

31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps

THE VIGILEER

Vol. 53 No. 3

January 26, 2007

Aviano Air Base, Italy

Fly Bys

Substance use

A meeting to inform parents on teen drug and alcohol use in the local area is at 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday in the Aviano High School media center. To sign up, e-mail susan.cleveland@eu.dodea.edu or dawn.holt@eu.dodea.edu.

Command selection

The following 31st Fighter Wing members have been selected for a commanding position: **Lt. Col. Mike Day** was selected to command the 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron; **Maj. James Alonzo** was selected to command the 6th Maintenance Squadron at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.; **Maj. Michael Donahue** was selected to command the 31st Maintenance Operations Squadron and **Maj. Dana James** was selected as chief nurse for the 52nd Medical Group at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

Art gallery

Art created by Aviano Middle School students is on display at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the middle school. For more information, call Ext. 5777.

Scorpions strike downrange

By Senior Airman **Sarah Gregory**
31st Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

After more than eight months of training, 86 "Scorpion" members of the 603rd Air Control Squadron deployed Jan. 9 to Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan.

The deployed group, comprised of various career fields in addition to radar controllers, with everything from civil engineering to vehicle maintenance and intelligence, are there to provide radar support for Afghanistan skies.

"We provide command and control for all aircraft, suppressing the terrorist threat by making sure folks on the ground have the close air support needed to eliminate the terrorist insurgency in Afghanistan," said Capt. Anton Peterson, 73rd Expeditionary Air Control Squadron director of operations. "We give air support that is always available, whenever and wherever it's needed, which provides the flexibility to prosecute targets at will. Terrorists can't



Courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Jason Bailey, 603rd Air Control Squadron heating, ventilation and air conditioning journeyman, moves supplies at Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan.

run or hide from that."

The Scorpions are considered force enablers – meaning they are always in the deployment bucket.

To prepare for its mission in Kandahar, the 603rd ACS conducted several training situations designed to simulate a real deployment.

"For our deployment

preparation, we had Scorpion Strike in October, which was set up and tailored to look as close to a real deployment as possible," said Lt. Col. Troy Jackson, 603rd ACS commander.

The squadron also held an eight day training in June, intended to simulate deployed field conditions.

See Scorpions, Page 7

Promotions: The 31st Fighter Wing holds an enlisted promotion ceremony at 9 a.m. Wednesday in the La Bella Vista Club.

World's Finest
DUI/MMVA counter

19 days ...

Since Aviano's last DUI

54 ...

Major Motor Vehicle Accidents



Unsung heroes

Airmen at Aviano's dining facilities prepare and serve hundreds of meals daily to keep hungry Airmen satisfied.

- Page 10-11



Learn to dance

Spice up your dance moves while getting in shape. The Community Center offers salsa lessons for people of all skill levels.

- Page 15



Vigileer
Editorial Staff

**Commander,
31st Fighter Wing**
Brig. Gen.
Robert Yates

Chief, Public Affairs
Capt. Melissa Waheibi

Editor
Senior Airman
Colleen Wieman

Assistant Editor
Senior Airman
Sarah Gregory

Photo support
Base Multimedia
Center

The Vigileer is published by Risma, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 31st Fighter Wing.

This commercial enterprise Air Force newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services overseas. The contents of the Vigileer are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by DoD, the Department of the Air Force or Risma of the products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser or user or patron. The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 31st FW Public Affairs office. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

Deadline info: The deadline for submitting information is close of business Thursday one week prior to publication. Send all information by e-mail to the Vigileer at vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Faxed articles will not be accepted by the staff. The public affairs office is located in Bldg. 1360, Rm. 19. The Vigileer staff can be reached at Ext. 7344.

Editorials: We want to hear from you. Flex your writing talents and share your thoughts with the community. Commentaries must be 500 to 700 words. Topics must be applicable to the Air Force, Aviano and appeal to the general public.

World's Finest: Messages can be submitted for appreciation, retirements, awards, good service, promotions and graduations.

31st Fighter Wing

Commander's Corner

By Brig. Gen. Robert Yates
31st Fighter Wing commander

World's Finest Warriors –
Once again we approach the end of a week of great accomplishment on the World's Finest Ranch!

We've ploughed through some tough ground over the past couple of weeks in our TACEVAL exercise. This morning I'd like to look at how we did, share a bit of philosophy with you, and then provide a few final tips for the three day weekend.

First, the TACEVAL exercise. I'd like to compliment all wing members for their hard work over the past two weeks.

During last week's PD & I we got out of town 'with honors;' the logistics machine worked efficiently; the aircraft maintainers were at their best delivering the aircraft we needed plus half again; the 555th Fighter Squadron executed the 'launch' precisely ... without a glitch; and the maintainers re-generated us in outstanding time and fashion. In sum: Job well done!

This week we picked up where we left off with the OPEVAL. We demonstrated a very steep learning curve since the December exercise, improving significantly in every major area. Wing sortie generation was textbook ... force protection activities well on their way ... mission employment excellent ... it was a fine effort to the very end. Thank you all for your hard work; I am extremely proud of each of you!

Of course, there is always room for improvement – our inspectors saw to that as they kept the scenario challenging and the sequence of events running strong!

When we return next week, we'll look at their writeups, address each of them professionally and hastily, and get ready for our final tuneup before the TACEVAL Inspection. We're not all the way there yet, but we're well on our way and the path to victory is clear.

Now – let's discuss a bit of philosophy. During exercises, in combat and in daily life as Air Force professionals, we are routinely tested to the limits of human and mechanical endurance.

During each of these tests, we tend to be at once proud of our achievements and resentful of our adversary for the difficult circumstances they force upon us. These feelings are human – it isn't unique to Aviano Air Base, you or me.

Since we are going through challenging times as we prepare for the NATO TACEVAL Inspection, I'd like to share an appropriate quote by my favorite brilliant

tough guy, Sir Winston Churchill. He said:

"It's not enough that we do our best; sometimes we have to do what's required."

If you're asking, 'how does this apply to me, my unit or this wing,' I would answer by saying, 'it applies quite literally to us and that's why we're being inspected.'

My logic goes like this: while we are required to take care of many priorities, and 'our best' is generally good enough, the standard of success is victory when we face our ultimate customer, the enemy.

It is he who wants to injure, maim or kill us. Against such a foe, victory, consistent with our values and training, is the measure of success. Success is victory in combat, and victory is 'what's required.'

To summarize:

1. we're not done until we've realized success (this may require more than 'our best');
2. success is defined as victory;
3. victory is (according to myself and verified by Sir Winston Churchill), 'what's required!'

In closing, I have a 'what's required' assignment for each of you: take care of one another this weekend at home, work and play!

Plan ahead and have fun together, but remember how precious your lives are – there is nothing more precious! Spend time with your family – they are your top priority.

If your activities include traveling or partying, plan ahead and take care of your life, your wingman's life, and the lives of others.

If you drive – drive slowly, drive soberly, drive consistent with the conditions or don't drive.

And a final wish from Barb and me to you and yours – be safe, have fun together, God Bless and have a wonderful weekend!



Deploying Airmen wait through six day layover

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt.
Amy Velasquez
*American Forces
 Network Aviano*

Total Force Airmen deploying to Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom had an Italian holiday of sorts this past week at Aviano Air Base.

Active duty and Reserve Airmen coming from places as close as RAF Mildenhall, England, Hickam Air Base, Hawaii, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, made a refueling stop at Aviano that turned out to be a little longer than a “gas and go.”

Their six day layover was due to their transportation down range being delayed by weather.

While the deployers were here, they experienced how 31st Fighter Wing members take care of other Airmen.

“It’s been great. The



Staff Sgt. James Ward, 15th Civil Engineering Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, takes a load off at Hangar One Jan. 18 while waiting for transportation to a forward operating location in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sergeant Ward left Hickham Jan. 9 and left Aviano Saturday.

support we’ve gotten from Aviano has been fantastic,” said Lt. Col. Gary Slack, chief of safety at RAF Mildenhall. “They’ve been finding us a place to stay, taking us out to a barbeque, helping out a lot and just making sure we’re okay.”

The troop commander,

Col. Douglas McHugh surveyed his troops, stretched out on the hangar floor. He said they’re ready to go – go down range and do what they get paid to do.

“People are getting a little restless because they’re away from home, and they’re anxious to get on with the business they

left home to do. There’s a building restlessness among the group,” said Colonel McHugh.

Although the layover was unexpected, Colonel McHugh said it gave the Airmen a chance to rest and get prepared to serve on the frontlines of the Global War on Terror.

Tax season: Aviano’s tax season begins Thursday. To make a tax appointment, contact your Unit Tax Representative.

Retiree office keeps veterans, families connected

By Senior Airman
Sarah Gregory

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

One of the most overlooked members of the Aviano community is the small group of retired military members living here.

About 160 retirees and widows live between Aviano and Trieste and although they don’t directly play a role in the current mission, their contributions to the services in the past don’t go unnoticed.

Aviano’s Retiree Activities Office helps ensure retirees and their families stay current on news and laws affecting them.

“It is the focal point for all retiree programs on base,” said Retired Senior Master Sgt. Ed LaRose, RAO volunteer. “Any information about changes in medical benefits, Veteran’s Affairs benefits or pay raises gets out to the retirees.”

Serving as a volunteer in the Air Force Instruction-mandated position,

“This event is one of the highlights of the year for retirees ... the enthusiasm with which the entire dental staff performed was greatly appreciated.”

*Retired Army Chief Warrant Officer
 Third Class John Kirby*

Retired Army Chief Warrant Officer Third Class John Kirby personally calls or e-mails all retirees and their families to make sure they are updated.

“Here locally, the grapevine works very well and everyone will tell everyone else,” said Mr. LaRose. “What Mr. Kirby’s really good at is reaching out to those who aren’t in the local community.”

Mr. Kirby stays up to date by subscribing to all VFW-represented ser-

vices magazines and keeping in contact with the retiree center at Air Force Personnel Center in San Antonio.

One of the most visible programs the RAO organizes is the dental clinic sponsored annual Retiree Dental Day, held in September. The last one drew 55 retirees, and their families to the base for exams, cleanings and operations.

“This event is one of the highlights of the year for retirees,” said Mr. Kirby. “Ordinarily we have to wait until there’s space available at the clinic for appointments. The enthusiasm with which the entire dental staff performed was greatly appreciated.”

Other key events in the retiree community are their annual Retiree Appreciation Day, held in September, and the retiree picnic, held in midsummer.

For more information on retiree activities, call the RAO at Ext. 5665 or visit the Airman and Family Readiness Center in Area One. The RAO office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

Scorpions, from page 1 –

With 24 different career fields and 21 work centers, Colonel Jackson said training together is essential to successful deployments. “It’s easier, with that many different career fields, to train together because there’s a lot of pull with getting everyone trained and ready to go downrange.”

As one of only two air control squadrons in the U.S. Air Forces in Europe command, field training prepares the Scorpions for deployments that can last anywhere from six to eight months.

Although the group is living and working in what some may call harsh conditions, Senior Master Sgt. Chris Lopez, 73rd EACS operations superintendent, said the Scorpions are doing their job with a smile.

“Nobody likes being away from our family and friends at Aviano, but when it comes to doing our job, the Scorpions are doing what we do best – living in austere conditions, controlling all aircraft flying over Afghanistan, putting bombs on the bad guys and providing air cover for our Army brothers and sisters – and we do this with such a positive attitude,” he said. “I’m very proud of my Scorpions – they are an awesome bunch of folks.”

Sergeant Lopez, who was with the 603rd ACS during its last deployment to Kandahar from May 2005 to January 2006, said that there have been major improvements to the base.

“I was very impressed with the upgrades made [to the base],” he said. “The units that deployed after the Scorpions have done an exceptional job maintaining and improving the quality of life for the 73rd EACS.”

While providing air control is a major part of the Scorpion’s deployed work, it is only one part of their total mission.

“Among other missions, the 73rd EACS expertly coordinates air support for our coalition forces on the ground as they push deeper into rural Afghanistan, engaging remnants of the Taliban,” said 1st Lt. Alena Taylor, 73rd EACS intelligence officer. “Securing these locations is imperative to the success of reconstruction projects throughout the country and waging the next phase of the conflict – winning hearts and minds.”



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Cowboy round-up

Victoria Thomas tastes different chilis during the western-themed Spouse It Up Jan. 17. Spouse It Up is a monthly event that allows spouses and children to participate in family friendly activities. The next Spouse It Up is at 10:30 a.m. Feb. 14 in the Mass Briefing Facility. The theme is the ‘Price is Right.’ For more information, call the Airman and Family Readiness Center at Ext. 5407.

Photos: Event photos can be found on the Intranet under misc. links. Call Ext. 6008 for info.

Military Channel broadcasting servicemembers’ stories

By Gerry Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The Military Channel is asking servicemembers across the armed forces to submit videotaped stories about their service in the Global War on Terrorism for broadcast on television.

“We want to give a voice to the troops to allow them to tell their stories,” Jill Bondurant, Military Channel publicist, said during an interview with American Forces Press Service.

The Military Channel plans to use servicemember-submitted video for broadcast during nightly one hour blocks of programming starting in early February, Ms. Bondurant said. The dates and times haven’t been specified yet, she said.

Video can be in digital or taped format, Ms. Bondurant said, and can be submitted via the following methods:

- Online: www.mywardiary.com;

- E-mail: mywardiary@discovery.com; or

- Mail: Military Videos, care of Discovery Productions, 8045 Kennett Street, Silver Spring, Md. 20910.

All submitted video will be screened for appropriate content, Ms. Bondurant noted.

The initiative seeks to illustrate some personal stories of military service during wartime, Military Channel spokesman and former soldier Pat Lafferty told the Pentagon Channel in a recent interview. Most evening news programming on the military these days shy away from the personal and focuses on “big picture” events, he said.

“There’s only so much that the ‘normal media’ can get out as far as the stories (and) what’s going on,” Lafferty said. “And, oftentimes, that really isn’t the story about individual servicemembers and what they’re doing on a day-to-day basis.”

Newest radio technology declared ready

By Staff Sgt. Francesca Popp

U.S. Central Command Air Forces Public Affairs

For nearly a year, the Air Force has developed and tested a communications system allowing commanders to talk directly to troops operating convoys outside the bases.

Today, Radio over Internet Protocol Router network, or RIPRnet, has earned its initial operational capability title, achieving a critical milestone in the program's short history.

More specifically, it has helped how convoys in Iraq conduct command-and-control operations.

"It enables, for the first time, the Army to pull hundreds of Soldiers back inside the wire to the main operating bases, rather than keeping them stationed at small outposts along roadsides," said Lt. Col. Marty Schlacter, the Combined Air Operations Center's Architecture and Integration Division chief. "It provides senior decision makers with the ability to determine the proper air and ground mix supporting convoy operations, thus freeing up aircraft for other high-priority missions."

RIPRnet was originally designed to have direct voice communications with people working in the CAOC and the fighter aircraft patrolling the skies over Baghdad – more than 700 miles away.

"After proving itself in that role, it was expanded to allow air support operations center controllers to talk to close-air support aircraft flying over Iraq on a standby orbit," said Colonel Schlacter, who is deployed from Air Mobility Command Latest headquarters at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. "[The network] then expanded to provide Soldiers and Marines with the ability to directly contact logistical convoys anywhere on Iraq's main supply routes."

RIPRnet extends the range and flexibility for communications, covering areas that might have been dead spots before.

"RIPRnet has allowed our (tactical radios) to transmit and receive FM communications over a far greater area than our alternate [radios] are capable of," said Army Sgt. Maj. Danny Toivonen, the operations sergeant major for a tactical operations center at Balad Air Base, Iraq. "The system has allowed our [radios] to keep a more consistent communication link with convoys throughout the area of operations."

While this latest technological advance is not replacing current communications, it does provide another avenue for senior leaders to talk directly with the warfighters. RIPRnet can be anywhere us-

“It will save the lives of troops we have never even met. As an Airman, it simply doesn't get any better than that.”

ers want it to be, as long as they have a long-haul circuit to get it there, Colonel Schlacter said.

The colonel explained how the RIPRnet is best used by convoys traveling across Iraq. Before RIPRnet, once a convoy left a forward-operating base, it would lose traditional radio communications after several miles.

"With RIPRnet, the origination point can maintain direct audio contact with the convoy throughout the day or night, regardless of whose battlespace they're in, or how far they have traveled," Colonel Schlacter said. "It provides the ability to perform true end-to-end [command and control] from origination to destination, and anywhere in between."

Initially, the troops in the convoys were hard to convince.

"The convoy controllers/operators now using RIPRnet were the most skeptical as we developed the system. Who can blame them? Their lives are on the line every day in those convoys," said Col. Mike Lewis, CAOC coalition director of command, control, computers and communications. "They are now our biggest advocates."

The newfound advocates are spreading the word about RIPRnet.

"The system is excellent," Sergeant Major Toivonen said, who noted that other units have asked if they can get the system in their tactical operations centers. "The convoys are reassured they will be able to reach assistance throughout the area of operations. It provides a direct link for convoys to request medical evacuations, quick-response forces and recovery assets in case of an emergency."

For the Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines who use RIPRnet, it means they will have persistent, clear, secure and reliable communications across the battlefield.

"RIPRnet, as a program, is just getting started. As we move forward, RIPRnet will continue to expand to new missions and enhance operations in ways we never could have envisioned," Colonel Lewis said. "It will save the lives of troops we have never even met. As an Airman, it simply doesn't get any better than that."

Promotions: All promotion testing is conducted in Area One, Bldg. 186, Room 4. For details, call Kathrine Kosmala at Ext. 5465.

Aviano offers online MIHA, utility surveys

By Senior Airman
Colleen Wieman

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Aviano members have an opportunity to increase how much money they receive for their utilities and Move in Housing Allowance by completing an online survey.

The survey runs from Feb. 1 to 28 and can be accessed at <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oha/survey/febaha.html>.

The annual utility survey helps assess the average costs servicemembers receiving Overseas Housing Allowance spend on utilities. The MIHA survey is offered every three years and assesses

the average costs servicemembers receiving OHA spend on relocating and housing maintenance.

"The last time we did the MIHA survey was 2004," said 2nd Lt. Tony George, 31st Comptroller Squadron deputy financial services officer. "Last time, there wasn't that much participation and the MIHA went down about €400."

MIHA is a one-time fixed-rate allowance given to servicemembers moving overseas. The survey asks what move in expenses the servicemember experienced that was not covered by any other allowance or reimbursement and as well as in what currency the expense

was paid. Lieutenant George said the results of the MIHA portion of the survey won't benefit anyone already here, but those PCSing in.

"There are unexpected hardships with moving overseas," he said. "People forget about the things you need [for your new home] when moving here."

However, Lieutenant George said everyone will be affected by the results of the utilities portion of the survey since the utility allowance is paid monthly.

"We want to make sure everyone is taken care of financially," he said. "If you do the survey, you make sure everybody here now, and PCSing in, is taken care of."

DFAC Airmen serve Aviano

Aviano Dining Facilities hours of operation

Buon Appetito (Area Two)

- Monday-Friday
 - Breakfast: 6 to 8 a.m. 'Grab and go' items are provided until 8:30 a.m. to accommodate unit PT.
 - Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 to 7 p.m.
- Weekends, holidays and down days
 - Brunch: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 to 7 p.m.

La Dolce Vita (Area F)

- Monday-Friday
 - Breakfast: 5:30 to 8:30 a.m.
 - Grab and go 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.
 - Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 to 7 p.m.
 - Midnight meal: 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- Weekends, holidays and down days
 - Brunch: 6 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 to 7 p.m.
 - Midnight meal: 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Above: Staff Sgt. Bob Starkey, 120th Fighter Wing food service craftsman, cuts bell peppers in preparation for dinner at the La Dolce Vita Dining Facility. Sergeant Starkey is an Air National Guardsman deployed from Great Falls, Montana.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Left: Master Sgt. Gina Tansksley, 31st Services Squadron dining facility manager, prepares box meals for people preparing to deploy and for those who can't get meals during dining facility hours.



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wieman



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Above: Staff Sgt. Troy Anderson, 120th FW food service craftsman, serves lunch to an Airman at the La Dolce Vita Dining Facility.

Left: Staff Sgt. Crystal Langford, 120th FW food service craftsman, cleans the dining facility serving area before loading the bins with food.

Five members of the Air National Guard from the 120th FW in Great Falls, Montana, are working in the La Dolce Vita as part of their annual two-week duty.



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wieman



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Left: Thananon Srichompoo, 31st SVS, serves lunch at La Dolce Vita Dining Facility. The La Dolce Vita Dining Facility staff consists of 16 civilians and local nationals and 21 military members.

Left: Airman Luis Lugo-Velez, 31st SVS food service technician, stirs sauce he prepared for meatball sandwiches.

The La Dolce Vita Dining Facility serves 600 meals a day on average. Each shift prepares for the next shift. For example, the midnight shift prepares the morning meal, so the morning shift can come in and serve the food, clean-up and cook lunch.

New grad program

The education center seeks students interested in obtaining a master's degree in international relations with Oklahoma University. At least 14 people are needed to sign-up for the program to be brought here.

Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree or the equivalent from an accredited college or university. To learn more about the program, visit <http://www.gou.ou.edu>.

To sign up for the program, call Ext. 5330, or stop by the education center, Bldg. 147 in Area One. The deadline is Wednesday.

Book speaker

The Aviano High School Book Club is hosting teen author Chris Crutcher Feb. 6. The author will speak at 8:15 a.m. at the high school and at 1:15 p.m. at the middle school. Afterwards, he will sign books at the base library from 2:45 to 3:30 p.m. The community is welcome to attend.

Valentines

Aviano members can submit their Valentine message to vigileer@aviano.af.mil for the Feb. 9 issue. Greetings should not exceed 35 words. Messages are printed on a first-come, first-served basis and must be received by Feb. 2.

Little Sprouts

Little Sprouts, a class designed to teach new and expecting parents about basic baby care and normal newborn appearance, is taught at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 5 and 12 at the Life Skills Support Center, Bldg. 108 in Area One.

For more information, or to sign up for classes, call the New Parent Support Program at Ext. 5667.

Job shadow day

Aviano students are looking for people to shadow in a career field they are interested in for Job Shadow Day Feb. 2. Arrangements can be made directly with the student or through the school.

To volunteer for a stu-

dent shadow, e-mail Debbie Lee at debbie.lee@eu.dodea.edu for the middle school or Kim James at kimberly.james@eu.dodea.edu for the high school. The elementary school staff will contact parents on elementary school involvement.

Scholarships

The deadline to apply for the 2007 Scholarships for Military Children is Feb. 21. Applicants must write an essay on the topic: "If you were granted the ability to change the outcome of any event in history, what would you change and why?" Applications can be turned in at the commissary. For more information, visit <http://www.militaryscholar.org>.

POV inspections

POV inspections is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and is located in a green tent behind the commissary. For more information, call Ext. 4458 or 8095.

Airman's Attic

The Airman's Attic is open from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursdays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. the first and third Saturday of the month in Bldg. 186, Area One. Donations are only accepted during hours of operation and items must not be left outside of the building. The attic does not accept toys, undergarments, furniture and household cleaning supplies. For more information, call Master Sgt. Charles Fetterolf at Ext. 8234.

History month

The following is a list of upcoming African American History Month events:

- The History of Gospel is at 7 p.m. Feb. 3 in the Base Theater. For more information, e-mail Tech. Sgt. Yakeem Jones at yakeem.jones@aviano.af.mil.

- A Sweetheart Ball is at 7 p.m. Feb. 10 at the La Bella Vista Club. For more information, e-mail Tech. Sgt. Roy Thomas at roy.thomas@aviano.af.mil.

- A soul food tasting cook-

off is at 3 p.m. Feb. 17 at the Community Center. For more information, e-mail Tech. Sgt. Roy Thomas at roy.thomas@aviano.af.mil.

- The history month high school essay contest deadline is Feb. 15. For more information, e-mail Staff Sgt. Natasha Gory at natasha.gory@aviano.af.mil.

- An African American History Month banquet is at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 24 at the La Bella Vista Club. The guest speaker is the Honorable Ruby Butler DeMesme, former Under Secretary of the Air Force. Tickets can be obtained through unit first sergeants. For more information, e-mail Master Sgt. Lorenzo Steele at lorenzo.steele@aviano.af.mil.

Mail authorization

Family members and dependents under the Dependent Residing Overseas Program are authorized to use the military postal service for 90 days after their sponsor has departed. If the sponsor is on a remote tour, family members are authorized postal service privileges for the duration of the sponsor's tour. For more information, call Ext. 7966.

AFOSI

People interested in retraining as an Air Force Office of Special Investigations agent who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and have not obtained a bachelor's degree, can attend a mass testing day Feb. 28.

Minimum eligibility requirements include: Minimum of six months time on station; within 10 to 19 months of DEROS; 21 years or older; and a senior airman through master sergeant with less than 12 years of Total Active Federal Military Service. Second lieutenants through captains with less than 12 years TAFMS may also apply.

For more information, call Special Agent Cheri Turner at Ext. 6203 or Special Agent Ricky Gecewich at Ext. 6206.

Reel Times

Today, 7 p.m. – "Deja Vu" Rated PG-13 – A special agent investigating a horrible crime begins experiencing deja vu – the feeling people get when they recognize a place they have never been before – giving him clues to the past and the future. Starring: Denzel Washington, Val Kilmer

Today 10 p.m. – "Code Name: The Cleaner" Rated PG-13 – A janitor who has amnesia is duped into thinking he is an undercover agent. However, he subconsciously carries a secret that can link the FBI with an arms scandal. Starring: Cedric the Entertainer, Elizabeth Hurley

Saturday, 7 p.m. – "Casino Royale" Rated PG-13 – James Bond's 007 mission takes him to Madagascar where he spies on a terrorist. Not everything goes as planned so he follows a lead that takes him around the world where the stakes for blood money are raised. Starring: Daniel Craig, Judi Dench

Sunday, 7 p.m. – "Deja Vu" Rated PG-13

Wednesday, 7 p.m. – "Borat" Rated R – A Kazakhstan journalist named Borat who works for a state-run TV network, travels to the United States to make a documentary. On his cross-country road trip, Borat meets real people, in real situations, with humorous consequences.

Thursday, 7 p.m. – "Deja Vu" Rated PG-13

(Titles and times are courtesy of www.aafes.com, and are subject to change.)

Fly Bys

Local events

• A Marc Chagall etching exhibition is displayed at the Corso Garibaldi in Pordenone through March 11. The exhibit is open from 2:30 to 7 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. For more information, call 0434-23-1418 or visit www.triennaleincisione.it.

• An exhibit displaying paintings of Venice in the 8th century is from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays through April 8 in Casa dei Carraresi, Treviso. For more information, visit www.venezia900.it.

• People can ice skate to music in Claut from 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday. The cost is €8. For more information, call 942-776-4518.

• People can hike in the Val Silisia area near Pofabro, Maniago. The group leaves at 9 a.m. Sunday for the eight-hour hike. To sign up, call 042-78-7333 or 042-78-7046. For more information, visit <http://www.parcodolomitifriulane.it>.

• A hiking group will hike for three hours in the mountains near Forni di Sopra, Udine, at 10 a.m. Sunday. To sign up, call 043-38-8080. For more information, visit <http://www.parcodolomitifriulane.it>.

Call Ext. 7555 for more information about these events.



Photo by Alex Wieman

Left: The ornate San Marco's Basilica is covered both inside and out with sparkling mosaics. The basilica was built between 1063 and 1094 and is connected to the Palazzo Ducale or Doges Palace. Photos are not allowed inside the basilica, but visitors can take photos of the piazza below from the balcony.

Experience the magic, wonder of San Marco's square, basilica

By Senior Airman Colleen Wieman
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Many people stationed at Aviano have taken the quick train ride into Venice. Filled with beauty and culture, Venice's canals have inspired people throughout the ages.

At the heart of this city is Piazza San Marco and surrounding it are shops selling expensive items and cafes for visitors to relax while taking in the piazza's beauty.

The piazza focal point is San Marco's Basilica. This ornate basilica is covered inside and out with Byzantine mosaics depicting biblical scenes. Lines into the basilica are usually long, but are worth the wait. Inside, visitors can stay downstairs and view an ornate altar backed by a silver and gold altar piece covered in gemstones. Beneath the altar lie the remains of Saint Mark.

On the second floor is the basilica museum. The museum has pieces of the basilica that couldn't be fully restored as well as the original four bronze horses that were once outside but brought inside to protect them from the elements. The horses currently outside are replicas. Inside the museum, visitors can learn

in English about the history of Venice and the basilica.

What makes the basilica so amazing is the glittering mosaic dome ceiling. The best place to view the mosaics is from the museum. People can spend hours staring at the ceiling recalling which part of the bible a scene depicts.

From the museum, visitors can also enter rooms with frescoed ceilings displaying tapestries and other artifacts.

Photos are not allowed inside the basilica and people must be quiet and keep their shoulders, arms and knees covered. However, photos can be taken on the balcony overlooking the piazza. From the balcony, visitors can see how crowded the piazza below is.

Although the piazza is usually crowded with pigeons and visitors, it can get even more packed during Carnevale, which runs Feb. 9 to 20. During Carnevale, some locals as well as tourists dress up in colorful costumes and ornate masks and walk the streets of Venice. There is usually a festival every night and most Carnevale revelers will flock to the piazza. For more information on Venice and Carnevale, visit <http://www.carnevale.venezia.it>. The site is in English.

Autos: An auto expo is 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. today through Sunday at the Padova Fairgrounds. For more information, visit <http://www.padovafiere.it>.



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wieman

In **Nove**, stores are filled wall-to-wall with ceramics. Sign up by Wednesday for an ITT shopping trip Feb. 3 to Nove.

Information, Tickets and Tours

Upcoming tours from the Information, Tickets and Tours office include:

- Saturday – Guided Turin and Egyptian museums
- Saturday – Guided San Marino
- Saturday – Pramollo ski trip with Outdoor Recreation

ITT escorts ensure the group arrives and departs from destinations as sched-

uled and will do everything possible to make the trip safe and comfortable. Escorts also provide general information about the area.

Please note weather conditions and dress accordingly. The ITT staff recommends wearing comfortable shoes because most tours involve walking. Call Ext. 5072 or 5026 for more information.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

From left to right: Dance instructor Marina Miller shows Melanie Vasquez and Fernando Magri how to hold a proper dance position during the full-immersion salsa lessons at the Community Center Monday.

Dance instructor gets feet moving

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Even the most confident people can crumble under the pressure of being on a dance floor.

Just the thought of tripping over two left feet can leave a person in a cold sweat, but those fears can be banished with the help of dance lessons through the Community Center.

The center's dance instructor, Marina Miller, teaches students everything from ballroom to country-western dances.

"Dancing is a sport and a hobby for life, and it brings health and maintains the smile," said Ms. Miller, who has been teaching dance for more than 11 years. "Dancing can increase not only flexibility and stamina, but a person's overall confidence as well." Bonnie Furnier, who has taken salsa and ballroom lessons with her husband at the Community Center, agreed with Ms. Miller.

"Dancing has always been something that I've been interested in, and it turns out that it's great for both your mind and body. It's very rewarding," she said. "Speaking in 'couple terms,' dancing is a great thing to do with your significant other – it's something that you can do together, as a couple, for the rest of your lives."

Ms. Miller said that in addition to the health benefits, taking dance lessons can help people avoid drinking too much when going out.

"There is a false illusion that alcohol relaxes people and helps them overcome shyness," she said. "People also say that holding

a drink in a club usually gives them a reason to stay in a place and feel more comfortable watching others having fun."

It's also common for people to use the excuse of offering someone a drink as a way to make new friends. With the help of dance lessons, Ms. Miller said people won't need to rely on drinking to feel comfortable.

"When someone has at least some basic knowledge of how to dance properly, he or she surely won't need to 'warm up' in the club with a few drinks first," she said. "Knowing how to dance gives a person enough courage and self-confidence to invite anyone to dance, make new friends and have lots of fun."

It also works up a thirst, giving a person a real reason to drink – water or juice, that is – Ms. Miller added.

Ms. Miller said that taking lessons with her is beneficial because she offers a variety of dances for any level, goal or special occasion and can work with at a student's schedule. The most important step to dancing is actually going through the door.

"I teach lessons in English or Italian and I sure can fix their feet and make them dance nice quickly, while having a lot of fun," she said.

"Take the first step and let me take care of the rest."

Lessons can be taught in a group or individually and are offered Monday through Friday at the Community Center. Individual lessons can be personalized to the student's specific needs and goals. For more information or to sign up, call Ms. Miller at 347-331-5567.

Fly Bys

Volksmarch

The Aviano Road Runners are participating in a Volksmarch at 8 a.m. Sunday. The group meets at the Bar Municipio in Roveredo and heads to Cordenons. For more information, call Ext. 7692 or 7404.

Bowling tourney

The Aviano Bowling Association hosts a Valentines Day Scotch Doubles tournament at 6 p.m. Feb. 10 at the Aviano Bowling Center. Teams must consist of one man and one woman. The cost is \$25 per couple, and there will be cash prizes given to the top finishing teams.

For more information, call Staff Sgt. Eric Hill at Ext. 4402 or the bowling center at Ext. 7487.

Hockey players

The Aviano Ice Dragons are looking for hockey players. The team practices at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays in Claut. Pads and helmets are required and available online. The team plays scrimmages with local teams and in the annual U.S. Air Forces in Europe tournament in Garmisch, Germany.

For more information, call Mark Boucher at 346-086-5270.

Friday golfing

People who play golf on Fridays during January are eligible to win a free golf cart rental for nine holes. Winners will be notified the next business day. For more information, call the Alpine Golf Course at Ext. 7386.

Grifoni football

The Aviano Grifoni full-contact semi-pro American football team has openings for its 2007 season. For details, call Jerome Baysmore at 348-731-3388 or e-mail avianogrifoni@yahoo.com.

No matter what, enthusiasm saves lives

By Chief Master Sgt.
John LaForgia

407th Air Expeditionary Group
superintendent

ALI BASE, Iraq – Have you ever gone up to a clinic reception desk or a customer service counter at a store and encountered someone who gave you the impression he would rather be somewhere else or that you were disturbing him?

I'll bet you can remember the time when you waited in line to pay for gas and when you got to the cashier you were greeted by an enthusiastic employee who had a friendly, warm smile, and when you left you received a sincere "Thank you." If you're like me, you felt good about your encounter and wondered why more people aren't like this.

There was a time in the military, not so long ago, when there was a special feeling on an Air Force base because most people displayed a level of enthusiasm where just about everywhere you went people made eye contact with each other and gave a genuine and sincere greeting.

Have you noticed that, for the most part, those days are a thing of the past. Now, it seems like a rarity if you walk by someone on base and they do actually say hi to you.

OK, so what's wrong with that?

“ There was a time in the military, not so long ago, when there was a special feeling on an Air Force base because most people displayed a level of enthusiasm ... ”

Encountering an enthusiastic employee usually makes people feel good. When people feel good, they have a tendency to enjoy coming to work, to do a better job, and to be more professional. Things just seem to run smoother and better in an environment where people show and display enthusiasm on a regular basis.

On the other hand, an unenthusiastic workcenter has a negative atmosphere where people usually keep to themselves, give mediocre customer service, would rather be somewhere else, and constantly talk about wanting to PCS, etc. When people feel this way, they usually have a poor attitude toward their job, co-workers, family members, and the Air Force. Their focus is usually on getting out of work and cutting corners rather than contributing positively to the mission.

In the Air Force, especially at an austere, deployed location like Ali Base, a positive attitude and enthusiasm are

extremely important for a variety of reasons. As I tell people at their Right Start briefing, the minute you arrive at Ali Base, the train is moving pretty fast. There's no time to stand on the platform and wait for the next train. You must hop on the train and stay on track for the entire deployment because many people are counting on you to perform the job you've been trained to do.

To me, being positive and enthusiastic is not all that difficult. It's choosing to see the positive things in life and not dwelling on the negative things we can't change. It's also just being courteous, friendly and treating people the same way you want to be treated. It's pretty simple stuff.

I've found enthusiastic people step up to the plate and perform their jobs without being constantly told what to do. And when they do, vital equipment and more importantly the lives of their fellow Airmen are saved.

AIRMAN ARTLESS

by Ben Schneider



Recognizing The World's Finest

• Congratulations to the following Airmen for the outstanding completion of their career development courses: **Airman 1st Class David Thompson**, 603rd Air Control Squadron; **Staff Sgt. Juan Garza**, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; and **Senior Airman Christopher Macklin**, 31st Maintenance Squadron.

• Congratulations to the following Airmen for their selection as Chief's Choice: **Tech. Sgt. Dennis Karner**, 555th Fighter Squadron; **Senior Airman Alejandro Rendon**, 31st Security Forces Squadron; **Tech. Sgt. Robert Mehaffie**, 31st Mission Support Squadron; **Staff Sgt. Sonora Vasquez**, 31st Mission Support Squadron; and **Staff Sgt. Chad Hill**, 31st Security Forces Squadron.