

January 2017

RABBIT TALES

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 513TH AIR CONTROL GROUP



**513th celebrates Christmas
Hawaiian style**

INSIDE:

WORDS FROM THE COMMANDER // HOW THE FY17 NDAA AFFECTS YOU

RABBIT TALES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

513th Update	3
Fit to Fight Hall of Fame	4
FY 17 NDAA Impact on Airmen	5
New Civilian Appraisal Program Begins	6
Forward Into 2017	8
Are You the Best Version?	9
Holiday Party A Success	10
Photos: A Luau Holiday Throwdown	11



Rabbit Tales is a production of the 513th Air Control Group Public Affairs office.

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

513TH UPDATE

Upcoming events

7 January – Group Annual Awards Packages Due
(POC: Lt. Col. Hawkins)

January 19-February 4 – Sentry Aloha Exercise
(Hickam AFB)

February 4-5 – Unit Training Assembly

Recruiter contact info



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Cover Photos

Photos from the annual 513th Christmas Luau, Dec. 3, at Noah's Event Center in NW Oklahoma Center. All photos by Staff Sgt. Giovanna LaMaestra, 513th Air Control Group Public Affairs.



Promotions

Congrats to January's promotees!



A1C Jasmin Mendoza-Madrid
(970th Airborne Air Control Squadron)



SSgt Jasmine Fuller
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

SSgt Joseph Stinnett
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

SSgt Walter Bolles
(513th Operations Support Squadron)

SSgt Trent Hargis
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)



TSgt Jeffery Witte
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

TSgt Travis Flanery
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

TSgt Kyle Walker
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

TSgt Nathan Seay
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

Fit to Fight MVPs – November & December

Maj Jose Rodriguez
Unit: 970 AACS
Score: 100%



SrA Hunter Millard
Unit: 970 AACS
Score: 97.3%



SSgt Stephanie Jacks
Unit: 970 AACS
Score: 99%



TSgt James Porter
Unit: 513 AMXS
Score: 93%

November Fit to Fight Hall of Fame

December Fit to Fight Hall of Fame



1.5-Mile Run

Men:
Maj. Jose Rodriguez
Women:
SSgt Stephanie Jacks

9:43
11:35

Record Highs

Men:
Women:

7:51
9:44

1.5-Mile Run

Men:
SrA Hunter Millard
Women:
SSgt Courtney Redmond

10:29
13:24

Pushups

Men:
SSgt Alex Baker
Women:
SSgt Roberta Blankenship

67
50

Men:
Women:

110
65

Pushups

Men:
SrA Hunter Millard
Women:
SSgt Courtney Redmond

72
30

Situps

Men:
SSgt Alex Baker
Women:
SSgt Stephanie Jacks

58
60

Men:
Women:

109
84

Situps

Men:
SSgt Hunter Millard
Women:
SSgt Courtney Redmond

58
45

Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA Impact on Airmen

By Staff Sgt. Janelle McRae,
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- The approval of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 provides a number of changes for Airmen, retirees, and families, to include stabilizing readiness and end strength, improving pilot retention, modernizing compensation and benefits and enhancing transparency in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The NDAA authorizes an overall increase in manpower by 4,000 Airmen increasing the Air Force active forces end strength to 321,000.

For personnel compensation and benefits, effective Jan.1, the monthly basic pay will increase by 2.1 percent, and while there will not be any changes made to the administration of the housing allowance the NDAA directs the defense department to begin planning for a transition to a single-salary pay system no later than Jan. 1, 2018. The goal is to create a system that better aligns the payment with the DOD's use of the housing allotment as compensation rather than as an allowance.

The NDAA additionally authorizes the Air Force to increase aviation retention pay from \$25,000 to \$35,000 per year and flight pay up to \$1,000 per month as needed to address manning shortfalls and challenges.

Also addressing staffing challenges,

the Air Force is required to transition to an organizational model with enlisted remotely piloted aircraft pilots by Sept. 30, 2020, for the regular component and 2023 for the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard.

The NDAA also directs improvements to military health care. One provision authorizes the Secretary of Defense to establish a self-managed, preferred-provider network option under the TRICARE program. This program – 'TRICARE Select' – will be available to active duty family members, retirees, reserve, and young adults. Under TRICARE Select, eligible beneficiaries will not have restrictions on the freedom of choice of the beneficiary with respect to health care providers. Cost sharing requirements are determined by prior military status. In addition, some additional cost sharing fees for TRICARE Prime retirees and family members and small increases to annual enrollment will be implemented. Another provision requires the DOD to improve access to urgent care services in both military medical treatment facilities and the private sector, while also requiring Military Treatment Facilities to expand hours on weekdays and weekends to ensure the availability of primary care services.

In addition, the NDAA authorizes up to 12 weeks of total leave for a primary caregiver, including up to six weeks of medical convalescent

leave, to be used in connection with the birth of a child. It also allows a primary caregiver up to six weeks of total leave to be used in the case of an adoption. In each instance, a secondary caregiver is also authorized up to 21 days of leave.

This year's authorization also contains a number of civilian hiring provisions, including direct-hire authorities for post-secondary students and recent graduates, wage schedule employees, financial management experts, industrial base facilities, major range and test facilities, and positions at DOD research and engineering laboratories. The NDAA also returned a restriction on the appointment of retired members of the armed forces to civil service positions in the DOD within 180 days of their retirement. Previous statute allowed that restriction to be waived based on a state of national emergency.

The first major reforms to the UCMJ in 30 years were also part of the authorization. The implementation of the reforms should improve efficiency and transparency, while also enhancing victims' rights. The reforms include expanding the statute of limitations for child abuse offenses and fraudulent enlistment, and establishing new offenses ranging from improper use of government computers to retaliation to prohibited activities with military recruits and trainees by a person in a position of special trust.

New Civilian Appraisal Program to Begin in April

By Richard Salomon,
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas -- The Air Force will roll out a new Department of Defense civilian appraisal program in April designed to improve overall job performance, enhance supervisor and employee communication, and more effectively develop and reward the workforce.

The new program, called the DOD Performance Management and Appraisal Program, is part of the DOD's collaborative labor-management effort known as New Beginnings. DPMAP will link employee duties and performance to the organization's mission and goals. It will also make distinctions in overall job performance and will include a three-tier level rating -- outstanding, fully successful and unacceptable. The first annual appraisal under this new system will be in 2018.

"Our civilian Airmen are an important part of the Air Force mission, and we want to continue to build on our culture of high performance with this new program," said Cynthia Manchester, performance management program manager at Headquarters Air Force.

"While DPMAP may feel familiar to the current Air Force appraisal



The Air Force will roll out a new civilian appraisal program in April that will link employee duties and performance to the organization's mission and goals. (U.S. Air Force graphic by Staff Sgt. Alexx Pons)

program, it provides for greater employee-supervisor communication, increased employee engagement and timely recognition."

Educational training is available to civilians and their supervisors in advance of the April roll out. Training options include web-based training via Joint Knowledge Online, or an eight-to-12 hour in-resident class, or a combination of the two. Employees will receive information about scheduling and taking DPMAP training when it

is planned for their base. DPMAP training is mandatory for all DPMAP covered civilians and their supervisors.

For more information, search "New Beginnings" on the myPers web site. Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by following these instructions. Additional information can also be found at Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service on the New Beginnings page or by visiting the local civilian personnel office.

Reserve Officer Association provides holiday meal for Airmen and Sailors

The Reserve Officer Association Chapter 66, with the massive support of retired military veterans from Northrop Grumman Technology Services, hosted Airman and Sailors at Tinker AFB to a free holiday luncheon at the Base Chapel on Dec. 8.

Two Tinker Sailors won four tickets to upcoming Thunder games, which were donated by Ken Dillon, a Northrop Grumman employee. Better luck next time, Airmen!



Northrop Grumman employees and members of the Reserve Officer Association Chapter 66 (Lt. Col. Gia Wilson-Mackey and 1st Lt. Aaron Wolfe) assisted with serving a scrumptious holiday meal with all the fixings. A huge thank you to the Base Chapel staff, Jewell Tessier and all of her Northrop Grumman Managers as well as Ms. Rachel Kirby from Northrop who was the chairperson for the event.

For more information about the Reserve Officer Association please contact:

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(Left): Lt Col Gia Wilson-Mackey, the Reserve Officer Association Chapter 66 President, with Airmen during the holiday luncheon Dec. 8.
(Right): Ken Dillon and a sailor pictured with Thunder basketball tickets. Dillon, a Northrop Grumman employee, donated the tickets as a door prize during the luncheon.

Col. Dale Andrews ends 41-year career

Col. Dale Andrews, a former Deputy Commander for Maintenance at the 513th Air Control Group, closed out a 41 year career with the Air Force at a ceremony Dec. 3 at a small church in Blanchard, Oklahoma. Most recently, he served as the emergency preparedness liaison officer for Oklahoma, where he facilitated Air Force defense support during natural and man made disasters and emergencies. He entered the service in 1975 as an aircraft crew chief, commissioned as an infantry officer with the Army National Guard, and later trans-

ferred to the Air Force Reserve. Andrews and his wife plan to spend his newfound free time vacationing and visiting their three boys.

From left to right: Lt. Col. Ralph Hawkins, Col. Dale Andrews (ret.), Maj. Walter Jacques (ret.) and Chief Master Sgt. Joe DiTommaso (ret.).



Forward Into 2017

By Col. David "Superdave" Robertson
513th Air Control Group Commander



Happy New Year to the 513 ACG family! It is my sincere hope that you were able to spend time with friends and family this holiday season and were able to get some much deserved rest after a busy, successful 2016.

2017 will be an exciting year for the 513 ACG. We have two international exercises scheduled – one in Hawaii and the other in Europe. Plus, the 513th will participate in its first airshow in years, Thunder Over Louisville, which will be a memorable experience for those who go. These are just some of the incredible opportunities ahead for the 513 ACG in 2017.

We will wrap up 2017 with another Capstone inspection in November. Stand by for further

words on this, but it will require us to move the dates of the November UTA like we did in 2015. I know you all will do another outstanding job as we prepare for this inspection in the months ahead.

Finally, I want to say "Thank You" for being a part of the 513th family and sacrificing your time to serve your country and the C2 mission. It really is a sacrifice and I appreciate your willingness to serve.

Continue to take care of each other like in years past. Together we can overcome any challenges that may face the 513th in the year to come. Have an outstanding 2017!

Are You the Best Version?

By Col. Steven "Spoon" England
513th Air Control Group Deputy Commander

Welcome to the first UTA of 2017! I hope everyone had a wonderful and restful holiday season. As we start this new year, I'd like to share with you a phrase (or an idea) I was introduced to this past year. I find it provides a great mind-set for me and a focus to my actions.

Ask yourself, "Am I the best version of myself?" It's an interesting question. I ask myself this question frequently. The answer is (and must always be) "no", since there's always something that I can do better, something that I can improve.

The follow-on questions, therefore, are the ones that are really helpful. For example, what IS the best version of me? What does he look like, say, and do? Have I gained a little something around the midsection that some extra time on the treadmill, a few more sets on the weight bench, and some better kitchen choices would correct? Am I doing these things or is this just something I occasionally think about?

How about the social version of me? Do my wife, children, extended family, friends, and coworkers know they're important to me by my actions? Are there different things I can say or do, or different ways to use my time to communicate their importance to me? Am



love? Am I giving myself the downtime to think and sort through the questions that matter to me, like some of the ones above? Do I know what I value and why? Is this just something I occasionally think about...or worse, don't even take the time to think about?

Am I the best version of myself? Are you the best version of yourself? I encourage us all to spend some time thinking about this. This year has a great deal of potential and step one to tapping into it is identifying what it is.

BUT, "potential" has several synonyms...

"possible," "prospective," "would-be," and "hypothetical" are a few. Notice all these words indicate the absence of anything real and tangible actually being present. Make sure to translate potential into something real. Put your thinking into action. Pick something every day that will bring you closer to the best version of you. On the days you forget, pick up where you left off the next day. If you do, every day you'll get to see what a better version of you looks like.

Thanks for all you do here and at home. Your actions and capabilities already amaze me. I can't wait to see what the better version of you can do tomorrow! Have a productive and rewarding New Year.

I doing these things or is this just something I occasionally think about?

Professionally, am I the leader I want to be and can be? Do I have the education, training, and certifications I need? Am I organized? Am I technically proficient in my trade? Have I thought through my career path and where I want it to go? Am I setting the pieces in motion that will bring it to reality? Am I doing these things or is this just something I occasionally think about?

How's my emotional health? Am I happy and content (or at least constructively dissatisfied)? If not, am I getting enough rest? Am I doing the things I love with the people I

Christmas Luau dubbed a success

By Staff Sgt. Giovanna C. LaMaestra
513th Air Control Group Public Affairs

Tis the season, and in keeping with tradition the 513th celebrated its annual holiday party in style at Noah's event center on Dec. 3. While holding a holiday celebration is traditional, the theme was not. Where others may have gone for a more formal setting in which ladies and gents dressed in threads worthy of any red carpet event, the 513th's members decided to take a break from tradition and replaced formal gowns and suits with Hawaiian leis, tropic shirts and grass skirts. There may also have been one or two coconut bikini tops, too.

This Holiday Luau had a record turnout in the number of people that attended. Whether it was because of this break from the norm of tradition or just perfect timing that filled the 186 seats can't be said.

What can be said is that even the cold, misty December weather did not keep people from lining up at the front doors.

"I've been with the unit almost 10 years and it was the biggest turnout I've seen," said Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Gibb, the 513th Operations Support Squadron Aviation Resource Management Superintendent. Gibb also emceed through-

out the night's festivities and was impressed with how things worked out as more people showed up than was expected.

"Extra tables and place settings were brought out and together event coordinators and hired staff made it work," he said. "No one was turned away." As the saying goes, the more the merrier.

Groups of people wore smiling faces and enjoyed more than just boisterous conversation as they gathered together at tables and watched the night's entertainments unfold. Everyone who attended had their name entered into a drawing for a chance to compete for and walk away with one or more of the four prizes up for grabs.

Contestants pitted their skills against each other in different games as onlookers yelled encouragement or laughed at the participants' antics. One of the more humorous events to watch was the "Twerk the Ping Pong Balls Out of Your Hips" challenge. Fortunately, there was more shaking it like a Polaroid picture than twerking going on. The winner, Senior Master Sgt. Alfonzo Glover, 513th Air Control Group Inspection Superintendent, said he nearly missed his chance to compete.

"I was leaving early to attend my friend's birthday party," he said. "When they called me to compete I was too far away to hear them. I had one foot out the door when my wife comes and yells at me to stop. Thanks to her, we now have tickets to a Bolts game in February."

There was a larger turnout than was expected, but no one was turned away.

Other prizes carted off that night? A 55-inch flat screen TV, a video game console and a luxury handbag.

If you missed this year's get together, there's always next year. According to event organizer Senior Master Sgt. Jay Harris, the 970th's Superintendent of Surveillance, a new venue will be used for next year's holiday bash to accommodate the expected turnout.

A Luau Holiday Throwdown







The entire photo album
can be found on [Flickr](#).

See you next year!