



# Flight Line

*Air & Space Forces Association*

**Chapter 105**



**2024-2**

**Tucson, Arizona**

**April 2024**

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## **From the Prez -**

Happy Spring. I hope that you continue to enjoy your daily activities and count the blessings you have as an American. I also encourage you to become as involved as you can with your local AFA Chapter 105.

For our January chapter meeting, our guest speaker was Walter Ram, a B-17 crew member was shot down on his sixth mission over Kiel Germany. He spent time as a POW in several German POW camps, including the "infamous" Stalag 17.

As usual we didn't have a chapter meeting in February, but March was a VERY busy month.

March started with Heritage Flight on March 1<sup>st</sup> where your chapter hosted AFA members from the local area and the chapter in Sierra Vista. We had almost 75 people enjoy walking by the aircraft on the flightline and then breakfast food provided by two of our Chick-fil-A Community Partners Grant & Tanque Verde and El Con Mall (thanks to our own chapter member Dave Carrell and his crew). Coffee, hot coco, tea and water were supplied by your chapter. Thankfully the wind wasn't as strong and the temperature was a little warmer than last year which made the event all that more enjoyable.

Saturday and Sunday saw 35 STEM teachers from southern Arizona attend a STEM camp on DMAFB hosted by your chapter and funded through a grant from the Arizona STEM Acceleration Project headed by AFA's 2019 National Teacher of the Year, Michael Vargas. See separate article for more details.

Our March meeting was a joint meeting with the Daedalians Old Pueblo Flight 12 on Friday March 22nd. Our guest speaker was Don Smith who gave a wonderful presentation on the Berlin Airlift of 1948-49. See separate article.

As we look forward to the next 3 months, we have planned chapter meetings in April & June; we skip May so you can enjoy your Memorial Day Weekend. And we take July off so you can enjoy the "dry" heat and the start of Monsoon season although we do serve a Loft meal at the DMAFB dorm facility at the room sponsored by the base chapel. If you've never participated, this might be your chance. We cook the food and serve it to AD members that participate in chapel

activities. It's a great chance to interact with our junior members serving at DMAFB.

DMAFB continues to have 900+ members deployed although the majority will return in April. Please keep them and their families in your hearts & prayers.

By the time you read this, AFA will have a new President & CEO, Lt. Gen. Burt Field, USAF (Ret.) as of April 1, 2024. To find out more about him, go to the AFA website.

He replaced "Orville" Wright who served as AFA's President & CEO, 2019-2024

While your chapter continues to be in good financial health, we need to continue raising funds to support chapter activities and fund the support we provide to our local airmen and their families; so please consider donating. If you are on Facebook, you can set up a fundraising event that directly supports YOUR chapter.

Chapter 105 is part of the Fry's Community Rewards Program. This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day.

If you have any suggestions on other sources of funds please let us know. The more we can raise the more we can support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families.

Since we use email to stay in touch, please remember to let us know if you change your email address. AFA National is also dependent upon having your current email so you should let them know of any changes.

## **AFA Mission**

***Our mission is to promote dominant U.S. Air and Space Forces as the foundation of a strong National Defense; to honor and support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families; and to remember and respect our enduring Heritage.***

Wally Saeger, President



## *Chapter's January Program*

### *Walter F. Ram, MSgt, US Army Air Forces*



Guest speaker at the January Chapter 105 meeting was Master Sergeant, US Army Air Forces, Walter F. Ram. Mr. Ram, who had recently celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, gave an outstanding talk about his experiences before, during and after World War II.

Walter Ram dropped out of high school in Nogales, AZ to enlist in the Army at the age of 16. Ram was stationed with the 158th Infantry Regiment, part of the Arizona National Guard, in Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

One year later, when Ram was Honorably Discharged, he returned to high school to get his diploma. But when WWII started, only two months later, Ram left high school again to join the Army Air Corps in hopes of becoming a pilot. Since he left school before graduating, he was unable to become a pilot, and instead was trained as a radio operator and gunner.

On July 16, 1942, Private Ram graduated from the Army Air Forces Technical School at Scott Field, Illinois completing a course for Radio Operators and Mechanics. In August the same year, recently promoted Staff Sergeant Ram graduated from the Aerial Gunners Course and was immediately promoted to Technical Sergeant.



After an eventful Atlantic crossing in their new aircraft, a B-17E Flying Fortress which they named HELNO-GAL, Ram and his 10-man crew were assigned to Bassingbourn, England as part of the 331<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron. The co-pilot, the only married crewmember on the plane, wanted to name their aircraft "Corky" after his wife, but everyone else had different plans and said, "Hell no!" and thus, HELNO-GAL was born. HELNO-GAL was severely damaged by German fighters on Ram's third combat mission. Fortunately, they made it back to England where they crash landed and all crewmembers survived.

Twenty-three days later, on Ram's sixth combat mission, HELNO-GAL was shot down over Kiel, Germany. Four of 10 crewmembers survived. Ram's crewmate, Chuck Lewis, threw Ram out of the plane, ultimately saving his life; Lewis did not survive the crash, but Ram, badly injured, parachuted to safety and was immediately captured by the Germans.



After capture, Ram was sent to civilian hospitals in Kiel and Flensburg, Germany. Ram was in Stalag IX -C, a prison hospital in Berlin, from June to September 1943. In Late September he was moved to Stalag VII-A, Germany's largest P.O.W. camp and stayed until October 1943.

October 23, 1943, Walter Ram was transferred to the notorious Stalag XVII-B, located near Krems, Austria, where he was held for 19 months.

Nestled in the middle of the Austrian countryside, Stalag 17-B had double rows of barbed wire adorned with machine guns and towers. Stalag 17-B prisoners were starved; their Red Cross packages went "missing" or were pilfered by the guards before the POWs received them. Each barrack in Stalag 17-B was 100 feet x 240 feet with at least 240 men crowded into each one. Men slept in bunks with make-shift mattresses and the rooms had no windowpanes resulting in freezing nights.



In April 1945 the war was coming to an end and all of the POWs were ordered to be executed. According to Ram "fortunately, that is one time Hitler's generals disobeyed him." As the Russians were moving in from the east, German guards evacuated Stalag 17-B and forced the prisoners to march west. They marched for 30 days and covered 298 miles of frozen ground in snowy and rainy conditions. Roughly 4,200 prisoners marched, including Walter Ram. At least 393 of the POWs did not survive the march and in May 1945 elements of Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army met up with the group and liberated them.

Walter Ram....continued page 3

Walter Ram...continued from page 2

After the war and discharge from the Army Air Forces, Walter finished high school, earned a college degree, and started a successful trucking business. In 1981, with the help of the Tucson VA hospital, Walter was diagnosed with, and successfully treated for PTSD.

In June 1993, exactly 50 years after he was shot down, Walter Ram and his son traveled back to Europe. Walter revisited Kiel, the town where he was shot down; Krems, the former location of Stalag 17-B prison camp; and also visited the final resting places of several of his crew-mates. Ten years later, he located the final resting place of Chuck Lewis, HELNO-GAL's ball turret gunner who had saved his life.

MSgt Ram's story is an incredible and inspiring story of determination, will and survival. You can read more about it in his book, *"HELNO-GAL, A survivor's Story of World War II and the infamous Stalag 17"*. He also told his story to Ben Buehler-Garcia on American Warrior Radio. The podcast is available at <https://americanwarriorradio.com/2020/05/stalag-17b-prisoner-walter-ram/>.



## Coming to D-M AFB



The new EC-37B Compass Call is built from a Gulfstream G550 business jet, with electronic warfare systems created by BAE Systems. L3Harris conducted the integration work at its Waco, Texas, facility.

## "A Little Bit of History"

### Lockheed XF-90



The Lockheed XF-90 was built in response to a United States Air Force requirement for a long-range penetration fighter and bomber escort. The same requirement produced the McDonnell XF-88 Voodoo. Lockheed received a contract for two prototype XP-90s (redesignated XF-90 in 1948). The design was developed by the Skunk Works team under Kelly Johnson. Two prototypes were built. Developmental and political difficulties delayed the first flight until 3 June 1949, with Chief Test Pilot Tony LeVier at the controls. Embodying the experience gained in developing the P-80 Shooting Star, the XF-90 shared some design traits with the older Lockheed fighter, albeit with swept-wings; however, this latter design choice could not sufficiently make up for the project's underpowered engines, and the XF-90 never entered production.

The XF-90 was the first USAF jet with an afterburner and the first Lockheed jet to fly supersonic, albeit in a dive. It also incorporated an unusual vertical stabilizer that could be moved fore and aft for horizontal stabilizer adjustment. Partly because Lockheed's design proved underpowered, it placed second to McDonnell's XF-88 Voodoo which won the production contract in September 1950, before the penetration fighter project was abandoned altogether.

Upon Lockheed losing the production contract, the two prototypes were retired to other testing roles. The first aircraft was shipped to the NACA Laboratory in Cleveland, Ohio in 1953 for structural tests. It was no longer flyable, and its extremely strong airframe was tested to destruction. The other survived three atomic blasts at Frenchman Flat within the Nevada Test Site in 1952.

#### General characteristics

- Crew: one
- Max takeoff weight: 31,060 lb (14,118 kg)

Powerplant: 2 × Westinghouse J34-WE-15 turbojets

#### Performance

- Maximum speed: 665 mph
- Range: 2,300 mi
- Service ceiling: 39,000 ft (11,890 m)

#### Armament

- 6 × 20 mm cannons
- 8 × 5 in HVAR rockets
- Up to 2,000 lb of bombs



## ***Chapter's March Meeting Donald Smith, The Berlin Airlift***

Our March chapter meeting was held jointly with the Daedalians Old Pueblo Flight 12 on Friday March 22nd and our guest speaker was Donald Smith. Don Smith is a retired U.S. Army Reserve officer. He spent ten years in the active forces, three of those in Germany at the end of the Cold War. After his active service he worked at a variety of jobs within the Department of Defense. He currently teaches Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for the U.S. Army at Ft. Huachuca. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Virginia and a master's degree in strategic intelligence from the Joint Military Intelligence College, now the National Intelligence University.



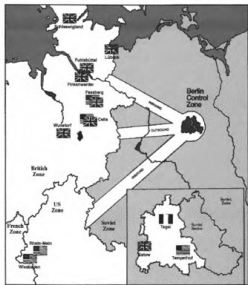
Don's presentation focused on the Berlin Airlift *"The first major 'battle' of the Cold War"*.



His first slide oriented the audience to occupation zones of the major powers: France, Great Britain, USSR and the United States in Germany and Berlin itself. In the days immediately after Germany was defeated, U.S. sought cooperation with the USSR to fight Japan, partner with the U.S. in the new UN, and *Occupy/Rebuild Germany*. By early 1946 the "Good Feelings" were fading and while the Soviets wanted the U.S. to leave, the U.S. was bearing almost all of the costs to revive Germany and showed no inclination to leave.

By June 1948, the three Western powers declare that their sectors will participate in the Marshall Plan, place their coal and steel resources under multinational management, institute a new currency and create their own government. The Soviet response was to cut West Berlin's (which was 100 miles inside East Germany) ground connections to West Germany. At the time, there were 2,008,943 people in the Western Sectors of Berlin.

There existed three air corridors into West Berlin that were recognized by the Soviets. Although the Americans had two troop carrier groups and the RAF had one, their daily lift capacities were 200-300 tons for the USAF and 750 tons for the RAF. Combined, this fell far short of the estimated 3,500 daily tons to supply the needs of the West Berlin civilians; the winter requirement increased to 4,500 tons daily.



To solve the shortfall, the U.S. relied on three problem solvers: Lt. Gen. Curtis LeMay, Commander, USAF; Maj. Gen. William Tunner, USAF's preeminent authority on airlift; and Brig. Gen. Joseph Smith, who Lt Gen. LeMay appointed as the Commander of the Berlin Airlift which became known as "Operation Vittles".

Part of the solution to increase tonnage was to bring in larger aircraft. The USAF C-54 "Skymaster" could carry 10-13 tons of cargo while the British brought in their AVRO 685 "York" with a capacity of 8 tons of cargo and the Handley-Page "Hastings" able to haul 9 tons of cargo.

Next was to utilize standardized procedures such as the USAF used the C-54 as their primary aircraft. General Tunner was detail oriented and worked at implementing the following procedures, to mention just a few. Any unnecessary equipment was removed from the aircraft. Weighing coal bags to ensure they weren't overloaded which affected aircraft performance and increased fuel burn. Finally go to extreme measures to reduce cargo weight such as shipping flour instead of baked bread, removing bones from meat, shipping dehydrated potatoes ("Pom") instead of whole potatoes and powdered milk instead of whole milk.

Finally, was to refine procedures at Berlin and in flight. Aircraft were allowed only ONE landing approach; if you missed you were sent all the way back to West Germany. Crews did NOT leave their planes; briefings and refreshments were given planeside. Separate corridors for flights TO and FROM West Berlin, two going in and one coming out; if you lost radio contact, you flew home.

Don Smith, continued page 5

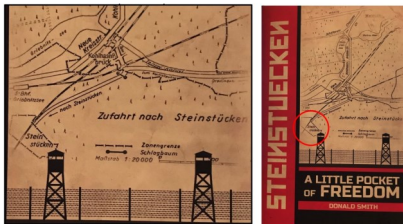
Probably the most recognized figure of the Berlin Airlift was Gail Halvorsen, also known as the “Candy Bomber”. He was a native of Utah who witnessed the suffering of the children and decided to help by dropping candy during his landing approach. More can be found at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gail\\_Halvorsen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gail_Halvorsen)

While the West Berliners suffered from the effects of the blockade, they also assisted in the success of the Berlin Airlift. On average, 500 Berliners worked at Tempelhof daily. Each plane was unloaded by a crew of 10-12 Berliners supervised by an American soldier with much of the unloading done by hand. The average offload times were less than 25 minutes for one C-54 and unload crews often competed against one another to unload faster or more efficiently. Former *Luftwaffe* mechanics helped maintain the aircraft.

During the 15 months that the blockade lasted, the USAF and RAF delivered over 2.3 million tons of cargo to the beleaguered city while flying over 266,000 flights (information obtained from the reports referenced below: “To Save A City – The Berlin Airlift” by Roger Miller and “Report on the Airlift” by General William Tunner).

By May 1949 the Berlin Blockade ended. The Soviets relented when they realized that the blockade was bringing the Western Allies closer together and that it was bringing West Germany closer to the West. A counter-blockade was depriving East Germany of imported goods since at least 26% of East Germany production was going to the USSR for war reparations. The Soviets reopened land and water access without getting concessions on currency reform or a new West Germany government.

Don has written a book “Steinstuecken: A Little Pocket of Freedom” that chronicles the lives of 200 people living in a hamlet in East Germany, separated from Berlin and only accessible by air. For over 20 years, the US & West Germany worked to guarantee the very existence of this small enclave of freedom.



For those wanting more information, Don provided the following links:

***Links for Don Smith's Berlin Airlift Talk***

***Free Downloads***

[To Save A City: The Berlin Airlift](#) by Roger Miller

[Report on the Airlift.pdf \(defense.gov\)](#) by General William Tunner

[The City Becomes A Symbol](#). A history of the U.S. Army in Berlin during the first 5 years of the occupation.

The “[Germany Under Reconstruction](#)” section in the University of Wisconsin's Digital Collections. An excellent collection of American and British publications related to the occupation of Germany.

“[Berlin Command](#),” by General Frank Howley, U.S. Commandant of Berlin during the Berlin Blockade/Airlift.

My webpage: [steinpocket.com](http://steinpocket.com). It has descriptions of all the presentations I do, plus testimonials from people/groups who attended.

***Links for buying my book:***

[Acclaim Press](#)

[Amazon](#)

Email: [steinpocket@gmail.com](mailto:steinpocket@gmail.com)



***DARPA Developing Wing-In-Ground Effect Cargo Seaplane***

The new X-plane will be a large flying boat similar in size and capacity to the C-17

The aircraft needs to be able to [takeoff and land in Sea State 4](#), operate efficiently at less than 100 feet above the surface for sustained on-water operation up to Sea State 5 (up to 13 ft wave height), fly out of ground effect at altitudes of up to 10,000 feet and transport huge payloads at speeds faster than current sea lift platforms. The ferry range required is greater than 6,500 nm, while the cargo capacity should be enough for two USMC Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACV) or six twenty-foot container units.

## ***STEM CAMP***

AFA Tucson Chapter 105 hosted a STEM Camp for 35 teachers, March 2-3, 2024, at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona. The teachers came from various southern Arizona school districts with an emphasis on Title 1 schools and those serving indigenous communities. The STEM Camp was made possible by a grant from the Arizona STEM Acceleration Project (ASAP) administered by Arizona State University.

The academic guidance for and hands-on instruction during the camp was provided by Michael Vargas, AFA's 2019 Rolls-Royce National Teacher of the Year, Nancy Para-Quinn, AFA's 2022 Rolls-Royce National Teacher of the Year, and Ty White, AFA's 2023 Rolls-Royce Runner-up Teacher of the Year. Assisting Mike Vargas was his co-PI, Amanda Whitehurst. Journeying from Civil Air Patrol Headquarters, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, was Susan Mallett who provided her assistance with a smile all weekend.

Elizabeth "Betsy" Fleming, School Liaison Program Manager, Pre-K – 12, 355th Force Support Squadron was instrumental in helping coordinate all the activities taking place on the base, assisting in setting up and tearing down the Youth Center used on the first day, as well as arranging for access to the base by the teachers. She also arranged for the lease of school buses from the Tucson Unified School District to transport the teachers during the two days.

In addition, several individuals from DoD and industry provided support during the two-day event.

Kate Kogge, STEM Education Specialist contracted to the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFSOR) conducted a workshop to build cardboard automotons (mechanical devices that seem to operate on their own), and on interdisciplinary project design and creative problem-solving using the engineering design process.

While the teachers enjoyed a variety of sandwiches from a local sandwich shop, they participated in "Cloud in a Bottle" activity led by Mike Vargas.

Jamie Vought, a DoD STEM specialist, provided a presentation on teacher resources through Air Force STEM activities.

Jehna Burns, a Workforce Strategic Specialist from Boeing, gave a presentation on the future of the aerospace industry and potential STEM-based careers in the industry.

After a short break, the teachers participated in various activities to demonstrate Bernoulli principles using ping pong balls, Bernoulli bags, and hair dryers. When they weren't doing those activities, Mike Vargas was demonstrating his home-built rail gun.

To conclude the first day, the elementary grade teachers constructed paper balloons while the secondary grade teachers constructed tetrahedral kites using straws, string, and tissue paper.

The first day concluded with a dinner at the Ramada by Wyndham Viscount Suites Tucson East where the guest speaker was Dr. Kim Jacoby, the AFOSR Director.

The second day presented a unique opportunity for the teachers. The Air Force was conducting the final day of the annual Heritage Flight Training and Certification Course which is conducted to enable historic aircraft like the P-38, P-51, F-86 and F-5 to fly in formation with modern USAF demonstration aircraft; the A-10, F-16, F-22 and F-35. The teachers were able to go out on the flightline and get up close to all of the participating aircraft and talk to available ground crews and pilots. The flightline was then cleared in preparation for flying. The teachers gathered in the VIP Commander's tent to watch the initial formation flight which consisted of the F-16 flying in formation with two P-51s. The second flight was an F-35 doing a solo demonstration and then formation flying with two P-51s.

The teachers were then bused to STARBASE, which is a DoD-sponsored STEM education program conducted on the base where 5th graders are bused in to participate in various learning activities for 5 days. The STARBASE teachers conducted a quick introduction to the theory and construction of bottle rockets which the teachers then constructed before going to a nearby parking lot to attempt to launch their rockets. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, not everyone could launch their rockets before heading off to lunch at the recently renovated dining facility.

After going through the various serving lines, the teachers were able to sit at a table where an officer or airman from one of the groups on DMAFB was available to talk about their career in the Air Force and what it was like to serve at DMAFB. There were enough volunteers that the ratio was three teachers per military member. The ranks of the volunteers ran the gamut from A1C to colonel.

The teachers were then off to the Chief Master Sergeant Carl E. Beck Airmen Leadership School where the rest of the day would be spent in the auditorium receiving presentations starting with Susan Mallett from Civil Air Patrol headquarters at Montgomery AL. Susan talked about the CAP's aerospace education program and the resources for teachers that become an Aerospace Education Member (AEM) including the Cross Country Navigation kit that each of the teachers received curtesy of Susan.

Chief Master Sergeant Karmann-Monique Pogue, who is the Senior Enlisted Leader for Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM), joined the group via Zoom to talk about her role as a senior leader of STARCOM and the vital role that STARCOM plays in preparing members of US Space Force to prevail in competition and conflict through innovative education, training, doctrine, and test activities. CMSgt Pogue is a native of Tucson, AZ which brought an immediate connection to the teachers.

Nancy "PQ" then used the navigation charts from the Cross Country Navigation kits provided to the teachers to demonstrate how to find features like airports and cities to get a feel for how to use the charts. Cadets from the Davis-Monthan Composite Squadron 334 assisted with the demonstration.

Wally Saeger provided a brief overview of how AFA supported STEM and where on the AFA web page to find additional information STEM-related activities like CyberPatriot, StellarXplorers, Teacher of the Year and Teacher Grants.

The day wrapped up with Mike Vargas explaining more about ASAP and how it can help AZ STEM teachers.

It was a fast paced 2 days and would not have been possible without the outstanding support provided by the leadership and airmen of Davis-Monthan AFB, the ASAP folks and the myriad presenters from within AZ and the DoD. Two chapter members deserve a special Thank You. Marie Lankford and Vickie Jo Ryder were instrumental in the preparations for and the actual daily activities during the STEM Camp. Thank you for your behind-the-scene efforts.



## *Photos from STEM Camp*



Jehna Burns, a Workforce Strategic Specialist from Boeing, gives a presentation on the future of the aerospace industry and potential STEM-based careers in the industry.



Eileen Chan from DMAFB STARBASE, demonstrates part of the process of building a bottle rocket to two of the teachers participating in the AFA STEM Camp at DMAFB, March 2-3, 2024.



Marie Lankford (AFA Chapter 105 Treasurer), Elizabeth “Betsy” Fleming (School Liaison Program Manager, Pre-K – 12, 355th Force Support Squadron), and Mike Vargas (Convergence Lead – The Arizona STEM Acceleration Project, ASU Center for Science and the Imagination), show a few of the boxes of supplies donated to the teachers attending the AFA STEM Camp at DMAFB, March 2-3, 2024.



Camp staff take a group picture in front of the A-10 demonstration aircraft on the DMAFB flightline during Heritage Flight on Sunday, March 3, 2024.



STARBASE Arizona has provided STEM instruction to 738 students since the 2023-2024 academic year began. Students attend from the Vail, Amphi, Sunnyside and Tucson Unified School Districts and participate in 25 hours of challenging “hands-on, minds-on” activities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The goal is to inspire and engage students in unforgettable educational experiences within a discovery/inquiry based environment. Davis-Monthan has hosted the program for nearly 18 years.



STARBASE Arizona is located in the Kennedy Professional Development Center on DMAFB serves 5<sup>th</sup> graders from surrounding school districts

This past February the STARBASE Arizona team attended Borman Elementary’s STEAM night. The team had a fantastic time interacting with the community and providing those attending an opportunity to build molecular models, program Ozobots, test out mass using a straw rocket launcher and learn about computer aided design. It was a phenomenal evening.

Recently, the team had the honor to partner with the Air and Space Forces Association and support the 2024 Teacher STEM Camp. Several STARBASE Arizona instructors provided training in rocketry basics and the construction of a water bottle rocket. Since the



STARBASE teacher Rachel Clayton helps a student learn coding using an “ozobot”.



STARBASE teacher Melanie Stewart explains the process of building a bottle rocket that the students will build and launch during their time at STARBASE.

Heritage Show was occurring at the same time it was only fitting to squeeze in time for teacher to experience these rockets in flight! It is always rewarding to share STEM experiences with other educators.

STARBASE Arizona appreciates our Davis-Monthan Community. The time and expertise each member invests in our students is profound and leaves a positive footprint for these future STEM leaders. Military personnel show students how their careers connect to each of the STEM fields. They also assist students with launching bottle rockets which is definitely a favorite. Since we launched in August, 254 military personnel have logged in nearly 226 volunteer hours and the year is not over!

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact STARBASE Arizona director Kristine Impellizzeri at (520)228-0912 or via email at [impellizzerik@vailschooldistrict.org](mailto:impellizzerik@vailschooldistrict.org)

## CAP Outstanding Squadron Cadet of the Year Award

C/Airman First Class Delilah Torres was named the CAP Outstanding Squadron Cadet of the Year for SWR-AZ-021 Yuma Composite Squadron 508.



C/A1C Deliah Torres is congratulated by Capt Albert Ustaszewski, CAP, after being recognized as the CAP Outstanding Cadet of the Year for Yuma Composite Squadron 508.

The award was presented by chapter president Wally Saeger during a Zoom session on March 6, 2024 due the travel distance to Yuma AZ. The citation for the award reads as follows:

C/A1C Delilah Torres has distinguished herself from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 and is a well-deserved selection for Air Force Association (AFA) Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Outstanding Squadron Cadet Award. Her performance as a cadet over the past year has been the epitome of outstanding leadership. She has continuously volunteered for all squadron events such as, the Back to School Fair,

Airshows, Cadet Field trips, various squadron projects and many more.

As an Element Leader she has mentored less experienced cadets as they learned to prepare for their first exam to promote to cadet airman as well as helped them with properly wearing of their uniform and customs and courtesies. She has always been able and willing to assist senior members during character development sessions and aerospace education and assist cadet leadership with any task assigned. New cadets could not have had a better role model to look up to. She has also recruited two of her friends into the cadet program and by doing so has helped the squadron grow and become stronger.

C/A1C Delilah Torres is a bright young lady with a good future ahead of herself. Her hard work and dedication are a great credit upon herself, Squadron 508 and the Civil Air Patrol as a whole. Cadet Torres is the most deserving cadet member of the Civil Air Patrol Yuma Composite Squadron 508 for this prestigious award.

It was an honor to be asked to do the presentation again this year and congratulations to C/A1C Torres.



Aircraft used for USAF Thunderbirds

Credit: J.P.Vieira



*Heritage Flight  
Davis-Monthan AFB  
March 1, 2024*



The Fab Four of Heritage Flight hit the skies over Davis-Monthan AFB in the first ever all-female, four-ship flyover. Led by air boss Kellie Hudson, the HFTC demo featured Capt. Lindsey "MAD" Johnson, Capt. Melanie "MACH" Kluesner, former F-35 Demo Team Commander Kristin "BEO" Wolfe, and former Viper Demo Team Commander Aimee "REBEL" Fiedler.



The El Con and E. Grant Chick-fil-A locations again supplied the breakfast food for AFA members at this year's Heritage Flight. Serving the food from the E. Grant location were: (L – R) Dave Carrell, Andrew Cesare, Makenna Garcia and Aedan Sisterman shown in front of the A-10 demonstration aircraft.



## MEMBERSHIP

The following joined or transferred into our Chapter during the last quarter (Jan-Mar 2024). Many of the new members were participants in the AFA Warfare Symposium. Thank you for joining and supporting the mission of Air and Space Forces Association. Welcome everyone to Tucson Chapter 105 of AFA and hope to see you at our chapter meetings/events in the future.

Capt Avery Eckebrecht  
Col Casey Bartholomew  
Maj David Lamme  
LtCol Jennifer W Pruitt  
MSgt Jeremy Clark  
Joel Henness  
Juliet C McDowell  
1Lt Kara Zens  
MSgt Kyle Gross  
Capt Lance Tollefson  
Col (ret) Mike Cundiff  
Sean Hanlen  
SMSgt Sean Osborn  
SrA Shane L. D. Ah Ping  
CMSgt Sharreen Taylor  
Maj Thomas Maloney  
Leia Cazares  
Andrew Hooper  
Maj (ret) John Stribling  
MSgt Allen Eslinger  
MSgt Amber Brown  
CMSgt Anthony Slaght  
1Lt Ayham Abdull-Hadi  
Ms. Bonnie Joi Scotto  
Capt Carmen Fowler  
TSgt Cesar R De Leon  
Mr. Chadwick P Luquette  
CMSgt Christopher Black  
Col (ret) Bruce E. Rianda

Mr. Corey Dodd  
MSgt Cortney Hayes  
SMSgt Daniel L Koob  
MSgt Devin Johnson  
SMSgt Elisha M Olivas  
Lt Col Eric Burley  
MSgt Eugene G Rich  
Col Greg Hoffman  
MSgt Jacob Christy  
CMSgt Jason C Renda  
Lt Col Jason P Gutierrez  
CMSgt Jason Ramos  
Maj Jeremiah Blackburn  
SMSgt John Brown  
Col John Drain  
SMSgt John M Carney  
CMSgt Justin Graves  
Maj Kelly Origel  
Capt Kendra Booth  
CMSgt Luke Lucas  
Capt Madeline Ulloa  
Dr. Marc Shaver  
2LT QueAndre Pitts  
Maj Rachael Ferris  
MSgt Rocio Rogers  
1LT Sarah Page  
SrA Stephen Bans  
Col (ret) Robert Van Sice  
Silvia Scotti

TSgt Steven Bame  
2LT Thomas L Westmoreland  
TSgt Tim Morris  
Capt Zackary M Shoenfelt  
1LT Zohn Manet Cepeda  
Alberto Griego  
Donald Smith  
McKay Monson  
Capt Susan Kelly  
Waleska Mendoza  
TSgt August R O'Niell  
MSgt Braulia Rocha Price  
MSgt Bryce Lehman  
Capt Chad Sufficool  
M/Gen (ret) David Frostman  
Maj Elizabeth Gallagher  
Lt Col (ret) James T. Faull  
A1C Jazmine Z McBride  
Maj (ret) Julius C. Gutierrez  
Capt Justin Waligora  
David Cole  
Maj (ret) Philip S. Bentley  
Col (ret) Roy E. Thomas  
SMSgt (ret) W. E. McNiff  
CMSgt Adam Boubede  
MSgt Xavier Elliott  
Brad Chamberlain

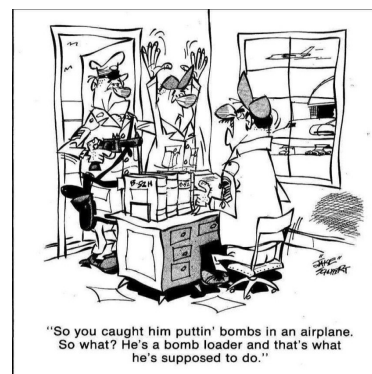
## Veterans exposed to toxins and other hazards during service now eligible for VA Health care

All veterans who meet the minimum service requirements and were exposed to toxins and other hazards—at home or abroad—are eligible to enroll in VA care.

We're making millions of Veterans eligible for VA health care under the PACT Act. Here's what YOU need to know:

- If you served in Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq, or Afghanistan, you can enroll.
- If you deployed to any combat zone after 9/11, you can enroll.
- If you deployed in support of the Global War on Terror, you can enroll.
- And even if you never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or serving on active duty here at home—by working with chemicals, pesticides, lead, asbestos, certain paints, nuclear weapons, x-rays, and more—you can enroll, too.

How to apply: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/>



## AFA's Wounded Airmen & Guardians Program

AFA's Wounded Airmen & Guardians Program supports the 14,000 Airmen and Guardians enrolled in the [Air Force Wounded Warrior](#) program (AFW2) and their families.

In addition, AFW2 continues to provide overarching support to Guardians through Air Force Casualty and Medical Systems.

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) defines a wounded warrior as "any Airman/Guardian who is seriously wounded, ill, or injured that may require a Medical Evaluation Board/Physical Evaluation Board to determine fitness for duty." Eligibility is based on:

- Very seriously, or seriously wounded, ill, or injured on the Casualty Morning Report or by a Department of Defense medical authority
- Airmen/Guardians with highly-complex medical conditions that are service related or were sustained in the line of duty and confirmed by a DOD medical authority (examples: tick-borne illnesses, cancer, invisible wounds [PTSD/TBI], chemical exposure, etc.). Final approval authority is AFPC/DPFW
- Airmen/Guardians diagnosed with service-related or in the line of duty PTSD, TBI, or MST, verified by DOD medical authority and are under consideration or referral for MEB
- Purple Heart recipients

## ***Community Partner Program***

For more than 40 years, businesses have been joining the Air Force Association to support both AFA National and local AFA chapters. Becoming a Community Partner is a great way to get your business involved with your local Air Force Community. Community Partners are partnership businesses that want to assist both AFA National and the local AFA chapters by becoming involved in Community efforts to support the United States Air Force.

By forming a partnership with your local AFA chapter, your business will help AFA fulfill their mission to promote a dominant United States Air Force and a strong national defense. Any business or organization can become a CP and have two options for membership:

**Category One (CP I)** \$90.00 annually- Business can designate one person to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof.

**Category Two (CP II)** \$180.00 annually- Business can designate two people to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof.

Not only does a Community Partner receive all the benefits of an AFA membership, such as a variety of product and service discounts, insurance programs, and much more, but the partner will also receive the following upon joining AFA:

— Date Medallion

Wooden Plaque

8"x5" "Our Business Supports Our Troops" Window Decal

If your business is interested in becoming a Community Partner, you should first contact your local chapter.

For questions or for more information on the program, please contact: **Dave Carrell, [carrelldav@aol.com](mailto:carrelldav@aol.com), (520) 305-4407**

Have your business become a part of a great cause and show your patrons that you support our Air Force!

### ***Tucson Chapter's Community Partners***

A & E Specialty Marketing  
Elliott M. Klahr  
P. O. Box 4423  
Rio Rico, AZ 85648  
520-281-1369 (P)  
520-980-0515 ©

Chick-fil-A  
Dave Carrell  
6675 E. Grant Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85715  
520-305-4407

Chick-fil-A  
4885 N. Oracle Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
520-408-2456

Chick-fil-A  
Brian White  
3943 W. Ina Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85741  
520-744-6269

Chick-fil-A  
Matt Hountz  
3605 E. Broadway Blvd  
Tucson, AZ 85716  
520-321-4232

Chick-fil-A  
Andres Romo  
1188 W. Irvington Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85714  
530-741-2280

Ciruli Brothers  
5 Calle Cristina  
Rio Rico, AZ 85648  
520-281-1456

Tucson Appliance Company  
Chris Edwards  
4229 E. Speedway Blvd  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
520-881-1207  
[tacappliance.com](http://tacappliance.com)

Aero Club of Arizona  
P. O. Box 856  
Green Valley, AZ 85622  
520-648-5749

Vantage West Credit Union  
P. O. Box 15115  
Tucson, AZ 85708  
800-888-7882  
[Vantagewest.org](http://Vantagewest.org)



### *Upcoming Events*

### *Upcoming Events*

We continue to schedule future “field trips” to different organization on base. If you have something specific you want to see please let us know! There are MANY events supporting our local Airmen and changes of command! As a Chapter, we try to attend all that we can. If you are interested in representing your AFA Chapter at any of these, please inform Wally Saeger (wsaeger@afatucson105.org) and he will coordinate it. You just have to show up and enjoy these traditional military ceremonies and gatherings. First come, first served!!

#### **Apr 2024**

- 1st: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- 26th: Chapter Meeting, 1130, Briefing on EA-37B (Replacement for EC-130H Compass Call), American Legion Post 36

#### **May 2024**

- 6th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- 24th: No Chapter Meeting, Enjoy your Memorial Weekend

#### **Jun 2024**

- 3rd: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- 28th: Chapter Meeting, Subject & Location TBD

#### **SAVE THESE DATES:**

- Jul 1st: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- Jul 26th: No Chapter Meeting due to summer break
- Jul 28th: Loft Meal, 1700, DMAFB Dorm Bldg 3610 (all welcome!)
- Aug 5th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- Aug 23rd: Chapter Meeting, Subject and Location TBD
- Sep 9th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, OG Conf Rm, DMAFB (all welcome!)
- Sep 14-15: AFA National Convention, Gaylord Center, National Harbor MD
- Sep 16-18: AFA National Conference, Gaylord Center, National Harbor MD
- Sep 27th: Chapter Meeting, Subject & Location TBD

#### *AFA's Mission*

*Our Mission is to promote dominant U. S. Air and Space Forces as the foundation of a strong National Defense; to honor and support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families; and to remember and respect our enduring Heritage.*

To accomplish this, we:

- **EDUCATE** the public on the critical need for unrivaled aerospace power and promote aerospace and STEM education for a technically superior and professional workforce to ensure national security:
- **ADVOCATE** and promote aerospace power to favorably shape policy and resourcing decisions to guarantee the strongest aerospace forces in the world:
- **SUPPORT** Airmen, Guardians, and the families of the Total Air Force and Space Force, including Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, civilians, families, and members of the Civil Air Patrol.