

SnapShot

944th Fighter Wing
Luke Air Force Base, Arizona
December 2018 Newsletter



Serving underserved communities

Major changes to medical policies good news for Reservists

Tributes flow in as nation mourns passing of George H.W. Bush

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Bryan E. Cook

Vice Commander

Col. Robert R. Tofil

Command Chief

CMSgt. Jeremy N. Malcom

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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SnapShot

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Bringing the Heat

December 2018

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Cover photo: Tech. Sgt. Renelle Conner, 944th Medical Squadron dental flight chief and Reserve Citizen Airman, is working toward becoming an orthodontist. A member of the Yakama Native American Nation, in her hometown of Toppenish, Washington, Conner is committed to serving underserved communities. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder)

Simple act of kindness Military kids doing amazing things!



The Falcon preschool class at the Luke Air Force Base Child Development Center, hosted a “Simple act of kindness” where they gathered bags filled with toiletries, snacks, and various items, to be handed out to homeless veterans in the Phoenix area. A total of 78 gallon bags were gathered from different classes at the CDC. The teachers wanted to encourage students to think about different ways they could help give back to the less fortunate this holiday season. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder)

Looking back at our accomplishments

By Col. Bryan Cook, 944th Fighter Wing commander

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! What a year we have had in the 944th Fighter Wing. This month I want to take a moment to remember what we have accomplished in the last year, and to say thank you for all that you do. This is truly one of the years to remember for the 944th.

In case you were sleeping, we deployed over 225 Airmen all over the world in support of contingency and combat operations. The most important part; we brought everyone home safely. This is truly an accomplishment and testament to the dedication and professionalism of our team. Even though we all did not deploy, I can assure you, it takes a village to ensure everyone is ready, has the right equipment, gets paid, and can travel to support our nation. This is something we can all be

proud of.

During 2018 we saw a renewed focus on readiness, not just in the Air Force Reserve, but across the entire Department of Defense. Readiness is now at the forefront of every discussion and decision. If it does not enhance readiness, we probably do not need to do it. We all have a responsibility to reduce ancillary training requirements and to stop doing things that do not enhance our ability to Fly, Fight, and Win.

In 2018 we stood up two new squadrons and a group officially marking the return of the 944th Maintenance Group. Something we have not had within the wing since 2008. This was truly a remarkable accomplishment for the entire wing, and I am sure this will lead to future opportunities.

The 414th Fighter Group at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, continued to train the world's

greatest Strike Eagle pilots and weapons systems officers. Col. Michael Eltz, 414 FG commander, led the 4th Fighter Wing Red Flag exercise to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, as part of our readiness training. This was quite an accomplishment. Up till then, the 414th had only been involved in the training mission, and not the operational flying.

The 924th Fighter Group at Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, continued to set new goals and achieve new heights in training for the wing. They accepted a record 30 plus B-course equivalent students, the most they have ever trained, en route to achieving full operational capability. In 2019, they will achieve FOC a full three years early. They are doing this while maintaining a fleet health that is rarely seen in the A-10 community.

Lastly, 2018 was full of golf tournaments, a civic leader tour to Nellis,

and numerous events that our honorary commanders and 944th Fighter Wing Booster Club supported with gusto. Between awards banquets, wingman days, holiday and welcome home parties, we could not do this without their support. They truly enhance and make our mission possible.

Please have a very Merry Christmas and happy holidays. I hope all of you have the opportunity to spend the holidays with your family and friends. If you can, try to reach out to someone in need this season and make their holidays special, it is about giving. As you celebrate, please remember those in uniform that cannot be with their loved ones as they are supporting and defending this great nation. We are a nation defended by volunteers, the greatest volunteer force in the world. Thank you for what you do every day... Keep "Bringin' the Heat"! Op

Wrapping up another great year

By Chief Master Sgt. Jeremy Malcom, 944th Fighter Wing command chief

What a great year the 944th Fighter Wing has had! We thankfully welcomed home all of our deployers safe and sound. I was personally emailed and called by downrange commanders and chiefs letting me know how awesome our folks are and what great work they were doing. I am thankful that they will get to spend this holiday season with their loved ones.

Their efforts have also won us awards at the Numbered Air Force and Air Force Reserve Command, including our nine for nine effort in STEP promotions.

Please take time this season to enjoy family and friends, and make sure you thank those that help and support you in your

life and career. Be sure to reach out to those families that have someone deployed or preparing for deployment. Knowing that our families are being looked after makes the deployment that much easier and less stressful.

As we close out 2018, I would like to thank you all for your hard work and dedication to the mission. We have made great strides with regards to readiness and I feel we are much better prepared today than we have been in some time.

I could not be more proud to serve as your command chief. I am sincerely blessed to have such an amazing group of men and women to serve. Tracey and I wish you the very best this season and hope you enjoy your well-deserved down time.





Tributes flow in as nation mourns passing of George H.W. Bush



By Jim Garamone, Defense.gov

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- President Donald J. Trump declared Dec. 5 as a national day of mourning for former President George H.W. Bush, who passed away Friday night at age 94.

Trump joined countless others in paying tribute to Bush and his lifetime of service as a Navy pilot in World War II, congressman, ambassador to the United Nations, CIA director, vice president and president.

“Through his essential authenticity, disarming wit, and unwavering commitment to faith, family, and country, President Bush inspired generations of his fellow Americans to public service – to be, in his words, “a thousand points of light” illuminating the greatness, hope, and opportunity of America to the world,” Trump said in a statement released by the White House Dec. 3.

“With sound judgment, common sense, and unflappable leadership, President Bush guided our nation, and the world, to a peaceful and victorious conclusion of the Cold War,” he said. “As president, he set the stage for the decades of prosperity that have followed. And through all that he accomplished, he remained humble, following the quiet call to service that gave him a clear sense of direction.”

Defense Secretary James N. Mattis said Bush “took his experience in war to build a better world as our commander in chief. His service to our nation demonstrated how we as a people can draw on our humility, diversity and devotion to our country to meet every challenge with fortitude and confidence.”

“We will miss him, but at the going down of the day, his example will long guide our Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Marines for how to live life without regret,” Mattis said.

International Leaders

All praised Bush’s steady hand on the tiller as the Soviet Union imploded and democratic government arose in Central and Eastern Europe. “When the Iron Curtain came down, the world needed politicians with visions and will,” wrote NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. “President George H.W. Bush was capable and committed. He seized the moment and shaped history. He will be remembered as one of the architects of the post-Cold War

ing the scourge of nuclear weapons and building a broad international coalition to expel a dictator from Kuwait. And when democratic revolutions bloomed across Eastern Europe, it was his steady, diplomatic hand that made possible an achievement once thought anything but – ending the Cold War without firing a shot.”

The man who defeated him in 1992 – President Bill Clinton – gave thanks for Bush’s “great long life of service, love and friendship.”

The two men became close while working together in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. “He never stopped serving. I saw it up close, working with him on tsunami relief in Asia and here at home after Hurricane Katrina,” Clinton said. “His remarkable leadership and great heart were always on full display.

I am profoundly grateful for every minute I spent with President Bush and will always hold our friendship as one of my life’s greatest gifts.”

All spoke of Bush’s devotion to his wife of 73 years, Barbara, who died earlier this year. “After 73 years of marriage, George and Barbara Bush are together again now, two points of light that never dimmed, two points of light that ignited countless

others with their example,” Obama said.

Perhaps the most fitting tribute was one of the shortest. On Twitter, the U.S. Navy posted a picture of President Bush with the words, “Fair winds and following seas, sir. We have the watch.”

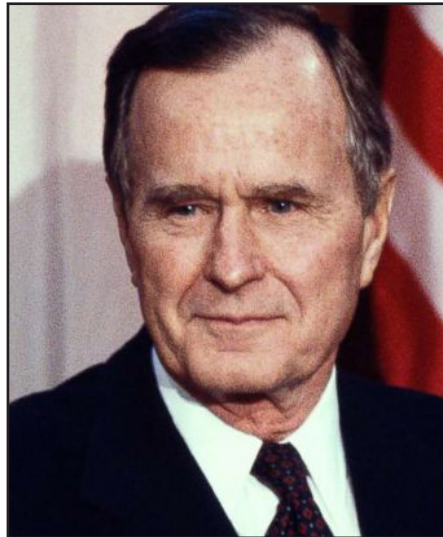


photo by Pfc. Elijah V. Foster



era and as a true trans-Atlantist.”

Bush was born into privilege, but was a true “servant leader.” “George H.W. Bush’s life is a testament to the notion that public service is a noble, joyous calling,” President Barack Obama wrote in a release. “And he did tremendous good along the journey. Expanding America’s promise to new immigrants and people with disabilities. Reduc-

Major changes to medical policies good news for Reservists

By Tyler Grimes, Air Force Reserve Command

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. -- When Col. John Buterbaugh took the helm as the command surgeon at Air Force Reserve Command in late summer 2018, he wanted to make some bold changes to improve processes for the 70,000 Reserve Citizen Airmen serving across the nation and around the world.

In an Aug. 28 letter, Buterbaugh outlined four initiatives to increase medical readiness across the command including, eliminating the medical case backlog, removing the mental health requirement differences between the active duty Air Force and Reservists, providing more full-time medical staff to local units and increasing decision-making ability on medical cases at the wing and squadron levels.

"The current Reserve medical system is out of step with the needs of the mission and the Airmen," Buterbaugh said in the letter. "This has led to the long backlog of cases, task saturation on the (unit training assembly), and decreased quality of medical administrative care of the members. Ultimately this has negatively affected medical readiness and has decreased the ability of the AF Reserve to take the fight to the enemy."

Of the four initiatives, aligning the mental health requirements with the active duty Air Force has seen the most progress and affects the highest number of Reservists, according to Buterbaugh. The standards are now the same and some of the mental health issues requiring a waiver or were disqualifying people from the Reserve have been eliminated. As major of a policy change as this was, leadership was able to move quickly to get it approved at the Air Force level.

"This didn't just affect the Reserve, it affected the Guard as well," he said. "Once they had signed off on the way it was written, it was voted on by the Air Force Medical Corporate Board."

The policy change was then added to and published in the Medical Standards Directory. With the new policy in place, Citizen Airmen who currently have waivers for certain mental health issues can now go through a process at their local medical units to have the waivers removed.

The goals of the policy changes are to increase the number of Reservists who are medically ready to deploy, retain more healthy members in the Reserve by eliminating unnecessary barriers and make it easier to recruit people from active duty into the Reserve.

"This is a huge win for the Air Force Reserve and the Guard too," he said. "People transferring into the Reserve and the Guard were affected by this."

One of test sites for moving the participation waiver process to the local level is the 315th Air-lift Wing at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. There, Master Sgt. Hope Lapoczka, Aerospace Medicine manager, is working with her team to implement these changes.

"By having a participation waiver granted it gives the members' squadron and leadership an opportunity to ensure their wellbeing while they are going through a sometimes difficult process," Lapoczka said, "especially when someone is going through a mental health related waiver. To some members, the Reserve is their family and their only support system, when you take that away it can have a heavy effect on that member's wellbeing. Overall it will increase our ability to complete the mission effec-

tively across the wing and keep a close eye on our fellow Airmen."

She said the policy changes have had secondary positive effects on the Reservists as well.

"In the past we have had participation waivers denied for members whose full case processing took sometimes over two years," she said. "This has caused the member to have two bad years towards retirement. Also, it helps relieve financial burdens from not having the monthly Reserve income that they were used to and for some members this is their primary source of income. Some members are on orders so often that they don't maintain a full time civilian job and rely heavily on military orders. If that type of member is denied a participation waiver for a disqualifying condition, it becomes a sudden loss of income."

At Travis Air Force Base, California, another test site, Col. Henry Schwartz, 349th Aerospace Medicine Squadron chief, said the ability to process participation waivers has added to the amount of work he and his staff has to do but it is a positive change.

"It transiently increased our workload as we dig through our backlog," Schwartz said. "However, the satisfaction of being able to get a valued Reservist back in the fight quickly is huge. The process has resulted in improved moral among the entire staff here at the unit."

These changes along with hiring more full-time medical staff to eliminate the medical case backlog are in motion to enable Reserve Citizen Airmen to serve and succeed.

Serving underserved communities

Story by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr., 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Native Americans make-up about 1.5 percent of the U.S. population. This month, during Native American History Month observance, we recognize their significant past and present contributions to this country, including efforts to give back to their communities.

Tech. Sgt. Renelle Conner, 944th Medical Squadron dental flight chief and Reserve Citizen Airman, is working toward becoming an orthodontist. A member of the Yakama Native American Nation, in her hometown of Toppenish, Washington, Conner is committed to serving underserved communities.

"I didn't look within the social norms as a child," said Conner. "I got made fun of a lot."

Conner suffered from dental abnormalities and her journey to repair those issues, as well as discover her life's passion, began on the reservation.

"The only orthodontist on the reservation at the time educated me on treatment plans and provided the best care he could with the skeletal disadvantages I presented him," said Conner.

At 19 years old, Conner enlisted in the U.S. Air

Force as a weather meteorologist specialist. As an active-duty Airman, she was able to receive the care that helped repair her dental issues.

"After they helped fix what was going on in my mouth, they helped fix what was going on in my heart," said Conner. "I realized then, that's something I wanted to be a part of."

Conner expressed how much she loved the weather career field and how difficult the choice was to begin a completely different path in becoming an orthodontist.

"People just don't drop what they are doing when they love something to put forth effort to do something entirely different," Conner said. "I collected bits of information I didn't know about myself to make a good decision for myself. I wanted a career where I could serve people and be thankful and proud for the service I give them."

Conner has been working toward achieving her goal for more than nine years, beginning with pre-dental coursework at Eastern Washington University, where she graduated with honors.

(continued on next page)

Conner then attended the University of Washington, School of Dentistry's Regional Initiatives in Dental Education program. The RIDE program exposes students to community dentistry in underserved areas in the hope that they return after graduation, serving the populations that need it most.

"Renelle is passionate about her heritage and her career," said Dr. Natalie Trongtham, doctor of dental surgery. "Those things largely define her as a person, and I am excited to see where her big personality will take her in the future."

Trongtham met Conner in dental school and both were enrolled in the RIDE program together. Trongtham witnessed Conner's determination to accomplish her goals.

"I always admired Renelle, because she balanced her family, being in the reserves, and getting through dental school all at the same time," Trongtham said. "Despite all the things she was juggling, Renelle was grounded and always had her mind on the big picture."

In 2009, after a four year stint, Conner left active-duty and joined the Air Force Reserve Command as a dental assistant. On the civilian side, since 2017, she has been an orthodontic resident and her dream to serve people, represent her Native American culture, and become an orthodontist is finally coming true.

As she looks to the future, Conner plans to remain a reservist and has always had a sense of responsibility to serve.

"I felt like I had a duty to my country to serve. My father set that example," said Conner. "It's so prevalent to join the military when you're from a native community, my culture was influence in itself."

"Growing up, my father used to ask me, 'what are you going to be when you grow up? How are you going to get there?'"

(Photos by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder)



continued Conner. "If my father were alive today, I would say, thank you for the example you set, I will never forget your

service. And I would tell him, I want to be an officer in the Air Force."

Conner has recently submitted a commissioning package to become an officer in the AFRC within the Dental career field.

Through everything she has accomplished, she credits her husband and mother for her success.

"My husband has been a source of constant encouragement, support and guidance, through our 15 years together," said Conner. "From the military, where we served together, to college, where he completed his engineering degree, he always had time to root me on, as I continued to climb the educational ladder."

"My mother is the reason why I work so diligently and have kindness in my service to others," said Conner. "She taught me hard work, compassion, and understanding for others. Needless to say, my mom is the one who has inspired me the most."

Lavon Meiser, Conner's mother, also has a heart of service and was active in the Johnson O'Malley Program; which aims to improve the education of Native American students enrolled in public schools.

"I always told my children, education is key to get out of poverty," said Meiser.

Meiser expressed how proud she was of her daughter and how she knew she would be alright because of who she was and where she came from.

"I felt it was important my children embrace their culture," Meiser continued. "I made sure they knew their history."

Throughout history, Native Americans have persevered and contributed to this country in many ways. Conner now has confidence in her smile and has demonstrated her commitment to achieve her goals and willingness to give back to communities in need.

"We [Native Americans] still exist in society and contribute greatly," said Conner. "People like myself are not invisible and we're not just on reservations, we are making things happen."

Congratulations

Col. Robert Tofil

944th Fighter Wing vice commander

for more than 25 years of flying for the United States Air Force and Air Force Reserve



(Photos by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder)



Santa Claus *is coming to the 944th!*

When:

Sunday Dec. 9
10 a.m. to Noon

Where:

Hangar 999

Bring your families!

There will be:

- Cookie decorating
- Coloring station
- Reindeer candy cane decorations
- Movie room
- Face painting
- Bounce house
- Trackless train-desert dwellers express
- Shriner's with mini cars and clowns
- Sumo suits
- Sporting equipment
- Photos with SANTA!!!



The “new” Nutrition Facts panel

The Food and Drug Administration just unveiled an updated Nutrition Facts panel, which is easier to read and reflects the 2015–2020 U.S. Dietary Guidelines. Recently revised after 20 years, this new format must appear on all packaged foods by July 2018 (with some exceptions). These are the facts to know:

- Highlighted calories, servings per container, and serving sizes. This information is larger and bold, making it easier to find at a glance.
- Vitamin D and potassium. These are now listed, since many Americans don’t get enough of these important minerals. Vitamin D maintains bone health, and potassium can help reduce blood pressure. Vitamins A and C are no longer included since deficiencies of these are rare.
- Added sugars. “Total Sugars” includes what’s added and what’s naturally occurring (but with “Added Sugars” also noted separately). This new information is especially important for those who are managing their nutritional needs and limiting their calories to less than 10% from added sugars.
- Updated “Serving size.” These now match what people typically eat or drink. For example, a single serving of soda might be 12 or 20 oz., depending on the packaging.
- Clearer footnote. The footnote better explains what “% Daily Value” means.
- Multiple serving sizes. Some packages, such as a pint of ice cream, include two columns: “per serving” and “per package.” This makes it easier to choose whether to eat or drink one serving—or the entire package—at one time.

Watch for the new Nutrition Facts panel to appear on your favorite packages soon. In the meantime, you can view it here.

Source: <https://www.hprc-online.org/articles/the-new-nutrition-facts-panel>

NEW LABEL / WHAT'S DIFFERENT

Servings: larger, bolder type

Calories: larger type

Serving sizes updated

Updated daily values

New: added sugars

Change in nutrients required

Actual amounts declared

New footnote

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

FDA

Get the FLU SHOT not the flu!

Date/Time Location

Saturday, Dec. 8

8 a.m. to noon	56th Medical Group/Base Clinic
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Hangar 999/944th ASTS

Saturday Jan. 12

8 a.m. to noon	56th Medical Group/Base Clinic
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The forthcoming Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 6205.02, "DoD Immunization Program," will require that all Active Duty and Reserve Component personnel, and DoD civilian health care personnel be immunized annually against influenza with vaccines approved for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and in accordance with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Accordingly, addresses should assure that their members receive their annual influenza vaccinations.

*Please bring a copy of your vaccination records if you received the influenza vaccine from a civilian medical provider.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

WING COMMAND SECTION

623-856-0944

WING SAFETY

623-856-5361

CHAPLAIN

623-856-5303

COMMAND POST

623-856-5600

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

623-856-5560

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

623-856-5716

INSPECTOR GENERAL

623-856-6682

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

623-856-5388

STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE

623-856-5333

RESERVE RECRUITING

623-856-5339

CUSTOMER SERVICES (IDS)

623-856-5358

TRAINING/EDUCATION

623-856-5318

AIRMAN & FAMILY READINESS

623-856-8324

HELP DESK

623-856-8024

SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE (24/7)

623-856-4878

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-8255



94th Fighter Wing Annual Awards Banquet

Luan

at the Renaissance Hotel at West Gate

Saturday, February 9th, 2019

Social hour - 5 p.m.

Dinner - 6 p.m.

- Junior Enlisted - \$9.44 – up to two tickets at this price. Third ticket and beyond \$50 each.
- NCOs, GS-07 and below - \$20
- MSgt, SMSgt, and GS-09 - \$30
- Chief thru Lieutenant Colonel and GS-11 and up - \$60
- Colonel and up - \$80
- Child Care for ages 3-13 is available for \$10 per child.