

# Quarterly Shoutout

*Click Here*

**A link to your Base Spouse: Click to visit our social media pages and to meet your Base Spouse! Meet the spouse who represents your base!**

**Bidding isn't the devil—it's an art form that can help your family navigate the ups and downs of pilot spouse life (PSL). While it may feel frustrating at first, time and seniority will make it easier. With patience, clear communication, and a little creativity, you can make this lifestyle work for your family.**

**Miles Apart, Close at Heart**

**Some tips and ideas to keep the heat on when your pilot is flying!**



**The Lingo Dictionary for new spouses...  
What does this mean?!**

**Meet-Ups and Events: Stay in touch with your Base Spouses and meet some awesome spouses from other bases!**

**QUICK  
TIPS**

**Bids due the 13th**

**Awards published the 16th**





## ***Bidding: Don't Burn the Cake***

My best advice to you is going to be the best advice some veteran wives gave me...have no expectations. I say this with love.

I want you to know a couple things that I wish I realized earlier on and some things that might talk you off the ledge...like a fine wine, time makes a difference in your aviation spouse experience.

Seniority is your best friend. As your pilot's seniority number loses digits s/he changes where s/he sits in percentage compared to the rest of the pilots in CLT, flying the same equipment.

On the 13th of each month, your pilot's bids are due. On the 16th of each month, their schedule is released. Communicate the days you hope to have your pilot home by the 8th so that your pilot can start building layers. Although there is no guarantee, open communication will result in better chances.

Let's break it down with an example:

Let's assume we are in March. March 10th rolls around and your pilot needs to start thinking about bidding for April. S/he has to bid in a program called PBS, where the requests are made in layers—think cake.

Layer 1 of your pilot's cake should be a dream scenario.

Layer 2 will have some sacrifices to that dream, and so on. Each layer drops off a little more and s/he submits the final bid with hopes and dreams of resolving in Layers 1-3.

During this layering process, your pilot also needs to look at things like: what days do we need off, commutability (that changes month to month for some airports), etc...

**EXAMPLE**

Reality

**If your pilot submits layers with too many restrictions, your pilot will not resolve in any of the layers and the system will just plug your pilot into a schedule based on the needs of the airline. They basically burn your cake. Be mindful of this when bidding. Don't bid greedy because it can bite you.**



Write out a list of important dates with the events attached and communicate to your pilot BEFORE bidding even begins.

### Set Realistic Expectations.

Junior pilots, especially, will have a tough time getting holidays off. They're competing against more senior pilots with better odds. Prepare to celebrate holidays early or late.

### Seniority matters.

### Solutions and Resolutions if the cake burns:

- Drop or Trade Trips: Your pilot can call PBS scheduling admins for tips on how to improve their bid or try to drop or trade.
- Non-Rev Travel Adventures:
  - Non-rev travel is a privilege but comes with risks. I've made it onto a red-eye as the #33 D2 with kids, only to get stranded in Italy. Another time, I flew to Spain to meet my husband, only to find his flight canceled. Despite the chaos, these experiences can be adventures if you approach them with flexibility.

*Pro tip: Join the Admiral's Club. It's a lifesaver, with amenities like showers, private rooms, and snacks for your family during long waits.*

- Virtual Connection:
  - FaceTime and Zoom are game-changers. My husband, a "slam-click" (meaning he stays in his hotel room between flights), often joins us virtually for family dinners or even school meetings. On one trip, he ate dinner in his hotel while video chatting with us, and we met with our accountant together via Zoom.



**Once, I vented to a friend about my husband's five-day trip. She reminded me her husband was on his 300th day of deployment. Perspective matters.**





# Miles Apart, Close at Heart

## Plan Virtual Date Nights

Schedule time to watch a movie together or enjoy a meal over video chat, no matter where you are.

## Send Care Packages

Send small gifts, snacks, or personal items to show you're thinking of them. This is easier to do during training days when the hotel and travel is less likely to change.

## Share Daily Highlights

Exchange quick updates about your day, even if it's just a text. It keeps you involved in each other's lives.





# The Lingo Dictionary

## Deadhead

- Definition: When a pilot or crew member is traveling as a passenger to their next assignment, at no personal cost. They are not working the flight but are simply being transported.
- Example: "He's deadheading back to New York to fly his Miami turn."
- Spouse Tip: When your partner is deadheading, it means they're not actively working the flight, but they are on duty.

## Jump Seat

- Definition: A seat in the cockpit reserved for other crew members, such as pilots traveling off duty. It is located in the cockpit and is a way for crew members to get around when there is no cabin seat. It can also be used for training purposes.
- Example: "She's flying back home in the jump seat because the flight was full."





# When s/he's flying for the holidays...

Holidays without your pilot spouse at home can be a challenge, especially when your picture-perfect plans take a detour. This narrative dives into the realities of life as a pilot's spouse during the holiday season and offers practical tips to find joy, create new traditions, and celebrate meaningful connections—no matter when or how the holiday comes together.

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When I thought about getting married, I dreamed of a partner who loved to travel. In my mind, we'd spend summers in Bali, Christmases in Vail, and have a scrapbook full of jet-setting memories. I didn't consider, at the time, my full time job or starting a family. Now, vacations are far and few between.

Being married to a pilot isn't always glamorous, but it does come with its own special kind of love story—one written between flight schedules, snow-covered driveways you shovel alone, and FaceTime calls during layovers. I love my husband with all my heart, but sometimes his schedule... well, let's just say it's the Grinch who stole my holiday plans.

Take this year, for example. My husband, Adrian, is based in ORD (Chicago). While he's fairly senior, he still doesn't have Christmas off. In fact, he has only one day off between Christmas and New Year's. My elaborate plans of cookie baking, light tours, and Christmas card-worthy snow globe mornings? Out the airplane window they go. But if I've learned anything in this life of schedules and swaps, it's that flexibility is key. It's easy to get caught up in the theories about holiday bidding: senior pilots should let junior ones have time off, asking for time off guarantees you won't get it, or "just don't expect holidays off, ever." Truth is, sometimes you're the pigeon, and sometimes you're the statue. This year, our family feels more like the latter.

And you know what? That's okay. It might not look like a Hallmark movie, but we'll make our own magic. Instead of waiting for the 24th, we'll leave cookies out for Santa on the 22nd. We'll bake, open presents, and do all the festive things before "real Christmas" rolls around. My 4-year-olds, Michael and Maddy, won't know the difference. The meaning of the holiday—love, connection, and time together—still shines through.



# Tips for Surviving Any Holiday Without Your Pilot Spouse

## 1. Celebrate Early or Late

Who says the holiday has to be on the actual date? Shift your celebrations to when your pilot is home and create a "second Christmas" or Thanksgiving.

## 2. Keep the Kids in the Loop

Frame the change as exciting! For example, tell them Santa made a special early stop just for your family.

## 3. Plan Virtual Moments

Schedule a video call for gift unwrapping or dinner time. Seeing each other's faces helps bridge the gap.

## 4. Rely on Your Village

Lean on friends, family, and neighbors. Invite others over to keep the festive spirit alive and share the holiday cheer.

## 5. Simplify or Create Your Own Traditions

Focus on what matters most: maybe it's baking cookies or watching a favorite movie. And develop your own unique holiday rituals, like writing notes to each other or recording special holiday messages.

## 6. Send Love on the Road

Pack a holiday care package with snacks, cards, or small gifts for your spouse to open during their trip.

## Most Importantly: Give Yourself Grace

It's okay to feel frustrated or sad about the distance. Don't pressure yourself to make everything perfect.

At the end of the day, the holidays are about love, connection, and togetherness—whether that's in person, over a screen, or in spirit. Life with a pilot means adapting, pivoting, and sometimes celebrating on a different timeline. But the joy you create, whenever and however it happens, is what makes the holidays truly magical.

So here's to snowy mornings, steaming cups of coffee, and new traditions—whether they're on Christmas morning or December 22nd. And Santa, if you're listening, a little holiday scheduling magic would still be greatly appreciated! 🎄✈️



# JANUARY \* \* \*

## VACATION

Vacation bidding is quickly approaching!

January 2 – January 12

Please talk to your pilot about the how's and why's.

Read. There are some great resources on the APA website. Compass Project has a Vacation Bidding guide. And don't forget to read the Pilot Vacation Annual Vacation Bid and Award (AVBA) provided by American Airlines.

Make a list of priorities and provide them to your pilot.

Join Us  
**January 28, 2025**

Dinner - 5-7 p.m.

Rodeo - Begins at 7:30 p.m.

Dinner and admission to the rodeo are included. Parking is not included.

You may request up to 4 tickets. Additional tickets may be distributed based on availability. Please note that space is limited, and we may not be able to fulfill all ticket requests.

**MUST RSVP BY JAN. 15**

Start Date/Time:

2025-01-28 17:00:00

End Date/Time:

2025-01-28 22:00:00

**January 28, 2025**

**Fort Worth Stock Show Rodeo  
Family Awareness Event**

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS**



**Rodeo**

# FEBRUARY



**Happy  
Valentines  
Day**



**Monthly**



**Book  
Club**

**DFW Wives Book Club**

This book club is run by DFW Base Spouse Kat and meets virtually!! The focus is on community and friendship--nothing aviation related!! If you are a pilot spouse looking for an escape--this is a great way to engage and meet others!

# MARCH

Monday, March 17, 2025  
Savannah's 201st  
St. Patrick's Day Parade  
<https://www.wsav.com/now/when-is-st-patricks-day-2025/>



March 15, 2025  
Chicago St. Patrick's Day  
Parade  
<https://stpattysdaychicago.com/>