

29 August - 1 September 2008

Welcome to your United States Air Force Academy! Parents' Weekend begins on Friday, 29 August, and ends on Labor Day, 1 September 2008. Parents' Weekend is an exciting time for cadets, their families and guests. The following information is provided to assist you with planning for the various Parents' Weekend events. Please read this information so that you can closely coordinate your visit with your cadet. The Parents' Weekend 2008 Brochure which will be mailed to fourth-class cadet parents of record in early August 2008.

Parents' Weekend Visitor Information

Parents' Weekend Weather. Due to our location on the Front Range of the Rockies and our high elevation, weather at the Academy can be highly unpredictable and change rapidly. It can be sunny and warm one day and rainy, foggy and cold the next day. The daytime high temperature is usually in the 80's, and the evening low in the 50's at this time of year. We recommend you bring sunscreen, clear, unopened water bottles and hats for good weather and rain coats/hats for bad weather. To better plan your day, see the USAFA weather site at <http://www.usafa.edu/tu/306ftg/oss/weather/sevenday.cfm> for more information.

SEVERE WEATHER. Colorado has more thunderstorm days than any other state except Florida. During the summer months, flash floods can become a major weather hazard. Slow-moving thunderstorms can dump several inches of rain over a small area in a few hours, quickly saturating the ground. In steep mountain terrain, the runoff pours into streams and rivers, causing water levels to rise rapidly.

HAIL. The state's mountains and high elevation increase the likelihood that hail will form in a thunderstorm, making Colorado one of the hail capitals of the world. Northeastern Colorado and nearby Great Plains states get more hail each year than any other part of the United States.

FLOODS. Flash floods are responsible for most deaths, and nearly half of those fatalities are auto related--such as when people unwittingly try to drive through flood waters. It only takes two feet of water to carry away most automobiles, and six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet. That's why, in a flash flood, it's best to leave your car, get away from the water, and climb to safety.

LIGHTNING. Lightning is Colorado's most dangerous weather hazard. Since the late 1980s, more people have been killed or injured by lightning than by any other weather-related phenomena in Colorado. In an average year, lightning kills three and injures eighteen people.

Hiking during a thunderstorm in Colorado's mountains can be very dangerous. In the summer, thunderstorms typically begin to form over the mountains in late morning or early afternoon. To minimize your risk of exposure to lightning, it's best to hike early in the morning.

WARNING SYSTEM. Here at the Air Force Academy, a 'Giant Voice System' and a Lightning Warning System (LWS) will activate to warn when a thunderstorm or lightning threatens the area. The LWS system is an announcement and a yellow light on light poles to warn personnel outside buildings. When the LWS activates, you should seek shelter immediately or limit exposure to the outdoors and remain at that location until it has been determined that lightning is out of the area

Parents' Weekend Information A packet of information including passes and a Parents' Weekend brochure will be mailed to Fourth-Class cadet parents only in early August 2008. Any returned ('forwarding order expired,' etc.) information packets will be sent to the cadet so that they can provide the information to you. Please remember that only your cadet can update your mailing address in the database.

Upper-Class cadet parents attending Parents' Weekend should ask their cadet to pick up information from their squadrons and provide it to you on your arrival. The base is currently open to visitors so you will have no difficulty getting on base to meet your cadet. You may also print information from this website to bring with you.

If you have a handicapped placard from your state, please bring it with you so you can access the handicapped parking area (immediately north of Stillman Parade Field).

Parents' Weekend - Disabled/Handicapped Assistance. Disabled or handicapped guests should bring or rent any walkers, wheelchairs, breathing support or other special-needs or medical equipment they require. They should also bring their state-issued 'disabled/handicapped' placard or other documentation in order to park in designated disabled/handicapped lots. During Parents' Weekend, specially equipped shuttle vans will transport disabled guests from the disabled/handicapped parking area to locations within the Cadet Area. If you have serious medical conditions such as anemia, heart disease or pulmonary disease, you should consult your doctor about the need for portable oxygen or preventive medication and the advisability of traveling to the Academy. NOTE: The Academy is unable to provide wheelchairs, oxygen tanks and other medical equipment supplies. Please contact a medical supply distributor or your doctor or insurance carrier for your medical needs.

Contacting Cadets during Parents' Weekend. Upon completion of the summer program, all Fourth-Class cadets will change from summer squadrons (letters A-I) to numbered squadrons (1-40). Please be sure to ask your cadet the number of his/her new squadron. Squadrons 24-40 are located in Sijan Hall; Squadrons 1-23 are located in Vandenberg Hall.

Cadet Group Phone Numbers. From on or off base, dial 333 then dial number.

First Group		Third Group	
SQ	CCQ/AOC #	SQ	CCQ/AOC #
01	4534/8991	21	4666/4456
02	4533/4537	22	4659/4594
03	4640/4548	23	4529/4457
04	4612/4541	24	4447/4559
05	4535/4524	25	4695/4798
06	4551/4532	26	6842/4766
07	4492/4518	27	4660/4424
08	4491/4550	28	4748/4408
09	4574/4552	29	4717/4488
10	4500/4569	30	4711/4465
Second Group		Fourth Group	
SQ	CCQ/AOC #	SQ	CCQ/AOC #
11	4581/4539	31	3050/4474
12	4448/4608	32	3052/4451
13	4757/4758	33	4300/4604
14	4759/4767	34	4304/4444
15	4669/4668	35	4311/4606
16	4675/4671	36	4306/4476
17	4501/4785	37	0667/0337
18	4777/4768	38	0668 0338
19	4741/4751	39	0669/0339
20	4712/6521	40	0670/0340

Parent's Weekend Chapel Activities. The chaplains at the Air Force Academy are privileged to minister to the spiritual and moral needs of your cadet. Their mission is to provide for and support spiritual and character development through the free exercise of religion and pastoral care. To fulfill this critical mission, we offer worship opportunities, religious education, fellowship activities, choirs, retreats and pastoral counseling.

The Cadet Chapel will be open to visitors from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during Parents' Weekend, except Sunday, when services will be held from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Parking for Sunday services is in the upper Harmon Hall parking lot. The chapel will reopen for visitors on Sunday from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

A number of different worship services will be offered during Parents' Weekend. See the schedule of events for specific services and times. Please contact the Chaplains' Office if you have any questions about Chaplain Services at the Academy or about any of the religious services or activities during Parents' Weekend. Cadet Chapel Phone Number: (719) 333-2636 .

Mailing Address: USAFA / HC 2348 Sijan Drive, Suite 100, USAF Academy CO 80840-8280

Appropriate Dress during your Visit. Please ensure children and young adults wear appropriate clothing for a visit to a national military academy. Plan to dress sensibly and comfortably for outdoor activities such as the Cadet Wing Parades. Since a visit to the Academy may require extensive walking, **wear good walking shoes.** We suggest that guests bring sun block, hats and raingear for scheduled outside events. For Chapel services and official ceremonies, please dress appropriately; for example, dress or slacks for ladies, coat and tie for gentlemen and Service Dress uniform or equivalent for military members. Specific dress information is provided for each event listed under 'Event Details.'

High Altitude Health Concerns. The Air Force Academy Cadet Area is approximately 7,300 feet above sea level. At this altitude, it is possible to contract an illness known as acute mountain or high-altitude sickness. The common symptoms of this disorder include headache, malaise, nausea, vomiting and shortness of breath. Most cases of acute mountain sickness are mild but the altitude may exacerbate other existing medical conditions. High altitude sickness usually resolves within a few days once an individual has had a chance to adapt to the increased elevation. The best way to avoid illness is to allow yourself to acclimatize: try not to over-exert yourself in the first days after your arrival and make sure to drink sufficient fluids to avoid dehydration. Don't go sight seeing at higher elevations (i.e., up in the mountains) until after you have been in Colorado Springs for a few days. Alcohol consumption may worsen these symptoms, so make sure to drink in moderation.

Local Shopping. There are many and varied stores near the Air Force Academy to meet your needs. Academy Boulevard, easily accessed from the South Gate of the Air Force Academy, offers a wide variety of retail stores, services, dining and entertainment

establishments, within minutes of the Academy grounds. For Academy souvenirs, please feel free to shop at the USAFA Visitor Center or at the Falcon Gift Shop in the USAFA Field House. Please be aware that the Base Exchange, Commissary and Service Center, located at the Academy Community Center, are only for authorized personnel (i.e., active duty or retired military personnel and authorized dependents). If you do not have a military ID card, you may shop here only when accompanied by your cadet.

Traffic. There will be thousands of cadets, parents & guests at the Academy during Parents Weekend. With all of these people converging in one place, traffic will be extremely heavy. Make allowances for slow and heavy traffic. **Rule #1: Leave early for every scheduled event! Even better, leave earlier!**

Parking areas may be limited due to security. Park only in designated visitor areas. Violators will be ticketed or towed. Buses will be available and will stop at designated bus stops (identified by signs and benches).

Meeting your cadet. Determine a location, preferably away from the cadet area, where you can meet your cadet. Be very specific as you and 4,000 other families will be "meeting at the chapel" and cadets in uniform will all look very much alike! Specify a corner or by the uniform insignia sign on the overlook, for example.

After the parade, you may meet your cadet at his/her Squadron Open House. Following the open house, must report back to the Academy for accountability formations prior to the football game on Saturday.

Following the football game, cadets may depart for the rest of the holiday weekend. All cadets must sign in by 7:10 p.m. on Monday (10:45 p.m. for First-Class cadets). **NOTE: Please do not interfere with your cadet's military duties until they are released.** The parade (for instance) is not complete until the commander releases the cadets on the terrazzo. Parents who break the ranks of squadron formations reflect poorly on the in-ranks discipline of their cadet's squadron.

FRIDAY SUPPER BUFFET:

After a very tiring day, you will want to relax and enjoy a wonderful time with your cadet at Extreme Pizza. Why wait in long lines at the restaurants in Colorado Springs! The Arizona Parents Club has reserved the restaurant from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm and you may drop by and stay as long as you like. Reservations are required for this event. The dress for this event is very casual. Extreme Pizza is located on Academy Blvd just south of Chapel Hills Mall.

Cadets will be able to sign out after the Squadron Open House, so plan to attend the buffet on your way out for the weekend!

REMEMBER....

... if this is your cadet's first weekend away from the Academy, don't over-plan the visit. They have been through some very challenging experiences, both physically and mentally. When cadets are finally allowed to leave campus with their parents, they cannot wait to leave! Most of them want to go out to dinner and then chill or sleep in the hotel so they can wear civilian clothes and leave the rigors of the Academy behind. They may wish to do some shopping or see a movie, but don't be surprised if they prefer to spend most of their time in the room watching TV and sleeping! As Fourth class cadets, they must wear their uniforms at all times when outside of the hotel room. The best advice is to be flexible and receptive to their needs. Play it by ear!

... Fourth Class Cadets may only travel within a 150-mile radius of the Academy.

... Shopping will be high on the priority list. They will want computer printers, vacuum cleaners, full-size ironing boards, sleeping bags, personal items and cleaning supplies.

... There will be many tours and events going on at the Academy during the weekend. But don't be surprised if your cadet does not want to return for a tour of Jack's Valley or a tour of the Field House. They have not been allowed to leave campus for quite some time and most do NOT want to return to give tours to their families. During their four years at USAFA, you will have ample time to take the tours.

... Don't be surprised if your cadet becomes unusually quiet prior to returning to the Academy. Make the afternoon/evening upbeat as possible and allow him his feelings.

**Cadets must sign in by no later than 7:10pm 1910 hours
on Monday, September 1, 2008 (Firsties by 10:45pm).**