

# THUNDERBOLT

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Giddy up!  
It's AMC Rodeo time



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Angela Ruiz

Col. David Almand, 6th Air Mobility Wing vice commander, shakes hands and coins every Airmen departing for Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 as they board a KC-135 on the flightline at MacDill Air Force Base, July 23. Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 is the Mobility Air Force's readiness competition sponsored by Air Mobility Command. The Rodeo focuses on improving worldwide air mobility forces' professional core abilities. Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 is being held at McChord Field, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., through July 29.

# COMMANDER'S CORNER



## We are all ambassadors; some of this week's team standouts

by Col. Lenny Richoux

6<sup>th</sup> Air Mobility Wing commander

As I serve my country I'm finding that the Air Force affords all of us at some point the chance to live as effective local community members or international ambassadors.

I often discuss my tour at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan, with fond appreciation for what that tour allowed me to see and how I developed from serving abroad. Many of you can relate to the experience of serving overseas and many of us capitalize on the social exposure to other cultures and broadened experience we and our families gained. This week I had the opportunity to grasp the importance of international relationships by meeting with and hosting on our base the Japanese navy contingent that visited Tampa.

I had the honor of meeting with **Rear Adm. Umio Otsuka**, the commander of

Japan's Training Squadron, several commanding officers of Japanese ships visiting the port of Tampa, and 175 newly commissioned Japanese cadets during a tour of the base.

The fellowship among allies is a phenomenal experience and I treasure the fact that each of us, as U.S. servicemembers, have the power to forge local and international relationships simply because we serve our great nation at home and beyond our borders.

Individual bonds and relationships can have huge effects on our communities locally and in international settings. I know many of you have seen the effects of outreach and individual involvement first hand, and you know for yourselves the power of individual effort. Sometimes individual efforts are needed to raise awareness about topics that mutually affect us all.

I want to thank all of you for being a part of the processes and mechanisms that help us to change for the better. If you're communicating your concerns through normal feedback forums or with your peers, or if you're directly getting leadership involved—thank you for talking and thanks to those leaders who are listening.

Our quarterly award winners for the second quarter of 2011 were announced last week and again, thanks to those leaders who are recognizing you all. It is important to recognize that a big part of what we accomplish is supported by the group and squadron-level leadership.

The winners were 6th Missions Support Group's **Airman 1st Class Eduardo Flores**; 6th Security Forces Squadron's **Tech. Sgt. Christopher Velez**; from 6th Operations Group, **Master Sgt. Jaimie Miller**; 6th Mission Support Group's **Senior Airman Remington Burnette**; the Legal Office's, **Staff Sgt. Frank Castro**; 6th Comptroller Squadron's **1st Lieutenant Lt. Ryan Abel**; 6th Mis-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela Ruiz

**Col. Lenny Richoux, 6th Air Mobility Wing commander, gives Rear Adm. Umio Otsuka, Japan training squadron commander, a book as a gift during his visit at MacDill Air Force Base July 26.**

sion Support Group's **Mr. Kevin Chambers**; and **Ms. Staci Vileta** from the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office.

Great job to the Airmen, senior noncommissioned officers, company grade officers and civilians who are sustaining an unbelievable ops tempo and maintaining high standards while excelling in off-duty pursuits.

Recognition was also deservedly earned by **Staff Sgt. Thomas Armstead** who is a recent re-trainee into the contracting career

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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](mailto:macdillwingcommander@macdill.af.mil)



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### MacDill Thunderbolt

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Every article and photograph is edited for accuracy, clarity, brevity, conformance with the "Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual" and Air Force Instruction 35-101.



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Events, movies, more...

# 1 1

## Critical Days of Summer

### Motorcycle safety

Watch out for motorcycles, scooters, and mo-peds on the road.

There are more than four million motorcycles registered in the United States. An article in the *Barriere Star Journal* dated Feb. 14, 2011 states that, "In a collision, motorcyclists are seven times more likely to be killed than other road users. Young drivers tend to be involved in more motorcycle-related mishaps. However, there is an emerging trend that riders in their 40s and 50s are increasingly becoming the fatal victims of this type of mishap."

Choose a bright-colored helmet that meets the recognized safety standards, such as DOT or Snell Memorial Foundation.

Wear protective gear such as a motorcycle jacket, pants, gloves and boots. These provides better protection than street clothes. Reference AFI 91-207 and AFI 91-207 AMC-SUP 1 for more guidance.

## Commentary

# The ABCs of our core values

by Master Sgt. William Farnand

6th Security Forces Squadron first sergeant

Back in the day, ... way back in 1997, when I was a young staff sergeant, our Air Force coined our Core Values: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do. In the nearly 15 years since these words became part of our culture, it almost seems some days like INTEGRITY, SERVICE, and EXCELLENCE have become cliché — their meaning has gone by the wayside and given way to our busy days. The purpose of my comments today are not to bash any one person or group, but simply to remind us why we do this.

According to former Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Sheila Widnall, "Core values make the military what it is; without them we cannot succeed. They are values that instill confidence, earn lasting respect, and create willing followers. They are the values that anchor resolve in the most difficult situations. They are the values that buttress mental and physical courage when we enter combat. In essence, they are the three pillars of professionalism that provide the foundation for military leadership at every level."

Those words ring just as true today as they did 15 years ago.

Many of us have seen "The Little Blue Book" and read it, but to internalize those words I would like to make it just a little bit more simple for all who hear and read my message as a first sergeant. To simplify the core values, let's reflect on the basics — ABCs:

A: INTEGRITY: "Integrity First" must be your "A" — it must be ABSOLUTE. If integrity is not present in your life every day, all the time, then do you really have it? Integrity is not a thing we do some of the time. It's like breathing. Integrity is a part of your character and your moral compass — it's "the inner voice; the voice of self-control; the basis for the trust imperative in today's military." We do what we know is the more correct thing to do, even when no one is watching over our shoulder. When faced with two roads to take — one the path of righteousness and the other the path of questionable intentions, we take the high ground. Even when it's the road less traveled, we must blazon a path to continue the tradi-



Master Sgt. William Farnand

of INTEGRITY. When I was a 7-year old boy at Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., I found a single dollar bill laying in the gutter of our house on White Drive. I thought I had hit the jackpot as a 7-year old. I was headed to the Shopette up the street on my bike to buy a pack of baseball cards. I walked in the house, told my parents what I had found and what I was going to do with it and where I was going. Instead of the happiness and joy I expected, my father and I instead went for a ride in the car to the law enforcement desk at the Chanute Air Force Base police station where we turned it in as "found property." I learned then the clear distinction of the "easy" path and the "right" path — the path to integrity. I owe my parents a great deal for teaching this lesson earlier in life than later when it might have been more difficult to change moral fabric.

B: SERVICE: "Service Before Self" is your "B" — it must be BALANCED. Every day we are faced with demands from our work serving the public and demands from taking care of our



## Meet the new 6th AMXS commander

The 6th Air Mobility Wing would like to welcome Maj. Michael Dailey the new commander of the 6th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Dailey took command of the unit July 25.

Dailey took time out of his day to answer a few questions for the Thunderbolt in order for the base to get to know him better.

**Thunderbolt:** What do you expect of the Airmen under your command?

**Dailey:** To adhere to Air Force core values. To be of high character and personally responsible. To be team players and good Wingmen. To exhibit a sense of ownership in whatever they do. To work safely and in a compliant manner. To be professional, and have goals. To seek balance using Comprehensive Airman Fitness methods/resources. To be effective communicators.

**Thunderbolt:** Who are your favorite leaders and role models?

**Dailey:** Sports personalities; coaches and players. Those who helped

See **AMXS**, Page 6



Photo by Staff Sgt Angela Ruiz

**Maj. Michael Dailey assumes command of the 6th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron from Col. Barry Roeper, 6th Maintenance Group commander.**

## Meet the new NOAA Aircraft Ops commander

The 6th Air Mobility Wing would like to welcome Navy Capt. Randall TeBeest the new commander for the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center. TeBeest took command of the unit in July 15.

TeBeest took time out of his day to answer a few questions for the Thunderbolt in order for the base to get to know him better.

**Thunderbolt:** What do you expect of those under your command?

**TeBeest:** My expectations of the women and men of the NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center are to continue their long standing record of faithfully executing NOAA's mission with the highest level of integrity and professionalism, continue to strive for excellence and continue to provide uncompromised stewardship of our taxpayer's resources.

**Thunderbolt:** Who are your favorite leaders and role models and why?

**TeBeest:** I've had the privilege of working for some outstanding and dynamic leaders and I have tried to take elements from each one in molding my own leadership style, but my most influential role model

See **NOAA**, Page 6



**Capt. Randall TeBeest**

# Enlisted Combat Dining In official rules of engagement

- ☛ Thou shall not question the decisions of the President (THE PRESIDENT is always right).
- ☛ Thou shall be present at the social hour before the President's arrival.
- ☛ Thou shall make every effort to meet all guests.
- ☛ Participants will enjoy themselves to the fullest extent allowed within military law.
- ☛ Thou shall be in the appropriate combat attire at all times (ABU, BDU or flight suit). Uniforms must be in compliance with AFI 36-2903. Camo paint and bandanas are authorized.
- ☛ Thou shall not take his/her place at the table until the President so directs.
- ☛ Thou shall participate in all toasts unless thyself or thy group is honored with a toast.
- ☛ Thou shall ensure that thy cup is always charged when toasting.
- ☛ Thou shall not talk while a toast is being made or when the President or Distinguished Guest is addressing the mess.
- ☛ Thou shall sit down to eat when the entire table returns from the line. Do not prop elbows on the table when eating.
- ☛ Thou shall be permitted to "arm" thyself

with water weapons.

- ☛ Thou shall initiate combat whenever alarm red is declared and prepare to defend your "combat area."
- ☛ Thou shall cease all combat as soon as alarm black is declared.
- ☛ If a member of the mess calls for a "halt fire," respect their wishes.
- ☛ Thou shall request the permission of the President to be excused from any portion of the Combat Dining-In. Protocol overrides all calls of nature.
- ☛ Thou shall not be late for dinner. Should a member be late for dinner, he/she must go to the President, offer his/her apologies and request permission to take a seat.
- ☛ Thou shall express approval by tapping thy silverware on the table. Clapping of the hands will not be tolerated.
- ☛ Thou shall keep toasts and comments within the limits of good taste and mutual respect. Degrading or insulting remarks will be frowned upon by the membership. However, good natured needling is encouraged.
- ☛ Thou shall not rise to applaud particularly



Photo by Airman First Class Rylan Albright

**Airmen defend their simulated Defense Fighting Position with water guns during a past Enlisted Combat Dining In.**

witty, sarcastic or relevant toasts unless following the example of the President.

- ☛ When the mess adjourns, thou shall rise and wait for the President and head table to leave.
- ☛ Thou shall not be admitted with water balloons.
- ☛ Thou shall not throw food or any other projectiles with thy hand and shall not aim thy water munitions at thy targets' head at anytime.
- ☛ **THOU SHALL ENJOY THYSELF TO THY FULLEST!!!!**



## AMXS

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From Page 4

build noteworthy teams or were “game changers.” Also business entrepreneurs, “idea” people who thought in new ways.

**Thunderbolt:** What does it mean to you to be new commander?

**Dailey:** I’m very pleased to have been selected to command the 6th AMXS. I’m looking forward to meeting the people and learning the mission of the squadron.

**Thunderbolt:** When you hold your first commander’s call what is the first thing you are going to tell your Airmen?

**Dailey:** Some things about me

and what to expect from me as their commander. As well, basic expectations I have for them and the organization.

**Thunderbolt:** What are your thoughts about MacDill and living in Tampa?

**Dailey:** My family and I will be coming to MacDill AFB and Tampa for the first time. We’re eager to get to know people and experience what the area has to offer. We’re very happy with our assignment.

**Thunderbolt:** Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Dailey:** I’ll want to know from the people what the unit’s strengths and weaknesses are, and their ideas for moving ahead.

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## NOAA

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From Page 4

is my father – the memory of his character and integrity guides me every day.

**Thunderbolt:** What does it mean to you to be new commander?

**TeBeest:** I’ve thought of the possibilities of this position for most of my NOAA aviation career and attaining it is truly one of the capstones of my career.

**Thunderbolt:** When you hold your first commander’s call what is the first thing you are going to tell your Airmen?

**TeBeest:** My position on the safety of our workforce is steadfast. The business of aviation is in-

herently dangerous and mitigating its risks to our best ability is the obligation of every team member at every single step of every single mission.

**Thunderbolt:** What are your thoughts about MacDill and living in Tampa?

**TeBeest:** I’ve spent many years of my career assigned to NOAA’s Aircraft Operations Center here at MacDill AFB and as a new commanding officer, I couldn’t ask for a better location than MacDill or a better mission partner than the U.S. Air Force. The level of support we have received since day one has always been outstanding and it is truly a privilege to be a part of the MacDill family.



# Upcoming changes to the post-9/11 GI-Bill

Special to the *Thunderbolt*

## Effective Aug. 1

For Veterans and their transferees - simplifies the tuition and fee rates for those attending a public school and creates a national maximum for those enrolled in a private or foreign school

- Pays all public school in-state tuition and

fees;

- Private and foreign school costs are capped at \$17,500 annually.

- The Yellow Ribbon Program still exists for out-of-state fees and costs above the cap.

For Active Duty Members and their transferees - creates a national rate for those active duty members enrolled in a private or foreign school pursuing a degree

- Pays all public school in-state tuition and fees

- Private and foreign school costs are capped at \$17,500 per academic year (an aca-

demic year begins August 1)

Allows VA to pay MGIB (chapter 30) and MGIB-SR (chapter 1606) 'kickers', or college fund payments, on a monthly basis instead of a lump sum at the beginning of the term

Prorates housing allowance by the student's rate of pursuit (rounded to the nearest tenth)

- A student training at a rate of pursuit of 75 percent would receive 80 percent of the BAH rate.

Break or interval pay is no longer payable

See **GI BILL, Page 22**





# BRIEFS

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## Case lot sale

MacDill Commissary is scheduled to have a case lot sale starting Sept. 14. Hours of operations will be: Sept. 14 (in conjunction with Military Day) from 4 to 8 p.m. and Sept. 15-18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## New Education & Training Office hours

The MacDill Education & Training Office is adjusting their customer service hours.

The new customer service hours are Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to noon. The preferred method of requesting an appointment or testing date is to email [education-02@us.af.mil](mailto:education-02@us.af.mil). Test dates may also be requested via AFVEC/AF Portal under "My Online Tests Requests" <https://rso.my.af.mil/afvecprod>: AFIADL PME (Course 14, SOS, ACSC, AWC); and paper-pencil proctored exams. Email [Elizabeth.Neill@saintleo.edu](mailto:Elizabeth.Neill@saintleo.edu) for all CLEP, DSST, excelsior, Pearson Vue and CBT school exams. Additionally, the Army Education Representative is now available 18 hours a week and has new hours. The hours are Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## German driver's license test

The online/open book and self-administered testing of the German DLT (also known as the USAFE Drivers Exam) is opened to all CAC card holders using military computer systems and PCSing to Ramstein Airbase, Spangdahlem Airbase, or any supported GSUs. That includes Air Force members, DOD civilians, and all other personnel possessing a CAC card and PCSing/processing through an Air Force installation. Driver's License Exam Web Site is <https://wwwmil.usafe.af.mil/dlt/default.aspx?TabID=1&Action=Home>. Army personnel may use this site as a study reference only, not as an official test.

## COMMANDER'S

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From Page 2

field and has quickly become a star in the 6th Contracting Squadron. Staff Sgt. Armstead procured audio-visual and video teleconference equipment for the Joint Special Operations University which enabled the schoolhouse to provide critical mandated training while saving \$30,000 per seminar.

**Staff Sgt. Stephanie Vega** from the 6th Operations Support Squadron has consistently risen to the occasion as a wing scheduler in the 6 OSS.

Recently, she fielded a tasking from 6th AMW's higher headquarters and coordinated with five AMC and base-wide agencies, as well as overcame technical problems to execute the tasking. Her professional and technical conduct allowed the seamless allocation of aircraft and aircrew on very short-notice resulting in the successful accomplishment of an extremely high priority mission.

I am proud to serve with you in the finest Air Mobility Wing on the face of the planet!



# Competition, spirits high on Sports Day



Airmen in the 6th Air Mobility Wing perform warm-up exercises before beginning the 6th Air Mobility Wing Warrior Sports Workout at MacDill Air Force Base. AMW participated in the Warrior Sports Workout against multiple squadrons in multiple sporting events.



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Angela Ruiz



(Left) Staff Sgt. Michael Ragsdale, 6th Force Support Squadron, kicks a kickball during Warrior Sports Workout, while (Right) Chief Master Sgt. Derrick Derrand chief, along with other chiefs, participated in a tug-a-war. The Chiefs pulled their way to victory against the opposing team of colonels that included



Photo by Airman Basic David Tracy

Base, Fla., July 20. Airmen of the 6th



Photo by Senior Airman Linzi Joseph

ck Crowley, 6th Air Mobility Wing com-  
ded wing leadership.



Photo by Airman Basic David Tracy

(Above) As the sun comes up, runners from the 6th Air Mobility Wing begin a 5-K race as part of the 6th AMW Warrior Sports Workout. (Right) Staff Sgt. David Poppy, 6th Contracting Squadron contract specialist, runs through the obstacle course during the 6th Air Mobility Wing Warrior Sports Workout.



Photo by Senior Airman Linzi Joseph

## COMMENTARY

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From Page 3

families at home. We must keep the demands of both these poles of our life in balance.

According to former Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald Fogleman, “The Air Force is not a social actions agency. It is not an employment agency. The Air Force exists to fight and win wars — that’s our core expertise. It’s what allows us to be called professionals. We’re entrusted to the security of our nation.”

If you focus the majority of your life energy on your job, stay extra-long hours when the rest of the office has already long departed and neglect your home life, you are probably not in balance. If you are routinely running out of work to attend a sporting event, taking extra time to run personal errands at lunch to do some shopping you didn’t get to on the weekend, or generally not focusing on the responsibilities you have as an Airman in the United States Air Force, you are not in balance. Only you can control that balance.

Balance in time is not necessarily (and probably shouldn’t be) a 1:1 ratio — it could be a 4:2 or a 3:1, but that small number MUST be of incredible QUALITY in the time you put toward it. That’s where the balance is encountered. The taxpayers of this country expect, and quite frankly, deserve our very best at work and home. The way we balance our duty is described in “The Little Blue Book:” rule following, respect for others, discipline and self-control, and faith in the system.

When I was a young senior airman here, I worked in the 6th Air Base Wing Protocol Office, where I had a very special responsibility of ensuring distinguished visitors were looked after in the very best manner our Wing could display. Our wing commander then was Col. Charlie Ohlinger, and I reflect on how he behaved and how he kept that balance.

A wing commander has an awesome responsibility of being the “mayor” of the base. He was everywhere and from every recollection I have was loved as our representative. The duty days for him were very long. But he had balance. His wife, Joan, was involved in every wing event and very active on our base. She would even bake banana bread to be placed in the quarters of our base’s distinguished visitors to add a touch of home when welcoming them to our community. I can’t think of a better example of balance — they were the “first family” of our base.

C: “Excellence in All We Do” is your “C” — it must be CONTINUOUS. Again, referring to “The Little Blue Book,” it says that it, “directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward spiral of accomplishment and performance.”

We do this through product/service excellence, personal excellence, community excellence, resources excellence, and operations excellence. This continuous excellence is a journey that MUST be continued. We strive daily to do the very best we can in our daily lives at work (and home) to make our part of the continuous journey the very best it can be. We do this through fully anticipating and responding to our customer’s needs, staying in physical and mental shape, working together in our community through mutual respect and giving the benefit of the doubt, ensuring we ask for only what we need to do the job and taking care of our people, and building a cohesive war fighting team.

I think back to being a young Airman and NCO at the 6th Medical Group in the old hospital building. Every Friday morning the Thunderbolt came into our office with the resounding cry of, “Thunderbolt,” from Hy Turner, one of the most recognizable faces of Red Cross volunteers who made our great base hospital a wonderful place to work. He placed a newspaper on every work station and made some interaction with everyone in every office he visited. Hy had such wonderful stories about selling newspapers on the streets of New York City. He took time to deliver each paper with a smile and pride — you could see the joy in his eyes. Keep in mind that EVERY paper he handed out was delivered in the same manner — with pride and joy. He and his wife, Helen, gave back so much to our MacDill Air Force Base community through excellence in volunteer service.

As you can see, this little experiment in Core Values is not an easy one. It involves a lot of moving parts. But if we make it part of our daily lives and look at it from an A-B-C approach, then it really is easy to be a person of integrity, service, and excellence. Look for examples of people who exemplify these core values in your life and this journey becomes a little easier. But you must commit your life to it. Our absolutely balanced journey continues with you!



# Help us shape MacDill dining

by Lt. Col. Caroline Omdal

6th Force Support Squadron commander

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I need to update the base community on Food Transformation at MacDill Air Force Base. MacDill was selected as one of six pilot bases to implement this Air Force initiative and ARAMARK Corporation was awarded the contract that started last October. The process started with changing the menus and offerings at Diner's Reef, expanding the hours, and opening the facility to the entire base populace. Now, our meal card holders from all military services can take advantage of campus dining, another aspect of Food Transformation. This program authorizes meal card holders to use their CAC to purchase meals at other Force Support Squadron food operations like the bowling center, golf course, and SeaScapes. Please remember this entitles the member to purchase one meal per visit during periods when normal meal service is provided, but not for special functions.

This transformation has been a tremendous success in our dining facility. The amount of usage has quadrupled and customers are enjoying the variety of offerings our military and our ARAMARK partners provide each day. However, the down-side is our former Non Appropriated Fund operations

have lost the solid customer base that once supported each operation. This is a direct result of not being able to compete with the incredibly low prices at the Diner's Reef dining facility.

I'm very pleased at the success of Diner's Reef, however, as a result you can expect to see some of our former NAF operations reduced in scope or temporarily closed. Truly, I don't want this to be a permanent solution so I've asked our FSS team to work closely with ARAMARK to create a strategic plan and increase marketing efforts which will match the resources with the needs of the installation. I ask for your patience during this period of change until we can get it right.

Here's what you can expect: better communication on programs, events and hours of operation for each of these facilities. What I ask from you is your participation. Help us shape the community by participating in surveys and focus groups planned in the next 45 days. Your comments and feedback will be critical in determining which services will be offered. Help us build community by participating in programs and advisory councils.

Team, there are a lot of moving pieces in Food Transformation and MacDill is right in the middle of this initiative. What happens on this installation will shape how the Air Force provides food service in the future. Thank you for helping us make history every day.







## ‘There I was’ First time deployed to Afghanistan

by Senior Airman Steven O’Quendo  
6th Force Support Squadron

There I was ... first time to Afghanistan, first time deployed with the Army, and first time deployed without any fellow Services (3M0X1s) members from my home base. On Oct. 28, 2010, I landed at Bagram, Afghanistan, getting mentally ready to take on this new challenge ahead of me. When I first stepped off the C-17, I took a deep breath of air and took a look at the surrounding mountains. The look reminded me so much of Iraq, my previous deployment.

While waiting at the passenger terminal to be picked up by the members I was going to work with, I thought to myself, “I am here, and I’ve finally arrived in Afghanistan.” A flight to anywhere in the area of responsibility

is not an easy one. The whole time in flight, I was wondering what I will be doing when I get there. After I was picked up, we headed to camp. While in processing, I was told this was not my final stop, my eyes opened wide as I had already started to relax thinking I was at my final destination. I was also told my new position was a “one-man” deep slot and I would lead the Joint Visitors Bureau lead down south. It made me really nervous as a young Airman imagining the huge responsibility ahead of me. I’ve never had the opportunity to be the one in charge. I was to head down to Kandahar Air field, Afghanistan in the next couple of days to work with Special Operations Task Force-South.

My job entailed having to build itineraries, setting up the commander’s calendar, and



Courtesy photo

**Senior Airman Steven O’Quendo in Afghanistan.**

plan travel arrangements by land or air for distinguished visitors passing through our area. Additionally, I had to find out the DVs food/drink preferences, allergies, and likes/dislikes.

Arriving on a C-130 in KAF, I was greeted by the tech. sergeant I was to replace. I was as excited to meet her as she was excited to meet me. I threw

See **THERE I WAS, Page 20**

# DIAMOND SHARP

## **Staff Sgt. Mark Duenas** **6th Security Forces Squadron**



**Job Title:** Base Defense Operations Center operator

**Home town:** Jacksonville, Fla.

**Short-term goals:** To obtain my degree by the end of my enlistment.

**Long-term goals:** To retire as a chief master sergeant.

**Advice to others:** Follow your heart. Never let anyone stand in the way of your dreams.

**Role model and why:** My father; his advice and guidance made me the man I am today.

**Why did you join the Air Force:** To provide a better life for my family and myself.

# THERE I WAS

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From Page 18

my bags in back of the SUV she drove. When I went to open the door, it was heavy. Upon inspecting the door I noticed it was armored and had bullet proof glass in it. What was I about to get myself into?

Getting to camp, I learned it was like its own little base for Special Forces. There was a place to get your hair cut, a monthly bazaar, a laundry drop off, and its very own Dining Facility. What I really enjoyed was we were authorized to wear civilian clothing off duty. Not too many places let you do that in the AOR.

The following day I went to work. My first visit was for the command general for Special Forces. The tech. sergeant, the commander's interpreter, and I were to pick up the CG and his party from the flight line and take him to a change of command ceremony. It was an easy task, as all the roads had been blocked off already because of another general that was heading to the same ceremony.

A few days later I found out why we had armored vehicles. On my second DV visit, the DV wanted to visit his comrades off the base. The nearest camp was about 10 minutes away from base. It was pretty scary and exciting to drive

off base. It was an interesting view. Just outside the base there was an Afghan school and I could see kids off in the distance swinging and playing. Just before reaching the camp there was a shopping strip filled with vendors. Looking outside the SUV window, I could see a lot of interesting items for sale.

Fortunately, I got a month of turnover. The person I replaced did not want leave and the Army kept her as long as they possibly could. Once she left, it was just the interpreter and I to take on the job as the Joint Visitors Bureau.

One of the fun things I got to do while in Kandahar was go over to the Boardwalk. It's a very interesting place. When I first heard of it, the first thought that came to mind was something that was on a pier. However, when I went to the Boardwalk I was really surprised at what I saw. In the middle of the place there was a hockey rink and a basketball court. Outside of that area was a track surrounded by a bunch of stores and restaurants. A couple of the well-known restaurants were the Green Bean and to my amazement TGIF.

I had little time to volunteer in Kandahar but when I did, I had a lot of fun. I helped deliver 3,000 DC cupcakes to troops around Kandahar. I had never seen so many cupcakes in my life.

Another volunteer opportunity I was able to do was drive around the security team for the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen along with a USO tour in Kandahar. I got the chance to meet Robin Williams during that tour, which was really awesome.

The Joint Visitors Bureau was a very interesting job. I worked alongside many coalition forces. The U.A.E. forces were fun to work with. Every week they would invite us to their compound to eat and each time they try to give us gifts and lots of candy. They made the best lamb and I always liked to receive candy from them.

As a key member of the Joint Visitors Bureau team, I worked with high-ranking individuals. I don't believe I worked with anyone below E-7 or O-4. The experience helped build my confidence in working and communicating with military members that have been in much longer than I have.

With each of my deployments, I always take home lots of experience. This deployment, however, I learned how to step up and take charge. I would have to say this deployment and job opportunity was my most memorable and rewarding as the overall experience increased my career knowledge as well as prepared me to be a future NCO.

# MACDILL COMMUNITY



## EVENTS

### Friday

#### Boomers Bar & Grill

Friday Bash! 3-7 p.m. Bar snacks & food specials! \$100 club card drawing, Bar Bingo, DJ/Trivia entertainment! Tables for groups may be reserved by calling April at 828-1453.

### Wednesday

#### Outdoor Adventure

Last Day to Sign-up! USF Botanical Gardens trip on Aug. 6 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost: 12 per person. Call 840-6919.

#### Arts & Crafts Center

Knitting Group 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free & open to everyone – beginners to advanced.

### Thursday

#### Outdoor Recreation

Kids Shoreline Fishing 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Meet at the Marina. Cost \$5 per person. Kayak & Canoe Instruction – base beach from 2-4 p.m. Cost \$5 per person. (11-17yrs) Sign up required call 840-6919

#### MacDill Lanes

Ladies Night from 4-8 p.m. Ladies play for FREE with paid shoe rental. 77-cent drafts!

#### Mark your calendar

There will be a Back Yard Camp-out Saturday, Aug. 27, 6 p.m at Lewis Lake. Cost \$12 per person. Camping, BBQ, campfire, games & more! For more info call 840-6919.

*For more information please visit our Web site at [www.macdill-fss.com](http://www.macdill-fss.com)*



Photo by Senior Airman Melissa V. Brownstein

## Ship shape

Col. David Almand, 6th Air Mobility Wing vice commander, views illustrations of Japanese' training students while touring one of the three Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ships at Port of Tampa Cruise Terminal 3, July 25. Port of Tampa was just one of the many stops for the Japanese ship as it continues on its 153-day training journey.



## CHAPEL SCHEDULE

### Protestant services

Sunday - 9 a.m. – Praise Worship Service  
Noon – Gospel Service

### Islamic services

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

### 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

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](http://www.macdill.af.mil/macdillchapel)



## AT THE MOVIES

\$4 for adults / \$2 for children 828-2780

Friday - 7 p.m.

Saturday - 3 p.m.

Saturday - 7 p.m.

Mr. Popper's Penguins (PG)

Mr. Popper's Penguins (PG)

Super 8 (PG-13)

# GI BILL

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under any VA education benefit program unless under an Executive Order of the President or due to an emergency, such as a natural disaster or strike.

- This means that when your semester ends (e.g. December 15th), your housing allowance is paid for the first 15 days of December only and begins again when your next semester begins (e.g. January 10th) and is paid for the remaining days of January.

- Students using other VA education programs are included in this change. Monthly benefits will be pro-rated in the same manner.

- Entitlement that previously would have been used for break pay will be available for use during a future enrollment.

- Allows reimbursement for more than one “license or certification” test (previously only one test was allowed).

- However, entitlement is now charged

- Allows reimbursement of fees paid to take national exams used for admission to an institution of higher learning (e.g., SAT, ACT, GMAT, LSAT)

- Allows those who are eligible for both Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (chapter 31) benefits and Post-9/11 GI Bill (chapter 33) benefits to choose the Post-9/11 GI Bill’s monthly housing allowance instead of the chapter 31 subsistence allowance.

- NOAA and PHS personnel are now eligible to transfer their entitlement to eligible dependents

## **Effective October 1, 2011**

Allows students to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill for -

- Non-college degree (NCD) programs: Non-college degree (NCD) programs offered at non-degree granting schools: Pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees or \$17,500, whichever is less. Also pays up to \$83 per month for books and supplies.

- On-the-job and apprenticeship training: Pays a monthly benefit amount prorated based on time in program and up to \$83 per month for books and supplies.

- Flight programs: Per academic year, pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees assessed by the school or \$10,000, whichever is less.

- Correspondence training: Per academic year, pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees assessed by the school or \$8,500, whichever is less.

Housing allowance is now payable to students (other than those on active duty) enrolled solely in distance learning. The housing allowance payable is equal to half the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents.

- The full-time rate for an individual eligible at the 100% eligibility tier would be \$673.50 for 2011.

Allows students on active duty to receive a books and supplies stipend.