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Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

January 27, 2017

Vol. 41, Issue 3

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Weather

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Sunday Partly Cloudy High 56°F Low 32°F	Monday Sunny High 49°F Low 36°F

Forecast provided by the 14th OSS Weather Flight

News Briefs

Enlisted Promotions/Fourth Quarterly Awards

The next Columbus Air Force Base enlisted promotions ceremony is at 3 p.m. Jan. 31 at the Columbus Club. Immediately after, the fourth quarterly awards ceremony will begin.

Super Bowl Party

The Columbus Club is hosting a Super Bowl Party starting at 4:30 p.m. Feb. 5. The event includes an all-you-can-eat buffet and door prizes while the Super Bowl is streaming. Tickets are \$10 for club members or \$15 for non-members in advance. Call 434-2489 for more information.

Annual Awards Banquet

The Annual Awards Banquet social begins at 6 p.m. Feb. 9 at the Columbus Club. The dinner and ceremony begin at 6:30 p.m.

Inside

Feature 8

The 43rd Flying Training Squadron "Firebirds" are highlighted in this week's feature.



Col. Franz Plescha, U.S. Air Force retired, speaks to the graduates of Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 17-04 at their graduation ceremony Jan. 20, 2017, at the Kaye Auditorium on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Plescha came down from the stage to directly interface with the graduates and give them three pieces of advice to serve them in their careers.

Plescha outlines three pieces of advice

Senior Airman John Day
14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Col. Franz Plescha, U.S. Air Force retired, visited Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, as the guest speaker for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 17-04's graduation ceremony Jan. 20, 2017, at Kaye Auditorium.

Plescha currently works for Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. and resides in Orlando, Florida. He received his commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1987 and completed pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

During his career he had five overseas assignments with multiple flying tours. His first assignment was as a T-38 instructor pilot prior to flying the F-16. He served as an F-16 flight examiner, flight commander, and assistant operations officer.

He is a command pilot with over 3,400 flying hours and 2,200 combat hours. He is a graduate of Air Command and Staff College and Air War College in residence.

See PLESCHA, Page 3

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 (17-14)	-0.69 days	-0.32 days	Mar. 8	48th (17-05)	1.75 days	2.92 days	Jan. 27	49th (17-DBC)	-1.72 days	-1.84 days	Feb. 1	T-6	1,897	1,803	9,411
41st (17-13)	3.37 days	4.30 days	Feb. 9	50th (17-05)	1.60 days	-6.43 days	Jan. 27					T-1	635	470	2,371
												T-38	706	684	3,105
												IFF	275	272	1,344

* Mission numbers provided by 14 FTW Wing Scheduling.

The graduation speaker is Maj. Gen. Brett Williams, U.S. Air Force retired.



14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 37 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.

Deployment numbers provided by the Installation Personnel Readiness Office.

2017 Tax Center volunteers needed

The Columbus Air Force Base legal office is currently seeking tax center volunteers for the upcoming tax season. No prior tax experience is necessary, as all required training will be provided to qualify volunteers for tax preparation. The tax center will open Feb. 6, 2017, and trained volunteers will prepare tax returns through April 7, 2017. If you are interested in this opportunity to be involved in our Tax Center please contact the legal office at 434-7030.



The 14th MDG will now be completely **CLOSED** the 3rd Thursday of every month for training starting March 16, 2017. The ancillary services including pharmacy, radiology and lab will no longer be open until noon. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
30 UEI ends	31 Enlisted Promotions/ Fourth Quarterly Award Ceremony, 3 p.m. @ Club 18-05 Pilot Partner Welcome, 5 p.m. @ Jackie 'O House	1	2	3 Pilot for a Day visit	4/5 5th: Columbus Club Super Bowl Party, @ Club	Feb. 13-15: Military Archbishop base visit Feb. 14: St. Valentine's Day lunch Feb. 16: Taste of Soul Feb. 28: Enlisted Promotions Mar. 7: Wing Newcomers Orientation Mar. 10: SUPT Class 17-06 Graduation Mar. 13-17: Local School Spring Break Mar. 23: Enlisted Dorm Dinner Mar. 24: Happy Irby Golf Tournament Mar. 27 - May 5: AFAF Mar. 28: Wing Newcomers Mar. 30 - Apr. 8: Spring Pilgrimage Apr. 7: SUPT Class 17-07 Graduation
6	7 Wing Newcomers Orientation, 8 a.m. @ Club	8	9 Annual Awards Ceremony, 6 p.m. @ Club Track Select, 9 a.m. @ Philips	10 SUPT Class 17-05 Graduation, 10 a.m. @ Kaye	11/12	

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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The SILVER WINGS staff reserves the right to edit or rewrite all copy submitted when necessary. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise stated.
Submit all advertising to the Columbus, Miss., Commercial Dispatch advertising department one week prior to desired publication date. The advertising department can be reached at (662) 328-2424.

Upcoming EVENTS

CPR Classes are offered at Baptist Golden Triangle, 6:30 p.m., in the Patient Tower. Pre-registration is required. February classes will be held on the 6th and 27th. Call the Education Department at 244-2498 or 800-544-8762, ext. 2498.

Baptist Cancer Center holds a **support group for cancer survivors** and their families the third Friday of every month from noon-1pm. The next meeting will be held Feb. 17th, room 5PT, past the gift shop. For information call 244-2923 or 800-544-8767, ext. 2923.

Baptist Golden Triangle will hold its **5th annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life**. Valentine Gift Baskets will be on display in front of the main cafeteria, 10a-2p, Monday, Feb. 13. Tickets are \$1 each. Drawing at 2 p.m. For more information call 662-244-1132.

Baptist Cancer Center offers **free prostate PSA screenings** for men over 40 the last Friday of each month. February PSA screenings will be held in Columbus. Make an appointment by calling at 244-4673 or 800-544-8767, ext. 4673.

Join us for a weekly education/support group meeting for people with **congestive heart failure** at Baptist Golden Triangle. Program runs on a 6-week cycle, you may begin at any time. Held each Thursday, 11am-noon, Outpatient Pavilion Board Room. For information call 244-1953 or 244-2132.

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 244-2498 or 800-544-8762, ext. 2498.

BMH-GT Diabetes Support Group - classes are the 3rd Wed. each month, 10-11 am, room 6 PT. For more information call Lacy Smith at 244-1392 or 800-544-8767, ext. 1392.

Baptist Golden Triangle is seeking caring, compassionate people to join an elite group of volunteers to help in a variety of hospital settings. For more information, call 244-1165.

For more information contact the numbers listed above or email info.goldentriangle@bmhcc.org

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NEWS AROUND TOWN

Jan. 29

A homecoming tribute concert honoring the legacy of gospel music featuring Dorothy McClung Lewis, Nationally Renowned Gospel Recording Artist, Singer, Songwriter. Guest performances by The Friendly Brothers in Christ, Canaan MB Choir, The Voices of Zion and The Golden Gates. Event starts at 3 p.m. at the Trotter Convention Center. Advanced admission is \$15 or \$20 at the door. Tickets available at dorothymcclunglewis.com and eventbrite.com.

Feb. 3

Cary Hudson in Concert begins at 7:30 p.m. at Omnova Theatre in Rosenzweig Arts Center, 501 Main Street in Columbus, Mississippi. This Mississippi-born singer/songwriter's colorful music career in alt country, folk and Southern rock has earned him a reputation for delivering "roots music at its best." Tickets are \$10 advance or \$12 at the door. Visit columbus-arts.org/events or call 328-2787 for more information.

Feb. 11

"Simply Streisand," The Music of Barbra Streisand performed by tribute artist Carla DelVillaggio, starts at 8 p.m. in Whitfield Hall on The Mississippi University for Women campus. For additional information or to reserve a free ticket, please call the Office of Development and Alumni at 329-7148.

BARGAIN LINE

Bargain Line advertisement

The Bargain Line is free for all military members (including guard and reserve members), DOD civilians, military retirees, family members and contract employees.

Bargain Line advertisements must be turned in to the Silver Wings office in the 14th Flying Training Wing headquarters building by noon Monday to be included in the following week's issue. Late ads will be held over for the next issue.

Reruns must be phoned in to the Silver Wings office, 434-7068, by noon Monday for inclusion in the next week's issue. Please do not re-submit ads for rerun on this form. Advertisements should contain a home phone number, home address or both. Duty phone numbers will not appear in the ads.

Advertisements for private businesses or services providing a continuous source of income, such as baby-sitting or rental property, may not appear in the Bargain Line. They may, however, be purchased through the Silver Wings publisher, 328-2424. Please fill out this form completely. The Silver Wings staff reserves the right to edit ads as necessary.

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Bathrooms and kitchen equipment shall not be used for any purposes other than those for which they were constructed and no rubbish, rags, disposable diapers, or other obstructive substances shall be disposed of in toilets.

PLESCHA

(Continued from page 1)

The retired F-16 pilot began his speech by thanking the class for inviting him there to train the pilots and the families in attendance for raising them to want to grow up and take on the noble duty of serving in America's military. He singled out the mothers of the graduates to personally thank them for their contributions to raise the pilots.

Plescha's advice to the newest aviators began by outlining three pieces of advice to help them in their careers.

"There are three things I want to tell you today," Plescha said. "I want to tell you how to survive, how to be good and how to have fun in the Air Force."

Accompanying his first piece was a story about his brother. He recounted a tale about his brother nearly crashing his aircraft into the water, narrowly avoiding a crash only because he listened and trusted his instincts.

"First, I'll teach you survival: trust your instincts," Plescha said. "You will become so tuned in to your aircraft that everything becomes natural and you will feel that you don't even have to look at your checklists. But even with 1,500 hours in an aircraft, don't become complacent. Trust your instincts. They can and will save your life."

He went on to talk about experience and stressed how important knowledge is to flying.

"The next piece is how to be good," Plescha said. "It is imperative that you know everything you can about your aircraft. Knowing when to take risks, how to compensate for them and how they will affect you. Without knowledge, you will not be able to effectively complete the mission."

The third piece of advice was to integrate with their respective squadrons and to draw

The retired F-16 pilot began his speech by thanking the class for inviting him there to speak, the instructors who take on the task and the families in attendance for raising them to want to grow up and take on the noble duty of serving in America's military.

motivation from within that squadron.

"The last thing I have for you is how to have fun," Plescha said. "We primarily deploy as a squadron. Embrace your squadron family. You will enjoy what you do so much more if you make yourself a part of that family."

Plescha mentioned one other bit of wisdom that would help the graduates down the road in their careers.

"Finally, for when you become leaders, you will spend time trying to balance people and mission," Plescha said. "Stop trying to figure that out. It is always people first. If you're taking care of your people, the mission will take care of itself. Remember this."

He finished by restating his thanks and congratulations.

"Again, thank you very much for allowing me to be here today," Plescha said. "It is so neat to see you all putting wings on your chest. It's an accomplishment you'll have for the rest of your lives. Congratulations to all of you."

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AETC's 75th Anniversary and the birth of a professional Air Force

Gary Boyd
AETC Command Historian

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas — On Jan. 23, 2017, Air Education and Training Command celebrated its 75th anniversary — a date much more important in our nation's heritage than a simple mark in time. Jan. 23, 1942, proved to be the birth of a professional Air Force — men and women precisely selected and trained to fly, fight and win our nation's wars.

That watershed moment begat the Air Corps Flying Training Command, which directly led to the major successes of the last 75 years — the Doolittle Raiders, precision daylight bombing, the Tuskegee Airmen, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, worldwide aerial logistics and a global reach, the Berlin Airlift, MiG Alley, Operation Linebacker, Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, to name a few. From the afterthought of the world's airpower strategists to the envy of every nation's airpower advocates within a few years, an incredible transformation occurred.

Think about American airpower in context for a few moments. For the first four decades, from 1903 to 1941, there were starts and stops, triumphs and tragedies, but never before a consolidated and scientific approach to training throughout the airpower pipeline.

The pivotal events of the first 40 years of manned flight often relegated the Air Corps to the sidelines. The brutality of World War I saw no American aircraft play a significant part of operational flying (save for Curtiss Flying Boats). The disastrous air mail mission showed how unprepared our Air Corps was to maintain and fly challenging missions on all-weather or all night missions. The early days of World War II witnessed poorly trained and equipped Airmen fighting uphill battles to defend American and allied interests from Hickam Field, Hawaii, clear across the Pacific to Darwin, Australia.

Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold, the commanding general of the U.S. Army Air Forces, confronted the greatest challenge in Air Force history with gusto, expanding a token force from its depression-era strength of 20,000 men to a war-winning force producing 1.9 million technical training graduates, 200,000 pilots, 48,000 navigators and aircrew and a staggering 2.8 million Basic Military Training graduates.

Beginning Jan. 23, 1942, the challenges of a global war necessitated a scientific, efficient and ever-expanding air force training pipeline that stretched from coast to coast. Activated as the Air Corps Flying Training Command, it was re-designated as the Army Air Forces (AAF) Flying Training Command two months later. It added technical training to its mission in 1943, and was re-designated as the U.S. Army Air Forces Training Command July 31, 1943.

Today's mighty Air Force was forged in the days and years following Jan. 23, 1942 — professional instructors, precise curriculum, training pipelines squeezed to capacity, educational facilities built in quantities and regions thought impossible. Airpower started here, the first command, and its professional establishment remains the difference-maker to this day. Today's Airmen — of all grades and backgrounds — are recruited, trained and educated, then sent out ready to contribute to a worldwide, complex mission wherever and whenever needed. Airpower truly starts here.



Courtesy photo

In December 1942, Gen. Hap Arnold stood at Lackland's Parade Grounds and looked out at 10 acres of Airmen — 100,000 people arrayed in the grandest formation in Air Force history. He told the Airmen of new technologies, strategies and equipment. He told them they would win the war and help guide the future through their training and professionalism.

In December 1942, General Arnold stood at Lackland AFB's Parade Grounds and looked out at 10 acres of Airmen — 100,000 people arrayed in the grandest formation in Air Force history. He told the Airmen of new technologies, strategies and equipment. He told them they would win the war and help guide the future through their training and professionalism. He understood immediately what was to come for airpower. It was that rarest of historical moments where a visionary got to experience the full fruits of his life's work.

General Arnold smiled the wry smile that informed his nickname "Happy." The world had demonstrably changed. From AETC's birth in 1942 to today, that familiar torch of knowledge has been continuously passed. Over 75 years of tumult, AETC has always accomplished its mission and produced a professional Air Force which quickly became the envy of the world. Our legacy continued. From the vast tent-cities of the Korean war BMT mission, to the addition of the professional recruiting mission; to the acceptance and mastery of the educational mission with Air University; to specialized undergraduate flight training which allowed American air power to dominate the world's crisis points through the present day, where enlisted Airmen have again entered flight training and every job is open to any Airman capable of performing it, our torch still lights the way in a complex world. Airpower truly starts here.



U.S. Air Force graphic by Michelle Deleon

On Jan. 23, 2017, Air Education and Training Command celebrated its 75th anniversary — a date much more important in our nation's heritage than a simple mark in time. Jan. 23, 1942, proved to be the birth of a professional Air Force — men and women precisely selected and trained to fly, fight and win our nation's wars.

Hill AFB fighter wings bring first F-35A to Red Flag

388th Fighter Wing

HILL AIR FORCE BASE, Utah — Pilots and maintainers from the 388th and 419th Fighter Wings deployed the F-35A Lightning II to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, Jan. 20, 2017, for exercise Red Flag.

This is the first deployment to Red Flag for the F-35A and the first large movement since the Air Force declared the jet combat ready in August 2016.

Red Flag is the Air Force's premier air-to-air combat training exercise. Participants include both U.S. and allied nations' combat air forces. The exercise provides aircrews the experience of multiple, intensive air combat sorties in the safety of a training environment.

"Our Airmen are excited to bring the F-35 to a full-spectrum combat exercise," said Col. David Lyons, the 388th FW commander. "This battle space is going to be a great place to leverage our stealth and interoperability. It's a lethal platform and I'm confident we will prove to be an invaluable asset to the commander."

The jets will be at Red Flag through Feb.

10. While deployed, the F-35 will fly alongside fourth-and-fifth generation platforms and provide offensive and defensive counter air, suppression of enemy air defenses, and limited close air support.

"Red Flag is hands-down the best training in the world to ensure our Airmen are fully mission ready," said Col. David Smith, the 419th FW commander. "It's as close to combat operations as you can get. Our Reserve pilots and maintainers are looking forward to putting the F-35A weapon system to the test alongside our active duty partners to bring an unprecedented combat capability."

The F-35A is a fifth-generation, multi-role stealth fighter designed to gather, fuse and distribute more information than any other fighter in history.

The first operational F-35As arrived at Hill AFB in October 2015. The base will eventually be home to three operational F-35 fighter squadrons with a total of 78 aircraft by the end of 2019. The active duty 388th FW and Air Force Reserve 419th FW will fly and maintain the Air Force's newest fighter aircraft in a Total Force partnership, which capitalizes on the strength of both components.



U.S. Air Force photo by R. Nial Bradshaw

F-35A Lightning II aircraft piloted by the 388th and 419th Fighter Wings prepare to depart Hill Air Force Base, Utah, Jan. 20, 2017, for Nellis AFB, Nevada, to participate in exercise Red Flag. Red Flag is the Air Force's premier air-to-air combat training exercise. This is the first deployment to Red Flag since the Air Force declared the jet combat ready in August 2016.

1,000th RPA student graduates

Randy Martin
12th Flying Training Wing

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas — Lt. Col. Jason Thompson, the 558th Flying Training Squadron commander, presented 2nd Lt. Kevin a certificate commemorating the 1,000th graduate of the Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft training program at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Jan. 20, 2017.

The 558th FTS executes undergraduate instruction for all RPA pilots and sensor operators on their way to assignments in Air Combat Command.

"RPAs continue to prove their value to warfighting commanders in the intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and kinetic fight," said Col. Joel Carey, the 12th Flying Training Wing commander.

The Air Force called for increased output of qualified RPA pilots in 2015 and the 558th FTS responded by doubling the number of graduates in fiscal year 2017. Over \$3 million was invested in infrastructure and training simulators to support the effort and 24 new civilian and military instructors were assigned to the Air Force's undergraduate RPA schoolhouse.

"This is one more milestone of many in the 558th FTS's history of excellence producing RPA pilots and sensor operators for the Combat Air Forces," Thompson said.



U.S. Air Force illustration by Randy Martin

Lt. Col. Jason Thompson, the 558th Flying Training Squadron commander, presents a certificate to the 1,000th Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training graduate, 2nd Lt. Kevin, during a graduation ceremony Jan. 20, 2017, at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. Chris Schweinberg and James Taylor (pictured at right), were both cadre members when the undergraduate program grew to become a squadron in 2010.

EC-130s maintain constant presence in Afghanistan 15 years later

Staff Sgt. Katherine Spessa
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — All around the dimly-lit tent are enduring symbols of a constant presence. A name scrawled across a wooden wall, a lengthy list of deployment dates written underneath, updated year after year. A library stacked with books and games to pass the time. A built-in couch labeled “Snooze Town.”

All the things people do to make a place feel like home are apparent in this place where its inhabitants often spend half their time each year.

The 41st Electronic Combat Squadron and the 75th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, based out of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, have been continuously deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and now the Resolute Support Mission, since 2002. They’ve called Bagram Airfield their deployed home since 2004.

They are the longest continuously deployed Air Force unit in Afghanistan.

The unit operates the EC-130H Compass Call, a modified version of the C-130H Hercules airframe. It serves as an airborne weapons system capable of disrupting enemy command and control communications and limiting adversary coordination essential for enemy force management.

This capability is known colloquially as “jamming” and ensures that when a U.S. or



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Katherine Spessa
Staff Sgt. Kyle Poston, a 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, oversees engine maintenance on an EC-130 Compass Call Jan. 18, 2017, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. To date, 41st Electronic Combat Squadron crews have flown over 39,000 hours during 6,800 combat sorties in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and now the Resolute Support Mission.

coalition unit goes on a mission, the enemy is unable to communicate with one another.

The effect is an indispensable asset to ground forces and has led to 2,193 terrorists removed from the battlefield since 2014.

“The special forces guys will come by after a mission we supported and say thanks,” said

Tech. Sgt. Michael Meredith, a 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron expeditor.

Many of their maintainers have been with the unit since the beginning. The members of the 455th EAMXS’s EC-130 Compass Call aircraft maintenance unit currently deployed to Bagram Airfield have 146 deployments among them.

“I’ve been on 13 deployments, nine of them here (at Bagram) and all of them have been with this unit,” Meredith said.

These numbers are not unusual, and individuals throughout the unit often have deployments in the double digits, with months out of each year spent away from home.

“His kid just started walking and he shows us videos all the time – but he doesn’t get to see it,” said Senior Airman Richard Marshall, an Aircraft Electrical and Environmental Systems journeyman with the 455th EAMXS, about a fellow squadron member.

For those with families back home, they say the key is to make the most of the time they have. Tech. Sgt. Tony Rivera, a 455th EAMXS crew chief, has two sons and said he spends the time he has with his boys participating in their lives and making every moment count.

Despite the strain of an undeniably high operations tempo, the mood in the unit remains positive. When they’re not working out on the flightline, they play sports or video games together and work out in their “prison gym” in front of a vividly painted “Muscle Beach” sign.

“We just call it high-fiving. You don’t skip a beat,” said Meredith about the constant change-over.

“I’ve been deployed 13 times in my career and the last two since I’ve been with this unit have been the best by far,” said Rivera, who just arrived at Bagram for his third deployment in the two years since joining the EC-130 AMU. “This is without a doubt the tightest group of folks I’ve ever worked with.”

To date, 41st ECS crews have flown over 39,000 hours during 6,800 combat sorties in these operations. The unit has broken the monthly flying records for three consecutive months since October 2016– something that has never been done before.

The unit’s mission capable rate, the maintenance term for the number of functioning aircraft, hit a 27-month record high in November 2016– 96.5%. This has led to the 455th EAMXS winning the 2016 Air Combat Command Maintenance Effectiveness Award.



Staff Sgt. Sean Nelson, a 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, lowers himself off the roof of an EC-130 Compass Call Jan. 18, 2017, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The aircraft’s communications jamming capability is an indispensable asset to ground forces and has led to 2,193 terrorists removed from the battlefield since 2014.

IFF Class 17-DBC to graduate Feb. 1

The 49th Fighter Training Squadron will graduate Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Class 17-DBC Feb. 1.

Nine members will graduate this phase of their training on their way to becoming fighter pilots and weapon systems officers in the Combat Air Forces of the U.S. Air Force.

The 49th FTS is responsible for active duty, guard, reserve, and international flying



training in the T-38C IFF aircraft. The Squadron provides training to fighter pilots and weapon systems officers entering Air Force major fighter weapons systems, which include the A-10C, F-15C, F-15E, F-35, F-16 and F-22.

The nine-week course begins with tactical formation flights and then introduces pilots and weapon systems officers to basic fighter maneuvers and air-to-air employment in offensive, defensive, and high aspect fight scenarios. Wingmen bound for aircraft with an air-to-ground attack capability then move on to basic surface attack and surface attack tactics phases learning to employ ordnance against ground targets. The skills learned during IFF directly trans-

late to the fighter aircraft these wingmen will fly in their follow-on training and employ in combat.

Congratulations to the following fighter wingmen:

- 1st Lt. Philip Butler F-16
- 1st Lt. Alexander Babos F-16
- 1st Lt. Evan McCartney F-16
- 1st Lt. Matthew Stopka F-16
- 2nd Lt. Ariel Brown F-16
- 2nd Lt. Stephen Tupta F-16
- 2nd Lt. Josh Sturniolo F-15E
- 2nd Lt. Christian Cummings F-15E
- 2nd Lt. Adam Aubel F-15E

TRIVIA NIGHT
at the Columbus Club
January 27 · 7p.m. FREE EVENT Must be 18+
TRIVIA • FOOD • FUN • PRIZES • DRINK SPECIALS

For More Information
434-2489
CLUBS

Commander’s Action Line
434-1414

The Commander’s Action Line is your direct line to the commander for comments and suggestions on how to make Columbus AFB a better place. Although the Commander’s Action Line is always available, the best way to resolve problems is through the chain-of-command.

The Commander’s Action Line phone number is 434-1414. Callers should leave their name and phone number to receive an answer. All names will be kept confidential. Message may be answered in the Silver Wings without names.

Written questions may also be brought to the PA office in the Wing Headquarters building, BLDG. 724, suite 210. Questions and answers may be edited for brevity and style.

JUSTICE TIMES
JANUARY 2017

STATUS OF DISCIPLINE BY THE NUMBERS— OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2016

Columbus Air Force Base Article 15s

An Airman 1st Class received a reduction to airman and a reprimand for consuming alcohol under the legal age and making a false official statement. The A1C had previously received an Article 15 and multiple Letters of Counseling and Letters of Reprimand. Following his second Article 15, the A1C was administratively discharged for minor disciplinary infractions. The A1C received an under honorable conditions general discharge characterization.

A Tech. Sgt. received a reprimand and a suspended reduction to staff sergeant for negligent dereliction of duty and failure to obey a lawful order.

A Lt. Col. received a reprimand and forfeitures of \$4079 pay per month for two months for assault consummated by a battery, simple assault upon a child under the age of 16, and communicating a threat.

JUSTICE FACTOID:
After hearing a member’s response to the offer of an Article 15, commanders can drop any or all of the offenses listed.

19 AF Article 15 Offenses

- Dereliction of duty: Willful (31%)
- Failure to go (19%)
- Dereliction of duty: Neglect (14%)
- False official statement (11%)
- Drunken driving (11%)
- Fail to obey lawful order (8%)
- Sign false official statement (6%)

19th Air Force Courts-Martials and Article 15 Totals

Luke AFB	Altus AFB	Laughlin AFB	Vance AFB	Columbus AFB	19 AF Totals
0 Courts-Martial	0 Court-Martial	0 Courts-Martial	0 Courts-Martial	1 Court-Martial	1 Court-Martial
10 Article 15s	12 Articles 15s	6 Article 15s	1 Article 15	3 Articles 15s	32 Article 15s

Information about this court-martial was published in the Sept. 16, 2016 issue of Silver Wings

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 Penney has now been discontinued in favor of 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.

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

turbfans

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



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

The A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft 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.



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

The A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft 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.

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.)

Transition Assistance Program GPS Workshop

This workshop is held 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Jan. 30 - Feb. 3. The Transition Assistance Program Workshop has seminars on: Transition, Military Occupational Code Crosswalk, Financial Planning, Health Benefits, Mississippi Dept. of Employment Security, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Disabled TAP, Dept. of Labor TAP portion. Preseparation counseling is required before attending. Recommend attendance is 8 - 12 months prior to separation/retirement. Spouses are encouraged to attend with their sponsor. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

Career Technical Training

This transition event is held 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. Feb. 6 - 7 and explores technical careers for post military personnel using VA Educational benefits. It is conducted by CALIBRE, private company contracted by DVA. Prior registration is required, company requires 10 days notification and must have minimum of eight participants. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

Wing Newcomers Orientation

This brief is 8 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Feb. 7 and is mandatory for newly arrived active-duty and civilian personnel. Spouses are encouraged to attend. The orientation is held at the Columbus Club. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

Military Life Cycle

The Military Life Cycle workshop, from 1-2 p.m. Feb. 7, allows the VA contractors to explain to service members, whether first term, separating, retiring or a veteran, what services the VA offers and what they are able to provide throughout the member's military career and how to apply for benefits. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

Heart Link for Spouses

This event is 8 a.m. - noon Feb. 8. It is for Spouses new to Columbus AFB or the military lifestyle. The event is held at Columbus Club. It is a fun-filled spouse orientation program with info on protocol, finance, benefits, helping agencies, local conditions and prizes. It is a great way to meet others new to Columbus. To register and for more information, please call 434-2790.

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

UEI members arrive at Columbus AFB



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman John Day

Air Education and Training Command Inspector General members for the Unit Effectiveness Inspection arrive Jan. 23, 2017, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. During their visit they assessed the four Major Graded Areas of how the 14th Flying Training Wing executes the mission, manages resources, improves the unit, and leads people.

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, 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 streamlines 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.

Personal Financial Readiness

Make the most of your money. Contact DeLores Sherman, Personal Financial Counselor, for an appointment at 426-2527, or 434-2790. She can help manage finances, resolve financial problems, and reach long-term goals such as getting an education, buying a home and planning for retirement.

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.

Saint Leo University

SLU offers on-base classes in psychology, criminal justice, and business administration. Online and CD-ROM classes are also available. Call Saint Leo at 434-8844 (dial 99 on-base) or stop by room 120 in building 926 (old Personnel building).

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.

Catholic Community

Sundays:

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

Fellowship Dinner after Mass on 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month

Tuesdays:

11:30 a.m. - Daily Mass

Wednesdays:

11:30-12:30 p.m. - Adoration

Protestant Community

Sundays:

9 a.m. - Adult Sunday School (Chapel Library)

10:45 a.m. - Traditional Worship Service

Tuesdays:

5 p.m. - Student Pilot Bible Study (Chapel Library)

Wednesdays:

4 p.m. - Music Rehearsal

Ecumenical services

Wednesdays:

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

Columbus Air Force Base Information and Events

Join our Facebook page at Columbus AFB Living, Twitter @columbusafbliving, Instagram at columbus_afb_living, 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.

Battle of the Bulge

The Fitness Center is running the Battle of the Bulge from Jan. 9 – March 3. Contact Health and Promotion for more information and to sign-up 434-1688.

Youth Spring Soccer

Sign-up for youth spring soccer at the Youth Center from Jan. 9 – Feb. 10. Call 434-2504 for more information.

Trivia Night

The Columbus Club will host a Trivia Night at 7 p.m. Jan. 27. It is a free event with trivia, food, fun, prizes and drink specials. Must be 18 or older to participate. For more information call 434-2489.

\$.25 Cent Bowling

The Bowling Center is offering 25-cent bowling Jan. 30 from noon – 5 p.m., shoe rental not included. For more information call 434-3426.

Win Moolah at the Club

The Columbus club will host Win Big Moolah each Friday beginning Feb. 3. It is free and for club members only. Be at the club between 4 - 6 p.m. All club members are entered to win the cash pot. If there is no winner, \$25 is added to the pot for the following Friday's drawing. Attendees must be 18 or older to apply. For more information call 434-2489.

Super Bowl Party

The Columbus Club will host a Super Bowl Party Feb. 5. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. There will be an all-you-can-eat buffet and tons of prize giveaways. Advanced tickets for club members are \$10, nonmembers are \$15. At the door, tickets for club members are \$15 and nonmembers are \$20. Children under 12 get in for free. For more information call 434-2489.

Brewery Tour and Casino Stay

Visit southern Alabama and Mississippi with our casino stay and brewery tours Feb. 18 - 20. Visit 5 breweries and stay at Hollywood Gulf Casino for \$195 per person. Includes a two-night stay, tours and transportation. Attendees must be 18 years old to visit breweries. Sign up by Feb. 8. Call 434-2505 for more information.

Fitness/Time Out Child Care

The Child Development Center offers child care from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. The cost is only \$4 per hour. Sign up one week in advance at the CDC or contact 434-2479 for more information.

The Overrun Open Friday Nights

The Overrun is open Fridays 4:30 p.m. until midnight. Bar menu includes chicken wing basket, chicken tender basket, club wrap, or buffalo chicken wrap. For more information, contact 434-2419.

Story Time and Circle Time

The Base Library offers Story Time every Friday at 11 a.m. for all ages. Circle Time is offered each Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. for ages up to 4 years old. For more information, contact 434-2934.

Cosmic Bowling Special

The Bowling Center offers Cosmic Bowling for only \$12 per person every Friday and Saturday night from 5 – 8 p.m. You also may purchase individual games for \$3 per game with purchase of \$1.50 shoe rental. For more information, contact 434-3426.

Free Wood at the Golf Course

Wood is available at the Golf Course on Sundays from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Contact the Golf Course Monday-Friday to arrange pick-up. Call 434-7932 for more information.

Lawn Mower and Bicycle Repair

Lawn mower repair is now available at Outdoor Recreation. The cost is only \$40 per hour plus parts; pickup and delivery available. Self-help bicycle repair is also available. For more information, contact 434-2507.

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.

Hobby and Craft Instructors Needed

Do you have a hobby or craft project you can share with others? For more information, contact 434-7836.

Referees Needed

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

Make Your Shopping Easier

Force Support Squadron gift cards are available in increments of \$5 to fit any budget. They can be used at most Force Support Squadron facilities at Air Force installations worldwide and they never go out of style. Purchase your gift card at one of the following locations: Bowling Center, Golf Course or Youth Center. For more information, contact 434-3426.

Take & Bake Pizzas at the Bowling Center

Grab-and-go ready pizzas for you to take home and bake yourself are available at the bowling center. Save \$2 per pizza. Large and medium pizzas only.

Interested in Sponsoring with Columbus AFB?

Want your business to reach the 18,000 active duty military, family members, civilian employees and retirees living and working at Columbus AFB? If you are interested in event sponsorship or donations, please contact our sponsorship coordinator at 434-2337.

Free Fitness Classes

Free classes are available at the fitness center. Classes range from P90X, Hot Fusion, Jiu Jitsu and Floor Core & More. For more information on class schedules, contact the Fitness Center at 434-2772.

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.

Instructional Classes at Youth Center

Youth Programs is offering piano lessons, guitar lessons, tumbling classes, dance classes, and martial arts instruction. Times and ages vary for all classes. Call 434-2504 or stop by the Youth Center for more information.

Fitness on Request

CAFB Fitness and Sports offers a truly comprehensive group fitness platform that is available all day and completely customizable to meet your needs with over 30 different classes on the Fitness on Request system. For more information, call 434-2772.

Space A Lodging

The Magnolia Inn usually has openings for Space A family and single units. Contact the lodging desk at 434-2548.

Ride in Style

If you don't want to leave your car at the airport over a vacation, we can help you out. Outdoor Recreation offers a shuttle service to the airport of your choice. Call 434-2505 for more information.

Biomedical Sciences Corps celebrates 52nd anniversary

Maj. Oscar Corredor

14th Medical Operations Squadron
Optometry Flight Commander

United in the Mission, our multi-disciplinary corps brings together expertise from more than 15 different specialties to deliver world-class patient care and customer service which increases our productivity, force performance, and quality of care to our beneficiaries.

This year, Columbus Air Force Base and the Air Force celebrated Biomedical Sciences Corps week Jan. 23-27.

This time we celebrated our 52nd anniversary, but our roots date as far back as 1917 when the Army's Sanitary Corps was established. Since its humble beginnings on Jan. 28, 1965, the BSC has grown to over 8,200 officers and enlisted worldwide and it is fair to say that every patient of the 14th Medical Group has at least one aspect of their care or readiness provided by a BSC. At Columbus AFB, the BSCs are represented by aerospace and operational physiology, biomedical laboratory, bioenvironmental engineering, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, public health, psychology and social work.

Aerospace physiology is probably better known to our student pilots, as they spend thousands of hours per year training students on the different aspects of what flying can do to the human body and how to cope with potential challenges such as airsickness and egression from an aircraft. Bioenvironmental engineering is probably best known for the gas mask fit test. However, they are first responders to mishaps and hazardous spills and ensure our water supply is safe for consumption. The medical laboratory performs 35,000 tests every year to aid providers in the diagnosis and treatment of blood, bodily fluids and tissue.

Optometry delivers excellence in eye



U.S. Air Force photo by Sharon Ybarra

Members from the 14th Medical Group Biomedical Sciences Corps organizations pause for a photo to celebrate BSC Week Jan. 23, 2017, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. BSC Week ran from Jan. 23-27 and highlighted their 52nd anniversary. The BSC contains the aerospace and operational physiology, biomedical laboratory, bioenvironmental engineering, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, public health, psychology and social work.

care by utilizing the latest technology to perform more than 150 exams every month to evaluate and treat for eye conditions to ensure every Airman and their family have their best quality of vision. The pharmacy processes approximately 9,000 prescriptions every month. They also use the latest technology to scan both medications and prescriptions to make sure the right medication gets to the right person.

Aerospace medicine-trained physician assistants oversee the health and wellness of our flyers, air traffic controllers, and

family members, while physical therapy uses a full spectrum of skills and treatments to return our active members to duty without limitations in their newly renovated facility.

Any facility where you eat or drink on base has been inspected by public health. They also guide standards and processes for infectious disease control like Ebola. Psychology and social work collaborate to form mental health. Mental health provides psychotherapeutic support to active duty, dependents, and retirees for a wide

range of psychiatric conditions but also assists in maintaining readiness through security and deployments clearances.

As a BSC myself, I take pride in our diversity and the impact we bring to the mission at Columbus AFB. No other corps in the Air Force Medical Service performs a job that reaches across to all our active-duty members, civilian employees, retirees, spouses and family members. Though we only celebrate BSC week once a year, we are here every day to help you and Team BLAZE perform the mission.

**To advertise in Silver Wings,
call 328-2424**



Visit www.columbus.af.mil to learn about Columbus AFB agencies and other important information.



RIGHT: The 14th Operations Group building houses the command section of the 43rd Flying Training Squadron on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The Firebirds have much history both before and during World War II.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman John Day



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Daniel Lile

LEFT: Maj. William Parrott, 43rd Flying Training Squadron Assistant Flight Commander, explains air-to-air maneuvers with a student pilot Jan. 13, 2015, at the 49th Fighter Training Squadron on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The entire reserve unit contributes to the Air Force mission every day.

Firebirds augment SUPT

Senior Airman John Day
14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

It's no secret the Air Force needs more pilots, but to train those pilots, you need instructor pilots.

The 43rd Flying Training Squadron "Firebirds" at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, started as two reserve flights of T-38 instructors. They became so lucrative they grew into a single squadron, with flights in every pilot training squadron.

Before present day, it was named the 29th Bombardment Squadron on Dec. 22, 1939, and was activated in February 1940. They flew B-17s and B-18s before World War II and switched to the B-29 Superfortress during the war; it was deactivated afterward.

Today, the 43rd FTS, a geographically separated unit of the 340th Flying Training Group, Randolph AFB, Texas, is a reserve associate unit that works side-by-side with the 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus AFB. The 340th FTG, commanded by Col. Roger Suro, is the largest flying group in the Air Force, consisting of 425 instructor pilots assigned to six squadrons at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma; Joint Base San Antonio, Texas; Columbus AFB; Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas; Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas; and the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado.

43rd FTS reserve instructors fly all three 14th FTW aircraft, including the T-1A Jayhawk, T-6A Texan II and T-38 Talon and are spread throughout the squadrons.

"Here's the big picture, we are all reserve here at the 43rd [FTS]," said Lt. Col. Brent Drown, 43rd FTS Commander. "We supply the instructors and each squadron supplies the planes. There are around 85 43rd [FTS] IPs divided among each flying squadron."

Instructors are vital to one of the most rewarding missions in military flying: training and mentoring the next generation of Air Force officers and pilots.

"Our mission is, quite literally, 'Deliver unrivaled instructors to Air Education Training Command,'" Drown said. "That's our bumper sticker, our motto. AETC is all about production, cranking out pilots. We closely track our contributions to Columbus' mission. Of all the IPs in this wing, we account for 12 to 13 percent of the manpower, but we do 16 percent of the pilot production."

Reserve instructors usually come straight from an active-duty IP spot and are able to fit right into Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training.

"The guys here have already done an active duty instructor assignment and are generally more experienced," said Maj. Allan Chun, 43rd FTS Systems Flight Commander.

"What makes us so cost effective is the fact we primarily hire straight from the active-duty Airmen who are current qualified," Drown said. "Active-duty pilots who are selected to be instructors have to go to Pilot Instructor Training. The vast

majority of our guys are already qualified on active duty and they just, as we say, 'walk across the street and trade patches.' This eliminates the PIT training cost."

It isn't always easy having a squadron where all its members are spread out, according to Drown.

"It is a very unique scenario," Drown said. "One of our biggest challenges lies in the fact we are all spread out. I am a firm believer the number one priority of communication is face-to-face. I spend at least two to three hours a day just walking through the squadrons to establish that communication."

Reserve instructor pilots are usually very senior compared to first assignment instructor pilots, allowing them to mentor newer IPs and take on some additional duties.

"Our guys have a lot of experience as opposed to a FAIP or a brand new instructor from PIT," Drown said. "This allows us to perform up to 50 percent of the ground supervision duties. In addition, some of our guys fill command level positions in the other squadrons."

The squadron has some full time reservists and others who come in for one week of each month to fulfill their reserve commitment.

"Our squadron is about 20 percent what we call full-time support," Drown said. "The full-time support is there to take care of the part timers who only come in for one week a month."

The 43rd FTS has another unique function in the event of a major war breaking out.

"In the case of an absolute need to put active-duty IPs back in their weapon systems, Air Force Reserve Command has the authority to put traditional reservists back on active-duty status to buffer the loss of the active-duty IPs," Drown said.

Being a reservist with the 43rd FTS gives valuable service, Total Force Integration and the freedom to serve, without some active-duty constraints, Chun said.

"In some ways, being a reservist with the 43rd gives you the benefits of being active duty without some of the drawbacks," Chun said. "The big picture is the volunteer idea. You can choose to some extent which unity you go to and the usual PCS cycle does not apply."

TFI is able to function well when there is a positive relationship between the reserve component and active duty. The 43rd FTS displays just how effective TFI can be.

"Our mission is, quite literally, 'Deliver unrivaled instructors to Air Education Training Command,'" Drown said.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman John Day

LEFT: Items representing the 43rd Flying Training Squadron Firebirds sit in a case Jan. 25, 2017, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The 43rd FTS does not have a traditional heritage room and instead houses its history in the entrance to the command section.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman John Day

RIGHT: The 43rd Flying Training Squadron patches and coins sit in a case Jan. 25, 2017, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The 43rd FTS is a geographically separated unit of the 340th Flying Training Group, Randolph AFB, Texas, a reserve associate unit that works side-by-side with the 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus AFB.



U.S. Air Force photo

LEFT: The 43rd Flying Training Squadron Pontiac Firebird sits on the flightline Jan. 14, 2014, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The Firebird has the 43rd FTS patch on its hood and is painted in the same color scheme as a T-38. It was donated in honor of Maj. Blair "Bama" Faulkner, a 43rd FTS instructor pilot who died in a T-38 crash in 2008.