



Program Director Fighter Country Partnership

ighter Country Partnership had another er year and another successful event in which it celebrated the holiday season with the Luke Air Force Base airmen.

Each December, the organization coaxes the airmen out of their dormitories with the promise of good food, a fun time, a video game tournament and many door prizes.

The airmen who live in the dorms on base are typically new to the Air Force—usually, less than one year of service—and are away from their homes and families for the first time.

When I was active duty and reported to my first duty station, I arrived in the middle of De-

cember and remember feeling alone. I'm originally from California and was stationed, at that time, at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. I did not have family close, so it would have been nice to have such an event back then so I would not feel that way. This is why it's great to be part of Fighter Country Partnership. It strives to support the men, women, families and mission of Luke Air Force Base, and that means from the most junior airmen to senior leadership and everyone in between.

We were set to start at 5 p.m., and as the evening started, hundreds of young people descended upon the Community Commons Center to have a night of fun.

Immediately, they started playing games and eating the pizza and cookies the club staff delivered. Best Buy brought a team again this year to run the video game tournament, which is always a hit.

This year we talked with the dorm council and asked if they wanted to add something new to the evening, and they chose a hot wing-eating contest. We held back one of the bigger door prizes and had four airmen sit down to see who could eat the wings the quickest. It was touch and go for a minute, but a winner emerged with a full stomach and was happy to win the prize.

UHDTV

during the holiday party.

The airmen had a chance to relax

Best Buy brought a team this year to run a video name tournament. which is always a big hit.

As always, it was a fun evening. The airmen enjoyed themselves, and hopefully, they took a minute to contact their parents and let them know about the fun they had that night. They had cool door prizes to take back to their rooms.

For me, it's always a fun event to plan because it brings me back to when I was a junior airman. Now I can make sure this group of airmen have an evening of fun after they work a long day at Luke Air Force Base.



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Contents January/February 2020



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Airman Akwasi Agyeman-Prempeh and his son, Kofi, by photographer Airman 1st Class Jacob Wongwai







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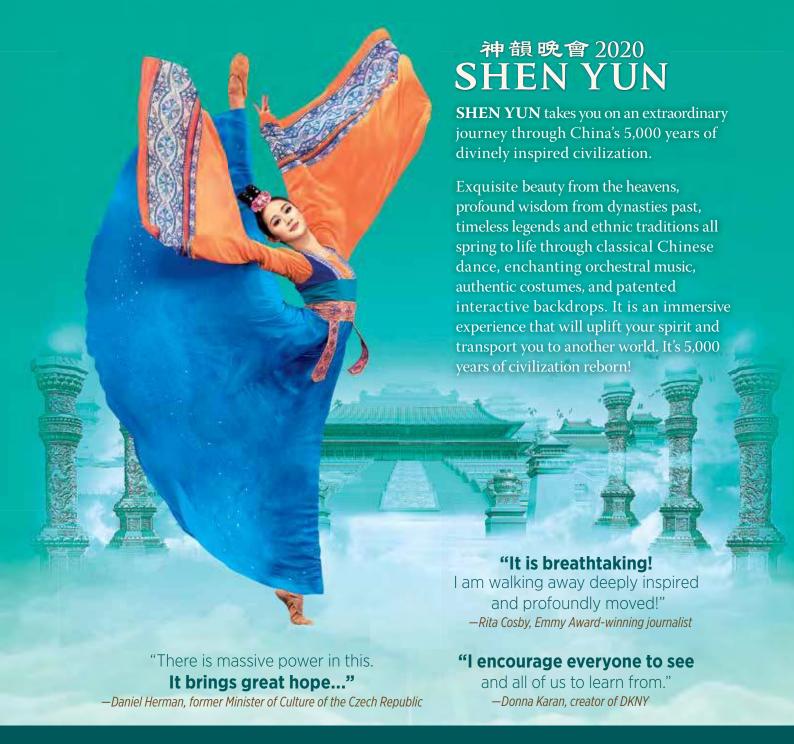


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Out of the Dark

Veteran Georganne Bickle finds solace with Arizona Military Women's Luncheons

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO-KARASINSKI

eorganne Bickle comes from a family of veterans. Her father was a Purple Heart recipient who fought in the Guadalcanal campaign in World War II. By 17, her mother was a pilot.

"They told her she was too short to join the Navy," Bickle recalls. "She went and got a job and paid for her own flying lessons. She flew with the Civil Air Patrol search and rescue. She's feisty and 4-foot-11. She would have to take a pillow to a cockpit to see over the dashboard."

With the military in Bickle's blood, she is a lifelong supporter of soldiers. She has a special affinity for female veterans, so she's organizing the Arizona Military Women's Luncheon: In Celebration of Women's History Month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 21, at the Phoenix VA Medical Center, Lower Level, 650 E. Indian School Road.

For the first time, the luncheon is open to all women, whether they have donned a uniform or not. All proceeds go to Veterans First Ltd., the Salt River Military Women Across the Nation and the Saguaro Chapter of the WAC/Army Women United.

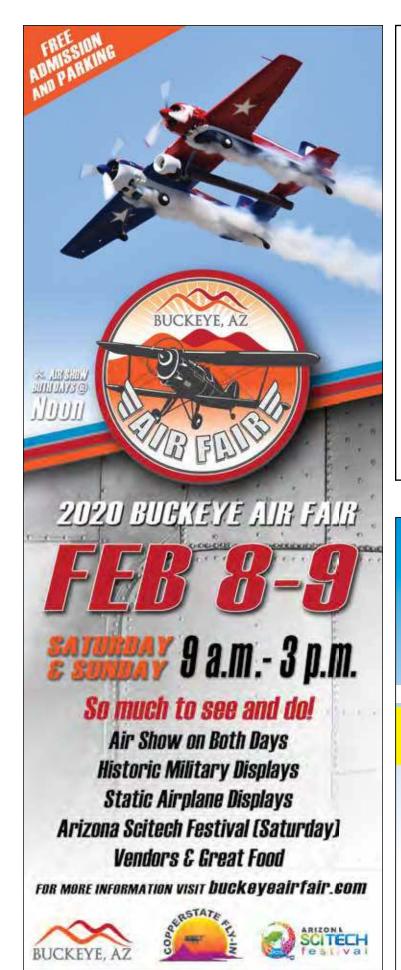
The guest speaker is retired Admiral Dr. Connie Mariano, who was the first military woman to be appointed the White House doctor, the first female director of the White House medical unit and the first Filipino-American to become a Navy rear admiral.

Tickets are \$25. For tickets, call Martha Alderman, treasurer, at 623-810-9328. Scholarships are available.

Arizona Military Women was formed by Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society member Sue Wudy, who is a disabled Army veteran, as a fun way of bringing military women together. Each luncheon has a guest speaker, catered lunch, raffle prize and silent auction.

"It's a good way to distribute information to military women for resources they might not know about," Bickle says. "This year, it's being sponsored by the Salt River

SEE **LUNCHEON** PAGE 8



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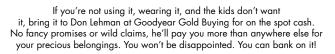
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LUNCHEON FROM PAGE 6

Military Women and Women's Army Corps in Phoenix."

The luncheon is held every year in March; previously, it was before Memorial Day.

"The problem is, there were so many things going on in the Phoenix area for veterans during that time," Bickle says. "We have a lot of community support and really good donations coming in from organizations. Even the caterer is giving us a reduced price."

Bickle began her military career at 17 when she enlisted in the Air National Guard in Tucson. After about a year and a half, she went into the Air Force active duty because she wanted to travel. After the Air Force, she enlisted in the Navy so she could garner experience on a ship. At the time, women were rarely on ships.

At the time, she had her own personal war, which is chronicled in one of her four books, "Dear Men: What I Really Wanted to Say..." The 2014 effort is a true story written in the form of letters to the men in her life. Bickle uses the final chapter to focus on alcoholism, bipolar disorder, sexual trauma/abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder and spirituality.

Arizona Military Women's Luncheon: In Celebration of Women's History Month

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 21
Phoenix VA Medical Center, Lower Level,
650 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
\$25, includes a choice of shaved chicken,
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"I was the victim of (sexual abuse) by both civilian and military men," the North Phoenix resident says. "We had no help back then if you were a woman in the military. We were told to pick ourselves up by the bootstraps and move on.

"I drank whiskey a lot when I was off duty just to get numb. It wasn't until I got out of the service in the '80s that I had counseling through the VA off and on. It was just putting a Band-Aid on the situation. I struggled for a long time with nightmares and anxiety. I eventually found a really good group in the early 2000s led by a master's-level therapist and counselor. She saved a lot of our lives."

She loves the military still and feels it's ingrained in her DNA. Bickle doesn't blame the military for what happened to her.

"The men didn't know any better," says Bickle, who is a Realtor. "They didn't have the skills to deal with their problems. I've worked through all of that. I don't hold any blame or malice. I was really struggling one day, and God gave me this image of the attacker as a 5-year-old boy. He was bruised and beaten and emotionally just bankrupt. He had nothing. He was crying because he wanted somebody to love him, and it broke my heart."

Her instinct was to comfort the boy, and she could then see the men were hurting themselves. Bickle was able to forgive them and move beyond the attacks. She was then introduced to the Arizona Military Women's Luncheon and has expanded her base of friends.

"When women attend our events, they find sisters to love and support," Bickle says. "We're more than just a group who gets together once in a while. We're fundraising for other charities. If someone has a medical appointment, they can find someone to take them there.

"We help them clean their house—whatever they need. A lot of these women have seen combat or have had sexual trauma. They now have someone to lean on, trust and to get out of isolation." ■



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'Vet Talks'

BestCompanies AZ hosts a veteran career event

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO-KARASINSKI

eterans can connect with award-winning companies like Charles Schwab, Axon and Vanguard during a Best-CompaniesAZ-hosted business-networking event on Thursday, February 13, at University of Phoenix.

Modeled after "TED Talks," the event will feature five inspiring presentations, called "Vet Talks," from different military professionals who have transitioned into civilian life with some of Arizona's top companies, including USAA and Freedom Financial Network. Designed to inspire military members, the "Vet Talks" will provide career advice through personal anecdotes, career advancement tips and employment guidance.

"BestCompaniesAZ is passionate about providing a platform for our military members to connect and grow in their career paths," says Denise Gredler, founder and CEO of Best-





CompaniesAZ.

"We are honored to give veterans and their families the unique opportunity to engage with like-minded business professionals and award-winning companies. This event will connect top talent with top Arizona employers."

Event attendees can discuss employment opportunities with more than 30 Arizona companies that are currently hiring and recognized for their veteran-committed company culture, such as GoDaddy.

"GoDaddy was founded by a veteran and has a continuing commitment to hiring veterans and military spouses," says Heather Dopson, community builder at GoDaddy.

"We are proud of the work we are doing to create a military-friendly environment, especially our employee resource group, called Go-Daddy Vets. GoDaddy Vets' goal is to create a sense of camaraderie and support for our employees with military experience, while building a community with vets and supporters alike."

Several veteran resource groups and military-focused community organizations will also be at the event, including Arizona State University's Pat Tillman Veteran Center and the Arizona Department of Veteran Services, to assist and network with event attendees and Valley veterans.

This is the fifth annual Veteran Business Networking and Career Event hosted by Best-CompaniesAZ in partnership with Arizona State University, Birdies for the Brave and Career Connectors.

Companies interested in participating in the event can learn more about corporate participation and submissions by contacting Best-CompaniesAZ at dgredler@bestcompaniesaz. com or 480-545-5151. ■

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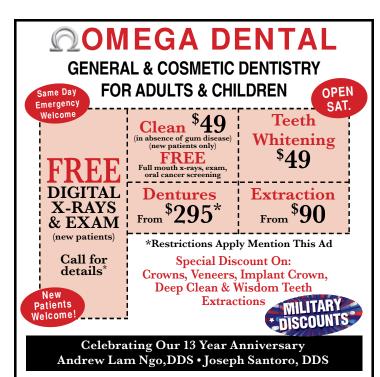
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Commemorative Air Force hosts 35th annual Big Band Dance fundraiser

BY LISA LECARRE

Tith the backdrop of a B-17 WWII Bomber on display, the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Airbase Arizona museum's huge exhibition hangar and museum will be transformed into a 1940s canteen, complete with a big band, a large dance floor, swing dancing and the 1940s-era music of the harmonious trio the Uptown Angels on Saturday, March 14.

Museum exhibits and memorabilia complete the transformation, taking you back to a time of joy and celebration.

The CAF Airbase Arizona's annual fundraiser, "A Night in the '40s, Big Band Dance," is held at Falcon Field in Mesa. During the exciting evening, the Sonoran Swing Orchestra plays all of the best-known music by great musicians of the time. From swing and patriotic marches to jazz, they will keep guests on their feet and upbeat all night. The decade of the 1940s, or the "War Years," is synonymous with World War II, patriotism and the unique fashions. Many partygoers come dressed in military uniforms, swing dresses, women's victory suits complete with victory curls or the men's zoot suit.

While '40s fashion is encouraged, it's not required, and it is fun to

watch the costume contest where you might see a Betty Grable or Rosie the Riveter lookalike dancing with a dashing military pilot!

If you aren't hip to the dance moves from the 1940s, no need to worry! At "A Night in the '40s, Big Band Dance," guests can sign up for swing-dance lessons with the Arizona ballroom dance champions. Specialty food trucks cook up a mouth-watering selection of dining options and refreshments are located throughout the venue. If that isn't enough, there are raffles for unique prizes as well as an open

gift shop with military and aviation items, and you can bring home a photo memory of your evening taken in front of the B-17 Sentimental Journey Warbird.

"A Night in the '40s, Big Band Dance"

5 to 11 p.m. Saturday, March 14 Commemorative Air Force, Airbase Arizona, 2017 N. Greenfield Road, Mesa \$40 for general admission, \$80 for reserved or \$120 for officer club seating bigbanddance.com

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Making a Change

Community colleges ease the transition to civilian life

BY JOHN HECKENLAIBLE

aking the move from active duty to civilian life can be challenging. However, community colleges around the nation—including Glendale Community College—focus on helping military personal get the education and training they need for a smooth transition.

Recently discharged and retired military service personnel often need to reinvent themselves and get additional education to meet the needs of the workplace and prepare themselves for a secure future. Community colleges are well-positioned to help.

As they map out their academic plans,

The Veteran Services Center can help students:

- Choose and register for classes
- Plan their degrees
- Complete financial aid forms
- Understand tuition and book deferment options
- Explore civilian career options, career counseling and job search tools
- Meet Department of Veterans Affairs regulations to use Veterans Educational Assistance benefits
- Network with other veterans in the Veterans Support Coalition or the Veteran Women's Support Group

students should address a number of questions: areas of study, how to pay for schooling and what type of school is best.

There are several factors to consider when determining what to study. The first is what are you interested in—busi-

ness, computer technology, health services, education? The second thing is researching future job trends so you can align your interests with the workforce needs. At Glendale Community College, the Veteran Services Center's academic advisement and career services teams can assist students in their self-assessment and help them with their academic and career plans.

There are many options when it comes to paying for college. First, determine the cost of tuition, then research aid packages and scholarships. It's very important for students to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to help secure financial aid.

Determining the best type of school to attend can depend largely on the student's chosen field of study. Consider fully accredited schools with plenty of course of-



The Glendale Community College Veteran Services Center is a one-stop shop for veterans who want to transition from military life to civilian life through higher education. The Veteran Services Center provides assistance in planning academic paths, identifying federal and state benefit options, certifying education benefits, and guiding students through degree planning as well as class selection and registration.

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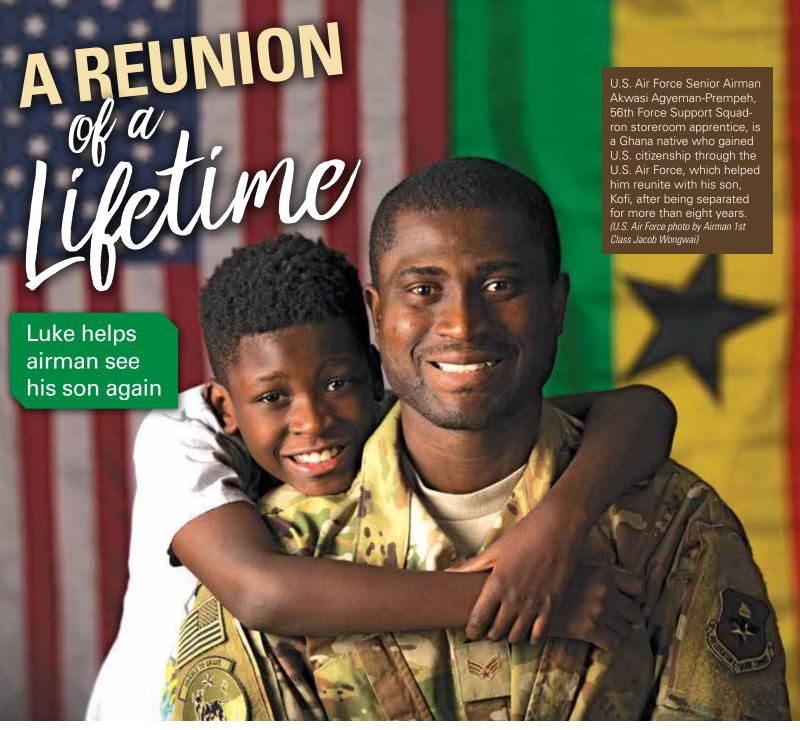
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BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JACOB WONGWAI

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

or most residents of Accra, Ghana, life seemed like any other day on November 11, 2011. The people, accustomed to the hot and humid fall weather, buzzed around the sprawling city. Although, for Akwasi Ageyman-Prempeh, it was anything but normal—it was filled with excitement and hope.

As he drove down familiar roads, he knew his life was about to change. Ageyman-Prempeh was armed with a scholarship for higher education, and his thoughts

were consumed by the dream of a grander life. He had earned the \$10,000 scholarship to study abroad through the Jump Scholarship Program by scoring well on a math, English and science exam. It offered him a chance to travel to the United States and a start to a new and exciting life.

Boarding his flight and taking his seat, his legs bounced in anticipation of the new opportunities ahead of him. Yet, a pang of regret cut through it all; while he knew he was doing this for his newborn son, Kofi, the thought of leaving behind his family and friends left plenty of doubts.

Eight years later, he still reflects on his life-changing opportunity.

"It was a tough decision to go to the United States without my son and his mother," says Senior Airman Akwasi Ageyman-Prempeh, 56th Force Support Squadron storeroom apprentice.

"I had that back in my mind that I had a son," he says. "I had to be a better person so that he could look up to me and that I would bring him here one day."

Unfortunately, Ageyman-Prempeh's new beginning was not an easy one.

"The scholarship dried out, so I had to find another way of living in the U.S.," he says. Additionally, due to the long distance, his relationship with Kofi's mother didn't last. Struggling to get by, Ageyman-Prempeh held several jobs while fighting to remain in America. During this struggle, something unexpected occurred.

While attending a party at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in 2013, he met a female student named Shaye. They married in the same year and had two children: Adrienne and James. This new development added another dimension to his challenges.

"I had to think about a smarter way to go to school, but also have money for my family," Ageyman-Prempeh says.

While researching the options, he caught a glimpse of what would be his future—the opportunity to join the Air Force.

"I thought it was a good choice. They were going to give me health insurance, education support and benefits," Ageyman-Prempeh says. He joined the Air Force in 2017.

As an airman, he had the resources necessary to provide support and security for his family. His dream was nearly complete.

However, he said his life would not be whole without reuniting with the son he had left in Ghana.

"My connection with my son was poor," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "The time difference between us was hard since we weren't able to talk to each other as much. It was hard and it broke my heart, because in my mind I thought I had to get him here because I missed out on most of his life. I was really eager to see him again."

Though he tried his hardest to develop a relationship, it proved to more challenging than he thought. Since 2016, when Kofi turned 5, Ageyman-Prempeh called him frequently to ensure his son knew his voice.

"Any time we talked it felt like he was quick to get off the phone because he didn't know who his dad was," Ageyman-Prempeh says.

While he tried to maintain the relationship, Ageyman-Prempeh also wanted Kofi to build a relationship with Adrienne and James. Separated by thousands of miles, their only means of communication was through FaceTime calls.

Ageyman-Prempeh says the time difference and young age of his children made it difficult for the siblings to connect. Nonetheless, as time passed, their relationship grew.

Sometimes my son would ask, 'Daddy, why did you abandon me?'
Or, 'Why didn't you bring me to the United States when I was a baby?' I had to tell him that I didn't want to leave him and it wasn't as easy to bring him here."

As Ageyman-Prempeh's life in the United States stabilized, he worked diligently on the process to reunite with his son.

"They wanted so much from me, and of course he's my son so I was going to do everything that I could. I sent paperwork and they would tell me that it's not enough proof, so I had to add even more documents to support it. That was the hardest part.

"The process was tedious," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "You'd never think it wouldn't be so difficult to get your own blood son into the U.S. It was a two-year process."

While wading through the process, Ageyman-Prempeh's resolve to reunite with his son solidified even more when he learned Kofi's mother was neglecting their son.

"My friends called me saying they saw my son unattended and the mother had gone (away)," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "My dad confirmed she wasn't taking good care of my son, so he had to take custody of him."

With Kofi now in a loving and supportive environment, he could finish the process of getting his son into the United States. That's exactly what he did.

On March 4, 2019, with his wife and kids in tow, Ageyman-Prempeh traveled to Ghana to reunite with Kofi.

"It's been eight years and I was ready to get my son," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "I was thinking, 'What is he going to think about me?' because he only knew me from the phone, so I was nervous."

No matter how prepared he thought he was, he said the sheer amount of emotions

he felt when he saw Kofi again was overwhelming, but he didn't care because he finally had his son back.

"I sat for a little bit and I thought 'Wow, it's been a long time,' and he's grown, he's taller," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "I was emotional because seeing him that big reminded me of the last time I saw him when he was so little."

The family spent a month in Accra visiting parks, riding horses and exploring the city, getting to know one another. But, Ageyman-Prempeh says he knew life in the United States would be challenging for Kofi, his wife and his other children.

"My wife has handled it tremendously, she's really doing a good job, and of course there's days where there isn't a connection there," Ageyman-Prempeh says.

Shaye did everything she could to provide a loving family for Kofi.

"I thought I did everything to prepare for Kofi's arrival," Shaye says. "But just like any other kid or baby, once they get here, all of that is out the window and you adjust to being what they need you to be."

Since his return to the United States, Kofi retained some of the pain of being "abandoned."

"Sometimes my son would ask, 'Daddy, why did you abandon me?' Or, 'Why didn't you bring me to the United States when I was a baby?" Ageyman-Prempeh says. "I had to tell him I didn't want to leave him and it wasn't as easy to bring him here."

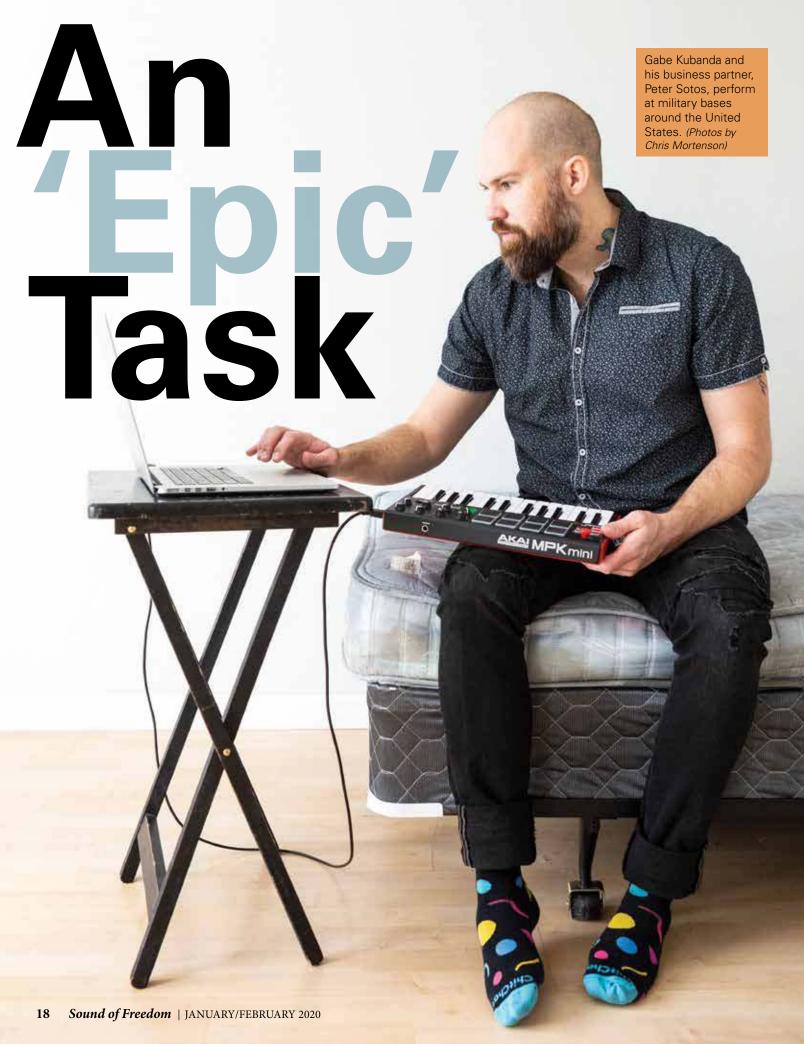
Over time, Kofi grew to understand the incredibly hard choice his father made.

Even though they are burdened by the hardships they endured, Ageyman-Prempeh is grateful for the help he received.

"I'm being honest, without the Air Force I don't think the process would have been any smoother," he says. "I had to get a citizenship to petition for my son, which I was able to receive by joining the U.S. Air Force."

With the help of the Air Force, his family in Ghana, wife and younger children, he finally accomplished his ultimate dream.

"I sit down and I think about the whole thing and I'm like, 'Wow, it was so worth it,' and I look at him and I can't believe what I had to go through just to get him," Ageyman-Prempeh says. "I look at my life, how I envision my life and my family together and I think it's complete."



Gabe Kubanda brings musicians to military bases

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO-KARASINSKI

abe Kubanda looks at music differently than most musicians. With an acute business sense, the Glendale singer-songwriter has "epic" plans for his career and others around the world.

In 2011, Kubanda founded "The Epic Proportions Tour," a jaunt visiting high schools, colleges and military bases around the United States. Kubanda's business partner, Peter Sotos, is a U.S. Army veteran.

"We support our servicemen and know because they are on the front lines keeping us safe and free, we're able to do what we do," Kubanda says.

"Regardless of the crazy politics on both sides of the aisle, we know it is a massive sacrifice for the men and women in the military. So we love to give back and put on concerts for them whenever we can."

Kubanda and Sotos are generous and don't take advantage of bands, as many do in the industry.

"We actually pay the bands," he says with a laugh. "We take care of their travel and their lodging and a lot of their food. We give them a crazy tour experience for free and they get paid.

"That's how I want the music industry to run. I want to give people opportunities and not just try to see what I can take from them. Last year's European tour was nuts. I took a couple bands around Denmark, Sweden and the U.K. for a month and a half, and it was amazing."

On average, the tour performs to approximately 250,000 fans between the ages of 14 and 24 per tour, thanks to sponsors and benefactors.

This month, Kubanda will speak and perform at the NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) show in January in Ana-



heim. He'll sit on the "Smart Touring" and "How to Land Brand Partnerships" panels at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., respectively, Thursday, January 16. Both events require NAMM badges.

Those without a badge can see Kubanda perform at midnight Friday, January 17, on the Anaheim Hilton lobby stage. It's a frew show.

Epic Proportions

The Epic Proportions Tour brings along a full backline, highly trained road crew and state-of-the-art sound system.

"I was in L.A. with a post-emo band called Letters Burning and we were struggling to get people out to shows all the time, you know, getting our friends and family members to buy tickets and have to deal with two-drink minimums and parking on Sunset Boulevard," he says.

Kubanda had an epiphany: go to the fans.

"I was thinking high schools. Those are the types of fans we want," he says. "We started just calling up high schools and saying, 'Hey, can we play a free lunch concert for your students?' Many of them said yes.

"I was surprised it was that easy."
Success took plenty of cold calls and many

polite no's.

"At first, they said, 'You can't sell CDs. You can't talk to the kids. You can't get their emails. You can't do this..." he recalls. "But then they started getting familiar with us. I left the band and started 'The Epic Proportions Tour.' We added colleges and military bases to this equation.

"They realized we're always bringing out good bands, and if there are problems, I'm the fall guy. They can yell at me and that's cool."

Kubanda toured with bands from Australia, Canada, Argentina and Arizona.

"We're pretty ragtag, but I'm still proud of it," he says with a laugh.

"Seriously, we've never quit. We've never canceled a tour—even in the face of really harsh circumstances."

This includes surviving a serious crash when its bus was hit by a semi during a tour.

"We were traveling to San Francisco to do a bunch of college shows in the spring, and it was at the end of our tour," Kubanda explains. "A semitruck driver fell asleep at the wheel and hit us going 70-75 miles per hour. Our entire bus flipped off the road multiple times. We were all in bunks, and apparently that's what saved us. We were bouncing around in

a short space instead of flying all around the cabin and getting thrown out of windows.

"We had a summer tour planned right after and we waited to do all the chiropractor's stuff later," he says with a smile. "We went on tour."

The acts with Kubanda, including Lost in Atlantis and the Thomas King Band, sustained many injuries, mostly abrasions from the steel that kept the metal bunks in place, and broken bones.

"We all survived."

Musical family

Kubanda grew up in a musical household, performing in his church and jazz band in high school. He also teamed with his friends to form garage rock bands in Seattle.

"I always thought it would just be a hobby," he says. "I took the big step and moved to L.A. to go to UCLA Music Business School. It was an after-hours program."

He studied music business at UCLA, and that led to an internship with a manager who worked with Filter, BT, the Crystal Method, Psychedelic Furs and Henry Rollins.

"Basically, I was just running coffee and errands for people," says Kubanda, who will soon release the hook-laden single "Let's Ride." "But it really opened my eyes to how the industry was—the good and the bad of it. I really didn't like a lot of it.

"When I started this tour, I wanted it to be anti-industry in a way. I wanted to focus on being nice to people. That's how I've operated ever since. The key is to be nice and work hard."

Music education

Kubanda slowly went from playing lunch concerts to also speaking in classes. He dubs it #EduMusication, which pairs professional artists





with music students for "rousing" workshops, demos and Q&As, showing how students can start today on their journey toward a rewarding career in music.

The organization also offers \$5,000 scholarships with Full Sail University; freebies; and music gear provided by Ernie Ball, Orange Amps, PRS Guitars and Line 6.

"We're a 501(c)(3) nonprofit," he says. "We offer music inspiration and education workshops for free. We just want to show if we can do it, you guys can, too—but start now. Don't wait as long as we did.

"Get on YouTube, start making cover videos, start managing your own student band, start playing shows, start interning places. Think about a career now instead of 20 years later."

The next "Epic Proportions Tour" will kick off March 9 at South By Southwest Music Conference and continues through April 30 in New York City.

By performing at South by Southwest and NAMM, Kubanda has honed the art of networking and feeling comfortable approaching complete strangers to chat.

"Walking up to complete strangers, you never know where it's going to lead," he says. "I think that's really important for any musician or anybody who wants to be in the industry. If you sit at home and play guitar all day long, nobody's going to hear you.

"NAMM is especially important because all the music merchants are there and all the vendors are there. If you want to be sponsored by your favorite guitar company or a piano company or a piece of gear or a DJ, this is where you're going to meet those people face to face. I know musicians tend to get in their little bubbles and just hang out with local music people, but you need to branch out."

Epic Proportions Tour epicproportionstour.com

NAMM namm.org



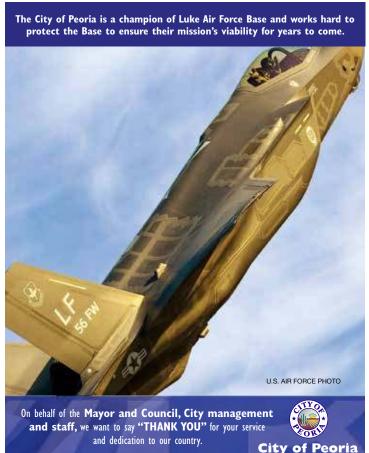
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Remembering Those Abroad

Luke NCO, cousin send 1,500 care packages to deployed military members

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS LEALA MARQUEZ

Luke noncommissioned officer, his cousin and 400 Detroit-based volunteers shared the 2019 holiday spirit with approximately 1,500 deployed military members by sending care packages to 15 overseas locations including Afghanistan, Iraq and Djibouti.

Tech. Sgt. Timothy Pfeiffer, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of munitions control, recently returned from a deployment where he received a holiday care package from his cousin Rose Cobb. He said her care package was his inspiration to share the spirit with others deployed overseas.

"I was deployed to southeast Asia from July 2018 through February 2019," Pfeiffer says. "My cousin sent me and my coworkers a couple care packages for the holidays. It was extremely uplifting, the moment of joy, to not think about being in the desert, it took our mind off of everything."

When Pfeiffer returned from his deployment, he and Cobb, who is an executive banker at a Detroit-based Quicken Loans branch, worked to supply holiday packages. While planning, Cobb's boss showed interest in supporting their effort.

"We decided to put together a presentation," Pfeiffer says. "I did a video explaining how much it meant to me to receive care packages and send them. My cousin presented all of it to her board of directors. They offered us a little bit of money; but, by the time we started it we had acquired a promise of \$15,000 to \$20,000."

Following the company's donation notification, Pfeiffer flew to Detroit to oversee a three-day operation in which 400 people rotated through nine-hour workdays to pack care packages.

"We had assembly lines on three floors of the building," said Pfeiffer. "Each department would do 30-minute blocks to help me pack. They would come down ask me what I needed them to do. They would pack and another group would come."

Pfeiffer says the experience was rewarding



Tech. Sgt. Timothy Pfeiffer, left, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of munitions control, and volunteers pack holiday care packages. In the 2019 holiday season, Pfeiffer and a team of Quicken Loans employees made care packages that were sent to approximately 1,500 deployed military members in 15 different locations including Afghanistan, Iraq and Djibouti. (Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base)

on several levels.

"I went to Detroit and I had such a warm reception; they were all about helping veterans and service members," he says. "The second part was hearing from all the people who received the packages. Knowing that I was able to chip away that negativity you feel while you're on a deployment."

After the boxes were mailed, Pfeiffer received feedback from Airmen around the world. He laughed as he read through appreciative messages and comments on social me-

dia, "Boxes are a little beat up, but the food still tastes good," read one comment.

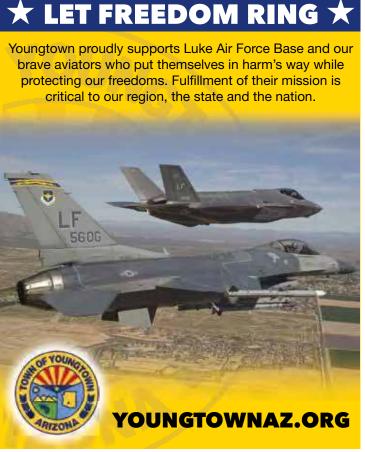
"Deployments are difficult on our service men and women, regardless of the location," says Master Sgt. Nicholas Levis, Ammunition Contracting Officer representative deployed to Qatar. "For myself and the personnel I work with, the care packages Tech. Sgt. Pfeiffer coordinated brought a sense of distant connectedness. It was a reminder that we are not forgotten, as we can sometimes feel. The simple

SEE CARE PACKAGES PAGE 24











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Tech. Sgt. Timothy Pfeiffer, right, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of munitions control, and his cousin Rose Cobb, Quicken Loans executive banker, stand in front of packed care packages. Pfeiffer and Cobb created an operation that has sent care packages to 1,500 deployed members in 15 locations including Afghanistan, Iraq and Djibouti. (Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base)

CARE PACKAGES FROM PAGE 22

things we often take for granted while in garrison spark joy in the forces who receive these packages with a little taste of home."

The Air Force works continually to increase the resiliency of its Airmen and promote the wingman concept.

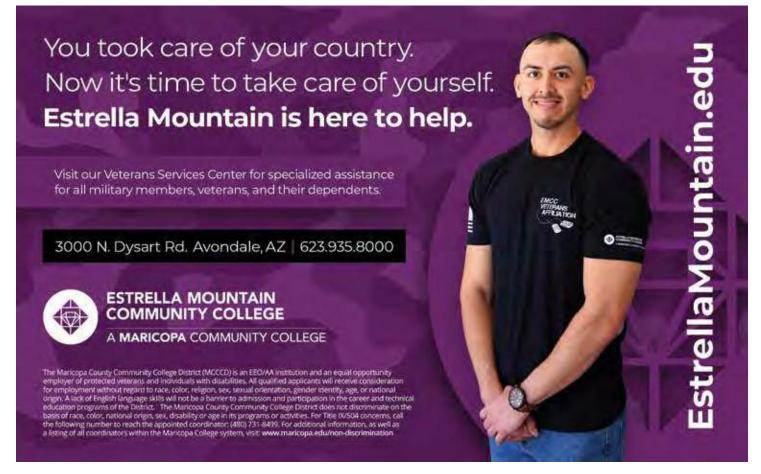
"I feel it's very important for us as military members to take care of our own, especially those who are deployed," says Master Sgt. Seth Yothers, 56th EMS ammunitions systems section chief. "Tech. Sgt. Pfeiffer has a high passion for deployed service members, and this event was the highlight of that passion."

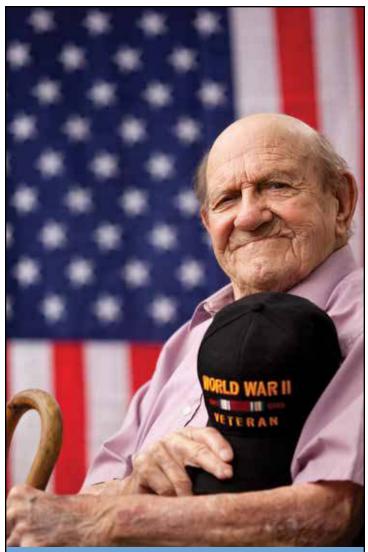
"Whatever you contribute you don't understand how much that can change one person's life, when they're stuck in the trenches, in a place where maybe the water went out that day or in a bunker," Pfeiffer says. "They can look at that stuff and they don't have to think about any of that for an hour. I hope it lasts for a really long time and it just gets bigger and better."

In the end, the company donated \$100,000

towards the care packages. Pfeiffer and Cobb's current goal is to organize more donation initiatives like this semi-annually. He said he hopes to make another shipment in July and again in November, ahead of the holidays.

"I am very thankful for the men and women in uniform and what they do for our country," Cobb says. "It has been a pleasure to watch our team come together and send care packages from home to those who are deployed during the holidays. I am looking forward to growing this program and continuing our efforts in the years to come.





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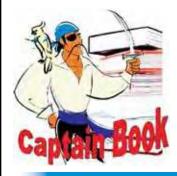


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SOUND OF FREEDOM AVAILABLE HERE



BY AIRMAN BROOKE MOEDER

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

In a span of eight demanding months, four 62nd Fighter Squadron student pilots—two U.S. and two Norwegian—will learn the ins and outs of the F-35A Lightning II as they train through the first allied F-35 B-course, beginning as novices and developing into proficient and lethal fighter pilots.

The 62nd FS activated in January 2015 at Luke Air Force Base as a joint international effort between Italy, Norway and the United States for F-35 training. Student pilots from each of the three nations fly Italian, Norwegian and American F-35s under the guidance of American, Norwegian and Italian instructor pilots.

"This is the first allied basic course ever in the F-35," says Lt. Col. Christopher Hubbard, 62nd FS squadron commander. "Previously, only U.S. pilots learned to fly the F-35 as their first fighter jet straight out of pilot training. Now, for the first time, Norwegian pilots are training right alongside American pilots in the F-35 B-course."

The student pilots took their first flights in the fifth-generation fighter on varying dates in the fall, familiarizing themselves with the F-35 and its components.

"The first flight was awesome," says U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Nathanael Zillweger, 62nd FS fighter student pilot. "It's interesting because in the simulator you can't feel the jet at all. On your first flight, the jet rumbles a little bit, so you get a feel for what it's like to have 40,000 pounds of thrust at your back. That was probably the best thing for me."

The students employed their training as they taxied onto the runway and rose into the Fighter Squadron fighter pilot student, prepares for his first flight in the F-35A Lightning II at Luke Air Force Base. Four student pilots, two U.S. and two Norwegian, are attending the eight-month first allied F-35 B-course, preparing for Red Flag at Nellis AFB, Nevada. Red Flag is an annual exercise in which student pilots experience realistic combat simulations. The 62nd FS activated in January 2015 at Luke Air Force Base as a joint international effort between Italy, Norway and the United States for F-35 training. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Brooke Moeder)

air, experiencing the power of the F-35 for the first time.

"It was a great experience," says a Royal Norwegian Air Force fighter student pilot assigned to the 62nd FS. (Due to foreign partner sensitivities, the names of the Royal Norwegian Air Force members are undisclosed.)

"When you do the first takeoff after only flying aircraft in previous flights with smaller engines, you can really feel the kick of the aircraft accelerating on the runway. It was really



fun to achieve the goal of flying a fighter jet for the first time."

The student pilots train on smaller aircraft prior to starting the F-35 B-course to learn the basics of military flight operations.

While attending Undergraduate Pilot Training, student pilots fly the T-6 Texan II, which is a two-seat, single-propeller trainer. Next, they'll fly the T-38 Talon, which is a two-seat, twin-engine jet trainer, says Capt. Sake, 62nd FS Norwegian flight commander and instructor pilot.

Flying instrument information on the T-6 and the T-38 lay the foundation for success, preparing the student pilots to tackle the F-35's components. The F-35 B-course provides an in-depth orientation to the fifth-generation fighter.

The first phase of the F-35 B-course, or basic flight class, is a month of classroom basics to identify how each system in the Lightning II works. The second phase is ground simulator training, performing hours of local and emergency procedures, along with other simulations. The last phase includes hands-on training, and the students are paired into operational squadrons where instructor pilots teach academics and the students fly the F-35 for the first time, Sake says.

In some ways, the T-38 is actually a little bit more challenging to maneuver just because the flight controls are very mechanical, whereas the F-35s are more electrical."

"In some ways, the T-38 is actually a little bit more challenging to maneuver just because the flight controls are very mechanical, whereas the F-35s are more electrical," a Royal Norwegian air force student pilot says. "The F-35 handles a little bit easier even though it has more power and thrust."

In March, the student pilots are scheduled to attend Red Flag at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. Red Flag is an annual exercise in which student pilots experience realistic combat simulations. As a multinational exercise, the students will practice flying with different countries, allowing them to build on their skills, Sake says.

"Red Flag is the long-term big goal that

I'm looking forward to," a Royal Norwegian air force fighter student pilot says. "I think we need to take in everything that happens along the way because that's going to be the building blocks that's going to lead us there. Everything we're doing from this point on is things we've never seen before, at this scale at least. Everything is interesting and fun."

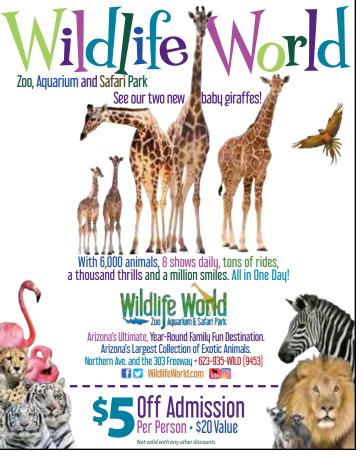
The U.S. and Norwegian instructors have high expectations for their four student pilots.

"They've been very strong up to this point," Sake says. "We expect them to continue that strong trend, to be prepared and ready to stand up on their own."

The Norwegian and U.S. student pilots that are training together are making history and strengthening foreign partner relationships.

"This is a huge milestone for the 62nd FS, 56th Fighter Wing, U.S. Air Force and Royal Norwegian Air Force," Hubbard says. "This interoperability means that all F-35 partners are, or will be, training on the same airplane, using the same syllabus, operating off the same tactics manual and going through the same training pipeline. The benefits to this commonality are just starting to be seen but will undoubtedly give allied combat efforts a huge advantage in future conflicts."





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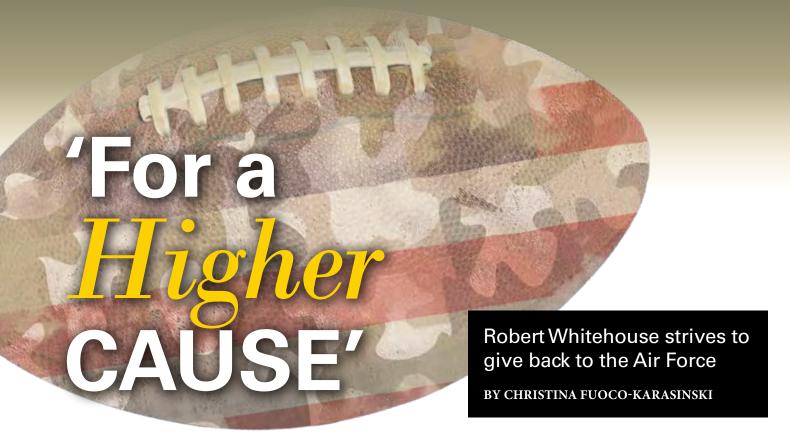
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obert Whitehouse feels fortunate for the experience he's had with Fighter Country Partnership and its foundation, both of which support Luke Air Force Base airmen and their families.

A member of their boards of directors, Whitehouse also understands FCP's need for volunteers and funding.

"The board provides strategic oversight to the organization," Whitehouse says. "Fighter Country Partnership has a very small staff, and we try to help out when we're able to with Ron (Sites, FCP's president and executive director) and his staff. We try to make things happen to improve the lives of the airmen and their families at Luke."

Whitehouse would know, as he was on the other side. He spent 27 years in the Air Force, with the last 19 years at Luke Air Force Base.

"I spent four years at the Air Force Academy for my college education," he says. "I was blessed to fly the F16 for 26 of the 27 years that I was in the active duty or the reserves. I spent the last 19 years basing at Luke, primarily as an F16 instructional pilot.

"I finished my career as the vice wing commander of the 944th Fighter Wing, the reserve wing at Luke. It augments the 56th Fighter Wing."

Whitehouse says he learned some time ago that service to a higher cause is fulfilling.

"When I retired, one of the things I wanted to do was to continue to support some causes," Whitehouse says. "I wanted to 'pay it forward,' if you will. Fighter Country Partnership is a great organization with tremendous folks, and the community really rallied around it."

Now in his sixth year serving as the vice president of operations for the Fiesta Bowl, Whitehouse helps the event make Arizona as a whole a "better place to live through our charitable endeavors."

"The Fiesta Bowl is a community organization that tries to create economic impact and to make Arizona a better place to live through our charitable endeavors," he says.

"We've had a long-standing partnership with Fighter Country Partnership. They've been in our parade for years. We've partnered with Operation Santa and Dick's Sporting Goods to help distribute items to the airmen and their families."

In early December, Fiesta Bowl Charities partnered with USAA and Dick's Sporting Goods to provide 40 Valley children with an active, deployed parent in the military a holiday shopping spree inside Dick's Sporting Goods at the Arrowhead Towne Center in Glendale.

The 40 children were selected as part of the Fighter Country Foundation.

The holiday experience for all 40 children included a \$300 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card, dinner provided by Rudy's BBQ, an Operation Santa T-shirt, and a USAA volunteer who served as a personal shopper for each child. Spirit, the Fiesta Bowl mascot, was also on hand to bring holiday spirit to the festivities.

Recently, Fighter Country Partnership received a grant from Fiesta Bowl Charities to better the lives of the men and women at Luke Air Force Base.

"Part of the money went toward the fire-house project," he says. "The men and women of Luke's firehouse have a place to meet, to rest and to eat before responding and after responding to not only emergencies at Luke, but the surrounding communities as well."

A native of Northern Virginia, Whitehouse says joining the Air Force was a natural progression.

"I decided to go to the Air Force Academy for college, and with that comes a commitment, after you graduate, to join the Air Force," Whitehouse says.

"I really enjoyed it and became passionate about what the Air Force was doing. Serving the country is very fulfilling, and I got to work with a lot of great people. I thought we were doing something for a higher cause."

Whitehouse feels the same about the Fiesta Bowl.

"Some of the things that make the Fiesta Bowl great are the volunteers and the community support," he says. "That really makes a difference. We get support for the games and for our charitable endeavors. Fighter Country Partnership comes out to our events and gets behind the cause to make Luke a better place. We make it so we can put our heads on the pillow at night and not worry about things going haywire."



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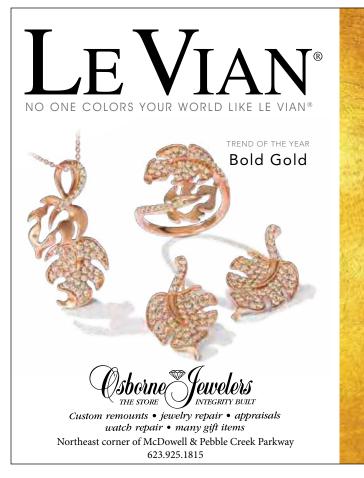
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Up in Smoke

V'Cloud Vape rebranded as a CBD business

BY OCTAVIO SERRANO

d Chaney was addicted to smoking and after many attempts at quitting he discovered his solution—vaping. "I had many times moved off of one nicotine product or another, all tobacco types," Chaney says. "They're all fairly dangerous but I never successfully quit. This (vape) came around and within a few months, I was completely freed of it."

Inspired by his success, the entrepreneur wanted to bring the Valley a product similar to the one that helped him. He opened V'Cloud Vape and CBD in 2004, which rebranded roughly three months ago as Cannafyl CBD.

The U.S. Navy veteran and Scottsdale resident also had previous business ventures. The Maryland native studied business at ASU and executive leadership at MIT. For more than 20 years, he was an active member of Arizona's elite Entrepreneur Organization. Chaney is focused on CBD now.

"I've had lots of business startups in the last 30 years and Cannafyl was designed to bring a product to the market that allowed us to create a position of authority," Chaney says.

"When I became disappointed with the vape market, when I launched into the CBD market, I decided I was going to participate in it from an authority place."

Chaney prides himself on the meticulous work the Cannafyl CBD brand puts into its development. The company's chief executive officer, Chaney says the quality of its products was established with chemists who are ASU interns and graduates. He ensures they are tested properly.

"I certainly used my skills that I have learned to create a pretty extensive third-party testing," Chaney says. "I created the product to be almost a clinical level of potency because I knew there was a deficiency in the market."

Cannafyl CBD goes beyond selling its products. It schools customers on what it sells.

"After we developed the product and put those kinds of standards in place at the retail store, we created opportunities monthly for training," Chaney says. "We invited anybody on our list to come once a month to the store where they can touch and feel products. We would always invite a chemist or somebody that was reputable so they can answer questions."

In addition, Chaney says he signed a 52week agreement with VoiceAmerica to host a radio show on all things CBD. He will invite experts on and discuss different products and other topics.

"Every Friday at noon, I have somebody show up and we host a show on CBD and we almost always invite experts in research," Chaney says. "We share that with our listeners in a very unbiased way."

As a veteran, Chaney knows veterans can benefit from the use of CBD to help them cope with the stress of past experiences.

"The CBD helps their body deal with emotional stress," Chaney says. "CBD triggers those components that are capable of hanWe invited anybody on our list to come once a month to the store where they can touch and feel products. We would always invite a chemist or somebody that was reputable so they can answer questions."

dling high stress."

Chaney says the experiences of a veteran's life can be haunting and he himself had troublesome times during his service.

Chaney says he was part of an 11-member flight crew for a P-3 Orion for four years.

"We had six planes and one of our aircrews had an accident," Chaney says. "One of our planes had an altimeter malfunction and ran into a mountain. All 13 members passed away."

"It took an entire year to come back from that."

Chaney says this experience gives him an

insight into the difficulty people may have in overcoming things and has since researched on how CBD can help.

He says it is this knowledge that is most valuable to his customers.

"How it impacted me? I can connect with it and once I researched it more, I certainly started contributing more toward veterans."

"How I can help them the most is that knowledge," Chaney says. "It's helping them understand how, why and when to take CBD."

In addition, Cannafyl gives a 20% discount to veterans.

Chaney says what sets Cannafyl CBD apart from other companies is the whole plant is used when creating its products. They are also entirely plant-based, organically grown and have certificates of analysis.

The product lines are customizable. Some clients may need stronger doses of CBD while others may just want to relax. Cannafyl CBD has made sure to properly organize them.

"There are relief, relax and balance," Chaney says. "Our relief line was designed to aid in reducing inflammation and pain. Our relaxed line was designed to aid in sleep and

our balance line was designed to aid in reducing stress.

"Pain is the one thing everybody wants to solve. It's the most life-threatening and after the opioid scare, this product was a nice alternative."

Chaney has roughly 30 years of business experience and he has worked diligently to bring the people of the Valley a product that's well crafted by chemists. The vape business is easy to enter, but he promises top-notch products.

"I think the barrier of entry to get into the vape industry is very low, so it's easy for people to get in it," Chaney says. "I think those who have not studied business principles or business ethics were coming in."

But Chaney knows the difference between a well-run business and one that just tries to get by. As Cannafyl CBD continues to grow, it will continue to make sure its quality is maintained.

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Hand

Real estate agent supports first responders and veterans

BY ALISON STANTON

rowing up as the daughter of a veteran, Haley Schuster learned at a very early age how important it is to care for members of the military, as well as first responders.

"It is in my blood to take care of the people who take care of us," Schuster says. She is married to a Phoenix police officer who served in the U.S. Marine Corps. They live in Peoria with their two children.

When Schuster got into the real estate business a couple of years ago, she made a com-

mitment to donate 25% of her commission toward closing costs for all veterans and first responders she worked with.

Schuster, who joined Platinum Living Realty in late October, works in Scottsdale and says she is not only passionate about giving a generous portion of her commission to veterans and first responders but it is also great for business.

"I have really focused on giving back to first responders and veterans; in doing that, I tripled my business within a year," she says.

"It is what I built my business off of, it's in my email tagline, and if the amount ends up Haley Schuster donates 25% of her commission toward closing costs for veterans and first responders she works with. (Photo courtesy Haley Schuster)

being more than the closing costs, the money can go toward buying my client's interest rate down."

Prior to jumping into real estate a few years ago, Schuster worked for another company, where she spent over a decade working in hospitality refining her client-centric approach at Starwood Hotels, which is now Marriott.

Although she enjoyed the work and its focus on putting customers first, Schuster says the long hours eventually got to her.

"My husband pointed out that we were paying about the same amount for daycare as I was making working," she says. He referred her to real estate.

At that time, Schuster looked into real estate and got her license when their son, Wyatt, was 9 months old. About two years later, her second son, Sawyer, was born.

As Schuster notes, there are definitely some similarities between working in hospitality and real estate.

"Being a people person, being in hospitality was one of the best ways for me to learn about customer service and really knowing what people need," she says.

For instance, because she understands not all first-time homebuyers will have a solid idea of what they need to do prior to listing their home, Schuster says she is happy to advise them on what they should put away before an open house, as well as arrange for a professional cleaning, staging and photographing of the home.

"I know that buying or selling a home can be one of the most stressful things, and so I do everything I can to make it less stressful as possible."

And, as a wife of a police officer, Schuster says she truly understands the often-atypical schedules many first responders face and is happy to work with like-minded clients whenever she can.

"I get first responders and their lifestyle, and I know that sometimes they are not available at all until 3 p.m. or another time. I've heard other officers say, 'She gets it because she lives it."

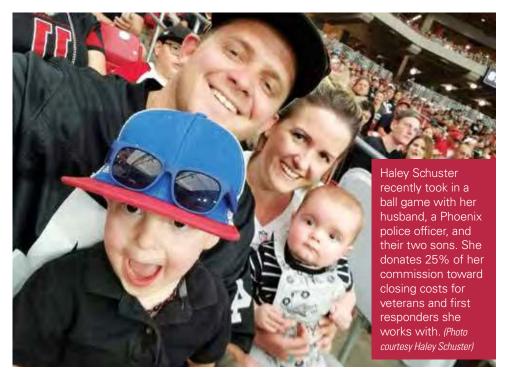
Because first responders have such busy

I get first responders and their lifestyle, and I know that sometimes they are not available at all until 3 p.m. or another time. I've heard other officers say, 'She gets it because she lives it.'"

work lives, Schuster says most of her clients are looking for turnkey homes rather than a project house with a big to-do list.

Schuster says she is already enjoying being part of Platinum Living Realty. She works with clients from all over the Valley, and since starting her career has sold a number of homes in Glendale, Peoria and further out locations like the San Tan Valley, Maricopa and Prescott.

While most of her clients are already aware of how she gives back a quarter of her commissions to the closing costs of veterans and first responders, Schuster says every once in a while a new client is pleasantly surprised by her policy.



"Just last week I was working with a new buyer who is a Surprise police officer, and I was sending him home search information. He saw my signature line for the first time,"

she says.

"He took a screenshot of it, sent it to me and said, 'By the way, this is awesome.' But I've always truly had a service lifestyle."



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Luke AFB blood donors save Arizona patients like David

BY SUE THEW

hose who are ill or injured are helped every day by blood donors. David is one of them. Here are excerpts from David's open letter to his 37 blood donors, in celebration of his December 19 two-year anniversary of being cancer-free.

"You don't know me, but I owe you every day of my life. Today marks the two-year anniversary of the day I heard my cancer was in remission. For two years, I have been able to sleep in my own bed with my loving wife next to me. For two years, I have been able to work full time without hospital stays interrupting my passion—my vocation. For two years I have been able to look at myself in the mirror and not see IV tubes coming out of my body. For two years, I have been able to live my life to the fullest.

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10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday, January 28: Luke AFB 607 ACS

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, February 20: Luke AFB 310 AMU/308 AMU/309 AMU



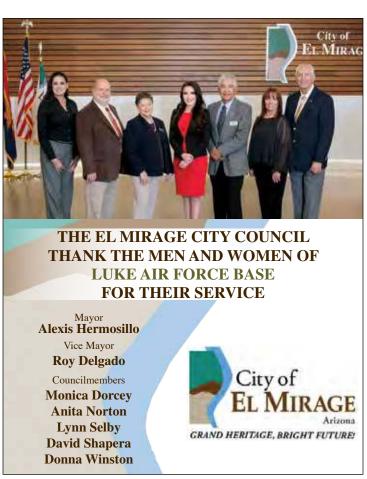
"You may not know where your donation went, or why it was needed, but I do. I know how weak and tired I was. I know how close I was to dying without your gift. But your love, your gift, your selfless act kept me alive. You gave me hope. You gave me strength. You gave me the ability to continue fighting this disease that no one should ever have to deal with. You gave Marley and me countless more date nights and even the ability to get married. Your loving gift meant every-

thing to me.

"So, in celebrating my remission, I want to dedicate my life to you all. I want to look back on my life and say, 'I accomplished everything I accomplished because of the 37 people that saved my life. It is because of them that I was able to live my life to the fullest.'

"Thank you for being a blood donor and thank you for saving my life."

—David, a Valley blood recipient ■











They Shoot, They Score

LukeThunderbolts Hockey wins big in Vegas

BY SENIOR AIRMAN TRAVIS BROWN

309th Aircraft Maintenance Unit

uke Thunderbolts Hockey team won championship titles in two divisions at the recent Armed Services Hockey Championships in Las Vegas.

Forty-two military and first responder teams competed in the 17th Annual Armed Service Hockey International Tournament in Las Vegas. The tournament was divided into six divisions varying in skill and experience level and showcased the talent of hockey players from military installations across North America and all branches of the U.S. services as well as military and veterans

from the Canadian and Australian armed forces.

Since the resurrection of the Luke Varsity Hockey program in 2016, the Thunderbolts have brought home numerous division titles to include the New Dawn Division V Championship honors in 2018, and then this year fielding two teams competing in both the Noble Eagle Division II and the Enduring Freedom Division VI, bringing home championships for both teams.

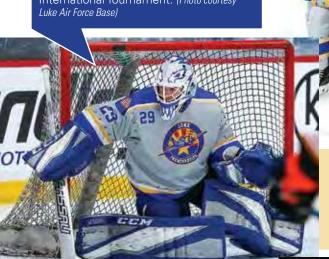
"I knew with great goaltending and a little luck we could possibly bring Luke home another cham-



Luke Air Force Base's Enduring Freedom Division hockey team celebrates following the final horn of its game against the Utah Warriors in Las Vegas. The tournament was divided into six divisions varying in skill and experience level, and showcased talent of hockey players from military installations across North America and all branches of the U.S. services as well as military and veterans from the Canadian and Australian armed forces. (Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base)

SPORTS

Capt. David Brown, 63rd Fighter Squadron instructor pilot, defends his net in the third game of the Armed Services Hockey International Tournament Division II in Las Vegas. Forty-two military and first responder teams competed in the 17th annual Armed Service Hockey International Tournament. (Photo courtesy luke Air Farce Base)



Luke Thunderbolts upper division hockey team poses with the Noble Eagle Division championship banner at City National Arena, Las Vegas. The tournament was divided into six divisions varying in skill and experience level, and showcased talent of hockey players from military installations across North America and all branches of the U.S. services as well as military and veterans from the Canadian and Australian armed forces. (Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base)

pionship. I never could have imagined we would bring back both," says 1st Lt. Ryan Allen, 56th Mission Support Group executive officer and Luke Hockey Team president.

"Luckily, our defenses never stopped skating. Our (upper) team was able to take down some top-level competitors, including the Nellis Creechers and the All-Marine Corps Team. No doubt Luke has the bragging rights across all of the Air Force base hockey teams for the next year.

To secure the championship, Luke's top team battled through players primarily from Alaska and the Upper Midwest and kept the lead for the majority of the game, but the rival team rallied to tie the game at 1-1 with just over 2 minutes of play remaining. With just over 1 minute to play, Airman Clyde Gilman, 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle maintenance technician, netted the game-winning, tournament-clinching goal.

"One of my favorite parts of the tournament was being able to support our other team," says Staff Sgt. Kyle Kupiec, 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Unit weapons load crew chief. "Both teams were there for all 10 games and bonded the newer players with the older and more seasoned guys. It felt good to know both (Luke) teams stole



Luke Thunderbolts' Enduring Freedom Division hockey team poses with the championship banner following its 3-1 victory over the Utah Warriors in Las Vegas. Eleven active-duty airmen from Luke Air Force Base, a reserve Airman from March Air Force Base, California, and a retired airman from the Phoenix area competed on the team. (Photo courtesy Luke Air Force Base)

the show."

The championship banners and jersey, along with a team photo, can be seen hung in the Bryant Fitness Center.

Military members and dependents play in four local adult recreational leagues as Thunderbolts and participate in local and regional tournaments. There are more than 104 players affiliated with the organization, primarily made of active duty but also reserve and retired military members throughout the Phoenix area.

For more information on how to become a player or learn more about the sport or how to get involved, email lukeafbhockey@gmail.com.

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Patriot All America's Opening Ceremonies

Photos by Pablo Robles

he Patriot All America golf tournament at The Wigwam in Litchfield Park honors the military and fallen soldiers, who are represented by 84 elite collegiate golfers. The opening ceremonies were stunning, led by the "voice of the Sun Devils," Jeff Munn. U.S. Navy (Retired) Petty Officer 1st Class Steven Powell sang the national anthem, which ended with a flyover. Those in attendance included West Valley Mavericks President Jason Khan and various West Valley leaders.





Lt. Col. Tim Woods, the 2020 WMPO Tournament chairman, speaks highly of the event.



Luke Air Force Base Joint Color Guard presents the colors.



Luke Air Force Base's 56th Fighter Wing Cmdr. Gen. Todd Canterbury takes time to help promote the event.



West Valley Mavericks President Jason Khan speaks about his organization and its affiliation with the tournament.



U.S. Navy (Retired) Petty Officer 1st Class Steven Powell's national anthem ends with a F-35 flyover.





Participants in the Patriot ALI American golf tournament warmup on the driving range.



Emcee Jeff Munn led the opening ceremonies.

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