



## Force Protection



Current FPCON:

**"6-5...  
IN THE FIGHT!"**  
CY 2010  
(as of Oct. 12, 2010)

**1,452  
SORTIES**

**22,909  
LODGED**

**5.60 million  
gallons  
FUEL ISSUED**

### Weekend Weather Forecast (Lajes Weather Flight)

#### Friday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cldy / Partly Cldy  
Wind ENE 10-15mph  
High 66  
Low 61

#### Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cldy / Showers  
Wind E 15-20/E 20-30 mph  
High 65  
Low 60

#### Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cldy / Partly Cldy  
Wind ENE 20-30mph  
High 66  
Low 62

## 65 SFS Airmen train for the fight



Members of the 65th Security Forces Squadron practice combatives while Chief Dennis Vannorsdall, 3rd Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. (far left), looks on with other SFS members during a pre-TDY training at Lajes Field, Oct. 12, 2010. Combative training techniques are useful to military members when in hand-to-hand combat. This specialized training includes verbal judo and self-defense. (U. S. Photo by Guido Melo)

By Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell  
65th Air Base Wing / Public Affairs

Members from the 65th Security Forces Squadron provide security, antiterrorism, and force protection for Lajes Field, enabling airpower for all U.S. and allied forces. To provide these services 65 SFS members must always be ready for the fight by staying up-to-date with training. This constant readiness allows security forces members to be ready for real-world responses and short-notice deployments.

Several SFS members are currently completing a pre temporary-duty training consisting of firing requalification, deployed location weapons and combatives for an upcoming TDY.

"Whenever you get ready to go into any environment you need to not just re-familiarize yourself with basic force protection but you also need to learn the conditions

of the local environment," said Staff Sgt. Eric Tabb, 65th Security Forces Squadron Operations Alpha flight chief.

With SFS members in the fight with a 1-to-1 deployment band, it has them deployed more than half the year with only about an average of 4-6 month dwell time at their home station before going back out for 180-day deployment.

"It is hard being a SFS member with the deployment rates, but I love my job and what I stand for. The base populace and mission capabilities are contingent of me doing my job and doing it right," added Sergeant Tabb.

The SFS motto is 'defensor fortis,' which means defenders of the force.

The 65th SFS members are the defenders of the force for Lajes Field, enabling Lajes to facilitate expeditionary forces through continuous operation of an essential en route support base for worldwide deployments of U.S. and allied forces.

## Lajes team learns about renewable energies

By Master Sgt. Rigo Chacon  
65th Civil Engineer Squadron

On Sept. 22, members from the Lajes Field chapter of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) toured the wind farm located in Serra do Cume.

Guided by Sr. Miguel Martins, Project Engineer with Empresa de Electricidade e Gaz, Lda (EEG, Ltd), the group learned the wind farm is the largest in the Azores and consists of 5 wind turbines delivering 4.5 megawatts (4.5 MW) of potential electricity and is capable of powering up to 25 percent of Terceira's power on any given day.

EEG Ltd. estimates up to 12 gigawatt-hours (12 GWh) are produced annually and prevents the annual consumption of 2,400 tons of fuel oil, 19 tons of lubricating oil and

prevents 9,000 tons of carbon dioxide being emitted into the atmosphere. Completed in 2008 at a cost of 5.7 million Euros, the wind farm has been deemed economically viable and an expansion is currently being designed.

Converting wind to electricity is not the only renew-

To read more on "Energy" see page 6

**LAJES FIELD  
WINTER CAMPAIGN:  
8 DAYS**



# Stamp out fraud, waste, abuse

By Lt. Col. David Easley

65th Air Base Wing Inspector General

In the United States Air Force, a wing Inspector General has two primary duties. The first is to manage and execute the Air Force IG Complaints Resolution Program. The second is to manage and execute the process by which we eliminate instances of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (FWA).

Though the IG is the primary POC and has "First Right of Refusal" for all FWA cases, like many things in the Air Force, the prevention of Fraud, Waste and Abuse is truly the responsibility of ALL Airmen. We are a nation at war, and we all need to ensure we do not waste or abuse any of the resources needed for the fight!

Fraud is defined as "any intentional deception designed to unlawfully deprive the AF of something of value (to which the member is not entitled) for the purpose of personal gain." Examples of such practices of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- The offer, payment or acceptance of bribes.
- Making false statements or submitting false claims (such as on a travel voucher).
- Suppressing the truth or misrepresenting material facts, or defrauding the Air Force of something of value.
- Falsifying records.
- Conspiring to carry out any of the actions just stated.

Waste is the "careless or needless expenditure of AF funds resulting from deficient practices and controls." People often think that the only waste worth reporting would be something along the lines of a multi-million dollar

aircraft contract, but actually relatively small examples of waste (e.g. a continuously leaking water pipe) all cost the Air Force dollars which would be far better spent elsewhere. If one can fix a minor source of waste right on the spot, by all means this should be done. However, if a quick easy fix is not possible, then Airmen are expected to report the waste to the IG.

Abuse is defined as a member's intentional wrongful and improper use of AF resources. Examples include misuse of rank, position, or authority that causes the loss or misuse of resources such as tools, vehicles, computers, or copy machines.

Examples include someone using a government computer to run a private business, or using government vehicles and gasoline to run purely personal errands. Abuse of authority involves the misuse and/or abuse of Air Force personnel by someone in a supervisory role or position.

If one becomes aware of any examples of Fraud, Waste, or Abuse that they cannot readily correct on the spot, an individual should contact the Inspector General at DSN 535-3264/1142, or by e-mail at 65abw.ig@lajes.af.mil. Individuals may also contact the DoD FWA Hotline at Commercial: 001-800-424-9098; e-mail: hotline@dodig.osd.mil. In most cases the IG will refer the matter back to the appropriate chain of command for resolution, but as was stated previously, by AFI the IG does have first right of refusal for all FWA cases.

It is important for all Airmen to remember that anyone making lawful communications regarding allegations of Fraud, Waste, or Abuse to Congress or the Inspector General is always protected from reprisal by "whistle-blower" protection laws and regulations.

# Fitness focus is on keeping you alive, not downsizing

By Capt. Darrick B. Lee

35th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan -- It's no secret the Air Force has placed a renewed emphasis on physical training lately. Although we've always had a PT program, the recent revisions are the most significant we've seen in the past few years.

Likewise, it's no secret that many Airmen are concerned about keeping up with the revised fitness standards. With the 1.5-mile run now accounting for potentially 60 percent of an Airman's total test score, and with the understanding that a failure in any one area means total test failure, these are valid concerns.

Unrelated, and also not a secret, is the Air Force's ongoing effort to reduce the total number of Airmen force-wide. According to Air Force Personnel Center officials, the force has more people than authorized by Congress. Recent programs, including force shaping and the implementation of high-tenure separations, are aimed at meeting manpower goals.

On the surface, some skeptics might view our renewed focus on fitness as a subtle attempt to help with the manpower reduction efforts. While I don't agree with this view, it is true the current program considers two consecutive PT test failures as potential grounds for discharge.

I think the Airmen who believe this need to spend some time talking with those who have recently returned from a joint expeditionary deployment. If they do, they'll learn what joint expeditionary tasking Airmen already know; If you are not physically fit, there is a real chance you may die while deployed.

The Air Force's increased focus on physical fitness is directly related to the increased number of kinetic-combat roles Airmen are being tasked to perform. The force wants to do all it can to ensure you have the tools you need to work, and survive, while in a combat zone. Aside from your weapon and a sound mind, a fit body is probably the best tool you can have downrange.

To read more on "Fitness" see page 6

## Commander's Action Line

535-4240

65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution. Your chain of command should always be your first option — but when that's not the



Col. Jose Rivera

answer, call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.

Col. Jose Rivera

Commander, 65th Air Base Wing



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

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# Firefighters work together to educate Lajes Airmen



Team Lajes members watch fire response vehicles drive through Lajes Field as part of the base's Fire Prevention Week Parade Oct. 9, 2010. The parade showcased the variety of equipment that enables the 65th Civil Engineer Squadron to support the base's mission and achieve the wing's priorities. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

By Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell  
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Fire trucks from Lajes Field joined with fire trucks from Angra do Herosimo, Praia da Vitoria and Altares to showcase the variety of equipment that enables the 65th Civil Engineer Squadron to support the base's mission and achieve the wing's priorities of "Today's Fight... Airmen and Families...Host Nation Relationship...Future Challenges."

"The theme of the Fire Prevention Week this year was 'Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With'," said Jorge Estrela, Fire Inspector. "We also educated the base populace on how to prevent fires."

"After educating the base on fire prevention, we used this time to have collaboration with local firefighters and have a friendly competition against each other such as mannequin drags," Mr. Estrela added.

Even though the competition part of the event was cancelled due to weather, Lajes firefighters talked with local firefighters about training, equipment and how they stay up-to-date in the firefighting craft.

"I became a volunteer firefighter for the adventure as well as it is a family tradition. This is my first time coming out to the base for this, and I believe that we should get together more often," said Adriano Silva from the Angra fire station.

Most of the local off-base firefighters are volunteers. Mr. Silva has been a volunteer firefighter for more than seven years.

"Getting to see how the Air Force firefighters work and see the dif-

ferent equipment is a great opportunity, even though the competition was cancelled," said Pedro Barcelos, a firefighter from Praia.

"I cannot wait until next year to come together with my fellow firefighters and share information and remember those who have lost their lives due to fire," added Mr. Barcelos.

According to National Fire Protection Association, Fire Prevention Week commemorates the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. President Woodrow Wilson first implemented National Fire Prevention Day in 1920, and every president since 1925 has signed the proclamation for the week-long observance. Every year, a parade of on-base and off-base fire trucks cruise through the base and base housing areas to help close out the educational week. There were eight U.S. Air Force and six Portuguese fire trucks that participated in the parade this year, as Sparky and others threw candy to spectators.

"It was awesome to see all the fire trucks coming down the street and hear the sirens," said Frankie Caruso, son of Maj. Anthony Caruso, Diagnostic and Therapeutic Flight commander.

Besides a base parade and collaboration with local firefighters, the week consisted of several events such as an open house at the fire station for the DODDS school and Area Base 4, exercise demonstration at a Portuguese facility and Sparky visited the commissary and BX. If you missed these events, next year's fire prevention week will be Oct. 9-15, 2012.

## 65th CES releases Energy Awareness Month events

By Lereña Duarte  
65th Civil Engineer Squadron

The 65th Civil Engineer Squadron recently released the list of Energy Awareness month events for October. During this month, the library will have posters and flyers with information on how to save energy to remind costumers about the Energy Awareness Month.

See below for a list of additional events.

**Library** - On Oct. 14 Energy story time.

**Commissary** - 19th and 26th of October Interacting and giving Energy savings tips for the housewives.

**Energy Expo at the Youth Center Gym:** An exposition where we can demonstrate how various energy efficient technologies work and also show all of the students' energy art worksworks.

### School - Energy Wisdom

Teachers at the base school will talk about energy and the effect it has on everyone. All of the students that participate in the activities will receive a t-shirt and a certificate on the last day of Energy Expo.

The students will work in groups or alone and present a work on the energy Expo as follows:

- 1st and 2nd grade drawings representing energy
- 3rd and 4th grade poster representing energy
- 5th and 6th grade a mockup or a poster representing all of the natural resources on earth
- 7th, 8th and 9th grade a mockup or a poster on alternatives to oil.
- 10th to 12th grade mockup or a poster on a sustainable village.

If you have any questions regarding Energy Awareness Month, contact Lereña Duarte at 535-3427.

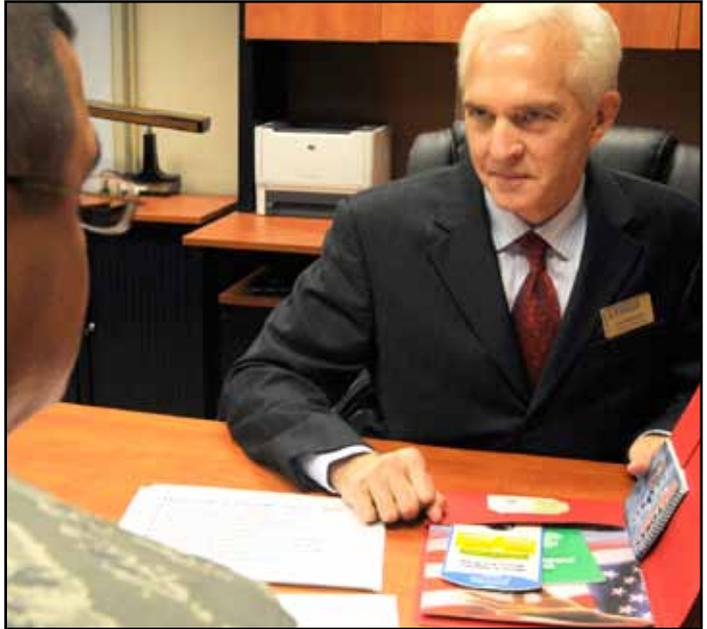
## Watch out for E-speed monitoring radar along Via Rapida

Lajes members are reminded that an electronic speed monitor is in place on the four-lane highway between Praia and Angra. Members are thereby urged to watch your speed. It doesn't matter who is driving; if it's your car, you get the ticket! There are two radars installed on the highway: one at Reguinho (a little up from the circle of access to the dump, Angra-Praia) and another one at Quatro Canadas (intersection to Aqualva and Fontinhas, near Galanta's Bar). For now, these two radars are only on the Via Rapida, but there is the possibility of more being installed, depending on the success of the current radars. According to the 65th Security Forces Squadron officials, there has been an increase in the number of tickets due to the fact some Lajes members are not aware of these radars. This notice is to simply remind Lajes members to drive safely and be mindful of their speed along the above-mentioned roads.



# Financial Fitness: Show me the money

By Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell  
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs



The bill is \$142.50. Will you pay with cash or credit?  
Today, less and less people are choosing to use a credit card to pay their bills. According to Index Credit Cards, the average American has a revolving debt of \$3,752 per adult and \$7,394 per household. This is a significant decrease since the census data collected in July 2009 when the average credit card debt per adult was estimated at \$4,013.

Debt can be detrimental to a person's way of life and even career, causing the person to not be focused on the mission and possibly lose clearances, and it is unfortunately one of the top reasons for divorce. To combat this, the Airmen and Family Readiness Center offers classes, programs and even one-on-one counseling with a financial manager.

"I have seen people from various backgrounds with little to no debt to heavy debt come to me for assistance," said Mr. James McDaniel, A&FRC community readiness consultant and accredited financial counselor.

The A&FRC "Have you fed your pig today" class teaches Airman how to transform their financial dreams into personal investment goals and plans.

Several classes, ranging from how to stop emotional spending to real estate to investing and savings, are offered monthly at the A&FRC.

One of the main reasons people don't attend classes is that they don't want others to know about their financial status. To encourage members to explore options, one-on-one counseling is offered.

"The A&FRC offers such a great and variety of classes that even if you are not in debt, it's a great way to stay on top of your finances and better manage your money," said Capt. Naomi Evangelista, 65th Air Base Wing public affairs officer.

Personal financial planners in the civilian sector can charge a flat rate, hourly rate or even a commission for a service.

The A&FRC provides these services free of charge with no strings or hidden agendas, which is a savings that could range from \$350 to more than \$1000 depending on the class and provider.

"I love the one-on-one counseling because it is conducive to my

work situation and schedule," said Senior Airman Javona Tarpley, 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron mobility storage technician. The A&FRC offers classes, financial programs and one-on-one counseling. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

"I found the information from Mr. McDaniel very informative and it was tailored just for me. I would recommend this to everyone because Mr. McDaniel finds ways to help you no matter what your financial status is, and he is not judgmental," Airman Tarpley added.

If you need assistance with getting out of debt or want to save more efficiently or even invest extra money, the A&FRC can help. They not only offer classes, programs and one-on-one counseling, but they will also be glad to visit and brief your unit. For more information, contact the A&FRC at 535-4138.

and takes care of the 65th Security Forces' day-to-day operations.

## LAJES AIRMEN OF THE WEEK



**Name:** Janay Alexander  
**Rank:** Senior Airman  
**Unit:** 65th Security Forces Squadron  
**Hometown:** Killeen, Texas  
**Duty Title:** 65 SFS duty flight sergeant  
**Accomplishments:** Senior Airman Alexander is without a doubt one of our young up-and-coming stars in the Security Forces career field. Airman Alexander always displays a can-do attitude and has performed at a very high

level, taking on non-commissioned officers' responsibilities as a swing shift flight sergeant. Her positive attitude also extends to her off-duty involvement in base/community functions and in her pursuit of her Community College of the Air Force Degree. Her recent selection for promotion to a staff sergeant is very well deserved!



**Name:** Paula Sousa  
**Rank:** LN Civ  
**Unit:** 65 SFS  
**Hometown:** Angra Do Heroismo  
**Duty Title:** 65 SFS commander's secretary  
**Accomplishments:** Ms. Sousa is one of our key players in the 65 SFS. She not only keeps our unit commander's schedule in order, but she also keeps our wing and group tasking in line. Paula always takes care of business with a smile

and takes care of the 65th Security Forces' day-to-day operations.



# "6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"



Members from the Lajes Company Grade Officer Council sat down with Col. Jose Rivera, 65th Air Base Wing commander, at Café Bean for an Officer Professional Development panel Oct. 8. Leadership, expectations of officers and promotions were among the numerous topics discussed at the meeting, which will take place monthly. The Lajes CGOC is an organization whose goal is to promote leadership, officer-ship and professionalism. (Photo by Capt. Naomi Evangelista)



The 65th Air Base Wing welcomes back Capt. Russell Montante, 65th Communications Squadron, from his deployment to Qatar. Capt. Montante was deployed for 6 months to Afghanistan where he worked in the Combined Air Operations Center. (Photo by Capt. Naomi Evangelista)



65th Security Forces Squadron members and their families volunteered their Saturday morning on Sept. 25 to clean up all 10 of the playgrounds and some of the common areas in the Lajes base housing areas. The members picked up about 150 pounds of trash and debris during the effort to maintain a clean and safe environment. (Courtesy photo)



Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Vannorsdall, 3rd Air Force command chief master sergeant, conducts an NCO forum with Team Lajes non-commissioned officers at the base theater Oct. 12, 2010. The enlisted call was designed to allow Chief Vannorsdall to hear from the enlisted members so he can advise leadership at the 3rd Air Force. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Nicole White, legal assistant, reviews paperwork with Master Sgt. Jeremy Alvarez, section chief of the wing addition duty cell, at Lajes Field, Oct. 12, 2010. The legal office provides competent and timely legal advice and services to the military community. Walk-in hours for powers of attorney, affidavits and notaries services are Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and legal assistance services are by appointments. For more information call 535-3546. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)



Staff Sgt. Seth McClintock, 65th Operations Support Squadron transit alert, talks to Staff Sgt. Johnathon Pennington, 65th Operations Support Squadron quality assurance, about steps he took to collect engine oil samples at Lajes Field, Oct. 5, 2010. When an aircraft lands for maintenance issues oil samples have to be taken within 30 minutes of landing. Lajes' Airmen have reduced the oil analysis turnaround by 80 percent. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)



## Mark your calendar

### 2010 Breast Cancer Awareness Month Activities:

10 a.m. Oct 16, Angra Walk and Kick for the Cure  
8 p.m. Oct 22-23 Midnight Walk for the Cure  
6:30 p.m. Nov 6, Pink Tie Gala and Auction

\*For details or questions, contact Capt. Brandon Morgan at [brandon.morgan@lajes.af.mil](mailto:brandon.morgan@lajes.af.mil).

### PUMPKIN PATROL:

The 65 ABW's annual "Pumpkin Patrol" trick or treat event will be held in the Beira Mar and Nascer do Sol housing areas. The 65 SFS is soliciting volunteers from 1700-2100 hours on 31 Oct to assist in providing security for this event. If you are interested in making certain our family and friends have a safe and secure environment during this year's Halloween festivities, please contact Master Sgt. Joe Swick at 535-3645 or Staff Sgt. Ossian Satterwhite at 535-4505.

**NOVEMBER PROMOTION CEREMONY:** The Team Lajes Monthly Promotion Ceremony for November is scheduled for 29 October 2010 at 3 p.m. in the TORC Ballroom. All are invited to attend and join in congratulating Lajes' newest promotees. For details, contact Tech. Sgt. Chantal Satterwhite at 535-5191.

### "Energy" from page 1

able energy being produced in the Azores. Terceira has a small hydro-electric plant located in Angra do Heroismo. Additionally, the Portuguese government has invested on geothermal power on the island of Sao Miguel and is researching similar production on Terceira. Launched in 2001 as part of a new government energy policy, Portugal has reported getting 45 percent of its electricity from renewable energy – an increase of 28 percent over the last 5 years.

Occurring throughout the month of October, "Think Green, Build Green, and Fly Blue" is this year's Air Force facility energy awareness month theme. According to the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency (AFC-ESA), the Air Force has reduced its facility energy consumption by nearly 12 percent with more than 5 percent of its power now being generated from renewable energy sources.

With the goal of promoting engineering support for national security, membership into SAME is open to all members of the uniformed services, public and private sector engineers, as well as related professionals. Uniformed officers and enlisted personnel are offered membership for a one-time payment of \$60 that will provide membership for the duration of their military career. Memberships are free for high school students, as well as full-time undergraduate students at an accredited college or university. Anyone at Lajes interested in joining SAME should contact MSgt Rigo Chacon DSN 535-3839 or Major Ross Gleason at DSN 535-2641.

The Lajes field chapter is a subordinate unit of the Kaiserslautern Post located in Germany and usually meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Top of the Rock Club. Program starts at noon, with a pay-as-you-go lunch available at 11:30 a.m., and is free of charge to the public.

### "Fitness" from page 2

Some might think to themselves, "I'm not going to risk pushing myself now. Besides, if I have to deploy, they'll whip me into shape during combat skills training, anyway."

The pre-deployment training we receive helps, but it's unrealistic to believe the challenge of getting in shape for combat begins at CST. The Air Force is trying to create a culture that is focused on being in shape year-round, not just when it's time for a PT test or time to deploy. The intent is to keep you alive, not to kick out Airmen or ensure those who remain are "checking the box."

The 35th Fighter Wing's senior enlisted leader, Chief Master Sgt. Russell Hastings, agrees. He recently expressed a desire to de-emphasize the technical aspects of the new program and to put focus more on fitness in general.

"Clearly, there's a lot of emotion about the program," Chief Hastings said. "But mission readiness is the reason we're doing this. We've got to be able to accomplish the mission. We do need to meet these new standards, but rather than worrying about going on a crash diet to lose an inch, doing the perfect push-up or bringing a calculator to your PT test so you can tally scores mid-run, we need to change our daily mindset to include being fit every day."

## Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



**ENGLISH:** Where can I go to get a good pizza?

**PORTUGUESE:** Onde devo ir para conseguir uma boa pizza?

**PRONUNCIATION:** Own-day day-vuh er pahda cohn-see-guid uh-ma boah pizza?

## BULLFIGHT SCHEDULE

Friday, Oct. 15 5:00 p.m. Santa Rita Hill  
Friday, Oct. 15 5:00 p.m. Caminho da Esperança, Porto Judeu



**NOTE:** This is the last bullfight for 2010.

## At the Movies

7 p.m. Friday - Nanny McPhee Returns (PG)  
7 p.m. Saturday - Lottery Ticket (PG-13)  
4 p.m. Sunday - Nanny McPhee Returns (PG)  
7 p.m. Sunday - Vampires Suck (PG-13)



Movie times and schedule are subject to change.  
Call 535-4100 for the latest update.

I learned the same lesson, the hard way, during a recent deployment. In 2009, I served as a member of a provincial reconstruction team in Afghanistan. Our team often traveled to remote villages to help build schools, roads, etc. Sometimes, we traveled in vehicles, but when the terrain was too rough, we had to travel on foot.

This was not an easy task based on distance, weather and terrain alone. Add to this the requirement to carry "full battle rattle" (combat gear), and a foot patrol could quickly turn into a real physical fitness test, one I didn't want to fail while outside the wire.

On several occasions during my deployment, fitness was a factor in saving me from being injured or even killed. My most vivid memory is of our PRT taking incoming fire from insurgents while we were on foot, and me frantically running to get to the safety of our mine-Resistant ambush-protected vehicles. A medic was waiting inside the vehicle I was running to. She helped me by quickly opening the heavy MRAP door so I could scramble inside. MRAP doors are opened automatically, but they can sometimes be slow and hard to open. To open them quickly takes extra muscle.

I made it to safety that day, but I know more than a few Airmen who may not have been able to do the same.

Now, whenever I'm running, with my lungs out of breath and my sides hurting, I think to myself, "What if I couldn't run fast enough on that day?"

Whenever I'm doing push-ups, fighting to keep my knees off the ground while hoping my arms can support my own weight, I think, "What if the medic wasn't strong enough to push open that MRAP door to let me in?"

I could have died that day.

I'm not a fitness freak. The truth is that I don't enjoy running. Sit-ups always hurt my back, and push-ups bring back bad memories from boot camp. But I've promised myself that going into my next deployment, I won't have to wonder "what if," because I'll feel confident knowing the answer before I go.

I ask you to do the same.

Abandon any conspiracy theories about why we're re-focusing on fitness, and quit bringing your phone to the PT test loaded with the latest fitness score calculator application. (That's a true story; I've seen it.)

Instead, embrace the new standards. If you don't do it to accomplish the mission, embrace the new standards for a more personal reason; You may very well die if you don't.