

Get ready for Luke Days 2020

By FCP Staff

Luke Days, the premier air show in the Phoenix area, is returning March 21-22, 2020.

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds demonstration team will headline the free event throughout the two-day show.

“Mark your calendars now because we can’t wait to host you in 2020,” Brig. Gen. Todd Canterbury, 56th Fighter Wing commander, said. “Luke Days is our chance to open up our gates and welcome the community on base to see their U.S. military up close. We love hosting you as a small thank you for the amazing support you give us year after year.”

More than 250,000 attendees enjoyed the 2018 event, making it one of the most highly-attended events in Arizona.

Stay tuned to the Luke Air Force Base social media accounts and website for updates on performers, appearances and other details.

Questions can be directed to the Luke AFB Public Affairs Office at 623-856-6011 or 56fw.pa@us.af.mil. ■



Heritage jets fly high in a demonstration at Luke Days 2016. The airshow returns in 2020. (Photo special to FCP Visions)

Fighter Country Partnership makes holidays bright for Airman

By Bill Johnston

Program Director, Fighter Country Partnership

Tis the Season! That has been the topic of conversation in the Fighter Country Partnership office these days. This is always a great time to be part of Fighter Country Partnership because we have several events that are very fulfilling to be part of and one of the reasons I truly enjoy working for this organization. Two of those are what I would like to showcase today. Those are the Dorm Dweller Holiday Party and Operation Santa.

The Dorm Dweller Holiday Party has been around for the past seven or eight years and is a celebration of those airmen who are living in the base dormito-

ries. These airmen are young; mostly 18 to 20 years old with most of them away from home for the first time. This party is simply a positive distraction for these young men and women.

During their workdays, these airmen are maintaining multi-million-dollar aircraft, working to secure the installation, tending to the medical care of thousands of military and family members and all the other important jobs that these airmen do day in and day out.

For this party, we bring in a team of Best Buy employees to run a big video game tournament and



For the Dorm Dweller Holiday Party, Fighter Country Partnership brought in a team of Best Buy employees to run a big video game tournament and soon, there were well over 100 in the Airmen's Community Center. (Photos courtesy Fighter Country Partnership)

Holidays...continued on page 2

Holidays...continued from page 1

enough pizza, sandwiches, cookies, and cakes to feed an army. Airmen started arriving and soon there were well over 100 in the Airmen's Community Center, which is perfectly located – directly across from the dormitories. They play ping pong, pool and foosball and soon after we started, the room where the video game tournament was being held quickly filled with airmen who wanted to play.

After a few hours and after all of the door prizes had been given out, all of them went back to their dorms with smiles on their faces.

The other perfect holiday event was Operation Santa. This is an incredible partnership between Fighter Country Partnership, USAA, Fiesta Bowl and Dick's Sporting Goods. For this Operation Santa, Fighter Country Partnership brought 20 kids to Dick's Sporting Goods for a shopping spree. All of these kids have a parent who is currently deployed and will not be home for the holidays.

The exceptional part of this event is how each organization brings their "A" game to make this event perfect for the kids. Between Fighter Country Part-



For Operation Santa, Fighter Country Partnership brought 20 kids to Dick's Sporting Goods for a shopping spree. (Photo courtesy Bill Johnston)

nership, USAA and Fiesta Bowl, each kid was given \$300 worth of Dick's Sporting Goods gift cards for their shopping spree. Dick's Sporting Goods also gave a 20 percent discount, which gave the children even more bang for their buck. As they arrived, Spirit of the Fiesta Bowl was there to greet them

and give each a high-five.

Each child had a USAA volunteer to walk with them and help them make sure they weren't going over budget. It was a perfect fit to be the person walking with them because the kids could not exceed the amount on their gift cards and in-store discount.

Although the kids might not realize it, they were getting a lesson in budgeting while they were filling their shopping cart with all the cool things that Dick's Sporting Goods has inside their store. All 20 kids ended their shopping spree and waiting for them was a crew from Rudy's BBQ so they could go home with full stomachs and full bags of Christmas presents.

I know firsthand how important both

events are to the airmen and their families. Once upon a time, I lived in the dorms as a young airman and I, too, was deployed and away from home during the holidays. The smiles on the faces of the airmen and the young kids were enough to let us know that they appreciated what we had done and that they were going to have a good holiday season.

It's great to work for Fighter Country Partnership, but it's equally great to have such awesome partners like USAA, Fiesta Bowl, Dick's Sporting Goods, Best Buy and Rudy's BBQ who made it possible for these airmen and kids to have a fun and memorable holiday season. 'Tis the season, indeed. ■

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Holiday Magic brings the snow and other activities to Luke



A horse-drawn carriage loaded with passengers prepares to trot around Fowler Park on December 7 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. An orange and purple sky cascades over Holiday Magic 2018, illuminating the event that brings holiday cheer to Luke families. (U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid)

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F-35 HFT prepares for new demonstration profile

By Senior Airman Alexander Cook
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The F-35 Heritage Flight Team is officially transitioning to the F-35 Demonstration Team for the 2019 air show season, taking their current flying profile to new heights.

"The past year's demonstration was sort of like an 'appetizer' if you will," said Capt. Andrew "Dojo" Olson, F-35 Demonstration Team pilot and commander. The new profile this year will be the full 'five-course meal' showing fans everything this jet is capable of." According to Olson, the new 13 minute-long profile will highlight the F-35A Lightning II's numerous capabilities to include speed, agility, and high-g turning.

"What makes the fifth generation fighter so special in general is the slow-speed, high angle of attack maneuvering it can do," Olson said. "We're also going to be performing controlled flat spins while falling out of the sky as well as high-speed passes and vertical climbs." Along with the new single-jet pro-

file, the team plans to include the Heritage Flight display following the F-35A's performance flying alongside older warbirds representing the past, present, and future of Air Force Airpower.

"For the 2019 air show season, we're going to be a demonstration team," Olson said. "The show we're going to bring to fans is unlike anything they've ever seen and I really believe it's going to set a bench mark for the demonstrations performed by any airplane on the planet. I think it's really going to impress people by finally showing off the full maneuvering envelope of the F-35A." Throughout the off season, Olson is preparing for the new profile in Fort Worth, Texas where he'll engage in simulated training.

"The training involved during the off season is very intense," Olson said. "It takes a lot of practice to fly the F-35A crisply and professionally to fully showcase its power and agility. We wrote the new demonstration from scratch hand selecting all of the new maneuvers so their execut-

able and repeatable to ensure safety." With the amount of operational support from the 56th Fighter Wing, Olson is confident now is the right time to transition to the demonstration team.

"We have the right amount of jets right now at Luke AFB to fully support what we need to do on the road with the demonstration team as well as continue to fulfill our primary mission at home of training the world's greatest fighter pilots and combat ready Airmen." The quantity of fully combat capable (3F) F-35A's within the fleet at Luke AFB will also enable the F-35 Demonstration Team to effectively demonstrate its capabilities while on the road.

"We have a wide variety of professionals within their respective career fields on the team this year who are at their absolute pinnacles in their career and it's such an honor and joy to work with them on a daily basis." With 12 Airmen selected to be on the team for the upcoming season, Olson is looking forward to what's in store for the future.

"I'm really proud of what our team accomplished last year, but I'm also very excited about the upcoming season to finally get to show air show crowds around the world the full potential of the F-35A Lightning II."

The F-35 Demonstration Team pilots will be completing their certification over the upcoming weeks at the Barry M. Goldwater Range in preparation for



The F-35 Heritage Flight Team is officially transitioning to the F-35A Lightning II Demonstration Team for the 2019 air show season. Their new 13-minute long profile will highlight the F-35A's numerous capabilities to include speed, agility, and high-g turning. (U.S. Air Force graphic by Richard McManus)

their show season beginning in March 2019.

2019 schedule for the F-35 Demonstration Team: Latrobe, Penn.; St. Louis; Duluth, Minn.; Milwaukee; New Windsor, N.Y.; Cleveland; Hillsboro, Ore.; Huntington Beach, Calif.; San Francisco; Houston; Jacksonville, Fla.

For questions, call the Luke AFB Public Affairs Office at 623-856-6011. For more information and updates on the F-35 Demonstration Team, go to <https://www.luke.af.mil/F-35-Demo-Team/> or follow them on Facebook @F35DEMO and Instagram @F35DemoTeam. ■

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Luke Forward campaign sets \$5.82M goal to support Luke AFB

By Donald Brandt, Luke Forward Campaign General Chair & Carolyn Dryer, Editor

Since 2010, the Department of Defense budget has steadily declined between 8 and 10 percent per year, which has had a large impact on Luke Air Force Base, the world's largest F-16 fighter training base.

In response, community leaders, The Fighter Country Partnership and the Foundation Board of Directors launched the \$5.82 million Luke Forward Capital Campaign to support the population of 100,000.

The campaign is funding 10 projects, such as updates to the Honor Guard Headquarters, Airmen Leadership School, Fire Station and more.

As an extra incentive, Arizona Public Service (APS) has put up a \$200,000 match for new gifts to the campaign on top of its \$300,000 cornerstone donation.

To learn more about the Luke Forward Capital Campaign, Donald Brandt, President/CEO of Arizona Public Service and the campaign general chair, answered the following questions.

Q: When was the Luke Forward campaign launched?

We have an outstanding group of business and community leaders who we refer to as the campaign cabinet. These are folks from banking, real estate, philanthropy, retail and more – tremendous leaders from many different industries, all connected by their dedication to supporting the men and women of Luke Air Force Base. The cabinet held its first meeting downtown at the APS offices on April 7, 2017, and that was the official launch of the Luke Forward Campaign.

Q: What kind of data collection was conducted? Who did it?

Back in 2016, before launching the Luke Forward campaign, we enlisted Powers Young & Company of Phoenix to conduct a capital development study and help chart a path for the campaign. The study was meant both to take stock of the needs at the base, and to gauge the community's readiness to support key capital projects there. The study also measured the community's engagement with the

programs of Fighter Country Foundation and Partnership.

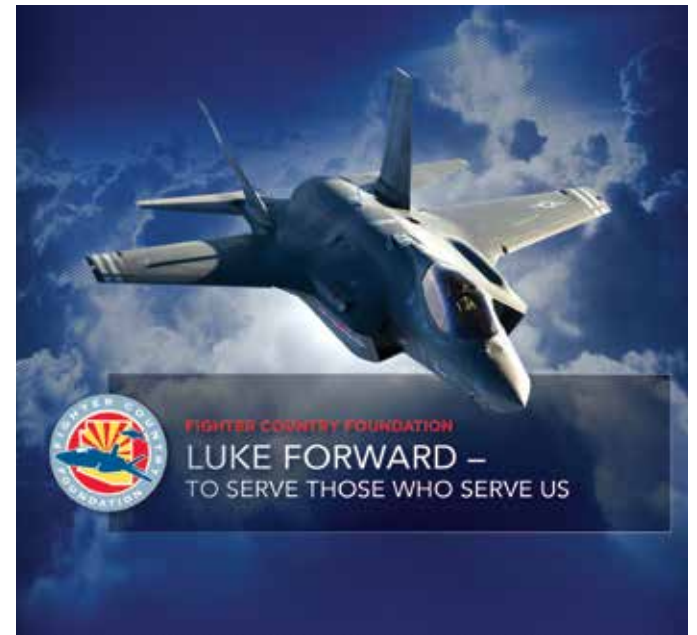
Q: How did you come up with the \$5.82 million figure? How much have you collected so far?

The study I just mentioned indicated that the broader community was ready to support a campaign to fund projects not deemed "mission critical" by the Department of Defense. And this is an important distinction. Luke is the Air Force's largest fighter training base, and the DoD supports "Mission Critical" projects and programs at the base, which are directly related to the personnel, training, aircraft, weapons, equipment and maintenance tied to Luke's military mission.

The projects we are supporting


through the Luke Forward campaign are not considered mission critical, but are nonetheless important to the 22,000 airmen, and other service members and families who call Luke Air Force Base home. The base

Goal...continued on page 10



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Goal...continued from page 8

fire station, honor guard headquarters, child development center, and air-conditioned flight line kitchen are excellent examples. These facilities improve the quality of life for folks on the base. The study indicated a stretch but achievable goal of \$5.8 million for these projects, and the Fighter Country board elected to proceed based on that recommendation.

I am proud to report the campaign has raised \$4.4 million to date.

Q: How could the private sector become involved? How do you plan to achieve your goal at this point?

The campaign leadership has been fortunate to connect with foundations, individuals and companies in Maricopa County and around Arizona that support Luke's mission and the men and women who serve "inside the fence." This truly is a team effort, and our campaign cabinet has opened many doors.

Anyone interested in learning more about the project should contact Ron Sites, the executive director of Fighter Country Foundation, at 623-882-2191 or rsites@fightercountry.org.

My company, Arizona Public Ser-

vice, has committed \$300,000 to this campaign to date through our Foundation. In addition, this past October, we issued a challenge to the business community to raise another \$200,000 that we will match dollar for dollar. We hope this will inspire commitments of \$10,000 or more by local businesses. That being said, we welcome new supporters at any level – \$1 on up.

Q: Who makes the ultimate decision about how the funds collected will be spent? The top official of the Air Force? The top official of the Defense Department? Luke AFB Commander?

The list of projects to be funded by the Luke Forward Campaign was developed in consultation with base leadership, from conversations with individual squadron commanders, and with input from Fighter Country's network of community leaders who are actively engaged in the campaign. The men and women of the Base are so humble - and so mission driven - that they have never complained, and never asked for a thing. For example, the old Flight Line Kitchen was not much more than a picnic table – no air conditioning, no shade, no proper sink to wash their hands. It was the leadership and

community who recognized that after working on aircraft engines outdoors in July, a mechanic might want to wash his or her hands, and have lunch in an air-conditioned kitchen for a little respite. After recognizing this type of need, the campaign presented the project list to the Department of Defense, who then had final approval on how funds raised would be spent.

Q: Is it just brick and mortar and infrastructure, or can a portion of the funds be used for equipment technology or directly with programs and administration thereof?

There are 10 project elements. Nine are capital projects (brick and mortar). The 10th is a \$500,000 fund restricted for program support during the campaign.

Q: Anything you wish to add ...

Luke Air Force Base keeps America safe. In so doing, Luke and those who go to work there each day keep the world safe. The F-35 and F-16 fighter pilots trained at Luke are the best in the business.

Luke also delivers a profound economic value here in Arizona. Each year, Luke produces \$2.4 billion in economic benefits to Arizona, placing

the base (along with Palo Verde and our universities) among the most important economic drivers in our state.

I have personally served as an Honorary Commander at Luke, and it was a tremendous experience to see first-hand what the men and women of the base are capable of. As Defense Department budgets have become more and more stressed and narrowly focused on the central component of the Defense mission – protecting the nation, some of the important support to the men and women who keep America safe has gone by the wayside. Luke Forward addresses that shortfall. These dedicated men and women have earned our support through their hard work and commitment not only to Luke, but the entire community. By doing everything we can to support the men and women of Luke; we honor Frank Luke's legacy and that of every courageous man and woman who has lived and died in the defense of freedom. I could not be more honored to lead the Luke Forward campaign.

For more information, visit fightercountry.org/lukeforward/

VISIONS Editor Carolyn Dryer contributed to this report. ■

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President Trump visits Luke Air Force Base



President Donald J. Trump engages in a roundtable discussion with cabinet members, congressmen, and defense industry leaders on October 19, 2018, at Luke Air Force Base. The discussion focused on a variety of topics including cybersecurity, foreign military sales, and technological advancement. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ridge Shan)



Brig Gen. Todd Canterbury, 56th Fighter Wing commander, briefs President Donald J. Trump about the capabilities of the GBU-12 bomb during his visit to Luke Air Force Base on October 19. After touring a static display of the F-35A Lightning II and other military equipment, Trump met with cabinet members, congressmen, and defense industry leaders in a roundtable discussion on current defense issues including cybersecurity, stealth technology, and F-35 development. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexander Cook)

By Senior Airman Ridge Shan,
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

President Donald Trump visited Luke Air Force Base on October 19, 2018, to discuss military weapons and technology capabilities and learn about the 56th Fighter Wing's pilot training mission.

After touring a static display of the F-35A Lightning II and other military equipment, Trump convened with cabinet members, congressmen, and defense industry leaders in a roundtable discussion on current defense issues including cybersecurity, stealth technology, and F-35 development.

"We make the greatest military equipment in the world," Trump said. "American-made military products are more effective, more lethal, and more precise than any other equipment in the world. It's not even a contest, there's nothing close."

Trump acknowledged and emphasized the importance of Arizona's military presence, including Luke's role in building the future of airpower.

"This incredible state is home to six major military installations, more than

30,000 military personnel, and thousands of defense companies," Trump said. "Arizona's military defense industries support 76,000 jobs and create \$11.5 billion in economic output."

Additionally, Trump praised the F-35's capabilities and the progression of its pilot training program under the guidance and direction of Brig. Gen. Todd Canterbury, 56th Fighter Wing commander.

"It is an honor and a privilege to lead the more than 5,600 men and women of Luke Air Force Base," Canterbury said. "Our mission is simple: We train the world's greatest fighter pilots here. Luke Air Force Base is responsible for training about 95% of the United States Air Force's fighter pilots."

Trump concluded his visit with a meet and greet, where he spoke with, shook hands, and took photos with Thunderbolts from units across the base, before departing on Marine One.

For more images go to this link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/56fwpa/albums/72157674682152698>

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Luke AFB stands up new F-35A Lightning II fighter squadron

By Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid,
56th Fighter Wing

Luke Air Force Base reactivated the 308th Fighter Squadron on November 30, 2018, which will house the Dutch and the Danes F-35A Lightning IIs as part of Luke's partnerships.

With Lt. Col. Robert Miller assuming command, the fighter squadron is scheduled to begin operations in December 2018.

"It's bitter sweet to leave the 62nd FS but fortunately I'll continue to fly and instruct at the 308th FS," said Miller.

Throughout the next two years the Dutch and the Danes will be sending their jets to populate the squadron and help Luke's mission of training the world's greatest fighter pilots.

"The 308th FS is the fourth F-35 squadron at Luke, but the most important part of this activation is that we will be with two partner nations," said Miller. "In a few weeks the Dutch will start their F-35 training followed by the Danes."

Before final arrangements were made the commander of the Royal Netherlands air force, Lt. Gen. Dennis Luyt, paid Luke a visit. During the visit he was given a tour of the base and of the Academic Training Center where all of the F-35 pilots learn how to fly.

After thorough examination of the training facilities the Dutch were given a walk-through of the new fighter squadron building.

Under Miller's watch, the 308th FS's goal is to train as efficiently as the rest of Luke's fighter squadrons.

"As we stand up the 308th FS we will emulate the 62nd FS nation to the best of our ability," said Miller. "In time, we'll challenge to be the best F-35 organization."

Challenging the status quo is the mindset at Luke.

"The trust that we build at Luke with our partners is critical to our success on the battle field. The opportunity to train, learn and be together is unparalleled elsewhere," said Miller. "We are changing the way our Air Force and other nations prepare for war." ■



Lt. Gen. Dennis Luyt, Royal Netherlands Air Force commander, receives a briefing about Luke's heritage at Luke Air Force Base. Luyt visited the Dutch F-35A Lightning II pilots and was given a tour of the training facilities that will be used for the Dutch pilots on base. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid)



Col. Mathew Renbarger, 56th Operations Group commander, passes the 308th Fighter Squadron guidon to Lt. Col. Robert Miller, 308th Fighter Squadron commander, during an assumption of command ceremony at Luke Air Force Base. The 308th FS is a reactivated squadron which will partner with the Netherlands and Denmark to train alongside their F-35A Lightning II pilots. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid)

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



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WESTMARC presents pledges of support for the F-35 program to Congresswoman Debbie Lesko

Pledges show continued support for Luke Air Force Base and its mission by local leaders

By **PAUL LAYEUX**
Public Information Officer
WESTMARC

When Luke Air Force Base was chosen to house the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program, it was the culmination of a groundswell of support from leaders in the local community. Years later, that support remains strong and continues to grow.

Over the past several months, WESTMARC, the public-private partnership of 15 communities and businesses in the West Valley of Greater Phoenix, sponsored an elected official pledge that reaffirms that support, and the response was overwhelming.

"County supervisors, mayors, state legislators, and councilmembers from across the West Valley were so happy to sign the pledge," said WESTMARC CEO Sintra Hoffman. "We compiled them and are sharing them

with Congresswoman Debbie Lesko to show her how strong the West Valley remains in its support of Luke Air Force base and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter."

While Congresswoman Lesko was not in Congress when the F-35 was awarded to Luke Air Force Base, she has long been a steadfast supporter of the program. She signed several resolutions during her time at the state legislature that supported the program and its ongoing mission at Luke. As a member of Congress, she's continued her vocal support of the program as well as voting for the funding of the jets.

"Luke Air Force Base is the largest F-35 operating base in the world. It currently hosts 76 F-35s and is on its way to a total of 144," Congresswoman Lesko said. "But in addition to that, it has such a large economic impact on our communi-

ty. It provides for thousands of jobs, all working and participating to keep our country and world a safer place."

"Just last week, President Trump visited Luke Air Force Base and saw the F-35 up close. This shows how critical the program is to our national security and military," Hoffman said. "It also shows the importance of having leaders in Washington like Congresswoman Lesko who are advocating for the program each and every day." ■



WESTMARC CEO Sintra Hoffman and Congresswoman Debbie Lesko. (Photo courtesy WESTMARC)



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American Legion Auxiliary hosts Luke families at raceway's ZOOMTOWN Lights

By MARGE CHRISTIANSON
Volunteer
American Legion Auxiliary

John J Morris American Legion Auxiliary of Peoria hosted 30 families from Luke Air Force base at the popular ZOOMTOWN Lights at ISM Raceway in Avondale. All of the attending families have or soon will have a parent deployed overseas.

The nearly 50 children visited with Santa and Mrs. Claus from whom they received candy canes, cookies, hot chocolate and gift cards from McDonald's. In addition to Fry's gift cards, the parents enjoyed the fifth-floor suite overlooking the lighted raceway before receiving priority entry into the drive-through light show. The light show, which runs through the end of December, features sparkling displays through an approximately 1.6-mile course.

ZOOMTOWN Lights is the only light show in Arizona that allows

guests to drive inside a newly modernized raceway and onto the same pit road used by NASCAR's most elite. Throughout the drive around the raceway, Luke families enjoyed patriotic scenes, snowfall canopies, trees of light as well as special motorsports-inspired displays.

"Several moms talked about how excited their deployed loved ones would be when they heard that the family had been up in an elite suite and got to drive on a NASCAR raceway," said Surprise resident Mikaela Anderson, the Children and Youth Chairman at the American Legion Auxiliary Unit in Peoria.

Tiffany Thompson, whose husband, Capt. William Thompson, has been deployed for nearly six months, said "My brother is a huge NASCAR fan, so it will be fun to tell him about it....and of course, our three girls love Santa!"

Zoomtown...continued on page 20



Msgt. Johnbrian Robles, Alaric (2), Emzi (12), Ariston (4), Monza (8) and Staff Sgt Lana Robles enjoy their time at ISM Raceway's ZOOMTOWN. (Photos courtesy John J Morris American Legion Auxiliary)

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Zoomtown...continued from page 18

Unlike some holidays, MSgt. Johnbrian Robles, SSgt. Lana Robles and their five children are spending this holiday season “state-side.” Since their marriage six years ago, MSgt Johnbrian Robles has been deployed to Afghanistan, Korea and Qatar. In the next few weeks, he will stay home while SSgt. Lana Robles will be sent to Qatar on her first deployment—expected to be six months. Their children range in age from 2 years to their teens. MSgt Robles is currently serving in the Family Readiness group at Luke Air Force Base.

“We know that families of deployed military are also serving their country and we want to recognize that service,” Anderson said.

American Legion Unit 62 holds a number of events throughout the year for deployed families; events such as pottery painting, Halloween events, trampoline parties and holiday parties.

Sun City resident and Unit 62 Auxiliary President Doris Theiss said, “As the world’s largest patriotic organization for women, supporting the families of U.S. military service personnel



Joseph and Cheri Morrill Thompson and the Thompson children, Brynn (9 months), Olivia (5) and Nora (3), were happy to see Santa at ZOOMTOWN. (Photos courtesy John J Morris American Legion Auxiliary)

is a key mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

Peoria residents and American Legion family members Cheri and Joseph Morrill volunteered as Santa and Mrs. Claus. Starbucks in Avondale provided the hot chocolate. ZOOMTOWN

Lights upgraded every ticket to Speedy Pass status.

The American Legion Auxiliary honors military families through their Children and Youth program. In addition to providing local support, the Auxiliary also provides scholarship opportunities

for those families. If you would like to help or would like more information about the John J Morris American Legion Auxiliary, contact them at alauunit62az@gmail.com or visit at www.azpost62.com or 9847 W. Desert Cove Ave., Peoria, AZ 85345. ■

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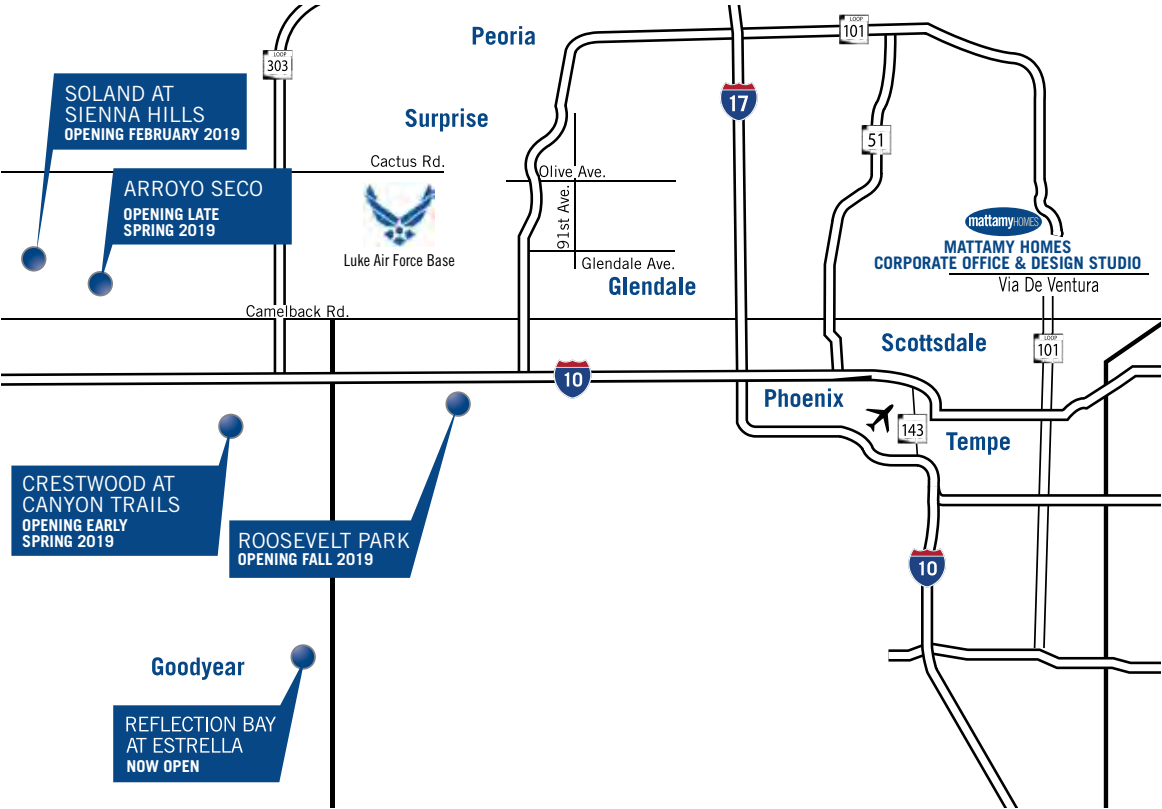
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308th Fighter Squadron reactivated

By Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid

Luke Air Force Base reactivated the 308th Fighter Squadron on November 30, 2018, which will house the Dutch and the Danes F-35A Lightning IIs as part of Luke's partnerships. With Lt. Col. Robert Miller assuming command, the fighter squadron began operations in December.

"It's bitter sweet to leave the 62nd FS, but fortunately I'll continue to fly and instruct at the 308th FS," Miller said. Throughout the next two years the Dutch and the Danes will be sending their jets to populate the squadron and help Luke's mission of training the world's greatest fighter pilots.

"The 308th FS is the fourth F-35 squadron at Luke, but the most important part of this activation is that we will be with two partner nations," Miller said. "In a few weeks, the Dutch will start their F-35 training followed by the Danes." Before final arrangements were made, the commander of the Roy-

al Netherlands air force, Lt. Gen. Dennis Luyt, paid Luke a visit. During the visit he was given a tour of the base and of the Academic Training Center where all of the F-35 pilots learn how to fly. After thorough examination of the training facilities, the Dutch were given a walk-through of the new fighter squadron building. Under Miller's watch, the 308th FS's goal is to train as efficiently as the rest of Luke's fighter squadrons.

"As we stand up the 308th FS, we will emulate the 62nd FS nation to the best of our ability," Miller said. "In time, we'll challenge to be the best F-35 organization." Challenging the status quo is the mindset at Luke.

"The trust that we build at Luke with our partners is critical to our success on the battle field. The opportunity to train, learn and be together is unparalleled elsewhere," Miller said. "We are changing the way our Air Force and other nations prepare for war." ■



Lt. Col. Robert Miller, 308th Fighter Squadron commander, provides remarks at an assumption of command ceremony, November 30 at Luke Air Force Base. Miller is an F-35A Lightning II instructor pilot who assumed command of the reactivated fighter squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid)



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CBRN gear checkout process improves

By 2nd Lt. Daniel Rubio
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron Materiel Management Flight made improvements to the process for issuing Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear training gear to Airmen allowing them to accomplish their mission more efficiently.

Prior to the change the flight would have each item separated on the shelves and wait until a customer arrived to issue items individually.

“What we had before was everything on the shelf and would pick out the items needed and put it in the bag,” said TSgt John Damasco, 56th LRS Individual Protective Equipment Flight section chief.

The new system has training gear prepackaged and ready to go upon the customer’s arrival.

“With this improved process we now have premade bags and a new color coded system for the laundry as well,” said Damasco.

The idea came about when their

shop was very low manned, customers were still coming in for training gear and processing each person was taking too long because of it. A more efficient way of issuing gear needed to be implemented.

“We all wanted to make it better and we took an idea from Sgt Damasco who has a similar system set up from his deployment in Qatar which ended up working perfectly.”

Through the old process it would take the flight roughly five minutes to process one Airman. They cut the time by more than half bringing the process to less than two minutes per person.

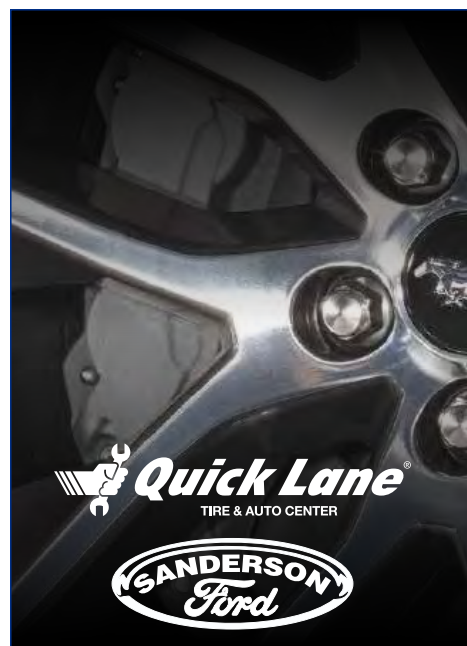
“It is especially helpful when you have a big groups for training and only 2 or 3 Airmen here,” Damasco said. “You can accommodate up to 10 customers who walk in much easier versus the old system.”

With 70 to 80 customers a week walking through their doors for training or deployments, it would be diffi-

CBRN...continued on page 25



Airman 1st Class Darrell Robinson, 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron Materiel Management Individual Flight equipment journeyman, inspects a gas mask bag for all essential equipment needed for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training at Luke Air Force Base. The Materiel Management Flight recently reduced the process time of issuing equipment to customers from five to two minutes, ensuring that airmen obtain their equipment without delay. (U.S. Air Force photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Rubio)



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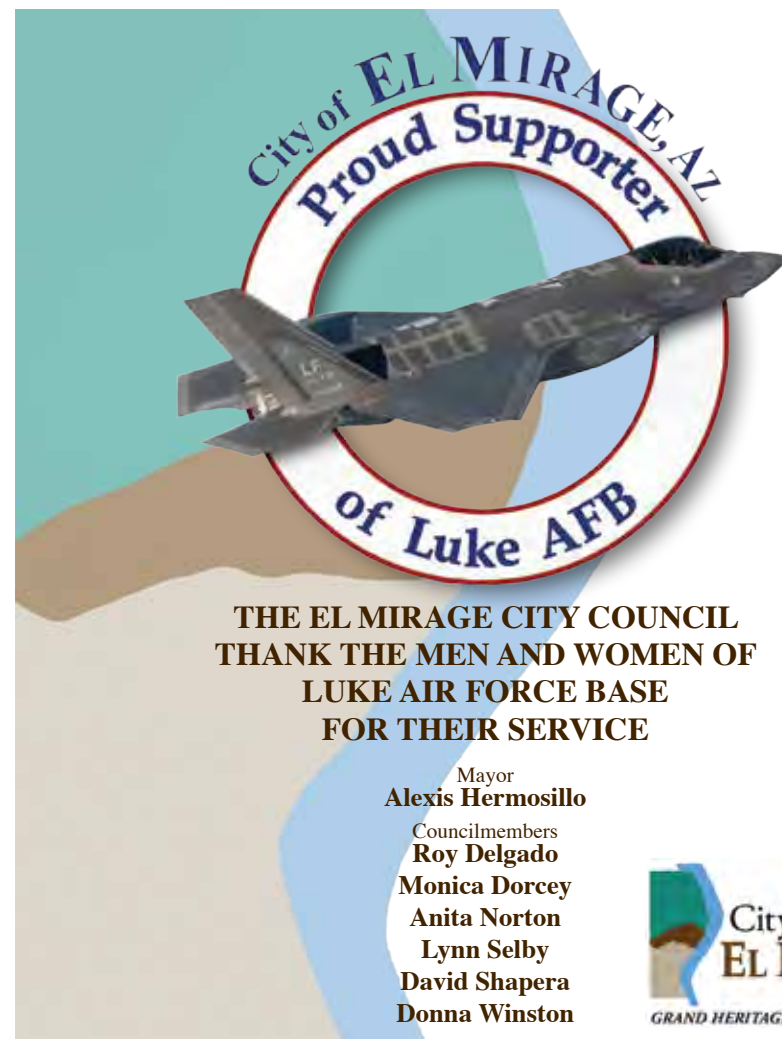
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An airman from the 56th Fighter Wing signs for his gear from 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron Materiel Management Individual Flight Equipment at Luke Air Force Base. The 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron has simplified the process of checking out equipment required for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training or deployment, increasing the efficiency and ensuring that airmen remain combat-ready. (U.S. Air Force photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Rubio)

CBRN...continued from page 24

cult for the flight to keep up if they did not have a full shop. With this system it will save over 200 hours per year and as a result it will assist Airmen through the line quicker.

“It makes everything easier, faster and more efficient because customers can just grab the bag they need and ultimately get them in and out much quicker than before,” said SSgt Corey Kindred, 56th LRS Individual Protec-

tive Equipment Flight supervisor. “Our goal is to continue and improve whatever process we have here and to cater to the mission,” Damasco said. “Our mission is readiness and we make sure that we positively impact the Airmen that come through our doors.” Making sure that our Airmen can quickly and efficiently obtain the proper gear ensures that 56th Fighter Wing can continue to train the world’s greatest fighter pilots and combat ready Airmen. ■

FLYING HIGH FOR THE BIRD’S EYE



Pilots from the 388th and 419th Fighter Wings taxi F-35As on the runway in preparation for a combat power exercise on November 19, 2018, at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. During the exercise, wings confirmed their ability to employ a large force of jets against air and ground targets, demonstrating the readiness and lethality of the F-35 Lightning II. As the first combat-ready F-35 units in the Air Force, the 388th and 419th FWs are ready to deploy anywhere in the world at a moment’s notice. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Justin Fuchs)

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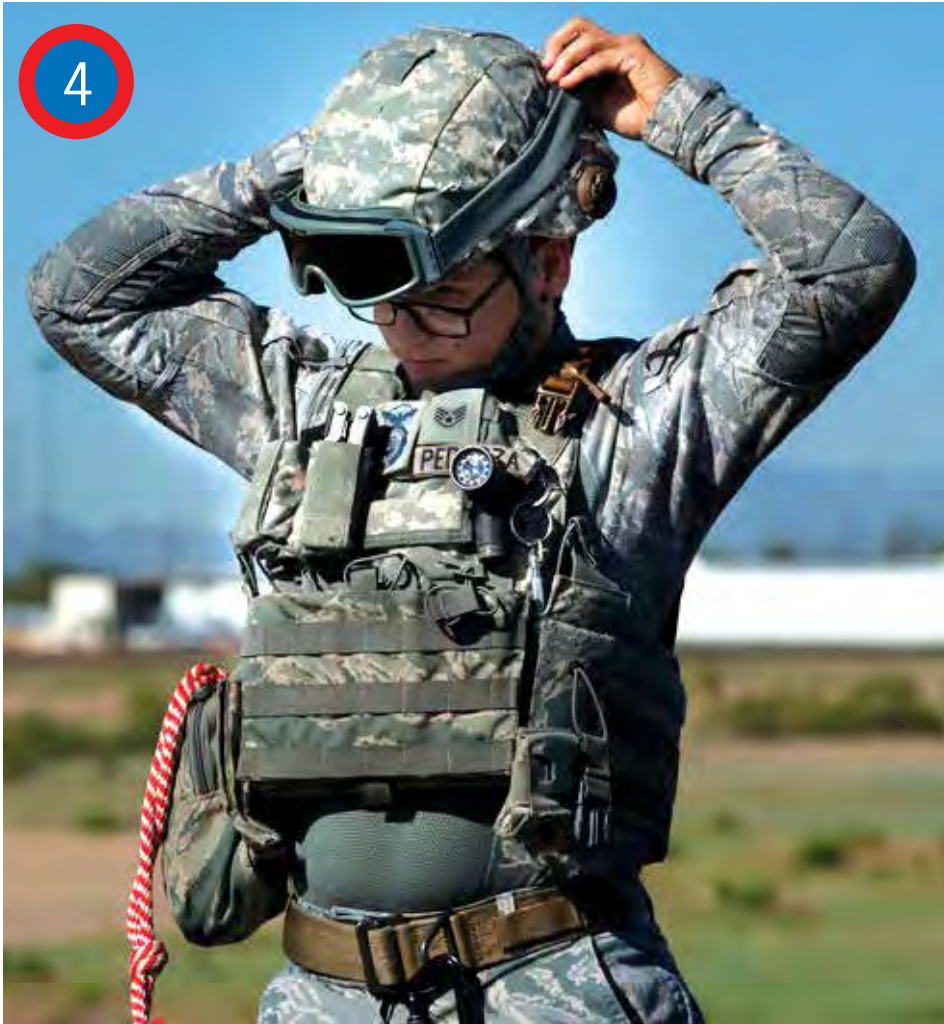
around the base

U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Zoie Rider, 56th Fighter Wing, Public Affairs

56th SFS and ANG conduct joint training

Members of the Arizona Army National Guard worked hand in hand with 56th SFS military working dogs and handlers to learn about proper handling techniques and medical procedures for deployed environments.

1. Staff Sgt. Kyle Quigg, 56th Security Forces Squadron kennel master, poses for a photo with a 56th SFS military working dog after a joint training exercise at Glendale Municipal Airport, Nov. 2, 2018, in Glendale. During the exercise, handlers and their dogs practiced getting on and off a helicopter to help familiarize themselves with the loud sounds, vibrations, and procedures of a medical evacuation; **2.** Members from the 56th Security Forces Squadron and the Arizona Army National Guard hold onto a military working dog while flying in a UH-60 Black Hawk during a joint training exercise at Glendale Municipal Airport, Nov. 2, 2018, in Glendale. Members of the Arizona Army National Guard worked hand in hand with 56th SFS military working dogs and handlers to learn about proper handling techniques and medical procedures for deployed environments; **3.** 56th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handlers prepare their dogs for a joint training exercise with the Arizona Army National Guard at Glendale Municipal Airport, Nov. 2, 2018, in Glendale. The exercise was the first time 56th SFS military working dogs and handlers trained with a UH-60 Black Hawk and was designed to help prepare them for real-world evacuation scenarios; **4.** Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Pedroza, 56th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, adjusts her personal protective equipment before a joint training exercise at Glendale Municipal Airport, Nov. 2, 2018, in Glendale. 56th SFS MWD handlers trained Arizona Army National Guard members on how to properly load and unload MWDs from a helicopter during hostile situations. ■



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Airmen from Luke Air Force Base hold an American Flag during the National Anthem before the Arizona Cardinals Salute to Service game, Nov. 18, 2018, at State Farm Stadium, Glendale. More than 100 airmen participated in unfurling the American flag across the field during the National Anthem. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Aspen Reid, Airman 1st Class Zoie Rider, 56th Fighter Wing)

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By Chaplain, Major R. John Boyer,
56th Fighter Wing Chaplain

The holidays can mean different things to different people. For some, this is the best time of the year. In my tradition, many think of twinkling lights, decorated trees, candy, presents, and the sights and sounds of Christmas. Joyous times of celebration with family and friends readily come to mind. For others, this time of the year can bring a heaviness of heart; it can feel like a demanding and stressful time, with pressure to get everything done "just right."

There are presents to be bought and wrapped, Christmas cards to be sent, the house needing to be cleaned for family visiting, and holiday meals to be made. Christmas can sometimes feel exhausting, and if we're not careful – we can lose our joy during the holiday season. It's sad to think a time of the year that ought to be special, bringing with it feelings of joy, peace and harmony ... can feel to many like anything but joyous.

Still more, Christmas can even be

a time of financial, emotional or relational stress and anxiety. I mean, let's face it, for some people getting together with family for the holidays looks more like an episode of Jerry Springer or Dr. Phil – than it does "A Wonderful Life."

If this season of the year can at times feel overwhelming for you, I invite you to pause for a quiet moment of refuge from the craziness, and reflect on the words which have provided comfort and peace to countless people over the years: "For to us a child is born, a son given – and he will be called...Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6) Unfortunately, many times it can feel like our lives are filled with everything but peace. I've got four kids at home, and believe me – sometimes the only peace and quiet I can find, is when I escape into the bathroom.

In the verse above, the writer Isaiah uses a Hebrew name *sar shalom*. *Sar* means, "the one who is in charge, the Chief, the General." *Shalom* means, "peace, tranquility, completeness." The term *sar shalom* quite literal-

ly means, "the one who is in charge of our peace." The ancient writer reminds us, we have a General in charge of our peace – we have a Commanding Authority of our tranquility and wholeness, who wants us to live with peace in our lives. It's incredible to think we're given peace from the One who created us, and who loves us.

When my kids were younger, and they were afraid of the dark, they would sometimes cry out for a parent to comfort them. Once my wife or I embraced our child to provide comfort, they were no longer afraid. Why? Because they'd been given the peace of their loving parent. Our presence as a parent is what comforts our child. In the same way, we are comforted by God's sacred peace that surpasses all understanding.

As this special season is upon us, ask yourself, "Do I have peace in my life?"

Your Unit Chaplain and Religious Affairs Airmen truly hope you have peace in your life, and we're always available 24-7 to talk about the most



Chaplain, Major R. John Boyer (Photo courtesy Chaplain, Major R. John Boyer)

important questions of faith. We have a unique heavenly calling, and we care about you and your family. For more information, or to speak with a Luke AFB Chaplain, call 623-856-6211. ■

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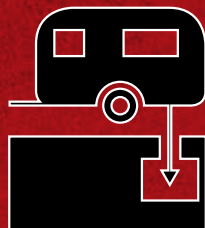


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TROUBLESHOOTING



Aviation Electronics Technician 3rd Class Vanessa Cabrales, from Peoria, assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22, troubleshoots the radios in a MH-60S Seahawk helicopter in the hangar bay aboard the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) on Oct. 17, 2018. Iwo Jima was underway prior to participating in Trident Juncture 2018, which is a NATO-led exercise designed to certify NATO response forces and develop interoperability among participating NATO and partner nations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kevin Leitner).

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Blood needs escalate as winter visitors arrive in Arizona

By Sue Thew
Public Relations, Vitalant

Blood needs escalate following the holiday season with the increase in hospital surgery schedules and the arrival of winter visitors.

“Your single donation can save several lives because blood can be separated into components,” said Sid Lewis, Sr. Donor Recruitment Director for Vitalant’s Southwest Division. “In just one hour, you could be a hero for an accident victim, a person undergoing surgery and a child receiving treatment for cancer.”

Blood donors help people like McKindree, a Gilbert teen, who has required more than 300 blood transfusions. In addition to an immune disorder, McKindree suffers from Diamond Blackfan Anemia, a rare disease that prevents her body from producing red blood cells. She is alive today because of regular transfusions of red blood cells and IVIG, a blood plasma derivative that provides antibodies to boost her suppressed immune system. “Thanks to blood donors, our family is complete,” says her mother, Aimee. “I’m not sure I have the words to express my gratitude to them. Their generosity helps to take away the fear of losing her.”

United Blood Services is now Vitalant (Vye-TAL-ent) . . . Last September, United Blood Services and nine additional blood centers across the country united as one cohesive



McKindree has required more than 300 blood transfusions. (Photo courtesy Vitalant)

brand under the new name of Vitalant. “We have a 75-year history as the first and largest blood center in the southwest,” said Tom Choi, president of Vitalant operations in Arizona and southern Nevada. “We remain committed to the community with the same people and purpose they have come to expect.” More than 600 donations are needed each day to meet the needs of people throughout Arizona and southern Nevada. Vitalant operates six Metro Phoenix and three Las Vegas area donor centers and works with community sponsors to host about 500 blood drives every month.

To make an appointment to transform lives by donating blood call 877-258-4825 (877-25-VITAL) or visit www.BloodHero.com (enter desired city or zip code). ■

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RAAF prepares F-35s for historic arrival



Left, Royal Australian Air Force and U.S. Air Force push gear off of a K-Loader at Luke Air Force Base on Dec. 3, 2018. The RAAF was preparing to launch two F-35A Lightning IIs and a C-17 Globemaster III to start their historic journey to Australia. **Right,** Australian media correspondents film a Royal Australian Air Force F-35A Lightning II takeoff at Luke Air Force Base on Nov. 27, 2018. Four media members interviewed RAAF Airmen in preparation for the first two RAAF F-35s to arrive in Australia. (U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Jensen Stidham)

By Staff Sgt. Jensen Stidham

The Royal Australian Air Force is preparing to send two F-35A Lightning IIs for their multi-day journey home to RAAF base Williamtown, New South Wales, Australia.

Two RAAF F-35's along with a crew of 40 Airmen are schedule to start their journey home December 3.

"The team has done a fantastic job in not just preparing the aircraft for the transit, but also coordinating all the supporting assets [such as] refueling aircraft, transport aircraft, logistics in the locations we are staging

through etc., to enable a successful ferry," said RAAF wing commander Darren Clare, No. 3 Squadron commander. "On top of this they have been arranging their own international removals home, so it has been a pretty busy period."

Although RAAF pilots and Airmen have been training to fly and maintain their F-35's at Luke for the past few years, they have been preparing for their trek home for the past two months.

RAAF Flight Sgt. Damian Gardiner, No. 3 Squadron, said over the past

months, once the required routine maintenance was completed on the jets, RAAF Airmen have been packing equipment and participating in final training.

Along with RAAF preparation, Australian media has been preparing for the departure and arrival as well. This week four Australian media personnel arrived at Luke to interview Airmen and gather video footage of the F-35s to send home.

Just as many Australians are excited for their new defense aircraft, the pilots are eager to get home as well.

"It will be fantastic to get these jets back in Australia, to start flying and maintaining them in our home environment, and for Australia to see what they are capable of," said Clare, one of two pilots scheduled to fly the jets home. "Whilst one chapter is ending here at Luke, for some of us, it is really just beginning when we get home."

Though many are headed home, several RAAF Airmen and pilots will stay at Luke and continue training with the 61st Fighter Squadron. ■

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