Peterson opens doors to new dental clinic

By Senior Airman Stephen Collier
21st Space Wing Public Affairs

Peterson leadership and base dental officials swung open the doors to a new, temporary dental facility Nov. 19 as Team Pete continues to upgrade facilities to better support the local military community.

The $3.5 million facility, which eventually gives way to a permanent clinic in the next decade, features many technological upgrades over the previous facility that was co-located with the Peterson medical clinic. The facility’s design was started October 2006. The improvements made include new dental chairs, a new laboratory used for fabricating prosthetic restorations and, in the following six months, will make available digital radiology to customers.

“Once installed, digital X-rays will cut patient wait time from five minutes to instant results,” said Master Sgt. John Kemp II, dental clinic noncommissioned officer in charge. “The (dental) clinic is also set up to streamlining for patient care. With three, new treatment rooms, we’ll be able to work much more efficiently.”

The price tag for upgrading clinic capabilities include $375,000 for dental chairs, $35,000 for a new laboratory, and $14,000 for sterilizers and new work stations for assistants. Overall, the new facility falls in line with Peterson’s expansion plan “Blue Print 2050.” Through Congressional military construction, or MILCON funding, Maj. Michael Brunh, 21st Medical Support Squadron deputy commander, said opening the temporary clinic “is the first step towards a new medical complex on Pete East.”

“A new MILCON dental clinic is scheduled for 2012 and a MILCON medical clinic is scheduled for 2025,” the major said. “However, the projected growth of retirees to the area is not expected to hurt our bottom line as we primarily support the active duty population. Retirees may use dental services here only on an emergency basis.”

As Peterson continues to adhere to Air Force Smart Operations, or AFSP-21 policy, upgrades over the previous facility that was co-located with the Peterson medical clinic.

Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado

Thursday, November 29, 2007 Vol. 51 No. 34

Waste audit looks at what is, isn’t being reused

By Corey Dahl

Dumpster diving is usually frowned on here, but for a group of Peterson employees, crawling in refuse Nov. 15 was just another day on the job.

In honor of America Recycles Day, members of the 21st Civil Engineer Squadron and contractors from Booz Allen Hamilton and Resource Geoscience, Inc., dug through a week’s worth of trash from Dorm 1170. The group sorted out all the recyclables to find out how much – or how little – Airmen in the dorms are taking advantage of recycling bins.

“We’re trying to get an idea of how many recyclables are getting sent to the landfill,” said Phil Chase, pollution prevention manager with the 21st CES. “There’s a lot of stuff that’s getting thrown in the dumpster when it could be recycled.”

An audit of the dorm’s trash found 64 pounds of card-

General honored for decades of service

By Ashley Wright

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. (AFPN) – The current longest-serving person in the Air Force was inducted into the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Hall’s Wall of Achievers during an enlisted academy graduation ceremony in downtown Montgomery recently.

Angela Correto and Danielle Trice, employees with Resource Geoscience, Inc., sort through a week’s worth of trash from Peterson’s dorms. Booz Allen Hamilton employees teamed up with the 21st Civil Engineer Squadron to sort through the base’s trash in order to discover how many recyclables are ending up in the landfill.

Peterson opens doors to new dental clinic

By Senior Airman Barry Vaughan
21st Medical Support Squadron

Working to prepare the base’s new dental clinic, Senior Airman Barry Vaughan installs electrical components for an endoscope Nov. 15 here. Airman Vaughan, together with other members of the 21st Medical Support and Dental Squadrons, were putting the finishing touches on the new facility prior to its Nov. 19 opening. Airman Vaughan is a biomedical equipment technician assigned to the 21st MDSS.

See Audits page 8

INSIDE

Joint Operations U.S. and Canadian forces ensure security in a remote arctic region

News 1-5

Heritage 7

Briefs 7

Sports 13

Athlete of the Week 14

Miracle Baby Child born with a life threatening heart disease comes home for the holidays

Page 5

Page 6

21st Services Squadron holiday hours

Page 7

Community’s Corner: Preparing for the holidays – Page 3

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The holiday season, from Thanksgiving through New Year’s, is one of the most special times of the year and one which many of us look upon with great anticipation. For those who are able, I encourage you to take this opportunity to recharge your batteries, reconnect with family and friends and reflect on all the wonderful things we enjoy as Americans. Not everyone is fortunate enough to have this time away from work and spend extra time with their loved ones.

As you know, thousands of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are serving their country around the world as part of the Global War on Terror. There are also those, closer to home, performing mission-critical duties that preclude them from spending time with their loved ones.

Examples in the 21st Space Wing include various 24/7 operations such as our command post, security forces, and fire department teams. Another example includes our geographically separated units performing mission warning and space control duties. Whether it is Christmas or New Year’s, members of these units are on call no matter what time of year it is. I ask you keep these individuals in your thoughts and prayers, as well as their family members, until such time they are able to enjoy the holiday season as others do.

The holiday season is also about taking care of one another. Whether it is taking an active Wingman approach or visiting a family member, until such time they are able to enjoy the holiday season as others do.奇幻的性，I encourage you to take this opportunity to recharge your batteries, reconnect with family and friends and reflect on all the wonderful things we enjoy as Americans. Not everyone is fortunate enough to have this time away from work and spend extra time with their loved ones.

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Dancing, displays part of Native American celebration

By Corey Dahl
Space Observer

Base Exchange patrons got more than low-priced goods and a quick lunch Nov. 14. Members of the Sweetwater Indian Dancers treated customers and passersby to traditional Native American dancing and drumming during the lunch hour. Part of the base’s Native American Heritage Month celebration, the event was meant to give the Peterson community a taste of an important Native American tradition.

“The dancing is a big part of Native American culture,” said Tech. Sgt. Rick Rentz, a member of the 76th Space Control Squadron, which helped organize the month’s events. “Having the dancers come out gives the public a chance to see it up close.”

Dancers later went to the Child Development Center to teach crafts to preschoolers. The event was one of many the 76th SPCS organized throughout November. The group also set up displays explaining the month and offering brochures filled with Native American recipes in the BX, the fitness center and the Military Personnel Flight building.

A free screening of the movie “Windtalkers” rounded out the local observance activities. Events were meant to educate the base community on Native Americans and their various contributions, including those made to the armed services, said Tech. Sgt. Terrell Borel, another member of the 76th SPCS.

“By showing “Windtalkers,” we’re letting people know about the Native American community’s contributions to the military,” he said. “They’ve played an important role, and it’s necessary that we recognize that.”

The movie, featuring actor Nicholas Cage, dramatizes the heroic efforts of Navaho-speaking soldiers. Few people are fluent in the dialect and the uniqueness of its structure made it perfect for use as an unbreakable code during World War II.
Joint ops at Top of World

By 1st Lt. Nicole Langley
821st Air Base Group

THULE AIR BASE, Greenland—The biannual resupply of Canadian Forces Station Alert and Eureka, known as Operation Boxtop, came to a close Sept. 28 after nearly three weeks of round-the-clock missions originating from Thule Air Base, Greenland.

With approximately 200 Canadian servicemembers involved in each operation, Boxtop is Canada’s largest resupply operation and occurs each spring and fall. “Boxtop is a model multi-national operation demonstrating the dependence and interoperability of U.S. and Canadian forces ensuring security in the remote arctic region,” said Col. Lee-Volker Cox, 821st Air Base Group commander. “Supporting the world’s northernmost inhabited locations from Thule exhibits NATO’s global reach capabilities. No matter how difficult the weather, terrain or remote the location, we can deliver.”

During the fall operation, the annual bulk replenishment of dried, non-perishable goods are delivered, said George Stewart, G4 for the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces Chief Information Management Group.

CFS Alert is located approximately 420 miles north-northeast of Thule AB and has about 70 Canadians assigned. It is the northernmost permanently inhabited settlement in the world. CFS Eureka, located about 340 miles north-northwest of Thule, has only about 17 Canadian servicemembers assigned there.

The dried goods that were transported to Alert from Thule were delivered to the U.S. Air Base by Canadian-contracted sea carriers this summer near the end of Thule’s port season, Mr. Stewart explained.

Thule AB has been providing support for these resupply operations since the early 1950s. While the Canadian Forces conducted direct operations, Thule’s Operation Boxtop team consisted of individuals from airfield operations, logistics and communications.

Additionally, the base supported the Canadians with lodging and access to the dining facility and morale, welfare and recreation services. Base personnel also provided medical and security forces support. While the Canadians did face some challenges during the operation, primarily due to weather and aircraft serviceability, the overall operation was considered a success. According to Capt. Marie Meihls, 821st Support Squadron’s Logistics Flight commander, with more than 160 missions flown, this fall’s operation exceeded the goals.

As the primary contact for Thule support to CFS Alert and the detachment at Eureka, Mr. Stewart described Thule’s support as outstanding in all areas. “Without support from Thule Air Base, the survivability of CFS Alert would be in serious question,” said Mr. Stewart.

While the Canadian Forces benefit from Thule’s support, the U.S. Air Base also benefits from the additional training. “The entire operation provides Team Thule a superb opportunity to train and operate at an operations tempo that is 500 percent higher than normal. It takes a tremendous effort to maneuver, service, repair, load and launch aircraft 24/7,” explained Col. Cox.

In addition to providing daily support for the operation, many Team Thule members got the opportunity to have an up close and personal look at the flying missions to Alert and Eureka by participating in orientation flights as space was available.

The operation wouldn’t be complete without the traditional Boxtop Olympics—a competition of international proportion.
‘Miracle baby’ boy comes home for holiday season

By Chris Calkins
45th Space Wing Public Affairs

P ATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Call it a miracle. Call it an act of God. Call it a once-in-a-blue-moon shot. Call it pure luck. Call it anything you want.

But you can call the Schlagheck’s downright ecstatic – and immensely thankful – to be home for the holidays with their little boy.

That pretty much sums up the attitudes of Capt. Chris Schlagheck and his wife Heidi after a nearly year-long grueling, stressful, life-threatening experience with their first-born born son Austin that recently culminated with the three of them being home for the holiday season.

Back to the beginning.

It was Oct.23, 2006, when the Schlagheck’s found out Heidi was pregnant. Ten weeks later, Jan. 8, they were told their unborn son was diagnosed with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, a potentially life-threatening situation.

They were given four options at that time: + Terminate the pregnancy; + Compassionate care (carry the baby full term allowing him to die after birth); + Heart transplant; + Three-stage reconstructive surgery. Understandably, the news hit both of them like a tornado. “I was heartbroken,” said Heidi. “I never imagined being put in a position where a doctor was telling me it was an option to kill my own child. I was sad for myself, felt that I had somehow let Chris down, and most of all, saddened by the idea of bringing a child into the world who would have to go through so much pain.”

Her husband, after battling both denial and disbelief, said the ultimate decision was an easy one. “The first two options were just unacceptable to us. We would not give up. The third option (heart transplant) could and always can be used if the three-stage surgery does not work out well. The fourth option gave Austin the best chance at life with his own heart,” said Captain Schlagheck, engineering flight commander, 1st Space Launch Squadron.

Heidi was admitted to Florida Hospital April 26, because the baby’s heart was decelerating with each contraction. Two weeks later she was airlifted to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Austin McKinley (Heidi’s maiden name) Schlagheck came into the world June 14, weighing 5 pounds and 10 ounces. He was immediately stabilized and transported to the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

The very next day the couple learned their newborn son had an unknown hemorrhage or lesion on his brain. “I was heartbroken; I felt that I had somehow let Chris down, and most of all, saddened by the idea of bringing a child into the world who would have to go through so much pain.”

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The very next day the couple learned their newborn son had an unknown hemorrhage or lesion on his brain. Two days after that, during the first of his three operations needed on his heart, Austin went into cardiac arrest for seven minutes until cardiologists could get a good rhythm back into his heart.

Two weeks later, another magnetic resonance image, or MRI, of Austin’s brain indicated there was a tumor, and another one taken July 28 confirmed the tumor and showed exponential growth, indicating the tumor was malignant.

One thing about the Schlagheck’s: they are fighters.

So they took Austin to All Children’s Hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla., where they performed a third MRI on Sept. 26, and – once again – confirmed the exponential growth of the tumor and cancer.

Obviously not believers in the old “three-strikes-and-you’re-out” philosophy, the couple went to a neurosurgeon in Orlando and underwent a fourth MRI Oct. 26.

“We did that one to determine if we could place Austin into hospice care so he could die comfortably. It was then they determined the tumor had not grown as much as they expected,” said Captain Schlagheck.

The Orlando doctor arranged to have Austin sent back to the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia to undergo high-risk brain surgery.

“He still felt the tumor was cancerous and would only give us – at best – a 50-50 chance for survival but we didn’t care. That was better odds than the 100-percent chance he’d die if we did nothing,” said Heidi.

On Nov. 7, Austin underwent neurosurgery in Philadelphia. The tumor was determined to be “mature teratoma,” a totally benign and non-cancerous tumor.

He’s home now, and doing well.

He’s scheduled to have his second heart operation in about six weeks and the third one in a year or two.

The prognosis is positive.
RV, trailer gate access

Drivers of recreational vehicles and trailers, and non-commercial rental trucks and trailers who have a valid military, dependent, retiree or Department of Defense civilian ID card may enter through either the East or West gates. Commercial trucks or trailers being operated by contractors, once receiving a pass from the West Gate Visitor Control Center, will enter through the East Gate.

Holiday hours

The following 21st Services Squadron facilities will observe holiday hours:

Aero Club: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day and AFSPC family days.

Aragon Dining Facility: Open 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4:30 to 6 p.m. Christmas, New Year’s Day and MLK Day;

Auto hobby center: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day and MLK Day;

Bowling center: Closed Christmas Day, open 2 to 9 p.m. New Year’s Day and 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. MLK Day;

Child Development Centers: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day and MLK Day; open 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. on AFSPC family days;

Community Activities Center: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day, MLK Day and AFSPC family days;

Fitness center: Closed Christmas Day, open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. New Year’s Day and a 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. MLK Day and AFSPC family days;

Golf course: Closed Christmas Day; open 2 to 9 p.m. New Year’s Day and 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. MLK Day and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. AFSPC family days;

Library: Closed Christmas Day, open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. New Year’s Day, closed MLK Day and open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. AFSPC family days;

Outdoor recreation: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day and MLK Day; open 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. AFSPC family days;

Youth center: Closed Christmas, New Year’s Day and MLK Day, open 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. AFSPC family days. (AFSPC family days are Dec. 24 and 31)

FEHB open season

The Federal Employee Health Benefit program open season is Nov. 12 to Dec. 10. For information call 556-4737 or go to http://www.opm.gov/insure/.

Tri-Care Reserve Select re-enrollment

TIRS deadline has been extended to today for previously enrolled and eligible Reserve Component members. For members wanting retroactive coverage effective date of Oct. 1, must include payments for all months of coverage. For additional information, go to https://www.dmdd.osd.mil/app/tirs/ or contact TriWest Healthcare Alliance at 1-888-TIRWEST (1-888-874-9378).

Eckankar meeting

There is an introduction to Eckankar, religion of the light and sound of God, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. today at the Peterson library community room. For information call 633-0453.

Cookie drive

The Peterson Spouses’ Club is having its annual Cookies for the Troops holiday cookie drive for Peterson’s dorm residents. Homemade cookie donations will be accepted at the base chapel from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Dec. 3 and 4. For information contact Jeannine Morton-Brown at 554-6981 or jmorton@yahoo.com.

Tree lighting

Peterson’s annual holiday tree lighting ceremony is 5 to 6 p.m. Dec. 6 at the Peterson chapel. There will be caroling, hot chocolate, coffee and more. For information call 556-4442.

Deployed spouses dinner

The December deployed spouses dinner has a new location. The dinner is 4 to 9 p.m. Dec. 7 at The Club Annex (former Enlisted Club).

Holiday social

The 21st Space Wing holiday social is 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Dec. 12 at The Club. Cost is $5 per person; dress is holiday casual (no jeans please). Spouses or guests are welcome.

Promotion ceremony

The monthly Team Pete Induction and Promotion Recognition Ceremony is 3 p.m. Nov. 30 at the Peterson museum.

Joy of the season

The Peterson Chapel Chancel Choir and Chapel Ringers present a special service of music and Christian scripture at the Protestant worship service, 11 a.m. Dec. 23 at the chapel.

Snofest 2008

The annual snow sports weekend celebration, hosted this year by Peterson AFB, is Jan. 25-27 at Keystone Resort. Lodging is available at Keystone (call 800-208-0437 and mention Peterson AFB and group code GV7SNFE); discounted lift tickets and party tickets available at ITT, 556-1760 or 556-1733. For information or to register for the ski and snowboard races, go to www.21stvs.com.

Scholarship applications

Applications for the Defense Commissary Agency’s 2008 Scholarships for Military Children Program are available now in commissaries worldwide or online at www.commissaries.com. The $1,500 scholarships are available to unmarried children under the age of 21 (or 23, if enrolled in school) of military active-duty, retired, and Guard and Reserve servicemembers; applications due by Feb. 20. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

Family violence training

Annual domestic violence awareness training is mandatory for all units. To schedule training contact Martina Porter at 556-8843.

Care line

Servicemembers can call the Care Line at 556-CARE (556-2273) from 6 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays to book appointments, or anytime at www.tricareonline.mil.

Recognition, Respect, and Rewards: Hometown Heroes

Beazer Homes would like to thank you for all you do to make America the great nation. It’s by offering our Hometown Heroes Rewards Program to our military serving in the Armed Forces (active or reserve), cadets or the public safety profession, we strive to support our military families. For more information, please call 1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378).
At the end of the operation and the athletic competition, it was obvious that the time spent together was mutually beneficial for the Canadian servicemembers and Team Thule. Everyone comes together for Boxtop and the Thule family grows with an additional 200 members, said Sergeant Kemp commented on the base's dental resources being consolidated. "I think patients are going to like the new clinic with state-of-the-art dental equipment and a much needed facelift. It looks very nice."

The ADL supports military readiness by improving oral health through advanced technologies. The laboratory provides assorted dental work, including crowns, fabrications and dentures.

The new dental clinics hours are Mondays through Fridays from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. For dental emergencies after hours, members are encouraged to contact the Air Force Academy emergency room at (719) 333-5015.

Audit: Loss of revenue

From page 1

that occurs during each biannual resupply operation. The Canadian Forces competes in activities including volleyball, floor hockey, badminton and bowling against Team Thule, and the winner is awarded the coveted traveling trophy until the next matchup.

“Unfortunately for Team Thule, Boxtop Olympics II 2007 ended in a draw, with Alert keeping the trophy, explained Master Sgt. Chester Spires, 821st Air Base Group first sergeant.

"Little by little, it’s gotten better over the years, but we could really be doing a lot more," Mr. Chase said. "It’s really hot and cold. Some people really get behind it, and some people just say, ‘Well...’"

Mr. Chase said he and his crew will take the results to base buildings at the beginning of the year to start working with facilities managers on ways to improve. The key, he said, is to make recycling easy. Possible solutions could include increasing recycle baskets in a building or educating employees on the benefits of recycling.

“We want to figure out what we can do to get the installation to recycle more," he said. “With a little bit of extra effort, we could be recycling a lot more of our materials. It’s really just as easy as walking over and throwing something in the blue bin instead of the trash can.”
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directly support combat operations through
Gen. T. Michael Moseley’s direction to inac-
ein all the previous Space
Commander Col. Stephen Latchford retired
Center Col. Robert Wright.
by Space Innovation and Development
down in an inactivation earlier this month
– The Air Force Space Battlelab here stood
Space Battlelab stands down after 10 years
The inactivation completed Chief of Staff
Colonel Wright and 595th Space Group
SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo.
Thursday, November 29, 2007
SPACE OBSERVER
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

innovative and revolutionary applications
of space systems. Its goal was to turn around
projects at low cost within 18 months.
Although the battlelab itself is gone, the
SIDC will continue to pursue many of the re-
search projects that started at the battlelab,
said Colonel Latchford, who was the bat-
telab’s last commander.
The battlelab became operational June 30,
1997, with Col. Jeffery Wenzel as its first com-
mander. It was one of six Air Force bat-
telabs established at that time by Air Force
Chief of Staff Gen. Ronald Fogleman to de-
edvelop ways to take advantage of quick and
inexpensive recommendations and demon-
strate those recommendations in the field.
“We would try out ideas in an operational
environment to determine if they had mili-
tary utility,” Colonel Latchford said. “The re-
ports could be used to decide if someone
wanted to field the idea.
The Space Battlelab comprised Airmen from
a wide variety of Air Force specialties as well
as civilians and contractor partners. While the
unit was relatively small with a total of about
25 people, the environment they created was
unique, Colonel Latchford said.
“It was an excellent opportu-
nity to come and work with a bunch of people who
were excited about their jobs,” he
said. “The excitement was pal-
table because everyone was
involved with something they
loved – it was new, it was interesting, and it
was innovative.”
The Space Battlelab’s contribu-
tions to warfighters are numerous. Some of those
innovations included projects to track
satellites using ambient radio frequencies,
demonstrating commercial-off-the-shelf soft-
ware for scheduling satellite communications
on the Air Force Satellite Control Network
and GPS jamming resistance programs.
“One of our NGOs came up with a pro-
gram to use GPS to align aircraft compo-
nents within a hangar,” Colonel Latchford
explained. “This saved the maintenance folks
in the field hours of maintenance time because
planes didn’t have to be rolled out of the
hangar to get GPS alignment – they could
stay inside.”
It earned recognition for its contributions
through Air Force Organizational Excellence
awards, which it received consecutively
between Aug. 1, 1997, and Aug. 31, 2006. As its
reputation spread, units that wanted to test
a concept would often bring money with
them. “Our budget was $3 million per year, but
as people found out what we could do, they
brought more and more projects our way,”
Colonel Latchford said, “so we were exe-
cuting about $6 million per year.”
Rumors of the battlelab’s closure first started
circulate in 2006. “It became apparent (that the Space
Battlelab would close) in December 2006
when we started seeing the official Air Force
funding documents that talked about closing
all the battlelabs,” Colonel Latchford said. “When we saw the decision documents, we
realized it was going to happen.”
“We knew the news would be disruptive.
We focused on our people so they could keep
working. They wanted to work on their proj-
ects, not worry about whether they were
gonna have to move to another base or
whether they were going to lose their job, so
we kept the information flowing,” he con-
tinued. “We also looked at how we would
continue to use government off-the-shelf
and commercial-off-the-shelf software after the
inactivation.
The early planning allowed Space Battlelab
officials decide how best to inactivate the
unit.
“Before the Air Force told us how the Space
Battlelab was going to close, we came up
with the plan of how to close it,” Colonel Latchford said.
The plan detailed where people would go after the in-
activation, what projects would have to be dropped and what
projects could continue under the SIDC’s um-
rella.
“Having the Space Battlelab inside the SIDC
was a good thing because it allows some of the innovations
to continue after the battlelab is gone,” Colonel Latchford said. “The billets and
funding are gone, but it was important to keep the projects going, even if at a reduced
rate.”
Of 14 projects that were active before the
battlelabs closed, roughly seven will remain
active under the SIDC. One of the remaining
projects provides 3rd Space Operations
Squadron operators to maintain constant
architecture from their Defense Satellite
Communications System satellites.
Another project, a high-altitude weather
balloon system, is designed to increase the
distance of, ‘How do we make things better?’
Everyone was looking for ways to do every-
thing better, not just their particular job.
Those people will be able to take that with
them.”
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NORTEO’s Santa Web site going live

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — In honor of the 52nd season of NORAD tracking Santa Claus on his annual journey around the world, the bi-national command tasked with providing aerospace security for North America announces that the NORAD Tracks Santa Web site www.noradsanta.org is live, according to NORAD officials.

“The NTS program began in 1956 when an errant phone call was made to NORAD’s predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) Operations Center in Colorado Springs,” said Michael Perini, NORAD Director of Public Affairs. “The call was from a local child who dialed a misprinted telephone number in a local newspaper advertisement,” Perini said. Although the wrong number, the commander who answered the phone that night gave the youngster the information he requested … thus the tradition of NORAD tracking Santa began.

The program has grown immensely since it was first presented on the Internet in 1998.

“In 2006, the Web site received a whopping 941 million hits from 210 countries and territories,” Perini said. In addition, the NTS Operations Center, occupied by 756 volunteers on Christmas Eve, answered nearly 63,000 phone calls and 96,000 emails from children around the world.

The NORAD Tracks Santa Web site and program would not be possible without the support and generosity of the following corporate partners:

• Google
• Booz Allen Hamilton
• Analytical Graphics, Inc
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• Globelink
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• Quest
• Plantronics
• First Choice
• Awards and Gifts
• e-frontier
• Cultural Services, Inc.

For information, please contact NORAD Public Affairs at (719) 554-3525/4072/6889.

General: Wall of Achievers


“This induction is beyond my wildest dreams,” the general said.

The qualifications for induction state that a person must earn the rank of general officer or be a celebrity and worked as an enlisted member, said Staff Sgt. Roosev Scheurer, Web master for EHH.

General Deppe started his career in basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Almost 41 years later, he now serves as the vice commander for the Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB.

“None of us know where our Air Force careers will take us,” he said to the graduates of the NCO Academy where he was guest of honor.

After spending almost 11 years on the enlisted side, General Deppe was commissioned through Officer Training School in 1977. He admits that his original plan was to do four years and then get out; however, things changed after he attended Airmen Leadership School and volunteered to become a recruiter. He realized at this point that the Air Force is about protecting “this great country,” General Deppe said.

“My focus has been about the people,” he said. “It’s the people who win the wars.” He reminded the graduates that they, as NCOs, must enforce the standards of excellence and shape the perception of the Air Force. The general stressed that Airmen are the most important part of the service, more important than any aircraft. The former staff sergeant said he had a “great appreciation and fondness” for what enlisted members accomplish.

“The main message is they are the future of the Air Force,” the general said.

“What they do will affect the future of the Air Force.”

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