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CARBON MONOXIDE

The Invisible Killer



CO is an invisible and odorless gas emitted by fuel-burning products, including generators, gas appliances, water heaters, furnaces, charcoal grills, and engine-driven tools.



Generators produce hundreds of times more CO than cars.



More than 80 consumers die each year from CO poisoning caused by portable gerators.

African Americans are at Higher Risk for Generator-related CO Death.







Percent of Population

Percent of CO Deaths

Don't be a Victim of CO Poisoning!

Follow These Safety Tips:





- Never operate a portable generator inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace, shed or on a porch; and never leave a car running in an attached garage.
- Operate portable generators outside only, at least 20 feet away from the house, and direct the generator's exhaust away from the home and other buildings.
- Ask retailers for a portable generator with a safety feature to shut off automatically when high CO concentrations are present. Some models with CO shut-off also have reduced emissions.
- Never burn charcoal inside a home, garage, vehicle, or tent.



CO Alarms Save Lives Install battery-operated CO alarms or CO alarms with battery backup in your home.



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COVER PHOTO BY A1C JHADE HERRERA



As the new Director of Air Combat Command Safety, I want to start by thanking everyone in the Command and the Safety community for your warm hospitality! I'd like to open this issue of *The Combat Edge* with a philosophical safety musing, and the obligatory Chevy Chase homage holiday safety reminder.

While I am new to the Safety profession, I can't think of a better time to be a part of our vital endeavors that are necessary to inform, underpin, and protect our precious combat capability. We are in the throes of what General Milley recently described as "the most Historically Significant change in the character of



Col Joe Augustine Director of Safety

war." In JFQ 110, he describes a new world in which "pervasive sensors, Al-driven weapon systems, and long-range precision fires will make the fastest platforms seem slow and leave the most hidden formations exposed." Meanwhile, the Economist identified "A new era of high-tech war," with all-seeing sensors and unheard-of levels of destruction involving immense physical mass, hundreds of thousands of humans, and millions of machines and munitions. These daunting predictions are playing out before our eyes in Ukraine, and pose the objective challenge predicted by the NDS with its "Decisive Decade."

The question I would pose to all of us safety professionals is this: How are we adapting to this new world? Do we understand and enable autonomous and expendable systems, are we supporting the adaptation from specialized to multi-capable Airmen (or even Joint teammates and foreign allies), and are we keeping pace with the trajectory of weapons technology? For those of you not in Safety, but who continue to read our great magazine, please engage your local safety community—or direct to me (acc.se.chief@us.af.mil) and let us know your thoughts on this daunting task. If we do our job right, our timeless tenants of proactive risk optimization will inform a rational and accessible future for our warfighters—and a more lethal deterrent to our opponents.

Alas, none of this lofty thought is useful if we don't get ourselves and our fellow Airmen through the holidays in one piece. The time off is a great opportunity to reconnect with family and do one of the most safety-engendering activities of all: rest and reflect. While we're doing this, please be careful on the roads (and be extra, extra careful if you're riding a motorcycle), don't submerge a frozen turkey in boiling oil, and as Clark Griswold demonstrated, don't go overboard with the light displays! Did you know that according to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission you should never string together more than three sets of incandescent lights?

Whether it's the future of war or not slipping on the ice, I'll end with a Thucydides quote as a nod to all those PME instructors out there: "Prudent men preserve their gains with a view to the uncertainty of the future, and this makes them able to deal with disaster more intelligently when it comes."



BY CAPT DAEHYUC ("DUCK") D. YIM

uring an Agile Combat Employment exercise on 5 November 2022, I learned a powerful lesson in hypoxia detection and treatment in single seat aircraft. We briefed for two back-to-back sorties, taking off and landing each time out of Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana, Virginia, as a 4-ship formation of A-10s. For the tactical portion of the sortie, we would trade off as Forward Air Controller-

Airborne and Close Air Support fighters with USMC Harriers. For our second sortie, we knew our mission would meet the end of civil twilight and would land at night back at NAS Oceana.

By the time we took off, we already had lost two aircraft to maintenance woes. In an A-10 4-ship formation, the pilot occupying the no. 1 position holds, at a minimum, the Multiship Flight Leader qualification and is the overall director of the formation. Number 3 holds

at least a 2-Ship Flight Lead qualification and acts as the deputy flight lead for the overall 4-ship formation. Number 3 aids in mission success by ensuring tasks within the formation are executed in support of the plan laid by No. 1. Numbers 2 and 4 are wingmen, usually the youngest pilots, and execute the flight lead's instructions. In our situation, we had lost no. 2 and no. 3, hence no.4 was renumbered to be the new no. 2 and would fly directly off me.

At 6:23 P.M., no. 2 and I began our descent from 16,500 ft en route to our assigned Military Operating Area (MOA) over the coast of North Carolina. I heard no. 3 check in with Air Traffic Control (ATC) on the same frequency, learned that our maintenance team was able to fix his aircraft, and knew he was 10-15 minutes behind us. Pulling back the throttles to commence the descent, no. 2 heard a "bang," recognized his displayed cabin pressurization was abnormal, and asked me to verify his observations were correct. Indeed, something was wrong with his system. At that point, we had a problem which meant we no longer could proceed with our planned mission. Our

new game plan was to get into the MOA at a lower altitude and reference our emergency procedure checklist.

Established in our MOA, I noted an overcast laver of clouds below us at \sim 6,000 ft Mean Sea Level, and then asked no. 2 about his aircraft's issues on our dedicated intra-flight radio. No response. I tried to reach him on another radio. "Broken ... but readable ... gotcha." His communication pace was slower and tone more lackadaisical than normal, and I thought to myself, "I know it's the second sortie of the day and we are exhausted, but you need to have more discipline than that." I tried to reach him again on the dedicated intra-flight radio, to which he responded, "Say again

last?" At this point, I was getting a bit frustrated with my no. 2's performance.

I asked him a third time for the problematic signs in his aircraft. I heard him key the mic. inhale deeply, and ask, "... In respect to what?" In that radio transmission, I heard what I suspected to be air hunger, followed by confusion about what we were discussing. I would expect any pilot who has experienced a loss of canopy pressurization to maintain that issue at the forefront of his or her attention. The slow speed and almost relaxed quality in his radio calls, sounds of air hunger, and confusion prompted me at 6:27 P.M. to ask, "2, what are your hypoxia symptoms?" Response: "Uh, I think I'm feeling ok."

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With hypoxia denied, we proceeded in executing the Loss of Canopy Pressurization checklist. At the same time, I hear no. 3 checking in on the same MOA frequency. Number 3 and I set up a deconfliction plan to safely reioin as a now 3-ship formation. Then, at 6:31:35 P.M., a little over 3.5 minutes after inquiry, no. 2 declares, "Yeah, I think I may have some hypoxia symptoms." I begin directive communication with no. 2 for his flying inputs, and use phrases like "Start a right turn," and "Slowly roll out."

From our periodic training of operating the A-10 simulator while attached to the Restricted Oxygen Breathing Device, I recalled my own hypoxia experience, and how I recognized

that I should be doing a certain action, but either forgot how or simply didn't do it. I directed no. 2: "Look for [heading] in your Head-Up Display. Set your autopilot on—Do you remember how to do that?" Noticing his airspeed getting slower. I was about to tell him to "Push your power up," but wondered if he might select max power and leave it there, denying me the power advantage to catch up. Instead, I told him, "Set your throttle setting standing straight up." To questions regarding his physiological symptoms, he responded, "Kind of feels like I'm moving slower than I want to be. I got a tingling feeling kind of like I had in the [depressurization] chamber."

Photo by SSgt Alex Stephens



As we exited the MOA, we declared an emergency with ATC and stated our intentions of proceeding back to Oceana. The overcast layer of clouds below us sloped up as we moved north, and the sun was setting quickly. With the decreased light and shortened time buffer before reaching the clouds below. I moved to a close chase position on no. 2 to be able to ascertain the vector of his aircraft quickly in case it started to change unnecessarily. We were flying straight and level when no. 2's jet suddenly started a right roll. I stopped mid-sentence with ATC, and velled on our intra-flight radio" [pilot's first name], STOP! ROLL OUT!" The unnecessary roll suggested he might make nonsensical flight control inputs, leaving a very short time window to correct.

As most of my focus by then was devoted to ensuring no. 2 maintained safe flight parameters, my ability to focus on flight admin and checklist tasks was hampered. Fortunately, no. 3, who was maintaining $\frac{1}{2} - 1$ -mile trail behind us, started to provide excellent mutual support. He made continuous offers to help, caught my mistakes, ensured no. 2's adherence to the checklist, pre-positioned our flight surgeon for our arrival, and retrieved weather information at Oceana to develop our recovery game plan. Most importantly, no. 3 identified that no. 2's aircraft was suffering from two malfunctions occurring simultaneously, and provided inputs to address both.

The overcast laver cleared as we neared Oceana, and we reviewed the game plan: "We're going to monitor how you feel. If you don't feel better by the time we get there, we will continue around the radar pattern." We began our descent at 20 miles from the field. Remembering the unnecessary roll no. 2 had started earlier, I considered the possibility that he might neglect to level off, and I stipulate, "No



more than 3 degrees nose low." In that moment, I recalled the story of "Pardo's Push," when an F-4 piloted by Captain Bob Pardo during the Vietnam War physically pushed another damaged and fuel-starved F-4 nearly 88 miles in order that its pilots could eject over safer territory. Should no. 2 fail to level off and be unresponsive to verbal commands, the last resort was to try and maneuver my own aircraft underneath his and "push" him back up. (It is important to emphasize that this is not written guidance in any publication. merely the last-ditch game plan should nothing else have worked.) To me, this highlights the importance of sharing stories at the bar and reading history in order to prepare for the day where there is no time to reference something else.

Thankfully, no. 2's condition seemed to be improving as we neared Oceana. With the game plan communicated to Oceana Tower, I asked no. 2 for the final confirmation: "Do you feel good to land?" "Affirm." At 7:02:54 P.M., just over 30 minutes from when he declared his hypoxia symptoms, no. 2 finally touched

down. Our flight surgeon met him at the end of the runway, noted raised blood pressure and decreased pulse oximetry consistent with hypoxia, and transported him to the Emergency Department. The jet was impounded by our maintenance team and was later discovered to have both a failed canopy seal and a malfunctioning On Board Oxygen Generating System.

In the months since this sortie, I've reviewed the experience for both the strong points and mistakes. Unfortunately, a handful of other hypoxia incidents also occurred in the A-10 community during that time. If I were to do this over again, I would hold for myself the lessons learned, and would advise other single-seat pilots to do the following:

• Directly ask the other pilot if they are hypoxic if something is not adding up. The unaffected pilot may catch it first, and can bring it to the hypoxic pilot's attention by asking. Proactively identifying each pilot's symptoms in the brief also allows it to be specifically referenced in flight.

- Utilize directive communication that has parameters in order to build extra time or flight regimes to work around the incapacitated pilot. Examples include: Set your throttles straight up, descend no more than 3 degrees nose low, look for the numbers in the bottom of your HUD, turn your auto pilot on, and tell me when it's
- Verbalize the checklist utilizing one radio transmission per item, and wait for acknowledgement to ensure the hypoxic pilot has completed each switch actuation. The slower pace will also help the unaffected pilot create and execute a game-plan in accordance with the checklist.
- Direct the hypoxic pilot to communicate specified content with outside agencies while the unaffected pilot listens, so as to assess condition. (In another A-10 hypoxia event, the nonincapacitated pilot directed the stricken pilot to talk to the Supervisor of Flying and Tower).



n 2009, I received orders to deploy to Camp Arifian Kuwait. I, along with 12 other mechanics and a load of vehicle operators from various bases, attended Basic Combat Convoy Course at Fort Bliss, TX. We began learning the skills and training needed to keep us alive while trucking supplies from base to base in northern Iraq. truck was ready for inspection. Training lasted 30 days, after which we shipped out to Kuwait.

The day before leaving on our first convoy, we sat in a pre-brief and talked about the route we would travel, known hazards that were present or could possibly occur, along with a plan of action to negate the threat. We even had backup plans if something changed. We felt ready, but were on edge.

The next day, we all gathered up in full Battle Rattle for a final safety brief before we rolled out the gate. Pushing north, we crossed over into Iraq. As soon as we left the base, we were constantly on alert. Our eyes scanned the roadsides for Improvised Explosive Devices. We listened to the radio chatter screeching out commands for directions or road hazard conditions. Luckily, our first eight heard, and never will forget. The nights of convovs from base to base were uneventful. With our mission complete, we returned to Kuwait.

Back on base, we felt secure as fences kept the enemy a safe distance away. It was time for

BY TSGT JEFFREY P. KUKUK the mechanics to go to work. The trucks really had taken a beating driving thru the streets of Iraq, and required a full inspection upon their return to Kuwait. The vehicle operators pulled the tractor and trailer into the maintenance shop, separated the truck from the trailer, opened the hood of the truck and exited the shop. The popped hood was a signal to the mechanic that the

> On one truck, an Airman began inspecting the engine's serpentine belts. This was a standard practice—one he had done thousands of times. What happened next was a complete surprise. We didn't see it coming, and none of us ever would have thought it could happen. The vehicle operator and his battle buddy noticed they had forgotten to separate the truck from the trailer. Fearful of getting into trouble for not following Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). they went back into the shop to separate the truck from the trailer.

> The operator hopped into the driver's seat and started the engine. Instantly, all hell broke loose. The Airman's hand was caught between the engine belt and pulley. There was screaming in the shop like I never had huge diesel engine was turned off, but it was too late. His hand was nothing but bone on three of his fingers on his right hand. A Technical Sergeant quickly dressed the Airman's hand and took him straight to the hospital,

where three of his fingers had to be amputated.

The next day, everyone had questions about the event. How could something like this have happened? How could this have been prevented? All the mechanics, as well as the Airman's family, wanted and deserved answers. I began to wonder what could have prevented this mishap. Could a simple pre-inspection safety brief have prevented this? Why was there no SOP for starting a vehicle in the shop? Was complacency a factor because we were just performing our job on base? Was it just a freak accident?

The mishap inspection revealed new SOPs were needed for starting vehicles in the maintenance shop. It was a two-person task, during which the driver would wait to start the vehicle while another observer insured no one was working on the vehicle. The next 6 months of convoy duties were completed with no further incidents.

Looking back, we all were fully prepared mentally for an injury to occur while trucking through downtown Iraq, but no one ever thought it would happen while just preforming our daily duties on base. My takeaway from this traumatic event was always to be mindful of safety, with a what-if-this-happens approach. It's something gained through experience and training. Safety should be a main focus no matter what you are doing or where you are doing it.

When the Hits Fue the the Fue

BY TSGT JOHN A. WORLEY

ife can be unpredictable at times. Such was my case one cloudy summer day. I reported for duty, unaware that my life—and the lives of my comrades—would soon be in my hands. I would have to rely on my training and expertise if we were to make it out alive.

On a day just like any other, I reported for duty. After learning of the day's duties, I gathered the team and proceeded to the flightline. This massive concrete slab of earth housed the F-15E Strike Eagle Aircraft used for training and combat sorties. It was my iob to maintain these eagles, and to ensure the aircraft were available for the pilots. Today, I was tasked with diagnosing an Environmental Control System (air conditioning) issue. The first step of troubleshooting was to perform an engine run; starting the aircraft to identify the source of the problem. Engine runs take place every day, and were nothing new; however, things soon became interesting.

I hooked up the communication cord to the aircraft to speak with the crew chief running the aircraft. After getting the signal to start the first motor, I gave the approval, and the Jet Fuel Starter (JFS—a small jet engine designed to start the main engines) spooled up. After engaging the first motor, the steady whirring grew into a roar, and the engine came to life. Suddenly, a large plume of white smoke erupted from the top of the aircraft. I signaled the aircraft to shut down, and investigated the source of the smoke.

After climbing onto the aircraft, I found the smoke dying down, and no apparent source of ignition. I opened several access panels, but found no flames or other indication of an issue. After consulting specialists of several career fields (engines, avionics, and crew chiefs) I decided to reattempt the engine run. Once more, I brought the JFS online and engaged the first motor. Upon arriving at 65% engine speed, a loud "BOOM" thundered across the flight line: The JFS had just exploded.

The concussion shook our bones, and clouds of smoke billowed from the top and bottom of the jet; this immediately set the Airmen into action. I ran under the aircraft and opened the access panel for the JFS. Looking inside, I saw my worst fear realized. Bright orange flames rolled in the space surrounding the small engine. Knowing that fuel lines could explode at any moment, I signaled a fellow maintainer, Sgt Desmond Partin,

to pull the 150 lb fire extinguisher bottle to the aircraft. I then instructed unnecessary personnel to evacuate. I unraveled the firehose, pulled the safety pin, and doused the flames inside the bay. After just a few seconds, the flames were extinguished. The danger had passed.

Looking back, it is worth noting that the situation was far more complex than it may seem to have been. The work our maintainers do every day of the pilots, as well as those of the public. If an aircraft were to crash, there is no telling who or what would be affected.

Therefore, it is imperative that our military be professional and well-trained.

In addition, while the events unfolded in only a few minutes, the risk of danger, potentially even death, lingered on. It required a calm, collected mind in a time of stress to assess the situation, recall one's training, and take action to eliminate the danger. If there is anything to be learned from this situation, it is to be prepared. Training might not be our ideal way to spend an afternoon, but the day may come when we will be forced to use that training. We hear it every day—to prepare for the worst. When the fire hit the fuel that day, it was training and preparedness that allowed everyone to return home safely.





gun system that was due for a scheduled inspection from one of Moody's A-10 units. TSgt White enlisted two of the Maintenance Section's subject matter experts to help, and SSgt Stiffler and SrA Mecum got to work preparing the system for complete disassembly.

When they removed the gun's breech bolts, a part responsible for moving rounds through the system at a high rate of speed, they struggled with what should have been an easy task: removing all 7 bolts from the gun housing. SSgt Stiffler noticed a bolt carriage was missing a roll pin

alerted the Floor Supervisor (FS) of his findings. The FS then expedited an emergency action checklist that halted aircraft maintenance on all surrounding A-10s.

Next, SSgt Smith, A1C St Fleur, and A1C Lamarche took over, methodically breaking down the remaining breech bolt components, gun housing, and ammunition drum. They then rebuilt the entire assembly in under 8 hours. Using their indepth inspection technique and textbook reassembly process,

they were able to restore an irreplaceable \$600k asset.

Afterward, TSgt Abolos joined the team, coordinating a metal hardness test with the GAU-8 Gun System Special Program's Office. He then created an extensive product quality deficiency report on 19 breech bolts, cocking levers, and roll pins recovered from the system, and initiated an Engineering

Investigation lab test. His report provided details that highlighted potential design flaws in the equipment, and the information was distributed across the Air Force's entire A-10 fleet.

During the tearing down and rebuilding of the gun housing, the members discovered and removed 67 damaged rounds in the gun, preventing a possible inadvertent misfire and fatal

injury to maintenance personnel. They recovered all missing items, while effectively expediting all information to the highest levels for dissemination, and returned a reconstructed war-ready asset. Their precise actions led to the swift shutdown of 3 A-10s in the area, eliminating any potential foreign objects from being picked up by aircraft or damage to running engines.

With a commitment to safety at the forefront of the Armament Maintenance Section's activities, the team worked together exceptionally well to rebuild an irreplaceable gun system in only 60 hours, while also making sure to alert all A-10 units of their findings. Their influence extended well beyond a single repair in their shop.

Photo by SrA Erick Requadt

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HOOVR46

BY CAPT WILLIAM F. DENISON

n 12 December 2022, HOOVR46, an RC-135V assigned to Offutt AFB, NE was returning from supporting an exercise in the Southwest United States when the crew encountered a smoke-and-fumes emergency aboard the aircraft while on their final approach to land. During the time of arrival, the weather at Offutt AFB was Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC), requiring an alternate airfield for landing. The glideslope at Offutt AFB was inoperable, requiring the crew to fly a non-precision approach to the airfield under minimums that required visibility only, straight-in procedure criteria.

The crew had attempted one approach, but missed after failing to break out of the weather in a safe position to land. There was only enough fuel on board for one more approach before they would have been required to divert to the alternate airfield. As the crew passed the final approach fix, the Tactical Coordinator (TC), Capt Andrew Ton of the 343d Reconnaissance Squadron (RS), relayed to the flight deck that there was a strong smell permeating the aft portion of the aircraft. Within moments, a strong, acrid smell made its way to the flight deck. Shortly after, the TC informed us that the reconnaissance compartment was going to don their oxygen masks.

While the Aircraft Commander (AC), Major Jeffrey Martin of the 343d RS, flew the final segment of the approach in IMC, the aircraft began to make what was noted by the entire crew to be spooling-up and spoolingdown sound. Focus on the task at hand grows more difficult when emergencies seem to be compounding. The AC quickly assessed the engine and airspeed instruments, noting no changes and no flight-control issues. The assessment enabled Maj Martin to continue to fly the aircraft with an enhanced level of situational awareness and confidence. He relied on his airmanship to land the aircraft safely, having determined that continuing this approach was the best course of action, and would bring about the quickest, safest end to the situation.

While executing the final approach segment, the rest of the flight deck—Capt Christopher Valasek, copilot; and 1st Lt Aaron Long, Navigator—determined that donning their oxygen masks while only 500 feet above the ground (and in bad weather) was detrimental to aircraft safety. The to analyze the situation and flight deck made the prudent decision to aviate the jet during a critical phase of flight, rather than donning their oxygen masks, thus relying on the training emphasized throughout their careers: Aviate, Navigate, Communicate.

Realizing that clogging up the aircraft interphone would not allow the airplane to land any faster, the aircrew did a great job of allowing the pilots to fly the approach in IMC. They calmly, quietly, and professionally donned their oxygen masks. This enabled the flight deck to focus on flying a successful approach. Fortuitously, the second approach to the airfield yielded more fruitful results. This time around, the

aircraft broke out of the weather. allowing the crew to place the aircraft into a safe position to land.

After the aircraft landed safely and slowed to a safe taxi speed while approaching the taxiway, the AC and the TC continued communicate with one another. During their conversation, the Airborne Systems Engineer, SSgt Tyler Harris alerted the crew that there was smoke continuing to build in the aft portion of the aircraft.

The aircraft taxied the aircraft clear of the runway and came to a complete stop. At that time, the AC declared an emergency and requested fire coverage from tower. The AC confirmed that there was no fire observed, and commanded the crew to egress the aircraft expeditiously. The aircraft was shut down per the technical order emergency egress checklist. The navigator egressed first, chalked the

of personnel and informed the AC, who was the final crew member to egress out of the aircraft. Due to the guick actions of the aircrew of HOOVR46, all members egressed safely, and the aircraft incurred no additional damage.

This was a textbook execution of what was briefed before the flight, and what was missionplanned by the entire crew in the event of an emergency. As smoke pooled in the back of the aircraft, the crew encountered a dangerous situation during a critical phase of the flight while in IMC, with a potentially perilous divert under emergency conditions staring them down. Prioritizing the aviating of the jet resulted in the aircraft's safe landing at home station, expediting the end of the emergency. The outstanding airmanship and professionalism of the crew of HOOVR46 resulted in the safe recovery of all 25 Airmen aboard, as well as the preservation of a high-value airborne asset.

&F 018 1018

BY SSGT JOVANY A. RODRIGUEZ

he year was 2017, and I was working nightshift at Al Udeid Air Base in Doha, Qatar, from sunset to sunrise. We'd been loading bombs for the last four months, and only had two more months to go until we could fly back home. I was a 4-man working on B-52s as a Weapons

job was to drive the MJ-1 and MHU-83 (bomb lift trucks) and follow my 1-man's orders to load bombs on the jet in order to drop

Load Crew Member, and my main warheads on foreheads. The long hours were rewarded by our jets' landing, having dropped all munitions, and our pilots' coming into our tent to thank us for

providing them with the means to accomplish their mission. Everything was going smoothly until a very simple task turned into a safety investigation.

Fast forward a couple of weeks: We had a little over a month until we flew back home, fatigue was starting to hit, coworkers were getting grumpy, and long hours and complacency were taking a toll on everyone. One of the crews on our shift was tasked with troubleshooting a MAU-12 Ejector Rack. This is the assembly that holds onto the bomb while it is loaded onto the iet via "hooks" that close onto a bomb's suspension lugs. The member grabbed the needed test equipment and headed down to the flight-line. My crew was finished with all the loading required on our shift, and there was nothing else to do except run the electrical test on that bomb rack. My crew member and I decided to assist.

When we arrived, the crew was in the process of downloading the eight bombs that had been loaded onto the right wing of the jet. These were Guided Bomb Units (GBU-38), 500 lb bombs classified as a smart munition that uses the Global Positioning System to arrive precisely at its target. While the rest of the crew was busy downloading munitions, my crew member and I assisted with setting up Aerospace Ground Equipment (AGE), used to provide power and cool air to the Aircraft while it is shut down, and to enable us to run electrical checks. We set up the AGE to supply power, and connected the bleed air hose to provide cooling to the electronics in order to keep the jet's electrical system from overheating.

The crew downloaded the bombs and applied power to the jet, I stayed to help run the check using this big diagnostics tester we called the Multi-Use Systems Tester Armament Next Generation on B-52s. The tester is easy to operate: You read the steps as they come up on the screen, and tell the crew inside the cockpit which buttons or switches to actuate. The test ensures the controls are operating correctly,

and the jet is communicating properly with the bomb racks in order to supply the correct information/coordinates to the munitions.

This took place near the end of our shift, after about eleven hours of work. We were halfway through the check when the tester required us to press the Weapons release button, I looked up at the bomb rack to make sure no munition was loaded. I relaved the instruction to the other crew to press the big red button, then suddenly ...

"BOOM." I looked up and saw smoke. I thought "What the H-Edouble-hockey-sticks is going on?" Before I could get up to tell anyone, another "BOOM" went off, and more smoke filled the air. I ran to everyone on the spot and start screaming "SHUT IT OFF! SHUT IT OFF!" We turned off the AGE (which is really loud), and took a step back to look at the jet.

Two bomb racks had fired off on the ground because of a lack of communication. The crew in charge of the operation was supposed to verify that all racks were safe, and that all impulse carts had been removed (the explosives in a bomb rack that provide the force to punch a bomb off the jet midflight.). After that, we had to evacuate, call Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Ammo, and a bunch of other agencies in order to remove the expended explosives and check on the damage that may have been caused to the equipment. Luckily, no one was hurt, but this could have been an instance that changed the lives of many people for the worse.

When remembering the event, I think of what we should have done differently to make 100% sure the entire iet was dearmed. We should have slowed down and double checked to make sure everything was safe; however, we had performed this task many times before with no problems, and the seriousness of our working with explosives

didn't really hit us until it was too been checked; we all should have late. We had many opportunities looked at the racks before pressing to get it right: The team chief of the big red button—we had many the other crew should have looked chances to avoid this mishap, but everything over before starting; none were acted upon because the other crew members should "nothing bad ever happens" ... have asked if all the racks had until it happens to you.

Nowadays, I triple check to make sure all explosives have been removed safely. There may be those who haven't had the wakeup call I received early in my career, who look at me and say, "What are you worried about?

Nothing bad is going to happen." Complacency kills. Don't let complacency tell you "nothing bad happened the last time," because this time might be your last time.



Photo by SSgt Patrick Evensor

DON'T COUNT YOUR BOMBS Before They Hatch

BY SSGT CHRISTOPHER J. GLASSEN

ack in 2018, while working at Weapons Standardization as a Standardization Load Crew (SLC) member, two other members and I were teaching and evaluating a 3-week initial certification course. Part of the job involved training a brand-new flight line load crew for the B-2 Spirit. I was a SLC 4-Member, my job was to instruct and teach the new 4-Member how to safely operate the MHU-83 D/E Jammer to best support the crew.

The last week of the training the crew was learning to load an inert GBU-38, one of the more difficult loading tasks of the week. The difficulty lay partly in the time standard for the load, which required an average of 5 minutes to accomplish the following: 1) pick up an Inert GBU-38 off the trailer, 2) transport and position it underneath the aircraft, 3) thread and lift the 500-lb munition through the **Smart Bomb Rack Assembly** (SBRA), 4) align and lock the munition in place, 5) lower the lift arms and Mechanical Ram Assembly (Mech Ram),

6) back out of the bay, and 7) pick up a new GBU-38. The task forces the crew to work together precisely (within 1.5 inches), as they prepare for certification to perform an 80xGBU-38 load on the flightline.

With my fellow SLC members positioned around the crew to observe every angle of the loading operation, the first three GBU-38s went off without a hitch. The crew was performing well, and was in line to finish on time. We were feeling proud of the crew, and were hopeful that our training was setting them up for success.

The fourth load proved to be a different story. It was closest to the weapons bay door, making it the trickiest maneuver to accomplish. The load had to go in at an exact angle so as to avoid hitting the weapons bay door with the corner of the Jammer. and not interfering with the placement of the Team Chief's and 2-member's ladders. The 4-member correctly positioned the jammer and lift arms, and once directed by his Team Chief, used the Remote-Control

iammer and motioned for the the Mech Ram, and leaned forward in order to pass the RCU. While leaning in order to reach the 3-member, his knee bumped the Azimuth-Right control lever, moving the jammer boom to the right inside the tight tolerance of the

The small movement caused the Mech Ram table to hit the two SBRA snubbers, (rails secured to the bomb bay) but the skinnier cylinder of the Ram passed between them. The whole ram assembly was placed at an extreme tilt, causing the 500 lb munition to be dislodged. It came off the two rear rollers 25 ft in the air. The Team-Chief felt the

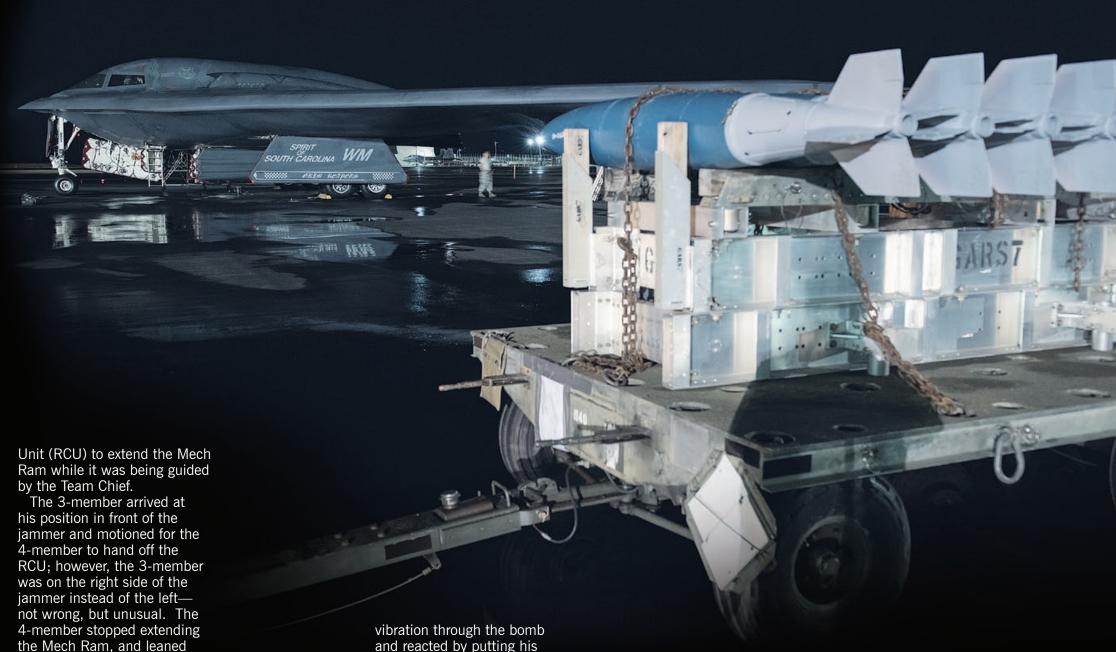
vibration through the bomb and reacted by putting his body weight on the nose of the munition, stopping it from tipping backwards.

All the SLC evaluators yelled stop, and jumped into action. The SLC 2-member scaled the ladder, and assisted the Team Chief in balancing the munition. The SLC 3-member evacuated the remaining three members of the load crew, and grabbed two 5000 lb-rated ratchet straps while I took control of the jammer. We used the ratchet straps to secure the front and rear of the munition to the next highest bomb rack. This allowed us to lower the jammer and secure the munition to the jammer table.

At Weapons Standardization. we teach and evaluate safe and reliable loading procedures. It is our job to think about every possible scenario, and to know how to rectify the situation. Thankfully, our training provided us with the skills to solve a problem just like this.

As evaluators, we learned that you really can't be prepared for everything, as anything involving munitions can and will happen in the blink of an eye. We started teaching new 3-members

where to stand during the load in order to further mitigate the risks of this happening in the future. Thankfully, this had a happy ending. The whole crew's ability to spring into action and take control of the situation, along with the Load Crew Team Chief's reaction. allowed us to turn this into an extremely effective teaching experience. Sometimes, the smallest movements can matter the most. It's important to maintain situational awareness of even the tiniest details.







BY SSGT CARSON R. RINALDI

n 2020, I experienced a weapons safety mishap while deployed to a small bare base in Spain. Luckily, it was caught before an explosive incident occurred. The previous unit was in the process of leaving the base, and one of their weapons members pulled an open but unfired Engine Starter Cartridge (ESC)—a 1.3 electroexplosive device —off the jet, and sat it on the flightline without telling anyone. (Note: A rating of 1.3 indicates a fire hazard along with minor blast hazard and/or

minor projection hazard.)

The cartridge sat on the bare ground of the flightline for some time before a security forces member found it. Not knowing what it was, the member took it back to their shop and displayed it on a bookshelf in their office. More than a month went by before someone noticed the "1.3" sticker and contacted the Weapons Safety Manager, who took the asset to the bomb dump until our unit arrived.

When my unit got to the base, I was taken out to inspect the

ESC. I discovered the grounding cap was not engaged, which could have resulted in accidental firing, a problem compounded by the number of people who had handled it since discovery. In addition, the cartridge lid was compressing the firing device, worsening the problem. After completing the inspection, I submitted an Ammunition Disposal Report, and properly grounded and sealed the asset. It then was sent back to our home station, where it later was shipped for demilitarization.



BY MAJ DUSTIN C. WARNER

nile acting as a T-38A Evaluator Pilot during a training sortie, I noted improper engine operating indications while selecting max afterburner. With a malfunctioning failure of an Airframe-Mounted engine, I transitioned to an emergency pattern for a fullstop landing. The landing was executed uneventfully; however, upon landing, maintenance personnel noted a massive fuel leak from the entire bottom-aft section of the aircraft. There had been no indications of a fuel leak. Had I not noticed the subtle discrepancy in engine operation, the situation could have become much more dire.

On another occasion, while again Traffic Control, coordinated for acting as an Instructor Pilot in a T-38A, we experienced complex malfunctions in the hydraulic and electrical systems. After executing a closed traffic pattern

to inside downwind following a touch-and-go landing, I noted the simultaneous illuminations of the Master Caution, Right Generator, and Flight Hydraulic lights. I analyzed the malfunction as a Gearbox, in which the driveshaft powering the hydraulic pump and right generator sheared. This led to a complete loss of the right Alternating Current electrical system and flight hydraulic system. With a severelycrippled aircraft, and limited time of controllability remaining, I transitioned to an emergency landing pattern using one engine. At the same time, I relayed critical information and intentions to Air emergency ground services, ran in-flight emergency checklists, and began coordinating ejection considerations with the pilot-notflying.

The big lessons learned from these events are 1) the importance of the basics and 2) preparation. As a pilot, there are many small checks we make to confirm proper operation throughout a flight. It's easy to become complacent when you've checked something a thousand times without an issue. As with the fuel leak, when one of these checks reveals an abnormal operation, it could potentially serve as the break in the chain that prevents a disastrous outcome.

Throughout our flying training, we evaluate, practice, and discuss different emergency scenarios. Taking the time to think through the intricacies of how you will execute everything allows you to make the quickest and best decision in the moment. You've already thought through the hard decisions, and that saves valuable time in the moment.













Report unsafe

SaferProducts.gov

or (301) 595-7054

(for deaf or hard of

hearing individuals and/or individuals

with speech and

language disorders)

(800) 638-2772

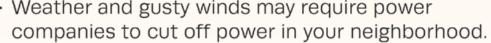
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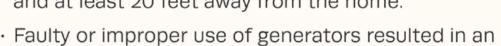
Keep Safe during

Wildfire Season

- Weather and gusty winds may require power
- · Portable gas generators must be operated outside and at least 20 feet away from the home.
- · Faulty or improper use of generators resulted in an average of 65 deaths a year.
- home and test them regularly.
- air quality in your area. Follow directions of state and local officials.







- · Install carbon monoxide and smoke alarms in your
- · Have an evacuation plan in place.
- Monitor local alerts about wildfires and hazardous







FY23 Flight					
	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Class A Aircraft Damage		
15 AF	0	*	0		
16 AF	0	0	0		
USAFWC	0	0	0		
ANG	0	0	0		
AFRC	0	0	0		
CONTRACT	0	+	0		
COCOM	0	++	0		

F123 Occupational						
	Class A Fatal	Class A Non-Fatal	Class B			
AFCENT	0	0	0			
USAFWC	2	0	0			
12 AF	0	0	0			
15 AF	7, 1	0	2			
16 AF	0	0	0			

Thru 30 June 2023

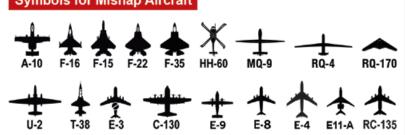
FY23 Weapons Thru 30 June 2023							
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E		
ACC	0	0	3	3	5		

Legend

Class A - Fatality; permanent total disability; property damage \$2.5 million or more Class B - Permanent partial disability; property damage between \$600,000 and \$2.5 million Class C - Lost workday; property damage between \$60,000 and \$600,000 (Class description effective Oct. 1, 2019)

(RED) = On-duty(BLACK) = Off-duty

Symbols for Mishap Aircraft



Flight Notes

Air Combat Command experienced one MQ-9A Class-A mishap in the 3d Quarter of 2023. However, don't take this statistic lightly as mishaps occur every day at less than the Class-A category and any mishap will impact combat readiness. Don't let your guard down. Keep your eyes on your fellow Airmen, and say something when things are out of the ordinary. Disciplined execution, sound risk management, and being a solid wingman is what keeps Air Combat Command ready to answer our nations call!

Occupational Notes

Air Combat Command Occupational Safety sustained six Class-A fatalities in the third quarter of the fiscal year 2023. These included one on-duty AFLOAT mishap during which a member died in jet ski mishap. In the off-duty Sports and Recreation category, we lost three members. Two fatalities were due to drownings, and the third occurred while a member was jogging. Additionally, we lost one member in a motorcycle mishap, and another died when he was struck by a vehicle while changing a car tire on the side of the highway. Factors leading to the increase in mishaps included poor risk decisions combined with the fact that we tend to be far more active during warmer weather.

Weapons Notes

During the third quarter of FY23, ACC experienced one Class-C and two Class-E mishaps. The Class-C mishap resulted from a forklift running over a worker's foot while transporting a GBU-12. The first Class-E mishap resulted from flare magazines falling out of a transport module during transportation. The second Class-E mishap of the quarter was from an M18 handgun rear site plate dislodging from the firearm and striking the shooter in the face. With the exception on the handgun incident, these mishaps were caused by a lack of situational awareness and attention to detail. Please stay cognizant out there, and take your time when handling explosives.

2nd Quarter FY23 Awards



Aircrew Safety AwardCrew of Sentry 61
963 AACS, 552 ACW (15 AF)
Tinker AFB, OK



Aviation Maintenance Safety
Tow Team
461 & 116 AMXS, 461 ACW (15 AF)
Robins AFB, GA



Flight Line Safety
Airfield Management Team
23 OSS, 23 WG (15 AF)
Moody AFB, GA



Pilot Safety Capt Zachary R. Morrison10 EACCS, 461 ACW (15 AF)
APO AE 09094



Safety Career Professional
TSgt Michael E. Uriostegui
HQ 16 AF/SEG
JBSA-Lackland, TX



Explosives Safety

Conventional Maintenance – Big Bombs

57 MUNS, 57 WG (USAFWC)

Nellis AFB, NV



Unit Safety
42d Electronic Combat Squadron
55 WG (16 AF)
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ



Weapons Safety Professional
TSgt Christine E. Budzynski
366 FW/SEW (15 AF)
Mountain Home AFB, ID



Unit Safety Representative SSgt Michael A. Emington 42 ECS, 55 WG (16 AF) Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ



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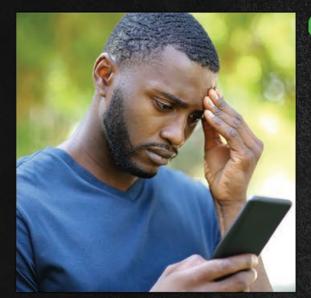
OVER≗ MAGAZINE

Lights Lit Up!

PAGE 4

Extreme Weather Preparedness

Communicating After Storms



If possible, communicate via texting, email, and social media



Reduce network congestion by limiting phone calls, online videos, and streaming



Conserve phone battery by reducing screen brightness and limiting app use



Check on neighbors and those most vulnerable

weather.gov





OVER₽

THE LIGHTS LIT UP! by SrA Bryna K. Hanson 355 WG. Davis-Monthan AFB. AZ

- SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH
- COMBATING THE SILENT ADVERSARY by MSgt Joshua R. Robley AFTAC/SE, Patrick SFB, FL
- CALIBRATE YOUR COMPASS by TSgt Tucker G. Morgan 366 FW/SEO, Mountain Home AFB, ID
- NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION MONTH from the National Fire Prevention Association



ICINTS LITUS

BY SrA BRYNA K. HANSON

he event took place on the night of December 14, 2013. Nearly ten years later, it's still stuck in my mind. There were eight of us out and about, having some drinks at our favorite bar. We were taking shots and cutting a rug on the dance floor. Closing time came, and we all wandered outside to figure out the next phase of our night. I still don't remember whether I had offered to drive or drew the short straw, but there I was—in the driver's seat, while everyone else was crammed in the back of the Suburban. We hadn't even made it out of the parking lot when the lights lit up and off I went, in the back seat of a patrol car. I was arrested for Driving Under the Influence (DUI).

Luckily, my roommate was reliable, and bailed me out. The next day, worrisome and depressing thoughts were running through my head as I reported to work—3 hours late—and shamefully informed my boss of my situation.

Realizing I had no one to blame but myself, I couldn't get mad at my friends. These nifty things called cell phones work not only for texting but also for making calls. Why hadn't I phoned another friend or called a taxi? What was a little money spent on a safe ride home compared to a potential Die Hard scenario? Why had no one else suggested a taxi? Isn't that the main concern for anyone going out drinking? Safety should ALWAYS be a concern.

No one has to stop drinking, but they should have a game plan for the whole evening from start to finish. Map out the entire night: who's going, just drinks, food, dancing, going together or separate, who's

Illustration by Kolonko/Shutterstock.com

drinking. Designate a driver for the ride home. If everyone is partaking in the festivities, plan for a

sober ride home or call a taxi/Uber. Don't risk your or anyone else's life for one second, and don't fool yourself into believing you can drive safely. Bet on Blackjack, not on drunk driving.

When you know you've had too much to drink, speak up and refuse to drive. Don't let others drive drunk, either. Take away their keys, if necessary. They may not like it at the time, but they will thank you later. Not only will you save yourself, but you also

will spare others from the grave consequences of driving while impaired.





PREPAREDNESS MONTH

fter an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water, and other supplies to last for several days. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Print a copy to take with you to the store. Once you take a look at the

basic items consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets or seniors.

- Water (one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a several-day supply of nonperishable food)
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape (to shelter in place)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)
- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)
- Manual can opener (for food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

- Masks (for everyone ages 2 and above), soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes to disinfect surfaces
- Prescription medications. About half of all Americans take a prescription medicine every day. An emergency can make it difficult for them to refill their prescription or to find an open pharmacy. Organize and protect your prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and vitamins to prepare for an emergency.
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids, or laxatives
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution

- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

Silent Silent ADVERSARY

BY MSGT JOSHUA R. ROBLEY

ost people encounter stress in their everyday lives. In the workplace, stress is even more common, as employees grapple with the demands and expectations of their jobs. Workplace stress can have significant mental and physical effects on employees, and can impact their health and wellbeing negatively.

One of the most significant effects of workplace stress is its impact on an employee's mental health. Stress can lead to many mental-health issues including anxiety, depression, and burnout. When an employee is exposed to chronic stress in the workplace, their brain is constantly in fight-orflight mode, which can lead to the overproduction of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. Long-term stress may lead to a variety of symptoms including irritability, difficulty concentrating, and memory problems. Eventually, chronic stress can lead to more severe problems such as anxiety disorders, depression, and even post-traumatic stress disorder.

In addition to its impact on mental health, workplace stress also can have significant physical effects such as headaches, fatigue, and muscle tension. It weakens the immune system, which can make an employee more susceptible to illnesses such as the common cold and flu.

DIET HEALTH INSURANCE WOMEN'S HEALTH INSURANCE HEALTH INSURANCE HEALTH INSURANCE HEALTH INSURANCE

Chronic stress disrupts the body's natural processes, and can lead to more severe health issues such as high blood pressure, heart disease, weight gain, digestive problems, and diabetes.

Reducing workplace stress is essential for the well-being of employees as well as the overall health of a business. Employers can take several steps to reduce workplace stress and improve the mental and physical health of their employees. One way is to promote work-life balance. Employees need

time to rest and recharge, and employers can help facilitate this by encouraging breaks throughout the workday and offering flexible work schedules.

Employers also can promote open communication and collaboration among employees, which can help foster a sense of community and support. Encouraging regular feedback and recognition can help employees feel valued and motivated. Providing employees with resources to manage stress, such as access to mental health services,

can be beneficial. Employers can offer workshops, trainings, or even access to mental health professionals to help employees manage their stress levels.

Finally, creating a positive work environment is key to reducing workplace stress. Encouraging a positive company culture, fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace, and offering opportunities for growth and development can contribute to a healthier and happier workforce.

Calibrate Your Compass

BY TSGT TUCKER G. MORGAN

he first hunting season I enjoyed with my father was 15 years ago. While most people were cozying up in their homes, preparing for winter and holidays with family, I was walking through the woods of the San Juan Islands in western Washington, hoping to harvest my first blacktail deer. My dad and I would wake before sunrise, and spend every minute of daylight walking through the dense forest, motivated by the possibilities of what lay just over the next hill.

Being young, I relied greatly on my dad's leadership, not only in pursuing wild game, but also in traversing the landscape and knowing where we were. Ninety-nine percent of the time. my father was never lost, even though the area we hunted was dense with brush and evergreen trees. Most areas were so thick you couldn't see well enough to use your surroundings as landmarks.

We didn't have any luck that day, and the time came to return home. As night approached, the trek back home began to feel much longer than the hike out. It was getting late in the season, and the shorter days left us little time to find our way back to the truck. As you probably can guess, we were lost—though my father may never admit it.

The sun began to set, and the fading light made every hill, tree, rock, and trail look the same. I started to lose confidence, and wondered if we were going the right way. Should we turn around? With no compass or smart phone, we had few options. Then, just as the last bit of daylight was failing, we had some luck. Our truck seemed to appear out of nowhere just as we crossed a hill.

Although I didn't get my first deer that year, I came away with something more valuable. I gained an understanding of the importance of preparedness, a lesson that has developed into what I call "calibrating my compass." It's a tool I use, not just when I'm exploring the wilderness, but for all my travelling. I pull up maps of areas I will be visiting, and familiarize myself with the area. I memorize the locations of buildings and other landmarks, features in the terrain, etc. It can take some time to master, but it is invaluable when you need to know where you're headed.

Most members of the military are stationed in unfamiliar places. Naturally, we want to explore our new areas, whether it be in town or out in the countryside. Nowadays, we rely on the conveniences of modern technology like GPS and smartphones, but what will you do when those fail? Prepare yourself accordingly, not only for your own safety, but also for the safety of those with you. Buy a compass and learn to use it. Study a map of your area, and get your bearings. Lastly, remember to take supplies with you in case you get lost.

Adventure is out there. Explore, but don't forget to calibrate your compass! *



National Fire Prevention Month

FROM THE NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

October is National Fire Prevention Month—time to take steps to prevent dangerous and lifethreatening fires. According to the National Fire Prevention Association, the winter months see an increase in home fires, deaths, and injuries. Here are some tips for fire safety in the home.

- Make sure your heating source is well maintained. Whether it's a fireplace, wood stove. furnace, or electric heat, check the equipment before using or have it serviced.
- Don't store items near your heater. Boxes, clothes, and other fuels may ignite if they are close.
- Make sure draperies and furniture are kept away from a heater.
- Make sure smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are working. Place one on every level of the home, and test them monthly. Replace batteries annually.
- Keep at least one fire extinguisher in the home, and check it annually. Know how to use it.
- In the Kitchen: It's important to not leave burners or grills unattended. Use proper equipment, and keep dish towels, clothing, and other items away from heating elements and burners. Keep pets away from the kitchen, especially when you're not home.
- Candles: Never leave a burning candle unattended. As an alternative, use battery-operated candles for ambiance.
- Smoking: Unattended cigarettes, cigars, or pipes can start fires.

When using a fire extinguisher, the National Safety Council reminds you to PASS in order to remember the steps.

A im low at the base of the fire.

Squeeze the handle slowly.

S weep the nozzle side to side.

Create an escape plan. Practice fire drills with your family, and make sure everyone knows where to go depending on the location of the fire. Identify at least two ways to get out of the house. Set a meeting place for everyone.

In the event of a house fire, do not try to salvage items before leaving the house. Personal effects can be replaced, but lives cannot. Instead, keep valuable documents in a fireproof box for recovery later.







Illustration by EreborMountain/Shutterstock.com



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