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## AMC chief to visit Airmen at McChord

By  
**Tyler Hemstreet**  
Staff writer

McChord will welcome Air Mobility Command's command chief Wednesday as he makes his first visit out to the base.



**BARRON**

Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Barron Jr. is visiting the base to get a feel for the base's mission and see what the Airmen do out here, said Chief Master Sgt. Russell Kuck, 62nd Airlift Wing command chief.

Chief Kuck said the primary focus of the visit is to get Chief Barron out to the squadrons and see people.

"He likes to talk one-on-one with Airmen," Chief Kuck said. "Airmen can bring up whatever they want with him."

Chief Barron plans on having breakfast with Airmen at the Olympic Dining Facility along with Chief Kuck. He is set to tour the fitness center and fitness center annex. Other items on his agenda include visiting the First Term Airman's Center, dining with squadron functional managers and the Rising 4 council as well as touring the flight-line.

Chief Barron is the principal advisor to AMC's commander and his senior staff on matters of health, welfare and morale, professional development and the effective utilization of more than 43,000 active duty and 71,000 Reserve and National Guard enlisted personnel assigned to the command.

After tours as command chief master sergeant at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., Chief Barron was selected to become the chief master sergeant of AMC in April of this year.

Earlier in his career, he was a military training manager and later served in multiple units as a first sergeant both in the United States and overseas during Operations Desert Fox and Allied Force, where he was instrumental in the initial beddown, troop support and morale for the largest combat air refueling wing in Air Force history.



Photo by Abner Guzman

## Calling all engines

**April Chandler, left, watches as her daughter Olivia sits inside a fire truck during the block party at Carter Lake Tuesday. The party, sponsored by the chapel support center, featured free food, music and community fellowship.**

## New TSA screening rules apply to AMC

By  
**Tyler Hemstreet**  
Staff writer

People traveling on Air Mobility Command charter and military aircraft will face the same new security measures travelers across the nation are adhering to now.

A memo released last week by Col. Tonja Brickhouse, chief of the Air Transportation Division at AMC, reminded AMC passengers that all AMC-owned and operated terminals will comply with the screening changes implemented by the Transportation Security Administration.

"We follow all the same guidelines — and it includes all Department of Defense travelers," said Lt. Col. Mike Cannon, 62nd Aerial Port Squadron commander.

According to TSA's Web site, the update to the prohibited items list and screening process prohibits passengers from carrying most liquids, gels and lotions and other items of similar consistency in carry-on luggage.

Exceptions to the guidelines include baby for-

mula, breast milk and juice, if a baby or small child is traveling, prescription medicine with a name that matches passengers' tickets, up to 8 ounces of liquid or gel blood sugar treatment and up to 4 ounces of other essential non-prescription liquid medicines in original packaging, according to the Web site.

Also, passengers are now required to remove all types of footwear before walking through metal detectors, according to the Web site.

Colonel Cannon said travelers at McChord have been cooperative when it comes to the new regulations.

"We haven't had many complaints because we don't have the long lines," he said.

But Colonel Cannon advised all travelers to do their homework when it comes to packing their bags.

"Before you get to the terminal, make sure all your liquids are in your checked bags," he said. "That will make the process a lot smoother."

Travelers can visit <http://www.tsa.gov> for a full list of the prohibited items or call the passenger terminal at 982-7259 to check on updates or changes in guidelines or regulations at McChord.

### Weekend Weather

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Hi: 82 Low: 50	Hi: 83 Low: 51	Hi: 83 Low: 50

Forecast generated at 7 a.m. Thursday  
Courtesy of the 62nd Operations Support Squadron

### Mission accomplished

Total McChord sorties .....	11,575
Total flying hours .....	36,768.5
Cargo moved (tons) .....	98,663.5
Departure reliability rate .....	95%
Mission capable rate .....	84.8%
Personnel currently deployed .....	478
Reservists currently activated.....	283

(Jan. 1 to Tuesday. Numbers updated Tuesday.)

### Don't miss it ...

#### MPF closed

The military personnel flight will close at noon Aug. 25 for a squadron function. For more information, call 982-3747.

# Staying safe brings personal rewards

By

Col. Jerry Martinez  
62nd Airlift Wing commander

The 101 Critical Days of Summer are quickly drawing to a close. The weather is getting cooler, the days are getting shorter and Labor Day will be here before we know it.

This year McChord has had three fewer incidents during the 101 Critical Days of Summer than last year, but I want to remind you that the 101 Critical Days are not over yet. The majority of this summer's safety incidents were caused by sports and recreation activities off duty.

While the weather is still warm, I know many of you will be outside taking advantage of the many activities in the Pacific Northwest. When you are out biking, hiking or on the water, please keep your safety in mind.

At work, supervisors are there reminding you to follow the proper safety procedures and wear the correct equipment to protect yourself. Off duty, there is no one to insist you wear a helmet when you ride your bicycle or to

ensure you are properly trained before you rent a ski boat with your friends. You must take responsibility for your own safety.

This means you must practice operational risk management in your personal life. Before you play a sport, ride a motorcycle or go on a hike, you need to think about the risks and make sure you are prepared to handle them.

The cost of taking the time to evaluate the hazards of an activity and prepare for them is far outweighed by coming back from the activity safe and healthy.

We do so much important work here, from supporting the evacuation of American citizens out of Lebanon to bringing freedom to all corners of the world. None of that would be possible without each of you. I can't tell you enough how valuable you are to the Air Force, your unit, your family and friends and to me.

Beyond carrying out the mission, staying safe means you are healthy to do the day-to-day activities that are important to you, like playing with your kids or hanging out with friends. Staying safe will be its own reward.

“The cost of taking the time to evaluate the hazards of an activity and prepare for them is far outweighed by coming back from the activity safe and healthy.”

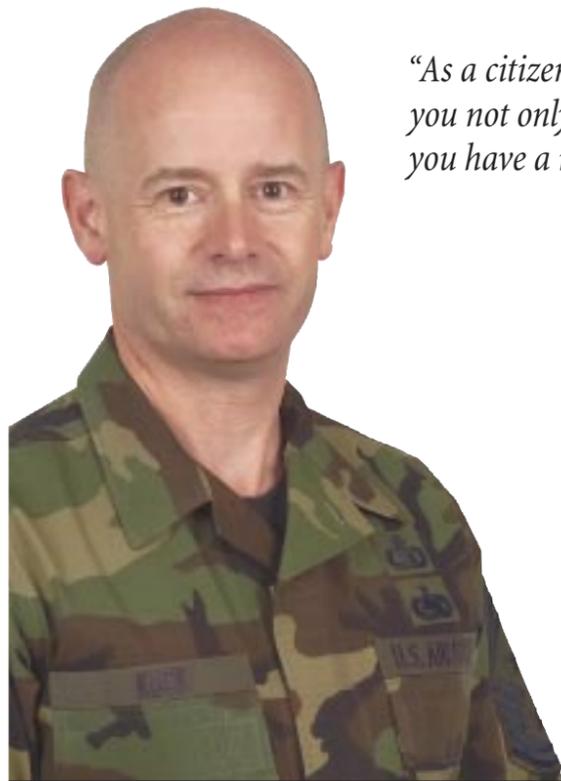
Col. Jerry Martinez  
62nd Airlift Wing  
commander



# Don't forfeit your right to cast a ballot

By

Chief Master Sgt. Russell Kuck  
62nd Airlift Wing  
command chief master sergeant



“As a citizen of the United States, you not only have a right to vote, you have a responsibility to vote ...”

Chief Master Sgt.  
Russell Kuck  
62nd Airlift Wing  
command chief

Why would an Airman wear a uniform and not vote?

It makes us angry and brings us to action when we see images of people around the world harassed, beaten and even murdered for simply trying to register to vote. Yet we think nothing of giving up this freedom and turning a blind eye to those who, throughout the forming of our nation, struggled and fought so every American could have their voice heard.

Throughout our history, men and women of every race, nationality and ethnic origin have fought tirelessly for that right, and their victories are documented in our Constitution ... the 14th Amendment designed to protect U.S. male citizens from voting obsta-

cles; the 15th Amendment granting the right to vote to all men regardless of race, color or previous servitude; the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote; the 24th Amendment preventing the use of poll taxes to keep minorities from voting and the 26th Amendment lowering the minimum voting age from 21 to 18.

As a citizen of the United States, you not only have a right to vote, you have a responsibility to vote to have your opinions heard. As active duty members, we have sworn to support and defend, against all enemies, foreign and domestic, the very document that set in place the process we now use to elect our country's presidents.

Your vote matters to the future of our nation and pays respect to those who fought so you could enjoy this liberty. Don't let this hard-won freedom fall by the wayside. The only vote that doesn't count is the one that isn't cast. Hooah!

## Ask the Commander

E-mail [ActionLine@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:ActionLine@mcchord.af.mil) or  
call 982-2222

## Commander's Action Line

The Commander's Action Line provides a direct link of communication between you and me, with the goal of building a better community. Your concerns, questions and ideas are highly valued and are key in enhancing Team McChord's mission and community. I encourage you to give the professionals here, together with your chain of command, the opportunity to address your concerns directly.

However, questions that come through the Action Line have my personal attention. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number, so we can follow up with you. Comments and questions that apply to a large base audience will be published in the base newspaper.

Col. Jerry Martinez  
62nd Airlift Wing commander

**Q: I've noticed several people, including government vehicle operators, not using their turn signals while driving around McChord.**

A: Thank you for pointing out this important safety issue that could help prevent traffic accidents. You're right, signaling intent is an easy way to alert both other vehicles and pedestrians of a driver's intentions while behind the wheel. To help remedy this problem, I've directed our squadron-level vehicle NCOs to remind all gov-

ernment vehicle operators to use their turn signals. Additionally, our security forces squadron will now keep a keen eye out for vehicles failing to signal. Thank you for thinking about safety and bringing this important issue to my attention!

**Q: Why can't McChord do a better job of enforcing the smoking ban outside of the base commissary? The smoke gets trapped under the canopy and other people have to breathe it.**

A: Thank you for writing me with your concern. The commissary has several "No Smoking" signs posted outside of the commissary, and the commissary staff makes an effort to ask patrons smoking near the building to extinguish their cigarettes. Please help the commissary staff by giving folks a friendly reminder that smoking is not permitted under the canopy at the commissary entrance. With your help we can create a happy, healthy shopping environment for everyone.

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Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by 62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

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# Are you really ready to deploy?

By

Lt. Col. Mike Cannon  
62nd Aerial Port Squadron commander

If there was any doubt in my mind that we are an expeditionary force, it vanished when I was notified from my next duty station of my pending deployment ... two days before I got my hard copy permanent change of station orders. It may sound a bit odd, but it was a good thing. That meant I had plenty of time to prepare.

There are others who are not so fortunate. Because of training injuries, last-minute profiles and foul-ups, some of our Airmen are getting days to weeks notice of up to one year deployments. If this were to happen to you, would you be ready?

Deployment readiness can be broken down into three areas: professional readiness, personal readiness and family readiness. If you are current in all three, you are truly ready to deploy. If you are weak in any of these areas, then you are creating the potential for disaster.

Probably the easiest area to maintain currency is in professional readiness. Ask yourself these two questions: Can I do my job? Can I do my job in the sand? If both answers are yes, then you are professionally ready.

Personal readiness is a bit trickier. Are you physically, emotionally and spiritually

fit? Do you have a current will? Have you arranged for all of your bills to be paid and your personal property to be safeguarded? Are you mentally prepared for the challenges of deployment?

Fortunately, there are some people who will help you in this area as well. Your commander, first sergeant, the medical group professionals, the legal office, the mission support squadron and the chaplain's office can all help you. But, you're going to have to engage with them and let them know if you need any help.

Family readiness is the most difficult, but often most important aspect of deployment readiness.

Is your family ready to be without you while you are deployed? Can someone do those things that you always do?

Make sure they know who to call if they have any problems. Sit down with your kids and let them know why you'll be missing their birthday this year. Teach your husband how to boil water without it getting all lumpy. Show your wife and kids how a plunger works. Get a friend to mow your lawn on Mondays since yard inspections are on Tuesdays. Let them know about all of the wonderful things the base does for deployed families.

Let's hope that you get plenty of notice before your next deployment. But be really ready, just in case you don't.

## Combat Airlifter

of the week

### Senior Airman Bryan Kerr

7th Airlift Squadron

**Duty title:**

C-17 Globemaster III  
loadmaster

**Duty Section:**

Loadmaster training

**Hometown:**

Des Moines, Iowa



**What makes him so great?**

Airman Kerr has deployed to numerous hostile airfields in Afghanistan and Iraq in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. While supporting more than 6,600 missions, he helped deliver 964,120 tons of crucial wartime materials and 121,297 personnel. Airman Kerr also played a critical role in the standup of the two expeditionary airlift squadron system by helping facilitate the transition of more than 35,000 troops at his deployed location to the rotational cycle.

### Base announcements

Want to get the word out about an event at McChord?  
Visit <https://intranet.mcchord.af.mil/Base%Announcements>



### Do you have a story idea?

Spread the news in *The Northwest Airlifter!*  
Call public affairs at 982-5637 or e-mail us at  
[northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil)

# General praises AMC's tireless efforts

By

Gen. Duncan McNabb  
Air Mobility Command commander

**Editor's note:** The following is a letter to the men and women of Air Mobility Command focusing on the recent evacuation of U.S. citizens from Lebanon.

Recently a crisis erupted in Lebanon putting the lives of fellow Americans at risk. They needed to be evacuated quickly and safely. This was a crisis that had very few solutions. Our nation's leaders knew exactly who to call on ... Air Mobility Command.

Once again you answered the call providing rapid global mobility. More importantly, you provided hope, comfort and relief to human beings in need. Words simply cannot describe how incredibly proud I am of you. You flawlessly executed a critical non-combatant evacuation operation under the watchful eyes of an international audience who marveled and admired your professionalism, dedication and commitment.

I am particularly proud of the superb leadership and performance of the entire 18th Air Force team.

You worked tirelessly behind the scenes and on the flightlines to identify and launch aircraft, alert crews, plan missions, secure diplomatic clearances, load and deliver supplies, provide medical care, comfort exhausted shell-shocked passengers and fly the missions that brought our fellow Americans safely home.



McNABB

Our battle-hardened C-17 Globemaster III demonstrated its workhorse capabilities. Together with our commercial partners, AMC flew 75 missions and 11,200 passengers — all this while sustaining our mobility support requirements for the Global War on Terror. This incredible feat did not go unnoticed.

The distinguished legacy of AMC's evacuation operations continues to grow. You just wrote another chapter in the proud history of our command. As a C-17 pilot said, "this was an once-in-a-lifetime experience ... some of the most rewarding flying you can do."

To the untrained eye, you made it look effortless. However, I know and our civilian and military leaders understand how challenging and dynamic the mission was. Our State Department colleagues and the evacuees deeply appreciate your service and dedication.

You've proven why I can unequivocally and proudly tell the Congress, combatant commanders and our secretary and chief of staff of the Air Force that AMC is one of our nation's most precious crown jewels.

Every two minutes, every day, 365 days a year an AMC aircraft comes and goes from a flightline around the world. That can only happen because of your selfless service, unwavering dedication and uncompromising professionalism. No other country, no other nation's Air Force, no other command has the capability to provide responsive global reach with the uncompromising standard of excellence like the men and women of AMC ... no one comes close!

On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you and salute your superb accomplishments. It's a privilege to be your commander and an honor to serve with you. Stay focused — we never know when the call for help will come again.



Photos by Abner Guzman

## Food and fun

(Above top) Retired Gen. Don Brown, left, speaks with Tom Hansen during the Retiree Affairs Office annual picnic at Holiday Park recently.

(Above) RAO volunteers work their way through the buffet line during the picnic.





# Airmen act as Air Force ambassadors

## SECAF says communication skills key to AF success

By  
Michael Wynne  
Secretary of the Air Force

**Editor's note:** The following is a letter to Airmen recently released by the secretary of the Air Force on the importance of effective communication.

Because of our Airmen, the United States Air Force is the best air and space force in the world, and we're gaining leadership in cyberspace. Yet many citizens do not fully realize what you do and the sacrifices you make every day. Because you do your jobs so well, most Americans simply don't think about the Air Force's contribution to the Global War on Terror — to include the efforts of those of you serving on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

To get this message out, we've embarked on an enhanced strategic communication program. Our strategic communication efforts will build better

relationships with key audiences and the support that is critical to operational success, force modernization and the development of our most precious resource: Airmen.

Our major enhancement is you. The success of this effort will rely on making every Airman an ambassador for our Air Force, at home and abroad. Your stories resonate the most with local newspapers, schools and rotary clubs. The American public looks up to you as a model of integrity, and by sharing your experiences you are the best spokesmen for our Air Force.

This responsibility means that Airmen must understand air, space and cyberspace power and how the Air Force contributes to the Nation's defense. To assist you, we will soon distribute "The Air Force Story," which will provide you with information to discuss with family, friends and the public.

Those Airmen who have deployed should have an "Airman's Card," available from your commander or Public Affairs office. This card will help guide your communication efforts. It

reminds you that when telling your story, "You represent the Air Force, its values and its image. Be honest, candid and stay within your area of expertise."

The new Air Force advertising campaign, "Do Something Amazing," harnesses the power of your individual story. These television and Internet videos feature our outstanding Airmen describing the contributions they make every day to our nation's defense. One person's story carries the hopes and dreams of a new generation of Airmen and confirms the public's belief that we serve on their behalf.

I encourage you to show your pride and share both your personal story and the Air Force story with others. Your active involvement in this communications strategy will help the public better understand their Air Force and the contribution we make to the nation's security every day.

You are the finest Airmen the world has ever seen. Be proud of yourself, your Air Force and your heritage. Our Air Force is counting on you to communicate your story like no one else can.



Photos by Aric Becker

### Sweet treats

(Above) Members of the Officers' Spouses' Club answer questions about the organization, while they serve ice cream for sundaes during the group's ice cream social and membership drive at Holiday Park recently. The event was a way for those interested in the organization to find out more information and get to know current club members.

(Right) A member of the OSC scoops ice cream out of a container, while a child makes an ice cream sundae.



# Symposium gives helpful information to SNCOs

By  
Tyler Hemstreet  
Staff writer

Because the move in rank from technical sergeant to master sergeant brings with it more responsibilities, base officials put on a Senior Noncommissioned Officer Symposium Aug. 7-11 here to help Airmen prepare for what lies ahead.

Helping newly promoted senior noncommissioned officers learn many things they need to know was the goal of the week-long symposium, said Master Sgt. Mark Yurkovich, one of the symposium's instructors from the 62nd Medical Support Squadron.

"We're tiering it down for them so they get the whole perspective," he said. "We want to make sure they start off on the right foot in their careers [because] when you put on that stripe you don't know everything that you should know."

Newly-promoted master serg-

eants were given the opportunity to listen to lectures on topics such as SNCO responsibilities, mentoring and counseling, as well as maintaining discipline, leadership and personal financial management.

While many in attendance were already familiar with what encompasses senior military management, several Airmen said they received a good refresher course in how this new level of management works.

"It enlightens you to a lot of things that go on at this level," said Master Sgt. Brad Nelson, 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "[The information] has been a bit of an eye-opener."

Sergeant Nelson said he also enjoyed the portion of the symposium that focused on enforcing military customs and courtesies, which also struck a chord with Master Sgt. Melissa Caffrey, 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron.

"It's a good way to get you re-blued," she said. "We start getting too comfortable and we need a refresher course. That way you

**"It's a good way to get you re-blued ... That way you don't forget what you represent."**

— Master Sgt. Melissa Caffrey  
62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron

don't forget what you represent."

The leadership and discipline principals expressed in some of the forums heightened her level of awareness, which was something she said she would take back to the workplace, said Sergeant Caffrey.

In an effort to reconnect and put some active mentorship into the event, the new SNCOs spent the final segments of one of their days on a 7.5 mile run with some first-term Airmen.

"I thought the run was great," Sergeant Nelson said. "[It was] good team building."

Master Sgt. Andrew Goodnight, 62nd Medical Operations

Squadron, said the course presenters' zeal stood out to him.

"I was impressed with the drive [the speakers displayed] to be a part of that NCO team," he said.

In addition to attaining another level of professional military education, the symposium was positive in that it also stressed the importance of a civilian education, said Master Sgt. Ron Edgington, 62nd Airlift Wing legal office.

"When you bring in that education to go along with the [professional military education], it does more for your whole development," he said.

The symposium also gave the new SNCOs a chance to hear from those on the SNCO promotion board.

Master Sgt. Patrick McCarty, 8th Airlift Squadron, said the presentation from the promotion board increased his understanding of promotion boards as well as other topics.

"If you want to go farther, [the symposium] laid out what needs to be done," he said.

The U.S. military

# AROUND THE WORLD



Photo by Airman Christopher Griffin

**EIELSON AIR BASE, Alaska** — Airman 1st Class Kristin Ferris positions herself in the brush during an exercise Aug. 8. Airman Ferris is one of five enlisted female snipers in the Air Force. She is assigned to the 354th Security Forces Squadron. (AFPN)



Photo by Master Sgt. Orville Desjarlais Jr.

**AFGHANISTAN** — Staff Sgt. Eric Mathiasen checks an Afghan man's blood pressure during an exam at a forward operating base clinic recently. Sergeant Mathiasen is a medic with the Tarin Kowt Provincial Reconstruction Team. (AFPN)



Photo by Capt. Brent Davis

**MOFFETT FEDERAL AIRFIELD, Calif.** — Tech. Sgts. Paul Tatar, left, and Tom Kocis prepare a boom nozzle configuration for a specially-modified C-130H Hercules Aug. 7 in support of the Safe Seas 2006 oil-spill response exercise in San Francisco. The sergeants are aerial spray maintenance technicians with Air Force Reserve Command's 910th Airlift Wing at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio. (AFPN)



Photo by Senior Airman Mike Meares

**SOTO CANO AIR BASE, Honduras** — Staff Sgt. Rafael Melendez and military working dog, Hoston, patrol the flightline recently. Sergeant Melendez and Hoston help prevent the transport of illegal narcotics through Central America. (AFPN)



# Calling Sgt. DoLittle ...

By  
David Kellogg  
Staff writer

When Soldiers and Airmen get the call to be deployed or transferred to another base, they must ensure that their pets are ready to go.

The McChord Veterinary Treatment Facility makes sure taking care of pets isn't overlooked, said Dr. Brian Neir, a veterinarian at the facility. Approving about 800 pets for world travel sums up what the veterinary treatment facility accomplishes on a grand scale.

Even though the clinic doesn't hospitalize animals overnight or conduct surgeries because Dr. Neir is the only full-time veteri-

narian at the facility, the veterinary clinic, which serves both Fort Lewis and McChord, is always busy, said Dr. Neir. For this reason, he said people should stop by to schedule appointments because the office phone sometimes forwards callers straight to voicemail.

"It's not always that way, but right now we're very short-staffed," he said.

There are also Army veterinarians who work at the clinic as well, but they only work part time and are often occupied approving the quality of food served and sold on McChord and Fort Lewis, said Army Capt. Scott Goldman, a veterinary Army corps officer.

Generally, the veterinary clinic sees between 45 and 60 pets a day, Dr. Neir said. Most of the visits are for basic health check-ups and for prescriptions. Some of the tests the clinic offers include blood work and X-rays, feline

leukemia test, feline immunodeficiency virus test, canine heartworm test and microchip insertion.

The veterinary clinic also offers health certificates for people who are traveling with their pets.

The wife of a deployed military member planned to travel with her cat, Soxy, to her home in Ohio, but the status of the trip seemed uncertain because the member was afraid her cat had intestinal worms. However, after a visit to the veterinary clinic, everything was fine, she said.

"I think [the clinic] is great, I'm glad [the clinic] is here," she said.

People can find out more information about the services the veterinary clinic provides or make an appointment by calling 982-3951 or stopping by Bldg. 768.

# Vet clinic serves bases' furry friends



Sergeant Lopez comforts Harley while Captain Goldman takes a temperature reading.



Army Sgt. Lewis Lopez and his dogs Harley and Copper wait to be seen during a visit to McChord's Veterinary Clinic.



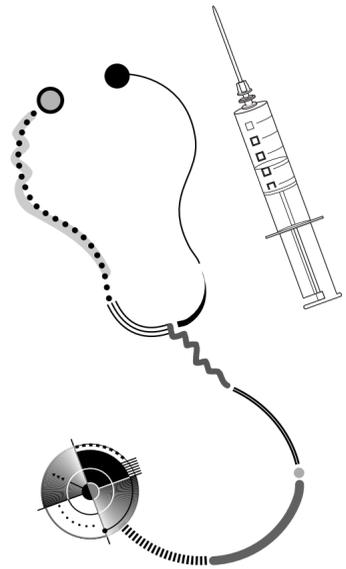
(Above) Army Spc. Thomas Reha examines his patient, Captain Morgan, during an appointment at McChord's Veterinary Clinic.



(Left) Sergeant Lopez holds his dog, Harley, while McChord veterinarian Capt. Scott Goldman checks his weight.



Clinic receptionist Celia McCann assists Sergeant Lopez with his paperwork during his recent visit to McChord's Veterinary Clinic.



Sergeant Lopez and his dogs Harley and Copper visit the veterinary clinic in Bldg. 768.

# Team McChord hosts, instructs Australian Airmen

## 24 Aussies learn C-17 avionics before taking aircraft Down Under

By  
Tyler Hemstreet  
Staff writer

Training 24 members of the Royal Australian Air Force on the avionics of the C-17 Globemaster III before the delivery of the country's newly-purchased aircraft in December was a chance for McChord to shine on an international scale.

And for McChord's 373rd Training Squadron, Detachment 12 instructors, it was a challenge they tackled head-on.

"We had to develop a course from scratch to mold to their specialties," said Senior Master Sgt. Douglas Levesque, a 373rd TRS, Det. 12 chief.

In the Air Force, Airmen in six different specialties are required to maintain the C-17. However, the Australians only have two. That meant five different instructors needed to be included in writing and teaching the course, with each focusing on a different expertise, said Sergeant Levesque.

The compressed timetable for teaching and scheduling the course also presented a challenge for the training crew.

"To write a new course, it usually takes six to eight months," said Tech. Sgt. Kevin Elmore, 373rd TRS.

"We did it in two. It was quite an accomplishment — these guys worked really hard."

The courses, which started July 31 and run until mid October, are currently being taught in four different shifts, two during the day and two on swing shift. The class size has also been increased to accommodate the circumstances, said Sergeant Levesque. The normal ratio of students to instructor is four to one, but the courses teaching the Australians are six to one.

"Scheduling that was quite a challenge," Sergeant Levesque said. "We usually schedule classes three months in advance. My guys did a great job developing the course."

The students concurred with Sergeant Levesque.

"There's been a lot of information," said Royal Australian Air Force Flight Sergeant Scott Biddell. "But the instructional process has made it easy."

While the Australians are receiving their avionics instruction at McChord, they will get their mechanical instruction at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., Sergeant Levesque said.

"[McChord] is the most impressive training facility we've ever been to," Sergeant Biddell said.

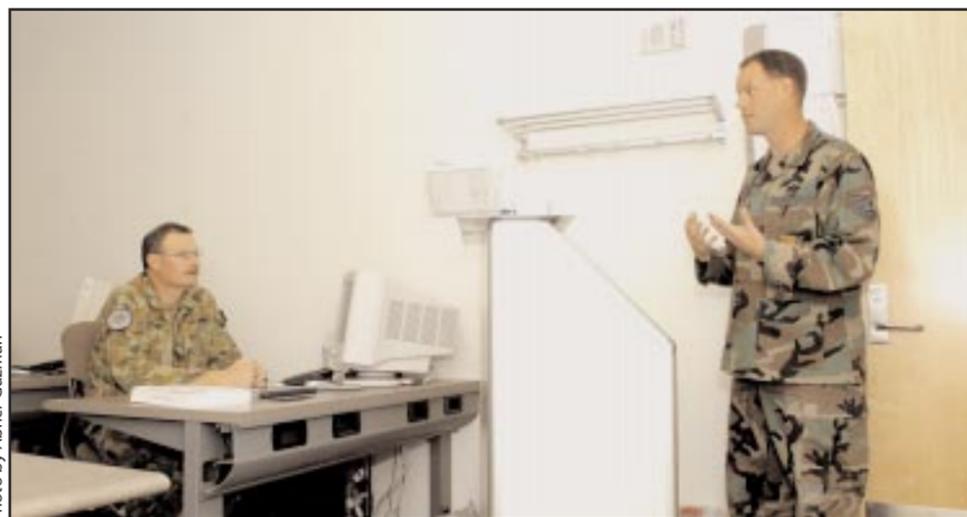


Photo by Abner Guzman

**Tech. Sgt. Kevin Elmore, 373rd Training Squadron, Detachment 12, right, gives a presentation on the C-17 Globemaster III to a class of Australian Airmen at McChord recently.**

In addition to the training aspect of the operation, there has also been a sharing of cultures — further strengthening the bond between the two countries, said Sergeant Levesque. Aussie phrases such as "G'Day Mate" and the accent itself has grown on the McChord crew, he said.

The Australians have also taken a liking to the training team and McChord itself.

"It's a whole new experience as far as the size and scale of the opera-

tions," Sergeant Biddle said, comparing McChord to RAAF Base Amberly, 600 miles north of Sydney.

Based on the success of the training program so far, there is a possibility that a McChord training crew could fly to Australia in the future to assist in training on the flightline, another step in strengthening the bond between the two countries, said Sergeant Levesque.

"We felt the importance of making this a success," Sergeant Levesque said. "This has been great for us."



# Mt. St. Helens re-opens to hikers, thrill seekers

By

Capt. Greg Hignite  
62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**Editor's note:** The following is the next in a series of articles highlighting Washington's great outdoors. Articles in the Northwest Airlifter featuring information on state parks do not imply Air Force endorsement.

Though thousands of hikes in the Cascades offer breathtaking views of roaring rivers, fields of wildflowers and stunning mountain-top views, only one trail leads hikers to the rim of an active volcano.

At a height of 8,365 feet, Mount St. Helens may not be the highest summit in Washington, but those brave enough to scramble to the summit are rewarded with unbelievable views of a volcano that is growing right before your eyes.

Unlike other dormant volcanoes in the region such as Mount Rainier, Mount St. Helens is growing at nearly a foot a day by some geological estimates. The growth in the center of the mountain causes rock slides, steam vents and, most noticeably, an enormous slab of rock being heaved up by pressure deep within the mountain's cauldron.

In 1980, Mount St. Helens violently erupted blasting the top and much of the core of the mountain down the Toutle River valley. The eruption leveled 1,313 feet of rock at the summit and gouged a huge scoop from the center of the mountain. Today's growth is occurring in that void, which allows hikers to climb high above on the rim and look down on the growth.

The volcanic activity forced U.S. Forest Service officials to close the trail to hikers in October 2004 to ensure hiker safety. The hiking ban was lifted recently after it was deemed safe enough for people to re-enter the area.

The chance to climb an active volcano enticed a small team of McChord Airmen to recently hike to the summit.

"The chance to see Mother Nature building a mountain is something few people get to see," said David Kellogg, 62nd Airlift Wing.

Mr. Kellogg and his team traveled to the mountain a day early to spend the night camping at Climber's Bivouac.

"We pushed off from the campsite around 5 a.m. to get an early start. We enjoyed cool temperatures and an awesome sunrise," he said.

The trail to the summit is five miles long and climbs more than 4,500 feet. Hikers return on the same path so the round-trip hike is 10 miles long and takes most people 12 hours to complete.

Once on the summit hikers enjoy stunning views of not only the volcano directly beneath them, but off in the distance Mount Rainier, Mount Adams and Mount Hood are clearly visible.

The route down the mountain goes much



Photos by Capt. Greg Hignite

## Local Airmen keep fit on volcano

(Above) Karla Hignite, spouse of a McChord Airman, looks out at the center of Mount St. Helens from its summit recently. Mrs. Hignite, along with a team of McChord Airmen, hiked to the summit as the area was reopened to hikers in July.

faster as hikers can hop and slide down the pumice slope.

"It's a lot like running down a sand dune at the beach," said Mr. Kellogg.

Hikers can also avoid large sections of the boulder field by walking down ribbons of snow that remain on the mountain throughout the summer.

"We trekked down the snow field and quickly descended the mountain back to the forest below. It saved us time and more importantly was easier on our knees and ankles," he said.

The U.S. Forest Service allows 100 hikers to climb the volcano each day. Permits must be purchased in advance by visiting <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/mount-st-helens>. Most weekends are already booked for the remainder of the summer but there are still spots available during weekdays. Permits are \$22 per person and are non-refundable.

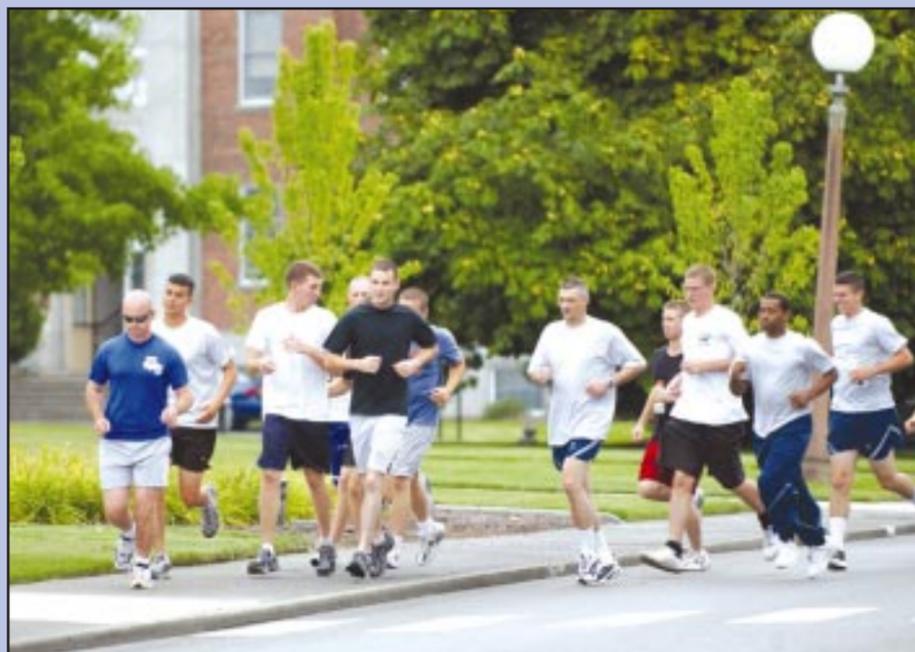
"It was totally worth it," said Mr. Kellogg. "The hike seemed a little daunting at first but it's very manageable if you take it slow and pace yourself."



A group of McChord Airmen descend the volcano's pumice slope. Mount St. Helens is estimated to be growing about a foot a day.



Photos by Abner Guzman



## McChord marathon

(Above) Chief Master Sgt. Russell Kuck, 62nd Airlift Wing command chief, leads a group of newly-promoted master sergeants on a run during the senior noncommissioned officer symposium.

(Left) Airmen congratulate each other after finishing the 7.5 mile run.

**Base announcements**

Want to get the word out? Visit base announcements on McChord's Intranet at <https://intranet.mcchord.af.mil/Base%Announcements> to post information for and find out about upcoming events.

**PCS workshop**

McChord's Airman and Family Readiness Center is having its Smooth Move workshop from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Wednesday in Bldg. 551. Representatives from several base agencies will be on hand to answer questions. To RSVP, call 982-2695.

**Blood drive**

There will be a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Aug. 25 in Bldg. 1210.

**Scholarship**

The McChord Chief's Group is offering scholarships to active duty, enlisted personnel in grades E-1 through E-5 who are pursuing mid-level and advanced degrees. Scholarship applications may be obtained from the base education center, Bldg. 851, any McChord active duty chief master sergeant or the McChord Chief's Group Intranet site at <https://62msg.mcchord.af.mil/chiefs/default.aspx>. Scholarship applications are due by Aug. 28 and can be sent via e-mail to [rodney.billinghurst@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:rodney.billinghurst@mcchord.af.mil) or given to your group superintendent or any chief master sergeant. For more information, call Chief Master Sgt. Rod Billinghurst at 982-7071.

**Absentee ballot**

Servicemembers, their family members and overseas citizens who have not yet received their state absentee

ballots may use the federal write-in absentee ballot to vote for candidates in the federal, state and local runoff elections Tuesday. Ballots should be received by 6 p.m. Sept. 5. The FWAB is available from unit voting assistance officers, at embassies, consulates and the Federal Voting Assistance Web site at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/ofwab.pdf>.

**Voting hotline**

A voting action hotline has been set up for questions and information about voting at 982-VOTE. Information on voting is also available on McChord's Voting Assistance Intranet Web site at <https://62aw.mcchord.af.mil/VotingAssistance/default.asp>, the Federal Voting Assistance Web site at <http://www.fvap.gov>, by calling Maj. Rob Schmidt at 982-9937 or speaking with a unit voting representative.

**Investment seminar**

There will be a free investment seminar from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 8 at Fort Lewis' American Lake Club. Topics that will be discussed include investment, retirement planning, credit management and predatory lending. For more information, call Gary Wertz at 967-3525.

**POW/MIA luncheon**

This year's Prisoner of War and Missing in Action Luncheon is scheduled for 11 a.m. Sept. 14 at McChord's Clubs and Community Center. For more information, call Master Sgt. Tammy Wagendorf at 982-0327.

**Air Force Ball**

McChord's Air Force Ball is scheduled for Sept. 16. For more information, call Staff

Sgt. Jennifer Gillen at 982-1940.

**Cub Scouts troop**

There will be a sign-up for Cub Scouts for boys in first through fifth grades at 6 p.m. Sept. 19 at McChord's Escape Zone. For more information, call Capt. Ernie Fox at 982-8793.

**Advisory board**

The next Parent Advisory Board meeting is Sept. 20 at 4 p.m. in the Bldg. 580 staff lounge. Parents of children who attend the child development center, family child care or school age care programs are encouraged to attend. The PAB also needs new representatives. If you are interested in becoming a representative or would like to learn more about CDC/FCC/SAC initiatives, please attend the meetings.

**Case lot sale**

The base commissary is having a case lot sale from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sept. 28-30.

**Vehicle decals**

Department of Defense vehicle decals are issued from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at the visitor control center. Decals may also be obtained 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday in Bldg. 100, Suite 1001E. Reservists may obtain decals in Bldg. 100, Suite 1001E, only during Reserve weekends from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. People must have their current vehicle registration, driver's license, proof of insurance and DOD identification card to obtain a decal. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Charles Kidwell at 982-2256 or 982-1995.



# Faith and Worship Programs

*For more information, call the chapel support center at 982-5556.*

The following chapel programs take place at the base chapel support center, Bldg. 746, unless otherwise noted.

- **Faith Formation and Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults** are 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Sept. through April.
- **Protestant Men's Bible**

- study** is 6:15 a.m. Thursdays.
- **Combat Brown Bag Bible study** is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays.
- **Adult Bible study** will resume in September.
- **Jewish Torah School Classes** for adults and children are 9:45 a.m. Sundays at Fort Lewis, Chapel Five.

Schedule of worship services

**Catholic Services:**  
All Catholic Services are in Chapel Two  
Daily Mass Tuesday - Friday 11:30 a.m.  
Saturday: 4 p.m. Confession  
5 p.m. Mass  
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Mass  
11 a.m. Mass

**Protestant Services:**  
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Liturgical Worship: Chapel One  
9:45 a.m. Sunday School for all ages: chapel support center  
11 a.m. Traditional Worship: Chapel One  
11 a.m. Contemporary service: chapel support center

**Jewish Services:**  
Friday: 7 p.m. Fort Lewis Chapel  
Corner of 12th St. & Liggett 966-8949  
Led by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Avi Weiss

**Orthodox Activities:**  
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy, St. Nicholas Church, 15th & Yakima, Tacoma

**Other services:**  
Orthodox Christian Community, Cascade Chapel, Fort Lewis  
Sundays: 8:45 a.m. pre-Communion prayers  
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Confessions are by appointment; call Father John Anderson at 967-1717 or 906-6843, or e-mail [father.anderson@us.army.mil](mailto:father.anderson@us.army.mil).





Photos by Senior Airman Garrett Hothan



## McChord Snowbird

(Above) Capt. Matt Long, 8th Airlift Squadron, shows off the cabin of a C-17 Globemaster III to Tristan Shelby at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, during the base's air show and open house, Arctic Thunder 2006, Sunday.

(Left) Visitors watch a demonstration while standing outside of one of McChord's C-17s. The featured performers for the air show were the Navy's Blue Angels and the Army's Golden Knights.

