

FLANTED LOGIC WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE? p.18



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-The Combat Edge

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by MSgt Kevin Scott, HQ ACC Ground Safety, Langley AFB, Va.



Oops ... In our May/June issue we inadvertently omitted the name of Major Bob Gardner, U-2 Instructor Pilot, for his pivotal role in coordinating crucial support for the U-2 emergency aircraft. Well done Bob!

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COVER PHOTO BY: A1C BRETT CLASHMANZ

ACCENT

ON SAFETY

Time to Take a Second Look

Here we are, wrapping up another summer and nearly through another fiscal year. The end is almost in sight, but being "almost finished" can be a vulnerable moment and a good time to stop and take a second look. Almost everything we do presents an opportunity for one last cross check. Whether the task is putting a bomb on target, returning home from a summer trip, or having one last cookout for the year — there is always time to take a moment to review your position and safely complete the mission.



Gen William M. Fraser III Commander

With less than a month left in FY10, we've had 3 Class A flight mishaps (compared to 5 in FY09). We also had 6 off-duty fatalities so far in ACC compared to 10 for all of FY09. Your commitment to safety resulted in significant progress in several areas. For example, since FY02, our PMV-4 fatal mishaps are down 90 percent! I applaud your efforts, but we still have work to do.

We must continue to focus on discipline. Despite all of our efforts, speed, alcohol and lack of seat belt use continue to be mishap factors. Add a cell phone call or text message and you have a recipe for disaster. Additionally, aviation discipline is critical in preventing flight-related mishaps. Following tech data, executing the basics and sound crew resource management procedures are the foundation for safety.

Furthermore, we can never underestimate the power of our Wingman culture. We are still losing too many of our Airmen to destructive behaviors. Your feedback from our recent Air Force Wingman Stand Down re-emphasized the value of face-to-face contact and support. Each one of us can save a troubled or emotionally isolated Airman by simply reaching out and letting them know we are here to help. Through efforts like Comprehensive Airman Fitness, we've ensured Airmen have the tools to achieve a healthy, balanced lifestyle.

Airmen are facing more challenges than ever with aging aircraft, expanding missions, resource challenges, and high operations tempo. We have provided safety tools for your use on the Air Force Portal and Air Force websites and published messages, surveys and provided down days and campaigns. Our mishap prevention programs are working, but taking care of each other is a mission that doesn't end. As we close out the summer and FY10, I challenge you to approach each task, whether on or off-duty, with discipline, focus, and a Wingman mentality to make this our safest year ever.

STORY BY LT COL ROBERT "G-MAN" GENDREAU | PHOTOS BY MSGT KEVIN GRUENWALD

one 23 was on an Operation ENDURING FREEDOM armed over-watch in southern Afghanistan in April of 2009. The sortie was relatively benign for the first $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours. About an hour before an air refueling System (FCGMS) automatically turns rendezvous, the crew noticed a slight on various transfer pumps within fuel system glitch that did not, at

first, seem significant. In the B-1, the fuel system has an automatic fuel sequencing system to maintain the airplane's center of gravity (CG) mission providing in flight. This system monitors both the CG and the main tank quantity. As the main tanks burn down to 75 percent capacity, the Fuel Center of Gravity Management the eight fuel cells to refill the main

tanks, all while maintaining CG. Typically, the main tanks hold about an hour of gas at any given time. The barely noticeable error indicated that the fuel transfer sequence was incorrect. FCGMS seemed to be feeding the main tanks from fuel cells out of the designed order. This, in and of itself, was not really a major issue and the resolution is usually to reset the FCGGMs system with the push of a sequencing button.

About 30 minutes later, the crew noticed that the fuel system was still out of the norm and crew concerns grew. On the way to rendezvous with their regularly scheduled refueling tanker, the copilot noticed that the glitch had turned into more of a problem. The fuel from the number three tank was failing to transfer properly. The number three tank holds about 30K pounds of fuel, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours worth of fuel. Immediately, the crew started calculating the required fuel to get home and land with reserves. However, with a high priority tasking, the crew took on gas and headed back to the mission while monitoring their fuel status.

Then the situation changed; the "LOW FUEL" master caution light illuminated along with several other fuel caution lights. This indicated that the main tanks had depleted below 65 percent and were not refilling. Immediately, the pilot started coordinating for an emergency landing at Kandahar. Following procedure, the crew turned on all fuel transfer pumps to override the automatic system. The Offensive Systems Officer started coordinating for a safe location to jettison their 22K pounds of weapons to lighten their gross weight for an emergency

Officer worked with the copilot to accomplish applicable checklists for manually transferring fuel. The pilot also coordinated for an emergency air refueling and through good crew resource management, the crew quickly developed a plan of action. After an air refueling, the B-1 is

about 365K pounds with normal landing weight being 250K pounds. Bone 23 had about 20 minutes of fuel to stay airborne but was extremely heavy; raising the risk of an emergency landing in Afghanistan. If the crew had to land at 365K gross weight on the short runway at Kandahar, the brakes would most certainly catch fire and shut down a strategically critical runway with a burning plane loaded with fuel and weapons. Complicating the issue was the fact that there was no specific checklist to follow for this specific emergency. The question was, why was the aircraft consuming over 30 minutes of fuel in just a few minutes? The conclusion was that there was apparently something blocking the transfer of fuel into the main tanks. The crew improvised by coordinating for an emergency air refueling to trick the system into air refueling mode where fuel could be pumped directly into the main tanks.

After coordinating to get a tanker



Photo by: SSgt Manuel J. Martinez

worked — sort of. It enabled the transfer of fuel into the main tanks, but it was the only way to get fuel into the main tanks. To avoid a heavyweight landing on a short runway in the middle of a hot Area of Operation, the crew would have to refuel from the tanker





The crew decided to make the 3-hour flight back to their deployed home base by having the tanker drag them there with multiple air refuelings. Once Bone 23 arrived in the local area of their home base, they dumped fuel out of the wing tanks to reduce gross weight for landing and reduce the chance of a brake fire. While dumping fuel, another "LOW FUEL" master caution light illuminated, and the crew decided to put the aircraft on the deck a little heavier than normal, but not so heavy that they had significant risk of burning up the brakes or starting a fire on landing.

Bone 23 landed uneventfully after a well-earned paycheck that day. In the following week, the test facility back in the states identified the problem and published a new checklist change as a result of the actions of the crew of Bone 23. Thanks to outstanding crew coordination, good systems knowledge, innovativeness and a 'Johnny-on-the-spot' KC-135 crew, the crew of Bone 23 returned safely and avoided shutting down a key runway in the AOR.



This story is another example of how Airmen innovate and apply good risk management principles every day to accomplish their mission in the ongoing war.

Where are they now? All of the crew members of Bone 23 currently serve at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas. Major James "Pumper" Dykas, the Instructor Pilot, currently serves in the 7th Operations

Group Standardization and Evaluation office. Major James "Wrench" Smith, the Copilot, currently serves as the Chief of the Commander's Action Group, 7th Operations Group. Captain Mark "Durden" Tyler, the Instructor Weapons Systems Officer, serves in the 28th Bomb Squadron. Captain Jared "Got it" Burns, the Weapons Systems Officer, serves in the 9th Bomb Squadron.





COMBAT TROOP SUICIDES

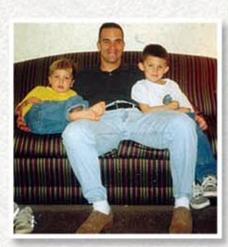
BY MS. ELAINE WILSON

Washington (AFNS) – Kim Ruocco hung up the phone with her husband, relieved he had finally agreed to seek help for his increasingly severe bouts of depression.

Still, she had a nagging feeling that something wasn't right. She decided to catch a red-eye flight from Massachusetts to California, where her husband's reserve unit was located, so she could be with him when he sought help.

(Below) John Ruocco and his two sons Billy and Joey. John, a Marine Corps major and helicopter pilot, committed suicide in 2005, months before he was to be redeployed to Iraq for a second tour.

(Right) Marine Corps Maj John Ruocco poses with his wife. Kim, and children, Joey, right, and Billy, in November 2004.



After Mrs. Ruocco landed, she called the hospital. He wasn't there. She called his office. He hadn't shown up. A sinking feeling set in. Mrs. Ruocco rented a car and raced over to the hotel where her husband had been staying. When she arrived, several Marines were walking out of his hotel room. The Marines were crying. "I didn't have to ask; I knew," she said.

Her 40-year-old husband, Marine Corps Mai, John Ruocco, an accomplished AH-1 Cobra helicopter pilot and father of two, had hung himself just hours after his conversation with his wife.

Mrs. Ruocco struggled to make sense of the loss that shook her family to its core. Yearning to give her husband's death some meaning, she eventually immersed herself in efforts to combat suicide within the military. "I wish I would have called the (military police) and told them there was someone in crisis," she said of that night 5 years ago. "I wish I would have taken the chance in having him feel like I betrayed him -- but at least he'd be alive."



Her husband had battled bouts of depression for most of his adult life, Mrs. Ruocco explained. Past incidents, including a fatal car accident in high school and aircraft crashes that took the lives of his friends, had stuck with him throughout the years. But he kept his feelings private, worried about disrupting his skyrocketing Marine Corps career. After more than a decade in the Marines, Major Ruocco was at the pinnacle of his career field, his wife explained. An expert pilot, he had accepted an Air Force exchange position at Vance Air Force Base, Okla., where he trained new pilots on the T-37 Tweet.

Major Ruocco took his work "very seriously," she noted, and the demands of a fast-paced, post-9/11 military were wearing him down.

"It was taking a toll, the stress and pressure," she said. "He felt indebted to the Marine Corps and the Air Force, and indebted to us. He was trying to please everyone."

Backed by his family, Major Ruocco decided to separate from the Marines. His wife and their then 8and 10-year-old sons were pleased, since they had grown tired of the frequent moves and school changes. "People thought, at almost 15 years, it was a crazy time to get out," she said. "I felt it was better for the family."

The major separated from active duty in 2004 and joined a reserve unit in Pennsylvania. While moving his family to their new home in Boston, he began training to be a pilot with a civilian airline company in Texas. Two weeks after he joined the reserve unit, Major Ruocco was activated and deployed to Iraq.

His deployment went well, his wife said. He flew 75 missions, was awarded an Air Medal, given for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight, and led his troops with pride, she noted. But post-deployment life took a downturn. The job with the civilian airline company didn't pan out, and his Pennsylvania-based squadron had moved to California.

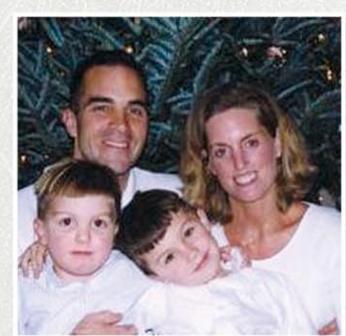
"The adrenaline of war was coming to a screeching halt." Mrs. Ruocco said. "He was having difficulty flying because of the anxiety and depression. It was the snowball effect you see so often with suicide.

"People often think suicide is one thing, such as a relationship breakup," she explained. "But that's the final straw of a multitude of things that build up and tear away at a (service member)." John was living in a hotel room in California, she said, where his depression was worsening by the day. He was due to deploy to Iraq again in the spring, but doubted his ability to lead there and also was afraid of letting his unit

Major Ruocco died on Super Bowl Sunday 2005. His beloved New England Patriots edged out the Philadelphia Eagles for the coveted football victory. But he didn't watch the game. On their phone call that evening, Kim asked her husband if he was feeling so bad that he could kill himself. He told her he could never do that to her and the boys. "He told me he was going to go on base and get help," she said. "But he also said that would be the end of everything; that it would ruin his career.

"Nothing is more important to a military man or woman than how people view you," she added. The stigma of seeking help and the fear of being viewed differently prevented her husband from seeking the help he needed.

"I believe he really meant it when he said he couldn't do that to me and the kids, but he probably sat there and thought about the consequences of getting help, the concept of death before dishonor, and that he was



A family Christmas photo of Kim and John Ruocco and their children, Billy and Joey.

(Below) Maj John Ruocco at a deployed location.

mentally incapable of doing his duty," she said. "That's the final straw for (service members), when they don't feel they have anything to give anymore."

Mrs. Ruocco said she's seen the same stories replayed on military installations throughout the world and hopes, by sharing her story, others will be inspired to come forward and seek help. In her talks with service members, she stresses the importance of never leaving someone in emotional distress alone. "I tell the troops to practice ACE-ask, care, escort," she said. "You can never leave a person who is in that much pain alone. You can't say, 'I'll call you tomorrow.' Grab their arm and escort them to help."



Mrs. Ruocco also explains the signs of suicide: withdrawal; substance abuse; physical self-harm; talking about feeling hopeless or helpless; talking about wanting to die, even in a joking way; impulsiveness; lack of judgment; and as a sign of a possible imminent attempt, agitation and angry outbursts. She's already seen positive signs of change, she said, thanks to Defense Department efforts to lower suicide rates and end the stigma of seeking help.

To illustrate, Mrs. Ruocco described a visit to Fort Hood, Texas. about a year ago. Many soldiers approached her crying, and told her that was the first time they felt they could share their feelings. She returned there in the spring, and it was a different story, she said. "A lot of soldiers came forward and said they got help, or they noticed a soldier and took him to help," she said.

Mrs. Ruocco praised the military for its recent suicide prevention efforts, but stressed more work remains. She serves on four Defense Department task groups dedicated to combating the military's suicide rate, and is focusing efforts on building up follow-on care for surviving families. "They need a lot of help and often help is not there for them," she said. "We need to build up services more and build up funding."



Kim Ruocco, with sons Billy and Joey (in hat) visits grave of Maj John Ruocco who took his own life in 2005.

Even one suicide is too many, she said. "I've talked to thousands and thousands of troops and I really get the sense [military] leaders want to find out how to fix this," she said. "But it's so hard to keep people from falling through the cracks. It's hard and heartbreaking."

Mrs. Ruocco is also working to combat the stigma associated with military suicides; something that plagued her in the days following her husband's death. Surviving family members often keep the cause of death from others, particularly from their community and church, for fear of judgment.

Five years ago, Mrs. Ruocco kept the cause of death from her own children. In shock and unsure how to handle the situation, she told her sister, who was watching the kids, to tell them it was an accident. The secret only compounds the pain, she said. Two weeks after her husband's death, Mrs. Ruocco and her sons were driving to a restaurant, and her older son said, "I think I killed Dad." Mrs. Ruocco asked him what he

meant. "I put salt on his nachos," he told her. "And he said it wasn't good for his heart. Maybe he got in an accident because of his heart. Is that why he died?"

Mrs. Ruocco immediately pulled the car over and told her sons the truth, in terms they could understand. She talked to them of war and depression, and compared mental pain to that of physical pain. "That day, we started again from scratch," she said. "They were angry and confused, but it was a relief to tell them. I didn't have to worry about them overhearing something anymore. "You can't rebuild on a lie."

In the years since, Mrs. Ruocco and her sons have worked on taking on healthy roles and building new, happy memories. They traveled to Florida and the Caribbean and immersed themselves in the military and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors' support. Mrs. Ruocco now focuses on celebrating her husband's life, rather than dwelling on how he died. She cites Enid, Okla., as an

example of a community that has created a touching celebration of life. She returns to Vance AFB, the family's last active-duty station, each year to visit with old friends.

On her last visit, she stopped by a town memorial, where a stone is placed for each military member from Oklahoma who died while serving the nation. To her surprise, the park included a plaque in memory of her husband. "They were honoring not how he died, but how he lived," she said. "He served and sacrificed and stepped up, too, and they were acknowledging that. That's how it should be done."

Mrs. Ruocco is now the director of suicide education and support for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families with a fallen military loved one. She has shared her story with thousands of troops across the nation, working to fight the stigma that kept her husband from seeking help.

Feeling lost, lonely, desperate?



If you feel trapped...If you feel you have no one to turn to...If you've been feeling down for a while and you're not exactly sure why...

It's important to talk to someone. You can talk to someone <u>right now</u> by calling the Lifeline. Help is available at any time of the day or night—and it's completely free and confidential. We're here to listen and to help you find your way back to a happier, healthier life.

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255) With help comes hope.





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.samhsa.gov





For the past few years, I taught part of the First Term Airman Course at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. During my class. I presented a number of choices for the young people to consider. Generally, I found in class after class, many of these choices were things most of them were never told. To my amazement, all were related to the top three reasons Airmen die in vehicle mishaps each year.

One of these choices relates to a form of fatigue that is both insidious and rampant in our harried society, and sometimes even more so in the military. It's called sleep debt. Annually, a disproportionate amount of Airman vehicular deaths occur between 2200 and 0600. This is the timeframe when sleep debt combines with circadian rhythm lows and is the most deadly.

So what exactly is sleep debt? Sleep debt is the physiological time your body needs to recover from getting inadequate or insufficient sleep. Because your body begins to change your sleep pattern to accommodate sleep loss, sleep debt is typically somewhat less than accumulated lost hours of sleep. This is the reason we don't start to hallucinate after a few weeks of sleeping only 6 hours each night.

It works like this. Most people require 8 hours of sleep for their bodies to function at peak performance levels. The more often you get less than 8 hours of sleep per night, the greater your sleep loss. This happens despite your body's attempts to compensate for the reduction in sleep.

The difference between your actual hours of sleep loss, and the amount of sleep loss your body has been able to compensate for, is called sleep debt. So when you wake up in the morning, you are greeted by the morning sun, the sleep you actually obtained, and your sleep debt.

For example, let's say that beginning on Sunday night, you go to sleep at midnight and awaken at 0600, and you do this for five nights in a row. This would result in 10 hours of sleep loss. However, because your body changed its sleep pattern, on Friday morning you will actually awake with only 8 hours of sleep debt.

Research by NASA and other teams revealed that accumulating sleep debt results in decreased recognition times, decreased response times, decreased accuracy of responses, and degraded problem solving. These conditions get worse as the level of sleep debt increases.

The research also showed that accumulated sleep debt must be added to time awake to accurately predict the impact on physiological performance skills. Specifically, they found that human performance degrades to the equivalent of 0.08 blood alcohol content (BAC) after 20 hours awake if the person has no sleep debt. However, the person with 8 hours of sleep debt reaches this degraded level of performance after only 12 hours of time awake (12 hours awake plus their 8 hours of sleep debt). After 16-hours awake it's even worse. Sixteen hours awake plus 8-hours of sleep debt degrades performance to the equivalent of 0.10 BAC. Adding alcohol makes things even worse. One of the most alarming findings of the research was that sleep debt makes us less able to accurately estimate our own level of fatigue.

Researchers found the only way to avoid the negative effects of sleep debt is to choose to obtain enough sleep over several nights to minimize or eliminate the sleep debt. You will know you have eliminated most of your sleep debt when you are unable to sleep (assuming you don't have something else wrong with you). If you feel you can take a nap or are dozing off, your body is sending you the message, "Warning, I need sleep."

Failing to choose to eliminate sleep debt on a continuing basis has additional consequences. It can result in decreased immune system performance and, thus, more frequent illness and longer recovery times. It can also lead to a group of symptoms known as chronic fatigue syndrome.

(Now back to Joe.)

It was Friday morning and Joe awoke excited. Tonight he would see his fiancé. The 2 months since he'd seen her seemed like an eternity.

Joe worked his day, but was unable to get off early because of mission needs. Despite the delay, he was able to get back to his dorm by 1700. He packed his car and showered before he left. After stopping at the base gas station to top off his fuel tank and purchase a Red-Bull, Joe headed out the gate at about 1800 hours. As he headed down the road, he noted he felt a little fuzzy in his thoughts. He shook it off and focused on his reunion later that evening.

Unfortunately, Joe never arrived at his planned destination because at 2300, he was pronounced dead in a local emergency room, as his fiancé waited in anticipation of their long awaited reunion.

What happened? As Joe drove out the gate his awake time plus sleep debt was 20 hours. The fuzzy thoughts were the result of performance degraded to the equivalent of 0.08 BAC. Four hours later, at 2200, Joe's physiological response time was degraded to the equivalent of 0.10 BAC, and was rapidly getting worse. The caffeine in the Red Bull seemed to help Joe stay awake, but did nothing to improve his rapidly degrading performance behind the wheel. Around 2230, a sleepy trucker traveling in the opposite direction crossed the centerline. The delay in Joe's response time kept him from avoiding the head-on collision with the semi-tractortrailer rig that took his life.

An essential part of being mission ready is getting enough sleep so we can perform at our best. Airmen who fail to minimize their sleep debt put themselves and the mission at risk.

* Joe is a fictional character representing many Airmen who died in motor vehicle accidents in recent

The author is a research psychologist; a NASA trained and certified fatigue countermeasures instructor, and a former Air Force flight safety officer.

Mountain Home News Airman dies in vehicle rollover Wednesday, November 18, 2009 Mountain Home News A 19-year-old Airman was killed Wednesday when he was involved in a single-vehicle rollover on 1 in 5 drivers will be involved Highway 30 just east of Mountain Home. in a crash this year. The Elmore County Sheriff's Department responded to a one vehicle rollover crash on Highway 30 which The driver of the vehicle, who has not been identified by this point, was traveling West on Highway 30 when he apparently lost control of the vehicle. He then drove off the left shoulder of the roadway, overcorrected and crossed over both lanes of traffic, going My car, my rules. off the right shoulder of the roadway. The vehicle then went into a roll and the driver Approximately 35,000 was ejected. people are killed in vehicle crashes each year. Half of them would not driving far from home, likely have survived if they had worn a seat belt. If a person without a seat belt crashes going 30 mph, they could get stuck if my car is on fire. could strike another passenger with a force of **4,800 lbs** Seat belts increase vour chances of surviving an accident by 45% 75% of crash deaths and injuries occur within 25 I can brace myself if I crash. miles of home.

\$100 million in

annual injury and death costs

could be saved with just 1%

increase in seat belt use.

The occupants of a vehicle are 25 times more likely to be killed or injured if

they are ejected.

WHAT'S

BY MSGT KEVIN SCOTT

espite mandatory laws and local campaigns, recent studies show there are still drivers that do not buckle up. People have all kinds of excuses not to wear their seat belts, but the reality is, there is no good reason.

It is a proven fact that seat belts reduce injuries and save lives! Any excuse not to wear them ignores this fact. In a collision, it is not the impact of the vehicle that hurts or kills the occupant; it is the impact of their body slamming into the dashboard or another passenger. There is no collision where you are safer not wearing a seat belt. As the car crashes, the unbuckled occupant keeps traveling, hitting the dashboard or windshield, or sometimes being thrown completely out of the vehicle. Without a seat belt to support the occupant, their chances of surviving the collision are cut in half.

So why then, when all the facts and figures support seat belt use, do some people still refuse to wear them? It's one of those unknowns that mystify people who know better. The hope is that excuses will reduce, as people learn more about the effectiveness of seat belts. Although it takes longer with some people, effective safety programs and information eventually help convince people to wear their seat belts. Here are the facts:

Only .005% of crashes actually involve fire or water. In the other 99.995% of crashes, you are more likely to be tossed into oncoming traffic, get crushed under your own car, or go right through the windshield if you are not wearing a seat belt. It's highly probable that you will be knocked unconscious or severely injured if you're not buckled up. If you are belted, more than likely you will be able to unbuckle yourself and get out of a potential fire or submerged car situation.

Sources: James Madison University Office of Public Safety, Division of Motor Vehicles (2008) and NHTSA National Center for Statistics and Analysis, Traffic Safety Facts (2008 Data)

I don't want to drown if I end up underwater.

If the car flips, I'll be stuck.



CAPT HANS N. BUCKWALTER AND MAJ CHRIS X. LIENESCH, 391 FS, 366 FW, MT. HOME AFB ID. After takeoff, Uzzi 22 (F-15E) crew had an unsafe gear condition. Uzzi 21 observed Uzzi 22's left main landing gear raised, but pinned against the fuselage. During one attempt to force the left main down, the aircraft entered an uncommanded auto-roll with an associated "yaw rate" warning tone. The crew flew a fast, shallow approach, landed 1,000' prior to the barrier, and countered left wing dip with power and aileron, balancing on the nose and right main landing gear. (June 10)

Crew Chief Safety



SSGT ANTHONY L. CAPELLI, 552 MXS, 552 ACW, TINKER AFB OK. After performing maintenance in the flight deck of an E-3 AWACS, SSgt Capelli noticed an abnormal and extreme amount of heat emanating from the E-23 cabinet, Data Display Group Rack. He powered down the cabinet and notified the dock chief of the incident. His situational awareness and experience allowed him to properly identify and eliminate a potentially hazardous scenario from realization. His quick response prevented the destruction of costly computer data display equipment and an aircraft fire inside a populated hangar. (*July 10*)

Flight Line Safety



SSGT JASON F. BRATHWAITE, 506 EOSS, 506 AEG, KIRKUK, IRAQ. While performing duties as senior controller at the tower, SSgt Brathwaite received a call from a C-130 that was 10 miles west of the airfield at 6,000'. After clearing the aircraft to land on runway 14, he observed the aircraft on final approach and noticed that it appeared that the C-130 was making its approach to the wrong runway. Less than 1 mile from landing, he issued go-around instructions, cleared the aircraft for right closed traffic, and reissued a landing clearance for runway 14. (*June 10*)

A1C KEVIN JONES, 23 AMXS, 23 WG, MOODY AFB GA. The A-10C had just completed 3 gun strafing passes with the 30mm gun system firing 30 rounds each pass, all without issues. On the 4th pass, the gun system jammed on the initial trigger pull and the pilot received a MASTER CAUTION light and a GUN UNSAFE light on the caution annunciator panel in the cockpit. He removed all lose rounds from the bay and disconnected the turnaround unit, enabling him to safely remove the punctured rounds. (*July 10*)

SSGT DUSTIN M. CLUTTER, 366 AMXS, 366 FW, MT. HOME AFB ID. While performing an augmenter Fuel Pump replacement on an F-15E, SSgt Clutter noticed a large quantity of fuel gushing from the Engine to Airframe Mounted Fuel Line for the #2 aircraft located in an adjacent parking spot. Utilizing an Engine to Airframe Mounted Fuel Line Plug, he stopped the fuel from draining, averting a possible catastrophe from occurring. His quick action and sense of urgency kept the fuel leak to a manageable size and averted a situation that could have resulted in total loss of several aircraft. (*July 10*)

Pilot Safety

CAPT EDWARD J. STAPANON, 77 EFS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. While in a visual wedge formation on NVGs and during a rejoin to the tanker, Capt Stapanon received a master caution and warning indicator from the aircraft. Upon inspection, he noticed that his MMC had restarted and his HUD and FCR were also inoperable. Despite multiple degraded systems, deteriorating weather, and low visibility conditions, Capt Stapanon executed a flawless night recovery/landing, saving a \$30M CAF asset and preserved USAFCENT airpower capability in the CENTCOM AOR. (June 10)

TSGT CHRISTOPHER J. PEARSALL, 380 ELRS, 380 AEW, AL DHAFRA AB. Upon his return to the Fuels Management bldg, TSgt Pearsall opened the office door and encountered a rush of white smoke. As he looked to identify the source of the smoke, he noticed the outlet the air conditioner was plugged into was on fire. He ran to the Fuels Service Center and asked the controller to call the fire department. He then shut the power off to the air conditioner, grabbed the fire extinguisher, and extinguished the fire. He saved the facility and averted potential loss of 28 refueling vehicles parked in close proximity. (June 10)

TSGT KARL T. ANDRESCAVAGE, 732 ESPTS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. TSgt Andrescavage was instrumental in remedying a high-risk operating environment while guiding our partner nation to establish a safe operating area and enhancing the advisor mission during a recent mission to Kirkush Military Training Base. He also averted a possible catastrophic event and assured the safety of over 1K IA/USF-I personnel and more than \$500K in mission resources. He was able to demonstrate safety leadership and set the example for IA officers and NCOs by highlighting the need for a full process view of safety fuel operations. (*July 10*)

Unit Safety minimum 🔏

COMBINED EN ROUTE RADAR APPROACH CONTROL (CERAP), 332 EOSS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. Within seconds of BACC's complete radar and radio failure, the Balad CERAP assumed control of all airspace over the southern two-thirds of Iraq. For 2 days, they safely and expertly managed a more than 200 percent increase in air traffic, affording zero delays. In the midst of this unexpected contingency, the CERAP aptly aided an emergency C-17 with sudden loss of cabin pressure. The controllers quickly cleared the aircraft for a rapid descent, saving 28 lives and a \$202M aircraft. (June 10)

332ND EXPEDITIONARY CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. The 332 ECES significantly reduced fire hazards on JBB through a robust fire prevention program, Task Force for Safety Actions for Fire and Electricity, unit drawdown and consolidation, and demolition of wooden structures. Through combined safety and prevention efforts the average rate of 15 fires per month were reduced to only 2.3 per month. The fire prevention section inspected 447 facilities and identified/corrected over 300 discrepancies, completing 25.7 percent of the total number of inspections scheduled. (*July 10*)

Weapons Safety

MSGT DONAVON L. SCHAEFER, 380 AEW, AL DHAFRA AB. MSgt Schaefer's hard work and unmatched program management resulted in zero findings during the AF SAV where he was recognized as a "top Performer" and his program rated as an "AOR best." He authored and initiated a compensatory measure that eliminated four dangerous violations. These actions prevented exposure to hazards for 30+ Airman and soldiers and protected \$195,000 in vital quick response Explosive Ordnance Disposal assets. He sought out three additional facilities that maintained explosives and brought them into compliance. (June 10)

TSGT CURTIS J. GARCEAU, 405 AEW, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. TSgt Garceau proactive approach took what was a "bare base" with no weapons safety program to a fully functional weapons safety office with communications to all agencies throughout the installation. This ensured explosives safety requirements were assessed in the early stages resulted in zero explosive safety violations and ensure weapons safety was an essential part of all future planning. As a coalition partner, he ensured proper inspection and explosive licensing of two munitions storage locations. (*July 10*)



Safety Spotlight

PILOT SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION. MAJ SCOTT M. SEIGFRIED, 55 EFS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. Near dusk on 30 May 10, Maj Scott "Kelso" Seigfried was operating his F-16 over Baghdad, Iraq in support of OIF. While performing armed over watch, the aircraft suffered an unusual emergency situation. As Maj Seigfried pushed up the throttle, the PTO shaft which transfers power from the engine to the accessory drive gearbox failed. This uncommon occurrence resulted in the loss of normal electrical and hydraulic systems. Reacting quickly and relying solely on the EPU to power the flight controls, Maj Seigfried immediately pointed the aircraft towards Joint Base Balad, almost 50 miles away. He noted the loss of the HUD, MFDs, and radar. The HUD serves as the primary flight instrument while the MFDs show the aircraft's position. Referencing his checklist and using his Wingman to replace vital situational awareness displays, Maj Seigfried expertly analyzed the problem. He tested and used backup systems, worked with the SOF to create a recovery plan, and used his Wingman as a chase aircraft for mutual support. Due to loss of hydraulic power, Maj Seigfried performed an alternate landing gear extension. He set up for and executed a flawless ILS approach and landing on secondary instruments. With only limited backup braking, Maj Seigfried stopped the aircraft on the runway and coordinated to shutdown with rescue crews. The operation of the EPU can be toxic and requires careful consideration by the pilot to prevent harmful exposure to him and ground crews. Superb airmanship is required to simply keep the aircraft safely flying, at night, on essentially all backup systems. Maj Seigfried's actions preserved the combat capability of a \$30 million US asset and should be recognized. (July 10)

FY10 Flight As of July 31, 2010				
	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Aircraft Damaged	
1 AF				
9 AF	İ	* +	*	
12 AF			+** ★	
USAFWC		↓ "		
ANG (ACC-gained)		1**		
AFRC (ACC-gained				

FY10 Ground As of July 31, 2010			
	Fatal	Class A	Class B
9 AF	111	3	0
12 AF	111	3	0
DRU's	•	1	0

FY1	FY10 Weapons As of July 31, 2		
	Class A	Class B	
9 AF	0	0	
12 AF	0	0	
AWFC	0	0	

Legend

Class A - Permanent Total Disability: Property Damage \$2,000,000 or more

Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between \$500,000 and \$2,000,000

Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between \$50,000 and \$500,000 (Class Description Effective October 1, 2009)

** Non-rate Producing * Fatality

= Fatal due to misconduct

Flight Notes

Your outstanding mishap prevention efforts resulted in zero Class A mishaps for June and July. However, as we complete our investigations of previous mishaps, deficiencies in basic flying skills, training and risk management are still being discovered. While we continue to improve these areas, we must also remain vigilant in recognizing environmental factors. Heat, wildlife, and even insects are some of the environmental factors identified in recent mishap investigations. Environmental factors are an important part of our risk mitigation efforts and including them will help us continue to reduce mishaps and fly safe.

Ground Notes

ACC is well on the way to completing another recordmaking year for the 3rd year in a row. The command has not experienced a Class A Ground mishap since 14 Apr and has gone over 200 days without a 4-wheel Class A mishap. As we approach the final days of the Critical Days of Summer, we must continue to adhere to the principles of Personal Risk Management, and to watch out for our Wingman.

Weapons Notes

ACC Weapons Safety community experienced another outstanding 2 months with regard to mishaps. The only explosive mishap on record occurred within the AOR. You are to be commended on your efforts. Keep up the good work! Your focus for the up-coming months should be established through your trending process. Review your mishap data points, spot inspection, and annual inspection discrepancies to focus your efforts. Thanks for all you do in support of the ACC Weapons Safety Community.



THE COMBATEDGE SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2010 23



Seat Best Meas adil ot TON snosper

9. It should make my obituary a good read. 10. It wrinkles my spiffy uniform.

8. The seat belt's color clashes with my uniform.

7. I really like my windshield and want a closer look at it.

6. I can test out all my pickup lines on my new police friends.

5. I love the feeling of slamming into the wheel at every red light.

4. I've always wanted to try a full-force chest bump with my air bag.

3. I want to set a record for the furthest distance a person can be ejected.

2. Shooting through the windshield is more glamorous than dying of old age.

1. It's so much easier to pull my dead body out of the car when I'm not tied to it.



Garcia and Airman Hernandez.

and placed it on a kitchen Airman Garcia took the weapon out of his waist band because I have never really been around (guns)."

Airman Garcia then told Airman the testimony revealed that After picking up the weapon, Airman Hernandez to pick it up. Airman Garcia then told counter, according to testimony.

in the face. from Airman Garcia, pulled the trigger, shooting his friend time, Airman Hernandez, with the gun 2 to 3 feet away Hernandez to "Pull it, pull it," meaning the trigger. At this

him load (the gun), I didn't know there was a bullet in the earlier that night, and I trusted him. Even though I saw Hernandez said, "I trusted him; I'd seen him doing it Asked by the judge why he pulled the trigger, Airman

saying Airman Garcia actually shot himself. Police Department officials, who responded to the scene, Airman Hernandez testified he initially lied to Bellevue

pay and allowances. discharge, reduction to airman basic and forfeiture of all no more than seven years confinement, a dishonorable agreement, the 21-year-old Airman could have received counsel and Airman Hernandez . Under the pretrial agreement signed by the convening authority, the defense the pleas by the court and sentencing as per the pretrial were dismissed based on his guilty pleas, acceptance of included Uniformed Code of Military Justice offenses that Airman Hernandez faced additional lesser charges

Air Force military justice system at the request of the Air originally in the local jurisdiction. It was transferred to the Because the events occurred off base, the case was

> something I didn't know much about." reckless acts ... drinking, messing around with Hernandez testified. "The whole night was "All of the people there were friends," Airman

laser sight on the weapon. brandished his 40-caliber handgun to show off a new continued in one apartment where Airman Garcia local restaurant, several Airmen testified. The drinking of friends having dinner and a few alcoholic drinks at a The night began harmlessly enough with a small group

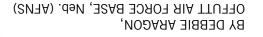
in irresponsible acts by several friends including Airman

in the apartment, although according to testimony this It was also here that "Trust" was introduced to those and at the heads and chins of several of his friends. weapon and laser sight inside and outside the apartment According to testimony, Airman Garcia pointed the

to an overseas location with Marines. game previously after he learned about it while deployed witnesses testified Airman Garcia had taken part in the wasn't the first time those there had heard of it. Several

have died as a result of the game. the trigger. It is believed at least five military members the response, the person holding the weapon then pulls people who are asked "Do you trust me?" After hearing weapon, either loaded or unloaded, is then pointed at involves a weapon and dummy or live rounds. The According to reports, the game of "Trust" usually

drinking and get something to eat, according to testimony. Garcia's apartment in the same complex to continue Airmen Garcia and Hernandez, transitioned to Airman At some point in the evening, three Airmen, including



Lt. Col. Nancy J. Paul sentenced Airman Class Corey Hernandez, Military Judge After accepting the plea of Airman 1st his judge-alone court martial July 20. false information to a peace officer during manslaughter and knowingly providing Squadron here pled guilty to involuntary member of the 55th Communications

Hernandez to five years in confinement, reduction in

The case stems from the Dec. 11, 2009, shooting Spears, the 12th Air Force commander, for review and case now goes to the convening authority, Lt. Gen. Glenn grade to airman basic and a dishonorable discharge. The

consequences," said Brig. Gen. John N.T. Shanahan, the and a series of bad decisions resulted in devastating "This is another example of how drinking alcohol member of the 55th Operations Support Squadron. death of Senior Airman Michael Garcia, a 23-year-old

"We cannot forget the golden rules of weapons safety," this so-called 'game' was an isolated case. wing first sergeants and directly from our Airmen was that in every sense of the term. The feedback I received from 55th Wing commander. "This was a senseless tragedy

person unless you intend to kill." understands, you never point a gun at an animal or a he said. "As every hunter or security force Airman



residence es at off-base

(AFNS) 12/15/2009 - OFFUTT AFB, Neb.

Airman 1st Class Corey Support Squadron. a member of the 55th Operations Senior Airman Michael Garcia is an apparent gunshot wound. his off-base residence as the result of Base, Neb., died Dec. 11, 2009 at An Airman from Offutt Air Force

is currently being held at the Sarpy accidental discharge of a firearm. He to commit a felony, in the apparent manslaughter and use of a weapon Police Department on charges of been arrested by the Bellevue Communications Squadron, has Hernandez, a member of the 55th

authorities who have jurisdiction. are fully cooperating with local investigation, and 55th Wing officials This incident remains under arrived at Offutt in April 2006. the Air Force in August 2005 and from San Benito, Texas; enlisted in Airman Garcia, 23, is originally County jail.

THE COMBATEDGE | OVER THE EDGE | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2010 |

BY SSGT SANJAY ALLEN | PHOTOS BY SRA PERRY ASTON Airman Slifko likes working on his personal car because knows my Dad is here, knows we're father and son, so "It was a good thing and a bad thing ... everybody deployed as vehicle mechanics passenger terminal here. DAAI OT first deployment. He was met by his Dad at the military Father and son were both Six weeks later, Airman Slifko was on his way to his FOLLOWING DAD'S FOOTSTEPS

Sergeant Slifko said he had the same thoughts on it's kind of nice having someone over here right now." guess it's a good thing because it's a deployed location so

meeting his son here, especially on the ribbing he will

He said he was even approved to stay a few extra

weeks to see his son get in.

hours with him before I get on the plane out of here, him. I'm looking forward to maybe spending a couple to, 'your Dad this, and your Dad that' for the entire first deployment and I didn't want him to have to listen staying. Just because he is a young Airman, it is his actually," he said. "I was really hesitant about even "I think there's probably some good and bad to that

Airman Slifko grew up working on cars with his Dad, when we're both off duty." deployment. But by the same token, I'm glad I got to see

was 11 years old, he spotted the car for one of his Dad's and he even got a car before he could drive it. When he

turned 14, he actually saved enough money to buy the said. "Ryan had been in love with it ever since. When he "My friend went out and bought it," Sergeant Slifko

car back. He's done everything on it himself with a little

"We've actually done all of it together," Airman Slifko

also put a new engine in it." car, cut the roof off of that one and put it on there. We put a new roof on it. We went out and bought another rusted pretty bad, so we cut the whole roof off of it and said. "First thing we did was replace the roof on it. It was

flowing, where in his job he has to stick to the technical enior Master Sgt. CJ Slifko, the vehicle I'm going to get picked on about it." Airman Slifko said. "I it gives him the opportunity to get his creative juices

recommendation to my commander."

whether Airman Slifko should deploy.

Slifko, a vehicle mechanic, to Iraq.

could come."

supervision said, and left it strictly at that, and gave my

what their supervision said and laid that next to what his

sergeant said. "I pretty much took their records and

"I had 3-levels on the deployment I'm on," the

Sergeant Slifko turned to the paperwork to decide

here, having to approve or disapprove whether or not he

probably the hardest e-mail I got to answer while I was

Mo.) asking for a waiver on a 3-level," Sergeant Slifko

come) I got an e-mail from Whiteman (Air Force Base,

"For whatever reason, (the primary person couldn't

the deployment of his 3-level son, Airman 1st Class Ryan

6-month tour: whether to approve a waiver on

tough decision to make toward the end of his

Logistics Readiness Squadron, said he had a

fleet manager for the 447th Expeditionary

said. "The very last name on there was for my son. It was

THE COMBATEDGE | OVER THE EDGE | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2010 | δ

he goes, but I'm very proud of him."

make chief and stay in a little longer.

he got what he wanted."

that's a senior that he has to follow around everywhere

field. And it has to be really hard on him to have a dad

fact that he's doing it. It's hard enough to be in our career said. "It's kind of tough. I have a lot of respect for the

"I'm very proud of him in every way," Sergeant Slifko

Air Force and he aims to pass his Dad, who hopes to

economy picks up. He plans on making a career of the

out to be more than something to get by with until the

they offered him, ended up being in this career field. So

it. Sure as anything, four out of the five jobs, I think that

open mechanical, and he was sure he was going to get

guaranteed and it didn't work out. He ended up going in

"(It was) sheer luck," Sergeant Slifko said. "When he

luck finding a job, Airman Slifko turned to the Air Force

something he loved, and with the combination of his Doing things his own way on cars with his Dad was

whole family being in the military, a bad economy and no

everything's got to be back how it was. It's kind of nice to

like it, scrap it, do it over again. It's not like here, where

kind of do what you want to it," he said. "If you don't "You never know what happens there, and you can

order and everything has to go back to the way it was.

went to the recruiter, he actually tried to get this job

and lucked into his father's career field.

be able to do things your own way."

Airmen Slifko did get what he wanted, which may turn

https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/CombatEdge





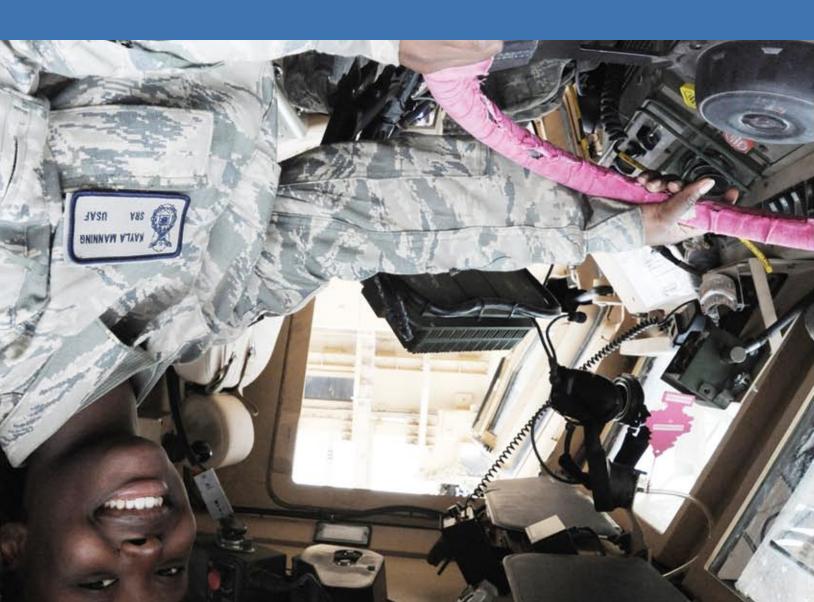
POLLOWING DAD'S FOOTSTEPS TO IRAG

by SSgt Sanjay Allen,

U.S. Air Forces Central Command Public Affairs

 $oldsymbol{\mathsf{A}}$ IRMAN PLEADS GUILTY DURING ' $oldsymbol{\mathsf{T}}$ RUST' COURT MARTIAL

8 | Top 10 Reasons 10 Top Seat Belt by Debbie Aragon, 55th Wing Public Affairs



VIU LOUCE: BBICEFE22

DIAK WHEEEL COVER \$10

SINK VIE FEESHEREE \$2

TOOMING COOF IN LHE

Over the edge $\,$ september $\,$ october 2010 $\,$ $\,$

 $oldsymbol{\mathcal{L}}$ https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/combatEdge

LIFE AROUND THE AIR FORCE



Father and son were both deployed as vehicle mechanics. ARTICLE ON PAGE 4 FOLLOWING DAD'S FOOTSTEPS TO IRAC