

# Commander's Call Topics



January 8, 2015

"One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency."

Arnold H. Glasow  
American businessman and humorist  
(1905-1998)

[Can I donate?](#)

Check your eligibility to be a blood donor. It's a death-defying act you can do lying down.

## Give a Service Member A Second Chance: Donate Blood

For those who grew up on M\*A\*S\*H reruns, it may come as a bit of a surprise that the American Red Cross and the Armed Services Blood Program are not the same thing, although they do work closely in times of need.

Originally stood up by President Truman in 1952, ASPB took over collection, processing and transporting blood products for the military from the American Red Cross after the Korean War ended in 1953. The program became fully operational, separate and distinct ten years later. Headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, ASPB provides blood to active-duty Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen, retirees and military families through more than 20 [blood donor centers](#) worldwide, including Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Lackland AFB, Texas; and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; although mobile units travel throughout the country on a predetermined schedule as well as on demand.

One of four organizations that ensure the United States has a safe and dependable blood supply (the other three organizations are the American Red Cross, America's Blood Centers and Blood Centers of America), ASPB is the official blood collection, manufacturing, transport and transfusion program for the U.S. military, and, as such, cannot receive blood from civilian organizations. However, like civilian agencies, ASPB is governed by strict Food and Drug Administration guidelines to maintain safety and quality of blood and blood products.

Since the ASBP's inception over 60 years ago, more than 1.5 million units of blood have been provided to treat battlefield illnesses and injuries. While ASBP blood recipients are most often thought of as deployed service members injured in the line of duty, the ASBP also supports the peacetime needs of military personnel and their families. Blood must be available to military hospitals for scheduled and emergency procedures.

Occasionally, the ASBP's recipient base extends beyond the military community. In cases of natural disasters or other catastrophes, the ASBP is called upon to serve civilians in need, not only here at home, but also globally during humanitarian missions. Anyone receiving blood products in a combat area will receive blood through the ASBP.

Whether blood is needed to treat cancer patients, surgical patients or battlefield injuries, service members depend on blood donors every day. Each unit is critical when one considers the following:

- 40 or more units of blood may be needed for a single trauma victim.
- Eight units of platelets may be required daily by leukemia patients undergoing treatment.
- A single pint of blood can sustain a premature infant's life for two weeks.

January is Blood Donor Awareness Month, and it's a good time to plan to "Give to the Red White and Blue," as the ASBP suggests, and save a life in [three easy steps](#).

Martha J. Lockwood  
Chief, Air Force Information Products

### ► TRENDING...

"We are the best Air Force on the planet. Our Airmen are the smartest. They are dedicated, passionate in their service to America, but I'm also hearing the fact that we have become the smallest Air Force...has placed strains upon our Airmen. So as a result, earlier this week I announced that we are going to stop the downsizing and we will not be doing any more involuntary boards in fiscal 2015," said [Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#), visiting [Columbus AFB in Mississippi in December 2014](#).

## ► 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 Veteran 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](#)

## ► CURRENT ISSUES

[Two C-17 squadrons to be inactivated over next two years](#)

Based on the President's Defense Budget for FY15, two C-17 Globemaster III squadrons will be inactivated during the next two years – one at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, and one at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington.

## ► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[AF government travel cards receive tech upgrade](#)

The first phase in a multi-phased rollout begins this month as Citibank issues chip- and PIN-enabled government travel cards (GTC).

[DOD releases 2015 military pay, compensation rates](#)

New rates for basic pay, basic allowance for housing (BAH), basic allowance for subsistence (BAS), and the cost of living allowance (COLA) took effect Jan. 1, 2015.

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**Jan. 8, 1973** - In their F-4D Phantom, Capt. Paul D. Howman and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Lawrence W. Kullman shot down a MiG southwest of Hanoi with a radar-guided AIM-7 missile. This shootdown was the last aerial victory before the North Vietnamese signed the ceasefire agreement, which went into effect on January 29.

**Jan. 9, 1943** - The Lockheed C-121 Super Constellation first flew.

**Jan. 10, 1957** - The Department of Defence assigned the highest national priority to intercontinental ballistic missile and intermediate-range ballistic missile projects.

**Jan. 11, 1944** - During a WWII bombing mission over Oschersleben, Germany, [Lt. Col. James H. Howard](#) was leading a P-51 fighter escort group, when numerous German fighters attacked. Not waiting for his group to reassemble, Howard attacked 30 enemy planes, destroying three and damaging several others. Even when three guns stopped working and his fuel tanks neared empty, Howard continued to protect the bombers. For his bravery, he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

**Jan. 12, 1965** - At Plattsburg AFB, N.Y., the 380th Air Refueling Squadron received the Strategic Air Command's last KC-135 (Tail No. 64-14840).

**Jan. 13, 1949** - William P. Odom flew a Beechcraft Bonanza to a Federation Aeronautique Internationale distance record for light planes: 2,400 miles from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Oakland, California.

**Jan. 14, 1977** - The Department of Defense directed the Air Force to begin full-scale production of the Air Launched Cruise Missile.

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

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