

Celebrating Black History Month

Heritage council spotlights Air Force vice chief of staff

By Staff Sgt. Charlie Battle
437 AW Military Equal Opportunity

This week's article features the Air Force's senior ranking African-American, Gen. Lester Lyles.

Gen. Lester L. Lyles is vice chief of staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As vice chief, and subject to the authority, direction and control of the chief of staff and secretary of the Air Force.



Gen. Lester Lyles

He presides over the Air Staff and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Requirements Oversight Council.

The general entered the Air Force in 1968 as a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

He has served in a variety of assignments, including program element monitor of the Short-Range Attack Missile, Headquarters U.S. Air

Force in 1974, and special assistant and aide-de-camp to the commander of Air Force Systems Command in 1978.

He has served as director of tactical aircraft systems at AFSC headquarters and as director of the Medium-Launch Vehicles Program and space-launch systems offices.

He became AFSC headquarters' assistant deputy chief of staff for requirements in 1989, and deputy chief of staff for requirements in 1990.

In 1992 he became vice commander of Ogden Air Logistics Center, Hill AFB, Utah. He served as commander of the center from 1993 until 1994, then was assigned to command the Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles AFB, Calif., until 1996.

The general became the director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization in 1996. He assumed his current position in May 1999.

This article culminates the efforts of the African American Heritage Council to inform the community about prominent African American military members who have left their mark in the Air Force.

Visiting the veterans



Tech. Sgt. Brian Jones

Tech. Sgt. Ed Ebersole, 17th Airlift Squadron, visits with Herbert Beasley at Ralph H. Johnson Veterans Hospital. Ebersole was one of 25 members from Charleston AFB who visited the hospital Feb. 17 during National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week.

Observance ends with Gospel Extravaganza

The end of February signifies the end of the "official" recognition of the contributions of African-Americans.

To culminate the efforts of the African-American Heritage Council, community members are being provided one last opportunity to join in the celebration of Black History Month.

The AAHC is sponsoring an "all out" Gospel Extravaganza Sunday at 5 p.m. at the Base Theater. There will be a host of local talent from surrounding churches. Choirs scheduled to appear are Lord of the Harvest Full Gospel Church, Mt. Moriah Baptist Church and the Charleston Air Force Base Chapel Choir. There will be special guest appearances by the groups Pecooliar and Focus, who are working on their debut CD release.

The extravaganza is free of charge and open to everyone.

Airdrop

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was happening around the aircraft in flight.

"We went over a bunch of iterations and cases in trying to figure out anything that could possibly happen, and came up with some predicted percentages of encounters and ranges of spacing," Petry explained.

The testing was completed in December at Pope AFB, N.C. Despite the predictions, at 28,000 feet there were several major encounters between the mannequins and the vortices, so the spacing was increased to 32,000 feet.

Before progressing to using real paratroopers, AMC dropped 712 mannequins with element lead aircraft spaced 32,000 feet apart to ensure the spacing was safe, said Lt. Col. Pete Livingston, AMC C-17 operational test manager. Then 60 test jumpers, followed by 302 paratroopers from the Army's 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C. were airdropped to complete the test of the reduced spacing. All test

events were completed successfully and safely.

"We feel that the risk that hasn't increased by moving the aircraft from 40,000 feet apart to 32,000 feet apart and it meets the Army's pass time requirements," Kasberg said.

Dual-row airdrop capability

More time is shaved off the airdrop time by developing a dual-row airdrop capability in the C-17. The dual logistics rails will allow two rows of equipment to be airdropped from the C-17. This more than doubles the capacity of each C-17 and cuts in half the number of C-17s required to airdrop the heavy equipment portion of the SBA. Some equipment is still required to be dropped in a single row.

"Right now, the airplanes rolling off the assembly line have dual-row capability and we'll have enough dual-row airplanes by July to meet the Army's SBA requirement," Kasberg said.

SKE Follow-On

Current Station Keeping Equipment is in use

Staffers

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of the Hunley Park housing renovations and asked for additional support for future phases of renovations, citing housing as an important quality of life need for our airmen.

Col. Ed Stickler, 315th Airlift Wing commander, talked about the increasing workload for today's Reservists, where they are called upon more often than ever. He asked for future help in providing additional financial incentives such as tax breaks for employers that have Reservists in

their organizations. He also mentioned the need for a new facility for their medical personnel.

"The visit required months of planning and was a huge success, thanks to the efforts of project officer 2nd Lt. Scott Bentley," said Lt. Col. Connie Davis, deputy commander of the 437th Support Group.

"We were able to provide our staffers an overview of the economic impact of the area military installations to the state of South Carolina and also let them observe first hand the capabilities of the premier airlifter in the free world."

throughout the Air Force on most mobility aircraft. Using radio wave frequencies (channels), it allows aircraft to fly in formation during inclement weather. A new version of this equipment called SKE Follow-On is currently in development.

"The SKE allows us to fly in formation in the clouds (when you can't see the airplane in front of you)," Kasberg said. The current SKE causes interference if formations use the same radio wave frequency in close proximity to each other. This interference is not a factor with the new SKE. It is expected to be installed in the aircraft by the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2004.

"The SBA testing at Pope back in December was a tremendous success for team Charleston," said Lt. Col. John Norton, director of operations for the 15th Airlift Squadron. "We flew one or two six-ship formation airdrops per day over a two-week period, and never failed to launch all six airplanes. This is an amazing record and it's a great credit to our maintenance and operations team."

(Senior Airman Michael Duhe contributed to this article.)