

THUNDERBOLT

WWW.MACDILL.AF.MIL

The 6th Air Mobility Wing's origins brought to life - page 14

Maintainers from the 6th Composite Group check out a crashed De Havilland DH-4 bi-plane near France Field, Panama, circa 1927. The 6th CG is the predecessor of the 6th Air Mobility Wing.



Then and Now

COMMANDER'S CORNER



We're in the 'yes' business; week's top performers

by Col. Lenny Richoux
6th Air Mobility Wing commander

Recently, I hosted a series of Commander's Calls in which I met with the MacDill family and discussed a few timely and relevant mission topics.

During the "All Call" discussions I emphasized our overall philosophy of us being in the "yes" business. What I mean by that is that we should have an attitude of yes to the call of maintaining the mission. We don't know what the world holds for us tomorrow, and we have to be ready to do what our country asks us to do. We, the MacDill family, are the best of America and I depend on your leadership, which goes from the top brass to the E-1 executing the mission. I can't run the wing alone.

My priorities have not changed. Mission readiness and accomplishment are at the top, but we must accomplish the mission the right way. We have to accomplish the mission safely. You are the irreplaceable human capital that

makes the mission happen. If I take care of you, the mission will take care of itself.

I'm taking care of you by looking out for your homes based on what you've expressed you want.

We are growing the base population and are making our base a community. We provide support where most of the base lives, and it's my job to make the base a place where you and your family can work and live comfortably. Since 2001, we've tripled the base population. With the increased population, we need places for kids to play and recreation that engages all of the families. I've found it true that when you don't have to worry about your family's well-being, you'll get the mission done. I want to provide support to you, where you live, which requires my service agencies to branch out. One of my initiatives is to reach out to the vast numbers of spouses and families who live out in Brandon.

We have a few things planned in Brandon next month that will bring the spouses together, have



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Terry Montrose

Col. Lenny Richoux shakes hands with Gary Kadow, who with the help of Team MacDill recently shipped much-needed supplies to military members in Afghanistan.

them enjoy a dinner with other spouses and introduce them to the support services that are helpful while the deployed member is away.

We've got to be in the business of taking care of all of our people, especially those who see no way

out of the pressure of their current problems.

Last year 100 people in the Air Force resorted to a permanent solution to resolve temporary problems. They committed suicide.

See **COMMANDER**, Page 21



COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE

The Action Line provides a two-way communication between the 6th Air Mobility Wing commander and the MacDill community. A 24-hour recording service is provided so personnel may submit questions, concerns or comments. Call the Action Line at 828-INFO (4636) or e-mail macdillwingcommander@macdill.af.mil



Follow MacDill
Air Force Base
on Facebook



MacDill Thunderbolt

Publisher: Denise Palmer
Editor: Nick Stubbs

The MacDill Thunderbolt is published by Sunbelt Newspapers, Inc., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for distribution to members of the U.S. military services on MacDill. Contents of the MacDill Thunderbolt are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of De-

fense, the Department of the Air Force or the 6th Air Mobility Wing.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, 6th Air Mobility Wing or Sunbelt Newspapers, Inc., of the products or service advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron.

Display advertising or classified advertising information

may be obtained by calling 259-7455.

News items for the MacDill Thunderbolt can be submitted to the 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs office, Bldg. 25, MacDill AFB, FL 33621, or call the MacDill Thunderbolt staff at 828-4586. Email: thunderbolt@MacDill.af.mil.

Deadline for article submissions is noon, Thursdays to appear in the next week's publication. Articles received after deadline may be considered for future use. All submissions are considered for publication based on news value and timeliness.

Every article and photograph is edited for accuracy, clarity, brevity, conformance with the "Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual" and Air Force Instruction 35-101.



Your T-bolt Today

News/Features: page 4



‘There I was’

News/Features: page 12



WWII vet remembers

News/Features: page 14



Past comes alive at MacDill

MacDill Community: page 24



Events, movies, more...

Commentary It's Personal...

by Col. Slim Morgan

6th Operations Group commander

While there are a lot of common ideas about leadership, I believe that the “formula” for being a successful leader is a very personal thing. When I sat down to think about my personal leadership philosophy, I found myself reaching back to previous leaders whom I have worked for, both good and bad. What I have come up with is a short list, not all-inclusive, of the most important leadership traits to me. That is to say, these are the traits I hope to portray and instill among others. If people remember me as possessing these traits I will consider myself a successful leader. They are not listed in any prioritized order, because I believe a failure in any one of these areas will spell disaster for a would-be leader and the organization.

Integrity

We are members of an honorable society of warriors. Our success is dependent upon the trust we have in each other. No civilian organization is so uniquely interdependent. Personal and professional integrity demands high standards of morality, ethics, and commitment to the good of the unit, the Air Force and our country that transcend personal ambition and gain. We cannot abuse our positions through fraud, lying, or equivocating our high standards. Be honest with yourself and your country. Do what is right not what is convenient at the time.

Mission

We must understand the unit’s mission and be able to restate it in our own words. In most instances, achieving the mission requires personal sacrifice. We must instill in the unit a true sense of pride and professionalism that will sustain the people throughout their careers.

Relationships

We deal with a myriad of people in our lives; we must treat each with courtesy and respect. This holds true not only for our unit but also for all activities that shape our environment. We get a lot more accomplished with polite, reasonable conversation than toe-to-toe, eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation. It’s my belief we



Col. Slim Morgan

should bend over backwards to be diplomatic with support organizations. Along these lines, be open to visitors; introduce yourself, make them feel welcome. First impressions are the most important and the most lasting.

Can Do

We must always desire to support our bosses with regard to mission tasking. However, the “Can Do” spirit can result in shortcuts and errors in judgement. We must keep the big picture and ensure our seniors understand the impact of the tasking — don’t be afraid to speak “truth to power.” Once a decision is made, however, we must support it.

Respect

Every person must respect the rights and privileges of their teammates. The stressful environment in which we operate necessitates personal restraint and conscious consideration of others. An individual’s worth and self-esteem are inviolate. Everyone has a right to his or her own private beliefs and opinions. We cannot tolerate coercion or harassment. Every member has the right to live without fear of reprisal for



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn C. Rhodes

New commander

Col. Rodney Brian, commanding officer of the 927th Mission Support Group, passes the guidon of the 927th Logistics Readiness Squadron to Capt. Gregory Wedding during a change of command ceremony Feb. 12.

Correction

A photo caption on page 4 of the Feb. 18 edition of the *Thunderbolt* misspelled the name of Col. Dave Cohen, 6th Air Mobility Wing vice commander.



'There I was'

U.S. Airmen are making a difference

by Capt. Michael Pastuzyn

310th Airlift Squadron

I am currently deployed to Afghanistan as a staff officer in the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron. The 4th ERS employs the MC-12 Liberty ship, a tactical Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance platform providing support to ground units all over Afghanistan. The unit is located at Bagram Air Base, with Airmen spread amongst multiple Forward Operating Bases throughout Afghanistan.

My role in the 4th ERS is as the Support Flight commander. I direct many of the day-to-day functions of the squadron as well as supervise seven NCOs and Airmen in the Aircrew Flight Equipment and Communications sections. As Support Flight commander, I'm in charge of all squadron in-processing and crewmember mission qualification preparation. The squadron is made up of pilots from all types of major weapon systems as well as linguists who act in the Communications Operator position, and Sensor Operators who come from sentry aircraft backgrounds. I have seven days to integrate these folks into our mission, and have them prepared to fly. Additionally, I manage all line badge paperwork for the squadron as well as oversee the security managers. I supervise the creation of all squadron computer accounts. I act as the facility manager for a five structure compound coordinating all routine maintenance and improvements. Finally, I oversee the squadron flightline driving program.

This deployment has shown me firsthand how everyone at home and abroad has a role in ensuring America's military goals are achieved. Every effort, no matter how small is a critical component in ensuring success.

- Capt. Michael Pastuzyn

AFE is responsible for the launch and recovery of more than 10 flights per day. They are responsible for all aviator survival equipment, and night vision devices. Additionally, my AFE shop maintains a fully functioning armory which issues/inspects all squadron weapons. They also support daily operations by acting as duty drivers for



Courtesy photo

Capt. Michael Pastuzyn on the ground at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. His time there is teaching him that mission success is a team effort, in which the smallest components make a difference.

the aircrew.

Crew Communications is the squadron focal point for all computer and network issues. I have three Computer Support Administrators who work around the clock maintaining more than 50 secure and non-secure stations as well as 25 telephones.

In addition to the roles described above, I and two other staff officers function as a squadron Commanders Action Group. We take all squadron commander directed improvement projects and vet them through the shops that will be working the project. The 4th ERS is developing the foundation for the MC-12 mission in Afghanistan and most of the publications, support and rules of engagement are developed internally.

This deployment has shown me firsthand how everyone at home and abroad has a role in ensuring America's military goals are achieved. Every effort, no matter how small is a critical component in ensuring success. In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the 6th Air Mobility Wing for their contributions to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn. It's awe inspiring to see the difference American Airmen are making 7,000 miles from home.



PERSONAL

From Page 3

doing their duty.

Laughter

We know what has to be done ... so we simply must do it. Keeping a positive attitude will ease the stress of accomplishing those tasks. We must stay up to date and assist others who are overburdened by taskings ... we are a team. We must also take time to relax, recreate and get away from the rigors of the job and the military.

Behavior

Proud standards characterize proud men and women in proud units. Some people equate manliness with profanity, drunkenness, flaunting of authority, etc ... This is absolutely wrong, and we cannot tolerate the man or woman who discredits our unit or any of our teammates. We all have the responsibility to intercede in activities that lead to this behavior. A fine, subtle line separates honest horseplay from an incident that could injure, embarrass, or ruin the reputation and career of an individual. We are professionals; we must

conduct ourselves like "Pros."

Fitness

Ours is a demanding, stressful profession. Physical and mental stamina is required to perform to our utmost. Personal physical readiness is essential. A person who is fit can remain alert longer and has greater reserves to call upon when required. The Air Force demands minimum standards of fitness, and we should build upon these programs by moderation in habits and a regular personal fitness program.

Environment

We must take care of our people both on the job and off. This implies that we must know our people and even more important, listen to them. The people on our team are the ones who accomplish the mission. Our job is to make sure they have everything they need to do their job, as well as to remove as many obstacles as possible. We are the filter to keep them freed up to accomplish the mission. Listen to the members of our team, give them what they need, provide any necessary top cov-

er and then get out of the way. Let them amaze us with their ability and accomplishments. Do not hold them back.

Loyalty

Loyalty is the cement that holds us together. It's the basic element of a top-notch unit. Loyalty implies trust and trust implies honesty. Our success and the success of the unit depend on our loyalty and our willingness to do what is right. For example, logs must be complete and scrupulously accurate. Reports, be they written or verbal, must be honest and truly reflect the situation. Loyalty means we air our differences of opinion among ourselves, within the unit and not throughout the base. We must welcome constructive criticism and new ideas ... be part of the solution.

This is my personal philosophy and formula for being a successful leader and I believe it has served me well while commanding three squadrons and two groups. I share it with you in hopes it will help you develop your own personal leadership philosophy.

Yes, MacDill has a base curfew

by 6th Security Forces Squadron

All unsupervised family members and guests under the age of 16 will not loiter, play, drive, walk, or wander on any part of MacDill Air Force Base, including military housing areas after hours. These regulations apply between the hours of:

- ◆ 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., Sunday through Thursday nights
- ◆ Midnight to 5 a.m., Friday and Saturday nights and evenings before holidays

To prevent curfew violations all members and guests under 16 years of age will leave all base activities in sufficient time so as not to violate the base regulations. When leaving from activities members and guests will take the most direct sidewalk or street to their homes. Loitering in the nearby areas of base facilities is strictly prohibited after the facilities have closed. Military family members and guests will not enter any building, structure, or area not expressly designated for their use unless they obtain prior approval. When leaving activities after curfew hours military sponsors, parents, or another responsible party will personally escort underage members.

Actions taken for Curfew violations:

Sponsor will be notified and requested to respond to pick up the family member or guest.

Notification to Family Advocacy office

For several violations, may be referred to the Juvenile Correction Board for further action.

MacDill's curfew policy wasn't established to harass juveniles, it's enforced to help keep kids out of trouble. If anyone observes juvenile's after the curfew hours, they are requested to call the 6th Security Forces Base Defense Operation Center at 828-3322. If you have further questions concerning the Curfew policy, contact Police Services at 828-2565.

Controlled Spend Account card to replace GTC

by 1st Lt. Ryan Abel

6th Comptroller Squadron

In case you haven't heard the buzz by now, the Air Force will replace the Government Travel Card with the new CSA card. Essentially, the CSA card serves as an electronic cash advance as spend limits are pre-loaded based on mission requirements versus a constant availability of credit with the GTC. Once travel orders are approved, the CSA's spend limit automatically adjusts based on the estimated dollar amount for that particular mission. Authorized merchants have been expanded to more than 30 million locations worldwide so that travelers may use the card anywhere to complete their mission. To accommodate for changes in mission requirements cardholder's will have the ability to call Citibank directly to request a temporary spend limit increase 24/7/365 from anywhere in the world. The TSL increase is good for five business days and is contingent upon an amendment to the original order being cut as support for the TSL. Once travel is completed, 100 percent of the reimbursement will go to Citibank to satisfy expenses incurred and the residual amount belongs to the traveler. A few options exist with the residual amount at this point; spend it directly from the CSA card, transfer it to a personal account, or withdraw it from an ATM.

CSA program highlights include;

- All Airman are eligible for CSA not just those with acceptable credit ratings
- CSA only has value if cardholder has approved travel orders

- Total Trip Reimbursement — 100 percent of voucher disbursement will go to Citibank
- Reduces current 407,000 man-hours per year on GTC delinquency management
- Reduces travelers ability to overspend as well as opportunities to commit fraud and abuse
- Long-term TDYs and PCS moves automatically move CSA into mission critical status

This article is not intended to inform you of all things CSA but rather provide you with some food for thought in preparation of upcoming CSA training sessions. To help ease the transition from GTC to CSA, AMC is sending a subject matter expert to MacDill from Feb. 28 to March 4 to train cardholders (all sessions held in base theatre).

This will be an opportunity for future cardholders to learn the ins and outs of the CSA program, especially the responsibilities as an individual cardholder. All cardholders will be afforded the opportunity to ask questions at the end of each training session so please be prepared to take advantage.

Below is the scheduled times for the briefings. All briefings are in the base theater.

March 1

10:30 a.m. -12 p.m.
1-2:30 p.m.
3-4:30 p.m.

March 2

8-9:30 a.m.
10-11 a.m.
1-2:30 p.m.
3-4:30 p.m.

March 3

8-9:30 a.m.
10-11:30 a.m.
1-2:30 p.m.
3-4:30 p.m.
5:30-7 p.m.



WWII vet with MacDill history recounts days gone by

by Nick Stubbs
Thunderbolt editor

MacDill Field, as it was known when Howell Faulkner arrived on base in 1945, was a tent city, had a dirt runway and “didn’t look anything like it does today,” the 93-year-old former Army Air Corps radio operator recalled, sitting high above the runway in the MacDill tower Saturday. “It wasn’t much then.”

Faulkner, who is a friend of Bruce Morrow, a supervisor at the air traffic control tower, is a Brandon resident who sometimes visits the base for day trips and trips down memory lane — to a time when the United States and its allies were standing against the Axis powers in WWII.

“I was hear to learn Morse Code,” recalled Mr. Faulkner, who was a radio operator on B-17, B-24, B-25 and DC-3 aircraft during the war years. He also served as a gunner on B-17s. Though he was all over the world, his story could be summed up with just a few dots and dashes spelling out: “I made it back.”

“I never was in the war,” said Mr. Faulkner, adding that at least not involved in combat. “We were doing reconnaissance and transport mostly,” he said.



Photo by Nick Stubbs

See **REMEMBERING**, Page 23

Howell Faulkner, 93, with friend Bruce Morrow, MacDill air traffic control supervisor, in the MacDill control tower. Mr. Faulkner was based at MacDill in 1945, where he was trained as a radio operator.

Past meets present

Family of 6th Composite Group member -1925-28 visits MacDill

by William Polson

6th Air Mobility Wing historian

The past caught up with the present recently when relatives of an Army Air Corps veteran who served with the 6th in Panama made a visit to MacDill, bringing their grandfather's life as an early airman full-circle back to his old group. Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Denny Cole, along with sons Sean and Chad, brought his grandfather's photo album to share with members of the 6th Operations Group and the 6th Maintenance Group.

"We really enjoyed having them stop out," said Lt. Col. Brian Smith, the 91st Air Refueling Squadron commander, who hosted the visit. "In my 19 years of service, I've seen how the Air Force has continually evolved, so this was a great opportunity to see what it was like way back then."

Cole's grandfather, Private 1st Class Jesse Snyder, served with the 6th during the mid to late 1920s. At that time, the group was stationed at France Field in the Panama Canal Zone. Located on the eastern edge of the Canal, the airfield sat near the city of Colon (the original Atlantic terminus of the Panama Railroad). The 6th had been assigned to cover the 51 miles of the Canal as it stepped its way, lock by lock, up into the Cordillera Central mountains and back down to the Pacific.

"I grew up hearing the stories that my grandpa told and seeing the pictures he took, and that fired my imagination for aviation" said Cole. "In fact, I still remember stories he told us about painting the group's pirate emblem on the Spirit of St. Louis when Charles Lindbergh visited France Field in 1928."

Like so many other young American men of his era, Snyder left his family's farm to seek a new life. He chose the military, enlisting in 1925. After learning his trade as an aviation mechanic, he went on to serve with the 6th Composite Group from 1925-1928. However, some of the biggest threats he faced in Panama often came in the form of old busted-down biplanes in need of repair, heat, humidity, and mosquitoes.

Snyder's first tour of duty in Panama turned out to be his last one. In 1929, he negotiated his release from the Army for the grand sum of \$75 – roughly equivalent to two-and-a-half months pay. Afterwards, he returned stateside to civilian life, settling in a small Indiana town to raise a family



Retired Master Sgt. Denny Cole (third from left) and his sons brought photos taken in the 1920s to share with Lt. Col. Brian Smith (far right), 91st Air Refueling Squadron commander, 6th Air Mobility Wing.





Photo by Staff Sgt. Nancy Hooks

en by his grandfather with the 6th Composite Group in
on commander, and other members of today's 6th Air



Private 1st Class Jesse Snyder poses for a photo sitting in the cockpit of a De Havilland DH-4 biplane, circa 1927. Snyder served with the 6th Composite Group in the Panama Canal Department during the mid to late 1920s. The De Havilland DH-4 served as the work horse of the U.S. Army Air Service from the end of the war to 1932, when it was retired from service.



(Left center) Famed American pilot Charles Lindbergh made three stops in 1928 at France Field, Panama Canal Department, where Mr. Snyder was stationed. Many years later in Tampa, Mr. Snyder often recounted stories of how his unit had painted their emblem on Lindbergh's plane (left) to his grandson, Denny Cole. The pirate emblem of the 6th Composite Group (the ancestor to the 6th Air Mobility Wing) can be seen below the "l" and the "S" in "St. Louis" on Lindbergh's plane. on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. The motto of the 6th, "Parati Defendere," (in Latin, "Ready to Defend") is painted on the pirate's propeller.

Commentary

A way out: My journey from the brink of suicide

by Maj. Karry Gladden

Air Force Network Integration Center

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. — I recently celebrated two important anniversaries. On Jan. 30, 2010, I decided when and how I was going to end my life. The night before, I went to bed and slept for two hours, as I had for the previous nine or so months. Once I was sure my wife was asleep, I got out my laptop and researched how long it would take to bleed out from a femoral artery injury. This bit of information helped me narrow down the when and how. It also took away the last stumbling block. It had to look like an accident, primarily to ensure my sweetheart didn't spend the rest of her life wondering why I committed suicide or blamed herself.

It is important to know that I got to the brink of suicide the same way most people do -- a series of stressors in my life built up until they simply got the better of me. To make matters worse I had chronic back pain, which had been increasing since an injury a year ago, resulted in less and less exercise -- an important way to relieve stress. And although I made sure members of my family received counseling for the major life events we were all facing, I just "manned up." Through it all, I continued my duties as a flight commander at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, and later, as an executive officer at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

Here are signs I ignored:

- On the way home from work one day, a truck veered into my lane. I made no effort to move and was disappointed when it didn't hit me.
- I was sleeping less and less, lying awake with racing thoughts, only falling asleep when exhausted.
- I wasn't eating. Ironically though, I gained a lot of weight.
- I went through the motions of life; I went to work because I had a responsibility to my family and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Jan. 31, 2010, is the other anniversary, the day I decided to live. It was a Sunday morning. During church I realized that normal people do not stay awake at night researching how to die. At home, I took my wife aside and told her everything. I also asked her to remove our firearms from the house, not to leave me alone and take me to the emergency room or mental health first thing in the morning. Just telling that one person, the most important person in my life, paid big dividends. She didn't look at me like I'd sprouted another head; she was upset that she hadn't noticed and that I couldn't tell her. It wasn't that I couldn't tell her, I didn't want to add to her stress.

I felt better. I got up Monday morning and decided that just telling my wife was enough. I put my blues on and told her everything was going to be okay. I didn't need to go see anyone. She gave me the option of going willingly or in the back of an ambulance.

We went to mental health and I chose to admit myself. I would have been admitted either way, but believe me, self-admission is the way to go. The mental health staff was very professional and sympathetic. A very knowledgeable senior airman spoke with my wife and me and started the admission process. A civilian provider made arrangements

6TH HISTORY

From Page 14

and live out the rest of his days.

Despite his short military career, Jesse Snyder took a number of photographs while stationed in Panama. These images have left a visual record of the 6th Operations Group's nascent years, when it was named the 6th Composite Group and was one of eight Army aviation groups in 1925. Snyder's photos also provide a glimpse into the life of an American Airman serving overseas during a time when the Army Air Corps (which had been named the Army Air Service prior to July 1926) was figuratively – as well as literally in some cases – trying to get off the ground.

“I remember my grandpa telling me that the De Havilland DH-4 biplanes, which in some cases had flown before

World War I, were getting so old that sometimes a couple of the pilots would actually fly them out over the edge of a nearby swamp and parachute out. Then the mechanics would go out and salvage any parts,” said Cole. “That way they would get replacement aircraft.”

“I can't imagine what it must have been like for him,” said Airman 1st Class Eric Hufford, a relatively new crew chief with the current 6th Maintenance Squadron, who assisted with the visit. “In some ways it must have been harder working on those old biplanes, but when I crawl up into the cockpit of a KC-135, with all of those lights flashing, I think in some ways it might have been a lot easier.”

Snyder passed on to his family a fervor for military aviation that has spanned the better part of the past century. His grandson, Cole, eventually joined the Air Force in 1974, where he followed in his grandfather's footsteps as an aviation mechanic. Cole arrived at MacDill that same year for his first duty tour. He worked on the F-4 “Phantom” fighter jets as a member of the 56th Tactical Fighter Wing, and later, the F-16 “Fighting Falcons” when the wing transitioned to the new fighter jet in 1979. Four years later, Cole served as a maintenance instructor, often teaching classes in the same room now used as the 6th AMW commander's office.

“My granddad always loved the fact that I became an aviation mechanic, and he always asked me when my ‘furlough’ was going to end and when was I going back to ‘camp,’” Cole said with a reminiscent chuckle. “I guess he never quite made the adjustment from military life in the 1920s to that in the 1970s.”

Cole retired in 1994. Ironically, that same year, the wing which eventually descended from his grandfather's old group – named the



A close-up photo (taken in 2007) of the 6th emblem painted on the “Spirit of St. Louis.”

SUICIDE

From Page 16

with a local hospital for care.

Once at the hospital I realized I had never been so embarrassed or ashamed in my life.

“How did I get here?” “What will everyone think?” I tried to figure out what I would tell everyone when I got out. I quickly learned a few life lessons:

- There are others there just like me, not just with the same experiences, but other Airmen.

- Sleep is a wonderful and restorative thing.

- No one, my commander included, saw me as weak or “crazy.” He was very supportive. He even called me -- in the hospital -- to congratulate me on my selection to major. I learned I had been selected for promotion from a call on a stainless steel phone with a cord too short to be used as a noose.

- Military members stay an average of four days longer than our civilian counterparts. Why the disparity? Probably because we have a tendency to “suck it up and move on,” going back to the same environment at an increased risk of relapse.

After five or six days I realized in horror that I had successfully hidden this from everyone, including my sweetheart of 19 years. I wondered how many others were going through the motions as well. We know there are others, we see the reports. How many times have we been surprised by their actions? As I felt better, I felt obligated to be as vocal

as I had been silent. I told my story to my unit, the Air Force Network Integration Center, and I’m telling you now.

For those supervisors, friends, spouses and wingmen:

- We have to embrace the Wingman culture. A wingman is not a name and phone number on the back of a card. It is someone you know well enough to see when something is wrong, or know enough about their life and struggles to take them aside and offer to talk. If our relationship only exists Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., I’m not going to share my deepest darkest secrets with you.

- Look at your Airmen. There are signs and they are not always “giving away their stuff, experiencing financial problems, or other personality changes.” I enjoy humor and laughing, an easy wall to hide behind, but I also gained 40 pounds in nine months. No one said anything.

- Beware of the curse of competency. A fine line to be sure, we can’t have people backing down from stressful jobs or the tough jobs wouldn’t get done. At the same time, maybe an executive officer isn’t the right job for an Airman who was given a humanitarian assignment to your unit. After explaining my situation when I arrived, I was told, “We really need you to do this and it’s the right time in your career. Work with your supervisor to take the time you need.”

For those of you who are stressed, not sleeping, having racing thoughts, thinking of harming yourself either actively or passively:

- Talk to someone NOW. If you are worried about confidentiality, consider this: no one besides my commander and first sergeant knew. Not even the commander’s exec, and he knows everything.

- If you are worried about your career, consider: I came out on the promotion list in the hospital, I pinned on major two months ago and I still have my security clearance. And my leaders let me keep my branch chief position.

- Tell your leaders if you are in over your head. I still feel that my leaders should never have put me in an exec position, but I didn’t push the issue, either. I didn’t want the stigma of having said no or sounding like a whiner.

- Stay active. Part of my on-going therapy is physical activity in addition to regular exercise.

- Asking for help does not show weakness, it shows courage. Be humble enough to talk to a friend, your chaplain or a Mental Health representative.

I have been reflecting on the things I would have missed. I am grateful every day, for God, my loving companion, my understanding commander, a compassionate first sergeant and for the medical professionals who got me moving in the right direction.

6TH HISTORY

From Page 17

6th Air Base Wing at that time – moved from Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, to MacDill as part of an Air Force realignment. He still participates in many aviation events – such as Airfest – at MacDill, where a new group of 6th Airmen are making their own legacies.

“It’s important for us to take the time to link back to the past,” said Colonel Smith. “These photos are an important way for us to remember where we came from as Airmen, to understand the challenges and the environments they faced and to learn from their lessons so we can bring it forward to today.”



Jesse Snyder shows off his 1922 Model T coupe at France Field. He affectionately named his car “Liz.” The Ford Model T (colloquially known as the Tin Lizzie and the Flivver) was the car produced by Henry Ford’s motor company from 1908 through 1927.

Transitions Championship

The Transitions Championship recognizes the efforts that all members of the U.S. Armed Forces provide in defending the United States. As part of our Military Appreciation, we say thank you and would like to welcome you to the Transitions Championship at Innisbrook, a Salamander Golf and Spa Resort March 17-20, 2011.

Free Admission to all Active, Reserve, National Guard and Retired Military Service Members and their dependents

- All Military Service Members and their dependents will receive complimentary admission all week.
- Everyone must provide a valid Common Access Card or retired ID card – including dependants – at the gate along with the ticket.
- All children age 17 and under are admitted free each day
- In addition, anyone with a military ID can purchase up to (6) Good-Any-One-Day tickets at half price - \$15 each.

Complimentary and discounted tickets are available online at www.TransitionsChampionship.com/promotions

Pinch-A-Penny Military Appreciation Tent

- A hospitality venue for the Military located at the 16th green will be available for all active, reserve and retired Military Service Members and United States veterans.
- The venue will be open Thursday – Sunday and will be stocked with complimentary food and beverages.
- Open for anyone with a military ID card plus one guest.

Any questions or comments please call the Tournament Office at 727-942-5566 or send an email to staff@thecopperheads.org



COMMANDER

From Page 2

Analog leadership has to be in place to prevent events like this from happening. I deal with this question every night - "Are my people safe?" We need to continue taking care of each other and as I said, I can't run this base alone. I need strong leaders to lock arm-in-arm to take care of all of the MacDill family.

Shout-outs for this week demonstrate how we all are taking care of each other. 6th AMW Command Chief Derrick Crowley pulled together a committee of dedicated folks who worked hard on the Annual Awards Recognition Banquet that will be held here Friday. Their tireless work went into planning an event that is so top-shelf the honorees and others who are attending will be beyond proud of what went into the star-quality event.

Staff Sgt. Tom Morone, a 310th Airlift Squadron flight attendant and the unit's physical training leader, organized and led weekly physical training sessions - instrumental to a 94 percent unit pass rate.

The Medical Group's Tech. Sgt. Tamara Abernathy-Greene is being recognized for her superior performance in conducting occupational health exams for the 6th AMW and personnel in 39 other tenant units who are flying and executing special operational duty. She also performs paraprofessional portions of preventative health assessments with oversight of grounding and waiver management for the 6th AMW aviators.

I am proud to serve with you in the finest Air Mobility Wing on the face of the planet!

Military savings week puts focus on putting away

by Nick Stubbs

Thunderbolt editor

Saving money in today's economy is a bigger challenge than ever, but strategies to squirrel away a little something even in these times are out there, and are the focus now through Sunday — Military Saves Week.

Mark Stanford, a certified financial counselor at the MacDill Airman & Family Readiness Center, said all focus this week is on getting out the word about how to develop a sound saving plan and dealing with financial issues that can stand in the way of a happier, more secure life.

Airmen who put away at least 10 percent of the net earnings per month are on the right track, said Mr. Stanford. If they are saving 15 percent, all the better. One of the biggest obstacles today is dealing with debt that gets in the way of saving much of anything.

"It's easy to use the credit card too much, and high interest rates creates debt," said Mr. Stanford.

Working out a budget and paying off debt is one of the most valuable services the A&FRC offers, he said.

"We help you work out a budget and pay off that debt and get back on track," Mr. Stanford said. "It leads to a better life (for Airmen) and it's better for the military."

Financial security is part of the new Comprehensive Airman Fitness program which focuses on the mental, spiritual, and physical health of Airmen and their families. Eliminating financial worries can go a long way toward a happier existence and reduce stress.

"It's particularly important when it comes time for a major purchase, like a house or a car," said Mr. Stanford, who added that there is nothing more satisfying than being able to afford such a purchase without suffering financial strain.

Developing a plan is not difficult with the help of the A&FRC. Mr. Stanford recommends visiting macdillafrc.com to browse available classes, which range from how to buy a car to estate planning. All are free.

Military members may also come in for private financial counseling or to pick up literature on debt management, budgeting and savings strategies. Also, visit www.militarysaves.org.

Another important service provided at the A&FRC is credit score counseling. A good credit score is essential for those looking to advance into career fields requiring higher security clearances, said Mr. Stanford.

"We're here to help," and anyone can take advantage of the free services by calling or e-mailing the A&FRC, he said.

REMEMBERING

From Page 12

But as fate would show, it didn't mean harms way was very far away at any given time. Mr. Faulkner's story is one of several close calls and brushes with deadly fate.

Landing on the MacDill runway on return from a training flight, a heavy crosswind blew the plane off line. It ended up cocked up, with one wing wedged on a dirt mound.

"Everyone bailed out and ran away, and I stayed on to contact the tower," he said. "We got lucky on that one."

He was in Calcutta when Japanese bombers ripped the harbor to pieces, but was safely out of range of the explosions. He was at the Bradenton airstrip when a plane he very easily could have been aboard had its wings sheared off by a pair of pine trees, killing all aboard.

In another incident, he was asked to fly on Christmas, but standing his ground and risking a courts martial, he pointed out that he was on leave for the day. The plane took off without him and crashed, killing all aboard.

In yet another instance, he and crew flew into Calcutta to have an engine on their plane replaced. He and his buddies went into town for a steak and returned to find their plane crashed during testing of the new engine, killing everyone aboard.

Another time, a plane he was aboard carrying a cargo of paint thinner was turned over to another crew to take the next leg of the flight. A crewman on that flight apparently lit a cigarette, sending them all to their deaths when the thinner fumes ignited.

In one incident, Mr. Faulkner's quick action led to saving everyone.

His plane was due for new engines, and during one evening he and a

maintenance chief were assigned to inspect the engines.

"I didn't know an engine from a hole in the ground," he recalled thinking at the time, but he looked them over with the chief, who was tired and decided to skip inspection of the last of four engines on their B-17.

"That night I couldn't sleep very well, and all I could think about was that one engine," he said.

The next day on takeoff, the buck sergeant fixated on the engine, watching it out his window, microphone in hand if something went wrong.

"Three feet off the ground it caught fire, and I was ready on the mic and told the pilot right away," said Mr. Faulkner, who was credited with saving the crew and plane.

A short time later, he saw his name on a board in a hallway, announcing his promotion to staff sergeant. It wasn't long after that, he was promoted to technical sergeant.

"I guess I was pretty lucky," said Mr. Faulkner, referring to all the close calls and luck he saw during his service. "I told Jesus if he would get me home, I would go to church; it worked for me."

Mr. Faulkner's duty saw him in India, China, Brazil, Florida, Central and South America, California, Africa and a few other places in the Pacific. Those years were exciting and dangerous, and for Mr. Faulkner ended with the war.

After the war, he came back to his home town of Dover, Fla. He built and operated a drive-in restaurant and sold it when business slowed two years later. He moved to Michigan, where he worked 30 years for the Whirlpool Corporation, retiring and settling there until the cold winters brought him back to Florida.



EVENTS

Friday

MacDill Lanes

9 Pin No Tap Tournament start sat 5:30 p.m. \$15 per person. 828-4005.

Saturday

Arts & Crafts Center

FREE Scrap Party from 1-5 p.m. Join us for a fun-filled afternoon of scraping and socializing. Snacks and beverages provided! Teens Welcome! Call 828-4413 to sign up.

Tuesday

Airman & Family Readiness Center

Spouse-2-Spouse from 9:30-11 a.m. Open conversation about issues relating to deployments and an opportunity to meet new friends.

Ten Steps to a Federal Job Plus from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Learn how to apply for federal employment, how to fill out a federal resume, and how KSA's (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) fit in to the process.

Bay Palms Golf Complex

FREE Active Duty Clinic from 12-1 p.m.

Wednesday

Airman & Family Readiness Center

Bundles For Babies from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Participants will receive a "bundle" of information, resources, and a special gift!

Base Chapel

Newcomers Reception from 9-10:30 a.m. Meet the Wing Commander and other base agencies.

For more information please visit our website at www.macdillfss.com



Photo by Senior Airman Linzi Joseph

Major Gen. (Ret.) Leonard Randolph speaks during the African American Heritage Luncheon at MacDill Air Force Base Feb. 18. February is African American History Month, in which we celebrate the achievements made by African Americans and the important milestones achieved throughout U.S. history.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Protestant services

Sunday - 9 a.m. - Praise Worship Service

9 a.m. - FamCamp Traditional Service (Nov.-March)

Noon - Gospel Service

5:30 p.m. - Mass

Sunday - 10:30 a.m. - Mass

Monday to Thursday: 12:10 p.m. - Mass

Catholic services

Saturday - 4:30 p.m. - Confession

Islamic services

Friday - 1:15 p.m. - Prayer Service

AT THE MOVIES

\$4 for adults / \$2 for children 828-2780

Friday - 7 p.m.

The Dilemma (PG-13)

Saturday - 3 p.m.

The Dilemma (PG-13)

Saturday - 7 p.m.

The Fighter (R)



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn C. Rhodes

ORI standouts!

Fourteen members of the 927th Air Refueling Wing were recognized during a commander's call Feb. 13. The gathering serves as a way for the commander of the 927th ARW to pass on information and recognize those who go the extra mile in defense of their country.