

Puzzled airman shares craft

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska — What can be very addictive but can also inspire people's creativity? At the same time, what can be really frustrating?

Give up? They are crossword puzzles — and thanks to an airman here, they're now available to base newspapers across the Air Force.

First Lt. **Tony Wickman**, deputy chief of public affairs for Alaskan Command, began creating military-themed crossword puzzles at his previous base as an experiment. He's now producing crosswords for the Air Force News Service in San Antonio during his off-duty time.

"I was struck by their professionalism right from the start," said Senior Master Sgt. **Terry Somerville**, Air Force newspaper consultant. "Lieutenant Wickman weaves special Air Force clues into the usual elements of a crossword puzzle."

Before this, Wickman produced puzzles at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. While not many Air Force bases run crosswords, he said his puzzles were a huge success with base members.

"I'd walk through the hospital and see new and old issues of base papers left open on the crossword section. I'd see people in the halls who would stop and ask me about the answers to certain clues. We'd get calls coming in asking if we could con-

tinue printing them," he said.

His puzzles, featuring various Air Force and military topics, are now slated to be a regular feature in many base newspapers.

"The actual making of a crossword puzzle is a challenge. When I first started, it would take me about three to four hours. Now, it takes me about an hour, and so far, I already have enough puzzles to get AFNEWS through most of this year," he said. "My goal is to make the puzzles challenging and fun. I believe crossword puzzles inspire creativity and mix things up a little."

This different twist will encourage people who might not normally pick up the paper to do so, and may even keep newspapers "hanging around" the offices longer, he said.

— *Airman 1st Class Amy Christopher*
3rd Wing Public Affairs

by Senior Airman Joe Laws



First Lt. Tony Wickman creates military-themed crossword puzzles for base newspapers in his off-duty time. The puzzles are now being used at bases throughout the Air Force.

by Master Sgt. Jim Varhegyi



Air Force pride

WASHINGTON — Placing an embroidered Air Force logo on the lightweight blue jacket is now an option for airmen. About 300 jackets bearing the logo will be distributed Air Force-wide for wear testing, but airmen can add the embroidered logo to their jackets at any time by visiting a local embroidery shop. For guidelines on getting your jacket embroidered, go to www.af.mil/airforcestory. The site provides complete specifications such as thread color and number, font style and size, stitch style and count, and spacing.