

FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

THULE TIMES

821st Air Base Group Thule AB, Greenland



**February-March
2008**

Volume 11

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Photo submitted by Greenland Contractors

Although the sun officially came up at Thule Feb. 11, it was hidden by low-hanging clouds and wasn't visible to the crowd of Team Thule members who gathered on the hill at the 12th Space Warning Squadron to welcome it back. The community center hosted a trip back to the highest point on base Feb. 16 to view the sun and were treated to a beautiful sight as it peaked up over South Mountain. The sun set for the final time of 2007 on Oct. 31.

Do something amazing ... at Top of the World!

Col. Lee-Volker Cox
821st Air Base Group commander

After almost 3,000 hours, something amazing happened. The long Arctic night ended and Team Thule saw the sun for the first time since October, revealing a landscape veiled in white. You could feel the renewed excitement and energy around base as darkness gave way to light and our days grew by 15 minutes every 24 hours.

Living more than 700 miles inside the Arctic Circle enables us to experience some amazing events from storms with winds above 150 mph and temperatures colder than -60 degrees

Fahrenheit to a full lunar eclipse. How many people can say they've walked across a frozen bay locked with ice over four feet thick, stood on the Polar Icecap, searched for seals on a dog sled with an Inuit hunter or haven't seen a McDonalds for months? We live at an amazing location!

Every day hundreds of satellites and space objects fly over the North Pole. Even if they are thousands of miles above us, we know where each is thanks to one of the world's most powerful radars. Simultaneously, the Air Force's largest satellite control facility downloads lifesaving data from

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Thule Times Editorial Staff

Col. Lee-Volker Cox,
821st Air Base Group Commander
1st Lt. Nicole Langley,
Chief, Public Affairs

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environmental and reconnaissance spacecraft. Team Thule provides the space superiority eyes and ears for America, NATO and our friends and Allies. We do an amazing mission!

We work in one of the most challenging environments and remote locations in the world. It would be easy to just do enough to get by. However, that wouldn't be the Team Thule so many have come to know. Numerous visitors, with smiles on their faces, have told me just before leaving that Thule is the friendliest base in the Air Force. I agree 100 percent. Everywhere you go, everyone you meet has positive can-do attitudes, tremendous pride and a willingness to help. We are an amazing team!

It'll only be about three weeks before we see another amazing sight, our last sunset, and Thule will become the land of the midnight sun for four months. Yes, we are blessed to live at an amazing place, doing an amazing job with an amazing Thule Family. Are you ready to do something amazing? It's easy here, because Thule is someplace amazing.

And the lights went out ...



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Team Thule gathers Feb. 22 to welcome the sun's return on the main base and say goodbye to the Christmas tree that had provided a warm glow in the cold winter night since November 2007. Each year, the Christmas tree's lights are turned on at the beginning of the dark season and remain on until the reappearance of the sunlight.



Amazing celestial event at Thule Air Base

On Feb. 17, a meteorite burned in over Thule Air Base, creating a unique pattern in the sky .



Tops in Blue wows crowd at DoD's northernmost installation

1st Lt. Nicole Langley
821st Air Base Group Public Affairs

Tops in Blue, the Air Force's premier entertainment group, performed for approximately 300 Airmen and civilians here at the Top of the World Feb. 20.

The Air Force entertainers set up their stage, lighting and sound equipment, and musical instruments in one of the giant hangars adjacent to the airfield, and wowed the crowd with a nearly two-hour performance entitled "The Fly-By," A Musical Tribute to 60 Years of Proud Air Force History.

"Tops in Blue is a huge morale booster for the people of Thule! There is no 'off base' here, and that means that the people who live and work at the Top of the World don't have the opportunity to see a concert, go to a comedy club or eat at a restaurant like Airmen at other bases," said Col. Lee-Volker Cox, Thule Air Base commander. "It really means a lot that the group travelled more than 700 miles north of the Arctic Circle to perform for us! They'll be the talk of Thule for weeks."

The group arrived on an Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, C-17 Globemaster III at approximately 11:30 p.m. Feb. 19.

When they stepped off the aircraft, they were not only greeted by base leadership, but also temperatures dipping near minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Prior to coming to Thule, they were at Cannon AFB, New Mexico, which meant that the group had to adjust to more than a 100 degree temperature difference.

"The group's trip to Thule was another testament to the Air Force's commitment to care for its people," said Master Sgt. Chester Spires, 821st Air Base Group first sergeant. "Although we're at one of the most remote bases in the world, we were provided the same quality entertainment as if we were in the U.S.!"



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Multicultural Committee hosts African American Heritage Banquet

Col. James C. Epting, directorate of Integration and Resources at the Pentagon, delivered the keynote message at the Thule Air Base African American Heritage Banquet here Feb. 21. The banquet's theme was 'Origins of Multiculturalism' and the menu featured a variety of traditional southern delicacies, including fried catfish, collard greens, black-eyed peas and pecan pie.



Colonel Epting speaks to more than 70 attendees at the banquet Feb. 21. Throughout the day, he had the opportunity to meet American, Danish, Greenlandic and Canadian members of Thule's multinational family, who call America's most remote base home.



Members of Thule's Multicultural Committee pose for a photo with Colonel Epting after the banquet.



Andre Burris, civilian contractor and master of ceremony for the banquet.



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Thule welcomes new deputy commander

Lt. Col. David Arnold

821st Air Base Group deputy commander

Thank you, Team Thule, for welcoming me with open arms and bright smiles. It's an honor to serve as the deputy commander for such a great base and such a great team. The warmth of your welcome almost made me forget the 100 degree drop in temperature from Colorado Springs to Thule!

Over the past few weeks and over the next few, I will try to get out to your work centers to introduce myself. However, I know I won't see you all as I blow by like a stiff breeze off the ice cap. So if you see me at Café Cool or spinning class or the dining facility, come over and say hello.

This is my fifth trip to Thule over the last several years – but the first without a return plane ticket! One of the things I have always enjoyed about travelling to Thule is the chance to stop in Washington, D.C., to say hello to family, many of whom still live in my hometown. And in recent years, I have never missed an opportunity to swing by the new Air Force Memorial.

The new Air Force Memorial represents a lot of things to a lot of people. The three spires are symbolic of many aspects of our lives: our core values, a Thunderbird burst formation, our three core mission areas (air, space and cyberspace), or three satellite boosters on their launch trajectories. The beauty of the memorial's design is that it can mean all that and more.

For career space professionals like myself, the three spires can represent the three personnel pillars of the Air Force Space Command mission: Airmen, civilians and contractors. At Thule Air Base, we have an unbreakable team performing operations 24/7.

Thule is one of many AFSPC bases relying on such a team.

For career space professionals like myself, the three spires can represent the three personnel pillars of the Air Force Space Command mission: Airmen, civilians and contractors. At Thule Air Base, we have an unbreakable team performing operations 24/7. Thule is one of many AFSPC bases relying on such a team.

Just like the Air Force cannot do its mission of defending air, space and cyberspace unless it has a Total Force team well trained and equipped, Thule Air Base cannot do its mission of providing 24/7 capabilities to the Joint Functional Component Commander for Space without our total force team. Our Airmen provide North America warning of a transpolar missile attack from the Russian mainland and submarine-launched missiles from the Arctic and North Atlantic Oceans. Our contractors ensure warfighters' needs are met by command and control of the largest station in the Air Force Satellite Control Network and by providing space situational awareness. And our contractors provide installation support in weather extremes that would make most people cringe.

Our vision for Team Thule is simple, but it requires all three parts – Airmen, civilians, contractors – working together if we will ever achieve it: "Transforming Space Operations, and its Support, at DoD's Northernmost Installation."

So when I look at the Air Force Memorial, I see three spires representing Airmen past, present and future. Those people, Airmen all, are one team of blue suiters, government civilians and contractors. And I know that we will succeed.

Getting to know Lt. Col. David Arnold

What do you claim as your hometown?

I claim Washington, D.C., as my hometown, where I was born and raised, but my legal state of residence is Wyoming.

How many years have you been in the Air Force?

18

What was your previous assignment?

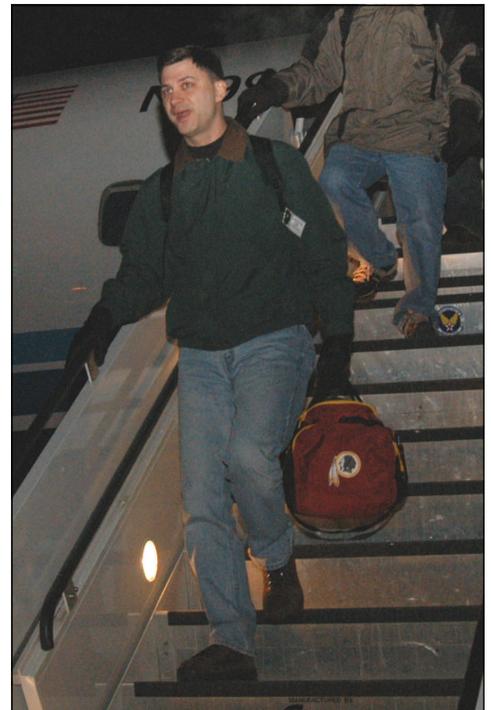
Commander of the 22nd Space Operations Squadron at Schriever AFB, Colo., and locations worldwide (including Detachment 3 at Thule!).

What is your favorite leadership principle?

Trust

What is your favorite Air Force memory?

So many commissioning, promotions, successful evaluations, PCSs, making friends for life. But probably the most significant professionally was assuming command of 22 SOPS in 2006.



Chief's Corner: Reflections on being a woman in the Air Force

Chief Master Sgt. Nathalie Swisher

It's an honor to be a woman in the U.S. Air Force today, especially during the month of March, as we celebrate Women's History Month. It's a time when we gather together to celebrate the contributions women have made and pay tribute to past and present legends. It's a time when we recognize the accomplishments of women, reinforce pride in those who served and are serving, and provide encouragement for a promising future.

When I entered the Air Force in 1983, only a little more than nine percent of the service's population was women. Since then attitudes have changed, giving us much more equality and respect. As a result, many doors of opportunity opened up and we're now placed into positions because of our abilities and skills not because of our gender. Today 19.58 percent of women make up the force and we serve in 99 percent of the career fields.

History has shown how women, who have gone before us, paved the way and made many personal sacrifices. Nothing has changed about that. Every

week I read in the headlines about another woman doing amazing things in our Air Force.

Like Senior Airman Vanessa Velez, the female Airman from the Bronx who drove in numerous convoys in Afghanistan. And Maj. Nicole Malachowski, the first woman to fly on a U.S. military flight demonstration team as Thunderbird No. 3, and was recently inducted into the Women in Aviation Pioneer Hall of Fame. And then there's the all-female aircrew, consisting of Maj. Leslie Picht, 1st Lt. Cindy Dawson and Senior Airman Killian Lange who flew an in-flight refueling mission together in a KC-135 Stratotanker over Iraq.

Unfortunately, there's not enough space in this column for me to name every single female who has made a contribution. I'm certain Esther Blake, the first woman in the Air Force, would be very pleased at the progress we have made and what we'll continue to do in the future.

Women can be proud of what they've accomplished over the years, and nowhere else can you feel a deeper sense of pride than by visiting the

Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. The Women's Memorial, founded by retired Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, the Air Force's first female general, honors all military women – past, present and future. It's the only national memorial that distinctly recognizes women who have served their country during all eras and in all branches of service.

In case you didn't know, the memorial is oftentimes used as a backdrop for events including promotion and retirement ceremonies. It would definitely be worth your while the next time you're in Washington D.C. to stop by and see it for yourself.

Women's History Month honors the spirit of hope and possibility set in motion by generations of women, and encourages us to keep on pursuing our dreams. Several weeks ago, I re-enlisted for five more years. I'm so proud to have the opportunity as a woman to continue serving in our great Air Force!



Chief Master Sgt. Nathalie Swisher, 821st Air Base Group superintendent, repeats the oath as Col. Lee-Volker Cox, 821st ABG commander re-enlists her for another five years Feb. 29. Chief Swisher will be departing Thule in May for her next assignment as the superintendent of the 70th Mission Support Group at Fort Meade, Md.

Thule Spotlight

Several of Thule’s outstanding people and units received Air Force Space Command-level awards. This spotlight recognizes those award winners.

Master Sgt. Timothy Quinn

Air Force Space Command 2007 Fuels Senior NCO of the Year



Master Sgt. Timothy Quinn was named AFSPC’s 2007 Fuels Senior NCO of the Year. The award recognizes an individual who excelled in performance and made outstanding contributions to the Air Force Fuels mission. Sergeant Quinn’s accomplishments in administering precise control measures at 19 locations for petroleum products valued at \$1.25 billion and his superior oversight of the Base Fuels Operation section of a \$70 million contract helped ensure his place as best in the command. He also directed AFSPC’s only fuel tanker re-supply – a flawless 36-hour, nine million gallon ship-to-pier and pier-to-tank farm transfer – and oversaw AFSPC’s largest fuel tank farm with 22 million gallons of fuel, maintaining Thule’s arctic life source.

1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Air Force Space Command 2007 Captain Bradley R. Schuldt Outstanding Communication Company Grade Officer of the Year



1st Lt. Nicole Langley was named AFSPC’s 2007 Captain Bradley R. Schuldt Outstanding Communication CGO of the Year. The award recognizes an individual who has excelled in the Public Affairs career field. Lieutenant Langley led the Dover AFB, Del., newspaper to number one in the Air Force and received two individual Air Mobility Command writing awards. She directed an eight-day Fox News visit, which provided outstanding coverage of Thule Air Base, was watched by 87 million people and was valued at \$1.4 million. She also orchestrated a two-week Combat Camera mission to Thule, arranging interviews and filming at 20+ locations, along with holiday greetings that were distributed to 120 U.S. television stations. She also directed two articles for Jane’s Defence, which reached 2.3 million people.

821st Support Squadron Terminal Radar Approach Control in Tower Cab

Air Force Space Command 2007 D. Ray Hardin Air Traffic Control Facility of the Year



The 821st Support Squadron’s airfield operations team was named AFSPC’s 2007 D. Ray Hardin Air Traffic Control Facility of the Year recipient. The award is given to the best air traffic control facility in the major command and goes on to compete at the Air Force level. The unit garnered the award for an AFSPC best 95 percent compliance benchmark during the 2007 Air Traffic System Evaluation Program by controlling 607 arctic sorties for Operation BOXTOP 07/I and II. That operation provides an entire year’s worth of supplies to Canada’s Station Alert. They also provided 48-hour air traffic control coverage for a disabled C-130 on Greenland’s icecap and averted hazard to 34 personnel.

Thule Spotlight



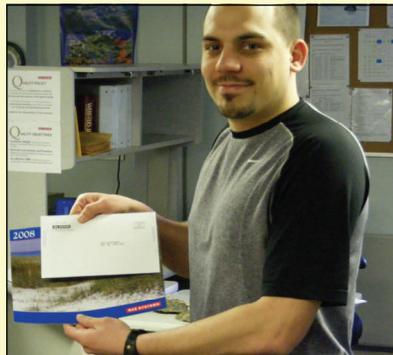
Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Senior Airman Brandon Lenz, 821st Security Forces Squadron, is presented a \$75 scholarship check March 21 from the Thule Association of Professional Airmen president, Tech. Sgt. Wendi Atchley. Each quarter TAPA awards a scholarship to an outstanding Thule Airman for continuing Education. Selection for the scholarship was based on an essay, "How does off-duty education benefit today's expeditionary Airman?"



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Tech. Sgt. Amanda Beatie, 821st Support Squadron, was promoted to the rank of master sergeant in a ceremony at the Top of the World Club Feb. 29.



Submitted photos

Upper left: Garth Bay, BAE PMEL manager and quality administrator, receives two outstanding performer awards from Max Carnley, Thule's BAE site manager. Mr. Bay received BAE's Super Star award and Delighting the Customer team award, which included two monetary awards as well. He competed against nearly 200 other BAE employees at multiples sites for these awards.

Paul Netopsky, BAE LAN administrator, displays his individual Delighting our Customer Award. Mr. Netopsky also competed against approximately 200 other BAE employees, and was selected for constantly putting the needs of his Thule customers first and providing timely, quality service.

If you would like to submit something for the Thule Spotlight column, please send it to 821abg.pa@thule.af.mil. Submissions are accepted from anyone on base, including military and civilians.

Distinguished visitors

Col. Jay Raymond, 21st Space Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Timothy Omdal, 21st SW command chief visited Thule Air Base Feb. 28-29. Also visiting was Staff Sgt. Ava Dunn, 21st SW. The visit provided Colonel Raymond and Chief Omdal an opportunity to meet many of Thule's Airmen at their work sites, at a Commander's Call and at the first-ever Commander's Cup volleyball tournament at the Fitness Center. Pictured in front of the Polar Ice Cap from left to right are: Chief Master Sgt. Nathalie Swisher, 821st Air Base Group superintendent; Chief Omdal; Staff Sgt. Ava Dunn, 21st SW; Colonel Raymond; and Col. Lee-Volker Cox, 821st ABG commander.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Donald Heaton



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Col. James C. Epting, Directorate of Integration and Resources at the Pentagon, visited Thule Feb. 21-22. The primary purpose of his visit was to speak at the African American Heritage Banquet Feb. 21. While here he also received a tour of the base and mission brief, in order to better understand Thule's unique mission. Pictured from left to right are: Lt. Col. John Blagreen, Danish Liaison Officer; Colonel Cox; Master Sgt. Chester Spires, 821st ABG first sergeant; Colonel Epting; Master Sgt. Mike Hall, 821st Support Squadron and Multicultural Committee president; and Lt. Col. David Arnold, 821st ABG deputy commander.

Chief Master Sgt. Bryan Eaton, Army and Air Force Exchange Service enlisted advisor to the commanding general, and Bob White, AAFES region senior vice president, visited Thule March 13-14 in order to better understand the needs of Team Thule and how the BX can meet those needs. In addition to visiting the BX and other sites on base, they hosted a focus group to discuss BX issues and answer questions. Pictured from left to right are: Sergeant Spires, Mr. White, Chief Eaton and Chief Swisher.



Photo by Tech Sgt. Wendi Atchley

Commander's Cup champions



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Thule Air Base hosted its first-ever Commander's Cup volleyball tournament when Col. Jay Raymond, 21st Space Wing commander, visited Feb. 21-22. The event was a single-elimination tournament with each unit on base represented. The 12th Space Warning Squadron took home the championship title. Pictured from left to right are: Colonel Raymond, Master Sgt. Joseph Stratil, Tech. Sgt. Jason Hartjen, Capt. Mike Phipps, Staff Sgt. Rich Wells, Staff Sgt. Mariah Walker (kneeling in front), Capt. Dave McMillan, Lt. Col. James Forand and 2nd Lt. Donald Heaton.

Culture of Responsible Choices at Thule Air Base

As part of the Air Force's Culture of Responsible Choices initiative, each month Thule Air Base sponsors a CoRC activity to reinforce the message that there are plenty of fun alternatives to drinking. These activities vary from dodgeball and kickball competitions to board games.

The March CoRC event was a wiffle ball tournament at the Fitness Center that was won by the 821st Security Forces Squadron



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley



Ribbon cutting marks opening of new cinema



Attendees at the ribbon cutting enjoyed a selection of hors d'oeuvres prior to the showing of the first movie.



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Inge Bulck, Greenland Contractors' site manager, Thomas Schiby, GC Services, and Col. Lee-Volker Cox, 821st Air Base Group commander, prepare to cut the ribbon at a ceremony March 1 to mark the completion of the base's new movie theater. Immediately following the ribbon-cutting ceremony, the theater was opened to the base for the first movie. The theater is a state-of-the-art facility, located in the Community Center, and features stadium-style seating and surround sound.

The nearest movie theater multiplex for those at Thule is over 2,300 miles away in Baltimore or Copenhagen.

"Being stationed at America's most remote base, 700 miles inside the Arctic Circle is no reason not to have a movie theater," said Col. Lee-Volker Cox, Thule Air Base commander.

The theater provides the Thule family an exciting and enjoyable experience and is a huge morale boost.

"During our harsh winters, people need alternative activities to attend," said Colonel Cox. "This theater fills a critical quality of life void.



Show time!

Team Thule settles in with popcorn and candy to watch the first movie in the base's new theater.

Organization focus: Danish Liaison Officer

1st Lt. Nicole Langley

821st Air Base Group Public Affairs

Thule Air Base has many components that set it apart from the typical Air Force base. Located in Greenland, a part of the Kingdom of Denmark, the base is home to a diverse group of people who ensure that everything runs smoothly.

One of those individuals is the Danish Liaison Officer.

Commonly referred to as the DLO, this position has been present on base since the installation opened in 1951 and serves as a representative of the Island Commander of Greenland. The DLO is primarily responsible for assisting the base commander in all aspects involving Denmark and Greenland.

Thule's current DLO is Lt. Col. John Blagreen of the Royal Danish Air Force.

Since Thule is an air base, it might be assumed that all DLOs are Danish Air Force members. However, Colonel Blagreen made the record books as the first Air Force DLO, when he assumed the position July 2, 2007. Since 1951, all DLOs have been Danish Navy commanders.

The DLO and his two-person staff, consisting of Navy Chief Petty Officers Soren Pedersen and Lars Iversen, are part of Thule Air Base commander Col. Lee-Volker Cox's staff. They are also responsible for ensuring accordance with the spirit of the 1951 U.S.-Danish defence treaty and other international agreements. They advise Colonel Cox and serve as the liaison between the Danish and Greenlandic base population, Greenland Home Rule, the Qaanaaq District, the Thule City Council, Air Greenland and the Tele-Post.

"The DLO is vital to our space superiority mission at Thule and an instrumental member of my staff," said Colonel Cox. "I couldn't have asked for a better leadership team partner."

The DLO's position is multi-faceted and he has many other responsi-



Photo submitted by DLO

From left to right: Lt. Col. John Blagreen, Danish Liaison Officer; Chief Petty Officer Soren Pederson, DLO staff; Gen. Hans Jesper Helso, Danish Chief of Defense; and Chief Petty Officer Lars Iversen, DLO staff, pose for a photo in August 2007 when General Helso and other Chiefs of Defense visited Thule Air Base.

bilities, which include serving as an interim Danish Police Inspector when he is off the island and, on behalf of the Danish High Commissioner in Greenland, he has the authority to conduct weddings.

Additionally, the DLO and his staff are also responsible for verifying foreign visitors to Thule Air Base are authorized, and meet all Air Greenland aircraft arriving from other parts of Greenland and Denmark to ensure that passengers onboard are allowed to enter the Thule Defence Area.

The DLO supports all Danish military aircraft and ships that arrive at Thule and assists them while on base. He also coordinates and supports, in conjunction with the base commander, official visits by Danish and foreign distinguished visitors and scientific research groups and expeditions.

And, without the contributions and continuity provided by the DLO's office, Operation Julemand – the base's ongoing annual fundraiser to purchase gifts for children in local villages – and

Armed Forces Day wouldn't be nearly as successful for Team Thule and the gift recipients.

For those at Thule, it's obvious that the DLO plays an integral role in the workings of Thule Air Base and the local communities.

"We work hand-in-hand everyday on issues ranging from country clearances to U.S.-Danish Arctic military operations," said Colonel Cox.

The DLO and staff, who typically serve at Thule for two years, agree that there are many highlights of working at Thule Air Base, including the base's multi-culture and the harsh, but beautiful climate.

"Our friendship and close cooperation parallel the relations between the U.S. and Denmark," explained Colonel Cox. "Our countries have been allies and friends for hundreds of years. Thule Air Base is a superb example of what friends can get done when we work together."

12th SWS completes intense inspection

The 12th Space Warning Squadron underwent an Operations Standardization Team Inspection March 13-20.

The inspection team traveled from Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., and arrived on base the morning of March 13 and quickly got to work inspecting everything from general operations, crew force management, operations training, and standardization and evaluation.

The OST Inspection is conducted annually at remote locations, such as Thule Air Base, and bi-annually elsewhere.

While the official results of the inspection have not yet been released, the squadron received a positive report during the team's out-brief.

"I'm very proud of the hard work and dedication put forth by the members of the 12th Space Warning Squadron, said Lt. Col. James Forand, 12th SWS commander. "This inspection validated that we are on the right path toward achieving one of our top priorities ... establishing enduring effectiveness in missile warning and space surveillance operations--effectiveness that will take root and last far beyond the time we are all here. This outstanding team met that challenge head-on and left quite a legacy for those who will follow!"



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Capt. Nia Bluford, Staff Sgt. Kevin Ryan and Staff Sgt. Rich Wells, 12th Space Warning Squadron, receive a briefing from Capt. Mike Phipps, 12th SWS Standardization and Evaluation chief, prior to an evaluation March 17. The briefing and evaluation were monitored by Operations Standardization Team members Maj. Rickey McCann and Canadian Forces Capt. Doug MacMullin. The 12th SWS underwent an annual OST Inspection March 13-20.

How well do you know Thule Air Base?



Do you know where this object is located? More importantly, do you know what it is? The first person who can correctly identify this object will receive five Club Bucks that can be used at the Top of the World Club for any beverage, food item or BINGO cards. If you're up to the challenge, email the correct answer to: 821abg.pa@thule.af.mil today!

Lunar eclipse

Thule Air Base had the unique opportunity of witnessing the total lunar eclipse the night of Feb. 20. Although the skies had been cloudy beforehand, they cleared up in time for the actual event.



Photos by Col. Lee-Volker Cox



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

The FTAC graduates pose for a photo along with their course facilitators after the final event of the course. Back row from left to right are: Lt. Col. David Arnold, 821st Air Base Group deputy commander; Senior Airman Brandon Lenz, 821st Security Forces Squadron and course facilitator; Airman Basic Ciro Brandt, 821st SFS; Airman First Class Skyler Graff, 821st SFS; Airman First Class Desmond Pearson, 821st SFS; Airman Basic Jonathan Leszewski, 821st SFS; Tech. Sgt. Christy McDonald, 821st ABG and course facilitator; Airman First Class Eric Fowler; and Chief Master Sgt. Nathalie Swisher, 821st ABG superintendent. Front row from left to right are: Airman First Class Alessia Miller, 821st SFS; and Airman First Class Brandee Pelkey, 821st SFS.

Thule's newest Airmen complete First Term Airman Course

First term Airmen who arrived at Thule Air Base in January through early March participated in the First Term Airman Course here March. The three-day program included presentations on a variety of topics ranging from dress and appearance standards to enlisted professional development and consumer credit.

Facilitators for the course were Tech. Sgt. Christy McDonald, 821st Air Base Group, and Senior Airman Brandon Lenz, 821st Security Forces Squadron.

At the conclusion of the FTAC, the course participants battled the base's senior leadership to a volleyball match. While the new Airmen lost, they learned about teamwork and volleyball skills from the other team.





Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley

Senior Airman Keturah Floyd, 821st Security Forces Squadron, assists Master Sgt. Mike Hall, 821st Support Squadron, as he fills out a contribution form at the Air Force Assistance Fund Rally here March 21. More than \$2,100 was contributed by Thule Air Base in a little over an hour.

AFAF Rally

An Air Force Assistance Fund Rally was held at the Top of the World Club March 21.

The Air Force Assistance Fund was established to provide for an annual effort to raise funds for the charitable affiliates that provide support to the Air Force family in need.

Those organizations are the Air Force Village Foundation, Inc., the Air Force Aid Society, Inc., the General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation, and the Air Force Enlisted Village, Inc. These organizations help Air Force people with aid in an emergency, with educational needs, or to have a secure retirement home for widows or widowers of Air Force members in need of financial assistance.

Team Thule can still contribute to the AFAF until April 18. For more information, contact Master Sgt. Bruce Bernard at x3901.



Photos by Col. Lee-Volker Cox

Two familiar faces at the AMC counter are George France, CAV International Gate Agent for AMC Flights, and Kathleen Allan, CAV International Assistant manager for AMC Flights.

With friendly volunteers, free refreshments and a comfortable place to relax before the flight, the USO at BWI is another familiar sight to many Team Thule members.

Friendly faces ...

While Team Thule is a diverse organization consisting of Airmen and civilians from all walks of life, all around the world, every American member of the team has one thing in common. That common thread is that the last stop they make in the U.S. before arriving at Thule is the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and in particular, the Air Mobility Counter to check in for their flights.



Unique organization develops Airmen at Top of the World

1st Lt. Nicole Langley
821st Air Base Group Public Affairs

It doesn't take long for Airmen assigned to Thule Air Base, Greenland, to realize that the base is unique in many ways. Besides being home to the world's only white runway, the Air Force's only tugboat and the DoD's northernmost deepwater port, the base is also home to just one professional development organization.

The Thule Association of Professional Airmen is a combined group of all ranks that works together for the benefit of Thule.

With only about 140 military members on base, there are not enough people for separate traditional organizations such as a Company Grade Officers Council, Top Three or Rising Six.

"As the only first sergeant at Thule, Diamond Council meetings would be pretty lonely," said Master Sgt. Chester Spires, 821st Air Base Group first sergeant. "TAPA allows me to professionally associate with not only other Senior NCOs, but all Airmen on the base.

"It eliminates the need for separate private organizations that most bases have and puts all Airmen working for the betterment of the entire base; one team, one fight!"

TAPA was created in March 2007 in order to promote unity; inspire leadership and professional development; promote

awards, recognition and retirement programs; and sponsor various ceremonies and morale-building activities.

"By bringing everyone together to set up, organize and host different events for the base, all ranks get the opportunity to work alongside each other outside of the work environment," explained Tech. Sgt. Wendi Atchley, 821st Support Squadron and TAPA president.

The organization is open to all Airmen, and we usually have about 50-60 members present at monthly meetings, explained Sergeant Atchley. TAPA optimizes the efforts of Team Thule's small, but strong group of Airmen and provides all members with increased leadership and growth opportunities.

While Thule is a small base and may be unique in many ways, it still has all of the traditional banquets, ceremonies and official functions that can be found at any other Air Force base around the world. TAPA plays an integral role in planning and coordinating many of these events.

"This is why the Airmen who make up TAPA are so important to the base," added Sergeant Atchley. "Every member is instrumental into making each of those events a success."

In addition to coordinating many special events on base, TAPA also provides a quarterly education scholarship to a deserving Airman, conducts briefings during First Term Airman Courses and conducts professional development seminars.



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole

NCO Professional Development Seminar

Upper right: Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Clayton, 821st Support Squadron superintendent, briefs attendees at Thule's first-ever NCO Professional Development Seminar March 25. The two-day seminar featured Thule's senior NCOs as guest speakers and focused on providing advanced leadership skills to Thule's up and coming enlisted force.

The light returns and demolition begins ...

Even though temperatures still plummet below -20F daily at Thule Air Base, with the return of the light, demolition and outdoor construction projects are getting underway. Through consolidation and demolition of facilities and resources, the base will save millions of dollars over the next few years.



Photos by Col. Lee-Volker Cox

Mass celebrated on Top of the World

821st Air Base Group

The world's northernmost Easter Mass was joyously celebrated by a vibrant Catholic community living more than 700 miles inside the Arctic Circle at Thule Air Base, Greenland. Father Michael Padazinski, Chancellor for the San Francisco Archdiocese and a chaplain (lieutenant colonel) in the Air Force Reserves, visited the extremely remote location for Holy Week to minister to the 15-member, Our Lady of Dundas congregation.

"Living at America's northernmost base is not only mentally and physically challenging, but also spiritually," said Colonel Lee-Volker Cox, Thule Air Base commander. "We haven't had a priest assigned to the base for more than 10 years. When one visits only a twice a year, it takes a lot of hard work and effort to keep a faith community together. We are like a very remote mission."

During his eight-day visit, Fr Padazinski celebrated daily Masses, led Stations of the Cross, heard Confessions and trained Catholic Leaders for Liturgy of the Word in the Absence of a Priest worship services. This was the chaplain's eighth visit since 1992.

"Thule is a wonderful and beautiful place and the community is very much like the early Church, small but strong in faith," he said. "I really enjoy coming here. It is so peaceful. There is no hustle and bustle or focus on materialism like you see in the much of the world. You



Photo by Col. Lee-Volker Cox

Fr Padazinski speaks to the Our Lady of Dundas congregation at the Thule Air Base Chapel March 23, Easter Sunday.

can get close to God just by walking outside and seeing the magnificent surroundings during the light season. In the middle of winter when the sun hasn't come up for four months, it's just you and God in the silent darkness."

An international team of Americans, Danes, Greenlanders and Canadians work at Thule Air Base, one of the world's most remote locations accessible only by air for about 10 months each year.

From the United States, one weekly military charter flight brings up to 32 passengers to the isolated installation and is supplemented by only one other aircraft that transports cargo and mail. Since the active duty military only remain 12 months, continuity is maintained by civilians who stay for several years and are the foundation of the base's space superiority mission.

"As with most remote assignments, personnel are constantly coming in and out," said Jennifer Tribble, the Catholic faith community leader. "But we've built a foundation here for Catholics to worship, even in the absence of a priest."

According to Mrs. Tribble, the Catholic community does its best to give all members a chance to celebrate their faith and get involved with services.

"The goal of our community is to keep Catholics strong in their faith while awaiting the full celebration of mass during each visit by a priest," she said.

Between priest visits, the members still meet to worship, share fellowship and be recognized as members of the Thule Chapel Community.

"Our Thule Family is the Church's beacon of light on Top of the World," said Fr Padazinski. "I pray daily for the safety and strength of faith of the men and women who call this extreme arctic location home and ask you do the same. I know they appreciate it."

Storm Season continues at Thule Air Base ...



Photos by Col. Lee-Volker Cox

Thule Main Base went to Storm Condition Charlie approximately 5 p.m. Feb. 29 until the early hours of March 1. Storm season officially ends May 15.

March — Women's History Month

In recognition of Women's History Month and in order to honor the women of Thule Air Base, the Thule Multicultural Committee hosted a Women's History Month dinner March 27 at the Top of the World Club.

The evening celebrated the accomplishments of women past and present, and included a special presentation by Elaine Flynn, a performer and tour guide from Washington, D.C. Mrs. Flynn told the stories of America's First Ladies, with help from some of the women in attendance.



Photos by 1st Lt. Nicole Langley and Col. Lee-Volker Cox

Community Center & Fitness Center Activities



Poker — Feb. 1
1st place: Dan Thorsted
2nd place: Brian Waldie
3rd place: Thomas Schiby



Soccer tournament — Feb. 17
1st place: 12th Space Warning Squadron



Space Bowling — Feb. 8
1st place from left to right: Kim B. Jensen, Jacob Sorenson, Dino Nielsen, Anette Poulson and Col. Lee-Volker Cox



Scrabble tournament — March 3
1st place: Master Sgt. Andrea Richards
2nd place: 1st Lt. Nick Van Elsacker
3rd place: Master Sgt. Amanda Beatie

Community Center & Fitness Center Activities



Poker — March 7
1st place: Master Sgt. Mark Koopman
2nd place: Tech Sgt. Jay Novinger
3rd place: Senior Airman Jared Korman



February Dancing with the Stars



Basketball tournament — March 16
1st place: Master Sgt. Mike Hall, Staff Sgt. Derrick Satterfield and Senior Airman Nichalos Grady



Here comes the sun ... Trip to BMEWS to welcome back the sun Feb. 16