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Celebrating Fifty Years of News
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In the family

Chief's daughter takes the oath

Curtain call

Two airmen tops in blue

Running man

Liberty Warrior named USAFE athlete of the year

JET 48 Vol. 30 No. 10
Friday, March 14, 2003

Brig. Gen. John T. Brennan
48th Fighter Wing commander

Maj. Francisco G. Hamm
Public affairs chief

Master Sgt. Will Ackerman
Public affairs superintendent

JET 48 STAFF

1st Lt. Chris Watt
Deputy chief of public affairs
Chief of internal information

Staff Sgt. Tiffany Jeltema
Editor

Senior Airman Jeff Hamm
Assistant editor

Senior Airman Lynne Neveu
Staff writer

Tabby Casto
Jet 48 intern

HOW TO REACH US

Submissions

Email: jet.48@lakenheath.af.mil
DSN: (314) 226-2151
Fax: 44+(1638) 525637
Phone: 44+(1638) 525640
Editorial office: *Jet 48*, Unit 5210 Box 215, APO AE 09461

All correspondence should include the writer's full name, address and telephone number and may be edited for clarity and space.

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48th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Mail: 48FW/PA, Unit 5210 Box 215, APO AE 09461
Email: 48fw.pa@lakenheath.af.mil
Phone: 44+(1638) 522151

Advertising

For advertising rates and information, call 44+(1428) 609920

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Photo by Staff Sgt. William Greer

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ON THE COVER

Senior Airman Charles Cook, 48th Security Forces Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Kerri Brooks, 48th Munitions Squadron, part the curtains on a one-year tour with Tops in Blue. *Photo illustration by Maj. Francisco G. Hamm and Staff Sgt. William Greer.* For story, see Pages 12 and 13.

A 'lofty' farewell from command chief

By Chief Master Sgt. Carl Brown

48th Fighter Wing command chief master sergeant

What a wonderful time to be in the world's greatest Air Force and stationed at its premier combat air wing. It's even greater to have had the opportunity to be the command chief of such an outstanding and respected institution. It only seems like yesterday when I took the reins as your "Chief," and I must tell you it has been an absolute blast!

I continue to be amazed at the miracles that occur daily throughout this wing. This doesn't happen without strong leadership at all levels and a commitment to excellence by the entire team.

Over the past five years, I've seen this wing respond to disasters, prosecute a war from three separate locations, deploy as the lead wing during Air and Space Expeditionary Force rotations and transform its organizational structure to increase combat efficiency. At the same time, it continued to maintain one of the toughest inspection and exercise regiments in the Department of Defense. You not only survived, but also actually thrived with each challenge. Your efforts are recognized at the highest levels of command.

Because of your many sacrifices, the rich heritage of the 48th Fighter Wing continues to flourish. Once again, we may be called upon to help lead the fight in the global war on terrorism. There is no doubt about our level of readiness. As our motto states, we are Ready, Focused and Proud.

Well, my time here at the Liberty Wing has come to an end. As I prepare to transition to my next assignment, I leave with mixed emotions. Many of our teammates, friends and loved ones are deployed. We must continue to keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers. I will never forget all of the love and support that Team Liberty has shown my family and me during our tour here.

You personify our Air Force core values and have made me the proudest command chief in the entire Air Force. Thank you for allowing me to play a small role on such a great team. Until we meet again, may God bless each and every one of you!

Photo by Staff Sgt. William Greer

Chief Master Sgt. Carl Brown, 48th Fighter Wing command chief master sergeant, leaves the wing after being the lead chief here since February 2001. Brown is PCSing to Wilford Hall, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, to be the command chief master sergeant there.

Action Line

Your link to the commander

*The Action Line is your direct link to me for complaints, suggestions or comments. It's not intended to replace the chain of command. When normal command agency channels haven't been able to resolve your concerns, call 7-2324, fax 7-5637, e-mail (**Action.Line@lakenheath.af.mil**), send through distribution (48 FW/PA), mail (48FW/PA, Unit 5210 Box 215 APO AE 09461-0215), or hand carry your Action Line to the public affairs office (Building 1085). You may remain anonymous; however, to receive a reply, please leave your name, unit, duty or home phone number, and full APO mailing address. Names are confidential.*

John T. Brennan

48th Fighter Wing commander

Dangerous pets

I live in Anglo housing and have a concern for the safety of individuals living in the area. Recently, a dog that got loose from another family in military housing attacked my neighbor's son. He called 48th Security Forces Squadron to request assistance. They told him that he needed to call the U.K. police for assistance in Anglo Housing. When he called them, the U.K. police said, "You live on the American Base; what do you want us to do about it?"

The support was non-responsive and took some yelling and anger to force a resolution. However, while this is a problem that needs to be addressed, this is not the center of my concern.

What concerns me is that there was no public knowledge that there was an attack, or that vicious or ferocious animals are living in the housing center. As to my knowledge, the dogs are still there. As a parent of a 3-year-old, I would like to know if an animal has attacked other children in my housing area. It is information that may affect my reaction while walking or working outdoors, and that reaction could potentially keep my family safe.

My point is, if the 48th Fighter Wing does not have the capacity to protect members from harmful pets, then they should at least let members living in the area know that a threat exists, and to adjust their activities and behavior accordingly. If there is criminal activity or potential hazards, I think I deserve to know either through a public notice in the Jet 48 or a community advisory letter. I have tried unsuccessfully to resolve this with the local council. As a military member who went through the Military Family Housing office, I am requesting support to enable the members living in "no man's land" in Anglo Housing to protect ourselves and our families.

The desk sergeant erred in asking you to call local police. Instead, your call should have been transferred to the Ministry of Defence Police. When the MDP receive calls of this nature, they will respond by contacting a dog warden to round up the stray dog and impound it. Responsibility then shifts to the pet owner to collect the impounded pet. However, if the dog warden feels the dog is dangerous, they have the authority to take further action in accordance with the Dangerous Dogs Act. In fact, anyone can contact the Forest Heath Council dog warden, and we encourage you to do so. He can be contacted at (01638) 719210.

It is a mandatory requirement for all pet owners to register their pets with the base vet by completing a pet registration form outlining their responsibilities as a pet owner. Forms are available at the base housing office. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in their pet being removed form base housing if it is deemed a danger or nuisance.

Students' ImagiNations solve problems

By Jennifer Fetla
RAF Lakenheath School Liaison Office

Teamwork, creativity, achievement and independence are just a few key ingredients required for a team to participate in the Destination ImagiNation Tournament held at Lakenheath High School Saturday.

What began more than 25 years ago as the "Olympics of the Mind" has now evolved into "Destination ImagiNation." The United Kingdom Destination ImagiNation tournament allows Department of Defense Dependents Schools, and international and British school students to "wow" onlookers and judges with their creative presentations and "out of the box" problem-solving strategies. With 37 teams from 18 different schools competing, it was a showcase of talent from kindergarten to 12th grade.

Photo by Eileen Williamson

Courtney Brown, Tyree BoClair and Tyler Poppenwimer, Lakenheath Intermediate School students on team MVP Connect, participate in Destination ImagiNation Saturday at Lakenheath High School. Students competed by showcasing their talents to creatively solve problems.

Participants chose from six different activities focusing on a range of challenges from structural engineering to storytelling. After choosing their activity, teams also participated in an Instant Challenge in which they only had minutes before the event to prepare for their task. Teams also competed in the "fun challenge" where they were given a bag of odds and ends and asked to create a container for the spirit of Destination ImagiNation.

In the ConnecDId competition, Liberty Intermediate School team "MVP Connect" amazed onlookers by amassing 309 pounds of weight onto a wooden structure weighing only 50 grams. The focus of this event was to combine structural engineering, construction, theater arts and teamwork to create a "universal connection" that could be used to instantly create connections between people, nations, objects and/or events. The structure created was to be made completely from wood, with no adhesives or other materials to help bind the connections together. Because the use of adhesives was prohibited, the children used dove tail connections to fit the pieces of wood together. The structure also had to be able to withstand weight.

With only eight minutes to complete their task, LIS fifth graders Courtney Brown, Tyler Poppenwimer and Tyree BoClair depicted an imaginative story about time travel, using props to accentuate their story and all the while, they kept adding additional weight to their structure.

Children at RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall picked up 12 team awards, with the LIS MVP Connect team picking up first place in their division. Now that RAF Lakenheath's two years playing host to Destination ImagiNation are up, next year's tourney will be in Bedford.

Hash brown product recalled

The producers of Lynden Farms Hash Brown Patties have recalled certain lots of hashbrowns, because of the possibility it's contaminated with plastic fragments that can potentially cause injury.

European commissaries have been instructed to remove the affected product from their shelves. Commissary patrons who have purchased the product should return it to the commissary for a full refund. It should not be consumed.

The affected lot will bear the UPC code: 71179 49190, and the first 10 digits of one of these three production codes: 006 OCT 21 02, 006 OCT 23 02 and 006 NOV 03 02.

The product is described as a package of 10 frozen hash brown patties in a shallow cardboard tray, over wrapped with clear cellophane. The UPC code is on the bottom of the tray, and the production code is printed above the "use-by" date on the side panel of the package.

(Courtesy of the Defense Commissary Agency)

Photo by Senior Airman Lynne Neveu

Moving on up

Tech. Sgt Elizabeth Molloy, 48th Component Maintenance Squadron, reacts after receiving her promotion under the Stripes for Exceptional Performers program Monday. Brig. Gen. John T. Brennan, 48th Fighter Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Carl Brown, 48th FW command chief master sergeant, also presented STEP promotions to Master Sgt. Elbert Arnold, 48th Operations Group; Master Sgt. Stanley Knutelski, 48th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; and Tech. Sgt. Darlene Overton, 48th Mission Support Squadron.

Photo by Maj. Francisco G. Hamm

Monique Richardson takes the oath of enlistment while her father, Chief Master Sgt. LeRoy Richardson, 48th Logistics Readiness Squadron, proudly looks on.

Daughter follows proud chief's footsteps

By Maj. Francisco G. Hamm

48th Fighter Wing public affairs

Monique Richardson is like most 20-year-olds, looking for the right path to lead them on a journey of fulfilling and successful life experiences and a sense of purpose. Lucky for her, she had the footsteps of a 25-year Air Force veteran leading her way, which left vivid impressions of travel, honor, service, family and duty.

After two and half years of searching for a purpose, she discovered the "family business" was her path and the Air Force was her destination. Monique was sworn into the Air Force March 4 as her parents, Chief Master Sgt. LeRoy and Linda Richardson, stood proudly by her side during a ceremony at the 48th Logistics Readiness Squadron here.

"I can't think of a better way of life for my daughter," said Chief Richardson, 48th LRS vehicle maintenance flight chief. "I'm ecstatic, but I wanted to make sure it was her choice."

Monique graduated from high school in 2000 while the Richardsons were stationed at Hurlburt Field, Fla., and according to her parents, she hadn't made up her mind yet what she wanted to do. So they asked her if she wanted to come to England.

"Lakenheath was a great place for her to test the waters and see what the Air Force was like," said Richardson, explaining his daughter's interests in the Air Force as a possible career path.

The plan, according to Chief Richardson, was for Monique to make a decision before they received their next assignment from here. After two years and nine months, her timing was on target.

"I wanted to make sure I was ready for the commitment," said the new recruit. "I always knew the Air Force was for me, but I wanted to take my time and make sure."

Growing up as an Air Force brat, family was important to Monique as part of her career choice.

"The best part of the Air Force for me is the family atmosphere. The Air Force is offering me everything I need, including a steady job, a chance to travel and education opportunities," she said.

Monique is now at basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and has already been assigned as a medical administration apprentice. "I really wanted to be in the medical field," she said. After basic training, she'll go to Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, for six weeks of technical school.

Her family and members of the vehicle maintenance flight worked with Monique to choose her next path in life.

"We all wanted the best for her and I was proud to be a part of this," said Lt. Col. Richard Czyzewski, 48th LRS director of operations. "I know Monique personally, so this was very special to see her join our family."

For her dad, the plan worked like a charm.

"She will make one tough future chief," he said

Photo courtesy of the 48th Fighter Wing History Office

50 years of news

On Aug. 13, 1961, construction began on the Berlin Wall. As Cold War tensions mounted, the 48th Fighter Wing's pilots waited on short-notice alert, able to respond within minutes notice using their fully armed F-100s. In addition to standing on alert, the wing's F-100s deployed across Europe, augmenting Air National Guard aircraft serving on rotational alert duties under Operation Stair Step, the largest overseas movement of aircraft since World War II. RAF Lakenheath also served as a rotational base for Strategic Air Command B-47 and B-52 aircraft throughout the Berlin Crisis.

Liberty Warrior

Senior Airman Steven Green
48th Munitions Squadron

Hometown: Torrington, Conn.
Time in service: Three years
Time on station: Two years, six months
Role in mission: Support the fighter squadrons by ensuring the use of mission-ready weapon systems equipment
Hobbies: Traveling, basketball and playing video games
If you could change one thing about the Air Force, what would it be? I wouldn't change anything about just the Air Force, but the military as a whole, and that would be the pay.
What's the most exciting experience you've had in the Air Force? The chance to visit Africa, twice
Who is your role model and why? My Mom – she raised me alone and made me who I am today
What is your greatest achievement? Doing what I am doing now, living how I want to live

Airmen continue to flow into RAF Fairford

By Staff Sgt. Kristina Barrett

457th Air Expeditionary Group public affairs

ROYAL AIR FORCE FAIRFORD, England (USAFENS) – Approximately 400 airmen arrived here March 7, bringing the number deployed to more than 800.

The group, the bulk of which consist of airmen from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., deployed here to support the war on terrorism and any possible future contingency operations.

"I'm glad these airmen are here," said Col. Daniel Charchian, 457th Air Expeditionary Group commander. "Their arrival gives us the ability to do whatever mission we may be called upon to perform."

A majority of the airmen who arrived are maintenance personnel, including flightline and backshop crews. For some, RAF Fairford is their first deployment; for others, coming here is just part of the job.

"The deployment lines both here, and at Minot, are pretty much normal – long," said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Brown, 457th AEW aircraft maintenance superintendent. "It was a good flight. Everyone was ready to go, and everything has gone smoothly so far."

Brown estimates the number of deployments in his career to be "around 20, maybe more."

Most of the airmen coming from Minot have experienced at least one deployment, as a majority of them just came back from deployment in December. But for those who've never deployed before, the chief said the more seasoned airmen have been the voice of experience.

"Our supervisors are really taking care of their airmen," Brown said. "Those who've deployed before guided new airmen through the deployment process, getting paperwork, answering questions and ensuring the airmen were taken care of, personally and professionally."

Airman 1st Class Zoua Vong, also deployed from Minot, is on her second deployment in six months.

"At first we were unsure if we were coming, but we were told weeks ago to be prepared," she said. "It went back and forth until we were told we were coming and it was official – then we had just one day to make the final preparations."

But, although the official word on the deployment was short notice, Vong said she was happy to be here because the weather is much better here than at Minot.

Deployed airmen are slated to be here 179 days, or until the mission is complete – whatever mission they are called upon to perform.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Fisher

Jet propulsion specialist Airman 1st Class Lester Smith inspects safety wiring fuel line on a B-52 Stratofortress Monday. Smith and a contingent from his 5th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., are deployed to RAF Fairford in support of the global war on terrorism and other possible contingency operations.

SGLI cost reduced; coverage remains same

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — The amount airmen pay for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Family Member SGLI will be automatically reduced starting July 1.

Decreased mortality rates allow for the reductions of 1.5 cents per $1,000 of coverage for military people and as much as a 42 percent decrease for spouse coverage. The premium for servicemembers with $250,000 of coverage will decease from $20 per month to $16.25.

"(Veterans Affairs) had a surplus partly because of the low number of claims, and they've decided to pass this surplus on to the servicemember," said Scott Hand, chief of Air Force casualty operations at the Air Force Personnel Center here. "This is a great deal for Air Force people. The price for a little peace of mind has just gone down."

SGLI is the life insurance currently available to all members of the uniformed services. It is purchased by Veterans Affairs from a commercial life insurance company. Members on active duty, active duty for training or inactive duty for training and members of the ready reserve are eligible for insurance through this program. SGLI is available for the member in $10,000 increments up to $250,000.

Servicemembers who carry any amount of coverage are also given $10,000 of coverage for each dependent child at no cost. Those who decline SGLI coverage are not eligible for the dependent child coverage.

Similar to SGLI is the FSGLI, which covers spouses for up to $100,000. Participation in the FSGLI program is voluntary and cannot exceed the amount of coverage the servicemember carries.

People can have coverage restored, increased or reduced by filling out the proper paperwork through the military personnel flight.

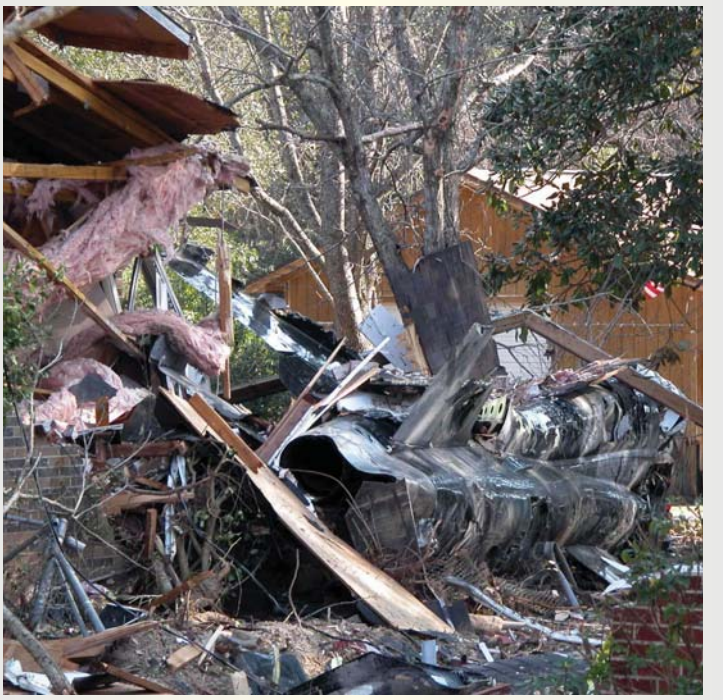
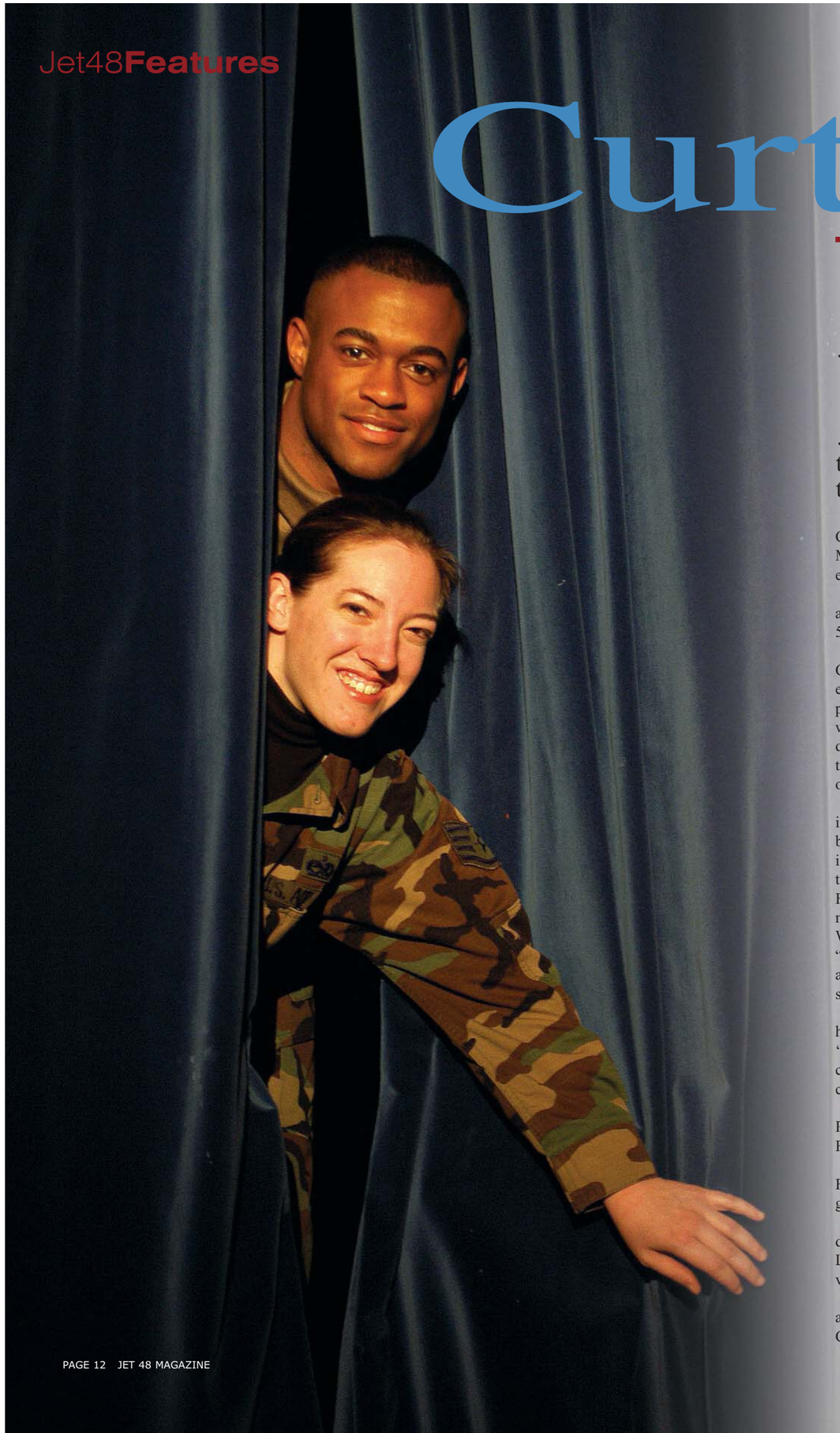


Photo by Lois Walsh

Pilot survives jet crash

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFPN) — An Air Force T-38 Talon aircraft crashed into two houses in nearby Valparaiso, Fla., Saturday. The pilot ejected safely, and no one was injured on the ground. The pilot was on a training mission from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., when the accident occurred. An interim safety board has been established to investigate the cause of the crash.



Curtain call

Two airmen tops in blue

Story and photos by Maj. Francisco G. Hamm
48th Fighter Wing public affairs

He caught the entertainment bug as an 8-year-old, belting out gospel tunes during church choir performances. She caught it as a third grade light flicker volunteer for a class play. Through the years, the flame that represented their commitment for their passion flickered as they waited patiently for the right moment.

Their flames have flared and their time has come. Senior Airman Charles Cook, 48th Security Forces Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Kerri Brooks, 48th Munitions Squadron, have been selected to join the Air Force's premier entertainment group, Tops in Blue.

Both are going to be a part of Air Force history – where more than 1,700 airmen in more than 7,000 shows went before them – to be part of the show's 50th anniversary tour.

"I think I screamed and dropped the phone and jumped around the room," Cook said, describing his initial reaction to a late evening phone call from event organizers he received in January, telling him of his selection to compete in the "Tops" worldwide talent show. "I was definitely excited, even though I knew it was only the first step."

After years of singing in church choirs, karaoke bars and family gatherings, Cook, who arrived to RAF Lakenheath in February, felt the urge to move to the next level. When he saw his first "Tops" show a few years ago, he realized he also saw his opportunity.

"I was blown away," he said. "I thought, 'How neat to serve my country and fulfill my childhood dream of being an entertainer.'"

His former security forces family is very proud, according to Master Sgt. Prince Smith, 47th Security Forces Squadron first sergeant, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

"He has been a model airman and promoted the best of what the Air Force has to offer," said Smith. "He was destined to be a member of this group."

Cook tried several times to try out at base level, but it wasn't in the cards due to last minute deployments. Finally, last year, while stationed at Laughlin AFB, he was able to perform at the base's talent show and sent a video of his performance to the show's organizers.

"I never had a doubt Air Force Entertainment would recognize what an asset he would be," said Helen Sykes, who as Laughlin's Fiesta Community Center assistant director, worked with Cook at the base level. "To see him go from talent show participant to the best-of-the-best is amazing," she said.

After submitting a tape of a talent show performance, Senior Airman Charles Cook, 48th Security Forces Squadron, was selected to sing with Tops in Blue.

For Brooks, her selection to the team was just a matter of time.

Her first contact with Tops in Blue was in 1999. While working a second job as a stagehand for Rapid City, S.D., Rushmore Plaza Civic Center's plays, concerts and musicals, she was hired to work the show, never realizing the journey would change her life.

"It started the spark to want to join this team," she said. At this show, she saw that all the performers were active-duty military and quickly realized, "I could do this."

The following year, Brooks was assigned to Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, and volunteered to work behind the scenes for the group's Christmas show. It was during this show that she received encouragement from both the organizers and cast members to apply for the team.

"They liked my motivation and attitude to do what it took to have a great show," she said.

Although her work center will miss her during her "Tops" tour, they are proud of her.

"She is an outstanding troop and highly deserving of this unique opportunity to serve the Air Force and her country," said Tech. Sgt. Bruce Martineau, 48th MUNS assistant element chief.

Staff Sgt. Kerri Brooks, 48th Munitions Squadron, joins the Tops in Blue team as a stage director.

Brooks, a 1984 graduate of the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts, Muhlenberg, Pa., a state-sponsored summer program for talented performing and technical artists, considers this an opportunity of a lifetime.

"It's very rewarding to be a part of a team that is greater than the sum of its parts," she said. "There is a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from successfully entertaining audiences worldwide as Air Force members."

This selection was particularly rewarding for Brooks. She had one other opportunity to join the team a few years ago but pulled her application and just kept on volunteering.

"I knew I wasn't ready to commit then like I am now," she said.

Knowing that Brooks had volunteered at several "Tops" shows, Tom Edwards, the show's executive director, asked her the one question she had no problem answering now, "Was it worth the wait?"

Her reply, "Yes, yes it was."

For more information, visit www.topsinblue.com.

Running on passion

Airman wins 2002 USAFE male athlete of year

Story and photos by Maj. Francisco G. Hamm

48th Fighter Wing public affairs

What started out as a deterrent from cold weather turned into a lifelong passion for 36-year-old Staff Sgt. Antonio Luna, a 48th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron weapons-loader crew team chief.

Luna was selected as the 2002 U.S. Air Forces in Europe male athlete of the year for his athletic efforts as a long-distance runner representing the 48th Fighter Wing, USAFE and the United States at international cross country and track events.

"This is breath-taking, because it means closure for something I've worked very hard for," said Luna, upon hearing about the recognition.

The news is also a welcomed bonus for the 48th Services Squadron, according to Master Sgt. Lee Cousins, fitness and sports center superintendent.

"Luna's accomplishment is great for us, too, because it helps promote the 48th Fighter Wing and our fitness programs," said Cousins. "He's an amazing athlete."

Running for USAFE-level teams since 1994, Luna's been an integral member of the team and competed in many high-profile meets. He placed first in both the 5K and 10K races at the 2002 USAFE cross country championships, hosted by the 48th FW here in September. Luna also ran in last year's Armed Forces Track and Field championships in Baumholder, Germany, and the U.S. Winter National Cross Country championships in Vancouver, Wash.

In November last year, he competed in the Allied Air Forces North cross country championships in Denmark and placed fourth to help the U.S. team to a first place overall AIRNORTH win. The AIRNORTH sports program includes six countries' air force teams from Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Luna began his passion for running as a deterrent to cold weather during fourth grade in Texas when he would run to school on cold days.

"My brother and I were tired of waiting for the bus when it got cold, so we would run to school," said Luna.

For most people, this is not unusual, except the school was two miles away.

"Running for me was an instant attraction because it separated me from everyone else. It gave me an identity," said Luna.

His normal training schedule includes 70 miles a week, broken down into track workouts, six- to eight-mile runs and one 10- to 12-mile long run.

"I've developed a great passion for running. It's very personal and I have great respect for what it does to me physically, emotionally and mentally," Luna said.

As a weapons loader for the F-15, being in great shape is a plus. His job is just as demanding and grueling. Luna directs a team of three bomb loaders and is directly responsible for their safety and direction.

According to Master Sgt. Chris Lister, 48 AMXS, 492nd Aircraft Maintenance Unit weapons flight chief, Luna puts forth the same high energy toward his work.

"He undoubtedly deserves the award," said Lister. "He has an amazing ability and we support him 100 percent. The man runs continuously and his energy level is extremely high whether he's working or running."

His team was recognized as the weapons load crew of the year for the 492nd AMU and will now compete at the 48th AMXS level.

Luna said he takes pride in sharing his passion with others. In addition to competing, he also helps the fitness center with organizing races and provides advice. He also coaches runners of all abilities.

So, what's next for Luna? He's training for the AIRNORTH Track and Field championships in June at RAF Uxbridge. His sights are also on the Air Force's world-class athlete program. Of course, his biggest challenge he faces here, according to Luna, is the cold weather. But, he's been able to out-pace the weather before.

Discover Britain

By Sal Davidson – Community Relations Adviser

Origin of St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and St. Patrick's day has always had a special meaning for the Irish. Little is written about this patron saint, but it is believed that he did not come from Ireland, but from Western Britain.

At the age of 16 he was carried off by Irish marauders. According to legend, he was kept in captivity either in County Antrim or County Connaught. He was said to have seen visions in which he was urged to escape and, after six years in captivity, he escaped to the northern coast of Gaul (now France.) While in France, he was ordained a priest, possibly by St. Germanus at Auxerre, and returned to Ireland. Sometime around A.D. 431, he was appointed successor to St. Palladius, the first bishop of Ireland.

Legends

The shamrock was originally chosen as the national emblem of Ireland because of the legend that St. Patrick used the plant to illustrate the Doctrine of the Trinity. He plucked a shamrock from the ground and compared the three leaves on one stem to the nature of the Christian God. Most shamrocks, particularly the small-leaf clover, are considered good-luck symbols by the Irish.

Another story associated with St. Patrick was his ability to rid the country of serpents. On one occasion, his effort to rid a serpent was proving difficult, so he built a box for it. The serpent refused to enter the box, saying it was too small. St. Patrick, however, placed the serpent in the box and slammed down the lid and threw it into the sea. These two legends are why St. Patrick is usually depicted with a shamrock and a serpent.

Ireland - the country

Southern Ireland (or Eire) is the more popular place for visitors, but Northern Ireland also has plenty to offer in terms of spectacular scenery and culture. On the rugged North Irish coast is the Giant's Causeway. This hexagonal formation of rocks, according to legend, are the ones used by the giant Finn McCool to cross between Ireland and Scotland.

Armagh, Northern Ireland

The old city of Armagh is the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland. Its two cathedrals, one Protestant and one Roman Catholic, stand on two hills facing each other. The author of Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, lived and worked as a clergyman in Amargh and the city has an original copy of his famous book.

Ulster

Forty-two previous American presidents claim roots in Ulster, including Andrew Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Just up the road is another connection. Gray's Printing Shop houses the printing presses where John Dunlap and James Wilson once worked. In 1757, Dunlap emigrated to America where he founded The Pennsylvania Packet. It was Dunlap who was hired in 1776 to print copies of the newly drafted Declaration of Independence. Wilson was the grandfather of Woodrow Wilson, the 28th president of the United States.

Courtesy photo

Patron saint, St. Patrick

Dublin, Southern Ireland

Dublin is the capital of Eire and lies on the east coast. Phoenix Park, the largest enclosed park in Europe, includes the home of the American ambassador and also the home of the Irish president. It is here where a light constantly burns in one of the top windows to offer a welcome home for all people whose families emigrated from Ireland.

One of the major attractions in Dublin is the Guinness brewery. A local connection with the Guinness family is with Lord Iveagh, who owns much of the land around RAF Lakenheath. Lord Iveagh is a member of the Guinness family.

Parts of Dublin Castle date back to the 13th century, but the main structure was completed in the 16th century and later. The castle lies in the old section of the city and south of the River Liffey. Close to the castle are St. Patrick's Cathedral and Christ Church. Christ Church is the Protestant cathedral founded in 1038 and rebuilt between 1870 to 1877 to the original design. The body of author Jonathan Swift lies in St. Patrick's Cathedral. He was also dean of St. Patrick's.

Tracing ancestors

Many of the people of Ireland emigrated to the United States, and I often get asked how to trace family histories. There are many places to go for help in your search. You will need a few pieces of basic information. Probably the most vital piece is the specific locality (town, village or parish) where your ancestors lived. A search is unlikely to be successful if the only information you have is the county. Useful addresses include: General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 4HF and General Register Office, 8-11 Lombard Street East, Dublin 2.

For more information on living in Britain, look in the British community information public folder, or call Sal Davidson, community relations advisor, at 226-3145, or e-mail sal.davidson@lakenheath.af.mil.

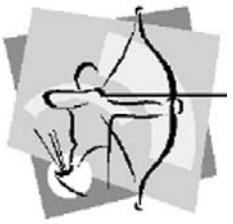
Briefs

Health care council

The 48th Medical Group hosts its quarterly health care council meeting at 3 p.m. Thursday in the 100th Air Refueling Wing conference room Bldg. 562, RAF Mildenhall. The meeting is a forum to discuss various medical topics and issues. The health care council is open to RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall communities and is a required meeting for unit health care monitors.

Archery club meeting

The Liberty Archers Archery Club holds its monthly meeting and archery shoot at 10 a.m. Saturday. The club is located five minutes from base at the Wangford Road turn off on the A1065. All RAF Lakenheath members are welcome to attend.



Guard opportunities

The 109th Airlift Wing, Scotia, N.Y., has traditional Guard vacancies in the following career fields: 1A1X1, 2A5X1, 2A5X3, 2A6X1, 2A6X2, 2A6X4, 2A6X5, 2A6X6, 2A7X1, 2A7X3, 2E1X3, 2E6X3, 2F0X1, 2S0X1, 2T251, 2W0X1, 3E0X1, 3E1X1, 3E2X1, 3E4X1, 3E7X1, 3M0X1, 3P0X1, 4A0X1, 4A1X1, 4A2X1, 4E0X1, 4N0X1, 4T0X1, and 4Y0X1, as well as full-time active-duty opportunities in the 2A6X6 career field. For more information, call Master Sgt. Ryerson at DSN 344-2456 or e-mail Wesley. Ryerson@nyscot.ang.af.mil.

School board forum

The Lakenheath and Mildenhall Community School Board holds its quarterly open forum at 6:30 p.m. March 27 at the RAF Mildenhall Youth Center. Topics to be discussed include school safety patrols, bus monitors and discipline, student absences and parent notifications. Parents, educators and school administrators are encouraged to attend to discuss these issues and any new items of concern for the school community. For more information, visit the Department of Defense Dependents Schools page on the RAF Lakenheath

Office hours change

The 48th Civil Engineer Squadron Customer Service office, Bldg. 1155, is closed 2 to 4:30 p.m. Fridays for scheduled training.

Military tuition assistance

All military personnel using tuition assistance are advised against withdrawing from classes based on the possibility of deployment.

AFAF campaign

The 2003 "Committment to Caring" Air Force Assistance Fund campaign runs through April 7 here. One-hundred percent of contributions goes directly to one of four charities.

Taxi way construction

The south taxi way is under construction for the next 16 weeks. Drivers are advised to follow detour signs and drive with caution.

Bus safety reminder

Parents are encouraged to become involved with school bus safety and discipline. Each child is responsible for his/her own safety and behavior on the bus. As a common courtesy to other school bus riders, students sitting in rows where seats are empty should be willing to move over to the window seat or alternatively, to allow another child to pass in front of them in order to take the adjacent seat. Backpacks should never be left on seats to save them for others or prevent others from sitting where they choose. This is especially important when the bus is close to its maximum capacity. As an added safety measure, elementary school-age children are required to sit in the front area of the bus. Middle school students are encouraged to sit towards the rear of the bus, unless seating has been otherwise designated. Younger students look to the older children to set the example for bus behavior. Consequently, the middle school students will be held more liable for their conduct and sanctions will be assigned accordingly.

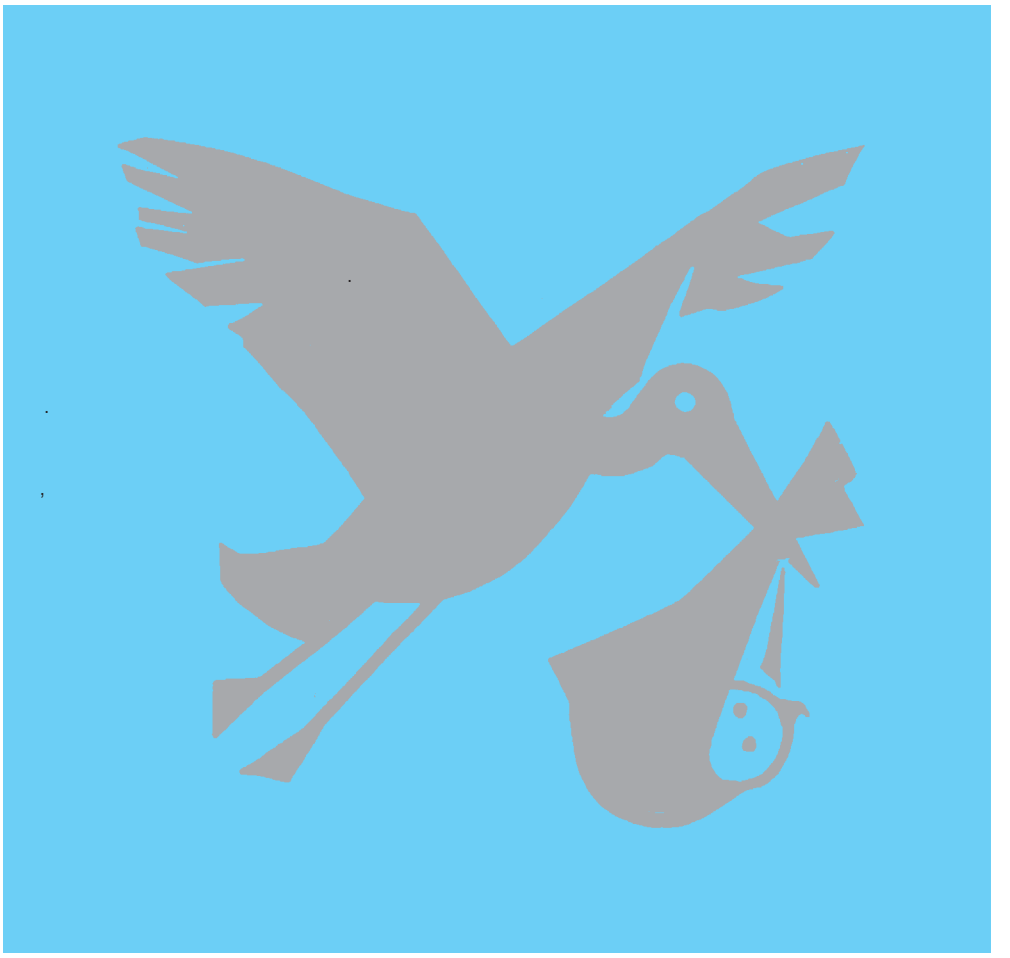


Photo by Maj. Francisco G. Hamm

Paving the way

Guy Belcher (left), Forrest Health District Council countryside assistant, works with Staff Sgt. John Watt, 48th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, on a community project Saturday in Beck Row. Four members from 48th AMXS joined Watt and Belcher on a community volunteer project paving a disabled accessible path in Aspal Close, a local nature reserve.
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MOVIES

RAF Mildenhall 238-2351

Today
6:30 p.m., Two Weeks Notice, PG-13, starring Sandra Bullock and Hugh Grant. George doesn't make a move without Lucy, his chief counsel at Wade Corp. It's not the job that's getting to her. It's George. After five years of calling the shots, on everything from his clothes to his divorce settlements, Lucy is calling it quits. Is it ever too late to say 'I love you'?
9:30 p.m., Cradle 2: The Grave, R, starring DMX, Jet Li and Mark Dacascos. When an international criminal (Dacascos) kidnaps the daughter of gang leader Tony Fait, DMX, as part of a diamond heist, it causes a city's police to engage in an intensive search aided by Fait's gangsters.
Saturday
Noon, The Wild Thornberrys, PG, animated. Eliza and Debbie are two sisters who don't always get along. But their relationship is put to the test when Debbie's life is in danger, and Eliza might have to give up her power to talk to animals.
2:30 p.m., Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, PG-13, starring Elijah Wood and Sean Astin. The second in the Tolkien trilogy. Frodo the hobbit, braves terrible dangers in an attempt to have the evil ring destroyed.
6:30 p.m., Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, PG-13
10:00 p.m., Cradle 2: The Grave, R
Sunday
Noon, The Wild Thornberrys, PG

2:30 p.m., Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, PG-13
6:30 p.m., Two Weeks Notice, PG-13
Monday
6:30 p.m., Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, PG-13
Tuesday
6:30 p.m., Two Weeks Notice, PG-13
Wednesday
6:30 p.m., Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, PG-13
Thursday
6:30 p.m., Cradle 2: The Grave, R

Survivor benefit plan

When an insured military person's retirement pay stops, the Survivor Benefit Plan will pay benefits to eligible survivors month for life. An eligible widowed spouse is assured of a steady source of income for life. A widow's SBP benefits can never run out. Prior to retiring, military members have a chance to enroll.

Events

Homeschool catalog fair

The S.A.F.E. at home homeschool support group hosts a free catalog fair from 1 to 6 p.m. March 22 at the Bob Hope Community Center, RAF Mildenhall. Educators, day-care providers and parents will be offered catalogs from 200 different educational companies plus free history atlases while supplies last.

Art show

Lakenheath Elementary School holds Rocky's Second Art Extravaganza 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday in the school cafeteria. For more information, e-mail michelle_ruksc @eu.od.edodea.edu.

St. Patrick's Day Party

The RAF Lakenheath Community Center hosts a St. Patrick's Day family party from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday.

Classes

OU summer registration

Registration has started for the University of Oklahoma's summer semester at www.enroll.ou.edu. Graduate courses in the Human Relations program, International Relations or Teacher Education are still available.

Family support center classes

The family support center offers the following classes this week:

Monday
8 a.m. – Veterans Affairs community briefing (RAF Mildenhall theatre)
11 a.m. – Mandatory pre-separation briefing
Tuesday
Noon – Heart's Apart luncheon
Wednesday
9:30 a.m. – Questions and answers about living in Britain (held at Beri Tree's coffee-shop)
10 a.m. – Sponsor training
3 p.m. – Pet scoop
6 p.m. – Bereavement support group
7 p.m. – Spouse pre-deployment briefing
Thursday
8 a.m. – Married pre-deployment briefing
10:30 a.m. – Singles pre-deployment briefing
2 p.m. – U.K. home buying
Friday
9 a.m. – Special delivery
Saturday
9 a.m. – Marriage enrichment program

Youth

Scholarships

❒ The Community Scholarship Association has scholarships available for high school seniors who will enter college or vocational school next year. Students must be dependents of a military or civilian employee at RAF Lakenheath, RAF Mildenhall or RAF Feltwell. Applications can be picked up from Diane Howder, Lakenheath High School senior class counselor, and are due by March 21. For more information, call Howder at 226-5564.

❒ European Stars and Stripes offers three $1,000 scholarships to Department of Defense Dependents School high school seniors who will major in journalism or mass communications at a four-year college. The deadline is April 4. Applications are available online at www.stripes.com.