

# Desert Lightning News

VOL. 15, No. 10

Serving Southern Arizona's military community, including Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

OCT. 2022

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# Rescue: A bittersweet mission

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### FEATURE



Photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon  
**KEEPING LEGACIES ALIVE**

See Pages 6 & 7

By Airman 1st Class  
**PAIGE WELDON**

355th Wing Public Affairs

Davis-Monthan's rescue mission is a global effort and the Airmen of the 58th Rescue Squadron are always prepared to go wherever someone is in need.

Members of the 58th RQS, along with Airmen from other bases, have been deployed to various countries in Africa as part of the 82nd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron where they have performed numerous exercises and missions.

The 82nd ERQS responded to multiple lifesaving rescues throughout 2022. Some of the missions they accomplished are as follows: rescuing a patient in critical condition from a ship, transporting a patient with an eye injury from a ship, providing care to a U.S. Navy SEAL injured by a gunshot, a two-day search to recover the remains of a local Djiboutian that drowned in a river, and assisting the Djiboutian Coast Guard in picking up survivors of a sunken Spanish tour boat.

"For me, accomplishing the mission is bittersweet," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Patrick



U.S. Air Force courtesy photos

**Airmen assigned to the 82nd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron pose for a group photo during a deployment in Djibouti, Africa, this year. The 82nd ERQS has performed numerous lifesaving rescues throughout 2022, such as rescuing a patient in critical condition from a ship, transporting a patient with an eye injury from a ship, providing care to a U.S. Navy SEAL injured by a gunshot, a two day search to recover the remains of a local Djiboutian that drowned in a river, and assisting the Djiboutian Coast Guard in picking up survivors of a sunken Spanish tour boat.**

Limage, 58th RQS pararescue journeyman. "If someone needs us, it means they are having, most likely, the worst day of their life."

Camaraderie, morale and preparation are essential for accomplishing the rescue operations, especially when deployed.

"We do not have the luxury of



**An Airman assigned to the 82nd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron poses for a photo in an HH-60G Pavehawk during a deployment in Djibouti, Africa, 2022.**



**An Airman assigned to the 82nd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron rappels from an HH-60G Pavehawk during a deployment in Djibouti, Africa, 2022. Camaraderie, morale, and preparation are essential for accomplishing the rescue operations, especially when deployed.**

knowing exactly what we will be called to do; therefore, we train throughout the year to maintain currencies and ensure the team is fully mission capable," said Limage. "Whether it's performing a free fall parachute jump from an aircraft or hoisting from a helicopter, if there is a way, we will find it. We will go to extreme lengths and do everything in

our power to bring these members home and reunite them with their family and friends."

The 82nd ERQS creates a newsletter detailing each month's rescues, training exercises, morale boosting events while also highlighting Airmen that have been essential to accomplishing those tasks.

See RESCUE, Page 5

## Desert Lightning News

Continue to get Davis-Monthan Air Force Base latest news and information from these sources:

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Date of publication

**First Friday**  
of the month

Submission deadline  
**15th day of the month**  
prior to date of publication

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# POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony

By Staff Sgt.  
NICHOLAS ROSS

355th Wing

The 355th Wing held a POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony at the Pima Air and Space Museum on Sept. 16, 2022.

The guest speaker was former prisoner of war Harvey Horn who served with the 772nd Bomber Squadron, 463d Bomber Group, 15th Air Force based in Foggia, Italy 1943-1945.

"My story is about 36 days that changed my life," said Horn. "It's a story of a Jewish boy from Brooklyn who dreamt of flying and enlisted in the Army Air Corps, it's about survival."

Horn recounted his story of being shot down and being held captive by German SS soldiers.

"Being captured by the Germans is not the best of times, being Jewish and captured by the Germans is the worst of times."

Afterwards Horn was presented a ceremonial POW/MIA flag by U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander. The flag had been carried during an honorary 5k that occurred earlier in the day at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

"You see this table and you hear those words at the beginning of every speech, and you're moved," said Mills. "You hear about the salt symbolizing tears and you feel the loss and grief for the families and the service member."

In his closing remarks Mills challenged the audience to try looking past grief and instead do two things.

"Remember their courage, their sacrifice and their actions. That is what they want to be remembered for, not sadness but courage, toughness and standing alone when our nation called."

The second thing that Mills asks is that we serve. "It's too often that we link service with the uniform, but the fact is we are all called to serve the United States every day," said Mills. "You don't have to wear a uniform to do that. You just have to help someone else."

National POW/MIA Recognition Day was established in 1979 through a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter. Since then, each subsequent president has issued an annual proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

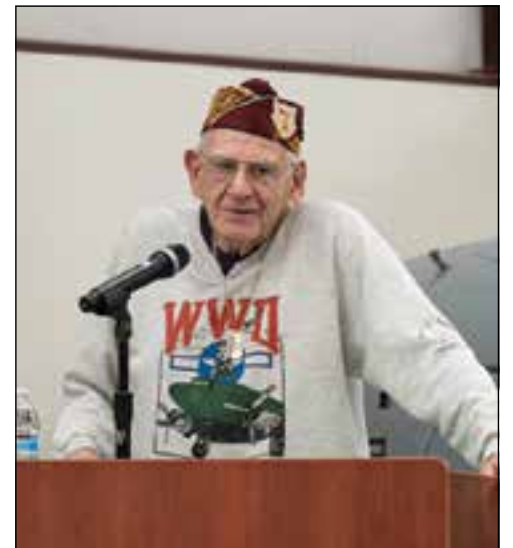


U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Ross

**U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, speaks with POW/MIA veterans at the Pima Air and Space Museum during the POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony in Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. Established in 1979 and celebrated on the third Friday in September, POW/MIA Recognition Day honors those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who remain missing.**



**U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, provides closing remarks during the POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. Established in 1979 and celebrated on the third Friday in September, POW/MIA Recognition Day honors those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who remain missing.**



**Harvey Horn, former prisoner of war, recounts his story during the POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022.**



Courtesy photo



## Warrior of the Month

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Lantz Bell was alerted to fly a real-world civil rescue mission that resulted in saving a man experiencing a life threatening condition onboard an oil tanker hundreds of miles off the coast of California. This mission integrated the 129th Rescue Wing (California Air National Guard) with one HC-130 to provide air refueling and overhead command and control capabilities. A1C Bell's actions as an HC-130 loadmaster allowed the execution of three helicopter air refuelings, relay of weather reconnaissance and vital communications between a Pararescue team, two HH-60W crews and the Rescue Operations Center.

Bell's coordination led to a flawless mission execution allowing the Pararescue team to stabilize the

critical patient. Ultimately the oil tanker worker was flown in stable condition to Moffett Field for follow on medical care. Bell also led an immersion of the 79th Rescue Squadron. He was able to explain the unit's mission which led to a more focal understanding of combat rescue operations for Airmen of the 355th Mission Support Group. As the unit's mobility/supply guru, Bell was entrusted with maintaining an inventory of equipment valued at \$3M as well as, equipping 25 members with \$350K of required gear for maintaining Immediate Response Force taskings. Lastly, Bell was the point of contact for the unit's beautification contract valued at \$1.3K, ensuring four contractors obtained base access and the scope of work was met.



# 355th MXG hosts suicide awareness event



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kaitlyn Ergish

**U.S. Air Force Capt. Matthew Klimis, True North 355th Maintenance Group Chaplain, talks to Airmen assigned to the 355th MXG during a morale event at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. True North is a resilience program that embeds providers and spiritual leaders within squadrons and groups enabling easy access to helpful resources.**

**By Senior Airman Kaitlyn Ergish**

**355th Wing Public Affairs**

U.S. Air Force Capt. Matthew Klimis, True North 355th Maintenance Group Chaplain, Col. Clarence McRae, 355th MXG commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Raul Torres, 355th MXG command chief, hosted a morale event to chat with their Airmen about Suicide Awareness while the 355th Munitions Production flight chief and several other leadership teams and volunteers cooked burgers on the grill. The purpose of this event was to boost morale by bringing this burger bash out to the Airmen’s work center and to create an environment to talk about morale injury, one of the leading causes of suicide at DM.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kaitlyn Ergish

**U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. John Williamson, 355th Munitions Production flight chief, cooks burgers on a grill during a morale event at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. The purpose of this event was to boost morale by bringing a burger bash out to the Airmen’s shop and to talk about morale injury, one of the leading causes of suicide at DM.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kaitlyn Ergish

**Lola, a 355th Wing Chaplain’s moral dog, lays in the shade during a morale event at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022.**



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

**U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. John Williamson, 355th Munitions Production flight chief, cooks burgers on a grill during a morale event at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kaitlyn Ergish

**U.S. Airmen assigned to the 355th Maintenance Group attend an event led by members from the 355th Wing Chapel at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022.**

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The 355th Wing along with the Air Force Sergeants Association, Chapter 1261, held a POW/MIA Remembrance 5k at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. The event was held to honor and remember the sacrifices made by those who were prisoners of war and missing in action.

# — POW 5K Run —



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. John Alex Sundell, 355th Equipment Maintenance Squadron aircraft ground equipment craftsman, carries the POW/MIA flag during a 5k held at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 16, 2022. The 355th Wing along with the Air Force Sergeants Association, Chapter 1261, held a POW/MIA Remembrance 5k to honor and remember the sacrifices made by those who were prisoners of war and missing in action.

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# Limited public service loan forgiveness waiver nearing end

Defense Department personnel with student loan debt might be able to benefit from temporary changes made to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

The Limited PSLF Waiver allows borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment, making it easier to have their loans forgiven.

Those who have not already applied for this waiver must submit a PSLF form and consolidate their non-direct federal student loans by Oct. 31 to receive the benefit.

The waiver allows borrowers to gain additional PSLF credit, even if previously told they had the wrong loan type or repayment plan.

Those interested can learn more about the limited waiver and who qualifies on the Federal Student Aid Site.

“If you have a federal student loan and are eligible, I encourage you to take advantage of the PSLF waiver benefit today,” said Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen H. Hicks. “A few minutes of your time may save you thousands of dollars on your student loans. Remember, you need to take the steps necessary to qualify.”

President Joe Biden also commented on the PSLF program portion of the White House website: “Dedicated public servants are the lifeblood of democracy. They do the hard work that is essential to our country’s success — protecting us, teaching our children, keeping our streets clean and our lights on, and so much more.”

After the Oct. 31 deadline and beginning on Nov. 1, the standard PSLF program requirements will resume.

Federal Student Aid: <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/pslf-limited-waiver>

PSLF Program: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/public-serviceloanforgiveness/>



Courtesy photo

## RESCUE *(from Page 1)*

The newsletter is distributed to Airmen’s home units and family so they can see how their Airmen are performing on deployment, giving them a source to gain a sense of pride, a boost in morale and a way to keep that connection to their loved ones back home.

“As a team, we take pride in always being ready for anything, but what that also means is that everyone on the team has this overwhelming need to get out there and do the mission to justify all the time they have put into preparing for this vocation,” said Limage. “The blood, sweat and tears, the time away from our families, and above all, the sacrifices we have made to be the people that when called upon are prepared to help others — it makes it all worth it in the end.”

All rescue Airmen work tirelessly to live up to the motto, “These things we do, that others may live.” The motto helps Airmen remember that all their sacrifices, time away from family and countless hours spent training is all worth it when they complete those rescues to ensure someone’s worst day is not their last day.



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# KEEPING LEGACIES ALIVE LONG

By Airman 1st Class  
PAIGE WELDON

355th Wing Public Affairs

From transport to close air support attack, the 355th Wing Heritage Park has a variety of aircraft, some as old as the United States Air Force itself, that call Davis-Monthan's Heritage Park home.

A cleanup event was held where volunteers washed an F-100F Super Sabre display and cleared debris from the area as part of the 355th Wing's new Aircraft Adoption Program at Heritage Park, Sept. 9, 2022.

"Some of these planes have been out here since the 1970's, that's when Heritage Park was established," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jose Barrera, 355th Equipment Maintenance Squadron fabrication flight Heritage Park custodian. "There are plaques on the displays about their missions, the pilots that flew them and decorations those pilots achieved."

The 11 retired aircraft that currently reside at Heritage Park all played significant roles during their time in the Air Force and in accomplishing DM's various mission sets throughout the years.

The goal of the 355th Wing's Aircraft Adoption Program is to maintain the appearance of these historical displays and keep their legacies alive long after their final flight.

"We're in the process of changing the park right now by getting rid of aircraft that were not part of our mission sets and receiving new aircraft that are," said Barrera. "It's going to be completely rebuilt and something we can take even more pride in."

The program allows squadrons and local organizations to adopt a display at Heritage Park. Volunteers are responsible for upkeeping their area at least once a year.

All supplies required for upkeep will be provided at no charge to by the Heritage Park property custodian Staff Sgt. Jose Barrera.

"The opportunity to give back to the community by preserving our legacy and protecting our future was a great privilege," said Lynn Stedje, Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) director. "It was nice to get out of the office and do something different from our typical day of work."

Units or organizations interested in adopting an aircraft can submit a request form to the 355th Wing Commander's Action Group organizational box, 355WG/CAG@us.af.mil.



Special Agents and civilian employees from The Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) office clean an F-100F Super Sabre aircraft. The OSI Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) office adopted the Super Sabre as part of the 355th Wing Aircraft Adoption Program.





# ING AFTER THEIR FINAL FLIGHT



an F-100F Super Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022. The



**BOTTOM LEFT:** Special Agent Andres Martinez-Muñoz, Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AF-SOUTH) operations officer, washes an F-100F Super Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022.

**BOTTOM CENTER:** U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Michelle Cormier, 355th Wing command chief executive assistant, U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Ryan McGraw, 355th Equipment Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintainer, and U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jose Barrera, 355th Equipment Maintenance Squadron fabrication flight Heritage Park custodian, cleans an F-100F Super Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Special Agent James Castro-Guerrero, Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AF-SOUTH) counter intelligence agent, and Master Sgt. Michelle Cormier, 355th Wing command chief executive assistant, prepare to wash an F-100F Super Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022. The display at Heritage Park was adopted through the 355th Wing's Aircraft Adoption Program.

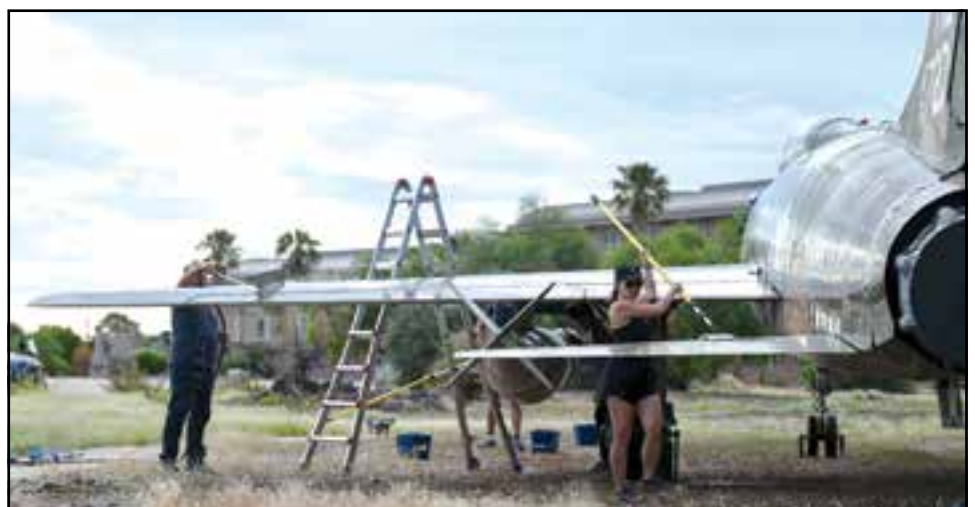


U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

**Chris Montoya, Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) intel-**  
**intelligence analyst, sprays an F-100F Super Sabre display with water at Davis-Monthan**  
**Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022. The 355th Wing's Aircraft Adoption Program**  
**allowed the OSI Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) to adopt the Super Sabre.**



**Chief Master Sgt. Dana Council, 355th Wing command chief, cleans an F-100F Super**  
**Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022. The display**  
**at Heritage Park was adopted through the 355th Wing Aircraft Adoption Program.**



**Chris Montoya, Office of Special Investigations Region 2 OL-B (AFSOUTH) intel-**  
**intelligence analyst, and Master Sgt. Deanna Bruce, 355th Wing Commander's Action**  
**Group member, washes an F-100F Super Sabre display at Davis-Monthan Air Force**  
**Base, Arizona, Sept. 9, 2022. The display at Heritage Park was adopted through the**  
**355th Wing's Aircraft Adoption Program.**



# USAF 75th Anniversary



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

Guests at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's 75th Anniversary Air Force Ball pose for a photo during social hour at Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 17, 2022. The Ball is held every September as an opportunity for Airmen to come together, celebrate their accomplishments and reflect on the history and heritage of the Air Force.

LEFT: Guests arrive at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's 75th Anniversary Air Force Ball at Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 17, 2022.



Courtesy photo

U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Roa Grace Gozon-Marquez, 355th Healthcare Operations Squadron medical logistics flight commander, sings the national anthem during Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's 75th Anniversary Air Force Ball.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Isaiah Pedrazzini



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Isaiah Pedrazzini

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Devin Aaronson, 355th Munitions Squadron munitions inspection technician, and U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, cut a cake during Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's 75th Anniversary Air Force Ball at Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 17, 2022. Traditionally the highest ranking and youngest enlisted Airmen at the Ball cut the cake. Mills represented the experience of the Air Force while Aaronson represented its future.

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# Dirty Jobs, CATM edition

By Staff Sgt.  
KRISTINE LEGATE

355th Wing Public Affairs

It's easy to forget everyone's impact in the big Air Force mission of "Fly, fight and win — airpower anytime, anywhere", especially while working in a back shop on the flightline, or in an office where they sit behind a computer and answer phones all day. Despite how some may feel about their specific duties in the USAF, everything done is a contribution to the mission, no matter how minuscule it may feel in the moment.

To battle this, DM's 5/6 Council came up with the idea for Airmen to shadow other Airmen in different Air Force specialty codes to give them the opportunity to have a better understanding of how everyone contributes to the mission.

The 355th Security Forces Squadron combat arms training and maintenance team were the first to open their doors to Airmen selected to take part in the program for its first iteration.

"It can be easy to assume that some jobs are basic and consist

of mundane tasks," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Julius Caesar Piga, 355th SFS CATM instructor and 5/6 Council president. "No one really gets the chance to see behind the scenes and that is where a lot of the impact transpires."

Airman 1st Class Michah Dunn, 355th Communications Squadron cyber network operations technician, and Senior Airman Ryan Miller, 355th Equipment Maintenance aircraft structural maintenance metals technician, are the first two Airmen to take part in this program.

They received a tour of the CATM workspace from its range, to their armory and even filing systems, while also getting hands on experience with small arms weapons and range set up prior to a qualification course taking place.

"This has been a great opportunity to see the Air Force and it's different jobs from another perspective," said Dunn. "There's so much more to Security Forces than handling firearms and scanning ID cards at the gate."

Piga's hope is that this program



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Kristine Legate

**U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Julius Caesar Piga, 355th Security Forces Squadron combat arms training and maintenance instructor, and Airman 1st Class Michah Dunn, 355th Communications Squadron cyber network operations technician, watch over Airmen taking a small arms qualification course at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona.**

continues on and that more people get the chance to experience other AFSCs.

"Some people have fallen into the trap of assuming other career fields don't contribute to the mission equally, but what I am hoping to show with this initiative is that there is a whole lot more than what meets the eye," Piga said.

A program like this provides a unique connection and perspective of how all career fields' individual missions blend together to support the overall Air Force mission, not only helping Airmen realize their potential, but also providing a sense of understanding and pride in the day-to-day work that they accomplish.

**Senior Airman Gustavo Torres, 355th Security Forces Squadron combat arms training and maintenance instructor, gives a description on how to handle weaponry at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Sept. 12, 2022. The 355th Security Forces Squadron combat arms training and maintenance team were the first to open their doors to Airmen selected to take part in the Airmen shadowing Airmen program.**



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An American flag waves on the left, and a silhouette of a soldier saluting is on the right, set against a blue sky with a light horizon glow.

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