

WARRIOR



CURRENT EVENTS

509th CE Squadron going with the electrical flow

pg.5

Finding life's new direction after a loss

By Airman 1st Class Erica Crossen
375th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, III. (AFNS) -- Sometimes it takes a difficult situation in your life to not only be reminded of the things you are truly grateful for, but also to serve as a catalyst for change.

That moment for me came during the beginning of 2012 when my mother died suddenly at just 43 years old.

We had just finished observing Christmas and like always, she was the absolute fixture in our celebrations.

I can still hear the sound of my mom's laughter, smell the delicious food we prepared and see the tree twinkling as it sheltered cheerful little packages beneath it. She would initiate "Star Wars" and "Godfather" movie marathons as part of our yearly traditions, and I never expected that anything could shatter my excitement for this time of the year.

However, the New Year began in a tragic way. Mom had collapsed and hit her head, hard. She was admitted into an intensive care unit, slipping into unresponsiveness due to a brain hemorrhage. My husband drove us eight hours to the hospital where I found her on life support with the haunting beeping and alarms going off in her room. It was the worst thing to have to hold her hand and acknowledge that she was truly gone, never to smile proudly at future graduations or hold my children as a grandmother.

After I lost my mom, I never thought the holidays could regain their happy luster. It

was a hard reality to accept that I couldn't just pick up the phone and talk to her. I was so angry with her and confused as to why she let her health decline, leaving me and my sister without a mom.

As you can imagine, as the next holiday season approached I looked at it as something to get through. She had represented the togetherness of friends and family, and now she was gone. I had to make sense of it, and I continued to do a lot of soul searching.

During this process I decided that while I could hold on to her legacy of a great sense of humor and honor the way she loved me, there were unhealthy lifestyle habits I needed to let go of. That's when I decided that I needed to take care of my body better and eventually I lost 50 pounds.

After achieving success with that goal, I then decided to join the Air Force. I'd been an Air Force spouse for four years, but my mom's death made me realize that I shouldn't wait to do the things I felt I needed to do.

With a new outlook on life, I felt I could power through anything. I wanted to make every moment count and not regret at least trying. I wanted the next holiday season at home to be a time of looking back on what I had accomplished that year.

It was the Christmas I spent in basic training down at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, that I realized I had become part of another family with new traditions which helped fill the emptiness from my mother's passing. On Christmas Eve we marched to the chapel for services and as I looked

around me, I knew the other trainees were experiencing difficulties, too. Some were missing their children, some were still trying to adjust to this new life, and some were just missing friends and family back home.

As we marched under a crisp star-lit Texas sky, our "Lackland Laser" flashlights swung in unison. It made the ground sway with light, competing with the sky, and it seemed almost magical. For someone half-way through training and with just two days to go before her 25th birthday, it just made me smile. On Christmas, the drill instructors were surprisingly nice to us, and we had an elaborate, relaxed meal that day.

Two days later, my flight sang "Happy Birthday," which helped to lift my spirits as did the daily letters unfailingly sent by my husband. He knew what I was going through, but better yet he knew something that I was just realizing: hope and gratitude can buoy us through any difficulties. Moreover, the Air Force family that I always knew was there, but never quite relied on until that point, came through for me when I needed it most.

Now as I approach each holiday season, I pause to remind myself that there is always something to be thankful for and to challenge myself to keep setting--and achieving--new goals for myself.

Sometimes it's those difficult circumstances that help us change and grow the most. I still miss my mom, yet the memories and traditions I will always carry with me. However, she also gave me an opportunity change the course of my life -- something that I'm very thankful for this year.

THE WARRIOR

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Job Opening for the Airmen's Attic

What is the Airman's Attic? It is an active duty program for active duty members E-5/Spouses and below to shop at no cost to them. It is open Tuesday and Friday from 10 a.m. -2 p.m. It runs solely on donations and volunteers. The store offers many different options to Airmen. It offers clothes from newborn to adults, house wares, toys, purses, holiday items and so much more. There is also an active duty room open to active duty members only that houses gently used uniform items. The Airman's Attic has an OI (operating instruction) that is used for the daily rules, regulations and performance of the store. This program has full support of the leadership on base who stand alongside you with any help you may need.

Job Description: This job consists of overseeing the everyday operations of the Airman's Attic. This includes overseeing the volunteers, daily operations of the store, paperwork and monthly meetings

with your executive board.

The job consists of roughly 20 hours a week. Currently Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. are the current times but Mondays can be adjusted. The store runs on the Knob Noster school schedule so if the school is closed then the attic is as well. This job is so important. Although it is a nonpaying job it is the most rewarding. You are investing your time into the lives of others. You get to help others from the beginning to the end in times they really need it. Are you the person that is going to step up to take this rewarding position?

If you are interested in this job please email wafbairmansattic@gmail.com or come in to the store ask for Tiffany on Tuesday or Friday from 10 a.m. -2 p.m. to get an application. Applications need to be in as soon as possible.

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On the cover

U.S. Air Force photo/
Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Cameron Kesinger, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical systems supervisor, inspects a face shield at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 24, 2014. The face shields are used to protect the face while performing hazardous tasks.

NEWS BRIEFS

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LEAVE AFI: https://www.my.af.mil/leavewebprod/downloads/afi_36-3003.pdf

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Air Force makes strides in combating sexual assault

By Staff Sgt. Torri Ingalsbe

Air Force Public Affairs Agency, Operating Location – P

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Eight-hundred fewer Active-Duty Airmen experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in fiscal year 2014 than in fiscal 2012, and 500 more Airmen reported the crime over the same period.

This data was part of a report provided to the President, Dec. 2, that summarizes the progress the Department of Defense and all the services have made in eliminating sexual assault in the DOD over the past three years.

"The increase in the reporting shows us that victims are more comfortable coming forward, and believe they will get the services they need to recover from the trauma" said Maj. Gen. Gina Grosso, the director of Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response.

A sexual assault report does not automatically trigger an investigation. Victims who choose to file a restricted report can get the care to help them cope with the crime, and the sexual assault response coordinator will assist them in getting any desired assistance. Unrestricted reports also provide care and assistance to a victim, while automatically launching a criminal investigation by The Air Force Office of Special Investigations. Victims can always seek care from a medical provider without triggering any kind of report.

"We strongly believe in victim's choice," Grosso said. "Victims always have voice and choice when seeking care after an assault. We want all victims to get the help they want and need and should never be pressured into filing one kind of report over another."

She attributes the decrease in prevalence and increase in reporting to

the culture change within the Air Force toward sexual assault, particularly at the commander level.

"Leadership involvement at every level the past three years has resulted in fewer sexual assault incidents and more victims reporting the crime," Grosso said. "However, we still have work to do."

Providing a robust sexual assault response system will continue to be a focus moving forward, but Grosso also wants to take a new approach to prevent sexual assault, emphasizing it's everyone's responsibility: individual Airmen, peer groups, leadership at all levels, installation-level programs and Air Force-wide programs working together to eliminate the crime.

"We're starting the new year with a week-long prevention summit in January," she explained. "We're pairing Airmen from the field with primary prevention research experts to develop new prevention tools that will drive us to our vision of an Air Force free from sexual assault."

Another focus area the general wants to address is social and professional retaliation that victims have reported.

"We have training modules this year designed to address communication and training to foster victim empathy," Grosso said. "This needs to happen at all levels – from the peer group, to the first-line supervisors, with commanders taking the lead."

Grosso shared that she is often asked if the Air Force's vision is attainable and she unequivocally says yes. She believes Airmen join the Air Force to be a part of something that's important for the Nation's defense and have a set of values they want to live by.

"I believe we can absolutely create an Air Force free from sexual assault because there is no important task for the nation that Airmen cannot achieve," she said.

15th Wing honors survivors, families of Pearl Harbor victims

By Tech. Sgt. Terri Paden

15th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (ANFS) -- The 15th Wing hosted the 73rd Remembrance Ceremony here at 7:55 a.m. Hawaii Standard Time, Dec. 7, in commemoration of the fatal attacks on Hickam Field in 1941.

More than 50 survivors and family members of survivors attended the ceremony, which honored the 189 Airmen who lost their lives on Hickam Field during the two waves of attacks launched by the Imperial Japanese Navy.

"I am honored and humbled to speak to you on such a historic day," said Col. Randy Huiss, the 15th Wing commander, while addressing the crowd. "Today marks the anniversary of a day that changed the course of history. On this day, the lives of everyone stationed at Hickam Field changed forever."

During the ceremony, the heroic stories of the men and women who lost their lives during the attack were shared with the attendees.

"The stories are what keeps those who sacrificed alive," Huiss said.

One unique survivor story was represented by the Shepherd family.

Marion Shepherd was assigned to Hickam Field after enlisting into the Army Air Corps, and survived both the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Battle of Midway in 1942. Before passing away at 89 years old, he left a lasting impression on his grandson; Tech. Sgt. Andrew Shepherd, who enlisted in the Air Force nearly 10 years later.

Shepherd, who's assigned to the 15th



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Alexander Martinez
Col. Randy Huiss, right, presents an American flag to Thomas Shepherd during the 73rd Remembrance Ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii Dec. 7, 2014. Shepherd is the son of an Army Air Corpsman who survived the attacks on Hickam Field Dec. 7, 1941. More than 50 survivors and family members of survivors attended the ceremony, which honored the 189 Airmen who lost their lives in the attack. Huiss is the 15th Wing commander.

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Hickam attended the ceremony as a family representative and official escort to his father, Thomas Shepherd, who participated in the ceremony for the first time. During the ceremony Thomas accepted a folded flag in honor and recognition of his father's selfless service.

"The ceremony was really emotional," Thomas said. "It brought a lot of the stories to life ... it was very beautiful and moving."

Thomas said he felt proud to have his father honored in during the event.

"Attending this ceremony is something that I've wanted to do for a long time," he said. "It's an honor to me also that he and his fellow Airmen are honored like this. I've very proud."

In addition to honoring survivors like Marion Shepherd, the ceremony also honored retired Master Sgt. Kenneth Ford and retired Col. Roy Bright, two survivors who were long-time attendees of the ceremony at Hickam, but passed away before this year's ceremony.

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LIGHT IN THE DARKEST HOUR

Whiteman's 509th CE Squadron keeps the flow of energy going By Senior Airman Keenan Berry

Every time a light turns on, microwaves are used or a refrigerator door is opened, the 509th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical shop receives the honor of ensuring these daily uses occur without problem.

The electrical crew is hard at work making sure the installation can function and Airmen enjoy their household luxuries. With dedication and valor, they proudly shine a light over Whiteman's shadow.

The electrical shop has the important job of ensuring every facility has base power and is able to perform.

"We provide direct support for the flying mission and support agencies by providing electrical power and life safety," said Staff Sgt. Cameron Kessinger, 509th CES electrical systems supervisor. "The hangars cannot operate without power and electricity."

The electrical shop maintains the flow of electricity through each facility.

"We install switches around the base to ensure the flow of electricity is maintained through every shop," said Kessinger. "Sometimes, when an underground cable is damaged from lightning strikes or someone cutting them, we will splice and repair the circuit."

The electrical shop has different areas they cover within the unit. They have their own fire alarm shop which is called the fire alarm suppression team (FAST), an exterior crew and an interior crew called "do it now" (DIN).

"The FAST shop deals with all the fire alarms and suppression systems on base," said Airman 1st Class

Robert Rodriguez, 509th CES electrical systems apprentice. "Every facility on base has a Monico system, which is a transceiver and receiver. It sends a message to a central computer and tells us if the system has been activated or damaged. The fire alarm shop responds to calls just the same as the fire department."

The DIN crew handles all jobs that require a quick response. For example, if a facility has a power outage, the DIN crew will receive the call via radio to head to the facility to fix the problem. The interior crew also deals with light fixtures, wall outlets, breaker panels, lights and indoor lighting boxes.

"We ensure our safety is taken into account."

"The installation receives 13 kilovolts into the electrical shop's sub stations from Kansas City Power and Light," said Kessinger. "The exterior crew, in turn, distributes that high voltage around the base. Each service entrance to a facility, we step it down with a transformer varying upon customer and equipment needs. Transformers come in different sizes depending on the power requirements."

The exterior crew also handles backfeeding, which is a process used to generate power to facilities through an alternative power source, without using the dead circuit.

The direct support the electrical shop provides requires the team to pay close attention to detail and

provide quality work.

"Quality means making sure each wire is in the right place and ensuring every aspect of the job is successfully completed," said Kessinger. "If any piece of equipment is installed inaccurately or incorrectly maintained, it could make that equipment defective and delay the facility's mission."

The electric shop uses a wide variety of materials to accomplish their tasks such as tape, trenchers and much more.

"A lot of our tools are specialized equipment," said Kessinger. "We rely heavily on equipment to complete all our tasks. With each task, we must ensure our safety is taken into account. This means donning the proper equipment before dealing with anything electrical. We have a very hazardous job and must take into consideration on how to effectively accomplish task without anyone getting injured."

Being an electrician can be a very risky task, but these dedicated Airmen are willing to step up to the challenge, day in and day out.

"Before I joined the Air Force, I had misconceptions about being an electrician," said Kessinger. "Electricity is a dangerous thing and beforehand, I wouldn't even deal with an outlet. I didn't know how to control it, but being in the military taught me a lot. It's incredible to be able to take something so powerful, and bend it to our will. We have the knowledge and the equipment to get the job done."



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Robert Rodriguez, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical systems apprentice, mounts pipe to existing structure at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 24, 2014. This procedure is done to create a securing point for the pipe. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry/Released)



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Cameron Kessinger, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical systems supervisor, secures equipment to existing structure at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 24, 2014. After the pipe is mounted, it must be tightened and secured to remain in place. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry/Released)



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Cameron Kessinger, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical systems supervisor, opens a high voltage switch at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 24, 2014. This process is done to verify if the switch's configuration is in an opened or closed position. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry/Released)

Winter Fire Prevention Safety Article

By Tech. Sgt. Chris Gunn
509th CES/CEFP

With the winter months here you can expect it to get much colder. With that, the use of more heating equipment will be used to stay warm during this winter season. According to the National Fire Protection Association, heating equipment is a leading cause of home fire deaths. Almost half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January and February. The following are some helpful tips that can prevent heating related fires from happening.

- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them monthly.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, such as the furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable heater.
- Only use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.(URL)
- Make sure your portable heaters have 'tip switches.' These 'tip switches' are designed to automatically turn off the heater in the event they tip over.
- Don't use heating equipment to dry wet clothing.
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip.

- Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Make sure the fire place has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room and burn only dry, seasoned wood. Allow ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container, which is kept a safe distance from the home.
- For wood burning stoves, install chimney connectors and chimneys following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation.
- Make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Never use your oven or propane grills for heating homes.

Other winter Fire safety tips

Now that you're safe and warm when using your heating equipment, there are other winter fire safety tips that you need to be aware of this season. Did you know that heating equipment being used creates a risk of carbon monoxide gas? It's an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane) burn incompletely? Don't worry, here are some safety tips from NFPA to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Test CO alarms at least once a

- month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instruction.
 - If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help (# 911) from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel arrive.
 - If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motors indoors, even if garage doors are open.
 - Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
 - During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
 - Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.
- Whiteman AFB Fire Emergency Services would like you and your family to be safe and stay warm this holiday season. If you have any question about fire prevention or fire safety please contact our Fire Prevention Office for information at 687-6080/6083/6374. Also, please log on to our face book page at Whiteman AFB Fire Emergency Services for more fire safety tips

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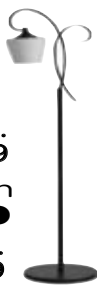


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Photo courtesy Jennifer Greene

Members of the Sedalia Elks Lodge display a giant American flag for the Sedalia Christmas Parade, Dec. 6, 2014, in Sedalia, Mo. The Sedalia community and its civic partners are strong supporters of the military and families.



Photo courtesy Jennifer Greene

Airmen from the 509th Security Forces Squadron participated in the Sedalia Christmas Parade, Dec. 6, 2014, in Sedalia, Mo. Sedalia is the sister community of the 509th SFS. Year after year, they work together to strengthen the tie between Airmen and the local community.



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jovan Banks

Team Whiteman youth pose with Santa during the Mission's End Tree Lighting event at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 3, 2014. The event had several different giveaways as well as food and pictures with Santa.



Photo courtesy Jennifer Greene

Brig. Gen. Glen D. VanHerck, right, commander of the 509th Bomb Wing and Grand Marshal of the parade, his wife Marilyn VanHerck, center, and Carter Lapine, prepare for the Sedalia Christmas Parade, Dec. 6, 2014, in Sedalia, Mo. As the base commander, VanHerck serves as the liaison for military and civic events throughout the local communities.



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jovan Banks

Volunteers at the tree-lighting event help members of Team Whiteman create their own holiday ornaments at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 3, 2014. There were stations for creating snowflake and snowmen ornaments.



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jovan Banks

Whiteman Airmen distributed stuffed animals during the tree-lighting event Dec. 3, 2014, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. Four hundred stuffed animals were donated for this event.



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Wires, sensors, dials: E&E keeps aircraft in flight

By Staff Sgt Alexandra M. Boutte
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Within every U.S. Air Force aircraft there are miles of wire, thousands of sensors and hundreds of dials, switches and indicators.

The electrical and environmental systems (E&E) specialists know each and every one of them, but more importantly they know how to repair them if they malfunction.

“We are like any other maintenance career field,” said Senior Airman Colby Nash, 509th Maintenance Squadron E&E systems technician.

The electrical portion of the shop deals with every aspect of the aircraft’s electrical system, from power generation to interior and exterior lighting and even fire prevention and suppression. The environmental aspect focuses on the pilots’ climate control system inside the cockpit, weapons system cooling, cabin pressurization and oxygen generation.

“If we weren’t here, the B-2 (Spirit) wouldn’t be able to fly, nor could the aircrew survive the flight if it did,” Nash said.

Members of the shop also assist fuels, engines, hydraulics and the crew chiefs with various troubleshooting and repairs.

“On top of our aircraft maintenance we also perform various inspections on liquid and gaseous oxygen and nitrogen carts, as well as support equipment for other shops within our squadron,” Nash said.

With maintenance shops, parts availability is an obstacle to overcome in order to get a job done in a timely manner. The E&E shop recently had such an issue; an incident of multiple broken transformer rectifiers almost brought the shop and other maintenance personnel to a screeching halt.

“The parts were designed to be maintenance free, but as with anything, 20 years is a long service life,” Nash said. “And needless to say, 20-year-old parts aren’t easy to refurbish.”

On the B-2, systems require two different types of electricity: either alternating current or direct current. Transformer rectifiers solve this problem by taking AC power from the generators and turning it into DC power for other subsystems.

It took new innovation and clearing some big hurdles in order to put the transformer rectifiers back into working condition. This process required the shop to devise substitutions for unobtainable equipment required to perform the checks, as well as coordinate with engineers to approve their new



Senior Airman Colby Nash, 509th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems technician, works on a broken transformer rectifier from a B-2 Spirit, Nov. 25, 2014, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. The shop was able to resolve issues of broken transformer rectifiers that could have possibly brought the shop and other maintenance personnel to a halt.

procedures.

“Without working hand-in-hand with supply and the engineers to supplement a means to power and cool the units while we test them, we wouldn’t have been able to put the TR units back into supply in a serviceable condition,” said Tech Sgt.

Shawn Bloom, 509th MXS E&E systems craftsman.

This team effort is a characteristic of how the Air Force mission gets accomplished day in and day out.

Each time an aircraft flies, it is the result of shops like E&E working hard to make it happen.



Senior Airman Colby Nash, 509th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems technician, works on a broken transformer rectifier from a B-2 Spirit, Nov. 25, 2014, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. On the B-2 Spirit, systems require two different types of electricity: either alternating current or direct current. The rectifier solves this problem by taking AC power from the generators and turns it into DC for other subsystems.

Senior Airman Colby Nash, 509th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems technician, works on a transformer rectifier at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 25, 2014. The parts were designed to be maintenance free.



Tech Sgt. Shawn Bloom and Senior Airman Colby Nash, 509th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems specialists, perform a check on a transformer rectifier to ensure it is working properly before placing it back into supply at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Nov. 25, 2014. Members of the shop also assist fuels, engines, hydraulics and the crew chiefs with various troubleshooting and repairs.

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On the morning of December 18th all volunteers will convene at Mission's End to assemble cookie care packages for the dorm residents. Set-up will be from 7:30-8:00. Assembling will commence at 8:00 and continue until finished (around 10:00). Please feel free to stop in at any time to help out or to drop off cookies.

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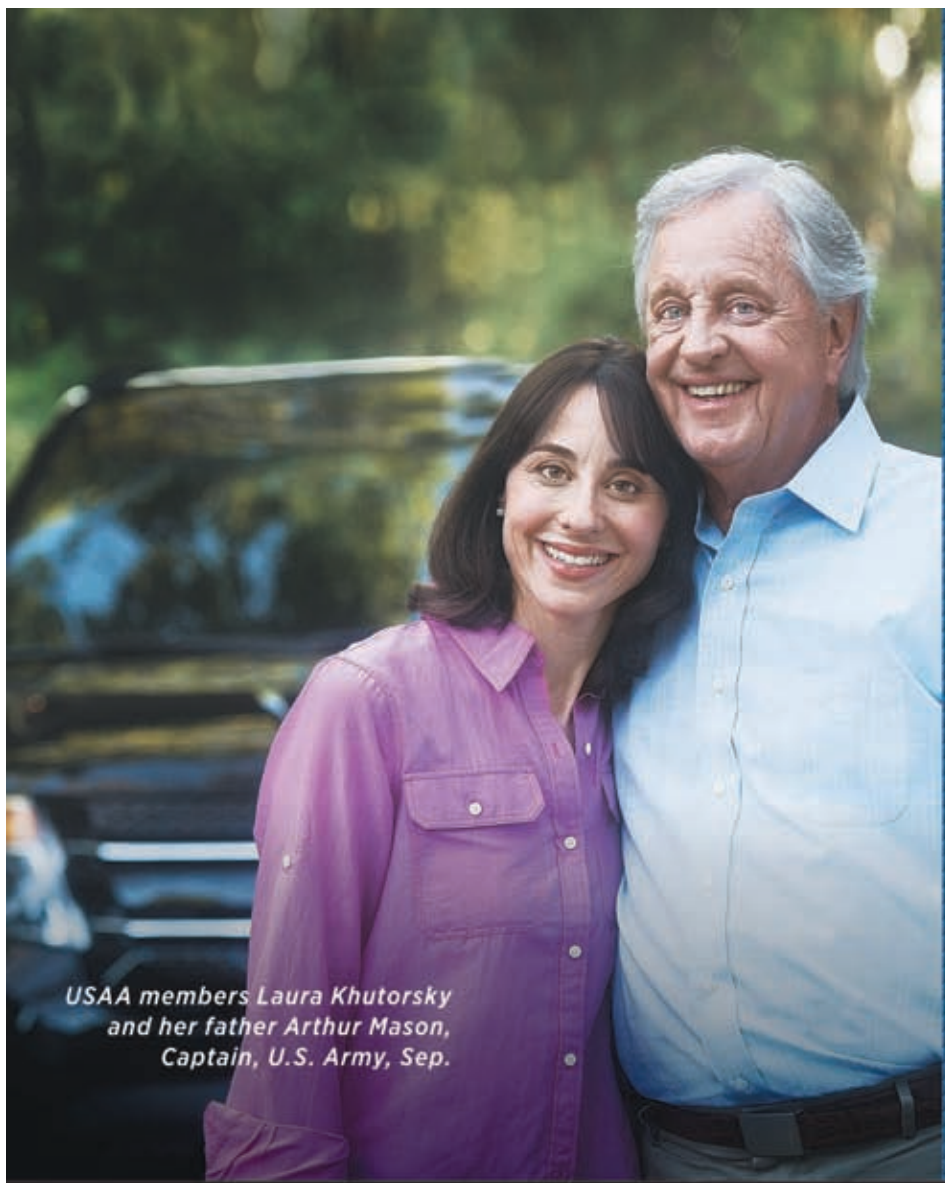
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Aviano stays 'Forward, Ready, Now' with joint exercise



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Matthew Lotz

Joint tactical air controllers call in simulated airstrikes Dec. 2, 2014, in Barcis, Italy. Trained in all types of warfare, JTACs are proficient in a variety of technology, a range of weaponry, and can advise and support ground commanders. The training allowed JTACs to coordinate with F-16 Fighting Falcons and practice calling in airstrikes on simulated targets in the mountains. The JTACs are from the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing's 2nd Air Support Operations Squadron.

By Senior Airman Matthew Lotz
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy (AFNS) -- The 555th Fighter Squadron hosted a weeklong exercise with the U.S. and Netherlands joint tactical air controllers here Dec. 2, as a part of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces in Africa's "Forward, Ready, Now" initiative.

Together, JTACs from the 2nd Air Support Operations Squadron and the Royal Netherlands army and U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group, coordinated airstrikes with F-16 Fighting Falcons from Aviano Air Base on simulated targets to stay current in their proficiencies.

"I cannot express how grateful we are that we had the ability to train with the Army, Air Force and Dutch in this exercise," said Capt. Brian Beears, the 555th FS weapons officer and exercise mission commander. "The (555th FS) looks forward to continuing interoperability missions between our NATO and allied countries."

With Aviano AB increasing their flying operations during the exercise from 90 to 310 sorties a week, several units throughout the 555th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron and 31st Operations Support Squadron contributed to ensure the training was successful.

"While not everyone had the opportunity to see or experience the training, this was a base-wide effort," Beears said. "It wouldn't have been as successful as it was if we didn't have the units that travelled down to help also."

Aviano AB has a recent record of successful interoperability missions within the past month. Just two weeks ago, the 555th FS returned from Amari Air Base,

Estonia, where they performed similar operations with the Estonian JTACs as a part of Operation Atlantic Resolve.

"With real-world missions like (Operation Unified Protector) and persistent threats like (the Islamic State group), there is no such thing as 'too much training' with our NATO allies," Beears said.

According to Beears, both exercises were intended to give the fighter pilots close air support training -- exercises to enhance communication between air and ground forces that is often critical in real-world operations. To help imitate a deployed environment, the JTACs used actual buildings and mountains to assist them as they called in simulated strikes.

"It's crucial that we were able to train with the (555th FS) pilots," said Capt. Joost, a Dutch army JTAC. "When we are tasked to operate with American pilots, it's good to train with them before to get all the bumps out of the way. There are things these experienced pilots know that we learn during these types of interoperability training."

Joost said the most important training that the Dutch army gets to take away is having the chance to improve their English in an operational setting.

"It doesn't matter what nation you are from, you must be able to speak English to operate downrange," he explained. "It's not just to speak with the Americans, but also the French, Spanish and other European countries that we operate with."

While deployments can happen at a moment's notice, Beears asserted that these types of multinational trainings have helped prepare both the fighter pilots and other Airmen involved.

"If the Air Force wanted to send us right now, we'd pack our things, say goodbye to our family and get on a plane because we are 'Forward, Ready, Now,'" he said.



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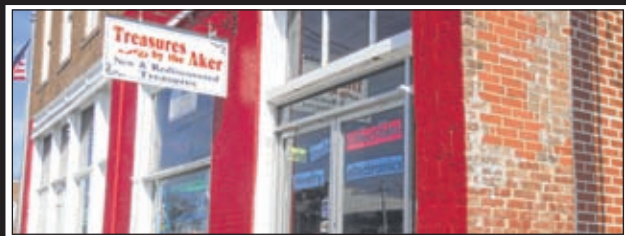
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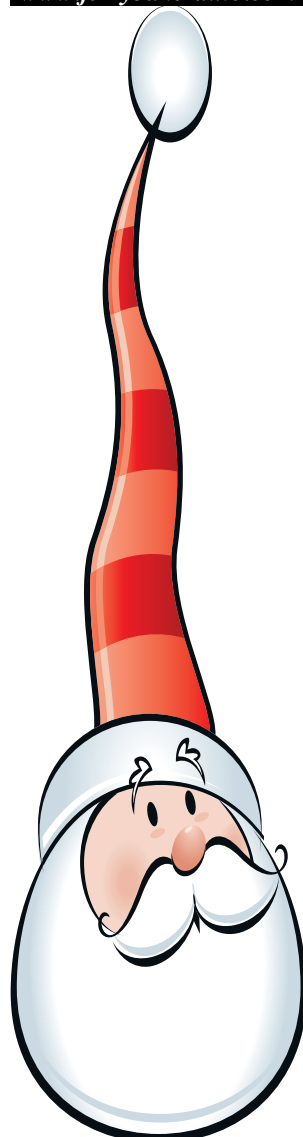
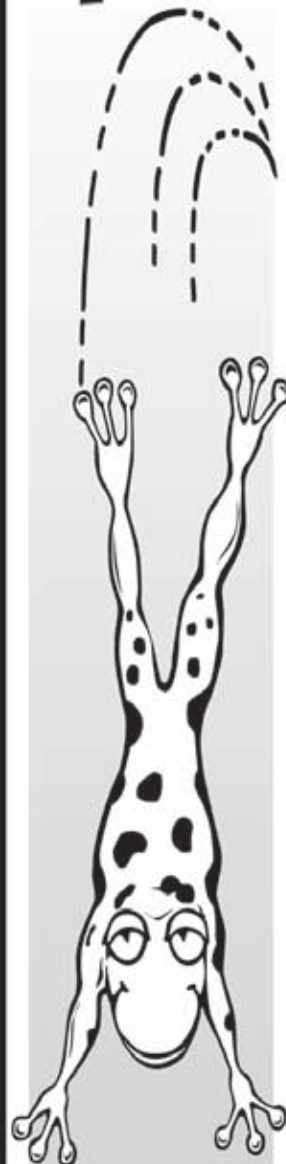
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 Monday, Wednesday and Friday
 (Regular deadlines apply)

If your advertised item doesn't sell, get 3 additional days FREE (Ads run Mon., Wed., & Fri., Price must be stated in ad)

36 Words or less; 1st 4 words bold; one item only; price must be listed to qualify for FREE ad

~ or ~

3 Days In Democrat (Mon., Wed., & Fri) + **3 Weeks In A Plainsman** + **3 Weeks In The Warrior** = **\$99** includes color

If your advertised items doesn't sell, you'll receive

3 Days In Democrat (Mon., Wed., & Fri) + **3 Weeks In A Plainsman** + **3 Weeks In The Warrior** = **FREE** includes color

Contact Your Ad Rep For Details, or call 660-826-1000 Ext. 239

