

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

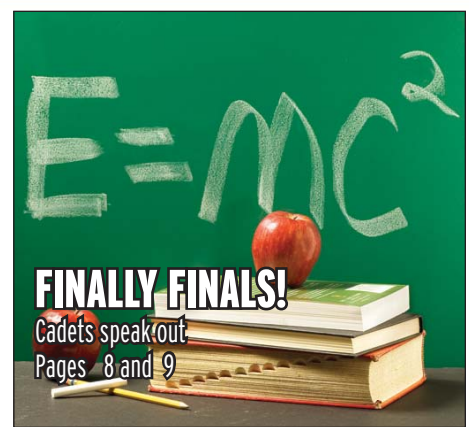
Cadet Area repairs to last through 2014.
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FREE FALLING

Cadets build esprit de corps from thousands of feet above ground. Page 6

FOOTBALL ALL-STARS

Falcons seniors selected for all-star games.
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Happy holidays from your Academy Spirit • Next issue: Jan. 11, 2013



ELIZABETH ANDREWS

Academy firefighters recognized for Waldo Canyon fire efforts

By Don Branum
Academy Spirit staff writer

More than 50 firefighters with the 10th Civil Engineer Squadron here received Air Force Achievement Medals and Air Force Civilian Achievement Awards in a pair of ceremonies Wednesday and Thursday for their efforts in containing the Waldo Canyon Fire, which burned 12 acres on the Air Force Academy in June but did not destroy any structures on base.

The 18,247-acre fire was the most destructive

in Colorado history, killing two and destroying nearly 350 homes in the city of Colorado Springs while damaging more than 450 others.

Firefighters' heroic efforts kept the fire from breaking through containment lines on several occasions, said 10th Mission Support Group Commander Col. Michael Addison.

"That fire was a pretty close-run thing," Addison said. "It was a real battle." Ground crews directed airdrops of fire retardant from C-130 aircraft equipped with Modular Airborne Fire-fighting Systems.

Col. Michael Addison (far left) speaks with firefighters during an award presentation ceremony at Fire Station 3 here Wednesday. More than 50 firefighters were recognized with Air Force Achievement Medals or Air Force Civilian Achievement Awards for their efforts in containing the Waldo Canyon Fire, which burned 12 acres of the Academy in June but did not cause any injuries or destroy any structures. Addison is the 10th Mission Support Group commander.

Had the Waldo Canyon Fire broken through containment lines, "it would almost certainly have consumed everything in Pine Valley," Addison said. "But no structures were destroyed, no one got hurt, and that was due to the courage and skill of our firefighters."

"I'm very proud of them. They prove day in and day out why they are the best fire department in the Air Force," Addison added.

Andrea Caraway, a civilian firefighter, said she's proud of the entire department.

See Firefighters Page 13

Winter graduation adds 4 more to the long blue line

By 1st Lt. Brandon Baccam
Air Force Academy Public Affairs

Four cadets joined the Long Blue Line when they graduated from the Air Force Academy in a winter graduation ceremony held Wednesday at Arnold Hall.

At the ceremony, Raymond Crone

III, Connor Dietz, Erik Soderberg and Jonathan Yi received their diplomas and were commissioned as second lieutenants.

Speaking directly to the graduates, Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Mike Gould emphasized the importance of their continual growth as leaders of character.

"How are you going to do this?" asked Gould. "We all know the obvious answer: with integrity."

These newly commissioned officers bring the Academy's graduating class of 2012 to a total of 1,083, said Academy Dean of Faculty Brig. Gen. Dana Born.

Dietz, a native of Columbus, Ohio,

graduated with a bachelor's in management.

"I just feel really blessed and thankful that today came," Dietz said.

Dietz will begin his Air Force career as a logistics readiness officer at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Currently he is the starting quarterback

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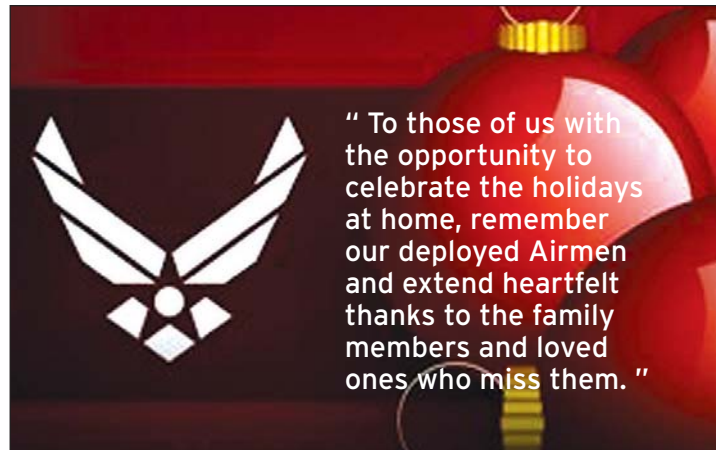
Air Force leaders: 'Happy holidays!'

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh III and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy sent a holiday message Monday to Airmen and their families across the Air Force:

"The holiday season is a perfect time to celebrate the many blessings that we enjoy in our country and spend time with the people who are most important in our lives. As we gather around those we love, we encourage you to strengthen the relationships that enrich your life and sincerely thank those who steadfastly support your service to our nation's Air Force.

"To those who will spend this special time of year far from family and loved ones, our thoughts are with you. The sacrifices you make earn the deep and abiding respect of your fellow Airmen and Americans. For those Airmen and members of our sister services engaged in combat operations around the globe, we look forward to your safe return.

"To those of us with the opportunity to celebrate the holidays at home, remember our deployed Airmen and extend heartfelt thanks to the family members and loved



ones who miss them. We ask that you reach out to the families and friends of our deployed Airmen, and in the spirit of giving and support that defines our Air Force family, welcome them into your holiday celebrations.

"In the many joyous ways we celebrate this holiday season, we wish you and yours the very best during this special time and throughout the New Year."

Don't let an electrical 'short' ruin your holiday

By Amber Baillie
Academy Spirit staff writer

The weather outside might sometimes be frightful during the winter months here at the Academy, but it can get a lot worse if you're not aware of how easily a Christmas tree can become a serious fire hazard.

Annually, an estimated 240 home fires involve Christmas trees, and 1,150 home fires involve holiday lights and other decorative lighting, according to the National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Fire Administration.

"Slow down and take your time this season," said Master Sgt. Russ Devino, the Academy's ground safety manager. "No amount of time saved can make up for the consequences of an accident that should have never occurred."

Devino said a common misconception this time of year is that it's safe to hang indoor holiday lights outside and outdoor lights on an indoor Christmas tree.

The three types of Christmas lights people can purchase are those marked for outdoor use only, indoor use and those certified for both, Devino said. Lights that are certified for outdoor use are specifically made to withstand cold and wet conditions, and lights certified for indoor use have been safety tested to make sure that they are not a fire hazard for trees.

"Read the label to ensure you are getting the correct lights for your installation and if you are unable to verify what

type of lights they are, don't use them," Devino said.

Christmas tree fires typically occur due to a "short" — an excessive electric current — in electrical lights or wiring or from a nearby open flame, Devino said.

"Do not put up your live tree too early or leave it up longer than two weeks because it will start to dry out, even with watering," Devino said. "Also, always keep your live tree watered, never place a tree too close to a heat source and always check your tree lights to ensure there are no shorts including cracked, broken or spliced wiring."

Devino said to always turn off holiday lights when you're not at home or in bed. He also said to turn off lights periodically when they are on a Christmas tree, especially a cut tree inside of a home.

"Lights can heat up quickly, especially if there is an undetected crack in the cord, causing a fire," Devino said. "You should avoid plugging more than three strands of lights together to reduce the likelihood of a fire caused by excessive heat buildup in the wiring."

Devino said to trim candle wicks one-fourth inch before use, make sure they're in a candleholder and not to put them within three feet of a Christmas tree or other greenery.

"Candles can make a great addition to your home during the holiday season but can also be dangerous if improperly used," Devino said. "Keep burning candles out of the reach of children and pets, place them where they will not be knocked down or blown over and keep them well away from drapes and blinds."

A common mistake people make when putting up holiday lights is the improper use of a ladder, Devino said.

"Always try to use a free standing step ladder when possible and make sure it's set on an even surface," Devino said. "When you must use an extension ladder, it must be positioned against the house to prevent it from tilting backwards when a person climbs up near the top. For every four feet in the air that a person will climb, the base of the ladder must be positioned one foot away from the base of the home and always ensure at least three feet of ladder is sticking above the top of the roof."

To report an emergency, call 911. For safety information, call 333-6311.

Firefighters examine the remnants of a house after a fire. Holiday lights and overloaded wiring can become fire hazards if precautions are not taken.



COURTESY PHOTO

New phone app lets you know about the snow

By Staff Sgt. Heather Stanton
Air Force Academy Public Affairs

Smartphone owners can now download a new application dedicated to letting them know whether the Academy has delayed or closed its normal operations.

The Air Force Academy snow application, called "USAFA Snow," contains vital information including base maps, snow routes, important phone numbers, base closure information and survival tips.

USAFA Snow is a free, digital version of the hardcopy USAFA Visual

Aid 32-1, "United States Air Force Academy Snow Routes and Winter Survival," said Col. Michael Addison, 10th Mission Support Group commander and USAFA Snow developer.

Though everyone should have the

See App Page 10

ACADEMY SPIRIT

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

Lt. Gen. Mike Gould — Academy Superintendent
Lt. Col. John Bryan — Director of Public Affairs
1st Lt. Brandon Baccam — Chief of Internal Communication
Ray Bowden — Editor
Don Branum — Staff Writer
Amber Baillie — 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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DOD to increase most housing allowances in 2013

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — The Defense Department released on Monday the 2013 Basic Allowance for Housing rates, which take effect Jan. 1, 2013.

Overall rates will increase an average of 3.8 percent.

For service members with dependents, average increases in BAH are approximately \$60 per month. A typical E-6 with dependents, for example, will find his or her BAH about \$60 per month higher than last year, while an O-3 with dependents will receive about \$55 more than last year.

In areas where rates will decrease, the decrease will only apply to members newly reporting to those locations. Service mem-

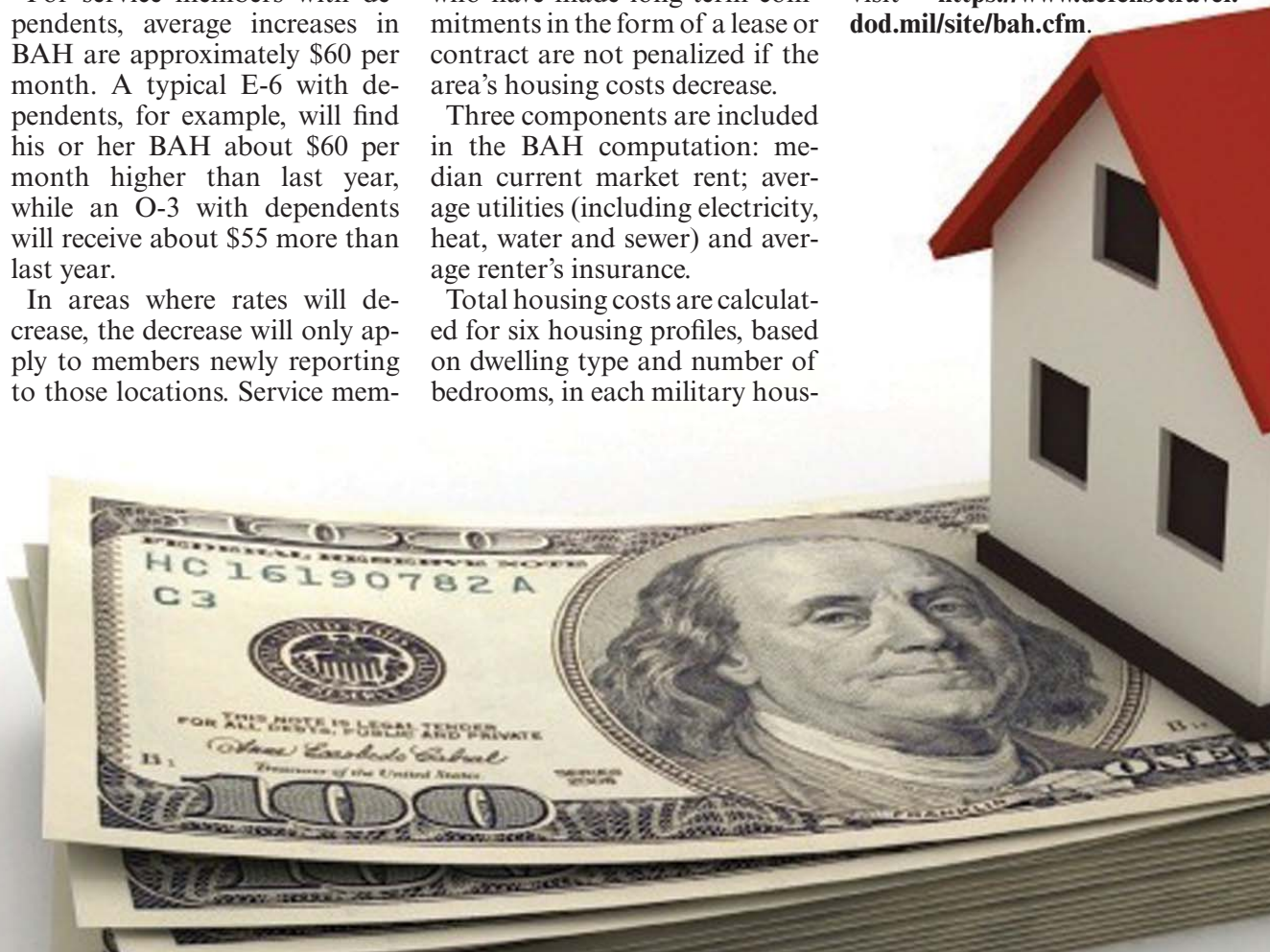
bers are protected by individual rate protection, which ensures that those already assigned to a given location will not see their BAH rate decrease but will receive the increase if the rate goes up. This ensures that members who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract are not penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

Three components are included in the BAH computation: median current market rent; average utilities (including electricity, heat, water and sewer) and average renter's insurance.

Total housing costs are calculated for six housing profiles, based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms, in each military hous-

ing area. BAH rates are then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without dependents. An estimated \$20 billion will be paid to more than 1 million service members in 2013.

For more information on BAH, visit <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bah.cfm>.



TSP hardship withdrawal rules relaxed to help hurricane victims

WASHINGTON — The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board announced it has made temporary changes to the Thrift Savings Plan hardship withdrawal rules to help victims of Hurricane Sandy pursuant to the guidance issued by the Internal Revenue Service Nov. 16.

The TSP will treat any financial hardship in-service withdrawal request (Form TSP-76) received until Jan. 25 as qualifying for a hardship withdrawal if the participant writes "Hurricane Sandy" at the top of the form and checks the block on the form for personal casualty.

The distributions must occur before Feb. 1 to qualify for this treatment.

The participant should write Hurricane Sandy at the top of the form and check the "personal casualty" box on the TSP-76. The TSP will then waive the rule that prohibits a participant from making employee contributions for six months after taking a hardship withdrawal.

This will allow an employee to continue to make contributions to the TSP and receive the employer match if eligible. These temporary changes will not be effective retroactively.

For more information, visit www.tsp.gov/whatsnew/plan/planNews.shtml.

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Cadet area construction to disrupt parking, facility access, traffic

By Amber Baillie
 Academy Spirit staff writer

Seven construction projects underway in the west Cadet Area will limit access to Arnold Hall and the Arnold and Harmon Hall parking lots for the next two years.

The projects include repairs on the Terrazzo, granite wall in Harmon Hall, Arnold and Harmon Hall roofs and construction of the new Center for Character and Leadership Development building through October 2014.

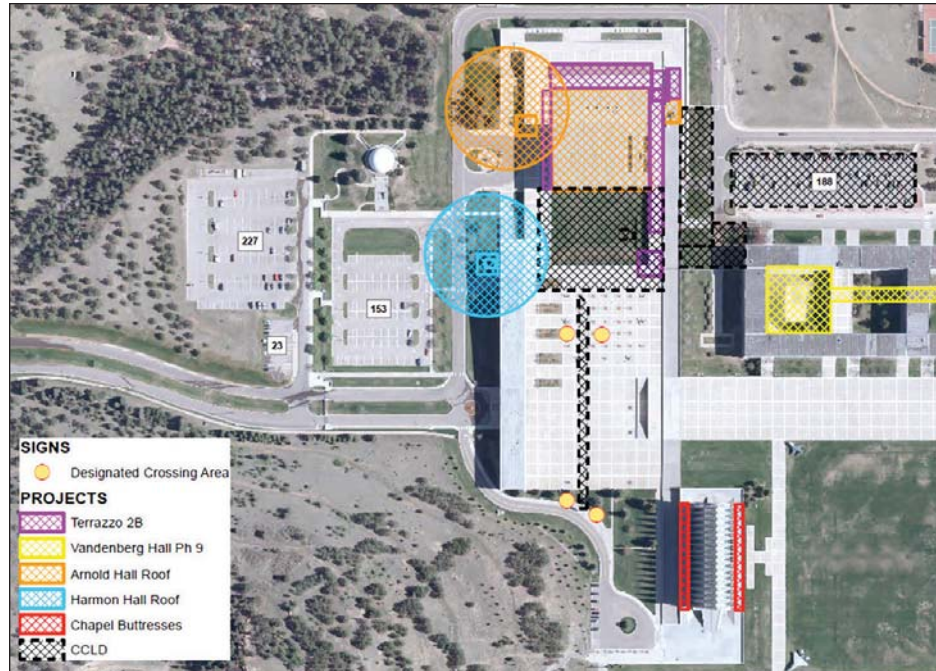
Construction on the Terrazzo began in October 2011 and work on the wall began this September, causing restricted access on the grass and all sides of Arnold Hall on the Terrazzo level. Fifteen spots in the Arnold Hall parking lot have been reserved due to construction.

"The construction crew is utilizing visitor and vacant spots in the far west parking lot," said Sandee Miller, construction manager for CH2M Hill Academy Services. "The north Arnold parking lot is not affected, except with construction materials that are currently stored there. Cadet parking is being eliminated in these spots to ensure enough parking for others."

Construction on the Harmon Hall roof began in November and work on the Arnold Hall roof began this month. Miller said the crane being used for the project requires the northwest stairs and sidewalk to be closed.

"The contractor is currently installing scaffold above the ceiling in order to install safety anchors on the roof," Miller said. "Once the safety anchors are complete, roofing will occur."

Construction for the Center for Character and Leadership Development will begin in January, closing the northwest Vandenberg parking lot, restricting access to the east



Construction scheduled to continue through 2014 will affect the seven highlighted areas.

side of Arnold Hall and increasing the amount of cars in the outer Harmon Hall parking lot.

"Parking north of the building will not be affected by CCLD construction," Miller said. "Access will be only from the west, so pedestrians will have to walk around to those doors."

Phase nine construction of Vandenberg Hall will also begin January and restrict access to the west doors of Arnold Hall. Construction to repair the Chapel Buttresses is scheduled to begin next summer.

Miller said the most important thing for people to remember during the construction is to read the signs and follow the directions on the signs to ensure they stay out of the construction zone.

"We can't stress enough that people need to stay out of the construction area for their safety," Miller said. "Plan ahead, knowing that the construction is ongoing."

Construction begins on search area near Academy's south gate

By Academy Public Affairs Staff

Construction on a new vehicle inspection station began Dec. 7 near the Academy's south gate, officials said Wednesday.

The roughly 9,000 square-foot facility is designed to enhance indoor inspection capabilities for the inspection of commercial vehicles entering the Academy.

"This project will give us the capability to thoroughly inspect upwards of 57 commercial vehicles each hour, which will enhance security across (the Academy) and decrease wait times for those entering the base," said Maj. Kimberly Lee, 10th Security Forces Squadron commander.

Further, the new inspection station will enhance traffic flow through the south gate by separating commercial traffic from personal vehicles and providing security personnel here a dedicated and ideal environment to process commercial vehicles in an efficient manner, Lee said.

The \$6 million project also includes construction of access roads, a parking area, stormwater control, security gates and landscaping.

The project is scheduled to be completed in October 2013, said Ken Chalifour, 10th Civil Engineer Squadron planning branch chief.



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Special hiring program helps Air Force wounded warriors

By Tammy Cournoyer
Air Force Personnel Center Warrior and Family Operations Center

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS) — The Air Force's Wounded Warrior Civil Service Employment Program assists combat-related ill and injured Airmen secure Air Force civil service jobs today, and since the program's inception in 2006 nearly 120 wounded warriors have joined the Air Force's civilian work force.

This employment program assists wounded warriors with a 30 percent or higher combat-related disability rating. It provides for the noncompetitive placement of a wounded warrior into an Air Force civil service position and can temporarily fund their salary through the use of a central salary account if necessary.

Wounded warriors not only gain employment, but employers benefit as well from the hiring program. The recruitment process is streamlined and employers get well-qualified and trained individuals much faster to fill existing openings.

Former Airman 1st Class Ray Alexander is a wounded warrior who benefited from this program. In 2005, Alexander was injured in a major vehicle accident while on patrol outside Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. He suffered a concussion and back injuries, and currently suffers from a traumatic brain injury, post-



traumatic stress and long-term memory loss.

During his recovery, Alexander set a goal to reenter Air Force service. Working with his nonmedical care manager, Bob Gullion of the Air Force Wounded Warrior program, he was able to earn his place as a civil servant and today serves as a civilian career security field team analyst at the Air Force Personnel Center.

"I made it clear that my goal was to continue serving my country, and I would make myself available for civil service," said Alexander. "Although the process was not easy, nor immediate, Bob and the wounded warrior team worked hard to make sure that my goal of re-entering Air Force service came to fruition."

Wounded warriors interested in the special hiring program should contact their nonmedical care manager.

For more information about the Air Force Wounded Warrior programs, visit www.woundedwarrior.af.mil.

Panetta orders review of child care hiring practices

by American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has ordered a review of hiring practices at Defense Department child development centers.

Army officials announced Wednesday an immediate investigation into hiring procedures at its child development centers nationwide after identifying potential problems with security background investigations for some CDC employees at Fort Myer, Va.

"Secretary Panetta fully supports this review by the Army and has directed each of the services to conduct a similar review of hiring practices at all DOD child development centers," said Pentagon Press Secretary George Little.

In ordering the review, Panetta emphasized the importance of safety.

"Military children are precious members of our DOD family," he said. "As a department, protecting our service members and their families is paramount. That includes doing everything we can to provide for the safety of children attending CDCs throughout the department, and ensuring they are provided with the highest-quality care by dedicated professionals."

"We owe nothing less to the members of our DOD family who have sacrificed so much for this department and this nation," he added.

The Army's Installation Management Command replaced the CDC's

management team at Fort Myer in October when concerns were raised about facility leadership, officials said in announcing the Army review. A subsequent review found background issues with some employees, not all of whom were directly responsible for child care, officials said.

"Out of an abundance of caution, we removed those employees and temporarily closed the facility," said Army Col. Fern Sumpter, the garrison commander at Fort Myer, adding that children enrolled at the center were moved to another Fort Myer center.

"An investigation was ordered to determine whether background checks were properly done at the time these employees were hired, and whether required procedures were followed. That investigation has just begun," Sumpter said.

Following the initial findings at Fort Myer, Army Secretary John McHugh directed a review of management and procedures at all Army child care centers and a review of compliance with those policies and procedures.

"It's a fundamental responsibility to ensure the highest quality of care for the children of our men and women in uniform, many of whom rely on us to care for their children while deployed," he said. "These initial findings are not only troubling, they are unacceptable, and we will make certain that adequate policies and procedures are in place, and that they are strictly followed and fully enforced."

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Cadet skydivers build trust through training

By Airman 1st Class Veronica Cruz
 Air Force Academy Public Affairs

Leaping out of a perfectly good airplane might not seem like a good idea, but for the men and women of the Academy's award-winning skydiving team, it's just another day's work.

"Although it may seem contradictory, the Wings of Blue and skydiving are not about the skydiving itself – it's about trusting in yourself, in others, and in your equipment," said Wings of Blue skydiver Cadet 1st Class Glenn Miltenberg. "It's about pushing yourself to new limits and heights you never thought possible."

These skydivers practice throughout the year, said 98th Flying Squadron training superintendent Bill Wenger. Wenger coaches the Wings of Blue competitive skydiving team.

"These cadets give up Christmas and Thanksgiving vacation, spring break and every Saturday in order to train and compete because to win, that's what it takes," he said.

This formula for winning seems to work, as the team has taken home the national trophy 33 times in 44 years of competition.

These collegiate national champions have earned their titles through personal sacrifice and by focusing on their goals, Wenger said.

"They learn what it means to compete with others," he said. "When looking at jump footage, they are taught to look at themselves first and think about what they each could have done better."

Successful skydiving relies on a mix of individual and team skills, said Cadet 1st Class James Agee, a Wings of Blue skydiver.

"Being on a skydiving team is different because everyone involved has to be solid at all aspects of the flying, unlike many other team sports where you can stack players' strengths and cover weaknesses with the effort of others," Agee said. "Everyone is equally important at all moments, which creates a special team dynamic that is unlike any other sport of which I have been a part."

Miltenberg agrees.

"Jumping has the potential to be extremely dangerous so there is a trust and understanding between one another to be doing the right things in the right places, and always looking out for one another, be that inspecting each other's gear (or) maintaining proper separation on parachute deployment," he said.

These skydivers use each jump as learning experiences to improve their skills and share their lessons learned.

"Every team member is an instructor first and foremost and is required to teach other cadets in the Airmanship course how to jump," Wenger said. "There is no staff in the back of that plane."

Wings of Blue is scheduled to compete in the National Collegiate Parachuting Championships in Eloy, Ariz., Dec. 29-Jan. 2. The team has dominated national and intercollegiate parachuting competitions for more than 40 years.



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DOD officials praise Academy support for small business

By Ray Bowden
Academy Spirit Editor

Academy contracting officials are using more small businesses than ever before to provide services to more than 4,000 cadets and 2,000 active-duty Airmen and their families here, officials said Tuesday.

"The way we got there is through constant review of each acquisition to ensure small businesses were given an opportunity," said 10th Contracting Squadron contracts officer Robert Reyes. "Our contracting officials do a great job of looking at small businesses first."

Earlier this month, Department of the Air Force Small Business Programs director Joseph McDade praised the Academy for its support of small businesses.

"The Academy's hard work in ensuring small businesses have the maximum practicable opportunity to participate in Air Force procurements resulted in a significant increase from (the Academy's) Fiscal Year 2011 small business utilization rate," McDade wrote in a letter to Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Mike Gould.

What this means is that a greater percentage of the Academy's contracts were awarded to small businesses in Fiscal Year 2012 than in Fiscal Year 2011, said Jim Berns, 10th Contracting Squadron director of contracting.

"The idea is to ensure that small businesses get to fully participate in (Defense Department) contracting opportunities," Berns said.

Among the many small business supported by the Academy are women and disabled-owned franchises, McDade wrote in the letter.

Testing the weather



LEFT: Second Lt. Chris Brown, satellite research assistant at the Academy's Astronautics Department, releases a weather balloon on Academy grounds Wednesday. Attached to the balloon is a barometric pressure sensor, a GPS tracker, an accelerometer and a light sensor used to gauge weather conditions at high altitude and track the balloon. The weather balloon reached an altitude between 80,000 and 100,000 feet and landed in Seibert, Colo., two hours after liftoff.

BELOW: (Left to right) Dr. Mike Holmes, 2nd Lt. Chris Brown and Tech. Sgt. Chris Smith prepare a weather balloon for launch on Academy grounds Wednesday. Along with gauging high-altitude weather conditions, the launch was designed to promote science engineering and research at the Academy's Astronautics Department. Holmes is a visiting professor of astronautics. Smith is an Astronautics Department lab tech.

PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH ANDREWS



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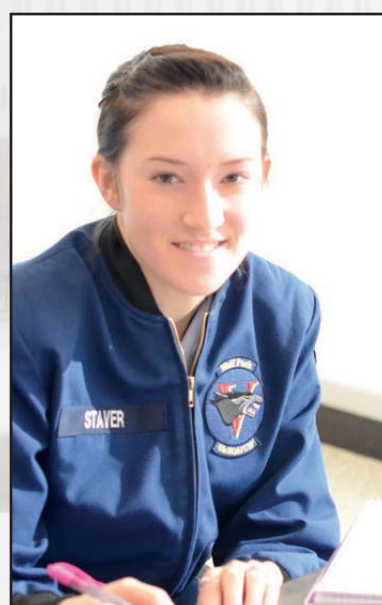
Cadets speak out ...

on holiday plans, studying, and give tips for success

Rank/name: Cadet 1st Class Nathan Sorensen
Hometown: Houston, Texas
Squadron: 23
Major: Foreign Area Studies – Slavic Political Science
Favorite class/subject: Russian
How I prepare for finals: “Nothing terribly out of the ordinary – just study, study, study. I try to sleep a bit, keep eating.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Being able to do nothing, being back at home. School is tiring”
My tip for success: Manage your time. It’s all about time management.



Rank/name: Cadet 2nd Class Alannah Staver
Hometown: Shippensburg, Pa.
Squadron: 05
Major: English
Favorite class/subject: Literary Criticism
How I prepare for finals: “Going through the lesson objectives for each class and reviewing the notes I already have. I also go over my old (graded reviews) and that sort of thing. Also, if my instructor put out any sort of information to study for the final, I normally look at that.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Spending time with my family and friends because I don’t really get to see them that often. Also, having home-cooked food is a big one.”
My tip for success: “I found that this semester has been a lot easier to study for finals since I have kind of kept up with my work better throughout this semester. So, I would say that’s a number one tip, because if you keep up with it throughout the semester it’s a lot easier to study for finals, because you’re not trying to figure out where you are two days before the test.”



Rank/name: Cadet 1st Class Joey Ching
Hometown: Kailua, Hawaii
Squadron: 17
Major: Undeclared
Favorite class/subject: English/Mandarin Chinese
How I prepare for finals: “Going over notes and meeting with teachers for extra instruction to review things that you learned over the semester.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Going home, seeing my family and friends, going to the beach and eating my mom’s home cooking!”
My tip for success: “Definitely start studying early! Don’t procrastinate, and make sure you get ahead on your studies so when finals come around you’re better prepared.”



Rank/name: Cadet 1st Class Andre Chun
Hometown: Enterprise, Ala.
Squadron: 12
Major: Foreign Area Studies
Favorite class/subject: Language classes
How I prepare for finals: “I pay close attention during the semester. Specifically for finals week, I’ll sit in a room with no distractions: no music, nothing. Then I’ll study on my own to get everything down, and then study with friends to further deepen my knowledge.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Seeing family and friends! It’s always nice to get out and see them after a hard semester.”
My tip for success: “Stay diligent during the semester, then study hard two weeks prior to finals so that finals will be a breeze.”



Rank/name: Cadet 3rd Class Frances Ortiz
Hometown: Colorado Springs, Colo.
Squadron: 10
Major: Behavioral Science
Favorite class/subject: English
How I prepare for finals: “Studying with friends, reviewing the notes that I took back over the semester, and creating little study guides for myself.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Spending time with my family; I haven’t been able to go home for a while, so it’ll be good just to be home and open presents and to see them.”
My tip for success: “Really know how to time manage and stay ahead of the things that you need to do.”



Rank/name: Cadet 3rd Class David De Los Santos
Hometown: Yokosuka, Japan
Squadron: 12
Major: Biochemistry
Favorite class/subject: Law 220
How I prepare for finals: “I got together with a couple of my friends and we’d get together and study for hours on end.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Going back down to Texas and getting to see my newborn niece, who was actually born at the end of Thanksgiving break.”
My tip for success: “Priorities. Everyone has classes that they aren’t as worried about, so you need to dedicate yourself to the things that are hardest for you. For me, it was organic chemistry and Japanese.”



Rank/name: Cadet 4th Class Ziqun He
Hometown: San Jose, Calif.
Squadron: 02
Major: Management
Favorite class/subject: Chinese
How I prepare for finals: “I study weeks ahead of time and get a lot of food and sleep during the week of finals so that you are well-rested and prepared.”
What I look forward to most about Winter Break: “Going home, seeing my baby sister and my family.”
My tip for success: “Go to extra instruction. There’s no shame in asking for help.”



An a cappella holiday

Cadet 1st Class Derrin Gould (foreground), a member of the cadet singing club "In the Stairwell", sings in the bookseller's room at the White House, backed by other members of the club, Dec. 11. The group traveled to Washington D.C. to perform for the president and first lady at the request of the White House Social Office. The singing club also performed at the White House Holiday Party in 2011. The club was created when members of the Academy's Class of 2007 decided to find a location for freshmen who enjoyed singing. The name is from where the group met for rehearsals.



CAPT. DAN SANDERS

AF to test 24/7 fitness centers

By Debbie Gildea
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS) — Six installations will implement 24/7 fitness center access in December and January as part of an Air Force Services Transformation Initiative test concept, Air Force Personnel Center officials announced Tuesday.

Test installations include Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., Scott AFB, Ill., F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo., Tinker AFB, Okla., Little Rock AFB, Ark., and Joint Base Andrews, Washington D.C., said Capt. Matthew Dunn, AFPC Services Transformation deputy chief.

"Test guidelines are clear and focused on Airman security and safety," Dunn said. "Facilities must have controlled access, security monitors and emergency capabilities and equipment, including defibrillators, first aid kits, phones with emergency number lists, and clear procedures for fire department access."

The after-hours fitness center test is one of several initiatives intended to transform how the Air Force provides morale, welfare and recreation programs and services, said Margaret Treland, Air Force fitness and sports chief.

In addition, test installation commanders must conduct and document operational risk management assessments, develop applicable wingman policy and post writ-

ten standards for unsupervised use of the facility. This guidance will help ensure Airmen who use the facility after hours understand safety requirements and address facility security, Dunn said.

One of several Services Transformation Initiative programs, the initiative has great potential to better serve Airmen, he said. Testing will provide more information, though.

"Fitness centers are critical to Airman fitness and resiliency, but most centers have fixed hours, unlike the Air Force which has a 24/7 mission," Dunn said. "Airmen who work unusual hours may not be able to get to the fitness center during routine operating hours."

While 24-hour fitness center access may be an obvious answer, manpower authorizations and budget restrictions prevent round-the-clock manning, he explained.

"Unmanned fitness centers are not uncommon outside the gates, so test results from the participating installations will help us determine if the practice will work for Air Force fitness centers, as well."

Test installations will monitor and collect information on use, utility cost increases, damage to the facility or equipment, and injuries or incidents, to determine viability to further expand this program across the Air Force.

For more information about this or other quality of life programs, visit www.usafservices.com or www.myairforce-life.com.

On your mark ... get set ...

Air Force Marathon announced

by Tiffany Johnson
U.S. Air Force Marathon Office

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFNS) — Registration for the 2013 Air Force Marathon will open Jan. 1, 2013, with special New Year's resolution discounts.

Academy runners who register for the race on Jan. 1 will receive a \$10 discount on the full- and half-marathon fees and a \$5 discount on the 10-kilometer and 5-kilometer races.

"We encourage all participants to register as early as possible," said race director Robert Aguiar. "Not only are the prices lower the earlier you register, but we sell out very quickly."

Jan. 1 registration fees are \$80 for the marathon; \$65 for the half-marathon; \$35 for the 10-kilometer race; and \$25 for the five-kilometer race. Fees will increase after Jan. 1.

The Air Force Marathon sold out in record time this year and organizers anticipate the 2013 marathon will sell-out even faster. Officials will not be increasing the number of runners this year, capping the participants at 15,000.

"We sold out on May 19 in 2012," Aguiar said. "We are very excited to debut our course changes in 2013. We believe runners will really like the changes."

For more information on registration and fees, visit the Air Force Marathon website, www.usafmarathon.com.

App

From Page 2

pamphlet with them at all times, Addison understands that this is not always possible, so he designed the application with Academy personnel in mind, making the information available with the touch of a button.

"I do many everyday tasks on my smartphone, and I organize the apps on my phone to help me through my day," Addison said. "The snow routes handout is extremely useful, but I knew I'd have a hard time carrying it around with me, but I always have my phone. Further, there are perhaps hundreds of handouts around (the

Academy) that will eventually end up in the recycle bin. I just wanted to create something that the people who live and work here can use and will always be at their fingertips."

The application is available for Android and iPhone users as well as with any other smartphone that has a browser. The application gets new data from the Web each time it is opened to ensure it has current information.

Android users can install the application from the Google Play store, like any other application. However, iPhone users have a trickier process

because Apple did not allow the application in the iTunes store. To get the application on a iPhone, users must open the browser and go to the Appatch.com application market at www.tinyurl.com/usafasnow-iphone, then create a link on the home screen.

"(This application) was very simple and free to develop," Addison said. "Surely there are other opportunities for other apps that help the Academy community. I'd just encourage others to look for an opportunity and, following the rules of course, get to developing."

Falcons to play in record 6th-straight bowl

The Falcons will make Air Force Academy history when they take the field at Amon G. Carter Stadium for the 2012 Armed Forces Bowl on Dec. 29, as it will mark their sixth-straight bowl game appearance under head coach Troy Calhoun.



The previous record for consecutive bowl appearances was four, between 1982-1985 and again between 1989-1992, both during the coaching career of Fisher DeBerry.

Air Force, which finished 6-6 overall and 5-3 in the Mountain West Conference, will face Rice in the Armed Forces Bowl, marking the teams' first

2012 ARMED FORCES BOWL

- Air Force VS Rice University, Fort Worth, Texas
- Saturday, Dec. 29, kickoff 9:45 a.m.
- TV - ESPN, Radio - KVOR 740 AM, The Fan 104.3 FM

meeting since 1998.

"When we got the invitation, we said, 'We're looking forward to going home,'" said Troy Garnhart, associate director for Athletic Communications at the Academy, in a Wednesday press release. "If there was ever a bowl made for us, it's this one."

Amon G. Carter Stadium, home of the TCU Horned Frogs, has not been kind to Air Force in past years: The Falcons have a 1-7 record at the stadium, including one loss to California in 2007, one loss to Houston in 2008 and five losses

to TCU.

The Falcons' record against Rice is somewhat better, however. In six meetings between 1985 and 1998, the Falcons lost only one: an away game in 1986.

Also of note is the schools' academic performance rate. Rice and Air Force are two of the top schools in the country in terms of athletes' academic performance, which measures the percentage of NCAA athletes who graduate. A score of 925 indicates 50 percent of athletes graduated; the Rice Owls scored 986 for the 2010-2011 academic year, while Air Force scored 980.

Fans can purchase tickets, which range from \$20 to \$150, at www.armedforcesbowl.com. They can also donate a ticket to a service member through the bowl's purchase-and-donate option; donated tickets are tax-deductible.

Former USAFA grad, CSAF to receive patriot award at bowl

FORT WORTH, Texas — Retired Gen. Norton Schwartz has been named the 2012 recipient of the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl's Great American Patriot Award.

Schwartz, who served as Air Force chief of staff until his retirement in 2012, is scheduled to accept the award during halftime at the 10th anniversary Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl in Fort Worth Dec. 29.

Schwartz graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1973, is an alumnus of the National War College, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a 1994 Fellow of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Seminar XXI.

Previous recipients include Medal of Honor Recipient and former Army Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta, Navy Adms. Thad Allen and Michael Mullen. Eligible recipients must have spent his or her career serving the U.S.

Schwartz retired from the Air Force as a command pilot with more than 4,400 flying hours. He led the joint task force that prepared for the non-combatant evacuation of U.S. citizens in Cambodia in 1997, served as chief of staff of the Joint Special Operations Task Force for Northern Iraq in operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1991 and took part in the airlift evacuation of Saigon, South Vietnam, in 1975.



Retired Gen. Norton Schwartz will receive the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl's Great American Patriot Award at the game Dec. 29.

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Offensive lineman Jason Kons

2 Air Force seniors selected for all-star games

By Troy Garnhart
Athletic Communications

Air Force senior linebacker Alex Means and senior offensive lineman Jason Kons were selected Dec. 12 for post-season all-star games on Jan. 19.

Means has been selected to the College All-Star Game in Montgomery, Ala., Jan. 19 while Kons is scheduled to play in the East-West Shrine Game the same day at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Both players were critical in Air Force qualifying for a bowl game for a school-record sixth straight season. The Falcons take on Rice in the Armed Forces Bowl on Dec. 29 in Fort Worth, Texas. The Falcons finished the season 6-6 and placed fourth in the Mountain West Conference with a 5-3 mark.

Means is second on the team and ninth in the conference in tackles with a 7.4 per-game average. He leads the team and ranks fourth in the conference with 11.0 tackles for loss and has two interceptions and nine pass breakups.

Means ranks in the top 10 in the conference in four categories: tackles for loss (11.0, seventh); tackles (7.4, ninth), tackles by linebackers (7.4, seventh) and passes defended (.92, eighth). Means played one of the best games of his career vs. New Mexico with 10 tackles, a sack, 1.5 tackles for loss, a pass breakup and a 56-yard interception return for his first-career touchdown. He also made a tackle on fourth-and-4 to force a turnover on downs on New Mexico's last drive. Means earned Mountain West defensive player of the week honors for his efforts vs. the Lobos.

Kons has been the steady leader of an offensive line that was forced to play three centers due to injury and opened the season with just two returning starters. Despite the changes and injuries, the offensive line has paved the way for Air Force to rank second in the nation in rushing with a 328.8 yards-per-game average.



Linebacker Alex Means

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Graduation

From Page 1

for the Air Force Falcons, and will be playing in the Armed Forces bowl on Dec. 29 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Crone is from Douglasville, Ga., and graduated with a bachelor's in aeronautical engineering.

Yi is from Seoul, Korea and graduated with a bachelor's in systems engineering management. Both Yi and Crone are scheduled to attend pilot training in the same class at Laughlin AFB, Texas.

"We both have the same

(initial flight screening) dates and are in the same class, so we're pretty excited about that," Crone said.

Soderberg, a native of Eden Prairie, Minn., graduated with a bachelor's in management and will undergo special tactics officer training at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

"I have about two years of pretty rigorous training," Soderberg said. "That training is going to be a huge challenge - I can't wait to get started and [to] do well."



MIKE KAPLAN

Cadets 1st Class (left to right) Jonathan Yi, Erik Soderberg, Connor Dietz and Raymond Crone III receive their diplomas in a winter graduation ceremony held Wednesday in Arnold Hall. Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Mike Gould encouraged the newly commissioned officers to strive to be leaders of vision and character.

Firefighters

From Page 1

"I'm proud that we were able to help our local community," she said.

Airman 1st Class Taylor King, a military firefighter, said he was grateful for the support firefighters received in turn from the local community, which donated food, clothing and other items.

"It was very generous," he said. "Everywhere I went, everyone was crazy about firefighters. There was overwhelming support."

The Waldo Canyon Fire started in the Pike National Forest June 23. By June 24, the 306th Flying Training Group had converted part of the airfield into a staging area for helicopters helping fight the fire. MAFFS-equipped C-130s with the 302nd Airlift Wing were brought in June 25 to as-

sist.

The following day was the most destructive, as 65-mph winds and hot, dry weather created a horizontal "fire vortex" that rolled through Queens Canyon on the west side of Colorado Springs and into Mountain Shadows. That evening, 10th Air Base Wing Commander Col. Tim Gibson evacuated base housing residents.

The Academy reached out to help the community after the fire. Cadets, some of whom had arrived for inprocessing even as smoke from the still-active fire billowed over Colorado Springs, helped clear burned and dead wood from affected areas in August.

Investigators revealed in September that the fire was human-caused but that they had no information regarding the intent. The fire remains under investigation.

Firefighters receiving medals were:

Hans Barkley	William Gates	Anthony McMurty
Brian Bell	Lance Gore	Staff Sgt. Barry McNeil
Senior Airman Donnie Brown	Master Sgt. Jeffery Hackworth	Phil Messina
Airman 1st Class Sulaiman Burns	Wesley Harrison	Jonathan Milam
Andrea Caraway	Ken Helgerson	Tyler Moran
Mark Caraway	Patrick Holt	Ryan Moriarty
David Caulfield	Senior Airman Sean Kaufmann	Airman Blake Nelson
Eric Chess	Airman 1st Class Tylor King	Elaine Perkins
Martin Clinton	Kenneth Kotcher	Travis Perkins
Senior Airman Francis Cooper	Patrick Kraft	Ernst Piercy
Airman 1st Class Everett Cowart	Senior Airman Tylor Lamberson	Ron Prettyman
Roy Dalton	Airman 1st Class Xavier Leal	Shawne Ragsdale
John Dannen	Tech. Sgt. Jason Linta	Senior Airman Steven Rousseau
Tommy Disario	Reid Lohse	Staff Sgt. John Salinas
Airman 1st Class Blake Dwyer	Craig Long	Jason Smith
Airman 1st Class Tieghan Fitzpatrick	Staff Sgt. Nicole Longwell	Charles Surrat
Senior Airman Jacob Frey	Mike Mater	Mike Trenker
Airman 1st Class Daniel Garcia	Dan McAuliffe	Joe Wright

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**For advertising information
call Sara at 719-636-0130**



Superintendent's call Jan. 7

Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Mike Gould has scheduled superintendent's calls in the Arnold Hall Theater Jan. 7 at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

All attending should arrive early and be in their seats at least five minutes before the scheduled start time.

Buses have been scheduled to transport those attending.

Pickup times are scheduled for 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at the following locations:

- Building 8034, west side
- Building 8110, north side
- Building 8116, east side
- Building 5136, west side
- Building 4199
- Building 4102, near loading dock
- Field House, south side
- Prep School, near F-100 display
- Fairchild Hall, northwest corner

Emergency chapel construction

The handicapped access ramp on the north side of the Cadet Chapel, also known as 'handicap access,' is closed for concrete reconstruction.

The ramp will be closed for at least a month and possibly longer depending on the status of needed repairs.

Handicap access signs will be removed outside the chapel and re-

placed with a "handicap access temporarily closed" sign until further notice.

The chapel will be open for tourism Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. It will be closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

For more information, visit the Cadet Chapel website at www.usafa.edu/hc/visitors.cfm.

10th CS to reduce services

The 10th Communications Squadron will reduce or eliminate some services, effective Jan. 7, due to Fiscal Year 2013 budget constraints.

New telephone, cable TV and network port installations must be approved by a group-level commander and must be paid for by the requesting organization.

Support for new information technology projects must be based on mission need, support requirements and funding availability.

The 10th CS will also cease funding computer hardware maintenance.

For more information, contact the 10th CS Comm Focal Point at 333-4357.

USAFA endowment campaign

The USAFA Endowment has launched its year-end drive to boost graduate support to the Academy.

The Endowment's 2012 contributions to the Academy include the recent Center for Character and Leadership Development groundbreaking, a project funded by the annual military construction budget and \$12.5 million from private donors.

For more information, call the Endowment at 472-0300 or visit www.usafa.org/push.

Dining facility adjusts policy

The High Country Inn will no longer offer dining to retirees beginning Jan. 7 due to limited funding.

Other 10th Force Support Squadron dining facilities, such as the Falcon Club, Ten Pin Grill and Ike's Grill, will remain open to all DOD ID cardholders.

Pottery studio available

The Arts and Crafts center's pottery studio is available when a class is not in session.

The studio includes nine pottery wheels, glazes and five kilns. Clay is available for purchase.

For more information, call 333-4579.

A&FRC events

For information on these and other Airman and Family Readiness Center events, contact the A&FRC at 333-3444.

Starting Your Own Business:

Jan. 10, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. The workshop is the first of the SCORE SmartSTART 6-part series. The Start Up Basics workshop is free and 5 Advanced Workshops will follow.

Bundles for Babies:

Jan. 23, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The workshop is open to active-duty personnel and spouses. Attendees will learn budgeting for baby, nutrition, developmental play and basic parenting skills. Attendees will also receive a bundle of goodies from the Air Force Aid Society.

Troops for Teachers:

Jan. 23, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The workshop will provide information for military personnel interested in

beginning a second career in public education as a teacher.

Resume Writing Workshop:

Jan. 23, 9 a.m.-noon. Attendees will learn how to write an effective resume, different resume formats, how to best highlight their qualifications and how to target their resume to specific jobs.

Federal Resume Writing Class:

Jan. 29, 2-4 p.m. Attendees will learn how to create a federal resume formatted to USAJOBS guidelines.

Transition Assistance Program:

Jan. 14-18, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. This workshop provides information for those who are preparing to retire or separate. The workshop is open to active-duty, Reserve and Guard service members as well as Defense Department civilians and their spouses. Attendees are eligible to attend two years from their retirement date or 12 months from their separation date.

Retirement Planning:

Jan. 30, 8 a.m.-noon. Attendees will receive information on Federal Employees Retirement System benefits and financially planning for retirement. Spouse may sign up with a member.

Winter Sale

The Academy's Athletic Association Visitor Center Gift Shop will continue their annual winter clearance sale through Dec. 30.

All items are discounted at least 20 percent and some are discounted as much as 50 percent.

The shop is open daily from 9 a.m.-

5pm. Call 472-0102 for Falcon Shop hours.

Pooch Plunge

The Academy will hold a Pooch Plunge today from 3-7 p.m. at the Academy's Fitness Center pool.

The cost for dogs and families to attend is \$5.

All dogs must have a current rabies tag, be up-to-date on all vaccinations and may not be in heat or a threat to other dogs.

For more information, call 333-4522.

Got an IDEA?

The Innovative Development through Employee Awareness, or IDEA Program is designed reward individuals whose suggestions improve the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of Air Force, Defense Department and government operations.

To submit an idea, go to <https://1.usa.gov/RPDNgu> (CAC login required) or contact the IDEA office at 333-4332.

MLK Basketball Tournament

The Fitness Center will hold a basketball tournament in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 12 starting at 9 a.m.

The event is free and open to all DOD ID cardholders 16 and older.

The deadline to sign up is Jan. 10. For more information, call 333-4522.

The facts about fluoride

Fluoride works by stopping or even reversing the cavity process and keeping tooth enamel strong and solid. Almost all water contains naturally occurring fluoride, but usually at levels too low to prevent tooth decay. Many communities adjust the fluoride concentration in the water supply to a level beneficial to promote good oral health.

Given the dramatic decline in tooth decay during the past 65 years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention listed water fluoridation one of 10 great public health interventions of the 20th century.

Water fluoridation prevents cavities by providing teeth with frequent contact with low levels of fluoride. Recent studies reveal that cavity scores are lower in naturally or adjusted fluoridated areas. Today, studies show that water fluoridation reduces cavity formation by roughly 25 percent over a lifetime.

Tooth decay is caused by bacteria. When a person eats sugar and other refined carbohydrates, these bacteria produce acid that removes minerals from the surface of the tooth. Fluoride replaces these minerals, making the enamel stronger and more resistant to dental cavities. Optimal use of fluoride can even stop cavities from progressing.

The drinking water at the Air Force Academy comes from Colorado Springs. Some areas of Colorado Springs have optimal levels of fluoride, but the water fluoride concentrations here have consistently remained between 0.15-0.20 milligrams per liter. This is well below the beneficial level of 0.7 milligrams per liter as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Fluoride supplementation might be indicated for children living on base or in areas with significantly low fluoride levels. Supplementation is only indicated in children who have been identified as being high cavity risk with low water fluoride levels.

Dental cavities risk assessment is determined based on a child's age, biological factors, protective factors, and clinical findings. Questions can be routed through your child's Primary Care Manager or Pediatric Dentist.

For more information, visit <http://1.usa.gov/fhFYtG>.

Recommendations from the 10th Dental Squadron:

- Buy bottled water containing optimal fluoride concentration.
- Use fluoride toothpaste and seek out mouth rinses containing fluoride.
- Eat a healthy diet that is not high in simple carbohydrates like soda and candy. If you do drink a soda, drink it at one time and then rinse your mouth with some water. This will decrease the amount of acid released from the bacteria in your mouth.

Schedule of Worship

Cadet Chapel

BUDDHIST

Sundays, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, 6:20 p.m.

PROTESTANT

Traditional: Sundays, 9 a.m.

Contemporary: Sundays, 11 a.m.

CATHOLIC

Mass:

Sundays, 10 a.m.

Mondays, 6-6:20 p.m.

Tuesdays, 6:45-7:15 a.m.

Wednesdays, 6:30-7 p.m.

Thursdays, 6:15-6:45 a.m.

JEWISH

Shabbat: Fridays, 7 p.m.

MUSLIM

Jum'ah: Fridays, 12:30-2 p.m.

Community Center Chapel

CATHOLIC WORSHIP

Mass: Saturdays, 4 p.m.; Sundays, 9 a.m.; Tuesdays-Fridays, 11:30 a.m.

Reconciliation: Saturdays, 3:30 p.m.

Formation Classes: For students in grades K-8. Sundays, 10:15-11:30 a.m.

PROTESTANT WORSHIP

Evangelical: Sunday, 10:15 a.m.

Gospel: Sunday, 11:30 a.m.

PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sundays, 9 a.m.

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More Days to Earn Stamps for FREE Cuisinart
Earn Stamps Now through December 24th.
Redeem your Stamps through 1/8/13



USDA CHOICE
Whole Standing Rib Roast
Hand Trimmed, Bone-in
Limit 1



5.88
lb.

Trimmed & Tied

Happy Holidays

Cuties
5 lb. Box
Limit 2
3.99 ea.
Clementine Tangerines
5 lb. Box
Limit 2
Additional \$5.99 ea.

Hormel
Cure 81
Spiral Sliced Half Ham
Bone-in Limit 1
14.7 lb.

pepsi
12 pk., 12 oz. or
6 pk., 24 oz.
Select Varieties
Sale Price \$3.99 ea.
Final Price
4 for \$10
When you Buy 4
Limit 1 Reward per Transaction

Lay's
Classic
Lay's Potato Chips
10-10.5 oz.
Select Varieties
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE
Save \$4.29 on 2

Daisy
SOUR CREAM
Pure & Natural
Albertsons Large Eggs
18 ct., Grade AA or
Daisy Sour Cream 16 oz.
Select Varieties
Limit 2 ea.
1.99 18 ct.

Blue Bunny
Ice Cream, Sherbet
56 oz. or
Novelties 6-20 ct.
Select Varieties
Limit 4
2.88

Military Discount COUPON
All Active, Reserve or Retired Military Personnel!
\$10 OFF COUPON GOOD 12/21/12-12/24/12
Your purchase of \$100 or more
LIMIT 1 COUPON PER CUSTOMER. This coupon cannot be used unless the purchase is \$100 or more after deducting all manufacturer coupons and store coupons, and without including money orders, lottery tickets, gift cards, alcohol, tobacco, prescriptions, stamps and other products prohibited at law. Cannot be doubled, tripled, quadrupled or exchanged for cash. Not valid toward previous purchase. Void if copied or transferred in the event of return, coupon savings may be deducted from refund. May not be used in combination with any other offer. One coupon per customer, per transaction.
People featured are not actual service members.
*Some Restrictions Apply. Military ID Required.

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