



# CONTACT

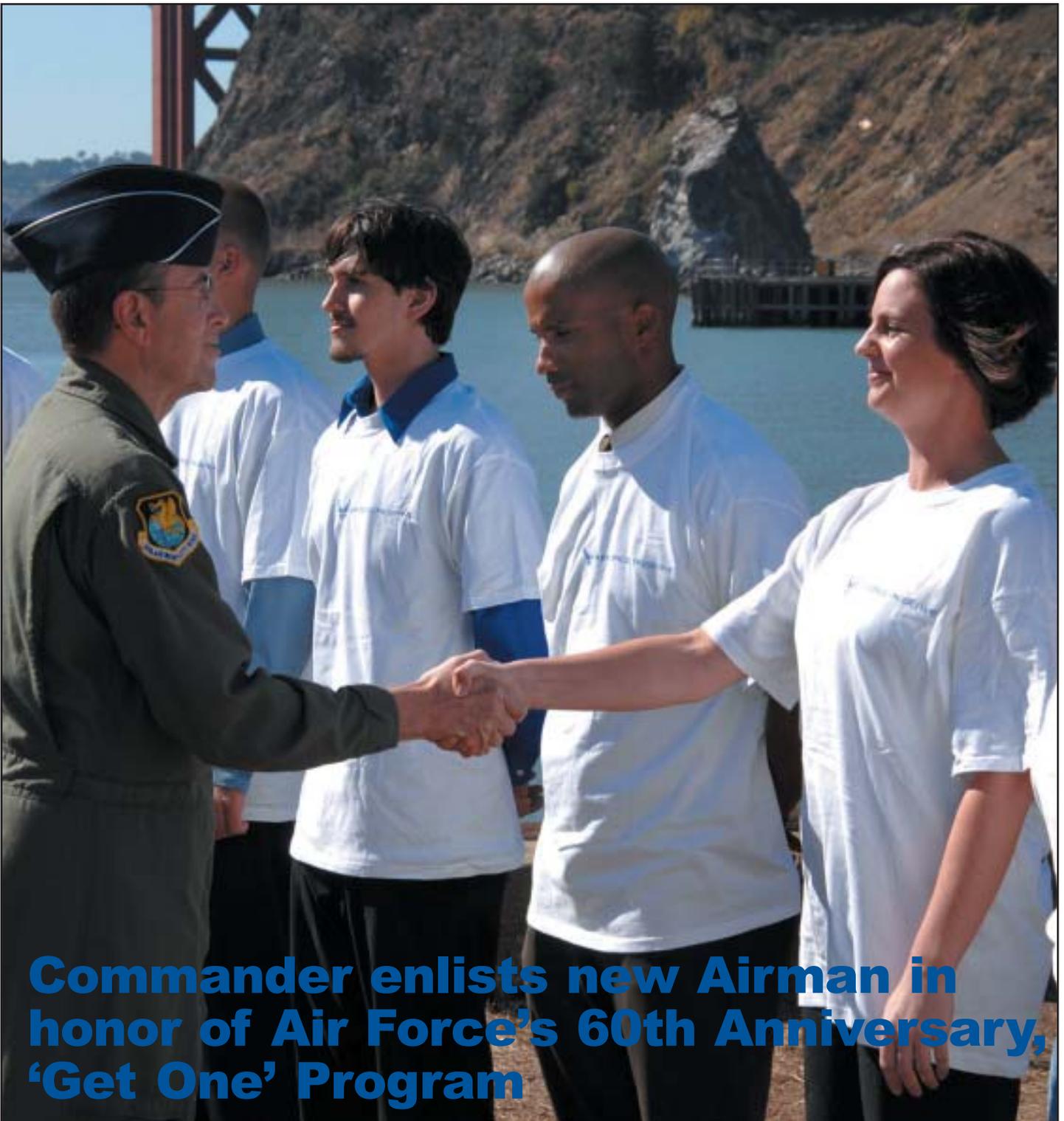


Magazine for and about Air Force Reserve members assigned to the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California



Vol. 25, No. 11

November 2007



**Commander enlists new Airman in honor of Air Force's 60th Anniversary, 'Get One' Program**

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The ceremony was one of the ongoing events celebrating the United States Air Forces' 60th Anniversary.



Cover photo by Andre Mansour, Base Multimedia Service Center



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## Planning, time management key

You've probably heard the saying "if you fail to plan, you plan to fail." Poor planning is one of the main reasons projects fail, fall behind schedule or miss their deadlines.

Without adequate planning, it is difficult to really understand what it will take to complete a project successfully. Without plans, it is difficult—sometimes even impossible—to get a clear picture of all the things that you are working on and what still needs to be done. Without planning, you won't have a clear idea of what you need to do and you won't be able to prioritize your time properly.

Without proper planning, it is difficult to anticipate and avoid major problems and risks. Without actively monitoring and avoiding these risks, they can easily sidetrack or even cause your project to fail.

Planning is one of the most important activities in time management—it has been estimated that every minute spent planning can save three in execution. So take time to focus on the plan. It will allow you to execute your mission in a timely and successful manner.

This month the 604th Medical Squadron is furling its unit flag as they deactivate at Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington. The Reserve unit has been in existence

since 1983. The tiny unit with a big heart is the way members refer to it. The unit has served an important role in retaining and maintaining enthusiastic Reservists with vital life saving skills. According to Senior Airman Christina Castillo, a member of the 604th, "the members of the 604th Medical Squadron are a patriotic bunch. We love our country, we are proud to salute our flag, and we are honored to serve the United States of America." Despite the furling of the unit flag the spirit of the 604th is sure to remain strong within those who have served with and for this amazing organization. I salute all of you for a well completed mission.

Technical Sgt. Robert Garcia, 82nd Aerial Port Squadron, recently graduated from the NCO Academy in-residence at Robins AFB, Ga., which, by itself, is a wonderful accomplishment! That he received the Academic Achievement Award and was named a Distinguished Graduate is fantastic, another awesome representative of our wing and the Reserve command as a whole! When you see him, please congratulate him for his superior service and his commitment to excellence!

The giving season is upon us and for those wanting to give to charities, the Combined Federal Campaign kicked off



By Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr.

Oct. 9 and runs through Nov. 21. This year's theme is "2 Minutes 2 Make A Difference!" The wing goal is \$17,600 and we want 100 percent contact with all members in the 349th. CFC is a wonderful way to give to the charities of your choice and many people will benefit from your donation. For more information contact the wing CFC representative, Master Sgt. Charmaine McDonald at (707) 424-5360.

Now with thoughts of giving on your mind, Cleo and I would like to wish you a Happy

Thanksgiving with your family and friends and may God continue to bless you and keep you safe.



## Deployment, in general, is a battle in of itself

by Chaplain (1st. Lt.) Andrew Edwards  
349th Air Mobility Wing

Many of us have already been deployed to an area where we could encounter battle or we may be preparing to do so. Based on the need for redeployment counseling, patching the wounded, rehabilitation, etc. it is obvious that battle is stressful and dangerous to our bodies, our emotions, our spirit, and our families. Deployment, in general, is a battle whether or not we ever



come close to a war zone or engage the enemies of our nation. Deployment means leaving loved ones behind, months of missing our wives or husbands, children, etc. Deployment

will reveal character and cause us to fight thoughts, ideas, and emotions that could cause our foundations to shake. Realize that no man or woman is perfect, without feeling, or free from emotional strain, we will often seek care for ourselves regardless of appropriateness-which means we become targets emotionally and spiritually. However, we can ultimately be victorious in these areas even if we lose some of the skirmishes. If we are going to be victorious then we will need to prepare for battles well in advance and be determined to win! Any good soldier or airman is constantly training, preparing their bodies, their minds, their skills so that they are ready to meet the adversary. If you are going to survive and ultimately win the battle of deployment then you will need to prepare emotionally and spiritually, as well as the obvious preparation needed physically.

Realize that one of the biggest battles

faced during deployment is the temptation to be close to the opposite sex (I can't deal with all temptations and trials, but this is a major one - though principles for battling it are the same as those I will mention). Men and women will feel lonely in a war zone, so you will need to prepare yourself in such a way that you deal with loneliness appropriately and win the battle for purity. Like it or not, sexual impurity is always going to be wrong! Therefore you need to make the decision now that you will read books, write letters, pray, find something, anything morally sound that will help you deal with inappropriate desires. Oh, I know this isn't politically correct, but I can guarantee that your spouse, fiancé and God are in agreement with me - not to mention commanders who have to deal with pregnancies, sending people for sexuality transmitted disease treatment, or sending airman to counseling to deal with

(See Battle on next page)

# Command Chief moves out, up to 4th Air Force

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Meredith Mingledorff  
349th Public Affairs

Bitter sweet, happy, sad, those were some of the words used to describe Command Chief Patricia Thornton's farewell. Chief Thornton leaves the 349th Air Mobility Wing to serve as Command Chief of 4th Air Force, headquartered at March Air Reserve Base, Calif.

"It has been such a joy serving with and serving for you," said Chief Thornton. "I will continue to serve you at 4th Air Force and my 349th brothers and sisters will always have a special place in my heart."

Heartfelt good-byes have taken place throughout the month of September as the chief gave her thoughts at each Wing Commander's Call.

"Where you at 349th?" hollered the chief at each assembly.

Responding with resounding booms of enthusiasm, each squadron called out their unit's war cry.

"What a gift," said Chief Thornton. "I couldn't have achieved my goals without each and every one of you. I salute you!"

The last ever C-flight required no prompting at all. Each unit calling out louder than the last. Travis' base theater resonated with energy.

"She has earned the nickname 'Chief Rah-Rah'," joked Col. Robert Millmann, 349th AMW vice-wing commander.

"That's a good thing. She is the biggest advocate for our Wing and our troops. I knew she was the right person for the job

up at 4th, and I had to come to terms with the fact that it would be unfair of us to keep her all to ourselves when she still has so much to give."

Known for her vibrant personality, big smile, and even bigger heart, Chief Thornton leaves the 349th with inspired airmen at every level.

"She has always done good things for our people and there is no doubt that she will continue to do good as she moves on to bigger and better things," said Col. Millmann.

"Her ability to listen is what has made her special to me," said Col. Kenneth Lewis, 349th Operations Group commander. "So many people only hear you. They listen to a portion of what you're saying and start forming their opinions. Chief Thornton doesn't do that, she has an amazing ability to listen and reflect before giving an honest, fair response."

"I am an American Airman," recited the chief, the creed is an oath, promise, and way of life for Thornton. "I embarrassed her once," said Brig. Gen. Thomas Gisler, 349th AMW commander. "I said I thought she was the best command chief in the whole Air Force Reserve Command and I believe that. I tell you, I think she will one day be the command chief leading AFRC."



**Godspeed:** Command Chief Patricia Thornton says farewell. Chief Thornton leaves the 349th Air Mobility Wing to serve as Command Chief of 4th Air Force, headquartered at March Air Reserve Base, Calif.

Big predictions that make Chief Thornton smiles, a humble woman who admittedly draws strength from her faith, she left the Wing with wishes for each member.

"I wish you all the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, humility, and self-control." Thank you chief. Godspeed.

## Battle...

(Continued from previous page)

marriage breakups. Remember folks, this isn't television or the movies - actions have consequences that can last a life time such as broken hearts and ruined lives. I have learned a few ways to win battles of the mind and body. First, and easiest - find out what the right thing to do is and then do it! Pretty simple isn't it? This works with all problems that you want to overcome (lying, stealing, cheating, cursing, picking fights - every vice).

Second, try doing mentally what Paul

the Apostle suggested in the Bible, found in the book of Ephesians 6:10-18. *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might...Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful*

*to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints"* (NKJV).

Folks if I can win the battle then any one can. I was once an atheist without constraint, a special operations trainee. I was weak ethically and morally. But I became victorious because I decided I wanted to win the battle for righteousness and I hated what I saw others doing to their families!

If you want to have joy and peace at the end of the deployment battle then you will need to prepare during predeployment and continue to prepare first thing every morning. God bless you all.

# 349th Wing selects new Command Chief

Story and photo by  
Master Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer  
349th Public Affairs

“Thank goodness,” was Chief Master Sgt. Christine Taylor’s first thought when she heard she had been selected for the position of Command Chief Master Sergeant for the 349th Air Mobility Wing. She has always known what she wanted to do and becoming Command Chief was at the top of her list of life goals.

“The Command Chief position for the 349th AMW has been an integral part of staying connected with our Airmen, and while I had some really outstanding individuals apply for this position, I believe that Chief Taylor will bring a new level of excellence to the position and I am looking forward to working with her,” said Brig. Gen. Thomas Gisler, wing commander.

“Being selected for Command Chief is like a dream come true,” said Chief Taylor. “This wing is my home and we always only want the best for where we live. I’m very proud to be selected for the Command Chief of the 349th AMW, I wouldn’t have wanted it anywhere else.”

Chief Taylor was born in the Bronx and raised in New York City. After high school, she knew she wanted to go to college, but her family couldn’t afford to send both her twin sister and herself. So she looked into the education opportunities offered by the U.S. Army.

“It was a tough time, it was the end of the Vietnam war, so my family was not all that tickled that that was going to be my option, but they supported me,” said Chief Taylor with just a hint of a New York accent evident.

She made the decision to enlist in the U.S. Army, beginning her 31 year military career. She served for three-and-half years, extending long enough to finish her Associate Degree in Art. The Chief trained as an Avionics maintenance specialist working on CH-54 Sky Cranes, Hueys and Chinooks helicopters.

Her Army career started out with an 18-month basic electronics program at Fort Gordon, Ga., where her strong desire to learn resulted in her graduating as an honor graduate.

“When I got to home station, the assignment they wanted to give me was a

job that had nothing to do with electronics,” said the Chief. “They wanted me to be the first sergeant’s secretary.”

“I was just a ‘lowly’ private, I had no voice and this junior noncommissioned officer just came in the office one day and went in behind closed doors with the first sergeant and the commander,” remembered Chief Taylor. “He came out 20-30 minutes later and he said, ‘You’re working on my crew and you report to the flightline.’”

“I never forgot that—somebody stood up for me,” said Chief Taylor. “That set the example for me right then and there. I remember thinking how important it was that somebody thought I was important enough to stand up for.”

The Chief excelled in her job and while stationed with the 478th Aviation Company, Fort Benning, Ga., she was chosen to escort visiting Secretary of State Alexander Haig and his wife, on a tour of their hangar and the helicopters her crew maintained.

“I believe I made a difference for a lot of people that day, because I was young, a woman and I was black. I felt like I made that junior NCO who stood up for me proud,” said the Chief.

After separating from the Army, the Chief decided to go back home and start college. Meanwhile, she found herself missing the military and decided to join the Air Force Reserve. She was stationed for the first year at the base closest to her home, McGuire AFB, N.J.

During that time, the Chief visited a friend in California. She liked the area so much that she decided to move there permanently and transfer to the Reserve unit at Travis AFB. The Chief continued in her avionics career field, working on C-5 Galaxy and C-141B Starlifter aircraft while also attending Chico State University.

Very happy with her avionics career field, the Chief still had visions of her future goals spurring her on. She had always wanted to work in an airport. And the aerial port squadron seemed like a great way to get experience.

“Everyone said, ‘Oh, you’ll never get into that because everyone wanted to



**212 degrees and rising:** The new Command Chief Master Sgt. for the 349th AMW, Chief Master Sgt. Christine Taylor, is on fire as she speaks to a group who attend this year’s 349th AMW Wing Enlisted Workshop. Chief Taylor talked about deciding on life goals and how to focus on and reach those goals. This year’s theme for the WEW was, “Let’s make it happen!”

work there,” said the Chief.

But she was not deterred. She researched the aerial port squadrons, liked what she saw, and decided to give the career field a try, applying and being accepted into the 47th APS, one of six aerial port squadrons on Travis at that time.

After arriving at the 47th APS, Chief Taylor found a mentor that made a big difference in her life and military career, Chief George Ingle.

“He was very well spoken and on point when he was talking to you. I’d be doing something and he’d always pull me aside and say, ‘Now I expect better.’ And I was thinking I was doing pretty good,” remembered the Chief. “And when he became first sergeant, I got to see him in action and see the way he handled people. I so admired him and wanted to be like him, from that moment, I decided I wanted to be a first sergeant.”

When Chief Ingle was promoted to chief, the first sergeant position for the 47th APS became available. While moving cargo was the Chief’s main career field, taking care of people was her passion. She

(See Chief on Page 11)

# 349th Wing member gets the opportunity

*Story and photo by  
Master Sgt. Ruby Zarzyczny  
380th Air Expeditionary Wing*

Capt. Thomas Lessner, a KC-10 pilot from the 79th Air Refueling Squadron, Travis AFB, Calif. and Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor and Purple Heart recipient recently deployed to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing's 908th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron at a forward-deployed location, got to 'walk the line.'

"I like to call it walking the line," said Captain Lessner. "I can draw a line from any Airmen's job to how they support the troop on the ground and in the air. As each person in the Armed Force does their job and does it well, they increase the survival rate for individuals who have survived situations like mine."

Before Captain Lessner flew KC-10s, he lived a different life flying the MH-53 PaveLow Special Operations helicopter. While supporting an Operations Enduring Freedom mission, he got the opportunity to share his story.

"Captain Lessner is a tremendous patriot, who continues to serve his country and our Air Force, despite his harrowing experiences," said Lt. Col. David DuHadway, 908th EARS commander. "His positive attitude and professionalism are infectious, and he's a fantastic example for all Airmen. I'm glad he's on our team and able to tell his story while he is here."

In 2004, Captain Lessner was deployed to Baghdad International Airport in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On the night of April 12, he flew three missions near the southeast corner of Fallujah, Iraq, in a two-ship MH-53 helicopter formation.

Captain Lessner was the pilot for the lead MH-53 helicopter with a crew of six men on board. The crews had three missions that night. The first mission was the infiltration of Special Forces and ammunition into a forward operation base near Fallujah. The second mission was to pick up Armed Forces members killed in action from Mamadiyah, Iraq, and bring them back to BIAP.

"Once we were at BIAP we were to drop off the bodies and pick up a Special Forces team to survey a field called Taji Field located 12 miles north of Baghdad, said

Captain Lessner. "Then we were just going to fly back to BIAP and call it an evening."

The crews took off out of BIAP to complete their first mission. With winds out of the north and zero percent illumination, the helicopters flew to the designated landing zone. They called several different radio frequencies to make contact with someone on the ground in the LZ. They heard a lot of chatter on the radio, but they couldn't make contact with anyone on the ground. Despite the lack of radio communication, the crews shot the approach (went in for a landing) using the coordinates and imagery of the LZ.

"When I was shooting the approach, we notice that there was a lot going on, on the ground, and we realized we weren't going to be able to get in," said Captain Lessner. "So we executed a go around. As we were resetting our approach, I was about 190 feet above the ground flying at 110 knots."

"While the co-pilot and the flight engineer were head down putting in the coordinates for another LZ, I saw a huge flash or light. I heard a pop and then I heard a deafening explosion."

The explosion happened in the middle of the instrument panel in the nose of the helicopter. As the explosion progressed in the center of the instrument panel the light from a rocket propelled grenade turned bright orange.

"I could feel the percussion of the explosion," said Captain Lessner. "It felt like I got hit in the face and chest with a baseball bat. It also felt like a large warm mud ball hit me hard and then the warmth dispersed throughout my body."

"It jostled me and it blew my helmet and goggles off my head," he continued. "I had sustained shrapnel wounds to my legs, left shoulder, neck and face. I broke my nose and sustained burns over 70 percent of my face from my left eye all the way down my mouth and neck."

Captain Lessner was bleeding from his face that was peppered with shrapnel and could not see from his left eye. The copilot was also hit severely in the arms and legs. The engineer sustained the majority of the damages as a huge piece of shrapnel punctured the globe of his left eye. The crew had only seconds to maneuver the helicopter for an emergency landing.

The second aircraft observed the nose

of the helicopter turn straight up almost 90 degrees almost vertical to the ground.

"Having a hole in your cockpit is not an ideal flying situation," said Captain Lessner. "I still had use of my right eye. I did a quick scan of the cockpit when I felt a burst of wind rushing inside the cockpit where there used to be an instrument panel."

"I didn't hear anything from my copilot or the engineer, and I didn't know how badly the aircraft was damaged," he continued. "I knew we were low enough that if I just drop the helo out of the sky we could possibly survive."

"I dropped the collective (that controls the up and down and amount of power and pitch on the rotor blade) down to the floor to send us straight down, and I had the cyclic (that controls the forward and tilt of the main rotor blade) in my hand. What ended up happening was our aircraft went from an almost 90 degrees nose up to a level position. This all happened in less than 30 seconds."

Now there were no lights in the helicopter except for the engineer's computer display unit about the size of a deck of cards. The windshield had been cracked and broken out. Captain Lessner could make out a line of city lights on his right side as he tried to level his aircraft with the cyclic. When he tried to level it he felt some resistance and realized the co-pilot was back with him. He felt the cushioning of the aircraft as the co-pilot landed the helicopter on the ground.

On the way down, Captain Lessner thought about his previous deployment in 2003 to Bagram when he witnessed four of his crew members and one passenger burn to death. He thought of those guys and how they died when he first got hit and thought that was how he was going to die. He was at peace and knew he had to do whatever it took to save as many lives as he could. That is when his training took over, and he helped successfully maneuver an emergency landing.

Captain Lessner's initial actions to level the helicopter and start the decent down for an emergency landing helped save the crew of six Airmen and six Special Forces.

"The stars and moon were aligned in order for us to make it out of this," said Captain Lessner. "I think we were all well trained and very lucky."

# ty to 'walk the line' while deployed

When the aircraft got on the ground Captain Lessner's first thought was, "we made it."

"Then I heard my engineer wake up, and he started screaming in pain," said Captain Lessner. "I reached over to unbuckle him, and I felt him get pulled out of the seat. I reached around for my GAU rifle and blindly made my way out of the cockpit. I kept trying to wipe the blood from my eyes. I tried climbing out of the back, and I fell down to the floor. One of the Special Forces picked me up and helped me out of the aircraft."

The recovery of the aircrew and Special Forces took about 15 to 20 minutes. The helicopter and crew were downed .8 miles away from the enemy forces that launched the RPG into their cockpit. They weren't just sitting there waiting to be recovered because there were about 30-40 enemy forces moving toward their positions.

"I heard the Special Forces say, 'we have to go—we have to get out,'" said Captain Lessner. "We followed the emergency egress plan and tactically ran to a position 100 yard away from the helicopter. While we were running into position. We could hear approaching gun fire. We were running low to the ground, and I could feel the high grass whipping across my chest."

"The next thing I knew, I felt him fall," said Captain Lessner. "I thought the worst. I tried to look for him and fell into a five foot deep ditch right on top of him. We climbed up the back side of the ditch, and he started saying 'they're coming and the second helicopter landed about 100 yards from our position. We ran to get onto the second helicopter."

"The second helicopter crew made three attempts through the enemy combatants in order to get us. They took multiple small arms fire, and they successfully avoided about a dozen RPGs that were launched at them. Master Sgt. Bryon "Biggin" Allen, MH-53 tail gunner, laid down a number of bursts of cover fire and killed a lot of the enemy forces who were coming to get us."

Capt. Lessner pilot (right seat), Maj. Steve Edwards co-pilot and mission commander (left seat), Technical Sgt. Christian Mackenzie flight engineer, Master Sgt. Randy Kensey left door gunner, Senior Master Sgt. Rob Colannino

right door flight engineer/gunner, and Staff Sgt. Jesse Lee tail gunner were happy to see the aircrew of the second helo as they assisted them into the aircraft and left no one behind.

On the second aircraft, Capt. Marshall Groves pilot (right seat), Capt. Matt Barry co-pilot (left seat), Staff Sgt. Brian Bowling, flight engineer center seat, Staff Sgt. Chris Dalton right door engineer/gunner, Senior Airman Casey Mabry left door gunner, and on the tail Master Sgt. Bryon Allen, those guys were the real heroes of the whole situation, said Captain Lessner.

Once all crew members were safely on the second aircraft they headed back to BIAP.

Captain Lessner honestly believes the only reason he and his crew survived is because of actions of everyone from his crew, to the other crew, and every single person who was involved in their lives up to that moment. Whether it was a services person, a chaplain, a maintainer, or security forces—every single person they came into contact with that day had a part in their survival.

"If Airmen do their jobs well, they have a direct and positive impact on the mission all the way down the line," said Captain Lessner. "As I walk through the chow hall and see the young Airmen who is standing there making sure people are signing in and washing their hands, I can walk their job down the line and see a direct impact on the mission"

"I think where ever Airmen are doing their jobs well, I need to say thank you,"



Capt. Thomas Lessner, 79th Air Refueling Squadron, Travis AFB, Calif. recently deployed to the 908th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron at a forward-deployed location, got the opportunity to 'walk the line.'

he continued. "I am alive and it is not just because the stars aligned that night. It's because every single person was doing their job to the best of their ability."

"I feel the utmost amount of humility toward the Airmen who are doing a good job. I feel a sense of gratitude towards that person. It's humbling for me to have them listen to my story and be amazed and thankful for what I did that night; when in actuality it should be the other way around."

"I'm living my life on borrowed time, ten times over. I'd look like a mad man if I went around saying thank you to everybody, but that is actually the way I feel. That is the reason I tell my story because I feel thankful to everyone who serves."

## Free computer-based training

In an effort to fill the gap between tight budgets and training requirements, officials here are reminding Airmen and Air Force civilians that there is a place to go for free computer-based training.

Hosted on the Air Force Portal, the IT e-Learning program primarily offers continuing education to help communications professionals prepare for information technology certifications and keep up with the latest software upgrades.

It is geared toward active-duty, Reserve, Guard and Department of Defense civilian IT professionals, "But, you don't need to be a comm troop to use the resources provided there," said James Shaw, the Air Force Communications Agency technical director. The Agency administers the site for the Air Force.

"Anyone who uses Microsoft Office applications such as Word or Excel can take courses to improve their knowledge," he said. "We'll also have a course online soon so people can learn the about Microsoft's Vista platform."

People can take courses in human resource development, project management or marketing strategies. They can also learn more about Adobe's software systems such as Acrobat and Photoshop, for example. These courses can be finished in a single sitting or be saved and worked on as time permits.

People also have access to "Books 24x7," a comprehensive online reference library of fully-searchable technical books. The library contains more than 6,000 books covering topics such as IT software development, system engineering, and network design and support. It also contains 294 books covering desktop applications, operating systems, graphics, multimedia and design. These books are available for all levels of expertise and experience.

"We have such a wealth of free resources to use," Mr. Shaw said. "Why not take a few minutes to visit the IT e-Learning site and discover the benefits yourself?"

IT e-Learning is administered by the Communications and Information Training Management Branch of the Air Force Communications Agency. For more information on IT e-Learning, call DSN: 779-5698, emcl: 618-229-5698 or send your question to: [afca.caft@scott.af.mil](mailto:afca.caft@scott.af.mil).

## First Sergeant Selection Process

The 349th Wing holds two First Sergeant Selection boards each year; one in June and one in December, for personnel meeting the eligibility requirements for becoming First Sergeants. Individuals wishing to be considered must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must be highly motivated and capable of fulfilling the role of the first sergeant as prescribed in AFI 36-2113, Chapter 1,
- Must possess exceptional communication, leadership and managerial skills,
- Aptitude Score of 45 in Administrative or 62 in General,
- Technical Sergeant must be immediately eligible for promotion to Master Sergeant and meet time-in-grade requirements,



- Hold a 7-skill level,
- Completion of the NCO Academy,
- Agree in writing to complete the First Sergeants Academy in-residence within one year of selection,
- Have the ability to speak distinctly,
- Have the minimum physical profile requirements,

- Be financially stable,

- Must meet Air Force standard of good physical health (scored 75 or above on the Air Force Fitness Test during the past 60 days). In addition, applicant's physical appearance and military image must meet the highest standards expected only of the most dedicated senior NCOs,

- Must have completed the NCO Academy Course. Must complete the Senior NCO Academy within 12 months upon graduation from the First Sergeant Academy. In-residence is highly desirable,

- Personnel must agree to serve tenure of no less than 3 years from date of graduating from the First Sergeant Academy.

- Agree to maintain proficiency, a high grade of leadership, fitness to perform, and fulfill without exception the duties and responsibilities of a first sergeant.

Application packages for individuals interested in meeting the December board are due to Personnel Employment no later than Nov. 30. Squadron commanders should notify Personnel Employment when a first sergeant vacancy is projected. At that time, Personnel Employment will announce the vacancy.

For additional requirements, contact the 349th Personnel Employment office at (707) 424-1662.

## Basic Allowance for House location

Basic Allowance for Housing is an allowance to offset the cost of housing when you do not receive government-provided housing. Your BAH depends upon your location, pay grade and whether you have dependents. BAH rates are set by surveying the cost of rental properties in each geographic location. The rates are established such that members in each pay grade, independent of location, pay approximately the same out-of-pocket costs. Each military member must recertify BAH. When was the last time you filled out an AF FORM 987 to recertify your BAH. For additional information contact the 349th Financial Management office at (707) 424-1675.



## Air Force Fitness Management System

If you didn't know you can pull and print your own scores and history by logging on to the AF PORTAL and clicking on "Air Force Fitness Management System" link under "Featured Links" which will open up your "My Fitness" page. Just print the page. It's as easy as that! You can use that document for TDY out-processing or any other official needs. For additional information contact the wing fitness coordinator, Master Sgt. Bill Travers, (707) 424-3250.



# Programs prepare Airmen, families for deployment

by Staff Sgt. Monique Randolph  
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

As part of ongoing efforts to inform Airmen about ways to manage stress, Air Force officials have introduced a monthly campaign to highlight initiatives to help Airmen and their families cope with life's difficulties, and the initiative this month is deployment readiness.

Air Force officials employ proactive programs to prepare Airmen and their families for the challenges associated with deployment and family separation, and the programs focus on the time before, during and after the deployment.

"The Air Force created the deployment support process to provide continuous, integrated support to Airmen and their families while deployed and at home station," said Lt. Col. Steven Pflanz, the chairman of the Air Force Integrated Delivery System. "We must recognize that deployment support is an ongoing process, and not just a homecoming event. This program aids in the transition from the deployed to family life and the work center, and ensures timely attention to the needs of Airmen and their families."

**Pre- and post-deployment briefings:** The Airman and Family Readiness Center, in conjunction with other agencies on base, conducts a pre-deployment briefing to educate Airmen and families on personal planning strategies related to extended duty away from home.

Representatives from several base agencies provide information about the services available to Airmen and family members. During these briefings, Airmen can complete powers of attorney, enroll in the morale call program, and get information about military pay changes, family care plans and other deployment-related issues. Spouses are also encouraged to attend.

"These briefings are often done in groups, but can be provided individually to help Airmen plan for how to handle personal business long distance," said Brenda Liston, the chief of community support and family readiness at the Pentagon. "They are also valuable to help spouses speak to their children about the



deployment, ensure appropriate planning for financial issues, and build communication plans to ensure family unity while apart."

The A&FRC also offers post-deployment services, such as "Coming Home" briefings, to prepare Airmen for reunion with their families, friends and co-workers. Working with chaplains and other helping agencies within the Integrated Delivery System, the A&FRC provides counseling services, briefings and guidance on reunion issues.

"It seems like the reunion would be easy, but it is often the most difficult part of the deployment," Ms. Liston said. "Both the deployed Airman and the family have changed during the separation; sometimes slightly, sometimes a lot. Family rules and routines often need to be adjusted to fit the new reality. Spouses and children have often become more independent and the Airman can feel left out at first. The Airman has often gone through some life-changing events and that can cause changes.

"Single Airmen have similar issues to deal with," she said.

Additionally, some reintegration problems can arise in the days past the original post-deployment period, so officials also follow up with Airmen 120 days after they return.

**Deployment health assessments:** Before and after a deployment, Air Force medical professionals provide health assessments to identify any potential health and behavioral issues.

During the pre-deployment assessment, Airmen complete screening forms, records review and an interview to address any potential health concerns before they deploy to "ensure they are not sent somewhere that could potentially be dangerous for the Airman or the mission," Colonel Pflanz said.

"The post-deployment health assessment is conducted upon return from deployment, followed by a post-deployment health reassessment at 90 to 180 days after the Airman's return," said Colonel Pflanz, senior psychiatry policy analyst for the Air Force Medical Operations Agency. "These assessments are designed to identify both physical and mental health concerns, and lead to treatment for health problems identified."

**Family readiness programs:** The Air

Force also provides services that directly support the family members of deployed Airmen. These services are designed to help families understand the cycle of deployment and the effects deployment can have on children.



"Children don't always understand why mom or dad had to leave for the deployment and what it all really means. They often fear that their parent is in danger," Ms. Liston said. "Helping them understand the whole process and keeping open communication with the deployed parent is important. Our A&FRCs have junior deployment events each year that help children experience the deployment process. Parents should contact their local A&FRC for the date of the next event."

The A&FRC partners with installation communications squadrons to provide free Hearts Apart Morale Calls and video teleconferencing between family members and deployed Airmen. Support groups, childcare programs, and even car care programs are also available to the families of deployed Airmen.

"We find families who stay connected via various means of communication fare much better than those who do not," Ms. Liston said. "The A&FRC assist families in building strategies to keep communication open for all members of the family unit."

**Palace Hart:** Air Force leaders developed the Palace HART — Helping Airmen Recover Together — program to assist Airmen with combat-related illnesses or injuries resulting from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

"The program provides individualized support to ill or injured members," said Yvonne Duker, supervisor of the Air Force Palace HART program.

Consultants ensure Airmen receive necessary information and entitlements on the military side, as well as assist with transitioning to civilian life.

"This can include financial counseling, relocation and employment services," Ms. Duker said. "In addition, consultants coordinate benefits counseling and services provided by the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs and Labor, Social Security Administration and other helping agencies. The Air Force is committed to providing support and follow-up to our wounded warriors for up to five years."

PROMOTIONS



Senior Master Sergeant

Nolan H. M. Delemos, 349th MDS



Master Sergeant

Sebastian K. Gilder, 349th ASTS  
 Shawn A. Simmons, 79th ARS  
 Bessie L. Slaton, 55th APS  
 Rommel R. Trinidad, 349th MDS  
 Kimberly A. Williams, 349th AMW



Technical Sergeant

Maria A.R. Chavez, 349th MAS  
 Carmen J. Everingham, 349th MDS  
 Bobby J. Gonzales, 82nd APS  
 Michael S. Gray, 349th MAXS  
 Rebecca S.R.B. Grijalva, 349th AMDS  
 Harold V. Ray, Jr., 349th EMS  
 Nathaniel B. Williams, Jr., 82nd APS



Staff Sergeant

Eric A. Apolonio, 349th EMS  
 Daphne Blask, 349th MDS  
 Adrian D. Delacruz, Jr., 45th APS  
 Candace E. Johnson-Cunningham,  
 349th MDS  
 Todd J. Kirkland, 312th AS  
 Agustin Medina, 349th MDS  
 Pamela M. Peterson, 45th APS  
 Julio C. Ramirez, Jr., 301st AS  
 Brandon G. Robinson, 349th CS  
 Victor V. Rodriguez, 749th AMXS  
 Scott C. Sherman, 749th AMXS  
 Charlene N. Starker, 349th CES



Senior Airman

Dalance A. Boschee, 349th CS  
 Chantay D. Brinkley, 349th OSF  
 Jennifer N. Christner, 45th APS  
 Joseph R. Mizer, 349th AES  
 Lori J. Mulcahy, 82nd APS



Airman First Class

Michelle Carpenter, 349th MDS  
 Xavier Garcia, 349th AES  
 Christopher M. Raymond, 301st AS  
 Jared R. Wilson, 349th MDS



Airman

Andrew J. Larsen, 55th APS  
 Zachary D. Williams, 349th EMS

All promotions effective Oct. 1, 2007

REENLISTMENTS/NEWCOMERS

SSG ANGELES KIMBRELL, ALYSON, 349TH CS  
 TSG ANGELES, MELCHOR R., 55TH APS  
 SRA ARONS, STEVENS EDWARD, 749TH AMXS  
 TSG BALCOBERO, MAECOLLEEN CARIAGA,  
 349TH ASTS  
 TSG BAUTISTA, ALEX P., 749TH AMXS  
 SSG BUKHARI, YAZAN, 349TH CES  
 MSG CABALLERO, JAMES A., 349TH CES  
 TSG CASTRO, ANTHONY R., 349TH AMW  
 MSG CINCO, AMELIA L., 349TH MOF  
 SSG GALLEGOS, LENORA L., 349TH ALCF  
 MSG GILB, DENNIS C., 349TH CS  
 AB GONZALEZ, RUBEN CHRISTOPHER, 349TH CMS  
 SMS GRAHAM, BERNADETTE B., 55TH APS  
 TSG GRIEFF, ERIC J., 312TH AS  
 SRA HARRIS, JOSEPH MICHAEL, 749TH AMXS  
 SSG HERRERA, ALEXIS GRACE, 349TH AMDS  
 SSG JACKSON, STACEY DENISE, 349TH AMW  
 TSG JACKSON, TERRY A., 349TH LRF  
 MSG KRUMWIEDE, JONATHAN C 312TH AS  
 MSG LEBLANC, GEORGE E., 749TH AMXS  
 MSG LOMBARDI, TRACY J., 749TH AMXS  
 SSG LOPEZ, MARIO A., 349TH LRF

TSG MEDEIROS, MARK B., 45TH APS  
 TSG MELTON, MICHAEL C., 349TH CES  
 TSG MILLER, GLEN A., 349TH LRF  
 MSG MORRIS, GLENN V., 55TH APS  
 SMS PALMER, IAN A., 82 APS  
 SRA PATTERSON, SCOTT C., 349TH AMXS  
 MSG QUENGA, JESSE Q., 55TH APS  
 TSG RAUL, STEPHEN J., 349TH AMXS  
 SSG RODRIGUES, STEVEN D., 79TH ARS  
 SMS ROJAS, LARRY 55TH APS  
 MSG RUSSELL, RANDI J., 55TH APS  
 CMS SANBORN, SHAWN R., 301st AS  
 SMS SCHARDT, JOHN B., 55TH APS  
 TSG SENTER, TRISTINA L., 349TH ALCF  
 TSG SPENGLER, JASON W., 749TH AMXS  
 TSG STEIN, JOSEPH J., 9TH 45 AMXS  
 TSG STONE, JON C., 349TH LRF  
 SSG TANG, RUTH, 349TH ASTS  
 A1C VAZQUEZ, CHARLA NICOLE, 349TH MSS  
 SRA WEBB, CHRISTIAN JAY, 945TH AMXS  
 MSG WEBB, SCOTT D., 945TH AMXS  
 TSG WOOD, ROSS ADAM, 55TH APS  
 TSG WRIGHT, KEITH ROY, 349TH MDS

**UNIT VACANCIES**

| <b>AFSC</b> | <b>AFSC Title</b>         | <b>Grade</b> | <b>#</b> | <b>AFSC</b> | <b>AFSC Title</b>           | <b>Rank</b> | <b>#</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------|
| 11M3A       | Mobility Pilot, C-5       | Officer      | 3        | 3E051       | Electrical Sys              | SSgt        | 1        |
| 11M3K       | Mobility Pilot, C-17      | Officer      | 7        | 3E052       | Electrical Power Production | SSgt        | 2        |
| 1A151       | Flight Engineer           | SSgt         | 3        | 3E471       | Utilities System            | TSgt        | 1        |
| 1A251       | Aircraft Loadmaster       | SSgt/TSgt    | 1/2      | 3E651       | Operations Mgmt             | SSgt        | 1        |
| 1A271       | Aircraft Loadmaster       | MSgt         | 1        | 3E851       | Explosive Ord Disposal      | SSgt        | 4        |
| 1N071       | Operations Intel          | TSgt/SMSgt   | 1/1      | 3E891       | Explosive Ord Disposal      | SMSgt       | 1        |
| 1T071       | Surv, Evas, Resist & Esp  | TSgt         | 2        | 3E891       | Explosive Ord Disposal      | CMSgt       | 1        |
| 21R3        | Logistics Readiness       | Officer      | 3        | 3E951       | Readiness                   | SSgt        | 1        |
| 2A551J      | Aerospace Maint, C-5      | SSgt         | 12       | 41A3        | Health Services Admin       | Officer     | 2        |
| 2A551L      | Aerospace Maint, KC-10    | SSgt         | 11       | 43H3        | Public Health               | Officer     | 1        |
| 2A553A      | Intergrated Avonics Sys   | SSgt         | 2        | 44F3        | Family Physician            | Officer     | 2        |
| 2A651A      | Aerospace Propul, Jet Eng | SSgt         | 7        | 44M3        | Internist                   | Officer     | 4        |
| 2A671A      | Aerospace Propul, Jet Eng | TSgt         | 1        | 44Y3        | Critical Care Medicine      | Officer     | 1        |
| 2A654       | Aircraft Fuel System      | SSgt         | 3        | 45A3        | Anesthesiologist            | Officer     | 1        |
| 2A655       | Aircraft Hydraulic System | SSgt         | 2        | 45B3        | Orthopedic Surgeon          | Officer     | 1        |
| 2A672       | Aerospace Ground Equip    | MSgt         | 2        | 46F3        | Flight Nurse                | Officer     | 2        |
| 2A675       | Aircraft Hydraulic Sys    | TSgt         | 1        | 46N3        | Clinical Nurse              | Officer     | 8        |
| 2A753       | Aircraft Structural Maint | SSgt         | 1        | 46N3E       | Clinical Critical Nurse     | Officer     | 2        |
| 2A771       | Aircraft Metals Tech      | SSgt         | 1        | 47G3A       | Dentist, Comprehensive      | Officer     | 1        |
| 2E151       | Satellite/WB Comm Equip   | SSgt         | 1        | 48A3        | Aerospace Medicine          | Officer     | 2        |
| 2E153       | Ground Radio Comm         | SSgt/TSgt    | 2/3      | 48R3        | Diagnostic Radiologist      | Officer     | 3        |
| 2E173       | Ground Radio Comm         | MSgt         | 1        | 4A151       | Medical Material            | SSgt        | 1        |
| 2T251       | Air Transportation        | SrA/SSgt     | 13/20    | 4A171       | Medical Material            | TSgt        | 1        |
| 2T271       | Air Transportation        | MSgt         | 1        | 4N051       | Aerospace Medical Svc       | SSgt        | 1        |
| 2T351       | Spec Veh & Equip Maint    | SSgt         | 1        | 4N091       | Aerospace Medical Svc       | SMSgt       | 3        |
| 32E3G       | General Civil Engineer    | Officer      | 1        | 5J071       | Paralegal                   | SSgt        | 1        |

For more information about these vacancies, go to <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afpcsecure/MainMenu.asp>.

# Chief...

*(Continued from Page 5)*

felt moved to apply for the first sergeant position and was selected.

“I got to really be with the people, hear the people. I’m a people person, I get excited when people are excited about what they’re doing,” said the Chief. “I get even more excited when I think I’m a part of that,” said Chief Taylor. “When I was a first sergeant, in my heart I knew it was about the people, it’s always about the people, it’s the people that get the mission done.”

But her career path would soon throw up another one of life’s “bumps.” The six Travis aerial port squadrons were instructed to become three squadrons. The Chief transitioned into the 82nd APS, but a position as a first sergeant there was not available. The Chief decided to focus her attention on getting to know every section that makes up the aerial port squadron, eventually becoming superintendent of them all and finally became Operations Superintendent.

Still she hadn’t forgotten her passion - being a first sergeant. The chief took note of the duties of the senior enlisted advisor position which later evolved into the command chief position and began to prepare herself, to set her sights to the future. While still giving the maximum effort to the 82nd APS.

“I always had my eye on whatever I needed to do to keep my finger on the pulse of the wing, realizing that could be the next great opportunity for me,” said the Chief.

When Chief Maddox retired, Chief Taylor had thought about applying for the command chief position but her life was too hectic.

“Now that I’ve had my journey, I find I’m so much more prepared today than three or four years ago when Chief Thornton was throwing her hat into the ring, which is when I would’ve wanted to do it. So there’s a reason that life got in the way for me, it wasn’t the right time,” reflected the Chief.

In her personal life the Chief stays busy running her own business as a financial advisor and spending time with her husband, who retired from the 301st Airlift Squadron after 34 years, and with their two daughters. When she’s feeling down she takes refuge with her family who always brighten her spirit. And if some extra time should appear in her busy schedule Chief Taylor likes to play chess or pick up a pool cue or ping pong paddle and give the game her all.

Reflecting on her new job and her plans for the future energizes the Chief.

“My goal right now is to keep the wing in it’s elite status,” the Chief. “The wing is so well revered all across the numbered Air Forces, and my goal is to one, keep it that way and two, figure out a way to elevate us to the next level,” Chief Taylor.

“With all the changes and transitions now, people are being asked to do more than they were ever being asked to do before and I think a big part of my job now is to make sure we are all prepared for tomorrow,” said Chief Taylor.

As for advice for Airman for reaching their goals

“If you want something, decide you want it. Don’t worry about the rocks, the bumps and the pebbles in the road. You may not get it at the time you want it, but you’ll get when the time is right,” said Chief Taylor. “Also, don’t let life derail you. Figure out who you are, who you want to be and how you want to be remembered and go for it!”

*We've made a list, and checked it twice...  
You're invited 'cause you're so nice!*

**60 MOS/349 MOF Fifth Annual  
Holiday Tree Festival & Auction**

**Benefiting The Fisher House and  
The Airmen & Family Readiness Center's  
Food Pantry**

**DATE:** Thursday, Nov. 29  
**TIME:** 4-7 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Building 31 Atrium  
60th MCG Headquarters  
501 Hanger Avenue ("Pizza Hut")

**Admission:** One non-perishable food item.  
**POC's for donations:** Contact Master Sgt. Jim Barber at (707) 424-4558 or Ann James Watkins at (707) 424-1499.



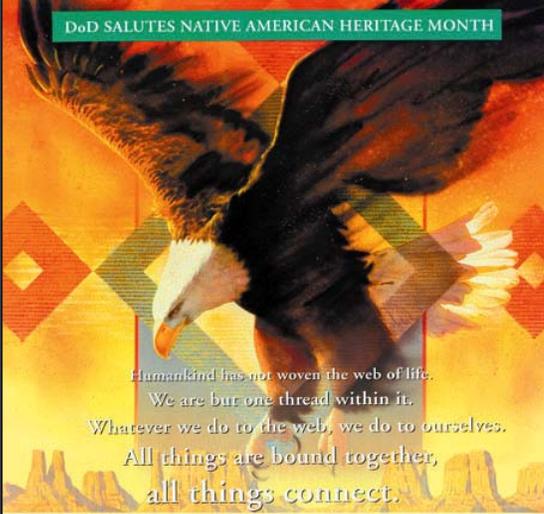

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Top Three/ Master Sgt. Kathleen Covert (707) 424-3812  
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