

FCP Visions

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



Fall 2016

F-35 reaches 10,000-hour milestone

Maj. Nathan Heguy, 62nd Fighter Squadron F-35 Lightning II pilot, successfully completed a routine training sortie Sept. 12, 2016, to officially cross more than 10,000 total combined flight hours in the F-35 for all pilots at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.

The milestone marks yet another progression in the development of the tactics and utility of the F-35, which reached Initial Operational Capability Aug. 2.

"It's awesome to be a part of a milestone like this," Heguy said. "But it's just a small tick in the long train of milestones accomplished here at Luke before me. It's clear that everyone at Luke has done awesome work in the small amount of time that the F-35 has

been here."

The F-35's advanced suite of sensors and stealth technology allow it to operate uncontested in a variety of environments, and as more and more time is spent in the cockpit, F-35 pilots develop the skills necessary to fully utilize all of the advantages their aircraft provides them.

"Now that we are in IOC, we've made a significant amount of progress toward being able to execute a lot of the missions that the airplane is tasked to execute," said Maj. Brian Healy, 62nd Fighter Squadron director of operations.

As Luke's mission transitions into training an international cadre of F-35 pilots, similar milestones

MORE MILESTONE ON 22



Photo by Senior Airman Devante Williams

An F-35 Lightning II performs a maneuver Sept. 12, 2016 over Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. This sortie marks the 10,000th flying hour for the F-35 program at Luke.

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From the Desk of Fighter Country Partnership

FCP impact felt throughout community

I'd like to share a story about a person I met a few weeks ago. I was at a local restaurant about to have lunch when an older gentleman came up to me and introduced himself. I was wearing a Fighter Country Partnership polo and he noticed (and liked) the logo. I invited him to sit down and I proceeded to tell him about Fighter Country Partnership and what we do to support Luke Air Force Base. He mentioned that he had served in the Air Force back in the 1970s and that his grandson was currently stationed at Luke.

I enjoy talking about our human services program because that is where the "rubber meets the road" in terms of efforts to support to the men, women and families of Luke Air Force Base. I talked about the Pilot for a Day program. I told him, honestly, I had seen that program in real life when I was still on active duty working for the

Luke Wing Commander. I remember meeting a young man who was waiting with his family for his lunch with a group of fighter pilots and to meet the commander. The pilots arrived, called him by his new call sign and he absolutely loved it. He had already been in a cockpit of an F-16 and toured around a fighter squadron.

We continued to speak about what the Air Force was like for him then, and the differences and similarities of what his grandson is experiencing. A lot of things are the same, but a lot of things are different, he told me, as he laughed.

His grandson deployed for the first time a few months back and is expecting to be home by the end of the year. His grandson's wife and child are waiting for him to return while they get their child into the first grade. It was a big event for the family and without a prompt from me, went on to talk about the backpack and



Ron Sites
President and
Executive Director
Fighter Country
Partnership

supplies they had been given a few weeks prior.

He talked about the bounce houses, hot dogs, and the fun his family had that evening. I went on to tell him that the Back to School Bash was a resounding success where we partnered with the base chapel and

the USO to give out over 600 backpacks with school supplies to Luke families.

He told me that was the biggest difference between his time in the service and now. They never would have done for us back when he served and (pointing at my FCP logo) he told me, and there certainly wasn't anything like Fighter Country Partnership.

I told him to ask his grandson's wife, the next time they spoke, to find out if she went to the deployed family's dinner at the

Wigwam. He laughed again and seemed amazed that we were doing so much for the base. I smiled back and told him that we hadn't even scratched the surface.

This is what continues to fascinate me about this organization. We have lofty goals, on one hand, with the Foundation Capital Campaign, and on the other hand, have programs that reach down and touch an individual family.

Yet another reason why I enjoy coming to work every day.

We would like to publicly thank all of those who participated in the Study Advisory Committee (SAC) for the Fighter Country Foundation Capital Campaign. Don Brandt, SAC Chair alongside Rick Hearn, Barbara Barrett, Matt McGuire, Tom Browning, James Moffett, Robert Delgado, Tom O'Malley, Charley Freericks, David Rousseau, John Graham, David Scholl, Derrick Hall and Candice Wiest have committed their time and resources towards this unique initiative.

We know the efforts of this committee will result in facilities that will positively affect the lives of the men, women, and families of Luke Air Force Base for years to come. The support from the Valley of the Sun community towards the service members and their families at Luke is truly second to none.

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Fighter Country Partnership

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Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard takes command at Luke

By **TECH SGT. LUTHER MITCHELL JR.**
56TH FIGHTER WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Luke from the Pentagon, where he served as senior military assistant to the secretary of the Air Force.

He entered the Air Force in May 1992 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. This is his second tour as a wing commander, having previously commanded the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, from 2013 through 2015.

The general is accompanied by his wife, Maria, and their six children.

“Maria and I are extremely excited to be here today, to join your team and to serve you,” Leonard said. “This was our first assignment 22 years ago, after getting married, and it’s awesome to rejoin your team.”

The ceremony was officiated by Maj. Gen. James Hecker, commander of the 19th Air Force at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, who narrated Pleus’ many accomplishments at Luke.

“They flew 33,000 sorties during the two years the Pleus family commanded here,” Hecker said. “They produced 800 fighter pilots and 600 air weapons controllers. You’ve had several challenges, but you knocked every single one of them out of the park.”

Hecker continued to praise Pleus for his leadership during his tenure at the wing, and presented him with a Legion of Merit award.

Under Pleus’ command, the wing integrated the F-35, the Air Force’s newest fifth-generation fighter. He ushered in pilot training



Photo by Airman 1st Class Pedro Mota

Maj. Gen. James Hecker (left), 19th Air Force commander, hands the guidon to the incoming commander Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard at Luke Air Force Base, July 13, 2016. Leonard will be the commander of the 56th Fighter Wing.

Luke Air Force Base Airmen welcomed their new wing commander July 13, as Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard took command of the 56th Fighter Wing from outgoing commander Brig. Gen. Scott Pleus.

Leonard, a command pilot with more than 2,900 flying hours, including 576 combat hours, comes to



Photo by Senior Airman Devante Williams

Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, 56th Fighter Wing commander, speaks to the airmen for the first time during the 56th Fighter Wing Change of Command ceremony July 13, 2016 at Luke Air Force Base.

for the F-35, saw the F-35 program go from two to 39 F-35s, and postured Luke for initial operational capability at Hill Air Force Base.

“I’m proud of you,” Pleus said. “As I take a last look across your faces, I see friends, and that is what I will miss the most. Thank you for all the opportunities

you have given Jennifer and I, and I hope we cross paths soon.”

Pleus will go on to work as the director of the F-35 Integration Office at the Pentagon.

As the change of command concluded, Leonard reinforced his priorities and vision for the

future at Luke.

“Our part as the 56th FW is to build the future of airpower,” he said. “Our Air Force is growing and our enemies continue to pursue. We must also grow and while doing so pursue excellence. We build the future of airpower, and it starts here.”

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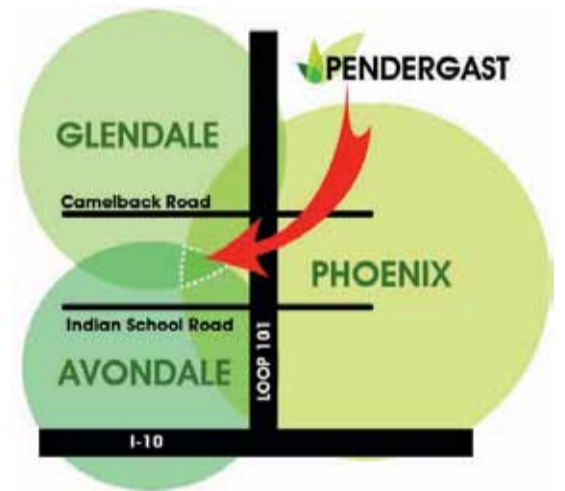
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15 years later, Luke remembers 9/11

By **STAFF SGT. MARCY COPELAND**
56TH FIGHTER WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Luke Air Force Base held a memorial Sept. 9 to remember the events of Sept. 11, 2001 and to honor those who lost their lives during the terror attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Shanksville, Pa., marking the 15th anniversary of the attacks.

Military personal and civilians gathered at the flight line control tower and held vigil, as well as spoke about the events that transpired on that fateful day.

The sound of bagpipes played as the colors posted and then the emcees gave the timeline of events.

• **8:46 a.m.**

– Hijackers aboard American Airlines Flight 11 crash the plane into floors 93-99 of



Photo by Senior Airman Devante Williams

Airman 1st Class Andrew Garcia, 56th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, rings the bell to honor the fallen heroes who responded to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 during the 9/11 Tower Tribute ceremony Sept. 9, 2016 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. Following the ceremony, Airmen and firefighters from across the base climbed the tower's stairwell to bring streamers bearing the names of the fallen to the top.

the North Tower of the WTC, killing everyone on board and hundreds inside the building.

• **8:47 a.m.** – Within seconds, NYPD and FDNY forces dispatch units to the WTC, while

Port Authority Police Department officers on site begin immediate evacuation of the North Tower.

• **9:03 a.m.**

– Hijackers crash United Airlines Flight 175

into floors 75-85 of the WTC's South Tower, killing everyone on board and hundreds inside the building

• **9:37 a.m.**

– Hijackers aboard American Airlines

Flight 77 crash the plane into the western façade of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., killing 59 aboard the plane and 125 military and civilian personnel inside the building.

• **9:59 a.m.** – The South Tower of the WTC collapses.

• **10:07 a.m.**

– Passengers and crew members aboard the hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 mount an attempt to retake the plane. In response, hijackers deliberately crashed the plane into a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, killing all 40 passengers and crew aboard.

• **10:28 a.m.** – The WTC's North Tower collapses, 102 minutes after being struck by Flight 11.

During a moment of silence, Airmen unfurled a giant American flag spanning more than three stories

from the catwalk of the flight control tower. Afterward, the memorial's guest speakers took the stage to recount their personal experience on that day.

“I was a staff sergeant at the time of the attacks and everything changed in a single day,” said Chief Master Sergeant Todd Kirsch, 56th Mission Support Group command chief. “We went from fighting for deployments to counting more deployments than I have fingers. I am proud to be standing here with the Airmen who joined after 9/11. I am proud of all of you who stand the line to protect this country. We have all decided this is the greatest nation in the world and we are going to stand here and protect it and if that concludes our lives, then that is the way it is. I am extremely proud to stand up here

MORE MEMORIAL ON 8



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MEMORIAL: Remembered with honor, From 6

and speak to you, but I am even more proud to be serving in the United States Air Force and to serve with every one of you.”

The last alarm tradition was carried out by the chiming of a bell with three rings per set, representing the completion of a firefighter’s tasks and that the firefighters were coming home for the final time.

After the ceremony concluded, everyone in attendance lined up to receive one of the 411 first responder names to carry the nine stories to the top of the control tower where they were collected and laid across the top of the American Flag draped on the tower.

“It is humbling to know that we only went nine stories today when the first responders climbed 10 times the amount of stairs we just did,” said Col. Robert Sylvester, 56th MSG

commander. “Those men and women were running into hell, but not a single one of them looked back. They put others before themselves and sacrificed their own lives in pursuit of rescuing the men and women trapped in the towers and we should take not just today, but every day to reflect on those sacrifices.”

After the flight tower emptied, firefighters from the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron and the 944th CES cleared the building and begin to take off all of their gear, having made the climb just as the first responders did on 9/11, wearing almost everything to the top.

“I came to this country 18 years ago from Venezuela and I found myself wanting to serve this country as my new home,” said Staff Sgt. Nairi Cornejo, 944th CES firefighter. “Climbing those

stairs gave me a brief glimpse into what those firefighters went through on that day and it just broke my heart. Now, I have an idea of just how bad it was going all the way to the top of those towers.”

As the last few Airmen began to leave the area, and old glory floated on the breeze, a few Airmen stood looking at the flag and the banner of names at the top.

“I felt such a sense of camaraderie climbing those stairs,” said Tech Sgt. James Jonathan Hickman, 56th CES firefighter. “I must have passed 30 or 40 other people on just one trip. I hope we touched everyone’s hearts and gave them a sense of closure with the ability to honor our fallen and to remember that day.”

We shall never forget the 2,977 victims who lost their lives Sept. 11, 2001.



Photo by Senior Airman Devante Williams

Luke firefighters and Airmen hold the American flag atop the air traffic control tower Sept. 9, 2016, at Luke Air Force Base. Thunderbolts climbed the nine stories of the control tower bearing the names of the 411 responders who lost their lives that day.



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AZ Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2016 induction Oct. 28

The annual Induction Ceremony of the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame will take place 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 28 at the DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel Paradise Valley-Scottsdale, 5401 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale. Doors open 10:30 a.m.

The Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame is sponsored and administered by the Unified Arizona Veterans Inc., Phoenix. The induction ceremony recognizes and honors Arizona veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and who serve and inspire their fellow American citizens with civic deeds and accomplishments outside their military service, including Arizona Medal of Honor recipients recognized for valor in action against enemy forces in wartime.

The Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame is recognized by the governor of Arizona and the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services, and supported by the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society. This will be the 16th class of veterans inducted since its inception in 2001.

This year's Induction Ceremony will recognize the Class of 2016:

- Jesus David Alegria, Oro Valley, US Army veteran
- Terry Michael Araman, Phoenix, US Army veteran
- Geraldine Berger, Sun City West, US Army veteran
- John Howard Black, Sierra Vista, US Army veteran
- Jeanne Joachim Blaes, Scottsdale, US Army veteran
- Patrick A. Campbell, Mesa, US Marine Corps veteran, posthumous
- Keith Blaine Connolly, Tucson, US Air Force veteran
- Roger K. Ferland, Scottsdale, US Army veteran
- Robert Charles Filbey, Yuma, US Army veteran
- Martin Stewart Fraiser, Prescott, US Marine Corps veteran
- Rachel Marie Gutierrez, Phoenix, US Army veteran
- Corey Randall Harris, Phoenix, US Army veteran
- Eric R. Jackson, Tucson, US Air Force veteran
- Richard Eldon Jonas, Chino Valley, US Air Force veteran
- James Thomas Kolbe, Tucson, US Navy veteran
- Thomas W. Linton, Phoenix, US Marine Corps veteran
- Joseph Charles Little, Lake Havasu City, US Army veteran
- Patrick Scott Lynch, Chandler, US Army veteran

- Frederick Marable, Mesa, US Army veteran
- Joan Beverly McDermott, Lake Havasu City, US Army veteran
- Michael Phillips Pollard, Marana, US Marine Corps veteran
- Vicente Sanchez, Phoenix, US Army veteran
- Johnny N. Stewart, Sahuarita, US Air Force veteran
- Eugene Talas, Kykotsmobi, US Air Force veteran
- William Rex Talcott, Phoenix, US Army veteran
- Richard Toliver, Goodyear, US Air Force veteran
- Robert E. Welch, Scottsdale, US Army veteran

Medal of Honor recipient included in the Class of 2016:

William McBryar (1861-1941), Sergeant, Company K, 10th US Cavalry, Salt River, Arizona, March 7, 1890. Date of issue: May 15, 1890. Citation: Distinguished himself for coolness, bravery and marksmanship while his troop was in pursuit of hostile Apache Indians.

Veterans and the public are invited to the induction ceremony, which includes lunch. The lunch entrée is a mixed grill of steak and chicken. Special dietary needs, such as requests for vegetarian meals, will be accommodated. The "Early Bird" cost is \$55 per person until Sept. 30. From Oct. 1 to 14, the lunch cost changes to \$65.

Registration via the Unified Arizona Veterans website, www.azuav.org, uses Eventbrite and payment by credit card. An option will also be available at that time to mail in a registration form and a personal or organization check to the following mailing address: Treasurer, Unified Arizona Veterans, P.O. Box 34338, Phoenix 85067.

Veterans and the public who do not have access to the registration form on the website www.azuav.org, contact Carol Culbertson, secretary, telephone 602-943-7834, to have the form mailed to you. The final registration due date is Oct. 14. Only registered guests will be allowed to attend the induction ceremony and lunch.

All lunches are pre-paid; lunches will not be sold at the induction ceremony event. For general information about the ceremony and luncheon, contact Culbertson by email: secretary@azuav.org, telephone 602-943-7834; or Reggie Yates, Chair, Unified Arizona Veterans, at email: chair@azuav.org, telephone 602-373-0703.

Read inductee Col. Richard Toliver's story on page 10.

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SOUTHWEST GAS

Tuskegee Airman protégé selected for Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame

The Unified Arizona Veterans Inc., Phoenix, has announced the selection of Retired Air Force Col. Richard Toliver into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame (AZVOF) Oct. 28, 2016. AZVOF recognizes and honors Arizona veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and who serve and inspire their fellow American citizens with civic deeds and accomplishments outside their military service.



Col. Richard Toliver will be inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Oct. 28.

Toliver is a protégé of the famed Tuskegee Airmen and was mentored, trained, and commissioned under their tutelage. He began his fighter pilot career in 1965 at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson under the leadership of then Col. Daniel "Chappie" James, an original Tuskegee Airman and the first African American four-star general. Later, he graduated from the USAF Fighter Weapons School ("Top Gun") at Nellis AFB, Nev., and completed two tours in Southeast Asia and 446 combat missions.

Toliver returned to Luke AFB in 1974 as one of the original F-15 Operational Test and Evaluation pilots. He returned again in 1982 for a refresher course prior to continuing on to Edwards AFB as the Test Director for the F-15E Strike Eagle that was first assigned to Luke AFB.

Toliver also held key roles in advanced research, development, and testing of tactical fighter aircraft. In addition, he directed the testing and evaluation of other weapon systems for the Department of Defense and allied military programs. Toliver held key staff positions and commanded

a number of units in several major commands of the Air Force. His duty assignments included bases throughout the United States, Southeast Asia, Europe, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf.

He is a Command Pilot with 4,000 flying hours in the F-4, F-15, F-16, OT-37, O-2, T-33, and several civilian aircraft. His military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Air Medal with 27 Oak Leaf Clusters.



Col. Richard Toliver began his fighter pilot career in 1965 at Davis Monthan Air Force Base.

Toliver retired from the United States Air Force March 1, 1989, after 26 years of distinguished service.

Since retiring from the Air Force, Col. Toliver pursued several ventures in business, economic development, and politics in New Mexico, Alabama, Georgia, and Texas. In 1993, he was recruited by Ross Perot's organization, United We Stand America, and became a strong, outspoken national advocate for education, economic, and government reform. He

organized the state of New Mexico into an effective political voice and served as the State's Executive Director. Later, he was appointed the Southwest Regional Director for 12 states, where he continued to encourage and inspire thousands of citizens to get involved in political affairs that affected their welfare and the future of their children.

In 1995, Perot selected Toliver to be the National Coordinator for Minority Community Outreach during the formation of the new National Reform Party.

In 1998, Perot again called upon Toliver to assist the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) that was created by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 40 years earlier. He worked directly with SCLC's new President, Martin Luther King III, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, former Ambassador Andrew Young, and others to successfully complete an operational strategy and a business plan for the 21st century. His efforts resulted in establishing a

way forward with broader appeal, credibility, and viability of this historical civil rights organization.

In 2002, Toliver was recruited by the president of Tuskegee University to jumpstart the development of the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Center at nearby Moton Field, Ala. His leadership and successful coordination with the Department of Interior and National Park Service resulted in the release of \$29 million for the initial phase of the site.

Today, the completed center is a major tourist attraction and the training site for the Legacy Flight Academy (LFA). LFA is a unique, two-week aviation experience that encourages minority students 16 to 19 years of age to emulate the great examples of the pioneering Tuskegee Airmen.

During 15 years of residing in the state of New Mexico, Toliver's public service included serving on the State Public Safety Advisory Commission; Board of

MORE TOLIVER ON 14

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36th Annual Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament April 7

The Annual Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament is one of the longest continuously run military golf tournaments in the area.

It began in 1981 as a relationship building effort between the Glendale Chamber of Commerce and Luke Air Force Base. Chamber members Bill Kelleher, Jim Herman, Ed LeGendre, Wendell De-Cross and chamber executive Bob Beckley were the originators of the event. Kelleher is still involved with the Luke Shoot Out today.

Villa de Paz Golf Course in Phoenix was the site of the first four tournaments. The committee decided to increase the value and quality of the golf tournament and moved the event to the Wigwam Resort. It was held there for 15 successful years. Luke Air Force Base opened its own golf course in 1998, covering an old landfill on West Northern Avenue and North Reems Road just north of the base. Falcon Dunes Golf Course became the home of the Luke Shoot Out in 2000 and it



Sgt. Estrada plays in the 35th Annual Luke Shoot Out.

has been at that location ever since.

Today, a portion of the proceeds from the Luke Shoot Out benefit "Operation Warm Heart" at Luke Air Force Base. The Glendale Chamber of Commerce donates part of the proceeds from the tournament to assist those families whose spouses are deployed. This is a great way to say thank you to enlisted personnel who are

devoted to serving.

The 36th Annual Luke Shoot Out Golf Tournament will be held April 7, 2017 at Falcon Dunes Golf Course, 15100 W. Northern Ave., with check-in beginning 6:30 a.m. and a shotgun start 7:30 a.m. Featured at the tournament is a putting contest with a guaranteed cash winner, plus Hole in One and Closest to the Pin contests on all par threes. One of



Foursome Bob Cohn, retired U.S. Air Force Sgt. Tom Cook, Harry Shapiro, and retired U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. George Thorne at the 34th Annual Luke Shoot Out.

the Hole in One prizes is a new 2017 vehicle. There is also a Challenge Hole, where you can double your wager, if your ball stops inside a large circle on the

green.

Many raffle items will be available and mulligans through the purchase of raffle tickets at the tournament. For information,

early registration, sponsorships, advertising and item donations for the Luke Shoot Out, call the Glendale Chamber of Commerce at 623-937-4754.



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the table with family and friends for a delicious 3 course menu of traditional Thanksgiving favorites at **LITCHFIELD'S** on Thursday, November 24, 3-7PM. Both locations also feature live piano entertainment. Reservations can be made beginning on October 1st.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING



Join us on the **THE WIGWAM FRONT LAWN** for our annual tree lighting and Hilgers Express on Friday, November 25, 5:30-9PM. Enjoy live music by local schools and choirs, hot chocolate, and a snow slide to help us

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Over the last 65 years, Credit Union West has provided education on topics ranging from understanding credit score to buying a car. They began as Luke Federal Credit Union in 1951 and have a strong legacy of supporting the men and women at Luke Air Force Base.

Incidentally, supporting Luke AFB is also the mission of Fighter Country Partnership (FCP), who has been a valued community partner of Credit Union West for many years.

Each year, FCP holds a financial expo to provide resources to active-duty and

veteran military members and their families. The credit union supports this event by providing free financial education seminars to discuss important topics.

In addition, together with the Airmen and Family Readiness Center, Credit Union West conducts a portion of the required four hours of financial education during their time with the First Term Airman Center. They equip young airmen with the tools necessary to make sound financial decisions on topics such as the ones above. The goal is to provide basic education to minimize the missteps that can so easily divert families from achieving financial success.

To learn more about Credit Union West and all they have to offer, visit online at www.cuwest.org, or call 602-631-3200, or 800-621-0287 (outside Maricopa County).

TOLIVER: AZ Vet Hall of Fame induction, From 10

Regents, University of New Mexico; and Board of Directors of the Kirtland Partnership Committee.

In 2004, the Tolivers moved to Goodyear and became active in the affairs of their new community. Toliver was subsequently recruited to serve on the Board of Directors for the West Valley Hospital. In 2005, he spearheaded the creation of the Archer-Ragsdale Arizona Chapter (ARAC) of Tuskegee Airmen Inc. to honor and perpetuate the legacy of the airmen. The chapter's dual mission focuses on inspiring youth toward outstanding achievements and leadership through social and educational activities in science, technology, engineering, math, and the arts (STEMA).

Toliver continues to have a significant influence in ARAC and participates regularly in youth outreach activities and programs in the community, schools, and civic organizations. During the past 10 years, the chapter has reached more than 300 youngsters and provided more than 200 orientation flights free of charge. These youngsters have been exposed to flying units, flight simulations, and aerospace facilities at airports

and military bases throughout the Valley. In addition, He helped lead the efforts in Washington, D.C. to gather signatures for a legislative bill to approve the Congressional Gold Medal for the Tuskegee Airmen. The bill was unanimously approved by the U.S. Congress, and President George W. Bush signed the bill into law in April 2006.

March 29, 2007, President Bush awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to approximately 300 surviving Tuskegee Airmen and their spouses.

Toliver has extensive experience with local, state, and national television, radio, news media, and speaking engagements. He has written numerous articles for local and national newspapers, magazines, and periodicals. In 2009, he published "An Uncaged Eagle," a highly acclaimed book of his memoirs. In 2014, he published "WOMAN—A Godly Creation" to celebrate and honor the historical and continuing accomplishments of women worldwide. He is in high demand as a motivational speaker nationwide and overseas, including trips to Canada, Germany, Iraq, Kuwait, Spain, Hawaii, and Japan.

Since 2005, he has been the

keynote speaker at 20 military bases from Washington, D.C. to California. He has also been the guest speaker at several dozen schools, churches, and civic organizations throughout the Phoenix area and across America.

Toliver's life, Air Force career, and passion for public service are anchored in a solid marriage and exemplary family relationships. He has been married 54 years to the former Peggy A. Hairston of Baltimore, Md. They have eight adult children, five of which are adopted or foster, 13 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. The Tolivers reside in Goodyear, and are members of Apollo Baptist Church in Glendale, where both teach Sunday school, and Toliver serves as Chairman of the Deacon Board.

Col. Toliver is a life member of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., the Air Force Association, and the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association. He is also a member of Pinnacle Forum, a national organization that seeks to be a catalyst for change across the seven Cultural Mountains of Religion, Family, Education, Business, Arts and Entertainment, Media, and Government.

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It's Christmas for the Troops time in City of Peoria

By CAROLYN DRYER
EDITOR

It's been almost five decades since former Peoria Mayor Bob Barrett served his country in what was the most unpopular military engagement of our history: Vietnam.

Tuesday evening, he talked about his experiences, and how he fears Americans are slowly allowing themselves to forget the troops. Although he did not say it, it was apparent he was comparing Vietnam soldiers' experiences when they arrived home to the experiences of present-day soldiers.

He asked the audience at the council meeting to tell him when was the last time they had seen a broadcast of a soldier arriving to a big celebration at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. There was only silence.

"I spent a year in Vietnam," Barrett said. "It was very rare when anybody got a package."

He compared that experience to what he feels is happening today.

"I'm afraid everybody's losing interest. Please help us show you care."

Barrett's remarks came after his wife, Rachelle, president



Photo by Carolyn Dryer

Rachelle Barrett gives a presentation on Christmas for the Troops at the Peoria City Council meeting Sept. 6. This is the sixth year of the campaign close to the heart for her and her husband, former Peoria Mayor Bob Barrett.

of Peoria Sunset Lions Club, gave her presentation about the 2016 Christmas for the Troops campaign. The local Lions Club started the campaign six years ago, and continues to partner with the city for help

in gathering donations to send overseas.

Rachelle Barrett said since the first campaign, community partnering has grown and is now at multiple levels. The second year of the campaign, Chal-

lenger Space Center joined in. This year, Rachelle Barrett said, Montessori School, the city's public library, Cox Communication, Congregational Church of Sun City, local Boys and Girl Scout troops, and honor students from local high schools and eighth grades are "learning how to share and appreciate."

She said kids are finding out how important what they are doing is, and where all of the stuff they are packaging is going.

"They learn it doesn't come for free," she said. "The entitlement attitude goes away."

Last year, she said, after everything was packed, kids sat down and wrote individual thank you letters to the troops.

There were 362 boxes sent to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Qatar and two undisclosed locations.

"It's getting harder to get packages back to the forward lines," she said. "The common factor behind all of this is the dirt. They have two seasons: dirt and mud."

It costs \$15.95 per package, and this year the Lions are trying to send 350. They need \$3,500 or more to cover costs.

The public is encouraged to donate items, as well as sign holiday greeting cards, which

will be included in the boxes. Items that are needed include shampoo, conditioner, body wash, body lotion, toothpaste, tooth brushes, toilet paper, shaving cream, feminine hygiene products, wash cloths, baby wipes, eye drops, lip balm, sunscreen, white tube socks, black or tan uniform socks, winter thermal underwear, protein bars, tuna cans, jerky, healthy snacks, candy, gum, books, magazines, game books, phone cards, detergent pods, small toys, wraparound sun glasses and cash donations to help defray postage costs. Travel size items are preferred.

Collection sites are at the Peoria Main Library and Peoria City Hall (8401 W. Monroe St.), Peoria Community Center (8335 W. Jefferson St.), Rio Vista Recreation Center (8866 W. Thunderbird Road), Sunrise Mountain Library (21109 N. 98th Ave.), and the Challenger Learning Center (21170 N. 83rd Ave.).

The boxes will be sent to deployed military men and women at the end of November, just in time for the holiday season.

For more information, contact Rachelle Barrett at 602-359-1623, or 602-292-0602.

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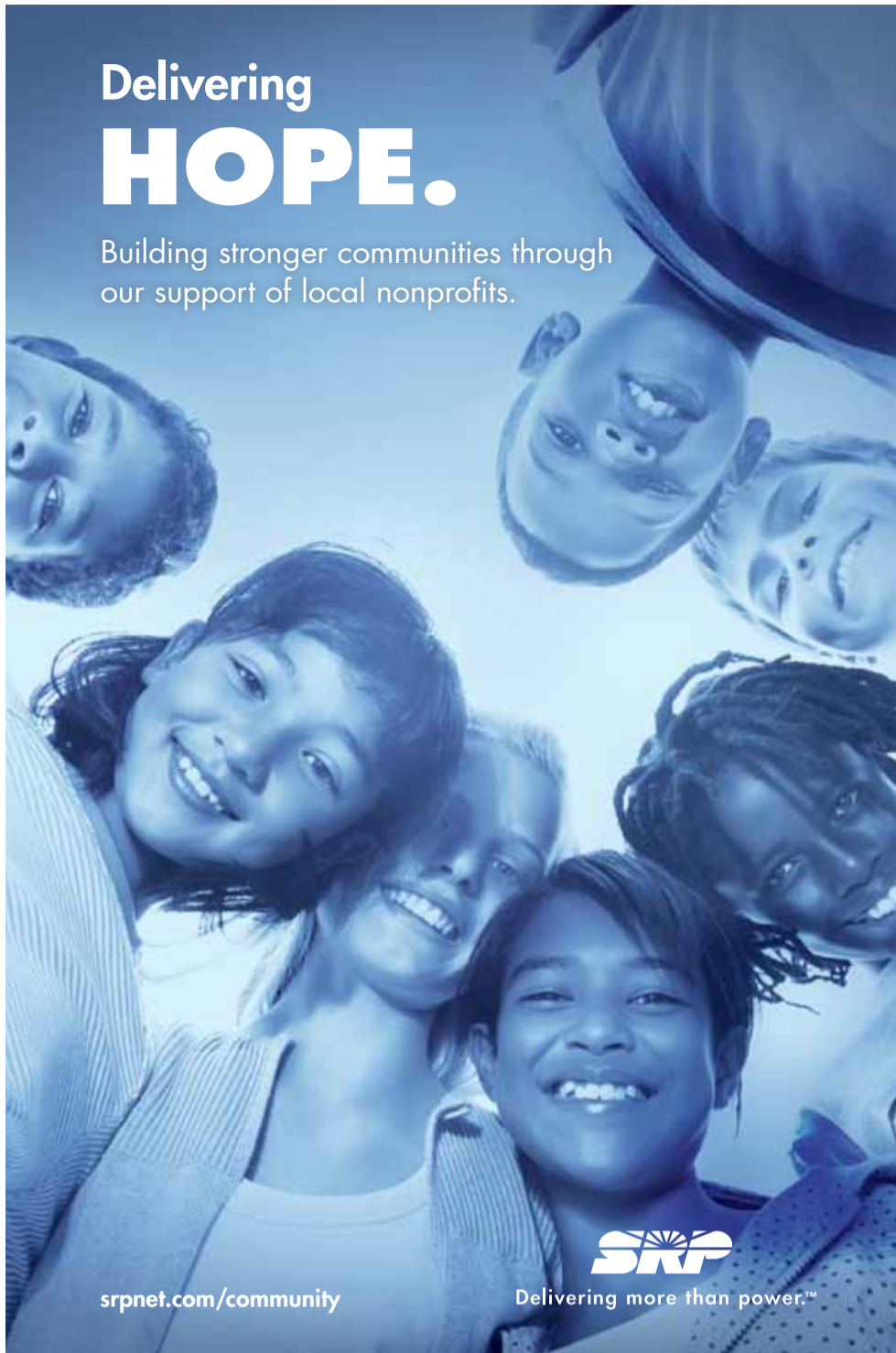
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Glendale to host fourth annual Stand Up for Veterans Sept. 24 at GCC

Glendale's fourth annual "Stand Up for Veterans" will be held 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 24 at Glendale Community College, 6000 W. Olive Ave. Nearly 1,000 veterans have attended the community outreach event in its three-year history to utilize the many resources available.

A local committee representing city, state and federal agencies, local businesses and non-profit partners has begun planning Glendale's Stand Up for Veterans, which will provide opportunities for veterans to gain employment on the spot and access to a wide array of services. Organizers are now accepting business, non-profit and government agency vendor applications.

As many as 50 employers presently hiring will have representatives and interviewers at the event and many will hire veterans that very day. Advisors will also offer professional resume-building suggestions and other job search assistance.

"The whole purpose is to provide our veterans with a hand up, not a handout," said Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers, who initiated the Glendale Stand Up event three years ago. "They can potentially walk into the event without a job and bogged down with legal issues, and they can walk out of the event gainfully employed with, essentially, a clean slate. That truly can change someone's life for the better."

Veterans will learn what higher educational opportunities are available through Glendale Community College, which offers its Veteran Services Center - ranked eighth nationwide for Vet-friendly two-year colleges.

"Glendale Community College, one of the top nationally ranked veteran-friendly



Ed Besta
Chairman, Stand Up for Veterans Committee
Major, USAF, Retired
VFW Post 1433, Past Commander

schools, is proud to be part of such an important event to support our veterans," said Teresa Leyba Ruiz, interim GCC president. "It's not just about veterans, it's about their families too - all of those who have made sacrifices - and GCC is happy to be part of it."

One critical service on hand that day is access to court and legal services. Glendale City Court Presiding Judge Elizabeth Finn will be representing dozens of Arizona municipal courts, where veterans with criminal cases may be able to satisfy outstanding court fines and fees by performing a community service work project. Veterans with active arrest warrants on criminal misdemeanors will have those warrants exonerated.

Judges from many additional justice courts in Maricopa County will also be present to

offer similar opportunities to reduce or eliminate court fines through community service. Glendale's Community Services Department will provide transportation from Glendale Community College to historic Sahuaro Ranch Park, where the community beautification work service project will be offered.

Additional free legal services will include consultation with members of the State Bar of Arizona on all civil matters and with attorneys from the Maricopa County Public Defender's Office on felony matters. The City of Glendale Prosecutors Office will also be on hand. The Arizona Motor Vehicle Division will be present to advise veterans of requirements for reinstatement of their driving privileges and other MVD business.

"One of my most rewarding experiences is having someone come to the event with a suspended license, which prevents them securing appropriate employment," said The Honorable Elizabeth Finn, Presiding Judge of Glendale City Court. "They complete community restitution benefiting the City of Glendale and leave with a valid license. This allows them to better provide for themselves and their families. We take pride in being able to provide all these services at Stand Up for Veterans."

Sandy Coor Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1433 in Glendale serves as the non-profit administrator of the event, working in partnership with the committee.

"The event is consistent with the VFW national mantra, 'No One Does More for Veterans,'" said Ed Besta, immediate past commander of Post 1433 and chairman of

Glendale's Stand Up for Veterans. "Our post has been an active supporter of veterans in the Glendale community since it was first chartered more than 90 years ago."

Veterans can apply for health care and other benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and social service agencies and non-profits will assist with family and personal matters. Although offering social assistance, Weiers emphasizes that this event differs from "Stand Down" events, which provide needed supplies and services specifically to homeless veterans through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

"These are people who have served our country, and they deserve an opportunity to be given a second chance with the tools to succeed, so our goal is to reach them before they hit rock bottom," said Mayor Weiers. "If they attend our Stand Up event, hopefully they'll never need the services of a Stand Down event."

Older veterans who just want a haircut or assistance with minor tickets or traffic violations are welcome to attend. No one will be turned away. Veterans and their families - of any age - can attend.

The Military & Veteran Affairs Committee of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce is actively promoting the event. Local businesses have committed in-kind and cash support for Glendale's Stand Up For Veterans. Republic Services provides complimentary lunch to all veterans in attendance. Additional business supporters have included Rolfs Salon and Credit Union West.

For more information, or to become a vendor, go to www.GlendaleStandUp.org.



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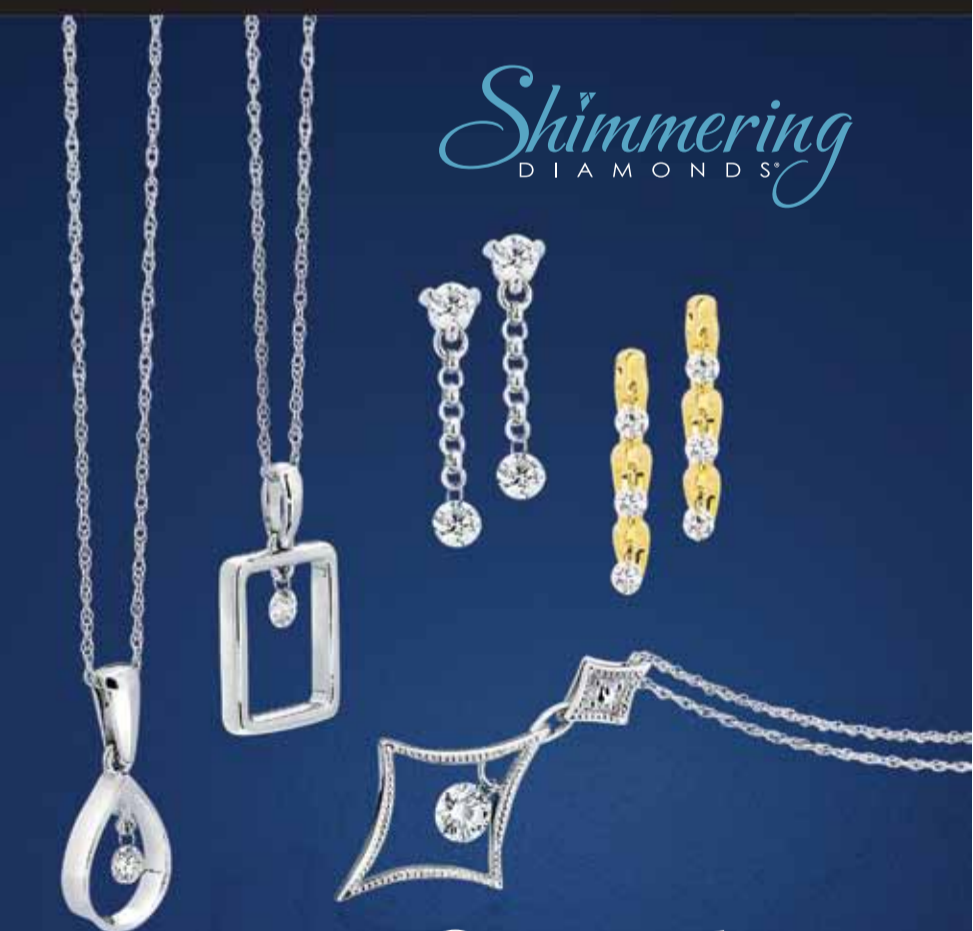
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Luke Air Force Base pilot nominated for Sijan Air Force Leadership Award

By STAFF SGT. MARCY COPELAND
56TH FIGHTER WING
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Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base

Luke is proud to have Maj. Matthew "Sheet" Hoyt, 54th Fighter Group F-16 chief instructor and 54th Operations Support Squadron chief of weapons and tactics nominated for the Lance P. Sijan Air Force Leadership Award.

Hoyt was responsible for leading 192 pilots and 72 instructors as chief instructor, accounting for 55 percent of the Air Force's new F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots. Additionally, he led a project that brought life-saving auto-collision avoidance to the F-16, leading to an upgrade on a fleet of 56 aircraft, and orchestrated a rescue mission of a downed pilot which resulted in the pilot's safe return to base in less than two hours.

"I am honored to represent the 56th Fighter Wing at the 19th Air Force level and know that our accomplishments as a team will compete well at the MAJCOM level," Hoyt said. "I am humbled to be considered and am incredibly proud of our fighter wing for training warrior fighter pilots for our combat Air Force. Whatever you do in our wing, you contribute to the making of an F-16 or F-35 pilot who stands ready to defend our nation."

The Lance P. Sijan Air Force Leadership Award is given annually and recognizes Airmen who have demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities.

Nov. 9, 1967, Captain Lance Sijan was shot down over Vietnam sustaining several injuries. Unfortunately, he was captured after evading the enemy for 45 days. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp, where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length.

During his interrogation, he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information to his captors. Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner, Lt. Col. Robert Craner.

Maj. Matthew "Sheet" Hoyt, 54th Fighter Group F-16 chief instructor and 54th Operations Support Squadron chief of weapons and tactics, was nominated for the Lance P. Sijan Air Force Leadership Award July 27, 2016, at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. Hoyt will now compete at the Air Force level.

During Sijan's intermittent periods of consciousness and until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts. Due to his extreme weakness, adverse living conditions, insufficient clothing, and an inadequate diet, Sijan contracted pneumonia on Jan. 18, 1968. Removed from his cell on Jan. 21, 1968, he died at the Hoa Lo prison camp, as reported by his Vietnamese captors.

He was presented the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously. Sijan was the first Air Force Academy graduate to have received the MOH.

The first of the Sijan awards was presented in 1981 and has continued to be awarded every year to an Airman who has demonstrated his or her leadership abilities to be worthy of the award.

Hoyt will now compete at the major command level.

"This award, one of the most prestigious in the Air Force, recognizes Airmen who have demonstrated the highest qualities of leadership in the performance of their duties and the conduct of their lives," Col. David Shoemaker, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander. "The quality of all nominees is very high, and the competition fierce and the 56th FW is proud of this recognition of Maj. Hoyt's outstanding leadership, and we wish him luck as he competes at the MAJCOM level."

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcy Copeland, U.S. Air Force

The Air Force's 100th F-35 Lightning II lands at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz, Aug. 26, 2016. The aircraft, designated AF-100, marks a milestone for the F-35 program, as it continues to grow, progress and support initial operational capabilities.

100th F-35 lands at Luke AFB

The F-35 program took a major step forward recently with the announcement of initial operational capability and another huge step was made at Luke Air Force Base today when the Air Force's 100th F-35 Lightning II, designated AF-100, arrived here.

"This marks a milestone and shows the fact that the F-35 program has continued to grow, progress and support initial operational capability," said Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, 56th Fighter Wing commander. "It is also a 'scare factor' for our enemies that we are able to produce such an incredible platform at such a high production rate and that it's getting out in the field in larger and larger numbers."

Luke Air Force Base received its first F-35 in March 2014 and developed the training and tactics for the program. The fleet has since grown to more than 40 F-35s at Luke, including those of partner nations such as Australia and Norway, and recently activated its third F-35 unit – the 63rd Fighter Squadron.

"A lot of people put the blood, sweat and tears into making sure we could have an agreement with the community that would allow us to train and continue to produce the future of airpower," Leonard said. "Standing up the third squadron marks the halfway point as we grow up to six squadrons. It also comes with the heritage of the 63rd, which is incredible, and to be able to see that take new form in the shape of a Lightning aircraft is phenomenal."

From the first training sortie on May 5, 2014, to the arrival of the first partner-nation F-35 on December 18, 2014, and more recently beginning its first-ever F-35 Mission-



Photo courtesy U.S. Air Force

Documentation of the Honorable Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force, and Dr. William LaPlante to LMAERO.

Ready Airmen training class for maintainers, Luke is no stranger to F-35 milestones.

"Last year we began U.S. Air Force and partner pilot training at Luke AFB in Arizona, where a blend of U.S. and partner instructor pilots are helping to train U.S. Air Force and other partner pilots," said Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, F-35 Joint Program Executive Officer, during an April 26 hearing with the Senate Armed Services Committee.

As Luke continues to perfect F-35 training, the Air Force has moved beyond training and announced August 2 that IOC has been accomplished.

"The Air Force is now receiving F-35As at Hill AFB in Utah," Bogdan said.

With the reception of the 100th F-35, Luke is quickly transitioning to the only active-duty Air Force F-35 training base, providing the world's greatest F-35 fighter pilots to the new operational squadrons and eventually to combat.

"The F-35 is going to be the backbone of the



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Luther Mitchell Jr., U.S. Air Force

Maj. Matt Strongin, 62nd Fighter Squadron F-35 Lightning II pilot, is met by a 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Unit Airman Aug. 26, 2016, after landing the Air Force's 100th F-35. This milestone comes on the heels of the Air Force's announcement of the F-35's initial operational capability.

fighter fleet in the United States Air Force and for our partner nations," Leonard said. "There are going to

be more F-35s than any other fighter platform, and all that training starts right here at Luke AFB."

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will continue to be reached. In total, Luke is expected to host 144 F-35s, distributed between six fighter squadrons, once the entire fleet has been delivered.

“This is just another stepping stone that we’ve laid down through hard work,” Healy said. “We’re taking incremental steps, and we are very, very quickly turning out students. It’s ramped up at almost an exponential pace.”



Photo by Senior Airman James Hensley

Maj. Nathan Heguy, 62nd Fighter Squadron fighter pilot, greets Casey O’neal, 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Unit crew chief, after landing at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., Sept. 12, 2016. Heguy’s sortie marks the 10,000th flying hour for the F-35 program at Luke.

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Region of the Air Force Association, which covers Nevada and New Mexico, as well as Arizona.

Approximately 5,000 AFA members live in Arizona and generally are affiliated with chapters in Tucson, Sierra Vista, Prescott-Goldwater, and the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area (Frank Luke).

On Oct. 1, 2004, the Phoenix Sky Harbor Chapter, which served members on the east side of the Phoenix area, closed down because of lack of leadership availability. The Frank Luke Chapter absorbed those members and now is about 2,000 strong.

For information, call Harry Bailey, 623-846-7483.

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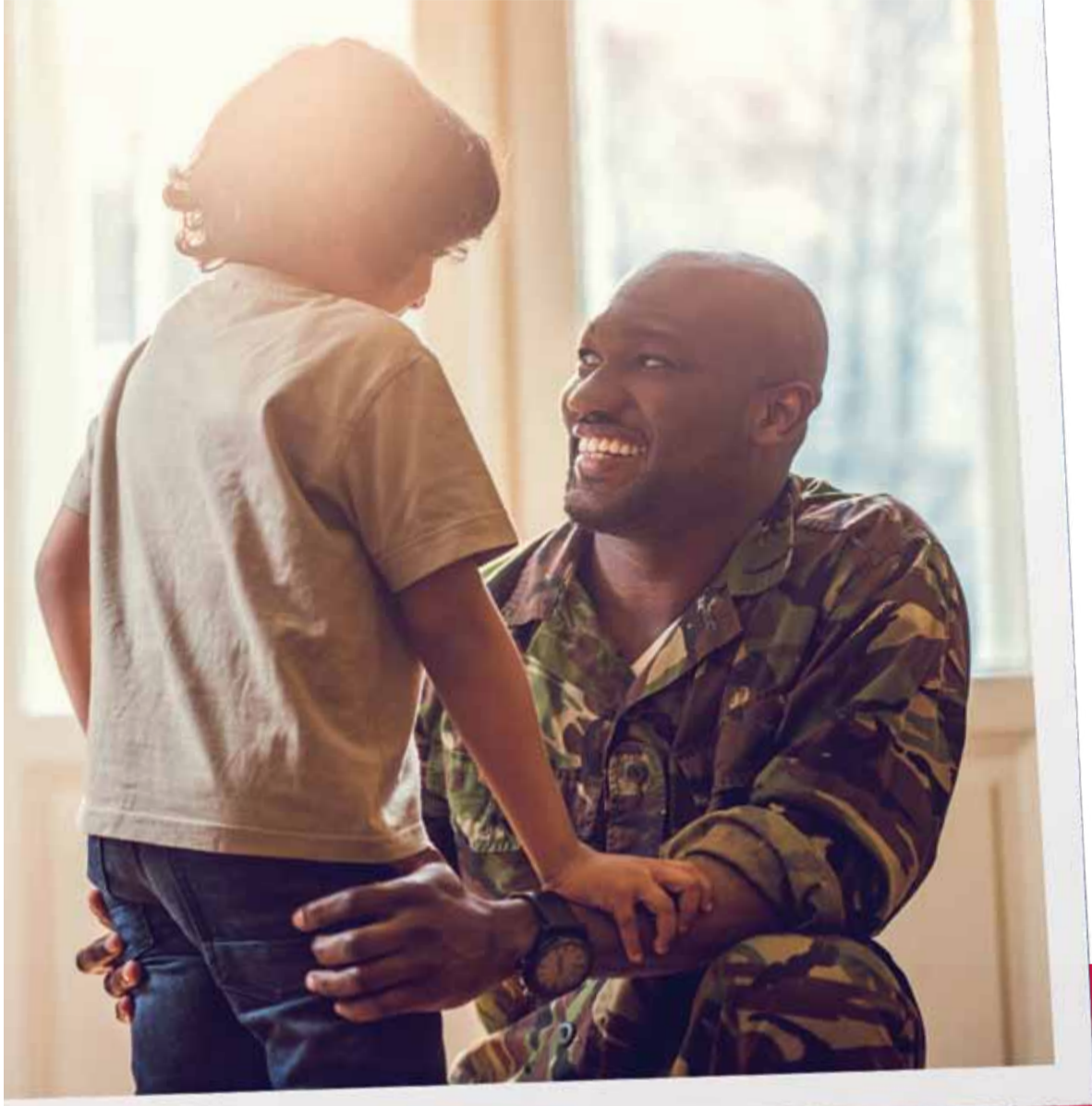
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