PARTNERS IN DEFENSE

Senior Airman Jordan Fuller, 802nd Security Force Squadron military working dog handler, poses with Rocco, his MWD, Feb. 23, at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Medina Annex. Canines with the MDW program are trained in various skills such as detecting explosives and narcotics, and apprehending suspects. See story page 10.
Ten suggestions for success

By Chief Master Sgt. Roger Towberman
25th Air Force Command Chief

I was asked a while ago for a “top 10 list” of suggestions for Airmen who want a successful career. I finally found time to answer this Airman and I decided I’d do it open-letter style. The list is certainly not all inclusive, but you may find it useful.

In no particular order, here are 10 ways to be successful in our Air Force:

Be Teachable

You cannot be better if you are not teachable. You do not have all the answers and you never will. You will have great ideas and you will have less than great ideas. No matter how many promotions you earn, this remains true. When someone asks a question or points out a different way, listen to them and learn from their input. Changing your position to a better one is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of confidence and strength.

Be Fit

Be-fitting success requires energy and focus, and if you are not fit across all four Comprehensive Airman Fitness domains, your energy and focus will certainly be affected. Exercise, eat right, and sleep well. Strengthen your mind in every way you can. Be true and committed to your family and friends. Ensure you are dished into something bigger than yourself. If you don’t find time to be fit, you’ll never find time to be successful.

Be Yourself

You cannot change who you are and you cannot pretend to be something you’re not. Maybe for a while you can fool them, maybe even fool yourself, but at the end of the day your success must be built after your fashion and no one else’s. What worked for your mentor, may not work for you. Find your own path – train your weaknesses, but play your strengths. You’ll go nowhere if you’re disingenuous, and no matter where you find yourself, it’s unlikely you’ll feel successful when you get there.

Be Disagreeable

Psychologist Jordan Peterson, in a theory popularized by Malcolm Gladwell in his book “David and Goliath,” stated innovators need to be “disagreeable.” I believe this speaks directly to the DNA of being an Airman. If you want to be successful, you’ve got to risk being different. You can’t just sit back and play it safe, you can’t be afraid to rock the boat or get funny looks. When you know doing the right thing or attacking a problem in a new and innovative way is going to earn you funny looks, that is precisely when you need to do it the most.

Be Involved

Hiding away from our Air Force unless you are “clocked in” is no way to find success as an Airman. Spend time with your teammates and spend time with your Air Force community. Play sports, sing karaoke, use the golf course, volunteer to give something back; it really does not matter. Be involved in whatever way resonates with you and you’ll be happier and more successful because of it.

Be a Wingman

No one succeeds alone. Taking care of your teammates means they will take care of you when the time comes and the time will come. Want a successful career with a shadow box full of great memories? Then remember, memories are not made alone. Those to your left and right are easily as important as those above you, and will help you take care of those below you.

Be Accountable

There are few things that will drive success more than accepting that you and you alone are responsible for it. If something goes wrong, own it. If you face challenges, know that how you deal with them is what defines you. If you do not believe you and you alone control your success, why are you still reading this?

Be-lieve

Finally, being a successful Airman starts with just being an Airman ... a professional of arms. You must truly believe in the institution ... our culture, our heritage, and our core values. Every day that you consider this just a job and not a way of life, you limit your success. If you can’t put your full faith in “Big Blue,” sooner or later you will struggle. This business is not for everyone, and if you are not “into it,” you will not be the most successful Airman you can be.
Military members must understand, know, rules regarding political activities

By Staff Sgt. Al Hyatt
70th ISR Wing Public Affairs
Fort George G. Meade, MD

As election season heats up, Airmen and federal employees must follow strict guidelines to ensure no wrongdoing.

Department of Defense Directive 1344.10 and Air Force Instruction 51-902, outline what active duty service members are permitted and restricted from doing while acting in personal and official capacity.

Service members who violate these directives could face punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, according to Capt. Lindsey Callahan, 70th Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Wing deputy staff judge advocate. The Hatch Act (5 USC 7321-7325) applies to DOD civilian employees.

“It's important to understand [the rule regarding political activities] because it is the duty of every military member to comply with these rules. Our system of government is structured to prevent politicized military,” added Callahan. “It is perhaps the most central tenet of our military that it should be neutral with regard to politics.

While it’s important to know the rules, Airmen must also understand the rules.

“We take an oath to the Constitution - not to any one political party or any one person,” Callahan said. “Individual members of the military may have their personal preferences as to political parties or candidates, but the DOD or Air Force does not endorse a particular party or candidate.”

Members must be familiar with these regulations, because these rules also apply to social media.

“Often, people forget that social media is a public forum,” Callahan said. “Even though service members may believe only their friends will see something, there is no guarantee to ensure that. People will forward and share posts. Once it is on the internet, it is available for the world to see.”

“Every Airman plays a role in ensuring the U.S. military continues to be a non-political part of the government,” Callahan said.

For more information or questions, contact the Joint Base San Antonio Legal Offices at 671-3362 for JBSA-Lackland, 808-0169 for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and 652-2751 for JBSA-Randolph.
Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein and other senior leaders testified before the House Armed Services Committee about readiness and the fiscal year 2017 Air Force budget request Feb. 12.

The panel, which also included Lt. Gen. John Raymond, Air Force deputy chief of staff for operations, and Lt. Gen. John Cooper, Air Force deputy chief of staff for logistics, engineering and force protection, testified that with today’s national security challenges, the world needs a strong American joint force. The joint force depends upon Air Force capabilities and requires airpower at the beginning, the middle and the end of every joint operation.

“Since our establishment in 1947, the Air Force remains the world’s first and most agile responder in times of crisis, contingency and conflict,” Goldfein said.

He added that the last 25 years of continuous combat operations and reductions in the total force, combined with budget instability and lower funding, have resulted in one of the smallest, oldest and least ready forces across the full spectrum of operations in Air Force history.

Goldfein also stated the Budget Control Act further degraded readiness while limiting recovery. While the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 provided some readiness recovery and modernization efforts, the Air Force needs permanent relief from BCA with consistent and flexible funding, more manpower and time to recover readiness.

For the past two years, instead of rebuilding readiness for future, high-end conflicts, Airmen have responded to events across the globe leading and in support of the joint force while remaining the world’s greatest Air Force. A return to sequestration would worsen the problem and delay the Air Force goal to return to full-spectrum readiness, Goldfein said.

“We are too small and you have seen us trying to build back up capacity so we can do what our nation needs,” Goldfein said.

To improve mission quality, the vice chief of staff said the budget includes a modest upsizing of the total force to address a number of key areas, including critical career fields such as intelligence, cyber, maintenance, and battlefield Airmen. Aircraft maintenance career fields are approximately 4,000 maintainers short. The manpower requested will keep existing aircraft flying at home and abroad.

“We have offered numerous retention incentives to our older maintainers so they will stay and retain that training, that expertise, but we are digging a continuous hole as we go forward,” Cooper said.

According to Goldfein, this budget request prioritizes readiness and modernization over installation support.

Today’s Air Force maintains infrastructure that is in an operational excess. There are 500 fewer aircraft now compared to 10 years ago, therefore, a reduction and realignment infrastructure would best support Air Force operational needs by base realignment and closure, he said.

Airmen are educated, innovative, motivated, and willing to ensure the Air Force continues to outwit and outlast opponents and defend the United States from harm, Goldfein said. They assure air superiority so American ground forces can keep their eyes on enemies on the ground rather than concern themselves with enemy airpower overhead.

“This budget request is an investment in the Air Force our nation needs,” Goldfein said. “America expects it; combatant commanders require it; and with your support for this budget request, our Airmen will deliver it.”

To advertise in the Talespinner, call 250-2440 for classifieds or contact Michelle Bogue at 250-2052 for retail ads.
A series of mobile applications developed by the 367th Training Support Squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, is giving Airmen ready access to Air Force standards, culture and basic doctrine.

While the unit – part of the 82nd Training Wing's 782nd Training Group at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas – typically focuses on computer-based training in support of aircraft maintenance, its unique skill set proved a perfect match when the Air Force was looking for a way to put the “little blue book” and other core Air Force documents literally into the hands of Airmen.

“Our focus is mainly on developing computer-based training or videos for maintainers on the flightline,” said Tech. Sgt. Kaimi Pacheco, app designer. “So developing mobile apps is a little out of the norm for us, which is challenging. The other products we create are mostly linear, or step by step, in nature, but when you’re developing apps you have to include functionality that lets the user go in many different directions.”

Still, the team was confident it could not only get the job done, but get it done quickly and exceed expectations.

“The little blue book was the first project, which they completed on a tight timeline to coincide with the book’s release,” said Tech. Sgt. Zach Davis, Android developer.

“It was definitely a challenge,” he continued. “But with our strong, cohesive teams and individual commitment to the project, we were confident we could satisfy all the requirements, and even exceed a few.”

One way they exceeded expectations was by adding audio narration for all the text included in the app.

“That’s not something we routinely incorporate into our products,” said Master Sgt. Kasey Lynch, project manager, “and it did prove challenging. Once we started producing audio assets we realized how much work goes into producing a perfect vocal narration – varying vocal inflections, correct enunciation of words, consistent volume and even consistent pauses.”

The most critical audio decision was choosing the voice actor.

“We needed someone with a pleasing sound, but who had a neutral accent that would appeal to the widest audience,” Lynch said. “Now we jokingly refer to our voice actor – Staff Sgt. Scott Summers – as ‘The Voice of the Air Force.’”

The variety of devices and screen sizes was another issue the team had to consider.

“Developing mobile apps requires a lot more graphics support than a computer-based product, because we have to produce multiple versions of the same image to ensure the app looks good and works correctly for every potential device,” said Tech. Sgt. Rudy Gonzalez, graphic designer.

Despite the challenges, the team completed the application on time and ensured it was available for Apple and Android devices when the book was released to the Air Force.

“The team truly came together to deliver an excellent product for our Air Force and Airmen,” said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Cody, who worked with the team to finalize the app. “Thanks to their hard work, our Airmen now have access to the little blue book in a format they often prefer.”

The success of the little blue book app led to three additional projects for the 367th TSS:

- The Professional Airman’s Development Guide, which is given to new recruits in delayed enlistment status to help them prepare for basic military training, is 80 percent complete and in validation by Air Force Recruiting Service.

To download these apps, go to the Google Play Store for Android devices or the App Store for Apple iOS devices.
Annual Basura Bash cleanup of Salado Creek attracts hundreds of volunteers

A record crowd of more than 300 military and civilian volunteers showed at the Salado Creek Park on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Saturday to help clean up the areas surrounding the creek and the waterway itself as part of the annual Basura Bash, now in its sixth year. The Basura Bash is a one-day, all-volunteer event to clean the San Antonio Watershed.

More than two tons of various kinds of rubbish were pulled out of the creek and collected from the park area, almost filling a 40-yard-long dumpster to the top.

Among the trash was a set of metal bleachers, seven tires, a partially full refrigerant tank, dozens assorted of pieces of metal in various sizes, along with hundreds of plastic bottles and styrofoam containers. The bleachers were actually in good shape, according to event organizer Bryan Hummel, 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron, and were placed back next to the others for continued use.

“We had the largest turn out ever for Basura Bash and were able to expand the clean-up area by a quarter mile,” said Hummel, 502nd CES pollution prevention manager and aquifer recharge specialist. “We actually did not gather the largest volume of trash ever, because the previous five cleanups have been so successful, so there is just not as much trash to clean up. This shows that our efforts are paying off and we are making a long-term difference for the waterways of the San Antonio River.”

Hummel added that if trash is picked up out of the upland fields, parking lots and buildings around JBAS-Fort Sam Houston, there will be less trash to get washed down and pollute our natural waterways.

“The solution to our water issues start on the uplands, not in the actual creek,” he said. “The condition of the creek is just a symptom of land stewardship practices in upstream water basin. The trash we cleaned up came from upstream, so if keep this area cleaner, our river will be cleaner. This requires a constant community effort throughout the water basin.”

The JBAS-Fort Sam Houston Basura Bash was a part of a larger effort throughout San Antonio that saw local residents, community groups and organizations collecting trash from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday at 20 different locations that connect to San Antonio’s watershed.
tired, on remote assignment or deceased. The applicant spouse shall be pursuing a technical, associate, undergraduate or graduate degree.

- Military dependents of military personnel assigned to JBSA-Lackland and currently enrolled in a San Antonio area community college while living in the home of their military sponsor.

The deadline for applying is Tuesday.

For additional information, go to http://www.lacklandosc.org/scholarships/ or email scholarshipslosc@gmail.com.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2016
12 OUTSTANDING AIRMEN OF THE YEAR

There are three categories: Airman, NCO and Senior NCO. Major Commands and the Air Force District of Washington may each nominate one candidate per category to the Air Force 12 OAY selection board, which will select the winners.

Organization and base-level personnel must contact their MAJCOM, forward operating agency, direct-reporting unit or MAJCOM equivalent for applicable suspense dates. Nominations are due to the Air Force Personnel Center by April 1.

All nominees must be enlisted in the Air Force through Sept. 30. Any nominee with a projected separation date prior to Sept. 30, must take immediate action to extend or re-enlist in the Air Force. Local military personnel section officials may approve or disapprove extensions for the purpose of the 12 OAY program. AFPC will make the final approval determination for extension requests sent from the Military Personnel Section for 12 OAY nominees.

Any nominees who extend their enlistment for the 12 OAY award program and are not selected may cancel their extensions through their local MPS.

For more information, go to https://myers.af.mil/. Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by following the instructions at http://www.retirees.af.mil/myers/index.asp.

MEDINA FIRING RANGE TRESPASS NOTICE

Trespassing on the Medina Firing Range is both illegal and dangerous due to gunfire.

Weapons training is conducted daily at the firing range, located at 900 Patrol Road on Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Training Annex at Medina.

For details or valid entry requests, contact the 37th Training Support Squadron’s Combat Weapons Section range control office at 671-2349 or 671-0023.
It's second nature for many of us to flip a light switch, plug in a laptop computer or charge your mobile phone. Electricity makes our lives convenient.

Nevertheless, we need to be careful and keep electrical safety in mind. Across Joint Base San Antonio plenty of electricity is being used. Electrical fires remain one of the leading causes of home structure fires as reported by the National Fire Protection Association, or NFPA.

The electrical fires report calculates that an electrical failure or malfunction factored in 45,000 to 55,000 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments every year since 2000. These fires, which account for 13 percent of total home structure fires, resulted in annual losses of 455 civilian deaths, 1,500 civilian injuries and $1.5 billion in direct property damage from 2007-2011.

Any type of equipment that uses electrical power can have an electrical failure or malfunction. Electrical distribution or lighting equipment accounted for 48 percent of home electrical fires in 2007-2011. Outnumbering overheating by at least 2-to-1 and as much as 7-to-1, arcing appears to be the explanation for most home electrical fires.

Here are some electrical safety tips:

- Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by qualified electrician.
- Only plug one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Major appliance (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, etc.) should be plugged directly into the wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used with a major appliance.
- Arc fault circuit interrupters, or AFCIs, are a kind of circuit breaker that shuts off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home. Use a qualified electrician.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupters, or GFCIs, to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.
- Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly.
- Do not attach multiple extension cords together. This can cause a fire.
- Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets.
- Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more electrical outlets so you won't have to use an extension cord.
- Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture. There should be a sticker that indicates the maximum wattage light bulb to use.
- Refrigerators, ovens, washers, clothes dryers, and dishwashers are in most households. Each appliance should come with instructions upon purchase, as well as safety guidelines that should be read and kept for reference.

A safety hazard in large appliances that it can gather lots of dust. Periodically dust and dirt should be cleaned off of vents at the bottom of refrigerators to permit these appliances to run more effortlessly.

After every load of clothing the lint screen of the clothes dryer
Alamo Wing hosts leadership conference

Story and photo by Ben Faske
433rd Airlift Wing

The 433rd Airlift Wing held an in-house commanders’ leadership conference at the Gateway Club Jan. 26-28 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

The conference is part of the Human Capital Growth Initiative and included representatives from all group and squadron level commanders.

“The purpose of the conference was to enhance communications between commanders within the wing and build cohesion among the wing’s leadership,” said Lt. Col. Kenneth Evans, 733rd Training Squadron commander.

The conference included briefings from individual sections within the 433rd AW. Some of the speakers were from the judge advocate, the inspector general; the logistics readiness squadron, sexual assault prevention and safety office and other support elements from the wing. In the spirit of team building, the commanders also ran a 3-mile run.

The highlight of the conference was a class given by Col. Richard Tatem, Profession of Arms Center of Excellence individual mobility augmentee to the director, teaches a class on enhancing human capital to 433rd Airlift Wing commanders Jan. 27 during an in-house commander’s conference at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. Tatem’s class focused on self-reflection as a technique to better lead Airmen.

“Being able to assess their own (the commanders) abilities are extremely important,” said Col. Thomas Smith Jr., 433rd AW commander. “This training will help our leadership get back to the basics; people will feel more included, and they will want to stay in the Air Force Reserves and continue doing this noble profession.”

Col. Richard Tatem, Profession of Arms Center of Excellence individual mobility augmentee to the director, teaches a class on enhancing human capital to 433rd Airlift Wing commanders Jan. 27 during an in-house commander’s conference at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. Tatem’s class focused on self-reflection as a technique to better lead Airmen.

FIRES from Page 8

should be cleaned of dust and dirt. A major contribution to a fire in a laundry room is the build-up of lint.

Also to be checked periodically is the dishwasher in the home to see that it is in good working order. If water isn’t draining properly, or if there is a problem with water intake, the dishwasher can potentially heat up, leading to problems.

Ovens should be cleaned regularly to avoid a build-up of burnt food on the floor of the appliance. To avoid falling on top of a hot burner and causing a fire oven gloves and pot holders (along with any other flammable objects) should be kept clear of the stovetop.

To avoid a little one opening an oven door and getting hurt, oven locks should be used if there are children in the household.

These safety precautions are simple to put into practice and simply require periodic inspection to ensure that they are in safe, working order. One can never be too safe when it comes to home and kitchen appliance.

To learn more about electrical safety, visit the National Fire Protection Association’s website at http://www.nfpa.org/education or contact the 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron’s fire prevention division offices at 221-2727 for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, 671-2921 for JBSA-Lackland or 652-6915 for JBSA-Randolph.
By Robert Goetz
JBSA-Randolph Public Affairs

A senior airman assigned to the 802nd Security Forces Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland said he has the best job in the Air Force.

He works with “man’s best friend” on a daily basis.

Senior Airman Jordan Fuller, 802nd SFS military working dog handler, called Rocco, his MWD, “the best partner I’ve ever had and literally my best friend.”

“The amount of time spent together is a big key factor in the reason why our bond is so great versus a human counterpart you may work with one day or two days out of your work cycle,” he said. “The bond you build with a dog that you’re working with every single day of that work cycle is going to be so much greater.

“It’s a very close bond,” Fuller said. “It’s something special, that’s for sure – almost indescribable, at least to me.”

Fuller, who grew up in Conroe, Texas, enlisted in the Air Force after graduating from high school and attending college for two years.

“I enlisted in the Air Force when I realized college wasn’t for me and I wanted to serve my country,” he said.

Fuller said he didn’t even consider being a MWD handler until he was a few years into his enlistment.

“I had become a very good patrolman and gotten a lot of drug busts working at the gates and while on patrol, and it just seemed fitting for me to apply,” he said.

Dedication is one of the attributes of a proficient MWD handler, Fuller said.

“Coming in on days off to conduct training or care for your dog is a regular occurrence,” he said. “It also helps if you are detail-oriented and very meticulous. For the purpose of substance detection, you have to be able to think like a criminal in order to find a productive place for your dog to search, therefore increasing the likelihood to find the substance.”

Rocco, a 4-year-old German shepherd, is more than up to the task, Fuller said. A dual-purpose dog, he’s trained in patrol work and detection work. He’s fast, too.

“My dog’s average speed is 18 miles an hour,” he said. “Not very many humans can run that fast. And if they do run that fast, it won’t be for long, especially with my dog behind him. He’s constantly looking for something, some type of hostile act, something that could possibly hurt me or him. He’s always alert.”

Fuller said every day is different for him and Rocco.

“There really is no typical day per se,” he said. “For instance, one day I could be working a law enforcement patrol responding to incidents throughout JBSA and the next day I could be conducting K-9 demonstrations for military units and attached to a distinguished visitor as a personal security detail.”

Fuller said he’s had the privilege of conducting motorcade sweeps for Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, President Obama and Pope Francis.

“We as a MWD team are very versatile and can be implemented in numerous roles as a force multiplier,” he said.

Staff Sgt. Benjamin Isom, 802nd SFS MWD trainer supervisor, called Fuller “a self-motivated and motivating young man.”

“Senior Airman Fuller is a very meticulous and dedicated person,” he said. “He is one that loves his job and goes above and beyond daily requirements without being asked.”

Isom also said Fuller has progressed quickly as a MWD handler.

“Senior Airman Fuller is a very young handler,” he said. “He’s only been on leash for a little over a year, but he is already handling his MWD at a level of one who has been working a MWD for three or four years. This is largely due to his tireless work ethic and dedication to his MWD.”

Fuller said his bond with Rocco helps motivate him.

“I enjoy being able to come to work every day and, regardless of what may be bothering me or on my mind, I have my dog to cheer me up,” he said. “Every morning he is anxiously awaiting my footsteps and is always excited to see me.”

Isom said Fuller was an asset to the 802nd SFS from day one.

“Senior Airman Fuller has been a great assist to the security forces as a whole prior to joining the elite ranks of a military working dog handler,” he said. “Once he made that commitment to become an MWD handler, he has not looked back and has pushed himself to be the best that he can be. Along with pushing himself, he has encouraged those around him to be better.”

Senior Airman Jordan Fuller, 802nd Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, and his MWD, Rocco, perform maneuvers Feb. 23, at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Medina Annex. Handlers regularly practice obedience training with their working dogs to increase their team cohesiveness.
New co-chairman joins Air Force’s retiree council

By Tammy Cournoyer
Air Force Retiree Services

A new co-chairman will share the head of the table at this year’s Air Force Retiree Council meeting in May.


The co-chairs serve as personal advisers to the chief of staff and the secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding retirees and their families. Hoog’s appointment was announced by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III.

Meeting at the Air Force Personnel Center, the council receives briefings on today’s Air Force structure from senior members of the Air Staff and other Air Force elements. This information helps the 19-member panel address issues submitted from 100 base-level retiree activities offices worldwide. Subjects range from health care to publication of the Afterburner newsletter to various benefit and entitlement enhancements. Recommendations on key issues are forwarded to the Air Force chief of staff and subject matter experts.

Hoog attended a council orientation in early February where he was able to meet with Polk and McKinley to discuss his new role and responsibilities.

“As a fairly new retiree myself, I am impressed with the support and services the Air Force strives to provide its retirees, their families and surviving spouses,” Hoog said. “I’m looking forward to serving on the council beside others who care deeply about our retiree family.”

A native of the Bay Area in California, Hoog is a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. He is a command pilot with more than 3,400 flying hours, including 181 combat hours over Bosnia and Iraq.

During his tenure as co-chair, Polk was instrumental in bolstering commander support for base-level retiree activities offices andreviving the hard-copy mailing of the Afterburner for retirees and annuitants without Internet access.

“It was an honor and a privilege to serve with each council member and with Chief Master Sergeants of the Air Force Gerald Murray and McKinley – professionals all and still serving,” Polk said. “I’m proud of the work and accomplishments we handled as a team, and I’m grateful for the strong support of former Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Norton Schwartz and current Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Welsh. I’m especially proud of the enthusiastic RAO volunteers worldwide who continue to serve our Air Force every day.”

Retired Lt. Gen. Stephen Hoog

‘I love it’: Nurse still serving, mentoring after 45 years

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jerilyn Quintanilla
59th Medical Wing Public Affairs

In April 1997, after 26 years of honorable military service, newly retired Col. Charlene Carpenter chose to continue serving her country at the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, this time as a volunteer.

Born and raised in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, Carpenter decided to attend Grace Hospital School of Nursing, and completed post graduate work for operating room technician and management at Vancouver General Hospital. She then moved to the U.S. and obtained citizenship before joining the Air Force in 1971.

“I completed Officer Training School in 1971 and my first assignment was as an aeromedical evacuation nurse at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. I was there during the Vietnam War and we used to transport wounded service members back to the states for treatment,” Carpenter said.

Following her short stint at Travis Air Force Base, Carpenter was assigned to the then-Wilford Hall Medical Center in 1972. While on active duty, Carpenter served in many roles including staff nurse, scheduler and consultant for various medical units across the country.

Now with more than 40 years of experience, Carpenter can still be found in the Wilford Hall operating room and shows no signs of slowing down.

“I’ve been working here since 1972 and I’ve loved every minute of it. Nursing has always been a passion of mine,” said Carpenter. “My mother used to say that at a very young age I would carry my dolls around and try to put bandages or wrap them up as if they had injuries.”

As a volunteer, Carpenter keeps busy as an OR nurse and has assisted in a wide range of procedures including neurosurgery; orthopedic; general; open-heart; ear, nose and throat; and vascular surgeries.

To date, Carpenter has dedicated more than 12,400 hours assisting in more than 5,000 surgeries saving the Department of Defense approximately $291,060.

Over the course of 40 years, medicine and technology have changed tremendously and Carpenter has been witness to much of it.

“The technology has changed a lot and it took some time to get used to,” she said. “But the advances in medicine have been phenomenal. I remember a time when, if a patient came to us with cancer in one of their limbs, that entire limb would have to be removed. It’s amazing to see the level of care we’re able to provide nowadays.”

For Carpenter, it’s the love of helping people that keeps her motivated after all these years.

“People always ask me why I chose to volunteer and all I can say is that I do it because I love it,” she said. “I have been incredibly fortunate. The military has given me so much; it’s my turn to give a little back.”

Retired Col. Charlene Carpenter has been working or volunteering at the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland for more than 40 years.
Zika Virus: What is it? What can you do?

What is the Zika Virus?
The Zika virus is spread primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. These are the same mosquitoes that spread other viruses like dengue and chikungunya. Only about one in five people infected with the Zika virus will feel sick. In those that do, symptoms are usually mild and can include fever, rash, joint pain and red eye. Learn more about symptoms and diagnosis at http://www.cdc.gov/zika/symptoms/index.html.

How is Zika transmitted?
Zika is primarily spread to people through the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her baby during pregnancy, though we do not know how often that transmission occurs.

Learn more about Zika transmission.

Where are people contracting Zika?
People are contracting Zika in areas where Aedes mosquitoes are present, which include South America, Central America and the Caribbean. As the CDC notes, specific areas where the Zika virus is being transmitted are likely to change over time, so please check http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information for the most updated information.

Who is at risk of being infected?
Anyone who is living in or traveling to an area where the virus is found is at risk for infection.

What is the treatment for Zika?
There is no vaccine or specific medicine to treat Zika virus infections.

Treat the symptoms:
• Get plenty of rest.
• Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
• Take medicine such as acetaminophen to reduce fever and pain.
• Do not take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
• If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

Why are there specific recommendations for pregnant women?
There may be a link between a serious birth defect called microcephaly—a condition in which a baby’s head is smaller than expected—and other poor pregnancy outcomes and a Zika infection in a mother during pregnancy. While the link between Zika and these outcomes is being investigated the CDC recommends that you take special precautions if you fall into one of these groups:

If you are pregnant or trying to become so:
• You should consider postponing travel to any area where the Zika virus is active.
• If you must travel to an active region, talk to your doctor first and follow the steps to prevent mosquito bites during your trip.
• If you are trying to become pregnant, talk to your doctor before you travel and the risks posed from infection.


What can I do to prevent a Zika infection?
Right now, there is no vaccine to prevent this disease. The best way to prevent diseases by mosquitoes is to protect yourself from getting bitten. Here’s how:
• Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
• Stay in places with air conditioning or that use window, door screens, and netting to keep mosquitoes outside.
• Use Environmental Protection Agency – registered insect repellents. All EPA-registered insect repellents are evaluated for safety and effectiveness.
• Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items.
• Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.


Should we be concerned with Zika in the United States?
The U.S. mainland does have Aedes species mosquitoes that can become infected with and spread Zika virus. U.S. travelers who visit a country where Zika is found could become infected if bitten by a mosquito.

With the recent outbreaks in the Americas, the number of Zika virus disease cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States will likely increase.

These imported cases may result in local spread of the virus in some areas of the United States.

CDC has been monitoring these epidemics and is prepared to address cases imported into the United States and cases transmitted locally.

(Source: http://www.Health.mil)
Air Force Medical Service improving access to care

By Kevin M. Hymel
Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs

Over the last year, the Air Force Medical Service has been working to improve patient access to care. “We’ve always focused on and provided high quality and safe care,” said Lt. Col. Donald Lofton, Air Force Surgeon General’s Medical Support Division, Director of Access to Care. “Now access is getting a lot of attention.”

Patients have always been highly satisfied with their clinic or hospital care, but getting to the right clinician in a timely manner has sometimes been a challenge.

“We’ve heard people say, ‘Once I’m in the door I love it,’” said Lofton, “but we need to be getting the right patient to the right place faster.”

A 2014 Secretary of Defense Military Health System review reported that the AFMS was doing well regarding access to care, but uniformed and civilian leaders know it could be better.

“Our leadership basically told us: ‘Patients who were calling in were being told to call back too often. We need to fix that,’” Lofton said.

The AFMS, working with the other service’s medical branches at the Defense Health Headquarters, laid the foundation to move forward on improved patient access to care. Here are the top 10 things the AFMS is doing to improve access.

1. Simplified Appointing. Instead of appointment clerks using ten different appointment categories for patients, there are now only two. In the past, if someone called in with a cold, and all the acute category slots had been filled, the patient wouldn’t necessarily be seen in the clinic that day. Meanwhile, other slots potentially went unfilled. The system has changed from a symptom-based schedule to a time-based schedule. “Our goal is to see patients when they need to be seen, rather than forcing them into our previous symptom-based appointing construct,” Lofton said. “You’re now either in a 24-hour slot for things you need to be seen for in the next 24 hours, or a future slot for things you want to be seen for at some time beyond the next 24 hours.”

2. More Same Day Appointments. The AFMS is pushing to have more same-day appointments on the schedule each day, providing more patients the opportunity to be seen within 24 hours of calling for an appointment.

3. No Call Back Policy. To prevent appointment clerks from telling people calling for an appointment to call back the next day, the AFMS has created a new policy where, if no slots are open, the appointment clerk can directly contact a nurse in the clinic. If they are unable to reach a nurse, the clerks send an electronic note to a nurse, who will call the patient back within two hours.

The AFMS is also working towards greater enrollment in MiCare, where patients can use a secure server to make appointments, request refills or ask a nurse questions, saving time and money.

4. Direct Access Physical Therapy. To save active duty Airmen from going through their doctor to see a physical therapist, they may now book an appointment directly with a physical therapist for certain issues.

5. Embedded Pharmacy Clinics. A new pilot program places pharmacists in primary care clinics to better support patients with poly-pharmacy issues.

6. Clinical Support Staff Protocols. Clinical nurses and technicians are being utilized to treat a variety of common symptoms, such as sore throats. This maximizes the high level of training and competency these staff members have and helps get the patients to the right level of care for their issues and needs.

7. Nurse Advice Line. The AFMS is leveraging the Defense Health Agency’s Nurse Advice Line, a toll-free service where people can speak to a nurse who provides self-care advice, determines if the patient needs to see a doctor, or needs to go to an emergency room. The nurse can also activate emergency services and provide self-care advice, determines if the patient needs to see a doctor, or needs to go to an emergency room. The nation-wide service can be reached by dialing 1-800-TRICARE and pressing 1.

8. Improving DART. The AFMS continues to refine and improve the Direct Access Reporting Tool, or DART, a system that enables clinic administrators to better manage schedules and patient access. It refreshes data every two to 30 minutes, so it allows for timely, tactical decision making to better meet patient demand for appointments.

9. TRICARE Online, or TOL. The AFMS has worked with the other Services and the DHA to improve TOL, making it easier for patients to book appointments online. This system allows patients to book primary care appointments 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from the convenience of their home or office.

10. TOL has also expanded its Blue Button service, which allows a patient to review and track their medical history. Patients can check on their allergy tests, follow their immunizations and track their cholesterol, among other things. Visit http://www.tricareonline.com for more information.

While some improvements have been incremental, Lofton sees them all working together to increase access to care. “I see it getting better,” he said. “We made a promise to our Air Force family: We’ll take care of you.”

It’s a promise Lofton and AFMS team intend to keep. “Good things are coming but nothing happens overnight,” Lofton said. “We continue to make strides because we want to ensure timely access to the high quality and safe care that we provide in the AFMS.”
The 59th Medical Wing and Gateway Performance System are hosting professional development courses at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center’s, Innovation Center, Room 1C31. Public Speaking CLEP Prep will be held at 2 p.m. March 3 while Leading, Coaching, Mentoring and Empowering Effective Team members will be at 8 a.m. March 4. Register at https://cs3.eis.af.mil/sites/00-ED-AE-25/Pathways/Registration/Registration.aspx. Walk-ins are welcomed.

MARCH 17
INTERVIEW, DRESS FOR SUCCESS
Learn how to make a first good impression when networking, being interviewed and in daily work life interactions 10 a.m. to noon March 17 at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, building 1249.

Review expected guidelines of what to wear and how to prepare for an interview and how to make a connection with your interviewer. For more information, call 671-3722.

MARCH 23
RESUME WRITING TECHNIQUES
Everyone needs a resume when job hunting. Learn which resume formats to use when writing a non-Federal resume 8:10 a.m. at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, building 1249. Bring a copy of your current resume. For additional information, call 671-3722.

INTERVIEW WITH CONFIDENCE
Review interviewing techniques, creating a great first impression through appropriate attire, and a clear knowledge of shared interest and values 10 a.m. to noon at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, building 1249. Call 671-3722.

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT PROCESS
Learn how to apply for a Federal job by reviewing the civilian hiring process 1:30 p.m. at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, building 1249. Patrons will learn about terminology, how to navigate through http://www.usajobs.gov, federal resume writing tips, the Application Manager, checking on the status and rating process.

Don't forget to bring a copy of your resume. For more information, call 671-3722.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS
Learn how to make a first good impression as you network, and in your daily work life interactions 3:30-4 p.m. March 23 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, building 1249. Attendees will learn what, when, where and how to wear things the right way. Bring a tie. For more information, call 671-3722.

MARCH 24
COUPONING
Learn tips for gathering and organizing coupons. Review couponing terms and local grocery store policies to maximize promotions, stacking coupons and more. This workshop will be held 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 24 at the Wilford Hall Annex, building 4600. Call 671-3722.

MARCH 31
EFMP SUPPORT GROUP
The exceptional family member program support group focuses on Understanding Functional Behavior and Assessment noon to 1:30 March 31 at the Children's Association of Maximum Potential facility, building 3850. Review the necessary data for a thorough behavioral assessment and how to use that data to develop an appropriate behavior intervention plan. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of how these supplements can be implemented in the school setting. Call 671-3722.
Senior Army, Navy and Marine Corps officials outlined plans to integrate women into combat roles before the Senate Armed Forces Committee Feb. 2 and agreed incorporating women into combat ranks is the right path for the future.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Acting Secretary of the Army Patrick J. Murphy, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert B. Neller updated committee members on the services’ integration efforts.

Marine Corps leadership has “thoughtful and deliberate plans” to execute the transition effectively, Mabus said, adding the 231 female Marines who successfully completed the ground combat arms military occupational specialty training can immediately switch to those previously closed jobs.

The secretary said because the integration process includes training and education evaluation at every level from recruits to the highest levels of leadership, implementing that policy was a priority.

And while “suggestions” have been made to lower standards for female Marines to meet quotas, Mabus emphasized it’s “an unacceptable notion” for every Marine, especially those women who choose to compete for those positions.

“It’s unacceptable under the law, to me, and to every other senior leader in the Pentagon because it would endanger not only the safety of Marines, but the safety of our nation,” he said.

“Standards can never be lowered for any group or any job. Standards will evolve as threats evolve, but they will evolve for everyone equally,” Mabus said.

The Marine Corps also is ceasing its tradition as the only service branch that separates men and women in boot camp, he added.

“As our Army gets smaller, our success increasingly depends upon our ability to maximize the contributions of every volunteer that fills our ranks,” Murphy said. “A soldier’s ability to meet established standards that contribute to our success will remain our overriding factor moving forward.”

And to take advantage of America’s diverse and deep talents, the Army began its integration efforts several years ago, leading to three primary conclusions, he said:

• Every soldier will have the opportunity to compete for every position to include infantry, armor and Special Forces;
• The Army’s high individual standards, performance and professional conduct will continue to be based on requirements of the position and nothing else; and
• Enforcing the standards fairly and objectively will remain the guiding principle for mission success.

Murphy said he’s confident that integrating women into combat roles, while underpinned by strong leadership, will increase Army readiness.

“We will continue to monitor and report the lessons we learn so the Army can collectively integrate the force and share our experiences,” he said.

Murphy added, “The Army is prepared to act and benefit from integration – now.”

Fully integrating women into the Army will “maintain, sustain or improve” overall readiness, Milley said.

To be successful in this endeavor, he said, the Army must “maintain and enforce rigorous combat readiness standards, remain a merit-based results-oriented organization and apply no quotas and no pressure.”

To do so, the Army will put in place a “very deliberate methodical and transparent process,” Milley said.

Milley called the Army’s methodical approach to gender-neutral training for all Army officers, noncommissioned officers and junior enlisted members the leadership’s first principle to ensure success.

“Female cadets and officer candidates who meet the gender-neutral standard will be given the opportunity to request either infantry or armor branches” by spring, he said, adding that every active-duty infantry, armor and field artillery battalion today already has women soldiers.

“It is my professional judgement that some women can perform every single job in the United States Army to include infantry, armor and special forces,” Milley said. “Army leaders will continue to assess integration and we will adjust the process so our standards in combat readiness are maintained. You, the committee, have my word on this.”

On Dec. 3, 2015, when Defense Secretary Ash Carter opened all military occupations and positions to women, including combat roles, the Marines Corps began integrating all qualified Marines into previously closed MOSs in a well-planned responsible manner based on Corps’ research, Neller said in his written statement submitted to the committee.

“We have already awarded additional MOSs to all Marines who earned it through primary MOS-producing schools,” he said, “and two female second lieutenants are now undergoing MOS training at the field artillery officer basic course.”

Marines who were awarded additional MOS qualifications also can now request formal reclassification for combat arms designation, he said.

“The Marine Corps is a learning organization,” Neller said in his written statement. “We will evaluate the success of our plan and inform in-stride adjustments throughout this ongoing process as we recruit, train, develop, deploy and retain the highest-quality force.”
Joint Base San Antonio swimming pools looks to draw lifeguards

By Robert Goetz
JBSA-Goetz Public Affairs

Summer is not quite around the corner, but aquatic centers and pools throughout Joint Base San Antonio will soon be advertising for lifeguards to meet the facilities’ needs during the 2016 swimming season.

“The lifeguard announcement will be posted on https://www.usajobs.gov sometime around spring break,” said Dave Waugh, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Aquatic Center manager. “The jobs will also be advertised with fliers at the different facilities.”

The pools will hire lifeguards at three general schedule pay grades: GS-2 for lifeguards, GS-3 for lifeguard/water safety instructors and GS-4 for lead lifeguard/water safety instructors. WSIs are also certified to teach swimming lessons.

Waugh said there is a need for lifeguards at JBSA facilities.

“There has been a real problem in previous years getting enough lifeguards to run all the programs and work during posted operating hours,” he said. “I know that last year I was short 10 employees.”

Waugh said he hopes to hire 31 lifeguards at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston: 23 GS-2s, five GS-3s and GS-4s.

JBSA-Lackland’s facilities – the indoor Skylark Aquatic Center and the outdoor Warhawk Pool – and JBSA-Randolph’s outdoor South and Center pools are also seeking lifeguards.

“We hope to hire a total of 23 positions, which include lifeguards, water safety instructors and lead lifeguard/water safety instructors,” said Stephanie Soto, JBSA-Lackland aquatics manager. “We have not recruited in the past, but we are recruiting now and the summer looks promising.”

“All employees must be currently certified as lifeguards by having successfully completed the American Red Cross Lifeguard Course within the last two years,” he said. “The course certifies them in lifeguarding, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator operation. Certification is valid for two years.”

The American Red Cross course is taught at all three JBSA locations.

“The class has instruction in rescue skills in the aquatic environment,” Waugh said. “A lot of time is spent on preventive lifeguarding and safety at the pool. We also teach first aid, CPR and AED.”

The next class is planned for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 12-13 and March 19-20, followed by a class from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 26-27 and April 2-3.

A blended-learning lifeguard class is also scheduled 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 12-19 at JBSA-Lackland’s Skylark Aquatic Center and Skylark Community Center.

Soto said other classes will follow.

The JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Aquatic Center will also be conducting water safety instructor classes. The first class is scheduled 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 14-18. The second class will be 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 9-10, 5-9 p.m. April 13 and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 16-17.

The lifeguard and water safety instructor courses cost $160 each and require passing a pre-test. The lifeguard course is open to anyone 15 or older while the WSI course is open to anyone who is 15 or older on the last day of the class.

Lifeguards must be a student, at least 16 years old and able to pass a background check, physical examination and urinalysis.

Lifeguards need not be military dependents, Waugh said.

“Unfortunately, people have the idea that you have to be a military dependent to work, but that is not true. I have had my best luck recruiting from JROTC and ROTC units.”

Waugh also said lifeguards serve as customer service representatives, cashiers and custodians in addition to their lifeguarding duties.

The JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Aquatic Center, a heated outdoor facility, is open for lap swimming now and for recreational swimming starting Memorial Day weekend. For more information, call 221-4887.

The JBSA-Lackland Skylark Aquatic Center is open year-round, while the Warhawk Pool is open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. For more information, call 671-3750.

The JBSA-Randolph South Pool is open from mid-June to mid-August for swim lessons and lap swimming; the Center Pool is open starting Memorial Day weekend for recreational swimming. For information, call 652-5142, option 1.
Selflessness in stride: Technical sergeant runs while thinking of military and civilian community

When a military training instructor ran the San Antonio Rock ‘n’ Roll Half-Marathon in December 2014, it was for the purpose of “just doing it.”

Tech. Sgt. Christopher West, 323rd Training Squadron MTI, had no idea the race would ignite a passion to run not only for himself but also for wounded warriors with physical and mental ailments.

“I saw a couple of wounded warriors carrying flags (during the run), and it was inspiring to see that,” West said. “The half-marathon was a bucket list item for me and they are running to fulfill a dream or show they haven’t given up on life. Seeing that made me want to push myself more physically and also help them with whatever it may be.”

To honor veterans through fitness, West joined the Team Red, White and Blue’s San Antonio chapter – a non-profit organization that focuses on enriching American military veterans through social and physical activities in the community – in February 2015.

Through the Team RWB organization, the technical sergeant participates in events with veterans to help them cope with mental illnesses with the goal of taking their mind off depression.

He was recently selected for a leadership position within Team RWB in November 2015 that entails him discovering community events for veterans to participate in.

“I have always wanted to do something to give back to our veterans,” West said. “When I saw Team RWB’s mission statement and what their goal was, which was to bring veterans closer together and give them an opportunity to have people at their side, that gave me a passion to be a member of the organization and do what I can to make the lives of veterans better.”

Roy Orozco, Team RWB’s San Antonio chapter captain, calls West an “outstanding Eagle” for his participation in and leadership of team functions. The eagle is the organization’s emblem.

“It makes us as an organization proud to see Chris fly while wearing Eagle attire,” he said. “He may not have done it physically, but he was there with me this whole time.”

Betsy Walling Furler, Henry’s mother, calls West’s dedication to Henry “amazing.”

“Henry, like Chris, is an over-achiever and hard worker,” she said. “Our family is honored that Chris runs races for Henry. Chris inspires him to keep moving forward.”

In addition to racing for others, West has personal race goals of his own. He said he wants to run 2,016 miles by the end of the year plus run a 50k and 100k ultramarathon and 50 and 100-mile race.

West performs interval and hill training, and speed drills at least six days a week to accomplish those goals.

“I do whatever it takes to better my body, stamina and endurance because I don’t want to put myself in a position where I can’t run because I hurt myself,” he said.

However, discomfort doesn’t halt West from logging miles.

“There are days when I am in a blah mood and I don’t feel like doing anything,” West explained. “But I think about Henry and how he had to go through a blood transfusion so he can make it through his day. I find the passion and motivation to run because Henry is not giving up on me and I am not going to give up on him.

“I start to hit a wall when performing longer runs, but the thoughts of wounded warriors pushes me through to make it to the finish line,” he continued. “These people gave it their all or lost something I couldn’t imagine myself losing so I am going to pick it up and finish. I am not stopping or giving up.”

West’s selflessness has not gone unnoticed by his peers.

Orozco said West exemplifies the team concept for Team RWB.

“Watching Chris grow as a runner and team member has been rewarding for me,” Orozco said. “We have had some great conversations on why he runs and what it means to him, and I can honestly tell you he makes a difference in people’s lives each time he runs a race.”