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56th Fighter Wing changes command

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U.S. Air Force photo by Darlene Seltmann

GILA BEND FIREFIGHTERS STAY READY

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U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Mason Hargrove

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Clark J. Quinn (left), 19th Air Force commander, receives a guidon from Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff (right), 56th Fighter Wing outgoing commander, before transferring command of the 56th FW to Col. David Berkland at the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The 56th FW commander oversees the operations of the base including training, safety, and wellbeing of Airmen.

Luke Air Force Base Thunderbolt

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Luke56thFW



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U.S. Air Force Col. David Berkland, 56th Fighter Wing incoming commander, salutes during the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Berkland gains command of the 56 wing from U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff.



Above, U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff (right), 56th Fighter Wing outgoing commander, visits with community partners before transferring command to Col. David Berkland. At left, Berkland speaks during the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony.

56th FW welcomes new commander

By Senior Airman Dominic Tyler

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff, 56th Fighter Wing commander, relinquished command to Col. David Berkland, during a Change of Command ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

Berkland is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours, including over 900 combat hours. He arrived at Luke AFB following a position as the chief of staff of the Headquarters Pacific Air Forces at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, and is selected for promotion to brigadier general.

Berkland earned his commission in 1998 from Officer Training School after graduating from Augustana University. He performed duties as an F-16 Fighting Falcon instructor pilot and weapons officer, and flew combat missions in Operations Southern Watch, Northern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Freedom's Sentinel.

Maj. Gen. Clark Quinn, 19th Air Force commander as-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jakob Hambricht

U.S. Air Force Airmen salute Col. David Berkland, 56th Fighter Wing incoming commander, during the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Change of command ceremonies are historic ceremonies that honor the achievements of outgoing commanders and pass leadership to incoming commanders.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jakob Hambricht

Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs (center right) stands alongside U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Clark Quinn (center left), 19th Air Force commander, Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff (far right), 56th Fighter Wing outgoing commander, his wife Melissa Rueschhoff (second from right), Col. David Berkland (second from left), incoming 56th FW commander, and his wife Nikki Berkland (far left), for a group photo, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Hobbs visited Luke AFB to welcome Berkland and bid farewell to Rueschhoff.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Dominic Tyler

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Clark J. Quinn (left), 19th Air Force commander, claps with Brig. Gen. Jason Rueschhoff (right), 56th Fighter Wing outgoing commander, after transferring command of the 56th FW to Col. David Berkland at the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Berkland is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours, including over 900 combat hours.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Mason Hargrove

Luke Air Force Base leaders, Airmen, community partners, and families attend the 56th Fighter Wing Change of Command Ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke AFB, Arizona.

RIGHT: U.S. Air Force Col. David Berkland, 56th Fighter Wing incoming commander, walks among the crowd immediately following the 56th FW Change of Command ceremony, July 1, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

signed to Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, presided over the ceremony.

“Luke AFB is a perfect example of the Air Education and Training Command mission done right,” said Quinn. “Ox (Rueschhoff) and his incredible team here lead about 7,500 Total Force Airmen. Ox leaves the 56th to the exceptionally capable Ajax (Berkland). You have inherited a team of motivated and innovative Airmen, and I charge you to continue empowering that team to forge the next generation of our nation’s warriors, to ensure readiness and develop

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U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Noah Coger

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2ND QUARTER WEAPONS LOAD COMPETITION



U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Airman Jakob Hambricht

Republic of Singapore air force ME1 Wei Shen Tang (left), ME2 Yong Hao Wong (center), and ME2 Jeff Hong (right), load an AIM-120 AMRAAM missile onto an F-16 Fighting Falcon during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition, July 12, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Nicholas Reynolds (right) and Senior Airman Jaire Whitehead (left), 310th Aircraft Maintenance Unit maintainers, guide an AIM-120 AMRAAM missile during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition, July 12, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.



Republic of Singapore air force ME2 Jeff Hong (right), and ME2 Yong Hao Wong (left), load an AIM-120 AMRAAM missile during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition, July 12, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Jaire Whitehead, 310th Aircraft Maintenance Unit maintainer, guides an MJ-1C bomb loader, commonly referred to as a jammer, during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition, July 12, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Load competitions are used in place of written evaluations when determining quarterly and annual award winners for the weapons career field.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brandon Castillo, 308th Aircraft Maintenance Unit maintainer, secures an AIM-9X Sidewinder missile during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition, July 12, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The AIM-9X was one of three munitions the crews were required to load within a 35-minute time window. Competitions like these focus on advancing training and partnerships to build Mission-Ready Airmen capable of executing agile combat employment.

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Tyler Rosado, 310th Aircraft Maintenance Unit maintainer, unstraps an AIM-120 AMRAAM missile during the 56th Maintenance Group 2nd quarter weapons load competition.



LUKE ENTERS DRONE AGE WITH NEW CLASS



U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Airman Jakob Hambricht

U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing pilot small unmanned aerial systems through an obstacle course, May 29, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The Airmen participated in the 56th FW's first Combat Airpower for All Airmen class, which focuses on the training and employment of SUAS drones in combat environments.



A small unmanned aerial system, piloted by an Airman assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing, attacks a balloon target during the 56th FW's first Combat Airpower for All Airmen class, May 29, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The class, hosted by the 56th FW Spark Cell, focused on basic operations of SUAS drones, offensive and defensive tactics, as well as open case studies from SUAS employments in current conflicts.



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing participate in a small unmanned aerial system flying class, May 29, 2024, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

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Military members get free access to Olympics



Courtesy graphic

By Army & Air Force Exchange Service

Public Affairs

Once again, service members and honorably discharged Veterans worldwide will enjoy free access to NBCUniversal's full coverage of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, courtesy of the Army & Air Force Exchange Service and Comcast NBCUniversal. Military members will be able to stream all the action from Paris with their personal devices and computers through ShopMyExchange.com. The Paris Olympics are taking place July 26 to Aug. 11.

More than 5,000 hours of the Paris Olympics will be available to U.S. service members and honorably discharged Veterans. Throughout the Games, the comprehensive offering features live competition across all 39 sports and all 329 medal events, top stories and moments, as well as live streams of select practice and warm-up sessions and extensive video content including event recaps, highlights, viral moments, interviews and more.

"We value our relationship with Comcast NBCUniversal and are thrilled to once again be able to team with them to bring the Olympic Games to service members and their families, wherever they are called to serve," said U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rich Martinez, the Exchange's senior enlisted adviser. "The Olympics are one of the biggest events in the world, and we're excited to play a role in helping our

military community cheer on Team USA."

"We're thrilled to once again partner with the Exchange for the Olympic and The Paralympic Games in Paris. It's our privilege to provide unprecedented access to this historic event to U.S. military service members and Veterans, where the world's greatest athletes will compete against the backdrop of one of the most beautiful cities in the world," said Mona Dexter, VP of Military & Veteran Affairs at Comcast NBCUniversal.

Service members can access NBCUniversal's coverage from their computers or personal devices by visiting NBCOlympics.com (desktop) and the NBC Sports App (U.S. only) and choosing the Exchange as their service provider.

Because of content rights restrictions, an active ShopMyExchange.com account is required. OCONUS viewers must also be physically located on-installation at a military location with internet service through an authorized internet service provider to gain access. Authorized providers have partnered with the Exchange on technical solutions to allow streaming on U.S. military installations in OCONUS. They include: 101 GLOBAL, Allied Telesis, Americable, Babel, Basefix, Boingo, DHI/TravelWiFi, DSN, LG Uplus, Mediati Broadband, Solutions by STC, Telecom Italia, TKS and US Wicom.

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AF CONTRACTED FIRE DEPARTMENT STAY

By Darlene Seltsmann

56th Range Management Office

Whether it's aircraft incidents, flooding, warehouse fires, vehicle accidents, or wildfires, this team of Air Force contracted firefighters isn't known for shying away when it comes to lending a helping hand.

About 60 miles southwest of the Phoenix metropolitan, lies a quaint town most have not heard of. Named after the 90-degree bend in the Gila River, Gila Bend played a significant role in the early history of the Southwest.

The town of around 1,900 people has been known for centuries primarily as a place for travelers to stop and rest. As to be expected, with any town of that size, services can be somewhat limited.

Gila Bend's fire department consists of about 29 part-time employees or volunteers who have various levels of certifications in fire and medical treatment. But most also hold full-time positions elsewhere in the community.

Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field is approximately four miles south of the town of Gila Bend. The airfield encompasses 1,885 acres of land, east of Highway 85. It is all managed by the 56th Range Management Office out of Luke Air Force Base.

The primary mission of GBFAF is the same as when it was an active-duty base; to support users of the Barry M. Goldwater Range and serve as a hub for range maintenance activities. Military aircraft routinely use GBFAF for practicing traffic patterns and emergency simulated engine flameout procedures. The airfield is also used for emergency and divert recoveries of military aircraft when the aircraft is unable to make it to their home station.

Much like everything else in the area, most have not heard of GBFAF, let alone the Goldwater Range Fire Department that lies on the installation.

The fire department is run by Air Force contractors through the 56th RMO. They respond to any emergencies on GBFAF as well as on BMGR East. In addition to Air Force properties, they also often assist their neighboring unit in Gila Bend with emergencies in town and the surrounding area.

"The Gila Bend Fire Department is a small volunteer department with a small budget," said Arelia Henry, Gila Bend Fire Department Fire Chief. "We are very lucky to have the support provided by the Goldwater Range Fire Department. They are always more than happy to come out and help."

The town of Gila Bend and 56th Fighter Wing have a Mutual Aid Agreement which is an agreement between agencies meant to assist one another on request by furnishing personnel, equipment, and/or expertise in a specified manner when either party experiences an incident that exceeds the organization's capabilities.

"With our tanker truck currently in the shop for maintenance, the Goldwater Fire Department has been stepping in to assist more often over the past few months," Henry said.

The Goldwater Range Fire Department has 32 employees, mostly military veterans, which include 25 full-time and seven part-time personnel. Their department comprises of six firefighters who are qualified paramedics, 25 firefighters who are certified emergency medical technicians, and one employee who is solely a paramedic, which isn't standard for the traditional fire department.

"When you are dealing with life-threatening emergencies time is of the essence," said Craig Caraker, Goldwater Range Fire Department Assistant Chief. "Being out here we don't have time on our side because we are 70 miles from a trauma center, so we have to be prepared with a paramedic on call when we come across critical patients."

The team's mission is unique even before the assistance they provide to the local community. They are assigned to take care of Air Force assets along with providing services for visiting units in a remote location. They are responsible for providing emergency services across more than one million acres. During the summer months, they also monitor BMGR wildfires.

"We really do have a great group of professionals here," said Christopher Horsman, Goldwater Range Fire Department Fire Chief. "Most have some sort of military background they've either served or are still serving in the Guard or Reserves and their skillsets are beneficial to both the Air Force and our neighbors."

Throughout the years the Goldwater Range Fire Department has held significant roles when it comes to safety in the Gila Bend community and the surrounding areas.

"We as a fire department and as a community in general are lucky to have them nearby," said Henry. "We understand when they are unable to respond due to their primary duties, but they are always willing to help when they are able."



Members of the 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department pose for a group photo in front of a fire truck on August 21, 2024, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. The department has 32 employees, mostly military veterans, which include 25 full-time and seven part-time personnel. Their department comprises of six firefighters who are qualified paramedics, 25 firefighters who are certified emergency medical technicians, and one employee who is solely a paramedic.



David White, 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department engineer (left) secures Larry Blalock, 56th RMO Goldwater Range Fire Department Station captain's (right) harness in preparation for a confined space training exercise at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona.



AYS READY FOR GILA BEND EMERGENCIES



U.S. Air Force photos by Darlene Seltmann
photo in front of their unit's fire engine, March
itary veterans, which include 25 full-time and
s, 25 firefighters who are certified emergen-



Chad Hunsaker, 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department engineer, stands in front of one of the unit's fire engines March 21, 2024, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. In addition to being a firefighter with the range, Hunsaker is also a Reservist firefighter with the 944th Civil Engineering Squadron.



The 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department has a variety of vehicles assigned to the unit that help them be able to respond to any emergency, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. They have three crash trucks, two fire engines, one tanker, one ambulance, and one rescue vehicle with the jaws of life.



Nate Tinguely, 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department captain briefs the team on the objectives for the confined space training exercise, at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona.



Richard Prince, 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department captain is raised out of a manhole during a confined space training exercise at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Arizona. The team participates in various training exercises throughout the year to make sure they are ready for any type of emergency.



The helmet photographed belongs to David Perez, 56th Range Management Office Goldwater Range Fire Department engineer out of Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field. Each engineer receives a helmet with their rank and accountability number.

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Chaplain's thoughts ...

Building resilient teams

By Chaplain (Maj.) Nathan Tarr

Wing Chaplain, 161st ARW

We think a lot about individual readiness, comprehensive Airman fitness, and personal resilience. And there is certainly an important place for these individual concerns.

But I want to suggest that we need to include regular conversations about resilient teams alongside our emphasis on individual health. The fact is that we do not live, train, or fight alone. We work as a team or, as Gen. Stanley McChrystal put it in his *New York Times* bestselling book, a "Team of Teams."

And these teams are greater than the sum of their parts. This means that, while the health of each Airman does contribute to the overall strength of the team, a resilient team has a far greater impact on the lives of those Airmen who make it up. As one ancient Jewish proverb put it, "Two are better than one; for if one falls, the other will lift up his fellow." What are some keys, then, to building resilient teams?

First, resilient teams share a clear sense of purpose. What helps a team overcome the inevitable frustrations of personality differences or disappointed

preferences is a shared conviction that they are making a meaningful contribution to a worthy goal. Because this goal is far larger than the career of any one Airman, it orients our lines of effort and mutes the kind of competition that is corrosive to team building.

Second, resilient teams fail fast and fall forward. Accountability is vital for post-failure growth. But accountability needs to serve creativity like a fireplace rather than a fire extinguisher, preserving the freedom of innovation while preventing harm to the home. This freedom to fail creates a team culture where members are comfortable taking risks in pursuit of optimal ways to achieve their common goal.

Third, resilient teams shatter legacy organizational structures. The ability to overcome challenges is a basic definition of resilience. Sometimes those advances come as we optimize current approaches. At other times, however, the team can benefit from whole new ways to see a problem and its solution. And often those new ideas don't originate with senior leaders. Resilient teams promote good ideas regardless of their source.

Fourth, resilient teams carry a sustainable battle rhythm of output and recovery. Teams caught up in the importance of their purpose and encouraged by innova-



Courtesy photo

Chaplain (Maj.) Nathan Tarr

tion and growth can forget that they will serve best if they take a break. This break looks like putting down the work, pursuing restorative activities, processing pent up emotions, re-investing in important relationships, and remembering what all this is for.

Teamwork makes the dream work. And these four keys to building resilient teams can help keep our Airmen fit to fight.

56th FW (from Page 2)

Airmen with the competencies to win against any competitor anytime, anywhere."

Before relinquishing the guidon to his successor, Rueschhoff addressed the group commanders and expressed his gratitude to the 56th FW.

"Our people are our foundation," said Rueschhoff. "Thank you to the leaders and group commanders for keeping your priorities straight with knowing what our most important asset is. I am extremely grateful to have worked with the men and women here at Luke. Thank you all for putting the time, effort, and energy into the mission every single day."

After the exchange of the ceremonial guidon, Berkland thanked everyone in attendance, as well as those who supported him throughout his career. Before concluding the ceremony, he addressed the 56th FW and explained what they should expect of his leadership.

"I am honored and humbled to take this guidon today," said Berkland. "But as to your expectations of my command, I'm going to provide you with my commander's intent and then I'm going to get out of your way. I will let you continue to do what you already do to support, defend, and deliver high-end airpower at the 56th FW. Thank you all, and let's get back to work."

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