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Midland Visitors Bureau



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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PROFESSIONAL ARMED FORCES RODEO IN MIDLAND

Midland, Texas (Oct. 17, 2011) — The Professional Armed Forces Rodeo Association (PAFRA) will host their rodeo for U.S. military men and women at the Midland County Horseshoe, 2514 Arena Trail, in Midland on November 25 through 27.

The rodeo is open to the public and tickets can be purchased at the Midland County Horseshoe. It will feature events such as bull riding, barrel racing, bareback riding, saddle bronco riding, tie down roping, breakaway roping, steer wrestling, chute dogging and team roping.

PAFRA's vision is a world-wide organization that co-sanctions other established rodeo associations, thus, allowing its members to earn points to qualify for an all-military world finals rodeo. A board of elected officials works to gain sponsorships for top prize money and year-end awards that are competitive with other top-quality rodeo association.

PAFRA is seeking sponsorship to help with prize money for the rodeo competitors. Please contact Tammy Dooley at (254) 897-9533 or Katie Sangl with Midland Convention & Visitors Bureau at (432) 686-3568 to donate to the cause.

For more information, visit www.pafra2000.com or call the Midland County Horseshoe at (432) 682-1300.

The above information has been provided by the Professional Armed Forces Rodeo Association and distributed by the Midland Convention & Visitors Bureau. This event is projected to bring in \$69,000 in direct visitor spending to the Midland economy.

The mission of the Midland Convention & Visitors Bureau is to encourage economic growth by developing, promoting, enhancing and supporting Midland as a vibrant visitor destination.

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FEATURE BIO OF PAFRA OFFICER - OCTOBER 2011

Lt Col Val Baker, USAF

Hometown: La Vernia, TX.

Branch of Service: *US Air Force*



Currently the Communications and Information Budget and Resources Branch Chief for the Air Education and Training

Command at Randolph AFB, TX supporting all 13 AETC Wings meet their mission to train, educate and equip today's Airmen. She just moved there from her seven year stint with the Joint Interoperability Test Command (JITC) server under many different and unique rules. Her last duty was as the Distributed Common Ground/Surface System Test & evaluation Focus Team Chair for the OUSD(I)'s #1 Program. This Joint Intel program is currently fielded in theater and fighting the war on terror.

Prior to being selected for the Test and Evaluation Focus Team Chair she served as the Portfolio Chief for National Intelligence (JTF) where she mitigates risk to National Intelligence Community by providing support through developmental and interoperability test, evaluation, and certification efforts. Standardize processes and procedures within the Intel community and DoD. Prior to taking the Portfolio Chief position, Lt Col Baker was the Empire Challenge 2009 (EC09) Line of Operation 6 (LO6) Technical Assessment Lead, taking the Joint test command through this first-ever COCOM event to tie Warfighter Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Command and Control (C2) combat needs to potential industry solutions. Her team validated industry solutions to acquisition community for rapid fielding to meet Warfighter needs identified in the field. This effort involved the first-ever Net-Ready assessment of an exercise community on interest (CoI); provides direct feedback to senior leadership. Before her return to JITC and the ISR community, Lt Col Baker was the Senior Communications Advisor for the Coalition Air Force Transition Team (CAFTT A6 Advisor), assisting the Iraqi Air Force (IqAF) A6 to validate, plan, and deliver Iraqi Air Force communication systems and training. She led the effort to train and equip Iraqi personnel establishing IqAF aircraft and communications, command and control (C2). She directly assessing IqAF Staff and Operation Headquarters and field unit capabilities and advising leadership as well as integrated Service activities with Iraqi Ministry of Defense M-6 and supports joint planning.

Before her one-year deployment, Lt Col Baker held various roles with the Joint interoperability Test Command to include Test Director and Chief of the Commanders Action Group. She applied current operational C4I military expertise to development of test strategies for combatant commands, Services, and DoD agencies. She lead Joint test teams with a total of 80 Air Force, Army, Navy, civilian and contractor personnel supporting SECDEF transformational acquisition and warfighting capabilities development processes. As the senior officer in the Commanders Action Group she directed 1,200 military, civilian & contractor personnel with annual budget exceeding \$196 million and was the principal assistant to JITC Commander on operational, personnel, readiness, and administrative issues.

Before moving to Fort Huachuca, Lt Col Baker held a NATO position in Naples Italy as the A6 Division Coordination Office, directing a multinational staff at all levels of AIRSOUTH's (AIRS) Communications and Information (CIS) on all matters relating to operations and management of CIS, ensuring coordination on exercise & real world support for NATO's Southern Region (SR). Advises AIRS Chief of Staff and his NATO planners on CIS technical solutions for near and future CIS systems for command and control (C2) required by AIRS' Commander and 5 subordinate allied Combined Air Operation Centers (CAOCs). During this assignment she deployed with first NATO Training Mission to Iraq and was the first female trainer to walk into Iraqi Ministry of Defense. During her deployment she graduated 86 Iraqi communication students in the first ever Multi-National Security and Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I) Iraqi Radio Communications course.

Prior to moving to Naples, Italy where she was the 90th Space Wing's Maintenance Group Executive Officer and the Mission Systems Branch Chief working with 109 specialist on Peacekeeper and Minuteman missile communications systems. Before Lt Col Baker was assigned to FE Warren AFB, WY she managed the

development of AETC's computer-based ICW for all graduate and undergraduate flying training (UFT) programs at Randolph AFB, TX. Her expertise was sought by HQs AETC and 19 AF and squadron training program managers on training technologies including integrating leading-edge multimedia and ICW applications into UFT electronic classroom presentations. Her first duty assignment with STRATCOM at Offutt AFB, NE where she gained main frame programming experience and was one of the communications officer's on the floor in the Command Center.

Before coming on active duty Lt Col Baker worked with the United States Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Research Service, National Seed Storage Laboratory, Network Administrator, in Fort Collins, Co, was a Research Assistant at the Panhandle Station Research and Extension Center in Scottsbluff, NE, and spent a summer as a Research Assistant with the Department of Energy / Department of Defense, University of California at Berkeley, CA.

EDUCATION

1992 Bachelor of Science degree in computers, Colorado State University
12 credits to an MBA, University of Phoenix plus 9 transfer credits

Professional Military Education

Air Command and Staff College, correspondence Jun 2005

Advanced Communication and Information Officer Training (ACOT), Keesler AFB, Feb 2000

Distinguished Graduate, Lt Col James E. Webb Memorial Award

Squadron Officers School (SOS), correspondence, Jun 1998

Squadron Officers School (SOS), residence, Apr 1998

Lieutenants Professional Development Program (LPDP), Apr 1994

Basic Communications-Computer Systems Programming & Analysis Officer Course, Keesler AFB, Mississippi, Jan – Jun 1993

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Bronze Star Medal

Defense Meritorious Service Medal

Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster

Joint Service Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Joint Service Achievement Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant 27 Oct 1992

First Lieutenant 27 Oct 1994

Captain 27 Oct 1996

Major 1 Jun 2003

Lieutenant Colonel 1 Jul 2008

"I had been assigned to advise an Iraqi Colonel Saad, and the first couple of weeks were real rough," she said. "One day a postcard my sister had sent me of one of my horses fell out of my notebook, and it broke the ice between us."

As it turned out, Saad had been a horse trainer in Iraq. Learning that Baker also had trained horses created a bond and understanding between them.

Recently at the 10th annual 2010 Professional Armed Forces Rodeo Association World Finals in November, Baker won the Women's All-Around for the second year in a row.

"We do this for fun; we're not out here to make a living," she said. "I don't care so much about winning as long as I catch. I want to catch everything that I throw my rope on."

The World Finals is the only actual PAFRA event during the year. The competitors obtain their points throughout the season by participating in rodeos throughout the world, Baker said. They must notify the PAFRA circuit director prior to the rodeo in which they want to compete. After each event they submit a report to verify their results. The 15 members with the highest score at the end of the season are eligible to compete in the finals in their respective events.

Aside from the competition of the rodeo, Baker said it gives her and her service members other benefits that translate into being better people.

“People who have animals and compete in rodeo have more responsibility, and you can see that transfer into their level of work and their work ethic,” she said.

Baker also likes to give back by helping military children learn about riding and horses. They learn to ride and rope with her six horses and three cows.

“They learn a lot about responsibility, brushing, feeding, saddling and the basics of taking care of the horses,” she said.