

## Essay contest winners express pride

(Editor's note: Following are two winners of the Family Support Center's *Why I Like Being Part of a Military Family* essay contest. Other category winners are set to appear in upcoming editions of *The Shaw Spirit*.)

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**By Catelynn Curnutt**  
*2nd - 3rd grade category*

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I am happy to be in a military family for many reasons. I get to travel and see lots of different places and things. I get to meet a lot of neat people around the world, too. I'm also proud because my daddy is serving our wonderful country.

I've seen places like France, Switzerland, Germany, Idaho, Nebraska, Arizona and South Carolina.

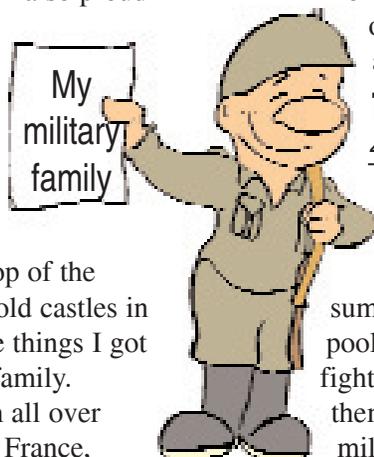
I've seen the Eiffel Tower. I was lucky enough to go to the top of the Eiffel Tower. I've visited many old castles in Europe, too. These are just some things I got to do because I'm in a military family.

I've met a lot of people from all over the world. I've met people from France,

England, Netherlands, Australia and Germany. If I weren't in a military family, I wouldn't have met some really good friends. Some are almost like family to me now.

I like being in a military family because my daddy helps make our country and other countries a better place. What my daddy does gives me hope of a better future. If I weren't in the military family, I wouldn't feel as safe as I do now.

These are just some of the things I like about being a part of a military family. I've been to lots of places and met a lot of friends. But best of all, my daddy keeping you and me safe and sound.



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**By Chelsea Queen**  
*4th - 5th grade category*

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I like being a military child because I get to go to the Youth Center. The Youth Center is very fun. Also, because in the summer I get to go to the base pool. The base pool is very fun. Also, because my parents are fighting for our country. That is very nice of them. The base is a very safe place. Being a military child is special, it encourages us to

get up and help our country. When I grow up I want to be a physical therapist like my dad, Evan Queen. He is retired now. It looks like a lot of fun. In any way I would love to help my country. It means so much to be a military child. I also like being a military child because it gives you special privileges. Like going to the base park. Going to the BX. Just going on base is a privilege, not a right. You have to be military to go on base. You also get to go to the lemon lot and the bowling alley. There is the Community Center where the HAWC is. My step mom used to work there. She is the one who is in the military. You get to meet a variety of people. You get good medical care for very little money. You can go to the Commissary for inexpensive food. And bases usually have credit unions for banking. You can go to the golf course. Or you can also go to the tennis court. And for your fitness needs you can go to the base's gym. There is also the beautiful lakes by the park. The air shows are so cool. The base housing is so neat and tidy. They make you feel welcome. The shoppette helps you buy little things, like movies and snacks.

Those are the reasons why I like being a military child.

## Plan ahead: don't be left out in the cold

Although the South is known for having warm temperatures throughout the year, there are days when the thermometer can drop below freezing. Even in the South, winter weather conditions can wreak havoc on automobiles.

The best way to have a car ready for colder temperatures is to do routine maintenance throughout the year, including tune-ups and inspection and replacement of worn belts and hoses.

Before taking off this holiday season to go shopping in cold weather or to take a family trip, make sure your vehicle won't leave you out in the cold.

■ Perform a general check of the brakes, lights, defroster, heater, fluid levels and exhaust system to ensure they are all in good repair.

■ Check the condition of wiper blades. If traveling to much colder temperatures, consider switch-

ing to winter/snow blades for the trip.

■ Check the coolant level and make sure the radiator has the proper mixture of antifreeze and water. The suggested combination is a 60:40 coolant to water ratio. Too little antifreeze in the mix can allow the coolant to freeze and crack the engine block.

■ Check tire inflation to ensure optimal tire contact with the road.

■ If a battery is more than three years old, have a voltage check performed to ensure it can carry a full load.

■ Clear all glass surfaces of ice, not just enough to see in order to look for others who may not be cautious.

■ If there is snow, clear it from the entire vehicle. Snow of the

roof of a vehicle can slide onto the windshield and hinder vision, and snow on the trunk can slide into the road, causing a hazard for those traveling behind.



■ Keep the gas tank at least half full. This limits the amount of condensation entering the fuel system and may improve traction in rear-wheel-drive vehicles by adding weight. Adding gasoline antifreeze to the fuel tank helps protect against fuel-line freezing.

■ Lubricate door locks, latches and coat weather stripping with silicone spray to help keep them from freezing.

■ If going on a trip, prepare for the worst. Put extra winter clothes, blankets and a sleeping bag in the trunk. Also have water and food, such as energy bars, in the trunk. Include a flashlight, extra batteries, matches and a first-aid kit.

■ Take along a cell phone to call for help if stranded. (Information courtesy of [www.advanceautoparts.com](http://www.advanceautoparts.com). Adriene M. Dicks contributed to this article.)



*Photo by Airman 1st Class Susan Penning*

## Calling all bookworms

Janet Price, base librarian, speaks to Shaw members Monday celebrating the grand reopening of Shaw's library after renovation. During the ceremony, Price thanked Ken Daigle, contracted project manager; 20th Services Squadron; 20th Contracting Squadron; 20th Civil Engineer Squadron and library staff who helped with the project.

## Airmen's Cookie Drive

- The 11th annual cookie drive generated more than 3,600 dozen baked goods and more than 3,000 cards from the local community.
- Base personnel contributed about 300 dozen cookies.
- Local schools donated more than 2,300 dozen cookies.
- Community churches donated more than 1,100 dozen cookies.
- More than 140 volunteers assisted with the cookie drive Dec. 4 and 5.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Alicia Prakash

Above, Rhonda Stegall, Airmen's Cookie Drive coordinator, sorts the donated cookies Dec. 5 to ensure airmen receive a variety of baked goodies for the holidays.



Above, chocolate cookies were donated in large numbers, but other decorated varieties of cookies, like these gingerbread men, were also festive contributions. Right, Elizabeth Kuhlmann adds a holiday card, designed by local elementary school children, to each cookie bag.



Right, Master Sgt. Joseph Whetstine, 20th Mission Support Squadron first sergeant, filled bags with cookies and delivered them to more than 40 residents in base dormitories.



Below, the cookies in the Community Center were packaged in various containers, to include colorful tins and buckets.





## *Wing Holiday Party*



Saturday from 7-11 p.m. in the Conference Center.  
**E-6 and below free -- see your first sergeant!**

*live band*  
*photographer*



*door prizes*  
*appetizers*





## Spirit Spotlight



### Staff Sgt. Christina Sparrow

**Organization:** 20th Logistics Readiness Squadron

**Duty title:** NCO in charge of Quality Assurance

**Hometown:** Norfolk, Va.

**Time in service:** 12 years

**Family:** Husband, Staff Sgt. Byron Sparrow; children, Tiara and Tahrik

**Off-duty interests:** Reading and spending time with family

**Words I live by:** "I have learned throughout my life that what really matters is not whether we have problems, but how we go through whatever we are facing." -- Rosa Parks



Photo by Airman Amber McCarthy

### Pods require precision

Left, Staff Sgt. Shawn Barnette, 20th Component Maintenance Squadron electronic warfare systems team member, performs maintenance on an electronic countermeasures pod Dec. 4 to ensure it is ready to provide aircraft protection against radar-directed weapons.