Wing Tips

108th Wing - New Jersey Air National Guard

November 2010
Volume 11, Issue 9

Commander's Column

Flu season is here once again

By Col. Sandra Long, 108th Medical Group commander

Well, here we are again – fall and flu (influenza) season.

But this year there is good news: only one flu vaccine is necessary, as opposed to the two vaccines all 108th Wing personnel received last year. This years' flu vaccine contains constituents of the H1N1 virus and the regular flu vaccine. The same criteria apply this year of using two different types of vaccines, which include the injectable and the intranasal flu mist. Those that are more than 50 years of age will receive the injection, and those under 50 years of age will receive the inhaled flu mist.

As noted from an ANG/SGPH article, Air Force Maj. James Coker, the chief of the Air Surgeon's Public Health and Prevention branch, said, "Every year scientists select the three influenza virus strains that research feels will pose the most common threat. This year scientists used an influenza H3N2 virus, an influenza B virus, and the 2009 H1N1 virus that caused illness last season to form a Travalent Inactivated Vaccine, which they feel will offer personnel the greatest amount of protection from the influenza types that scientific evidence shows will be the greatest threat during the 2010-2011 influenza season."

The flu virus is passed from person to other people by exposure to infected droplets by coughing or sneezing, which can be inhaled, or can contaminate hands or surfaces. Individuals start spreading the virus a day before they develop symptoms.

Here are some helpful hints to avoid getting the flu and transmitting it to others:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. You also can use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever -- 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius - or signs of a fever without the use of a fever-reducing medicine such as acetaminophen.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

Symptoms of the flu are: fever, cough, headache, muscle and joint pain, sore throat and runny nose, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Individuals should seek medical care if they experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or if a fever continues for more than three days.

Basic care for treating the flu is: rest, drink plenty of fluids and use a pain reliever for aches.

Those who receive the influenza vaccination begin to develop antibodies sufficient to protect them from the influenza infection within two weeks of vaccination. This protection generally lasts six to nine months and sometimes longer. The peak months of flu activity is generally from December through March in the United States. Nine out of 10 healthy people who get the shot won't get the flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

So...Prevention is still the best medicine. Please come to the 87th clinic during the 108th Wing preventive health assessment hours and get your flu immunization!

Any questions, feel free to call us at the clinic or stop by and see us.

Here's to a healthy fall and holiday season!

On the Cover

Don't move!!.... Airman 1st Class John Beattes, a security forces personnel from the 108th Wing stands watch during a search of a suspicious person during a training scenario at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., during the October 2010 drill weekend. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing Public Affairs Office

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Odds & Ends...

If you are a Vet, you eat free

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bar will thank American veterans again this year with a complimentary meal on Nov. 11, Veterans Day. A special selection of entrees will be available for their special guests at all Applebee's restaurants throughout the United States.

Last year, the restaurant initiated this program and served more than one million free meals to current and former members of the military.

Due to the popularity of last year's event, New Jersey Applebee's will open one hour earlier for lunch starting at 10 a.m. and continue serving dinner until midnight or later in order to accommodate more of our deserving military.

All U.S. veterans and active duty personnel with proof of current or former military service can choose one complimentary entrée from this selection of favorites. Proof of service includes the following: U.S. Uniform Services Identification Card, U.S. Uniform Services Retired Identification Card, Current Leave and Earnings Statement, Veterans Organization Card, photograph in uniform or wearing uniform, DD214, Citation or Commendation.

To locate the Applebee's restaurant nearest you or for more information, visit www.applebees.com.

Saturday Afternoon at the Movies

The 108th Wing will be celebrating National Native American Indian Month during November's drill weekend.

As part of the celebration, the movie "True Whispers - The Story of the Navajo Code Talkers" will be played at the Wing conference room in Bld. 3327 at noon on Saturday, Nov. 11. Bring your popcorn!!!!!

On the Calendar

November

Nov. 6-7	UTA
Nov. 7	Daylight Savings Time ends
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day
Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day

December

Dec. 1	Hanukkah
Dec. 7	Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
Dec. 11-12	UTA
Dec. 21	Winter begins
Dec. 25	Christmas

January 2011

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 17	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan. 8-9	UTA

NJ Devils discounted tickets for vets

The New Jersey Devils hockey team is offering discounted-priced tickets to all military personnel for Wednesday, Nov. 10 game against the Buffalo Sabres in honor of Veteran's Day.

Any military personnel may purchase a ticket to the game along with a $10 food and beverage card for only $20 by going online to www.newjerseydevils.com/veteransday and entering the special code: DEVILS.

In addition, you may purchase tickets at the Prudential Center box office on day of the game by showing your military ID.

Tickets are based on availability.

If you have any questions, call Samantha Davis, New Jersey Devils representative, at 973-757-6168.

Vietnam Memorial ceremony set

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation will host a Veterans Day Ceremony on Nov. 11, at 11 a.m. The N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial is located on the grounds of the PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, N.J.

Air Force Col. Colonel Gina M. Grosso, commander of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and the 87th Air Base Wing will be the keynote speaker.

The Memorial will induct three veterans into the "In Memory" Program, which honors those who served in Vietnam and returned home only to die as a result of their tour, but whose names are not on the Memorial.

The three inductees are:

Arthur S. Bialoskurski, U.S. Army, from Cherry Hill, N.J., who died on July 25, 2007

Wilbur S. Hall, U.S. Army, from Union, N.J., who died on August 31, 2007

Joseph A. Krisanits, U.S. Army, from Elizabeth, N.J., who died on January 4, 2010

As part of the ceremony, family members will say a few words about their loved one and light a candle in their memory.

Church honoring military

Union Baptist Church of Trenton will recognize the dedicated service of our armed forces in a special worship service on Nov. 14 at 11 a.m. The congregation will show its appreciation by saluting past and present members of the military and their families during its "Armed Forces Appreciation Day." The church is located at 301 Pennington Avenue.

Persons who have served or are currently in the military or have a spouse, fiancé or children who are currently serving and would like to attend this service should contact the church office with your name and daytime phone number at 609-392-2245 ext. 3 by Nov. 10.

Driving Safely in Winter Weather

From the 108th Safety Office

The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents. Many accidents could be avoided if drivers took the time to learn and practice the following tips for driving safely during snow and icy conditions.

Perhaps the deadliest danger of all is "***black ice***." Black ice is ice which forms on a roadway, usually due to snow melting and re-freezing. Since it is almost invisible, drivers fail to recognize black ice conditions and may drive at normal speeds - often resulting in very serious accidents. Always be alert to the possibility of ***black ice*** when temperatures are near or below freezing. Pavement that looks dry but appears darker in color and is dull-looking, should alert you to the presence of black ice.

Failure to allow you enough time to stop is a major cause of winter driving accidents. During slippery conditions stopping distances can triple. Driving at a slower speed; anticipating stops at traffic lights and intersections; and applying brakes sooner than normal will help ensure an accident-free stop. When braking, brake carefully with short, rapid application of the brakes. Always allow plenty of extra space between you and other vehicles to minimize the need for quick stops.

Acceleration, turning, and passing also present dangers during winter. Accelerate slowly to avoid loss of traction and subsequent loss of control. Turn slowly, with caution, to avoid sliding into a stationary object or the path of an oncoming vehicle. Avoid sudden movements. Pass with care since passing lanes are not maintained as well as driving lanes. Again, leave extra space between yourself and other vehicles so there is room to maneuver in case something goes wrong. During a skid, steer cautiously in the direction you want the car to go.

Here are some other tips you should remember to ensure driving safely in the winter:

- Always use your seatbelt.
- Turn on your headlights during adverse weather conditions. Overcast skies and falling snow limit visibility. It is important to see and be seen.
- Like all the signs say, bridges and overpasses freeze before the roadway. Use extra caution on these.
- Remember that driving in winter weather conditions causes physical and mental fatigue and reduces reaction times. Get plenty of rest and adequate nutrition. Don't drive while you're sleepy or on medication that causes drowsiness.
- Prepare your vehicle well ahead of time. Check fluid levels, tire pressure, lights, and the battery. Have a mechanic give your vehicle a winter check-up and make any necessary repairs.
- Stock an emergency kit containing heavy clothes and a blanket, traction material such as sand or kitty litter, tire chains, a small shovel, first aid kit, flashlight, jumper cables, and a bright cloth to use as a flag.

In addition to these vehicle safety tips, vehicle winterization is also a critical aspect of winter driving. The 108th Wing vehicle maintenance shop states that cars need attention. Period! This is especially true when you live in an area that goes through extreme temperature or weather changes. The folks at Advance Auto Parts were nice enough to send over this list of winter car prep tips for Dumb Little Man (internet webpage) readers.

One should stop taking their car for granted and give this a quick read. If anything, ask yourself when was the last time you checked these items? The last thing one needs is to get stranded on the highway with their family during the middle of winter.

- **Inspect your antifreeze** while your engine is cold by using a tester to check the mixture for its freeze point. A 50/50 ratio means 50 percent distilled water and 50 percent antifreeze, which is sufficient in most climates, except in extreme cold.
- **Have your charging system checked** for free at any Advance Auto Parts store. Cold weather starts

See **Winterization** on page 6

Safety Tips

Feature Story

Rich traditions are celebrated through foods, music, and poems during Hispanic Heritage Month

Staff Sgt. Janice Rivera, a knowledge operations management non-commissioned officer at the 108th Mission Support Group, reads a poem by Julia de Burgos, "Te Quiero," during the Hispanic Heritage Month ceremony held at the 108th Operations conference room here at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Oct. 2. Julia de Burgos, a renowned Puerto Rican poet, was the central theme of the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration held here. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Adrian R. Rowan, 108th Wing Public Affairs.

Story by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing Public Affairs Office

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. -- With flamenco music playing in the background and poems by Julia de Burgos read in Spanish by several Airmen, the 108th Wing celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month Oct. 2 here.

Hispanic Heritage Month is observed from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 and it recognizes the many contributions of Hispanic Americans to the United States, and to celebrate the Hispanic culture and rich heritage. The Department of Defense recognizes this program and encourages its service members to actively participate in such celebratory programs.

This year, a commemoration to Julia de Burgos was the theme for celebrating the many Hispanic Airmen of the 108th Wing. Julia de Burgos, a renowned Puerto Rican poet, is considered by many as one of the greatest poets in Latin America, and was a passionate civil-rights advocate for women and African/Afro-Caribbean writers. In addition, a retired 108th Wing Airmen, Master Sgt. Rafael Jimenez, is a direct descendent of de Burgos and was present during the celebration of his aunt's great accomplishments.

"The Hispanic Heritage Month program was great," said Staff Sgt. Janice Rivera, the knowledge operation management non-commissioned officer for the 108th Wing here and a proud Hispanic of Puerto Rican heritage. "It was such a wonderful opportunity for many to be aware of such a diverse culture. The program did focus on Julia de Burgos but it also showed how her words impacted many throughout history, and even today. Many who read from her poems were not Puerto Rican, but it showed that anyone of from any nationality can come together and enjoy a bit of culture and history, and at the same time learn something new."

"I was glad to be able to assist with the program and learn about Julia de Burgos," said Rivera, currently a resident of Camden, N.J., and one of the several Airmen who read de Burgo's poem in both Spanish and English.

Jimenez spoke of his aunt's accomplishments and the pride his aunt felt to be Puerto Rican and Hispanic. Although never having met his aunt, he felt he knew her well by the many poems she wrote and the many stories he heard from friends and family, said Jimenez.

Also in attendance was Carmen D. Lucca, a writer and poet of Puerto Rican descent and an admirer of de Burgo's artistic work. She offered a reading of de Burgo's poems and spoke briefly of her appreciation and admiration to the life of this great Hispanic poet.

For their participation in the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, Lucca and Jimenez were each presented with a certificate of appreciation from Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, 108th Wing commander, on behalf of the 108th Wing.

To cap the event, the Airmen and honor guests were treated to some of the many ethnic foods enjoyed by Hispanic people. Such foods consisted of rice and beans, empanadas, potato salad, fried sweet plantains, Spanish chicken stew, flan, and tropical fruit drinks.

"To be Puerto Rican or of Hispanic heritage is such an honor, and I am proud to be part of such a great culture that values tradition and family," said Rivera.

Rivera has seen the many challenges Hispanics have had to overcome throughout history and still today in modern times. Though she is Latin American, she knows the stories of her ancestors and has seen the land that her grandparents lived and worked on for many years before coming to New York, said Rivera.

"I feel it's important to maintain that sense of cultural awareness so that I can appreciate all the struggles my family had to overcome," said Rivera.

And that is what hopefully Hispanic Heritage Month was able to do for the rest of the 108th Wing.

Winterization from page 4

make the vehicle battery work much harder and getting stranded in the cold is no fun!

- **Change your oil and oil filter**. Clean, high quality engine oil goes a long way in protecting the motor in cold start situations. Use the oil recommended by the vehicle manufacturer.
- **Visually inspect all lights**; marker bulbs, tail lights, third level brake lights, especially headlights and driving lights. Daylight savings time requires bulbs to work longer hours.
- **Tire tread condition**; check it yourself, or have it checked. Winter driving requires good traction in snow and ice. Quality tire tread sheds the snow, ice and road grime more quickly, providing better traction for improved safety. Check your tire pressure regularly, especially in colder temperatures. Follow the recommended PSI found on the driver's side door post for maximum traction.
- **Visibility is key to your safety**; make sure that your wiper blades are in top condition, to fully clear your windshield, and back window if the vehicle is equipped with one. Road salt and slush can jeopardize visibility. Use washer fluid containing deicer and Rain-X Treatment on windows to avoid the chiseling of ice early in the morning.
- **Inspect your engine's belts and hoses**. Cracked, frayed or worn out rubber won't stand up to extreme temperature. Don't get stranded on your next trip because of a $10 belt or hose!
- **Replace the Cabin Air Filter** if the vehicle is equipped. Outside contaminants from fall and summer driving are stranded in the cabin air filter and running the heater on "high" in the extreme cold only sends the microparticles deeper into the vehicle.
- **Protect your vehicle's paint**. Rain, snow and salt are extremely tough on paint. A tough coating of quality car wax will add another barrier in-between road grime and your vehicle's paint.
- Last but not least, **prepare a roadside emergency kit** including a flashlight with fresh batteries, a blanket, food bars, water bottles, cell phone, jumper cables, flares, HELP sign, and a first aid kit.

BONUS TIP. There's a new threat out there. Brine. You've seen the white salt lines on the road before the snow. That's Brine, concentrated salt to melt the snow and ice. It also rusts your brake lines and could cause loss of brakes. After the snow season hose down the underside of your vehicle and be sure to get the hard-to-reach brake and fuel lines running under the floorboards.

So really it's not that tough. Most of these things you can easily take care of in your garage or driveway.

The point is TO DO THEM!

It wasn't supposed to be like this

By Lt. Col. Jonathan Tamblyn, 54th Air Refueling Squadron Commander

ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. -- After parking the Air Force staff car beside the yard, the chaplain, the nurse and I got out of the car and took a moment to look over each other's service dress. We had been steeling ourselves for this moment most of the afternoon.

As a death notification team, it was our job to inform a newly bereaved father about the tragic death of his Air Force son.

In a very rare Air Force Personnel Center decision, the signed letter I would read to the father stated the suspected cause of death was suicide.

Many of you can't read the word "suicide" without feeling the pangs of a tragic loss you have already experienced in your life due to someone else's decision to prematurely end his or her own life. Although the pain of suicide is staggering, the risk of suicide may be more pervasive than previously thought.

In a 2008 study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, it was found that "nearly 8.3 million adults (age 18 and older) in the U.S. had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year."

The study also showed that 2.3 million adult Americans made a suicide plan within the past year and that 1.1 million adults actually attempted suicide within the past year."

Hidden within these staggering statistics, you find too many servicemembers who have also been suicidal.

Lately, military suicides have been on the rise.

The Houston Chronicle did an analysis and found suicides of "Texans younger than 35 who served in the military jumped from 47 in 2006 to 66 in 2009 -- an increase of 40 percent."

As sobering as the statistics can be, there are some things we can do to help reduce the risk of losing an Airman, coworker, friend or family member to suicide.

The first thing I recommend is to maintain connections with each other and remain involved in one another's lives. Depression, substance abuse and emotional pain are indicators that can be observed when people know and observe one another. These can be signs of potential trouble, and getting an individual to talk about his or her situation often provides the release needed to turn around feelings about life.

Don't be afraid to refer people in trouble to trained professionals.

There may be no other profession which provides its members with so much help for dealing with life's problems than the U.S. military. Don't be afraid to refer anyone to the chaplain, Airman and family readiness center or mental health when you suspect there may be a need.

I also suggest continued efforts to educate and coach Airmen in life-disciplines that can prevent some key, unnecessary stressors. Disciplines like responsible financial management, educated parenting techniques and maintaining healthy relationships can actually prevent a person from making it to the breaking point in life when things seem to be spinning out of control.

See **Prevention** on page 8

So long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, goodbye

By Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison, Wing Tips staff

When November comes to a close, I start a new phase of my life – orders take me into the Retired Reserve. After 28 years in the military – active duty Army, Pennsylvania Army National Guard and New Jersey Air National Guard – I am changing my daily wear of camouflage to … what I want to wear!

As is normal, when it comes to the end of one part of your life, you sit back and reminisce about the past. I am leaving the military the same season I started – Thanksgiving. After 3 ½ months in Delayed Entry, I went to the MEPS station in Harrisburg, Pa., for another swearing in and my flight to Fort Jackson, S.C. In a possible omen in how my life in the military was to be – the group of five newly sworn in soldiers found themselves on a bus to Fort Jackson because someone forgot to buy plane tickets and at Thanksgiving time there was no way last minute tickets were available.

So we hopped on the Greyhound bus and took a meal ticket meant to pay for meals for all five of us at the stops along the way. At the first stop, we ordered meals at the Burger King, handed them the meal ticket and found out that the ticket only paid for one meal not five. I think the same person who forgot to buy plane tickets filled out the meal ticket.

Twenty or so hours later we arrived at Fort Jackson, exhausted, hungry and wary of this new adventure. Then, came the call for chow. As I entered the chow hall, drill sergeant wanna-bes started screaming at me because I wasn't standing in line properly. I quickly learned how to stand at parade rest, snap to attention, take a step, come back to attention, then snap to parade rest – and repeat those movements again and again until I got to the front of the line. With VERY aching arms!!! My first meal was Thanksgiving dinner; we had landed there on Thanksgiving Day and I sat there and had the 1982 Army version of a Pilgrim's feast.

Many memories will stay with me through the years of my retirement. I have met some great people, some famous, some not so famous. While stationed at Fort Devens, Mass., I met the Sergeant Major of the Army (1987-1991), Command Sgt. Maj. Julius W. Gates. I went along to do a story for

See **Harbison** on page 8

National Native American Indian Month

In observance of National Native American Indian Month, the 108th Wing will be recognizing the contributions and achievements of the **Navajo Code Talkers** with the video "**True Whispers**". This 60 minute film will run continuously starting at 12 p.m. on Nov. 11 in the Wing Conference Room.

True Whispers is the personal and heartfelt story of the Navajo Code Talkers. Young Navajo men were recruited from government boarding schools to serve in the Marines Corp during World War II. From 1942 to 1945, they devised an unbreakable code in their native language and transmitted vital messages to military forces in the Pacific.

True Whispers is a moving testament to these forgotten heroes and their wartime contributions. The film combines breathtaking images of the Navajo reservation with original music, graphic World War II footage, archival photographs, historical re-enactments and interviews with Navajo historians and leaders of the Navajo Nation.

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the post newspaper when he visited an engineer company working with their equipment in a big sandpit.

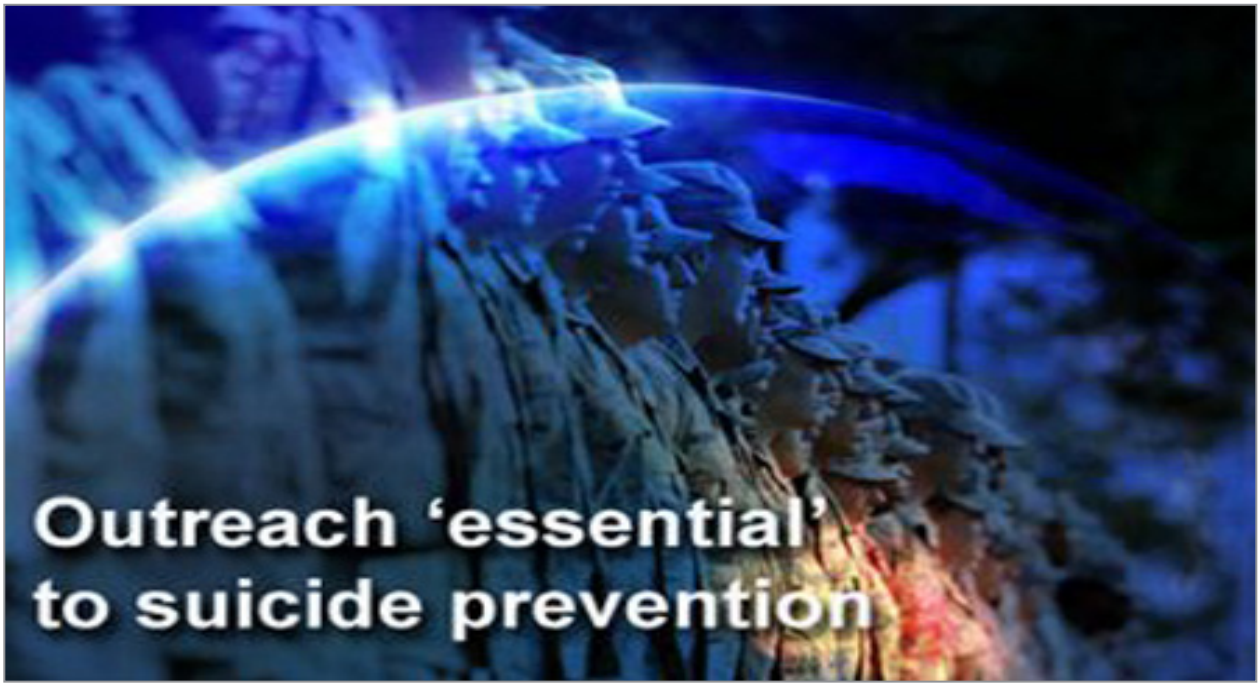
These soldiers, staff sergeant and below were overwhelmed and nervous. I watched, interested, as he had told the senior enlisted to stand about 20 yards away and then had these young men take off their helmets and relax as he asked them about their military experiences – the pluses and minuses. It was a lesson that I have carried with me: no matter how important the system says you are, you should be able to take the time to talk to those the world may consider less important than you. In my book, those leaders who didn't, weren't.

I have served in a variety of jobs – radio teletype operator, public affairs specialist, awards clerk, unit clerk, medical supply, tool and parts attendant and data analysis. I was lucky enough to be trained on how to use a PC in 1988; of course the floppy disks were 5.25 inches and held a miniscule amount of data compared to the 8 gig thumb drives I carry with me now!

My favorite job has been working in public affairs. I get to meet many people, learn about a lot of things, see different places, and get paid for it at the same time. The past 11 years which have been spent in the public affairs office have given me many wonderful memories that I carry in my mind and heart. I have to give a special shout out to the 108th Civil Engineers. They opened their doors to me and took me to Florida and Croatia.

My plans for the upcoming years include more time to spend with my family, from parents to grandchildren; traveling with my soon-to-be retired husband; doing some more volunteer work with Delran First United Methodist Church and my favorite charity, Home Front Hearts; and of course, creating quilts. One quilt in the planning stage is one made from military uniforms – a good use for them since I certainly will not be wearing them!

As I sit at the table this year, many Thanksgivings later – four spent in Geilenkirchen, Germany, while I was stationed there – I will be remembering that one 28 years ago and among the things I will be saying my thanks for – the men and women with whom I have served and those who continue to serve.



Prevention from page 6

Finally, never be afraid to ask people showing signs of trouble whether or not they want to harm themselves. I know that making the decision to ask this question can be difficult, and asking it can feel awkward, but research has shown asking doesn't plant the idea in an individual's mind. It actually communicates concern and a connection that might stop the suicide from happening.

Perhaps asking that tough question could have prevented my very difficult talk with this bereaved father.

As we approached the father, he was mowing his grass. I almost had to stand in front of the riding mower before he noticed us. I'm sure the parent of an Airman, Soldier, Sailor or Marine dreads the day he or she makes eye contact with a solemn commander and chaplain in dress uniform in an unscheduled meeting at his or her home.

Today, this father elected to stay outside and lean against the mower while I informed him about his son's untimely death. Composed and shocked, the father asked us questions and told us he was aware of his son's troubled state of mind. He went on to tell us he always understood news of his son's death was possible, because of dangers associated with military service, "but it wasn't supposed to be like this."

It never is. It never should be.