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“Produce Pilots, Advance Airmen, Feed the Fight”

Vol. 42, Issue 6

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

February 16, 2018

## Annual Award Winners

<b>Airman of the Year</b>  <b>Airman 1st Class Gabrielle Achuff</b> 14th Medical Group	<b>Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year</b>  <b>Tech. Sgt Bryan Albrecht</b> 14th Operations Group <i>*Also 19th Air Force and AETC level winner</i>	<b>Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year</b>  <b>Master Sgt. Joshua Matias</b> 14th Operations Group <i>*Also 19th Air Force and AETC level winner</i>	<b>Company Grade Officer of the Year</b>  <b>1st Lt. Scott Guerin</b> 14th Mission Support Group <i>*Also 19th Air Force level winner</i>	<b>Field-Grade Officer of the Year</b>  <b>Maj. Eric Chase</b> 14th Medical Group	<b>Flight Commander of the Year</b>  <b>Capt. Stephen Caple</b> 14th Mission Support Group
<b>Instructor Pilot of the Year</b>  <b>Maj. Joseph Butters</b> 81st Fighter Squadron	<b>Honor Guardsman of the Year</b>  <b>Staff Sgt. Tremaine Jones</b> 14th Medical Group	<b>First Sergeant of the Year</b>  <b>Master Sgt. Noe Torres</b> 14th Operations Group	<b>Category I (NS) Civilian of the Year</b>  <b>Jason Ebbert</b> 14th Mission Support Group	<b>Category II (SUP) Civilian of the Year</b>  <b>Michael Nelson</b> 14th Medical Group	<b>Category II (NS) Civilian of the Year</b>  <b>Margaret Guenther</b> 14th Operations Group
<b>Category III (SUP) Civilian of the Year</b>  <b>Danny Adams</b> 14th Mission Support Group	<b>Category III (NS) Civilian of the Year</b>  <b>Michael Counihan</b> 14th Operations Group	<b>Volunteer of the Year</b>  <b>Staff Sgt. Whitney Felder</b> 14th Wing Staff Agencies	<b>Innovation Team of the Year</b>  <b>14th Student Squadron</b> Transition Office	<b>NAF Category I Employee of the Year</b>  <b>Zenikia Curtis</b> 14th Force Support Squadron	<b>NAF Category II Employee of the Year</b>  <b>Caleb White</b> 14th Force Support Squadron

### Weather

<b>Friday</b>  Cloudy High 68°F Low 61°F	<b>Saturday</b>  Rain High 60°F Low 47°F
<b>Sunday</b>  Cloudy High 63°F Low 44°F	<b>Monday</b>  Cloudy High 72°F Low 54°F

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

### News Briefs

**President's Day Holiday**  
Columbus Air Force Base will observe President's Day Feb. 19. Most base offices will be closed.

**SUPT 18-06 Assignment Night**  
Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 18-06 will have assignment night at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Columbus Club.

**Enlisted Dorm Dinner**  
A Dorm Dinner for enlisted Airmen living in the dorms is scheduled for 5 p.m., March 2 at the Montgomery Village.

### Inside

**Feature 8**  
SUPT Class 18-05 graduates today at 10 a.m. at the Kaye Auditorium.



U.S. Air Force photo by Melissa Doublin  
Fourteenth Flying Training Wing annual award winners stand with Col. Douglas Gosney, 14th FTW commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Johnathan Hover, 14th FTW command chief, during the 2017 Annual Awards Banquet, Feb. 9, 2017, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Fifty-five members and two flights, which represented 20 categories, were recognized during the evening and competed for 20 wing level awards.

## Awards show Columbus AFB Airmen's excellence

**Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb**  
14th Flying Training Wing Public affairs  
Team BLAZE celebrated the hard work of Airmen throughout the wing during the 2017 Annual Awards Banquet Feb. 9, on Columbus Air Force Base.

Fifty-five members and two flights, which represented 20 categories, were recognized and competed for 20 wing level awards.  
After social hour, the nominees were formally introduced as

See AWARDS, Page 3

### COLUMBUS AFB TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE II				PHASE III				IFF				WING SORTIE BOARD			
Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Track Select	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation	Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual
37th (18-15)	-0.93 days	-2.60 days	Mar. 30	48th (18-06)	-0.67 days	2.02 days	Feb. 23	49th (18-EBC)	-5.10 days	-1.02 days	Mar. 2	T-6	1,346	0	10,235
41st (18-14)	-3.61 days	0.19 days	Mar. 7	50th (18-06)	-1.77 days	-0.89 days	Feb. 23					T-1	454	377	3,053
												T-38	476	454	4,319
												IFF	178	192	1,627

*\* Mission numbers provided by 14 FTW Wing Scheduling.*  
Maj. Gen. James Scanlan, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida, is the guest speaker for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 18-05's graduation at 10 a.m. Feb. 16 in the Kaye Auditorium.

### 14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED



As of press time, 18 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.

### Hunt Housing tip of the week

Hunt Housing has recently asked residents to begin complying with the current resident guidelines that restrict the use of fire pits and chimineas. Hunt will begin enforcing this restriction on March 30, 2018. 14th Flying Training Wing leadership is utilizing the Dispute Resolution process with the Air Force Civil Engineer Center and Hunt Corporation in an attempt to allow outdoor fire pits and chimineas. If we cannot reach a resolution by March 30, 2018, residents are asked to comply with the current resident guidelines that prohibit the use of fire pits and chimineas and allow the resolution process additional time to work a solution favorable for both residents and Hunt. If you have any questions please contact Tina Durrah, government Housing Manager, at 434-7276 or Kay Quinlan, government Housing Program Manager, at 434-3474.

## Tax Center Hours

The Columbus Air Force Base Tax Center will be open Feb. 13-April 6 in building 926 to prepare taxes for retirees, active-duty military, and their dependents. Hours are from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and from noon-5 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays.

The following are issues that fall outside of the scope of our tax center:

- Net operating loss (current year or carryforward)
- Self-employment income not shown on Form 1099
- Self-employment expenses in the form of payments to employees/independent contractors
- Home office expenses
- Airbnb income
- Extensive investment income
- Health savings accounts
- Returns for 2016 or amended returns

To schedule an appointment, please call the Columbus AFB legal office at Comm. 662-434-7030.

### Volunteers needed for tax season

The 14th Flying Training Wing Legal Office is seeking volunteers for 2017 tax season, starting in February 2018. Accounting experience is a plus, but is not a requirement. Childcare fees may be eligible for reimbursement. Please contact Capt. Casey Keppler or Senior Airman Anna Miller at 742-7030 for more information or with any questions.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
19 President's Day, most base offices closed	20	21	22 Hearts Apart, 5 p.m. @ A&FRC	23 SUPT Class 18-06's Assignment Night, 5:30 p.m. @ Club	24/25	Mar. 6: Wing Newcomers Mar. 8: Daedalian's Meeting Mar. 9: SUPT Class 18-06 Graduation Mar. 9: Sen. Cochran Staffer Visit Mar. 17: CGOC Beer Garden Mar. 22: Hearts Apart Mar. 23: SUPT Class 18-07's Assignment Night Mar. 24: Easter Egg Hunt and Youth Craft Show Mar. 26: Happy Irby Golf Tournament Mar. 27: Wing Newcomers Mar. 30: Enlisted Promotions Apr. 5-14: Columbus Pilgrimage
26	27	28 Enlisted Promotions, 3 p.m. @ Club	1	2 Dorm Dinner, 5 p.m. @ Montgomery Village	3/4	

## 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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Discipleship Training - 5pm  
Evening Worship - 6pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
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# Airmen selected to participate in new cyberspace direct appointment program

1st Lt. Lauren Woods

Air Forces Cyber Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas — The Air Force recently selected the first two candidates for a newly created cyberspace officer direct appointment pilot program, authorized by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

Master Sgts. Anthony Bustamante, 92nd Cyberspace Operations Squadron flight chief, and Micheal Locke, 91st Cyberspace Operations Squadron superintendent, will soon attend officer training school and return to the cyberspace career field as cyberspace operations lieutenants.

“These two candidates exhibit adversarial thinking and a high degree of technical aptitude,” said Maj. Gen. Patrick Higby, Office of Information Dominance, Cyberspace Strategy and Policy director, and Office of the Secretary of the Air Force chief information officer. “(They’re) a perfect fit for defensive and offensive cyberspace operations mission sets, and leading our cyber teams into the future.”

The direct appointing process is already established in other career fields, such as chaplains, attorneys and physicians, as a method of acquiring individuals in possession of advanced skills and degrees. The decision to choose Bustamante and Locke was made based on their

advanced degrees, certifications, experience, job performance and demonstrated leadership potential. Their selection was granted via waiver by the secretary of the Air Force.

“(These two candidates are) a shining example of the caliber of enlisted Airmen we have among our ranks,” said Chief Master Sgt. Robert Agard, cyberspace career field manager. “Their trek through this process will help lay the foundation for the future of this initiative.”

If the pilot program is successful, it will be used to recruit additional personnel with advanced cyberspace education and skills directly into the Air Force cyberspace officer corps.

“I think it’s awesome,” said Locke regarding the new initiative. “It shows how committed the Air Force is to recruiting cyberspace professionals.”

Locke and Bustamante will retain their master sergeant rank until they complete OTS. Upon graduation, and based on their advanced education and experience, Bustamante will assume the rank of first lieutenant with two years of constructive service credit, while Locke will be commissioned as a second lieutenant with one year’s credit.

“I am extremely grateful and I look forward to paving the path for future cyberspace warriors to take advantage of this opportunity,” Bustamante said.



Courtesy photo

Col. Eric Delange, 688th Cyberspace Wing commander (left), and Chief Master Sgt. Emilio Avila, 688th CW command chief (right), congratulate Master Sgt. Anthony Bustamante, 92nd Cyberspace Operations Squadron flight chief, on being selected as one of the first Airmen to undergo direct appointment into the Air Force cyberspace officer corps. Direct appointment for cyberspace officers was authorized under the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. The candidates’ experience will be used to develop policies and procedures for future applicants.



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb

Team BLAZE members greet each other before the 2017 Annual Awards Banquet Feb. 9, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Fifty-five Team BLAZE members and two flights competed in 20 categories for wing level awards. The banquet recognized multiple 19th Air Force level awards during the award presentations.

## AWARDS

(Continued from page 1)

they made their way through a saber arch.

Senior Master Sgt. Garrick Christian, 14th Operations Support Squadron chief of air traffic control, created a video highlighting the history of Columbus AFB, showed the importance and impact of the current mission and nominees in a unique interview format. The attendees were treated to a video in contrast to a traditional guest speaker.

Col. Douglas Gosney, 14th Flying Training Wing command-

er, and Chief Master Sgt. Jonathan Hover, 14th Flying Training Wing command chief, presented the awards and left the banquet with closing remarks.

“We can’t do what we do without the support or sacrifices the family members make every day, whether they’re a nominee or a winner, you had a piece in that as well,” Gosney said. “To the supervisors, I know you’re out there; thanks for putting the time and effort to mentor these Airmen year round. ... Award winners and nominees; congratulations the competition was tough, really tough, so congratulations on the amazing perfor-



Master Sgt. Joshua Matias, 14th Operations Group control tower chief controller is congratulated by Chief Master Sgt. Bradley Reilly, 14th Operations Group superintendent, Feb. 9, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi after winning the Senior NCO of the Year. Nominees were introduced at the beginning of the event, highlighting everyone’s accomplishments before the winners were announced.

mances this year.”

During the awards presentation, the following Team BLAZE members were recognized for winning 19th Air Force level awards:

**Honor Guard Program Manager:** Staff Sgt. Janessa D. Ebbert

**Training Support Civilian Cat I:** Michael W. Keasler

The 19th Air Force winners will go on to compete this week at the Air Force Association Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Florida.

## NEWS AROUND TOWN

Feb. 23

Fairview Baptist Church is scheduled to host a Wild Game Feast Feb. 23, with guest speaker, Clay Dyer, to share his inspirational story of hope and determination. The meal begins at 5:30 p.m. and Dyer will speak at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children (6th grade and under) and must be purchased in advance of the event. Tickets and information available from Fairview Baptist Church, 127 Airline Rd., or by calling (662) 328-2924.

March 2-3

Cabela’s Crappie USA 2018 Tournament Trail runs through Columbus as anglers compete for cash and prizes! Anglers may fish Aberdeen, Columbus, and Aliceville Lakes on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway on Saturday, March 3, from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Weigh-in takes place at the Columbus East Boat Ramp on Wilkins-Wise Rd. Those not in line by 4 p.m. will be disqualified. Late sign-in is Friday, March 2, 5-7 p.m., at the Columbus-Lowndes Convention & Visitors Bureau Office, 117 3rd St. S. Seminar Begins at 7 p.m. Seminar is open to the public.

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# Thunderbirds, let’s run ‘em up!

**Lt. Col. Christopher Harris**  
Wings Over Columbus 2018  
Airshow Director

With over 12,200 flight hours between them, of which almost 2,000 hours were flown, executing Air Force combat operations across the globe, “America’s Ambassadors in Blue” get set to tear through the air over Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, during Wings Over Columbus April 21-22.

As the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds take flight over Columbus AFB watch

as Maj. Stephen Del Bagno immediately slides his No. 4 jet into position behind Lt. Col. Kevin Walsh, Thunderbird commander and leader, to create the Thunderbird’s signature Diamond Formation. Flanked by Capt. Will Graeff on the left and Maj. Nathaniel Hofmann on the right, Walsh will power the formation’s mighty Block 52 F-16C Fighting Falcons straight into the sky and over the top in their first of many exhilarating maneuvers ... the “Diamond Loop.” Walsh will continue to champion his formation through a variety of maneuvers, at times with as little as 18 inches of

separation between, as they loop and roll at speeds of over 450 mph.

Before you know what’s happening, the solos, Maj. Whit Collins and Capt. Matt Kimmel, will join in on the action executing single ship maneuvers that approach the speed of sound. Eventually, they’ll join forces for one of the Thunderbird’s most famous and recognizable maneuvers ... as Collins turn his jet’s (and uniform’s) number right side up to execute the “Calypso Pass”.

As the Diamond Formation nears completion, performing the signature “Bomb

Burst” maneuver, all four aircraft splitting off into separate directions, solos going straight through the maneuver into rolls reaching miles upon miles into the sky ... six other officers and over 120 enlisted personnel, representing nearly 30 different career fields from across the Air Force, will also look on knowingly representing the pride, professionalism and dedication of hundreds of thousands of Airmen serving every day at home and abroad.

Join us as the Thunderbirds inspire yet another generation during Wings Over Columbus 2018.

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# 14th MDSS Radiology Department keeps Columbus AFB ready

**Airman 1st Class Beaux Hebert**  
14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Radiology is probably something people don't think about until they need their services, for either a potential broken bone or other internal injury, and last year the radiology department on Columbus Air Force Base served about 900 people.

The Kortiz Clinic radiology department's primary mission is patient care which saves the Airmen time and trouble by getting quicker results.

The team starts its day by warming up the X-ray machines and checking the wiring around it, which may not sound like much but it is crucial to the patient's safety. Master Sgt. Eric Severs, 14th MDSS's Diagnostics and Therapeutic flight chief, said that if they are not careful the machine could potentially electrocute the patient. The X-ray machine works by taking 220 volts from the wall outlet and then amplify it to 100,000-140,000 volts by utilizing a transformer like machine.

If not for the department here, Airmen would have to get an off-base referral to another radiology department for their X-rays, bring them back to base and get looked at by the base doctor again. In other words, the base radiology department is crucial to the wing mission because they ensure Airmen don't miss work for longer periods of time than they need.

"It is a great job, I wouldn't have picked another one," Severs said. "It's our job to take care of [the patients] and



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

**Airman 1st Class Michael Mannarino, 14th Medical Operations Squadron bioenvironmental engineer apprentice, simulates getting an X-ray Feb. 14, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The X-ray machine works by taking 220 volts from the wall outlet and then amplify it to 100,000-140,000 volts by utilizing a transformer like machine.**

place the minds at ease."

Torrie Gates, 14th MDSS radiologic technologist, said that the most challenging this is adjusting to each patient. The department has set techniques in order to do their job but they have to tweak them to make sure they do their job and get the patient what they need.

One unique thing about the radiology department here is



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

**Torrie Gates, 14th Medical Support Squadron radiologic technologist, stands behind a wall while Airman 1st Class Michael Mannarino, 14th Medical Operations Squadron bioenvironmental engineer apprentice, simulates getting an X-ray Feb. 14, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The Kortiz Clinic radiology department's primary mission is patient care which saves the Airmen time and trouble by getting quicker results.**

that it is a tele-radiologist office. Once the department has taken an X-ray, one of the team members sends it all the way to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where a radiologist will read the X-ray, write a report, and send it back to Columbus. This saves the Air Force money by not having to hire a radiologist.

# Simmons awarded BLAZE 5/6 Leadership Highlight

**Name:** Senior Airman Glen Simmons  
**Hometown:** Cheboygan, Michigan  
**Unit:** 14th Operations Support Squadron  
**Duty Title:** Air Traffic Controller

Simmons exemplified leadership by assuming extra duties without prompting, therefore alleviating the workload of his peers. He spent eight hours rewriting 58 ready reference files for three control positions, ensuring the facility's compliance with local and federal regulations. His dedication resulted in him being appointed as the air traffic control simulator administrator responsible for building and instructing training scenarios for 28 members.

Additionally, he identified and replaced two defective pieces of simulation hardware eliminating a three-month outage on a \$900,000 system. He remains steadfast in the community with programs like the "Boys and Girls Club" where he worked concessions for four hours raising \$5,000.

Also, he assisted the "United Way" by adopting a family and providing \$1,000 worth of gifts and necessities.

Finally, he leads by example by pursuing a higher education resulting in the accomplishment of his Community College of the Air Force degree.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb

**Senior Airman Glen Simmons, 14th Operations Support Squadron air traffic controller, is awarded the January BLAZE 5/6 Leadership Highlight Award Feb. 9, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Simmons assumed extra duties without prompting, therefore alleviating the workload of his peers.**

# Air Force to institute new method to protect PII

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON — Air Force officials announced Feb. 6, 2018, emails containing personally identifiable information, and similar numeric constructs, will be blocked from transmission unless the email is encrypted. For members unable to send or receive encrypted emails, members will be directed to utilize the AMRDEC SAFE application.



Courtesy Graphic

This is not a change in policy, but a new method to halt PII breaches via email. PII is information about an individual that identifies, links, relates, or is unique to, or describes a member. For example – social security numbers (full or partial), age, marital status, race, salary, home/personal cell phone numbers, other demographic biometric, personnel, medical and financial information.

"The Air Force depends on reliable, secure communications to operate," said Under Secretary of the Air Force Matthew Donovan. "Ensuring confidentiality of every Airman's personal information is part and parcel for maintaining operational security, as well as an inherent command responsibility".

Users will be notified via a dialogue pop-up box or email response and provided with the option to either remove PII content, encrypt or send via AMRDEC SAFE. There are no user accounts for AMRDEC SAFE and authentication is handled via email and password. Everyone has access to AMRDEC SAFE. The application is convenient and intuitive to utilize.

If users send an email that contains a series of numbers that resemble PII information, the system will also block the email transmittal. In order for the email to transmit, the user will need to treat the email as if it does contain PII by encrypting the email or using AMRDEC SAFE. Feedback to the Help Desk in these instances will aid in changing the blocking tool "sniffers" to differentiate non-PII data in the future.

"Ideally, email would be the last medium used to transmit PII information," said Col. Patrick Ryan, reserve advisor to the chief, information dominance and chief information officer. "However, if you have to send PII via email for mission accomplishment, then either encrypt or use AMRDEC SAFE."

AMRDEC SAFE can be accessed through the following website: <https://safe.amrdec.army.mil/safe/Guide.aspx>

Additional Air Force CISO PII resources can be found under "Data Privacy Day 2018"

<http://www.safcio6.af.mil/Organizations/CISO-Homepage/Resources/>

For more information, please contact the PII Program Lead at (571) 256-2515 or DSN: 260-2515.

# Medal of Honor recipient, former POW laid to rest

Staff Sgt. Alyssa C. Gibson

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — As a Medal of Honor recipient and former Prisoner of War, retired Col. Leo Thorsness's life mantra after returning home from the Vietnam War was "Faith, Family, Friends and Fun."

With the support of Air Force senior leaders, his wife, Gaylee, and daughter, Dawn, kept those words close as they said their final goodbye to Thorsness during his interment at Arlington National Cemetery Feb. 14, 2018.

Thorsness was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on April 19, 1967. That day, Thorsness, an F-105 Thunderchief pilot, was on a surface-to-air missile suppression mission over North Vietnam. According to his citation, the pilot and his wingman attacked and silenced a SAM site with air-to-ground missiles, then destroyed a second SAM site with bombs. In the attack on the second missile site, Thorsness' wingman was shot down and the two crewmembers abandoned their aircraft.

Thorsness kept the crewmembers in sight while simultaneously destroying an MIG-17 aircraft. Despite being dangerously low on fuel, he went on to deter four more MIGs from the scene while allowing another friendly aircraft to refuel from a nearby tanker, preventing further loss of life and aircraft.

"During combat, when faced with life-defying decisions, he thought, 'If not me, who? And if not now, when?' This is what he was thinking during his F-105 Wild Weasel missions, and explains his decisions during the mission for which he received the Medal of Honor," Dawn said.

Just 11 days after this mission, Thorsness was shot down and captured by the North Vietnamese. There was an 11-month span where his family didn't know if he was dead or alive; his daughter was only 11 years old.

"Every morning I listened to the radio for news about the war," Dawn remembered. "I would look at a world globe and trace where we lived over to North Vietnam. It didn't seem so far on the globe. I wondered why we could not communicate with him. I could see where he was on the map but we were helpless to communicate."

Back at home, the anti-war movement was gaining momentum, and for many military families, like the Thorsness, it was a difficult time.

"We had a husband and father fighting the war and we supported him, so it was very difficult," Gaylee said. "We had reason to hate war more than the people protesting, but our country had made a decision to engage so we supported. It was a shock that people hated us for supporting the Vietnam War. It was a horrible time."

Thorsness spent the next six years in captivity at several POW camps including Hanoi Hilton and Heartbreak Hotel. After his release and return home



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Rusty Frank

**Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson presents the American flag to the next of kin during the full honors funeral ceremony for retired Col. Leo Thorsness at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., Feb. 14, 2018. Thorsness received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the Vietnam War.**

in 1973, he made the conscious effort to often remind people of how daily freedoms can be taken for granted.

"Leo's life mantra after coming home from Vietnam was 'Faith, Family, Friends, and Fun,'" his wife said. "He said no one in prison ever said they wished they had spent more time at the office. He often talked about how lucky he was to be born an American – where people are free."

After 23 years of service and more than 5,000 flying hours, Thorsness retired from defending those freedoms as an Airman and immediately ran for political office. He served as a Washington State Senator from 1988 to 1992 and went on to serve on the board of directors for the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation.

"Leo was always willing to work hard," Gaylee said. "He carried great responsibility for his country and he did his job extremely well."

As a civilian, Thorsness fought for the release of information on 30,000 Soldiers listed as either Prisoners of War or missing in action from conflicts dating back to World War II. Though no longer in the Air Force, he continued to serve as an ambassador for servicemember recognition.

Thorsness died May 2, 2017, and at the family's request, was laid to rest amongst his brothers and sisters in arms.

"Leo had no bitterness and did not carry a grudge," Gaylee said. "His values were right. How he carried out his life was right. He really was one of a kind. He was a great guy. My husband lived his life truthfully, honestly and honorably."

### Columbus Air Force Base Information and Events

Join our Facebook page at Columbus AFB Living, Twitter at @columbusafbliving, Instagram at columbus\_afb\_living, or visit our website at www.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.

### Lunch Buffets at the Overrun

Buffets are back! Enjoy daily lunch buffets Tuesday thru Friday at the Columbus Club. Daily buffets include: Tuesday-taco and nacho \$9, Wednesday-chicken wings and pasta \$11, Thursday-southern style \$11 and Friday-fried catfish \$11. Club members receive a \$2 discount. For more information, contact 434-2489.

### Tasty Thursday

Stop by and grab lunch from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Thursdays at the OG area between buildings 268 and 230! Enjoy buffalo-infused grilled chicken wings with Jack Daniels barbecue beans Feb. 22. Cost is \$6 for members and \$8 for non-members. In the event of inclement weather, this event will be moved to the Columbus Club. For more information, contact 434-2489.

### Storytime with Mother Goose

Special guest, Mother Goose, will attend Storytime at the Base Library at 11 a.m. Feb. 16. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### BLAZE Teen Book Club

Stop by the Base Library beginning Feb. 20 and pick up "The Dog Days of Charlotte Hayes" by Marlane Kennedy. Book discussion will be held at 4 p.m. March 21. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Lunch and Learn

The Base Library is offering a free Lunch and Learn at noon Feb. 22. You provide your lunch and we will provide the information on universal class continuing education credits. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Mardi Gras at the Columbus Club

Celebrate Mardi Gras at the Columbus Club from 7 p.m.-midnight Feb. 24. The cost is \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members. Menu includes red beans and rice, gumbo with rice and king cake. Must be 18 years old to attend. Drink specials available. For more information, contact 434-2489.

### Baseball, Tee Ball and Girls Softball Registration

Registration begins Feb. 26 for youth 3-18 years of age. The cost is \$35 for ages 3-4 years and \$40 for ages 5-18 years. Register by March 2 and save \$5 per registration. Volunteer coaches needed. Sports physical required. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### Tennis Registration

Registration begins Feb. 26 for youth 8-18 years of age. The cost is \$40 per participant. Register by March 2 and save \$5 per registration. Volunteer coaches needed. Sports physical required. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### Peanut Butter Lovers Day

The Columbus Club is celebrating Peanut Butter Lovers Day from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. March 1. Enjoy a hand packed peanut but-



**MARDI GRAS**  
at the Columbus Club  
**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24th**  
7pm until Midnight  
Red Beans and Rice  
Gumbo and Rice  
King Cake  
Ages 18 and above only  
**\$8 for Members and \$10 for Non-Members**  
Food will be served from 7:30pm until 10pm  
Drink specials available for purchase  
Mask contest winners will be crowned the Mardi Gras King and Queen  
DJ Hustle 8pm until Midnight  
For more information call 434-2489

ter and jelly fusion burger, french fries and choice of peanut butter cookies or Reese's peanut butter pie. The cost is \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members. For more information, contact 434-2489.

### Dr. Seuss Birthday Celebration

Celebrate Dr. Seuss with the Base Library! Create Dr. Seuss crafts and read his books from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. March 2 and 8 a.m.-noon March 3. Bring your family and friends and watch "The Lorax" movie at 10 a.m. March 3. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Glow in the Dark 5K Run/Walk

The Youth Center is offering a Glow in the Dark 5K Run/Walk at 5:30 p.m. March 3 at the Youth Center parking lot. This is a free event and open to all ages and fitness levels. Sign up no later than Feb. 28 at the Youth Center. For more information, contact 434-2504.

### Free Breakfast for Club Members

The Columbus Club is offering free breakfast from 6:30-9 a.m. March 6, for club members; \$8 for non-members. For more information, contact 434-2489.

### Game Night at the Library

The Base Library is offering a free game night at 5 p.m. the second Thursday of each month. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Horse Boarding Available

The Columbus Air Force Base Riding Stables usually has stall

space available. For pricing and more information, contact Outdoor Recreation at 434-2505.

### Free Mango Languages

Learn a new language today! Free Mango Languages available at the Base Library; real-life conversations in over 70 languages. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Play Paintball

Outdoor Recreation offers paintball for groups or individuals. You must book twenty-four hours in advance; 17 years old and under must be accompanied by an adult. The cost is \$15 per person for party of 10 or more; \$20 per person for party of nine or less. You must purchase paint balls at Outdoor Recreation for \$50 per case of 2,000. For more information, contact 434-2505.

### The Overrun Open Friday Nights

The Overrun is open Fridays 4:30 p.m. until midnight. For more information, contact 434-2419.

### Library Hours of Operation

The Base Library hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thursday 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m.-noon. For more information, contact 434-2934.

### Lawn Mower and Bicycle Repair

Outdoor Recreation is now offering lawn mower repair and self-help bicycle repair. For more information, contact 434-2507.

### Hobby and Craft Instructors Needed

Do you have a hobby or craft project you can share with others? Arts & Crafts is looking for craft instructors. 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.

### 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.

### Instructors Needed

The Youth Center is seeking instructors for tumbling classes, dance classes, piano and guitar lessons. For more information, contact the Youth Center.

### Fitness on Request

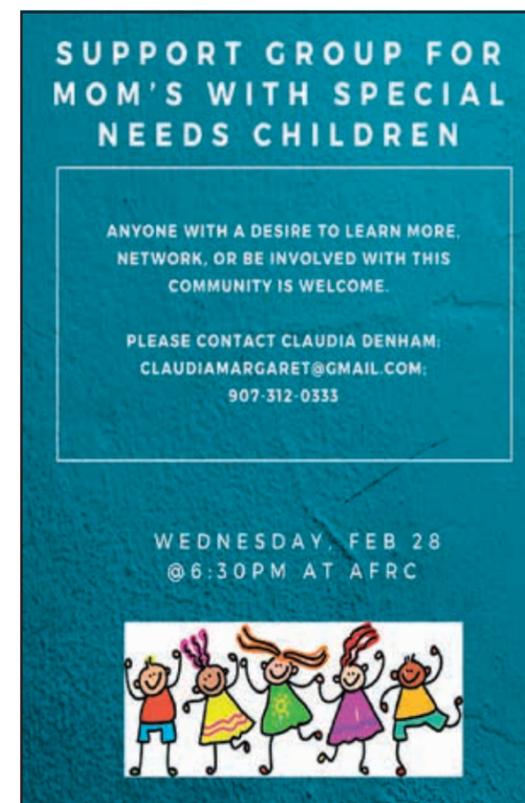
The Fitness Center offers a truly comprehensive group fitness platform that is available all day and completely customizable to meet your needs with 119 different classes on the Fitness on Request system. For more information, call 434-2772.

### Space A Lodging

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

### Ride in Style

Information Tickets and Travel offers a shuttle service to the airport of your choice. For more information, contact 434-7861.



**SUPPORT GROUP FOR MOM'S WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN**  
ANYONE WITH A DESIRE TO LEARN MORE, NETWORK, OR BE INVOLVED WITH THIS COMMUNITY IS WELCOME.  
PLEASE CONTACT CLAUDIA DENHAM: CLAUDIAMARGARET@GMAIL.COM; 907-312-0333  
WEDNESDAY, FEB 28 @ 6:30PM AT AFRC



*You're Invited!*  
78th Annual Columbus, Mississippi April 5-14  
**SPRING PILGRIMAGE**  
Please join us for cake and coffee as we register to host these lovely homes exclusively for Columbus Air Force Base Volunteers.  
The coffee will take place Friday morning, February 23, 10 am - 12 pm at the Visit Columbus office located at 117 3rd Street South.  
We hope you can join us! Please RSVP to Claudia Denham. claudiamargaret@gmail.com  
Visit COLUMBUS MISSISSIPPI  
The Columbus-Lumbus Connection and Visitor Bureau

## Following the Drinking Gourd; A pathway to freedom

**Rufus Ward**  
Retired lawyer and local historian

Within the narratives of the Underground Railroad as a pathway to freedom for slaves in the antebellum south, one story merges into local history. It is a story that began in song and has been enlarged by sources ranging from the National Geographic to NASA to popular literature. It is a song whose origin and veracity are uncertain but whose story illustrates a deeper truth. The song is "Follow the Drinking Gourd".

Did a branch of the Underground Railroad reach into the Columbus area? In pre-Civil War Lowndes County there were a few people who were openly opposed to slavery but there is no record of any of them actively participating or having a station on the Underground Railroad. "Follow the Drinking Gourd", however, provides musical folklore that might provide a connection.

"Follow the Drinking Gourd" is an African-American spiritual that is said to be a verbal road map for slaves escaping from the Tombigbee River Valley north of Mobile, Alabama. Although, there is some question as to whether or not the song actually was associated with the Underground Railroad, it has through recordings, books and tradition become a part of the story.

The oldest surviving version of the song was reported by H. B. Parks in 1912 and published by him in 1928. The oldest reference to the song was in Mary Austin's autobiography, written in 1934, which recalled her hearing the song as a child around 1873. A slightly more refined version of the song was arranged by Lee Hays in 1947 and it entered the realm of popular

music. Whether or not the song's lyrics provide a verbal road map is open to interpretation but it sure fits the Tombigbee River. In Park's early version verses could easily lay out a route to freedom:

The song begins;  
"When the sun come back  
When the firs Quail call  
Then the time is come  
Foller the drinkin' gou'd"

This verse seems to say that in the spring when the quail start to nest it is the time to leave and to follow the drinking gourd or North Star. If you head north then there will be help along the way.

The verses continue:  
"The riva's bank am a very good road

The dead trees show the way..."

The banks of the Tombigbee River will be the road and dead trees along the river bank will be marked to show the way. One of the legends is that the route was marked by a man called "Peg Leg" Joe.

The final directions are:  
"The riva ends a-tween two hills  
Foller the drinkin' gou'd  
"Nuther riva on the other side..."

Wha the little riva meet the grea' big un  
The ole man waits..."

The headwaters of the Tombigbee are in the hills of southern Tishomingo County. Across those hills still traveling north one finds the Tennessee River. The "road" continued north along that river. At Paducah, Kentucky, the Tennessee River flows into the Ohio River. Across the Ohio River was freedom and there would be someone there to help the escaping slaves to safety.

Is "Follow the Drinking Gourd" actually a verbal road map for the Underground Railroad? I don't think it real-



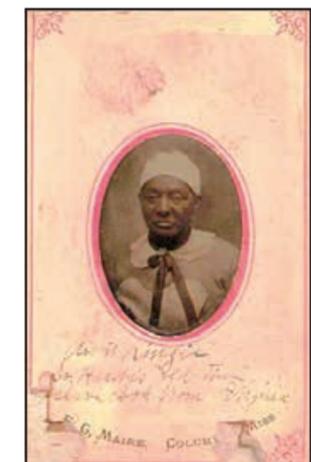
"The riva's bank am a very good road." This is the Tombigbee River described as a path way to freedom for escaping slaves in the old spiritual "Follow the Drinking Gourd". The Tombigbee River at Waverly in 1922. Near the river here there is a 170 year old slave cemetery.

ly matters as the song has become a part of the lore of people seeking their freedom and as such it help tells their story.

The Adventure Cycling Association promotes a 2,100-mile bicycle trail from Mobile, Alabama, to Ontario, Canada, following the route of the Underground Railroad as described in "Follow the Drinking Gourd." Among the not-to-miss historic highlights listed along the trail are three Lowndes County sites.

They are "the Missionary Union Baptist Church, Concord Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and the archives of the Columbus Library." Several times a year cyclist riding the trail show up at the Billups-Garth Archives of the Columbus Lowndes Public Library seeking more information on the community. "Follow the Drinking Gourd" tells another often over-looked story of the African-Americans who helped shape and build in Columbus in its earliest days.

The story of "Following the Drinking Gourd, A Pathway to Freedom," is one of countless that acknowledges the impact of African-American contributions in securing our Nation. To further the discovery of America's diver-



A rare photograph, c. 1860, of a slave in Columbus. "Aunt" Kinzie was a slave who was the cook for Dr. Cornelius Hardy at Magnolia Hill, his Columbus home. Magnolia Hill was later the residence of Col. Joseph Duckworth while stationed at Columbus Army Air Field during World War II. Col. Duckworth was very active in community affairs and was known by his civilian friends as "Joe Duck".

sity, mark your calendars for Columbus AFB's first annual Diversity Day. The cultural celebration will be held at the Walker Center, July 19th at 1000."

# Medical Corner Sleep and your weight

### It might be your weight that is causing those sleepless nights

Being that we live in a 24-hr society where work and sleep schedules are rotating day, evening and night-time work along with leisure activities leads to a sacrifice of hours available for sleep.

This modern day way of life has resulted in later bed-times, reduced total sleep time, and eating instead of sleeping during the night-time hours.

### Sleep deprivation, obesity, and diabetes

Although the connection between sleep and weight is becoming clearer, the exact mechanisms involved are still being studied. Because insufficient sleep cause changes in hormones, this results in sleepy people feeling hungrier and consuming more energy than those who are well rested. Studies suggest that when people are sleep deprived, their brains respond differently to un-healthy foods and are less likely to resist eating them.

Not sleeping enough is also known to lower a person's metabolic rate and affect the production of insulin. A study conducted by the NIH showed that when your body is subjected to a sustained wakefulness, it undergoes a process where the glucose metabolism is slowed and absorption is lowered. Unfortunately, these changes extend to younger people as well and have shown to increase the risk of obesity in children. Because childhood obesity rates have tripled in the last 30 years, doctors and researchers are starting to focus on the role of sleep in weight control.

### Sleep recharges you

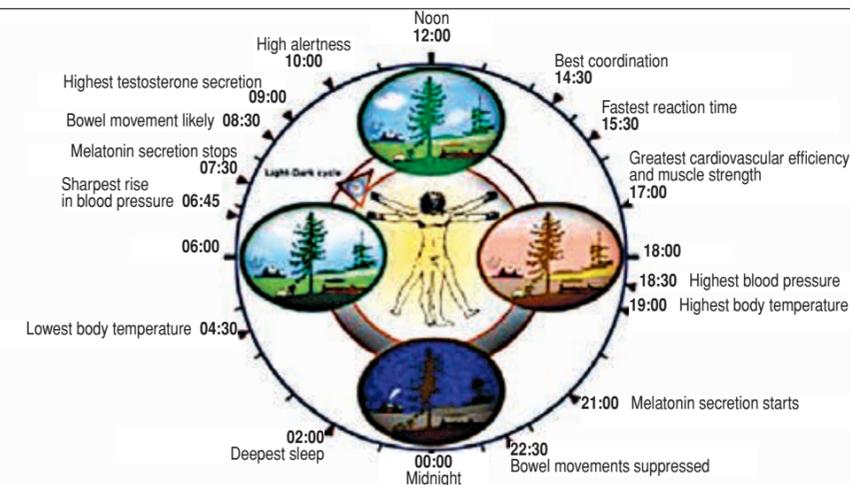
By not getting the recommended hours of sleep, your body begins to wear down. Much in the same way that a car battery over a period of time begins to lose its ability to retain a full charge if the alkaline fluid levels inside it are

Age Group	Recommended amount of sleep	Age Group	Recommended amount of sleep
Newborns	14 to 17 hours a day	3 to 5 years	10 to 13 hours
12 months	About 10 hours at night, plus 4 hour naps	6 to 13 years	9 to 11 hours
2 years	About 11 to 12 hours at night, plus a 1 to 2-hour nap	14 to 17 years	8 to 10 hours
		Adults	7 to 9 hours

not maintained at the proper levels, your body will also lose its charge if the parts within the body that maintain the charge are not allowed to do so. The best thing to do is get the recommended amount of sleep every night. Look below to see how much sleep you and your family should be getting each night.

Sleep "is a restorative process of the brain, by the brain, and for the brain" as well as being important for health of the entire body. For anyone who lives a busy lifestyle such as most adults today, sleep is an important modulator of the neuroendocrine function and glucose metabolism. Sleep loss has been shown to result in metabolic and endocrine alterations including de-creased glucose tolerance, decreased insulin sensitivity, in-creased evening concentrations of cortisol, increased levels of ghrelin (which increases appetite), decreased levels of leptin (which tells us we're full), and increased hunger and appetite. These neuro-chemical actions are what helps the body during specific periods of the sleep cycle to metabolize the foods that we eat for storing into energy in preparation for use once awake.

According to recent estimates, the worldwide prevalence of obesity has doubled since 1980 and can be tied to a person's sleep duration. Poor sleep quality, which is associated with overall sleep loss, has become a frequent complaint and epidemic as the majority of complaints stem from those who fall into the category of being overweight or obese.



## A personal message from your health promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,  
*I've been gaining weight lately and according to my BMI I'm considered obese. I've noticed I get less and less sleep, is there a correlation between my weight and the amount of sleep I get?*  
Sincerely,

Heavy Sleeper

Dear Heavy Sleeper,  
Sleep can be contributing to your weight gain but keep in mind that obesity is a multifactorial condition influenced by genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors. Studies have found a relationship between the quantity and quality of one's sleep and many health problems, including obesity. For example, insufficient sleep affects growth hormone secretion that is linked to obesity; as the amount of hormone secretion decreases, the chance for weight gain increases. The association between genetic risk of obesity and phenotypic measures (BMI, abdominal circumference) are intensified by poor sleep quality. Sleep is a powerful regulator of appetite, energy use, and weight control. During sleep, the body's production of the appetite suppressor leptin increases, and the appetite stimulant ghrelin decreases. The less you sleep, the more likely you are to be overweight or obese and prefer eating foods that are higher in calories and carbohydrates.

Another contributing factor to your weight gain could be a sleep disorder. One sleep-related disorder often associated with people who are overweight is sleep apnea, which is a breathing disorder that leads individuals to repeatedly stop breathing during sleep. Weight gain leads to compromised respiratory function when an individual's trunk and neck area increase from weight gain. These interacting problems of weight gain and sleep apnea make it difficult to help oneself off the slippery slope of health problems. If you suspect you may have sleep apnea, the first thing to do is see your doctor.

There are a number of things you can do to lose weight and improve your sleep. The foods you eat are related to sleep by appetite and metabolism so make healthy choices for your meals by avoiding fast foods and foods high in carbohydrates and fat. Incorporate more fish, fresh fruits and vegetables into your diet. Start getting consistent exercise, which will improve the quality of your sleep. Avoid exercising less than 3 hours before bedtime, because exercise is alerting and can make it harder to fall asleep. The more caffeine you consume, the harder it'll be to fall asleep at night so try replacing caffeinated beverages with a healthy snack such as carrots, fresh whole fruit or a fruit and nut granola bar.

Sincerely, Health Myth Busters

## 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.)

### 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, 434-2790 for more information.

### Pre- and Post-Deployment Tour Briefing

These briefings are mandatory 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.

### Heart Link

The next Heart Link is from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Feb. 21 in the A&FRC. This half-day program is open to all spouses of active duty military members assigned to Columbus AFB. Attendees will receive information about life in the Air Force, in the local area, and at Columbus AFB from local subject matter experts including spouse leaders. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Hearts Apart

The next Hearts Apart is from 5-7 p.m. Feb. 22, in the A&FRC. This monthly social event is for family members whose sponsor is deployed, on a remote tour, or TDY for more than 30 days. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Transition Assistance Program GPS (Goals, Plans, Success) Workshop

This workshop is from 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Feb. 26-March 2, at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Workshop has seminars on: transition, military occupational code cross-walk, financial planning, health benefits, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Veterans Affairs, Disabled TAP, Department of Labor (TAP portion). Preseparation counseling is required before attending. Recommend attendance eight to 12 months prior to separation/retirement. Spouses are encouraged to attend with their sponsor. To register, call 434-2631.

### Career Technical Training Track Workshop

The next Career Technical Training Track Workshop is from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. March 5-6 in the A&FRC. This workshop covers the importance

## AF Junior ROTC members tour Columbus Air Force Base



Members of the Lafayette High School Air Force Junior ROTC stand in front of a T-6A Texan II after viewing a static display Feb. 15, 2018, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Members of the Junior ROTC toured several facilities and saw several static displays of various aircraft during their visit.

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

and how to go about obtaining skills required to make better decisions about your technical goals. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Wing Newcomers Orientation

This brief is from 8 a.m.-12:15 p.m. March 6 at the Columbus Club. The orientation is mandatory for newly arrived active-duty and civilian personnel. Spouses are encouraged to attend. For more information, call 434-2790.

### Military Life Cycle

The next Military Life Cycle will be March 6, 1-2 p.m. VA contractors 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. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Federal USAJobs Workshop

This workshop is from 9-10:30 a.m. March 7, This is a workshop on writing resumes, applications and job search, using USAJobs. Call 434-2790 to register.

### Smooth Move

The next Smooth Move workshop is from 10-11 a.m. March 13, in the A&FRC. This monthly venue provides information for relocating members and families. Here you'll learn what to expect before you move from agencies such as Traffic Management Office (TMO), Housing,

Military Pay, Lodging, Tri-Care, School Liaison Officer and A&FRC. To register or for more information, please call the A&FRC Relocation Manager at (662) 434-2701/2790.

### Bundles of Joy

The next Bundles of Joy workshop is from 1-3:30 p.m. May 17, in the A&FRC. This program is designed for active duty Air Force members and/or their spouses who are pregnant or have a child four-months old or less. Attendees will learn about finances, labor and delivery, and infant care. A \$50 gift card sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society will be provided for each qualifying child. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Entrepreneurship Track Transition Workshop

This workshop is from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. May 10-11. The entrepreneurship workshop is conducted by the Small Business Administration for veterans and all base personnel interested starting up and operating their own business. To register and more information call 434-2790.

### Linked-In Workshop

The Linked-In workshop is from 2-5 p.m. May 14-15. This workshop will teach you how to establish and use a Linked-In account. To register and more information, please call 434-2790.

### Bundles of Joy

The next Bundles of Joy workshop is from 1-3:30 p.m. May 17, at the A&FRC. This pro-

gram is designed for active duty Air Force members and/or their spouses who are pregnant or have a child 4 months old or less. Attendees will learn about finances, labor and delivery, and infant care. A \$50 gift card sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society will be provided for each qualifying child. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Employment Workshop

An employment workshop on local and base employment opportunities is held every Wednesday, 1-2 p.m. This program provides military families and DOD civilian member's individual assessment and career counseling to assist with local employment, preparation for future endeavors via education, job search, or self-owned business objectives in the local area. For more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Sponsorship Training

An electronic version of sponsorship training called eSponsorship Application & Training (eSAT) is now available. It can be found on the Military Installations homepage militaryinstallations.dod.mil, under "Are You A Sponsor?" For additional information, please contact the A&FRC Relocation Manager at (662) 434-2701/2790.

## 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) Start date TBA  
4 p.m. - Choir Practice (Chapel Sanctuary)  
4 p.m. - Confession (or by appointment)  
5 p.m. - Mass  
Fellowship Dinner after Mass on 1st and 3rd Sundays of every 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  
**Wednesdays:**  
4 p.m. - Music Rehearsal  
**Thursdays:**  
5:30 p.m. - Student Pilot Bible Study (Chapel Library)

### 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

# CAFB youth basketball victorious at tournament in Alabama

**Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gross**  
14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

worthwhile and he hopes they now see the results of what good teamwork looks like.

“If you really go after a goal as a team it’s so rewarding to actually reach that pinnacle,” Sansano said.

Jensen echoed Sansano’s sentiments, and said their hard work has been very evident.

“[I’m] very, very proud of the kids, they did a great job,” Jensen said. “Their work out here in practice as well as in the games [makes this] very well deserved.”

Sansano also said programs like the traveling youth basketball team wouldn’t be capable if not for the hard work of Tyler Marsh, the Columbus AFB Director of Youth Sports. Sansano said it’s easy to see the passion Marsh has for encouraging youth to be involved in athletics and various other programs.

“I ask myself two questions every day, ‘If my kid was in this program, what would I want the director doing?’ and the second question I ask myself is ‘What have I done today or what will I do today to positively affect somebody’s else’s’ life?’” Marsh said. “I try to answer those questions every day, I’m not saying that I do it. I’m just saying that I try to.”

The Columbus Blazers, Columbus Air Force Base’s traveling youth basketball team, won the Joint Forces Annual Basketball Tournament for the second year in a row Feb. 10 at Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

Nineteen children between the ages of 11-15, played a total of seven games throughout the day against teams from Maxwell AFB; Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Fort Rucker, Alabama; and Fort Benning, Georgia.

The team was coached by head coach Lt. Col. Benjamin Jensen, 41st Flying Training Squadron director of operations, and assistant coach Col. Anthony Sansano, 14th Mission Support Group commander.

Sansano said the team’s success could be attributed to “a lot of teamwork ... we had some highs and lows during the day and we made sure we kept encouraging each other and that everybody stayed positive throughout the day.”

Sansano said seeing the smiles on the faces of his players after bringing home a championship makes all the hard work they put in



Photo by Jennifer Gilliam

**Members of the Columbus Air Force Blazers stand with their trophy after winning the Joint Forces Annual Basketball Tournament for a second year in a row Feb. 10, 2018, at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. The group went 6-1 for the day and played against teams from Maxwell AFB; Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Fort Rucker, Alabama; and Fort Benning, Georgia.**

## VIEWPOINT

# Career Skills Program

**Lashon Webb**  
Columbus Air Force Base Education Office

Over the past several years, the Air Force objective has changed on preparing our Airmen to transition to civilian life.

Previously you attended a transition assistance program and received valuable information at the end of military service. Now, the Air Force has implemented the Military Life Cycle program. The program assist members from accession through transition from service and reintegration back into civilian life by providing key touch points throughout the Airman’s career. One element of MLC is the Career Skills programs. CSPs prepare Airmen for a post-military career up to six months prior to retirement or separation. The CSPs allow transitioning Air Force and Air Force Reserve personnel to participate in apprenticeships, on-the-job training and job shadowing opportunities that lead to civilian employment.

To participate in CSPs eligible enlisted and officers must complete 180 days on active duty and expect to be discharged or released from active duty within 180 days of starting the CSP as well as identify a qualifying program. The unit commander’s will determine the Airman is not mission essential, served honorably or under honorable conditions to approve CSP participation. CSPs will normally be located within 50 miles of the Airman’s installation or duty station, or 50 miles of the Airman’s residence. However, unit or squadron commander may allow participation in a program beyond the 50-mile limit if the commander is satisfied that adequate measures exist to ensure accountability and safety given the Airman’s unique circumstances.

Airmen may apply to participate through self-nominations while attending the transition assistance program and complete their application via the Air Force Virtual Education Center 30 days prior to the start date of the CSP. Airmen must sign a Memorandum of Participation outlining

*To participate in CSPs eligible enlisted and officers must complete 180 days on active duty and expect to be discharged or released from active duty within 180 days of starting the CSP as well as identify a qualifying program.*

their participation in the CSP. The memorandum includes the requirement to report accountability, comply with military training requirements, and maintain military standards.

Applications are processed and forwarded to the Education Service Officer at the education center to verify the employer or program is an eligible provider per DODI, 1322.29. If the application is approved by the ESO it is forwarded to the Unit Commander for denial or approval.

For more information contact your Transition GPS Counselor at 434-2561.

# BLAZE Hangar Tails: KC-135 Stratotanker

## Mission

The KC-135 Stratotanker provides the core aerial refueling capability for the United States Air Force and has excelled in this role for more than 50 years. This unique asset enhances the Air Force’s capability to accomplish its primary mission of global reach. It also provides aerial refueling support to Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and allied nation aircraft. The KC-135 is also capable of transporting litter and ambulatory patients using patient support pallets during aeromedical evacuations.

## General Characteristics

- Primary Function:** Aerial refueling and airlift
- Prime Contractor:** The Boeing Company
- Power Plant:** CFM International CFM-56 turbofan engines
- Thrust:** 21,634 pounds each engine
- Wingspan:** 130 feet, 10 inches (39.88 meters)
- Length:** 136 feet, 3 inches (41.53 meters)
- Height:** 41 feet, 8 inches (12.7 meters)
- Speed:** 530 miles per hour at 30,000 feet (9,144 meters)
- Ceiling:** 50,000 feet (15,240 meters)
- Range:** 1,500 miles (2,419 kilometers) with 150,000 pounds (68,039 kilograms) of transfer fuel; ferry mission, up to 11,015 miles (17,766 kilometers)

**Maximum Takeoff Weight:** 322,500 pounds (146,285 kilograms)

**Maximum Transfer Fuel Load:** 200,000 pounds (90,719 kilograms)

**Maximum Cargo Capability:** 83,000 pounds (37,648 kilograms), 37 passengers

**Pallet Positions:** six

**Crew:** Three: pilot, co-pilot and boom operator. Some KC-135 missions require the addition of a navigator. The Air Force has a limited number of navigator suites that can be installed for unique missions.

**Aeromedical Evacuation Crew:** A basic crew of five (two flight nurses and three medical technicians) is added for aeromedical evacuation missions. Medical crew may be altered as required by the needs of patients.

**Unit Cost:** \$39.6 million (fiscal 98 constant dollars)

**Date Deployed:** August 1956

**Inventory:** Active duty, 167; Air National Guard, 180; Air Force Reserve, 67

## Background

Air Mobility Command manages an inventory of 414 Stratotankers, of which the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard fly 247 aircraft in support of AMC’s mission.

The Boeing Company’s model 367-80 was the basic design for the commercial 707 passenger plane as well as the

KC-135A Stratotanker. In 1954, the Air Force purchased the first 29 of its future 732-plane fleet. The first aircraft flew in August 1956 and the initial production Stratotanker was delivered to Castle Air Force Base, Calif., in June 1957. The last KC-135 was delivered to the Air Force in 1965.

Of the original KC-135As, more than 415 have been modified with new CFM-56 engines produced by CFM-International. The re-engined tanker, designated either the KC-135R or KC-135T, can offload 50 percent more fuel, is 25 percent more fuel efficient, costs 25 percent less to operate and is 96 percent quieter than the KC-135A.

Under another modification program, a re-engined tanker with the TF-33-PW-102 engine was designated the KC-135E. In 2009, the last KC-135E retired from the inventory.

Through the years, the KC-135 has been altered to do other jobs ranging from flying command post missions to reconnaissance. RC-135s are used for special reconnaissance and Air Force Materiel Command’s NKC-135As are flown in test programs. Air Combat Command operates the OC-135 as an observation platform in compliance with the Open Skies Treaty.

The KC-135RT aircraft continue to undergo life-cycle upgrades to expand their capabilities and improve reliability. Among these are improved communications, navigation, autopilot and surveillance equipment to meet future civil air traffic control needs.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Erin McClellan

**A KC-135 Stratotanker descends before landing at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, Jan. 18, 2018. Air Mobility Command’s tanker fleet, which is primarily made up of KC-135s, offloaded 1.177 billion pounds of fuel to U.S. and allied aircraft in 2017.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Rob Wieland

**A KC-135 Stratotanker refuels an F-16 Fighting Falcon during a past Northern Edge exercise. Northern Edge ‘08, a joint training exercise hosted by the Alaskan Command, involved more than 120 Air Force, Army, Air National Guard, Navy and Marine aircraft.**

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



T-1A Jayhawk

# SUPT Class 18-05 earns silver wings



T-38C Talon



**Capt. William Cox**  
San Antonio  
C-130J Ramstein AB, Germany



**Capt. Leesa Froelich**  
Tarpon Springs, Fla.  
C-130J, Keesler AFB, Miss.



**Capt. Steven Trochil**  
Rhineland, Wis.  
KC-10 JB, McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.

Twenty officers have prevailed during a year of training, earning the right to become Air Force pilots.

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 18-05 graduates at 10 a.m. today during a ceremony at the Kaye Auditorium. Maj. Gen. James P. Scanlan, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida is the graduation guest speaker.

Students will receive their silver pilot's wings at the ceremony, and students who excelled in their respective training tracks are recognized.

Second Lt. Garrett McElligott, T-38C Talon, and Capt. William Cox, T-1A Jayhawk, received the Air Education and Training Command Commander's Trophy for being the most outstanding students overall in their classes.

The Air Force Association Award was presented to McElligott and Capt. Leesa Froelich, T-1A. The award is presented to a graduate in each flight who excelled in training and typified the tenets of the association; promoting aerospace power and a strong national defense.

McElligott and Cox were named the distinguished graduates of SUPT Class 18-05.

The 52-week pilot training program begins with a six-week preflight phase of academics and physiological training to prepare students for flight. The second phase, primary training, is conducted in the single-engine, turboprop T-6A Texan II at Columbus AFB, Miss. Students learn aircraft flight characteristics, emergency procedures, takeoff and landing procedures, aerobatics and formation flying. Students also practice night, instrument and cross country navigation flying.

Primary training takes approximately 23 weeks and includes 254.4 hours of ground training, 27.3 hours in the flight simulator and 89 hours in the T-6A aircraft.

After primary training, students select, by order of merit, advanced training in the fighter-bomber or airlift-tanker track.

Both tracks are designed to best train pilots for successful transition to their follow-on aircraft and mission.

Advanced training for the fighter track is done in the T-38C Talon, a tandem-seat, twin-engine supersonic jet. T-38 training emphasizes formation, advanced aerobatics and navigation. Training takes approximately 26 weeks and includes 381 hours of ground training, 31.6 hours in the flight simulator and 118.7 hours in the T-38C aircraft.

The airlift-tanker track uses the T-1A Jayhawk, the military version of a multi-place Beech Jet 400 business jet. Instruction centers on crew coordination and management, instrument training, cross-country flying and simulated refueling and airdrop missions. Training takes about 26 weeks and includes 185 hours of ground training, 53.6 hours in the flight simulator and 76.4 hours in the T-1A.

Each class is partnered with business or civic organizations during their year of training. This program is designed to foster closer ties between the community and Columbus AFB. Today, each student will be given a set of pilot wings with their names engraved on the back as a token of good luck from their partners. SUPT Class 18-05 pilot partners are Angela Laster, Crye-Leike Properties Unlimited, and Sheri Lipsey, Real Living Reality.



**2nd Lt. Ella Curcic**  
Renton, Wash.  
C-17, JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska



**2nd Lt. Nathaniel Heldreth**  
Charlottesville, Va.  
KC-135, McConnell AFB, Kan.



**2nd Lt. Michael Hyde**  
Santa Fe, N.M.  
C-146, Duke Field, Fla.



**2nd Lt. Waleed Alhusaini**  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
F-15SA, Royal Saudi Air Force



**2nd Lt. Jamel Boukhemis**  
Huntington, W.V.  
C-130H, 130th Air Wing ANG, W. V.



**2nd Lt. Brandon Cruz**  
Windsor, Calif.  
C-17, Dover AFB, Del.



**2nd Lt. Andrew Leach**  
Cheyenne, Wyo.  
C-5M, Dover AFB, Del.



**2nd Lt. Cameron Lindsey**  
Simpsonville, S.C.  
C-17, JB Lewis-McChord, Wash.



**2nd Lt. Garrett McElligott**  
Milwaukee  
F-16, TBD



**2nd Lt. Kevin Mitchell**  
Philadelphia  
F-16, TBD



**2nd Lt. William Mott**  
San Antonio  
C-130J, Yokota, Japan



**2nd Lt. Marika Nemeth**  
Palmdale, Calif.  
EC-130, Davis Monthan AFB, Ariz.



**2nd Lt. Samuel Pearce**  
Noblesville, Ind.  
AC-130J, Hurlburt Field, Fla.



**2nd Lt. Nicholas Reisch**  
Denver  
T-6A, Columbus AFB, Miss.



**2nd Lt. Andrew Shelton**  
Jonesboro, Ark.  
C-130J, Little Rock AFB, Ark.



**2nd Lt. Richard Sutedjo**  
Westlake Village, Calif.  
KC-135, Scott AFB, Ill.



**2nd Lt. Christopher Towns**  
Chester, Va.  
F-22, Tyndall, Fla.