



Youth parade

Children and care providers from the Shaw Youth Center march down Frierson Road Oct. 9 as part of the *Lights On Afterschool* celebration. The event highlights programs providing a safe place for children to go while their parents work.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Stacy Simon

Team Shaw members step up to



Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Holcomb

Members of the 20th Civil Engineer Squadron participate in the tug of war as a part of the Viper Challenge Oct. 10. Individual and team activities were held throughout the day across the base. Other events included kickball, softball, trap shooting, bowling, ping pong and horseshoes.



Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Holcomb

Bike riders wait at the starting line to begin a 10-mile bike ride during sports day.



Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Holcomb

Capt. Tony Banks, 20th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron, low-crawls on the obstacle course as a part of sports day. Also on the course were a wall jump and dummy drag.

wing sports day Viper Challenge



Photo by Senior Airman Nathaniel Bevier

Staff Sgt. Belinda Fluke, 20th Civil Engineer Squadron, bumps during a game of volleyball on sports day.



Photo by Adriene M. Dicks

One of the two 20th Medical Group teams finishes the bed race during the Viper Challenge. Despite the rain, no sports day events were cancelled.

IG team offers key service to wing members

By Airman 1st Class Susan Penning
Staff Writer

If there is a problem in the workplace, and handling it through the chain of command could cause repercussions, who can help?

The 20th Fighter Wing Inspector General team is a key service to members with legitimate workplace concerns that need attention.

Until 1997, the fraud, waste and abuse program was an additional duty of the vice commander, said Master Sgt. Steven Mitchell, 20th IG chief of complaints. But, as a result of the Whistle Blower Protection Act, which provides confidentiality and protection from retaliation to employees or applicants who report allegations of mismanagement, fraud and abuse, the Air Force established the IG complaint System.

Through an IG office, free from the chain of command, servicemem-

bers can now voice legitimate complaints without fear of reprisal.

The idea was implemented to eliminate a member's apprehension about having the inspector role filled by someone in his chain of command, said Col. Ken Stokes, 20th Fighter Wing Inspector General.

Stokes and Mitchell make up the 20th FW IG team.

When the IG gets involved with an allegation, the job is to determine who did what to whom in violation of what Air Force standard, policy or instruction. This frames an IG complaint, said Mitchell.

The IG's office has an "open-door policy," and is designed to provide members easy access.

"We can, and do, have a tremendous positive effect on the wing's mission," Stokes said.

"If a person feels there is a legitimate concern the IG staff can help with, the first question we ask is, 'have you used your chain of com-

mand?'" said Mitchell.

The problem may be able to be solved at a lower level.

Going to the IG should be a last resort and is not a substitute for the chain of command, Mitchell said.

According to Air Force Instruction 90-301, *Inspector General Complaints*, the IG won't investigate complaints more than 60 days old.

"I always say, if it was wrong today, then it should be reported today," Mitchell said.

The Wing IG office will also not investigate complaints for which the Air Force already has a channel, unless that channel has failed the member. For example, if a servicemember receives a negative Enlisted Performance Report and feels they received it in error, the member should address the Air Force Board of Corrections.

Using the correct channel for complaints can help the IG better han-

dle legitimate cases, and can help servicemembers get the help they need without wasting time being referred to various offices, Mitchell said.

One avenue of assistance servicemembers may not be aware of is the Military Equal Opportunity Office. MEO is primarily designed to help servicemembers with race, national origin, color, sex discrimination, sexual harassment and religious discrimination issues, said Tech. Sgt. Brad Stevenson, 20th Fighter Wing NCO in charge of MEO.

As far as servicemembers using the IG office to file a complaint, the 20th FW IG team is prepared to assist, refer, pursue or dismiss complaints to help the wing meet its mission, Mitchell said.

20th FW members with a workplace concern can call **895-2031**, or stop by the IG's chief of complaints and investigations office, located on the second floor in the 20th Fighter Wing headquarters building.



Spirit Spotlight



Senior Airman Joshua Reckord

Organization: 20th Maintenance Operations Squadron

Duty title: Repair enhancement program technician

Hometown: Baltimore

Time in service: four years

Family: wife, Sabriena

Words I live by: "If you have a positive attitude and try your hardest, good things will happen."

The Shaw Spirit runs announcements for sporting event winners, adult and youth sporting leagues, retirements, award winners and graduates. For more information, call **895-2018** or send an e-mail to spirit.editor@shaw.af.mil.