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Recreational and Driving Safety

Road & Rec

Volume 19, Number 4

Fall 2007

Road
& Rec

"Road & Rec" Reaches The End

This issue of *"Road & Rec"* is the last of its kind. After 19 years of publication under that title, the Air Force Safety Center's ground safety magazine will be renamed *"Wingman,"* starting with the Winter 2008 edition. See back cover for more details.

Road & Rec

Volume 19, Number 4

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page 4

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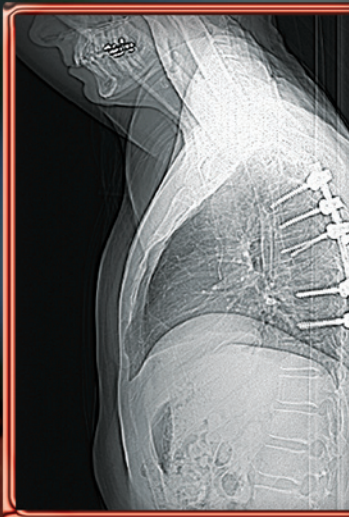
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Air Force Loses 19 Airmen During 2007 “101 Critical Days of Summer” Campaign

MAJ GEN WENDELL L. GRIFFIN

United States Air Force Chief of Safety
Commander, Air Force Safety Center

I am pleased to report that all, but one, of our Airmen returned to duty following the Labor Day weekend. This year’s 101 CDS campaign was another successful one. In fact, it was one of the best ever in the 40-plus years we’ve been running it. However, this year we still lost 19 exceptional Airmen. Despite these losses, we have sustained significant reductions as compared to an average of 29 fatalities during the previous five year period of FY02-06. You too should be pleased with this accomplishment, because it was a total force effort.

I am fully convinced the overall success of this year’s campaign is directly attributed to the collective efforts of our commanders, supervisors, and personnel embracing our Wingman safety

culture, *“Airmen taking care of Airmen.”* Their untiring support ensured the safety message was kept at the forefront.

Nonetheless, off-duty motorcycle mishaps continued to plague our Airmen. Motorcycle crashes led to six of our 19 fatalities. Five of six crashes were the result of the operator losing control of the vehicle. Commanders, supervisors, and experienced motorcycle riders must continue their vigilance and mentorship of our lesser experienced riders. They must continue to be “Top Notch” wingmen, and intervene when individual’s riding practices are known to be of high risk.

The summer season has come to a close, but risk and the threat of preventable mishaps stays with us 24/7. Every time an automobile or motorcycle is started, a wrench is turned on the flight-line, or an operation is planned, personnel must assess the risk, consider risk options, and take the appropriate action to manage that risk. *“Airmen taking care of Airmen”* isn’t just an Air Force motto, it’s our way of life. ★★



A Rainy Day On The Freeway

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It was an unusually rainy day in San Diego, Calif.; it's usually sunny and warm. However, I still needed to get up, get ready, and take my husband to work. I had a lot to do during the day, including getting some hours in at work. We headed to the freeway, which is pretty much the only way to get around.

As we slowly pulled onto the freeway, the rain began to get heavier, and cars began to slow just slightly. That's unusual, because drivers in this area don't usually slow for anything or anyone, unless it's bumper-to-bumper traffic. The traffic that morning was average, enough to pick up speed and move around a little.

After about five minutes, the heavy rain turned into a downpour. It was as if a sheet had been pulled over my windshield, and I could hardly see five feet in front of my car. I hoped it would let up at least a little, so I wouldn't have to deal with it for the next 15 or so miles.

All of a sudden, the car in front of me slammed on its brakes. The driver didn't let off even once. It took everything I had in my little foot, pressing on the brake pedal as hard as I could without going into a spin, trying to keep the steering wheel from going out of control. I was scared to death, because I could hardly see anyway, but now this crazy person was coming to a standstill in the

middle of the freeway! I actually managed to stop without hitting the car in front of me, but just when I thought I was in the clear, the car behind me slammed into me.

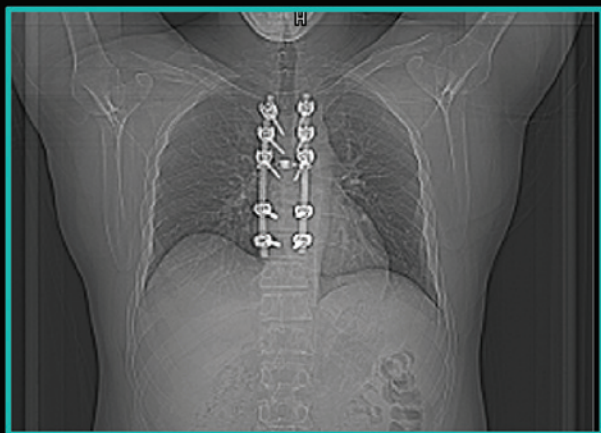
The driver who'd hit me and I got out in the pouring rain, mulled over what had happened, gave each other information, with help from police who showed up outstandingly fast, and then went on our way. I was one of the lucky ones able to leave without receiving medical treatment. Many others who were involved in what I found out later was a 40-car pileup were transported to the hospital for further assistance. I was closer to the tail end of the mess, so to speak, than most other unfortunate souls.

Later that day, I saw coverage of the event on the evening news. It seems that a little old lady panicked when the rain became a downpour, and decided that the best solution for her was to stop immediately where she was, on the freeway, in the fast lane. That's what caused the massive collision.

This incident changed my driving perspective, at least in the rain, for the rest of my life. When I'm a passenger in a vehicle driving in the rain, I still find myself trying to step on brakes that aren't there.

Unfortunately in this incident, there wasn't a whole lot a person could do to prepare for such an occurrence, but for the little old lady and anyone else who may consider her solution to be a good one, it wasn't. You may want to consider pulling over to the shoulder instead of stopping on a busy road. ■

Ambulances, Helicopters & Duct Tape:



A Desert Race Gone Wrong

LT COL THOMAS ROY

HQ AFSC/SEF
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There I was, lying flat on my back in the southern New Mexico desert with some pretty serious injuries, looking at what remained of my brand new desert bike. Talk about intense pain (looking at my damaged bike, not the injuries)! Thankfully, I was able to rally what little common sense I possessed and didn't try to stand up before the paramedics arrived to duct tape me to a backboard and cart me off to definitive medical care. I did, however, immediately jerk my helmet off. In retrospect,

that wasn't too good of an idea.

The weekend of the first dirt bike desert race of the season started great. I arrived at the course in time for the Saturday pre-ride, which consisted of one lap around the 20-mile course for familiarity and machine setup. The pre-ride was uneventful, the course layout great, and although I was a little uncomfortable on my brand new bike, I felt really good about the next day's race.

Sunday arrived and the race kicked off as scheduled at 8 o'clock. I got a good start and was having the time of my life. I hit the first checkpoint at the 12-mile point, got my visor card marked, and made a left turn down a section of high-speed single track. It was at this point I

made the transition from “having the time of my life” to “it sucks to be me.”

I got out of shape going good and fast, and high-sided huge. If you’re unfamiliar with motorcycle lingo, by “high-side,” I mean being pitched upward off the bike in a graceful arc, resembling a 180-pound lawn dart. I landed on the right side of my head and my right shoulder. Total damage: four fractured vertebrae, fractured collarbone, heavily flexed rib cage and a pretty good ding on the head. I got an ambulance ride to a community hospital, a medevac helicopter transfer to a larger military medical center, 10 days in the hospital, and a bunch of titanium holding my spine together. Talk about intense pain (removing all that duct tape, not the fractures)!

After more than two years as an Air Force Safety Center aviation-mishap investigator, I couldn’t help thinking of my current plight in terms of the “what,” which was immediately obvious—I fell off my dirt bike doing the national speed limit, and the “why” or “root cause,” which took a little more percolation. Oh, and yes, the irony of my being a “Safety Center” staff officer went unnoticed by very few (sorry, boss—at least it was the Ground Safety stats I pushed up).

I came up with two factors that undoubtedly contributed to the crash. First was my unfamiliarity with the bike, and second, an inadequate bike setup.

Riders on new or unfamiliar bikes are highly overrepresented in accident statistics. Guilty on that count! I had planned on getting a bunch of seat time on my new desert bike over the winter, but things got busy at work, and time went by. I found myself breaking in this new bike less than a week before the race.

I’d been looking forward to this race all winter and wasn’t going to miss it. Starting the pre-ride, I had only about 45 minutes ride time on it; I used the pre-ride to finish breaking in the motor. Although this bike was similar to my previous bike, it had its differences. My unfamiliarity with those differences was undoubtedly a factor in this crash.

In any sort of racing, setup is critical to performance and safety. I fell below the line on this count, as well. All the normal Motorcycle Safety Foundation recommended pre-ride

checks, such as tire pressure, spoke tightness, and chain adjustment are critical, but in racing, the bar is higher. A combination of not enough seat time and getting a little lazy led me to fail to accurately adjust the suspension damping, adjust the spring sag, set the bars, etc. I also hadn’t gotten around to mounting a critically important steering stabilizer on the new bike. These were all factors that could have prevented the crash. The bottom line is that motorcycle racing has plenty of inherent risk. There’s no need to add risk by inadequate preparation.

Now a little bit about my experience with helmets. I feel lucky that out of more than 20 years of riding and racing motorcycles, I’ve never had a life-threatening injury. That would not have been the case if I hadn’t worn high-quality, full-face helmets religiously.

This crash and one I was involved in 20 years ago, road-racing at a track in Wisconsin, were

very similar in impact characteristics. The first thing to hit the ground on both occasions was my head (this should clear up some questions from my co-workers). The central impact on both occasions was very low on the helmet. In my recent crash, my state-of-the-art carbon/Kevlar matrix helmet was severely fractured where the chin-bar transitions into the main shell. This impact occurred just in front of my right ear lobe. In the earlier crash, the impact occurred at the base of my skull, centered on the

back of my head.

The reason I think it’s important to highlight these impacts is two-fold. The first is simply that both likely would have been fatal without a quality helmet. The second is due to the number of Airmen I see wearing barely DOT-legal half-helmets. Both of my impacts occurred below where these style helmets provide any protection. Not going to preach here, just giving the bottom line: If I had been wearing a half-helmet in either one of these impacts, I wouldn’t be writing this article.

As simplistic as it may sound, the biggest lesson I learned from this crash is that it could happen to me. Twenty years of riding and racing with no major injuries had me in a major state of denial. Serious injuries happened to other people. I was never going to be the guy leaving in the ambulance or helicopter. I now know it did happen to me, and it can happen to you. Please gear up and ride safe! ■





Anonymous

It was a cold morning—a lot colder than it should have been at that time of year. Still, I was dressed for it, and I was determined that it was the day I’d get a shot at that buck. As I started putting my tree stand together in the dark, I could feel my anticipation starting to rise.

My equipment was in pretty good shape, only a few years old, and I had used it many times before, so I was very familiar with it. My tree stand was a climbing type, the kind with two pieces. I didn’t use a safety belt of any sort. None of my friends did, either. It really wasn’t necessary and besides, it just got in the way, anyway. That was what I told myself. It was a decision I’d later regret.

I was about 20 feet off the ground when it happened. One of the welds on the foot portion of my stand failed.

I reached for the hand climber portion, but too late. Unfortunately, what was left of the lower portion of my stand had managed to plant itself with the cutting edge pointed up, directly beneath my leg.

I don’t remember the impact. I had difficulty breathing. Then my nerves started working again, my lungs started filling up with air again, and my brain finally registered what had happened. Then the pain in my leg introduced itself to me, and it had my undivided attention. Ouch!

Through sheer luck, my leg wasn’t broken, but I had a good gash on the back of my left calf. I didn’t panic, but I was definitely scared. It was at least a quarter mile back to the dirt road where I was to be picked up later that night.

It hurt like hell, but I could walk, so I made my way back to the road where I’d been dropped off earlier. As luck would have it, one of my friends was returning to camp to retrieve



something he had forgotten. He saw my light, and off to the hospital we went.

After a few stitches and a lot of ribbing from my friends, I was back in camp, but my season was over. I still hunt from a tree stand today, but fall protection is something I now take seriously. I look over my gear thoroughly before each use, especially my bright, shiny new safety belt. Most of my friends have started using one, also, but I'm not sure they would admit it to me.

I always have a plan, and I file it with someone. I carry a whistle with me, and I keep a personal first aid kit on me.

If it sounds like I had a bad day, I didn't. It was the luckiest day of my life. I dodged a bullet. A couple of inches either way and I could've lost my leg. A different twist on the way down, and someone else would be writing my story.

Personal protective equipment isn't just for your job; it's for your off-duty recreation and hobbies, too. ■

Street Wise.



The right gear will not only keep you comfortable, it will help protect you. Wear a helmet and protective apparel and be prepared for anything the road or the weather throws at you.



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Pain, Misery and Untimely Death, Part IX, Take MIXVII.7

ZACHARY WAKEFIELD

506 ECS/SCMK
Kirkuk AB Iraq

It appears the time has come again, in which we transition into the next round of seasonal excuses to put ourselves in harm's way. That being said, it also means it's high time your trusty Viking pseudo-guardian takes quill and parchment in hand and sets forth attempting to prevent said harm through use of printed media distribution. Given the opportunity, of course I would much rather join each of you on your seemingly never-ending quests to do bodily injury to yourselves and others, that I might intervene in the flesh, rather than having to camp out in the subconscious. Sadly, that cannot be the case, as I am but one Viking and the world at large is ... well ... large. So without further ado, the first topic!

Road trips. With winter closing in fast, and the realization that most of the summer was spent loafing fresh on our minds, that wild urge to careen haphazardly down unfamiliar highways begins to surface with gusto.

The folks at the other end of the road are not, however, looking forward to having to meet the ambulance half-way, so do them a favor and get there in one piece. Ways to prevent a free ride in the meat wagon are many; here are a few.

The longer your trip, the more dead bugs will appear on your windshield. These would-be bird foodstuffs impair visibility, increase glare, and make horrible little splatty noises at the moment of impact. Therefore, keeping the squeegees flying during pit stops is wise.

Might as well check your oil, too, as there's nothing fun about sitting beside the road with the hood up.

Going over the speed limit is a fun way to attract law enforcement officials and, if you do the math, doesn't save nearly as much time as you'd like to believe.

Also, don't be an idiot: It's easier to stop and "crash" for an hour than it is to crash and stop forever.

Something else to ponder is the start of a new school year, and basketball season or whatever else, cramming lots of things into an already-packed work schedule. This can lead to stress,

The follies of idiocy, and the many clever guises of complacency utilized maliciously in this whirlwind of an existence that we endure.
 "A non-award-winning short"

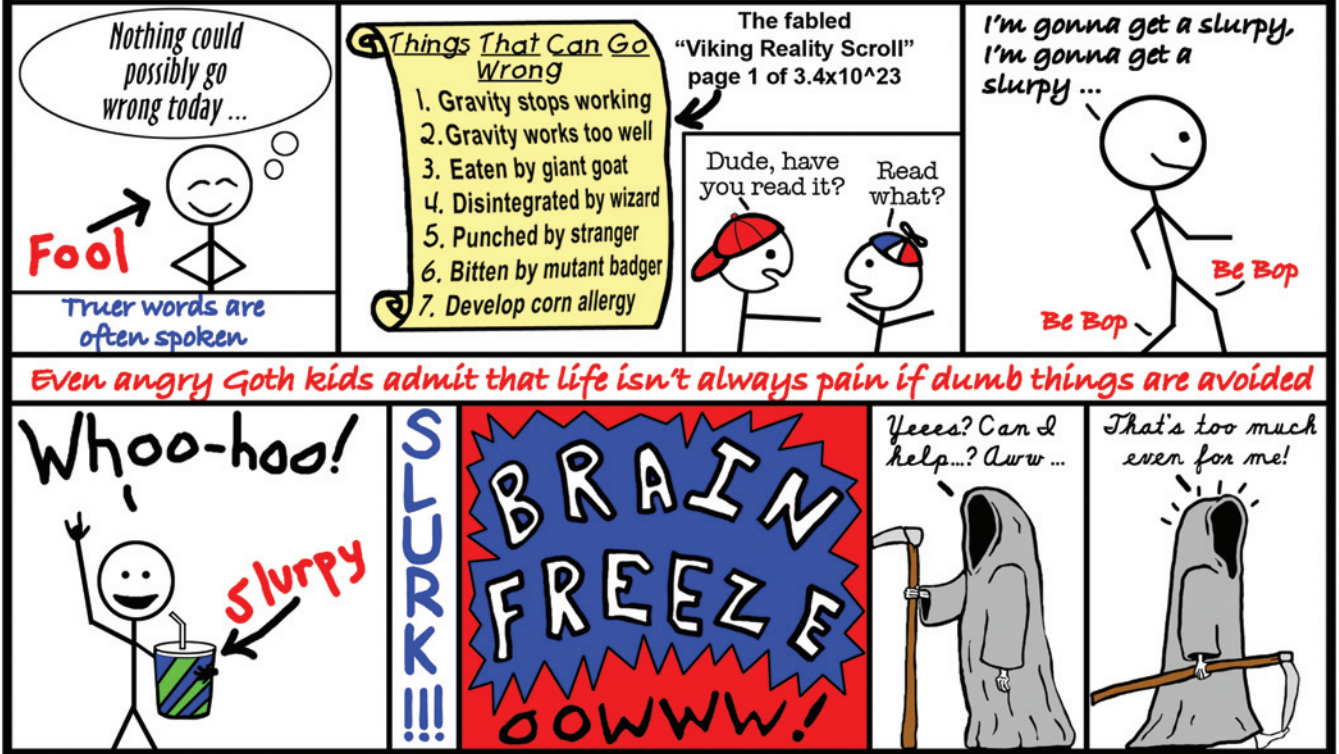


Illustration by Zachary Wakefield

anger, and big forehead veins popping out and frightening the children. No need to blast everyone with exploded head goo—take five and chill out every once in a while. I've found a good book out on the poop deck of my sailing vessel takes the edge right off. Don't giggle; it's a nautical term.

The final topic I would like to burrow into your minds is one that never ceases to be important: Don't take the helm if you have consumed mead! That's a pretty easy one to understand, but somehow it's forgotten on a nearly daily basis. How? I don't know, but if I could hypno-toad all of you into psychosomatically feeling the wrath of *Thok the Mighty Axe of Safety* every time you even considered driving impaired, I certainly would. Thok doesn't take guff from anybody. **Most importantly:**

Don't do dumb things!!

Sincerely,

*Bjorn, Your Friendly Neighborhood Safety Viking
 Distributor of shining wisdom-pearls
 Scalper of those same pearls at fur-laden
 fights to the death
 Everlasting Leader of the Invisible Taco
 People of Avocado VII*

IS AGGRESSIVE DRIVING WORTH THE RISK?



TRAFFIC is going nowhere fast, but the hotshot behind you just has to pass. The minute there's enough room, he or she is next to you, and because you're a safe driver and allow some distance between yourself and the vehicle ahead of you, there's just enough space for the hotshot to squeeze in ahead of you. Oh sure, you get a cursory blink of the turn signal, or maybe not, just as the vehicle pulls in.

Most drivers are reasonable people, though we stew as we watch the hotshot do it again to the vehicle in front of us. Of course, when you get to the next light, the hotshot is just a couple of cars ahead, having risked an accident for a 40-foot advantage. Of course, the hotshot's windows are down and the music is deafening, even two car-lengths away. I see this every day, driving to and from work, on a somewhat busy four-lane divided highway, with a posted speed limit of 70 mph. At times, the traffic can be referred to as the "Minot 500." I ask co-workers and myself, "What's the hurry?" Are they late for work? Probably not. It must be the fresh pot of coffee or doughnuts waiting for them at the office.

I used to think it was the anonymity of being in a vehicle that enabled some people to be so rude on the road. I think that's still true, but it's been worsened by how it's now cool to drive aggressively. How can it not be, when all we get in TV commercials are attractive young people tearing around in high-performance sports cars or SUVs as if there's no one else on the road?

Aggressive driving isn't just rude. The fundamental point of ethics is not to hurt others, and aggressive drivers hurt others. Rudeness on the road causes anger, and other drivers not only are hurt by being needlessly angered, but they also get aggressive in response. The whole thing feeds on itself, because then still other drivers are affected.

Ethical behavior isn't just about how you conduct yourself face-to-face. Being encased

in three or four tons of metal doesn't remove you from the ethical sphere, not even if you're riding high in your supposedly super-safe SUV, seeing yourself as the coolest driver around. You still owe others consideration.

Part of the trouble is that hurting others seems to have been rethought over the past decade. It used to be that upsetting people counted as hurting them. Now, even with our obsession about political correctness, it seems that in practice, not hurting people is thought of as just not physically damaging them. Upsetting them has become purely a matter of legality and liability, something for the courts. That's not good enough, but I don't see things improving anytime soon.

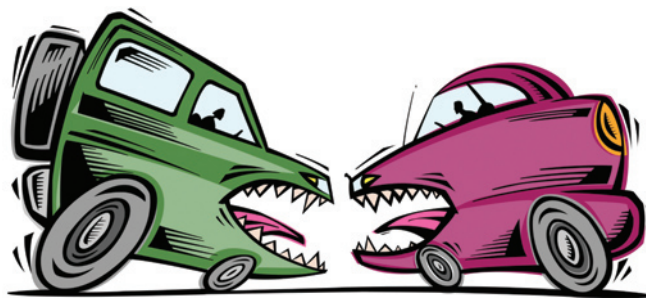
How can you avoid such drivers? First, don't become another aggressive driver yourself. Keep your emotions in check. Don't take your frustrations out on other drivers.

Plan your trip and allow enough time for delays. Focus on your own driving. Yelling, pounding on the steering wheel, and honking your horn won't make traffic move any faster.

Next, avoiding the dangers of aggressive drivers: First, be a cautious, considerate driver. Don't create situations that may provoke another motorist. Don't tailgate or flash your lights at another driver. If you're in the left lane and someone wants to pass, move over and let the driver pass you. If you encounter an angry driver, don't make matters worse by triggering a confrontation. Try to avoid eye contact, steer clear, and give the angry driver plenty of room. Don't make inappropriate hand or facial gestures. Always remember, if you're concerned for your safety, get a vehicle description, a license plate number, and call 9-1-1.

If an aggressive driver is involved in a crash farther down the road, stop a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for the police to arrive, and report the driving behavior that you witnessed.

Remember, your car isn't a tank, it's not bulletproof, and the truly aggressive driver may follow you home. Is an impulsive action worth ruining the rest of your life? ■



AIR FORCE CULTURE ASSESSMENT SAFETY TOOL

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INTRODUCTION

A squadron commander has just taken command of a unit and would like to get a sense of the organization's work ethic, safety climate, and other special-interest issues affecting operational effectiveness. The commander also wants to measure the success of current, long-running, well-established safety programs. How does the commander accomplish this daunting task? Commanders typically rely upon traditional approaches, such as staff feedback, selected performance measures, and personal observations. However, the commander now has a new tool to help in this task—the Air Force Culture Assessment Safety Tool [see Figure 1]. AFCAST is a Web-based survey that provides commanders rapid assess to their unit members' perceptions regarding operational and safety-related issues.

FIGURE 1. AFCAST HOME PAGE



The Air Force Class A Flight Mishap rate has markedly declined over the past 50 years. During this period, significant improvements were made in crew station design, operational training, and aircrew selection to enhance safety readiness. Unfortunately, less attention was paid to organizational factors that could also affect performance and safety. To assist in this area, the Air Force Safety Center recently implemented the online survey process termed AFCAST. Based on high-reliability organizational theory, AFCAST analyzes key

organizational attributes that lead to successful risk reduction in hazardous operations, including:

- Process Auditing**—a system of continuing checks to identify and correct safety issues
- Reward System**—expected action to reinforce safe or correct unsafe behavior
- Quality**—policies and procedures for promoting quality performance
- Risk Management**—systematic process to identify hazards and control risks
- Command & Control**—policies and procedures for operations and safety management
- Communication & Functional Relationships**—coordination among departments and activities

AFCAST SURVEYS

Currently, five online surveys are available to Air Force organizations, with more on the way: (1) *the Flight Safety Culture Survey (FLT)*, which assesses an organization's operational practices from an aircrew, perspective, and (2) *the Maintenance and Support Safety Culture Survey (MX-SUP)* which assesses an organization's maintenance and support practices from a maintainer or support perspective. Figure 2 provides a view of one portion of the FLT on-line survey. Both surveys collectively assess an organization's ability to safely conduct operations in terms of leadership, culture, policies, standards, procedures, and practices. Each survey takes approximately 10 minutes per survey respondent to complete. The surveys are available online at www.afcast.org.

AFCAST also provides three additional surveys in the ground safety arena: (3) *Drinking & Driving*, (4) *Private Motor Vehicle*, and (5) *Off-Duty & Recreational* surveys. The Air Force Safety Center is developing additional surveys to enhance safety in Air Force organizations. Potential surveys include higher headquarters, security forces, and special ops, among others. Call the Air Force Safety Center Assessment Division at DSN 263-8454 or 246-0986/0871, or commercial 505-853-8454 or 505-846-0986/0871, with your survey suggestions.

FIGURE 2. SAMPLE FLT SURVEY

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Afcast.org survey interface. The page title is 'Flight Safety Culture Survey'. It includes a navigation menu on the left with items like 'AFCAST POLICY', 'SURVEY OVERVIEW', and 'SET UP UNIT SURVEY'. The main content area is divided into two parts: 'PART I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION' and 'PART II. TAKE SURVEY'. Part I contains several dropdown menus for demographic data such as 'Your rank', 'Your total flight time', 'Your total hours in model', 'Time in this unit', 'Your current model aircraft', 'Your status', 'Your military affiliation', 'Your occupation/career field', 'Your current airframe/weapon system', and 'Your service'. Part II contains two survey questions with radio button options for 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neutral', 'Agree', 'Strongly Agree', 'N/A', and 'Don't Know'. The first question is about reviewing and updating safety standards, and the second is about monitoring currency standards.

PRIVACY OF DATA

Of primary importance to survey participants is a feeling of confidence that their responses will remain anonymous. Squadron commanders can view their survey results only when a specified minimum number of survey participants have taken the survey. This encourages individuals to communicate their unbiased perceptions to their squadron commander without fear of retribution. Of equal importance to the squadron commander is the confidentiality of data at the squadron level. Access to a squadron results is restricted to only that squadron's commander.

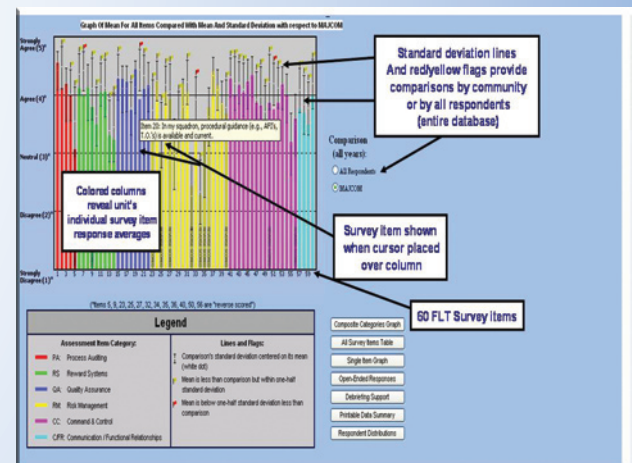
With individual anonymity and command confidentiality preserved, squadron commanders have the ability to look first-hand at composite data collected from individuals within their units, and then address concerns at the squadron-level. Additionally, squadron survey data are compiled with data from other organizations into a single database. As such, squadron commanders have the ability to compare their unit results with these aggregate results. Higher headquarters have the ability to view only aggregate results and intervene on broader, community-wide issues.

SAMPLE AFCAST SURVEY RESULTS

Figure 3 provides a sample overview of the data available to a squadron commander. The FLT and MX/SUP surveys contain 60 survey items and three open-ended questions. In the figure, the top of each bar represents the squadron's average score for that survey

item. Imbedded near the top of each bar is what appears to be a barbell turned on its side, with a white dot in the middle. The white dot is the MAJCOM survey average for that particular survey item. The barbell represents plus or minus one-half standard deviation from this MAJCOM average. If the squadron average is on or above the white dot, there is no flag. If the squadron average is below the dot, but within a half standard deviation, a yellow flag appears above the barbell. If the squadron average is below a half standard deviation, a red flag appears. This single screen provides the commander with an overview of squadron strengths, as well as, areas that may warrant attention. AFCAST has the additional capability to display tailored comparisons of survey data by timeframe, mission, location, airframe, etc. This offers the commander an increased capability to focus and apply limited safety resources.

FIGURE 3. SAMPLE SQUADRON FLT DATA



REQUESTING AFCAST SURVEYS

AFCAST is a tool that allows commanders to benchmark, get feedback, and establish safety goals. We encourage squadron commanders to try it. It's quick and simple, and you just might learn something.

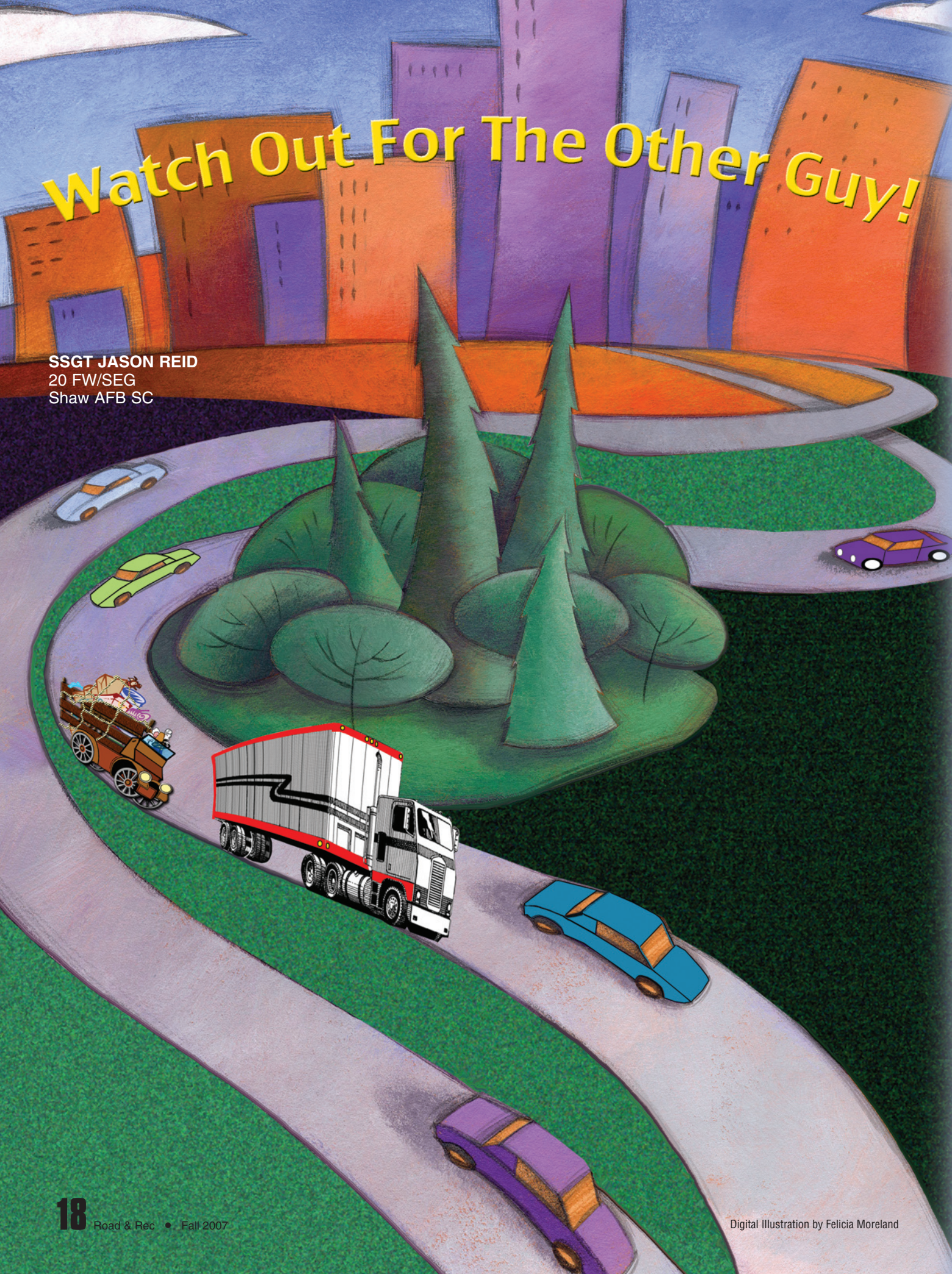
Squadron commanders desiring AFCAST surveys should have their safety representative follow the survey setup procedures listed on the Web site (www.afcast.org) or call the survey administrators at 888-603-3170. ■



**The most important PPE
of all, though,
is between your ears –
THINK SAFETY!**

Watch Out For The Other Guy!

SSGT JASON REID
20 FW/SEG
Shaw AFB SC



While driving, it's good to know your surroundings and watch out for "The Other Guy." The story I'm about to tell you is true, and I was there to witness it all. It's just another point to hammer home that everyone must watch out for "The Other Guy."

It was a sunny, clear November afternoon. Traffic was light for a Friday as I traveled south on I-95 to Savannah, Ga., for a day of shopping. I-95 is a divided two-lane highway with speed limits that range from 55 to 70 mph. It's about a 170-mile trip for me, and I'd gone about 70 miles.

Driving in the right lane, I had my cruise control set at the speed limit, and began to approach a group of slower vehicles in front of me. The one farthest from me was an 18-wheeler. Trailing it was a worn-looking pickup, towing a worn-looking trailer with what appeared to be household goods piled high and secured with a rope. I was approaching the duo rather quickly. I was cruising at the posted limit of 70, while the group was traveling much slower. Realizing I was going to overtake them very soon, I signaled to enter the left lane and pass. This is where watching "The Other Guy" came into play and saved my day.

As soon as I turned on my signal, I watched the pickup. As I began to move slowly into the left lane, that beat-up little rig jolted into the left lane to pass the truck. Since I had my eye on him the whole time, I wasn't surprised. Although it had cut me off, I simply slowed down as I switched lanes, following him at a much slower speed and a safe distance.

His move was so quick, I'm not sure if the driver even checked to see if the left lane was clear. Had I continued at my original speed of 70 mph, he would have merged into me, for sure. After the rusty rig passed the 18-wheeler, he eased back into the right lane, never signaling once. Judging by the condition of his truck, I'm not even sure if his turn signals worked! Shaking my head as I always do when I see bad driving, I accelerated back to the speed limit, set my cruise control, and began to pull up alongside the truck.

The trailer seemed in poor condition. Very rusted, no brake lights, and the household goods were wrapped with flimsy-looking rope. Not something you wanted to be driving behind! The pickup truck had a camper shell on the back, loaded with all sorts of items. Someone was moving, no doubt. I pulled up even with the driver's window, and looked over to see an elderly man staring straight ahead, both hands firmly on the wheel. In the passenger seat was an equally elderly female. I continued and began to pull away, thanking my lucky stars I'd used caution when approaching what could have been a disaster.

Story's over, right? Wrong. I'm in the left lane, pulling away from the "rusty rig," as I now refer to it. The "rusty rig" was in the right lane, tooling down the road. I looked in my rearview mirror and saw a

purple car, approaching at high speed, in the left lane. For some reason, I kept watch on the purple car as it approached me. That was when it happened. As soon as the purple car was right next to the "rusty rig," which was still traveling in the right lane, the driver of the "rusty rig" decided he wanted to go into the left lane. The whole rig jerked into the left lane. I gasped. Then the whole rig jerked back to the right lane. The driver must have realized the purple car was within two feet of his vehicle, and corrected. Most likely, he never looked over his shoulder or checked his mirrors before making the lane change, AGAIN.

The driver of the purple car, seeing the "rusty rig" coming into her lane as she was passing alongside, jerked the wheel hard left to avoid the collision. Doing this while traveling more than 70 mph is not good. I saw everything from my mirror. Her car spun 360 degrees twice, slid off into the grassy median, then slid backward into the guard cable that separates the two directions of traffic. I saw a huge debris cloud of car parts, dirt and smoke, and then the vehicle came to a rest, backward, and tangled in the cable. Now comes the unbelievable part of the story.

I immediately dialed 911 and relayed the accident information and location. As I was dialing, the "rusty rig" was catching up to me. The driver didn't stop, or even slow down! I pulled alongside him, pointing back to the accident. At first, he wouldn't look over. After I honked and got his attention, I rolled down my window and let him know he'd just caused an accident. He wouldn't roll his window down, and we continued down the road, side by side. I made eye contact one last time, and he made a hand gesture telling me to leave him alone. I was shocked, to say the least. This guy just caused an accident, and either didn't care or didn't realize it, or both. Either way, it was bad. I slowed down and got a good description and the tag numbers from the trailer and the front and back of the truck. Each was from a different state.

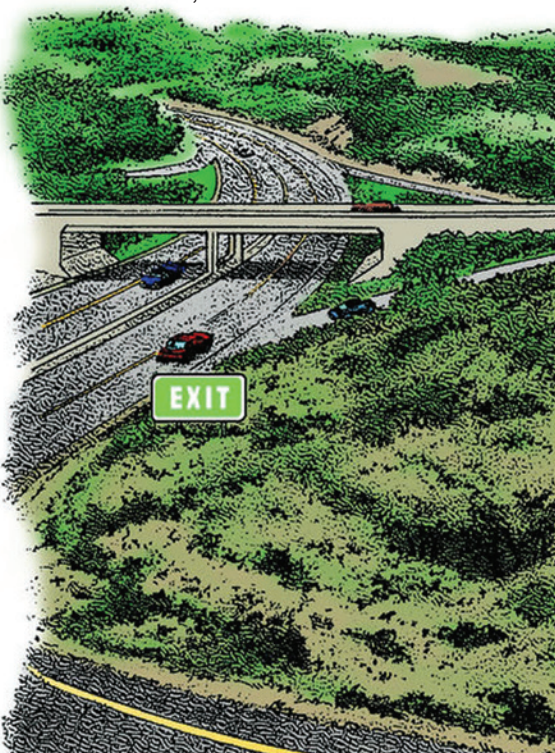
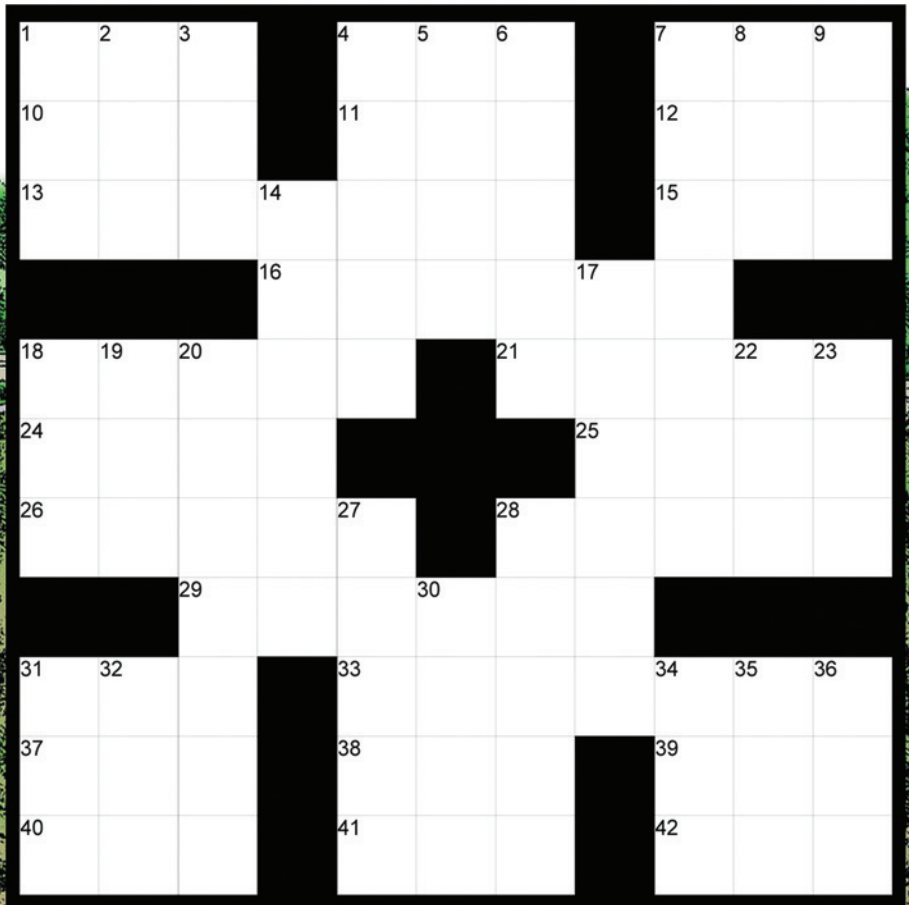
I took the next exit and doubled back. The "rusty rig" continued down the interstate. As I approached the scene, the Highway Patrol was already there, along with the driver of the 18-wheeler. The driver of the purple car was still in her car, talking on her cell phone, and appeared to be fine. She still had her seat belt on. The truck driver was relaying information to the officer, and I could hear him telling the same story I just told you here. He also described how the "rusty rig" almost did the same thing to me! I gave my information to the officer and left as the EMS crew was arriving.

To sum it all up, keep a close eye on your surroundings—you never know when you'll have to make an emergency lane change to get out of the way—and keep a sharp eye on "The Other Guy." He's out on the road, ready to cause an accident, every time you get into your vehicle. ■

DRIVE SAFELY

CAPT TONY WICKMAN

71 FTW/PA
Vance AFB, OK



ACROSS

1. Belongs or relates to inanimate object
4. Alphabet string
7. CBS TV cop show
10. Intimidate
11. Commander's region of control, in brief
12. Jogged
13. Eye-catching
15. Charged particle
16. Tools to detect distant objects and determine their position
18. Vote into office
21. ___ perception; critical for driving
24. ___ belt in vehicles
25. Away from the wind
26. Capital of France
28. Aircraft pilot
29. ___ bus; driving risk starting in fall
31. Burn residue
33. Associating with
37. Co. leader
38. Guided
39. Baby speak
40. Dine
41. ___ Alamos
42. Hubris

DOWN

1. Bond writer Fleming
2. Number of seconds as minimum following distance
3. Place
4. Capital of Morocco
5. Peddled
6. Tire concern
7. In a well-delineated manner
8. ___ Paulo
9. Boardinghouse
14. North Pole region
17. In effect
18. Sixth sense, in brief
19. Tract of open ground
20. Within ___; close by
22. Golf prop
23. In ___ Shoes
27. Plan to, intend to, or expect to
28. Creases
30. Margarine
31. Pilot with 5+ kills
32. Red or Dead
34. Black ___; fall driving hazard
35. Egg ___; holiday drink
36. Slop

SafetyLitSM Injury Prevention Literature Update

Preventing injuries by providing informationSM



SAFETY RESEARCH UPDATE

The following information is courtesy of *SafetyLit*, a service of the San Diego State University Graduate School of Public Health. Information about the occurrence and prevention of injuries is available from many sources and professional disciplines. *SafetyLit* staff and volunteers regularly examine and summarize 2,600 scholarly journals from 35 professional disciplines, and scores of reports on safety research from government agencies and organizations. We've included these summaries in *Road & Rec* for their interest to the Air Force community. For more information, go to www.safetylit.org.

Big Game Hunters in Colorado: Heart Disease, Not Firearms, Biggest Risk

A 9-year study of 725 big game hunters' visits for emergency medical care showed that 45 percent were for trauma, 31 percent for medical illnesses, and 24 percent were labeled "other." The most common reason for the medical visits (105) was for cardiac signs and symptoms, and all four of the deaths were attributed to cardiac causes. The most common trauma diagnosis was laceration (151), most of which (113) came from accidental knife injuries, usually while the hunter was field dressing big game animals. Gunshot wounds (4, < 1 percent) were rare. Horse-related injuries to hunters declined, while injuries related to motor vehicles and all-terrain vehicles increased. Of the five out-of-hospital deaths, three were cardiac-related, one was motor vehicle-related, and one was firearm-related. The author recommended the following actions: Hunters and their health

care providers should consider a thorough cardiac evaluation before big game hunts; hunter safety instructors should consider teaching aspects of safe knife use; and consideration should be given to requiring and improving ATV driver education.

(Source: Reishus A.D. *Wilderness Environ Med* 2007; 18(1): 20-5. Copyright 2007, Wilderness Medical Society.)

Side Airbags Reduce Driver Deaths in Driver-Side Collisions

Researchers studied the effectiveness of side airbags in preventing driver deaths in passenger vehicles struck on the driver side. They found that side airbags substantially reduce the risk of car and SUV driver death in driver-side collisions. Head-protecting airbags reduced driver death risk in driver-side crashes by 37 percent, and torso-only side airbags reduced death risk by 26 percent. The side airbags reduced driver death risk for older and younger drivers, males and females, drivers of small and midsize cars, and when the striking vehicle was an SUV/pickup or a car/minivan. Death risk for drivers of SUVs was reduced by 52 percent with head-protecting side airbags and by 30 percent with torso-only airbags. The effectiveness of side airbags could not be assessed for pickups and minivans due to the small number of these vehicles with airbags involved in crashes. Conclusion: Making side airbags with head protection available to drivers and front seat passengers in all vehicles could reduce the number of fatalities in motor vehicle crashes in the United States by about 2,000 each year.

(Source: McCartt AT, Kyrychenko SY. *Traffic Injury Prev* 2007; 8(2): 162-70.)



Dress For The Crash

OS1 RONNIE MASON
USCG Sector St. Petersburg
St. Petersburg FL

During my time off, I ride with a large group of sport bike riders. Unlike most riders in Florida, this group believes in wearing full gear. Even when it is 95 degrees outside, most of us still ride in full leather gear. We insist everyone riding with us have the following gear as a minimum: helmet, motorcycle-specific jacket, riding gloves, jeans and boots.

Early one Sunday morning, we decided to go on a spirited ride through a couple of towns. There's always one guy (we'll call him "John") who wants to ride, but doesn't have full gear. On this ride, he had everything except boots

—he was wearing tennis shoes. After much debate, it was decided that he could join us, since he was wearing jeans and a textile jacket with armor.

We started our ride and everything went well for the first couple of hours. We rolled through some nice sweeping turns and a couple of real good twisty sections, while doing our best to scare the local strays off the side of the road. I was riding in back on my Z1000, pulling video duties, when I looked over the crest of the next hill to see a big cloud of dust. My first thought was that someone had run off into the orange groves. I was almost right.

Over the crest of the hill, the road takes a sharp, almost 90-degree left turn. It is

surrounded by orange groves. The exception is that there is a dirt road that cuts through the groves if you keep going straight. John was riding his brand new Suzuki GSXR 600 following George on his Honda CBR 600RR. George came into the left turn a little faster than he thought was safe and tried to hit the brakes. Instead, what he hit was the sand on the outside of the corner, which immediately caused his bike to go into a slide, with him sliding face down right behind it. John, seeing this, kept his focus on the downed rider instead of concentrating on the turn before slowing down. Due to his target fixation, John also went off the road. He tried to keep the bike upright, but the front wheel dug into the sand, causing the bike to flip over on top of him before cartwheeling away.

I pulled up to the scene to find George walking around cussing at his bike. "Well, he's all right," I thought. Then I run over to John, who's still on the ground. After seeing the accident, I could only imagine how bad he was hurt. As soon as I got over to him, he was already trying to get up. I helped him to his feet

and we did a quick check of his whole body for injuries. The only one we could find was a sprained ankle. His armored jacket kept him from getting injured when his bike rolled over top of him, and of course, the helmet protected his head. We wondered if he'd been wearing an appropriate pair of motorcycling boots whether he would have even hurt his ankle.

Checking on George, we found the worst of the injuries: the palms of his hands. He was wearing full leather pants and jacket, but had decided to go cheap on the gloves. The second his hands touched the ground, the asphalt wore right through them and gave him some nice road rash. Luckily, he was not injured more than that.

Both the bikes needed a little roadside repair to make them rideable for the trip home. John's brand new bike, with only 750 miles on it, now needed all new bodywork, among other pieces. George's bike also needed some rebuilding.

What we really learned that day, though, was that without the proper gear, the result of this

continued on next page



Here we're trying to figure out how to put John's bike back together.



George's bike.

incident could have been a lot worse. We stayed at the scene for a little while and got to a point where

we could laugh and learn about everything. Overall, it turned out to be another great day on a bike. ■



One of the guys playing with John's broken bike parts.

Should I Stay ... Or Should I Go ???

CAPT JUSTIN WHITE
50 SW/SEO
Schriever AFB CO

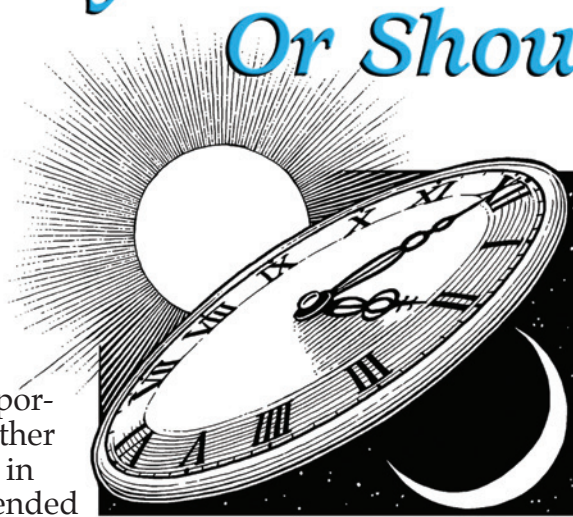
This year, I had the opportunity to visit my brother at his new apartment in Chico, Calif., during the extended Memorial Day holiday weekend. After a fun few days, it was time to get on the plane and return to the real world.

For some reason, I booked my return flight to leave at about 5 o'clock that afternoon. Since my brother had to work that day anyway, I planned to arrive early to the airport to try my luck at boarding a flight that left at 1:30 p.m. I was notified the flight was full, and flying standby was not going to be an option for the 1:30 p.m. flight.

"No problem—I can pass the afternoon with a good book and a trip to the airport sports bar," I thought. I still would get home in time to spend some time with my wife and get a good night's sleep for work the next day.

However, about halfway through the afternoon, my 5 p.m. flight status showed "delayed," with a departure time of 6 p.m. After a series of updates throughout the afternoon, the departure time finally settled on 10:30 that evening! That would put me into Denver at 1:30 a.m., and I'd still have to drive to Colorado Springs. I estimated that I'd get home about 3 o'clock that morning, about 20 hours after I had gotten up that morning.

I quickly realized that fatigue might be a hazard, especially during the drive from Denver to Colorado Springs that late into my day. When I called my supervisor to tell him my situation, he said that if I made it into work the next day by noon, I wouldn't have to use an additional day of leave. This took a little pressure off me and would allow me to get a little sleep before I



showed up to work the next day.

Sure enough, the plane took off about 10:45 p.m. that night and landed in Denver at 1:45 a.m. By the time I got my luggage and made it to my car, it was almost 2:30 a.m. At that point, I had a decision to make. Should I go ahead and drive home, or should I try to get a hotel and drive home the next morning before I had to be to work?

Obviously, both options had pros and cons. But one option definitely had much more risk than the other. If I drove home that night, I could sleep in my own bed and get up just in time to make it to work by noon. I would not have to find and pay for a hotel room for just a few hours of sleep. It's only a 75-mile drive. What could go wrong?

But having been awake now for more than 18 hours, my chances of falling asleep at the wheel or making a poor driving decision were much greater than they would have been the next morning.

I decided that the benefits outweighed the risks and I started driving toward Colorado Springs. The roads were a little wet and slick due to rain a little earlier. But traffic was light and I mostly had the road to myself. Although I was tired, I turned up the radio, rolled down the windows, and made it home safe and sound.

Did I make the right decision? Did I make the safe decision? Since I arrived in Colorado Springs without a scratch, it's easy to say I made the correct choice. But I guarantee that it would have been a much smarter decision to spend the night in a Denver hotel and drive south the next morning. ■

Silver Mountain

SSGT ODIN L. ARCOS
92 ADS/SGGT
Fairchild AFB WA

It was a beautiful Saturday morning when I was enjoying the gondola ride up to the top of Silver Mountain. In the winter, Silver Mountain is a ski resort, but in the summertime, it is transformed into a mountain biking playground. I spent the time on the ride up preparing myself mentally for the ride. I'm not an expert extreme rider, and I wasn't going on the most difficult trail, but I knew this wasn't going to be some light ride through the park. This was my second time riding down the mountain, and I had an understanding of how challenging it could be. The major factor to keep in mind was speed. The highest speed I had reached was 38 mph, with an average of 26 mph. That may not seem fast, but when you're going downhill on some rough and sometimes loose trails, it can really get your adrenaline going. You have to stay focused and make quick

decisions, or else you could put yourself in a bad situation, and falling off at those speeds wouldn't be pleasant.

I had made it about halfway down the 14-mile trail before I had a life-changing experience. The part of the trail I was on ran down along the side of the mountain. To the right was the mountain face, and to the left was a steep drop down the mountain. I'd just finished making a right turn around a blind



corner, when I saw a hard 90-degree left turn about 30 yards ahead. Toward the outer part of the turn, I noticed a mud puddle. Wanting to go around the puddle, and going too fast to make a sharp turn under it, I went high on the outside of the turn, cutting close to the side of the mountain. There was short brush where the trail met the mountain. As I was going around the puddle and into the brush, my front tire washed out from under me, sending me flying over the handlebars. I landed face first on the ground.

Stunned and still in shock from what occurred, I just rolled over and sat there for a few minutes. I could taste some blood, and my nose hurt a bit from being scraped along the ground. My first clear thought was that my helmet had saved my life. I was so grateful to have been wearing it, and wearing it correctly. I didn't always wear a helmet, and sometimes I would wear it unstrapped. There was a bill on the front, probably to protect from the sun and to make the helmet more aerodynamic. That piece of the helmet broke off in the fall and saved my face from potentially hitting the ground harder. I got back on my bike and finished out the ride.

On the way home, I was still thinking about what had taken place. Why would I ever ride without a helmet, when there's always a threat of getting into an accident? Did I find the mountain to be more of a threat?

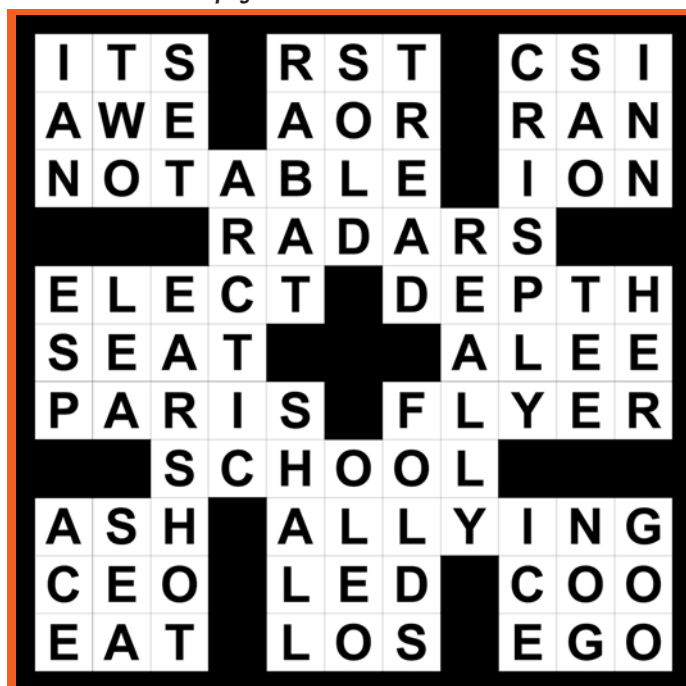
Roads are no safer. In 2005, 784 bicyclists died on U.S. roads. Ninety-two percent of them died in crashes with motor vehicles. About 540,000 injured bicyclists visit emergency rooms every year.

No matter how much we hear about safety, we still hear about those who didn't take the necessary safety precautions. In the Air Force, safety is something I hear about and practice on a day-to-day basis. As a supervisor, I'm responsible for holding others to the same standards. So why would I not practice safety in my personal life? All the possibilities for an accident still exist. My health and safety are still at risk.

I hope my accident knocks some sense into you, as it did me, and I hope you take the time to evaluate the decisions you make, and make the safe one. ■



Puzzle answers from page 20



Safety Shorts



Association warns truckers to watch for 'drafting' vehicles

The American Trucking Association warned fleet safety directors and truck drivers about a resurgence of a dangerous driving behavior that motorists might use to try to increase fuel economy. The Alexandria, Va.-based association's warning followed media coverage of the hazardous fads and two Web sites that promote them. According to the association, "hypermiling" involves several practices, including driving partly on the right shoulder, overinflating tires, coasting with the ignition off and drafting behind tractor-trailers. ATA is concerned with "drafting," which involves driving a car very close behind a truck to use the truck's "reduction of wind resistance to reduce the amount of energy needed to propel the auto."

Source: National Safety Council

Texting cited in fatal crash; lawmakers call for ban

The recent deaths of five teenagers in a head-on automobile crash has become a cautionary tale fueling efforts to ban text messaging while driving in New York. Republican State Sen. Carl L. Marcellino on July 16 proposed S.B. 3195 to prohibit the writing, sending or reading of text messages on mobile phones while driving. Democratic Assemblyman Felix Ortiz also proposed legislation in the New York Assembly.

The proposals came after police officials in Canandaigua, N.Y., discovered from phone

records that the driver of a sport-utility vehicle sent and received a succession of text messages on her cell phone before her vehicle slammed into a truck, killing her and four other recent high school graduates in June. Officials also noted that routine tests ruled out alcohol as a factor in the crash, and they do not suspect drug use was involved.

According to the Denver-based National Conference of State Legislatures, two other bills proposed in New York this spring also focus on banning texting while driving, or TWD.

Source: National Safety Council

Legislation targets imported ATVs

A proposed law to create a standard for imported all-terrain vehicles has emerged in the midst of recent investigations of products from China.

Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, proposed the All-Terrain Vehicle Standards and Compliance Act of 2007 on July 18 during a committee meeting on safety of Chinese imports. The bill would require all foreign and domestic companies and manufacturers that market and sell ATVs in the United States to meet identical product safety standards.

On June 5, the Consumer Product Safety Commission issued a warning to American consumers that ATVs imported from China were missing several safety features, such as front brakes, parking brakes, and the ability to be started while in gear.

Source: National Safety Council

Road & Rec Wins 2007 APEX Award For Publication Excellence

"Road & Rec" magazine has received the Award of Excellence in the 2007 APEX Awards for Publication Excellence competition, placing in the top 25 percent of 137 entries in the overall "Magazines & Journals" category. APEX Awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

"Road & Rec" was able to win the 2007



APEX Award because Airmen send us their safety stories.

As a quarterly publication, we have a continuing need for new

material, so we encourage our readers to become our writers. To discuss story ideas, please call the editor at DSN 246-0983 or commercial (505) 846-0983, or send an e-mail to afsc.semm@kirtland.af.mil. Our mailing address is HQ AFSC/SEMM, 9700 G Ave. SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670.

Air Force Wins Four 2006 Motorcycle Safety Foundation Awards

In 2006, the United States Air Force won four of the five Motorcycle Safety Foundation awards in which military services can compete: **Outstanding Military Bases, Outstanding Rider Coaches, Outstanding Military Branch and Outstanding Press Award.**

John Phillips, the Air Force's chief of ground safety, and Frank Kelley, the Air Force's motorcycle safety program manager, accepted the "Outstanding Military Branch" award, presented for the most significantly improved/successful motorcycle safety program—incorporating mentorship from senior leadership down, a sustained lifelong-learning training

initiative involving Air Force-trained volunteer instructors and installation support agencies, including sister services, and proactive mishap-reduction efforts at all levels. Notably, the Air Force achieved a 29 percent reduction in fatal mishaps since 2003.

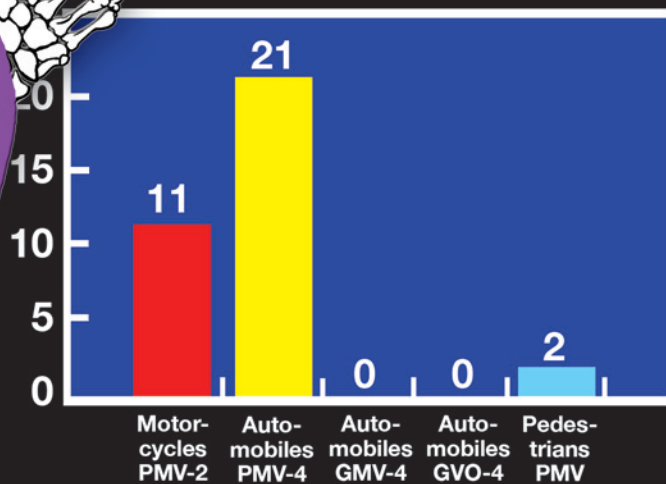
John Cochran, the managing editor of "Road & Rec," the Air Force's ground safety magazine, and Felicia Moreland, the magazine's design director, accepted the "Outstanding Press" award for the Air Force Safety Center, for sustained literary excellence in promoting and supporting Air Force and Motorcycle Safety Foundation programs.



Snapshot on Safety

3rd Quarter FY07 Update

Motor Vehicle Fatalities Total FY07



BRIAN DYE, CONTRACTOR
HQ AFSC/SEG
Kirtland AFB NM

Poor Judgment, Racing and Speed: A Fatal Combination

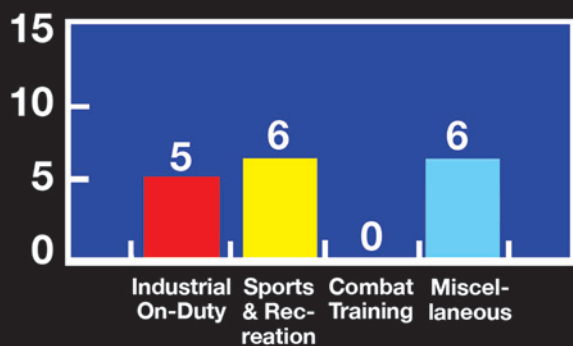
Two Airmen were released early from work at about 8 p.m., stopped at operator 1's on-base dorm room, changed clothes and drove off-base to passenger 1's off-base residence. Traveling westbound on a 4-lane parkway, while en route to passenger 1's off-base residence, operator 1 lost control of his vehicle, crossed over the grassy median, and struck the front end of another vehicle in the eastbound lanes. The impact caused vehicle 2 to rotate 180 degrees and flip on the

driver's side. Witnesses said that operator 1 lost control of vehicle 1 while racing a motorcycle at a high speed. The police investigator estimated operator 1's speed at 91-106 mph. All three were transported to a local off-base hospital. Operator 1 died of his injuries at 11:30 p.m. Passenger 1 suffered multiple injuries, including broken forearms and legs, shattered facial bones, and severe artery and nerve damage to the left leg. Subsequently, both of his lower legs were amputated. The driver of the second vehicle was treated for a sprained left ankle and released.

Lessons Learned:

Speed and racing are a deadly combination. Poor risk-management decisions were a prime cause of this major off-duty fatal mishap. Judgment and common sense are significant factors in the risk-management process. Racing

Non-Motor Vehicle Fatalities



and speeding on public roadways do not mix. Operator 1's poor judgment and lack of common sense resulted in his death and the permanent disability of a passenger. The wingman concept of risk management includes off-duty activities and decisions. When your wingman makes an irrational decision, it's time for you to intervene.

Drinking, Weapons and Emotions Don't Mix

After getting off from work, an Airman stopped at a local convenience store and purchased an unknown quantity of beer. At about 5 p.m., while waiting for an out-of-town friend, the Airman began completing chores and drinking beer. When the friend arrived about 30 minutes later, the Airman, his roommate and the friend sat down, engaged in conversation and drank several beers. While

in the kitchen, the friend noticed a handgun on the counter and asked the Airman and roommate about the gun. The roommate replied that it belonged to another friend and he was temporarily holding it for him.

After about two and a half hours and the consumption of several more beers each, the conversation turned to the suicide of a mutual friend that happened four days earlier. As the conversation continued, the Airman grabbed the handgun and began manipulating the weapon by removing and reinserting the magazine. At some point, all three of them realized the gun was loaded. The Airman then picked up the handgun with his left hand and began pulling on the slide with his right hand, but did not intentionally try to chamber a round. He then removed the clip again and said he could not believe their friend could have committed suicide. He then replaced the magazine, raised the gun to his head with his left hand, said "Bang" while he simultaneously pulled the trigger, not realizing he had chambered a round, unintentionally discharging the gun.

The roommate and friend immediately called 9-1-1 when they realized their friend was seriously injured. After being transported by helicopter to the local medical center, the Airman was pronounced dead at 9:31 p.m. His blood alcohol content was 3.5 times the legal limit for driving.

Lessons Learned:

The combination of drinking, weapons and poor judgment led to a very disastrous situation. Excessive alcohol consumption impairs the senses. The Airman made a poor risk management decision after consuming a number of alcoholic beverages and unfortunately, his roommate and friend failed to stop him from playing with a loaded weapon.

Experience is Not Always Enough

Operator 1 left his office and met fellow Airmen (Operators 2, 3 and 4) from his squadron at 4:30 p.m. for a retirement rehearsal. At about 6:45 p.m., Operator 1 and Operators 2, 3 and 4 left the rehearsal en route to one of the Airmen's apartment. They were traveling on a 4-lane divided highway with a 55 mph posted speed limit. While operating his motorcycle, operator 1 was following operators 2, 3 and 4 in their cars. Traveling in the left lane at 55 mph, directly behind the lead vehicle, operator 1 for no specific reason accelerated and passed the first vehicle on the right. As he maneuvered his motorcycle back into the left lane, the rear tire began to fishtail. Operator 1 tried to regain control of his motorcycle but overcorrected. As a result, he departed the road and was ejected from the motorcycle, striking a tree in a swampy area. Operators 2, 3 and 4 stopped their vehicles and rendered first aid until police and medical staff arrived. Operator 1 was transported by ambulance to the hospital where he died of blunt-force trauma injuries to the head, neck, chest and spine. Operator 1 was an experienced rider and was wearing all the proper personal protective equipment. However, his blood alcohol content was 3.5 times the legal limit.

Lessons Learned:

This was a direct result of poor risk management! Sometimes experienced riders make mistakes. Complacency occurs when you are most familiar with an operation, situation or action. Most people don't think of the risk involved with their actions. Complacency, along with alcohol, was a disaster waiting to happen. Never drink and drive! You should always consider risk management, even on actions you've accomplished repeatedly. The key is to remember that there is always risk to be managed in all situations. ■

“Wingman” To Launch In February

“Wingman” will focus on operational, occupational, and off-duty safety. The magazine should be out to the field in February. It’s sure to become a collector’s item, so hold on to your copy.

The Air Force Safety Center has a continuing need for original articles and photos, so we can get the vitally important message of safety out to Airmen everywhere. If you’re a safety professional or not, and you’ve had a safety-related experience while deployed, at work, or off-duty, please take the time to write an account of the event and send it to us at afsc.semm@kirtland.af.mil. If your story is selected for publication, you’ll receive credit for being published in an Air Force-level magazine, as well as recognition from the Air Force Chief of Safety.

We welcome reader comments, suggestions, and story ideas. You can e-mail them to us at the address above, or call the managing editor at DSN 246-0983 or commercial (505) 846-0983. Our mailing address is HQ AFSC/SEMM, 9700 G Ave. SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670. Let us know what you think of the new title, the contents, and anything else related to the magazine. We look forward to hearing from you.