



Thule Times



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

April 2003

Commanders Action Line

Call x3400 if you have questions or comments about Thule.

Reminder

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season begins April 15

For more information, call Master Sgt. Corey Hewitt, finance, at x3881. Also, see story on Page 3.

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**Perpetual
Sunlight begins
April 23**

**Skiing and
Tubing at P-Mtn
next two wkds!**



Lt. Col. Shawn Barnes, 12th Space Warning Squadron commander, explains the history of the Ballistic Missile Early-Warning System to visiting members of the Greenlandic Parliament. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers)

Parliament Visits

Thule hosts 32 parliamentarians prior to debate on missile defense

**By 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers
821st Air Base Group Public Affairs**

In preparation for the April 7 hearing in Nuuk on U.S. missile defense plans, 22 Danish and 10 Greenlandic Parliament members visited Thule's early-warning radar site April 6.

The public hearing in Greenland's capital is focused on a U.S. proposal to include the 12th Space Warning Squadron's Ballistic Missile Early-Warning System, known as BMEWS, as a sensor in the overall national missile defense architecture.

Debate has been ongoing in Denmark and Greenland since President Bush's Dec. 17 announcement to begin fielding initial missile defense ca-

pabilities in 2004-2005—capabilities that would include Thule's BMEWS site. The United Kingdom has already approved the use of the BMEWS site at RAF Fylingdales in northern England; Denmark is expected to vote on the proposal in May.

"We have different views on this issue," said Danish Parliament Defense Committee chairman Helge Adam Moller, addressing fellow parliamentarians visiting Thule. "I don't know what your decision will be, but I know it will be a wise (informed) one."

The parliamentarians received a first-hand look at the inner-workings of Thule's radar and the men and women who operate it. Briefings in-

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Members of the Danish and Greenlandic Parliaments pose for a group shot on the Dundas Peninsula April 6. The Parliamentarians visited Thule April 5-7 prior to a trip to Nuuk, Greenland's capital, where they engaged in public debate over allowing Thule's radar to be used as a sensor for U.S. missile defense. (Photo by Capt. Greg Marty)

Recent visits key in missile defense debates

By Col. Lou Christensen
821st Air Base Group commander

This past month, Team Thule has hosted the Foreign Minister of Denmark, the Premier of Greenland, members of Danish and Greenlandic Parliaments, members of Danish, Greenlandic and European media and at least four defense attaches from Hungary, France, Denmark and Poland, in addition to a small army of personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen.

You may be wondering why Thule is such a popular place to visit. It certainly can't be considered a resort area, despite the spectacularly mild and sunny days we've experienced recently.

Dec. 17, 2002, President Bush made an announcement outlining the United States' intent to field a limited missile defense capability. Part of the capability requires the Ballistic Missile Early Warning Radars at Thule and RAF Fylingdales, United Kingdom, to be used as part of the sensor network to track and target inbound intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with weapons of mass destruction fired by rogue nations or organizations.

The U.K. provided an affirmative response to the request in February. Denmark plans a formal response to the United States by May on the issue and very much desires a widespread mandate of approval. This desire has run head-on into the evolving Danish-Greenlandic relationship. Subsequently, the U.S. request to use the Thule radar in the missile initiative has become a hotly debated focal point

in Denmark and Greenland.

Compounding the issue are lingering misperceptions in the Danish and Greenlandic public, from the days of Thule as a bastion of the Cold War. Since the Cold War ended, the mission at Thule is no longer shrouded in secrecy and mystery. The U.S. military's recent tradition has been to be as open and honest as operational constraints would allow us to be.

Team Thule hosted all these visitors in an effort to be "honest brokers" and assist and facilitate the public debate desired by Denmark and Greenland. The U.S. ambassador (Stuart Bernstein) in Copenhagen has identified the missile defense initiative as currently, "the most important issue on the Danish-U.S. bilateral agenda."

I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your part in presenting the Thule story and the planning and execution of the numerous visits we've hosted this past month. All of you, American, Dane, Greenlander, and Canadian, have made Thule look good and your hospitality and professionalism has significantly contributed to the public discussion that is taking place.

We can take pride knowing we have done our part in furthering U.S. homeland security (and eventually security for all our allies, as the technology gains maturity) and implementing the vital missile defense initiative. I join Ambassador Bernstein in a recent message he sent to the U.S. secretaries of state and defense in saying, "Well Done, Team Thule!"

TSP open season begins April 15

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFP)—Civilian and military employees can sign up for or change Thrift Savings Plan accounts during "open season" from April 15 to June 30.

"TSP is an easy, long-term retirement savings plan that everyone should consider," said Maj. Alesandra Stokstad, chief of the Air Force Personnel Center's contact center here. "Current account holders might be interested, too, in transferring money from one fund to another -- the TSP folks are set up to handle that."

"Either way it's a great supplement to military and civilian retirement plans," said Stokstad. "It's important to note that TSP is not limited to investing in stocks. People can choose safer government securities as well."

"Employees already contributing to the TSP are encouraged to review their TSP plan and account balances," said Janet Thomas of the center's civilian benefits and entitlements service team, "as the open-season period is the best time to open an account or make changes to an existing one."

TSP offers investors the chance for lower taxes each year they contribute while not having to pay taxes on earnings until they reach retirement.

"You can take out loans and make withdrawals from your TSP account," said Thomas. "And you can keep your account even if you leave military or federal service."

Investment money is deposited directly from

TSP

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Parliamentarians

(Continued from Page 1)

cluded the history of the BMEWS radar as well as information regarding current upgrades to the circa 1970's technology used at the site.

"The Thule radar has been a critical missile warning and space surveillance sensor for over 40 years," said Lt. Col. Shawn Barnes, 12th Space Warning Squadron commander. "We look forward to continued close cooperation with our Danish and Greenlandic allies as they consider the U.S. proposal to upgrade BMEWS Site I and include it in a missile defense architecture."

This visit is important to the public debate, said Jensine

Berthelsen, chairperson for Greenland's foreign policy committee. "I feel better informed now that I've seen the site," she said.

Thule's BMEWS site continues a 40-year mission of early warning for ballistic missile attacks. Furthermore, the site also assists with tracking nearly 8,500 objects—some no larger than a softball—orbiting the Earth.

Thule is also home to Detachment 3, 22nd Space Operations Squadron; the detachment is one of eight sites in the Air Force Satellite Control Network. The network is responsible for performing telemetry, tracking and commanding operations for more than 120 Department of Defense satellites.

Along with briefings regarding the base's mission, the parlia-

mentarians toured the Dundas peninsula, an area of land adjacent to and formerly part of the Thule Defense Area. A memorandum of agreement signed Feb. 20 in Nuuk marked the return of Dundas to Greenland Home Rule.

Thule's economic impact on Greenland is nearly \$17 million (140 million Danish kroner) per year. The base also operates a vocational education program for Greenlanders and conducts various community programs with the city of Qaanaaq, located 75 miles north of the base.

"We are a good neighbor and look forward to further developing our relationship with the surrounding communities," said Col. Lou Christensen, 821st Air Base Group commander.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Lt. Col. Hugh Amundson—April 27

Tech. Sgt. Troy Beringer—April 22

Tech. Sgt. Armando DaSilva—April 20

Master Sgt. Hendrix Dickens—April 20

Senior Airman Annalisa Hernandez—

April 5

2nd Lt. Margaret Krase—April 5

Airman Basic Jeffrey Lathrom—April 10

2nd Lt. Brock Lusk—April 7

Senior Airman Mary Moats—April 26

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Sherman—April 9

Master Sgt. Michael Shonka—April 11

HAWC opens, Thule gets WarFit

By 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers
821st Air Base Group
Public Affairs

Nestled on the top floor of an old converted hangar that functions as Thule's gymnasium is the military's northernmost Health and Wellness Center, which opened for business March 28.

The HAWC will provide health promotion information and initiatives to some 800 U.S., Cana-



Col. Lou Christensen, 821st Air Base Group commander, officially opened Thule's Health and Wellness Center March 28. (Photo by Capt. Beth Ferrill)

dian, Danish, and Greenlandic personnel who call Thule Air Base home.

The center is part of "Fix

Thule," an initiative that began when former Air Force Space Command commander, Gen. Ed. Eberhart, sent members of his staff to the base and identified more than \$100 million of needed improvements for Thule. The \$380,000 Health and Wellness Center was a priority project in bringing the 50-year-old base into the 21st century.

"Part of our job in the military is to maintain a high-level of fitness," said Col. Lou Christensen, 821st Air Base Group commander. "The Health and Wellness Center is a tool to help people do their job."

The center will offer a variety of programs, to include health assessment and personalized exercise prescriptions, as well as smoking cessation classes, nutrition and cooking classes. Stress management is a focus for the relaxation room, complete with a massage chair. The HAWC is also home to a program Thule has had a long-standing waiver for: Cycle Ergometry Testing.

The waiver may have provided a safe haven for some, but only temporarily. Capt. Fred Clare, health promotions man-

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Capt. Fred Clare, health promotions manager, shows Tech. Sgt. John Mannino what life would be like 17 pounds heavier. Clare taught a nutrition class during WarFit Day, March 28. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers)

HAWC

(Continued from Page 4)

ager and medical quality assurance evaluator, said, "Some people would come to Thule for a year and then leave totally unprepared for their new assignment because they'd be overweight and out-of-shape." One goal of the HAWC is to make a healthy lifestyle the norm.

The HAWC ribbon cutting ceremony occurred in conjunction with Air Force Space Command's WarFit Day, a command-wide day to promote fitness. Some of the activities conducted during Thule's WarFit day, such as Fit Ball, a workout designed around a large exercise ball, and TheraRobics, aerobics conducted with resistance bands, will continue to be offered by the HAWC. The HAWC staff will become a focal point for implementing WarFit here.

WarFit is an AFSPC program aimed toward ensuring people maintain a high-level of fitness, and ultimately, a high-level of readiness.

"The Air Force figured out a long time ago that it's a lot cheaper and a lot better to address and encourage a healthy lifestyle as opposed to treating the outcomes of a unhealthy lifestyle," said Christensen.

WarFit testing, which includes cycle ergometry, push-ups, sit-ups, and a body-fat measurement, is scheduled to begin in late April at the HAWC. The composite score WarFit testing provides is a much greater health assessment than fitness programs in the past, according to Tech. Sgt. Sean Bennett, Bio/Public Health quality assurance evaluator.

When it comes to assessing a person's health and then prescribing a proper fitness, exercise and nutrition regimen, Henrik Juhl, HAWC director, likes to emphasize a popular advertisement slogan: "Just do it!"

Juhl said he's happy to teach



Lean on me? Tech. Sgt. Terri Hartmann shows Tech. Sgt. Phil Lindenmuth an exercise during Thule's WarFit Day, March 28. Other activities included Fitball and TheraRobics. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers)

people proper nutrition, how to exercise and how to develop an evolving training program that fits personal needs; however, "the HAWC can only help those who first choose to help themselves."

All people who work at Thule may use the HAWC—civilian con-

tractors may use it on a space-available basis.

Greenland Contractors, the company responsible for most of Thule's support functions, began construction of the facility in November 2002 and finished in March.



The Greg Brady Show's roving reporter, "Mega Beth," poses with her latest interviewees, Urban Moves, a dance troupe that performed at Thule in late March. (Photo by Capt. Greg Marty)

"We're dancers, not cheerleaders"

WJFM's roving reporter, "Mega Beth," recently interviewed members of the dance troupe Urban Moves for the increasingly popular, primetime variety show, The Greg Brady Show. What follows are the excerpts from this exclusive interview:

Mega Beth: [Cheering in the background] I'm here with 5 of the Urban Moves dancers. We are at T minus 1 hour and 58 minutes until their performance at the TOW Club.

MB: In the studio we have Kelly, Pam, Jenn, Stephanie and "T."

MB: How many dancers came to Thule?

Stephanie: There are 12 of us total.

MB: How long have you all been dancing to-

gether?

Stephanie: Some of us four years, but let's see in this room right now its four years max, some three and two years.

Jenn: On our team, experience varies—from dancers who have been training their whole lives to those with cheerleading backgrounds and gymnasts or all sorts. Even some with ballet or hip-hop. And we all come together and give our talents together to the team. We learn a lot from Stephanie.[the director of the team].

MB: Who is the newest member?

"T": The newest members would be Dana and

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Jennifer performs a ballet move during the Urban Moves dance show. (Photo by Mega Beth)

Urban Moves

(Continued from Page 6)

Skipper (Jessica). Those are the two that are the newest. But as far as touring, Natalie is also new.

MB: How would you describe your style?

Pam: Wide variety? We pretty much try to hit every kind of dance. We've got an opening section with more jazz style, then a hip-hop section and a lyrical section with more like ballet. It is a variety show with dancing and crowd entertainment/involvement activities. The only type of music that I don't think we covered is country.

MB: Who does your choreography? Do the dancers get to have inputs?



Senior Airman Fred White, 821st Support Squadron, participates in a push-up competition during the Urban Moves' performance at the TOW Club. (Photo by Mega Beth)

Kelly: Stephanie does most of our choreography, but we all help out as well.

MB: Where else have you been on other Department of Defense tours?

Kelly: We've been to the Balkans, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Germany, Italy, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, and Texas (but that's not out of the country!).

MB: How does Thule compare?

Kelly: This is definitely the coldest. But the one thing I noticed the day we got here that this base has the best recreational facilities and best living quarters...definitely top notch.

MB: What did you expect Greenland to be like? Are you surprised?

Stephanie: I expected it to be really, really cold. I thought it was going to be green! I don't know...I was surprised at how personable everyone is. Right when we got off the plane, we were greeted by a whole line of people. We've never had that before.

I try to keep an open mind on these trips and I've never been disappointed. Each base is its own unique experience. It is our job to bring a little piece of home to you all. It is not really about us. It is about making you guys happy.

MB: What do you think that most memorable part of this trip will be?

Jenn: Well we've only been here for two days so far, but last night we had a blast. We had dinner with the officers and each of the officers sponsored a dancer. After the dinner we played Danish Pool. I'm going to master that before I leave! I stunk at first, but I snuck a practice in today so all of you out there are in for it! But truthfully getting to know you all is always the best part. I hope to meet all you out there that are listening...you better come to the show!

MB: Thanks for the interview and it was nice to meet you all....

Got a story idea? Submit it to the Thule Times at
Thuletimes@thule.af.mil

Manpower reductions shared AF Space Command-wide

By Maj. Sean McKenna
AFSPC Public Affairs

Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.—Air Force Space Command will trim 1,125 employee positions over the next seven years as part of an Air Force initiative to realign more than 13,000 active-duty and civilian manpower authorizations by 2010.

The AFSPC plan calls for 756 positions to be eliminated across the command by the end of September 2004 – 314 civilian and 442 military positions. By the end of September 2009, the number of eliminated positions will grow to 1,125 – 349 civilian and 776 military. What positions will be trimmed and at what locations should be determined by the end of March, according to Col. Laurie Carroll, chief of AFSPC's manpower division.

"Historically we've been able to work manpower reductions without causing individuals to lose their jobs, but there are no guarantees," Carroll said. "Each AFSPC base will use a specialized group of personnel programs to minimize the impact on their employees while maintaining the viability of their mission."

These strategies include retraining military members, and offering priority placement and voluntary retirement and separation incentives to civilian employees. The command is also planning to delay or delete some planned initiatives.

Increased operations tempo, workload and security requirements created by the war on terrorism, as well as budget constraints have prompted the Air Force to review its manpower authorizations to create a workforce better prepared to meet future

challenges and missions. The plan is to put more resources into its highest priority missions, including special operations, security and intelligence, which were heavily stressed after Sept. 11, 2001.

"We are committed to minimizing the impact on people as much as possible," Carroll said. "No military member will be involuntarily separated. While we can't absolutely guarantee no civilian worker will lose their job, we're doing everything we can to trim positions without affecting current AFSPC employees. We're concerned about the personal issues of this action more than the personnel issues. We want and need to take care of our people."

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld directed a review of the

Air Force last year to best determine its ability to meet mission requirements. Based on this review, the Air Force directed realignment of more than 13,000 military and civilian manpower authorizations by 2010. Each Air Force major command was given a share of positions to eliminate.

"The restructuring of manpower positions isn't an attempt to reduce the Air Force's personnel strength," Carroll said. "Rather, it's an effort to shape the workforce to meet the future steady state of the Air Force that has evolved since Sept. 11."

The command is taking a programmatic approach to the cuts it has been directed to make, rather than arbitrarily assigning reduction numbers to bases.

FREEZE FRAME!



Emergency response personnel respond to an accident during March's Condor Crest exercise. The exercise is one of many in the way ahead as the group prepares for its Operational Readiness Inspection, currently scheduled in September. (Courtesy photo)

Manpower cuts coming **Reshaping the force never an easy task**

**By Gen. Lance Lord
Commander, Air Force Space Command**

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo.—Over the next seven years, Air Force Space Command will trim 1,125 manpower positions. That is our share of the more than 13,200 reductions the Air Force must make before the end of the decade. Seven hundred and fifty-six of those cuts will come in the next year, so we are exploring proposals to implement the reductions. We will focus on outsourcing, reprogramming or delaying some manpower positions and eliminating lower-priority workload.

With all the rumors out there, I want to assure everyone in Air Force Space Command that this force reshaping is central to the needs of the Air Force, especially in strengthening sorely stressed career fields such as security forces and intelligence.

The command is taking a mission-oriented approach to the cuts it has been directed to make, rather than arbitrarily assigning reduction numbers to bases. We believe a "fair share" spread of the reduction to the field is counterproductive, so we will take a hard look at each mission area rather than taking a percentage of slots

from each unit.

We still have not completely resolved what bases, or career fields, this reduction will come from in AFSPC. Those decisions should be finalized in the next month.

Identified airmen will have the opportunity to retrain while civilians will be eligible for priority placement, voluntary early retirement and voluntary separation incentives. I can't absolutely guarantee that no civilian workers will lose their jobs, but we're doing everything we can to avoid any involuntary separations as a result of this manpower reduction.

Increased operations tempo, workload and security requirements created by the war on terrorism, as well as budget constraints, have prompted the Air Force to review its authorizations to create a workforce better prepared to meet future challenges and missions. Our challenge is to reallocate positions – both military and civilian – to alleviate some of

that workforce stress.

Let me assure you that we will do everything possible to trim positions with a minimal effect on current AFSPC employees. We will do this in part by delaying or deleting some positions slated to be filled in the next year, as well as using attrition and current vacancies. We're concerned about the personal issues of this action more than the personnel issues.

Today's challenges have forced the Air Force to make tough decisions. Shaping the workforce to meet the future steady state of the Air Force that has evolved since Sept. 11 is our top priority. We must do this by making sure manpower authorizations do not exceed the funding Congress has given us.

We will work this issue extremely hard to get answers as soon as possible. We are fully committed to keeping the number of people affected as low as possible without negatively impacting the missions of our bases.

FREEZE FRAME!



A C-130 from New York's 109th Air National Guard makes its final approach into Thule Air Base March 18. The unit is responsible for the Air Force's resupply missions to Antarctica, a dangerous mission requiring special training and certification. The crew that recently visited Thule briefed base leaders on the unit's upcoming training schedule, which takes place in areas throughout Greenland. The unit is the only one in the Department of Defense that flies the LC-130, a "Herc" specially equipped with skis so it can land on arctic terrain. (Photo by Capt. Beth Ferrill)

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain's Corner By Chaplain James Parrish 821st Air Base Group chaplain

With spring comes the assurance that it will soon be warm and all those long awaited outdoor activities can begin again. Thule tripping, softball and golf are waiting to test your skills and endurance.

Along with fun outdoors activities comes rejuvenation and new hope. Spring is the season when trees leaf and grass turns green, soft rain showers and warm nights.

Spring ushers in Easter. For Christians, Easter is the highest holy day in observance of the resurrection of Jesus from his death. In the early church Easter was the day when Christians who had fallen from the fellowship were admitted back into

a good and righteous relationship with the church. Easter was the day when new disciples were baptized into the church. After the baptism the new believers were handed a new set of clothes to symbolize being made into a new creature in Christ. Hence the tradition of wearing new clothes to church on Easter Sunday continues to this very day. The wearing of white on Easter Sunday symbolizes purity; the new garment given to the new baptized believers was a new white robe. For Christian it's new life new hope.

Spring ushers in Passover. Jews all over the world gather on Passover to remember their deliverance from bondage from Pharaoh. When Moses was diplomatically seeking the release of the Hebrew nation from Egypt one of the plagues pronounced

was the spirit of death would take the first born of all the inhabitants of Egypt. Moses instructed the Hebrews how to live through the spirit of death as it passed over their homes and spared the lives of their first-born. (Exodus 12: 1-14). For Jews it's new life new hope

Spring is the reassuring voice that winter is over and new life has begun. There is a realization here at Thule that we're not going to see a lot of trees leafing or grass that will need a regular mowing.

Perhaps for Thule resident the newness that accompanies spring is the opportunity to do something new within. Is there something new you want to bring to your life? Spring is a wonderful time to start something new. It's new life new hope.

FREEZE FRAME!



Lt. Gen. Robert Hinson, Air Force Space Command vice commander, and Gen. Lance Lord, AFSPC commander, make their pledges to the Air Force Assistance Fund. The AFAF donates millions each year to Air Force families in need. Those at Thule who want to make a donation to the AFAF or are looking for more information about available programs, can contact Tech. Sgt. Donna Wansor or Tech. Sgt. Marty Shoobridge.

Springtime in Thule

By Phil Eddy
Weather

This past month of March has been one of the warmest on record for Thule, as could be seen by the vast amounts of "open water" to the West. Normal average temps/high temps for March are -14°F/+35°F, and our current average/high temperatures thus far (as of 25 March) are: +2°F / +38°F with the warmest day being the 5th of March. Our coldest temperature recorded was -26°F on March 1st.

Highest wind speed recorded on-base is 102 knots, and this month we only hit 49 knots on-base with the peak wind off-base of 119 knots, on 3 March. Very little snow fell (less than 1 inch total), while we normally receive around 2 inches.

April should continue to be warmer than normal. April climatology would give us an average temperature of 32°F with a peak temp of 43° and a minimum temperature of -32°F. Peak wind recorded on-base during April is 84 knots.

We are still in the zone of possible winter storms, all month, although the trends over the past 5 years would indicate a less-than-normal risk.

Our last sunrise (when we go to 24 hour sunlight) is on April 23rd and we won't see a sunset again until the night of August 20th - time to break out the cardboard and duct tape!!



Jensine Berthelsen, Greenland's Foreign Policy Committee chairperson, poses with the Dundas Peninsula in the background. A working group is meeting to ensure the Dundas return goes smoothly. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers)

Cop's Corner

By Major Bob Winters
821st Security Forces Squadron commander

A Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of Denmark, Greenland Home Rule and the United States returned the Dundas Peninsula back to Denmark and Greenland Home Rule on the 20th of February this year. Since 1951, the Dundas Peninsula had been part of the Thule Defense Area and since 1953 local Inuits were excluded from permanent settlement. However, in three years time the agreement will allow for the permanent resettlement of residents from the Qaanaaq Community into Dundas Village.

From now until February 2006, the Memorandum of Understanding allows Qaanaaq Community residents to temporarily live in Dundas Village as they have before by requesting permission to do so from the Danish Liaison Office on base. However, what has immediately changed is the total exclusion of Air Force Security Forces from conducting duties in an area now considered part

of Greenland. Jurisdiction and law on the peninsula are now exclusively the responsibility of the Danish Police. While Air Force personnel are still permitted access to the Dundas Peninsula, it is as tourists and not for official reasons.

All of the ramifications of the recent change are the subject of a cross-functional working group currently meeting regularly on base. Representatives include the local Greenland Home Rule Government, Greenland Contractors, Danish Liaison Officer, Danish Police Inspector, and various Air Force agencies. Although major issues regarding Dundas are the responsibility of the highest levels of the governments involved, the working group's goal is to ensure the questions of the base population and the local Qaanaaq Community regarding the Dundas Peninsula's return are answered.

Working with the great sense of teamwork that is indicative of the Team Thule approach, we'll make the return of the Dundas Peninsula as successful as possible for everyone involved.

A lesson in missile defense

By 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers
821st Air Base Group
Public Affairs

As part of ongoing talks between Denmark and Greenland regarding a U.S. proposal to include Thule's radar in the U.S. missile defense initiative, Denmark's foreign minister and the Greenland Home Rule premier visited the base March 10 to tour facilities.

"It's great to be at the top of the world," said Per Stig Moeller, Danish foreign minister, referring to a popular base catchphrase. Today, Moeller traveled to Nuuk, Greenland's capital, to continue discussions with Greenland Home Rule regarding Thule's role in missile defense.

"Missile defense has created concerns for the population of Greenland," said Premier Hans Enoksen. "But, we are willing to make it happen and make it a success. With continued cooperation, we can make this a win-win for all."

The Danish parliament is ex-



Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller describes how missile defense works to Greenlandic Prime Minister Hans Enoksen. (Photo by Capt. Beth Ferrill)

pected to vote on the missile defense proposal in May.

The United States is requesting approval to use the radar at the 12th Space Warning Squadron's ballistic missile early warning system, known as BMEWS,

as part of the sensor network for the missile defense initiative. The United Kingdom has already approved the use of the BMEWS site at RAF Flyingdales in northern England.

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People returning from remote get breather

By Master Sgt. Scott Elliott
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON—Airmen returning from overseas remote "short" tours will receive six-month exemptions from deploying with their new units on scheduled air and space expeditionary force deployments.

The policy change is the result of input from airmen in the field, according to Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Peppe, special assistant for AEFs at the Pentagon.

"Gen. (William J.) Begert, Pacific Air Forces commander, talked to an airman in Korea who had permanent change of station orders and already knew that he was in an AEF and would be

leaving soon after he arrived at his new base," Peppe said.

The policy goes into effect immediately, and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper has directed the change to Air Force instructions to reflect the six-month exemption.

Previously, the policy called for 60-day exemptions with deviations approved at the squadron-commander level. Peppe said deviation from the new six-month deferment would have to be made at the major command vice commander level.

"It's pretty obvious why we're doing this," Peppe said. "The AEF concept was (designed) to provide our airmen with some stability in their lives.

"If we roll into this properly, we'll provide not only the airman and his or her family with some stability, but the unit will have an opportunity to bring the individual in and get him or her acclimatized to the new location," he said.

Personnel officials said the policy change would grant temporary deployment relief to as many as 7,000 airmen.

"It's the fair thing to do," Peppe said. "Those people who are serving remote tours are providing forward presence at its finest. People can always volunteer if they see their units deploying. We want to make sure we're fair and equitable across the board."

Missile Defense

(Continued from Page 12)

Greenland won partial home rule in 1979, but Denmark manages the state's foreign, defense, and security policy.

The missile defense initiative has provided an avenue for Enoksen to argue for changes to the 1951 Defense Agreement, which established Thule Air Base. As a result, the Danish government is working with Greenland to identify and possibly propose updates to the agreement in light of developments in the past 50 years.

A change to the 1951 Defense Agreement went into effect Feb. 20, when the Dundas Peninsula, located near the base, was returned to Greenland.

Thule Air Base's day-to-day mission is to provide real-time early warning data to U.S. Strategic Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, as well as to detect, track and identify orbiting satellites.

Thule is also home to Detachment 3, 22nd Space Operations Squadron, which is part of the 50th Space Wing's Air Force Satellite Control Network. The AFSCN is key to command and control for Department of Defense satellites.

"Thule Air Base is good for Greenland," said Christensen. "From an annual economic impact greater than \$16 million (U.S. dollars), educating



Col. Lou Christensen, 821st Air Base Group commander, talks with Axel Olsen, vice mayor of Qaanaaq at Dundas Peninsula. The vice mayor visited Thule in conjunction with the foreign minister's visit. (Photo by Capt. Beth Ferrill)

and training Greenlanders, to developing quality of life initiatives for the surrounding communities—I'm proud of the work 'Team Thule' does here."

TSP

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each paycheck "so you never have to think about it," said Stokstad. "That makes it easy to 'pay yourself first' while only investing what you deem appropriate."

The five TSP funds are: the Government Securities Investment (G) Fund; the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund; the Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund; the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund; and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund.

Account changes made on or before May 31 will take effect June 1 for both military members and civilians. Changes made on or after June 1 will become effective in the following pay period for civilians and the following month for military members.

Some of the specifics of the program include:

Military: Military members can contribute up to 8 percent of their base pay. Airmen also have

the ability to invest all or part of their bonuses or special pay. But their total yearly tax-deferred investment cannot exceed \$12,000, except those serving in tax-free combat zones are allowed up to \$40,000 in annual contributions.

Military members can enroll through the Defense Finance and Accounting Service Web site at <http://www.dfas.mil/emss/>. They can also enroll by filling out a Form TSP-U-1 at local military personnel flights, finance offices and family support centers.

Civilian: Contribution limits are based on which retirement system an employee has.

Federal Employees' Retirement System employees may contribute up to 13 percent of basic pay each pay period. The government provides matching funds of up to 4 percent as well as an automatic 1 percent each pay period whether the employee contributes or not, making the government's contribution 5 percent.

Employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System

may contribute up to 8 percent of basic pay, but do not receive any matching contributions.

The percentage FERS and CSRS employees may contribute will increase by one point each year through 2005, when they will be restricted only by the Internal Revenue Code's annual limit, which is \$12,000 in 2003, Thomas said.

Specific information is available for civilians on the Thrift Savings Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

All Air Force-serviced civilian employees must choose their TSP contribution amount or changes through the BEST automated phone system at (800) 997-2378, or commercial 527-2378 in San Antonio.

People can choose which fund to contribute to by calling the TSP automated ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777 or on the TSP Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/>. Military members with general TSP questions can call the AFPC contact center at DSN 665-5000 or toll-free (866) 229-7074.

Operation Iraqi Freedom



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM—Staff Sgt. George Greene builds a storage facility April 5 at a desert air base supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is with the 379th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's structures shop. (Photo by Master Sgt. Terry L. Blevins)

B-1 pilot describes bombing run

**By Master Sgt. Scott Elliott
Air Force Print News**

WASHINGTON—An Air Force B-1 Lancer crew rode an "adrenaline rush" as they prepared to strike a recently discovered target of opportunity believed to be the site of a high-level Iraqi leadership meeting April 7.

"There wasn't a lot of time for reflection," Lt. Col. Fred Swan told Pentagon reporters via telephone from his deployed location. Swan is a B-1 Lancer weapons systems officer assigned to the 405th Air Expeditionary Wing.

According to Swan, the B-1 was engaged in midair refueling when a call came from an airborne control aircraft telling them "this is the big one" and directing them to the new priority target.

"I knew it was important, so it really doesn't matter who was attending the high-level meeting," he said. "We've got to get the bombs on target, and we've got 10 minutes to do it."

"There are four crew members on the B-1 and we all have separate jobs to do, but we have to work in concert to make it happen," Swan said.

That coordination included locating the target, planning an escape route, checking out enemy air defenses, staying in contact with airborne and ground controllers, selecting the appropriate weapons, and "dialing in" the target coordinates, Swan said.

"The key is not what the target is, but making sure we are 100-percent accurate with the proper weapon and our coordi-

nates are right," said Capt. Chris Wachter, the pilot of the strike aircraft, who was also interviewed. "And, oh-by-the-way, we're going into an area where we're going to get shot at, so we want to make sure we have a way to protect ourselves." While the desired effect of the mission was to destroy the building, Swan said the target's suburban location made preventing collateral damage a primary concern.

To reduce the danger to innocent people and nearby facilities, mission planners chose the "Version 3" of the GBU-31 Joint Direct Attack Munition.

"It's a hard-target penetrator that buries itself in before it explodes," Swan said. "It will take

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OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM—Senior Airman Tyler Palyton, a security forces journeyman deployed to the 363rd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, checks a vehicle's authorization April 7 prior to allowing it to proceed through an entry control point. The airmen perform force protection measures and air base defense, and protect personnel at forward-deployed locations in Southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Hannen)



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM—A crew chief from the 392nd Air Expeditionary Wing marshals an A-10 Thunderbolt II to its parking spot at a forward-deployed location in southern Iraq April 3. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo)

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out the particular structure, but it's going to minimize the fragmentation ... into outlying areas."

As important as limiting fragmentation is to reducing collateral damage, accurate delivery is

also key, said Col. James Kowalski, 405th AEW commander, who also participated in the interview.

"We've dropped about 2,100 JDAMs," Kowalski said. "Based on a sampling of...areas we've hit, airfields, bunkers and leadership

targets, the weapon is performing well above 99 percent."

The global positioning system-guided JDAMs typically strike within 40 feet of the target, Kowalski said.

"They hit where we want them to hit," he said.

The Last Word

By 1st Lt. Jeremy Eggers
The TDY PA guy

I've known Capt. Beth Ferrill since our days at the Air Force Academy and I can tell you that she hasn't changed a bit. She could let her hair down and remain professional while always keeping things in perspective—a rare trait at the Academy.

Beth is separating from the Air Force in June. She'll tell you there are other opportunities waiting for her and that her work here—in the Air Force—is done.

She's been the Thule Times editor most her time here. Editing this paper, or any paper for that matter, is a daunting task requiring a huge investment of time and energy—a commodity at this base since everybody has an additional duty. Working on the paper also requires a thick skin—every paper has its critics.

Beth expertly produced the paper each month and she did it with the same great attitude she has put into everything throughout her life and with 100 percent of her effort. Her sole purpose has been to make a difference—Beth...you have.

There's one thing I know for certain about "Mega Beth,"—Beth, the Air Force will miss you, Thule will miss you, the members of JFM, Inc., will miss you, and I, as a friend and new editor of this paper, will most certainly miss you. Good luck in all your future endeavors.



Capt. Beth Ferrill shows her lighter side during a dance competition. Despite the innovative moves, she lost the competition to Airman 1st Class Sam Chatam. "It was payback," said Chatam, "for the time she hit my arm when I was promoted"



Mega Beth made her debut on the Greg Brady Show interviewing the band "Brickfoot." Afterwards, she received job offers from MSNBC, Entertainment Tonight, and A Current Affair, but turned them down, altruistically saying, "Thanks, but I helped establish WJFM and The Greg Brady Show—this is my home."

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors to this paper and are not to be considered an official expression by the 821st Air Base Group, 12th Space Warning Squadron, Department of the Air Force, Department of the Army, Department of the Navy, or the Department of Defense.

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