Bailey.....NCOIC
Senior Airman Jonathan D. SimmonsAssistant Editor
Senior Airman Bethaney A. Watson.....Public Affairs Assistant
Senior Airman Karl Smith.....Information Management Assistant
Senior Airman Jesse Hernandez.....Information Management Assistant
Ms. Elsa M. Martinez.....Public Affairs Specialist (CIV)



Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Lyle E. "Von" Seggern
433rd Chaplain Section

"Can You Hear Me Now?"

"Seek the Lord while He may be found;
call on Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake their way
and the evil person their thoughts.
Let every person turn to the Lord,
and He will have mercy on them,
and to our God,
for He will freely pardon."

Isaiah 55

It is repeated time and time again in that commercial we all probably have seen once or twice: "Can you hear me now? Good." We can't deny the importance of "good" communication. It is mission critical.

I believe communication with the Lord is "mission critical". Prayer is powerful. God is near so please talk to Him about everything. He "can hear you now!" He also is kind and merciful and "can help you now!" Stop and say that prayer you know you should. Good!

433rd Airlift Wing Religious Services

Protestant worship and Catholic Mass are held each UTA Sunday. Service times vary and current schedules will be e-mailed during each UTA or.910. The 433rd Chaplain staff can be reached at 925-3556 or by e-mail at 433AW.HC@lackland.af.mil. Services are conducted in the Chaplain Section in the upper room of building 910.

Military personnel flight, electronic age merge

By Staff Sgt. Kat Bailey

Wing Public Affairs

Back in the electronic stone age of 1988, when I first entered the Army, if you needed to make changes to your personnel records, you had to find the original document you stashed in the trunk of your car, take a copy to the orderly room and pray it was routed correctly to the records section at the personnel center. Or, you could find a ride, take it there yourself, wait in line for 30 minutes, talk to the clerk who couldn't find your folder, convince them to look for it in the file drawer under "Dailey"...you get the picture.



Today's highly advanced electronic capabilities make such things effortless. To conduct personnel business online, I just log on to the Air Force Personnel Center secure website (AFPCSecure) and click my way to the virtual Military Personnel Flight (vMPF).

Logging onto secure websites for me is always a hassle because I'm

password-challenged. I simply cannot remember all the different user IDs and passwords for today's virtual world. AFPCSecure has a solution – if you've forgotten your password, AFPCSecure has a secure and straightforward way to create a new one.

If you haven't logged on in the past 120 days, you can recreate your account using your social security number (that I can remember) and your pay date (oh, drat). Be forewarned – if you're prior service or have had a break in service, your pay date is not the one you've always used in the past. I had to look mine up on my LES which was oh, so conveniently located online at the secure myPay website (www.dfas.mil).

vMPF allows Airmen to view their duty history, reenlistment eligibility, awards and decorations, complete accrual travel vouchers, conduct a records review and more. It also lists any suspenses due or past due and contains helpful links to common applications like the vRED, or virtual Record of Emergency Data Briefing.

vRED, which replaces mandatory DD Form 93 and is required by law, maintains the contact information for

your next of kin should anything happen to you on duty or deployment. Each Airman is responsible for keeping their vRED updated, at least annually.

As I browsed through my vRED recently, I realized my last update was August 2003. Since then, my mother married, changed her name and moved. Unfortunately, her address is in my address book at home. However, vMPF has an easy fix accessible through your home computer. If you have trouble logging on, the toll-free phone number is listed at the bottom of the page. The control desk operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, excluding federal holidays (I know; I've called).

vMPF is an incredible tool for Airmen today. So much time is saved with a simple click of a mouse to access your personal information. You, too, can be dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century. Amazingly, I have no scars to show and no horror stories to tell. vMPF was so easy to use I might actually go back and check my Point Credit Summary.

Hey, it could happen... if I can just remember my password. 🏠

OPSEC awareness, reporting terrorist activity off-base

It is not illegal to belong to a group whose members have committed acts of terror. It is illegal to commit, conspire or aid in committing criminal acts. It is not what is said or thought. Actions define terrorists.

Because of what terrorists do and the dangers they impose, we are potential targets everywhere we go, which is why it is important to consider OPSEC practices off-base as well as on-base. Understand the threat. Be aware of your surroundings and practice common-sense measures to ensure security when off-base.

Consider the following:

- ◆ Call 911 for life-threatening

emergencies only.

- ◆ Call your police non-emergency number to report any behavior or event that seems to be outside the norm or is frightening but does not immediately endanger lives or property.

- ◆ Call the local FBI field office or find one at www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/info.htm or check inside the front cover of your local phone book

- ◆ Remain calm and provide the following information: Your name and address; a brief description of the event - what happened, when, where and who was involved; description of the suspect: sex, race, age, height,

weight, hair color, clothing, distinctive characteristics such as beard, mustache, scars or accent; description of the vehicle involved: color, make, model, year, license plate and special features such as stickers, dents or decals; where you think the suspicious person(s) may have gone.

Be proactive and take local emergency training. Join or form a neighborhood watch program. Take Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training.

For more information contact a unit OPSEC program manager, or wing OPSEC office at 5-7080.

Government travel card information lost

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — About 900,000 Defense Department employees may be affected by Bank of America's loss and the possible compromise of government travel card (GTC) information, Pentagon officials said Feb. 25.

The General Services Administration and Bank of America notified DOD officials that "SmartPay" travel cards are affected. Officials said Bank of America has been monitoring the affected accounts, and there has been no evidence of fraud or misuse of the accounts.

Bank of America officials are sending letters to affected employees.

"Information regarding travel card program accounts for individual cardholders has been lost, and it is possible that that information has been compromised, though we don't believe that that is the case," said Teresa McKay, the Defense Department's deputy chief financial officer.

Secret Service agents are conducting the investigation, with help from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service. Officials said that although there has been no evidence of criminal activity, release of details on the circumstances of the loss could jeopardize the investigation.

"Indications right now are that it is an accidental event," Ms. McKay said. "The bank has been monitoring the accounts involved from the onset, and to date there has been no indication of fraudulent activity."

The information is personal cardholder information — names, Social Security numbers, addresses and account numbers — on magnetic tape. The loss occurred in late December. GSA officials notified DOD on Jan. 19. Ms. McKay said the delay was necessary to protect the integrity of the investigation.

"The bank is in the process of notifying cardholders of the situation," she said. "They will be given a special customer service number that has

been set up by the bank specifically for this purpose. If (cardholders) have any questions, they can contact the bank. If they would like, they may request that the bank cancel the card and reissue a card to them."

Ms. McKay said that consumers should always keep an eye on any credit accounts they have.

"It's always prudent for any cardholder to monitor their monthly statements (and) dispute any charges they may question, and also it's important for all of us to get a credit report at least once a year and look at the content of that report," she said.

Bank of America has set up a hotline for those affected. The number is (800) 493-8444. Cardholders who notice irregularities in their accounts should call the Bank of America at the number printed on the back of their cards, Ms. McKay said.

"If you are an affected cardholder, you may contact Bank of America for information on obtaining a free credit report," she said. 🏠

Recent Bank of America e-mail hoax

Although no connection between this e-mail hoax shown to the right and the above story has been announced, Government Travel Card holders are advised to watch their GTC account statements as they would any other credit account.

Many scams are circulating on the internet and through the telephone. Always remember banks will never ask for your account numbers to verify an account. They have that information already and have no need to ask.

For more information about safeguarding credit and protection from credit and identity scams, log on to the Federal Trade Commission web page at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm>.

Joe Snuffy Senior Airman AFSPC

From: Bank of America Corporation [support_num_679118099@bankofamerica.com]

Sent: Monday, March 14, 2005 10:38 AM

To: joe.snuffy@somebase.af.mil

Subject: BANK OF AMERICA - CONFIRM YOUR DETAILS TO AVOID SERVICE CANCELLATION

 **Higher Standards**

Dear client of the Bank of America

Technical services of the Bank of America are carrying out a planned software upgrade. We earnestly ask you to visit the following link to start the procedure of confirmation of customers' data.

<http://www.bankofamerica.com/confirm.cgi?section=confirmpage&update=&cookiecheck=yes&destination=rba/confirm>

We present our apologies and thank you for co-operating. Please do not answer to this email – follow the instruction given above. This instruction has been sent to all bank customers and is obligatory to follow.

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Teen driver today, team mate tomorrow

By Tech. Sgt. James P. Levi

— 433rd Logistics Readiness Squadron

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of teen fatalities accounting for 44 percent of all teen deaths according to the National Safety Council's January 2005 newsletter.

Why would I be writing a Drivers Safety briefing about teenagers when most of us are way past our teen years? The fact remains that there are teen drivers all around us.

We have seen on television and read in the local papers about teens losing their lives in accidents that could have been avoided. Most of us have children who are teens or young adults. We all have to be aware of them on the roads. Two out of five deaths among U.S. teens are the result of major crashes.

So what does this have to do with us as military members and our own driving habits? It is going to make us drive with a lot more vigilance. Defensive driving is not just a class we take to get out of our last speeding ticket. Consider this:

- Teenagers represented 10 percent of the U.S. population in 2000 and accounted for 14 percent of all motor vehicle-related deaths (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety – *Fatality Facts, Teenagers 2002*).

This is something we have to beware of. Driving the streets is dangerous. Getting to work safely becomes more of a challenge. Remembering that they are very young and inexperienced is the key. Here are some risk factors to think about:

- Teens are more likely than older drivers to underestimate the dangers in hazardous situations, and they have less experience coping with

such situations (Article by Jonah, B A 1987 *Alcohol Drugs and Driving*).

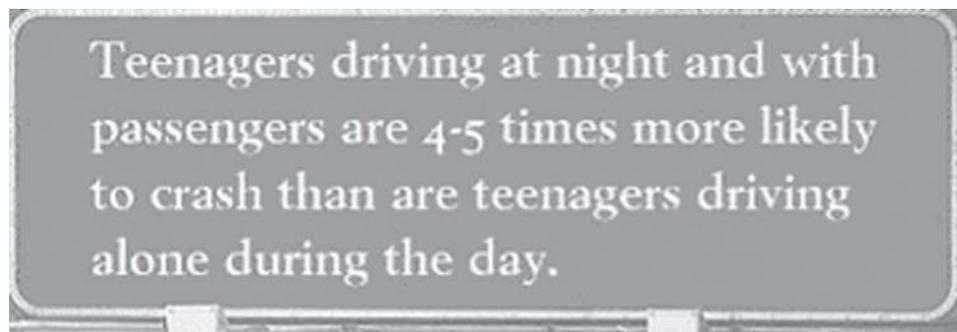
- Teens are more likely than older drivers to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, ride with an intoxicated driver, and drive after using alcohol or drugs. (Jonah 1987).

- Compared to other age groups, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use. In 2001, 14 percent of high school students reported they rarely or never wear seat belts when riding with

S A 2001, *Trends and Sub Group Differences and Transportation Related Risk and Safety Behaviors Among High School Students*).

- In 2002, among teen drivers who were killed in motor vehicle crashes after drinking and driving, 77 percent were unrestrained (NHTS 2003).

- In 2001, 43 percent of the teen motor vehicle deaths occurred between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. (IIHS 2003).



someone else (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration, the risk of being involved in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens than for drivers who are older (IIHS 2000).

- In 2002, 29 percent of drivers ages 15 to 20 who died in motor vehicle crashes had been drinking alcohol (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – *Traffic Safety Facts 2002: Young Drivers 2003*).

- Analysis of data from 1991–1997 found that, consistently, more than one in three teens reported they had ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol in the past month. One in six reported having driven after drinking alcohol within the same one-month time period (Article by Everett,

- In 2002, among teen drivers who were killed in motor vehicle crashes after drinking and driving, 77% were unrestrained (NHTSA 2003).

I am asking all of us to become more aware of our driving surroundings. Some of these teens may be our children and some may even become Airmen and drive in with us on the UTA weekends. As noncommissioned officers, we set the example for young troops to follow. 🇺🇸



90,000 dirty deeds done dirt cheap

By Staff Sgt. Kat Bailey

Wing Public Affairs

The biodegradable sand bags protecting the tents in the tent city where Col. Delbert Lewis lives, work as designed. The bags degraded and left what Colonel Lewis describes as, “a worthless pile of eroding sand.”

Currently deployed as the airfield commander at Baghdad International Airport, Colonel Lewis, 433rd Operations Group commander, is charged with protecting the most valuable asset at BIA, the people in his command. To do that, the sandbags needed to be replaced.

Colonel Lewis researched contracting the job. He found it would cost over \$90,000 at a dollar a bag and take at least six months because the contractor couldn't find reliable workers.

“I couldn't wait that long much less pay that price,” Colonel Lewis said. “So, I did a very unpopular thing. I asked our base populace to form daily details to get the job done. At first there was a lot of moaning and groaning.”

All that grumbling isn't surprising. After all, it's hard work filling over 90,000 sandbags.

Colonel Lewis isn't above getting a little dirty himself to show the importance of what many consider a menial task. He was one of the first bag fillers, claiming, “Even the ‘old man’ can do an afternoon of yard work.”

It took more than an afternoon. It was a full week of 8 and 9-hour shifts for the 60-person detail to fill and replace degrading bags.

The importance was soon made clear.

“A couple of days after the last bags were placed, a 122mm rocket hit a quarter mile from the Tent City project,” Colonel Lewis said. “Several people were hurt. One was almost killed and may still not make it. Analysis of the attack revealed this guy was in quarters unprotected by sandbags. Some of the folks who grumbled at first have since told me it's a good thing we replaced the bags.” 🏠

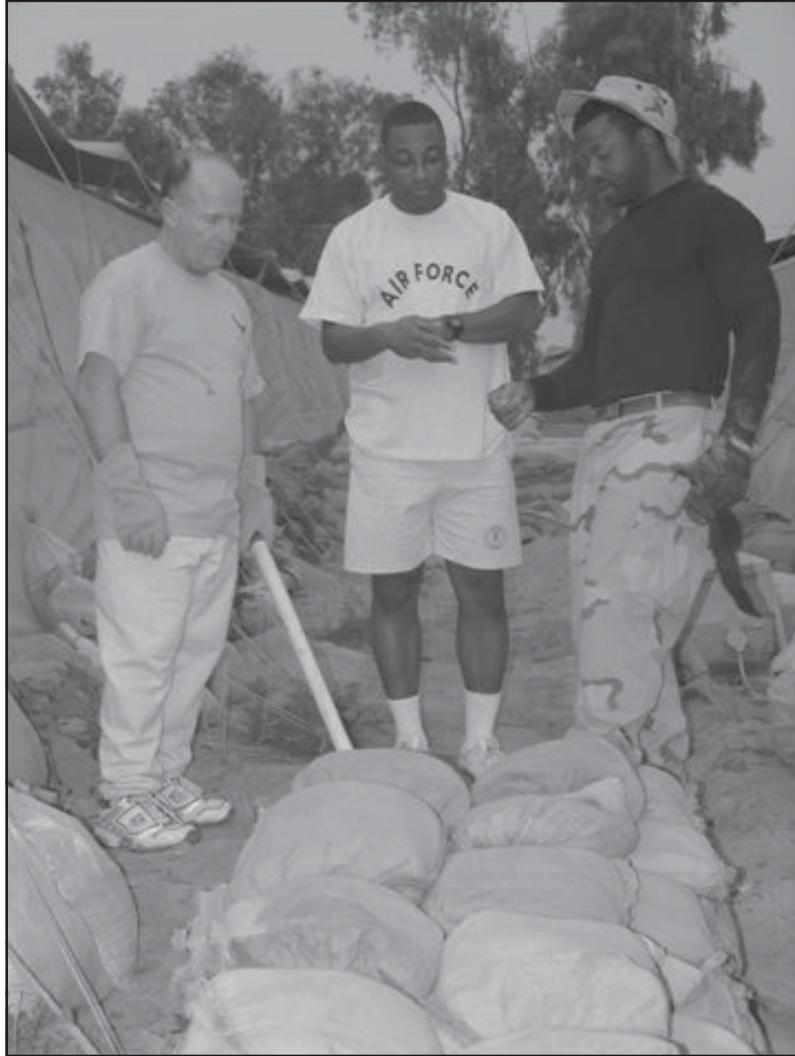


Photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Petosky, 447 AEG/PA

(From left to right) Day one of sandbag detail – Col. Delbert Lewis, 433 OG commander, and his vice commander receive instruction from Civil Engineer Jimmy Garvin on how to fill and stack sandbags. This monumental task of filling over 90,000 sandbags took seven days to complete with 60 people each day working eight to nine hours a day.



Lt. Col. Delbert Lewis doesn't spend all his time filling sandbags. He received a care package from his staff here at Lackland full of chocolate candy and a toothbrush. Colonel Lewis is due to return from his deployment sometime in May.

Courtesy photoPhoto by Staff Sgt. Eric Petosky, 447 AEG/PA

Alamo Wing reservists on Iraq convoy duty

By Maj. David Simons
— 386th AEW Public Affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA — Some who answer their country's call to duty in this remote forward-deployed location in Southwest Asia could easily sit back, perform their job, catch up on sleep and get in shape. For this base is considered the most secure base in the entire Central Command theater of operation. Then there are those who are not content to sit on the sidelines and let someone else take the risks. They are the ones who have answered the call to arms and done so with a resounding "Here, sir."

So goes a contingent of men from the 433rd Alamo Wing of the Air Force Reserve. The San Antonio-based unit at Lackland Air Force Base flies the super-large cargo aircraft, the C-5 Galaxy. Three of their best volunteered to serve for a six-month tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as members of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Senior Master Sgt. Louis Antu, a 24-year veteran, has always been one to put others first. Whether it was his tour of duty during Desert Storm or his service as a crisis intervention officer with the Bexar County Sheriff's Office, Sergeant Antu has been there to answer the call. Maybe that is why he volunteered to come to help the people of Iraq in the first place. It is certainly why he has volunteered to ride convoy duty delivering supplies into the heart of Iraq. Convoy missions have quickly become the terrorist's favorite option in attacking coalition members, especially U.S.



Photo by Maj. David Simons 386th AEW Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Jeffery DeSpain, assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Group at a forward deployed air base near the Iraqi border, trains coalition partners for the Republic of Korea on the 10-K All-Terrain forklift. Sergeant DeSpain, Senior MasterSgt. Louis Antu and Staff Sgt. Frank Leal deployed for six months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as vehicle operators and dispatchers.

servicemembers, but that hasn't stopped Sgt. Antu or his fellow Airmen from the Alamo Wing. He has made the trip three times already, and if it wasn't for him rotating home shortly, he certainly would volunteer to go again.

The hardest part of the six months serving as the supervisor for vehicle operations in a forward-deployed location is also the best. "You have to adapt to people who come from all walks of life. They bring their various personalities to the job, but I know I will walk out of here making some new friends and learning some new things," Sergeant Antu said.

Staff Sgts. Jeffrey DeSpain and Frank Leal follow Sergeant Antu's lead. Both work for him here in the desert and they both work for him back in San Antonio. They both serve as vehicle dispatchers and operators. Their mission one day could be dispatching a van to bring

an air crew to their plane and the next they could be driving a heavy-duty fork lift. Both of these men are capable and competent. Sergeant Leal boasts 14 years of service in the Air Force while Sergeant DeSpain has served a decade.

Sergeant DeSpain, a transportation inspector for the San Antonio Police Department, has made five trips escorting convoys into Iraq and 37 total convoy missions in the theater of operations. Sergeant Leal, a ten-year veteran of the VIA city bus system in San Antonio, made 46 convoy missions, though none into Iraq proper.

Editor's note: All three returned to San Antonio March 13th and will be on leave for about two weeks prior to reporting for duty here at Lackland AFB. The LRS Airmen will remain on active duty under the president's partial mobilization authority at this time. 🏠

Promotions and Awards



Chief Master Sergeant

Emil C. Garza, SFS



Senior Master Sergeant

Michael Mendoza, MXS
Rodrigo Morin, Jr., MXS
Edward B. Owens, AMDS
David Shedrock, CES
Bruce R. Reeh, CLSS



Master Sergeant

Cory S. Box, AES
Lenny Clark, 307 RH
Valde Estrada, CES
Marguerite Gallegos, MXS
Edward Gutierrez, MXS
Manuel Hofilena, CLSS
Matthew J. V. Jackson, AES
Evelyn Kemp, 710 IS
Johnnie McDonald, 26 APS
James Montalbo, CES
William Newhard, 68 AS
Rebecca Ortiz, 26 APS
Jared Pittssenbargar, 26 APS
Antonio Ribas, CES
Spiachel Rucker, CES
William Waddle, CES



Technical Sergeant

Jorge Aradillas, MXS
Robert Calmes, 307 RH
Dawn Freedkin, 74 APS
Maria Garcia, ASTS
Richard Garcia, MSS
Alger Hyatt, MXS
Richard Lopez, MXS
David Luellen, 26 APS
Damon Mace, LRS
Eugen, Reyesquinones, ASTS
Rodolfo Robles, CES
Raymond Rodriguez, MXS

AFRC Outstanding Public Affairs NCO of the Year, (Wing Level and below)
Tech. Sgt. Collen Roundtree



Staff Sergeant

Neal Allen, SFS
Damon Armstrong, MOS
Jose Ayala, CES
David Handy, SFS
Tiffany Hardin, AMDS
Neil Keeah, 26 APS
Brian Martin, ASTS
Alisa Mills, AES
Jose Nunez, LRS
Daniel Pena, CES
Sara Pickens, AES



Senior Airman

Monica Chavez, CLSS
Emmanuel Eisenstein, AES
Amy Gardiner, MDS
Matthis Herrera, MXS
Dionne Le, AMDS
Mark Lopez, AMDS
Sarah McCauley, 307 RH
Jayson Steelman, 74 APS



Airman First Class

Juan Alaniz, MDS
Evelyn Castilleja, AES
Rogelio Castro, CES
Ruben Garcia, MXS
Jeffrey Hall, AMDS



Airman

Jennifer Cerda, 26 APS
Roberto Flores, CES

AFA Joe Kellog Blue Suit Awards

Outstanding Company Grade Officer

Captain Richard Aves (AMDS)

Outstanding First Sergeant

SMSgt Reuben F. Knape, Jr. (MXS),

Outstanding Senior NCO

MSgt Jimmie D. Morris (MSS),

Outstanding NCO

TSgt Arthur S. Allen (MSS)

Outstanding Airman.

SrA Jonathan D. Simmons (AW)



Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. James F. Drescher, AES
Lt. Col. Nora M. Fellows, MDS
Lt. Col. Pamela T. Scott, MDS
Maj. William J. Lydon, AES
SMsgt. Victor R. Abundis, OG
MSgt. Criselda J. Gonzalez, MSS
MSgt. Daniel Lee, MSS
MSgt. Shane A. MacDonald, CES
Msgt. James Newton, CES
MSgt. Elbridge K. Wilson, ???



Aerial Achievement Medal

Lt. Col. Phillippe M. Elmers, 68 AS
Maj. James C. Miller, OSS
MSgt. Kent Jacobs, AES



AF Commendation Medal

Capt. Douglas A. Brown, 68 AS
Capt. James E. Chisolm, MDS
Capt. Ruben S. Soliz, AES
MSgt. Russell S. Dekrone, MXG
MSgt. Joe R. Ramirez, MOS
MSgt. Lynn E. Schwab, MOS
MSgt. Luis C. Mendoza, MOS
TSgt. Richard Bennett, AES
TSgt. Robert B. Burkhardt, MOS
TSgt. Craig A. Calvert, CES
TSgt. Raul F. Flores, MOS
TSgt. Armando Garza, AMXS
TSgt. John R. Hernandez, AMXS
TSgt. Thomas A. Norton, AES
TSgt. Gerald E. Rivas, AES
TSgt. Jeffrey A. Simpson, AES
SSgt. Johnny W. Dunn, AES
SSgt. Victor Estrada, AES
SSgt. Yvonne M. Haines, MSS



AF Achievement Medal

TSgt. Tina R. Gomez, CLSS
SrA Raymond S. Solis, AES

City of San Antonio Patriot Award

The 433rd Airlift Wing - Outstanding Military Unit of 2004.

This is the first year an entire military unit has been selected for this award previously awarded to one individual military member.

USERRA gets recent congressional update

By Ms. Elsa Martinez

Wing Public Affairs

Congress updated the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, in Dec. 2004, to include four significant changes. The update became effective March 10.

Enacted in 1994, USERRA overhauled the Veterans' Reemployment Rights law of 1940. The law significantly strengthened and expanded the employment and reemployment rights of all uniformed service members, including members of the Reserve forces.

Under the update, employers:

Are now required to post USERRA notices at work. Congress added a new final section to USERRA. The section requires employers to inform employees of their rights and obligations under this law. The Department of Labor was required to formulate the text of the notice and provide it to employers by March 2005.

By now the new notice should be posted in employees' workplace break rooms everywhere. Posters are available through DOL.

Must continue civilian health insurance for up to 24 (up from 18) months. Under USERRA's current section 4317(a), Reservists have the option to continue their civilian health insurance coverage at their civilian jobs during activation.

Insurance coverage continues until one of the following occurs first: 24 months pass from the date of activation; the reservist completes the period of service, returns to work and the civilian health insurance is reinstated; or activation is completed and the deadline for application for reemployment has passed without applying for reemployment.

The update extends the first option from 18 months to 24 months. However, if your service period is 31 days or longer, the employer is allowed to charge you up to 102 percent of the entire premium, including the employer's portion.

Reservists may choose to continue their civilian health coverage or use the TRICARE system offered to active-duty service members.

Reinstate DOL reporting requirement. USERRA's section 4332 required DOL to file annual reports with Congress concerning processing of USERRA claims only through the year 2000. But the update reinstated this requirement permanently.

The USERRA update also established a demonstration project that refers USERRA claims against federal agencies to the Office of Special Counsel. OSC is an independent federal investigative and prosecutorial agency.

Although the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard

and Reserve operates its own ombudsman's program, the demonstration project has no direct impact on the program's procedures.

NCESGR will refer cases to outside agencies only after exhausting all efforts of resolving the matter through the employer.

For further information, contact NCESGR at 1-800-336-4590, or visit online at www.esgr.com. Or, contact DOL at www.dol.gov/vets. Local contacts for questions about NCESGR related issues include Colonel John Douglas, 433rd Maintenance Group Commander at 925-7855 and Ms. Elsa Martinez, 433rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs at 925-4988. 

More USERRA Facts

- ◆ There is no difference between voluntary and involuntary service
- ◆ An employee is not required to use earned vacation for military service
- ◆ Employees must be credited with the seniority status they would have earned during the military absence.
- ◆ USERRA does not cover college students however, the Service Members Opportunity Colleges (SOC) organization is prepared to intercede for members experiencing problems with tuition and re-enrollment

UTA SCHEDULE

May

A: 14-15* Changed for Mother's Day

B: 21-22

June

A: 4-5

B: 11-12

July

A: 9-10

B: 23-24

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.

Sir Winston Churchill (1874 - 1965)

Do you have a favorite quote? Perhaps one of your own? Mail to 433aw.pa@lackland.af.mil with the subject line: Quote for AW.



News bites...

MEDALS UPDATED IN PERSONNEL SYSTEM

Airmen eligible to wear either of the Korean Defense Service Medal or Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal can view their decoration history in virtual military personnel flight to verify the latest batch update was successful in the military personnel data system.

For more information on criteria for issue and wear of each medal, go to www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/awards/.

If you need to correct or update information reflected on vMPF, call Senior Airman Taylor Leigh Houston at customer service at 925-6658.

FAMILY DAY

Family Day is scheduled for Sat., April 16, at Upson Park just inside the Acme Gate.

Everyone is encouraged to bring their relatives to meet the military family regardless of their scheduled UTA. There will be games for kids as well as food booths sponsored and manned by various units within the 433rd Airlift Wing.

This year's Family Day events include a basketball throw, sponge toss, duck pond, face painting and the Alamo Wing Jail House.

Rescheduling individuals from the "A" to the "B" UTA is certainly allowed providing all training requirements are current.

Volunteers are still needed to help with set-up, tear-down and during the event.

If you wish to help or

would like more information, please contact Ms. Leticia Gonzales from Family Support at (210) 925-3650.

FIT TO FIGHT EFFECTS PME

Everyone attending Airman Leadership School (ALS), Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) or Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA) in residence must have a minimum fitness score of 75 prior to attending the applicable school. This is a new 4th Air Force requirement. Contact Wing Education and Training at 925-3870 if you have any questions or concerns.

LANCE P. SIJAN AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE

Nominations for the 2005 Lance P. Sijan U.S. Air Force Leadership Award are due to the 433rd MPF Career Enhancement by May 15.

The Sijan award recognizes accomplishments of officers and enlisted members who demonstrate the highest qualities of leadership in the performance of their duties and the conduct of their lives.

For more information on this award or others, please contact Master Sgt. Jimmie Morris, Chief of Career Enhancement at (210) 945-7848.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Two \$250 scholarships will be awarded by the Team Lackland First Sergeant Council.

The scholarship is open to active-duty Team Lackland personnel, grades E1 - E6 and reservists and guardsmen eligible to receive active-duty tuition assistance. The scholarship application is available at <http://www.lafb1sgt.com>. Once at the site, select "Scholarship".

To apply, complete the application, attach your current TA form, and return the package to the Lackland Education Center by April 15.

Recipients will be announced by April 29.

If you have any questions, contact your First Sergeant, or email Master Sgt. Joe Hare at joseph.hare@lackland.af.mil or scholarship@lafb1sgt.com.

BASE TAX CENTER ASSISTANCE

Military members, their dependents and retirees may seek tax preparation assistance from unit tax advisors or the Base Tax Center. The Base Tax Center is open Mon. - Thurs., 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. through April 15.

You can drop off Form 1040 EZ all week at Bldg. 1530, 2nd Floor, Room 271, North Frank Luke Drive, Kelly USA.

All other assistance requires an appointment by calling 925-7044.

CIVILIAN TIME-OFF AWARDS

Civilian employees must use time-off awards within one year (26 pay periods) of

effective date. For example, time-off awarded effective June 1, 2004, will be lost if not used by the civilian pay period ending May 29, 2005. Supervisors should charge time-off awards on civilian timesheets using leave 'type hours' code 'LY'.

Employees lose time-off awards when they transfer from one federal agency (i.e. Air Force) to another (i.e. Army).

SUMMER JOBS

The rush to fill this season's summer hire positions has begun. This year, the Summer Program will offer the following positions: **Lifeguard/GS-02; Lead Lifeguard/GS-03; Water Safety Instructor/GS-03; Clerical/GS-01, 02, 03; and Laborer/WG-02.**

Eligibility requirements for the Summer Program include: 1) enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) seeking student and is taking at least a half-time academic/vocational or technical, course load in an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2 year or 4 year college or university, graduate or professional school; 2) a cumulative GPA no lower than 2.0; 3) must be U.S. citizen; 4) must be at least 16 years of age at time of appointment.

Those wishing to apply for these positions should contact the Summer Program Coordinator, Mrs. Rosanne Guerrero, at 671-1634, for more information.

Who's who in the Alamo Wing...



Photo by Maj. Elena T. Milford

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS --Senior Airman Johnny Tello, from the 433rd Maintenance Squadron, wears the coveralls and respiratory protector necessary for sanding aircraft components prior to painting.



Photo by Maj. Elena T. Milford

GOT PARTS?--Supply technician, Staff Sgt. Gilbert Torrez, 433rd Maintenance Operations Squadron, locates aircraft parts in tail number bins.



Photo by Maj. Elena T. Milford

SERVICE WITH A SMILE -- Staff Sgt. Jermaine Cockrell is an administrative specialist with the 433rd Medical Squadron. Sergeant Cockrell is usually the first face customers of the clinic see at the check-in area.



Photo by Senior Airman Jonathan D. Simmons

IN DEPTH TECH -- Tech. Sgt. Edward Hernandez, a jet engine mechanic, replaces a temperature sensor inside the engine cowling of a C-5 during an Isochronal Inspection. ISO is a complete inspection of the entire aircraft and is required on each airframe annually.

REDHORSE raisin' roofs at Camp Bullis



Photos by Lt. Col Joseph W. Pierce, 307th REDHORSE Squadron

BAGHDAD, TEXAS --Thanks to the efforts of the 307th REDHORSE Squadron from Lackland AFB and Barksdale AFB, a part of Camp Bullis will soon resemble a forward operating base.

The area will be used to train Soldiers and Airmen in convoy techniques. The replica encampment will feature tent living quarters, a fabricated dining facility and work areas similar to those found at any forward operating location.

The project is due to be completed near the end of April.



433rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs Office
203 Galaxy Road, Suite 103
Lackland AFB, TX 78236-0112

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