



Combat Edge

May 2006



GENERAL RONALD E. KEYS, COMMANDER

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Combat Edge



4 DEPLOYED SAFETY IS JOB ONE

by Col John P. Good, 9 AF/USCENTAF/SE, Shaw AFB, S.C.



10 ROGUE MAINTENANCE

by Mr. Joseph H. Gray, Barksdale AFB, La.

14 AIRMEN SUPPORTING AIRMEN

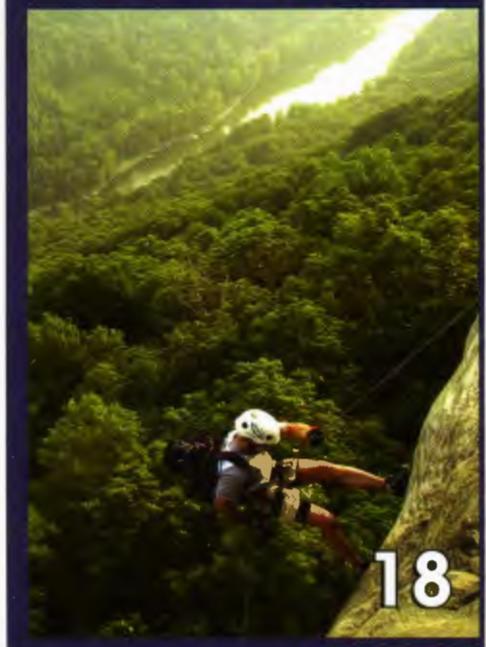
by MSgt Michael L. Walter, Langley AFB, Va.

16 A VISIT FROM AN OLD FRIEND

by Mr. Scott Eck, Barksdale AFB, La.

18 I'VE LIVED AND LEARNED

by SSgt E. Nifong-Velazquez, Barksdale AFB, La.



22 A LITTLE PRM FOR YOUR JET SKI

by MSgt Steve Borton, Shaw AFB, S.C.

DEPARTMENTS

24 MONTHLY AWARDS

28 USAF ANNUAL AWARDS

30 STATS

31 FLEAGLE

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ACCent on Safety



101 Days ... and counting

Although the 101 Critical Days of Summer (CDOS) comprise just over a quarter of the year, they involve 15 weekends, three of which are extended due to ACC Family Days, and all of them are critical. Historically, ACC experiences almost 40 percent of the yearly fatalities during this time period. Going back several years, FY99 to FY05, we can get an idea of how we, as a command, have fared when it comes to fatal mishaps during the 101 CDOS. Mishap increases during this time are due to a variety of reasons: increased leisure time activities, Airmen spending more time on the road traveling, recreating with their family and friends, and taking well deserved vacations.

FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05
5	6	6	9	12	9	6

Taking a quick look at the total number of fatalities for the past 7 years, it's easy to spot the negative upward trend leading up to FY03, and a steady decline back down to last year's total of six. Consider the spike in FY03 fatalities, and ask yourself if some of those mishaps were brought about by world events and their impact on the military. What about driving for the conditions or exceeding your endurance and experience limits and needless risk taking? These are just a few warning signs that a coworker, friend or family member needs your help. Being a good wingman means taking care of each other, and we must pay particular attention to unit members who are deploying and/or returning from deployment; make the transitions smooth.

Remember to use the principles of good Operational Risk Management and Personal Risk Management. Take the time to **Assess** the hazard(s), **Consider** the options, and then **Take** action (ACT process). Proper risk management planning will allow us all to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and our friends out of harm's way.

Don't forget to wear and or use the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when recreating. Motorcyclists need an approved helmet, impact resistant goggles or full face-shield, long-sleeved shirt, full length pants, sturdy footwear and gloves and a brightly colored or contrasting reflective vest or jacket. While boating, each person in the boat must have a flotation device available to them, preferably one being worn at all times while on the water.

Do the little things that pay such large dividends: wear your seat belt and shoulder harnesses properly, ensure your children are seated in correctly installed child seats, and don't drink and drive. We simply can't afford the cost in human suffering and mission impact. Enjoy the upcoming summer and be careful in your endeavors – your nation and your Air Force need you to be duty ready at all times. Be proactive this summer – make safety your **Combat Edge**.



Colonel Creid K. Johnson,
ACC Director of Safety



Deployed safety is Job One

by Col John P. Good, 9 AF/USCENTAF/SE, Shaw AFB, S.C.



“What’s so special about deployed safety? We did that during Operations DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, and SOUTHERN WATCH! Why, we even did that when we deployed in support of SALTY BEE (when we demonstrated we could generate, deploy, operate, and redeploy from the European theater during the Cold War)! There ain’t anything new under that rock!”

Yep, I’m old alright. But I know this new game isn’t like the old one. Deployed (you may choose the term “expeditionary”) safety is different. It’s different this time because the war covers more than 10 bases, over five regional time zones, where winter, spring, and summer may be occurring simultaneously, and someone’s trying to kill you every day. Joint and coalition mishaps occur. Mishap investigations, even Class Cs, are more difficult, especially when staffing in theater is not set high enough to make winning the war while conducting an accident investigation easy. Imagine all those engine investigations some of you have done state-side; pretty easy, unless you’re trying to win a war while a no-kidding alarm red is going off on your part of the base? How about trying to do a Class A inves-

tigation when evidence you need sits in enemy territory? What if that vehicle involved in a Class A is serviceable and you can put it back into combat quickly; do you do that or hold off until a formal investigation runs its course? Do you think your persuasive skills would be challenged by a unit about ready to employ in combat for the first time when all they interpret from your words is “be safe?” What about lines of authority; who do you call; who makes the call; who does ‘what’ to ‘whom?’ “Auntie Em, Auntie Em, help, it’s a twister!” Hey, this is just to stimulate your thinking. I’m only scratching the surface of the new deployed safety paradigm.

The most important thing about deployed safety is true anywhere the military operates. The mission is “job one.” However, the mission must be clearly defined in simple, operational terms. Once that is accomplished, the next step is to understand that there is a tension, a balance if you will, between risk and benefit. In some cases, the priority of the mission dictates the operational necessity to take on more risk. The challenge for safety is to evaluate those missions to ensure unnecessary increased risk is not unwittingly incurred which might needlessly jeopardize the successful execution of those higher priority missions. The third most important thing is to understand the rules under which the mission is to be accomplished and why those rules were instituted. With these three items clearly in view, deployed safety can be very effective because the boundaries of the mission are plain, risk-benefit balance is assessed, and the foundation on which the mission is laid is understood. The value of this combination is that decision making in terms of safety now has a context, or environment, to temper its processes.

For example, imagine an F-22A unit deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, with one of its jets down for engine Foreign Object Damage (FOD). Did you know that these engines cost \$10.5 million each? Such expenses make engine FOD Class As on F-22As more likely than some of our other jets. Apart from the sterile textbook safety process in terms of conducting a Class A investi-



Photo by MSgt Lance Cheung



Photo by SSgt Stacy L. Pearsall



gation, a combat commander wants to know what the cause was, how to prevent its recurrence, and when the unit can get their jet back. Can the war stand to have one of its jets down for 30 or more days while a safety investigation runs its course? The answer may vary. However, if that jet can be returned to combat inside of an investigation timeline, the commander might want that jet in the air rather than wait for the conclusion of an investigation. So, after gathering the data, do we still hold the jet back from returning to flight quickly? This is the commander's call.

OK, try another example. A convoy in enemy territory has a vehicle flip over apart from enemy involvement and someone is killed. Sounds like a Class A mishap. From a safety perspective, what should we do? Should we go out and take pictures of the site, put the evidence on a truck, and head back to base for interviews, tox testing, and completion of the investigation, or is the risk-benefit scale out-of-balance with some of these activities? Should we take what we can get at minimal risk and complete the investigation in a more permissive environment? Again, your answer may vary, and you might even think I haven't

told you enough to decide. Certainly, the in-theater commander might know more than most as to what call to make, since they are closest to the action. In this example, which is similar to real-world mishaps we in USCENTAF have had to address since Sept. 11, 2001, a benefit could be realized through formalized relief incorporated into Air Force Instructions (AFIs). Tempered by real-world constraints, modifying the AFIs will facilitate this balancing act and yield an adequate safety investigation. Some changes have already been instituted to adapt our safety programs to the reality of today's Air Force and can be found at https://wwwmil.shaw.af.mil/Publishing/EPubs/91series/uscentafi91202/USCENTAFI91_202.pdf.

Let's revisit engine mishaps once more, but from a board-convening perspective. In a combat environment, an organization is sized to accomplish "job one" — prosecute the war. Activities other than this particular "job one" are distracting and manpower draining. Unit effectiveness to accomplish "job one" may be adversely affected, to some degree, by other activities not directly related to "job one." In our example, a formal board must be convened while

the interim board gathers and preserves as much mishap evidence as possible. With the advent of equipment like the F-22A, the possibility of a Class A mishap increases (even if the cause merely appears to be due to engine FOD), simply because of the relative nature of equipment costs in relationship to mishap category dollar thresholds. Considering the upswing in costs of new equipment, with no change to mishap category thresholds, the recurring need to deploy O6-led safety investigation boards should also increase. These boards require space to do their work and some attention from the deployed host unit. However, in terms of engine mishaps, much of the investigating work (apart from cracking open the engine) can be accomplished quickly by the interim board prior to the engine being shipped back to depot. Once the engine is at depot, more discovery may occur and conclusions may be drawn by benefit of exposure to new information as well as the data provided by any on-scene board. In terms of engine mishaps in a combat environment, a combat commander would profit from the formal board conducting its work from depot rather than within the combat environment.

Tough questions, huh? However, these are the types of issues being grappled with in the safety world of combat operations today. Now, let's move beyond examples.

When someone says "be safe," what does that mean to you? Does your perspective of that meaning change in combat? Is the guidance utilized for employing your skills any less applicable, merely because someone is really trying to kill you? If you think published guidance on how to conduct your business is any less applicable, let me offer a sports analogy. Does a team win a championship by deviating from what got them to the championship game? Not usually. The team might modify their approach to exploit the weaknesses of their op-

ponent, but the basics (e.g., running, shooting, passing, bread-and-butter plays), the stuff they're good at, provide confidence and an expectation for success in that championship game. Why should we think we in the Air Force should be any different when employing our trade in combat? Frankly, the combat environment demands more of us in terms of personal and professional discipline, diligence, and an eye for detail than the training environment does. The combat environment, like in any game you want to win, requires some degree of adaptability. However, as some say "physics is physics." What got you to the game is, by-and-large, going to see you through. Therefore, when you hear someone suggest that because they're in

a combat environment the rules don't apply, educate them on what "got them to the game."

So what about joint mishaps, ones where multiple services are involved? Do all the services share a common base in terms of processes, procedures, standards, thresholds, and perspectives? Yep, you're right! They don't all possess this shared (or common) reference. Should they? Well, the more we operate jointly, the more likely joint mishaps will occur. Currently, the services utilize instruments like memorandums of understandings (MOUs). While MOUs are helpful, they lack a broad and needed base of common terms, processes, standards, and thresholds to prepare their collective expectations and to facilitate



more effective and efficient collaboration under the safety tent. A simple set of joint doctrine is needed to serve as a common point of departure and bring safety into that joint arena.

Have you considered the size and composition of that deployed safety office? While the basics are frequently the same (i.e., the need for a chief of safety, as well as ground, flight, and weapon safety offices), a particular safety office might need to be more than one body deep to cover base responsibilities in addition to any detachment activities or regional demands dictated by the combat environment. For instance, USCEN-TAF is experimenting with a concept of drawing down safety manning at some wing detachments while increasing the

manning at the wing headquarters. In the case with this particular experiment, overall safety manning under the entire wing is reduced, while safety manning at the wing headquarters (where mission activity is very busy) is increased. This increase is not only helpful in support of safety efforts at the wing headquarters, but is intended to enable the wing commander to examine the safety environment at bases never directly supported by on-scene safety personnel, but where that wing has occasional operations or potential operations. The impact should be a reduction in theater personnel and an improved level of combat safety.

Deployed safety offers unique and exciting opportunities. In combat, the challenges are endless. The need to

make safety relevant in a combat environment is essential. A relevant safety program in combat serves to "enhance combat effectiveness by the reduction of preventable mishaps" (i.e., the safety mission statement we use at USCEN-TAF). An adaptable safety program exploits these opportunities to remain relevant. Perhaps now you realize "what's so special" about deployed safety.

Col Good is Director of Safety for Ninth Air Force and US Central Air Forces (USCENTAF). He looks forward to discussing this article with you. He can be reached at john.good@shaw.af.mil or at DSN 965-3179. Col Good offers special thanks to Colonel Creid Johnson who was the impetus behind some of these concepts. ✈



by Mr. Joseph H. Gray, Barksdale AFB, La.

Rogue Maintenance



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Strang

FINANCE





Photo by Ann Julianne Truison



Courtesy Photo

What is “rogue maintenance,” you ask? Some of you seasoned maintainers probably have somewhat of an idea. For those of you still pondering, let’s first define the word rogue. A rogue is an unprincipled person or an undesirable variation from a standard. My view of rogue maintenance is just that, unprincipled maintenance or an undesirable variation from a maintenance standard. Most of you have probably heard the term “rogue cop.” You know, someone given tremendous responsibility in the community to serve and protect, but who takes advantage of that trust and responsibility by engaging in unacceptable, irresponsible, and unprofessional behavior by breaking the law themselves and taking matters into their own hands. Rogue maintainers basically do much the same thing, except they commit their offenses in the aircraft maintenance community by engaging in unacceptable, irresponsible, and unprofessional behavior by violating Technical Orders (T.O.s), job guides and work cards, and taking matters into their own hands; T.O.s not included! Don’t look surprised, but instead, pay attention because you just might have a few in your own unit. Sometimes their offenses, and maintenance practices go undetect-

ed, but on occasion, their unprincipled maintenance activities surface in the form of damaged equipment, damaged aircraft, and even injury to themselves or others. If you’re a maintainer, I’m almost certain you’ve crossed paths with someone who exemplified the poor maintenance qualities that have been mentioned so far. This might sound harsh, but the result and reality of such unacceptable maintenance practices is what’s really harsh. Please do your part to ensure rogue maintenance is stopped whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head.

The term rogue maintenance occurred to me after many years of direct involvement in the aircraft maintenance community. As an aircraft maintainer as I tried to understand why someone would be willing to cut corners and put themselves in a position of such intense scrutiny if something went wrong. I’ve had the opportunity to perform and oversee many aspects of maintenance from several different perspectives; crew chief, Quality Assurance (QA), flight chief, expeditor, production superintendent, and as a Flight Safety NCO. I’ve been there so to speak and that is why I feel strongly that it is imperative for everyone in the maintenance community at all levels to stop unacceptable maintenance practices before equipment is

damaged, an aircraft destroyed, or even worse someone is fatally injured. If you are guilty of such rogue maintenance practices, an immediate halt to those unprincipled maintenance practices is the only acceptable course of action. It’s not a matter of “if” something will go wrong, but instead, a matter of “when,” should you continue down that road. If you know of someone practicing unacceptable, irresponsible, or unprofessional maintenance, confront them and backup your confrontation with action if necessary. If you are aware of it, but say or do nothing, then you have, in effect, condoned and accepted the unprincipled maintenance being performed. These rogue maintainers put themselves, you, and others in harms way and jeopardize aircraft and equipment, which ultimately jeopardize the mission. The tremendous cost associated with damaged equipment, facilities, and aircraft goes without saying.

AFI 21-101, *Aerospace Equipment Maintenance Management*, paragraph 1.2. states: “All levels of supervision must place emphasis on safety, quality, and timeliness in the performance of maintenance. Quality maintenance depends on the integrity and skills of the technician. This concept must be fostered by each supervisor and technician and will not be degraded. Short-

cuts or incomplete maintenance actions are prohibited." Integrity is the word I key on, unfortunately, not all of our Air Force members embody the same levels of integrity and that is where you have to step in. Don't think for a minute it can't happen in your unit. Job guides, T.O.s, and checklists were established to ensure specific steps are accomplished for safe and thorough task completion. Safe and thorough task completion ultimately helps determine the quality of the maintenance product. Rogue maintenance can occur on a variety of levels, but the results are usually the same.

Who did it? Who did it becomes the main focus when or if negligence is determined. If you are at fault, i.e., the perpetrator, you will find yourself in a position that will not be positive for you. An intense chain of events takes place. Here's what I've witnessed; your supervisor arrives on the scene, followed by his supervisor, followed by maintenance supervision at all levels, and in some cases your unit commander. It doesn't stop there; QA arrives on the scene, followed by your unit or wing safety personnel, because an incident has occurred which could possibly lead to a reportable mishap. If that doesn't get your attention, sometimes the applicable group commander heads out to assess the damage for themselves when it's one of those situations that have to

be seen to be believed. I've also witnessed wing commanders interrupt their busy schedules to come see what all the fuss (radio traffic) is about. And where does that put you? In the spotlight of course, but not the type of spotlight you want to be in! You may as well be wearing a sign that says: "I am the individual who failed to follow tech data and I am personally responsible for the damage to this aircraft." There's more ... QA then starts their investigation and interview process with you; and if that's not enough, safety personnel are required to investigate, interview you and other potential witnesses, and obtain witness statements. The safety office's goal is mishap prevention, so safety personnel will determine what happened and make recommendations to prevent the incident from happening again. But you're not out of the woods yet!

A task decertification might be in order depending on the task. In some units, the perpetrator gets to brief roll calls or have to visit maintenance supervision or the unit commander and explain why they decided to cut corners or skip key steps in a task that resulted in damage. The damaged facility, equipment, or aircraft doesn't get hidden away and it can sometimes take weeks for the damage to be repaired. In the meantime, that damaged hangar door off its tracks, the huge hole in the

aircraft wing, the aircraft resting on its fuselage due to a collapsed gear, or that aircraft with the missing hatch will become a constant reminder, and become a topic of conversation with your name attached to them as the perpetrator. That kind of attention, I think most of us can do without. A situation like this has the potential to not just ruin your day, but your career.

Here is something for maintainers to think about: remember, you are literally putting the lives of others in your hands when you are preparing an aircraft to fly its next mission. Our aircrews step to the aircraft with the confidence that you, as an Air Force maintainer, are providing the best product available in terms of safe, reliable aircraft for flight. Aircrews expect you to have properly prepared the aircraft so they can effectively fly the intended mission and return home safely. There is an unwritten trust that exists between those who fly and those who prepare the aircraft for flight. When you perform rogue maintenance, you violate that trust. It takes a very long time, if ever, to gain back the trust of coworkers, supervisors, commanders, pilots, and aircrew members following a mishap where negligence has occurred. The few minutes gained by cutting corners or allowing others to do it aren't worth it; don't become a rogue maintainer. ✪



Photo by A1C Christopher Irwin

AIRMEN supporting AIRMEN



Photo by 1Lt Greg Hignite

Another Approach

by MSgt Michael L. Walter, Langley AFB, Va.

With the start of the “101 Critical Days of Summer” quickly approaching, we need to reflect back on our previous losses and focus on the lessons learned. Last summer the Air Force lost 29 Airmen in accidents; compared to 32 during FY04 and 37 from FY03. Regrettably during FY05, six of these members were from ACC. We’ve made significant strides in reducing our mishaps during the past 3 years, but we can and must do better — every Airman must come to understand that accidents are preventable. This requires leadership action and the involvement of our newest Airmen. This approach can help promote and instill a safety culture in our units.

This summer ACC will continue a full-court press to preserve lives “Airmen Supporting Airmen.” Implemented appropriately, the “Airmen Supporting

Airmen” approach will encourage open and specific mishap prevention communication amongst Airmen at every level. This encourages leaders and supervisors to solicit ideas, then implement, and act upon proactive mishap prevention concepts younger Airmen propose. This all-encompassing approach to mishap prevention should help us foster alternative “outside-the-box” safety initiatives for use within the command.

The concept is simple, Airmen reminding each other to be safe — helping others to act safely is key to the wingman concept. The goal is to increase interest and generate Airmen participation in order to progressively improve safety. Too often we hear Airmen describe their impression of safety as getting the same boring and worn out speech from a supervisor or commander. Involving young Airmen at the wing, squadron, and work center levels, to help plan the

campaign can gain their “buy in” and result in the development of strategies and methods that will work from them.

Seek the involvement of your local Airman’s Council, Group 56, Unit Advisory Council, or Base Advisory Council; professional organizations like these are often a great place to start. Turn the campaign over to them and let them plan, develop messages or safety flyers, and organize events to promote the “101 Critical Days of Summer.” Once you’ve got your Airmen’s “buy in” and involvement — keep them involved. Our younger troops have great ideas and their input could be crucial in making a positive impact toward their survival. They understand their subcultures and can help foster new approaches to mishap prevention. We need their help.

Motor vehicle fatalities plagued the Air Force last year and continue to be one of our greatest challenges. Last





Photo by SSgt Amber K. Whittington



Photo by Mr. Dale Eckroth



Photo by Capt Carlos Diaz

The "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign began in the early 1980s and was developed to counter the traditional increase in Air Force mishaps and fatalities that occur during the summer months. Campaign efforts attempt to increase personal awareness of risk and thereby reduce the number of summer mishaps and fatalities. Traditional efforts include: messages by senior leadership, mass briefings by commanders, weekly supervisory briefings, pre-trip/travel/departure briefings, etc.

summer, the Air Force lost nine active duty personnel to automobile mishaps and another nine to motorcycle mishaps. Tragically, these two categories accounted for 62 percent of this period's fatalities. Drowning mishaps accounted for another five Air Force deaths. Getting everyone to wear their seat belts, wear personal flotation devices, and use the appropriate motorcycle equipment can make a big difference. Ask your Airmen to consider this question as they are planning their campaigns, "Why don't Airmen choose to wear personal protective equipment like seat belts or flotation devices?" Encourage your Airmen to develop new and innovative ideas to get the message out to keep each other safe.

ACC has had some major success; for two consecutive years the Command has not lost a single person in a motorcycle-related accident during the cam-

paign. We attribute this success to the hard work and diligent efforts at every level to include those individuals that made safe decisions — even when no one was there to remind them. We need the same level of focus again this year.

Finally, I challenge everyone to speak up and get this message across — don't just let your Airmen take the ball and run — they still need your support. After the "101 Critical Days of Summer" are over, and your Airmen, friends and coworkers are safe and sound, you'll know your campaign was successful. If this is the case, take note of what went well to better plan for next year's efforts and also share your success with the command. We've made progress, but need your support to get younger personnel actively engaged and leading the campaign if we hope to reduce fatalities and prevent mishaps.



Photo by Mrs. Jennifer Brugman

A visit from an Old Friend

by Mr. Scott Eck, Barksdale AFB, La.

has quicker reflexes (if needed) and the ability to make better decisions.

Alcohol and any activity do not mix. Alcohol is a depressant which impairs reasoning ability, judgment, and reflexes.

Find time to relax and don't try to cram too much activity into your summer vacation. Enjoy life and the time you spend with your loved ones. Take some time to "stop and smell the roses," and while you're at it, find some time for yourself to get into proper physical condition.

Educate yourself. If you're going to try a new physical activity, learn all you can about it first. Consult the experts, think about the risks, and plan ahead for contingencies. Above all, trust your instincts. If it sounds unsafe and looks unsafe ... it probably is.

Remember: fun and risk needn't go hand-in-hand when the 101 Critical Days of Summer rolls around each year. We can't control the 101 Critical Days and keep them from coming, but, with a little planning and forethought, we can set historically low mishap rates.

"So, when I knock on your door, are you going to let me in?"

Sincerely yours,

~ The 101 Critical Days of Summer

drinking and driving, speeding, exceeding the limits of their skills or equipment, or failing to use appropriate protective gear.

Unfortunately, past history shows that several Air Force personnel will lose their lives or sustain a serious injury during this time period. Most of these incidents will be directly related to the operation of some form of vehicle while under the influence of alcohol; and as the result of those unsafe acts, the lives of Airmen and their families will change forever. Last year during this time frame, 262 ACC warriors were involved in some type of mishap; and when all was said and done, these warriors were taken out of the fight and the mission suffered.

So how can you protect yourself and the wing's vital mission during this time? One way is by following this simple acronym:

Sleep is crucial to ensure the body and mind are both well rested for the task at hand. A well-rested individual

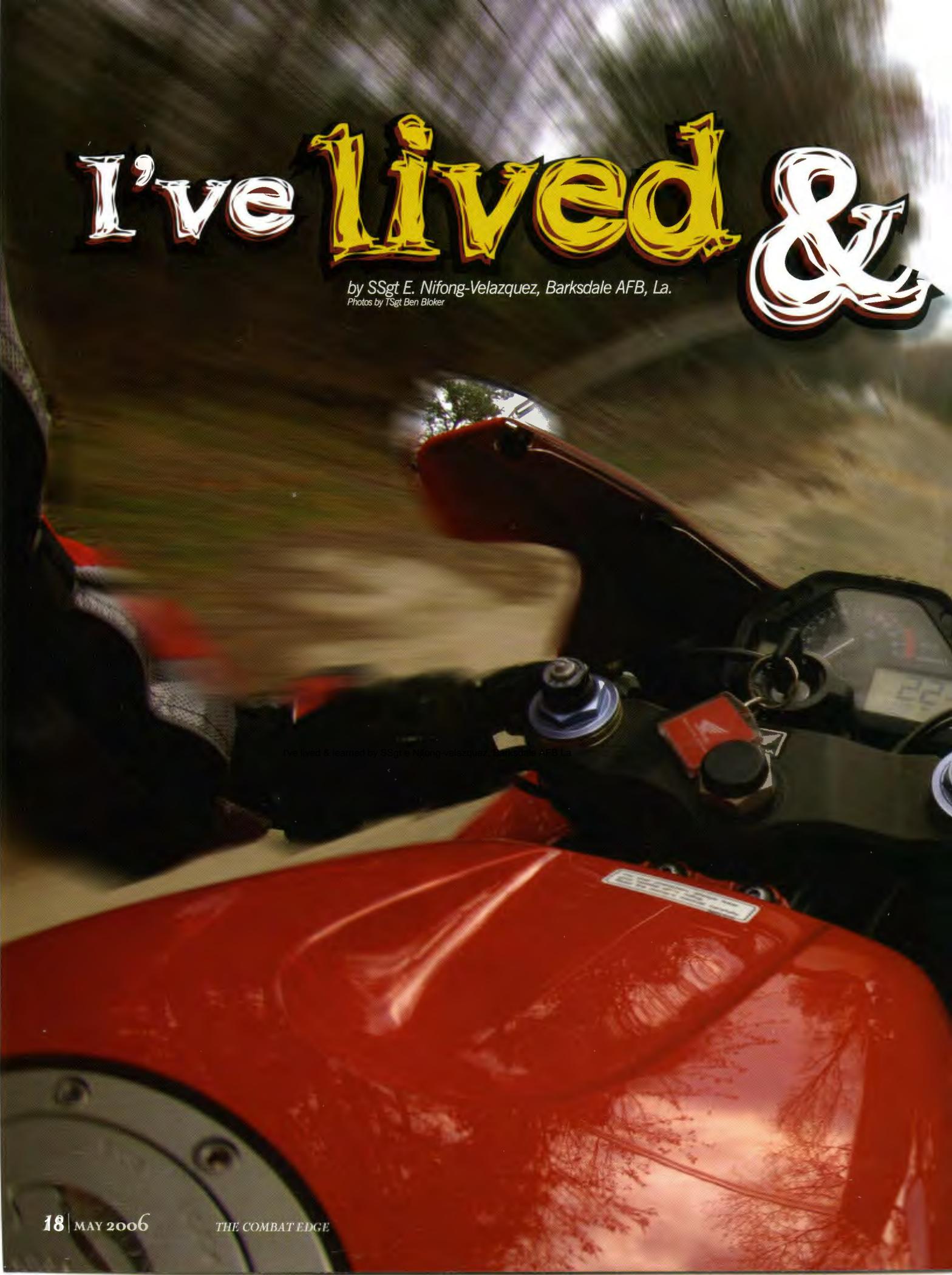
“Well ... it's that time again ... summertime is here and I'm coming for a visit. Who am I? Why it's me, your old friend ... the 101 Critical Days of Summer. When I knock on your door, are you going to let me in? Don't make it a boring summer for me; go ahead ... have a few beers before you go boating. Go on ... you don't need any training to ride that motorcycle. Sure, you can cut the grass in open-toed sandals. Remember, if it looks easy on TV, it must be, I bet you can do it on the first try ...”

What's not to love about this time of year; it's a glorious period of summer vacations, a chance to kick back, relax, take some time off, and maybe do a little traveling. It's also a time when people become so distracted and more concerned about their off-duty endeavors, that they let their guard down and do things; stupid things they know aren't right like



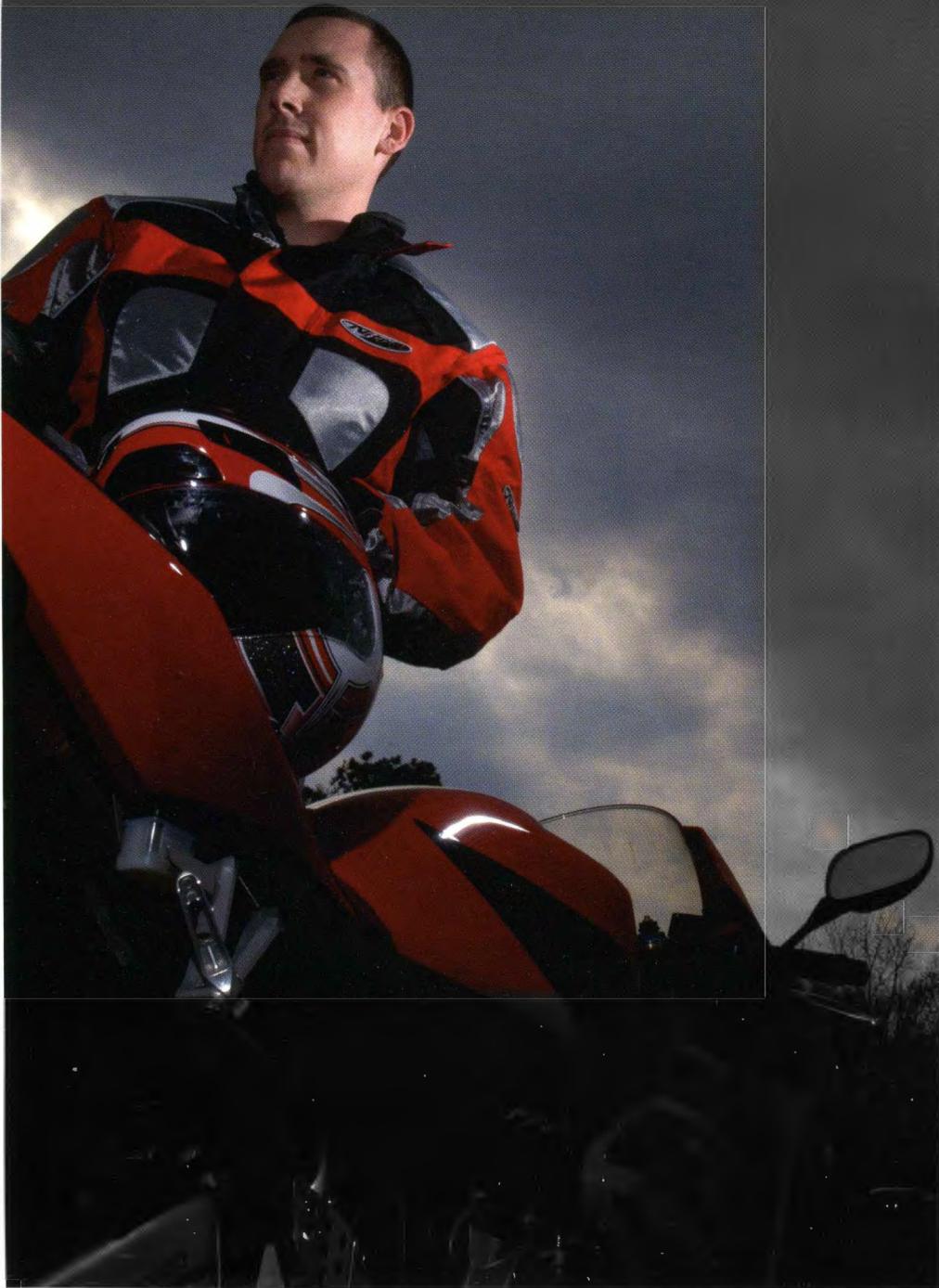
I've lived &

by SSgt E. Nifong-Velazquez, Barksdale AFB, La.
Photos by TSgt Ben Bloker



learned





Just 4 years ago I almost died ... several times. I guess you could say I was in my "I'm invincible" phase. I was a divorced, single parent and wanted to take advantage of all life had to offer while I was still young.

It was the summer of 2002 and I was attending Airman Leadership School. My daughter was being cared for by grandma and grandpa a few states away so I could focus on school. I did well in school and met a lot of new people. Some of those new people I met happened to be motorcycle enthusiasts. Well, I started to hang out with my new friends on the weekends, going to dinner, and playing pool. After a few weeks, the weather started to warm up and they all seemed very antsy. When I asked them what all the excitement was about they told me about their bikes. One was a Honda CBR 929 and the other a Suzuki GSXR600, which was all Greek to me at the time.

One weekend, they invited me to go out riding with them for a few hours. I figured "What the heck, what could happen?" They told me to wear long sleeves with a hooded sweatshirt, some jeans, and boots. I had to borrow an extra helmet from one of them and they explained "The Rules for Passengers" to me. After a few laps around the neighborhood, we were ready to go. I have to tell you, once I got on the bike I couldn't stop smiling, I was having so much fun. We stopped to meet six other riders, and once we all were ready, we took off on one of the major roads through town. That is when one of the bikers started to do "wheelies" while another crossed his leg over the bike and dragged his heels on the road. Once we got to a back road, my rider told me to hold on tight. He hit the throttle and did a "wheelie" for at least 100 feet. I was scared, but like I said earlier, I felt invincible at that time in my life. My adrenaline was pumping from all the tricks. We ended up riding for a little over 5 hours that day. We took the highway back home. All of the riders started weaving in and out of traffic, and I noticed it was getting harder for me to hold onto my rider. My grip was so tight I thought I was going to crush his ribs. I was just able to tilt my head

to one side to look at the speedometer to see how fast we were going ... it read 138 MPH.

That was just one day of many I spent with my new friends that summer. The friend I rode with that summer suffered later that year. He went for a ride with another passenger and tried to do a trick; 20 minutes later he found himself in an ambulance being rushed to the nearest hospital. He suffered really bad road rash on his arms, hands, legs, muscle damage to his shoulder, and a broken collarbone. His passenger was in the ICU for almost 2 weeks fighting for her life. He was a firefighter and could no longer fulfill his military duties, so he was medically discharged. They both survived the accident, but were permanently disabled. Had they been wearing the proper Personal Protective Equipment, their injuries might not have been so severe. Had they used good riding skills, they probably would have avoided the mishap altogether.

Three years later, I was chosen to cross-train into the Safety career field and have seen enough in my first year in this job to make my heart tremble every

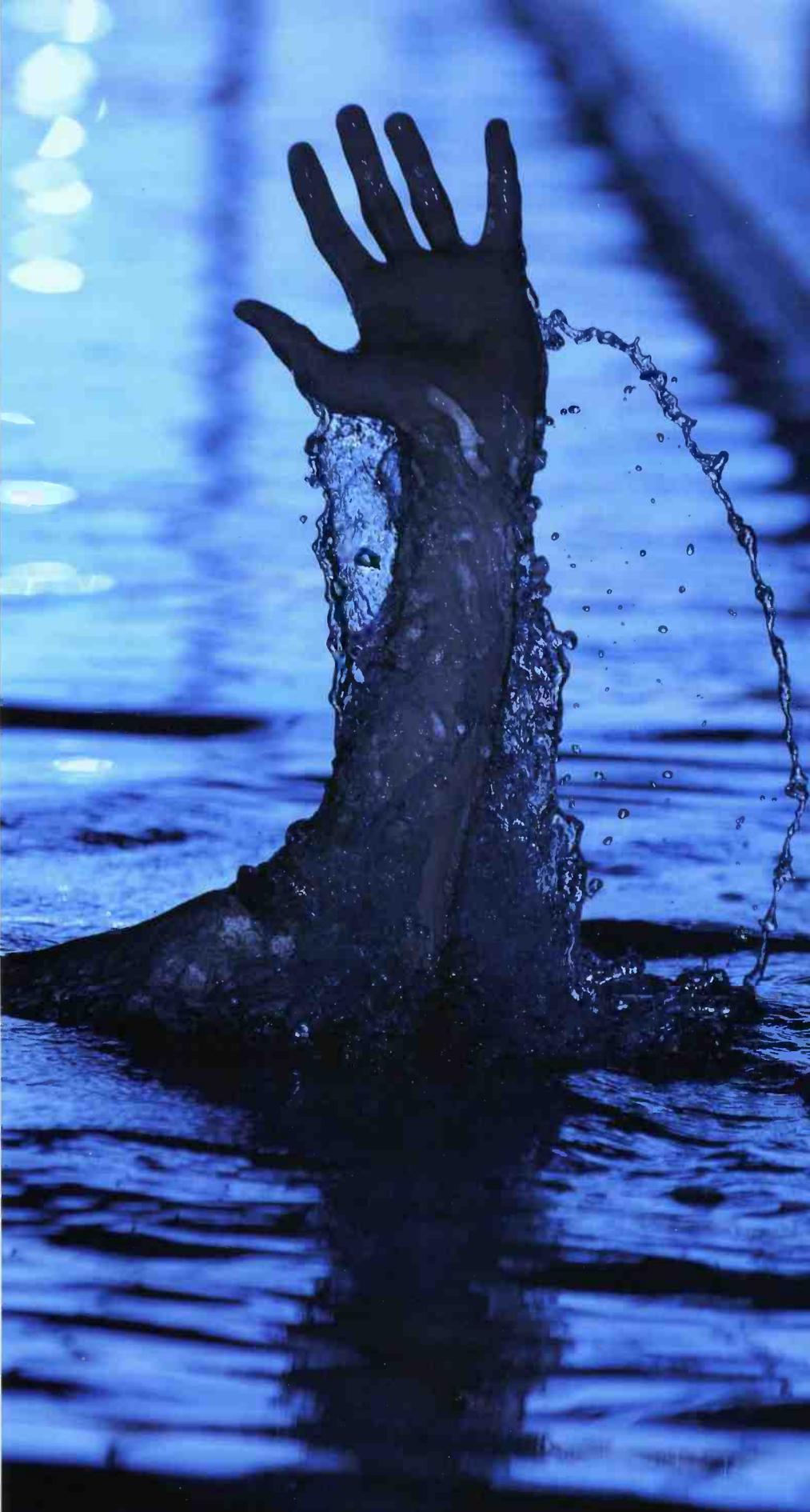
time I think of what I did that summer. I have been asked "What were you thinking?" as well as "Didn't you think of what could have happened?" and "What about your daughter?" I have no answers to their questions, other than to say I must be blessed. I am not trying to give any biker the idea that this kind of behavior is acceptable or to brag about my experiences. I would like to think of this as an opportunity to convince riders who are in it for all the wrong reasons that it is not worth it. I have nothing but regret for myself and my friends' reckless and naïve behavior. There is no telling what could have happened if I had been involved in an accident, or worse, ended up as a fatal statistic. My coworkers, friends, and family would have suffered, and I might have ended up medically discharged like my friend due to injuries. I would then have to return to my small hometown in Alabama to live with my parents and think of all the things my daughter would not be provided due to my poor judgment.

I just celebrated my 27th birthday on the 1st of January. My 5-year-old daughter is starting her sixth month of

gymnastics and the tooth fairy visited her for the first time last weekend. I am expecting my second child any day now — a baby boy! And I am married to a great father, a man most women could only dream of. Not 1 day goes by that I don't think about how blessed and lucky I am to have this opportunity to tell my story and maybe save a life.

Looking back, it's obvious my friends and I failed in our duties as wingmen. None of us looked out for ourselves and we certainly did not look out for each other, either. Confronting friends and peers about unsafe behavior is difficult, but it is the sacred duty of every wingman, and far easier than looking back in hindsight at opportunities lost and potential wasted. If I had been a better wingman, things might have turned out differently. My friends might still be serving their country, doing the jobs they love, and choosing their paths in life. Everyone from the youngest Airman to the most seasoned veteran deserves a good wingman willing to make the "tough calls." I was able to walk away unscathed, but the next person might not be so lucky. ✈





Let me tell you a story. It's not a "Once upon a time ..." story but a true life story. The good thing about this story is that there is a "happily ever after ending," or at least "happily ever after" until next time. Hopefully, the individuals involved learned a lesson on personal risk management.

It was a cold January morning and I was on my way to scout out some new water for an upcoming fishing tournament. Prior to my departure, I checked my boat and truck to make sure I had everything I needed and performed a functional check of my safety equipment. I checked tire pressures, life vests, oars, flares, keys, gas, oil, lights, engine kill switch, and last, but not least rods and tackle. Everything was good to go, so I headed off to pick up my fishing buddy.

After about a 2-hour drive, we launched my boat and we were off to explore the waters of the Cooper River. Because it was the day after a cold front, we were not expecting to catch many fish, as the winds were around 10-15 mph out of the S-SW, water temperature was 47-48 degrees, and by the afternoon, the air temperature had only risen into the low 60s.

Around 1500, we decided to call it a day and headed for the boat launch to pack up and head home. As I was waiting to put my boat on the trailer, I watched an individual launch a Jet Ski. He was only wearing jeans, a sweatshirt, and a life vest. I thought it was kind of strange that someone would be jet skiing in that water temp and cool climate without a heavy wet suit.

My fishing buddy and I got my boat loaded and out of the water and started strapping it down when I noticed the individual on the Jet Ski had his young son and wife join him for a ride. The driver and passengers were all dressed alike: life vests, jeans, sweat-shirts, but no wet suits.

As my buddy and I were talking to some other fishermen, we heard a scream for help. I looked down towards the boat launch and saw the Jet Ski float past, and then noticed a hand out of the water on the far side of the dock, waving. I knew I didn't have any time to

waste, as a person had died of hypothermia in a boating accident at Lake Wateree just a few weeks earlier.

I sprinted toward the spot where the hand was and found the family fighting the incoming tide while trying to hold onto the dock. I snatched the young child out of the frigid waters and handed him to another individual. I then guided the mother and father around the corner of the dock so they could walk up the boat ramp. Once they were safely out of the water I turned my attention back to the youngster.

I took the youngster's life vest and upper garments off. He was screaming, shivering, and complaining of how cold he was. Once I got his upper garments off, I took my sweatshirt off and put it on him. I then suggested to the parents that we take the child to their car and get the heater going to help warm him up.

I monitored the family to see

if they would need further assistance while another boater salvaged the Jet Ski. After a while, they said they were fine and would not need any more help. The mother could not stop thanking me for what I had done to help them. I explained to her that I hadn't done anything more than anybody else would have done; I was just the first one to get to them.

After everyone had calmed down, I found out that the gentleman had just bought the Jet Ski a couple of days prior. As a matter of fact, he admitted that he didn't have any experience riding or operating a Jet Ski, and hadn't bothered to get any hands-on instruction or training from the dealer when he purchased it.

With that said, there are a few lessons to be learned here. First, if you are inexperienced in operating something you purchase, seek training if it is available. Second, be it a boat, motorcycle,

Jet Ski, or other recreational vehicle, become proficient in the operation before you take on passengers. Finally, make sure you always have the required or proper protective equipment for the conditions. With the cold water temperatures involved with this incident, the family should have been wearing heavy wet suits. Had this incident happened on the main river, away from the boat launch, the family most likely would not have survived. Don't let this happen to you. Always practice the principles of personal risk management.

If you are interested in receiving training on your personal watercraft and boats, contact your local Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Most DNR offices offer online or video training. Also, once you successfully complete this training, most insurance companies will offer you a discount on your insurance policy. 🗡

A little PRM for your Jet Ski

Personal Risk Management Can Prevent Watercraft Tragedy
by MSgt Steve Borton, Shaw AFB, S.C.

Photos by SrA Austin Knox



Photo by Mr. John Dyer

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS



On initial takeoff, Lt Schoeneberg, and Capt Steeves raised the gear and did not get a proper “up and locked” indication. After avoiding an over speed of the T-38’s gear by slowing down to a safe airspeed, they put the gear handle back down and requested a chase ship via tower. The chase ship verified that the gear was extended; however, the nose wheel was canted 40 degrees to the left. After running all checklists and coordinating with the SOF, TOP 3, and the T-38 ADO, Lt Schoeneberg and Capt Steeves chose to fly a faster than normal approach with a normal flare and touch the nose gear to the runway in an attempt to straighten out the nose wheel. The first attempt veered the aircraft abruptly to the left and did not center the nose wheel. Lt Schoeneberg expertly executed a go around using afterburner. On the second attempt Lt Schoeneberg lined up on the

right side of the runway flying approximately 15kts fast on approach. He engaged the nose wheel steering as he touched the nose wheel to the runway; the aircraft again veered to the left and again did not center the nose wheel. Lt Schoeneberg added power, raised the nose, and then firmly touched the nose wheel to the runway while engaging the nose wheel steering. This successfully straightened out the nose wheel. At this point the aircraft was at a faster than normal touchdown speed and Lt Schoeneberg skillfully slowed the aircraft under control and brought the aircraft to a complete stop.



Lt Robert N. Schoeneberg, Capt Geoffrey M. Steeves
394th Combat Training Squadron
509th Bomb Wing
Whiteman AFB, Mo.



During his recovery from a low-angle strafe pass, Capt Powers observed his master caution and left engine hot lights illuminate at approximately 300 feet above ground level. While climbing away from the ground, he observed a rapidly rising engine temperature and decaying RPM. Capt Powers quickly and correctly diagnosed the indications as an unrecoverable compressor stall. Recognizing the time critical nature of the over temperature, Capt Powers shut down his left engine; preventing permanent engine damage. While navigating the mountain valley single-engine, Capt Powers completed multiple checklists associated with his emergency and prepared to divert to China Lake Naval Air Station, the nearest suitable airfield, 60 nautical miles away. On his way to China Lake, Capt Powers was forced to cross high terrain exceeding 6,500 feet mean sea level; a challenging task in a thrust deficient situation. With his left hydraulic system inoperative, Capt Powers was required to configure using auxiliary landing gear extension procedures and engage his emergency brake system. Capt Powers recognized the decrease in aircraft per-

formance caused by the high density altitude and elected to delay gear extension until glide slope intercept. Configuring in the descent enabled him to maintain sufficient control authority to counteract adverse yaw common to A-10 single-engine approaches. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasized, as failure to counteract such yaw has resulted in three Class A mishaps in the A-10’s history, all of which occurred at bases with substantially lower density altitudes. Once coming to a stop using the emergency brakes, Capt Powers shut down his remaining engine and egressed the aircraft. The quick thinking and exceptional flying skills exhibited by Capt Powers in handling an engine failure at low altitude, in mountainous terrain, and at a high density altitude, not only prevented damage to the engine, but also resulted in the safe recovery of this combat asset under some of the most challenging conditions.



Capt Garrin W. Powers
75th Fighter Squadron
23rd Fighter Group
Pope AFB, N.C.



Flight Line Safety

Award of Distinction

A1C Peska, TSgt Nagy, A1C Stratton, A1C Glasscock and A1C Folts distinguished themselves by averting a major fire on a RC-135U Combat Sent aircraft. The RC-135U is the only current operational aircraft in the Air Force Inventory that collects precision Signal Intelligence that provides solid battlefield awareness to the war fighter. During routine recovery operations after the aircraft returned to the parking spot, a brake on the left main landing gear developed a hydraulic leak and began to spray hydraulic fluid onto the brakes. Residual heat in the brakes was high enough to ignite the hydraulic fluid, which drove the magnesium brakes to catch on fire. Airman Peska was the first to notice the fire and immediately notified the aircrew. Then, without hesitation, he rushed towards the flames with a 150-pound Halon 1211 flight line fire extinguisher, un-reeled the hose, and began to fight the flames. Within minutes, the four other individuals responded with a second 150-pound extinguisher to assist A1C Peska. Despite the ineffectiveness of the Halon fire bottles to extinguish a magnesium fire, the team was able to contain the fire

for approximately 5 minutes until the arrival of the Offutt Base Fire Department. The maintenance team's immediate intervention was critical to limiting the damage to a unique 159 million dollar reconnaissance aircraft asset, but more importantly the team allowed the safe evacuation of 29 aircrew members. After the incident was over, the aircraft was restored to fully mission capable status later that evening after maintenance replaced the brake, tire, and a hydraulic line.



**TSgt Thomas M. Nagy, A1C Marcus A. Peska
A1C Joseph B. Glasscock, A1C Noah W. Stratton
A1C Adam M. Folts
55th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
55th Wing
Offutt AFB, Neb.**



Weapons Safety

Award of Distinction

When the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center's (AMARC) weapons safety position was abruptly vacated prior to the Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI), Mr. Pederson shouldered the added duties with ease. Applying superior organizational skills developed as AMARC's Ground Safety Manager, he contacted the 355th Wing Safety office for training and program management oversight. He then spearheaded a complete overhaul of AMARC's weapons safety program. Mr. Pederson immediately re-vamped the weapons safety continuity book which provided a more streamlined guide for the weapons safety program. He modified the annual inspection checklist to facilitate better inspection processes for the safety staff and agencies being inspected. Inspection report formats

were re-aligned to ensure all safety program elements required by applicable AFIs were clear and concise. He conducted 35 spot inspections and assessments, identified numerous deficiencies, and ensured permanent corrective actions were adopted. Mr. Pederson archived old data files and constructed a more efficient and user-friendly file plan to aid in program management. His outstanding efforts enabled AMARC to achieve an overall excellent rating for the inspection.



**Mr. Matt Pederson
AMARC/CC-SE
355th Wing
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.**

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

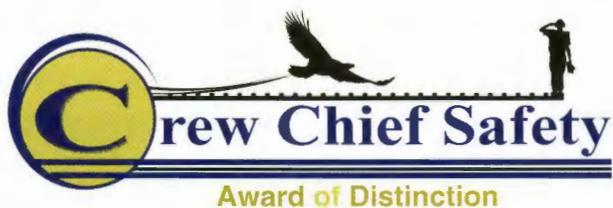


SrA Dena Johnson's keen intuition to spot unsafe situations led her to question the seemingly excessive load of supplies and equipment placed in the unit storage area. She brought her concerns to the attention of her supervisor and chain of command. The storage loft was immediately ordered off limits until further investigation deemed it safe to re-enter. SrA Johnson personally contacted the building engineer to determine the total acceptable weight limit for the storage loft. With that information in hand, SrA Johnson led a team of Airmen to remove the complete inventory from the loft. She then painstakingly weighed each item and recorded the data for future use. Although surely a tedious task, her unselfish attitude and staunch work ethic enabled her to complete the "weigh-in" in 6 hours flat. She knew that it was critical to quickly return this valuable and potentially pilferable equipment to secure storage. Following careful calculations, SrA Johnson directed her team of Airmen in the effort to evenly distribute the weight of the equipment across the entire loft. Under SrA Johnson's watchful eye, the team was careful not to exceed the weight limit prescribed by the building engineer. SrA Johnson briefed the unit on the weight limit for the loft, ensuring all members understood the risk of the floor collapsing on the offices below if the weight limit prescribed by the building engineer was not adhered to.

Total time from hazard identification to hazard abatement was just 14 hours; a remarkable feat for such a task! SrA Johnson also volunteered her time to help prepare the unit for a 7th Bomb Wing Safety SAV. During a walk-through inspection, she noticed a defective safety cane used by the radio maintenance personnel. After researching the cane, she discovered that it was obsolete. She procured a National Stock Number for the updated version of the cane and located a supplier. Her find lessened the chances of a fatal electrocution mishap by the unit's radio maintainers. SrA Johnson's aggressive approaches to making sure things are done on time shown through with her procurement of \$500,000 in combat safety gear. She ordered and tracked state-of-the-art Battlefield Airmen equipment for all 73 personnel assigned to the unit. Her persistence paid off well, guaranteeing 28 departing SQ personnel would be the most modern, well-protected force on the battlefield.



SrA Dena R. Johnson
11th Air Support Operations Squadron
3rd Air Support Operations Group
Fort Hood, Texas



While refueling a B-52H, SrA Davis averted a catastrophic mishap which could have destroyed or damaged multiple aircraft and caused many injuries or deaths. During the refueling operation, an in-flight refueling receptacle seal ruptured, spilling large amounts of fuel onto the ramp and created the potential for an aircraft fire and environmental contamination. Recognizing the extreme gravity of the situation, SrA Davis immediately sprang into action and executed the emergency shutdown of the refueling operation. He evaluated the situation after safely stopping the refueling operation, and determined that the aircraft was no longer leaking fuel. He immediately evacuated all personnel in the immediate vicinity,

called for emergency response, and cordoned off the aircraft. Finally, SrA Davis coordinated the cleanup of the fuel spill and eliminated the possibility of an environmental hazard. SrA Davis' leadership and decisive action averted the loss of at least one \$53.4M national asset, but more likely two other aircraft parked next to this aircraft as well. His actions also prevented possible injury or death of his coworkers and probable environmental contamination.



SrA James E. Davis
5th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
5th Bomb Wing
Minot AFB, N.D.



Unit Safety

Award of Distinction

The 3d Weather Squadron (3 WS) demonstrated superior performance while making significant contributions towards personnel protection in support of Fort Hood Army Installation, the DoD's largest military installation. 3 WS tenaciously tracked an approaching winter ice storm and provided crucial weather briefings to Fort Hood leadership prior to a 4-day holiday weekend. The forecasters' gave leadership a 3-day "heads-up" of the impending threat. This allowed leadership ample time to notify troops to take proper precautions prior to the holiday weekend. 3 WS' situational awareness during the 15 hours of freezing precipitation and more than 18 hours of icy road conditions was leveraged by the III Corps CC and Home Station Operations Center staff to properly alert troops via local TV and radio media of the icy road conditions on and around Fort Hood. This advanced notice and situational awareness helped safeguard Fort Hood's 60K person workforce and their dependents by ultimately preventing automobile

accidents and protecting lives. Local civilian authorities reported only 47 accidents during the storm, down by more than 60 percent from the previous ice storm. The advanced notice on the precipitation and temperatures also allowed firefighting crews to stand-down from their 2-hour on-call standby they have been working the past 3 months, due to constant wild fire threat, and go back to their normal 8-hour on-call standby; giving crews a much needed break.



3rd Weather Squadron
3rd Air Support Operations Group
Fort Hood, Texas

ACC Safety Salutes Superior Performance



Maj Thomas R. Lane
 B-1 Instructor Pilot
Maj Theodore M. Wagner
 B-1 WSO

1Lt Donovan Davis
 B-1 Student Pilot
1Lt Ariane McKay
 B-1 Student WSO
 28th Bomb Squadron
 7th Bomb Wing
 Dyess AFB, Texas

Capt Heather A. Fox
 U-2 Aircraft Commander
 99th Reconnaissance Squadron
 9th Reconnaissance Wing
 Beale AFB, Calif.

Capt Chris J. McCarthy
 Operational Test & Eval IP
 28th Test Squadron
 53rd Wing
 Eglin AFB, Fla.

Maj Christopher J. Zuhlke
Lt Col Mark R. Lovejoy
 F-15E Instructors
 17th Weapons Squadron
 57th Wing
 Nellis AFB, Nev.

A1C Israel Woodmancy
 Asst Dedicated Crew Chief
 388th Aircraft Maintenance
 Squadron
 388th Fighter Wing
 Hill AFB, Utah

USAF ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

USAF Annual Award Winners

Photo Illustration by SSgt. Alexander Sotak

COLONEL WILL L. TUBBS MEMORIAL AWARD FOR GROUND SAFETY

Air Combat Command

**Congratulations to Air Combat Command
as the recipient of the Colonel Will L.
Tubbs Memorial Award for Ground Safety,
Category 1, for fiscal year 2005**

AF NUCLEAR SURETY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

TSgt Lewis Long
509th Bomb Wing
Whiteman AFB, Mo.

CHIEF OF SAFETY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR GROUND SAFETY

Category III
33rd Fighter Wing
Eglin AFB, Fla.

FLIGHT SAFETY PLAQUE

1st Fighter Wing, Langley AFB, Va.
4th Fighter Squadron, Hill AFB, Utah
27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, N.M.
34th Fighter Squadron, Hill AFB, Utah
388th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah
421st Fighter Squadron, Hill AFB, Utah
43rd Electronic Combat Squadron,
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

MISSILE SAFETY PLAQUE

27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, N.M.
388th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah
83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron, Tyndall AFB, Fla.
5th Bomb Wing, Minot AFB, N.D.
33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.

EXPLOSIVES SAFETY PLAQUE

388th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah
23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, N.C.
9th Munitions Squadron, Beale AFB, Calif.
33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.
7th Munitions Squadron, Dyess AFB, Texas
27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, N.M.
49th Fighter Wing, Holloman AFB, N.M.
366th Fighter Wing, Mt Home AFB, Idaho
2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, La.
1st Fighter Wing, Langley AFB, Va.
28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
55th Maintenance Munitions Flight, Offutt AFB, Neb.

NUCLEAR SURETY PLAQUE

5th Bomb Wing, Minot AFB, N.D.

AERO CLUB SAFETY CERTIFICATE

Barksdale AFB, La.
Beale AFB, Calif.
Lemay Flight Training Center, Offutt AFB, Neb.

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL AWARDS

AWARD OF HONOR

Headquarters, Eighth Air Force, Barksdale AFB, La.
Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, Shaw AFB, S.C.
4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.
9th Reconnaissance Wing, Beale AFB, Calif.
33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.
53rd Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.
388th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah
509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Mo.

AWARD OF COMMENDATION

3rd Combat Communications Group, Tinker AFB, Okla.
5th Combat Communications Group, Robins AFB, Ga.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD LETTER

United States Air Force Warfare Center, Nellis AFB, Nev.
98th Range Wing, Nellis AFB, Nev.
505th Combat Communications Wing,
Hurlburt Field, Fla.



FY06 Aircraft

As of March 31, 2006

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

Aircraft Notes

ACC had two Class A mishaps this month: one Predator and one F-16; both destroyed but thankfully no injuries! One trend we've seen of late is the loss of aircraft panels, flight controls and other equipment and the subsequent IFEs. Please take the extra time to get a good look at the outside panels/airframe during preflight. Spring and summer leave behind most of our icing problems but bring with them severe weather and my favorite, embedded thunderstorms. If you can't avoid them, suck it up, divert, and live to fly another day.

FY06 Ground

As of March 31, 2006

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		1	3
9 AF		3	1
12 AF		4	1
DRU's		1	0

Ground Notes

There were no Class A or B mishaps during Mar 06. Currently for FY06 there have been nine Class A mishaps as compared with eight for FY05. Class B mishaps have increased from zero in FY05 to five in FY06. Just 8 weeks away begins the 101 Critical Days of Summer. Have you begun planning your Critical Days safety program? Keep in mind, motor vehicle operations and high risk summer activities should be at the forefront of everyone's mind.

FY06 Weapons

As of March 31, 2006

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

Weapons Notes

We've had a good run this last month. With the change to AFI 91-204 and several down graded mishaps we only had one Class E! Great work out there being vigilant and keeping safety and tech data on the forefront of operations!

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





