

Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado

# SPACE OBSERVER

Thursday, March 3, 2005 Vol. 49 No. 9

## Co-Commanders program forges new partnerships



Brig. Gen. Webber

By 1st Lt. Jennifer Whitaker  
21st Space Wing Public Affairs

The newest crop of 21st Space Wing leaders doesn't wear uniforms, boast a bevy of assignments or blend acronyms into daily conversation.

They do, however, have their fingers on the pulse of the Colorado Springs community and represent a cross-section of civil-

ians who are the first in what is envisioned to be a long line of civic leaders entrusted with honorary command of 21st SW organizations.

Following the success of similar community relations programs around the Air Force, the 21st SW Co-Commanders Program will kickoff Tuesday night, matching community leaders with 21st SW commanders,

many of whom share similar interests and professions.

Drawing on his experience in another co-commanders program, Brigadier Gen. Richard E. Webber, 21st Space Wing commander, planted the seed for his wing's initiative.

"Our commanders need to know what's on the mind of the community, and strong partnerships are built upon open com-

munication, understanding and interaction – all cornerstones of the 21st Space Wing Co-Commanders Program," said Brig. Gen. Richard E. Webber, commander of the 21st SW.

The general foresees co-commanders participating in a multitude of unit events. Among them are: breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, commander's calls, *See Co-commander, Page 13*

## Services airman key to being a rock at the Rock

By Maj. David Simons  
386th AEW Public Affairs

ALI AL SALEM, KUWAIT – For Senior Airman Patricia Rojero, being part of the fitness staff at "The Rock" gymnasium at a forward deployed air base in Southwest Asia is more than the glamour life of working in the area's number one workout facility. It is a matter of life and death.

It isn't lost on this airman that her role is critical to the mission. She knew that before the base commander told her and every officer and enlisted person who have

attended the mandatory "Right Start" briefing.

As espoused by Col. Mike Keltz, 386th AEW Commander, the command belief is that "it is the airman at the base gym who provides and maintains the workout equipment that allows the aircrew member to workout, thus keeping them in peak flying condition. And should they have an in-flight emergency, they have the strength, mental and physical, to overcome the problem, thus saving the aircraft and crew." The statement is true, it is relevant, and it is the motivation and

*See Rock, Page 12*



Photo by 1st Lt. Tracy Giles

U.S. Air Force Academy cadets inspect their oxygen hoses before simulating flight pressures in the altitude chamber at Peterson Air Force Base.

## Aerospace Physiology provides critical training to Airmen

By 1st Lt. Tracy Giles  
21st Space Wing Public Affairs



"It's a great feeling to know that the information we give them can save their life and the lives of others."

Airman 1st Class Tyler Relph

Sixteen U.S. Air Force Academy cadets sat side by side in a pressurized altitude chamber awaiting directions from their 21st Space Wing Aerospace Physiology instructors at Peterson Air Force Base.

Airman 1st Class Tyler Relph, altitude chamber inside observer, began the experience by helping the cadets familiarize themselves with their oxygen masks, helmets and equipment, while inside the chamber with the cadets.

Major James Laswell, Aerospace Physiology training flight commander, sat opposite of Airman

Relph on the other end of the chamber to assist with observation duties.

"We are responsible for ensuring that Airmen have the proper information they will need to know while they are in the air," Airman Relph said. "We teach them parachuting procedures, oxygen components, cabin pressurization and physical symptoms at different altitudes."

Outside the chamber, Tech. Sgt. Idalina Foulk, NCO in charge of Aerospace Physiology operations, watched over the group in the chamber through a long, glass window.

Seated next to her was Airman 1st Class Maria Arteaga, chamber

*See Aerospace, Pages 10-11*

## NORAD – USNORTHCOM color guard performs at NBA All-star game

By Sgt. 1st Class Gail Braymen  
NORAD – USNORTHCOM Public Affairs

The fans crowding the seats at Denver's Pepsi Center Sunday night may have come to see Shaq and Yao and other top players compete in the NBA's annual all-star game, but before the first ball could swish through a hoop, another all-star team took the court.

As spectators clapped and cheered, the eight members of the North American

Aerospace Defense Command – U.S. Northern Command joint service color guard filed precisely onto the court, their flags held straight and steady, rifles resting on shoulders, uniforms sharp and faces solemn, military low-quarter shoes gleaming even more brightly than the polished wood beneath them.

On a stage at center court, the color guard joined members of the Air Force Academy choir, who sang the national anthem as the color

*See Color guard, Page 12*

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**21st Space Wing Commanders Call will be from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesday at the Peterson Air Force Base auditorium**

**Base closure updates**  
Base Realignment and Closure 2005 news is available on-line at [www.defenselink.mil/brac](http://www.defenselink.mil/brac).  
**Page 3**

**Tour guides needed**  
The 21st Space Wing Public Affairs office is currently seeking people to interview for positions in the base tour guide program. **Page 6**

**Weekend weather**  
Partly cloudy, rain **H L** and snow showers **53/27**  
**Snow Call 556-SNOW**  
For details, visit <https://petecentral.peterson.af.mil/21sw/weather/>  
(Information courtesy of 21st Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight)



# Murray testifies at new quality of life committee

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez

[Air Force Print News](#)

The Air Force's most senior enlisted airman testified Feb. 16 before the new House Appropriations Committee subcommittee on military quality of life and veterans' affairs.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray discussed quality of life issues, including morale, housing privatization, the value of Department of Defense schools, deployments and weight allowance increases.

"The morale we have today is one of commitment and determination that I have not seen the likes of since I have been in the service," Chief Murray said. "It is focused on the mission; it is not about having fun or the good times."

Chief Murray said that commitment is driven in part by the support of the American public, and much of the morale has been driven by the influx of patriotic Airmen who signed up for service after Sept. 11.

"There is a new energy coming into the force today; that is these young Americans – since our nation was attacked – who have chosen to join our military service," Chief Murray said. "Even when they see there are Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines being killed or wounded, they are volunteering to serve their nation."

Chief Murray said the largest

quality-of-life complaint was child care, followed by adequate housing. The Air Force has begun privatizing base housing at many stateside locations. The process involves private contractors building new homes on federal property. The homes then can be rented by military families using their basic allowance for housing. Chief Murray said the program is working well for Airmen.

"Where we have built the new homes, there is no question that our Airmen will live on the base, versus downtown, (because of) the quality of those homes," he said. "It is only where we have the inadequate housing that the Airmen will take their BAH and move downtown."

Asked about the importance of DOD Dependent Schools, Chief Murray said his own children have been in many types of schools during his service, but that the DODDS system has provided for him the best option.

"(My children) have been overseas; they have been stateside; they have been in Department of Defense schools," he said. "They have been in the very best of schools across the nations and have been in some of the very worst schools. But one of the things you are always guaranteed in DODDS schools is consistency."

Part of that consistency is a curriculum that matches up, grade by grade, across the DODDS system.

Because of a standardized curriculum, students who are forced to move can expect to re-enter a DOD school and pick up their studies where they left off. That consistency provides much needed stability for children, he said.

Another key stability factor for families is to know when a service-member is going to deploy. Chief Murray said the air expeditionary force system continues to provide families with that predictability.

"Our AEF process is based on a 120-day deployment in a 20-month cycle," Chief Murray said. "One of the things it does is provide predictability to the family. When you can tell a family when (an Airman) is going to deploy and when (he or she is) going to come home, then that is certainly something that destresses a lot of things for the family."

One quality-of-life issue the enlisted service chiefs raised in unison to legislators was increasing the weight allowances for permanent moves. Often, when military families make a permanent change of station, they are forced to eliminate some of their belongings because of the weight restrictions on government-funded moves.

"All you have to do is go into our housing areas, and you will find things on the street that you would not normally get rid of, or that you would not give away," Chief Murray said. "If

you ask us very directly 'would you increase our weight allowance,' I would say 'yes we would.'"

When asked about recruiting and retention, Chief Murray said while the Air Force has fallen short of its goal to retain as many as 75 percent of second term Airmen, the service is excelling in other areas.

"We are meeting our recruiting goals and our retention goals," the chief said. "For first term Airmen, 55 percent is our goal. We are over 60 percent. For career Airmen, our goal is 95 percent, we are right on that goal."

The subcommittee on military quality of life and veterans' affairs is a recent addition to the House Appropriations Committee, said the subcommittee chairman, Rep. James Walsh.

"(This) is not just an expanded military construction subcommittee," Representative Walsh said. "It was created to think more holistically about quality of life of military members and veterans."

"If we do our jobs, and we take our responsibilities seriously to make sure your people are well cared for and valued, and that worries of family and those responsibilities are taken care of, our (servicemembers) will do a better job," he said. "They will be safer. They will hopefully sleep better at night. I think that is what this committee is really about."

## Fylingdales at a glance

Royal Air Force Fylingdales is Site III, of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System. The unit is a vital portion of BMEWS operations, which include the 12th Space Warning Squadron, Thule Air Base, Greenland; 13th Space Warning Squadron, Clear Air Force Station, Alaska.

### MISSION

- Missile Warning
- Space Surveillance
- Satellite Warning Service United Kingdom

### Missile Warning

RAF Fylingdales has a primary mission of maintaining continuous missile warning capability for the United States and United Kingdom, demonstrating that a surprise missile attack could not succeed. Missile warning data is provided to United State Space Com-

mand's Missile Warning Center in Cheyenne Mountain, and UK MWC.

### Space Surveillance

The site's secondary mission is to detect, identify and track man-made objects in earth orbit, contributing to the U.S. Space Surveillance Network. The SSN consists of radar, optical and passive sensors located throughout the world. The site tracks objects in near earth orbit out to a range of 3,000 nautical miles. When an object penetrates the radar's coverage, the radar tracks the object to identify it as a missile or space object. Over the course of one day, a space object can penetrate the radar's coverage multiple times. By day's end, the Fylingdales team can rack up 55,000 tracks. As part of the identification aspect of space surveillance, the site routinely collects Space Object Identification on numerous objects. Space Object Identification can be used to discriminate between a rocket body or satellite payload.



Photo by Senior Air Craftsman Paul Oldfield  
**Wing commander Phil Cox, station commander for the Royal Air Force Fylingdales, gives a mission brief to Brig. Gen. Richard Webber, 21st Space Wing commander, while overlooking Fylingdales Air Station.**

## A Moment in Time



- **Feb. 27, 1920** – An official world altitude record of 33,113 is set at McCook Field, Ohio.
- **Feb. 27, 1958** – Missile Director William M. Holaday approves the U.S. Air Force's Minuteman Project, a program for building 5,000-mile-range solid-fuel ballistic missiles launched from underground installations.
- **Feb. 27, 1971** – The U.S. Air Force launches Operation Haylift in response to urgent pleas from farmers in blizzard-swept Kansas and drops 35,000 bales (nearly a million pounds) of hay for 275,000 cattle stranded in deep snow.
- **Feb. 28, 1947** – An F-82B set a record by flying non-stop from Hawaii to New York in 14 hours and 33 minutes.

# Space Observer

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# Extended deployments only affect 200

By Master Sgt. David Byron

Air Force Print News

Air Force officials are designating some positions in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility as 365-day extended deployments in an effort to provide stability and allow for long-term relationship building with host governments.

The new tour lengths will affect only about 200 key and critical operational and joint task force staff positions, officials said. People in the remaining positions will serve in the current air and space expeditionary force structure.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper directed the extended tours in response to requests from joint task force commanders seeking continuity in selected positions, often where the local culture requires more time to establish meaningful ties with local people and host governments.

These key positions are an integral part of a combatant commander's mission and the AEF structure. No new positions will be created; they will be converted from current AEF slots.

"The positions will span a wide spectrum of Air Force career fields," said Lt. Col. James Davis, Air Force assignment classification, retirements and separation policy chief. "There will be a good mix of enlisted and officer positions, mainly mid-level and up."

Air Force Personnel Center officials will take the lead in finding people to fill most of the slots. Air Force Senior Leader Management Office officials will handle requirements for colonel and chief master sergeant positions, he said.

Colonel Davis said selections would be made during the course of the upcoming spring and summer assignment cycles with all being in place by August 2005.

Volunteers will be sought first, he said. If there are not enough volunteers, AFPC officials will use modified short-tour criteria to fill the slots. For colonels, AFSLMO officials will assign them through major command channels.

Although these deployments may appear to be remote tours, they are not permanent change-of-station moves. It is not a goal to establish a permanent U.S. military presence in the region, and there is no Status of Forces Agreement in place covering permanent assignments, officials said. The positions will fall under the category of "indeterminate length" temporary duty assignments. That category will allow for certain entitlements to apply that are not available for standard temporary assignments.

"Although we can't consider them regular short-tour assignments, they will be treated as such," Colonel Davis said. "Lieutenant colonels and below who complete the tours will have priority for follow-on assignments, just like any other one-year tour."

Colonels completing the tours will be assigned according to normal colonel assignment procedures.

Family members also may be eligible for standard short-tour benefits.

Storage of household goods is one benefit offered to Airmen serving temporary assignments of 180 days or longer. There are possible options for moving the Airman's family while deployed. The availability and extent of those options will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Airmen may also have the option of returning to their former assignment, if there is a suitable vacancy, officials said.

There will be career benefits for Airmen serving these extended temporary assignments. Airmen serving the 365-day TDYs will receive short-tour credit and be exempt from AEF or other contingency deployments for six months following their return home. Most of the joint task force positions will earn joint-duty credit depending on actual length of rotation, officials said.

"Our expectation is that all of the joint task force positions will get full joint credit," Colonel Davis said. "We are currently validating the positions working this with the Joint Staff and (secretary of defense). Although we're asking some of our Airmen to deploy for a longer period of time to meet mission needs, we're constantly looking for the best options for our (Airmen) and their families."

## MPF staff sergeant arrives with annual award

### Will compete to be one of 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year

By Tech. Sgt. Matt Gilreath

21st Space Wing Public Affairs

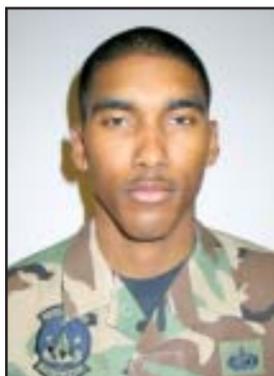
A newly assigned 21st Mission Support Squadron noncommissioned officer recently won headquarters-level accolades for his performance.

Staff Sgt. Clinton Minor won the NCO of the Year award for the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, where he served as a retraining program manager for the directorate of personnel program management. In winning this award, Sergeant Minor now competes as AFPC's NCO nominee for the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year.

"I found out when I got a call on my cell phone February 15," said Sergeant Minor, 21st MSS noncommissioned officer in charge of re-enlistments and evaluations. "My former supervisor, Tech. Sgt. Catina Johnson-Roscoe, contacted me while I was out house hunting and told me I had won. I was really excited and so was she," Sergeant Minor said.

Sergeant Minor said the award was a surprise since there are so many good NCOs who do a lot of great work.

"I owe a lot to Sergeant Johnson-Roscoe, she's a great boss and always ensured I was recognized for the hard work I did," Sergeant Minor said.



Sergeant Minor

Working at AFPC with its Air Force-wide personnel impact, Sergeant Minor demonstrated this reach when he suggested and received approval from Air Staff to release more than 250 deployed Airmen selected for retraining. His actions helped eliminate stress due to involuntary retraining and allowed those Airmen to focus on their Operation Iraqi

Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom missions.

"Staff Sergeant Minor played a

key role in implementing the Air Force NCO Retraining Program critical to the Force Shaping initiatives designed to balance skills across the Air Force," said Col. Nancy Rice, chief of the personnel procurement and development division.

His leadership extended to the local community as well, where he mentored children during church services and other events, served as judge for an elementary school science fair and judged a school public speaking contest.

"Every leader would like to have another 100 Airmen just like Clint. He has a tremendous ability to motivate peers, organize events and manage the most complex issues. I am confident he will continue to be one of the Air Force's best," said Colonel Rice.

(Tech. Sgt. James Brabenec, AFPC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.)

### Cash is fine

Brig. Gen. Richard Webber, 21st Space Wing commander, shares tips on how to approach members to support the Air Force Assistance Fund. The 2005 AFAF kicked off with a breakfast at the Peterson Air Force Officers' Club Monday.



### BASE CLOSURE UPDATES

Base Realignment and Closure 2005 news, including the current timeline, speeches and Congressional testimony, is available on-line at [www.defenselink.mil/brac](http://www.defenselink.mil/brac). The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 authorized the Department of Defense to pursue one BRAC round in 2005. No installation closure or realignment list currently exists. The official closure and realignment list will be available on or about May 16.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Gilreath



# Blotter

The following real-life events from around Peterson are to inform Peterson members of crimes, accidents and events occurring on base. These entries are recorded in the Peterson Police Blotter and reprinted for situational awareness.

*\*Editor's note: Although the Space Observer staff may make light of blotter entries, the intent is to call attention to our security and law enforcement concerns. Our vigilant security forces team treat each incident seriously and according to the rules and regulations.*

## CREWS RESPOND TO CLINIC ALARM - FEB. 17

The base fire department dispatcher received a report of a natural gas smell emanating from the Peterson Clinic. Responders from the fire department and security forces were dispatched to investigate. Patrols provided traffic control while the fire crew investigated the source of the alarm. Finding no source of the smell, the response was terminated.

## HUMAN ERROR ACTIVATES ALARM - FEB. 22

Security forces patrols responded to an alarm activation at a building here. Upon arrival, they secured the scene and contacted the person who had activated the alarm. The suspect stated he had accidentally entered his PIN incorrectly twice while entering the facility. The patrolmen terminated the response upon confirming proper authentication.

## CREWS RESPOND TO CLINIC ALARM, AGAIN - FEB. 22

The base fire department dispatcher notified the law enforcement desk that fire crews were en route to the Peterson Clinic in response to another reported nat-

ural gas smell. Again, fire crews investigated while security forces managed traffic. The response was terminated when no cause for the alarm could be found.

## OFFICERS' CLUB ENTRANCE OVERHANG DAMAGED - FEB. 22

An employee at the Peterson Officers' Club reported a vehicle had damaged the overhang at the club's main entrance. The base of the structure was cracked, the roof was chipped and the overhang was leaning to the west. A patrol responded and documented the damage. The alert photographer arrived and took evidentiary photos. 21st Space Wing Safety Office evaluators checked the structure and deemed it safe for use. 21st SW civil engineers estimated the damage at \$20,000. A witness reported a large delivery van had struck the building that morning. The driver of the van backed the vehicle up and went into the club. The driver of the vehicle did not report the accident and departed the scene.

## UNDERAGE DRINKER PROVOKES PROBLEMS - FEB. 22

Three Airmen returning from an evening of partying downtown, reported a vehicle had been following them from a local nightclub. Further investigation by a Colorado Springs Police Department officer and base security forces revealed that one of the three Airmen had provoked the occupants of the other vehicle by spitting at them. By then, said airman had high-tailed it to his dorm room before the law enforcement officers could question him. A security forces patrol tracked the airman down at his dorm room. He was transported to the security forces building where he blew a .140 blood alcohol content. He was cited for making a false official statement and for underage drinking. The other passenger in the car was cited for making a false official statement and for contributing alcohol to a minor. Both Airmen were released to their supervisor. Further investigation revealed the underage drinker and his alcohol supplier had been imbibing in

a dorm room. Their partying migrated to a local watering hole where said underage drinker helped himself to drinks that had been brought to the table he was at. Club security noticed the illegal consumption and 86ed the airman and his friends.

## POST TRAUMATIC STRESS EVENT SPURS RESPONSE - FEB. 22

Security forces responded to a temporary lodging facility unit after a lodging employee reported a TLF occupant was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Patrols arrived on scene and requested additional assistance from fire department personnel and an American Medical Response ambulance. The victim had to be physically restrained for transport to a local hospital for treatment.

## TESTIMONY FLUSHES OUT O' CLUB OVERHANG SUSPECT - FEB. 23

The passenger of the delivery van called security forces to report the bumper-to-building incident that had occurred the previous morning. He said the driver had tried to contact someone in the club, but it was locked up. The driver reported the accident to her dispatcher then left the base. Base security forces reported the information to CSPD who assumed the investigation.

*\* Anyone with information on a crime or any of these blotter entries should report it to the 21st Security Forces team at 556-4000.*

**Enlisted Against Drunk Driving**



*Protecting you and your family members by providing a safe alternative to drinking and driving.*

**Please call us!**

**Fri. - Sat. 10 p.m. - 3 a.m.**

**Phone: 719-556-6384 or 55 NO DUI**

# Personnel Corner

## TOP THREE ANNOUNCES MEETING

The Pikes Peak Top 3 meets at 3 p.m. today in the Peterson Enlisted Club. Membership is open to all master sergeant selects through chief master sergeants who are assigned here. Retirees who are sponsored by an active-duty Top 3 member may join as associate members. Pikes Peak Top 3 actively supports enlisted causes and professional development through a variety of activities. For information, call Senior Master Sgt. Leyda Pendergrass at 556-9022.

## FAMILY MEMBER GROUP LIFE INSURANCE IS AUTOMATIC

Family Member Group Life Insurance automatically enrolls family members until the sponsor specifically declines or reduces the coverage; this includes a spouse whether or not they are a military member. For this purpose, a military member's spouse is covered effective from the date of marriage or the member's entry date whichever is more recent. All military sponsors have the responsibility to report any additions or changes to the Customer Service section in the Military Personnel Flight to ensure the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System is updated appropriately. It is strongly suggested that this requirement become a part of the squadron's marriage checklist.

## READINESS BRIEFING MANDATORY FOR DEPLOYING MEMBERS

This briefing is offered every week from 11 a.m. to noon Tuesdays at the Family Support Center. This is a mandatory briefing for those who are being deployed or going on a remote tour. This briefing

educates members on the three phases involved with separation and the programs available for the families left behind. Spouses are encouraged to attend.

## FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER OFFERS ESTATE PLANNING

Learn how to estimate the value of an estate and plan for future business, personal and health care needs. This seminar provides an estate planning sampler, as well as information on disability planning, powers of attorney, living will, long-term care and death taxes. The presenter is attorney Skip Morgan. This seminar is offered every other month. The next seminar will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Family Support Center.

## PRESEPARATION BRIEFING MANDATORY FOR SOME

This is a mandatory briefing offered every other week for those who are retiring or separating from the military. People must receive this briefing no later than 90 days before separation or retirement. This briefing is necessary to ensure members have sufficient information and time to take full advan-

tage of your veteran benefits and to explain the services of the Transition Assistance Program. This briefing will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. Wednesday at the Family Support Center.

## NATIONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL SYSTEM UPDATE

The 2004 National Defense Authorization Act gave the Department of Defense authority to establish a new human resources management system for civilian employees called the National Security Personnel System. This will create a new framework of rules, regulations and processes – rooted in the principles of flexibility and fairness – that govern the way civilians are hired, compensated, promoted and disciplined in DoD. Proposed regulations were posted in the Federal Register Feb. 14. Employees and managers should go to the DoD NSPS Web site at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html) and click on *FACT SHEET* to read more about NSPS and the proposed regulations. People can subscribe to the United States Air Force NSPS newsletter at [www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/](http://www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/).



### Team Pete around the globe

The 21st Space Wing operates 15 weapon systems, comprises 43 units in 26 locations in four countries, and spans nine time zones throughout the world. Team Pete has 121 deployed members supporting various operations across the globe. The 21st Space Wing makes up 88 of those members.



**21ST SPACE WING  
COMMANDERS  
CALL  
WILL BE FROM  
1 TO 2 P.M.  
TUESDAY AT THE  
PETERSON AIR  
FORCE BASE  
AUDITORIUM**

**PIKES PEAK COMBINED SPOUSES  
CLUB OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Pikes Peak Combined Spouses Club is offering several merit-based scholarships to retired and active-duty military family members and DoD civilians. High school seniors or non-traditional students, may be eligible to apply for these scholarships (specific guidelines are available at the Peterson AFB Family Support Center and Education Office).

Scholarships range from \$500 to \$1,000, but vary based on the number of students who apply and the amount of funding available. Applicants do not have to be seeking a career in the military to be eligible for this scholarship. Applications must be received by March 15 to receive consideration. For information and applications, log on to [www.geocities.com/pikespeakcsc](http://www.geocities.com/pikespeakcsc).

**TEAM PETE PROMOTION CEREMONY**

The monthly Team Pete NCO Induction and Recognition Ceremony will be held at 3 p.m. Friday at the Enlisted Club.

**POTENTIAL SCAM**

The Peterson Legal Office has received a report of a potential awards scam. The individual reporting the possible scam received a notification in the mail that she had won a prize over \$3 million. The company, Las Vegas Nevada Actionable Award Program, claims that a \$20 payment is required in order to receive the prize. The Better Business Bureau has not been able to find a business license for this business and has received complaints regarding its prac-

tice. People should not be required to pay any fee if they win a prize. If people receives an announcement like this from this business or any other, they should contact the Better Business Bureau or the Colorado Attorney General's Office.

For information, call the Peterson Legal Office at 556-4871.

**OFFICER SELECTION  
BOARDS POSTPONED**

Air Force Recruiting Service officials announced, due to fiscal 2005 Air Force force-shaping efforts, the non-rated (both non-technical and technical) portions of the March 28, and May 10, Officer Training School selection boards have been rescheduled for August.

**MUSEUM DELAYS OPENING DAY**

Due to unexpected delays during renovations, the Peterson Air and Space Museum will not reopen for tours or ceremonies until Monday at the earliest.

**CHAPEL SPONSORS MARCH AARP  
MATURE DRIVER SAFETY CLASS**

The chapel is hosting an American Association of Retired Persons Mature Driver Safety Class in March. This is an eight-hour refresher course, especially designed for drivers age 50 and older, divided into two four-hour sessions. No tests are given and graduates may qualify for a substantial discount on their auto insurance. Cost of the class is \$10. The class will be from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. March 14 and March 16 in one of the chapel classrooms. To sign-up for the class, call the chapel at 556-4442. For information about the course curriculum, contact Mike Byrne at 556-6543.

**MILITARY PERSONNEL FLIGHT  
OFFERS UNIFORM GUIDANCE**

In accordance with the 96th Uniform Board results, members are authorized to wear conservative ornamentation on nonprescription sunglasses and eyeglasses. In addition, frames may be black or brown material or gold/silver wire. Brand names may be worn with a small logo on the frame of the lens. The logo must be the same color as the frames or lens.

**NEW PT UNIFORM  
TO ARRIVE AT PETERSON**

The official physical training uniform should be available at Air Force Military Clothing

Sales Stores by the end of March. Individuals should read the wear policy before wearing the uniform. Effective Oct. 1, 2004 the enlisted annual clothing allowance was increased to cover the cost of the uniform. All personnel will be required to purchase the uniform from the Military Clothing Sales Store and must have it by the mandatory wear-by date, which will be determined based on inventory availability.

**FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER  
OFFERS CAREER MARKETING**

This workshop is offered once a month and covers conducting an effective job search, writing a competitive resume and interviewing effectively for a job. The next workshop will be held from 8 a.m. to noon today at the Family Support Center. For information, call 556-6141.

**TOUR GUIDES NEEDED**

The 21st Space Wing Public Affairs office is currently seeking sharp officers and Airmen E-4 and above stationed at Peterson Air Force Base for positions in the base tour guide program. Those interested need to have no less than one year time on station. Each year, Peterson is host to more than 1,000 base tour visitors. Members can share their Air Force experience with potential recruits from local schools, ROTC units nationwide, scouts and community organizations.

Tours typically last four hours and are hosted Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Interviewees must have their supervisor's permission to become part of this elite team. Tour dates will be e-mailed each week as far as three months out to allow proper planning. For information, call 556-6208.

**LADIES GOLF MEETING**

The Peterson Ladies Golf Association Annual Golf Meeting and Coffee will be held at 9 a.m. March 31 at the Silver Spruce Golf Course clubhouse. For information, call Val Bardis at 597-4748 or Doris Winn at 392-4122.

**BIOENVIRONMENTAL  
ENGINEERING CLOSURE**

Bioenvironmental Engineering will be closed March 8 to 10. For emergencies or short notice, deploying members may call the office cell phone at 238-8923 or email [21ados.biomanagement@peterson.af.mil](mailto:21ados.biomanagement@peterson.af.mil).



Read the Space Observer  
online at [www.csmnng.com](http://www.csmnng.com)

# Congrats

Members of Peterson Air Force Base would like to congratulate the following unit and personnel on their awards and promotions.

**Col. Selects: from Air Force Space Command,** Edward Fienga, Deborah Kirkhuff, Andre Lovett, David McCormick and Brian Murray; **from North American Aerospace Defense Command,** Jacki Frisby-Griffin and Daniel Morin; **from Northern Command,** Edward Keegan.

**Lt. Col. Selects:** Charles Killion, AFSPC and Stephen Mounts, 21st Medical Support Squadron.

**Air Force Sergeants Association Capter 1181 First Term Airman of the Year;** Airman 1st Class Mandy Weightman, 21st Space Wing Public Affairs.

**Air Force Space Command Outstanding Small Security Forces unit;** 721st SFS, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station.

**14th Air Force Quarterly Awards, Fourth Quarter 2004:** *Company Grade Officer,* 1st Lt. Luis Figueroa, 21st Space Wing; *Noncommissioned Officer,* Staff Sgt. Tommie Ellis, 21st Space Wing; *Airman,* Senior Airman Sherry Martinez, 21st Space Wing.

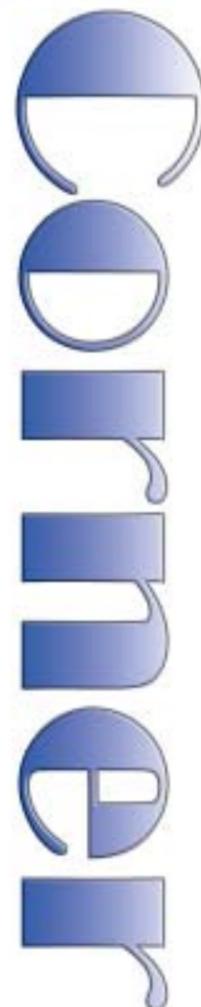
**Air Force Space Command Intelligence Awards for 2004: from Peterson AFB,** *Outstanding Active Duty Field Grade Intelligence Officer,* Maj. Geoffrey Pihlaja; *Outstanding Active Duty Intelligence Senior NCO of the Year,* Master Sgt. Brent Packard; *Outstanding Intelligence Senior-level Civilian,* Bonnie Chandler; *Outstanding Reserve Field Grade Intelligence Officer,* Lt.

Col. Suzanne Peterson; *Outstanding Intelligence Officer Contributor,* Capt. Joseph Flynn; **from Holloman AFB,** *Outstanding Intelligence Enlisted Contributor,* Tech. Sgt. Ted Waller, 4th Space Control Squadron.

**Air Force Space Command Weather Award Winners for 2004;** *The Grimes-Williams Award for Most Outstanding Air Force Weather Flight,* Detachment or Equivalent Performing Aerospace Weather Operations, 21st Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight; *The Merewether Award for Excellence by an Individual or Team Making the Most Significant Technical Contribution to the Aerospace Weather Operational Mission,* Space and Missile Systems Center, Technology Applications Division.

**Air Force Space Command Inspector General Complaints and Investigation Program Office at Wing/Installation Level Award Winner for 2004:** 21st Space Wing Inspector General

**Air Force Space Command's Public Affairs Achievement Awards for 2004;** *Director's Excellence Award (Large Wing),* 21st Space Wing; *Outstanding Public Affairs Company Grade Officer,* 1st Lt. Jennifer Tribble, 821st Air Base Group, Thule Air Base, Greenland; *Outstanding Public Affairs Reserve Component enlisted airman,* Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Thibault, 21st Space Wing; *Outstanding Public Affairs Intermediate Grade civilian:* Jenna McMullin, 21st Space Wing; *Outstanding Contribution to a Public Affairs program,* Margaret Leibfried, 21st Space Wing.



## Earned an award? Been promoted? Completed training or earned a degree? Fill out a Hometown News Release!

The Hometown News Release program is your chance to tell your Air Force story in your hometown, and it couldn't be easier! Just go online to [www.peterson.af.mil/21SW](http://www.peterson.af.mil/21SW), click the "Fill out an online Hometown News Release" link, and you're on your way! You can also fill out a DD Form 2266 and send it to 21st Space Wing Public Affairs, via fax at 556-7848, e-mail at [21sw.pa.ms@peterson.af.mil](mailto:21sw.pa.ms@peterson.af.mil), or in person to Building 845, room 219.

<p><b>Team Pete's</b> <i>noteworthy</i> <b>events</b></p> <p>To submit information for the base calendar, email <a href="mailto:space.observer@peterson.af.mil">space.observer@peterson.af.mil</a></p> <p>March is Women's History Month and Nutrition Month</p>	<p><b>Friday, March 4</b></p> <p>Enlisted Promotion and Induction ceremony – 3 p.m. at the Enlisted Club</p> <p>New command center ribbon cutting – 9 a.m. at Cheyenne Mountain</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, March 8</b></p> <p><i>Co-Commander's reception – 5:30 p.m. at the Officers' Club</i></p>	<p><b>Thursday, March 10</b></p> <p>Senior master sergeant promotion release party – 3 p.m. at the Enlisted Club</p>
	<p><b>Thursday, March 10 through Wednesday, March 16</b></p> <p><i>Condor CREST exercise – Positive Force</i></p>	<p><b>Thursday, March 17</b></p> <p>St. Patrick's Day</p> 	<p><b>Sunday, March 20</b></p> <p><i>First day of Spring</i></p> 

**at your SERVICE**

# Staying in-line



Photo by Margie Arnold  
An in-line skater catches an edge while warming up at the in-line hockey rink located near the Sports and Fitness center.

**By Margie Arnold**  
21st Services Squadron

For those who grew up having to stay in the lines when coloring, it could be a grown-up's sweet revenge to skate like mad all over the place and still be in line.

People can have that opportunity at the in-line hockey tournaments held once a quarter at the Peterson Fitness Center's in-line hockey rink, located outside the Fitness Center on the north side of the track. These tournaments are for male and female players. It's a great way to get people together and enjoy some good exercise outdoors. Compared to ice hockey, in-line hockey doesn't take as much of a toll on the body and leaves members able to go to work the next day.

According to Tamra Davis, special programs coordinator at the Fitness Center, these tournaments are "special programs" events, not intramurals.

"What that means is there will not be a paid official for the tournament games. The participating teams can select someone knowledgeable about the game and the rules to volunteer as an official for their game," Ms. Davis said. "Players can look at it as a good team-building exercise, an opportunity to work together, communicate and behave as adults."

Players need to provide their own equipment: skates, approved helmets, knee and shin guards, mouth guards, elbow pads and hockey gloves.

Each team needs a minimum of five people: four skaters plus a goalie. Ms. Davis suggests three extra players as possible substitutes.

The quarterly in-line hockey tournaments are scheduled for March 22 to 24, May 17 to 19, July 19 to 21 and Oct. 18 to 20. All tournament dates depend on weather, and will be rescheduled if necessary.

The deadline to register for a tournament is two days prior to the tournament start date. For the first tournament, the registration deadline is March 20. Game times will be announced.

For information, call Ms. Davis at the Fitness Center at 556-1515. Visit the Fitness Center online at [www.21svs.com](http://www.21svs.com).

## ARAGON DINING FACILITY MENU

Today	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p><b>Lunch:</b> Roast Loin of Pork Jaeger with Mushroom Sauce Glazed Cornish Hen Potato Halves Orange Rice Carrots Simmered Pinto Beans Corn Combo</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Herbed Baked Chicken Stuffed Cabbage Southern Fried Catfish Black-eyed Peas with Rice Mashed Potatoes Sweet Potatoes Mixed Vegetables Peas</p>	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Lasagna Spaghetti with Meat Sauce Sweet Italian Sausage Mashed Potatoes Broccoli Polonaise Cauliflower Italian-Style Baked Beans</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Mexican Baked Chicken Swiss Steak with Tomato Sauce Stuffed Green Peppers Baked Macaroni and Cheese Steamed Rice Fried Cabbage</p>	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Fish Almondine Stir Fry Chick with Broccoli Pork Chops with Mushroom Gravy Rissolle Potatoes Rice Pilaf Calico Corn Club Spinach Fried Okra</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Crispy Baked Chicken Cajun Meat Loaf Grilled Steak Baked Potatoes Mashed Potatoes Broccoli French-Style Peas Glazed Carrots</p>	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Ginger Barbecue Chicken Breaded Fried Shrimp Seafood Cocktail Sauce Spinach Lasagna Orange Rice Mashed Potatoes Black Eye Peas</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Tuna and Noodles Sauerbraten Chicken Breast Parmesan Au Gratin Potato Steamed Rice Cauliflower Combo Peas Fried Cabbage</p>
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Roast Turkey Baked Can Ham Raisin Sauce Fish and Fries Mashed Potatoes Corn Bread Dressing Succotash Tempura Vegetable</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Swiss Steak with Tomato Sauce Baked Chicken Hot Italian Sausage Peppers and Onions Steamed Rice Mashed Potatoes</p>	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Paprika Beef Barbecue Beef Cubes Chicken Fajitas O'Brien Potatoes Steamed Rice Cauliflower Corn on the Cob Lima Beans</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Onion-Lemon Baked Fish Pork Schnitzel, Steak Yakisoba Baked Potatoes Mashed Potatoes Simmered Pinto Beans</p>	<p><b>Lunch:</b> Roast Beef Barbecue Spareribs Roast Turkey Steamed Rice Mashed Potatoes Broccoli Corn on the Cob Peas and Carrots</p> <p><b>Dinner:</b> Caribbean Jerk Chicken Beef Porcupines Chicken Enchiladas Scalloped Potatoes Steamed Rice Mexican Corn Savory Baked Beans</p>

**Hours of Operation: Weekdays/Weekends: Breakfast 5:30 – 8 a.m.; Lunch 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Dinner 4 – 6 p.m.; Holidays/Down days: Supper 11 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; All carry out times 7 – 9 p.m.**

## Aerospace, from Page 1

operator, who was positioned and ready to operate two levers used for letting air out of and into the chamber to increase and decrease the altitude and pressure.

Instructors and students all communicate with each other through headset radio equipment.

The group began the chamber flight with an ear and sinus check taking the students up to a simulated 5,000 feet above ground level and then back down to the ground.

"The reason for this is that the greatest physiological changes happen between ground level and 5,000 feet above ground level," said Airman Relph.

After the ascent and descent the group took thirty minutes to do an exercise called pre-breathing before they went up to a higher altitude.

"This is so we get rid of some of the nitrogen that is sitting in our bodies," Airman Relph said. "By doing this we get rid of approximately 30 percent of the nitrogen and this is important so that we lower the risk of decompression sickness."

After the breathing exercise, the group moves up to 8,000 feet at which point they lower their oxygen masks to start the hypoxia demonstration.

"Hypoxia is simply a word that means 'starvation of oxygen,'" Airman Relph said. "So at 8,000 feet we start the process of getting the body hypoxic and then we raise the group up to 25,000 feet."

When the students reached 25,000 feet they were directed to take out a worksheet to test their mental condition.

Airman Relph said when the body does not have the correct amount of oxygen it begins to act different. He said some typical symptoms students might feel are euphoria, dizziness, light-headedness, nausea, tingling and beligerance.

Sergeant Foulk said they encourage their students to be able to feel one to two different symptoms listed above or as it was with this particular group their faces began to get pale.

The group then practices self-correcting procedures by putting on their oxygen masks, taking a few breaths and watching their faces and breathing return to normal usually within 30 seconds.

One cadet comments that he feels numbness, tingling and wants to laugh. All of the cadets raise their hands when asked if they have experienced any of the symptoms.

"If only 'one' student can recall something we've taught them to save their life or someone else's when it really counts, then it's all worth it," Sergeant Foulk said. "I like to think of aerospace physiology as the conscience of the flying community, since we can't always be there with them."

United States Air Force Academy Cadet Robert Renquist agreed. "The altitude chamber gave me an understanding of some of the few rigors and natural affects that changes in pressure can have on the pilot himself," he said. "By completing this training I am now eligible to complete some of the summer programs including Jump and Soaring, which will better prepare me to be a pilot after graduating from the Academy."

Another demonstration includes the visual acuity test which involves the lights being dimmed and the students are shown how hypoxia can affect their vision by having them stare at a multi-colored card with the letter z around the perimeter

"They start to notice colors blending, tunnel vision... they can't see the z's any longer, maybe even a blackout...they can't see anything," said Airman Relph. "Then after staring at the card for about a minute, we tell the students to swing their oxygen masks back up to their face and take a couple deep breaths."

After doing this Airman Relph said they will notice their vision coming back to them, the colors will start popping out at them in a pin-wheel affect, the tunnel vision will subside, and their vision will be back to normal.

To finish the experience, the instructors take the students down to ground level and on the way down show them how to use high pressure and low pressure oxygen systems they might come in contact with.

"Our job is extremely important because we give students the information to be able to survive in any circumstance," Airman Relph said. "Whether that be crash and escape, or simply the corrective procedures to do if they were to notice their hypoxia symptoms coming on.

"It's a great feeling to know that the information we give them can save their life and the lives of others," he added.

Sergeant Foulk said the Aerospace Physiology training flight operates on a daily basis to train a wide variety of people every year including active duty and reserve Airmen, U.S. Air Force Academy cadets and Department of Defense civilians.

"Altitude chamber training is the main focus of Aerospace Physiology, but it's not the only focus," Major Laswell said. "We exist to support all Department of Defense warfighters."

Major Laswell said one initiative they are actively pushing is their Human Performance training team.

"We basically take physiology training outside the four walls of our unit to all of Team Pete," he said. "We highlight human performance issues during Right Start and First Term Airmen's Center and we support Night Vision Goggle training for local crews."

The major said the flight is working with the 21st Space Wing Safety office to educate people on fatigue countermeasures.

"Ultimately we tailor our training to meet the needs of local organizations with the goal of improving readiness and mission effectiveness," he said.

For information, call 556-4185.



Photos by 1st Lt. Tracy Giles

Airman 1st Class Tyler Relph, altitude chamber inside observer, briefs cadets in altitude chamber before the exercise begins.

# Aerospace Physiology

BELOW: Cadet Zack Word listens to instructions to prepare for simulated flight pressures in altitude chamber.



ABOVE: (Front) Cadets Zack Word and (Back) Robert Renquist test their visual acuity by focusing on multi-colored cards with the letter Z around the perimeter.

RIGHT: Airman 1st Class Maria Arteaga, altitude chamber operator, operates levers to let air out of and into the altitude chamber to increase and decrease the pressure while Tech Sgt. Idalina Foulk, NCO in charge of Aerospace Physiology Operations, gives instructions to cadets inside the chamber.



Cadet Jamal Harrison performs a final inspection on his oxygen hose.



**Color guard, from Page 1**

guard rendered honors to the American flag.

During a rehearsal at Peterson Air Force Base the previous Friday afternoon, color guard director and Command Sergeant Major NORAD – USNORTHCOM commander, Sgt. Maj. D. Scott Frye, had warned the team to put on their “game faces” Sunday night.

“The cameras will be in your face, zooming in on you and doing close-ups when you don’t even know it,” he told them.

The team had plenty of time to anticipate being nationally televised, as they arrived at the Pepsi Center several hours before tip-off. Their designated half-hour rehearsal time was delayed while the singing group Destiny’s Child occupied the stage and the color guard members waited on the sidelines.

After rehearsal, team members took advantage of their behind-the-scenes status to get photos and autographs of some of the players and performers, including Shaquille O’Neal, Tracy McGrady, Kevin Garnett, Antawn Jamison, Kobe Bryant and LeAnn Rimes.

Later in the day, shortly before their actual performance, the color guard members gave each other last-minute advice.

“Don’t lock your knees.” “Step up on the stage with your left foot.” “Watch the head in front of you.” “Get in the zone.”

Sergeant 1st Class Martin Thomas, the team’s non-commissioned officer-in-charge, carried the American flag. As the team waited for its cue to go on the court, he admitted to being “a little” nervous. But, he added, “I’m proud to be the face of the forces.”

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class David Diener, who carried the Navy flag, had his brother sitting in the stands at the Pepsi Center watching him perform. “He thinks it’s the greatest thing in the world,” Diener said. “He said, ‘How’d you land that gig?’”

“I think it’s great. Not too many people get to do this. It’s truly an honor.”



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gail Braymen, NORAD – USNORTHCOM Public Affairs

**The U.S. Northern Command joint service color guard lines up behind members of the U.S. Air Force Academy choir during the opening ceremony of the NBA All-Star game Feb. 27 in Denver.**

Air Force Staff Sgt. Tameshia Johnson, who carried the Air Force flag and has 12 years of color guard experience, also had family in the stands. “My brother, his wife and their son, and my best friend are here,” she said.

After their performance, the color guard members stayed to watch the game.

“I mainly watch collegiate basketball,” said Marine Corps Sgt. Grayson Warbritton, who carried a rifle in Sunday’s performance. But he said he favored the All-Star West team to win, since he was a Lakers fan when he used to watch professional basketball.

Warbritton’s team didn’t win, but at least one of the

color guard members felt like a winner.

“I feel good about (representing the armed forces) because it gives the services a chance to stand out and give honor to our nation,” said Army Sgt. Leander Jones III, who carried a rifle. “It’s a great privilege.”

Other NORAD – USNORTHCOM joint service color guard members performing at the NBA All-Star game were Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Chris Meedel, carrying the Coast Guard flag, Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Kenneth Edwards, carrying the Marine Corps flag and Spc. Charles Kemp, carrying the Army flag.

**Rock, from Page 1**

direction in which the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing moves.

For Airman Rojero, her four-month deployment is a personal journey, as well as a professional journey. She volunteered for this deployment to toughen up mentally and to test her inner self. “I chose this assignment because it was going to test my inner will, to determine what I could and can take,” said Airman Rojero. “When I leave, I hope to have more confidence in my abilities and to consider myself a stronger person.”

Her services job, her specialty within the Air Force structure, allows her help schedule some of

the fun events at the Rock. The 5-kilometer fun runs, the bench press competitions, and aerobics classes all fall under her specialty. More importantly, at an air base where service members are not allowed to leave due to force protection issues, and where alcohol consumption is forbidden, working out is the highlight of many Airmen’s off-duty time.

The El Paso, Texas, native is pushing back her start at college. Upon her return, she will attend the University of Phoenix, majoring in criminal justice while specializing in anti-terrorism. Also, when she returns, the 302nd Airlift Wing, a C-130 Reserve unit stationed at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., will have a stronger person and more qualified services Airman.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Amanda Hall

**Senior Airman Patricia Rojero signs out a basketball to an airman at the base gym at a forward deployed location in Southwest Asia.**

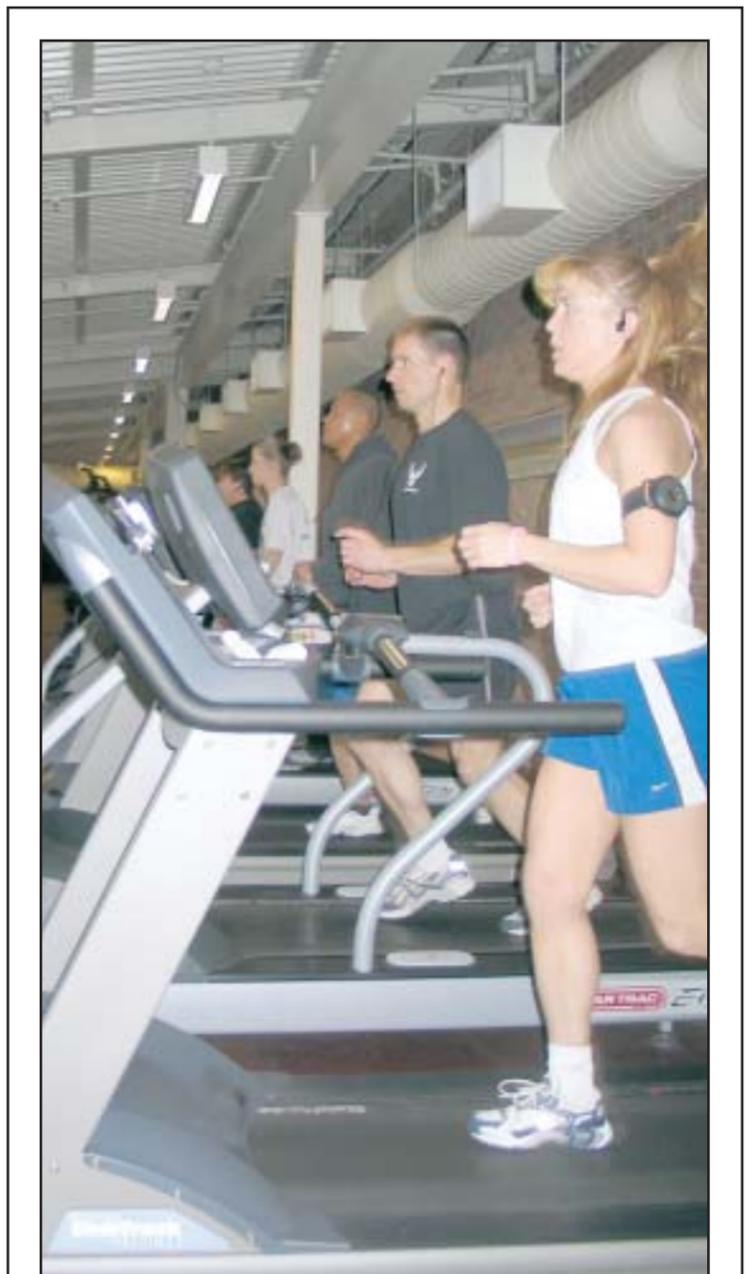


Photo by Tech Sgt. Matt Gilreath

**Workin’ it**

**21st Space Wing Airmen enjoy comfort of working out inside during February’s Warfit activities.**

**Co-commander, from Page 1**

change-of-command ceremonies, promotions, reenlistments, retirements, farewells, awards presentations, military observances, and social events.

"This program allows members of the Colorado Springs Community to become involved with and see close-up what goes on our military installations," said Vic Andrews, the Chamber of Commerce's military affairs committee chairman. "Although there are a lot of military retirees and dependents in the community, many long-time residents have no idea what happens on our installations. This is a great initiative to bridge this gap."

Bridging the gap and forging new relationships are the cornerstones of the Co-Commanders Program, said Capt. Amy Sufak, 21st SW chief of public affairs. The program creates a unique opportunity to "brand" the 21st SW among the numerous military organizations in the Colorado Springs community. The long-term goal is for the program to create a body of 21st SW advocates in the community.

"Ideally, over the years two things will happen," Mr. Andrews said. "As people cycle through the program, people leave and new ones come aboard. More and more people will become familiar with our military organizations."

"Military organizations and installations have been an important part of the Colorado Springs landscape for over 50 years. Most of our citizens and businesses realize that. This program is a wonderful opportunity to participate in the lives of our military members and bring the military and civilian communities closer together," Mr. Andrews said.

"The men and women of Colorado Springs are our neighbors. What better way to be a good neighbor than to open our doors to the men and women who lead this community. We're here to continue to nurture the relationships that will maintain our role in Colorado Springs long after we are gone," General Webber said.



Photo by Larry Hulst

**Honoring the Tuskegee Airmen**

The Honorable Rodney Coleman (second row, center) stands with the Tuskegee Airman for the Black History Month Luncheon held at the Officers' Club Feb. 24.

**Attention spouses:**

Interested in the new Pikes Peak Combined Spouses Club?  
Check us out at [www.geocities.com/pikespeakcsc](http://www.geocities.com/pikespeakcsc)



# Flying 'bug' bites WASP early, pilot recounts service

By Valerie VanKleeck  
341st Space Wing Public Affairs

It was not Charles Lindbergh, but "a fella before him" whose name escapes her now. She remembers he came through Charleston, W. Va., when she was very young, and she said he inspired her to learn to fly.

"I was about 7 or 8 years old when this famous flier came to town. Everyone turned out to see him. I said to Daddy, 'I'm going to fly airplanes when I grow up,' and I did," said Marty Volkomener, who will be 84 years old this year.

Not only did she fly airplanes, she went on to become a member of the Women's Airforce Service Pilots, which played a vital role during World War II. The organization trained women who already had their private pilot licenses to fly military aircraft in noncombat missions to free up the military men to fight. It also included women with their commercial pilot licenses ferrying aircraft, allowing men who were civilian pilots to join the combat mission, according to early records.

The first WASP class was in November 1942. Mrs. Volkomener was in the fourth class, which started in April 1943.

She learned to fly sea planes at the

Kanawha Flying School, named after the river in Charleston where she trained. She said she used her lunch break at work to pursue her dream of becoming a pilot.

"I could go fly for a half an hour at lunch and not bother anything," Mrs. Volkomener said.

She said she thinks she logged about 80 hours before she was asked about flying planes for the military.

The flying school staff learned of the WASP training program, and they contacted one of the WASP founders.

"At least that's what they told me when they asked me if I would be interested," Mrs. Volkomener said. "Well, I just couldn't get there fast enough." That was the beginning of a journey that lasted a little more than a year. But it was a journey that she said fulfilled her dreams and placed her in the history books with 1,073 others.

Her class, the program's largest, was trained at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, graduating 112 women, according to statistics gathered on the training program.

And she said she had to learn to fly all over again to make it to graduation.

"Takeoffs are drastically different. If you take off in a sea plane the [same] way you take off in a land plane, you're going to get wet," Mrs. Volkomener said.

Flight checks were always interesting, too, she said.

"We all knew that eventually, we would have a flight check by a military officer," she said. "They washed out a lot of candidates."

But she learned how to fly a land plane, earned her wings and went on to experience what very few women ever have.

She even met and trained with one of the founders, Jacqueline Cochran.

"She was a good pilot, and she wanted all of us to be good pilots, too. She pushed us hard, but she was fair," Mrs. Volkomener said. "She used to tell us over and over, 'You don't make any mistakes, or it goes against the whole organization.'"

Mistakes were not going to be made by this determined new recruit, Mrs. Volkomener said.

She did not ferry aircraft, she flew missions, she said.

Reluctant to go into details, she told of "being up there at 10,000 feet, or wherever they asked me to go for anti-aircraft tracking training." She also shared stories about hauling targets for the aerial gunners.

The targets were connected to a rope that extended about 300 feet behind the plane, Mrs. Volkomener said.

"One time, they were shooting at

me instead of the target. They were hitting close enough [that] they would jar the airplane," she recalled. "That was pretty scary."

In 1944, the need for the WASP services declined drastically, and the unit was dissolved.

Her aviation career did not end then, though. She worked for the Civil Aeronautics Administration as an aircraft communicator in Dillon, Mont. The CAA was the beginning of what is now the Federal Aviation Administration, and she witnessed some of the early changes.

It was during this phase of "flight" that Mrs. Volkomener altered her course, met the man she would marry and gave up taking to the sky for raising a family. They moved to nearby Great Falls shortly after they were married. She has been here ever since.

As excited as she gets when talking about her time as a WASP, she is also very modest about the importance of what she has done.

Mrs. Volkomener said her most significant accomplishment was, "I never had an accident, and I never got lost on a cross-country flight." She said her favorite memory was, "Just that I was one (WASP) and I loved every minute it."

(Courtesy of Air Force Space Command News Service)



**Are you a talented writer or have you always wanted to be published?**

Call the editor at 556-7846 today to get an assignment or to talk about a story idea. Civilians, retirees, military and family members welcome!