

FCP Visions



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

Winter 2015

Luke Days set for April 2 and 3

Luke Air Force Base's 56th Fighter Wing will host Luke Days April 2 and 3. The event is free and open to the public. The air show theme, "75 Years of Air Power," will mark Luke's 75th year of operation since its founding in 1941.

"Luke AFB has trained fighter pilots for every war and conflict since we were called Litchfield Park Air Base back in 1941, so it's special that we get to celebrate 75 years of service here in the West Valley with an air show," said Brig. Gen. Scott Pleus, 56th FW commander. "We're excited to open up the base to the public and showcase our mission of training the world's greatest F-35 and F-16 fighter pilots. We'll have lots of



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Boyer
Capt. Jason Curtis, U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds opposing solo pilot, signs autographs March 16 for fans during the 2014 Open House and Air Show at Luke Air Force Base.

aerial performances, and of course, the new F-35 on display. I hope everyone can come out and see the

great things Luke's Airmen do every day."

The F-35 Lightning II and the F-16 Fighting Fal-



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Pedro Mota
An Air Force Academy cadet flies in with the colors March 16, 2014 at Luke Air Force Base during the Open House and Air Show.

con will be among the static displays. The schedule of aerial performers and full

list of aircraft on static display is being developed.

"I can't wait. I miss the

days of air shows being an annual thing. Hope there will be an A-10 demo," wrote Hector of Phoenix on the Luke AFB website Luke Days comment page.

Michael of Avondale wrote, "Awesome. Cannot wait for this show to begin. Thank you for the far in advance warning. You guys and gals are great and appreciated very much."

Luke welcomed more than 150,000 spectators per day during the air show weekend in 2014 and expects to host that many Arizonans next year.

As in past years, Luke AFB's website -luke.af.mil - will feature a page dedicated to the 2016 air show to provide information as it becomes available.



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From the desk of Chairman of the Board Fighter Country Partnership

As spring approaches, I find it hard to believe my Fighter Country Partnership Board Chairmanship is coming to an end. Not to sound too cliché, but these three years have flown by. Just three years ago, Charley Freericks was wrapping up his more than five-year term as FCP's Board Chair. Under Charley's leadership, FCP had become a very healthy and viable advocate for the men, women, families and mission of Luke Air Force Base. Charley, working alongside the new President & Executive Director, Ron Sites, had placed FCP on a path that increased its visibility, financial impact, and relevance to Luke.

In what many refer

to as "a moment of weakness," Charley asked if I would succeed him as the Board Chairman back in late 2012. Thanks to Charley's smooth transition and Ron's leadership, Fighter Country Partnership and Fighter Country Foundation have continued to grow in their effectiveness over these last three years.

Since 2012, we have seen Luke AFB solidify its future as the chosen base for the future of F-35 pilot training. We have had the privilege to witness the historical delivery of the very first F-35 at Luke. We have also continued to monitor land use issues in and around Luke, and have fostered strong relationships with the



David Scholl
Board Chair
Fighter Country Partnership/Fighter Country Foundation

communities that have long supported the activities at the base.

During my tenure, I have witnessed the formation of the Blue Blazer Squadron, an Honorary Commander "alumni association" of individuals who finish their two-year commitment in the base's Honorary Commander program. At the end of the two-year commit-

ment, these individuals find themselves with a huge passion for Luke's mission, and they are able to continue their service through the Blue Blazer Squadron program.

This "boots on the ground" force within FCP has been a huge component of FCP increasing its impact on those we want to serve. Our annual Honorary Commander Golf Tournament continues to be highly successful, and an event many in the West Valley look forward to each year. It is through this type of fundraiser that FCP and FCF have increased their reach each year in supporting the base in areas of Health and Human Services, Culture and

Tradition and Mission Sustainability.

It would take pages to list all that FCP and FCF have accomplished over the past three years. The future is equally as bright. We are excited about Fighter Country Foundation growing in its ability to take on, and deliver, larger and more ambitious projects on the base that supports the mission at Luke. There are truly exciting times on the horizon.

Finally, I want to thank some very important people for making my time as Board Chairman so enjoyable, and for being so instrumental in allowing FCP to be so impactful. Ron Sites, Susan Lovelace and Veronique Cruikshank continue to be

an amazing resource for Luke AFB. I have been on many civic boards and cannot remember any with such talented, tireless and committed staff. Rusty Mitchell and all of his staff at the Luke Community Initiatives Team are an invaluable resource for FCP and FCF. In addition, they do a pretty good job of helping a new Chairman stay out of trouble. Rarely have I seen a Board of Directors with the "can do" attitude of our Board. We are blessed with leaders, talents, energy and resources that truly have made being Board Chair a pleasure.

I look forward to FCP's exciting future and the chance to continue to work closely with all of you.

The City of Peoria is a champion of Luke Air Force Base and works hard to protect the Base to ensure their mission's viability for years to come.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, City management and staff, we want to say **"THANK YOU"** for your service and dedication to our country.



City of Peoria

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For generations of families in the West Valley, Luke AFB has served as a constant reminder of the freedoms and liberties all of us enjoy.

Glendale remains dedicated to continuing the Luke tradition as the base prepares to welcome new generations of pilots for its new F-35 training mission.



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500 Estrella Parkway Suite B2, PMB #479 Goodyear, AZ 85338
Ron Sites, Executive Director and CEO (623) 695-9244

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FCP Visions

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Luke AFB – a shining symbol of pride for Glendale and Arizona

Luke Air Force Base has and continues to be a shining symbol of pride for the city of Glendale, the West Valley, and the state of Arizona. As the world's largest fighter base, its mission is critical to the safety and security of our country.

Beyond what these brave soldiers do in protecting our nation each and every day, their contributions to our city, region and state also cannot be understated. Base operations impact our everyday economic lives, and it's easy to see why we are eager to support the men and women at Luke AFB. One of my proudest moments as a West Valley leader was hearing the news that the F-35 would be stationed here, the result of a monumental effort by Fighter Country Partnership, 91 municipalities and many others to ensure base operations well into the future.

As a former State Representative and the former Chairman of the House Military Affairs and Public Safety Commit-

tee, I gained an intimate understanding of the real impacts military installations have on our state. And now, as Mayor of Glendale, it is my honor to continue working hard towards longevity for Luke AFB, a \$2.17 billion economic engine for Arizona.

Over the years, Glendale has demonstrated its commitment by launching numerous efforts to support the base and its population of about 4,830 military members and Department of Defense civilians. Each year the base graduates more than 400 pilots and 300 air control professionals and is also the steward of the Barry M. Goldwater Range spanning more than 1.7 million acres.

In 1995, the city annexed Luke AFB to help protect it from incompatible land-use encroachment and ensure Glendale had a voice in its future. Since the annexation, Glendale has followed through with numerous planning and zoning actions to ensure that land use surrounding



Mayor Jerry P. Weiers
City of Glendale

the base remains compatible.

Glendale has also spent millions of dollars providing the necessary infrastructure for the base, including the installation of traffic control improvements, signage upgrades and rubberized asphalt. And, "Luke Link" transit carries hundreds of daily riders to and from Glendale and the base commissary and hospital, a service maintained for almost 20 years.

Regional efforts involving public and private leadership have also proven vital in protecting and honoring the mission of Luke AFB. Glendale has led the way on many

of those. Specifically, we work closely with Fighter Country Partnership and their goal of educating and demonstrating widespread support for the base's military mission.

Luke West Valley Partners is a public sector partnership comprised of all 14 mayors and the county supervisor from the West Valley. Over the last decade we, as a group, have joined together to fund consultant reports and to lobby various agencies to protect the mission of the base and secure additional missions, such as the F-35. We meet regularly and work together to develop strategies and policies to ensure compatibility, and we have visited the Pentagon to meet with our national military leaders on a yearly basis to advocate for the ongoing mission of the base.

It is also my honor to serve on the Luke West Valley Council. Established in the mid 1980's, the Council is comprised of: Luke AFB Officials, elected officials from all West Valley cities and

Maricopa County, and representatives from Sun City and Sun City West. This group's purpose is to discuss and address community issues, challenges and successes relating to Luke AFB activities, to maintain and ensure future support for the base and to recognize the critically important role the base plays in our community. Legislators and other organizations frequently attend these meetings as well.

In the late 1980s and again from 2000 to 2005, West Valley leaders secured significant statewide legislation to ensure responsible land use planning around military airports. Today's laws have established compatible land uses and protections within noise contours and accident potential zones around the base. All of these efforts reflect the tremendous commitment that state, local and community leaders have in protecting military installations statewide from residential encroachment.

While Luke AFB is the largest fighter wing

in the U.S. Air Force, it's also important to bear in mind that Arizona is a global leader in aerospace and defense. With about 1,200 A&D companies employing 52,000 people, our state ranks third in the country when it comes to the supply chain. This creates a ripple effect on the economies of our city, region and state. Consider the impact of all of those employees—their homes, car purchases, and retail impact. It truly matters for Glendale and the entire state. Here in Glendale, for example, Honeywell employs more than 800 people with high-paying jobs. In addition, there are about 70,000 retired military members living in the Valley.

We have a long and steadfast tradition of strength.

Following World War II, defense industry production and manufacturing companies moved from the West and East coasts and found new homes inland. With 300 days of sunshine and cloudless skies, Arizona earned a lion's share of those jobs and employers. Decades later, the aerospace and military-related industries in Arizona continue to be a critical platform of our state's economic engine.

Already, the F-35 training mission is serving as an economic stimulus for our Valley's construction industry, as \$100-\$125 million in infrastructure upgrades continue to be made with the F-35 aircraft's arrival. This ramping-up period is resulting in about 3,000 construction jobs.

The catalyst for this growth is founded in partnership - one that is recognized for its success. I can share from personal experience that the leaders at the Pentagon continue to point to Luke AFB, Fighter Country Partnership, the West Valley and Glendale as a collective example of how to support, protect and enhance a base.

And our work is never done. In order to continue this success story for Glendale, the West Valley, and Arizona, we must continue to be proactive and vigilant in supporting these efforts. I remain firmly committed to serving in a manner that helps pave the way for future graduating classes at Luke AFB.

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Mayor Weiers

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Luke Air Force Base—the best of the West Valley

Some 10 years ago, I was a somewhat reluctant transplant from Illinois. My wife, an Arizona native, had just gone through a serious illness and we decided to move her back home to Arizona so she could be close to her family.

Going from the cornfields and forests of Illinois to the Sonoran desert of the Valley of the Sun was, in many ways, a jarring experience. The visual contrast between lush verdancy and the pastels and creams of the desert landscape was intense. Early on, in my first summer, I learned about the dangers of steering wheels and heat conductivity.

But as we settled into our new home, I fell in love with the West Valley with all its many and varied

attributes and amenities. Chief among them is Luke Air Force Base.

Luke AFB, as I quickly learned, is of vital importance, not only to the region, but also to the state and the nation. Luke AFB contributes in excess of \$2 billion annually to the Arizona economy and is one of the largest employers in the state.

Luke began as a 1,440 acre land lease from the City of Phoenix to the Army Air Corps in 1941 and was first known as Litchfield Park Air Base.

Later that same year, it was renamed Luke Field in honor of Frank Luke Jr., a WWI flying ace and the first aviator awarded the Medal of Honor. (The award was posthumous since Frank Luke Jr. was



Mayor Michael LeVault
Town of Youngtown

killed in action Sept. 29, 1918, at age 21, after his 200 hp SPAD XIII bi-plane was shot down near Murvaux, France).

The United States Air Force became a separate military service Sept. 18, 1947 and, after a five-year deactivation between WWII and the Korean War, Luke Field was reactivated and officially named Luke Air Force Base.

Some 12,000 pilots were trained at Luke Field during WWII and over the

years, in excess of 55,000 fighter pilots have been trained at Luke AFB. In modern times, the vast majority of Middle-Eastern-Theatre pilots have been trained at Luke AFB. With its desert location and close proximity to the Barry M. Goldwater Bombing Range, it is an ideal training facility for this country's current military missions.

In August 2012, the Air Force announced the selection of Luke AFB as a pilot training center for the new Joint Strike Fighter, or F-35, program. The F-35 is an exportable '5th generation' fighter and is the product of a partnership of nine countries: the United States, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

This announcement

was the culmination of an arduous, years-long, unprecedented cooperative marketing effort, which saw every municipality in the West Valley along with Maricopa County, the State of Arizona and many of the region's major employers come together, as partners, to petition and lobby the Air Force to place this critical mission at Luke AFB.

Local, county and state leaders have worked hard, for decades, defending Luke from the BRAC process (Base Closure and Realignment Commission) of the 1990s and developmental encroachment of the early 2000s. This unprecedented support and co-operation has assured that Luke AFB will be able to fulfill its daily flight missions and re-

main an integral part of the West Valley well into the future.

The West Valley Partnership still meets on a regular basis and continues to look after and stay involved with Luke AFB, and Luke works hard to involve itself in the communities surrounding it.

As I travel throughout the West Valley, fighter jets are a ubiquitous presence in our desert skies. I never fail to look up and follow their trajectories as they streak overhead and I think about the importance of Luke AFB, on so many levels, and what it means to the security of the West Valley, Arizona and the United States as fighter pilots, Air Force men and women, train daily to assure fulfillment of the Air Force mission to "fly, fight and win."



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Luke AFB: a beacon of freedom and security

Luke Air Force Base stands as a beacon of freedom and security to the Valley, producing highly-skilled fighter pilots since its first class in 1941.

Its weathered story dates back to childhood for most natives. Luke is where the nation's finest go to train and keep our country safe - through a World War, the Cold War and in a War on Terror.

Luke AFB remains a \$2.2 billion annual economic engine to the state, with most of that stimulus hitting the West Valley.

The business of national security will always be a recession-proof economic driver for the West Valley. Local manufacturers and distributors, including real estate, food, auto and retail businesses all rely on the direct and residual affect of the base and its employees.

The impact of Luke in the Valley, and its surrounding cities in particular, extends far beyond economics, however. It's our daily honor to see Luke personnel - in line at the coffee shop, at little league games and at the dry cleaners.

Our children run up to shake a hand and ask questions because they are in awe of these superheroes. One of Peoria's many enduring qualities is the steadfast patriotism of our residents.

Peoria is home to the most active-duty and veteran personnel from Luke than any other city in the Valley. They are our family. We are proud of our vets and servicemen and women, and that's why Peoria is a strong supporter of Fighter Country Partnership, and will continue to be in the future. Through



**Mayor Cathy Carlat
City of Peoria**

Luke's storied past and times of uncertainty, it is this community allegiance to our hometown military base that tells decision-makers, once again, that Luke AFB is the center of local patriotism.

Through the base, Arizona plays a prominent part in national security.

Right down the street, fighter pilots get the best training in the world, and then they go a world away to protect us in our homes at night.

Every single day, Luke AFB graduates

put everything on the line to protect the freedoms penned by our founding fathers.

The role of Luke becomes even more important to our nation and world as we enter into a new war, fighting an enemy that adapts and reinvents modern warfare.

Make no mistake; our enemy's mission is to force its beliefs onto our society. Training our war fighters to be the best in the world becomes even more critical moving into this uncharted era.

The free world looks to our military to continue to develop new

technology to fight modern wars, keep them safe in times of political instability and defend people from religious and cultural persecution. The significance of Luke AFB and its global role today and in the years to come cannot be understated.

Park University designated military friendly institution for seventh straight year

For the seventh consecutive year, Park University has been honored by Victory Media as a 2016 Military Friendly School.

The military friendly designation by Victory Media, which publishes G.I. Jobs, STEM Jobs and Military Spouse magazines, provides service members and their families with transparent, data-driving ratings about post-military education and career opportunities.

The honor is awarded to the top colleges, universities, community colleges and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace military students, and also dedicate resources to ensure their success in the classroom and after graduation.

Institutions named to the list of

military friendly schools complete a survey of questions related to military support on campus, graduation and employment outcomes, and military spouse policies. Survey responses are then scored against benchmarks against these key indicators of success and independently tested by Ernst & Young based upon the weightings and methodology established by Victory Media with guidance from an independent advisory board of higher education and recruiting professionals.

For more information about how Park serves the educational needs of the military, visit www.park.edu/military or contact the Department of Military and Veteran Student Services at warriorcenter@park.edu, or 816-584-6530.

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Maricopa Community College District launches Veterans Success Project

The Maricopa Community Colleges system plans to create a statewide program to provide support to military personnel, veterans and their families as they move from active duty to civilian life. The program, which takes a holistic approach to helping veterans and families identify and reach education, career, and life goals, will begin once the Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation raises the \$14 million to support the initiative.

The new program will build on Maricopa's successful record in providing education to veterans through, for example, its East Valley Veterans Education Center in Tempe, which is supported by several Maricopa Community Colleges and led by Rio Salado College.

The new Veterans Success Project proposes creation of a similar center in the West Valley that will be a regional hub, where veterans and their families will receive a variety of support under one roof.

"No matter where veterans live in metro Phoenix, they will be able to find services and educational support at one of the Veterans Educational Centers or one of our 12 campus Vet Centers," said Maricopa Chancellor Rufus Glasper. "This new project will allow us to provide more effective pathways for veterans to reach their career goals."

Other proposed items – all dependent on raising funds to support them – include:

- A prototype for a centralized District and State Application for Veterans Aid database that would allow electronic submission, processing and tracking of veteran aid

and pre-enrollment advisement;

- A centralized location for student referrals to be entered and tracked and customer satisfaction to be recorded;

- A center for curriculum evaluation and transfer model for military credits. Among other things, military courses will be checked against courses and skills at Arizona's colleges and universities;

- Faculty and staff training to raise awareness about such veteran issues as post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury;

- A veterans Career Re-entry job placement and referral center in collaboration with local business and industry;

- A district contact and resolution center to help veterans transition into the Maricopa Community Colleges as well as link veterans to critical community-based support services;

- Veterans success courses specifically oriented to the needs of veterans; and

- Expansion of existing veterans centers to provide satellite support services to veterans, active-duty Guard, reserve military members, and their families.

The proposal calls for the district to work closely with community organizations supporting veterans. A key goal is to provide a seamless transfer process for veterans interested in completing a baccalaureate degree.

For more information about the Veteran Student Success Project, contact Felicia Ganther, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Services, at 480-731-8824.



Photo courtesy Banner Thunderbird Medical Center

Banner Thunderbird patient becomes 'pilot for a day'

Nathan Hullinger, 18, was admitted to Banner Thunderbird Medical Center in May for treatment of heart issues. During his stay, staff in the Child Life department became aware that Nathan loved airplanes and, after providing him with some flying toys, they set about making arrangements for Nathan to attend the "Pilot for a Day" program at Luke Air Force Base for chronically ill children.

The Glendale resident had a wonderful time interacting with active duty fighter pilots, touring facilities, and even had to pose for a photo in a jet. At the end of his big day, Nathan took home a special plaque commemorating his memorable visit.

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Luke Family Advocacy Center and Glendale PD earn international honor

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS RIDGE SHAN**
56TH FIGHTER WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Sonja Raciti, 56th Medical Operations Squadron family advocacy officer. "We've seen so many victims who have passed away because they remained trapped in violent situations with their abusers and could not figure out how to escape."

The Luke DAVA and Glendale Family Advocacy Center are able to assist victims by guiding them through legal procedures and providing them with resources such as shelter, transportation, and child-care in order to allow the victim and their family to live independently of their abuser.

"Having someone who can walk them through the legal processes and hold their hand to let them know there really is a light at the end of the tunnel is essential," Raciti said.

Additionally, partnership with the Glendale Police Department allows the FAC to more easily direct victims through the process of obtaining restraining and protection orders against aggressors.

"If the victim's abuser



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Ridge Shan

Glendale Police Chief Debora Black, Glendale Criminal Investigations Officer Sgt. Patrick Beumler, Luke Family Advocacy Officer Capt. Sonja Raciti, and Col. Stephen Boden, commander of the 56th Medical Operations Squadron, pose with an International Association of Chiefs of Police award Nov. 5 at the Glendale Family Advocacy Center. The award was presented to the Glendale Police Department and the Luke FAC in honor of their joint efforts to support and protect victims of domestic violence and abuse.

continues to pursue them, text them, call them, or threaten or intimidate them, there is protection that the police can offer and we can help the victim get that."

The cooperative efforts of the two advocacies as defined by their Memorandum of Understanding, a formal agreement of partnership between Luke and the Glendale Police,

is resulting in an effect reaching far beyond the local Phoenix community.

"We are looking at creating a like MOU for Air Force installations throughout the Air Force

enterprise to be able to utilize, and are interested in how [Luke] chose to structure [theirs]," said David Thomas, senior advisor for the Sexual Assault Prevention Response Office at the Pentagon.

"Our higher-ups are really looking at how we work with civilian law enforcement here, and are acknowledging that this is something we should have Air Force-wide," Raciti said.

The advocacies are hopeful the impact their collective work has created will continue to help victims for the foreseeable future.

"We enjoy the great partnership we have between Luke and the City of Glendale, and this award is just a reflection of how, when we work together, we create a better community and better services for the people who serve our country at all levels," Glendale Police Chief Debora Black said. "Our MOU establishes our partnership for five years, but I know our cooperation will go far beyond that."

Our commitment to the community will never equal that of the men and women that have taken up arms in defense of our country.

Thank you for your service.



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Two Arizona cadets earn Civil Air Patrol's highest award

The General Carl A. Spaatz Award is Civil Air Patrol's highest cadet honor. It is presented to cadets who have demonstrated excellence in leadership, character, fitness, and aerospace education. Cadets Meghan and Jessica Parsons received the award in late October 2015. This granted them the grade of Cadet Colonel.

Cadets qualify for this prestigious award after devoting an average of five years to progress through 16 achievements in the CAP Cadet Program. Meghan and Jessica completed the program in only four years. Along the way cadets develop self-discipline, a strong sense of personal responsibility, the ability to lead and the foundation necessary for pursuing a career in aviation, space, or technology. Cadets also learn a great deal about leadership that will benefit them in a career in any industry.

The final step a cadet must complete to earn the Spaatz Award is a rigorous four-part exam consisting of a challenging physical

fitness test, an essay exam testing their moral reasoning, a comprehensive written exam on leadership, and a comprehensive written exam on aerospace education. Upon passing the Spaatz Award exams, the cadet is promoted to the grade of Cadet Colonel.

Meghan and Jessica Parsons, identical twins from the Valley, joined the Civil Air Patrol Cadet program in October 2011 at age 15. In the past four years, they have worked together towards the Spaatz Award, supporting each other. The girls have served as staff at four Encampments in Texas and Colorado, and attended various schools and academies across the nation. This summer they attended the International Air Cadet Exchange, serving as Ambassadors for Civil Air Patrol and the Air Force on trips to the United Kingdom and Australia, respectively.

Females account for less than a quarter of the Spaatz Award demographics. Siblings have earned the Spaatz Award before,



Cadet Jessica Parsons



Cadet Meghan Parsons

Siblings have earned the Spaatz Award before, but there is no information that a set of twins have earned the Spaatz Award at the same time since the award's inception in 1964.

but there is no information that a set of twins have earned the Spaatz Award at the same time since the award's inception in 1964.

Jessica currently serves as a Southwest Region Cadet Safety Advisor, working to develop a program to help encourage other cadets to see safety as an exciting and important part of their training. She also serves at the Wing Level as a Cadet Safety Officer where she helps manage the Safety Program for the

State of Arizona. She has won several awards from the Wing and recognition from the Air Force for her work as a Communications Officer in Civil Air Patrol's Emergency Services missions. In 2014, she was named the Air Force Association's Cadet of the Year for her Squadron. Her goal is to one day be a JAG Lawyer in the Navy.

Meghan serves as a Public Affairs Officer for the Arizona Wing and is in charge of Social Me-

dia. She also assists in the editing and publication of the Wing Newsletter. In 2014 she was named the Arizona Wing Cadet of the Year and earned a Meritorious Service Award for a program she created to help train new cadets.

On average, only two cadets in one thousand earn the Spaatz Award. Since the award's inception in 1964, Civil Air Patrol has presented the Spaatz Award to just over 2,000 cadets nationwide, including 32 cadets from the state of Arizona.

Spaatz Cadets are expected to serve as role models for junior cadets and become leaders in their communities as they enter adulthood. The first recipient of the Spaatz Award, Michigan's Douglas C. Roach, became a pilot with the Air Force Thunderbirds.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with 58,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft.

CAP, in its Air Force

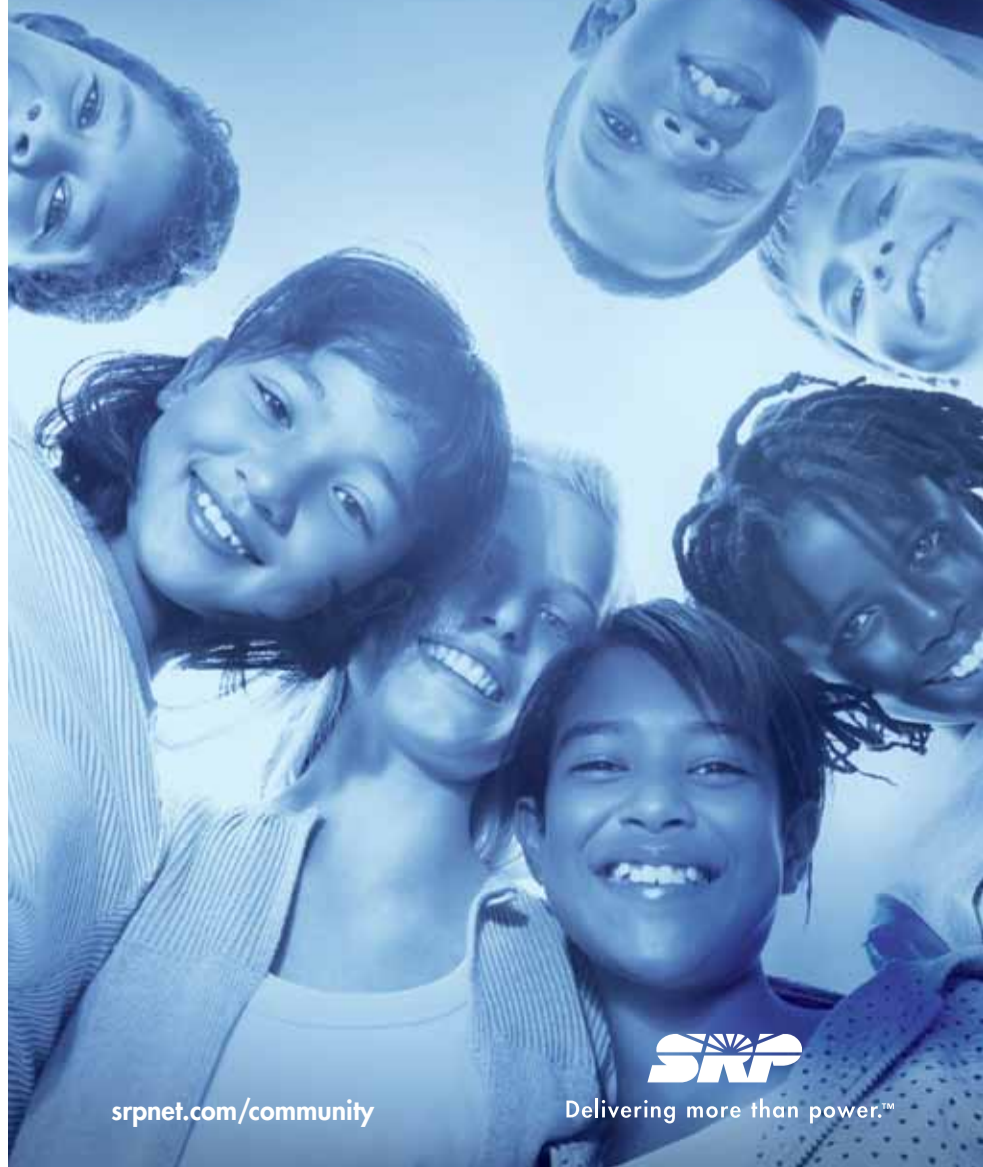
Auxiliary role, performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 70 lives annually. Its unpaid professionals also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies.

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Programs offered through Fighter Country Foundation

Operation Thunderbox

Occurs each July, October and December. Operation Thunderbox collects comfort items such as sunscreen, phone cards and powdered drinks for airmen. Items are collected and the program pays for boxes and postage for 450 boxes: 150 in July, 150 in October and 150 in December to Airmen deployed from Luke AFB to Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, and throughout the world.

Operation Warmheart

Occurs throughout the year. Operation Warmheart is used to assist military families in times of hardships for things that Air Force Aid is unable to help them with.

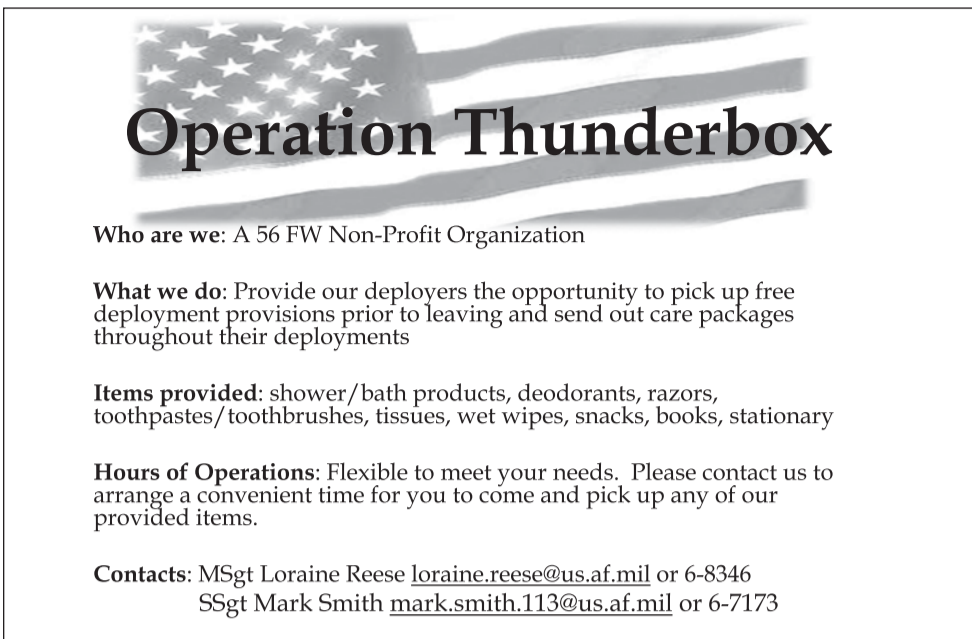
Warmheart is also used to augment Adopt a Family and Angel tree donations during the holidays.

Unit Spouse and Family Support Fund

The Foundation provides support and services to help Luke service members cope with the demands of deployments and to support families during separations resulting from mission requirements.

Base funds are limited for these programs.

Hearts Apart provides monthly activities that offer social, recreational, and morale support through a wide range of events, including picnics, bowling, arts and crafts, spouse luncheons, sports events, children's activities, and concerts.



Operation Thunderbox

Who are we: A 56 FW Non-Profit Organization

What we do: Provide our deployers the opportunity to pick up free deployment provisions prior to leaving and send out care packages throughout their deployments

Items provided: shower/bath products, deodorants, razors, toothpastes/toothbrushes, tissues, wet wipes, snacks, books, stationary

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Contacts: MSgt Loraine Reese loraine.reese@us.af.mil or 6-8346
SSgt Mark Smith mark.smith.113@us.af.mil or 6-7173

These activities provide a safe and supportive environment to provide Luke deployed families with a strong sense of community while separated from their loved ones.

In addition, expanded quarterly activities include active duty personnel who have returned from deployment within the past year, along with their families.

Post-deployment "Welcome Home" events provide education on reunion stressors and coping with issues related to deployment in a friendly welcoming environment that includes lunch and welcome home gift certificates to the deployers and families.

This program supports over 1,500 persons per year.

Airmen / Family Readiness Center

FCF helps market Base programs and encourages participation in activities designed to promote the welfare of the Luke active duty and family population. Luke service agencies focus on prevention programs to assist the many young families at Luke. Over one-third of the Luke population is under the age of 25 and many have family responsibilities. Incentives and refreshments create a positive environment that encourages use of services that include financial counseling, parenting assistance, family violence treatment and prevention, relocation assistance, and a variety of other prevention programs.

Chaplain Services

FCF is proud to support monthly dinners deployed to Airmen families.

944th Reserve Wing

The Foundation also supports programs that assist the 944th Air Force Reserve Wing. These are men and women who live in our community full-time and support the global war on terror.

Luke Airmen Memorial Fund

Fighter Country Foundation has established the Luke Airmen Memorial Fund to assist any Airmen injured or killed in the line of duty. With wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Luke airmen and their families sacrifice a lot for our freedom. Some have made the ultimate sacrifice to their country. We are here to provide honor, support and comfort to these incredible Americans.

Donate

You can help the families and airmen at Luke by making a donation. Even a few dollars can go a long way in providing much needed assistance to those who need it most. As a 501(c)(3), your donation is always 100% tax deductible.

You can make a donation of any amount and have an option of how to direct your donation to one of the following:

- Airmen and Family Base Programs
- Airmen Memorial Fund
- Chaplain Services Fund
- Dorothy Rowe



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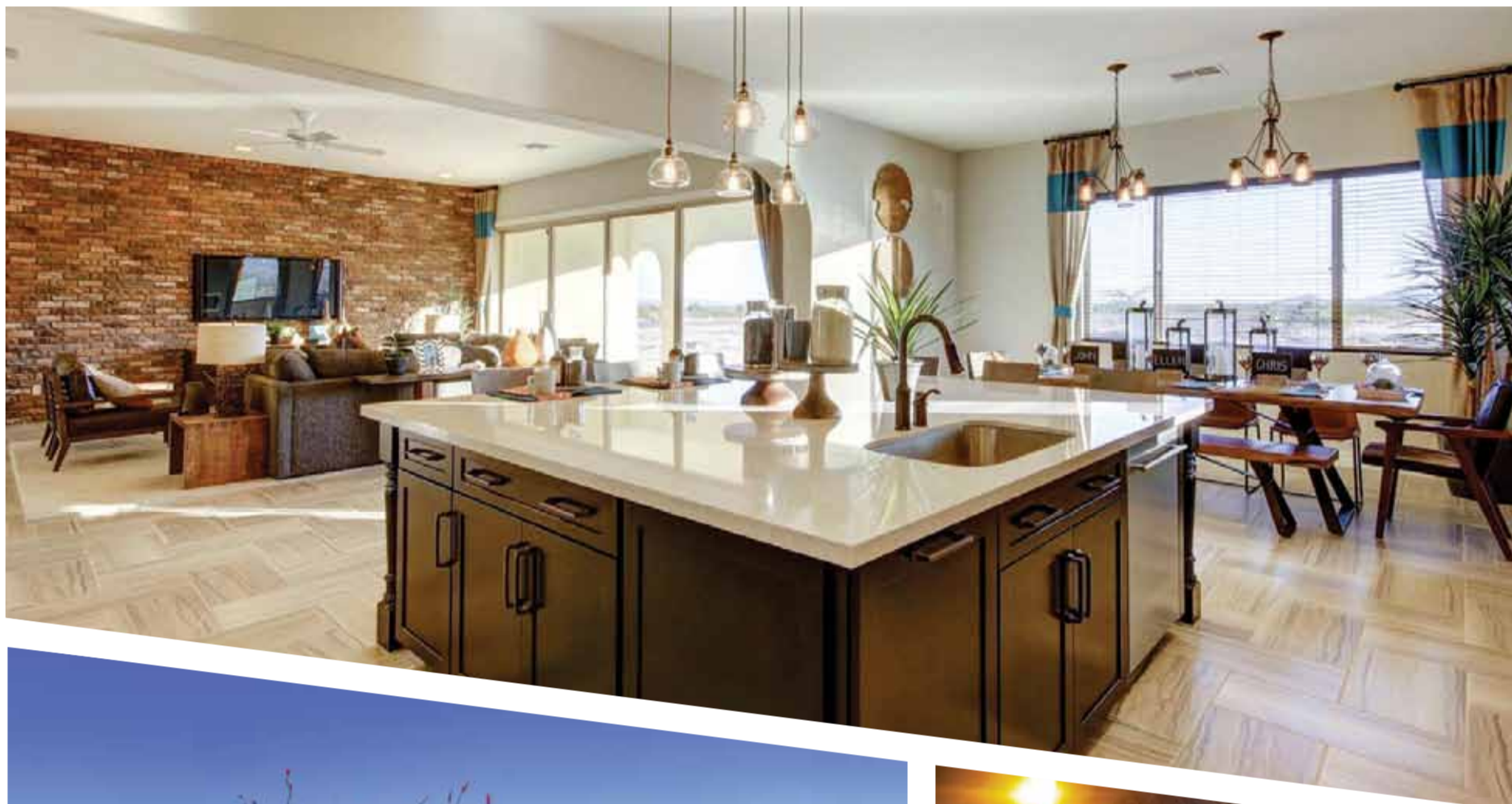
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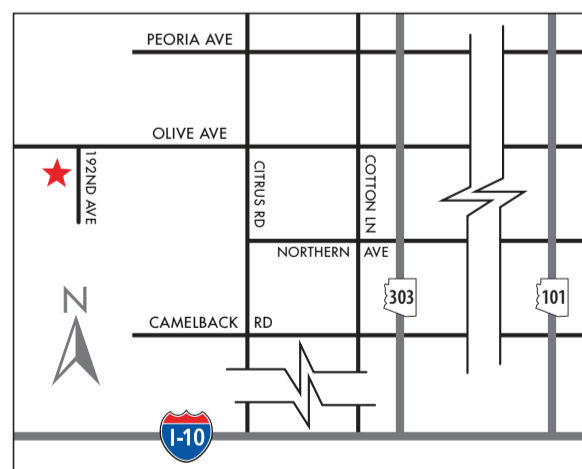


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Knowledge is power when buying a car

Buying a car can seem overwhelming. Choosing the right year, make, model and color are just parts of the equation. Knowing a few car buying tips before you hit the lot provides you with power to make the right decision.

Here are three critical tips to help you on your way to buying a car.

1. Preparation is key

Begin the buying process online instead of at a dealership or car lot. Kelly Blue Book or Edmunds.com are good starting points. These resources tell you what people have paid for the same type of car in your area. They also give a target range for negotiating with a car dealer.

Researching online also helps you take your time. Taking your time when buying a car is important because you're more likely to make a well-prepared decision.

"Nine times out of 10, a deal the

salesman quotes you will be available the next day," Oren Weintraub, a former auto salesman, told ABC's "20/20." "Prepare yourself to walk out of the dealership if you are being pressured and are uncomfortable."

2. Negotiating power

There are many loan options in the banking world, and it's important to shop around for the best one.

Jack Nerad, executive editorial director of automotive research company Kelley Blue Book recommends getting pre-approved for a loan.

"Get pre-approved for a loan before you venture into a showroom, then check out the dealer financing," Nerad said. "Sometimes, particularly with factory incentives, dealers can beat other finance offers."

Also, when negotiating prices, make sure to negotiate each piece of the car deal separately.

Separate your negotiation according to every profit center the dealer has: price, rebates, trade-in value, interest rate, lease rate, bank fee, alarms, maintenance, warranties, and any other products the dealer is offering. This helps you get the best deal for every dollar you spend.

However, financing through dealerships isn't always the best option. Shop around at a few financial institutions to see where you can get the most favorable terms.

3. Financial institution financing benefits

Getting pre-approved before setting foot on the lot allows you to stay in charge. When you do, you're able to go through the buying process with the confidence that your loan is already arranged. Plus, you will know exactly who has your loan instead of settling for whoever the dealership selects.

It is also good to note that many financial institutions offer the same products as the dealership at a lower cost (i.e. GAP insurance and extended warranties). Comparing and contrasting these with dealership products allows you to figure out which has the best deal.

Buying a long-lasting, reliable car is within your reach, but it takes time and effort. However, all the time spent researching is less time spent in a car repair shop. By incorporating these three steps in your buying process, you'll soon be on your way to owning the right car for you.

Credit Union West offers affordable and flexible lending options as well as optional benefits such as GAP and Mechanical Breakdown Protection.

Visit www.cuwest.org to get pre-approved today.

F-35A Lightning II combines advanced technology with highly supersonic capabilities

The first F-35A Lightning II arrived at Luke on March 10, 2014.

The fifth-generation F-35A Lightning II integrates advanced stealth technology into a highly agile, supersonic aircraft that provides the pilot with unprec-

edented situational awareness and unmatched lethality and survivability.

As new threats emerge, it is more important than ever for U.S. and allied fighter fleets to fly the F-35 stealth fighter, the world's

only fifth-generation international aircraft. While each aircraft is uniquely designed to operate from different environments, all three variants set new standards in network-enabled mission systems, sensor fusion and support-

ability. The F-35 redefines the multirole fighter.

Get a close-up look at this amazing aircraft during the Luke Days air show April 2 and 3. For more information about the show, visit www.luke.af.mil.

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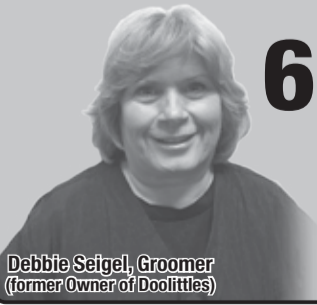
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WIGWAM BALLROOMS Brunch in the Ballroom.

LITCHFIELD'S will offer an a la carte Brunch with choices, Reservations required.

From cockpit to classroom, fighter pilot is legendary

Skip Hopler was one of the first to fly the F-16 Fighting Falcon. Now, he's guiding the launch of F-35 Lightning II operations by training the next generation.

Skip Hopler is born to fly. With 3,800 hours in the cockpit as a U.S. Air Force pilot, his love of flying began at an early age like many pilots, and he was inspired by his uncle's stories from World War II, flying missions over Europe. What Hopler didn't know until later in his career is that he is born to teach, too.

Hopler has trained more than a thousand pilots during his military service and then as a contract ground training instructor pilot. In his current role, Hopler is responsible for training the next generation of fighter pilots as the lead for the F-35 Academic Training Center at Luke Air Force Base.

"What makes a great fighter pilot is attitude, skills and training," Hopler said. "The pilots we're training today at Luke are outstanding, and my



Photos courtesy Lockheed Martin

Skip Hopler was one of the first four fighter pilots in Tactical Air Command sent to Hill AFB in Utah in 1978 to set up F-16 training at the 16th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, the first operational squadron of F-16s. Today, he is responsible for the Lockheed Martin F-35 ground training program for the world's newest fifth generation fighter.

team's job is to give each pilot the foundation to succeed in combat."

Hopler brings operational experience from 21 years of service in the Air Force to his role on the F-35. After F-4 pilot training at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, he deployed twice to Southeast Asia

and flew 389 missions in just two years during the Vietnam Conflict.

He also flew Hawker Hunters with the U.K.'s Royal Air Force as part of a tactical weapons unit, before he was selected to join the initial cadre of F-16 pilots. That's when Hopler found his second passion



-teaching. In 1978, Hopler helped stand up the first F-16 squadron at Hill Air Force Base in Utah and then continued his career as an F-16 instructor pilot.

He said making the jump to the F-35 has been similar to the transition to other new aircraft, except that the avionics and weapons are significantly more sophisticated.

"Aviation technology evolves, and the F-35 introduces the opportunity to advance tactics, but the

objective to be the best fighter pilot you can be never changes. I see the same drive in the F-35 pilots we're training today," he said.

As the F-35A pilot training hub, Luke Air Force Base will eventually provide training for U.S. pilots, plus seven partner nations and house a total of 144 F-35s. The base welcomed its first class in May 2015. Since then, 14 pilots have graduated through the F-35 Training System at Luke.

Pilots begin their F-35 training with Hopler's team at the Academic Training Center with classroom instruction and flights in the Full Mission Simulator, which replicates all aircraft sensors and weapons employment. Simulator flights are a major component of F-35 training to prepare pilots for their first ride in the single-seat F-35. More than half of the initial qualification flights for the F-35 take place in the Full Mission Simulator for training effectiveness and affordability.

The F-35 technology is impressive, Hopler said, but the technology alone isn't the advantage. It's the men and women equipped to use it - with the right attitude, skills and training - that make all the difference.

"Here at Luke, we're preparing the pilots who provide a security net for our country and coalition partners," Hopler said. "Many pilots have gone before them, and our team is honored to continue the legacy and train the world's best fighter pilots."

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O-Negative LAFB blood donors are special heroes to Arizona patients

As the temperatures cool down in our state, Arizona's population rises with the influx of winter visitors. Along with this growth comes a greater need for blood donors. The cold and flu season often further impacts the need for blood when many regular donors can't give due to illness. Having an ample supply of Type O blood is especially important this time of year, because it gives doctors transfusion options when

shortages of other blood types arise.

O-Negative: 6 percent of the population has it; 100 percent of patients can receive it. The universal donor, O-negative is the only blood that can be substituted for all other types. In emergency situations when there is no time to determine a patient's blood type, doctors depend on O-negative blood to sustain life until the patient can be stabilized. Having plenty

of O-negative available to hospitals is important because doctors routinely rely on O-negative blood when premature babies and infants under six months old require lifesaving transfusions. A typical 6-pound newborn has only about 8 ounces (one cup) of blood and extremely tiny veins, making it difficult to conduct blood tests. Furthermore, because of their immature immune systems, neonates often lack the necessary



Submitted photo

Dean is alive today due to blood donations.

factors to easily determine blood type. O-negative is the only blood type these babies can safely receive.

"My son, Dean, was severely anemic when he was born and needed a blood transfusion right away,"

said Twila.

Dean was later diagnosed with a rare condition called Diamond Blackfan Anemia. His body did not produce enough red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout his body,

so he relied on red blood cell transfusions to live normally.

"Dean is type O-negative, and we have waited several hours to get a transfusion that is a match for him," Twila explained, "It is humbling to realize that my son's life is dependent upon other people donating blood. Every blood donor is a true hero to Dean."

To make an appointment at an upcoming Luke Air Force Base blood drive, visit www.BloodHero.com (Sponsor Code: LAFB) or 1-877-UBS-HERO (827-4376).

To coordinate a blood drive or volunteer on the LAFB committee, contact: Greg Wicking, 602-614-4772, or Captain Sharlott Uriate, 623-856-6869.

United Blood Services' LAFB donation locations Appointments recommended

- Visit www.BloodHero.com (Sponsor Code: LAFB) or call 1-877-UBS-HERO (827-4376)
- Luke Air Force Base Blood Drives – Sponsor Code: LAFB (Base Access Credentials Required)
- Jan. 14, 12 to 4 p.m.: 56 EMS, 6207 N. Ammo Drive, LGMW, Bloodmobile at Building 859
 - Jan. 26, 8 a.m. to noon: 607 ACS, 14793 W. Corsair St., Bloodmobile
 - Jan. 27, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.: Medical Group,

- 7219 N. Litchfield Road, Bloodmobile in North Lot
- Jan. 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: CE, 13970 Lightning St., Bloodmobile by Building 343
- Jan. 26, 1 to 5 p.m.: CMS, 6608 N. Tovrea, Bloodmobile by Building 917
- Goodyear Donor Center:** 14270 W. Indian School Road
- Hours: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday

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 - o SBA quarterly Boots to Business Workshop
 - o Higher Education Training
 - o Quarterly Resume Writing Classes to include Federal Resumes
- Discovery Center - Resources for relocations, transition, employment, housing, schools, and more!
- AMVETS – Provides medical records screening and assistance with VA disability claims
- Personal Development Information & Resources
 - o Check out LukeIDS.com (Integrated Delivery System)
- Military & Family Life Consultant Assistance
- Financial Counseling Education
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- School Liaison Officer - Addresses educational issues involving military children and youth in the local school community

5 Day Dept. of Labor TAP Employment Workshop held Monthly

Yearly Career Fair held Each Fall

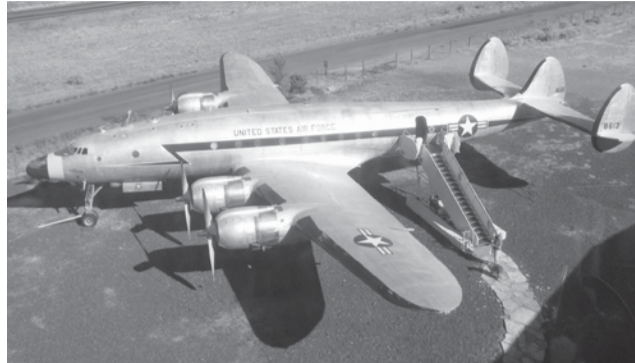


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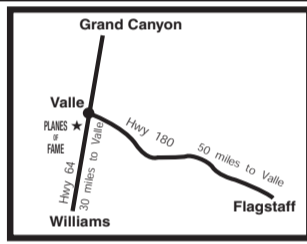
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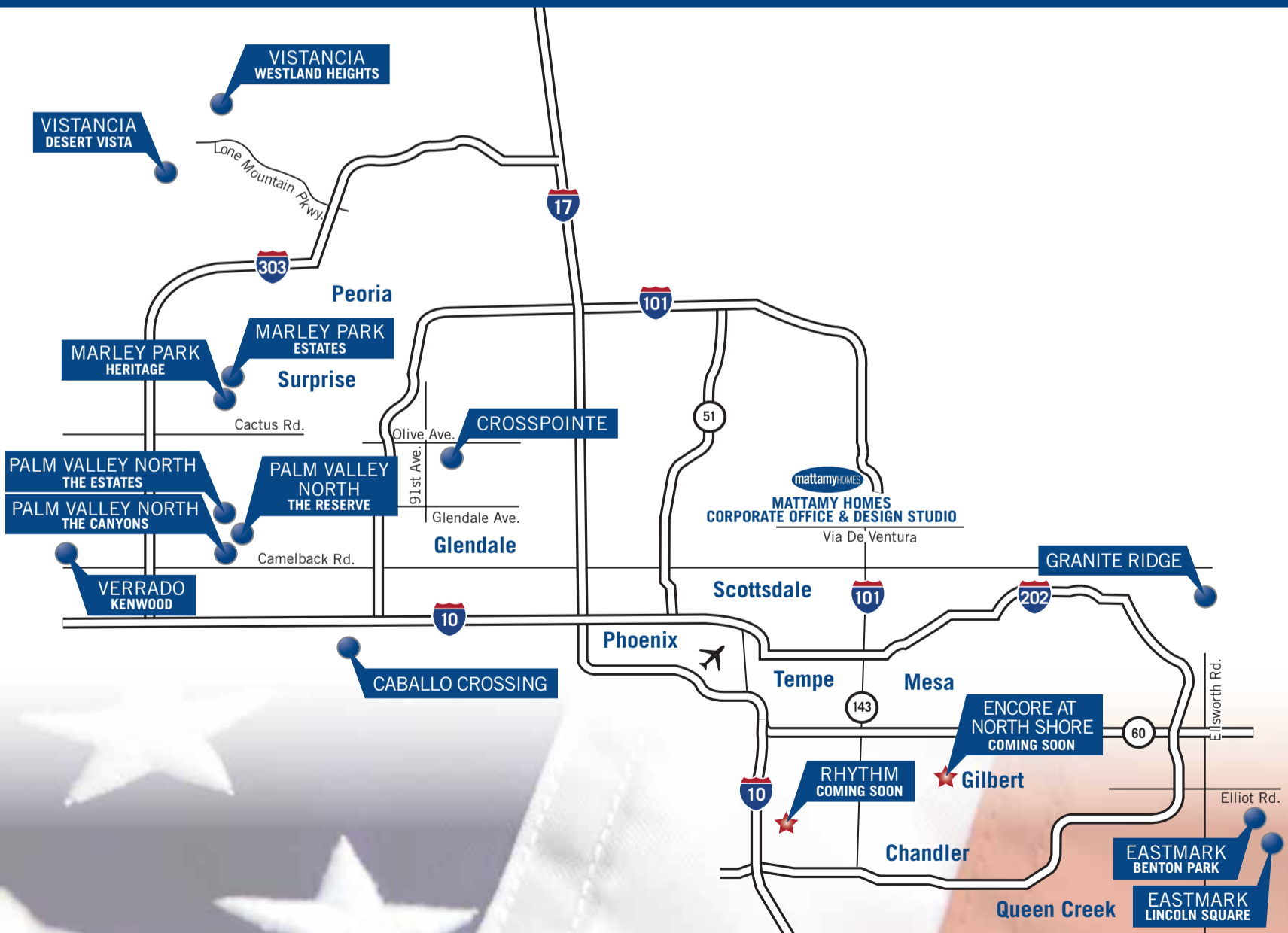
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