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# SILVER WINGS

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“Produce Pilots, Advance Airmen, Feed the Fight”

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

March 17, 2017

Vol. 41, Issue 10

## Weather

<b>Friday</b> Mostly Sunny / Isolated Rain Showers overnight High 67°F Low 50°F	<b>Saturday</b> Thunderstorms High 67°F Low 41°F
<b>Sunday</b> Sunny High 69°F Low 45°F	<b>Monday</b> Sunny High 75°F Low 53°F
Forecast provided by the 14 <sup>th</sup> OSS Weather Flight	

## News Briefs

### Enlisted Dorm Dinner

The monthly Enlisted Dorm Dinner is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. March 23 at the Chapel Annex.

### Happy Irby Golf Tournament

The Happy Irby Christmas Fund Charity Golf Tournament begins at 11:30 a.m. March 24. Tournament will begin with a lunch and a shotgun start at 1 p.m. at the Whispering Pines Golf Course. Sign up with Steve Reedy by calling 434-7932.

### Wing Newcomers Orientation

A Wing Newcomers Orientation is scheduled for 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. March 28 at the Columbus Club for newly arrived active-duty and civilian personnel.

## Inside



### Feature 8

Retired Lt. Col. Richard “Gene” Smith’s repatriation is highlighted in this week’s feature.



U.S. Air Force photo by Elizabeth Owens

**Brig. Gen. Craig Wills, Director of Strategic Plans, Requirements and Programs, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, prepares to take off in a T-38C Talon aircraft for a familiarization flight March 10, 2017, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Wills was the keynote speaker for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 17-06’s graduation.**

## Wills gives pilots four pieces of advice

### Airman 1st Class Beaux Hebert

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

The Director of Strategic Plans, Requirements and Programs, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, visited Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, to deliver the keynote address during Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 17-06’s graduation Mar. 10, 2017, at Kaye Auditorium.

Brig. Gen. Craig Wills supports the Commander Pacific Air Forces, by providing oversight of the strategy for operational plans, international relations, theater security cooperation and programming of \$16.5 billion in Pacific Theater resources. He is also a Command Pilot with over 2,500 flight hours and 252 combat hours mainly in the F-15C/E Eagle.

The general began his speech by thanking those in atten-

See WILLS, 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 (18-01)	-0.24 days	4.71 days	Apr. 24	48th (17-07)	-0.10 days	3.68 days	Mar. 24	49th (17-FBC)	-0.77 days	0.25 days	Mar. 30	T-6	1,428	1,414	13,726
41st (17-15)	2.48 days	2.56 days	Mar. 31	50th (17-07)	-2.35 days	0.52 days	Mar. 24					T-1	429	394	3,602
* Mission numbers provided by 14 FTW Wing Scheduling.												T-38	520	473	4,722
The graduation speaker is Gen. Robin Rand, Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.												IFF	1212	182	1,984



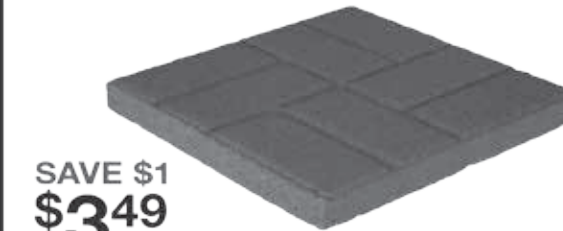
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# 14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 42 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.*

**WILLS**  
(Continued from page 1)

dance, including Col. James Fisher, 14th Flying Training Vice Wing Commander, for the privilege of being there, Team BLAZE for the work they do at Columbus AFB, the instructor pilots for their hard work, and the parents for supporting their sons and daughters through SUPT.

“I’d like to welcome the families and friends of our graduates,” Wills said. “All of you have traveled a long way to here at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, to honor these graduates. I’d like to just thank you for being here to show your love and appreciation.”

Wills then thanked the rest of Team BLAZE for supporting the mission to produce pilots. He talked about how each part of the base was important because without everyone else the planes won’t fly.

“This base is here for one reason, and that’s to train pilots,” Wills said.

Wills said if the maintainers don’t fix the aircraft, the pilots can’t fly. That’s an important lesson he learned pretty early in life and aviation career.

Wills told the graduates four things they should remember through their careers. The first is they should be very proud to be here. He explained it is a hard path to become a U.S. Air Force pilot and it is not for everyone.

The next thing he told them is to be humble. He said it takes 400 Airmen for one plane to fly.

The third thing was the graduates’ work is just beginning. He told them they will have to continue to better their skills as a pilot.

The final point he made was that the pilots are officers first. He said their bars (referring to their rank) go on their shoulders first, not their silver wings on their chest.

During his speech Wills singled out some of the graduates and gave them a summary of what they should expect with their new assignment. He gave examples such as a lieutenant whose next assignment is the F-15E.

“Flying alone at 300 feet at 500 knots, maybe a little bit of weather to make it a little harder, you are going to look up and see the shadows of giant mountains well above your airplane and it’s fantastic. Just at the right time you’re going to jack the nose up, light up the burners and when you get to the right altitude the world is going to get small,” Wills said. “You’re going to roll on your back. You’re going to pull back down and then you’re going to put the (targeting system) on and put some very specific warheads on some very specific foreheads so the U.S. ground troops can live to fight another day.”

Wills finished his speech by saying why the graduates are here.

“We have an Air Force to protect our nation and our way of life,” Wills said. “Today you become a pilot in the most combat capable, powerful fighting force the world has ever known and I think that is awesome.”

## 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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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.

## News Around Town

**March 23 – 26**  
The Long Blue Line Comes Home as the Mississippi University for Women celebrates Homecoming 2017. A full schedule of events and additional information is available at [longblueline.muw.edu/events](http://longblueline.muw.edu/events).

**March 25**  
Come join Uncle Bunky’s 10K and 1 mile fun run! The 10K begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Hitching Lot Farmers Market and Columbus Soccer Complex. For more information, visit [racesonline.com](http://racesonline.com) or email [unclebunkyrun@gmail.com](mailto:unclebunkyrun@gmail.com).

**March 25**  
A golf tournament benefit for the New Hope robotics team begins with a shotgun start at 9 a.m. on the Lion Hills Golf Club course. Cost is \$75 per player or \$275 per team and includes green fees, cart, range balls and lunch. Registration is due by March 13. For more information, email [tracy.doyle@lowndes.k12.ms.us](mailto:tracy.doyle@lowndes.k12.ms.us).

**March 30 – April 8**  
Experience the beauty and grandeur that makes Columbus’ Spring Pilgrimage an event not to be missed. The 77th Annual Columbus Spring Pilgrimage Columbus Spring Pilgrimage has evolved from a tour of homes in its infancy to today’s diverse and deeply satisfying 10-day celebration of Southern history, architecture, culture, food and fun. Many home tours feature recreated activities of the 1800s, complete with period costumes, which add excitement and authenticity to this historic event. Download the 77th Annual Columbus Spring Pilgrimage brochure from [visitcolumbusms.org](http://visitcolumbusms.org).

**DRONE**  
(Continued from page 14)

the data to sign off their preflight external inspection, a first for the Air Force.

“This could save (maintainers) a lot of time,” said Staff Sgt. Joshua Jaburek, of the 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at JB Lewis-McChord. “When we go on top of the airplane, we can only walk on certain parts and then we have to hook and unhook our (safety harness) very few feet.”

Inspections that would normally take 45 minutes to an hour could be done just in a few minutes with a quadcopter if it’s successful. Maintainers also would not need a lift to inspect a C-17’s tail, Jaburek said.

Capt. Justin Merrick, a CTF lead engineer said, the CTF got the idea from seeing a video online showing a commercial airline company using a sUAS to inspect a plane.

“(Leadership) encourages us to go out and conduct tests, so after we saw some videos online we contacted some maintainers here and they were very enthusiastic to help out,” Merrick said.

Riley added that this first test on the flightline could pave the way for future sUAS tests and test procedures.

“Another reason we’ve conducted this test is to open the aperture on flying a sUAS near the airfield, which has been frowned upon in the past,” Riley said. “As we execute these missions it establishes a baseline for how operations can be conducted safely, not only here at Edwards, but at other bases as well. We

“This could save (maintainers) a lot of time,” said Staff Sgt. Joshua Jaburek, of the 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at JB Lewis-McChord.

couldn’t have accomplished what we have so far without the support of the 412th Operations Group and test wing commander in breaking down some of the barriers to these types of operations.”

Riley said the CTF is looking at a variety of other missions in the near future such as roof inspections, airfield inspections and environmental-concern area inspections.

In February, the newly formed CTF began testing a quadcopter to determine if it was possible to use the sUAS to calibrate the 412th Range Squadron’s telemetry antennas on base. Those tests also yielded positive results.

The CTF was officially activated last July and its mission is to provide agile, innovative flight test capabilities for emerging technologies and to explore the Air Force warfighting capabilities of tomorrow. Current focuses are on the use of sUAS for testing and operational use, and on autonomous systems’ development and use.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
20	21 Shirts and Chiefs vs. ALS volleyball challenge, 4 p.m. @ Fitness Center	22	23 “March Madness” Enlisted Dorm Dinner, 5 p.m. @ Chapel Annex	24 SAPR Fun Run, 7 a.m. @ Fitness Center Happy Irby Golf Tournament, 11:30 a.m. @ Golf Course	25/26 25th: ALS picnic, noon @ Stennis Lock and Dam	Apr. 1: Comedy Show at the Club Apr. 7: SUPT Class 17-07 Graduation Apr. 13: 14th OSS Change of Command Apr. 18: Wing Newcomers Apr. 21: 50th FTS Change of Command Apr. 28: SUPT Class 17-08 Graduation Apr. 28: Enlisted Promotions/Quarterly Awards May 26: Independence Pool Opens
27 AFAF	28 ALS Graduation Fun Run, 7 a.m. @ Fitness Center Wing Newcomers, 8 a.m. @ Columbus Club	29	30 WHM Panel Luncheon, 11 a.m. @ Columbus Club ALS Graduation, 6 p.m. @ Columbus Club Annual Spring Pilgrimage	31 Enlisted Promotions, 3 p.m. @ Columbus Club Ryan Daniel Concert, 6:30 p.m. @ Columbus Club	1/2	



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Discipleship Training - 5pm  
Evening Worship - 6pm

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# AF uses first drone for C-17 post flight inspection

Kenji Thuloweit

412th Test Wing Public Affairs

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The 412th Test Wing's Emerging Technologies Combined Test Force used a quadcopter to conduct a maintenance inspection of the exterior of a C-17 Globemaster III here March 6, 2017.

The C-17 was on loan from Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington. It was the first time the CTF flew a small unmanned aerial system on the flightline and the second time the CTF has used a sUAS in a new application that shows promise.

The winds remained manageable and allowed the test team to conduct three sorties with the quadcopter, which was fitted with a video camera. Live video was assessed by the team that included maintainers, to determine if the quality was adequate for routine inspections. The video recorded from the quadcopter's camera will be analyzed to see if it is clear enough to see smaller details of the cargo plane's exterior such as structural abnormalities, rivets and cracks.

Maj. Dan Riley, the CTF director said, the test was so successful that the maintainers used See **DRONE**, Page 15



U.S. Air Force photo by Kenji Thuloweit

**The 412th Test Wing's Emerging Technologies Combined Test Force conducted three test sorties March 6, 2017, at Edwards Air Force Base, California, using a quadcopter to inspect a C-17 Globemaster III. Maj. Dan Riley, the CTF director, and Maj. William Niblack, the CTF operations officer, piloted the small unmanned aerial system.**



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# Hunt Housing tip of the week



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## Happy Irby Christmas Fund

### 2017 Charity Golf Tournament

Whispering Pines Golf Course

Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi



**Four-Person, Nine-Hole Scramble**  
**\$40/person or \$160/team**  
Entry fee includes greens fees and lunch.  
**Registration: 11:30 a.m.**  
**Burger Burn: Noon**  
**Shotgun Start: 1 p.m.**  
**Friday, March 24**

**Prizes Awarded for first, second and third Places**

**All participants are also eligible for door prizes**

**Sign up at Whispering Pines Golf Course or call 434-7932**

**Please register by Friday, March 17**

**100 percent of the proceeds go to the Happy Irby Christmas Fund, LLC**

The mission of the Happy Christmas Fund is to provide clothes, school supplies and other necessities to underprivileged children in the Columbus area at Christmastime. Over 400 children received gifts in 2016  
The Happy Christmas Fund, LLC, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization; EIN # 64-0793931

# Track Select



- |                               |      |
|-------------------------------|------|
| 2nd Lt. Fiona Akoth           | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. David Albandoz        | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Zachary Braum         | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Christopher Breyfogle | T-1  |
| Capt. Sarah Cassman           | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Peter Davidson        | T-38 |
| 2nd Lt. Tiffany Dill          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Peter Evans           | T-38 |
| 2nd Lt. Christopher Hakobian  | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. James Huff            | T-38 |
| 2nd Lt. Patrick Livingston    | Helo |
| 2nd Lt. Arturo Marin          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. David McNair          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Alberto Rios          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Austin Rivera         | T-1  |
| Capt. Mustafa Shosh           | T-38 |
| 2nd Lt. Simon Thaler          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Matther Thomas        | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Ryan Tillman          | T-1  |
| 2nd Lt. Christopher Wadginski | UH-1 |
| 2nd Lt. Kosuke Watanabe       | T-38 |
| 2nd Lt. Kenneth Wilson        | T-1  |

### Leverette Award

2nd Lt. Peter Davidson

### Top Guns

**Contact:** 2nd Lt. Austin Rivera  
**Instrument:** 2nd Lt. Ryan Tillman  
**Formation:** 2nd Lt. Peter Evans

# 17-14

# 2017 Tax Center Hours

The Columbus Air Force Base Tax Center is open for active duty, retiree, or dependent members with a combined family income under \$58,000. This service is executed by trained volunteers who will prepare your tax returns through April 8 free of charge by appointment only. The Tax Center is located on the first floor of the old Personnel Center, bldg. 926, room 105.  
The hours of operation are Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. – noon. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call the Columbus AFB Legal Office at 434-7030.

# Air Force Birthday Ball raffle winners

Congratulations to Maj. Charles Albertson, 43rd Flying Training Squadron, on winning a custom AR-15 Rifle, and to Jeff Davis, L3, for winning a \$50 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card. The Air Force Birthday Ball Committee raised \$1,605 from the raffle and sold over 320 tickets.

# Women History Trivia & Fun Fact

Victoria Claflin Woodhull was the answer to last week's trivia question. Congratulations to those who guessed correctly!  
Carey Schueler, daughter of then Chicago White Sox General Manager Ron Schueler, was the first woman ever drafted by a Major League Baseball team. Which round and draft was she picked in and at what age? See next week's Silver Wings for the answer!  
**Fun Fact:** In July 1890, the Territory of Wyoming, which allowed women to vote, was admitted as a state. Wyoming became the first state with women suffrage.



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# AFAS celebrates 75th Anniversary

Air Force Aid Society

## A Powerful Legacy

At 75 years, the Air Force Aid Society continues its tradition of Airmen helping Airmen, and educating America's future leaders.

In the darkest days of a world at war, most Americans thought only of the grim present. Many American men were in the military, and they and their families knew the risks all too well. They watched newsreels and read newspaper accounts of their loved ones engaged in fierce battles in distant places. In the skies over Great Britain, Germany and the South Pacific islands, young American Airmen put their lives on the line for their country and the world's freedom. At home, their families held their breath, and put any long-term plans for education, career or finances on hold.

It was in this most uncertain of times that General Henry "Hap" Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, and his wife, Bee, turned their thoughts to the future. It was March 1942. America had only been in World War II for a few months. Yet young Airmen were losing their lives at an alarming rate. What would happen to their families now that these men were no longer alive to support them? Who would ensure that their children would one day get the education they needed to become America's future leaders?

When the world was consumed by war, General Hap and Bee Arnold chose to sow the seeds of optimism about America's future. This positive focus was in keeping with the General's personality: he earned his nickname – Hap – while in the U.S. Military Academy at West Point for his sunny, happy disposition. Home movies of the Arnolds show a family of smiling, active children and the close, supportive relationship they had with their parents. It was just this type of support the Arnolds wanted the children of deceased Airmen to enjoy as they grew up.

So 75 years ago, on 9 March 1942, Gen. Hap and Bee Arnold created the Army Air Forces Aid Society. Now the Air Force Aid Society, the organization was chartered for "the establishment of a trust fund, the principal of which is to be invested to provide income for the continuing problem of Air Force needs, mainly after the war."

## Airmen Helping Airmen

The Army Air Corps' motto during wartime was "Whatever, whenever and however necessary, the Air Force always takes care of its own." So, since its earliest days, the Air Force Aid Society has been based on that noble ideal of "Airmen helping Airmen."

When Airmen lost their lives, their wives and children could find the financial support they needed to stay in their homes and finish their education. Today, the Air Force Aid Society keeps that flame the Arnolds kindled burning brightly, with programs that include emergency grants and no-interest loans to help Airmen with unexpected financial needs, as well as scholarships to help dependent spouses and children of Airmen pay for college.

"General Arnold and Bee, a compassionate observer of the

war, saw the tremendous losses the Army Air Corps had in World War II," says Lt. Gen. John D. Hopper, Jr., Chief Executive Officer of the Air Force Aid Society. The Army Air Corps suffered some 64,000 casualties in the war. "When you would lose a B-24 or a B-17, you'd lose ten or more Airmen at a time. It was an accomplishment just to survive 25 missions. The losses were extremely high. So General Arnold thought, 'What will happen to the children?'" The available solutions were simply inadequate, the late General realized.

In 1942, the Air Force was not yet a separate military service, but part of the Army. In the first report of the new society created to benefit Airmen, Gen. Arnold noted that it was chartered "because the Army Relief Society, due to provisions of its constitution, was not able to meet the demand of all our Air Force personnel." Funds provided by both the American Red Cross and Army Emergency Relief went into a "common pot," but the Arnolds knew more funds needed to be raised and designated just for the needs of Airmen and their families.

"What they did demonstrates the level of compassion they had. On one hand, it was expected, but compassion can be missing in the crush of war," says Gen. Hopper. "They had a far-reaching vision for what a world war does to a generation of people. The Air Force Aid Society provided critical help for the post-war health of our Airmen and their families. I would put us beside the G.I. Bill as one of the most important supports for the recovery of the American post-war society and economy."

## Wartime Crisis

The Arnolds saw how war affected Airmen's families firsthand. In 1942, a young airman, Edward V. Rickenbacker, known as "Iron-Man Eddie" to many, was nearly lost at sea during a secret mission for General Arnold in the South Pacific. Rickenbacker was rescued and reunited with his wife and children, but eight other men on that mission lost their lives. Rickenbacker wrote the dramatic story of his rescue for Life magazine, donated the proceeds to the Air Force Aid Society – and became the Society's first Board of Trustees President.

The immediate crisis for the new organization's leaders was to support the families of Airmen lost in the war. Its first Memorial Honor Roll was established in 1943, and the numbers listed would only grow as the war deepened. The Air Force became a separate branch of the Armed Forces in 1947, and its society continued efforts to build a trust fund for the "emergency relief" and post-war educational needs of Air Force personnel and their dependents.

Early fundraising efforts were challenging. Americans' budgets were tight. Some of the earliest supporters were the Officers' Spouses Clubs, women who felt the sting of wartime's deprivations first-hand. By the 1950s, aeronautics corporations Lockheed and Boeing stepped in with large annual commitments, and the Air Force Aid Society began staging Charity Balls in 1964. The first ball was held at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, raising \$90,000 – which would be close to \$700,000 today.

Throughout its 75-year history, the Air Force Aid Society's most dedicated fundraisers and donors have been Airmen and

their families.

"My involvement started soon after I joined the Air Force in 1971. As an Air Force Judge-Advocate General (JAG), one thing we do is provide legal assistance to Airmen. Not infrequently, we might solve a problem for an Airman who had gotten in over his head and needed a pathway back to stability," says The Honorable William A. Moorman, retired Major General USAF, Senior Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and current Board of Trustees President of the Air Force Aid Society. "At that early stage of your Air Force career, you may be worried that you have problems that nobody else has, and not tell anyone so you can get help. That's just human nature. But the Air Force Aid Society fills a huge need for Airmen in difficult circumstances."

## Focus on Helping Airmen

The Air Force Aid Society donates around \$15-16 million each year. Funds are distributed for emergency assistance in the form of either no-interest loans or small grants. These dollars may pay for an Airman's emergency car repair or a plane ticket to travel to a parent's funeral, Gen. Hopper notes. In 1988, the society added an education grant. Grants and scholarships are awarded based on family financial needs and merit, and applicants must meet high academic standards.

Education was part of the Arnolds' core vision for the society when it was founded, says Judge Moorman.

"As I read about General Arnold over the years, I think, how did he even have time to think about this? We always talk about taking care of the troops, but here's a guy who stepped up to build the Army Air Corps from next to nothing, and to be what we needed to win World War II," he says. "Then you find out that he and his wife also made it a priority to address Airmen's families' needs too. That speaks to me of General Arnold's foresight. He was a visionary, seeing over the horizon. He foresaw the need for this next generation to be well educated."

The current Board of Trustees Vice-President at Air Force Aid Society, retired Major General Alfred K. Flowers, recently watched a group of Air Force spouses celebrate their graduation from nursing school at San Antonio's Lackland Air Force Base – education funded in part by one of the Air Force Aid Society's many programs.

"That's the power of how this all works, and it's happening all over the country," says Gen. Flowers, who spent more than 46 years on active duty in the USAF. Airmen should be able to focus on their mission, not on how they'll pay for their kids' college tuition or a shortfall on their rent payment, he says. "In the military, we're not so unique that we don't have the same challenges as anyone else. We have to offer Airmen ways to address these challenges so they can focus on their service to the nation."

## Grants and No-Interest Loans

Gen. Flowers credits current Society CEO Gen. Hopper for the innovative creation of a grants program for emergency needs.

See AFAS, Page 5

# Squadron revitalization leads to EPME changes

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — The reenlistment and extension ineligibility requirement will be removed from the enlisted professional military education program effective March 15, 2017 according to Air Force officials.

Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso, approved the change, removing the automatic reenlistment or extension ineligibility status for Airmen who fail to complete their enlisted professional military education distance learning course tests by their suspense dates.

"We continually review and evolve personnel policies to ensure it provides equity for Airmen, aligns with our Air Force strategy and supports our Airmen's ability to execute the mission," Grosso said. "While originally intended to drive increased development and professionalism, the previous EPME approach created a higher standard, particularly when compared to recent changes to our officer PME model. Additionally, as we grow the force the policy added unnecessary challenges and distractions to our Airmen. We certainly heard and listened to Airmen on this matter."

The former policy stated that if an Airman exceeded the suspense date for course completion, the Airman automatically became ineligible for reenlistment or extension, until

the course was complete. This meant impacted Airmen were required to separate or retire on their date of separation. Although PME completion is expected and tied to promotion, non-completion is not directly tied to continued service under the officer system. This change brings both systems back into alignment.

The need for this policy change was confirmed during the Air Force Chief of Staff's Squadron Revitalization effort. "Airmen clearly identified this as an issue in both the Air Force Revitalization Survey and during the recent field interviews conducted at Joint Base Andrews," said Brig. Gen. S.L. Davis, Team Lead for the squadron revitalization effort.

The policy adjustment places authority and responsibility for reenlistments back at the squadron level and provides flexibility for commanders to retain high-performing experienced Airmen who meet the Air Force's mission needs, in line with revitalizing Air Force squadrons.

"As we work to revitalize our squadrons, it remains important that commanders and supervisors who are closest to an Airman have a say in whether or not an Airman should be allowed to re-enlist," Grosso said. "It has been a squadron commander's decision, and this policy adjustment restores that authority, placing the retention decision back in the hands of the local commander."

With the change in policy, Airmen who were previously

impacted due to EPME non-completion will now be eligible to re-enlist or extend (unless otherwise ineligible), and should see their ineligibility code removed from their record in the Military Personnel Data System within 24-48 hours.

In line with placing the retention decision authority back in the hands of squadron commanders, the approval authority for EMPE distance learning course deferments has also been changed and now rests with squadron commanders.

"Gen. Goldfein has been clear – we succeed or fail in our missions at the squadron level where we develop, train and build Airmen," Grosso said. "We must promote best practices, identify improvements and remove barriers, real or artificial, in order to support our squadrons – the most essential level of command."

No changes were made to the policy regarding promotion eligibility. Grosso said that was a deliberate decision as PME is critical to the development of all Airmen, both officers and enlisted, as leaders in the profession of arms.

Airmen with questions about their individual situations are encouraged to contact the Total Force Service Center at (800) 525-0102.

Stay informed on the most current EPME information on the Force Development page on myPers, or select "Active Duty Enlisted" from the drop-down menu and search "EPME."

# Cooper's Closet



## Semi-Annual Children's Consignment Sale & Marketplace

The Golden Triangle's  
ORIGINAL and LARGEST  
Children's Consignment Event

## March 23rd - 25th

### Gateway Shopping Center

(former Dirt Cheap building)

### 201 V Alabama Street - Columbus, MS

[www.cooperscloset.com](http://www.cooperscloset.com)

[www.facebook.com/cooperscloset](https://www.facebook.com/cooperscloset)

[instagram.com/cooperscloset](https://www.instagram.com/cooperscloset)

[coopersclosetcolumbus@gmail.com](mailto:coopersclosetcolumbus@gmail.com)

**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.

**March Madness Bowling**

Every Saturday in March, bowling is \$1 from 5 p.m. to close. For more information, call 434-3426.

**St. Patrick's Day at the Club**

St. Patrick's Day at the club has green beer along with corned beef, cabbage and other Irish foods at 5 p.m. March 17. Free for Club members and \$5 for nonmembers. Beer and alcohol not included in the price. Call 434-2489 for more information.

**BBQ Rib Tip Lunch**

Enjoy BBQ ribs, baked beans, coleslaw, roll and beverage for only \$10 on March 23. Order in advance by calling 434-2504.

**Youth 'Kick Butts' Health Fair**

This event begins at 4 p.m. March 27 at the Youth Center. It is a free event with downtown organizational booths. All ages are welcome. Stand up and seize control against tobacco.

**Ryan Daniel Concert**

The Columbus Club will host country music singer Ryan Daniel at 6:30 p.m. March 31 for a free concert in the field adjacent to the club.

**Dean Edwards Comedy Show**

The club hosts comedian Dean Edwards and guests at 7 p.m. April 1 for a free comedy show. Call 434-2489 for more information.

**Win Moolah at the Club**

The Columbus club will host Win Big Moolah each Friday in March from 4:30 - 6 p.m. Free for club members only. 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. Must be 18 or older. For more information, call 434-2489.

**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 call 434-2479 for more information.

**The Overrun Open Friday Nights**

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

**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.

Columbus Club Event Center

**St. Patrick's Day PARTY**

**Friday 5p.m.**

**EAT Drink & Be IRISH**

**Irish Buffet with Corned Beef & Cabbage**

**CHEERS!**

**FREE Members | \$5 • Nonmembers**

**2 Green Beers \$2**

Club Members don't forget it's Win Moolah Night too!

The Columbus Club | Event Center Bldg. 944 | Phone: 434-2489

CLUBS

FORCE

**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, call 434-2934.

**Laser Bowling Special**

The Bowling Center offers Laser 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, call 434-3426.

**Wood Shop**

Is now open Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**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, call 434-2507.

**Hobby and Craft Instructors Needed**

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

**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, call 434-2505.

**Referees Needed**

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

**Skeet & Trap**

Available at Outdoor Recreation. Call 434-2507 for more information.

**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, call 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.

**Hobby and Craft Instructors Needed**

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

**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, call 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. Call the lodging desk at 434-2548.

**WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

**Women's History Month Events**

**Weekly Trivia & fun facts**  
Starting 10 March  
silver wings

**Softball Game**  
17 March @ 1600-1730  
Baseball Field

**Luncheon with Guest Speakers from**  
Around the Base  
30 March @ 1100-1300  
The Club

BROUGHT TO YOU BY AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT

**Ryan Daniel**

Check Him Out  
YouTube

**FREE CONCERT**  
**Friday, 31 March - 6:30pm**  
**SOCCER FIELD BESIDE**  
**COLUMBUS CLUB**

**For More Information Call 662-434-2489**  
**MYAIRFORCELIFE.COM**

**AFAS**

(Continued from page 4)

"When we have Airmen who are in trouble, if they can't pay this money back, why add to their woes? Need-based grants can enable a family to thrive. We recruit members but we retain families. If a family is stressed or unhappy, we will lose them," says Gen. Flowers.

"Many Airmen starting their careers are young, but may already have college debts and families who need their support," says Gen. Hopper. "That's why the Air Force Aid Society's grants and loans fill a vital need."

"These young Airmen are in demanding circumstances. They have to be very disciplined in their job as well as in their budgeting and financial management. But they're just getting started in their lives and careers, and they may have things that they need to clean up to stay in stride," continues Gen. Hopper. "When something happens to them, we need to be able to help them. That's where the Air Force Aid Society can step in."

Recent crises like Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as the 2008 economic downturn when many Airmen's finances and mortgages were in peril just like everyone else, highlight the continuing need for the Air Force Aid Society's mission. Gen. Hopper saw that in tough economic times, an Airman might be his family's only steady source of income.

"Most of the support we provided in the past was in the form of no-interest loans. But as we thought about it, we realized that if a no-interest loans helps, a grant may help even more," he says. "If something bad has happened, and you can't pay the rent or put food on the table, you will get a grant. Airmen are not looking for a handout. This is a partnership with both the Air Force and our airmen." Those in need can also visit with a certified financial planner or counselor at Airmen and Family Readiness Centers located on every Air Force base, says Gen. Hopper. Professional advice can help them find solutions to their financial problems without resorting to using "payday lenders" who prey upon Airmen with exorbitant interest rates. "Our loans are repaid at 99 percent plus. We're not a bank, and we don't intend to be. We are just glad to be of service."

While the Air Force Aid Society's Emergency Assistance loans and grants typically help Airmen who are between 18 and 32, its General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant program often benefits older Airmen with college-age kids, Gen. Hopper shares.

"We probably get the most feedback from our educational support programs," which can be up to \$5,000 for tuition or other college expenses, he says. "So many people contact us to say, 'Thank you! You just helped me put my kids through college.' It's very gratifying to see that."

Even small gestures to Airmen and their families make a big impact, says Judge Moorman. The Air Force Aid Society provides assistance items like gift cards to Airmen with new babies, and offers for free oil changes or other car maintenance to spouses of deployed Airmen through the AFAS Community Enhancement Programs. Even small outreach efforts go a long way to

alleviate the stresses these families may experience, he says.

**Legacy of Values**

"On its 75th anniversary, what the Air Force Aid Society passes on as its legacy is the value of taking care of others. We always talk about 'Airmen helping Airmen. If that continues in the future, we create this intergenerational set of values," says Judge Moorman. "In a military organization, everything depends on trust. The Air Force Aid Society is Airmen helping Airmen and trusting each other. That is a powerful legacy."

The Air Force Aid Society is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that receives the highest, four-star rating from Charity Navigator™, a benchmark for fiscal prudence among nonprofit organizations. That designation speaks to how well the organization is managed, with low overhead so a high percentage of dollars goes to the cause, not the effort to raise money.

"You won't see us out in public fundraising a lot, but a great amount of the money we raise is donated by Airmen and those who support Airmen," says Gen. Hopper. In 2004 after a hiatus, the Charity Ball was revived, and the event continues to this day in Washington, D.C., not far from the society's headquarters in Crystal City, Virginia. It's not just at these gala events or from corporate donations that these important funds are raised, but by everyday Airmen at their duty bases or family members and other "compassionate observers" making online donations of any amount. Whether small or large, these donations add up to provide a safety cushion for Airmen in need, and as a vital investment in the education of tomorrow's leaders.

General Hap and Bee Arnold had a bold vision in a time of war. At the war's end, he gave a speech to "thank all those who fly and those who make flying possible." He understood that no one soars to victory or achievement alone - we are all connected and must support each other as a family. In today's environment, Airmen have many challenges still - and the Air Force Aid Society's mission is as important as ever, says Gen. Hopper.

"Airmen are going out on tours of duty, coming back and redeploying. These cycles are tremendous stressors on Airmen and their families. Anything can go wrong. There are Airmen who have never known anything but this cycle, and that has been their family's lives, their children's lives too," says Gen. Hopper. "We worry that our airmen will not reach out to us when they need help. When you think about how hard it is to say, 'I'm having a problem. I'm stuck. I need help. Especially for the strong and the proud, it's not easy to do. Airmen are not looking for a handout, and we aren't offering one. This is a partnership."

The Air Force Aid Society is the official charity of the U.S. Air Force and has been meeting the unique needs of Airmen and their families since 1942. AFAS works to support and enhance the USAF mission by providing emergency financial assistance, educational support and community programs. Last year alone, AFAS provided nearly \$15 million in direct support. Visit www.afas.org to learn more.

# Silver Wings seeking Team BLAZE viewpoints

Fellow Airmen, the Columbus Air Force Base Public Affairs office wants to hear from you! We are looking for submissions to run in the Silver Wings. This is open to all Airmen to include enlisted, officer, civilian and dependents. Draft viewpoint articles are due to the Silver Wings office (silverwings@us.af.mil) by March 20.

This is our paper. Your contribution to the base paper ensures our Columbus Air Force Base audience has the opportunity to receive a wider view of the Air Force and its Airmen.

The topic of your viewpoint is up to you. Viewpoints are based on opinions but are supported by facts, quotes and personal experiences. Your viewpoint may affect a large number of people, help readers understand Air Force policies and programs, and be of general interest. Some topics include Air Force Core Values, why you serve, what motivates you, a unique life experience, etc. Avoid writing anything simply factual or controversial as such information is usually better presented by other means, not as a viewpoint.

Your viewpoint article should be one to two pages long, double-spaced, with a word range of 250 to 700 words (Times New Roman font, 12 point pitch). The Silver Wings editor will assist in style, format and grammar which are unique to newspaper writing and required by AFL. Please include your rank, name, squadron and duty title as they are also required by AFL.

If you have questions about your viewpoint, please contact the public affairs office at 434-7068. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

MAYOR'S 10<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL UNITY PICNIC  
APRIL 1, 2017  
COLUMBUS RIVERWALK PARK  
4 P.M. - 8 P.M.

FREE  
Catfish Plates, Hotdogs, Music, Bounce Houses  
& Entertainment For The Entire Family

Come Out and Join the Fun!!  
For more information, contact Greg Lewis at 662-251-4016

Security  
and  
policy  
review

Did you know that as a military member you must coordinate all information relating to speeches, presentations, academic papers, multimedia visual information materials and information proposed for release to a publicly accessible Worldwide Website, with exception of Air Force publications, through the 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office? For more information contact the 14th FTW/PA at 434-7068.

Visit us online!  
www.columbus.af.mil

March is  
Nutrition  
Awareness  
Month

AIR FORCE MEDICINE  
AND CARE  
DEPARTMENT

FOURTH ANNUAL  
PILGRIMAGE  
HALF MARATHON • 5K  
COLUMBUS, MS

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2017

Start & Finish at the Historic Tennessee Williams  
Welcome Center  
Half Marathon starts 7:00 am / 5K 7:15 am

www.columbushalfmarathon5k.com

Bib Timing, Tech Shirts, Food/Beverages, Customized medals for half  
marathon finishers, Overall & Age group awards

Visit  
COLUMBUS  
MISSISSIPPI

Columbus  
CULTURAL HERITAGE  
Foundation

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.)

Wing Newcomers Orientation

This brief is 8 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. March 28 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. March 28 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 from 8 a.m. – noon March 29. 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.

Hearts Apart

The Hearts Apart Social program, from 5 - 7 p.m. March 29, 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 Senior GPS Workshop

This workshop is held from 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. April 3-7. 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.

Resume and Cover Letter

The Resume and Cover letter workshop is from 9 – 10:30 a.m. April 9. The workshop helps with preparing and writing an effective civilian resume and cover letter. To sign up, call 434-2839/2790.

Flight attendants visit Columbus

U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Beaux Hebert

Master Sgt. Bryan Pitman, 89th Operations Group Superintendent of Flight Attendant Retraining, briefs Airmen about the flight attendant career field March 15, 2017, at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The flight attendant career field is recruiting First-Term Airmen and eligible NCOs for retraining into the career field.

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. 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

# His dream is my reality

Senior Airman Ceaira Young  
23rd Wing Public Affairs

MOODY AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. shared his dream with the world.

Fast forward to now. When I wake up in the morning, I am his dream. I am black and every day I serve as an equal with my brothers and sisters in arms.

Sixty years ago, as an African American, I wouldn't have been able to freely pursue this career that I love. This fact wouldn't be true due to a lack of qualifications, but simply because of the color of my skin. Fortunately, times have changed and the Air Force I love has changed.

According to the Defense Department, today approximately 15 percent of the more than 300,000 people who serve on active duty Air Force are African American, but this privilege did not come without sacrifices.

While facing the hardships of segregation in America such as sitting on the back of the bus, using separate water fountains, and attending different schools, churches, businesses, etc., African Americans such as the Tuskegee Airmen wanted

to do their part. They joined the fight for rights that they themselves didn't have in America.

During this time, it was still widely accepted that African Americans were inferior, but still they joined the fight to defeat Adolf Hitler and his ideology. Even though they couldn't battle beside their Caucasian counterparts, they felt a sense of patriotism and refused to let the history books be written without them.

The Tuskegee Airmen conducted approximately 15,000 combat sorties and earned more than 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses. As World War II came to an end, their success made it impossible to ignore the need for a more diverse service.

In 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed an executive order integrating the military but that order did little to change the culture. In fact, Gen. Daniel "Chappie" James, who was the first black to reach the rank of four-star general, didn't earn this distinction until 1975.

As Black History Month kicks off, I challenge everyone to learn about people like Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Barnes. He was the first black Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force. Chief Master Sgt. Kaleth O. Wright became the second black CM-

*I challenge you to research  
someone's history other than your  
own. I challenge you to get to  
know about some of the service  
members, who came before us and  
made serving possible today.*

SAF on Feb. 17, 2017. Additionally, I encourage everyone to research Maj. Shawna Kimbrell, the Air Force's first female, African-American fighter pilot.

I challenge you to research someone's history other than your own. I challenge you to get to know about some of the service members, who came before us and made serving possible today. The reality of life is that we can never truly know the way ahead unless we know where we came from as a person, as a race, as a society, and lastly as an Air Force.

It is an honor to be among the small percentage of African Americans who are eligible and want to serve. Today, I say to Dr. King, "dreams do come true."

# Blaze Hangar Tails: HH-60 Pave Hawk

## Mission

The primary mission of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter is to conduct day or night personnel recovery operations into hostile environments to recover isolated personnel during war. The HH-60G is also tasked to perform military operations other than war, including civil search and rescue, medical evacuation, disaster response, humanitarian assistance, security cooperation/aviation advisory, NASA space flight support, and rescue command and control.

## Features

The Pave Hawk is a highly modified version of the Army Black Hawk helicopter which features an upgraded communications and navigation suite that includes integrated inertial navigation/global positioning/Doppler navigation systems, satellite communications, secure voice, and Have Quick communications.

All HH-60Gs have an automatic flight control system, night vision goggles with lighting and forward looking infrared system that greatly enhances night low-level operations. Additionally, Pave Hawks have color weather radar and an engine/rotor blade anti-ice system that gives the HH-60G an adverse weather capability.

Pave Hawk mission equipment includes a retractable

in-flight refueling probe, internal auxiliary fuel tanks, two crew-served 7.62mm or .50 caliber machineguns, and an 8,000-pound (3,600 kilograms) capacity cargo hook. To improve air transportability and shipboard operations, all HH-60Gs have folding rotor blades.

Pave Hawk combat enhancements include a radar warning receiver, infrared jammer and a flare/chaff countermeasure dispensing system.

## Background

The Pave Hawk is a twin-engine medium-lift helicopter operated by Air Combat Command, Pacific Air Forces, Air Education and Training Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command.

Pave Hawks have a long history of use in contingencies, starting in Operation Just Cause. During Operation Desert Storm they provided combat search and rescue coverage for coalition forces in western Iraq, coastal Kuwait, the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. They also provided emergency evacuation coverage for U.S. Navy SEAL teams penetrating the Kuwaiti coast before the invasion.

## General Characteristics

**Primary Function:** Personnel recovery in hostile condi-

tions and military operations other than war in day, night or marginal weather

**Contractor:** United Technologies/Sikorsky Aircraft Company

**Power Plant:** Two General Electric T700-GE-700 or T700-GE-701C engines

**Thrust:** 1,560-1,940 shaft horsepower, each engine

**Rotor Diameter:** 53 feet, 7 inches (14.1 meters)

**Length:** 64 feet, 8 inches (17.1 meters)

**Height:** 16 feet, 8 inches (4.4 meters)

**Weight:** 22,000 pounds (9,900 kilograms)

**Maximum Takeoff Weight:** 22,000 pounds (9,900 kilograms)

**Fuel Capacity:** 4,500 pounds (2,041 kilograms)

**Payload:** depends upon mission

**Speed:** 184 mph (159 knots)

**Range:** 504 nautical miles

**Ceiling:** 14,000 feet (4,267 meters)

**Armament:** Two 7.62mm or .50 caliber machineguns

**Crew:** Two pilots, one flight engineer and one gunner

**Unit Cost:** \$40.1 million (FY11 Dollars)

**Initial operating capability:** 1982

**Inventory:** Active force, 67; ANG, 17; Reserve, 15

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U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson

TOP: An HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter lands as a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter prepares to pick up a medevac patient. The primary mission of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter is to conduct day or night personnel recovery operations into hostile environments to recover isolated personnel during war.

RIGHT: California Air National Guard pararescuemen of the 129th Rescue Wing, Moffett Federal Airfield, California, climb up a moving rope ladder, from the chilly waters outside the Golden Gate Bridge, up to a HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter. The HH-60G is also tasked to perform military operations other than war, including civil search and rescue, medical evacuation, disaster response, humanitarian assistance, security cooperation/aviation advisory, NASA space flight support, and rescue command and control.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Lance Cheung

Visit [www.columbus.af.mil](http://www.columbus.af.mil) to learn about Columbus AFB agencies and other important information.

# 'Without them, there would be no us'



Courtesy photo

## Senior Airman John Day

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Airmen in today's Air Force do great things around the world every day, but we would not be doing these things if not for the Airmen that came before.

This week, we celebrated the anniversary of retired Lt. Col. Richard "Gene" Smith's repatriation. On March 14, 1973, he was repatriated after spending more than five years as a prisoner of war when his plane was shot down over Vietnam.

Smith was born in Marks, Mississippi, in 1935 and grew up in Tunica, Mississippi. After he graduated high school in 1952, Smith entered Mississippi State University and studied Chemical Engineering.

Four years later, he entered the Air Force with a commission from the Reserve Officer Training Corps. After completing Navigator training in 1957 and the Radar Intercept Officer Course in 1958, Smith went through

Undergraduate Pilot Training at Williams Air Force Base, Arizona, and earned his silver wings in 1962.

He flew the F-105D with 333rd Tactical Fighter Squadron out of Takli Air Force Base, Thailand, before he was shot down flying his 33rd mission on Oct. 25, 1967, over Hanoi. His mission was to destroy the Doumer Bridge, a railroad bridge that sent important supplies.

Smith spent nearly six years in a POW camp called the Hanoi Hilton where he was shot, interrogated and tortured. He learned the tap code to send messages to other POWs within the camp.

His release came years later during Operation Homecoming on March 14, 1973, when Smith was freed from the camp along with nearly 600 other POWs.

After a readjustment period, Smith returned to active duty and was assigned to Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. He served as an Instructor Pilot, the 50th

Flying Training Squadron Commander and the wing Director of Operations. He retired from the Air Force July 31, 1978.

His military decorations include two Silver Stars, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Legion of Merit, two Air Medals, two Purple Hearts, a POW Medal, a Vietnam Cross of Gallantry and a Meritorious Service Medal.

Smith stayed in Mississippi and was the Executive Director of Golden Triangle Regional Airport for 20 years. He also was the National President of the Air Force Association from 1994-1996 in addition to holding many other positions in the Golden Triangle Region and remained involved with the Air Force.

For his time at Columbus and his bravery during his years as a POW, the Ceremonial Plaza in front of the wing headquarters building was renamed the Richard "Gene" Smith Plaza on Sept. 19, 2007.

TOP: Then Maj. Richard "Gene" Smith poses for a photo in front of his F-105 Thunderchief in 1967 in South East Asia. For his time at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, and his bravery during his years as a POW, the Ceremonial Plaza in front of the wing headquarters building was renamed the Richard "Gene" Smith Plaza.

LEFT: Retired Lt. Col. Richard "Gene" Smith stands next to a model F-105 Thunderchief aircraft June 29, 2015, at his home in West Point, Mississippi. He spent over five years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam after ejecting from his aircraft in 1967.

CENTER: Retired Lt. Col. Richard "Gene" Smith, former Vietnam POW, poses for a photo with retired Maj. Gen Jack Catton, former 14th Flying Training Wing Commander March 14, 2014, at the Memorial Wall on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. March 14 marked the 44th anniversary of Smith's repatriation.



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



U.S. Air Force photo by Melissa Doublin



U.S. Air Force photo by Kenn Brown  
Retired Lt. Col. Richard "Gene" Smith stands next to a T-6 Talon aircraft before an incentive flight April 2007 on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. While assigned to Columbus AFB, Smith served as an Instructor Pilot, the 50th Flying Training Squadron Commander and the wing Director of Operations.