

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander Col. Bryan Cook

Command Chief CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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SnapShot Editorial Staff

Commander Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

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Photojournalists, PA
Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson
Staff Sgt. Nestor Cruz
Staff Sgt. Lauren Snyder







Ready to embrace the New Year

By Col. Kurt Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing commander

Welcome back and Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and are ready to embrace 2017. I look forward to what the New Year has in store for our wing and hope you are too.

This year there will be many changes in senior leadership starting from the top, including the President of the United States of America. We all reside in the greatest country in the world and our duty as U.S. Air Force Airmen is to protect and serve our country as our leaders see fit. Change can be scary at times but democracy affords each of us a voice and the power to express that voice when we elect our leaders.

Our very own command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, will be retiring next month as she moves on to a new chapter in her life. She has done an outstanding job as our Command Chief steering our wing through a lot of changes. I want to wish her and her family the best and let her know she will be missed.

I will also be retiring later this summer but with your help we can see to it that the next commander receives a "well-oiled machine" and will breeze through the remainder of the year on auto pilot. Especially as we prepare for another Capstone inspection at the end of this year. I expect that we will only improve upon our previous inspection. Let us start to work toward that with recharged motivation and hard work.

As everyone is aware, funds have been tight these last few months and I ask you to be patient. The CRA is expected to run through April but if there are issues that must be addressed please bring it up through your chain of command.

As a reminder, our Annual Awards Banquet will take place at the Wigwam on Saturday of the February UTA. Please do your part to support the event as we honor our best.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for what you do to make the 944th Fighter Wing an organization our Airmen can be proud of. Your integrity and hard work make me proud to be your commander and serve with you.

This is a fresh start to a new year so keep bringing the heat as the wing continues to grow and produce excellence. Have a wonderful UTA!



A whole new year, get new goals

By Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944th Fighter Wing command chief Well Gang, it is January 2017 already, Happy New Year to one and all!

If your friends and family are anything like mine, you've gone from 100 miles per hour of parties and family visits to zero all of a sudden after the New Year started. Now we have to move forward and deal with those post-holiday blues. You can look to your New Year's resolutions for motivations; but, if you're like me those are usually gone by mid-month and you are back to reality.

So what to do?

You have a clean slate, a whole new year. Nothing but opportunity and promise ahead. Looking back on last year will only bring you down; it may have been a great year, but you don't need the pressure of trying to top it. Last year is done, we've all been gifted a new start. This year might not be a great in some ways but work to make it unique in its own way. Be positive, get some new goals and be bold. Dr. Susan Battley, SUNY, believes in mnemonic of "Three Bags Full." Her approach is for everyone to have three full bags, a bag being a big audacious goal! I think that is a great idea!

One of the tips is to put them in writing so you and a buddy know what you're trying to achieve. In my case I have a whole Wing of buddies, so here are my BAGs for 2017. 1. Change Careers. I will be retiring for AFRC and the Wing in Feb. This is a huge change as I have been in the military in some way shape or form since 1989. This will be a big transition. I will be consolidating my civilian position and working to better that work center.

2.I am going to start a hobby to channel my extra energy. I have never really developed any hobbies throughout my adult life. This is a big goal for me because I have been focused on both careers and never really put any effort toward hobbies. I have looked into painting and working in stained glass...who knows, maybe I'll find my muse elsewhere, but I will be actively looking.

3.I will participate in another SPARTAN Race. I have done one, but keep talking about doing another for several years, but have not done it yet. This is my year! To each of you I say, set your goals high, be audacious, be the person you want to be. The only one holding you back is you! Enjoy your clean slate. Til our last month together Chief

"Don't stop, won't stop, keep fighting"



Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson, 924th Fighter Group Public Affairs

DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -The 47th Fighter Squadron hosted a local Tucson child as part of the "Pilot for a Day" program, Dec. 4.

The program focuses on children of all ages who have terminal or chronic conditions. The goal of the program is to give each child and family a special day and a break from the daily challenges they face.

The honoree for the day was Noah Hepner, 10. He was diagnosed with high risk Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, August 2015. He arrived at the base excited and nervous but he didn't face the unexpected alone. He was joined by his parents, siblings and two best friends

Capt. Keith Madsen, 47 FS A-10 pilot, volunteered to "train" Noah for the day. "I was very eager to be a part of this program" said Madsen, "The courage and perseverance this 10-year old boy has, is an example to all of us."

The squadron had one plan for Noah.

"We want him to forget about his daily life and focus on getting into the role of becoming a fighter pilot," said Madsen.

"It was a rough year for us, we've spent every holiday and birthday in the hospital because he's been so sick." said Lisa Chuinard. Noah's mother.

Noah's disease has prevented him from doing most things that healthier 10-year olds get to do. He missed his entire fourth grade year of school and rarely hangs out with other kids because of his compromised immune system, which means germs are life threatening to him. The day was a welcomed break for the family.

"He's been in his own fight and I really appreciate [the 47 FS] for honoring that and him," said Chuinard. "It's like a birthday party for him especially because he was able to invite his friends."

Noah shyly stood in front

of fellow 47 FS pilots, in his personalized flight gear, to be indoctrinated into the honorary pilot training program. After the ceremony he and his family headed out to see the A-10C Thunderbolt II up close and personal.

"Whoa! We actually get to sit in the cockpit!?!" said Noah.

The squadron was aware that Noah's favorite thing to do was playing video games so they planned plenty of time for the A-10C aircraft simulator. After a basic rundown of what the flight controls do, Noah had his bearing and everyone was left in awe of how quick he picked it up.

"He's a natural, look at that control, it's amazing," said Madsen.

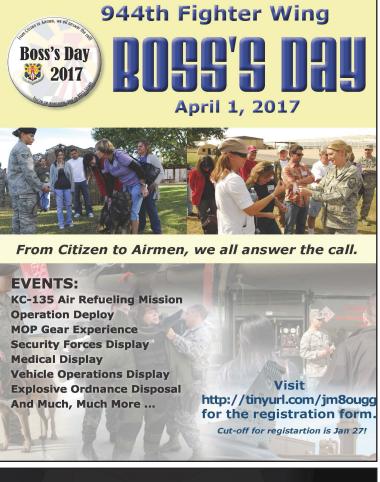
For the full pilot experience the aircrew allowed Noah's siblings and best friends to sit in another simulator and play against Noah.

After some well spent time in the simulator, Noah headed to the one other place he wanted to go to, the Armory. He learned about the various different weapons and how they operate.

Noah completed his "training" and the 47 FS made it official in front of the entire 924th Fighter Group.

"I want you all to meet Noah, the newest pilot of the 47 FS," said Lt Col. Brian Cusson, 47 FS commander.

"Noah, you are welcome here anytime and keep kicking cancer's butt."fighter squadrons and 144 F-35s.





Wing Quarterly Award Winners

Congratulations to our Wing Quarterly Award Winners for the fourth quarter!

Company Grade Officer of the Quarter:

1st Lieutenant Blake Conley, 414th Maintenance Squadron

Airman of the Quarter:

Senior Airman Dwight Turner, 414th Maintenance Squadron

Field Grade Officer of the Ouarter:

Major Daniel Daehler, 944th Operations Group Det. 2

Non-Commissioned Officer of the Ouarter:

Technical Sergeant Cassandra Kavanaugh, 944th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

Instructor Pilot of the Quarter:

Major Darrell Walton, 47th Fighter Squadron

Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter:

Master Sergeant Daneon Riley, 944th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Instructor Weapons Safety Officer of the Quarter:

Major Regginal Ramsey, 307th Fighter Group

Remarkable recruiters replenish Reserves

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Lauren Snyder, 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- The Luke Air Force Base 944th Fighter Wing Recruiting office recently received several significant awards and recognitions for excellence presented during their annual recruiting conference.

Tech. Sgt. Marquise Heard, 944 FW Reserve recruiter, won the prestigious Century Club, of which only five percent of recruiters ever receive and earned the Rookie of the Year award.

Heard distinguished himself by recruiting 63 new Reserve members, surpassing the annual goal by 350 percent.

Master Sgt. Ricketa Conley, 944 FW Reserve in-service recruiter, who is responsible for covering the Central Valley, was recognized as a superior performer by gaining 44 new recruits, 125 percent of her annual

The key to the recruiter's success has been

passion and persistence.

"It could be the grocery store or school. but really we talk to people anywhere." said Conley. "We have to be a people person and there are people everywhere. Sometimes. I don't even realize I'm recruiting because it feels so natural to talk about the Reserves."

As a shop, the flight's six recruiters won Top Large Flight in the third and fourth quarters. They are part of the overall trend that the Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service has shown by meeting the accession goal for the 16th consecutive year.

"I've never worked with such great professionals," said Senior Master Sgt. Clayton Callahan, 944 FW recruiting flight chief. "They are a great group of recruiters and we work very hard to ensure we are getting the right people in the right positions for the wing."...continued on page 9

January 2017 promotions: Congratulations to the following 944th Fighter Wing promotees From Airman:

Airman First Class Ian Timbreza, 924 MXS From Airman First Class:

Senior Airman Kyle Armand, 414 MXS Senior Airman Spencer Clark, 414 MXS Senior Airman Amanda Gonzalez, 924 MXS Senior Airman Christopher Merrill, 414 MXS Senior Airman Emmanuel Pate, 924 MXS Senior Airman Bret Robinson, 414 MXS Senior Airman Terry Rodgers, 414 MXS Senior Airman Duane Thomas, 414 MXS Senior Airman Robert Whitney, 414 MXS Senior Airman Amber Schumacher, 944 FW Det.1

From Senior Airman:

Staff Sgt. Kelvin Barnes, 924 MXS Staff Sgt. Garrett Barton, 924 MXS Staff Sgt. Krystal Broady, 944 FW Det. 1 Staff Sgt. Edwin Chapman, 414 MXS Staff Sgt. Chase Drye, 414 MXS Staff Sgt. Austin Fifield, 414 MXS Staff Sgt. Joshua Hurley, 414 MXS

From Staff Sergeant:

Tech. Sgt. Joel Alfarosalazar, 944 FW Det. 1 Tech. Sgt. Renee Boehm, 944 ASTS Tech. Sgt. Joshua Cameron, 944 CES Tech. Sgt. Shane Holland, 944 ASTS Tech. Sgt. Natatlie Semensow, 944 FW Det. 1 Tech. Sgt. Adam Smetak, 924 MXS Tech. Sgt. Marcus Webster, 944 FW Det. 1

From Technical Sergeant:

Master Sgt. Tanya Edwards, 944 LRS Master Sgt. Joshua Fitzgerald, 414 MXS Master Sgt. Danielle Graziana, 944 FW Det. 1 Master Sgt. Dale Hugo, 924 MXS Master Sgt. Steven Ratz, 924 MXS Master Sgt. John Slade, 924 MXS Master Sgt. Joseph Willis, 924 MXS

47th Fighter Squadron celebrates their heritage

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson, 924th Fighter Group Public Affairs



DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the 47th Fighter Squadron gathered their Alumni to celebrate the unit's history Dec. 6-7, 2016.

If you ask any one of the 25 Alumni present, what makes the 47 FS special they are going to say three words, Taylor and Welch.

2nd Lt. Kenneth Taylor and George Welch, assigned to then 47th Pursuit Squadron, were the first pilots in the air, without orders, when the Imperial Japanese Navy decided to bomb the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor.

"The U.S. was able to find a bright light in what was otherwise known as the darkest days of the U.S. military history because of the decisiveness, tenancy, and courage of some notable 47 PS fighter pilots," said retired Maj. Gen. James W. Graves, a former assistant to the Chairman Joint Chief of Staff for Reserve matters and former 47 FS commander 1996 to 1997.

Working off of an hour and half of sleep Taylor and Welch were woken up by gun-fire and low-flying planes. They quickly redressed in the clothes they were wearing the previous night and drove 10 miles, dodging machine-gun fire and



explosions, on their way to the airfield. Once they arrived, they immediately climbed into their Curtiss P-40 B Warhawk fighters and took off. Taylor and Welch are credited with taking down six Japanese aircraft.

With the significant historical background the unit has, many of the members felt as though something should be done to commemorate their incredible heritage.

Lt. Col. Robert Hetland, 924th Fighter Group deputy commander, decided to host a 47 FS Alumni event.

"We had 25 alumni, with seven of them being former squadron commanders from the 1980s to 2000s," said Hetland.

During their three-day visit the veteran's received a tour of the squadron and the A-10C Thunderbolt II. They learned about the technological updates and how they contribute in recent combat missions, and they also participated in a friendly competition in the

"Many of [the alum] last flew the A10A [model] before iron sights or GPS so during this visit they learned all about the capabilities of the A-10C," said Hetland.

To better understand the aircraft the alums had to opportunity to sit in the simulator and compete in teams of two. They had to take out ground targets while defending their positions in the air.

"I was able to wrestle the A-10C," said Graves. "The systems and switches are very different but what I chose to do was to keep it simple. I used the system that has defined the airframe from its production, the gun."

The Alums were thankful for the open welcome they received when they returned to the unit.

"The best part of the reunion was reconnecting with old friends and make new one," said Graves. "The 47th has a very proud heritage and it's great to see the legacy continue."

Western Winds

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson, 924th Fighter Group Public Affairs

TUCSON, Ariz.- Members of the 924th Fighter Group provided some extra cheer when they hosted a holiday party for the 95 residents of Western Winds Apartments here, Dec 3.

Western Winds Apartments is a low-income, independent senior living community. The community provides a safe, low-maintenance lifestyle, allowing residents to focus on socializing and engaging in recreational activities.

MSgt Kimberly Beecher, 924th training manager, coordinated the event based on experiences from her previous duty station.

"I was a volunteer firefighter and when we would go to calls for the elderly we kept notes of what they needed like lifts and stuff. At Christmas time we held fundraisers and spent the money on them getting them what they needed," said Beecher, "they seem to be forgotten."

Beecher began working with Dorrie Sabot, Western Winds property manager, back in October.

"It feels absolutely wonderful that my residents are getting this kind of attention," said Sabot. "My tenets are all low-income so there are a lot of things that they can't afford and do, so anytime someone is willing to donate and help them it fills our hearts big time."

Sabot sat down with each resident and helped them determine three things that they would like from the Airmen. She then returned the information to Beecher who placed it on a tree in the squadron for anyone to come, pick and fulfill. The request ranged from socks to a tablet.

"If they wanted to purchase all three they could or not and some bought gift cards so the resident could shop for themselves, giving them that independence," said Beecher. "It was all up to the Airmen about what they can afford and the response has been outrageous."

To present the residents with their gifts, Sabot and Beecher decided to make it holiday party style. They gathered the residents in the community room and the Airmen served treats and warm apple cider before handing out their wrapped gifts.

Many of the residents were in shock that the Airmen didn't forget about them.

"I've been here for 9 ½ years and this is the first time anything like this has ever happened for us," said Jane Au, Western Winds resident. "We've entered our second childhood, we are so very excited."

In addition to the gifts, the unit also collected 216 pounds of aluminum cans, raising \$96 dollars to purchase bingo prizes and recreational activities for the residents.









New Year, new you: Take control of your own health

By J.D. Levite, Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AFNS)- A new year can mean new opportunities, new discoveries and maybe a few new goals. While the New Year's Resolution is a common tradition, many of them get abandoned long before the new year is gone again. Setting goals for a healthier you is something everyone can do, if you do it right.

"Probably the most important thing is setting goals you can achieve," said Col. Thomas Moore, chief of Health Promotion. "Losing five pounds? It's a start. You can do that and build on it. Even small changes in weight can have an impact on improving health."

Setting small, manageable goals, gives you a chance to analyze how you got there. Moore said, "Once you hit that goal, it might be good to take a step back and say, 'What did I do right?' Was it because I was eating healthier stuff like fruits and vegetables? Move on that. Build on your successes."

The Air Force Medical Service is setup to provide many resources for helping people achieve their goals during the new year.

"The Health Promotion office can help with tobacco cessation. Many, not all, have a dietician who can either offer weight loss classes or possibly one-on-one counselling. If you don't want to go the health promotion route, next time you're seeing your doctor, talk about your goals with them," said Moore.

This new year will also be a great chance to change how Airmen approach their own healthcare, too, as the AFMS tries to get people more engaged during their medical visits.

"I would recommend Airmen and their families resolve to be more active partners in their care," said Col. John Oh, chief of Preventive Medicine. "We know care is safer when we have an effective partnership between the healthcare team and the patients. That's the kind of the cultural change we're trying to promote. The more patients understand about their conditions, their medications, their options - the more empowered they feel."

Oh and his team created the online Patient and Family Engagement Toolkit just for that reason, to provide specific ways to get patients and their families more involved in their own care. He said their goal is to make care safer and more effective.

"Healthcare is changing," Oh said. "The amount of information freely available to patients and family members is a paradigm shift. We want patients to feel more comfortable asking questions and getting involved in their care to the extent they are comfortable."



Courtesy photo

Moore said the new year is as good a time as any to achieve some new healthier goals.

"Have a conversation with yourself about what you want to focus on. Maybe it's important to focus on one small area, like losing weight or giving up smoking," Moore said. "These things can have a negative impact on Airmen performance, whether direct job performance or the ability to bounce back from a setback. The fitter you are, the fewer of those unhealthy behaviors you engage in, the better you'll respond."

One tool to use to set those goals is Comprehensive Airman Fitness, which is one of many ways Airmen can achieve balance in several aspects of their life. Each of the four areas – Mental, Physical, Social, and Spiritual – need attention throughout the year if you truly want to grow. Start now with a simple New Year's Resolution and continue to try new things as 2017 unfolds.

Troops to teachers

From Master Sgt. James Smith, 944th Force Support Squadron force development superintendent

Interested in putting your military experience to use in a K-12 teaching career? Check out the "Troops to Teachers"

Troops to Teachers was established in 1993 to assist transitioning Service members and veterans in beginning new ca-

reers as K-12 school teachers in public, charter, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. The program provides counseling and referral services for participants to help them meet education and licensing requirements to teach and subsequently helps them secure a teaching position. Since 1993, more than 20,000 veterans have successfully transitioned to a career in education.

The Troops to Teachers National Office is available to assist with program and state certification information.

Those who meet certain education, military service, and application requirements may be eligible for Troops to Teachers financial assistance to assist with their transition to the classroom.

Troops To Teachers will connect qualified participants with state or local hiring officials.

Mentorship program currently in development.

Get more information at the "Troops to Teachers" website located at http://www.proudtoserveagain.com/

FY 17 NDAA impact on Airmen

By Staff Sgt. Jannelle McRae, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs **WASHINGTON (AFNS)-** The approval of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 provides a number of changes for Airmen, retirees, and families, to include stabilizing readiness and end strength, improving pilot retention, modernizing compensation and benefits and enhancing transparency in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The NDAA authorizes an overall increase in manpower by 4,000 Airmen increasing the Air Force active forces end strength to 321,000.

For personnel compensation and benefits, effective Jan. 1, the monthly basic pay will increase by 2.1 percent, and while there will not be any changes made to the administration of the housing allowance the NDAA directs the defense department to begin planning for a transition to a single-salary pay system no later than Jan. 1, 2018. The goal is to create a system that better aligns the payment with the DOD's use of the housing allotment as compensation rather than as an allowance.

The NDAA additionally authorizes the Air Force to increase aviation retention pay from \$25,000 to \$35,000 per year and flight pay up to \$1,000 per month as needed to address manning shortfalls and challenges.

Also addressing staffing challenges, the Air Force is required to transition to an organizational model with enlisted remotely piloted aircraft pilots by Sept. 30, 2020, for the regular component and 2023 for the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard.

The NDAA also directs improvements to military health care. One provision authorizes the Secretary of Defense to establish a self-managed, preferred-provider network option under the TRICARE program.

This program – 'TRICARE Select' – will be available to active duty family members, retirees, reserve, and young adults. Under TRICARE Select, eligible beneficiaries will not have restrictions on the freedom of choice of the beneficiary with respect to health care providers. Cost sharing requirements are determined by prior military status. In addition, some additional cost sharing fees for Tricare Prime retirees and family members and small increases to annual enrollment will be implemented. Another provision requires the DOD to improve access to urgent care services in both military medical treatment facilities and the private sector, while also requiring Military Treatment Facilities to expand hours on weekdays and weekends to ensure the availability of primary care services.

In addition, the NDAA authorizes up to 12 weeks of total leave for a primary caregiver, including up to six weeks of medical convalescent leave, to be used in connection with the birth of a child. It also allows a primary caregiver up to six weeks of total leave to be used in the case of an adoption. In each instance, a secondary caregiver is also autho-



rized up to 21 days of leave.

This year's authorization also contains a number of civilian hiring provisions, including direct-hire authorities for post-secondary students and recent graduates, wage schedule employees, financial management experts, industrial base facilities, major range and test facilities, and positions at DOD research and engineering laboratories. The NDAA also returned a restriction on the appointment of retired members of the armed forces to civil service positions in the DOD within 180 days of their retirement. Previous statute allowed that restriction to be waived based on a state of national emergency.

The first major reforms to the UCMJ in 30 years were also part of the authorization. The implementation of the reforms should improve efficiency and transparency, while also enhancing victims' rights. The reforms include expanding the statute of limitations for child abuse offenses and fraudulent enlistment, and establishing new offenses ranging from improper use of government computers to retaliation to prohibited activities with military recruits and trainees by a person in a position of special trust.

Reserve recruiters continued from page 5...One of the programs that has helped Reserve recruiters reach their goals is the command program called "Get 1 Now". The program rewards individual Reservists who inspire qualified friends and acquaintances to consider and join AFRC. The program offers reward incentives when potential candidates are verified as a qualified lead. Once the referred individual actually joins as a new Reserve member, the referring service member becomes eligible for rewards like a mini-MagLite. cooler, multi-tool, quad copter, and more. For more information please visit http://www.getlnow.us/

