

THE CARGO COURIER

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

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STF demonstrates prowess during Thunder

By Capt. Jeremy Shoop
123rd Special Tactics Flight

"That water's so cold, only the catfish are foolish enough to be in it!" Master Sgt. Joel Hicks joked as he surveyed the murky-brown Ohio River.

But Hicks, a combat controller with the 123rd Special Tactics Flight, wasn't about to let a little cool water come between him and his task.

After all, Hicks and six other KyANG combat controllers had an audience of nearly 500,000 spectators lined up along the banks of the Ohio, and they were anxious to see just what the Special Tactics Flight was all about.

The combat controllers didn't disappoint, executing a helocast insertion into the river as part of Thunder Over Louisville on April 17. Their simulated objective was to secure and destroy a bridge held by enemy forces.

In this case, it was Louisville's Second Street Bridge.

Joining Hicks in the frigid river were Tech. Sgts. Jim Johnson and Jon Rosa; Staff Sgts. Martin Tracey, Isaac Guerrero and Bill Sprake; and Senior Airman Sean McLane.

As the team worked to place simulated explosives on the bridge, an enemy assault forces them to radio for air support from Air Force A-10 Thunderbolts and Army AH-64 Apache helicopters.

Realizing the enemy has a stronger hold on the bridge than expected, the controllers call for extraction.

Blackhawk helicopters swoop down and deploy a rope ladder, enabling the friendly troops to be safely extricated.

"Helocasting is a very effective way to insert and extract combat swimmers, combat divers, and combat watercraft," explained Tech. Sgt. Todd Swenson, operations NCO for the unit.

"Helicopters make excellent water delivery and recovery vehicles because of their speed, range, and lift capability," he said.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Eric Mills/KyANG

ABOVE: Members of the 123rd Special Tactics Flight practice helocasts at Taylorsville Lake in preparation for Thunder over Louisville.

LEFT: Staff Sgt. Isaac Guerrero surveys the Ohio River before the demonstration April 17.

BELOW: WFPL-FM reporter Fonda Bock prepares to interview the team.



The water temperature during the demonstration was 50 degrees, Hicks said.

To deal with the cold, team members wore Neoprene wet suits, gloves and boots in addition to operational gear.



"We each had our standard combat load of ammunition, load-bearing vest, survival gear, radio and GAU-5 rifle," McLane said.

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We are the guardians of everything for which our founding fathers fought and died

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reedom really isn't free! Then again, anything that is worthwhile rarely is free.

I just returned from a vacation trip to Williamsburg, Va., where more than 200 years ago a group of folks risked everything they had to help secure the freedom we enjoy today.

Guys like Patrick Henry, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were well-off individuals who believed in certain values and the then-relatively new concept of freedom and democracy.

They not only held these beliefs dear, they risked everything they had to help secure this freedom and form the great country that we have today.

After spending four days touring the sites where they formed these beliefs and then put them into practice, I developed a great appreciation for what they went through and the tremendous responsibility we have to protect what they started.

We all take an oath to protect and defend the Constitution — the very same document whose principles these men conceived, fought for and then put in writing.

That is what we do in the military.

We often don't make the connection when we're flying a sortie on Tuesday night or firing a rifle during a Saturday morning UTA, but we are!

Every day, we are defending what these patriots started.

We likely won't go down in history, but our founding fathers didn't know that they would, either. They weren't concerned



Col. Michael L. Harden
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

about their legacy (which seems to be a modern-day phenomenon). They were simply concerned about how they could put their beliefs and principles into practice.

Their legacy is this great country and the concepts of freedom and democracy that they developed, and for which they fought.

Our legacy as military members is that we made a conscious decision to take some time out of our lives to defend what our founding fathers began.

It may seem small compared to what they did, but it is no less important.

What they did would have been for naught if folks like you hadn't stepped forward and defended the principles of freedom and de-

mocracy during World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War.

Make no mistake — what we do is important. We need to take pride in that, and understand the seriousness of it.

The tempo of our operations has never been higher. We continue to have folks deployed on exercises, contingencies and annual field training all over the world.

Our 123rd Aerial Port Squadron just completed a successful deployment to Savannah, Ga.; the 123rd Medical Squadron recently returned from the Wendell H. Ford Training Center; the 123rd Special Tactics Flight underwent rigorous training in Hawaii; the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron completed a construction project at Pope Air Force Base, N.C.; the 205th Combat Communications Squadron deployed to St. Croix; and we have two weather folks still activated at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

Our operations and maintenance troops still crank out four Guardlift missions every weekend, and we have a month of Coronet Oak activity coming up in August, followed by our deployment to Oman this fall.

We are busy doing what we do. And what we do is support and defend the ideals put forth by our founding fathers — ideals that have been carried forward by generations of military members who also made the decision to defend them.

No small task, eh?

Thanks loads,

Michael L. Harden

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If you have a story idea, photo or article to submit, stop by the public affairs office, room 2117 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is Aug. 17.

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Courtesy 15th Air Force

Col. Michael L. Harden, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, accepts the 15th Air Force Reserve Forces Trophy (RIGHT) from Lt. Gen. John Sams, the numbered unit's commander, during a ceremony March 30 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

Wing earns second award from 15th AF

By 2nd Lt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

For the second consecutive year, the 123rd Airlift Wing has been recognized as the top reserve unit in the 15th Air Force.

Wing Commander Col. Michael Harden accepted the 15th Air Force Reserve Forces Trophy during a banquet held March 30 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

The trophy, which now is displayed on the second floor of the Wing Headquarters Building, recognizes the wing's commitment to excellence in everything from flight safety to mission accomplishment.

"This award is a testament to the effort and professionalism that each of our members puts forth every day," Harden said.

"We strive to be the best, and it's gratifying to see that dedication being recognized."

There are 29 Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units in the 15th Air Force.

Group planning Family Day events

Volunteers welcome to join

By Darlene Swanner
Wing Family Support Group

The Kentucky Air Guard's Family Support Group is in the process of planning children's activities for the annual KyANG Family Day, scheduled for Aug. 29.

This year's event promises to be the best yet, and we encourage all family members to come out and enjoy the day.

The Family Support Group is an organization of family members, volunteers, and airmen/civilian employees who offer assistance to other military members and their families.

We also provide a network of communication among family members, the chain of

command, and community resources.

In other words, we are Guard family helping Guard family.

If you would like to volunteer for Family Day activities, please contact us. Also, feel free to call if you have questions, ideas or just want information about attending the next meeting.

We offer plenty of rewarding opportunities for involvement, but we can only work with family members who are willing to grasp that opportunity. We need you!

To volunteer for Family Day activities or for more information on the Kentucky Air Guard's Family Support Group, contact Darlene Swanner at (502) 368-2138; Louise Allen at (502) 969-5980; or Paula McLain at (812) 944-0669. ☎

Insurance benefits change for veterans

Changes in government life insurance programs now allow terminally ill veterans to receive accelerated death benefits.

The Veterans Programs Enhancement Act established the option, which only applies to retired or separated veterans who hold Service members Group Life Insurance or Veterans Group Life Insurance policies.

Active members are not eligible.

For information on the application process, veterans may contact their nearest Department of Veterans Affairs office.

After years of effort, Base club scheduled to open this weekend

By Staff Sgt. David I. Tors
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

After more than two years of planning, a base club finally has become reality.

The Thoroughbred Club Inc. will be open today and Sunday from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the old Motor Pool Annex, next to the Clam Shell Hangar.

The club will feature special prices during its open house this weekend, and door prizes will be awarded to lucky members, said Tech. Sgt. Ted Schiess, the club's president.

The drink selection initially will be limited to beer and soda, but there are plans to seek a liquor license in a few years, he said.

Those plans also hold the possibility for expansion — a new club facility that would house a snack bar and maybe even the credit union. Such a facility would give the base a location in which to hold dances and parties, Schiess said.

The club must first, however, prove that it can support itself in its existing location. That means the new facility will be operated on a 90-day trial basis, Schiess said.

The Thoroughbred Club actually has existed for the past several years, even though it lacked a facility.

The club has supported events such as the ORI party and Bean Soup Feast, and it provided concessions for the Thunder Over Louisville static aircraft displays.

Stop-Loss program ends for Guard

Air Force Print News

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Stop-Loss ended June 22 for Air Force reservists and Air National Guard members when the Air Force announced a phased termination of the program.

The announcement came two days after NATO Secretary General Javier Solana proclaimed that Operation Allied Force was officially over.

Stop-Loss began June 15 and was designed to keep airmen in fields critical to the

allied effort from leaving the service during the air campaign over Yugoslavia.

"With the end of hostilities, withdrawal of Yugoslav troops from Kosovo and the redeployment of our forces home, it is appropriate to begin releasing our people from Stop-Loss," said Col. Lynn Pratt, chief of the Air Force's Military Personnel Policy Division.

"Stop-Loss is terminated for everyone not deployed in support of Kosovo. For those deployed, Stop-Loss terminates upon return to home station."

STF

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All that protection did not, however, stop the chill from penetrating the thin-layered suits.

"This demonstration tested the teams' ability to effectively operate in the maritime environment — especially a cold one," said Tech. Sgt. Jim Johnson.

Johnson was the castmaster on one of two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters from the Kentucky Army Guard.

It is the castmaster's responsibility

to ensure that the helicopter is flying at the proper altitude and airspeed. The castmaster also acts as the liaison with the aircrew.

One week prior to their demonstration, the STF trained and rehearsed helocasting at nearby Taylorsville Lake, providing an opportunity to train new castmasters in the unit.

The simulation itself, which was broadcast on local TV and radio stations, highlighted the Special Tactics Flight's unique capabilities and showcased interservice cooperation between the Air Force and Army, Hicks said.

Banquet to honor Col. Logan tonight

A retirement banquet will be given tonight in honor of Col. Gary Logan, commander of the 123rd Logistics Group.

The banquet, to be held at Woodhaven Country Club, will begin with a social hour at 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person.

For more information, contact Lt. Col. Paul Stone at ext. 4449, Maj. Johnny Jones at ext. 4556 or Capt. Matt Stone at ext. 4450. ☎

Commands change for services flight, security forces

Maj. Charles Mayfield assumed command of the wing's 123rd Services Flight during a change-of-command ceremony here March 14.

2nd Lt. Jim Dunn was appointed to fill Mayfield's previous job as commander of the 123rd Security Forces Squadron.

Gas masks need inspection

A recent joint-service audit by the U.S. Marine Corps turned up numerous gas masks that were unserviceable.

Base disaster preparedness officials ask that you inspect your mask immediately to determine if it has damaged parts or fails to seal properly.

Dinner to be held for retirees

A dinner will be held for all Kentucky Air Guard retirees Aug. 1 at Fifth Quarter Steak House on Durrett Lane.

For more information, contact Victoria Brightwell at (502) 361-0696. ☎

Commander *in* Chief



ABOVE: Gov. Paul Patton greets Master Sgt. Mike Walters of the 165th Weather Flight and Senior Airman Robert Mack of the 165th Airlift Squadron during a tour of the base June 10.

RIGHT: Capt. Jeremy Shoop, commander of the 123rd Special Tactics Flight, describes the STF's specialized Harley-Davidson motorcycle to Gov. Patton.



LEFT: Gov. Patton takes a moment to view the far-flung locations in which members of the Kentucky Air Guard have performed their global missions recently.

*KyANG photos by
Master Sgt. Terry Lutz*



KyANG promotions, retirements, separations & honors

The following individuals have been promoted to the rank indicated as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the U.S. Air Force:

SENIOR AIRMAN (E-4)

- Stephanie A. Wilding,
123rd Services Flt.
- Dana K. Walker,
123rd Communications Flt.

STAFF SGT. (E-5)

- Jennifer L. Berry,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- Kenneth W. Richards,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Christopher A. Turner,
165th Airlift Sq.

TECHNICAL SGT. (E-6)

- Daniel R. Conklin,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- Ronald E. Dorsey,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- Harold G. Goodlett,
123rd Services Flt.
- Fred Heady Jr.,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Joseph P. Knight,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Janet G. Stevenson,
123rd Communications Flt.

MASTER SGT. (E-7)

- William D. Large,
123rd Communications Flt.
- Nathaniel Mack III,
123rd Mission Support Flt.
- Mark B. McNair,
123rd Operations Support Flt.
- Daryl A. Smith,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Robert E. Wright,
123rd Services Flt.

SENIOR MASTER SGT. (E-8)

- Kenneth B. Coogle,
123rd Logistics Group
- Kenneth D. Shuler,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- John C. Siebert,
165th Airlift Sq.

The following individual separated from the Kentucky Air National Guard to accept appointment as an ANG officer:

- Staff Sgt. Kristin K. Soldner,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

The following individuals have retired as members of the Kentucky Air National Guard and reservists of the U.S. Air Force:

- Tech. Sgt. Maureen G. Atchison,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Mark A. Crawford,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Marvin A. Crooks,
123rd Civil Engineer Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Steven F. Densford,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Master Sgt. Alexander J. Felinski,
123rd Communications Flt.
- Tech. Sgt. Esliá G. Gregory,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- Senior Master Sgt. Eddie H. Lawson,
123rd Logistics Sq.
- Maj. Judy A. Mitro,
123rd Services Flt.
- Master Sgt. Roy Swartwood,
123rd Mission Support Flt.
- Maj. Patrick L. Wimsatt,
123rd Logistics Sq.

The following individuals have separated from the Kentucky Air National Guard:

- Senior Airman Heather M. Ciukaj,
205th Combat Communications Sq.
- Airman 1st Class Shaka T. Bridges,
123rd Airlift Wing
- Airman 1st Class Laura A. Bryan,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Scott Danforth,
123rd Special Tactics Flt.
- William J.P. Farquhar,
123rd Student Flt.
- Senior Airman Tina R. Gardner,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Capt. Todd H. Hanson,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Donald P. Happel,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Airman Brian H. Harkins,
123rd Maintenance Sq.

- Senior Christina M. Holdner,
123rd Security Forces Sq.
- Senior Master Sgt. Eugene D. Kemp,
123rd Operations Support Group
- Senior Airman Shelley E. Kruse,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Staff Sgt. William D. Lamkin,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Virginia Mack,
123rd Airlift Wing
- Staff Sgt. Charles L. Meyer,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- 1st Lt. Quentin E. Moore,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Michael T. Newman,
123rd Special Tactics Flight
- Maj. John P. Okkonen,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Airman 1st Class Michael J. Patrick Jr.,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Airman Christopher T. Popplewell,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- 1st Lt. Carri L. Rowles,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Senior Airman Karl K. Rybicki,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Airman Martin L. Schafer,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Master Sgt. Billie J. Schanen,
123rd Medical Sq.
- Airman 1st Class Daniel G. Smith,
205th Combat Communications Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Timothy N. Smith,
123rd Civil Engineer Sq.
- Scottie A. Stockton,
123rd Services Flt.
- Staff Sgt. Jody P. Sutton,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Senior Airman Christopher R. Wright,
165th Airlift Sq.

The following individual distinguished himself through exceptional performance:

- Senior Airman Jeffrey A. Dickson,
123rd Aerial Port Sq;
Distinguished Graduate,
U.S. Air Force
Air Education and Training Command
37th Training Group,
Lackland Air Force Base, Texas

Howard 'marks' end of era



Staff Sgt. John B. Dendy IV/USAF

Col. Roger Corbin, commander of the 24th Wing, observes a team of airmen as they paint Xs on the runway at Howard Air Force Base, Panama.

By Staff Sgt. John B. Dendy IV
Air Force Print News

HOWARD AIR FORCE BASE, Panama — Airmen officially ended the history of Air Force flying operations here by painting three yellow Xs on the empty runway June 17.

The base will close in December as part of the U.S. pullout from Panama.

While the land awaits transfer, the marks were painted to alert aviators that the runway should not be used.

"That's the sign that it's not a runway any more," said Master Sgt. Peter Copesky, a weather expert with the 24th Wing here.

The airfield at Howard Air Force Base, Panama, was carved out of dense triple-canopy rainforest on Panama's central Pacific coast in the early 20th century.

Air Force radars and control tower equipment have already been removed from Howard's airfield in preparation for the pull-out.

Deadline nears for 3rd-annual Air Force Marathon

(AFPN) — Only 10 training weeks remain before the third-annual Air Force Marathon is set to be run Sept. 18 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

Labeled a "race with a different altitude," the 26.2-mile marathon celebrates the Air Force's birthday and the historical significance of Wright-Patterson in aviation history.

The 1999 event also offers a relay designed for teams of runners who do not wish to contest the entire course.

For more information, including registration fees, call the U.S. Air Force Marathon at (800) 467-1823. ☎

Registration deadline is Sept. 4.

DoD eliminates 'honorary retirees'

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — A reservist who does not complete 20 years of satisfactory service to qualify for a military retirement check and related benefits can no longer become an "honorary retiree."

In 1997, the 6th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation recommended eliminating the category, and Department of Defense Instruction 1200.15 subsequently removed it.

People became honorary retirees for a variety of reasons, including medical disqualification from further military service.

They were issued a Retired Reserve identification card.

However, the only benefits they received were open messing and the right wear their uniforms at official functions.

No monetary compensation was authorized.

Finch named to top enlisted job

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan has named Chief Master Sgt. Frederick J. "Jim" Finch to serve as the 13th chief master sergeant of the Air Force. Finch is currently the command chief master sergeant for Air Combat Command.

Finch will replace Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Eric W. Benken, who will retire July 30 after more than 29 years of service to the Air Force.

"Chief Benken has been a tremendous advocate for the enlisted corps," Ryan said. "I'm sure everyone in the Air Force will join me in wishing him and his wife, Johnne, every success as they transition into retirement — but they will always be part of our Air Force family."

Ryan said the selection "was an extremely tough decision because each of the candidates are eminently qualified, and would have made excellent leaders for the enlisted force.

"Chief Finch joins the Air Force's senior leadership at a time of change for the Air Force. We are finishing the transition of the force from a Cold War posture to the expeditionary aerospace concept. Chief Finch has been deeply involved in this transition and understands the challenges."

Finch, who was born July 29, 1956, joined the Air Force in 1974. His career includes various assignments in missile maintenance and several positions in professional military education, including commandant of the Pacific Air Forces Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

He also has two assignments as a command chief master sergeant.

Finch has had several stateside tours, as well as overseas tours in Alaska and the United Kingdom.

Prior to his July 1995 appointment with Air Combat Command, Finch was the senior enlisted advisor to the commander, 11th Air Force, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska.

5-star general created as answer to British rank

'Hap' Arnold was only officer to hold post in two services

By Staff Sgt. John R. Martin
Wing Historian

The term "general" has been with us since the 1700s, when the American military adopted the rank from the British Army during the American Revolution.

It's only been since World War II, however, that we've had five grades of general officers — brigadier general, major general, lieutenant general, general and General of the Army (or Air Force).

Specific names for commanders began to evolve in Europe during the 16th century, when the commander-in-chief of an army was referred to as general.

The commander of the cavalry was addressed as lieutenant general (being second in command), and next in line was the commander of the infantry, who was called sergeant major general.

This was later to be shortened to "major

general," resulting in the paradox that a "lieutenant" outranked a "major."

It was also about this time that the title of field marshal began to be used by Great Britain, which meant the bearer outranked a four-star general.

This also meant that U.S. forces were subordinate to British authority.

To counteract the problem, and because of the tremendous size of U.S. forces involved, the rank of General of the Army was created on December 14, 1944, but with the stipulation that no more than four officers could hold the rank at one time.

In 1949, Congress established the grade of General of the Air Force, allowing Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold, who was commander of the U.S. Army Air Corps, to keep his rank as he transferred to the newly formed U.S. Air Force.

To this day, Gen. Arnold has been the only General of the Air Force.

Gen. Arnold also holds the distinction of being our only five-star general for two separate branches of service.

Trivia question: Who was the last officer to be conferred with this highest of military ranks?

Answer: If you said Gen. Omar Bradley, you would have been very close. Bradley, one of several outstanding military commanders during World War II, earned his fifth star just after the war, retaining the rank up to his death in 1981.

Therefore, he was our last living General of the Army. But by a special act of Congress in 1978, the position of General of the Army was posthumously awarded to one of our greatest heroes — and our very first general — George Washington.

Trivia for next month: Besides Washington, there have been nine five-star generals in the history of the U.S. military. Can you name them?

Look for the answer in the next "Retrospect."

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