

WARRIOR



Weathering PERSONAL Storms

Whiteman Airmen notice dire signs preventing potential suicide
pg. 5

The Sound Barrier

509th SFS Airman overcomes adversities of mission trip
pg. 8

Don't underestimate the importance of sacrifices

By Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Lussion
6th Air Mobility Wing command chief

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- As I was reviewing some enlisted performance reports and decorations today, I started contemplating a huge event in my life that occurred almost 20 years ago.

In April of 1995, I asked my then girlfriend Tiffani, a fellow Airman at the time, to be my wife, for better or worse. We were married later that year and along our journey these past 20 years, we have seen many places, been blessed with two wonderful children and made many friends.

What really got me thinking though, were the numerous sacrifices that my wife and two children have made.

Throughout the journey, my kids have been asked to change schools six times, each time giving up old friends to make new ones. Some of those transitions were easy, but some have been difficult. The resiliency they have shown each and every time though, inspires me. In some instances, they have actually been the ones itching to move, long before I ever was. My wife has been asked to give up two different jobs along the way as well, not really ever getting the opportunity to start a career. Additionally, my family has had to deal with me missing many birthdays, anniversaries, etc. due to my temporary duties and deployments.

We, as service members, raise our right hand and solemnly swear

to defend the United States, against all enemies foreign and domestic. We signed on the dotted line vowing to give our lives in its defense, if needed, but nowhere on that contract does it say that our families should do the same.

Whether you have a wife, husband, partner, children or simply family back in your home town, we all have someone, somewhere along the journey with us that didn't sign that contract. They endure the ups and downs, the uncertainties of deployments and the joy of reuniting with one another after those separations.

My family has sacrificed so much over these years to allow me to do what I love, which is taking care of our Airmen! I cannot say "thank you" enough or rewind time to make up for those missed birthdays and anniversaries. I don't think any of us would change a thing, but I simply wanted to let them know how much they are loved and appreciated and that I understand the sacrifices they have made.

Two things I ask: First, don't ever underestimate how much the support and sacrifice of our families means to our success. Second, please ensure you go home tonight and thank those that you love, give them a call if they are not here with you, or give them a big hug if they are.

I can think of no greater thing than serving in the world's greatest Air Force alongside the world's greatest Airmen, but without my family and their support and sacrifices, none of it would have been possible. We all look forward to seeing where the journey continues to take us.

'Heroes at Home' program coming to Whiteman March 6

Mark your calendars for the "Heroes at Home, An Evening of Hope, Help and Humor" event, which will be held at the Mission's End Club on March 6 at 2:30 p.m. This highly-acclaimed program for military families provides audiences with an event that is entertaining, engaging and educational.

There are no reservations required -- plus it is free and child monitoring will be provided on-site by the Airman's Council!

Led by Ellie Kay, who is known as "America's Family Financial Expert" ®, the program provides financial education that can help families pay off debt, build up

savings and learn ways to get more for less. The "Heroes at Home" program includes an award-winning inspirational singer, engaging emcee, live twitter interaction and attendees will receive a complimentary copy of Kay's book, "Heroes at Home." The program ends with a capstone presentation that inspires audiences to give back by volunteering on base and to learn to love the legacy that the military provides.

Ellie Kay's team has presented "Heroes at Home" more than 150 times in venues worldwide, including a Department of Defense sponsored tour of United States Air Forces in

Europe with 21 presentations at bases in four countries. Kay is the author of 15 published books, which have helped more than 1 million families. She has conducted 1,200 media interviews, including with Fox News, ABC News, the Today Show and Nightline. She is the wife of an Air Force pilot, and a mother of seven financially fit young adult children including sons who serve in the Marines, Air Force and Army. She gives practical encouragement in the journey and encourages audiences to consider the two legacies they will leave: a financial legacy and a military legacy.

Weaving the stories of women's lives

By Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Bettisworth
509th Force Support Squadron

Sunday kicks off National Women's History Month.

In the United States, Women's History Month traces its beginnings back to the first International Women's Day, March 8, 1911.

In February 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The proclamation stated, "From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation."

"Too often the women were unsung heroes and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America were as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well."

In 1987, after being petitioned by the National Women's History Project, Congress designated March as Women's History Month.

Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., will highlight the importance of women making positive impacts on lives with various activities planned throughout the month.



March 4
2 - 4 p.m. - Women's history crafts with Youth Center pre-teens

March 8
International Women's Day - Documentaries will be playing at the Ozark Inn dining facility during brunch

March 25
8 - 9 a.m. - Women's History Month Breakfast at Mission's End

For more information, contact
2nd Lt. Lydia Hughey at 660-687-6991
or Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Bettisworth at 660-687-6520

THE WARRIOR
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The deadline for article submissions to the Warrior is noon Friday. If a holiday falls on Friday, the deadline then becomes 4 p.m. Thursday. Articles will be published on a space-available basis. Submissions does not guarantee publication.

For more information, call the Warrior office at 660-687-6126, email Whiteman.Warrior@us.af.mil, fax 660-687-7948, or write to us at Whiteman Warrior, 509th Bomb Wing, 509 Spirit Blvd. Suite 116, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305.

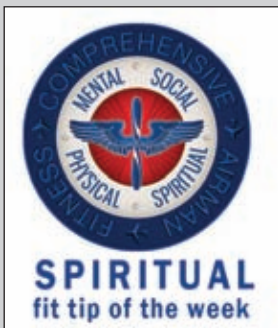
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On the cover

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

The total number of service member suicides in the Department of Defense in 2014 was 224, which is 30 lower than in 2013, according to www.suicideoutreach.org. Although the count was slightly lower, suicide remains an issue across the DoD. Suicide prevention is a key priority of the Air Force that aims to develop and care for Airmen and their families.

NEWS BRIEFS

SPIRITUAL FIT TIP
OF THE WEEK

"People often avoid making decisions out of fear of making a mistake. Actually, the failure to make decisions is one of life's biggest mistakes."

**- Rabbi Noah Weinberg,
48 Ways to Wisdom**

Also, please join us for a Purim celebration on March 6 at 7 p.m. in the main chapel. We will read the Book of Esther and have delicious pastries; all are welcome to attend!

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100 percent inventory

The 509th Munitions Squadron will be conducting a 100 percent stockpile inventory March 2-6, 2015. If you need any munitions issued or have any that need to be turned in, please do so either the week prior or after the inventory. During this week 509 MUNS will only process emergency requests, submitted in writing and approved by the group commander (or equivalent). If you have any questions or concerns please contact Master Sgt. Jason Gebbia at 687-8049 or Tech. Sgt. Young at 687-8052.

Found property

Keys, wallets, bicycles, jewelry and other items have been turned in as found property to Security Forces Investigation Section. To inquire about lost property, go to building 711, room 305, or call Detective Steven Scott at 660-687-5342.

WEATHER

Today	Saturday
Mostly Sunny	Snow Likely
Hi 18	Hi 28
Lo 2	Lo 11

Sunday	Monday
Chance Rain/Snow	Wintry Mix
Hi 36	Hi 37
Lo 25	Lo 22

Tornado drill scheduled for March 3: Be prepared

509th Public Affairs staff report

A tornado drill is scheduled to occur on Whiteman AFB on Tuesday, March 3. The drill will take place from around 8 a.m. through 11 a.m.

During the exercise, the tornado siren will sound and all members of Team Whiteman should respond as if it were real. Once the siren ceases and the all-clear has been given, a majority of Team Whiteman will be able to return to their daily routine.

However, emergency responders will continue to exercise their response capabilities throughout Tuesday morning, which may lead to traffic delays and congestion at certain areas around the base. Please avoid areas of heavy congestion and practice patience as our emergency management team practices readiness.

Below are some tips for how you should respond when you hear the tornado warning siren:

- Go to the lowest floor of the building you are in. Try to get in a small center room (like a bathroom or a closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows.
- Crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down, and cover

your head with your hands. Again, avoid any windows as much as possible.

- A bath tub may offer a shell of partial protection. Even in an interior room, you should cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris in case the roof and ceiling fail.

- If you are outside, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If this is not possible, lie flat and face-down on low ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can; they may be blown onto you in a tornado.

- If you are in a car or truck and the tornado is visible, far away and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive away from its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. Otherwise, park the car as quickly and safely as possible -- out of the traffic lanes. Get out and seek shelter in a sturdy building. If in the open country, run to low ground away from any cars (which may roll over onto you). Lie flat and face-down, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Avoid seeking shelter under bridges, which can accelerate the wind while offering little protection against flying debris.

The link between healthy teeth and a healthy heart

By Lt. Col. Rene Saenz

509th Medical Operations Squadron

Research suggests there is a link between healthy gums, healthy teeth and a healthy heart.

Daily flossing and good oral hygiene help promote healthy teeth and gums, which in turn can help fight heart disease. Without proper oral hygiene, including daily flossing, your oral cavity begins accumulating a soft, sticky bacterial film called plaque. Eventually, the bacteria within the plaque produce acids and begin to destroy the outer protective barrier of teeth, called enamel. This will cause the gums to become irritated and chronically inflamed causing them to bleed.

Over time, plaque will start to harden into a crusty yellow-brown looking substance, called tartar, that sticks to teeth. Tartar promotes the

accumulation of more plaque and often leads to chronic halitosis or bad breath. Over time, the lack of proper oral hygiene practices may lead to gingivitis, periodontal disease and tooth loss.

For years, scientists have theorized a correlation between a healthy mouth and a healthy heart exists. Today, there is strong evidence proving this correlation. Research has shown there is a direct link between gum and cardiovascular diseases. Although exact reasons as to why healthy gums and teeth promote a healthy heart are still being investigated, it is speculated chronic inflammation and bacteria that enter the bloodstream from the mouth may actually play a key role toward the promotion of cardiovascular disease.

Many of my patients do not floss regularly, because they complain their gums start bleeding. It is important to make sure flossing is done

correctly. Gums that are not stimulated regularly will bleed. A recent survey indicated only 17 percent of the American population flosses on a daily basis. Patients may do a great job brushing, but by not flossing, inflammation will begin to build up in-between the teeth causing gums to bleed easily.

Flossing teeth is not a difficult process. A helpful tip is to make sure to slide the floss under the gum line and curl it around each tooth. I use the analogy that flossing is very similar to shining your shoes. Most patients also complain they just don't have the time to floss their teeth. Flossing your teeth right before bedtime is an easy solution. It is important to include flossing as part of your daily oral hygiene routine. At the end of the day, this practice may help keep your teeth and your heart healthy for years to come.

Chiefs' Choice Award winner recognized



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Joel Pfister

Senior Airman Elizabeth Silva, 509th Communications Squadron network infrastructure technician, receives a Chiefs' Choice Award at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 16, 2015. Silva was recognized for her critical role in eliminating a nine-month backlog of 116 overdue maintenance inspections and leading a five-person information technology team during an office renovation which finished two weeks ahead of schedule.

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Sometimes, all you need is a friend



'After realizing the door was unlocked, that's when my heart sank. After looking around we saw some key indicators and knew we needed to find him right then.'

**-- Senior Airman William Sines
709th Munitions Squadron**

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

The total number of service member suicides in the Department of Defense in 2014 was 224, which is 30 lower than in 2013, according to www.suicideoutreach.org. Although the count was slightly lower, suicide remains an issue across the DoD. Suicide prevention is a key priority of the Air Force that aims to develop and care for Airmen and their families.

By Airman 1st Class Joel Pfeister
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Sometimes, feeling down or being in a bad mood can spiral you into a deep and dark place where you start to feel helpless.

You may start to believe that no one cares about you or understands the situation you are in. Problems might begin to snowball and the next thing you know, you could find yourself convinced life isn't worth living anymore.

This is a cold and sad reality some people find themselves in. However, thanks to the

military's strong focus on suicide prevention, there are many avenues available for individuals who might be contemplating taking their own life.

Sometimes, all a person really needs is a friend.

Recently, two Airmen here started to notice something might be going on with one of their good friends.

"We saw the breadcrumbs which led us to the problem," said Senior Airman William Sines, 709th Munitions Squadron weapons maintenance team member.

"It was during the holiday season, so

we thought maybe he was lonely or feeling down," added Senior Airman Mark Folve, 709th Munitions Squadron.

The breadcrumbs they spoke of were indicators that maybe something was wrong.

"We heard he was walking around Warrensburg, Mo., handing out large amounts of money," Sines said.

"He tried to play it off as like a good Samaritan thing, like he was paying it forward," said Folve.

Giving him the benefit of the doubt, they didn't look too much more into it until another indicator reared its head.

"His mother sent a message to another one of our friends and asked 'Hey, can you guys go check on him?'," said Sines. "It was nothing too big at that moment and we still didn't really suspect it at the time.

At that point we were considering that we should just try to get him out of his place," Sines continued. "It wasn't obvious at that point, we just thought maybe he was feeling lonely or down."

Soon after, Folve received yet another message from a mutual friend saying she was concerned as well.

Realizing their friend might be in dire need, Folve and Sines decided to intervene.

"We met up with the shirt and went to our friend's place, but his car wasn't there," said Folve. "I checked the front door and it was open."

After entering the apartment and realizing their friend was not there, they knew this was a serious situation.

"After realizing the door was unlocked, that's when my heart sank," said Sines. "After looking around we saw some key indicators and knew we needed to find him right then."

Their friend had some common indicators evident on his computer desk. Ammunition, medication and alcohol; a potentially fatal combination.

"We realized this was a major, major concern," said Sines. "We were considering where else we could look for him and it turned out he had just left to get food so we got extremely lucky he came back."

Sines and Folve showed their friend something that a lot of people are afraid to--tough love.

"We basically cornered him and let him know we knew something was going on," Sines said. "We told him what we found in his apartment and that we knew what his plans were. At first he was kind of standoffish but we just started picking away at the armor. The next morning, we went to mental health."

By intervening and supporting their friend, they potentially saved his life.

Sines and Folve recognized the signs and stepped up to own the problem. Without hesitation, they were there for their friend.

"Before we went to his place we were thinking there's only going to be three possible outcomes to this. He's either going to hate us forever, love us forever or we're not going to get there in time," said Sines. "Luckily we did get there in time. We're all still good friends. He actually comes over to the house even more than he used to."

Even though their friend may still have his ups and downs, he now knows that he has a support system within his friends.

"The cool thing is that he will sometimes have bad days and he'll just randomly show up at our place and start venting about things," said Sines. "We opened up that bridge for him and he knows we are here for him. When you get in a dark place, you think that nobody loves you or that you don't have any friends. The biggest thing we showed him is that a lot of people care."

Their friend is now on the right path, out of his dark place.

"He's been doing well and is back at work," Folve said. "If you are ever concerned about a friend, don't be afraid to say something. In the end, they will thank you."

WHITEMAN SPOUSES' CLUB

Scholarship Program

It's that time of year again! Scholarships are being given away by the Whiteman Spouses' Club applications need to be postmarked by March 14, 2015. For more information and for

applications please go to: www.whitemanwsc.com/scholarships.html or email wsc.scholarship1@gmail.com



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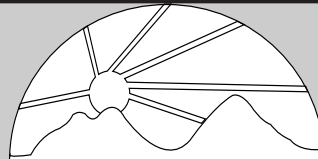
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Garden Club—1st Thurs. of each month 6:30 p.m. - Trails Regional Library - Knob Noster Branch

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)—Every Fri. 8 p.m. - Basement of Methodist Church • Every Tues. Noon - 101 Gray Lane, Chapel Annex 2 at WAFB

Knob Noster Board of Aldermen—1st & 3rd Tues. each month - Basement of City Hall

Whiteman Area Piecemakers Quilt Guild—3rd Thurs. each month 7 p.m. - Methodist Church

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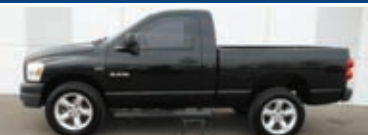
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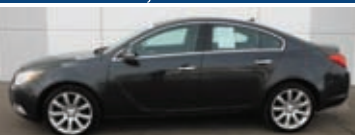
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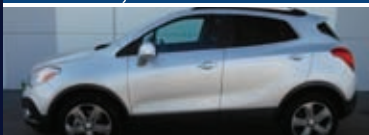
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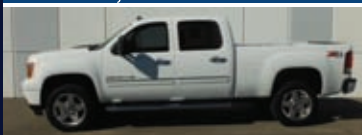
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Resiliency results in success

By Senior Airman Keenan Berry
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

To have resilience means to be able to withstand difficult conditions and come out on top.

In every Air Force career, Airmen are taught to be resilient when they are away from their homes and families.

However, for Airman 1st Class Henry Sorenson, 509th Security Forces Squadron member, this was a trait he learned before joining the Air Force.

Sorenson, who is from the small town of Cedar City, Utah, was born and raised as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was chosen to serve a mission down in Brazil for two years. While there, Sorenson learned a great deal about the Brazilian culture.

"The process for applying for missions is similar to joining the Air Force," said Sorenson. "I had to do an interview, a screening and a background check to ensure I met the qualifications for the mission. The church then selects and sends qualified applicants to different places around the world. I happened to be chosen for Brazil. For two years, I went around communicating to the locals about the church."

Adjusting to different cultures can be tough, and for Sorenson that was a lesson he learned firsthand.

"When I first arrived in Brazil, I figured the local language was Spanish because I was in South America," said Sorenson, "but I was wrong. I went to a place called the Missionary Training Center in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where I received training for eight weeks along with other American

missionaries. I had to room with Brazilian locals and none of them spoke English. It was a bit awkward and challenging trying to communicate with them with the little knowledge I had."

Sorenson eventually became fluent in Portuguese, but it was a rather difficult experience.

After eight weeks of training, Sorenson was sent to the missionary field where he was accompanied by a fluent expert. They assisted him with communicating to the locals whenever he required interaction. Throughout 22 months he began to pick up on the language the more he spoke with the locals. It was still a struggle.

"It was really awkward at times trying to convey religious messages to the locals," said Sorenson. "There were times I would go to someone with a memorized line and when they started to talk I would look to the expert for help. Some locals would hear my American accent and would shun me away; others were sincere enough to assist me with communicating to them."

Despite the difficulties with learning Portuguese, Sorenson learned the significance of work ethic.

"I was frustrated a lot of times because I didn't understand the language," said Sorenson. "Also I was a bit homesick missing my family and friends, but I kept persevering and eventually came out on top. A good life lesson I learned is when things get tough, that's the time when you really have to stand up and keep going."

Sorenson became resilient in his struggle to master the language and communicate his religious messages to the locals. Because of his dedication,

Sorenson was able to pull through and accomplish his mission.

"Life is full of trials," said Master Sgt. Andrew Wells, 509th Civil Engineer Squadron assistant chief of hazardous material safety. "That adversity will give us experience and has the potential to strengthen us. An attitude of resiliency comes when we view mistakes and weakness as opportunities to learn, to the point that we accept losing as learning. This will help us focus on what we can do to change the situation instead of worrying about what is outside of our control."

Not only did Sorenson receive knowledge, he spent time giving back by teaching English to some of his friends.

"I didn't just go to Brazil for the religious aspect," said Sorenson. "I taught English to a few people who were going to universities. All the textbooks are written in English and they have to know it in order to progress through college. I think that benefited them in their endeavor to pursue a higher education."

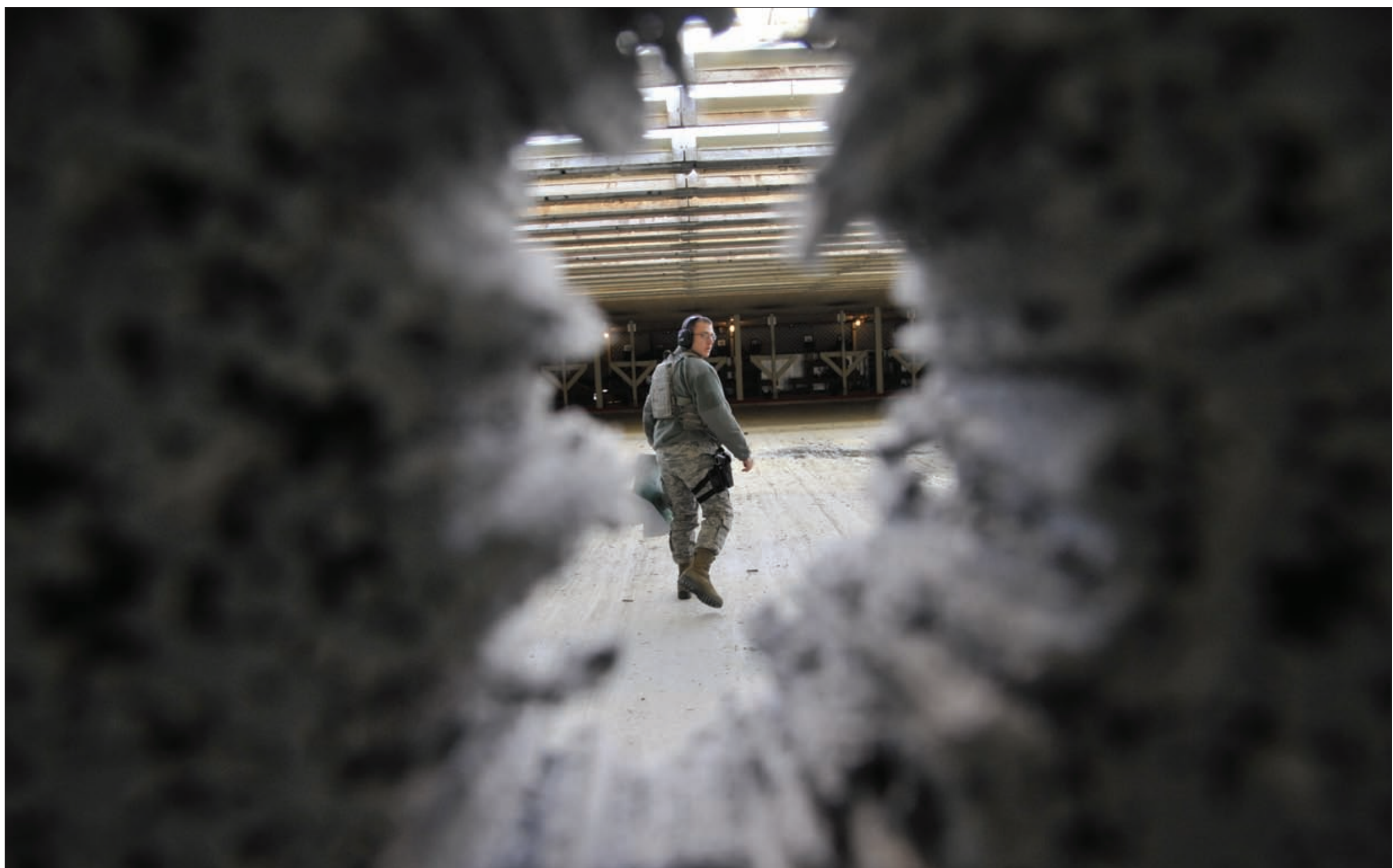
Sorenson demonstrated resiliency on several accounts throughout his mission in Brazil. Despite his time away from family and friends, he gained new experiences that will last him a lifetime.

"I was able to make close friends and I still communicate with them via social media, which also keeps me fluent in the language," said Sorenson. "I've had the opportunity of visiting different locations, trying new foods and many activities others don't get a chance to experience. It's taught me life lessons which have carried on into my Air Force career, making me the Airman I am today."



Courtesy photo

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Henry Sorenson, right, 509th Security Forces Squadron member, poses for a photo with his friend during a mission trip to Brazil in 2008. Despite his time away from family and friends, Sorenson gained new experiences and made new friends that will last him a lifetime.



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Keenan Berry

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Henry Sorenson, 509th Security Forces Squadron member, walks away from a firing target during a combat arms training and maintenance course at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 10, 2015. Sorenson is from Cedar City, Utah, and was raised as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was chosen to serve a mission in Brazil for two years before joining the Air Force.



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Keenan Berry

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Henry Sorenson, 509th Security Forces Squadron member, fires an M4 during a combat arms training and maintenance course at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 10, 2015. Prior to joining the Air Force, Sorenson spent eight weeks training at the Missionary Training Center while on a mission trip in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Keenan Berry

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Henry Sorenson, 509th Security Forces Squadron member, loads an M4 magazine during a combat arms training and maintenance course at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 10, 2015. Prior to joining the Air Force, Sorenson embarked on a two-year mission trip to Brazil where he became fluent in Portuguese.

Fun dental facts for kids

By Capt. James Koll
509th Medical Operations Squadron

Did you know that 50 percent of people say a smile is the first thing they notice about someone? Smiling represents confidence and an overall state of happiness for people of all ages. It seems children have the right idea ... they smile on average 400 times per day!

Educating children about dentistry should be fun. Nearly 40 percent of all children are afraid to go in for a dental visit. By keeping a positive and consistent perspective on maintaining good oral hygiene, trips to the dental office will be much more enjoyable for everyone involved. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children to get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Here are three helpful hints for parents in regards to their children's oral health:

1. Avoid putting your baby to bed with a bottle. This is the easiest way to cause tooth decay in small children. For photographic evidence, internet search "baby bottle tooth decay" and see for yourself.

2. Bring your child to the dental office before their first birthday. Dental visits every six months starting at a young age will also help your child feel comfortable and even excited to go every time. It is very important to create positive dental experiences so children do not develop "dental phobia."

3. Don't let your children brush their teeth alone. Since most children don't have the motor skills to brush effectively until they're 8 years old, parents need to supervise brushing and check to make sure the surface of each tooth is clean. Plaque-identifying mouth rinses and tablets are also useful tools to help children and parents evaluate brushing effectiveness.

Maintaining good oral habits throughout childhood will contribute to a happy, healthy smile that will make a positive first impression in the future. Below are a few fun and informative dental facts.

- 73 percent of Americans would rather go grocery shopping than floss!
- If you don't floss, you miss cleaning 40 percent of your tooth surfaces.
- The average person only brushes for 45-70 seconds at a time. The recommended amount is two-three minutes.
- Americans did not brush their teeth every day until after World War II. During WWII, the military required soldiers to brush their teeth twice a day to keep their teeth healthy. The soldiers brought the habit home after the war.
- The second most common disease in the United States is tooth decay. The first is the common cold.
- When we brush our teeth, we should also remember to brush our tongue. Did you know that just like our fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different?
- Dentists recommend a toothbrush be kept at least six feet away from a toilet to avoid airborne particles resulting from flushing.
- A toothpick is the object most choked on by Americans.
- Dogs have 42 teeth, cats have 30 teeth, pigs have 44 teeth and an armadillo has 104 teeth.

And last but not least ...
• More than 51 million hours of school are lost each year by children due to dental related illness. This is preventable. Please take some time this month to talk to your children about their oral health. If you have any questions regarding your child's dental health, please contact the Whiteman Dental Clinic at (660) 687-2201.



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LEE'S SUMMIT

Museum volunteer shares story of service

By Airman 1st Class Zachary Cacia
436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. (AFNS) – It was January 1945, and 21-year-old Lt. Donald Clark found himself piloting a C-47A Skytrain over the Western Front as the Battle of the Bulge was coming to an end. The aircraft was on its way to resupply Lt. Gen. George Patton's 3rd U.S. Army, and its tanks, with fuel and ammunition, as they began their push into Germany.

Fast-forward 70 years and Clark has long since moved on from his C-47A days. Now you can find this 91-year-old volunteering at the Air Mobility Command Museum here, educating and sharing his stories with the younger generations.

Clark's story started years earlier on a quiet family farm in the heart of Delaware. It only took an early graduation, a white lie and a few rigorous months of training for Clark to find himself in the cockpit of the C-47A.

As a young child, Clark's passion for all things aviation began to sprout.

"I was a farm boy and I always wanted to fly," Clark said.

As Clark progressed through school, his studies focused primarily on an agricultural vocation. Nonetheless, his passion for aviation continued.

"When I was in high school, the war was already going on," Clark said. "I would skip classes, take my grandfather's car and come out here (Dover Army Air Field) and sit on the west side of the field. I'd watch the B-25s as they flew in and out of here while they were going on patrols over the Atlantic."

Clark was like most young men of his age at that time – swept up by the war. As a high school senior, he applied and was accepted into an aviation cadet program.

But before his acceptance was made official, he had to receive his parents' permission, but more importantly, their signature.

"I only lied to my parents one time," Clark said. "I told them that I had to go, even though I didn't."

Because Clark came from a farming family and their farm exceeded a certain acreage, Clark would have been exempt from the draft and military service.

After telling this white lie to his parents, all he had to do was wait for graduation and he would be sent off for cadet and flight training.

"It was February 1943 and the principal called me down to his office," Clark said. "He said, 'get out of here, you're supposed to report on the 13th of February.'"

Clark said he was confused by this. He previously believed he would not be called up until after he graduated a few months later. His principal informed him that he was lucky that the Delaware State Legislature had just passed a law allowing schools to give students in good standing an early diploma in an effort to support the war.

Within a few weeks, Clark was in Birmingham, Alabama for pre-cadet training. Training was six demanding months of college classes, primarily focusing on physics. Upon completing this, Clark was sent to a classification center in Nashville, Tennessee.

"It was three days of physical, academic and psychological tests to determine if I would be a pilot, a navigator, a bombardier or wash out," Clark said. "I was selected to be a pilot."

Initially, Clark was assigned to fly A-26



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Zachary Cacia
Don Clark poses in front of a C-47A Skytrain Jan. 28, 2015, at the Air Mobility Command Museum on Dover Air Force Base, Del. During World War II, Clark piloted a C-47A and flew 81 missions, to include 27 combat missions.

Invaders, but was transferred to the newly activated 1st Troop Carrier Command, where he would soon learn to pilot C-47s. Clark completed all three required phases of training, racking up over 200 flight hours, and was selected to become a 1st pilot, what is known today as a command pilot. Clark was now fully trained to be sent to Europe.

When Clark arrived in war-torn France on Jan. 1, 1945, it had already been seven months after the Allied invasion at Normandy; the Germans' last ditch counter-offensive (the Battle of the Bulge) was crumbling and the Allies would soon be entering Germany itself.

Stationed near the front, just outside of Paris, Clark and his crew were broken up and assigned to different aircrews.

"We all became co-pilots and joined different crews," Clark said. "It was a real big letdown, but after flying two or three resupply missions, we realized we weren't as smart as we thought we were. It was a good thing we went through that period with the older people."

For the next five months as the war went on, Clark flew a total of 81 missions, 27 of those being credited as combat missions. The majority of these missions saw Clark and his crew flying their C-47 to the front lines, loaded with ammunition and gasoline. On their return flights, their aircraft was usually loaded with the wounded for transport back to France or England, depending on the severity of the wounds.

"We did most of our supply work for Patton and his 3rd Army," Clark said. "The armies were moving so fast that the trucks couldn't keep up with supplies. That's when the Troop Carrier Command came in with 900 airplanes."

Clark recalled one of his most unforgettable and adrenaline pumping missions.

"The clerk came to me and told me to unload my cargo of gasoline, that I've got a special mis-

sion," Clark said. "Oh, Jesus, right off the bat, we thought this is good; maybe we're going to fly to Yugoslavia and drop off supplies for the partisans."

Clark and his crew were instructed to fly to a field just outside of Reims, France, and wait.

"It was just a farmer's field," Clark said. "We landed and there we waited about a half an hour, and finally a couple of trucks came down the road."

Hoping for something exciting, Clark was humorously surprised with what he had to do.

"An officer jumped out of one of the trucks and said, 'Are you guys on special mission 1-2-3-4 or whatever,'" Clark said. "Yeah, that's us, I said. 'OK, we got a priority load here,' he said. 'Your orders are to load this as quick as you can and waste no time in getting to your destination.'"

Clark could not believe what his cargo was. "A whole load of toilet tissue!" Clark said. "We had to take it to the 1st Army up north. They had dysentery."

Returning from the mission, he and his crew became the subject of many jokes from the other aircrews.

"Beforehand, we were bragging to the other crews," Clark said. "After that, we received a lot of flak."

With the war in Europe ending in late spring of 1945, Clark continued on in Europe, flying for the newly created European Air Transport Service (EATS). Even though this service acted as a civilian airline, transporting people all over the continent, the aircraft and crews were from the Army Air Force.

During his time in EATS, Clark was given the opportunity to fly around many VIPs and was eventually offered a pilot job from Trans World Airlines. They wanted him to fly a converted C-47, based out of Geneva, Switzerland.

But Clark decided against this.

"It had been over two years since I'd been home," Clark said. "I was homesick, so I went home in August 1946."

Returning home and not wanting to give up his passion of flying, Clark utilized his knowledge of both aviation and agriculture to start a successful business.

"Being a farm boy, I started a crop dusting business," Clark said. "I did it for 10 years and had six airplanes."

He sold this business to start Clark Seeds, a seed business that still operates to this day in Clayton, Delaware.

Besides this, over his lifetime, Clark served on the board of directors for two Delaware banks, on the board of directors for the Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia, on two school boards and was eventually elected to the Delaware House of Representatives for 12 years.

However, Clark always maintained a love and interest in aviation. This is what brought him to the AMC Museum.

"I brought my grandchildren out here one day, about 10 or 12 years ago, and I was taking them around," Clark said. "This guy was following me around and asked me, 'Why don't you come out here and volunteer?'"

The individual who approached Clark was Mike Leister, the AMC Museum director.

"Don Clark is an American original," Leister said. "He's one of two remaining World War II veterans who work here at the museum. Here, you get to actually talk to the people, like Clark, who lived that history. To get the first hand experiences is awesome."

After retiring, Clark began volunteering at the AMC museum.

"I love airplanes," Clark said. "And I love to talk to about them, especially to people who are interested."

Unfortunately for men afflicted with prostate cancer, treatment options like surgery and standard radiation can come with debilitating side effects like incontinence and impotence, both of which can impact your lifestyle dramatically. There is a better way—it's called proton therapy from ProCure, and men who receive this treatment report little to no side effects.

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Pay dates increase for civilians in 2015

By Janis El Shabazz
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS) -- Civilian employees will have 27 pay dates in 2015 compared to the usual 26, so some employees might need to adjust their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contribution elections to receive the maximum agency matching contributions for 2015.

The Internal Revenue Code imposes a limit each year on the amount that an employee can contribute annually to a tax deferred retirement plan like TSP. The maximum 2015 contribution amount for traditional or Roth TSP is \$18,000 and the maximum amount for 2015 catch-up contributions is \$6,000. Catch-up contributions are additional tax-deferred contributions and are separate from regular TSP contributions. To be eligible to make catch-up contributions, you must be at least age 50 in the year the contributions are made, must be in a pay status, and must be scheduled to reach the elective deferral limit for regular TSP contributions during the calendar year. For those who are eligible, catch-up contributions provide a way for individuals to secure their retirement, especially for those who begin investing later in their careers.

"If employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System wish to receive the maximum matching contributions for 2015, they must ensure they do not reach the \$18,000 contribution limit before the last pay day of the year because TSP contributions stop when an employee's contributions reach the annual maximum limit," said Erica Cathro, an Air Force Personnel Center human resources specialist.

Air Force civilians can adjust TSP elections through the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS).

For more information about this topic, to include viewing the TSP and Catch-Up Contributions Chart and other personnel programs, visit the myPers website. To access EBIS, select the link under the 'I would like to' section and log into the site with the social security number and EBIS personal identification number.

New users who do not have a PIN must click the 'new user' option to create one. Employees who have forgotten their PIN can reset it by providing six pieces of previously established information. After answering the security questions select the "forgot login" link and enter the requested information.

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