

the **Gateway**

The Gateway to Europe

Vol. 61, No. 25, Dec. 19, 2003, Rhein-Main AB, Germany

News Briefs

Award winners

Congratulations to the 726th Air Mobility Squadron, which captured an Air Force-level and two Air Mobility Command-level Directorate of Maintenance awards for 2003.

- Senior Master Sgt. Terry Carroll garnered the General Lew Allen Trophy for providing outstanding leadership in aircraft sortie generation.

- Tech. Sgt. Mike Tizio won the General Leo Marquez Award for AMC for his superb accomplishments as an aircraft maintenance technician and supervisor.

- The 726th AMS captured the AMC maintenance Effectiveness Award. The squadron supported more than 5,800 strategic airlift missions ferrying more than 84,000 tons of cargo and 420,000 combat troops in fiscal year 03.

SF on the move

The 469th Air Base Group Security Forces Flight has moved a majority of its operations to Bldg. 334, next to the base tennis courts.

The law enforcement desk, pass and vehicle registration, on-duty shift element leader, reports and analysis, security forces operations, investigations/resource protection and force protection have all moved to the new location.

Contact the LE desk at 330-7177 or 069-699-7177 for more details.

Volunteers needed

The base post office seeks volunteers to help with the holiday mailing rush.

To volunteer, call 330-6384.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Summers

3-star dinner

Lt. Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, U.S. Air Forces in Europe Vice Commander, talks with troops deployed to Rhein-Main during a dinner for airmen augmenting the 469th Air Base Group Wednesday at the base chapel. General Lichte toured the base on Thursday and was briefed on the implementation of USAFE Combat Programs and Special Interest Items at Rhein-Main.

Safety first

COMUSAFE stresses vigilance during holiday season

By Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (USAFENS) - The holiday season is a time of great joy, however it's also a time of increased risk.

As we get together with family and friends and enjoy the festive events of this joyous time of year, I ask that all of our U.S. Air Forces Europe members also remain vigilant so together we can ensure this holiday is untouched by needless tragedy.

Vigilance means more than being aware of your surroundings; it also includes proper planning, identifying risks and developing a game plan that ensures safety. Europe allows for an abundance of great travel opportunities, but proper planning — to include checking weather and road conditions, getting plenty of rest before traveling, wearing a seatbelt, driving defensively and not mixing alcohol with holiday activities — are all

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Team Rhein-Main

Enjoy the holidays; make it back safe

The holidays are a good time to take a break from our busy lives and think back about what we've done in the past year.

Was what you did productive? Were you able to make a difference and contribute to something greater than yourself?

I've been your commander at Rhein-Main for only a short time but I can say without a doubt that we as a team have contributed to the mission of the Air Force, defending our country by providing air and space power unmatched by any other nation in the world.

We have limited resources and limited manpower at Rhein-Main, yes, but we've impacted the lives of many people and have played our part in that greater mission.

Rhein-Main has been and will continue to be a very active and important base for the global war on terrorism.

I hope this fact indicates to you how important you are to your nation and to our mission here, which brings me to my main point: we can't afford to lose any of you while you're home or away traveling with friends and family during the holidays.

It's an unfortunate trend that during the time between Thanksgiving and New Year's, military members are at a greater risk of becoming hurt or worse due to increased traveling and bad driving conditions. It's imperative that we are careful to be safety minded in the midst of celebrating the holidays and spending time with loved ones.

If driving, look at the roads and

highways on your route for black ice: a major source of automobile accidents this time of year.

If at home, take a look at the decorations you may have put up for the holidays. If you've hung lights, make sure there's no electrical or fire risk.

The holidays are a time to celebrate and be joyful; don't let carelessness and lack of preparation turn a time of joy into sadness.

I urge all of Team Rhein-Main to enjoy the holidays and some

well-deserved time off. And I urge you all to make sure you come back safe and sound. Your country needs you, and so do I!

Happy Holidays to All!



By Col. Bradley Denison
Commander,
469th Air Base Group



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Summers

**On the
night shift**

Capt. Nolan Diestro, 469th Air Base Group executive officer, works a hose under the supervision of Staff Sgt. Joseph Yamane, 469th ABG Civil Engineer Flight firefighter, at the base fire department Dec. 4 during a Combat Nighthawk visit. Combat Nighthawk provides leadership and career-broadening opportunities to officers and airmen. Diestro is the base point-of-contact for officers and Tech. Sgt. Monica Adams is the POC for senior enlisted members.



Photo by 1st Lt. Bryan Edmonson

Coined

Lt. Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, U.S. Air Forces in Europe Vice Commander, presents coins to Master Sgt. Mark Riemann (right), deployed to the 469th Air Base Group Services Flight from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., and Staff Sgt. Reginald Stovall, 469th ABG Services Flight, at the contingency lodging office in Bldg. 340. The contingency lodging staff supports the hundreds of members deployed to Rhein-Main and those transiting the base in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Realignment to create Ramstein air base wing

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (USAFENS) — The activation of an air base wing here in mid January will separate Ramstein's base operating and Kaiserslautern Military Community support functions from its operational airlift and contingency support missions.

The U.S. Air Forces in Europe reorganization does not change Ramstein AB's KMC support roles, according to officials here.

Operating independently from each other, the new 435th Air Base Wing will assume responsibility for base support functions, allowing Ramstein's operational wing, the 86th Airlift Wing, to focus entirely on its combat and contingency support for tactical and humanitarian airlift operations within the U.S. European Command theater, including Africa.

The 435th Air Base Wing will be commanded by Brig. Gen. Rosanne Bailey, currently director of the Aeronautical Enterprise Program Office, Aeronautical Systems Center, Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. She will also assume the role of KMC commander. The 86th AW will be commanded by Col. Robert C. Kane, currently serving as the wing's vice commander.

Brig. Gen. Erwin F. Lessel III, the current commander of the 86th AW, will be reassigned as deputy director of Plans and

Programs, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, located at Wright-Patterson AFB.

The action is a result of a U.S. Air Forces in Europe plan to increase organizational efficiency throughout

the command, according to USAFE commander Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong. This arrangement is common at several stateside Air Force bases, where the operational and base support mission functions are separate organizations.

"A dual-wing at Ramstein makes sense," said General Foglesong. "It streamlines the base support functions and places them under a new commander of the 435th Air Base Wing. This will allow the 86th Airlift Wing to dedicate its efforts entirely on its operational combat and contingency support missions."

The operations group, maintenance group and contingency response group will continue to fall under the 86th AW and the USAFE Air and Space Communications Group will be added.

The mission support, security forces, communications, civil engineer, logistics readiness and medical groups will move to

"A dual-wing at Ramstein makes sense. It streamlines the base support functions and places them under a new commander of the 435th Air Base Wing."

Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe



the ABW, along with the 469th Air Base Group at Rhein-Main.

"There is no change in the way the base will operate. It's a much smarter way of conducting business and serving our customers better," General Foglesong added. The lineage of the 435th wing can be traced to the operational airlift wing at Rhein-Main, when it operated C-9 and C-130 aircraft there more than a decade ago.

"As for the 469th ABG, our unit designation will not change and neither will our day-to-day challenges of serving as the 'Gateway to Europe' until closure in December 2005," said Lt. Col. Guy Parker, 469th ABG deputy commander. "We will have to update a lot of our documentation to roll into the new dual-wing structure... but rest assured the men and women of 'Team Rhein-Main' are ready for the continuing challenges of day-to-day operations."

Combat Touch

Focusing on spiritual needs, well-being of airmen

By Maj. Kevin Cody
Rhein-Main base chapel

Just a few weeks ago a young airman (we'll call him Bill) ended up delayed at Rhein-Main.

Bill lost his visa and passport on his way to a deployed location and could not enter the country.

He was sent to Rhein-Main to acquire the appropriate documents and found himself stranded, waiting for things to fall in place. Bill had a lot of time on his hands. He didn't know anyone and was a little anxious about heading out on his own to explore Frankfurt.

One of our NCOs (we'll call him Collin) got word of Bill's predicament and he decided to give Bill a hand. Collin and his family invited Bill to enjoy some of the hospitality Rhein-Main has to offer. The next few days, while the paperwork was being processed, Bill enjoyed a home cooked meal with everyone.

He experienced a Christmas market the family had planned to visit. A few days later they went on a tour of Frankfurt and had dinner one evening at Collin's favorite German restaurant. Before Bill knew it, the waiting was over. He had made some new friends and some good memories to take with him.

Bill left Rhein-Main feeling good about himself, our base and looking forward to his time down range. Collin's family will never forget the way they felt by helping another person feel comfortable and at home.

The program is called "A Touch of Home." It's one of the new initiatives the Chapel is developing under Combat

Touch. Combat Touch is one of Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong, U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander's combat programs aimed directly at all of us helping each other.

The Air Force may have different terminology to describe this program, but it boils down to the Golden Rule, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

When you go out of your way to help another person you're rewarded in more ways than you can count. It develops virtues of patience, compassion and selflessness. It warms your heart with the goodness of your fellow man and reminds us we're not alone, we're in this together. It shows the depth of your generosity to another human being and inspires them to do the same.

In the near future you'll have the opportunity to be on the receiving end of a Combat Touch event.

For starters, if you miss the family atmosphere of a Christmas dinner, come by the base chapel at 3 p.m. Thursday for the Christmas Day dinner.

If you haven't already experienced a Combat Breakfast, we'll be setting one up with your unit soon. The Combat Touch Chapel will be opening soon in the passenger terminal. You might want come by and experience the peace and serenity of this quiet, prayerful place.

This is the season of giving thanks and appreciating all the gifts we've been given in life. Combat Touch is a way to carry that spirit of gratitude and giving throughout the coming year. All the new Combat initiatives give us many opportunities to get involved. They are programs that help

The Action Line is one way for me to keep my finger on the pulse of the Rhein-Main community and is used as an avenue for communication.

The main objective of the Commander's Action Line is finding solutions to problems or providing explanations for processes.

If you experience problems at Rhein-Main, you should always try to resolve problems at the lowest level by contacting the unit or agency managers. In almost every case, your chain of command is the best solution. I strongly encourage everyone to use that route first. When normal channels haven't been able to resolve your issues, feel free to send an e-mail to Hotline@rheinmain.af.mil or call 330-7779. Please include your name and contact information along with your concern.

Action Lines are forwarded to the appropriate agency for action and response. They should contact you within 24 hours. Once an Action Line is started, the agency must provide a complete answer to me within 10 days.

The 469th Air Base Group Public Affairs Office is responsible for managing the Action Line program on my behalf.

If you have any questions, call the 469th ABG/PA office at 330-7804 or e-mail at Hotline@rheinmain.af.mil.

Col. Bradley Denison
Commander, 469th Air Base Group

330-7779

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us reach out and express to each other how much all the hard work and sacrifice is appreciated. Your example of good will will become contagious and develop character in ever person you touch. Don't miss the chance to experience a warm heart. But I've got to warn you; it might change your life.

the Gateway

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The deadline for the Jan. 9 edition of the Gateway is 4 p.m., Jan. 2.

USAFE implements winter safety campaign

By Tech. Sgt. Mona Ferrell
USAFE News Service

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany – To reduce the potential for needless injuries and loss of life, U. S. Air Forces in Europe officials implemented a winter safety campaign from Nov. 27 through March 31, 2004.

The focus of the campaign is to encourage USAFE members to plan their activities as if they were planning a mission, said Col. Scott Adams, USAFE Safety director.

“During the winter months, USAFE usually experiences an increase in adverse weather-related accidents and injuries – most of which are preventable,” he said. “Risks are more easily assessed and managed in the planning stages of a mission or activity.”

The slogan of this year’s campaign, which was chosen to remind USAFE personnel to avoid unnecessary risk and actively manage the inherent risk in their activities, is “Risk – don’t chance it – manage it for life!”

While risk management is everyone’s responsibility, commanders and supervisors should help their members assess winter activities, consider options and take action to eliminate or reduce the risks involved, Adams said.

“Integrating personal risk management into planning as early as possible provides our members the opportunity to identify and minimize their risks,” he said. “Individual risk management means choosing to reduce your risk, and that might be choosing to run on a lit road instead of a dark, wet, wooded trail or slowing below the posted speed limits to compensate for potential black ice.”

As part of the winter campaign, USAFE is also implementing a ‘Click it or Ticket’ campaign through Jan. 4, 2004. The campaign, a high-profile law enforcement effort gives people more of a reason to buckle up and aims to change behavior through education.

“This proven initiative is directed at saving lives of USAFE members and their families by protecting them against one of their greatest threats this winter – traffic mishaps,” said Col. Mathew Toth, USAFE Security Forces director. “Security Forces will reinforce commanders’ emphasis on this program by issuing traffic citations to violators for noncompliance during random vehicle checks, traffic stops and at DUI checkpoints.”

The winter safety campaign is about more than preventing mishaps, said Adams.

“It’s about taking care of your wingman,” he said. “Our goal is to not lose any member of our USAFE team – military, civilian or family member – this winter.”

Warrior of the Week



1st Lt. Michael Martin

Unit: 469th Air Base Group Chapel

Time in service: 5 years

Time at Rhein-Main: 4.5 months

Duty Title: Protestant chaplain

Hometown: New Bern, N.C.

Hobbies: Soccer, creative writing and quilting

What has been your best AF experience?

Being a part of the Air Force community. I can’t believe the government pays me to go around and touch so many lives in a positive way – it’s truly a blessing.

Safety, from Page 1

essential to preventing mishaps and potential loss of life. Chief Coleman and I just did a higher Headquarters USAFE safety call – it’s that important.

Being vigilant also means looking out for each other. Many of us will be taking this time to spend with family members. However, for those who are separated from family – particularly our single airmen – the winter months, and holiday season in particular, can be stressful. If you see someone who is going to be alone for the holidays, invite them to spend time with you and your family. And if you see someone struggling, ask how you can help.

Enjoy the holiday season, but do it safely. The needless loss of even one life reduces our readiness, increases the stress on those left to carry on and inflicts a terrible emotional toll on our loved ones. I ask each of you to increase your vigilance, so when the much deserved pause is over, all of our USAFE team can return to work and do what we do best – protecting and defending our great nation.

Mary and I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Matt Summers

New threads

(Left) Tech. Sgt. Troy Edwards, 469th Air Base Group Communications Flight, models the new utility uniform to be wear tested for six months by several hundred Air Force members beginning in January. The new utility uniform and physical training gear were on display during an Air Force Uniform Board briefing Monday at the base theater. (Above) Tech. Sgt. Monica Adams, 469th ABG, allows fellow airmen to check out the fabric of the new Air Force PT uniform. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper said the distinctive Air Force utility uniform is designed to fit well, look sharp and require much less maintenance. Airmen from a cross section of career fields will provide feedback on the fit, durability and functionality of the proposed blue, gray and green tiger-stripe ensemble that will come in men's and women's cuts. A final decision on the uniform is expected in December 2004. If approved, production could begin as soon as 2005, with a phase-in date to be determined.

RMTP marks construction milestone

By Capt. Alisen Iversen
USAFE News Service

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Completion of a new facility here marks a significant milestone as U.S. Air Forces in Europe prepares to move Rhein-Main Air Base's airlift mission to nearby Ramstein and Spangdahlem Air Bases.

Finished ahead of schedule, the 721st Air Mobility Operations Group facility is the first large-scale building at Ramstein AB completed as part of USAFE's Rhein-Main Transition Program.

"The contractor turned the building over to us five weeks early," said Al Fraga, USAFE RMTP Program Management Office project manager. "They (the 721st) will be able to get in there earlier than we expected."

The new facility replaces several buildings occupied by the 721st. The old buildings will be demolished, making way for a new aircraft parking ramp.

"Finishing the AMOG facility early removes a critical domino from our path to start the new ramp five construction on time," said Chuck Williams, USAFE RMTP Project Management Office branch chief, referring to one of the parking areas for Air Mobility Command aircraft. "It also enables the acceleration of several additional projects."

The 721st AMOG is an AMC organization that monitors AMC operations, to include command and control, aerial port operations and aircraft maintenance, in Europe, Southwest Asia and Africa.

Members of the 721st are excited about moving into their new building, said Col. David Smith, 721st AMOG deputy commander.

"We are very happy to be moving into our new facility," said Colonel Smith. "We will finally be in a single building on a single floor. It will provide easier interaction between sections and more efficient leadership oversight."

An agreement between the United States and Germany specifies the Air Force will vacate Rhein-Main by Dec. 31, 2005.

COLA keeps up with rising Euro

Base residents pay 26 percent more on average for comparable stateside goods and services

By Tech. Sgt. Mona Ferrell
USAFE News Service

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany – Although the Euro continues to gain strength against the American dollar, U.S. Air Forces in Europe members can be assured they will continue to be provided with the proper Cost of Living Allowance, said USAFE officials recently.

Foreign currency rate changes are continually reviewed in high-cost living areas and the COLA rate is changed accordingly, said Lt. Col. Catherine McLoud, USAFE Accounting and Finance operations branch chief.

COLA, a monetary allowance provided to members living in high-cost areas, ensures all military members have the same buying power, whether living overseas or in the Continental United States.

“Several factors routinely impact COLA,” Colonel McLoud said. “A Retail Price Survey is conducted each year to assess the costs and typical local economy buy rate of more than 160 items and services. These items, ranging from meats to various entertainment purchases such as books or video tapes, are meant to give the true purchase-price picture for goods and services in each high-cost living area.”

The survey results for each area are then provided to the Department of Defense Per Diem Committee in Washington, D.C., she said. The Per Diem Committee analyzes the data and assigns each location an index number indicating the cost difference be-

tween purchasing those same items in the United States.

“For instance, the index for Ramstein Air Base, Germany, is currently .26,” said Colonel McLoud. “This indicates that our military members pay 26 percent more here for those 160 items than they would in the CONUS. This percentage difference is then calculated into the COLA rate.”

A Living Pattern Survey is also conducted every three years to gather information on whether members purchase goods and services on base or on the local economy, said Master Sgt. Michael Windsor, USAFE Financial Management chief of command travel pay and procedures.

“In this survey, the purchases are weighted in the overall index. For example, groceries are weighted more than reading materials,” Sergeant Windsor said.

“Using Ramstein Air Base as an example again, the current LPS indicates that military members in this area make one quarter of their purchases off base. This ratio is taken into consideration when calculating the COLA rate here. These purchase percentages, on- or off-base, help determine the impact exchange rate fluctuations have on the overall COLA rate,” he said.

But, the factor that has the most noticeable impact on a member’s COLA is foreign currency rate changes, said Colonel McLoud.

“The Per Diem committee makes updates as often as twice a month, on the first and fifteenth of the month,” she said. “If during that two-week period the cumulative cost of off-base spending has increased or decreased at least five percent, then the

index number is changed and members receive an increase or decrease in their cost of living allowance accordingly.”

Although the exchange rate fluctuates daily, it takes two weeks to adjust the military pay computer tables. But, this two-week adjustment works both ways, McLoud stressed.

“For instance, let’s say the foreign exchange rate gets better, and the Per Diem Committee determines that a COLA decrease is required,” she said. “That decrease won’t be seen until two weeks later, so during that time we’re getting a COLA rate higher than what it’s costing us to purchase goods. The same could be said if the COLA increases. It takes two weeks to see a change in our paychecks whether the rate increases or decreases. Over time, the COLA rates balance out and we’re getting the money we need to purchase the items we want, where we want.”

The statistics behind COLA may be complicated, but it’s an allowance that’s fair, Sergeant Windsor said.

“USAFE members are being affected by the dropping Euro exchange rate, however the DoD is taking care of them through COLA adjustments,” he said. “Over time, all military members, whether living in England, Germany or any other part of Europe, are properly compensated for the high costs associated with overseas living.”

More information about COLA rates can be found on the Per Diem Committee Web site located at <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/ocform.html>.

(Editor’s note: As of Tuesday the new COLA index for Ramstein and Rhein-Main is .28. Members will see this change reflected in their end-of-month pay.)



The 2003 Combined Federal Campaign has been extended until Dec. 31.

To make a donation, contact your unit key person or call or stop by the 469th Air Base Group Public Affairs Office at 330-7805.

Make a World of Difference... Give to the CFC

AF leaders celebrate Centennial of Flight

WASHINGTON — The following is a joint message from Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper:

“It was the most significant 12 seconds of the last 100 years.

“On Dec. 17, 1903, two bicycle builders from Ohio, Orville and Wilbur Wright, launched the world on a path to the heavens when their rudimentary airplane of wire, wood and canvas wings lifted off a windy, grassy hill at Kitty Hawk.

“Since their marvelous achievement, aviation has enabled our expansion, enhanced our commerce and expanded our communication.

“Military aviation developed quickly after that first flight. The names and exploits of our airpower pioneers are melded into our nation’s history: Rickenbacker, Mitchell, Doolittle, Davis, Cochran and

Yeager, to name just a few.

“While our past is storied, our present and future remain as boundless and adventurous as the Wright Brothers’ dream. Because of our great airmen in today’s Air Force, we have developed, operated, and exploited advanced weapons systems and technologies — from sensors and aircraft to lasers and satellites

— enabling us to own the ultimate high ground and dominate any battlespace.

“The Centennial of Flight is as much about our future as it is about our past. We commend you for all that you do every day to promote this heritage and provide our nation with the finest air and space force in the world.

“We’re proud to serve alongside you as we continue to discover ways to slip the surly bonds and deliver peace and freedom for our nation.”

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)



Military firsts

1942 – The Bell P-59A Airacomet makes its first flight at Muroc, Calif. It’s the first turbojet flight for the United States.

1951 – 1st Lt. Russell J. Brown, flying an Air Force F-80 Shooting Star, downs a North Korean MiG-15 in the first battle between jet aircraft.

1957 – A B-52 completes a 45-hour around-the-world flight, becoming the first jet aircraft to circle the globe nonstop.

1976 – SR-71 pilots Maj. Adolphus H. Bledsoe, Capt. Robert C. Helt and Capt. Eldon W. Joersz set three world flight records over Beale Air Force Base, Calif.: altitude in horizontal flight — 85,068.997 feet, speed over a straight course — 2,193.16 mph, and speed over a closed course — 2,092.294 mph.

1991 – B-52G crews from the 2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., take off to begin what will become the longest bombing mission in history. Carrying 39 AGM-86C air-launched cruise missiles, the bomber crews fly to the Middle East and launch their missiles against high-priority targets in Iraq.

Spreadin’ the word

Brig. Gen. Stanley Gorenc, U.S. Air Forces in Europe Director of Plans and Programs, presents an Officer Force Development briefing Monday at the Zeppelinhaus. Force development is the process the Air Force uses to achieve a final goal of developing leaders who can lead and integrate missions outside their specialized experience.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Summers

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



(Above) Members of the 469th Air Base Group Services Flight toss candy to children during the Rhein-Main Holiday Parade Dec. 4. (Right) Col. Bradley Denison, 469th ABG Commander, hits the switch to officially light the base Christmas tree during a ceremony following the parade. (Below) Brittany Hodges, a member of the Halvorsen-Turner School Choir performs a Christmas carol.



Photos by 1st Lt. Bryan Edmonson & Staff Sgt. Matt Summers



(Top) Taylor Lindley tells Santa what she wants for Christmas during the Breakfast with Santa program Dec. 6 at the Zeppelinhaus. (Above) Members of the Rhein-Main Chapel Choir perform carols during the base tree lighting ceremony.



AF to release new fitness instruction

New guidelines increase emphasis on commander involvement in unit PT

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — One of the most noticeable changes to the Air Force's new fitness program is that it will be defined by an operational rather than a medical instruction.

The change shows that senior leaders consider fitness an important part of operational readiness, said Maj. Lisa Schmidt, the Air Force chief of health promotions operations.

"As we support the aerospace expeditionary force and the environments we now deploy to, fitness becomes a readiness issue," Major Schmidt said. "If a person is fit, they are going to be able to tolerate austere environments, the fatigue and the temperature changes."

The full text of the Air Force's new fitness instruction will be available to the force before Jan. 1, she said. The planned release comes less than five months after the service's highest ranking officer told airmen there would be changes in the way the Air Force looked at physical fitness.

"The amount of energy we devote to our fitness programs is not consistent with the growing demand of our warrior culture," wrote Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper in his July Sight Picture. "It's time to change that."

Besides making physical fitness a readiness requirement, the new instruction also puts an emphasis on



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Summers

Fred Miller, 469th Air Base Group Civil Engineer Flight, pumps out push-ups during a recent cross-training class given by the 469th ABG services flight during their Fitness 101 day Dec. 11. More than 30 people took part in the class.

commander involvement in unit fitness programs.

"If you look at the July Sight Picture, General Jumper says fitness is a commander's responsibility," Major Schmidt said. "This instruction puts more responsibility on the commander, not the medical community."

Among other things, the instruction requires unit and squadron commanders to implement and maintain a unit physical-training program and to offer the program at least three times a week.

The instruction also details methodology for conducting fitness evaluations. Major Schmidt said the instructions for conducting the push-up and crunch portions of the evaluation should be no surprise to airmen. They are

the same instructions that have been used at the end of the cycle-ergometry test for the last two years.

"The only change is that the push-ups and crunches will be evaluated for one minute, instead of two minutes," Major Schmidt said.

The instruction also specifies how to conduct the aerobic portion of the test. Airmen will run on an outdoor course approved by the wing commander. During inclement weather, an indoor running track may be used. Treadmills will not be authorized for fitness evaluations. The new fitness instruction takes effect Jan. 1, and will make obsolete the current fitness and weight-management instructions, Air Force Instruction 40-501 and AFI 40-502.

Sports Briefs

Youth sports

Registration for youth basketball and cheerleading runs through Dec. 31.

The basketball season begins in January. Basketball is for children ages 5-15 and gymnastics is for ages 10-15.

For more information, call the youth center at 330-7125.

Jingle bell run

Jingle Bell Walk/Run begins at 3:30 p.m. today at the base flag pole, Bldg. 347. Bring a toy for a child 3 and under.

Dining facility

Following are holiday hours for the 64th Replacement Company Dining Facility:

- Breakfast 7 - 8:30 a.m.
 - Lunch 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner 4:30 - 6 p.m.
- Operating hours for Christmas are:
- Brunch 9 - 10:30 a.m.
 - Supper 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Couples massage

The family support center sponsors a couples massage therapy class set for 6 - 8 p.m. Monday at "Our House."

Participants can learn massage techniques from a certified massage therapist.

Child care is provided. Participants should bring a pillow and any lotion they would like to use. The class size is limited.

Call 330-7992 to sign up.

Stocking giveaway

From now until Monday, when you bowl three games at the Rocket Bowling Center your name is entered into a drawing for "The World's Largest Christmas Stocking Giveaway."

The winner will be announced Monday. For more details, call the center at 330-7219.

Scholarships available

The Rhein-Main Community Spouse's Club has applications available for scholarships for graduating high school seniors with a sponsor assigned to Rhein-Main. Completed application packets must be delivered by Jan. 30 to:

Chapel Worship

The following special worship opportunities are offered by the Rhein-Main Chapel:

- Christmas Eve Candlelight at 7:30 p.m.
- Christmas Mass at midnight
- Christmas Day Mass at 11 a.m.

For more information please call the chapel at 330-7501.

Applications are located in the family support center and the base library or see Cecilia Kitterman, School Liaison Officer. For more information, call at 330-6272.

Thrift shop

The Rhein-Main Thrift Shop will be closed Dec. 23 - Jan. 6 for the holidays.

Cookie drive

The USO office at Rhein-Main needs the following items to help support troops traveling through Rhein-Main on their way down range and returning for R&R:

- Packaged cookies, sugar, coffee, napkins and stir sticks

If you have any of these items to donate, there are drop boxes at the following locations:

- Base chapel, commissary, shoppette, family support center, FSC Annex and billeting office

For more information, contact Tech. Sgts. Don Anderson or Paul Smith.

New Year's Eve party

The Rhein-Main community is invited to a family New Year's Eve Party beginning at 8 p.m. Dec. 31 at the Rocket Bowling Center.

Participants can enjoy Colorama Bowling, free hats and noisemakers and breakfast after midnight.

Call 330-7219 to sign up or for more information.

Rocket party

The Rocket Sports Lounge hosts a New Year's Eve party from 4 p.m. Dec. 31 until 2 a.m. Jan. 1.

Spouse scholarships

The Aerospace Education Foundation has 30 \$1,000 scholarships available to Air Force spouses. A GPA of 3.5 or higher is a requirement.

Applications are available at the education center in Bldg. 347 and are due no later than Jan. 30 to:

Aerospace Education Foundation
1501 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22209

Call 330-7484 for more details.

Movies at Rhein-Main

Tonight - "School of Rock," (PG-13), 7 p.m.

Saturday - "Looney Tunes Back in Action," (PG), 5 p.m., and "Duplex," (PG-13), 7:30 p.m.

Sunday - "Out of Time," (PG-13), 7 p.m.

Wednesday - "The Last Samurai," (R), 7 p.m.

Dec. 26 - "Freaky Friday," (PG), 7 p.m.

Dec. 27 - "Dr. Seuss: Cat in the Hat," (PG), 5 p.m. and "Intolerable Cruelty," (PG-13) 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 28 - "Under the Tuscan Sun," (PG-13), 7 p.m.

Dec. 31 - "Stuck on You," (PG), 7 p.m.

Movies and times are subject to change.

Movie schedules for local communities can be found at

www.aafes.com/ems/default.asp

For sale

For sale: 19" Zenith TV - \$65; microwave (220) - \$40; microwave (110) - \$45; 3-piece leather couch set w/coffee table - \$375; mattress/box spring (queen) - \$350; JVC DVD/Stereo Sys. (220) - \$100. All in good working order. Call 016099826935.

For rent

For rent: Apartment in Walldorf. Available Jan. 24. 95 sq. m.; 2 bedroom, 1.5 baths; balcony; garage. 15 min. from base. Call 330-7820 days, 06105951956 nights.

B-ball tourney

A 3-on-3 basketball tournament/sleep in is set for Jan. 10 at the youth center.

The tourney is from 3 - 5 p.m. and costs \$1 per person for all ages. The sleep-in is for ages 9 - 13 and costs \$3 per person.

Call 330-7125 to sign-up.

Christmas traditions in Germany

By **Monika Salfelder**

Public Affairs

In Germany Advent is the name for the season leading up to Christmas day.

It derives from Latin "advenire", which means "to come". Advent begins four Sundays before Dec. 24 to give people a time frame to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

For children it became a tradition throughout Germany to have an Advent calendar, which makes the waiting for Christmas a little more enjoyable.

There are many versions of Advent calendars: in former days 24 pictures had been put on the wall day by day, or the parents drew 24 strokes with chalk on the door, and one per day was wiped off.

One of the newer versions of an Advent calendar is a picture for the wall with 24 "doors" or "windows" to open. Each window shows either little drawings or hides a piece of chocolate.

Advent calendars can be bought at stores or food markets in the cities or at some commissaries.

Parents sometimes create their own kind of Advent calendar, for instance a row of 24 stockings or little bags, which contain a small gift for the child for each day.

Nowadays in day care institutions and kindergartens there are a lot of different Advent calendars produced, which gives way to creativity and is less expensive than to buy the

calendars in a store.

The Adventskranz (Advent wreath) is another German tradition for the Christmas season.

It's a wreath with four candles, which stand for the four weeks before Christmas. The candles are lighted starting with one on the first Sunday and one more each following Advent Sunday until all four burn until the Christmas season is over.

Instead of a wreath some people make four candle arrangements with twigs and decorations.

In many families – at least in the religious ones - the singing of Christmas carols is practiced during the Christmas season. In the evenings the family gathers around the Adventskranz, and on Christmas around the Christmas tree, for singing, praying and reading of Christmas stories.

Nowadays people start to eat Christstollen or Stollen of various

kinds (e.g. Hazelnut-, Marzipan-, Poppyseed-Stollen), a traditional Christmas cake, during Advent time or earlier, a habit which in the past reserved for Christmas.

Various kinds of Lebkuchen (ginger bread) are also eaten before Christmas.

What do Germans traditionally eat for Christmas dinner or lunch? Many people eat duck or carp, or a meal of apple-stuffed goose with red cabbage and dumplings on either Christmas eve or Christmas Day.

In German households the Christmas tree is traditionally put up and decorated

on Dec. 24, but this is beginning to change towards the American way of decorating much earlier.

Normally German families, even those not active church goers, attend a Christmas service, either on Christmas Eve or to a Midnight mass or on Christmas Day.



Courtesy photo

Germany's Gerhard Lang printed the first Advent calendar in 1908. Since then the calendars have evolved into the chocolate filled ones like the one above.

The Christmas Tree legend and St. Boniface

Legend has that a 7th century monk from England came to Germany to teach the word of God.

He was said to have used the triangular shape of the fir tree to describe the Holy Trinity of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The converted began to revere the fir tree as God's tree.

By the 12th century it was being hung, upside-down, from ceilings at Christmastime in Central Europe as a symbol of Christianity.

The first decorated tree on record was in Riga, Latvia, in 1510. In the early 16th century, Martin Luther is



said to have decorated a small Christmas tree with candles, to show his children how the stars twinkled through the dark night.

In the mid 16th century, Christmas markets were set up in German towns to provide everything from gifts and food to knives to carve the Christmas goose.

At these fairs, bakers made shaped gingerbreads and wax ornaments for people to buy as souvenirs of the fair and to take home and hang on their Christmas trees.

(Courtesy of the Christmas Archives)