

Laughlin members perform in play downtown, page 11

# Border Eagle

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Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

April 16, 2004

## Civilian personnel chief earns DoD award

By Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill  
Public affairs

Esther Gomez, Laughlin's chief of civilian personnel, recently earned a Department of Defense-level award for work she did this past year in human resource management.

Mrs. Gomez earned the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives Outstanding Department of Defense Hispanic Civilian Award. The award recognizes a civilian Hispanic employee from each of the armed services for their leadership and innovativeness that increases the effectiveness of their organization's overall mission.

Mrs. Gomez, along with the  
See **Award**, page 4



Courtesy photo

### You're all ears...

Two of Laughlin's smallest members hitch a ride with a furry friend during the base's Easter Parade Saturday. The parade was followed by an egg hunt at the Fiesta Center.

## Laughlin goes green; celebrates Arbor Day

By Airman 1st Class  
Olufemi Owolabi  
Staff writer

Laughlin will celebrate Earth and Arbor Day next week to show honor and appreciation for the importance of environmental resources to human life.

The 47th Mission Support Group and Civil Engineer Squadron here will sponsor activities and events at the Fiesta Center from Monday to April 23 for the observance.

Activities will include the reading of an Arbor Day proclamation, tree planting, environmental displays, and food and games.

"This is an Air Force tradition used every year to recognize the importance of preservation of natural re-

sources," said 2nd Lt. Letha Manning, a 47th CES environmental flight engineer. "Laughlin plays a vital role in this aspect and will be presented with ...Tree City USA Growth Award."

Furthermore, she said the wing vice commander, Col. Keith Traster, or his delegate, will read the Tree City proclamation at the Fiesta Center on Thursday.

The Tree City USA Growth Award, which is provided by the National Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters, recognizes environmental improvement and encourages higher levels of tree care throughout America. This award is designed not only to recognize achievement, but also to communicate new ideas and to help

improve community tree care.

"There will be recycled artwork on display at the Fiesta Center, and people will learn more about energy and utility conservation, pollution prevention, and Laughlin cultural and natural resources," said Dave Leighton, a recreation specialist at the Fiesta Center.

Also, people will leave from the Fiesta Center on buses for the Nature Trail walk, which will be guided by the park services, Tuesday at 4 p.m.

"This is a good thing because it allows people to know what (nature offers) in this geographical area," Mr. Leighton said.

On Thursday, an Earth and Arbor Day celebration and Family Night

See **Arbor**, page 8

## Newslines

### Officer promotion selections

Three Laughlin Reserve captains have been selected for promotion to major.

Congratulations to Thomas Bernard, Darran Britton and Brian O'Neal, all from the 96th Flying Training Squadron.

The officers were selected during the Fiscal Year 2005 Air Force Reserve line and health professions board.

### Blood drive

The South Texas Blood and Tissue Bank will be holding a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. today at the Fiesta Center. There will be cookies and T-shirts for all donors.

### OSC membership bingo

The Laughlin Officer Spouses Club offers a "Membership Appreciation Bingo" night at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Club XL.

The social is free to all members. A fee of \$16 can be paid to activate membership. Members with last names starting with A-M can R.S.V.P. at 298-3529 and members with last names starting with N-Z can R.S.V.P. at 298-7950.

On-site childcare is available from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Members must R.S.V.P. with the child's name and age to Trasi Mullin at 734-5076 by Sunday.

Call 734-5076 for more details.

### Deployment stats

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Deployed:             | 26 |
| Returning in 30 days: | 13 |
| Deploying in 30 days: | 2  |

### Mission status

(As of Tuesday)

Days behind or ahead:

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| T-37, -8.00 | T-1, 0.74  |
| T-38, -5.48 | T-6, -4.62 |

Mission capable rate:

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| T-37, 90.3% | T-1, 71.8% |
| T-38, 73.9% | T-6, 86.2% |

# Laughlin major contributor in terror war



## Commander's Corner

By Col. Keith Traster  
47th Flying Training Wing vice commander

For those of you who read Colonel Woodward's article from Pakistan last week, I wanted to take some time to talk about Team XL's support to the global war on terrorism.

As Colonel Woodward pointed out last week, there are many, many thousands of dedicated people working to win the war on terrorism in Pakistan and Afghanistan. From dedicated professionals like our own Lt. Col. Rob Seaberg and Col. Dan Woodward to hundreds of personnel from our sister services, the direct contributions of America's

Airmen, soldiers and sailors is quite evident.

I would like to point out the sometimes direct, but often times indirect, support provided by the professionals here at Laughlin's Team XL that makes America's success overseas possible. A great example of this is all the personnel who helped Colonel Woodward get ready for his deployment. From 1st. Lt. Lindsay Logsdon, the wing staff's unit deployment monitor, helping him get all the equipment needed, his passport and visa ready and his travel arrangements made to the CATM team that got him qualified in both the M-9 and M-16.

Then there are Doctor Hardin's medical professionals who were instrumental in getting the colonel's medical clearance to go overseas. The wing comptroller's office did their part by getting his financial records ready to go and finally, our team of professionals in transportation made sure he arrived at the airport in time to catch his flight.

Yes, it was a true team effort, as it is every time a member of Team XL deploys into harms way. Each and every member of Team XL is key to mission success.

Another group of team members who also help support mission accomplishment but are not so visible but, just as important, are those personnel supporting our deployers in other ways. From personnel in the deployed troop's work areas who "pick up the load" when their shop goes down a worker due to that troop's absence to the spouses, children and friends at home who chip in to take care of the "homefront," everyone is involved in some way.

This group also includes the other "support" agencies, from Chaplain Lim's team providing the "Deployed Spouses Dinners" to give the families of our deployed personnel a good meal and a break from the pressures of taking care of the family, to the support

See **Support**, page 3

## Door to opportunity always labeled 'push'

By Chief Master Sgt.  
Doug Hodge  
65th Air Base Wing command  
chief

LAJES FIELD, Azores – Finance guru Tom Peters was right when he said, "If a window of opportunity appears, don't pull down the shade."

For those of us serving in the Air Force, the sun shines brightly through a very large window. It overlooks many different prospects for change, promotion and advancement. From education to recognition, the door to opportunity is always labeled 'push.'

I've been fortunate to see

many opportunities over the course my own career. I finished my Community College of the Air Force degree. I branched out from my career field and held positions in the professional military education field, including commandant of an NCO Academy.

Those same opportunities are available to you without discrimination. How close are you to a CCAF associate's degree? You may be closer than you think, and spring graduation is just around the corner.

No one can deny the military is the best deal for getting a bachelor's degree. With 100 percent tuition assistance and classes that flex around your schedule, the education office and the schools offering advanced degree programs are ready to serve.

Meanwhile, training opportunities abound. Have you attended the First-Term Airman Center class? Have you gotten Airman Leadership School out of the way? When are you

See **Push**, page 3

## Border Eagle

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### Deadlines, Advertising

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Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Submissions can be e-mailed to: [timothy.stein@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:timothy.stein@laughlin.af.mil) or [sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil).

# CUT slogan reflects military service

By Col. Bob Staib  
1st Expeditionary Red Horse  
Group commander

SOUTHWEST ASIA – When the 819th Red Horse Squadron was reactivated in August 1997, the unit adopted the squadron motto: Unity, Teamwork, Commitment. Shortly after assuming command, I realized this motto had drifted away. So I brought it back, shuffled the deck and turned the words around to Commitment, Unity, Teamwork. In effect, I took the first letter of each word and added a slogan ... “a CUT above.”

I must admit this initially was just a catchy way to reflect our squadron motto and make it easier to remember. However, after further reflection on these three words, I realized that

commitment, unity and teamwork really form the building blocks of success for our Air Force.

COMMITMENT means being dedicated to a cause. In the armed forces, it is called service to our country and dedication to the cause of freedom. The success of any team or unit requires the individual commitment of its members. If the individuals are not committed, then the team has little chance for success.

Commitment requires us to adhere to our Air Force core values of Integrity, Service Before Self and Excellence In All We Do. I have a motivational art picture on my office wall with the word “commitment” which is clearly illustrated by the accompanying quote from our president after the fateful day on Sept. 11, 2001: “We

will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; we will not fail.”

Commitment is the foundation of success, but without bringing that commitment together in unity, we'll just have a chaotic bunch of individuals without a sense of coordinated purpose.

UNITY is singleness of purpose and focus. It is the pulling together of individuals in the realization that the whole is greater than the sum of each individual part.

Unity implies agreement. It is the acknowledgement of an established bond so the unit can forge together, as one, toward the goal.

Sun Tzu, the ancient Chinese war philosopher described the ultimate value of unity this way: “He whose ranks are united in purpose will be victorious.”

Once you've gotten personal commitment from the members, and the members come together in unity, the third building block is teamwork.

TEAMWORK means working together to get the job done.

Teamwork implies unselfish dedication and effort for the betterment of the team, rather than individual glory.

Teamwork needs to take place on all levels. It must occur between individuals, within and throughout the unit and between units as part of a bigger team, whether a wing, a major command or the entire Air Force.

When you've achieved all these building blocks – individual commitment, coming together in unity, displaying unselfish teamwork – then you, your unit and our Air Force will truly be a CUT above.

## Support, from page 2

from our Family Services, Child Development Center and all the other organizations that provide specific services to our families left at home.

These efforts are key to the mental well being and peace of mind of our personnel while at their deployed location so they can concentrate on their job.

Finally, there is the long-term support Team XL is providing to the global war on terrorism. That support is provided by the outstanding job we do here at Laughlin in training future air warriors and air traffic controllers to meet the long-term needs of our Air Force. It is this aspect of support that ensures the future

success of our efforts to keep America safe in an increasingly hostile world.

I think you get the idea. Each and every member of Team XL, military, civilian, or contractor, is “key and essential” to meeting our nation's security needs both now and into the foreseeable future. Whether you are deployed directly, supporting someone deploying, or providing the training or equipment support for the long-term training of our future warriors, you are needed, respected, and appreciated by not only Colonel Woodward and me but by the American public as well.

We thank you for your support.

## Push, from page 2

headed to the NCO Academy?

Sometime after you read this, look at the jobs available to you on the EQUAL Plus list. How many will you find? Special duty assignments as military training instructors, military training leaders, professional military education instructors, office of special investigation agents, recruiters and more await.

The Air Force needs more people to look at the big picture – to look for assignments that may not necessarily turn a wrench or march a patrol. Is that you?

Or will you just be filling the squares you believe need filling?

To round out your view out this window of opportunity, seek and engage the hundreds of volunteer openings at your base. Every day I see something new from a burger burn to a car wash. Awards dinners, celebrations, ceremonies and other events are always looking for people with energy, ability and a smile.

There is so much more. The education counselors, career adviser supervisors, first sergeants and others are your first stop to pushing the door open.

As we continue our mission providing support to the world's premiere air and space force, remember to leave the shade up on the window of opportunity that's open to you.



**Actionline**  
298-5351 or  
[actionline@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:actionline@laughlin.af.mil)

Col. Dan Woodward  
47th Flying Training Wing commander

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels. By

including your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also useful if more information is needed to pursue your inquiry. We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved. Please keep e-mails brief.

If your question relates to the gen-

eral interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

|                           |          |                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>AAFES</b>              | 298-3176 | <b>Clinic</b>             | 298-6311 |
| <b>Finance</b>            | 298-5204 | <b>Commissary</b>         | 298-5815 |
| <b>Civil Engineer</b>     | 298-5252 | <b>Dormitory manager</b>  | 298-5213 |
| <b>Civilian Personnel</b> | 298-5299 | <b>EEO</b>                | 298-5879 |
|                           |          | <b>FWA hotline</b>        | 298-4170 |
|                           |          | <b>Housing</b>            | 298-5904 |
|                           |          | <b>Information line</b>   | 298-5201 |
|                           |          | <b>Legal</b>              | 298-5172 |
|                           |          | <b>MEO</b>                | 298-5400 |
|                           |          | <b>Military Personnel</b> | 298-5073 |
|                           |          | <b>Public Affairs</b>     | 298-5988 |
|                           |          | <b>Security Forces</b>    | 298-5900 |
|                           |          | <b>Services</b>           | 298-5810 |

## Award, from page 1

other winners, received the award Thursday at a DOD luncheon during the NAHFE Summit in San Antonio. The NAHFE is a private, non-profit professional organization of federal supervisors, managers and executives. The organization promotes increased opportunities for Hispanic Americans in federal government.

"I am very honored and excited about receiving such a prestigious award," Mrs. Gomez said. "I never dreamed that I would be the one receiving this award because I was competing with GS-12 through GS-15 employees within the Air Force."

Mrs. Gomez's son, Capt. Paul Gomez, an 86th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot here, also attended the luncheon and said, "I am very proud of my mom and her accomplishments."

The personnel chief said she could not have won the award without support from senior-level management and a great staff. She also credited her husband, Paul, and children, Florinda, Paul and Andrea, for her success.

"Mrs. Gomez has embraced the wing's mission and earned the functional leadership's faith and confidence in her expertise and recommendations," said Lt. Col. Jennifer Graham, 47th Mission Support Squadron commander. "She is always thinking outside the box, listening to new ideas and implementing them. Mrs. Gomez places a personal touch on the wing with her amazing dedication and professionalism, working to maintain an effi-



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill

### Esther Gomez, Laughlin's chief of civilian personnel, reviews a civil service application package.

cient and successful civilian personnel program."

As a civilian personnel officer, Mrs. Gomez said the key to a successful program is understanding the wing's mission, establishing credibility with senior leadership, having open communication, and always looking to modernize processes and attitudes.

Living up to that philosophy, this past year Mrs. Gomez coordinated training on the self-nominating process for several union officials who visited the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph, which was a benchmark for other Air Force bases and made in-roads in union partnership. She also recognized a disconnect in workman's compensation, and devel-

oped and presented a briefing on Office of Workers' Compensation Program issues during the 2003 Air Education and Training Command Civilian Personnel Officer Workshop.

Filling in as the acting mission support squadron commander, Mrs. Gomez established a quarterly Peer Award to recognize military and civilian personnel. The award also helps boost morale, and more than 20 people have been recognized by their peers so far.

With people being the focus of her work, she said it is important to "take care" of employees because every employee counts at Laughlin and is vital to the mission.

"I am committed to fair and equitable treatment of all employees

and work in partnership with the local union president when addressing issues concerning their well-being," she said.

Managing the Special Emphasis Programs is another way she helps with employee issues. The programs are part of the overall affirmative action program and emphasize the enhancement of employment and advancement opportunities for minorities, women and people with disabilities.

"Having the opportunity to work every area of human resources makes my job challenging, enjoyable and satisfying," Mrs. Gomez said. "My greatest satisfaction is working side by side with military members and civilians, and knowing everything we do in personnel directly impacts the Air Force's ability to accomplish the mission."

In addition to her work on base, Mrs. Gomez is a strong advocate in the community by emphasizing the importance of education and mentoring women and minorities in the civilian workforce.

She is also a member of a variety of professional organizations, including NAHFE, Federally Employed Women, MANA-a Latina Organization, and National Image, Inc.

Mrs. Gomez, who works on behalf of nearly 1,000 civil service employees, said she is fortunate to be part of the Laughlin team and work under the wing leadership.

"I am also very blessed to have such an outstanding staff working for me," she said. "I am as good as my staff makes me."

## Newslines

### Holocaust video

In recognition of The Days of Remembrance for Victims of the Holocaust, the base chapel and military equal opportunity office will air the video "Holocaust" on the commander's access channel.

The video will be shown on base cable channel 34 at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Thursday.

The 20-minute video sheds new light on the atrocities of the Holocaust and encourages people remember those lost during that period.

### Mentoring class

A mentoring class designed for military and civilian supervisors of civil service personnel is set for 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. April 23 at Club XL.

Limited space is available and is on a first-come first-served basis.

Interested supervisors should R.S.V.P. to the civilian personnel flight at 298-5015 by April 23.

For more information, call 298-5015.

### Retirement class

The civilian personnel flight is holding two retirement seminars April 29 in the Anderson Hall auditorium.

The morning class from 8 to 11:30 a.m. is designed for civil service employees under the Civil Service Retirement System.

The afternoon class from 12:30 to 4 p.m. is designed for employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System.

To R.S.V.P. to either seminar, call Mark Martinez at 298-5806

### Ice cream social

In recognition of National Volunteer Week, Laughlin will conduct an Ice Cream Social to honor all of its volunteers.

The social will be held from 1:30

to 3 p.m. April 28 at the 47th Mission Support Squadron patio.

All volunteers, family members and their supervisors are invited to attend.

### Prayer breakfast

The Laughlin Chapel is holding a prayer breakfast 6:45 a.m. Thursday at the chapel's Fellowship Hall.

Lt. Col. Robin Squellati, 47th Medical Operations Support Squadron, will be the guest speaker.

The event is free and open to all base members.

# DoD: New civilian system will take time, patience

By Jim Garamone  
*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON – A letter signed by Defense Department leaders asks DOD civilian employees to be patient as teams work to make the new National Security Personnel System a reality.

The April 1 letter, signed by David S.C. Chu, undersecretary for personnel and readiness, and Navy Secretary Gordon England, stresses that DOD sees the new personnel system as a combined effort.

The system, passed as part of the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, allows DOD officials to transform the civilian personnel system to make it more agile and responsive.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said the new system would make it easier for the department to make new hires and keep highly skilled employees. It also would al-

low DOD to move workers to shortage specialties as national security concerns change, he said.

In the letter, Mr. Chu and Secretary England state, "We are determined to take the time necessary to do the job right."

Taking time will allow the department to consult with employees, managers and unions, a DOD spokeswoman said. The letter encourages people interested in the system to present their thoughts, ideas, views and concerns.

Department officials are also working with other government agencies as they develop the new system. They are consulting with people at the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Management and Budget and the Government Accounting Office as the new system takes shape. They are also taking lessons from the Department of Homeland Security, which built its own personnel system after it was formed last year.

Five teams within DOD

are looking at process, personnel, programs, requirements and communications, officials said. A sixth team will draw recommendations from these five together in one package. That proposal is scheduled to be presented to Secretary Rumsfeld and other senior leaders in April.

Once approved, senior leaders will work with Congress on implementing the system.

Mr. Chu and Secretary England said that the system still is being formed, and few details about how the system would work are available because there is no system yet. Concepts and proposals will change over

time and department leaders will do their best to keep employees informed, they said.

Information will be available on the DOD and DefendAmerica Web sites, the Pentagon Channel and local commanders' television programs. The new system also has its own Web site.

## AETC announces 2004 family days

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – The commander of Air Education and Training Command recently announced the 2004 dates the command will observe as family days.

Gen. Don Cook has designated July 2, Nov. 26, Dec. 23 and Dec. 30 as family days, which means most military members will get the day off and an extended break for the observed holidays.

In his announcement, General Cook said the days are in appreciation for the tremendous accomplishments of AETC people in the past year.

For military members required to perform duty on a family day, commanders are

encouraged to grant compensatory time off during the first week following the holiday, mission requirements permitting, the general said.

Air Force Instruction 36-3003, "Military Leave Program," should be followed regarding passes and chargeable leave.

Under current rules for Department of Defense civilians, commanders are being encouraged to grant liberal leave, the use of previously earned compensatory time or already approved time-off awards. Group time-off awards specifically for the purpose of giving the day off, are prohibited by Air Force In-

struction 36-1004, "Managing the Civilian Recognition Program."

Civilian personnel officers have more information regarding current rules and available options.

"During your holiday activities, please think safety first," General Cook said in the announcement. "Use common sense, drive defensively and wear your seat belts."

Commanders and supervisors must provide a safety briefing to their personnel to ensure they understand risk management should be used on and off duty.

*(Courtesy of Air Education and Training Command News)*

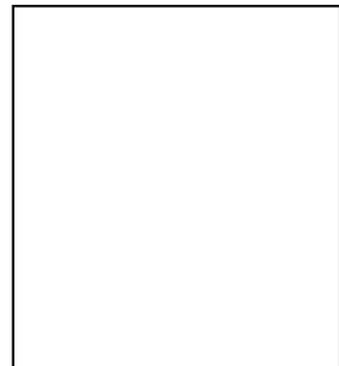
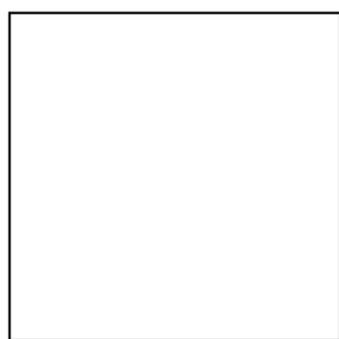
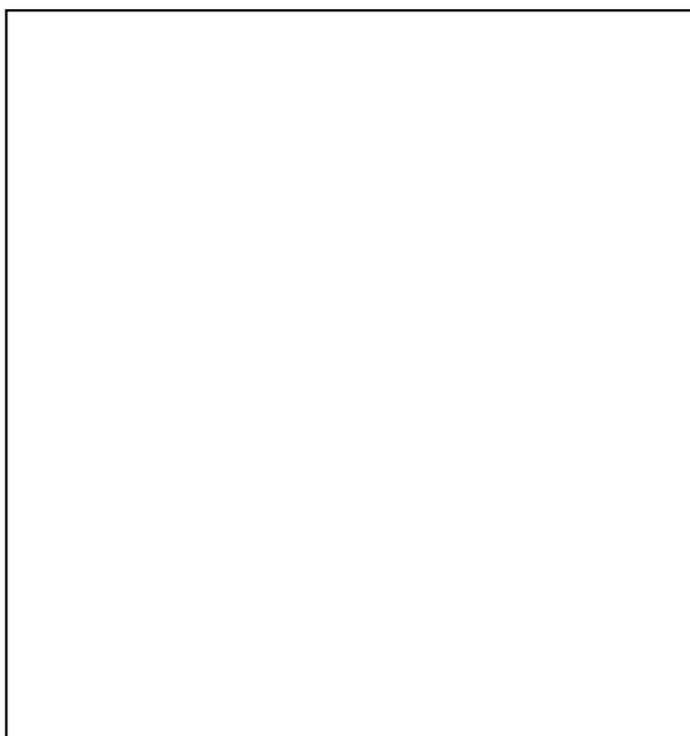
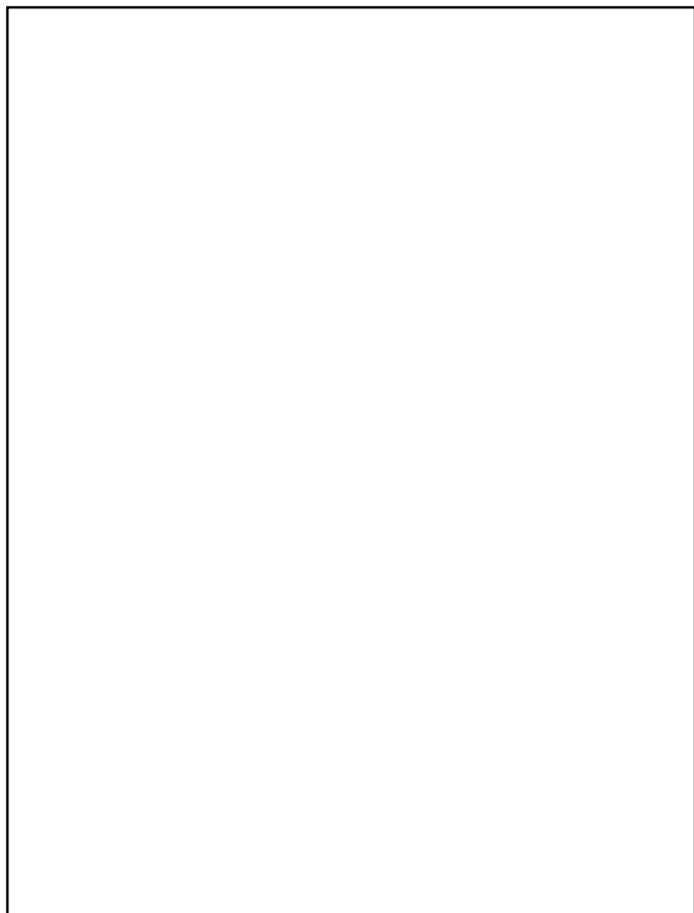




Photo by Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill

### Top recognition...

Richard Urban, of the logistics readiness division he, receives the Director's Award from Texas Department of Safety Trooper Sgt. Todd Jennings during a ceremony Thursday at the DPS office. Mr. Urban received the award for actions he took June 25 that helped save a local man from a suicide attempt. He ran to the assistance of state troopers Joe Duenez and Bobby White as they worked to save the man from jumping off the San Pedro Bridge on U.S. Highway 277 North. The Director's award is the highest DPS accolade given to a civilian.

If you know of or suspect fraud, waste and abuse, call the FWA hotline at 298-4170.

## Mandatory form critical in officer assignment process

**RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE** – Recent statistics show that a significant percentage of Air Force officers have not completed or updated the mandatory form detailing future assignments and development opportunities.

The Transitional Officer Development Plan went into effect November and so far more than 30 percent of officers, lieutenant colonel and below, have not completed the form, officials said.

“This is an officer’s direct communication tool in the force-development process,” said Col. Kathleen Grabowski, chief of assignments programs and procedures at the Air Force Personnel Center here. “Development teams use these forms to review an officer’s career goals and recommend the best developmental vector for each officer.”

“If the (form) isn’t completed, development teams have zero input from the officer or their commander,” said Col. Dave Nuckles, deputy chief of assignment programs and procedures. “The sooner people get their (form) done the better.

“Each career field’s development team will meet at least twice every year,” he said. “It’s up to the officer and commander to ensure the (form) is current before the team meets.”

Rated officer development teams are already preparing to meet. The following are upcoming deadlines for submission:

■ Monday, Air Force Special Operations Command and combat Air Force officers.

■ July 9, all remaining rated officers.

While the form is similar to the old “preference worksheet,” there are differences. It requires officers to consider long-range career plans and goals, not just their next assignment preferences, Colonel Nuckle said. It also provides an opportunity for feedback from the development teams to the officer.

Officers can contact their assignment teams for more information about T-ODP submission timelines. To fill out a form, officers must log on to the Assignment Management System at: <https://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/amsweb/master.cfm>.

*(Courtesy of AFPC News Service)*

Access education information at the click of a mouse. Visit the Air Force Virtual Education Center at <https://afvec.langley.af.mil>

# Darkness can be a hazard for motorists

By Lt. Col. Fred Armstrong  
47th Flying Training Wing  
safety chief

(Editor's note: This is the second in a two-part series on nighttime safety.)

Driving may come easy to motorists no matter the time of day. But, when darkness falls, challenges lurk.

Nighttime driving can be a hazard when drivers least expect it.

Most people dislike driving at night, and the reason is simple. They can't see as far or as well at night as they can in the daytime.

Darkness makes driving a challenging job. It's dangerous, too. According to the National Safety Council, fatal accidents increase sharply during the hours of darkness. In fact, statistics show a driver's chances of being involved in a fatal traffic accident are about three times greater at night than during daylight hours.

But, there are things to do, facts to know, and techniques to use that can get and keep motorists ready for safe night driving.

## Tips for nighttime driving:

- Before you start out at night check headlights, taillights and directional signals. A wall or show window makes a good place to check headlights and turn signals to see if they're functioning properly.

- The better you can see the better your chances of avoiding an acci-

dent. Clean headlights and windshield - inside and outside.

- Have your headlight aim checked if it hasn't been done recently or if you've replaced a headlight. One study indicated one-third to one-half of all vehicles on the road have badly aimed headlights, reducing their effectiveness for the driver and often blinding approaching drivers.

- When you drive out of a lighted area it takes a few minutes for your eyes to adjust to the dark. A two- to five-minute wait before driving off into the night could pay off in safety. Waiting a few minutes before driving in the dark will improve your vision.

- Wear sunglasses during the day. They'll help your eyes preserve their supply of "visual purple," a retinal chemical that helps them adapt to the dark. A day of too much sun exposure and glare without sunglasses can drastically reduce ability to see at night.

- Don't wear sunglasses at night. There are no glasses designed to reduce headlight glare at night. Any lens that reduces the brightness of headlights also reduces the lights reflected from dimly-lit objects at the side of the road, particularly pedestrians.

- Don't drink and drive. Alcohol can drastically slow the direct affect of the eye's sensitivity. According to Professor Robert Selular of the Psychology Department of Northwestern University, "It takes the eye a second or two longer to hunt around for what it was seeing, and in that time an acci-

dent can occur."

- Don't smoke while you're driving at night. Nicotine and carbon monoxide, two of the ingredients in cigarette smoke, can reduce your vision when it's dark.

- Reduce speed and drive with extra care if you've just gotten your first set of eyeglasses. Newly-corrected nearsighted people tend to brake too quickly, as newly-corrected farsighted drivers tend to brake too slowly.

In addition, a change in prescription may take some getting used to, and its effect on your driving should be taken into consideration.

- If you're wondering whether or not it's dark enough to turn on your lights, it is. They may not help you see any better in early twilight, but it will be much easier for other drivers to see you - the better other drivers can see, the less chance of an accident.

Don't ask yourself: "How well can I see without my headlights?" Instead, ask: "How well can the other drivers see me without my lights on?"

- When following another vehicle at night keep headlights on low beams to prevent blinding the other driver.

- Use low beams within 300 feet (the length of a football field) of the rear of the vehicle you're following

- Spotting trouble at night takes more time compared to seeing trouble during the day. Reduce speed accordingly.

- Try to beat out the oncoming driver in being first to switch from high

to low beams. Never try to give oncoming drivers a taste their own medicine when they fail to switch to low beams. Switch your lights from high to low, then avoid the approaching glare by watching the right edge of the road and using it as a steering guide.

- Increase your following distance at night.

- When you look ahead don't look only as far as your headlights brighten the pavement. That limits your visual range - a seeing trap into which many drivers fall. Peer ahead into the area that's only faintly illuminated. You may pick up the faint glow of a distant headlight or some movement that will alert you to a possible hazard.

- When you spot a deer or other animal on the road at night, switch headlights to lower beam and sound your horn.

- At night, primarily in rural areas, oncoming vehicles can be detected much quicker if you watch for their headlight reflections on electric or telephone lines alongside the road.

- Never stop on any roadway at night. It's hard for an approaching driver to tell whether or not your car is moving until it's too late.

- Take curves slower at night. Headlights pointing straight ahead shine off the road, reducing your view of the road considerably.

- Switch to low beams in fog or snow. High beams will reflect more off fog and snow, creating increased glare to throw off your vision.

## Safety measures reduce challenges for nighttime drivers, cyclists

According to a study by the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety, the lowest level of alertness for most drivers is between 2 a.m. and 7 a.m.

To stay alert, BMCS suggests drivers stop frequently, drink coffee, walk around and lower windows while driving. These are only temporary measures.

If you are tired and your body needs sleep, the only thing that is truly effective is sleep.

When trouble - most notably a flat tire - forces a stop at night, take action for safety. Pull off the roadway as far as possible. Warn approaching traffic at once. Use an illuminated or reflective device such as a flare or reflecting triangle.

Place one at least 300 feet behind and another near the stopped vehicle. Turn on flasher

lights and the dome light. Stay away from the roadway. If you must work close to the road, try to keep approaching traffic in your field of vision. When it's necessary to stop on a narrow shoulder or other location that could be hazardous, get all passengers out of the car.

Cyclists should also take safety into account during nighttime traveling. Requirements for motorcycle, motor scooter, and moped operations on Air Force bases and for operation by military personnel off Air Force installations include the following:

- To increase visibility of riders, they are encouraged to affix reflective material to their helmets.

- Operator and passenger must wear impact resistant goggles or a full-face shield on helmet.

There is one exception. Goggles or a full-face shield are not required for the operator if the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield that is equal in height to or above the top of the helmet of the properly upright-seated operator.

- Wear a brightly colored or contrasting vest or jacket as an outer upper garment during the day and reflective during the night. An outer upper garment will be clearly visible, not covered.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts or jackets, full-fingered motorcycle gloves or mittens, and long trousers.

- Wear sturdy footwear. Leather boots or over-the ankle shoes are strongly encouraged.

(Courtesy of the 47th Flying Training Wing safety office.)

## **Arbor**, from page 1

activities and games for children will start at 4 p.m. at the Fiesta Center.

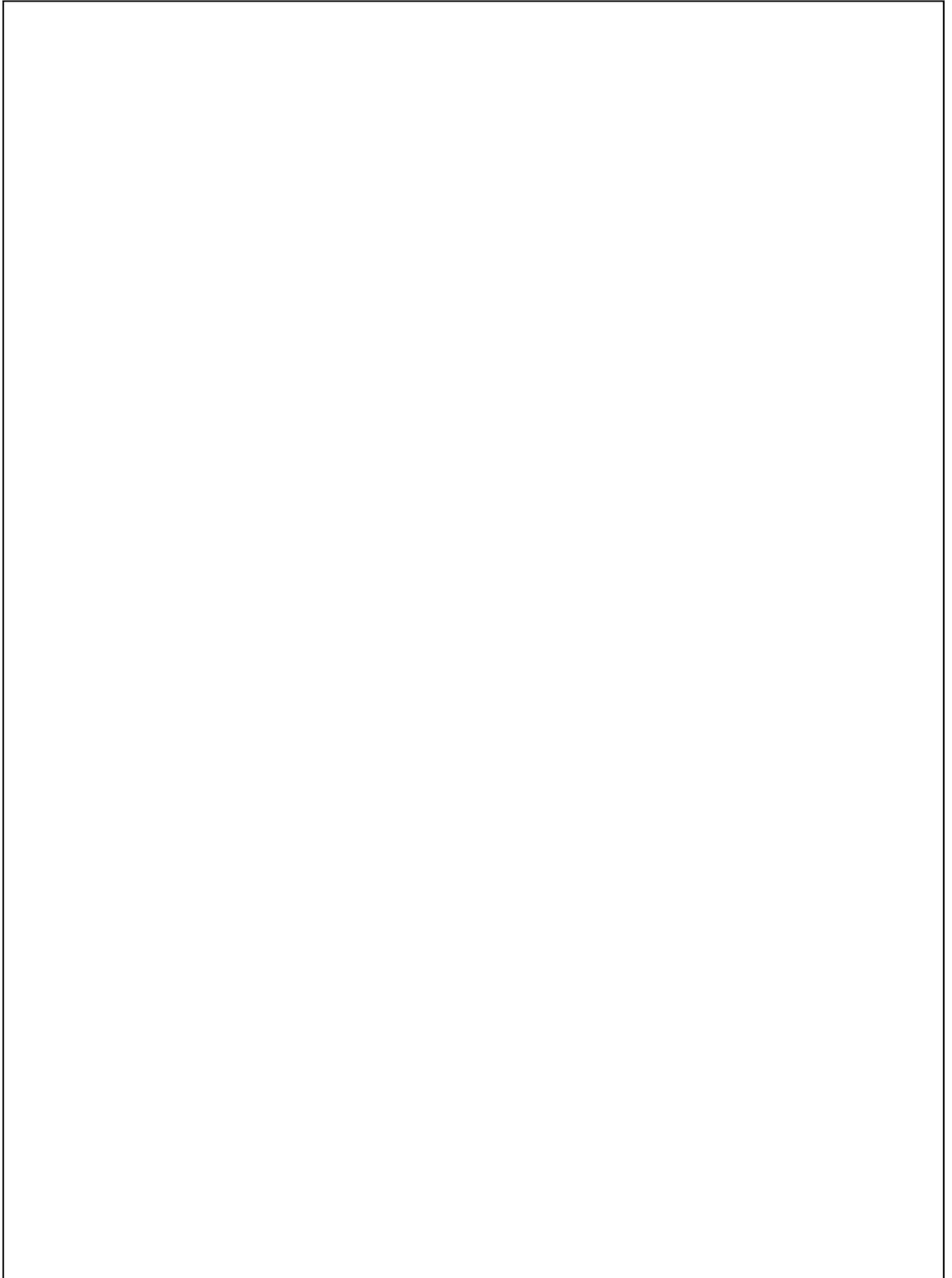
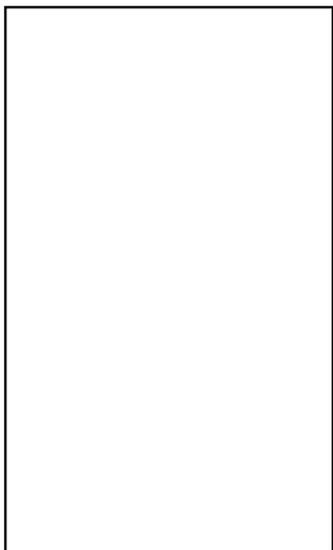
J. Sterling Morton, a Nebraska native, first proposed a tree-planting holiday in his state on January 4, 1872, and referred to it as Arbor Day. Nebraska then was a tree-less state. His proposal was adopted and spread to other states in the 1870s. Arbor Day, commonly observed on the last Friday of April, also spread beyond the United States.

Arbor Day activities emphasize the critical importance of the environment and make the American public aware of the destruction of the Earth's natural resources, Mr. Morton said back in the 1800s.

Also, he said people have learned that protecting the environment's natural resources could mean protecting a large part of the world.

Mr. Leighton pointed out that planting trees around the Fiesta Center on Thursday would give young people an appreciation of what to do to protect their environment. "This also means protecting their future," he added.

Likewise, the founder of Arbor Day, Mr. Morton said, "Arbor Day is not like other holidays. Each of those reposes on the past, while Arbor Day proposes for the future."





## Laughlin Salutes

### SUPT Class 04-07 awards

**Daedalian award:**

2nd Lt. Brandon Roberts

**Academic award, airlift/  
tanker track:**

2nd Lt. Peter Janeczko

**Academic award, fighter/  
bomber track:**

2nd Lt. Steven Baker

**Flying training award,  
fighter/bomber track:**

2nd Lt. David Clark

**Flying training award, air-  
lift/tanker track:**

2nd Lt. Jonathan Baize

**Airlift/tanker Distin-  
guished Graduates:**

2nd Lt. Jonathan Baize

**Fighter/bomber Distin-  
guished Graduate:**

2nd Lt. David Clark

**Outstanding Officer of  
Class 04-05:**

Capt. Eric Guttormsen

**AETC Commander's Tro-  
phy, airlift/tanker track:**

2nd Lt. Jonathan Baize

**AETC Commander's  
Trophy, fighter/bomber  
track:**

2nd Lt. David Clark

### Interested in the Air Force?

*Call Del Rio's Air Force  
recruiter at 774-0911.*

## Despite 'tough' period, U.S. won't waver in Iraq, Bush says

By Army Sgt. 1st Class  
Doug Sample  
*American Forces Press  
Service*

WASHINGTON — The United States will continue in its commitment to an independent, free and secure Iraq, and the United States "must not waver" despite "a tough, tough period," President Bush said at a news conference April 13.

The president stood before reporters in the East Room of the White House to make his administration's case for standing firm in Iraq, even with sporadic violence continuing and the June 30 transfer of power to an interim Iraqi government nearly two months away.

Despite the recent increase in violence and casualties, President Bush said the United States will not retreat from its mission.

"Weeks such as we've had in Iraq make some doubt whether or not we're making progress," the president said, "but we are making progress."

President Bush offered servicemembers assurances of the nation's commitment, and he emphasized the importance of the mission in remarks aimed at their families.

"We'll stay the course and complete the job, and you'll have what you need," he said to forces in Iraq.

--"And my message to the loved ones who are worried about their sons, daughters, husbands and wives is your loved one is performing a noble service for the cause of freedom and peace."

The president placed blame for violence in Iraq on three groups: remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime, Islamic militants and terrorists from other countries.

He said that although these instigators come from different factions, they share

common goals.

"They want to run us out of Iraq and destroy the democratic hopes of the Iraqi people," he said.

Calling the violence in Iraq a "power grab" by extreme and ruthless elements, President Bush sought to dispel the notion that the recent violence reflects the will of the Iraqi people.

"It's not a civil war. It's not a popular uprising," he

hostages or plants a roadside bomb near Baghdad is serving the same ideology of murder that kills innocent people on trains in Madrid, Spain, and murders children on buses in Jerusalem, and blows up a nightclub in Bali, Indonesia, and cuts the throat of a young reporter for being a Jew," the president said.

"We've seen the same ideology of murder in the killing of 241 Marines in Beirut,

that's what he wants, that's what he gets," the president said.

Some 135,000 U.S. servicemembers are in Iraq, and the U.S. military presence there will continue "as long as necessary and not one day more," President Bush said.

The president said the nation has a commitment to the June 30 transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people, and he said a delay would send the wrong message to the Iraqi people and to the world about the value of an American promise.

"We have set a deadline of June 30. It is important that we meet that deadline," he said. "Iraqis do not support an indefinite occupation, and neither does America."

But sovereignty involves more than a "date and a ceremony," President Bush said. "It requires Iraqis to assume responsibility for their own future."

The president said according to a schedule already approved by the Iraqi governing council, Iraq will hold elections for a national assembly no later than next January.

That assembly will then draft a new permanent constitution, which will be presented to the Iraqi people in a national referendum held in October of 2005.

Iraqis then elect a permanent government by Dec. 15, 2005.

That vote, he said, will mark the completion of Iraq's transition from "dictatorship to freedom."

In the meantime, he said, other nations and international institutions are stepping up to their responsibilities in building a free and secure Iraq. Coalition leaders are working closely with UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi and with Iraqis to determine the exact form of the government that will take charge of the country June 30.

A UN election assistance team headed by Carina Perelli is in Iraq developing plans for next January's election, President Bush said.

NATO is supporting the Polish-led multinational division, and 17 of the alliance's 26 member nations have forces in Iraq.

The president listed several reasons why he believes success in Iraq is vital to the United States.

He said that a free Iraq will give 25 million Iraqis the right to live in freedom and will stand as an example to reformers across the Middle East. He also said that a free Iraq will show that America is on the side of Muslims who wish to live in peace.

But just as important, he said, a free Iraq will confirm to the world "America's word, once given, can be relied upon even in the toughest times."

Victory on the Iraqi front is key to further victories in the war on terror and therefore to U.S. security, the president said.

"Above all, the defeat of violence and terror in Iraq is vital to the defeat of violence and terror elsewhere, and vital, therefore, to the safety of the American people," he said.

"Now is the time, and Iraq is the place in which the enemies of the civilized world are testing the will of the civilized world. We must not waver."

The president said he visited wounded Soldiers hospitalized at Fort Hood, Texas, on April 11, presenting the Purple Heart to some of them, and thanking them on behalf of all Americans.

Other people, he said, have paid an even greater cost.

The nation honors those killed and prays their families will find "God's comfort in the midst of their grief," the president said.

He promised the families

---

**--"And my message to the loved ones who are worried about their sons, daughters, husbands and wives is your loved one is performing a noble service for the cause of freedom and peace."**

---

said. "Most of Iraq is relatively stable.

Most Iraqis by far reject violence and oppose dictatorship."

President Bush specifically cited radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr as one of those responsible for inciting riots and attacks against coalition forces.

Mr. Sadr has assembled supporters into an illegal militia and publicly supported the terrorist groups Hamas and Hezbollah, the president said.

He also accused Mr. Sadr of violence and intimidation against Iraqi Shiia. Iraqi authorities have indicted the cleric for the murder of a prominent Shiia cleric, President Bush said.

"Iraq will either be a peaceful, democratic country or it will again be a source of violence, a haven for (terrorists), and a threat to America and to the world," he said.

The president said the violence in Iraq has a familiar ideology.

"The terrorist who takes

(Lebanon)," he said, "the first attack on the World Trade Center, and the destruction of two embassies in Africa, in the attack on the USS Cole, and in the merciless horror inflicted upon thousands of innocent men and women and children on Sept. 11, 2001."

Though terrorist acts often have religious reasons as the professed motive of the perpetrators, President Bush said that is not really the case.

"None of these acts is the work of a religion," he said. "All are the work of a fanatical political ideology."

Meanwhile, President Bush said his administration is reviewing the needs of servicemembers on the ground, and he promised to send military commanders all the troops and resources they say they need.

President Bush said Army Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, is "clearly indicating" that he may want more troops.

"It's coming up through the chain of command, and if

# 'Laughlinites' set to perform in British play

By Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill  
Public affairs

Eight Laughlin members take to the stage next week in a local theatre production they promise is sure to keep the audience "laughing in the aisles."

Del Rio's theatre group the Upstagers is set to perform "It Runs in the Family," a comedy by British author Ray Cooney.

The 12-member cast will conduct the first of four shows at 8 p.m. April 23 at Paul Poag Theatre in Del Rio.

The play's scene is a London hospital three days before Christmas, and the staff is getting ready for its annual holiday show. A conference of neurosurgeons is also taking place as Dr. David Mortimore, played by Staff Sgt. Scott Fooshee of the 47th Operations Support Squadron, prepares a lecture that should guarantee him a knighthood and the hospital some much needed funds.

But, a former nurse bursts in with news that their fling more than 18 years earlier made the doctor a father.

As the lead character, Sergeant Fooshee said he loves playing Dr. Mortimore.

"The doctor starts lying from the very beginning of the show and doesn't stop until the last scene," Sergeant Fooshee said. "Sometimes it's hard for me to keep up with him. It is so much fun working on this show."

The actor said he hopes the audience laughs as hard as the cast does during rehearsals.

Events spin deliriously out of control as deception, mistaken identities, double-entendres, puns and flapping doors fuel this high-octane show, said Terra Wade of the 47th Flying Training Wing legal office. Mrs. Wade, a 17-year member of the Upstagers, plays the role of Rosemary Mortimore, the doctor's dutiful wife.

"My character spends most of her time oblivious to her husband's attempts to cover up his past indiscretions," she said. "It's fun playing Rosemary because she's so different from other roles I've played, and I enjoy playing characters who are nothing like the real me."

Brenda Schamus of Laughlin's maintenance directorate plays Jane Tate, the nurse who had the affair with the doctor.

The Upstagers present

"It Runs in the Family"

Dates: April 23, 24, 30 and May 1

Time: 8 p.m.

Place: Paul Poag Theatre

Tickets: Ticket and Tours,  
Building 511, 298-5830

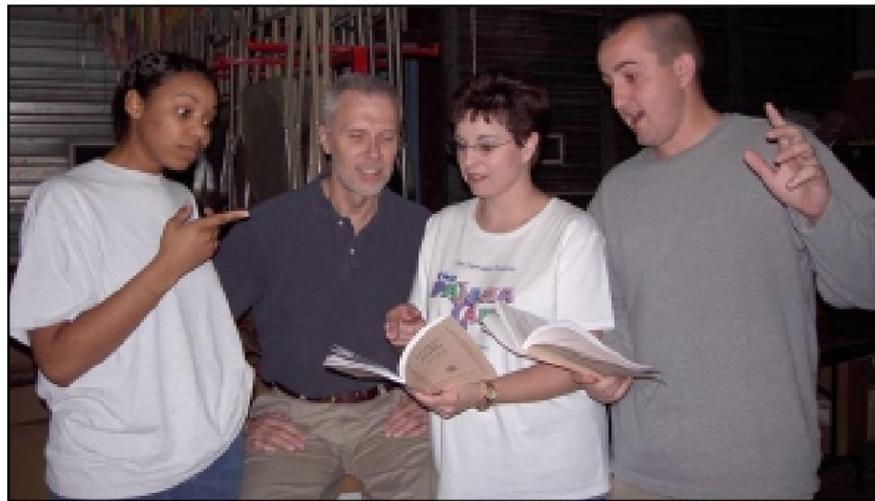
"I have come to tell the doctor that we had a son," Ms. Schamus said of her character's role. "Although the doctor is dreadfully busy, I keep trying to get him to see his son. Of course old colleagues are there along with his wife. There's a lot of fibbing from the doctor, and it is truly hilarious."

As events escalate, the young doctor directing the hospital's holiday show finds himself compensating for each of the roles to be played by his distracted actors.

Staff Sgt. Ben Ackerman, 47th Contracting Squadron, plays Dr. Mike Connolly.

"I love my part because my character is very colorful," said Sergeant Ackerman. "Mike Connolly doesn't care what's going on. He just wants to get on with his play, even if it means him making people mad or even cross dressing occasionally. As the other characters become more entangled in the actual storyline of the show, I have to take their place at 'rehearsals,' wearing everything from a pirate's coat to a blonde heroine's outfit."

Sergeant Ackerman's wife, Kelly, also stars in the comedy as the 80-year-



Courtesy photo

(From left) Staff Sgt. Jennifer Nalls, Joel Bacon, Kellie Jackson and Staff Sgt. Ben Ackerman rehearse for their upcoming play.

old mother of Dr. Hubert Bonney, a colleague of Dr. Mortimore.

Kellie Jackson, from the maintenance directorate here, plays Matron, the hospital's strict head nurse.

"As the serious head nurse, my character finds herself in very awkward situations," said Ms. Jackson, "like walking and falling off a window ledge, getting a shot of anesthetic and falling asleep, getting knocked out cold and being placed upside down in a wheel chair."

Two other Laughlin members, Staff Sgt. Jennifer Nalls and Ben Graf, round out the base's participation as cast members.

Mr. Graf of the 47th Civil Engineer Squadron steps into the character of Sir Willoughby Drake, the hospital's chairman of the board of governors who is having difficulty convincing Dr.

Mortimore to focus on the lecture.

Sergeant Nalls, 47th CONS, plays a nun that works in the hospital.

"This production is definitely a lot of fun," Sergeant Nalls said. "It's really cool for me because this is my first non-musical production with the Upstagers."

A member of the theatre group the past three years, Sergeant Nalls has performed in five productions, in addition to work as a member of the stage and technical crew.

Even as actors, the cast members set up everything for their production.

"We all help with everything to make the production work," Sergeant Nalls said. "We do all of the labor, design and costumes ourselves."

Other members from the Laughlin community are also helping behind the scenes of this latest production. Lending a hand with stage and technical assistance are 2nd Lt. Matt Wieringa, Airmen Sadek Brandford and Michael McClain, Kristen Fooshee, George Hnatiuk, Jennifer Rhinesmith and Sarah Scheller.

"The Upstagers provide 'Laughlinites' the opportunity to showcase their many talents," said Mrs. Wade. "This show is no exception. Three fourths of the cast and crew work at Laughlin."

"We are an all-volunteer group," she said. "None of us gets paid to do this. Our reward and satisfaction come from our audience and knowing that all of our hard work hasn't been in vain. When we know our audience has enjoyed the show and been thoroughly entertained, that is our 'paycheck.'"

## Upstagers have strong Laughlin ties

In 1975, Fred Brockwell at Laughlin s the lead character, Sergeant Fooshee said he loves playing Dr. Mortimore.

"The doctor starts lying from the very beginning of the show and doesn't stop until the last scene," Sergeant Fooshee said. "Sometimes it's hard for me to keep up with him. It is so much fun working on this show."

The actor said he hopes the audience laughs as hard as the cast does during rehearsals.

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member of the stage

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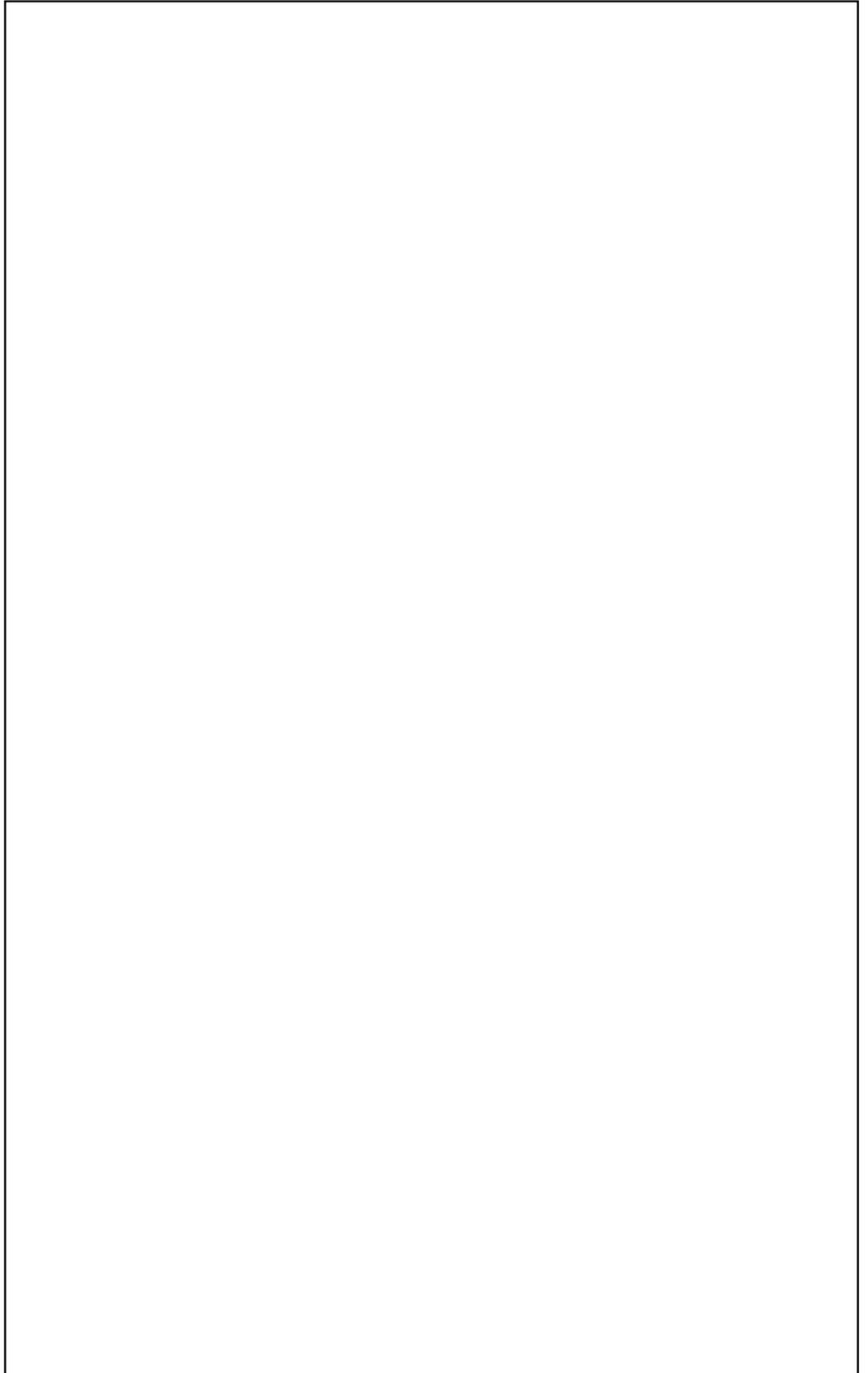
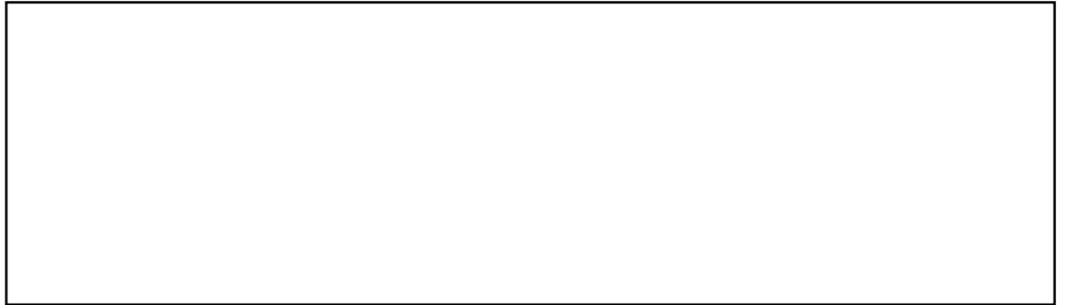
Aghtht participant with the Upstagers for about three years, Sergeant Nalls said she has per



*Photo by Airman 1st Class Stephen Collier*

## Face of the future?

**Caroline Brereton cradles the American flag during a practice retreat April 2 at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. Caroline and other Girl Scouts from Brownie Troop 32 learned how to display the flag while preparing to become Junior Scouts.**



## The *XLer*

**Master Sgt. Brian Lewallen**  
47th Operations Support Squadron



Photo by Airman 1st Class Timothy J. Stein

**Hometown:** Poplar Bluff, Mo.

**Family:** Wife, Toni; two sons, Zach and Kyle

**Time at Laughlin:**

Nine years, three months

**Time in service:**

18 years

**Greatest accomplishment:**

Getting married to my wife

**Hobbies:** Music, sports and spending time with my family

**Bad habit:** Too many to mention

**Favorite movie:**

“The Passion of the Christ”

**If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be?**

My grandmother. I don't remember ever meeting her and it would be nice to find out a little about her.

## Chapel information



### Catholic

*Monday - Friday*

● Mass, 12:05 p.m.

*Saturday*

● Mass, 5 p.m., Reconciliation, 4:15 p.m. or by appointment

*Sunday*

● Mass, 9:30 a.m., Religious Education, 11 a.m.

*Thursday*

● Choir: 6 p.m., Rite of Christian Initiation, 7:30 p.m.

### Protestant

*Wednesday*

● Choir, 7 p.m.; Protestant Women of the Chapel Ladies' Bible Study, 9 a.m.

*Sunday*

● General worship, 11 a.m., Contemporary worship, 9 a.m. in the base theater

### Chaplain Staff

*Wing chaplain:*

Chap. (Lt. Col.) Joseph Lim, Roman Catholic

*Senior Protestant:*

Chap. (Capt.) Terri Gast, Presbyterian Church, USA

*Protestant:*

Chap. (Capt.) Alex Jack, Independent Christian Church

*Protestant:*

Chap. (1st Lt.) Kenneth Fisher, Evangelical Church Alliance

**For more information on other denominations, chapel events or services, call 298-5111. For information on special events, see the Community Calendar on page 16.**

It's your Future.  
**VOTE**  
for it!

## The Commander's Access Channel

Tune in to  
**Cable Channel 34**  
for up-to-date information about events and activities happening at Laughlin.

## ONLINE news

Access breaking news at United States Air Force Online News, the official newspaper of the United States Air Force. A simple click to [www.af.mil/news/](http://www.af.mil/news/) keeps you informed about events.

## Air Force women swipe basketball title from Army

SAN ANTONIO – A Laughlin public affairs officer is a member of the Air Force team which won the 2004 Armed Forces Women's Basketball Championship at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 2 to Saturday.

First Lt. Lindsay Logsdon has also been selected to play on the All-Armed Forces Women's Basketball that will play in the Pro-Am National Women's Basketball Championship in Las Vegas next week. Lieutenant Logsdon was one of four Air Force members to make the team.

The Air Force team upset the perennial championship Army team in the final at a double round-robin championship.

The powerhouse Army team had won the championship every year since the Navy defeated them in 1991 at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The Air Force won its only previous title at Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., in 1981.

The Air Force opened the tournament by defeating the Marine Corps team with Naomi Mobley's 17 points. She is from Eielson AFB, Alaska. The 6-foot-3-inch center also collected seven rebounds.

LySchale Jones, from Langley AFB, Va., scored 10 points, while Staci Muller, from Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, added 9 points. Lindsay Logsdon, from Laughlin, and Nicole Bowman, from Aviano Air Base, Italy, each contributed 8 points to the 79-52 win.

The Air Force followed

up its first day win by defeating the Navy team 90-74.

Mobley scored 21 points, and Jones' three 3-pointers helped her compile a 16-point game total. Mariela Miles, from Eglin AFB, Fla., scored 13 points from her point-guard position, while forward Angelia Rougeau, from Dover AFB, Del., totaled 11 points and four rebounds.

On the third day, despite strong scoring by Mobley and Rougeau, with 18 and 14 points, respectively, the Army beat the Air Force team 64-61.

Miles got the Air Force back on the winning track, scoring 19 points to lead the Air Force to its second win over the Marine Corps, 67-45. Mobley and Jones pitched in 13 and 12 points, respectively.

Mobley's 23 points and Miles' 13 points again led the team to an important 67-46 win over the Navy. This win led to a final showdown between the Army and Air Force teams. The Air Force had to beat the Army by at least 3 points in the final game to win the championship (based on final win-loss record and actual head-to-head results in the tournament).

After leading during the championship game by as many as 11 points, the Air Force went into half-time trailing 41-40; however, Mobley's 24, Miles' 18, Bowman's 14, and Rougeau's 12 points led the Air Force team to an 81-74 final victory over the Army.

(Courtesy Air Force Print News)

## Fit to Fight Warrior of the Week

Senior Airman Cedric Lightener  
47th Security Forces Squadron



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi Owolabi

**Fitness philosophy:**

The faster you run the quicker you finish.

**Favorite healthy treat:**

I really don't eat healthy, but I do eat a lot of rice.

**Fitness assessment score:** 95.25

**Fitness tip:** Lift only what your body can handle, drink enough fluids and give your muscles time to rest.

**Fitness goals:** My goal is to stay "Fit to Fight"

### Fitness Fact:

**Did You Know?** If you smoke one pack of cigarettes per day, and you quit smoking today, you could save approximately \$65,700 that you would have spent on cigarettes. That money would be worth quite a bit more in a savings account.



### Shop the commissary...

*the military's premier benefit*

### XL Fitness Center hours

Monday - Thursday:  
5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Friday:  
5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday:  
7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Holidays:  
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

# Shin splints: runners can get a leg up on pain

**By Bill Goins**  
*47th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron exercise physiologist*

The nature of shin splints most often can be captured in just four words: too much, too soon.

I always seem to get them when I start up running again after a break. I've noticed shin splints to be a problem mainly for new runners or runners starting over.

## What are they?

Shin splints, the catch-all term for lower leg pain that occurs below the knee either on the front outside part of the leg (anterior shin splints) or the inside of the leg (medial shin splints), are the bane of many athletes, runners, tennis players and even dancers. They of-

ten plague beginning runners who do not build their mileage gradually enough or seasoned runners who abruptly change their workout regimen, suddenly adding too much mileage, for example, or switching from running on flat surfaces to hills.

Shin pain doesn't always mean one has shin splints. It might be a sign of some other problem.

Pain on the anterior (outside) part of the lower leg may be compartment syndrome. A swelling of muscles within a closed compartment which creates pressure. To diagnose this condition, special techniques are used to measure the amount of pressure. With compartment syndrome, the blood supply can be compromised, and muscle injury and

pain may occur. A medical provider should be able to help distinguish between the two.

Pain in the lower leg could also be a stress fracture (an incomplete crack in the bone), which is a far more serious injury than shin splints.

A bone scan is the definitive tool for diagnosing a stress fracture. However, there are clues people can look for that will signal whether or not a bone scan is needed. Stress fractures can be detected by pressing one's fingertips along the shin. If there is a definite spot of sharp pain, it is probably a stress fracture (the pain of shin splints is more generalized). Usually stress fractures feel better in the morning because the bone has rested all night. Shin splints are worse in the morn-

ing because the soft tissue tightens overnight.

## So what causes them?

There can be a number of factors at work, such as overpronation, inadequate stretching, worn or incorrect shoes, or excessive stress placed on one leg or one hip from running on crowned roads or always running in the same direction on a track.

The most common site for shin splints is the medial area (the inside of the shin). Anterior shin splints (toward the outside of the leg) usually result from an imbalance between the calf muscles and the muscles in the front of the leg, and often afflict beginners who either have not yet adjusted to the stresses of running or are not stretching enough. In general, the muscles in the front are working hard to overcome the power in the muscles in the back of the leg.

But what exactly is a shin splint? Over the years, there have been several theories. Small tears in the muscle that has pulled off the bone, an inflammation of the periosteum (a thin sheath of tissue that wraps around the tibia, or shin bone), an inflammation of the muscle, or some combination of these, but there's no hard-core consensus among sports scientists. Fortunately, there is some hard-core advice on how to treat shin splints.

## Treatment and prevention.

Experts agree that when shin splints strike people

should stop running completely or decrease their training depending on the extent and duration of pain. Shin splints usually take three to six weeks to heal, but they can take longer if not given adequate time. As a first step, ice the shin to reduce inflammation. Here are some other treatments to try:

Gently stretch the Achilles for medial shin splints and the calves for anterior shin splints. Another good stretch is to kneel on a carpeted floor, legs and feet together and toes pointed directly back and slowly sit back onto the calves and heels, pushing the ankles into the floor until there is tension in the muscles of the shin. Hold for 10 to 12 seconds, relax and repeat.

In a sitting position, trace the alphabet on the floor with your toes. Do this with each leg. Or alternate walking on your heels for 30 seconds with 30 seconds of regular walking. Repeat four times. These exercises are good for both recovery and prevention. Try to do them three times a day.

Consider cross-training for a while to let shins heal. Swim, run in the pool or ride a bike. When returning to running, increase mileage slowly, no more than 10 percent weekly. Make sure correct running shoes are worn for each foot type.

Specifically, over-pronators should wear motion-control shoes. Severe over-pronators may need orthotics.