

# WARRIOR



## INSIDE:

- AF MARATHON RUNNERS
- WHITEMAN WANDERER
- MILITARY PAY RAISES

REMINDER:  
SECURITY EXERCISE  
FROM 0730-1130  
WED. AUG. 29  
AT IKE SKELTON PARK

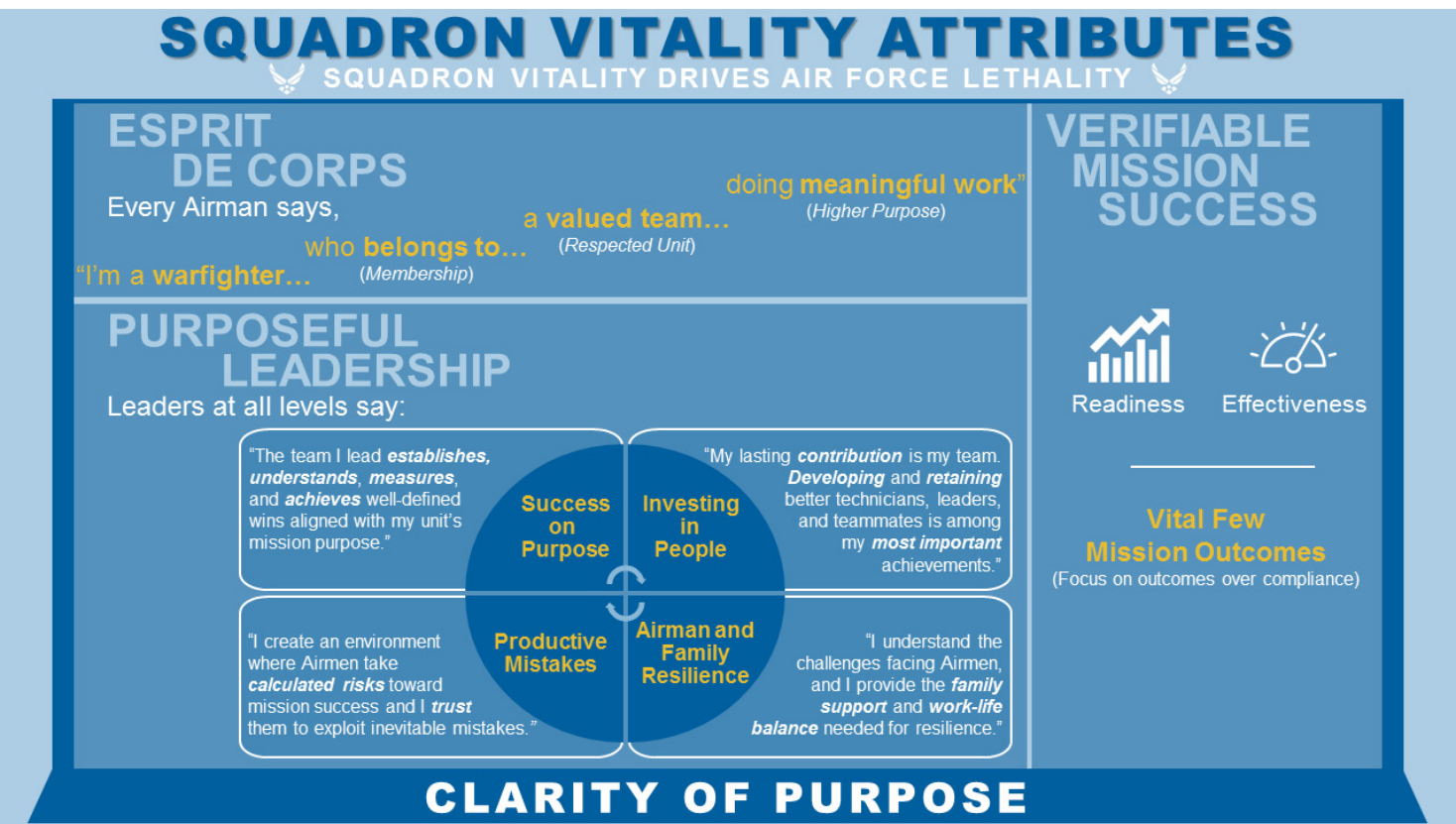


SPECIAL TACTICS AIRMAN RECOGNIZED FOR HEROISM ▶ PG. 3

# MEDAL OF HONOR



# Air Force outlines progress on Squadron revitalization



By Tech. Sgt. Robert Barnett  
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

**WASHINGTON (AFNS)**— Since Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David L. Goldfein announced his initiative to revitalize squadrons, the assigned task force produced many visible changes and is moving forward with additional changes in an implementation plan.

"The squadron is the beating heart of the United States Air Force; our most essential team," Goldfein said in a letter to Airmen. "Our vision demands that 'squadrons be highly capable, expeditionary teams who can successfully defend our nation's interests in both today's and tomorrow's complex operating environments.'"

The task force conducted an Air Force-wide review, driven by Airmen in the field, to promote best practices and identify improvements. Consisting of Total Force Airmen from diverse backgrounds, they reviewed survey data and gathered inputs from across the Air Force through online crowd sourcing and face-to-face discussions with nearly 4,000 individuals, including spouses, from 25 different bases representing all major commands, Reserve, and National Guard.

Along the way, the Air Force implemented improvements to include authorizations to rebuild the command support staffs, while addressing the manning for superintendents. Additionally, enlisted professional military education has been improved, performance report requirements have been removed for the rank of airman first class, and computer-based and ancillary training requirements have been reduced, all based on the feedback from Airmen.

"This is incredibly humbling and exciting to be a part of because if we can get this right, we can hopefully impact the lethality and effectiveness of the entire Air Force," said Col. Russell Williford, current director of the task force to revitalizing squadrons task force. "We can also make Airmen's lives better and more fulfilled."

The team further analyzed the feedback to develop a comprehensive model for squadron vitality.

According to the findings indicated in the implementation plan, Williford said there are three key attributes to a successful squadron: verifiable mission success, purposeful leadership and esprit de corps.

These key attributes are being implemented through three lines of effort: focusing on the mission, strengthening leadership and culture, and taking care of Airmen and families.

## Focus on the mission

Verifiable mission success means aligning a clearly stated mission purpose from the command-level down to each task an Airman performs. Highly successful squadrons clearly define, understand, and communicate their purpose, asking every member of the squadron "why?" until the purpose behind every task is aligned to mission success.

While this may appear rather easy, the team found that many units struggled with clearly defining and communicating their purpose.

Verifiable mission success drives a culture described as "mission command" in which members of the unit clearly understand why their unit exists; therefore, their efforts are directly in-line with mission outcomes, which enables empowerment throughout the unit.

The plan also calls for better enabling squadron leaders to focus on their missions. For example, support staffs will work with commanders to push daily- decision authority to the lowest practical level while scrubbing overly restrictive Air Force Instructions and updating organization models to align with the new National Defense Strategy.

This helps every Airman gain a clarity of purpose to understand how they contribute, add value and are valued.

## Strengthening squadron leadership and culture

Purposeful leadership means valuing mission outcomes, investing time in Airmen development, and creating an environment where taking smart risks is rewarded and to find better ways of getting the mission done, seizing the opportunity to learn from mistakes.

Starting in the fall, an Air University squadron commander foundational course will be launched to better prepare officers (and civilians for squadron-like units) for purposeful command.

"The first time an Airman leads a large team is as a flight chief or a flight commander," Williford said. "So, flight commander and flight chief courses will be developed at the wing-level to help enable leaders to focus on the key skills to succeed in this first essential level of leadership."

In addition, boosting mental and physical fitness is a key ingredient of the leadership and culture line of effort. While there will be no changes to physical fitness standards and tests, squadron leadership gains authority for administering physical fitness tests., and Meanwhile, wing commanders will build incentive programs to reward innovative unit-level fitness programs that increase Airmen readiness.

## Taking care of Airmen and their families

Williford said the third, esprit de corps, may happen naturally when the previous two are in place.

"It means belonging to a group that's respected, and they are accomplishing something that's larger than themselves," he said. "They are warfighters who belong to a valued team doing meaningful work. That alignment of purpose to the respective unit, to being a member of this group is what we found creates a high level of esprit de corps."

The plan includes helping squadrons better support Airmen and families by building on their resilience and, strengthening family support programs and community connections.

"We tangibly discovered that focusing on supporting families gave the Airmen more focus at work," Williford said. "An Airman who is fulfilled and has a good work-life balance comes to work more focused."

"The process of being able to achieve that long-term vision that the CSAF and the Secretary of the Air Force have, that's incredibly exciting," he continued. "We know it's a long process to get there, but we're excited to be a part of it."

## THE WARRIOR

### Editorial Staff

Brig. Gen. John J. Nichols  
509th Bomb Wing Commander

Capt. Keenan Kunst  
Chief, Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Joel Pfeister  
Editor

Tech. Sgt. Alexander Riedel  
Brye Steeves  
Copy Editors

Staff Sgt. Danielle Quilla  
Senior Airman Jovan Banks  
Airman 1st Class Taylor Phifer  
Photojournalists

The Sedalia Democrat  
Layout and Design

Published by the **Sedalia Democrat**, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with Whiteman Air Force Base.

This civilian enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of **The Warrior** are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services advertised by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or the **Sedalia Democrat**.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs office of 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

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 do not guarantee publication.

For more information, call the Warrior office at 660-687-5727, email 509th.bw.pa@us.af.mil, fax 660-687-7948, or write to us at Whiteman Warrior, 509th Bomb Wing, 509th Spirit Blvd. Suite 116, Whiteman AFB, Mo., 65305.

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

## On the cover

U.S. Air Force photo  
**U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John A. Chapman, a USAF special tactics combat controller, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism while deployed in Afghanistan. His family was presented the Medal of Honor during a ceremony August 22. Chapman was part of a joint special operations reconnaissance team that came under overwhelming enemy fire during a heroic rescue attempt on Takur Ghar mountain, Afghanistan, on March 4, 2002. Story on Page 3.**



# Medal of Honor presented to Tech. Sgt. John Chapman's family



U.S. Air Force photo by Wayne A. Clark

Valerie Nessel, the spouse of the late Tech. Sgt. John Chapman, stands as the citation is read before receiving the Medal of Honor from President Donald J. Trump during a ceremony at the White House in Washington, D.C., Aug. 22, 2018. Chapman was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for actions on Takur Ghar mountain in Afghanistan on March 4, 2002, when his elite special operations team was ambushed by the enemy and came under heavy fire from multiple directions. Chapman immediately charged an enemy bunker through thigh-deep snow and killed all enemy occupants. Courageously moving from cover to assault a second machine gun bunker, he was injured by enemy fire. Despite severe wounds, he fought relentlessly, sustaining a violent engagement with multiple enemy personnel before making the ultimate sacrifice. With his last actions, he saved the lives of his teammates.

## From the office of Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- On what would have been their 26th wedding anniversary, Tech. Sgt. John Chapman's widow, Valerie Nessel, accepted his Medal of Honor from President Donald Trump during a ceremony at the White House Aug. 22.

"We are gathered together this afternoon to pay tribute to a fallen warrior, a great warrior...and to award him with our nation's highest and most revered military honor," Trump said.

Fighting in the early morning hours through brisk air and deep snow, Chapman sacrificed his own life to preserve the lives of his teammates during the Battle of Takur Ghar, Afghanistan, on March 4, 2002.

"[John] would want to recognize the other men who lost their lives," Valerie said in a previous interview. "Even though he did something he was awarded the Medal of Honor for, he would not want the other guys to be forgotten -- they were part of the team together. I think he would say his Medal of Honor was not just for him, but for all of the guys who were lost."

Chapman was originally awarded the Air Force Cross for his actions; however, following a review of the Air Force Cross and Silver Star recipients which was directed by then-Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, Deborah James, then-Secretary of the Air Force, recommended Chapman's Air Force Cross be upgraded to the Medal of Honor.

"John was always selfless -- it didn't just emerge at Takur Ghar -- he had always been selfless and highly competent, and thank God for all those qualities," retired Air Force Col. Ken Rodriguez, Chapman's commander at the time of the battle, said in a previous interview. "He could have hunkered down in the bunker and waited for the (Quick Reaction

See Chapman, Page 14.

## Team Whiteman gathers to honor Medal of Honor recipient, can watch Air Force ceremony today



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jovan Banks

### From 509th Bomb Wing staff reports

Airmen from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., gathered on Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, for a live-stream event as President Donald Trump presented the family of Tech. Sgt. John Chapman with the Medal of Honor.

Chapman died during the Battle of Takur Ghar, Afghanistan, in 2002. He is the first Airman to receive the award since the Vietnam War.

An additional Air Force ceremony will be live-streamed today at 9 a.m. today at the Whiteman Air Force Base Professional Development Center. There are 144 seats available.

The Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson, Chief of Staff of the Air Force David Goldfein and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright will speak at the presentation. Whiteman Air Force Base leadership encourages Airmen to watch the event.

Civilian job vacancy at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri:

**USAJOBS**  
"WORKING FOR AMERICA"

Civilian job vacancy at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri:

Position: Architect

Work schedule: full time

Pay scale and grade: GS-12

Salary: \$73,840 to \$95,991

per year

Closing date: 8/29/2018

Appointment type: permanent

For more information, including

eligibilities, duties, requirements,

and to apply, please visit

[www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).



**U.S. AIR FORCE**  
**EagleEyes**

**WATCH.REPORT.PROTECT.**

U.S. Air Force Eagle Eyes provides service members and civilians a safe, discreet and anonymous option to report criminal information, counterintelligence indicators or force protection concerns.

To submit a web tip go to the AFOSI web page at <http://www.osi.af.mil>.

How to report an anonymous tip using a smart phone:

1. Open the smart phone app
2. Manually select an agency
3. Choose USA then Federal Agency then select AFOSI

4. Create a passport, select New Tip and fill out the form with as much information as possible.

How to report an anonymous tip via text message:

Text "AFOSI" plus your tip information to 274637 (CRIMES).

## WEATHER

### Friday

Chance of Storms

Hi 89

Lo 66

### Saturday

Sunny

Hi 94

Lo 72

### Sunday

Mostly Sunny

Hi 94

Lo 74

### Monday

Sunny

Hi 93

Lo 73



## Reel Time Theaters

*We're saving a seat for you.*

**FRIDAY, AUG. 24 • 7 p.m.**

**SATURDAY, AUG. 25 • 7 p.m.**

Teen Titans Go! To the Movies (PG)

Blindspotting (R)

Adults - \$7.00, children - \$4.75

Adults - \$7.00

**SUNDAY, AUG. 26 • 3 p.m.**

Teen Titans Go! To the Movies (PG)

Adults - \$7.00, children - \$4.75

**YOU  
CAN  
NEVER  
B-2  
SAFE**

Rain Date  
Saturday, September 22, 2018  
More Info Call 660-723-3970

**Lincoln Fly-In**



ØR2

Rain Date  
Saturday, September 22, 2018  
More Info Call 660-723-3970

# Saturday, September 8, 2018

## Lincoln, Missouri

*All Proceeds Will Be Used To Make Improvements Required By The FAA & To Preserve The Field, As It Is One Of The Few Grass Air Fields Left In The State*

**For More Information: 660-547-2718, 660-723-3970**

### Fly-In Celebration For Lincoln's 150th Anniversary

**Meals Served To Public & Pilots - Hanger #3**  
**Breakfast 7 A.M. to 10 A.M. • Lunch 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.**  
**All Types Aircraft Welcome • Free Will Donation**

• Door Prizes From Local Merchants & Restaurants •

**Located Behind Estes Drive-In On 65 Highway, Lincoln, Missouri - 101 Airport Road**



• No Alcohol On Premises  
• Not Responsible For Accidents



2018 131ST AMXS

## CAR SHOW

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH 5PM**

**\*\*BASE ACCESS REQUIRED\*\***

-IMPORT  
-TRUCK/SUV

-MOTORCYCLE  
-CLASSIC  
(6CYL AND UNDER)

-MUSCLE V8+  
-SPORT COMPACT

**EXHAUST COMPETITION! PEOPLE'S CHOICE!**

**PARKING LOT WEST OF BASE TOWER OFF OF ARNOLD AVE/NEAR ECP3**

VEHICLE ENTRY PRICES:  
AMN-\$5  
NCO/CIVILIAN-\$10  
SNO/OFFICER-\$15  
REGISTER AT THE EVENT

FOOD/DRINK  
BBQ FOOD TRUCK  
WILL BE AVAILABLE

B-2 STATIC DISPLAY

**POC: ROBERT FRAGOSO - ROBERT.FRAGOSO.1@US.AF.MIL**



# Be on the lookout for ticks during Missouri summer, early fall

By Airman 1st Class Taylor Phifer  
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Summertime brings more outdoor activities like camping and hiking, but the warm weather also invites ticks and other unfriendly pests that can carry harmful diseases.

## What ticks are near me and what diseases can they cause?

Ticks are small arachnids that feed off the blood of a human or an animal. Missouri is home to many tick species, but the most common include the lone star tick, the American dog tick and the black-legged tick.

These tiny vampires can carry diseases like the Heartland virus and the Bourbon virus. More common bacterial infections include Rocky Mountain spotted fever, which can cause fever, headache, abdominal pain, vomiting and muscle pain. The infection can be fatal if not treated properly. Another well-known bacterial infection is Lyme disease, which can cause fever, chills, headache, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, muscle and joint aches. In most cases, the tick must be attached to its host for over 24 hours to be able to transmit the bacteria – so ticks need to be properly removed as soon as possible.

## How can I protect myself and avoid tick bites?

For the prevention of tick-borne diseases, public health professionals recommend:

- Using repellent, especially when tracking through woodsy or grassy areas. Look for repellent that contains 20 percent or more of DEET, picaridin or IR3535 on exposed skin, which is also safe for pregnant women and children older than two months.
- Wearing protective clothing, long sleeves and pants that can be tucked into boots, as well as densely woven or mesh clothing to reduce the likelihood of being bitten. Additionally, ticks are easier to spot on light-colored clothing.
- Checking yourself and others. There is a greater chance of infection with a tick-borne germ the longer an infected tick is attached to the host. So, it's best to periodically check for ticks while you're still outdoors, especially after you have passed through vegetation and wooded areas. It's also a good idea to shower and wash your clothes after being outdoors. Lastly, don't forget to check your pets before bringing them inside – ticks may hitch a ride and fall off indoors.

## What should I do if I find an attached tick?

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grab an attached tick's head close to the skin and pull up with a steady motion until the tick is removed.
- Do not dig out tick mouthparts that are embedded in the skin. Clean the bite and watch for signs of an infection. Normally, the skin will expel embedded tick mouthparts similar to expelling a splinter.
- A tick can be killed by wrapping it in tape and then discarding it in the trash.
- Mark your calendar on the day you found the tick in case you have symptoms later.

For most people, symptoms of Missouri's tick-borne diseases usually appear less than two weeks after an infected tick bite. Seek medical attention if you get a sudden fever with chills, severe headache, fatigue or muscle aches after removing a tick.

For more information about tick-borne diseases and tick-bite prevention, contact Whiteman AFB Public Health at 660-687-2179.

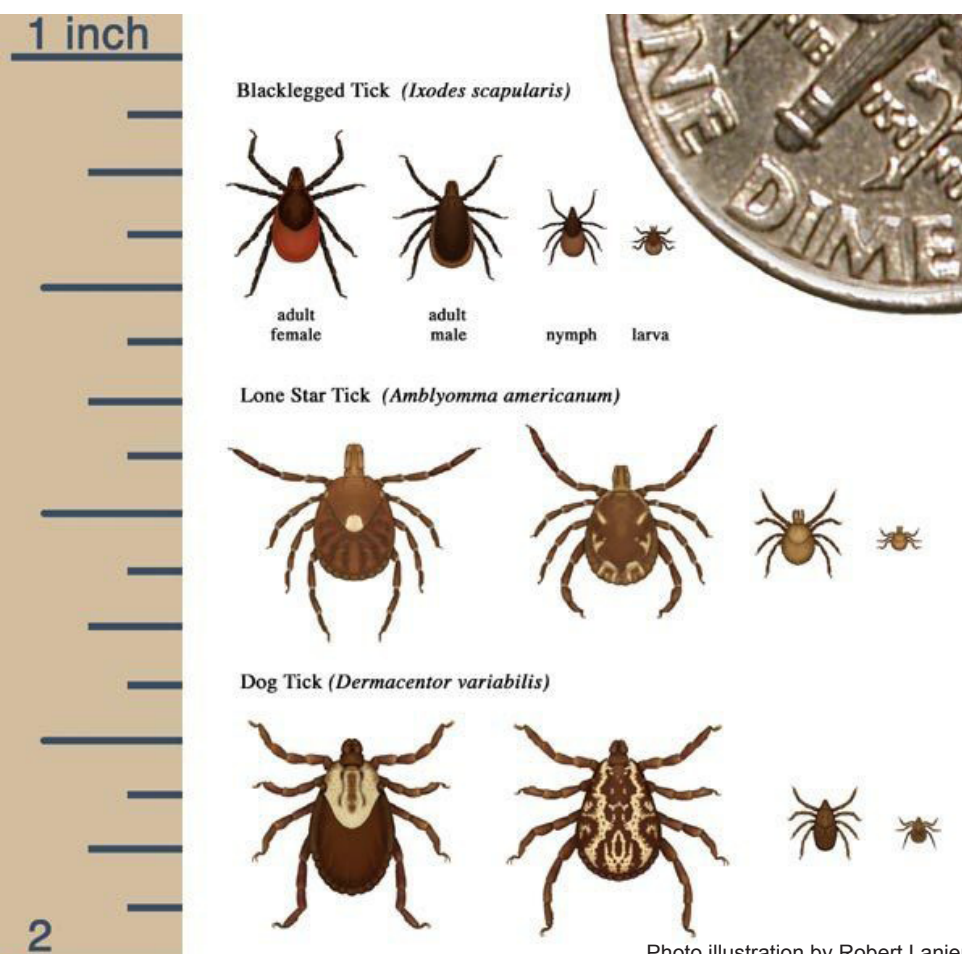


Photo illustration by Robert Lanier



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Patrick Kirby, 40th Public Affairs Detachment

A vial full of ticks found by the biologists from Fort Campbell Fish and Wildlife at Fort Campbell, Ky. June 4. The biologists perform tick checks whenever they return from the field and place the ticks in the vial to go to the Environmental Health Center.

LEFT: This is a photo illustration of a black-legged tick, a lone star tick, and a dog tick.



# HOLIDAYS FOR HEROES

WHO: OPEN TO ALL

WHAT: EVERY MAJOR HOLIDAY, COME SHARE AND HEAR STORIES WHILE ENJOYING HOMEMADE COOKIES

WHERE: MISSOURI VETERAN'S HOME  
1300 VETERANS RD., WARRENSBURG, MO. 64093

WHEN: SEPT. 1, 2018 FROM 10 - 11 A.M.

HOW: VOLUNTEER AT THE VETERANS HOME OR DROP OFF BAKED GOODS AT BLDG. 509, RM. 206, WAFB, ON AUG. 30, 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT STAFF SGT. ERIC ZIMMERMAN AT (660) 687-6589 OR [ERIC.ZIMMERMAN.6@US.AF.MIL](mailto:ERIC.ZIMMERMAN.6@US.AF.MIL)



# Trump signs \$717 billion defense policy bill into law, authorizes military pay increase



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

President Donald Trump smiles during a signing ceremony for a \$717 billion defense policy bill named for Sen. John McCain, Monday, Aug. 13, 2018, in Fort Drum, N.Y.

By Claudia Grisales  
STARS AND STRIPES

**WASHINGTON** — President Donald Trump signed into law a \$717 billion defense policy bill on Aug. 13, which authorizes a wave of significant military increases, including service members' biggest pay boost in nearly a decade, higher troop levels, and new equipment and weapons for the upcoming fiscal year.

The 2019 National Defense Authorization Act also ushers through a series of new reforms and policy efforts, from revamping the military's "up or out" promotion system to new policies to reigning in sexual misconduct and domestic abuse among the ranks.

Trump signed the NDAA, or H.R. 5515, during a visit to Fort Drum in upstate New York.

"After years of devastating cuts, we are rebuilding our military like we never have before," Trump said after an introduction by Vice President Mike Pence at the base that houses the Army's 10th Mountain Division. "Our bases and vital equipment were allowed to fall into a state of disrepair ... but those days are over."

Trump's signature marks the first on-time passage of the NDAA in 22 years with the start of the 2019 fiscal year on Oct. 1. With a two-year spending deal that lifted federal budget caps, midterm elections in the fall and a more experienced White House administration, lawmakers were eager to pass the measure earlier than in recent years.

For example, they reached a deal earlier this year to break imposed budget caps to increase defense spending limits to more than \$700 billion for 2019. The move helped speed up

negotiations for this year's NDAA.

"I appreciate President Trump's commitment to strengthening our military, as evidenced by his signing this bill," said Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. "This action, and the large votes in both the House and Senate, confirm that overwhelming majorities of both parties can work together on behalf of the men and women who serve our nation in the Armed Forces and their families."

The legislation was named for ailing Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who has been battling brain cancer and away from Washington since December.

"I'm humbled that my colleagues in Congress chose to designate this bill in my name," McCain said in a statement. "Serving as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and working on behalf of America's brave service members has been one of the greatest honors of my life."

The NDAA, which directs policy and spending plans for the Defense Department, authorizes a 2.6 percent pay raise for service members, the largest increase in nine years, as well as new purchases of aircrafts, ships, submarines and weapons.

The plan builds on the momentum to increase the size and might of the military in response to China and Russia's growing capabilities as laid out in Trump's \$686 billion defense budget proposed earlier this year. The Trump request for fiscal year included an increase of more than 15,000 active duty troops, which lawmakers matched in the NDAA.

"This measure continues to rebuild and repair our military while making needed reforms in the Pentagon," Thornberry said. "It takes important steps to confront the aggressive be-

havior of Russia, China and others. Most of all, it helps ensure that our troops get what they need to carry out the missions they are assigned. It is now essential that we follow this bill with matching appropriations before the beginning of the fiscal year."

On Aug. 1, the Senate passed the NDAA in an 87 to 10 floor vote. In July, the House passed the massive bill in a vote of 359 to 54. Earlier that month, a joint panel of House and Senate lawmakers reached a deal on the NDAA after weeks of negotiations and congressional hearings to craft the measure.

The bill dictates some steps towards creating a Space Force, but stopped short of Trump's calls for a new military service. The White House said last week that the new service could be created by 2020 through separate legislation.

But there's little clarity when lawmakers could reach a deal on an appropriations bill that actually funds the NDAA.

In June, the House, which is now on recess until Sept. 4, passed its defense appropriations measure, H.R. 6157, in a vote of 359 to 49. The Senate, which returns Aug. 15 from an abbreviated recess, has yet to debate the matter.

Trump also has threatened not to sign off on government spending plans if there isn't sufficient money to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. This, as Republican lawmakers are directing hearings and votes on his Supreme Court nominee, Judge Brett Kavanaugh, in the coming weeks, could divert Capitol Hill from finishing up a NDAA funding measure on time.

Without such a spending measure in place by Oct. 1, lawmakers might need to pass a temporary budget measure, which is known as a continuing resolution, to keep the government afloat.



# Whiteman Wanderer: From the ‘roof of the world’ to world’s greatest Air Force

By Airman 1st Class Taylor Phifer  
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

His passion for adventures and traveling started as a young child. Today, it helps him do his job as an Airman.

Born in Nepal, U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, could be found running up and down the mountain paths every day. Even after leaving the roof of the world, and moving across the globe to the United States, his desire for exploring only grew larger.

After graduating high school, Bhandari went off to college to find himself. While in college, Bhandari knew he wanted more out of life. So, he headed off to Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, on yet another journey, this time with the U.S. military.

Now in the Air Force, Bhandari takes a few weeks out of each year to venture to new places around the world to soak up new sights and cultures.

“My wife and I try to explore new places as much as we can and go on one big trip at least once a year,” Bhandari said. “Both of us have high-stress jobs and we wanted to take this trip as a way to get away and hit the reset button.”

“Going on exotic adventures helps us

bond and grow together,” he continued. “We believe that exploring new places gives you a dynamic advantage in understanding nature, culture and your spiritual well-being.”

Bhandari said his most recent trip to Iceland and the state of Utah with his wife, Samita, was an adventure they both needed – and that taught them a lot.

The couple spent 16 days exploring new places while making lasting memories. The Bhandaris spent the first week visiting Iceland on a road trip, traveling the famed Iceland Ring Road, a more-than-800-mile road that runs around the island nation and connects most of the inhabited parts of the country. The couple explored Iceland’s unique and diverse landscapes, from oceans and waterfalls to mountains and glaciers.

“In Iceland, we traveled in a camper so we could explore as much as possible in a week,” Bhandari said. “While there, we were able to see the midnight sun, several world-famous waterfalls and wild horses everywhere. We traveled through a black sand beach on the South Coast to visit the crash site of a U.S. Navy Douglas Super DC-3 at Sólheimasandur.”

After what most would consider a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Iceland, the couple spent the second half of the trip in Utah hiking up Angels Landing in Zion National Park and King’s Peak ,

the highest peak in Utah.

“During our hikes in Utah, I was astonished as I witnessed the change in the landscape,” Bhandari said. “The week before I was in the Arctic and suddenly I was in the desert of Utah. And to see the drastic differences in such a short time made me appreciate nature even more.”

Hiking and traveling the world has not only helped Bhandari and his wife grow their relationship, but has also helped with his military career by enhancing his ability to adapt to different situations and understand different cultures around the world, he said.

“Being in the military demands cross-cultural competence and understanding of geography since we are everywhere in the world,” Bhandari said. “I think hiking and traveling has helped me strengthen my resiliency and world perspectives, which is crucial in the military.”

Along with benefiting his own career, Bhandari hopes to inspire other Airmen to stay active and explore the world. Bhandari plans to continue his treks around the world and document his journeys on his YouTube channel.

“I know that life is short and I want to experience as much of our world as I can,” Bhandari said. “Exploring new places has always been my passion, and I refuse to grow old and regret the things I didn’t do when I had the chance.”



Courtesy photo  
U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, poses for a photo at Dettifoss waterfall in Vatnajökull National Park on June 28, 2018. Dettifoss is 144 feet high and is known to be the most powerful waterfall in Europe.



Courtesy photo  
U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, and his wife, Samita Bhandari, relax in the Hrunalaug hot spring in Iceland on June 30, 2018. During a week in Iceland, the couple visited famous hot springs, waterfalls, glaciers and more.



Courtesy photo  
U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, sits for a photo on top of Angel's Landing at Zion National Park, Utah, July 9, 2018. Bhandari hiked up Angel's Landing and King's Peak during his weeklong trip to Utah.



Courtesy photo  
An aerial photo of Hengifoss Waterfall in East Iceland on June 27, 2018. Hengifoss is one of the highest waterfalls in Iceland at 420 feet. The waterfall is surrounded with black basalt and thin layers of red clay.



Courtesy photo  
U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, observes the U.S. Navy Douglas Super DC-3 crash site on the black beach at Sólheimasandur, Iceland on June 26, 2018. The aircraft was forced to crash land in 1973, all crew members survived, but the aircraft was abandoned and remains on the beach.



Courtesy photo  
An aerial photo of the mountain ranges near Hofn, Iceland on June 26, 2018. Hofn, known as an Icelandic fishing town in Southeast Iceland, offers scenery of Vatnajökull National Park which is the largest national park in Europe.



Courtesy photo  
U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sukh Bhandari, an aerospace ground equipment journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, and his wife, Samita Bhandari, stop for a photo during a hike to the Hengifoss waterfall in Iceland on June 27, 2018. Bhandari and his wife spent a week exploring Iceland followed by a week of hiking in Utah to experience the diverse landscapes.



# Whiteman runners to participate in AF Marathon

By Senior Airman Jovan Banks

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Runners from Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri will have an opportunity to participate in this year's official Air Force marathon scheduled to take place in September at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

The Air Force Marathon, running strong for 20 years, challenges racers to a 26.6-mile course featuring historical Air Force landmarks along the way. Runners can participate in a wheelchair, 5K, 10K, half marathon or full marathon events. The race offers an experience for athletes at all levels from all over the world.

This year, Master Sgt. Teresa Chavez, a security manager assigned to the 509th Maintenance Group, Capt. Derek Ecklebe, a pilot assigned to the 13th Bomb Squadron and Senior Airman Demarcus Greene, a low-observable aircraft structural maintenance journeyman assigned to the 509th Maintenance Squadron, all look to make their mark on the run and challenge their personal bests.

The runners were individually selected to represent Team Whiteman, based on their past performances.

"I had to run fast," Chavez said jokingly. "I had to go through the process of a formal application via Air Force portal, which required you to submit a history of your run times."

All the runners have their own personal motivation for wanting to participate in the run, for Chavez and Ecklebe the idea of joining the team came from the aspiration of completing a goal.

"I had completed a few half marathons and really aspired to run the official Air Force Marathon while still on active duty," said Chavez.

"The Air Force Marathon has always been on to my bucket list of marathons to do," said Ecklebe.

Despite the runners' personal reasons for wanting to participate, the event is a team run and working together is something that will push them all forward.

"Being part of a team is a major motivation; to contribute to the success of the team, but also challenging myself to get a better time than last time," said Chavez.

"It makes me feel like a true athlete," said Greene. "Being with a group of people all passionate about running and coming together to accomplish a goal gets me excited."

Training is an important process in the days leading up to the event and could be the determining factor in the outcome of which team will finish first.

"I train every day in some fashion," said Greene. "I usually run four to five times a week with one or two days focusing on dynamic stretching through yoga."

"My mileage starts at about 40 miles per week and will work up to about 70 miles per week by the end of the training plan," said Ecklebe.

It takes more than just exercise to be ready when the time comes and to get through such a long run, according to the runners.

"Preparation is important but fitness only takes you so far," said Chavez. "It is the mental toughness that gets you through the last few miles."

"The beauty of long distance training is that you are indeed training your mind along with your body every time you complete a run," said Greene.

The runners' hard work and training earned them the opportunity to compete, and they look forward to returning to Whiteman as winners.

"I am honored and feel very privileged to have this opportunity," said Chavez. "I hope to contribute what I can to get AFGSC a 'W'."



U.S. Air Force graphic illustration by Senior Airman Jovan Banks



# Gen. Ray takes command of AF Global Strike



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Philip Bryant

Gen. Timothy Ray accepts the Air Force Global Strike Command guidon from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David L. Goldfein during a change of command ceremony at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., Aug. 21, 2018. AFGSC's mission is to provide strategic deterrence, global strike and combat support.



## Amended Notice of Intent for the Air Force Reserve Command F-35A Operational Beddown Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) F-35A Operational Beddown EIS (Vol. 83, No. 56 Federal Register, 12568, March 22, 2018). The NOI provided the public with instructions on how to submit scoping comments to the USAF in consideration of the four alternatives being considered, which include: Homestead Air Reserve Base, Homestead FL; Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, TX; Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, AZ; and Whiteman Air Force Base, Knob Noster, MO. The USAF has subsequently been made aware that the address provided for submittal of courier delivered public scoping comments (e.g., Federal Express or United Parcel Service) was incorrect. Consequently, the USAF is providing the correct address below and 10-working days to resubmit scoping comments from the time resubmittal instructions are published in the Federal Register. During this 10-working day period, the USAF is offering multiple ways in which comments can be resubmitted. Comments can be provided through the project website ([www.AFRC-F35A-Beddown.com](http://www.AFRC-F35A-Beddown.com)), via email to the email address provided below, and via regular mail or via courier to the addresses listed below. The website also provides additional information on the EIS and related materials. The USAF will consider all additional scoping comments submitted.

The 10-working day resubmittal period extends from 13 August 2018 with the publication of the amended NOI in the Federal Register and concludes 27 August 2018.

### ADDRESSES:

The address for courier delivered (e.g., Federal Express or United Parcel Service) public scoping comments is:  
AFCEC/CZN  
(ATTN: Mr. Hamid Kamalpour)  
3515 S. General McMullen Drive, Suite 155  
San Antonio, Texas 78226-1710

The address for U.S. Postal Service mail delivery:  
AFCEC/CZN  
(ATTN: Mr. Hamid Kamalpour)  
2261 Hughes Avenue, Suite 155  
JBSA-Lackland Air Force Base, Texas 78236-9853

### PUBLIC COMMENT

For more information or to submit written comments, please visit the project website at <https://www.AFRC-F35A-beddown.com> or contact:

Mr. Hamid Kamalpour, [hamid.kamalpour@us.af.mil](mailto:hamid.kamalpour@us.af.mil)

The USAF will accept comments at any time during the environmental impact analysis process. *However, to ensure the USAF has sufficient time to consider public input in the preparation of the Draft EIS, please submit comments by 27 August 2018.*



# Chapman

Continued from Page 3.

Force) and (Combat Search and Rescue) team to come in, but he assessed the situation and selflessly gave his life for them.”

Chapman enlisted in the Air Force Sept. 27, 1985, as an information systems operator, but felt called to be part of Air Force special operations. In 1989, he cross-trained to become an Air Force combat controller.

According to friends and family, Chapman had a tendency to make the difficult look effortless and consistently sought new challenges. Dating back to his high school days, he made the varsity soccer squad as a freshman. In his high school yearbook, Chapman quoted these words: “Give of yourself before taking of someone else.”

Chapman looked for a new challenge, which he found in combat control. This special operations training is more than two years long and amongst the most rigorous in the U.S. military; only about one in 10 Airmen who start the program graduate. From months of intense training to multiple joint schools – including military SCUBA, Army static-line and freefall, air traffic control, and combat control schools – Chapman is remembered as someone who could overcome any adversity.

“One remembers two types of students – the sharp ones and the really dull ones – and Chapman was in the sharp category,” said Ron Childress, a former Combat Control School instructor. “During one of his first days at Combat Control School, I noticed a slight smirk on his face like [the training] was too simple for him...and it was.”

Following Combat Control School, Chapman served with the 1721st Combat Control Squadron at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, where he met Valerie in 1992. They had two daughters, who were the center of Chapman’s world even when he was away from home – which was common in special operations.

“He would come home from a long trip and immediately have on his father hat – feeding, bathing, reading and getting his girls ready for bed,” said Chief Master Sgt. Michael West, who served with Chapman through Combat Control School, a three-year tour in Okinawa, Japan, and at Pope AFB. “They were his life and he was proud of them. To the Air Force he was a great hero...what I saw was a great father.”

## The Battle of Takur Ghar

In conjunction with Operation Anaconda in March 2002, small reconnaissance teams were tasked to establish observation posts in strategic locations in Afghanistan, and when able, direct U.S. airpower to destroy enemy targets. The mountain of Takur Ghar was an ideal spot for such an observation post, with excellent visibility to key locations.

For Chapman and his joint special operations teammates, the mission on the night of March 3 was to establish a reconnaissance position on Takur Ghar and report al-Qaida movement in the Sahi-Kowt area.

“This was a very high profile, no-fail job, and we

picked John,” said retired Air Force Col. Ken Rodriguez, Chapman’s commander at the time. “In a very high-caliber career field, with the highest quality of men – even then – John stood out as our guy.”

During the initial insertion onto Afghanistan’s Takur Ghar mountaintop on March 4, the MH-47 Chinook helicopter carrying Chapman and the joint special operations reconnaissance team was ambushed. A rocket-propelled grenade struck the helicopter and bullets ripped through the fuselage. The blast ripped through the left side of the Chinook, throwing Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Neil Roberts off the ramp of the helicopter onto the enemy-infested mountaintop below.

The severely damaged aircraft was unable to return for Roberts, and performed a controlled crash landing a few miles from the mountaintop. Thus began the chain of events that led to unparalleled acts of valor by numerous joint special operations forces, the deaths of seven

U.S. servicemen and now, 16 years later, the posthumous award of the Medal of Honor to Chapman.

Alone, against the elements and separated from his team with enemy personnel closing in, Roberts was in desperate need of support. The remaining joint special operations team members, fully aware of his precarious situation, immediately began planning a daring rescue attempt that included returning to the top of Takur Ghar where they had just taken heavy enemy fire.

As the team returned to Roberts’ last-known position, now on a second MH-47, the entrenched enemy forces immediately engaged the approaching helicopter with heavy fire.

The helicopter, although heavily damaged, was able to successfully offload the remaining special operations team members and return to base. Chapman, upon exiting the helicopter, immediately charged uphill through the snow toward enemy positions while under heavy fire from three directions.

Once on the ground, the team assessed the situation and moved quickly to the high ground. The most prominent cover and concealment on the hilltop were a large rock and tree. As they approached the tree, Chapman received fire from two enemy personnel in a fortified position. He returned fire, charged the enemy position and took out the enemy combatants within.

Almost immediately, the team encountered machine gun fire from another fortified enemy position only 12 meters away. Chapman deliberately moved into the open to engage the new enemy position. As he engaged the enemy, he was struck by a burst of gunfire and became critically injured.

Chapman regained his faculties and continued to fight despite his severe wounds. He sustained a violent engagement with multiple enemy fighters for over an hour before paying the ultimate sacrifice. Due to his remarkably heroic actions, Chapman is credited with saving the lives of his teammates.

(Staff Sgt. Ryan Conroy contributed to this story.)

