

“Produce Pilots, Advance Airmen, Feed the Fight”

Vol. 36, Issue 49

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

December 7, 2012

## Upcoming Inspection



# 58

3 Excellents  
3 Zeros  
100%  
Accountability

Days until the CUI

## News Briefs

### Class 13-11 Track Select

The Track Select for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 13-11 will be held Dec. 11 at 9 a.m. in the Phillips Auditorium.

### Happy Wrap

Volunteers needed to gift wrap presents for underprivileged children in the local area on Dec. 20. Wrapping begins at 9 a.m. at the Columbus Club. To volunteer contact the Columbus Air Force Base Happy Wrap Chairperson at (314) 307-8333.

### CDC Child Care for Holiday Shopping

Let the Child Development Center provide care for your children while you get your shopping done for the holidays! Get three or four others together to plan an outing then call the CDC at 434-2479 to keep your children happy and entertained while you shop!

## Inside



Feature **8**

Winter safety tips are highlighted in this week's feature.

## Local Native American concludes heritage month

**Senior Airman Chase Hedrick**  
14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

Columbus Air Force Base concluded its 2012 Native American Heritage Month with a luncheon featuring a guest speaker from a Mississippi Native American tribe at the Columbus Club on Nov. 29.

Cheriena Ben, Pearl River Representative for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Tribal Council offered her perspective of this year's Native American Heritage Month theme “Serving Our People, Serving Our Nations: Native Visions for Future Generations.”

“We were third class citizens; we didn't receive citizenship until after African Americans received citizenship...” she said. “But we had great leaders. We had leaders like Pushmataha.”

Cheriena said that it was Pushmataha's efforts and work with the U.S. Government that was a milestone that helped to bring about many of the opportunities Indian tribes have today. She said another major figure in her tribe's history was Phillip Martin, Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians who began his career in tribal leadership in 1957 after 10 years in the U.S. Air Force. Martin was first elected tribal chief in 1979.

“The 70's came around and still our people were picking cotton....” she said. “But then Chief said ‘well our people need high-tech jobs.’ He didn't have a computer then, he did a lot of writing on his own and he sent letters to some of the biggest companies in the U.S.”

See NATIVE AMERICAN, Page 3



Cheriena Ben, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Tribal Council, Pearl River Representative speaks during the 2012 Native American Heritage Month luncheon at the Columbus Club on Nov. 29. Cheriena offered her perspective of this year's Native American Heritage Month theme “Serving Our People, Serving Our Nations: Native Visions for Future Generations.”

## 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 (13-12) | 3.27 days    | 1.39 days        | Jan. 16      | 48th (13-03) | 0.28 days    | 1.50 days        | Dec. 14    | 49th (13-CB) | 0.09 days    | 0.87 days        | Dec. 19    | T-6               | 461      | 221   | 3,684  |
| 41st (13-11) | 0.82 days    | -1.32 days       | Dec. 11      | 50th (13-03) | 1.53 days    | 1.76 days        | Dec. 14    |              |              |                  |            | T-1               | 136      | 168   | 2,063  |
|              |              |                  |              |              |              |                  |            |              |              |                  |            | T-38              | 135      | 113   | 2,474  |
|              |              |                  |              |              |              |                  |            |              |              |                  |            | IFF               | 54       | 19    | 768    |

The graduation speaker is Lt. Gen. Glen Moorhead, USAF Ret.

## Nine enlisted Airmen promoted at ceremony

14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

Nine of Team BLAZE's enlisted Airmen sewed on their next stripe during the enlisted promotion ceremony on Nov. 29 at the Columbus Club.

Promoted are:

- Senior Airman Ariel Morgan, 14th Operations Support Squadron
- Senior Airman Marissa Alcantara, 14th Medical Operations Squadron
- Senior Airman Devondra Brown, 49th Fighter Training Squadron
- Senior Airman Kyle Rodgers, 14th Security Force Squadron
- Senior Airman Cory Stiely, 14th OSS
- Tech Sgt. Bryan Franks, 14th Flying Training Wing
- Tech Sgt. Nicole Sharff, 14th OSS
- Master Sgt. William Reynard, 14th FTW
- Master Sgt. Drew Spradley, 14th OSS



U.S. Air Force photo/Melissa Dublin

Nine of Team BLAZE's newly promoted enlisted Airmen sewed on their next stripe at the enlisted promotions ceremony at the Columbus Club on Nov. 29.

## 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 |
|-------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---------|
| 10                | 11  | 12  | 13                        | 14  | 15/16   |
| Night Flying Week | AETC Command Chaplain Visits<br>Newcomer's Orientation, 8 a.m. @ Club<br>Class 13-11 Track Select, 9 a.m. @ Phillips<br>CSC Holiday Social, 6 p.m. @ Bryn Bella | Heart Link Spouse Welcome, 8:30 a.m. @ Club |                           | Class 13-03 Graduation, 10 a.m. @ Kaye<br><br>Amory Civic Leaders Visit |         |
| 17                | 18  | 19  | 20                        | 21  | 22/23   |
| CUI ADVON Team    |   |   | Happy Wrap, 9 a.m. @ Club |   |         |

### Long Range Events

- Dec. 24: AETC Family Day
- Dec. 25: Christmas Day
- Dec. 31: AETC Family Day
- Jan. 1: New Year's Day
- Jan. 3: Enlisted Promotions
- Jan. 4: Class 13-04 Assignment Night
- Jan. 8: Hearts Apart
- Jan. 8: Enlisted Call
- Jan. 10: Civilian Call
- Jan. 11: Officer Call
- Jan. 15: Newcomer's Orientation
- Jan. 16: Class 13-12 Track Select
- Jan. 17: Dorm Dinner
- Jan. 21: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Jan. 25: Class 13-04 Graduation
- Jan. 30: Enlisted Promotions
- Feb. 1: Class 13-05 Assignment Night

## Thank You

Words cannot express the gratitude that all of the commanders, commanders' spouses and I have for the countless volunteers that made the Columbus Air Force Base 2012 Cookie Drive a smashing success. We are so proud of how every person on Columbus AFB pulled together to accomplish this base-wide service project! The spirit of volunteerism that emanated from the Happy Lounge at the Club this morning was awesome to see.

Due to the hard work and generosity of time of numerous volunteers, we baked, packaged and delivered over 1,000 dozen cookies! There was such a beautiful array of cookies donated by many talented bakers from the base, as well as community members. We delivered the cookies in paper bags that were lovingly decorated by over 800 school children from five local elementary schools and the Columbus AFB CDC. Once we had the paper bags filled for the single officers and enlisted personnel, we delivered tubs of cookies to almost every unit on base to spread the holiday cheer. Special thanks goes to Dawn Westphal, who served as the Columbus Spouses Club Chairperson for the Cookie Drive.

This event would not have succeeded without the countless volunteers who baked, dropped off, bagged, sealed, stapled, and delivered. Columbus AFB is a special place because of the wonderful and generous people who live and work here.

Thank you and Merry Christmas!

Mai Lan Isler  
Columbus AFB Cookie Drive Advisor

## Volunteers host Cookie Drive



U.S. Air Force Photo/Airman 1st Class Charles Dickens  
**Avery Speed, daughter of Lt. Col. Joseph Speed, 14th Operations Support Squadron Commander, gives 2nd Lt. Travis Sebree, 14th Student Squadron a bag of cookies as she volunteers to hand out the desserts to single Airmen during the Columbus Air Force Base 2012 Cookie Drive Dec. 3. Volunteers from across the base and community came together to bake, package and deliver over 1,000 dozen cookies to the single Airmen of Columbus AFB to bring them holiday cheer.**

## NATIVE AMERICAN

(Continued from Page 1)

Cheriena said that Martin's letters brought jobs in manufacturing across Mississippi, bringing the tribe to become the 10th largest employer in the state.

"It was never about us looking out just for the Choctaw people, we were looking out for the state of Mississippi."

"I believe in the U.S. government. I believe we have a president who cares and I can say about my community that we are starting to see familiar faces in the bureaus. I can sit with somebody who is Native American, who grew up on an Indian reservation, who knows

## 14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 57 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.



## CSAF directs Air Force-wide inspection

WASHINGTON — Commanders across the Air Force will conduct health and welfare inspections starting Dec. 5 to emphasize an environment of respect, trust and professionalism in the workplace.

The health and welfare inspection is a tool routinely used by unit commanders, command chiefs, and first sergeants.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III tasked commanders during the Nov. 28 Wing Commanders Call to examine their work settings and

ensure Airmen at all levels consistently apply standards of professionalism and respect across the service.

"Over the past months, I've discussed with our commanders, leaders and supervisors about the importance of pride and performance," said Welsh. "When Airmen work in a setting that is consistent with our core values of integrity, service and excellence, they perform with honor and distinction — they deserve nothing less. Anything short detracts from that pride and cripples mission effectiveness."

The purpose of this inspection is to reinforce expectations for the workplace environment, correct deficiencies, and deter conditions that may be detrimental to good order and discipline. Commanders will look for and remove unprofessional or inappropriate items that hinder a professional working environment.

"This is about commanders being commanders," Welsh said. "The underlying principle for the inspection is our core values, and the bottom line is that it's the right thing to do."

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

## Bio: Chaplain, Colonel, Steven Schaick

Chaplain, Colonel, Steven Schaick is the Command Chaplain, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command (AETC), Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. As Command Chaplain, he advises and represents the AETC commander on all



**Chaplain, Colonel, Steven Schaick**

Corps mission. He ensures AETC's chaplains and chaplain assistants are trained and equipped for global deployment. He directs the AETC headquarters chaplain staff and exercises oversight to a Chaplain Corps of approximately 210 personnel at 18 locations in the Command. The 88,000 active duty, Reserve, Guard, and civilian men and women of AETC train more than 340,000 students per year.

Chaplain Schaick is a native of Oshkosh, Wisconsin and entered the United States Air Force in 1976 as an F-15 Integrated Avionics Specialist. He was commissioned in the Air Force Reserves as a Chaplain Candidate in 1985 and into the active duty Chaplaincy in 1988.

aspects of the Chaplain

## Bio: Lt. Gen. Glen "Wally" Moorhead III

Lt. Gen. Glen "Wally" Moorhead III last served as the Commander, NATO Allied Air Component Command Izmir, Turkey; and Commander, 16th Air Force, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein Air Base, Germany. In both roles, the general was responsible for the planning and execution of U.S. and NATO air operations throughout Europe and Africa. He also served as the air component commander for NATO and European Union air operations in the Balkans.



**Lt. Gen. Glen "Wally" Moorhead III**

The general graduated from Smackover High School, Ark., in 1964, and attended the U.S. Air Force Academy Preparatory School before graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1969. After completing undergraduate pilot training and initial mission qualification, he was assigned twice to Southeast Asia, where he flew more than 350 close air support and air interdiction missions and more than 500 combat hours in the A-37 Dragonfly and A-7 Corsair II. He has also commanded two tactical fighter squadrons,

an operations group, the Warrior Preparation Center in Europe, the 50th Space Wing, the Space Warfare Center and the Air Warfare Center. In 1995, in support of a number of ongoing Balkans operations, General Moorhead directed Joint Task Force Provide Promise, including humanitarian airlift into Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Joint Task Force Able Sentry in Macedonia; the United Nations hospital in Zagreb, Croatia; and unmanned aerial vehicle operations for NATO's Operation Deliberate Force. During Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the general commanded the 16th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force and Coalition Air Forces North, a collection of more than 4,700 Airmen and 100 aircraft flying combat and combat support sorties from expeditionary bases in Europe, and also commanded Operation Display Deterrence, NATO's Article IV air defense of Turkey during the same period.

General Moorhead has held staff positions as Deputy Director of Fighter Tactics and Training for Headquarters Tactical Air Command, special assistant to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and Air Force Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations. The general has flown more than 5,000 hours in seven different aircraft since receiving his pilot wings in April 1971.

### Airman selected for AFIT

Congratulations to 2nd Lt Shedrick Bridgeforth, 14 Comptroller Squadron for his selection for the Air Force Institute of Technology Masters Degree program where he plans to pursue a degree in Cost Analysis.

## Follow the progress



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C3 Discussion



C3 News

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Go to  
<http://www.aetc.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-120614-139.pdf> to submit your idea. Trouble with the direct submit option? Save the form to your computer and attach it to

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Discuss your thoughts, suc-

cesses, ideas and more on the C3 discussion thread at <http://www.aetc.af.mil/new/s/story.asp?id=123304097>

Follow what innovations are happening throughout AETC as others bring their Cost Conscious Culture into play at <http://www.aetc.af.mil/library/costconsciousculture.asp>. Contact Public Affairs at 434-7068 or [Silverwings@Columbus.af.mil](mailto:Silverwings@Columbus.af.mil) to submit your success and stories about C3 for highlight on the web!

## 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.

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# SecAF declares 'Modernization can't wait'

NEW YORK CITY — The Air Force's senior civilian addressed the importance of modernization and the challenges ahead for the Air Force at the 2012 Aerospace and Defense Investor Conference here Nov. 29.

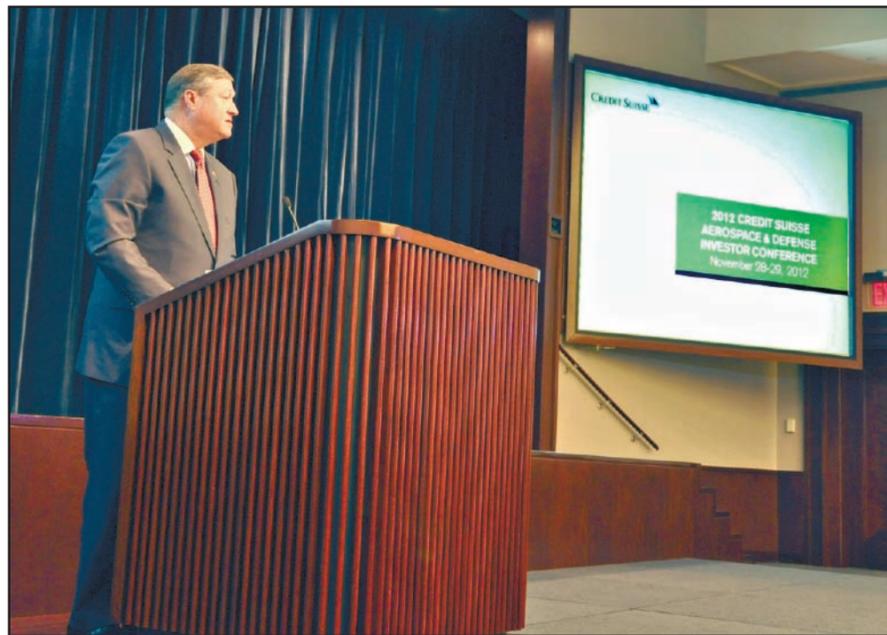
"Among the most difficult challenges facing the Air Force is the need to modernize our aging aircraft inventory as the defense budget declines," said Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley. "New threats and technologies require new investments."

Donley conveyed the careful strategic choices made in crafting the service's budget, highlighting the importance of research, development, procurement and construction — "investments in future capability."

He specifically addressed the need for modernization among fighter, tanker, bomber, space and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms as "high priority investments," while other important capabilities like a new trainer and joint surveillance and target attack radar system are not yet funded.

"The plans and resources available for modernization are not optimal, but we are making tough choices to keep them workable with the right priorities for the future," he said. "Further reductions in defense would make these choices even harder."

Among these choices is readiness, which



U.S. Air Force photo/Dave Wilson  
**Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley discusses the importance of modernization and the challenges ahead for the Air Force at the 2012 Aerospace and Defense Investor Conference in New York, Nov. 29, 2012.**

the secretary stressed is one area the service is not willing to taking additional risk.

"We see readiness — in personnel, training

and materiel dimensions — already frayed. We have made important efficiencies and we are programmed for more," he said. "There are few

options for reducing the size of our forces and still being able to execute strategic guidance."

In line with defense guidance, the Air Force has set a clear picture of its investment spending and priorities — priorities that the joint force and the American public depend on, Donley said. For example, the service's ten largest investment programs include four space systems critical for access to space, secure communications, missile warning, and navigation and timing.

"America's Air Force remains the most capable in the world, but modernization can't wait," Donley said. "These new threats and investment needs, like cyber and missile defense, are not theoretical possibilities for the future. They are here, now."

Amidst the challenges and emerging requirements involved with modernizing the service, Secretary Donley stressed the importance of balancing effectiveness and efficiency, containing program requirements and costs, and continuing to be responsible stewards of taxpayer resources to make it work.

The two-day conference featured speakers from industry and the Department of Defense, including remarks from Robert Hale, under secretary of defense and chief financial officer; and Frank Kendall, the under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics.

# Deployed father controls airspace over son in Afghanistan

**Senior Airman Bryan Swink**

379th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA — Maj. Christopher Gering worries like any other parent whose child deploys downrange. It can be gut wrenching knowing his child operates outside the wire, working to clear and dispose of improvised explosive devices.

Since August, this proud parent has had an advantage most parents are not afforded when their child is deployed and in harm's way. He provides a birds-eye view while maintaining a watchful eye over the surroundings of his son's unit and assists them with accomplishing their mission safely.

As a mission crew commander for the 71st Expeditionary Air Control Squadron, Gering provides battle management and command and control over the skies in Afghanistan and air defense of the Arabian Gulf.

The squadron provides the Combined Air and Space Operations Center with a real-time view of the air picture, handing commanders valuable information on the ground while also supporting the fighters in the field by coordinating close air support for troops in contact, and aircraft deconfliction for forces in Afghanistan.

*"My crew provides constant air support and surveillance to the region of Afghanistan where my son is currently deployed," Gering said, deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.*

"My crew provides constant air support and surveillance to the region of Afghanistan where my son is currently deployed," Gering said, deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. "We also make sure the right aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles are in the right airspace at the right time based on mission needs. Sometimes our priority is to provide intelligence for what's going on, and other times the priority is to make sure close air support attack aircraft can reach ground targets to protect our troops under attack."

Gering's son, Army Pfc. Marshal Gering, is assigned to the 584th Mobility Augmentation Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion assigned to Forward Operating Base Walton in

Eastern Afghanistan.

His unit's main mission is to conduct route clearance in and around the Kandahar Province and Panjwey District, which provides freedom of movement to coalition forces and Afghan civilians.

"It seems crazy to think of him being here in the (area of responsibility) too, looking at real time video feed and listening to all the traffic we put out on the net," The younger Gering said, deployed from Ft. Hood, Texas. "Even though (my father) is just doing his job, it is almost as if he is watching over me and keeping a protective eye out for me, like he has always done. It almost seems funny to think we are closer here than compared to the rest of our family, yet we won't even see each other again until we are reunited with family back home."

Pfc. Gering deployed to Afghanistan in February of this year, just a few months after graduating Army Basic Training and not even a year after graduating high school.

"I'm incredibly proud of the amazing work he and his unit are accomplishing over there," said Maj. Gering. "It's a reassuring feeling, as a father, to know that when my crew is coordinating effective air support at a moment's notice, it might be my own son we're saving."

## Congratulations BTZ Winners



U.S. Air Force photo/Melissa Dublin  
**Airman 1st Class Kristen O'Hearn, 14th Contracting Squadron is awarded senior airman Below-The-Zone by Col. Matt Isler, 14th Flying Training Wing Vice Commander and Chief Master Sgt. Vance Kondon, 14th Flying Training Wing Command Chief.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Elizabeth Owens  
**Airman 1st Class Dennisse Ceci, 14th Comptroller Squadron is awarded senior airman Below-The-Zone by Col. Matt Isler, 14th Flying Training Wing Vice Commander and Chief Master Sgt. Vance Kondon, 14th Flying Training Wing Command Chief.**

## 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 Wing Headquarters building, BLDG. 724, suite 210. Questions and answers may be edited for brevity and style.

## Shotgun Road signs more visible



U.S. Air Force photo  
**The 14th Civil Engineer Squadron modified signs warning runners from on-base hunting areas (pictured) for better visibility. Hunting season on-base runs from Oct. 1 to Jan. 31.**

## Holidays and the blues: Overcoming past and present holiday stresses

Lt. Col. Michael Husfelt  
627th Air Base Group

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. — “It’s the most wonderful time of the year” isn’t just a familiar line of a classic Christmas song. Instead, the phrase resonates with our culture because November and December offer times of splendor and recollection unlike any other time.

Things like trips to grandmother’s house for Thanksgiving, early morning shopping trips the next day to find those one-of-a-kind bargains, decorating our homes and offices to reflect the seasonal joy, and numerous opportunities to connect at our places of worship all combine to make this particular time of the year the one which is filled with powerful memories and unwritten, and sometimes unreachable, expectations.

So why the connection with concerns of stress and even suicide?

Obviously, that question is too deep for a brief commentary, but I do offer a few thoughts on how this joyous season sometimes stresses out even the jolliest among us, and why it is important to proactively work against the holiday blues. So if you want to experience a joyous holiday season without all the unwanted stress, here are a few suggestions.

First, take control where you can, and develop a list of this year’s seasonal goals. Think about what you want to experience, accomplish and feel.

What will help you get there?

If you want a simple “old-fashioned Christmas,” because last year was just too artificial for you, then maybe decorating the house with every item on the market should be left for your neighbor. If you want to make it through the party season and still look good in your clothes, limit the amount of festive foods and work hard at maintaining your gym regimen.

The point is that you probably know what is most important to you about the holiday season. So take the time to figure out the best way to make what is most important to you a reality.

Second, temper your expectations. You don’t have to attend every Christmas party (or every special worship service for that matter) that you hear about. You don’t have to buy a gift for everyone you meet. Decorating your home with simple or loud seasonal symbols can be very uplifting, but you don’t have to use

every plug in the house to make the season bright. Though competition with neighbors can be fun, I do think this is one area where it really shouldn’t be a competition.

Third, take charge of your money. Spending outside of your budget is another area which adds to the holiday stress. If budget is a dirty word to you, try using “spending plan” instead.

It may be a little too late to entirely implement this year, but if you are still planning to buy more gifts and host more parties, developing a reasonable and affordable spending plan can save you tons of stress. Develop a list and spending limit to help you feel more in control and make wiser shopping decisions. The stress relief will continue over the next couple of months as the credit card bills come due and you actually have the money to pay them off.

Fourth, develop a spirit of grace for yourself and those around you. For instance, if your parents or other significant family members still bring up the time when you didn’t live up to their expectations, try not to repeat the same family argument again this year. This could be the perfect time to proactively engage and where appropriate confess your sins to one another.

Ask forgiveness, forgive if you need to, including forgiving yourself, encourage restoration and move on. If the offended party isn’t ready to forgive, you can’t control that, but you can control your attitude as they deal with their own. Don’t escalate the situation. Don’t debate.

A simple, “I am really sorry you feel that way, but I hope you will learn to forgive me as I have forgiven myself (or as I have forgiven you)” may be the best response.

Whether you are a person of faith or not, December should be a time of hope, for all, that disappointments of the past are behind us and the dawn of a new year is just around the corner.

This truth can be hard to see if you feel out of control. Try implementing the suggestions above and you should feel better. However, if you still feel more blue than joyous, please remember that we have a network of helping agencies ready and willing to help you find reasons to keep on living. The chaplain corps is here to help and will also help you find additional resources to overcome whatever is taking away your joy this holiday season. If you need more information, please give your chaplain a call.

## A night to remember

Tech. Sgt. Crystal Lee  
Armed Forces Network -  
Incirlik

INCIRLIK AIR BASE, Turkey — Some things occur in life that you never forget. Things that leave a scar and others that never even heal. There are lessons to be learned from those experiences, and I learned a big lesson on drinking responsibly at the tender age of eleven.

So I volunteered to share a part of my life normally reserved for those close to me. I decided to share a time that will never leave me in hopes that others don’t have to experience the pain it brought. If you know me, you know that I keep family matters private. This account, however, may help sway someone’s decision and prevent an alcohol related incident.

It was Friday, date night for my parents.

I was 11 and my little sister, Jen, was 9. We were at the age many parents start let their kids stay home alone. Mom and dad were invited to a party in Bowie, Md., which was about an hour away.

AWESOME! Jen and I had the whole house to ourselves. We proceeded to, you know, do typical kid activities. At around 2 a.m., we heard knocking at the door. I didn’t grow up in the best neighborhood, so there was no way I was opening that door. The knocking persisted and we were terrified. Jen and I actually hid under the bed because we thought someone was trying to break into the house.

The next morning we woke up under the bed. We got up and knocked on mom and dad’s room door. No answer. I opened the door; they hadn’t come home.

I picked up the phone to call my grandpa and found that it had been off the hook since last night. That’s when he told me mom and dad were hit by a drunk driver. He said it happened last night around 1 a.m. and he had tried to call us. Grandpa was the one knocking on the windows and doors.

Once we got to our grandparents

house, we were told the details of the accident. My father was driving home on Oxon Hill Rd. when a drunk driver swerved into their lane and sideswiped them. Dad hit a telephone pole head on. Mom wasn’t wearing her safety belt and her face went through the windshield. Dad had this crazy adrenaline rush and pulled my mom out of the car. We found out later that his back was broken. He was out of commission for about six-to-seven months.

After gramps gave us the news, Jen started freak out and I started crying. I’m not sure if I was crying due to sadness or because I was angry as hell, probably both.

Sunday evening at around 5 p.m. our parents came home. They were lucky to survive. They recounted the events from that night. I asked dad if the drunk driver got hurt. Dad said, “No. The guy thought the whole situation was funny.”

Our lives drastically changed. No more family outings to the park, no more fun things and nothing normal for kids our ages. Instead, the next several months consisted of Jen and I taking care of our parents.

What upsets me the most is that this didn’t need to happen; responsible decisions could have prevented the entire event.

When someone abuses alcohol it affects more than just them. It has a ripple effect to everyone who cares about that person, those they hurt, and the people who are left behind to pick up the pieces. Take ownership and responsibility for your actions and what you put in your body. There are other things you can do besides drink excessively.

Find that niche that makes you happy — go to school, play video games, travel, etc. If you do drink, know your limit. Know when to say “when.” Ask yourself, “How are my actions going to impact other people?”

My life was affected by an irresponsibly selfish guy who couldn’t make the right decision concerning alcohol and almost killed my parents. Don’t be that person.

## NORAD provides website, apps to track Santa

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Children of all ages will be able to track Santa Claus on his annual journey, thanks to the North American Aerospace Defense Command.

The “NORAD Tracks Santa” website at <http://www.noradsanta.org> is up and running. The site features a holiday countdown, games and daily activities, video messages from students around the world and more, officials said, and it is available in English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Chinese.

Official apps also are available in the Windows Store, Apple Store, and Google Play so parents and children can count down the days until Santa’s launch on their smartphones and tablets. Tracking opportunities also offered on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Google Plus. Santa followers just need to type “@noradsanta” into each search engine to get started.

Starting at midnight Mountain Standard Time on Dec. 24, website visitors can watch Santa make the preparations for his flight. Then, at 4 a.m. Mountain time, trackers worldwide can speak with a live phone operator to inquire as to Santa’s whereabouts by dialing the toll-free number 1-877-HI-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) or by sending an email to [noradtrackssanta@outlook.com](mailto:noradtrackssanta@outlook.com).

NORAD’s “Santa Cams” also will stream videos as Santa makes his way over various locations.

NORAD Tracks Santa is possible, in large part, to the efforts and services of numerous program contributors, officials said. New to this year’s program are Bing, HP, iLink-Systems, Kids.gov, Microsoft’s Windows Azure, BeMerry! Santa, and SiriusXM. Returning collaborators include the 21st Space Wing, Acuity Scheduling, Air Canada, American Forces Network, Analytical Graphics Inc., Avaya, Citadel Mall, Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council, CradlePoint, Defense Video Imagery Distribution System, the Federal Aviation Administration, First Choice Awards and Gifts, Globelink Foreign Language Center, the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, Meshbox, the National Tree Lighting Ceremony, Naturally Santa’s, the Newseum, OnStar, PCI Broadband, the Pentagon Channel, RadiantBlue, Space Foundation, TurboSquid, twnetcom, UGroup Media, Verizon and VisionBox.

Santa’s Countdown Calendar and the Santa Cam videos will feature music by military bands, including the Naden Band of the Maritime Forces Pacific, the Air Force Academy Band, the Air Force Band of Liberty, the Air Force Band of the Golden West, the Air Force Band of the West, the Air Force Band, the Air Force Heartland of America Band, the U.S. Army Ground Forces Band, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Band, the Air Force Band of Mid-America, and the West Point Band.

It all started in 1955, when a local media advertisement directed children to call Santa direct — but the number was misprinted. Instead of reaching Santa, the phone rang through to the crew commander on duty at the Continental Air Defense Command Operations Center. NORAD has carried the tradition on since the command was created in 1958.

(Courtesy North American Aerospace Defense Command)



U.S. Air Force photo/Scott M. Ash  
Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III talks during a wing commanders call at Joint Base Andrews, Md., on Nov. 28, 2012. Welsh met with the commanders to underscore, face-to-face, his expectations of them as leaders and to discuss Air Force issues.

## CSAF talks leadership with wing commanders

Senior Master Sgt. David Byron  
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

WASHINGTON — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III met with more than 140 wing commanders from across the Air Force Nov. 28 at Joint Base Andrews, Md., to underscore, face-to-face, his expectations of them as leaders and to discuss Air Force issues.

“Operationally, we’re doing great ... mission-wise we’re doing everything we’re supposed to be doing and we’re doing it in outstanding fashion,” Welsh said. “The bottom line is performance.”

He emphasized that performance comes from taking great care of Airmen and their families as well as making sure they are proud of what they do. This includes addressing the problems of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the service.

The chief of staff stressed that the goal for sexual assault in the Air Force is zero and that commanders who are not directly and aggressively involved in fixing

this issue are not part of the solution, but part of the problem.

“The environment inside our Air Force is changing. It’s been changing for the last 25 to 30 years, but it hasn’t changed enough and it hasn’t changed in all the right ways to ensure integration of all Airmen,” Welsh said. “And so you and I are going to change it — immediately and definitively. We must ensure that every member of our Air Force is treated with respect and feels like a critically important part of the team.”

Eliminating sexual assault and preventing an environment conducive to sexual harassment takes strong and effective leadership, especially at the unit level. Ridding the Air Force of these problems is a change for the good.

Every Airman has a story and Welsh stressed that leaders learn and know the stories of their people. “The more we know and care about each other, the more we will take care of each other,” he said.

# Base families are offered a variety of fun activities

## Columbus Air Force Base FSS Rocks

Make sure to join our Facebook page at CAFB FSS Rocks, Twitter at CAFB FSS, or our website at [www.cafbssrocks.com](http://www.cafbssrocks.com) to keep up to date with all the great events happening around base!

## Certified Aerobics Instructor

The fitness center is in need of a certified aerobics instructor. If that describes you make sure to call the Fitness for more information at 434-2773.

## Columbus Club Hours

The Columbus Club is open Tuesday through Friday for lunch from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. They offer a full menu and daily buffets. Save \$1 on meals by becoming a member!

## Prove Yourself!

Do you have what it takes to be a racquetball champion? Sign up for the racquetball tournament by Jan. 13. The tournament takes place on Jan. 14. For more information call 434-2772.

## Horseback Riding Lessons

Learn how to ride the mode of transportation of the past, horses! Lessons are available for ages 6 and up in the ways of English and Western Riding. Lessons are ongoing through the winter months! Sign up at Outdoor Recreation or for more information call (972) 822-7585.

## Cookie Baking Contest

Do you hold grandma's special recipe? If so, please share those awesome cookies (not the recipe of course) on Dec. 11 at the Library. Entries need to be entered by 1 p.m. with the judging at 2 p.m. For more information call 434-2934.

## New Years 5k Run

Start preparing for the New Years 5k. This run will take place on Jan. 11 at 6 and 7 a.m. Commander's trophy points are awarded. For more information call 434-2772.

## Wee Babies!

It's baby fun time! Bring your kid(s) ages 0-4 to the Library for rhythm, kinesthetic, body awareness, and song and dance activities! This event occurs on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. For more information call 434-2936.

## Christmas Holiday Camps

Get your kids involved with the youth program and come out to the Christmas Holiday Camps. Week one is from Dec. 19-21, and Week two is from Dec. 26-28, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily! Registration must be completed by Dec. 11. There is a \$10 non-refundable deposit with the cost of the program based on family income. For more information call 434-2504.

## Child Care for Holiday Shopping

Let the CDC provide care for your children while you get your shopping done for the holidays! Get three or four others together to plan an outing then call the CDC at 434-2479 to keep your chil-

dren happy and entertained while you shop!

## Mothers Happy Time!

The Child Development Center presents Mothers Happy Time! Let the CDC provide care for your children while you enjoy some "Happy Time" with friends. Get three or four mothers together and plan an outing. Available Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information call 434-2479.

## Sunday Lunch N Bowl

Lunch N Bowl on Sundays, for each adult combo purchased at the Bowling Center receive two free games of bowling, must pay for shoe rental. For more information contact 434-3426.

## Two for Tuesdays

Two for Tuesdays at Whispering Pines Golf Course, \$25 for two players to play up to 18 holes of golf including cart. For more information contact 434-7932.

## Are you feeling lucky?

Information Ticket and Travel offers monthly casino trips every first Friday of each month. With more than 5,000 slot machines, 115 table games and 14 poker tables including the wildly popular Texas Hold'em, you will not be bored at the Silver Star Casino in Philadelphia, Miss. Join the fun for only \$25 which includes transportation and receive \$25 IN BONUS BETS! Contact 434-2505 for more information.

## Are you ready for some Football?

Plan now for the New Orleans Saints vs.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers NFL game trip Dec. 15-16 (game date Dec. 16 at noon). Trip includes game tickets, transportation, and lodging at the Best Western in Slidell. Call 434-2504 for pricing information.

## Green Plate Special

The Pro shop at Whispering Pines offers a special for lunch Tuesday through Friday. The price is \$6.95 which includes a side of chips and a drink.

## Instructional Classes at Youth Center

Youth Programs is offering piano lessons, guitar lessons, tumbling classes, dance classes and martial arts instruction. Time and ages vary for all classes. Call 434-2504 or stop by the Youth Center for more information.

## Need a Break from the Kids?

Parents, contact the Child Development Center for information on the Parents Night Out/Give Parents A Break program, 434-2479.

## Affordable Tickets at ITT

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

## Space A Lodging

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

## Massage Therapy is Back!

Massage therapy is available by appointment only at the Fitness Center. Swedish massage is just

\$35 for 30 minutes, \$60 for 60 minutes and \$90 for 90 minutes. Therapeutic/deep tissue massage is \$45 for 30 minutes, \$70 for 60 minutes and \$100 for 90 minutes. Reflexology is \$35 for 30 minutes, and a chair massage is \$1 per minute. Call Terrance Bonner at 251-9255 for an appointment.

## Daily Fitness Classes Available

Columbus AFB Fitness and Sports offers a variety of heart-pumping, sweat-inducing classes throughout the week including Aerobics Class. Come check out Zumba every Tues. at 6 p.m. and Sat. at 10 a.m., circuit training classes on Tues. and Thurs., 5:30 a.m., spin class on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 5 p.m., and stroller fitness class on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. For more information, call 434-2772 or go online to [www.cafbssrocks.com](http://www.cafbssrocks.com) and click on the link to the Fitness page.

## Car Maintenance on Base

Don't forget you can get your general automotive maintenance and repairs at the Auto Hobby Shop right here on base and even while you work. If you are a do-it-yourselfer or shade-tree mechanic, Auto Hobby offers a wide array of tools and equipment. For more information and pricing, drop by Auto Hobby or call 434-7842.

## Hot and Easy to Use - FSS Gift Cards

These gift cards are available in increments of \$5 to fit any budget. They can be used at most FSS facilities (golf, bowling center snack bars, clubs) at Air Force installations worldwide...and they never go out of style. FSS gift cards can be purchased at Whispering Pines Golf Course, Strike Zone Lanes or at the Youth Center.

## Get off the Couch and Play!

Columbus AFB has an 18-hole disc golf course across the street from the Fitness Center. The course's layout includes par threes, fours and fives plus lots of trees making it great for beginners or pros alike. So grab your friends or family and a disc and have some fun! Disc sets are available for check out at the Fitness Center.

## It's Like FREE Money!

Single Airmen returning from deployment and families of deployed members can receive up to \$500 in special discounts and rewards through participating FSS facilities and programs. Get discounted trips at Information Tickets and Travel, rent equipment from Outdoor Recreation, play a round of golf, participate in a golf clinic, or go bowling with a friend. These are just some of the offerings through the PLAYpass program. To find out if you are eligible for a PLAYpass card, visit [www.MyAirForceLife.com](http://www.MyAirForceLife.com) or call the AFRC at 434-2790.

## Base News

### Tax Volunteers

The Columbus AFB Tax Center will open in late January and we are looking for volunteer tax preparers and center assistants. All of our volunteers play a critical role in assisting service members, retirees and dependents complete and file their tax returns. This service helps our clients obtain the refunds they have earned! We welcome volunteers with special skills or training, and would appreciate your expertise. However, training will be provided on the latest tax preparation forms and software, so prior experience is not required. Great volunteers are individuals who have prepared their own tax returns; are comfortable with computers; are willing to learn; and enjoy working with people. If you want to become a trained tax preparer or volunteer in any other way, please contact Capt Wells in the legal office at 662-434-7030 to register.

### Retiree Affairs Coordinator Needed

Volunteer needed 2 to 3 days per week to assist with advising military retirees on benefits are provided The Retiree Affairs office is established to coordinate, establish and staff an office on an active-duty, reserve or guard base through command channels that will assist retirees with myriad actions. These actions include: serving as information center for space-available travel, Tricare, base services, etc.; offering referrals for financial-assistance and pay matters; counseling active duty Airmen nearing retirement; and providing literature on retirement issues. Another major activity involves working with base agencies to conduct Retiree Activity Day events. If interested, contact Linda Dodson at 434-2314 or [linda.dodson@columbus.af.mil](mailto:linda.dodson@columbus.af.mil)

### The Base Thrift Shop

The Base Thrift Shop is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Consignments until noon. The Thrift Shop is non-profit and all proceeds benefit CAFB Community. It is located in building 530. Phone: 434-2954.

### Airman's Attic

The Airman's Attic is open Tuesdays/Thursdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m.-noon. The Attic serves junior enlisted members (E-1 through E-5) with uniforms and basic household items at no cost. Donations of uniforms, household goods, family clothing, maternity, infant care items and furniture are welcomed. Please coordinate furniture or other large donations with the staff during business hours. The Attic is located in building 530, across from the Thrift Shop. For any questions, please call 434-1614.

### Contraceptive Counseling Class

There are currently many safe and effective options for preventing or delaying pregnancy. The staff of the 14th Medical Group, wants to make sure you have the information you need to make your best choice. The Family Health Clinic is now offering a Birth Control Counseling Class covering topics ranging from natural family planning to tubal ligation. The class is offered once a

month and taught by a Women's Health Provider and a Registered Nurse. Classes will be held at the Koritz Clinic, the last Friday of each month from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Please call the clinic appointment line at 434-2273 to reserve your spot in the next Birth Control Counseling Class.

### FREE Computerized CLEP Exams

Computerized CLEP testing is available at the Mississippi State University Assessment and Testing Center (<http://www.ats.msstate.edu/testing/>). Military members will NOT be charged a fee for the first-time administration of any CLEP exam. However, retakes of CLEP exams must be paid for by the military member. DANTES (DSST) paper-based exams will continue to be administered in the CAFB Ed Office. Please call 434-2562 or 434-2563 for more information.

### LGR Mobility Individual Protective Equipment Element closed for Training

The 14th Logistics Division, Mobility and Individual Protective Equipment Element located in the Walker Center, building 1030 will close for training Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. beginning Thursday, May 10, 2012. All appointments must be scheduled around these days/times to avoid delays and inconveniences. Walk-ins are no longer accepted. All appointments must be scheduled in advance by calling 434-7305, 7306, 3363 or 3364. For more information, please call 434-7212 or 434-7306.

## 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).)*

### Military and Family Life Consultant Program

MFLC consultants provide a non-medical counseling to help Airmen, (both single and married) their spouses and other family members to cope with stressful situations created by deployments, reintegration, and life challenges, such as martial issues, parenting, career stress and anger. All consultants are licensed mental health providers. Consultants can meet either on or off base. There is no charge for services and appointments can usually be made within one to two days. To contact the MFLC call 364-0504.

### 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.

### Sponsorship training

An electronic version of sponsorship training called eSponsorship Application and Training (eSAT) is now available. It can be found on the MilitaryINSTALLATIONS homepage <http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil>, under "Are You a Sponsor?"

### Survivor-Benefit Plan

One of the best feelings about retiring from the military Service is to know you are guaranteed a lifetime income as the result of a successful career. What about your spouse or dependent children? If you die, what guarantees do they have? Enrolling in the SBP prior to retiring will ensure they will have guaranteed income after your death. Additional details are available by calling your SBP Counselor Jamey Coleman at 434-2720.

### 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.

### Computer workshops

The cost is \$30 each if taken at the Golden Triangle campus. They are free and taught here on base at the AFRC. We need a minimum of six, maximum of 11. We currently have two in each. If we do not get enough students, EMCC cannot provide an instructor, and we may not be able to offer these workshops in the future.

### Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in volunteering, please

## Chapel Schedule

### Catholic Community

**Sunday:**  
3:45 p.m. – Religious Education, grades K-9, Chapel Annex  
4 p.m. – Choir Practice, Sanctuary  
4 p.m. – Confession  
5 p.m. – Mass  
**Thursday:**  
4:15 p.m. – Choir Practice  
**Saturday:**  
Theology on Tap meets monthly. Please call 434-2500 For More Information.

contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center. We have volunteer opportunities located throughout the base for a one-time event, special events, or on a continual basis. Volunteers are needed on base at the Youth Center, Child Development Center, Library, Golf Course, Medical Clinic, the Chapel, Airman Attic, Thrift Store the Retiree Activities office and many others".

### Air Force Aid Society's Gen. H.H. Arnold Education Grant

Online applications for the 2013-2014 academic year will be available from the Society's website, [www.afas.org](http://www.afas.org), after Nov. 1. Please visit their website for details on eligibility and requirements.

### Wing Newcomers Orientation

Dec. 11, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. For newly arrived Active Duty and Civilian personnel. Spouses are encouraged to attend. Held at the Columbus Club, for more information call 434-2839.

### Heart Link For Spouses

Dec. 12, 8:45 a.m.-2 p.m. For members who are new to Columbus AFB or the military lifestyle. Held at the Columbus Club, fun-filled spouse orientation program filled with information on protocol, finance, benefits, helping agencies, local conditions and prizes. Great way to meet other new Columbus AFB, to register and more information call 434-2790.

### Volunteer Orientation/Training

Jan. 2, 10-11 a.m. Discuss volunteer job description, brief overview of the base volunteer program. Training to include confidentiality, ethics and avoidance of conflict of interest. Call 434-2790 to register.

### Tap Workshop

Jan. 7-11, 7:30 a.m. Mandatory for all personnel separating, pre-separation counseling is required before attending. Seminars on: transition, military occupational code crosswalk, financial planning, health benefits, Miss. Department of Employment Security, Department of Veterans Affairs, disabled TAP, Department of Labor TAP portion. Spouses are encouraged to attend with their sponsor. To register call 434-2790.

### Protestant Community

**Sunday:**  
9 a.m. – Sunday School for Adults, Chapel Library  
10:45 a.m. – Traditional Service  
**Tuesday:**  
5 p.m. – Officer Christian Fellowship Bible Study, Chapel Library  
**Wednesday:**  
4:30 p.m. – Choir Practice, Sanctuary  
5 p.m. – Potluck Dinner  
6 p.m. – Pioneer Clubs  
6 p.m. – Adult Bible Study, Sanctuary  
6 p.m. – Adult Bible Study, Chapel Library



U.S. Air Force Safety Center graphic

# Holiday safety tips

## Winter Road Conditions

Driving in winter weather can be challenging, even for the most experienced drivers. Why? Because there are so many unknowns when you hit the road at this time of year. Even if you're assigned to a location that doesn't have winter weather conditions – Hawaii for example – you may find yourself heading somewhere that does. Knowing all you can about your destination or route conditions could save your life.

Since the roads vary greatly, drive according to the conditions and be aware of changing weather. Winter roads can be very slippery. You must be able to control your vehicle, slow down or stop safely at all times. According to the Virginia Department of Transportation: even experienced drivers can find their nerves and skills tested by winter road conditions.

Here are some tips to help you drive safely as the weather turns cold:

- Make sure your vehicle is ready for winter:
  - Check your brakes and tires
  - Check your battery and ignition system
  - Check your antifreeze and thermostat
  - Check your windshield wipers and de-icing washer fluid
  - Check your headlights, tail and brake lights, blinkers and emergency flashers
  - Check your exhaust system, heater and defroster
  - Check your oil
  - Properly lubricate door locks that may be prone to freezing
- Clear the snow and ice from your vehicle's roof, hood and trunk and especially from the windows, mirrors and lights.
  - Always wear your seat belt.
  - Leave a few minutes early.
  - Start out slowly in the lowest gear recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer.
  - Be aware of potentially icy areas such as shady spots and bridges.
- Keep a safe distance of at least five seconds behind other vehicles and trucks that are plowing the road.
  - Don't pass a snowplow or spreader unless it is absolutely necessary. Treat these as you would emergency response vehicles.
  - Keep an emergency winter-driving kit in your car. ([http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/Seasonal\\_Advisories/WinterDrivingTips/wintertips6\\_10.html](http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/Seasonal_Advisories/WinterDrivingTips/wintertips6_10.html))
  - Drive smart!

for a major house fire to start due to a Christmas tree igniting. This is the most common fire hazard during the holiday season, NFPA estimates that Christmas trees, both natural and artificial, were the item first ignited in an estimated average of 240 reported home structure fires per year during 2005-2009. These fires caused an estimated average of 13 civilian deaths, 27 civilian injuries, and \$16.7 million in direct property damage per year. These estimates are based on data from the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System and the National Fire Protection Association's annual fire department experience survey.

During the same period, holiday lights and other decorative lighting with line voltage were involved in an estimated average of 150 home structure fires per year. These fires caused an average of eight civilian deaths, 14 civilian injuries, and \$8.5 million in direct property damage per year.

## Back to Work and Tired

The holidays are over, you're back from leave and it's the first five-day work week after all the celebrations. How much rest did you really get during the holiday season? If you're like the average person – not enough. What happens to your on-the-job performance when you're tired? The consequences of being tired are the same regardless of why. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (<http://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2012/03/sleep-and-work/>), those who work long hours or shift work encounter these risks:

- Risks for Workers:**
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Lack of adequate time to recover from work
  - Decline in mental function and physical ability, including emotional fatigue and a decline in the function of the body's immune system
    - Higher rates of depression, occupational injury, and poor perceived health
    - Higher prevalence of insomnia among shift workers with low social support
  - Increased risk of illness and injury
  - Strain on personal relationships, such as marriage and family life
    - Increased risk of long-term health effects, such as heart disease, gastrointestinal disorders, mood disturbances, and cancer
- Risks for Employers:**
  - Reduced productivity
  - Increase in errors
  - Absenteeism and presenteeism (present at work but not fully functioning because of health problems or personal issues)
    - Increased health care and worker compensation costs



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Bryan Franks  
**Mississippi roads can be dangerous during the winter. Winterize your vehicle with these tips and watch [www.Columbus.AF.Mil](http://www.Columbus.AF.Mil) in case of delayed reporting or CAFB closures due to road conditions.**

- Risks to the Community:**
  - Potential increase in errors by workers leading to:
    - Medical errors
    - Vehicle crashes
    - Industrial disasters

Research indicates that the effect of long work hours and shift work may be more complex than a simple direct relationship between a certain high number of work hours or shift schedule and risks. The effects appear to be influenced by a variety of factors including characteristics of the worker and the job, worker control, pay, non-work responsibilities, and other characteristics of the work schedule.

## Dangers of Short Daylight Hours

We're just about one month into the winter season and the days don't seem to be getting any longer. Most of us are still encountering the cold, dark days and the dangers are still there. What are some of the dangers and how can you mitigate those risks?

Keeping to an outdoor exercise routine at this time of year presents challenges such as wearing the proper clothing, being seen during darkness and black ice in your path. You want to make sure you're taking every precaution to prevent a weather-related accident.

According to eHow.com, the shorter daylight hours, result in an otherwise well-lit evening run becoming dark and hazardous. Drivers are less likely to expect runners to be out in the colder weather.

Winter running apparel should include plenty of light reflective surfaces for safety. Wear bright colors and include light-reflective accessories in your apparel. Apply light-reflective tape in an array of neon colors to jackets and pants to make your outfit more readily visible. While this refers specifically to runners, it also applies to all other outdoor activities. Even when you don't expect to be out after dark, you want to be prepared should your plans take an unexpected turn.

## New Year's Eve Firework Safety:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2008, seven people died and an estimated 7,000 were treated in emergency departments for fireworks-related injuries in the United States.

The risk of fireworks injury was two-and-a-half times as high for children ages 10–14 as for the general population.

You can protect yourself and others while using fireworks by following some simple rules:

- Leave fireworks to the professionals, the safest way to enjoy them is to not use consumer fireworks.
- The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public display conducted by trained professionals.
- After the firework display, children should never pick up fireworks that may be left over, they may still be active.

Did you know the tip of a sparkler burns at 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, which is hot enough to cause third-degree burns and melt glass?

*(This information was provided by the National Fire Protection Association).*



Center for Disease Control photo  
**The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has identified many risks related to lack of proper rest. Use proper risk management to avoid hazards at work and at home.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Jacob Corbin  
**Professional fireworks shows, like the 2009 Fireworks on the Water display pictured, are the safest way to enjoy fireworks. For more information on fireworks safety, visit [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).**

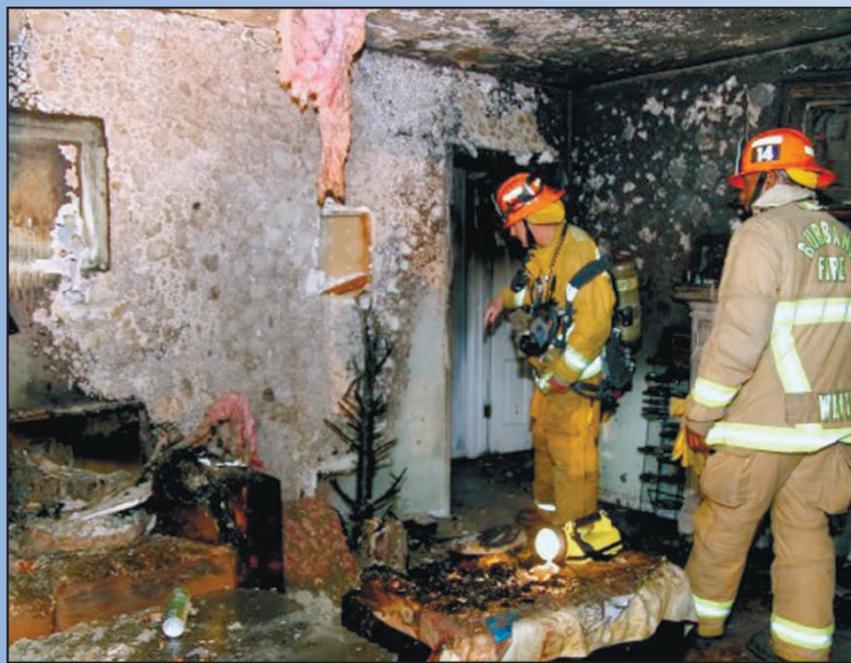


Photo by Ross Benson  
**Fire Captains Kevin McNew and Tray White look at the remains of a Christmas Tree that caught fire causing a \$125,000 in damage to a Burbank, Calif. house.**

## Seasonal Fire Hazards

It only takes a moment! That's the length of time