

# Commander's Call Topics



July 3, 2013

“Diligence is the mother of good luck.”

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

Author, printer, political theorist, postmaster, inventor, Founding Father

Safety first  
On the Fourth of July!  
Stay safe with [these tips](#) from  
the Consumer Product Safety  
Commission.

## Furloughed Fireworks for Fourth

From our country's earliest times, The Fourth of July has meant celebrating with fireworks. It was only during the direst times, such as World War II, when rationing across the country curtailed the manufacture, importation and use of fireworks of any kind, that the United States' birthday was not celebrated with fireworks.

This year, it's not the material cost of the fireworks that is causing a shortage of shows. The major cost, by a factor of three, is the personnel overtime costs of providing security, safety, logistics and transportation support.

This begs the question: "What's the Fourth of July without fireworks?" According to a variety of bases throughout the country, the answer is "Plenty!"

The 20<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing of Shaw AFB, S.C., is combining efforts with the City of Sumter to host the "Jammin' July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration" at a park in Sumter. While admission is free, food and beverages are available for purchase. The AF Heritage Band, The Blue Aces, will provide musical accompaniment for a city-sponsored fireworks grand finale. The base, itself, plans a much smaller "Freedom Bash" on July 3<sup>rd</sup> with face painting, bounce houses and castles, and pool games.

Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst's Facebook page shows many entries discussing their canceled fireworks. While some bemoan the hit to morale, many others are encouraging families to start new traditions like

barbecues and block parties. Other entries share nearby locations where fireworks will be displayed. Still others express gratitude to be living in a country where freedom is celebrated every day.

Joint base Pearl Harbor-Hickham is scaling back their celebration and canceling this year's fireworks display. Instead, there is a daytime celebration that will feature the Pacific Fleet Band and the Air Force Band of the Pacific.

For people in the Hampton Roads/Williamsburg/Newport News area, the Air Force Heritage Band performances will be the cornerstone of [celebrations](#) throughout the week, as well as throughout the summer. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, the band gets star billing, performing at Victory Landing Park, Newport News, Va., immediately prior to the city's "Stars in the Sky" fireworks show and celebration.

Scaled down, scaled back and canceled fireworks shows will cause many of us to re-think our holiday plans. Behavior scientists will tell us that while tradition is the bedrock of a community, it's good for individuals to challenge the "way we've always done it."

And for those who just can't become accustomed to the Fourth without fireworks, there's always the [finale of the Air Force Academy's 2011 fireworks show](#) on YouTube.

Happy 237<sup>th</sup> Birthday, America!

### ► TRENDING ...

*"On this Fourth of July, as Americans around the world gather to celebrate with families and loved ones, [let us remember](#) our service members who have fallen in battle." – Acting Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning, AF Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III and Chief Master Sgt. of the AF James Cody, in their Independence Day message.*

## ► 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://militaryonesource.af.mil>

### **Military HOMEFRONT**

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod>

### **Air Force Personnel Center**

<https://mypers.af.mil>

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

### **Air Reserve Personnel Center**

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

### **Department of Defense News**

<http://www.defense.gov>

### **Department of Veteran Affairs**

<http://www.va.gov>

### **TRICARE**

<http://www.tricare.mil>

### **U.S. Government Website**

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

### **Employment Opportunities**

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

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

### **Air Force Association**

#### **Scholarships**

<http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/scholars.asp>

### **Air Force Safety Center**

[www.afsec.af.mil](http://www.afsec.af.mil)

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**July 4, 1908:** Scientific American offered the first American air trophy for the first flight of one kilometer. Glenn H. Curtiss won this award at Hammondsport in the June Bug with a 1-minute, 42.5-second flight at 39 MPH. An FAI representative timed and measured the event, and it was the first official test of an airplane made in America.

**July 5, 1974:** The 555 TFS moved without personnel or equipment from Udorn RTAFB to Luke AFB to

become the first F-15 Eagle Squadron in the USAF.

**July 6, 1951:** KOREAN WAR. A 43 AREFS aircrew flew a KB-29M in the first combat air refueling operation. It refueled four RF-80s flying reconnaissance missions over North Korea.

**July 7, 1914:** Dr. Robert H. Goddard, the “father of American rocketry,” received a US patent for a two-stage solid-fuel rocket. It was the first of 69 patents he received for inventions.

**July 8, 1944:** Lt Col Clifford Heflin flew his C-47 on the first mission into France to rescue airmen who had parachuted behind enemy lines.

**July 9, 1959:** The last C-45 aircraft were phased out of TAC.

**July 10, 2002:** A C-5 from the 436AW left Dover AFB for Kabul, Afghanistan, with 13,115 pounds of school supplies collected by children from 58 American schools.

## ► CURRENT ISSUES

### [SecDef: DOD welcomes Supreme Court decision](#)

Defense Department officials will move forward in making benefits available to all military spouses, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said today in a statement issued after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, which had prevented federal agencies from offering all of the same benefits to spouses in same-sex married couples that they provide to other spouses.

### [Air Force announces preferred alternative for security forces regional training center consolidation](#)

Air Force officials announced June 27 that Fort Bliss, Texas, was chosen as the preferred alternative for the Security Forces Ground Combat Training Center while Camp Guernsey, Wyo. is a reasonable alternative.

## ► PERSONNEL ISSUES

### [Voluntary retraining application window closes July 7](#)

Enlisted Airmen in overmanned career fields who want to retrain into an undermanned field have until July 7 to submit their application under Phase I of the fiscal 2014 Noncommissioned Officer Retraining Program, Air Force Personnel Center officials reminded Airmen.

## ► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY

### [B-52s to receive communications upgrade](#)

Installation of a communications system upgrade earmarked for the venerable U.S. Air Force B-52 Stratofortress bomber fleet is scheduled to start here in July.

This issue is being sent early so that all can enjoy the Fourth of July! Commanders Call Topics will resume its regular schedule July 11<sup>th</sup>.

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

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