

Air Force Families Forever



“Ensuring that the families of our fallen Airmen are never forgotten by providing immediate and long-term compassionate support.”

Fall 2017

Air Force Family Support Network

AF family tree includes very special branch

By Tammy Courmoyer

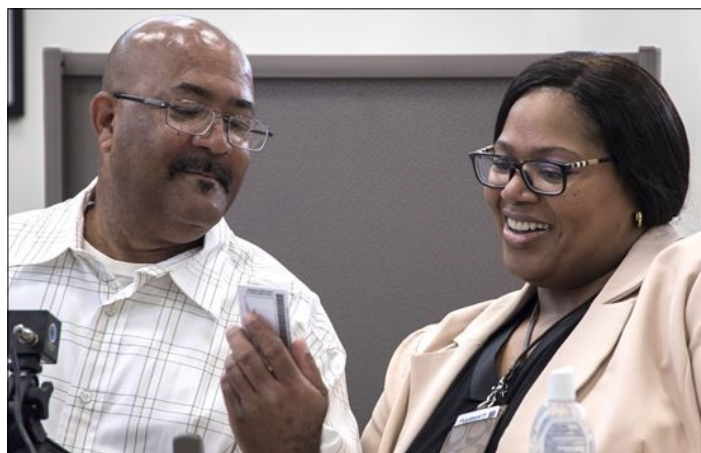
Air Force's Personnel Center Airman and Family Division

The Air Force family tree has many branches and one branch, representing the service's Gold Star families, has leaves that glow consistently with the rest.

Gold Star families are survivors of military service members who lost their lives during armed hostilities, including deployments in support of military operations against an enemy and/or during an international terrorist attack.

The Air Force's Gold Star program provides enhanced support and outreach for the lifetime of each survivor, or until the survivor no longer needs or desires the services. The program is designed to let families know the Air Force cares for them and will continue to embrace them as part of the Air Force family.

“Our primary purpose is to continue recognizing and honoring the sacrifice these families and their loved ones made in the service of our nation,” said Vera Carson, Air Force Families Forever program manager at the Air Force's Personnel Center. “Gold Star



Michael L. Chavis, a Gold Star parent, shows his new Gold Star Base Access ID card to Carla Diamond, a U.S. Air Force Headquarters community readiness consultant, at Joint Base Andrews, Md. These cards are part of an Air Force initiative allowing Gold Star family members unescorted access to Air Force installations. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jordyn Fetter)

families fall under the Air Force Families Forever program, which ensures all families of our fallen Airmen are never forgotten.”

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein directed the provision of additional lifelong support to Gold Star families in April 2017. Gold

Star family members (parents, adult children and siblings) are now being offered the opportunity to receive a Gold Star identification card, which authorizes access to Air Force bases in the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii. For additional information, contact

“

Our primary purpose is to continue recognizing and honoring the sacrifice these families and their loved ones made in the service of our nation.

Vera Carson
AFFF program manager

See **Gold Star** on Page 2 ➔

Disclaimer: This news bulletin is for informational purposes only. The appearance of hyperlinks, and the information and services you find at these locations, are provided for your convenience and do not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Air Force. The Air Force Families Forever Program does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find by accessing hyperlinks. Such links provided are consistent with the stated purpose of the AFFF Program. Please contact your nearest A&FRC or the AFFF Program Analyst at (210) 565-1165 if you have questions.

Gold Star...

Continued from Page 1

your Air Force Families Forever representative at the local Airman and Family Readiness Center.

By allowing these families unescorted access to Air Force installations, they can visit their loved one's gravesite, attend memorials and basewide events, and stop by the Airman and Family Readiness Center for immediate and long-term compassionate support.

"General Goldfein and his wife, Dawn, want to ensure our Gold Star families remain a part of the Air Force family; this special ID card is helping us make that happen," said Carla Diamond, Air Force Gold Star and Surviving Family Member representative. "We are reaching out to surviving family members, establishing contact and ensuring that their needs are met."

One resource for survivors is the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, or TAPS. This program provides emotional support and healing to anyone grieving the death of a military loved one. The TAPS staff provides Military Survivor Seminars, Good Grief Camps for young survivors, peer mentors and resources relating to grief and trauma.



Arlene Wagner, a Gold Star mother, smiles while getting a picture taken for her Gold Star Base Access ID card at Joint Base Andrews, Md., May 1, 2017. Wagner was one of the first people to receive the ID card allowing Gold Star families unescorted access to Air Force installations to visit buried loved ones, attend base events, and stop by Airmen and Family Readiness Centers for support. The Gold Star ID program is scheduled for Air Force-wide implementation beginning May 15, 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jordyn Fetter)

Taking care of each Airman's family is vital to ensuring an Airman is prepared and mission ready.

"Supporting family members is critical in making sure our Airmen are resilient and ready to meet their mission objectives and serve our nation daily," said Mr. Randy Tillery, the director of Airmen and Family Care. "The Gold Star program reminds our surviving family members they are still an important part of the greater Air Force family."

Gold Star families are not new. The term began in World

War I when Americans flew a flag with a blue star for every immediate family member serving in the armed forces. The star became gold if the family lost a loved one in the war. Along with the U.S. flag, these family members now receive a lapel pin with a gold star resting on a purple background.

To reach the AFFF program, call 866-299-0596, or search Facebook for "AF Families Forever Support Network." For more information on TAPS, call the 24-hour helpline at 800-959-2877, or visit www.taps.org.



Air Force Families Forever

call 866-299-0596

or search Facebook for

"AFFamiliesForeverSupportNetwork"



Luke AFB honors Gold Star Family

By Senior Airman James Hensley
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -- As part of a Department of Defense program launched in May 2017, Luke honored its first Gold Star family Aug. 18.

When Capt. Jeremy Fresques, a 23rd Special Tactics Squadron special tactics officer, was killed in action May 30, 2005 in Iraq, the Fresques family became an Air Force Gold Star Family.

Jeremy's parents gave advice to those struggling through the loss of a family member.

"You have to remember the good memories," said Sherry Fresques, Jeremy's mother. "It's been a 12-year journey for us and you start out in the darkest of spots. I think through the grace of God he gives you comfort, others are praying for you to have that comfort and you get it and slowly see the light again. After 12 years we're in a good place."

"If they don't have faith then they should try and get



Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, 56th Fighter Wing commander, talks with Sherry and Nick Fresques at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., Aug. 18, 2017. The Fresques son Capt. Jeremy Fresques, 23rd Special Tactics Squadron special tactics officer, was killed in action in Iraq in 2005. The Fresques have become the first gold star family at Luke to apply for the Defense Biometric Identification System Card initiative allowing them access to the base and Airman and Family Readiness Center resources. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman James Hensley)

into a group that can help them deal with their loss," said Nick Fresques, Jeremy's father.

The Fresques family visited the base here recently to pick up their Defense Biometric Identification System cards. The cards

allow Jeremy's parents access to Luke AFB to reconnect with the military, receive invites to base events and have supporting resources like the Air Force Families Forever representatives at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The family also met with Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, the base commander.

"I feel really appreciative of Luke Air Force Base for asking us to come on base and be a part of special events and functions," said Sherry Fresques.

"I'm excited to be able to be there for the service men and women because they're really important to us," she said. "It's nice to be around them." (Courtesy of Air Force News)

“

You have to remember the good memories.

Sherry Fresques
Gold Star mother

”

Air Force Families Forever



RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT – Military Family Appreciation Month

Traditionally, the president signs a proclamation declaring November as Military Family Appreciation Month. This annual proclamation marks the beginning of a celebration in which the Department of Defense and the nation honors the commitment and sacrifices made by the families of its service members.

Below are 10 ways to recognize military families:

1. SAY “thank you!”
2. Write a thank-you note to a family for what they’ve sacrificed.
3. Provide job opportunities.
4. Offer workplace flexibility.
5. Offer to babysit. It can be a sanity saver for that spouse with no support.
6. Perform a random act of kindness for the family, while remaining anonymous.
7. Volunteer your time. Cut the grass. Shovel snow from their driveway – every time it snows!
8. Thank them publicly (on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) for their sacrifice
9. Donate to a veterans’ charity on their behalf.
10. ASK “How can I help?”



RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT – Christmas List

The holiday season is just around the corner. Here is a Christmas budget that will keep you out of debt by using five simple steps offered by <https://christianpf.com>:

1. Make a long list of everyone that you’d like to give a gift – include family, co-workers, church friends and don’t forget service providers or anyone else that you’d like to include
2. Determine NOW how much you can afford to spend on Christmas
3. Prioritize your list of individuals by sorting them into three groups – paid gifts, made gifts and no gift. Since you’ve already determined how much you can spend, this will give you a better sense of how many individuals can be on your paid list.
4. Beside each name on the paid gift list assign a budgeted amount - be sure the total does not exceed your total allowance. Beside each name on the made gift list decide what gift you will make – cookies or other Christmas treats are ideal for family, close friends and neighbors. For those on the no gift list a personalized card is both meaningful and thoughtful.
5. Make your budget work – Don’t spend more than you budgeted for. Start now as time and creativity is a valuable resource.



Air Force Families Forever



RESOURCE Spotlight — Heroes' Legacy Scholarships

The Heroes' Legacy Scholarships program honors not only those who have fallen in battle, but all who have died or have become disabled through their active military service since Sept. 11, 2001. The program is open to their dependent unmarried children younger than 23. A disability is defined as one that results in the service member being eligible for, and receiving, Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance or a permanent and total disability compensation rating of 100 percent. Interested family members may download the application by visiting <http://www.militaryscholar.org/index.html>.



RESOURCE Spotlight — Suicide survivor seminar, grief camp

All suicide loss survivors are warmly invited and encouraged to attend the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors' National Suicide Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp. This year's event will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, at the Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort, Oct. 6 to 9. Each fall, TAPS creates a sacred space of hope, help and healing for survivors of suicide loss in the form of the National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar. Bringing together surviving family members and loved ones from all parts of the country, this seminar offers an opportunity to connect with others who understand your loss, find resources and learn how to tell your story — and that of your loved one. For additional information and to register, visit www.taps.org.

RESOURCE Spotlight — National Wreaths Across America

Each December, wreath-laying ceremonies are held at Arlington National Cemetery as well as more than 1,200 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad.



National Wreaths Across America begins Dec. 16. (Courtesy photo)

The national theme for this year's ceremony is, "I'm an American. Yes, I am." On Dec. 16, Wreaths Across America will be at Arlington National Cemetery to remember and honor veterans by laying remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes, and saying the name of each and every veteran aloud.

For more information, or if you are interested in participating in the wreath-laying or attending the ceremony at Arlington, visit the organization's website at www.wreathscrossamerica.org.

You may also search for local ceremonies and volunteer opportunities by entering your ZIP code or the desired cemetery/location on the website.

Air Force Families Forever



RESOURCE Spotlight – Upcoming Events

JBSA-Lackland, Texas

Role Reversal-Caring for Those Who Cared for You: Oct. 10, 10 a.m. to noon, Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, 2160 Kenly Ave. Bldg. 1249. This seminar will offer information and resources to those caring for an aging parent. Caregivers will be educated and provided with the tools to make informed choices. Topics include health issues, accessing services, long-distance caregiving, stress management and community/military resources. Facilitated in part by the Alamo Area Council of Government and The Bexar Area Agency on Aging. Registration required by contacting 210-671-3722/3723.

Franchising 101: Nov. 3, 1 to 3 p.m., Arnold Hall Community Center, 1560 Stewart Street. Whether you're buying an existing business or starting your own from scratch, take a look at businesses that thrive in all economic conditions. Compare business ownership and franchise opportunities, and weigh the difference between benefits and challenges. Learn to conduct market research and find out which one is right for you. To reserve a seat, call 210-671-3722/3723.

2017 JBSA Air Show and Open House: Nov. 4 and 5, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days, JBSA-Lackland Kelly Field Annex. Admission is free to the public. Join us in celebrating the rich military and aviation history in San Antonio. This year's theme is, "Your History, Our Legacy: Commemorating the U.S. Air Force's 70th anniversary, Air Education Training Command's 75th anniversary, Kelly Field's 100th anniversary and San Antonio's 300th anniversary." During the rehearsal day Nov. 3, Gold Star families and Wounded Warrior families will have air show access. DOD cardholders are also invited to the rehearsal Nov. 3.

Social Security & You: Dec. 14, 10 a.m. to noon, Lackland Military & Family Readiness Center, 2160 Kenly Ave. Bldg. 1249. Learn about the changes to Social Security benefits and how it can affect your retirement. This workshop is facilitated by a retired Social Security Administration caseworker. To reserve a seat, contact 210-671-3722/3723.

Los Angeles Air Force Base, California

Sports Day: Oct. 4, Fort Mac Arthur-San Pedro, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come out and see the Space and Missile Systems Center team compete in various sporting events and cheer them on!

Octoberfest: Oct. 21, Fort Mac Arthur-San Pedro, California, Community Center, 3 to 7 p.m. Come be a part of a festive event with a live band, German foods, adult beverages, games, vendors and more! The cost of the event is \$10 for people 13 years and older; \$5 for 5 to 12; and \$7 for club members. Food and entertainment is free, adult beverages are a reasonable cost. Contact the Community Center for more information at 310-653-8225.

Scott Air Force Base, Illinois

Widow Support Group: Scott AFB Widow Support Group meets at the Airman & Family Readiness Center once a month on the 4th Thursday of the month, 12:30 to 2 p.m. This network of survivors is an informal group that understands grief as they have lost loved ones and received the folded flag. The group shares resources, experiences, and advocates for widows/widowers. For more information, contact Jessica Barattini at 618-256-8668.

U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado

Breakfast with Santa: Dec. 17, USAFA Falcon Club. For more information, contact Fight Chief Mary Willis of the Airman & Family Services at 719-333-7781 or via email at mary.willis@us.af.mil.

Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma

Career Fair: Oct. 24, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Altus AFB Freedom Community Center. Call 580-481-6761 for more information.

Air Force Families Forever



RESOURCE Spotlight – Winter Recipes



CREAM CHEESE PENGUINS

Ingredients for 18 servings

- 18 jumbo black olives, pitted
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 18 small black olives
- 1 carrot

Directions

Cut a slit from top to bottom, lengthwise, into the side of each jumbo olive.

Carefully insert about 1 teaspoon of cream cheese into each olive.

Slice the carrot into eighteen 1/4 inch thick rounds; cut a small notch out of each carrot slice to form feet. Save the cut out piece and press into center of small olive to form the beak. If necessary, cut a small slit into each olive before inserting the beak.

Set a big olive, large hole side down, onto a carrot slice. Then, set a small olive onto the large olive, adjusting so that the beak, cream cheese chest and notch in the carrot slice line up. Secure with a toothpick.



CREAMY TOMATO SOUP

Ingredients for 6-8 servings

- 2 cans (28 ounces each) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano or 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 to 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/3 cup sour cream

Directions

In a blender, process tomatoes, one can at a time, until smooth. Transfer to a large saucepan. Stir in the broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the oregano and sugar.

Add a small amount of hot tomato mixture to whipping cream; return all to the saucepan. Cook until slightly thickened (do not boil).

Cut a small hole in the corner of a pastry or plastic bag; fill with sour cream. Pipe a snowflake on each bowl of soup.