

Contact

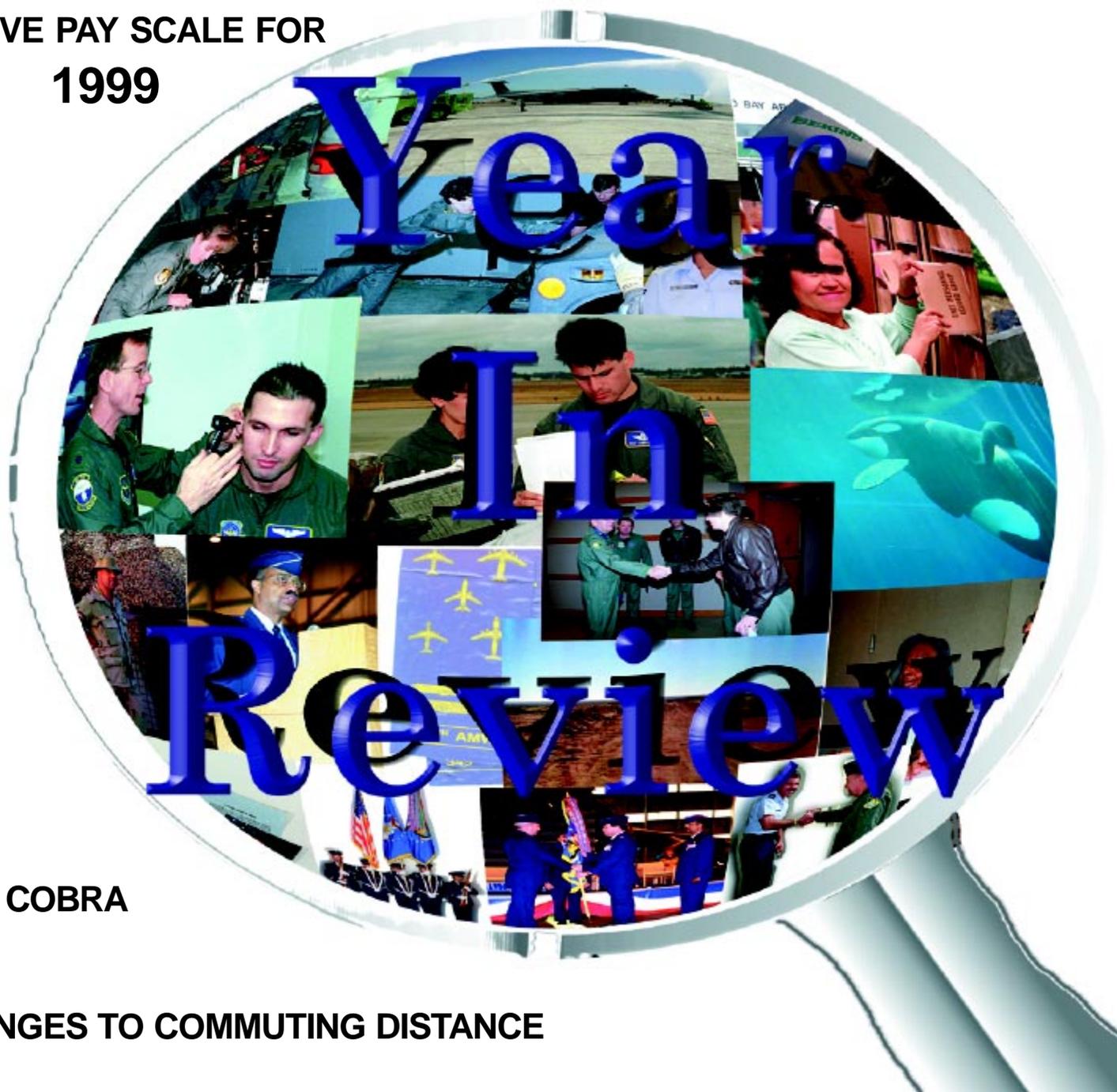
Magazine for and about members of the 349th Air Mobility Wing
Vol. 16, No.12

Year-End 1998

THE CONTACT TAKES A LOOK BACK

A PHOTO JOURNEY OF 1998

RESERVE PAY SCALE FOR
1999



IRON COBRA

CHANGES TO COMMUTING DISTANCE

Commander's

by Col. Gerald A. Black
Commander, 349th Air Mobility Wing

CORNER

This year, we're trying something new with this issue of Contact. This wing tends to cram so much into a single year that by December, we've forgotten what happened in January: remember the rains? Well, we blinked and now we're back where we started, yet richer by so many experiences, good and bad, that we need help to remember where we went and how much we accomplished.

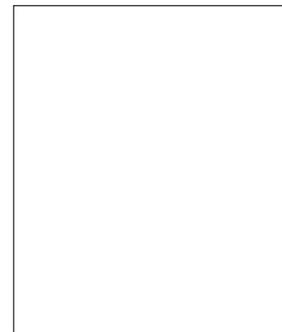
So we decided to recapture and condense 1998 with this special retrospective. Flip through the pages and see how much you've forgotten already. Operations Phoenix Scorpion I, II, and III, Southern Watch, and Keiko Lift, just to name a few. Humanitarian airlifts to Rosebud Reservation, Pine Ridge, S.D.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Nuevos Horizontes in Ecuador; and most recently the missions to Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. And our mortuary affairs personnel deployed to provide services to families of the Americans killed at the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya.

We've had new wing, group and squadron commanders across the board. Jet shop is back up and running; Rodeo!; services flight became Memorial Affairs Squadron; So much time, sweat and effort, and all reduced now to trophies (lots of 'em!) and memories.

We've also mourned the passing of several old friends, Senior Master Sgt. Soloman Bayoneta Sr., from the 349th headquarters customer service section and most recently Technical Sgt. Jerry Phipps, a familiar face in the 349th safety office, and a former member from the 708th Airlift Squadron, Terrie R. Stowers-Sevilla.

We have also welcomed many new faces. Lots of events, lots of people working hard to keep up with all of the events.

This is a dynamic wing; it never holds still. So we've captured a piece of time and preserved it on paper. Enjoy the memories, because we'll be creating many more come 1999. Then it's off to the millennium; and if last year was any example, 2000 will be here before we know it. So take a deep breath and get ready to go. After all, this wing drives best in high gear. ✈



Command Chief Master Sgt.

by Chief Master Sgt.
Anthony L. Maddux

CORNER

As I look back during the past year, I am very proud to be a member of this outstanding wing. I believe the key to the many successes enjoyed by our wing is the many years of experience from our multi-talented enlisted force. You can bet the Air Force will rely more on this strength as we face and accept bigger and more difficult assignments. Therefore, it will be the challenge of every enlisted person to be as prepared as they possibly can be, both professionally and technically, in order to be the very best wing in this total Air Force.

We must also continue to make the most efficient use of time and resources. Learn your job and do it better than anyone else does – consistently. If you're going to succeed in our Air Force, you'll have to be highly motivated, extremely determined, and never accept only satisfactory results from yourself. I believe that outstanding people will continue to produce outstanding results. I also firmly believe in empowerment. This means both the authority to do a job and the responsibility for doing it right belongs with those who do the work. Each stripe on our chevron is based on a demonstrated increase in skill, knowledge, experience and an expectation of quality work.

Air Force leadership continues to show its commitment to quality-of-life and career issues. The new 24-visit commis-

sary program, our continued efforts in managing our lodging needs and the impact on the commuting distance, the green ID card, the new enlisted aircrew grade structure and many more programs being developed are very important to our people.

These programs which affect our enlisted people, should always be given priority second only to the ability of our leaders to accomplish our many Air Force missions. We must keep our people informed of new policies that affect them; ensuring their living and working conditions are maintained at the highest levels possible; recognizing and rewarding outstanding performers; and providing the right tools, training and trust to do the job right the first time.

This next year will be challenging. Outstanding duty performance, a positive attitude and the flexibility to accept change will be the key attributes of those serving into the 21st century. If you hang in there, there is no doubt in my mind we'll have more opportunities and a much better Air Force. The world is changing. The threat to America is perceived differently than it was when many of us first enlisted. In the future, our enlisted force will pick up more responsibility. I believe with these challenges that lie ahead, we've got our work cut out for us, but I believe just as strongly that the 349th AMW enlisted force is up to any challenge. ✈

CONTACT

349th Air Mobility Wing
Office of Public Affairs
520 Waldron Street
Travis AFB, CA 94535-2171
Vol. 16, No. 12 Year-End 1998

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of "CONTACT" are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 349th AMW Public Affairs Office, Travis AFB, Calif. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

Office hours: Monday through Friday and UTAs,
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Office Phone: (707) 424-3936
Fax: (707) 424-1672

Commander:

Col. Gerald A. Black

Chief, Public Affairs:

Capt. Tania L. Daniels

Deputy Chief:

Mr. Ronald C. Lake

Public Affairs Assistant:

Staff Sgt. Patti Holloway

Public Affairs Officers:

Maj. (Sel.) Anne F. Macdonald

2nd Lt. Dawn J. Young

Public Affairs NCOIC:

Senior Master Sgt. Ronald C. Lake

CONTACT Staff Writers:

Technical Sgt. Marvin Meek

Staff Sgt. Shayne Sewell

Staff Sgt. Steven O. Ontiveros

Senior Airman Robin M. Jackson

Editor:

Staff Sgt. Shayne Sewell

WWW.TRAVIS.AF.MIL/PAGES/349PA

Missing your copy of the CONTACT magazine? We only mail out to the address on file with Personnel Systems. They get your address from your change of address forms. Check your orderly room or administration section to make sure you have the correct address on file.

**COVER GRAPHICS BY
STAFF SGT. STEVEN O.
ONTIVEROS**

Holiday Message from the Secretary of Defense

by William S. Cohen
Secretary of Defense

As we enter this joyous season and approach the end of 1998, it is fitting that we pause to reflect on our accomplishments.

For another year, we have maintained security in an unstable world. In operations at home and abroad, you have defended America's vital interests, transformed chaos into calm, and provided shelter, food and care for thousands in need.

Most important, by your very presence, you brought hope to those who had known only despair. These are not only great military achievements, they are great humanitarian accomplishments for which the entire nation can be proud.

Now, as we gather to enjoy the holidays, let us rejoice in the freedoms which your sacrifice, dedication and determination have made possible. But let us not forget those who are not here -- the soldier who stands watch on the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the sailor who scans the horizon in the Persian Gulf, the aviator who monitors the skies over Bosnia, the Marine who stands guard at an embassy in a faraway land, and the Coast Guardsman who patrols the waters off our own shores. Our thoughts, gratitude and prayers are with you.

May the spirit and peace of this holiday season be with you all and may God grant you health and happiness in the coming year. Happy Holidays! ✈



Changes to commuting distance

NOTE: The commuting distance information published in the November 1998 issue of Contact was incorrect. Please refer to the new supplement DFAS-DER 7010-3/TAFB1 dated November 1, 1998 on the Travis Intranet.

The Will Commute area of Travis AFB is defined by the following zip codes. All personnel who reside within the area defined by these zip codes shall be in Will Commute status for duty performed at Travis AFB, CA. For more information check out the Travis Intranet at <http://w3.travis.af.mil/pubs/publications/travis/Supplement/TAFBIDFAS-DER7010-3.DOC>

<u>City</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>
Acampo	95220	Elmira	95625	Oakland	94626	Sacramento	94244
Alamo	94507	Emeryville	94608	Oakland	94627	Sacramento	94245
Albany	94706	Emeryville	94662	Oakland	94643	Sacramento	94246
Antelope	95843	Esparto	95627	Oakland	94649	Sacramento	94247
Antioch	94509	Fair Oaks	95628	Oakland	94650	Sacramento	94248
Antioch	94531	Fairfield	94533	Oakland	94659	Sacramento	94249
Benicia	94510	Guinda	95637	Oakland	94660	Sacramento	94250
Berkeley	94701	Hercules	94547	Oakland	94661	Sacramento	94252
Berkeley	94702	Hood	95639	Oakland	94666	Sacramento	94253
Berkeley	94703	Isleton	95641	Oakley	94561	Sacramento	94254
Berkeley	94704	Knights Landing	95645	Oakville	94562	Sacramento	94256
Berkeley	94705	Knightsen	94548	Orinda	94563	Sacramento	94257
Berkeley	94707	Lafayette	94549	Petaluma	94952	Sacramento	94258
Berkeley	94708	Larkspur	94939	Petaluma	94953	Sacramento	94259
Berkeley	94709	Larkspur	94977	Petaluma	94954	Sacramento	94261
Berkeley	94710	Lodi	95240	Petaluma	94955	Sacramento	94262
Berkeley	94712	Lodi	95241	Petaluma	94975	Sacramento	94263
Berkeley	94720	Lodi	95242	Petaluma	94999	Sacramento	94267
Bethel Island	94511	Madison	95653	Piedmont	94620	Sacramento	94268
Birds Landing	94512	Mare Island	94992	Pinole	94564	Sacramento	94269
Boyes Hot Springs	95416	Martinez	94553	Pittsburg	94565	Sacramento	94271
Brentwood	94513	Mather Field	95655	Pleasant Hill	94523	Sacramento	94273
Brooks	95606	McClellan AFB	95652	Port Costa	94569	Sacramento	94274
Byron	94514	Moraga	94556	Rancho Cordova	95670	Sacramento	94277
Capay	95607	Moraga	94570	Rancho Cordova	95741	Sacramento	94278
Carmichael	95608	Moraga	94575	Rancho Cordova	95742	Sacramento	94279
Carmichael	95609	Napa	94558	Rancho Cordova	95743	Sacramento	94280
Citrus Heights	95610	Napa	94559	Richmond	94801	Sacramento	94282
Citrus Heights	95611	Napa	94581	Richmond	94802	Sacramento	94283
Concord	94518	North Highlands	95660	Richmond	94801	Sacramento	94284
Concord	94519	Novato	94945	Richmond	94805	Sacramento	94285
Concord	94520	Novato	94947	Richmond	94807	Sacramento	94286
Concord	94521	Novato	94948	Richmond	94808	Sacramento	94287
Concord	94522	Novato	94949	Richmond	94850	Sacramento	94288
Concord	94524	Novato	94998	Rio Linda	95673	Sacramento	94289
Concord	94527	Oakland	94601	Rio Vista	94571	Sacramento	94290
Concord	94529	Oakland	94602	Rodeo	94572	Sacramento	94291
Corte Madera	94925	Oakland	94603	Rutherford	94573	Sacramento	94293
Corte Madera	94976	Oakland	94604	Ryde	95680	Sacramento	94294
Courtland	95615	Oakland	94605	Sacramento	94203	Sacramento	94295
Crockett	94525	Oakland	94606	Sacramento	94204	Sacramento	94296
Danville	94506	Oakland	94607	Sacramento	94205	Sacramento	94297
Danville	94526	Oakland	94609	Sacramento	94206	Sacramento	94298
Davis	95616	Oakland	94610	Sacramento	94207	Sacramento	94299
Davis	95617	Oakland	94611	Sacramento	94208	Sacramento	95812
Diablo	94528	Oakland	94612	Sacramento	94209	Sacramento	95813
Dixon	95620	Oakland	94613	Sacramento	94211	Sacramento	95814
Dublin	94568	Oakland	94614	Sacramento	94229	Sacramento	95815
Dunnigan	95937	Oakland	94615	Sacramento	94230	Sacramento	95816
El Cerrito	94530	Oakland	94616	Sacramento	94232	Sacramento	95817
El Macero	95618	Oakland	94617	Sacramento	94234	Sacramento	95818
El Sobrante	94803	Oakland	94618	Sacramento	94235	Sacramento	95819
El Sobrante	94820	Oakland	94619	Sacramento	94236	Sacramento	95820
El Verano	95433	Oakland	94621	Sacramento	94237	Sacramento	95821
Elk Grove	95624	Oakland	94623	Sacramento	94239	Sacramento	95822
Elk Grove	95758	Oakland	94624	Sacramento	94240	Sacramento	95823
Elk Grove	95759	Oakland	94625	Sacramento	94243	Sacramento	95824
				Sacramento	94244	Sacramento	95825
				Sacramento	94245	Sacramento	95826
				Sacramento	94246	Sacramento	95827
				Sacramento	94247	Sacramento	95828
				Sacramento	94248	Sacramento	95829
				Sacramento	94249	Sacramento	95830
				Sacramento	94250	Sacramento	95831
				Sacramento	94252	Sacramento	95832
				Sacramento	94253	Sacramento	95833
				Sacramento	94254	Sacramento	95834
				Sacramento	94256	Sacramento	95835
				Sacramento	94257	Sacramento	95836
				Sacramento	94258	Sacramento	95837
				Sacramento	94259	Sacramento	95838
				Sacramento	94261	Sacramento	95839
				Sacramento	94262	Sacramento	95840
				Sacramento	94263	Sacramento	95841
				Sacramento	94267	Sacramento	95842
				Sacramento	94268	Sacramento	95851
				Sacramento	94269	Sacramento	95852
				Sacramento	94271	Sacramento	95853
				Sacramento	94273	Sacramento	95857
				Sacramento	94274	Sacramento	95860
				Sacramento	94277	Sacramento	95866
				Sacramento	94278	Sacramento	95867
				Sacramento	94279	Sacramento	95873
				Sacramento	94280	Sacramento	95887
				Sacramento	94282	Sacramento	95894
				Sacramento	94283	Sacramento	95899
				Sacramento	94284	San Pablo	94806
				Sacramento	94285	San Quentin	94964
				Sacramento	94286	San Quentin	94974
				Sacramento	94287	San Rafael	94901
				Sacramento	94288	San Rafael	94903
				Sacramento	94289	San Rafael	94912
				Sacramento	94290	San Rafael	94913
				Sacramento	94291	San Rafael	94915
				Sacramento	94293	San Ramon	94583
				Sacramento	94294	Sonoma	95476
				Sacramento	94295	Suisun City	94585
				Sacramento	94296	Thornton	95686
				Sacramento	94297	Travis AFB	94535
				Sacramento	94298	Vacaville	95687
				Sacramento	94299	Vacaville	95688
				Sacramento	95812	Vacaville	95696
				Sacramento	95813	Vallejo	94589
				Sacramento	95814	Vallejo	94590
				Sacramento	95815	Vallejo	94591
				Sacramento	95816	Vallejo	94592
				Sacramento	95817	Victor	95253
				Sacramento	95818	Vineburg	95487
				Sacramento	95818	Walnut Creek	94595
				Sacramento	95819	Walnut Creek	94596
				Sacramento	95820	Walnut Creek	94597
				Sacramento	95821	Walnut Creek	94598
				Sacramento	95822	Walnut Grove	95690
				Sacramento	95822	West Sacramento	95605
				Sacramento	95823	West Sacramento	95691
				Sacramento	95823	West Sacramento	95798
				Sacramento	95824	West Sacramento	95799
				Sacramento	95825	Winters	95694
				Sacramento	95826	Woodbridge	95258
				Sacramento	95827	Woodland	95695
				Sacramento	95827	Woodland	95776
				Sacramento	95828	Yolo	95697
				Sacramento	95829	Yountville	94599
				Sacramento	95830	Zamora	95698

Volunteer C-5 crew spells relief

Story and photos

by Senior Master Sgt. Ronald C. Lake

An old television commercial once asked the question “How do you spell relief?” One answer could be A-I-R F-O-R-C-E R-E-S-E-R-V-E.

A volunteer crew from the 301st Airlift Squadron flew 172,000 pounds of relief supplies to Soto Cano Air Force Base, near Comayaga, Honduras, on a C-5 humanitarian mission to help ease the pain Hurricane Mitch ravaged on the Central American nation.

“We can deliver bombs and such, but it always gives us a good feeling to participate in these kinds of missions,” one aircrewman said with a self-satisfied smile on his face.

The seven-hour direct flight from Travis left early Sunday morning before Thanksgiving and off-loaded the precious cargo to the welcome hands of Honduran volunteers who will distribute the supplies throughout the country.

The cargo included: 50,000 pounds of canned tomato products on 20 pallets; 46,000 pounds of rice on 20 pallets; 38,000 pounds of drinking water on 20 pallets; 15,000 pounds of other assorted canned foods on 10 pallets; 15,000 pounds of baled clothing on 10 pallets; and 8,000 pounds of non-canned foods on 10 pallets.

The aircrew included Maj. Chris Pollastrini, pilot; Capt. Vince Eckelkamp, aircraft commander; Capt. Paul Frydenlund, pilot; flight engineers Master Sgt. Dennis Clintsman, Master Sgt. Anthony DiGiacomo, Tech. Sgt. Scott Dillinger, Tech. Sgt. Steven Hoffman, Staff Sgt. Louis Long; loadmasters Master Sgt. Thomas Barstad, Master Sgt. David Cramer, Master Sgt. David Lafferty, and Staff Sgt. Jason Lee.

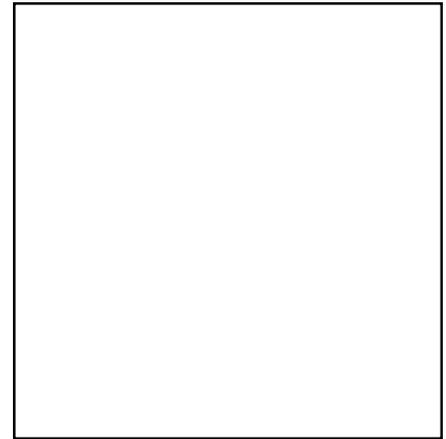
The relief supplies were delivered to Travis by agents of the California Emergency Foodlink, a California Department of Social Services effort to collect donated goods for distribution to Central America.

The entire effort was coordinated under the auspices of provisions of the Denton Amendment. Established in 1985, the Denton Amendment authorizes the Department of Defense to use Air Mobility Command and Air Force Reserve Command training missions to transport such humanitarian cargo on a space-available basis at no cost to the donors. The amendment is the brainchild of former U.S. Senator Jeremiah Denton, who also was a prisoner-of-war during the Vietnam War.

“These missions couldn’t happen without the Denton Amendment and the (airlift) system that is in place,” said Joe Luce, chairman of the board of Worldwide Gospel Mission, a nonprofit organization based in Marion, Ind., whose second-largest mission is in Honduras.

The 349th Air Mobility wing’s two C-5 units, the 301st and 312th Airlift Squadrons, have flown four other similar missions since the Thanksgiving flight, one each on Nov. 28 to El

Salvador and Managua, Nicaragua; Nov. 29 to El Salvador and Guatemala City; Nov. 30 to Honduras and Howard AFB, Panama; and Dec. 1 to Guatemala and El Salvador. And, more missions are expected to



C-5 crew unloads donated supplies for hurricane relief mission to Honduras.



Volunteers create line to unload donated items to be flown to Honduras.

be scheduled in the coming weeks and months.

During the first month of the Denton Amendment-Hurricane Mitch relief response, AFRC crews airlifted more than six million tons of cargo to locations throughout Central America. “The Air Force Reserve should get nationwide recognition for all they have done,” said Heidi Meyer, director of Joint Relief International-Denton Operations, at Pope AFB, N.C. “The American people need to know what they have done,” she said, adding, “They have been absolutely amazing and are the real heroes of this operation.” ✈





Iron Cobra good experience for 349th SFS

Story by Staff Sgt. Shayne Sewell

Photos by Master Sgt. Juan Gomez, 349th SFS

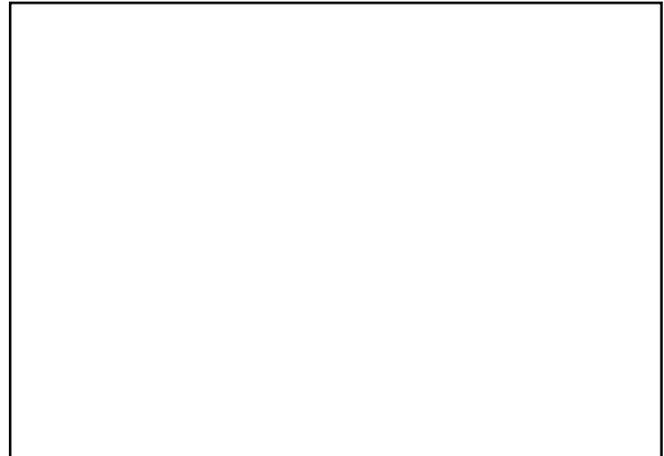
Eight members from the 349th Security Forces Squadron deployed to Egypt to provide real-world security for U.S. forces and aircraft taking part in Exercise Iron Cobra '99, a joint chiefs of staff training exercise, from Oct 22. to Nov. 17. The eighth in the Iron Cobra series, this is an air mobility field training exercise designed to enhance Egyptian defense capabilities, strengthen military-to-military relationships, and enhance interoperability and battle staff proficiency between U.S. and Egyptian armed forces.

The exercise involved approximately 400 U.S. Air Force Reserve and active-duty personnel to include eight 349th SFS members: Master Sgt. Brian D. Smith, Master Sgt. Juan M. Gomez, Technical Sgt. Stanley A. Mozak, Staff Sgt. Neil J. Cervenka, Senior Airman Christopher Gillespie, Senior Airman Mark A. Brown, Senior Airman Zen A. Lovett, and Senior Airman Angela M. Menor.

When Reserve officials initially received the request to provide security, they were told 108 people would be needed to guard three locations. "After we conducted a site survey, we determined that 71 people were needed to secure two locations," said Senior Master Sgt. Rick Trull, chief of reserve security force contingency plans and operations branch, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command and organizer of this deployment. "We had hoped to provide all the security, but the reserve does not have a K-9 unit."

The deployment provides an opportunity for U.S. forces to exercise with Egyptian armed forces in Egypt while demonstrating U.S. capability and commitment to the region. The 30-day tour, for the Air Force Reserve, is the largest security forces deployment in support of an exercise, stated command officials.

"Providing security for Iron Cobra is an ideal mission for our reservists," said Col. Mike Mungavin, director of



Cairo, Egypt

security forces, Headquarters AFRC. "Most reservists can only be away from their civilian jobs for a limited amount of time, so this 30-day deployment was well-suited for them. Our people also had the opportunity to fill some key leadership roles in this mission."

The members from the 349th SFS were the first to arrive to the remote base in Cairo, Egypt, to provide real-world security and the last ones to leave, according to Master Sgt. Brian D. Smith, NCOIC, force protection, 349th SFS. "Our main mission was to provide physical security to the people and aircraft at Cairo West and Enshas Air Bases."

"I enjoyed being able to operate in a constantly fluid environment in a foreign land and working together as a team," said Senior Airman Gillespie, 349th SFS. "It was a really positive experience for me," said Senior Airman Zen A. Lovett, 349th SFS. "I learned quite a bit of Arabic. The Egyptian soldiers took time to teach us the language while we worked together at the entry control points. They had us come back the next day and show them what we learned the day before. I also enjoyed seeing how different cultures live. It was common to see horses and donkeys alongside semi-trucks on the paved roads which quickly turned to cobblestone in some places," said Lovett.

"Whenever we had a problem, the Egyptians would help us out," said Senior Airman Angela M. Menor. "When we provided en route security to Enshas Air Base, there were times where I was the only female at the base. It took the Egyptians a while to adapt to working with me and Senior Airman Lovett because the Egyptian military does not have females, but they respected us when we held our ground. We had an excellent relationship with them."

"I was extremely proud with the way our security forces worked with the Egyptian security forces and intelligence. We worked hand-in-hand with them at the entry control points and we established a good working relationship with them. Overall, it was a very positive experience," said Smith. ✈

Activation of new squadron expands 349th mission

by Capt. Kevin N. Berger, 349th MAS
(with contributions from AFRC News Service)

The 349th Air Mobility Wing gained a new squadron and an expanded mission as the 349th Memorial Affairs Squadron was officially activated in a ceremony here on December 5.

This activation does not signal a new mission that the 349th AMW is taking on but rather recognition for a job reservists have been performing since before the Gulf War.

The mission of the newly formed 349th MAS is very unique. Only two squadrons in the Air Force (including the 512th MAS at Dover AFB, Del., slated to be activated Jan. 9, 1999) have this mission and they are both in Air Force Reserve Command. "Our primary responsibility is to provide support in the port mortuaries both here at Travis and at Dover AFB," said Maj. Michael McCully, commander of the 349th MAS.

The men and women of the 349th MAS are no strangers to this mission. Five members deployed to Dover's port mortuary in August to assist with processing the remains of the U.S. citizens killed in the U.S. Embassy bombing disaster in Nairobi, Kenya. Only weeks later, four more members deployed to the same location in response to the crash of two Blackhawk helicopters in Nevada.

"For many of these people, the embassy bombing and helicopter mishap were their first exposure to mass casualty," said Marilyn Sanders, chief of the plans and force

photo by Senior Airman Robin Jackson



Staff Sgt. Susan K. Hilbelink, billeting customer service representative, 349th MAS, passes a room key to Senior Airman Ines L. Leong, also of the 349th MAS.

“Mortuary affairs has always been a part of the Services flight mission, along with food service, lodging, fitness and recreation.”

**- Maj. Michael McCully
Commander, 349th MAS**

management division in AFRC's directorate of services at Robins AFB. "Their immediate response and willingness to assist was highly commendable," she said.

"The squadron was developed because there was a need to identify those dedicated to port mortuary," said Capt. Kevin Berger, services officer, 349th MAS. "Our responsibility

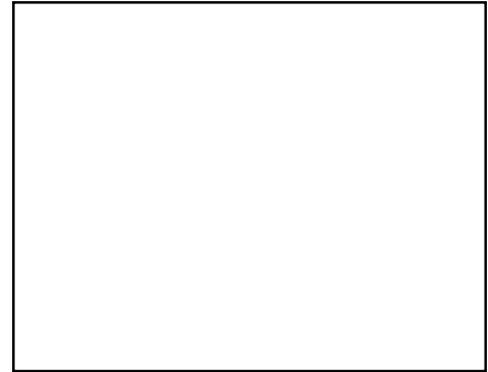
is to help provide closure for the families of the military member that died." "Our people have a very difficult job and they do it with the highest level of professionalism," McCully said. "Mortuary affairs has always been a part of the Services flight mission, along with food service, lodging, fitness and recreation. While the 349th MAS will still train to maintain proficiency in these other areas," explained

McCully, "The training is now refocused to ensure that our people are ready to perform our new primary mission of mortuary support."

In addition to its teams at Travis and Dover, the Reserve has 20-person teams assigned to eight units throughout the United States. Twenty Reserve individual mobilization augmentees also support the port mortuaries at Travis and Dover. The 293 reservists comprise 75 percent of the total force designated to provide port mortuary support.

"Our folks have been very involved in port mortuary operations for some time now," added Sanders. "Where our units are a tenant on an active-duty base, the teams have been considered a function in the Mission Support Squadron. Where we are the host, the teams belong to services squadrons or flights. We've been working on obtaining separate squadron/flight status for the teams for about two years but only recently gained squadron status for the Travis and Dover teams because of their size."

The Reserve's other port mortuary teams are at Charleston AFB, S.C.; McGuire AFB, N.J.; Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn.; Niagara Falls IAP ARS, N.Y.; and Pittsburgh IAP ARS, Pa. ✈



Senior Airman Jackie A. Aquino, 349th MAS, prepares a lunch menu item for the Sierra Dining Facility.

photo by Senior Airman Robin Jackson

Logistics Group wins prestigious Daedalian maintenance award

The efforts of more than 3,000 maintainers at Travis AFB were recognized recently with the announcement that the 349th and 60th Logistics Groups had been awarded the prestigious Clements McMullen Memorial Daedalian Weapon System Maintenance Trophy at the Air Mobility Command level.

This award recognizes the unit that has best met the objective of providing safe, serviceable, and available equipment for sustained use in peacetime and wartime. With this award, it has been acknowledged that no one does a better job of maintaining the Air Force's airlift and tanker aircraft than the combined, active duty and Reserve logistics team at Travis.

This "Travis Team" was tested many times during the award time frame of October 1, 1997 to September 30, 1998. The results of every operation that Travis aircraft were involved in depended upon the skills of these technicians including Phoenix Scorpion I and II, the swift U.S. response to Iraq's non-compliance with United Nations weapons inspections, and Southern Watch, the ongoing coalition patrols of the Persian Gulf no-fly zone. This high operational tempo and the outstanding efforts of maintainers prompted General Walter Kross, (former) Commander of Air Mobility Command, to grant an unprecedented "full Operational Readiness Inspection credit" to the proven warriors of Travis.

In addition to projecting force, Travis maintainers continued the AMC tradition of utilizing ready forces for humanitarian assistance throughout the nation and around the world. The logistics team quickly generated missions to move food, water, equipment, and personnel to Guam after super typhoon Paka devastated the island. On the July 4th weekend, the Travis maintainers spooled up operations to launch missions moving fire fighting equipment and personnel to Florida to stop the state's raging wildfires from spreading out of control.

While meeting these diverse mission taskings, the synergy of Reserve, active duty, civilian and contractor maintainers continued to constantly improve the base. 1998 saw the resurrection of 3-level engine repair at Travis and in just seven months, the engine shop was operational and producing enough engines to eliminate a chronic shortage of C-5 spares that had impacted the nation's ability to deploy and sustain its forces for over five years.

Additionally, over \$2.3 million in valuable defense dollars were saved through implementation of innovative ideas improving the availability of limited airlift and air refueling aircraft enhancing the nation's ability to go to war through constant readiness.



C-5 maintenance team members (from left) Tech. Sgts. Ernie Burd, Joe Halsey, and Kirk Stewart, carry a power cable on the McChord C-5 ramp. Maintenance team members worked many extra hours during AMC Airlift Rodeo '98 keeping their aircraft in perfect condition. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Shayne Sewell)

Validation of Travis maintenance capabilities came at the 1998 international AMC Airlift Rodeo competition. By the end of the intense competition, the 349th maintenance teams had won Best Wing and Best Maintenance Team in both the C-5 and KC-10 categories.

"I couldn't be more proud of the outstanding people in the 349th Logistics Group," said 349th LG commander, Col. William Rollin. "Each and every one contributed to this most prestigious maintenance award. It was a joint 349th/60th LG team accomplishment. We had great contributions from our Reserve Rodeo Teams, support of Southwest Asia, build-up of TF-39 engines, Pacific enroute support and the synergy of the five 349th LG squadrons that helped carry the award."

"This has been an awesome year for all of logistics," said 749th Aircraft Generation Squadron commander, Maj. John Korach. "Support of the Southern Watch mission demonstrates the seamless active duty/Reserve partnership while the success of the 349th Rodeo teams demonstrates how we stand above the rest."

"Terrific!" exclaimed Chief Master Sgt. Robert Waggonner, 349th AGS, upon hearing the news about the Daedalian award. "It is great to see the hard work and dedication of the Travis Team get recognized with this honor. Daily, they step up to the task of safely producing mission capable aircraft with fewer personnel and resources. This award is well deserved and culminated an outstanding year!" Those squadrons that contributed to this award include the 349th and 749th AGS, 349th Component Repair Squadron, 349th Equipment Maintenance Squadron and the 349th Logistics Support Squadron. ➔



AFRC SELECTS NEW COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT

**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE,
Ga.** - When Chief Master Sgt. Billy G.

Blackburn becomes Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant Jan. 1, he will draw on more than 24 years experience in the Air Force. He's been a reservist for 13 years, seven as a first sergeant.

The first sergeant of AFRC Recruiting Squadron replaces Chief Master Sgt. Carol Smits, who will remain at the headquarters as chief of international programs in the special projects division.

Maj. Gen. James Sherrard, chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, announced Blackburn's selection Dec. 11.

"Chief Blackburn was one of eight outstanding candidates who applied for consideration to be the command chief master sergeant," Sherrard said. "He brings a broad breath of experience, and I know he will provide the same quality assistance and serve as a key adviser to our command leadership as did Command Chief Master Sgt. Carol Smits. Chief Smits has done a superb job representing the interests of the enlisted women and men of Air Force Reserve Command."

During his three-year tour of duty, the new CCM will work for Sherrard, serving as a liaison between the commander, key staff members and the enlisted force.

The command's highest-ranking enlisted person communicates with the commander on problems, concerns, morale and attitudes of the enlisted force, and in turn ensures the commander's policies are known and understood by enlisted people.

Blackburn said he applied for the active-duty tour because he wanted the opportunity to represent the command's enlisted people to Sherrard and Maj. Gen. David R. Smith, AFRC vice commander. Likewise, he wants to be the representative for these "great leaders" to the enlisted force.

"We have the greatest Air Force Reserve ever," Blackburn said. "Our people are well-trained and capable of performing the mission. Coming from recruiting, I view retention as my greatest challenge, keeping those talented folks in the command.

"We also have some quality of life issues to tackle, and I will be relying on the first sergeants I've met and worked with over the years to provide me valuable information about those issues and other concerns." (AFRC News Service)



VA TOUGHENS LOAN REFINANCING RULES

By Staff Sgt. Michael Wetzel
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — New regulations are due by the end of the year to curtail money lenders preying on veterans seeking to refinance their VA home loans.

Homeowners, including many service members and veterans, are flocking to take advantage of the lowest interest rates in 30 years, said Keith Pedigo, director of the VA Loan Guarantee Service here. Some lenders, however, are using aggressive and unfair marketing practices to turn a deal for the veterans into a deal for themselves.

He said the new rules require every interest rate reduction refinancing loan to show a decrease in the principal and interest payment. Plus, he said, if payments on the current loan are more than 30 days past due, the VA must approve the refinance.

"Currently, we do not require an income verification, a credit report or an appraisal to make these kinds of loans, Pedigo said. "Under the new rules, we would require that the loan be submitted to the VA and we would subject that loan to a credit and income review before deciding whether or not to approve it." Issues include whether the borrower is a satisfactory credit risk and has sufficient income to make the mortgage payments.

The new, tougher rules stem from practices VA officials were seeing in the refinancing market. "We detected that there were some lenders who were allowing veterans and active duty members to skip payments on their current VA loans and to roll those delinquent payments into the new loan," Pedigo said. "The rollover increased the amount of the new loan, in some instances far above the balance of the old loan."

Some lenders even encouraged VA loan holders to spend the skipped mortgage payments on a car or a vacation, he said, and others slipped in excessive closing costs. In still other cases, he added, "The actual mortgage payment for these veterans was going up, even though the interest rate was going down."

Only a few of the more than 5,000 lenders who do business with the VA have been found using these marketing tactics, Pedigo pointed out. The vast majority do not, he stressed, but even then, VA loan holders should shop carefully.

"My advice to anyone who's either buying a home or refinancing it would be to spend some time, do some comparative shopping and make sure you get the best deal that's available to you."

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
349TH AIR MOBILITY WING PA
520 WALDRON STREET
TRAVIS AFB CA 94535-2171
OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
HAYWARD, CA
PERMIT NO. 3335**



"CONTACT" magazine is printed for reservists like (left to right) TSgt. Larry Roberts, SrA Mark Brown, A1C Darryl White, SSgt William Walters, SrA Ana Lopez and SrA Michael Emmons, all from 349th SFS.

photo by Technical Sgt. Larry Roberts, 349th SFS