

The United States Air Force Journal of Occupational,
Recreational and Driving Safety

Road & Rec

Volume 17, Number 1

Winter 2005

“Here’s A Toast ...”

Winter Driving Stories & Tips

Sowing & Reaping

WINNER



Road & Rec

Volume 17, Number 1 Winter 2005

GEN JOHN P. JUMPER
Chief of Staff, USAF

MAJ GEN LEE MCFANN
Chief of Safety, USAF

JAY JOHNSON
Chief, Education, Force Development and Media Division
DSN 246-0489

JERRY ROOD
Chief, Media Branch
DSN 246-0950

JOHN COCHRAN
Managing Editor
DSN 246-0983

MRS. PAT RIDEOUT
Editorial Assistant
DSN 246-1983

FELICIA M. MORELAND
Electronic Design Director
DSN 246-5655

MSGT MICHAEL FEATHERSTON
Photo Editor
DSN 246-0986

Web page address for the Air Force Safety Center:
<http://afsafety.af.mil>

Commercial Prefix (505) 846-XXXX
E-Mail – john.cochran@kirtland.af.mil

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
CHIEF OF SAFETY, USAF

PURPOSE—The Air Force Safety Center publishes *Road & Rec* quarterly, as part of the program to prevent vehicle and other ground mishaps. Contents are not directive unless so stated. **REPRINTS**—Air Force units may reprint *Road & Rec* articles without further authorization. Other organizations must advise the Editor of the intended use before reprinting. This coordination will ensure that articles are accurate and contain the most current information. The appearance of specific commercial products, commodities or services is for information purposes only and does not imply Air Force endorsement. Some individuals in this publication are not Air Force members, and may not conform to Air Force appearance standards. **DISTRIBUTION**—One copy for each five Air Force members. To establish or change requirements, Air Force units must contact Mrs. Pat Rideout at HQ AFSC/SEMM, Voice—DSN 246-1983; Fax—DSN 246-0931; E-mail—Patricia.Rideout@kirtland.af.mil; or by mail to:

Road & Rec Magazine
HQ Air Force Safety Center
9700 G Avenue SE, Ste 286
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670

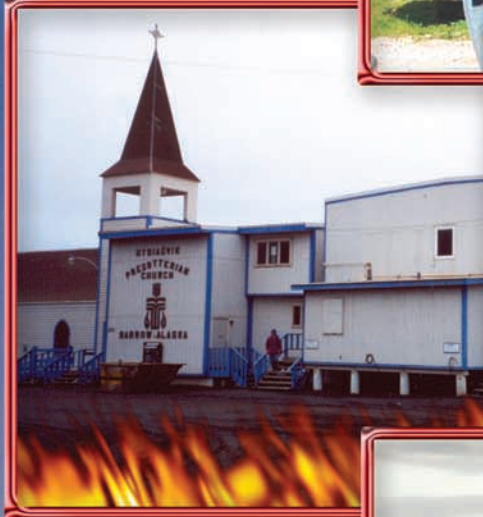
Limited numbers of back issues are available from HQ AFSC/SEMM.

POSTAL INFORMATION—*Road & Rec* (ISSN 1055-7725) is published quarterly by HQ AFSC/SEMM, 9700 G Avenue SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670. Periodicals postage paid at Albuquerque, NM, and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Road & Rec*, Attn: Editorial Assistant, HQ AFSC/SEMM, 9700 G Avenue SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670.

CONTRIBUTIONS
Editor

Road & Rec
HQ AFSC/SEMM
9700 G Avenue SE, Ste 286
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670

page 12



page 18



page 26

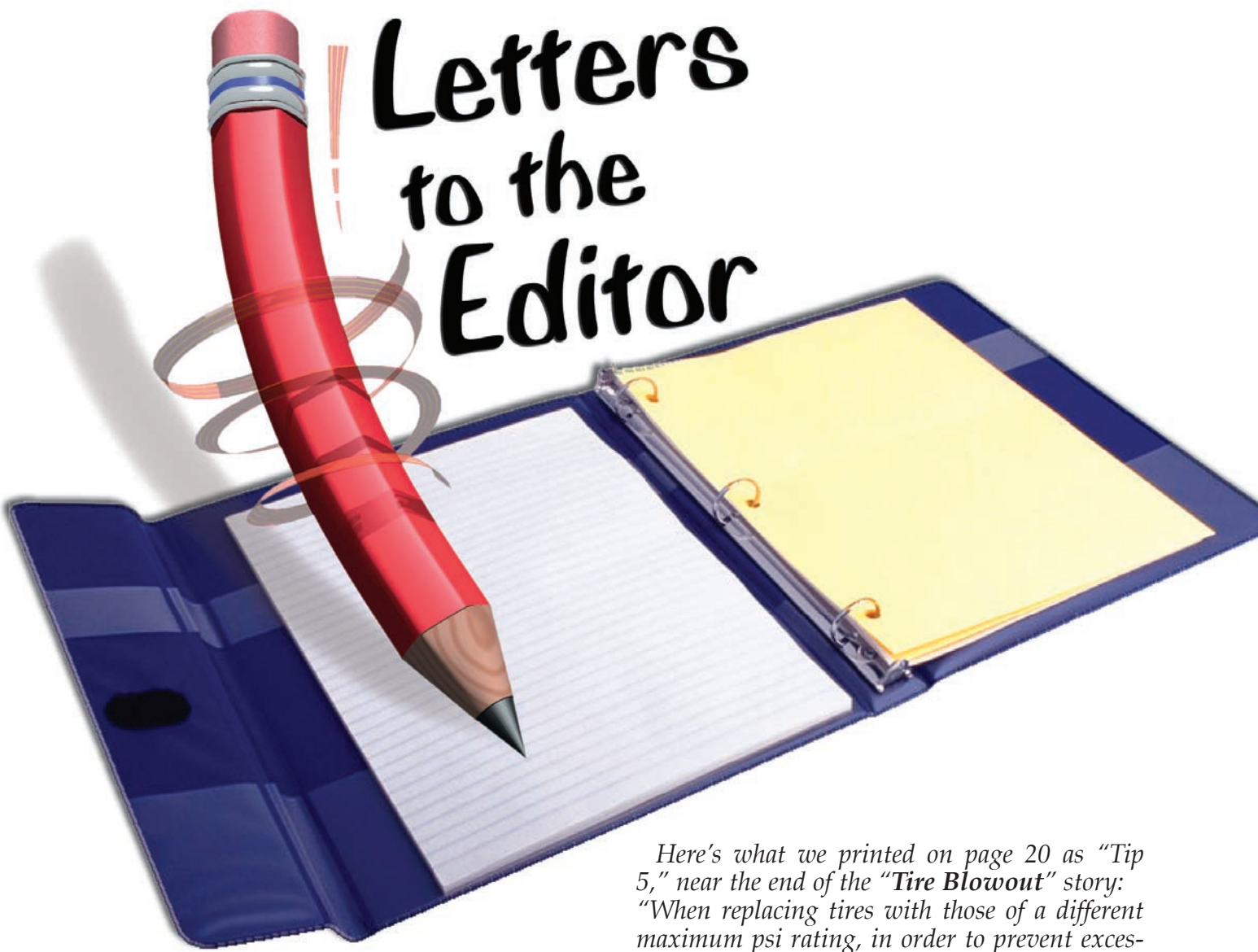


Features

- 8 "Here's A Toast ... "
- 11 Grinder Gone Wild
- 12 Fighting A Church Fire
- 18 Winter Driving: More Dangerous Than Flying An F-16
- 20 Study: Frosty Fingers Fumble
- 21 Surviving the Cold Weather
- 22 Does Stretching Prevent Injuries?
- 24 Winter, Your Car and You
- 26 Finality of A Death
- 27 10 Tips for Winter Driving

Departments

- 4 Letters to the Editor
- 6 A Note From The Editor ...
- 7 Bumbles, Fumbles & Stumbles
- 10 Winter Safety Puzzle
- 15 SafetyLit
- 16 Poster
- 28 101 Critical Days of Summer Wrap-Up
- 29 Saved by the Belt
- 30 Snapshot On Safety



Letters to the Editor

Here's what we printed on page 20 as "Tip 5," near the end of the "Tire Blowout" story:
"When replacing tires with those of a different maximum psi rating, in order to prevent excessive tire wear/blowouts, maintain an air pressure from 4-8 psi lower than the maximum psi rating for the tire."

Editor's Note: We appreciate reader feedback and want to correct errors, misunderstandings, unclear wording and other mistakes we make. We welcome questions, comments, kudos and constructive criticism. Contact us by phone at DSN 246-0983/Commercial 505-846-0983; by fax at extension DSN 246-0931; by e-mail at john.cochran@kirtland.af.mil; or by mail at Editor, *Road & Rec*, HQ AFSC/SEMM, 9700 G Ave SE, Ste 286, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670.

Two articles in the fall issue of Road & Rec generated the reader comments below.

SSgt Conway Kangas, 119 FW/LGMCP, Hector IAP, Fargo ND, wrote:

Spent my afternoon reading Tire Blowout (well, not my entire afternoon ...) on page 18 of the fall Road & Rec, and in my humble opinion, the tire shown, and the reason most tires blow out the sides like the one in picture, is running too little air. The lack of air warms up the tire as it continues to flatten at the bottom when all the weight is on it, and then expands at the top of the rotation. This constant wear tears out the reinforcement treads, as I experienced on one of my tires. The advice to run with less air is so

wrong that it is asking for a blowout. The vehicle will run smoother with less air—air and fluid in a container act as a solid, and the more pressure in the vessel, the rougher the ride. But the safer the ride. Too much air and the tires wear from the middle first; too little air and the tires wear from the sides. The proper pressure makes the tire wear across the width of the tread and that is a visible reference. So, on page 20, tip 5 is bad advice. I have shown that picture to numerous people I work with, and immediately they said that the tire had been driven on with too little air.

SSgt Kangas,

Thanks for the feedback. Regarding the photo, you may be right about underinflation being the cause of the blowout. The author wrote that he didn't check the tires before starting his trip. I also think the wording on Tip 5 could have been clearer. Here's advice from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation: "When replacing an original equipment tire with another tire that has a different maximum psi, inflate the replacement tire to the pressure recommended by the vehicle manufacturer." (Because a given tire—the "replacement," in this case, can be used on multiple vehicles, some of which may be heavier than yours, and therefore may have a higher vehicle manufacturer's recommended psi.)

Thanks again for taking the time to write and send your comments about the magazine.

Here's what we printed on page 30, as a sub-headline: "**Motorcycles Kill More Airmen.**"

John H. Soncrant, 97 AMW/MXRA, Altus AFB OK, wrote:

On page 30 of the fall **Road & Rec**, is the statement, "**Motorcycles Kill More Airmen.**" As a downed motorcyclist, I took offense to that statement. It is not the motorcycle that killed the Airmen, but rather stupidity and lack of common sense in the three examples given. I lost my leg in an accident that was in no way any fault of my own. While it is true that motorcyclists have a higher chance of injury or death than people riding in automobiles, it is not true that the motorcycles are guilty of murder. The statement made me think of another statement—"Guns kill people," when in fact, it is not the gun, but

the person holding it. A well-maintained and properly driven motorcycle just doesn't kill anyone—it is usually the carelessness of either the person driving the motorcycle or the person who does not pay attention and hits a motorcyclist. Show me one case where the motorcycle just decided to buck someone off like a horse would decide to do. I would bet that you can't find it. It is a machine and doesn't think at all ... it just does what it is designed to do. How about using the statement: "Lack of training and common sense causes more motorcycle-related deaths?"

Mr. Soncrant,

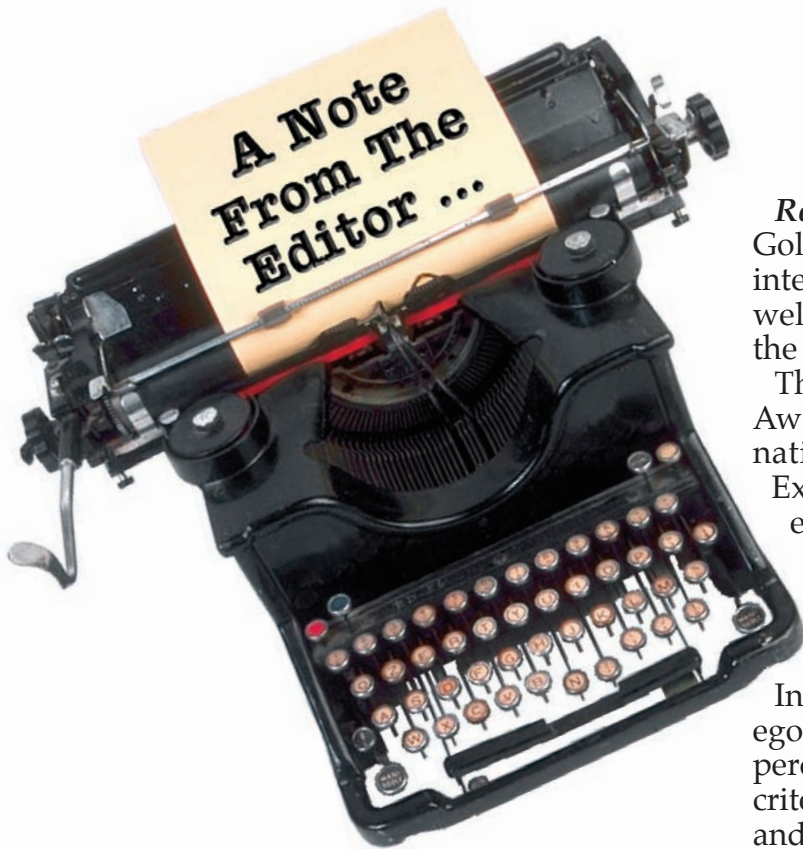
I'm sorry to hear of your injury. I can only imagine what you've been through. Thank you for taking the time to read the article and write your comments about it. I agree that we could have used a better choice of words in that sub-headline, such as the example you gave. We'll be more careful with our phrasing in the future. Thanks again for the feedback. ■

Recalls.gov **Consumer Product Safety Commission**

To provide consumers easier access to all recall announcements, the federal government launched a new Web site at www.Recalls.gov.

The www.Recalls.gov site provides links to all federal agencies with statutory authority to issue recalls, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Consumers can easily find information about all federal government recalls—regardless of the jurisdiction of the agency or the nature of the recall.

"We're confident visitors will find www.Recalls.gov to be a convenient portal to important safety information covering consumer goods, automobiles, boats, drugs, cosmetics and environmental products," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "It's a 'one-stop shop' for the latest information on all federal government recalls."



Road & Rec recently received a 2004 MarCom Creative Platinum Award, a 2004 APEX Award of Excellence and a 2004 Communicator Awards Crystal Award of Distinction. These honors, in three separate national and international competitions, recognize superior achievement in print publications.

The MarCom Creative Awards is an international competition for marketing and communications professionals involved in the concept, writing and design of marketing and communication programs, and print, visual and audio materials.

Road & Rec won the Platinum Award for overall quality and creativity, placing in the top 10 percent of entries (rated 90-100 by evaluators) in the Magazine/Government category. Other notable winners included 3M, AFLAC, BellSouth, Boeing, Cisco Systems, DynCorp, Lockheed Martin, MasterCard, Northrop Grumman, the Anaheim Mighty Ducks, Philadelphia 76ers, Raytheon, Siemens, and Texas Instruments.

Road & Rec also won MarCom Creative Gold Finalist Awards (rated 80-89) for an interior layout, illustration and cover, as well as Honorable Mentions (70-79) for the logo and another illustration.

The magazine's second honor is the Award of Excellence from APEX, the nationwide Awards for Publication Excellence competition, sponsored each year by the editors of ***Writing That Works***, a newsletter for professional communicators who write, edit and manage business publications.

In the "Magazines & Journals" category, ***Road & Rec*** placed in the top 10 percent of nearly 800 entries. The award criteria were excellence in graphic design and editorial content, and the success of the entry in achieving overall communications effectiveness and excellence.

The third win for ***Road & Rec*** came in the Communicator Awards, an international competition founded by communication professionals to recognize excellence in the communication field.

In the "Print Media" category, ***Road & Rec*** won a Crystal Award of Distinction. This is the second-highest award in the competition, which included more than 3,000 entries from Fortune 500 companies. The 2004 win makes three Communicator Awards for ***Road & Rec***.

The ***Road & Rec*** staff is pleased to have received these awards. This external recognition validates that the team here is doing good work. Our contributors made this achievement possible, because they send us articles they've written about their safety-related experiences. Thanks to them—people who have learned from going through tough situations, and are willing to tell their stories—we can spread the word about safety to the rest of the Air Force, in a personal way that our readers can relate to. ■



The following short articles are derived from actual Air Force Class C mishaps. Our intent is not to make light of anyone's pain, even if it is sometimes self-inflicted; it's the questionable behavior and decisions we're pointing out. This is just a different approach to getting people to read about safety. Check 'em out—you just might get a laugh, and learn something, too.

Mogul, Shmogul

Novice snowboard dude was taking lessons from a buddy. All was going well until he tried to go over his first mogul and landed shoulder first, dislocating the joint. After a ski patrol ride to the lodge, then a drive to the base ER, the attending doc placed him on quarters.

Pro-PAIN

This would-be barbecuer set out to light the burners on a propane grill. Step 1: Turn on all four valves. Step 2: Try igniter system, to no avail. Step 3: Find matches. Step 4: Turn off gas. Oops—forgot Step 4. Step 5: Toss match into built-up gas vapor. Step 6: Become acutely aware of the need to have used Step 4. Step 7: Drive self to ER, become hospital inpatient for two days, and then spend two more days on quarters.

I Am Not A Clay Pigeon

Mr. Unaware was watching his friends shoot targets with their .22 rifles. Somehow, he walked in front of the loaded weapons, and when one of the shooters pulled back the slide to chamber a round after reloading, he unwittingly popped off a slug into his buddy's leg. The ER doc confirmed it—"Yep, that's a gunshot wound, all right. You're on quarters."

Handburger Helper

Hungry Man went to pry apart two frozen ground beef patties with a steak knife. In a show of passive resistance, the uncooperative meat offered only token opposition to the blade, because it was not completely frozen. "Sliced palm" then became the night's featured menu item.

Slippery Slope

The Wizard of Winter Weather once said, "She who slips on icy street may fracture ankle." Case in point: An Airman is walking back to her dorm one wintry night, when she slips on the ice and falls. Thinking the injury is minor, she picks herself up, dusts off the snow, and goes to bed. The next morning, practicing self-aid, she puts ice on her bruised foot. Heavy snow and impassable roads shut down vehicle traffic on base for the weekend, so she stays in her room. X-rays at the clinic Monday morning show a fractured ankle, pending further examination. Orthopedic surgery, convalescent leave and a cast follow.

Tree 1, Snowmobile Trainee 0

At dusk on a winter day, an Airman was following his snowmobile instructor on a narrow trail when a snow-laden tree leaped into his path, smacked him on the face shield and separated him from his mount. Shaken, but not stirred, he climbed back on and rode on down the trail. The riding coach turned back to meet his student, found out what happened, and escorted him to a pick-up point for transport to the base clinic. He ended up with two days on quarters. Maybe the first fallen tree in their path, which they had both stopped to remove earlier, was some kind of a warning signal.

Totally Tubular

Two snow tubers (no, that's not a potato that grows in the winter) were zipping down a slope at a ski area. Tuber 1 finishes his run to the bottom when all of a sudden, Tuber 2 yells, "Look out!" and then crashes into him. The unguided human missile knocks down Tuber 1 with a helmet strike to the abdomen. Feeling fine, Tuber 1 then calls it a day and goes home. The next morning, feeling less than fine, he goes to the hospital. His MRI shows a lacerated spleen, and he's admitted for four days. He doesn't need surgery, but he does spend the next five days on quarters and gets a temporary medical profile. ■



1ST LT MELANIE PRESUTO
 HQ AFSC/SEFW

Looking back, it still does not seem real. It's been two years, yet the events rush back to me as vividly as yesterday. On December 18, 2002, I lost one of my best friends. A mother lost a daughter. Jennifer, Mandy and Lorrie Kate lost their sister. Our Academy class lost our leader—the glue of our class spirit. The world lost so much more. 2nd Lt Holly Adams, a personnel officer at Grand Forks AFB, N.D., was on her way to the airport in Minneapolis, Minn. that snowy night. She had talked to her parents, who were at home in Tennessee baking Christmas cookies. She had called her friends to wish them a Merry Christmas, and she was on her cell phone with her fiancé, excited to see him and her family for the holidays. She had crossed all of her "Ts," just like she always did.

I wanted to write this article because it seems that once the "mishap" is reported, everyone speculates how it could've been prevented. The cell phone, her speed, the driving conditions, her skill as a driver. A report is written. A dollar amount assigned. And then the report is filed away. It seems like such a quick process, to sum up one's existence, and file it away. I wanted to let the world know whom they lost that day. Because even now, two years later, thoughts of Holly stay with so many people.

Holly was unlike anyone I had ever met.

Everyone she encountered loved and respected her. She was so organized that she could juggle all sorts of additional duties, always complete her work, as well as go above and beyond, and still had time to play rugby on a local team, write her grandma every day, maintain her busy social life, train a new puppy and bake brownies for every unit on base, it seemed.

Even at the Air Force Academy, for which she was the class president of 2001, she constantly succeeded, while others struggled to find time to sleep. I was always in awe of how much she was able to take on, all the while keeping a glowing smile on her face that brightened every room. During our senior year, Holly was deputy group commander, maintained her status on the Dean's list, sang in the church choir, organized all activities for graduation, including our "hundredth night to graduation" dinner, escorted for Corona—a vigorous week, with many distinguished visitors, sponsored a family for Thanksgiving and Christmas, took care of the Boy Scouts Annual Freezoree, grew her hair for cancer patient wigs, organized one of the Academy's largest charity events—an annual boxing match called the Wing Open, and managed to bake a cake for everyone's birthday she knew, including the janitors of our barracks, as well as leave little notes in my bag and around our room that said, "Good luck on your test today!!" It was no surprise when Holly received

the most honored award at graduation—the cadet who most exemplifies integrity, service and excellence. She was remarkable.

I have no doubt that on that snowy day before Holly left for the airport, she had covered all of her bases. She probably had the house clean, decorations up, Christmas cookies made and delivered, gifts packed and shipped (I know this because I received mine in the mail a few days later), had the car packed with bags full of beautiful hand-made gifts for her family, and had the Christmas cards in the mail ... early.

But, like the rest of us, Holly was human. She was gutsy, and lived her life with little fear. She was a very confident driver, sometimes a little overzealous, and had giant cell phone bills that came with her love of keeping in touch. A cell phone was a great tool for multitaskers like Holly—she could talk to all her friends, make all of her arrangements. She cringed every time that bill came in the mail, and always vowed to talk less, write more—but willingly paid, because letting people know she cared was most important.

A call came that night, saying that Holly had lost control of her Blazer along Interstate 29 in North Dakota, crossed the median and was hit broadside (driver's side) by a semi-tractor trailer. She was killed instantly. In an instant, this beautiful person was gone. In an instant, her family and friends' lives were turned upside down. She was the third person to die in I-29 crashes that night.

The day's weather conditions included snow and ice, which melted on the road, then froze, making the surface extremely slippery. Some areas also had compacted snow and ice.

When I heard the news, my knees buckled beneath me. Many questions of "why?" filled my mind, and flooded my heart. But through all my confusion and sorrow during that terrible time, there is one thing that I never had to worry about—that Holly's loved ones and friends knew how much she loved them. She lived every day of her life as if it were her last.

Recently, her mother sent me a poem that reminded her of Holly, and I agree. It's called "Live a Life that Matters," by Michael Josephson.

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end. There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours or days. All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten, will pass to someone else. Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance. It

will not matter what you owned or what you were owed. Your grudges, resentments, frustrations and jealousies will finally disappear. So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans and to-do lists will expire. The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away. It won't matter where you came from, or on what side of the tracks you lived, at the end. It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant. Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant.

So, what will matter? How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built; not what you got, but what you gave. What will matter is not your success, but your significance. Not what you learned, but what you taught. What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others to emulate your example.

It's not your competence, but your character. Not how many people you knew, but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone. It's not your memories, but the memories that live in those who loved you.

What will matter is how long you will be remembered, by whom and for what. Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident. It's not a matter of circumstance, but of choice. Choose to live a life that matters.

Holly chose to live a life that mattered. She had a lifetime of love and service packed into a short 23 years. I wanted Holly's family to know that no one who met Holly will ever forget her. She is entwined in the very fabric of our lives.

In a military tradition, every time they would announce the fallen soldier, we would raise our glasses, and say "Here is a toast ..." and then have several seconds of silence for everyone to finish that sentence. It is part of the full lyrics of the Air Force Song. Here are the lyrics:

Bridge: "A Toast to the Host"

Here's a toast to the host ...

*Of those who love the vastness of the sky,
To a friend we send a message of his brother
men who fly.*

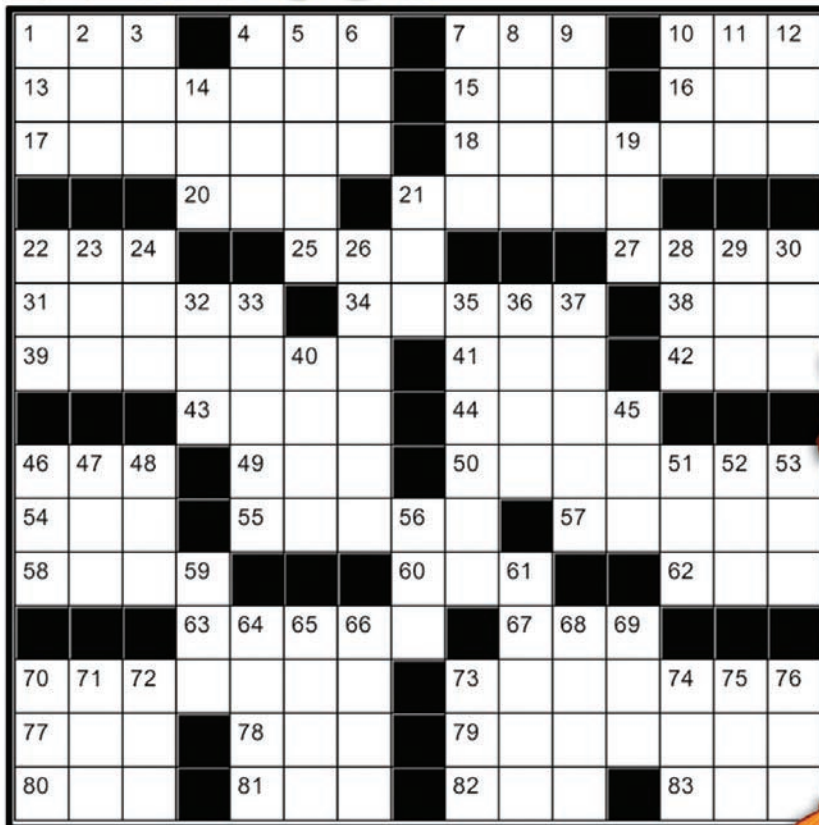
*We drink to those who gave their all of old,
Then down we roar to score the rainbow's
pot of gold.*

*A toast to the host of men we boast, the U.S.
Air Force!*

I never thought I'd ever have to say this.
"Holly, here is a toast ... " ■

Winter

1ST LT TONY WICKMAN
ALCOM/J02PA
ELMENDORF AFB AK



Safety

ACROSS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Penn movie, _ _ Sam | 44. Flashlight, sand, jumper cables, etc., winter survival needs |
| 4. Honest prez. | 46. Crazy _ _ loon |
| 7. Sault _ _ Marie | 49. Craftsmanship |
| 10. Pocket watch part | 50. Choose a new path |
| 13. With 39 ACROSS, fast moving, snow-producing weather system | 54. Inexperienced |
| 15. Holden movie _ _ Town | 55. Sample |
| 16. Hurricane center | 57. Beastly |
| 17. Previously | 58. Winter concern |
| 18. Winter driving concern | 60. Capture |
| 20. Grain for Mr. Ed | 62. Zero |
| 21. Prom is one | 63. Frozen layer on ground |
| 22. Animal foot | 67. Music genre |
| 25. Compass point | 70. Defrost |
| 27. Geek | 73. Winterized vehicle need |
| 31. Winter driving hazard | 77. With 52 DOWN; tropical drink in Hawaii |
| 34. King with "golden touch" | 78. Dir. from Anchorage to Seattle |
| 38. Prohibit | 79. Winter survival item |
| 39. See 13 ACROSS | 80. Strange |
| 41. Together with more, in brief | 81. Cash machine |
| 42. Islamic title of rank | 82. Stallone nickname |
| 43. Shakespeare's King _ _ _ | 83. Health resort |

DOWN

1. Winter driving hazard
2. Pie ___ mode
3. Russian space station
4. Capital of Western Samoa
5. Vegetables
6. Mistake
7. Pepsi or Coke
8. Swerve
9. ___ the Red; Greenland founder
10. Foreign headgear
11. Popeye's girl Olive
12. Something in a bonnet
14. Arafat org.
19. Mahayana Buddhism enlightenment school
21. Driving crime resulting in UCMJ action
22. TV ad for safety
23. Everything
24. Spider's home
26. Hurts
28. Wane
29. Field movie Norma ___
30. What you must be in winter to survive
32. Snakelike fish
33. Trick or ___
35. Celsius or Fahrenheit
36. Fits to ___
37. Winter clothing needed to stay warm
40. Scarlett's home in Gone with the Wind
45. Caviar
46. Circle part
47. ___ Paulo, Brazil
48. Auger
51. Vase
52. See 77 ACROSS
53. 12th alphabet letter, phonetically
56. Explosive combo
59. Texas airport abbrev.
61. Mythical beast under the bridge
64. Civil rights leader Parks
65. Dethrone
66. Stalk
68. Gone
69. Whenever required; ad libitum, in short
70. Mil. moving organization
71. Owned
72. Winterized vehicle "first" kit
73. Turner TV station
74. Approves, in short
75. Esprit
76. Greek letter



MSGT JEFFREY INTEMANN
349 MXG/SE
Travis AFB CA

As the 349th Maintenance Group's Safety NCOIC and Operational Risk Management representative, I'm always briefing safety. I continually tell my people to take ORM home with them. Then I had a personal lesson that dramatized the importance of personal protective equipment (PPE).

I was building a dog run on the side of my house. I had already dug the holes for the chain link fence poles. The poles came in 12-foot lengths, so I had to cut them down to the size I needed.

Over the years, between presents from my wife and different purchases, I now have a great selection of tools. Some of the best tools I have are grinders (electric and air). They have made my hacksaw almost obsolete. I think you can see where I'm going with this—from a fairly safe hacksaw to a potentially dangerous high-speed grinder.

While grinding away to cut the poles to length, the grinding wheel let go. At the time, I was wearing safety glasses, leather gloves and ear defenders. I heard the grinding wheel start to flap, and the next thing I knew, I felt sharp objects hitting my face and safety glasses. I didn't sustain cuts to my face, only red marks that stung. I hate to think what might have happened without the safety glasses.

After all these years of briefing about other people who have been hurt, now it had happened to me. How did this mishap occur? I believe that I took the grinding wheel down too far. I did notice the fibers on the wheel were showing, but not knowing about such things, I didn't give it a second thought.

Because I used the proper PPE, I was able to brief the group on my mishap, and see the people in the audience. ■

Fighting A Church Fire



CAPT TODD K. SHERWOOD
168 ARW/JA
Eielson AFB AK

About two years ago, I worked as an attorney for a municipality. The eight-person office I supervised rented space in a building connected to a local church. Both the church and the annex were wooden structures that had been built 40 to 50 years earlier. The church, which was even older than the annex, was a local historical landmark.

I was working in my office after normal hours one evening, when I faintly heard a sound I could not quite place. (Access to my office was through a doorway from the hall, through my secretary's office, and then through a door into my office.) I opened the window thinking perhaps it was an emergency vehicle in the area, but the sound did not get

any louder. I opened my door and stepped out, where I heard the fire alarm sounding and saw the backup battery lights on in the darkened hallway. Not seeing any fire or smelling any smoke, my first reaction, like most people, was that it must be a false alarm.

I noticed another attorney's open door down the hall, and I asked her how long the alarm had been going. She told me it had been on for about five minutes and she was leaving, because the sound bothered her. (She, too, was treating it as a false alarm. It is also worth noting that this building, though old, had a very up-to-date fire alarm system and did not have a history of false alarms). Just then, I thought I smelled the faintest odor of wood smoke. Having grown up in a log home heated with wood, I knew this smell well. I was not worried, but went down the winding hallway to the church to see if I could find some way—or

someone—to turn the alarm off. Or perhaps identify the source of the wood smoke odor I thought I smelled.

Because it was after work hours, the lights were off and the hall was dimly lit from natural light. The hall opened up into the church kitchen. It was apparent no one was there, but as I went through the kitchen to the sanctuary, the smell of smoke grew stronger and I noticed a flickering in my peripheral vision.

I turned around and was shocked to 2- to 4-foot flames leaping straight up in an open closet in the corner! I could also see many cardboard boxes piled up in the closet. It was obvious this had the makings of a big fire and that it could spread quickly. I turned and ran out of the kitchen, up the steps, and down the connecting hall into our office hallway. I yelled to the other attorney as I went by: "It's real fire! Call 911!" She already had her coat, but immediately ran back to her phone and began to call. My first thought was that we should leave as soon as she called. I headed quickly to my office to get my coat and something "valuable." (For some inexplicable reason, the irrational thought went through my head that "people who flee burning buildings always try to save one valuable thing, and I needed to get my coat and that one "valuable" thing! But I could not think what that might be.)

These thoughts passed quickly, before I was even down the hall to my office, and were replaced by another thought: "I cannot just let the historic church burn without at least trying to save it." I turned around and ran back down the hallway, pausing just long enough to grab a large fire extinguisher hanging at the end of the hallway. By the time I reached the kitchen again, the flames were filling the closet, leaping over 8 feet high and licking at the ceiling of the closet. Black smoke was also curling up. I felt the gnawing presence of fear as I tried to figure out how to work the fire extinguisher, and wondered if the fire was too big for it. It was an older type that I was not familiar with. I finally got the pin pulled and slammed down on a lever so it was ready for use.

Due to the heat and the flames, I stayed back 8 to 10 feet and made sure to aim at the base of the flames. I triggered the extinguisher and swept it slightly back and forth, giving it two long blasts. It appeared that the fire was out,

but there was also still a lot of smoke and fire extinguisher dust coming back at me. I held my breath and headed for the nearest outside door, where the other attorney was waiting for me. I was hoping to see that the fire department had arrived to take over, but they were not there yet. Probably only a couple minutes had gone by, but—as usually happens in such situations—it seemed much longer. After another minute, I thought I was smelling wood smoke again and wondered nervously whether the fire was truly out. I ran back in with the fire extinguisher in hand.

The kitchen was quite smoky, so I took a deep breath and went back in toward the closet. I could see 2- to 4-foot flames rising through the smoke and I again hit the fire with two long blasts trying to aim at the base of the fire. I ran back out and saw to my relief that volunteer firefighters had arrived in their personal vehicles and fire chief cars, but not the fire engines. Fully geared-up firefighters were running to the church with fire extinguishers in hand. Two ran past me into the church, while a third plunked a fire extinguisher in front of me "in case they need another one inside." Not thinking, and still full of adrenaline, I grabbed it, held my breath and ran back into the kitchen, which was even more smoky by then, but it appeared that the fire was out. I put the extinguisher down just inside the kitchen door and ran back out to fresh air. By then the first fire trucks had arrived, and the fire was deemed to be out shortly after. Fire hoses turned out not to be necessary.

My throat felt a bit raw. One firefighter took me to the ambulance, where I was briefly examined for smoke inhalation and released with no ill effects. When the smoke cleared, I went back in with the fire battalion captain. He showed me how the fire followed the oxygen path up through the ceiling and toward the open wood rafters of the roof. The flames had burned higher and hotter than I had realized, and the fire was very close to burning through the roof when it was put out. Further examination by the fire department showed that the fire had been deliberately set, though the culprit was never caught. The battalion fire captain was later quoted in the paper as saying that I had likely saved the church from considerable

continued on next page

damage, and possibly from burning down.

I learned several important lessons from this little adventure that I would recommend to the readers of *Road & Rec*. First, don't be a hero. Although things worked out well for me and people said nice things about me, I probably should have just left the building after my colleague called 911. It was not a case of trying to save lives. I knew my office was empty and, although I could not be 100 percent sure, I believed the church was empty of people as well. I cannot say I was risking my life (however small that risk was) to save the lives of others. This was not like a small kitchen fire that could be easily extinguished. In the end, I took the risk because I couldn't stand to sit by and watch the old church burn without at least trying to prevent it. That doesn't mean it was a good idea! If I had to do the same thing over again—I probably would ... but do as I say, not as I do!

Related to that lesson is one involving fire alarms. It seems to be human nature to believe bad things can't be real. Work to get over that feeling. If the alarm goes off—get out of the building! Do not assume it is a false alarm or a test (unless you have been informed it is a test ahead of time). I now work in a very new and modern building, and we had a fire alarm recently. Although we all evacuated in good order, we assumed it was a false alarm. After all, it was a new building and you can't have fires in a new building, right? Wrong. It turned out that an exhaust fan in a mechanical room had overheated and started smoking. Although it may not have been a major fire hazard, it was real.

Another lesson from this is to know where your fire extinguishers are, how they work and whether they are fully charged and have been inspected. At home, I have been in the habit of reviewing such things with my family. To my embarrassment, I have to admit that I had not done so with my work "family." I knew where the fire extinguishers were in our office, but I had not checked to see that they were current or how they worked. (That is why I had to take a little extra time while the fire was burning to see how an unfamiliar and older type of fire extinguisher worked; in a different situation, such a delay could be crucial). I discovered after the fire that, according to the

tag, the one I used had not been inspected for 14 years! The other one further down our hallway had not been inspected for 10 years. There were some poor bureaucratic reasons for this, but that is no excuse for me as a supervisor not checking them out myself. You can be sure I had a staff meeting on the topic of fire safety the next day, but even then you could tell the staff had a hard time taking it seriously. That is simply human nature, but we all need to work to overcome it.

One thing I did do right (and for which I credit training over the years, as well as simply reading fire extinguisher instructions ahead of time), is that I aimed at the base of the fire and swept slightly side to side. I still marvel at just how well a fire extinguisher works when used properly!

In summary, don't be a hero (get out and then call 911), check the location and currency of your fire extinguishers, and know how to use them. ■

Stranded In The Snow? Don't Panic

The National Safety Council suggests motorists stranded in the snow should follow these tips:

- Use a cellular telephone to call for help.
- Use flares or reflective triangles to attract attention and to avoid being hit by another car.
- Never walk away from your vehicle unless you know exactly where you are, how far it is to help and if you are positive you can improve your situation. Leave a note with the date, time and destination in the car.
- Keep at least one window open slightly.
- Keep snow and ice from blocking the exhaust pipe.
- Run the engine and heater for 10 minutes every hour, depending on how much gas you have in your tank.
- Don't panic. Stay calm and reason each step through carefully.

SAFETY RESEARCH UPDATE

The following information is courtesy of SafetyLit, a service of the San Diego State University Graduate School of Public Health. SafetyLit summarizes copyrighted reports on safety research. SafetyLit staff and volunteers regularly examine more than 300 journals and scores of reports from government agencies and organizations. We've included these summaries in *Road & Rec* for their interest to the Air Force community. For more, go to this link: www.safetylit.org.

Louisiana Bikers: Fewer Helmets, More Deaths

On August 15, 1999, Louisiana's mandatory motorcycle helmet law was repealed. Statewide, helmet use decreased 21 percent, and fatalities increased three percent.

(Source: *The Journal of the Louisiana State Medical Society*, 2004; 156(3): 151-152, 154-115, 157. Copyright 2004, Louisiana State Medical Society.)

Drink Up ... And Take The Next 30 Years Off

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studied the effects of excessive alcohol consumption—the nation's third-highest preventable cause of death. The CDC estimated there were 75,766 alcohol-attributable deaths, with 2.3 million years of potential life lost during 2001, or about 30 years of life lost on average.

(Source: *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2004; 53 (37): pages 866-70, In Public Domain 2004, CDC.)

A Rock And A Sore Place

British orthopedic surgeons studied the most common injuries among experienced rock climbers—acute hand and wrist injuries. Finger tendon injuries were the most frequent, followed by abrasions, lacerations and fractures. Greater climbing intensity over a climber's career correlated with greater likelihood of sustaining these injuries.

(Source: *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2004; 38(5): 545-8. Copyright © 2004, BMJ Publishing Group.)

"Per Se," Eh?

Canadian researchers found that the

Breathalyzer Law in Ontario had a significant role in the 18 percent reduction of fatally injured drinking drivers from 1962-1996, and had a specific deterrent effect on impaired driving. The law established a per se criminal alcohol concentration of .08. "Per se" means by or in itself; intrinsically. In other words, a measurement of .08 or above violates the law and subjects drivers to criminal penalties.

(Source: *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 2004; 65(4): 450-9. Copyright © 2004, Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies.)

Tall Toddlers—At Increased Risk For Scalds?

Plastic and reconstructive surgeons in Ireland reported that tall toddlers (29.5 inches at nine months) who have not yet acquired a sense of danger may be at risk of scalding from pulling down hot liquids from kitchen counters. The surgeons studied 31 children who sustained this injury, and all were above the 90th percentile for height. To prevent such injuries, keep kettle cords short and coiled or use cordless appliances, and keep hot objects well back from the edge of the table or counter.

(Source: *Journal of the International Society for Burn Injuries*, 2004; 30(6): 581-2. Copyright © 2004, Elsevier Publishing.)

Softballs Aren't

Surgeons in a New York hospital analyzed sports-related facial trauma during recreational baseball and softball. Over a 12-year period, they identified 38 patients with 39 fractures. Most of the injuries were caused by direct impact with the ball (68 percent), while player-player collisions (18 percent) and impact from a swung bat (13 percent) caused the others. Eighteen fractures (46 percent) involved the midface, skull fractures accounted for 12 (31 percent), while nine (23 percent) were mandibular fractures. The authors endorse the recommendations of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for the use of low-impact National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment-approved baseballs and softballs for youth and recreational leagues.

(Source: *Journal of Oral Maxillofacial Surgery* 2004; 62(10): 1209-12. Copyright © 2004, Elsevier Publishing.)

*Unsafe actions ...
are like snowflakes ...*





... *They may be small,
but they can have
a BIG impact.*

Winter Driving: More Dangerous Than Flying An F-16



1ST LT WM V. SCHNAUFFER
163 FS
Fort Wayne IAP IN

Everyone might think that flying an F-16 for the Indiana Air Guard at Fort Wayne is the most dangerous thing I do. Actually, flying the F-16 is most likely one of the safer things I do. What is more dangerous than flying an F-16? Driving to work and home again every day is by far the most dangerous thing I do.

When I moved to Fort Wayne, I had been living in the southern parts of the United States. I had lived in Texas, Mississippi, Georgia and Arizona for about the last four years. I believe this is significant because I had not driven in any winter weather for

many years. However, I did grow up in northern Illinois, so winter weather was nothing new to me.

I am very fortunate to have a fairly easy drive to work. My drive is only about eight miles of very quiet back roads. The last four miles or so takes me onto an interstate. This interstate is very quiet—many times I only see about 10 cars on my way to work. Driving to work was a very low-stress, easy thing for me to do.

Indiana, like many northern states, is notorious for its really bad winters. This one was no different. My advantage of living out in the country and taking mostly back roads to work turned out to be a major danger.

I figured that once it snowed, the city would be able to plow the snow and salt



the roads, so driving would not be very difficult. I remember growing up in northern Illinois and all the snow we received in my childhood. The city would remove the snow, and driving would only be difficult for the morning after the snow.

I was in for a surprise with Fort Wayne. The snow removal in my city and the route I take to work is very poor, at best. The first snow hit around mid-December, with freezing rain following, for about the next week. The streets were very poor to drive on for almost two weeks after that.

I dealt with this problem by driving my Blazer in four-wheel drive, and driving very slowly to and from work. However, even with all these precautions, every trip to work I spun my car out on the ice somewhere along the way. Driving to work became a very high-stress and dangerous situation. After many weeks of snowfall, the roads were highly dangerous.

I figured that it was just a matter of time before I crashed my car. I stressed my concern to my flight commander and he just laughed, saying, "Deal with it." I

guess that was the best thing to say. The only answer in my mind was to move south to another unit—which may just happen.

On the day of my accident, it had been snowing and freezing rain all night. I did not think it could do both, but again I was wrong. I woke up that morning dreading the drive to work. I just knew it was only a matter of time before something bad happened. To paint a better picture, the road in front of my house had been completely covered in ice for at least a month by now. Even walking out to my car was dangerous because of all the ice. I would have to hit the brakes on my car three houses before mine to have the ability to stop by my driveway.

This morning I got into my Blazer and began my trek to work. I did think about call-

ing in to say I wouldn't be coming in because the weather was so bad. I knew we were not going to fly. Being the good Lieutenant that I am, I started my car and drove off. I did the normal precautions, by placing my Blazer into four-wheel drive and driving very slowly. I think I hit only about 25 miles an hour.

The fine city of Fort Wayne had done nothing to clean the roads. It was so bad I could not even tell I was on a road. After slugging it out on the back roads, I finally reached the interstate. I figured the interstate would be better than the back roads, because of traffic and snowplows. Again, I was wrong. I reached the interstate and could not see the pavement at all. At this point, I was getting very annoyed with my situation. Driving to work should not be stressful! This should be fun.

I was on the interstate, just crawling along in my Blazer. I was only about three miles from work, and I figured this was really annoying but I would make it. Next thing I knew, my car was totally out of control. The front of the car spun hard to the left and I was sideways before I could do anything. I spun the wheel hard to the right, trying to stop the car from spinning. This did nothing.

So, there I was, spinning sideways in my car, annoyed that I was living in Fort Wayne, Indiana. All of a sudden, it became very apparent to me that I was going to hit a cement barrier right in front of me. I knew it was inevitable, so I let go of the wheel and braced myself. I hit the wall going only about 10 miles an hour; I did have my seat belt on.

I had spun a full 180 degrees and was facing oncoming traffic. I was well off to the side of the road. After the car came to a stop, I got out of the car to survey the damage. The right bumper was bent back and the headlight was knocked out. I could still drive the car, though. So I fired it up and drove the rest of the way to work, more annoyed than before. We did not fly that day because of weather.

The moral of this story is that if you feel uncomfortable about things, do something about it. I could have refused to go to work that day. Or I could have loaded my car up with sandbags that might have helped the car from spinning. I should have done something. ■



Study: *Frosty Fingers Fumble*

National Safety Council

As the indoor temperature drops, workers are more likely to make mistakes and experience decreased productivity, according to a study from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

The study evaluated the impact of indoor environmental conditions on worker productivity as it related to keyboarding. Researchers found a 74 percent increase in typing mistakes and a 46 percent decrease in typing output

when temperatures dipped below 77°F. to 68°F.

"As employees typed, we knew the amount of time they were keying, and the amount of time they were making error corrections," said lead author Alan Hedge. "At 77°F., employees were keying 100 percent of the time with a 10 percent error rate, while at 68°F., keying rates went down to 54 percent of the time with a 25 percent error."

The findings were presented in June at the 2004 Eastern Ergonomics Conference in New York. ■

Surviving the Cold Weather

National Safety Council

Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and/or moisture can result in cold-related injury from frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on how to keep warm and avoid frostbite and hypothermia.

Dress Properly

Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing to insulate your body by trapping warm, dry air inside. Loosely woven cotton and wool clothes best trap air and resist dampness.

The head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body. Your cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite. Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater to protect these areas.

Frostbite: What To Look For

The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours after thawing. There are two classifications of frostbite:

- Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and underlying tissue feels soft when depressed.
- Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard, and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after rewarming.

What to do:

1. Get the victim out of the cold and to a

warm place immediately.

2. Remove any constrictive clothing items that could impair circulation.

3. If you notice signs of frostbite, seek medical attention immediately.

4. Place dry, sterile gauze between toes and fingers to absorb moisture and to keep them from sticking together.

5. Slightly elevate the affected part to reduce pain and swelling.

6. If you are more than one hour from a medical facility and you have warm water, place the frostbitten part in the water (102 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit). If you do not have a thermometer, test the water first to see if it is warm, not hot. Rewarming usually takes 20 to 40 minutes or until tissues soften.

What not to do:

1. Do not use water hotter than 106 degrees Fahrenheit.

2. Do not use water colder than 100 degrees Fahrenheit since it will not thaw frostbite quickly enough.

3. Do not rub or massage the frostbite area.

4. Do not rub with ice or snow.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it produces. Symptoms include change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, cool abdomen and a low core body temperature. Severe hypothermia may cause rigid muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heartbeat and respiration, and unconsciousness.

Treat hypothermia by protecting the victim from further heat loss and seeking immediate medical attention. Get the victim out of the cold. Add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim. Be sure to cover the victim's head. Replace wet clothing with dry clothing. Handle the victim gently because rough handling can cause cardiac arrest. Keep the victim in a horizontal (flat) position.

Finally, the best way to avoid frostbite and hypothermia is to stay out of the cold. Read a book, clean house or watch TV. Be patient and wait out the dangerous cold weather. ■



Does Stretching Prevent Injuries?

Everyone knows that flexibility is good for runners, right? Too bad medical research doesn't agree ...

AMBY BURFOOT
Runner's World

Editors are generally a timid and bookish lot. You'll find few Purple Hearts in our ranks, and few of us trying out for Fear Factor. In two decades at *Runner's World*, I've gone to the brink of combat just once.

It happened 10 years ago at the annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine. I was attending a slide show on "Stretching and Running Injuries," and the speaker kept making fun of *Runner's World*. His data on Honolulu marathoners indicated that runners who stretched got injured more often than those who didn't. After each of his statistical slides, he'd project pages of *Runner's World* with articles like, "9 Best Stretches for Runners." The message was clear: the editors of this magazine must be lost in space.

Hey, wait a minute, that's me. When the lights came on, I rushed to the microphone, huffing, puffing, and expanding my chest to its full 38 inches. I felt my testosterone surging. This dude was in trouble. "Thanks for the fascinating paper," I said. "I'm just curious. If stretching doesn't work, why do runners keep doing it?"

So much for my Terminator fantasy.

These days, as the running population keeps booming, the question of stretching's value is more important than ever. No wonder a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) received so much attention. It, too, cast doubt on the effectiveness of stretching, concluding, "There is not sufficient evidence to endorse or discontinue routine prerun or postrun stretching to prevent injury among

competitive or recreational athletes."

I always thought the folks at the CDC worked around the clock on SARS, HIV, and the biohazards of sci-fi movies. These people have time for sore Achilles tendons?

Stephen Thacker, M.D., the study's head author, assures me he has spent many years in public health surveillance, epidemiology, and infectious diseases. "But," he says, "obesity is costing the United States more than \$100 billion a year, and the CDC believes that more exercise could reduce this healthcare burden."

"We want to promote physical activity," says Dr. Thacker, "but we have to look at all the things that either encourage or discourage exercise, such as the amount of time it takes to exercise, and the injuries you can get. We look for the science before we make any recommendations."

For Dr. Thacker's paper, "The Impact of Stretching on Sports Injury Risk: A Systematic Review of the Literature," he and his colleagues pored over nearly 100 other published medical studies on the subject. Their key conclusions include:

- Stretching does increase flexibility;
- The highest-quality studies indicate that this increased flexibility doesn't prevent injuries;
- Few athletes need extreme flexibility to perform their best (perhaps just gymnasts and figure skaters); and
- More injuries would be prevented by better warmups, by strength training, and by balance exercises, than by stretching.

Ian Shrier, M.D., a past president of the Canadian Society of Sports Medicine, has been delving into the stretching literature since the

early 1990s. In a 1999 paper titled, "Stretching Before Exercise Does Not Reduce the Risk of Local Muscle Injury," Dr. Shrier lists five reasons why stretching shouldn't be expected to work. Among them:

—Stretching won't change eccentric muscle activity (when a muscle simultaneously contracts and lengthens, as in downhill running), which is believed to cause most injuries;

—Stretching can produce damage at the skeletal level; and

—Stretching appears to mask muscle pain, which could cause the exerciser to ignore this key pre-injury signal.

He concludes: "The basic science and clinical evidence today suggests that stretching before exercise is more likely to cause injury than to prevent it."

This is certain to come as a shock to many runners. In a recent *Runner's World* Online Poll, 89 percent of respondents said they try to make stretching "a regular part" of their program. Stretching has worked for them, so why should they stop? "I was sidelined with an IT band injury, but my PT taught me some new stretches," one runner wrote. "Since then, I have not had any problems." Many others stretch simply because it feels good.

It's easy to understand why flexibility has fans. I want to be flexible—not rigid—in my life, especially in my thinking. Likewise, we all know that tall buildings and long bridges are built to be flexible. Their flexibility enhances their strength in the face of hurricanes and earthquakes. No doubt: Flexibility is good.

Until you consider runners' relationship with "motion," which is another word for flexibility. Runners try to avoid too much motion. We wear orthotics to prevent overpronation. We wear knee straps to prevent too much lateral movement. We do crunches to build a rock-hard midsection. Flexibility sounds like a great idea, but has definite drawbacks for runners.

The best research on stretching and injury prevention has been done with military recruits. Military training has much in common with exercise, and the Army has a huge interest in keeping injuries to a minimum. In one study, titled, "Physical Training and Exercise-Related Injuries," a U.S. Army research team found that trainees with the highest and lowest flexibility had the highest

injury rates. They were, respectively, 2.2- and 2.5-times more likely to incur an injury than trainees with average flexibility. Apparently, when it comes to flexibility and injuries, don't try to be all that you can be. Settle for average.

Surprisingly, the best-known stretching-for-runners team in the United States, the father-son duo of Jim and Phil Wharton, agree with the medical research conclusions. "We don't even use the word 'stretching' anymore," the Whartons say. "It conjures up an image of static stretching—of holding still for too long, like the tension created by a tug of war. That can actually weaken the muscle-tendon connection."

The Whartons promote AI ("active, isolated") flexibility exercises. These exercises move the muscle and joint gently and progressively to the point of slight tension, then immediately release the tension, and then repeat 10 times. There's no static-stretching hold for 10 to 30 seconds. "This promotes healthy blood circulation and lubrication to the joint," say the Whartons, whose fans include Deena Kastor, Alan Webb, and Khalid Khannouchi.

Since older runners would seem to have much to gain from stretching, I called Ed Whitlock, who last fall became the first 70+ runner to go sub-3:00 in the marathon. But Whitlock is afraid of setting a bad example. You see, he doesn't stretch. "I get the greatest return on my time by piling on miles," he says. "I don't want to dump on stretching. We all need to find our own way. But you can do too much and get injured."

The CDC's Dr. Thacker agrees. "If the time you spend stretching," he says, "causes you to lose time from something else—more running, strength training, or stability exercises—then you might be better off spending the time on that something else."

Or take the middle road: stretch in the evening while you're watching TV. I like the Wharton approach, where you keep moving through your stretches—into them and out of them. That seems like a natural way to make you feel better. And it won't cut into your training time. ■

Source: October 2004, *Runner's World* magazine (<http://www.runnersworld.com/article/0,5033,s6-197-0-0-7001,00.html>).

Reprinted by permission of *Runner's World* magazine. Copyrighted 2004, Rodale Press, Inc., all rights reserved



National Safety Council

Winter weather can produce life-threatening situations, catching the unprepared traveler, worker or homebound family off guard. The National Safety Council (NSC) has several safety tips on surviving the cold weather available on the Web at www.nsc.org.

In many places, winter driving means snow, sleet, and ice that can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions, hot tempers and unforeseen dangers. To help you make it safely through winter, here are some suggestions from the NSC for you and your vehicle.

Weather

Winter weather affects road and driving conditions and can pose serious problems. Check weather forecasts on radio, TV, the cable weather channel, or newspapers.

Your Car

Prepare your car for winter. Start with a

checkup that includes:

- Checking the ignition, brakes, wiring, hoses and fan belts.
- Changing and adjusting the spark plugs.
- Checking the air, fuel and emission filters, and the Positive Crankcase Ventilation (PCV) valve.
- Inspecting the distributor.
- Checking the battery.
- Checking the tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth.
- Checking anti-freeze level and the freeze line.

Your car should have a tune-up (check the owner's manual for the recommended interval) to ensure better gas mileage, quicker starts and faster response on pick-up and passing power.

Necessary Equipment

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time and you must be prepared. Following the tune-up, a full tank of gas, and fresh anti-freeze, your trunk should carry:

- A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod-type jack
- A shovel
- Jumper cables
- Tow and tire chains
- A bag of salt or non-clumping cat litter
- Tool kit

Essential Supplies

Your “survival kit” should always stay in the car. Replenish after use. Essential supplies include:

- Working flashlight and extra batteries
- Reflective triangles and brightly colored cloth
- Compass
- First aid kit
- Exterior windshield cleaner
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Wooden stick matches in a waterproof container
- Scissors and string/cord
- Non-perishable, high-energy foods, such as unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits, and hard candy.

If you’re driving long distances under cold, snowy, and icy conditions, you should also carry supplies to keep you warm, such as:

- Heavy woolen mittens, socks, cap, blankets

If You Become Stranded

—Do not leave your car unless you know exactly where you are, how far it is to possible help, and you’re certain you will improve your situation.

—To attract attention, light two flares and place one at each end of the car a safe distance away. Hang a brightly colored cloth from your antenna.

—If you’re sure the car’s exhaust pipe is not blocked, run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes every hour or so, depending on the amount of gas in the tank.

—To protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia, use the woolen items and blankets to keep warm.

—Keep at least one window open slightly. Heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.

- Eat a hard candy to keep your mouth moist.

Shoveling Snow

Shoveling snow can be invigorating, but it

can also present health and safety hazards. Here are some tips to help make shoveling snow a safer job:

- Begin by dressing warm and covering all exposed skin to prevent frostbite.
- Don’t eat a large meal, drink alcohol or smoke just before shoveling snow.
- Know your limitations. If you’re out of shape, be careful.
- If you have a heart condition or other medical issues, check with your doctor before shoveling.
- Don’t overdo it. Pay attention to what your body is trying to tell you; breathing rate, heart rate, and blood pressure all increase with work.
- Pace yourself. Take it slow and keep it light, use a small shovel or don’t fill a large one with snow.
- Watch your step. Slips and falls are common on ice and can cause serious injury.
- Try to shovel dry snow before it becomes wet and freezes to the ground
- Push snow out of the path with the shovel instead of lifting it.
- If you have to lift the snow in the shovel, do it right. Lift with your legs, not your back. Keep your back in its natural curve to avoid increased stress and injury. ■

Winter Safety answers to page 10

I	A	M		A	B	E		S	T	E		F	O	B
C	L	I	P	P	E	R		O	U	R		E	Y	E
E	A	R	L	I	E	R		D	R	I	Z	Z	L	E
			O	A	T			D	A	N	C	E		
P	A	W			S	S	W				N	E	R	D
S	L	E	E	T		M	I	D	A	S		B	A	R
A	L	B	E	R	T	A		E	T	C		B	E	Y
			L	E	A	R		G	E	A	R			
A	S	A		A	R	T		R	E	R	O	U	T	E
R	A	W		T	A	S	T	E		F	E	R	A	L
C	O	L	D				N	E	T			N	I	L
			F	R	O	S	T		R	A	P			
T	H	A	W	O	U	T		T	O	W	R	O	P	E
M	A	I		S	S	E		B	L	A	N	K	E	T
O	D	D		A	T	M		S	L	Y		S	P	A



Finality of A Death

JOY E. FOWLKES
62 AW/SEG
McChord AFB WA

People were everywhere, and most of their attention was turned to a small field. The glare of the light-alls was aimed at a vehicle and the lone body curled up on its side next to it. From a distance, it seemed “clean.” No fuss. Not a lot of blood. Just like back in the good old days of TV, where people were hit by a car, rolled over the hood, and serenely lay in their final position. Only this time, the person was thrown from the vehicle, with it landing on top of her. Emergency services had lifted the vehicle off and it now lay on its side, a few feet from the body.

I walked closer, trying to take note of all the things that could be important, but somehow only able to concentrate on the still form lying on the ground. Standing as close to the cordoned off areas as I possibly could, I saw it was not as

immaculate as I had thought. Deep gouges scored the earth, and dirt was caked all over the vehicle and the victim. Clothing had been ripped open and pulled up, down, and around the body. I noticed it was a female—a girl, really. That surprised me. Most accidents happen to young men.

As a woman, I wanted to run up there and cover her from all the eyes that were trained on her, but I couldn’t. So, I stared like everyone else. I felt embarrassed and ashamed. Embarrassment for her and the reality of her final state, and shame for me and everyone else there staring at the sight.

This was my first real body. I had done other fatality investigations, but had never seen the direct result. I’d seen blood before; I’d even seen worse—but always without the victim there. This time was different. A person I could see. An individual with a face I HAD to look at. It makes a difference, and is something you

don't forget.

During the investigation, I learned that she was only 19, that she had a boyfriend, that she was new to her Air Force career, and that she had just learned to drive the vehicle that took her life. A simple mistake had taken all that away. A decision was made that changed everything.

Even worse, I learned that day that Death doesn't care about youth or potential or how things are portrayed on TV. Death can be an ignoble, desolating, disrespectful act. It can be lonely and it can be shaming. It's not all about the warm positive memories of friends and family, or about lying in a pristine white hospital bed, taking your last dying breath with

your loved one's name on your lips. Sometimes it's just about dying in a dirt field.

After that, I realized death is an inevitability we can't put off, and we don't get to choose how and when.

There are many things out there to turn the tables against us, but that doesn't mean we hand our lives over without as much input as we possibly can. What I'm saying is the choices we make are ones we have to live with—or leave others to deal with. We need to take a moment to evaluate not only the choices we have, but the decisions we make. Use the tools we've been given to make a difference, to lessen the potentials that could threaten ourselves, our loved ones, our mission. Make the best and most rational decision. Make it work for us and help others do the same.

Remember, Life and Death are both realities, but only one has finality. ■



National Safety Council

To keep those emergency rooms less busy this winter, follow these 10 tips for safe winter driving:

1. Respect the winter weather. Plan extra time for a trip in the winter. A trip that might take 30 minutes in May might take you 45 minutes or an hour in the winter.

2. Wear your safety belts. Make it a rule: Everyone must be buckled up before the vehicle moves.

3. Don't drink and drive. At least 30 percent of those winter-driving crashes that lead to Emergency Room visits involve alcohol. Remember that you have less reaction time in hazardous conditions.

4. Winterize your vehicle's safety kit. The kit should include some special additions, such as a blanket, a small shovel to dig out snow, sand to help get traction if needed, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, jumper cables, ice scraper/brush and lock deicer.

5. Conduct a pre-trip inspection. Check the anti-freeze. Make sure you have proper tires to handle the weather. Be sure you have enough gas for each trip. Wipers must be in good shape to handle snow and ice. Remember to first unstick them from the frozen glass.

6. Be ready for changing conditions. Make sure you have good all-season tires that can handle different types of weather. Check with your auto mechanic or a professional at a tire store to discuss your options. In high snow and ice areas, you may need more than all-season tires.

7. Don't get SUV overconfidence. The bigger the vehicle, the tougher it is to stop. While a sport-utility vehicle might get through some tough conditions more easily, it won't stop more quickly, and it may roll over if you make a turn too fast.

8. Know how to react to trouble. If you have anti-lock brakes, don't pump them. Press them down as hard as you can. If you go into a skid, turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the front of the car to go; that will keep the vehicle from skidding out of control. Then prepare to counter steer two or three times.

9. Leave some space. Follow the three-second rule. After the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object, you should be able to count for three seconds before your vehicle passes the same object. Add one more second for each driving condition that deteriorates.

10. Defuse road rage. One-fourth of drivers in a recent AAA survey admitted they have expressed anger at other drivers. To avoid becoming a road-rage statistic, leave more room between yourself and other drivers. Stay out of the left lane if you're going slow. And don't play games on the road. ■



During the 101 Critical Days of Summer 2004 (4 p.m. May 28 through 7 a.m. September 7), the Air Force lost 32 Airmen to fatal mishaps.

Air Force fatalities from the previous five years' "101 Critical Days" appear below:

- 2003: 37
- 2002: 30
- 2001: 19
- 2000: 19
- 1999: 19

As in past years, motor vehicle mishaps accounted for most of the losses—13 PMV4 mishaps and 11 PMV2 mishaps. Some of the factors in these mishaps included speeding, alcohol, and not using seatbelts or helmets.

Sports and recreation mishaps claimed another six Airmen, and two lost their lives in industrial incidents.

"In each of the past three summers, we've lost 30 or more Airmen to preventable accidents. This year, we lost 32. The needless loss of our most precious resource is totally unacceptable. That's why it's so important for Air Force leaders at all levels to do whatever they can to help protect our people," said Maj. Gen. Lee McFann, Air Force Chief of Safety and Commander of the Air Force Safety Center.

At the start of the 2004 Critical Days, Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. John P. Jumper wrote in a message to the force, "Almost 90 percent of our fatal accidents occur off-duty, and the overwhelming majority involve private motor vehicles. Every day, our superb Airmen demonstrate their professionalism and training in a dangerous profession. The same standards you embrace on the job pertain outside the gate as well. When you relax from the job, don't relax your good judgment." ■



LT COL SCOTT VANDER HAMM
325 BS/CC
Whiteman AFB MO

Sowing & Reaping

Ever heard of the Law of Sowing and Reaping? Have you ever put something in motion, only to find it came back around to haunt or reward you? I have!

My dad always told me, “You reap what you sow.” This is true whether in the physical, emotional or spiritual realm. You may have heard it said differently, but parents, grandparents, mentors, supervisors and commanders have harped on this for as long as I can remember. There will always be consequences—good or bad—for everything we do.

I’d like to tell you a quick story to demonstrate this point, which may have a lasting impact on your life or the lives of your loved ones.

An officer in my squadron reaped the benefits from years of sowing good seed in her life. The benefit was walking away from a totaled vehicle in what could have been a fatal crash if she hadn’t sown these habits. Major Kristin Goodwin, one of my flight commanders, nearly lost her life on Highway Y, just east of the base on her way to work one dark February morning.

Major Goodwin left her Sedalia home very early to be at work for B-2 mission lead training that began at 6 a.m. Road conditions were generally good, because the sun caused much of the snow to melt from the roads the previous day. However, north winds during the night blew drifts across a section of the road. This wasn’t visible to traffic moving from the east.

As she crossed the knoll, due to the conditions on that section of road, there was a vehicle travel-

ing in the opposite direction that began to drift into her lane. In an effort to avoid the oncoming traffic, Major Goodwin moved to the right. Her right front wheel caught the snow-and-gravel mix, and when she corrected, the vehicle started an acrobatic maneuver she will never forget. After three complete flips, the vehicle came to a rest.

This is where the story could get ugly. But it doesn’t!

Because Major Goodwin had sown the good habits of wearing a seat belt, she was able to get out of the vehicle, with some help, and walk away. The result could have been much different. We could still be nursing her back to health, or worse. Instead, she returned to flying status in less than two weeks.

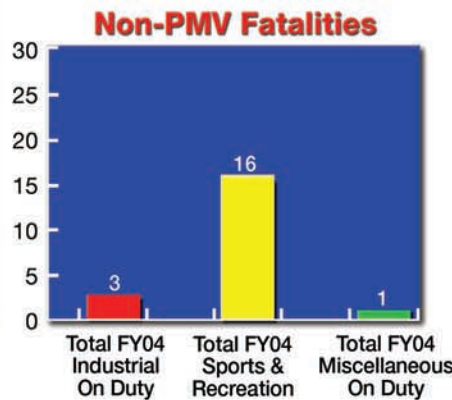
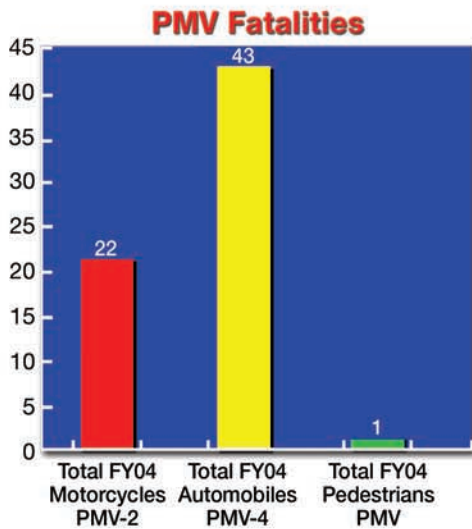
From the past to the future, every person who has or will have contact with Major Goodwin either is or will be grateful for seat belts when they hear her story. I know I am—it saved the life of a dear member of our squadron.

I’m also grateful to the people who stopped to help Major Goodwin. Jeff Blake, from our Northrop Grumman partners, was the first on scene. He helped Major Goodwin out of the vehicle and provided communication to get emergency vehicles to respond. Lt Col Terry Sunnarborg, 394th Combat Training Squadron, also went the extra mile and stayed with Major Goodwin when she was transported to the hospital and home. Lt Col Scott Young, 715th Weapons School commander, also stopped and provided comfort and assistance. What a privilege to work in a wing where so many good Samaritans dwell.

I hope you will sow good habits into your life. Wear seat belts and demand that those loved ones and friends with whom you travel do so as well. ■



Snapshot on Safety



4th Qtr FY04 Update

In FY04, 86 Airman were killed in mishaps—nine on duty and 77 off duty. We lost 30 during the fourth quarter. THIS IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE! Once again, motorcycle and automobile mishaps led the way this quarter—we lost 11 Airman to motorcycle mishaps and another 8 to automobile mishaps. The causes are not new: driving too fast for conditions, overcorrecting steering during emergencies, failure to wear seatbelts (16 fatalities in FY04), fatigue, and driving after drinking alcohol (14 fatalities in FY04). Motorcycle riders continue to test the laws of physics and exceed their abilities. Poor risk management is apparent. Supervisors must ensure their people understand and practice personal risk management, and use these Lessons Learned to avoid making the same mistakes.

Drinking, Driving and Speeding = DEATH

An Airman and a friend drank many beers and several shots of liquor during the evening. About 1 a.m., the two got into the Airman's vehicle and drove on a road with a posted speed of 55 mph. As they approached a gradual left curve at an estimated 125 mph, it departed the road on the right side. The Airman attempted to steer back onto the road. There was no sign of severe braking or erratic steering. However, the vehicle struck a partially buried culvert at an estimated 85 mph, and became airborne. The rear of the vehicle struck the ground and the vehicle flipped, with

the roof and front end striking the ground. The vehicle then rolled back onto the road, sliding diagonally across the road on its roof and hood, coming to rest more than 400 feet from its impact with the culvert. Both occupants wore seatbelts and the airbags deployed. The Airman suffered massive head trauma and was pronounced dead at the scene. The passenger was transported in critical condition to a local hospital. The Airman's blood alcohol level was .17, more than twice the legal limit. Investigators cited high speed and driving drunk as the mishap causes.

Lesson learned: Speeding and driving drunk are deadly.

More Speed and Alcohol

Two Airmen watched TV and drank a few beers in the afternoon, then went to a restaurant around 7 p.m. They ate dinner and drank beer for the next four hours before leaving for home, driving a convertible. About a mile from the restaurant, they were traveling more than 50 mph in a 30-mph zone. They entered a curve too fast; the driver braked and skidded into the curb. The vehicle jumped the curb, struck a guardrail, and rolled to the right. It crashed through a fence, traveled down an embankment on its top and came to rest against a tree. Both occupants wore seatbelts, but the passenger received fatal head injuries. Police estimated the vehicle left the road at more than 50 mph. The driver's BAC was .25, three times the legal limit!

Lesson learned: Speeding and driving drunk kills another Airman.

Drinking And Driving Claims Another Airman

The Airman was home on leave, and after socializing with several friends and drinking an unknown amount of alcohol, decided to drive home in the pre-dawn hours. As the vehicle topped a hill with a rising curve, the Airman lost control and drove off the right side of the road, midway along the curve. The vehicle struck a rock wall and veered back onto the road on the two driver's-side wheels. The vehicle next made an abrupt right turn into the rock wall and overturned. The Airman,





who failed to wear a seatbelt, was partially ejected and received fatal injuries. Police estimated the vehicle speed at 65 mph when it veered off the road. Blood alcohol test results are pending, but alcohol use is confirmed.

Lesson learned: Speed, failure to wear seatbelts, and alcohol use are a deadly combination.

More Alcohol, More Death

The Airman and his passenger had been riding his motorcycle for about two hours when they joined up with another rider, then spent the next three hours riding to bars and drinking an unknown amount of alcohol. They stopped to eat at a restaurant around 10:30 p.m., and then rode to another friend's house in a nearby city, where they drank more alcohol. After about an hour, the Airman and his passenger, with their "friend" following in his car, drove back to a bar near their home. Again, they drank an undetermined amount of alcohol at the bar. Around 11 p.m., they decided they should all go home. The passenger opted to ride in the car with the friend, and the Airman rode his motorcycle. They were driving on a two-lane asphalt road, with the motorcycle far out in front of the car. The motorcycle was so far ahead of the car that those in the car lost sight of its taillight. The motorcycle crossed into the opposing lane and ran off the left side of the road, traveled more than 200 feet, and came back on the road in the wrong lane. The Airman lost control of the motorcycle and skidded more than 250 feet across the road, off the right side and into a grassy ditch. The Airman separated from the motorcycle during the skid, receiving severe head injuries, and died in the hospital 12 days later. He was not wearing a helmet. His BAC was .268, almost 3.5 times the legal limit. He had never attended a Motorcycle Safety Course. He had received five traffic citations in the 34 months before the mishap, four of them for speeding. His squadron had briefed him on the requirements for motorcycle safety training, risk management and protective equipment. However, the Airman ignored the briefings.

Lesson learned: Alcohol use and speeding result in another needless death.

Other Deadly Mishaps

An Airman had worked the last of his normal 3 days on/3 days off, 12-hour shifts. He slept about 1.5 hours during his scheduled 12-hour shift, which was allowed due to the type of work involved. He planned to drive 450 miles on his days off to visit his family. His supervisor was aware of the planned trip and advised him to go home and sleep before going on his trip. The Airman said he did better if he just stayed up and would be more tired if he slept. It could not be determined if the Airman slept before starting the trip. The Airman called his family twice during the trip and said he had taken a 3.5-

hour nap during the trip. The Airman drove about 10 miles after the last phone call. He was driving on a two-lane winding road with a posted speed limit of 55 mph. He veered left of the centerline and collided head-on with a semi-tractor trailer traveling at about 50 mph. A State Police Trooper was following the tractor-trailer and witnessed the mishap. The Airman made no evasive attempt to stop or swerve before the impact. He was wearing a seatbelt, and alcohol was not a factor. However, he had taken three different prescription drugs: an anti-depressant, a medicine to help with sleep, and a pain reliever. Because of the Airman's work and sleep cycle, and the effects of the drugs, he likely fell asleep at the wheel.

Lesson learned: The Airman exceeded his limits, didn't consider the effect of the drugs, and lacked proper rest. His poor judgment, by attempting the trip while medicated and without proper rest, proved fatal. Supervisory intervention may have saved this Airman's life.

Much, Much More Alcohol

After flying a 19-hour mission, the Airman and others proceeded to off base billeting. En route, most of them drank beer. In the lobby of an off-base hotel, one of them introduced a liter of vodka and three-quarters of a liter of rum. After most of the crew ate breakfast at the hotel buffet and had depleted the beer, vodka and rum, they collected money to buy more alcohol. The mishap Airman went to the base Shoppette and bought another liter of vodka, a liter of rum, a liter of bourbon, two 12-packs of beer, cokes and some Red Bull. Two of the members, who had consumed about five beers each, went to their rooms. The remaining six consumed 20 beers, 1.5 liter of vodka, and 1.25 liters of rum and one-fourth of a liter of bourbon. Two more then went to their rooms, while the other four went swimming in the hotel pool. The pool has a bar at the shallow end and is 40 feet wide, 150 feet long and 15 feet deep. At about 12:30 p.m., two more members went down to the pool. The six of them bought 30 alcoholic drinks at the pool bar. Around 3 p.m., the Airman was heard to say that he could swim the entire length of the pool both ways (300 feet) on one breath. He was in the deep end of the pool and started swimming underwater. On the return lap, he rose to the surface without taking a breath and returned underwater. He was seen swimming near the diving board and then went to the bottom of the pool. He remained there for two to five minutes before the lifeguard and others pulled him from the pool. An ambulance arrived and the EMTs attempted further resuscitation, but the efforts failed. Toxicology at the time of death showed the Airman's BAC was .29. The autopsy showed the cause of death as drowning.

Lesson learned: Alcohol, fatigue, poor judgment, and swimming are frequently a recipe for disaster. ■



Winter Driver Prep

Most winter storms develop over time, giving the driver who has followed the weather time to anticipate conditions that will affect driving. Knowing the winter forecast terms will let you know what to expect. Below is a brief description of winter driving forecast terms and their meaning:

- * *Winter Weather Advisory*—conditions such as cold, ice and snow are likely to hinder travel, cause significant inconveniences or create other hazardous conditions.

- * *Freezing Rain*—rain is likely to freeze as soon as it strikes the ground, causing an ice coating on roads.

- * *Sleet*—rain drops that freeze into ice pellets before reaching the ground.

- * *Winter Storm Watch*—severe winter weather is possible.

- * *Winter Storm Warning*—heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain are likely.

- * *Blizzard Warning*—heavy snow, winds, and dangerously low temperatures are likely. Blizzards can impair visibility and produce life-threatening wind chills.

Source: *National Safety Council*