



KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train to Fight. Train to Win.

FEB. 16, 2012 VOL. 73 NO. 7



Mardi Gras parade rolls through 81st Training Group

Page 5

Make the most of education services

Page 4

Environmental, safety inspection

Page 12

Revival of Tuskegee Airman chapter

Page 16

INSIDE

Commentary, 2-3 Training and Education, 4-7 News and Features, 8-21 Sports and Recreation, 22-23

www.keesler.af.mil

COMMENTARY

Saving \$ takes discipline, patience, persistence

By Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller

81st Training Wing commander

“A penny saved is a penny earned” rings as true with me today as it did in 1976 when I started my first job as a caddie at a local golf course. Back then, I could bring home \$10 a day — all cash. Had I started saving just one day’s wages a week in 1976, today I would have \$18,720 — cash! And according to my wife, had we started saving just one day of our Air Force pay per month in 1985, we would have \$53,119 today! Wow — saving money a little at a time can certainly add up.

As Airmen, personnel financial security is an important part of our mission readiness. Being financially able to meet additional and unplanned expenses that can result from the uniqueness of military service is the key to being fit to fight. Controlling expenses, improving credit scores and starting and sustaining a disciplined savings program are all components of financial security. Saving now can ensure you have the money needed when unexpected or unplanned expenses arise.

To assist military personnel and their families in understanding the

Military Saves Week Proclamation

WHEREAS, personal and household savings are fundamental to stability and vitality of our nation; and

WHEREAS, adequate emergency savings, retirement funds, and safe debt-income ratios are critical components of personal financial security; and

WHEREAS, personal financial security of service members is a crucial aspect of military readiness; and

WHEREAS, Keesler is a partner in the Military Saves campaign and is committed to helping its military family members — Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen — to take immediate financial action to build wealth, not debt;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Brig. Gen. Andrew M. Mueller, Keesler commander, do hereby proclaim the week of Feb. 19-26, 2012, as Military Saves Week at Keesler.

value of saving money and adopting long-term financial goals, the Department of Defense implemented a financial readiness campaign. An important focus of this campaign is the importance of saving your money. The “Military Saves” program was started to persuade, encourage and motivate service members and their families, as well as the wider military community, to take financial action to control their expenses and build their wealth through disciplined savings. The Department of Defense has partnered with the Consumer Federation

of America to support military saves activities. The CFA has a useful website at www.militarysaves.org.

DOD has designated Feb. 19-26 as “Military Saves Week.” While the Military Saves program is a year-long effort, Military Saves Week is a dedicated opportunity for you to focus in on your personal finances and **take action** to improve your financial readiness — by starting or continue a disciplined program to save your hard-earned dollars!

Our airman and family readiness center coordinates activities to support our Military Saves campaign here at

Keesler. Seminars on topics such as budgeting, investing and savings are scheduled for Feb. 22-23. A schedule is included on Page 15 of this newspaper. In addition, one-on-one consultations with an accredited financial counselor from Military Family Life are available all week. Don’t miss these opportunities to improve your financial readiness — call the A&FRC at 376-8728 and get started saving.

Also, I’d encourage everyone to use Military Saves Week to review the opportunities to save for the future through the Thrift Savings Plan. TSP is a convenient method to make monthly payroll deductions to save your money. Depending on your financial situation, TSP contributions may also present a tax advantage by deferring tax on the income you place in your TSP.

While I never made \$18,000 lugging golf clubs, I did learn about discipline, patience and persistence on the golf course. These are key qualities for starting and sustaining a successful personal savings program. I encourage everyone to use next week to review their financial readiness. Looking back, saving \$53,119 would have been easy!

Teens can have dangerous relationships, too

By Paula Spooner

Family advocacy outreach manager

February is the month for lovers, but it’s also Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

Setting aside an entire month to boost awareness reflects our growing understanding that violence within relationships often begins during adolescence. In the United States, teens and young women experience the highest rates of relationship violence of any other group. This should be of particular concern for parents, given that adolescence is already such a vulnerable, impressionable time.

Abuse in peer relationships can negatively impact development, and teens who experience dating violence may suffer long-term behavioral and health consequences. Adolescents in controlling or violent relationships are also at higher risk for carrying these dangerous and unhealthy patterns into future relationships. Consider these facts:

- About one in three high school students have been or will be involved in an abusive relationship.
- Forty percent of teenage girls ages 14 to 17 say they know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.
- In one study, from 30 to 50 percent of female



high school students reported having already experienced teen dating violence.

Over the years, I’ve talked to teens and parents about their perceptions regarding this issue. On one hand, the candid feedback I hear from teens is sometimes frightening. On the other, some parents are in denial about what is happening in their communities.

For example, teens will admit experiencing abuse, yet will offer numerous reasons why they feel they could never approach their parents for support. Talk to those parents, however, and they will confidently declare that their child is definitely not being victimized. How are they sure? Because their child would most certainly confide in them; an “open door” policy has always been emphasized in their home.

This perceptual disconnect is scary for several

reasons. First, the relationship violence that may be taking root flourishes in silence and isolation. It can spiral out of control quickly and unpredictably. Second, most teens don’t yet possess the depth of maturity to make wise, safe decisions about their romantic relationships. Last, many adults — let alone youth — have little knowledge about the availability of resources and support in their communities. This knowledge can become a safety net around a teen who makes the painful decision to flee from a volatile situation, or one whose self-worth has been systematically diminished. Parental denial can be downright dangerous in these circumstances.

I think at least part of the answer to this communication dilemma can be answered by parents in the form of improved education. When we educate ourselves, we begin to consider those admittedly frightening possibilities that ultimately increase our kids’ safety. It won’t always be easy, but I promise you won’t regret it.

For example, if you have been concerned about your teen, think about any changes since becoming involved in a particular relationship, or over a set peri-

Please see **Spooner**, Page 3

Train, Care, Innovate ... Developing Combat Power for Air, Space and Cyberspace



ON THE COVER

Jo and Lt. Col. Jeffrey McLemore, 334th Training Squadron commander, throw beads to the Airmen lining the parade route between Thomson Hall and Matero Hall during the 81st Training Group Mardi Gras parade Friday. For the second year, the 336th Training Squadron hosted the event at Keesler. Parades continue through Gulf Coast communities through Tuesday, Mardi Gras Day. More photos, Page 5

Photo by Kemberly Groue



Photo by Master Sgt. John Long

DRAGONS THAT I MEET

By Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller

81st Training Wing commander

The Keesler First Sergeants Council recognizes young Airmen for outstanding professionalism and dedication to duty with the “Diamond Sharp” award.

One of last week’s recipients is Airman 1st Class Darya Blaylock, a career development representative in the 81st Force Support Squadron. She joined the Air Force last year and attended the personnel apprentice course in the 335th Training Squadron. Keesler is her first assignment. She provides information to Air Force members on promotion, assignments, retirement, separation and other vital programs. She found time to volunteer as a tutor for the BOOST program at Pass Road Elementary School in Gulfport.

Our people are our most valuable resource. I’m proud that Airman Blaylock is a part of Team Keesler.

Spooner, from Page 2

od of time. Then ask yourself whether your teen:

- Has had bruises or other physical injuries that are unusual or don’t match the explanation of how the injury happened.
- Has had a change in personality – particularly if an outgoing and upbeat teen has become quiet and withdrawn.
- Has started to have problems at school.

- Has stopped hanging out with friends and started spending all free time with a romantic partner.

- Can’t seem to make independent decisions.
 - Has had a sudden change in appearance or clothing style.
 - Has started using drugs or alcohol.
 - Has gotten pregnant.
- Forced sex can be a part of an abusive relationship.
- Has started showing signs of stress, such as appetite changes, changes in sleep pattern, changes in

mood – particularly being down, depressed, or anxious.

- Has changed usage patterns of telephone, Internet, cell phone or other technology.

Your teen may be harassed, abused or intimidated by a dating partner through any of these technologies.

If you see any of these signs, don’t be shy — talk to your teen about how the relationship is going. Listen, don’t judge. If help is needed breaking it off, seek support from family advocacy, the Gulf Coast Women’s Center for

Non-Violence or a mental health professional. If there are clear signs of abuse and your teen is denying the situation, don’t “wait and see” what happens. Immediately contact one of these resources and get advice on what to do next.

Teen dating abuse must be taken seriously. If you suspect that your teen is being abused, get help as soon as possible. Your teen’s well-being depends on it.

For more information, call family advocacy, 376-3457.

KEESLER NEWS

**81st Training Wing
commander**

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller

Public affairs director

Jerry Taranto

Deputy director

1st Lt. Victoria Porto

Editor

Susan Griggs

Photojournalist

Kemberly Groue

Writer/graphic designer

Steve Hoffmann

Public affairs staff

Staff Sgt.

Kimberly Moore

Senior Airman

Eric Summers Jr.

Airman 1st Class

Heather Heiney

Tim Coleman

Joel Van Nice

YoLanda Wallace

The Keesler News office is in Room 201A, Wall Studio, Building 0902. The mailing address: 81TRW/PAIN, Keesler AFB, MS 39534-2120. Phone: 377-4130, 3837, 3163 or 9966. Published Thursday. News deadline: noon Monday. Editorial content edited, prepared and provided by the 81st TRW Public Affairs Office is in compliance with Air Force journalistic standards. Photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

The Keesler News is published by Gulf Publishing Co., a private firm in no way connected with the Air Force, under an exclusive written contract with the 81st TRW as an authorized publication for U.S. military service members. Contents aren’t necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense or Air Force. Advertising doesn’t constitute endorsement by the U.S. government, DOD, Air Force or Gulf Publishing of products or services advertised. Everything advertised shall be available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor.



Use your smart phone QR code application to view this issue and the online Keesler News archives.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Education office helps Airmen learn, succeed

By Airman 1st Class
Heather Heiney

Keesler Public Affairs

Education is no longer optional. Whether it's through formal training, on-the-job training, a traditional college or online, it is impossible to succeed without continual learning. Keesler's education office is here to help military members achieve that success.

A few services the education office offers are educational counseling, proctored testing, tuition assistance processing, satellite reception of distance learning classes, education records updating for enlisted members (officers must go through the Air Force Institute of Technology) and assistance with commissioning programs.

Also, members of the education office are available to give briefings at commander's calls or for any organization that needs more information about continuing education.

There are four civilian colleges that offer classes on base — Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, William Carey University, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and the University of Southern Mississippi. Classes are generally held Monday through Friday in the evenings.

"Education is important because it opens opportunities," Darryl Rink, CFC services support manager said. "If you have education and experience together you're a step ahead of the next person."

One benefit that all enlisted Air Force members receive is enrollment into the largest community college in the world, the Community College of the Air Force. During basic training, members choose their Air Force Specialty Code which determines the career field in which they'll be placed. Once that AFSC is chosen, members are placed into one of the more than 80 corresponding



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Airman 1st Class Keith Hankins, 81st Training Wing, has his progress toward earning his Community College of the Air Force associate degree reviewed by Harry Reichner, CSC education counselor, at the education office in Sablich Center.

CCAF degree programs.

Harry Reichner, CSC education services counselor, said that at any given time there are more than 300,000 people enrolled in CCAF.

To complete the degree, the member must complete 64 credits total — four in physical education, 24 in technical education, six in management, 15 in program elective, and 15 in general education. The physical education requirement is automatically fulfilled upon the completion of basic training, technical education is fulfilled through the completion of technical training and career development courses and management is fulfilled through the completion of airman leadership school. That only leaves

30 credits in program electives and general education.

"There are a lot of enlisted people out there that are closer to a degree than they think," Rink said.

There are two graduation cycles every year, in April and October. The number of Keesler graduates ranges from 120-200 per cycle. The deadline to submit all required documentation is the last Friday of every February and August.

Reichner said that many people don't realize that the CCAF is accredited by the Southeastern Association of Colleges and Schools — the same organization that grants accreditation to civilian colleges in an 11-state region.

"I know the Air Force gives good training," Reichner said, "I would stack it up against any civilian two-year college."

If planned properly with the use of tuition assistance, a member can complete a CCAF or other associate degree, or even a bachelor's degree, for free within his or her first enlistment. Active-duty members are allotted \$4,500 per year for education.

Becky Scott, CSC education services counselor, said that there are commissioning programs available for enlisted personnel based on their interests, qualifications, and future endeavors. The most common options are Basic Officer Training and the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps.

"I often tell members about

the risk of applying to be an officer prematurely," Scott said. "For the Airmen who have less than five years active-duty service and are within the age requirement, should consider getting more experience, studying more for the (Air Force Officer Qualifying Test) and completing their bachelor's degree before submitting a package to become an officer."

"Education is important because it allows one to have choices whether military or civilian," Scott said.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office is in Room 224, Sablich Center. For more information, call 377-8708 or visit the Virtual Education Center on the Air Force Portal.

Mardi Gras madness hits Keesler



Photos by Kemberly Groue
Three-year-old Madalyn Cooper, daughter of Tech. Sgt. Stephen and Tonya Cooper, 336th Training Squadron, waits for more floats to pass during the 81st Training Group Mardi Gras parade Friday between Thomson and Matero Halls. The 336th TRS sponsored the festivities.



Tech. Sgt. Joseph Dill, right, 336th TRS, dressed as "Hulk Hogan," and other squadron members portray professional wrestlers from the 1980s.



Lt. Col. Brian Worth, 336th TRS commander, teases the crowd with a strand of beads.



Airman Basic Jalen Edmonds, 336th TRS, catches some air and some beads as they're tossed from the floats rolling through the parade route.

23 graduate from ALS

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

Twenty-three members graduated Friday from Airman Leadership School.

Members of Class 12-2 are:
81st Communications Squadron — Senior Airman Christian Louer

81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron — Petty Officer 3rd Class John Moore; Senior Airmen Teresa Adens, Jacqueline Cromartie (academic award) and Nathan Wagner.

81st Force Support Squadron — Senior Airman LaShanda Brown.

81st Inpatient Operations Squadron — Senior Airman Dominique Cole.

81st Medical Operations Squadron — Senior Airmen Nicole Moriarty and Robert Toth (distinguished graduate).

81st Mission Support Group — Staff Sgt. John Wright.

81st Security Forces Squadron — Staff Sgt. Christopher Burk (Levitow Award); Senior Airmen Tera Burk, Justin Gachett, Elvin Jose, Jordan Nestor, John Rice, David Schlothau and Jesseca Whittaker.

81st Surgical Operations Squadron — Senior Airman Whitney Miller.

85th Engineering Installation Squadron — Senior Airmen Brandon McDonough and Justin Rae (commandant's award).

345th Airlift Squadron — Senior Airmen Maryanne Cooper and Phillip Hernandez.

Annual technology expo offers wide range of products

Elaine Liner, WolfVision regional sales manager, lets Master Sgt. Jay Cook, 335th Training Squadron, control a high-definition camera used for training during a technology expo, Feb. 9 at the Roberts Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Facility. The 17th annual free expo, hosted by the 81st Training Support Squadron, featured more than 40 exhibitors.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



Don't drink and drive.

Call Airmen Against Drunk Driving, 377-SAVE,
for a safe ride home.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

Drill downs, parades

The 81st Training Group's drill down and parade schedule for 2012 is:

Drill downs — 8 a.m. Friday, April 13, June 22 and Aug. 31; 5 p.m. Oct. 31 (tentative).

Parades — 6 p.m. March 29 and July 1.

MGCCC-Keesler term

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College's Keesler Center's spring term is Feb. 27 through May 11.

Registration is underway for current students on the web, as well as by appointment in the MGCCC-Keesler office, Room

221, Sablich Center for active-duty military.

Students taking English composition I, oral communication or mathematics class for the first time must have an assessment of skills.

Printed copies of the schedule are available at the office or online at www.mgccc.edu.

For more information, call 376-8477 or 897-3822.

CCAF graduation

Feb. 24 is the deadline to apply for the Community College of the Air Force's spring graduating class.

By that date, all supporting documentation must be on file at CCAF at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., including your nomination action request.

For more information, visit the education services office, Room 224, Sablich Center, or call 376-8708 or 8710.

KSC scholarships

Applications are now being accepted for 2012 Keesler Spouses Club Scholarships.

Eligible applicants include high school seniors entering a college, university or vocational studies as well as spouses pursuing a degree or vocational studies.

For applications and more eligibility information, visit www.keeslerspousesclub.com, call 210-825-2273 or email scholarships@keeslerspousesclub.com.

The deadline is April 2.

OTS boards

Officer Training School recruiting service board dates:

Non-rated — March 1 cut-off for April 16.

Hap Arnold grants

March 9 is the application deadline for Air Force Aid Society \$2,000 grants for undergraduate studies through the Gen. Henry H. Arnold educational grant program.

Visit www.afas.org for information and to access the online application.

Grants are available to selected sons and daughters of active duty, Title 10 active

Guard/Reserve members on extended active duty, Title 32 AGR performing full-time active duty, retired, retired Reservists with 20 or more qualifying years of service, and deceased Air Force members; spouses (residing state-side) of active duty and Title 10 AGR/ Reservists on extended active duty; and surviving spouses of deceased.

Tuition assistance

Effective April 1, students who want to use Air Force tuition assistance must ensure their school has signed the Department of Defense memorandum of understanding.

Tuition assistance submitted for non-participating schools won't be approved and is currently unwaiverable.

For more information or to check on participating schools, visit www.dodmou.com.

CALT program

The Civilian Acculturation and Leadership Program is a two-week in-residence course patterned after the Officer Training School curriculum.

CALT is open to Air Force civilians in permanent General Service 7-13 with a bachelor's degree and two to five years experience. Applications are open on a continuing basis.

Nominees can apply by completing the Air Force Civilian Competitive Development Nomination Form.

Classes are open until all seats are filled.

For more information, call 376-8161 or log on to Air Force Personnel Services.

Manager certification

The Community College of the Air Force awards professional manager certification that recognizes an individual's advanced level of education and experience in leadership and management, as well as professional accomplishments.

For more information, log on to <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/certifications.asp> or call 376-8708 or 8710.

NEWS AND FEATURES

Fiscal 2013 budget released

By Tech. Sgt. Richard Williams

Air Force Public Affairs Agency

WASHINGTON — The Air Force released its fiscal 2013 budget Monday and stressed the need for difficult budgetary cuts to meet the new defense strategy while maintaining the service's agility, flexibility and readiness.

The Air Force is requesting \$154.3 billion in the president's 2013 budget, a reduction of five percent from the \$162.5 billion the service received in fiscal 2012.

"The Air Force made some very difficult choices," said Maj. Gen. Edward L. Bolton Jr., the deputy assistant secretary for budget. "But it was our priority to tightly align with the new strategy and also stay within the fiscal environment as a result of the realities we are facing economically."

The Air Force Strategic Choices and Budget Priorities paper, released by Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz Jan. 27, calls for streamlining of the force, making it smaller and more efficient with care to not create a hollow force.

Under the Budget Control Act, the Defense Department is required to reduce expenditures by \$487 billion over the next 10 years with a reduction of \$259 billion over the next five.

"It is worth noting that our budget has reduced by 12 percent in real terms since FY09," Bolton said. "So we have seen a consistent trend of reductions in the budget."

"The Air Force budget portion of the Budget Control Act reductions over the next five years is \$54 billion," Bolton said.

The Air Force's portion is not a result of simply dividing responsibility between the services. Instead, the budget amount is strategy driven, while maintaining a properly equipped force with the ability to deter, deny and defeat an opportunistic aggressor in a combined cam-

paigned any time, anywhere, he added.

"The strategy requires a different force structure and different tools; the Air Force is realigning the total force to address the future," Bolton said.

The service has drawn down many times in the past, but never as a nation still at war. Previous size reductions focused more on maintaining force structure, which left the Air Force with a hollow force, he said.

"It is really about balancing risk among the themes of force structure, readiness, modernization and taking care of our people," Bolton said. "We have sized the force to the strategy within the fiscal constraints we are facing."

The Air Force is looking at a nearly \$3 billion reduction in procurement cost because the service divested and is purchasing less hardware. Also, there is a reduction of about \$500 million in research, development, testing and evaluation, but the Air Force continued its focus on modernizing key components that will maintain the service's technological edge, Bolton said.

"Funding for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and space remain a priority," he added. "We will continue to develop programs in ISR ensuring we are supplying this skill set to the joint warfighter and coalition partners."

According to Bolton, funding also remains in place for the F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter — the centerpiece for future modernization to be able to prevail in contested environments.

"Ensuring fiscal goals are met and fleet modernization continues are only half of the goal in the new strategy," said Bolton. "Taking care of Airmen and their families is a key component and cannot get lost in talking of mere numbers."

"We are reducing the force by 9,900 Airmen, which will reduce the end strength of

active duty, Guard and Reserve to around a 501,000 total force," he said. "This allows us to appropriately size the force structure to the strategy and hardware we are going to have in the inventory."

The Air Force is proposing a 1.7 percent military pay raise in fiscal 2013 and a 4.2 percent raise in basic allowance for housing and 3.4 percent raise in the basic allowance for subsistence as a continuing growth of compensation for service.

"We are budgeting more than \$700 million for family programs including child and youth programs and child development centers," Bolton said. "We will continue to take care of our folks; we just need to ensure it is being done efficiently under tighter fiscal constraints."

Housing is a key ingredient to taking care of Airmen and the Air Force is close to reaching its goal of 53,000 privatized housing units force-wide with over 40,000 units in place and the remaining units to be ready in fiscal 2013.

"We've increased our family housing budget by \$93 million and this will allow us to meet our goal," Bolton said. "Completing this transition is important because we have found through privatization we are able to increase the quality of housing for our Airmen and their families."

Looking back to the 2011 requirements — military action and support in Iraq and Afghanistan, supporting NATO missions in Libya, along with humanitarian support to Japan following a major earthquake — Bolton reinforced the reach and responsibility placed on today's Airmen and emphasized the importance of providing them the tools required for a versatile force.

"We will continue to do everything we can to provide them with the tools they need to continue to be the best Air Force in the world for decades to come," Bolton said.

IN THE NEWS

Early Keesler News deadline

The deadline for the Feb. 23 issue of the Keesler News is noon today because of Monday's Presidents Day federal holiday and Tuesday's Mardi Gras holiday on Feb. 21 observed by the newspaper's commercial publisher.

Wing annual awards Feb. 23

The 81st Training Wing annual awards ceremony on Feb. 23 begins with a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

Attire is mess dress or semi-formal for military and semi-formal for civilians, said Senior Master Sgt. Derek Fromenthal, project officer for the event.

Tickets are available until Feb. 16 for \$17 for club members and \$20 for nonmembers. Group representatives are Senior Master Sgt. Jason Hanley, 376-0449, 81st Medical Group; Master Sgt. Shawn Robertson, 377-3456; Senior Master Sgt. Valencia Parker-Evans, 377-9011, 81st Training Wing staff agencies; and Master Sgt. John Bowden, 377-3034.

National Prayer Breakfast

Keesler observes the National Prayer Breakfast, 7 a.m. March 6 at Bay Breeze Event Center.

Team Impact returns this year for the interfaith program. Team Impact's unique method of ministry uses the physical talents of elite athletes to demonstrate a spiritual message.

For tickets, see your first sergeant or visit Larcher Chapel. For more information, call 377-2520 or 4859.

AETC family days

Air Education and Training Command family days for the remainder of 2012, 2013 and 2014 are:

2012 — May 25, July 5, Nov. 23 and Dec. 24.

2013 — May 24, July 5, Nov. 29 and Dec. 26.

2014 — May 23, July 7, Nov. 28 and Dec. 26.

For military members required to perform duty during these holidays, commanders are encouraged to grant compensatory time off during the first week following the holiday, mission requirements permitting.

For civilians, commanders can encourage liberal leave, use previously earned compensatory time or use already approved time-off awards. Group time off awards, specifically for the purpose of giving time off, are prohibited by Air Force Instruction 36-1004.

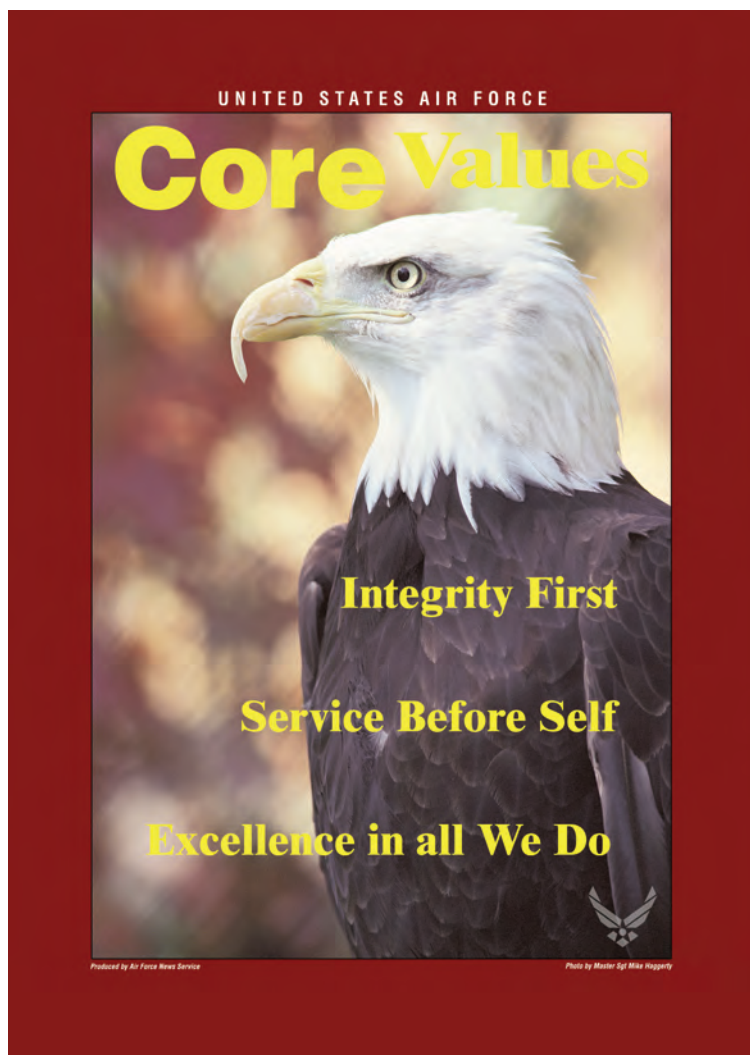
Wing calendar event planning

The 81st Training Wing events calendar at <http://www.keesler.af.mil/events/index.asp> is designed to help organizers avoid conflicts with other scheduled events.

Once an official date is set, event planners should send details to 81trw.pa@us.af.mil. Most items are posted within one business day. Items that must be included are the name of event, date, time, location and a point of contact.

Events should be coordinated and approved through respective chains of command and be mission-relevant to a wide audience. All inputs are subject to review and editing by the 81st Training Wing Public Affairs office.

Dragons deployed — 194



Chapel student ministry NCO wins chaplain assistant award

By Steve Hoffmann

Keesler News staff

Staff Sgt. Tawny Crutcher, 81st Training Wing noncommissioned officer in charge of student ministry, is the recipient of Air Education and Training Command's Charles R. Meier Award for outstanding chaplain assistant NCO for 2011.

Crutcher directed a \$200,000 facility renovation and technical upgrades to religious education. She created and implemented a nonprior service student senior leader perspective. She eliminated wasteful procurement steps by streamlining and reorganizing the ordering of wor-

ship supplies.

Crutcher conducted 165 crisis intervention counseling sessions, helping Airmen maintain resiliency and spiritual fitness. In the Air Force's battle against suicide, Crutcher briefed 4,000 Airmen on suicide awareness and prevention playing an instrumental role in leading Keesler to zero suicides being reported for 2011.

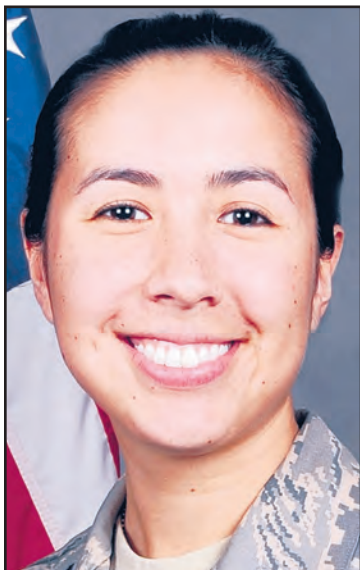
Crutcher was the Air Force Sergeants Association's top recruiter garnering 306 new members. She also led the NPS student volunteer program and is involved in various other bas and community volunteer organizations.



Crutcher

Exceptions to Keesler's **25 mph** speed limit:
15 mph in housing areas, flight line and unpaved surfaces;
10 mph near marching formations and when waved through base gates;
5 mph in parking lots;
 and **35 mph** in some sections of perimeter roads.

Keesler PA officer wins web award in AFSOC contest



First Lt. Victoria Porto, deputy director of the 81st Training Wing Public Affairs Office, was an award winner for web design in the 2011 Air Force Special Operations Command Media Contest. The lieutenant, formerly assigned to the 1st Operations Wing Public Affairs Office at Hurlburt Field, Fla., shared the team award with Staff Sgts. Ryan Whitney and William Banton and Tech. Sgt. Stacia Zachary. Porto, who was commissioned in 2009 from the University of Virginia, came to Keesler last September and deployed to Southwest Asia in December to serve as the public affairs chief for the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.



This week's movies at Welch Theater

Friday — 6:30 p.m.,
Mission Impossible: Ghost
Protocol (OG-13).

Saturday — 2 p.m., Joy-
ful Noise (PG-13); 6:30
p.m., War Horse (PG-13).

Sunday — 1 p.m., The
Adventures of Tintin (PG-13).

PERSONNEL NOTES

Special duty team here March 5

81st Force Support Squadron

Special duty assignment team briefings by a recruiting team from Air Education and Training Command are scheduled at Keesler March 5:

9-11 a.m. — Sablich Center Auditorium, 2nd floor.

11 a.m. to noon — Sablich Center Auditorium for senior leaders such as commanders, superintendents, first sergeants and Top III members.

2:30-3:30 p.m. — Room GC612, Keesler Hospital, for 81st Medical Group members.

4-5 p.m. — Welch Auditorium.

Briefers discuss opportunities for recruiters, military training instructors, military training leaders and professional military education instructors.

Spouses are highly encouraged to attend. Senior airmen with at least 35 months time in service through master sergeants with less than 16 years total active federal military service may be eligible to apply and are encouraged to attend a briefing. Since each specialty has some varied rank needs and requirements the briefings are open to everyone on base.

The team will also be recruiting first sergeants. For qualification and eligibility standards for prospective first sergeants and information about the other specialties being recruited, call 377-3697.

WAPS testing cycle

81st Force Support Squadron

The 12E6 and E7 Weighted Airman Promotion System testing cycle continues through March 31.

Contact your unit WAPS monitor if you have not received a test date for this current cycle or haven't received your WAPS specialty knowledge test study materials.

The online 2011 Professional Development Guide is currently an approved official reference for WAPS testing and can be found at the Airman Advancement Division website on its professional development page at <https://www.omsq.af.mil/index.htm>.

Transition assistance

Airman and family readiness center

Transition assistance program workshops have been scheduled for 2012 in Room 108A, Sablich Center, according to Steve McDaniel, transition assistance program specialist at the airman and family readiness center.

Workshops are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. March 12-15, April 9-12, May 14-17, June 11-14, July 16-19, Aug. 12-16, Sept. 17-20, Oct. 15-17, Nov. 26-29 and Dec. 13.

The final day of the workshop includes Veterans Affairs briefings and retirement briefings.

Dress is business casual — no jeans, T-shirts or uniforms.

For more information or to register, call 376-8728.

Military personnel contacts

Military personnel section phone numbers:

Customer support — 376-8738.

Career development — 376-8739.

Force management — 376-8368.

Student personnel center — 377-4332.

Testing — 376-4111.

Use-or-lose leave guidance

For guidance on special leave accrual for members in use-or-lose leave status, call the military personnel section's customer service element, 376-8347 or 8348.

ESOH CAMP

Keesler prepares for inspection on environmental, occupational health

Environmental office

Keesler is preparing for an external Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health Compliance Assessment and Management Program inspection March 5-9.

The assessment is a wide-ranging audit covering facets of base activities with the potential to impact the environment, as well as a review of occupational health and safety protocols.

The inspection team will consist of military, civilian and contractor personnel from Air Education and Training Command who will conduct a compliance assessment as well as an audit of the base's Environmental Management System. The EMS provides an overall management system for policy development, organizational structure, planning, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes, and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining programs for meeting environmental goals.

The ESOHCAMP will

monitor for standard regulatory compliance issues associated with Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Air Force and state environmental, safety and health requirements. Shop supervisors and workers can expect to be checked for compliance in environmental areas such as air emissions, hazardous materials, hazardous waste, fuel storage tanks, drinking water and wastewater.

Occupational health and safety inspections will also be conducted in areas including chemical hazards, hazard communications, hearing conservation, personal protective equipment and respiratory protection programs.

Shop personnel should also expect to be asked questions about the 81st Training Wing commander's EMS Guidance. The guidance emphasizes compliance with laws and regulations, minimization and elimination of wastes and the release of pollutants, conservation of natural resources

through recycling and conserving energy, seeking continual improvement and implementation of the EMS throughout all organizations.

Units can also expect generalized questions about the installation's environmental management plans and steps being taken to achieve objectives of those EMPs, as well as questions about each individual's own shop regulations and environmental impacts. Other questions will focus on worker knowledge of compliance with energy conservation measures, methods used to conserve fuel, and efforts to find alternative products to prevent generation of hazardous waste.

Checklists and questionnaires are available on Keesler's eDASH site to assist supervisors and workers in preparing Keesler personnel for this ESOHCAMP inspection. The eDASH page can be accessed from the Keesler Portal web page.

For more information, call the environmental section, 377-1262.



ENERGY AWARENESS

Energy conservation helps create and maintain a clean environment, reduces pollution and our dependence on foreign oil, and helps the Air Force meet its federal goals. Here's how you can help:

- Turn off lights in unoccupied offices or rooms
- Replace inefficient incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs
- Turn off monitors, printers and fax machines when leaving at the end of the day
- Buy "Energy Star" labeled appliances and products
- Install programmable thermostats to set lower temperatures in unoccupied areas
- Make sure broken windows are reported and everything is caulked and sealed as appropriate
- Recycle. Recycling paper can save one tree per 16.5 reams of paper; recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a television for three hours
- Styrofoam is not recyclable -- use coffee mugs instead

Make energy awareness
a part of your day ... everyday

Photo by Ian Duke

Airman promotion study material now available online for testing

AETC Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — The Air Force now offers Career Development Course volumes online for use as promotion study material. The volumes offered online are those identified in the Enlisted Promotions References and Requirements Catalog as study references for Weighted Airman Promotion System testing.

The online library provides Airmen the opportunity to download those study materials for use on electronic devices. It also offers enhancements for visual learning.

"We wanted to create a site where Airmen can download the most current WAPS CDC study materials in a simple and easy-to-use format," said Dwayne Hafer of Air Education and Training Command's

airman advancement division.

As the site continues to develop, historical versions of the CDCs will be added so Airmen testing out of cycle will be able to access the appropriate materials for the cycle they're competing in, Hafer said.

"Anything that makes our study materials more accessible is helpful," said Staff Sgt. Stacey Stallard, Headquarters AETC commander's support staff. "I already use the online (Professional Development Guide) on my smart phone, so having my CDCs available too will be good."

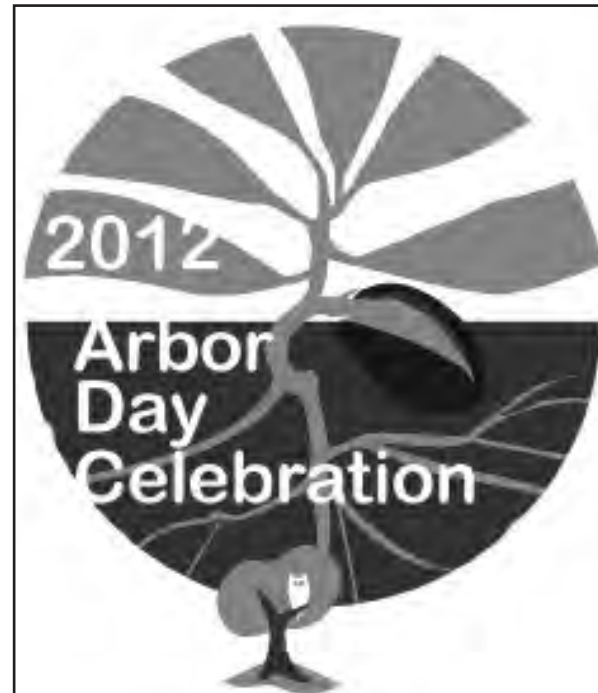
The library is available to .mil users only at <http://cdc.aetc.af.mil>. Once downloaded to their military desktop, Airmen can e-mail the documents or burn them to a CD in order to transfer them to a personal electronic

device. The complete Enlisted Promotions References and Requirements Catalog is also available online at <https://www.omsq.af.mil/TE/EPTRC.pdf> along with the Professional Development Guide at <https://www.omsq.af.mil/PD/>.

The electronic volumes are provided as a secondary or alternative source for WAPS testing materials. Hafer said current plans are for Airmen to continue to receive hardcopies of their CDCs in the usual manner.

The WAPS CDC study material library is not identical to the Air University online library used for Airmen in upgrade training, Hafer said. Those Airmen in upgrade training still need to contact their unit training manager to obtain access to their CDCs.

Keesler observes Arbor Day



Environmental office

Arbor Day, a national observance that encourages tree planting and care, is observed at Keesler Feb. 23.

A 9:30 a.m. ceremony at the child development center includes a tree planting by Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, 81st Training Wing commander.

The ceremony also includes the Tree City USA Award presentation that Keesler is receiving for the 19th consecutive year. The award recognizes the importance and priority Keesler places on good management of its trees, along with commitment of budgetary resources. Representatives from the Mississippi Urban Forest Council, the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, the Harrison County Beautification Commission and the City of Biloxi are expected at the presentation.

In case of rain, the ceremony is held at the youth center.

For more information, call 377-1262.

For lost and found items, call the
81st Security Forces Squadron investigations office,
377-4500, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Contracting officer invaluable on deployments

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

Master Sgt. Donald Crawford traded his camouflage uniform for a crisp business suit and tie to tackle his duties as a contracting warrior during a recent six-month deployment to Southwest Asia.

In today's Air Force, contracting officials are more than paper-pushers — they're in an undermanned career field with frequent deployments, traveling "outside the wire" with armed guards and building partnerships with foreign nationals.

"One of the only reasons we have enlisted members in this career field is to deploy," said Crawford, who came to Keesler just over a year ago as superintendent of the 81st Contracting Squadron. "We have a valuable commodity here — contingency contracting officers — that the other services can't provide. The Army is huge, but we're still providing 70 percent of the CCOs in theater. At the assignment I just left, 80 percent of the force was Army, but 100 percent of the contingency contracting force was Air Force."

Crawford joined the Air Force in 1993. He cross-trained from the supply career field 12 years ago.

For this deployment, Crawford was based with a special operations unit in Qatar and forward deployed to multiple locations where he was safer not wearing a uniform. Since 1996, he's served in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jeddah, Iraq and Afghanistan, too.

"This deployment was really amazing and allowed me to visit countries that as an American I never dreamed of seeing," he said.

There are several reasons why contracting is a "stressed" career field that offers significant reenlistment bonuses. There's a six-month dwell time, meaning members can expect to be deployed again after six months back at home. Also, contracting pro-



Courtesy photo

Crawford, second from left, meets with Tajik officials as he finalized requirements for a \$700,000 deworming contract financed by the U.S. State Department. The program provided vaccinations for more than 7 million people.

fessionals can command much larger salaries outside the military, so many leave long before retirement.

"The Air Force has invested a lot of money in this career field, and we're trying to train a lot of people," Crawford said. "Our schoolhouse has tripled at Lackland (Air Force Base, Texas), but that pool wouldn't mature fast enough, so the E-6s and E-7s are still stressed. The big reenlistment bonuses are a way to 'incentivize' these experienced people to stay in."

He's quick to correct the impression that contracting officers are nothing more than "desk jockeys" and believes they're judged more harshly than other career fields because they're dealing with taxpayer money.

"Here's the thing — I'm not the expert on any of these projects," he pointed out. "However, I'm responsible for buying these projects and products, so I have to get out

there to see what I'm buying and learn about it. If a contracting officer just sits behind a desk, there's no way to be successful at the job. What makes us successful is not necessarily how great we are, but the strength of the relationships that we build with our customers."

Now that he's back at Keesler, his deployment experiences and insights are helping his squadron learn and appreciate the critical impacts of contracting support, said Lt. Col. Jonathan Wright, 81st CONS commander.

"On the strategic level, he bolstered public support for coalition efforts from Tajikistan by authoring a country-wide deworming contract," the colonel said. "On the operational level, Sergeant Crawford helped plan two major coalition exercises across 22 countries. Finally, he enabled a rapid tactical execution capability for special operations commandos. His incredible experiences will enrich

our future deploying CCOs."

Crawford said the \$700,000 Tajikistan deworming contract, a U.S. State Department initiative, provided vaccinations for more than 7 million people. More than half of the country's school-aged children are infected with pinworms, roundworms and tapeworms and about 10,000 of them die each year.

"I worked with the equivalent of their country's surgeon general," Crawford said. "Remember, this is a former Russian country — for me to be sitting there, still seeing the Soviet Union signs on the wall, was surreal for me."

"This project is a huge win — they not only see us as visitors at this point, but as an asset," he continued. "You can see the effect we're having on the war on terror by winning the hearts and minds of the people. This area is a major drug route on the Afghan border — these people are more likely to help us

now when we need it."

One of the challenges for Crawford during his most recent deployment was the joint mission in a secure compound. Sometimes conflicts occurred when different cultures clashed.

"My particular unit was a special operations unit and it was our duty to support it," he explained. "The Air Force does things a certain way, Army does things a different way, Navy and Marines, too. We even had Coast Guard forces. When cultures mix, sometimes there's conflict. In the Air Force, we're bred to ask "Why?" and that's not necessarily the same in the other services. It was challenging to understand the things the other services bring to the fight and to have them appreciate what we do."

One of his proudest accomplishments was unifying a contracting team that was struggling with hard feel-

See **Crawford**, Page 15

Military Saves Week features four seminars

Airman and family readiness center

Four seminars are scheduled for next week as part of Military Saves Week, Sunday through Feb. 26.

Wednesday – 1-2 p.m., I Owe, I Owe.

Feb. 23 – 10-11:30 a.m., Budgeting Your Expense and Debt; 11 a.m. to noon, Basic Investing for Your Financial Goals; 1-2 p.m. Advanced Investing for Your Financial Goals; 3-4:30 p.m., Why Savings Matters.

As it enters its sixth year, the Military Saves program has now become an integral part of the Department of Defense's Financial Readiness Campaign.

Military Saves is co-sponsored by



the Consumer Federation of America and the Department of Defense.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Departments of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps and the National Guard Bureau all formally support Military Saves Week.

The goals of Military Saves for serv-

ice members and their families include increased household savings for short- and long-term needs and decreased consumer debt. Military Saves seeks to develop a military command climate and overall culture that supports prudent financial behavior by creating a focus on financial literacy education and counseling; supporting the availability of bank and credit union savings products, especially regular (automatic) deposits and encouraging service members and their families to take financial action to improve their financial well-being.

For more information, call 376-8728.

For more news, photos, videos and information, log on to keesler.af.mil

Crawford,

from Page 14

ings from previous rotations.

“I had a great lieutenant, an academy grad, and I was proud of how I helped that junior officer grow,” Crawford said. “He helped me, too — he was so young and I tend to be set in my ways and he helped me think outside the box. It was a huge undertaking, but by the time I left, we were able to change the environment there together.”

Being separated from a family is one of the toughest things about being deployed, and Crawford said this was one of the harder times for his wife and three children, especially his 11-year-old son. He returned home Dec. 17 in time to enjoy Christmas with his family.

“My wife, Katrice, did a stand-up job,” he said. “Many relationships fail based on frequent deployments, but we have a strong support system. Some wonderful people were there for us. Colonel Wright invested time with my family and did things for my kids like he does for his own children. That speaks to the magnitude of his character.

“But I’m super happy to be home, and there’s nothing like coming back to work with a great team,” he said. “Now I have an opportunity to train other CCOs on what I saw in the field. I’m passionate about this. I want my folks to be the best when they deploy.”

Crawford describes himself as a “Type-A control freak personality,” but his commander portrays him as a “people-first kind of person.”

“Even while deployed, he put people back home at Keesler ahead of his own personal needs,” Wright said. “He’d work a 14- or 15-hour day, yet stay connected with our squadron in a variety of ways such as mentoring Airmen, reviewing award nominations and providing a sounding board.”

“The Air Force has invested a lot of money in me and I’m trying to give them their money’s worth,” Crawford concluded.

Tuskegee legacy honored by serving community

By Senior Airman
Eric Summers Jr.

Keesler Public Affairs

A group of people on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is dedicated to sharing a legacy of Airmen who played a significant role in history while also giving back to the community.

Keesler's Lawrence E. Roberts Gulf Coast Chapter, part of Tuskegee Airmen Inc. shares the stories of some of America's greatest heroes and provides high school students an opportunity to receive a college education.

"We create scholarships for young adults coming out of high school," said Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Jennings, 81st Mission Support Group superintendent and member of the local Tuskegee Airmen chapter. "We target Junior ROTC groups and travel in two-person teams visiting schools to make personal contact with students to make sure they know about our scholarship program."

The chapter members travel to Gautier, Moss Point, Pascagoula, Pearl River, Picayune, Gulfport, D'Iberville, George County, Hancock, Harrison Central, Ocean Springs, West Harrison, Bay High, Biloxi and St. Martin High Schools in Mississippi to educate them on scholarships available through the chapter.

"Our main focus is to provide scholarships to those who would otherwise not have the opportunity to go to college while heightening awareness of the contributions of the Tuskegee Airman," Jennings said. "Our chapter is named after Col. Lawrence E. Roberts, an original Tuskegee Airman stationed here at Keesler."

Roberts began his career at Keesler Field in 1943 as a pre-aviation cadet private and was assigned to the Tuskegee Airmen training program the following year. He retired in 1975, ending his 32 years of service back at Keesler, where he was serving as commander of the maintenance and supply group. He adopted the Missis-



Roberts

sippi Gulf Coast as his home and continued his involvement with Keesler and the surrounding community until his death in 2004. The Roberts Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Facility was dedicated in his memory in 2009.

To raise awareness of their local chapter, members usually talk to students during high school visits, host fundraising events and pass out brochures. But with the opening of the movie "Red Tails," which depicts a group of African-American pilots from the 332nd Fighter Group in 1944 that were sent into combat in Italy, the chapter has found a new way to enlighten others of their cause.

As portrayed in the movie, the Tuskegee Airmen were fighter pilots who provided safe passage for bombers.

It was something to catch the attention of the community, Jennings said. People didn't know that a Tuskegee Airmen chapter exists right here at Keesler and that they could join, the chief said.

That lack of unawareness nearly brought the chapter to an end two years ago.

"We had some of our more senior people who were trying to hold this chapter together and keep the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen going," Jennings said. The chief said that it would have been a travesty to let the chapter, named after a Tuskegee Airman who served on Keesler, fade away after

"If it weren't for people during World War II who looked like me, I don't know if I would have gotten this opportunity to become an Air Force chief as an African-American."

— Jennings

the years of service that many members have put in to it.

"I believe that there was a time in history where these Americans were not recognized and we are now helping to preserve the memories, and not because of the African-American piece -- this is about American history."

In today's Air Force, resiliency, the power or will to bounce back from difficult situations, is needed because Airmen are sometimes put in situations where the outcome is not to their satisfaction. This same principle was instilled in the Tuskegee Airmen back many years ago.

"I think it is phenomenal what they achieved," Jennings said. "I can't sit here and honestly say that I would have the same attitude to put my life on the line, as they did, for a country that did not welcome me."

During the era of the Tuskegee Airmen, the African American pilots not only had to battle in the skies but they also dealt with racism, prejudice and scrutiny by the public, the media and their superiors.

"If it weren't for people during World War II who looked like me, I don't know if I would have gotten this opportunity to become an Air Force chief as an African-American."

According to Jennings, the only requirement to become a member of Keesler's chapter is to be a concerned citizen who wants to continue the legacy and help children get a higher education.

For more information, call 601-213-4780.



Feb. 24 — 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., youth center, soul food sampling. Donations accepted. For more information, call 376-8682.

March 1 — (rescheduled from Feb. 10), noon, Gaudé Lanes, 8th annual AAHC bowling tournament. \$10. For more information, call 377-5250.

Troops, families benefit from foreclosure settlement

By Elaine Sanchez

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Service members and their families are among the Americans who will benefit from a “landmark” \$25 billion foreclosure settlement between the government and banks, federal and state officials said Friday.

The federal government and 49 state attorneys general reached the agreement with

the nation’s five largest mortgage lenders to address mortgage loan servicing and foreclosure abuses. This agreement includes substantial financial compensation for military homeowners — above and beyond the \$25 billion — and sets up significant new protections for troops and their families for the future, officials told reporters during a conference call today.

“On my travels to military

communities across the country during the past year, I have repeatedly heard about the devastating impact of the housing crisis on military homeowners,” said Holly Petraeus, assistant director for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s Office of Servicemember Affairs. “I have spoken out about the unique challenges to service members caught in this current housing crisis, and I am pleased that this settlement addresses those challenges.”

Petraeus, alongside Tom Perez, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department’s civil rights division, and Delaware State Attorney General Beau Biden explained how this settlement will affect distressed homeowners and, in some cases, all military members and their families.

To start, four lenders — JPMorgan Chase & Co., Wells Fargo & Company, Citigroup Inc. and Ally Financial Inc., formerly GMAC — have agreed to conduct a full review, overseen by the civil rights division, to determine whether any service members were foreclosed on in violation of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act since Jan. 1, 2006, Perez explained. The SCRA offers a wide range of financial protections to active duty and deploying service members in areas such as credit card debt and mortgage payments.

For violating the law, Wells Fargo, Citigroup and Ally will be required to provide any service member who was a victim of a wrongful foreclosure a minimum payment of \$116,785, plus the service member’s lost equity and interest, Perez said. The service member’s payment could be higher as a result of the review conducted by banking regulators, he added.

To ensure consistency with an earlier private settlement, JPMorgan Chase will provide service members who were a victim of a wrongful foreclosure either their home free and clear of debt or the cash equivalent of the full value of the home at the time of sale. “In addition,” Perez said, “service

members will receive compensation for any additional harm suffered.”

Citigroup, Wells Fargo and Ally also have agreed to conduct a review to determine whether service members — from Jan. 1, 2008, to present — were charged interest in excess of 6 percent on their mortgage after a valid request to lower the interest rate, in violation of the SCRA, Perez said. Lenders will be required to provide these troops with a payment equal to a refund, with interest, of any amount charged in excess of 6 percent, plus triple the amount refunded or \$500, whichever is greater.

JPMorgan Chase already has compensated service members charged interest in excess of 6 percent on their mortgage through the private settlement, Perez added.

All four lenders have agreed to numerous other measures, he said, including SCRA training for employees and agents. The lenders also will repair any negative credit report entries related to wrongful foreclosures and will not pursue any remaining amounts owed under the mortgages.

The settlement also involves expanded protections for service members and their families.

The SCRA prohibits foreclosures on service members without court orders on mortgages that were originated before military service began. This settlement extends this protection to all service members, regardless of when their mortgage was secured, if they were receiving hostile fire or imminent danger pay and were stationed away from their home within nine months of the foreclosure, according to a Justice Department news release.

“The provisions relating to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act in this agreement will help ensure that members of the military won’t be denied critical consumer protections or face foreclosure when they are deployed to a war zone,” Petraeus noted.

The agreement also requires all five lenders to provide some service members

ordered to relocate access to loan modifications without going into default, Perez said. If they must sell their home at a loss but are ineligible for funding through the Defense Department’s Homeowners’ Assistance Program, lenders must, in some cases, provide troops with short sale agreements and mandatory deficiency waivers.

“The cost of this program will not be paid by DOD and the taxpayers, but rather by the servicers,” Perez noted.

The banks had neglected to discuss options, such as short sale agreements, with military families faced with a mandatory move. As a result, these families often stayed behind when the service member moved, Biden noted. “We simply should not force families to be separated” due to a military move, he said.

Biden, a military lawyer and major in the Delaware Army National Guard, said he takes this settlement personally. He served alongside troops affected by lenders’ wrongdoing while deployed in Iraq for a year, he said. Troops and their families already serve and sacrifice and shouldn’t have to bear another hardship, he added.

Service members who believe their SCRA rights have been violated should contact the Armed Forces Legal Assistance office. Information is available at <http://www.servicemembers.gov>.

Perez also invited service members who believe they’re entitled to compensation under this settlement to directly contact the Justice Department at 1-800-896-7743.

However, he added, service members don’t need to apply for this relief. The Justice Department will have access to information that will determine victims of wrongdoing and will contact these service members.

Perez didn’t give a specific compensation deadline. “The investigative process of reviewing these records will take some time,” he explained. “But we will work to ensure it’s as little time as possible.”

Teen dental care — flossing, braces, body art

By Capt. (Dr.) Jessica Milburn

81st Dental Squadron

During adolescence, children experience changes regarding their teeth. Teeth will begin to move into alignment and the spaces seen with baby teeth may not be present after adult teeth erupt. These changes and more are expected and routine dental care will be necessary throughout a child's life.

Children should start flossing as soon as adjacent teeth contact together, usually around 4 years old. Flossing removes food stuck between the teeth that a toothbrush is unable to reach. Just like food left in the refrigerator or out on the counter too long, food stuck between teeth begins to rot and stink. When this happens, it can cause bad breath and painful cavities. Children should not be discouraged if their gums bleed while flossing — this is a sign of gingivitis and will stop as gum health improves with rou-

tine flossing. Until a child has the proper manual dexterity to floss on their own, a parent will need to help the child. A dentist or hygienist can demonstrate proper flossing to both the parent and child. If contacts are tight or the floss breaks, try waxed floss as it glides more easily than unwaxed floss.

In the absence of severe bite disturbances that a dentist can catch early, the soonest a child or teen should be taken

to an orthodontist for braces is after their last baby tooth has fallen out.

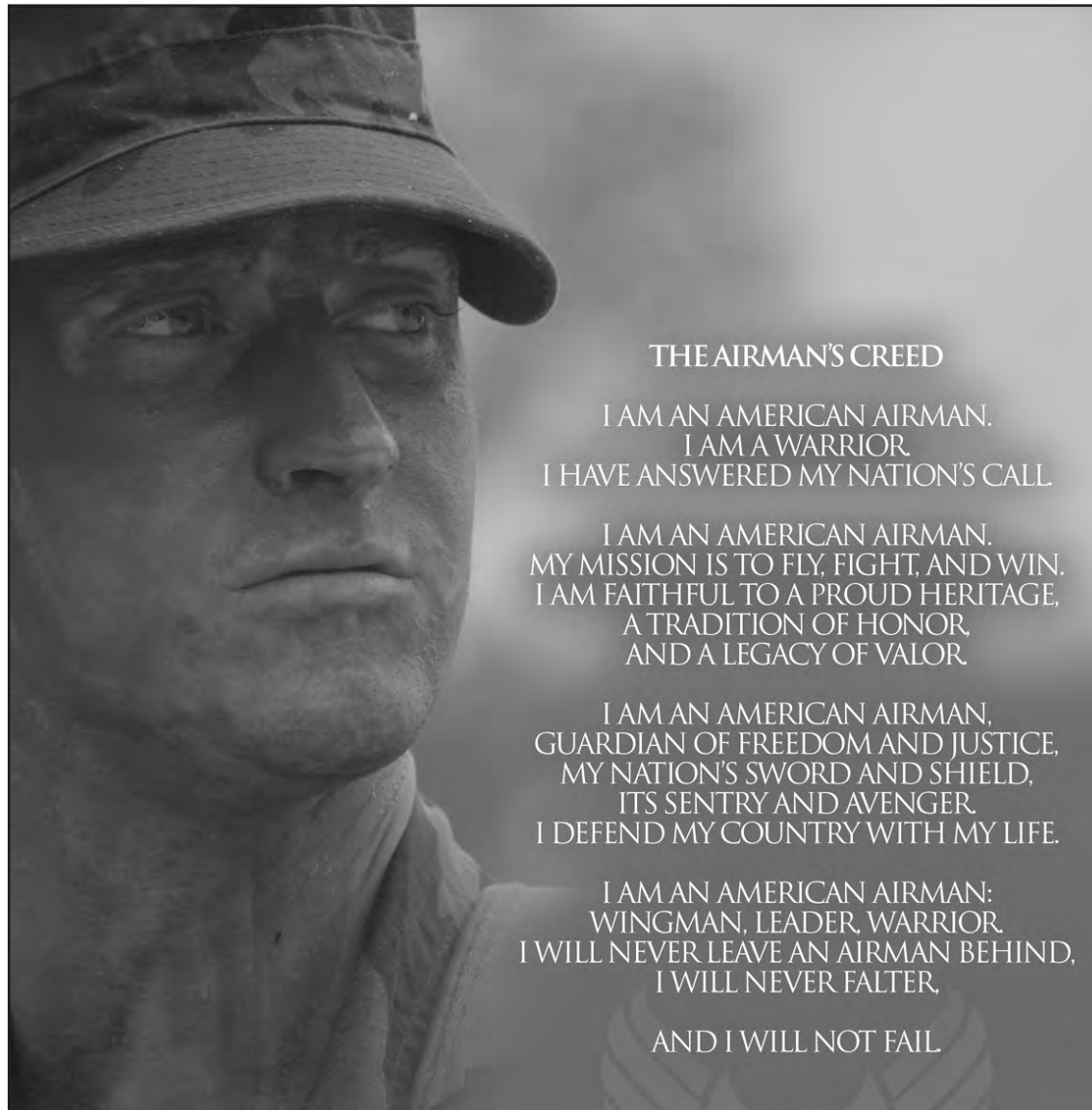
Maintaining proper oral hygiene while wearing braces is a challenge. Brackets should be cleansed of trapped food to help prevent demineralization (a weakening of tooth structure) and cavities. Braces are expensive, but should be looked as an investment in a child's dental functioning and esthetics. By doing so, that investment should be protected.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

If the orthodontist makes the child a removable retainer, the child should wear it. Teeth move rather easily and they will easily drift out of alignment if a retainer is not worn properly for the specified amount of time.

Parents should caution children about body art including piercing the tongue, cheek and lip and tongue-splitting (intentional "forking") procedures that are currently fashionable. Common problems associated with these procedures include infection, pain and swelling, nerve damage, tongue numbness, increased salivary flow, difficulty speaking and loss of taste. The metal barbells and studs that go through these piercings may chip teeth, fillings and crowns. There is also the risk of obstructing the airway if a piece of jewelry is swallowed.

Routine dental care is a medical necessity that begins in infancy, continues through childhood and adolescence and throughout adult life.



THE AIRMAN'S CREED

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
I AM A WARRIOR.
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,
A TRADITION OF HONOR,
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,
MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD,
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,
I WILL NEVER FALTER,

AND I WILL NOT FAIL.

KEESLER NOTES

Wood shop items

A number of items at the wood shop need to be picked up by the end of February.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held 7-8 p.m. Fridays upstairs in the Triangle Chapel Annex.

All active-duty and retired members and their dependents are welcome to attend.

Supply classes

Quarterly supply classes are held in Room 109, Taylor Logistics Building.

Block I supply indoctrination class is 9-10 a.m. March 15. All newly-assigned supply custodians and resource managers are required to attend. For more information or to sign up, call 377-5998.

Precious Metals Recovery Program is 10-11 a.m. March 15. All newly-assigned PMRP

Low manning, high demand limit legal and tax office services

Legal assistance — Effective March 5, retirees and their dependents seeking legal assistance will only be seen by appointment. Only active-duty members and their dependents will be seen during walk-in hours.

For an appointment, call 376-8601.

Tax office — Due to low manning and high demand, the tax office will no longer be able to see walk-in clients.

To make an appointment for tax assistance, call 376-8141. Appointments are limited and are on a “first come, first serve” basis with priority given to active-duty members.

However, members can go to www.militaryonesource.com for a free tax preparation program.

monitors are required to attend, and refresher training is required annually. For more information or to sign up, call 377-5998.

Block IIA bench stock training is 9-10 a.m. March 29. For more information or to sign up, call 377-4180.

Block IIB repair cycle training is 10-11 a.m. March 29. For more information or to sign up,

call 377-4191.

Block III equipment custodian refresher training is 1-2 p.m. March 15. All newly-assigned supply equipment custodians are required to attend, as well as all other custodians annually. For more information or to sign up, call 377-2270.

For information on all supply classes, call 377-4480.

Airman's Attic

Airman's Attic, at the corner of Meadows Drive and 1st Street, assists junior enlisted members with obtaining free basic household items.

Donations are needed such as furniture, area rugs, cutlery, dishware, infant wear and maternity clothes that are clean and in good condition.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. the last Saturday of the month and closed on federal holidays.

For more information, call 209-1390 or 377-3814.

Keesler Thrift Shop

The Keesler Thrift Shop, operated by the Keesler Spouses Club, is at the corner of Meadows Drive and First Street.

Profits benefit base and area charities and provide scholarships.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mondays and Wednesdays. Consignments are accepted 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays.

Log on to www.keeslerspousesclub.com for more information and a list of preferred donations. Pickup is available for bulk donations.

For more information, call 377-3217.

AFSA meetings

The Air Force Sergeants Association meets the second Thursday of each month in Room 2 at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

For more information, call 377-9193.

Supply source

The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office is a free source of supplies and equipment.

For more information, visit CSC supply customer service, Room 126, Taylor Logistics Center, Building 4002; call 377-2005 or e-mail 81LRS.CustomerSVC@us.af.mil



eight days a week

Airman and family readiness center

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 376-8728.

Today — 8-11 a.m., Veterans Affairs benefits briefing. 1-4 p.m., retirement benefits briefing.

Wednesday — 7-11:30 a.m., newcomers orientation. 9-11 a.m. survivor benefit plan, for single and married members and their spouses. 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., separate rations briefing. Open to nonprior service students with dependents stationed at Keesler for 20 weeks or more who want to reside outside of the dorms during technical training. To register, call 377-0155.

Feb. 23 — 9 a.m. to noon, Bundles for Babies. Open to expecting military members and dependents at Keesler. Receive a layette gift valued at \$75 upon completion of the class.

Arts and crafts center

Editor's note: Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 377-2821.

Friday — 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., ceramic mold pouring. Learn to pour slip into ceramic molds. \$25 includes materials. 12:30 p.m., framing class. Bring a piece of art or photograph no larger than 8x10 inches to frame. Class certifies you to use shop equipment in the future. \$35 includes materials. 6-9:30 p.m., cocktails and canvas. Paint a fleur-de-lis on canvas using acrylics. Light snacks provided, bring your favorite beverage. \$20 includes materials. Space limited.

Saturday — 9-11 a.m., basic woodworking. Class certifies you to use shop equipment. \$25 includes materials.

Bay Breeze Collocated Club

Editor's note: For more information, call 377-2334.

Friday — 5 p.m., Texas Hold'Em tournament in the ballroom. Prizes awarded. Free for Air Force Club members, \$5 nonmembers.

Bay Breeze Community Center

Editor's note: For more information, call 377-2509 or 3308.

Saturday — noon to 3 p.m., free dance central competition. Controller-free dance competition on the Xbox Kinect. Open to all ages.

Bay Breeze Golf Course

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-3832.

Friday and Wednesday — noon to 3 p.m., ladies golf development. 30-minute driving range lesson plus four to nine-hole option. \$40 per person includes cart.

Fitness centers

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-4385 or 3056.

Feb. 27-March 9 — Blake Fitness Center is closed for installation of a new fire alarm system. During this time, Dragon Fitness Center

extends its hours to mirror the regular hours of Blake Fitness Center, 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekends. Regular hours resume March 10.

Information, tickets and travel

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-3818.

Saturday — 11:30 a.m., Mardi Gras bus trip, Endymion parade in New Orleans. Bus departs Bay Breeze Event Center and returns at 9:30 p.m. \$35 per person. Space limited. Reserve your seat today.

Sunday — 1 p.m., Mardi Gras bus trip, Bacchus parade in New Orleans. Bus departs Bay Breeze Event Center and returns at 9:30 p.m. \$35 per person. Space limited. Reserve your seat today.

McBride Library

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-2181.

Today — 4 p.m., United Through Reading. Deploying members read a children's book aloud to be recorded on DVD for child to watch at home. Registration is required.

Wednesday — 4-5 p.m., free "Rock Your Smile" story time, ages 3 and older. Co-hosted by the dental clinic.

Outdoor recreation

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-3160.

Friday and Sunday — Gulf barrier island fishing trips aboard the Dolphin II. \$100 per person, fishing gear included; 14-22 people. No fishing license required.

Monday — Presidents Day special. Free rod and reel rental with every boat rental.

Vandenberg Community Center

Editor's note: Friday and Saturday night activities are part of the late night dances, \$3 admission; non-prior service students only. For more information, call 377-3308 or 5576.

Saturday — 6-7 p.m., free ping-pong tournament. Prize awarded. 8 p.m. to 2 a.m., Mardi Gras party. Ladies' night featuring DJ Freddie J. Two-for-one admission for ladies.

Wednesdays — 5-9 p.m., friends and flicks. Free movie night; popcorn provided.

Youth center

Editor's note: For more information or to register, call 377-4116. Drop-ins accepted on space-available basis.

Friday — 6:30-9:30 p.m., Friday night fun, ages 6-12. Games, skating, movies and more. \$10 for first child, \$5 each additional.

Through March 9 — youth baseball registration, ages 3-14. \$50 for first child, discounted price for each additional. Season begins in April. Coaches needed, call for information.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Intramural hoops crown decided tonight at Blake Gym

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News editor

The base intramural basketball championship game tips off at 6 p.m. tonight at Blake Fitness Center.

Postseason play began Feb. 8. All 16 teams in the league's two conferences were eligible to play in the single elimination tournament.

Trophies for first, second and third place in the tournament will be presented after tonight's game.

Also being recognized tonight are the top teams in both the Eastern and Western Conferences.

Regular season records for each conference are:

Eastern Conference — 81st Security Forces Squadron and 335th Training Squadron (9-1), 403rd Wing and 338th TRS (6-4), 345th Airlift Squadron (3-6), 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron (2-8), 338th TRS-C (1-8) and Gautier Army Recruiting Station (1-9).

Western Conference — 81st Medical Group (9-1), 81st Force Support Squadron (8-2), 334th TRS (6-4), Keesler Marine Corps Detachment and 81st Training Wing Staff Agencies (5-5), 333rd TRS (4-6), 81st Medical Support Squadron (3-7) and 338th TRS-B (0-10).

Keep safety in mind on camping trips

AETC Safety Office

When there's a chill the air, many people turn to camping for enjoyment. The key to enjoyment is keeping campsites safe.

Safety sense should tell you to always bring a map, compass, lighter, insect repellent, snake bite kit, first aid kit, sturdy hiking boots and enough water, nonperishable food and warm clothing for your stay. However, safety problems can arise even with the best-laid plans.

Tent on fire

Your tent could catch fire from the embers of your campfire or camping stove, a knocked-over lantern or a carelessly thrown match or cigarette.

Never light a fire inside a tent. If you're in the tent, get out as fast as you can, but be careful to quickly brush off any pieces of burning fabric.

Once outside, collapse the tent and stamp out any remaining small flames. Don't

attempt to stamp out a large fire, since your clothing may catch fire.

If the tent doesn't have an attached ground cover, try grabbing it by the end furthest from the fire and pulling it clear of your equipment inside. Pour water over the entire area, even after the fire is out.

Be especially careful to keep flames from any foam rubber or plastic, since these can give off poisonous fumes.

Trapped in a sleeping bag

If you have to get out of your sleeping bag in a hurry, don't waste time trying to find and unzip the sleeping bag's zipper. Instead:

Sit up and push the sleeping bag down to your waist.

Lie back down, lift your hips off the ground and push the bag down.

Sit up again and pull your knees up to your chest as you push the bag over them, down your legs and off your feet.

Saturday is Military Appreciation Night for Mississippi Surge hockey at coliseum

Saturday is Military Appreciation Night at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum as the Mississippi Surge meets the Pensacola (Fla.) Ice Flyers in professional hockey at 7:05 p.m.

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, 81st Training Wing com-

mander, drops the puck to start the contest.

Airman 1st Class Amanda Nesbitt, 81st Contracting Squadron, sings the national anthem.

The Surge gave Keesler 3,000 free tickets that have already been distributed.

Blake Fitness Center closes for fire alarm system upgrade

Blake Fitness Center is closed Feb. 27-March 9 for installation of a new fire alarm system.

During this time, Dragon Fitness Center will its their hours of operation to mirror the regular hours of Blake Fitness Center — 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekends.

Normal hours resume March 10 at both facilities.

Become a Keesler fan on Facebook
<http://www.facebook.com/keeslerafb>

Friday is Night of Tournaments

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

Keesler's Underage Drinking Focus Group sponsors "The Night of Tournaments" 8 p.m. to midnight Friday in the student Triangle area.

First Lt. Julianna Petrone, Keesler Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment program manager, said this is a sporting night to promote fun without alcohol. Kickball, softball, ultimate Frisbee, volleyball and Guitar Hero events will be held simultaneously throughout the night.

The lieutenant explained, "The focus group is a Keesler Integrated Resource Team initiative. It is comprised of multiple KIRT agencies and is designed to address underage drinking at Keesler.

"This is a basewide issue and each training group squadron is signing up teams for all of the events," she continued. "I would also encourage base permanent party to sign teams as well and come out and enjoy the event. We hope to have a large number of spectators."

In addition to the sporting events, food vendors are planned and KIRT agencies will provide outreach throughout the night.

For more information, call 376-3452.

