



The IGUANA

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Photo courtesy of NASA

The STS-107 crew includes, from the left, Mission Specialist David Brown, Commander Rick Husband, Mission Specialists Laurel Clark, Kalpana Chawla and Michael Anderson, Pilot William McCool and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon.

Two airmen among shuttle crew

SAN ANTONIO – Two Air Force officers were among the seven astronauts lost when the Space Shuttle Columbia apparently broke apart at 9 a.m. EST today in the area over north central Texas. Col. Rick Husband was the mission commander and Lt. Col. Michael Anderson was the payload commander.

The shuttle was preparing to land at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida when NASA's Mission Control in Houston lost contact with the crew.

The space vehicle was at an altitude of about 203,000 feet and was traveling at approximately 12,500 miles per hour, or Mach 18, when contact was lost.

Other members of the crew included Cmdr William McCool, USN, pilot for STS-107; Capt. David Brown, USN, mission specialist; Dr. Kalpana Chawla, flight engineer and mission specialist; Cmdr Laurel Clark, USN, mission specialist; and Israeli Air Force Col. Ilan Ramon, payload specialist. (Air Force Print News).

DOD supporting shuttle Columbia search effort

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Department of Defense assets currently involved in search, security and transportation operations related to the loss of Space Shuttle Columbia include:

– Air Force: C-141 aircraft from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., will be used to transport NASA's rapid response team from Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

– Air Force Reserve: Six F-16 Fighting Falcons from Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas, will be part of search operations and security. Two KC-135 Stratotankers from the 507 Air Refueling Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla., will be used to refuel supporting aircraft.

– Coast Guard: 110-foot cutter from Naval Air Station New Orleans; buoy tender and station boat from District 7, based in St. Petersburg, Fla.; patrols in the Gulf of Mexico to check out reports of fallen debris.

– Army: Four UH-60 helicopters from Fort Hood, Texas, to assist in search operations.

– Navy: Dauphine helicopter from Naval Air Station New Orleans to assist in search operations.

– Texas Air National Guard: A C-130 Hercules from NASJRB, Fort Worth, to assist with search operations.

An Air Force Reserve Command HC-130 is on alert here, ready to respond if needed. The Coast Guard also has two UH-1 helicopters standing by in Corpus Christi, Texas, and a C-130 standing by in St. Petersburg, Fla.

The DOD Manned Space Flight Support Office here is the single point of contact for coordinating initial DOD contingency support for the United States' manned space flight programs. (Air Force Print News).

Medical team saves local in infant

By 1st Lt. Carla Pampe
Public Affairs Director

Members of a U. S. military medical team in Honduras performing eye surgeries and exams found themselves taking on another role Jan. 19 when they saved the life of a newborn.

The San Antonio-based team, composed of people from Lackland Air Force Base's Wilford Hall Medical Center and Fort Sam Houston's Brooke Army Medical Center, was participating in an optometry and ophthalmology medical readiness and training exercise Jan. 10 to 20 at the Hospital Del Sur in Choluteca, Honduras.

Team members were performing eye surgery when someone from the hospital's staff rushed in and asked for help.

"They had done an emergency (cesarean) section, and the pediatrician came into the operating room while we were doing surgery and asked for our help with a baby who was unresponsive," said Lt. Col (Dr.) Robert Smith, team chief of the exercise team.

Smith and Lt. Col. (Dr.) August Pasquale took the

baby to a recovery room and began giving it oxygen and performing CPR.

At the time of the emergency, Maj. (Dr.) Kathy Weesner, a staff anesthesiologist from Wilford Hall, and Lt. Col. (Dr.) James McLane, a pediatrician from Brooke, had finished their day's work and left the hospital.

"Dr. McLane and I were in a van headed back to our hotel when we got a phone call asking us to come back to the hospital right away," Weesner said. "When we returned, the ophthalmology team was already on the scene. The baby was just lifeless, very dusky in color, and they were desperately searching for oxygen for him."

Weesner and McLane immediately joined in the resuscitation efforts.

"He was pretty close to dead," McLane said. "I think the local pediatrician had just accepted that he was going to die. Not because he didn't have the skills to save him, but they just don't have the resources."

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Photo by 1st Lt. Carla Pampe

Maj. (Dr.) Kathy Weesner works on baby Eduardo after the infant was born Jan. 19 in Choluteca, Honduras.

Once an airman, forever an airman

By Chief Master Sgt. William Milligan

Command Chief Master Sergeant of Air Education and Training Command

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas – It's one of those things that sneaks up on you. You are ambling along, doing your job each day, enjoying life, when suddenly your life changes, never to be the same. You don't really like it, but you must accept it because you can't do anything about it. So you start making plans to deal with this unwanted situation called retirement!

Never in 29 years have I been faced with a dilemma that I have had such a difficult time accepting.

Regardless, it will happen, and I will find a way to deal with it. Consequently, there are a few things I would like to leave with you as I transition to another career.

Life as an airman is an honor and privilege. We sometimes forget to consider the challenges and opportunities afforded us as an airman. Being an airman is not about pay, benefits, allowances or entitlements. It's about freedom, democracy and an equality of life for all. These freedoms we enjoy are only as secure as the men and women who are willing to serve in our armed forces. Being an airman is one way of making that ultimate commitment.

This commitment must be free from inhibitors such as compensation or expected rewards. Of course, those who serve should expect a reasonable quality of life for themselves and their family, but that is a function of leadership. The role of the air-

men is to prosecute those things within their control that ensure freedom and equality for all, to dedicate themselves to maintaining democracy regardless of the requirements.

At times, the challenges presented during a career can seem overwhelming, yet we always find a way to succeed. We deal with deployments, remote tours away from family, and uprooting and moving families many times to many different homes and numerous school systems. With each job come new challenges for both the member and the family. Only someone who has walked in these shoes can appreciate these challenges, but with each also comes opportunities.

We are afforded the opportunity to become mentally and physically stronger, disciplined and able to deal with change. Our family members also learn to deal with the temporary nature of each assignment. Most importantly, we are privileged to be a part of something far more important than life itself.

We are fortunate to work with only the finest professionals, from the pilot to the mess cook. Our growth and potential is only restricted by the constraints we place on ourselves. Everyone is equal regardless of gender, race or religion. The bottom line is we have the greatest people serving this great nation in the greatest Air Force in the world and serving with distinction. We get to be a part of this great institution.

With this understanding, I believe I can accept retirement because there are many

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SOUTHCOM Deputy Commander pays a visit



Above: Maj. Gen. Robert D. Bishop, SOUTHCOM Deputy Commander, visits the Fire Department Jan. 27 during a trip to Joint Task Force-Bravo. Right: Bishop spends some time with a resident of the Hogar de Tierra Sante orphanage in La Villa de San Antonio.



SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to The Iguana can be sent to the PAO at george.kyriakeas@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, bldg. D-06. If you have any questions regarding possible submissions call ext. 4150 or 4676.

The IGUANA

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NEWS

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JTFB Chaplain truly a man for all seasons

By Master Sgt. G. A. Volb
JTF-Bravo Public Affairs

"Excuse me son, can I speak to your father please," asked the postal worker.

"This is my house," said the teenage-looking husband as he stood in the doorway.

"Look," the postman continued unconvinced, "I can't give this package to anyone under 15."

Now irritated, the young man looked over his shoulder and pointed; "That is my pregnant wife, my pit bulls in the backyard and this is my house, so what do you want to do?"

And finally the man conceded, offering him the package to sign for.

But such is the life of a man who suffers from Doogie Howser syndrome. Now, 42 Chaplain (Capt) Matthew Hall can still pass for 20 something.

"When I was 17 I went down to enlist in the Navy and the recruiter almost threw me out," he said. "It's been particularly difficult as a young pastor. In my 30s I still looked like a teenager and sometimes folks wouldn't take me seriously. But I'm one of your typical type 'A' personalities and my youthful countenance hasn't been a handicap. In many ways it's been helpful."

Hall arrived at Soto Cano in December, his presence immediately felt as he played the bagpipes during the emotional memorial service honoring soldiers

killed in a helicopter crash here. Initially, many members of the community assumed he was "shipped" in specifically for the event since such talent is hard to come by. But that wasn't the case for Hall; his unique skills are the product of a family tradition of sorts, though he took the road less traveled to get here.

"My grandfather and uncle began to teach me the pipes when I was about 8 years old," said Hall. "My grandfather came to (America) when he was a teenager from Ireland. He and his older brother jumped on a boat to come here and find work, and my grandfather helped put together the Philadelphia Ulster Scottish Pipe Band back in 1922. My brother and cousin also play the pipes."

He said he started out learning on a practice chanter until he was 14, when his dad bought his first set of bagpipes. His next big step was to jump straight into the proverbial frying pan by playing in a band in Belfast, Northern Ireland. True, his background is as eclectic as any you'll hear of.

"When I was in Northern Ireland I got the opportunity to minister to some of the British troops," he said.

Then in 1997 he joined the National Guard, eventually going back to school for his Master Of Divinity degree from the Evangelical School of Theology in Myerstown, Pa. and was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

"I was pasturing fulltime, going to

school fulltime, serving as a battalion chaplain in the guard and had a wife and five kids at home," he said. "It was a busy time." To say the least, but he persevered.

After he graduated from seminary in 2002 he joined the chaplain corps as a first lieutenant. A couple of assignments later and he's Joint Task Force Bravo's chaplain.

"As the pastor of the Protestant congregation it's my goal to build the Protestant worship services and ensure that every service person has the opportunity to the free exercise of religion, regardless of their beliefs," he said. "I also want

to build a relationship of trust with my soldiers and airmen so that they have confidence in their chaplain's ability to help them in times of emotional or spiritual crisis.

"In the general Protestant Worship services we incorporate hymn singing, prayer, creedal recitation, special music and preaching," he continued. "In my preaching ministry my goal is to invite folks to trust in Christ for salvation and challenge Christians to a life of dedication to service for Christ. I also offer communion services once a month and baptismal services up on request."



Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Hall plays the bagpipes during the Dec. 14 Memorial Ceremony

Eduardo

From page 1

With the equipment our team already had there, we were able to help."

With the baby's heart rate, oxygen level and temperature dangerously low, the team raced against time to revive him.

"The first thing we had to do was clear the baby's airway," McLane said. "We got a breathing tube in him and got him oxygenated."

Then, McLane inserted an IV into the baby's umbilical cord so they could give him fluids to raise his blood pressure.

"Being a pediatrician, that was a special skill Dr. McLane had," Weesner said. "I would have had to find another place to insert the IV, like his hand, which might have taken longer. We initiated all the resuscitation measures we could, and then we had to improvise. We heated IV bags and packed them around the baby to raise his temperature."

After more than two hours of work, the team was able to stabilize the baby and return him to the care of the Honduran medical staff.

"On the way to take the baby to the neonatal intensive care unit, the mother was in the recovery room, and we stopped by with the baby so she could kiss him," McLane said. "Our only feeling of success at the time was that the mom got to see her baby alive, because we really weren't sure he'd make it through the night."

When the team returned the next morning, they were given the good news that the baby survived the night. Soon, the boy, whose mother had named Eduardo, was with his mom, breast feeding and doing well.

"We were just so happy," Weesner said. "We fought such an uphill battle to save him, and seeing him in his mother's arms just two days later was amazing."

"It was just a matter of the right people being in the right place at the right time. It was awesome."

Have a comment or question? E-mail: Carla.Pampe@jtfb.southcom.mil

Airman

From page 2

who will come after me, just like those before me, those committed to ensuring this country continues to be the flag bearer for freedom and democracy.

As stated by our 12th chief master sergeant of the Air Force, when I am retired and my young granddaughter is sitting on my knee and asks, "Granddaddy, what did you do in the Air Force?" I know exactly how I will respond. "Sweetheart, I was part of an institution that promoted democracy, an organization where freedom was paramount. I was a member of a profession where words like character, valor and integrity had a to-

tally different meaning than what the dictionary defines. I was an airman and in our job the bottom line wasn't profit. It was freedom."

I will truly miss putting on my uniform each morning, but I realize that being an airman is not just about wearing a uniform. Being an airman is not just a job, not just a vocation, not just a hobby. It's about being the consummate military member and citizen.

No, even in retirement we don't stop being airmen, we simply change roles. In reality, you can never stop being an airman because it is part of your DNA.

We didn't start the fire...

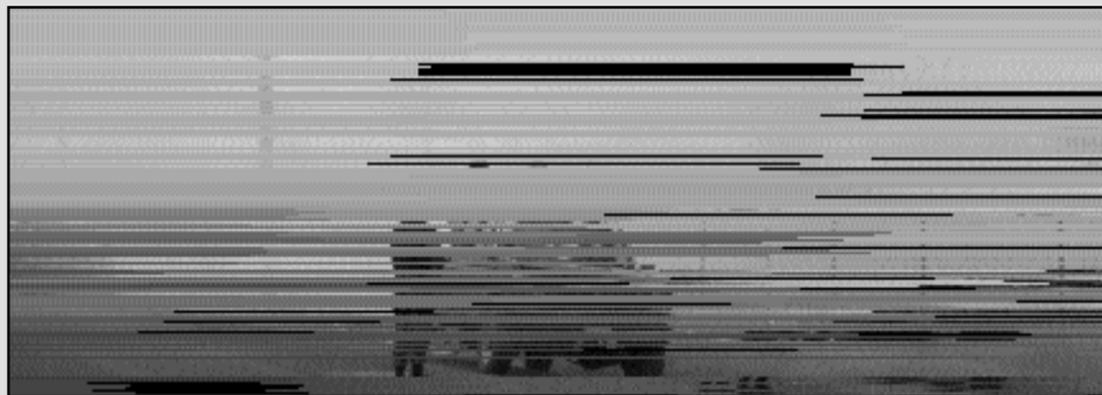


Photo by Maj. John McCauley

Members of the JTF-Bravo Fire Department extinguish a blaze near the flightline Jan. 27. The fire was started by local farmers clearing land but the wind caused the smoke to interfere with flightline operations and the Fire Dawgs were sent to put out the fire.



Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Eugene Edwards reinstalls fuel transfer lines on a CH-47 Chinook while CH-47 Maintenance Supervisor Dale Musolf looks on.

Lockheed Martin keeps JTFB flying

By Spc. George Kyriakeas
JTF-Bravo Public Affairs Office

Many of the missions we accomplish here at Joint Task Force-Bravo are done so only with the support of the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment. They are in turn, supported by the 55-member Lockheed Martin staff who work tirelessly to keep them in the air.

Lockheed Martin and the 1st Bn., 228th AVN RGT have been working together for over 15 years, said Ed Volinski, Site Manager for Lockheed Martin.

"They're good. We've got a good working relationship with the 1-228th. A lot of times we work hand-in-hand with the military personnel here."

Members of the 1-228th echo this sentiment.

"We're a small company and can't do it all so we need their support," said Sgt. Barry Longest, 1-228th.

Lockheed Martin came here approxi-

mately five years ago when the 1st-228th relocated to Soto Cano after the Panama Canal closed, Volinski said.

Lockheed Martin employees do more than just provide maintenance and mechanical work for the 1-228th here at Soto Cano, Volinski said.

Lockheed Martin also performs maintenance on ground support equipment.

"We work on aviation life support and equipment maintenance on their gear; helmets, vests, first-aid kits and everything they wear when they fly."

Many Lockheed Martin employees take advantage of their option to continue working with JTF-Bravo past the initial one-year term, Volinski said.

"I've been here five years and I'm looking forward to continuing on. I enjoy working with the 228th and supporting their flying operations."

Have a comment or question? E-mail: George.Kyriakeas@jtfb.southcom.mil

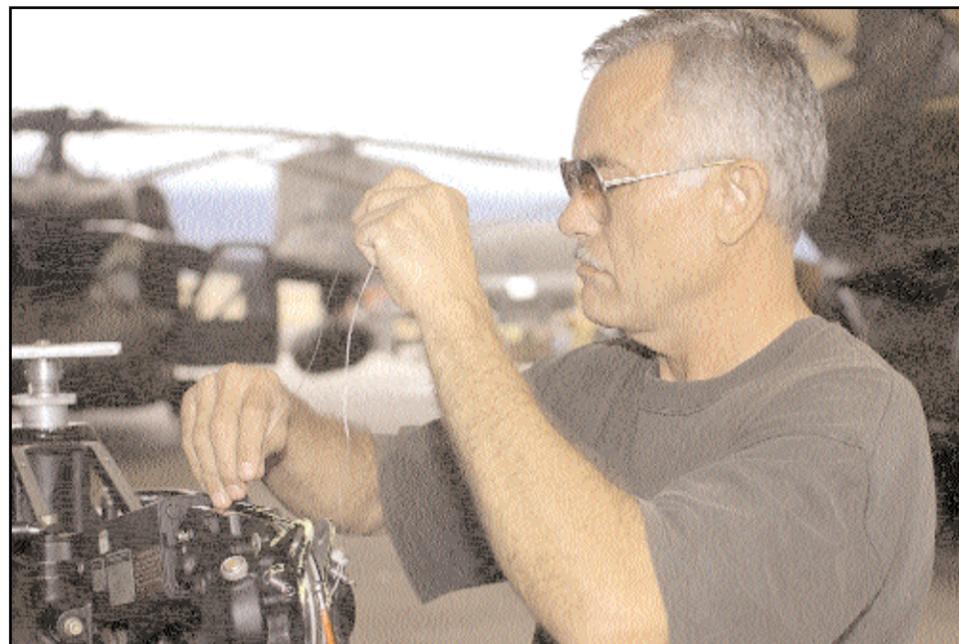


Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Roger Beard works on a rescue hoist used on Black Hawk MEDEVACs

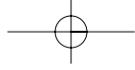


Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

L.C. Thomas blows dirt off the floor of a CH-47 Chinook before checking for corrosion.

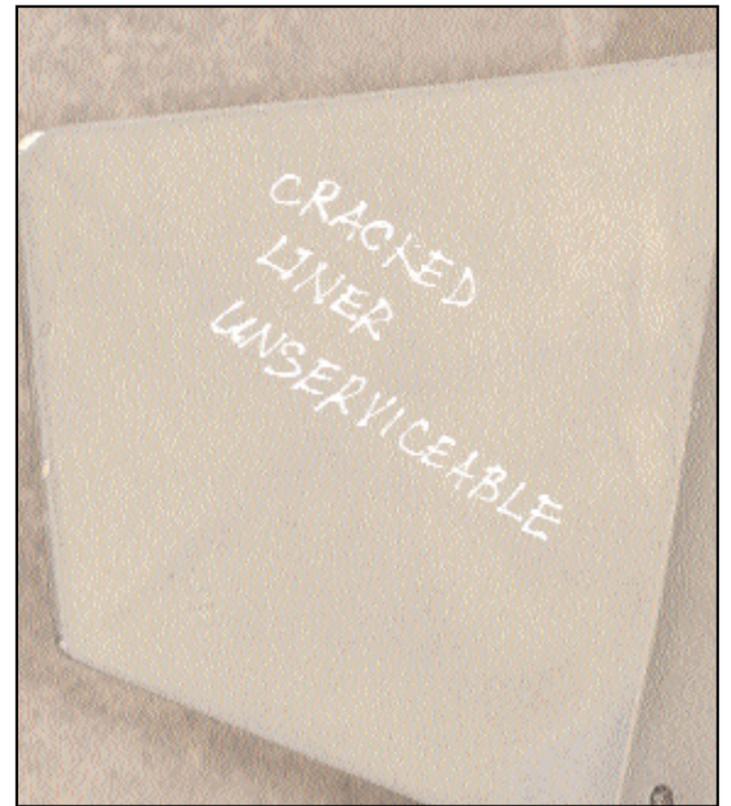


Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

The external fuel tanks for a UH-60 Black Hawk cost as much to repair as they do to purchase a new one, said Site Manager Ed Volinski.



Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Roger Beard checks out an APR-39 radar detector.



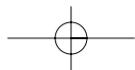
Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Sgt. Barry Longest, 1st Battalion, 228th AVN RGT, checks a rotor blade on a UH-60 Black Hawk.



Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

A view from the inside of William "Bone" Bowser treating corrosion on a CH-47 Chinook.



Army to realign major commands, agencies

WASHINGTON – Five major commands will report directly to Department of the Army staff principals under a realignment announced today.

The realignment of major commands and field operating agencies will create a new position on the Army staff -- the provost marshal general -- and the Criminal Investigation Command, known as CID, will report directly to the new staff officer.

The Military District of Washington will become a direct reporting unit to the Office of the Army Chief of Staff.

Medical Command will become a direct reporting unit under the Army surgeon general.

The Intelligence and Security Command, known as INSCOM, will report directly to the Army's assistant chief of staff, Intelligence/G2.

The Army Signal Command will be realigned under the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command. NETCOM will report directly to the chief of Information Operations/G6.

U.S. Army South, or USARSO, will continue moving to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, from Puerto Rico and will continue supporting the joint U.S. Southern Command, officials said, although it will report to Forces Command under the realignment plan.

Preliminary decisions about the realignment of other MACOM headquarters have been made, officials said, but details will not be released until the commands review the proposals.

Over the next few months, MACOMs will develop implementation plans that address the challenges involved, officials explained.

Proposed changes will affect the fol-

lowing commands: U. S. Army Europe, U. S. Army Pacific, Eighth Army in Korea, U. S. Army Forces Command, U. S. Army Materiel Command, and the Military Traffic Management Command.

Training and Doctrine Command, Special Operations Command and the Corps of Engineers will remain unchanged, officials said, under the current realignment plan.

The realignments are a continuation of Secretary of the Army Thomas White's initiative started in June 2001 to assess all Army headquarters and supporting activities, properly align responsibility and eliminate redundancy, officials said. The FOA realignment is Phase II of that initiative and the MACOM realignment is Phase III.

The realignment plan will incorporate better business practices and organizational concepts that have proven successful in major corporations, White said, adding that it will optimize the use of technology.

The realignments are also designed to improve the control of resources and thereby provide tangible benefit to Army commands, installations and ultimately soldiers and their families, officials said.

Most of the initiatives, including those for FOAs, will begin next fiscal year after the affected organizations develop and submit implementation plans for approval, Army officials said.

Decisions about the following Army agencies have been made:

Office of the Inspector General -- The TIG will integrate 10 reserve-component soldiers into the organization and consolidate its Information Technology activity with the Directorate of Information Management.

The Judge Advocate General -- The U.S. Army Legal Service Agency will eliminate one function and 22 spaces, while the TJAG School will eliminate seven spaces.

Army Contracting Agency -- One hundred spaces were eliminated in the consolidation and further reductions are proposed over the next three years.

Simulation, Training and Instrumentation Command, or STRICOM -- This command has been eliminated and its acquisition functions transferred to the Army Acquisition Executive as a Program Executive Office. Research and development activities were retained in the Army Materiel Command, to become LOGCOM.

Logistics Integration Agency -- Consolidation of this agency will eliminate 25 spaces and provide more integrated support to the deputy chief of staff, G-4.

Army Physical Fitness Research Institute -- APFRI has been transferred to the control of the Surgeon General from the Army War College, and the spaces will move to the Medical Command on Oct. 1.

Army War College -- The Peacekeeping Institute is disestablished and its missions and functions transferred to TRADOC. Further, 26 other AWC spaces are eliminated, and the college is transferred to TRADOC.

Center for Military History -- Thirteen spaces are transferred to Fort Belvoir, Va., to begin establishment of the National Museum of the U.S. Army.

Army Test and Evaluation Command -- The command will assess the potential for consolidation and co-location of its headquarters and report recommendations in the spring of this year.

Army National Guard Readiness Center -- The Center will cut 164 spaces.

A study of Human Resources agencies, activities and missions has been completed, officials said, adding that results are expected within 60 to 90 days. They said the Army will announce decisions after the findings and recommendations have been briefed and approved.

Also as part of the Department of the Army Realignment Plan, the U.S. Army Central Personnel Security Clearance Facility was recently realigned as a subordinate command of INSCOM. Formed in 1977 as part of the U.S. Army Military Personnel Center, CCF at Fort Meade, Md., has responsibility for granting security clearances for Army personnel worldwide.

The announcement is the result of continuing efforts by the Headquarters, Department of the Army Realignment Task Force that White established June 25, 2001, officials said. The Phase 2 and 3 task forces were established on Jan. 8, 2002, immediately following final decisions on Phase 1.

The two task forces, consisting of about 30 senior civilians and military members of Army headquarters, looked at all aspects of Army agencies and MACOMs to include: acquisition, headquarters management, logistics, operations, training, intelligence, requirements development, resource management, external affairs, and civil works.

The approved initiatives are designed to streamline decision-making processes and achieve efficiencies, officials said, as the Army adapts to meet rapidly changing institutional and operational challenges. (Courtesy of Army News Service)

Working like a dog



Photo by 2nd Lt. Nancy Kuck

Arkie inspects a truck at the vehicle search area at a forward-deployed location. A veteran military working dog with the 380th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron K-9 patrol, Arkie works with Staff Sgt. Louis Smith.

Guard troops to build schools, clinics

By Sgt. 1st Class Tom Roberts
National Guard Bureau public affairs support element

WASHINGTON – National Guard soldiers from across America will soon shed winter clothes and travel south to Panama to participate in New Horizons 03 in the western highlands of Chiriqui province.

Spearheaded by the Ohio National Guard, Joint Task Force Chiriqui will construct schools and clinics and conduct medical exercises for the rural villagers in this remote mountain area along the Costa Rican border.

"I'm looking forward to getting the equipment out to Chiriqui and getting to work," said Capt. Dave Lambert, Joint Task Force Chiriqui logistics officer and member of the Ohio National Guard.

Lambert ensures that all necessary equipment, material and supplies to support more than 500 soldiers for the four-month project all arrive at the right place at the right time.

Months before deployment, JTF Chiriqui troops began by inspecting and thoroughly cleaning all of the engineer and medical equipment as well as the vehicles and aircraft before they left their stateside bases. They then shipped the equipment to central locations for shipment on the cargo vessel Thunder and Lightning.

More than 250 items, from huge shipping containers to

three Blackhawk helicopters from the New Jersey National Guard, get packed aboard the ship.

When the Thunder and Lightning approaches the Panamanian docks, soldiers in the advance party meet it to unload the material and arrange its transportation to the remote field locations. Helicopter crews must unwrap the helicopters - sealed in white, shrink-wrapped plastic for protection from the salty sea winds - and inspect for damage from the voyage.

Commanders and supervisors will constantly remind troops to drink water in the tropical heat and sun, weather far different from the winter in the Midwest and Northeast this year.

New personnel arrive daily for JTF Chiriqui to assist with the relocation of equipment and to build a base camp. When all is ready, a full-time contingent of soldiers will stay for the duration of the exercise, providing continuity for others who cycle through.

Army National Guard soldiers from 21 states will deploy to Panama to conduct the exercise. Members of JTF Chiriqui will work with their Panamanian civilian counterparts to accomplish the projects.

For the people of this remote region, the "thunder" of heavy machinery will be heard as National Guard troops provide educational and medical benefits that will last for years. (Courtesy of Army News Service)

Domestic violence decreasing Armywide

FORT BELVOIR, Va. – Statistics show that rates of domestic violence among Army families are not only lower than national standards, but they are also steadily decreasing, said Brig. Gen. Robert L. Decker, commander of the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center.

Decker made that statement on the inside cover of "Hot Topics: Family Violence Behind Closed Doors," a pull-out insert in the February issue of Soldiers magazine, hitting the street this week at installations Army-wide.

The rate for child abuse is 12.2 per 1,000 persons nationwide versus only 5.1 per 1,000 in the Army, according to the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

"During the past seven years, we have seen a steady decline in documented cases of abuse," said Lt. Col. Yvonne Tucker-Harris, family advocacy program manager for the Community and Family Support Center. She added, though, that some cases still go unreported in both civilian and military communities.

Studies of family violence in the Army show that age and maturity levels are important risk factors in determining an individual's involvement. Statistically, 22- to 26-year-olds have the highest rate of both spouse and child abuse.

"Any case of domestic violence is one too many," Tucker-Harris said. "Those of us in the military see ourselves as a family, and family members are as important to readiness as our soldiers are."

In 2001 there were 6,404 substantiated allegations of family violence within Army ranks. Women and children suffered the most injuries, and researchers emphasize that these num-

bers include only cases that were reported and cannot be inclusive of violence that occurred unnoticed or was ignored. The total number of spouse-abuse reports was 7,693, with 3,948 of those reports being substantiated. Studies reveal that spouse abuse is most frequent among young couples who have not yet developed joint coping and communication skills. Child-abuse reports were somewhat lower than those of spouse abuse at 6,579 reports, with 2,456 of those cases being substantiated.

Despite good news, the Army lost four wives and one husband in a string of deadly violence last summer at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"Violence is not compatible with our core values," Decker said. "It is contrary to everything we believe in as an organization: respect, honor, integrity, personal courage."

"We must empower soldiers to recognize risk factors in their own lives and encourage them to seek help before violence occurs," Decker said.

The Army Family Advocacy Program offers intervention and treatment services that can turn dysfunctional relationships into healthy bonds, Decker said. He added that every leader is responsible for acting upon known or suspected cases of family violence.

"If our families are in trouble," Decker said, "so too is soldier and unit readiness."

(Editor's note: Beth Reece of Soldiers magazine is the editor of "Hot Topics: Family Violence Behind Closed Doors." Editors are encouraged to localize information from this excerpt by contacting local Family Advocacy offices.)

Afghan firefight leaves at least 18 enemy dead

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – In a joint effort, soldiers, airmen and coalition forces killed 18 enemy personnel after a small group of U.S. Special Forces came under fire last night.

A small group of U.S. Special Forces was clearing a compound with support from Afghan militia forces when they came under small arms fire Jan. 27, at 11 p.m.

Coalition forces returned fire, killing one, wounding one and detaining a third. The detainee informed the Special Forces that approximately 80 armed men were located several kilometers north in their vicinity.

After the information was verified, Army helicopters fired on the enemy forces, who were located near a series of caves, and a quick reaction force from the 82nd Airborne Division was launched. Close air support was provided by Army Apaches, U.S. Air Force Bombers, an USAF AC130 Gunship and coalition F16s, officials said.

Enemy forces were engaged throughout the night and the action continues, officials said. At least 18 enemy have been killed and no coalition casualties have been reported, officials added.

Sergeant gets six years

By Airman 1st Class Andre Thacker
6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – An Air Force staff sergeant will spend six years in confinement, be demoted to airman basic and be dishonorably discharged for stealing four laptop computers and two personal data assistant devices from U.S. Central Command last year.

A military judge sentenced Staff Sgt. Sheridan Ferrell II on Jan. 30 to seven years on two charges of larceny and two charges of dereliction of duty. The sentence was reduced to six years because Ferrell had a pre-trial agreement with prosecutors in exchange for his guilty plea. The sentence is subject to approval from the convening authority, who is Maj. Gen. George N. Williams, 21st Air Force commander.

Ferrell pleaded guilty Jan. 29 to stealing four laptops and two PDAs containing sensitive information from CENTCOM last summer. An additional charge of stealing a computer hard drive was dropped in exchange for his guilty plea.

When two computers were noticed missing Aug. 2, security here clamped down and more than 50 agents searched the base. A week after the laptops disappeared, the investigation led OSI agents to Ferrell's residence, where they discovered the missing computers and two additional laptop computers taken from the secure compartmentalized information facility at CENTCOM. They also discovered the two PDAs.

The iceman 'teach-eth'



Photo by Airman 1st Class G. L. Freeman

MOUNT CAVALLA, Italy – Capt. Damian Schlüssel instructs Senior Airman Chris Hucks on ice axe self-arrest techniques at the peak here Jan. 26. Schlüssel is the officer in charge of the security forces training flight for the 31st Security Forces Squadron at Aviano Air Base, Italy. Hucks is a communications project manager for the base's 31st Communications Squadron.

Five officer specialties receiving bonus

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas – More than 6,000 officers in five critical skill career fields are now eligible to receive a retention bonus of up to \$40,000 -- \$10,000 per year for up to four years -- as a result of the Air Force's Critical Skills Retention Bonus Program.

The people who may qualify are scientists, developmental engineers, acquisition program managers, civil engineers, and communications and information officers with four to 13 years of commissioned service who are willing to commit to serving up to four more years. Those eligible can start to receive their annual payments in March or April.

Officers who become eligible for the CSRB before Sept. 30 have until Aug. 31 to take advantage of the bonus.

This bonus is a result of the Science and Engineering Summit held Dec. 6, 2001. It is being offered to help improve retention in these five career fields, which have had the reten-

tion rates in the Air Force for several years, said Lt. Col. Dean Vande Hey, deputy chief of mission support officer assignments at the Air Force Personnel Center here.

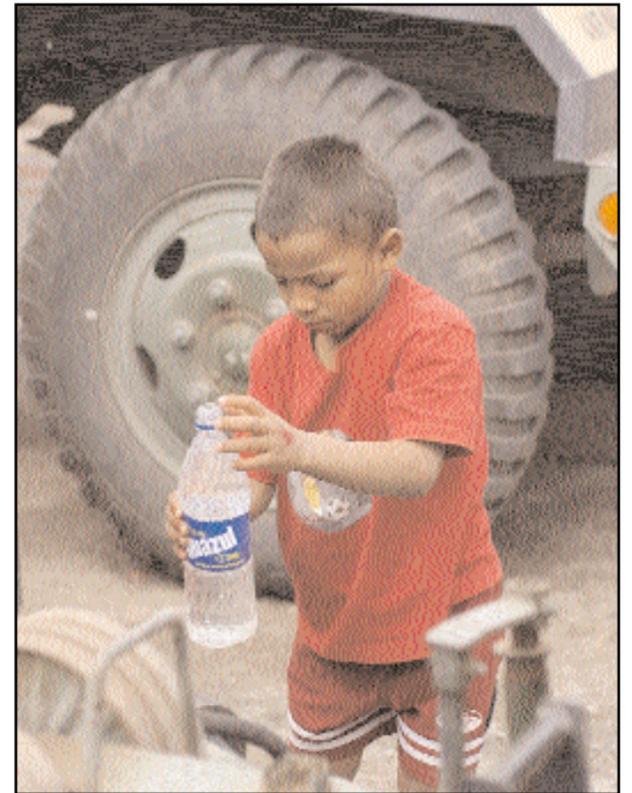
"This bonus should help make an Air Force career more financially competitive with civilian sector salaries," he said.

Most officers who qualify for the bonus will receive the standard four-year, active-duty service commitment that runs concurrently with any other service commitments. The exception is officers who have completed 11, 12 or 13 years of commissioned service, said Vande Hey. These officers would receive three-, two- and one-year, active-duty service commitments based on corresponding agreements at the same rate of \$10,000 a year.

For more information, call the Air Force Contact Center toll free at (866) 229-7074 or DSN 665-5000. (Courtesy of AFPC News Service)



A Hogar de Tierra Sante resident enjoys some fresh water straight from the source.



One of the children at the orphanage transfers some water to a smaller container.



The Water Dawgs back up a Water Buffalo Jan. 31 with 400 gallons of water which will meet the orphanages' needs for the weekend.



Spc. Charles Dickey, ARFOR, checks out an empty Water Buffalo during a trip to the Orphanage Jan. 29. The Water Dawgs usually make three trips to the orphanage a week.

Water Dawgs— Somebody is thinking of the children

Story and photos by Spc. George Kyriakeas
JTF-Bravo Public Affairs Office

Joint Task Force-Bravo's water section is tasked with supplying water wherever it is needed. Anytime a mission demands that JTFB members work away from Soto Cano, the Water Dawgs will be there to ensure that we drink water. Their most regular work however, is dedicating to supporting a group that is not officially part of JTFB.

The Water Dawgs deliver a Water Buffalo containing 400 gallons of water from the post to the Hogar de Tierra Sante Orphanage in La Villa de San Antonio three times a week, said Pfc. Ezequiel Hernandez, ARFOR.

"They don't have their own supply of freshwater, so they use ours for cooking, laundry, cleaning and bathing. They use it for everything."

The only local supplies of water the orphanage has available are several standing-water ponds and a man-made canal that don't provide water as clean as the water from post the Water Dawgs supply, said Spc. Charles Dickey, ARFOR.

"The post water we have here is better than the water found in 90 percent of U.S. cities."

The Water Dawgs say they enjoy their missions to the orphanage as much as the children seem to.

"It's great. It's fun. The kids love it when we go out there," Hernandez said.

"Never in my whole Army career has there been a time when I can see the effects of our job so immediately. Our water goes directly to the kids," Dickey said.

During a holiday week Dickey, Hernandez and the other two Water Dawgs, Spc. David Hinson and Staff Sgt. Eric Wolberg deliver four Buffaloes to meet the children's needs over extended weekends.

Have a comment or question? E-mail: George.Kyriakeas@jtfb.southcom.mil