

Commander's Call Topics



February 12, 2015

*"Anything that we can do to raise personal savings
is very much
in the best interest of this country"*

Allen Greenspan
American Economist
(b. 1926)

Monday, February 16 is
[Presidents Day](#),
a good day for some
Presidential Trivia

What Are You Saving For?

Military Saves week starts February 23rd, and along with providing the annual [Savings Pledge](#), the Military Saves website offers a myriad of ways that military members, their families, reservist guardsman and retirees can save when they [prepare and file their taxes](#), with a spending and debt-management plan, even when transitioning from active duty to civilian life. Saving takes focus and discipline.

So does spending.

Maybe it's time to ask this question: how will you spend your savings? Knowing how and where to spend money wisely is as important as how to save it in the first place. Following are some ways to spend that provide greater security and honor the hard work that went into saving the money.

Establishing an emergency fund with enough cash to carry you through six months of expenses is a good place to start. This provides a cushion should the unexpected happen: the water heater that no longer heats water, the car's air conditioning condenser that decides to take a vacation in July, or a medical emergency. Once the crisis is dealt with and past, replenishing the fund becomes the financial priority.

Paying down high-interest debt is another good way to spend money. Credit card balances accelerate date at the rate of upwards of 18 percent per year. [Payday loans](#), the short-term loans for relatively small amounts typically coming due on one's next payday, are usually higher.

There are two schools of thought on paying off credit card debt if you have multiple credit cards. The first advises paying off the card with the highest interest first, while the second advises paying off the card with the largest balance. A better way, if possible, would be to consolidate all the balances on the lowest-interest card and pay it off as quickly as possible.

Investing in a [529 plan](#) for a beneficiary's higher education is like paying down debt before it begins. Earnings are not subject to federal tax and not generally subject to state tax when used for the qualified educational expenses of the designated beneficiary. Most states allow you to participate in a 529 plan with \$25 per month.

Investing hard-earned dollars in the right way increases wealth over time, but the question remains: where to begin? [Investor.gov](#) a site established by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission provides the basics, the tools and the benchmarks to help Americans reach their financial goals.

Everyone saves and spends differently, and the key to success is starting.

Martha J. Lockwood
Chief, Information Products AFPRO

► TRENDING...

"I want all of you students to take a look around this room at the people who are here to mentor you," said Air Force Vice Chief of Staff [Gen. Larry O. Spencer](#), during the mentoring breakout session at the [Black Engineer of the Year Award Conference](#). "They've taken their time to mentor and work with you to help you and advise you on how you might progress in your own lives and your own careers."

► 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

Feb. 12, 1958 - The Department of Defense transferred the Jupiter Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile program from the Army to the Air Force.

Feb. 13, 2007 – Through February 16, nearly 150 Airmen participated in a joint military exercise with the Peruvian Air Force. The exercise allowed the U.S. military to build relationships with Peru's military and civilian leaders. It involved the C-130 Hercules, E-3A Sentry, F-16 Fighting Falcon, and the B-1 Lancer. Afterward, the aircraft remained in Peru for two more days to perform in the Falcon Condor air show.

Feb. 14, 1989 - In its first launch, the McDonnell-Douglas Delta II space booster lifted the first operational NAVSTAR Block II GPS satellite into orbit.

Feb. 15, 1948 - The XF-87 Blackhawk made its first flight at Edwards AFB, Calif.

Feb. 16, 1966 - General John P. McConnell, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, presented astronaut wings to Col. L. Gordon Cooper, Col. Frank Borman and Lt. Col. Thomas P. Stafford.

Feb. 17, 2007 - The 45th Space Wing supported the launch of a Delta II booster from Cape Canaveral AFS, Florida, carrying five National Air and Space Administration 'THEMIS' probes to study auroral substorms, an avalanche of solar wind-powered magnetic energy that intensifies the northern and southern lights.

Feb. 18, 1943 - The first class of 39 flight nurses graduated from the U. S. Army Air Forces School of Air Evacuations at Bowman Field, Kentucky.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[AF officials announce FY16 budget force structure changes](#)

Force structure changes in the President's fiscal 2016 budget are expected to retain critical capability in the near term while positioning the service to support a leaner, more modern force in the future.

[AF identifies Boeing 747-8 platform for next Air Force One](#)

Although an acquisition strategy and timetable have not been announced, the Boeing 747-8 will, most likely, serve as the next presidential aircraft.

► FAMILY HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Free tax preparation, advice available to military families](#)

Military OneSource and H&R Block are combining efforts to offer no-cost tax consultation, preparation and filing to service and family members, reservists, survivors and some separated service members.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Approved innovation submissions projected to save \\$35 million](#)

Averaging more than 100 submissions per month, the Airmen Powered by Innovation program, which was launched in April 2014, is poised to save the Air Force at least \$35 million.

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

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