



KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train. Fight. Win.

JAN. 10, 2013 VOL. 74 NO. 1



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In game of life, 'richest' player really wins

By Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Boothe

81st Mission Support Group superintendent

Many of you may have played the board game "LIFE," which makes real life seem simple. In this game, you designate one player to be the banker and have him or her distribute \$10,000 to each player. Then, the banker gives each player a car into which they place a plastic person. On your first turn, you have to decide whether to start a career or go to college. The career will allow you to earn money sooner and college will put you in debt. To go to college, you borrow \$40,000 from the bank to pay for school. As the game goes on, you continue to spin the wheel and move your piece according to the number on the wheel, following the directions to search for a job, get married or buy a house, depending on what's printed on a red space. The game has stopping points for getting fired, having a mid-life crisis, having a baby and all of the other major decisions in life. In the end, the richest player wins!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if real life

were truly that simple? The object of the board game, as well as life, is to make good decisions and hopefully get rich in the end.

Many of us made a decision to join the military, and although we won't necessarily get rich in the end, military service offers many rich and rewarding opportunities. Many of the riches are intangible but make us feel good inside simply because we had the experience. When I think about the different opportunities the Air Force offers us like education, travel, training, leadership opportunities, and major job skills, I feel rich when I compare myself to my civilian counterparts.

Every day you have to make a decision that is right for you and your family. When you make a "life decision," you really must take into account all the effects that choice will have on your life.

How much money do you really make in the Air Force? When I was growing up in the Air Force, I never thought that we made enough money. However, each time I went home on leave, I found that I seemed to be

doing a lot better than most of my childhood friends.

Take a look at the salary of a senior airman. A senior airman customer service technician's annual salary is roughly \$41,800 per year. Let's not forget about the free medical and dental insurance, paid education via tuition assistance and G.I. Bill, and the 30 days of leave per year. The same type of customer service technician in the civilian sector makes about \$8.73 per hour, roughly \$16,762 annual salary. The civilian sector usually doesn't include free medical, education, vacation time or sick leave.

There are other riches and benefits like the exchange, which saves a member about 11 percent over the economy costs, and the commissary which saves an average of 30 percent when compared to the civilian markets. Other benefits we take for granted are things like base services including fitness centers, child care centers, youth programs and base clubs.

How many companies out there still offer a retirement benefit plan at no cost to the member as the military

does today? According to a survey by Towers Watson, a global consulting firm, only 17 percent of Fortune 100 companies still offer a direct-benefit plan, down from 67 percent in 1998. That is only 17 companies out of 100 and that number is on the steady decline. The list goes on and on, and the benefits the Air Force has to offer and the riches just keep piling up.

So, in the game of life, when you land on the red space and you are trying to decide which option is the best for you and your family, don't make a hasty decision. Do your homework and weigh your options.

Someone once said "Real riches are the riches possessed inside." The Air Force way may not necessarily make us monetarily rich in the end, but consider the richness that it does have to offer. When you look back over life's experience and think of all the things that you've done, seen and accomplished, you just may be glad that you stayed. Just like in the game, "LIFE", in the end the richest player really does win!

Pondering what 'legacy of valor' really means

By Maj. Corey Jewell

35th Maintenance Operations Squadron

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — Legacy of valor — it's part of the Airman's Creed, and it's a focus of numerous movie plots, but have you really thought about its meaning?

When I think of the legacy of valor, I think of times long ago and missions other people do.

Gen. Mark Welsh, our new Air Force chief of staff, gave a speech at the Air Force Academy last November. I highly encourage you to look it up on YouTube. He spoke to the young cadets about the heritage of the Air Force and the legacy of valor many unknown cadets have left in past history.

During his speech, he named cadets who did some amazing acts of valor. He then asked the audience, "Why don't we know about these people?"

The Airmen's Creed

I am an American Airman.
I am a warrior.
I have answered my nation's call.
I am an American Airman.
My mission is to fly, fight and win.
I am faithful to a proud heritage,
A tradition of honor
And a **legacy of valor**.
I am an American Airman,
Guardian of freedom and justice,
My nation's sword and shield,
Its sentry and avenger.
I defend my country with my life.
I am an American Airman:
Wingman, leader, warrior.
I will never leave an Airman behind.
I will not falter,
And I will not fail.

I recently had the opportunity to brief during a weekly wing meeting, and I also shared names of those

who have become unknown to newer generations of Airmen.

I named 65 former F-100F "Wild Weasel" pilots who lost

their lives in combat. Later that night, I spoke with a fellow commander, and he said one of those lost heroes was the father of his roommate while at the academy. I wanted to find out about our fellow Wild Weasel to see what legacy he left us.

Capt. Michael Joseph Bosiljevac flew with the 17th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 388th Tactical Fighter Wing, in support of the Vietnam War. From March to October 1972, Bosiljevac earned two Silver Stars and three Distinguished Flying Crosses as an electronic system officer flying the F-105 Thunderchief.

His crew directed repeat attacks against hostile surface-to-air missile batteries drawing fire away from ally strike packages. On one occasion, he prompted the firing of 10 missiles toward himself and ensured the success of the mission. Bosiljevac was ultimately shot down over North

Vietnam and died in captivity as a prisoner of war.

Bosiljevac's complete selflessness for his life and his devotion to duty sets him apart and epitomizes our entire Wild Weasel legacy.

Yes, technologies have improved and aircraft have gotten faster and more maneuverable but there is still a warm-blooded soul sitting in the seat with the understanding of real threats looming below.

We may not all fly over enemy territory, irritating enemy missiles until they fire at us, but we are indeed Wild Weasels, and we fight side by side with our fellow Airmen every day.

Do your part to find that Wild Weasel, firefighter, maintainer and countless others who each left a quiet legacy of valor so we can share their story. You may be surprised what you find and what connections the past and present have with each other.

Brig. Gen. Brad Spacy
81st Training Wing
commander

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ON THE COVER

Shane Olsen, recycling center contractor, uses a forklift to carry a bail of flattened cardboard boxes to be recycled. Keesler's recycling center recently won the Environmental Hero Award, Recycler of the Year in the state and federal government category from the Mississippi Recycling Coalition. In fiscal year 2012, the recycling center recycled 2,383 tons of materials including 323.45 tons of food waste, a unique effort in Southern Mississippi. This effort saved \$99,555.44 from going to landfills and resulted in \$180,119 of revenue being returned to the base.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



PHOTO OF THE WEEK



First patients cared for in new tower

Rachael and Tech. Sgt. Eugene Utman talk with their daughter Adysen, 5, after she was moved into the new Back Bay Tower medical inpatient unit. Nurse Maj. John Funke adjusts equipment in the background. Adysen was among almost 20 of the first patients relocated to the tower's inpatient units after the tower opened in December. In addition to the medical inpatient unit, patients are now being cared for in the facility's surgical inpatient and intensive care units. Utman is a member of the 255th Air Control Squadron at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center.

Photo by Steve Pivnick



THE WORLD'S BEST AIRMEN — TRAINING, FIGHTING, WINNING

Site solicits Keesler's 'million dollar' feedback

By Lt. Col. Jonathan Wright

81st Mission Support Group
deputy commander

Keesler's senior leaders have asked, "What would you do if our base won the \$1 million prize for the Installation Excellence Award?" Team Keesler has responded enthusiastically and creatively.

Using Sharepoint, Tech. Sgt. Vincent Callahan from the 81st Training Support Squadron devised a communication method that exemplifies bottom-to-top communication. For anyone at Keesler with access to a government computer, the site address is <https://keesler.eis.aetc.af.mil/81MSG/tmdq/default.aspx>.

The site, simply referred to as

TMDQ for "The Million Dollar Question," features a method for personnel to post their ideas as well as comment on somebody else's ideas. In one month, personnel answered with 85 ideas. More than 110 people have registered an answer of some sort and another 140 personnel have commented on the ideas.

The most frequent suggestions have been to expand the gun range for off-duty use, construct a parking garage for the new Back Bay Tower at Keesler Hospital and create an indoor pool.

On the pool idea, for example, comments have addressed how swimming offers an alternative workout and provides a great option during inclement weather, as well as requests for extend-

ed hours.

Keesler people have identified a wide range of ways that a million dollars could improve the quality of life on base by taking a look at fitness, the arts and crafts center, intramural sports, the youth center, the child development center, base housing, Welch Theater, outdoor recreation upgrades, Bay Breeze Golf Course, motorcycle safety, the sexual assault prevention and response program and traffic improvement.

Senior leaders are excited about these ideas. Many of the ideas may not have been considered if it had not been for TMDQ.

The site will continue, and Keesler personnel are encouraged to comment. While it may appear that 85 answers

is a lot, more posts would broaden the ideas and insights for ways to improve life at Keesler.

For family members, retirees and others who don't have access to the Sharepoint site, the base's Facebook page is another way to make suggestions. Another 46 ideas have been proposed at <https://www.facebook.com/keeslerafb>.

Whether our base wins the Installation Excellence Award or not, these ideas are rich and thought-provoking. And with the cost-savings initiatives that Keesler continues to generate, some of these ideas may receive the funding.

So, Team Keesler, keep asking "The Million Dollar Question" and continue to embrace the cost-conscious culture.

81st SFS issues warning on distracted driving

By Senior Airman
Heather Heiney

Keesler News co-editor

According to the National Safety Commission, 28 percent or 1.6 million traffic accidents each year involve cell phone use. While Keesler only had one major distracted driving incident in 2012, that is still one accident that could have easily been prevented by keeping cell phones put away while driving.

And it's not just a suggestion. Using cell phones without a hands-free device while driving has been prohibited on all Department of Defense installations since April 2005.

It doesn't matter if you're texting, talking, surfing the web or playing with the latest app — it's prohibited.

The first offense results in a seven-day suspension of base driving privileges, the second offense results in a 30-day suspension and the third offense results in a one-year revocation.

Capt. Christopher Porta, 81st Security Forces Squadron, said, "This means that if the

person has a recurring need to come onto the installation after the infraction and within the suspension period, they will either have to ride as a passenger in a vehicle or simply walk to their destination."

In 2012, there were 25 cell phone violation tickets issued by the 81st SFS, down from 73 in 2011.

"The 81st SFS is enforcing no texting on base and will be citing personnel for any infractions," Porta said. "Aside from the normal 81st SFS patrols that are watching for cell phone violations, we have already started utilizing unmarked vehicles/law enforcement officers to regulate cell phone infractions."

Porta also said there is a common misconception among many within the base populace that using the speaker phone function on their cell phone constitutes a hands-free device. This is not true and has been revalidated within Keesler's supplement to Air Force Instruction 31-218 as being illegal.

There are three main types



Photo illustration by Kemberly Groue

of distraction — manual, visual and cognitive — meaning the driver takes his or her hands off the wheel, eyes off the road or mind off the task of driving. That's why text messaging is a dangerous trifecta.

Bryan Bailey, 81st Training Wing Safety Office, said, "Although driving may seem

like a simple task, there are so many hazards out there on the roads that we have no control of including weather, other drivers and road conditions, so it makes no sense to add another by driving distracted.

"The ultimate goal of being a safe driver is to become an old driver! Survival and

mishap prevention in the traffic environment require good judgment and sound decision-making skills. Driving distracted impedes the process."

For more information, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website www.distraction.gov.



Five airmen first class receive below-the-zone promotions

Five Keesler airmen first class were selected Friday to receive the rank of senior airman below the zone.

They are:

Andrea Capela, 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron.

Hamish Grason, 81st Force Support Squadron.

Jerreald Hickman, 81st Communications Squadron.

Scarlett Kaya, 81st Medical Operations Squadron.

Ashley Morgan, 81st Dental Squadron.

MOVIES AT KEESLER

For a recorded
listing
of movies
at Welch

Auditorium, call

377-6627

Safety Sam says,



**“Safety is like
a lock
— but you are
the key.”**

Sisters attend basic, technical training together

By Staff Sgt. Eric Summers Jr.

Keesler Public Affairs

The life-changing process of becoming an Airman begins with a person being thrown into an unfamiliar environment with people they don't know. However, two Keesler Airmen went through the challenging experience with the comfort of a familiar face.

Two sisters, Airman Nicole Zens and Airman Basic Bridgit Zens, 335th Training Squadron, were able to attend basic training at the same time and continue in the the same class during technical training at Keesler.

"During basic, we were in the same squadron, but different flights," said Bridgit.

"But we actually got to see each other quite a bit during training," said Nicole. "It was weird seeing her when we were marching."

The youngest two of four siblings struggled to maintain military bearing and tried not to smile whenever they passed each other in formation. Occasionally they had the chance to talk if they saw each other in a restroom.

"Everyone in our flights knew who we were and would say 'There is little or big Zens when they saw us,'" Nicole said.

The Zens were able to keep their bond a secret from their military training instructors for almost half of basic training.

"They didn't find out we were sisters until the third week," said Bridgit.

"Somebody in my flight said something about it around my MTI and they teased us the whole time after that. It was pretty fun," Nicole said. "My MTI actually let me give her a hug one day when we were standing in line getting our blues dry cleaned."

Following basic training, the sisters continued their adventure together here at Keesler during avionics training.

"I like it here," Bridgit said. "It's nice and we're in the same squadron so we can go into each other's rooms and hang out."

The Zens said they enjoy spending time playing basketball, going to the Fishbowl and hanging out at the beach together.

The sisters said while it was helpful to have one another in training so they could be supportive of each other's success, they also enjoyed competing against each other to see who could score the highest on tests.

"They challenged each other. It was good positive reinforcement and they had the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Summers Jr.

Airman Basic Bridgit Zens and Airman Nicole Zens, 335th Training Squadron students, display their certificates of completion after finishing the avionics fundamental course Dec. 18 at Keesler. The two sisters entered basic training together and were in the same class for avionics training.

initiative to learn," said Justin Wells, 335th TRS avionics fundamental instructor.

"It helps us strive to get higher scores," Bridgit said. "We are always very competitive."

"This is my first time having sisters come through this course," Wells said. "They were very helpful to each other, and if others needed help, they stepped up to the plate."

After completing the avionics course at Keesler, the sisters will continue their journey together during their second part of training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

81st MDG wins seven medical service awards

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

Members of the 81st Medical Group have earned one team and six individual honors at the Air Education and Training Command in 2012 Air Force Medical Service Awards.

The **81st Medical Support Squadron's medical information management flight** is the Surgeon General's Medical Information Services Team of the Year. Among the accomplishments of the 50-member flight were completing more than 36,000 work orders, tracking surgery trays and instruments and supporting 499 births, 2,600 surgeries and 22,000 emergency room encounters. The flight was also the Air Force's lead site for digital telepath, automated

information and data collection and essentris initiatives and was tasked with evaluating seven systems as well as accreditation of four others. The unit led a \$10 million congressionally-funded research and development real-time location services project, proving the concept and attaining validation.

Airman 1st Class Andrea Capela, 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron nutritional medicine flight, is the Outstanding Diet Therapy Airman of the Year. Her nomination noted she aided production in the Air Force's second largest nutritional medicine operation with more than 260,000 meals served and \$600,000 in subsistence. Directing the flight's quality control, she inspected more than 2,000 patient trays, alerting staff of discrepancies which she corrected on the spot, averting 50 potential incidents.

She also conducted 1,500 patient-meal rounds during which she updated preferences and collected selection menus — she received 100 percent positive patient feedback. During 477 inpatient screenings, Capela identified 82 patients at nutritional risk, then notified the registered dietician, ensuring the patients received appropriate medical nutrition therapy.

Airman 1st Class Jason Boyd, 81st Medical Operations Squadron cardiopulmonary lab technician, is the Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Airman of the Year. His nomination stated that during Phase I training in San Antonio, he was a squadron red rope managing 12 student leaders and 200 trainees and received the 59th Training Squadron's Top III Leader-

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Keesler can help you keep your resolutions

By Senior Airman Heather Heiney

Keesler News co-editor

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of four on common New Year's resolutions.

For many people the New Year brings with it the desire to start fresh, set goals and do something to make themselves better in one way or another. While not everyone creates a resolution each year and those that do tailor their goals to their specific needs, four of the more common resolutions are to quit smoking, be healthier, help others and learn more. Each week throughout the month of January, this series will explore the four resolutions above and how different Keesler agencies can help individuals reach their goals.

Week one:

Quitting tobacco.

The fact that using tobacco kills people is not debated. And yet people still choose to do it.

Whether their reason for starting is because they had a high level of stress in their lives, felt peer pressure as a teen or they simply enjoyed the act of smoking or chewing tobacco, it is a highly addictive substance and they often have a difficult time letting go of the habit later in life.

Chief Master Sgt. Angelica Johnson, 81st Training Wing command chief, said that she started smoking when she was in basic training because at that time smokers got an extra 15-minute break. She said that several

years later she decided to quit because it made her feel bad, smell bad and the habit costs too much.

"It was not easy to quit smoking, but I am so glad I did," Johnson said. "They did not have a health and wellness center back then. My supervisor and friends helped me tremendously. I also stopped hanging around people who smoked."

While some people will chose to use tobacco the rest of their lives, there is help out there for those who want to quit. Here at Keesler, the health and wellness center has a certified health educator and other resources available to active duty members, their families, retirees, and Department of Defense employees.

Some options include:

- A four-week tobacco cessation program in which participants meet weekly to discuss the how and why of tobacco use, how to successfully make it through the first few tobacco-free days, how to overcome obstacles and how to stay quit for good. Active duty members, family members, and retirees enrolled in the class also have the option to receive free tobacco cessation prescriptions.

- The HAWC also partners with the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking quit line, a 12-week counselor-assisted program.

Participants initiate the call, inform the counselor that they're at Keesler, call once a week with updates and receive counseling over the phone. Blood pressure readings are also required and can be taken anywhere or at the HAWC. Participants will also

have free access to tobacco cessation prescriptions.

- The website www.ucanquit2.org is a DOD-sponsored tobacco cessation website available to Tricare and Department of Veteran's Affairs beneficiaries who are trying to quit. It offers a live chat option which can help if a craving strikes. There are also games, a savings calculator and a message board available.

In 2012, the HAWC helped 213 individuals quit tobacco and their goal for 2013 is to decrease tobacco use on Keesler from 16 to 13 percent of the population.

Terri Jordan, health promotion manager at the HAWC, said, "The ultimate Air Force goal is to have a healthy and fit force."

Updates to Air Force policy taking effect in March may help those who are thinking of quitting take the next step. Air Force Instruction 40-102, Tobacco Use in the Air Force, restricts the number of locations on base where tobacco use is allowed. So, users may have to walk further to and from designated tobacco areas and for some people, this may mean that they don't have time during their breaks to use tobacco.

"It may be a very difficult transition for the smokers. We could lose some productivity up front because of the issue, but it is more important that we make the base a safe and healthy environment for all," Johnson said.

"This change is focusing on the positive side by promoting this as a major benefit for the members that will have major benefits now and for the rest of their

lives. This base has great role models of health and fitness and we hope that this will catch on across the base and Keesler will be the leader for health and wellness for all members," Jordan said, "I think with all Keesler members supporting and educating this new policy we will have a smooth transition implementing these changes."

"I think health costs will be reduced. Airmen will, in fact, be healthier and less sick. That will improve productivity in the long run," Johnson said. "Healthier Airmen are more resilient and better prepared for long hours, working and adapting to an uncertain environment and can better endure extreme conditions."

If someone is on the fence about quitting tobacco, they should consider some of the major benefits including increased physical endurance, better health and more money to spend elsewhere.

"It is important for people to quit tobacco to reduce their risk of heart disease, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema, bronchitis, and other respiratory diseases. Tobacco use also slows recovery time from illnesses and injuries. Quitting is not only beneficial for your own health, but also for the health of others around you. Second-hand smoke also increases the risk of all of the above mentioned diseases," Jordan said.

For those who decide to quit in 2013, visit the HAWC or call 228-376-3170.



MLK luncheon today at Bay Breeze Events Center

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Chris Moore, sings the National Anthem during the Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon at the Bay Breeze Event Center Jan. 9, 2012. This year's event is scheduled to take place 11 a.m. today at the Bay Breeze Event Center. The theme is "A Day On, Not a Day Off" and Lt. Gen. Darren McDew, 18th Air Force commander, is scheduled to be the guest speaker.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

Shane Olsen, recycling center contractor, grabs an arm-full of flattened cardboard boxes to put into the baling machine at the recycling center Monday. Keesler's recycling center recently won the Environmental Hero Award, Recycler of the Year in the state and federal government category from the Mississippi Recycling Coalition. In fiscal year 2012, the center recycled 2,383 tons of materials including 323.45 tons of food waste, a unique effort in south Mississippi. This effort saved \$99,555.44 from going to landfills and resulted in \$180,119 of revenue being returned to the base.

Photos by Kemberly Groue



Duane Olsen, recycling center contractor, separates plastic and aluminum materials into different bins.

Recycling center wins Environmental Hero Award

By Senior Airman Heather Heiney

Keesler News co-editor

Keesler's recycling center won the Environmental Hero Award, Recycler of the Year in the state or federal government category from the Mississippi Recycling Coalition Jan. 3. A formal announcement is scheduled for 10 a.m. today as part of the MRC Recycling Awareness Day at the state capitol in Jackson, Miss. The award will be presented to Keesler at a later date.

According to its website, www.msrecycles.org, each year the Mississippi Recycling Coalition honors outstanding environmental efforts of organizations, businesses, schools and local governments around the State of Mississippi.

The MRC judges the nominees based on the following criteria: promotes recycling as a way to create a better community, conducts continuous recycling or environmental programs rather than a one-time project, practices and improves awareness of environmental stewardship and improves community waste handling and environmental practices.

Mark Williams, solid waste policy, planning and grants branch administrator of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality said, "Keesler has had a strong recycling program for some time, but this year we felt they deserved the award."

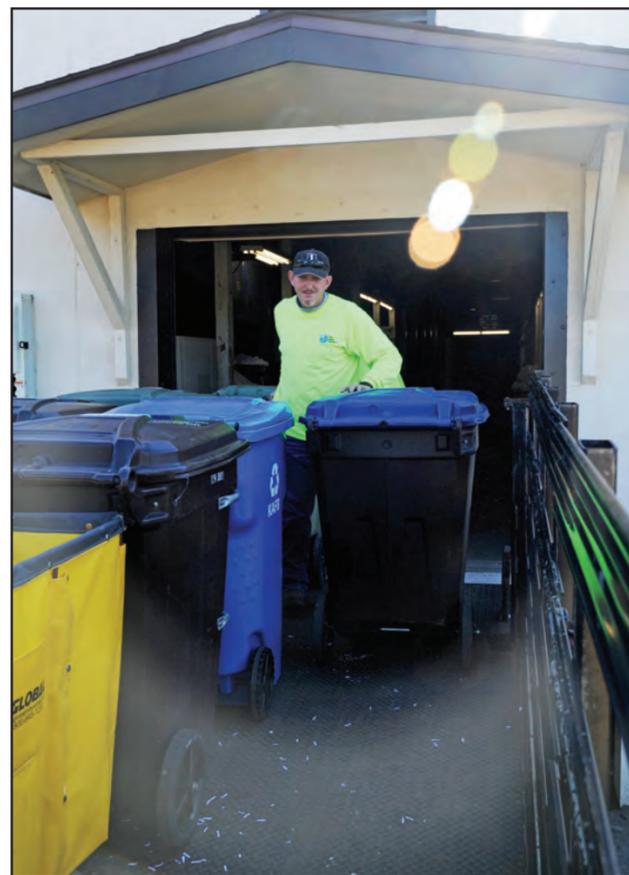
Doug Smith, Zero Waste Solutions/Mark Dunning Industries project manager, said

that winning the Environmental Hero Award shows all the progress the recycling center has made over the last two years.

"We've gone from a 20 percent to a 52 percent diversion rate," Smith said. "It takes all the individuals on Keesler to make this happen."

In fiscal year 2012, the recycling center recycled 2,383 tons of materials including 323.45 tons of food waste, a unique effort in south Mississippi. This effort saved \$99,555.44 from going to landfills and resulted in \$180,119 of revenue being returned to the base.

Smith also said his team looks for new items and ways to recycle every single day. The team's goal is a 75 percent diversion rate by 2015.



Pete Robertson, recycling center contractor, rolls cans of recycled materials from around the base into the recycling center for processing.



Duane Olsen empties a bag of shredded paper into a baling machine.



Aluminum cans collected from around the base are crushed and bailed in preparation for shipment to an off-base processing center.

Keesler public affairs initiates self-help photo training, studio

By Joel Van Nice

Keesler Public Affairs

81st Training Wing Public Affairs is launching a new service focused on empowering customers to fulfill their mission-related photo requirements. A new self-help portrait studio opens Monday and will be open Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Wall Studio, 709 H St. An American flag, blue backdrop and cameras are available for checkout. There is also a non-network computer for uploading pictures from a photo memory card to burn on a customer-provided disk.

Visual information services will also provide beginner-

level photography training classes to assigned unit self-help photographers. Training will be held monthly for one hour and will be used to assist unit self-help photographers in carrying out unit-level location and studio photography not supported by public affairs photographers.

The class will consist of camera familiarization and basic functions, shooting tips and techniques, composition, self-help studio use and setup, accessioning requirements and public release requirements.

Also available for self-help, are consumer video cameras; 35 millimeter slide-to-digital conversion equipment and

public address equipment including speakers, microphones, projectors, screens and podiums.

Due to recent budget cuts, contracted base multimedia center services are limited to 81st TRW-level mission requirements and above. Studio photography is for official passport, ISO prep, special duty package and the 81st TRW annual awards program photos. All other requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information on training classes or base multimedia center services, go to <http://www.keesler.af.mil/units/multimediapage/index.asp> or call 228-377-4378.

Awards,

from Page 9

ship Award. As cardiopulmonary Phase II class tutor, he held study sessions giving tips to three members and increasing the class grade point average by more than 20 percent. He also responded to 10 “code blues”—performing chest compression and manual ventilation—and raised the chance of patient survival by 50 percent. In addition, he provided training to the intensive care unit staff. He taught 20 personnel the use of oxygen devices and aerosol therapy, increasing their knowledge and skill set.

Senior Airman Robert Chambers, 81st MDTS diagnostic imaging apprentice, is the Outstanding Diagnostic Imaging Airman of the Year. Among his achievements, he employed \$3.5 million-worth of equipment and conducted quality control review of 2,000 exams. He was named Diagnostic Imaging “Tech of the Month” three times, “No. 1 of 24 flight Airmen.” Chambers completed 2,500 X-ray images and operating room cases and scanned 200 computed tomography exams with a 2 percent repeat rate that shattered the 8 percent national average. “Developing faster than his peers,” his nomination stated, “he was chosen for a solo night shift position six months early, providing 24/7 ancillary support.” Chambers also coached 17 Phase II pupils, teaching them 70 qualifying taskings which enabled their career progression and earned an “outstanding” during a 382nd Training Group inspection.

Maj. (Dr.) Robert Cromer, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron and General Surgery Program Director, was named Physician Educator of the Year. His nomination observed he directs the largest Air Force-sponsored general surgery residency with 22 residents and graduated three surgeons in June 2012. He was appointed as associ-

ate examiner to the American Board of Surgery for the oral board certifying examination. Cromer also comprehensively prepared for the re-accreditation visit and transition to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education’s new accreditation system. In addition, he developed a residency education committee to standardize the residency training platform across integrated sites. The nomination noted he was, “a productivity leader; general surgery attained annualized case load and currency goals for the first time in 2012.” He served as the 81st MDG’s advanced trauma life support course director conducting three courses per year, training more than 50 providers from the Air Force, Navy National Guard and Reserves and saving \$40,000.

Lt. Col. Winnie Lok-Park, commander of the 81st Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron’s pharmacy flight, was named the 2012 Biomedical Specialist Category II Field Grade Officer. She was cited for leading AETC’s second-largest pharmacy flight, directing an 84-person staff with a \$32 million annual budget while serving 47,000 eligible beneficiaries. Her nomination noted she promoted delivery of the highest quality service, dispensing 1.5 million annual prescriptions and intravenous medication plus 3,000 clinic orders. “A medication management champion,” she monitored compliance with The Joint Commission, Health Services Inspection, federal, state and Air Force standards. As readiness skills verification and disaster team chief, the colonel trained 50 members, assuring mission readiness and supporting 52 deployment taskings. She also was recognized for directing the first robust mass prophylaxis point of dispensing exercise, exceeding 24 goals and receiving an “excellent” rating.

Lt. Col. John Childs, director of musculoskeletal research with the 81st MSGS, was selected the Air Force

Biomedical Clinician Category II Field Grade Officer of the Year. Among his achievements, his nomination cited his leadership of a \$21 million musculoskeletal research agenda. He published 22 papers, created 27 presentations, 12 abstracts and 15 posters and received three international awards. He integrated the physical therapy clinic in primary care, a first for the AFMS. Partnering with eight primary care managers, capacity was increased by 60 percent, saving \$480,000. In addition, Childs was awarded a \$390,000 Air Force Medical Support Agency grant to study lower back pain care quality, cutting costs by 40 percent, slashing profiles by 30 percent and saving \$100,000. He also launched a \$2.5 million Battlefield Airman injury prevention study which cut attrition by 25 percent, improved fitness by 30 percent and resulted in \$3 million in lower injury costs.

All now compete for the Air Force-level awards.

KEESLER NOTES

AFRC classes

The airman and family readiness center is collaborating with the civilian personnel office for a course in using spouse priority placement preference to apply for positions, especially at Keesler. This is a different program than 'spouse preference,' and can be confusing. There is a time limit to use PPP(S), so getting a resume with good quality content turned in to the correct place as quickly as possible is very important. The class is 9 a.m. Jan. 17 in Sablich Center Room 108A. Call 228-376-8728 to sign up.

Often individuals are at a loss in how to describe the things they have accomplished, either at work or as a volun-

teer, when preparing a resume or job application. Employers look for what a person has done, not just the job duties. The airman and family readiness center holds a "Translate Your Background into Job Skills" class, 3 p.m. Jan. 23 in Sablich Center Room 108A. This class is also open to older teens who may be applying for summer jobs or internships. Call 228-376-8728 to sign up.

Embry-Riddle

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is now registering for the January 2013 term that begins Monday. The university offers degrees in aviation and aerospace, management and business administration with multiple course formats. Graduate courses are

also available to complete Civil Service 1750 qualification requirements (adult teaching and learning techniques this term). Discounted tuition rates are available for active-duty, reserve and national guard military members.

For more information go to the Sablich Center, Room 217, or call 228-376-8478 or 228-432-5312.

AFA scholarships and grants

Air Force Association scholarship and grant programs for 2013 are:

Lt. Col. Romeo and Josephine Bass Ferretti Scholarship — This scholarship is made possible by a bequest from the estate of Lt. Col. Romeo and Josephine Bass Ferretti and was established for children of Air Force active-duty, reserve or Air National

Guard enlisted Airmen pursuing an undergraduate degree in science, technology, engineering or math.

Visit <http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/ferretti.asp> for more information or to apply.

Spouse scholarships — The Air Force Spouse Scholarship program is designed to encourage Air Force spouses worldwide to pursue an associate, bachelor, graduate or postgraduate degree.

Visit <http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/spouse.asp> for more information or to apply.

Capt. Jodi Callahan Memorial Scholarship — The Jodi Callahan Memorial Scholarship provides financial assistance and recognition to an active duty Air Force, full time Guard or Reserve person who is pursuing a master's degree in a non-technical field.

Visit <http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/callahan.asp> for more information or to apply.

Grantham University Scholarship — The AFA/Grantham University Online Degree Scholarship is designed to encourage active-duty dependents to continue their education. Visit <http://www.afa.org/aboutus/members/grantham.asp> for more information or to apply.

Housing office

The housing office and community housing has relocated to 300 Patrick Drive in the Forest City Community Center. All phone numbers and operating hours remain the same.

Tuition assistance

Active-duty members requesting tuition assistance may do so no earlier than 30 days prior to their class start date.

81st MDG minimal services

The 81st Medical Group will have minimal services available on the following days:

Today — Contingency response training.

Jan. 21 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Feb. 14 — Contingency response training.

Feb. 18 — President's Day.

Feb. 28 — Contingency response training.

Pathways

The airman and family readiness center is offering a class for adult students in college, trade school or technical education programs to prepare resumes or applications for the Pathways federal internship program. The new class is 3 p.m. Wednesday at Sablich Center Room 108A. Interested individuals need to call 228-376-8728 to register in advance. Positions are advertised on <http://www.usajobs.gov>, using the key word search term 'Pathways.'

81st TRW quarterly awards

The 81st Training Wing Quarterly Awards luncheon is scheduled for 11 a.m. Jan. 25 at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

AFSA

The next Keesler Air Force Sergeants Association meeting is held in the Sablich Auditorium noon to 1 p.m. Jan. 17. Current legislature that affects benefits and the upcoming fundraising and community volunteer opportunities will be discussed. Members and non-members are welcome.

81st TRG awards

The 81st Training Group quarterly and annual awards ceremony and commander's call is 2:30 p.m. Jan. 17 at the Roberts Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Facility multipurpose room. The ceremony is open to all Keesler personnel.

For more information call 228-377-1975 or 228-377-3711.

USM

The University of Southern Mississippi is still receiving applications for the Spring 2013 semester that begins Monday. Apply online at www.usm.edu/gulfcoast/admissions. Stop by Room 219 of the Sablich Center, Mondays through Thursdays to get more information about the programs offered at the USM Gulf Coast campus.

Keesler Events Calendar

Today

9 a.m. — Federal job search class at the airman and family readiness center.

11 a.m. — Marin Luther King Jr. luncheon at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

6 p.m. — Needlecraft social at the arts and crafts center.

— Party play date at the arts and crafts center.

— Free ping pong tournament at the Vandenberg Community Center.

Friday

5 p.m. — Mongolian barbecue at the Bay Breeze Collocated Lounge.

8 p.m. — Hometown throwdown at the Vandenberg Community Center.

Saturday

1 p.m. — E-reader class at the McBride Library.

— Family time watercolor painting at the arts and crafts center.

Wednesday

10 a.m. — Children's storytime at the McBride Library.

1 p.m. — Smooth move

seminar at the airman and family readiness center.

3 p.m. — Pathways: federal jobs seminar at the airman and family readiness center.

— Japanese braiding I class at the arts and crafts center

5 p.m. — Auto maintenance 101 class at the auto hobby shop.

6 p.m. — Japanese braiding II class at the arts and crafts center.

— Free pool tournament at the Vandenberg Community Center.

6:30 p.m. — Bingo at the Bay Breeze Collocated Lounge.

Jan. 17

9 a.m. — Military spouse preference program at the airman and family readiness center.

4:30 p.m. — Library and community center focus group at the Vandenberg Community Center.

6 p.m. — Wreath and bow-making class at the arts and crafts center.

Jan. 18

5 p.m. — Two-for-one

steak night at the Bay Breeze Collocated Lounge.

— Family game night at the Bay Breeze Community Center.

6 p.m. — Cocktails and canvas at the arts and crafts center.

Jan. 19

10:30 a.m. — Pottery wheel class at the arts and crafts center.

1 p.m. — Polar bear regatta at outdoor recreation.

8 p.m. — Wild, Wild West party at the Vandenberg Community Center.

Jan. 23

8 a.m. — Newcomers orientation at the Airman and family readiness center.

9 a.m. — Job skills briefing at the airman and family readiness center.

5 p.m. — Family dinner night (flying pasta) at the Bay Breeze Collocated Lounge.

6 p.m. — Watercolor painting at the arts and crafts center.

Revamped TAP aids separating service members

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Major changes announced in December to the Transition Assistance Program will revolutionize the way the military prepares people leaving the services, with mandatory participation in programs throughout their military careers to help set them up for a successful transition.

The redesigned program, called Transition Goals Planning Success or Transition GPS, was unveiled by Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta and Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. It is a multi-agency response to President Barack Obama's call to improve career readiness for separating service members, explained Susan S. Kelly, principal director of the Defense Department's Transition to Veterans Program Office.

The president hinted at the most-sweeping change to the Transition Assistance Program in two decades during a speech last summer to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Obama called it the centerpiece to a broader federal effort to help service members transition to civilian life and to reduce veterans unemployment.

During the three-phase rollout of the Transition GPS program that continues through 2014, the many, but often disconnected, activities conducted across the U.S. government to support veterans and their families will be melded into one comprehensive effort, Kelly said.

The Defense Department and departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor aligned their most successful programs to deliver better and more comprehensive services to help make service members "career ready" for civilian employment, officials said. They reached out to the Department of Education to integrate the latest teaching methods and tapped into the resources of the Office of Person-

nel Management and the Small Business Administration.

One of the biggest changes in the new program is that participation is no longer voluntary.

Based on a law that took effect Nov. 21, service members can no longer opt out of the transition assistance program. All, including reservists and Guardsmen demobilized after 180 days of active duty, must now attend specific training sessions and take concrete steps to prepare for separation.

During the first phase which is already being implemented, all separating service members will receive counseling about Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, Kelly said. In addition, most will be required to attend newly revamped employment workshops run by the Department of Labor.

These workshops incorporate new curriculum such as how to explore career interests, use search tools to find job opportunities, write a resume, interview for a position and negotiate a salary, said John Moran, DOL's deputy assistant secretary for Veterans Employment and Training Service.

While fulfilling the congressional mandate to reach out to all separating service members, the interagency team went a step beyond the law to further enhance the effort, Kelly said.

Separating service members must now take financial planning training and complete a 12-month budget that factors in the cost of where they decide to live after leaving the military. They must evaluate how their military-acquired education, training and experience translate into civilian career qualifications and prepare an individual transition plan.

The task force ran a pilot program last summer at seven installations to evaluate this core curriculum, gathering assessments from about 950 military members who participated.



Photo by Andy Morataya

This booklet and brochure were samples of the reading material handed out to attendees during a Transition Assistance Program at the Pentagon on Dec. 10.

"Many in the pilot programs found it eye-opening," Kelly said.

The seven pilot sites continue to offer the DOL workshops, but the instruction will be available service-wide by January, Moran said.

The program's second phase, to be tested during 2013 and implemented by the year's end, establishes requirements for separating service members who plan to go on to college or technical or career training or to start their own businesses.

Those electing higher education or other training will be required to show an acceptance letter from that institution, or have an application filled out and ready to submit, Kelly said. They also will be required to establish a contact with a counselor to follow up with after leaving the military.

Also during the second phase, service members who hope to become entrepreneurs will be required to connect with the Small Business Ad-

TAP changes underway at Keesler

The Keesler Airman and Family Readiness Center began implementing the redesigned Transition GPS program in October.

The next week-long program starts Monday, but others are scheduled every month, according to Steve McDaniel Jr., transition assistance program specialist.

For more information, call 376-8506 or -8514.

ministration for help in drafting and evaluating their small business plans.

The final phase of the rollout to be implemented by the end of 2014 will integrate transition preparation throughout the service member's military career. The idea, Kelly explained, is to begin preparations for transition long before a service member prepares to leave the military.

"The end state that we are shooting for is to embed this across the military lifecycle," she said.

Each service will develop a

plan designating points along a service member's career path for this training, Kelly said.

Danny Pummill from the VA called the Transition GPS program an unprecedented interagency effort that ensures service members have the time and resources to prepare for a smooth transition from the military.

It will help the nation's newest veterans live up to their destinies as "the next greatest generation," he said.

"If we do this right, this is our opportunity to once again transform America," Pummill said.

'Fiscal cliff' legislation affects DOD paychecks

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The legislation President Barack Obama signed Jan. 2 postponed the fiscal cliff and means changes to military and civilian paychecks, Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials said today.

The legislation increases Social Security withholding taxes to 6.2 percent. For the past two years during the "tax

holiday" the rate was 4.2 percent.

The increase in Social Security withholding taxes affects both military and civilian paychecks, officials said.

For civilian employees, officials said, this will mean a 2 percent reduction in net pay.

For military personnel, changes to net pay are affected by a variety of additional factors such as increases in basic allowances for housing, sub-

sistence, longevity basic pay raises and promotions. Service members could see an increase in net pay, no change or a decrease, military personnel and readiness officials said.

For military members, Social Security withholding is located on their leave and earnings statement in the blocks marked "FICA taxes" — for Federal Insurance Contributions Act.

Defense Department ci-

vilians will see the change on their leave and earnings statement under "OASDI" — for old age, survivors, and disability insurance.

Reserve component members will be the first to see potential changes in their net pay as a result of the law, DFAS officials said. Changes will be reflected in their January paychecks.

Active-duty military personnel will see pay adjust-

ments in their January mid-month paycheck and will be reflected on the January leave and earnings statement.

DOD civilians will see social security withholding changes reflected in paychecks based on the pay period ending Dec. 29, 2012, for pay dates beginning in January.

DFAS stresses that all personnel should review pay statements carefully.

Save when it matters most with Thrift or Roth

By Desiree Palacios

Air Force News Service

FORT MEADE, Md. — With the current military retirement system, Airmen must serve in the military for 20 years before reaping retirement benefits, unless they are medically retired before hitting that mark.

But what about Airmen who serve fewer than 20 years? What can they take away from their Air Force service beyond a medal, a handshake and solid work experience?

A Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement and savings plan originally designed for Federal Employees Retirement System employees and later became available to service members and employees of the older Civil Service Retirement System.

Oct. 1, service members became eligible to take advantage of a Roth version of the Thrift Savings Plan, where money is deducted from taxed income, but becomes tax-free money when it is withdrawn.

According to TSP's external affairs director Kim Weaver, there's a big difference between the two options.

"The biggest difference is that the traditional TSP is pre-taxed money, so it reduces the amount of your income in that year," she said. "So let's say your salary is \$50,000 and you contribute

\$5,000 to traditional TSP. That money comes out before you pay taxes on it. You're only paying taxes on \$45,000, but, when you retire, or when you need the money, you pay taxes on what you withdraw then.

"The Roth TSP is just the opposite," she explained. "The money coming into the Roth TSP is after-tax money."

Contributors pay taxes before it is put in their account and as long as they follow two IRS rules, it will remain tax free, Weaver explained. Funds contributed must remain in the Roth TSP for five years and members must be 59 and a half before they can withdraw their funds.

"All of the money that comes out is already taxed, so when that money is withdrawn at retirement, it is tax-free, which makes obviously a huge difference," she explains. "Then the question becomes, 'Do I think I'm going to pay higher taxes now or higher taxes later and is it going to help me to defer income now or is it OK to pay taxes going into the Roth TSP?'"

Federal employees can use the contribution comparison calculator on www.tsp.gov to help them determine which plan is right for them. The maximum contribution this year will be \$17,500.

Although Federal Employees must

sign up for TSP, Weaver explained that Airmen can take advantage of TSP from day one of their enlistment. It is done through the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

While most look at TSP as a roadmap to a comfortable retirement, Weaver said that enrolling in thrift savings, even for one or two enlistments, can pay real dividends.

"They can either leave it in their TSP untouched, move the money around within the funds or leave it in until they are ready to retire," Weaver said. "They can also roll it over into another 401(k) plan in the private sector if they choose to do that. So, just because service members leave the military, it doesn't mean they are forfeiting their money. Once they contribute their money, the TSP belongs to the participant."

One bit of caution. There can be large tax consequences for Airmen who simply pull their money out without any type of rollover into another account.

TSP officials also confirm the adage that the 'early bird gets the worm,' or in the case of TSP, the dividends. For example, two Airmen join the military at the same time. One Airman decides to immediately put away 5 percent of her pay for 20 years while the other Airman decides to invest 10 percent of

his pay for his last 10 years of service.

Which service member would accumulate more money over time? Is it the Airman who started saving as soon as she joined, setting aside a smaller percentage, or the Airman who started saving 10 years later, but doubled his contribution for the remainder of his career?

The Airman who chose to contribute 5 percent from day one is the winner. This Airman ended up saving more overall due to compound interest that accumulated over a longer period of time. This is despite the fact that the other Airman saved doubled the amount of his pay for 10 years.

The Airman who started contributing as soon as she joined would have a total estimated TSP account balance of \$95,133, while the other Airman who waited would have a total estimate TSP account balance of \$51,325. The difference is almost double.

"If you get an early start and put in just a little bit of money into either the traditional or Roth TSP, you are going to do yourself a big favor for that time when you are ready to retire."

For more information on the Thrift Savings Plan, go to www.tsp.gov or check out the following link: www.youtube.com/user/tsp4gov.

For more news, photos, videos and information, log on to www.keesler.af.mil

or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/keeslerafb



Dragon Wagon



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Schedule

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Fridays | 1700-2400 |
| Saturdays | 1200-2400 |
| Sundays & Holidays | 1100-1800 |

Route: twice an hour every hour

- 1 Triangle Mini-Exchange**
 - 2 Welch Theater**
 - The "V" • Legends Café
 - 3 Bay Breeze Event Center**
 - Collocated Club • Community Center
 - Golf Course • ITT/Leisure Travel Office
 - 4 Outdoor Recreation**
 - Marina Park • Convenience Store
 - 5 Gaudé Lanes Bowling Center**
 - Shoppette • Blake Fitness Center
 - 6 Tyer House**
 - Sablich Center
 - 7 McBride Library/Exchange**
 - Arts & Crafts Center • Tennis Courts
 - Auto Hobby Shop • Post Office
 - 8 5000 Block**
 - White Avenue Gate • Permanent Party Dorms
- Return to Triangle Mini-Exchange**

www.keesler81fss.us

Route and times are subject to change.

KIDS ROCK™ New Orleans



The youth center is putting together a Keesler kids' team for the New Orleans Rock-n-Roll Marathon, "Kids Rock" Run 9 a.m. Feb. 23 at City Park in New Orleans.

This team will meet for weekly runs leading up to the event. All participants will receive a t-shirt, medal, race bib, pace packet and access to the Rock-n-Roll expo.

Keesler Kids between Kindergarten and 7th grade can register at Youth Center or kidsrock@competitorgroup.com.

Team name "Keesler Kids Rock the Run."
 \$25 per runner (sponsors available if needed).

Sign-ups for the weekly runs will continue through the middle of Jan. at the Youth Center.

377-4116
 www.keesler81fss.us



"I LOST IT" At Keesler

Jan. 14-Feb. 25

Shed those holiday pounds in our annual weight loss competition.

Register Jan. 2-10 at the Dragon Fitness Center.

Recognition will be given to the male and female winners with the highest total percentage of weight loss. Free to participate.



377-4409

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