

THUNDERBOLT

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Mental Health
ready to help

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COMMANDER'S CORNER



Knowing True North is knowing your mission

by Col. Robert Rocco
6th Medical Group commander

If you've ever been lost and attempted to get your compass bearings aligned, you were attempting to ascertain your True North. True North is the direction from any point along a meridian towards the North Pole. Sometimes called geographic north, True North is a fancy way of pointing you in the right direction--an important first step in finding where you are and setting your bearings straight in focusing where you are headed. Like so many of us, when I was a young Airman, I sometimes found myself lost between demands of my unit, time management and command expectations. When I reached that stress choke point, I found comfort in re-reading my mission statement because when I did, it always put me back on track guiding me towards where I needed to be.

In today's Air Force, we face many challenges that often make it difficult to find our way in an ever changing environment full of demands. We offer Airmen opportunities to enhance personal fitness and resiliency goals but for me, during times like this, I find reminding myself that despite all of the challenges and all of the responsibilities we as Airmen share, our True North is our mission...it is why we serve and it provides professional direction each and

every day.

In the 6th Medical Group my team recently crafted a mission statement that we believe best aligns us with the objectives of the 6th Air Mobility Wing, 18th Air Force and Air Mobility Command and best points us towards our professional True North. Wanting to avoid the vague verbiage some units get hung up on when crafting their mission statements, we opted for a simple, direct approach on why we are here and what's expected of us. Simply put, we crafted the following 6th Medical Group mission statement: "Prevent, Heal, Prepare, Deploy" and it hits the mark for being direct, all-encompassing and understandable.

Something unique about the medical mission on most bases is that regardless of installation mission or focus, the one constant whether on an AMC base, ACC base, overseas base or CONUS base is the expectations of the installation population for its medical units. Our garrison mission rarely changes and this is why our mission statement makes it clear what it is we need to focus on each and every day. If we allowed ourselves to get caught up in the numbers...600,000 prescriptions filled last year or 185,000 patient visits we could easily overwhelm ourselves before the duty day even started. When we focus on our mission, it removes the stressor and



Col. Robert Rocco

replaces it with a straight forward expectation.

Here, our mission statement's first two elements clearly summarize what our patients need and fellow units expect of us. When medics talk of "prevention", we emphasize the need for guiding our beneficiaries towards decisions that focus on healthy lifestyle choices and towards that end, the 6th Medical Group offers a wide variety of healthy lifestyle options.

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COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE

The Action Line provides a two-way communication between the 6th Air Mobility Wing commander and the MacDill community. A 24-hour recording service is provided so personnel may submit questions, concerns or comments. Call the Action Line at 828-INFO (4636) or e-mail macdillwingcommander@macdill.af.mil



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MacDill Thunderbolt

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Editor: Nick Stubbs

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This week’s standout



New warning system proving itself

MacDill one of early adopters of AtHoc system

by **Nick Stubbs**

Thunderbolt editor

One of the first bases in Air Mobility Command to implement the new AtHoc mass, electronic instant notification system, MacDill can boast that its members are truly “dialled in” when it comes to knowing what’s going on.

From weather alerts on up to major threats, the MacDill Command Post-based AtHoc system can blast out a message to thousands of individuals no matter where they may be. It’s all about the purple globe, which is the symbol for the notification system many on base recognize from the bottom of their computer screens. But AtHoc also sends messages to cell phones, PDA devices such as Blackberries, home computers, laptops and tablets. It’s a powerful system that ensures when important word about anything has to go out, Team MacDill members will get it, and get it fast.



“It’s a great tool for getting information out to the base population quickly,” said Chief Master Sgt. John Langston, superintendent of the Command Post.

Langston said the AtHoc system has been running at MacDill since November, and it couldn’t be working out much better.

“We use it on a daily basis,” said Langston. “It’s used whenever there is a threat to (base/Air Force) assets or when there is the threat of harm to people.”

The system is a persistent messenger, as well, demanding the attention of the person receiving the message and requiring them to acknowledge receipt before the purple globe will leave them alone – at least until the next message goes out.

It’s an effective system, said Langston, who added that if anything it can become overly dogged in doing its job.

Langston said one of the issues that has come up with the system is that Airmen and personnel who forget to cancel registration from the system when they leave MacDill discover that there is nowhere they can hide from AtHoc.

“It will follow you no matter where you go,”

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Resiliency Region Lonely and in need of a friend

DEAR WING MA’AM: I’m a lucky man. I have a career, financial security, health-care, a beautiful wife who loves me and helps support the family and a healthy child. The only thing we really argue about is how to divide up the household chores. Help - someone’s gotta keep this mess under control! ~ Mr. Clean

DEAR MR. CLEAN: Chores around the house should be a ‘shared responsibility.’ It is the second biggest



Dear
Wing
Ma’am



Dear Wing Ma’am is written by Capt. Christy Cruz, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Wing Ma’am works as the Resiliency Program manager and clinical therapist at MacDill AFB. If

you want to ask Wing Ma’am for advice, please send your questions to 6mdos.sgoh@us.af.mil. Letters are kept anonymous. Rights are reserved to edit published letters for style and length.

Not every question can be answered. This column seeks to educate readers and should not be used as a substitute for seeking professional assistance.

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‘There I was...’

We shared a relentless desire to get the mission done

by Senior Airman Eduardo Flores

6th Logistics Readiness Squadron

It is very impressive how a small team of disciplined, mission-oriented, and well-trained Airmen can execute many complex tasks in short periods of time.

During the preparation for our deployment at the Basic Combat Convoy Course (BC3) in Camp Bullis, Texas, we were presented with many different challenges. Overcoming these adversities taught us invaluable keys for success for our tour in Iraq. Our very first challenge was that every single one of the Airmen in our convoy team were from different bases around the world; each with different backgrounds, hobbies and interests.

At the time, even though we had numerous differences, it became clear that we all shared one crucial trait: our relentless desire to get the mission done. Everyone on the team learned the basics in Camp Bullis. As we became combat life savers and worked hard around the clock on a wide variety of combat drills, we learned to work as a team and improved our ability to perform under pressure. We all did our very best during the training, and by the time we jumped on the plane to our deployed location we had an idea of what it was going to be like to work in a combat zone.

Our convoy team was part of the 387th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, 70th Medium Truck Detachment located on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait (AJ). Our mission was to transport cargo from numerous forward operating bases in Northern and Southern Iraq and bring them back safely, efficiently, and quickly. Our number one priority was always to come back home safe. With the conclusion of each mission, it was no doubt a success when every single person returned safely to AJ. Communication, mutual support during critical times, and trust were all keys to ensuring our various successes in Iraq.

Each member in our team was assigned different specialties within the convoy. Early on at BC3, my convoy commander (C2) assigned me as his driver along with the task of Radio Telephone Operator (RTO). Such a task consisted of carefully managing classified cryptographic information to program numerous Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems (SINCGARS) on each mission. My job also included



Courtesy photo

Senior Airman Eduardo Flores during his deployment, where he worked transporting cargo from forward operating bases in Iraq.

administering and conducting inspections on multi-million dollar computerized movement tracking systems. It was a sensitive job with significant responsibilities, and it demanded that I stayed alert to face any challenge each time there was an issue.

I recall vividly the first time we were at the Kuwait-Iraq border. We all gathered in a circle to have a prayer before crossing the perimeter. This practice became a tradition which reminded me of the story of a Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés (1485-1547) who decided to burn his ships before his enemies, therefore making the retreat of his troops impossible. Cortés declared that “they will defeat the enemy or die” meaning there was no turning back. When our prayer was completed, we returned to our trucks, mounted up and with some anxiety we headed out into the unknown pass that border. That first time crossing that Kuwait-Iraq border is so memorable in my life because I didn’t know what to expect. I found myself in limbo, a state of uncertainty I never experienced before. Although we didn’t have to burn our trucks as Hernán Cortés had to burn his ships, we succeeded as he did.

Overall, our convoy team crossed the border eight times and performed a total of six missions into Iraq, traveled five thousand four hundred

miles, and delivered ten thousand tons of cargo for the Iraq draw-down mission. In support of the Afghanistan theater re-distribution, we hauled twenty thousand pounds of Class Five cargo two hundred miles to the main ammo supply point. As we shutdown numerous bases in Northern and Southern Iraq, it became obvious that our initial efforts during our combat training, in addition to our experience gained in previous missions, had an excellent repercussion in our results.

As one of the last Air Force Detachments to have boots on ground in Iraq, I believe that these events not only became a memorable period in our lives, but also marked a transition in the history of the United States of America. For my performance on this deployment I received the Army’s Commendation Medal on January 10th, 2012. However, I know it was due to the actions of my team that ultimately led to me getting recognized.

I will never forget how important it was for us who played a part in this mission, to have such a sense of purpose and commitment to our country. Our motivation to succeed kept us alive and focused on the mission done. We shall always remember that we are all in one team, one string, and that we are part of one unique force we all must protect, defend, and remain victorious.



Team MacDill Safety Office named best by Air Force

by Nick Stubbs

Thunderbolt editor

“The Air Force Chief of Safety Outstanding Achievement Award for Ground Safety.”

It has a nice ring to it; especially reverberating off the walls of the MacDill Safety Office, which learned last week that it was judged top Air Force ground safety unit in its class for 2011.

The prestigious award follows being selected tops in Air Mobility Command, a title the office has earned three times since 2006. Winning at the Air Force level is affirmation that the safety crew at MacDill is on the right path.

“A lot of hard work” by the team went into the win, said Jason Jackson, 6th Air Mobility Wing ground safety manager.

“It was overall teamwork,” said Jackson. “It wasn’t just one outstanding person.”

It didn’t hurt that the numbers showed team MacDill was a substantially safer place to live and work in 2011.

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SAFETY

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“Our number of mishaps went down significantly from the previous year,” said Jackson. “That helped, I’m sure.”

The MacDill safety team won the Air Force award for Category III, which is for safety units serving less than 4,000 members. In addition to the award, the Safety Office also received special recognition Air Force plaques for Explosives Safety and Ground Safety categories during 2011.

The safety crew was still riding high on the news this week, but it isn’t letting it distract them from the tasks ahead.

“We’re coming into the 101 Critical Days of Summer,” said Jackson, referring to the annual safety awareness program that emphasizes the unique risks summer presents, including safety issues related to outdoor activities such as biking, boating and traveling common during the warmer months.

Details about this year’s safety campaign will be emerging as the program nears its Memorial Day kickoff, but Jackson said it will be a mix of successful events from previous years along with some new things still in the works.

More Team MacDill standouts recognized by AMC, Air Force

The following Team MacDill members and units are congratulated for their recent wins for 2011 accomplishments recognized by Air Mobility Command and the Air Force:

- ◆ Major General Harold M. McClelland Award: 6th Communications Squadron
- ◆ AMC Outstanding Civilian Specialist Award: Richard Black, 6th Communications Squadron
- ◆ AMC and AF Outstanding Civilian Manager: Ernest Thompson, 6th Communications Squadron
- ◆ AMC and AF Outstanding Cyberspace Systems SNCO: Senior Master Sgt. David Cox, 6th Communications Squadron
- ◆ AMC and AF Outstanding Knowledge Operations Manager: Senior Airman Steven Arthur, 6th Communications Squadron
- ◆ AMC Force Support SNCO of the year: Master Sgt. Marcus Watson, 6th Force Support Squadron

WING MA'AM

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flexible and allow your partner to accomplish a task in their own way. If having the clothes folded a certain way is super important to you, then you fold the laundry.

If you are tired of carrying the load yourself and have discussed this issue with your loved one to no avail, you will have some choices. You can't CHANGE your hubby or wife. So, you can either 1) cut back some of the chores that you don't want to do anymore and focus on the higher priority tasks or 2) hire a cleaning service. The cost may be worth it---compared to continually fighting over the issue!

Mental health:

When needed, help is in easy reach

by Airman 1st Class Michael Ellis/Photos by Senior Airman Melissa Paradise

6th Air Mobility Wing public affairs

The number *five*.

When one thinks of Mental Health services, is the first thing that comes to mind the number *five*?

The Air Force Mental Health program is divided into *five* individual groups, with *five* distinct functionalities. Mental Health, Family Advocacy, ADAPT, Resiliency and Behavior Health are the *five* sections that fall under the Mental Health umbrella.

“Sometimes there’s a stigma associated with seeking treatment from Mental Health,” said Staff Sgt. Andrew Johnson, 6th Medical Group Resiliency Element. “People tend to forget we all have problems. Mental Health is simply here to treat, evaluate and return back to full duty status as quick and efficiently as possible.”

Clinical psychologists and licensed psychiatrists make up the Mental Health flight at the 6th Medical Group. The professionals at Mental Health are available by appointment to help work with you on many issues pertaining to military, family and everyday life.

The 6th Medical Group Family Advocacy section is here to support military families. The primary goal of Family Advocacy is to build healthy communities with programs that prevent and treat the maltreatment of children and spouses. Besides one-on-one consultations, Family Advocacy offers classes such as: Dads 101...a class for new and expectant fathers; Baby Basics for new parents; Infant Massage, Playgroup ages newborn to three; Anger Management, Divorce/Separation, and Fases which helps improve communication skills and build healthy relationships.

“There’s even a program where nurses will make “house calls” to the homes of new parents and assist them with new-parent basics such as baby care, feeding, bathing, stop baby crying, potty training and other parenting skills,” said Marlene Sullivan, 6th Medical Group Family Advocacy Program assistant. “Parents don’t start out as experts, it takes time and practice and our Family Advocacy experts are the right coaches to assist with any parenting challenge!”

ADAPT, also known as the “Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team,” focuses on preventing and aiding military members on issues related to alcohol and/or substance abuse.

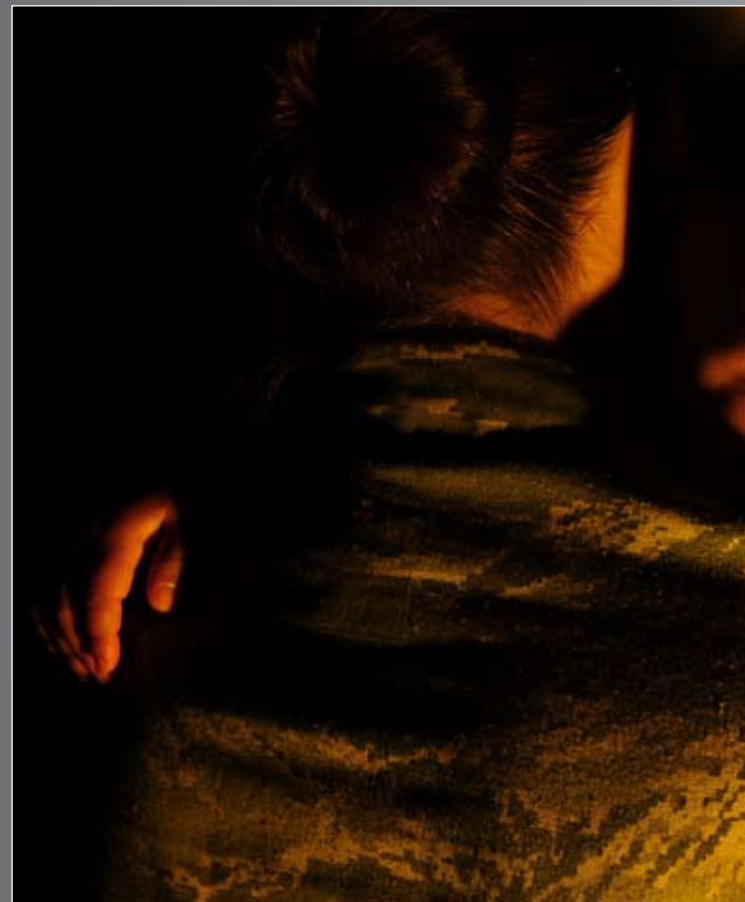
Johnson has some advice for those who are undecided on whether or not to visit the 6th Medical Group:

“People feel uncomfortable talking about their problems in general, and they feel their problems are new or really sensitive. When someone drops by the clinic for help it shows good judgment and reflects good on the member and helps address a potential problem before it gets out of hand.”

The Resiliency Element proactively addresses the morale of personnel assigned to MacDill Air Force Base. From formal briefings and events with large groups to morale checks with staff members working odd hours, the Resiliency team is fully engaged in building stronger, healthier more resilient Airmen. “Here at the Resiliency element we take what we do seriously from shop visits to Airmen road trips to social spots on and off base, most recently, to Dave and Buster’s,” said Johnson.

Behavioral Health specializes in a broad scope of medical specialties. Some of

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Family Advocacy: The 6th Medical Group Family Advocacy section supports military family by offering family oriented counseling such as Anger Management, all geared toward building a strong



Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment program: Health focuses on preventing and aiding military members with alcohol and substance abuse.



Capacity section supports the military as Dads 101, Baby Basics and other family unit.



Program: A key program of Mental Health offers counseling geared towards evaluating, treating and returning personnel back to full duty.



Sleep clinic: The 6th Medical Group Behavioral Health clinic offers a number of classes to aid in sleeping problems. A helpful tip for good rest is to remove all distracting electronic devices from the bedroom to minimize disturbances.



One on one counseling: The 6th Medical Group Mental Health clinic offers one-on-one counseling geared towards evaluating, treating and returning personnel back to full duty.

MENTAL HEALTH

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the classes include: sleep hygiene issues, healthy sleeping habits and diabetics classes. Just as a reminder, Behavior Health services are also available to military family members.

“Regardless of what you may have heard about Mental Health services please understand that they are a benefit available to our military families,” said Col. Robert Rocco, 6th MDG commander. “And those assigned to the Mental Health mission are proud of their ability to serve as Wingmen, fellow warriors and Airmen!”

If you have questions for yourself, a family member or a friend, feel free to call (813) 828-CARE to schedule an appointment at the clinic. “Don’t take somebody else’s experience and make it your own. Everyone is different and everyone can benefit from the experience of the Mental Health team,” says Johnson.

So the next time someone mentions Mental Health think about the number *five*. *Five* different elements, *five* different missions, they’re bound to have a program uniquely designed for you.

ATHOC

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said Langston. “It’s like your luggage, so you have to make sure if you leave to update your data.”

Updating is done by clicking on the purple globe logo and plugging in new preferences, which cover everything from selecting what personal communication devices will receive messages, to suspending the service due to a change of station or deployment.

“Update your data,” Langston urged for those whose situation is changing. “And keep it updated.”

CORNER

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From fitness programs at the Health and Wellness Center or one-on-one counseling between patients and their medical or dental providers, our prevention mission is first among equals here at the 6th Medical Group. Why? Fit warriors ensures maximum capability and keeping the force fit and healthy ensures a leaner force that isn't hanging around the clinic...they're fixing planes, flying planes, defending the base and supporting the needs of the various units that work on MacDill each and every day. An MDG focused on "prevention" is focused on our primary obligation to our nation: fit and healthy warriors mission ready all the time.

Of course, I hope most of you think of "healing" when you think about the 6th Medical Group and the ability to "heal" exemplifies competency in our crafts as medics. We all get sick...when that happens, our patients want their medical group to provide them the support to recover quickly or to provide them the support necessary to face whatever challenges their personal health presents them. For many of you, "healing" is the bottom line and we are true to that expectation because "healing" is why most of us entered the healthcare professions in the first place.

The final two words of our mission pay tribute to a primary reason we all serve. As medics, we too "prepare" for the readiness challenges all Airmen face. Whether here on base preparing for local disaster response challenges or TDY training for global contingency operations, we medics take preparation seriously because we all understand that the difference between life and death is often the effort we place on the training we receive in the field, in the classroom and working alongside our sister service teammates and local community medical partners (here in Tampa or wherever our duties take us).

Finally, "deploy" summarizes for us our bottom line. Like our grandfathers who fought in World War II and fathers who served in Korea and Vietnam, today's 6th Medical Group warrior medic understands that the

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true test of any Airmen is the ability to balance garrison demands with the expectations of an Air Force to keep our warriors fit, cure them when ill, prepare to save them in the most trying times, and take those skills where the fight is whenever and wherever our Air Force calls. The large numbers of retiree patients we see each day understand our primary mission and take pride in our ability to support them, their families and today's warriors and their families. We all understand the "deploy" part of our mission pays tribute to those warriors who ensured our countries security for 200 plus years and honors their legacy by ensuring our country remains secure and medically ready for generations of Americans to come.

The 6th Medical Group team values the trust Team MacDill places on us to ensure the safe delivery of healthcare to our more than 35,000 on base enrollees and the 100,000 plus beneficiaries who pass through Tampa each year. Sure we face challenging, sometimes complicated expectations but when we allow our compass to point to our True North – our mission to Prevent, Heal, Prepare, Deploy – we keep our focus and ensure MacDill's Airmen are fit to Fly, Fight and Win and MacDill's mission partners are medically ready for any challenge here at home or wherever our nation needs us.

Folks, healthcare is important...if you ever have questions about your personal health, the health of your family or the personal health of your Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines or Coast guardsmen, please don't hesitate to give the 6th Medical Group a call!

SPORTS

Sports Talk



by Mack Dill

Hello once again Sports Fans! Well, the bracket is set and we'll spend the next few weeks watching teams work their way through the tournament in the hope of reaching the championship game in New Orleans on April 2.

We've already seen plenty of drama on the court, but let's make this interesting for those of you playing along at home.

Yes, you may have guessed it. I'm challenging you to see if you can pick this year's champion. Just fill out the bracket form on the 6th Force Support Squadron web site at www.macdillfss.com, and send it to me at macdill33621@yahoo.com, or take it to my friends in the 6th FSS Marketing Office. That's building 65, and it's right across the street from the golf course. So have lunch at Fairways and then drop your bracket off.

The deadline for entry is by 2 p.m. on March 21, so I'm making it easy for you. By that time, the first three rounds will have been completed and all you have to do is pick the winner out of the Sweet 16. Only one entry per person so get your buddies to fill out their own brackets.

So here's how it'll work, and I'm going to make this easy. There will be two drawings for prizes. One drawing will be everyone who guessed the winning team. That means that even if you don't correctly name both teams in the championship, if one of them happens to be the winner; you're in the drawing. What do you win? Keep reading. I'm not telling just yet.

Okay, so even though the NCAA runs the tourney as a "win or go home" event, we're not going to do that to you. So for all of you other bracketologists who entered our contest, your entries will go into the consolation drawing thus keeping alive the notion that it ain't over till it's over. The person whose name is chosen will take home a 6th FSS gift card worth \$50 redeemable at great facilities like golf, bowling, arts

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EVENTS

Friday

Surf's Edge Club

St. Patrick's Day Lunch Buffet from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. \$8 includes buffet & beverage.

SeaScapes Beach House

St. Patrick's Party starts at 4 p.m. Irish Band "4 Ever Erin" playing from 5:30-9:30 p.m.

Boomers Bar & Grill

Friday Bash! 3-7 p.m. Irish Bar snacks & drink specials! Guaranteed \$100 club card drawing, Bar Bingo, and DJ!

Monday-Friday

Surf's Edge Club

Global Tastes Lunch Buffet from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Cost \$8. Mon: Latin Tue: Italian Wed: Asian Thu: Mexican Fri: Americana

SeaScapes Beach House

Daily Early Bird Dinner Special 4:30-6:30 p.m. Home-style favorite meal with iced tea or fountain drink \$7.

Monday

Bay Palms Golf Complex

Club Member Appreciation Day – Free golf & cart *Must show valid club card when check-in at Pro Shop.

Tuesday

Airman & Family Readiness Center

Key Spouse Meeting from 6-8 p.m.

Thursday

Base Marina

Single Airman Program Gone Fishin' Day from 1-5 p.m. Register by 15 March, call Angie Fields at 828-0145.

For more information please visit our website at www.macdill-fss.com

MacDill community hosts car show

from the 6th Air Mobility Wing public affairs office

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service hosted a car show on MacDill Air Force Base, in honor of Military Appreciation Day March 10.

In conjunction with the Community Services Transformation and in honor of service members, AAFES hosted its third annual car show. The 6th Force Support Squadron provided food, other vendors provided specialty beverages and tax services, and car enthusiasts got the chance to get a close look at many vehicles you'll never see on the road.

There were more than 50 unique and exquisite cars showcased at the MacDill Exchange which competed for awards in multiple categories. In addition to awards, door prizes were given out



Photo by Airman First Class Shandresha Mitchell

In conjunction with the Community Services Transformation efforts at MacDill and in honor of Military Appreciation Day, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service hosted its third-annual car show on MacDill Saturday.

to spectators with one attendee taking home a brand new grill.

"It was great to watch three generations come together in one place to celebrate America's love for cars. Tampa boasts lots of car shows, but when MacDill hosts one, it's a community event like no other," said Col. Lenny Richoux, 6th Air Mobility Wing commander.



Protestant services

Sunday - 9 a.m. - Praise Worship Service
9:30 a.m. - FAMCAMP Service (Bldg 2017)
12 p.m. - Gospel Service

Islamic services

Friday - 1:30 p.m. - Prayer Service

For all other faith inquiries or to view upcoming event information, call the Chapel at 828-3621 or visit the website at www.macdill.af.mil/macdillchapel

Catholic services

Saturday - 4:30 p.m. - Confession
5:30 p.m. - Mass

Sunday - 10:30 a.m. - Mass

Monday to Thursday: 12:10 p.m. - Mass



EXCHANGE

ARMY & AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE

DIAMOND SHARP

Senior Airman Odel Ortega-Rodriguez 6th Force Support Squadron



Job Title: Career development advisor

Hometown: Los Arabos, Cuba

Short-term goals: Earn as many coins and ribbons as I can while deployed.

Long-term goals: Achieve the rank of chief master sergeant.

Advice to others: Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Role model and why: My mother, because she had every chance to fail yet succeeded.

Why did you join the Air Force: To get my act together, I needed something to guide me down the right path.

SPORTS

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and crafts and outdoor recreation.

Now let's talk about the grand prize. If you happen to be the lucky person chosen from all of the correct entries received, we're going to load you up with a Kindle Fire. Not too shabby if you ask me.

But wait, there's more.

If you are a member actively serving or are a Department of Defense civilian assigned to a unit on MacDill, the 6th Force Support Squadron is going to give your unit a \$250 6th FSS gift card that can be used for events or it can go toward food for your next unit function. Wouldn't it be great to be the person who brings home a little extra spending money the next time your team gets together? You can treat everyone to a fun activity.

Well, that's it for this week's column. Special thanks to the 6th Force Support Squadron for providing the prizes for this contest.

I hope to see a whole bunch of winning entries! Have a great week and, as always, I hope your team wins.