

RABBIT TALES



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Severe Winter Weather

Want instant updates on the base's operating status during severe weather? Like Tinker Air Force Base on Facebook or follow them on twitter. For all the info on base closures, visit <http://t.co/GDG8c1n2>.



@Team_Tinker



Tinker Air Force Base

This UTA in History

January 5, 1781 – American traitor and British Brigadier General Benedict Arnold enjoys his greatest success as a British commander on this day in 1781. Arnold's 1,600 largely Loyalist troops sailed up the James River at the beginning of January, eventually landing in Westover, Virginia. Leaving Westover on the afternoon of January 4, Arnold and his men arrived at the virtually undefended capital city of Richmond the next afternoon.

Virginia's governor, Thomas Jefferson, had frantically attempted to prepare the city for attack by moving all arms & other Military Stores records from the city to a foundry five miles outside Richmond. As news of Arnold's unexpectedly rapid approach reached him, Jefferson then tried to orchestrate their removal to Westham, seven miles further north. He was too late--Arnold's men quickly reached and burned the foundry and then proceeded towards Westham, which Jefferson had asked the formidable Prussian military advisor Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben to guard. Finding von Steuben, Arnold chose to return to Richmond, burning much of the city the following morning.

January 6, 1912 – New Mexico is admitted into the United States as the 47th state. Spanish explorers passed through the area that would become New Mexico in the early 16th century, encountering the well-preserved remains of a 13th-century Pueblo civilization. Exaggerated rumors about the hidden riches of these Pueblo cities encouraged the first full-scale Spanish expedition into New Mexico, led by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado in 1540. Instead of encountering the long-departed Pueblo people, the Spanish explorers met other indigenous groups, like the Apaches, who were fiercely resistant to the early Spanish missions and ranches in the area.

New Tricare Premiums Take Effect Jan. 1

New premium rates for Tricare Reserve Select and Tricare Retired Reserve will go into effect Jan. 1.

Monthly rates for member-only coverage under TRS will be \$51.62. That is down 5.3 percent from 2012 premiums. Rates for member and family coverage will be \$195.81 a month, a 1.5 percent increase over 2012 rates.

Premiums for member-only coverage under TRR will be \$402.11 a month, a decrease of 4.4 percent. Rates for member and family coverage will be \$969.10. That is down 5.7 percent over 2012 rates.

Those not currently covered under either program who want to initiate coverage must submit an initial two-month premium payment with a completed application form. After the initial premium payment, the regional contractor will provide a bill by the 10th of each month. Payments are due no later than the last day of each month and are applied to the following month of coverage.

Beginning Jan. 1, TRS and TRR premium payments will only be accepted by automatic payment.

Reservists Give Back To Local Vets

Members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing and 513th Air Control Group at Tinker Air Force Base surprised residents at the Norman Veterans Center on Dec. 22 with a holiday party.



World War II U.S. Navy veteran John Calvin Bailes talks with, from left, National Guardsman Samuel Wilson, Airman Lynne Lee and Col. Jeff Pickard at a holiday party Friday at the Norman Veterans Center given by the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base. (STEVE SISNEY, THE OKLAHOMAN)

Congress, AF finally reach budget compromise

by Brian Everstine and Jeff Schogol
Staff, Air Force Times

After a year of wrangling between Congress and the Air Force, lawmakers have agreed to a budget that would cut 4,860 airmen this fiscal year — about half as many as the Air Force wanted to eliminate.

The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act Conference Report calls for cutting 3,340 active-duty airmen, 1,000 airmen from the Air National Guard and 520 from the Reserve. That would restore 5,040 airmen jobs that had been slated to be cut this fiscal year, most of which would have come from the Guard.

Lawmakers also agreed to restore 91 aircraft that the Air Force wanted to retire, including 32 mobility aircraft. The service can decide whether those aircraft will be C-130s or C-27Js. Other aircraft saved include Global Hawk Block 30s.

The House passed the measure Dec. 20 and the Senate followed a day later.

The agreement between House and Senate negotiators marked the end of a long fight that began in January when the Defense Department laid out its plan to cut spending, including cuts to the Air Force. The Air Force's proposed fiscal 2013 budget called for cutting end strength by 9,900 airmen: 3,900 from the active-duty force, 5,100 from the Guard and 900 from the Reserve. That was part of a broader move to cut a total of 11,600 airmen over five years.

Going into the budget season, the Air Force argued that the active-duty force had borne the brunt of previous drawdowns and could not be cut much further, so most of the cuts had to come from the Guard and Reserve.

But the Air Force failed to understand that all politics is local and the service soon found itself locked in combat with lawmakers who were anxious to protect local National Guard units. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., pressed Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh to work more closely with the Guard during Welsh's July 19 confirmation hearing.

"The Air Force appears to have decided against re-

lying as much on the Air National Guard to provide tactical fighters and airlift capability," Levin said. "The firestorm which erupted from this proposal resulted in Congress stepping in."

Not everyone appreciated Congress stepping in. During a Dec. 18 speech, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta criticized Congress for pressuring the department to keep aircraft and force structure it does not need instead of investing in training and equipment. "Aircraft, ships, tanks, bases, even those that have outlived their usefulness have a natural political constituency," Panetta said at the National Press Club. "Readiness does not. What's more, readiness is too often sacrificed in favor of a larger and less effective force. I am determined to avoid that outcome."

In November, the Air Force offered to cut 9,500 airmen over five years: 6,200 active-duty airmen, and 1,400 from the Guard and 1,900 reservists, according to budget documents obtained by Air Force Times.

That offer did not make it into the bill's final language.

In the end, lawmakers decided to make modest cuts to the Guard and Reserve while maintaining most of the proposed cuts to the active-duty force.

The agreement also prevents the Air Force from retiring its 18 Block 30 Global Hawks in 2013 and requires it to use the aircraft through the end of 2014.

In January, Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter told lawmakers that the Global Hawk had become so expensive that it "priced itself out of the niche." Each of the Block 30 aircraft costs about \$215 million.

Initially, the Air Force proposed retiring 245 planes this fiscal year:

- 102 A-10s
- 44 C-130HJs
- 30 C-27Js
- 24 KC-130s
- 21 F-16s
- 18 RQ-4 Global Hawks (Block 30)
- 5 C-5As
- 1 E-8Cs

Fighter squadrons

All three fighter units to be cut in the U.S. will come from the Guard and Reserve: An A-10 and an F-16 squadron from the Guard, and an A-10 squadron from

the Reserve.

The Guard's 188th Fighter Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., is set to lose all of its 20 A-10s in fiscal 2013. The state's congressional delegation, led by Democratic Sen. Mark Pryor and Republican Sen. John Boozman, said that although no final decisions had been made, they will work to ensure the wing has a "vital mission in the USAF as it is modernized."

The Iowa Air National Guard's 132nd Fighter Wing in Des Moines is set to lose all 21 of its F-16Cs. Rep Tom Latham, R-Iowa, said that the conference committee had gone against the will of Congress in voting to cut the F-16s, and introduced legislation to stop the cuts.

"House and Senate negotiators erred in adopting the White House's wrongheaded plan to cut key Air Force assets without proper justification," Latham said in a statement. "Choosing to eliminate a historically successful and reliable fighter wing like the 132nd is a serious decision and to not weigh the consequences with a cost-benefit analysis and an evaluation of the national security implications is just foolish."

Iowa's Republican Sen. Charles Grassley told the Des Moines Register that there was virtually no chance of reversing the plan.

Iowa and Arkansas, in exchange for losing their F-16s and A-10s, will stand up unmanned aircraft squadrons.

The Reserve 917th Fighter Group at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., also is set to lose its 24 A-10Cs. The Air Force also plans to eliminate an active-duty A-10 squadron, the 81st Fighter Squadron, at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

Other fighter units originally targeted by the Air Force were spared, however. Both the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing and the Indiana Air National Guard's 122nd Fighter Wing are set to keep their A-10s under the new plan.

The proposed move of the 18th Aggressor Squadron from Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson is also on hold while the Air Force puts together an assessment of the move. The proposed move was blocked by Alaska Democratic Sen. Mark Begich, who went so far as to place temporary holds on two top generals — including Welsh's confirmation as chief of staff — until the service agreed to suspend the move.

Mobility fleet

The Air Force persuaded lawmakers to allow the service to finally decommission its aging C-5A Galaxies, but that can happen only after the Defense Department completes a review of the nation's mobility requirements, according to negotiators.

The service's quest to shut down its fleet of C-27J Spartans — the Air National Guard planes favored by the Army for medium airlift — may finally win approval from Congress. After a contentious battle in the spring, in which lawmakers chastised Air Force leaders for promoting the need for the new planes in 2011, only to return in 2012 and ask to eliminate them, Congress has given the service a choice: Restore either 32 C-27Js or C-130s to meet the airlift requirement.

"We did that in order to provide sufficient aircraft to meet the Army's fixed-wing direct support, time-sensitive airlift mission requirements," Levin told reporters.

MC-12 Liberty

The Air Force, in its original budget proposal, planned to move its MC-12 Liberty squadrons to the Air National Guard in 2014 to replace missions that would be cut, such as the A-10 mission at Fort Wayne, Ind., the C-27J mission in Mississippi and the C-130 mission in Texas.

Now all 42 of the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance planes will stay right where they are — with the active force at Beale Air Force Base, Calif.

In May, Carter, the deputy defense secretary, said the MC-12 provided a quick and effective solution to give troops more eyes in the sky, but

the Air Force will need fewer of the planes as it develops more sophisticated surveillance aircraft.

The twin-propeller Hawker Beechcraft King Air 350s are fitted with surveillance sensors and have an aircrew of four: two pilots, a sensor operator and a signals intelligence specialist.

"With respect to the [assets] that we put together quickly, under the pressure of combat, and which have been so amazingly successful, they do pose a managerial issue for us after the war because they were not essentially designed to last; they don't necessarily have all the features that we wanted in a force that will be

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File Photo: C-5 Galaxy



File Photo: MC-12 Liberty

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an enduring part of the force,” Carter said at a May 30 event at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C. “Liberty fleet is also very much of a quick-reaction type of fleet. These are the little turbo props with a lot of ISR and so forth on them, also essential, and we are going to keep a portion of that fleet,” he said.

Guard officials have said that the MC-12, currently providing ISR support in Afghanistan, could be useful in providing intelligence after domestic natural disasters.

Oversight commission

Congress also created the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, an independent group that will look at the appropriation of Air Force force structure. The Air Force lobbied Congress, saying that the service should take charge of the commission, but conference negotiators said that control of the group will remain on Capitol Hill.

The commission had been a focal point of state leaders who lobbied Congress on the budget. The bipartisan Council of Governors repeatedly criticized the Air Force for not including governors and adjutants general adequately in the budgetary process, and the commission is seen as a way to improve the relationship moving forward.

“It will be critical that the Guard is represented on this commission,” the National Governors Association said in a statement.

Working behind the scenes

National Guard proponents who had adamantly pushed for a freeze on all Air National Guard cuts came out largely in support of the new plan. The National Guard Association of the U.S. said the bill has both wins and losses for the Guard.

While the Guard will lose experienced A-10 and F-16 fighters and maintainers, the compromise will keep a larger number of guardsmen on duty.

That tradeoff might have swayed congressional leaders, who initially seemed unwilling to approve a new fiscal 2013 budget plan. The Air Force, however, was successful in winning approval for its revised plan from a small number of House negotiators, and that made the difference, NGAUS president retired Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett said.

970 AACCS Crew Wins AFRC Safety Award

by Tech. Sgt. Sandra Hatton
NCOIC, 513 ACG Public Affairs

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. -- Five Airmen assigned to the 513th Air Control Group won the Air Force Reserve’s Aircrew of Distinction Award for 2012.

Lt. Gen. James Jackson, commander of Air Force Reserve Command, announced AFRC’s safety award winners for fiscal year 2012 in a memorandum Nov. 19.

Major Stephen Williams, Captain Bradley Keen, Captain Adam Williams, First Lieutenant Christopher Jordan, and Master Sergeant Kim Robertson, all flight crew on flight Scout 12, were faced with multiple emergencies while flying a mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



In the middle of a combat sortie over Afghanistan, Scout 12’s number three engine began fluctuating outside normal limits. Although the crew was forced to shut down the engine and cut their mission short, they safely returned to their assigned air base and landed the E-3 Sentry.

Major Stephen Williams, the aircraft commander for Scout 12, credits crew resource management in helping the crew through the troubled flight.

“As the aircraft commander, your primary responsibility is safety of flight. Your job is to utilize all your resources, the crew being primary, and come up with a plan that mitigates risk,” he said. “The flight deck CRM was instrumental in the safe recovery of every soul on board that day.”

According to Williams, the crew walked away with some lessons learned. “It was nice to have one engineer reading the checklist while the other performed applicable steps,” he said.

Williams also credits the aircraft manufacturer, saying the jet “flew like a champ, kudos to Boeing!”

In The Spotlight



Master Sergeant Carla Barber

Unit: 513 Air Control Group Staff

Job title: NCOIC, Knowledge Operations Management (Wonder Woman)

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio (Go Buckeyes!!)

Place you’d like to visit: Sydney, Australia or Hawaii

Favorite part of your job: Pay Day!! And the end of the day.

Biggest pet peeve: When the trash can is full and no one has emptied it.

Little known fact about you: A picture of me was displayed on a billboard promoting “diversity” in Wichita, Kans. for my alma mater, Newman University.

Favorite memory from your time in the 513th: Moving from Bldg 1 to Bldg 240 into a brand new office.



Airman First Class Nick Endsley

Unit: 513th Maintenance Squadron

Job Title: RADAR

Hometown: Moore, Okla.

Place I’d Like to Visit: Japan

Favorite Part of My Job: I love learning about electronics. Energy is the foundation of our planet and I love learning about it.

Biggest Pet Peeve: When people can’t learn and ask the same questions over and over again.

Little Known Fact About Me: I grew up as a military brat, and I have traveled all over Europe.

Favorite Memory from Your Time in the 513th: When I first got to the shop, I had to stare at a T.O. for 14 hours trying to find answers for a pop quiz.

Where Are They Now?

Lieutenant Colonel T.J. Courtney

How long did you serve with the 513th?

I was a Traditional Reservist from December 2000 until March 2004. Interestingly enough, due to life's circumstances, I was one UTA away from signing out of the unit and the Air Force. It would be the October 2001 UTA, however, the events of 9/11 occurred and stop loss and the activation shortly ensued allowing me to continue serving with the 970th. In March of 2004, after being activated for two years, I decided to return to active duty.

What is your current position?

I am currently the Chief of Training, Wing Training Development

What was one of the biggest challenges you faced while assigned to the 513 ACG?

Definitely the activation post 9/11. Having just started in a surgical sales position for Johnson and Johnson, we closed on a house in Long Island, New York on September 3rd of 2001. I was told to report to Tinker by September 21st and that it would be a long term activation. I brought my family with me knowing it was going to be long term. After being in OKC for a couple of months, my wife decided to return to Long Island to get our van. Upon her arrival, she found that some pipes had burst and flooded the house. At that point, we decided to move our belongings to storage in Oklahoma and sell the house once the flood damage was repaired.

We parted ways just after Thanksgiving that year as the 970th deployed to ONW. On January 2nd just before a flight, I called home to see how things were. My wife then informed me that the workers had showed up at the house to work on it and it had basically burned to the ground. Apparently, the temperature of the oil heater had risen too high causing the wood in the boiler room to catch fire. Thankfully, we had already moved our family and belongings to Oklahoma. By far, the biggest challenge I had faced.

What is your favorite memory of the 513th?

The people!!!! How is it you can deploy to combat to a bare base, be housed in billeting called SARS Hill and still have a great time? What a phenomenal group of warriors. We merged from England, where we had to pay out of our own pockets to print out the Air Tasking Order for the first flight of the war, and Turkey where crews were held for a week, to a bare forward deployed base. We built the planning cell, fought the war while still finding time to enjoy many Brandy Sours at the bar.

I also remember the phenomenal trips to Turkey as we took over ONW. Memories of Page Lynn mixing his 'Tater Salad' with his bare mits, or New Year's eve celebrations with Otis and the crew. Many fond



memories of patio nights and guitar jammin' with Davey Jones or anytime Chuck "Pinkie" Diven stood up to give a brief or debrief. Always entertaining!

I had many great memories of the 970th. As a matter of fact, during my last active duty assignment, I took advantage of many opportunities to go back and fly with Thumper. A great squadron with incredibly "experienced" Airmen (yes Frosty Woo that is another way of calling you "mature").

Where are you now?

I now live in Germany on the Belgium/Netherlands border. Thumper alumni DavO Omstead is also here with me and we will soon be joined by Thumper Alumni Sam Helwig. We welcome any visitors that want to venture over to Europe and need a place to stay.

Safety Corner:

GET AHEAD OF THE WINTER FREEZE

Check these 10 tips off your list and get ahead of the winter freeze:

1. Ensure your furnace has been inspected and serviced by a qualified professional during the last 12 months. (A furnace should be serviced at least once a year.)
2. Do not overload electrical outlets. Overloaded electrical outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday fires. Avoid overloading outlets and plug only one high-wattage appliance into each outlet at a time.
3. Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights. More than three strands may not only blow a fuse, but can also cause a fire.
4. Keep tree fresh by watering daily. Dry trees are a serious fire hazard.
5. Use battery-operated candles. Candles start almost half of home decoration fires (NFPA).
6. Keep combustibles at least three feet from heat sources. A heat source that was too close to the decoration was a factor in half of home fires that began with decorations. (NFPA).



7. Protect cords from damage. To avoid shock or fire hazards, cords should never be pinched by furniture, forced into small spaces such as doors or windows, placed under rugs, located near heat sources, or attached by nails or staples.

8. Check decorations for a certification label. Decorations not bearing a label from an independent testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or Intertek (ETL) have not been tested for safety and could be hazardous.

9. Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking. Unattended cooking equipment is the leading cause of home cooking fires (NFPA).

10. Turn off, unplug, and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or leaving the house. Unattended candles are the cause of one in five home candle fires. Half of home fire deaths occur between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. (NFPA).

Remember:

SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU!

513ACG.Safety@tinker.af.mil

NORAD Volunteers track Santa's progress, answer calls

NORAD Public Affairs

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Most of the thousands of children who call the annual Santa-tracking operation at a Colorado Air Force Base on Christmas Eve ask the usual questions: “Where’s Santa, and when will he get here?”

So volunteer Sara Berghoff was caught off-guard Monday when a child called to see if Santa could be especially kind this year to the families affected by the Connecticut school shooting.

“I’m from Newtown, Connecticut, where the shooting was,” she remembers the child asking. “Is it possible that Santa can bring extra presents so I can deliver them to the families that lost kids?”

Sara, just 13 herself, was surprised but gathered her thoughts quickly. “If I can get ahold of him, I’ll try to get the message to him,” she told the child.

Sara was one of hundreds of volunteers at NORAD Tracks Santa who answered thousands of calls, program spokeswoman Marisa Novobilski said. Spokeswoman 1st Lt. Stacey Fenton said that as of midnight Tuesday, trackers answered more than 111,000 calls, breaking last year’s record of 107,000.



the country, telling some who asked that her favorite toys growing up were Barbie dolls and an Easy Bake oven.

She also received an invitation to visit an 11-year-old boy in Fort Worth, Texas, and a request to put her husband on the phone. “He’s not here right now. But you know what, I will tell him you asked about him. OK?” she replied.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command, a joint U.S.-Canada command responsible for protecting the skies over both nations, tracks Santa from its home at Peterson Air Force Base.

NORAD and its predecessor have been fielding Christmas Eve phone calls from children — and a few adults — since 1955. That’s when a newspaper ad listed the wrong phone number for kids to call Santa. Callers ended up getting the Continental Air Defense Command, which later became NORAD. CONAD commanders played along, and the ritual has been repeated every year since.

After 57 years, NORAD can predict what most kids will ask. Its 11-page playbook for volunteers includes a list of nearly 20 questions and answers, including how old is Santa (at least 16

centuries) and has Santa ever crashed into anything (no).

But kids still manage to ask the unexpected, including, “Does Santa leave presents for dogs?”



First lady Michelle Obama, who is spending the holidays with her family in Hawaii, also joined in answering calls as she has in recent years. She spent about 30 minutes talking with children from across