

# The Combat EDGE

December 2003



*Holiday Gift of Freedom*



# The Combat Edge

Volume 12 Issue 7,  
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## GENERAL HAL M. HORNBERG, COMMANDER COLONEL KEVIN W. SMITH, CHIEF OF SAFETY



Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker



Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker



Photo by SSgt Samuel Rogers



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MAJ REBECCA COLAW  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

MAJ WENDY HAMILTON  
EDITOR

MS. BARBARA TAYLOR  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

SSGT CARRIE ATWOOD  
PUBLICATIONS DESIGNER

TSgt BEN BLOKER  
ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR  
1ST COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON

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**CONTRIBUTIONS:** Please send articles with name, rank, DSN phone number, e-mail and complete mailing address and comments to:

Executive Editor, *The Combat Edge*  
HQ ACC/SEM  
175 Sweeney Blvd  
Langley AFB VA 23665-2700

Telephone: (757) 764-8868  
DSN 574-8868  
FAX: (757) 764-8975  
e-mail: rebecca.colaw@langley.af.mil

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Front Cover: TSgt Ben Boker



This holiday season finds members of ACC deployed around the globe fighting the war against terrorism, building a new Iraq, and defending our freedoms and the freedoms of others. We certainly need to remember throughout the holidays all those who are deployed, on duty, and their families.

Many of our members also hit the road for long trips and for recreation. Unfortunately, the holiday season has a number of challenges like freezing rain, icy roads, rapidly changing weather conditions, and shorter days. We all need to risk-manage our travel and activities, because fatigue has killed way too many ACC Airmen in 2003.

Commanders, supervisors, coworkers, and peers must stay actively engaged and take action when someone they know plans to overextend themselves. Additionally, individuals need to remember to celebrate in a responsible manner, take care of one another, and "don't celebrate so hard that you forget the right thing to do." Together we can have a safe and ...

Happy Holiday Season!

Colonel Kevin W. Smith  
ACC Chief of Safety



Photo by SSgt Christopher Mathews





Photo by SSgt Cherie A. Thurlby





I thought I was prepared

# I thought I was *Prepared*

By Maj Brett Davis, Sheppard AFB, Texas





Photo by MSgt Mark Bucher



Photo by PHAN Ryan O'Connor

**A**s an Air Force “Hog Driver,” I never imagined that I’d end up flying Prowlers with the Navy. I came from a single-seat community and suddenly found myself one of four crewmembers. Two airplanes take off and there are eight people in a two-ship instead of two! (I know, I know, .... “section.”) So many new things to get used to. A new airplane, new people, and most of all, a whole different language to learn. It was all beginning to gel for me though and soon enough I found myself on my first deployment to Incirlik AB,

Turkey, for Operation NORTH-ERN WATCH (ONW). On one particular ONW sortie, things reverted from the mundane “Groundhog Day” theme to a bit more excitement than I care to encounter on a regular basis.

I was leading my section as part of the standard ONW package and things were ops normal as we lined up number one for takeoff in the middle of the launch. Takeoff was standard until cleanup. After raising the gear, I moved the flaps and slat lever to the clean position. As is normal in the Prowler, the jet oscillates quite

a bit until the flaps and slats are fully retracted. Unexpectedly, the oscillation felt a little different and more difficult to control than is normally the case. Immediately, I glanced down and realized the horizontal stabilizer had not shifted from dirty throws to clean throws as it should have. This can potentially present a relatively serious controllability problem in the Prowler.

As per NATOPS, I maintained airspeed below 250 KIAS, limiting control inputs as my right-seater (ECMO 1) broke out the checklist for “Stab Shift Failure after Flap Retraction.” My wingman was in the midst of executing a 10-second interval takeoff, expecting to re-join at 300 KIAS. So as not to cause a gross under-run, we made a quick call to dash two informing him that we had a flight control problem and we would be at 230 KIAS. He acknowledged and assumed a chase position ready to assist. As we turned downwind, we declared an emergency and began dumping fuel from the wings. We informed departure of our intention to execute a no-flap, no-slat approach, as well as an approach-end arrestment. Now for a guy coming from an A-10 which had no hook, and never saw the boat going through the Prowler RAG, I had not made an arrested landing before. My only thought at this particular time was not to embarrass myself by missing the wire!

On downwind, we were sent to a single frequency approach channel. For those not familiar, a single frequency approach is standard ops for Air Force bases. This allows all emergency radio calls to be



made without having to change radio frequencies. The three critical agencies are up on that channel: approach, tower, and the Supervisor of Flying (SOF) — similar in function to the Air Boss. Not requiring assistance from dash two, we cleared them off. We then announced that we required an approach-end arrestment. When all our ducks were in a row, we turned inbound to set up for the approach.

Having completed all necessary checklist steps, we set up on final, configured for a no-flap, no-slat approach and arrestment. We were subsequently cleared to land. Normally in the daytime I don't use visual glideslope data from either the VASI or other visual aid but given the necessity to fly an ultra-smooth approach in this case, I elected to use the VASI and fly a "one white over three red" approach. I had flown practice no-flap, no-slat approaches as part of our normal requirements but was surprised at just how difficult the airplane was to control with a stab-shift failure. It was not all that scary but it did get my attention.

As we crossed the runway threshold, it dawned on me that the first approach-end cable was a bit shorter than I had anticipated. About 700' from the approach end vice approximately 2,000' back at Whidbey Island. Having flown a slightly flatter approach than normal, I felt confident that we'd catch the first wire. Upon touchdown I knew it would be close but thought we'd catch it. I was told by my salty Navy comrades that a land arrestment is nothing like a trap at

the ship. So as we rolled out, I fully expected to begin a relatively rapid slow down, but to no avail. We had not caught the first wire. I thought, surely we

leviated any possibility of confusion. For instance, if we had said, "Request an approach-end arrestment to Runway 5" vice, "Request an approach-end arrestment"



**"Neither cable was rigged!"**

were down in time but maybe not. No worries, there was another one a short distance in front of us, we'll catch that one. Crossing the second wire it became apparent that neither wire was rigged! How could this be? We luckily had a very long runway to work with and our tires held together, so with normal braking I was easily able to bring the aircraft to a crawl; however, we did end up with hot brakes.

In sorting out the details of this incident a number of misunderstandings took place that were not apparent while the EP was in progress. Somehow, tower was under the impression that we were planning on an opposite direction, approach-end arrestment, therefore, negating the need to rig the approach-end gear, which we thought was being rigged as we flew downwind. This info was relayed to the SOF who also was manning the tower. How they got that idea is still a mystery to me, but more directive, clear, concise directions from us would have al-

would have been more appropriate. In addition, when using a single-frequency approach, it is advisable to direct communication to the agency you wish to hear what you have to say even though all three critical agencies are listening. Finally, the SOF is a handy tool for getting things done and advising on available options. Given enough time, it's a smart play to talk directly to the SOF and give him your game plan for recovering the jet. He may have information that you're not aware of.

When all was said and done, there was no harm, therefore, no foul. The jet was recovered without significant damage with the exception of the stab shift cable which had snapped for an unknown reason. Hindsight being what it is, a little detailed forethought goes a long way for not only how you're going to handle an emergency with regards to NATOPS, but also how best to relay your game plan and intentions to others. ▶

**Editor's Note:** Courtesy of the Naval Safety Center





# Riders

By MSgt Ty Foster, Peterson AFB, Colo.

Why don't they

Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker



**L**ast year, I wrote an article about motorcycle safety titled, "What were they thinking?" I should have called it, "Why weren't they thinking?"

For as many years as I have been a rider, even longer, I have been concerned about motorcycle safety.

Two months before I bought my first bike, a motorcycle passed me on the right as I was turning right. As his bike crashed into the side of my parents' 1970 Chevy pickup, everything began moving in slow motion. He flew 30 feet through the air right over the hood of the truck. Two other motorcyclists, waiting to turn at the intersection, watched in dismay as this human projectile hurled toward them and his mangled bike careened their way.

He landed face-up and unconscious underneath the nearest bike and his right leg had a gash so severe I thought it had been severed. Pulling the bike off of him, I looked at his helmetless head. His face, cut by my rearview mirror, was lacerated from the top of his forehead to the tip of his nose. Blood pooled over his closed eyes.

His motorcycle ended up in the ditch 10 feet away. The can of beer that had been between his legs as he began his impatient pass was in the grass near my parents' truck. His name, I had learned, was Ricky, and he was alive.

I met him, under better circumstances, about a year later. It had taken about 300 stitches to fix his wounds and he almost did lose his leg. He told me it wasn't my fault. He was drunk and had done a stupid thing. Why wasn't he thinking?

I was 18 years old. I am 42 now, and I can remember that wreck like it happened yesterday.

Between then and now, I have logged tens of thousands of miles on motorcycles. I have taught motorcycle safety at eight sites in two states to more than 650 people. I have written countless articles, conducted workshops, inspections, and demonstrations in an effort to stem the red tide of Air Force motorcycle deaths and injuries.

### **Why wasn't he thinking?**

On April 10, two riders were on a divided highway with a posted speed limit of 50 kilometers per hour — that is about 31 mph. Rider No. 1 zipped between two cars at a high rate of speed. As he entered a gradual curve, his motorcycle began to lose control. He skidded for 198 feet, hit the median, was ejected from the bike, and collided with an oncoming vehicle. He was

dragged 30 feet and tumbled another 103 feet. Rider No. 2 watched his friend die.

Rider No. 1 had just picked his bike up from the shop where it had been in for brake problems resulting from a result of a previous mishap. He had attended motorcycle safety training about 18 months earlier.

### **Why weren't they thinking?**

Another Air Force rider and his buddy were out for a ride May 24, on a new road. There were no street lights, minimal street markings, and neither rider had driven it before. At a speed in excess of 60 mph — posted 45 mph — an unannounced curve sneaked up on them. Rider No. 1 applied his brakes hard. Rider No. 2 swerved around rider No. 1 who then struck the curb and went airborne. Two hundred twenty-two feet later the dust began to settle on the mangled bike. This rider No. 2 also watched his friend die. Neither rider was wearing the required protective gear.

**He flew 30 feet through the air and right over the hood.**

### **Why didn't they think?**

On June 1, an Air Force motorcyclist with a passenger was doing about 120 mph in a 60-mph zone down a divided four-lane highway. Approaching a curve, the front tire left the pavement edge. They crashed in the grass median and were launched about 500 feet. The operator lived but the passenger suffered traumatic head injuries and later died. They had been at a party, then went on a beer run while the designated drivers were taking people home. Neither wore the required protective gear.

### **Unfortunately, more will die.**

I would recount more of these tragic losses, but it makes me sick to read them, to envision their final realities. Last year ACC lost 9 airmen in fatal motorcycle crashes.

### **But it hasn't worked.**

I have realized there is no panacea, no cure-all to eliminate the deaths of Air Force motorcyclists. As involved in their rider's lives as supervisors and commanders can be, they can't be expected to make every decision for them. It is on the rider. For when riders decide to straddle their bikes, start them, shift into gear and roll onto the road, they have accepted the risk and the responsibility for whatever may occur. Their split-second decision to speed up, slow down, swerve or not to ride after a drink of alcohol is in their hands — or, rather it is in their heads.

Some people think we motorcyclists have an attitude. I think they are right. I just wish the attitude every one of us had involved safety. "Safety is an attitude — get one!" If they had, they would probably live to ride a lot longer. ▶

**think?**





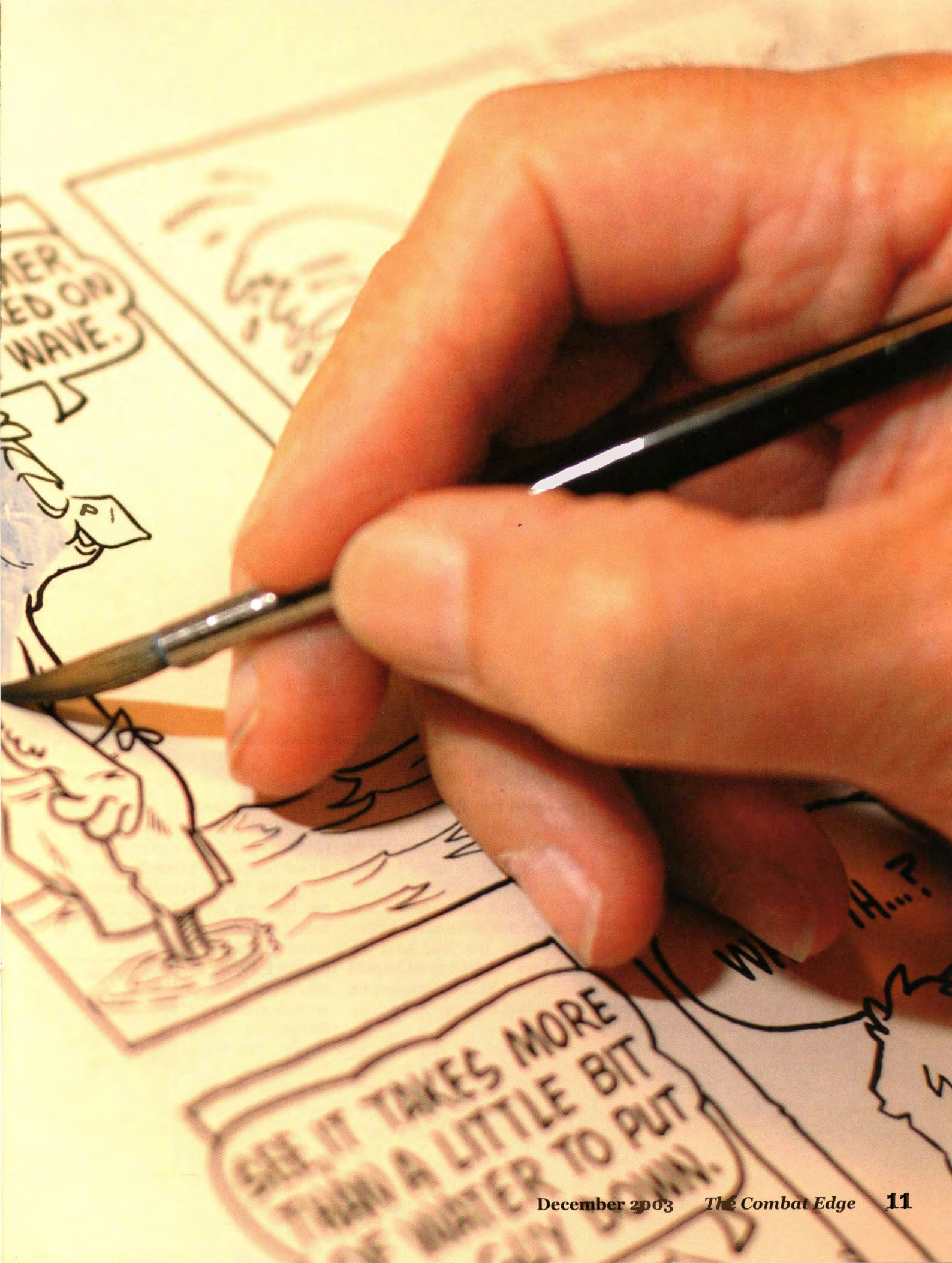
THIS IS TH' SUMM  
I AIN'T GONNA GET KNOCK  
MY CAN BY NO OCEAN

# Stan Hardison **creator of** Fleagle

By Maj Wendy Hamilton, Langley AFB, Va.  
Photos by TSgt Ben Bloker, Langley AFB, Va.

# Still flying







# Fleagle (fle'gull),

n. a bedraggled-feathered bird, son of a common loon and a ruddy duck from Pea Island, N.C.; a total screw-up; typically spotted in World War I flying cap and goggles.

# Stan Hardison (stan' hard'i sun),

n. graduate of Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Fla.; native of Newport, N.C.; Fleagle's real father.



**T**he dictionary descriptions of Fleagle and Mr. Hardison do little to show how this unlikely pair became the ambassadors of Tactical Air Command's, now Air Combat Command's, safety program. They also do little to describe the tireless efforts of Mr. Hardison to keep penning Fleagle after 33 years.

Mr. Hardison, a Korean War veteran and talented commercial artist, became the art director for *TAC Attack*, *The Combat Edge's* predecessor, in 1966.

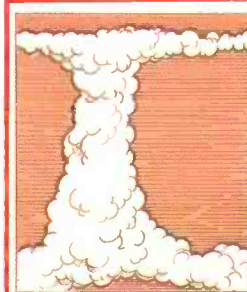
"A friend told me about the position, and I thought I'd throw

my name into the hat since it would bring me back closer to home." Mr. Hardison's home of Newport, N.C. is about 4 hours south of Langley AFB.

"I didn't even know it was a safety magazine when I interviewed for the job," said Mr. Hardison. "But, I figured it would be similar to other magazine work, but without advertisements."

He had no idea that he would stay with the magazine for 24 years as a civil service employee and create ACC's most memorable safety icon — Fleagle.

Fleagle started in June 1970 as a regular part of *TAC Attack*. Originally used as a caricature for a local newspaper's classified section in the 1960s, Fleagle eventually became an ambassador of safety after one of Mr. Hardison's friends, a lieutenant colonel flying courier service, flew into an anvil cloud on a trip to Bergstrom AFB, Texas. The friend had to make an emergency landing and wait for parts. Unfortunately, the



Stan Hardison's





aircraft ferrying the parts faired no better when it too had to divert after sustaining damage from flying into another thunderstorm. About a week later when his friend made it home, he and Mr. Hardison had a little talk.

"I don't care what you do in this next issue of *TAC Attack*," his friend said, "just find some way to keep idiots like me from flying into a thundercloud."

Mr. Hardison thought of the previously unnamed bird he

had used in the newspaper, and Fleagle (flying+eagle) made his debut haphazardly penetrating a thunderstorm.

"He was supposed to be a one-time deal, but the letters to the editor poured in and as fate would have it I got another story idea the next month," said Mr. Hardison. "My brother, an F-105 instructor in Arizona, landed gear up when a student pulled the gear handle too soon. Bet you can never guess what Fleagle did in the July 1970 issue."

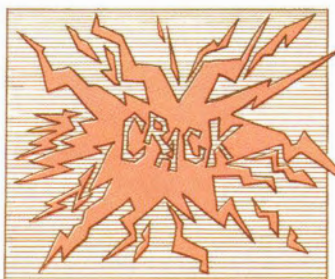
As Fleagle matured, Mr. Hardison had to make a few changes to Fleagle to better tell the safety story.

"I found as Fleagle became a regular feature he needed a few cosmetic changes like hands to help him get into more trouble. So, over a few issues his wings developed fingers," he said.

If you look at the first Fleagles and those of today you also will notice Fleagle got an incremental nose job.

"It was easier to draw expressions on his face with a shorter beak. So gradually I bobbed it!" said Mr. Hardison.

Other changes came as the magazine's scope changed. *TAC Attack* was originally focused on flying safety, but when weapons and ground safety were included, Fleagle kept up with the times finding new ways to hurt himself. For example, since he is a bird sporting World War I garb, he had a period-appropriate Tommy gun



first Fleagle, printed in *TAC Attack*, June 1970





*The most memorable Fleagle was this 1975 centerfold featuring Fleagle in the nude.*

mounted in his claws to demonstrate unsafe weapons loading and handling.

Besides his physical changes, Fleagle's friends changed over the years as well. When bombers came under ACC control, Tiny — read any heavy driver — and Pedo — read any fast jet driver — replaced his original friends Rob and Griff.

Now that he was so well known in print, Fleagle was ready to take his safety show on the road.

"Everyone is always interested in how I draw Fleagle," says Mr. Hardison. "In fact, they could care less about hearing me talk about safety. That's how I got involved taking Fleagle and our safety concerns to bases."

Mr. Hardison was asked to paint some pictures for the Flying Tiger squadron, then an A-10 unit at England AFB, La. The commander asked him to personally deliver the paintings so they could recognize him for his work. On the drive over to the base theater, the commander asked him, "What are you going to say today?" Mr. Hardison wasn't prepared to say anything, and as the conversation went on, he realized he was the guest speaker for the safety meeting. On stage he noticed the only questions he was asked were about Fleagle. So, he got a flip chart, started drawing Fleagle, and delivering a safety message. The teaching method was a great success. From then on, they traveled to at least one base each month

*Fleagle's friends  
Pedo and Tiny*

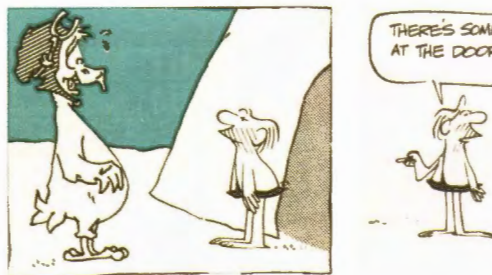


addressing safety topics while Mr. Hardison drew Fleagle.

Perhaps that's another reason why Fleagle's been so popular and effective. He is a fun way to deliver a not-so-fun topic. Humor can get us to think about and remember safety messages so we don't become the next "mishap pilot/ground crew/weapons handler...."

The Fleagle phenomenon was a springboard for other safety initiatives as well. One of the initiatives was the ACC Chief of Safety's "Fleaglegram." Essentially, it was a notepad from his desk to the field addressing important topics. Just having the name Fleagle on it made it

more likely to be read. Fleagle also became part of the awards program recognizing the best in accident prevention and the worst. The "Fleagle Salute" went out to all candidates for safety awards, and the "Fleagle Fanny Feather of Fate" went out to individuals who escaped serious injury but whose gross buffoonery was an



*Stan's most favorite strip was this 19...  
It gave Stan a chance to work with a*



example to keep others from repeating the same actions. One can still find the "Fleagle Salutes" every month in the safety awards section of the *The Combat Edge*.

Fleagle has been such a success that Mr. Hardison couldn't resist the offer to keep drawing Fleagle even though he officially retired in 1990 and moved with his wife Shirley back to her hometown of Kinston, N.C. He contacts *The Combat Edge* editorial staff monthly to keep Fleagle's antics current and relevant to the magazine's theme.

When asked if Fleagle will ever get it right, Mr. Hardison emphatically replied, "No! He may come close, but he just can't. I plan to keep drawing Fleagle as long as I'm physically able, and he doesn't cut into my golf time. He's too much fun to quit."

Mr. Hardison is still amazed that such a woeful critter as Fleagle could make such a lasting impression.

"He's not pretty, you wouldn't pin him up on your wall, and you definitely don't want to do what he does. Maybe he's popular be-

cause we want to root for the underdog," said Mr. Hardison.

Every month we hope Fleagle will get it right this time. He doesn't, and sometimes his accidents touch too close to home eliciting the response, "Ouch! That could have been me."

Whatever the reason for his popularity, his message remains simple and unchanged — it is possible to prevent accidents.

When asked if he has seen any change in how we approach safety issues, Mr. Hardison said that during his tenure at *TAC Attack* from 1966 to 1990, safety focused on reducing accident statistics by explaining why an accident happened. The limitation of this method is it only addresses accidents which are similar in circumstances.

"We should have a system to stop any kind of accident before it occurs," according to Mr. Hardison.

Fortunately, many others in the safety community shared this

thought, and today we have Operational Risk Management (ORM). While many of ORM's principles stem from years of accident studies, its basic premise is that someone else shouldn't have to get hurt to teach us not to do it. It's a truly proactive program designed to heed the individual circumstances

## Safety lessons come from the most unlikely sources ...

of the situation and stop the accident chain before it begins. But if ORM fails, we still have Fleagle to show us the wrong way and hopefully keep us from repeating his mistakes.

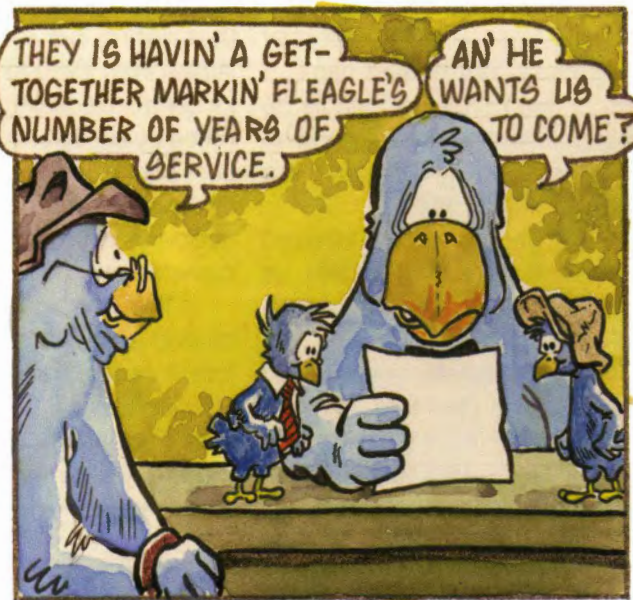
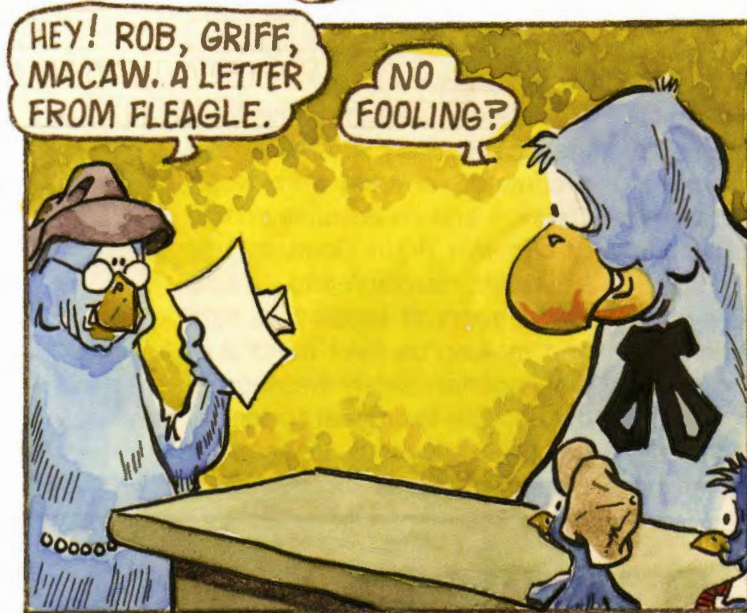
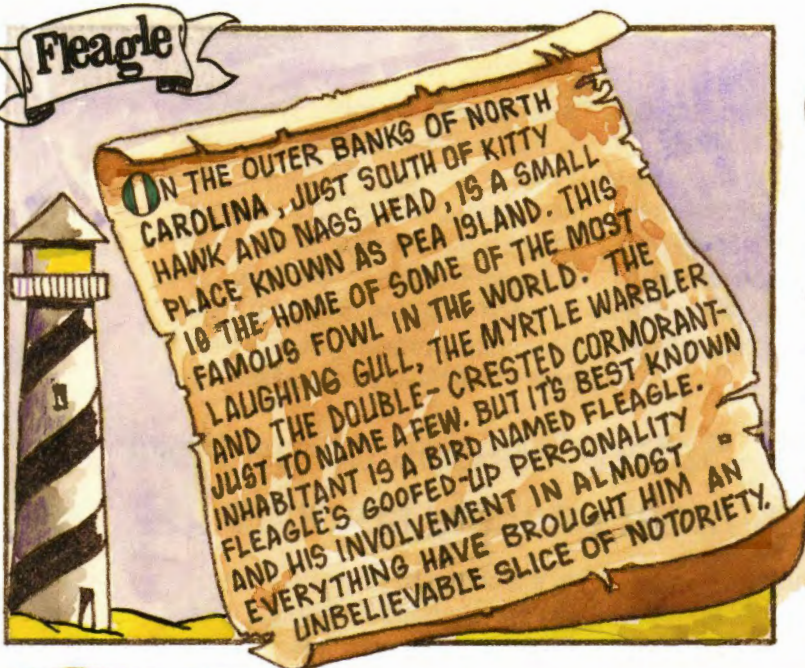
Safety lessons come from the most unlikely sources — like a commercial artist from North Carolina and an absolute screw-up bird. We at *The Combat Edge* salute Mr. Hardison and Fleagle for 33 years of keeping us safe and making us ever mindful of that important safety message — it is possible to prevent accidents. We hope the next 33 years of Fleagle will be as successful! ►



77 Fleagle featuring Johnny Hart's B.C. characters.  
other great cartoonist.

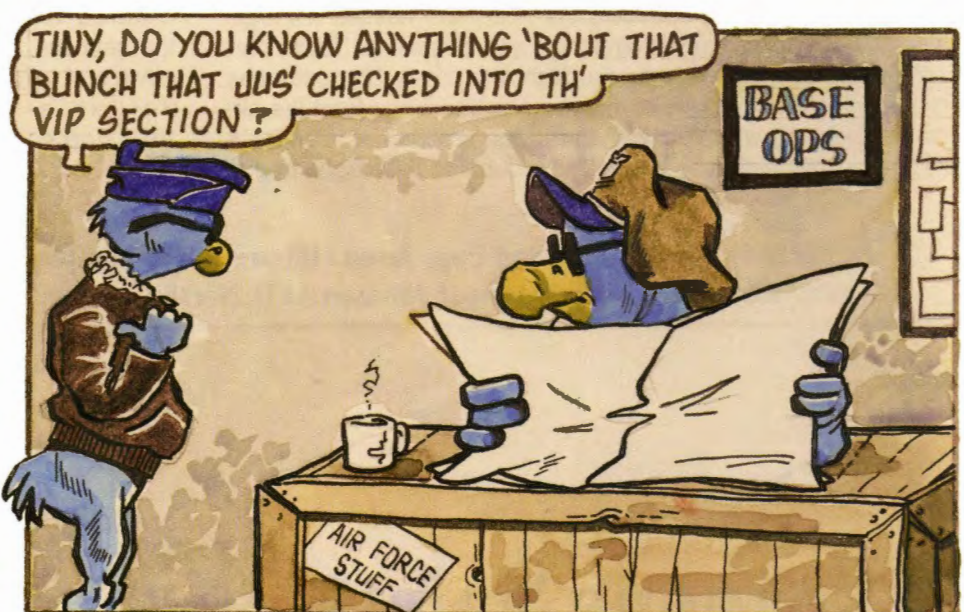


# Fleagle



This cartoon features all of Fleagle's friends from the past 33 years.







# MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

## Aircrew Safety Award of Distinction

Capt Stan Shuttleworth and Jason Hilburn, call sign "Kong 22," were number two of a two-ship formation of F-15Es. Shortly after a planned formation takeoff, Capt Hilburn, the Weapons System Officer, noted a Master Caution light with an unsafe gear indication and vocalized these indications to Capt Shuttleworth, the aircraft commander. Capt Shuttleworth simultaneously maneuvered safely away from his flight lead, reduced the throttles to avoid over speeding the gear, and notified his flight lead of the problem while maintaining aircraft control. Tower personnel immediately informed the flight that Kong 22's gear was still hanging and that smoke appeared to be trailing from the aircraft. The aircrew correctly analyzed the problem as a Utility A (UTL A) circuit hydraulic failure and requested their flight lead to

perform a battle damage check. The flight lead confirmed hydraulic fluid, and not smoke, was trailing from the aircraft. Meanwhile, Capt Shuttleworth and Hilburn continued to crew coordinate and complete the multitude of checklists. After completing the "UTL A" failure checklist, they completed the Landing Gear Emergency Extension checklist and the Approach End Arrestment checklist. Realizing they were initially too heavy for a safe cable engagement, they dumped over 10,000 pounds of fuel. Kong 22 declared an emergency in coordination with RAPCON, the Supervisor of Flying, and squadron operations while maneuvering to a 10 NM final with a single-frequency approach. Capt Shuttleworth skillfully flew a flawless approach to the precise touchdown point. Their outstanding crew coordination resulted in a successful approach-end arrestment. Their actions throughout this serious emergency directly contributed to the safe recovery of a valuable Air Force asset.

**Capt Stan Shuttleworth and Capt Jason Hilburn, 355th Fighter Sqdn., 4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina**



## Weapons Safety Award of Distinction

TSgt Shane Johnson and Ted Gacek identified the need for both the Battle Staff and Disaster Control Group (DCG) to communicate the same language during any Major Accident Response Exercise (MARE). Since these two functions are in two different geographical locations, the computer program used for Explosive Site Plans (Assessment System Hazard Surveys) was loaded on

computers in both locations. This allowed both sections to plot any accident on a map at the same coordinates and is displayed for both groups to view. In addition, the clear zones and entry control points were also plotted. This was a great improvement over the original use of a framed base map. TSgt Gacek trained individuals assigned to the Battle Staff and TSgt Johnson had it available on his deployable laptop computer located in the DCG. This concept was put to test during a major accident exercise involving aircraft for an Operational Readiness Inspection. It was identified as a strength by the Exercise Evaluation Team and as an innovative use of existing technology to solve a continuing problem.

**TSgt Shane D. Johnson and TSgt Ted Gacek, 28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota**

*Photo of TSgt Gacek not available.*





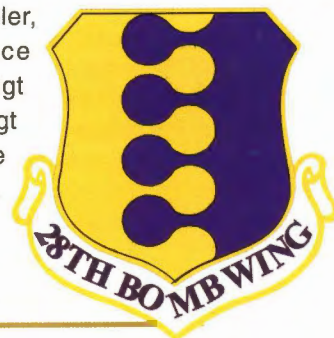
## Unit Safety

Award of Distinction

Capt Tucker established and led a 10-person team from the 28th Logistics Readiness Squadron through the complete development of a Hot Cargo checklist for use in the Installation Deployment Plan. His determination to have a tested document in place prior to an Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI), and the need for accountability and communication was demonstrated during two earlier local Operational Readiness Exercises (OREs). Both OREs received an unsatisfactory rating due to safety violations. During an ORE, a convoy of Hazard Class/Division 1.1 explosives stopped near the mobility processing center for individuals to retrieve paperwork. This exposed nearly 275 non-related personnel to

mass-detonation explosives, including hand grenades, land mines, and Lite Antitank Weapon Rockets. Captain Tucker's team developed a 21-line checklist that covered all aspects of the Hot Cargo process — identifying required units for buildup, identifying an expeditor to be the focal point for the entire process, radio communication between the entire convoy, and ensuring compensatory actions were completed prior to cargo movement. Their actions during the Hot Cargo process assisted in the overall excellent rating for Deployment Cargo Processing during the ORI, but more importantly it kept ACC personnel safer. The following personnel were part of the team that developed the Hot Cargo Checklist: Capt Andrew Tucker, Lt Jason Bowden, Lt Carrie Kessler, SMSgt Joe Kern, MSgt Bruce Gegner, MSgt Glenn Miller, TSgt Ted Gacek, TSgt Dan Miller, TSgt Richard Haggan, TSgt Shane Johnson, and Ms. Lisa Brackett.

**28th Logistics Readiness Sqdn.,  
28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota**



## Pilot Safety

Award of Distinction

Capt Cook and his flight lead were accomplishing a Battle Damage (BD) check following a Tactical Intercept Mission Qualification Training sortie. During the BD check, he noticed that his F-15C wasn't handling correctly. The pitch and roll functions of the Control Augmentation System (CAS) were malfunctioning and the nose of the aircraft was oscillating in the pitch axis. In accordance with the checklist, Capt Cook tried to reset the pitch and roll CAS, but they would not reset and he left them off for the rest of the sortie. As he was low on fuel and within 15 miles of the field, he declared an emergency and set himself up on a base leg for a straight-in approach with the plan being to con-

duct a controllability check on final. With his flight lead in chase, he experienced a second malfunction when he lowered his landing gear. Once again, the master caution light illuminated, this time for an anti-skid light. While contacting the Supervisor of Flying, he and his flight lead ran the checklist for an anti-skid malfunction which recommended an approach-end arrestment. Due to the compressed time and multiple emergencies, he completed the controllability check, devised a plan, and notified supervision. Although not perfect, he assessed that the aircraft was controllable enough for him to take an approach-end cable. He then set his F-15C up for a visual straight in. Capt Cook executed a flawless approach-end cable engagement, accomplishing all of the appropriate checklists prior to a fuel deficient situation. Despite his status as a new wingman in the squadron and in the mission qualification program, his quick thinking, situational awareness, systems knowledge, and sound cockpit resource management skills allowed him to handle a potentially dangerous compound emergency and preserve a vital Air Force asset.

**Capt Chad W. Cook, 390th Fighter Sqdn.,  
366th Fighter Wing, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho**



# MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

## Aircrew Safety Award of Distinction

**M**ishap aircraft (MA) was number two in a two-ship tasked to respond to a Troops-in-Contact (TIC) situation. At rotation, the mishap pilot (MP) noticed, in the rearview mirror, a single self-protection flare bounce down the runway. The flight climbed through the weather and leveled at Flight Level 270. ATC, contacted the flight on UHF Guard, and advised there were pieces of tire on the runway where the flare had dropped. The MP visually inspected the tires from the cockpit and discovered the right tire had significant tread separation but appeared to be holding air. The aircraft handled normally and because of the nature of the tasking, the Flight Lead (FL) and MP decided to continue towards the TIC until the Alert A-10s could be scrambled. Contact was made with the Supervisor of Flying (SOF) and considerations were listed with respect to landing at this airfield.

Winds were gusting to 25 knots and a crosswind existed. It was determined to land with a left crosswind to allow for a more controlled touchdown of the damaged right tire. After additional coordination with the SOF, it was decided to jettison all ordnance. Due to the erratic instruments, a formation TACAN penetration was performed to descend below the weather. It was still light above the clouds but very dark below and the flight donned NVGs after the descent. The conditions below the weather were disorienting due to reduced visibilities from blowing dust and a low level of illumination. Ceilings were ragged at 5,000 feet AGL. During the holding time the MP made a low approach to evaluate the visibility and illumination conditions for the landing. The MP concluded the illumination and visibility during the low approach would facilitate an NVG landing. The landing turned out to be uneventful as the tire did not fail. Directional control was maintained and the aircraft was taxied clear of the runway. By rapidly assessing the situation and taking action, and by skillful handling of the aircraft by the MP with the assistance of the SOF and FL, Lt Col Smith minimized damage to the aircraft and prevented a potentially catastrophic situation.

**Lt Col William E. Smith, Jr., Lt Col Daniel B. Marino, Maj Edward S. Jones,  
Maj Kevin J. Campbell, 104th EFS, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing**

*October's Aircrew Safety Award of Distinction was printed incorrectly. The picture accompanying the award was incorrect. The individuals in the photo were Capt Bryan Wickering and Lt Col Richard Vanderburg who won the previous award in September. There is no photo of the October winners. Therefore, we are reprinting the October Aircrew Award without the photo.*

## ACC Safety Salutes Superior Performance



**Lt Col Mark J. Alvarez,**  
Inst. Elect Warfare Officer  
**Maj Kenneth F. Wyzywany,**  
Asst Flight Commander  
93rd Bomb Squadron  
917th Wing  
Barksdale AFB, La.

**A1C Jacob B. Nugent,**  
TMDE Apprentice  
366th Component  
Maintenance Squadron  
366th Fighter Wing  
Mountain Home AFB, Idaho



# Wear your seat belt!

## don't learn the hard way

By Lt Col Colleen Murphy, Minot AFB, N.D.

**W**e all know we're supposed to wear seat belts, right? Then why do Department of Transportation statistics show nationwide seat belt use for 2002 at only 75 percent? Apparently, there are still a lot of people who don't understand why they should buckle up. I learned the hard way just how critically important it is to always wear a seat belt.

I'd like to share my story with you. I was lucky. I survived.

My brother and I were passengers in a Jeep CJ-4, driving through the streets of Albuquerque on our way to a ski resort. We never made it.

I remember opening my eyes to see a nurse sitting in the corner of the room. She looked into my eyes and said, "You're in Presbyterian Memorial Hospital. You've been in an accident. Your parents have been notified. They're on their way."

That was 20 years ago and I still remember those words as clear as if I had just heard them yesterday.

A car that ran a red light had broadsided us. I was

ejected through the canvas roof and hit the roll bar on my way out. My brother was ejected out the side door, the force of the impact giving him a slight fracture of the skull and a slight fracture of the spine. I was unconscious for about 6 hours and in pain for several weeks. My brother was uncon-

live through the accident and to suffer no permanent injuries.

Needless to say, that day was a defining moment in my life. I've been a seat belt wearer ever since, as have my parents and brother. I don't ever want to feel that kind of pain again. I never want my parents to get another phone call telling them their son



Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker

scious for a day and in pain for a couple months.

The driver suffered a bruised knee. He had his seat belt on. My brother and I didn't.

My parents nearly lost their son and daughter that day. At that time it wasn't illegal to not wear a seat belt, just incredibly stupid. My brother and I were very lucky to

and daughter are in intensive care in serious condition.

Wearing a seat belt is still the single most effective thing you can do to increase your chance of living through an accident and reducing any injuries you may suffer from an accident. Don't wait, like I did, to learn this good habit the hard way. Buckle-up, always! ►



# the Blizzard of '88

TSgt Grant Callant, Fairchild AFB, Wash.

It was while we were packing up that everything with our weather went from good to bad quick!









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heard a loud sound humming around us. As we looked out, we saw this helicopter overhead checking out the scene. On the radio they told us that they had orders to pull us out if they could, but due to the low visibility they couldn't put down anywhere and didn't want to chance it. They let down two big A-3 bags full of extra Sterno, MREs and wool blankets.

We had already broken open the winter survival boxes to check them out and see what we had. My lead instructor decided that he would take some of the supplies up to the other vehicle. I had no idea what was going to happen next. He got out of the vehicle and proceeded to the other vehicle with one of the other A-3 bags of supplies. Our vehicles were only a couple hundred feet apart, but you couldn't see each other. In fact, when you got out of the vehicle to relieve yourself, you couldn't see your hand in front of you. He didn't take this into consideration when he left to help out the other vehicle; he was just trying to help them out.

Several minutes went by as I wondered how things were going in the other vehicle, and how he was progressing with them. For whatever reason, to this day, I don't know why, I started testing my head lights by turning them on and off. A few short moments later there was a loud clunk on my driver's side door. I opened it and there stood my lead instructor gasping: *That he'd never made it to the other vehicle and "thanks man, for turning on the lights. You saved my life."*

I didn't know what he meant, but he finally told us that while he tried to get back to the other truck, he got disoriented and turned around in the blizzard. He said he started following a fence line, until snowdrifts buried it. Finally, he turned around and tried to head back to our truck. When he didn't know which way it was, he just laid down on the ground, put his head in his hands and started to pray.

Just a few minutes later, he saw this glowing flash in the snow ahead of him and he thought, "I am

saved." That is when he got back in the truck. We stuck it out for the rest of the 3 days and 2 nights on the side of the road. The other truck got by with what they had in their winter survival kit.

On the 3rd day, after we awoke, we heard the helicopter hovering around again. This time it was able to find a place to land and it took us back to our support base. Except for minor frostbite, everyone returned back to base healthy.

The one major thing we learned was that "**weather can change in an instant.**" We didn't know which way the weather came from, but when it did come, it came in a gale. We survived because

we didn't loose our cool. We just settled down and waited it out. Nobody got stupid and thought they could walk to the MAF or anything. Another lesson learned was we should have tied a rope around my lead instructor when he attempted to go to the other vehicle. This way he could have tied it to the other vehicle and we could use it to guide us back and forth. The old Cheyenne statement, "*If you don't like the weather — wait a minute, it will change,*" was never more true than on that day. We are lucky to have made it through. Never underestimate the weather because in a battle with Mother Nature, you'll lose. ►

## How to survive ... Cold Weather

- ❄ **Stay dry.**
- ❄ **Keep out of the wind.** Use anything available to make a shelter; your car, blankets, tarp, tent, branches, or even packed snow.
- ❄ **Avoid exhaustion and perspiring.** Open layers of clothing if you increase your workload and work slowly.
- ❄ **Stay put.** Do not travel unless necessary for safety. If you do travel, leave a recognizable signal showing your direction of travel.
- ❄ **Recognize onset of cold weather injuries** and prevent if able.

**Frostbite:** cover your extremities and keep them dry.

**Hypothermia:** Recognize it is most prevalent in 30-50 degree weather and when you are wet.



# Drunk drivers **Kill!**

By A1C Jason A. Neal, Pope AFB, N.C.

**T**he summer of '92 holds especially bittersweet memories for me. The summer was incredibly hot and humid. My friends and I had just graduated high school and were very excited about the adventures we were going to soon be having in college.

Those adventures would never happen. Dreams were destroyed when a person decided to get behind the wheel after drinking.

My three closest friends, Remy, Paul, David, and I were basking in the merry anticipation and enjoying having neither jobs nor immediate responsibilities. We had no cares and no hurries, just 6 weeks to spend happily on the lake swimming and skiing.

We were all heading to the University of Arkansas at the end of summer. We had all been accepted and were very excited at the prospect of being Razorbacks. Paul and David's parents had already paid for their tuition while Remy and I both had full-ride scholarships.

Paul and Remy were going to pursue degrees in chemical engineering. David was interested in taking over his dad's business, so he was majoring in business. I was looking forward to pursuing my degree in design.

We were aglow with endless energy and optimism. It seemed that the world was ours and all was well.

David's parents bought him a shiny new blue BMW M-5 sports sedan for graduation and the four of us were going to drive to Hot Springs, Ark., to spend a few days at Oaklawn, watching the horse races. We rented a cabin in Hot Springs National Park, packed, and were frantically making the final arrangements to leave town.

David dropped me off at my house and we were all going to meet up later that evening and leave.

I finished packing and played with my dog, Sadie, for a few hours in the backyard.

My parents, relatives, and several friends of the family had a small celebratory dinner for me. We had a barbecue, and I got what seemed like a thousand hugs and congratulations, not to mention the entire gamut of graduation gifts. My family was proud of me and I was swelling with pride as well.

After dinner was over, it was time for me to meet the guys in town so we could leave for a weekend of horse races and hiking in the Ozarks.

I got in my car and drove toward town. The trip from my parents' house into town was about 20 minutes, and I was halfway there when two police cars passed me. It looked like they were traveling at 100 mph. I was driving 55 mph and they passed me like I was going backward.

About a mile farther down the road an ambulance passed me, and then another ambulance followed closely by two fire trucks.

I didn't give the parade of flashing lights a single thought. I was too contentedly looking forward to the races.

I didn't think about anything but my buddies and our good times.

A mile before the city limit marker, the traffic slowed to a crawl. Around the corner I could see all the lights from the police cars, fire trucks, and the ambulances.

As I slowly made my way toward the chaos on the road, I could see that an 18-wheeled log truck had slid across the road and turned over. A state trooper was directing one lane of traffic, at a time, through the logs scattered across the road. Some of the logs were smoking, evidence of a fire.

As I drove past the fire truck that blocked my view of the wreck, I saw that indeed there had been a fire. The white truck was completely gutted and had been charred black by the blaze.

I wouldn't have noticed the remains of a burnt car that was par-

Photo by SSgt Samuel Rogers





## Our dreams were destroyed when a person decided to get behind the wheel after drinking.

tially crushed under the semi if the traffic hadn't stopped.

I watched as the coroner stood up from a crouched position and walked to his car. He had been blocking my view of what looked like three long pillows. They were bodies. They had been covered with white sheets and their ominous presence was impossible to ignore. I just stared and stared.

Then I noticed it. I noticed the chrome silver stripe, the blue stripe and the orange stripe next to the chrome M5. The badge was on the crushed blue trunk lid, 30 feet from the car, next to the road. I looked at it in total disbelief. I didn't believe that it could be. I had almost rationalized that it must be another blue M5. I wouldn't believe that it could

be my friend's, until I saw Remy's backpack.

There was no denying it. The orange anodized aluminum external frame, the orange canvas pack and the Harley Davidson patch that I helped him sew on at his grandmother's house the summer before. There was no wishing it away.

We never went to the race-track. We never went hiking together again. Instead I went to three funerals. When I left for the University of Arkansas, I left alone.

The driver of the semi lived. He spent a few weeks in the hospital.

The driver of the semi was drunk. He was nearly three times past the legal limit.

I told him that if he had not been drunk, my friends would still be alive.

Remy's grandmother, both of David's parents, and Paul's dad came and visited me when I graduated college. Paul's mother wrote me a long letter.

I still talk to them from time to time, mostly about what Remy, Paul, David, and I would be doing if things were different. And usually there is an uncomfortable silence when the melancholy and the memories get too heavy.

Paul's dad always ends our conversations by telling me that he loves me like a son and that alcohol and automobiles don't mix.

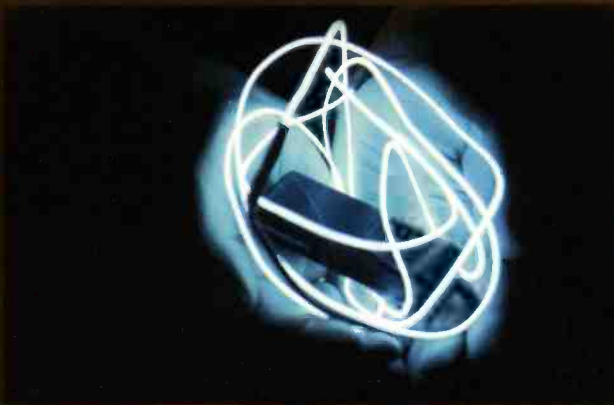
I always tell him that I know. I tell him that I know because I do know. And my heart will forever be heavy with the knowledge. ►



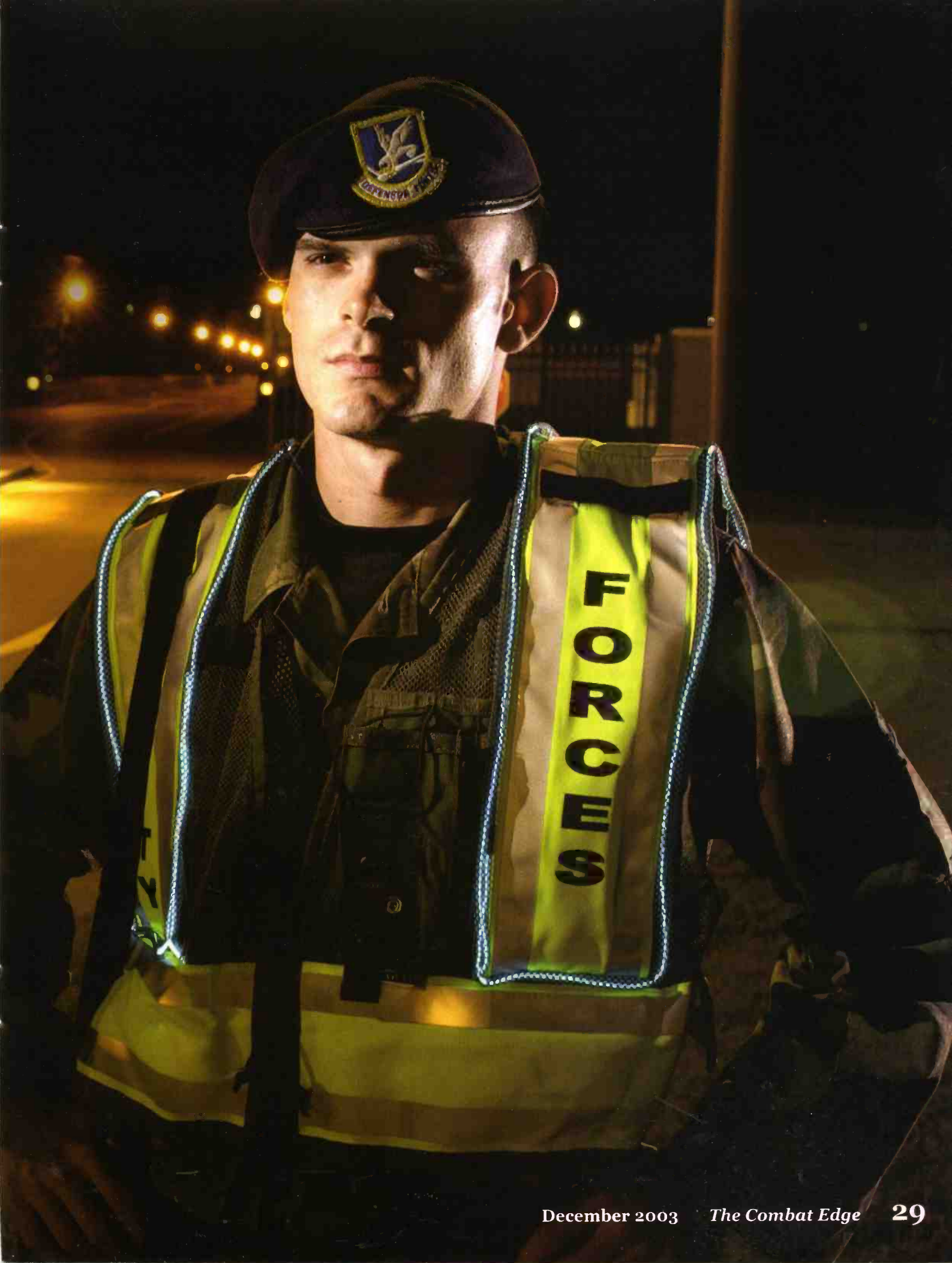
# Can you SEE ME now?

By Maj Wendy Hamilton, Langley AFB, Va.  
Photos by TSgt Ben Bloker, Langley AFB, Va.

This electro-luminescent technology called ELMO-lyte helps a driver see the security forces member before the person is in the car's headlights!









**O**n November 17, 1999, TSgt Wesley Simmons III, a security police patrol supervisor at Nellis AFB, Nev., quickly sealed off and evacuated an area during a bomb threat. It was dusk when he began directing traffic, which was backing up at a nearby intersection. Tragically, an inattentive motorist

international Corp. working for HQ ACC Security Forces Systems Branch.

In the case of the traffic vest, the power source is two AA batteries. The batteries operate the vest for 24 hours continuously, or more practically, three 8-hour shifts at the gate shack. The ELMO-lyte looks similar to

a fiber optic cable and runs through seams on the vest outlining the front and back. Even though it looks like fiber optics, ELMO-lyte is much more durable. In fact, it can be bent, wadded up, tied in a knot, or even cut, and it will keep illuminating. Besides its improved durability, the light can be set on "steady" or "flash"

"If I remember right," she says, "I was walking by Steve's office and saw the vest hanging on the back of his chair. I thought it would be a simple enhancement which would greatly improve safety. It reminded me of those glowing rings you see at fairs. I asked some of our ACC security forces units to test the vest and so far we've gotten good reviews."

In addition to using ELMO-lyte, the traffic safety vest incorporates some basic creature comforts: a camel pack for water, a radio pocket, D-rings on the shoulder to keep firearms from slipping off the slick reflective material, and belt keepers to help take weight off the wearer's hips. All these ideas came from test wearers and helped enhance the vest's functionality and versatility.

"I'd love to see this vest used Air Force-wide," says Colonel Hertog. "We have so many different units who could benefit from the technology. I think about basic military trainees running with their 'Lackland lasers' [flashlights]. Not only would they have increased visibility but the vest would free up their hands as well. Maintainers and flyers on the flight line at night could also use the vest in a permissive environment."

Such a simple, inexpensive piece of equipment, the traffic vest with ELMO-lyte is an example of using today's technology to improve safety.

As Colonel Hertog said, "It amazes me we haven't thought to use it before. It's too simple not to, and I hope other units will consider adopting the technology as well. For so little, we can prevent any more cases like TSgt Simmons'." ►

struck him, and TSgt Simmons died 2 days later. Had he been wearing the new traffic safety vest the 1st Security Forces Squadron at Langley AFB is testing, he might be alive today.

The vest, a Headquarters ACC initiative, uses technology developed at the security forces battlelab in San Antonio, Texas. This electro-luminescent technology called ELMO-lyte helps a driver see the security forces member before the person is in the car's headlights.

"Current reflective technology requires that an exterior light source shine on the material in order to be seen. ELMO-lyte is self illuminating, provided it's connected to its power source," says Mr. Steve Kunich, a senior analyst with Science Applications In-

for even better visibility.

This new technology is important because it could have prevented the 460 deaths nationwide in 2002 which were the result of a motorist not seeing someone in time to avoid them. The statistics are even more telling for police officers. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, Inc., being "struck by an automobile" is the third leading cause of law enforcement deaths annually, only behind shootings and automobile/motorcycle accidents.

Because of its added safety value, Colonel Mary Kay Hertog, Director of Security Forces, Headquarters ACC has been instrumental in actually getting this technology out to the field.






## FY04 Aircraft

As of October 31, 2003

	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed
8 AF		
9 AF		
12 AF		
AWFC		
ANG (ACC-gained)		
AFRC (ACC-gained)		

## FY04 Ground

As of October 31, 2003

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		0	0
9 AF		0	0
12 AF		1	0
DRU's		0	0

## FY04 Weapons

As of October 31, 2003

	Class A	Class B
8 AF	0	0
9 AF	0	0
12 AF	0	0
AWFC	0	0

## Aircraft Notes

And thus begins a new fiscal year. Warrior leaders, if it doesn't look right, smell right, or taste right, it probably ain't right — stop it. Warrior aviators, if it's not briefed, scheduled, or specifically authorized chances are it's dumb, different, or dangerous — AKA: a no-no. Keep the focus. Aviate — Navigate — Communicate. Point at suitable concrete, get the checklist done, develop a plan, get someone to QC your plan, and get the aircraft back on the ground. Also, think about contingencies like missed cables and ground egressing. The fire trucks will definitely see the fire, but maybe not the egresseses. Fly safe!

## Ground Notes

There was one PMV4 Class A mishap in the first month of FY04. This is a much better start for the fiscal year. I know commanders, supervisors, and first sergeants are actively working to prevent mishaps. So let's keep the momentum going and continue to keep our Airmen safe from any additional loss of life.

## Weapons Notes

Last year was a busy year for the AF and the weapons community. With the high ops tempo and all the deployments we supported, the number of mishaps were surprisingly low. We did, however, have one more mishap this past year than the year before. Please continue to educate and encourage good safety practices. Let's make this year the safest year to date in ACC.

## Legend

Class A - Permanent Total Disability; Property Damage \$1,000,000 or more  
 Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between \$200,000 and \$1,000,000  
 Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between \$20,000 and \$200,000  
 \* Non-rate Producing

## Symbols for Mishap Aircraft







Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker



Photo by MSgt William Sharp



Photo by TSgt Charlein Sheets



Photo by SSgt Shane Cuomo



Photo by MSgt William Sharp

*This Holiday Season  
The Combat Edge salutes  
those serving on foreign soil  
fighting for freedom.  
From all of us at ACC Safety,  
have a safe Holiday Season!*