

## 2015 Air Force Birthday Ball

Thank you to everyone for attending.



United States Air Force Photo/Elizabeth Owens



United States Air Force Photo/ Elizabeth Owens



United States Air Force Photo/ Senior Airman Stephanie Englar



United States Air Force Photo/ Senior Airman Stephanie Englar



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"Produce Pilots, Advance Airmen, Feed the Fight"

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

September 25, 2015

Vol. 39, Issue 38

### Weather

<b>Friday</b> Partly Cloudy High 85°F Low 61°F	<b>Saturday</b> Thunderstorms High 84°F Low 63°F	<b>Sunday</b> Thunderstorms High 83°F Low 63°F
<b>Monday</b> Thunderstorms High 85°F Low 63°F	<b>Tuesday</b> Thunderstorms High 83°F Low 62°F	<b>Wednesday</b> Thunderstorms High 84°F Low 62°F

Forecast provided by the 14<sup>th</sup> OSS Weather Flight

### News Briefs

#### Anheuser-Busch safety presentation

The 14th Flying Training Wing Safety Office is hosting a "Street Smart" event at 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. Sept. 28 in the Kaye Auditorium. The event is recommended for Airmen and dependents over the age of 14 and is designed to make young adults aware of the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, texting and/or emailing while driving, not wearing seat belts, and the trauma associated with these dangers.

#### Wing Photo and Picnic

The 14th Flying Training Wing photo will be taken at 8:30 a.m. on the flight line in front of Base Operations. Please arrive early. Attendance is highly recommended. Parking is limited and shuttle service will be available. The Wing Picnic will kick off at 11:15 a.m. at Freedom Park.

#### Enlisted Promotions

The next Columbus Air Force Base Enlisted Promotions ceremony is at 11:15 a.m. Sept. 30 at Freedom Park.

### Inside



#### Feature 8

The 68th Air Force Birthday Ball is highlighted in this week's feature.



U.S. Air Force Photo/Sonic Johnson

Maj. Gen. Richard Clark, Commander, Eighth Air Force, gives a speech at the 2015 Air Force Birthday Ball Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus. Clark spoke to the crowd about having a purpose and committing to that purpose.

## Honoring Heroes; Celebrating Air Force Heritage

#### Senior Airman Stephanie Englar 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Team BLAZE members of Columbus Air Force Base celebrated the 68th birthday of the world's greatest Air Force Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus, Miss.

The theme for this year's Air Force Birthday Ball was 'Tradition of Honor, Legacy of Valor' which celebrated the Air Force's rich heritage while honoring Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action.

Maj. Gen. Richard Clark, Commander, Eighth Air Force, See HERITAGE, Page 2

## COLUMBUS AFB TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE II				PHASE III			IFF			WING SORTIE BOARD					
Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Track Select	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual
37th (16-09)	0.70 days	-0.71 days	Oct. 21	48th (15-15)	-1.36 days	0.76 days	Oct. 2	49th (15-LBC)	0.00 days	4.82 days	Sept. 21	T-6	1,979	2,180	28,967
41st (16-08)	1.33 days	0.34 days	Sept. 28	50th (15-15)	-0.01 days	0.86 days	Oct. 2					T-1	585	652	10,522
												T-38	660	701	8,861
												IFF	260	366	4,125

The graduation speaker for SUPT Class 15-15 is Col. Scott Yancy, Vice Commandant of Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

HERITAGE

(Continued from page 1)

Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, was the featured speaker for the event. At the ball, Clark spoke to the crowd about having a purpose and committing to that purpose.

“Our Airmen have purpose, and they understand that purpose,” said Clark. “Real purpose is that thing you say is ‘bigger than me and it is worth putting everything I have into to achieve that level that will not only make the world around me, but the world for everyone else, better.’”

Clark said that some people choose to be rich or famous, but claimed that those are not a real purpose.

“True purpose is not a selfish thing,” said Clark. “True purpose is something that gives back to everyone. That purpose means nothing if you don’t have commitment. If you aren’t committed to that purpose, then it is just a dream.”

Clark continued by saying that there are three phases of commitment.

“The first step is the ‘say it’ phase,” said Clark. “That is where you take your commitment, whatever that purpose is that you are going to commit to and you say it out loud to the world. You voiced that level of commitment to one purpose that is so big that everybody believes everybody is ready to watch you go.”

Clark used politicians as an example for the ‘say it’ phase, saying when they announce they are going to run or make a change, they are beginning a commitment.

“The next phase is the ‘do it’ phase,” continued Clark. “That is the phase where you take that first step. This phase tells the world you are committed and you’ll do what you said.”

Clark said marriage is a great example of this second phase because not only have two individuals announced they are go-

*“Our Airmen have purpose, and they understand that purpose,” said Clark. “Real purpose is that thing you say is ‘bigger than me and it is worth putting everything I have into to achieve that level that will not only make the world around me, but the world for everyone else, better.’”*

ing to get married, but they say ‘I do’ in front of witnesses and take that step.

“The third phase is the toughest phase,” Clark said. “This is the phase where you get real achievement. This phase is the ‘own it’ phase. Are you going to commit to it? Are you going to own it? Are you going to be able to weather the storm that comes along with the achievement and purpose you said you were going to commit to, and that purpose you told the world you were going to do it?”

Clark said Airmen have been showing commitment for the last 68 years by committing to a purpose that is bigger than them.

“They said they were going to do something, they took that first step toward it, and they owned it,” said Clark. “No matter how hard it got, no matter how tough the enemy was in their face, they owned it. Our tradition of honor and our legacy of valor is a commitment that has powered purpose for 68 years. You don’t get up every morning and do the things you do for yourself, you are doing it for something bigger than yourself and bigger than your family. You are doing it for the Constitution of the United States.”

Silver Wings

How to reach us

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Submission Deadline

The deadline for submitting copy for next week’s SILVER WINGS is noon Monday. Articles may be dropped off at the public affairs office or e-mailed.

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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
28 14th FTW Aerial Review Anheuser-Busch safety presentation, 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. @ Kaye	29 Enlisted Call, 9 a.m./3 p.m. @ Kaye	30 Wing Down Day Wing Photo, 8:30 a.m. @ Flight Line Wing Picnic, 11:15 a.m. @ Freedom Park Enlisted Promotions, 3:30 p.m. @ Kaye	1 Shotgun road closed until Spring CFC begins	2 Blood Drive, 9 a.m. @ Fitness Center SUPT Class 15-15 Graduation, 10 a.m. @ Kaye	3/4 3rd: Fire Prevention Week Parade, 9 a.m. @ Housing/Open House, 10 a.m. @ Fire Station 3&4th: Auto-cross, 9 a.m. @ SAC Ramp 4th: HHM base-wide soccer event, 4 p.m. @ 14th SFS Soccer Field	Oct. 12: Columbus Day Holiday Oct. 20: Newcomers Orientation Brief Oct. 20: IFF 16-ABC graduation Oct. 23: SUPT Class 16-01 graduation Oct. 30: Enlisted Promotions Oct. 30: Third Quarterly Awards Ceremony Oct. 30: Costume Dorm Dinner Oct. 31: Zombie Run Oct. 31: Halloween Trick or Treat Nov. 1: Daylight Savings Time Ends Nov. 7: Veterans Day Parade and Ceremony Nov. 11: Veterans Day Nov. 12: International Spouses Luncheon Nov. 17: Newcomers Orientation Brief Nov. 18: IFF 16-BBC graduation Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Nov. 27: AETC Family Day
5 Bench Press 125 & 300 Club, 6 p.m. @ Fitness Center	6 Sparky visits CDC, 9 a.m. @ CDC Sparky visits Youth Center, 4:30 p.m. @ Youth Center	7 Commanders vs. First Sergeants, 1 p.m. @ Fire Station	8 Base Fire Expo, 11 a.m. @ BX	9 SUPT Class 16-01 Assignment Night	10/11 10th: Tailgating cooking contest and party, 10 a.m. @ Commissary 10th: Latin Night, 7 p.m. @ Hunt Housing	

**MARATHON**

(Continued from page 13)

This year's women's full marathon winner was Elissa Ballas, of Chicago, Illinois, with a time of 2:57:21.

Ballas thanked race volunteers for their support during the race.

"All of the volunteers were outstanding," Ballas said. "It can be kind of lonely out on the course and having volunteers out there helps. Today is my last day in the Air Force and it has been so meaningful to be here."

The Air Force Marathon is sanctioned by the USA Track & Field Association and is a qualifier for the Boston Marathon.

Winners are listed below. All times are unofficial at the time of this release:

- Men's Full Marathon: Jason Brosseau, Colorado Springs, Colorado; 2:46:01
- Women's Full Marathon: Elissa Ballas, Chicago, Illinois; 2:57:21
- Men's Full Marathon, handcranked wheelchair division: David Berling, Avondale, Arizona; 1:18:50
- Women's Full Marathon, handcranked wheelchair division: Thea Rosa, Sacramento, California; 1:41:47

- Men's Half Marathon: Isaiah Bragg, Dublin, Ohio; 1:11:28
- Women's Half Marathon: Anne Portlock, Bloomington, Indiana; 1:23:59
- Men's 10K: Steve Chu, Colorado Springs; 32:25
- Women's 10K: Caitlin Oviatt, Dayton, Ohio; 39:35
- Men's 5K: Tyler Sullivan, Iowa City, Iowa; 17:01
- Women's 5K: Angela Kasten, Davison, Michigan; 21:15

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**NEWS AROUND TOWN**

**Sept. 24**

Possum Town Tales Storytelling Festival will be held Sept. 24-27 at the Columbus Arts Council located at 501 Main Street, Columbus, Mississippi. For tickets and information please contact (662) 328-2787 or visit columbus-arts.org.

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**National Preparedness Month**

September is National Preparedness Month. This year, the theme is "Don't Wait. Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today." Your Columbus AFB Readiness and Emergency Management Flight encourages you to discuss your emergency plan with your family. Before you can make an emergency plan, you need to learn about the hazards that may impact your area.

For Columbus AFB, we are most likely to be affected by natural disasters, such as tornadoes, floods, thunderstorms and lightning. By learning about these specific natural disasters, you are preparing yourself to react in an emergency. When making your emergency plan, ensure you include emergency contacts and meeting points during evacuations in case you are separated from family. Don't forget to consider elderly or young family members, medical needs, and pets or service animals.

For more information on how to make an emergency plan, go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or contact the Readiness and Emergency Management Flight at 662-434-3179.

**14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED**



As of press time, 39 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.

**Col. Scott D. Yancy to speak at SUPT Class 15-15 graduation**

Col. Scott D. Yancy is the Vice Commandant of Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. He assists the Commandant and the College's team of 166 civilian and military faculty in executing Joint Professional Military Education for midcareer officers and civilians. The college prepares students to provide significant contributions in developing, employing, sustaining and commanding air, space and cyberspace power in operations throughout the world.



Yancy received his commission in 1992 from the United States Air Force Academy. He first served as an acquisitions officer in the F-15 Program Office. Yancy is a command pilot with over 2,800 flying hours, including 270 hours in combat. He has served as a deputy operations group commander and squadron commander, F-15C/F-117A/T-38A instructor and evaluator pilot and F-22A mission pilot. His staff experience includes responsibilities at the Major Command and Combatant Command level. Prior to his current position, Colonel Yancy was the Executive Officer to the Deputy Commander, United States Forces Korea in Seoul, Korea.

**Education**  
1992 Bachelor of Science in Business, United States Air Force Academy, Colorado.  
1999 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.  
2003 Master of Aeronautical Science, Embry-Riddle University, Daytona Beach, Florida  
2006 Master of Military Operational Art & Science, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.  
2008 Air War College, by correspondence  
2012 Master of Joint Planning and Strategy, National Defense University (JAWS), Norfolk, Virginia.

**Assignments**  
1. September 1992 - March 1995, Acquisitions Officer, F-15 Program Office, Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio.  
2. April 1995 - July 1996, Student, Undergraduate Pilot Training, Columbus AFB, Mississippi.  
3. August 1996 - January 1997, Student, F-15C Formal Training, Tyndall AFB, Florida.  
4. February 1997 - December 1999, F-15C Mission Commander, Chief of Squadron Scheduling, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.  
5. January 2000 - June 2003, F-117A/T-38A Instructor

and Evaluator Pilot, Flight Commander, Chief of Wing Standardization/Evaluation (T-38A), Holloman AFB, New Mexico.

6. July 2003 - July 2005, F-15C Instructor Pilot, Chief of Wing Plans, Assistance Director of Operations, RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom.

7. August 2005 - June 2006, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

8. July 2006 - July 2008, Chief of Fighter Programs, Deputy Director of Commander's Action Group, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Langley AFB, Virginia.

9. August 2008 - November 2010, Director of Operations, Squadron Commander, Tyndall AFB, Florida.

10. December 2010 - June 2011, F-22A Pilot, Deputy Group Commander, Holloman AFB, New Mexico.

11. July 2011 - June 2012, Student, National Defense University — Joint Advanced Warfighting School, Norfolk, Virginia.

12. July 2012 - July 2014, Chief of Air Plans and Executive Officer to the Deputy Commander, Headquarters United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, United States Forces Korea, Yongsan AG, Korea.

13. August 2014 - February 2015, Vice Commander, Squadron Officer College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

14. February 2015 - Present, Vice Commandant, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

**Summary of Joint Assignments**  
1. June 2012 - March 2013, Chief of Air Plans, United Nations Command and Combined Forces Command, Yongsan AG, Korea, as a Lieutenant Colonel.  
2. April 2013 - July 2014, Executive Officer to the Deputy Commander, United States Forces Korea, Yongsan AG, Korea, as a Colonel.

**Flight Information**  
Rating: Command Pilot  
Flight Hours: More than 2,800  
Aircraft: F-22A, F-15C, F-117A, T-38A

**Major Awards and Decorations**  
Defense Superior Service Medal  
Meritorious Services Medal with three oak leaf clusters  
Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters  
Aerial Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Achievement Medal

**Effective Dates of Promotion**  
Second Lieutenant May 27, 1992  
First Lieutenant May 27, 1994  
Captain May 27, 1996  
Major February 2, 2003  
Lieutenant Colonel January 1, 2008  
Colonel February 1, 2014  
(Current as of March 2015)

# Merkle to speak at Retiree Appreciation Day

14th Flying Training Wing  
Retiree Affairs Office



John Merkle

into the Order of Military Medical Merit, an honorary organization that recognizes leadership and significant contributions to the Army Medical Department. He also earned the Parachutist Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Army Aviator Badge and received numerous medals, culminating with the Army Legion of Merit.

Merkle graduated in 1988 from John Carroll University in Ohio with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. In 1997 he earned a Master of Business Administration from St. Martin's College in Washington. He also earned a Master of Health Administration from Baylor University in Texas in 2000. He is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and a Lean Six Sigma Certified Black Belt.

For more information about Retiree Appreciation Day 2015 contact Mr. James Poe at 14FTW. RAO.columbus@us.af.mil or call (662) 434-3120.

ters Allied Powers Europe Health Care Facility, Deputy Commander of Administration of the San Antonio BRAC Integration Office, Air Ambulance Pilot, and Medical Company Commander. While in the military, Merkle was inducted

**Retiree Appreciation Day**  
Saturday, September 26, 2015  
At the McAllister Fire Department

Call the Retiree Affairs Office Now at 434-3120 to RSVP for this event. Early Registration is required due to limited space.

**Guest Speaker**  
**Mr. John F. Merkle**  
Tuscaloosa, Ala. VA Medical Center

## MDG Corner: Posture, Work Place Ergonomics

Staff Sgt. Misty Smiley

14th Medical Operations Squadron  
Physical Therapy Clinic

*Limiting unnecessary stressors can be as simple as watching your sitting posture while working on the computer, or changing the ergonomics of your work station.*

We all have undoubtedly heard the phrase "do more with less" or "make what you have work for you". I know personally from working in Physical Therapy for nearly nine years that applying these principles into my daily routine helps to limit mental and physical stress. Limiting unnecessary stressors can be as simple as watching your sitting posture while working on the computer, or changing the ergonomics of your work station. It's the small things that can make a big difference and who wouldn't want that? After all, working with improved focus, efficiency and consistency is the key to achieving our mission of Producing Pilots, Advancing Airman and Feeding the Fight. We can break down the key points of effective workstation ergonomics and proper sitting postures in three easy steps.

First, make adjustments and alignments to your work space. Making adjustments to your computer chair when you are working long hours typing 1206s or performance

reports will sure make the task a little more productive. To improve this simple part of your work center and decrease the strain on your muscles you need to adjust the height of your chair, backrest and arm support so that your elbows, hips and knees are at a 90-degree angle and your forearms and thighs are parallel to the ground.

Second, set up your equipment to include (but not limited to) the monitor and keyboard to suit you. One of the biggest modifications you can make to your work center in regards to equipment is to make sure your monitor/screen is

slightly below eye level. This modification along with proper keyboard height and keeping your wrist straight when you type decreases a lot of unneeded muscle strain or work. Adjusting the monitor places less strain on the neck and mid-back muscles which are needed to support your posture.

Lastly, the most important part of work place ergonomics is to have a good sitting or standing posture as well as getting up and taking breaks if you have been sitting at a computer for a while. Good sitting posture means rolling your shoulders back while maintaining 90-degree elbow flexion to decrease muscle work. Taking breaks is beneficial to not only your mind but your body as well. Think of a few tips to help beat discomfort from sitting to long and it might also boost work place morale. Getting up to visit a co-worker you might have been about to type a long email to or walking around the workplace will not also benefit you, but also the morale of your unit.

So remember, make as many adjustments as needed to your chair, desk and equipment and remember to take breaks and watch your posture.

## Upcoming EVENTS

Baptist Cancer Center will offer **free prostate PSA screenings** for men over 40 on Friday, Oct. 30, in Columbus. To make an appointment call at 662-244-4673 or 800-544-8767, ext. 4673.

Baptist Golden Triangle will host a **community blood drive** Friday, October 16, 11a.m.-5 p.m., Outpatient Pavilion Conference Center. Give the gift of life by being a blood donor. For information call 662-244-1132 or 800-544-8767, ext. 1132.

**CPR Classes** are offered at Baptist Golden Triangle twice each month, at 6 p.m., in the Patient Tower. Pre-registration is required. October classes will be Monday, Oct. 12 and Oct. 26. Contact the Education Department at 662-244-2498 or 800-544-8762, ext. 2498.

Baptist Golden Triangle offers **childbirth classes** each month. Classes are held on each Tuesday night at 6 p.m. To pre-register call the Education Department at 662-244-2498 or 800-544-8762, ext. 2498.

**Diabetes Self-Management Education Class** meets the fourth Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. Baptist Golden Triangle Outpatient Pavilion Conference Center. Physician referral is required. For information call 662-244-1596 or 800-544-8767, ext. 1596.

**Diabetes Support Group** classes are held each month. Day and evening classes are available. For information call 662-244-1596 or 800-544-8767, ext. 1596.

Baptist Golden Triangle will offer **FREE FLU SHOTS one day only** Wednesday, October 28, 3-7 p.m., Outpatient Pavilion Conference Center. For ages 18 and above, while supplies last. We cannot administer flu shots to women who are pregnant or nursing. Call 662-244-1132 for more information.

Mississippi University for Women and Baptist Golden Triangle will cosponsor the annual **Women's Health Awareness luncheon** Wednesday, October 14, 11:45 a.m., Pope Banquet Hall, MUW Campus. Dr. Robbie Godwin will present: "Signs, Symptoms and Treatment of Varicose Veins." To reserve a space call 662-329-7225.

Baptist Hospice Golden Triangle **Celebration of Life Service and Reception** will be held Sunday, November 8, 2 -4 pm, at First Baptist Church/Ministry Activity Center at 3000 Bluecuff Road, Columbus.

For more information contact the numbers listed above or email [info.goldentriangle@bmhcc.org](mailto:info.goldentriangle@bmhcc.org).

**BAPTIST** | MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
GOLDEN TRIANGLE

## 19th Air Force Marathon kicks off

Brian Brackens  
88th Air Base Wing  
Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Thousands of runners and spectators from across the country and around the world met on the grounds of the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, for the 19th annual U.S. Air Force Marathon, Sept. 19.

Gen. Ellen Pawlikowski, the Air Force Materiel Command commander, welcomed race participants to the event.

"Yesterday marked the 68th birthday of the United States Air Force," Pawlikowski said. "So it is appropriate that the Air Force Marathon, which has become a proud tradition, is celebrated right here at the birthplace of aviation. I can't think of a more perfect venue than the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force to commemorate these two events and more than 100 years of aviation history.



Courtesy photo/Wes Farnsworth

**Runners take off at the start of the 2015 U.S. Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, Sept 19, 2015.**

Thank you to everyone who made this 19th annual Air Force Marathon possible."

The three-day event started Sept. 17 with a Sports and Fitness Expo held at the Ervin J. Nutter Center on the campus of Wright State University. The expo high-

lighted exhibits on the latest in sports, fitness, health and nutrition.

Pre-race activities included a Breakfast of Champions and the annual Gourmet Pasta Dinner, held at the museum Sept. 18.

Col. John Devillier, the 88th Air Base Wing and installation commander, thanked the people responsible for putting on the marathon.

"This is my second year here and my first opportunity to see firsthand, all the hard work and planning that goes into creating a world class event" Devillier said. "I'm especially thankful to the thousands of volunteers who gave their time and energy to helping us, our sponsors who make this all possible and the incredible support we get from the local communities with their police, fire and emergency medical team support."

During the event, runners had the option of competing in the full marathon, a half-marathon, and 10K, as well as a wheeled division.

This year's men's full marathon winner was Jason Brosseau, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, with a time of 2:46:01.

Brosseau said that his determination and energy of the crowd helped him finish the race.

"My advice is don't let anything stop you," Brosseau said. "Just keep on pushing."

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# Peterson hosts Afghan pilots and 81st FS for high altitude training

**Airman 1st Class Rose Gudex**  
21st Space Wing  
Public Affairs

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Afghan pilots and U.S. Air Force instructor pilots from the 81st Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. came to Peterson AFB for several weeks in September for high-altitude training in the mountainous terrain.

Since the beginning of 2015, nine Afghan pilots have been training with the 81st FS to receive basic flight training and tactical training to learn to fly and fight in the A-29B Super Tucano, as well as learn how U.S. Air Force fighter squadrons operate in order to stand up their own squadron when they get back to Afghanistan.

The 81st FS is a stateside air advisor unit with both a stateside and deployed mission, said Lt. Col. Jeff Hogan, 81st FS commander. When the first group of Afghan pilots and maintainers finish their year-long training, the 81st FS will send Air Force pilots and maintainers to Afghanistan to provide advisory support.

"We'll have a constant rotational presence in Afghanistan, mentoring them as they stand up this new capability," he said.

The end result of this training is for Afghanistan to have its own fighter force that is capable of self-sustained combat operations. Hogan said the U.S. Air Force has been in the lead in mentoring the Afghan air force as it reestablishes itself after the 2001 invasion.

"The U.S. Air Force is uniquely postured with the capacity and the know-how to train our international partners," Hogan said. "It's a core (Air Education and Training Command) competency. We train thousands of international students a year, leveraging the best training in the world."

The training the Afghan pilots get will help them stand up their own sustainable fighter squadron and be able to provide aerial fire support for their ground forces, Hogan said. To achieve that, the 81st FS is training them on four

different missions, including close air attack, air interdiction, helicopter and convoy escort, and armed reconnaissance.

The aircraft the pilots trained on will go with them to Afghanistan when the pilots return home at the end of their training, said an 81st FS instructor pilot. It will replace the old Mi-35 attack helicopter that is nearing the end of its service life and doesn't have the capability of the A-29.

The training so far has been at Moody Air Force Base, which has an elevation of around 200 feet and doesn't compare to the high elevation in Afghanistan, he said. To get the pilots more realistic training, they came to Peterson.

As with any aircraft, performance is lower at a higher altitude, the instructor pilot said. The air is less dense, so aircraft take longer to accelerate and get off the ground. Peterson provides the high eleva-

tion and rising terrain for Afghan pilots to gain experience before going back to Afghanistan.

"Peterson afforded us some great facilities," said Hogan. "We're very thankful for the support we've received here. This is probably the place that most closely approximates the Afghan environment from a terrain and elevation perspective. We are very thankful for the warm welcome we have received."

Hogan said the most satisfying part of this training is knowing they're building another county's air force and the pilots are going to do well because of the training they received.

"This airplane will allow us to start to step away from Afghanistan," Hogan said. "When they can provide their own organic fires, support their own soldiers in the field and provide them with close air support — that will be the



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Rose Gudex

An Afghan pilot and an instructor pilot with the 81st Fighter Squadron out of Moody Air Force Base, Ga., get ready to take off in an A-29B Super Tucano for high altitude training here, Sept. 16, 2015. Afghan pilots have been training with the 81st FS to become qualified in the A-29 and to take the knowledge back to Afghanistan and stand up their own fighter squadron. The training at Peterson helped the students gain experience in high altitude and mountainous terrain operations.

major turning point that allows the battlefield and ultimately take the Afghans to be successful on responsibility for their own future."

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Columbus Air Force Base Third Annual 5K  
**ZOMBIE RUN**

Open to the Public

\*\*\*ATTENTION\*\*\*  
New Information!

\$35 Civilians  
\$25 Military ID Holders  
\$20 Single Airmen  
\$20 Kids (5-14)

October 31 Check-in 9am Race start 10am

at the Graveyard on Independence Ave across from the Fire Station

Civilians without base access can register for \$35 at Active.com no later than October 17 (no registration accepted after this date).  
Individuals with base access (Military, CAC, Sponsor ID, etc.) can register for \$25 at the Fitness Center until October 30. Single Airmen cost is \$20 at the Fitness Center. All kids (civilian & military) ages 5-11 may register for the 1 mile run for \$20. Medal, t-shirt, & food to all paid participants.

For More Information (662) 434-2772



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Daniel Lile

Maj. Oscar Corredor, Aerospace Medicine Flight Commander, exams a patients eye Sept. 22 at the Columbus Air Force Base medical clinic. The optometry clinic is well equipped with the latest technology to fully assess the health of the visual system.

## Aerospace Optometry, keeping BLAZE mission in sight

Maj. Oscar Corredor  
14th Medical Operations Squadron  
Aerospace Medicine Flight Commander

The 14th Medical Operations Squadron optometry clinic provides care to nearly five thousand members of the 14th Flying Training Wing, tenant units, retirees and dependents with services ranging from routine eye care to glasses and contact lens fittings every month.

The three personnel assigned to the clinic provide high quality ocular and vision care to keep military personnel ready to support wartime and aerospace missions in line with team BLAZE's "Produce Pilots, Advance Airman, Feed the Fight."

The optometry clinic is well equipped with the latest technology to fully assess the health of the visual system. Comprehensive exams cover tests for visual acuity, peripheral vision, and screenings for health problems such as glaucoma and diabetes.

The clinic and staff also offer contact lens fittings to its beneficiaries and is fully supportive of the Air Force's Corneal Refractive Surgery Program, which is offered to active duty personnel. However, those in "student-pilot" status are not eligible for the refractive surgery program.

The eye clinic also evaluates and treats many eye health problems, including infections such as "red eyes" and injuries to the eyes on a walk-in



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Daniel Lile

2nd Lt. Rogelio Castaneda, 14th Student Squadron, gets his eye examined Sept. 22 at the Columbus Air Force Base medical clinic. The 14th Medical Operations Squadron optometry clinic provides care to nearly five thousand members of the 14th Flying Training Wing, tenant units, retirees and dependents with services ranging from routine eye care to glasses and contact lens fittings every month.

basis, but the staff prefers to have patients call in advance to schedule an appointment.

The clinic's hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and appointments can be scheduled by calling the eye clinic directly at 434-2331.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Greg L. Davis

The A-10 Thunderbolt II is the first Air Force aircraft specially designed for close air support of ground forces. They are simple, effective and survivable twin-engine jet aircraft that can be used against all ground targets, including tanks and other armored vehicles.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Melanie Norman

Col. Jon Mott breaks the record for the most documented hours in an A-10 Thunderbolt II during a refueling mission March 30. Colonel Mott, with the Massachusetts Air National Guard's 104 Fighter Wing, has flown more than 4,570 hours in the A-10.

# BLAZE Hangar Tails: A-10 Thunderbolt II

## Mission

The A-10 Thunderbolt II has excellent maneuverability at low air speeds and altitude, and is a highly accurate and survivable weapons-delivery platform. The aircraft can loiter near battle areas for extended periods of time and operate in low ceiling and visibility conditions. The wide combat radius and short takeoff and landing capability permit operations in and out of locations near front lines. Using night vision goggles, A-10 pilots can conduct their missions during darkness.

Thunderbolt IIs have Night Vision Imaging Systems, or NVIS, goggle compatible single-seat cockpits forward of their wings and a large bubble canopy which provides pilots all-around vision. The pilots are protected by titanium armor that also protects parts of the flight-control system. The redundant primary structural sections allow the aircraft to enjoy better survivability during close air support than did previous aircraft. The aircraft can survive direct hits from armor-piercing and high explosive projectiles up to 23mm. Their self-sealing fuel cells are protected by internal and external foam. Manual systems back up their redundant hydraulic flight-control systems. This permits pilots to fly and land when hydraulic power is lost.

The A-10 has received many upgrades over the years. In 1978, the aircraft received the Pave Penny laser receiver pod, which sensed reflected laser radiation from a laser designator. Pave Penny has now been discontinued in favor more capable advanced targeting pods. The A-10 began receiving an inertial navigation system in 1980. Later, the Low-Altitude Safety and Targeting Enhancement upgrade provided computerized weapon-aiming equipment, an autopilot, and a ground-collision warning system. In 1999, aircraft began

to receive Global Positioning System navigation systems and a new multi-function display. In 2005, the entire A-10 fleet began receiving the Precision Engagement upgrades that include an improved fire control system, electronic countermeasures, upgraded cockpit displays, the ability to deliver smart bombs, moving map display, hands on throttle and stick, digital stores management, LITENING and Sniper advanced targeting pod integration, situational awareness data link or SADL, variable message format, or VMF, GPS-guided weapons, and upgraded DC power. The entire A-10 fleet has been Precision Engagement modified and now carries the A-10C designation.

The Thunderbolt II can be serviced and operated from austere bases with limited facilities near battle areas. Many of the aircraft's parts are interchangeable left and right, including the engines, main landing gear and vertical stabilizers. Avionics equipment includes multi-band communications; Global Positioning System and inertial navigations systems; infrared and electronic countermeasures against air-to-air and air-to-surface threats. And, it has a heads-up display to display flight and weapons delivery information.

The Thunderbolt II can employ a wide variety of conventional munitions, including general purpose bombs, cluster bomb units, laser guided bombs, joint direct attack munitions or JDAM, wind corrected munitions dispenser or WCMD, AGM-65 Maverick and AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, rockets, illumination flares, and the GAU-8/A 30mm cannon, capable of firing 3,900 rounds per minute to defeat a wide variety of targets including tanks.

## General Characteristics

**Primary Function:** Close air support, Airborne Forward

Air Control, Combat Search and Rescue

**Contractor:** Fairchild Republic Co.

**Power Plant:** Two General Electric TF34-GE-100 turbofans

**Thrust:** 9,065 pounds each engine

**Wingspan:** 57 feet, 6 inches (17.42 meters)

**Length:** 53 feet, 4 inches (16.16 meters)

**Height:** 14 feet, 8 inches (4.42 meters)

**Weight:** 29,000 pounds (13,154 kilograms)

**Maximum Takeoff Weight:** 51,000 pounds (22,950 kilograms)

**Fuel Capacity:** 11,000 pounds (7,257 kilograms)

**Payload:** 16,000 pounds (7,257 kilograms)

**Speed:** 450 nautical miles per hour (Mach 0.75)

**Range:** 2580 miles (2240 nautical miles)

**Ceiling:** 45,000 feet (13,636 meters)

**Armament:** One 30 mm GAU-8/A seven-barrel Gatling gun; up to 16,000 pounds (7,200 kilograms) of mixed ordnance on eight under-wing and three under-fuselage pylon stations, including 500 pound (225 kilograms) Mk-82 and 2,000 pounds (900 kilograms) Mk-84 series low/high drag bombs, incendiary cluster bombs, combined effects munitions, mine dispensing munitions, AGM-65 Maverick missiles and laser-guided/electro-optically guided bombs; infrared countermeasure flares; electronic countermeasure chaff; jammer pods; 2.75-inch (6.99 centimeters) rockets; illumination flares and AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles.

**Crew:** One

**Unit Cost:** \$18.8 million

**Initial operating capability:** A-10A, 1977; A-10C, 2007

**Inventory:** Active force, 187; Reserve, 49; ANG, 107

## Air Force Readiness Programs

(Editor's note: All activities are offered at the Airman & Family Readiness Center unless otherwise specified. For more information about any of the activities listed, call 434-2790.)

### Linked-In Workshop

This workshop is taught by EMCC and will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. Sept. 28-30. Participants will learn how to establish and use a Linked-In account. Call 434-2790 to register.

### Marketing Yourself for a Job Fair

This workshop, held from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Sept. 30, provides information on preparing for the upcoming job fair, how to interview, and using marketing techniques. Prepare for the upcoming Job Fair, call 434-2790 to register.

### Resume and Cover Letter

This workshop will be held from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 1 and will prepare participants for writing effective civilian resumes and cover letters. To sign up call 434-2790.

### Golden Triangle Employment Expo (GTEE)

GTEE 2015, Golden Triangle Employment Expo, will be held 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 7 at the American Legion Building in Columbus, Mississippi. Go to <http://www.jobfairs.ms.gov/> for list of participating vendors. More than 40 employers will be offering jobs. For more information call 434-2790.

### Smooth Move

This class will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Oct. 14, is a class that provides relocating members/families with valuable information about moving. You learn what to expect from TMO, Housing, Military Pay, Legal, Billing, Tri-Care, Medical Records, and A&FRC. Please call 434-2790 to register.

### Troops To Teachers

This workshop will be held from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Oct. 14. It is an informational workshop for members pursuing or interested in a teaching career after the military. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

### Capstone

This class is scheduled from 8 a.m. to noon on Oct. 15. The class is required for all separating/retiring personnel and should occur no later than 90 days prior to anticipated separation/retirement; however, if a member has less than 90 days left in the military, the member should attend as soon as possible within their remaining period of service. It verifies if service members have/have not met their Career Readiness Standards/Individual Transition Plan Checklist, DD Form 2958. The checklist, in conjunction with the ITP, will be used by the A&FRC to verify status of CRS completion. Call 434-2790 for more information.

## Columbus AFB Airmen attend Coffee With a Cop event



Courtesy photo

Airmen from Columbus Air Force Base, Miss. pause for a photo with Tony Carleton, Chief of Police, and Raymond Heckler, Traffic Division/PIO, at the Coffee With a Cop event held Sept. 22 at Visit Columbus in Columbus, Miss. The event allowed Airmen, as well as local community members, the opportunity to meet and talk with members of the local law enforcement.

### Pre-separation Counseling

This counseling is a mandatory briefing for personnel separating or retiring, to be completed at least 90 days prior to separation. It may be completed up to 12 months prior to separation or retirement. The counseling is held daily at 8:30 a.m. It takes approximately 60 minutes. Please contact A&FRC, 434-2839/434-2790 for more information.

### Pre, Post Deployment Tour Brief

These briefings are mandatory briefings for active-duty personnel who are either deploying or returning from deployment or a remote tour. The briefings are held daily at the A&FRC. Pre-deployment is at 9:30 a.m., and post-deployment is at 1:30 p.m. Please contact A&FRC, 434-2839/434-2790 for more information.

### Survivor-Benefit Plan

Are you nearing military retirement? The one decision you will need to make before you retire involves participation in the Survivor Benefit Plan. As with all good decision-making, you need to know the facts before you can make a sound decision, and be wary of anyone telling you they can offer you a better deal. Always get the true facts about the SBP before making up your mind. Additional details are available by calling (662) 434-2720.

### Military and Family Life Consultant Program

The MFLC counselors provide non-medical counseling to help Airmen (both single and married), their spouses and other family members to cope with stressful situations created by deployments, reintegration, and life challenges such as martial issues, parenting, career stress and anger. All consultants are licensed mental health providers. Counselors can meet either on or off base. There is no charge for services and appointments can usually be made within one to two days. To contact the MFLC, call 662-364-0504.

### Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in volunteering please contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center. We have volunteer opportunities located throughout the base for a one-time event, special events, or on a continual basis. Volunteers are needed on base at the Youth Center, Child Development Center, Library, Golf Course, Medical Clinic, the Chapel, Airman Attic, Thrift Store, the Retiree Activities office and many others. For more information please call A&FRC at 434-2790.

### Air Force Recovery Coordination Program

The Recovery Coordination Program stream-

lines and improves the way care and support are delivered to wounded, ill, and injured Airmen and their families. The RCP provides the support of a Recovery Care Coordinator who guides the Airman and family along their road to recovery. Those eligible include wounded, ill and injured Airmen who: (1) have a serious illness or injury (2) are unlikely to return to duty within a specified amount of time (3) may be medically separated from the military. Additional details are available by contacting the Columbus AFB RCC at DSN: 493-3399, Office: 334-953-3399 or tim.griggs.1.ctr@us.af.mil.

## Base News

### Learn How to Read Your LES

Having a hard time understanding your Leave and Earning Statement? Need a refresher so that you can mentor your subordinates on their entitlements? Finance has you covered. If you would like for Finance to come to your next CC call or Professional Organization event, you can contact Master Sgt. Sabrina Spriggs at DSN 742-3068 or Senior Airman Julianna White at DSN 742-2715.

## Chapel Schedule

Whether you are new to Columbus Air Force Base or have been around for a while, our parish communities welcome you to join us as we worship, fellowship, and encourage one another. For more information, please call 434-2500.

Starting Sept. 23, the Chapel is offering the following weekly programs:

- 6 p.m. – AWANA, a religious education program for children ages three years old to 6th Grade
- 6 p.m. – Adult Bible study on the Gospel of John
- 6 p.m. – Youth Group

### Catholic Community

- Sunday:** 3:15 p.m. – Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (Chapel Annex) 3:45 p.m. – Religious Education, grades K-9 (Chapel Annex) 4 p.m. – Choir Practice (Chapel Sanctuary) 4 p.m. – Confession (or by appointment) 5 p.m. – Mass w/Children's Church
- Tuesday:** 11:30 a.m. – Daily Mass
- Wednesday:** 11:30-12:30 p.m. – Holy Hour

### Protestant Community

- Sunday:** 9 a.m. – Adult Sunday School (Chapel Library) 10:45 a.m. – Traditional Worship Service
- Tuesday:** 5 p.m. – Student Pilot Bible Study (Chapel Library)
- Wednesday:** 4 p.m. – Music Rehearsal

### Columbus Air Force Base Information and Events

Join our Facebook page at Columbus AFB Living, Twitter at @columbusafbliving, MyAirForceLife App on any smart phone or visit our website at columbusafbliving.com to keep up to date with all the great events happening around base. Check out the calendar on the website for important Airman and Family Readiness Center events. For more information, contact 434-2337.

### Youth Center Renovation

The Youth Center will undergo several renovations beginning in the month of September. The Youth Center staff will work to keep you informed of any updates or changes. Renovations scheduled to be completed by mid-December. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### New Pool Hours

The Pool is open 12 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday until Sept. 27. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### End of Season Pool Party

Join Independence Pool for an End of Season Pool Party Sept. 26. This free event includes: music 5 p.m. – 7 p.m., food available for purchase 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. (burger, chips and drink \$5), jumpers 5 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., and "Minions" movie 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### Pooches in the Pool

Independence Pool is offering Pooches in the Pool Sunday, Sept. 27 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. For more information, contact Outdoor Recreation at 434-2505.

### Intramural Flag Football

The Fitness Center is offering Round Robin League intramural flag football. League begins Sept. 29. For more information, contact Zachary Flynt at 434-2770.

### Blazin' Trails Running Club

The Blazin' Trails Running Club is offering a 5K group run/walk Oct. 3 and Oct. 17 at 7 a.m. The run begins and ends at the Fitness Center. For more information, contact TSgt Russell 434-2875.

### Whispering Pines Base Championship

The Golf Course is offering a base championship to all base golfers Oct. 3 and 4; 1 p.m. shotgun start each day. The cost is \$20 plus \$15 for cart for golf course members; \$40 plus \$15 for cart for nonmembers. Entry includes green fees, prize fund, a sleeve of golf balls, golf glove and lunch both days. Prizes awarded for Base Champion, Club Champion, and Handicap Champion. Prizes awarded for Senior Division and Women Division (must have six or more entries to award). Each Flight awarded first, second and third place prizes. For more information, contact 434-7932.

### Fight Night Frenzy

The Columbus Club presents Fight Night Frenzy Oct. 3. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Pre-fight at 7 p.m. and featured fight "Cormier vs Gustafsson" at 9 p.m. Club members receive free admission, preferred seating, and food discounts; non-member admission \$5 per person. This adult themed entertainment is being held at the Bowling Center on the big screens; bowling will not be available. For more information, contact 434-2310.

### Bench Press Club

The Fitness Center is offering a 125 and 300 Bench Press event Oct. 5 at 6 p.m. Each participant receives three attempts to achieve a clean bench press. Each successful participant will receive a 300 Club t-shirt and picture on the 300 Club wall. For more information, contact Brandy Richardson (662) 434-2772 or Felix Montes (347) 693-3262.

**FREE EVENT**  
**End of Season POOL PARTY**  
 at Independence Pool  
**Saturday September 26**  
**5-9:30 p.m.**

Music by DJ Odum 5-7p.m.  
 Food 5-8p.m. \$5 includes Burger, Chips, & Drink  
 Jumpers 5-7:30p.m.  
 Family Movie 7:30p.m.

Swack Bar will be open, no outside food/beverage  
**For More Information 434-2505**

### National Science Day

The Youth Center is offering 4-H National Science Day Oct. 7 from 3:45 p.m. – 5 p.m. for ages 5 – 18. Explore the physics of motion and distracted driving. Limited space available; first come basis. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### 4th Annual Tailgating/Cooking Contest

Enter your best tailgating decoration and/or cooking dish Oct. 10 and win great prizes. Categories include individual, family, office or squadron. Sign up no later than Oct. 2. This free event held in the Commissary parking lot. For more information, email gregory.runyon@deca.mil.

### Tannehill Trade Day

Outdoor Recreation is offering a trip to Tannehill Trade Day in Bessemer, Alabama Oct. 17. Depart from Outdoor Recreation 8 a.m. The cost is \$30 for transportation. The admission cost is \$3 ages 12 and up, \$2 Senior Citizen, \$1 ages 6 – 11, ages 5 and under free. Register no later than Oct. 12. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### Mississippi State Fair Trip

The Youth Center is offering a trip to the Mississippi State Fair in Jackson Oct. 17. Free transportation; must purchase ticket upon arrival. Register no later than Oct. 14. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### Lights On After School

The Youth Center is offering Lights on After School Oct. 22 from 4 p.m. – 5 p.m. for ages 5 – 18. Learn about programs, safety, and the benefit of after school community care. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### Youth Center Open House and Membership Drive

Stop by the Youth Center Oct. 22 between 4 p.m. – 5 p.m.

and learn more about base youth programs and becoming a Youth Center member. Free refreshments provided. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### 3rd Annual 5K Zombie Run

The Fitness Center is offering the 3rd Annual 5K Zombie Run Oct. 31 at the graveyard on Independence Avenue. Check in at 9 a.m.; run 10 a.m. All paid participants receive a medal, t-shirt and food. The cost is \$20 for single airman and \$25 for active duty military and DoD employees. Registration required by Oct. 2. The cost to the public is \$35 per person or \$25 each for teams of four or more; register at active.com. For rates for kids or more information, contact 434-2772.

### Referees Needed

Referees needed for various sports at the Fitness Center. For more information or to sign up, contact 434-2772.

### GoPro Rental

Capture the moment by renting a GoPro Hero 3 from Outdoor Recreation. Cost is only \$10 for a 2-day rental. Single Airmen may receive a 2-day rental at no charge during Single Airman programming events. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### Play Paintball

Book your next paintball event at Outdoor Recreation. The cost is \$15 per person for a party of 10 or more; \$20 per person for party of 9 or less. You must purchase paint at Outdoor Recreation for \$45 per case of 2,000. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### Volunteers Needed

The Fitness Center is offering the 3rd Annual Zombie Run October 31. We want you to serve on the Zombie Run Planning Committee. Available opportunities include: check-in, set-up obstacles, zombie makeup artist, zombies, water stations, tear down obstacles; oversee adult run or kids run, and more. To volunteer or for more information, contact 434-2772.

### Free Pool Passes and FootGolf

Independence Pool Passes and FootGolf is included with Whispering Pines Golf Membership. If you have an individual golf membership, you receive an individual pool pass and FootGolf membership and if you have a family golf membership, you receive a family pool pass and FootGolf membership. Visit Outdoor Recreation for your free pool pass today. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### Story Time

The Base Library is offering Story Time each Friday at 10:30 a.m. for all ages. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Class

Free classes are scheduled every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 6 p.m. The benefits include huge gains in confidence, functional strength, flexibility, discipline, and overall physical conditioning. Mandatory equipment: BJJ Kimono (Gi); for ages 13 and up. For more information, contact 434-2772.

### Wood Shop Self Help

Do you need to complete a wood project? The base wood shop is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. for only \$4 per hour. For more information, contact 434-7836.

### RV Storage Lot

Don't clutter your home space, park with us. Outdoor Recreation offers a great place to store your RV year around. You will have 24-hour access and can pay monthly or yearly. For more information, call 434-2505.

# A Culture of Airmanship

**Chief Master Sgt. Rita Felton**  
14th Flying Training Wing Command Chief



Last Friday the 14th Flying Training Wing celebrated the United States Air Force 68th birthday downtown at the newly renovated Trotter Convention Center.

The atmosphere was filled with laughter and excitement as each person walked through the door. It was a good feeling to see everyone enjoying the celebration as a result of the commitment and dedication of the Air Force Ball Committee. As I walked around the room talking and listening to those around me, I could hear it. Then I saw it; there it was...it was pride; pride in our Air Force Heritage.

Every year as we celebrate the Air Force Birthday we can't

*Every year as we celebrate the Air Force Birthday we can't help but reflect on the successes, sacrifices, heritage and traditions of the Airmen who have fought, and continue to fight, for the freedom of the American people. The Airmen whose innovation has propelled us into the 21st century and beyond.*

help but reflect on the successes, sacrifices, heritage and traditions of the Airmen who have fought, and continue to fight, for the freedom of the American people. The Airmen whose innovation has propelled us into the 21st century and beyond. The Airmen whose tradition of honor and legacy of valor has not faltered. Team Blaze, you are those Airmen, and I am proud to serve with you.

We should take comfort in knowing we are part of the World's Greatest Air Force and the greatest thing we can give our nation is freedom. If you look at our rich heritage you will see every event has produced heroes—individuals who rise to the occasion with remarkable acts of heroism and selflessness. Airmen like Airman 1st Class Spencer Stone who showed great valor when he subdued a gunman during his vacation in Europe. His bravery exemplified "Service Before Self" by putting his life at risk to save others.

During the month of September, we also observed the anniversary of 9/11. We remember the act of terrorism that continues to challenge our sense of internal security in our country. Terrorism for Americans is a reality, and because it is we must continue to be vigilant. Traditional measures of strength are no longer the norm, therefore we must reach out and be more inclusive if we are to become more unified. Our Air Force is leading the way and holding true to the profession of arms.

We continue to thrive in challenging times and there is no doubt our Airmen will continue to surprise us because they are the most educated, the most experienced and the most capable. Team Blaze...Fly, Fight and Win!

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Columbus Air Force Base senior leadership pause for a group photo with their spouses at the Air Force 68th Birthday Ball Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus, Miss.



Airman 1st Class John Day, 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs, performs the POW/MIA Missing Man ceremony during the 2015 Air Force Birthday Ball. The ceremony honors those who may have been taken prisoner or have gone missing during times of war.

# Team BLAZE celebrates 68th Air Force Birthday

**Senior Airman Stephanie Englar**  
14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Columbus Air Force Base celebrated the 68th birthday of the Air Force Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus, Miss.

This year's theme was "Tradition of Honor, Legacy of Valor" which honored and highlighted the connection between the Air Force's past and future.

The Birthday Ball is a tradition that originated with the Army Air Corps. It started during World War II and has remained a popular social highlight every year. Now the ball is held at bases all over the

world annually to celebrate the Air Force's birthday on Sept. 18. It was on that day in 1947 that the Air Force was announced as a separate branch of the military.

Along with celebrating the Air Force's birthday, the ball also served to honor Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action. With all eyes on him, a former Prisoner of War, retired Lt. Col. Richard "Gene" Smith, inverted the glass at the POW/MIA table during a ceremony.

In addition to honoring POW/MIAs, the attendees paid tribute to the U.S. flag, the President, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Chief of Naval Operations,

the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the men and women in the Air Force's sister services, and to the men and women who support the Columbus AFB Airmen in completing the mission.

Maj. Gen. Richard Clark, Commander, Eighth Air Force, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, was the guest speaker for the event. Along with a speech from the guest speaker, the ball also consisted of a performance by the Lafayette High School Junior Reserve Officer Corps and a ceremonial cake cutting.

The Air Force Birthday Ball was funded by events such as the Air Force Birthday Ball Drawdown and the WaterWorks Run as well as ticket sales.



Columbus Air Force Base Airmen and members of the local community joined together to celebrate the U.S. Air Force's 68th birthday Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus, Miss. This year's theme was "Tradition of Honor, Legacy of Valor" which honored and highlighted the connection between the Air Force's past and future.



Maj. Gen. Richard Clark, Commander, Eighth Air Force, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, and Amiron Cottman, 37th Flying Training Squadron, the youngest Airmen assigned to Columbus Air Force Base, perform the traditional cutting of the Air Force Birthday cake.



The audience at the 2015 Air Force Birthday Ball raises their glasses for a toast Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Columbus, Miss. The toasts honor Air Force senior leadership, the president and the men and women fighting for their country.



Attendees of the 68th Air Force Birthday Ball pose for a photo during social hour Sept. 18 at the Trotter Convention Center in Downtown Columbus, Miss.