

THUNDERBOLT

WWW.MACDILL.AF.MIL



News/Features: page 3
A deployment story



Week in photos: page 4
Scenes from MacDill



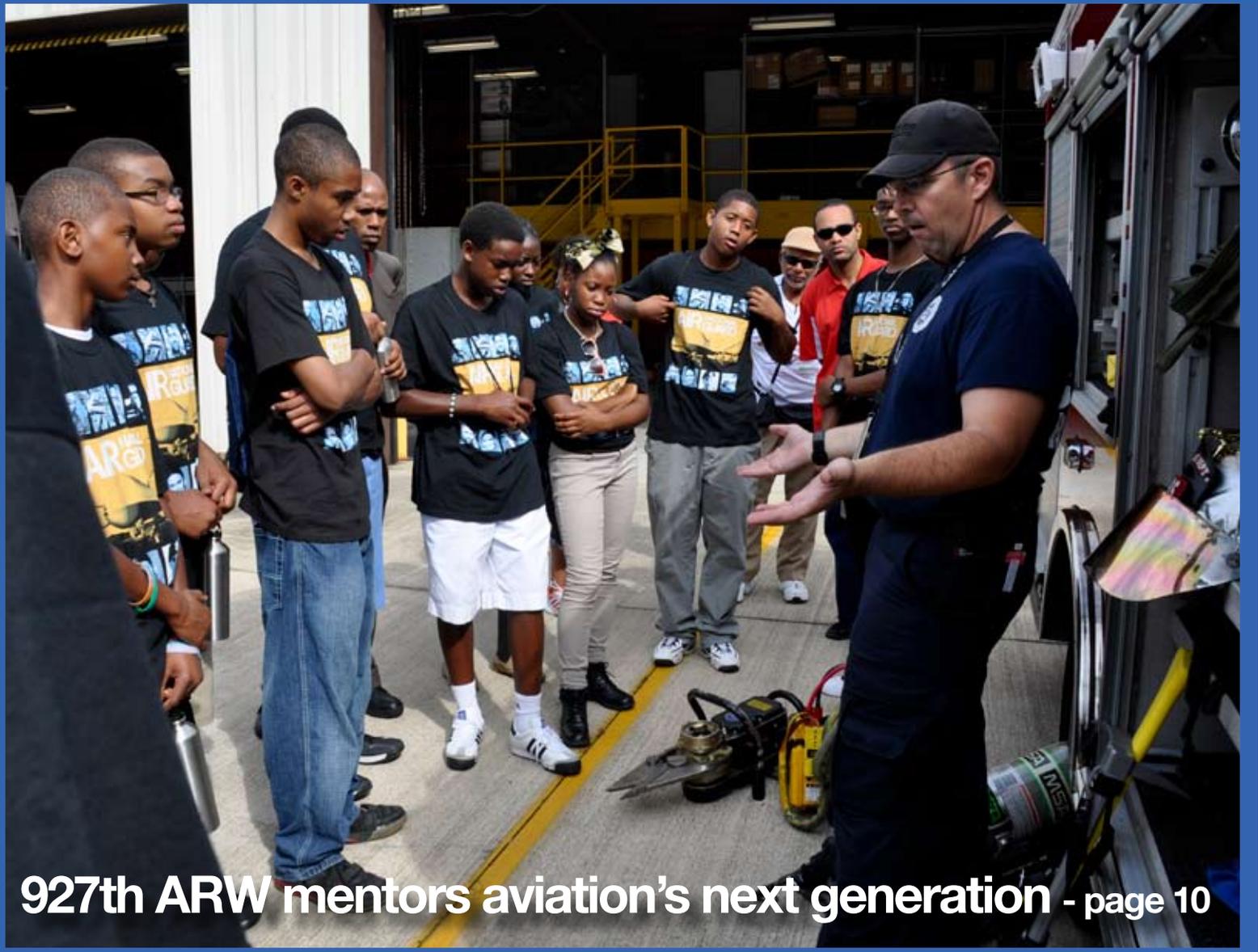
News/Features: page 6
Confronting sexual assault



News/Features: page 10
Aviation's future



Community: page 17
Events, Chapel, more...



927th ARW mentors aviation's next generation - page 10

Photo by Major Christine Stanaback

Staff Sgt. Scott Smith, 125th Fighter Wing assistant chief of fire prevention, discusses paths to becoming a firefighter and displays some of the tools used for fire rescue with Aviation Career Education Academy attendees, at Jacksonville Air National Guard Base, Jacksonville, Fla. Members of the 927th Air Refueling Wing are volunteer instructors at the academy, which teaches children all aspects of the aviation career field.

Critical Days of Summer, week 16: Diving safety - page 3

COMMANDER'S CORNER



A great time of year has arrived

by **Col. Bradford Anderson**
927th Air Refueling Wing vice commander

I always love this time of year as we enter fall, because it is when football season begins.

I grew up in the midwest in Columbus, Ohio and so naturally I follow the Ohio State Buckeyes. Over the last few years, I have been transplanted into South Eastern Conference country and receive a healthy dose of how great that conference is. In addition, my brother, who lives in Birmingham, Ala., is a huge Alabama Crimson Tide fan, and he frequently reminds me of how great his team is. As of late, it has been difficult to argue with

him. Alabama won three of the last four National Championship games and the sports analysts are beginning to toss around the 'dynasty' word to describe the team. But if we take a look into history, it wasn't too long ago that the same team was struggling to find success. They lost 6 consecutive games with their main rival, the Auburn Tigers. So what changed? Under the direction of a new head coach, Nick Saban, they began to slowly turn the program around. Through dedication, discipline, and a lot of hard training, they slowly rebuilt the team and the program as a whole. Their most recent success resulted in a program stacked with

talent from high school recruits to red-shirt freshman, all the way through their starting lineup. Some would say they have talent 'stacked up like cord wood.'

How would you like to have an organization like that? College football programs and Air Force organizations share a common challenge - they both manage continuous personnel turnover. This is a reality we both must confront in order to provide continuity and sustainability in our Air Force. The citizen Airmen of the reserve component are able to stabilize some of the personnel turnover, but permanent change of stations, retirements and separations

See **CORNER, Page 8**



Col. Bradford Anderson

6th Air Mobility Wing shout-outs

Senior Airman James Hinton is one of the Operation Support Squadron's top-performing and most professional Airmen.

As president of the squadron Unit Airman Council, he coordinated with the catering supervisor at Raymond James Stadium to obtain food-handling training for 88 people and secured 11 events for 2013, outshining his eight fundraisers in 2012 that raised \$16,000 to offset costs to Airmen for the annual squadron barbecue and holiday party.

He has consistently demonstrated leadership skills beyond his rank, evidenced by his selection and successes leading a 13-member

team dedicated to the professional development and upgrade training of the control tower's newest Airmen. On a daily basis he orchestrates the complex activities of this crew and guarantees it receives the best quality training possible.

Not only is Hinton a top-notch performer in his primary duties, but he is also a model Airman when it comes to physical fitness. He currently serves as the alternate Unit Fitness Program Manager and was a key player in the success of the recent Operations Group-led Wing Warrior Workout.



COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE

The Action Line provides 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 email macdillwingcommander@us.af.mil.

MacDill on the web



Website: www.macdill.af.mil



Facebook: www.facebook.com/MacDillAirForceBase

MacDill Thunderbolt

Publisher: Bill Barker
Editor: Nick Stubbs

The MacDill Thunderbolt is published by Sunbelt Newspapers, Inc., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for distribution to members of the U.S. military services on MacDill. Contents of the MacDill Thunderbolt are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S.

government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or the 6th Air Mobility Wing.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, 6th Air Mobility Wing or Sunbelt Newspapers, Inc., of the products or service advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron.

Display advertising or classified advertising information

may be obtained by calling 259-7455.

News items for the MacDill Thunderbolt can be submitted to the 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs office, 8208 Hangar Loop Dr., suite 14, MacDill AFB, FL 33621, or call the MacDill Thunderbolt staff at 828-2215. Email: thunder.bolt@us.af.mil.

Deadline for article submissions is noon, Wednesdays to appear in the next week's publication. Articles received after deadline may be considered for future use. All submissions are considered for publication based on news value and timeliness.

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.



Continuing education

by Senior Airman Shandresha Mitchell
6th Air Mobility Wing public affairs

The Education Center at MacDill Air Force Base provides active duty Airmen with a plethora of resources when it comes to continuing their education, whether it is for their Community College of the Air Force degree or other academic degree.

“Once Airmen decide to pursue a degree, they are encouraged to meet with one of the many education counselors. The counselors’ primary concern is to help utilize the Airman’s time and save Air Force dollars,” said Jacqueline DeRocco, 6th Force Support Squadron chief of education and training. “They provide answers to questions that the school may not be able to answer, such as how deployments may affect school, which schools are military friendly and how tuition and fees will affect students as far as out of pocket costs.”

Seeing an average of 30 walk-ins, 25 emails per counselor, and an abundance of phone calls daily, the education counselors have their work cut out for them.

“On scale of one to 10, I would give the

See **EDUCATION**, Page 15

Tampa reservist builds international alliances



Photo courtesy of Maj. Bill Strauss

Major Bret Wedding, (Right) a reservist with the 927th Air Refueling Wing, participates in a time-honored military tradition with British service members (left) at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Aug. 14. In a cultural exchange, Wedding signed a message on a weapon mounted to a Predator drone.

by Tech. Sgt. Shawn Rhodes
927th Air Refueling Wing

This is the second of a three-part series on the deployment of Maj. Bret Wedding, a reservist with the 927th Air Refueling Wing. Wedding’s experiences before, during and after his deployment will give readers insight into the life of a reservist and his family during the deployment process.

When Maj. Bret Wedding kissed his wife and kids goodbye this spring, he knew his deployment leading troops in the Southwest Asia area of operations would be an adventure. As a logistics officer, he would be responsible for ensuring the troops on the ground had the equipment they needed to accomplish their missions.

“It sounds really sophisticated, but I’m really just supporting those directly responsible for annihilating the enemy and keeping our special operation ground forces safe in the execution of their mission,” said Wedding during an interview from his deployed location. “I’m also the liaison with our allied NATO partners. It’s quite an honor.”

A lot of weight rests on Wedding, a reservist with the 927th Air Refueling Wing and native of

Tampa, Fla. In one of the longest wars the United States has ever been involved in, it is Wedding’s responsibility to lead the teams responsible for all aspects of logistics, civil engineering, human resources, contracting, communication and much more in support of all Air Component Special Operations Force’s combat missions in his area.

Whenever a reservist deploys, they often leave behind businesses and families that have to learn to live with their absence. For Bret’s wife, Cindy Wedding, the hardest part of his absence is the feeling that her partner and teammate is missing.

“The hardest part about Bret being gone is not having his voice of understanding, reassurance or even doubt,” said Cindy. Like many military spouses, she cares for their two young children while her partner is deployed. “However, we have it very lucky to be part of such a caring and supportive community as Tampa, both on and off-base.”

Life moves on for those who remain at home. Milestones that many parents cherish are missed as one of them is away serving their country.

See **WEDDING**, Page 12

Critical Days of Summer
May 24 to Sept. 3

Diving safety

- ◆ Test/Inspect all equipment and mark dive area with a dive flag prior to entry.
- ◆ Always have a diver partner and two regulators in case one fails during all dives.
- ◆ After a dive, wait 24 hours before flying.
- ◆ Avoid decompression sickness by ascending at a rate of 1 foot per second.
- ◆ If not a certified diver, or not familiar with the waters your diving in, make sure you dive with a certified diver experienced in the waters you will be diving in.
- ◆ Make sure your tanks are filled by a certified specialist, and have been certified and inspected.

WEEK IN PHOTOS



Acting Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning receives lessons on MacDill's Boom Operator Weapon Systems Trainer at MacDill Air Force Base, Aug. 29. The BOWST is a fully simulated, large-scale procedural trainer for aerial refueling with replicated aircraft systems, controls, and functions within a complete aircrew boom compartment.

Photo by Ned T. Johnston



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brandon Shapiro

Acting Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning meets with Airmen of the 6th Security Forces Squadron marine patrol at MacDill Air Force Base, Aug. 29. Fanning was taken out with the marine patrol for a tour of MacDill from Tampa Bay.



Photo by Ned T. Johnston

Acting Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning addresses questions from MacDill Air Force Base Airmen during an "all-call" at the base theater, Aug. 29.



Reservists confront sexual assault with training, knowledge

by Tech. Sgt. Shawn Rhodes

927th Air Refueling Wing

“When good men and women see a crime and do nothing, how sad is that?”

These were the opening words of an educational stand-down, led by Col. Doug Schwartz, commander of the 927th Air Refueling Wing. The stand-down and unit-level workshops were held on Aug. 4 in the base theater and in individual sections. Its purpose was to address the 26,000 cases of sexual assault that go unreported every year in the Air Force and to make Airmen aware of the options they have to prevent such assaults from occurring.

“We’re meeting this issue head-on, starting at the top and working our way down,” said Schwartz to the assembled members of his wing. “This kind of behavior isn’t tolerated in the Air Force, and it’s not going to be tolerated in the 927th.”

The lead trainer for the event was Staci Vileta, 6th Air Mobility Wing sexual assault and response coordinator.

“We know we have a lot of unreported cases, and we can’t change what we don’t know,” Vileta said during her presentation. “I believe in the Air Force family, so when someone hurts one of my brothers or sisters, it makes me angry.”

The brief was followed by a video presentation from Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Mark Welsh III, and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody.

“Every time I hear about another case, it breaks my heart,” said Welsh in the video. All of us are responsible for creating a climate (of respect). We take care of each other. It’s what we do.”

Schwartz concluded the wing-wide presentation by saying:

“It’s our Air Force, and it’s ours to fix. Take care of yourselves, and each other.”

Unit Climate Assessment

by **Airman 1st Class**

Tori Schultz

6th Air Mobility Wing
Public Affairs

The time for you to speak up about the Air Force is now. The 2013 Unit Climate Survey runs Sept. 9-20.

The survey has 60 standard questions and takes about 20 minutes to complete. The scale ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with a neutral option. The wing commander picks up to 10 locally based questions to address.

“The Unit Climate assessment is a survey for you to give your input to your commander about the good and bad,” said Tech. Sgt. Michael Nelson, 6th Air Mobility Wing equal opportunity specialist. “It’s a chance for you to speak for yourself.”

An example of how the Unit Climate Survey has benefited units is a change in duty schedules. Enough Airmen expressed concern and duty schedule changes were made.

Each squadron will send out an email with a link and password. Common Access Card privileges are not required to take the survey. The survey can be taken by a phone or at home on a personal computer.

“When enough people talk about their issues and have similar issues, positive things can happen,” said Nelson.

CORNER

From Page 2

will continue. The next generation of leaders must be developed to carry the torch. Take a look around your organization and see where your future vacancies will be in the next six months or next year.

So how do we do this? The answer is mentorship. I'm sure that a few readers just rolled their eyes thinking, "Oh, please, not another lesson on mentorship." However, if you take a moment and think about it, mentorship is really quite simple. At its core, we are talking about the basic principle of Airmen taking care of Airmen. Mentorship happens at all levels: peer-to-peer, supervisors-to-subordinates, and even subordinates-to-supervisors. Throughout my career, I've had peers and supervisors take the opportunity to discuss the options available to me in both my personal and professional life. Often these discussions took place in casual conversation, but the message delivered was sage advice for a young officer still learning the bigger Air Force.

Although mentorship can take many forms, it begins with one very basic element—knowing your people. We must learn about our people early and often. Although we are all very busy, we must take the time to talk with our Airman and learn about their personal and professional lives including their goals and their desires; some have a detailed

5-year plan while others are still considering their options for the future. In either case, as a leader and supervisor with experience and a broader view, you will see things from a different perspective and can offer advice and provide opportunities that our Airmen may not have considered.

As we grow and develop our Airmen we must also challenge them with new opportunities that nudge them outside their comfort zones. Throughout my career, I've been on the receiving end of opportunities that required me step outside of my comfort zones. On several occasions, I often wondered what had I got myself into. However, after completing the task or assignment, I could look back and take pride in my accomplishments, see the lessons learned and understand how those experiences helped prepare me for future challenges. In the end, I was thankful to have a supervisor provide me with that experience.

Each of us, at every level, will soon move on and pass the torch to the next generation. Therefore, we all share in the responsibility to do our part to develop, educate and train the next generation of great Airmen. The goal is to have an organization with talent 'stacked up like cord wood,' ready to lead the way. Are you ready to do your part? Know your Airmen, challenge them with new opportunities, and be a mentor who paves the way

63th ARSA pilot mentors the future of aviation

by Maj. Christine Stanaback

927 Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

“Cessna November 62354, clear for takeoff,” blared through the headset as the pilot pushed up the throttle of the four-seat, high-wing, single-engine Cessna 172 Skyhawk.

Fifteen-year-old Tiffini Campbell, Terry Parker High School student and Aviation Career Education Academy, Jacksonville Fla., attendee, accelerated down the runway, pulled back on the yoke, lifting the aircraft and crew of three off the ground.

“Today is when everything comes together for the kids,” said Maj. Brandon Acosta, director of the Jacksonville ACE Academy and traditional reserve KC-135 Stratotanker instructor pilot with the 63rd Air Refueling Squadron at MacDill Air Force Base, as he peered through his aviator sunglasses on the ramp watching Tiffini’s takeoff. “This last week of aviation tours, basic flight instruction and career path development come together in the experience of this flight.”

Tiffini is a student at ACE Academy, a nationally recognized program co-sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees. The camp serves as a support network for underserved communities. Focused on middle- and high-school students, the goal of the ACE Academy is to provide insight and hands-on experience for students to learn the fundamentals of aerodynamics, various careers available in the aviation industry and create a career path for their future.

For Acosta, his passion for flying goes beyond his service as a Citizen Airmen. When not flying missions with the 63th ARS, he volunteers as the director of ACE Academy.

“Volunteers are an essential part of the academy,” said Acosta. “The staff consists of pilots, teachers, finance managers and sales associates varying in background and education bringing their unique life stories and experiences in aviation to the students. The mission is not only aviation education, but to create a network of opportunity to grow the future of aviation and the community.”

“It was fun; the challenges taught us how to be organized and brought us together as a team,” said Derrick Taylor, a student at Ribault High School in Jacksonville, and ACE Academy attendee.

Students nearing high school graduation are faced with important decisions. These decisions can either help or hinder a successful future. ACE Academy provides positive role models educated and successful in their own specialties willing to share their experiences with the next generation.

“This academy reaches out to everyone and it is good for the kids to see successful men and women of all backgrounds. I’ve been involved with the camp for two years and you can see the difference in their maturity and individual character by the end of the week,” said retired Lt. Tyrone Jones, firefighter with the Baltimore City Fire Department, Md., and ACE Academy leader. “This program provides the tools and mentorship needed to make a difference.”

The influence of the academy is bigger than the student. Nathan Christel, a graduate of the academy and sophomore at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona, is an example of the school’s lasting impact. After high school, he joined the Florida Air National Guard as a security forces Airman. Soon after being awarded a Combat Systems Officer scholarship, Nathan decided to go to Embry Riddle Aeronautical University full-time to pursue a commission. He stays in touch with his ACE instructors. For ACE Academy students, their teachers often become lifetime mentors.

“The academy provides a great network,” said Christel. “I could email or call the camp leaders today and they would be there to point me in the right direction.”

Wings level and eyes on the horizon, Tiffini and her crew touch down on the runway. The instructor taxis the aircraft back to the hangar. She is so excited, she runs from the plane to share the experience with rest of the students and academy leaders; Acosta smiles.

If you would like more information, contact ACE Academy, at www.ccastt.com and ACE Academy, Tampa at ace@aceofthebay.com.



Students and instructors with the Aviation Career Education Academy participate in a building exercise, Jacksonville, Fla., July 22. Members of the academy teach children about all aspects of the aviation career field.





Photo by Major Christine Stanaback

Aviation Academy build a marsh mallow and spaghetti tower during a team-
the 927th Air Refueling Wing are volunteer instructors at the academy, which
field.



Photo by Major Christine Stanaback

Aviation Career Edu-
cation Academy stu-
dents watch as Jay
Mitchell, a K-9 police
officer with the Jack-
sonville, Fla., Police
Department and his
partner, Leo, demon-
strate how they de-
tect explosives at the
Jacksonville Interna-
tional Airport, July 24.



Photo by Major Christine Stanaback

Major Brandon Acosta, 63rd Air Refueling Squadron KC-135 Strato-
tanker instructor pilot and volunteer director of the Aviation Career
Education Academy, mentors students at the ACE Academy during a
week long course for underserved children, Jacksonville, Fla., July 22.
The camp serves as a support network for underserved communities
with a focus on middle and high school students, to provide insight
and hands-on experience for students to learn the fundamentals of
aerodynamics, various careers available in the aviation industry and
create a career path for their future.



Photo by Maj. Christine Stanaback

Alex Wieland, a pilot with JetBlue and Aviation Career Education
Academy leader, points out to students the different instruments in
the cockpit used during a simulated flight July 25. In preparation for
an actual flight, students of the ACE Academy practice flying using
simulators.

WEDDING

From Page 3

“When Bret left, our daughter Lorelei was barely walking. Now she’s walking and running all on her own,” Cindy said. “He missed our other daughter’s first ballet recital. The kids grow every day and selfishly, I want my husband to be here for the adventure. But I understand the importance of what he is doing over there, and that it’s for all the families of this nation.”

The Wedding family keeps in contact through online chats, emails, and video sessions, but Bret’s family is not the only thing he left behind. Like all reservists, his employer must make up for his absence. Bret works as a civilian leading the 927th Logistics Readiness Squadron, a unit here with the mission of providing all the logistical needs of Tampa’s reserve refueling wing.

“The testament of a true leader is when his people continue to succeed

even in his absence,” said Senior Master Sgt. Tom Lehmann, senior NCO in the 927th LRS. “Major Wedding is that type of true leader. Though we miss him, his leadership presence within each of his members continues to ensure we succeed in our mission.”

Lehmann is a testament to Wedding’s leadership. This year he was named the Reserve Senior NCO of the Year by the Tampa Chamber of Commerce.

“I am so proud to have the privilege to serve such a phenomenal team of warriors at MacDill,” Wedding said. “Their ability to stand unafraid and successful in my absence has allowed me the ability to focus on serving the needs of the team forward in war.”

Wedding says that his motivation comes from serving and inspiring others to accomplish something greater than themselves.

“I’ve found that inspiring trust and legitimately caring for those I’m responsible for allows them to do their jobs knowing I’m there to support and serve them,” Wedding said.

EDUCATION

From Page 3

education office a 10; they are extremely helpful,” said Airman 1st Class Takiis Thompson, 6th Comptroller Squadron financial services technician. “I’ve never had a question that some one cannot answer for me; and if they cannot, they never fail to point me in the right direction.”

Airmen apply to a school of their choice to receive their CCAF, associate’s, bachelor’s or master’s degree. Airmen seeking funding from tuition assistance are required to attend a mandatory TA briefing that will give them information about virtual education records, how to apply for TA and how to print out their form.

“The biggest mistake Airmen make is not talking to a counselor to find out all of the different programs available,” DeRocco explained. “We try to get military members headed in the right direction so they are not making a lot of mistakes.”

If a student is seeking a civilian degree, they are responsible for turning in a degree plan.

DeRocco explained, “With TA, the purpose of the degree plan is to know which classes will count towards a military member’s degree and which classes TA will cover.”

“I already had a major in mind, since I was working towards it when I was a civilian,” said Thompson. “So the consultation was more like a guidance and recommendation process as to which classes to take next.”

Tuition Assistance provides \$4,500 per fiscal year and covers up to \$250 per credit hour. Students are required to maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade-point average.

MACDILL COMMUNITY



EVENTS

Friday

Bay Palms Golf Complex

Membership Breakfast from 6:30-9 a.m. Club members free; Non-members: \$7.95

SeaScapes Beach House

Wild West Hoedown and Friday Bash. Fun starts at 4 p.m. Join us for prizes, great food, and lots of fun. Drink specials, bar bingo (\$2 a card/cash). Guaranteed \$100 weekly club card winner. Kids' activities, games, DJ, and free Ice cream sundae bar (peanut-free) with all meals. Wear your western gear.

Saturday

MacDill Lanes & Family Fun Center

Oktoberfest, 6-11 p.m. German music, Costume contest at 8 p.m. (\$25 FSS Gift Card for the winner) & Cosmic Bowling.

Airman & Family Readiness Center

Deployed or Actively Serving Military Family Swim/Picnic is 1-3 p.m. at Camp Christina YMCA. Swim, zipline, swing. Lunch provided. RSVP is required. Call 655-9281 or 828-0145. Space is limited!

Tuesday

MacDill Lanes & Family Fun Center

Brown Bag Lunch & Bowl from 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. Bring your lunch & bowl for \$1.50 per game. Reminder: DFAC right across the street.

Wednesday

Arts & Crafts Center

Canvas & Cocktails is back. Every Wednesday, 4-6 p.m., \$10 per person. Participants must register by noon each Wednesday to reserve a spot.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Ned Johnston

Airman 1st Class Jacob Burgess, a medical technician with 6th Medical Operations Squadron, sings the national anthem during a ceremony at the Egypt Shriners conference room, Tampa, Aug. 28. Burgess, along with the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard, was invited to open the event.



EXCHANGE
ARMY & AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE



CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Protestant service

Sunday - 11 a.m. - Contemporary Service

Islamic service

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

Catholic services

Saturday - 5:30 p.m. - Mass

Sunday - 9:30 a.m. - Mass

Monday-Wednesday - 12:10 p.m. Mass



Call the chapel at 828-3621 for more information or visit the chapel web site at <http://www.macdill.af.mil/macdillchapel>.