

FEW Notes

December 2004
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Federally Employed Women Inc.
**Greater Oklahoma City
Chapter, No. 30**

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The President's Pencil.....

By Brenda Hagar



Here we are at the end of another year. Did you accomplish everything that you planned on this year? Somehow all the plans that we make at the beginning of the year get lost in all the hustle bustle of each new day. I've met a few of my personal goals but there are always more to work on. Every new day that we are given is a chance to strive to meet our goals.

As we get lost in the busyness of the holiday season, take time to reflect on the reason for the season. From my home to yours, I wish each of you a joyous holiday season and the peace that it brings. Take time to hug someone you love.

Happy Holidays and see you next year.

Brenda

*Next Board Meeting
Monday, January 10, 2005*

6:00 pm

*Holiday Inn Airport
2101 S. Meridian*

*CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE @
<http://www.gokcfew.org/>*

GOKC CHAPTER EXECUTIVE BOARD 2004-2006		
President	Brenda Hagar	(w) 954-4514 (h) 376-5318
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*Words from a
Veteran....*



By Colleen Conway

Veterans of the United States Armed Forces are a unique group of people that have served as a part of our country's defense. They come from all over the United States and serve as America's Ambassadors across the world. Veterans of the Armed Forces are formed as groups from the following services: Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy, and the Coast Guard. Armed Forces Veteran's always put Country above themselves during the Country's time of crisis and need.

United States Armed Forces Veterans come from all around the world to serve our country. They enlist at age 17 with parental permission or 18 as an adult into the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines, or Navy. I am an Air Force Veteran that served during the Persian Gulf War and for about 6 years after that. I was stationed at Lakenheath, England Air Base until July 1991 and from there went to Cannon Air Force Base, Clovis New Mexico. I was a part of the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing in England and the 27th Equipment Maintenance Squadron in Clovis, New Mexico. As a Weapons Systems Journeyman

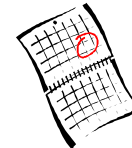
Mechanic, I worked on Munitions Loading Systems such as the BRU33A, MAU1-12, SUU21, and associated Avionics Equipment.

There were few female members in Tactical Fighter Squadrons at the time I first started my Air Force Career. This put me in a select group of females that stood together to show the rest of the Armed Forces what females are capable of. As time went by, our training and dedication to duty led some of us to be the best mechanics in our squadron. We were a group that stood for something, Women, and we helped further along the opening availability of other women into further combat roles.

Women in combat roles have come along way in the past fifteen years. We can now be Air Combat Controllers, Fighter Pilots, Shipmates, and Mechanics. We now play major roles in armed conflict and decision-making. This is helping allow women achieve bigger and better things and become greater parts of our armed forces. Just last year, the Army had one woman taken as a hostage in the Iraq conflict. The woman held her own and showed that woman can be a part of armed conflict and that we would not surrender any of our secret information to the hostage takers.

I can now see how my willingness to participate in joining the Air Force was not only good for me but also good for women. I did not stray from the job chosen for me and found it to be just what I was looking for. I love challenges and passed this challenge with flying colors. I am now a veteran of the Armed Forces and consider myself in great company amongst the women that have fought before, now are fighting, and the future women in combat. It says a lot about our country that we as women can fight alongside our men and be treated as equals.

*MARK YOUR
CALENDAR*



**SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAINING
PROGRAM (RTP)
February 23-25, 2005**

FEW comes alive in 2005

Moody Gardens, Galveston, TX

Brenda Hagar had knee replacement surgery Dec. 7. We wish you a speedy recovery, Brenda!

HOLIDAY CUSTOMS

ENGLAND :

Not surprising, many English Christmas customs traveled to the US with the English immigrants. Both countries share the hanging of stockings and mistletoe. People in both countries decorate with holly and ivy. There is no Santa Claus in England. Instead, children receive gifts from Father Christmas.

The custom in England is after Christmas dinner, plum pudding is the dessert of choice. Coins are hidden in the pudding bringing good luck to those that find them.

The English celebrate Boxing Day on December 26. On this day they give gifts to persons in service jobs, such as shop clerks or maids.

SWEDEN :

In Sweden, the celebration of Christmas lasts almost two months. The fun begins with Advent. Each Sunday before Christmas a candle is lit on an advent wreath made of a stick that is decorated with white lichen and paper-mache mushrooms or red berries

December 13 is St Lucia's Day. On this day, the eldest daughter in a family wears a white robe and a head wreath with candles. All dressed up, she serves the family St. Lucia buns and coffee in bed. A big event is the Lucia choir show. Young girls portray Lucia and "terns". Boys take part as starboys, tomtenissar or ginger cookie characters.

Christmas ornaments might be made of straw. Animals, especially goats, are popular ornaments for the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree is also decorated with lights, glass ornaments, and tinsel. On Christmas Eve, a large dinner or smorgasbord is served. Desserts include a rice pudding. An almond is hidden in the pudding. The person to find the almond is said to be the next to marry in the next year.

Children in Sweden look forward on Christmas Eve to gifts brought by Jultomten (today a cross between a little gnome and the German/British Santa Klaus). They make sure to leave him a bowl of porridge. They also put candles in the windows so he can find his way to the children's homes.

Christmas Day in Sweden is spent in church. December 26 is St. Stephen's Day in honor of the patron saint of animals. An old tradition on this day was to give the farm animals extra food to eat.

The holiday season concludes on January 13 or the 20th day Knut. On this day the Christmas tree is taken down and Christmas is over for another year in Sweden

HANUKAH :

The origins of Hanukah or the Festival of Lights are an event that happened 200 years before the birth of Christ. A king named Antiochus attempted to have all Jewish persons under his reign to follow the Greek religion. Under the leadership of Judah Maccabee, there was a rebellion.

After three years of fighting, the Maccabees drove the Greek soldiers away. The Maccabees wanted to rededicate the temple, but were only able to find enough oil for one day. Miraculously, the oil lasted eight days; long enough to make new oil.

An important part of the Hanukah celebration is the menorah. This is a candleholder with eight candles and a shamash or servant candle. One candle is lit by the shamash for each of the night of Hanukah.

After the lighting of the candles, people give gifts to one another. People sing and make merry. A popular food for Hanukah is potato pancakes, or latkes, cooked in oil in honor of the miracle.

KWANZAA :

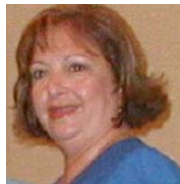
Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday which was created in 1966. It begins on December 26 and lasts through January 1. The name Kwanzaa comes from the language of Swahili and means first fruits of the harvest.

In preparation for the holiday, families decorate their homes with Kwanzaa symbols. Families place a mkeka (a straw mat) on the table. Corn (one ear for each child in the family) and other foods are placed on the mkeka to remember the earth's abundance.

Candles are placed in a kinara (a wooden candle holder). A black candle is placed in the center as a reminder of the richness of African-American skin. Three red candles represent struggles and three green candles represent a prosperous future. A candle is lit for each day of Kwanzaa. The black candle is lit first, then red and green candles are lit alternately.

There are seven principles of Kwanzaa, one for each day. They are Umoja or Unity, Kujichagulia or Self-Determination, Ujima or Collective Work and Responsibility, Ujamaa or Cooperative Economics, Nia or Purpose, Kuumba or Creativity, and Imani or Faith.

*Special Assignment for FEW Executive
Board Officer*



By Debbie Miller, Vice President
(Membership)

GOKC FEW Executive Officer, Debbie Miller, was selected to participate in the prestigious Air Force Education with Industry (EWI) program. Since 1947, EWI has been a beneficial endeavor between the U.S. Air Force and industry. Highly-qualified U.S. Air Force officers and civilians have participated in the yearly program in either a 10-month or 12-month fellowship associated with a particular institution/company. Mrs. Miller, an Air Force civilian, is one of 10 nation-wide recipients participating during the 2004-2005 timeframe.

The objective of the EWI program is to develop the recipients' management qualities and technical leadership abilities enabling them to have effective Air Force careers. The industry benefits as well from this participative program by developing this select group of individuals through exposure to the corporation's organizational structure, management methods, and technology. After being immersed in the company's objectives, problems, mode of operations, and daily challenges, the individual's expanded knowledge is applied to future partnerships and interactions throughout their Air Force career. Overall, the positive results have been overwhelming creating a "win-win" situation for the Air Force, its customers, and private industry.

Congratulations, Debbie, from your FEW friends!



*Annual Christmas Party
A Success!*

Members of the GOKC Chapter gathered for the annual Christmas party on December 3. We had a "covered dish" meal and, as is our custom, we played a resounding game of Dirty Santa, which of course ended some longtime friendships (just kidding)!

Members brought toiletry items, clothing and other items which were donated to the Battered Women's Shelter.



Quotation on Christmas

Submitted by Tammie Kierstead
By Erma Bombeck - From a column first
published January 1, 1987:

No one loves a Christmas tree on Jan. 1. The wonderful soft branches that the family couldn't wait to get inside to smell have turned into rapiers that jab you. The wonderful blinking lights that Daddy arranged by branch and color have knotted themselves hopelessly around crumbling brownery and have to be severed with a bread knife. The stockings that hung by the chimney with care are hanging out of sofa cushions, and they smell like clam dip.

And the angel that everyone fought to put on top of the tree can only be removed with an extension ladder that is in the garage, and no one can remember how to fit it through the door.

Next to the presidency, detrimming a tree has to be the loneliest job in the world. It has fallen to women for centuries and is considered a skill only they can do, like replacing the roll on the toilet tissue spindle, painting baseboards, holding a wet washcloth for a child who is throwing up or taking out a splinter with a needle.



Identity Theft

By Tammie Kierstead

You may think you know yourself pretty well, but are you sure that somebody isn't masquerading as you? Come and join the Greater Oklahoma City Federal Employed Women for LUNCH and a 1 hour informative discussion on "Identity Theft".

Guest Speaker: Alison Wolf, Marketing Director, Oklahoma Federal Credit Union

Listen to testimonies given by victims of identity theft.

When: January 20th 2005, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. (pizza & drinks will be served)

Where: VA Medical Center, 921 NE 13th Street. Ground floor in the Chase Auditorium.

For more information, please call Wendy Morgan at 954-2571 or Tammie Kierstead at 270-0501 ext. 4115.

