

# Commander's Call Topics



September 11, 2014

**“America was not built on fear.  
America was built on courage, on imagination and  
an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.”**

*Harry S Truman  
(1884-1972)*

*33rd President of the United States*

Make this year's bicentennial celebration of the national anthem complete with

[Flag etiquette](#)

and the words to

[The Star Spangled Banner](#)

## The National Anthem Turns 200 In Spectacular Style

It's going to be a little bit like the Fourth of July and a little bit like Flag Day at Fort McHenry, Md. this week. Years in the making, this week's star-studded spectacular calls attention to Baltimore's pivotal role in the defense of our country during the War of 1812. Specifically, this week celebrates the 1814 Battle of Baltimore and the writing of the national anthem by Francis Scott Key.

Although The Star Spangled Banner is not the oldest national anthem (That claim belongs to “Wilhelmus” the Dutch national anthem from the mid-1500s.), it may very well be the most easily recognized, thanks to the worldwide broadcast of the Super bowl and the Olympics gold medal ceremonies.

The melody of the “Star Spangled Banner” was nothing new when Francis Scott Key set pen to paper. A widely-used practice at the time, borrowing a popular melody and applying it to new lyrics, made the song more readily assimilated into the mainstream. Although the lyrics were new in 1814, the melody dates from the 1770s and is, quite possibly, the national anthem with the widest vocal range—more than an octave and a half.

Celebrations in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, Fort McHenry and Martin State Airport borrow heavily from the national bicentennial of 1976. Friday highlights a parade of a dozen tall ships into Baltimore Harbor where they will be moored for days and open to the public. There will also be naval vessels from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Germany, Spain and Turkey that are open to the public, as well.

Saturday will feature an air show from 2 until 4 PM (repeated on Sunday), and two nearly concurrent concerts. One is a ticketed event at the Pier Six Pavilion. A free concert at Fort McHenry begins at 6PM and culminates in the Star-Spangled Spectacular Fireworks extravaganza featuring new technology to display Francis Scott Key's “broad stripes and bright stars,” “rockets red glare and bombs bursting in air” and “twilight's last gleaming.” Launched from six barges that will stretch three miles from the Inner Harbor to Fort McHenry, viewers have been promised that they “will enjoy the largest fireworks and light display since 1814!”

Whether you plan to be in the area, or are just looking for ideas on how to commemorate your own star-spangled bicentennial, more information is available on the [Star Spangled 200 website](#).

*Martha J. Lockwood, CAE, APR  
Chief, Information Products, AFPRO*

### TRENDING

“This web-based survey assesses your recent experiences with military workplace relations, professionalism and personal safety. It's not ‘just another survey.’ ...By just taking a few minutes of your time to complete the survey, you will help us provide a stronger and healthier workplace for all Airmen,” said [Gen. Mark A. Welsh III](#), Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force in a [letter to Airman about the RAND study](#).

## ► 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

[Air Force revamps AEF](#)

In an effort to deploy more ACS Airmen with their units and standardize dwell times, the Air force will deploy Agile Combat Support Airmen under its redesigned air expeditionary force construct Oct. 1.

[Call for nominations: Portraits in Courage, Vol. IX](#)

Oct. 13 is the deadline for stories of courage, valor and heroism for this year's edition.

[AF Academy ranks high in Best Colleges Ranking report](#)

Not surprisingly, the U.S Air Force Academy ranks as the nation's fifth-best undergraduate engineering program and second-best aerospace program in the U.S. News & World Report 2015 Best Colleges Ranking report.

## ► FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Airmen must revalidate dependents by Dec. 31](#)

As part of Air Force audit readiness efforts, by the end of the year, a one-time, Air Force-wide recertification process will be required of every Airman to provide their servicing finance office with documentation for all dependents.

## ► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Sept. 10—Pulse on AF force management](#)

Changes to the reduction in force board eligibility, force shaping board results and ongoing civilian force management programs are highlights of this week's force management announcements..

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**September 11, 1953** - A Sidewinder N-7 (AIM-9) air-to-air missile made its first successful interception, sending a Grumman F6F-5K Hellcat drone down in flames at China Lake, Calif.

**September 12, 1918** - Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell led 1,481 planes in the St. Mihiel offensive lasting through Sep. 15. This was the biggest air armada to date.

**September 13, 1951** - The U.S. Air Force established its first pilotless bomber squadron at the Missile Test Center, Cocoa, Fla.

**September 14, 1944** - Col. Floyd B. Wood, Maj. Harry Wexler, and Lt. Frank Recford made the first flight into a hurricane to collect scientific data in a Douglas A-20.

**September 15, 2001** - In the first five days after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, 35 Air National Guard fighter units supplied 603 sorties while the 18 ANG tanker wings flew 72 sorties to offload 3.2 million pounds of fuel during Operation Noble Eagle.

**September 16, 1960** - From Cape Canaveral, Fla., a 1.5-ton reentry nose cone on an Atlas missile flew on a 5,000-mile test flight.

**September 17, 1908** - Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, flying as a passenger with Orville Wright, died when the Wright Flyer crashed at Fort Myer, Va. This event was the world's first fatal airplane accident and Lt. Selfridge was the first military casualty. Mr. Wright also received serious injuries.

Recent promotion? Change of command? Increased number of flight hours? There are lots of reasons to update a biography! Keep your leadership current by ensuring their AF.mil biography is up to date. Send us updates in real-time using the link below:  
[dma.meade.prod.mbx.air-force-production-air-force-biographies@mail.mil](mailto:dma.meade.prod.mbx.air-force-production-air-force-biographies@mail.mil)

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

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