



# WINGSPREAD

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH

No. 17 • MAY 2, 2014



## Members represent JBSA during Fiesta 2014

PAGE 10-11

# COMMENTARY

## TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

# Today's MTIs: Through eyes of old Airman

By Chief Master Sgt. Gerardo Tapia  
Air Education and Training Command  
command chief

I normally don't jump into the fray of Internet social commentary, but as Air Education and Training Command's senior-enlisted Airman, I felt compelled after seeing many readers' comments stemming from a March 31 news article on the court-martial of a former military training instructor.

The article highlighted the former MTI's guilty actions and quoted an anonymous MTI source to suggest how soft Basic Military Training has become and how much power basic trainees wield over their instructors.

I spend much of my time at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, the 37th Training Wing and at BMT. There, I talk to many Airmen, both in and out of training. I also look and listen from afar, when my presence isn't always known, because situational awareness is my job. But I'm also not so naïve to believe we live in a perfect world.

BMT is a demanding environment and is not for everyone. We've spent time and effort creating an atmosphere safe to train in, while conducive to preparing our newest Airmen to begin learning how to deliver lethal combat air power. I don't need to remind anyone of where we've been and where we will never go again.

At last count, 35 NCOs who ignored their core values and hurt Airmen, put a nasty shiner on the eye of our great Air Force. Since then, we've taken major steps to restore the trust and confidence this nation has in our Air Force. This is why I write today.

You can be proud of the Air Force MTI corps. It's my job to represent these Airmen and it bothers me to think some believe we've thrown the baby out with the bathwater. (I can hear the naysayers. "Chief, because of where you sit, Airmen will tell you what they think you need to hear versus what's really happen-



Photo by Michael Tolzmann

A military training instructor observes basic trainees as they pass over an algae-filled water obstacle on a cable and rope bridge at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

ing." To that I reply, I've invested my time wisely and find that most of our Airmen, MTIs and leadership trust me. I've been fortunate to serve 29 years and realized long ago that trust is hard to earn but easy to lose. So for me, not having trust is a deal breaker in any relationship. I make that known up front.)

I've listened long to our MTIs' concerns. I've found clear distinctions between a small minority who may feel powerless and those who clearly acknowledge they are comfortable operating in this environment. What the anonymous news source failed to mention was that those same critique boxes he or she referred to in the article are mostly stuffed with notes of praise for their MTIs and this institution we cherish. I've read them. The prevailing theme is one of pride and gratitude. In fact, the notes are a running testimony to how these trainees will never forget the names of their MTIs and the difference these superior

NCOs have made in their lives.

We can't lose sight of the fact that the overwhelming majority of our MTI corps "gets it." They give fully of themselves, their families sacrifice, and they train our newest Airmen hard. It's what we expect of them and they deliver every day.

Never forget that many of these young trainees may soon find themselves in harm's way.

Our goal at BMT is producing a tough-skinned, resilient, respectful Airman ready to fight tonight. If you need any further proof, I extend a personal invitation to you to join my boss, Gen. Robin Rand, commander of Air Education and Training Command, and me any Friday morning at 9 a.m. at JBSA-Lackland to witness a BMT graduation ceremony.

I was taught early on to carry my freight, so I gladly remain un-anonymous. I'm Airman Gerardo Tapia, command chief of AETC, and I proudly stand beside my Airmen and MTIs.

## ON THE COVER

Joint Base San Antonio military ambassadors, Air Force Staff Sgt. Kathryn North, 382nd Training Squadron, and Air Force Tech. Sgt. Daniel Anderson, 323rd Training Squadron, carry a wreath April 21 during the Pilgrimage to the Alamo. For more coverage of Fiesta 2014 events, see pages 10-11.

Photo by Joel Martinez

## WINGSPREAD

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## JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH MISSION PARTNER

# Air Force opens additional TERA, VSP windows

From Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

The Air Force will open two new fiscal year 2014 force management temporary early retirement authority application windows, and a new voluntary separation pay application window, Air Force Personnel Center officials said April 14.

Commonly referred to as the 15-year retirement, TERA eligibility will be based on the updated matrices posted on myPers and will apply to Airmen who have between 15 and 20 years of active service.

#### **April 15 - May 13 TERA Window**

The first window, planned for April 15-May 13, is for Airmen who were unable to apply during the original application window that ended March 26 due to unwaiverable active-duty service commitments, or ADSC, deployment status or a short tour assignment.

"Some Airmen who were interested in applying were unable to do so because their service commitment couldn't be waived," said Col. Joe Atkins, AFPC operations division chief. "AFPC was recently granted expanded ADSC waiver authorities after the first TERA window closed. Opening a second window helps ensure that those Airmen are treated equitably."

Air Force officials also reviewed and revised the policy affecting Airmen whose deployment or short tour return dates were after the original required separation or retirement date. The revised policy makes an exception for those Airmen, allowing them to apply and, if approved, have the ability to separate or retire based on their circumstances.

"A deployed Airman could request a retirement date up to four months after returning to their home sta-

tion," Atkins said. "For an Airman on a short tour assignment, their requested retirement date must correspond with their date eligible to return from overseas."

Eligible Airmen must apply through the Virtual Military Personnel Flight application, of vMPF, accessible via the Air Force Portal or the myPers website. Approved Airmen not on a deployment or short tour mentioned earlier, must be retired by Sept. 1.

Detailed instructions on this new TERA window were published this week to ensure information was available by the April 15 opening.

#### **May 22- June 30 TERA/VSP Window**

Another TERA window opens May 22 to June 30 for officers eligible to meet the October reduction-in-force board. At the same time, a second voluntary separation pay window will be open for these RIF-eligible officers.

These TERA and VSP windows ensure all officers who may be subject to the involuntary board in October have an opportunity to apply and be considered for a voluntary program. These opportunities have adjusted retirement or separation dates allowing time for affected Airmen to plan and prepare.

Eligible officers approved for the RIF-only TERA must retire by Jan. 1, 2015, and if approved for the RIF-only VSP, must separate by Dec. 31.

Detailed instructions on the TERA and VSP windows for RIF-eligible officers will be published in early May.

For full application instructions and eligibility requirements, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil> and enter "Active Duty: FY14 Force Management Programs" in the search window, select the link to the program page and select the officer or enlisted force management programs link.

## NEWS

# Top Airman gives insight into budget decisions

By Staff Sgt. Torri Ingalsbe  
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

“The demand for what the Air Force provides is on the rise; unfortunately, the supply is going in the other direction,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III.

Welsh spoke to members of the National Press Club about tough choices the Air Force has had to make in the face of budgetary constraints during a breakfast April 23.

“Every recommendation we’re making these days does hurt,” Welsh said. “It’s taking capability or capacity away from combatant commanders. We’re figuring out how to wisely move forward, keeping our Air Force balanced as we downsize it over time. We’re reducing capability in every one of our core mission areas, that’s the reality of it – every single one.”

Welsh described many behind-the-scenes activities and operations, which typically go unseen by most Airmen and the public.

“When you walk into a room and you look at a light switch on the wall, unless you’re an electrician, you really don’t have idea what’s behind the wall,” he said. “But every time you flip the switch, the light comes on; every single time. That’s kind of the way our Air Force is. We don’t do a whole lot of things in the world that are visible to you every day.”

Welsh highlighted the key mission areas in which Airmen operate on a daily basis, and the analytical processes used to determine where to make necessary cuts with the least mission impact.

“We’re doing everything we can to maintain that balance between being ready to do the nation’s business



Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlin Leslie  
Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III speaks at the National Press Club April 23 in Washington, D.C.

today, and being capable of doing it 10 years from now,” Welsh said. “It’s hard to make a \$20 billion reduction per year without making some significant change. Trimming around the edges as we make our budget proposal just wasn’t going to work. We had to look at some pretty dramatic things.”

One of the dramatic changes is the proposed elimination of the A-10 Thunderbolt II fleet.

“It’s not emotional, it’s logical; it’s analytical,” Welsh explained. “It makes eminent sense from a military perspective, if you have to make these kinds of cuts. Nobody likes it.”

He described the process of getting to the conclusion of cutting one of the Air Force’s most beloved airplanes and one that he has flown. To find the same \$4.2 billion savings in air superiority; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; global airlift, and command and control, posed unacceptable risks to all service chiefs and combatant commanders, Welsh said.

“So we looked at all those options,” he said. “We took each one independently and we ran it through an operational analysis, and we came very clearly to the conclusion that of all those horrible options, the least operationally impactful was to divest the A-10 fleet. That’s how we got there.”

Welsh said to achieve the same monetary savings of divesting the A-10 fleet, it would take about 363 F-16 Fighting Falcons out of the fight.

“Everything in this entire chain of events is hard,” he said. “The balance is pretty delicate; the cuts are real. The issues are serious, and they deserve serious consideration.”

Although the financial climate, coupled with a growing and evolving threat environment, puts additional strain on all branches of the nation’s military, Welsh expressed his confidence in the capabilities of the Airmen in his charge.

“This is a fascinating time to be in the U.S. military, and it’s a great time to be an American Airman,” he said. “Your Airmen are very proud of who they are; they’re incredibly proud of what they do, and they’re incredibly good at doing it.”

## Re-designed website aids civilian self-development

From 802nd Force Support Squadron,  
Force Development Flight

The Air Force has re-developed a tool for civilian employees’ self-development that creates learning opportunities and helps chart career paths regardless of where they are in their personal development journey.

The Civilian Development Resource Center, formerly the Supervisor Resource Center, provides access to a robust topical search engine in the Air Force e-Learning collection of self-development resources. E-Learning self-development re-

sources allows users to quickly find thousands of no-cost courses, books and interactive learning tools for new hires, developing journeyman employees, individual leaders, new and seasoned supervisors.

It expands self-development opportunities to all Air Force civilians using an existing platform within current resources. Military counterparts, who are developed via a separate process, may also use its resources. Employees can also receive credit for learning program completions.

These resources can be accessed any time and any place from a desk-

top computer; on-line books can be downloaded to mobile devices to save valuable work time.

Course preparation for some professional certifications is one of the most popular tools. Learning opportunities are offered for skill development in the Air Force Institutional competencies, which focus on core proficiencies expected of every Airman.

The CDRC continues the legacy created by the SRC that focused primarily on the development of Air Force supervisors. The CDRC website has been re-engineered to help users quickly locate resources tai-

lored to a particular skill level and individual goals.

User feedback and ongoing qualitative and quantitative data is collected to continuously improve the site. Navigation has also been simplified to help employees quickly identify the right development track for individual professional development needs.

The CDRC is accessible from the AF Portal. At the main portal page, select the “Life and Career” tab followed by the “Force Development” pull down. On the left navigation, select “Civilian Development Resource Center.”

## JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH MISSION PARTNER

# AF Families Forever serves families when, where needed

By Janis El Shabazz

Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

Families of Airmen killed on active duty can get support and information from community readiness consultants at their local base Airman and Family Readiness Center, Air Force Personnel Center officials announced.

Established in 2010 at Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations in Dover, Del., as a long-term support program for surviving family members, Air Force Families Forever relocated to AFPC, Joint Base San Antonio Randolph in November.

This reorganization transferred responsibility from a two-person operation to an expansive group of professionals at Airman and Family Readiness Centers Air Force-wide. Now, care and support is available where families need it most, at Air Force bases closest to where they live.

"We want to ensure families of the fallen know they are not alone and we, their Air Force family, will be there for them in their time of need no matter where they are," said Robin Raine, AFPC Air Force Families Forever program manager.

The program provides resources, support and information to help families adapt to life without their loved ones. As the program evolved and more family members were added, family care experts realized decentralizing the program and providing support from installations closest to the bereaved family members would better serve their needs.

"AFFF representatives will reach out to any person the fallen service member identifies on the virtual Record of Emergency Data, not just to the primary next-of-kin," Raine said. "Decentralizing the program was the answer to providing a larger staffing pool to help family members, as well as deliver face-to-face support where practical," she said.

"Representatives at A&FRCs take a proactive approach, supporting families within their geographic area of responsibility with a level of support and assistance directly tied to the specific needs of the individual family," Raine said.

Once the funeral is over, all entitlements and benefits have been paid and the short-term Air Force support entities have concluded services, Air Force Families Forever can carry survivors for the remain-

der of their journey," Raine said.

A specific prescription for outreach to survivors has been established to ensure no one who was important to the fallen Airman is forgotten.

Within 10 days of a service member's death, an A&FRC community readiness consultant from the installation the fallen service member was assigned to will send an introductory letter and information packet to all family members listed on the service member's vRED, explaining who they should contact if they need assistance.

Subsequent to initial outreach, spouses, children and parents will be contacted by the A&FRC closest to where they reside four more times during the year leading up to the 1-year anniversary of the date of death.

Even though scheduled contact will discontinue after the one-year anniversary, family members are welcome to reach out for help and support whenever they need it.

"Airmen can rest assured we value their families and loved ones," Raine said. "We believe once you are a part of the Air Force family, you are always part of the Air Force family."

For information about personnel issues, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.

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To advertise in the Wingspread, call 250-2440.

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*“The JBSA CBRN Challenge honed the skills of the bioenvironmental and emergency management career fields and measured the effectiveness of emergency response procedures at the installation level. With JBSA integrating policies and plans, we need to integrate response training to strengthen professional bonds and gain priceless experiences.”*

**Maj. Tre Doby**

*359th Aerospace Medicine Squadron Bioenvironmental Engineer Flight commander*

**Photos by Joel Martinez**

Senior Airman Trevaughn Sheppard (left) and Staff Sgt. Lawson Moss, 559th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, test a warehouse door for chemicals after a simulated missile attack April 23 using a MultiRae Plus, multi-gas monitor for confined spaces, during the Joint Base San Antonio CBRN Challenge “Warehouse Radioisotopes” scenario at JBSA-Randolph’s Camp Talon.



## **First JBSA CBRN Challenge administered at Camp Talon**

**By Airman 1st Class Kenna Jackson**  
Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

More than 30 Airmen from Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph and JBSA-Lackland demonstrated their specialized war and homeland readiness skills as bioenvironmental engineers and emergency management technicians during the first JBSA Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Challenge April 23-25 at JBSA-Randolph’s Camp Talon.

“If a real-world situation happened on one of our installations, we’d need to be able to provide expert support to the incident commander on-scene,” Maj. Tre Doby, 359th Aerospace Medicine Squadron Bioenvironmental Engineer Flight commander, said.

“The JBSA CBRN Challenge honed the skills of the bioenvironmental and emergency management career fields and measured the effectiveness of emergency response procedures at the installation level. With JBSA integrating policies and plans, we need to

integrate response training to strengthen professional bonds and gain priceless experiences.”

The idea to coordinate the JBSA CBRN challenge originated with two NCOs who had worked together at a prior assignment. Staff. Sgt. Justin Lee, 359th AMDS Bioenvironmental Engineer Flight readiness element NCO in charge, and Tech. Sgt. Markus Manuel, 559th AMDS NCO in charge of radiation,

**See CBRN P8**



Staff Sgt. Will Hamilton (left) and Senior Airman Jerry Shackelford, 559th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, study the results of their environmental tests of unknown agents after a simulated deployed location enemy attack during the Joint Base San Antonio CBRN Challenge “Emergency Management” scenario at the JBSA-Randolph Camp Talon.



Senior Airman Trevaughn Sheppard, 559th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, uses a HAZMAT ID for qualitative material analysis, and a MultiRae, multi-gas monitor for confined space applications, to perform a biological test during the Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph CBRN Challenge April 23.

## Joint Base San Antonio Sexual Assault Prevention, Response

To report a sexual assault, call the 24/7 Joint Base San Antonio Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Hotline at 808-7272 or the Department of Defense Safe Helpline at 877-995-5247.

## Smoke Alarm Safety at Home

Smoke alarms are an important part of a home fire-escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

### Safety Tips:

- Smoke alarms should be installed inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Larger homes may need additional smoke alarms to provide enough protection.
- For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound.
- An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to

smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms (also known as dual sensor alarms) are recommended.

- Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be at least 10 feet from a cooking appliance.
- All smoke alarms should be tested at least once a month using the test button.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

### Fast Facts:

- Roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half.

*Content courtesy of the National Fire Protection Association at <http://www.nfpa.org>.*

## JBSA-Randolph Chapel Regular Schedule

### PROTESTANT

#### Sunday

8:15 a.m. service, Main Chapel

11 a.m. service, Religious Activity Center (building 975)

### CATHOLIC

#### Monday-Thursday

11:30 a.m. daily Mass, Main Chapel

#### Saturday

5:30 p.m. Mass, Main Chapel

#### Sunday

8:30 a.m. Mass, Religious Activity Center (building 975)

11:30 a.m. Mass, Main Chapel

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**CBRN from P6**

discussed ideas with the lead from 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management, Greg Wilson. They planned to put together a joint training opportunity for the 559th AMDS at JBSA-Lackland, 359th AMDS at JBSA-Randolph and 502nd Emergency Management, that was both “cool” and “effective.”

Using the former Air Force BEE CBRN challenge – a weeklong event during which responders employed homeland defense and expeditionary CBRN detection equipment in realistic scenarios – as a blueprint, Doby’s AMDS team and their 502nd CES EM counterparts, planned, organized and successfully executed their JBSA-specific CBRN challenge.

Three months after the planning process for the challenge event began, participants were pitted against each other in competing teams for a series of timed events. The teams rotated daily for three days through the scenarios, each lasting three hours.

Scenarios included a “Clandestine Lab,” or a meth lab; “Emergency Management,” a scenario set in a simulated deployed location where the enemy attacks with an unknown chemical agent; and “Warehouse with Radioisotopes.”

Throughout the challenge, evaluators – two from emergency management and four from bioenvironmental – judged the teams on efficiency, time and knowledge assessment, including equipment operation and safety checks.

Although the “Clandestine Lab” and “Emergency Management” were challenging, Doby said the toughest one was “Warehouse with Radioisotopes.”

Doby said teams were not only evaluated on identifying potential isotopes, but on how well they prepared a health risk assessment for the incident commander.

“We looked at what detection equipment they brought and if it was properly calibrated,” Doby said. “We also checked to make sure the appropriate gear was worn correctly – ensuring it protected them from radioactive exposure.”

Lee echoed Doby’s judgment.

“Radiation is not visible, not tangible, and it’s probably one of the most detailed jobs Airmen in our career field are faced with,” Lee said. “The checklist is very long, from accurately identifying what type of radiation it is, acknowledging and documenting what those hazards present, delivering the assessment of the area to responders so they will have the right protective gear on and making sure everyone else on-scene is aware and prepared with protective equipment, or is at a safe distance.”

“Dealing with radiation is not clear-cut and it’s not like a physical barrier can just be put between people and the radiation,” he added.

Lee said the point of the challenge was to get Airmen to use all the different skills they would need to identify bioenvironmental hazards, whether at home station or in a warfare situation, and it was thanks to Doby; Maj. Ernest Scott Jr., 559th AMDS Flight commander; and Master Sgt. Thomas Terry, 559th AMDS Flight chief, who facilitated the event.

On the last day, players competed in a relay race, land navigation course and a bioenvironmental engineering knowledge game modeled after the “Jeopardy” TV quiz show.

“I think this challenge was great training,” Senior Airman Jerry Shackelford, 359th AMDS bioenvironmental technician said. “It gave us the opportunity to work on our abilities, get better at our job. If we end up doing this next year too, I definitely want to do it again.”

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the Wingspread,  
call 250-2440.**

# Top Flight: Inspiring listeners through musical excellence

By Airman 1st Class Kenna Jackson  
Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

Ranging from pop to rhythm and blues, and classic rock to country music, Top Flight's main mission is to inspire listeners through musical excellence, honor past and present Americans who served in the armed forces, enthuse diverse audiences through displaying professionalism and share American culture and entertainment.

Performing at official military gatherings, community relations events, banquets, parades, foreign countries and foreign schools, Top Flight is a popular music ensemble of eight top-notch musicians from among more than 60 who make up the complete U.S. Air Force Band of the West.

According to Tech. Sgt. Chad Newman, NCO in charge of Top Flight and percussionist, the band acts as a musical representative for the Air Force and it is through their multiple performances the Air Force story is told to the community.

"We are a regional band that performs throughout Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Florida, or basically 580,000 square miles of coverage," said Newman.

Covering an area that large doesn't just happen. Each musician also plays a part in making sure the schedule, performances and the working environment run smoothly. Additionally, with leadership approval and direction, the band members themselves also act as self-booking agents.

"Rehearsals can either be in the morning or the afternoon, since administrative work must be done and we share the rehearsal area with another band," Newman said. "We rehearse two to three hours a day depending upon the new material that needs to be learned and the performance schedule the band follows that month."

Song selection is another major part of the band's mission planning process – knowing what's important to the audience they'll play for and what the Air Force wants to say to that audience.

Recruiting is a big part of the band's mission, along with presenting a respectable military image, performing high-quality musical entertainment and delivering positive messages about the Air Force to the public, Newman said.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Alexandria Slade

Staff Sgt. Natalie Madison-Rascoe (right), Top Flight vocalist, rehearses with (left to right) Airman 1st Class William Kelly, Top Flight bass player, Senior Airman Lee Heerspink, Top Flight musical director and guitarist, and Staff Sgt. Darran Keenom, Top Flight vocalist, Feb 13 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lacklan.

"One of the new missions for Band of the West, Top Flight included, is to entertain under-represented areas for recruiting – areas far from military bases – and communicate important messages to the American people and demonstrate American values to others around the world," Staff Sgt. Natalie Madison-Rascoe, Top Flight vocalist said.

Every October, a series of concerts for the local community, part of the national Red Ribbon week to "say no to drugs" through a healthy lifestyle, Top Flight performs popular tunes for 6,000 elementary-age children and included positive messages between and in songs.

Top Flight also takes its positive vibes to audiences in foreign communities.

"We play at different bases and help American outreach with U.S. embassy personnel in foreign countries by performing to foreign civilian audiences," Madison-Rascoe said.



Tech. Sgt. Chad Newman, Top Flight NCO in charge and percussionist, rehearses Feb. 13 for upcoming performances.

See TOP FLIGHT P13

# Joint Base San Antonio participates in city-wide celebration of Fiesta



Photo by Airman 1st Class Alexandria Slade  
United States Air Force Band of the West musician Staff Sgt. Rachel Webber sings lead vocals while Airman 1st Class Logan Keese plays trumpet April 22 for the annual Fiesta in Blue concert observing San Antonio's Fiesta 2014 at the Edgewood Theatre for the Performing Arts.

Gen. Robin Rand, Air Education and Training Command commander, presents former Army Vietnam Veteran Staff Sgt. Condalario Trevino with a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor Sunday in Veterans Square during San Antonio's 2014 Fiesta.  
Photo by Johnny Saldivar



The Joint Base San Antonio 2014 military ambassadors representing all branches of military service pay tribute to the fallen heroes of the Alamo during the Pilgrimage to the Alamo April 21 as part of San Antonio's Fiesta 2014 celebration.  
Photo by Joel Martinez



Gen. Robin Rand (left), Air Education and Training Command commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Gerardo Tapia, AETC command chief master sergeant, salute after placing the Joint Base San Antonio wreath at the Alamo during the Pilgrimage to the Alamo April 21. The Pilgrimage is a solemn march in honor of the fallen heroes of the Alamo.  
Photo by Joel Martinez



The Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Drum and Bugle Corps, basic military trainee musicians from JBASA-Lackland who have been in the Air Force less than eight weeks, perform at San Antonio's Fiesta 2014 Air Force Day at the Alamo April 21. From its beginning in 1891, Fiesta has evolved into an annual 18-day celebration that includes civic and military observances, several parades, exhibits, sports, music and food.  
Photo by Benjamin Faske



Staff Sgt. Johnathan Royce, 902nd Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, demonstrates obedience, detection and patrol skills with his military working dog April 21 during San Antonio's Fiesta 2014 Air Force Day at the Alamo. Air Force Day at the Alamo is one of many Fiesta events held in celebration of the spirit, diversity and vitality of San Antonio.  
Photo by Benjamin Faske

## Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph News Briefs

### **Finance customer service office closure dates**

The Joint Base San Antonio 502nd Comptroller Squadron Financial Services Office Customer Service desk will be closed today at 1 p.m. for an official function. For more information, call 652-1851.

### **Summer camp information fair**

A summer camp information fair takes place today from 2-6 p.m. at the JBSA-Randolph Military & Family Readiness Center. Attendees can learn about upcoming local community camps and finalize their kids' summer plans. For more information, call 652-5321.

### **Resource fair**

The Joint Base San Antonio Special Needs Resource Fair and Fun Day event will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at Morgan's Wonderland, 5523 David Edwards Drive. The event is open to JBSA Exceptional Family Member Program participants and immediate military family members. EFMP families will have the opportunity to learn about support agencies and programs, both military and civilian. Event partners are JBSA-EFMP family support, the JBSA-Lackland First Sergeant Association and the Operation Warmheart Council.

### **'Mommy and Me Tea Party'**

In observance of Mother's Day, the JBSA-Randolph Library hosts a 'Mommy and Me Tea Party' 2 p.m. May 10. Moms and their children can celebrate with tea, sweet treats, food art and a special Mother's Day craft. Fancy attire and hats are optional – princess dresses welcome. Pearls and gloves will be provided. Visit the library or call 652-5710 to RSVP by Saturday.

### **Seminar registration open**

Registration for the Air Education and Training Command Executive Transition Assistance Program seminars May 19-22 and July 8-11 at the JBSA-Randolph are still open. ETAP focuses on resume writing, interviewing skills, salary negotiation, financial planning and more. Seminars are open to members who have never attended any other ETAP seminar. For more information, contact Elizabeth "Mona" Vallery at 652-7485 or email at [aetc.etap@us.af.mil](mailto:aetc.etap@us.af.mil).

### **BAH recertification**

The Air Force has started the recertification process mandating that every Airman provide their servicing finance office with documentation for all dependents by Dec. 31. The recertification is part of Air Force audit readiness for 2015 as required by the 2010 National Defense Authorization Act. The one-time process allows the Air Force to validate the \$5.4 billion spent annually on BAH entitlements and also ensures the money spent on BAH is fully auditable. For information, call 652-1851 or email [finance.callcenter@us.af.mil](mailto:finance.callcenter@us.af.mil). The finance office on JBSA-Randolph, building 399, Suite 2, is open to walk-in customers Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Wednesdays from 8 a.m.

# HeartLink helps spouses adjust to military lifestyle

By Alex Salinas

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

With the likelihood of frequent moves, long separations and inconsistent employment while also managing a family and household, military spouses are faced with constant challenges.

To make life a little easier for them, especially those new to the military, a class at Joint Base San Antonio called HeartLink empowers spouses to learn about the Air Force and make friends with others who share similar experiences.

"The class covers the basics of Air Force culture: protocol, the different major commands, how to read a leave and earnings statement, and more," Savannah Lohn, JBSA-Randolph Military & Family Readiness Center community readiness consultant, said.

In addition to learning about the heritage of the Air Force song, coins and terminology, spouses get a local history lesson on the location where

their uniformed member works – in JBSA-Randolph's case, a tour of the historic Taj Mahal is included, Lohn said.

"Benefits, entitlements, educational and employment resources are also discussed in HeartLink," Daniel Hutson, JBSA-Randolph M&FRC community readiness consultant, said. "Most of our staff (who teach the class) is linked to the military – either through prior enlistment or being married to a military member – and inform participants about many networks available."

A spouse who is able to cope with the stressors of military life and support the military mission – in other words, a happy wife or husband – is crucial in determining a member's retainability, Hutson said.



"Spouses are truly the heart and soul of the Air Force team," he said. "They are the ones who keep their families together when military members are away. If they don't feel accepted, it becomes really difficult for their partner to remain in service."

The next HeartLink classes are scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 21 at JBSA-Lackland, and 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 4 and Oct. 17 at

JBSA-Randolph. They will be held in each location's M&FRC and are open to military spouses only.

While HeartLink is tailored to the Air Force community, spouses of members from other branches are welcome to sign up, Lohn said.

For more information or to register, call the JBSA-Lackland M&FRC at 671-3722 or the JBSA-Randolph M&FRC at 652-5321.

## TOP FLIGHT from P9

"These performances foster support between civilian counterparts and the military members stationed there, so we can keep our bases in those countries and keep our popularity high."

Top Flight has provided entertainment in deployed environments four times since 2006 and each 90-day rotation has taken them to multiple locations within the region to which they were assigned.

Like many units, whether deployed, stationed overseas or stateside, Top Flight members have developed their own unique "battle rhythm" they take

pride in and which brings them an esteemed camaraderie.

"I love playing with this group because everybody rocks," Newman said. "All of them seem happy and into the music whether it's an old or new song, they're on time, their uniforms look great and they take care of their equipment and that's what separates professional musicians from an amateur; we're always prepared."

For more information about the Top Flight ensemble, call 945-7706. For requests, visit <http://www.usairforceband-ofthewest.af.mil>.

# Interservice Physician Assistant Program fulfills vital patient-care mission

By Robert Goetz  
Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

In 1971, the Air Force, Army and Navy started training its first physician assistants, medical professionals who are nationally certified and state-licensed to practice medicine with the supervision of a physician.

Twenty-five years later, the armed forces combined its PA training to form the Interservice Physician Assistant Program, which continues to provide the services with a critical link in patient care and its practitioners with a rewarding career that pays dividends even after their active-duty days are over.

Based at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston's U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School, the program consists primarily of enlisted active-duty members who, upon graduation, are commissioned as first lieutenants into the officer corps of their service.

"The Interservice Physician Assistant Program is one of the best opportunities in the Air Force for young Airmen with a hard science aptitude to get trained on active duty and be credentialed for a medical career," Kevin Smith, Air Force Personnel Center Biomedical Sciences Corps education manager, said.

Physician assistants' versatility makes them valuable in the armed services as physician extenders, he said.

Enlisted Airmen and officers who wish to be considered for the program must begin groundwork early, Smith said, accumulating 60 college credits, including core prerequisites such as biology and chemistry, before they begin their IPAP course work.

Students begin the program with Phase 1, the didactic portion at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, engaging in a rigorous curriculum of 101 semester hours that lasts 16 months. They receive a bachelor of science degree upon completion of Phase 1 and also finish a master's degree thesis during Phase 1 with final presentation during Phase 2.

During Phase 2, the clinical phase



that lasts about 13 months, students are assigned to Air Force or Army medical sites all over the United States and move through a variety of clinical rotations to gain specialty knowledge and experience.

"It is a very difficult program with 100 college credit hours completed in one year," Capt. Warren Stevens, 359th Medical Operations Squadron family health provider, said. "The most difficult aspect was the time commitment and amount of material to learn in a short period of time."

Phase 1 comprises nearly 40 courses, which range from biochemistry, microbiology and radiology to orthopedics, rheumatology and dermatology.

Maj. Derrick Varner, IPAP Phase 2 graduate clinical director, said the program was "like no other."

"It was fast and furious, but reward-

*"The Interservice Physician Assistant Program is one of the best opportunities in the Air Force for young Airmen with a hard science aptitude to get trained on active duty and be credentialed for a medical career."*

Kevin Smith

Air Force Personnel Center Biomedical Sciences Corps education manager



ing," he said. "The continued pace and volume of information, while keeping a balance with family, made it a challenge. Having a supportive spouse was the key."

Applications to the program are accepted no earlier than Oct. 1 and are due by Jan. 25, Smith said. The number of Air Force applicants is typically trimmed from 100 to 60 or less before the IPAP selection board convenes in March annually to choose 36 students for the program; the other service projections are 150 for the Army, 20 for the Navy and four for the Coast Guard.

The selection board features senior officers in the physician assistant career field, Smith said.

"The board members have a difficult job," he said. "We provide as much intel as we can, including letters that attest to the applicants' character."

The applicants' academic background is an important consideration, Smith said. They must also show the ability to handle a grueling academic workload.

"Our most difficult task is evaluating applicants for the pieces of their personality that will make them do the hard work to get the job done," he said. "They are given so much information so fast. It's trial by fire to see who can

make that transition."

Many of the applicants come from the enlisted medical field, Smith said.

"I'd say two-fifths are from the medical field," he said. "They tend to do very well because they already have a medical mindset."

Varner entered the program after serving as a surface freight technician and retraining as a radiology technician; Stevens was an enlisted security forces member at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, when he was accepted into the program.

Both attested to the impact of the program on their lives.

"I would do it all over again," Varner said. "It has changed the destiny of my family and I get to serve others."

Stevens said he has encouraged several military members to pursue training to become a PA.

"It was definitely an excellent career decision that has opened many doors and opportunities for my future after I separate from active duty," he said.

Smith said a call for candidates for all commissioning programs, including IPAP, is published in June or July each year. Information is available from installation education offices or the Air Force Medical Service Knowledge Exchange website, <https://kx.afms.mil>.



Barbara Bryant, Joint Base San Antonio Randolph Thrift Shop manager, arranges handbags March 19 at the shop.  
Photo by Joel Martinez

## Thrift shop business booms at JBSA-Randolph

By Alex Salinas

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

The Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Thrift Shop has moved more than a few times since it first opened 68 years ago, but one thing doesn't change – what's inside is always a surprise.

"Comfortably" located at building 1048 since 2010, "it's a treasure hunt in what you can find," Barbara Bryant, thrift shop manager, said. "Some customers have been coming here for 30 years. They contribute many of our used items and give them second or third lives."

The shop's best sellers are jewelry and furniture, but there's also clothing, linens, yard tools, household items and DVDs – "a little bit of everything," Bryant said.

However, because 20 to 35 items are consigned to the shop a day, it's a toss-up what comes through the doors, be they antique books or unusual trinkets.

Gabriele Leyne, a thrift shop regular, credits the shop with having unique craft items she buys to build miniature dollhouses, a hobby she cultivated growing up in Germany. A picture of one of her dollhouses was recently published in a national magazine.

"People can find old boxes of stuff to convert into anything," she said. "Some of the customers and volunteers (working at the shop) aren't from the U.S., so I'll find items from other countries."

The best part of shopping, though, is "they got to know me and keep an eye out for me when something interesting

arrives," Leyne said.

With 65 volunteers and two other staff members, Bryant considers everyone "family," which is how she likes to treat customers.

The friendly environment has translated into consistently good business for the shop, Bryant added.

For Lajuana DeForest, a 15-year frequenter of the shop, what keeps her coming back is the way it's arranged.

"The organization is wonderful," she said. "Plus, mostly everything is affordable. I love to read books and they are so expensive nowadays. You can get them for dimes here."

Active-duty members, civilians and retirees with a Department of Defense ID can bring up to 12 items a day, choosing their own price for each item. Consignors receive 75 percent of the purchase if their items sell within four business weeks. After a month, items become automatic donations.

The remaining profit is split between the Enlisted Wives' Club and the Officers' Spouses' Club, who operate the shop. Thrift shop funds often go to charities and scholarships for military family members via the spouses clubs.

The shop is open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and the first Saturday of each month for sales, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. those same days for consignments. Anyone with JBSA-Randolph access can shop at the thrift store.

To learn what items are accepted for the week and more information, call 658-5990.

## SPORTS - HEALTH - FITNESS

# First JBSA half marathon exceeds expectations

*The first Joint Base San Antonio Half Marathon gave racers the opportunity to explore JBSA-Randolph's rich history and scenic grounds Sunday. The event guided participants on a course from Harmon Drive past the Taj Mahal, chapel, flight lines, golf course and various static displays to the finish line in Heritage Park.*

*According to Marlin Richardson, JBSA-Randolph Rambler Fitness Center fitness and sports manager, the expectations for race attendance were more than exceeded. It was a joint base effort that provided an opportunity for camaraderie and teamwork for runners and volunteers from the entire JBSA community.*

*Some racers brought more to the JBSA Half Marathon than their running shoes and a determination to cross the finish line.*

*With more than 400 participants in the first event, the JBSA Half Marathon is in the approval process as becoming an annual event that possibly rotates between all three JBSA locations, Richardson said.*



Photos by Airman 1st Class Alexandria Slade

Runners near the finish line Sunday during the first JBSA Half Marathon at JBSA-Randolph's Heritage Park.



A racer watches fellow participants cross the finish line during the first Joint Base San Antonio Half Marathon Sunday at JBSA-Randolph's Heritage Park.



Runners wait for the signal to begin the first JBSA Half Marathon Sunday at the starting line on Harmon Drive at JBSA-Randolph.

### Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph *Sports* BRIEFS

#### **Golf classic**

The Randolph Oaks Golf Course hosts the Bob Carter Golf Tournament at 12:30 p.m. today. The event is a four-person scramble format. To sign up, call 652-4653.

#### **Aerobathon**

The Rambler Aerobathon takes place 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the Rambler Fitness Center. For more information, call 652-7263.

#### **Bowling specials**

The JBSA-Randolph Bowling Center offers free bowling for Moms 1-4 p.m. May 11. There is a three-game limit and does not include rental shoes. The rest of the family can bowl at a special rate.

#### **Pool passes**

Season pool passes are available May 13 at the JBSA-Randolph Community Services Mall. The center pool opens for recreational swimming 11 a.m. May 23. For more information, call 652-5142.

#### **Park passes**

Patrons can purchase an annual pass to the JBSA Recreation Park at Canyon Lake for \$65, which includes a vehicle and boat/trailer pass valid for one year. For details, call 830-226-5357.

#### **Strength competition**

A strength competition takes place 8 a.m. May 17 at the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Fitness Center. Registration is required in person at the center on the Medical Education and Training Campus. The event is free and open to all DOD ID cardholders, 18 years and older. For more information, call 808-5709.

# AF couple runs Boston Marathon in 'sign of solidarity'

By Robert Goetz

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

One year after the Boston Marathon bombings, an Air Force couple competed April 21 in the 118th edition of the race, joining nearly 36,000 other participants who ran despite last year's tragedy.

"We knew that with all eyes on Boston this year, we'd be hard pressed to find a safer place in the world," 2nd Lt. Meredith Hein, 24th Air Force deputy public affairs officer, said. "More than that, though, I would never have forgiven myself if I let what happened last year alter my course."

Meredith and her husband, 2nd Lt. David Hein, an Air Education and Training Command acquisitions program manager, ran in the Boston Marathon for the first time. They qualified for the event after competing in the 2013 Austin Marathon, and they were determined to run in Boston.

"We felt privileged and honored to run after what happened last year," David said. "At the race, we never heard anyone express any concerns about safety."

Meredith said the massive turnout at this year's marathon was "a sign of solidarity" on the part of the entrants and a million spectators.

"Last year, we decided that we could not opt out, because to do so would be to let the cowards who tried to ruin this race win," she said.

David, who is assigned to the AETC Directorate of Plans, Programs, Requirements and Assessments Technology Integration Division at JBSA-Randolph, and Meredith, who is assigned to the 24th Air Force at JBSA-Lackland, have also demonstrated solidarity as runners.

They were students at the Air Force Academy when they discovered a common interest.

"We ran for fun in college," David said. "That was the way we connected."

Meredith said running was also a way for her to enjoy Colorado and relieve stress.

The Heins began to train for their first marathon, which was in Oklahoma City, while they



Courtesy photo

Air Force 2nd Lt. David and Meredith Hein pick up their running bibs April 20 in preparation for the next day's Boston Marathon.

were at their first duty stations – David at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., and Meredith at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas – though Meredith said the brunt of her training took place at Fort Meade, Md., where she attended technical school.

"It was a way for us to share goals and experiences together even when we were apart," she said.

David, who "fell in love with running" when he joined the cross-country team at his high school in Adel, Iowa, said he and his wife prepared for the Boston Marathon by following a training schedule he borrowed from a high school friend who's run in five marathons.

He said he found the Boston course a tough one.

"It had some challenging hills," David said. "Heartbreak Hill, which is at the 20-mile mark, lived up to its name. I started the race too fast and, when I hit the hills, I nearly hit the wall. I slowed down for miles 21 to 24, then got a second wind for the last few miles."

Meredith said mental preparation is important to her, but the motivation she got for the marathon came from the crowds.

"It was amazing," she said. "I couldn't go a tenth of a mile without resounding cheers from those present. Their motivation is really what kept my legs churning the whole way, and I can't thank them enough for being there."

Meredith also had fun with competitors and spectators, giving high-fives to "to all the kids who stuck their hands out" and encouraging other runners.

David, who finished with a time of 3:04:40, and Meredith, who completed the course in 3:35:11, are looking forward to competing in next year's event.

He called his first Boston Marathon "an overwhelming experience."

"The city of Boston came together and put together a great event," David said. "The people of Boston showed support and unity. I couldn't be more thankful for the opportunity."

Meredith said the experience was everything she hoped it would be.

"The crowd was amazing and so supportive," she said. "They kept thanking the runners for being there and representing, but we really should be thanking them for fostering such an amazing environment and staying 'Boston strong' in spite of all that has happened."

## JBSA Loan Locker aids military community during transition, temporary needs

By Airman 1st Class Alexandria Slade

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

Open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Loan Locker at the Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Military and Family Readiness Center provides a variety of household items to military members in the midst of a transition between duty stations or in a temporary situation during which they need additional household items or basic furnishings.

"The loan locker is basically a house-

hold items checkout," Savannah Lohn, JBSA-Randolph MFRC community readiness consultant, said. "We have everything from microwaves and vacuums to futon mats and high chairs."

Conditions of use for items from the Loan Locker depend on the status of the individual in need and the item itself, Lohn said.

Permanent change of station or TDY members have priority and can reserve materials for up to 30-day periods, while houseguests are limited to approximately a week.

Though materials may become limited during the usual PCS season, from May to September, Lohn said the JBSA-Randolph Loan Locker "typically doesn't run out of items" due to the size of its inventory.

"Many Military & Family Readiness Centers have loan lockers," she said, "but JBSA-Randolph hosts the main Loan Locker for JBSA."

While addressed in the newcomer's brief and used primarily by incoming and outgoing military families, the loan locker does receive some extra attention during the holidays.

During the holiday season, there is an increased use of goods from the Loan Locker by local individuals with family and friends visiting, Lohn said.

"The Loan Locker is a great support tool for people to be able to come and get needed household items," she said. "It saves people a lot of money to not have to run to the Exchange to get those items only to have two of each when their goods arrive."

For more information, call the JBSA-Randolph MFRC at 652-5321.

