

BEAUTY QUEEN

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Worship area provides vital religious accommodation. **Page 4**

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Academy professor takes soccer skills on the road. **Page 8**

ACADEMY SPIRIT



YEAR IN REVIEW
2011 in pictures. **Pages 6-7**

Happy holidays from your Academy Spirit • Next issue: Jan. 13, 2012

Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas!



Santa Claus, AKA Lt. Col. Richard Nesmith, hands out toys at the Academy Airman's Attic Dec. 14. Nesmith is a regional director with the Academy's Admissions office. The Admissions office conducted a toy drive within the directorate for donation to the Airman's Attic for the holidays. According to Academy first sergeants, Academy mission elements were very generous this year with holiday donations to a variety of helping agencies.

SARAH CHAMBERS

Academy Clinic announces changes to its enrollment policies

The 10th Medical Group commander will host two Town Hall meetings at the AirForce Academy Community Center Auditorium Jan. 12 - 17 from 6-8 p.m to discuss changes to its enrollment policies.

New enrollment to the facility is now limited to active-duty service members assigned to the Academy and their family members only.

The new policy will not affect retirees and beneficiaries who are already enrolled at the Academy Clinic, but retirees and other eligible beneficiaries seeking enrollment will be asked to receive their care from a Tricare network provider in the greater Colorado Springs community.

This change in policy is driven by a mandated reduction in the number of Academy healthcare providers as well as a directed reduction of enrollees per provider.

The Access to Care phone number has recently changed. The new number is 524-2273.

Q&A

Q: Why is the 10th MDG making this change?

A: Directed downsizing of our staff and services over the past two years and a recent mandated change to our patient-care model have left us with a decreased capacity to see patients. We are no longer able to have an open enrollment policy and must now limit the number of patients assigned to each provider.

Q: Does this change apply to all retirees and eligible beneficiaries, or just those over 65?

A: This change applies to retirees and their dependants of any age wishing to enroll at the 10th Medical Group. Those retirees and dependants who are currently enrolled with us may continue their enrollment as long as they maintain their Tricare Prime status. This change also ap-

plies to those beneficiaries who become eligible for Medicare at age 65. We are also recommending the transfer of care to a community network Tricare provider for a select number of high acuity patients who require internal medicine services that are not currently available.

Q: Will beneficiaries referred off base have to pay a co-pay?

A: Yes, Retired service members and their dependants who are Tricare Prime enrollees pay a \$12 co-pay each time they see their non-military treatment facility TriWest primary care network provider. Emergency room visits incur a \$30 co-pay for retirees and their dependants. Active-duty servicemembers and their dependants do not have a co-pay when seen in the community by a Tricare network provider or emergency department.

Q: Can I still get my prescriptions filled at the Academy Clinic?

A: Yes, access to our pharmacy, laboratory, and services will remain available and at no cost to covered beneficiaries regardless of who their provider is.

See Clinic Q&A Page 5

Holiday celebrations with food

Commentary by Col. Allison Bowden
45th Medical Group

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) — Many holidays, celebrations and family and cultural traditions often center on food. As a result, many people gain weight between Thanksgiving and the New Year. The problem is not that we celebrate and over indulge, but how we eat.

It's the tempting treats during the holiday season and the pressure from family, friends and co-workers to overeat. Maybe it's the increased emotional eating, whether from holiday stress or joy.

It is not necessary to avoid holiday festivities in an attempt to maintain your weight. Watching your portions and your calories is not enough. Make time for exercise in your schedule — walk around the neighborhood after dinner.

For those who every year lose weight but then gain it all back during the holidays, we should focus on weight maintenance versus weight loss. If you are currently overweight and are trying to lose weight, the holiday season is not the time to do it. Don't set yourself up for failure, make realistic goals.

It is well-known that restrictive diets don't work in the long run; knowledgeable dieters know metabolism slows down when calories are restricted. What all of this means is, when calories are scarce, the body goes into survival mode and makes every calorie count. It starts handling the food you eat more sufficiently to protect its fat stores.

Avoid recreational eating. While some foods are more



The key to holiday eating is to watch portions and make time for exercise. Eating a well-balanced meal slowly and drinking water will make you feel full.

calorie-dense than others, no food will make you gain weight unless you eat too much of it. At parties and holiday dinners, we tend to keep eating beyond our body's physical hunger simply because food is there and eating is a "social thing."

To avoid recreational eating, consciously make one plate of the food you really want. Eat it slowly — enjoying and savoring every tasty bite — get a glass of water and sip it throughout the evening.

Eat up and enjoy the holiday season, but remember to go back to healthy eating and regular exercise after the holidays. If you need more information, contact your local health and wellness center.

The dos and don'ts of the political season

Commentary by 2nd Lt. Abraham J. Raymond
71st Flying Training Wing Legal Office

VANCE AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. (AFNS) — With the excitement of the presidential primaries lurking around the corner, there are a few things Airmen must remember during this upcoming political season.

When you joined the military or became a federal employee, you did so with the knowledge that this decision came with some sacrifice.

Everyone is encouraged to register to vote, research candidates and vote for the candidates. However, in order for this representative democracy to function properly, civil servants and military professionals cannot be seen as partisans.

Both military members and federal employees work for the government and in doing so they must support elected officials regardless of whether they voted for or against, particular candidates. For this reason, among others, getting a paycheck directly from the federal government necessarily limits a person's ability to participate in some aspects of the political process.

Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, "Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty," and Air Force Instruction 51-902, "Political Activities by Members of the U.S. Air Force," outline permitted and restricted political actions for active military members.

Military members who violate these rules may face punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

There are some reoccurring issues surrounding prohibited political activities. A frequent issue concerns whether or not an individual can display a large political sign on his or her car or truck. Displaying a large political sign on your automobile is prohibited; however, members are allowed to display a political bumper sticker on his or her car or truck.

Military members are prohibited from using official authority to influence an election or solicit votes for a

specific candidate or issue.

Military members are limited in their involvement in the political process off duty as well. This includes being a candidate for, or holding, political office, except in those circumstances authorized by the AFI.

Speaking at any partisan political gathering, including a radio or television program, and advocating for a partisan political candidate or party is also prohibited.

Military members should reference AFI 51-902 when they have any questions regarding the legality of their political activities.

Rules governing political activities by government civilians are found in a federal law known as the Hatch Act. DOD civilians who violate the Hatch Act face adverse personnel actions, including suspensions and employment termination.

Most restrictions surrounding the Hatch Act are centered on the prevention of supervisors influencing subordinates to participate in or contribute to partisan groups or candidates. Federal employees may not display partisan political campaign materials in the workplace.

While federal employees may express opinions about candidates and issues when off duty, when on duty, in uniform, in a federal building, or in a federally owned or leased vehicle, federal employees may not express opinions directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office or partisan political group.

There are three important things to remember during the upcoming political season. First, regardless of status, using command influence to sway subordinates to vote for a particular party, candidate or issue is prohibited by law or directive.

Second, when you receive a paycheck from the federal government, some aspects of your political freedom are limited.

Third, if you are unsure whether or not a political activity is approved, reference AFI 51-902 or contact your base legal office.

“... civil servants and military professionals cannot be seen as partisans.”

— 2nd Lt. Abraham J. Raymond

ACADEMY SPIRIT

To responsibly inform and educate the Academy community and the public about the Air Force Academy

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Academy Superintendent
Lt. Col. John Bryan —
Director of Public Affairs
Gino Mattorano —
Editor

Don Branum — Staff Writer
David Edwards — Staff Writer
Carol Lawrence — Graphic Designer

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The Academy Spirit also accepts story submissions by fax at 333-4094 or by email: pa.newspaper@usafa.af.mil.

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Air Force spouse named 2012 Mrs. Colorado Springs

By Staff Sgt. Heather Stanton
Air Force Academy Public Affairs

An Air Force wife was recently named Mrs. Colorado Springs United States, even though she has never competed in a pageant.

Jennifer Gonzales, the wife of Senior Airman Stephen Gonzales, received the title in early November, though she still does not know who nominated her. The title recognizes a married Colorado Springs woman who integrates beauty and intellect.

She is a full-time senior at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, a mother, and an AmeriCorps volunteer teacher's aide, but she still makes time to represent her local community.

"I think my family, school and volunteering contributed to my title," she said. "Also, I can relate to a variety of people throughout our community as a student, wife, mom and friend."

The Gonzales' have been married for three years and have a 2-year-old daughter together.

As Mrs. Colorado Springs United States, Jennifer's goals are geared toward supporting servicemembers.

"My goal as a local titleholder is to support our troops and raise mental health awareness within our armed services," she said. "I believe as a military wife, I can relate to families who have gone through deployments and other aspects that come with military life."

With a non-stop busy schedule, Airman Gonzales, who recently

returned from an overseas deployment, steps in and helps his wife in whatever way he can.

"I guess what I have been doing to help her is just being her 'go-to guy' when it comes to troubles at school or stress anywhere else," the 10th Communications Squadron computer technician said. "I just want to be as supportive as possible and let her follow her dreams."

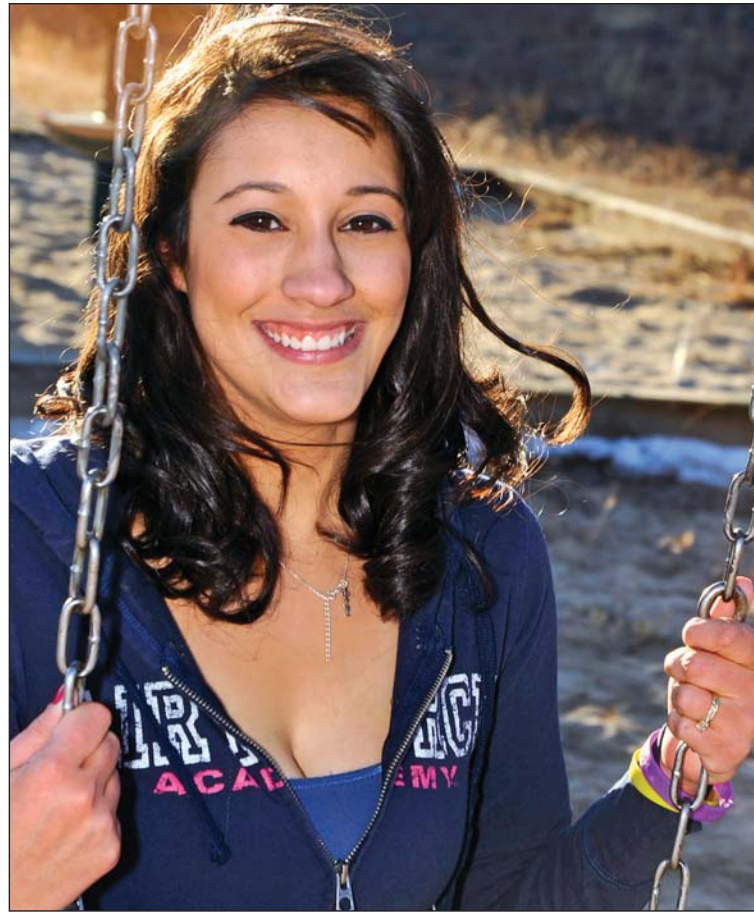
Jennifer is set to graduate as a psychology major in 2012 and wants to attend Air Force Officer Training School to pursue an Air Force career.

In her free time, Jennifer enjoys spending time with her family by going to a local park or watching Air Force Falcon football.

"There isn't much free time with my schedule," she said, "but when I do have free time, I like to watch football, read and do Zumba."

Adding to their busy schedule, the Gonzales family will move to Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., in January, though Jennifer will still accomplish her duties as the Colorado Springs titleholder to the best of her abilities by volunteering in her new community.

As Mrs. Colorado Springs United States, Jennifer will represent Colorado Springs in the Mrs. Colorado United States pageant in Denver April 21. The state pageant will include an opening number performance, swimsuit and evening gown competitions and an onstage personal interview. The winner of the Mrs. Colorado United States pageant



Jennifer Gonzales will represent Colorado Springs in the Mrs. Colorado United States pageant in Denver April 21. The state pageant winner will represent Colorado in the Mrs. United States pageant.

LIZ COPAN



I can relate to a variety of people throughout our community as a student, wife, mom and friend."
- Jennifer Gonzales

"Ever since I have known Jennifer, she always seems to have a lot on her plate, both in the present and what she would want to do in the future," he said. "No matter what has come her way, she always overcomes. She

has great ambitions and an even greater will to reach her goals. She is an amazing person who inspires those around her, including me."

Stephen said, Jennifer is an inspiration to anyone she encounters.

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Why building Falcon Circle was 'the right thing to do'



PHOTOS BY MIKE KAPLAN

Academy officials speak at the Falcon Circle dedication May 3.

By Don Branum
Academy Spirit staff writer

Why did the Air Force Academy build an "outdoor Stonehenge" worship area for just a handful of cadets?

That's the question some have asked Air Force Academy officials after the Los Angeles Times' Nov. 26 article citing an \$80,000 price tag for the Cadet Chapel Falcon Circle: an outdoor worship area used primarily for the observance of Earth-Centered Spirituality, i.e., Wicca and Paganism.

BY THE NUMBERS

The LA Times got the \$80,000 figure from the Academy's Cadet Chapel fact sheet. But the numbers on the fact sheet at the time were too high because they mistakenly included \$26,500 that was spent to control erosion on the east side of the hill on which Falcon Circle is now situated.

The erosion-control requirement was identified in January of 2010, explained Gregory Long, chief of the 10th Civil Engineer Squadron's Asset Management Division. The request for work to build Falcon Circle came from the Cadet Chaplain Corps three months later.

The scope of work in the \$51,484 Falcon Circle contract included removing screws and nails from the inside of the circle and installing 1,225 square feet of flagstone. The boulders were moved in 2009 from the east side of the hill, where erosion threatened to send them crashing into the Visitors Center, where more than 500,000 people per year learn about the national treasure that is the Academy.

By way of comparison, the Cadet Chapel that now houses Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist worship areas cost \$3.5 million to build -- in 1959. That would be more than \$25 million in today's dollars, or enough to build 500 Falcon Circles.

Recurring maintenance costs for Falcon Circle are likewise expected to be minimal: \$381.49 per year for semiannual herbicide treatment and

once-a-week policing. That's less than the cost of two months' utility bills for the average Colorado Springs resident. And like the main Cadet Chapel facility, Falcon Circle will be used by cadets and able-bodied Academy personnel for generations to come.

Opponents of the circle argue that even \$50,000 is a lot to spend for such a small congregation. But Falcon Circle is not exclusively for Earth-Centered worship ceremonies: Although the Academy's Earth-Centered Spirituality group receives scheduling preference, any religious ceremonies can be held there, from Easter sunrise services to the Buddhist celebration of Bodhi Day to Eid al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan. The only stipulation is that the area be treated with the same respect as any of the Academy's other chapels.

But let's say the small group of cadets -- three who have identified themselves as Pagan in the Academy's personnel database as of the Fall 2011 semester in addition to a few who are agnostic or don't publicly disclose their faith -- are the only ones ever to use Falcon Circle. Is \$50,000 a waste of money then? No, said Chaplain (Col.) Robert Bruno, the Academy's senior chaplain.

"The First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion does not just apply to the mainstream faith groups, e.g., Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox (or) Muslim," Bruno said. "It also applies to atheists, secularists, freethinkers and those whose belief systems are usually classified under the umbrella term of 'Earth-Centered Spirituality.' As a government institution ... our constitutional charter in this matter is obligatory. A denial of constitutional rights to one threatens the constitutional rights of all."

This is where we get to the root of the matter: How much should we pay to guarantee religious freedom? Because Falcon Circle is more than just a worship area -- it is also a symbol. And as a symbol, it carries with it the rocky history of Pagans who have sacrificed through their service to the United States.

FREEDOM AND A HAMMER

Military Pagans found themselves thrust into the spotlight after a series of stories on the Fort Hood Open Circle, which was established at the Texas post in August 1997. The American-Statesman ran a feature story in May 1999, and national attention followed.

Fort Hood's chain of command stood behind their decision, much as the Air Force Academy's leaders have done here. But then-Congressman Bob Barr (R-Ga.) asked the Defense Department, "Will armored divisions be forced to travel with sacrificial animals for satanic rituals?" And then-Texas Gov. George W. Bush said, "I don't believe witchcraft is a religion, and I think the military should re-examine its decision." More on those words in a moment.

The circle was desecrated Oct. 28, 2000 -- just three days before Samhain, one of the most important holidays on the Pagan calendar. Vandals armed with sledgehammers destroyed the four-foot limestone altar that the circle had bought with its own money. In a Nov. 3, 2000 email, Sacred Well Congregation director Rev. Dr. David Oringderff wrote, "One of the broken pieces left near the altar had a blue cross crudely marked upon it." It was not the first incident, Oringderff noted, but it was by far the most serious.

FREEDOM AFTER DEATH

Pagan groups first lobbied the Veterans Administration to have the pentacle, a Pagan equivalent to the Christian cross or Jewish Star of David, added to the VA's approved list of religious symbols for tombstones at about the same time that Sacred Well set up the Fort Hood circle.

VA made no decision on the requests even after Army Sgt. Patrick Stewart, a practicing Wiccan, died in combat in Afghanistan Sept. 25, 2005. Only when civil liberties groups threatened to take the case to court did the VA approve the request, settling the case in April 2007.

Why the delay? Rev. Barry Lynn, the executive director of Americans

United for Separation of Church and State, said his organization's attorneys had found that Bush's comments in 1999 had influenced decisions on whether to approve the pentacle.

"One of the saddest things is to learn that this wasn't just a bureaucratic nightmare; there was a certain amount of bigotry," said Rev. Barry Lynn, AU's executive director, in a Washington Post article published April 24, 2007. "The president's wishes were interpreted at a pretty high level ... It became a political judgment, not a constitutional judgment."

COMING FULL CIRCLE

While the VA case was ongoing, the Air Force Academy made headlines over allegations that its senior leaders had allowed a culture of religious intolerance to develop.

"If we have one problem of religious disrespect, it's a problem, and I need to solve that," then-Superintendent Lt. Gen. John Rosa said in a July 4, 2005, Air Force Times report.

The solutions haven't come overnight. In January 2010, about a week after I wrote a story on what would later be Falcon Circle, Tech. Sgt. Brandon Longcrier, the Earth-Centered Spirituality group's lay leader at the time, found someone had placed two railroad ties that were on the hilltop in the shape of a cross.

Academy officials investigated but could not determine the motive for the display. Was it intentional or accidental? The facts aren't clear, but to Longcrier and others, the image evoked memories of more serious incidents like the destruction of Fort Hood's circle.

There are promising signs, however. In the wake of the January incident, Vice Commandant of Cadets Col. Richard Williams told the 4,000-member Cadet Wing that the incident showed "complete lack of respect" and would not be tolerated. No further incidents have been reported.

In addition, the Academy invited representatives from Jewish, Christian, atheist and Pagan organizations

See Falcon Circle Page 4

Falcon Circle

From Page 4

to attend a conference on religious respect in November 2010. Falcon Circle was officially dedicated in May of this year, in a ceremony that Oringerdoff attended.

“Through Longcrier’s dedication and commitment and the help and support of the U.S. Air Force, cadets of our faith group and kindred souls have a place to worship and commune with the divine in this beautiful, natural setting,” he said.

After the destruction of the Fort Hood Open Circle altar in 2000, one of the group’s members wrote, “Is it too much to ask that our country’s service men and women be given the opportunity, respect and facilities to worship as they see fit, provided their doing so causes no harm to others?”

So let’s revisit the original question: Why did the Air Force Academy build an “outdoor Stonehenge” for just a handful of cadets?

The Air Force Academy did it because it’s the right thing to do. The Academy did it because those cadets will spend years of their lives putting service to their country before themselves. The Academy did it because those cadets asked for nothing more than what some 80 percent of Americans take for granted: the freedom, as illustrated in Norman Rockwell’s “Freedom of Religion” war bonds painting, to worship “each according to the dictates of his own conscience.” And the Academy did it because they may one day be asked, as Army Sgt. Patrick Stewart was asked, to give the last full measure of devotion.



Rev. Dr. David Oringerdoff speaks with Lt. Gen. Mike Gould during a dedication ceremony for the Falcon Circle May 3. Oringerdoff is the executive director of the Sacred Well Congregation.

Academy’s tax center set to open Feb. 3

The Academy’s tax center will open its doors to offer free tax preparation services beginning Feb. 3.

Taxes will be done by appointment only on Mondays and Fridays. Appointments will be available from 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m.

This free service will be open to income-eligible active-duty service members, their family members and cadets. Income-eligible retirees will be seen on a space-available basis only. Because of staffing shortages, the tax center will only be able to process your return if your gross income as either a single or joint return does not exceed \$60,000.

Because not all of the tax laws are in place at this time, the tax center asks service members who have complicated taxes, with multiple dependents or other multiple deductions, to wait until at least the second week of February to make appointments. This will prevent these individuals from having to re-file and amend their tax returns.

Service members should bring their military ID, last year’s federal and state tax return, and any other information necessary to complete this year’s tax return to the appointment. Additionally, spouses and dependents also must bring social security cards for verification purposes.

The tax center is located in Arnold Hall and will begin taking appointments in January. The tax center’s phone number will be 719-333-3905.

Military OneSource provides free online tax filing for active-duty service members. If you filed a 1040EZ last year and think you will qualify to file a 1040EZ again this year, you should consider taking advantage of this free service.

To take advantage of this resource, simply go to www.militaryonesource.com. If you run into problems while using the software, Military OneSource tax consultants are available by phone at 800-730-3802.

Clinic Q & A

From Page 1

Q: Do other Colorado Springs bases provide medical services to retirees?

A: Yes. Peterson Air Force Base and Fort Carson provide limited services to retirees. Enrollment opportunities at these locations are subject to their unique capacity issues.

Q: Will retirees and their family members currently enrolled at the Academy be asked to receive their care from a local provider?

A: No, not at this time. The changes only affect those retired beneficiaries and their

family members who wish to enroll at the Academy Clinic for the first time and those beneficiaries turning 65 years of age who become Medicare eligible. We are also encouraging those not yet 65 to select a PCM off base before they turn 65. This will help establish them with an off base PCM and make their transition to Medicare easier.

Q: Where can I find more information about enrolling for care off base?

A: Beneficiaries may visit the Tricare Service Center located off the 1st floor lobby of the Academy Clinic or call 1-888-TriWest(874-9378). Tricare enrollment information is also available at www.triwest.com.

CLUES ACROSS

- 1960’s civil rights college organization
- Big K store
- Slab of lumber
- Hilltribe of Thailand
- From a distance
- Earth color pigment
- Gelling agent in foods
- Plural of sorus
- Shabby in appearance
- Outdoor cookers
- The immaterial part of a person

CLUES DOWN

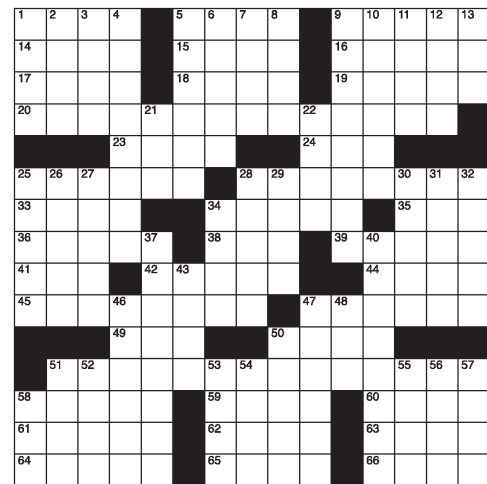
- Thick piece of something
- Dorset chili
- Burn the surface
- Border of a pavement or street
- Party where guests wear costumes and masks
- In a state of conflict
- Not frequently experienced
- Smart and trim in appearance
- Commercial enterprise
- Beaten egg dish
- Cain and
- Bolsheviks
- Not wet
- Longest division of

- A single unit or thing
- Containing salt
- Erstwhile
- Mimicked
- God of the underworld
- Quick head motion
- Narrow country roads
- To become old

- Diminished light under a tree
- Behave in a certain manner
- Counterweights
- 84097 UT
- Brief communications
- Common folder color

- Hostelry
- Section of a window
- Discrepancy between actual and stated
- Brief publicity notice
- Elliptical
- Racer Earnhardt
- Attempt one more time
- A boundary line
- Italian Island
- Turkish rulers
- Secondhand
- S. branch of the Lower Rhine

- melon
- Hindu god of fire
- Rugged mountain range
- Sent by USPS
- Small social insect
- Apply a thin coat of metal
- Horse fly
- Wife of Boaz
- Headstream of the Ubangi River
- “Rudolph” singer Burl
- Celebration
- Gaelic name for Scotland
- Make a ringing sound
- Women’s undergarment



- geological time
- Italian capital
- Arabian greeting
- Keep up
- Seasons of fasting
- Venerated wise men
- Lyric poems

- Lake in N. Finland
- Object built to scale
- Excessive fluid in tissue
- Genus lepus
- Understudies
- Smooth-skinned

SUDOKU

						8	3	
	2							
7				5				
				9				4
	8							5
		5	8	6	4		2	
2						1	9	
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	1		9	4				

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Solution on page 12

Level: Advanced

12-23-11

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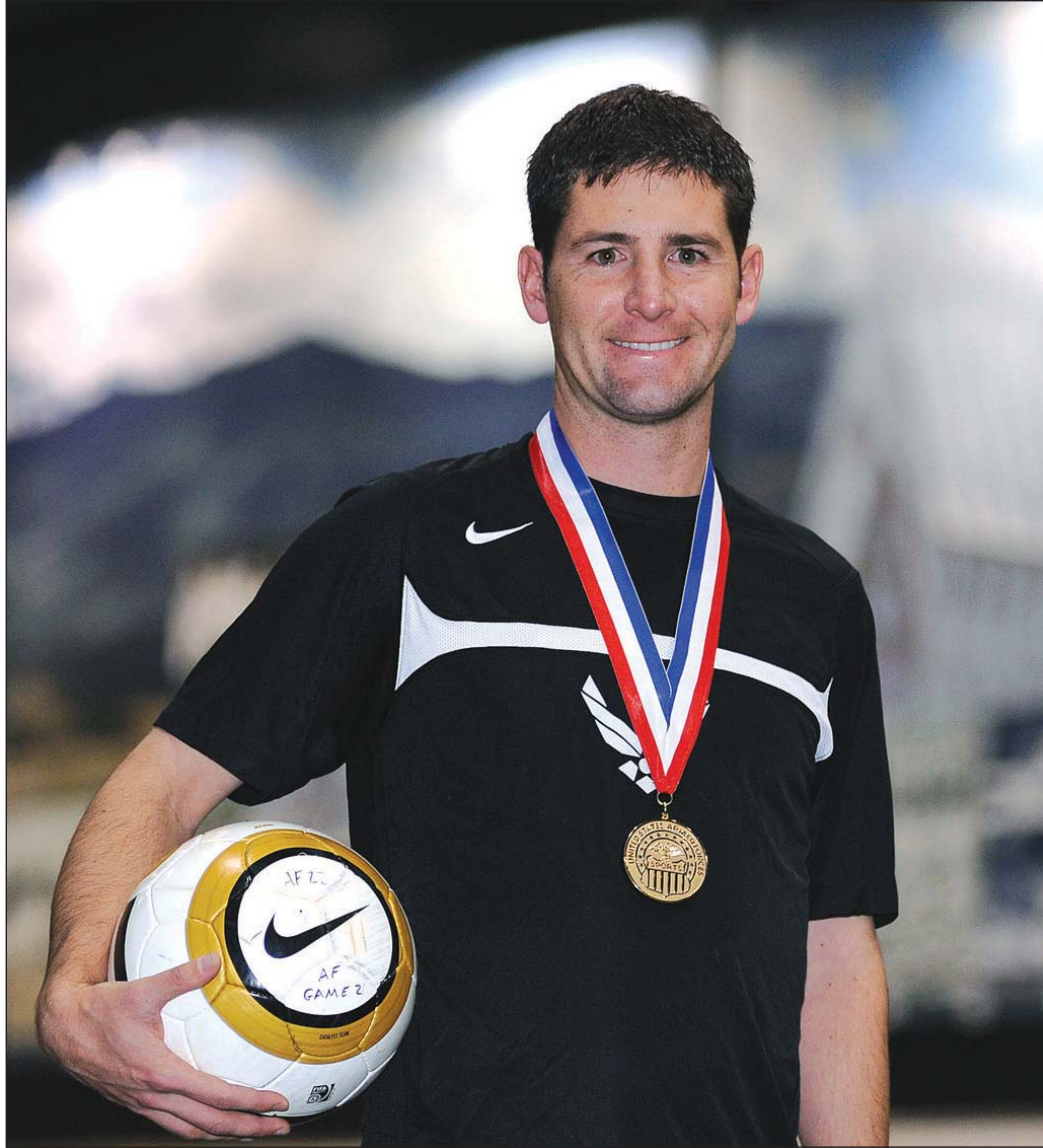
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Instructor helps Air Force take gold

Capt. Jeremiah Kirschman helps All-Air Force team win championship



MIKE KAPLAN

Capt. Jeremiah Kirschman, an assistant professor in the Academy's management department, was selected this year for the third time in his Air Force career to play defense for the All-Air Force Men's Soccer Team.

By Melissa Porter
Air Force Academy Public Affairs

Although he desires to help others achieve their goals, one Air Force Academy instructor's passion in life has him doing exactly opposite — ensuring the goal is never reached.

Capt. Jeremiah Kirschman, an assistant professor of management at the Academy who has played soccer most of his life, was selected this year for the third time in his Air Force career to play defense for the All-Air Force Men's Soccer Team.

The team's head coach, Maj. Derrick Weyend, credits Kirschman as being instrumental in the team taking Gold at the 2012 Armed Forces Soccer Championship Tournament Oct. 19-24 at Fort Eustis, Va.

"Jeremiah was the starting right defender for our team and secured a victory through an iron-tough defense," Weyend said. "Not only did he not allow anyone to score on us, but he also led the team through his example, both on and off the field."

Kirschman, a 2004 Academy graduate who was recruited out of high school to play for the Falcons, has played competitive soccer since he was 6. He attributes his soccer success and success in life to his older brother, Joshua, who at age 3 was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a degenerative disease that primarily affects voluntary muscles.

"At age 10, he stopped walking completely," Kirschman said. "I was only 8 at the time, so pretty much my whole life he wasn't able to do the physical activities most kids could."

Kirschman said that being in a wheelchair as a child didn't stop his brother, who passed away at 29.

"He never complained about the

things he couldn't do," he said. "Instead he was involved in as much as he possibly could be. That's where my motivation comes from."

That motivation transcends the soccer field.

"Jeremiah is a true leader in every essence of the word," Weyend said. "We had many young Airmen on the team, and he was always there for them, mentoring the newer players."

He also mentors young players back at the Academy, where he has been the assistant coach to the Academy Preparatory School Men's Soccer Team for the past three seasons.

"Every year, we ... develop approximately 20 new cadet candidates," Kirschman said. "Some of the Preppies are new to the Air Force, and some are new to soccer. I've had the chance to teach them all about what it means to give 100 percent -- all the time."

In addition, Kirschman plays base intramural soccer, along with his wife, Crystal, who was his high school sweetheart and also a competitive soccer player during high school.

"She allows me to do all of this," Kirschman said, referring to the time he puts into the sport. "She knows my passion for soccer."

That passion will hopefully help him make the 2012 All-Air Force team again next year.

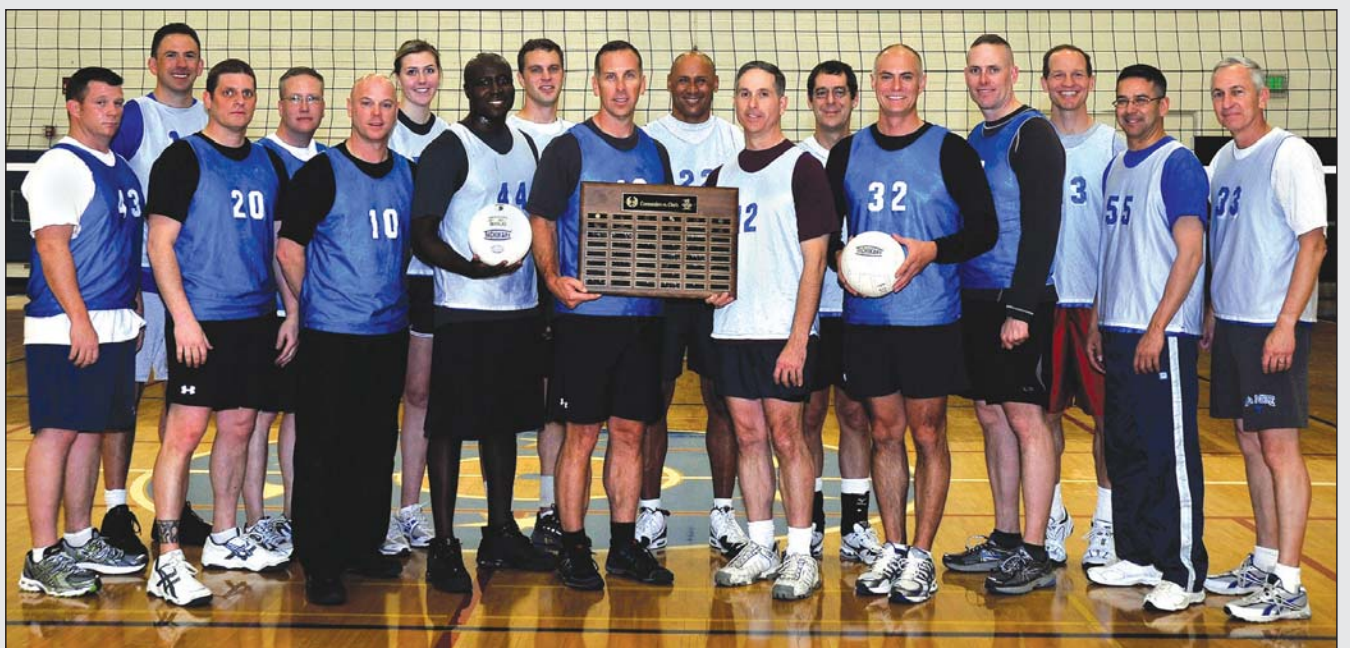
"I would like to try out again in October," said Kirschman.

But no matter where soccer or the Air Force takes him, Kirschman would like to continue mentoring others, preferably in the academic arena.

"I love teaching," he said. "If I could teach for the rest of my life, that would be perfect."



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH ANDREWS



Eagles defeat chiefs in volleyball action

ABOVE: Air Force Academy colonels and chief master sergeants squared off in a volleyball match Dec. 15 at the fitness center. The colonels won the contest 25-10 and 25-17 to wrap up the two leadership groups' annual competition, which includes softball, flag football, bowling, basketball, golf and volleyball. The chiefs were the overall victors for the year, winning every sport except golf and volleyball.

LEFT: Gary Yale serves the ball for the Eagles squad on their way to a victory over the chiefs.

Falcons beat Maryland-Eastern Shore

Taylor Broekhuis had a career-high 20 points in the win

(AP) Taylor Broekhuis had one word to describe Air Force's hard-fought 64-60 win over Maryland Eastern Shore Saturday night.

"A game of grit is how I would describe it," said Broekhuis, who had a career-high 20 points to go along with six rebounds. "Even though we weren't playing great, we withstood their attacks and pulled out a win."

Michael Lyons scored four points in the final 14.6 seconds to break a 60-60 tie and help the Falcons (6-2) survive a scare from the Hawks (3-9) at Clune Arena.

UMES tied the game at 60-60 with 2:08 remaining on Ishaq Pitt's offensive rebound and putback, but Lyons' steal and layup with 14.6 seconds left gave the Falcons a two-point advantage. Lyons then grabbed a crucial rebound with 2.8 seconds remaining and then hit a pair of free throws to seal the victory.

"I was just focused on the hoop, and I had the confidence I was going to make it," Lyons, Air Force's leading scorer, said of his running go-ahead bank off the glass. "It was nice to come up big, but I would like to be more consistent the whole way through."

Todd Fletcher tied his career-high with 15 for the Falcons, and Lyons also had a team-high seven rebounds.

Air Force missed its first seven 3-pointers and was just 1-for-10 from beyond the arc in the second half. Air Force hit just 33.3 percent of its shots in the second half (7-for-21), while UMES connected at a 44.4-percent clip.

"It felt like everything was going in and out (in the second half)," said Lyons, who was 5-for-13 from

the field. "If we had had a better shooting night, the game wouldn't have been as close."

Lyons and starter Mike Fitzgerald - Air Force's second-leading scorer - were a combined 0-for-10 from 3-point range.

"When your two leading scorers go 0-for-10 from three and you still come out with a win, you feel a little bit good about something," Air Force coach Jeff Reynolds said.

"When you go shoot the three and it doesn't go in, the guys get real tentative and doubted their shots. But give (Maryland Eastern Shore) credit, because I think they had something to do with that with their length."

The Hawks used their size advantage to outrebound the Falcons 36-26 and turned 17 offensive boards into 16 second-chance points. But Air Force's defense and clutch rebounding down the stretch helped secure the win.

"They did a good job of posting us and did a good job on offensive rebounds," Reynolds said of the Hawks. "We didn't panic, even when they tied the game. It's good for us to win that kind of game, and we'll use it as a learning experience."

Percy Woods' 14 points led UMES, and Pina Guillaume had a double-double with 12 points and 11 boards. Ronald Spencer also chipped in 11 points and eight rebounds in his first game of the season for the Hawks.

The Hawks can look back on missed free throws as one of their Achilles heels, as they hit just 7 of 16 from the line.

The Falcons shot 60 percent from the field in the first half en route to a 42-32 lead. Six 3-pointers kept UMES in the game in the first half.



ELIZABETH ANDREWS

Academy Junior Center Taylor Broekhuis fights for the ball with Maryland Eastern Shore's Pina Guillaume. Broekhuis had a career-high 20 points and six rebounds in the Saturday matchup.

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Commissary holiday schedule-

The base commissary will have the following schedule of operations for the next few weeks:

Saturday, early closure, 4 p.m.; Christmas, closed; Monday, closed; Dec. 31, early closure, 4 p.m.; Jan. 1, closed.

Entry decal discontinued

In accordance with recent guidance from the Department of the Army, Fort Carson has eliminated the use of the Department of Defense vehicle decals (DD Form 2220) for access to the installation.

Personnel requiring access to Fort Carson will be required to present their DOD-issued ID card (Common Access Card, retiree ID or family member ID) or have an extended pass and a state-issued photo ID.

Effective immediately, the vehicle decal, is no longer available at the

Pass and Registration Center. The PRC will now issue Cadet Area stickers weekdays, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The PRC will also continue to issue colonel to general stickers upon request.

Any questions can be referred to Brad Wilson at 333-8420.

Dispose of your recyclables

The 10th Civil Engineer Squadron is holding its annual electronics recycling event through January.

Each Wednesday and Thursday, electronic items can be taken to the Civil Engineers' Complex (Building 8125) from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for recycling. Recycling is free.

For more information, call Derek Damien at 333-3224.

Community center activities

Lunchtime table tennis - Monday through Friday starting at 11 a.m. in the Milazzo Center. Sponsored by the 10th Medical Group. Call beforehand to sign up, 333-2928.

Dance classes - Line dance classes are taught in six-week increments. Ballroom dancing consists of four lesson blocks, one hour per block. Classes for both take place Mondays in the Milazzo Center ballroom. Line dance classes start at 5 p.m., ballroom dance classes at 6:15 p.m.

SnoFest 2012

SnoFest 2012 is Jan. 27-29 at Keystone Resort, Colo. Lodging is now on sale by calling 800-258-0437 to book. Provide Group Code GC8PRB and base affiliation. Lift tickets can be purchased from Outdoor Recreation at 333-4475.

Assortment of skiing options

The Outdoor Recreation Office has ski passes available for purchase. The list of options is as follows: Monarch, Loveland, Patriot Pass (unlimited Copper Mountain and Winter Park), Patriot Pass Plus (unlimited Copper Mountain and Winter Park and six days at Steamboat), and Liberty Pass for Keystone and Arapahoe Basin. Call 333-4475 for more info.

Save the date: Air Force Ball

The Lance P. Sijan Chapter of the Air Force Association will hold its annual Air Force Ball on Jan. 20 at The Broadmoor. Tickets and more information will be available soon. For the latest information, please check the Lance P. Sijan chapter website at www.afasijan.com.

Health clinic holiday closures

In observance of Christmas and New Year's Day, the 10th Medical Group will be closed Through Monday and Dec. 30-Jan. 2. This will include the Community Center Pharmacy.

Care for Academy cadets and Prep School students will not be affected by these holiday hours and will be available.

If you have an emergency, please call 911 or visit the closest emergency room. After hours, contact your on-call Primary Care Manager by calling 524-2273, option 3 and they will coordinate your care.

Cadet Area gate closure

The Sijan entry control point will be closed until 6 a.m. Jan. 3. All Cadet Area traffic will be required to enter through the Vandenburg gate, next to the cadet tennis courts.

The 10th Mission Support Group is asking people to inform vendors and contractors of the closure and to adjust their driving routes while traveling at the Academy while the closure is in effect.

For further information about the closure, call Maj. James "Doug" Couch at 333-3685.

Nominate your Red Cross hero

Every day, ordinary people perform extraordinary acts of compassion or life-saving. The American Red Cross Pikes Peak Chapter needs your help to identify and recognize these local heroes in our community.

The Pikes Peak Chapter of the American Red Cross will accept nominations through Jan. 15. Winners will be selected by a committee of community leaders.

You can go to www.pparc.org/Heroes to nominate your Hometown Hero. Categories include adult, youth, military, animal, community partner agency and community service volunteer.

Event sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information call Catherine Bardé at 785-2711.

Medical appointments

The 10th Medical Group clinic has two new numbers for customers, 526-CARE and 524-CARE (2273).

Fitness Center holiday hours

The Fitness Center holiday hours are 6 a.m.-7:30 p.m. through Jan. 2, with the following exceptions: Christmas and New Year's eves - 6 a.m.-7 p.m.; and closed both Christmas and New Year's days.

Call the fitness center at 333-4522 for more information.

Academy Lanes offerings

A New Year's Eve Bowling Party is from 8 p.m. to midnight Dec. 31 at the Academy Lanes.

For more information call the bowling center at 333-4709.

Breakfast at Ten Pin Grill: Monday-Friday, 7-11 a.m. Hot breakfasts featuring eggs, hash browns, bacon or sausage, biscuits and gravy, and more. All breakfasts include drinks. Call in your breakfast order at 333-4252 by 6:45 a.m. to get your order delivered at curb side.

Clinic offers shingles vaccine

Shingles vaccinations are available at the Academy Allergy and Immunization Clinic. The vaccine is recommended for people age 60 and older. Anyone 50 to 59 years old must have a prescription.

The clinic's hours of operations are: Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.; Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

On the first Thursday of the month, the clinic closes at 11:30 a.m. for training. Patients are advised to call ahead because mission requirements can cause closures on short notice. For more information call the clinic at 333-5080.



Cadet Chapel

BUDDHIST

Sundays, 10 a.m.

PROTESTANT WORSHIP

Combined Worship Service:
Sundays, 9 a.m.

CATHOLIC WORSHIP

Mass: Sundays, 10 a.m.

JEWISH WORSHIP

Normal schedule
Fridays: 7 p.m.

Community Center Chapel

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Saturday

4 p.m. - Children's Mass (choir carols begin at 3:30 p.m.)

7 p.m. - Protestant Candlelight Service

9 p.m. - Christmas Mass (choir carols begin at 8:30 p.m.)

Christmas Day (Sunday)

9 a.m. - Christmas Day Mass

11 a.m. - Protestant Combined Worship Service

Dec. 31

4 p.m. - Catholic Mass

Jan. 1

9 a.m. - Catholic Mass

11 a.m. - Protestant Combined Worship Service

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE

The Community Center Chapel's Protestant Religious Education program resumes Jan. 11. Each week begins with a free dinner at 6 p.m. in the Chapel fellowship hall, followed by Religious Education classes from 6:30-7:30 pm.

Several new classes are being offered for adults and children. Contact the chapel for details at 333-3300.

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