

Desert Lightning News

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FEATURE



Airman 1st Class Devlin Bishop

PRIME BEEF BUILDS READINESS

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FARP team tryouts

By Airman 1st Class
DEVLIN BISHOP

355th Wing Public Affairs

Airmen assigned to the 355th Logistics Readiness Squadron tried out for the forward area refueling point team at Davis-Monthan Air Force base, Arizona, July 28, 2023.

The 355th LRS held the tryouts to find new, capable Airmen to join the FARP team. FARP is a special operations command program. Airmen are trained to perform covert refueling operations in deployed locations when fueling points are not easily accessible or when aerial refueling isn't possible.

"We provide fuel anytime, anywhere, any place that people need it," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kade Cowan, 355th LRS FARP team chief. "We also have site surveys that are in place for safety precautions, but extending the reach of our aircraft is the main objective."

The FARP tryout is a rigorous event that tests individuals both physically and on their mental



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Devlin Bishop

U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Jared Mitchell, 355th Logistics Readiness Squadron Fuels Management Flight Commander, pulls a 300-foot fuel hose during a forward area refueling point team tryout at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 28, 2023. There were only 63 FARP team positions across the Air Force, nine at each of the seven bases with a program.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Luke Strope, 355th Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels lab technician, holds a jet fuel hose over his head for 60 seconds during a forward area refueling point team tryout at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 28, 2023. FARP was a specialized team that facilitated aircraft refueling in austere environments.



LEFT: U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Luke Strope, 355th Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels lab technician, recovers after a forward area refueling point team tryout at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 28, 2023. Strope finished the events within the required time and qualified for FARP team selection.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Luke Strope, 355th Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels lab technician, pulls a 300-foot fuel hose during a forward area refueling point team tryout at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 28, 2023. FARP team candidates had to complete survival, evasion, resistance and escape training after being selected.

ability to persevere through challenging situations. Only high performing individuals of character, who have demonstrated continued excellence in their primary duties will be considered for selection.

"We started the tryout by pulling out 300 feet of hose until it was fully extended just like we would in a real-world scenario," said U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Luke Strope, 355th LRS fuels lab technician. "After that, we had to do the teardown sequence which required rolling up 200 feet of hose and carrying it back to the start, where we then held one of the rolls over our heads for 60 seconds."

Each Airman performed the required feats alone, one at a time. In real-world scenarios, processes like the hose pull would involve multiple Airmen. For the tryouts though, the Airmen must prove that, if the situation called for it, they could complete everything by themselves.

"It's harder than it looks," said Strope. "When I hit the 200-foot mark of pulling the hose out, my legs started really hurting."

Every Airman who tried out succeeded in completing the events within the time limit. Once selected, Airmen must successfully complete further training including the FARP course, survival, evasion, resistance and

escape training and a physiological chamber.

Once fully qualified, team members are frequently deployed to obscure locations and are required to perform high-risk, no-fail missions, including high visibility humanitarian operations.

"I'm really proud of what I did today," said Strope. "I'd still like to do it again though, to improve my time. I now know what kind of exercises will help me prepare for it. Definitely more legs, for sure."

FARP has a very limited number of positions, only nine at each of the seven bases with the program, which makes the tryouts intense as Airmen compete to secure a spot.

Desert Lightning News

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DRAGONS ARE COMBAT READY

RIGHT: U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Azukaego Okei-Nwabuokei, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron environmental and electrical specialist, watches as Staff Sgt. Natalia Moronds, 357th FGS weapons load team chief, performs a weapons operations test on an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. Airmen were required to bring a training aircraft to combat-ready status within a given time-frame.



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Devlin Bishop



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Cedric Harris, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron weapons load crew member, tightens a bolt on an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. The 357th FGS was responsible for repairing and maintaining all of the A-10s assigned to the 357th Fighter Squadron.



U.S. Airmen assigned to the 357th Fighter Generation Squadron push a trailer during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. The Airmen had between 12 and 24 hours to make the training jet combat ready.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Amariss Yunes, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron weapons load crew member, secures hardware to an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. The exercise reinforced Yunes' readiness and kept her capable and combat ready.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Trenton Woo, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron dedicated crew chief, left, and Airman 1st Class Sargent Tanner, 357th FGS assistant dedicated crew chief, discuss the inspections on an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. The exercise required the Airmen to make training jets fully combat-ready.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Trenton Woo, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron dedicated crew chief, left, and Airman 1st Class Sargent Tanner, 357th FGS assistant dedicated crew chief, right, inspect an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023. Crew chiefs were responsible for ensuring that all aircraft servicing was performed correctly.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Natalia Moronds, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron weapons load team chief, performs a weapons operations test on an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft during a training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 21, 2023.

The weapons ops test was one of many steps required to verify the jet's attack capability.

A-10 prototyping and innovation

The Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center partnered with major technology companies to test a new avionic prototype for the A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft assigned to the 924th Maintenance Squadron, June 29, 2023.

The new Portable Automated Test Station (PATS) will modernize weapon systems capabilities, improve return-to-combat times, and strengthen radio communication security.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Tyler Sanders, Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center avionics technician, right, and civilian engineers work together at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. The AATC was responsible for operational and developmental evaluations, tactics development, and evaluation for all Air Reserve Component (ARC) weapons systems.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Tyler Sanders, Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center avionics technician, pulls a Portable Automated Test Station into the cockpit of an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. Sanders tested the wireless range by placing the PATS in different locations around the A-10.

U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Tyler Sanders, Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center avionics technician, left, tests equipment with Misha Luczkiw, Maxentric Technologies RF systems engineer, at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. Sanders and Luczkiw tested a new prototype for the A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft at the 924th Maintenance Squadron.



An A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft, assigned to the 924th Maintenance Squadron, undergoes wireless prototype at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. PATS prototyped wireless capabilities to equipment on the A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft previously created for hard-wired radio communications. PATS would modernize weapon systems capabilities to meet the needs of the current demands at the 924th MXS.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Tyler Sanders, Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center avionics technician, operates test equipment at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. Sanders tested the functionality of a new radio communication system for the A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft.



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DM welcomes new command chief

By Airman 1st Class
JASMYNE BRIDGERS-MATOS

355 Wing Public Affairs



Courtesy photo

Chief Master Sgt. Michael G. Becker, 355th Wing command chief.

June 2023 marked a significant transition for the 355th Wing as U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Michael Becker assumed the role of command chief.

As command chief, Becker advises the installation commander and staff on mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale, and welfare of the command's 6,200 enlisted Airmen.

"We are thrilled to have Chief Becker here as part of our command team," said

Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander. "He is here to FIGHT, and I'm excited to see what we can accomplish together."

Raised in a military family, Becker's passion for service and dedication to protecting the United States led him to join the Air Force in February 1999 as an explosive ordnance disposal technician. Throughout his career, he has displayed a strategic understanding of the global threat environment and the critical importance of the Air Force's mission in maintaining national security.

With a career spanning 24 years, Becker brings a wealth of leadership experience to his new position. Having served in various leadership roles at different levels within the Air Force, including the position of Command Chief Master Sergeant of the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, Becker is well-equipped to guide the Desert Lightning Team toward achieving their mission objectives.

Having previously worked in the realm of strategic nuclear deterrence, Becker brings a unique perspective on the threats posed by adversaries and the significance of combat readiness.

"In the missile world it is clear how and why each and every Airman is connected to that no-fail mission, 24/7/365," said Becker. "My experience in that mission has helped me understand the threats that our adversaries pose to our way of life and to the stability and safety of people around the world."

Now entrusted with leading the 355th Wing, Becker emphasizes the importance of translating his strategic perspective into the wing's mission of Rescue & Attack.

"Our job is to provide combat ready Airmen and capabil-



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Jasmyne Bridgers-Matos

U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Michael Becker, 355th Wing command chief, and Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, visit the welcome center at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., July 18, 2023. The command team regularly met with units and organizations on base to connect with them.

ity to any Combatant Commander in any area of responsibility at any time," said Becker.

Becker stresses the need for demonstrating combat readiness to make adversaries think twice before challenging the United States.

"Again this is not negotiable," said Becker. "The fate of

See WELCOME, Page 8

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CSAF, Tuskegee Airmen recognize 75 years

By Staff Sgt.
Olivia B. Stecker

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, Maryland, (AFNS) — Three Tuskegee Airmen joined Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr., at Joint Base Andrews July 26 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of desegregation in the military and officially induct a PT-17 Stearman into the National Museum of the Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The event recognized the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen



U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Airman Tyrone Thomas
Tuskegee Airmen and attendees listen to a speech during the Tuskegee Airmen PT-17 Stearman Aircraft Exchange ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, July 26, 2023. The ceremony featured a restored PT-17 Stearman that was used as a trainer for the Tuskegee Airmen.



Tuskegee Airmen photos hang inside the PT-17 Stearman during the Tuskegee Airmen PT-17 Stearman Aircraft Exchange ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, July 26, 2023.

and their impact of ensuring Airmen as well as other service members can serve to their full potential.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, calling for the desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, renouncing 170 years of sanctioned discrimination. This crucial step forward inspired other parts of American society to move toward desegregation.

As the first all-Black American unit in World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen's actions, accomplishments, and experiences helped inspire Truman's executive order.

The key aspect of the ceremony was the induction of the PT-17 as a reminder of how most Tuskegee pilots, like retired Col. Carl Johnson, first trained on this aircraft during World War II. Currently, only two known PT-17 Stearmans used by the Tuskegee Airmen remain.

"Let us remember that those who flew this plane, those who started their journey to conquer the skies; ultimately changed our Air Force, our armed services and our nation for the better," Brown said.

The addition of the aircraft to the National Museum of the Air Force is a tribute to those who overcame discrimination and persevered against adversity to become one of the greatest fighter groups in U.S. history.

Brown reflected on the importance of their accomplishments, "Their progress is what made it possible for me to stand here today as the 22nd Air Force chief of staff."

He continued to explain how the Tuskegee Airmen, such as Johnson, Fauntroy, and Lt. Col. Shelton Ware who attended the event, laid the groundwork for many Airmen to not only serve but to succeed and thrive in the military.

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Prime BEEF: It builds our re

By Airman 1st Class
Devlin Bishop

Airmen from the 355th Civil Engineer Squadron took part in a Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force field exercise at the Davis-Monthan explosive ordnance disposal range, June 29, 2023.

Prime BEEF training happens monthly and increases readiness among civil engineer Airmen and provides them with skills necessary to handle situations while working in potentially hostile environments.

The exercise, which simulated a deployed area of responsibility, consisted of multiple scenarios that required participants to combine various aspects of their training to successfully complete their mission. Throughout the exercise, trainers observed the participants while also acting as opposing force combatants.

“The integrated base defense exercise was a culmination of everything we learned in the Prime BEEF program,” said U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Zohn Manet Cepeda, 355th Civil Engineer Squadron deputy installation management flight commander. “We do these exercises to enhance our readiness for deployment training, so when we’re downrange, outside the wire, we are ready for any scenario.”

During the exercise, the team was tasked with repairing a simulated radio tower, which required them to contact a local guide, who was played by a trainer.

“It felt almost like a validation course,” said Senior Airman Lincoln McFatrige, 355th Civil Engineer Squadron power production specialist. “We combined all of our training, like land navigation, traveling in a convoy, and individual movement, to successfully complete the mission.”

While under simulated fire from OPFOR, some Airmen were identified as casualties, which required their wingmen to get them to safety and deal with their injuries.

“My favorite part was extracting the casualties,” said McFatrige. “Having to shoulder somebody and carry them out definitely put my cardio to the test.”

Teamwork was essential to the Airmen’s success during the exercise and will be even more important in a deployed environment.

“The Prime BEEF program exists because we, as civil engineers, are often tasked to go outside the wire for things like site visits, repairs or construction,” said Cepeda. “It was hot and stressful during the exercise, but everyone had good attitudes, and we were able to get the mission done.”



U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Zohn Manet Cepeda, 355th Civil Engineer Squadron deputy installation management flight commander, f
prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. The Prim
realistically simulate a possible scenario the Airmen could face in a deployed environment.



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 355th Civil Engineer Squadron prepare for a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. The Prime BEEF training exercise tasked Airmen with meeting a local guide and following instructions to reach a simulated radio tower in need of repair while dealing with enemy combatants.



Readiness



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Devlin Bishop. An Airman fires his rifle at simulated enemy combatants during a Prime BEEF exercise. The exercise included opposing force actors to



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 355th Civil Engineer Squadron participate in a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023.



A U.S. Air Force Airman from the 355th Civil Engineer Squadron unloads blank rounds in preparation for a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. Blank rounds were used during the exercise to simulate live fire.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Matthew Madlang, 355th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical systems journeyman, left, and Airman 1st Class Samuel Babac, 355th CES pavements and heavy equipment journeyman, right, participate in a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023.



LEFT: U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 355th Civil Engineer Squadron carry a simulated casualty toward an evacuation point during a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. The Airmen succeeded in accomplishing their training mission and earned a Prime BEEF qualification.



U.S. Air Force Airmen discuss their next move during a prime base engineer emergency force field training exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, June 29, 2023. The Prime BEEF exercise trained Airmen in simulated real world scenarios they might face while in a deployed environment.

Desert Inn Dining Facility Q & A

By Airman
WILLIAM FINN V

355 Wing Public Affairs

With the recent reopening of the Desert Inn Dining Facility (DFAC) on Davis-Monthan, many Airmen have had a variety of questions about the facility and how they can best enjoy the services provided by it.

To assist those on DM with their dining facility experience, here are answers to some of the frequently asked questions.

1. What hours is the DFAC open?

The DFAC is open Monday through Friday 6 a.m.-6:30 p.m., and Saturday through Sunday 6:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. The Rescue and Attack Kitchen on the flightline opens every Monday at 3 a.m., and closes on Friday at 11:59 p.m.

2. Who is allowed to eat at the DFAC?

Anyone authorized to enter the base can eat at the DFAC. This includes Active Duty military members of all branches, Guard and Reserve members, Department of Defense contractors, military dependents, retired military members and guests of authorized personnel.

3. What does the menu look like and how can I view it?

The menu is on a 28-day cycle with online menus coming soon.

4. What is the pricing?

Pricing for each menu item is displayed on the televisions or on the individual label for the item.

5. How many servings can I have?

Servings are dependent on customer status. Members with a meal card (ESM) receive three meals a



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman William Finn V

An Airman assigned to the 355th Force Support Squadron prepares food at the Desert Inn Dining Facility at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 27, 2023.

day to include one entree, two sides, two beverages and two snacks per meal. Basic Allowance Subsistence recipients have no meal limit. A meal is considered a reasonable amount of food that can typically be consumed in one sitting. Members may return to the serving line area for additional portions within the same meal period.

6. Are there options for people with dietary restrictions?

The DFAC has a vast menu selection to provide options for customers. Specific dietary restrictions can be discussed with the individual member's unit First Sergeant and coordinated with the 355th Force Support Squadron management team.

7. Will there be special meals on holidays?

Yes, during major holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas there will be special meals provided. There will also be themed food items for other holidays such as the Fourth of July.

For additional information and questions please contact the DFAC org box email at 355FSS.FSVF.DFAC@us.af.mil

WELCOME *(from Page 4)*

the world is at stake and failure is not an option."

To achieve these goals, Becker recognizes the fundamental importance of creating an environment where every Airman feels respected, protected, and connected.

He believes that fostering a culture that values every individual's contribution, regardless of their uniformed or civilian status, is crucial. Becker sets high standards for the Desert Lightning Team, expecting them to treat one another with respect, safeguard each other's well-being, and build strong connections as part of the greater team.

Drawing from his extensive career, Becker understands the impact of leadership on an organization. He acknowledges both his successes and regrets, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning.

"I've had amazing leaders and I've had poor leaders," said Becker. "I've made good decisions that I'm very proud of, and I've made bad decisions that I regret. I've learned from all of this. I learn every day."

His commitment to growth and learning is evident in his enthusiasm for engaging with Airmen at all levels. While Becker recognizes the importance of administrative

tasks, his true passion resides in engaging with Airmen.

"Nobody makes Chief so they can send out emails and manage spreadsheets," Becker said. "The daily, face-to-face conversations with our Airmen are what get me out of bed every morning."

He values connecting with the newest Airmen in the First Term Airmen Center and future supervisors in the Airman Leadership School, recognizing the significance of genuine discussions and personal connections.

Becker wants every member of the Desert Lightning Team to know that he is present, engaged, and approachable. Regardless of rank or position, he is eager to connect with his team and encourages Airmen to approach him with any concerns or ideas they may have.

"I am the same person whether I'm talking to a senator, a general, our wing commander or our newest Airman," said Becker. "Please come up to me and have a chat about whatever is on your mind. I'm here for you all."

As Becker takes the reins as the 355th Wing command chief, the Desert Lightning Team can expect a leader who brings a strategic vision, a commitment to combat readiness, and a genuine dedication to the well-being of every Airman.

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DM Airman saves Tucson motorcyclist's life

By Staff Sgt. ABBEY RIEVES

355th Wing Public Affairs

Three years ago, Thomas Snyder raised his right hand, answering his nation's call. He became an American Airman, a calling



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Thomas Snyder, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron crew chief, waits for the arrival of an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 17, 2023.

beyond anything else in society. "To me, being an Airman is a part of something bigger," said the now senior airman. "It's more than just putting the uniform on every day."

As a member of the U.S. Air Force, Snyder is held to a standard only 1% of the population can achieve, the Profession of Arms.

"From the moment roll call is done, Senior Airman Snyder is out the door doing his job or helping someone else do their job," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Roger Price, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron aircraft section non-commissioned officer in charge. "Snyder is a hard worker."

As a crew chief assigned to the 357th FGS, Snyder ensures A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft can fly at a moment's notice. The hard work Snyder puts in his daily duties directly impacts the A-10's neutralizing ability and permitting DM to bring joint service members home. Having operational aircraft allows the pilots to train in the most realistic way.

Every day on the flightline, Snyder's professionalism is defined by his strength of character, respect



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Thomas Snyder, 357th Fighter Generation Squadron crew chief, checks the underside of an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 17, 2023.

for others, and living the Air Force Core Values.

On July 4, 2023, Snyder's integrity was put to the test as his eyes locked on the a profusely bleeding head of a wrecked motorcyclist in Tucson.

"Being raised under Blue, teaches our Airmen to do the right thing, at the right moment," said Price. "People drive by accidents and continue on with their day... but we're not trained to do that."

Without hesitation, Snyder

took action applying first aid to the critically injured community member, keeping the civilian talking and alert.

Workload, task management, office tempo and his recent deployment were some of the job aspects Snyder attributed for his ability to think clearly amidst the moment's stress.

"We have unique training from our jobs, where we have the skills to help people," said Price. "Senior Airman Snyder, being the person he is, took action and made sure this community member was here to see another day."

In the Profession of Arms, Airmen's standards and expectations are immense, but for Senior Airman Snyder, these standards are his way of life.

"If it were me in that situation, I'd want someone to do the same," said Snyder shrugging. "Helping is always something I strive to do, and it means a lot to me that I was able to give back to the community."

Actions by Davis-Monthan Airmen, like Snyder, show what it means to wear the uniform in the community they defend.

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Special Edition of Desert Lightning News

Published Friday, September 22, 2023

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This special edition, History of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, will feature historical photographs, stories about how the base came to be, all the major milestones in flight reached there, and the men and women who did not see limitations – only possibilities.

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