

Combat Edge

Air Combat Command's Safety Magazine



the
K to
E selecting
Y the
perfect
shoe

MUST
haves ...
for those who
ride
motorcycles



GENERAL RONALD E. KEYS, COMMANDER
COLONEL BILLY J. GILSTRAP, DIRECTOR OF SAFETY

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ACCent

ON SAFETY

I Want to Live

I'm honored to write the "ACCent on Safety" this month with a focus on the "101 Critical Days of Summer." The timing was perfect to share some words before my upcoming retirement later this fall. I've spent almost 26 years in an Air Force uniform — the last 23 promoting mishap prevention and trying to help keep our fellow Airmen safe. During this time a lot has changed, but one thing remains the same — summertime often equates to increased risk for Airmen and 2007 is no different.

For those that question what's so critical about summer — try this approach. If someone asked, "What's one thing you want to do before the end of summer?" how would you respond? Think about it for a second. Depending on your age and location, your answer could range from: travel to see family and friends, swim in the ocean, play golf, hike, landscape the yard, or paint the house. In reality, the activities we participate in today are almost limitless and each one involves some degree of risk, but I wonder if anyone answered, "I want to live."

Sound strange? Maybe a little, but think about it, it encompasses everything I'll do this summer; whether it's vacationing in Florida, driving from Virginia to North Dakota and back, working around the house, or playing golf with friends; living is what it's all about. It's about living through the summer with nothing left but fond memories of family, friends, and good times. This is much preferred to stories of scars, ambulance rides, hospital beds, or funeral homes.

But, unfortunately, I know summer will bring mishaps and some will be serious — I hope not, but like I said, I've been in Safety a long time and it's not that easy. Last summer was our most successful campaign on record, but four ACC Airmen still lost their lives; their families and friends didn't enjoy last summer. That's where safety plays a part: be proactive and manage the risk involved in your life. Look beyond that first glance to better recognize risk and plan your summertime activities accordingly. Remain alert to hazards and focus on the task at hand. When with others, practice sound Wingmanship. It takes courage, but when the opportunity comes up, a Wingman won't hesitate to take action above and beyond what is normally expected to keep someone else safe; even though it might seem unpopular at the time. This is what it takes to live and keep others alive.

As I prepare to leave the Air Force and ACC Safety, I want to thank all Safety professionals for the hard work they do every day. I also want to say thanks to every leader, supervisor, and individual in this command that truly cares for people and accomplishing our mission safely — you are the reason last year's summer safety campaign achievements were so remarkable! I'm confident with your continued support and involvement we will set future safety records, and I honestly believe that a fatality-free "101 Critical Days of Summer" is no longer simply a stated goal, but a very real possibility.



CMSgt Kevin L. Ennis
Chief of Ground Safety

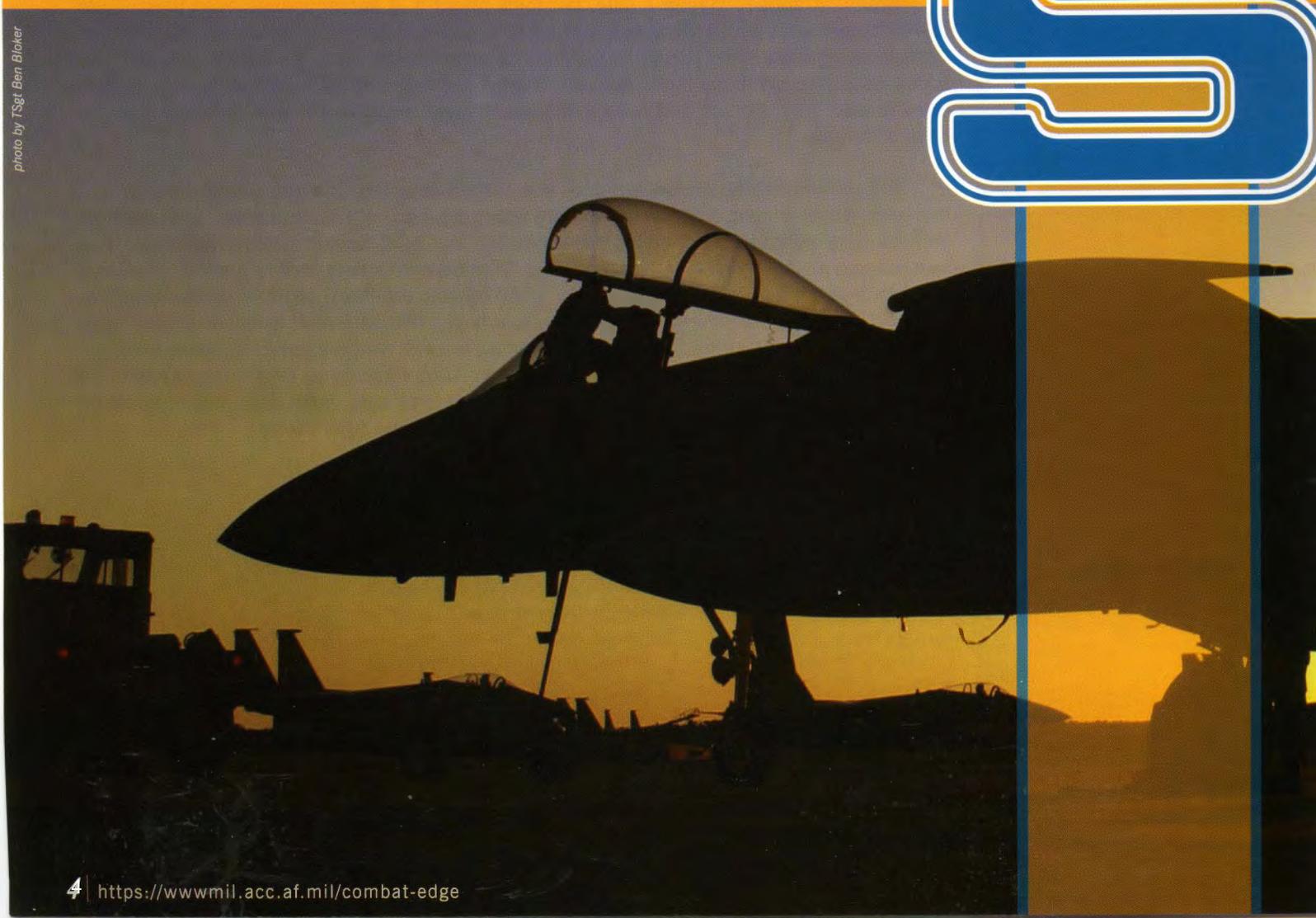


A fighter pilot's career

FIGHTER PILOT'

S

photo by TSgt Ben Bloker



The last thing a fighter pilot does before dying is jerk up his or her knees, squeeze his or her elbows into their ribs and bend at the waist — the fetal position. Nobody teaches this. It is involuntary, a reflex, a primal act that says, “This is going to hurt a whole bunch.” I know, because it happened to me.

The F-15 Eagle is a wonderful aircraft and costs millions of dollars. Luke Skywalker would enjoy its sophisticated technology, and it needs but one pilot to use it effectively. It’s highly capable, but it doesn’t have eyes to avoid every danger; the pilot must do that.

In the early '80s, we deployed six F-15s from Luke Air Force Base (AFB), Arizona, to Nellis AFB, Nevada, to fly as adversary, or “red air,” against pilots of the USAF Fighter Weapons Instructor’s Course. They were the elite in the older F-4 Phantom; the top guns of the Air Force about to graduate from a very tough school. We were their graduation exercise; they had to get through us to strike their target. That wouldn’t be easy. We were experienced pilots flying the brand new Eagle, a twin-engine, twin-tailed jet that was a quantum leap in technology over the F-4.

The match up was like two prizefighters brought together in the ring for a title fight. We had the beauty and sophistication of America’s newest fighter; they had us out-

numbered four to one. We couldn’t stand the thought of possessing all that capability and getting shot down by early '50s technology. They wanted very much to graduate. The duel was set, the pressure on.

Dutch Rifler was the flight lead for the mission. Our orders were to fly Combat Air Patrol (CAP) over the mountainous Nevada desert about 150 miles northwest of Las Vegas. Dutch planned to establish an orbit high enough for his radar to see the inbound F-4 attack force. He wanted me to hide low, below the jagged mountainous terrain to mask my position. The plan was for the F-4 radars to see Dutch but not me. I was to use low altitude tactics, slip through the mountains, down valleys, and then shoot down several F-4s before they knew I was even there. Dutch would keep me informed of what he saw on his radar and advise when they were coming.

The weather was Nevada clear; visibility 100 miles, with only a few puffy cumulus clouds. Iridescent blue sky washed over buff-colored terrain as we entered the air combat area at 18,000 feet. On his signal, I split from Dutch, rolled over on my back, and dove to the desert floor. The anchor point for my orbit was halfway between Dutch and the F-4 ingress route. Once there, I established an oval CAP pattern only 300 feet above the sage-covered desert. The legs of the circuit were aligned to the threat,

UNSET

by Mr. Ric Hunter, Langley AFB, Va.

“We had the beauty and sophistication of America’s newest fighter; they had us outnumbered four to one.”



the inbound leg, or “hot leg,” flown slowly at 250 knots to allow a long look by the powerful Eagle radar, the outbound leg, or “cold leg,” was to be flown fast at 500 or more knots to minimize time with my back toward the enemy.

At 500+ knots there is little room for error. The desert floor is a blur. By the time your eyes start to focus on a hawk in front, it’s behind and out of sight. Your 47,000 pound jet is traveling at the speed of a .44 magnum bullet. But unlike the bullet, you don’t slow down. Meanwhile, desert thermals bounce you like an old pickup truck on a washboard road.

It gets very busy in the cockpit. As the jet goes faster, you have to think faster. Check airspeed, altitude, adjust radar for the turn inbound, talk to Dutch, check weapons settings, look out front for granite, grab the opposite handle on the canopy bow and twist hard in the ejection seat to right and left, looking over your shoulder, focusing on a sector, any threat there? I hope my timing, body clock is working today ... jerk the throttles back, high G turn to the right, grunt, strain, fight to keep blood pumping to your head, don’t black out, #*!), don’t black out! Speed slowing to 250, look for bad guys.

Roll out heading east. Dutch on the number one UHF radio, “Fist Two, multiple contacts zero-nine-zero, 25 miles from you, headed your way.”

“Fist Two, Copy,” I replied. I’ve got to turn my back to them and go cold. Not good. I’ve got to turn now. Try and make this work out. How did they get in so close before we saw them?

“Fist Two turning cold,” I called as my left hand

slammed the throttles forward to full afterburner and I started the turn. I had to get from 250 to 500 knots — right now. Then 50,000 pounds of thrust shoved me back in the seat like a big hand pushing on my chest. The airspeed indicator spun past 400. I needed to be near supersonic — the speed of sound.

The F-4s were only 20 miles behind now. If I turned around to attack them, I’d roll out with a compressed 10 miles between us. That’s less than 30 seconds to get a lock on, position for an attack, and get missiles off. This is not good!

I hugged the sage-covered ground, streaking along at 500+ knots, at nearly 600 miles per hour. My thoughts raced, “Time to check over the right shoulder at 6 o’clock to see if F-4s are clearing the hills behind me.” I racked the jet hard right and twisted like a licorice stick in the seat. “Are they back there?” I reversed to a hard left turn, checked in the distance over my shoulder for little specks clearing the hills, and then dropping down into my valley. “I don’t see them!” I’d been looking over my shoulder for a long time, “better look out front,” I thought to myself.

It was time to come back hard right to course, and try to open our distance a little more ... “Oh, my God!” was all I could utter as the windscreen was filled with jagged granite everywhere. Facing me was a monstrous craggy face, a heinous madman; his cavernous mouth would swallow me to blackness.

I was facing a firing squad, their rifles locked, loaded and leveled ... no way out. Racing thoughts turned to action and I buried the control stick in my lap, willing the

“Deep inside, I knew I shouldn’t have seen such a beautiful sunset, but yet I was allowed to live and see yet one more sunset, and fly once again.”

Eagle’s nose up. “The granite is coming, pull harder ... roll to the right, aim to get the wings between two small peaks” was all I could scream to myself. “I’m going to hit!” ... my legs came up, my elbows squeezed in tight, and my head came down to my chest into a fetal position. “Keep pulling!” thundered in my head as quiet realization crept in, “God, this is going to hurt.”

“Fox One, Fox One kill on the F-15 climbing right hand turn.”

“What’s that? I should be vaporized, a million pieces splattered over the desert floor, but there’s something in my headset.” F-4 pilots were talking on the radio. “It’s coming over the radio! ... they’re calling their missiles on me.” The firing squad had lowered their guns ... this day they would not fire. “I’m alive! You guys can call shots on me all you want! That means I’m alive!!”

I continued a right climbing turn, put the throttles in afterburner and let the jet climb to the heavens like a homesick angel. It felt good to get away from the earth. We were playing hardball rules, once “killed” you went home and landed.

Mechanically, I went through the motions of taking care of the checklist and landing the aircraft. Mentally, I wasn’t in the cockpit. The near disaster left me empty and drained, unsure of whether I wanted to do this again.

Late that same afternoon, I was atop the Nellis AFB control tower serving as Supervisor of Flying (SOF). Positioned in an elevated chair behind the air traffic controllers, the vantage point gave a commanding view of the airdrome. The seat faced west where the sun would soon slide behind desolate, mountain terrain.

The sky was a deep blue, dabbled with red-orange cirrus, and sunbeams pierced a striated sky, bounced off clouds and ricocheted into space. Just before the sun dipped below the horizon, colors intensified, clouds became glowing pink-orange cotton balls. The radio noise in the cab faded as the friendly banter of air traffic controllers slipped into silence.

I stepped down from the elevated chair and stared, lost in the wonderful sight before me. Deep inside, I knew I shouldn’t have seen such a beautiful sunset, but yet I was allowed to live and see yet one more sunset, and fly once again. For that opportunity, and the blessing of life, I was thankful.

This story is dedicated to my friend, Captain Dutch Rifler, USAF deceased. Shortly after this incident, he crashed his aircraft in this same piece of Nevada desert. Dutch was on a classified mission; we never learned what happened ... he was a good pilot. ✈



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or that opportunity, and the blessing of life, I was thankful.”



photo by Amy B. Bombassaro



photo by MSgt Fernando Selma



photo by TSgt Jim Varhegyi



photo by PO1 Paul J. Phelps

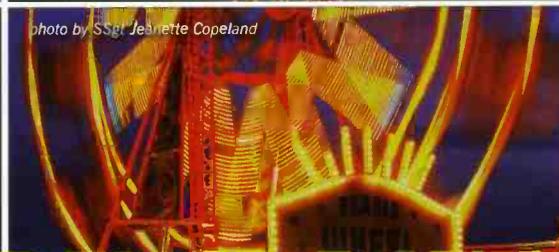


photo by SSgt Jeanette Copeland



photo by SSgt Ken Bergmann

INDEPENDENCE DAY IS EVERY DAY

by Mr. Scott Eck, Barksdale AFB, La.

The 4th of July.

The very image evokes visions of fireworks, barbecues and people all over the country celebrating the freedoms that make this country great. I know what you are thinking. You think you're about to scan this article and see some safety tips for the 4th of July, right? Or maybe this article is about the same old things you have seen and heard over and over again during your whole Air Force career; then again, maybe not.

This year, we would like for you to celebrate a different kind of independence. We would like you to declare your INDEPENDENCE from:

- The hurt and emotional pain caused by the tragic loss of a loved one due to drinking and driving, be it either a 4-wheel or 2-wheel private motor vehicle.
- The injuries suffered from not wearing a seat belt or personal protective equipment when riding a motorcycle.
- The medical expenses and suffering caused by burns while lighting the grill or an *E. coli* infection arising from undercooked food at a family BBQ.
- Being blinded or maimed by a careless or unforeseen fireworks accident.
- An injury that resulted in a partial or total disability discharge and the pain of having to spend the rest of your life in a wheelchair because you dove headfirst into unfamiliar water and injured yourself.
- Being surrounded by EMTs who are trying to breathe air back into your cold, lifeless body after rescuers have pulled you out of the ocean's riptides.
- Poor decision making caused by a lack of poor risk management skills.

We know to some, this is a frank and candid message. It is meant to get your attention. We hope it does. If it saves just one member of our Air Force from unnecessary tragedy, then it has served a valuable purpose ... and gives you the independence from mishaps that you deserve. ✈



FIREWORKS SAFETY

what NOT to do

by CMSgt Darren Kincaid, Fort Meade, Md.

Good results are not always based on good decisions. Sometimes, people just get lucky. The story I'm about to tell you goes into the "Did your mother produce any kids with a brain?" category. Kids, the following stunt was performed by a professional idiot. Do not try this at home.

When I was 16, my friends and I decided to pool our hard-earned money to buy fireworks for the 4th of July. We got all the usual hazards: bottle rockets, firecrackers, smoke bombs, jumping jacks, you know — lots of things that go "BOOM." For our grand finale, we decided to buy a Roman candle. That's the one that streaks to the heavens at mach 8 and explodes into thousands of streams of sparkling fire. You see, all 16-year-old boys

have a little pyromania as part of their critical thinking repertoire. With giggling glee, we grabbed our loot and headed to the park.

As night settled around us, we busied ourselves with conducting our concert of fire. We did all the usual stuff: shoot bottle rockets at each other, chase girls with sparklers, throw firecrackers at small

animals — it was great! The moment finally came when all the fireworks were expended, except for the Roman candle. Since I had contributed the most money to the pot, my friends gave me the honor of lighting the deadly missile. With great reverence, I unsheathed it from its package and proudly displayed it for the considerable audience that had gathered to watch. Like a gunslinger, I whipped out my trusty Bic, lit the fuse, and sauntered back to my friends who were wisely waiting at a safe distance. This was going to be great, I thought, unable to suppress the huge grin on my face.

The countdown went "3-2-1-0 ..." then silence. "What happened to the rocket?" I asked with a palpable mixture of horror and disbelief. A dud! I couldn't believe

it. Twenty-five dollars down the drain. Well, I wasn't going to let a stupid fuse ruin our fun. We were going to get our money's worth, I insisted. I asked the crowd to stand by one moment while I dealt with the technical difficulty. Emboldened by unfathomable stupidity, I marched straight to the rocket and cracked it in half, spilling its contents onto the pavement. I then pulled out my lighter and flicked it at the debris.

"Flick ... flick ..." but nothing happened, not even a flicker. Then I thought to myself, "I'll have to get closer." I stuck the lighter right into the cavity of the rocket where the meat of the pyrotechnic material was, and gave it another flick, and "BOOM!"

Suddenly, my friends were being entertained by the sight of me engulfed in an enormous glittering ball of fire. All I could remember was an old Dick Van Dyke commercial that advised, if you ever found yourself on fire, do like him: "Stop, drop, and roll Dick, roll!" And boy did I roll. I was a rolling log of sparkling fire. I finally put myself out after what felt like an eternity in Hell. I looked over at my friends through what remained of my hair and clothes and saw they were rolling on the ground too, laughing their rear ends off. When they managed to compose themselves, they walked over and vigorously thanked me for giving them way more than 25 dollars worth of entertainment.

In retrospect, I took some positive lessons learned away from what was admittedly, a moronic decision. I could have suffered from serious burns, but I didn't. I could have lost my eyesight, but I didn't, and I gained a valuable life-long experience, which I hope will benefit all the pyromaniacs that refuse to read the warning labels on fireworks: if you buy a dud, go get a refund! ❖

"Suddenly, my friends were being entertained by the sight of me engulfed in an enormous glittering ball of fire"

"We did all the usual stuff: shoot bottle rockets at each other, chase girls with sparklers, throw firecrackers at small animals — it was great!"



SHOCKING STING

by TSgt Israel Aguila, Nellis AFB, Nev.

Have you ever been working on your garden when suddenly you are being stung by a wasp? Or ever stepped on an ant right inside your home? How about giving your child a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? These are every day events that more than likely have happened to most of us in our daily lives. Most of the time, we don't even give them a second thought. Unfortunately, for many, any of these episodes could have been fatal!

Last spring, my wife and I were working in our back yard, trimming our roses and trees. We replaced sod in areas that were damaged by the winter frost and even planted flowers to enhance our simple, but colorful garden. It was on that beautiful day that we learned about anaphylaxis, the hard way. Anaphylaxis is the word used for serious and rapid allergic reactions usually involving more than one part of the body which, if severe enough, can kill.

It was about 3 hours into our chore, when my wife screamed in pain as she ran away from a hanging flower pot that she was trying to re-position. In that pot, a small wasp was taking care of a small nest that was only three chambers wide, about one-half inch in diameter. That little wasp sting was enough to set in motion a very serious allergic reaction.

Within a couple of hours, my wife's body was covered in little red bumps. She told me that her body was itching all over and that she could not stop scratching.

“That little wasp sting was enough to set in motion a very serious allergic reaction.”

I asked her to take a shower in an effort to wash off any pollen or grass that might have gotten onto her skin, not even thinking that it could be from the wasp sting. It was then that I started to look for information on the Internet about allergic reactions.

I was stunned to find that anaphylactic shock is a potentially lethal allergic reaction, and that my wife might be suffering from it. I stayed cool, and asked her several questions, like: do you feel dizzy? How is your vision? How is your breathing? She was not in respiratory or cardiac distress other than having rash-like bumps all over her body. I proceeded to apply Benadryl gel all over her body, and after about an hour, the itching had subsided, and the rash had begun to disappear, but I monitored her all throughout the night to ensure her safety.

The next day, we reported to sick call and our primary doctor referred us to an off-base allergist, and we received an appointment about 2 weeks later. During the office visit, a battery of tests were scheduled and performed. The doctor showed up to the room with a rectangular container full of little vials. To be specific, there were 60 vials arranged in six rows of 10, each containing samples of the 60 items most people are allergic to in the Las Vegas, Nevada, area. Row by row, the doctor scratched my wife's back with the little vials, and then observed the reaction.

Several hours later, he was stunned to find out that my wife was allergic to all 60 allergens. Needless to say, we became a little worried, and more so when the doctor suggested that we have the poisons test conducted as well. Amazingly, she was also allergic to all seven of the poisons they tested as well — a very unusual patient indeed. Due to the severity of her reactions, it was suggested by the doctor that she begin a treatment of injections during a span of about 2 years.

It's been a year now, and she's doing much better. Her sneezing has slowed down a lot, and as crazy as it may sound, last week she was stung by another wasp at home. Fortunately, she had no adverse reactions to the sting, other than a very small little bump at the site. We were lucky, but others aren't always as lucky.

It is estimated that between 150 and 200 American people die annually from anaphylactic shock caused by insect stings, medicine, or food allergies. Anaphylaxis can happen to individuals that are allergic to poisons like wasps, mosquitoes, or bees. I also learned that this type of reaction can occur to people that are allergic to foods or medicine as well. Some of the most common allergies related to food are peanuts, tree nuts, and almonds; while some are allergic to eggs, milk, wheat, or medicines like penicillin or items like latex.

Although there is no cure for food allergies, a team from the Stanford University School of Medicine has tested vaccines aimed at reducing the severity of allergic reactions for the three most common food allergens (peanuts, milk, and wheat), and research efforts to obtain approval from the Food and Drug Administration to use the vaccines are ongoing. Sadly, an estimated 12 million Americans suffer from food allergies, and must rely heavily on ingredient labels to warn them of known allergens in the products they are buying or preparing to eat. 🐝

— Anne Muñoz-Furlong
CEO and Founder of the
Food Allergy and
Anaphylaxis Network

“Between 150 and 200 American people die annually from anaphylactic shock caused by insect stings, medicine, or food allergies.”

Take Two Habits,

and Call Me in the Morning

by Maj Joel Harveaux, Shaw AFB, S.C.

Moments after we called number one on a calm spring morning, tower cleared my KC-135 for takeoff. It occurred just as I was talking over interphone to another crewmember, so the first part of tower's transmission was difficult to understand. My brain reviewed the internal tape-delay for our call sign, and came up with it. Just to be sure, I asked the crew, "That was for us, right?" To which they responded affirmatively. I released brakes and started rolling forward, but as has been my habit since pilot training some 13 years prior, I looked both ways before taking the runway. I did a double-take and hit the brakes when I saw another tanker taking the runway at the opposite end, some 2 miles away. As it turns out, that clearance wasn't

for us; the winds were forecast to shift and favor my runway. So as calm winds settled in, tower had shifted to my runway as primary. The other tanker was the last of the opposite direction departures, being even later after working a delay. Oblivious to this, my crew and I fell victim to expectancy — "We were number one — who else could they be clearing for take-off?" You'd think someone on the crew would have caught the wrong runway being referenced in the takeoff clearance, but we weren't so lucky that day. The copilot was just reading back "our" clearance to tower at the time I spotted the opposing traffic, so we'll never know if tower would have caught the discrepancy. The controller may have been distracted or had his own expectancy at work and not caught our error. Potentially, the only thing that kept disaster from striking that day was one little insignificant habit that hadn't helped me one bit in over 3,000 hours of flying ... until that day!

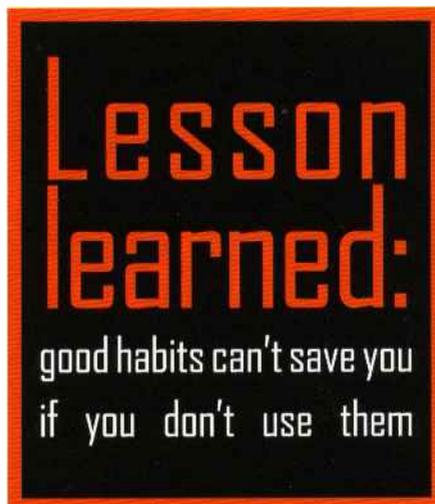
We often hear folks bemoan their bad habits, but the above incident shows the power of a good habit. When was the last time you thought about your repertoire of good habits? There are obvious ones like following the T.O. or AFI, or always referencing the checklist no matter how many times you've done the task at hand (what do you know, landings are much softer when the gear is down). There are also many less obvious areas where good habits can be a lifesaver (both literally and figuratively). I offer you the following examples as seeds to perhaps germinate some good habits of your own.

Some time ago, I bought a money-pit ... I mean a fixer-upper, and spent my spare time playing Bob Vila. I did some electrical rewiring work in the house, but when I first considered doing so, I promised myself that I'd never do any work without first testing the circuit to ensure that the affected circuit was indeed "dead." I soon gained confidence and proficiency in basic wiring — adding a socket here, or a dimmer there — but each time, I would faithfully employ my self-mandated habit of testing the circuit before commencing work. One afternoon while in the attic, I realized that I had left the tester all the way down in the basement. I was sure that I had killed the correct circuit, so I decided to go ahead and start the work anyway. As I reached for tools to start the job, that habit came tapping at my shoulder — "What is the cost if you're wrong?" With a deep sigh, I trudged down the stairs to retrieve the tester, only to be surprised by the soft golden glow of the "live circuit" LED staring me in the face a minute or two later! Lesson learned: good habits can't save you if you don't use them, and only have the possibility of helping you if you use them all the time, every time.

Another positive habit I took up involved my driving. There is a sharp corner on a small two-lane road on

my drive to work. The speed limit is 50 mph, and there is vegetation growing up to within inches of the inside of that curve. You literally can't see a bus load of nuns coming from the opposite direction until a second, or at most two, before they go hurtling past. I chose another habit for that corner — two hands on the wheel, no cell phone, no changing radio presets and my full attention every time I negotiate past that bus full o' nuns.

Once my wife and I added little ones to our household, we underwent



the normal risk-assessment/risk-abatement program known to non-safety geeks as "child-proofing." We did all the normal things — socket covers and cabinet locks, as well as a few abnormal things. This included getting a piggy bank. You see, I hate having spare change jingling around in my pockets. I was in the habit of getting home and emptying my pockets onto the entryway end table. From there, it wasn't unusual for the occasional coin to make its way onto the floor. To contain the choking hazard, I got in the habit of feeding the coins to the pig every night as I emptied my pockets. I'd much rather Heimlich that pig than one of the kids to get my money back.

The other abnormal thing was putting a little thought into how I loaded the dishwasher. That's right, the dishwasher. Our dishwasher has a basket that goes along the side of the bottom drawer for holding utensils. After seeing how a loaded, open dishwasher can be such a baby magnet, I decided to create a new habit of always putting the sharp knives in the rear-most compartment of the utensil basket. This compartment doesn't pull all the way out of the dishwasher when the drawer is out. Additionally, there are dozens of other shiny enticing "toys" to intercept a child with a death wish prior to them reaching the sharp knives. I added a second layer to the dishwasher defense — always closing the dishwasher door prior to leaving it. Now, although I've occasionally forgotten to close that dishwasher door, I've never come around the corner to find one of my kids juggling steak knives (occasionally butter knives, or trying to climb into the dishwasher, but never playing with the sharp knives).

So keep in mind that the most frustrating thing about bad habits — their tenacity and ability to pull at you when you are trying to ignore them — is something that you can put to work for you with good habits. They will remind you, seemingly of their own accord, that you need to do something (or not do something) — they'll interject themselves subconsciously into a situation and save you. Bad habits usually have a way of instituting themselves. Unfortunately, good habits most often have to be taught or deliberately chosen. So give some thought to your job, your flying, your life — where do the risks live? What positive habits can you choose to take up that can save yourself embarrassment and a headache, or your loved ones a heartache?

Habits, they're not just for that bus load of nuns! 

WMI

by SSgt Lisa D. Tetrick, Beale AFB, Calif.

We have all heard about it, seen it, or known it ourselves: the “what if” variable. In some way or another, it touches each of our lives every day. Tragically, I have become more familiar than I ever wanted to be with this “what if” factor in the last few years.

I had been stationed at Kadena Air Base, Japan, for about 3 months when the phone rang on March 20, 2002, “A1C Tetrick you need to go home and call your family. There’s been an accident.” My heart dropped into my stomach, “No. Not again — this can’t be happening again.” You see, about a month before I had received another phone call just like it. My sister had been killed in a car accident. It had not been that long since I had returned to work from emergency leave.

One of the NCOs I worked with asked if I needed her to go home with me. I numbly said yes. When I arrived at my room, I decided to listen to my messages before calling home. The first message was from my other sister sobbing, “Lisa, Dad’s been in an accident and he’s hurt real bad. Call me when you get this.” Beep. “Lisa, Dad’s dead. Come home now.”

This time it was a motorcycle accident instead of a car. My dad came around a corner that was less than 30 seconds away from our home. (Isn't that the way it happens so many times?) With all his protective gear in place, he did what you're supposed to do. He put the bike down as the truck ran right over him. It drug him the length of a football field, ripped off his helmet, and entirely graded off one side of his body -- especially his face. I could paint you a more detailed picture, but after 5 years I can hardly stomach it.

For obvious reasons, I did a humanitarian permanent change of station to Beale AFB, Calif., 2 months later. Just before my arrival, my new squadron lost a military member to another motorcycle accident. Is nowhere safe from the "what ifs ..."?

My dad had ridden motorcycles since he was 14 years old. Needless to say, the experience was there. Because he did everything right as he came around that corner, my "what ifs ..." are more about the circumstances (the truck, the timing, etc.). But my life has been so completely altered by his death that I started to do some research and realized there are a whole set of "what ifs ..." related to motorcycle safety. The biggest one I want to challenge each of you out there with is: "What if" we could reduce motorcycle-related deaths by 50 percent. It's totally possible when you break down the statistics and see why so many happen.

Motorcycle accidents are like cancer. Everyone knows somebody or knows somebody who knows somebody. Per vehicle mile traveled in 2004, motorcyclists were about 34 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a motor vehicle traffic crash. Overall in 2005, 4,553 motorcyclists were killed and an additional 87,000 were injured in traffic crashes in the U.S.

While my dad was wearing a helmet, I was shocked to find out that in 2005, only 20 states in the U.S. required helmet use by all motorcycle operators and passengers. In another 27 states, only persons under a specific age (usually 18) are required to wear helmets. Finally, three states had no laws requiring helmet use. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that helmets saved the lives of 1,546 motorcyclists in 2005. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 728 lives could have been saved. "What if ..."

Another major fatality factor for motorcyclists in 2005 was other objects. Approximately 50 percent (2,347) of all motorcycles involved in fatal crashes collided with another motor vehicle in transport, like my dad. However, motorcycles are more likely to be involved in a fatal collision with a fixed object than are other vehicles. Twenty-six percent of the motorcycles involved in fatal crashes collided with fixed objects, compared to 17 percent for passenger cars, 12 percent for light trucks, and 3 percent for large trucks. "What if ..."



Also in 2005, 34 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding. "What if ..."

Last, but not least, in 2005 was the alcohol factor. Twenty-seven percent of all fatally injured motorcycle operators had Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) levels of 0.08 or higher. An additional 7 percent had lower alcohol levels (BAC of 0.01 to 0.07). Motorcycle operators killed in traffic crashes at night (43 percent) were three times more likely to have BAC levels 0.08 or higher than those killed during the day (13 percent). "What if ..."

These are just a few of the statistics related to motorcycle fatalities. I haven't included unlicensed motorcyclists, over maneuvering, etc. Again, "what if ..."

Helmet:

eye protection:

jackets & Trousers:

"What if" these statistics alone were enough to stop these tragic deaths. Unfortunately, they have not done that so far. So what are some additional safety steps that motorcyclists can take? Studies show that the head, arms, and legs are most often injured in a crash. Protective clothing and equipment serve a three-fold purpose for motorcyclists: comfort and protection from the elements; some measure of injury protection; and, through use of color or reflective material, a means for other motorists to see the motorcyclist.

Here are a few "must haves" for those of you who ride motorcycles:

helmet:

This is the most important piece of equipment. Safety helmets save lives by reducing the extent of head injuries in the event of a crash. Many good helmets are available and, in many states, are required by law. The helmet should fit comfortably and snugly and should be fastened for the ride. Also when choosing a helmet, look for the Department of Transportation (DOT) label on the helmet. The DOT label on helmets constitutes the manufacturer's certification that the helmet conforms to the federal standard. Passengers should also wear a helmet.

eye protection:

Since many motorcycles don't have windshields, riders must protect their eyes against insects, dirt, rocks, or other airborne matter. Even the wind can cause the eyes to tear and blur vision. Good vision is imperative when riding. Choose good quality goggles, glasses with plastic or safety lenses, or a helmet equipped with a face shield. Goggles, glasses, and face shields should be scratch-free, shatterproof, and well ventilated to prevent fog build-up. Only clear shields should be used at night since tinted shields reduce contrast and make it more difficult to see. Even if your motorcycle has a windshield, eye protection is recommended.

jackets & trousers:

Clothing worn when riding a motorcycle should provide some measure of protection from abrasion in the event of a spill. It should be of durable material (e.g., special synthetic material or leather). Jackets should have long sleeves. Trousers (not shorts) should not be baggy or flared at the bottom to prevent entanglement with the chain, kick-starter, foot pegs, or other protrusions on the sides of a motorcycle.

gloves:

Durable full-fingered gloves are recommended. They should be of the non-slip type to permit a firm grip on the controls. Leather gloves are excellent, as are special fabric gloves with leather palms and grip strips on the fingers. Gauntlet-type gloves keep air out of the rider's sleeves. Appropriate gloves are available for all types of weather.

footwear:

Proper footwear affords protection for the feet, ankles, and lower parts of the legs. Leather boots are best. Durable athletic shoes that cover the ankles are a good second choice. Sandals, sneakers, and similar footwear should not be used since they provide little protection from abrasion or a crushing impact. Avoid dangling laces that can get in the way.

Additionally upper body clothing should be brightly colored. Some riders wear lightweight reflective orange or yellow vests over their jackets. Retro-reflective material used on clothing, helmet, and the motorcycle helps to make the rider visible to other motorists, especially at night. A high percentage of car-vehicle collisions occur because the driver of the other vehicle "failed to see the rider in time to avoid the crash."

I personally will never ride on a motorcycle even though it's cheaper in gas and apparently lots of fun. But nothing could keep me on

a bike, especially because of my history. I just figure my chances are better in a car with a seat belt. I've already had a lifetime of "what ifs ..."

We talk about it all the time in the military: operational risk management and the Wingman concept. Even the pilots discuss the worst "what if..." every time they brief before going on a mission. So "what if" the next time you and your friends, family or coworkers decide to go for a ride, you apply a little peer pressure and ensure they're wearing all the right gear, are in the right state of mind, and not riding recklessly. Do it so that you don't ever have to personally experience the worst "what if ..."

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www.nhtsa.dot.gov

NHTSA People Saving People Motorcycle Safety

DOT HS 807 709

“What we have her is

We've all heard the expression "putting the cart ahead of the horse." It seems that we do that quite frequently by not following Tech Orders, Air Force Instruction, etc., just to hurry task completion. Now, I know you're thinking, "Here's another Do This but Don't Do that story," and yeah, maybe you're right, but please hear me out. It takes constant vigilance and continuous communication, not just by supervision, but everyone involved in the daily mission to make sure that each and every one of us goes home at the end of the day with all assigned body parts and no major cuts, bumps or bruises.

Speaking of supervision, the Air Force puts a lot of emphasis on the duties and responsibilities of a supervisor. Supervisors, just to list a few of their many duties, must be knowledgeable of all the hazards involved in a ground, weapons or flight operation; convey emergency procedures to workers; and complete job safety

analyses and operational hazard analysis to ensure worker, equipment, and work-environment compatibility. People work more safely and effectively when properly trained and motivated. Supervisors must keep their people constantly involved in the risk management process.

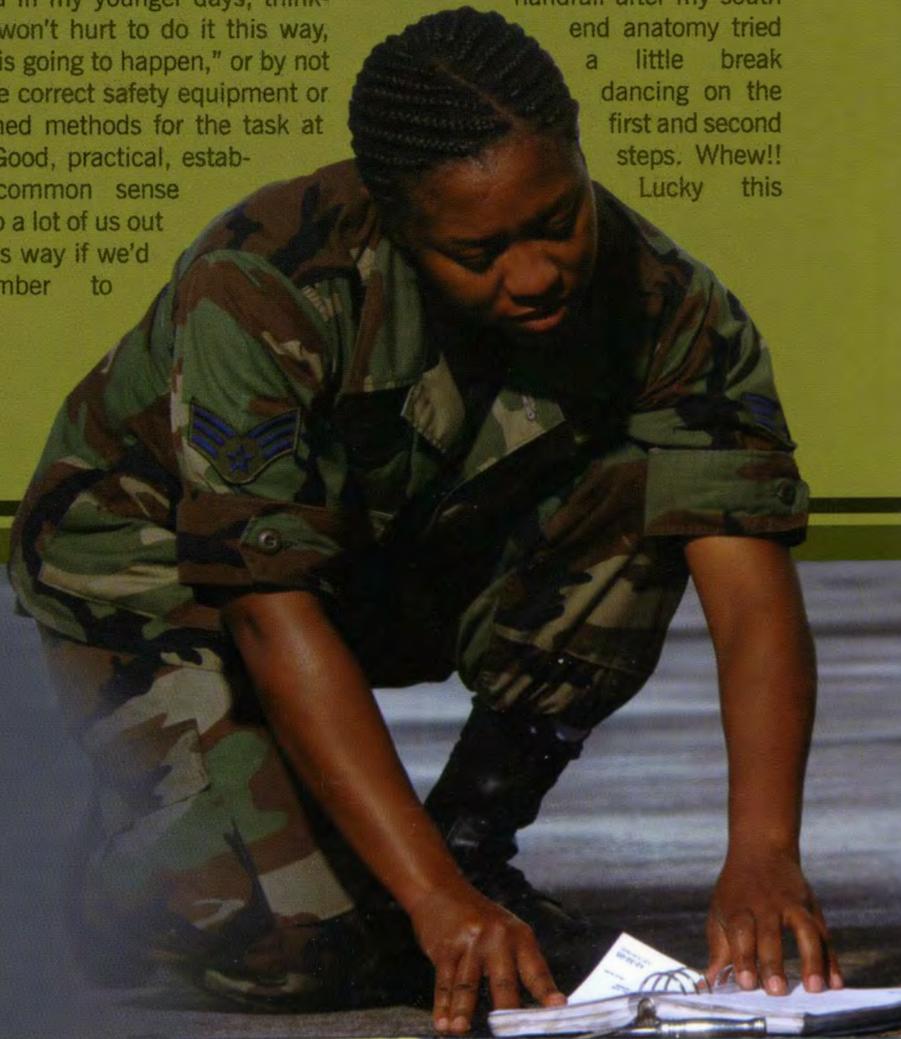
Whether at work or home, everyone has a supervisor — especially married men. Case in point: As a safety professional, it's easy to look back on all the unsafe acts that I've committed around the home front. But you know, at the time I did them, they all seemed like really good ideas (in my mind anyway). The very things I argue against today are things that I ignored in my younger days, thinking, "It won't hurt to do it this way, nothing is going to happen," or by not using the correct safety equipment or established methods for the task at hand. Good, practical, established common sense can keep a lot of us out of harm's way if we'd remember to

use it. A wise man once said, "The thing about common sense is that it is not that common."

Some years back, my wife had been after me to throw away an old worn out pair of shoes — sandals to be exact, and comfortable. I just can't begin to describe how I felt about those old worn-out shoes — the soles no longer had any tread and one strap partially frayed — but some days I couldn't get home fast enough and get comfortable. As the story goes, "There I was" ... going out the back door, after a brief rainshower, when, before I knew what was happening, my feet flew out from under me. Luckily, I was able to grab the

handrail after my south end anatomy tried a little break dancing on the first and second steps. Whew!! Lucky this

“The thing about common sense is that it is not that common.”



Failure is a failure to communicate"

by TSgt Roy S. Walls, Barksdale AFB, La.

time I thought. After a quick glance around to make sure the neighbors or worse yet, my boss (wife), hadn't witnessed my act of stupidity, I completed a quick battle damage assessment rating of "No injuries to report." I proceeded on about my business.

But the story doesn't end here. Yep, you guessed it; I performed the same feat several days later ... same scenario ... raining, my favorite pair of shoes, and the same back door steps! This time I didn't fair as well as the first. Battle damage revealed one broken shoe strap (non-mission capable), scrapes on

my back, arms, legs, bruises, and bumps (some in places I didn't even know I had places for bumps — but no broken bones). But the worse was yet to come. The boss heard me falling down the steps, so she was there in ample time to see me complete my barrel rolls. Once she was assured that I was all right and helped me up, I thought the verbal barrage would never cease — phrases like "Are you trying to cull yourself from the gene pool?"; "Do you

think some mistakes are too much fun to only make once?"

We've all heard it a thousand times in our Air Force careers, but the point to make here is that the Air Force has and continuously spends countless dollars on research and development to make sure that for every task assigned, it has been tested for application and theory and put

into writing for us to follow and the personal protective equipment issued is of the utmost quality.

So, to avoid my wrongdoings, supervisors please go that extra mile to keep your employees out of harm's way; employees, do your part by following all written directives, ask questions if unsure in what direction to proceed with an assigned task, use risk management to identify, reduce, or eliminate risk in activities on and off duty. And that my friend is why it takes communication between all of us to make this thing work! 

"The Air Force puts a lot of emphasis on the duties and responsibilities of a supervisor."



photo by MSgt Val Gempis

the

PERFECT Shoe

by 1Lt Virginia Meng, Shaw AFB, S.C.



With the spring season right behind us, most of us will have dusted off the old running shoes in support of our outdoor activities. Running is an inexpensive and convenient form of exercise that is associated with many positive health benefits.

There are a few things we need to consider when beginning a new running program. The subject of running safety usually makes many of us think about proper warm-up/cool-down, fluid replacement, and traffic rules. While these are all very important to a successful and safe running program, we tend to overlook another equally important element: our choice of athletic shoes.

There are over 1,000 different types and models of running shoes on the market. Each manufacturer would like to have us believe that their shoe

is the best brand on the shelf. Therefore, we must go to the stores armed with the knowledge that will help us find the right shoe for our individual feet.

We are all susceptible to foot and ankle injuries, but we can reduce our risk by wearing properly fitting shoes that conform to the natural shape of our feet. The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons found that more than 43.1 million Americans have trouble with their feet, mostly from improperly fitting shoes.

Although style is a main concern for many, the most important quality to look for in running shoes is durable construction that will keep you comfortable and protect your feet. Look for good shock absorption and a base that will provide stability and cushioning to the foot.

Follow these tips when purchasing a new pair of athletic shoes:

- Try on shoes at the end of the day when your feet are their largest.
- Wear your running socks.
- Try on both shoes and fit to your largest foot. Most people have one foot that is larger than the other.
- The shoes should be comfortable as soon as you try them on; there is no "break-in" period.
- When the shoe is on your foot, you should be able to freely wiggle all of your toes.
- Walk or run a few steps in the shoes to test comfort.
- There should be a firm grip of the shoe to your heel; your heel should not slip as you walk or run.
- When standing, make sure there is a thumbnail's width between your longest toe and the end of the shoe.

If you are still having pain or injuries with your feet and lower legs

after selecting a new pair of shoes, your doctor may suggest orthotics. These are inserts placed in your shoes to correct for bad alignment, for example, if the inside of your foot tends to turn in or over-pronate.

The last consideration is when to replace the shoes you already have.

Sixty percent of a shoe's shock absorption is lost after 250 to 500 miles of use. For example, if you run up to 10 miles per week, you should consider replacing your shoes every 9 to 12 months. You should also change your insoles in half that time.

Once you are properly outfitted with the perfect shoe for your foot, you will be able to gain the great benefits of running without exposing yourself to undue risk of injury. See you out on the trail! 🏃

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS – APRIL

CREW CHIEF SAFETY



Award of Distinction

While performing a pre-engine run inspection, Mr. Goodly discovered fuel leaking from the lower forward fuselage area of the aircraft. He immediately began to troubleshoot, and determined the engine had to be removed to identify the location of the leak. Once the engine was removed, the leak was pin-pointed to the right fuel sump tank by Sgt Butler, who was assisting the fuel shop in the removal of the engine. While analyzing the fuel sump tank, Sgt Butler discovered black abrasions and scorching on the surface of the tank. He cleaned the discolored area on the tank and found that it was arc residue from an electrical

current that had burned a hole through the tank sidewall. Sgt Butler, assisted by Sgt Johnson, inspected the area where the sump tank was installed inside the engine bay. Further investigation revealed that a 115 volt electrical wire had been chaffing on the fuel tank. The insulation on the wire had worn away and caused electrical current from the bare wire to arc across to the fuel sump tank and create a hole. This led to a one-time inspection of the entire U-2 fleet. During this inspection, 23 of the 27 U-2s, world-wide, were found to be unacceptable. Mr. Goodly's fuel leak discovery and Sgt Butler and Johnson's impeccable inspection techniques spawned an Urgent Action Time



Mr. Albert J. Goodly
SSgt Hughie E. Butler
SSgt Gregory E. Johnson
9th Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

Compliance Technical Order (TCTO). The TCTO release will prevent future wires from chaffing, eliminating a recipe for disaster, and safeguarding lives.

PILOT SAFETY



Award of Distinction

Capt Hargis was leading an A/OA-10 flight in the Barry M. Goldwater Range on a tactical night targeting pod upgrade sortie. While on the tactical range, Capt Hargis was performing a safe escape maneuver following a 30mm gun pass when his Master Caution Light illuminated. A quick glance at the annunciator panel showed a Right Engine Hot light. Referencing the aircraft's engine instruments, the right engine ITT was exceeding normal operating limits and the RPM was decreasing, an indication of an engine compressor stall. Capt Hargis smoothly recovered the aircraft from the 30 degrees nose-high attitude. A task made much more difficult due to little to no outside references and the resulting yaw. Capt Hargis rapidly applied the correct action of standing up the throttles. At that moment,

a loud bang and a bright flash came from the right engine. After calling a Knock-It-Off and while accomplishing critical action items, he referenced the Compressor Stall checklist. He eventually shut down the engine IAW the checklist and prepared to divert to Gila Bend AF auxiliary field for a single-engine landing. After extensive coordination with Gila Bend tower, his wingman, and the supervisor of flying, he flawlessly aligned the aircraft for a straight-in approach to landing, making only turns into the good engine per A-10 single-engine operations. Large rudder inputs and close attention to aircraft airspeed as well as coordinated flight were essential to successfully land the crippled aircraft at night into a relatively short airfield. Capt Hargis expertly landed and stopped the aircraft on the runway without the use of speed



Capt Dennis R. Hargis
354th Fighter Squadron
355th Fighter Wing
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

brakes due to the system's associated hydraulics from the right engine. The skills required to recover an A-10 aircraft during a compressor stall from a potentially dire attitude and battling resulting yaw in the dark of night; and further recovering to an unfamiliar airfield on only a single engine are immense.

GROUND SAFETY



Award of Distinction

TSgt McKee and SSgt Amirault arrived into the combat AOR as a “plus up” with no unit program or infrastructure in place. Assuming responsibility for their unit’s safety program while deployed into a combat AOR and enduring almost daily indirect fire attacks, these two dedicated Airmen developed a sound safety program. They created a Job Safety Training Outline (JSTO), that addressed the hazards specific to their unit’s location, facilities and tasks. This work center-specific JSTO was labeled “best-seen-to-date” by 332 AEW/SE personnel. Next they

studied the applicable regulations and discovered 12 major discrepancies during their weekly spot inspections. These two brainstormed and resourced immediate corrective measures for all identified discrepancies. Together they developed a database of safety information including mishap notifications, spot inspections topics, and safety flashes. By placing this database on the shared drive, they enabled real-time sharing of critical safety information by all six of the Squadron’s Aircraft Maintenance Units; this “cross talk” has provided a means for the AMUs to learn from each other’s mistakes and has made the entire squadron a safer place. Their self inspections, to include facilities and practices, have in fact pre-



**TSgt Gordon P. McKee
SSgt Nathan P. Amirault
332nd Expeditionary
Maintenance Group
Balad Air Base, Iraq**

vented both personal injuries and damage to vital combat aircraft.

AIRCREW SAFETY



Award of Distinction

The Predator Launch and Recovery Element (LRE) at Balad Air Base, Iraq, was set to receive an MQ-1 Predator for a routine landing. They received word from the Predator Operations Center (POC) at Nellis AFB that the inbound aircraft was having mechanical trouble with the Multi-spectral Targeting System (MTS) Ball Infrared (IR) system. The LRE flight crew, Maj Thomas and A1C Rivera set up the Ground Control Station to recover the aircraft. The crew took control of the aircraft and the Raytheon expert on-hand diagnosed the malfunction as a failure of the cryogenic unit in the ball. He informed the crew that an IR landing would not be possible. This left the crew with a nose camera picture, not very suitable for a night landing, and a Day-TV picture, the other camera on the MTS ball. A DTV landing at night requires a heightened situational awareness due to limited visual references to the runway during landing. A1C Rivera switched to

DTV and made final adjustments to get the best picture possible. Maj Snodgrass, Commander of the 46 ERS, devised a recovery plan and briefed the flight crew and maintenance on their part in the plan. Maj Snodgrass’ plan was to have the flight crew perform a DTV landing. He would be positioned on a taxiway near the runway to assist the flight crew and would radio their height above the runway during the landing. A maintenance tow team would be positioned on a taxiway further down the runway to radio the flight crew when to start their turn-off and to recover the aircraft. The on-duty SOF was called and given the plan and sequence of events. The SOF relayed this information to the Tower/Ground Controllers. Once the recovery crews were in place, Maj Thomas set the aircraft up for a straight-in. He worked with Tower to have the runway light intensity increased to show up better on his DTV. During the descent to touchdown, Maj Snodgrass gave altitude callouts over the radio from 10 feet until touchdown. Once the aircraft was safely



**Maj Chris Snodgrass
Maj Antonio Thomas
SrA Jon Cambric
A1C Marco Rivera
46th Expeditionary
Reconnaissance Squadron
Balad Air Base, Iraq**

on the ground, the recovery crew coordinated with Tower to enter the runway to give the flight crew a visual reference to follow off the runway. The flight crew maneuvered onto the taxiway and shut down. Though not an emergency situation, the successful recovery of this airplane took the combined efforts of multiple people.

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS – APRIL

FLIGHT LINE SAFETY



Award of Distinction

Hazard 51, a C-130, declared an emergency and relayed that his right main landing gear indicated it was in the retracted position. Due to the nature of this emergency, the Dyess control tower team coordinated with the 317 Airlift Group (AG) Command Post to have a C-130 pilot come to the tower and coordinate with Hazard 51 as a Supervisor of Flying (SOF). Upon arrival of the SOF, it was determined that Hazard 51 should make several passes over the runway so the SOF could see the gear's actual position. Due to the late evening hour and the fact that the sun was already setting, there simply wasn't enough daylight for the SOF or tower controllers to determine the actual position of the gear. Members of the Airfield Operations flight responded quickly and coordinated with the fire department to have a crash response vehicle shine its spotlight at Hazard 51's gear well on a subsequent pass over the run-

way. It was finally determined that the landing gear did not appear to be fully extended. This information was relayed to Hazard 51's aircrew and preparation for an emergency landing was made. Hazard 51 landed safely with the gear partially retracted and the aircrew successfully egressed. During the removal of Hazard 51 from the runway, Hawk 02, a B-1, declared an emergency and relayed that they too had an unsafe gear indication. Airfield Management Operations personnel again worked to safely remove the crippled C-130 from the runway and conducted a thorough airfield inspection in order to allow Hawk 02 to land before it reached a critical/emergency fuel condition. Hawk 02 made a low pass over the runway and it was determined that the landing gear appeared to be in the down position. Once this information was relayed to Hawk 02, the crew was able to do a pattern and execute an uneventful landing. As a result of the tower personnel's expert training, cool response under pressure and superb coordination with



Maj Francis Benedict
MSgt Michael Strickland
Ms. Amy Pitts
SSgt Creighton Cope
SrA Brian Box
A1C Malena Rathbone
A1C Gabriel Ramirez
SrA Tiffany Schemmel
A1C Jamie Harrison
7th Operations Support Squadron
7th Bomb Wing

Airfield Management Operations, they were able to facilitate two successful safe landings and recover two Air Force assets valued at over 300 million dollars as well as 10 of the Air Force's most valuable assets -- it's Airmen!

WEAPONS SAFETY



Award of Distinction

Sgt Miller, SSgt Welch, and SrA Dear were performing a maintenance procedure on an A-10 aircraft when they discovered 30mm propellant/residue from the gun system. While verifying the rounds limiter setting, Sgt Miller noticed loose propellant on the inside of panel F-13. He immediately notified his crew and they began an extensive inspection of the entire gun system. During the inspection, Amn Dear discovered a punctured round in the double fixed chute directly

above panel F-11. After the punctured round was discovered, Sgt Welch notified the Weapons Expeditor of the situation and declared a ground emergency. Working as a team, the crew cleared the area of personnel and took control of the situation until the fire department arrived. Assisting EOD, Sgt Miller commandeered a foam pad to place under the gun system while Sgt Welch and Amn Dear rotated the round to the exit unit to ensure safe evacuation of the round. Gone unidentified, the result most likely would have been a gun system stoppage during in-flight firing

SSgt James Miller
SSgt Eduardo Welch
SrA Christopher Dear
355th Aircraft
Maintenance Squadron
355th Fighter Wing
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

jeopardizing the aircraft and pilot. SSgt Miller, SSgt Welch, and SrA Dear clearly exceeded all established standards of excellence.

ACC SAFETY SALUTES SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

Eighth Air Force

Lt Col Blake K. Smith

99th Reconnaissance Squadron
9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

Maj Jeremy P. Potvin

Lt Col Bourke B. Milligan

99th Reconnaissance Squadron
9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

TSgt Dale W. Wilson

509th Operations Support Squadron
509th Bomb Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

SSgt Lisa E. Geeslin

509th Security Forces Squadron
509th Bomb Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

TSgt Brandon G. Martin

SSgt James J. Lilly

SrA Juan R. Pena

SrA Richard P. Simons

9th Maintenance Squadron
9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

9th Operations Support Squadron

9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

Capt Matthew W. McDaniel

1Lt Paul Jancsy

Capt Joseph Little

1Lt Tiffany Day

1Lt Robert Johnson

96th EBS
2nd Bomb Wing
Barksdale AFB, La.

5th Maintenance Squadron

5th Bomb Wing
Minot AFB, N.D.

Ninth Air Force

Capt Christopher A. Sample

510th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron
Balad Air Base, Iraq

A1C Robert C. Pearl

332nd Expeditionary Aircraft
Maintenance Group
Balad Air Base, Iraq

1Lt Ryan M. Wick

55th Fighter Squadron
20th Fighter Wing
Shaw AFB, S.C.

Flt Lt Neil Andrews

A1C Michael Eulo

46th Expeditionary
Reconnaissance Squadron
Balad Air Base, Iraq

SSgt Jason Carlson

SrA Anthony Mendoza

4th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
4th Fighter Wing
Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

SrA Jason P. Gleason

727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron
Balad Air Base, Iraq

MSGT Sean C. Jones

SSgt Joseph E. Bozsoki

407th Expeditionary
Logistics Readiness Squadron
Ali Air Base, Iraq

SrA Sheralee K. Freche

506th Expeditionary Logistics
Readiness Squadron
Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq

Twelfth Air Force

Lt Col Harry Foster

7th Operational Support Squadron

Capt Eric Bissonette

9th Bomb Squadron

Lt Col Gordon Greaney

436th Training Squadron

1Lt David Robertson

9th Bomb Squadron
Dyess AFB, Texas

TSgt Chad J. Sims

27th Medical Operations Squadron
27th Fighter Wing
Cannon AFB, N.M.

Capt Joshua L. Kubacz

27th Fighter Wing
Cannon AFB, N.M.

USAF Warfare Center

Lt Col John A. Breeden

561st Joint Tactical Squadron
57th Wing
Nellis AFB, Nev.

Maj Robert D. Davis

433rd Weapons Squadron
Nellis AFB, Nev.

Capt Maria T. Beecher

57th IA Squadron
57th Wing
Nellis AFB, Nev.

TSgt Jimmy K. Jones

57th Wing
Nellis AFB, Nev.

TSgt Scott D. Stewart

Det 1, 86 Fighter Weapons Squadron
Hill AFB, Utah

National Guard Bureau

Maj Nicholas S. Devereaux

Mr. Keith Marino

Detachment 1, HQ NV ANG
Nellis AFB, Nev.



MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS – MAY

FLIGHT LINE SAFETY



Award of Distinction

Sgt Marion, demonstrated exceptional attention to detail and leadership in preventing a potential catastrophic failure of a B-52 Electronic Countermeasures (ECM) Suite. While observing a shift turnover of tools and equipment, Sgt Marion noticed an ECM technician returning general purpose lubricant that had been checked out on the previous shift. He realized this was an item not normally used to perform ECM tasks and asked the technician why it had been checked out. When the technician replied that the oil was used to service the ALQ-155 countermeasures system cooling res-

ervoir, Sgt Marion immediately realized that the technician had mistakenly used Mil-Spec 7870 oil instead of the technical order-required DC-200 damping fluid and had contaminated the system. He requested additional details of the maintenance performed, and notified his chain of command, beginning the process of impounding the incident aircraft. DC 200 is non-conductive and has a higher flash point than the general purpose oil. Had the system been operated with this oil, the results could have been disastrous, potentially causing an in-flight fire with the possible loss of aircrew lives and destruction of the aircraft. Additionally, SSgt Marion



SSgt Reynaldo F. Marion
5th Aircraft
Maintenance Squadron
5th Bomb Wing
Minot AFB, N.D.

was instrumental in developing corrections to tool and chemical issue procedures that will prevent a recurrence of this mistake.

GROUND SAFETY



Award of Distinction

1 Lt Nelson and TSgt McClain teamed up to produce and present several safety briefings, including the Quarterly Fly Safe briefing. Lt Nelson also played an integral role in the implementation of a new 963 AACs copilot program that incorporates a safety briefing into every mission's coordination briefing. This program ensures that safety is always kept in the aircrew's crosschecks. Sgt McClain implemented new procedures for scheduling and tracking completion of Supervisory Safety Training for all squadron personnel. The procedures Sgt McClain has employed have drastically improved squadron compliance with this mandatory Air Force course. They also developed and ran a scenario for a major accident response exercise. By developing and executing a simulated aircraft mishap, they

delivered valuable lessons learned in preparation for the State Centennial summer air show. Finally, Lt Nelson discovered a deficiency in firefighter training, and with the help of Sgt McClain, arranged for several 963 AACs flight engineers to brief 22 local area firefighters on the hazards associated with the AWACS. Due to mutual support agreements that Tinker AFB maintains with local area fire departments, the potential exists that firefighting and rescue agencies external to Tinker AFB may respond in the event of an aircraft mishap. None of the local firefighters had ever been near an AWACS, let alone trained on the danger areas associated with them. Currently, Lt Nelson and Sgt McClain are developing plans for scheduling and implementing similar tours for the rest of the metro area fire departments. Through diligence and



1Lt Jack Nelson,
TSgt Charles McClain III
963rd Airborne
Air Control Squadron
552nd Air Control Wing
Tinker AFB, Okla.

exceptional dedication, 1Lt Nelson and SSgt McClain continue to improve upon a strong safety ethos that is alive and vibrant within the wing.

PILOT SAFETY



Award of Distinction

After 2 hours of manual flying due to a malfunctioning autopilot and en route to an exercise reconnaissance orbit area at Flight Level 280, Capt Perrow and his cockpit crew noticed the number 2 engine "COMP HOT" light illuminate, indicating that one of the fire detector loops in the engine was being exposed to abnormally hot temperatures. There were no abnormal engine gage indications, so Capt Perrow retarded the number 2 throttle to idle in accordance with the aircraft's Dash 1 procedure and hacked the clock. Ninety seconds later, the "COMP HOT" light extinguished. Ap-

proximately 20 seconds after that, the light re-illuminated. Capt Perrow elected to immediately shut down the number-2 engine using checklist bold-face procedures. Since the autopilot had been malfunctioning during the flight, Capt Perrow assigned flying duties to the copilot while he completed the "Engine Fire/Failure During Flight" checklist. The crew declared an in-flight emergency with Air Traffic Control, coordinated to adjust gross weight by 20,000 pounds of fuel, and entered holding at Offutt AFB's Initial Approach Fix to discuss landing and go-around considerations. Weather conditions were marginal — the runway was wet



Capt Guy Perrow
38th Reconnaissance Squadron
55th Wing
Offutt AFB, Neb.

and there was a 20-knot crosswind. After coordinating with wing leadership, Capt Perrow took control of the RC-135 aircraft and flew an instructor-quality ILS approach to a flawless full-stop landing.

CREW CHIEF SAFETY



Award of Distinction

The recovery team for an E-3 responded to a ground emergency upon returning from a certifying training mission. During aircraft engine shut-down procedures, TSgt Burke and SSgt Nielsen identified a significant hydraulic fluid leak, originating from the #3 engine. Sgt Burke immediately instructed the pilot on board to shut down the #3 utility pump and fluid shut-off switch. At the same time, Sgt Nielsen entered the aircraft and assisted the flight engineer to execute shut-down procedures; however, the leak persisted. While efforts to contain the leak continued, a second larger leak formed outside the inboard flap cove-lip area. The leak poured approximately three gallons of hydraulic fluid onto the ramp. The spill quickly flowed across the aircraft parking apron, exposing not

only potential damage to aircraft tires, but also a chemical safety hazard to both Airmen and environment. Realizing this, Sgt Nielsen removed his coveralls and blocked the fluid, containing the hydraulic fluid to a localized/controllable spill area. Moments later Sgt Burke then called the Aerospace Ground Equipment dispatch office to deliver an emergency spill response cart. Sgt Nielsen and Burke's actions ultimately prevented hydraulic fluid from entering storm drains that could have led to a potentially major Environmental Protection Agency/Occupational, Safety and Health Administration mishap. Furthermore, their actions prevented contamination of the aircraft tires, saving 18 maintenance man-hours and \$7,205 for replacement tires. The awareness and sense of urgency of TSgt Burke and SSgt



TSgt Randy L. Burke
SSgt Earl D. Nielsen
552nd Aircraft
Maintenance Squadron
552nd Air Control Wing
Tinker AFB, Okla.

Nielsen was pivotal to minimizing a potentially catastrophic situation to fellow Airmen, aircraft, and the environment.

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS – MAY

WEAPONS SAFETY



Award of Distinction

During a routine demolition training operation, SrA Ryan Wilkinson noticed a possible ordnance item buried near the explosive holding area; approximately one inch of rusted metal was visible above the surface. He immediately called a halt to unloading operations and calmly directed the evacuation of personnel and explosives from the area. Once the area was safely evacuated, he, under direction of the team leader, carefully excavated the ordnance item. He then safe-

ly transported the ordnance item to a safe disposal site where the team disposed of the item by detonation. Later that day, SrA Wilkinson led three other EOD technicians in the subsurface clearance of the area around the bunkers to ensure a similar instance would not happen again. His keen eye and strict adherence to range safety instructions is commendable. The ordnance item posed only a slight hazard in itself, but this hazard was compounded since the item was within 10' of the range explosive holding area. SrA Wilkinson's actions in clearing the area also eliminated the likelihood of a similar incident from occurring in the future.



SrA Ryan Wilkinson
2nd Civil Engineer Squadron
2nd Bomb Wing
Barksdale AFB, La.

UNIT SAFETY



Award of Distinction

The 332 EAMDS preventive medicine (PM) team has implemented numerous protective measures in support of coalition forces in central Iraq. The team trained and equipped flight surgeons for night MEDEVAC missions transporting critical patients. Helicopter orientation, High Risk of Capture briefings, and custom fit survival vests facilitated safer flights for the docs and their patients. Additionally, the team identified a hydrazine detection capability gap. Their procurement of sensitive detectors was critical to the safety of over 180 aircraft maintainers, as well as the hydrazine response team, first responders, and crew chiefs. After one of the flight surgeons identified inadequate/non-existent hand-washing facilities, Bioenvironmental Engineering (BEE) helped acquire portable hand-washing stations and coordinated with utilities and contractor personnel to

establish a recurring servicing schedule. Public Health trained four flight docs on the massive food service operation. Their synergistic efforts provided food safety for 11K meals per day. BEEs spearheaded the most in-depth air sampling study in theater to date. They collected 108 samples during a 144-hour sampling period which qualified and quantified smoke plume exposure and will drive burn pit mitigation. The BEE team also served as the lead agency for drinking water safety. They analyzed 32 samples ensuring safe, potable water for 30K coalition forces. The team also inspected 12 industrial shops, identified occupational hazards, and completed 17 follow-up surveys. Recommendations from these inspections further safe-guarded 2.3K wing industrial workers. Public Health personnel established a joint Disease Non-Battle Injury surveillance program with the Army's 13



**332nd Expeditionary
Aero Medical Squadron
USCENTAF**

Sustainment Command Combat Support Hospital. The PM team also developed biological exposure protocols that tracked various communicable disease exposures. Three hundred and ninety seven medical providers remained safe from inadvertent infection for their entire deployment. The PM team worked closely with Army counterparts to completely redesign the base medical patient decontamination plan.

WEAPONS SAFETY



MSgt Jones and SSgt Bozsoki abated the risk to 8,000 Coalition Forces by inspecting, making safe and storing over 5,000 rockets, grenades and ammunition rounds secured from a contractor living quarter's raid. In less than 2 hours, they also moved and stored 8,000 pounds net explosive weight (NEW) received on a C-17; operations doubled the munitions storage area's (MSA) previous total NEW, all accomplished without incident or mishaps. Sgt Jones and Sgt Bozsoki assisted 332 AEW/SEW to re-site six munitions storage facilities, eliminating Ali Air Base's boundary encroachment and increasing

Award of Distinction

NEW capability 400%. Maintaining over 12,000 countermeasures, they assembled and safely delivered flares for mishap-free sortie generation of ISR aircraft. The 407 ELRS/CC tapped Sgt Jones and Sgt Bozsoki to conduct the weapons staff assistance visit during which time they identified and closed 40 clearing barrel, armory and weapon safety procedural findings. Additionally, they identified and fixed operating location hazards by posting explosive and personnel limits to comply with cardinal rule (expose the minimum number of people to the minimum number of explosives for the minimum amount of time) and quantity distance. They also authored an operating instruction for heat-producing device use within MSA and eliminated hazards associated with flare barrier bag op-



**MSgt Sean C. Jones
SSgt Joseph E. Bozsoki
407th Expeditionary Logistics
Readiness Squadron
USCENTAF**

erations. Finally, MSgt Jones and SSgt Bozsoki engaged USCENTAF and fixed Special Experience Identifier/Munitions Inspector shortfalls which existed for over a year to institutionalize continued safe inspections of over 18,000 pounds NEW of munitions.

AIRCREW SAFETY



During a mission in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Maj Bright and A1C Austin assumed control of the Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) via satellite link after the launch and recovery element (LRE) performed the takeoff. The aircrew's pre-flight brief and Forms 781 review indicated the aircraft had recently experienced a complete engine change following a cracked engine block and emergency divert. As such, the aircrew remained vigilant during the climbout, electing to remain within glide back distance of the airfield until reaching its planned en route altitude. Just minutes after gaining control and climbing thru 12,500' MSL, Maj Bright noticed that the oil level was indicating 86% and fluctuating. One minute later he noticed it was down in the 70% range and dropping. Soon after, the oil level decreased below 60%. Maj Bright declared an in-flight

Award of Distinction

emergency, turned the aircraft around, and pointed it towards the airfield for RTB. While trying to contact the LRE, Maj Bright experienced significant aircraft communication problems. A1C Austin expertly aided the pilot during this time by monitoring the engine instruments, reading and performing expanded checklist steps, and assisting Maj Bright with the extensive coordination required to effect immediate hand back to the LRE. After several attempts to raise the LRE crew via UHF radio, Maj Bright was able to contact the LRE pilot via non-standard channels in time to save the aircraft. When the aircraft landed, it had only 14% oil remaining, indicating a near-total loss of engine oil. This would have almost certainly caused the loss of the RPA if it hadn't been recovered so expeditiously. Maj Bright and A1C Austin were directly responsible for the safe recovery of this 5.8 million dollar low-density, high-demand Air Force combat asset.



**Maj Jeffrey Bright
A1C Patrick Austin
17th Reconnaissance Squadron
Creech AFB, Nev.**

FY07 Aircraft

As of June 1, 2007

	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Aircraft Damaged
8 AF			
9 AF			
12 AF			
AWFC		  	
ANG (ACC-000000)		 	
AFRC (ACC-000000)			

FY07 Ground

As of June 1, 2007

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		3	2
9 AF		5	0
12 AF		3	2
DRU's		3	0

 = Fatal  = Fatal due to misconduct

FY07 Weapons

As of June 1, 2007

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

Aircraft Notes

ACC experienced two Class A mishaps in May. An ANG F-15D crashed during a BFM sortie. The pilot ejected safely (no passenger). A U-2S suffered Class A damage in the AOR with no injuries. Take a moment this month to thank your fliers for reporting those minor safety incidents. ACC/SEF, along with other Safety organizations, attends many of the System Safety Working Groups hosted by the individual aircraft program offices. By taking the time to report on minor incidents and mishaps, fliers can have an impact on maintenance and engineering solutions. Incident reporting helps our Safety professionals track and trend information used to fix problems BEFORE they become a Class A mishap.

Ground Notes

ACC sustained two fatalities since the last edition of *The Combat Edge*. Both were motorcycle mishaps that involved speed as a casual factor. Are your novice riders being mentored by experienced riders? Mentorship is a great way for novices to gain the experience they need to operate their motorcycles safely on the open road.

Weapons Notes

ACC experienced one missile mishap in May. The mishap occurred during the download of a TGM-65. A load crew member was attaching the cargo strap when the hook end of the strap contacted the dome and broke it. This mishap could have been prevented if more emphasis had been placed on attention to details. Please emphasize this during your spot inspections and cross tell information to your units. Thanks for all you do for weapons safety every day.

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





Water Safety



SUMMER CRITICAL DAYS OF
101
AIR COMBAT
COMMAND