

Commander's Call Topics



Nov. 20, 2012

["There is no place for sexual assault in our Air Force. When it comes to combating this challenge, every Airman is either part of the solution or part of the problem."](#) -- Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley, Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Mark A. Welsh III and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Roy issued a tri-signature "Letter to Airmen" Nov. 16.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Tyndall resumes F-22 flying operations](#)

The 325th Fighter Wing resumed normal flight operations as the Wing Commander, Col. David Graff, flew one of the first F-22 Raptor missions Nov. 19 approximately 7:45 a.m.

[F-35 begins integration phase of weapons testing](#)

The Joint Strike Fighter began the integration phase of weapons testing when the F-35A Conventional Takeoff and Landing aircraft successfully completed the first in-flight test with an AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile.

[8th EAMS Airmen save aircraft from enemy mortars](#)

A seven-man mission recovery team assigned to the 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron forward deployed to a remote forward operating base in Afghanistan to repair and recover a downed C-17 Globemaster III.

[Academy firefighters claim medals at world championships](#)

U.S. Air Force Academy firefighters took gold, silver and bronze medals Nov. 17 at the World Firefighter Combat Challenge XXI here.

[EOD tech earns Silver Star](#)

An Air Commando from the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron received a Silver Star during a ceremony at the Pentagon Nov. 14.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Air Force meets recruiting goal for fiscal 2012](#)

All four active-duty services and five of the six reserve components met or exceeded their recruiting goals for fiscal 2012, officials announced Nov. 19.

► FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Safety paramount as F-22 investigation continues](#)

The pilot of a F-22 Raptor, assigned to the 43rd Fighter Squadron, safely ejected as the jet crashed Nov. 15 around 3:30 p.m. on Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., one-quarter mile east of the drone runway.

► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY

[Airman awarded \\$6K through IDEA program](#)

A \$6,275 check was presented to Staff Sgt. Jared Weddle, a 2nd Maintenance Squadron communications navigations mission system craftsman.

► RESOURCES

AF.mil

<http://www.af.mil>

Airman magazine

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

Air Force Outreach

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

Military OneSource

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

Military HOMEFRONT

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

Air Force Personnel Center

<https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil>

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

Air Reserve Personnel Center

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

Department of Defense News

<http://www.defense.gov>

Department of Veterans Affairs

<http://www.va.gov>

TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.mil>

U.S. Government Website

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

Employment Opportunities

www.usajobs.com

www.nafjobs.org

Air Force Association

Scholarships

[http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/scholars.a
sp](http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/scholars.asp)

Air Force Safety Center

www.afsec.af.mil

November is Native American History Month

“As the first people to live on the land we all cherish, American Indians and Alaska Natives have profoundly shaped our country's character and our cultural heritage. Today, Native Americans are leaders in every aspect of our society -- from the classroom, to the boardroom, to the battlefield. This month, we celebrate and honor the many ways American Indians and Alaska Natives have enriched our Nation, and we renew our commitment to respecting each tribe's identity while ensuring equal opportunity to pursue the American dream.”

This is the first paragraph of the Presidential Proclamation designating November 2012 as National Native American Heritage Month. Fittingly, the day after Thanksgiving, November 23rd, is National Native American Heritage Day.

Although the nation's population of American Indians and Alaska Natives numbers only 5.1 million — or 1.6 percent of the total population — their numbers have increased by 1.1 million since the 2000 Census, according to the 2011 American Community Survey. Department of Defense numbers show an even smaller percentage of AIAN population among all Air Force components: Among those on active duty, 0.6 percent is AIAN; in the Reserve, 0.5 percent; and in the Air National Guard, 0.7 percent.

Small population statistics cannot hamper individual spirit, nor does it deny the opportunity to succeed and impact other Airmen and one's fellow citizens. Two very different examples of this show the range of talent within the AIAN community.

Gayle Blue-Keyes, director of the Information Protection Office at the U.S. Air Force Academy, was honored this month with the Society of the American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) Meritorious Service Award. The award honors military members and DOD civilian employees who support the DOD global conflict and humanitarian missions. Ms. Blue-Keyes' leadership and expertise shaped security policies and fostered an inclusive work environment. She chaired and hosted the first-ever Air Force Academy Air Force Security Advisory Council, working to engage all mission partners and the administrative assistant to the secretary of the Air Force, ensuring all remained aware of current information protection challenges. Additionally, Ms. Blue-Keyes partnered with the Academy commandant to streamline the top-secret clearance application process for more than 1,100 future second lieutenants. She assisted the undersecretary of defense for intelligence in a premier of the first security-credentialing program, shaping certification for thousands of DOD security professionals. An advocate of cross-cultural understanding, Ms. Blue-Keyes supports Anishinaabe youth programs and works to increase Academy understanding of Anishinaabe values and beliefs.

A more visible example of the Airman spirit of service is Ben Nighthorse Campbell, who served his country as a U.S. Representative (1987-93) and as U.S. Senator (1993-2005), where he chaired the Committee on Indian Affairs. He also represented the U.S. in the 1964 Olympic Games (judo) in Tokyo. He served in the Air Force in Korea, 1951-54.

The AIAN population may be small in numbers, but they stand tall among us when that same Presidential Proclamation calls upon all Americans to “move forward in the spirit of mutual understanding and mutual trust, confident that our challenges can be met and that our shared future is bright.”

-- Martha Lockwood
Chief, Information Products, Defense Media Activity

Pardon the fowl

It's that life-and-death time of year, again. It's the time when our Commander-in-Chief invokes the power of the presidential pardon and spares the life of not just one—but two!—turkeys, presented to him by the National Turkey Federation, a non-profit information source for the \$14-billion turkey industry serving consumers, food professionals and the media.

Although most of the ceremony is tongue-in-cheek, the President's pre-pardoning remarks are more in keeping with our annual day of gratitude. In the past, Americans have been asked to remember those who are less fortunate and to especially keep in mind those who cannot spend this holiday with their family. It is tradition for the President to announce his deep personal gratitude, especially, for the service men and women who are far from home, serving our nation.

There are 114.7 million households in this country, according to the U. S. Census Bureau, and each has the potential to be a gathering place for people to celebrate Thanksgiving. The Census Bureau also reminds us that we are what we eat with these numbers: There are 64,380 grocery stores in the United States, 4,030 baked goods stores and 2,979 fruit and vegetable markets. On an annual basis, they are the most likely retail sources for those iconic, if individual, preferences that make the day for us: 768 million pounds of cranberries, 2.7 billion pounds of sweet potatoes, 1.1 billion pounds of pumpkin, and the 254 million turkeys raised throughout the year.

The day isn't just about the food, though. Turkey lore and urban legend about the holiday and its celebrated bird abound. There's a historical disagreement about where the first Thanksgiving dinner was served and when. Some say 1621, served by the Pilgrims, while others credit Virginia's Jamestown settlers a few years earlier. There's no doubt, however, that it is a feast filled with tradition: When Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin sat down to their first meal on the moon, their ready-to-eat food packets contained turkey and all the trimmings.

The origination of the annual turkey pardon is also up for debate. Some say it was Tad Lincoln who implored his father (the president who first proclaimed the national holiday in 1863) to spare the turkey by pointing out that it was a living thing and worthy of a life. Others say it was the Roosevelt children who bonded with the would-be feast, and tearfully asked their father to grant clemency to their new "pet."

Last year, "Liberty" and "Peace" learned that they were free to gobble another day. This year's pardoned pair, "Cobbler" and "Gobbler," are already appearing on Facebook, to see which will be the star, and which the understudy for the Rose Garden ceremony. The two will live out their new-found freedom at Mount Vernon, the historic home of George Washington. Now that's something to be thankful for!

-- Martha Lockwood

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

Nov. 20, 1963 - The Air Force accepted the first two F-4C fighters. They went to 4453rd Combat Crew Training Wing at MacDill AFB, Fla.

Nov. 21, 1994 - Air Force and NATO aircraft bombed Serb targets to retaliate for a Serbian attack on Bihac. The raid was the largest NATO operation to date.

Nov. 22, 1952 - While leading a flight of four F-80s against enemy gun positions in Korea, [Maj. Charles J. Loring](#) deliberately crashed his damaged aircraft into enemy gun emplacements. For that sacrifice, he earned the Medal of Honor.

Nov. 23, 2002 - The F/A-22 Raptor accomplished its first guided AIM-9M Sidewinder launch at 24,000 feet over the White Sands Missile Range at Mach 1.4. The AIM-9 passed within lethal range of a QF-4 drone flying at Mach 1.

Nov. 24, 1975 - A C-141 crew from Travis AFB, Calif., airlifted 100 penguins from McMurdo Station, Antarctica, to Miramar, Calif.

Nov. 25, 1956 - TSgt. Richard J. Patton made the first successful polar parachute jump when he bailed out of a C-124 Globemaster from 1,500 feet at the South Pole.

Nov. 26, 1943 - When a B-17 suffered an engine failure on the way to the target in Germany, enemy fighters repeatedly attacked the aircraft. TSgt. Maurice V. Henry manned his guns, destroying one and damaging another. An incendiary shell hit the aircraft, and Henry put out the fire. Later, when the B-17 crashed in the English Channel, Henry helped the other crewmen from the sinking craft with disregard for his own safety. When he was last seen, he was still grasping the emergency radio, calling for rescue. For his courage, Henry received the Distinguished Flying Cross posthumously.

Nov. 26, 1968 - While flying a UH-1F helicopter, [1st Lt. James P. Fleming](#) twice exposed his aircraft to intense hostile fire while rescuing a special forces reconnaissance patrol near Due Co, Vietnam. He later received the Medal of Honor for his heroic action.

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

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