Amid change, our Airmen remain as strong as ever

PROUD & PROFESSIONAL

AF COOL
New credentialing option for Airmen

QUICK REFERENCE
Key contacts, AFSA locations and more

THE F-16 AT 40
Four decades of Fighting Falcons
With your everyday purchases, you can help support the Air Force Sergeants Association. Get the Air Force Sergeants Association USAA Rewards™ American Express® Credit Card and take advantage of:

- **0% introductory APR for 12 months** on balance transfers and convenience checks posted in the first three months after account opening (10.90% to 25.90% variable APR after 12 months on these balances)
- **No annual fee**
- **Earn 1 point for every dollar spent and 2X points on gas and groceries.** Plus, now you can extend your support by redeeming your rewards points for a donation to the Air Force Sergeants Association.

**APPLY TODAY.**
usaa.com/afsaamex or 877-499-AFSA (2372)
I hope that 2016 has brought you prosperity and happiness thus far, and that the rest of the year brings more of the same. As always, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your continued support of AFSA and your service to our country.

You may have received some yellow postcards in the mail asking for you to verify or update your information. I authorized our staff to allow these requests so that we can publish an AFSA 55th Anniversary Directory. This will serve AFSA in three ways. First, this action allows us to update member information through an approved third-party group, which saves time and allows our staff to concentrate on other important business. Second, income from any potential book sales will help AFSA attain critical non-dues income to help keep our costs to you—our members—low. Finally, we are confident that those who do elect to purchase the publication—though, of course, you do not have to—will receive a pretty cool anniversary edition of the product.

I also want to provide you with some information about the edition of AFSA Magazine you’re holding, or perhaps reading digitally. You’ll probably notice some significant changes, and I want to explain the logic behind those changes.

To begin with, you’ll see that this is a “Winter” issue, rather than “January/February,” as the first issue of the year has been in the past. There are a couple reasons for this, but the driving factor is cost. Frankly, the magazine is the Association’s most expensive product, and in order to be
good stewards of your money, we are changing the number of times the magazine is published each year from six to four, and keeping the page count at 36 pages.

In addition, you’ll see that this issue is not a 64-page Almanac. What we found in researching and putting together the Almanac in the past couple years is that as soon as the information is published, it is out of date. The best place to find the most up-to-date information on military and Veteran programs is on the Web, where it is updated in real time. Therefore, this edition only includes a smaller Quick Reference section, on pages 20–27, to direct you to the most up-to-date information on TRICARE, VA programs, and other important military and Air Force contacts. We also include information on Senior Enlisted Leaders, Former CMSAFs and AFSA Chapter locations that may be hard to find compiled in one place anywhere else.

Want more information than our quarterly magazine provides? In the past two years, we have stepped up our outbound communication and leveraged technology to engage members. Rather than wait to print information in the magazine, our headquarters staff now pushes information out to our members weekly. If you’re not receiving our e-newsletters—Headline Roundup, Washington Report

We are Airmen, united in our desire to maintain the best Air Force in the world.

We are brothers and sisters joined in the profession of arms.

We are families, linking arms and standing strong through deployments and separations.

We are Veterans... of wars abroad and battles we’ve fought when we return.

We are the flag wavers and caretakers of Veterans’ final resting places.

We are the scholarship providers, we help families pay for college.

We are the leaders, the teachers, the mentors eager to share our knowledge.

We are the protectors of those who protect us.

We are an international association with 7 Divisions and 132 Chapters across the world.

We are 100,000 strong; one powerful voice sharing Airmen's stories and concerns with our Nation's congressional and military leaders to continually advocate for promised military benefits.

We are the Air Force Sergeants Association, we take care of Airmen and their families... past, present and future.

We are here for you. Join AFSA now. www.hqafsa.org

In the past two years, we have stepped up our outbound communication and leveraged technology to engage members.

and e-News—you’re missing out! To opt in to these emails, please update your email address on the member site to be sure you get the latest information. And stay informed by visiting the AFSA website (www.hqafsa.org) as well.

Communication is one of AFSA’s four pillars, and the magazine remains a valuable service to our members. We plan to continue to publish the magazine in the future and believe that a quarterly publication is the right frequency. I encourage each of you to share the magazine when you receive it; it’s a great way to tell others about AFSA and its relevance to today’s Airmen, Veterans and families.

As always, if you have questions or comments, feel free to contact me at dyeomans@hqafsa.org. God bless all—and have a safe and wonderful 2016. I promise AFSA will be there for you!
CONTENTS

WINTER 2016

PRESIDENT’S COMMENTARY 1
AFSA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 4
EYE ON WASHINGTON 6
QUICK REFERENCE 20
AMM SPOTLIGHT 28
FINAL FLY-BY 30

COVER STORY 14
PROUD PROFESSIONAL PERFORMERS 18
THE FUTURE IS NOW 18

Please reserve the P-51 Mustang Thermometer Clock for me as described in this announcement. Limit: one per order. Please Respond Promptly*

*Plus $14.99 shipping and service. Limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 crafting days. Please allow 4-8 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

Reserve the P-51 Mustang Thermometer Clock exclusively from The Bradford Exchange.

**P-51 Mustang**

WWII Prop Dogfighter recreated on a handsome desk clock in intricate, hand-crafted detail on a striking wooden desk clock exclusively from The Bradford Exchange. The P-51 Mustang Thermometer Clock proudly displays a replica P-51D (the most decorated of the P51s) with a 9 ½-inch wingspan in gleaming cold-cast bronze atop an analog clock and indoor temperature gauge inspired by the aircraft's instrument panel. This quartz-accurate timepiece includes a Certificate of Authenticity and Collector's Fact Card. Peak demand is expected, so act now to acquire it in four interest-free installments of $24.99 for a total of $99.95**, backed by our 365-day money-back guarantee. Don't wait to order—return the Reservation Application promptly!

www.bradfordexchange.com/P51

©2013 BGE 01-17387-001 BISR

Requires one "AAA" battery, not included. Shown smaller than actual size of 9½" W x 7¼" H.
Claiming 4,950 enemy aircraft shot down, the P-51 Mustang American fighter plane became an icon and one of WWII’s most successful and recognizable aircraft. Now, this timeless North American Aviation warbird is authentically recreated in intricate, hand-crafted detail on a striking wooden desk clock exclusively from The Bradford Exchange.

The P-51 Mustang Thermometer Clock proudly displays a replica P-51D (the most decorated of the P51s) with a 9½-inch wingspan in gleaming cold-cast bronze atop an analog clock and indoor temperature gauge inspired by the aircraft’s instrument panel. This quartz-accurate timepiece includes a Certificate of Authenticity and Collector’s Fact Card. Peak demand is expected, so act now to acquire it in four interest-free installments of $24.99 for a total of $99.95*, backed by our 365-day money-back guarantee. Don’t wait to order—return the Reservation Application promptly!

www.bradfordexchange.com/P51
18 FY16 NDAA TAKEAWAYS
A BREAKDOWN OF S.1356, PENDING UNFORESEEN CHANGES

There hasn’t been any shortage of coverage for the Department of Defense’s Fiscal Year 2016 spending plan due to the many factors that impacted its initial veto by President Obama. Since then, compromises have been achieved and adjustments have been made. What follows is AFSA’s initial analysis of the legislation that was re-sent to, and now is signed by, the president. Keep in mind that as AFSA previously reported, the NDAA is the spending plan and is dependent on the FY16 Defense Appropriations Bill, one of 12 mandatory funding bills, being passed in order for the provisions of the NDAA to take effect. A Continuing Resolution (CR) in any form could change these findings, so your team here in Washington, D.C., will keep you advised if we discover anything that might deviate from what follows:

1. Air Force-related end strengths as of 30 September 2016 will be:
   • Active Forces: 320,715
   • Air National Guard: 105,500
   • Air Force Reserve: 69,200
   • Reserves on Active Duty in Support of Reserves
     ‣ ANG: 14,748
     ‣ AFRC: 3,032
   • Dual Status Military Technicians
     ‣ ANG: 22,104
     ‣ AFRC: 9,814
   • Non-Dual Status Technicians
     ‣ ANG: 350
     ‣ AFRC: 90
   • Maximum Number of Reserve Personnel on Duty for Operational Support
     ‣ ANG: 16,000
     ‣ AFRC: 14,000

2. The number of days of active duty that reserve component members need to perform for their duty to be considered Federal Service for purposes of unemployment compensation for ex-service members increased from 90 to 180.

3. DoD is prohibited from paying to honor members of Armed Forces at sporting events.

4. A process by which members of the Armed Forces may carry an appropriate firearm on a military installation was established.

5. Transition Assistance Program (TAP) training opportunities were expanded.
   • Training should be made available in any of the following subjects:
     ‣ Preparation for higher education or training.
     ‣ Preparation for career or technical training.
     ‣ Preparation for entrepreneurship.
     ‣ Other training options determined by the Secretary of Defense.

6. The receipt of unemployment insurance while receiving post-9/11 education assistance was prohibited.

7. Impact Aid to assist local educational agencies that benefit dependents of members of the Armed Forces and DoD civilian employees will be as follows:
   • $25 million basic assistance
   • $5 million aid for children with severe disabilities

8. A 1.3 percent military pay raise was made effective 1 January 2016.

9. Special pays and incentives were extended one year.

10. Basic Allowance for Housing value will phase down from 100 to 95 percent of average monthly cost of housing as follows:
    • Any month in 2015: 99 percent
    • Any month in 2016: 98 percent
    • Any month in 2017: 97 percent
    • Any month in 2018: 96 percent
    • All months after 2018: 95 percent

• NLT 31 December 2015, SECDEF shall establish and implement a process by which the commanders of military installations in the U.S., or other designated military commanders of military reserve centers, recruiting centers and other such defense facilities as the Secretary may prescribe, may authorize a member of the Armed Forces who is assigned to duty at the installation, center or facility to carry an appropriate firearm on the installation, center or facility if the commander determines that carrying such a firearm is necessary as a personal- or force-protection measure.
11. A proposal to reduce BAH for dual military couples was rejected.

12. A new “hybrid” retirement plan, combining a new, reduced defined benefit with a government-matching Thrift Savings Plan was proposed.
- The plan would apply to new entrants after 1 January 2018 and those already-serving members who choose to opt into the new program.
- Only those already-serving members with less than 12 years of service (YOS) will be able to opt into the new program.
- New defined benefit for those who serve at least 20 years will be 2 times YOS, rather than the current 2.5 times YOS.
- The modified cost-of-living adjustment for those under age 62 made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed.
- TSP details:
  - 1 percent automatic agency contribution to all members upon reaching 60 days of service and continuing until their second year of service.
  - At two YOS, members’ TSP would vest and the Secretary concerned would begin matching TSP....
contributions up to 5 percent of members’ base pay for a maximum government contribution of 5 percent.
› Members would be automatically enrolled at 3 percent matching contributions with the option to raise or lower their contribution level.
› Government matching would continue through 26 YOS.
• Lump Sum Option of Retired Pay for those who serve at least 20 years.
› May take 50 percent or 25 percent of the discounted present value of their defined retirement benefit that would be due to them prior to becoming fully eligible for Social Security.
• Continuation Pay at 12 YOS for those participating in the modernized retirement system who reach 12 YOS and agree to serve another four years.

13. Under the Survivor Benefit Plan, an individual can elect a new spouse beneficiary after the death of a former spouse beneficiary.

14. DoD was required to produce a plan for budget-neutrality of the defense commissary and military exchange systems.
• Must report plan to Congress NLT 1 March 2016 for making the commissary and exchange benefit budget neutral by 1 October 2018.
› Report must include description of modifications to commissary and exchange systems to make them budget neutral, including:
   ❑ Plans to exploit synergies between the operations of exchanges and commissaries,
   ❑ Any plans to privatize operations in whole or in part,
   ❑ Engagement of major commercial grocery retailers or other private-sector entities to determine their willingness to provide beneficiaries with discount savings on grocery products and certain household goods,
   ❑ The closure of commissaries in locations in close proximity to other commissaries or in locations where commercial alternatives through major grocery retailers may be available,
   ❑ An analysis of different pricing constructs to improve or enhance the delivery of commissary and exchange benefits,
   ❑ An analysis of the impact of any modifications on Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) quality-of-life programs, and
   ❑ The report shall ensure:
      ❑ The maintenance of high levels of customer satisfaction in the delivery of commissary and exchange benefits.
      ❑ The provision of high-quality products.
   ❑ The sustainment-of-discount savings to eligible beneficiaries.
   ❑ The level of savings to commissary and exchange patrons under any pilot program under this subsection is not less than the level of savings to such patrons before the implementation of such pilot program.
   ❑ DoD could conduct two-year pilot program with changes to gauge feasibility of privatization efforts.
   ❑ No fewer than five commissaries in largest markets in the commissary system.

15. Financial literacy and preparedness training was implemented.
• Requires training for enlisted below E-5 and officers below O-4 as follows:
   ❑ Arrival at first duty station
   ❑ Arrival at each subsequent duty station
   ❑ Additional training at various career and life milestones
   ❑ Regular DoD financial literacy and preparedness surveys

16. TRICARE pharmacy benefit cost shares will increase slightly in 2016.
• $8 is increased to $10
• $20 is increased to $24
• $16 is increased to $20
• $46 is increased to $49

17. Joint Formulary DoD-to-VA Transitional Care will be established.
• Require the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs to establish a joint uniform formulary that would include pain, sleep disorder, psychiatric drugs and drugs for other conditions critical for transition of a service member from treatment furnished by the Department of Defense to treatment furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

18. A three-year pilot program on urgent care under TRICARE will be created.
• Program would commence NLT 180 days after this NDAA is enacted.
• It would authorize a covered beneficiary under the TRICARE program to access urgent care visits per year without the need to obtain pre-authorization for such visits.
• A nurse advice line would be incorporated in the pilot to direct beneficiaries seeking access to care to the source of the most appropriate level of health care required to treat the medical conditions of the beneficiaries, including urgent care under the pilot program.
Air Force Sergeants Association representatives on Air Force bases often urge non-members to join AFSA. They do so to try to beef up the size of our membership. Why? Because the larger an association is, the more attention its representatives in Washington will have on Capitol Hill and when speaking with other government agency officials. Size opens doors and translates into access, influence and success.

For enlisted members, this is especially important because, in this time of fiscal austerity, quality-of-life (QOL) benefits are in the spending cuts “cross hairs” as the government looks for ways to spend less. For example, recent changes to the military retirement system were made primarily to cut military personnel spending. Congressional offices have indicated that military health care may be next to face scrutiny. In every case, DoD and congressional officials assert they are doing so to “improve” these programs for those who serve. But AFSA members should not be fooled by these claims. During tough budgetary times, changes to QOL programs (by the government and DoD) are sought in an effort...
to cut spending. AFSA’s role is to fight for enlisted equity if changes are to be made.

Many current enlisted members believe that DoD and their chain-of-command officials fight for their benefits. Unfortunately, this is not true because that very chain is always part of the Administration and must support the budgetary priorities that work their way down from the White House to government agencies and all the way through the chain of command. In fact, military personnel programs are relatively low in spending priority for DoD, whose top priority is to fight and win wars and protect the homeland—not to run QOL programs. Simply put, Airmen need a strong voice in Washington for them to gain new benefits and to protect those they currently have.

For your Association, it is even more important that Congress understands how its decisions may impact the successful recruiting and retention of members of the All-Volunteer Force—over 80 percent of which are enlisted members. When policymakers make cuts, they primarily (potentially) harm enlisted members and their families. When they support such programs, they are showing that they understand the importance of enlisted members to this nation’s well-being. So it is relatively common for AFSA to be fighting for priorities that are counter to those being pursued by DoD and military leaders. That is one reason why it is so important to have a strong, effective voice outside of the chain of command. Not because DoD doesn’t support the efforts of enlisted members—they do, but not always as a budget priority.

It is easy to take such benefits for granted. Over the years, AFSA has been instrumental in attaining the vast majority of military pay, allowances, education and other QOL programs. These improvements did not come from military leaders or government officials. They came about in large part because of the hard work of people on AFSA’s headquarters lobbying team who communicated with Congress and were successful in persuading elected officials to support these objectives.

However, just as we had to fight to achieve these benefits, today we must fight to maintain them.

Few Airmen take time to communicate with their elected officials. However, they do have a very powerful voice, so AFSA assumes that role on their behalf and does so in a positive, professional way. Association representatives regularly walk the halls of Congress, meet with members of Congress and their staffs, build relationships on the Hill, act to educate appropriate influencers as required, testify at congressional hearings and work to elevate awareness of enlisted QOL matters. So how exactly does this work, and why do all enlisted Airmen need to be a part of the Association?

Associations that are respected and have built relationships with members of Congress and their staffs are afforded opportunities to testify at congressional hearings. These hearings are little like what we see on television. The hearings that accomplish the most, and those that are most important to AFSA members, are those before specific subcommittees. These subcommittee hearings each typically focus on a specific subject for possible inclusion in major bills that will advance to the full floor later in the year. In the Defense arena, most QOL matters are developed each year by the military personnel subcommittees of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. Their recommendations, based on the information they have collected, will become part of that year’s National Defense Authorization Act. For that reason, AFSA lobbyists work very hard to get opportunities to speak at these hearings to promote enlisted QOL programs. That may entail striving to achieve a new benefit. However, because of DoD budget priorities, AFSA often must concentrate its efforts on fighting to maintain the benefits already on the table—to protect enlisted Airmen and their families.

It is also interesting to note that such hearings may involve AFSA lobbyists speaking to only a handful of
members of the subcommittee who happen to be present, and that committee members may come and go during the hearings. But all members of the subcommittee will know where AFSA stands because a written statement will have been submitted a few days before each hearing. The AFSA speaker (referred to as a “witness”) is typically afforded three to eight minutes to make an oral statement, then members of that subcommittee will ask questions they’ve prepared based on the written statements they have read—or based on some major point that the AFSA witness may have emphasized during oral remarks.

However, the impact of these hearings is relatively minor unless AFSA’s team has taken actions in advance. It is important to remember that the majority of influence of a committee or subcommittee actually happens during lobbying visits. These may be with the actual elected officials who are on the key committees. But, more often, the most influential work is accomplished by convincing key congressional staffers to include language in upcoming bills that we are trying to advance. If we have been successful in that effort during lobbying visits, the combined impact of lobbying and testimony can be powerful.

For that reason, it is extremely important that AFSA’s headquarters team works to build positive relationships on the Hill, with DoD and in other government agencies. We do so through efforts to be viewed as the subject-matter expert on enlisted QOL matters. We want to be the go-to source that members of Congress and their staffs think of as these matters arise. We want them to trust what we say and believe any commitments or promises we make. We want them to understand that we are cognizant of budgetary priorities, and that our comments and positions must be taken seriously. Indeed, building such relationships and being accepted as a knowledgeable, consistent, dependable, reasonable voice is paramount to our Association’s success.

Another major aspect of building such respect is in working to educate members of Congress. Because Administrations and their respective Defense Departments will usually hold QOL matters at low priority relative to other budgetary priorities—and military retirement programs are generally at the bottom of those QOL spending priorities—it is important that we serve as a trusted voice to educate members of Congress and their staffs on such matters. It is critical that these members understand how DoD forms its budget priorities and generally works to convince Congress to cut spending on these programs first.

So, if we do it correctly, what is the impact of having built such relationships, having established solid trust? AFSA’s collective experience has shown that these off-the-record, behind-closed-doors “lobbying” meetings yield frank give and take. They allow deeper discussions of the issues. In fact, because (in a relative sense) testimony opportunities have diminished in recent years, these meetings have become paramount. They are critical to getting the job done. These very important engagements in which AFSA lobbyists are regularly involved happen because we have built the respect and trust that afford these opportunities. Bottom line: We have built these strong, critical interaction opportunities by doing what we say we will; by maintaining the confidence of those with whom we meet; and by providing honest, dependable information.

It is very important that all enlisted members be part of the AFSA program. They need to do so to maintain the size, voice and impact of the Association. The larger we are in membership, the more doors that open for us on Capitol Hill—in turn, we have more QOL influence as an Association, which impacts individual benefits.

We hope our members understand how important they, and their activity, are to many parts of the process. We need their help to achieve our mission of protecting the quality of their lives, their families, their futures and even their survivors. Enlisted Airmen, especially AFSA members, are the eyes and ears of the AFSA headquarters team. And as AFSA educates its members on key matters before Congress, members need to participate in campaigns to magnify the headquarters’ voice, to petition their members of Congress on key issues and to generally complement the efforts of the headquarters team. This can be done via pen, ink and USPS, or electronically via AFSA’s online Legislative Action Center.

The net result of maintaining a strong voice through greater AFSA membership numbers, through the testimonial and lobbying efforts of our headquarters teams, through the strong relationships built with key government officials, and through the support of our members will be to achieve a greater likelihood that we will have success in convincing Congress to support enlisted programs. That is why all Air Force enlisted members should be part of this team—their team—because it is clearly in their interests.
In March 2015, AFSA Chief Executive Officer CMSgt (Ret.) Rob Frank testified before the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Congressional Armed Services Committee and also before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. One common theme that Chief Frank drove home on behalf of the AFSA membership was that Congress needed to eliminate the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Dependence and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset this year.

The DIC program, administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), was established in 1956. This program provides a tax-free monthly cash payment to the survivors and dependents of those who die from service-related conditions and to the survivors and dependents of certain disabled military retirees. Current law provides payments to these survivors of up to $15,000 per year.

Created in 1972, SBP is, in effect, an insurance-type plan that a military retiree may purchase. It is a Department of Defense (DoD) program designed to leave an annuity to the survivors of retirement-eligible military personnel. As a voluntary program, a military retiree decides whether to purchase the coverage, and the survivor can receive up to 55 percent of the military retiree’s pay, depending on the amount the retiree paid into the program each month.

Here’s the problem: Despite the fact that a military retiree has purchased the SBP program, current law allows DoD to reduce the SBP annuity for survivors by $1 for each DIC dollar the survivor receives from the VA. We refer to this as the SBP-DIC offset. It is also widely known as the “Widow’s Tax.” It currently affects about 63,000 military families.

Remember, not all survivors who receive SBP annuities also receive DIC payments. However, only those who do receive DIC payments are penalized, many up to $15,000 per year. This is an unfair gimmick in the law that needs to be rectified.

While the programs have been altered somewhat in the past half century, much still remains to be done. Despite over three decades of advocacy efforts toward eliminating the offset, Congress has only been willing to respond in half measures. Over the years, Congress has acknowledged that the Widow’s Tax is wrong, but the best it would do is go ahead and penalize the survivors with the offset, then pay them a much, much smaller stipend (about $310 per month), returning part of the offset. This modest stipend is called the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA). However, it is obvious that if the entire offset were eliminated, no SSIA would need to be paid.

While AFSA and The Military Coalition (TMC) point toward fairness and equity, Congress has been driven primarily by dollar signs. Congress emphasizes that to eliminate the offset, which it acknowledges is unfair, a $1 billion annual DoD cost increase would accrue. In fact, when the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) addressed the offset issue earlier this year, it noted the Widow’s Tax in recommending that the SBP program be altered and that premiums be hiked for retirees. Its point was that if retirees paid more for SBP and annuities were adjusted, no offset would be necessary. However, we noted the unfairness of that approach because SBP premiums would increase for all, annuities would no doubt go down for all, and there was no correlation between those who do or do not have service-connected disabilities.

In addition to providing separate testimony to Congress, AFSA often also provides testimony as one of the 27 signatory associations of TMC. On 10 December 2015, TMC had another chance to try to convince Congress to rectify the
ways we treat (and mistreat) the survivors of military retirees/Veterans. This time, the hearing was before the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Subcommittee on Military Personnel. DoD programs fall under this committee and subcommittee. Remember, it is DoD’s program (SBP) that is reduced.

Personnel Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Joe Heck (R-NV) wanted to take another look at the situations that survivors face surrounding these two programs.

During this hearing, TMC emphasized the following areas, urging Chairman Heck’s subcommittee to make changes to SBP and DIC to benefit military survivors:

- First, and highest priority, the offset needs to be eliminated entirely.
- Currently, SBP annuitants who remarry before age 55 lose the SBP payments entirely and permanently. However, if a DIC payment recipient remaries before age 57, he or she loses DIC payments. This is not only patently inconsistent, it is also unfair. Why should a military survivor lose the annuity in either case? At a minimum, TMC urged that the remarriage ages be made consistent at age 55.
- Members of the Selected Reserve may also participate in both programs. However, the payments to their survivors are much lower because of the formulas for their retirement pay and the resultant annuity levels. Therefore, in almost every case, if a Reserve survivor should have received both SBP and DIC payments, his or her SBP payments will almost certainly be wiped out.

As an Association keenly aware of the extraordinary contributions of military spouses and family members, we will continue to fight against the SBP-DIC Offset or “Widow’s Tax.” We urge our members to direct their elected officials to follow our lead on the issue by visiting AFSA’s Web page and utilize the Legislative Action Center.

### 34 U.S. CONGRESS MEMBERS NOT SEEKING RE-ELECTION

The following table lists the members of Congress who are retiring at the end of the current 114th Congress or seeking other political office in lieu of running for re-election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Chamber Party</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>First Elected</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Announced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Leaving: 34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Vitter</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>11/21/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marco Rubio</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>04/13/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Reid</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>03/27/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Coats</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>03/24/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Mikulski</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>01/08/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Chamber Party</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>First Elected</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Announced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House of Representatives:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruben Hinojosa</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>11/13/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Farr</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>11/12/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Pitts</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>11/06/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Nugent</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>11/02/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy Neugebauer</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>09/17/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Carney</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>09/16/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Kline</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>09/03/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Jolly</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>07/20/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Young</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>07/12/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Grayson</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>07/09/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Heck</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>07/06/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>05/26/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loretta Sanchez</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>05/14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlin Stutzman</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>05/09/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron DeSantis</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>05/06/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lois Capps</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>04/08/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy Duckworth</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>03/30/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Murphy</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>03/23/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Edwards</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>03/10/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candice Miller</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>03/05/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Van Hollen</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>03/04/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janice Hahn</td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>County Board</td>
<td>02/18/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Gibson</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>01/06/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**SOURCE:** Data reported on and compiled by Greg Giroux (ggiroux@bloomberg.net) and Alex Tanzi (atanzi@bloomberg.net) of Bloomberg; edited by Katherine Rizzo (krizzo5@bloomberg.net).
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Cody introduces himself to TSgt Thomas White during his visit with Airmen assigned to the Air Force District of Washington March 23, 2015, at Joint Base Andrews, Md. White is the unit training manager for AFDW. (U.S. Air Force photo/MSgt Tammie Moore)
AMID UNCERTAINTY AND CHANGE, THE CHARACTER OF OUR AIRMEN REMAINS AS STRONG AS EVER

By Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Cody

The last three years have been a whirlwind of uncertainty and change. We’ve witnessed the constant dialogue of sequestration and threats of a government shutdown, even feeling the impacts of an actual 16-day shutdown in October 2013. Our force has downsized to unprecedented manning levels—the smallest force since we became a separate service in 1947—only to now face the challenge of growing our end strength in light of unexpected and emerging threats around the world. We’ve also completely revamped our enlisted evaluation and promotion systems to ensure performance is the most important factor when we evaluate and identify Airmen for promotion, specific positions and added responsibility.

The Air Force today looks quite different from the Air Force of a few years ago, with one glaring exception: you. Through the continued churn of uncertainty and change, the character of our Airmen remains as firm as ever before. You continue to be the enlisted force that stands as the example for all other nations around the world. There are many labels that apply to the enlisted force today—most educated, most experienced and most capable in our nation’s history; best trained, best equipped and best prepared enlisted force of all time. Those and others are all true, and certainly illustrate how far we’ve come as an enlisted force, but what rings loudest as I spend time with Airmen around the globe is that you are proud, professional performers.

PROUD
Arguably the proudest moment of any Airman’s career is when he or she crosses into the blue at Joint Base San Antonio–Lackland, Texas. It’s a feeling of accomplishment, of stepping into a purpose and challenge greater than anything experienced before. Your pride grows and evolves throughout a career. It looks different at times, but it certainly doesn’t disappear. It’s clear as I meet with our Airmen that you’re extremely proud of what you do to serve our nation. You understand the immense responsibility and it shows: It drives you to stand taller.

Staff Sgt. Haida StarEagle is a clear example of the pride of our Airmen. Athena and I met Haida last year during a stop at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. She shared her story about her experience with the Single Airman Programming Initiative and how it provided the boost she needed both personally and professionally. Her smile and passion energized the room as she listed the opportunities she’s had to bond with her fellow Airmen. It was exciting just listening to her story. She was not only proud to stand and represent her fellow single and unaccompanied Airmen; she was proud to simply be an Airman and to serve in our United States Air Force.

Senior Master Sgt. Hope Skibitsky is another Airman who is proud of her service to our nation. We met her during a stop at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., where at the time she was the wing’s Career Assistance Advisor. As a former Military Training Instructor, Hope was certainly a sharp Airman who stood out in a crowd, but it was her pride and passion to help others that struck us most. She would talk at length about the Airmen she served and the support she was honored to provide. If you let her (and we did), she could and would talk passionately for hours on end, never mentioning herself; she was always focused on others. Her pride extended to the men and women who came in and out of her office every day, looking for the direction and spark only she could provide.

Haida and Hope are but two of the many examples of the pride we see around our Air Force. Everywhere we travel we see it firsthand from Airmen who recognize the significance of their service. You simply love what you do, and you’re proud to do it.
Pride in service often motivates Airmen to go further than ever before. It's driven us to be the professional force we are today. You, the enlisted men and women serving in today's Air Force, are not simply technicians. You are professional Airmen. You voluntarily serve in the Profession of Arms, a commitment that comes with a higher calling, and a higher standard.

A few months ago, I sat with the services' Senior Enlisted Leaders and Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, and we spoke about the professionalism of today's enlisted force. While we discussed initiatives to develop the force of our future, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that today's enlisted force is the most professional and capable force in our nation's history.

Secretary Carter shared the story of one of his past executive assistants, an enlisted Airman, who completed her doctoral thesis on the F-35 and the impact acquisition delays have on national and global security. Today, now-Dr. Monique Maldonado is working on her second thesis and leading her own division of professors at American Military University.

In that same conversation, we talked about how you continue to redefine what it means to be an enlisted Airman. You've taken us to a higher platform by embracing greater responsibility and more challenging leadership positions. Enlisted Airmen fill critical roles from space to the battlefield. You fly and operate every one of our satellites, ensure our fleets of aircraft are mission ready, and provide support to all Airmen and families—the lifeblood of our force. You also collect and deliver the intelligence fellow enlisted Airmen use to engage the enemy or rescue the fallen.

It's clear our senior leaders, military and civilian, know who you are and what you do. Commanders are integrating you into their staffs at every level of command, and congressmen and congresswomen now know what it's like to have your support. They are grateful for your service and sacrifice, and your commitment to development and education. Your knowledge, experience and expertise are simply unmatched. There is no doubt you are the most professional enlisted Airmen the world has ever known.

PERFORMERS
Your proud spirit and professionalism converge to produce the high-performing Airmen our nation has come to expect. Regardless of the situation, or the challenges and uncertainty you face, you continue to perform at the highest levels. This year alone you have generated 27,000 Close Air Support sorties in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria; conducted 31,000 ISR missions in the CENTCOM Area of Operations; and delivered more than 1.3 billion pounds of fuel. AFSOC Commandos have eliminated more than 1,500 enemy personnel from the battlefield, and we've completed 67 percent of the strikes against ISIL since operations began in August 2014.
Of course, that’s simply a broad scope and falls short of highlighting the individual tasks and missions you execute at the local level every day. There are countless examples of Airmen making significant strides to deliver airpower, strengthen partnerships and enhance capabilities for the Air Force and America.

At Travis Air Force Base, Calif., Tech Sgt. Ana Fierro planned and executed Mobility Support Advisory Squadron training teams in both Panama and the Dominican Republic. She built and led large teams of subject-matter experts from different services, commands and countries. It was her pride and professionalism that pushed her and her team to accomplish first-of-their-kind missions to strengthen partnerships and better prepare our allies to conduct security and counter-crime operations.

At Aviano Air Base, Italy, Staff Sgt. Aaron Broyles’ experience and technical knowledge delivered a new Instrument Landing System for the 31st Fighter Wing. He led a 12-person team of experts from different organizations to install, optimize, flight-check and commission the system in two weeks. It wasn’t easy, but he made it look easy. Now one of the busiest wings in Europe has a more reliable Air Traffic Control and Landing System to support its flying mission.

At Kadena Air Base, Japan, Senior Airman Eric Waldrip successfully led 18 crewmembers through six priority evacuation missions, including two high-risk pregnancies, two adult severe-burn victims, a pediatric burn patient and a post-cardiac-arrest victim. His leadership calls him the premiere Aeromedical Evacuation Technician in Pacific Command’s only Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. He’s been lauded by senior leadership and multinational partners alike because he is a professional and always performs at the highest level.

At every Air Force installation around the globe, there are countless examples of Airmen breaking new ground, establishing new standards of excellence and performance. We are the Air Force we are because we have Airmen who perform. Men and women like you who know “Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do” are not simply slogans we paste on walls, but core values that guide our daily actions.

**THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT**

The uncertainty and change we’ve grown accustomed to over the years will likely continue for the foreseeable future. We’ll move forward with the necessary agility and meet the demands the emerging environment will certainly introduce. It won’t be easy, but with the proud, professional performers we have on our team, we will prevail.

America’s Airmen are the asymmetric advantage we have over any other Air Force in the world. Athena and I continue to be extremely proud of who you are and what you and your families do for our country. You are the pride of our Air Force, and we are honored to serve beside you.
When military members transition from their service commitments, many are looking at what their next career paths will be. When they step into an interview, they are often presented with one question, “So what do you bring to the table?” In the past, though, many of these service members have walked out of these interviews wondering where they went wrong after being told they didn’t have the certifications or licensures that their civilian counterparts walked in with—despite their years of job experience, skills and knowledge.

When it comes to training, our Airmen need to be on an equal playing field with their civilian counterparts to ensure they are receiving the same opportunities. That’s where a new
credentialing program for enlisted Airmen comes into play: AF COOL, or the Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line. AF COOL bridges the gap between military life cycle training and civilian credentialing requirements. It does this by replacing the previous MilTA funding method for civilian credentialing, allowing active duty enlisted Airmen to obtain primary AFSC credentials or SNCOs to obtain leadership/management credentials. With more than 1,800 program-recognized credentials, AF COOL already has funded over $112,000 for Airmen seeking credentials in the past six months.

The AF COOL Program has reported a 96 percent pass rate across 330 uniquely sought credentials, and more than 1,300 credentialing goals have been established. To date, the top five credentials sought have been:
1. Airframe and Powerplant (A&P),
2. Certified Manager (CM),
3. Project Management Professional (PMP),
4. Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), and
5. Professional in Human Resources (PHR).

In short, AF COOL has been a huge success, especially considering full implementation has only been nine months. Here’s an overview on how to get started in six easy steps:

Step 1: On the AF COOL home page (https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/Public/COOL), select the “Search AFSC Related Credentials” screen, and you will see the AFSC-specific credentials that you are eligible for and that AF COOL will pay for on your behalf. (Each credential includes the following tabs: Summary, Eligibility, Comments, Exams, Other and Related Occupations.)

Step 2: Once you have reviewed the choices, pick one of the credentials to complete. When you click on the one you want, you will see an icon (blue with green arrow symbol). Click on this icon and an email will be sent to your supervisor. Your supervisor will then be asked to validate that you meet whatever eligibility requirements are listed for that credential.

Once you have your supervisor’s approval, you are cleared to begin working towards that credential completion.

Step 3: Review the exam(s) necessary to complete the credential. Review the gap analysis and the resources page to ensure you have the required knowledge to successfully pass the exam(s). Ensure that you upload the required supporting documentation (i.e., EPRs, applications, prerequisite certifications, etc.) Once you are ready to test, go to step 4.

Step 4: Click on the “Start a Funding Request” link on the right-hand sidebar. Follow the prompts to complete the funding request application. You will need the following information from the credential website:

- Testing location
- Cost for exam including admin fees
- Testing Window; if you are testing outside of the AFVEC system-allowed 30-day window, please contact the AF COOL CPO at DSN 749-5115 or CCAF.COOL@US.AF.MIL.

Once you complete the application, an email will be sent to your supervisor, who will review the request and approve or reject the application. You will be notified via email once this action is completed.

Step 5: If approved, a funding request is then electronically routed to the AF COOL office, which will make the payment on your behalf.

Step 6: Take the exam(s) and follow up with the AF COOL CPO to ensure your scores are reported to close out your educational goal. Once the AF COOL CPO receives your grades, they will notify you via email that your educational goal has been completed and send you a voluntary End-of-Course Survey. This survey will be used to better assist the AF COOL Program in providing a better service for future applicants.

For more information, contact the AF COOL Program Office at DSN 749-5115 or ccaf.cool@us.af.mil.
The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF) represents the highest enlisted level of leadership and, as such, provides direction for the entire enlisted corps while representing its members’ interests, as appropriate, to the American public and to all levels of government.

While employing unique talents, top-notch skills, and invaluable perspectives, the CMSAF serves as the personal advisor to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force. The CMSAF is responsible for representing the USAF enlisted personnel on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of the enlisted force.
Major Air Commands are major subdivisions of the Air Force and are assigned major segments of the Air Force’s overall mission.

CMSgt JAMES DAVIS
U.S. AIR FORCES IN EUROPE

CMSgt STEVE MCDONALD
AIR COMBAT COMMAND

CMSgt CALVIN WILLIAMS
AIR FORCE GLOBAL STRIKE COMMAND

CMSgt MICHAEL J. WARNER
AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND

CMSgt CAMERON KIRKSEY
AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND

CMSgt PATRICK McMAHON
AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

CMSgt DAVID STATON
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NORTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>F0363: Asheville, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0365: Charlotte, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0367: Pope AFB, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0371: Seymour Johnson AFB, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUERTO RICO</td>
<td>F0570: Muniz ANGB, PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>F0306: Charleston AFB, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0373: Greenville, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0376: Myrtle Beach, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0377: Shaw AFB, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENNESSEE</td>
<td>F0473: Nashville, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0476: Clarksville, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0477: Arnold AFB, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0478: Chattanooga, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0479: McChesney-Tyson ANGB, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIRGINIA</td>
<td>F0358: Langley AFB, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS</td>
<td>F0872: Scott AFB, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANSAS</td>
<td>F0972: McConnell AFB, KS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINNESOTA</td>
<td>F0858: Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSOURI</td>
<td>F0804: Kansas City, MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEBRASKA</td>
<td>F0984: Offutt AFB, NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH DAKOTA</td>
<td>F0959: Minot AFB, ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0964: Grand Forks AFB, ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OKLAHOMA</td>
<td>F0985: Tinker AFB, OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0988: Altus AFB, OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0990: Vance AFB, OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH DAKOTA</td>
<td>F0951: Ellsworth AFB, SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
<td>F0851: Milwaukee, WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARKANSAS</td>
<td>F0658: Little Rock AFB, AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISIANA</td>
<td>F0615: Barksdale AFB, LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSISSIPPI</td>
<td>F0651: Columbus AFB, MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F0652: Keesler AFB, MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXAS</td>
<td>F1054: Sheppard AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1055: Fort Worth, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1056: Dyess AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1062: Ellington ANGB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1066: Goodfellow AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1069: Laughlin AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1073: Dallas, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1075: Randolph AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1076: Lackland AFB, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1077: Joint Base San Antonio (FT. Sam), TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALASKA</td>
<td>F1473: Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, AK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1474: Eielson AFB, AK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUAM</td>
<td>F1560: Andersen AFB, Guam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAWAII</td>
<td>F1550: Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDAHO</td>
<td>F1164: Mountain Home AFB, ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPAN</td>
<td>F1551: Yokota AB, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1552: Misawa AB, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1553: Kadena AB, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOREA</td>
<td>F1554: Kunsan AB, Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1556: Osan AB, Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1557: Daegu AB, Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONTANA</td>
<td>F1156: Malmstrom AFB, MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OREGON</td>
<td>1451: Portland IAP AGS, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASHINGTON</td>
<td>F1461: JMLM McChord Field, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1462: Fairchild AFB, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYOMING</td>
<td>F1178: F.E. Warren AFB, WY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARIZONA</td>
<td>F1260: Luke AFB, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1261: Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>F1311: Oxnard, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1320: Travis AFB, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION 7 (EUROPE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZORES</td>
<td>F1653: Lajes, Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM</td>
<td>F1655: SHAPE/Brussels, Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY</td>
<td>F1674: Ramstein AB, GE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1678: Gellenkirch NATO AB, GE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1681: Spangdahlem AB, GE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>F1650: Ghedi AB, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1657: Aviano AB, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NETHERLANDS</td>
<td>F1661: Volkel, NL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAIN</td>
<td>F1663: Rota Naval Station, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY</td>
<td>F1660: Incirlik AB, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED KINGDOM</td>
<td>F1665: RAF Alconbury, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1668: Menwith Hill Station, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1669: RAF Lakenheath, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1670: RAF Mildenhall, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F1671: RAF Croughton, UK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEGISLATIVE
CONGRESSIONAL
U.S. Capitol Switchboard:
202-224-3121
Senate Majority Leader:
202-224-3542
Speaker of the House:
202-225-0600
SCHEDULES AND LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE ACTION
Senate Democrat Cloakroom:
202-224-8541
Senate Republican Cloakroom:
202-224-8601
House Democrat Cloakroom:
202-225-7400
House Republican Cloakroom:
202-225-2020
Bill Status:
202-225-1772
Library of Congress website:
thomas.loc.gov

WHITE HOUSE
White House Comment Line:
202-456-1111
www.whitehouse.gov

PAY
ACTIVE DUTY/GUARD/RESERVE
DFAS Denver Center Building 444
6700 East Irvington Place
Denver, CO 80278-6000
1-888-332-7411, option 2
www.dfas.mil
SURVIVOR BENEFITS
DFAS-Annuity Pay
PO Box 7131
London, KY 40742-7131
1-800-321-1080 or 216-522-5955
www.dfas.mil
RETIRED
U.S. Military Retirement Pay
PO, Box 7130, London, KY 40742-7130
1-888-332-7411, option 1
www.dfas.mil

PERSONNEL ISSUES
ACTIVE DUTY
Air Force Personnel Center
HQ AFPC
550 C Street West, Suite 50
JBAS-Randolph AFB, TX 78150
1-800-525-0102
www.afpc.af.mil
GUARD/RESERVE
HQ ARPC/DPCDCW (Contact Center)
18420 E Silver Creek Ave, Bldg 390
MS 68
Buckley AFB, CO 80111
1-800-525-0102
www.arpc.af.mil
RETIREE ACTIVITIES BRANCH
HQ AFPC/DPSAR
550 C Street West, Suite 8
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4713
1-800-525-0102 or 210-565-4663
CASUALTY ASSISTANCE
Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC)
HQ AFPC/DPCDS
550 C Street West, Suite 14
JBAS-Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4716
1-800-433-0048 or 210-565-3505 or DSN: 665-3505
www.afpc.mil/library
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE (ESGR)
4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 03265
Alexandria, VA 22350-1200
1-800-336-4590
www.esgr.org
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY
General Information:
Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA 22211
1-877-907-8585
www.arlingtoncemetery.mil

NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER
MILITARY PERSONNEL RECORDS
MEDALS AND DECORATIONS
(Note: All requests must be submitted in writing)
NPC/MPR
1 Archives Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63138
314-801-0800
www.archives.gov

USAF WORLDWIDE LOCATOR
HQAFPC/DPOXIDIL
550 C Street West, Suite 50
JBAS-Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4752
210-565-2660 or DSN: 665-2660
www.afpc.mil/library

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
1-800-772-1213
www.ssa.gov
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
www.va.gov
VA General Line: 1-800-827-1000
VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000
VA Educational Benefits: 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)
VA Insurance Center: 1-800-669-8477
Debt Management Center: 1-800-827-0648
CHAMPVA: 1-800-733-8387
Headstones/Markers: 1-800-697-6947
Direct Deposit Program: 1-800-827-1000
Special Health Issues (Gulf War, Agent Orange): 1-800-749-8387

DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY REGONAL CONTACT INFORMATION
TRICARE NORTH – Health Net Federal Services
CT, DE, DC, IL, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV, WI (and some ZIP codes in IA, MO, AND TN)
1-877-674-2273
www.hnfs.net
TRICARE SOUTH – HUMANA MILITARY HEALTHCARE SERVICES
AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, SC, and TN (excluding 35 TN ZIP codes in the Fort Campbell, KY area), and Texas (excluding only the extreme southwestern El Paso area)
1-800-444-5445
www.humana-military.com
TRICARE WEST – UNITED HEALTHCARE MILITARY & VETERANS
AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except 82 Iowa zip codes that are in the Rock Island, IL area), KS, MN, MO (except the St. Louis area), MT, NE, NV, NM, ND, OR, SD, TX (the southwestern corner, including El Paso, only), UT, WA, AND WY:
1-877-988-9378
www.uhcarmilitarywest.com

TRICARE OVERSEAS
TRICARE EURASIA-AFRICA
www.tricare.mil/tma/eurasiafrica
1-877-676-1207
TRICARE LATIN AMERICA & CANADA
www.tricare.mil/tma/lac
1-877-451-8659
TRICARE PACIFIC
www.tricare.mil/tma/pacific
1-888-777-8343

26  www.hqafsa.org
COMMUNICATING WITH CONGRESS

Though the opportunity to communicate with Congress is often neglected, it is not only a right of citizenship; it is an expectation. Senators and representatives are elected by the American public, meaning you. Their salaries come from the American taxpayer, meaning you. They are supposed to vote on issues based on the interests of their constituencies, meaning you. You give them their job and fund their paychecks—don’t be afraid to check up on your “employees” and give them direction on how to do their job.

To find your elected officials and view and respond to key legislation, visit the AFSA Legislative Action Center at www.votervoice.net/AFSA/home.

AFS-030_Winter_16.indd   27
0x0   1/21/16   2:12 PM
As the Vietnam War (1961–1975) was coming to a close, the desire for a lightweight fighter with greater air maneuverability prompted General Dynamics to create the F-16 Fighting Falcon. Despite this official moniker, the F-16 was soon nicknamed “Viper” due to its resemblance (especially in the nose area) to the Colonial Vipers from the TV series *Battlestar Galactica*. (Those of us old enough to remember the 1970s will recall that Sci-Fi was all the rage at the time.)

While the Fighting Falcon (aka Viper) may not have flown in space, it has shown its durability—as well as its ability to adapt and thrive—in the last four decades.

The F-16 was originally conceived as a good-weather day-fighter capable of supersonic speeds. It was given a bubble canopy to help improve the pilot’s vision. It was armed with 20 mm cannon (Vulcan M 61) for close combat but also carried missiles (in modern times Sidewinder or Sparrow missiles). Air-to-ground missiles were also part of its arsenal. Like the Minutemen of America’s Colonial times, the Fighting Falcon would come to be known for its constant state of readiness, as well as its ability to take flight quickly should the need to defend America arise. It was first produced in 1973 and would make its initial flight in 1975—the last year of the Vietnam War.

After the Vietnam War with another U.S. war not on the horizon for another decade and a half (the Gulf War of 1991), the use of the F-16 was limited. With no demand from combat, the F-16 saw action of another sort, as it quickly became the plane of choice for the highly marketable USAF Thunderbirds air...
Ground crewmembers make their final pre-flight checks under the noses and in the cockpits of the most famous F-16s, the USAF Thunderbirds, at Nellis AFB, Nevada, in 1983. Two years later the Israeli Air Force would achieve the first air-to-air “kill” by an F-16 in combat. (SSgt Bob Simons photo, USAF)

demonstration team. Millions of Americans over the years have seen just what the nearly 33-foot-wide fighter can do in flight, thanks to the thousands of air shows the Thunderbirds have performed. While its speed of 1,300 MPH (Mach 2) was often on display at these air shows, its range of some 2,600 miles was not.

By the 1980s, the F-16 also became a fixture in the air force ranks of America’s allies around the world. In fact, the Israeli Air Force got the first F-16 air-to-air “kill” in 1981 when an Israeli-piloted F-16 downed a Syrian helicopter. The Israeli Air Force continued to use F-16s extensively the following year in military actions against Lebanon. By the late 1980s, Pakistan’s Air Force also was using them against invaders of its air space during the Soviet-Afghan War (1980–1989), and Turkey’s Air Force did the same while intervening in the 1993 Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis in the Balkans.

But USAF F-16 Fighting Falcons first saw action in war in 1991’s Desert Storm, where they targeted Iraqi targets that had invaded Kuwait. More action would follow in the ensuing decades: Post-9/11, the F-16 was used in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Operation Iraqi Freedom and in the skies above Libya during the 2011 crisis there.

As years turned to decades, General Dynamics stopped producing the F-16 and Lockheed-Martin took over. In total, some 4,600 F-16s have been produced in the last 40 years. The latest forms of the “Viper” carry LAU rocket pods, which are each capable of carrying 19 rockets per pod. Some of these pods are even packing Sniper capability. Advanced Targeting Pods, nicknamed Sniper ATP for their high level of accuracy, are just some of the latest technology to be added to the F-16. The Royal Netherlands Air Force, which is one of the 25 Air Forces around the world still flying the Fighting Falcon, just ordered the Sniper ATP for their F-16s. And both Iraq and Egypt flew missions against ISIS targets in the Middle East in 2015 using the F-16. As of 2015, the Fighting Falcon is the second most common aircraft of all Air Forces around the world.

As for the USAF’s F-16s, plans are to keep them in service through at least 2025, thus ensuring the Fighting Falcon will see a 50th anniversary in flight. While there have been F-16 accidents over the years, only two were fatal to USAF personnel. A 1982 crash in South Korea as well as a 1994 crash at Pope AFB, North Carolina, are the only fatal USAF Fighting Falcon mishaps. (In November 2014, an F-16 from Tyndall AFB, Florida, crashed in the Gulf of Mexico, killing its pilot. The pilot, however, was a civilian employee of the 82nd Aerial Targets Squadron.)

Such a safety record for such a frequently used, high-speed aircraft only speaks to the quality of the equipment as well as the dedication of the enlisted mechanics who service the F-16s every day at USAF installations around the world.

Sources Consulted:
A LIFE OF SERVICE AND HONOR

Remembering SMSgt (Ret.) Joseph Kuchera, AFSA International President 2003–2005

Beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather Joseph John “Joe” Kuchera, 76, of Canonsburg, Penn., passed away peacefully Friday, Jan. 15, 2016, surrounded by loved ones.

Past president Kuchera also served as president of and, later, senior adviser to Golden Triangle Chapter 259 in Pittsburgh. He served on the committee that designed and implemented the Air Force Memorial in Washington, D.C., and is honored at the memorial with his name inscribed on the monument.

Orrie O. Colaw
LAKELAND, FL

Dwight J. Collie
NEWPORT NEWS, VA

Richard E. Cover
CHAMBERSBURG, PA

Wayne E. Creek
DALLAS, TX

William A. Crivello
MILWAUKEE, WI

Clarence L. Curtis
BISBEE, AZ

Zona A. Cutchens
READING, PA

William Davidson, Jr.
SILVER SPRING, MD

Darwin E. Deck
GREEN, SC

James T. Deeter
GARLAND, TX

Albert J. Derganz, Jr.
OCEAN SPRINGS, MS

William F. Devine
JACKSONVILLE, NC

Bobbie A. Dickerson
COLUMBUS, OH

Martha O. Dominick
MIDDLETOWN, PA

Robert J. Doucette
DADE CITY, FL

Joseph W. Dragony
TUCSON, AZ

Jeanette M. Dube
BOW, NH

Ralph W. Duke
LAPEER, MI

Jane W. Easterbrook
SANDY, UT

Robert A. Elrod
ARNOLD, MD

Harold J. Engel
ROCKWALL, TX

Ruth A. Eugenis
LAUDERHILL, FL

Donald P. Fankhauser
LAS VEGAS, NV

Robert L. Adams
LITTLETON, CO

Valetta P. Adkins
EASLEY, SC

Yukie Ahmad
FOUNTAIN HILLS, AZ

Lois P. Alcorn
LAKE CITY, FL

Carleen D. Alderson
GALLATIN, TN

Howard L. Allen
POLK CITY, FL

William P. Andrews, Jr.
MANGO, FL

David H. Angell
WILLITS, CA

Rosendo Aragon
CANYON, TX

David H. Arnott
DELAND, FL

Lillian B. Arnott
DELAND, FL

Howard W. Atkinson
DARLINGTON, SC

Barbara M. Atkinson
HOLLYWOOD, FL

John E. Backstrom
NORTH PALM BEACH, FL

Charles A. Baker
EAST MECKEESPORT, PA

Homer E. Baldwin
SHELBY, MT

Myrlin C. Balzen
KERRVILLE, TX

Helen L. Barrows
CHICOPEE, MA

Sara I. Barry
PETAL, MS

Richard F. Bassett
DENVER, CO

Russell L. Baxter
LUBBOCK, TX

Harvey D. Beane
TILLAMOOK, OR

Robert C. Beauchamp
ALIQUIPPA, PA

Harry W. Beidel
LAWRENCEVILLE, GA

Evelyn C. Beltran
WEISER, ID

Theonie B. Bennett
NOTTINGHAM, NH

John F. Berner
DUNNELLON, FL

Mary C. Berry
EL CAJON, CA

Dorothy Bezwanger
BETHPAGE, NY

Shirley A. Bigelow
LANDER, WY

Lyndel E. Blackwell
IDABEL, OK

Joseph Blair
NEVADA CITY, CA

Helen K. Blanchard
BRANDON, MS

August W. Blom
SACRAMENTO, CA

Thomas Blount
JACKSONVILLE, FL

Gail P. Bolding
APO MIAMI, FL

Julia G. Bolles
APO, AP

Anthony B. Borkowski
LONG BEACH, CA

Jeanine Bouchard
SUNNYSIDE, WA

Elmo L. Bowden
CLEARFIELD, UT

Francis C. Brady
WASHINGTON, DC

Bert O. Braftsford
LEHI, UT

Felix G. Brannon
HARTFORD, AL

Bedford L. Brasher
SAINT LOUIS, MO

George T. Bray
SAN ANTONIO, TX

Gustavus A. Bremer
ENTIAT, WA

Luther L. Briggs
GOLDSBORO, NC

Leo J. Brinkman
MESA, AZ

Patrick N. Brosnahan
CABALLO, NM

Robert E. Brown
AURORA, CO

William A. Brown
PHOENIX, AZ

Robert W. Brown
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

Edgar D. Brown, Jr.
ENID, OK

Robert F. Bruckner
MILWAUKEE, WI

Donald C. Bryan
EULESS, TX

Jasper C. Bryant
WALTERBORO, SC

Frances M. Bulmer
NORTH HIGHLANDS, CA

Virginia L. Burns
WAGONER, OK

Joseph F. Butler
SOMERDALE, NJ

Robert B. Byers
SPRINGFIELD, MO

Pauline B. Campbell
FAIRFIELD, CA

John H. Carter
LACE OSWEGO, OR

Flavil H. Caskey
LUBBOCK, TX

John T. Coad
TROY, TX
Life is hard work.

Choosing life insurance shouldn’t be.

Choosing the right plan to help protect the future of those most important to you can seem difficult. But your membership with AFSA can help make it simple.*

These days, making sure your family has everything they need and much of what they want can be hard work. That’s why AFSA has designed an affordable life insurance plan, exclusively for our members, that makes sense.

With the **AFSA Simplified Issue Term Life Insurance Plan**, you can apply for up to $200,000* of coverage with NO long forms to fill out. Also, active duty members under age 40 are guaranteed acceptance for $25,000 of coverage.

And, with features like an additional $1,000 Critical Illness CASH Benefit† paid directly to you in a lump sum to use as you see fit, choosing this plan seems sensible.

---

Learn more about the AFSA Simplified Issue Term Life Insurance Plan:
Call 1-800-882-5541 or visit www.afsainsurance.com
Request Number 074039-1-1-1

Hearing-impaired or voice-impaired members may call the Relay Line at 1-800-855-2881.

*Coverage is subject to approval. At age 70, coverage reduces to a maximum of $100,000.
†The Critical Illness Benefit is not available in all states. Please contact the Program Administrator for details and more information (including cost, exclusions, limitations, reduction of benefits and terms of coverage).

Underwritten by: Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Company, Hartford, CT 06155
The Hartford® is The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc., and its subsidiaries, including issuing company Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Company. This plan is administered by Mercer Consumer, a service of Mercer Health & Benefits Administration LLC.
All benefits are subject to the terms and conditions of the policy. Policies underwritten by Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Company detail exclusions, limitations, reduction of benefits and terms under which the policies may be continued in full or discontinued.
USAA members save when they bundle USAA home and auto insurance.¹

FIND OUT HOW TO GET YOUR SAVINGS.

Get a quote.

USAA.COM/AFSA • 877-499-AFSA (2372)

¹Multiple product savings do not apply in all states or to all situations. Savings subject to change. Restrictions apply.

Use of the term “member” or “membership” does not convey any eligibility rights for auto and property insurance products, or legal or ownership rights in USAA. Membership eligibility and product restrictions apply and are subject to change. Property and casualty insurance provided by United Services Automobile Association, USAA Casualty Insurance Company, USAA General Indemnity Company, Garrison Property and Casualty Insurance Company, San Antonio, TX, and USAA Ltd. (Europe), and is available only to persons eligible for P&C group membership. Each company has sole financial responsibility for its own products. The Air Force Sergeants Association receives financial support for their sponsorship. © 2016 USAA. 226239-0116