

Commander's Call Topics



November 6, 2014

*"... to care for him who shall have borne the battle
and for his widow, and his orphan,"*

President Abraham Lincoln
Sixteenth President of the United States
(1809-1865)
Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865

November is
[Military Family
Appreciation Month.](#)

Peace, Honor, Gratitude

It's called Armistice Day (in New Zealand, France, Belgium and Serbia), Remembrance Day (throughout the 53 member states of what was once called the British Commonwealth) and Veterans Day (in the United States and territories), and it is observed by all on November 11, honoring veterans everywhere.

Whether one serves during wartime or peacetime is not the deciding factor in determining if someone is considered a veteran. What matters is that one has served. There are 4.7 million Americans who served in peacetime only, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and they are among those whom we call veterans.

The Gulf War Era started 24 years ago, and it is safe to say that most current active-duty service members have never served during peacetime. Yet, those who served during peacetime, prior to 1990, served in a special way. They kept us battle-ready when there was no specific enemy during an indefinite period of time. For the Air Force, that meant that the peacetime Airmen needed to do far more than maintain the status quo. They actively kept the World's Greatest Air Force ready to fly, fight and win at a moment's notice, never knowing where or when that moment might be.

For some, veteran status was officially recognized after a long wait. The WASPs (Women Airforce Service Pilots), a paramilitary aviation organization of World War II, was formed in 1943 to ferry aircraft wherever they were needed, and the 1,074 WASPs freed up that many male pilots for combat service and duties. The WASPs flew over 60 million miles in every type of military aircraft. Although their service was exclusively a wartime effort, and 38 died in service to their country, they didn't receive veteran status until 1977 – more than 30 years after the end of World War II. They were given the Congressional Gold Medal in 2009.

For others, the word "veteran" is conferred upon them. In many of the jurisdictions that honor their veterans on Remembrance Day, Remembrance Sunday is the prior Sunday. During regular church services, the congregation observes two moments of silence: one in honor of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice; one in honor of those who mourn them. They are called "the honorary veterans."

Veteran's Day: It's about recognizing patriotism and service and saying "Thank you."

*Martha J. Lockwood
Chief, Air Force Information Products*

► TRENDING...

"We have to bridge this generation gap in order to move forward into the future. These new men and women are the leaders of our military, or will be in the future, and we have to understand that ... you have to acknowledge who they are as people, as individuals," said [Chief Master Sgt of the Air Force James A. Cody](#) during the [Global Strike Challenge 2014 Symposium](#).

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

Nov. 6, 1930 - [Edward V. Rickenbacker](#) received the Medal of Honor for his service in World War I. As a pilot with the 94th Aero Squadron, Capt. Rickenbacker became the leading American ace of the war with 24.33 aerial victories.

Nov. 7, 1967 - The last Atlas D in the Air Force inventory launched from Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

Nov. 8, 1968 – Tactical Air Command received the first [AC-119K](#), the latest in a series of multi-weapon attack aircraft.

Nov. 9, 1967 - Ejecting from his F-4C Phantom over North Vietnam, [Capt. Lance P. Sijan](#) evaded capture for more than six weeks. Enemy forces captured him, but the severely weakened and injured Sijan managed to escape. After his recapture and torture, he contracted pneumonia and died. He received the **Medal of Honor** posthumously.

Nov. 10, 1988 - The Pentagon announced the existence of the Lockheed F-117A Stealth Fighter.

Nov. 11, 1956 - Convair's B-58 Hustler, the first supersonic bomber and delta-winged aircraft capable of 1,000-MPH speeds, completed its first flight at Fort Worth.

Nov. 12, 1921 - Wesley May, with a 5-gallon can of gasoline strapped to his back, stepped from the wing of a Lincoln Standard to the wing skid of a JN-4 and climbed to the engine to pour gas into the tank. Frank Hawks flew the Lincoln and Earl S. Daugherty the JN-4. This was the first known air-to-air refueling.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[SecAF presents first Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medals](#)

Twenty-five Airmen are the first to receive the award, which recognizes their contributions to the nation's strategic objectives in nuclear deterrence, which is part of a larger effort to affect change within the nuclear enterprise culture..

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Air Force seeks 2015 First Sergeant of the Year nominees](#)

Nominations packages are due April 2nd for the award that recognizes important contributions and leadership qualities.

[12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year nominations due April 2nd](#)

Nominations for the three award categories – Airman, noncommissioned officer and senior NCO – must include examples of leadership and job performance as well as significant self-improvement and base or community involvement.

[AF authorizes medical benefits for some separatees](#)

The Air Force is authorized to pay the transitions assistance management program (TAMP) benefits to Airmen separated under the fiscal year 2014 Voluntary Separation Pay (VSP) program.

► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE, TECHNOLOGY

[Air Force completes historic fuel conversion](#)

With the conversion of the final stateside installation from Jet Propellant 8 (JP-8) fuel to the more common and commercially available Jet A fuel at Wright Patterson AFB on Oct. 29, the Air Force completed an important leap in fiscal responsibility and supply chain efficiency. The transition, completed 18 months ahead of schedule, is projected to save the Air Force an estimated \$25.5 billion annually in fuel costs.

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

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