

WARRIOR



WEATHERING PERSONAL STORMS

CARING FOR FELLOW WINGMEN IN DIRE TIMES
PG 8

Destination: X PG 5

509th FSS Airman travels the world

Weekly commander's message

Greetings, Team Whiteman!

Throughout the week our Total Force team supported U.S. Air Force Weapons School Advanced Integration missions at Nellis Air Force Base, in Las Vegas, Nevada. As part of this premier training, 325th Weapons Squadron crews flew three different Weapons School missions. During these missions, our teammates integrated with over 70 aircraft within the confines of the Nellis airspace ... well done!

Also this week, our dedicated Chaplain Corps hosted a living nativity scene and Menorah lighting. Angelle and I enjoyed all the festivities and it was wonderful to see many of you thoroughly enjoying this special event with your families.

As you may know, Wednesday marked the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. This historic event was tragic, but also significant for our nation as it initiated a turn of events that has reverberated for decades. For Whiteman, the ripples reached us in the form of our very own namesake. I ask that you reflect on the sacrifices made by those members who fell and familiarize yourself with the valiant story of 2nd Lt. George A. Whiteman. As the attack began, Lt. Whiteman, a Sedalia native, valiantly attempted to take the fight to the Japanese. He successfully reached his P-40B aircraft and managed to lift off the runway just as a burst of enemy gunfire hit his cockpit. Wounded and unable to control the aircraft, Lt. Whiteman crashed and his plane became engulfed in flames just off the end of the runway. By remembering him and the other fallen Americans from that dark day, we honor their sacrifice as they are the ones who paved the way for our success.

Speaking of success, Chief Smith and I wish to congratulate all four of Team Whiteman's newest chief master sergeant (CMSgt) selects! We are extremely proud to recognize these Bomber Airmen who have achieved the top tier of the Enlisted Force Structure. Through your hard work and dedication, you all have truly proven that you are deserving of this next step of responsibility and we cannot wait to see you succeed! We'll be celebrating your selection on Dec. 14th at Mission's End at 3:30 p.m. Come out to support our newest CMSgt selects, who are:

- CMSgt-select Jenny Green, 509th Bomb Wing
- CMSgt-select Vernon Huhmann, 509th Maintenance Squadron
- CMSgt-select Michale Marriott, 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- CMSgt-select Robert Tibi, 509th Munitions Squadron



Finally, I ask that throughout the holiday season and beyond you take a moment to think about your fellow Airmen and reach out to them. The holiday season is a joyous one, but not all of us get to spend that time with our families or closest friends. That is why it is imperative we all take the time to check on one another. Something as simple as talking to your neighbor, your co-worker, or someone new to your unit can make a big difference in their outlook. Take it a step further and go do something together; there are plenty of resources near and far that are just waiting to be taken advantage of. Our resiliency as a family is one of our strongest pillars, but we need everyone on board to give it the strength it needs.

Look out for your Wingmen this weekend, and if you see something unsafe or something does not seem right with someone ... say something!

Defend ... Avenge!

Nuke
PAUL W. TIBBETS IV
Brigadier General, USAF
Commander, 509th Bomb Wing

THE WARRIOR

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The Sedalia Democrat
Layout and Design

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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 do 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, 509th Spirit Blvd. Suite 116, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305.

To advertise in *The Warrior*, call the Sedalia Democrat at 1-800-892-7856.

6 Easy Tips for Reducing Holiday Stress

1. When you wake up in the morning, stop and take a moment to say good morning to your day.
2. If you are in a relationship, take a few minutes to really look at and appreciate your significant other.
3. If you are deployed with your unit, pause to think about how your buddies support and help one another to get through a rough day.
4. Take a moment to be grateful. Before you eat lunch, reflect for a moment and think about something that keeps you going everyday.
5. At dinner, spend a moment thinking about your loved ones. Have you told them lately something you appreciate about them?
6. Finally, before you go to sleep, acknowledge something about yourself you're proud of.



On the cover

U.S. Air Force illustration/
Senior Airman Jovan Banks

All Airmen have a responsibility that lasts longer than a one-month campaign. Suicide can be prevented by knowing fellow Airmen, family members, coworkers and being willing to support them when they are facing challenges that test their resilience.

NEWS BRIEFS

Disposition of Personal Effects

Capt. Andrew J. Treiman is authorized to make dispositions of the personal effects of 1st Lt. Johnathan M. Haase, deceased, 509th Operations Support Squadron, as stated in AFI 34-511. Any person having claims for or against the deceased please contact Capt. Andrew J. Treiman/ 660-687-2424/ andrew.treiman.1@us.af.mil.



U.S. Air Force Eagle Eyes provides service members and civilians a safe, discreet and anonymous option to report criminal information, counterintelligence indicators or force protection concerns.

To submit a web tip go to <http://www.tipsubmit.com/WebTips.aspx?AgencyID=1111> or the AFOSI web page at <http://www.osi.af.mil>

How to report an anonymous tip using a smart phone:

1. Use the smart phone app
2. Manually select an agency
3. Choose USA then Federal Agency then select AFOSI

4. Create a passport, select New Tip and fill out the form with as much information as possible.

How to report an anonymous tip VIA text message:

Text "AFOSI" plus your tip information to 274637 (CRIMES)

Stealth Lounge

If you are a young Airman, let the Stealth Lounge make your time at Whiteman more fun. Stop by after work to play some pool, darts, foosball, or the newest games on Xbox One or Playstation 4. The lounge opens at 4 p.m. during the week and noon on weekends. There is free dinner every Friday at 4:30 p.m. There are also free premium snacks and Wi-Fi. Come for the free stuff, stay for the fun and friends.

Please like the Stealth Lounge on Facebook to stay up to date on special events and tournaments.

Air Force Housing website

Visit www.housing.af.mil to find your new home with the Air Force. This website serves as a one-stop shop for Airmen and their families to obtain information about the housing options and support services available to them at Air Force bases worldwide.

WEATHER

Today Mostly Sunny Hi 28 Lo 10	Saturday Partly Sunny Hi 40 Lo 18
Sunday Mostly Cloudy Hi 39 Lo 30	Monday Mostly Sunny Hi 36 Lo 23

Air Force Suicide Prevention Program's 11 Elements

By Air Force Medical Service

The Air Force Suicide Prevention Program is built on 11 overlapping core elements stressing leadership and community involvement in the prevention of suicides. These 11 elements are:

1. Leadership Involvement: Air Force leaders actively support the entire spectrum of suicide prevention initiatives in the community.

2. Addressing Suicide Prevention through Professional Military Education (PME): PME provides periodic and targeted Suicide Prevention training for Airmen, specifically oriented to the individual's rank and level of responsibility.

3. Guidelines for Commanders: Use of Mental Health Services: Commanders receive training on how and when to use mental health services and guidance on their role in encouraging early help seeking behavior.

4. Unit-based Preventive Services: Helping-agency professionals partner with unit leaders to provide services at the work site to increase access, encourage help-seeking, and promote familiarity, rapport, and trust with Airmen and families.

5. Wingman Culture: Wingmen practice healthy behaviors and make responsible choices and encourage others to do the same. Wingmen foster a culture of early help-seeking. Wingmen recognize the signs and symptoms of distress in themselves and others and take proactive action.



6. Investigative Interview Policy: Following any investigative interview, the investigator is required to 'hand-off' the individual directly to the commander, first sergeant, or supervisor. The unit representative is then responsible for assessing the individual's emotional state and contacting a mental health provider if any question about the possibility of suicide exists.

7. Post Suicide Response (Post-vention): Suicide impacts coworkers, families, and friends. Offering support early is associated with increased help-seeking behavior.

8. Integrated Delivery System (IDS) and Community Action Information Board (CAIB): At the Air Force, MAJCOM and base levels, the CAIB and IDS provide a forum for the cross-organizational review and resolution of individual, family, installation and community issues that

impact force readiness and the quality of life.

9. Limited Privilege Suicide Prevention Program: Patients undergoing legal action who are at risk for suicide are afforded increased confidentiality when seen by mental health providers.

10. Commanders Consultation Assessment Tool: Commanders use a variety of assessments (e.g., Support and Resilience Inventory, Unit Climate Assessment) recommended by appropriate agencies, to gain insight into unit strengths and areas of vulnerability.

11. Suicide Event Tracking and Analysis: Information on all Air Force suicides and suicide attempts are entered into a central database, currently the Department of Defense Suicide Event Report (DoDSER), to identify suicide risk factors and trends.



Reel Time Theaters

We're saving a seat for you.

FRIDAY, DEC. 9 • 7 p.m.

Dr. Strange (PG-13) Adults - \$6.25,
children - \$4.00

SATURDAY, DEC. 10 • 7 p.m.

Almost Christmas (PG-13)
Adults - \$6.25, children - \$4.00

SUNDAY, DEC. 11 • 3 p.m.

Almost Christmas (PG-13)
Adults - \$6.25, children - \$4.00

Base Housing Holiday Guide

- Exterior holiday decorations may be lit from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
- Rooftop decorations are prohibited
- Decoration fasteners that leave permanent damage are prohibited
- Seasonal decorations must be removed by the 3rd week of January



For more information check page 23 of the Resident Guide

Whiteman's medical units join forces for extensive TFI emergency response exercise



U.S. Air National Guard photo/Airman 1st Class Halley Burgess
The 131st, 509th, and 442nd Medical Groups participated in a simulated radioactive bombing exercise to train Airmen for real world situations at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 3, 2016. The key objective for the exercise was for the three medical groups to come together as one cohesive team to work through a crisis situation that could arise during a mission and illustrate the importance of Total Force Integration.

Where in the world is Senior Airman Varga?

By Senior Airman Jovan Banks
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Boots, check.

Energy bars, check.

Desire to see the world, absolutely.

Traveling is not a foreign concept for Senior Airman Asuka Varga, an installation personnel readiness technician from the 509th Force Support Squadron. Born in Japan, Varga was introduced to travel at a young age.

With her dad being in the Air Force moving every few years was just a part of her life.

"I'm originally from Hokkaido, Japan. We moved from there to Misawa, then Okinawa. I was 13 when I moved to Hawaii," said Varga.

She decided to follow in her father's footsteps with an Air Force career of her own, which landed her here at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

"I imagined my career to somewhat mirror my father's career," said Varga. "He was constantly traveling on deployments and various assignments."

Though that hasn't been the case so far, Varga has brought it upon herself to try to see as much as possible.

"I've never lived anywhere similar to the Midwest," said Varga. "So when I first got here, I'm not going to lie, it was a complete culture shock, but I think every place has something to offer, different cultures, history, landscapes, architecture, foods."

In the time that Varga has been stationed here, she has traveled to Arizona, Florida, Wyoming, Colorado, New York, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas.

"Missouri is pretty central so nowhere in the continental U.S. is exactly really far away," said Varga. "I love visiting new places and experiencing new things and I think there's a gem in every place you go to."

Some of the travel destinations Varga chooses to visit also fall in line with some of her favorite things to do.

"I love to hike and do things outdoors so Colorado is definitely one of my favorites that I have visited because of all the nature and beauty it has to offer," said Varga. "You just have to go out and find something that you enjoy doing. Everyone has something they enjoy."

Varga's travels are not limited to the U.S.; she has also traveled back to where it all began.

"For the first time in 10 years I went back to my hometown," said Varga. "Going home as an adult was a completely different experience because I never really got to experience all the things there are to do in my hometown as a child."

Traveling is not only a fun thing to do as a hobby but it is also a way to strengthen bonds with the people close to her.

"I mostly travel with friends," said Varga. "I think traveling is a good bonding experience and it's a fun way to be social. I don't cherish or remember the materialistic things I've obtained, but instead, the memories I've created along



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Asuka Varga, an installation personnel readiness technician from the 509th Force Support Squadron, chooses her next travel destination at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 6, 2016. Varga has traveled to Arizona, Florida, Wyoming, Colorado, New York, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas and plans to travel to United Kingdom in the near future.

the way on the trips I've taken."

Some may think of traveling as out of their reach, but Varga believes traveling is for everyone.

"Having a family makes it difficult to just decide one day you feel like going to Colorado to climb a summit because there are things that need to get done,"

said Varga. "But I think it's just a matter of planning and wanting to go for it."

For Varga, her current station does limit the destination; she believes it has made her grow as a person.

"The world has so much to offer, and so much to discover," said Varga. "I feel that it's very humbling and makes you

a well-rounded person. You learn to be adventurous and it steps you out of your comfort zone. It's important to get out and experience something different."

Airman Varga looks toward her next journey, where she will travel to the United Kingdom to visit the person who ignited her love for travel, her father.

U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jovan Banks

509th MDSS Airman receives Whiteman Tier II Scholarship



U.S. Air Force photo/Master Sgt. Jenny D. Dix

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Jaclyn Barile, center left, a personnel and administration technician assigned to the 509th Medical Support Squadron, receives the Whiteman Tier II Scholarship Award from Tech. Sgt. Ryan Waterfield, the Whiteman Tier II president, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 1, 2016. Barile was selected for her academic achievements and goals, which include completing her Community College of the Air Force degree in Health Care Management, working toward a Bachelor's degree in business and setting her sights on commissioning to become an officer in the Air Force.

THINK SAFETY

Whiteman winter weather plan:

What you need to know

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs
Staff Report

As we have all seen and felt this week, winter is upon us. Therefore, it's important for us all to understand: how we report to the installation appropriately, how we can find out when we should report for work and know what the reporting process is regarding inclement weather.

Please take a moment to review the procedures and the base operating status terms below.

General Procedures:

U. S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul W. Tibbets IV, the 509th Bomb Wing commander, is the authority for determining the base operating status per Recall, Reporting, and Release Plan 10-207. Keep in mind that the base reporting status may or may not follow the local surrounding area status.

For example, the schools in the local area may be closed or delayed, but Whiteman may be operating normally. The same is true for early release. Schools may be letting out early; however, the installation may not be aligned with the early release of the local schools.

Team Whiteman members can expect to be notified of changes to the base operating status or if early release is authorized via one or more of the following avenues:

1. The AtHoc System. All Team Whiteman members who have properly registered and have an up-to-date AtHoc Account will receive a phone call, email and/or text based upon the settings you have established. Per the Installation Notification & Warning System plan, all active duty, reserve, MOANG, and government civilians are required to opt-in to AtHoc and have all their respective contact information filled out with the exception of their personal email address. If you haven't established an AtHoc system account, do so now. You can do this and check your current information in AtHoc by right clicking on the purple globe on the bottom right of your computer and selecting "Access Self Service."

2. The Whiteman Air Force Base Facebook page. If you do not follow or have not "liked" the Whiteman Facebook page, now is a good time to do that as well so you can receive the latest news and information regarding Whiteman.

3. The base website, which is www.whiteman.af.mil.

4. The Straight Talk Line, which can be accessed by dialing 660-687-NEWS (6397). This line will be updated with the base operating status, as well as other pertinent information.

5. Local news and radio stations will also be notified of delays or closures, similar to school closings. Please keep in mind, however, that not every news channel you have access to may be broadcasting information regarding the installation's operating status so it is best not to rely on a single media source.

6. A phone call from your chain of command.

The following terms define the possible reporting status options:

1. BASE OPEN: All Team Whiteman



File photo

members report at their normal scheduled duty times - this is our normal day-to-day reporting status.

2. DELAYED REPORTING: During this status, we delay reporting until no earlier than the time specified in the message you receive. For example, "Due to ongoing snow removal, all personnel except security forces, firefighters, and snow removal personnel delay reporting until 9:30 a.m." This means that all personnel except security forces, firefighters and snow removal personnel report to work on or after 9:30 a.m. If your particular shift report time is after the report time in the message, you report at your normally scheduled time, such as swing and mid-shifts.

3. RESTRICTED REPORTING: Only "mission-essential" personnel specified in the message report to work. All others stay home. Personnel are designated "mission essential" by their group or squadron commander based on the specific situation. For example, if it is a simple snow event, then mission essential personnel will likely only include security forces, command post and snow removal personnel. If we are in combat operations, it will likely include operations and maintenance personnel as well.

4. EARLY RELEASE: This occurs when the installation commander directs an early release from duty, which may result from a weather event or any emerging situation. The message you receive will specify the affected demographic. For example, during a snow event early release times may be staggered based upon the distance a member resides from the installation.

5. BASE CLOSED: The installation is closed due to inclement weather, for example, and personnel are not required to report unless specifically notified to do so. Also, installation gates may be closed and, based on the situation at hand, internal movement on base may be limited.

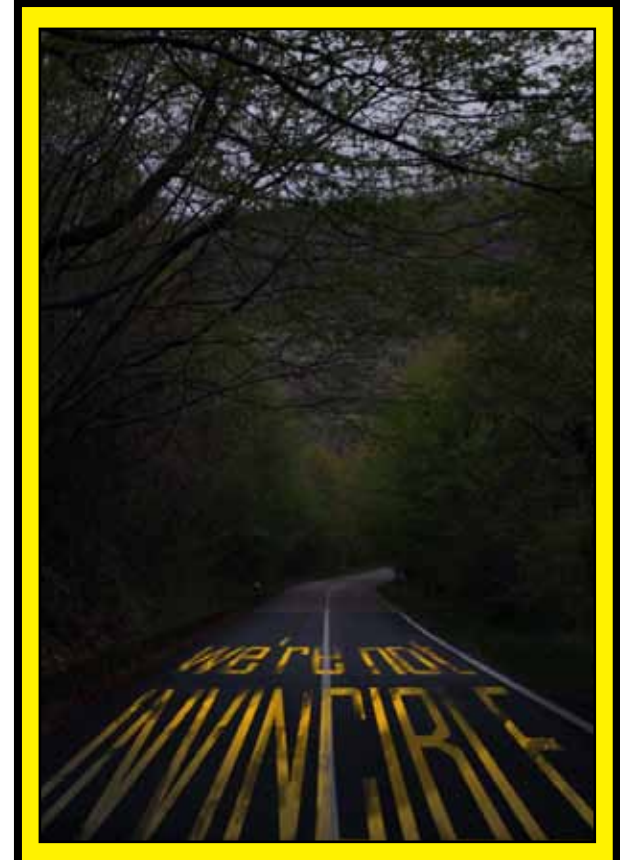
Ultimately, we all need to exercise sound judgment when it comes to winter weather.

If you are experiencing trouble or have questions about your duty status, please contact your supervisor and utilize your chain of command. If you have specific questions regarding the reporting procedures above, please

contact Wing Plans at 660-687-2312. Please contact Public Affairs at 660-687-5727 with questions or concerns regarding notifications via Facebook, the base website or the Straight Talk Line.

The secret about suicide

By Staff Sgt. Corey Schuler
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs



U.S. Air Force illustration/Senior Airman Jovan Banks

Know When and Where to Ask for Help...
...and remember that your Supervisor & First Sergeant are your first resource for help!



Phone #	660-687-4341	660-687-7132	660-631-7985	660-687-3652	660-687-4341	660-687-1199	660-687-4341	660-687-5737	660-687-2188	660-687-7272
CHIEF COMPLAINT	ADAPT	AF&RC	AF&RC MFLC	CHAPLAIN 100% confidential	Family Advocacy	Health Promotion	Mental Health	EO	Medical Appt	SARC
Work/School										
Finances										
Nutrition/Fitness										
Relationships										
Marriage/Family										
Grief/Death										
Abuse/Neglect										
Depression/Sadness										
Sexual Assault										
Discrimination										
Anxiety/Panic										
Exceptional Family Mbrs										
Alcohol/Drugs										
Suicidal Thoughts										
Homicidal Thoughts										
Anger Issues										

There's a secret about suicide. Flash back to September 2014. I PCS'd to Aviano, Italy, from Osan, Korea. During my time there, my marriage suffered serious strain. I also started addressing a lot of personal challenges I'd been unknowingly suppressing for a long time. Ultimately, I came to Italy with a fresh perspective on life and a marriage to rehabilitate. We tried, man, we tried. And while we were trying, my job had me going full-speed with a die-hard focus on innovation and fresh, uncharted territory. I was overwhelmed with stress and I lost 35 pounds due to not eating. I was trying to make everyone else happy and I had no concern for my own well-being. And one day, while driving home from work, on those tiny Italian roads, a thought popped into my head when I saw a semi-truck driving towards me in the opposite lane: "The slightest turn of the steering wheel and everything would be okay." ...To this day, I have yet to find the words to express just how shocked, how sucker-punched I felt when that thought appeared. That's not me. That's not who I am. That's not what I'm about. My stomach turned to brick and I broke. I pulled over and had a complete breakdown while my wife, worried out of her mind, sat there unable to understand or even help me because I couldn't find the words to explain it to her. Because that's not me. It can't be. Rewind further: I grew up in an abusive and neglectful home. My teenage years, depression and anger clung to me like a second skin. My early twenties, I couldn't find meaning in anything: in my family, friends or even in existing. But NEVER had I ever had a thought like that. ...So I was horrified. I was scared of that thought, scared of myself. And I didn't have the courage to seek help. Surely it just was a bad moment, I was just weak. It was a bad day, a bad week, a bad month, so much happening and so much to adjust to, and everything was going to be okay. Couple of days later, driving home on those little Italian roads once again: "It would be of little consequence. This car rental is a beater, company wouldn't miss it; the semi would get some scratches but it would pulverize the car and the driver wouldn't be hurt." Not only did the thought return, but it came back with a warped, twisted rationality. ...and over time, the thought came easier, and more frequently, and no one knew. Professionally, I was semi-open with my leadership: I was reliable and hard-working and I told them I was going through some marital issues and personal struggles but I also said they had nothing to worry about. I won awards. My team did incredible work. We hit a level of success we didn't know was possible. Personally, my wife and I sought therapy. We worked on our communication and over a period of time, we tried to put things back together. We got to a point where we were getting along again. Yet, damn near every day I thought about dying. I was *tempted*. You see, the secret about suicide is we're all susceptible to it. Yeah, you. Even you. If you're thinking "ha, yeah right, not me," then I'm asking you to have an open mind and check your pride for a moment. For 28 years, I weathered and overcame so many challenges I wasn't equipped to survive in the first place, and not once did I consider ending my life. Then suddenly this thought was always in my head.

Worse, it evolved, quickly. It came with those dangerous rationales that made complete sense in my head at the time even though they're a pack of lies. Had there been a moment of impulse where those lies were louder than the truths... had there been just THREE SECONDS of brash decision-making ... it would've been my last choice. So how do we combat this? How do we check ourselves in these moments of irrationality? When the impossible, the "wouldn't happen," the "I would never" IS possible? We have to lay down speed bumps against those trains of thought. Safeguards. Something to force us to slow down enough to realize we're tumbling down the rabbit hole and climb out. If you have access to a firearm, make it difficult to access. If you have pills, only put a few in your bathroom at a time, and put the rest in the attic and restock it every weekend. For me, I eventually went to mental health. I was in therapy for around 15 months, and it was worth every single moment (Shout out to my therapist!! You know who you are :D). I leaned more heavily on my friends and also removed a few poisonous elements from my life. I personally believe we can handle our demons, but not when toxic people keep feeding them ---- get rid of those people, you don't need that. ...speed bumps. In a moment of impulse, these may or may not be enough. It IS something though, and scientific studies have proven these little steps truly do deter people from following through. Most of us wouldn't think we're vulnerable to suicide. Most of us have maybe never thought of it nor considered taking our own life, but suicide has followed us throughout history, as an Air Force and as a species. We're not invincible. Protect yourself. Learn to recognize *your* red flags and get help the second you see them waving, whether they're in your face or somewhere in the distance still. Put speed bumps in front of those red flags and help yourself. Know you're a strong, amazing human being, and you're NEVER defeated, helpless, or a waste. And please do know ... as cliché and worn-out as the saying is... Everything is going to be okay. Including you.

*The Secret about Suicide commentary is available on the official Whiteman Air Force Base Facebook page. Please consider sharing with friends and family so we can continue to raise awareness about suicide and further the conversation.



Scholarships

NOW AVAILABLE TO:

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

CONTINUING UNDERGRADUATES

MILITARY SPOUSES

Applications must be postmarked by

01.31.2017

For An Application or More Information

Email -

WSC.SCHOLARSHIP1@GMAIL.COM

or visit

www.whitemanwsc.com/scholarships.html

“Stay Quit”

Nicotine Intervention Program begins in January

The WAFB Medical Clinic is starting a new Nicotine Intervention Program in January 2017. This is a four-week course dedicated not only to helping you quit, but helping you stay quit. If you are interested, the first session will be held January 11 at 2 p.m. in room 200 in the PDC. A brief synopsis of the program is below:

- **Week 1** - Introduction, rate reduction, managing urges, goal setting, initial medication education, and ordering of medications
- **Week 2** - Helpful hints/behavioral modification, preparing to quit/setting a quit date, and starting medications
- **Week 3** - Program recommended quit date, managing urges with healthy thinking, relapse prevention, and managing nicotine withdrawal
- **Week 4** - Problem solving for high risk situations, maintaining changes, and relapse prevention

For more information, contact Maj. Chris Button at 660-687-4341.

Airman COOKIE DRIVE

Drop off your solid in texture homemade cookies (no gooey frosting) December 12 & 13 at Mission's End between 0700-0900. Volunteers will organize and assemble packages December 14 from 0730-1000. Volunteers are welcome and appreciated!

Let's Spread Holiday Cheer to our Airmen in the dorms!

Whiteman pilot reflects on 6,000 hours in the A-10

By Senior Airman Missy Sterling
442nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Nearly three decades of flying and 11 combat deployments later, Lt. Col. John Marks, a pilot with the 303rd Fighter Squadron has achieved a

milestone that equates to 250 days in the cockpit, which most fighter pilots will never reach. This puts him among fighter pilots with the most flight time in the Air Force.

Marks logged his 6,000th hour in the A-10 Thunderbolt II at Whiteman Air Force Base,

Missouri, Nov. 14, 2016.

Ever since the end of the Cold War era when Marks began his Air Force career, the mission in the A-10 has remained the same — protect the ground forces.

“Six thousand hours is about 3,500 sorties

with a takeoff and landing, often in lousy weather and inhospitable terrain,” said Col. Jim Macaulay, the 442d Operations Group commander. “It’s solving the tactical problem on the ground hundreds of times and getting it right every time, keeping the friendlies safe. This includes being targeted and engaged hundreds of times by enemy fire.”

He also said it’s a testament to Marks’ skill that he’s never had to eject, and they both praise and respect the 442d Maintenance Squadron for keeping the planes mission ready.

Marks’ early sorties were low-altitude missions above a European battlefield, so different tactics have been used in more recent sorties that have focused on high-altitude missions above a Middle Eastern battlefield.

“In the end, we can cover the ground forces with everything from a very low-altitude strafe pass only meters away from their position, to a long-range precision weapon delivered from outside threat ranges, and everything in between,” Marks said.

Marks said most combat sorties leave lasting impressions because the adrenaline rush makes it unforgettable.

“Recently, a mission I flew on our most recent trip to Afghanistan, relieving a ground force pinned down by Taliban on three sides and in danger of being surrounded, using our own weapons while also coordinating strikes by an AC-130 gunship, two flights of F-16s, Apaches, and AH-6 Little Birds, stands out as a mission I’m proud of,” said Marks about one of the most rewarding missions of his career, which earned him the President’s Award for the Air Force Reserve Command in 2015.

Having more than 950 combat hours like Marks does is valuable for pilots in training because experience adds credibility, said Macaulay.

“I’ve watched him mentor young pilots in the briefing room then teach them in the air,” Macaulay said. “Every sortie, he brings it strong.”

See 6,000 hours, page 14



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. John Marks

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. John Marks smiles in front of his 303rd Fighter Squadron artwork at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2014. The 303rd Fighter Squadron is attached to the 442d Fighter Wing, a Reserve wing located at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

Holidays For Heroes

Who: Open to all-Groups and/or Squadrons welcome

What: Every major holiday, come share your stories and hear theirs while enjoying homemade cookies

Where: Missouri Veterans Home, 1300 Veterans Rd, Warrensburg Mo, 64093

When: 17 Dec 2016 from 10-11 a.m.

How: Volunteer your time or drop off baked goods to Bldg. 509, Rm. 206 on 18 November 2016



For more information, please call or email Staff Sgt. Eric Zimmerman at 660-687-7233 or eric.zimmerman.6@us.af.mil

**Uphold the
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WAFB's newest Chiefs



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman Michaela R. Slanchik

Whiteman's newest chief master sergeant selects stand with base leadership at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Dec. 7, 2016. Five hundred thirty one senior master sergeants were selected Air Force-wide for promotion.

**CMSgt-select
JENNY
GREEN**
509th
Bomb
Wing

**CMSgt-select
VERNON
HUHMANN**
509th
Maintenance
Squadron

**CMSgt-select
MICHALE
MARRIOTT**
509th Aircraft
Maintenance
Squadron

**CMSgt-select
ROBERT
TIBI**
509th
Munitions
Squadron



Upcoming Self Development Opportunities

DATE	TOPIC	TIME	LOCATION
12 Dec	Profession of Arms First Sergeants Panel	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium
13 Dec	Bullet Writing Master Sgt. West/Senior Master Sgt. Huhmann	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium
14 Dec	BTZ Process Airman's Council	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium
15 Dec	Time Management/Goal Setting Staff Sgt. Ramirez	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium
16 Dec	Wingmanship AADD Council	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium
19 Dec	Enlisted Force Structure Master Sgt. Kaufmann	12 - 1 p.m.	Ford Auditorium

6,000 hours

Continued from Page 11



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. John Marks

Then-Lt. John Marks, stands on the ladder of an A-10 Thunderbolt II at King Fahd Air Base, Saudi Arabia, during Desert Storm in February, 1991. Destroying and damaging more than 30 Iraqi tanks was one of Marks most memorable combat missions during Desert Storm.

which infects our young pilots that seek to emulate him.”

As an instructor pilot, Marks said he uses his firsthand experience to help describe situations that pilots learn during their book studies, such as, what it’s really like to withstand enemy fire.

“I like to think we can show them a good work ethic as well,” Marks said. “You always have to be up on the newest weapons, the newest threats, the newest systems. You can never sit still.”

Marks said he plans on flying the A-10 until he is no longer capable, which gives him a few more years in the cockpit and the potential to reach 7,000 hours.

“I love being part of something that’s bigger than any individual and doing something as a career that truly makes a difference -- whatever you do in the Air Force, you’re part of that effort,” Marks said. “It’s going to be up to you to carry on the great tradition we have in our relatively short history as an Air Force.”

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