

Weather

Friday  Cloudy High 78°F Low 53°F	Saturday  Sunny High 79°F Low 54°F
Sunday  Sunny High 83°F Low 57°F	Monday  Rain High 85°F Low 61°F

Forecast provided by the 14th OSS Weather Flight

News Briefs

SUPT Class 16-08 Graduation

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 16-08 graduates at 10 a.m. April 29 in the Kaye Auditorium.

Enlisted Promotion Ceremony

The next Columbus Air Force Base Enlisted Promotions ceremony is at 2 p.m. April 29 in the Kaye Auditorium.

Quarterly Awards Ceremony

The first Quarterly Awards Ceremony is at 3 p.m. April 29 in the Kaye Auditorium.

Inside



Feature 8

Earth Day and Arbor Day are highlighted in this week's feature.



U.S. Air Force photo/Elizabeth Owens

The newest 14th Flying Training Wing Honorary Commanders stand together after a reception April 19 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The reception was hosted to induct the wing's newest Honorary Commanders into the program, and to recognize the outgoing commanders.

New Honorary Commanders named, outbound recognized

Airman 1st Class John Day

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

The 14th Flying Training Wing hosted an Honorary Commander reception April 19 at the Columbus Club.

The reception was hosted to induct the wing's newest Honorary Commanders into the program, and to recognize the outgoing commanders.

Columbus Air Force Base prides itself on its good relations

with the Golden Triangle Region and surrounding communities. To maintain this relationship, Columbus AFB runs many public relations programs, including the Air Force Honorary Commander Program.

"The reason the Air Force has an Honorary Commander program in the first place is to make sure we as Air Force Airmen have a way to impart knowledge and keep our civic and

See HONORARY, 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 (17-02)	2.23 days	1.67 days	May 17	48th (16-08)	-1.53 days	1.51 days	Apr. 29	49th (16-GBC)	1.90 days	3.77 days	May 2	T-6	1,690	1,952	16,533
41st (17-01)	1.35 days	0.99 days	Apr. 25	50th (16-08)	0.10 days	-0.29 days	Apr. 29					T-1	574	537	5,519
												T-38	589	636	5,503
												IFF	258	264	2,271

The SUPT Class 16-08 guest speaker is Col. John Trnka Jr., Commander, 940th Wing, 10th Air Force, Beale Air Force Base, California.



14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 48 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.

HONORARY

(Continued from page 1)

business leaders aware of what the Air Force is doing; what Columbus AFB is doing,” said Col. John Nichols, 14th FTW Commander. “The reason we do is so (these leaders) can become advocates of the base, so (they) can expand and talk about our mission when out in (their) businesses, organizations and churches. That is the purpose of this program.”

This program invites leaders from the surrounding community to become an Honorary Commander of one of each of the groups or squadrons on base.

“They dedicate their time getting to know us and are half of what makes Team BLAZE,” said Lt. Col. Marc Deshaies, 14th Student Squadron Commander. “They advocate for our collective needs and are the reason I am blessed to call Columbus, Mississippi, my home.”

Group and squadron commanders maintain a relationship with their respective Honorary Commanders. This includes maintaining regular direct contact with each Honorary Commander, issuing invitations to events and attending downtown events to which they are invited.

“I’ve been in Mississippi all my life and I know a lot about the base, but was never

able to meet all the key players,” said Gary Dedeaux, 14th Operations Group Honorary Commander, and owner of Gary’s Pawn and Gun. “The base is a tremendous asset to the community. I hope to learn more about it and become more acclimated to this environment here.”

In addition, upon becoming Honorary Commanders, they are invited to tour their respective squadron to get a better understanding of the mission and how things operate. Flying squadrons may offer an incentive flight, or the 14th Civil Engineer Squadron may invite their Honorary Commander to an exercise.

“Being a pilot myself, aircraft fascinate me,” Dedeaux said. “Being a businessman, I get to interact with a lot of people from the base and am eager to meet and learn more as an Honorary Commander.”

The Air Force benefits greatly from an increased number of relationships with a community’s key leaders. To keep that number of relationships high, Honorary Commanders hold their position for approximately two years before handing the reins to another.

“To the folks that have served as Honorary Commanders, thanks again,” Nichols said. “To the folks that are coming on board to join us, we welcome you with open arms.”

Silver Wings

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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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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.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
25	26	27	28	29	30/1	May 10: Wing Newcomers Orientation May 13: CCAF Graduation May 14: BLAZE Fest May 20: SUPT Class 16-09 graduation May 25: 16-10 Assignment Night May 26: Capt. Pierson memorial May 27: AETC Family Day, Independence Pool Opens May 30: Memorial Day May 31: Wing Newcomers Orientation May 31: Enlisted Promotions June 3: Dodgeball tournament June 9: 41st FTS Change of Command June 10: SUPT Class 16-10 graduation June 16: 14th MSG Change of Command June 21: Wing Newcomers Orientation June 28: 14th CES Change of Command June 30: Enlisted Promotions
2	3	4	5	6	7/8	
			Holocaust Vigil Walk, 6 p.m. @ Chapel	Holocaust memorial event, 10 a.m. @ Club 16-09 Assignment Night, 5:30 p.m. @ Club		

NEWS AROUND TOWN

April 29
The Mississippi University for Women Jazz Ensemble Concert starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Mississippi University for Women Kossen Auditorium in Poindexter Hall. The event is free and open to the public. For more information visit online at visitcolumbusms.org.

April 30
Columbus Choral Society concert starts at 7:30 p.m. at First Baptist. The concert is free and honors Memorial Day and those who have served.

May 6
Mississippi University for Woman Choral Concert starts at 7:30 p.m. in the MUW's Poindexter

Hall, Kossen Auditorium. The event is free and open to the public. For more information visit online at visitcolumbusms.org.

May 6-7
The 21st Annual Market Street Festival is in downtown Columbus. For more information contact Main Street Columbus at 328-6305.

May 9
Grand Opening of the Farmers Market season starts and is open throughout the growing season: Mondays, 4-6 p.m.; Thursdays, 7-10 a.m.; and Saturdays, 7-10 a.m. For more information contact Main Street Columbus at 328-6305.

BARGAIN LINE

The deadline for submitting ads is noon Monday before the desired publication date. Ads turned in after the deadline will run the following week. Ads can be mailed to or dropped off at the public affairs office in the 14th Flying Training Wing Headquarters building, e-mailed to silverwings@us.af.mil or faxed to 434-7009. Calling Ext. 7068 by noon Monday can extend the run date of ads already submitted. Silver Wings reserves the right to limit ads based on content, space and frequency of requests. Advertisements for private businesses or services providing a continuous source of income may not appear in the Bargain Line. They may, however, be

Miscellaneous

For Sale: White Kenmore chest freezer with power light, sliding basket and in excellent condition; must sell, \$195. For more information call 356-4511.

For Sale: Olde Town 146 Saranac Green Canoe, used only three times and stored indoors. High back seats with center seat storage, bought new for \$699, asking \$450 or best offer. For more information call Mike at 574-0369.

Several items for sale: Pro form whirl-

wind dual action stationary bike for \$150; Health rider for \$200; EZ Bole Regal three wheel adult bike \$250; Shark floor cleaner mop with two pads for \$8; six shelf book case \$20. All items are in good shape, for more information, call 328-3977.

RETENTION
(Continued from page 13)

ment process, Pilch explained recommendations from Lt. Col. Bradley Turner, 33rd Operations Support Squadron commander. These included benchmarking the U.S. Navy practice of employing a wing career counselor who assists and counsels personnel in their assignments, implementing a warrant officer program for pilots, applying overseas returnee processes to all assignments to create predictability and using base of preference and follow on rules.

"To me this is the toughest to solve," said Pilch. "We're stuck in an assignment system that's from the 1950s or so. I think in this new age we can make it

better, we just have to figure out how."

Finally, the colonel spoke of leadership and policies he is implementing internally for leaders to show Airmen they care.

The commander is soliciting and initiating successful practices used for Airmen and spreading them across the wing. For example, commanders will conduct mentoring lunches with NCO's, Airmen and company grade officers to take inputs for better leadership practices.

"What I can tell you is your leaders care about you – but sometimes, it's a matter of communication or time," said Pilch. "So we're trying to figure out how to make sure your leaders show they care about you."

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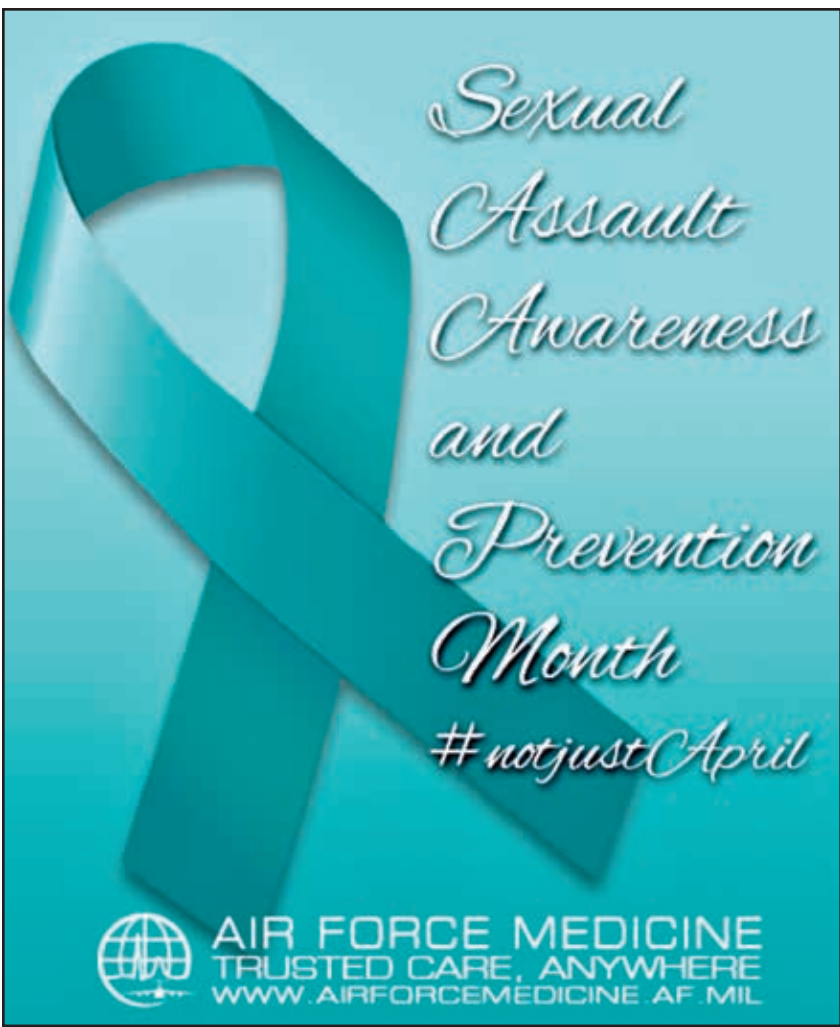
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Boster hands 48th FTS reigns to Gilliam



U.S. Air Force photo/Elizabeth Owens

Col. James Boster, 14th Operations Group Commander, passes the 48th Flying Training Squadron guidon to Lt. Col. Charles Gilliam, the new 48th FTS Commander, during a change of command ceremony April 21 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

The Joint Commission notice of accreditation survey

The Joint Commission will conduct an accreditation survey of the 14th Medical Group May 3 – 5.

The survey will be used to evaluate the organization's compliance with TJC standards for ambulatory health care and to determine if accreditation should be awarded to, or retained by, the organization.

Through an emphasis on education and consultation, the ultimate purpose of the accreditation process is to improve the quality of health care delivered by the 14th Medical Group. The group has voluntarily requested this survey as a means of assisting its own efforts to improve the delivery of quality health care.

Members of the general public, patients and individuals on the staff of this organization, believe they have pertinent and valid information about this organization's provision of health care or compliance with TJC standards, may request an information presentation with TJC surveyors at the time of the survey for the purpose of presenting such information, or may communicate such information in writing or by telephone to the TJC. All information received from identified individuals at or prior to the survey will be considered in making the accreditation decision. The information presented will not be debated with the reporting individual.

For more information about the TJC accreditation survey, contact the 14th MDG at 434-2292.

Trnka to speak at next graduation

Team BLAZE welcomes Col. John Trnka Jr. to Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, as the guest speaker for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 16-08's graduation April 29.

Trnka is the Commander, 940th Wing, 10th Air Force, Beale Air Force Base, California. The unit reports directly to the 10th AF commander at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas. The 940th Wing is recognized as the Air Force model of the total force enterprise, providing in-garrison and in-theater combat support, command and control, and high-altitude surveillance and reconnaissance expertise to warfighters across the spectrum of conflict in support of Air Combat Command, Pacific Air Forces, and Central Command.

Trnka graduated from Purdue University and received his commission through Officer Training School. He left active duty after a variety of ground-based and flying assignments and entered the Kansas Air National Guard in 1993. While a member of the Air National Guard, he served as Evaluator Weapons Director and Instructor Mission Crew Commander. In 1997, he joined the Air Force Reserve and the newly formed 513th Air Control Group.

Over the course of the next eight years, Trnka served as an E-3 Instructor and Evaluator Mission Crew Command-

er; Commander, 513th Operations Support Flight; Director of Operations, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron; and Deputy Commander, 513th Air Control Group. In the fall of 2005, he transferred to United States Joint Forces Command as Chief, Information Superiority Group, Standing Joint Forces Headquarters. He assumed his duties as Commander, 513th Air Control Group in July of 2007. In September of 2010, he left the 513th ACG to serve as Vice Wing Commander, 940th Wing, Beale Air Force Base, California, a position he held until taking command of the unit in May 2014.

Trnka has flown combat and combat support missions in Iraq and participated in Operations Provide Comfort, Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Deny Flight and Iraqi Freedom. He is a Master Air Battle Manager with more than 3,300 hours of flight time in the E-3B/C Sentry. He currently flies the RQ-4 Global Hawk, a remotely piloted, high-altitude surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. July 1986 – October 1986, undergraduate Air Weapons Controller training, Tyndall AFB, Florida
2. October 1986 – October 1988, Air Weapons Director, 612th Tactical Control Flight, Pruem Air Station, Germany
3. December 1988 – January 1989, Air Weapons Director and instructor, 621st Air Control Squadron, Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea
4. January 1989 – December 1989, Student Air Surveillance Officer, 966th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Tinker

AFB, Oklahoma

5. December 1989 – December 1992, Instructor Air Surveillance Officer, 965th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma

6. January 1993 – February 1997, Flight Commander, Evaluator and Instructor Air Weapons Director, and Mission Crew Commander, 134th Air Control Squadron, McConnell AFB, Kansas

7. February 1997 – April 1999, Instructor Mission Crew Commander, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma

8. April 1999 – January 2001, Commander, 513th Operations Support Flight, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma

9. January 2001 – October 2003, Director of Operations, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma

10. October 2003 – October 2005, Deputy Commander, 513th Air Control Group, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma

11. October 2005 – July 2007, Chief, Information Superiority Group, Standing Joint Forces Headquarters, Joint Forces Command, Navy Station Norfolk, Norfolk, Virginia

12. July 2007 – September 2010, Commander, 513th Air Control Group, Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma

13. September 2010 – May 2014, Vice Wing Commander, 940th Wing, Beale Air Force Base, California

14. May 2014 – present, Wing Commander, 940th Wing, Beale Air Force Base, California

Local car club chapter holds race on Columbus AFB

Senior Airman Stephanie Englar
14th Flying Training Wing
Public Affairs

The local Mississippi chapter of the Sports Car Club of America roared onto SAC ramp during a two-day Autocross event April 16-17 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

The car racing event was open to all Columbus AFB Airmen as well as pre-registered off-base participants.

"The Autocross is an entry-level auto sports event where we pit cars against each other based on time," said Chuck Bigelow, event coordinator. "All of the cars are grouped according to different classes, and the classes are handicapped based on times set by those particular classes at the national events in Topeka, Kansas, every year."

More than 40 participants competed on a flat, curving course delineated by traffic cones. Drivers went one at a time, racing the clock rather than each other, to determine who

could complete the course in the fastest time.

"It is a driver's race," Bigelow said. "You could bring a C-stock Altima and run against a Corvette or a Porsche and be graded on an even basis based on your ability to drive."

The SCCA has determined Columbus AFB as an ideal location for the racing event. The former SAC ramp is massive, paved and free of obstacles, making it perfect for SCCA racing.

"My favorite part of the Autocross is learning how to drive better than I did before I showed up," said Capt. Michael Orzel, 48th Flying Training Squadron.

Safety was a top priority before and during the event. Several certified safety monitors from the SCCA were on hand to oversee the event as well as inspect the cars and track before use. A safe environment allowed for the drivers to focus on having a good time and learning the limitations of their vehicle safely.

For more information on the next autocross race or the club in general go to msscca.org.



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Stephanie Englar

The local Mississippi chapter of the Sports Car Club of America held a two-day autocross race on SAC ramp April 16-17 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The SCCA's mission is to bring motorsports to the masses of American men and women who are passionate about automobiles, speed and competition.

Exercise Max Thunder 16 launches at Kunsan

1st Lt. Ashley Wright
8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KUNSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — U.S. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps and Navy personnel and aircraft will train with South Korean air force counterparts in the bilateral training exercise Max Thunder 16, at Kunsan Air Base April 15-29.

Max Thunder takes place annually and is the largest military flying exercise held on the Korean Peninsula. Max Thunder is part of a continuous exercise program designed to enhance interoperability between U.S. and South Korean forces, and is not tied to any specific real-world events or situations. The exercise highlights the long-standing military partnership, commitment and enduring friendship between the two nations to help ensure peace and security in Northeast Asia.

"Every year, Max Thunder serves as an ex-

cellent opportunity for U.S. and (South Korean air force) fighter pilots to train side by side and gain valuable experience they will need if the Korea airpower team is required to go into aerial combat together," said Lt. Gen. Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy, the Seventh Air Force commander. "The U.S.'s commitment to the security of (South) Korea is ironclad. U.S. military aircraft come to Korea from across the Pacific to participate in this exercise, making a tremendous display of the capabilities the U.S. brings to this alliance."

Approximately 1,200 U.S. personnel will participate in Max Thunder 16, in support of F-16 Fighting Falcons from Seventh Air Force; F-18 Hornets from the 12th Marine Aircraft Group; and EA-18G Growlers from the Navy's Electronic Attack Squadron 138.

Approximately 640 South Korean personnel will also participate in the exercise in support of various aircraft.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Nick Wilson

U.S. Navy Airman Austin Russem, assigned to the Electronic Attack Squadron 138, Whidbey Island, Washington, performs a preflight inspection on an EA-18 Growler during Max Thunder 16 at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, April 18, 2016. Max Thunder is part of a continuous exercise program to enhance interoperability between U.S. and South Korean forces.

33rd FW Commander addresses retention survey results, improvement efforts

Senior Airman Andrea Posey
33rd Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — Col. Lance Pilch, 33rd Fighter Wing commander, hosted a commander's call at the Academic Training Center April 15 to speak with Airmen about the one question retention survey and his plans to use the results.

The retention survey was sent out via email and asked Airmen their opinions on what needs to change for them to stay in the Air Force. The colonel received 250 responses where Airmen identified money, time, control or transparency in assignment process and leadership as issues.

The survey is a continuing initiative which focuses on using feedback and communication to help the commander learn what conditions in the wing and Air Force displease Airmen personally so he can take action to fix them. The all call is his first effort to address concerns found in the survey face-to-face with Airmen and discuss his plans for implementing changes.

He asked Master Sgt. Loren Cossette, 33rd Maintenance Group first sergeant, to address the issue of money by explaining military pay basics and discussing military benefits such as insurance, education and retirements. When speaking about these benefits, the first sergeant compared military pay and benefits to civilian equivalents.

"There are two real factors you have to consider when you think about money and how that's going to effect the decision to stay in," said Cossette. "Number one is having a thorough



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Andrea Posey

Col. Lance Pilch, 33rd Fighter Wing commander, shares the results of his one question retention survey at a commanders call April 15, 2016, that asked "I would stay in the Air Force longer if..." at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. The colonel received 250 responses that outlined money, time, control or transparency in assignment processes, and leadership as issues impacting Airmen's decisions to stay in the Air Force. The survey is meant to find factors Airmen feel need to change in the military to improve retention.

understanding of how much you actually make, what our compensations consist of, what you're entitled to and where all that money goes. The second part is being able to take an objective, honest look in the mirror and say how much

am I worth? What are my skill sets worth? How much would something like this get me outside; so you can determine if it is worth it for you to stay in or for you to move on?"

After Cossette's brief, Pilch presented time management concerns and his solutions.

The colonel recounted his discussion with Lt. Col. Brad Bashore, 58th Fighter Squadron commander, about wing and Air Force time management solutions to focus efforts on the mission. Such solutions included reducing required paperwork, like streamlining award packages and performance report processes; reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of the Air Force Inspection System and consolidating or eliminating some Air Force computer-based training.

Pilch encouraged Airmen to speak to their leadership about improperly used time they believed is connected to Air Force or Defense Department mandates and give suggestions for alternative initiatives.

"This is a big Air Force emphasis item," said Pilch. "[The Air Force] wants you to focus your time on the mission, your family or making yourself better. If [the focus] is outside of those three things, we have to look closely at why we're doing it."

To show his resolve, he tasked each unit commander to identify and implement at their level least one time saver. Pilch plans to execute any proposals based on legality and has begun his own implementation of reducing meetings to save time.

In the category of control or transparency in the assign-

Yokota aids Japan with earthquake relief

374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The 374th Airlift Wing sent two C-130 Hercules aircraft and aircrew to the Kyushu region April 18, supporting the government of Japan in their relief efforts for the series of earthquakes that took place in Kumamoto Prefecture and surrounding areas.

The Yokota aircraft transported heavy vehicles and personnel from Chitose Air Base, Hokkaido, to Kyushu, improving the capabilities of ground relief efforts in the area. Each C-130 can load up to 42,000 pounds of cargo.

“These missions are perfect examples of why we are located where we are and what we train for every day,” said Lt. Col. John Kerr, the 36th Airlift Squadron director of operations. “Our airlifters are eager to show their support for their friends and neighbors in Japan following this tragedy.”

The 374th AW, as the primary airlift hub in the Indo-Asia Pacific region, has experience responding to natural disasters. In March 2011, the 374th AW responded to the 9.0 earthquake near Sendai, Japan, providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief

“These missions are perfect examples of why we are located where we are and what we train for every day,” said Lt. Col. John Kerr, the 36th Airlift Squadron director of operations.

to stricken areas. In 2013, the wing sent five C-130s to the Philippines to offload cargo and airlift evacuees seeking safe haven in Manila, and in 2015, the 374th AW also sent support to Nepal in response to the Gorkha earthquake.

“I would like to express my deepest condolences on behalf of the men and women of the 374th Airlift Wing,” said Col. Douglas DeLaMater, the 374th AW commander. “We will continue to support the relief efforts in Kumamoto in whatever way the Government of Japan requests. This is a tragic event, but I am confident in the resolve of the people of Japan.”



U.S. Air Force photo/Yasuo Osakabe

A C-130 Hercules takes off from Yokota Air Base, Japan, April 18, 2016. The 374th Airlift Wing sent two aircraft in support of the government of Japan in their relief efforts for the series of earthquakes that took place in the Kyushu region recently. The aircraft transported heavy vehicles and personnel from Chitose Air Base, Hokkaido to Kyushu.



U.S. Army photo/Spc. Sarah K. Anwar

Airmen from the 321st Special Tactics Squadron out of Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England, and Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade out of Vicenza, Italy, conduct fast-paced landing and takeoff maneuvers during Saber Junction 16 April 13, 2016. Saber Junction 16 was the U.S. Army Europe's 173rd AB's combat training center certification exercise. It took place at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, March 31-April 24, 2016.

Army, Air Force train for short takeoff, landing

Spc. Sarah K. Anwar

304th Public Affairs Detachment

HOHENFELS, Germany — Airmen from the 321st Special Tactics Squadron out of Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England, and Soldiers from the 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade out of Vicenza, Italy, secured the Hohenfels Training Area's short takeoff and landing strip (STOL) April 13, as part of their certification at Saber Junction 16.

The airfield team from the 321st STS practiced seizing the STOL and assessed it for suitability by looking for obstacles and barriers that would be in the way of aircraft, explained Master Sgt. Christopher B. Sones, assigned to the 321st STS and the airfield team leader for the crew accessing the STOL. They also conducted fast-paced landing and takeoff maneuvers for several hours, refining their timing, efficiency and communication.

Sones also said Hohenfels Training Area's STOL differs from other military landing strips.

“It's unique because it's right at 3,000 feet,

which is our bare minimum for C-130s,” Sones said. “The composition is something we call “rhino-slide;” it's a dirt aggregate kind of concrete mix.”

Sones added that even the concrete mix is still tough enough for aircraft to land.

Saber Junction 16, which lasts from March 31-April 24, is a multinational exercise for U.S. Army Europe's 173rd Airborne Brigade, in which they're evaluated on the readiness of their combat units to conduct unified land operations and promote interoperability. The STOL supports this effort because is it the only semi-prepared, dirt landing zone in Germany, distinguishing it from other landing zones.

Sones says it is essential for his team be able to work in joint operations and share best practices, just as they are doing with the 173rd AB.

C-130s usually land on an average of a 4,600 foot strip. The STOL is 3,600 feet, but only 3,000 feet are usable for takeoff and landing due to the requirement for 300 unused feet to be on either end of a strip for safety.



Maj. Walters receives AETC Award

Congratulations to Maj. Drew Walters, 41st Flying Training Squadron, for achieving the Air Education and Training Command 2015 Air Force International Affairs Excellence Award (Officer category).

Walters led a multi-national Joint Air Warfare Tactical Exercise, securing the Netherlands' North Atlantic Treaty Organization Reaction Force certification. Additionally, he managed the Netherlands Air Force' tactical implementation for their C-130 Night Vision Goggles certification, greatly enhancing the squadron's tactical capabilities. Lastly, Walters created training programs, flight publications, and performed the Netherlands Air Force' first-ever Container Delivery System air-drop.

Don't text while driving

Base to offer retiree seminar

James Poe

Retiree Activities Office Director

The Retiree Activities Office is set to conduct an information seminar to address retiree issues starting at 1 p.m. April 28 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

The seminar is held in the 14th Mission Support Group's first floor Conference Room and is designed to help eligible retirees and veterans obtain 100 percent service connected disability for those who qualify, provide information on funds available to help those who qualify, and discuss other programs that may be of interest.

The seminar is being held based on input received from previous surveys sent out with feedback indicating an interest in these type of gatherings. The meeting is also a way to address many similar questions being asked by retirees.

Although the conference is open to the base population, retirees, and veterans of all branches of the military, those planning on attending the seminar should RSVP due to limited space.

For more information about the event or to RSVP, call 327-1789.



Courtesy photo

James Poe, Retiree Activities Office Director, speaks to Col. Kurt Kayser, 14th Mission Support Group Commander, about upcoming retiree activities and plans March 23, 2015, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. A retiree information seminar begins at 1 p.m. April 28 in the 14th Mission Support Group's first floor Conference Room. Those planning on attending should RSVP by calling 327-1789.

Team BLAZE celebrates National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week

1st Lt. Yolanda McKelvey

14th Medical Support Squadron
Laboratory Services Flight Commander

April 24 – 30 officially marks National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week.

Laboratory professionals work diligently behind the scenes performing the most tedious tasks in healthcare. Their laboratory test results aid Providers in daily health care decisions, from diagnosis through therapy and prognoses.

The Columbus Air Force Base Laboratory is responsible for treating approximately 18,000 TRICARE beneficiaries. In order to obtain timely and accurate lab results, the technicians work closely together with other Military Treatment Facilities located at Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Lackland AFB, Texas; Fort Sam Houston, Tex-

as; Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; and The Armed Forces Medical Examiner in Dover, Delaware. They also join forces with a civilian national network agency called LabCorp.

On a day to day basis, our technicians are responsible for managing over 4,000 complicated diagnostic tests. In fiscal year 2015 alone, the laboratory processed more than 25,000 tests. Furthermore, the lab staff continually ensures safe practices and quality of care come first.

Our lab staff not only provides fast, precise results, they go above and beyond to assist our fellow Airmen on-base and deployed by coordinating quarterly blood drives with Mississippi Blood Services and Keesler AFB. Our efforts have benefited our deployed members and local community with approximately 700 lives saved and \$21K recouped for the Department of Defense.

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

BLAZE Hangar Tails: F-22 Raptor

Mission

The F-22 Raptor's combination of stealth, super cruise, maneuverability and integrated avionics, coupled with improved supportability, represents an exponential leap in war-fighting capabilities. The Raptor performs both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions allowing full realization of operational concepts vital to the 21st century Air Force.

The F-22, a critical component of the Global Strike Task Force, is designed to project air dominance, rapidly and at great distances and defeat threats attempting to deny access to our nation's Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps.

Features

A combination of sensor capability, integrated avionics, situational awareness, and weapons provides first-kill opportunity against threats. The F-22 possesses a sophisticated sensor suite allowing the pilot to track, identify, shoot and kill air-to-air threats before being detected. Significant advances in cockpit design and sensor fusion improve the pilot's situational awareness. In the air-to-air configuration the Raptor carries six AIM-120 AMRAAMs and two AIM-9 Sidewinders.

The F-22 has a significant capability to attack surface targets. In the air-to-ground configuration the aircraft can carry two 1,000-pound GBU-32 Joint Direct Attack Munitions

internally and will use on-board avionics for navigation and weapons delivery support. In the future, air-to-ground capability will be enhanced with the addition of upgraded radar and up to eight small diameter bombs. The Raptor will also carry two AIM-120s and two AIM-9s in the air-to-ground configuration.

The F-22 will have better reliability and maintainability than any fighter aircraft in history. Increased F-22 reliability and maintainability pays off in less manpower required to fix the aircraft and the ability to operate more efficiently.

Background

The Advanced Tactical Fighter entered the Demonstration and Validation phase in 1986. The prototype aircraft (YF-22 and YF-23) both completed their first flights in late 1990. Ultimately the YF-22 was selected as best of the two and the engineering and manufacturing development effort began in 1991 with development contracts to Lockheed/Boeing (airframe) and Pratt & Whitney (engines). EMD included extensive subsystem and system testing as well as flight testing with nine aircraft at Edwards Air Force Base, California. The first EMD flight was in 1997 and at the completion of its flight test life this aircraft was used for live-fire testing.

The program received approval to enter low rate initial production in 2001. Initial operational and test evaluation by the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center was



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Ben Bloker

An F-22A Raptor is flown over Fort Monroe before being delivered to its permanent home at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. The Raptor performs both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions allowing full realization of operational concepts vital to the 21st century Air Force.

successfully completed in 2004. Based on maturity of design and other factors the program received approval for full rate production in 2005. Air Education and Training Command, Air Combat Command and Pacific Air Forces are the primary Air Force organizations flying the F-22. The aircraft designation was the F/A-22 for a short time before being renamed F-22A in December 2005.

General characteristics

Primary function: air dominance, multi-role fighter

Contractor: Lockheed-Martin, Boeing

Power plant: two Pratt & Whitney F119-PW-100 turbofan engines with afterburners and two-dimensional thrust vectoring nozzles.

Thrust: 35,000-pound class (each engine)

Wingspan: 44 feet, 6 inches (13.6 meters)

Length: 62 feet, 1 inch (18.9 meters)

Height: 16 feet, 8 inches (5.1 meters)

Weight: 43,340 pounds (19,700 kilograms)

Maximum takeoff weight: 83,500 pounds (38,000 kilograms)

Fuel capacity: internal: 18,000 pounds (8,200 kilograms); with 2 external wing fuel tanks: 26,000 pounds (11,900 kilograms)

Payload: same as armament air-to-air or air-to-ground loadouts; with or without two external wing fuel tanks.

Speed: mach two class with supercruise capability

Range: more than 1,850 miles ferry range with two external wing fuel tanks (1,600 nautical miles)

Ceiling: above 50,000 feet (15 kilometers)

Armament: one M61A2 20-millimeter cannon with 480 rounds, internal side weapon bays carriage of two AIM-9 infrared (heat seeking) air-to-air missiles and internal main weapon bays carriage of six AIM-120 radar-guided air-to-air missiles (air-to-air loadout) or two 1,000-pound GBU-32 JDAMs and two AIM-120 radar-guided air-to-air missiles (air-to-ground loadout)

Crew: one

Unit cost: \$143 million

Initial operating capability: December 2005

Inventory: total force, 183

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.)

Hearts Apart

The Hearts Apart Social program from 5- 7 p.m. April 28 is a monthly event to provide community bonding, fun and appreciation for the families of active duty personnel who are deployed, remote, or on an extended TDY. Food and activities are provided. For more information or to register call 434-2790.

Transition Assistance Program GPS Workshop

This workshop is held 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. May 2-6. 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. May 9-10 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. May 10 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. May 10 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.

Troops To Teachers

This workshop is 10:30 a.m. - noon May 11. 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.

Troop 9 camps out at SAC Lake



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class John Day

T.J. Johns, Cub Scout, and Ethan Radulski, Boy Scout, Troop Nine, tend to a campfire April 16 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The troop camped out for the night at SAC Lake, made their own fire and hiked Columbus AFB's nature trails. The older Boy Scouts were there to teach the younger Cub Scouts basic camping fundamentals.

Federal USAJobs Workshop

This workshop at 10:30 a.m. May 11 is on writing resumes, applications, and job search, using USAJobs. For more information or to register 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 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.

covery. 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 Ms. Delores Sherman, Personal Financial Counseling, for appointment, 426-2527, or 434-2790, ColumbusAFB-PFCC@MFLC.Zeiders.com. 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.

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

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



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class John Day

An F-22 Raptor sits on the SAC ramp April 20 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Twelve F-22s from the 94th Fighter Squadron at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, visited the 14th Flying Training Wing to generate interest in students to fly this airframe.

Columbus Air Force Base Information and Events

Join our Facebook page at Columbus AFB Living, Twitter at @columbusafbliving, MyAir-ForceLife 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.

The Overrun Now Open Evenings

The Overrun is open each Thursday 4:30 – 8 p.m. and Friday 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.

Supply Drive for St. Jude and Baptist Hospitals

The Youth Center is collecting donations for St. Jude Children's Hospital and Baptist Memorial Hospital. Drop off school supplies at the Youth Center Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. April 1 – 30. For more information and a complete list of items needed, please contact 434-2504.

Summer Day Camp Registration

The Youth Center is now taking registration for Summer Day Camp. Registration is open until all slots are filled. Cost based on family income. For more information, contact 434-2504.

FREE Movie on the Green

The Golf Course is offering "Kung Fu Panda 3" Movie on the Green April 22 at 7:30 p.m. Reserve your seat in a golf cart for only \$5; includes hot dog, chips and a drink. Golf cart seating is limited. The cost day of event: \$4 for hot dog combo only. You may bring lawn chairs or blankets. Popcorn available for purchase; rain date April 23. For more information, contact the Golf Course.

2016 Teen Summer Camps

The Youth Center is accepting nominations for the following teen camps: Air Force Services Teen Leadership Camp and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Camp. Applications available at myairforcelife.com/youth/. For more information, contact 434-2504.

Learn to Cross Stitch like a Pro

The Arts and Crafts Center is offering a free cross stitch class on Mondays and Tuesdays at 3 p.m. Classes begin April 25. Participants must provide their own materials for the class. For more information, contact 434-7836.

Free Breakfast for Club Members

The Columbus Club is offering free breakfast for club members May 2 from 6:30 – 8 a.m. Non-members pay \$8 per person. Become a Club member and eat for free plus enjoy all the benefits of being a member. For more information, contact 434-2489.

All you can eat!

FAMILY BUFFET

Monthly Event Center Program
May Theme: Mexican Buffet

May 5 - 5-8 p.m.

**Beef Tacos Hard & Soft Shell
Taquitos
Chicken Fajitas
Enchildas
Taco Salad
Rice
Beans
Queso Dip**

Come Celebrate Cinco de Mayo
\$10 Members - \$12 Non-Members
\$5 for kids ages 5-11, 4 & Under Free

For More Information call 434-2489

FORCE

Cinco De Mayo Family Buffet

The Columbus Club is offering an All You Can Eat Mexican Buffet May 5 from 5 – 8 p.m. The cost is only \$10 for members; \$12 non-members; \$5 ages 5 – 11; 4 and under free. For more information, contact 434-2489.

National Fitness Month Fitness Run

The Fitness Center is offering a 5K fitness run May 6 at 7 a.m. This event will kick off National Fitness Month. Commander's trophy points awarded. For more information, contact 434-2772.

Mom Bowls Free

The Bowling Center is offering free bowling for mothers May 7 in honor of Mother's Day. Shoe rental not included. For more information, contact 434-3426.

Mother's Day Brunch

The Columbus Club is offering Sunday Brunch in honor of Mother's Day, May 8, from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Make your reservations today. Brunch prices: club member \$17; non-member \$20; children (5 – 11) \$8; 4 and under free. For more information, contact 434-2489.

Bowl with the Pros

The Bowling Center is offering the free bowling camp Bowl like a Pro May 13 at 6 p.m. for ages 15 and up and Youth Bowling Camp May 14 at 9 a.m. for ages 7 – 15. Pro Bowlers Parker Bohn and Sean Rash will conduct these camps. For more information, contact 434-3426.

Thursday Night Nine-Pin No-Tap League

The Bowling Center is offering Thursday Night Nine-Pin No-Tap League sign up. The

cost is only \$10 per person per week. League begins 6 p.m. May 19. Sign up as an individual or a team. For more information or to sign up, contact 434-3426.

Youth Bowling League

The Bowling Center is offering Youth Bowling League sign up. The cost is only \$6 per child a week. League begins 3 p.m. June 4. For more information or to sign up, contact 434-3426.

Independence Pool Opens

The Independence Pool at the Columbus Club will open May 27 at noon. The pool will be open daily from noon – 7 p.m. Pool passes available for purchase at Outdoor Recreation beginning April 15. Book a pool party for your next event, birthday party, or squadron activity. For more information, contact 434-2505.

Columbus Club Lunch Buffet Specials

The Columbus Club is offering a lunch buffet Monday - Friday 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; Monday – Mexican Buffet, Tuesday- Italian Buffet, Wednesday – Pizza and Wings Buffet, Thursday-Southern Buffet, Friday – Catfish and Spaghetti Buffet. Cost of buffet is only \$7.95 for Club members and \$8.95 for non-members. For more information, contact 434-2419.

Story Time at the Library

The Base Library is offering Story Time every Friday at 10:30 a.m. for all ages. The library is located in the Education Center, building 916, rooms 3, 4, and 6. Hours of operation are as follows: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. and Sundays 1 – 5 p.m. For more information, contact 434-2934.

Bowling Center Party Specials

The Bowling Center is offering two options for all your party needs. Option 1 includes 2 hours of unlimited bowling and shoe rental for only \$8.50 per person. Option 2 includes 2 hours of unlimited bowling, shoe rental, and a child meal for only \$11.50 per person. Choice of meal includes chicken tenders, hot dog, corn dog, or grilled cheese served with fries and drink. You may bring in a cake, cupcakes, and ice cream. No other outside food and drinks allowed. For more information, contact 434-3426.

Cosmic Bowling Special

The Bowling Center is offering 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.

Lawn Mower Repair

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

Gymnastics Instructor Needed

Gymnastics Instructors needed at the Youth Center. For more information, contact Kayline Hamilton at 434-2503.

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.

GoPro Rental

Capture the moment by renting a GoPro Hero Three from Outdoor Recreation. The Cost is only \$10 for a two-day rental. Single Airmen may receive a two-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 nine or less. You must purchase paint at Outdoor Recreation for \$45 per case of 2,000. For more information, contact 434-2505.

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.

MyMC2 app

Welcome to the My Military Communities information page. MyMC2 is the mobile application that centralizes all of your installation's community events, organizations and services right in your pocket.



How do I get MyMC2 for my phone?

You can access this app by navigating to the native app store or market on your device and search for "MyMC2", or you can scan this QR code and it will take you directly to the download page in your phone.



iPhone QR code Android QR code

If you have any questions or need support please visit www.facebook.com/mymc2support

Why I celebrate Month of Military Child

Col. Imelda Reedy
14th Medical Group Commander

This month, we observe the Month of the Military Child. Services for military children have evolved significantly over the years, especially in education.

My husband and I have one child. He has traveled with us to many different bases and we have experienced a diverse set of communities from small villages to big cities.

In the process, we have experienced both advantageous and unfavorable seasons with our child's education. Adjusting from school to school can be tough on a child, but can also yield some great results.

In the beginning, I learned to quickly lean on my military family. After the birth of our son, my husband was deployed. While he was away, I spent time with the spouse's group, learning and volunteering my time helping others.

This was an educational experience for me to network and see how other military children were thriving at all different ages and stages. I watched in amazement, how well coordinated the spouses handled their kids and all of the events when military families gathered. I listened, I learned, and I participated. With the help of my husband's unit and the spouse groups, we made it through a very tough first year.

After my husband's deployments, we traded places. I direct commissioned and we moved to Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. I planned on placing my son into the Child Development



Center on base. It was convenient, close to work, and he was almost two years old at the time.

The plan failed; the CDC was full, and the waiting list was long. The alternative scramble was to place him into a child development program off base. This was his first child care experience and luckily, a positive one. He spent his second and third years of life singing to us with a southern accent.

Next, we moved on to Travis AFB, California. It was impossible to find a good prep school which didn't cost an arm or a leg. Most were very expensive, and much to my husband's distress, we paid just that.

My son did well and went on through to Travis Elementary School. These were great times for him; about 90 percent of the children were active-duty military dependents who lived on base. He was taught by teachers who were not bombarded with overcrowded rooms of students. I remember my son racing home – waving certificates with smiley face stickers.

About the time my son was midway into the second grade, we moved again, this time to the University of California, San Francisco. This was the hardest move, and in my opinion, the worst education system my son experienced.

He was enrolled into the third grade at Susan Elementary School, in Suisun, California. The public schools there ran a non-traditional year-round school. This meant, school was in session for three months with one month rotation of break.

This was very difficult for my son to adjust to. If I could explain it in one word it would be "chaos." One teacher to 33 students, rotational schedule, rotation of teachers, rotation of students, riding the bus, no sports, and no music.

After one-half year of this school system, my husband and I decided to pull him out of this system and moved him to a traditional school system in Myrtle Creek, Oregon. This was close

er to my husband's family. He spent the rest of his third grade year there.

After San Francisco, we went overseas to Elmendorf, Alaska, where my son was able to finish elementary and moved into middle school with the Department of Defense School system. I must say, this is a 10 out of 10 school system, which can compete against any private school in the nation. Much to my son's delight, we moved to yet another location where he would receive more DoD schooling.

This time we landed in England. We lived in a very small Village called Alconbury. From seventh to tenth grade, he attended Alconbury High School.

This was a different experience for him. He was able to participate in International relations, Model United Nations at the Hague; attend a Youth group – Club Beyond; join in sports activities such as Track and Field, and American football. Those were four amazing years in England.

His final high school destination was to graduate after a move back to Barksdale AFB. My son finished his last two years in high school, visited his top four universities, graduated with honors, and went on to attend college. Now, after four years of hard brain work, he will be graduating from college. He will be prepared to take on whatever he chooses and the challenges ahead.

As I observed all ages of our precious military children throughout my career, I see they have a genuine interest in people; they are comfortable with each other, and comfortable in their "skin." When dealing with people they show more respect, and are more sincere and honest than most other children. Most of all they seem to be more worldly and resilient, thanks to all of you military parents raising our military children. Hug them daily and thank them for their sacrifices, especially this month as we celebrate Month of the Military Child.

To advertise in Silver Wings, call The Commercial Dispatch at 328-2424

A Brief History of Earth Day

2nd Lt. Robert Shine
14th Civil Engineer Squadron

Earth Day, held nationwide each year April 22 since 1970 and worldwide since 1990, is an awareness campaign and a celebration of the earth and its natural resources.



Historical photo

Coke, ash and dust flow from steel mill 1906 at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Seeing how important this issue was, President Richard Nixon asked for air quality standards, improvements to water treatment facilities, cleanup of federal facilities, legislation against waste dumping, and safeguards against oil spills.

What started as protests against dangerous environmental practices and rampant pollution is now a celebration and an educational opportunity.

The first Earth Day was held in 1970, due to a culmination of events that began many years before and the increased awareness of those events due to faster and more comprehensive media coverage. As the U.S. became more and more industrialized after World War II, manufacturers pushed hard to keep up with demand. Due to a lack of understanding of the effects of their actions and the fact environmental regulations were weak and not enforced, factories were allowed to release waste directly into streams, rivers, air, and dump trash in open pits or gullies.

The demand for quick production of goods and a lack of attention to environmental practices led to several significant environmental incidences. In 1969, the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire due to an oil spill on top of decades of industrial waste dumping. The same year, an oil rig near Santa Barbara, California, spilled over 80,000 barrels of crude oil into a channel and on local beaches.

Looking to take advantage of the emotion and desire for change brought on by the Vietnam War, Senator Gaylord Wilson from Wisconsin took on the problem of pollution. He knew the way to get the change he wanted was to motivate the younger generation; now our parents and grandparents. He announced his idea for an education day on air and water pollution and recruited other congressmen to his cause.

April 22 was chosen because it was between Spring Break and exams. The first Earth Day was a success, and environmental awareness was brought to the center of national attention.



Historical photo

Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire due to an oil spill on top of decades of industrial waste dumping in 1969. The same year, an oil rig near Santa Barbara, California, spilled over 80,000 barrels of crude oil into a channel and on local beaches.



Historical courtesy photo

Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire due to an oil spill on top of decades of industrial waste dumping in 1969. The demand for quick production of goods and a lack of attention to environmental practices led to several significant environmental incidences.

Seeing how important this issue was, President Richard Nixon asked for air quality standards, improvements to water treatment facilities, cleanup of federal facilities, legislation against waste dumping, and safeguards against oil spills. He then established a regulatory body to oversee environmental regulations, and the Environmental Protection Agency was born. The Agency was established to enforce environmental protection standards, conduct environmental research, provide assistance to combat environmental pollution, and recommend new policies for environmental protection.

In 1990, Earth Day organizers decided they wanted to make Earth Day an international event. They approached Denis Hayes, an organizer of the original Earth Day to lead the efforts. His remarkable efforts were able to get over 200 million participants.

Global recycling efforts were increased and the world's countries started organizing the United Nations Earth Summit. Earth Day's first global celebration was a success.

Today, Earth Day continues to generate the awareness important to ensure actions are taken to protect human health and the environment. The effects of this enhanced awareness are everywhere. Concert venues are built on former landfill sites, Bald Eagle populations are increasing, smart forestry practices enhance forest cover, and the Cuyahoga River has an American Heritage River designation.

Closer to home, sections of the Buttahatchee River have been removed from impaired river status due to management practices to support clean water, and Bald Eagles are once again seen regularly in Lowndes County.

At Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, waste is reduced through recycling, energy is saved with updated heating and cooling systems, biodiesel reduces air pollution, and wetlands are protected. These are only a few of the environmental enhancements at the base.

The purpose of Earth Day is to continue to raise awareness of environmental issues. The celebration of Earth Day is meant to recognize how humanity can positively affect the environment and thereby the health of mankind.



Team BLAZE celebrates Arbor Day with Tree City USA

Frank Lockhart
14th Civil Engineer Squadron

Team BLAZE will celebrate Arbor Day in conjunction with Earth Day April 22 on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

Arbor Day was established on April 10, 1872, in Nebraska and was proposed as a special day dedicated to tree planting and increasing awareness of the importance of trees.

As a part of Arbor Day, the Tree City USA® program was developed. The Tree City USA® program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters to provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities that more than 120 million Americans call home.

Columbus Air Force Base will celebrate its 23rd year as a member of Tree City this year. The many benefits of being a Tree City include creating a framework for action, education, a positive public image, and citizen pride. The Tree City sign, located on Simler Blvd, will officially be updated at the "Celebration of Trees" program in late July 2016.