

# SPACE & MISSILE TIMES

Friday, Nov. 10, 2000

Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

Vol. 10, No. 45



STAFF SGT. RICHARD FREELAND

## Defender Challenge

Airman 1st Class Vincent Ouchana, 564th Missile Squadron Malmstrom AFB, Mont., prone position, and Senior Airman Efrain Espinoza, 30th Security Forces Squadron, engage targets in the combat weapons event at Camp Bullis, Texas, during Defender Challenge. The contest is an annual Air Force-wide competition showcasing the talents and capabilities of 13 international security forces teams in seven physical fitness, base defense and policing skills. The annual exercise reflects the security forces mission of force protection under the aerospace expeditionary force concept. The competition was held Oct. 31 to Nov. 4. Other participating 30th SFS members were Tech. Sgt. Alfonso Valenciano, command trainer, and Staff Sgt. Randal Levander, combat weapons trainer.

## Airman saves Minuteman launches

TECH. SGT. LLOYD CONLEY  
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ At the height of the Harris and Peacekeeper fires in September, the actions of one airman kept the launch of two multi-million dollar Minuteman missiles on schedule.

Airman Brian Kaiser, a Minuteman munitions team specialist with the 576th Flight Test Squadron, single handedly safeguarded two mission-essential \$8.5 million re-entry systems from serious damage during the blaze.

When communications and electrical power to the munitions storage area were cut off in the early stages of the fire, the alarms stopped working. Kaiser volunteered to do a security check in the area.

He said he really didn't know how big the fire was at the time.

"The power went out, so I just stuck around because the alarms were

down," Kaiser said. "I didn't want to leave the area like that."

During his check, Kaiser noticed a puddle of water at the door to the Minuteman munitions building housing the equipment for the dual launch scheduled later in the month.

When he entered the building, he discovered the fire suppression system had activated and was flooding the munitions storage building. Water was saturating the equipment at the rate of 628 gallons a minute.

Kaiser immediately notified the area supervisor, who called the fire department.

Kaiser opened the garage doors to the building to let in some light and allow the water to flow out. "I noticed the water had risen to the point that it was going to damage the re-entry system trainers and some arming and fusing assemblies," Kaiser said.

Standing in water up to his calves with only a flashlight to see by, he moved the equipment to dry ground, said Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Shipman, 576th FLTS, munitions flight superintendent.

The trainers, arming and fusing assemblies were safe but Kaiser noticed the water was creeping up to the bay that housed the Minuteman re-entry systems.

"I knew that if those re-entry systems had been damaged, the launches would have been postponed until the equipment was revalidated," he said. All the effort put into getting ready for the launches would have to be repeated, he added.

He couldn't open the bay doors because that would have flooded the bay, said Shipman.

See LAUNCH Page 9



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS AMANDA EDWARDS

Kaiser inspects a Minuteman III reentry system similar to the one he prevented from being damaged last September.

# Comment



**Col. Steve Lanning**  
commander,  
30th Space Wing

## Commander's Action Line

**A**s the wing commander, my primary focus is on the mission and I believe that our mission success will be based on how well we care for our people on and off the job.

The Action Line is your direct link to me. It provides an avenue for you to voice your concerns, share constructive ideas or give your fellow base members a pat on the back. The Action Line is not a replacement for using the chain of command.

When you e-mail or call please leave your name and contact number in case more information is needed.

I want Vandenberg to continue to be the best Air Force base in the world. Working together, it will be.

# 606-7850

e-mail: [30sw.pa@vandenberg.af.mil](mailto:30sw.pa@vandenberg.af.mil)

### Handy phone numbers

Fire, Police, Ambulance.....911  
Poison Control.....(800) 876-4766  
Clinic Appointments.....606-2273  
Healthwise Line.....(888) 252-3299  
TRICARE Services.....(800) 242-6788  
Law Enforcement.....606-3300  
Housing Maintenance.....734-5586  
Space & Missile Times.....606-2040  
Launch Update Line.....606-1857  
MPF Customer Service.....606-7756  
Pest Control.....606-1936  
Visitor Control.....606-7662  
Chaplain (duty hours).....606-5773  
Chaplain (after hours).....606-9961

Red Cross (duty hours).....606-1855  
Red Cross(after hours)..(800)660-4272  
Central Security Control.....605-2154  
EOD (duty hours).....605-1375  
EOD (after hours).....606-9961  
Base operator.....606-1110  
Golf course.....606-6262  
Fitness center.....606-3832  
Child development center.....606-1555  
CE damage control.....606-1856  
Base Informaion.....411  
Telephone Trouble.....611  
Public Tours.....606-3595  
Vandenberg Credit Union.....734-8550

## Mission essential applies to all

**Q**I'm the spouse of a military member here. I am a child protective worker at the department of social services.

I have a situation that needs to be clarified.

When I dropped my children off at the Youth Center one morning, I was told that only those people who are mission-essential could drop their children off. This implied to me that since I am not military, I am not mission-essential.

I take my children's safety seriously, so I was offended.

I had to argue with staff members of the Youth Center about whether or not I would be able to drop my children off that day.

I spoke to the Youth Center staff at a later date and there was still no clarification other than that they were following orders.

I would really appreciate it if this issue could be clarified.

**A** Thank you for bringing this to my attention. Child care is one of my top priorities.

The day you talk about, is the day I

declared as mission essential because of the Harris Fire. Our Youth Center folks should have taken your child without question. After all, child care is available to allow you to go to work. I've reiterated this to our staff and hope this is an isolated incident.

## School bus stop gets waste basket

**Q** I have a suggestion. I think a trash can is needed at the school bus stop at the intersection of Korina and Utah.

There's a lot of garbage there.

The children have to be there early and they often eat breakfast on the run.

**A** Thank you for your call! Controlling litter is everyone's responsibility and we here at Vandenberg take our responsibility very seriously.

A trash container will be placed at this location and emptied at regular intervals by our solid waste contractor.

# Right time to quit: Great American Smokeout kicks off

COMPILED FROM DoD MEMORANDUM

**A**nyone who has ever quit smoking will tell you that it was the hardest thing they've ever done. They will also tell you that it was the smartest thing they've ever done. Smokers will also tell you that they would do anything to prevent their children from smoking and being held hostage to tobacco addiction.

The reality, however, is that children whose parents smoke are more likely to start smoking themselves. Every day, 3,000 young people between the ages of 12 to 17 become regular smokers. The best way to influence your children from becoming one of these statistics is to become a good role model by quitting now. Why not set the date?

This year more than seven out of every 10 smokers will attempt to quit. The greatest challenge isn't deciding to quit; most know it is the right thing to do.

The greatest challenge is actually doing it.

Dr. J. Jarrett Clinton, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, cites participation in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout as a great first step in attaining that goal.

"The first step in quitting is to prepare to quit. This means picking a day," Clinton said. "Why not the Great American Smokeout when millions of other Americans quit?"

The Department of Defense is urging all servicemembers, civilian employees and their families who smoke or use tobacco products to participate in the smokeout this Thursday.

According to Clinton, the next step in quitting includes selecting a method to quit. "Your medical service providers can help you chose the program that is right for you. We want everyone to know that if you want to quit there are people and programs available to help you succeed," Clinton said.

Don't delay your decision to quit; smoking is an issue that affects the health of everyone in the family, not just the smoker.

Too often, it is the family of the smoker that suffers the effects of second-hand smoke. Lung and nasal sinus cancer, heart disease, and sudden infant death syndrome have all been linked to the effects of second-hand smoke. The good news is the benefits of quitting smoking are immediate, for the smoker and everyone around. These include risk reduction for major diseases including coronary heart disease and cardiovascular disease.

Once you have picked the day to quit, and enlisted the assistance of your health care provider in selecting the method, it is time to do it.

What better reason than the health of yourself and your family to mark Nov. 16 as the day to stop smoking and begin living tobacco free.

## SPACE&MISSILETIMES

**Col. Steve Lanning**  
30th Space Wing Commander

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tor of the purchaser, user or patron. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Vandenberg AFB Public Affairs Office. All photos, unless otherwise indicated, are Air Force photos.

Publication deadline is 4:30 p.m. every Friday. The Public Affairs Office reserves the right to edit all submissions for style and space. Send submissions to: 30SW/PA, 747 Nebraska Ave., Room A-105, VAFB, CA 93437; via fax at DSN 276-8303 or commercial (805) 606-8303.

# Remembering our veterans

GEN. HENRY SHELTON

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

**T**oday marks the first Veterans Day of the 21st century. As we have done since 1919, Americans pause to salute the brave men and women who have served in the armed forces of the United States.

This day was originally set aside as a day of

**“This Veterans Day, I challenge every American to consider the sacrifice of those who lost their lives in our Nation’s struggles to preserve liberty and freedom.”**

Gen. Henry Shelton  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Armed Forces undoubtedly will be called upon to go into harm’s way in the new century.

Our men and women in uniform, serving around the globe today, stand ready to answer that call.

In 1954, Veterans Day became a tribute to all those who have served America in all wars.

observance for those who fought and died in the “Great War,” World War I — the “war to end all wars.”

Obviously, World War I was not the end of warfare; in fact, it was the precursor of warfare throughout the 20th century.

So with history as our guide, members of our

It is fitting to note that this change came on the heels of another important conflict, the Korean War.

During this commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, we should pay honor to our veterans of that conflict. Their great sacrifice embodies the spirit selflessness in the face of overwhelming deprivation and hardship.

This Veterans Day, I challenge every American to consider the sacrifice of those who lost their lives in our nation’s struggles to preserve liberty and freedom.

Whether attending a parade, a memorial service or observing the day in private, pause at the 11th hour to reflect upon and mark this occasion.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I join you in paying homage to our veterans for all they have done.

Their actions made a difference for America and the world.

Their dedication to duty has preserved our precious legacy of freedom and liberty in this great republic.



GRAPHIC BY VIRGIE REYES

## Air Force leaders express nation’s thanks for veterans’ service, sacrifices

BY F. WHITTEN PETERS AND GEN. MICHAEL RYAN

Secretary of the Air Force and Air Force Chief of Staff

**F**or more than half a century we have paused to remember the sacrifices of military members and their families on Veterans Day.

Born from “Armistice Day,” the end of the “war to end all wars” — World War I — Veterans Day is a remembrance of the millions of men and women who have unselfishly served our country.

From battling against the aggression of the Iraqi regime, fighting for the lives of Kosovar

Albanians, or rescuing the victims of national disasters at home and abroad — when our nation called, individual servicemen and women met and exceeded all challenges.

Service before and beyond self is the greatest gift a person can make to our nation.

Today we recognize the special sacrifices of our military men and women. They and the civilian members of our total force provide to this great nation the security and liberty we all enjoy.

Thank you to each and every one of you for your service to America.



# Veteran recounts Vietnam experiences

By STAFF SGT. ANDREW LEONHARD  
30<sup>th</sup> Space Wing Public Affairs

A soldier rounds a bunker during an early morning patrol. His .38 is holstered and an M-16 is slung over his shoulder. Rounding the corner, he's faced with a rifle aimed at his chest. He believes he is only moments from his last breath. Staring back at him through the rifle sights are 16-year-old eyes filled with fear, his finger tightening on the trigger ... click! Misfire. The soldier scrambles for his sidearm as the boy slams the bolt forward with such force it fires the round. The soldier's leg shatters above the kneecap as the bullet passes through. A split-second later his patrol partner comes around the bunker and sends a bullet through the boy, killing him.

It was February 1968 and the Vietnam War was in full swing when Bob Hatch lived through that terrifying morning. He was an Army staff sergeant pulling a tour of duty in Vietnam.



Today, Hatch still serves his country as the president and CEO of the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Drafted in June 1966, Hatch went to

Army basic training at Fort Ord in Monterey, Calif. His first assignment was at Valley Forge General Hospital in Phoenixville, Pa., as a supply clerk. Six months later, he was in Vietnam.

"When I first arrived in Vietnam, I reported to my first sergeant telling him that I was his new supply clerk. He said, 'No you're not, we have enough of them. You are an infantryman assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon.'"

Reflecting back on it, Hatch said, "I remember it like it was yesterday. After we talked awhile, he offered me a cold beer. I looked around and saw how warm and sunny it was and thought this may be a cool place to be. I was also apprehensive knowing that there had to be more to it than met the eye."

Hatch had no infantry training at the time. "The only formal training I had

was basic training," Hatch said. Duty assignments during the Vietnam War were, at times, based on what was required within the platoon.

"I found myself a few times as the platoon sergeant or platoon leader," Hatch said.

The platoon leader was usually a lieutenant. However, there seemed to be a high casualty and turnover rate in that position due to inexperience or poor decision making, he said.

**"All soldiers are brave; heroes are just brave for about 30 seconds longer."**

Bob Hatch  
CEO and president of the  
Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce

a lieutenant. However, there seemed to be a high casualty and turnover rate in that position due to inexperience or poor decision making, he said.



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS AMANDA EDWARDS

Bob Hatch, Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce president and CEO, gives advice about California to April Smith. Hatch is a three time Purple Heart Medal recipient.

"We had a lieutenant that had a thing for blowing up bunkers. He would toss a grenade into a bunker, then run straight away from the opening. Well, the way the bunkers are shaped, the force of the explosion is focused straight out that opening. Once he was too slow to get away and caught shrapnel in the back," the veteran said.

The toughest thing about Vietnam, for Hatch, was not thinking about death.

"You never contemplated death. You just didn't say 'Today is the day that I will die,'" he said.

Hatch separated from the Army after a two-year commitment, but re-enlisted in 1969 for four more years. He then separated as an E-7 platoon sergeant in 1973. His awards include the Silver

Star, Bronze Star with Valor device, an Air Medal, three Purple Hearts, the Army Commendation Medal, a Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, a Vietnam Campaign Medal and the coveted Combat Infantry Badge.

"Vietnam was like playing cowboys and Indians in that it was a young man's war. There were a lot of boys there. Many of which, including myself, grew up in Vietnam. Maybe not so much by years, but in the soul," Hatch said.

More than 58,200 men and women of the armed forces died during Vietnam.

As a survivor, Hatch never considered himself a hero.

"All soldiers are brave; heroes are just brave for about 30 seconds longer," the veteran said.

## Honoring an Air Force hero's life 1945-2000

*Medal of Honor recipient succumbs to long battle with cancer*

■ WASHINGTON — Air Force Sergeant John Levitow, one of only 16 airmen awarded the Medal of Honor for exceptional heroism during wartime, died Wednesday at his home in Connecticut after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 55.

Levitow, the lowest ranking airman to earn the medal, received the honor as a result of an incident Feb. 24, 1969.

That day, the airman first class served as a loadmaster aboard a severely damaged AC-47 gunship flying a mission over Long Binh, South Vietnam.

Suffering from more than 40 shrapnel wounds in his back and legs caused by a mortar blast, he saw a smoking magnesium flare amid a jumble of spilled ammunition canisters.

Despite loss of blood and partial loss of feeling in his right leg, the 23-year-old threw himself on the flare, hugged it close, dragged himself toward an open cargo door and hurled the flare out. Almost simultaneously, the flare ignited harmlessly outside the door and away from the munitions.

President Richard Nixon presented the Medal of Honor to Levitow on Armed Forces Day, May 14, 1970, at the White House.

After Levitow left the Air Force, he worked in the field of veteran's affairs for more than 22 years.

His most recent work was for Connecticut developing and designing veteran programs.

Further details and funeral arrangements for a military burial at Arlington National Cemetery are pending.



AIR FORCE PHOTO



ANN JESSICA RAMOS

### Native American heritage

*Tech. Sgt. Juno Hopkins, First Term Airmen's Center manager, hands a slice of cake to Mary Linch while Col. Michael Altom, 30th Space Wing inspector general, cuts another slice. The cake cutting signified the beginning of Native American/Indian Heritage Month festivities.*

#### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**10 FRI** As the holidays approach the **American Red Cross** staff is looking for donations to support troops approach at various operations and exercises throughout the world such as Kosovo, Bosnia, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Donations will be accepted through Nov. 17 at the Red Cross office on the third floor of the base clinic. For a detailed list of needed items check the Nov. 3 issue of the *Space and Missile Times* or call, 606-1855.

November is **Native American/Indian Heritage Month**. The Native American Association has scheduled events throughout the month. A tour of Honda Ridge and its Native American artifacts departs Sesto Auditorium Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30 a.m. The library is holding a story time for children Thursday at 10 a.m. An exposition at Chapel One featuring the Chumash Indians with artifacts, food and entertainment is set for Nov. 18 at 1 p.m. Also, a free movie is scheduled Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. in Minuteman Theater. For more information, call Staff Sgt. CeeJay Brown at 605-5069.

The Pismo Beach Chamber of Commerce staff's **22<sup>nd</sup> annual Veterans Day Celebration** starts today. The 76th Helicopter Flight will conduct an aerial demonstration at noon today. A memorial service on the Pismo pier will start at 9 a.m. Sunday, with Col. Theodore Fink, 14th Air Force judge advocate general, presenting a wreath and speaking. The

Vandenberg Honor Guard will present the colors. For information, call the Pismo Beach Chamber staff at (805)773-4382.

**12 SUN** The congregation at the Trinity Church of the Nazarene is holding a **Military Appreciation Day** Sunday at 10:30 a.m. during the morning service. There will be a free barbecue following the service. The church is located at 500 E. North Ave. in Lompoc.

**15 WED** The Air Force Sergeants Association, Lompoc Chamber Military Aerospace Committee and the Lompoc Police Department are looking for families to **host an airman for Thanksgiving Day**. The deadline to volunteer as a host is Wednesday. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Lisa Antoni at 605-2633 or Tech. Sgt. Juno Hopkins at 606-5957.

**19 SUN** Vandenberg's base chapel staff is holding an **Ecumenical Thanksgiving** worship service and meal Nov. 19 at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited. The traditional Thanksgiving meal will follow the service in the Chapel annex.

**DEC 2 SAT** **Operations Kids Christmas** is Dec. 2 at the Pacific Coast Club. The OKC staff is looking for escorts, set-up and tear-down crews, and food delivery people. To sign up call Master Sgt. Roy Blanco at 606-9600 or Capt. Sig Bohren at 605-0578 or e-mail them on the global.

# Matchups test boxers' mettle

By 2ND LT. SEAN CREAN

30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ Boxing requires explosive energy, agility, endurance and an iron will. Three of Vandenberg's own tested their abilities during the second annual Interservice Invitational boxing match held at the base fitness center Saturday.

Rick Villapando, Dayshawn Grant, and Fernando Mora traded punches with Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps boxers during nine bouts and one exhibition.

At middleweight, Grant was the Air Force's lone victor, winning a three-round slugfest on points against Camp Pendleton's Ralph Cortes. Reduced to a brawl early in the fight, the 20-year-old claimed, "I tried to box, but he wanted to slug it out."

It was Grant's first bout, and his performance affirmed his boxing aspirations for the Air Force team, a goal which trainer Don Green said he has a fair chance of fulfilling.

"He lands solid punches. He just needs some polishing," Green said.

The evening's second bout pitted light heavyweight Villapando against Port Hueneme's Pat Holler. Villapando had an impressive first round, landing a flurry of punches that left Holler reeling. Holler received a standing eight count and, shortly before the end of the round, took a left hook from Villapando that sent



AIRMAN JESSICA RAMOS

Dayshawn Grant, left, prepares to deliver a crushing blow to his opponent, Ralph Cortes.

him across the ring. Holler rebounded in the last two rounds, however, and won the match on points.

Villapando, also in his first fight, cited problems with his headgear in the second round, but made no excuses.

"I'm not taking anything away from the guy ... I think he won," Villapando said.

The evening culminated with an exhibition bout between heavyweights Mora and Tom Jones of the Presidio in Monterey. Because it was an exhibition, no winner was declared.

Don Green was pleased with his boxers' performances.

"It took a lot of commitment on their part. They're the ones who wanted to get in there, and they did well," he said of the trio.

He was equally satisfied with the organization of the Budweiser-sponsored event. Green spent about four months

organizing the meet, which required coordination between several Vandenberg agencies and boxing clubs from seven other military installations.

Pacific Coast Club Manager John Pellay helped organize the event's sponsorship.

A certified amateur boxing official, coach and trainer, Green coaches boxing at the base fitness center annex Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 6 to 8 p.m.

The sixty-one-year boxing veteran claims it's good training for competition or simply as a physical fitness regimen.

The free program is open to active-duty military members and dependents 17 years and older.

There are seven women among the program's regular boxers, two of whom want to compete soon.

Green added, "I will train anyone who's interested."

## SPORTS

### BRIEFS

#### OVER 30 SOFTBALL STANDINGS

	W	L	Pct.
576th FLTS	10	1	.909
NRO	9	2	.818
30th MSS	8	4	.667
30th CES	7	4	.636
Det. 9	8	5	.615
U.S. Penitentiary	8	5	.615
614th SOPS/14 th AF	5	5	.500
30th SFS	8	9	.471
381st TRG	5	6	.455
30th CS	4	10	.400
30th LG	3	11	.214

As of Thursday

#### FLAG FOOTBALL STANDINGS

American League	W	L	Pct.
30th SFS No.1	4	0	1.000
576th FLTS	2	0	1.000
614th SOPS/14 th AF	2	1	.667
30th OG	2	2	.500
30th MSS	1	2	.333
392nd TRS No. 2	1	2	.333
Det. 9	1	2	.333
30th MDG	0	4	.000
National League			
533rd TRS	2	0	1.000
30th TRANS	1	0	1.000
30th CES	1	1	.500
381st TRG	1	1	.500
392nd TRS No. 1	1	1	.500
30th CS	0	1	.000
30th SFS	0	2	.000

As of Thursday

# RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

Registration begins  
at 8:30 a.m. in the  
Pacific Coast Club.  
Opening ceremonies  
begin at 9:30 a.m.

Retirees from the Central Coast of California are gathering at Vandenberg's Pacific Coast Club for the second annual Retiree Appreciation Day Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The guest speaker is retired Maj. Gen. Richard Murray, president of the National Association for Uniformed Services. Murray will talk about issues and concerns of interest to all retirees.

Maj. Gen. William Looney III, 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force commander, and Col. Steve Lanning, 30<sup>th</sup> Space Wing commander, will also speak at the opening ceremonies.

Throughout the day, base organizations will staff information tables and answer questions. The following information is from a few of the organizations that will be at the Retiree Appreciation Day.

## HEALTH CARE

TRICARE is the Department of Defense's health care program for CHAMPUS-eligible beneficiaries worldwide.

Beneficiaries can choose from three options – TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Extra, or TRICARE Standard.

To be eligible for TRICARE benefits, you must be:

- CHAMPUS-eligible beneficiaries; and
- Enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, or DEERS.

For information, call (800) 242-6788. This toll-free number is available when you need information about TRICARE or have a question about your coverage.

When you call, you'll have several options to choose from. You may speak with:

- A health care finder for assistance getting a referral;
- A claims processor if you have a question or need help

with your claim or bill;

□ A telemarketing representative to request program materials;

□ Or a beneficiary services representative if you have a specific question about your benefits.

After you've made your selection, listen carefully as

you may be given other options to choose from to make sure you reach the correct person.

**TRICARE  
Questions?  
Call  
(800)  
242-6788**

A TRICARE Service Center is located inside the 30<sup>th</sup> Medical Group hospital at 338 South Dakota Ave. The center's hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## RETIREE PAY SERVICES

Your time on active duty was an adventure, but now

you've moved on. Where can you go for information about retiree pay? Simply stop by the 30<sup>th</sup> Comptroller Squadron's customer service section in building 11777, room A-115, or call 606-1858 or 606-4607.

■ Allotments: For retirees, your allotments are sent through the month of your date of separation, or DOS. Your allotments may be carried over to your retired pay. The customer service staff can help with any other allotments retired military members might need.

■ Direct deposit: Any changes to a retiree's direct deposit pay can be completed at the 30<sup>th</sup> Comptroller Squadron's customer service center.

■ Pay service for retirees is available at Vandenberg's financial services office for pay inquiries.

■ For pay problems, retirees can deal directly with the Defense Accounting and Finance Service by writing to this address:

DFAS-CL/Directorate for Retired Pay  
Code ROB, P.O. Box 99191  
Cleveland, Ohio 44199-1126  
Or call (800) 321-1080

## CASUALTY ASSISTANCE

It's not something you care to think about, but the eventualities of life will catch up with everyone some day. When that happens to a military retiree, the casualty assistance office at Vandenberg has

people who can help answer questions about retiree pay, survivor benefits, and social security accounts.

■ When a retiree passes away, the spouse should call casualty assistance at 605-2029 or 606-4999. The staff at casualty assistance can call the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Cleveland at (800) 269-5170 and stop the retiree pay.

■ They can also help the widow or widower complete the required paperwork to receive any unpaid retired pay still due the spouse.

■ The staff at casualty assistance can: help the spouse or a retiree file for survivor benefit plan annuities; receive a new ID card classifying the spouse as an unremarried widow or widower; refer the spouse to the Veterans Administration for any VA claims they can submit; and provide the telephone number for Social Security to switch accounts if that's necessary.

■ One essential piece of paperwork many spouses can't

find is the Department of Defense Form 214, which is issued to every person who retires or separates from the U.S. Armed Forces. In addition to the DD Form 214, spouses who visit casualty

assistance must have several other forms, including a marriage and birth certificate.

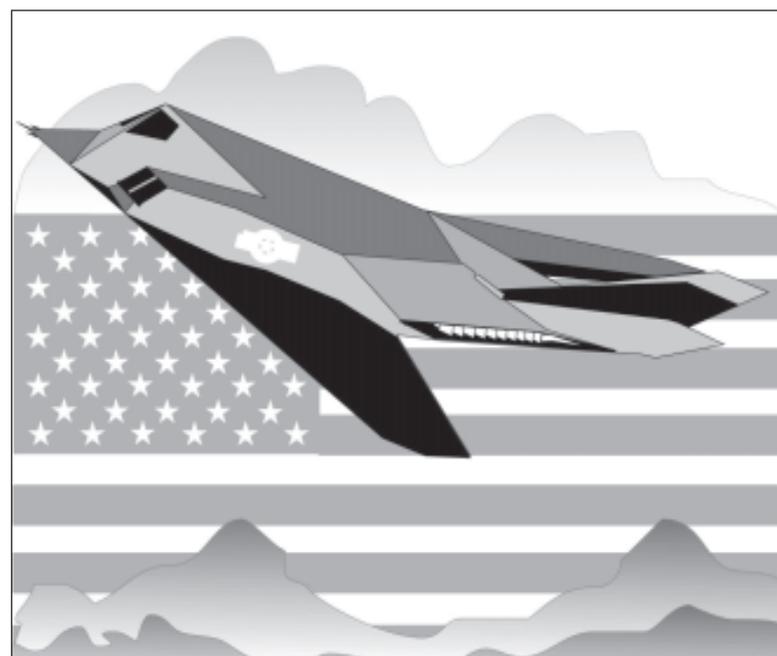
■ Often, however, the surviving spouse doesn't know where the DD Form 214 is located. In that case, the casualty assistance staff can help the surviving spouse request copies of military records.

Casualty assistance is located in building 11777, room C-112. It's open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

See LEGAL page 8

**CASUALTY  
ASSISTANCE  
Questions?  
Call  
(805)  
606-2029  
or  
606-4999**

**PAY  
Questions?  
Call  
(805)  
606-1858  
or  
606-4607**



# RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

LEGAL from page 7

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Vandenberg's legal office provides a variety of services to retired military members and their families. A valid ID card must be presented to receive legal services.

■ The attorneys on staff can help retirees, family members and even family members of deceased service members with powers of attorney wills, living wills, notary public services, and official contracts. If you know the nature of your legal needs, or if you simply have questions about a legal matter, the attorneys at Vandenberg's legal office are glad to help in any way possible.

For legal assistance, drop by the legal office located in building 10577 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and Wednesday from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

## COMMISSARY

The commissary sells groceries "at cost" and with no sales tax. There is no mark up or profit. However, there is a 5 percent surcharge, mandated by congress. The surcharge generates funds used entirely for commissary construction, supplies and maintenance.

■ Commissary patrons include members of the military services, the Reserve and National Guard, military retirees and members of their immediate families. Surveys show shoppers average 29.7 percent savings when compared with commercial retail food store prices.

■ Commissary vendors are giving away several items and shopping sprees during Retiree Appreciation Day.

■ The commissary staff is inviting all retirees to join a focus group that gives commissary managers feedback on how well the commissary is meeting the needs, wants and expectations of its customers. Any retiree who would like to be considered as a focus group panelist should complete an application and return it to the commissary customer service office or administration office during store operating hours.

## RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE

Vandenberg continues to support retiree activities for those who still serve the Air Force and nation. The base's Retirees Activities Office is a key link for support to retired service members and their families.

■ The newly renovated and larger Retiree Activities Office is located in building 10364 in the mall next to the base exchange across from the AAFES Four Seasons Center. There is a grand opening for the RAO Thursday at 1:30 p.m.

■ Volunteers at the RAO publish a quarterly newsletter that is available upon request.

Operating hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday to Friday. For more information, call 606-5474.

# Retirees, spouses, survivors get expanded health care

COMPILED FROM REPORTS

■ Medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees, their spouses and survivors who are age 65 and over will be entitled to expanded health care benefits under legislation signed by President Clinton on Oct. 30.

According to Pentagon data, this population represents approximately 1.4 million people. The new benefits include coverage under TRICARE, the military's health care program, and pharmacy coverage. April 1 is the start date for eligible beneficiaries to receive pharmacy benefits including access to military treatment facility pharmacies, the National Mail Order Pharmacy program and retail pharmacies. Beneficiaries who currently are age 65 or older or who will be 65 before April 1 will be eligible to use the pharmacy benefit without being enrolled in Medicare Part B.

Those who turn 65 on or after April 1 will need to be enrolled in Medicare Part B in order to use the pharmacy benefit.

Effective October 1, 2001 under the new law, eligible beneficiaries who continue to receive medical care from their current Medicare providers will have TRICARE as their second payer. TRICARE will pay their out-of-pocket costs for services covered under Medicare. In addition, they will have access to TRICARE benefits that may not be covered under Medicare. To participate in the health program, beneficiaries must be eligible for Medicare Part A and enrolled in Medicare Part B.

"We are pleased to have the legislative authority to provide our Medicare-eligible beneficiaries health care benefits similar to those other military beneficiaries receive. We have begun to work out the many details for each new authority and will continue to update our web site as we progress at [http://www.tricare.osd.mil/nda/fast\\_facts.htm](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/nda/fast_facts.htm). This new authority gives us the ability to keep the faith with America's military," said Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs J. Jarrett Clinton.

According to TRICARE Management Activity officials, who will administer the new benefit, eligible seniors should NOT immediately cancel their current

"Medigap" insurance coverage. The Department of Defense is working with the Health Care Financing Administration (the organization that administers the Medicare benefit) to provide the most accurate information on the appropriateness of continued enrollment in "Medigap" insurance policies.

According to TRICARE Management Activity officials, eligible beneficiaries should do two things now to ensure their future eligibility for TRICARE benefits.

First, they should update their Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System record with their correct address and any changes in family status such as

marriage, divorce, birth or adoption. Home addresses are important because the address on file with DEERS is used to send out information on health benefits. In addition, health benefits could be denied if DEERS is not updated to reflect a new spouse or child. Retirees may update DEERS by:

- going to our military personnel office;
- e-mailing changes to [addrinfo@osd.pentagon.mil](mailto:addrinfo@osd.pentagon.mil);
- mailing changes to the DEERS Support Office, ATTN: COA, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771;
- calling the toll-free numbers for the DEERS Support Office, (800) 334-4162 (California only), (800) 527-5602 (Alaska and Hawaii), and (800) 538-9552 for the rest of the United States.

Second, eligible beneficiaries should enroll in Medicare Part B if they haven't already. If they are not sure if they are enrolled, they can check the back of their Social Security card for this information.

To enroll, beneficiaries must submit an application for Medicare Part B directly to the Social Security Administration. The General Enrollment Period for enrollment in Medicare Part B is held January 1 through March 31 each year, and Part B coverage starts on July 1 of that year.

For details on enrollment in Part B, beneficiaries may call the SSA toll-free number, (800) 772-1213, or visit any Social Security office. They also can find information on the Medicare Web site, <http://medicare.gov>.

**"This new authority gives us the ability to keep the faith with America's military."**

J. Jarrett Clinton  
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs



## Cold warriors celebrate reunion

TECH. SGT. LLOYD CONLEY  
30th Space Wing Public Affairs

■ The 576th Munitions Flight recently celebrated the 42nd anniversary of the 51st Munitions Maintenance Squadron.

The 51st was a unit assigned to Vandenberg from 1958 to 1972.

Their role at the height of the Cold War mirrors what we do today, said Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Shipman, munitions flight chief with the 576th Flight Test Squadron.

Shipman added that their

accomplishments range from standing up the first missile alert on Vandenberg to processing various missiles like the Thor, Atlas, Titan, Minuteman, I, II and III, and a variety of experimental crafts.

These people were the Strategic Air Command warriors that laid the foundation of today's space applications.

"Their Legacy lives on through the 576<sup>th</sup> Munitions Flight and we proudly carry that torch," Shipman said.

## Airman can't stop flow of water

LAUNCH From Page 1

Kaiser said he couldn't stop the flow of water to the equipment and he couldn't move it either.

"I put some styrofoam in front of some of the doors to create a small dam to ebb the flow of water, he said. "After that, I got a squeegee and started pushing the water toward the other bay into the drain. I did that until the fire department arrived to turn the sprinkler system off."

"If the systems had gotten wet we would not have made the launch dates," said Staff Sgt. James Green, Kaiser's supervisor and Minuteman munitions maintenance team chief, 576<sup>th</sup> FLTS.

His actions during the crisis averted costly property damage and kept two \$20 million Minuteman III ICBM test launches on schedule, Shipman said.

Kaiser was recently promoted to Airman 1st Class.

He is from Dubuque, Iowa and has been a member of the Air Force for a year and a half.

# S 30th Services



# NEWS

☆☆ Pacific Coast Club  
 ☆☆ Membership Appreciation

☆☆ N.I.G.H.T

Saturday

6 p.m. until ???

Members Free  
 Bonafide Guests \$5.00

\* International Food Stations  
 featuring Germany, Italy, Japan  
 and the 'Good Ole' USA

\* Live on Stage! 'The Rat Pack'  
 with Frank, Dean and Sammy

\* Live Band - 'Slantbox'

\* Plus 'The Bud Girls'

## SERVICES CENTER

**Knott's Berry Farm Free Days**  
 veterans' week through Sunday  
 Call VITT at 606-7976

**Country Line Dance - Free**  
 Every Wednesday at the Service  
 Center, 6 to 9 p.m.

**Teen & Family Talent Show - Free**  
 Nov. 24 at 7:30 p.m. at the base  
 theater. Doors open at 7 p.m.

## OUTDOOR REC

**REC CHECK-OUT/OUTDOOR REC**  
 New Saturday Hours of Operation:  
 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**RV Storage Lot Fees**  
 Active Duty \$15 per month  
 Retired \$15 per month  
 DOD Civilians \$30 per month  
 (working on base)  
 Pay 11 months - get the 12th month FREE!

## GOLF

Twilight Rates start at 1:00 p.m.

**Ladies Priority**  
 every Wednesday, 8:30 to 9 a.m.

Golf Course open **Veterans' Day**

## BOWLING

**Turkey Shoot** Sunday through  
 Nov. 17. For all bowlers in leagues.

## YOUTH CENTER

**Dance - Saturday 6 to 9 p.m.**  
 \$2 members, \$3 nonmembers

## FITNESS CENTER

**TURKEY TROT -**  
 Nov. 17  
 at noon. Sign-up  
 deadline is Sunday.



## ROD & GUN

**Bullseye Pistol Shooting**, Saturday at  
 8:30 a.m. Three classes with Turkey for  
 the winner of each class. Cost is \$2.50  
 for members \$4 for nonmembers.

**Sporting Clay - Sunday**  
 Members \$22, nonmembers \$27. 100  
 rounds. Three classes with a turkey for  
 the winner of each class.

**Visa and Mastercard** now accepted at  
 Rod & Gun Club.

## November Reminders...

**KARAOKE  
 NIGHT**

7-11 pm

in the  
 Hawk's  
 Nest

Wednesday  
 at the Pacific Coast Club



Retiree  
 Appreciation Day

2 for 1  
 Prime Rib

2 Prime Rib Dinners  
 for the price of one \$16.95  
 6 to 8 p.m.

Thursday  
 at the Pacific Coast Club

**JAZZ  
 & GAME NIGHT**  
 DOMINOES/  
 CARDS

with  
 DJ  
 RAY

Nov. 16  
 at the Pacific Coast Club



**Congratulations**  
 to  
**FAMILY CHILD CARE  
 ENTREPRENEURS**  
 of the quarter...

**Great job and well done!**  
 Angela Sandoval, Melissa Loper,  
 Teresa Webb, Rachael Caruso,  
 Theresa Waller and Gina Burdett.  
**August through October**

# 30th Services

# NEWS



## PIZZA SPECIAL!

## BOWLING

# MONDAY MADNESS!

at FOGGIOS \* 605-7800

### MONDAY TAKE OUT SPECIAL!

**LARGE CHEESE  
PIZZA  
\$5**



**NEW SAUCE!**

**NEW CHEESE!**

**NEW CRUST!**

.50 for each extra topping

TOPPINGS: Canadian bacon, pepperoni, Italian sausage, hamburger, green peppers, onions, fresh mushrooms, pineapple, broccoli, extra cheese.

# ROLL for a TURKEY



Bowlers will receive a chance for every open game bowled Sunday through Nov. 18. There is a bonus of one chance for every series of three games bowled at any one session. Four turkeys will be given away.

Winners will be notified Nov. 21 and turkeys must be picked up by Nov. 22.

(Bowling during Thunder Alley will not apply.)

**Come bowl and deposit your chance in our TURKEY DRUM!**

## Massage Therapy



Located at the Services Center

Call Mary at 605-4748 or 717-9088

Credit cards are now accepted.  
**Special Christmas Gift Certificates are available.**

**Christmas SPECIAL**

1 hour session with free aroma therapy

**\$40**

Evening appointments can be made for your convenience.

## DINING FACILITY

### Home Recipe Program

Submit your mom's or grandmother's awesome home recipe and you could be eating a nice 'home cooked' meal that you've missed since basic training! If your recipe is chosen, your name will appear on the menu board by the meal item. Grab your mom's or grandma's recipe and bring it to the AETC Dining Facility supervisor, and we'll make it for you!



**DIAL-A-MENU** phone number for the AETC Dining Facility is 605-2595.