

A-29 SUPER TUCANO



joins Air Force Test Pilot School fleet



Air Force photograph by Lindsey Iniguez

Three A-29 Super Tucanos arrive at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., July 18, 2024, where they will join a unique fleet at the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School.

Air Force photograph by Richard Gonzales

Three A-29 Super Tucanos conduct a ferry flight to Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., July 18, 2024, where they will join a unique fleet at the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School.

by Chase Kohler and Tiffany Holloway
Edwards AFB, Calif.

A trio of A-29 Super Tucano aircraft recently arrived at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., to join a unique fleet at the Air Force Test Pilot School. The arrival marks the first newly assigned aircraft for the school in nearly 30 years.

The A-29 was designed as a low-cost close-air support aircraft. These A-29s were originally acquired by Air Force Special Operations Command but divested after mission requirements changed. The Air Force Test Center and school leadership saw these excess aircraft as a unique opportunity to expand the flight test and training capabilities at Edwards.

As part of a broader shift in response to Global Power Competition, the Air Force Test Pilot School's mission is evolving to meet strategic need. A refined three-pillar focus includes development of world-class staff, creating highly adaptive critical thinking test leaders, and advancing cutting-edge research.

While the A-29's airframe design is perfect for spin testing, the Super Tucano also offers an array of modern avionics with the ability to externally hang equipment through various wing pylons. This will allow the school to conduct training and research on a variety of multi-domain sensors and weapons, reducing reliance on T-38 and F-16 aircraft while enhancing the ability to perform aspects of the developmental test mission tasked to the Air Force Test Center.

"The decision to transfer A-29 aircraft to Edwards is a result of thoughtful analysis by the Test Pilot School and an excellent example of command agility and collaboration to take advantage of a unique, fleeting opportunity," said Michael Banzet, director, Air Force Test Center plans and programs. "Not only does this repurpose a \$63 million taxpayer investment, it also modernizes and expands TPS curriculum to accelerate the fielding of combat capability for the U.S. Air Force."



412th Test Wing commander promoted to brigadier general



Air Force photographs by Chloe Bonaccorsi
Senior Master Sgt. Tanya Sipos unfurls the new flag for Brig. Gen. Douglas P. Wickert, Commander, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. The Air Force Test Center, the 412th Test Wing, family, friends, and other distinguished guests gather to celebrate the promotion of the commander.



LEFT: Jodee Wickert and Nancy Wickert, spouse and mother of Brig. Gen. Douglas P. Wickert, commander of the 412th Test Wing, pin on the new rank of brigadier general at Edwards Air Force Base, Oct 18th, 2024. The ceremony was presided by Maj. Gen. Scott A. Cain, commander, Air Force Test Center.



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Remembering two trailblazing aviators:

Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay 'Miley' Evans and Lt. Serena 'Dug' Wileman

U.S. Navy story

Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay "Miley" Evans and Lt. Serena "Dug" Wileman will be remembered as role models, trailblazers, and women whose influence touched countless people on the flight deck and well beyond.

In the world of U.S. Naval Aviation, very few names will be forever imprinted with their squadrons, their communities, and their shipmates. Among them are Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay "Miley" Evans and Lt. Serena "Dug" Wileman, two highly skilled, combat-decorated aviators who tragically lost their lives during a routine training flight near Mount Rainier on Oct. 15, 2024. More than just names and ranks, they were role models, trailblazers, and women whose influence touched countless people on the flight deck and well beyond.

They had recently returned from a deployment with their squadron, Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 130, "Zappers," with whom they spent nine months at sea as a part of Carrier Air Wing Three (CVW-3) aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE). Operating mostly from the Red Sea, they supported Operations INHERENT RESOLVE, PROSPERITY GUARDIAN, and POSEIDON ARCHER, where they were involved in the most dynamic combat action in defense of the strike group and freedom of navigation since World War II.

During their deployment, both Evans and Wileman distinguished themselves in combat operations. Their efforts directly contributed to the Navy's mission defending U.S. and Coalition forces while keeping the seas open and free with precision and purpose. These role models cemented legacies by making history that will inspire future generations of Naval officers and aviators.

Born to Lead: Lyndsay "Miley" Evans

Following her time at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Evans, a native of Palmdale, Calif., was com-



Navy photographs

Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay "Miley" Evans, left, and Lt. Serena "Dug" Wileman.

missioned through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and earned her "Wings of Gold" as a Naval Flight Officer out of Naval Air Station Pensacola. While familiar with the spotlight, Evans always carried herself as a humble yet strong leader — the quiet professional. As an EA-18G Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO) and veteran of two sea tours, she earned the respect of the entire Growler community for her tactical expertise, mentorship to those of all ranks and communities, and ability to bring out the best in everyone around her.

In 2023, Evans was part of the all-female Super Bowl flyover, a historic moment marking 50 years of women flying in the Navy. This event also symbolized the progress of women in aviation across all military branches. But for those who knew her best, this was only one highlight in a notable career defined by high performance and distinction. After completing the challenging 12-week HAVOC graduate-level course at NAS Fallon (the TOPGUN of the Growler community), Evans earned the honor and responsibility of becoming a Growler Tactics Instructor (GTI). Living up to this responsibility daily, her approachable and knowledgeable demeanor enabled the training and development of countless junior EA-18G Pilots and EWOs. Therefore, it was

no surprise to her mentors and peers when she was recognized as the FY2024 Growler Tactics Instructor of the Year, a prestigious honor earned through her tactical acumen and sustained leadership.

During her 2023-24 deployment with CVW-3 and the IKE Carrier Strike Group (IKE CSG) in the Red Sea, Evans coordinated and executed multiple combat strikes into Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen, making her one of the few women to fly combat missions over land. In her critical role as VAQ-130's Training Officer, she helped develop and execute new warfare tactics that required knowledge, innovation, and a comprehensive understanding of aerial warfare and electronic attack in a nascent theater against a constantly evolving threat. The tactics, techniques, and procedures for the EA-18G she pioneered defending against Houthi aggressions directly contributed to the successful defense of the entire CSG and will be used as a template for adaptability at the unrelenting pace of combat in future fights.

Evans was awarded two Single Action Air Medals for her exceptional performance during strikes on January 12 and 22, 2024. She also earned three Strike Flight Air Medals for her contributions to missions flown between December 21, 2023, and March 29, 2024.

The Heart and Soul: Serena "Dug" Wileman

A native of Sacramento, Calif., and commissioned through Officer Candidate School, Wileman was at the beginning of a promising and illustrious career. As a senior first-tour Naval Aviator, she established herself as an energetic, vocal, and positive influence in VAQ-130. Known for her heart of gold, passion, and unrelenting smile, Wileman was always committed to improve and grow, not only for herself but every Sailor and officer around her.

During her 2023-24 deployment, Wileman planned and subsequently flew multiple strikes into Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen, one of the few women to fly combat missions over land. Wileman's exceptional leadership was highlighted during VAQ-130's "Dirt Det," where she was designated the Officer in Charge. Overcoming the challenges of operating from an austere location, she successfully oversaw all detachment operations enabling the support of multiple flights in the defense of U.S. and Coalition forces in support of Operations INHERENT RESOLVE and PROSPERITY GUARDIAN.

Always a team player, Wileman was also a respected qualified Landing Signal Officer (LSO), a vital role in the squadron to ensure her fellow Naval Aviators safely recovered aboard the ship. Despite operating in a weapons engagement zone, her calm and collected demeanor under pressure showed during combat operations. Even when recovering alerts while IKE was being targeted and the CSG was under attack by Houthi terrorists, she executed flawlessly, bringing all CVW-3 aircraft aboard expeditiously and safely. From the LSO platform, Wileman always showcased her extraordinary composure and consistent ability to perform under pressure.

Due to her unrelenting efforts, Wileman accrued three Strike Flight Air Medals for her role in combat operations between Dec. 17, 2023, and April 5, 2024.

Outside the cockpit, Wileman made everyone smile. She would brighten up any room and was known for her genuine care and compassion for those around her. She always brought a sense of calm, in the good times and bad, whether it was through a joke, a game of cribbage, or a giant bear hug for a Sailor in need of one.

The bonds that endure

Evans' and Wileman's strong connection to their families were second to none. Evans was close with her parents, who were immensely proud of her many accomplishments and were overjoyed when welcoming her back to NAS Whidbey Island on July 13th.

Wileman met her husband, Brandon, during flight school. Also a Naval Aviator, Brandon shared in her passion for flight, and together they supported each other through the challenges and successes of their careers. Wileman's goal for follow-on orders after the Zappers was to remain co-located with Brandon.

Both Evans and Wileman shared lasting loyalty and commitment to their mentors, peers, and Sailors. They always lifted others up, even during the most challenging moments of deployment, knowing exactly how to take a quick break from the "stress" of the job and deployment and getting everyone's heads back in the game.

They also bonded over their love of dogs: Evans, a proud "dog mom" to Nyx (an Australian Shepherd), and Wileman to Riley (a Dachshund/Chihuahua mix - "Chiweenie"). The two often flew together, sharing a deep understanding of the intricacies of Naval Aviation, and complemented each other well. They shared many moments together, from leading critical missions in combat zones during deployment to helping their Sailors and each other weather the mental strain of long deployments.

These women's bond with each other reached well beyond

– See **AVIATORS**, on Page 10

B-2 bomber undergoes key maintenance overhaul in record time

by Brian Brackens
Palmdale, Calif.

In a big win for U.S. Air Force readiness, the “Spirit of Nebraska,” a B-2 bomber, returned to operations 91 days ahead of schedule, after completing programmed depot maintenance in Palmdale, Calif., on Oct. 15, 2024.

Previously, it has taken B-2s approximately 470 days to go through PDM. However, the “Spirit of Nebraska” was able to get through PDM in only 379 days due to several changes the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center’s Bombers Directorate made to improve efficiency.

“Bringing these jets into PDM, getting the work done quickly, and delivering them back to the warfighter early is a big deal,” said Col. Francis Marino, B-2 System Program Manager within the Bombers Directorate. “This accomplishment would not have been possible without the great partnership between our team, Air Force Global Strike Command and Northrop Grumman.”

PDM occurs every nine years, and is an exhaustive inspection, overhaul, and repair of the bomber, with much of the work focused on restoration of the bomber’s Low Observable (LO) or stealth materials.

“PDM’s main objective is to accomplish LO restoration of the aircraft,” said Staci Gravette, B-2 PDM Program Manager. “Since the aircraft is stripped [for LO restoration] we are also able to do other maintenance work as well.”



Air Force photograph by Master Sgt. Grady Epperly
A B-2 Spirit aircraft, “The Spirit of Nebraska,” sits on display during the Tinker Air Show at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla, July 1, 2023. The B-2 is assigned to Whiteman AFB in Missouri.

One of the ways the Air Force was able to reduce PDM time for the aircraft, was to conduct the fuel system inspection earlier in the PDM cycle.

In the past, if an inspection identified a fuel leak, the team would have to pull parts and materials back off the aircraft, repair the leak, and redo previous work, often causing a 45-day delay. Moving the fuel system inspection up in the PDM cycle, eliminated duplicate work and delay.

Additionally, the team was able to reduce time by conducting pre-inspections of the aircraft before it arrived at PDM. This allowed them to catch issues ahead of time, order parts, and work specific repairs into the schedule.

“As any aircraft continues to age, you’re going to see more and more issues that need to be repaired on a PDM line,” Marino said. “The pre-inspection is great because it reduces the number of surprises at PDM.”

Maintaining the B-2s dominance is a priority for the Bombers Directorate. Improving the PDM process and other sustainment and modernization efforts the directorate is leading, ensures the aircraft continues to operate.

“Nothing else can even come close,” said Shawn Clay, B-2 Product Support Manager, referring to the capabilities of the B-2. “When you take into account that this is 1980s technology [on the aircraft] that is still leading the world today, it just speaks volumes to the amazing aircraft weapon system that it is. On top of that, the actual mission — holding our enemies at bay and giving them a moment of pause ... like the thought of a B-2 coming in and before you even know it’s there, the fight’s all over.”

“Until the B-21 is fielded, the B-2 is the world’s only long-range penetrable strike bomber and the only aircraft that can do what we need it to do today,” added Marino. “As long as the aircraft is operational and our adversaries continue to come out with new and advanced weaponry across the electromagnetic spectrum, we’re going to have to continuously invest in the B-2s lethality, its survivability, and of course its readiness. The work we’re doing on the PDM line will play a key role in all of this.”



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Fire dispatcher supervisor exemplifies service before self

by **Laisa Leao**
Edwards AFB, Calif.

Melissa Young has worked for the Fire Department at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., and Operating Location Plant 42 in Palmdale, Calif., since 2017.

She draws on her family's commitment to community service and legacy of fighting fires and emergencies throughout generations. Her father has worked as a firefighter at Edwards since 2001. Her great-grandfather was also a firefighter. Her sister, now an Airman in uniform, used to work for Cal Fire.

"It feels like I grew up in Edwards Fire Department because when my father took the job, I was seven. It's home to me," said Young.

Young started her career at Edwards as a firefighter dispatcher. Throughout her shift, she took calls about fires, accidents and other emergencies, acting wisely and quickly to assess the situation, such as location and nature of emergency. She was responsible for dispatching the appropriate firefighting unit, ensuring a swift response, minimizing damage and saving lives. She maintained constant communication with firefighters in the



Courtesy photograph

Melissa Young, left, has worked for the Fire Department at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., and Operating Location Plant 42 since 2017. She draws on her family's commitment to community service and legacy of fighting fires and emergencies throughout generations.

field, providing updates and additional resources as needed, to ensure a well-coordinated and effective response.

"Although dispatchers aren't the 'cool' ones in the department, without us, the public cannot receive timely responses to their emergencies, and will not receive life and property saving advice. Dispatchers are truly the first responders because we are the first to communicate

with a patient often offering lifesaving instructions, we are the first to identify the need for specific resources to better mitigate an emergency or any other type of call for service. Dispatchers are the heartbeat of the department," said Young.

After two years as a dispatcher, Young was promoted to a supervisory role. With a focus on mutual aid agreements, she

coordinates communication and resources between organizations to tackle incidents more effectively. From brush fires to fire incidents on base, Young has mobilized and allocated equipment, vehicles and personnel strategically, prioritizing responses based on urgency. As a supervisor, she ensures her staff is well-trained and ready to support collective responses.

"In my current role, I work with the counties and cities government entities, as well as mission partners. We mutually support each other in preventing and responding to emergencies situations to foster a safer community overall," said Young. "Fire and Emergency Services is the lifeline of any mission. Without a team dedicated to protecting life, limb and property, it would be unsafe to execute any mission. You cannot test aircraft without aircraft rescue and firefighting crews. You cannot maintain housing districts without structural and medical teams. You cannot store weapons and aircraft without a fire safe building. The entire fire department -- dispatch, operations, fire prevention and management -- works around the clock to ensure the safety of others."

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NASA pilots add perspective to research

by Jay Levine
NASA Armstrong

NASA research pilots are experts on how to achieve the right flight-test conditions for experiments and the tools needed for successful missions.

It is that expertise that enables pilots to help researchers learn how an aircraft can fly their technology innovations and save time and money, while increasing the innovation's readiness for use.

NASA pilots detailed how they help researchers find the right fit for experiments that might not advance without proving that they work in flight as they do in modeling, simulation, and ground tests at the Ideas to Flight Workshop on Sept. 18, 2024, at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif. "Start the conversation early and make sure you have the right people in the conversation," said Tim Krall, a NASA Armstrong flight operations engineer. "What we are doing better is making sure pilots are included earlier in a flight project to capitalize on their experience and knowledge."

Flight research is often used to prove or refine computer models, try out new systems, or increase a technology's readiness. Sometimes, pilots guide a research project involving experimental aircraft. For example, pilots play a pivotal role on the X-59 aircraft, which will fly faster than the speed of sound while generating a quiet thump, rather than a loud boom.



NASA photograph by Lauren Hughes

In the future, NASA's pilots will fly the X-59 over select U.S. communities to gather data about how people on the ground perceive sonic thumps. NASA will provide this information to regulators to potentially change regulations that currently prohibit commercial supersonic flight over land.

"We have been involved with X-59 aircraft requirements and design process from before it was an X-plane," said Nils Larson, NASA chief X-59 aircraft pilot and senior advisor on flight research. "I was part of pre-formulation and formulation teams. I was also on the research studies and brought in NASA pilot Jim Less in for a second opinion. Because we had

LEFT: NASA pilots Nils Larson and Wayne Ringelberg head for a mission debrief after flying a NASA F/A-18 at Mach 1.38 to create sonic booms as part of the Sonic Booms in Atmospheric Turbulence flight series at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in California, to study sonic boom signatures with and without the element of atmospheric turbulence.

BELOW: NASA pilot Jim Less is assisted by life support as he is fitted with a pilot breathing monitoring system. The sensing system is attached to a pilot's existing gear to capture real-time physiological, breathing gas, and cockpit environmental data.



NASA photograph by Carla Thomas

flown missions in the F-15 and F-18, we knew the kinds of systems, like autopilots, that we need to get the repeatability and accuracy for the data."

NASA pilots' experience can provide guidance to enable a wide range of flight experiments. A lot of times researchers have an idea of how to get the required flight data, but sometimes, Larson explains, while there are limits to what an aircraft can do — like flying the DC-8 upside down, there are maneuvers that given the right mitigations, training, and approval could simulate those conditions.

Less says he's developed an approach to help focus researchers: "What do you guys really need? A lot of what we do is mundane, but anytime you go out and fly, there is some risk. We don't want to take a risk if we are going after data that nobody needs, or it is not going to serve a purpose, or the quality won't work."

Sometimes, a remotely piloted aircraft can provide an advantage to achieve NASA's research priorities, said Justin Hall, NASA Armstrong's subscale aircraft laboratory chief pilot. "We can do things quicker, at a lower

cost, and the subscale lab offers unique opportunities. Sometimes an engineer comes in with an idea and we can help design and integrate experiments, or we can even build an aircraft and pilot it."

Most research flights are straight and level, like driving a car on the highway. But there are exceptions. "The more interesting flights require a maneuver to get the data the researcher is looking for," Less said. "We mounted a pod to an F/A-18 with the landing radar that was going to Mars and they wanted to simulate Martian reentry using the airplane. We went up high and dove straight at the ground."

Another F/A-18 experiment tested the flight control software for the Space Launch System rocket for the Artemis missions. "A rocket takes off vertically and it has to pitch over 90 degrees," Less explained. "We can't quite do that in an F-18, but we could start at about a 45-degree angle and then push 45 degrees nose low to simulate the whole turn. That's one of the fun parts of the job, trying to figure out how to get the data you want with the tools we have."



NASA photograph by Lauren Hughes

Justin Hall, left, attaches the Preliminary Research Aerodynamic Design to Land on Mars, or Prandtl-M, glider onto the Carbon-Z Cub, which Justin Link steadies. Hall and Link are part of a team from NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif., that uses an experimental magnetic release mechanism to air launch the glider.



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High-altitude ER-2 flights get down-to-Earth data

by Erica Heim
NASA Armstrong

Operating at altitudes above 99 percent of the Earth’s atmosphere, NASA’s ER-2 aircraft is the agency’s highest-flying airborne science platform.

With its unique ability to observe from as high as 65,000 feet, the ER-2 aircraft is often a platform for Earth science that facilitates new and crucial information about our planet, especially when the plane is part of collaborative and multidisciplinary projects.

“We’re deploying instruments and people everywhere from dry lakebeds in the desert to coastal oceans and from the stratosphere to marine layer clouds just above the surface,” said Kirk Knobelspiesse, an atmospheric scientist at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center. “We live on a changing planet, and it is through collaborative projects that we can observe and understand those changes.”

One mission that recently benefitted from the ER-2’s unique capabilities is the Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem Postlaunch Airborne eXperiment (PACE-PAX) project. The PACE-PAX mission uses the ER-2’s capabilities to confirm data collected from the PACE satellite, which launched in February 2024.

The PACE observatory is making novel measurements of the ocean, atmosphere, and land surfaces, noted Knobelspiesse, the mission scientist for PACE-PAX. This mission is all about checking the accuracy of those new satellite measurements.

“The ER-2 is the ideal platform for PACE-PAX because it’s about the closest we can get to putting instruments in orbit without actually doing so,” Knobelspiesse said.

The collaborative project includes a diverse team of researchers from across NASA, plus the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Netherlands Institute for Space Research, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, the Naval Postgraduate School, and other institutions.

Similarly, the Geological Earth Mapping eXperiment science mission is using the ER-2 over multiple years to collect observations of critical mineral resources across the Western United States.

“Flying at this altitude means the GEMx mission can acquire wide swaths of data with every overflight,” said Kevin Reath, NASA’s associate project manager for the GEMx mission, a collaboration between the United States Geological Survey and NASA.

The GEMx team collects visible, shortwave infrared, and thermal infrared data using instruments installed onboard the ER-2. Combining these instruments with the aircraft’s capability to fly at high altitudes bears promising results.

“The dataset being produced is the largest airborne surface mineralogy dataset captured in a single NASA campaign,” Reath said. “These data could help inform federal, tribal, state, and community leaders to make decisions that protect or develop our environment.”



NASA photograph by Genero Vavuris

Sam Habbal (quality inspector), Darick Alvarez (aircraft mechanic), and Juan Alvarez (crew chief) work on the network “canoe” on top of the ER-2 aircraft, which provides network communication with the pilot onboard. Experts like these sustain a high standard of safety while outfitting instruments onboard science aircraft like the ER-2 and science missions like the Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem Postlaunch Airborne eXperiment (PACE-PAX) mission. The ER-2 is based out of NASA’s Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif.

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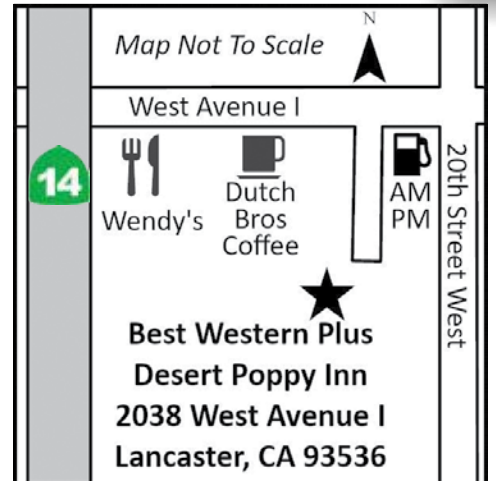
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Presentation

Environmental Restoration Program Update

The RAB provides two-way communication between the public and those responsible for environmental cleanup at Edwards AFB. The meeting is open to the public.

For more information, contact Gary Hatch at (661) 277-8707 or e-mail 412tw.pae@us.af.mil.



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WWII Airman's sacrifice remembered with reburial in Arlington

by Daniel Flook
Nellis AFB, Nev.

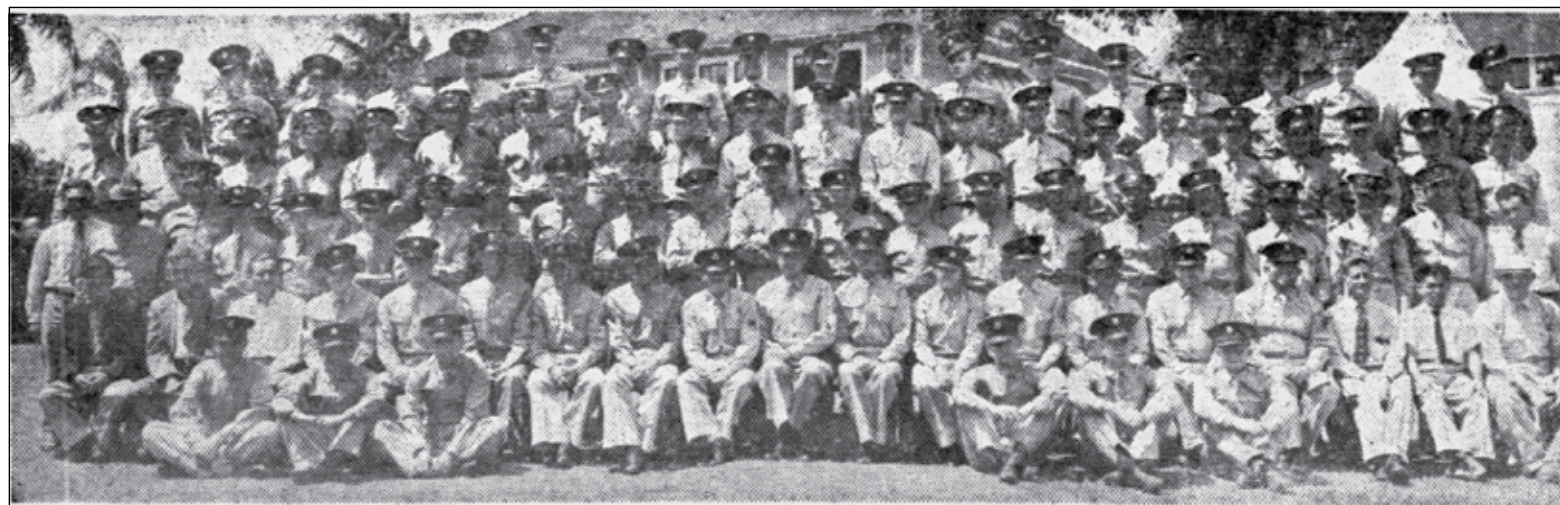
On Oct. 10, 2024, the United States honored Sergeant Frank J. Seiferheld, a World War II Airman from the 99th Bombardment Group, with a reburial in Arlington National Cemetery along with a stone bearing his name for the first time since his sacrifice on January 20, 1945.

Frank J. Seiferheld was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Jan 25, 1919, to parents Francis (a World War I veteran) and Rose Seiferheld. He grew up with an older brother, George, and a younger sister, Rita. After completing two years of high school, Frank volunteered for the U.S. Army and joined the Quartermaster service at Fort Shafter, Honolulu, Hawaii, where his older brother served as well.

Frank later returned to New York and married Pauline Carson on January 8, 1942, before enlisting again two weeks later. In the fall of 1944, both Sgt. Frank J. Seiferheld and Sgt. George F. Seiferheld, served with the 348th Bombardment Squadron, part of the 99th Bombardment Group. Today, the 99th Bombardment Group's heritage is continued by the 99th Air Base Wing.

Sergeant Seiferheld flew 11 missions with the 99th Bombardment Group between Nov. 5, 1944, and Jan. 20, 1945, with five different crews in nine different aircraft as the ball turret gunner.

The 99th Bombardment Group launched Mission 329 on Jan. 20, 1945, from Tortorella Airfield located outside Foggia, Italy. The mission targeted an oil refinery in Regensburg, Germany, more than 500 miles away. At 11:25, the pilot of Seiferheld's B-17 radioed that his #2 engine



SHOWN IN PHOTO—Seated on ground—left to right: Privates Michael L. Wolfe, Joseph Traylor, Clifford B. Oliver, George Bendas, Robert E. Courtney, Daniel H. Serafin. First row—left to right: Joseph Dias, H. S. Sheppard, Joseph Strohl, Cpl. Owen E. Persons, Sergeants Charles W. Hoffman, Henry Hatfield, Bluel M. Dineen, George H. Kuechler, Oliver Brinkman, Harris W. Warren, 1st Sgt., Maj. Lee M. Hester, commanding, Sergeants Peter Rombach, Edmund A. Sizer, John H. Williams, James E. Thompson, Cpl. Pasquale Rossi, William Donnell, Yutaka Imada, Fred Pavao. Second row—left to right: Ben Denis, Houston Ignacio, Privates Earle W. Newton, Robert C. Noel, Eugene J. Dwyer, Fred M. Sofka, Alphonso Spagnolo, Harold F. Jordan, Vern H. Wagner, Raymond F. Doucette, Joseph T. Sullivan, Craig W. Sharp, George Fox, George F. Seiferheld, Daniel H. Gabriel, Wilbur S. McCardle, Floyd S. Cox, Jewel D. Bridges, Sherel J. Talbot, LeRoy L. Malinski, John J. Melley, Oliver Scott. Third row—left to right: Privates Norman B. Godley, Eugene Adkins, Thomas M. Manning, Nicholas Hanas, James J. White, Rufus A. McKinney, Ernest L. Patrick, Joseph M. Gemza, Bruce R. Monroe, Leo C. Malatare, Cletis L. Sherrod, Howard J. Corcoran, Wayne E. Bungard, James F. Helderman, Edward C. Huff, Frank H. Carson, Joseph J. Zablocki, Harry E. Warren, William J. Cox, Vernon B. Scott, Victor H. Purdy. Fourth row—left to right: Privates Edward J. Zaykoski, Homer L. Davis, Edward R. Dill, Nele B. Hedglin, John R. Dunn, Ray Simmons, Norman M. Harrell, Dwain E. Lofton, Joseph M. Young, Frank J. Seiferheld, Joseph F. Uscio, Leo Dobiak, Donald Causey, Don R. Jefferson, Jerome Boliau, Byron R. Bray, Walter R. Cates, Fred M. Bowling, Edward H. Austin.

Courtesy photograph

A class photo taken circa 1943 including Sgt. Frank J. Seiferheld and his brother Sgt. George Seiferheld.

was leaking oil and he intended to return to base.

The pilot declined fighter escort and planned to use the clouds for cover during the return trip, but the plane never landed at Tortorella Airfield. Although a Missing Air Crew Report was filed on Jan. 22, 1945, no search was made for the plane nor its 10 occupants.

On Feb. 15, 1945, an Italian living in Grado, Italy along the Gulf of Trieste buried the remains of Lt. Raymond A. Sunderlin, one of the crewmembers aboard Seiferheld's B-17. Near

Trieste, Italy, two Italian sailors recovered the body of another crew member, Lt. Robert J. Brine, sometime prior to 1948.

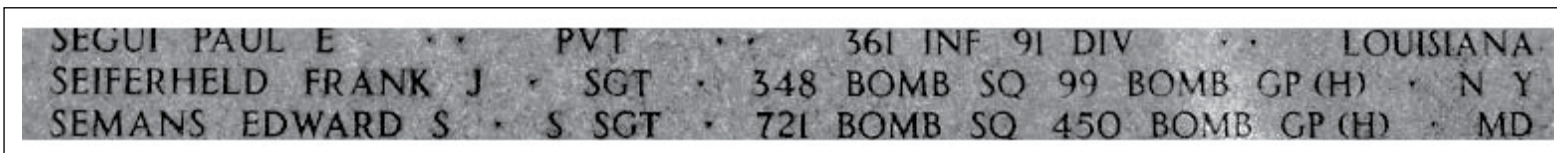
The two recoveries led the American Graves Registration Service to conclude that B-17, serial number 46268, had crashed into the Gulf of Trieste. Post-war searches led to the recovery and identification of several other crew members: Lt. Harry R. Hathaway, Lt. Robert W. Allen, and Staff Sgt. Robert F. Richmond, all of whom perished on Jan. 20, 1945. Several other remains were recovered and transferred to the

Florence American Cemetery, but these remains were not identified.

In 2018, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency exhumed remains from Unknown X-83 in the Florence American Cemetery for transport back to the United States. Utilizing dental records and DNA analysis, the DPAA identified those remains as Sgt. Frank J. Seiferheld, accounting for him, more than 79 years after his sacrifice on Feb. 12, 2024. Seiferheld was buried at Arlington National Cemetery outside Washington, D.C., the final resting place of more than

400,000 active-duty service members, veterans, and families as well as U.S. presidents. Arlington National Cemetery may be best known for the Tomb of Unknown Soldier, but thanks to the ceaseless efforts of the DPAA, Sergeant Seiferheld's grave now bears his name.

Col. Jason J. Glynn, commander of the 99th Air Base Wing, and Co. Joshua D. DeMotts, previous commander of the 99th Air Base, honored the family of Sgt. Frank J. Seiferheld with a telephone call and personal letter.



Courtesy photograph

A marker at the Florence American Cemetery that named the deceased whose bodies were not identified.

AVIATORS, from Page 3

the cockpit. They were both known for their humor and light-hearted spirit. A memorable moment came at a beachside pool, where, during a liberty port in Souda Bay, Crete, Evans and Wileman shared a laugh as two male squadron mates struggled to move a heavy umbrella. "Centuries of oppression have finally paid off," they joked, representing the camaraderie and light heartedness that defined both of them.

A legacy that lives on

The legacy that Evans and Wileman leave behind is characterized by strength, courage, and inspiration. They embodied the very best of Naval Aviation and were

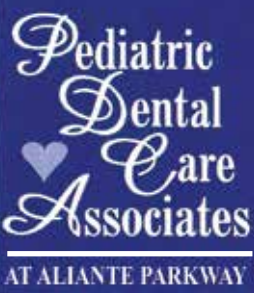
examples that hard work, determination, and devotion to their passions could lead to exceptional achievements. They will remain role models for both women and men, embodying the true Navy warrior spirit.

Capt. Marvin Scott, Commander of CVW-3, said Evans and Wileman will be remembered for their tenacity, their outstanding contributions to the defense of others, and the positive energy they brought to Naval Aviation.


"I have personally flown with both of these great Americans in both training and dynamic combat operations, and they always performed professionally and precisely. As true leaders in the Growler community, VAQ-130, and across my Air Wing, their contributions cannot be overstated; I could not be more proud to have

served with each of them," said Scott. "Every member of the CVW-3 Battle Axe Team is heartbroken at the loss of these exceptional warriors; Dug and Miley truly represent the best that Naval Aviation has to offer, and they will absolutely be missed."

As the Navy mourns the loss of these two exceptional aviators, their stories will continue to inspire generations of service members. They represent the best of the Navy and Naval Aviation: warriors who were steadfast in the face of danger, always prepared to lead, and compassionate to their fellow Sailors. Their memories will endure with the men and women of the Zappers, CVW-3, and the entire IKE CSG. Their legacies will live on, immortalized in the hearts of their families, friends, and all who had the privilege to serve alongside them.



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Local high school students visit Nellis



Students from Eldorado High School, listen to a briefing during a tour at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 27, 2024. The tour was part of Air Combat Command's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics recruiting initiative called Project Quesada which aims to reach Hispanic serving institutions and minority serving institutions.

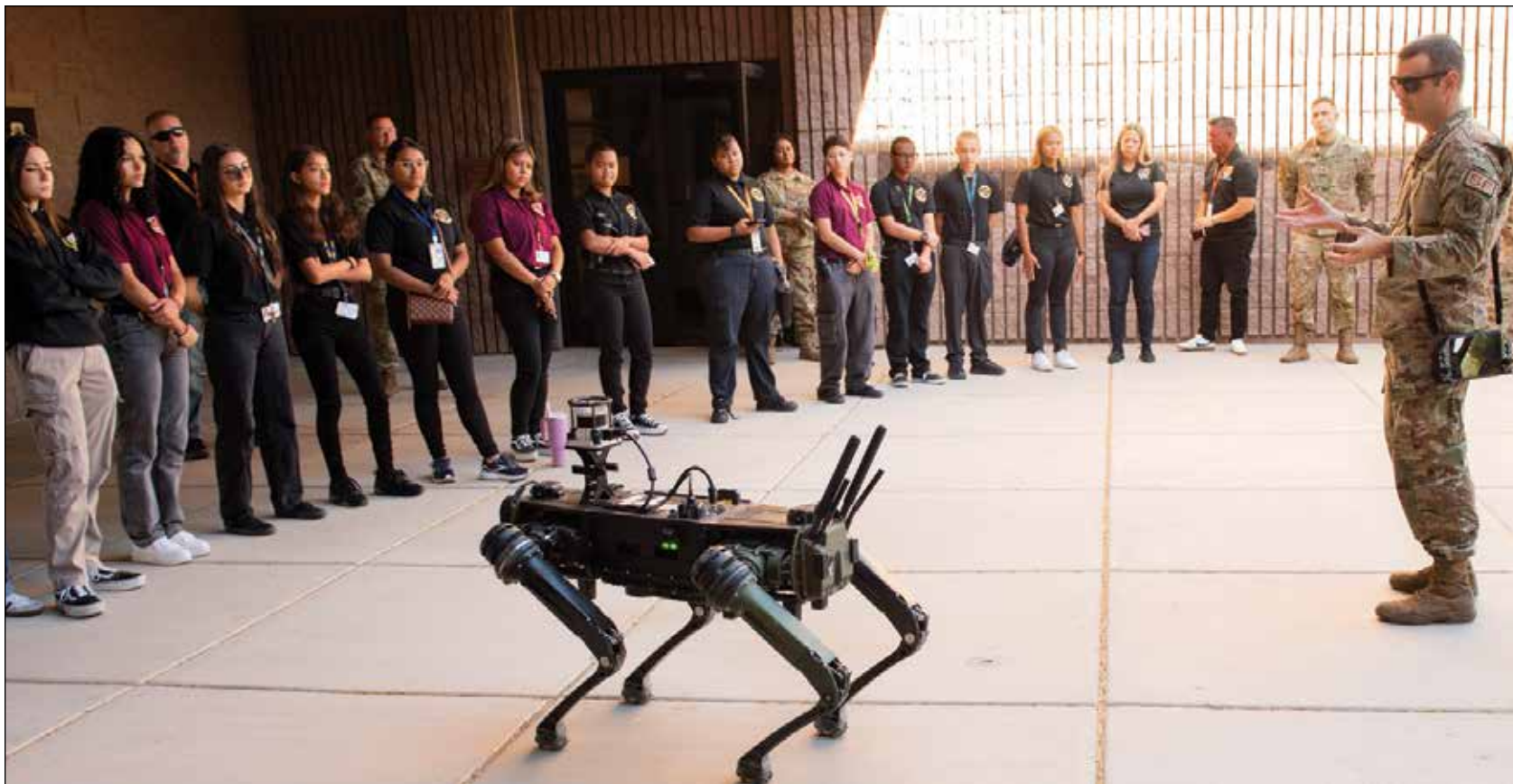


Students from Eldorado High School watch a 99th Security Forces Squadron robot dog demonstration at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 27, 2024. The students got to see firsthand Security Forces demonstrations, a flightline tour and a visit to the Thunderbirds Museum and hangar.



Eldorado High School students are given a final briefing during a tour at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 27, 2024. The tour was part of Air Combat Command's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics recruiting initiative called Project Quesada which aims to reach Hispanic serving institutions and minority serving institutions.

LEFT: Students from Eldorado High School are shown an F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft during a tour at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 27, 2024. The students were shown the Thunderbirds Museum, given a historybrief and shown the Thunderbirds hangar.



LEFT: Students from Eldorado High School watch a robot dog demonstration during a tour at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 27, 2024. The robot dogs can patrol remote areas of base and aid in patrolling operations.

6th CTS trained alongside U.S. Marines for first time during MWX

by Airman 1st Class Brianna Vetro

Nellis AFB, Nev.

The U.S. Air Force 6th Combat Training Squadron, based at Nellis AFB, Nev., trained alongside U.S. Marines for the first time during a recent Marine Air-Ground Task Force Warfighting Exercise exercise at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif., Aug. 14, 2024.

MWX is a comprehensive all-domain exercise that challenges MAGTF units to be innovative and adaptive by simulating a realistic fight against a free-thinking adversary with similar capabilities.

“In this scenario, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center represents an island within range of a highly capable near-peer adversary,” said Marine Corps Maj. John Curtis Andrews, the regimental Air Officer for the 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. “1st Marine Division assumed the command element role of Regimental Landing Team 1 (RLT-1). Nine Joint Terminal Attack Controllers from the 6th CTS attached to RLT-1 and provided invaluable joint integrated surface and aviation-based fires training to four company and battalion sized elements.”

This marked the first time USAF JTAC



Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Brianna Vetro

U.S. Marines assigned to the 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, review operation plans with U.S. Airmen during Marine Air-Ground Task Force Warfighting Exercise at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif., Aug. 14, 2024. MWX is a week-long culminating event for a six-week service-level training exercise that assesses readiness by simulating threat from rival forces.

Airmen participated in this capacity alongside USMC Marines in a joint combat training environment. Throughout the exercise, USAF TACP members trained to enable and support surface-to-surface and air-to-surface fires for a Marine Regiment.

“Our mission was to augment our

aligned Marine units to defend key terrain from the opposition force while realistically simulating amphibious landings, urban warfare, and combat operations in mountainous desert terrain,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin McFtridge, a JTAC assigned to the 6th CTS. “Both the mission and the training environment were focused on improving joint proficiency in peer and near-peer, large scale combat operations.”

MWX acts as the one-week culmination of the six-week Service-Level Training Exercise, with the preceding week dedicated to mission planning. The Integrated Training Exercise and Adversary Force Exercise both involve regimental sized units that train concurrently. SLTE concludes with MWX where the Integrated Training Exercise and Adversary Force Exercise overlay with each other for the Marine Corps’ force on force exercise.

“MWX was a great opportunity for both forces to share tactics, techniques and procedures and see different perspectives on how to best combine firepower and maneuver,” said McFtridge. “We were also able to test and validate new command and control architectures. There were many successes and lessons learned across both forces. As we seek to prepare for future conflicts with

near peer adversaries this training provided a realistic look at what that encounter might entail.”

Air Force and Marine Corps responsibilities for effectively coordinating joint fires have significant overlap, as both operate under the same Close Air Support Joint Publication doctrinal structure inside the Department of Defense. Although both services follow the same framework, each service brings different experiences, equipment, and insights to contribute to enhancing different types of fire support across various areas and platforms.

“We know that there’s going to be differences in how we tackle a problem, but that doesn’t mean that seeing how each other thinks isn’t important and the sharing of ideas isn’t important. That’s the main thing we do here with integration,” said Marine Corps Lt. Col. Nathaniel Griggs, Director, Aviation Combat and Integration, Marine Air-Ground Task Force Training Command, Twentynine Palms. “It works us towards the eventuality where we may have Air Force JTACs integrated in Marine units whenever we disaggregate and reaggregate combat firepower in a littoral campaign; we’re all going to be joint at that point, so it teaches us to work together.”

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13th FTD introduces first F-35 aircraft maintenance ground trainers at Nellis

By Senior Airman

Jordan McCoy

Nellis AFB, Nev.

The 13th Field Training Detachment at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., introduced the first F-35 aircraft maintenance ground trainers to their F-35 Engine Run Class on July 15, 2024, and instructed the most recent class September 20, 2024.

Ground trainers allow maintenance crews to use a simulated environment to replicate real-world scenarios, sharpen emergency procedures and hone strategic planning.

They simulate aircraft systems and performance in controlled environments, making them critical training tools for maintenance crews. By collaborating and coordinating the development process, the 12th FTD at Luke AFB, Ariz., M1 Contract Support Services, Bugeye Technology, and the 13th FTD were able to create and reproduce the F-35 Lightning II simulator support.

"After about a year of development, we were able to test the throttle and sidesticks with the software," said Lt. Col. Brandon O'Neil, then 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander. "Everything worked great, so we pressed for a full simulator."

The addition of a dedicated aircraft simulator allows maintenance crews to train for various aircraft proficiencies without having to work directly with the F-35, saving \$64,582 in fuel annually. This increases aircraft availability for Nellis' flying missions and helps further prevent damage to the \$110,300,000 aircraft.

"This simulator frees up aircraft availability for Nellis missions," said O'Neil. "Airmen now have the means to train new F-35 technicians on how to use the mission system screens without having to use a real aircraft."

O'Neil explained before integrating the simulators, students' first experience would be a real-world emergency in an aircraft. Now, with one class of two to three students a month,



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Jose T. Tamondong

the instructor can put their students through simulated emergencies and have them respond as necessary while giving them side-by-side guidance.

"With the simulator, we get to become familiar with the aircraft while not dealing with engine noise," said Staff Sgt. Christina-Ann Phillips, a weapons technician assigned to the 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "We're able to hear everything the trainer tells us."

According to Staff Sgt. Wyatt Garrard, a crew chief assigned to the 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and recent student of the ground simulator class, the training he received through the simulator helped him further familiarize himself with the aircraft while also allowing for trial and error.

"The simulator was great for familiarization," said Garrard. "Being able to hit that before going out for the real thing was great because it gave you a good feel for what you're going to see in the jet without taking away a

jet or putting wear and tear on the components."

Integrating the F-35 aircraft maintenance ground trainers allows maintenance Airmen to train in an environment that simulates their assigned aircraft without using valuable resources or deteriorating equipment.

"The simulators provide a hands-on learning environment that completely mimics sitting in the cockpit of today's F-35," said O'Neil. "Aircraft maintenance units no longer need to schedule aircraft for cockpit familiarization. We stop putting wear and tear on components and burning gas for engine runs since annual recertifications can now be accomplished in the simulator instead of an aircraft."

Since their inception over two months ago, the F-35 ground simulators continue to provide Airmen with an effective alternative to live engine runs, preserve F-35 systems, increase aircraft availability, and provide a comprehensive and flexible training tool.



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Jose T. Tamondong

LEFT: From left, Eric Staff, an Air Force Engineering and Technical Service airframe equipment specialist, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jamie Blake, a 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, and Staff Sgt. Erin Davernheim, a 232nd Combat Training Squadron avionics craftsman, conduct an F-35A Lightning II engine run at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2024.



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Jose T. Tamondong

Staff Sgt. Erin Davernheim, left, a 232nd Combat Training Squadron avionics craftsman, listens to Eric Staff, an Air Force Engineering and Technical Service airframe equipment specialist, during an F-35A Lightning II engine run at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2024. The F-35 engine run class evaluates the students' proficiency from emergency procedures to cockpit familiarization.



Air Force photograph by Senior Airman Jordan McCoy

Shawn Whittemore, center, an M1 Support Services F-35 maintenance instructor guides U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Bryan Roberts, an F-35 weapons instructor assigned to the 372nd Training Squadron, 13th Field Training Detachment, through a training simulation at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., July 15, 2024. The addition of a dedicated aircraft simulator allows maintenance crews to train for various aircraft proficiencies without having to work with the F-35 directly.

LEFT: Staff Sgt. Jamie Blake, a 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, Staff Sgt. Erin Davernheim, a 232nd Combat Training Squadron avionics craftsman, and Eric Staff, an Air Force Engineering and Technical Service airframe equipment specialist, conduct an F-35A Lightning II engine run at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2024. This is the first engine run on an aircraft since the 13th Field Training Detachment introduced the F-35 aircraft maintenance ground trainers to their F-35 engine run class in July 15, 2024.

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Arizona Air Guard Defenders return from Kuwait deployment

by Senior Airman Guadalupe Beltran
Morris ANGB, Ariz.

More than a dozen Airmen from the 162nd Wing Security Forces Squadron returned home after a six-month deployment to Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, where they supported combat power of joint and coalition forces in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility.

The 162nd Wing SFS Defenders provided vital base defense operations during their deployment. They ensured



U.S. Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Emilio Verduzco, a Defender assigned to the 162nd Wing Security Forces Squadron is welcomed home by family at Tucson, Ariz., Oct. 13, 2024

the safety and security of more than 3,000 coalition forces and other country nationals and provided flight-line security on an active runway, safeguarding multiple airframes.

Defenders were equipped with tactical vehicle certifications, extensive training in heavy weapons and multiple small arms qualifications.

"We are very proud of every member of this team," said Chief Master Sgt. Dion Hawkins, 162nd Wing SFS senior enlisted leader. "Our noncommissioned officers performed extraordinarily well, outpacing some of their active-duty counterparts. Leading flights and shifts of more than 30 Total Force Defenders, demonstrating a high level of confidence in their leadership abilities."

In addition to their ongoing defensive roles, Defenders vetted hundreds of OCNs, personnel and vehicles daily, facilitating base access.

"Our Defenders rose to the challenge, operating in a dynamic and often high-stakes environment," Hawkins said. "Their commitment to excellence ensured that our coalition partners and aircraft remained secure and operational."

By maintaining a strong presence and leading effective operations, Defenders



Air National Guard photographs by Senior Airman Guadalupe Beltran

U.S. Air National Guard Lt. Col. Jason Gonzales, 162nd Wing Security Forces Squadron commander welcomes an Airman returning from deployment in Tucson, Ariz., Oct. 13, 2024. The 162nd Wing Defenders returned home following a six month deployment supporting more than 4,000 joint and 8,500 coalition forces in the U.S. Central Command Area Of Responsibility.

demonstrated the U.S. commitment to its allies. This deployment also provided the opportunity for personal and professional growth.

"The return of our Defenders marks not only a squadron success but personal triumphs as well," said Hawkins. "All but one of our Defenders were first-time deployers, a testament to their courage and dedication. Their experience and professionalism were instrumental in navigating the complexities of this deployment."

While Defenders were deployed, many of their loved ones took on dual roles, managing household and family responsibilities. Now that the deployment is complete, Defenders will take time to acclimate, reconnect and reintegrate with their families at home.

"Their unwavering dedication and commitment have set a high standard for all," Hawkins said. "They exemplify what it means to be a lethal, multifaceted and adaptable mission-ready Airman."

Security Forces Defenders are part of the largest career field in the Air Force. Defenders are skilled in law enforcement and base defense and safeguard critical assets in combat zones and at home. Perfecting these skills enables the 162nd Wing to provide mission-ready Airmen to protect the people, property and resources of the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy and coalition partners.

Air Force Special Operations Command activates the 11th Air Task Force

by 355th Wing Public Affairs
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

Air Force Special Operations Command held an Assumption of Command ceremony for the 11th Air Task Force here on Oct. 8, 2024. The ceremony, presided over by Maj. Gen. Justin Hoffman, AFSOC deputy commander, marked the official activation,

ATFs, which replace the Expeditionary Air Base model, are the next evolution of the Air Force's progress toward the Deployable Combat Wing and a significant milestone in the Air Force's journey toward modernization and readiness to ensure and maintain a competitive advantage over the pacing challenge.

"The typical timeline for activation [of a unit] is often on the order of a couple or even several years. Yet, here we are after only a few months," said Col. Brett Cassidy, 11th ATF commander. "Our rapid activation represents Airmen aggressively driving forward the vision of our leadership."

Airmen assigned to the ATF will follow the Air Force's Force

Generation cycle to deploy as units of action in the coming years. This model will allow the unit of action to train as a team to improve unit readiness and help leadership clearly articulate Air Force capacity and risk to the joint force.

"Our service has realized that crowdsourcing Airmen from multitudes of bases is not sufficient to building winning teams to defend our nation," said Hoffman. "That's why the deliberate and predictable nature of the AFFORGEN cycle is built into the ATF concept."

The AFFORGEN cycle is built to enable Airmen to train and exercise together before being operationally employed together as part of a team. While the implementation differs depending on the mission of each Major Command, the goal is to achieve a common lexicon, more individual predictability, and greater alignment of readiness generating activities such as large-scale exercises across the Air Force.

"ATFs are the future of successful and cohesive deployments to win in Great Power Competition," said Chief Master



Air Force photographs by Airman 1st Class Jasmyne Bridgers-Matos

Maj. Gen. Justin Hoffman, left, Air Force Special Operations Command deputy commander, and Col. Brett Cassidy, right, 11th Air Task Force commander, depart the 11th ATF activation and assumption of command ceremony at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., Oct. 8, 2024. The 11th ATF will serve as one of six of the Air Force's units of action available to meet global combatant command requirements.

Sgt. Sharreen Taylor, 11th ATF command chief. "By building a tight-knit unit with a strong sense of connection and dedication to the mission we are prepared to take on any challenge we encounter, together."

The 11th ATF, along with ATFs activated at five other locations identified by the Air Force, will serve as experimentation platforms that will help refine the rotational force presenta-

tion model while also providing lessons which can improve the combat wing structure.

"Nowhere in the Air Force will you find a better integrated group of Airmen working across major command lines to realize a shared vision," said Cassidy. "That integration is further enabled by the incredible support from the local community here in Tucson."

ATFs are part of the Depart-



The Davis-Monthan Base Honor Guard prepares to post the colors during the 11th Air Task Force activation and assumption of command ceremony at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., Oct. 8, 2024. The base honor guard performs at a variety of base events including retirements, change of command ceremonies and other events.

ment of the Air Force's plan to implement major changes centered on how the Air Force develops people, generates readiness, projects power, and develops integrated capabilities in today's strategic environment.

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563RD PERSONNEL RECOVERY TASK FORCE RESCUES HELENE SURVIVORS

By Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves
McGhee Tyson ANGB, Tenn.

Airmen mobilized as the 41st Expeditionary Rescue Squadron and 563rd Personnel Recovery Task Force, from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., rescued four injured civilians, one critically injured, during search and rescue efforts in North Carolina, Oct. 5, 2024.

In support of a FEMA mission assignment, the 563d PRTF has been conducting search and rescue operations over various locations in affected areas of North Carolina, as part of the U.S. Northern Command and Air Forces Northern, Defense Support of Civil Authorities disaster relief mission.

“The PRTF continues to honor our legacy of ‘That Others May Live,’” said Lt. Col. Jaymes Hines, 563rd PRTF commander. “We postured as forward as possible and immediately began our alert [being on-call] after the storm cleared.

We remain ready to support

our Nation, our communities, our fellow Americans. We will be here as long as there are isolated or injured North Carolinians who require immediate search and rescue.”

This was the first rescue for the U.S. Air Force supporting North Carolina and FEMA’s response to Hurricane Helene. The combined efforts of the PRTF’s Surface Response

Team, Guardian 41 and the HH-60W airborne team units responded within 10 minutes of notification in the mountains of North Carolina — where local emergency services were unable to access.

The patients were transported via two HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopters to Johnson Medical Center, in Johnson City, Tenn.



Air Force photograph by Senior Airman Andrew Garavit

U.S. Air Force pararescuemen assigned to the 48th Rescue Squadron, forward deployed as the 563rd Personal Recovery Task Force, make contact with local civilians over various locations in North Carolina, Oct. 4, 2024, in support of the U.S. Northern Command and Air Forces Northern, Defense Support of Civil Authorities Disaster Relief mission. The 563rd PRTF provided the necessary support to aid local authorities following natural disasters when directed and approved by the Secretary of Defense.



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

LEFT: Airmen assigned to the 55th Rescue Squadron, forward deployed as the 563rd Personnel Recovery Task Force, fly an HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopter over various locations in Tennessee, Oct. 2, 2024, in support of the U.S. Northern Command and Air Forces Northern, Defense Support of Civil Authorities Disaster Relief mission. Rescue assets from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., practiced rescue and recovery operations to serve residents impacted by Hurricane Helene.



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

Airmen assigned to the 48th Rescue Squadron, forward deployed as the 563rd Personnel Recovery Task Force, climb a rope ladder into an HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopter in Tennessee, Oct. 2, 2024, in support of the U.S. Northern Command and Air Forces Northern, Defense Support of Civil Authorities Disaster Relief mission. The Department of Defense has unique capabilities, including an ability to deploy on short notice into austere environments, while providing resources that are not readily available in other federal agencies or the private sector. (Note this photo has been altered for security purposes by blurring out facial identification.)



Air Force photograph by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

A U.S. Air Force rescue team assigned to the 55th Rescue Squadron and 48th Rescue Squadron, forward deployed as the 563rd Personnel Recovery Task Force, pioneer the post Hurricane Helene destruction in North Carolina, Oct. 4, 2024, in support of the U.S. Northern Command and Air Forces Northern, Defense Support of Civil Authorities Disaster Relief mission. Both air and ground crews searched approximately 2,400 miles.

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FEATURING NBT COMPANY ARTIST BETSY LUCAS. PHOTO BY BILL HUGHES.

Weddings, sound barriers and special days

by Bob Alvis
special to Aerotech News

Some special dates in aviation history get lost in the passage of time and sometimes when they involve a specific regional program, the dates are harder to remember for current generations.

Recently, a couple things happened that made me take a second look at a date that for some reason had never clicked in my memory bank but discovering it now make it much sweeter in my old age.

On Oct. 14, 2024, two friends of mine, Renee and Steve, were married at the Edwards Flight Test Museum. And they timed the ceremony down to the moment when Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier 77 years earlier in his Bell X-1 at 10:20 a.m. It was fun to see them tie the knot and make their wedding day reflect a historical date in Edwards' history.

After leaving the ceremony and heading home, I got to thinking about my dad and his involvement in the XB-70 in the 1960s.

At home, I went looking for my dad in some old Air Force footage of the B-70 program that I knew was out there.

In report Number 16, I found my treasure — my dad is seen in several clips working around the Valkyrie out on the flight line.

The 24 minutes of footage covered the historic flight were the B-70 reached Mach 3 for the first and last time in its flight test career. Watching it and listening to the cockpit recordings, it's a special moment when

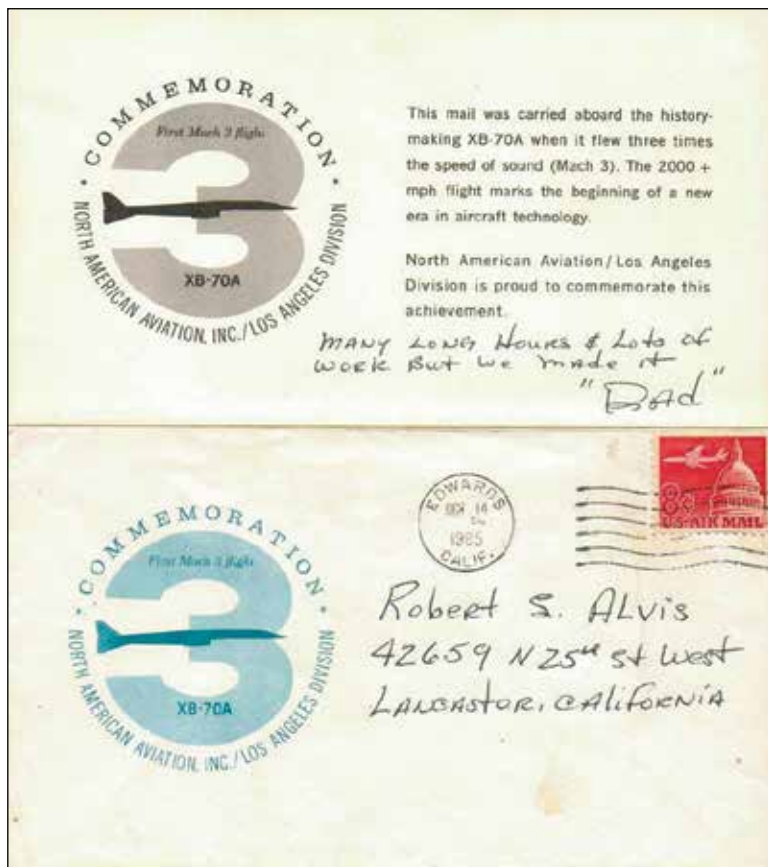
test pilot Al White announces to the support teams that the "big white bird" was cruising along at Mach 3. It was a monumental day for North American and the thousands of men and women who made the flight possible and helped to achieve what many thought was unachievable.

A nagging in my soul made me wonder what date that Mach 3 number and historic milestone was reached. When the narrator in the Air Force film gave the date and time — it all hit me. Oct. 14, 1965, at 10:06 in the morning, the largest and fastest bomber of all time reached Mach 3, 17 years after Chuck punched a hole in the Mach one



Air Force photograph

Dad and the team, September 1964, at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, Calif.



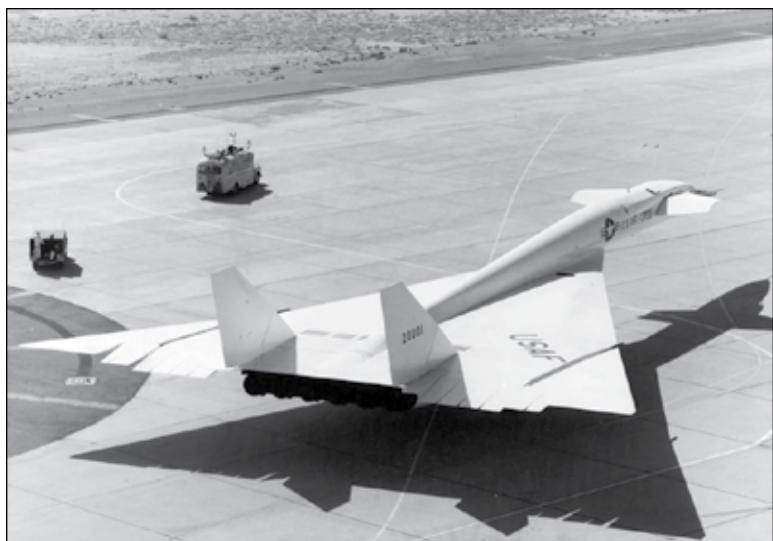
Photograph by Bob Alvis

The letter to me from my dad.



Photograph by Bob Alvis

The author's son, Garrett, at the XB-70 Valkyrie static display at the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio.



Air Force photograph

The XB-70 Valkyrie taxiing out towards the runway for a test flight.

barrier — aviation history was made again on this day.

Mach 3: Was it planned to happen at this time to mark the date? Or was it just a coincidence? I'm sure there are still people out there, or words written, that may answer these questions, but for me I'm just thankful at my age to still be around to ponder these questions!

One aspect of this story had me looking for some more verification, and I found in a small gift to me from my dad that meant the world to me. My dad took so much pride in whatever project he was involved with.

At some point leading up to that Mach 3 flight, a program of recording the date and celebrating the achievement was hatched and my dad picked up an envelope with a special card and wrote a little note on it to his 10-year old son, sealed it and addressed it to me and put it in with all the other letters that employees had filled out to be flown on that historic flight. Looking at it today, that postmark shares all the data one would need to make the connection to history.

Funny when I think about it, I bet all those letters and mine achieved something most mail deliveries never achieve and that's moving along to their destination at three times the speed of sound in a massive bomber.

The XB-70 program held a special place in my family's hearts. It was a special time in our lives and for hundreds more families here in the Antelope Valley. It was a one-in-a-million program futuristic in its looks

and design, that helped fuel many people's passion, and who looked at it as the first step to more advanced aircraft designs and technologies in the future.

Some years ago, when I was back in Dayton, Ohio, at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force with my son, we stood under the sole surviving XB-70, leaning on the front landing gear. It wasn't long until I had a small group of people listening to me tell the story of my dad, the flights and the tragedies, knowing full well that it was really my dad channeling his stories through me for everyone to hear.

From Mach One to Mach 3, and now the date when two of my friends tied the knot, Oct. 14 will always be the date where cool things took flight, made us smile, and added a few more memories in our history books! I wonder what Oct. 14 will hold for us in the future. Stay tuned!

Until next time, Bob out ...

ADVERTISEMENT OF SALE

Notice is hereby given that the Undersigned intends to sell the personal property described below to enforce a lien imposed on said property pursuant to sections 21700-21716 of the California Business & Professions code. Section 2328 of the UCC, Section 535 of the Penal Code, provisions of the Civil Code.

The Undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding at www.storage-treasures.com to end, **November 30, 2024 at 10:00 am** on the premises where said property has been stored & which are located at: **Storelocal Challenger Way, 42133 Challenger Way Lancaster, CA 93535 County of Los Angeles, State of California.**

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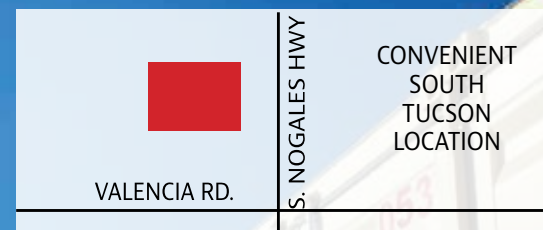


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NOTICE OF PUBLIC LIEN SALES
Business & Professional Code Section 21700-21707

NOTICE OF PUBLIC LIEN SALES
Business & Professional Code Section 21700-21707

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned that a public lien sale of the following described personal property will be held at the hours of **12 noon on the 11th of December 2024** or thereafter. The auction is being held at **www.selfstorageauction.com** by competitive bid. The property is stored by **Nova Storage located 16488 Adelanto Rd. Adelanto, CA 92301.**

The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

D30 Smith, Yohnnie
F67 Arzate, Marleni
E39 Castrellon, Ana

Date: November 21st, 2024 Signed NOVA STORAGE
This notice is given in accordance with the provisions of section 21700 et seq. of Business & Professional Code of the Sate of California. The owner reserves the right to bid at the sale. All purchased goods are sold "As Is" and must be paid for and removed at the time of sale. Sales subject to prior cancellation in the event of settlement between owner & obligated party. Auctioneer: Nova Storage

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

0639 DeRoman, Paulino
184A De La Fuente, Roland
0225 Vasquez, Crystalynn
0265 Martinez, Joe
0241 Gutierrez, Ramon
0312 Castro, Patricia
1098 Marquez, Donato

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

D213 Stinson, Nicole
E406 Carson, Vincent
E418 Rudnick, Frederick
D177 Powell, Terrence BPG Entertainment LLC
F541 Lawrence, Mechelle

Date: November 21st, 2024 Signed NOVA STORAGE

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

1035 Meza Hernandez, Maribel
1134 Strode, Anthony
1239 Garcia, Ignacio
4049 Aleman, Veronica
6172 Medina, Fabiola
6117 Gutierrez, Maria L
3019 Hernandez, Hector
1116 Solorio, Erica
4311 Peraza, Valerie
5022 Akiyama, Glen
2003 Martinez, Ryan Rubicon
And Moving Storage
2002 Martinez, Ryan Rubicon
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5074 Robles, Annie

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

K03 Bose-Travis, Malyk Jahee
T27 Martinez Miguel, Marva
P20 Washington, Debra
V08 Ourega Mahi, Veronique
U09 James, Christine
H09 Trotman, R Shawn Ragus Group LLC
T14 Jordan, Ricquel
F07 Castro, Francisco
W06 Porcayo, Maria
M28 Salazar, Shiann

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

D423 Rosales, Juan
B133 Burleson, Domiunique
A036 Andy, Benson
H197 Mercado, Marisol
E619 Vazquez, Josue
A029 Villavicencio, Ramses
D480 Davis, Tramell
F783 Velasquez Tejada, Sergio
A045 Garcia, Yeison
A062 Garcia, Yeison
B097 Langston, Luther
F685 Gomez, Johana

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

0474B Gray, Amanda
0470A Velasquez, Pablo
0030 Velez, Marcela
2327 Cintron, Amado
P4004 Machuca, Rosa
2421 Jones, Ajani
2423 Payne, Marcel
0462 Flores, Mark
2430 Ojeda, Jose R
2330 Guzman, Rosa Angelica
0575 Garcia, Esteban
2257 Prado, Chris
0194 Aguilera, Hector
0550 Mendoza, Gizelle
1203 Tanuvasa, Andrea

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

0284 Feshi, Muhamad
0406 Luna Antonio, Jonathan
0643 Lopez, Leonor
0703 Perez, Mariela
0145 Dorado, Cristina Rae
3111 Ennis, Regina
0139 Johnson, Lyell

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