



FCP Visions



To serve and support the men, women, families and mission of Luke Air Force Base

Spring 2017



Photo courtesy United Blood Services

Blood drive coordinators at Luke Air Force Base were honored as Blood Heroes at the United Blood Services Valentines for Life luncheon. Last year, Luke hosted 46 blood drives and brought in 714 donations. Of the 1,401 organizations that sponsored blood drives last year, Luke Air Force Base was among the top 38 organizations across Arizona that qualified for the Hero Award.

Heroes live and work at Luke AFB

The efforts of Luke Air Force Base were applauded in February at Valentines for Life, United Blood Services' premier annual awards event. Base blood drive coordi-

ators 1Lt. Ivette Caro and TSgt. Angela Sawn were presented with the coveted Hero Award, an honor that is reached by less than two percent of all blood drive coordina-

tors across Arizona. Hero Award winners provide the largest impact on the blood supply by organizing committees to recruit donors, holding internal recognition programs to

thank donors and by hosting blood drives during the most difficult periods of the year to maintain Arizona's blood supply. Last year, Luke hosted 46 blood drives and brought in 714

donations – an increase of 53 percent over 2015 and providing a one-and-one-half-day blood supply for all 64 Arizona hospitals depending upon United Blood Services.

Luke Air Force Base has hosted drives with United Blood Services since the 1950s and has earned the Hero Award 11

MORE HEROES ON 6

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From the Desk of Fighter Country Partnership

I have the best job in the world

My name is Veronique Cruikshank (AKA "V"). I'm the business manager for Fighter Country Partnership (FCP). I have the best job in the world. I get to be a part of the amazing organization whose mission is to "Support the men, women, families and mission of Luke AFB."

This job is so much more than a paycheck. As a matter of fact, it's a second paycheck. I'm a retired veteran. I retired from Luke Air Force Base as an Air Force Captain in 2011. In all of my 22 years in the Air Force, I've never seen a community organization that does so much for the Airman as FCP.

I joined the Air Force in 1988, straight out of high school. I wasn't "ready" for college and

really didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I entered the Air Force as an Airman Basic. I was a "slick sleeve," which is the lowest-ranking Airman in the Air Force. I literally grew up in the Air Force and have called military installations around the world my home. The Air Force was also much more than a paycheck and my coworkers were more than fellow Airmen. They were and still are my family. My supervisors and commanding officers were mentors, but also parental in nature. They built me up and challenged me to give my all and supported and encouraged my efforts to reach my goals and succeed.

I entered the military as a Food Service Specialist (a cook). My



Veronique Cruikshank
Business Manager
Fighter Country Partnership

career field continued to merge with other career fields and allowed me to have many diverse jobs. I worked as a billeting (base hotel) desk clerk, ran a flight line kitchen (fast food operation), helped run a fitness center (gym) and ran the Honor Guard Program. I also had the opportunity to deploy overseas and provide morale and welfare programs to other deployed Airmen.

I progressed to the rank of Technical Sergeant (TSgt/E-6) in nine years and was considered a "fast burner." I was a single parent and promotions equaled better pay and benefits for my daughter, Alexis.

I had some amazing leaders who encouraged me to pursue a college degree. I went to night school and took lunch-time classes while working full time and raising my beautiful daughter. Toward the end of earning my bachelor's degree in human resources, a friend nudged me to apply for officer training. A bachelor's degree is a requirement to be an Air Force officer. Upon graduation, I applied for and was accepted into the Air Force Officer Training School

(OTS). I went to 12 weeks of officer "boot camp" and graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant.

As a personnel officer, I worked directly for the Unit Commander. I was now the parental leader and mentored numerous Airmen. This included encouraging a few Airmen to go to college and become officers. I also met my husband, Kevin, who was an F-16 fighter pilot. He adopted my daughter and we later had our son, Jacob.

The Air Force helped me to follow my dreams. I had an awesome military career and am proud to be a veteran of our amazing country. What I didn't have was a community organization like FCP.

FCP hosts or partners in supporting the Dorm Dweller Holiday Party,

the Finance Expo, the Health and Wellness Expo, March of the Fallen, Luke Youth Center Summer Programs, Luke Library Programs, Operation Shower, Luke Back to School Bash, deployed family dinners and events, Operation Warm Heart, and Patty Larlham Camps for children with disabilities. And these are just a few of the programs and events FCP supports.

All of these programs assist Airmen in following their dreams by enhancing the morale and well-being, culture and tradition and sustainability of Luke AFB. And being a part of this organization and the programs we support is why I have the best job in the world.

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Fighter Country Partnership

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AETC and Luke AFB have long history

The Air Education and Training Command is vital in its mission to recruit, educate, and train today's Airmen to keep its Air Force mission ready.

Luke Air Force Base in Arizona has been a part of the Air Training Command and AETC for approximately half of its lifetime and has been the largest fighter wing in the United States Air Force since 1989. While typical wings have three squadrons, Luke has always had four or more.

"Even during World War II, Luke was the largest training base," said Richard Griset, 56th Fighter Wing historian. "The training mission is a great mission and we've done it for a long time. Since the very beginning, we have taken our pilots and trained them to fly our fighter aircraft."

During World War II, Luke Field produced 17,321 graduates from fighter training programs for the U.S. and its allies.



A view to the east from the control tower of Luke Field on Feb. 9, 1943, revealed completed construction of the base.

The base was initially equipped with F-51 Mustang and F-84 Thunderjet aircraft. In 1957, Luke joined the supersonic age when the North American F-100 Super Sabre was assigned to the base. That was followed in 1964 by foreign military sales programs,

Luke's first international training partnerships, in the F-104 Starfighter and the F-5A Freedom Fighter.

The A-7D Corsair arrived in 1969, but was reassigned when the U.S. Air Force decided to make Luke the Air Force's primary F-4 Phantom II training base. The F-4 was

used extensively throughout the Vietnam War due to its ground-attack and aerial roles. The first F-4 was assigned in 1971.

The first of the super fighters, the F-15 Eagle, was assigned to the base in 1974, followed in 1982 by the second super fighter, the F-16 Fighting Falcon. Then the F-15E

Strike Eagle arrived in 1988. The 56th Training Wing was re-designated a fighter wing Oct. 1, 1991, making Luke the service's primary F-16 training base. In 1991, the F-15 was reassigned, and four years later, the F-15E was reassigned.

On March 10, 2014, the first F-35A landed at



U.S. Air Force graphic by Michelle Deleon

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

Luke, starting the next period in the base's history.

From the AT-6 Texan in 1941, to the F-35 Lightning II aircraft that is flown today, Luke has been home to a number of fighter aircraft. Since then, Luke has produced

MORE AETC ON 6

The City of Peoria is a champion of Luke Air Force Base.



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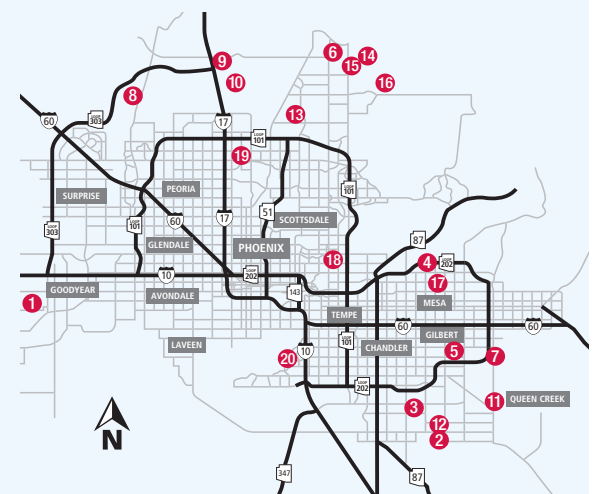
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U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Devante Williams

Jan Brewer, former governor of Arizona, spoke with Luke members during the F-35 Lightning II Unveiling Celebration March 14, 2014, at Luke Air Force Base. The former governor's speech showed government support between Luke and the surrounding communities.

AETC: F-35 program sets future for Luke, From 4

more than 58,800 graduates from fighter training programs for the U.S. and its allies and is truly the fighter country.

Today, the 56th Fighter Wing, a unit which historically had some of the world's greatest fighter pilots, continues the mission that has been identified with Luke since 1941: training warrior

Airmen while building the future of air power.

"With the community support we have received over the years, it looks like we'll be here a long while," Griset said. "The F-35 program sets the future up for Luke Air Force Base to remain very significant as part of AETC."

HEROES: Saving lives, From 1

of the 13 years since its inception. The cornerstone of success for the Luke blood program has been the development of individual committees comprised of primary and secondary contacts within each squadron. The group that had the most successful drives during the year earned the coveted "Top Squadron" title.

"We are proud and grateful to 1Lt. Caro, TSgt. Sawm and the squadrons for their devotion," said Sid Lewis. "They are heroes to both our country and to Arizona patients."

Luke Air Force Base blood donors help teens like Jaziel Olmeda of Phoenix, who shared his story with honored guests at Valentines for Life last month. Jaziel survived leukemia three times with the help of 135 transfusions. He was just 7 years old when he was first diagnosed.

"My childhood was interrupted by cancer," reflected Jaziel. "Having had cancer for six long, extremely emotional years, I can say I always knew I wasn't alone, thanks to my generous blood donors."

Grateful for the blood donors who helped save his life, Jaziel has dreams of becoming



Thanks to 135 blood donors, 17-year-old Jaziel Olmeda survived leukemia three times.

a pediatric oncology nurse and operating his own clinic, where he can spread awareness on the importance of blood donation.

Luke Air Force Base hosts blood drives regularly throughout the year for donors with base access. To make an appointment at an upcoming base drive, visit www.BloodHero.com (Sponsor Code: LAFB), or call 1-877-UBS-HERO (827-4376).

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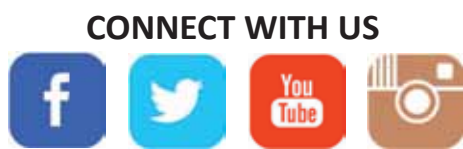
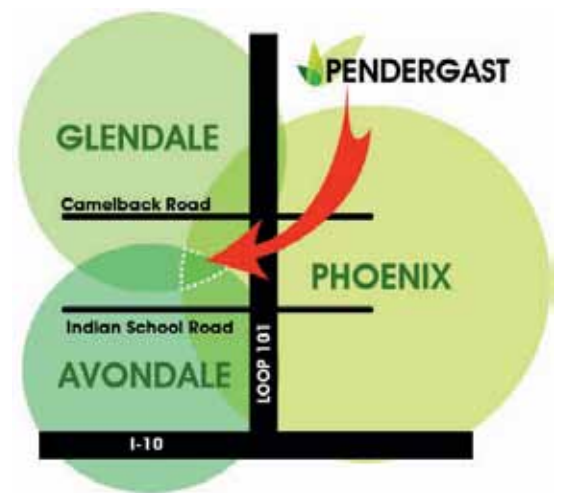
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36th Annual Glendale Chamber Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament benefits Operation Warm Heart

Airmen helping Airmen

Glendale Chamber Member and Past Chairman of the Board, Bill Kelleher of Dignity Memorial, has invested as a sponsor of the Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament since day one. Kelleher said this is one of the events he looks forward to each year. Not only is it a fun day out with fellow chamber members, but he enjoys engaging with former and present military.

Kelleher said, "It is an acknowledgement of gratitude to those who serve in the military by placing 'service above self and principles before personality.'"

With a portion of the proceeds going toward Operation Warm Heart, Kelleher and his company plan to remain a sponsor for years to come – it's a way to say thank you to our U.S. military.

Operation Warm Heart is a non-profit organization that distributes charitable donations to service members and their families all year long. Thanks to faithful members, the chamber has been able to host the event for 36 consecutive years. The Glendale Chamber and its members are proud to be able to give back to our service members through Operation Warm Heart.

Join the Glendale Chamber of Commerce for its 36th Annual Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament April 7 at Falcon Dunes Golf Course. Check-in starts 6:30 a.m., with a shotgun start 7:30 a.m.

Single golfers can register for \$115 each, or sponsor a veteran. Tee hole sponsorships are also



Photo courtesy Glendale Chamber of Commerce

Glendale Chamber of Commerce member Bill Kelleher of Dignity Memorial helps direct the putting contest during the 2016 shootout.

available for \$175 and include company signage on the golf course, ability to put promotional items in the golfer's goodie bags, and the ability to represent your company on the course to connect directly with

more than 100 golfers.

Additional sponsorships are available. Registration is available online at www.glendaleazchamber.org, or by calling 623-937-4754.



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ROC# 51293

Honorary Commanders Golf Classic May 25

Supporting the men, women, families and mission of Luke Air Force Base

Fighter Country Partnership (FCP), the leading support and advocacy organization for Luke Air Force Base, hosts the eighth Annual FCP Honorary Commanders Golf Classic May 25 at Wigwam Golf Club, 451 N Old Litchfield Road, Litchfield Park. The event includes luncheon, auctions and a raffle for terrific prizes

Registration begins 7 a.m. with an 8 a.m. shotgun start.

The golf tournament is the primary funding mechanism for Fighter Country Partnership and its support for Luke Air Force Base.

Cost is \$3,500 per foursome. All participants will receive exclusive items, including PING products. Various sponsorship packages are also available. See within

For registration and information, visit fightercountry.org/golf.

For more information and registration assistance, contact Ron Sites at

rsites@fightercountry.org, Bill Johnston at bill@fightercountry.org, or call 623-882-2191.

The following sponsorships are available:

THUNDERBOLT SPONSOR | \$25,000 Includes four foursomes (one extended to Luke Airmen), four exclusive PING merchandise packages, logo on the commemorative tournament coin, unique PING item for each participant, event signage, invitations to Wednesday evening's VIP Sponsor Recognition Event, four one-night Wigwam rooms, recognition on all tournament collateral materials and publicity, as well as at the event, and one TopGolf Scottsdale bay at the FCP Operation TopFlight Dogfight event in Fall 2017.

FALCON SPONSOR | \$15,000 Includes two foursomes, three exclusive PING merchandise packages, logo on commemorative tournament coin, unique PING item for each participant, event signage, invitations to Wednesday evening's VIP Sponsor Recognition Event, three one-night Wigwam rooms, recognition on all tournament collateral materials and publicity, as well as at the event, and one TopGolf Scottsdale bay at the FCP Operation TopFlight Dogfight event in Fall 2017.



Submitted photo

LIGHTNING SPONSOR | \$10,000 Includes two foursomes (one of which can be donated to Luke Airmen if you wish), two exclusive PING merchandise packages, name on commemorative tournament coin, unique PING item for each participant, event signage, invitations to Wednesday evening's VIP Sponsor Recognition Event, two one-night Wigwam rooms, recognition on all tournament collateral materials and publicity, as well as at the event, and one TopGolf Scottsdale bay at the FCP Operation TopFlight Dogfight event in Fall 2017.

PATRIOT SPONSOR | \$5,600 Includes one foursome, one exclusive PING merchandise package, unique PING item for each participant, event signage, invitations to Wednesday evening's VIP Sponsor Recognition Event, a one night Wigwam room, publicity opportunities and logo on event gift certificates.

FUEL CART SPONSOR | \$4,500 Includes one foursome, unique PING item for each participant, event signage, invitations to Wednesday evening's VIP Sponsor Recognition Event, publicity opportunities and logo on drink tickets.

CREW CHIEF SPONSOR | \$500 Tee box signage. Does not include a foursome.

VIP SPONSOR RECOGNITION PARTY HOST |

\$10,000 This sponsor will be the host of the Wednesday night function (May 24, 2017) prior to the Thursday Classic. Includes one foursome, event signage, speaking opportunities and a one-night Wigwam room.

GOLF CLASSIC LUNCH HOST | \$10,000 This sponsor will be the host of the Golf Classic day lunch. Includes one foursome, event signage and a speaking opportunity during lunch.

BLOODY MARY BAR HOST | \$5,000 This sponsor will host the Bloody Mary Bar from the staging through the start of the Golf Classic.

Background

Fighter Country Partnership (FCP) was founded in 1997 and is the leading community support and advocacy group for the aid, operation and preservation of Luke Air Force Base.

FCP partners are business professionals, elected officials, military retirees and a diverse group of citizens who support Luke and want to ensure its future in Arizona. Our purpose is simple: to provide a high level of support for the men, women and families of Luke while furthering its ongoing mission - to train the world's best pilots, maintainers and support personnel while deploying mission-ready warfighters.

Fundraising events such as this golf tournament provide a bridge of support for the many advocacy programs and special events that unfold throughout the year.

Three ways FCP supports Luke Air Force Base:

- Health and human services


Luke Airmen's Fund, Wellness Affairs, Chaplain's Deployed Family Dinners, summer camps for Luke children with autism and more.

- Culture and tradition

Luke Air Force Ball, Luke Days Open House & Air Show, 944th Annual Holiday Picnic, Navy Ball and more.

- Mission sustainability

Luke Forward Campaign, Honorary Commanders Program, VIP community receptions and more




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U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Bradley Smith

Aircraft 86-0291 sits in the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Airpark in front of the 944th Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. The airpark was dedicated Aug. 2 during a ceremony in which more than 50 original Tuskegee Airmen attended. The airpark features an F-16 Fighting Falcon static aircraft painted in World War II Tuskegee colors in recognition of the "Red Tail" warriors of the Tuskegee Airmen. Sixty-five years ago, the United States launched a program to train the first black military pilots and aircrews, who later became known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

Annual Tuskegee Airmen commemoration features The Rise Above exhibit

Following the successful annual Tuskegee Airmen commemoration in March 2016, the Archer-Ragsdale Arizona Chapter, TAI (ARAC) expanded the 2017 program with greater emphasis on youth activities. The events began as early as January and concluded March 9 to 14, with eight youth and chaperones traveling on a field trip to Washington, D.C. The activities included ARAC visitations and/or presentations at the West Valley Christian School, Goodyear; El Dorado High School, Chandler; 56th Medical Group Commander's Call, Luke AFB; United Technology Company, Phoenix.; and Buckeye Air Fair, Buckeye.

Another major youth activity was The Rise Above traveling exhibit at three schools in the Phoenix area. The exhibit featured two legendary Tuskegee Airmen, Col. (ret) Charles McGee of Bethesda, Md., and local Airmen Lt. Col. (ret) Robert Ashby of Sun City West.

The exhibit highlights the courage and determination of the Tuskegee Airmen, who overcame obstacles to train and fight as U.S. Army Air Corps pilots, and what it means to us 75 years later. It also features the original film, "Rise Above," on a 160-degree panoramic screen in a 30-seat movie theater. The three schools included Stapley

Jr High, Mesa, AZ; Luke Elementary, Glendale, AZ; and Trivium Preparatory Academy, Goodyear, AZ. The Rise Above traveling exhibit was sponsored by the ARAC and led by Southwest Airline captain (ret) Larry Jackson, Director of ARAC Youth Activities.

Other ARAC members continued to further the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen by serving as "Ambassadors of Goodwill" and as speakers at major events in the Phoenix area. These included the Scottsdale 2017 Martin Luther King Jr. Dinner Celebration; the City of Surprise Inaugural Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Celebration and Service; and the USAF Air War College Regional Cultural Studies Program hosted by the office of the governor of Arizona. The latter event included 55 senior officers from Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. These men and women were presented with an ARAC perspective on the Tuskegee Airmen living in Arizona, US military history and legacy, and race relations in Arizona and the USA.

The 2017 commemoration culminated the fourth Thursday, March 23, with the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Tuskegee Airpark. It was followed by a luncheon at the 56 Club, Luke Air Force Base.



Photo illustration/Staff Sgt. Susan Stout

A program was launched sixty-five years ago to train the first black military pilots and aircrews who later became known as the Tuskegee Airmen. From 1942 through 1946, 994 graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field receiving their commissions and pilot wings.



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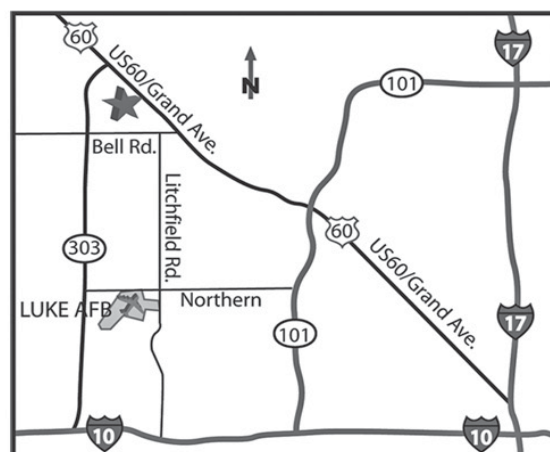


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Honorary Commander: Steven Hoover, SiteWorks

Fighter Country Partnership is proud to feature Steven Hoover, an alumni member of the Honorary Commanders Program and currently a member of the Blue Blazer Squadron of Fighter Country Partnership. Hoover was assigned to the 309th Fighter Squadron at Luke Air Force Base from 2012 to 2014 and is a highly engaged community leader.

Hoover is an Arizona native, proud father of a 5-year-old son and 7-year-old daughter and the lucky husband of Jennifer Hoover, with whom he just celebrated their 10-year anniversary.



Submitted photos

Life Members to the Blue Blazer Squadron. Steve Hoover is in second row far right. As a recent inductee as a Life Member to the Blue Blazer Squadron, Hoover looks forward to continuing active participation in every possible activity there is and to offering mentorship to new members of the Blue Blazers looking to make the greatest impact of their assignment.



**Steven Hoover
Fighter Country Partnership:
Honorary Commander
Principle and Division
Manager for SiteWorks**



Steven Hoover (middle) receives recognition as a Life Member of the Blue Blazer Squadron.

Hoover is a lifelong aviation enthusiast, spending most of his formative years alongside his father and friends restoring WWII aircraft, most notably the B-17 "Sentimental Journey." Spending such impressionable time with pilots and mechanics instilled many character traits, or "flaws as some may argue." The passion for flight led him in the direction to become a pilot for the Air Force. Upon an initial military medical

physical, a previously unknown eyesight issue was discovered, eliminating that possibility. With becoming a military pilot off the list, Steven headed to Florida to pursue a degree in aeronautical engineering.

In an odd twist of fate a few years after college, Hoover received an offer to work with a national homebuilder, which led to his ultimate career path in contracting. After decades in the construction industry working his way

through various positions, as well as owning small contracting operations, Hoover is now a principle and division manager for SiteWorks. SiteWorks is a multifaceted, local landscape contractor, which builds, maintains and provides arbor services for notable landscape projects such as spring training facilities, professional and collegiate clients, casino and resort properties, commercial, retail and master-planned

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Steven Hoover in cockpit of a KC-135 during a mid-air refueling flight with the 137th Air Refueling Wing

HOOVER: lifetime aviation fan, From 12

communities.

Hoover has been active in a local development advocacy organization, Valley Partnership, for nearly 15 years. He served as chairman for the Community Project Committee for several years, assisting organizations such as the Foundation for Blind Children, Salvation Army, Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center and many more to improve their facilities. Hoover also served on the Valley Partnership board of directors from 2009 to 2014, playing an active role in keeping the organization relevant and successful in an industry environment rife with turmoil during the “Great Recession.”

Hoover now enjoys the opportunity to serve as “Chief” on the Senior Leadership Team for the Blue Blazer Squadron of the Fighter Country Partnership. His time as “Bravo Class” Honorary Commander for the 309th Fighter Squadron and now on to planning and leadership for the Blue Blazer Squadron is described as one of the most humbling and gratifying philanthropic endeavors he has ever had the honor to be a part of.

He recalls many fond memories from his time with the 309th FS; the time-honored traditions of fighter squadrons such as Roll Calls and Naming Ceremonies for new pilots, to the many family events that the Hoovers were invited to attend.

“I was struck by how openly they welcomed me and my family into their operation and activities and expressed that I was not an outsider but an official member of the 309th “Wild Duck” family,” Hoover said.

Hoover takes every opportunity possible to enjoy his involvement with the Honorary Commander program and now with

the Blue Blazers. He has attended Haboob Havoc, the overnight trip to the Barry Goldwater Range, Luke Days, March of the Fallen events, base tours, speed mentoring, wingman day, Fiesta Bowl Parade, change of command ceremonies, a refueling flight and many others.

“I feel that this is a unique opportunity granted by our military and not to experience these would be tremendously unfortunate,” Hoover said.

Ron Sites, president and executive director of Fighter Country Partnership, describes Hoover’s dedication to the organization.

“Like most involved with FCP, I met Steve due to the Honorary Commander Alumni entering into the BBS program. It didn’t take long for me to identify with his personal passion for Luke AFB. Like many ambassadors, Steve lives in the Far East Valley...but you will find Steve and his wife at almost everything they have the opportunity to support and attend. His dedication and commitment to the FCP cause made it very easy to pull Steve in closer for needed BBS

leadership roles.”

He speaks often about how open and approachable the most senior of base leadership has been through his years of involvement and how they treat everyone with such respect and admiration. Hoover has been able to share his experiences with many in his personal and business life. This advocacy has garnered support for fundraising opportunities and instilled a deeper understanding of Luke Air Force Base and the tremendously important role it has within our community and nation’s military.

Hoover explained, “Creating lasting friendships with members of the squadron and specifically my Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Stephane Wolfgeher, has been one of the most rewarding outcomes from my time as Honorary Commander. This experience has deepened my love and admiration for our fighting men and women and for the families who support them. It has truly changed a peripheral appreciation to a lifelong commitment to support and protect the military personnel, families and mission of our armed forces.”



Steven Hoover (left) alongside Bruce Larson, both Blue Blazers of Fighter Country Partnership, participate in the “March of the Fallen” event sponsored by Verrado Golf Club. March of the Fallen (MOTF 2016) is a 4.5-mile ruck-march through the White Tank Mountains dedicated to honoring our fallen brothers and sisters who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the war efforts of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND).



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AF NCO dedicates four more years of service, re-enlists in deployed fashion

By 1ST LT. CLAY
LANCASTER
380TH AIR
EXPEDITIONARY WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Her Air Force calling started like many others who came before – speaking with a recruiter near her hometown in Washington. It was 2009 and she was with her mother who had pulled her out of school under the guise of having a day to spend time together; their first stop was the AF recruiter's office.

Before Staff Sgt. Rebecca Rains knew it she found herself in the delayed entry program patiently waiting on

her job to come open before departing for Basic Military Training. Her AF career has been anything but status quo since.

"I waited nine months for my slot to come open and I went off [in February 2010]," Rains said in a coffee shop near her deployed office. "Every experience I've had in the AF has been awesome and, for the most part, it's the best decision I've ever made. I got to fly in an F-16 during my first enlistment which was the second coolest thing I've ever done."

Fast-forward seven years and her energy and ambition as an Airman are stronger

than ever while serving at an undisclosed location here in the region. Recently Rains was afforded the opportunity to take the oath of enlistment in a unique way – in a KC-10 Extender, 30,000 feet over Syria and during an air refueling of an F-22 Raptor pilot.

The pilot, Lt. Col. August Pfluger, administered the oath and is the 380th Expeditionary Operations Support Sq. commander – Rains' deployed unit.

"This was the coolest thing I've done (since joining)," Rains said. "So, I get on the headset and I'm talking to him and he shared with me

some background about his mission prior to coming up for fuel. He then said, 'You ready to do this?' and I said, 'Yep, let's go.' He started the oath and I was kind of nervous, so he had to repeat the first part; but from there on out, it was smooth and I was able to thank him. Everything just lined up perfectly and the fact that he was able to do this was more meaningful to me."

Pfluger administered the oath just 11 minutes after completing his tasking there in Syria.

"SSgt Rains and her team had actually helped make the mission a success and participated in the development of this mission," he said. "She's an absolute superstar in a field of really talented people."

The refueling flight was nearly eight hours and the re-enlistment was at the very end of the mission, before the crew turned the tanker back towards its deployed home. According to Rains, she knew she wanted to re-enlist in a KC-10, but she never expected for things to fall in place the way they did.

"I really like the Air Force and I'm very passionate about my job," she said. "People are motivated in different ways and being out here supporting real-world operations and



Photos courtesy U.S. Air Force

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Rebecca Rains, currently serving in the 380th Expeditionary Operations Support Sq. at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, recites the oath of enlistment being administered by her squadron commander and F-22 Raptor pilot, Lt. Col. August Pfluger, March 3, 2017. The re-enlistment took place while conducting an air refueling in a KC-10 Extender over Syria in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve. Pfluger, who just 11 minutes before the re-enlistment had completed his air tasking in Syria, administered the oath while receiving fuel from the KC-10 and over headset from his F-22 Raptor. Rains re-enlisted for four years.

seeing the impact that my job provides for the AOR internally motivates me. I feel lucky to have had this opportunity."

When asked about the uniqueness of this particular re-enlistment, Pfluger shared his perspective.

"This one was by far the most memorable because it

involved a team in a very unique place. The Air Force is lucky to retain (Rains) for another four years and I was honored to be asked to do this," he said.

Rains intends to work next enlistment to work toward completing her undergraduate education and earning a commission.



U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. August Pfluger, 380th Expeditionary Operations Support Sq. commander and F-22 Raptor pilot, maneuvers a Raptor into position to receive fuel during an air refueling over Syria, March 3, 2017. During the refueling Pfluger re-enlisted Staff Sgt. Rebecca Rains who was in a KC-10 Extender, next to the boom operator, while reciting the oath of enlistment over headset.



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Photo courtesy City of Glendale

U.S.S. Arizona memorialized at Glendale main library branch

On the lawn at the Glendale Main Library at 59th Avenue and West Brown Street stands a bronze-colored obelisk, surrounded by five welded steel trees, which pay tribute to military veterans. A mermaid, flanked by saguaro cacti, adorns one side of the obelisk. On another are scraps of jagged metal and series of steel rings. And on a third is an inscription, "On Sunday, December 7, 1941, the first wave of Japanese military aircraft attacked Pearl Harbor at 7:55am..."

The installation is a memorial to the U.S.S. Arizona and its fate as the infamous enemy

ambush catapulted the United States into World War II. The mermaid represents a silver tea service presented to the ship's captain by the State of Arizona in 1916. The shards of metal had once formed a potato locker in the ship's galley. The steel rings were taken from the flagpole on a memorial erected over the ship's wreckage at Pearl Harbor.

One hundred years after it steamed out of the Navy shipyard in Brooklyn, N.Y. and 75 years after Japanese bombers blew it apart, the U.S.S. Arizona lives on in the state that gave it its name.

Female pilot follows in mother's boot steps

This feature is part of the "Through Airmen's Eyes" series. These stories focus on individual Airmen, highlighting their Air Force story.

By **SENIOR AIRMAN SAM SALOPEK**
349TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS



U.S. Air Force photo/
Senior Airman Sam Salopek
Capt. Jamie LaRivee
21st Airlift Squadron C-17
Globemaster III pilot

With childlike wonder, she watched as her mother pulled on a pair of combat boots. She witnessed her mother forge forward, knocking down walls that once stood to stall female progression. In the wake of that advancement, there was a maneuverable route the young girl could use to reach her own future goals.

Capt. Jamie LaRivee, a 21st Airlift Squadron C-17 Globemaster III pilot, saw her mother as a role model, and watched her excel in an Air Force career, making LaRivee certain she would follow in her mother's boot steps.

"She was in the first class of women at the Air Force Academy," LaRivee said. "That was a big piece of her life that shaped her completely, but it was also a big piece of my life, too."

After LaRivee graduated high school, she mirrored her mother and attended the Air Force Academy, where she majored in operations research and minored in German.

Her mother was a rarity as a female cadet in 1976. Similarly, today, LaRivee's career field is manned with just over 5 percent women.

"Not every little girl grows up dreaming to be a pilot," LaRivee said. "It's not a common perception for women to be in flying in general, let alone for women to be in the military."

While at the academy, she had an opportunity to fly gliders. She recalled how she felt in control of her own exhilarating roller coaster ride. After that, she was committed to make it as an aviator.

"There are still biases out there, and sometimes there are people who make assumptions," LaRivee said. "They're not so sure you can be as qualified as a male pilot, but that just makes you want to work even harder to show you're just as capable."

"In aviation, it doesn't matter if you're male or female- you're a flyer," said Barbara Brewer, the 21st AS unit program coordinator. "Your gender doesn't change that ability."

The world of 2017 has progressed socially far beyond the views of 1976.

"My mother faced a lot more challenges and a lot more barriers," LaRivee said. "There were not as many women who had gone before her to pave the way to prove that women were just as capable as men, if they worked hard at it."

LaRivee views her gender as a proud part of her identity. She is aware of the obstacles that being a female military member presents, and accepts them as an opportunity to excel beyond expectations.

"You can't pretend that we are built the exact same way as men. But, there are so many ways that we can, if not overcome it, become better," LaRivee said.

Trials arise throughout a military career that tests a

person's confidence in their own ability. While flying a mission, LaRivee was part of a predominately female crew. She remembers a passenger looked inside the flight deck and was shocked that he had been unable to tell the difference in women flying the aircraft rather than men. This comment did not bring LaRivee to question her capacity as a woman, but rather solidified her confidence in her skill.

"If you face challenges, don't let them get you down, let them inspire you to do better," LaRivee said. "There are so many women in aviation who have done amazing things, and there have always been people who doubted them."

In a 1996 speech made by LaRivee's mother, the message of femininity in the military rang out.

"One of the biggest challenges of being a woman in the military has and will continue to be balancing strength with sensitivity, confidence with humility," said retired Lt. Col. Marianne LaRivee, in a speech for the Senior Executives Symposium Spouses Program. "We want to show that we can do our jobs well, while also staying true to ourselves as women - daughters, sisters and mothers. That we can do what our country asks of us, while also living up to the cultural expectations and responsibilities of our gender."

The Air Force perseveres in its commitment for a brighter, more diverse future.

"We've made a lot of progress in the last 40 years," LaRivee said. "The social norms have improved so much in our favor as women in the military."

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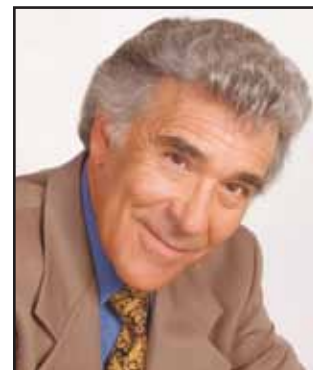


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Frank Pizzaro

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GCC to dedicate new veteran services center March 24

By CAROLYN DRYER
EDITOR

Although Chuck Pierce has retired as its director, the Glendale Community College Veteran Services Center is still operating on the college campus. In fact, veterans now have a new service center on campus that was dedicated March 24.

GCC is ranked eighth in the nation among veteran-friendly two-year colleges. The GCC veteran services center bills itself as a “one-stop” service for veterans who want to pursue education.

Named a Veteran Supportive Campus by the Veterans Administration, the veteran services center can help veterans transition from military life to the academic environment, get academic support and move into a civilian career.

GCC Interim President Teresa Leyba Ruiz,



Photo courtesy GCC

The new Glendale Community College Veteran Services Center was dedicated March 24.

Development Director Frances Mateo, who has been with the college 27 years, and Interim Vice President of Student Affairs Monica Castaneda gave a tour of the new center last week as a preview of the grand opening.

Castaneda said there

are more than 800 veterans enrolled in the center. They bring their families with them when they enroll, and the new center is a major improvement over the small building that has delivered services since 2010, and there was one staff member.

Leyba Ruiz said the center serves veterans from all conflicts, “and their family members as well.”

Veterans can transfer their education benefits to relatives. Leyba Ruiz recalled one veteran who transferred his benefits to his daughter.

“It was a beautiful expression of a father’s love for his daughter,” she said.

The demand has far outgrown the facility, and Leyba Ruiz said, “We had to find an alternative, an option. So, we scraped together the capital resources and

invested. The decision to expand was the right decision.”

An additional fact that makes the investment worth it – GCC’s veteran students are 58 percent more likely to graduate in three years, compared to GCC’s overall student body, Castaneda said.

Advisors at the center are veterans themselves. They can help plan an academic path, identify federal and state benefit options, and connect with veteran services on campus and in the surrounding community.

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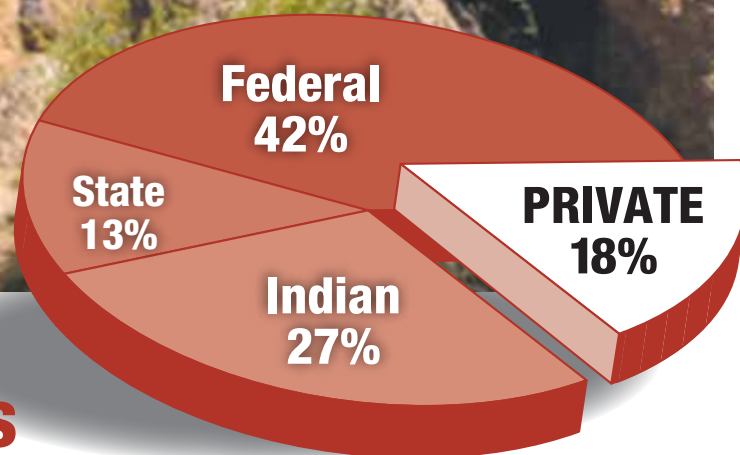
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Glendale Municipal Landfill serves city and Luke AFB

By **BETTE SHARPE**
GLENDALE DAILY PLANET

In 2013, Glendale City Council was advised by the city's Department of Public Works staff that operations at the Glendale Municipal Landfill "South Area" were approaching capacity and a projected Year 2017 closure of the southern portion of the landfill was eminent.

Glendale city leaders moved forward and approved a plan that called for the seamless transitioning of all landfill operations from the near-capacity south area to the landfill's north area, without impacting service levels to landfill customers.

The transition plan also involved the removal of the original administration building, heavy equipment maintenance canopy and outdated scale house, all of which had exceeded their useful life and the construction of new and updated facilities in the northwestern section of Glendale's landfill.

The \$4.6 million Municipal Landfill Facili-



Photo by Bette Sharpe/Glendale Daily Planet

Municipal Landfill Facilities Improvement Project, Feb. 27, 2017, ribbon cutting celebration. Glendale City Councilmembers, Jamie Aldama, Ray Malnar, Joyce Clark, Lt Col Hayle Wihongi, Deputy Commander, 56th Mission Support Group, Luke Air Force Base, Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers, Councilmember Bart Turner, Jack Friedline, Director Public Works Department, City of Glendale, representatives from Maricopa Association of Governments and the Solid Waste Association of America (SWANA), and leaders from the cities of Surprise, Peoria, Avondale, Goodyear, Phoenix and El Mirage. Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers thanked all those to who helped to make the new facility a reality with a heartfelt, "Well done."

ties Improvement Project broke ground in February 2015 and was completed in January 2017. The project consisted of the design and construction of a new administration building, a high-tech scale house and an equipment maintenance building.

Additional site improvements included relocation of the existing 69 kV APS power lines,

construction of a new main entrance roadway, the installation of new roadway approaches to the new scale house, roadway drainage enhancements, a new public drop-off area for recyclable materials, new directional signage and the installation of additional access road lighting.

In September 2016, Glendale entered into an

intergovernmental agreement with Luke Air Force Base to collect refuse and recyclable materials. Those materials are taken to the Glendale landfill. This has an approximate value to the city of \$184,000. Additionally, the recyclable materials from Luke Air Force Base will go to the Materials Recovery Facility, which is an added value to the city. If Glen-

dale did not have its landfill, the city would have to pay more than \$2 million in fees to haul and dump trash and waste materials to a different location.

Phase I: Administration building

The 4,368-square-foot administration building provides larger, updated staff workplace and offices, including ADA accom-

modations. New features include large restrooms with locker storage and showers, a training and break room, and a conference room equipped with a large screen monitor, Wi-Fi and video conferencing capability.

Phase II: Scale house

The new 784-square-foot scale house facility features two inbound and two out bound scales, including one equipped with high-tech attend-free wireless weighting software system and two out-bound scales (one bi-directional scale and one multi-axle vehicle scale) with drive-up service windows, a digital scale system, traffic lights and automatic gates to accommodate large volumes of customers.

Phase III: Equipment maintenance building

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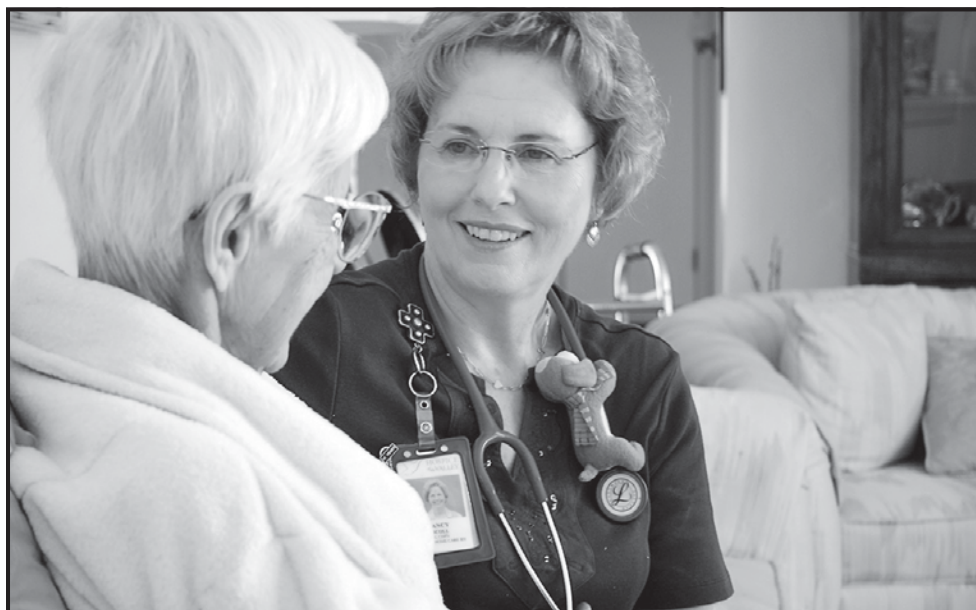
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Photo by Bette Sharpe/Glendale Daily Planet

Lt Col Hayle Wihongi, Deputy Commander, 56th Mission Support Group, Luke Air Force Base and Glendale, signs the Municipal Landfill Facilities Improvement Project welcome board, with Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers looking on, at the Feb. 27 ribbon-cutting for the facility.

LANDFILL: Service for the future, From 20

equipment work bays with steel-plated approaches and four overhead retractable entry/exit doors, an exterior wash-down area, large tool and storage areas, and overhead crane for large heavy equipment maintenance and external recycled fluids storage/extraction area.

Glendale Public Works Director Jack Friedline said in his welcome remarks to open the celebration, "These improvements will help us achieve three princi-

pal goals: 1. Improved customer service: reduced wait times for our residents and business customers entering and leaving the landfill; 2. Employee focus: We've transitioned staff from lean-to's and trailers to a state-of-the art equipment maintenance facility and administration building; 3. The addition of significant life to the landfill and ensured seamless transition from the south cell to the north cell."

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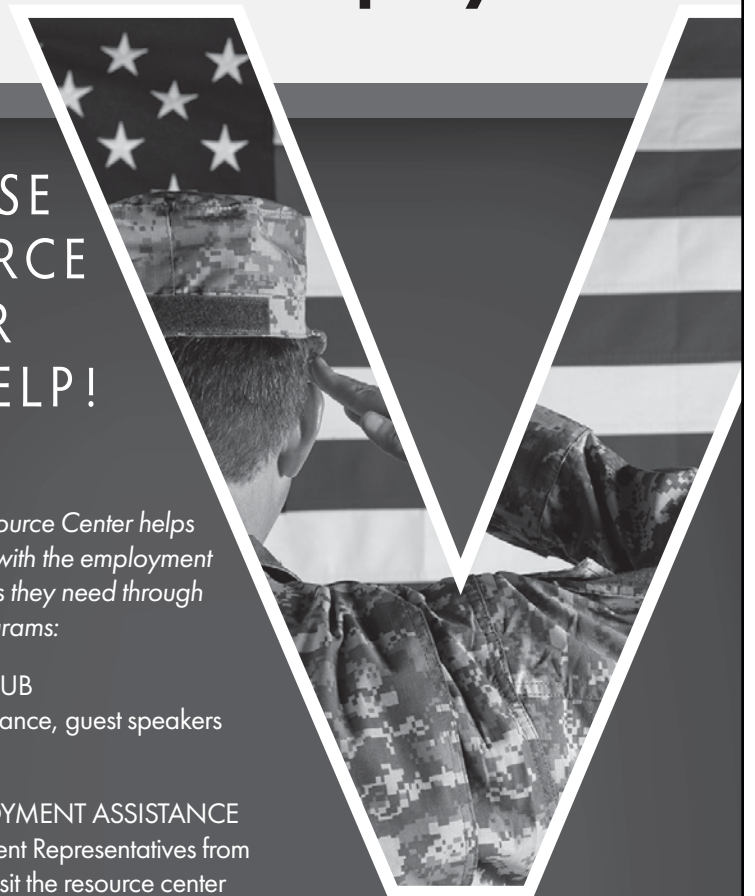
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Photos by Cpl. Wesley Timm, U.S. Marine Corps

Foreign aid up close and personal

Above, and below left, U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Douglas Casperson, builder, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Five, a Peoria native, builds a wall during the construction of a classroom at Ban Nong Mung school, Rayong, Thailand, during exercise Cobra Gold, Jan. 30, 2017. Cobra Gold, in its 36th iteration, focuses on humanitarian civic action, community engagement, and medical activities to support the needs and humanitarian interest of civilian populations around the region.






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Finances done the smart way

Everyone wants to be financially sound, but that doesn't just happen. The choices and priorities you make help determine your financial success. Being financially fit means you have control of your money instead of it controlling you, which makes your financial goals achievable.

Create a spending plan

If you're not a fan of the word budget, you're not alone. That's where a spending plan (not a budget!) can help. You're making money and deserve to treat yourself once in a while, right? But you want to do so within reason. Here are some strategies to help you spend smarter:

- 1. Figure your discretionary income.** Calculate the costs you have each month that do not change: rent/mortgage payment, car payment, insurance, electricity and groceries (use an average cost). Subtract this amount from your monthly take-home pay. What is left is your discretionary income — money to use at your discretion.
- 2. Look to the future.** Having big goals in mind (vacation, new furniture, pay off student loans) will give you motivation to reach your goal.
- 3. Pay yourself first.** With a spending plan, it's true you have the choice on how to spend your money, but financial experts recommend "spending" some on yourself right away by putting money into your savings account each month. Have a certain amount automatically transferred from your checking to savings each month; it's easy and painless.
- 4. List your needs and wants.** If your

car is due for an oil change and it's your child's birthday, those expenses likely need to come ahead of purchasing the latest smartphone. Your goal should be to spend wisely each month without having to reach for a credit card. Credit card debt is not part of a spending plan, unless it's something you can pay off in full the following month.

5. Keep tabs on your spending. Part of spending wisely is tracking your expenses, and noticing if you have funds available for a special treat or for saving.

Most people have never received financial education so it's important to seek sound financial advice from a trusted source. With its history firmly rooted in serving military families, Credit Union West has used its unique leadership position to provide support to the Base and its neighboring communities.

Recently, Credit Union West, alongside several community organizations, supported the Military Saves Week Financial Expo presented by the Fighter Country Foundation. All the agencies came together because they understand the importance of financial education and the positive impact it has on military families and their futures. In addition, together with the Airmen and Family Readiness Center, Credit Union West conducts two of the required four hours of financial education during FTAC. They equip young airmen with the tools necessary to make sound financial decisions, such as the ones above. The goal is to provide basic education to minimize the missteps that can so easily divert families from achieving financial success.



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Arizona Department of State receives Ariz. Veteran Supportive Employer designation

Arizona's Department of State has joined the growing list of employers granted the designation of Arizona Veteran Supportive Employer (AVSE). Secretary of State Michele Reagan initiated the process to become a part of the Arizona Roadmap to Veteran Employment in 2016.

The Roadmap is a statewide plan that engages public and private sector organizations with a goal of connecting service members, veterans and their families to employment opportunities, training &

resources. The effort is funded in part by the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family. The Department of Veterans' Services and the Coalition for Military Families are the lead implementation partners.

"We're honored to be a part of the AVSE network and will continue our effort to prioritize the hiring of veterans," Reagan said. "Former members of our armed services have unique leadership skills that consistently benefit the workplace. They've answered the call to defend freedom

and spread democracy throughout the world and we intend to honor that service by making sure they have every opportunity to find a new career with the state of Arizona."

Under the direction of Reagan, the Arizona State Library, Archive and Public Records Division has also developed www.azlibrary.gov/Jobline, which lists available library and information science positions in libraries, archives, museums and records management.

Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation announces acquisition of The Veterans Directory

To expand its long history of supporting veterans and their transition from military to civilian life, Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation has acquired the Veterans Directory (TVD), a comprehensive resource of organizations that assist veterans. This acquisition supports the foundation's ongoing support of the 650,000 veteran men and women who are current Arizona citizens.

The foundation launched the Veteran Success Project in 2015, an initiative to raise \$14 million dollars to provide veterans with the necessities to successfully transition from military to civilian life. Since its launch in 2015, the project has raised more than \$600,000 and has funded the West Valley Veteran's Center, scheduled to complete in May 2017. The center will provide assistance to veterans in finding affordable housing and transportation, as well as counseling support for career, education and

health care services.

TVD was launched in 2015 in Phoenix to provide access to a comprehensive, free online directory that empowers veterans and their families with online health and wellness, education, employment, and entrepreneurial resources without requiring a login or password.

The two organizations share a common mission to support veterans as they begin the life-long transition from military service into civilian life. By joining forces, both organizations can provide even greater support to veterans, offering more pathways to success.

Learn more about the foundation's Veteran Success Project at <https://mcccdf.org/fundraising/veteran-success-project/> and The Veterans Directory at <https://www.theveteransdirectory.org/>.

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Wings of Freedom Tour lands in the Valley April 10

The Wings of Freedom Tour of the WWII Vintage Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress, Consolidated B-24 Liberator, North American B-25 Mitchell and P-51 Mustang will be visiting Goodyear, Deer Valley and Scottsdale April 10 to 16. In honor of our WWII Veterans, the Collings Foundation's Wings of Freedom Tour brings extremely rare bomber and fighter aircraft for a local living history display as part of a 110-city nationwide tour

Participating in the Collings Foundation's Wings of Freedom Tour, B-17 Flying Fortress "Nine O Nine," B-24 Liberator "Witchcraft," B-25 Mitchell "Tondelayo" bombers and P-51 Mustang "Toulouse Nuts" fighter, will fly into three Phoenix airports April 10 to 16.

This is a rare opportunity to visit, explore, and learn more about these unique and rare treasures of WWII aviation history.



The P-51 Mustang "Toulouse Nuts" fighter will fly into three Phoenix airports April 10 to 16.

The B-17 is one of only eight in flying condition in the United States. The B-24J Liberator is the sole remaining example of its type flying in the world. The B-25 is best known for being used in the daring Doolittle raid and the P-51 "Toulouse Nuts" fighter recently received the 2016 Oshkosh Grand Champion Award for restoration.

Visitors are invited to explore the aircraft inside and out - \$15 for adults and \$5 for children under 12

is requested for access to up-close viewing and tours through the inside of the aircraft. Discounted rates for school groups. Visitors may also experience the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to actually take a 30-minute flight aboard these rare aircraft. Flights on either the B-17 or B-24 are \$450 per person. Get some "stick time" in the world's greatest fighter. P-51 flight training is \$2,200 for a half hour and \$3,200 for a full hour.



Photos courtesy Wings of Freedom

Phil Makanna will fly in the B-24 Liberator "Witchcraft."

B-25 flights are \$400 per person. For reservations and information on flight experiences, call 800-568-8924.

The Wings of Freedom Tour will be on display at Goodyear Airport, April 10 to 12; Deer Valley Airport, April 12 to 14 and Scottsdale Airport, April 14 to 16.

The Collings Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational foundation devoted to organizing

"living history" events that allows people to learn more about their heritage and history through direct participation. The Nationwide Wings of Freedom Tour is celebrating its 28th year and visits an average of 110 cities in more than 35 states annually. Since its start, tens of millions of people have seen the B-17, B-24, B-25 and P-51 display at locations everywhere.

MORE WINGS ON 31

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WINGS: Flying tribute, From 30

The Wings of Freedom Tour is one of the most extraordinary and unique interactive traveling historical displays of its kind.

The Wings of Freedom Tour travels the nation as a flying tribute to the flight crews who flew them, the ground crews who maintained them; the workers who built them, the soldiers, sailors and airmen they helped protect; and the citizens and families that share the freedom they helped preserve.

The B-17, B-25 & B-24 were the backbone of the American effort during the war from 1942 to 1945 and were famous for their ability to sustain damage and still accomplish the mission. Despite the risks of anti-aircraft fire, attacking enemy fighters, and the harrowing environment of sub-zero temperatures, many B-17s, B-25s and B-24s safely brought their crews home. The P-51 Mustang was affectionately known as the bombers' "Little

Friend" – saving countless crews from attacking axis fighters. After the war, many aircraft were scrapped for their raw aluminum to rebuild a nation in post-war prosperity and, therefore, very few were spared.

The rarity of the B-17, B-25, B-24 and P-51, and their importance to telling the story of WWII, is why the Collings Foundation continues to fly and display the aircraft nationwide. At each location, local veterans and their families are encouraged to visit and share their experiences and stories with the public. For aviation enthusiasts, the tour provides an opportunity for the museum to come to the visitor and not the other way around.

Visitors can find out more by visiting www.collingsfoundation.org.

For more information, e-mail Hunter Chaney, director of marketing: hchaney@collingsfoundation.org, or call 800-568-8924.

Planes of Fame Air Museum opens April 1



Planes of Fame gift shop

Located halfway between Williams and the south rim of the Grand Canyon, Planes of Fame Air Museum, 755 Mustang Way, Valle, houses more than 40 displays and aircraft, such as the Messerschmitt ME 109G Gustav, Stinson L5 Sentinel, Douglas RB-26 Invader, Grumman F11F-1F Super Tiger and Stearman PT-17.

Take a self-guided tour and rent an audio unit to hear information about some of the museum's star aircraft.

Details: open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily April through November; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Admission is \$6.95 for adults; \$6 for AAA

members; \$1.95 for age 11 or younger; free for active-duty military, age 4 or younger and museum members; \$4 for audio tour unit.

For more information, call 928-635-1000, or visit planesoffame.org.

Planes of Fame Air Museum is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that has grown since 1957 through donations and the dedicated work of volunteers.

Its mission is to preserve aviation history, inspire interest in aviation, educate the public, and honor aviation pioneers and veterans.

Can't visit the gift shop today? Shop online at shop.planesoffame.org.

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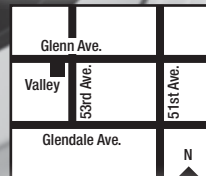
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