

THE

CARGO COURIER



123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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*Program gives
new members...*

THE Right Start

By Maj. Ralinda Gregor
KyANG Chief of Public Affairs

New members of the KyANG are getting a "right start" when they report for drill thanks to a new orientation program developed by the base personnel office.

The Right Start Program gives enlistees and prior-service members the training they need to be effective once they report to their unit, said Master Sgt. Rose Farquhar, the base retention manager and Right Start coordinator.

It picks up where the now-defunct Student Flight left program off, said Col. Michael Harden, wing commander.

"Student Flight helped prepare new enlistees for basic military training, while Right Start gives us a chance to clean up all the ancillary training for those folks with prior service, as well as get our enlistees ready for basic," Harden said.

"It's really a great program," said Col. Bill Leslie, the wing's vice commander, who recently rejoined the KyANG after an assignment with U.S. Air Forces Europe and is part of the first group of Right Start students scheduled to graduate this month.

"We're looking at how this first group does so we can make improvements to the program and tighten up the schedule if possible," he added.

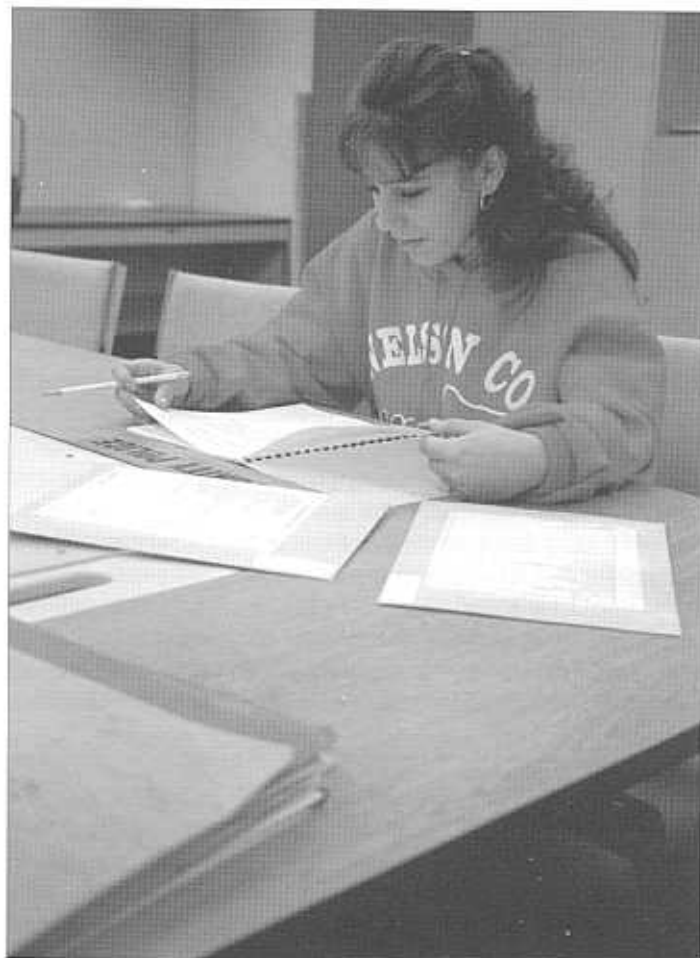
All new KyANG members spend their first three drill weekends in the program, receiving a variety of briefings and hands-on training. New enlistees receive an indoctrination to basic training. Prior-service members have time built into the schedule to coordi-

nate training needs with their unit training managers.

Ancillary training is a big part of the program. OPSEC and COMSEC training, driver's training, buddy care and first aid, initial chemical warfare training, M-16/M-9 training, social actions and quality awareness all are included in the Right Start schedule.

Many of these topics are completely new to Brandy Allen, the head cheerleader for Nelson County High School and one of the wing's newest enlistees. Allen is following in the footsteps of her

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KyANG photo by Staff Sgt. Dale Greer

New enlistee Brandy Allen studies up on KyANG facts as part of the wing's first Right Start class. The program is designed to help provide units with airmen who are ready for duty.

Six core skills to shape the Air Force as it enters the next century

Our predecessors set some high standards of ingenuity, innovation and dedication.

Just as the Air Force has benefited from the work of these men and women during the past 50 years, it is our responsibility to build the foundation for future generations.

That foundation can best be summed up by the Air Force's over-arching new strategy for the 21st century, "Global Engagement."

This vision captures the global nature and the unparalleled access that air and space forces possess from operating in a medium that surrounds the globe and touches 100 percent of the population and every center of government on the face of the Earth.

Our vision is based on using the speed, range and precision of air and space forces to meet the needs of the nation.

In developing this vision, our long-range planning began with the examination of possible alternative futures, because anyone who plans for a single point or a precise future will be precisely wrong.

These alternative futures led us to examine what capabilities the nation would need from its Air Force during the first quarter of the 21st century.

We describe those capabilities as six core competencies. These are the things the Air Force must be engaged in.

•The first core competency is called **Air and Space Superiority**, which assures a fundamental benefit to all forces across the full



Gen. Ronald R. Fogleman
Air Force Chief of Staff

spectrum of conflict from peace to war.

This superiority provides our forces freedom of action and freedom to attack. It denies the enemy sanctuaries and prevents adversaries from interfering with our operations.

Gaining control quickly and decisively yields air dominance — the ability to operate with impunity.

•The second competency, **Global Attack**, has two distinct aspects. The first part is that our forces stationed in the United States are capable of finding, fixing and attacking targets anywhere in the world within a matter of hours. The other dimension of Global At-

tack is our expeditionary nature and ability to go forward and provide sustained combat power.

•The key to going forward for the Air Force is **Rapid Global Mobility**, the third core competency.

This involves bringing forces forward for a full range of operations, from combat to peacekeeping or humanitarian efforts.

Our airlifters and tankers are important today and they will continue to be so in the future. They give the National Command Authorities the ability to reach out and influence events around the world.

•The fourth core competency, **Precision Engagement**, is the ability to precisely apply what is needed to influence events both on and off the battlefield.

It involves delivering food, supplies and lethal ordnance, or attacking an adversary's command and control net.

The ability to precisely strike multiple targets on a single sortie offers great capability and the promise of greatly reduced casualties on the battlefield.

•To meet the needs of the future, we also must place a premium on **Information Superiority**, the fifth core competency.

In the first quarter of the 21st century we will have the ability to find, track and target, in near real time, anything of significance, fixed or moving, on the surface of the Earth.

The Air Force has been designated the

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If you have a story idea, photo or article to submit, call or stop by the PA office, room 2117 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is Jan. 20.

Recruiting Excellence

Master Sgt. Dorenda Stackhouse recently was recognized as one of the top recruiters in the Air National Guard. Stackhouse, supervisor of the wing's recruiting office, placed in the top 20 nationally, and first in her region for productivity.

KyANG photo by
Tech. Sgt. Charles Simpson



Kentucky crew chiefs get Nomex gear

Flight suits enhance safety for maintainers

By Staff Sgt. Dale Greer
Cargo Courier Editor

The 123rd Airlift Wing's maintenance troops now have access to the same safety equipment that aircrew members have worn for years.

In September, the unit purchased 47 sets of Nomex flight suits to be worn by crew chiefs and other Mission Essential Ground Personnel who frequently fly on KyANG aircraft.

This marks the first time since 1989, when the unit converted from RF-4Cs to C-130s, that MEGPs have been issued the fire-retardant gear, said 1st Lt. Matt Stone, commander of the 123rd Aircraft Generation Squadron.

The move is critically important, Stone said, because MEGPs, who fly cross-country sorties to provide maintenance support for Kentucky planes, are exposed to the same dangers as regular flight crew members.

"What we've tried to do with these flight

suits is take care of the safety problem that's created when you have a guy that's spending a lot of time in the airplane and being exposed to the same hazards as the rest of the aircrew members, yet he is not protected in the same way as they are," Stone said.

"BDUs, which is what these guys used to wear, offer absolutely no protection to fire hazards. A guy would go up like a flame."

Stone said the wing first looked at purchasing flight suits for its crew chiefs right after the 1989 conversion, but "the money wasn't there to pay for it."

Although the gear is authorized for wear by MEGPs, only about half of the country's C-130 Guard units have issued it to their crew chiefs.

Stone praised the KyANG's Financial Working Group, which prioritizes unfunded spending requests, for giving the initiative its full support.

He said the group voted to make the pur-

chase of the flight suits its No. 1 priority last year.

"That says loads about the wing's commitment to the safety of its members," he added.

Master Sgt. Frankie Bronger, a flight chief with the 123rd Aircraft Generation Squadron, agreed.

"It's been a big morale booster," Bronger said of the gear.

"We see how much our leadership cares about our safety. It made the guys feel good that our commanders wanted us to have every safety benefit we could get."

In addition to the flight suits, the wing also purchased protective gloves, long underwear and summer-weight jackets for MEGPs.

Stone said the clothing cost about \$14,000 — a small price to pay for the safety of an airman.

"We had guys who were flying into Bosnia and being exposed to fire threats and all kinds of hazards," Stone said.

"Now we can put a flight suit on them so that if they are exposed to a fire situation, they can come home safe.

"It's the most important thing I've done in my career."

Guard pays tribute to Chief Gering

Service draws more than 200 bluesuiters

By Staff Sgt. Dale Greer
Cargo Courier Editor

Chief Master Sgt. Al Gering wasn't able to make it to the Dec. 7 drill. But, in a way, it came to him.

A wall of blue encircled Gering that morning as more than 200 Guard members gathered at Calvary Cemetery to honor a man who represented the best of the Air National Guard.

He was buried with full military honors.

Gering died in his Louisville home two days earlier after waging a courageous 14-month battle with cancer.

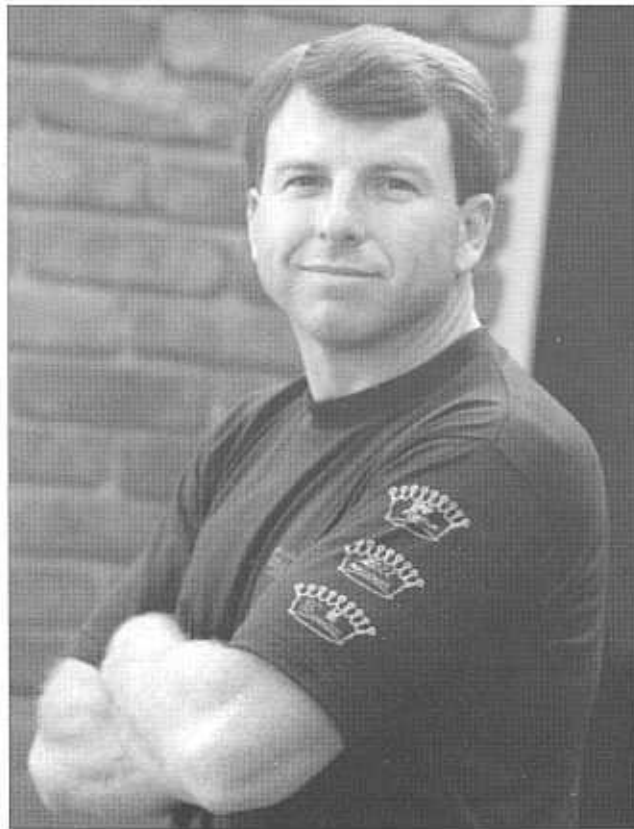
Friends say he never let the disease take over his life.

"The people around Al gained a lot of strength from the way he handled his illness," said Senior Master Sgt. Jim Smith, a close friend of Gering's for almost 20 years.

"Al didn't want anybody feeling sorry for him. He never whimpered or complained or blamed anybody or lost faith. He found a lot of strength from his faith in God."

Lt. Col. John Wheeler, Gering's former commander in the 123rd Operations Support Flight, was struck by Gering's dignity.

"The thing that impressed me most about Al was that he never mentioned his problems. I probably would have been dwelling in self-pity, but not Al."



Smith said Gering continued to attend unit training assemblies without fail, even as the cancer began to take its physical toll. He of-

ten took work home with him.

"The Guard was his life," Smith said. "He was dedicated to it and everything the Guard stood for — integrity, pride, courage."

Wheeler said Gering gave more to the wing than most people know, and he seldom was recognized for his hard work.

"Al was one of those kind of guys who would do his work without a lot of fanfare," Wheeler said.

"We found after he was gone that it took five people to replace him. He just did more jobs than almost anybody, and most of the time, people didn't even know he was doing them."

Gering also was a dedicated family man who coached girls' softball teams for his two daughters, Lori, a sophomore at the University of Louisville; and Beth, a senior at Sacred Heart Academy.

Gering first joined the Guard in 1970 as an airfield operations manager.

During his 26-year enlistment, he served as Command Post NCOIC, airfield management superintendent, and an Airlift Control Element member.

In October, Gering was named the 123rd Airlift Wing's senior enlisted advisor, a job Smith said he loved.

"Al was very happy to get that job," Smith said, "because he knew that he had earned it."

KyANG marathon runners remember fellowship

All Kentucky Air Guard runners marked the passing of Chief Master Sgt. Al Gering with sorrow.

Al loved to run.

In 1995, he ran the Kentucky Derby Mini-Marathon along with 10 other Air Guard members.

And although Al's time was off that

year, he still was the spark and glue that got everyone together. After the 13.1-mile race, Al wore his usual grin and joked with his fellow Guardsmen.

They didn't know it, but that would be Al's last race.

Last year, Al declined to run the Mini. He said he just wasn't up to the race, but he of-

fered to help organize our runners.

And at the finish line on race day, Al was there to congratulate everyone. He had a big smile on his face that just made everyone feel good.

We all will miss him.

—Lt. Col. Dan Wells

Chaplain collecting coats for mission

The wing chaplain's office is continuing its coat drive this weekend.

If you would like to donate coats, gloves or any other cold-weather clothing, please bring them to the base chapel or the collection site in the hangar.

Items will be given to the Wayside Christian Mission.

Wing seeking enlisted advisor

The headquarters of the 123rd Airlift Wing has an opening for a senior enlisted advisor.

Applicants must currently hold the rank of chief master sergeant or be senior master sergeants who are immediately eligible for promotion.

The senior enlisted advisor assists the wing commander with issues affecting the health, welfare and morale of the enlisted force.

Any member who is interested in the four-year commitment must submit a packet to Col. Michael Harden, 123 AW/CC, no later than Feb. 9.

The packet should include a resumé and a letter explaining why the applicant thinks he or she is best suited for the post.

For more information, contact Maj. Richard Frymire, 123rd Airlift Wing chief of staff, at extension 4666.

Off base, call (502) 364-9666.

Right Start prepares newcomers

Continued from Page 1

father, Tech. Sgt. John Bowling, and her sister, Senior Airman Melanie Owens, who also are KyANG members.

Allen will go to basic training this summer after she graduates from high school.

Then it's off to technical school to become a radio operator for the 205th Combat Communications Squadron.

Allen said her father told her a lot about the unit and basic training, but she said it wasn't enough to prepare her for the transition to military life. "Right Start has been very interesting," she said.

"My sister didn't go through it, and she said she wasn't prepared for basic.

"I'm definitely going to be ready."

Right Start gives the unit combat-ready airmen, said Senior Master Sgt. Donna Walz, NCOIC of base training.

"Their training is up-to-date, and they're ready to work," Walz said.

An added benefit is the camaraderie that develops among Right Start participants.

"They make friends in the program, and it helps them start feeling like they're a part of the unit," Walz said.

Airman 1st Class Chad Waters, a new sheet metal technician who came from Charleston Air Force Base, is enthusiastic about his Right Start experience.

"I'm having to do a lot of training over again, but I still like it," he said.

Even former KyANG member Staff Sgt. Timothy Nash has benefited from the program.

Nash left the unit in 1987 to become an F-4 crew chief in the active Air Force.

A civilian since 1993, he returned to the KyANG because some-

thing was missing in his life.

"I missed working on the flightline, and I missed the military," Nash said.

"It's helped me a lot," Nash said of the Right Start program. "It's helped me transition back into the Guard. The new base is different, and I even had to relearn how to put my uniform together."



KyANG photo by Staff Sgt. Dale Greer

Even prior-service members like Staff Sgt. Timothy Nash attend the Right Start program to help them acclimate to the Kentucky Air Guard.

Sen. Ford to address NGAKy

By Staff Sgt. Dale Greer
Cargo Courier Editor

U.S. Sen. Wendell Ford will speak in Louisville Feb. 22 to members of the National Guard Association of Kentucky.

Ford, a staunch advocate of the National Guard, served as Kentucky's 49th governor before beginning his current 23-year tenure in Washington, D.C.

His speech will be the highlight of the Guard Association's 66th Annual confer-

ence, to be held at the Galt House Feb. 21-23.

Kentucky's adjutant general, Brig. Gen. John R. Groves, also will deliver his "State of the Guard" address at the conference.

Other events include a banquet, military ball, awards ceremony and family activities.

Registration deadline for the conference is Feb. 11.

For more information, contact Maj. Richard Frymire at extension 4666.

End Of the Line

Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems recently completed assembly of the last C-130 "H" model, ending a 32-year production run for that series of Hercules transports. The "H" model shown here will be the last to leave Lockheed's Georgia factory.



Photo by John Rossino, Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems

VA changing insurance for Guard retirees

New program offers lifetime coverage, several flexible payment options

Air Force News Service

WASHINGTON — Thousands of Retired Guard policyholders who carry Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance will be affected by a program merger early next year, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Legislation signed into law Oct. 9 eliminated the Retired Reserve SGLI program. Effective Jan. 6, all of these policies automatically will be exchanged for policies under the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program.

In addition, for the first time, VGLI will be extended generally to Reservists and National Guard members who decide to separate before reaching 20-year retirement.

VA supported these changes to provide Reservists parity with active-duty members, recognizing their important role in national defense.

The eligibility of Reservists for VGLI coverage will benefit the entire VGLI pro-

gram by expanding the pool of insured members, thus providing downward pressure on premiums.

"We believe these changes to our insurance program are beneficial to both current and future veterans seeking affordable and comprehensive life insurance," said Acting Under Secretary for Benefits Dr. Stephen Lemons.

The expansion of VGLI eligibility is among several insurance program changes under the Veterans Benefits Improvements Act.

It authorizes conversion of VGLI policies to commercial life insurance at any time instead of awaiting the end of every 5-year coverage period, and it allows retired reservists to retain lifetime coverage under VGLI instead of being cut off from coverage at age 61 or when receiving retired pay as was the case with Retired Reserve SGLI.

The new law also changed the name of SGLI from Servicemen's Group Life In-

surance to the gender-neutral Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

The upcoming program merger affects an estimated 14,000 retired reservists with \$1 billion in insurance coverage who, in converting to VGLI, will join 350,000 veterans in that program holding about \$29 billion in insurance coverage.

Those members with Retired Reserve SGLI policies that expired because they began receiving retired pay or reached the age of 61 before Oct. 9, 1996, will not be eligible for VGLI.

For those whose policies are converted, in addition to lifetime coverage, benefits will include a longer reinstatement period of five years after a policy has lapsed instead of three.

Several new premium payment options also will be available, notably the use of automatic payments by deductions from VA benefits or retirement checks, as well as the option to take a one-month discount for annual payments.

Reservists with full-time SGLI coverage who will be separating soon and wish to maintain coverage under VGLI may also receive information and application forms from the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance at 1-800-419-1473.

Gen. Ryan: Airmen to remain in Bosnia for 'forseeable future'

Air Force News Service

TUZLA AIR BASE, Bosnia-Herzegovina — NATO's presence in Bosnia may change from a peace implementation force to a sustaining force this month, but it will be business as usual for airmen in the 4100th Group (Provisional) here, according to the commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

Gen. Michael E. Ryan said the Air Force will continue to lead the way for as long as the U.S. military has a mission in Bosnia.

"I think that as the political decision is being made for the United States to participate in the follow-on force, that we will probably keep the footprint that we have here at Tuzla about the same as it is right now," Ryan said during a recent interview.

Ryan noted the need to "continue to do all the missions we're doing right now."

He forecasted the Air Force will "remain here in about the same posture for the foreseeable future, at least the next six months."

The 4100th Group operates the Tuzla airfield, Bosnia's air bridge entry point for Mul-

tinational Division North.

While many of the airmen assigned to Operation Joint Endeavor come from USAFE units, the general said people will continue to be drawn from units around the Air Force, including the Guard and Reserve.

"We'll continue to do that to try to balance the burden," he said.

"It gives others an opportunity to serve here. I think serving here gives you a very, very good background for other operations similar to this that we're doing around the world."

More recent Air Force operations may overshadow Air Force activities here, but the general assured people that out of sight does not mean the mission here isn't worthwhile.

"This is a very, very important mission," he said.

"What (the 4100th does) is extremely important to the peace process in here in Bosnia. I'm proud of this organization."

Core skills to shape next century

Continued from Page 2

executive agent for Battle Management/Command and Control among the services. We are the integrators for the joint force.

This is a responsibility we take seriously. We are committed to providing the Joint Force commander a picture of the entire battlespace, including air, space and surface forces.

To support this goal we are looking at a full range of innovative technology, like the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

Down the road we see them becoming capable of delivering combat power.

Air and space forces provide worldwide situation awareness. They are generally the first forces called forward in a crisis, followed shortly by our fighter squadrons.

Because we must be the first in, our forces must be light, agile and far ranging.

•Which leads us to our sixth core competency, *Agile Combat Support*. This not only includes "lean logistics," but also force protection and ability to set up and fight rapidly deployable, light forces.

The first 50 years of the Air Force have truly produced a "Golden Legacy." Today the entire nation benefits from that legacy.

I believe our long-range planning lays the foundation for a "Boundless Future" as well.

Promotions in the KyANG



The following servicemembers have been promoted in the Kentucky Air National Guard and as reservists of the U.S. Air Force.

TO AIRMAN (E-2)

•Scott Hagan,
8123rd Student Flt.

TO SENIOR AIRMAN (E-3)

•Thomas Downs,
123rd Communications Flt.
•Melanie Owens,
123rd Security Police Sq.
•Karl Rybicki,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.

TO STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)

•Catherine Morgan,
123rd Communications Flt.

TO MASTER SERGEANT (E-7)

•Timothy Foster,
123rd Services Flt.
•David Meredith,
123rd Maintenance Flt.
•Dorenda Stackhouse,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

TO CAPTAIN (O-3)

•Kathryn Bowers,
123rd Operations Support Flt.

Cold War felt in frigid January climate

By Tech. Sgt. John R. Martin
123rd Airlift Wing Historian

January was named after the Roman god Janus, a two-faced deity that had the ability to look into the past and the future at the same time.

Beginning this month, Retrospect will be placing special emphasis on our unit's proud half-century of service as the Kentucky Air Guard joins the U.S. Air Force in its 50th anniversary celebration this year.

One tangible result of these 50 years of service was a complete military victory over an enemy we never actually engaged in battle.

In January 1957, however, no one knew the Cold War wouldn't heat to the flash point, and members of the Kentucky Air Guard were doing their part to ensure America remained strong and free.

That was the date our pilots began "scramble" exercises to ensure the security of Louisville and everything in a 300-mile radius. At a moment's notice, KyANG pilots (four of whom were kept on standby status during normal duty hours) were expected to jump in their planes and scramble for their destinations.

It also was in January 1957 that the KyANG lost its eighth member in the line of duty, 2nd Lt. Owen Turner, whose T-38 trainer crashed in Alabama.

The following year, the 123rd's mission changed from fighters to reconnaissance aircraft.

The conversion to the new F-86 Sabre-Jets was hampered, however, by a shortage of training aircraft and a base relocation.

This month also saw two of the KyANG's first women featured in a 1968

Louisville Courier-Journal article:

2nd Lt. Tina Cline and 1st Lt. Beverly O'Bryan were profiled as the only women in the unit to be called up to federal service during the Pueblo Crisis. Both women served as nurses.

The USS Pueblo, a Navy electronic intelligence and hydrographics ship, was boarded and seized by North Korean forces in international waters off the coast of Wosan, North Korea on Jan. 26, 1966.

Trivia answer from last month: Louisville's Levy Brothers clothing company had a strong tie to the Confederate army—it was the largest single supplier of Confederate uniforms. The building still stands downtown. Its current tenants include The Spaghetti Factory.

Trivia for February: What two unit designations were assigned to the KyANG when it received federal recognition?

Stamp commemorates 50 years' service



U.S. Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela Stafford

Air Force Secretary Sheila E. Widnall (left of stamp) and U.S. Postal Service Senior Vice President Larry Speakes (right of stamp) stand with Air Force personnel during a Pentagon ceremony to unveil the commemorative U.S. Air Force stamp last month. The image of the Thunderbirds pays tribute to the Air Force's 50 years as the world's premier air and space force.

WASHINGTON — Air Force Thunderbirds will launch first-class mail throughout the nation by late next year.

The U.S. Postal Service made that official last month in a Pentagon ceremony to unveil the design of a commemorative postage stamp honoring the Air Force's first 50 years.

The stamp is an image of the Thunderbirds flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

Larry Speakes, U.S. Postal Service senior vice president for corporate and legislative affairs, presented a framed rendering of the stamp design to Secretary of the Air Force Sheila E. Widnall during the Dec. 5 ceremony.

"When children in years to come collect stamps from 1997, they will see this 50th anniversary stamp surrounded by others featuring the best of America," Widnall said.

"The stamp's design depicts the Air Force's air power mission along with the pride and professionalism of its service members. We are honored to be selected as a stamp subject celebrating America — its heroes, history and humanity."

This is the first commemorative stamp the Postal Service has designed highlighting the Air Force. In 1957, a six-cent airmail stamp featuring the B-52 bomber was issued to honor 50 years of airpower beginning when the Air Force was a part of the Army Air Corps. The Postal Service will issue and start selling the new stamp Sept. 18.