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Wingspan

Vol. 13, No. 09 Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas Thursday • April 26, 2007





The U.S. Navy's Blue Angels, along with other captivating aerial acts, soared the skies of NASCC on April 14 & 15. Find the feature photo spread on pages 8 and 9.

Photo by Anne Booher, Editor

Angels sighted in the Corpus Christi skies

A look at Dusty Rhodes: WWII Vet, POW and Blue Angel

by Anne Booher, Editor

Few people can say they've followed the Blue Angels since they were commissioned by Admiral Chester Nimitz in 1946. Even fewer can say they personally knew the original members and were also with the Blues almost at their very beginning. Raleigh "Dusty" Rhodes is one of those select few and this World War II Veteran returned to Corpus Christi for our Air Show, the first time he has been here since he was the Commanding Officer of the Blue Angels in the late 1940s.

He left to serve as a Wildcat pilot in World War II, having no idea it would be three years before he would see his wife again, much less that for several months of that time, the United States Navy assumed he was dead.

In the Battle of Santa Cruz, Dusty's Grumman F4F Wildcat was shot down by a Japanese "Zero." Describing the situation before he was shot down, Dusty says, "We were escorting bombers to the Japanese fleet. We were at low altitude, trying to conserve fuel,

Much to his surprise, on April 12, Dusty was honored with a Mayoral Proclamation declaring April 13 "Dusty Rhodes Day." "It was a huge surprise...a real flattering event," says Dusty. (Photo by Bob Torres, Public Affairs Officer)

and had drop tanks. All of a sudden, the Zeros were after our fleet because we were after theirs. They dove out of the sun and we didn't see them. They shot two aircraft down on their first pass. As I said, we were going slow, and had to drop our tanks."

He adds, "The Zeros were light and fast and the Wildcat was loaded with armament, so it was heavier and didn't have the performance."

"I was shot down and picked up by the Japanese fleet on the next day. First, I was taken to Truk [Lagoon] and interrogated by Admiral Yamamoto. He wouldn't speak English to me, even though he could. He spoke to me through his interpreter. When it was all over, the interpreter said, 'We're gonna send you to Tokyo where they really know how to get information out of you.' And eventually, I ended up at a very secret questioning camp just outside of Yokahama...About eight months after I'd been there, I was transferred to a regular POW camp." At this point, his name was released to the U.S. Navy, informing them of his status as "captive," rather than killed in the Battle of Santa Cruz.

Dusty continued on page 13

In Memoriam

Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Davis, Opposing Solo #6 for the Blue Angels, was killed on April 21 while performing at MCAS Beaufort, SC. Our hearts go out to his family and friends.

From The Skipper

Thanks for a great Air Show!

by Capt. T.E. Coolidge

The 2007 South Texas Shoot-Out is now history and I'll tell you, I had a lot of fun! My wife and boys also came out and had fun watching all the festivities. The first thing I've got to say is that it couldn't have happened without the folks who pitched in and proved that when we put our minds together, great things happen!



Coolidge

Folks, sincerely, thank you! The list is far too long to mention all who were involved, but you made this the best Air Show in South Texas history! And that's not just coming from me. I heard from a lot of folks on Saturday and Sunday, and continue to

hear from more today, that it was a great show.

I know that some of you began working to make this happen several months ago. The work to set up for the event went on late into Friday night when the fencing was finally completed. A handful of determined souls went out, worked hard and didn't stop until the task was complete. There truly are too many behind-the-scenes activities that went on before, during, and after the Air Show that made this a flawless, enjoyable event for all of our guests!

Saturday had me very nervous because of the wind. It just wouldn't stop. But even with gusts up to 40 mph, with the exception of the Red Bull Parachute Team (I don't blame them for cancelling - they jumped on Sunday), every performer executed their act. It was windy, but the show was spectacular!

I don't think many people had seen the Tora! Tora! Tora! act. This was a re-enactment

of the 1941 surprise attack on Pearl Harbor that included a "mile of fire" pyrotechnic demonstration. Regardless of where you were, on base or off, the performance was awesome and got your attention. Following right behind the Tora! Tora! Tora! act were multiple fly-bys of several vintage US WWII aircraft. They were a P-40 Warhawk, P-47 Thunderbolt, P-51 Mustang, and an F6F Hellcat. Of course, we also enjoyed watching the B-25 Mitchell bomber and C-47 Gooney Bird. It's very rare to have this mix of Warbirds at an Air Show, but Lt. Asa Taylor, our Air Show Coordinator, pulled it off!

Speaking of the off-base audience, Jerry Boucher, the Flour Bluff Constable, said that on Saturday there were cars lined all up and down SPID. As motorists saw the aircraft flying over, they simply pulled over onto the shoulder

Captain continued on page 10

Chaplain's Column

A lesson on Yom HaShoah

by Chaplain Timothy Gault

April 14 was Yom HaShoah. For those of you who aren't familiar with this day, it is an occasion to remember the six million lives lost in the Holocaust and other attempts throughout history to extinguish the Jewish people. It is also an instructive occasion for people of all faiths.

In the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, so a story tells, a group of Jewish prisoners anticipated Hanukkah. But, they did not have any candles to celebrate and could not find any in the camp. So, they each saved their butter from their daily rations until they had enough to make one small candle.

On the night before Hanukkah, they gathered in secret. Imagine the moment. There they were, emaciated bodies who sacrificed their sole sustenance for this moment, huddled together around one candle and their Rabbi.

The Rabbi made the three blessings tra-

ditionally recited while lighting the candles on the first night of Hanukkah. But, after the blessings were made and the candle was lit, one of the men approached the Rabbi. "How could you make the third blessing? In the third blessing, we thank God for bringing us to this day! How can we thank Him for bringing us to this day while we are standing here in this hellish place of death and torture? Aren't the dead better off than we who are still living in this place?"

The Rabbi paused for a moment. Then, he admitted that he, too, questioned whether he should make the third blessing. "However, when I looked around at you all here in this place, I saw the glow on everyone's face and I believed that faith was indeed burning brightly in your hearts. I had to bless God's name, for allowing me to live to see this assembly of martyrs who sanctify the name of God in public, who keep their faith amidst the flames," he said.

What a moment of instruction for people of all faiths! Their bodies were weak but their

spirit was still very strong. Faith was critical for them in that horrible place. Faith in God is equally important for us all. Though we may feel our crises pale in comparison to their struggle, we too have very real, critical moments in life when a realization that God is present and active will be important to us. So, as we pause to remember those who died in the Holocaust, an excellent way to honor their lives and their suffering is to reflect upon our own faith in God. In God we find strength for living and One who understands our weaknesses and our temptations. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Therefore, let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help."



Gault

theft can take months and sometimes years. However, acting quickly could help minimize the damage and assist with a quick recovery.

With so many victims targeted, service members should take preventative steps to protect against identity thieves and to limit the damage if identity theft is suspected. The Fair Credit Reporting Act has made prevention easier by requiring each major consumer credit reporting company to provide a free copy of credit reports once every twelve months upon request. A free report will also be given if requested within sixty days of a company denying an application for credit. Service members away from their usual duty station should consider placing an active duty alert on their credit report. The active duty alert will remain on the report for twelve months and will require businesses to verify the service member's identity before issuing credit. An active duty alert will remove the service member's name from marketing lists for pre-screened credit card offers for two years.

Suggestions that may protect against identity theft are adding a work telephone number or post office box on your checks instead of home contact information; writing "Photo ID Required" on credit cards in permanent ink instead of a signa-

Legal continued on page 10

Legal Corner

Protect your credit

by Lt. Jeff Murse, Navy Legal Services

For most people, establishing a good credit rating requires years of disciplined buying and a conscious effort to ensure bills are paid timely and bank accounts balanced. Unfortunately, millions of Americans each year see their hard work instantly destroyed by identity thieves who open up lines of credit and purchase items and services using stolen information such as names, social security numbers, and dates of birth. Noticing the damage of identity theft, Congress passed the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act in 1998, making identity theft a federal crime punishable



Murse

by 15 years of imprisonment and up to a \$250,000.00 fine. Even with this deterrent, however, identity thieves continue to affect millions of victims each year, with each person left to spend months, and possibly years, correcting the damage to their credit rating.

Recognizing potential identity theft could

Wingspan

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Capt. T.E. Coolidge

Public Affairs Officer
Robert D. Torres

Assistant Public Affairs Officer
Lt. j.g. Caleb H. Booher

Editor
Anne Booher

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Winging Ceremony • April 6



(Back row) The Official Party includes, from left to right: Cmdr. C. J. Cassidy, CO VT-31; Lt. Col. Jon Ullmann, CO VT-35; Capt. Dave Maynard, Commodore TW-4; Capt. Tim Brewer, Guest Speaker and CO VP-30.

Wingees listed alphabetically: 1st Lt. Samuel P. Adams; 2nd Lt. Eric W. Barada; 2nd Lt. Paul A. Colella; Ensign Jeffery R. Coover; Lt. j. g. Francesco S. Coronas; Ensign Nicholas J. Gall; Lt. j. g. Marco M. Gianneta; 2nd Lt. Michael C. Hutchins; 2nd Lt. Dennis M. Napier; 2nd Lt. Reid K. Nishizuka; 2nd Lt. Mark A. Osbeck; 2nd Lt. Henry E. Pflugradt III; 2nd Lt. Andrew T. Reinhardt; 2nd Lt. Travis H. Sheets; 2nd Lt. Jeremy L. Stephens; 1st Lt. Bradley W. Swanson. (Photo by Hugh Lieck Event Photography)

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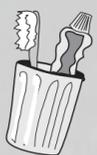
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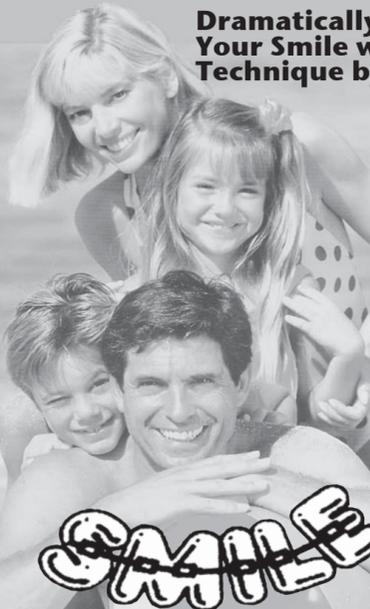
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Sexual Assault Awareness Month brings attention to underreported crimes, offers tips for prevention

by Pat Kapitan, NASCC, NASK, NSI Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in the United States. SAAM is dedicated to making a concerted effort to raise awareness about and prevent sexual violence. It's also a time to recognize the survivors of sexual assault.

Sexual Assault is the most unreported crime in our society and in the military. The Navy and the Department of Defense are committed to ensuring victims are protected, treated with dignity and respect, and provided support, advocacy and care.

Sexual assault is a crime and is any kind of sexual activity that is unwanted, enacted by one person on another without consent. It may include the use of physical force (but many sexual assaults do not) and it involves some combination of coercion, threats and intimidation.

Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy, indecent assault (unwanted, inappropriate sexual contact or fondling), or attempts to commit these acts.

Sexual violence can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, age, socio-economic status, or religion.

You are more likely to be sexually assaulted by someone you know, a friend, date, classmate, neighbor or relative, than by a stranger in a dark alley. One in four females are sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

One in six males are sexually assaulted in their lifetime. Please note that these statistics are based on reported assaults and many sexual assaults are not reported.

Drugs and alcohol are the number one factor that leads to non-stranger (date/acquaintance) rape. Acquaintance rape often occurs as a result of misunderstood sex role behaviors and/or communication styles. Don't assume that one form of sexual contact opens the door to other sexual contacts. Communicate your sexual expectations with your partner. If you think you are getting mixed messages, ask.

If you are sexually assaulted, here are some ways you can go about reporting it. The first is an unrestricted report. Allegations can be reported to your chain of command, base security, local police, healthcare personnel, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Victim Advocate, or FFSC Counselor and be investigated. Access to medical care (including a forensic exam), advocacy, intervention, information, and support will be provided for victims.

The second option is a restricted report, in which sexual assault reports are given to

designated personnel (SARC, Victim Advocate, military healthcare personnel, FFSC Counselors, and Chaplains). They will not be disclosed to command or law enforcement with specified exceptions. Your report will not be investigated but you will still have access to medical care (not forensic exam), advocacy, information and support.

Here are some tips to reduce your risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault or being named as an alleged offender: Common sense, situational awareness, and trusting your instincts will always reduce your risk of being sexually assaulted. If you consume alcohol, do so in moderation. If you are drinking alcohol, keep a buddy with you who will help you make decisions similar to those you would choose while sober. Never leave your drink unattended or accept one from an open container or someone you don't know.

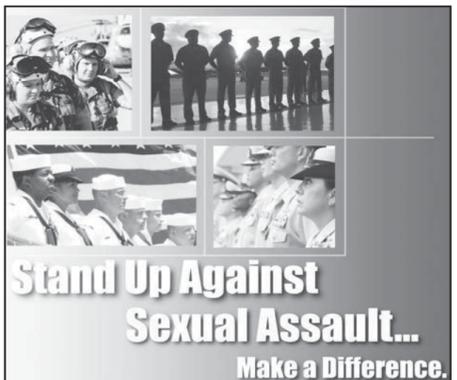
Use the "buddy system." When you go to a party, go with a group of friends. Arrive together, watch out for each other, and leave together. Never assume that you know what another person wants sexually. Ask for consent, listen, and respect their response.

Anyone has the right to change their mind at any time. And if you have any doubts whatsoever, or you feel that you are getting a mixed message, stop, ask, and clarify.

If you still aren't absolutely sure your partner is consenting, stop. If your partner continues sexual activity that makes you uncomfortable, leave the situation. Know and communicate your limits clearly and firmly. In addition to saying, "NO," you could also say, "I want you to stop right now," or "I am very uncomfortable with this and it's not okay with me."

Avoid being isolated with one person in a room, sleeping porch, or car. This reduces the risk of unwanted sexual contact. Think carefully before leaving a party with someone you don't know. Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Also, be wary of behaviors in people you spend time with, such as manipulation, viewing others as objects, constant anger, putting people on "pedestals," or extreme sex-role identification (beliefs that men and women should behave in certain ways.)

If you would like additional information about sexual assault prevention or intervention, or about reporting options, please call the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) Pat Kapitan at (361) 961-1670 or email at pat.kapitan@navy.mil.



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(L to R) Probado Sr. Program Mgr. Wil Merkel, CNATRA Asst. Chief of Staff Capt. Raoul Rall, CNATRA Chief of Staff Capt. David Grimland and Probado Program Analyst Ericka Boyd cut the ribbon on the new Flight Training Support Center at CNATRA Headquarters on April 11. The FTSC will serve as the central clearinghouse and support activity for all Naval Air Training Command (NATRACOM) Training Systems.

Dusty continued from page 1

In regards to his attitude throughout the three years he was in a POW camp and how he made it through, Dusty said, "You're always optimistic. I knew my country was going to beat the heck out of [Japan], eventually. Sure, you know in the long run you're gonna be the winner. On the other hand, we thought the US would probably have to invade Japan, and that wasn't a very helpful thought. They wouldn't allow us to be recaptured by our forces and would have put us away. But you always have optimism. We knew we would win."

When Dusty was released from the POW camp and returned to the United States, his next step was to go through physicals, rehabilitation leave, and then refresher flight training. "We were all underweight and out of shape. Leave was supposed to take care of our rehab. After that, I went to refresher flight training in Whiting Field, Florida."

In Whiting Field, Dusty would see the Blues for the first time and his Blue Angels career would begin soon after. Already good friends with Butch Voris, the first Blue Angels flight leader and Officer-in-Charge, Dusty spoke with him regarding the requirements of being part of the Blues. "When they landed after that first show I went to, we headed over to a coffee shop and I asked Butch, 'What do you have to do to get in this outfit?'"

The requirements for being in the Blue Angels of the 1940s were: you must be a combat veteran, unmarried, and be recommended by other people who had flown with you. Dusty was returning from World War II and Butch had flown with him before. The only requirement Dusty didn't meet involved his marriage.

"When the war was over, my marriage fell apart. We were both strangers. We had roundings at all times. Also, be wary of behaviors in people you spend time with, such as manipulation, viewing others as objects, constant anger, putting people on "pedestals," or extreme sex-role identification (beliefs that men and women should behave in certain ways.)

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situation away from propeller planes and move towards jets.

The Grumman F8F Bearcat had been the Blues' demonstration plane, but it seemed that interest was shifting towards the jet. "We wanted to stay modern," Dusty explained. "I went to Washington and spoke with [Admiral Putnam Storrs] and told them we really should be flying jets. That's what these young guys are interested in. He had a lot to do with the training command and the Blue Angels and had the power to order new aircraft for us. I said we liked the Grumman aircraft. It was strong and stable." That summer, the Blues were presented with brand-new, customized F9F Panther Dash-2's from Grumman.

While there were still kinks to work out with the new planes, they were a hit. "It was really a different thing all together," explained Dusty. "You could fly tighter with the jets. You didn't have any propwash. You could get the wings in closer to each other. The props caused so much turbulence that you could only get in so tight. And with the jets, there were less vibrations than with the reciprocating engine."

While the Blues got used to their new planes and necessary modifications were made along the way, they continued to alternate air shows with the propeller planes and jets, just to make sure everything was perfect before retiring the Bearcats.

It is the goal of the Blue Angels to create interest in young people through their brilliant maneuvers and demonstrations in hopes that they, too, will pursue Naval Aviation. The work of Dusty Rhodes and his team certainly helped lay the foundation for one of the most powerful and inspiring teams in America.

Even though the Blues headed back to Whiting Field in December 1949, and ultimately, became stationed in Pensacola, Corpus is still remembered fondly by the third Commanding Officer of the team. "I have a lot of good memories here in Corpus," says Dusty. "We were here long enough for lots of things to happen. Even though we were on the road most of the time, it was a great place to be."

If you are interested in Dusty Rhodes' story, check out the book "From POW to Blue Angel: The Story of Commander Dusty Rhodes."

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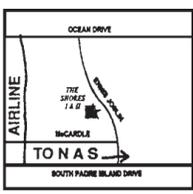
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U.S. Coast Guard monitors salvage of sinking oil rig off Port Aransas coast

by Lt. Lane Steffenhagen, US Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi

On March 21, the Coast Guard began monitoring a jack-up rig that had run aground to prevent it from sinking approximately one mile offshore and six miles south of the Port Aransas jetties. The crew of the tug Vinton Crosby radioed watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi, reporting that the jack-up rig Dolphin III (owned by Nabors International of Houston), which they were towing, was listing to one side and in danger of sinking or tipping over.

The crew also told the Coast Guard they were heading towards shore to run the rig aground to stabilize it. The tug crew was able to get the rig into shallow water, but the Coast Guard rescue boat crew was unable to investigate due to high wind and water. A Coast Guard helicopter crew was sent in and ensured all personnel were safe.

The rig crew reported that a generator powering the de-watering pumps had run out of fuel and the pumps had stopped running. The generators that did not have fuel were for the ballast pumps that provide leveling capabilities.

The next day, workers executed an underwater inspection of the rig to see what repairs were necessary, but their attempts to level the platform were unsuccessful.

By April 6, efforts were still being made to determine the rig's condition. Members of TITAN Maritime positioned a lift boat next to the Dolphin III and began transferring equipment from the lift boat to the disabled rig. Using the rig's own jacking system, TITAN Maritime were able to bring the hull approximately four feet above the water and efforts were underway to dewater compartments that flooded when it was partially submerged.

The rig sustained extensive damage from the constant pounding of heavy seas since it ran aground, but the salvage team worked to seal the compartments and breaches to the hull and the rig was successfully re-floated.

The owner had the rig towed to Kiewit Offshore Services in Ingleside for cleaning and additional repairs. Coast Guard and Texas General Land Office personnel oversaw the removal and disposal of oily water that was left on board from the rig's storage tanks and machinery spaces.



For a few weeks, the fate of this Dolphin III oil rig was unknown. But the efforts of Coast Guard ensured stabilization of the rig and it was safely towed away for repairs. (Photo by Charles Dekle, CG Auxiliary PAO)

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New policies regarding fire apparatus safety at NASCC

by Fire Chief John Morris, NAS Corpus Christi Fire and Emergency Services

As an agency focused on safety, we continually evaluate risks that may pose a danger to the community that we are sworn to protect as well as to ourselves, the emergency responder. We operate extremely heavy vehicles at all hours of the day, in all kinds of weather as we respond to the public's calls for assistance. This same public shares "our" roadways and each driver on the road reacts differently to stressors such as red lights and sirens. Sometimes the reaction is appropriate, as when a driver pulls to the side of the road, granting us the "right of way"; while others may develop the "deer in the headlights" or "squirrel syndrome" reactions that may result in tragedy as they either stop or dart out in front of a responding vehicle. Add to this the seemingly routine red-light runners on our local roadways, and you can clearly see a recipe for disaster as "big" catastrophically meets "little."

In an average year, approximately 25 firefighters are killed in traffic related accidents. This includes fire truck versus automobile accidents, loss of control/roll over of fire apparatus and firefighters being struck by vehicles at incident scenes. This number does not reflect the equally tragic civilian deaths associated with some of these accidents.

We have recently implemented comprehensive vehicle safety policies and procedures developed in a cooperative effort between the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). Our Apparatus Safety Manual has 27 individual policies that collectively serve to increase safety. In our business, "Arrive Alive" means we can mitigate somebody else's emergency as opposed to being part of a new emergency.

Most of these policies will be transparent to the community. One that could cause

confusion is a policy stating all responding fire units shall stop at stop signs and red lights. In the past, and still all too common in many jurisdictions, is that apparatus while responding would commonly "bust" an intersection, hopefully at reduced speeds with lights, air horn and siren activated, essentially taking the right-of-way (Right of Weight). What you should see onboard NAS Corpus Christi is a fire truck with all warning devices activated actually stopping at the controlled intersection and then proceeding through. You are asked to give the right of way if you were there first. The bottom line is, this policy will reduce the severity of an intersection incursion accident as any involved vehicles will be moving slowly. As a driver, you should always pull over to the side of the road when emergency vehicles are responding and avoid the aforementioned "deer in the head light" or "squirrel syndrome" reactions.

Another policy we are studying is a tiered response strategy that would reduce the number of vehicles going to certain types of calls, as well as some vehicles responding to calls in a non-emergency mode. With the size of the base, the few seconds "saved" responding with lights and sirens probably does not outweigh the risk to the public, nor to us. This change will take a while to implement, as it requires detailed data analysis and final coordination with our dispatch center to identify resources based on various factors.

The bottom line is safety and we take this very seriously. On an average day, our fire apparatus will be on the road multiple times responding to emergencies; please maintain situational awareness as you drive, stay off the cell phones and when confronted by one of our responding units, make every effort to ensure its safe passage and yours.



To ensure accidents like this don't happen, NASCC Fire and Emergency Services changed some of their policies regarding response to fire calls and other emergencies. At intersections, they will come to a complete stop to avoid accidents, but ask that you grant them the right-of-way if you arrive first. (Photo available through www.firefighterclosecalls.com)



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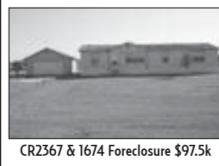
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Captain continued from page 2

and watched. He said we had quite a crowd of off-base spectators.

After the winds on Saturday, I was expecting a large crowd on Sunday. Sure enough, folks came out to enjoy what I can only describe as a perfect Air Show day! I also took advantage of an invitation to experience one of the acts first hand. As most of you know, I'm a Navy helicopter pilot. I enjoy flying and instructing in the T-34C Mentor with the Boomers of VT-27 and the Rangers of VT-28. But I take every opportunity that comes my way to get a little flight time in a helicopter.

On Sunday morning, Master Pilot Chuck Aaron, the pilot of Red Bull's Aerobatic Helicopter (a modified Eurocopter/ Messerschmitt Bo-105 CBS) invited me to fly with him for a short practice. For those of you who attended either day of the Air Show, you saw the red, white and blue helicopter go upside down, literally turn belly-up to the sky into a backward somersault, and a lot more. To those of you familiar with aerobatics, they were loops, rolls, Split S's, Immelmann's, Half-Cuban 8's and back-flips, or what Chuck refers to as the "Chuckslovic" maneuver. I didn't just get to see the performance; I got to ride along with Chuck while he did all those "impossible" things with his helicopter! Before that flight I thought I'd done just about everything you could do in a helicopter. I was wrong. Now, I can say I've done everything you can do in a helicopter! While Chuck didn't let me fly the maneuvers, I followed his control inputs as he put the Bo-105 through its paces. It was one of the most exciting flights I've ever been on...okay a couple of student flights in the T-34 I'll classify as more "exciting" but that was for different reasons. Anyway, my flight with Chuck in the Red Bull Aerobatic Helicopter kept me grinning all day long.

I couldn't be more pleased with the 2007 South Texas Shoot-Out Air Show. We also enjoyed sponsorship from a lot of companies and individuals who recognize and appreciate the service of the men and women in uniform!

Again, thank you to everyone involved in putting on one of our greatest Air Shows ever! Until next time, I'll see ya on the beach!

Legal continued from page 2

ture; only including the last four digits of your account number when writing checks to pay credit cards or other accounts; and frequently reviewing your credit report from the three credit reporting companies. The three major credit reporting companies are as follows: Equifax: (800) 525-6285; Experian: (888) 397-3742; TransUnion: (800) 680-7289.

The use of electronic Leave and Earning statements through the MyPay website was also initiated, in part, to help alleviate potential identity theft associated with hardcopies and postal deliveries of these statements. Complete social security numbers have been removed from all hardcopy Leave and Earning statements to further protect service members and their personal information. Despite all possible preventative measures, identity thieves have proven the ability to access personal information and destroy credit ratings on a large scale.

Although proactive efforts can reduce the risk of identity theft, it cannot always be prevented. Service members should be aware of the privacy policies established by their financial institutions, and steps should always be taken to ensure that personal information is not disclosed to third parties. By simply shredding documents before discarding, removing unnecessary personal information from wallets and purses, and being informed of their credit activity, service members can reduce their risk of being victimized by identity theft.

Call the NLSO at 961-3765 for more information on identity theft. Appointments can be scheduled at the NLSO to address specific identity theft issues from 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Auto Hobby Shop offers an inexpensive alternative to in-town mechanics

Photo and story by 1st Lt. Keith Knoesel, Public Affairs Office Staff



Byron Herrick, the Supervisor at the Auto Hobby Shop, fixes a flat tire for a customer. Located on Avenue E, the Shop is an inexpensive alternative to local mechanics.

If you're looking for a 'sort of' do-it-yourself car maintenance/repair shop, the Auto Skills Center is the place for you. The Auto Skills Center is located in bldg. 1718 on Avenue E, West of the Navy/Army Federal Credit Union.

There are numerous services provided aside from doing all of the work yourself. I've never owned a vehicle that hasn't had the "check engine" light come on at least once. Who doesn't just want to slap some electrical tape over it and hope for the best rather than spending \$75 to \$100 just to find out that your gas cap wasn't seated properly?

At the Auto Skills Center it's only \$20 for a computer diagnostic. So, if you're like me and don't know a lug nut from a beer nut you don't have to sell the farm to find out what's causing that check engine light.

You can have tires repaired; mounted and balanced; brakes turned, and even a state inspection. Of course, now that the dog days of summer are right around the corner, what about air conditioning? For only \$15 plus the fee for Freon, you can have your A/C serviced. For those of you who think you have some mechanical inclination, there are five drive-on lifts and three frame lifts.

At each of these workstations, there are toolboxes with metric and standard wrenches and sockets, screwdrivers, pliers and oil filter wrenches, and a lot of specialty type tools. The

staff is always around to help as well. According to one patron, "Sometimes I'll think I know what I'm doing and one of the guys will walk by and say 'You probably don't want to do it that way,' and then he'll show me how to do it the right way - they're great."

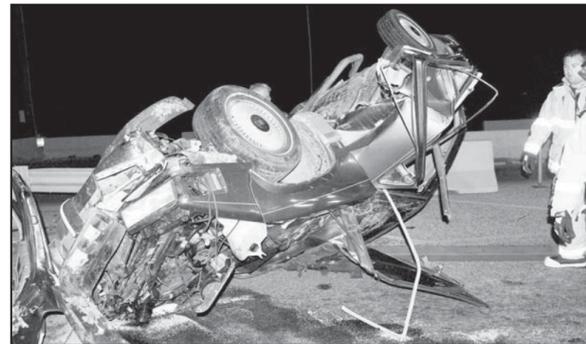
There is also a great computer program to help you along called ALLDATA. I would describe it as a Google specifically for cars/car problems. It was extremely easy to navigate, very informative, and had thousands of foreign and domestic vehicles serving many decades.

Another benefit to using the Auto Skills Center is that the NEX Auto Accessory Store is right next door. The Auto Accessory store stocks batteries, oil filters, cleaning supplies, and much more. You can also order tires and wheels.

The Auto Skills Center caters primarily to active duty military but, according to Supervisor Byron Herrick, "If you can get on the base you can pretty much use the place." The hours for the Auto Skills Center are Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It's closed on Monday and Tuesday.

So, the next time you see that "check engine" light, don't start looking for the electrical tape, go and see Byron and the crew at the Auto Skills Center. Tell 'em Keith sent ya.

Don't drink and drive...



At 2:45 a.m. on April 7, a drunk driver sped through the South Gate going 70 mph. He hit a concrete barrier head on, but somehow survived. Please be responsible and designate a driver.

Photo by Bob Torres, Public Affairs Officer

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2007

SOUTH TEXAS SHOOT-OUT



Photo by Anne Booher, Editor

(Above) The Blue Angels fly in formation over the NASCC flightline. In addition to the Blue Angels' demonstration, there were more than 50 military displays, including C-130s, a B-25 Bomber, vintage WWII aircraft and helicopters, that were available for visitors to walk through. Owners or servicemembers were available to answer questions.

(Right) Channel 6 News Anchor Bianca Castro receives a briefing from Aircrewman David Schmidt before flying with Blue Angels #7 Major Nathan Miller (not pictured). On April 12, Bianca, Eric von Wade from Channel 10, and Bart Allison from 92.7 KBAY Radio were able to fly with Miller and experience a Blue Angels' media flight firsthand. Some actually had a chance to maneuver the \$25 million aircraft themselves.

(Below) A crowd of spectators search the sky for the next aerial maneuver the Blues will perform. More than 130,000 spectators visited NASCC throughout the weekend of April 14 and 15, not including those who pulled their vehicles over on South Padre Island Drive to enjoy the spectacle.



Photo by Bob Torres, Public Affairs Officer



Photo by Anne Booher, Editor



Photo by Bob Torres, Public Affairs Officer

The Red Bull Bo-105 helicopter performs a full loop (in time lapse). Its solid rotor hub system allows it to perform aerobatic maneuvers, including barrel rolls, which are impossible for other rotary wing aircraft.



Photo by Lt. J.g. Caleb Booher, Asst. Public Affairs Officer

The Budweiser Clydesdales were on the flightline, escorting Capt. Timothy Coolidge (right), Commanding Officer of NASCC.



Photo by Naval Information Bureau

(Left) Mike Burke stands with his P-51 Mustang. Burke performed in "Tora! Tora! Tora!" by reenacting the U.S. response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.



Photo by Lt. J.g. Caleb Booher, Asst. Public Affairs Officer



Photo by Bob Torres, Public Affairs Officer

"Tora! Tora! Tora!" reenacts the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, complete with Japanese Mitsubishi A6M "Zeros," Nakajima B6N "Kate" Torpedo Bombers (pictured) and an extraordinary display of pyrotechnics.

On April 13, the Blue Angels practiced their Air Show routine for an audience of over 3,000 local children and servicemembers. Some of the children were patients from Driscoll Children's Hospital, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and Dare to Dream Foundation.