

Southern Flyer

908th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, Maxwell AFB, Ala., Vol. 45, Issue 6, June 2008

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Changing of the Guard

Reins of command change
hands - Pg 4

In the thick of it

Command post is eye, eyes of
the wing - Pgs 6-7

Wing snapshots

Take a look at scenes from
around the wing - Pgs 12-13

Regular Features

Commentary	02
Upcoming Events	04
UTA Training Schedule	15

Taking Aim

Airmen undergo M9 training - Pgs 8-9



Departing commander lauds unit: '908th will hold his heart forever'

By Col. Michael J. Underkofler
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

For Mother's Day about 30 years ago, I bought my mom a sweatshirt which had printed on it, "A mother holds her child's hand for a short while, their hearts forever." My mom loved it, and wore it until it was threadbare and falling apart.

Ten years ago, I was first assigned to the 908th Airlift Wing. I loved my job, the mission, and the people I worked with.

One son was six months old when we moved here; the other was born in Montgomery. Alabama and the 908 AW went from just being an assignment to our home. Four years later, I was reassigned to the 403d Wing at Keesler AFB and it was tough to leave.

Then, two and one-half years ago



Colonel Underkofler

I was lucky enough to be reassigned back to the 908th as your commander. In my first Southern Flyer commentary, I wrote how thrilled I and my family were to return. I also said the heels of my sons had been figuratively stained by the Alabama red clay, and coming back here after Hurricane Katrina destroyed what they had known in Mississippi was restorative. The 908th and Alabama were the things they knew and loved.

On my first UTA as your commander, I was given three black wing T-shirts to wear with my uniforms and a new wing coin from one of our chiefs. Over time, as many of your squadrons minted coins, you generously shared them with me. I carry them in my pockets. Sometimes when I'm a little anxious or nervous I put my hand in my pocket and rub a unit coin with my thumb and index finger. Some of you know when I'm doing it and kindly give me a reassuring look to put me at ease. Yet still, I have completely rubbed off my initials on the engraved coin one unit gave me.

I am extremely proud to have served here in the 908th AW. I have been continually amazed by the successes and contributions of all of you. Your model of service to the nation is inspiring. I can't say "thank you" enough for what you have done and continue to do. You are unrivaled—truly unrivaled.

No matter where I may serve in the future, I will proudly continue to wear those three black 908th AW T-shirts until they are threadbare, and I will continue to always have at least one 908th AW unit coin in my pocket to rub when I am anxious and to draw strength from when I am tired.

By diploma, I may be a North Carolina "Tarheel", but like my sons, the Alabama red clay has also now stained my heels. I look forward to its restorative effects when I return to Sweet Home Alabama for reunions, retirements, and other special events. Just like the feeling captured on that old sweatshirt I gave my mother years ago, while I may have only served with you a short while, you will hold my heart forever.

'Lookout' provides haven for singles

By Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch
908th AW Chaplain's Office

We're privileged as Air Force reservists to be associated with Maxwell Air Force Base. As the leadership and intellectual center of the Air Force, the base has a rich

heritage and a very important ongoing mission as it trains the present and future leaders of our great service. Beyond that, as reservists we can enjoy the benefits that Maxwell offers our active duty wingmen.

The ancillary services at Maxwell

are outstanding! Whether the gym, the recreational areas at Lake Martin or down near Destin Beach, the bowling alley, the paintball field, or the chapel programs, all of them

Con't on Page 3



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Col. Michael J. Underkofler Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

Lt. Col. Jerry W. Lobb Chief, Public Affairs

Jeffery Melvin Deputy Chief/Editor

Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder Public Affairs Specialist

Cover photo:

Capt. Lisa Iverson, 908th AES, examines the slide release on a M9 pistol during the classroom portion of weapons training May 4. See Pages 8 and 9 for more photos from the M9 training session.

Southern Flyer

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New wing commander takes helm this month

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Col. Brett J. Clark assumes command of the 908th Airlift Wing from Col. Michael J. Underkofler during a ceremony June 7 at 10 a.m. in Squadron Officer College's Polifka Auditorium.

Colonel Clark isn't a stranger to the area or the C-130 airlift mission. He is familiar with Maxwell having attended Squadron Officers School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College here.

He takes the helm of the 908th on the heels of commanding Pope AFB, N.C.'s 440th Operations Group. After decades at Milwaukee, Wis.'s General Mitchell International Airport Air Reserve Station, the 440th relocated to Pope last June. The move occasioned the 440th's transition to reserve associate status – a unique program that pairs a Reserve unit with an active-duty unit to share a single set of aircraft to maximize mission requirements and yield cost savings. As commander of the 440th OG, the colonel oversaw operation of two C-130 airlift and two aeromedical evacuation squadrons (one Reserve and one active associate) as well as an operational support squadron.

"I'm looking forward to returning to Maxwell," said the incoming commander. "During my previous stays at Maxwell I was impressed by the community's support for the base and the military as a whole. Local chambers, churches, and people make even people here for very short periods as students, feel right at home. The 908th has a long-standing reputation as one of the best wings in Air Force Reserve Command. I am proud



Col. Brett Clark, new commander 908th AW

to become part of, and will strive to maintain, that proud tradition."

A command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours in C-130E, C-130H, C-130H2, C-130H3, MC-130E and MC-130P aircraft, Colonel Clark has flown or directed combat operations supporting several conflicts and contingencies, including Operations Desert Shield and Storm, Provide Promise, Southern Watch, Uphold Democracy, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

The colonel received his commission in 1983 as a distinguished graduate of the Texas Christian University ROTC program.

He served nearly seven years on active duty before entering the Air Force Reserve in 1990 as an Air Reserve Technician at the 440th Tactical Airlift Wing, General Mitchell IAARS, serving as chief of weapons and tactics and later as

chief of standardization and evaluation. He then served as chief of tactical aircraft operations training, 4th Air Force, McClellan AFB, Calif., followed by a stint as chief of C-130 operations training, 10th Air Force, Bergstrom AFB, Texas, before returning to the 440th AW as director of operations for the 95th Airlift Squadron.

Leaving Wisconsin, he then headed to Duke Field, Fla., where he served first as director of operations, 5th Special Operations Squadron, 919th Special Operations Wing and later as commander, 919th Operations Group, 919th SOW.

Colonel Clark served a short stint as commander, 94th Operations Group, 94th AW, Dobbins ARB, Ga., before returning to the 440th AW where he served until his selection to command the 908th AW. Interestingly enough, recent 908th AW commanders Cols. James Stewart and Heath Nuckolls also served as 94th OG commander.

Colonel Clark's many decorations include the Bronze Star Medal.

Departing commander, Col. Michael J. Underkofler will still be able to reach out and touch his former charges as he moves up to the 908th AW's parent command, 22nd Air Force, where he'll serve as chief of staff.

"I am extremely proud to have served here in the 908th AW. I have been continually amazed by the successes and contributions of all of you. Your model of service to the nation is inspiring. I can't say 'thank you' enough for what you have done and continue to do. You are unrivaled—truly unrivaled," Colonel Underkofler said, commenting on his 30-month tenure as 908th AW commander.

: Lookout

Con't from Page 2

are available for our relaxation and enrichment. If you haven't planned a family vacation, look into renting a cabin by the day or a week. The rates are very affordable, and the time away will revitalize you.

Reservists, as their schedule and supervisors permit, are able to attend any of the chapel services. Don't let being in uniform stop you—the congregation will be glad for your attendance, even if you have to slip in late or out a little early due to work.

Our chapel team conducts a general Protestant service at 9 a.m. in 25th Aerial Port Squadron classroom.

Here is the Maxwell AFB chapel schedule:

**Chapel 1 – Catholic Mass on Saturdays @ 5:30 p.m. and Sundays @ 9 a.m.
Traditional Protestant @ 10:45**

**Chapel 2 – Contemporary Service @ 10
Gospel Service @ 11:45**

Just recently I learned of another opportunity. The "Lookout" is a special place on Maxwell for single Airmen, especially junior enlisted, to hang out on weekends. Sponsored

by the base chapel and located in Building 18 on Maxwell Boulevard, the Lookout has a pool table, video game consoles, wi-fi internet access, and a large screen TV for watching movies (complete with a popcorn maker).

This Saturday night after the UTA is over, singles are invited to the Lookout for a get-together. Come meet other reserve singles, as well as some from the regular component. We might even put together a Halo tournament. Or see if you can hustle the chaplain at a game of pool! See you there!

General Stenner nominated to command AF Reserve

WASHINGTON – Maj. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr. has been nominated for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general with assignment as chief of Air Force Reserve, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Pentagon, and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates announced April 18 that the president had nominated General Stenner for the promotion and assignment.

The general will replace Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley as chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander. General Bradley will retire in June.

General Stenner currently serves as assistant deputy chief of staff, Strategic Plans and Programs at Headquarters Air Force. He assists in the development, integration, evaluation and analysis of the U.S. Air Force Future Years Defense Program that exceeds \$682 billion, as well as the Air Force long-range plan to support national security objectives and

military strategy.

From July 2003 to July 2006, General Stenner was the director of operations and then director of plans and programs at Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB.

His joint assignments include deputy director and director of strategy, policy and plans, and director of transformation, U.S. Southern Command, Miami.

During his career, General Stenner commanded the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., from December 1998 to May 2001, and the 442nd FW, Whiteman AFB, Mo., from August 1997 to December 1998. He also served as commander of four operations groups.

He was commissioned a second lieutenant upon completing Officer Training School in 1973. (Air Force Reserve Command News Service)



Maj. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.

Airmen cleared to use regular detergent on ABUs

- WASHINGTON (AFPN) – Airmen are now authorized to wash their Airmen Battle Uniforms in regular detergent, regardless if the detergent uses optical brighteners announced Air Force leaders here recently.

On March 25, the Army released a memorandum concluding that ABUs laundered with detergents containing optical brighteners do not pose a detection threat to the wearer in an operational environment. "After reviewing Army test results and conducting follow-on evaluations we have determined that

changes from laundering ABUs in detergents containing optical brighteners are negligible," said Lt. Col. Chuck Arnold, chief, recognition and uniforms branch, directorate of force development at the Pentagon.

While any detergent can be used to launder the uniform, fabric softeners or bleach should be avoided. The uniform should be tumble dried at the low heat setting, too.

The ABU, which replaces the temperate and hot-weather Battle Dress Uniform and the Desert Camouflage

Uniform, made its first appearance in late summer 2007 when it was issued to Airmen deploying to Iraq, Afghanistan and Southwest Asia. It was also issued in October to basic military trainees in the initial-issue clothing bag. It was authorized for wear by all Air Force personnel, including Reserve and National Guard, in November.

The ABU, which was fit-and-wear tested in 2004 and altered based on feedback, is designed to be a wash-and-wear uniform. Starching and hot pressing is still prohibited; these procedures deteriorate the fiber in the uniform.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June

6 — Wing Commander's Farewell Dinner, 5:30 p.m., Richey Center, Bldg. 1425,
7 — Wing Change of Command, 10 a.m., Polifka Auditorium, Bldg. 1403

July

7-12 — League of United Latin American Citizens

National Convention & Exposition, Washington, DC
12 — 908th AW Chief's Group bowling tournament
14-18 — Federally Employed Women National Training Program – "Moving On – Moving Up," Anaheim, Calif. For more information about FEW, visit www.few.org
17-20 — Tuskegee Airmen Inc. 37th annual convention, Philadelphia, Pa.

Loadmaster reaches 10,000-hour milestone

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Dave Greer or "Junior" as he's affectionately called by squadron mates is the Energizer bunny of the C-130 loadmaster world – he keeps going and going and going.

In April he reached a milestone few can surpass; the 43-year-old reached 10,000 flying hours, that's akin to more than 416 days of his life in the air and that doesn't include pre- and post-flight activities.

He turns 44 in July and has no plans to join the ground bound, quipping that he'll retire "when I flunk my flight physical."

Loadmaster supervisor Chief Master Sgt. Mike Harper has known Greer since 1983, when the then-rookie loadmaster joined the 908th straight out of high school. Over the years he has served as Greer's trainer, mentor and friend; he's now his supervisor. He marvels at his fellow loadmaster's accomplishment.

"It's quite an achievement, especially for someone as young as he," said the chief.

The average number of flying hours among the unit's 15 loadmasters is 2,000. These figures are bolstered by Greer's incredible numbers and Harper's 8,500 flying hours. Some of his hours came from his active duty years, Harper said. Greer's, on the other hand, have all been onboard 908th C-130s.

Following the lead of his Chief Master Sergeant father who was head of the 908th's security police forces, Greer joined the unit and became a loadmaster so he could "get to meet people and go places."

And has he ever. By his own account he's flown missions to Europe, Central and South America, Afghanistan and Iraq. His service record reveals 127 TDYs, totaling nearly 1,400 days including 362 days overseas.

Both he and Chief Harper agree, the aviation career field

doesn't allow them to get old.

Innovations like joint precision airdrops keep them young and re-freshed. The career field, they said, is ever changing, and constantly evolving,

requiring them to learn new things.

Now that they're veterans charged with setting the example for younger loadmasters, "the young pups always keep the old dogs off the porch."



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Top Dog -- Loadmaster scheduler Master Sgt. David "Junior" Greer, 357th Airlift Squadron, a unit member since 1983 surpassed the 10,000 flying hours milestone on a April 22 flight.

In the thick of it

Command post serves as commander's eyes and ears, keeps track of wing activities

By Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder
908th AW Public Affairs

When folks hear command post, most may have an inkling what may take place there, but what probably first comes to mind is, 'What happens behind the closed door?' The command post is the focal point for all information across the wing pertaining to day-to-day operations.

"The primary thing I enjoy about working in the command post is being the agency that ties all the others together, especially during flying operations," said Tech. Sgt. Michael D. Freeman, command post controller. "We interface with maintenance, aerial port and the flying squadrons to ensure all pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight activities are accomplished."

"Communication comes through the command post," said command post controller Staff Sgt. Charles Jackson. "We're the interface for the wing commander in regard to the dissemination of information for the numbered Air Force or major command. Most of

what is communicated from them to the wing commander would usually come through the command post. We would in turn pass the communication to the wing commander along with the 'need-to-know' (classification), which is an essential part of the communication."

Though the peacetime mission is more flight following and reports, anything that occurs across the base, including weather warnings, injury of personnel and damage of aircraft gets sifted through the CP.

"The CP," said Sergeant Jackson, "is the focal point for incoming information and we decide who that information needs to flow to, for

instance, supporting agencies."

Tech. Sgt. John Geiger, another command post controller, described how having watched the weather report the previous day, he knew he would be busy the next day running weather checklists. "We spent most of the morning the previous day passing information to the maintenance folks, aircrew and the aerial port. We have to let them know if they should be alert for the danger of lightning while on the flight line."

Sergeant Geiger doesn't get bored with his job responsibilities saying, "Now, it may seem redundant but when you look at the big picture of what the mission is; 'yes, its part of my job



Command post controllers Senior Airmen Sonya Wilson and John Sorenson labor at their work stations ensuring accurate



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

and timely communications to the squadrons.

to repetitively call folks with the same information, but could that call save someone's life? Perhaps, that person on the flight line didn't know there was lightning within five miles."

The CP also coordinates communication between maintenance and the aircrews.

"We're the middle-man between maintenance and the flyers," said Sergeant Jackson. "For example, maintenance will report the aircraft is ready for the aircrew to conduct their pre-flight and leave on their mission. When the plane comes back, the CP will contact the aerial port for the unloading of the aircraft, then

contact transportation for a vehicle to carry the aircraft's passengers."

Watching weather reports and getting computer updates are normal for them. "We have a checklist we go through identifying people who are called and updated on the current situation," said Sergeant Geiger. "We're constantly on the phone."

Command post personnel also conduct what they refer to as Flight Following. "Flight Following," said Sergeant Jackson, "includes making certain there's a passenger manifest and helping ensure planes get off the ground on-time. It's also checking to be sure everything is okay in-flight. If there is an in-flight emergency; for instance a mechanical error, CP would communicate that to the Flight-line along with the commanders, so they'd be on the alert while aware of the situation. Though it may be a small incident to us, it may affect the Air Force as a whole."

Communicating the message to the wing can be a large part of Flight Following. "We keep the wing commander and the safety folks notified what's going on and what conditions we're under all the time," explained Sergeant Geiger.

"The command post is the channel between higher headquarters and the unit," said Sergeant Freeman. "Anytime a report needs to be sent up or information comes

down, we are responsible for the prompt and correct response. The command post ensures upper level wing leadership is 'kept in the loop' and well informed."

"We try to keep everyone on base informed, whether it is an emergency, a criminal act on base like a store robbery, or a change of defense condition status," said Sergeant Jackson. "We have to communicate that information to all of our supporting units."

Sergeant Geiger added, "We're the interface for the wing commander. The wing commander approves everything we send out of here. We refer to a template

and determine; 'Okay, where do we need to send this report to? What's the impact? Who has the need to know?' We make the phone calls and follow up with written reports. We maintain reliability between everyone by ensuring everyone knows what's going on at the same time."

Working in the command post can be an educational experience according to Sergeant Jackson. "Being a command post controller is an interesting job and a unique opportunity which can open up your eyes to all the different jobs across the air wing."

With the battle staff meeting at the command post, working in the CP presents a leadership perspective. Most people don't have a chance to see the challenges that are presented to our leadership, the sergeant said.

The command post uses checklists to ensure accurate and expeditious reporting of pertinent information so members know what's going on at all times.

The journey to becoming a command post controller begins at Keesler AFB near Biloxi, Miss. The six-week technical school includes training in radio etiquette and checklist discipline.

"Then basically, the remainder of the training is OJT, hands-on sitting at the consoles, a lot of time in the books, studying the checklists and working with the person certified as a trainer in flight following, report certification and emergency action certification," said Sergeant Jackson.

"The CP has 10 enlisted and 4 officers who work well together as a team creating training scenarios that we use to simulate actual events controllers might face while deployed," said command post chief Lt. Col. Nancy R. Stephenson. "Each controller has a part in conducting training each month."

"A CP controller can be a very exciting job at times. It is beneficial in that some civilian companies need folks with security clearances, CP controllers are required to maintain Top Secret clearances," said Sergeant Jackson.

Command post controllers are given responsibility fast.

Lt. Col. Stephenson said, "I believe by putting a controller in charge of a process they will learn more and gain confidence as a controller."

Sergeant Geiger concluded with his thoughts on the command post, "if you're looking for something where you will be actively involved in whatever is going on across the wing, this is the place to be."

The CP is looking for a sharp Airman who would like to cross-train to the 1C3 career field. If interested, contact Senior Master Sgt. James Theusch, CP Superintendent, at 953-2717 for more information.

Taking Aim

With the advent of expeditionary aerospace forces, weapons qualification is no longer the purview of a small segment of the force. Today, Airmen from all specialties need to be weapons qualified as evidenced by this M9 training class last month made up primarily of medical and support staff personnel.

Right, Master Sgt. David McCaughtry, 908th SFS' NCOIC of combat arms, points out areas on the slide where cracks might develop.



Photos by Jeff Melvin



Providing a little comic relief, Maj. Robert Moody, SFS' NCOIC of combat arms.



Following instructions for inspection and disassembly, class attendees look through the barrel of the rifle.

Feature



908th AES, asks for and receives 'increased firepower.'



908th AES' Staff Sgt. Melinda Ford gives classmate and co-worker, Master Sgt. Denise Thrailkill, some pointers on proper grip.



el of the M9 pistols.



Pointing out things the Airmen should look for during an inspection, Sergeant McCaughtry shows the group damage on a receiver.

Wing says thanks to area clergy

Nearly 20 members of the clergy across the River Region attended "Clergy Day" May 2, an event organized by the 908th AW to thank churches for their support of unit members.

The group comprised representatives from multiple denominations. Following lunch at the base dining facility, the clergy received briefings about the 908th AW mission and the military chaplaincy program. A part failure forced cancellation of a planned C-130 orientation flight over the local area; however, the guests were treated to an extended walk-through of a unit C-130 and got a chance to ask questions of the aircrew.

The event ended with a holocaust remembrance ceremony at the base chapel with guest honor, holocaust survivor Max Steinmetz. 908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler and the wing chaplain staff hosted the event with assistance from the 42nd Air Base Wing Chaplain's Office.

Right, Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch, 908th AW Chaplain's Office, explains the days sequence of events.



Photos by Jeff Melvin



Revs. Brian and



Loadmaster Senior Master Sgt. Steve Kramer gives the group a safety briefing before heading out to the flightline for the planned orientation flight.



C-130 pilot Capt. Jeff Randall, 357th Airlift Squadron, answer questions while giving guests a



Stacy Hebert, Rick Mason and Bill Galahair (front row, from left) and the rest of the group chat with each other and 908th staff while waiting for briefings to begin.



closer look at the cockpit.



From left, holocaust survivor Max Steinmetz's grandson; David Berry, Jewish lay leader for the Maxwell-Gunter community; 908th AW Commander Col. Michael Underkofler; and Rabbi Elliott Stevens of Temple Beth Or in Montgomery light candles in remembrance of those who lost their lives during the holocaust, as the Rabbi reads a blessing.

Wing snapshots



Photo by Senior Airman

Above, deployed 25th Aerial Port Squadron commander Lt. Col. George Baird accepts the guidon from 506th Air Expeditionary Group commander Col. Richard Scobee symbolizing his acceptance of command for Kirkuk Region Air Base, Iraq's 506th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron during a change of command ceremony there May 12.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Right, Tech Sgt. Leonard Golembeski, 908th MXS electrical/environmental shop, signs out technical orders using the tool accountability system.

Feature



Photos by Master Sgt. Dale Canofari

Deployed 908th SFS members Senior Airman Anson Pryde, above, and Tech. Sgt. Kelly Beeler, below, stand post during a recent shift in one of the many guard towers at Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq. About 40 908th SFS Airmen are serving a six-month rotation with Kirkuk's 506th Expeditionary SFS, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Healthy Airmen

By Lt. Col. Carol L. Anders
Nurse practitioner, 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

What affects 26 million adults in America and is known in the medical community as the “Silent Killer?” Chronic kidney disease or CKD.

Across the nation CKD rates are on the rise, one in every 7-8 adults has the disease, up from one in 10. The increase is linked to a rise in obesity rates (1/3 of all adults), diabetes, high blood pressure and the aging of the Baby Boomer generation.

Alabama ranks fifth in the nation for CKD, which means that some 400,000 Alabamians have the disease: 6,000 of these are receiving life-sustaining dialysis treatments; 3,000 have received kidney transplantation and survived; and 2,000 more are waiting for kidney transplants. The average number of kidney organ transplants a year (all types) is 340. There are 100 dialysis units in Alabama; giving the state one of the country's highest five-year growth rates in the number of dialysis units.

The kidneys play a vital role in the body maintaining overall health. Kidneys filter 200 liters of blood each day to remove 2 liters of toxins, waste and water. They regulate the body's water balance and hydration. Regulating blood pressure by controlling fluid levels and making hormones that cause blood vessels to constrict are other functions of the kidneys. Similarly, kidneys support healthy bones and tissues by producing the active form of Vitamin D, produce the hormone that stimulates bone marrow to make red blood cells, keep minerals and electrolytes (sodium, potassium, etc.) in the blood in balance, regulate blood acid level, remove certain drugs from the blood and eliminate excess water-soluble vitamins.

There are virtually no signs or symptoms when these organs begin to fail until the CKD is advanced. Many doctors say that if you wait to have symptoms to be tested you have waited to long. Signs of advanced CKD include but are not limited to tiredness, difficulty concentrating, decreased appetite, painful urination (pass your water) and increased need to urinate, blood in the urine, foamy urine, in-

creased thirst and swelling of the face, hands abdomen, ankles or feet.

The population at risk for developing CKD includes, but is not limited to, people who have the following disease processes – diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and vascular disease and a family history of kidney disease. The risk also goes up after the age of 60. Other risk factors include obesity, autoimmune diseases, urinary tract infections, systemic infections, kidney loss, damage, injury or infection.

Health care problems that can occur with failure of the kidneys include anemia, bone disorders, malnutrition, loss of kidney function, heart and blood vessel disease and death.

The most essential tests for determining the presence of CKD are done on the urine and the blood. The urine test measures the rate of albumin (protein) to creatinine (normal waste product) in the urine. The blood test called a GFR (glomerular filtration rate) tells how well the kidneys filter creatinine out of the blood.

People that have any of the risk factors mentioned above should be tested. If the testing reveals indications of

CKD, then a repeat test is scheduled at least 3 months after the first positive test to confirm the diagnosis. Your doctor may order more testing of your GFR or schedule further testing. Your doctor will also review all medications you are currently taking to see if any are placing stress on your kidneys.

While CKD cannot be cured, early detection will allow more time for interventions that can slow the progression of the disease. Prevention is the best course. Preventative measures to keep your kidneys healthy include regular exercise, low-salt diet, maintaining ideal body weight, monitoring blood pressure and cholesterol levels and keeping them within normal or near normal range, stop smoking, drink alcohol only in moderation, avoid NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen [Aleve]), and getting an annual physical exam.

To learn more about CKD risk factors, prevention and treatment go to the web site www.kidney.org.

(Source for this article was Teri Greene's article in March 18, 2008 edition of the Montgomery Advertiser)

Infection control item of interest for desert deployers -- beware of sand flies

By Maj. Donna Roberts
Infection control officer, 908th ASTS

Leishmaniasis (pronounced “leesh man i ah sis”) is a disease caused by a parasite and spread by the bite of infected sand flies.

There are several different forms. Most common is the skin form (cutaneous leishmaniasis), which causes scarring skin sores. The internal form (visceral leishmaniasis) affects internal organs and is the most serious form. Leishmaniasis exists in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and other places in the Middle East and poses a health threat to service members stationed there. Sand fly season in Iraq runs from April through November and peaks in September or October. While effective treatment is available, prevention remains the best option. Leishmaniasis is not the same disease as Sand fly fever that is also carried by sand flies.

The signs and symptoms are skin sores resembling a tiny volcano, with a raised edge and central crater. The sores do not respond to antibiotic creams or ointments. They may or may not be painful. People with the internal form have a long-term fever, weight loss, and an enlarged spleen or liver.

Leishmaniasis is spread by the bite of an infected sand fly that has been feeding on infected animals. The flies are most active from dusk to dawn. It may take several weeks for the sores to appear. The sores may heal on their own; but often leave ugly scars. A medication called AmBisome is prescribed to treat the internal form.

The best way to prevent leishmaniasis is to remain in air conditioned or screened tents from dusk to dawn when possible. Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, and socks when going out. Liberally apply insect repellent with 33 percent DEET. Treat clothing with permethrin. Keep animals and rodents away from sleeping areas.

For more information, check the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/leishmania>

Take Note

People Are Counting On YOU!
The 101 Critical Days of Summer

• Occupational mishaps, sports and recreation injuries, car crashes, and motorcycle wrecks account for most lost workdays.

Produced by HQ AFSC Media Branch
<http://708.afsc.af.mil/AFSC/center/graphics/101>

Promotions

Congratulations to the following people promoted to the grades indicated:

....to Senior Master Sgt.
Stephen Kramer, 357th AS

....to Master Sgt.
Teresa Lapcheske, MXS

....to Tech. Sgt.
Joseph Buettner, MXS
Brandon Means, 25th APS
Christopher Sneed, 357th AS
Ronnie Warner, LRS

....to Staff Sgt.
Jason Danley, 25th APS
Monica Lorenzo, SVF
Hollis Verneti, SFS
Decica Williamson, ASTS

....to Senior Airman
Joshua Fleming, 25th APS
Taylor Ford, AMXS
Derek Hollingsworth, MXS
Shiletha Myles, ASTS
Christopher Stewart, SFS

....to Airman 1st Class
Thomas Brackin, 357th AS

....to Airman
Anthony Green, MSS
Jada Young, ASTS

People are counting on you

The 101 Critical Days of Summer 2008 campaign began May 23 and ends at Sept. 2. During last year's campaign the Air Force experienced 19 fatalities compared to 17 during FY06. As in past years, motor vehicle fatalities accounted for most of our losses--eight to automobile (PMV4) mishaps and another six to motorcycle (PMV2) mishaps. Some of the factors in these mishaps included speeding and not using seatbelts or helmets. Alcohol was a factor in two motor vehicle mishaps. The Air Force has run the 101 Critical Days of Summer campaign annually since the late 1960's to counter the traditional increase in AF mishaps and fatalities that occur during the summer months. Campaign efforts attempt to increase personal awareness of risk and thereby reduce the number of summer mishaps and fatalities. Please let the 908th AW Safety Office know if they can be of any assistance. You can reach them at DSN 493-7871/7873 or CMCL (334) 953-7871/7873.

908th Airlift Wing
401 W. Maxwell Blvd.
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