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## Unanswered questions, unfulfilled dreams

By Chaplain (Maj.) Jonathan Wade

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — I'll call him "John."

In the words of his military friends and co-workers, John was one of the greatest guys you'd ever want to meet: A hard working NCO in a high operations tempo unit, a family man, a compassionate friend always seeking opportunities to help others in his unit succeed.

John was humble, they said. He would never take credit for his talents, instead calling it a "team effort."

His supervisors noticed, at times, that John was unusually hard on himself and seemed depressed about his job abilities, despite the opinion to the contrary of the entire supervisory chain. Then, quite suddenly, John's attitude perked up. He seemed to enjoy his job. Gone were the self-criticisms that had plagued him in the past. His friends noticed, and remarked about the positive change.

Within a week or two, John requested leave so he could take his family on a dream vacation. Word was that it was the best vacation he and his family had ever enjoyed together.

Upon his return from leave, John quietly slipped out of his home and into his office in the pre-dawn hours, telling his wife there was unfinished business he had to complete. She thought nothing of it, as John often gave up his free time for work needs. John carefully stacked project binders and folders on his desk with notes to co-workers of what was unfinished and how to complete each project. Then

John drove out to a remote part of the base, put a gun to his head and ended his life.

It's been many years since I cared for John's devastated wife, his grieving children and his friends and co-workers. I've never forgotten John or the serious damage that suicide leaves in its wake.

Suicide is about more than just an abrupt, untimely end to a human life. It is about unanswered questions, unfulfilled dreams, possibilities that will never be, a struggle for closure that may never come.

As one child (now an adult) said of his mother's suicide, "For years, I thought that one of the reasons she killed herself was because she couldn't get us to brush our teeth or other things we were supposed to do."

He'll never really know the answer, and will struggle to find one, just as John's circle of relationships struggles to this day to understand.

Is there good news? Absolutely. John's death taught me early in my career that there is a simple but powerful tool to prevent suicide from taking another life and leaving behind its human wreckage. That tool is you!

As service members, we would fight to the death to save our wingman from death at the hands of the enemy. When we fight, we fight for each other.

Whether the firefight is with an external foe or an internal battle against an emotionally crushing problem, we are the instrument of help that can rescue our friend and all those who love and care for him or her. How? By simply remembering and implementing the ACE plan.

**A — Ask** your friend how he is doing. Most people will typically respond "okay," because we use the "How ya doin'?" question as a common greeting. Take the time to ask him how he is really doing. Sometimes all a person needs is someone to listen to them. So talk less, listen more and let your friend share his story with you. If you suspect he may be self-destructive, ask him directly if he is thinking of killing himself. Is that uncomfortable? Yes, but it can be the most important question you ever ask. Get over the discomfort and ask him.

What if the answer to the question is "yes"?

**C — Care** for your friend. Don't leave him alone. Calmly control the situation by continuing to listen without judging him. Your job now is to care for your friend until you can get him to competent emergency care. Let him know that there is help available to navigate him through his troubles to a place of hope and peace.

**E — Escort** your friend to the emergency room. His emotional wound is as life-threatening as a shrapnel wound to the heart. Don't leave your friend alone until you find the expertise to help him. He may give you many reasons he doesn't want to seek help, and you will have to be persistent and truthful. He may ask about how this affects his career and family. You can't tell him what you don't know. Let the experts handle that. What he needs now is someone to help him.

Remember, you are the best tool for helping a suicidal friend or co-worker. Remember ACE. There is help, there is hope, and there is an answer.

## Taking care of family — unwritten core value

By Master Sgt. Lee Utsey

81st Aerospace Medicine Squadron first sergeant

"Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do" is embedded in us from the moment we hit the ground in basic training. As I journeyed through my Air Force career, I quickly learned there is an unwritten core value that we should honor at all times: "Family Always!" Taking care of your family is a priceless task that will pay dividends in the end.

One might ask, "How can I take care of my family and tackle the challenge of becoming a whole-person Airman?" I'll be the first to admit that I don't have all the answers, but what I do have is 16 years of experience, an active-duty wife and six kids (Yes, you read that right, six kids!) and I'm still learning! It's not an easy feat, but taking care of the family is

just as important as taking care of the mission. There must be a balance between the mission and your family.

It's no secret that the Air Force is downsizing, hence the rollbacks or changes in high year of tenure. We hear the expression, "Airmen are doing more with less." Well, that phrase is taken out of context and supervisors and mentors have to express its true meaning. "Doing more with less" simply means that one Airman is completing the job of two or more, but it doesn't mean that Airmen are doing more work at the expense of time with the family! I've learned to make a to-do list and prioritize my tasks. I know this is easier said than done because there are last-minute tasks that disrupt the to-do list. At that point, I construct a revised list that outlines what needs to be accomplished before I depart and I

stick to the revised list. Not only is accomplishing the mission imperative for the whole-person Airman, but it's also necessary for significant self-improvement and involvement in the base and community.

Self-improvement and base and community involvement are necessary, but can be time consuming. Self-improvement involves completing career development courses, PME and off-duty education. Thanks to the advancement of technology, you can accomplish off-duty education at your residence. This may require staying up an extra hour or two every night, but you're still giving your family the quality time they deserve.

While base/community involvement could be accomplished without decreasing your family time, it's going to involve strategic planning. The key is to carefully choose the activities with which you want to be involved.

Submitting your name for every volunteer opportunity might not be the best approach. Pick one or two a quarter or every other quarter that really interest you. If it's something the family can get involved with, then you can devote ample time to the task and not take too much time away from the family.

Being an Air Force member is truly an honor that comes with many challenges, including being a whole-person Airman. I've discussed some of the strategies I've employed to tackle this charge while taking care of the family, but there are many other ways to make it happen. The key point is that taking care of the family is as important as taking care of the mission. Typically, a happy home equates to a happy Airman. Remember, when your time is over in the military, your family will still be by your side. Family Always!



## DRAGON ON THE STREET

By Kemberly Groue

Keesler News photojournalist

What do you think about the new front page format for the Keesler News?



"I like it — it gives a big picture on what to look forward to and what news is inside.

**Brittney Crusoe, 81st Training Wing Inspector General staff**



"It looks more like a newspaper."

**Nelson Alvarez, retired master sergeant**



"I like it — it draws the eye and makes you curious about what's inside.

**Staff Sgt. Tobiah Walter, 338th Training Squadron**

## KEESLER NEWS

**81st Training Wing commander**

Brig. Gen. Ian Dickinson

**Public affairs director**

Jerry Taranto

**Editor**

Susan Griggs

**Photojournalist**

Kemberly Groue

**Graphics designer**

Steve Hoffmann

**Public affairs staff**

Billy Bell

Tim Coleman

Jonathan Hicks

Staff Sgt.

Kimberly Moore

Senior Airman

Eric Summers

Joel Van Nice

1st Lt. Joost Verduyn

YoLanda Wallace

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**Keesler on the Web**  
<http://www.keesler.af.mil>

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

## Civilian career advancement

# Hard work, education lead to 1750 qualification

By Tech. Sgt. Donald Allen

334th Training Squadron

“Oh, I got it! I got my 1750!” exclaimed Demetria “Demi” Richard from her desk. She then jumped out of her cubicle to share her enthusiasm with her coworkers, but unfortunately, it fell on confused ears.

Her coworkers in the office were all active-duty military, and while they wanted to be excited for her, they didn’t understand exactly what it was to be excited about. It appeared to be a major milestone, but no one really knew what milestone was reached.

As it turns out, this was a huge milestone. The 1750 qualification refers to job series in the General Schedule job identifiers. As an instructor for the command post apprentice course in the 334th Training Squadron, this could lead to huge changes in Mrs. Richard’s career.

When trying to find a civilian job, the job series identifies a type of experience or education required to fill a particular role. In the military, positions are identified by an Air Force Specialty Code, which tells what skill level and supervisory experience is required for a job.

In the civilian side, things are not quite so clear cut. According to USAjobs.gov, the federal government has a very distinct system for



Photo by Kemberly Groue

**Mrs. Richard is an instructor in the command post apprentice course in the 334th TRS.**

determining how to classify different jobs and the experience required for them using a term called series. The series identifies jobs that are closely related to each other.

In the case of instructors and support staff, many of the employees fall under the 1700 job series of the General Schedule for Federal Employment, according to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. For instance, all civilian technical school instructors fall under the series 1712, Training Instruction Series. As with any advancement, hard work and education pay dividends when trying to expand into other jobs that lead to increased levels of responsibility and/or pay.

According to Mrs. Richard, gaining the 1750 qualification is much like earning a degree. In order to gain the qualification, certain levels and types of education must be fulfilled. The representative at the Air Force Personnel Center oversees the program and makes the determination as to which classes and training qualify an individual for a 1750 position. So when asked what exact qualifications are required, the question is not as easy to answer, since each class could meet part of the requirements.

For Mrs. Richard, her journey started when she completed her bachelor of business administration degree with a minor in organizational psychology development.

When her husband, Andrew, a civilian heating, ventilation and air condition technician with CSC at Keesler, went to Afghanistan for a year with defense contractor KBR, she put her education on hold. With a full-time instructor’s job and a child at home, living the life of a single parent kept her busy nearly 24 hours a day. The day she found out her husband was due home in mid 2009, she immediately signed up for classes towards her master’s degree. By her fifth class, she had earned enough education to qualify for a 1750 position.

Mrs. Richard offered advice for anyone looking to qualify for a 1750 position in the future.

“First, get your bachelor’s degree, and try to focus on education, if possible,” she said. “Second, know what faculty development is offered and available, and how it can be applied to your 1750 qualification. Third, have an understanding of the Office of Personnel Management requirements for the position, and attend the briefings offered by Air Education and Training Command personnel when they’re on base. Finally, with all that in hand, choose the classes that will fill the requirements, so you don’t waste your education dollars.”

Violet Brantley, head of the Air Force force support career field team, said during a phone interview that anyone interested in becoming 1750 qualified should submit their transcript, via e-mail, to the force support inbox at [force.support@randolph.af.mil](mailto:force.support@randolph.af.mil). She went on to say that a transcript review should be done prior to a candidate asking for help picking classes that lead to qualification, so that they have an idea what an individual is lacking to be 1750 qualified. Furthermore, prospective candidates should also be aware that OPM requires that people filling a 1750 position must have completed a bachelor’s degree.

For further guidance, discuss your plans with senior civilians in your squadron.

## 2 dentists complete endodontics residency

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

Capt. (Dr.) Jered King and Maj. (Dr.) Paul Hilfer graduated July 1 from the two-year residency in endodontics program.

The first year is completed at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry and the second is conducted at Keesler.

According to Col. (Dr.) Brian Bergeron, director of the

Keesler’s Endodontics Residency Program, “This graduation ceremony was special as it marked a full circle reconstitution of our relationship with the LSU Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry. This is the first class since Katrina to fully complete a year of predominantly didactic study and research at LSU followed by a second mostly clinical year at Keesler.”

Captain King has been assigned to the 72nd Dental Squadron at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., and Major Hilfer to the 55th DS at Offutt AFB, Neb.

# Run collects 240 teddy bears for sick kids



## ON THE COVER

From left, Airman Stacy Nored and Airman 1st Class Phillip Honie, 332nd Training Squadron, pass teddy bears to Airmen 1st Class Matt Johnson, 334th TRS, and Jonathan Grote, 335th TRS, at Saturday's Teddy Bear Run. Runners started on the Biloxi end of the U.S. Highway 90 span, picked up stuffed animals on the Ocean Springs end and deposited them in the collection box at the Biloxi end. The stuffed animals were donated to the Keesler Hospital's pediatric unit.

Photos by Kemberly Groue

Left, Airman 1st Class Stanley Wesley, 332nd TRS, lifts his arms and a teddy bear in triumph as he finishes the 3.2 mile run.



From left, Airman 1st Class William Johnson, 332nd TRS, and Master Sgt. Justin Christman, 338th TRS, are cheered on by Tech. Sgt. Julie Hammond, an 81st Training Group military training leader, as they reach the finish line. Participants included 160 students and 20 permanent party members from the 81st TRG.

## Academic ace



Staff Sgt. Rachael Hillman graduated with a perfect score from the personnel apprentice course in the 335th Training Squadron. She's assigned to the 232nd Operations Squadron, Nevada Air National Guard.



# New commander coming to 333rd TRS

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

Lt. Col. Douglas Short assumes command of the 333rd Training Squadron from Lt. Col. Scott Solomon, 2 p.m. July 30 at the Dragon's Lair.

Colonel Short comes to Keesler from U.S. Joint Forces Command, Naval Station Norfolk, Va., where he was executive officer for the command, control, communications

and computer directorate. He joined the Air Force in 1986 as a law enforcement specialist and completed Officer Training School in 1994. He's served in various positions at the squadron, group and directorate level in six different major commands, combatant commands and/or direct reporting units.

Colonel Solomon, who's commanded the 333rd TRS for two years, becomes the deputy commander of the 81st Training Group.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

### Drill downs, parades

**Parades** — 6 p.m. today and Sept. 16.

**Drill downs** — 8 a.m. Aug. 20 and Oct. 15.

For more information on drill downs, call Tech. Sgt. Julie Hammond, 377-2103. For information on parades, call Staff Sgt. Gregory Washington, 377-2789.

### USM fall term

Registration for the fall semester for the University of Southern Mississippi is Aug. 10-11 at the Fleming Education Center on the USM Gulf Park campus in Long Beach.

Orientation for new undergraduate students is at 1 p.m., followed by advisement and registration from 2-6 p.m.

New undergraduate students are asked to call 228-865-4565 in advance.

Classes start Aug. 18.

For more information, e-mail Sandy Laubersheimer, sandra.laubersheimer@usm.edu or call 376-8479.

### CCAF fall graduation

The last day to apply for the Community College of the Air Force fall graduating class is Aug. 27.

By that date, all supporting documentation must be on file at CCAF at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, Ala., including the nomination action request. For more information, visit the education office, Room 224, Sablich Center or call 376-8708 or 8710.

### Commissioning briefings

Commissioning briefings are 10 a.m. Tuesdays in Room 224, Sablich Center.

### CCAF online

Visit the Air Force Virtual Education Center, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod>, to create MyAFVEC accounts to access online customer service tools.

People can request and track Community College of the Air Force transcripts, view degree progress reports and see if a course counts toward a CCAF degree.

### CCAF program

The Community College of the Air Force's General Education Mobile is a partnership between CCAF and civilian academic institutions that offers clustered online general education courses to meet CCAF degree requirements.

For more information, call 376-8708. or 8710.

### DANTES procedures

The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support won't fund re-testing on a previously funded exam title for the College Level Examination Program, Excelsior College Examinations and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests.

As a result, service members taking these exams who don't receive a passing score must be informed they won't be allowed to retest as a DANTES-funded candidate on a previously funded exam of the same title. However, they may personally pay for a retest after waiting the requisite period of time.

This includes spouses and Civil Service personnel of Reserve components and Coast Guard.

For more information, call education services, 376-8708 or 8710.

### GI Bill benefits

Montgomery GI Bill benefits may be used in conjunction with tuition assistance.

For more information, call 376-8708.

**Base shuttle schedules**

**are found at**

**<http://www.keesler.af.mil/>**

**[library/factsheets/factsheet.asp](http://www.keesler.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp)**

# NEWS AND FEATURES

## Year of Air Force Family coming to end

Air Force News Service

LACKLAND Air Force Base, Texas — While at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, July 8-9, Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and his wife Suzie reflected on the efforts of Air Force leaders during the Year of the Air Force Family campaign that runs through July.

“The year really referred to a larger audience than just families,” the general said. “It referred to family members, single Airmen, retirees, civilian employees of the Air Force and so on. In a broader sense, what we really were seeking to do is rekindle that sense of community we have had as an Air Force.”

General Schwartz said the initiative largely was to focus on assessing what the service was doing right, and what it could be doing better, in supporting the entire Air Force family.

Through feedback from leaders and Airmen across the Air Force, General Schwartz said there were several issues brought to light.

“One thing that we are not as good at as we need to be is how we assist our family members and families with special needs children,” he said. “Another area of concern is, not surprisingly, education.”

“Education came out as the No. 1 issue affecting our families,” Mrs. Schwartz said, noting that information led Air Force officials to move forward more aggressively with a plan to establish primary points of contact across the service to help families navigate local school systems.

“The Air Force has been able to put some funding behind more school liaisons ... and we now have a school liaison office at almost every Air Force base,” she said.

Officials at each family readiness center identified a single individual to serve as an information resource for Airmen with spe-

Year of the Air Force  
Family



cial needs family members. Air Force leaders had identified that the Exceptional Family Member Program needed to evolve from an assignment-focused program into a more comprehensive and proactive family support program.

Another program that gained momentum for military families this year was the interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children that now spans 35 states. The general said the intent is to facilitate transitions between school districts so that when families move “the whole process of integrating into a new school will be much, much easier and more standardized.”

The Year of the Air Force Family has been about connecting Airmen with the resources they need. In some cases, that simply meant doing a better job about making sure Airmen know what programs are already available.

“To me, I think it was even more about communication than anything else,” Mrs. Schwartz said. “We think we communicate really well, but sometimes we don’t.”

To bolster communication, Mrs. Schwartz said Air Force leaders reached out in new ways, such as hosting the first Single Airmen Summit, and worked to enhance programs already in place, like the Key Spouse program, which equips base spouse representatives at bases to help spread the word about support resources.

“We really put some time and effort into the Key Spouse Program,” Mrs. Schwartz said.

The goal was to harness the speed and efficiency of the spouse network to better communicate with families and “use it more as a communication tool for all times and not just for deployments.”

The Year of the Air Force Family programs not only helped Air Force leaders get their messages to Airmen, but allowed Airmen to voice their concerns to Air Force leaders as well.

“We held an annual Caring for People conference,” Mrs. Schwartz said. “In that forum, instead of getting information out, we were able to get information back in. It was really a great tool to find out what works and what doesn’t for Airmen and their families.”

“I really see that as a lasting forum that will continue each year, bringing out people from across the bases and telling us what’s working and what isn’t,” she added. Follow-on efforts will build upon the knowledge and momentum gained from the Year of the Air Force Family, especially in the area of feedback, she said.

“Getting such feedback from the base level is best, and armed with that feedback, we will continue working to improve family satisfaction,” Mrs. Schwartz said.

## AFPC news service offers career information

By Staff Sgt. Steve Grever

Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — An electronic news service featuring the latest Air Force manpower, personnel and services information is available to help Airmen make informed decisions about their careers.

More than 15,000 members subscribe to the Manpower, Personnel and Services News Service. However, Air Force leaders encourage all Airmen to subscribe in order to ensure they keep aware of key program updates, initiatives and other news from the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force Manpower Agency and the Air Force Services Agency.

“One of the best ways to stay current on Air Force personnel,

manpower and services programs is through this news service,” said Paige Hughes, chief of public affairs for AFPC, AFMA and AFSVA. “It allows subscribers to receive timely e-mails with the latest news releases and articles related to a variety of Air Force-level programs that affect many aspects of Airmen’s lives.”

For the past six months, the news service has been used to distribute vital information on force management updates, civilian employment and career development opportunities, Air Force-level awards and the new fitness program.

To subscribe, visit the Air Force “subscribe” Web site at [www.af.mil/subscribe](http://www.af.mil/subscribe) and click the radio button next to “Manpower, Personnel, and Services News.” Then, enter your e-mail address and name to complete the subscription form.

## CSAF releases ‘Vector’

By Janie Santos

Defense Media Activity-  
San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz released his vision for the future in a recent CSAF Vector 2010 that outlined five priorities and the “way ahead” for Airmen to maintain these priorities.

“Our Airmen are responding to the nation’s call with agility, innovation and expeditionary presence — today, nearly 40,000

American Airmen are deployed to 263 locations across the globe,” he said. “We’ve also demonstrated that modern warfighting isn’t just about how many are ‘over there.’

“Our deployed-in-place Airmen are indispensable to the day-to-day defense of our nation, whether they are tracking and dispatching bad actors at intercontinental range, maintaining constant vigilance from space, sustaining credible strategic deterrence, protecting networks, or patrolling the skies over the homeland,” General Schwartz said.

He discusses continuing to strengthen the Air Force nuclear enterprise, partnering with the joint and coalition team for today’s fight, developing and caring for Airmen, modernizing inventories and training, and recapturing acquisition excellence.

To read this Vector and other senior leader viewpoints, go to the information section at [www.us.af.mil](http://www.us.af.mil).



## New squadron commanders at Keesler Hospital



Photos by Steve Pivnick

First Lt. Mary Dobrinski chats with Col. (Dr.) Joseph Giovannini, new 81st Surgical Operations Squadron commander, as he visits the post anesthesia care unit July 15. Colonel Giovannini assumed command of the squadron from Col. (Dr.) Bartlett Hayes June 17. The new commander comes to Keesler from Travis Air Force Base, Calif., where he commanded the 60th Surgical Operations Squadron surgical specialties flight. Colonel Hayes, squadron commander since 2007, is headed to Houston for an Air Force Institute of Technology-approved two-year fellowship in retina and uveitis surgery.



Maj. Janice Shealey, left, 81st Inpatient Operations Squadron maternal child flight commander, explains the family birthing center's patient simulator "Katrina" to new squadron commander Col. Susan Bassett July 12. The colonel assumed command from Col. Allison Plunk July 1. Colonel Bassett comes to Keesler from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, where she served as 882nd Training Group chief nurse. Colonel Plunk, who led the squadron since June 2009, becomes 81st Medical Group chief nurse upon today's retirement of current chief nurse Col. Cassandra Salvatore.

## IN THE NEWS

### Wing change of command set

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller assumes command of the 81st Training Wing from Brig. Gen. Ian Dickinson, 9 a.m. Aug. 2 on the parade field.

### 8 selected for promotion

Eight Keesler officers have been selected for promotion:

**To lieutenant colonel** — Maj. Jennifer Fournier, legal office.

**To captain** — 1st Lts. Michael Wakeley, legal office; Joanna Cooley and Jan Dockery, 81st Inpatient Operations Squadron; Zackery Kalinzuskas, 81st Medical Operations Squadron; Zane Holland, 81st Medical Support Squadron; and Natalie McLendon and Mary Ann Dobrinski, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron.

### Name change for DRMO

As of Monday, Keesler's Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office is now DLA Disposition Services.

"This is much more than a name change," said Defense Logistics Agency officials. "It's about helping the Department of Defense and our customers see the full value of DLA as we enter a time of ever-shrinking resources."

Keesler's office continues to provide the same service in the disposition of excess property and management of hazardous waste as before. There are no changes in operating hours or services. The same name will be used worldwide to provide unity.

For more information, call Paul Pearl, 377-2307.

### Air Force Times Airman of the Year

#### Air Force News Service

Master Sgt. Rodney Deese, assigned to the Kisling NCO Academy at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, is the 2010 Air Force Times Airman of the Year.

Sergeant Deese received the award July 14 at the Military Times Service Member of the Year Awards ceremony at the Cannon House Office Building in Washington D.C.

### Phones, seatbelt, car seat rules

**Cell phones** — It's a primary offense to drive on base while using a cell phone without a hands-free device.

For military members, offenses are subject to citation for points, and for civilian employees, dependents, retirees and contractors, citations carry a fine. Driving privileges can be suspended for seven days for the first offense, 30 days for a second offense and one year for a third offense.

**Seatbelts** must be used by driver and passengers. Children at least 4-7 years old or less than 65 pounds or under 4 feet, 9 inches tall must be in a booster/child seat of vehicles in operation on the installation. For violations, driving privileges can be suspended seven days for the first offense, 30 days for the second offense, 90 days for the third offense and one year for the fourth and subsequent offenses.

For more information, call the 81st Security Forces Squadron, 376-6600, or the wing safety office, 377-2007.

**Dragons deployed — 253**

# PERSONNEL NOTES

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## Female veterans meet

### Airman and family readiness center

A gathering to provide information and communication for female veterans is 8:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday in Sablich Center Room 108B.

The event is hosted by the Women Veterans Program of the Gulf Coast Veterans Administration.

To register, call 376-8728.

## Identification card requirements

To obtain identification cards, military personnel in uniform have priority in customer service, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Customer service is also open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on non-training Fridays.

To be issued an identification card, two forms of legal identification are necessary. Dependents are required to be accompanied by their sponsor unless they have power of attorney or a Defense Department Form 1172.

For more information, call 376-8339.

## Military personnel contacts

Military personnel section phone numbers:

**Customer support** — 376-8738.

**Career development** — 376-8739.

**Force management** — 376-8740.

**Student personnel center** — 377-4111.

**Testing** — 376-4111.

## Training for new supervisors

Three mandatory supervisory training courses for newly-selected supervisors must be completed within six months of assuming a supervisory role.

**The Air Force Supervisor's Course** provides civilian supervisors with leadership and management skills required in supervisory positions.

**The Civilian Personnel Management Course** must be taken by all civilian and military supervisors who manage civilians. This course provides background information and an understanding of applicable civilian personnel laws and regulations needed to carry out civilian personnel management responsibilities.

**The Military Personnel Management Course** is designed to provide civilian supervisors of military members the basic skills, knowledge and abilities required to supervise enlisted and officer personnel.

Personnel requiring these courses can register online through the Air Force Human Resource Management School's virtual campus at <https://www.my.af.mil/afknprod/community/views/home.aspx?Filter=AF-ED-00-38>. Periodic reports will be provided by Air Staff and major commands identifying supervisory completion, so supervisors should complete the required courses in a timely manner.

For more information, call 376-8161 or 8154.

## Discrimination hotline

### Air Force Personnel Center

The Air Force Discrimination Hotline, 1-888-231-4058, serves all active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilians.

The 24/7 hotline number ensures all discrimination and sexual harassment concerns are quickly identified and addressed. It streamlines the process by which individuals can speak with an equal opportunity professional at the Air Force Personnel Center to advise and assist with their concerns and issues. Callers can remain anonymous.

Personnel are highly encouraged to use their chain of command or local EO office as a first means to address concerns, but the 24/7 hotline is available to those who don't have immediate access to their local EO office.

## Leave accumulation extended

### 81st Comptroller Squadron

Members unable to use leave due to military necessity may accumulate a maximum of 75 days by the end of a fiscal year until Sept. 30, 2013. After this date, the limit returns to the previous 60-day limit of accrued leave.

If service members are unable to use their excess accrued leave prior to that date due to mission requirements, approval may be requested to carryover the excess leave days.

For more information, call the military personnel section, 376-8738, or the Total Force Service Center, 1-800-525-0102.

# 42 Keesler NCOs targeted for retraining program

By Jon Hanson

## Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

RANDOLPH Air Force Base, Texas — About 4,345 Airmen have the opportunity to retrain as part of the fiscal 2011 NCO Retraining Program.

The program affects 42 Keesler NCOs, according to Gary Schafer, chief of the 81st Force Support Squadron's military personnel section.

The NCORP is a two-phase program designed to sustain the enlisted force by moving second-term and career Airmen from overage Air Force specialty codes to shortage AFSCs.

"The retraining program is a vital tool in managing the force that allows leaders to meet evolving Air Force needs and requirements," said Col. William Foote, director of personnel services at the Air Force Personnel Center.

"The 2010 NCORP was highly successfully in filling 96 percent of the shortfalls in Air Force spe-

cialties, while streamlining the process to 120 days," Colonel Foote said.

AFPC officials said they seek to achieve that same success with the fiscal 2011 program.

Officials have selected 41 overage AFSCs with retraining-out requirements, an increase from 31 last year. In addition, 10 AFSCs were selected with retraining-in requirements. All other Airmen identified for NCORP can volunteer during Phase I for specialties meeting AFSC and grade requirements.

Phase I began July 15 and ends Sept. 16. Phase II starts immediately following Phase I.

"A change this year allows Airmen who are disqualified from their AFSC and assigned a reporting identifier of 9A000 to apply for unrestricted fiscal year 2011 NCORP quotas," said Tech. Sgt. Keila Brown, NCO in charge of AFPC's retraining policy and procedures. "This will enable them to better serve Air Force needs and allow the Air

Force to retain experienced Airmen."

Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis during Phase I. In Phase II, individuals are involuntarily placed in AFSCs based solely on the needs of the Air Force.

Airmen can find the master vulnerability list on the Virtual Military Personnel Flight, <https://w20.afpc.randolph.af.mil/AFPCSecureNet20/CheckPortal.aspx>.

Frequently-asked questions concerning NCORP are available at <http://gum.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cgi-bin/askafpc.cfg/php/enduser/home.php> under the "enlisted" button. Then click on the "retraining" tab.

For more information about the fiscal 2011 NCORP, visit the AFPC personnel services Web site at <https://gum.afpc.randolph.af.mil>, contact your local military personnel section or call the Total Force Service Center, 800-525-0102.

Susan Griggs, Keesler News editor, contributed to this report.

## Heart Attack Symptoms

Men and women may experience some common symptoms, but there are differences.



- Nausea/vomiting
- Jaw pain
- Back pain



- Chest discomfort
- Arm pain
- Shortness of breath

Identity theft is a personal nightmare and security risk. Shred bills, statements, letters, old journals, records, outdated application forms and any documents that contain your full name, Social Security number, duty title and job information, credit card, bank account numbers and names of family members. If you see documents being removed from trash cans, call the 81st Security Forces Squadron law enforcement desk, 377-3040.

# Longtime pharmacy volunteer passed away

By Steve Pivnick

## 81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group is mourning the loss of longtime volunteer Ernest Brant who passed away July 12 in Biloxi.

Mr. Brant, 80, was a 30-year volunteer and had assisted in the main pharmacy since 1983.

Pharmacy co-workers re-membered him fondly.

Adrian Robinson said, "I worked with Ernest for 10 years. He was a vital part of our mission and always brought a smile to my face. He will be deeply missed for his unselfish service to our community."

Joann Griggs added, "Ernie was a wonderful

man. He always had a story and his military life was unbelievable."

Mr. Brant was in the Army and served in Korea and Vietnam before retiring as a major with 24 years of military service. He was a member of the Biloxi Elks Lodge and was past state commander for the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

He is survived by his wife Shirlee, five children, a sister, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Mr. Brant's funeral was Tuesday, followed by burial at Biloxi National Cemetery with full military honors provided by the Army Honor Guard.



Mr. Brant



## LEGAL BRIEFS

### Legal office

According to Air Force intelligence officials, adversaries are continuing to exploit this year's tax season through the use of malicious e-mail messages. This ongoing "spear phishing" campaign that targets Air Force personnel in an attempt to gain access to official networks.

These messages currently in circulation claim to contain important tax related information. Recipients executing PDF attachments or

untrusted links within these messages may become infected with malware, placing the entire network at risk.

Never open unsolicited messages, links or attachments from unknown sources, especially those claiming to contain tax information. Recipients should either delete these messages or ask their system administrator for assistance.

For more information, call the legal office, 376-8601.

Keesler's gospel choir performs at a Feb. 27 concert at Triangle Chapel as part of the base's African-American Heritage Month observance. The choir performs at the noon service Sundays at Triangle Chapel.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



# Base chapel reaches beyond Sunday worship

By Steve Hoffmann

Keesler News staff

The Keesler Chapel offers a wide range of programs and services throughout the week that allow base personnel, students and retirees to get connected and build relationships with others and their God.

The chapel is very careful not to endorse one religion over another but rather to foster the spiritual and emotional well-being of all Airmen, their families and other Defense Department personnel, whatever their religion.

The mission of the Air Force chaplain core is summed up in the phrase "Glorifying God, Serving Airmen, Pursuing Excellence." That's exactly what Chaplain (Col.) Clifton Perry, the new commander of the chaplaincy at Keesler, hopes to continue. "My vision is to offer quality worship, services and counseling."

The chapel program at Keesler consists of two branches. One offers pastoral care to technical students and their families and serves the base's permanent residents.

Most of the programs and services targeted toward students can be found at the Fishbowl Student Center at the Levitow Training Support Facility. There are five chaplains that provide ministry and counseling, along with other service providers such as the airmen and family readiness center and



**Chaplain Perry welcomes Airmen to The Haven, a communal area inside the permanent party dorms where students gather to make friends, have discussion and prayer groups and support each other in Air Force life.**

the military family life counselors.

Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Mallory heads the "Pizza and the Padre" program which discusses a different world religion each week. Pizza and the Padre offers a safe environment where students can feel free to openly discuss what they believe in or don't believe.

"Our goal is not to persuade them one way or the other, but to help guide them along their own path of

discovering their faith," said Chaplain Mallory.

"Pizza and the Padre" often features guest speakers and spiritual leaders from different faith groups in the local community to help compliment and enrich the experience.

Other programs, such as Bible studies, prayer and discussion groups, are designed to help guide students in their military life.

Ministry to the Keesler community and permanent party residents involves pastoral care with a variety of interactive programs and services, as well as regular worship services.

"We want to help people in a proactive way," said Chaplain Perry. "So many times we see people when things get bad. Our numbers are highest when we're deployed. When couples are knee-deep in marriage or parenting problems, that's when they come to us. But the chapel exists to walk with people and help them before, during and after things get bad."

The Haven dormitory ministry is one such place where the chapel reaches out to Airmen in a setting other than church. The Haven is a communal area in one of the permanent-party dorms where single residents can hang out in a safe, comfortable environment, talk and make new friends. With meals offered every Sunday night and various prayer groups meeting throughout the week, The Haven provides the opportunity for Airmen to support each other emotionally and spiritually as they make their way through Air Force life.

"A good chapel program always has its fingers around the base taking the pulse of morale," said Chaplain Perry.

Please see **Chapel**, Page 15

# Chapel,

from Page 14

There are chaplains on staff who are trained to lead classes in SafeTALK, a suicide prevention program now being used by the Air Force. SafeTALK is a three-hour class designed to train Airmen how to listen for and recognize signs that other Airmen may be contemplating suicide.

This class is offered at the Levitow Training Support Facility and is another example of how the chapel is taking a proactive approach to the emotional and spiritual well-being of Airmen.

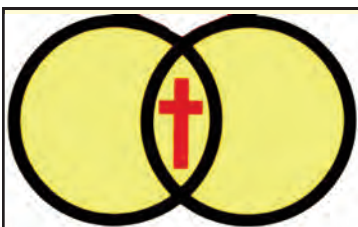
“Don’t get me wrong,” said Chaplain Perry, who is ordained to lead worship, liturgy and serve rites. “Worship is a fundamental cornerstone of what we do.”

Worship services for a variety of faiths both on and off base are offered on a regular basis. There’s an Islamic prayer room, an area synagogue where Airmen of the Jewish faith are referred, an Orthodox priest on staff, daily Catholic Mass, a gospel service and both contemporary and traditional Protestant worship services on Sundays.

“I inherited a good program and I want to make it better,” Chaplain Perry said about his new role. “I’m like a runner in a relay. The runner before me ran fast. My job is to take the baton and run faster and stronger.”



Airman Benjamin Quade, a student in the 332nd TRS, tells new students about the opportunities in being a “white rope” chaplain’s assistant.



## Military couples get special rate for conference

Military couples are being offered a special rate to attend a marriage enrichment conference, 7:15-9 p.m. Aug. 13 and 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 14 at Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala.

The normal cost of the conference is \$150, but a benefactor is willing to pay \$100 of the charge for military couples, according to Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Seligman of the chapel’s community ministries branch.

Lodging and meals aren’t included.

To register, contact Chaplain Seligman, 377-4859, or e-mail charles.seligman@us.af.mil. Money and names are due Aug. 10.

## Pizza and the Padre

# Keesler program now available Air Force-wide

By Steve Hoffmann

Keesler News staff

Nearly two years in development, the program that discusses different world religions each week known as “Pizza and the Padre” is now available online throughout the Air Force.

The link is <https://hcllogin.maxwell.af.mil/PastoralCare/PizzaPadre/PizzaPadre.asp>

The program that started in September 2008 was designed by Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Mallory and meets 6-7 p.m. Thursdays at the Fishbowl Student Center in the Levitow Training Support Facility. The classes average in size from 12-15 students per week and provide them with an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the beliefs, practices, customs and history of other world religions. It also provides an opportunity to eat free pizza.

In 2008, when the program was being birthed, Chaplain (Maj.) Randall Groves, who was then Chaplain Mallory’s supervisor, gave Chaplain Mallory the go ahead to develop his idea for a program to expose his students to various world religions. Soon after the program began, it just so happened that Chaplain Groves became the Air Force’s director of strategic resources responsible for shaping chaplain corps curriculum.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

From left, Airmen 1st Class Jared Burrows and Matt Banach and Airman Basic Eric Stevens learn about items used in Jewish worship from Master Sgt. Michael Raff as Chaplain Mallory looks on during a Pizza and the Padre session last year. Airmen Burrows and Stevens were students in the 332nd Training Squadron and Airman Banach was from the 334th TRS.

“It has always been a core value of the Chaplaincy Corps to not promote one religion over another but to help Airmen, spiritually and emotionally, to be the best they can be, whatever their faith,” said Chaplain Mallory.

It is within this context that Chaplain Groves was having a

conversation with Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Cecil Richardson, Air Force chief of chaplains, about how to make world religions more accessible to students online.

“While the two were talking, Chaplain Groves was thinking of Pizza and the Padre,” Chaplain Mallory

recalled in an e-mail he received from Chaplain Richardson. “It just so happened that Pizza and the Padre fits perfectly with Chaplain Richardson’s vision.”

With 35 world religion briefs already available online, Chaplain Mallory’s goal is to have 50 available by the end of the year.

## Interviews — first impressions count

By John Lang and Debbie Sterling

### 81st Training Group

Life comes at you fast, especially when you take control of your career. Are you ready for the next step? You have perhaps 30 seconds to make a first impression during a job interview. Competition for challenging assignments is keen. Here are a few common-sense tips to remember as you prepare for your next job opportunity.

**Dress professionally.** When in doubt, dress up, not down. Dress should be comparable to that of the supervisor and others who might interview you.

**Take the time to do your homework and develop your self confidence.** Get a copy of the core document (position description) and relate your experience, skills and knowledge to the job. Visualize yourself performing the job. Although some supervisors don't offer the core document, most will be impressed with your initiative and provide it if you care enough to ask. Develop confidence by anticipating questions and preparing your best responses.

**Go all out to "sell" yourself.** Your goal is to enable interviewers to visualize you successfully performing challenging duties of the position. Don't assume you are entitled as the next in line for a job because you have "filled all the squares" and are the most experienced. Don't tell interviewers about your responsibilities. Instead, describe your accomplishments and results — there's a huge difference. This concept also applies to your resumé. Describe accomplishments — don't simply recite the list of duties in core documents.

**Convey energy and enthusiasm.** Experience is important, but initiative and a vision of your contribution to the mission are vital. You want your future boss to see you as the proactive "Radar O'Reilly" who comes with signature-ready memos and solutions instead of problems. Volunteer for challenging tasks in your current position and, during the interview, capitalize on your reputation for getting things done.

**Listen to each question and answer it fully, but succinctly.** Request clarification if needed, but you absolutely must answer each question. For example, if the interviewer asks for three examples, be sure to give three examples. Opinion questions must be answered. For example, if you're asked, "What do you think is the most important aspect of this job and why?", don't say, "I can't pick one" or describe several important aspects of the job. You must pick just one and explain why. Otherwise, the interviewer will note, "didn't answer the question," or "rambled without answering the question." Know when to stop — don't ramble on. A brief but complete professional response will score more points than an incomplete, evasive or rambling response.

**Leadership could be the most important factor in your interview.** It's probably not listed as a duty in the core document, but in today's environment, leaders are stretched thin and Air Force civilians have more leadership opportunities than ever before. Your future supervisor may conduct the interview. He or she will be looking for someone who can step in to fulfill their leadership and supervisory responsibilities. What experiences and professional education have prepared you for your future boss's level of responsibility? What would you do in an emergency? Anticipate the probable emergencies and know who you would call for help. And, after the crisis has been taken care of, remember to mention your all-important call or e-mail to back-brief your boss as soon as possible.

**What makes you special?** Interviewers will want to know what you bring to the table that others might not. Think about your strengths before you walk in and try to weave them into each of your answers. Most of us have difficulty finding ways to showcase our strengths without sounding arrogant or overly confident. Be honest in your self assessment. Make a list of your strengths and how each would be beneficial to the specific job. If you aren't absolutely confident in an area, leave it out. Never wander into a discussion about an area of weakness; steer the discussion to your advantage.

**Convey a positive impression of your ability to excel in the job.** Remember, the interview isn't about how your boss can accommodate you; it's about what you can do to help the boss accomplish the mission. Don't feel obligated to discuss personal issues such as health and family concerns. If such issues arise, be honest and forthright but don't dwell on them. Instead, turn the discussion to a positive note about how you have overcome such issues to achieve success.

**Take advantage of opportunities to describe your talents that weren't brought out by the interview questions.** Be prepared when asked, "Do you have any questions you would like us to answer about the job?" or "Is there anything else you would like to tell us?" Use this moment to make a good final impression and direct the interview to shine upon your strengths.

**Don't sell yourself short by not applying for jobs.** Give selecting officials the chance to interview and hire you. When in doubt, apply! You may be the best candidate for the job. It's up to selecting officials to decide.

Do your homework and take advantage of occasions to interview. Build on lessons learned and hone your interview skills. Your skills will improve each time.

Coming up soon are an interview skills seminar in September and mock selection panels in October. Watch for notices of dates and locations or call 377-5311 for information.

# Medics recognized for diabetes presentation

By Steve Pivnick

## 81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The 81st Medical Group Hospital's health-care integrators recently returned from their annual Air Force annual conference in Orlando, Fla., where they garnered the "Best Poster Presentation" title.

Lt. Col. Kirk Tresch and Capt. Don Smith joined more than 40 health-care integrators from 30 Air Force bases for the June 8 meeting. The Keesler representatives shared a process improvement program developed at the Keesler hospital in 2009.

The Diabetic Interdisciplinary Comprehensive Evaluation program helps providers identify potential barriers to good glycemic control.

According to Captain Smith, "The program provides the provider with insights and recommendations gleaned from an intensive multidisciplinary evaluation to help manage their diabetic patients.



Courtesy photo

Captain Smith, left, and Colonel Tresch with their award-winning poster at the conference.

The DICE program is staffed by an internal medicine provider or endocrinologist, as well as a pharmacist, dieti-

tian, psychologist and diabetic educator. Patients are rotated through 20-minute evaluations in one-on-one sessions

by each discipline. Within 90 minutes, patients have received five evaluations from five different specialties."

The captain noted, "From January to September 2009, the 36 participants showed an average 16 percent A1c decrease and 17.5 percent LDL decrease."

Hemoglobin A1c is a lab draw that indicates how much sugar has been in the body for the preceding three months. In most labs, the normal range is 4-5.9 percent. In poorly-controlled diabetes, it's 8 percent or more, and in well-controlled patients it's less than 7 percent. LDL cholesterol is used to predict a person's risk of developing heart disease. Of all the forms of cholesterol in the blood, the LDL cholesterol is considered the most important form in determining risk of heart disease.

For more information about the DICE program or how to enroll, call Colonel Tresch or Captain Smith, 376-3179.

**101  
CRITICAL  
DAYS OF  
SUMMER**

**Make  
summer time  
your  
safety time.  
Be careful  
and alert  
during work,  
play and  
travel.**



# Back-to-school time is just around the corner

By Senior Airman Eric Summers

## Keesler Public Affairs

Students living in Keesler's military family housing areas attend Biloxi public schools.

To verify which school your child will attend, call 374-1810, extension 125.

This year, school attendance zones are being realigned by the moth-balling of Nichols and Beauvoir Elementary Schools and Michel 6th Grade School.

Beauvoir students have been reassigned to either Popp's Ferry or Jeff Davis Elementary Schools. Students residing in Thrower Park and Tanglewood and Bent Oaks subdivisions will attend Popp's Ferry. All other Beauvoir students will attend Jeff Davis Elementary School.

Students who had attended Nichols Elementary School will now attend Gorenflo Elementary School. All sixth grade students will attend Biloxi Junior High School.

Parents who didn't pre-register their children can enroll students at the Biloxi school to be attended, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 29-30. School begins Aug. 11.

When registering, you must present two proofs of residency, child's certified birth certificate, certificate of immunization issued by the state of Mississippi and the student's Social Security number.

Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1.

For more information, visit <http://www.biloxischools.net>

Start dates and Web addresses for other school districts:

**Gulfport** — School starts Aug. 11; <http://www.gulfportschools.org>.

**D'Iberville and Harrison County** — School starts Aug. 11; <http://www.harrison.k12.ms.us>.

**St. Martin and Jackson County** — School starts Aug. 5; <http://www.jcsd.k12.ms.us>

**Long Beach** — School starts Aug. 9; <http://www.lbsdk12.com>.

**Ocean Springs** — School begins Aug. 5; <http://www.ossd.k12.ms.us>.



DeAnn McLaurin and her 8-year-old daughter, Melanie, shop for school clothes at the main exchange Friday. Mrs. McLaurin's husband is Sgt. Terry McLaurin from the Army National Guard Joint Forces Training Center at Camp Shelby, Miss.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



The Mississippi Department of Revenue has declared that the 2010 Sales Tax Holiday will take place between 12:01 a.m. July 30 and midnight, July 31.

A sales tax holiday is a temporary period when sales taxes aren't collected or paid on purchases of specific products and/or services.

For more information, call 601-923-7015 or log on to <http://www.dor.ms.gov/secondsalestaxholiday.html>.

# Victim advocates

## Volunteer team puts sexual assault survivors first

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

Trained victim advocates from Keesler's sexual assault prevention and response office provide a vital link to support, give direction and assist victims in regaining control of their lives.

VAs are active-duty or civilian volunteers armed with essential information, processes and resources to assist survivors of sexual assault. They remain by the survivor's side as long as they're needed.

Michelle Lind, Keesler's sexual assault response coordinator, said victim advocates receive 40 hours of intense training to prepare them for their duties. Background checks are done to ensure that these volunteers are the right people for the job.

When a sexual assault occurs, Airmen have two reporting options — restricted and unrestricted.

Restricted reporting allows a sexual assault victim to confidentially disclose the details of his or her assault to specified individuals and receive medical treatment and counseling, without triggering the official investigative process.

Unrestricted reporting is recommended for sexual assault victims who want medical treatment, counseling and an official crime investigation.

The first step in either case, once the sexual assault response coordinator is notified of a reported sexual assault, is to immediately assign a victim advocate to the case. The victim advocate assists the survivor in making a determination about whether or not to receive a sexual assault forensic examination, as well as the pros and cons of making either a restricted or unrestricted report.

Currently, Keesler has 65 VAs, all with different reasons for participating in the program.

Two of the victim advocates,



**Sergeant Thompson**

Staff Sgts. Tiffany Thompson and Jacqueline Pena, are air traffic control instructors in the 335th Training Squadron.

Sergeant Thompson, who arrived at Keesler almost three years ago, had been sexually assaulted. She credits the SAPRO at Vance Air Force Base, Okla., for playing a major role in her recovery. She became a VA four years ago.

"VAs need to be caring, compassionate and have thick skin," said Sergeant Thompson. "Going with survivors to appointments and hearing their stories isn't always easy and you hurt right along with them, but you have to separate the hurt they're going through from your own personal life.

"In a sense, all victim advocates are like guardian angels for those survivors, protecting them as much as possible while helping them to see the light at the end of the tunnel," she remarked.

"Our responsibilities include not only taking the on-call phone and being able to assist if a case comes up, but working behind the scenes, helping with training, collecting donations to help the Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence, setting up educational displays, talking to friends and coworkers about what we do as VA's and supporting the staff," she noted.



**Sergeant Pena**

Sergeant Thompson's experience as a VA has changed her in several ways.

"I feel like I've become a better person and a worse person at the same time," she explained. "Being able to touch the lives of the survivors who need assistance and support is surreal, but sometimes hearing the stories makes you jaded and angry — never angry at the survivor, but angry at the situation and the fact that sexual assaults are so preventable, but are still so prevalent."

Sergeant Pena became a victim advocate while stationed at Columbus AFB, Miss. She's been at Keesler since October 2007.

"I honestly don't know what prompted me to become a VA," Sergeant Pena admitted. "I felt like I could make a difference in these people's lives. It takes a very special kind of person to be able to emotionally separate yourself from the situation you're in with the victim and be there for them wholeheartedly and support them in any way possible."

Sergeant Pena is pursuing a degree in criminal justice, and her college courses have helped her serve her survivors better by helping them to know what to expect and to better navigate the legal system.



**Sergeant Harris**

"Sadly, I've gotten many calls to assist," she pointed out. "As VAs, we take the on-call phone from Tuesday to Tuesday, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We make ourselves available day and night to anyone who needs assistance.

"I've received calls at all hours of the night, and I am always happy to be the person the victim needs to help them through this process," Sergeant Pena continued. "I've become friends with a lot of the people I help and it makes me feel great that I have made a difference in their lives. I still talk to some of my victims from three years ago, and it's great. I see them go from a complete bottoming-out to happy men and women who are thankful I was there when they were at their worst. This is all the reward I need as a VA."

Master Sgt. Tiaj Harris, who's been the unit deployment manager for the 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron for almost a year, sees his role as a VA as "sort of a 'big brother' that can listen to others. Giving our time and commitment to helping someone in need is truly a selfless act of human compassion."

He was motivated to become a VA after hearing a briefing by Capt. Tresa



**Mrs. Jegel**

Strickland while he was stationed at Osan Air Base, South Korea.

"She made it quite clear that sexual assault was not just a male assaulting a female, but could also male on male," said Sergeant Harris. "My initial thought was, 'Really — a male getting assaulted.' Then it really hit home when she stated that it's quite possible for someone to slip a drug into your drink whether you are male or female — everyone is susceptible."

When he arrived at Keesler, he interviewed with Christine McGill and Barry Newman, sexual assault prevention and response program technicians. He completed his training in November.

"We have a great group of SAPR program technicians and victim advocates at Keesler," Sergeant Harris commented. "As a VA, my main focus is to assist and get the help that's needed for sexual assault survivors. I'm not a knowledge expert, but I can guide them to the agencies on base as well as in the local community.

"It's important not to be judgmental — no matter what happened to that individual, a crime was committed and a

Please see **Advocates**, Page 22

## Advocates,

from Page 21

VA should give all the support that's needed at a crucial time," he added. "My experiences so far as a VA are bittersweet. I enjoy helping people, but because of the nature of helping them you want to sympathize and get them as much help as possible."

Tammy Jegel has worked in the 81st Medical Support Squadron clinic research laboratory's veterinary sciences section for 14 months.

A victim advocate since November, she's able to relate to the people in her care because of the abuse she experienced in her first marriage for more than 10 years. She's now married to Tech. Sgt. Mark Jegel, an instructor at the Mathies NCO Academy.

"I had been through a whole lot, but Mark was strong, sensitive, caring, encouraging and there for me," she remembered. "I told myself if I ever got over the issues from the past, I wanted to be just like him and be there for people that need someone to just listen and not judge them for what had happened to them. I guess you could say he's my hero."

Mrs. Jegel said it's very rewarding to see victims becoming stronger because someone has taken the time to listen and really care about what has happened to them.

"I feel very strongly that everyone needs to understand the importance of the victim advocate program," Mrs. Jegel stressed. "When we get a call, time is the most important issue. The advocate should only have to focus on how to help the victim and that takes support and understanding from everyone. You never know — it could be their wife, daughter, son or husband that may need us one day, and they'll expect us to be there as fast as we can."

# KEESLER NOTES

## Job opportunities

People interested in applying for nonappropriated fund positions may submit an application in person or on line.

Hours for the NAF personnel office, Room 211, Sablich Center, are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

To apply online, log on to <https://nafjobs.afsv.net>.

For current job openings, call the 24-hour job line, 377-9055, or log on to [www.keeslerservices.us](http://www.keeslerservices.us).

## Biloxi public schools

Administrative offices for the Biloxi Public Schools are closed Friday due to recent budget cuts.

Registration for the 2010-11 school year is 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 29-30 at the school the student will attend.

For more information, log on to [www.biloxischools.net/District/Supt/Registration.asp](http://www.biloxischools.net/District/Supt/Registration.asp).

## Senior NCO induction

The senior noncommissioned officer induction ceremony is 6:30 p.m. Aug. 5 at the Roberts Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Facility.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Ezra Khan, 377-9160.

## Root canal treatment

The Keesler Dental Clinic is seeking patients who

require root canal treatment.

All authorized beneficiaries, including military retirees and dependents of active duty and retired, are eligible for care.

Patients accepted for treatment are treated by either the endodontic specialty program residents or the residents in the general dentistry program.

Referral from a dentist for root canal treatment is needed.

For more information, call the endodontics department, 376-5227.

## Immunization clinic

Immunization clinic hours: **Immunizations** — 7 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Friday; closed 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. non-training Fridays.

**Allergy shots** — 1-4 p.m. Monday; 7:30-10:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

The clinic is closed noon to 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month for training.

For more information, call 376-3553.

## Thrift shop closed

Due to an impending move, the Thrift Shop is closed through July.

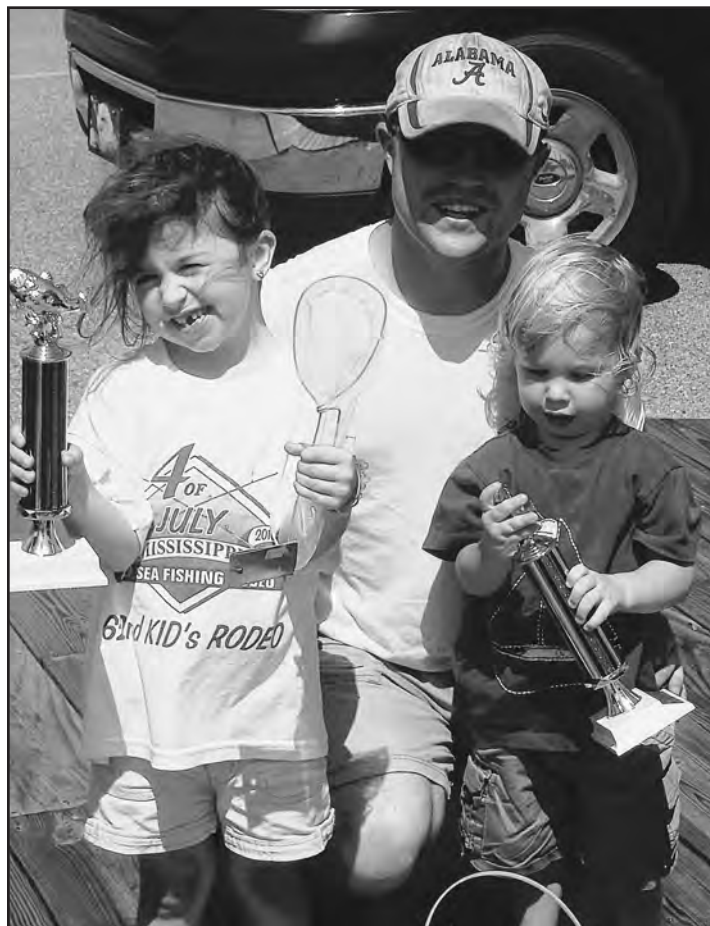
For donations during the summer or if you have no way to get them to the thrift shop, call 377-3217 to schedule a drop off or pick up time.

# SPORTS AND RECREATION



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Four-year-old Joel Ahern places his three croakers on the scale during Saturday's Kids Fishing Rodeo at the marina. His dad, Jimmy Ahern, 335th Training Squadron, looks on.



## Tiny anglers brave heat for children's fishing rodeo

Hadley Thornton, 6, and her 2-year-old brother, Ethan, won first place in their divisions. Their dad, Brian Thornton from the legal office, won first place in the flounder division earlier this month at the Mississippi Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo in Gulfport.

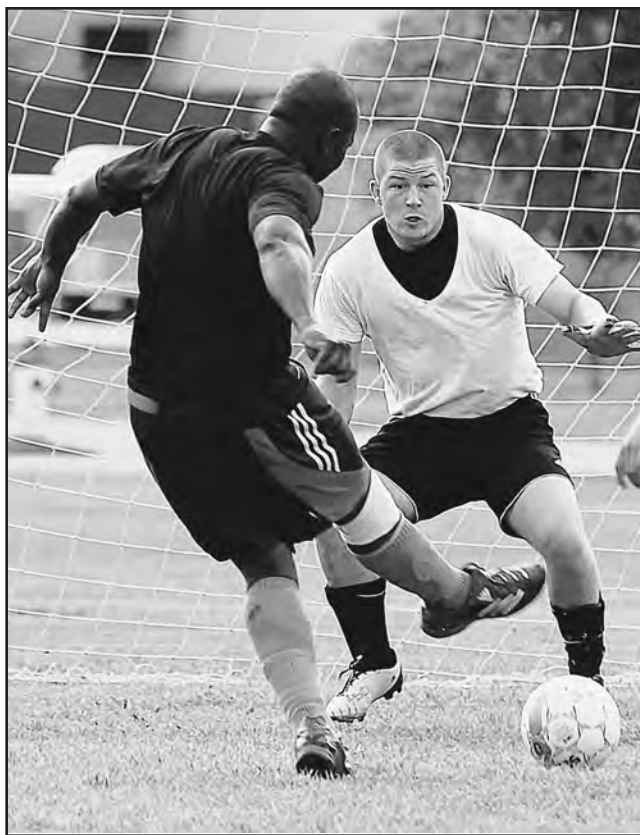
Courtesy photo



From left, Steven Haro, 334th Training Squadron, and Douglas Purinton, 335th TRS, battle for the ball Monday as 335th TRS goalie Justin Nacol prepares to defend.

## Soccer sizzles

Mohamed Barry, 335th TRS, kicks the ball into the net past 334th TRS goalie Zane Stenz for the first point of one of Monday's intramural soccer matches. The 334th TRS claimed the win, 6-3. This is the second week of the season. The other nine teams are the 338th TRS-A, B and C teams; 336th TRS-A and B teams; 332nd TRS, 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron, 81st Medical Support Squadron and Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit.



Photos by Kemberly Groue  
Craig Reinwald, 334th TRS, gains control of the ball to make a pass in Monday's intramural contest against the 335th TRS.