

# The Luke Air Force Base Thunderbolt

“We train the world’s greatest fighter pilots and combat ready Airmen”



May, 2023  
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# Purple Up for military children

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### FEATURE



Staff Sgt. Noah D. Cogger

### FURIOUS ALPACA

See Pages 6 and 7

The Defense Department observed April as Month of the Military Child and highlighted programs, resources, and services available to support the overall well-being of military children, youth, and teens.

“Taking Care of Our Military Children” is the theme of this year’s Month of the Military Child campaign, an opportunity to focus on the lives of military children, youth, and teens.

Military families move every two to three years on average, and military children change schools an average of six to nine times from the start of kindergarten to their high school graduation. This year an estimated 30 percent of military service members will move to a new installation.

The Defense Department is committed to recognizing the unique challenges of military-connected children, youth and teens and ensuring that families are aware of the full breadth of support and resources that are at the ready to serve their needs as they change schools, settle into new communities, and navigate military life in general.

Across the military this April, installations hosted events and observances celebrating military children, youth and teens and highlighting the programs, resources, and services available to support moving schools, education, and overall well-being.

Throughout the month of April, DOD invited the nation to Purple Up—wear purple and share their pictures on social media to show their support for military children, youth and teens.

“This April, we honor the 1,602,261 military children, youth and teens serving alongside our nation’s service members,” said Patricia Montes Barron, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Military Community and Family Policy. “Our military kids bring joy to our hearts, and we work hard to ensure they have access to the support and resources they need.”

Within the Defense Department, there are a number of programs and resources to support military parents and their children. These



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Elias Carrero

Children from the Luke Air Force Base Child Development Center participate in a parade, April 21, 2023, at Luke AFB, Arizona. The parade provided Luke families an opportunity to celebrate military children and recognize challenges they face.

include many affordable, quality and licensed child care options on and off installation.

DOD works with a variety of stakeholders to build a support network that provides the best possible education experience for military-

connected children and youth worldwide. This includes school liaisons who can help students realize their education goals and interstate compacts that make changing schools easier for children.

## Thunderbolt

Continue to get Luke’s latest news and information from these sources: <https://www.aerotechnews.com/lukeafb/> <https://www.luke.af.mil> and social media



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of the month

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prior to date of publication

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Tell us Your Story  
Active-duty, Reserve, Retirees  
All military branches are included  
Email name, phone number and a brief description of your service to [kim@aerotechnews.com](mailto:kim@aerotechnews.com)



Children and caretakers from the Luke Air Force Base Child Development Center participate in a parade, April 21, 2023, at Luke AFB, Arizona. April is the month of the military child.



Students in the Shadow Ridge High School marching band perform, April 21, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, part of the Child Development Center’s Purple Up parade.



## PHONE NUMBERS

Airman and Family Readiness Center .....	623-856-6550
Airman's Attic .....	623-856-6415
Armed Forces Bank .....	623-535-9766
Base Exchange main store .....	623-935-2671
Base taxi .....	623-856-6866
Beauty shop .....	623-536-1897
Chapel .....	623-856-6211
Chapel (after duty hours) .....	623-856-5600
Child development center .....	623-856-6338
Clothing sales .....	623-856-6310
Club Five Six .....	623-856-6446
Command post .....	623-856-5600
Commissary .....	623-935-3821
Community center .....	623-856-7152
Computer IT service desk .....	DSN 945-2900
Crime Stop .....	623-856-6666
Dental clinic .....	623-856-2273
Dermatology .....	623-856-2273
Dining hall .....	623-856-6396
Dorm management .....	623-856-7841
Education center .....	623-856-7722
EMERGENCY ONLY .....	911
Equal opportunity .....	623-856-7711
Eye clinic .....	623-856-7965
Falcon Dunes Golf Course .....	623-535-9334
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Family housing .....	623-388-3515
Fire station .....	623-856-6641
Firestone Car Care .....	623-271-8104
Fitness center .....	623-856-6241
Flight medicine .....	623-856-2273
Food court .....	623-935-2671
Fort Tuthill .....	623-856-3401
Fraud, waste and abuse hotline .....	623-856-6149
Hobby shop .....	623-856-6722
Housing assistance section .....	623-856-7643
Housing facilities section .....	623-856-3007
Housing maintenance .....	623-935-2676
Identification cards .....	623-856-7832
Information, tickets and travel .....	623-856-6000
Law enforcement desk .....	623-856-5970
Legal assistance .....	623-856-6901
Library .....	623-856-7191
Lodging office/switchboard .....	623-856-3941
Maintenance control center .....	623-856-5469
Marine Corps .....	623-856-2417
Marine Corps 24-hour duty desk .....	602-421-5806
Marketing .....	623-856-3245
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Military pay .....	623-856-7028
Navy Operations Support Center .....	602-353-3008
OB/GYN clinic .....	623-856-2273
Office of Special Investigations .....	623-856-6821
Optometrist .....	623-856-2273
Orthopedic clinic .....	623-856-2273
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Retiree Activities office .....	623-856-3923
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Ticket/tour office .....	623-856-6000
Travco .....	855-896-7939
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TMO passenger travel .....	623-856-7035
Transient alert .....	623-856-6204
Travel pay .....	623-856-7028
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Wellness center .....	623-856-2273
Youth center .....	623-856-7470

# ACE tactics exercised at Wild Coyote

By Airman 1st Class  
JAKOB HAMBRIGHT

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 56th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, and the 317th Airlift Wing, Dyess AFB, Texas, executed Agile Combat Employment tactics during exercise Wild Coyote, April 12-13, 2023, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona.

The two-day training exercise included three different groups from the 56th FW operating alongside two C-130J Super Hercules aircraft assigned to the 40th Airlift Squadron.

"Having (the 317th AW) join us adds vital training value for both wings," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Nicholas Carter, 63rd Aircraft Maintenance Unit director of operations. "With the different mission sets, it gives the Airmen a chance to view more of the Air Force, and gain experience that they can take to a deployment or a different command."

Focused on rapid deployment of F-35 Lightning II aircraft, Airmen executed hot pit refueling, where aircraft are immediately refueled upon landing. This drastically reduces refuel time and aircraft can return to the air in potentially under 30 minutes.

"Hot pits are not only useful for the pilots, but great training for the aircraft maintenance unit," said Carter. "It's a whole different process to perform a hot pit versus a normal refuel."

Alongside hot pits, Airmen participated in a wet wing defuel of a C-130J, where fuel was taken from the aircraft and used to refuel F-35's during the hot pits.

"The C-130's are playing a big part in the exercise," said Carter. "Not only are they helping the refuels, but they're providing transportation for our personnel and cargo."

Airmen were also involved with tasks outside of their career fields, such as setting up infrastructure and maintaining security of the airfield.

"Training Multi-Capable Airmen is crucial," said Carter. "When the maintainers aren't working on the aircraft, we need them to help with things like security, living quarters, and facilities."



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Jakob Hambricht

U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing enter the cargo hold of a C-130J Hercules assigned to the 317th Airlift Wing, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, during exercise Wild Coyote, April 13, 2023, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. Wild Coyote allowed Airmen to experience agile combat employment operations in a simulated environment.



A U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules aircraft assigned to the 317th Airlift Wing, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, takes off during exercise Wild Coyote, April 12, 2023, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. Airmen assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing used two C-130J's from the 317th AW in a wet wing defuel, transferring the fuel to F-35A Lightning II aircraft during hot pit refuels.

According to Air University, the ACE concept was developed in response to advances in 21st century weapons capabilities and reconnaissance. Instead of relying on key central infrastructures, ACE allows the U.S. Air Force and its partners to run operations from smaller, geographically separated locations.

"(ACE) is a key concept in the Air Force right now," said Carter. "At a training base like Luke, our Airmen don't get to experience it as much, so this exercise allowed them to get that experience before they go off to another command where it's more prevalent."

U.S. Air Force Col. Anthony Mullinax, 56th Mission Support Group commander, emphasized the importance of exercises like Wild Coyote for the 56th FW and the U.S. Air Force.

"These exercises allow us to make mistakes and learn from them," said Mullinax. "We would rather make the mistakes out here in a simulated environment than making them in a deployed environment."

Exercises like Wild Coyote enhance readiness and prepare Airmen for the future as the U.S. Air Force continues to redefine the way it projects combat power across the globe.

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# 2,000th U.S. F-35 pilot graduates from Luke AFB

By Airman 1st Class  
KATELYNN JACKSON

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 56th Fighter Wing graduated the 2,000th F-35 Lightning II pilot, U.S. Air Force Maj. Christopher “Blade” Jeffers, April 17th, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

This milestone marks a step forward for the Airmen at Luke in realizing its mission of training the world’s greatest fighter pilots.

Since 1941, Luke AFB has graduated over 61,000 pilots, approximately 105 F-35 pilots and 188 F-16 pilots annually, accounting for over 75 percent of trained F-35 pilots across the Department of Defense.

“Here at Luke, we don’t just take pride in the number of pilots we produce,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander. “We take great pride in the quality of our graduates, because they will be the ones who advance airpower for decades to come.”

Before flying the aircraft, pilots must undergo 192 hours of academic and simulator-based training. Fifty hours of flying are needed to complete the course and nearly half are accredited through the F-35 Full Mission Simulator, an immersive technology designed to replicate the hardware of the F-35.

“The simulator was very close to the airplane,” said Jeffers. “It is about as realistic as you can get.”

Jeffers flew the F-16, from 2014 to 2019 with over 1,600 flight hours prior to attending the Transition Course (TX) for the F-35. Jeffers became certified to fly the F-35 while assigned to the 62nd Fighter Squadron.

“The most rewarding part of training is just seeing what I can do now in the F-35 compared to the F-16,” said Jeffers. “The situational awareness and capabilities that the F-35 offers, would take multiple F-16s.”

The F-35A is the U.S. Air Force’s latest fifth generation fighter, with over 8 million lines of three-tiered code making up the flying systems.

“The biggest differences in the fifth-generation aircraft and the F-16 is stealth,” said Jeffers. “It increases the survival rate in missions. The next is sensor fusion. The F-16 can give you a lot of information, but you as the pilot have to decipher what is and isn’t important. Whereas the F-35 knows what you want and increases battlespace awareness.”

In addition to re-enforcing national security, the F-35 serves as a vessel for strengthening global partnerships. Luke AFB currently upholds training partnerships with Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, and Denmark.

“I had the opportunity to train with foreign partners here at Luke,” said Jeffers. “It was a really good experience to train with them and see the motivation and drive they had to learn and improve.”



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Katelynn Jackson

Upon completing 3 ½ months of flight training accompanied by 50 hours of flying, TX pilots like Jeffers are then trained as instructors in instructor upgrade training. Jeffers will carry out the remaining three years of his contract as an F-35 instructor pilot at Luke AFB.

“I see myself flying the F-35 here at Luke until I can retire,” said Jeffers.

It took 14 years from the F-35’s introduction in 2006 to achieve 1,000 trained fighter pilots in 2020. Three years later the Department of Defense has doubled that number.

It’s Jeffers’ belief that with the ever evolving and innovative nature of the Air Force, this rate of force growth will continue.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if we jump to 6,000 pilots in a fraction of the time it took to get to 2,000,” said Jeffers. “The Air Force is always improving and growing.”

As the F-16 approaches the end of its training mission at Luke AFB, a force of 2,000 trained F-35 fighter pilots strengthens the aircraft’s role in modern warfare.

“We will be flying the F-35 for years to come, and then the next generation of fighter aircraft will come along,” said Jeffers. “But I think the F-35 will be around for the next generation of aspiring fighter pilots.”

Luke AFB is fully committed to continuing quality F-35 training in support of its mission. Producing combat-ready Airmen that train alongside high-performance, multi-role aircraft strengthens combat readiness.

**U.S. Air Force Maj. Christopher Jeffers, 62nd Fighter Squadron student pilot, climbs into an F-35A Lightning II fighter jet, April 17, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Jeffers was preparing to take off on his final training sortie needed to graduate as the 2,000th F-35 pilot in the Department of Defense.**





# Luke Unveils Murvaux flag at Club Five Six

By  
56th FIGHTER WING

Public Affairs

Luke AFB leadership unveiled a flag from 2nd Lt. Frank Luke Jr.'s grave in Murvaux, France, April 7, 2023, at Luke AFB, Arizona.

The flag was gifted to 56th Fighter Wing leadership in 2018 by the mayor of Murvaux during the 100th anniversary ceremony honoring Luke's death and is now on display at Club Five Six on Luke AFB as a heritage item.



U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff (right), 56th Fighter Wing commander, members of the Luke family and Fighter Country Foundation partners pose for a group photo in front of the Murvaux flag, May, 7, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

"The flag is part of Murvaux's history," said U.S. Air Force (ret.) Lt. Col. Rick Grisct, former 56th Fighter Wing historian. "It is significant that the mayor wanted to gift this historic item to the representatives of Luke AFB in order to commemorate the skill and courage of Frank Luke."

Luke was an aviator during World War I and Luke AFB, where the Murvaux flag currently resides, is named after him.

"The Murvaux flag is associated with the town where Frank Luke's last mission ended," said Grisct. "That mission earned Frank Luke a Medal of Honor."

On Sept. 29, 1918, while under heavy fire from ground forces and the active pursuit of eight German planes, Luke successfully shot down three German war balloons. After finishing off the third balloon, Luke was forced to land due to injuries sustained during his aerial assault. He continued firing on enemy ground troops in his descent, killing six more German soldiers. Once his plane landed, the mortally wounded Luke drew his automatic pistol and defended himself until he fell dead from a chest wound.

A group of farmers from Murvaux witnessed the event and buried the then unknown American aviator nearby. They later signed a statement given to the U.S. Army retelling their eyewitness account of Luke's heroism. This account led to Luke becoming the first aviator to receive the Medal of Honor.

"We are honored by the town of Murvaux gifting us this piece of our base's history," said Brig. Gen. Jason



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Elias Carrero

Participants in the Murvaux flag ceremony celebrate the unveiling of the Murvaux flag May, 7, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The flag was given to 56th Fighter Wing leadership in 2018 by the mayor of Murvaux, France, during the 100th anniversary ceremony honoring the death of Luke AFB's namesake, 2nd Lt. Frank Luke Jr.

Rueschhoff, 56th Fighter Wing commander. "We strive every day to honor the legacy and heroism of Lt. Frank Luke Jr. here at Luke Air Force Base. It was his pursuit of excellence and willingness to give the ultimate sacrifice that continues to inspire our own efforts today."

The U.S. Air Force has a long tradition of honoring the courage, integrity, and dedication of service members who made the ultimate sacrifice.



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# Days of Remembrance



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Katelynn Jackson

**Werner Salinger, Holocaust survivor and U.S. Air Force veteran, talks to Airmen at a Days of Remembrance event at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, April 18, 2023. Salinger was born in 1932 in Berlin and survived the Night of Broken Glass before immigrating to New York in 1939 and enlisting in the U.S. Air Force at the age of 19. The 56th Fighter Wing Diversity and Inclusion Team hosted the event, giving Airmen the opportunity to hear Salinger's story.**



**U.S. Air Force Maj. Ryan O'Dea, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron commander, leans in to hear guest speaker Werner Salinger, holocaust survivor and U.S. Air Force veteran.**



**U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, speaks with Chris Cropps, 56th FW Chapel volunteer, during a Days of Remembrance event. Cropps was born in 1927 in Frankfurt, Germany, growing up during the rise of the Third Reich.**



**LEFT: Luke Air Force Base leadership listens to guest speaker Werner Salinger, holocaust survivor and U.S. Air Force veteran.**

A large, vibrant red poppy flower is centered on a background of many smaller, faded white poppy flowers. The poppy is a symbol of remembrance for military service members.

For the ones who gave all,  
**WE REMEMBER.**

The poppy is a symbol of remembrance for all who made the ultimate sacrifice in military service to our nation.

On Memorial Day, we join you in honoring each individual this red flower represents.



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# FURIOUS ALPACA:

## Luke EOD trains at Camp Navajo

By Staff Sgt.  
NOAH D. COGER

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**CAMP NAVAJO, Ariz.** — Twenty-one members assigned to Luke Air Force Base's 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight participated in a three-day field training exercise, Furious Alpaca, April 10-13, 2023, at Camp Navajo, Arizona.

The strategic objective of the exercise was to conduct EOD operations in a contested, deployed environment alongside a foreign partner while facing threats from a near-peer adversary.

"We are training for the worst-case scenario against a peer-to-peer threat," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Alger, 56th CES EOD training section chief. "We need to know how to deploy and work with our foreign partners as well as tackle any obstacles that we might see in a contested environment. Ultimately, the goal is to prepare our EOD members to go into those environments and have the capabilities to maneuver and communicate well with partner forces to achieve success."

The exercise consisted of day and night operations with scenarios that challenged the participants, both physically and mentally.

"We have had early mornings and very long nights," said U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Jessey McClain, 56th CES EOD technician. "We've been out here training on scenarios both day and night. Having that physical wear and

tear while still being able to maintain and operate during whatever problem arises is definitely one of the biggest challenges."

Along with those challenges, each day saw the flight face a different situation which tested previously learned skills and added new skills to the Airmen's collective repertoire.

"The first day we deployed them from a main operating base to a forward operating base, where they were familiarized with the partner force they were going to be operating with, doing things like firing drills and small unit tactics," said Alger. "The second day they focused on land navigation to prepare them for the environment and familiarize them with the landscape in which they'll be operating. Then on the last day, they were forward deployed with the partner force and executed EOD specific objectives in the field."

On top of learning new skills, every scenario required a different and special set of tools to complete the mission at hand, which served to deepen understanding of what and how to employ during real-world operations.

"This also allows our technicians to understand how their gear works; what kind of equipment is needed in these environments and how to utilize it," said Alger. "Those are tactile things that can only be taught through first-hand experience, those small field-craft and care skills, but also learning more about how to adapt to the environments and how quickly they can change. Reading about

a scenario is different than experiencing it; things become much more complex and we want to inoculate them to any future stressors they may encounter."

The 56th CES EOD flight regularly plans and holds one field training exercise annually but hopes to expand to multiple annual exercises in the future to further develop Airmen's knowledge and prepare them for any situation.

"We're always trying to think forward," said Alger. "To prepare our folks today, is going to pay off dividends in the future. It's great to get out into the elements and go through these scenarios so that they know when they do get out into some of those real-world scenarios, that they can perform and accomplish the mission."

The Air Force has prioritized Airmen as its most valuable advantage in today's era of strategic competition and with that, trainings like this are fundamental to their success.

"The great thing about these exercises is that we have so much experience, top to bottom, that we're always learning," said McClain. "There is always a different way to do something and sometimes people have more effective and efficient ways to do that thing, so if I can learn a better way to do something, then that's a huge benefit."

The U.S. Air Force EOD maintains readiness and trains in order to enable the accomplishment of the Joint Force and the geographic combatant commander's mission objectives in support of U.S. national security.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Jessey McClain (left), speaks with Senior Airman Gunnar Tokar (right), both 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight technicians, inside a storage unit at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 12, 2023.

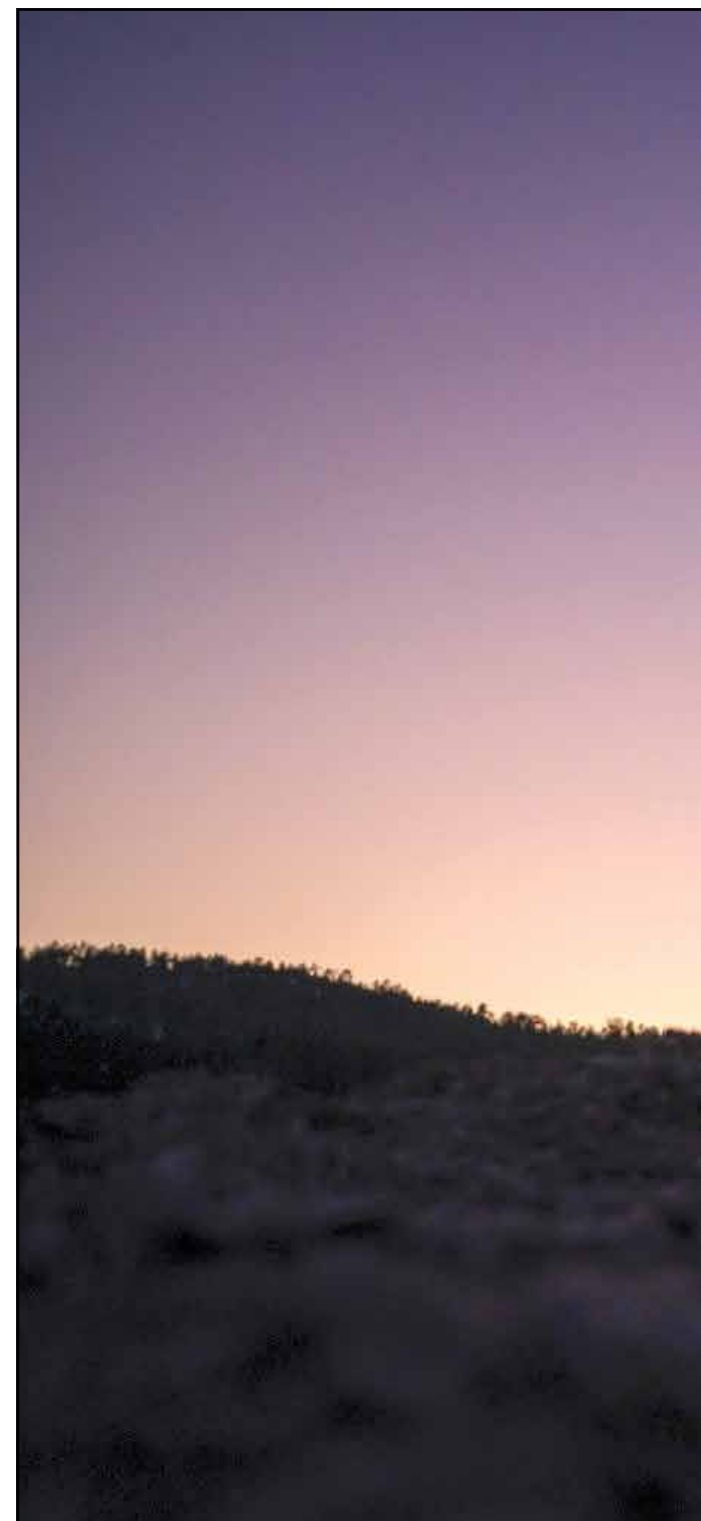


U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Tyler Paul, 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight technician, investigates a mortar outside a mock village during a training scenario at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 12, 2023.

U.S. Air Force members assigned to the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron participated in exercise Furious Alpaca. The flight trained with small combat units.



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Tyler Paul and Senior Airman Jacob M. ... an area outside a mock village at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 12, 2023. They are conducting several scenarios including searching for explosives after being abandoned.







U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Noah D. Cogger

assigned to the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight fire M4 carbine assault rifles on a firing range at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 10, 2023. The Airmen Furious Alpaca; a three-day exercise with the strategic objective of conducting operations in degraded environments alongside foreign forces against a near peer threat. The EOD combat arms and practiced skills required to engage enemies as a unit.



Tyler Paul (left), Senior Airman Seth Elroy (center), and Senior Airman Jacob Schoonmaker (right), 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight technicians, investigate a training scenario at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 11, 2023. The 56th CES EOD members trained on land navigation and scouting areas that were baited with mock enemy forces.



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jason Evans (right) and Senior Airman Nestor Guevara-Penella (left), 56th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight technicians, hike up a snow-covered hill at Camp Navajo, Arizona, April 11, 2023. Members assigned to the 56th CES EOD flight participated in exercise Furious Alpaca; a three-day exercise with the strategic objective of conducting operations in degraded environments alongside foreign forces against a near peer threat. The second day consisted of day and night land navigation courses meant to familiarize members with a basic understanding of the tools needed to successfully navigate unfamiliar territory.





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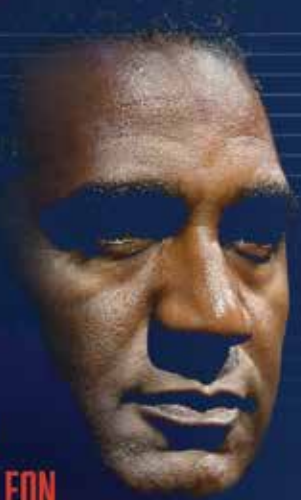
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Photo of Norm Lewis by Walter McBride. Production photos of the 2020 Broadway company by Jenn Marcus.

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## Chaplain's Corner ...

### Guard Your Time: Considerations About Time Stewardship

By Chaplain (Capt.)  
JEFF RYBOLD

What is time? It is an immaterial commodity that you can never gain, yet you are constantly spending. When you are bored, it passes slowly, but when you are active or enjoying life, it passes quickly. The older you get, the more valuable it is. As you continue to live your life, I want to encourage you to purposefully guard your time.

Protect that which is valuable. The time you have is the only time you will ever get. You cannot get more, and you cannot make up for that which is lost. You can, however, guard and use what time you have more effectively.

How? First, identify what your time is invested in. Family, friends, work, entertainment, education — all of these are areas in which we invest our time.

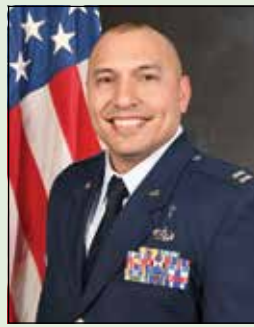
Second, identify the priority of those areas. As you consider the time investment, ask yourself “Am I investing in this area enough, too much, or not enough?” This should be a continual and regular process. There is much to consider when evaluating your personal time stewardship.

Every person's story is different and the amount of time they spend in certain areas will vary considerably. For example, to me, family is the most important area to invest my time. However, if all my time is in my family and none is in my work, it is very likely I will lose both because my family is not properly

provided for. On the other hand, your story may be one of retirement and you can spend much less time on work and much more on family. That is an evaluation only you can observe and decision only you can make.

Protect from losing more than you should. We all know emergencies happen. Certain things come up requiring more time than we want to spend. Sometimes, however, we let things steal our time when they really shouldn't. Those are the things to look out for and guard against. When you are with your family, friends, or in a moment of self-care, prevent that time from being stolen. Be sure to create reasonable expectations, establish personal safeguards, and effectively communicate with others to better protect your time.

If you find yourself in a situation where you are constantly losing time, re-evaluate the situation and circumstances then consider alternatives going forward. Part of advancing quality of life here at Luke Air Force Base is finding ways to innovatively move forward both at work centers and with families. If you are unsure, consider the resources available to you. Your Chaplain Corps team is ready to help your units and families with tools in time stewardship.



U.S. Air Force photo  
Chaplain (Capt.) Jeff Rybold

# Educators connect

By Airman 1st Class  
KATELYNN JACKSON

56 Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 56th Fighter Wing hosted Phoenix-area educators for a West Valley Educators Immersion Tour at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, March 31, 2023.

“From pharmacy technicians to air traffic controllers, fighter pilots to maintainers, our educators got to see a little bit of everything during their visit to Luke AFB,” said U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff,

See EDUCATORS, Page 10



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Katelynn Jackson  
U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, speaks to West Valley educators, during the West Valley Educators Immersion Tour, March 31, 2023, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Tours like these are designed to offer opportunities to build community partnerships and contribute to public knowledge of base operations.



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# Volunteer advocates honored



**U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, (right) 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, presents an award to Tech. Sgt. Kyle Johnson (left), 56th Fighter Wing volunteer victim advocate, April 21, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.**



**U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, (right) 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, presents an award to Staff Sgt. Bridgette Babers (left), 56th Fighter Wing volunteer victim advocate, April 21, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Elias Carrero

**Jennifer Schoen (left), 56th Fighter Wing Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, and U.S. Air Force Col. Keegan McLeese, (right) 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, poses for a group photo with volunteer victim advocates from the Luke Air Force Base Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. Volunteer victim advocates are a crucial part of the Luke AFB SAPR team and provide critical support to Airmen impacted by sexual assault.**

## EDUCATORS

(from Page 9)

56th FW commander. "We were proud to host the West Valley educators for this visit. Education is not only about imparting knowledge, but also about instilling positive character and values in our youth."

A total of 27 educators toured the base, receiving information on the wing's mission and gaining insight on opportunities available to students interested in joining the U.S. Air Force.

"It was an honor to host our educators and let them see behind the curtain for a day," said Rueschhoff. "The military has a lot of fantastic options for our youth to keep learning and growing if they choose that path."

Base tours offer opportunities for wing leadership to strengthen community partnerships and contribute to public knowledge of base operations.

"This immersion allowed the educators to come out to Luke AFB, and make a connection with base leadership, Department of Education, and the School Liaison Officer," said Stacey Holland, the School Liaison Program Manager. "We wanted everyone to get a better understanding of how we can work together to support our military-connected students."

As the school liaison officer for the 56th FW, Holland is familiar with many resources available to military families and serves as the connection between base leadership, families, and the schools in the community.

Phoenix is the fifth largest city in the country and over 13 thousand active-duty members and their families stationed at Luke AFB attend over 500 schools in the West Valley. Holland also expressed how educators not only educate military-connected students but can also provide support as they transition across the world with their military sponsors.

"It also allowed the educators to see the many career opportunities, as well as the beauty of Luke AFB," said Holland. "They can go back and relay to their students how the Air Force can be a great option for their future!"

The tour visited the 62nd Fighter Squadron, the 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Unit, the 56th Communications Squadron and the 56th Medical Group, introducing them to multiple Air Force career fields. The educators had face-to-face conversations with Airmen and hands-on experience with equipment at each location.

Participants ended the day with a discussion on the different mission sets within the fighter wing and additional resources for students potentially interested in the military.

"Thank you to all our West Valley educators and fellow community servants for visiting Thunderbolt Nation," said Col. Anthony Mullinax, 56th Mission Support Group commander and Military State Representative for the Military Interstate Compact. "Your selfless service is an inspiration, and we were honored to host you."



U.S Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Katelynn Jackson

**Phoenix area educators tour an F-35 Lightning II aircraft assigned to the 62nd Fighter Squadron, during the West Valley Educators Immersion Tour, March 31st, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Twenty-seven educators toured the base, received information on operations and gained insight on opportunities available to their students interested in joining the U.S. Air Force.**



**Brandi Haskans, La Joya Community High School principal, looks into a microscope at the medical treatment facility during the West Valley Educators Immersion Tour, March 31, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.**



**U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff, 56th Fighter Wing commander, coins Michelle Hill, Dreaming Summit Elementary School principal, during the West Valley Educators Immersion Tour, March 31, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Rueschhoff shared the history of military challenge coins with the West Valley educators before coining them as they concluded the tour.**



**U.S. Air Force Maj. Ashley Lopez-Clark, 56th Communications Squadron commander, places a squadron patch on Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff, 56th Fighter Wing commander, March 31, 2023, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The exchange happened during the West Valley Educators Immersion Tour where Phoenix area educators visited Luke AFB to learn more the U.S. Air Force.**





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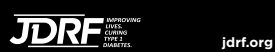
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- **Education** - Charter or private school options for children, higher education for adults
- **Food/ Entertainment** - What are options for eating out, recreation and socializing?
- **Transportation** - Who has military financing for vehicle purchase or leasing?
- **Worship** - Where are the local churches, synagogues, etc?
- **Specialized medical and dental care** - What providers are available in the community to supplement on-base services?
- **Pre-school and child care** - Who can be trusted to care for children of dual-income families?
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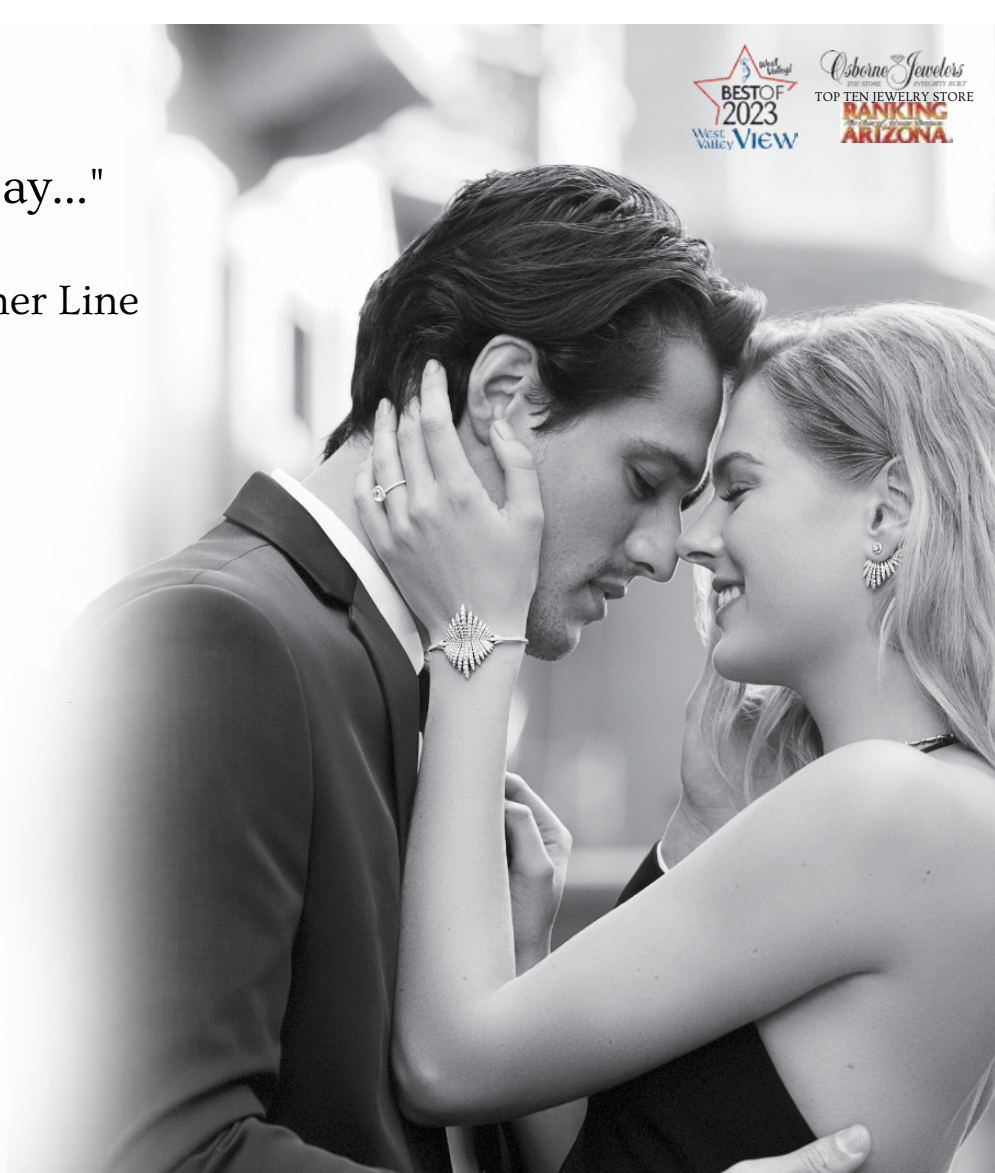
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[memberplanet.com/events/lukeafbclubs/2023annualmothersdaybrunch1100-1300](http://memberplanet.com/events/lukeafbclubs/2023annualmothersdaybrunch1100-1300)

Club Members - \$35 • Nonmembers - \$40  
Ages, 6-12 - \$10 • Ages, 5 & Younger - Free

Our menu features an omelet station, Belgium waffles, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, hash browns, and many other breakfast favorites, prime rib, roasted turkey, a variety of vegetable side dishes, fresh fruit and cheeses, assorted salads and desserts, dinner rolls, tea, coffee, and mimosas (one per paid adult)

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*continued on page 2*

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**Bryant Fitness Center**

*continued from page 1*  
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May 27 • 5-9pm • Open to all • \$60

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Jun. 3 • 7am - 7pm • Open to all • \$150

**BLISS WINE TOUR - SEDONA**

Jun. 10 • 7am - 8pm • Open to all • \$250  
Includes luxury limo bus transportation while visiting 3-4 vineyards, wine tastings, and individual charcuterie board lunch.

**LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTER - TEMPE AZ**

Jun. 14 • 10am - 3:30pm • Open to all • \$40 each • Learn to build Legos like and expert, rides, and 4D movies. Sign-up by Jun. 7 Limited to 20 participants

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Jun. 17 • 6am - 6pm • Open to all • \$45  
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### MAY COVER to COVER BOOK CLUB

May 11 • 10:30am • Free  
Read or listen to "The Midnight Line" by Lee Child

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Participants learn grip, stance, driving, chipping, putting techniques, and etiquette.

### MEMORIAL DAY TOURNAMENT

May 29 • 7:30am Shotgun Start • Register by May 26 • Club members - \$56 • Nonmembers - \$61 • Guests - \$66 • Includes green fees, range ball cart rental, lunch and prizes

## Community Commons

### AIRMEN GAMING TOURNAMENT

May 5 • 11am - Noon • Free • Prizes awarded

### LITTLE BRUSHES - Baby/Toddler Painting Class

May 6 • 10-11am • Ages six months - 5 yrs. old & parent • Free • Mother's Day-theme

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Active-duty, 19 yrs. & older • all others, 21 yrs. & older \$70 each - Permit \$60 (additional - Money Order required). Sign-up via e-mail at: 56.CommunityCenter@gmail.com

### BALLOONY TUNES

Mon. - Fri. • 8am-4pm • Community Commons, Mother's Day is May 14, check-out our large selection of balloons, balloon bouquets, baskets, and gifts for every occasion. Orders will be available for pick-up on May 12. Prices vary.

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Silver Wings Pool

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Pre-registration required

**Only \$99**

All materials & equipment included  
Open water certification not included

Outdoor Recreation • Bldg. 247 - 623-856-6267  
Facebook.com/LukeODR



## Youth Programs

### FLAG FOOTBALL CLINIC

Jun. 3 • 9am - Noon • Ages 5(K) • \$25 • Sign-up online May 8 - Jun. 2 at: [parent.afcyp.com](http://parent.afcyp.com)  
Call Youth Programs to set-up your *cypbms* account • Current immunization record and proof of flu shot and sports physical are required

## School Age Care

### SCHOOL AGE CARE PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Ages 5(K)-12 • Youth Programs • Prices based on total family income • Register now at: [militarychildcare.com](http://militarychildcare.com)

Program includes breakfast, an after-school snack, transportation (*pick-up and drop-off in front of Youth Programs*) to-and-from Luke, Dreaming Summit, and Heritage Elementary schools, and lots of enrichment programs.

## Family Child Care

### BECOME AN FCC PROVIDER

Spouses of active duty and retired military members living on-and off-base, are eligible to become licensed Family Child Care (FCC) providers. Providers must be at least 18 yrs. old, speak, read, and write English, have a high school diploma/GED, obtain liability insurance, and attend trainings. Call 623-856-2684 or e-mail; [patricia.mangrum.1@us.af.mil](mailto:patricia.mangrum.1@us.af.mil), or visit: [militarychildcare.com](http://militarychildcare.com).

### YOUTH PROGRAMS (YP) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Ages 9-18 • \$84 • Register at Youth Programs  
Youth Programs is affiliated with the Boys & Girls Club of America, 4-H, and the National Alliance for Youth Sports.



**Youth Programs**  
**KIDS NIGHT OUT**  
**COUNTDOWN TO SUMMER BASH!**

**MAY 12 • 5:30-9:30pm**  
Ages 5(K)-12 & 13-18 yrs. old • Sign-up by May 10  
YP members -\$20 • Guests - \$25  
Video games, movies, arts & crafts, refreshments, open gym & more • Athletic shoes must be worn in the gym  
Sign-up online at: [parent.afcyp.com](http://parent.afcyp.com)  
Call the Youth Programs to set-up your *cypbms* account  
Youth Programs • Bldg 1143 - **623-856-7470**  
[Facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms](https://www.facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms)

56th Force Support Squadron

## TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

(Area Code 623)

Arts and Crafts Center .....	856-6502
Auto Hobby Shop .....	856-6107
Bryant Fitness Center .....	856-6241
Bryant Fitness Center Annex .....	856-8299
Child Development Center .....	856-6338
Club Five Six .....	856-6446
Community Commons .....	856-7152
Falcon Dunes Golf Course .....	535-9334
Falcon Dunes Grill .....	856-0004
Family Child Care .....	856-2684
Fighter Country Inn (Lodging) .....	856-3941
Fort Tuthill .....	928-774-8893
G-Force Cafe .....	856-6446
Hensman Dining Facility .....	856-6396
Information, Tickets and Travel .....	856-6000
Library .....	856-7191
Marketing .....	856-3245
Military & Family Readiness .....	856-6550
NAF Human Resources .....	856-7755
Outdoor Recreation .....	856-6267
Saguaro Skies FamCamp .....	856-4891
School Age Programs .....	856-7471
Silver Wings Pool .....	602-739-4826
T-Bolt Cafe .....	856-6420
Wood Hobby Shop .....	856-6566
Youth Programs .....	856-7470
Unite Program .....	856-2472

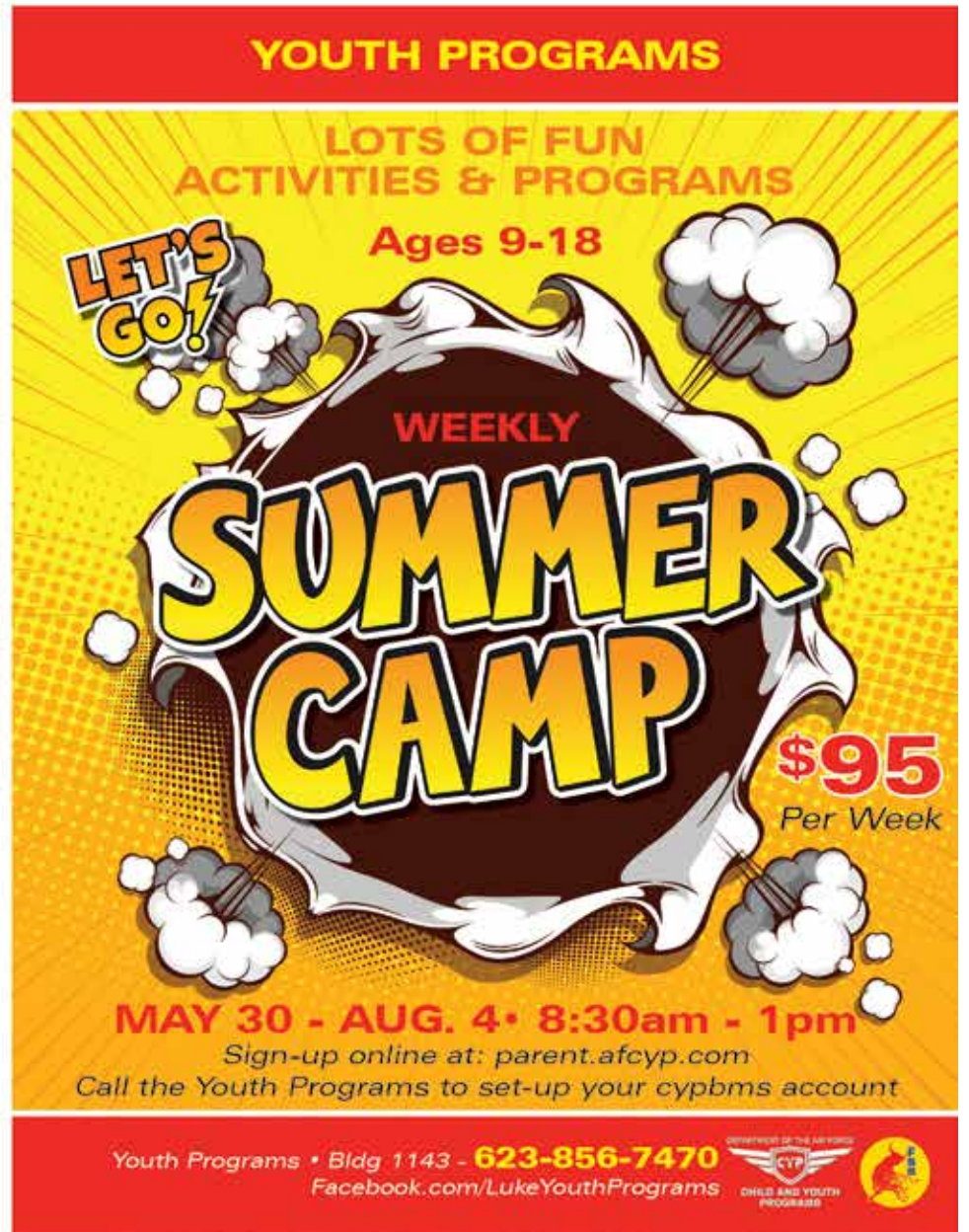


**SCHOOL AGE CARE**  
**Summer Camp**

**Weekly, May 30 - Aug. 4**  
**6am - 5:30pm • Ages 5(K)-12**

Camps include Arts & crafts, computers, fitness, STEM, dramatic and outdoor play, swimming, field trips, and much more  
Breakfast, lunch, and a snack are included  
Cost is based on total family income  
Sign-up for care by the Wednesday prior to camps  
New customers register at: [militarychildcare.com](http://militarychildcare.com)  
Existing customers sign-up online at: [parent.afcyp.com](http://parent.afcyp.com)  
Call the Youth Programs to set-up your *cypbms* account

Youth Programs • Bldg 1143 - **623-856-7470**  
[Facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms](https://www.facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms)



**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

**LOTS OF FUN**  
**ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS**

**Ages 9-18**

**LET'S GO!**

**WEEKLY**

**SUMMER CAMP**

**\$95**  
Per Week

**MAY 30 - AUG. 4 • 8:30am - 1pm**  
Sign-up online at: [parent.afcyp.com](http://parent.afcyp.com)  
Call the Youth Programs to set-up your *cypbms* account

Youth Programs • Bldg 1143 - **623-856-7470**  
[Facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms](https://www.facebook.com/LukeYouthPrograms)