



## Vance air traffic controller uses self-aid, buddy care training on local grocery store shopper

by Airman 1st Class Frank John Casciotta  
71st Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

11/2/2011 - **VANCE AIR FORCE BASE, Okla.** -- Airman 1st Class Robert Strauss was standing in line at a local grocery store Oct. 23 when he heard a crash. He saw an elderly woman being helped to her feet.

Strauss, an air traffic controller with the 71st Operations Support Squadron at Vance Air Force Base, offered assistance. The woman was struggling to stand even with the help of the two men.

"She was clearly disorientated," said Strauss. "She was able to tell me where she was but was having a hard time standing and complained that her head hurt."

Instead of forcing her to stand, Strauss helped her lay down because he didn't know what type of injury she had.

"Her head wasn't bleeding but her hand was bleeding pretty badly," said Strauss.

He told a bystander to call 911 and asked the manager to look for bandages before dashing out to his vehicle and grabbing his Air Force sweatshirt to use as a bandage in case one wasn't available.

Strauss wrapped the woman's arm in his sweatshirt, applied pressure and elevated her arm to help stop the bleeding.

"It was more like a reaction than anything," said Strauss, from Trenton, Mich. "I just went through the mental check list of what I learned at Basic and waited for the paramedics to arrive."

While at Air Force Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, Strauss learned self-aid and buddy care -- life support and limb saving techniques to apply while waiting for medical professionals to arrive.

"I was just happy I could help out thanks to my training," said Strauss. "Any other Airman would have done the same thing."

When he's not working as an air traffic controller, the 22-year-old studies and enjoys spending time at the Fitness Center.

"I spend a lot of time studying air traffic control material to get to my five-level," said Strauss.

Although he hasn't been at Vance long, Strauss has already deployed to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, where he spent four months as a third-country-national escort.

"I had a good time, and the people I escorted were nice," said Strauss.

He believes he is part of a generation inspired to serve their country in a time of war. "I know it sounds cliché, but I really wanted to be part of the effort to fight the war on terrorism, even as a kid," said Strauss

Strauss says he enjoys being a part of the Air Force and plans to stay in until he retires.

"Even though I haven't been in the Air Force very long, I can't imagine doing anything else. I'll do twenty plus, or until they get rid of me."



Airman 1st Class Robert Strauss, an air traffic controller with the 71st Operations Support Squadron at Vance Air Force Base, Okla., used his self-aid and buddy care training to help a woman injured in a local grocery store. (U.S. Air Force photo/ Airman 1st Class Frank John Casciotta)