

WARRIOR

Year of the B-2

Vol. 4 No. 25
June 28, 2013

*B-2 pilots
dine in
Pg. 3*

*FTF:
A1C McMahon
Pg. 5*

*Don't 'Retreat'
from customs
& courtesies
Pg. 7*

Fighters & Bombers

131st Bomb Wing celebrates 90 years, Pg. 8

B-2 pilots celebrate with dining-in

Retired Lt. Col. Frank Cavuoti (#78)
Det. 5, 29th Training Systems Squadron

Past, present and future B-2 Spirit stealth bomber pilots gathered June 14 during the fourth B-2 Pilot Dining-In to celebrate their collective diverse backgrounds, their unique and rich heritage, their shared common vision, and 20 years of the B-2 stealth bomber.

Held at Whiteman Air Force Base Mission's End club, an unprecedented 133 B-2 pilots attended, including 51 who were able to return from off-station locations such as Lajes Field, Portugal; Edwards AFB, Calif.; Barksdale AFB, La.; the Pentagon and many other "stealthy" areas.

Major Gen. Garrett Harencak, a former B-2 pilot (#407) and the eighth B-2 wing commander here at Whiteman, attended as the guest speaker presiding over this formal event rich with Air Force tradition. Harencak currently serves as assistant chief of staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration in Washington, D.C.

Our current 509th Bomb Wing commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas Bussiere (#114), served as the President of the Mess, assisted by Capt. Marcus Antonini (#500) as Mr. Vice.

Brigadier Gen. Scott Vander Hamm (#94), Brig. Gen. Greg Champagne (#403), Brig. Gen. Jim Dawkins (#184), Col. Michael Francis (#427), Col. Kenneth Eaves (#420), Col. Rob Spalding (#191), Col. Kristen Goodwin (#279), and Capt. Dale Wilds (#551) filled out the Cranium Table. The lowest Spirit in attendance was Tom Lebeau (#5).

The Air Force tradition of the dining-in has ancient, pre-Christian, Roman roots, coming to our modern times by way of Viking warlords and King Arthur's knights in the sixth century, through British soldiers in colonial America and George Washington's Continental Army, to Gen. Henry H. Hap Arnold's "Wing Dings" in the 1930s and finally, into today's present format.

Through all this, the purpose of the dining-in is to bring together members of a unit in an atmosphere of camaraderie, good fellowship and social rapport to promote high morale and esprit de corps.

Formal traditions during this Mess Dress event included toasts to the president, the queen, the chief of staff of the Air Force, chief of naval operations and deployed members, as well as the somber POW/MIA table ceremony.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Brigitte N. Brantley
Firefighters and the hazardous material team from the 509th Civil Engineer Squadron present the "grog bowl" at the fourth B-2 Pilot Dining-In June 14, 2013, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. In attendance were 133 B-2 pilots, including 51 who found their way back to Whiteman from as far away as Portugal.

Additionally, attendees observed some less formal but just as important traditions, like the "grog bowl" and wearing of unit specific regalia. The evening was even pleasantly interrupted by a live satellite feed from Fox New Network's own Greta Van Susteren and past presidential candidate, Arizona Sen. John McCain, with special messages to all B-2 pilots.

The actual dining-in was a culmination of several events surrounding this gathering of so many B-2 pilots, to include a ReBlue Symposium, aircraft and simulators refreshers, and a Stealth Golf Tournament complete with joint air-to-surface standoff missile and massive ordnance penetrator shots.

This series of events and B-2 pilot dining-in usher our wing into a very significant timeframe, as we prepare to celebrate Dec. 17 as the 110-year anniversary of man's first flight and the 20-year anniversary of the first arrival of the B-2 stealth bomber here at Whiteman AFB.

Many thanks to all the individuals that volunteered to make this event such a success. It is your hard work and dedication that keeps tradition and the Spirit alive!

Acting SecAF recounts journey to equality

By Amaani Lyle
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFPS) -- During a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month event at the Pentagon today, the highest-ranking openly gay member of the Defense Department described his experiences witnessing the evolution of the law that banned openly gay service members, from its implementation to its eventual repeal.

Acting Air Force Secretary Eric Fanning noted the significance of Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel kicking off the DOD's pride celebration, as just two years ago, gay and lesbian service members could not openly serve in the military.

Absent an association like DOD Pride to lend support, Fanning described the difficulties and sense of isolation that he and others at the Pentagon endured as the repeal process ran its course. "There were no other open LGBT appointees, and anyone serving openly in uniform was surely in the process of being discharged," he said.

Fanning began working in the Pentagon 20 years ago, a time he described as a personally painful experience as DOD began to implement the law that came to be known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

"It was a deeply conflicting time for me," the Air Force's top civilian official said. "I was launching a career with strong support from amazing bosses who knew about my



**Mr. Eric Fanning,
Acting Secretary of the Air Force**

personal life. ... I was being given opportunities that were being denied to people just like me. I was working for an institution that discriminated -- against people just like me."

He also recalled how during that time, people spoke about gays and lesbians in "blistering and emotional ways," denigrating them for simply wanting the right to serve their country while being honest about who they were.

Still, Fanning said, the military underwent the difficult process of opening doors to those it previously denied or constrained:

women, immigrants looking to prove their patriotism and earn their citizenship, and to gays and lesbians.

"At times, it seemed agonizingly slow, or even that we were losing ground," Fanning said. "But never once did we doubt we were on the right path."

Relying on the diverse talents of a broader pool of people who are willing and able to serve has fortified the military, Fanning explained. "We are stronger for looking more like the society we are charged with protecting, and we are today ... the finest military the world has ever known," he said.

In the two years leading up to the repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell," the debate had a remarkably different tone, due in great part to the support of the president and the then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen.

"I cannot escape being troubled by the fact that we have in place a policy which forces young men and women to lie about who they are in order to defend their fellow citizens," the admiral testified before Congress. "It comes down to integrity -- theirs as individuals and ours as an institution."

Looking back to almost two decades earlier as a junior aide, Fanning said, he could never imagine having a chairman say things like Mullen did.

Fanning said most people had begun to accept the possibility of repeal long before

See Acting SecAF, page 14

THE WARRIOR

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The deadline for article submissions to the Warrior is noon Friday. If a holiday falls on Friday, the deadline then becomes 4 p.m. Thursday. Articles will be published on a space-available basis. Submissions does not guarantee publication.

For more information, call the Warrior office at 660-687-6123, email: Whiteman.Warrior@us.af.mil, fax us: 660-687-7948, or write to us at: 509th Bomb Wing, 1081 Arnold Ave., Bldg. 59, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305.

To advertise in *The Warrior*, call the *Sedalia Democrat* at: 1-800-892-7856.

On the cover

131st Bomb Wing file photo
Capt. Charles Lindbergh, 110th Observation Squadron Missouri National Guard, services his aircraft, the "Spirit of Saint Louis," at Robertson Field, St. Louis, in 1927.

NEWS BRIEFS

Commissary Farmers Market

The Whiteman Commissary will be having a Farmers Market Sidewalk sale on June 28 & 29, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The Commissary will also be closed on Thursday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day. The Commissary will reopen on Friday July 4th at 8:00 am. For further information, contact the commissary at 687-5655.

2013 Community Assessment Survey

The 2013 Community Assessment Survey is your opportunity to contribute to community action plans at your base, MAJCOM and the Air Force!

Starting 5 April 2013, you may be one of those chosen to receive an email invitation to participate in a survey concerning your experiences as a member serving in the Air Force. Sharing your experiences and opinions in this survey is voluntary and will help us improve life for families in the Air Force Active Duty, Reserve components and DoD Civilian workforce.

The survey's subject line will be '2013 Community Assessment Survey (Survey Control Number AF13-141SGHW)' and it will be from afcasurvey@ipsosresearch.com.

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact this survey's POC, Lt Col Wendy Travis at afmoa.communityassessmentsurvey@us.af.mil.

Disposition of personal effects

Captain Daniel Uchtmann is authorized to make disposition of the personal effects of SMSgt Stephen Counts deceased, 131 AMXS, as stated in AFI 34-511. Any person's having claims for or against the deceased please contact Captain Daniel Uchtmann at (660) 687-2015.

Whiteman Warrior Story Ideas

The Public Affairs Office accepts story ideas for news and feature articles on people and organizations to help provide recognition of excellence in performance and set forth norms for mission accomplishment.

To submit an idea, call 660-687-6123, or email whiteman.warrior@us.af.mil

Air Force Accepting Prior Service Applicants

Have you previously served as an enlisted member in the Air Force or other branch of the U.S. military? If so, and you were honorably discharged and have been out of the service less than six years, you may be eligible to serve in the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force is currently seeking individuals to serve in their previous job or to possibly retrain. To learn more, contact your local Air Force recruiter, call 1-800-423-USAFA or visit airforce.com and speak live with an Air Force adviser.

For more news briefs, visit <http://www.whiteman.af.mil/news/announcements/index.asp>

WEATHER

Today	Saturday
Chance of Storms	Mostly Sunny
Hi 87	Hi 80
Lo 70	Lo 64
Sunday	Monday
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny
Hi 78	Hi 79
Lo 62	Lo 62

Whiteman AFB releases 2012 water quality report

509th Medical Operations Squadron Bioenvironmental Engineering Flight

Whiteman Air Force Base has released the Consumer Confidence Report for 2012, an annual summary of drinking water quality delivered by Whiteman AFB during calendar year 2012. The report helps base residents and employees better understand, and have confidence in, their drinking water supply.

Under the "Consumer Confidence Reporting Rule" of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, community water systems must report water quality information to the consuming public. As required by regulations, results reported in 2013 are based on samples collected and analyzed in 2012.



The report details where the water comes from, what it contains and the health risks water testing and treatment are designed to prevent.

For more information about this report or water quality at Whiteman AFB, call Bioenvironmental Engineering at (660) 687-4324.



The full 2012 report is available on the Whiteman website at <http://www.whiteman.af.mil/library/Environmental.asp>.

July 4 festivities

Check out all the local opportunities to see some July 4 fireworks!

Whiteman Independence Day celebration

When: July 3, from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Where: Skelton Park on Whiteman AFB

Cost: Free!

The fireworks start at 9:30 p.m.

Check out facebook.com/whitemanmarketing for a list of all the events!

Freedom Fest Spectacular

When: July 4, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Where: Grover Park Baptist Church, 409 N. Mitchell St., Warrensburg

Cost: Free!

The fireworks start at dark.

Sedalia's 4th of July Celebration

When: July 4 from 6-11 p.m.

Where: Missouri State Fairgrounds, 2503 W. 16th St., Sedalia

Cost: Free!

The fireworks start at dusk.

KC RiverFest

When: July 4 from 4-11 p.m.

Where: Berkley Riverfront Park

(Grand Boulevard and River Front Road), Kansas City

Cost: Parking is \$10, admission is \$5 per person

(Free admission until 5 p.m.)

Check out kcriverfest.com for more information.

Whiteman's 62 newest technical sergeants are ...

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

The Air Force announced the results for the 2013 technical sergeant promotion cycle June 27. The 5,654 selected represent 15.03 percent of the 37,608 eligible.

The average score for those selected was 340.17. Selectees' average time in grade is 5.52 years and time in service is 10.78. Their average enlisted performance report score is 132.58 and the average decoration score is 5.97. Selectee average promotion fitness examination score is 72.63 and the average specialty knowledge test score is 63.40.

The following 62 staff sergeants were chosen for promotion to technical sergeant.



- Zachary Linton,**
509th Security Forces Squadron
- Scott Lloyd,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- Raul Loyo,**
509th Medical Support Squadron
- Christopher Mattingly,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Ronnie McGee,**
509th Medical Operations Squadron
- Eric Miller,**
509th Bomb Wing
- Ryan Moudy,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- Justin Nutter,**
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- Crista Parker,**
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- Daniel Parsons,**
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- Robert Peterson,**
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- James Prather,**
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- Bryan Riddell,**
509th Civil Engineer Squadron
- Daniel Rylander,**
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- Jayne Sanford,**
509th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Jonathan Sangricco,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Shawn Sawtelle,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Steven Scott,**
72nd Test and Evaluation Squadron
- James Steenburg,**
372nd Training Squadron
- Joshua Tanner,**
Air Combat Command Det. 12
- William Tauffener,**
509th Maintenance Group
- John Thomas,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Micah Thornton,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- Chad Tillery,**
509th Maintenance Group
- Jolene Trappett,**
325th Weapons Squadron
- Gerald Urban,**
509th Civil Engineer Squadron
- Michael Vandeusen,**
509th Security Forces Squadron
- Victor Vorngsam,**
509th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Alonzo Warner,**
509th Civil Engineer Squadron
- Thomas Waters,**
509th Comptroller Squadron
- Brian White,**
495th Fighter Group
- William White,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- LeTray Womble,**
509th Contracting Squadron

- Daryl Ables,**
509th Security Forces Squadron
- Michael Allgire,**
709th Munitions Squadron
- James Anderson,**
509th Medical Operations Squadron
- Anthony Atoigue,**
509th Maintenance Operations Squadron
- Eric Bowlin,**
509th Munitions Squadron
- Jason Busby,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- Hernandez Buslon,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Shane Carrasco,**
20th Reconnaissance Squadron
- Bryan Childers,**
509th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Clifton Cleveland,**
509th Operations Support Squadron
- Timothy Czapsky,**
509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- William Daniels,**
509th Bomb Wing
- Daniel Delarosa,**
509th Civil Engineer Squadron
- Christopher Dennis,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
- Michael Dewandeler,**
509th Bomb Wing
- Danny Dodson,**
509th Munitions Squadron
- Thomas Dunlap,**
372nd Training Squadron
- Dan Earley,**
509th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Kevin Frederick,**
495th Fighter Group
- Ray Frederick,**
509th Maintenance Squadron
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509th Maintenance Squadron
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- Alex Holloway,**
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509th Maintenance Squadron
- Michael Howell,**
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- Michael Hyde,**
509th Civil Engineer Squadron
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From the Frontlines: Airman 1st Class Nathan McMahon



Courtesy photo

By Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Pilots are responsible for operating aircraft to complete their assigned missions, but they cannot get the planes off the ground without all the pieces in place.

Airman 1st Class Nathan McMahon, 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron journeyman, is one of many Airmen responsible for just that mission.

McMahon deployed to a base in Southwest Asia just last month and is currently working at an aircraft parts supply shop.

"I work at the aircraft parts store," said McMahon. "It's a warehouse where we pull parts for combat-oriented support issues (COSO) so maintainers can fix the planes that come in. We process items that need to be turned in so they can be shipped to other bases for repair. We also inventory all of our items to make sure the numbers in the system and the numbers on the parts actually match."

On a typical day, McMahon works with different shops to ensure they issue parts to the appropriate locations.

"My day-to-day duties are to check with COSO to make sure they don't need us to process any turn-ins from the maintainers," said McMahon. "I also run different listings to keep our ware-

house up-to-date and make sure everything has a location. I'll make trips to the traffic management office and process parts that have been turned in so we can ship them off for repair."

After a long day of work, it is nice to have a good place to relax. McMahon said his living conditions are of good quality and conveniently located.

"I'm currently living with one other person in the dorms," said McMahon. "The room comes with a fridge and TV, and since my roommate works days and I work nights, I have the room to myself most of the time."

Although the living conditions are fairly comfortable, McMahon still misses the conveniences of home.

"Of course I miss my family," he added. "It is hard to talk to people with the time difference."

McMahon's duties at his deployed location are different from those at his home station.

"Back at Whiteman I worked in customer service, which was more desk work and running different listings on the computer, while here the work is a lot more hands-on," said McMahon. "Here, it's also easier to see how what I'm doing directly benefits the mission."

Despite his different tasks, McMahon understands the role his job plays in operations downrange.

"It's very important because without



Courtesy photo

us, the maintainers aren't able to get the parts they need to fix the aircraft," said McMahon.

In addition to making sure the work gets done, McMahon is known for exercising "service before self" in accomplishing his job.

"He is a motivated and hard-working Airman who puts the mission before himself and is dedicated to helping his fellow wingmen," said Tech. Sgt. Roberto Guerrero, 386th ELRS NCO in

charge of flight service. "He is willing to take on challenging tasks to ensure the job is completed."

This is McMahon's first deployment, and he is doing what it takes to make it worthwhile, including participating in his office's nightly ping-pong tournament.

"It is different than what I'm used to," said McMahon. "I'm having fun and enjoying what I'm doing. It's also great liking the guys I work with."

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Reveille, Retreat and Taps customs and courtesies

Reveille and Retreat ceremonies take place every day to signal the beginning and end of the duty day. These ceremonies are a time for everyone to stop and pay their respects. There are certain procedures that take place for each ceremony for different situations.

Reveille:

Reveille signals the beginning of the official duty day of Whiteman Air Force Base and plays at 7 a.m. daily.

Retreat:

Retreat signals the end of the official duty day for Whiteman AFB and plays at 5 p.m. daily.

Taps:

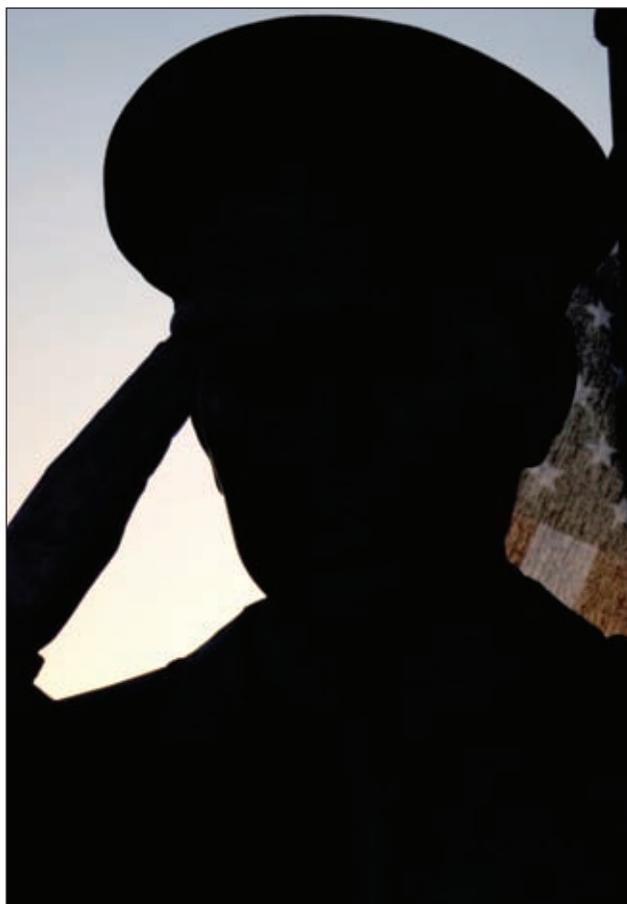
Taps represents the lives lost for our country and is played at 9 p.m. daily.

What to do when Reveille is played:

When outdoors and in uniform (including the PT uniform) while Reveille is playing, stop, face the flag or the direction of the music if no flag is visible, and stand at parade rest. Snap to attention and salute at the first note of To the Colors or the National Anthem; hold the salute until the last note of the music stops. When outdoors and not in uniform, stand at parade rest until the last note of the music stops.

What to do when Retreat is played:

When outdoors and in uniform (including the PT uniform)



while Retreat is playing, stop, face the flag or the direction of music if no flag is visible, and stand at parade rest. Snap to attention and salute at the first note of the National Anthem; hold the salute until the last note of music stops. If outdoors and not in uniform, stand at parade rest until the last note of the music stops.

What to do when Taps is played:

There is no formal procedure for Taps. However, many people choose to assume parade rest or attention to take the time to reflect

What to do in a vehicle during

Reveille and Retreat:

When Reveille or Retreat plays, move to the side of the road and stop the vehicle. All occupants should sit quietly until the last note of the music has played.

What to do inside at an event:

If you are inside at an event and in uniform (including the PT uniform), stand up, face the flag and stand at attention. If there is no flag present, face the direction of the music; do not salute unless in a formation. If you're inside and not in uniform, stand at attention with your right hand over your heart. If you're in civilian attire and wearing a hat, remove it with your right hand and hold it at the left shoulder with the hand over the heart. NOTE: Some indoor ceremonies are treated as outdoor events. Personnel in uniform will wear their headgear and render the appropriate customs and courtesies they would for an outside function.

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THINK SAFETY

From Jennies to jets to stealth bombers

90 years of the 131st Bomb Wing and 110th Bomb Squadron, Pt. 2

(Editor's note: This is part two of a three-part series. Look for part two in next week's paper.)

Senior Master Sgt. Mary-Dale Amison and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Boehlein
131st Bomb Wing

From Jennies to jets to stealth bombers, the 131st Bomb Wing's history really began with it. The chief pilot on the St. Louis-to-Chicago mail run for the Robertson Aircraft Company was a young aviator named Charles "Slim" Lindbergh, who soon joined his employers at the 110th. He was a captain in the National Guard in 1927 and had to seek permission from his commanders to make a historic transatlantic solo flight to Paris in the "Spirit of St. Louis." He was rewarded for his efforts by a special act of the Missouri legislature that promoted him to the rank of colonel.

The squadron flew 10 different aircraft from 1925 to 1940, including the D-4, the PT-1 "Trusty" and the TW-3. Aircraft such as the O-11, O-2H and O-38B were employed for observation and reconnaissance missions. Squadron photographers honed their skills using the K-17 observation camera.

On Dec. 23, 1940, the unit was called to serve in World War II as a fighter and medium bombardment unit, and commenced training in Little Rock, Ark., and Salinas, Calif. Members flew the Douglas A-10 "Havoc" bomber, Bell P-39 "Air Cobra" and Curtis P-40 "Warhawk" fighters. The unit was based in Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines, and was credited with destroying approximately 123 Japanese aircraft and approximately 12 ships, earning the squadron a Presidential Unit Citation in 1944.

Upon returning home, the unit was demobilized and in the early summer of 1946, plans were formulated to organize the Air National Guard. Unlike the pre-war unit, which consisted of some 24 officers and 120 enlisted men, Missouri was to receive a fighter wing, utilizing nearly 10 times as many personnel. The unit executed an extensive recruiting drive, moved back into facilities at Lambert Field in St. Louis and received a new designation as the 57th Fighter Wing and 110th Fighter Squadron; that September, the wing earned federal recognition. The unit flew the P-51 "Mustang," then recognized as the fastest fighter aircraft of World War II.

In 1947, the wing was re-designated the 71st Fighter Wing. During this period, Maj. Charles DuBois, World War II ace and former member of the famed Flying Tigers, took command of the 110th Fighter Squadron and soon gained recognition as one of the unit's most aggressive commanders.

Three years later, on Nov. 1, 1950, the wing was re-designated the 131st Composite Wing, and began pursuing intensive training to raise the wing's readiness to the highest possible degree.

On March 1, 1951, as a result of contingency operations in Korea, the wing was recalled to active federal service for 21 months, with moves to Strategic Air Command at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, and then later in the year to George Air Force Base, Calif., with the new designation as the 131st Fighter-Bomber Wing.

The medium bomber North American B-25 "Mitchell," the North American T-6 "Texan" trainer, the Douglas B-26 "Invader" and military transports Douglas C-47 "Skytrain" and Beechcraft C-45 "Expediter" joined the 131st fleet throughout the 1950s.

During the Korean conflict, the wing took on an increased role of flying bombers, but the mission would change quickly to that of a fighter role. Fighters would be the 131st mission for 40 more years, but bombers would ultimately become the future.

Additional content for this story was provided by Charles Machon (Missouri State National Guard Museum curator).



Airman 1st Class Banjo A. Burro, the beloved mascot of the 131st, joined the wing in the late 1950s and appeared at many wing events and parades. The Missouri Mule has long been identified with the 110th and 131st as the mascot of the unit and appears on patches and aircraft.



Members of the 110th Reconnaissance Squadron in the Philippines, circa 1942.

Betty Robertson-Uhl, one of the nation's earliest pilots, takes part in the ribbon cutting ceremony at the dedication of the Missouri Air National Guard's new Robertson Building 131 at Lambert Air National Guard Base, Aug. 22, 1922. She is the sister of the Robertson brothers, who founded the 110th Observation Squadron on June 23, 1923.

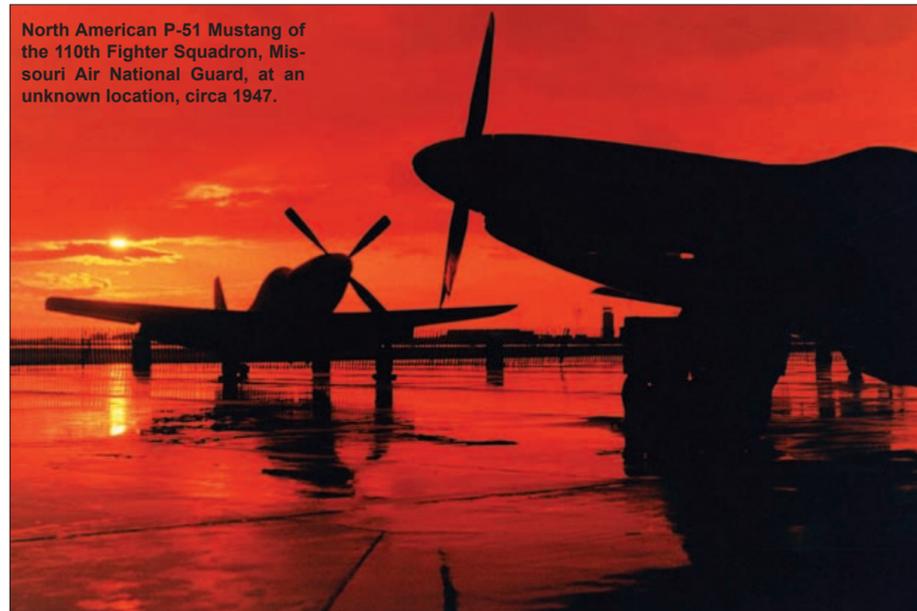


The 110th Reconnaissance Squadron's mobile message center at an undisclosed forward location, circa 1940.



Members of the 110th Reconnaissance Squadron flew the Douglas A-20 "Havoc" during the early part of World War II.

North American P-51 Mustang of the 110th Fighter Squadron, Missouri Air National Guard, at an unknown location, circa 1947.



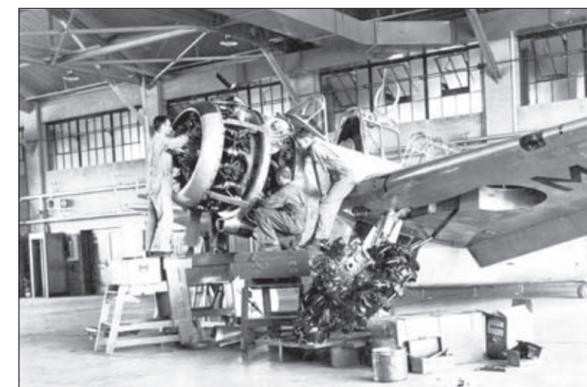
A McDonnell Douglas F-4-E of the 131st Tactical Fighter Wing flies high in 1989. It is painted in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the F-4 Phantom.



F-84F "Thunderstreaks" and F-100C "Super Sabres" of the 131st Light Bombardment Wing, Missouri Air National Guard, parked at Robertson Field, St. Louis, Mo., 1962.



North American B-26 Bombers of the 131st Fighter-Bomber Wing at an unknown forward location.



Aircraft maintainers of the 110th Observation Squadron service a North American O-47A observation aircraft in Hanger 1 at Robertson Field, St. Louis, Mo., circa 1939.

All photos/ 131st Bomb Wing file photos



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U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry

Around the Air Force



U.S. Air Force photo/Master Sgt. Ben Bloker

Airman 1st Class Everardo Torres scans an airfield for potential threats in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, while a C-130 Hercules from the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron transfers equipment and personnel, June 11, 2013. Fly-Away Security Team members are required to fly on specific missions when a location requires an extra measure of security to ensure the aircraft and crew are protected from hostile fire or on-board security breaches. Torres is a 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron FAST team member.

Strike Now program allows for innovation at all levels

by Airman First Class Joseph Raatz
Air Force Global Strike Command
Public Affairs



BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. -- Unhindered innovation is the name of the game when it comes to Air Force Global Strike Command's "Strike Now!" program.

Strike Now offers AFGSC Airmen at all levels a conduit to submit suggestions for improvement to senior command leadership directly, without being encumbered by the traditional process of passing the idea up each step in their chain of command. The program was created to allow Air Force Global Strike Airmen "to be able tell us directly where improvements can be made without needless roadblocks and bureaucracy," said Lt. Gen. James Kowalski, AFGSC commander.

"Each and every submission is personally discussed by the commander and directors at Strike Now senior leader review boards," said Pete Ellis, director of AFGSC Smart Operations Division.

Of the more than 380 Strike Now submissions received to date, approximately 70 have been approved or approved-in-part, and more than a dozen have been sent to Headquarters Air Force for approval.

One idea which was approved and has since been field-tested was submitted by a B-52 aircrew member at Barksdale.

"This individual was frustrated by the fact that many squadrons had different standards and formats when it came to aircrew training folders," Ellis said.

Previously, when a member transferred to a new unit, the gaining unit would have to review and rearrange the member's training folders to ensure adherence to that particular unit's standards. The member who made the suggestion felt this process was confusing and needlessly wasted a great deal of time and effort.

In response to this, the member submitted an idea to Strike Now that featured the adoption of a standardized electronic training folder that would transfer quickly and easily between units, saving time and hassle.

Other suggestions submitted to the Strike Now program have included combining certain inspections to eliminate wasteful redundancy, creating an equivalent of the First Term Airmen's Center for first term officers and authorizing flexible work schedules for civilian employees.

One Airman proposed the Air Force could save money and resources by encouraging inspector general teams to carpool, thereby reducing the number of vehicles used.

"That worked out great," Ellis said.

Airmen who submit approved proposals can receive command recognition and may be encouraged to make a submission to the Air Force's wider Innovative Development through Employee Awareness initiative, known as the IDEA program, which offers both monetary and non-monetary awards for innovative ideas.

"With the really good ideas, where we see that potential, we encourage them to double-back and see how high they can take it," said Air Force Master Sgt. Jesse Boyd, Strike Now project coordinator.

For Ellis, the really good ideas share a common theme.

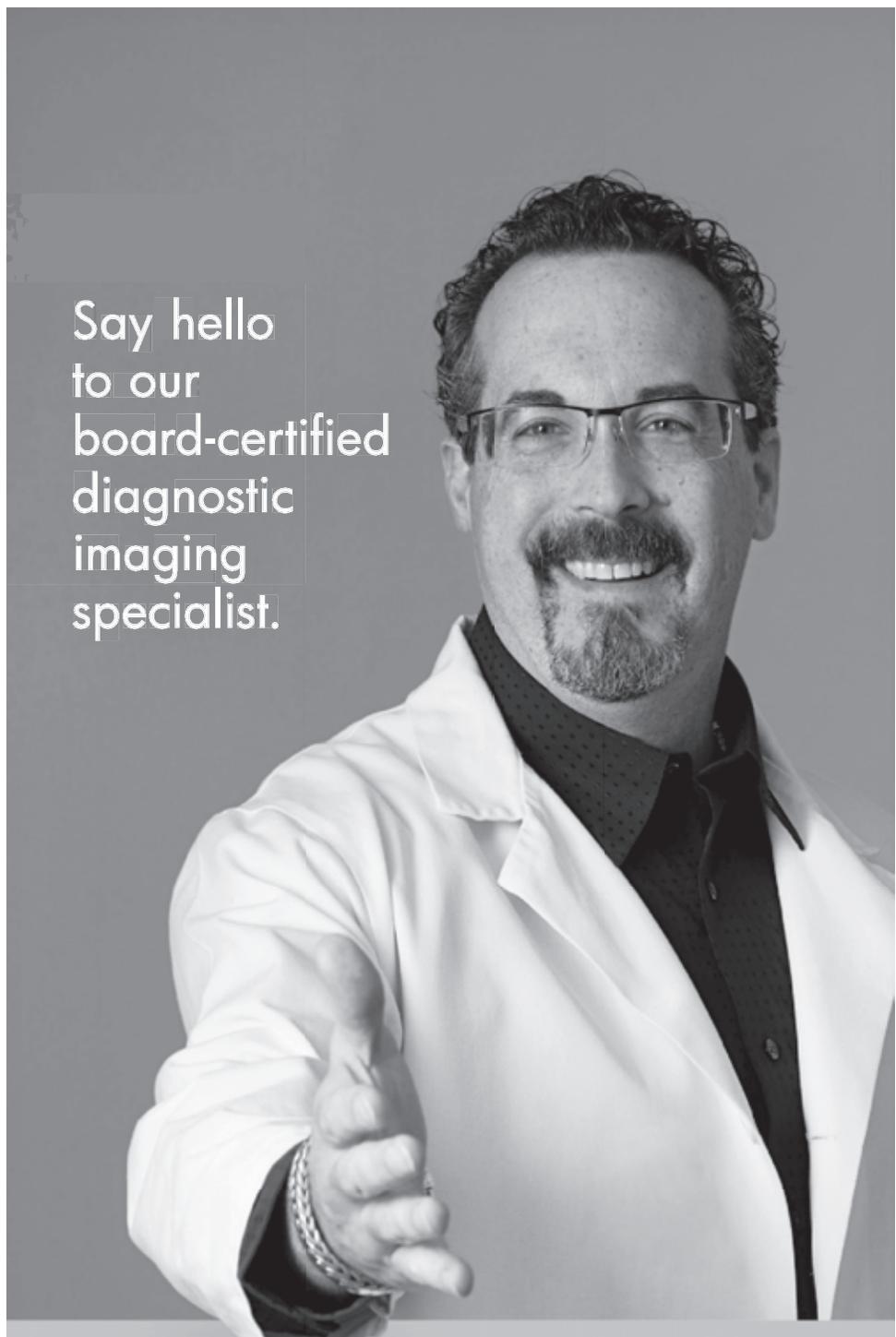
"The ideas that are spring-loaded for success are those which have really been thought out," Ellis said. "The people submitting them don't just bring up a problem, they envision a solution. They say 'Here's the issue I see, and here's how I would fix it.' Those are the people who are successful in the program."

Any AFGSC Airman wishing to submit an idea may do so through the Strike Now Website, <https://www.afgscstrikenow.com>, which has been made accessible not only by computer but also by mobile platforms such as tablets or smartphones running Apple iOS or Android operating systems. This allows for Airmen to submit suggestions at any time, and wherever they may be, improving the program's impact by making it easier for Airmen working out in the field to contribute.

Strike Now has been successful largely due to the fact that the review process is run from a "how can we make this work?" standpoint rather than utilizing a "no, because..." method, Ellis said.

"If someone has a better way of doing things and that idea has merit, the program's responsibility is to clear the barriers that stand in the way," Ellis said. "That's why Strike Now was created – to help the good ideas rise to the top."

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Acting SecAF Continued from Page 2

it occurred, though he was fortunate enough to be present when the president signed the historic document.

Among the celebrations and congratulations, he said, many supporters asked what it was like to be in the Pentagon after the repeal.

"I answered honestly, and I think disappointingly, that ... we went back to the building, and in my view, the building had already moved on past the decision and we talked about what we talk about every single day: the budget," he said.

Fanning also said he's received a bit of attention since he was nominated to be undersecretary of the Air Force -- not all of it welcome, some quite negative, and some that

he described as "rather imaginative."
"Many have speculated as to my agenda, what color I'll paint the planes, what designs I have on the uniforms," he said. But like almost everyone else, he added, he remains focused on simply doing his job, and chiding comments are dwarfed by the outpouring of support he's received in and out of the Pentagon.

"It reminds me that, as important as events like this are for our community, they're also important opportunities for our allies to identify themselves and to let us know they're right alongside us," Fanning said. "Events like this give voice not just to us, but to those who support us."

Teeing off!



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Keenan Berry
Brigadier Gen. Thomas Bussiere, 509th Bomb Wing commander, tees off at the 2013 Bomb Wing Commander's Community Appreciation Golf Tournament at Royal Oaks Golf Course, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. The tournament was planned as a way to show Whiteman's appreciation for all those in the surrounding community who support the base and the Airmen and civilians who call it home.

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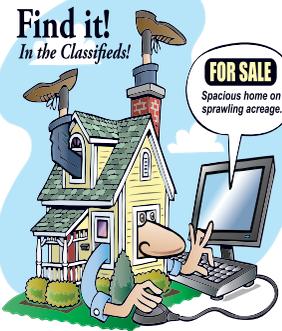
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