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WWII Veteran receives Purple Heart after 60 years

By 2nd Lt. Mike Andrews
21st Space Wing Public Affairs

The 21st Space Wing commander helped correct a half-century oversight Tuesday when he traveled to Ordway, Colo. to present the Purple Heart to a combat veteran of World War II.

Former U.S. Army Air Corps Private First Class Michael J. Chavez, who now lives in Rocky Ford, Colo., was injured in the line of duty in 1944. Though he qualified for the honor, he never received the medal, a situation now rectified thanks to members of his family and Kehler.

"Michael Chavez symbolizes the true meaning of the word hero. He answered his nation's call to defend and protect the freedoms and liberties so others could enjoy a life of freedom and peace," said Kehler.

Chavez served in the European Theatre Combat Zone as a rifleman and anti-tank gunner with Company G, 41st Armored Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Division. During an armored battle in Germany in October 1944, Chavez was atop a tank when it rolled over a landmine. He was thrown from tank, seriously injuring his legs and completely losing hearing in his left ear.

After recovering from his injuries, Chavez was assigned to the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he completed his foreign service, which became a separate branch of service in 1947. Chavez was honorably discharged from service Dec. 14, 1945, as a private first class.

Why it took nearly 60 years for his Purple Heart to be awarded is a story in itself.

Decades ago, a devastating fire destroyed thousands of veterans' records in St. Louis, including Chavez's files. While Chavez didn't pursue the matter, his brother-in-law, Joe (also a veteran of WW II) determined that Michael was a true hero and deserved the honor and recognition of the Purple Heart. It became Joe's self-appointed yet daunting task to dig through war-era personal letters, unit records and official Veterans Administration documentation. His persistence paid off.

"It took a lot of piecing together, including letters my mother had received from dad during the war," said Chavez's son Rick. "Finally, it all paid off. The feeling is indescribable. The system worked."

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an armed force or any civilian national of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U.S. Armed Services



Photos by Senior Airman Shane Sharp

Brig. Gen. Bob Kehler, 21st Space Wing commander, pins the Purple Heart medal on Michael J. Chavez as Chavez's daughter Dede Lozzi looks on. Chavez was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds he received while serving as a private first class in World War II, nearly 60 years ago.

after April 5, 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded in battle.

In addition to his recently presented Purple Heart, Chavez was awarded three Battle Stars for three campaigns: Normandy, Northern France and Rhineland. He also earned the Good Conduct Medal, European African Middle Eastern Service Medal, the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service, and the World War II Victory Medal. He, and his fellow local veterans, recently received the Jubilee of Victory medal awarded by the French government for service in the Normandy Invasion.

Chavez says he has lived a full life, with many memories. How did he feel when he received his medal, after so many years?

"Honored," he said.

"We are honored and overwhelmed with pride to see Dad finally get his Purple Heart," said daughter Dede Lozzi. "When we told him what was happening, he got a big grin and said honored. Then, still grinning, he added 'bout time'."



Chavez and his wife of 60 years, Stella, pose for a photo during Tuesday's ceremony.

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Straight Talk Line 556-9154

Call the 21st Space Wing Straight Talk Line for current information on real-world wing events.

Today we remember our heroes

Dec. 7, 1941 is a date permanently etched in our minds as an event in history that changed the world and this nation forever. The attack on Pearl Harbor awoke this nation and our military to the possibilities of foreign military attack in our own backyard and the need to constantly be vigilant of our adversaries. How could any armed force large enough to inflict credible damage possibly make it to Pearl Harbor, undetected, and take out virtually the entire Pacific Fleet of the United States Navy? It was all but unthinkable that a day would come when lives would be shattered in so few moments and be remembered as "a date which will live in infamy."

As we pause in remembrance of Pearl Harbor Day and all it signifies, heroes come to mind. These real heroes helped define what this country is today. They are courageous men and women who many of us cherish

in our photo albums, saved letters, conversations with elders, and our memories. Many heroes that day will never be known or immortalized in our history books but they made the ultimate sacrifice to do their duty and defend America.

There are other heroes too, like Michael J. Chavez, highlighted in today's *Observer*, who quietly and patriotically put his family and life on hold while putting it all on the line because his country needed him. Tuesday I had the distinct honor of presenting the Purple Heart to this great American almost 60 years after he was seriously wounded while fighting in World War II. Through his family's efforts, not his own, the country and the Air Force were able to repay him in a small way for all he has done and all he stands for. There is no better way to define a true hero.

Today, we have even more reason

to remember our heroes because we have even more heroes than ever before. Sept. 11, 2001 reminded us you can never be fully prepared for the harm enemies want to inflict on us, and it reminds us that ordinary people when faced with extraordinary circumstances can do extraordinary things for the sake of freedom. There can be no better reason than this very moment to be ever vigilant and ever aware to expect the unexpected. The world is a changing, sometimes volatile place, where it is our job – here in the 21st and around the Air Force – to keep a watchful eye over our friends, our potential enemies, and ourselves. It's also a place we can count on heroes. This day and its history remind us of that unwavering fact.

Brig. Gen. Bob Kehler
21st Space Wing commander

Action line

Submitting Action Lines

The Action Line (556-7777 or fax 556-7848) is your direct link to me. It provides an avenue for you to voice concerns over problems, share good ideas or provide some constructive criticism. The Action Line is not a replacement for the chain of command. They can help make the Peterson and the wing a better place to live and work.



Brig. Gen. Bob Kehler

Seeing the world change

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

The world changed forever on Dec. 7, 1941. American service members based in Hawaii saw that seminal moment in history, and those alive today still vividly remember that Sunday morning 60 years ago.

Fittingly, at the Veterans Memorial in Memorial Park today, many veterans, active-duty military and citizens from around Colorado Springs, will gather to remember the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, during a 60th Anniversary Observance ceremony.

One veteran who will be remembering that day is George Phraner. Phraner was a petty officer first class aboard the battleship USS Arizona. His battle station was a forward 5-inch gun. He had just gone topside to get some air after finishing breakfast when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor started.

"Just as we left the mess area we heard this noise," he said in an oral history on the Pearl Harbor Survivors' Association Web site. "We could hear and see there were airplanes. I looked across the bow of the ship and could see large plumes of smoke coming up from Ford Island."

He said he didn't comprehend at first that what he was seeing was an attack.

"It didn't mean anything to us until a large group of planes came near the ship and we could see for the first time the Rising Sun emblem on the plane wings," he said. "The bombing was becoming heavier all around us and we knew this was REALLY IT!" He headed for his gun when general quarters sounded.

"It was standard practice to keep only a limited amount of ammunition at the guns," Phraner said. "There we were, the Japanese dropping bombs over

us and we had no ammo. All the training and practicing ... and when the real thing came we had no ammunition where we needed it."

But this fact saved his life. His gun captain pointed to him and told him to go aft and bring up ammunition from the magazines.

"I remember getting these cases of ammo powder and shells weighing about 90 pounds each," he said. "I had begun lifting shells into the hoist when a deafening roar filled the room and the entire ship shuddered."

The explosion was the ship's forward magazines exploding after a hit by an armor-piercing Japanese bomb. "Only moments before, I stood with my gun crew just a few feet from the center of the explosion," Phraner said. "My whole gun crew was killed."

Phraner was in the dark, and smoke quickly filled the compartment. He was burned as he climbed up the ladders.

"Getting through that choking kind of smoke was a real ordeal – the kind of smoke that really hurt your lungs," he said. "After awhile, I began to get weak and lightheaded. I could feel myself losing the battle to save my own life. I hung to the ladder, feeling good. I felt that it was all right for me to let go."

But he looked up and saw a speck of light and he kept climbing.

"After what seemed to me like an eternity, I reached the deck gasping and choking. I lay down for a few moments," he said. "The warm Hawaiian air filled my lungs and cleared my head. I glanced over to the forward end of the ship to see nothing but a giant wall of flame and smoke. Behind me, a Marine



The USS Arizona burns in Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941.

lay dead on the deck, his body split in two. I began to realize there were dead men all around me."

The Arizona was doomed. Phraner abandoned ship, swam to Ford Island and would live to serve on other Navy ships throughout the Pacific War.

The Arizona remains where it sank and its stripped, sunken hull still seeps oil even after 60 years. It is the tomb of many of the 1,177 crewmembers known to have died in the attack. The National Park Service operates a hall-like, 184-foot-long memorial building that sweeps over the ship's beam.

Contrary to popular legend, the USS Arizona is no longer in commission. As a special tribute to the ship and its lost crew, however, the Stars and Stripes fly from a flagpole attached to the ship's severed mainmast.

In 1998, another famous battleship docked near the Arizona Memorial, bringing a kind of closure to the Pearl Harbor experience. That fitting symbol was the USS Missouri. The Japanese boarded the Missouri in Tokyo Bay on Sept. 2, 1945, to sign the instruments of surrender.

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21st Space Wing Commander
Brig. Gen. Bob Kehler
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NCOIC Internal Information
Staff Sgt. Gino Mattoraro
Newspaper Staff
Staff Sgt. Melanie Epperson
Senior Airman
Josh Clendenen
2nd Lt. Suzy Kohout
Senior Airman Shane Sharp

B-2 pilots challenge youth to pursue dreams

By Staff Sgt. Gino Mattorano
21st Public Affairs

B-2 Stealth bomber pilots from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. visited Peterson Nov. 29 to make a presentation to a Colorado Springs boy who was recently adopted from foster care.

The pilots, from the 325th Bomb Squadron, decided to make the presentation after reading a story in the Colorado Springs *Gazette* about 10-year-old A.J. Barrett, who was highlighted for his struggles within the foster care system and his eventual adoption by Billy Jack and Anne Barrett of Colorado Springs.

In the story, A.J. expressed an interest in flying the stealth bomber and the pilots decided to personally deliver a lithograph of the B-2 Stealth bomber, signed by members of their unit, to the boy who showed the determination it takes to be a pilot in America's premier air and space force.

"My mother-in-law sent me a copy of the story and I was so impressed with A.J.'s story I decided we ought to do something for him," said Capt. Rhett Binger, 325th BS. "We decided to pass a lithograph around the squadron and have everyone sign it and then send it to A.J. When I took it in to our squadron commander to sign, he asked us why we didn't just fly it out there in person, so that's what we decided to do."

Because of the high-cost involved with flying the B-2, Binger and three other 325th BS pilots made plans to fly T-38 trainer aircraft to Peterson to make the presentation while using the trip as

a training flight.

Binger, Capt. Marvin Ashe Baker, Joe Hall and Dave Benson, gathered unique squadron items like a hat, scarf and squadron patches and the signed lithograph and contacted the Barrett family to arrange a meeting.

"When Capt. Binger contacted us we were really excited," said Anne Barrett. "A.J. really loves airplanes and we were thrilled at the idea."

When Anne told A.J. about the visit, he summed up his excitement in one word, "Cool!"

The Barrett family arrived early Nov. 29 to meet the pilots as they arrived. A.J.'s eyes lit up as the T-38s pulled into their parking spots and Binger and company stepped from the cockpit and greeted the eager youth and his family.

During the visit, the B-2 crew presented A.J. with the items they had brought and encouraged him to pursue his dreams.

"A.J., you've demonstrated the type of determination and desire that we look for in an Air Force pilot," said Binger. "If you study hard and continue to do the best in everything you do, you'll one day realize your dreams."

Both A.J. and his new parents were impressed with their visitors.

We were just overwhelmed at their response," said Anne Barrett. "It was amazing to us that they would fly out here and do this for us. A.J. was so impressed with those men, I've never seen him so focused on anything. Like most 10-year-olds, he's usually distracted very easily, but it was like he was



Photo by Staff Sgt. Gino Mattorano
Capt. Rhett Binger, a B-2 pilot from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., gives A.J. Barrett, of Colorado Springs, a taste of what it's like to be a pilot during his visit to Peterson Nov. 29.

trying to absorb every piece of what he was seeing and hearing."

A.J. shared Anne's impressions of his visitors and expressed his gratitude for the items he was given and the priv-

ilege of meeting his heroes.

As A.J. watched the T-38s roar into the sky, he once again voiced his excitement and enthusiasm of his dream to Fly - "That was cool!"

Are we doing the right thing in Afghanistan?

Americans continue to support military efforts on the war on terrorism and members of Team Peterson are no exception.

According to polls conducted by a variety of survey organizations, pub-

lic support of the war on terrorism remains at 85-90 percent.

Historically, the current levels of support are higher than they have been for any other war since World War II, according to Gallup Poll

analyses. They have been asking this question since the Korean conflict, and this is the lowest "mistake" reading that Gallup has found.

Americans continue to recognize that this will be a long war rather than

a short war. In mid-September, 92 percent said it would be a long war, and 6 percent said it would be a short war. Now, the numbers are 87 and 11 percent respectively. *(Information courtesy The Gallup Organization)*



Maj. Gerry Ashby
21st Space Wing
Plans and Programs

"Yes, were doing the right thing. We need to systematically remove terrorists from the earth."



Tech Sgt. Chris Stephens
21st Space Wing Manpower

"Yes, but I wish our leadership would step up and declare that we are at war. Our military brothers are dying for the values and principles this country was built upon."



C.J. Jardin
Fitness center

"We're doing the right thing, but we shouldn't have waited so long to do it. This is the second time the World Trade Center was attacked and the USS Cole was recently attacked by the same group."



Dallas Sandland
Contract employee, John Bowman Construction

"I think they're doing a good job. They're on the right track, but they need to eliminate Osama Bin Laden."



Airman 1st Class Damian Sharpe
810th Medical Operations Squadron

"Yes, terrorism has to stop. It's happening all over the world. Terrorism not only kills, it affects the economy as well."

Navy ship-naming ceremony honors Air Force hero

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

CHARLESTON, S.C. -- Air Force war hero and Medal of Honor recipient, Airman 1st Class William Pitsenbarger, was honored at a Navy ship-naming ceremony Nov. 28, at Detyens Shipyard here.

Pitsenbarger, a pararescuer, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for treating and protecting scores of wounded infantrymen while under intense enemy fire after being mortally wounded himself, in a rain forest stronghold near the Vietnamese capital of Saigon in 1966.

Pitsenbarger's heroism was honored when a chartered ship operated for the Navy's Military Sealift Command -- the ocean transportation provider for the Department of Defense -- was named MV A1C William H. Pitsenbarger. The ship will preposition Air Force ammunition at sea near potential war or contingency sites.

Air Force Gen. John W. Handy, commander in chief of U.S. Transportation Command and commander of Air Mobility Command, was the keynote speaker for the ceremony.

A pair of F-15E Strike Eagles from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., flew over the ship when Richardene Brewer, wife of Navy Rear Adm. David L. Brewer III,

commander of Military Sealift Command, broke the ceremonial bottle of champagne officially naming the ship.

"This ship will live up to its heroic namesake, going into harms way if necessary to deliver the ammunition that the Air Force needs to carry out its worldwide mission," said the admiral during the hourlong ceremony. "We welcome this outstanding ship to the Military Sealift Command fleet."

Handy spoke of the tremendous heroism Pitsenbarger demonstrated repeatedly. He told of one mission where Pitsenbarger had figured out a way to extract a wounded soldier in a minefield at great risk to himself, earning him the Air Force Airman's Medal afterward.

"Freedom does not come without a price," Handy said. "Like William H. Pitsenbarger, this ship will carry the essence of America's warfighters. Every single steel plate is a symbol of the American hero for which she is named and the iron resolve that he displayed that bitter day. Her cargo will be used to defend freedom around the world."

The Pitsenbarger will carry Air Force containerized ammunition. Air Force munitions are loaded into side-loaded 20-foot International Standardization Organization containers that are carried on these ships. The ship can hold containers with a net explosive weight of about 6 million pounds, which can



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Buytas

Guests look on as two F-15E Strike Eagles from the 333rd Fighter Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., perform a fly-over during the naming ceremony for MV A1C William H. Pitsenbarger. The chartered ship will be used to preposition Air Force ammunition at sea near potential war or contingency sites. Pitsenbarger will operate from the Diego Garcia area in the Indian Ocean.

weigh about 7 to 8 million short tons. About 720 containers fit under the deck and 135 in compartments above deck. Both cargo areas will be air-conditioned and dehumidified to protect the ammunition.

The Pitsenbarger has five cranes on the deck that allow the ship to on- and off-load ammunition without shoreside cranes. This critical feature gives Pitsenbarger the flexibili-

ty to off-load in undeveloped ports.

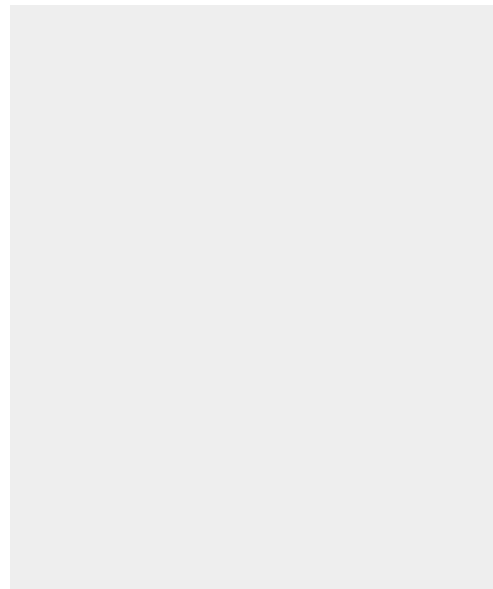
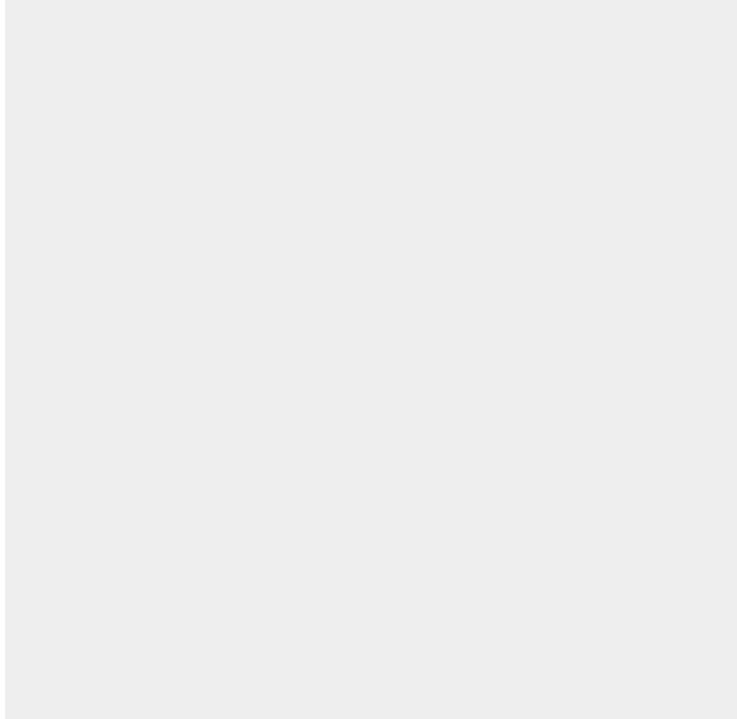
First Lt. Mike Lenehan, program manager for the Air Force Afloat Preposition fleet at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, oversees the three container ships for the Air Force. The Pitsenbarger is the newest container ammunition ship. Military Sealift Command obtains the ships for the Air Force.

"A typical ship has a crew of about 20 people, but there is constant maintenance required and everything is on a time schedule just like your car," Lenehan said. "The ship will

go to a designated port and will occasionally slow steam and operate all the cranes to maintain a certain state of readiness."

"During Enduring Freedom, we've already had to use ship cranes to download some of these containers (on the other two container ammunition ships) at some austere ports," he said.

The Pitsenbarger is owned by RR & VO L.L.C. and operated by Red River Shipping Corp. of Rockville, Md., for MSC. MSC charts the ships for five years. (Courtesy of Air Force Print News)



21st Space Wing



GSU

Corner

Thule Air Base: A piece of the 21st Space Wing on the outskirts of Earth

Thule, Greenland, isn't really the edge of the earth, but ancient adventurers might be forgiven for thinking it was. According to Maj. Matthew Carroll, alert operations, 12th Space Warning Squadron, at Thule Air Base, the word Thule is Latin and means "the northernmost part of the inhabitable world."

Daunting, as that might sound, it doesn't intimidate 12th SWS members who for years have journeyed to the Air Force's most remote "remote" for a 12-month tour, said Carroll, who calls it "serving with pride in the middle of the Arctic Circle".

For dozens of years, Thule was the "bogyman" of the Air Force, about which old, grouchy supervisors made mock threats: "Don't make me send you to Thule." Whether or not the "threat" was real, it was likely effective because Thule AB has always been around - well, almost as long as the Air Force has, anyway. Built on the northwestern shore of Greenland in 1951, it was vital for Strategic Air Command forward operations, and home to bombers, tankers and air defense interceptors, Carroll explained.

He added that at the height of the cold war, more than 10,000 Air Force and Army members were stationed at the base where, today, a fraction of that number serves a multi-national mission.

The Ballistic Missile Early Warning System radar came to the outpost in 1961, built about 13 miles north of the base. There it still exists, still used to detect and provide early warning in the event of a missile launch against North America.

Thule was a busy place until the late '60s, shrinking quickly and noticeably when flying units deactivated, and personnel and missions were drawn down.

While the mission may have changed and the population may be smaller, Thule AB and the 12th SWS play a key strategic role in national defense, Carroll explained. BMEWS continues to perform missile warning and space surveillance missions, and the 12 SWS also provides support to Detachment 3, 22nd

Space Operations Squadron.

Det. 3 is the northernmost satellite tracking station in the Air Force Satellite Control Network, and it directly supports space operations, providing data and service to United States' and its allies' satellites in polar orbit.

Because of its unique location on the globe, the base also serves as a starting point for numerous scientific and international research expeditions exploring the arctic, said Carroll, and added that because of Thule's 10,000-foot runway, the base supports critical supply operations for other Danish and Canadian observation stations north of Thule.

Supplying Thule AB with what it needs for mission and personnel support is no piece of cake, either. Although aircraft have access (weather permitting) to the installation, basic supplies are delivered via cargo ships that must be escorted in by "icebreaker" vessels. And re-supply is an annual event, so restocking the pantry isn't quite for Thule troops as for, say, a Peterson person who just needs a quart of milk at midnight.

If you think a 12-month tour at the "edge of the earth" might be a great "low-key" place to spend some time, maybe study for promotion, think again.

"Thule Air Base is actually a hotbed of activity, as recent events have proven," Carroll explained. This summer, for example, Thule experienced a series of events unlike any in its 50-year history.

Severe flooding in August disrupted water and fuel lines leading to the main base. Power lines and transportation routes to the BMEWS and Det. 3 area were also cut off, and that threatened mission operations. In addition, Greenpeace protesters in the area planned to drop by the base for a visit, which probably would have further disrupted recovery efforts.

Knowing that outside help was, at best, days away, 12th SWS Commander, Col. Craig Whitehead, looked to Thule military members and contractors for



Photo by Master Sgt. Michael Shapiro

A heavy equipment operator with Greenland Contractors works to remove drainage pipe damaged during August flooding.

solutions.

"Efforts by Team Thule personnel maintained 100 percent operational capability for all missions, continued re-supply operations and thwarted Greenpeace protesters. Despite the Herculean efforts to recover from the flood, Thule spirit and morale remain high," the commander said.

His perception of his team is not exaggerated pride. During a recent visit to the installation, the American Ambassador to Denmark said "Team Thule is a remarkable organization. Your professionalism and commitment to excellence is unmatched."

Carroll and the Thule team already knew that, though. For the men and women of the 12th, excellence is the standard, not the exception, Carroll said.

Injured servicemembers receive Purple Heart

By Master Sgt. Joe Bela
U.S. Air Forces in Europe Public Affairs

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany -- Four of the five U.S. servicemembers injured during a prison uprising in Afghanistan were presented Purple Hearts Dec. 1 at Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center in Germany.

The four soldiers and one airman, identified only by rank and first name, are members of the elite U. S. Special Forces. They were wounded Nov. 26 during a three-day battle with armed Taliban members who were being detained in Quala-

i-JanGi, a fortress located about 10 miles west of Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan.

Army Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Lambert, commanding general of U.S. Army Special Forces Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., presented the soldiers -- Capt. Kevin and Paul; 1st Sgt. David; and Sgt. 1st Class Paul -- with their medals during a brief ceremony attended by international media. All four men are Green Berets assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Campbell, Ky.

"They paid a price in blood here," Lambert said. "They

have given their blood in the war against terrorism."

The fifth injured servicemember, Air Force Staff Sgt. Mike from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron at Hurlburt Field Air Force Base, Fla., opted to have his Purple Heart presented to him among family and friends at his home station.

The men sustained injuries ranging from abrasions to ruptured eardrums and broken bones when a U.S. bomb inadvertently struck near their position during the battle.

Recalling the events that led to the friendly fire incident, Capt. Paul said they were part of an 11-man element sent to assist the northern alliance when the uprising began.

"Northern alliance forces were sustaining heaving casualties during the uprising. On the morning of Nov. 26, we arrived at the fortress," he said. "Three of us, Sgt. Paul and Sgt. Mike and I, made our way up to the top of a wall where we started receiving some direct small-arms fire and also some mortar fire.

"We needed some backup so 1st Sgt. Dave and Capt. Kevin also made their way up to the roof to assist us; (they also) ran into some fire," he said. "We realized that even though we could see the Taliban, we weren't going to be able to do much good because of the fire we were receiving."

The team eventually made



Photo by Master Sgt. John P. Snow
Air Force Staff Sgt. Mike, one of five Special Forces servicemembers injured during the prison uprising in Quala-JanGi, Afghanistan, responds to questions during a Dec. 1 interview.

its way to a new position and set up behind a wall for protection, but Taliban forces struck again, Capt. Paul said.

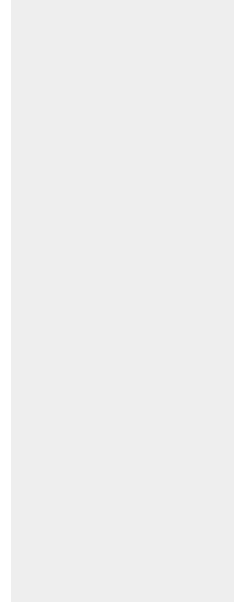
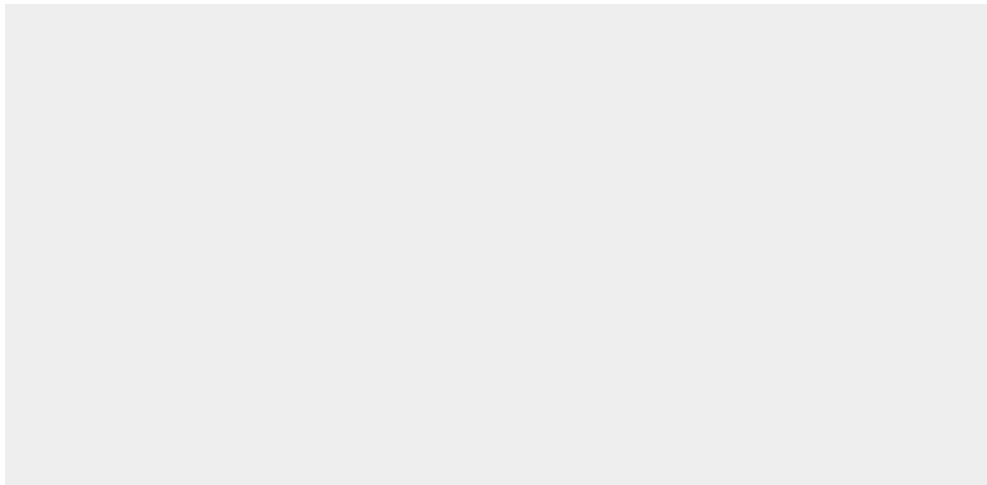
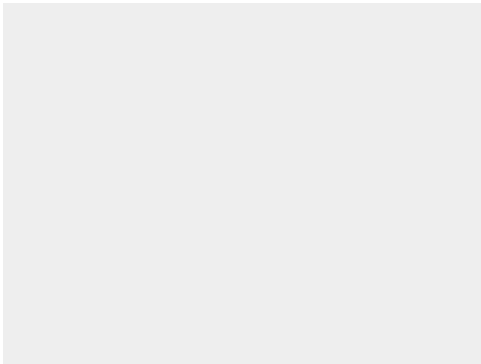
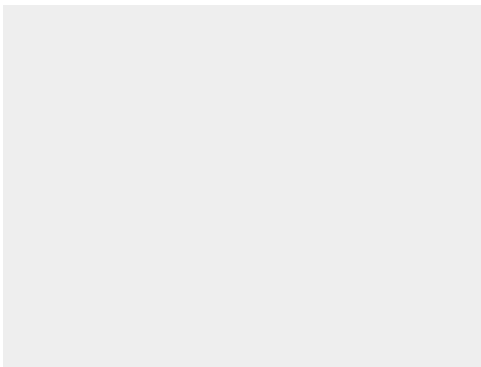
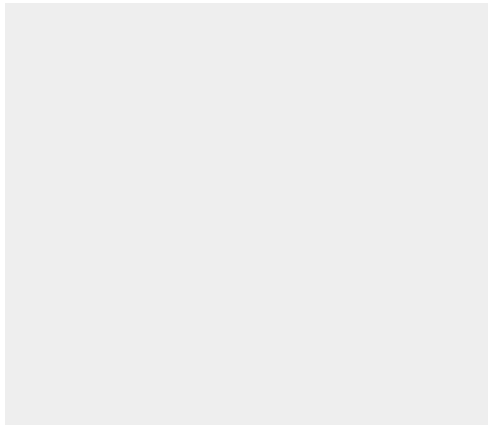
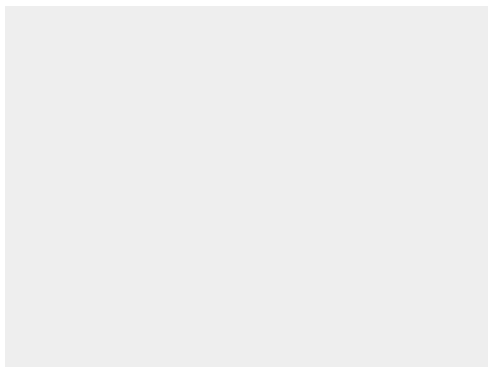
"There was machinegun fire and mortar rounds were landing all around us," he said.

The team established communications with fighter aircraft in the area and directed them to the target, Capt. Paul said. The fighters began to make their run and the next thing they all knew, they were flying through the air.

"It took me about a second to realize what had happened," said Staff Sgt. Mike, the mission's combat controller and ground link between the aircraft and the ground units.

"There was a flash and the next thing I know, I'm airborne," he said. "I hit the ground and stayed there for about a second or so to make sure I had all my body parts. Once I knew I was all there, I went back to the top of the hill and kind of assessed the situation."

See PURPLEHEART, Page 7



— PURPLEHEART, From Page 6

"It was a weird feeling, to say the least," said Capt. Paul. "I remained conscious the whole time."

Unable to move because his left leg was pinned behind his torso when he hit the ground, Capt. Paul waited until 1st Sgt. Dave appeared.

"I went over to him, and he was saying something like 'I can't move; I can't move.' First thing, though, I had to find a weapon," said 1st Sgt. Dave. "We'd been blown forward off the wall of the fortress. My weapon was there in front of me, and, then, all of a sudden, I'm lying there on the ground with no weapon.

"I realized I had all my body parts, and I got up. I found a weapon, grabbed it, and then I moved to (Capt. Paul)," he said.

"He said he couldn't move, but I said he was going to move because we were (exposed) and could have gotten engaged by the Taliban. I got him up and started talking to him. I pushed him up the wall, and then the northern alliance guys felt we ran out of gas toward the top and (helped)," he said.

Eventually, the men gathered and realized one was missing: Capt. Kevin. Those who could, set out to look for him. They found him lying down at the base of a wall.

"He was further out than where we'd been," said Capt. Paul. "He was just lying on the ground; he wasn't moving. It looked really serious."

A Quick Reaction Force soon arrived to evacuate and treat the injured. The men were flown by helicopter to a nearby field hospital for initial treatment. Eventually, an Air Force C-9 Nightingale brought the injured to Germany from Turkey.

(Courtesy of USAFE News Service)

Local school children send care packages in support of deployed military members

By Christie Bond

21st SW Public Affairs

Carolyn Fairchild's fifth grade class wants to show their support for America in the war against terrorism.

The 23 students from Woodmen-Roberts Elementary School are making care packages to send to Peterson AFB people deployed in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

"I always have my class do something community service-oriented during the holiday season," said Mrs. Fairchild. "Care packages for our servicemen and women seemed perfect for this year."

The students plan to include items such as magazines, playing cards, sunglasses and chapstick. Each package will also contain a letter from a student and stationary for the recipient to respond back to the class.

As part of their care package project, the class also produced a two-minute newscast about their effort to be shown on the school's cable channel.

Nov. 30, four student reporters interviewed Senior Airman Terry Todachine, 21st Support Group Information Manager, about his recent deployment to Kuwait. Todachine gave them insight into how it feels to be separated from family and friends, how it feels to get a care package and what items he appreciated most while deployed. The show, which opened with the group saying "Hello, how are you?" in Arabic, aired Monday.

After the filming, Todachine taught the rest of the class the Arabic greeting and talked with them



Photo by Christie Bond

Senior Airman Terry Todachine, 21st Support Group information manager, is interviewed by students at Woodmen-Roberts Elementary School about his deployment to Kuwait and the care packages he received.

about his experiences while deployed. Questions from the students ranged from what kind of candy deployed people like most to whether or not they have automobiles in Kuwait. They were especially interested in sand storms, native reptiles and living arrangements on base.

Shane Hays, one of the student reporters, summed up what the care package project means to the class when he said, "We feel good that we're doing this for our servicemen and women."

Guarding the high frontier

Peterson security forces ensure safety of base personnel, resources

“Force Protection is a base issue. It’s not just security forces carrying a weapon or doing building security checks – we all participate”

- Lt. Col. Lyle Cary, 21st SFS commander

By Staff Sgt. Gino Mattorano
21st SW Public Affairs

In the wake of attacks on America Sept. 11, military bases around the world have been on heightened alert and Peterson Air Force Base is no exception.

Maintaining this higher state of readiness has created new challenges for security forces and the 21st Security Forces Squadron has aggressively tackled this challenge.

“Security has always been important,” said Lt. Col. Lyle Cary, 21st SFS commander. “Call it law enforcement, crime prevention air base defense, or weapon systems security, it all comes down to protecting resources and people on our installation and it takes everyone to do it.

More than ever, this reality has forced security forces to balance security with impact on installation operations for the approximately 6,000 people assigned to Peterson.

“Security has to come first,” said Cary. “We’ve never had to deal with this type of threat here in the Continental United States. We’re constantly re-evaluating the threat and adjusting our security posture accordingly. But we can’t do it alone – we need everyone’s help.

“We need people to be sensors. Be constantly vigilant for things that look out of the ordinary and report them to security forces or OSI. People are



Photos by Dennis Plummer

Above: Airman 1st Class Adrena Hancock, a security forces augmentee, inspects a vehicle at Peterson’s main gate. Vehicles are inspected randomly, and all vehicles entering the base are subject to search.

Left: Airman 1st Class Pamela Cavit, 21st Security Forces Squadron, stands ready with an M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon at a defensive fighting position.

Below: Staff Sgt. Jeff Whiteman, a security forces augmentee, patrols the base using an all-terrain vehicle. All-terrain vehicles help security forces patrol the areas of the base that aren’t easily reached by patrol car.

doing that and we appreciate it, but we need to stay focused. As time goes by and nothing happens, there will be a tendency to get back to business as usual mindset, so we need to ensure we maintain a balanced level of readiness.”

To ensure Peterson maintains the appropriate level of readiness, security forces work with the Office of Special Investigations, and local and federal law enforcement officials to identify levels of threats and adjust force protection levels accordingly.

Sustaining increased force protection levels creates a need for more security forces members than are normally available, so bases have a secret weapon to assist them in these times of need – the Ready Augmentee program.

Air Force members in career fields ranging from information management to computer maintenance are tasked to leave the comfort of their offices and work side by side with security policemen.

Before they can do this, they must undergo a crash course in the critical security forces tasks they may be asked to

perform.

“Before augmentees begin working, they first receive training in areas such as use of force, handcuffing, searching, and officer safety,” said Staff Sgt. Dale Campbell, 21st SFS augmentee manager. “They also have to qualify on the M-16 rifle and M-9 pistol. The training we provide gives them the basic skills they need to work with our security policemen.”

Despite the training they receive, augmentees aren’t expected to work on their own. They’re paired with security policemen and work at a variety of jobs ranging from maintaining flightline security to inspecting vehicles as they enter the base.

How valuable is the assistance they provide? “They’ve been instrumental,” said Tech. Sgt. Dean Bayens, 21st SFS Alpha Flight chief. “Without them we’d be working 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I integrate them into my flight and schedule them as if they were regular cops. By having additional people on the gates we can maintain heightened security, while keeping traffic moving into the base.”

The augmentees also provide an added benefit to the squadron.

“They come in excited about helping us and their enthusiasm rubs off on our own people,” said Bayens. “They’re great.”

So what’s it like to be pulled from your chosen career and stuck in a job you didn’t ask for? Many security forces augmentees are pleasantly surprised about their new work.

“When I was selected, I’d only been here for a few months,” said Staff Sgt. Chantel Pursley,

who’s normally a personnel specialist assigned to Air Force Space Command. “I wasn’t looking forward to being an augmentee, but so far, it’s been a great experience. It’s really been an eye opener for me. In the past I’ve taken what the cops do for granted, but when you do it yourself, it makes you appreciate it more.”

Augmentees also learn what it’s like to be the one holding up traffic when people are in a hurry to get to work.

“Sometimes it’s surprising how intolerant people are about the delays,” said Staff Sgt. Cedric Mitchell, a computer maintenance technician normally assigned to the 21st Communications Squadron. “People don’t realize they’re being delayed for their safety. Being an augmentee has given me new appreciation for the important work our security forces do.”

So how can the people of Peterson help? According to Cary, vigilance and a watchful eye will help security forces to detect potential threats.

Security forces also asks that people be patient with delays. Those delays help to provide the security people enjoy here at Peterson.

According to Master Sgt. Scott Barnhart, 21st SFS Operations superintendent, people can help keep traffic moving smoothly by ensuring that everyone in the vehicle has their identifications out and ready when they drive up to the gate.

“When it comes to force protection, we must practice the Air Force core value of “excellence in all we do,” says Cary. “Not just security forces members – everyone. The alternative is unthinkable.”



Above: Airman 1st Class Adrena Hancock, a security forces augmentee, inspects a vehicle at Peterson’s main gate. Vehicles are inspected randomly, and all vehicles entering the base are subject to search.

Left: Airman 1st Class Pamela Cavit, 21st Security Forces Squadron, stands ready with an M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon at a defensive fighting position.

Below: Staff Sgt. Jeff Whiteman, a security forces augmentee, patrols the base using an all-terrain vehicle. All-terrain vehicles help security forces patrol the areas of the base that aren’t easily reached by patrol car.

Wing NCO ventures into unfamiliar territory

Senior Master Sgt. Bradley W. Steininger
21st Space Wing Plans and Programs superintendent

Have you considered stepping outside of your comfort zone and volunteering to help check IDs at the gates during the morning rush hours?

Admittedly, I was a little intimidated by the thought of working side-by-side with seasoned Security Forces troops to perform what is arguably the most important mission on Peterson AFB; checking IDs and searching vehicles at the base gates.

After all, this is the front line of defense where we ensure the safety of our facilities, missions and many of our family members. However, the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 brought about a new realization for me that perhaps it was time for me to get out from behind my desk and get a taste of what it's like to serve next to the Air Force's finest right here at Peterson.

So when the request went out for volunteers to augment the warriors at the gates I raised my hand and the very next day I found myself waking up way too early and then standing in the dark staring at my frosty breath which could be seen in the headlights of the line of cars waiting to get onto the base. My first thought was, "what in the world have I gotten myself into?"

Fortunately, after a short while I got the hang of checking the IDs and remembered some tricks for keeping warm (it had been many years since I'd been in a "tactical" environment). By the end of that first morning I was hooked. I'd found my niche and have taken every opportunity to get back out there and work the gate.

It's imperative for me to mention that I wasn't the only one out there as a volunteer. There are quite a few others that come out regularly as well. If you find your curiosity piqued and want more info, then contact the 21st Security Forces Operations Superintendent, Master Sgt. Scott Barnhart at 556-7167.



SSgt Eric Malone, 21st Security Forces Squadron, installation entry supervisor, checks identification at Peterson’s front gate. To prevent unnecessary delays, security forces asks that people have their identification ready when they arrive at the gate.



For your information

Today

- The Peterson Medical Clinic will close at 4:30 p.m. for an official function.
- Mothers on the Move, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Family Advocacy Center.

Saturday

- Kris Kringle Market (craft fair), 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Building 210.

Monday

- Mothers on the Move, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Family Advocacy Center.

Tuesday

- Advent Lunch Bunch, noon, at the Chapel.
- Sponsorship training, 7:30-8:30 a.m., at the Family Support Center.
- Toastmasters meeting, 11:35 a.m., at the Enlisted Club.

Wednesday

- Going Overseas class, 8-9 a.m., at the Family Support Center.
- Smooth Move Summary, 9-9:30



Photo courtesy of 21st SW Safety

Christmas decorating safety

When putting up Christmas lights please remember the following: Check cords for wear and tear, don't overload extension cords, don't run cords through doors/windows/ceilings/under carpets, etc. Most of all, don't splice cords together. Don't leave on after duty hours. Have a safe and Merry Christmas.

- a.m., at the Family Support Center.
- Story time for kids, 10:15 a.m., at the base library.
- Mothers on the Move, 9:30-10:30 a.m., at the Family Advocacy Center.

Thursday

- Holiday Support Lecture, 9-11 a.m. at the Chapel.
- Job orientation, 1-2:30 p.m., at the Family Support Center.
- Play Group, 10:30 a.m.-noon, at the Chapel.

Helpful Numbers

- Family Advocacy Center 556-8943
- Education Center 556-4064
- Library 556-7462
- Community Center 556-7671
- Aquatics Center 556-4608
- Fitness Center 556-4462
- Officers' Club 556-4181
- Enlisted Club 556-4194
- Youth Center 556-7220
- Family Support Center 556-6141
- Chapel 556-4442

Community Notes

Community News

21st SPACE WING HOLIDAY PARTY: This year's wing holiday party will be Dec. 21, 7-10 p.m., at the Officers Club. There will be door prizes, songs by the Mitchell High School Choir, and music and dancing. Tickets are on sale through Dec. 15, at \$5 for E-5 and below and \$8 for all others (there is a \$3 surcharge for non-members). Contact your unit POC to purchase your ticket(s). Designated drivers will also be available for those who need help. For more information contact 1st Lt. Lance Willoughby at 556-4911 or 2nd Lt. Richard VanSchoor at 556-4913.

NORAD/USSPACECOM/AFSPC HOLIDAY PARTY: The annual tri-command holiday party will be Dec. 15 at the Officers Club. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and dinner is served at 7 p.m. For more information, call Capt. Lorinda Frederick at 554-5575.

HELP NORAD TRACK SANTA: NORAD Public Affairs needs volunteers to help track Santa Claus on his Christmas journey. Volunteers will work in two-hour blocks, between 5 a.m. Dec. 24 and 3:30 a.m. Dec. 25, answering telephones and e-mail messages. Volunteers will work across from the Cheyenne Mountain visitor gate, or from their homes. Those who volunteer at the Cheyenne Mountain facility may bring their children. NORAD PA will provide refreshment and will play family videos during the event. There were more than 70 million "hits" on the Santa tracker Website last year, which generated more than 4,000 e-mail messages. In addition, more than 40 phones were busy the entire tracking period last Christmas. To volunteer, e-mail Maj. Doug Martin at douglas.martin@peterson.af.mil. In your message, include the time(s) you

want to work, whether you will work from home or from CMAS, and if you will have family members with you at the mountain.

HOLIDAY SUPPORT LECTURE: The Peterson Complex Federal Women's Program invites all to attend the December meeting to hear Dr. Lee Blackwood, the guest speaker, discuss "nutrition and keeping a positive attitude during the holidays." The meeting will be Thursday, 9-11 a.m., at the Chapel. To sign up, or for more information, contact Sandy Sharketti at 554-6544, or Suzanne Lucero at 554-4328.

KRIS KRINGLE MARKET: The Kris Kringle Market is a craft fair scheduled for Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Building 210 (on the flightline). Tables are for rent. Call 556-1733 for details.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD: The 168th Air Refueling Wing is hiring people to fill part-time positions for Clear Air Force Station, Alaska, in the following career fields:

1C6X1 - space operators, 13S3E - space operator crew commander. Other positions are available at Eielson Air Force Base. For more information, call 1-800-770-JETS (5387), or (907) 456-1016, e-mail jordan.niemuth@akeiel.ang.af.mil or tracy.gudgel@akeiel.ang.af.mil or try our website at www.akeiel.ang.af.mil

TAX VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: The base tax office needs volunteers for the coming tax season. Volunteers will be trained to serve as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance tax preparers. To volunteer or for more information, contact Tech. Sgt. Debra Henry at 556-4403, or at debra.henry@peterson.af.mil.

SILVER SPRUCE ANNUAL SALE: Customers can enjoy discounts on sportswear, golf clubs and bags,

videos, books, jewelry and more at Silver Spruce's annual sale. Gift wrapping is free for every purchase. The sale ends Dec. 24 at noon. Call 556-7414 for details.

Chapel

ADVENT LUNCH BUNCH: Everyone is invited to an hour of inspiration, fellowship and food Tuesday and Dec. 18, noon, at the Chapel. For more information, call 556-4442.

Community Activities Center

SNOFEST!!! FEB. 22-24 AT KEYSTONE RESORT Lodging reservations - Make them by Jan. 4 for the best military discounts and guaranteed availability. Lodging availability and discounts not guaranteed after Jan. 4. Call the CAC at 556-1733 for details.

PartiGras - Tickets are on sale at the CAC for \$7 each for those who purchase tickets by Feb. 15. Tickets purchased after Feb. 15 are \$10 each.

Lift tickets - Lift tickets are on sale now at the CAC. Adults (ages 13 and older) pay \$28 per day and youth (5-12 years) pay \$18 per day.

Rental equipment - Equipment is available for rent at Outdoor Recreation. Reserve equipment at least 24 hours in advance. Call 556-4867 for more information.

Races - Race categories include individual, team, commander's cup and challenge. Look for details in the January issue of Good Stuff or Leisure News. Register at Outdoor Recreation, call 556-4867.

For general information about SnoFest, visit or call the CAC, 556-7671 or 556-1733.

Chapel Schedule

Protestant Services

Liturgical Worship
8:15 a.m.

Traditional Sunday
Worship
11 a.m.

Gospel Services
12:30 p.m.

Sunday School
9:45 a.m.

Catholic Services

Mass
Weekdays

11:35 a.m.

Saturdays
5 p.m.

Sundays
9:30 a.m.

Reconciliation
Saturdays

4 p.m.

Religious Education

Adult and
pre K-12th grade

Sundays
8:30 a.m.

Space is part of DoD's transformation and integration mindset

By Capt. Vida V. Beard
Space and Missile Systems Center PA

LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. - Transformation within the Department of Defense or the Air Force is nothing new. It is part of our nature.

The broad mission for those in uniform and associated with the Department of Defense is to "defend the United States against all enemies: foreign and domestic." We change to do this. In World War II, the way we fought wars was fundamentally changed as a result of air power.

During the Cold War, we built a defense landscape that was prepared to handle strategic nuclear warfare.

After Vietnam, we learned lessons from guerilla warfare and retooled our military by bringing Special Operations Forces to the forefront.

Operation Desert Storm in the 1990s signaled the first true integration of space systems in joint warfare operations.

The terrorist attacks on Sept. 11th will bring about more change.

The military is transforming. Homeland defense is now one of our key missions, which is shared with many federal organizations. We are organizing, training and equipping to take on this mission.

At the same time, combating terrorism in Afghanistan has brought joint warfare to new levels. We have air, land,

sea and space forces working together to complement one another to accomplish their military objectives.

Space systems are playing a prominent role in this conflict in providing communications, weather, navigation and surveillance capabilities, which enable joint warfare. Over time, space systems will play

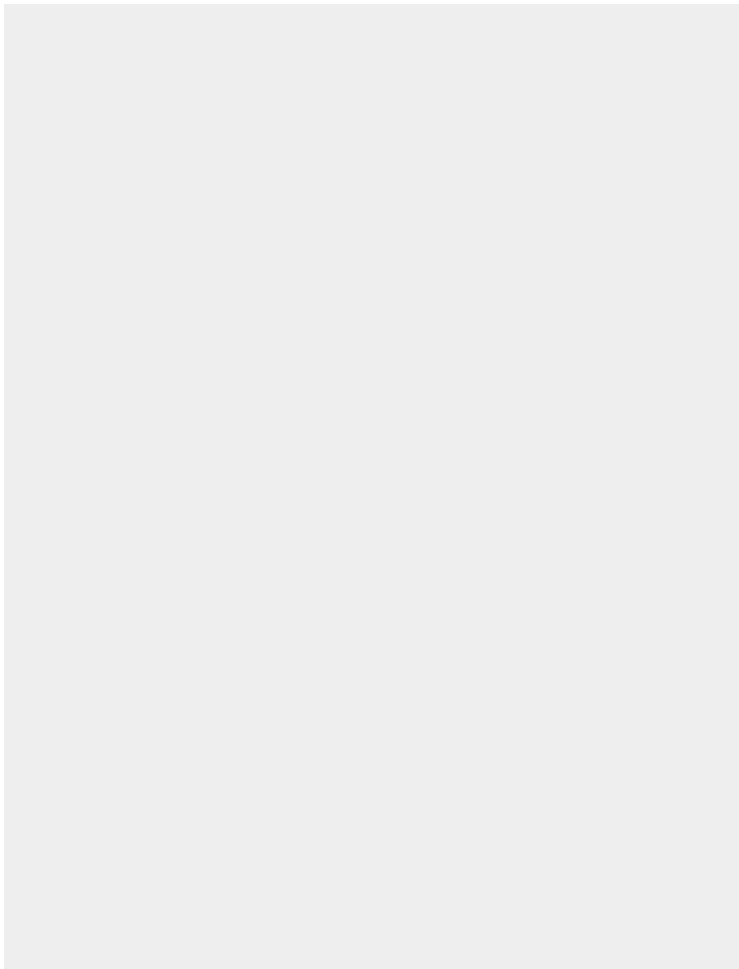
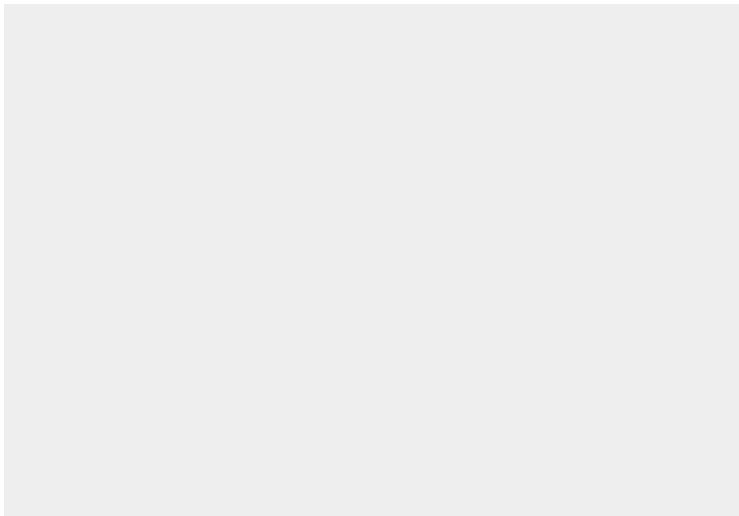
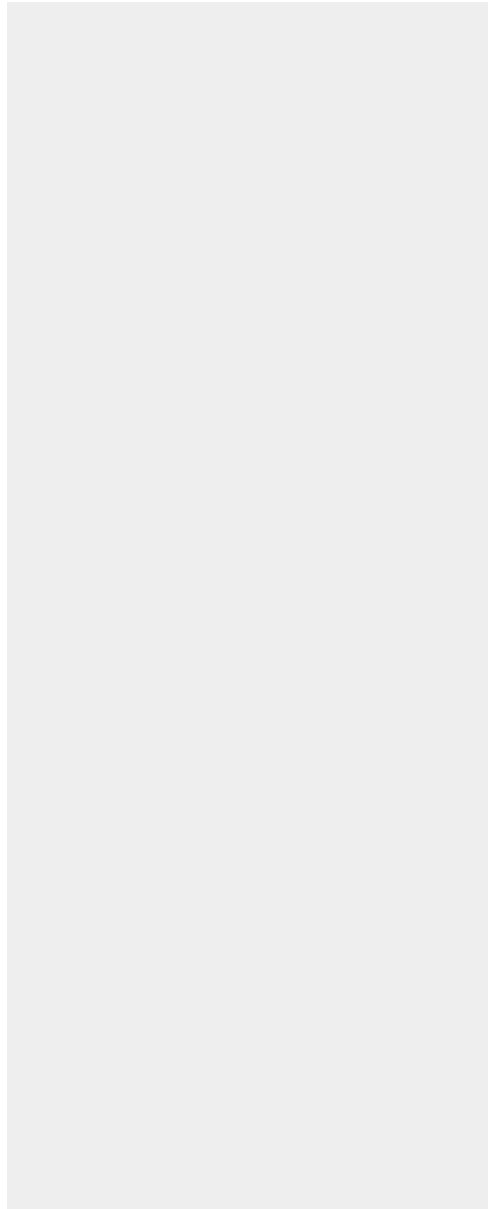
an even larger role in military operations here and abroad.

Transformation requires a new mindset; one that divorces airmen from their weapon system platforms and focuses on what the requirement is on the battlefield. Is it to strike a hardened target? Is it to gain target information on an area in theater? The answer is all

of the above.

Space is part of that new mindset. Space brings global reach, power and vigilance to the fight. What is as important is to integrate these abilities with the rest of DoD.

Transformation and integration are the norm in these times, and this will continue to be the case in the future.



HQ AFSPC wins flag football championship



Photos by Dennis Howk

Above: A diving Ben Bohl, AFSPC/CSS, pulls the flag of Luis Gruneiro, HQ AFSPC. Right: Michael Kimm, HQ AFSPC, releases the ball before Ken Lavoie, AFSPC/CSS, rushes in to yank his flag.



By Senior Airman Shane Sharp
21st SW Public Affairs

The Headquarters Air Force Space Command flag football team took home the base intramural football trophy Nov. 29 after two chilly games against AFSPC Communications Support Squadron.

HQ AFSPC came into the game undefeated.

"Our offense was very effective through out the season," said Michael Kimm, HQ AFSPC coach. "A big surprise this season was the strength of our defense. We had five shutouts and only gave up nine touchdowns all season, with five of those TDs coming in the championship games against AFSPC/CSS."

AFSPC/CSS won the first game 26-20. Since it was HQ AFSPC's first loss, another game would have to be played to decide who would be the intramural flag football champs.

"We knew we could win the first game," said Franco Santiago, AFSPC/CSS coach. "They run a unique offense but we figured out a way to counter it."

The deciding game started off with a HQ AFSPC touchdown and conversion. AFSPC/CSS

found themselves down by eight, but battled back to claim a four-point lead, 12-8.

HQ AFSPC found the endzone again, making it a 16-12 ball game.

With less than two minutes to go, AFSPC/CSS scored what would have been the go-ahead touchdown, but the play was called back because Santiago stepped over the line of scrimmage before throwing the ball.

"Relieved was the best word to describe our team after the second game against AFSPC/CSS," said Kimm. "Both games were very close, and either team could have easily won or lost either game."



Above: Franco Santiago, AFSPC/CSS, passes for a first down during the first championship game Nov. 29. Left: Karl Seppa, AFSPC/CSS, comes around the end on an option play during the second game.



Martin Cunningham, HQ AFSPC, runs past Karl Seppa, AFSPC/CSS, as he attempts to pull the flag while teammates Justin Monday (right) and Ben Bohl wait to make the stop if necessary.

Sports

Shorts

Holiday hours - The fitness center will be open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1.

Taekwondo - Taekwondo classes are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Fitness Center. Children 7-13, 6-7 p.m., and children 14 and older, 7-8 p.m. All military I.D. cardholders are eligible. Call 556-1515 for details.

Volleyball tournament - A volleyball tournament is Dec. 11 and 13. at the Fitness Center. The cost is \$10 per team. Game times will be 11 a.m.-2 p.m. The registration deadline is Wednesday. Call 556-1515 for details.

CMAFS 5K fun run - A 5K fun run is scheduled for Dec. 14. The entry fee is \$1. The deadline for registration and

race start time is 11:30 a.m. the day of the race. Participants should meet in front of the Technical Support Facility at CMAFS.

Dodgeball tournament - A dodgeball tournament is slated for Dec. 21, 11 a.m., at the Fitness Center. The cost is \$1 per person. Deadline for registration is Dec. 14. Call 556-1515 for more information.