

Make suicide awareness a year-round effort

By Tech. Sgt. Karen Pettit
AMC Public Affairs

While the holiday season brings about renewed efforts in many people to look out for each other, Air Mobility Command leaders urge everyone to keep suicide awareness a priority year-round.

In fact, it's not so much the holiday season that prompts an increase in suicides and suicidal gestures, but rather the spring and summer months. That's because people are focused on getting out and having fun and may forget to check on each other, said AMC's director of behavioral sciences, Lt. Col. Mary Billinger.

"The holidays are still an excellent time to review the warning signs and intervention measures for suicides, and to emphasize the buddy care system of taking care of each other. However, our statistics show that more attempts and actual suicides occur around April, during June and July, and then again in September."

There were no suicides for the 1998 holiday season and two suicides for AMC in 1999. Overall, the rates of suicides have dropped within the past four or five years, but the number of attempts have not decreased.

In 1995, the Air Force decreed suicides as the second leading cause of death in active-duty members. There were 10 suicides in AMC that year with 42 attempts.

The Air Force then began several initiatives to reduce the numbers by using education and training methods, along with establishing family support center, family advocacy and several outreach programs.

In 1999, suicides were listed as the 17th leading cause of death, with AMC numbers at two suicides and 38 attempts.

"The number of attempts rose for awhile, I believe, because more people are coming forward to report the attempts and in turn, they're getting the help they need," said Billinger. "Because we're more open in talking about suicide causes and prevention, our frontline supervisors and friends or coworkers are better able to assist that person. We're getting away from the stigma that someone's career is ruined because they went to

mental health. We just need to continue to let people know that they can talk to health professionals or the clergy when problems seem too large for them to handle. Many times we can help them develop better coping skills."

The reasons people attempt suicide are varied, but in 50 percent of the AMC cases, the people involved were experiencing relationship problems, she said.

Troubled relationships, financial or legal difficulties, or substance abuse are some key risk factors and the AMC commander, Gen. Charles T. "Tony" Robertson Jr., recently sent a letter asking commanders to remind their folks to stay alert for the warning signs during the holidays.

Billinger said that advice is good year round.

Warning signs

- ☛ Talks about committing suicide.
- ☛ Has trouble eating or sleeping.
- ☛ Loses interest in hobbies, work, school.
- ☛ Gives away prized possessions.
- ☛ Takes unnecessary risks.
- ☛ Has had recent severe loss.
- ☛ Is preoccupied with death and dying.
- ☛ Loses interest in personal appearance.
- ☛ Increases use of alcohol or drugs.
- ☛ Withdraws from friends or social activities.



What to do

- ☛ Be direct. Talk openly about suicide.
- ☛ Be willing to listen. Accept feelings.
- ☛ Be nonjudgmental.
- ☛ Don't lecture on the value of life.
- ☛ Become available. Show interest.
- ☛ Don't act shocked--this causes distance.
- ☛ Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- ☛ Offer hope of alternatives, not glib reassurances.
- ☛ Take action. Remove the means, e.g., guns.
- ☛ Get help from crisis intervention team.

Chapel schedule



103 South Davis Drive

Office hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Office closes Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Phone: 963-2536. After duty hours, call the command post at 963-2531 for emergencies only.

Catholic Services

Saturday -- 4 p.m. Reconciliation, 5 p.m. Mass

Sunday -- 9:30 a.m. Mass, 9:30 a.m. Children's Church

Weekdays -- 11:30 a.m. Mass, Sacrament of Baptism
pre-baptismal classes are held the first Sunday each month at 11 a.m. in the Chapel 1 Annex. For Sacrament of Marriage, call the Catholic chaplain six months prior to wedding. For information on other special services, women's group, youth group, singles group and Bible studies, call the chapel at 963-2536.

Protestant Services

Sunday -- 8 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service, 9:30 a.m. Sunday School building 245, 11 a.m. Traditional Worship Service, 11 a.m. Children's Church. For information on other special services, women's group, men's group, youth group, singles group, single parents' group, choir and Bible studies, call the chapel at 963-2536. Marital, family and baptismal counseling available.

Buddhist: Columbia Shambhala Meditation Center, Suite 109, Columbia, S.C. 29405

Orthodox: St. John Antiochian Orthodox, 4939 Durant Avenue, North Charleston. Phone: 554-8691.

Jewish: Call Jewish Lay Leader: Airman First Class David Winner at 963-2102.

Islamic: Al-Jami Ar-Rasheed, 1998 Hugo Ave., Charleston Heights, S.C. Phone: 554-1773.

Movie schedule

Admission prices:

Adults -- \$2 (12-years and older)

Children -- \$1 (6-11 years old)

Children (3-11 years old) -- G-rated movies for \$1



Any child under 17 years of age requires a parent or adult guardian to purchase admission tickets and accompany the minor child to the theater auditorium to view R-rated movies.

Movie schedules are provided by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service. Patrons should call the theater at 963-3333 to verify movie titles, running times and start times, which are subject to change.

Tonight, 7:30 p.m.

"The Bachelor" - Chris O'Donnell

Jimmie Shannon's grandfather passes away and wills a \$100 million inheritance to his grandson on the condition he marries by nightfall on his 30th birthday, which is less than 24 hours away. **(PG-13) 101 minutes**

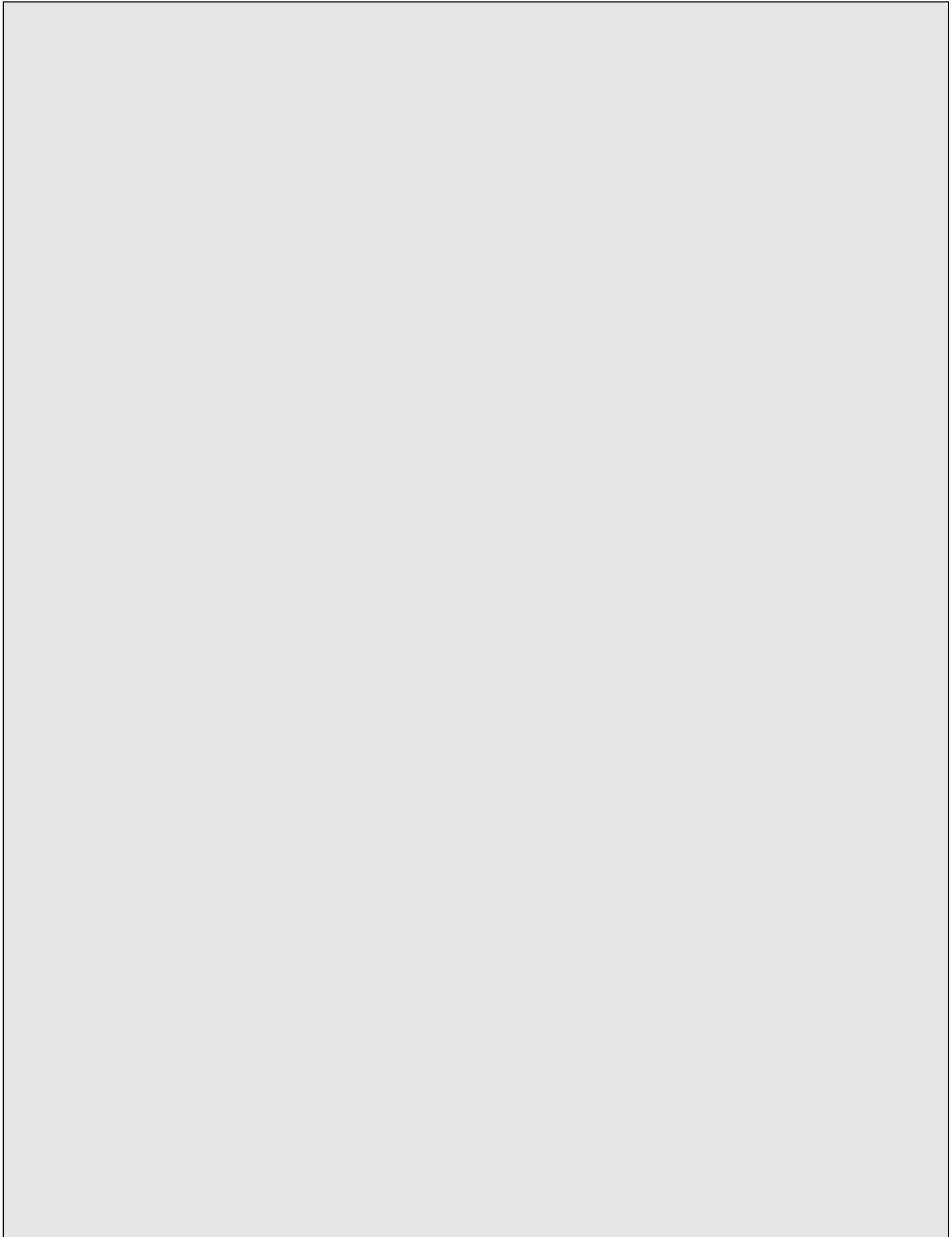
Saturday

No Movie - Happy Holidays

Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m.

"Bringing out the Dead" - Nicholas Cage

NYC paramedic Frank Pierce finds himself falling prey to urban shell shock after working too many years on the graveyard shift. Once called Father Frank for his efforts to rescue lives, he begins to question his sanity in a world that seems to be far beyond his control. **(R) 118 minutes**



HAWC can help with New Year's resolution

By Senior Airman Michael Duhe
437th AW Public Affairs

In deciding on a New Year's resolution, many people will turn to their health as an area that needs improvement. From kicking the tobacco habit to healthy eating, the Health and Wellness Center can help.

The HAWC will offer a number of classes open to the base populace. A five-week tobacco cessation course begins Jan. 25. Two class times will be available on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. in the fitness center classroom. Participants must attend the three classes held every other Tuesday to complete the course.

The tobacco cessation course focuses on all tobacco products, including cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars and pipes. It offers nicotine patches and Zyban pills to help participants cut their nicotine habit, according to Master Sgt. Bruce Brinson, NCO-in-Charge of the HAWC.

"People must attend the classes to get the medication," he said.

One of the most popular classes offered by the HAWC is known as LEARN, an acronym for "Lifestyle-Exercise-Attitude-Relationships-Nutrition." That name reflects the class's comprehensive approach to eating right and living a healthy lifestyle. Brinson said a LEARN class will kick off in January and will continue for 12-16 weeks. The instructor for the class will be Frankie Cox, a registered dietitian at the HAWC. The LEARN classes will be held on either Mondays or Wednesdays at lunchtime and last an hour.

Class members learn to read food labels, maintain a food diary, learn about the importance of exercise and recognize healthy eating habits, even for those who wish



to gain weight. In addition to classroom instruction, LEARN uses group interaction to encourage behavioral change. Classes are held in an informal setting and members discuss their experiences.

"Whatever they're looking for, the class has a combination of things," Brinson said. "Plus, being in a group setting, they feed off of each other's successes and failures. We've had people successfully go through a 12 or 16 week course, graduate, and turn around and sign up for another class. They enjoy it and that's their way of maintaining their lifestyle."

Cox also teaches three monthly general nutrition classes that deal with nutrition, diabetes and cholesterol. The classes are offered Wednesdays from 1:30 -3 p.m. To sign up for the classes, you must call Central Appointments at 963-6880. "You don't have to have any of these problems to attend the classes," Brinson explained. "You just have to have an interest in learning what general nutrition is about, understanding diabetes and understanding cholesterol. If people do a little research and learn about problems before it happens to

them, it's less likely they will occur. If you learn about what cholesterol is, how to control it and maintain it, you're less likely to have high cholesterol."

The diabetes class is set for Jan. 12. General nutrition is Jan. 19 and cholesterol is Jan. 26.

The HAWC is also a good resource for information on health and nutrition, according to Brinson. A resource room provides compact discs, cassette tapes, videos, books, and internet access for people who'd like to find out more about a particular health and wellness topic. These items are available for check out. Losing weight is one of the most common topics people come in to research. Current dietary programs is another.

"We also get a lot of people come in asking for information on working out," Brinson said. "We have some information to provide them, but we generally refer them to the fitness center to contact a personal trainer."

A cardiovascular training room is available at the HAWC and features 19 pieces of cardio workout equipment and three pieces of equipment with "virtual reality" to make for a fun workout.

Another popular feature of the HAWC is a "relaxation room" that offers a massage chair, soothing stereo music and nature sounds, adjustable lighting, a fish aquarium and a big screen TV.

Physical therapy is available at the HAWC by physician referral only. It includes limited sports injury and rehab therapy. Sports and work injury prevention consultation is available and stretching and strengthening conducted at the unit level is available by request.

HAWC hours of operation are 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. To sign up for smoking cessation or LEARN classes, call the HAWC at 963-4007.

Dallas' star fading: Jets crush Cowboys

By The Swami

How about them Jets! I knew they would give the Cowboys the butt kicking they deserved.

I have a message for Larry "Loser" Linney and the rest of you Cowboy fans out there: I told you so! The "Boys" are done! Wait until they play my other New York team, the Giants, in week 17. The Giants will do what the Jets did—spank the Cowboys and send them packing for the season.

The winner of week 15 is Marshall Mantiplay with his 13-2 record. Mantiplay edged out Ken Lane and Todd Walker by having the better tiebreaker score. Mantiplay even picked the Cowboys (yuck!). There were 59 entries for week 15 and I, the Great One, beat 53 of those with my 12-3 record. As Yogi Berra once said, "its not over until the fat lady sings."

Here is the current top ten pigskin pickers (ranked by winning percentage) with only two weeks to go. Just remember that you must play at least 11 weeks to eligible for the coveted Swami Cup. The top two people must play the last two weeks. One last message for the "Woodman:" if you're scared, say you're scared. Seasons greetings!

- 1. Matt Mercer .689
- 2. Ken Lane .664
- 3. John Woodruff .644
- 4. Rick Edwards .640
- 5. Earl Parmenter .634

- 6. Casey Boyer .632
- 7. Marshall Mantiplay .624
- 8. John Hearn .623
- 9. John Canter .614
- 10. Warren Scott .608

WEEK 17

NAME _____

DUTY PHONE _____

COMMENTS _____

SUNDAY

ARIZONA	@	GREENBAY	
BALTIMORE	@	NEWENGLAND	
CINCINNATI	@	JACKSONVILLE	
DETROIT	@	MINNESOTA	
INDIANAPOLIS	@	BUFFALO	
NEWORLEANS	@	CAROLINA	
OAKLAND	@	KANSAS CITY	
ST. LOUIS	@	PHILADELPHIA	
SEATTLE	@	NY JETS	
TAMPABAY	@	CHICAGO	
NY GIANTS	@	DALLAS	
TENNESSEE	@	PITTSBURGH	
MIAMI	@	WASHINGTON	
SAN DIEGO	@	DENVER	

MONDAY NIGHT

SAN FRANCISCO @ ATLANTA

TIE BREAKER SCORE _____

SWAMI'S SCORE: 22

Swami Rules: (1) Circle your selections of each match-up and pick the tiebreaker Score (combined score of both teams, without going over). (2) Turn entries into room 224 of Bldg. 1600 or E-mail to Dispatch@charleston.af.mil by 4 p.m. Dec. 31.

Sports Line

Intramural standings

Basketball		
	W	L
1. SFS	5	0
2. SUP 1	4	0
3. FLYERS	4	0
4. MED GP	4	0
5. 437 AGS 1	3	0
6. SUP 2	3	2
7. APS 1	3	2
8. EMS	2	2
9. Navy Hosp	1	2
10. 1 CTCS	1	3
11. APS 2	1	3
12. LGT	0	4
13. LSS/CPTS	0	3
14. 437 AGS 2	0	5
15. 437 AW	0	3
16. CES	0	3
17. OSS	0	3

Bowling

American league

- 1. 637 AGS 2
- 2. EMS 4
- 3. APS 3
- 4. EMS 1
- 5. SVS
- 6. 637 AGS 3
- 7. APS 2
- 8. SFS
- 9. CTCS
- 10. 437 OSS
- 11. APS 4
- 12. LGT

