

# Commander's Call Topics



**May 27, 2011**

## **Memorial Day Message**

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force and their Families:

As we pause this Memorial Day to honor those who have died in service of our great Nation, it is also useful to reflect on what this day of remembrance reveals about the character of our Nation and its people. History records that Major General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, formally designated May 30th, 1868 as a day to decorate the graves of the fallen.

History also suggests, however, that long before this formal decree, the people of several towns and cities organized local efforts to decorate service members' graves, demonstrating the deeply personal and heartfelt gratitude that Americans express for those who serve-and for those who sacrificed. Since its origin, Memorial Day has been an opportunity to pause and reflect on the sacrifices of the more than one million Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen who have made the ultimate sacrifice to secure our freedoms.

Let us also not forget those who are still counted among the missing, including over 1,600 from action in Vietnam, 8,000 in Korea, and well over 73,000 in the Second World War. We also demonstrate America's character through our ceaseless efforts to account for each of them, with gratitude for their sacrifices and that of their families. No other nation in history has dedicated as much care, effort, and expense as we have to find our missing comrades and bring them home with the honor that they deserve. And, thanks to our staunch determination, 80 formerly missing service members-including 31 Airmen-have been returned to their families since January 2010.

Now that these 80 heroes have returned home, grateful Americans can decorate their graves on Memorial Day, too, along with those of many others who sacrificed all. This year, as we observe Memorial Day, let us renew not only our solemn gratitude for their sacrifice; let us also renew our thankfulness for having the privilege to serve such an exceptional Nation. Your sacrifices, and those of your families, have earned America's respect. Our proud Nation is truly grateful for your service.

*Michael Donley, Secretary of the Air Force*

*Gen. Norton Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff*

## FROM AIR FORCE SENIOR LEADERS

### [Conaton speaks on AF biomass fuel use at open house](#)

Undersecretary of the Air Force Erin Conaton spoke during the 2011 Joint Service Open House at Joint Base Andrews, Md., about the milestone of the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds flight demonstration team's first use of a biomass fuel blend. The Air Force has a vested interest in the use of biofuels since it's the largest user of energy in the Department of Defense.

## CURRENT ISSUES

### [Experts discuss future long-range strike bomber requirements](#)

More than 30 military and civilian strategic air power experts discussed ideas for a new long-range strike bomber. The Bomber Advisory Group examined past and current global strike success stories and strategic air power's role in the 21st century.

### [Gates: Defense cuts must be prioritized, strategic](#)

In delivering his last major policy speech during his tenure, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates laid out the department's cost saving initiatives over the past few years, and outlined what he expects from a comprehensive review launched last week. Secretary Gates said the review should ensure that future spending decisions are focused on priorities, strategy and risks, and are not simply a math and accounting exercise.

## PERSONNEL ISSUES

### [Red Cross eases access to emergency communication services](#)

Beginning June 13, service members and their families can use one toll-free number, 877-272-7337, to send an urgent message to a service member. Through this number, [Red Cross](#) emergency communications services can put service members in touch with their families following the death or serious illness of an immediate family member, the birth of a service member's child or grandchild, or when a family faces other emergencies. Additional Red Cross services, such as case management and emergency financial assistance, are also available.

### [Air Force Marathon registration nearing capacity](#)

Time and space are running out for people interested in running the Air Force Marathon Sept. 17. The marathon is 80 percent full and the remaining slots are selling fast. Price increases are also set to go into effect June 2 for late registrations. To register, visit [www.usafmarathon.com](http://www.usafmarathon.com).

### [Officials seek nominations for 2011 GEICO awards](#)

The annual GEICO Military Service Awards recognize enlisted service members from all military service branches, active duty, Guard and Reserve, for their contributions to military and civilian communities. The three award categories are drug and alcohol abuse prevention; fire safety and fire prevention; and traffic safety and accident prevention. The accident prevention category applies specifically to vehicle or motorcycle related accomplishments. For more information, visit the [Air Force personnel services](#) website.

## CIVILIAN

### [Civilian career development webcasts continue May 26, June 21](#)

Webcasts designed to help civilian Airmen plan and manage their careers will be held May 26 for GS-12 and GS-13 civilians, and June 21 for GS-7 through GS-11 civilians. Webcast topics will include how to plan for the next job, how education affects careers, and more. To join the webcast, go to <https://connect.dco.dod.mil/dpi>.

## FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

### [Program offers free museum visits](#)

Service members and their families can visit a wide array of museums for free from Memorial Day through Labor Day, courtesy of the second annual [Blue Star Museums program](#). The program is available to active-duty military and their immediate family members -- military ID holder and up to five immediate family members. Active-duty National Guard and Reserve members also are eligible.

### **[Air Force Central Ticket Program offers discounts to Airmen, families](#)**

Discount tickets for nationwide attractions and recreational events are available for purchase at installation force support Information, Tickets and Travel offices. For more information on vacation destinations and other recreational activities, visit the base ITT office or go online to [www.aftavelonline.com](http://www.aftavelonline.com).

### **[Education is key in fight against PTSD](#)**

Stemming the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, requires awareness, education and recognizing its symptoms, such as substance abuse, talks of suicide and depression. Taking action doesn't necessarily call for a major intervention. Sometimes reaching out and talking to someone can put that person on the right path to get the necessary help. For more information, visit the website for the [Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury](#).

## **FINANCE**

### **[myPay goes mobile](#)**

To begin using myPay on a mobile device, authorized myPay customers must go to <https://mypay.dfas.mil> on their smartphone or other mobile device's web browser. Once there, customers can log in to myPay using the same login identification and password they use on their computer.

### **[VA Announces Disaster Assistance After Tornado Outbreaks](#)**

Special disaster assistance may be available to veterans with [VA-guaranteed home loans](#) who have been affected by recent tornados. Veterans should contact their insurance company as soon as possible to file claims for losses. At the same time, they need to contact their mortgage companies to let them know their circumstances. Veterans living in designated disaster areas may receive mortgage assistance through their loan servicers.

## **RESOURCES**

### ***AF.mil***

<http://www.af.mil>

### ***Airman magazine***

<http://www.airmanonline.af.mil/>

### ***Air Force Community***

<http://www.afcommunity.af.mil/>

### ***Air Force Outreach***

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil/>

### ***Military OneSource***

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

### ***Military HOMEFRONT***

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

### ***Air Force Personnel Center***

<https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/home>  
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

### ***Air Reserve Personnel Center***

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/>

### ***Department of Defense***

<http://www.defense.gov>

### ***Department of Defense News***

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

**TRICARE**

<http://www.tricare.mil>

**U.S. Government Web site**

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

**Employment Opportunities**

[www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)

[www.nafjobs.org](http://www.nafjobs.org)

## **AIR FORCE HERITAGE TO HORIZONS**

### **This Week in Air Force History**

**May 28, 1959** – Monkeys Able and Baker are recovered alive from the Atlantic Ocean near Antigua Island after a flight to an altitude of 300 miles in the nose cone of a Jupiter missile launched from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

**June 1, 1960** – Grace A. Peterson became the first female chief master sergeant.

**June 1, 1967** – U.S. Air Force crews flew two HH-3E helicopters nonstop from New York to Paris in 30 hours, 46 minutes and 10 seconds with nine air refuelings.

**June 1, 1992** – Military Airlift Command, Tactical Air Command and Strategic Air Command stood down and Air Combat Command and Air Mobility Command stood up.

**June 2, 1949** – Gen. Henry H. Arnold was given the permanent rank of General of the Air Force.

**June 2, 1991** – Mount Pinatubo erupted on the island of Luzon, the Philippines, covering Clark Air Base and two other U.S. military bases with two feet of volcanic ash.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>.

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