

Commander's Call Topics



January 15, 2015

"Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Civil Rights Leader
(1929-1968)

January is
[National](#)
[Mentoring Month.](#)

A Day of Service Honors Us All

"What are you doing for others?"

Martin Luther King Jr. posed this as "life's most persistent and urgent question." In honor of the slain civil rights leader and his commitment to community service, this year January 19 will be "a day on, not a day off." This phrase was coined in 1994, when Congress designated the federal holiday as a national day of service to empower individuals, strengthen communities, bridge barriers, create solutions to social problems and move us all closer to Dr. King's vision of community.

The federal holiday, first designated in 1983, is the only federal holiday that is also a national day of service.

This call to a day of service comes through President Obama's nationwide service initiative, [United We Serve](#) (UWS), and is built upon the belief that ordinary people can achieve the extraordinary. UWS is managed by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency charged with promoting and fostering volunteering and national service in America.

Participating in the National Day of Service can be an individual effort, such as volunteering one time at a local food bank or soup kitchen, or it can be a base-wide event involving more than one venue. For example, Airmen from Air Force Base McConnell, (Kansas) will be volunteering at Wichita's Midtown Ronald McDonald house Jan. 19, where they will prepare lunch for the families and help with household chores. Concurrently, additional Airmen will help with household chores at Wichita's Sleepy Hollow Ronald McDonald House.

While it seems that only a relatively few Airmen are involved in this activity, those who are not on-site will be required to shoulder more responsibility at the base so that the mission continues unabated. In short: everyone is involved, directly or indirectly, in preserving King's legacy by remembering those in need.

While volunteering is not a uniquely American quality, Americans showcase volunteerism for the rest of the world. CNCS statistics through 2013, the last year for which numbers have been published, note that one in four Americans volunteer through organizations, estimating the value of this service at nearly \$173 billion. Nearly two-thirds (62.5 percent) of Americans also engaged in "informal volunteering" in their communities, which includes helping neighbors and being involved in school, civic, recreational, religious or other service organizations.

And that's just American civilians. Airmen volunteer every day, providing the spirit and the foundation for the world's best Air Force.

Martha J. Lockwood
Chief, Air Force Information Products

► TRENDING...

"I think the conference is an important step as we look to permanently shift the Air Force culture to one which embraces and emphasizes persistent focus at all times on dignity, respect and inclusiveness for all of our Airmen," said [Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#), delivering the opening remarks at the five-day [Sexual Assault Prevention and Response \(SAPR\) summit](#), Jan. 12.

► 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

Jan. 15, 1914 - The Signal Corps Aviation School issued the first Army aviation safety regulation. It required pilots to wear helmets and leather coats for overland flights, and unsinkable coats for overwater flights.

Jan. 16, 1981 - From Corpus Christi, Texas, and Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, Military Airlift Command C-130s moved 500 tons of arms, ammunition, helicopters and other material to San Salvador to support the Salvadoran government in its struggle against leftist guerrillas. This operation lasted through June.

Jan. 17, 1932 - After a severe snowstorm, seven aircraft from the 11th Bomb Squadron flew missions for four days to deliver supplies to Navajo Indians near Winslow, Arizona. Lt. Charles H. Howard received the Mackay Trophy for this effort.

Jan. 18, 1905 - Through their congressman, the Wright Brothers opened negotiations with the U.S. Government to build an aircraft. The government, however, refused the offer.

Jan. 19, 1976 - The 180th Tactical Fighter Group became the first Air National Guard unit to participate in a Red Flag exercise at Nellis AFB, Nevada.

Jan. 20, 1960 - Early in January, the Soviet Union announced tests of more powerful rockets. Through Jan. 22, Pacific Air Forces employed KC-135, C-130, and RB-69 (P2V-7) aircraft to observe these tests.

Jan. 21, 1991 - During Operation Desert Storm, Capt Paul T. Johnson in his A-10 Thunderbolt II found a downed Navy fighter pilot, who had ejected in Iraqi territory. Johnson destroyed a threatening Iraqi truck, which allowed an Air Force MH-53J Pave Low helicopter to rescue the pilot. For his efforts, Johnson received an Air Force Cross.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[SAPR summit tackles tough issues](#)

A five-day summit at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, is focusing on better ways to combat sexual assault and take care of victims.

► 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

[Assistance fund campaign kicks off in February](#)

The six-week-long campaign underwrites assistance to Airmen facing financial hardship in the areas of housing, education, nursing care and education.

[Air Force, DOD switch HOMES](#)

Modernizing the search for housing, Airmen now have access to HOMES.mil, which features search and display options to obtain specific information about the real estate options when relocating.

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

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