

“Produce Pilots, Advance Airmen, Feed the Fight”

Vol. 35, Issue 25

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

June 24, 2011

## Weather



**Today**

High: 88, Low: 70  
Scattered T-storms



**Saturday**

High: 89, Low: 69  
Scattered T-storms



**Sunday**

High: 92, Low: 70  
Scattered T-storms



**Monday**

High: 93, Low: 72  
Isolated T-storms

## News Briefs

### AETC Family Day

July 1 will be an AETC Family Day. Most Columbus AFB offices will be closed. In addition, most offices will be closed on Monday, July 4 for the holiday.

### Class 12-04 Track Select

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 12-04 will hold their Track Select ceremony at 5 p.m. June 29 at the Columbus Club.

### Enlisted Promotions

The next Enlisted Promotions ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. June 30 at the Kaye Auditorium.

## Inside



### Feature 12

The 15th anniversary of the Khobar Towers terrorist attack is remembered in this week's feature.



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Chase Hedrick  
Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Helm, senior enlisted advisor for the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, listens to the Columbus Air Force Base Child Development Center director Martha Mann during a tour of the base's CDC. Chief Helm visited the base June 15 and 16 to listen to the base's community on matters concerning AAFES services here.

# Senior enlisted advisor for AAFES visits base, listens to customers

**Lisa Neidinger**

Army and Air Force Exchange Service

The senior enlisted advisor for the Army and Air Force Exchange Service visited here June 15 and 16.

During his visit, Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Helm met with base community members and leadership, toured Exchange facilities, met with employees and addressed Exchange-related issues.

The Exchange is a joint military com-

mand with a retail mission that is two-fold, providing quality products and services to Airmen and Soldiers, their families, Reserve and Guard members, plus military retirees, all while generating earnings to

See AAFES, Page 3

## COLUMBUS AFB TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE II				PHASE III				IFF				WING SORTIE BOARD			
Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Track Select	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual
37th (12-05)	2.18 days	0.87 days	Jul. 25	48th (11-11)	0.73 days	-0.91 days	Jun. 30	49th (11-1B)	5.10 days	2.55 days	Jul. 13	T-6	2,545	2,147	23,269
41st (12-04)	5.38 days	-2.24 days	Jun. 29	50th (11-11)	-2.00 days	-5.45 days	Jun. 30					T-1	718	801	7,622
												T-38	884	897	8,231
												IFF	212	154	1,739

The next graduation speaker is Maj. Gen. Harold Cross, USAF retired. Former Adjunct General, Mississippi National Guard.

## 14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 73 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.



Visit [www.columbus.af.mil](http://www.columbus.af.mil) to learn about Columbus AFB agencies and other important information.

### AAFES

(Continued from Page 1)

supplement Air Force Services programs and MWR activities.

Chief Helm is one of 72 active duty service members assigned to Exchange headquarters in Dallas, Tex. to carry out this mission, and employing approximately 44,000 civilian associates world-wide.

"For every dollar earned, 67 cents comes back to the military community from the MWR dividend. Last year Columbus Air Force Base got more than \$238,000, so shopping at the Exchange is a win-win," said Chief Helm. "You get great products at a great price and the money you spend comes back to the installation through the dividend."

During his visit, Chief Helm met with Columbus Exchange associates and toured facilities. He met with the base Airmen and spouses, giving all a chance to ask questions and air their

concerns.

"Part of my job as the senior enlisted advisor is to visit bases throughout the world and find out what the Exchange can do to better serve its customers and fix existing problems," said Chief Helm.

"Also educating our customers on the Exchange benefit is the most important part of my job. Our goal is to be your number one choice for retail shopping. You can go anywhere to purchase an iPod or a TV, but when you buy from the Exchange, that's money going back to support our troops," said Chief Helm.

"More importantly, clothing sales is the only place troops can buy uniform items on base without mail ordering them, making it our goal to have what they need when they need it so they can be outfitted properly," he added.

For more information about the Exchange and Exchange programs, visit [www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com).

## SILVER WINGS

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### Submission Deadline

The deadline for submitting copy for next week's SILVER WINGS is noon Monday. Articles may be dropped off at the public affairs office or e-mailed.

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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun
27	28	29	30	1	2/3
		Class 12-04 Track Select, 5 p.m. @ Club	Class 11-11 Graduation, 10 a.m. @ Kaye  Enlisted Promotions, 4 p.m. @ Kaye  Airmen's Summer Splash, 7 p.m. @ Pool	AETC Family Day, most CAFB closed	
4	5	6	7	8	9/10
Independence Day, most CAFB closed		14th MSG CoC, 9 a.m. @ BLAZE Hangar			

### Long Range Events

**July 13:**  
IFF Graduation

**July 15:**  
37th FTS CoC

**July 15:**  
Class 11-12  
Assignment Night

**July 18:**  
Wing Retreat

**July 19:**  
Newcomers

**July 21:**  
Dorm Dinner

**July 25:**  
Class 12-05 Track  
Select

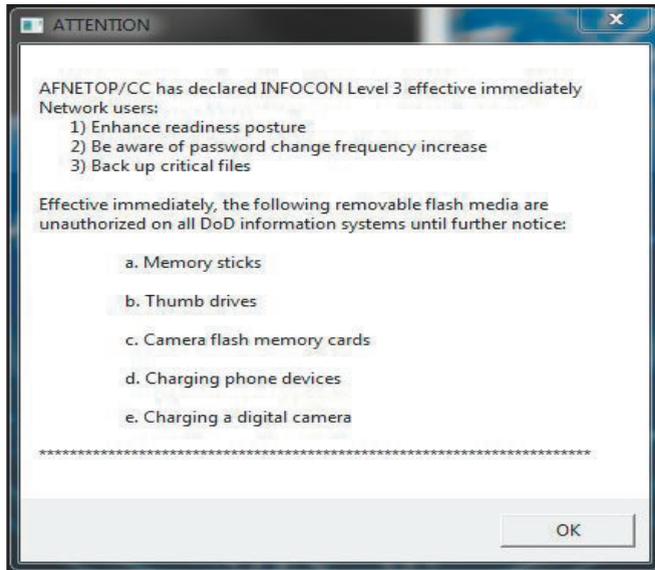
**July 26:**  
Wing Quarterly  
Awards Ceremony

# Flash memory devices banned on Air Force network: When in doubt leave it out

**Larry Campbell**

14th Flying Training Wing  
Information Assurance Officer

Do you recognize the notice/warning shown in the accompanying photo?



It is the notice banner that appears on your computer whenever you log-into the unclassified government network.

Due to an undisclosed amount of classified/unclassified data showing up in places where it should not, Network Tasking

Order 2008-320-001B established a Flash Media Ban. This ban prohibits any devices containing flash memory from being connected to any government information system (i.e. network, desktop, laptop, printer, scanner, etc.).

The Air Force is actively monitoring for unauthorized USB Flash Media device use on government information systems to include the Columbus AFB Network. The Air Force provides the 14th Communications Squadron a violations report. This document identifies violators by name, device type, computer name and date/time of the incident.

After receiving the report, the 14th CS implements the following steps:

Review documents to determine if the devices in question have already been approved for use on the government information systems.

– If approved for use on government information systems the 14th CS closes the case.

– If not authorized for use on government information systems the 14th CS immediately deactivates violators unclassified network account.

– Notify unit commander's that violators must report to the base Communications Focal Point in Building 730, Room 102 to reaccomplish "Information Assurance" training Monday – Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

– After violators successfully complete IA training -- with the unit CC and 14th CS/CC approvals, they reactivate the violators account.

Between May 8, when the scans began, and now CAFB has experienced 13 violations.

Our goal is to receive zero violations.

Any removable flash media devices are not allowed. Flash

media is found in devices such as, but not limited to, memory sticks, USB "thumb" drives, digital cameras, MP3 players, iPhones, personal digital assistants and camera flash memory cards.

Also, the Air Force Systems Security Instructions 8502, Para 3.10.3 states... "No privately-owned media/equipment (music/video CD/DVDs, iPods, PDAs, cell phones, and USB drives) may be used in government-owned information systems."

Non-memory wired devices to include keyboards, mice, Common Access Card (CAC) readers, and speakers are allowed on government systems. Devices that have been pre-approved by the unit Information Assurance through the wing Information Assurance office are allowed.

Government owned CDs/DVDs and "authorized" external hard drives are allowed to be used to transfer data. The Air Force and DoD require external hard drives to be both password protected and have encryption (FIPs 140-2 encryption) software loaded on the hard drive. Also, the external hard drive device must be registered (i.e. serial number, etc.) with the user's unit IAO. This registration will track the user and personal computers the device will be used by/on. For units wanting to purchase an external hard drive, obtain unit Commander approval to purchase the equipment. Then coordinate with the unit Telephone Control Officer (TCO) to submit the request into Work Order Management System) for validation, and a technical solution from the 14th CS. After receiving pertinent information from 14 CS the unit can purchase an external hard drive.

If you have questions contact your Unit IAO or call the Wing Information Assurance office at 434-3194.

# Senate confirms Panetta as defense secretary

**Lisa Daniel**

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate voted unanimously June 21 to confirm Leon E. Panetta as the next secretary of defense.

Mr. Panetta received broad bipartisan support following his June 9 confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in which he said his foremost mission as defense secretary would be to protect the United States and ensure it has the "best-trained, the best-equipped and the strongest military in the world."

President Barack Obama nominated him earlier this year to replace outgoing Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates. Mr. Panetta, who

currently serves as CIA director, is a former congressman from California who has worked in government for four decades, including as President Bill Clinton's budget director.

President Obama has nominated Army Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan, to replace Mr. Panetta as CIA director.

Mr. Panetta's confirmation comes one day ahead of the president's scheduled address to the nation to outline his plans to drawdown U.S. troops from Afghanistan.

In his hearing before the Senate committee, Mr. Panetta called Secretary Gates "one of the greatest secretaries of defense in our nation's history" and said he would carry on the secretary's initiatives.



Defense Department photo

Leon E. Panetta appears before the Senate Armed Services Committee during confirmation hearings June 9, 2011.

## Maj. Gen. Harold Cross (Ret.) to speak at SUPT Class 11-11 graduation

Maj. Gen. Harold Cross (Ret.) last served as the Adjutant General of Mississippi. In this position he was a member of the Governor's Cabinet and Commander of the Military Department of Mississippi, which includes the Army National Guard, Air National Guard and the Mississippi State Guard. The Adjutant General is charged with the responsibility to organize train and equip the more than 13,000 citizen soldiers and airmen of the Mississippi National Guard to perform its federal and state missions in addition to the supervision of an additional 3,000 state and federal employees. Duties include administration and management of personnel, fiscal and legislative matters pertaining to the military department and maintaining readiness of the force.



U.S. Air Force photo  
**Maj. Gen. Harold Cross, USAF Retired.**

General Cross entered the Air Force after graduating from the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Mississippi State University in 1968. Upon completion of pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, he served as a pilot with the Tactical Air Command in various assignments in Europe and the United States from 1968 to 1972. He joined the Mississippi Air National Guard as an aircraft commander in 1972, where he has commanded at the flight, squadron, and wing levels. General Cross has also served on the Committee of Advisors for the Air National Guard. He is a command pilot with more than 5,000 flying hours and a combat veteran of Operation Just Cause and Desert Storm. General Cross is a published author on the Civil War. He and his wife, Carolyn, have two sons: Daniel and John.

## SUPT Class 12-10 meets with community partners



U.S. Air Force photo/1st Lt. Sara Greco  
**Col. Steve Stater, 14th Operations Group Commander, speaks during Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 12-10's pilot partner welcome at the pavilion outside 4-County Electric. Class 12-10 Pilot Partners are 4-County Electric and Namma Talley.**

## Congratulations to Team BLAZE's newest technical sergeant selects

Staff Sgt. Charles Ball  
Staff Sgt. Thomas Blandino  
Staff Sgt. Tiffany Bowens  
Staff Sgt. Chenoa Clardy  
Staff Sgt. Latonya Davis  
Staff Sgt. Christopher Dooley  
Staff Sgt. Engeliqne Dupre  
Staff Sgt. Richard Dutka  
Staff Sgt. Gary Fisher  
Staff Sgt. Latrice Harris  
Staff Sgt. Brent Heath  
Staff Sgt. Kristi Koch

Staff Sgt. Jacob Lewis  
Staff Sgt. Danielle Lytle  
Staff Sgt. Jonathan Marion  
Staff Sgt. William Noble  
Staff Sgt. Joseph Roberts  
Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosenbaum  
Staff Sgt. Michael Rowe  
Staff Sgt. Bethany Shillcox  
Staff Sgt. Daren Snyder  
Staff Sgt. Donnie Stone  
Staff Sgt. Paula Zanders

# Reporting Sexual Assault



There are three different methods people can use to report sexual assault. It's vital you know the difference!

### 1. Unrestricted

- ◆ Sexual Assault Response Coordinator is contacted and victim receives medical care
- ◆ Chain of Command, Office of Special Investigations and Law Enforcement **are notified** immediately
- ◆ Investigation initiated
- ◆ SARC Victim Advocate provides supportive services for victim
- ◆ Victim receives counseling
- ◆ No confidentiality. Commander will determine course of action in cases of bilateral misconduct after investigation

### 2. Restricted

- ◆ Sexual Assault Response Coordinator is contacted and victim receives medical care
- ◆ Chain of Command, Office of Special Investigations and Law Enforcement **are not notified**
- ◆ SARC Victim Advocate provides supportive services for victim
- ◆ Victim receives counseling
- ◆ Victim can make unrestricted reporting decisions afterward
- ◆ Victim has confidentiality even if there is bilateral misconduct on his or her part, such as underage drinking

### 3. Independent

- ◆ Third-party reporting is an inherit responsibility of all military personnel. If you tell anyone who subsequently notifies OSI or Law Enforcement, or if someone observes the assault and notifies Law Enforcement, an investigation may be launched. This can occur in conjunction with or regardless of restricted reporting.

**If Law Enforcement is contacted, the report is automatically unrestricted.**

*Call the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at  
Office: (662) 434-2875 or (662) 434-1130 Cell: (662) 386-0811  
24/7 On-Call Hotline: (662) 364-0822*

# Airmen's Council elects new leaders

## Sonic Johnson

Chief, 14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

The Columbus Air Force Base Airman's Activity Council elected new Executive Committee members during their May meeting. Airman 1st Class Perry Huffman, 14th Communications Squadron, will be at the helm as the council's president for the next year.

Senior Airman Christina Ortiz, 48th Flying Training Squadron, will be backing Airman Huffman up as the AAC Vice President. Recording the details of their meetings and activities is their Secretary, Airman 1st Class Dustie Daniels, 14th Operations Support Squadron and Senior Airman Brooke Wood, is the council's Treasurer. As the Programs Coordinator, Senior Airman Michaela Spiegle works closely with agencies and the AAC planning their events. Both Wood and Spiegle are from the 14th Medical Operations Squadron. AAC also has a senior enlisted advisor in MSgt Norma Chism, 14th Medical Group First Sergeant. She provides keen guidance, mentorship and support to the organization.

All junior enlisted at Columbus AFB are automatically members of the AAC yet there are only 12 active members in the organization. With over 260 junior enlisted Airmen assigned, Airman Huffman believes there is room for the organization's active membership roster to expand. "One of our goals as leaders of the AAC is to expand our roster," said Airman Huffman. "One of the easiest ways to do that is to keep your organization relevant to today's Airmen." Their current goal is to have at least 45 active members participating in events and



U.S. Air Force photo/Sonic Johnson  
**The Airman Activity Council's executive committee: Senior Airman Michaela Spiegle, Airman's Activity Council Programs Coordinator, Airman 1st Class Perry Huffman, AAC President, Senior Airman Christina Ortiz, AAC Vice President, Senior Airman Brooke Wood, AAC Treasurer and Airman 1st Class Dustie Daniels, AAC Secretary.**

attending meetings.

The primary goal of the AAC is to promote base and community involvement, reflecting the wing's enabling task of Cultivating Community Relations. To that end, they would like to log 100 hours of volunteer work by May of next year.

AAC members volunteer time on base at the Thrift Shop and providing drivers for the 434-RIDE program. Some of their off-base activities include Habitat for Humanity, the local Humane Society and participating in many local festivals.

The AAC meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Montgomery Village. All junior enlisted members are eligible for active member-

ship and are invited to attend. AAC annual dues are \$2. For more information on the Airman's Activity Council, contact Airman Huffman at 434-3425 or [perry.huffman@columbus.af.mil](mailto:perry.huffman@columbus.af.mil).

"This is a great professional organization, with great Airmen. I partner in their vision of Airmen expansion" noted Chief Master Sergeant Zef Smith, 14th Flying Training Wing Command Chief. "Columbus AFB provides opportunities for all enlisted Airmen to participate in professional organizations. It is the role and responsibility of ALL enlisted tier Airmen to join professional organizations as spelled out in the little brown book on enlisted force structure."

## Trail BLAZE'r



Name: Senior Airman Jennifer Sill

Unit: 14th Operations Support Squadron, Weather Flight

Job title: Radar Manager

Time at Columbus AFB: 1 Year, 2 months

Time in Service: 6 Years

Hometown: Theresa, Wisconsin

Career goals: Work with National Weather Service

Family members: Parents Jay and Lori, four brothers with two currently serving in the Marines Corps.

Favorite musician: Beethoven

Favorite movie: The Town

Biggest pet peeve: Tardiness

Favorite book: The Great Gatsby or To Kill a Mockingbird

Inspirations: My Grandparents and two Brothers

Personal motto: Rain from above! / Live with no regrets



Facebook

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ColumbusAFB](http://www.facebook.com/ColumbusAFB)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/Columbus\\_AFB](http://www.twitter.com/Columbus_AFB)



# Experts teach March Airmen to run injury-free

**Staff Sgt. Kevin Chandler**

452nd Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE, Calif. — Dr. Mark Cucuzzella, the medical consultant for the Air Force Marathon, and Ian Adamson, an ultra-athlete and three-time record holder, shared information on proper techniques and methods for injury-free running during two, three-hour running clinics June 12 here.

Dr. Cucuzzella, an associate professor of family medicine at West Virginia University and an Air Force Reserve flight surgeon stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, told those in attendance the primary concern for runners is their feet.

Feet are “critical to movement” and can be a source of injuries for many runners, he said. In fact, it was a toe injury that led the doctor, who won the 2006 Air Force Marathon, to re-evaluate his running form.

After examining the running technique of

successful Kenyan marathoners, the doctor said he realized his training regimen needed some modification. He developed a 12-step plan for running, based on the barefoot style of running Kenyans employ and Western children enjoy, but eventually abandon as they grow up.

The plan focuses on developing proper form and posture to ensure runners are using the natural engineering of the foot to absorb shock from impact and keep the runner’s hips and knees from bearing too much strain and ultimately sustaining injury. Dr. Cucuzzella played a short video on this technique, which featured him running barefoot on a highway.

Mr. Adamson said he is also a proponent of barefoot running. Despite his numerous races and years of training, he said he never experienced a running injury until he transitioned from barefoot running to wearing his sponsor’s shoes.

While barefoot running is growing in popularity, a recent article in the New York Times

cautioned that barefoot running can lead to new injuries, due to the body’s inclination to keep striding as if the feet were still in shoes. People who are used to walking barefoot tend to impact the ground at the mid-foot, while those who are used to wearing shoes strike more with the heel.

Dr. Cucuzzella acknowledged this fact and cautioned that retraining your feet to adopt a natural stride should be done gradually to avoid harm to foot bones and tissue.

He also advised those runners trying to improve their aerobic conditioning to run slower.

According to scientific research, by maintaining a pace that keeps the runner’s heart rate in an aerobic zone, the body taps into fat stores instead of burning glucose, allowing the runner to go longer distances. Additionally, as time passes, that target heart rate will become more difficult to reach, causing the runner to increase their pace.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Kevin Chandler  
**Runners stand barefoot in the grass during a running clinic at June 12, 2011, at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The clinic was a joint effort between the 452nd Air Mobility Wing and the March Fitness and Inspiration Through Teamwork organization.**

# In defense of fathers who serve

**Gene Kamena**  
Air War College

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. — Since Father's Day was last Sunday, I would like to offer some personal thoughts about fathers who serve in the military. This article is written particularly for fathers who are now deployed or had to be away for frequent periods of time in the past. In my own case, and I have the best wife in the world, from time to time, when speaking of my son's upbringing, the phrase "How would you know? You were never there," enters the conversation.

These words are absolutely true and serve to remind me of two important aspects of being a military dad. The first aspect is the time I missed in my son's early life, and the second is the great burden I had placed upon my wife. Sandy, my wife, did a great job of raising our son in my absence. She balanced being a mom, working in family support organizations, volunteering at school and running a household, all on her own. She filled the roles of both mother and father for many years.

Balancing the responsibilities of fatherhood against the call of duty to serve our nation is difficult. I must admit that I did not always choose wisely, but I always did what I thought was right. There were times -- too many, upon reflection -- when I could have done better, when I might have stayed home longer or returned from work earlier. I wish I could have experienced more of my son's youth. Kurt, my son, is a great young man and is a sophomore at the University of Alabama. I think he now has pardoned my long absences.

No words that I can write will ever rise to the level of a satisfactory defense for the charges of "You were never there, you missed important events and you would rather be at work." In fact, many of us military fathers have been tried and sentenced long ago in the court of family opinion. Yet there are matters of extenuation and mitigation that must be stated, matters that children and wives should take into account before verbalizing or even thinking of the charges mentioned above. The points offered below are provided from a father's perspective, a father who did his best to balance obligations to family and nation.

Separation affects all. No military father wants to be away from his child. Undoubtedly, separation affects fathers as well as children. Loneliness and guilt are the constant companions of a military father while he is away from his family. This is especially true when children are involved. Please take into account the phone calls, letters, video teleconferences and emails received from Dad while he was away. Military dads work hard to stay as connected as possible while being physically separated. Intentions and effort should count for something.

Remember the reason for the absence. Although it is never easy to be away, there are good reasons for military fathers to be absent: defense of the nation, bringing freedom to other parts of the world and providing a better future for children, all children. Unfortunately, military children do bear an additional burden, as do their military fathers.

However, all children who live in freedom owe some degree of gratitude to fathers who serve. Fathers who must deploy or

be separated from their loved ones do so in the hope that their children one day will not have to worry about the threat of attack or war. Military fathers serve so their children will not have to.

Remember the times when Dad was there. Do not focus only on those periods of division. Recall the times when Dad came home early or left work behind to take a family vacation. Please recollect the good times as well as the times when Dad was away. Remember, too, that Dad did his best to fulfill duties often in conflict.

Finally, I respectfully offer some advice to all military fathers, advice I wish I had received many years ago. First, remember that time passes quickly. While you are away, your family marks birthdays, holidays and graduations. They also mark your absences, none of which can ever be made up.

My second and last point to military fathers is to remember what matters. One of the main reasons you serve this nation is for your family, to offer them something better, a brighter future. Therefore, as a military father, you must work hard to balance the here and now (your family) against what will be (the future). Do not make the same mistake I did by thinking that you will somehow make up for lost time later. It just does not work that way. Time and events passed are gone forever.

To military wives and children of military fathers, please go easy on Dad this Father's Day. He is not perfect, but he is doing his best. If he is home this Father's Day, make the best of your time together, and if he is away, remember the reason for his absence and that he really wants to be home with you.

## Officials seek input to update MWR services

**Terri Moon Cronk**  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Department officials intend to use input gained from customer satisfaction surveys to bolster morale, welfare and recreation programs and meet the up-to-date needs of service members and their families, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy said today.

Officials are electronically sending 600,000 surveys to military installations worldwide, Robert L. Gordon III said. The survey is the first of its kind to collect input from all components of the U.S. military, including guardsmen and reservists, he added.

The survey includes 135 questions that address a range of offerings from fitness centers to libraries, and automotive services to leisure activities.

Officials hope to have survey data returned in about three weeks, Mr. Gordon

said.

"If (service members) can turn it around quickly, we can soon understand how we're doing and see how we can get better," he said.

Sent randomly, the survey takes about 20 minutes to complete, he added, and the answers are kept confidential and anonymous.

"We want to get a sense of exactly what our service members and their families are using (at MWR) so we can tailor it to our multigenerational force," Mr. Gordon said.

Recognizing the differences in multigenerational needs is essential to members of the armed forces, he noted.

"The younger service members might use different types of equipment in our fitness centers (than older troops), and library services is another area where our millennial generation, ages 18 to 29, is more likely to use online service, while others use books," he said.

The MWR survey does not include data

from family members since valid contact information was not available for them. Because of this, Gordon emphasized that service members should keep their families in mind when filling out the survey.

"Don't just think about yourself," he said. "Think about your families. It's important because we want to make sure your families have access to the very best services that we can provide them."

Mr. Gordon noted the need for survey data.

"In our last survey, we were able to pinpoint that our fitness centers were an area of concern for our service members and families, so we focused on that in terms of improvement across the force, and we intend to do the same with this survey," he said.

"If you get it, please fill it out quickly, and know that your opinion counts and will make MWR better for you and your family members," he added. "Quality of life is important to us."

## Last week's answer



**Base News****Commissary closed for holiday**

The commissary will be closed on July 4 and 5 in observance of Independence Day.

**Splish/Splash with The Landings**

Join us at the Landings Community Center on June 28 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. for a day of Fun in the Sun. We will have the enormous Blue Hippo Waterslide as well as the Hawaiian Slip and Slide. Fun for the entire family!

**Thrift Shop**

The Columbus Air Force Base Thrift Shop has moved locations. They can now be found in building 530 and are open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call 434-2954 for more information.

**Airman's Attic**

The Columbus Air Force Base Airman's Attic has moved locations. They can now be found in building 530 and are open Tuesdays from noon to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon. Donations may be dropped off during business hours. To donate furniture items please call 434-8824 or (719) 369-6791.

**Motorcycle PPE at Exchange**

Air Force compliant personal protection equipment for motorcycle riders is now carried at the base Exchange.

**vMPF Post 9/11 GI Bill Transfer of Benefits**

Members can now access the vMPF and click DoD TEB website to transfer Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits. The vMPF application will verify the Airman's eligibility to transfer benefits, provide timely notice regarding eligibility issues and allow Airmen to complete, sign, and forward the required statement of understanding to the Automated Records Management System. You can link to the vMPF through the AF Portal at <https://www.my.af.mil/afpc2ww3/vmpf/Hub/Pages/Hub.asp>.

**Manpower openings**

There are currently openings for qualified NCOs in the Manpower career field. If you have excellent mathematics and communicative skills, you may qualify for a career opportunity in this exciting career field. Interested? Call Linda Kessler extension 434-2341 at the Installation Manpower and Organization Office.

**ACT/SAT Testing**

Information on ACT and SAT tests are now available on their respective websites

(<http://www.act.org> and <http://www.collegeboard.com>). Answers about registration as well as quick tips regarding both of these important tests for aspiring college students can be found here. The tests are provided throughout the year, with advanced registration required.

**Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University**

The ERAU office is open Monday Wednesday Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is located in Building 926, suite 124. ERAU is offering Master of Aeronautical Science and Master of Science in Management degrees. For more information contact the ERAU office at 434-8262 or [Memphis.center@erau.edu](mailto:Memphis.center@erau.edu)

**Saint Leo University**

SLU offers on-base classes in psychology, criminal justice, and business administration. Online and CD-ROM classes are also available. Call Saint Leo at 434-8844 (dial 99 on-base) or stop by Room 120 in Bldg. 926 (Old Personnel Bldg.)

**Base Thrift Shop**

The Base Thrift Shop is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Consignments until noon. Please visit the Thrift Shop for more information on consignments. Donations are accepted and very much appreciated. They can be dropped off anytime in the donation shed. The Thrift Shop is non-profit and all proceeds benefit CAFB Community. It is located in Bldg 345, Ines Street (next to Youth Center). Phone: 434-2954.

**IDEA Program**

The Air Force Innovative Development through Employee Awareness is looking for submissions of individual, group, or team ideas about how the Air Force can accomplish something more efficiently. Cash rewards for ideas are possible. Visit <https://ipds.randolph.af.mil> or call Tech. Sgt. Angela Coleman at 434-2388.

**School Liaison Officer**

The Columbus Air Force Base School Liaison Officer (SLO) works with local school districts, schools, parents and students on issues related to elementary and secondary education for the children of ALL personnel (civilian, military and contractor) assigned to the installation. As parents of school age children are aware, there are many unique issues our children face as they transition to new schools. The role of the School Liaison Officer is to assist families ensure their children receive the best possible education regardless of where they attend school. For assistance, please contact the School Liaison Officer at 434-2792 or via email at [slo@columbus.af.mil](mailto:slo@columbus.af.mil).

**Education Counseling Hours**

Education counseling (CCA, Bachelor's/Master's programs, Tuition Assistance, etc.) is now available Mondays and Wednesdays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment only. Please contact Edward Hodge at 434-2562 to schedule.

**MPS Training dates require appointments**

The Military Personnel Section (MPS) in building 730 will hold in-house training on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons during Night Flying Weeks. They will utilize appointments-only on these days to accommodate this necessary training. If you have any questions, contact the MPS Supt, Master Sgt. Heng, at 434-2611.

**Airman and Family Readiness Center**

*(Editor's note: All activities are offered at the Airman & Family Readiness Center unless otherwise specified. For more information about any of the activities listed, call 434-2790 or email [afrc@columbus.af.mil](mailto:afrc@columbus.af.mil).)*

**Self-paced Tutorials**

Available on MS Office 2007 Suites; Access, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Word and Windows Vista. Set your own learning pace at your AFRC.

**Relocation assistance**

Weekly workshop on programs, services and resources available through the Airman and Family Readiness Center held every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Topics of discussion include preparing for a move, environment/cultural issues or needs, adaptation and community awareness.

**Employment Workshop**

Workshop on local and base employment opportunities, held every Wednesday at 1 p.m.

**Spouse welcome**

For new personnel assigned to CAFB held every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the Magnolia Inn lobby. Local information is presented.

**Budgeting Basics**

Every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to noon. Learn practical ways to tell your money where to go rather than wonder where it went.

**Pre-Separation Counseling (DD Form-2648)**

Mandatory briefing for personnel separating or retiring. Briefing should be completed at least 90 days prior to separation and may be completed up to 12 months prior to separation or retirement. Counseling held daily at 8:30 a.m. and takes approximately 30 minutes.

**Pre and Post Deployment Tour Brief**

Mandatory briefings for active duty personnel who are deploying or returning from deployment or a remote tour. Briefings are held daily at the AFRC; Pre-deployment at 9:30 a.m. and post-deployment at 1:30 p.m.

**Newcomers Orientation**

June 21 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for newly arrived active duty and civilian personnel. Spouses are encouraged to attend. Held at the ARFC, to register call 434-2790.

**Sponsorship Training**

June 28, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., for all Unit Intro Monitors and Sponsors. Information on the importance of a good, effective sponsorship program and resources available for both sponsor and newcomer. To register call 434-2790. In addition, a public version of eSponsorship Application and Training (eSAT) can be found on the MilitaryINSTALLATIONS homepage. <http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mils> in the Sponsorship article for each installation.

**Chapel Schedule****Protestant Worship Service**

Sunday:  
9 a.m. — Adult Sunday School  
10:45 a.m. — Traditional Worship Service (Children's Church)  
All are invited to a fellowship luncheon following the 10:45 a.m. service the fourth Sunday of each month.

**Protestant Men of the Chapel:** Come out and join the men of CAFB Chapel every Saturday morning at 7 a.m. for Bible study and

devotion in the Chapel Annex.

**Catholic Services**

Thursday  
6 p.m. — Choir Practice  
Sunday:  
3:30 p.m. — Religious Education, grades K-9  
3:45 p.m. — Choir Practice  
4 p.m. — Confession  
5 p.m. — Mass  
6 p.m. — RCIA

# Education key to reaching for stars: Colonel Drew soared on final Discovery mission

**Kelly Deichert**  
Air University Public Affairs

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. -- Sometimes education can get you a promotion. For others, it can take you further. Five years after Col. Benjamin Alvin Drew graduated from Air War College with a master of strategic studies in political science, he was aboard the final Space Shuttle Discovery mission.

"The educational and training opportunities (at Air University) are second to none," he said in a phone interview from his office at the Johnson Space Center. "Looking back, any colonel or general will tell you, the educational opportunities are there, and you don't want to pass up on them."

The course gave him the opportunity to learn and develop his own education while learning from instructors and his peers. He learned from other colonels with varied experiences and profound backgrounds, sharing stories and ideas.

"It was a good time to think big thoughts," the now-retired colonel said.

And his thoughts were big. From Feb. 24 to March 9, he was aboard the 39th and final Discovery mission as a mission specialist. "I sat on the flight deck, in the flight engineer's position," he said. He also monitored systems and worked nonflying elements during launch, reentry and landing.

The crew upgraded station systems and delivered the Pressurized Multipurpose Module and Robonaut 2 to the International Space Station.

On this mission Colonel Drew became the 200th person to walk in space.

"I think the exact words were 'Oh my god,'" he said of the experience. "That sensation of being in outer space was spectacular."

He saw a sunny afternoon over South America. "I remember seeing the green jungle, all these brown rivers flowing into the Amazon, all these puffy, white clouds floating by," he said. "I can't believe I'm out in the middle of this whole thing," he remembered.

Colonel Drew's experience in the Air Force helped pave the way for his career at NASA. He knows first-hand that training and education are essential to career success.

"A lot of what is important here at NASA is people with an operational sense about them," he said. "We have lots of people here with scientific and technical backgrounds."

NASA values people who have served in combat zones and know how to operate aircraft, he said. The training Airmen receive, especially in combat situations, is useful in space exploration fields.

"You have to make a decision right now, and it has real life



**Col. Alvin Drew moves stowage containers through a hatch on the International Space Station while space shuttle Discovery remains docked with the station in March.**

Courtesy photo

or death consequences," he said of his time in the Air Force. "At NASA, especially in the exploration part, we do that every day."

Colonel Drew served as a combat rescue helicopter pilot from 1985 - 1987. As a member of Air Force special operations, he flew 60 combat missions over Panama, the Persian Gulf and northern Iraq.

He also worked as a project test pilot, commanded two flight test organizations and served on the Air Combat Command staff.

According to NASA's website, he has more than 3,500 hours of flying experience and has piloted 30 different types of aircraft. He retired from the Air Force in September 2010.

In August 2007 he was part of Endeavour's 20th flight, the 119th space shuttle mission.

Four years later, he was on the final mission for Discovery, which launched its first flight in 1984, the same year Colonel

Drew graduated from the Air Force Academy with Bachelor of Science degrees in astronautical engineering and physics.

His education helped him achieve his flight goals and will carry him through the next phase of his career.

"Right now, I'm hoping to get a position at NASA headquarters, working to help the design and direction of the rendezvous spacecraft," he said.

Colonel Drew said that NASA decided seven to eight years ago to change direction, focusing on exploration as it did back in the 1960s, going on interplanetary missions and studying the moon and asteroid belt.

Though NASA is at a crossroads, the agency still needs educated men and women to continue its missions.

"I'm really interested in making sure there's a viable and vibrant space program for future generations of explorers," he said. "I got to be here because a lot of people worked hard in the '60s to create a working space program."

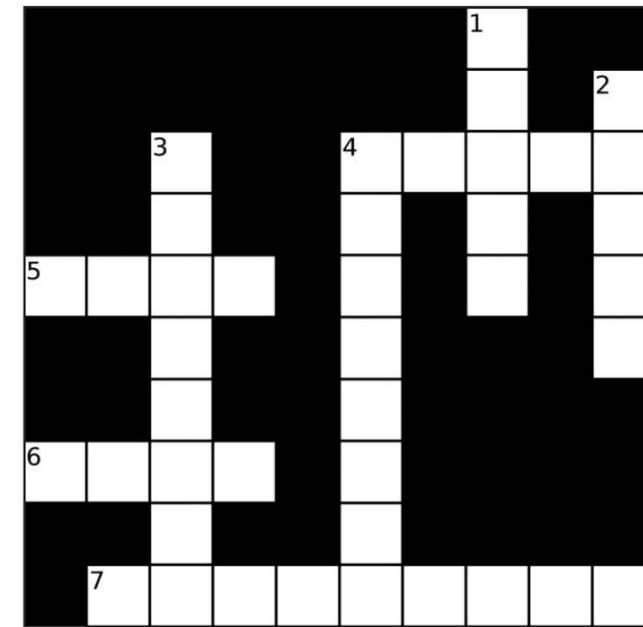
## AROUND TOWN

### Hitching Lot Farmer's Market

The Hitching Lot Farmer's Market is open Mondays from 5-7 p.m., Thursdays from 6-10 a.m., and Saturdays from 7-10 a.m. Visit [hitchinglotfarmersmarket.com](http://hitchinglotfarmersmarket.com) for more information.

### Sounds of Summer Concert Series

Come enjoy the Sounds of Summer Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. in July at the Columbus Riverwalk. Each week features a different band live. Call 328-6305 for more information.



## Khobar Towers crossword

Down

- 1 The vehicle bomb that exploded just outside of building 131 was a \_\_\_\_.
- 2 The attack occurred at approximately 9:55 at \_\_\_\_.
- 3 Number of Airmen killed in the Khobar Towers bombing.
- 4 Airmen living in the Khobar Towers were there in support of OPERATION \_\_\_\_ WATCH.

- 4 Across The Khobar Towers terrorist attack took place in Dhahran, \_\_\_\_ Arabia.
- 5 The Khobar Towers attack took place \_\_\_\_ 25, 1996.
- 6 The off-base parking lot where the vehicle bomb was parked was only an estimated 65 \_\_\_\_ away from building 131.
- 7 Building 131, which was struck by the blast, primarily housed Civil \_\_\_\_.

## BARGAIN LINE

**The deadline for submitting ads is noon Monday before the desired publication date. Ads turned in after the deadline will run the following week. Ads can be mailed to or dropped off at the public affairs office in the 14th Flying Training Wing Headquarters building, e-mailed to [silverwings@columbus.af.mil](mailto:silverwings@columbus.af.mil) or faxed to 434-7009. Calling Ext. 7068 by noon Monday can extend the run date of ads already submitted. Silver Wings reserves the right to limit ads based on content, space and frequency of requests. Advertisements for private businesses or services providing a continuous source of income may not appear in the Bargain Line. They may, however, be purchased through the Commercial Dispatch, 328-2424.**

### Homes

**For sale:** 235 Justin Circle. Beautiful three bed, two bath, 1,948 sq. ft. home in Ridgeland Estates (Caledonia School District) less than 6 miles from Columbus AFB. Home features stone fireplace with gas logs, French doors to the back patio, 15 foot vaulted ceiling in sunken living

room, master bath suite with his and hers vanity sinks, formal dining room, laundry room, two-car garage, gas connection on back patio for a grill, spacious yard, screened room off the breakfast area in the kitchen, attic storage over garage and master bedroom. Rent for \$1250 per month or buy for \$139,000. Call 570-4221. See more at [www.militarybuyown-er.com](http://www.militarybuyown-er.com).

**For rent:** Beautiful three bedroom, two bath house located only 10 minutes from CAFB near the hospital, \$800 per month. Perfect for a family or a few pilots! The entire house has been remodeled! New carpet in every bedroom. Patio area perfect for barbeques. Large fenced back yard great for pets. Washer, dryer, fridge and all other major appliances included! 408 24th Ave N, Columbus. Please call Emma at (715) 570-3484 for more information or to schedule a showing.

**For sale or lease:** Spacious three bedroom two bathroom home in New Hope. Great neighborhood, walking distance to New Hope schools. Remodeled 2,370 sqft. Open floor plan with wood laminate and ceramic tile flooring. Formal dining room,

bonus room, laundry room, large bathrooms, pantry, covered patio, privacy fence, and two car garage. For sale \$160,000 or lease \$1,200 per month plus deposit. Call 418-3592. **For sale:** 2.1 acres on Wood Road in Caledonia. Ready to build. Call 356-6844 please leave message.

### Transportation

**For sale:** 1987 Ford Escort, four door, body and interior in excellent shape, needs engine work. Call 244-8390 after 5 p.m. or 251-1413.

**For sale:** 2006 Mercury Milan, Black, tan leather interior, heated seats, sunroof, 114,000 miles, \$4000. Call 364-2109 or 816-1701.

**For sale:** 2001 Damon Daybreak 35 foot Class A motor home. Asking payoff \$31,000. Call 356-6844. Please leave a message.

**For sale:** 2006 Dodge Dakota crew-cab truck, V-6, auto, \$8,976. Please call 328-4374.

### Miscellaneous

**For sale:** Dog Kennel, four feet high

modular, eight section and portable. Asking \$100. Call 352-1790.

**For sale:** Graco Pack-n-Play. Sage green and cream color, also has changing area and mobile and two sheets, \$35. Baby Einstein play mat, \$10. Lots of baby boy clothes 0-18 months. Graco stroller combo with car seat and two bases for the car sage green with jungle animals, \$50. Electronic dart board w/ darts and extra tips pretty much never used, \$50. Please call (843) 324-7135.

**For sale:** Entertainment Center, Oak, fits 27" TV, stereo cabinet with glass doors, two pullout drawers, video/DVD storage, good condition. \$50. Call 244-8390 after 5 p.m. or 251-1413.

**For sale:** Solid wood computer desk with hutch, \$40. Coffee plus two end tables (wrought iron), \$75. Call 843-697-2942 for more information.

**For sale:** 46' RCA rear-projection TV, \$150. Call 574-9414.

**For Sale:** 32" Panasonic CRT TV, \$70. Black and gray futon, with metal frame, \$60. Call 434-8358

**For Sale:** Black slide-in ceramic top oven, glass window door and storage drawer. Great condition and works, \$150.00. White side by side refriger-

ator/freezer, with ice maker. Great condition and works, \$200.00. Call 574-1262.

**For sale:** Singer sewing machine in beautiful maple cabinet, \$56. Call 328-4374.

**For sale:** IBM Thinkpad R52 Laptop, 1.8ghz Pentium 4 processor. 1G of RAM, 60G hard drive, CDRW-DVD, Wifi, USB Ports, WinXP Pro, Microsoft Word Pro Suite, Adobe. Very Good Condition. Asking \$200. Call 386-6981.

### Pets

**For sale:** CKC Male Husky puppy with papers, \$100 or best offer. Has all shots for the year, cage and food bowls included. Please call (206) 931-6834.

### Saturday Yard Sales

**Yard sale:** June 25 starting at 8 a.m. at 4250 Alabama Ave. Baby toys and small house utilities.

**Garage sale:** 110 N. Walnut Dr., Oak Dale Park. June 25 from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m.

## Security and policy review

Did you know that as a military member you must coordinate all information relating to speeches, presentations, Academic papers, multimedia visual information materials and information proposed for release to a publicly accessible Worldwide Website with exception of Air Force publications through the 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office? For more information contact the 14th FTW/PA at 434-7068.

# Base families offered a variety of activities

## Catfish Invitational Softball Tourney

It's time for the Fitness Center's Fourth Annual Catfish Invitational Softball Tournament on July 9. There is room for 20 teams in this double-elimination tournament and the cost is \$150 per team. Play begins at 8 a.m. This and other events open to the community are sponsored by these 2011 Annual Fitness Program Sponsors: Ashley Furniture HomeStore, The Dispatch, Techniq Graphics, Cable One, ESPN Radio 103.1, Bud Light, Verizon Wireless, Triangle Federal Credit Union, Annunciation Catholic School, Splash In A Flash Auto Detailing, Patti Johnson or Century 21-Doris Hardy & Assoc., LLC, Rob Naugher of State Farm Insurance, and North Mississippi Medical Center. No federal endorsement of sponsors intended. Sign up at the Fitness Center by July 1 or call 434-2772 for more information.

## "Bump & Run" to the Golf Course for Daily Specials

In addition to offering a great lunch menu with daily specials Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Whispering Pines Golf Course is starting some great daily golfing and drink specials in July. There's "Moonlight Mondays" – nine holes and a cart for just \$15 or 18 holes with a cart for only \$20 after 6 p.m. "Two-Fer Tuesdays" offers two golfers the chance to play 18 holes with a cart for just \$35. The Thursday "Twilight Special" is continuing due to its success. Every Thursday after 6 p.m., play 9 holes with a cart for just \$15. Then "Thursday Thursdays" offers drink specials in the Pro Shop or on the patio from 4-7 p.m. The Saturday morning "Dog Fights" are open to all levels of golfers and begin at 8 a.m. each week. Every Sunday play 18 holes with a cart for only \$20. Direct questions to the Pro Shop at 434-7932.

## Alabama Adventure Trip

Sign up before July 1 for a trip to Alabama Adventure in Birmingham, Ala., on July 16. The bus will be departing the base at 7 a.m. and returning after a day of fun in the sun at the combination theme and water park. The cost is \$69 per person and includes the ticket price and transportation. Contact Outdoor

Recreation at 434-2507 for more information.

## Book Your Summer Party Now

Outdoor Recreation is now booking summer parties at Independence Pool. For more information about availability and prices, call 434-2505 or 434-2507.

## Daily Grind Going Out of Business

Take advantage of the lower prices at the Daily Grind before it goes out of business for good on June 30. Stop by the Fitness Center location for a hot or cold beverage before it closes.

## Fees Increase at FSS Activities

For the first time in nearly six years, fees will increase at the Bowling Center and at the RV storage lot in order to compensate for the rising costs of goods, repairs, etc. The new fees for games of bowling are posted in the bowling center and average 50 cents per game. RV storage prices will change as of July 1 with on-base residents' fees going from \$5 to \$8 and off-base residents' fees increasing to \$10 from \$15. The lock will be changed as of July 5.

## Passport to Food, Family & Fun

Pick up your Passport to food, family and fun after May 31 at any of the participating 14th Force Support Squadron activities, and get it validated for such things as attending events, patronizing the facility or just visiting. Turn in your passport(s) at any of the participating activities by Aug. 31 for a chance to win prizes. The participating activities are the Bowling Center, The Daily Grind (until the end of June), Whispering Pines Golf Course, Columbus Club (and Indy's), Arts & Crafts (and Auto Hobby), Youth Programs, Fitness & Sports, Outdoor Recreation, ITT and the Child Development Center. For more information about this program, call FSS Marketing at 434-2337.

## FitFamily Cook It Up!

Enter the FitFamily "Cook It Up Healthy Recipe Contest" for a chance to win great prizes and bring Celebrity Chef Herb Mesa to Columbus AFB. The contest runs through

June 30 and there is no limit to the number of recipes that can be entered. Visit [www.usaffitfamily.com](http://www.usaffitfamily.com) for all of the details and to enter the contest.

## PLAYpass Program

Single airmen returning from deployment and families of deployed members can receive special discounts and rewards valued at more than \$500 each beginning May 28. The PLAYpass cards offer discounts that provide members and their eligible family members opportunity to participate in the 14th Force Support Squadron's participating facilities and programs for free or at a reduced cost. These cards can be picked up at the Airmen & Family Readiness Center beginning May 28. Please bring a copy of orders and a valid military identification card. For more information or to find out if you are eligible for a PLAYpass card, visit [www.MyAirForceLife.com](http://www.MyAirForceLife.com) or call the A&FRC at 434-2790.

## Say Cheese!

The Arts & Crafts Center is offering professional 3-D seasonal backdrops for your do-it-yourself photo shoots. You bring the camera, the kids, the pets, the friends...whoever. It's free and available for use Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Saturdays by appointment. Call 434-7836 for an appointment or for more information.

## Home School Collection at the Library

The base library has a phenomenal collection of educational fun books, games, puzzles, "how-to" guides and the like for homeschoolers. For more information about the Home School Collection, please contact the Library at 434-2934

## Dance, Dance, Dance!

Children ages 3 to 8 can learn all styles of dance at the Youth Center for just \$30 per month. Classes for ages 3 to 5 are Mondays, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and classes for ages 6 to 8 are at the same time on Tuesdays. For registration information, call the Youth Center at 434-2504.

## Squadron DUI-Free Bowling Party

The bowling center is offering a free squadron bowling party from 1 to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, for those squadrons who have been without a DUI for three months. Shoe rental, food and beverage charges still apply. For more information or to reserve lanes at the bowling center, call 434-3426.

## Join FitFamily!

All ages can benefit from the Air Force Services fitness and wellness initiative, FitFamily. Families can register as a team at [www.USAFFitFamily.com](http://www.USAFFitFamily.com) to earn points and achieve levels for participation in Family Fun activities, family sports and fitness and family nutrition. Recognition is provided at each level to encourage families to continue on the path of wellness. The FitFamily program encourages Air Force families to make healthy lifestyle choices and provides resources and tips in an effort to promote overall family fitness. For more information, contact the Youth Center at 434-2504.

## Space A Lodging

The Magnolia Inn usually has openings for Space A family and single units. Contact the lodging desk at 434-2548.

## Affordable Tickets at ITT

The Information, Ticket and Travel office has discounted tickets for Disney World, Universal Studios, Dollywood, Sea World, Busch Gardens, Six Flags over Georgia, the Memphis Zoo, Alabama Adventure, Dixie Stampede, Geyser Falls and more. Call 434-2505/7861 for more information.

## Youth Center Sponsorship Program

Moving is hard, but it is also a time to meet new friends, find new hangout spots, get involved in fun and different things and travel to interesting places. The Youth Sponsorship Program at Columbus was created by and just for youth. For assistance in this sometimes difficult transition, contact the Youth Center at 434-2504 and join in the fun of the youth sponsorship program.

# Airmen pick up pieces before historic handover

**Tech. Sgt. Jason Lake**  
321st Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq — More than 35 Airmen and Soldiers volunteered to clean up the Victory Over America Palace at Camp Slayer June 5 through 7.

The palace, which is one of 70-plus palaces Saddam Hussein built throughout the country, will soon be returned to the Iraqi government.

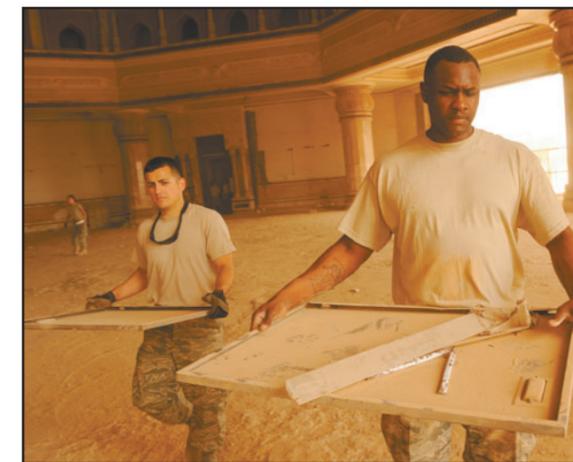
The three-day cleanup effort was coordinated by Staff Sgt. Teresa Pavljuk.

"Now that tours are over, I volunteered to open (the palace) up and organized for (Airmen) at Sather Air Base to clean it up," she said. "I'm doing something that is part of history. I'm giving back palaces to Iraq. How many people can actually say they did that while deployed?"

Over the past eight years, the bombed-out palace had been used for office and dormitory space, supply storage and even as a dining facility before it became a novelty site where deployed service members took occasional supervised visits for souvenir photos.

"We had a lot of military people here back in 2003," said Sergeant Pavljuk, a 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron aerial porter. "Now we're cleaning up the mess. There's a lot of wood, glass and metal. We're taking it all out and trying to make any kind of presence we had here go away (before) we sign (the palace) back over to the Iraqi general."

For some Sather Air Base newcomers, like Staff Sgt. Nicole Beye, it was an opportunity to help out U.S. Army property



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Lake  
**Staff Sgt. Justin Loterg and Tech. Sgt. Brian Jones, from the 447th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron, haul out debris from inside the Victory Over America Palace as more than 35 volunteers cleaned up the palace June 11, 2011, at Camp Slayer outside Baghdad, Iraq.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Lake  
**Staff Sgt. Alexis Johnson (left) and Staff Sgt. Nicole Beye, from the 447th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron, remove debris from inside the Victory Over America Palace as more than 35 volunteers cleaned up the palace June 11, 2011, at Camp Slayer outside Baghdad, Iraq.**

caretakers while getting a glimpse inside Iraq's historical landmark.

"We helped the Army out. We filled up a flatbed and a regular truck several times," said the 447th Expeditionary

# Scare at local water park highlights importance of knowing BLS/CPR

**Bekah Clark**  
12th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS — The importance of Basic Life Support and CPR training was reinforced for a Randolph family June 5 when their trip to a local water park took a serious turn after another family's small child choked on a grape and stopped breathing.

Dr. Shawna Hoffert and her family were in the kiddie pool area when three ladies came running over to get the lifeguard nearby.

"At first, I didn't go over there. I didn't want to insert myself into the situation needlessly. I thought they had it under control," said Dr. Hoffert, wife to Capt. Stephen Hoffert of the 559th Flying Training Squadron.

Once it became clear the little girl still needed help, Dr. Hoffert, who is trained in BLS, CPR, as well as Advanced Cardiac Life Support, went to see if she could assist.

"No one was doing anything for her," she said. "They were just standing there; even the lifeguard. There were no whistle calls, nothing."

"I don't even remember how I got to the little girl, I just remember slapping her back to dislodge the grape, when that didn't work, I started abdominal thrusts. Ultimately, I had to put her on her back and start mouth-to-mouth and chest compressions."

"On my second breath, I was finally able to get her airway open enough for her to cough up the grape," she said.

According to Dr. Hoffert, the situation goes to show why anyone who can should know CPR.

"What would have happened if I wasn't there? No one was doing anything for her," she said, explaining that the emergency response team wasn't able to reach the scene until after the little girl coughed up the grape.

Dr. Hoffert doesn't blame the lifeguard for not stepping in.

"He was just a kid; anyone can freeze up in a situation like that. That's why it's so important for as many people as possible to know CPR."

"I especially want parents, grandparents and caregivers to realize how important it is for them to know CPR. This situation could have happened anywhere, I had just fed my kids those same grapes; it could have just as easily happened to one of my kids."

Needed CPR training? Call the local American Red Cross office at 224-5151.

# Commander's Action Line 434-7058

The Commander's Action Line is your direct line to the commander for comments and suggestions on how to make Columbus AFB a better place. Although the Commander's Action Line is always available, the best way to resolve problems is through the chain-of-command.

The Commander's Action Line phone number is 434-7058. Callers should leave their name and phone number to receive an answer. All names will be kept confidential. Message may be answered in the Silver Wings without names.

Written questions may also be brought to the PA office in the MSG building, Bldg. 730, suite 186. Questions and answers may be edited for brevity and style.

View past issues of Silverwings and much more at [columbus.af.mil](http://columbus.af.mil)

## TRICARE does not retire when you do

**Sharon Foster**  
TRICARE Management  
Activity

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — When beneficiaries retire from active duty, they may have big plans for how they are going to spend their time. Along with choices about where to live and their next great adventure, they must make choices about their health care. Understanding these choices will help beneficiaries and their families make the best health care decisions.

“While active-duty service members must use TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote, retirees who are not eligible for Medicare may be eligible for TRICARE Standard or Extra,” said Kathleen Larkin, the director of the Health Plan Policy Division at the TRICARE Management Activity. “Each program has advantages pertaining to cost, location and convenience.”

If space is available, retirees can continue care in a military treatment facility with a primary care manager, through TRICARE Prime. This requires re-enrolling and paying annual fees of \$230 for an individual and \$460 for a family. If beneficiaries choose to enroll in TRICARE Prime at an MTF, they will receive care based on the same access-to-care standards as all other Prime beneficiaries.

TRICARE Standard or Extra may be the best option if a retiree moves to a location that is not near an MTF, or where Prime is not offered. TRICARE Standard is a flexible, affordable plan that gives retirees and their eligible family members a greater choice of providers, no enrollment fees, waiver of cost shares for most preventive health care services and the same low catastrophic cap as TRICARE Prime.

TRICARE Extra offers even lower out-of-pocket expense if retirees use network providers. Although there is no enrollment fee for TRICARE Standard and Extra, a deductible of

\$150 for individuals and \$300 for a family must be met before cost-sharing begins.

Under TRICARE Standard and Extra, retirees retain the same access to pharmacy benefits through a local MTF or TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery. To learn more about Home Delivery, go to [www.tricare.mil/homedelivery](http://www.tricare.mil/homedelivery). Retirees also have the option to use the TRICARE retail pharmacy network and can purchase dental coverage through the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program. More information on TRDP can be found at [www.trdp.org](http://www.trdp.org).

In addition to TRICARE retiree health care benefits, certain medical and pharmacy benefits also may be available to retirees from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Go to [www.va.gov/health/default.asp](http://www.va.gov/health/default.asp) for more information.

The TRICARE Overseas Program Standard option is available to retirees planning to live outside the United States. They and their family must meet a deductible before cost-sharing begins and generally file their own claims for reimbursement for covered health services. TRICARE also has additional country-specific requirements for care received in the Philippines.

Retirees always should remember to update the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System with any new personal information at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/index.jsp](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/index.jsp). Automatic coverage by TRICARE Standard and Extra or TOP Standard occurs after retirement as long as DEERS information is current.

TRICARE officials recommend beneficiaries consider all available choices before retiring. It is best to plan well in advance to ensure a smooth transition. Beneficiaries can learn more about retiree health care options at their local TRICARE service center. Other TRICARE contact information and beneficiary assistance locations can be found at [www.tricare.mil/contactus](http://www.tricare.mil/contactus).

## Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Uncovering the truths

**Airman 1st Class Lloyd Kimble**  
14th Medical Operations Squadron,  
Public Health Element

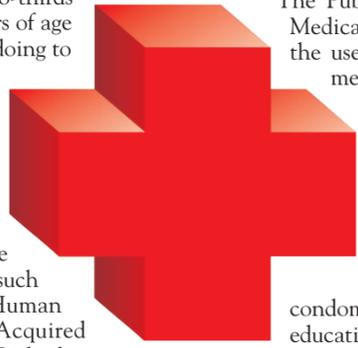
According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, one in every five people in the United States has been or currently is infected with a Sexually Transmitted Disease. Two-thirds of all STD's occur in people 25 years of age or younger. So think, what are you doing to protect yourself?

The consequences of unprotected sex can be devastating; it changes not only your life but your partners' as well. Breakthroughs in medicine have provided cures to many STD's like Chlamydia and Gonorrhea. Sadly, however, no cure has been found for other infections such as herpes, genital warts, Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Risk factors include unprotected sex, multiple sex partners, and unsafe sex practices. In the month of March alone, there were 349 reported STD cases in Lowndes County, compared to an annual total of over 4,000 reported cases. HIV and AIDS have claimed the lives of over 550,000 Americans. Today, an estimat-

ed 1.1 million Americans are living with this disease, approximately 20 percent of those people are unaware they even have the infection. The state of Mississippi has reported 7,557 AIDS cases to the CDC, from the beginning of the epidemic through December 2008. Mississippi currently ranks 25 among the 50 states in reported AIDS cases.

The Public Health Element of the 14th Medical Operations Squadron stresses the use of protection and risk management when engaging in sexual practices. We advocate the use of condoms as a way to ensure your health and reduce the risk of sexual infection. The Koritz Medical clinic as well as your local health department provides free testing for STD's. Public Health provides free condoms and brochures for everyone and education upon request. One of our missions is to stop the chain of infection and

provide you with the essential tools needed to protect yourself and your partner. For questions concerning testing, protection, or other issues relating to STDs, please contact public health at 434-2411. More information can be found at the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)).



## The “dirt” on carwash fundraisers

**Rena Fischer**  
14th Civil Engineering  
Squadron

Car wash fundraisers are big part of the summer months. Whether you're raising money for a sports team, disaster relief effort or organizational functions, car washes seem like an easy and inexpensive way to do so. All you need are soap, access to water and some willing volunteers. Unfortunately, car washes can also be harmful to the environment. Car wash fundraisers are usually held in parking lots where the water enters the storm drain. The water that enters a storm drain doesn't go to a wastewater treatment facility where it is cleaned. Instead the car wash

water containing soaps, oils and grease and heavy metals empties into local creeks, streams and rivers. We use these same waterways to fish, swim and even as a source of drinking water.

For these reasons, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality prohibits Columbus Air Force Base from releasing car wash water in the storm drains. Allowing water that contains these pollutants to leave the base can result in a notice of violation from the state of Mississippi issued directly to the wing commander. Violations of the Clean Water Act could also result in monetary fines, up to \$32,000 per day! You would need to wash a lot of cars to raise

enough money to pay this fine.

If you're still interested in hosting a carwash, the 14th Civil Engineering, Environmental Element, can help you plan an environmentally-friendly carwash fundraiser. We will assist you in selecting a location where carwash water will not enter storm drains and an eco-friendly or phosphate-free soap. Responsible use of water resources must also be considered. Outfitting hoses with spray nozzles that have an “off” option and using buckets will help reduce water usage.

For more information on carwash fundraisers, contact Kim Davis, CAFB Storm Water Program Manager, at 434-7955.

## Developing our Future Force

**Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr.**  
AETC commander



**Gen. Edward A. Rice,**  
Commander, Air Education  
and Training Command

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — It has been almost six months since Teresa and I arrived at AETC. Since that time, we have traveled to a number of our AETC bases. Simply put, we are very impressed with the men and women throughout the command executing our mission. The breadth of our responsibility to recruit Airmen as well as to educate and train Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and our international partners cannot be truly appreciated until you have witnessed our team in action.

Thank you for your dedication and service to our Air Force and the nation. The diligence and professionalism you exhibit daily accomplishing the AETC mission is no small feat; having witnessed firsthand the motivation you display recruiting, training and educating our number one resource, people, is an eye-watering experience. AETC's mission is critical, as we ensure our “trainees”, all volunteers from our nation's youth representing the next generation of Air Force leaders, are instilled with the skills and knowledge needed to provide for our nation's defense. But, we must do more than just give them the best tools and resources to tackle future challenges.

We are also charged with teaching them how to learn and

think. Why is this important? We live in an ever changing and dynamic world. In order to succeed in a complex environment, we must have the ability to adapt quickly to change. If we don't, we will lose our competitive advantage. Our nation requires “Thinking Airmen”...Airmen that can define the right question and have the ability to develop executable courses of action. We enable the development of the future force so they will be prepared to lead and tackle the opportunities and challenges they will undoubtedly encounter.

The continuum of learning is built upon three pillars: training, experience and education. Training our forces in their specific job is a disciplined, standardized approach ensuring our Airmen can follow established procedures (rules, guidelines, technical orders, checklists, etc.) to accomplish a specific mission or task. To me, training is a very valuable and necessary development tool ensuring the job is done safely, securely and correctly.

As our trained forces work in their technical specialty, they build upon the second pillar...experience. Experience is invaluable and is constantly honed by the mentorship and grooming of peers and supervisors. Airmen rely on training and experience to master their technical field; but it is the third pillar, our educational programs, that make our Airmen the best in the world.

## Positive impressions leave lasting impact

**Col. Glen Downing**  
81st Training Wing vice commander

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. (AFNS) — Twenty-one years later, I still remember my very first day of active duty on an Air Force base. It was June 14, 1990, and my wife and I had just driven halfway across the country from Iowa to Mather Air Force Base in Sacramento, Calif. Neither one of us had ever been to Sacramento before, let alone Mather. It was our first permanent change of station, so there was a little bit of unease as we pulled up to the gate late in the afternoon.

That uneasy feeling got a little worse when I noticed an authoritative looking technical sergeant talking to some of the Airmen at the gate. Even a naïve lieutenant could tell this man must be in charge of something. The gate was busy so when I stopped, it was the tech sergeant, assisting his Airmen, who came to my window. I rolled my window down, because that's what we did back then, and before I could even say anything, the sergeant smiled and politely asked,

“Can I help you, Sir?”

I nervously reached for my orders and my prized red second lieutenant ID card. That card was red for a reason...it screamed inactive reserve and meant I was as “green” as they come.

The sergeant looked things over and then asked, “Sir, are you here for navigator training?” I proudly said yes and immediately he explained how to get to the lodging office, reminded me my first day of class was Monday and explained where and how I needed to report. He then took a step back, snapped the sharpest salute I've ever seen and said, “Welcome to the Air Force, Sir; Ma'am.”

Driving away from that gate, I commented to my wife about how great the Air Force was going to be. I also thought about how courteous and professional the NCO was and how he anticipated all of my needs and fulfilled them. What immediately formed in my mind was the most lasting impression of my career. That noncommissioned officer convinced me the Air Force has the most incredible people anywhere. Our daily business is really people taking care of people, and that sense of communi-

ty is what I have enjoyed most about my career.

Over the years, I've thought a lot about those few minutes at that gate. I've drawn other impressions over time. It taught me about the pride and professionalism of the NCO corps. It also taught me about the quality of our security forces personnel. I began to realize the NCO doesn't even know the impression he made on me as a newly-minted lieutenant. I'll never have the opportunity to thank him. All I can do is pay it forward. I'm also pretty sure he never thought a few minutes could leave an impression that continues to impact a career 21 years later.

How often do you think about the impressions you make? Often, we talk about first impressions and I agree that those are important. We're also making impressions every day, usually without even knowing we have an impact on others. I'm continually surprised and grateful when someone comes up to me and tells me how I made some sort of impression or impact on him or her. Usually, it's a small comment or just an observation from a distance. Truly, we are always on parade. Airmen are

Our Air Force prides itself on having a highly educated force, and our service culture has always relied heavily on intellectual capital. Education, when coupled with training and experience, serves as a force multiplier. Education enhances critical thinking skills and empowers individuals to ask thoughtful questions that search for root causes and solutions. In a world in which the pace of change is arguably greater than it has ever been in human history, education is ever important. How we teach our Airmen to learn is often more critical than what we train them to do. Therefore, we must pursue an approach to development that places increased emphasis on education and critical thinking.

The Air Force and the First Command are facing challenging times. While we must continue to train and educate, we must find ways to continue producing exceptional Airmen with fewer resources. There are multiple drills underway helping to create decision space regarding how we develop our future force. We need new models and frameworks to balance resources, requirements and risk. Relying on our training, experiences and education, we will find the answers.

And despite all the challenges that we face and the uncertainties of the future, I am certain of one thing...the confidence I have in the abilities that each of you brings and the key role you have in the development of future generations of warrior leaders. Each of you is a valuable member of a skilled team, transforming the youth of our society, those who have volunteered to defend the ideals and freedoms we all enjoy. You can take immense pride as you develop them; educating and training them into future leaders ready to tackle the unknown. We continue to shape our legacy, a legacy of developing future leaders not just for today, but for tomorrow.

always watching and listening. Are you making positive impressions or negative ones?

There are a few things you can do to ensure you leave positive impressions on others.

First, be yourself. Phoniness makes you look, well, phony. Let your personality shine.

Second, never give up what I call the free stuff. Personal appearance, customs and courtesy go a long way in communicating who you are as an Airman and a person. The free stuff won't normally move you up in the world, but giving it up will certainly move you down.

Third, work on self-awareness. The more you realize you are making impressions, the more control you'll have over them. You'll learn to choose the best words, keep the best attitude and pause that extra second to provide a piece of advice or mentorship that otherwise you may have passed by.

Last, and most important, treat everyone with respect. That security forces NCO so many years ago could have easily laughed at my little red ID card and challenged the wet-behind-the-ears-LT to fend for himself. Instead, he chose to throw his arms open and embrace my wife and me as part of the Air Force family. In two minutes or less, one person affected our view of the Air Force forever. Remember, impressions really do count!

# Dollars & \$ense: Is my bonus tax-free if I was in a combat zone?



Bonuses earned in an area designated for the Combat Zone Tax Exclusion are tax exempt.

- For officers, the exemption is limited to the sum of the highest rate of enlisted basic pay plus the amount of Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay actually payable to the officer for the qualifying month. Currently, that exemption is \$7,714.80 monthly (Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force monthly basic pay of \$7,489.80 plus \$225 HFP/IDP payable). Any amount in excess of that total will be taxed. If you are an officer, keep in mind that your normal basic pay also counts against your maximum exemption, as well as any bonus.

- For enlisted members, there is no limit; the entire bonus is tax exempt.

If you're entitled to a Career Status Bonus, it is con-

sidered tax exempt if the effective date of your election falls within a month in which you're entitled to CZTE. CSB does not apply to the Reserve Component.

## References:

AFMAN 65-116, Volume 1, Chapter 56, Section 56D  
AFMAN 65-116, Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 30.8  
DODFMR Volume 7A, Chapter 66, Paration 660204  
DODFMR Volume 7A, Chapter 44, Table 44-1

## 14th CPTS Finance Customer Service:

Bldg 730, first floor lobby.

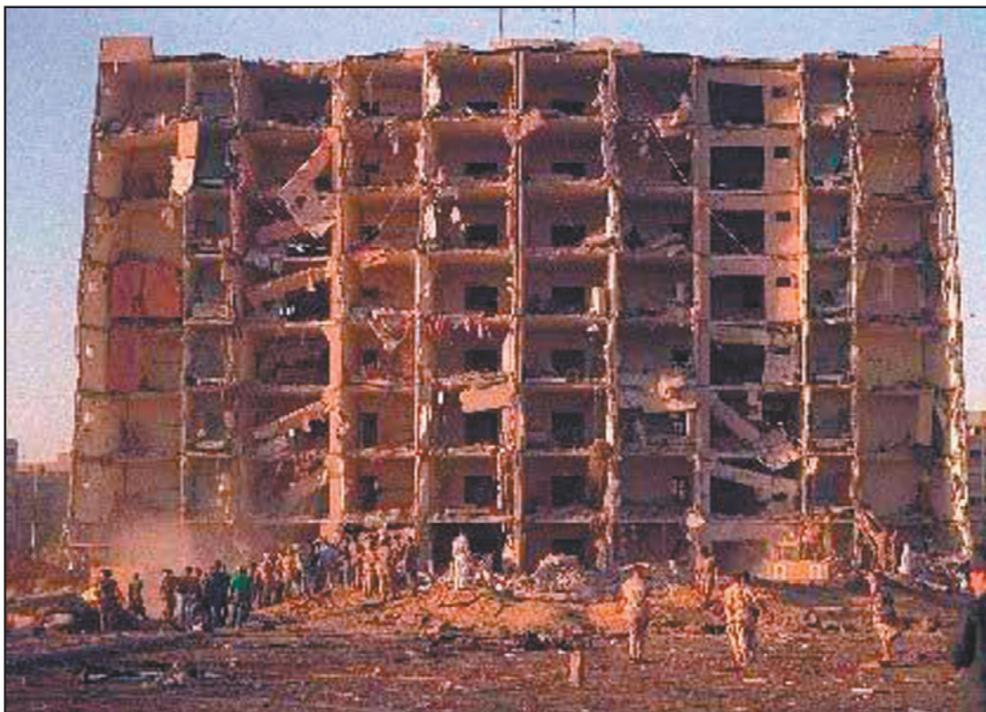
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

14th CPTS Finance Customer Service e-mail:  
14CPTS.FCS@columbus.af.mil

\*\*If you are unable to come during customer service hours due to mission requirements, please call 434-2705/2095 to schedule an appointment



Courtesy photo  
At the time 1st Lt. Mike Harner smiles for the camera in a hospital bed while recovering from injuries sustained in the Khobar towers bombing on June 25, 1996. Lt. Col. Mike Harner is now the commander of the 14th Civil Engineer Squadron.



Courtesy photo  
A picture of building #131 after the bombing on June 25, 1996. Building #131 was being used for housing deployed military personnel.

# Shedding blood for my country

**Lt. Col. Michael Harner**  
Commander, 14th Civil Engineer  
Squadron

Saturday, June 25, marks the 15th anniversary of one of the deadliest terrorist attacks on U.S. Airmen and coalition forces in Saudi Arabia. Most people remember or know the event as the “Khobar Towers” bombing. For me, this horrific act is an experience that will be forever etched in my mind and on my body. As I flash back to that time, I share with you my first-hand account of that devastating day where 19 Airmen were killed and over 385 were injured.

At the time, I was a 1st lieutenant stationed at my first duty assignment, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. The Air Force had selected me to deploy for 90 days...I was filled with excitement but apprehensive of my first deployment. When I arrived into Dhahran, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on June 19, I was assigned to the 4404th Provision Wing to work as a civil engineer in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. This was my first time in the Middle East and I never imagined that in six days, my life would almost come to an end.

The initial days in country were an indoctrination to the culture, climate and battle rhythm of the installation. The Civil Engineer Squadron was physically located on the perimeter of the base, in building 131 where most engineers worked and resided. I arrived around midnight and was ushered from the flight line, which was five miles away, to the compound. A few hours later, I awoke to morning Muslim prayers at 4:30 a.m. and looked out to realize the compound was adjacent to the city. One of the prominent landmarks was a huge mosque that was under construction about quarter mile away. The mosque’s parking lot was finished but no cars were parked there. It was a little alarming to see my building only 65 feet from this off-base parking lot, but I tried to put it out of my mind.

Throughout the first couple days, to my knowledge nothing suspicious had occurred. Thus the evening of June 25 had been a typical day of 120 degree temperatures, so I waited to exercise until late evening, after work. The compound was a mile around the outside perimeter, so I went out with another engineer for a 3-mile run at 9:30 p.m. After I had finished, I went back to my room on the 7th floor. My roommates were still working out on the other side of the base, so I decided to do my cool down stretching on the small balcony outside our room.

At approximately 9:55 p.m., less than five minutes after I stepped foot onto the balcony, I saw a truck and a car slowly pull into the parking lot. I thought this was odd so I watched as they drove past

me and stopped at the next building. It was dark out, but I could see the truck back up to the curb next to the perimeter about one-hundred yards away. Two men got out of the truck and left in the car...there was no shooting, no crashing into the fence, nothing threatening while I stood there watching. However, something didn’t feel right about the situation. I went inside and debated what to do next. I sat down to stretch some more in front of a sliding glass door. Within a minute or two, the loudest explosion I have ever heard went off. Praise God I had closed the curtains when I came inside, because I was sitting three feet from the plate glass door leading to the balcony. The glass from the door exploded into the room and into my body. The whole event only lasted approximately 15 seconds, but time stood still during the explosion.

*“On the anniversary of this day,  
I ask that each of us take a  
moment to reflect and pray for  
the families who lost loved ones  
during this horrific act as well  
as for those who endure the  
long-term effects of this atrocity.  
May we never forget those who  
paid the ultimate sacrifice for  
our great nation.”*

After the explosion my first instinct was to get out, but I couldn’t see due to the power outage from the explosion and blood running down my face. I felt my way down the walls to my room and yelled out of the blown out window for help. At the time no one responded which made me feel like I was the only survivor left. Because it was dark and I didn’t have any way to see my injuries, I sat down in a chair and started praying, “Lord, I don’t know what to do, please help me!” At that instant, a peace came over me like I’d never felt before and I remember distinctly knowing it was going to be all right. I reached into my clothes cabinet and found a t-shirt to try and stop the bleeding. I wrapped one shirt around my head to stop the blood running into my eyes. Then I reached down and realized my right leg had a huge hole in it, but I felt no pain so I completed the self-aid on my leg and other parts of my body.

After I got the bleeding under control I was able to see light from the city which allowed me to see a way out. I found the stairwell and heard voices from the

floor above and called to them to come help me. The team above were explosive ordnance disposal technicians...they did a phenomenal job of assisting me including ripping a door off its hinges and carrying me down seven flights of stairs. Over 100 engineers were injured in the blast, but everyone assisted the most critical. With my extensive wounds, the team took me to the triage area that was set up outside the base clinic, where I spent over an hour on the tarmac with a medical attendant named Senior Airman Cindy Hartsfield. She became an instant friend and we still maintain contact to this day! With such a small clinic, the medical staff did everything they could do, but the massive injuries from the explosion were overwhelming. They stabilized me with two IVs and a blanket, and Cindy stayed with me the entire time while the medics continued to assess and treat the wounded as much as they were able.

After about an hour, Saudi ambulances started arriving at the compound and I was taken to the city’s university hospital. I was the first to arrive from the compound and felt uneasy about being the only Airman there with no way to understand Arabic and no one escorting me. So again I prayed and asked God for peace and protection. He gave me more than I asked for...peace, protection and an English speaking doctor and staff. I was assured everything would be alright.

My wounds were severe enough that after two days in the Saudi hospital, I was medivaced with 41 other Airmen on a C-141 to Landstuhl Army Medical Center, close to Ramstein Air Base, Germany. I was blessed to have my wife, Julie, arrive just before me. We spent two days there then all the stabilized patients were transported on the same military plane to Eglin AFB, Florida for the memorial service with President Bill Clinton, Gen. Ronald Fogelman, Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall and other senior Department of Defense members.

After the ceremony, Julie and I were transported back to Whiteman AFB for convalescent leave and rehabilitation. I was greeted with a wonderful base welcome as the only Airman from Whiteman to return immediately from the terrorist attack. After several months of recovery, General Hawley, the current commander of Air Combat Command, flew to Whiteman AFB to present four of us from the base with Purple Hearts.

On the anniversary of this day, I ask that each of us take a moment to reflect and pray for the families who lost loved ones during this horrific act as well as for those who endure the long-term effects of this atrocity. May we never forget those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation.



Courtesy photo  
Colonel Harner’s room in the Khobar towers after the bombing on June 25, 1996. Due to the blast from the attack knocking out the building’s electricity, injured survivors were forced to navigate their way out of the structure in near-complete darkness.



Courtesy photo  
A picture of the crater left behind when the truck filled with explosives in the parking lot outside of the fenced compound exploded, killing 19 Airmen were killed and injuring over 385 more.