

Mother's Day: pick a gift that shows you care

By Airman 1st Class Susan Penning
Staff writer

Mothers always seem to appreciate the gifts they receive. That watercolor picture you were so proud of at age four; she loved it. The clay "masterpiece" you sculpted in first grade art class; she still displays it on her nightstand.

Now that you've grown up, hopefully your taste in gifts has as well. This Mother's Day, show the lady who's appreciated all the good things you've done how much you appreciate her. Below is a list of some creative ideas.

■ Flowers can be a good choice. If possible, get someone to ask your special lady what her favorite flower is, then incorporate that variety into a bouquet.

■ If she lives far away, why not

send her a pre-paid phone card?

■ Hire yourself out for "Mom's Cleaning Service." Offer to tidy up anything that needs it around the house. You could even create a gift certificate outlining the services you will render.

■ Create personalized stationary, greeting cards or a calendar.

■ Invite Mom to an afternoon tea at a bed and breakfast, or take her out to dinner. Hint: Mother's Day is one of the most crowded days at restaurants, so making her dinner at home may be a better choice. "My son cooked me a homemade dinner. I think it was the best Mother's Day gift I've ever received," said Master Sgt. Malinda Freeman, 20th Fighter Wing Command Section superintendent.

■ How about a new book by her favorite author or a new cover for her Bible?

■ Gift baskets can be a wonderful

idea. Choose a theme based on one of her favorite hobbies and fill it with goodies reflecting the theme.

■ For those who are electronically savvy, there are numerous software programs which allow users to create movies with photos. Putting together a DVD with running pictures of your mom's life, complete with music and captions, can be especially touching.

■ Does she collect anything in particular? You could purchase something to add to her collection.

■ Jewelry can be a good choice, particularly if there is a specific piece she's had her eye on. "One Mother's Day when I was pregnant, my best friend gave me a pendant with a mother and child on it. I was so touched, I cried," said Staff Sgt. Heather Gray, 20th Fighter Wing Protocol NCO in charge.

"I bought my wife a ring, which

she especially liked because my daughter picked it out," said Master Sgt. Victor Atlas, 20th Fighter Wing Readiness superintendent.

■ If she loves decorating her home, a gift certificate to her favorite home decor store may be just right.

■ A picture of you (and your family) in a nice frame always makes a great gift; a picture of you and her together could be particularly special.

■ What about the gift of pampering? Many local salons and spas offer Mother's Day specials. Spa packages are also an option.

Remember, just like the watercolor painting that hung on the refrigerator for so long, Mom will appreciate the thought put into a gift more than the gift itself. So whatever you choose, make sure you let her know how special she is by putting your thoughts into words, either with a card or in person.



Emergency services, ready 24/7

By Staff Sgt. Alicia Prakash
Editor

(The following is the final article in the People of the Night series.)

When darkness starts to fall, many personnel at Shaw are locking doors to their offices or strapping on seatbelts in their cars to go home. For some, the nighttime means it is time to clock in and work on the mission. Some of those include security police and fire and emergency personnel.

"I enjoy working nights," said Tech. Sgt. Eric Hamdeed, 20th Security Forces Squadron mid-shift flight chief. He has been on the night shift here for seven months and usually works nine hours a night. He said his wife of 17 years is used to it, and she knows he likes his shift.

For Sgt. Hamdeed, family life is not negatively affected, but when he needs an appointment for something, he ends up having to awaken earlier or stay up later.

"Sometimes I can't get an appointment until 9 a.m. when I would nor-

mally be at home already," he said.



Sgt. Hamdeed said the night shift duties differ from the daytime job because there seems to be more action.

"That's when things happen," he said. "DUIs and domestics happen."

He said during the daytime, SF personnel usually deal with security incidents and don't have to worry so much about someone driving on base intoxicated.

The fire and emergency services also harbor night crawlers. Together, firefighters and emergency medical technicians work many hours to keep Shaw and the surrounding community safe.

"We work 24-hour shifts," said Mr. Richard Turner, Shaw Fire Department assistant fire chief. He works from 7 a.m. one day to 7 a.m. the next. He said during the day and night, Shaw's firefighters and EMTs receive training on night fires and respond to emergency situations. The situations range from aircraft emergencies to hazardous material responses. They also assist with residential fires off base, if

requested by the county. According to Mr. Turner, from day to night, the job does not change much, but there are exceptions ... one of them being darkness.

"We are required to have training on night fires semi-annually," he said.

He said during the daytime, they can see the surroundings better at the accident site. At night time, visibility is reduced.

Though the requirement is twice a year, the assistant fire chief said they train more often.

Mr. Turner said a benefit of working at night is being able to participate in squadron sport activities at the beginning of his shift.

Spending the night at the Fire Department does have its downfalls.

"We can all be sleeping," said Mr. Turner. "Then at two in the morning we have to get up for an emergency."

Shaw can go to sleep tonight knowing the men and women on the night shift are prepared for and can handle emergencies even when the sun goes down.





Spirit Spotlight



Airman 1st Class Douglas Bonham



Organization: 20th Operations Support Squadron

Duty title: Host aviation resource management journeyman

Job duties: Aviation service records management

Hometown: Sacramento, Calif.

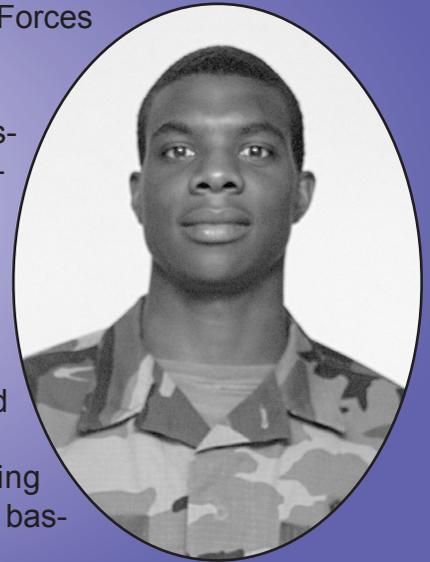
Time in service: Two years

Family: Wife, Megan

Off-duty interests: Playing golf, football and racquetball

Words I live by: "Just do the job right the first time. It's better in the long run."

Staff Sgt. DeMario Simmons



Organization: 20th Security Forces Squadron

Duty title: Supply technician

Job duties: Receive and distribute equipment, and transport items to the defense reutilization and marketing office

Hometown: Buffalo, N.Y.

Time in service: Six years

Family: Wife, LaToya and daughter, Jalen

Off-duty interests: Spending time with family and playing basketball

Words I live by: "Put God first in everything you do."