



Air Force Real Property Agency

The Former Chanute Air Force Base

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Get to Know the Air Force Personnel

Dr. Bill Harris is the BRAC Environmental Coordinator for the former Chanute Air Force Base. The BEC is the representative of the Air Force responsible for implementing the environmental programs needed to meet federal and state regulatory requirements for base closure. It is the BEC's responsibility to make sure all restoration programs are done cost effectively and in a timely manner. He also works with the Village of Rantoul to identify property needed for redevelopment to speed community economic development.

Dr. Bill Harris has served the Air Force for eight years. From April 1986 to June 1989 and October 1993 to March 1997, Dr. Harris worked in the private sector, providing

services for the former Williams Air Force Base. Between 1989 and 1993, Dr. Harris pursued his doctoral degree at Iowa State University and also taught courses as an adjunct professor. Today, Dr. Harris serves as the BEC for the former Chanute Air Force Base where he has been a government civil service employee since January 2004.

As the BEC, Dr. Harris serves as the installation co-chair of the Chanute Restoration Advisory Board. He attends RAB meetings where he provides updates about the status of the restoration program and is available to answer community questions. Dr. Harris would like more community members to join the RAB. He wants the RAB to be an active

part of the environmental restoration of the former installation. He was pleased two new members joined the RAB at the February meeting and is hoping to see continued increases in future meetings.



Dr. Bill Harris
BRAC Environmental Coordinator
of the former Chanute AFB

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143 Billy Mitchell Blvd., Suite 1
San Antonio, TX 78226-1816

Meet the Chanute Restoration Advisory Board

Lorraine Wirges moved to the Village of Rantoul in 1959. She began working at the Air Force Hospital at Chanute Air Force Base in February 1960. For the next 33 years she worked at various jobs on base, before retiring as the secretary to the base commander in

1993. Ms. Wirges' husband also worked as a civilian employee at Chanute following his retirement from the military.

One of Ms. Wirges' favorite memories of the active installation was the beauty of the grounds. She remembers the flowers in the spring, the award winning housing units and the pride the village took in the presence of the Air Force in the Village. When the word came Chanute had been selected for closure, she was heartbroken. Like many people she didn't understand what closure would entail and how it would affect the community.

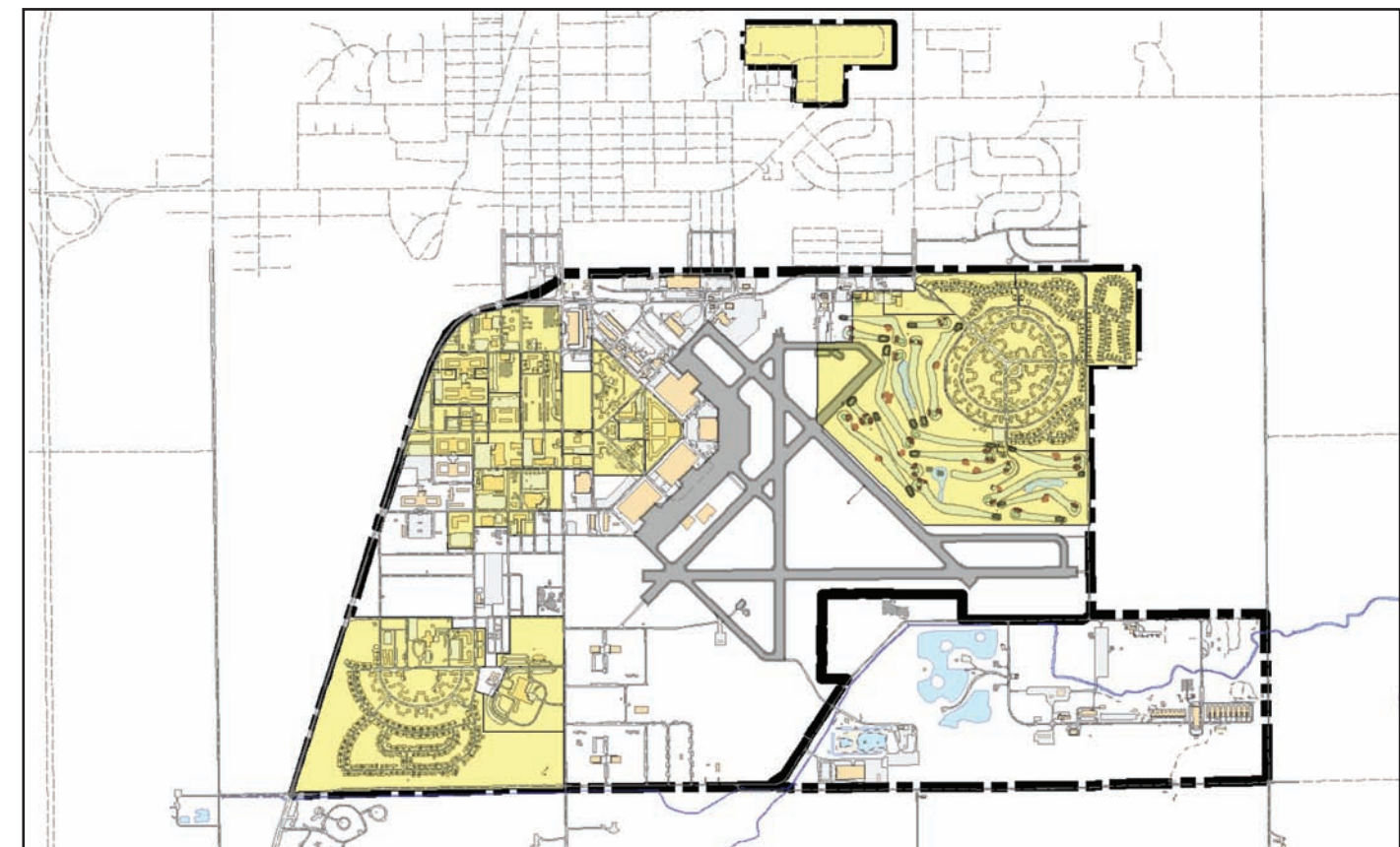
A friend of Ms. Wirges told her about the Chanute Restoration Advisory Board in 1995. She came to a meeting to learn more about the environmental restoration and has been attending ever since. She felt it was her duty to share her history at the base with the professionals coming in to work on

the closure. Ms. Wirges feels people should be informed on the complex issues of installation closure. "People should know it's not a magic wand you wave and the base is closed." She pointed out that many people living in the community are new arrivals or renters and don't have a history with the installation being open and might not even know restoration projects are ongoing.

Ms. Wirges would like other community members to join the RAB. "People are needed who are going to show up and take part." She pointed out the many projects that the RAB has been involved in, such as the planting of wildflowers in restoration project areas, that she takes pride in. She has many ideas for the future of the Chanute RAB including tours of the restoration projects, publicity, membership drives and partnering on beautification projects with the Village.



Ms. Lorraine Wirges
Restoration Advisory Board
Community Member



Transferred Property

To date, 721.59 acres of land have been transferred at the former Chanute Air Force Base. The transferred land has been used for residential and commercial purposes. A total of 1,452.17 acres of the initial 2,173.76 acres has yet to be transferred.

Environmental Restoration Update

The Air Force is conducting a human health risk assessment of Salt Fork Creek. A risk assessment determines if any potential health threat exists to residents. Samples and testing are being done on soils and fish looking for poly-aromatic hydrocarbons.

A PAH is a chemical made of carbon and hydrogen. The most common exposure to PAH is by breathing air around a fire or eating charbroiled meat. PAHs can be produced from industrial processes such as the making of dyes, plastics or herbicides; during energy production from coal and coal tar pitch; from transportation; from the burning of crude oil; and by

individuals burning trash or smoking cigarettes. There are more than 100 different kinds of PAHs found in the air, water and soil all over the country from various sources. The study of Salt Fork Creek should be completed in the summer of 2005. Results of the study will allow the Air Force and state and federal regulators to determine if any potential health threats exist; and if appropriate, the best way to cleanup the creek.

During the investigation, the Air Force posted "No Fishing" signs. This is merely a precaution, not a regulatory requirement. The area remains open to the public.



Salt Fork Creek Testing Area

Aerial photograph Salt Fork Creek and Heritage Lake, circa 2004

RAB Meeting Time & Dates

Noon - 1:00 p.m.
August 25, 2005
November 22, 2005

Public Meeting

7:00 p.m., August 25

RAB and Public Meeting Location

Rantoul Corporate
Technology Center
(Former Smith Hall)
601 S. Century Blvd., Suite 1106
Rantoul, Illinois 61866-2945

Feedback, Comments, and More Information

- I would like more information about the cleanup of the former Chanute Air Force Base.
- I would like more information about the Restoration Advisory Board for the former Chanute Air Force Base.
- I would like more information about how to join the Chanute Restoration Advisory Board.

Please let us know how we are doing. Your comments and opinions are welcomed and assist us in providing the most accurate and up to date information regarding the cleanup of the former Chanute Air Force Base. Fill out this form and send it to the address below.

Name (Mr. /Mrs./Ms./___)

Phone

Organization

Street address

City

State

Zip

Additional comments

Detach and mail this section in an envelope to: AFRPA/DC-K, 143 Billy Mitchell Blvd., Suite 1, San Antonio TX 78226-1816

Contact Information

General Questions

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Property Transfer/Real Estate

AFRPA/DC-Chanute
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(217) 892-3242

Information Repository

Rantoul Public Library
106 West Flessner Avenue
Rantoul, Illinois 61866
(217) 893-3955

The Chanute Story

During its 76-year history, Chanute Air Force Base's mission evolved with the changing needs of the Air Force.

The base originally trained airmen for service overseas during the first World War. In 1921, the Air Force's Air Service Mechanics School, the Air Service Photographics School and the Air Service Communications School, which later became the Air Corps Technical Training Command, were relocated to Chanute.

Chanute AFB expanded operations in 1938 when the Air Force bought 276 acres and built several support buildings including two hangars, a headquarters building, officers' quarters and hospital facilities.

During World War II, Chanute ran a variety of training programs, such as aircraft maintenance, weather observation, life support, metal processing operations and chemical warfare. At the end of the war, Chanute's mission changed to providing military and technical training for aerospace weapon systems, missiles, vehicle maintenance, and fire fighting. As a result of the Base Realignment and

Closure decision, the base officially closed September 30, 1993.

Throughout Chanute's history, the Air Force used the most up-to-date practices for managing waste products resulting from daily operations. Nonetheless, modern environmental science has now shown many of these previously accepted practices were harmful to the environment.

The environmental cleanup program at Chanute was established in 1983 to remedy the effects of contaminants in the soil and groundwater resulting from past operations.

Today, the Air Force Real Property Agency is managing the environmental cleanup at the former Chanute AFB. The Air Force is working closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to identify, investigate, and remediate all contaminated sites and prepare the land for transfer to the community. To date, 94 percent of the former base has been transferred back to the community for reuse and development.