



Flight Line

Air & Space Forces Association Chapter 105

2026-3

Tucson, Arizona

July 2026

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From the Prez -

Well summer has arrived as has the heat but apparently not monsoons. We got a small taste of them, but nothing like in the past. Here's hoping we get out of the doldrums soon.

I hope 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.

April was busy with numerous events both on the base and off. On base, chapter officers supported the SAPR event 3 April, the DMTVC 17 April, 11 ATF Inactivation 17 April, and the 355th Wing 1st Qtrly Awards 24 Apr. Off base, we attended two U of A AFROTC Det 020 events, their Dining Out on 18 April and their Awards Ceremony on 28 April attended by Bryan Foulk. Oh, by the way, we had our chapter meeting on 24 April (see separate article).

May was busy starting with Bryan Foulk attending a trip to the Goldwater Range on 1 May to watch A-10s performing gunnery and bombing runs. Then on 3 May, he attended the 162nd Wing Annual Awards where he presented the AFA Junior Airman of the Year to SrA Maria L. Gutierrez. Chapter members helped with the Deployed Spouses Appreciation event sponsored by M&FRC on 8 May and again turned out for the LOFT Meal on 10 May. The 355 MXG/CC retired on 8 May and the NEW South Wilmot Gate was dedicated on 18 May but due to finishing touches it won't open until early July. To round out the activities, Bryan Foulk attended the U of A AFROTC Det 020 graduation and promotion ceremony on 18 May while Wally Saeger attended the ALS graduation that evening.

June saw chapter leadership attend seven squadron level changes of command and the MSGT Release Party. Wally Saeger had the change to journey to the Barry Goldwater range on 11 June with numerous airmen from DMAFB to watch a two-ship of A-10s demonstrate the remarkable capabilities of the aging warrior. It was the final flight for one of the pilots. June concluded with a presentation by Richard Bushong at our 26 June chapter meeting.

See the Upcoming Events for events for the upcoming two quarters.

Speaking of chapter membership meetings, if you RSVP and are a NO-SHOW we are still responsible for your meal. If you don't prepay, please be considerate of those who do pay and send a check to cover your meal. Your check should be made payable to AFA Tucson Chapter 105 and mailed to AFA Tucson 105, PO Box 15057, Tucson AZ 85708. Thank you

AFA has a new membership category, Mission Membership, which is free. To learn more about it and the paid membership options see the separate article in this newsletter.

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; 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.

It's that time of the year again that Wreaths Across America are looking for individuals to sponsor wreaths to be laid at cemeteries across America on veterans' graves. See separate article on how you can support this cause and your chapter.

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

Since we use email to stay in touch, as does AFA National, please remember to let us know if you change your email address.

Wally Saeger, President

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.



Chapter's April Meeting

Our guest speaker for the April 24th chapter meeting was Tandi Hoffman from the Pima Air & Space Museum about the new Tucson Military Vehicle Museum located adjacent to the Pima A&S Museum. The Tucson Military Vehicle Museum opened 21 March 2025 and currently features over 65 military vehicles; some of which can be operated on the museum's vehicle track.

The TMVM operates under the Arizona Aerospace Foundation which also operates the Pima Air & Space Museum (PASM) in Tucson and Titan Missile Museum in Green Valley. All three museums are open daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.



Chapter's June Meeting

For our June 26th chapter meeting we were honored to have Colonel, USAF, Retired Richard B. Bushong. Despite being 103 years young, he was as entertaining a speaker as we've had in some time. He recounted his early years training to become a B-17 pilot at the start of WW II. From his enlistment as a private in the US Army Air Force April 23, 1942, to being appointed as an "Aviation Cadet" in September 1942 at Patterson Field in Dayton, Ohio, you could feel his desire to be a pilot. Richard clearly portrayed his journey through Preflight, Primary Flight, Basic Flight, Advanced Flight Training, and finally B-17 Training at Ephrata, Washington.



For B-17 Training they were formed into 10-man crews that would remain together throughout training and then deploy to their overseas base. Richard's crew became part of the 390th Bomb Group (H) when they were assigned to Framlingham, England.

To learn more about Richard's 28 B-17 missions during WWII and his 32 years and 8 days total service, you'll have to find a copy of the book he wrote "My Wars" B-17s to F-4s, WWII to Viet Nam. The book is an easy read and written pretty much like he talked during his presentation.

At the end, he was presented with a framed picture of a B-17 in flight that Len Summers produced and donated.



A T-7A Red Hawk takes off from Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, May 15, 2026. The 99th Flying Training Squadron is the first Air Education and Training Command unit to fly the T-7A, which will replace the T-38C Talon as the service's advanced jet trainer. U.S. Air Force photo by Benjamin Faske

Univ. of AZ AFROTC Det 020 Dining Out

Wally and Joan Saeger had the honor of attending AFROTC Det 020's Dining Out on Saturday 18 April. The dining out was held at the Lodge on the Desert, the setting was spectacular and the weather couldn't have been better since it was held outside under beautiful skies.

Colonel Cory Christoffer, Det 020 Commander, and his wife Gina were the hosts for the event. In attendance was Colonel Jose Cabrera, Commander 355th Wing and his wife Chandra. Also in attendance was the 355th Wing Command Chief, Chief Master Sergeant Kelvin Hatcher and his wife Dana. Besides the 100 or so cadets and their guests, there were several civic leaders from the local community.

While there were several formal portions to the event, there was also the infamous "grog bowl". This was an opportunity to send members of the mess to partake of either the alcoholic or non-alcoholic concoction for various infractions of the Rule of the Mess. The looks on the faces of the "participants" was always amusing. Wally wasn't exempt as all the colonels in attendance were sent as a group.

During the awards portion of the dinner, I had the honor of presenting the AFA Outstanding AFROTC Cadet Award to Cadet Noah Roade. The evening was a total success and kudos to the cadets and staff of Univ of AZ AFROTC Det 020.

Spouses Appreciation Event

The DMAFB Military & Family Readiness Center hosted an event for military spouses on Friday, May 8th, to recognize the efforts and sacrifices required of spouses of military members. The event was held at the M&FRC center. There were refreshments, a food truck, activities and games for those that participated. The spouses were even provided with the opportunity for brief messages to help ease some of their tension.

The 355th Wing Commander, Colonel Jose Cabrera, and Wing Command Chief, CMSgt Kelvin Hatcher, took time out of their busy schedules to stop by and participate in some of the activities.

Your AFA chapter provided some of the volunteers to help orchestrate the event and facilitate the recruitment of cadets from the U of A AFROTC Det 020 to help as needed.



2026 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Event

The DMAFB SAPR office held its annual SAPR awareness event on Friday, 3 April in the area just outside the SAPR office. The event appeared to be well attended by individuals from across the base. The event is held to raise the awareness of sexual assault and the resources available from the 355th Wing SAPR office to help prevent and respond to sexual assault. One of the key things that many people don't realize is that both females and males are subject to sexual assault.

To encourage attendance, besides the information and awareness to be gained, there were food trucks available and games to be played.

Besides the attendance by Wally & Joan Saeger, your chapter donated \$300 to help offset the cost of the event.

The 355th Wing Commander, Col Jose Cabrera, and Wing Command Chief, CMSgt Kelvin Hatcher, took time out their busy schedules to stop by and mingle with those in attendance.

It was a great event with great weather thanks to the SAPR office staff and the director Mr. Michael Starkey.

2026 Wreaths Across America

This year, National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on Saturday, December 19, 2026. Join millions of volunteers and supporters who will gather to Remember, Honor and Teach at over 5,500 participating locations in all 50 states, at sea and abroad.

Sponsor a veteran's wreath in honor of or in memory of a loved one who served in our armed forces. Or, sponsor and allow us to designate a recipient among the millions of heroes who rest in honored glory.

Your Tucson Chapter 105 is again part of Wreaths Across America's donation program. This program allows individuals to designate a non-profit organization to receive \$5 for each wreath that individual purchases.

This year, you have the opportunity to sponsor wreaths for two locations to benefit the chapter:

East Lawn Palms Mortuary & Cemetery 5801 E. Grant Rd

www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/AZ0311P

All Faiths Memorial Park 2151 S Avenida Los Reyes

www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/AZOLDLC

The other WAA participating cemeteries in the greater Tucson area that are NOT part of sponsorship program are Evergreen Cemetery, South Lawn Mortuary & Cemetery, Holy Hope Cemetery, Mount Calvario Veterans Cemetery, Green Valley Mortuary and Cemetery, Marana Mortuary Cemetery, and Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Marana.



"A Little Bit of History" Douglas C-124 Globemaster II



The **Douglas C-124 Globemaster II**, nicknamed "Old Shaky", is a retired American heavy-lift cargo aircraft built by the Douglas Aircraft Company in Long Beach, California.

The C-124 was the primary heavy-lift transport for United States Air Force (USAF) Military Air Transport Service (MATS) during the 1950s and early 1960s, until the Lockheed C-141 Starlifter entered service. It served in MATS, later Military Airlift Command (MAC), and units of the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard until retired in 1974.

Douglas Aircraft developed the C-124 from 1947 to 1949, from a prototype they created from a World War II-design Douglas C-74 Globemaster. The aircraft was powered by four large Pratt & Whitney R-4360 Wasp Major piston engines. The C-124's design featured two, large, clamshell doors and a hydraulically actuated ramp in the nose, as well as a cargo elevator under the aft fuselage. As a cargo hauler, it could carry tanks, guns, trucks, and other heavy equipment, while in its passenger-carrying role, it could carry 200 fully equipped troops on its double decks. It was the only aircraft of its time capable of transporting fully assembled heavy equipment such as tanks and bulldozers.

The Military Air Transport Service was the primary operator until January 1966, when the organization was retitled Military Airlift Command (MAC). Within a few years following the formation of MAC, the last remaining examples of the C-124 were transferred to the Air Force Reserve (AFRES) and the Air National Guard (ANG). The first ANG unit to receive the C-124C, the 165th Tactical Airlift Group (now known as the 165th Airlift Wing) of the Georgia Air National Guard, was the last Air Force unit to retire their aircraft in September 1974.

General characteristics

- **Crew:** 6 or 7: Aircraft Commander, Pilot, Navigator, Flight Engineer, Radio Operator, 2 Loadmasters
- **Empty weight:** 101,165 lb (45,888 kg)
- **Gross weight:** 185,000 lb (83,915 kg)
- **Max takeoff weight:** 194,500 lb (88,224 kg)

• **Powerplant:** 4 × Pratt & Whitney R-4360-63A Wasp Major 28-cylinder air-cooled radial piston engines.

Performance

- **Maximum speed:** 304 mph
- **Cruise speed:** 230 mph
- **Range:** 4,030 mi



The 2025–2026 academic year for STARBASE Arizona was filled with incredible milestones and memorable learning experiences that inspired students to explore science, technology, engineering, arts/design, and mathematics (STEAM). Nearly 820 fifth-grade students participated in 25 hours of hands-on, premier instruction.



STARBASE students compare calculations after an event to make sure everyone agrees with the results.

Students attended from the Vail, Amphitheater, Sunnyside, and Tucson Unified School Districts. The program's goal is to inspire and engage students through unforgettable educational experiences in a discovery- and inquiry-based learning environment.

STARBASE Arizona Advanced extends these opportunities into middle school. This year, 40 students from Corona Foothills and Alice Vail Middle Schools were immersed in hands-on learning experiences in Forensic Science and CO₂ Dragsters, further fostering creativity, critical thinking, and a passion for STEAM.

A significant milestone was reached this past January. Davis-Monthan has hosted STARBASE Arizona for 20 years. This partnership speaks volumes about the shared commitment to providing exceptional educational opportunities for our youth.



A STARBASE instructor shows a STARBASE student how to use a jigsaw to carefully cut a part out of Styrofoam.

STARBASE Arizona is deeply grateful for the continued support from Davis-Monthan.

The year was rich with strong student connections, implementation of advanced technology and numerous community outreach opportunities where the team not only participated in base events and teacher trainings, but also science nights with partner schools.

The 2025–2026 academic year concluded with an outstanding group of military dependents participating in

our Summer Academy. Students embraced the role of engineers as they designed and constructed bridges that met specific load-bearing requirements, while also engaging in a variety of hands-on activities that fostered teamwork, problem-solving, creativity, and a deep appreciation for STEAM.

STARBASE Arizona is grateful to be part of inspiring our youth in STEAM and equally grateful for the support from our partner districts, community and Davis-Monthan. Nearly 210 military personnel at Davis Monthan volunteered 255 hours by assisting students with launching bottled rockets and sharing how their careers connect to each of the STEAM fields. The team remains committed to empowering our youth and building strong community connections in STEAM education.



STARBASE students compare notes during a "GeoScavenger hunt" to locate different objects on DMAFB.

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

Junior Airman of the Year



Chapter Vice President Bryan Foulk presents SrA Marie L. Gutierrez of the 162nd Wing (ANG) with the 2026 Air & Space Forces Association Tucson Chapter 105 Junior Airman of the Year Award during the wing's annual award ceremony, Sunday May 3rd at the Morris Air National Guard Base. Shown in the background is the Wing Commander, Col Brant A. Putnam (left) and Wing Command Chief, CMSgt Jason L. Handa (right). Photo courtesy of the 162nd Wing.



MEMBERSHIP

Our chapter roster is growing (it is now over 2,000), and a big part of that increase is the result of AFA's new "Mission Membership" category. Many of our former members have had their expired membership converted to an active Mission Membership. If you are one of these, welcome back! We are happy to have you again as a member of Chapter 105, and hope to see you at one of our future functions following the summer break. You will receive notice of these functions, events and other topics of interest via email from our Chapter President.

If you have questions or need assistance with your membership status, please reach out to membership@afatucson105.org.

If you, your family or friends would like to take advantage of this new membership opportunity, go to <https://www.afa.org/join/>. It's quick, it's easy and it's free!

DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT OF THE DAVIS-MONTHAN AIRFIELD REGISTER

There were an astonishing 717 landings by Douglas aircraft recorded at Tucson in the Davis-Monthan Register. Eight were civilian; the rest were military pilots flying everything from BTs to XO-22s. As you might imagine, the list of pilot names reads like a Who's Who of aviation leadership from that era and on into WWII and beyond.

Many of these Douglas military aircraft models are pictured and discussed in the context of the Davis-Monthan Airfield in the book "Military Aircraft of the Davis-Monthan Register" which contains excellent B/W photographs and 3-view silhouettes of the aircraft.

Company founder and owner Donald W. Douglas visited Tucson as a passenger and signed the Davis-Monthan Airfield Register twice. Both times he was flying with Register pilot Victor E. Bertrandias. Douglas founded the Douglas Aircraft Company in 1921. He was Company President 1921-1957, and Chairman of the Board from 1957-1967.

Bertrandias and Douglas first landed and signed the Register on Thursday, March 17, 1927. Bertrandias, based at Dayton, OH McCook Field, was carrying Douglas (based at Santa Monica, CA) to their next stop, El Paso, TX, and then, noted in the destination column, to Dayton, OH. They were traveling in 26-423, a Douglas C-1C Transport. They stayed in Tucson overnight, continuing east the next morning at 8:40AM.

Their second landing was on Thursday, August 25, 1927. They were again eastbound to El Paso, TX. Their airplane,

27-228, was a Douglas O-2H. This landing was about three years after the successful World Flight by Douglas aircraft.

The Douglas company began business by fulfilling a contract for an aircraft named the "Cloudster." The "Cloudster" crashed in 1926, enjoying only three years of flight.



Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

Dr. Leslie T. Lockridge Executive Director

The VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN 22) Interim Network Director is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Leslie T. Lockridge, DNP, RN, as the new Executive Director of the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System, effective April 5, 2026.



Dr. Lockridge brings a wealth of experience and proven leadership to this role. Most recently, she served as the Acting Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Patient Care Services within the Veterans Health

Administration, where she provided oversight for 16 National Program Offices delivering operational, policy, and compliance support across VHA.

Since joining VA in 2009, Dr. Lockridge has held numerous key leadership positions, including Senior Advisor to the Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer, Associate Director for Patient Care Services at the Phoenix VA Health Care System, and acting executive leadership roles at Phoenix, New Mexico, and Southeast Louisiana VA Health Care Systems. Her extensive experience spans strategic planning, facility operations, nursing leadership, and patient-centered care initiatives.

Dr. Lockridge earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice from Chamberlain University, a Master of Science in Nursing Administration from Middle Tennessee State University, and dual Bachelor's degrees from Tennessee State University and Lipscomb University. She also serves as a Professor of Practice at Arizona State University's Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation, reflecting her commitment to advancing healthcare education and practice.

With Dr. Lockridge's extensive experience and leadership, we are confident that she will effectively lead the Southern Arizona Health Care System in continuing to provide excellent care and services to our Veterans.



The Waco Aircraft Company produced significant military versions during the 1930s and 40s, evolving from 1930s biplane trainers and navy parasite fighters to mass-producing WWII troop gliders and utility aircraft. Key military models included the UPF-7/PT-14 trainer, the CG-4 Hadrian glider, and the UEC-7/C-72 transport, with over 1,000 CG-4As built.

Goldwater Gunnery Range

April 2, 2026

Photos by Ned Harris



Air Force Delays A-10 Retirement Until 2030

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, (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 (C)

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

Chick-fil-A
Travis Kuhn
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
Chris Ciruli
5 Calle Cristina
Rio Rico, AZ 85648
520-281-1456

Coldwell Banker & Homes for
Heroes
Susan Kelly
11165 N La Canada Dr, Ste
175
Oro Valley, AZ 85737
520-760-3801
susan.kelly1@cbrealty.com
www.susankellyhomes.com
www.homesforheroes.com

Tucson Appliance Company
Chris Edwards
4229 E. Speedway Blvd
Tucson, AZ 85712
520-881-1207
tacappliance.com

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

Vantage West Credit Union
Lea Cazares
P. O. Box 15115
Tucson, AZ 85708
800-888-7882
Vantagewest.org

Upcoming Events

We hope to schedule future "field trips" to different organization on base while conducting chapter meetings at the American Legion Post 36 off 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!!

Jul 2026

- 6th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, Serial Grillers, 7585 S Houghton Rd
- 24th: No Chapter Meeting
- 25 – 26: Southwest Region Conference, Viscount Suites

Aug 2026

- 3rd: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, MXG Conf Rm, Bldg 5500, DMAFB (**New location**)
- 28th: Chapter Meeting, Subject and presenter TBD, 1130, American Legion Post 36

Sep 2026

- TBD: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, Date & Location TBD
- 12 – 13: National Convention, Gaylord Center, Maryland
- 14 – 16: Air, Space & Cyber Conference, Gaylord Center, Maryland
- 25th: Chapter Meeting, Subject and presenter TBD, 1130, American Legion Post 36

SAVE THESE DATES/DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Oct 5th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, MXG Conf Rm, Bldg 5500, (**New location**)
- Oct 23rd: Chapter Meeting, Subject TBD, 1130, American Legion Post 36
- Nov 2nd: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, MXG Conf Rm, Bldg 5500, (**New location**)
- Nov 27th: No Chapter Meeting, Enjoy your Thanksgiving
- Dec 3rd: Chapter Meeting, Joint Awards Meeting with Daedalians OPF 12, 1130, American Legion Post 36
- Dec 7th: Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 1200, MXG Conf Rm, Bldg 5500, (**New location**)

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.