

SnapShot

944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

December 2015 Newsletter



Headlines:

Behind the scene look at 944th
citizen airman

Mayo Clinic cardiologist follows heart,
gives back to troops

EUCOM implements travel restrictions

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944th Fighter Wing Monthly SnapShot

www.944fw.afrc.af.mil

Bringing the Heat

December 2015

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander

Col. Robert D. Whitehouse

Command Chief

CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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SnapShot Editorial Staff

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Chief, Public Affairs

Maj. Elizabeth Magnusson

NCOIC, Public Affairs

Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante

Operations Chief, PA

Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

Photojournalists, PA

Staff Sgt. Nestor Cruz

Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder

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944th Mission

**Train and provide Combat-
Ready Airmen.**

Mission ■ Airmen ■ Family



Command Commentary

Closing out another successful year



By Colonel Kurt J. Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing Commander

Happy Holidays! As we close out another successful year, I would like to extend my thanks for all you have done to keep this machine we call the 944th Fighter Wing moving, especially while operating under fiscal constraints. Hopefully, the continuing resolution will pass on Dec. 11 and we can get back to work as usual.

The holiday season is a great time to spend with family and friends, to reflect and be thankful for what we have. It can also be a very stressful time of year with financial pressures, shopping, baking, cleaning and other personal demands. If you find yourself, a holiday stress victim, seek out community, religious, or wingman support. Remember to look out for each other and provide assistance when needed.

Be safe when traveling and when participating in holiday libations remember to be responsible and have a back-up plans that include sober volunteer drivers, taxis, or sleeping arrangements.

Let's enjoy the holiday and return safe, relaxed, and ready to work in January.

This UTA should be fun. I look forward to seeing all you and your families at the holiday party and I hope that all of you have Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Holidays are a time to reflect on the past

By Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944th Fighter Wing Command Chief
944th Warriors!

Happy Holidays! It hardly seems like another year has passed but here we are with just a few weeks left in 2015. As I told you last year, I take time every year during the holidays to reflect on the time passed. And what a year it has been. We have just spent a day thanking our Veteran's for their service and a day giving thanks for the bounty we have. You have once again proven your mettle passing our readiness evaluation with distinction; you have added a new weapon system to our Wing and begun training. Many of you have deployed forward to support our allies and defend freedom everywhere. The recent violence in Paris and Mali show how much your service is still needed. And it is your spirit of selfless service that heartens me most about our Wing. When I look at our Wing I see dedicated Airmen standing shoulder to shoulder defending our country, our families, and freedom everywhere. Most importantly, I see Airmen holding out a hand to other Airmen, helping them up when they stumble, and being true Wingmen.

It is important to remember that the holidays can be very difficult for some. Please look out for each other. If you see someone in need of help, act. And if you find yourself in need of help, ask for it. The coming year will be exciting and demanding and our Wing will need every Airman back and healthy to be as strong as we will need to be.

My hopes for the coming year are the same as my hopes for this year; the Wing continues its proud tradition and history, we continue to help and take care of each other as we are a family, we take failure as an opportunity to learn and grow, not to place blame. In short, be the people we always knew we could be. Finally, it is an honor and blessing to serve as your Command Chief and I hope a positive impact has been made on each one of you.

I wish you all and your families a very Happy Holiday season and a safe and prosperous New Year. 'Til next time Chief.

2015 winter holiday command message

From Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Cody,

The winter holidays provide an opportunity to relax and celebrate with our families and friends. It's also an opportunity to re-establish a proper work-life balance by enjoying the seasonal festivities and activities.

We work diligently all year to reduce mishaps, and we should not ignore those efforts during the much-deserved break. Sadly, last year we lost five Airmen in off-duty mishaps between 22 November and 2 January. Every Airman, uniformed and civilian, must take a few minutes to include sound risk management in his/her winter and holiday plans. The same risk management principles that keep us safe on duty are just as effective when traveling and enjoying recreational activities off duty.

Think through every plan and have a backup plan for contingencies. Pay close attention to weather conditions, remain vigilant, and maintain proper awareness of your surroundings.

Use your training and common sense to do the right thing. If you see someone in need, help them. If you're the one struggling, make the right choice and seek help from a friend, a supervisor, or a professional.

We are the best Air Force on the planet because of who we are, how we approach challenges, and what we do for our families and fellow Airmen. The Air Force and the Nation need every Airman to be ready and available to respond when and where called.

Your family, friends, and Nation depend on you to make safety a priority in your winter and holiday plans.

While enjoying the season, take care of yourself and take care of each other.





Wing News

Behind the scene look at 944th citizen airman



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nestor Cruz

By Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante, 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 944th Fighter Wing Air Force Reserve unit at Luke AFB hosted Boss's Day 2015 on Nov. 7, 2015 providing over 85 employers the perfect way to take a peek into the military service of their employees.

In an action packed day designed to provide civilian employers, from both across the valley and out of state, insight into a day in the life of a citizen airman, the guest employers observed wing members training in combat and support skills used during real world deployments.

Opening comments and a wing mission briefing were given by the 944 FW commander Colonel Kurt Gallegos. "We have two goals here today, show case the 944th and have some fun."

From taking to the sky to observe a refueling mission from the belly of a KC-135, provided by the 434th Air Refueling Wing from Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., to participating in a military convoy exercise employers were given a behind the scene look not given to many civilians.

"This was just fabulous, well worth the trip. It was so educational and I have to say I am really impressed with the staff everyone is prepared, friendly, and so knowledgeable. The convoy training was a whole new experience for me," said Bobbie Gibbons, an insurance agent who traveled from Salt Lake City to attend the event.

Wing members showcased how they hone their combat skills, talked about personal experiences, discussed how they train on programs such as the Emergency Medical Systems, and explained how improvised explosive devices are discovered and de-arm'd. The day's events also included several squadron exhibitions and demonstrations to include an F-35, F-16 and A-10 static display.

Tech. Sgt. Brian Miller, a fuels technician with the 944th Logistics Readiness Squadron nominated his boss for a Patriot Award and asked her to attend the Boss's Day event. "My supervisors are always understanding and supportive of my military commitment and overall decision to serve."

The Patriot Award, given by the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, reflects the efforts made by civilian employers to support Reserve members through a wide-range of actions including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence if needed.

"The flight was so fun, this whole tour was an eye opening experience for sure," said Ms. Rebecca Keefer, Facility Manager for CB Richard Ellis/Cigna and civilian supervisors of Miller. "I really had no idea what Brian did on a [unit training assembly] weekend, he has a great work ethic and wonderful customer service skills that I can see probably come from serving in the military."

Closing out the day participants gathered for closing comments and presentation of ESGR Patriot Awards.

The objective was to give employers a better understanding of what their Air Force Reserve Employees do when they are away from the office serving their military commitment. "Balancing family, a civilian and a military career is not easy. The support given by a civilian employer is invaluable, if it wasn't for you all, we could not do our job" said Gallegos. "I truly believe we exceeded that goal here today."

December 2015 promotions: Congratulations to the following 944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman Basic:

AMN Trevor Kortman, 924th MXS
AMN Angelica Santamaria, 924th MXS

From Airman:

A1C Theresa Hernandez, 924th MXS

From Airman First Class:

SrA Brandon Ritter, 944th SFS

From Senior Airman:

SSgt Jason Dodd, 924th MXS
SSgt William Raines, 414th MXS
SSgt Juriana Villalpando, 924th MXS

From Staff Sergeant:

TSgt Reacel Allen, 47th FS
TSgt Luis Castro, 414th MXS
TSgt Jennifer Dimant, 944th FSS
TSgt Stephen Grenat, 924th MXS
TSgt Joseph Hennessy, 944th FSS
TSgt Timothy Rosio, 944th FW Det1

From Technical Sergeant:

MSgt Chad Howerly, 414th MXS
MSgt Robert Mason, 924th MXS

From Master Sergeant:

SMSgt Lawrence Tennison, 944th FW Det1
SMSgt Joseph Ware, 924th MXS

From Senior Master Sergeant:

CMSgt Jeremy Malcom, 924th FG
CMSgt Henry May, 924th MXS

BRINGING THE HEAT

944th FIGHTER WING



Wing News

Mayo Clinic cardiologist follows heart, gives back to troops



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Chin Cox

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

Both a father's dream for his son's success and a son's desire to serve his country, finally came true in pursuit of the American dream October 24.

Dr. John F. Beshai, Arizona Mayo Clinic cardiologist and senior associate consultant, took the Oath of Office for the United States Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) and more specifically the 944th Aeromedical Staging Squadron during a short ceremony here. His wife, eight month old son and mother were also there.

Beshai has been a doctor for over 20 years and is one of 31 cardiologists at the Mayo Clinic. He practiced in Chicago and even served as the team cardiologist for the Chicago Blackhawks before coming to Arizona in 2013. His main reason for joining the Air Force at age 46 is as humble as the man himself, to give back to the troops and to serve the country that has given him so much.

Col. Kurt Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing commander, tendered the Oath of Office and welcomed Beshai to the unit. Gallegos expressed how lucky the Wing was to have him and how lucky Beshai was to be a part of a wing like the 944 FW.

Beshai was an infant when his family came to America in 1969 via Jersey City, New Jersey, looking for better opportunities and with hopes for a better life, like so many immigrants in the past. A Coptic Christian born in Egypt, raised in Ohio, Beshai was

brought up with values of spirituality, respect, appreciation, and earning everything with hard work and perseverance.

At age 15 he found his life's calling when his father was diagnosed with heart disease and had to have open heart surgery at age 45.

"Having to watch my dad go through that ordeal was when I knew I wanted to be a cardiologist and to one day be able to care for him," said Beshai.

His father survived the surgery but later succumbed to pancreatic cancer at age 63 and never got to see the results of his efforts and sacrifices for his children's success. Beshai's only other sibling is his younger sister, who is a surgeon.

The interest to serve his country has been growing inside throughout his life but out of respect for his father's wishes to go to college and obtain a better life, Beshai decided not to.

"Over the years, as I became more successful in my career, I became more appreciative and thankful for the opportunities I had that this country has given me and recognizing that those opportunities and freedoms came with a very heavy price," said Beshai.

His interest in joining the Air Force Reserve started in 2009 but proved to be unobtainable after a series of circumstances prevented him from joining. In 2013, he moved to Arizona and met Col. Curtiss Cook, 944 ASTS commander and Professor of Medicine at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, and Chair, Division of Endocrinology, Mayo Clinic Arizona. Cook, peaked his interest in joining the military once again, before eventually getting in contact with Master Sgt. Randi Cross, AFRC health professions recruiter, who helped guide him through the recruiting process.

"I believe his actions send a message that Dr. Beshai lives by the Air Force core values already; integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do," said Cross. "I have recruited over 500 members into the Air Force Reserve over my tenure as a recruiter but I must say that Dr. Beshai is one of the most accomplished, skilled professionals that

I have had the pleasure of working with."

Beshai has a long list of accomplishments including completing fellowships in Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology, Cardiovascular Medicine, and Internal Medicine. He was the Associate Director of the Heart Rhythm Center and Director of Pacemaker and Defibrillator Services at the University of Chicago; his Curriculum Vitae includes his research activity, peer reviewed manuscripts, and book chapters that he has had published. He is a fellow of the American Heart Association, Heart Rhythm Society and he is an internationally renowned researcher and invited speaker to many courses and conferences on the subject.

"Dr. Beshai always expressed an interest in giving back to his country," said Cook. "As a cardiologist and electrophysiologist, Dr. Beshai brings unique skills and knowledge that will enhance our education and training mission to better prepare us for medical contingencies."

It is common for health professional to receive monetary incentives for joining, but Beshai is joining without receiving anything based on the fact he is going into an overage slot. In fact, he originally thought his commitment to the AFRC would be volunteer work and that he would not get paid.

His unselfish desire to care for the men and women in uniform and use his skills and expertise to train and mentor his fellow medical professionals has finally happened. He has achieved yet another goal he set out to complete, to wear the U.S. Air Force uniform.

"When there is a calling far greater than what you do every day and you have a passion and desire to do something [serving the country] you have to follow that at any cost," said Beshai. "The fact that our service men and women are going abroad to fight that fight for our people, I can't sit back and watch, I have to be a part of that, I have to be able to help them."

Beshai will be filling a flight surgeon billet and is scheduled to report for his first unit training assembly in January.

"His strong commitment to serve has put the needs of the Air Force Reserve before himself and his family," said Cross. "Hopefully, this sends a message to other potential recruits that while there are many benefits to being a member of the Air Force Reserve, you must have the desire to be part of something bigger than yourself."



EUCOM implements travel restrictions

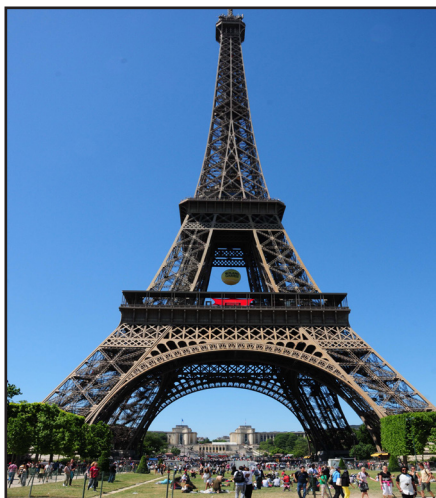


Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

By United States European Command

United States European Command has implemented travel restrictions to France that apply to all Defense Department personnel. Specifically, unofficial travel (leave, liberty and special pass) to France is prohibited.

This EUCOM policy applies to U.S. military personnel, DOD civilian employees, contractors and command-sponsored dependents and family members.

Paris travel

This prohibition is for unofficial travel to Paris, and includes a 50-kilometer radius around the city. For those requesting official travel or emergency leave travel to Paris (or within a 50-kilometer radius of the city), approval from the first general/flag officer or SES in the chain of command is required.

Elsewhere in France

Official travel and emergency leave travel to France requires approval from the first general/flag officer or SES in the chain of command.

Again, this EUCOM policy applies to U.S. military personnel, DOD civilian employees, contractors and command-sponsored dependents and family members.

These restrictions also apply to cruise ship shore excursions but do not apply to military personnel assigned to diplomatic posts in France and individuals who have commercial airline connections in the country and will not leave the secure portions of airport terminals.

This is a precautionary measure to keep personnel and families safe in light of the recent attacks. This is also an effort to help minimize tourist traffic at the borders in France, and, particularly, in Paris as the French authorities continue their investigation.



Top 10 Ways to Stay Stress-Free

- ☐ **Get plenty of endorphin-boosting exercise.** This can be as simple as a 20-minute walk or following along with a yoga DVD.
- ☐ **Eat a healthy diet.** Make sure you get plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein and water in your daily diet. Enjoy holiday treats, but go easy on them!
- ☐ **Do something kind for someone.** Pick up groceries for an elderly neighbor, take on an extra chore for your spouse or volunteer for charity.
- ☐ **Take some quiet time for yourself.** You can practice meditation, deep breathing or progressive relaxation techniques to calm your nerves.
- ☐ **Find a new hobby.** Studies show that repetitive activities such as knitting, crafting and latch-hook have a calming effect.
- ☐ **Reach out to a good friend and talk about what is going on in your life.** Sometimes it helps your stress level to get things off your chest.
- ☐ **Spend quality time with your family.** You can watch a favorite holiday movie together or go on a tour of local holiday lights.
- ☐ **Get at least eight hours of sleep.** Try not to drink caffeine late in the day and take time to unwind in the evening so you can go to bed with a calm mind.
- ☐ **Take time to laugh.** Plan a fun activity, watch a comedy or read a funny book.
- ☐ **Make a list of positive things in your life and practice gratitude every day.** Counting the good things in your life can put the stressful things into perspective.



944th Fighter Wing Gift Card Drive

Sponsored by the HRDC

Join the HRDC in sharing some holiday cheer by supporting our fellow Airmen in need! Just bring in a gift card of \$20-\$100 for a local grocery store, Target, or Walmart to help pay for a Holiday meal.

Gift cards can be dropped off at the 944th Family Readiness office, Bldg. 993, at the following dates and times:

- Saturday, 5 December – all day
- Sunday, 6 December – 0700 to 1000



For more information contact Ms. Jessica Paul, ext. 2289, or SSgt Perla Tapia Cordero, ext. 2283



Benefits of Thrift Savings Plan

By Tech. Sgt. Karla V. Lehman, 94th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Thrift Savings Plan provides military members a 401(k)-like savings plan, which allows members to contribute pre-tax dollars thereby reducing current taxes, and accumulating long-term, tax-deferred savings and earnings, which can supplement future retirement income.

Participation is convenient through pay-roll deduction, and account management can be done on the internet. Open season enrollment is not an issue and members can enroll, make changes, and update at any time.

The amount members can contribute changes annually. Members may elect to contribute any dollar amount or percentage of basic pay. However, your annual dollar total cannot exceed the Internal Revenue Code limit, which is \$18,000 for 2015 through 2016. For members who are age 50 or will turn 50 this calendar year, may be eligible to make additional contributions to their plan, called "catch-up contributions" up to \$6,000.

The Thrift Savings Plan is an important benefit designed to help members save for their future. The plans offers all participants:

- Tax deferral on contributions

- A choice of five investment funds and additional life cycle funds.
- A loan program



Courtesy photo

- In-service withdrawals for financial hardship or after age 59 and a half
- A choice of post-separation withdrawal options
- TSP Survivor Withdrawal Options
- The ability to transfer money from other eligible retirement savings plans into your TSP account

According to the Defense Finance Accounting Service website, members may elect Roth or traditional TSP contributions. Traditional TSP contributions are deducted pre-tax; taxes are deferred until you withdraw your contributions. Roth TSP contributions are taken after-tax.

If members elect to contribute to TSP, the contributions will be deducted from their pay account.

Contributing as much as you can to TSP retirement coverage is simply a smart financial move. Further information on TSP as well as election forms may be obtained at their website. You may also find information from the command or installation personal financial counselors, or the finance office.

2015 944FW SPEED MENTORING & VOLUNTEER FAIR

Presented by Top 3 & HRDC

Date: Sunday, 31 January 2016

Time: 1200-1500

Location: Hanger 999

OPEN TO ALL
PERSONNEL



Free Food

Door Prizes

Gift Certificates

Prize Give Aways

Great opportunity to network
Talk with subject matter experts
Volunteer with local organizations

POCs: MSgt Kelley Scogin
SSgt Perla Tapia Cordero

944FW PT Challenge



Relay Race

Saturday 9 Jan, 2016 @ 1500-1600 Base Track

- 4-Person Team
- 5 Events
- 1 Minute to Win It
- POC: MSgt Shadden @ 6-7320
- Sign up Now!

Presented by 944 FW Det 1

AIRMAN'S CREED

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.

I AM A WARRIOR.

I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.

MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.

I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,

A TRADITION OF HONOR,

AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,

GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,

MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD,

ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.

I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:

WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.

I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,

I WILL NEVER FALTER,

AND I WILL NOT FAIL.



The SnapShot wants to highlight you and/or your unit. If you would like to submit an idea, article, or photo for the SnapShot, please e-mail 944fw.pa@luke.af.mil or call 623-856-5388.

Col. Robert Whitehouse, 944th Fighter Wing vice commanders, is taped by fellow pilots after taking his "fini flight" here Nov. 18. Fini-flights are designed to celebrate milestones for respected individuals rank, commanders departure to another command or retirements. Whitehouse has served as vice commander since 2013 and has been with the Wing since 2011. In January Whitehouse will transition to the 56th Fighter Wing as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee. (U.S. Air Force photo taken by Maj. Elizabeth Magnusson)