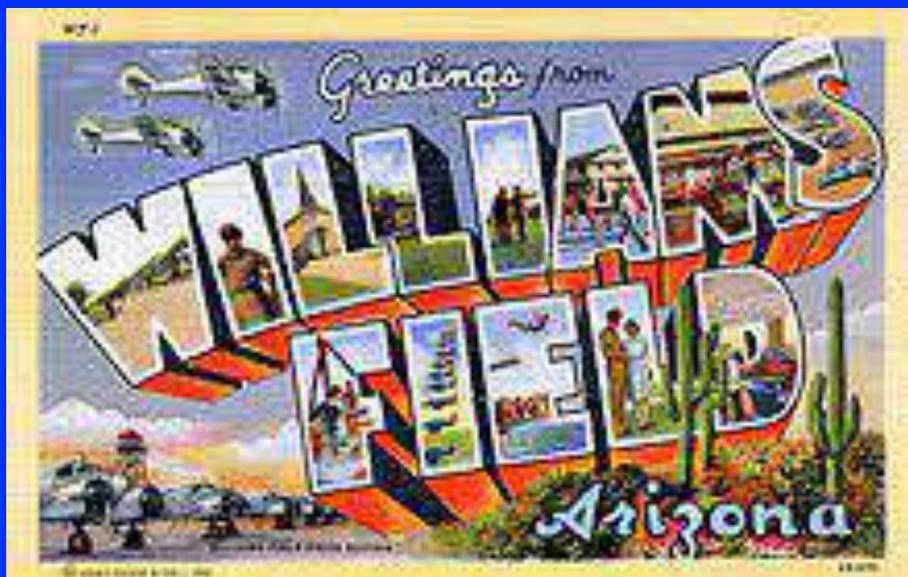


Willie Flight 832



Willie was initially named **Mesa Military Airport**. the name was changed October 1941 to **Higley Field**, the base being in the proximity of the town of Higley, Arizona. In February 1942, the growing military airfield's name was changed to **Williams Field** in honor of Arizona native 1st Lt Charles Linton Williams (1898–1927). Lieutenant Williams died on 6 July 1927 when his Boeing PW-9A pursuit aircraft crashed near Fort DeRussy, Hawaii. Williams Field was re-designated **Williams Air Force Base** on 13 January 1948. The Base was closed in 1993 and officially reopened as Williams Gateway Airport in March 1994. In 2007, the name of the Airport was changed to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.



WILLIE FLIGHT 82
Order of Daedalians
 P.O. Box 11261, Chandler, AZ 85248
<http://www.willieflight.net>



April 2023



FLIGHT CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Greetings from on the road. I am flying the Cessna X for initial operating experience (IOE) for Wheels Up, a FAA part 135 Charter operator.

Each day is an adventure with last minute trip assignments and a dynamic communication software. Nothing like the Ops Orders that are passed down in the SPINs from a CAOC. Adapt and stay flexible.

Challenging is the in service status on a 30 year old aircraft, running at the rate the KC-135E was having when the Copper Heads converted to the KC-135R in 2005-6.

The F-22 is already getting phased out with the retirement planned next year of the first group produced, along with other "legacy" machines. The DoD has to prioritize the budget, and is shedding the systems we used in the war on terror.

Recruiting goals were met by ONLY the Marines and the Space Force, a sign of the civilian attitude towards their own freedom. Continuous war, negative publicity and the allied response to the Russian invasion of Crimea, Georgia and Ukraine still shows it is only the United States that can lead.

Information is power. Software is a tool to provide that information. We have China as our "peer competitor" now. Will we be able to accept the challenge from a Communist country? God help us!

Cruising at FL 450,
Sig Nelson

Still flying!

NEXT MEETING:

It will be on Saturday, 8 April at The Doubletree by Hilton Phoenix Mesa. The address is 1011 West Holmes Ave. Mesa, AZ 85210.

Speaker Topic: "Shot Down"

Time: 1100 Social Hour, 1200 Lunch

Meeting Dress: Dressy Casual

Price: \$35 per person.

Note: Scholarship Raffle tickets are 6 for \$5.

Reservations: To make a reservation, please contact your Element Leader (page 6), by Friday, 31 March. For questions, please call Tom Waldron (480-883-0853 or 602-743-3661).

Cancellations: If you have made reservations and you cannot attend, please contact Tom Waldron (480-883-0853 or 602-743-3661) as soon as possible, so he can notify the restaurant. Cancellations made after the Sunday before the meeting will incur a \$35 charge.

Need a ride? Art Stark for help; 480-277-4700.

2023 Meeting Calendar	
8 Apr	General Meeting
13 May	General Meeting
9 Sep	General Meeting
14 Oct	General Meeting
11 Nov	General Meeting
9 Dec	General Meeting

Officers & Staff:

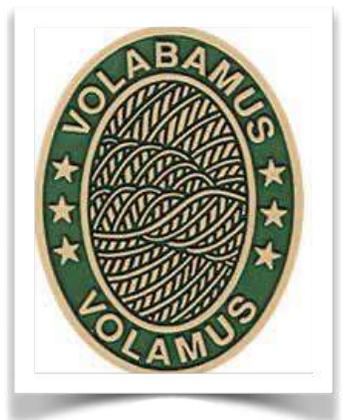
Elected Officers:

- Flight Captain: Sig Nelson, 602-793-4367
- Vice Flight Captain: TBD **HELP!**
- Treasurer: Gary Schooler, 480-208-6615
- Scholarships Chairman: Jay Norton, 480-897-0379
- Provost Marshal: Rick Drown, 480-857-1757

Appointed Staff:

- Flight Adjutant: TBD **HELP!**
- Elements Co./Chaplain: Tom Waldron, 602-743-3661
- A-V Support: Art Stark, 480-288-9301
- Webmaster: Kurt Gearhart, 480-329-1936
- Biographies: Gary Klein, 480-650-5522
- Asst Scholar./Awards: Gary Zettl, 480-415-6854
- Newsletter Editor: Bill Follette, 602-619-5445

March Meeting







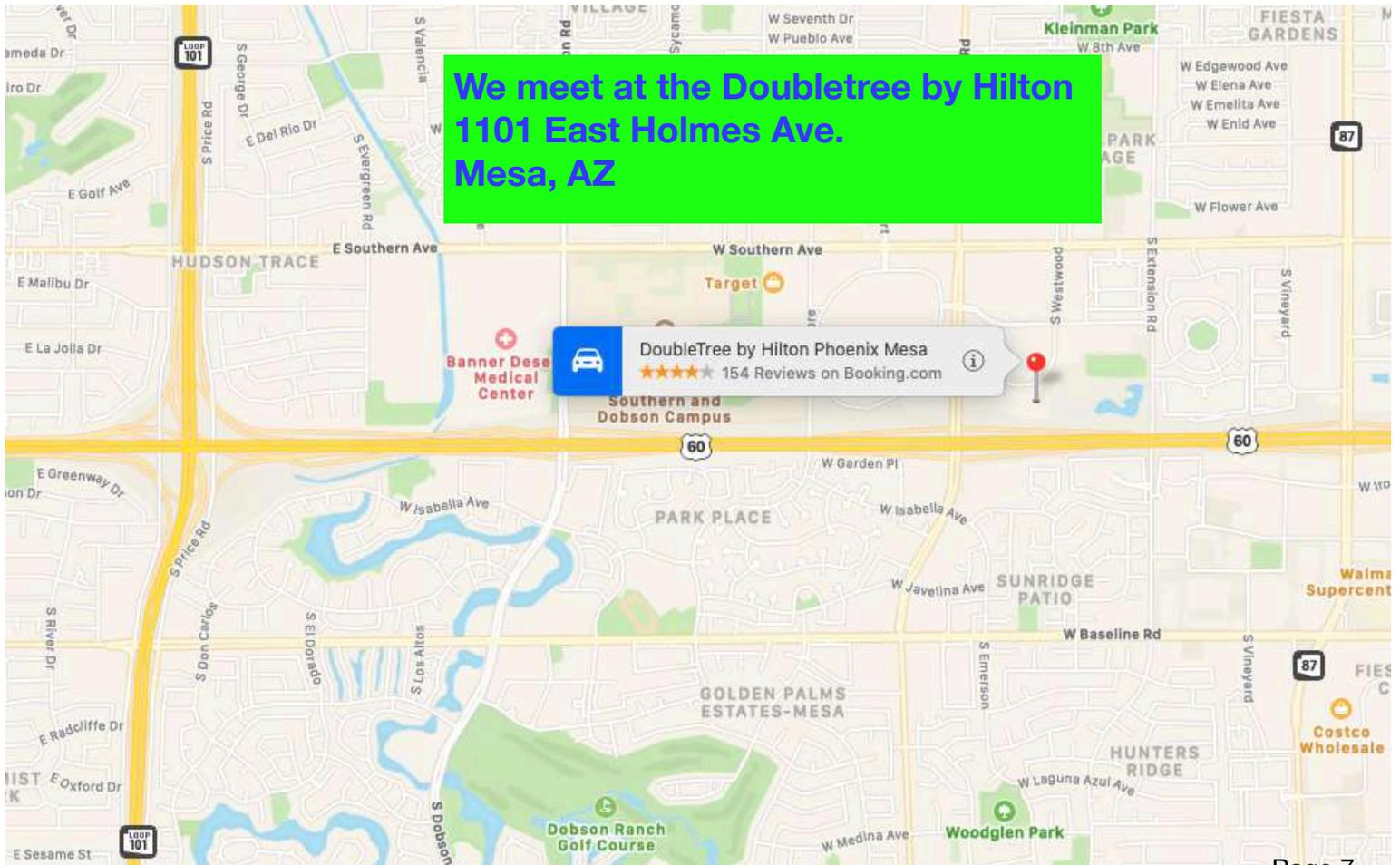


Attention All : Your element Leader may have changed; be sure to check it out!!!!

Flight 82 Dinner Reservation Procedures:

When you get this newsletter, please contact your Element Leader (shown below) to make a reservation by the Saturday prior to the meeting. If that does not work, please contact Tom Waldron (480-883-0853 or 602-743-3661).

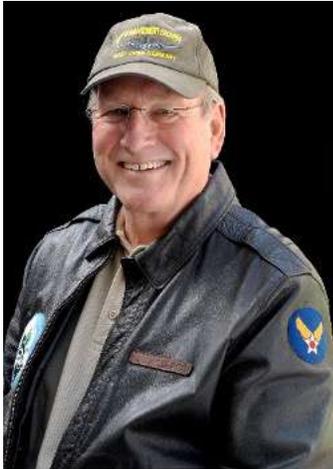
MEMBERS	ELEMENT LEADER	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
ALLEN TO BURKE	SIG NELSON	sig.nelson@cox.net	602-793-4367
BUSHKO TO FOLLETTE	ART STARK	artstark6160@gmail.com	480-277-4700
FRANKLIN TO JOHNSON	GARY ZETTL	gzettel@msn.com	623-680-2603
JONAS TO OLDROYD	BILL FOLLETTE	bill@strategicquality.com	602-619-5445
OLNEY TO STARK	TOM WALDRON	mojack7@msn.com	480-883-0853 or 602-743-3661
SULLIVAN TO ZETTL	RON PERKINS	rbperkins@cox.net	602-295-3880



Our April Speaker

Steve Snyder

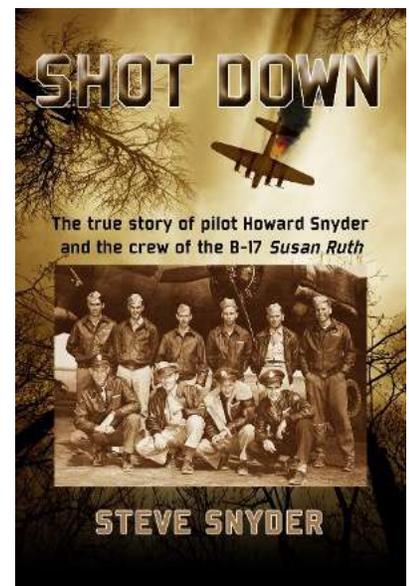
“Shot Down”



A graduate of UCLA, Steve Snyder lives in Seal Beach, California. In 2009, he retired from Vision Service Plan (VSP) after a 36 year career working in sales and sales management. He then began his quest to learn more about the World War II experiences of his father, pilot Howard Snyder, and the crew of the B-17 Susan Ruth. It became his passion, and after 4 ½ years of dedicated research, resulted in his book, SHOT DOWN, which has received 25 book awards. Steve is on the board of directors and past president of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association and on the board of directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. He keeps very busy making PowerPoint presentations to all types of organizations and attending air shows around the country signing copies of his book.

Set within the framework of World War II, *SHOT DOWN* is about the individual experiences of each member of a B-17 crew after their plane (piloted by my father) was knocked out of the sky by German fighters over the French/Belgian border and about the courageous Belgian patriots who risked their lives to help them. <http://bit.ly/ShotDownBook>

After my father bailed out, he was missing in action for seven months but evaded being captured by the Germans. He was hidden for several months by several members of the Belgian Underground. After a while, he got tired of hiding and joined the French Resistance to fight against the Nazis sabotaging German convoys. Finally, he met up with U.S. forces which had come up through France after D-Day and made it back to England.



If you have not yet paid your Flight 82 dues (\$25), please do so soon, at the luncheon meeting or use the form below and mail it in.

NOTE: National dues are collected separately -- if you are not a life member, Daedalians' HQ will bill you directly.)



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FLIGHT 82 DUES FOR 2023: If you need to pay your local dues, please pay it at the next meeting or print out and complete the form below, clip at dotted line, and send to:

*Willie Flight 82
P.O. Box 11261
Chandler, Arizona 85248*

Enclose a check for Flight dues (\$25) and add any scholarship donations you would like to make. Please make your check out to "Willie Flight 82"

NAME: _____

(First) (Last)

RANK: _____ SERVICE: _____ ACTIVE _____ RETIRED _____ or OTHER _____

SPOUSE'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-Mail: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: Annual Flight Dues (\$25): _____

Scholarship Donation: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Reminder:

Local Flight 82 dues are now \$25/yr

Luncheon Meetings are now \$35



DID YOU KNOW.....



**BEER AND WINE IS AVAILABLE
AT THE HOTEL FRONT DESK
DURING OUR LUNCHEONS**

When is a raffle really not a raffle??

**Reminder: Our raffle is really a method to
collect donations for our annual ROTC
scholarship fund.**

“Normal Donations” are always welcome too!!

Cash, Check, Memorials, etc.

**No size restrictions! A few years ago a member
gave us a \$10,000 donation!!**



!!SPEAKERS!!

“CALLING ALL SPEAKERS”

Do you have a presentation pent up inside you??

Do you have an interesting “I was There” tale of your aviation experiences?

Do you know of someone that does and might want to share it with our Flight?

Have you heard an interesting military aviation presentation at another organization you belong to?

We need YOUR help in generating speakers/ presentations for our future meetings?

VA Hotlinks



VA Disability & VA Pension: What's the Difference?

Learn the difference between VA Disability and VA Pensions in this episode of theSITREP.

[WATCH](#)

'Reflecting Back' – Military Memories Competition. Your Chance to Win \$250!

[Who or what influenced your decision to join the military? Which branch did you select and what do you remember most about joining up?](#)



How CaringBridge Helped My Family – and Me – After I Almost Died

CaringBridge provides free, secure and personal websites — as a dedicated platform — to assist family and friends in communicating with loved ones during any type of health journey. Read the story about how one Soldier benefits from this free resource on his difficult health journey.

[READ MORE](#)



Report and Prevent VA Benefit Scams

Scammers are targeting Veterans and their VA benefits through misleading commercials, emails, texts, cold calls, or online ads. Some may even pose as someone from VA or an organization providing discounts on fees for services. But VA **never** charges you for processing a claim. Keep your benefits safe from fraudsters by knowing what to look out for and reporting fraudulent activity to vaoighotline@va.gov or call **1-800-488-8244**.



Find Free Support from VA-Accredited Reps

If you would like help understanding or applying for VA benefits you may be entitled to, a [VA-accredited representative can help free of charge](#). These representatives include Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), attorneys, and claims agents who have undergone a formal application and training process recognized by VA. [Find an accredited representative near you.](#)

Pension Payments for Eligible Survivors

VA's [Survivors Pension](#) program offers monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress. If you're a surviving spouse or child of a deceased wartime Veteran, [find out if you're eligible and how to apply.](#)



Increased Disability for Time in a Hospital

Have you spent time in a VA medical center or a VA-approved hospital for a disability related to your military service? If so, you may be eligible to get added disability compensation or benefits with a temporary 100% disability rating for the time spent in the hospital. [Find out if you qualify and how to file a special claim.](#)

FAST Way to Process Fiduciary Claims

[Fiduciaries](#) protect Veterans and other beneficiaries who, due to injury, disease, or age, are unable to manage their financial affairs. With VA's online Fiduciary Accounting Submission Tool (FAST), the accounting submission process for fiduciaries is easier than ever. [Learn how to access and navigate FAST.](#)



Access New Toxic Exposure Health Care and Benefits



The PACT Act expanded benefits for millions of Veterans. Download the Accessing Toxic Exposure Benefits guide and learn more about what you're eligible for.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[VA releases dashboard to measure the PACT Act's impact on Veterans and survivors. See the performance dashboard.](#)

VetServe 2023: Mark Your Calendar, National Day of Service is April 21

Whether you choose to plant a tree, package boxes at a local food bank or offer to serve with a nonprofit, what matters most is that you go out and engage. VetServe is a celebration of service and a call-to-action to join the national day of volunteerism on April 21.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Commemorating the 20-year Anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom

March 20, 2023, marks the 20-year anniversary of the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). VA health care and other benefits are accessible to eligible OIF Veterans, especially if you were exposed to burn pits.

[LEARN MORE](#)



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

EVIDENCE INTAKE CENTER
PO BOX 4444
JANESVILLE WI 53547-4444

February 27, 2023

JAMES A EDDINGS
5612 COMETA PL NE
ALBUQUERQUE NM 87110

In Reply, Refer To: 347 32 7283

You May Qualify for Disability Benefits

To Whom It May Concern,

Due to a recent legislative change, you may be eligible for additional VA benefits.

What is Happening

On August 10, 2022, President Biden signed the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, also known as the PACT Act, into law. This law increases eligibility to benefits by expanding lists of locations, timeframes, and presumptive conditions related to herbicide exposure.

If you have already filed a disability compensation claim based on the PACT Act, please disregard this letter.

How This May Affect You

If you were previously denied for disability compensation benefits, you may now be eligible and are encouraged to apply if you performed covered service in the following locations during the specified timeframes:

- Thailand at any United States or Royal Thai base during the period beginning January 9, 1962, and ending June 30, 1976, regardless of where on the base you were located or what military job specialty you performed.
- Laos during the period beginning December 1, 1965, and ending September 30, 1969.
- Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province, during the period beginning April 16, 1969, and ending April 30, 1969.
- Guam or American Samoa, or in the territorial waters thereof, during the period beginning January 9, 1962, and ending July 31, 1980.
- Johnston Atoll, or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll, during the period beginning January 1, 1972, and ending September 30, 1977.

Additionally, two new presumptive conditions associated with herbicide exposure have been added:

- Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)
- Hypertension (also known as high blood pressure)

What We Need from You

- If you *have not* previously submitted a disability compensation claim for your herbicide exposure-related disability and would like to do so, please submit **VA Form 21-526EZ**, *Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits*.
- If you *have* previously submitted a claim for disability compensation for your herbicide exposure-related disability, but were not found eligible, please submit **VA Form 20-0995**, *Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim*.
- If you wish, you may submit additional evidence, such as medical records or a biopsy report, with your application. For more information on herbicide exposure, please see VA's page on herbicide exposure at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/. Also, VA can assist you in gathering new and relevant evidence to support your claim.
- You may have your provider complete a Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) based on your current condition. For more information and for access to the DBQs, see https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/dbq_publicdbqs.asp.

Where to Send Your Correspondence

Documents may be submitted by mail, in person at a VA regional office or electronically. However, VA recommends submitting correspondence electronically as this is the fastest method of receipt.

VA provides several tools to assist in electronic submission. To learn more about how to submit documents and claims electronically, visit www.va.gov/disability/upload-supporting-evidence. You can also go directly to <https://euth.va.gov/accessva/?cspSelectFor=quicksubmit> to digitally upload any correspondence using QuickSubmit.

By visiting www.va.gov you can also check your claim status and learn about other VA benefits.

If you prefer to mail your correspondence, please use the mailing address below:

Compensation Benefits
Department of Veterans Affairs Compensation Intake Center P.O. Box 4444 Janesville, WI 53547 Toll Free Fax: (844) 531-7818

This address serves **all United States and foreign locations**.

Aviation News



Perennial pilot shortage puts Air Force in precarious position

By: Rachel S. Cohen, Military Times

The Air Force's pilot corps is shrinking.

The service was 1,907 pilots short of its 21,000-person goal for manned aircraft as of October, according to the latest data provided to Air Force Times. That's nearly 260 more open pilot slots than it had at the end of 2021.

A web of factors that include commercial airline hiring, military flight instructor shortages, changes in the U.S. war footing abroad, and the Air Force's shrinking fleet has entangled the service into a long-running pilot shortfall that makes the service more vulnerable in a potential crisis. It has also snagged the Air Force's policy shops that rely on a deep bench of expert pilots to shape the future

Navy astronaut leads NASA's next space mission

By: Jonathan Lehrfeld, Navy Times

The next set of astronauts bound for the International Space Station — led by the first ever Navy submarine officer selected as an astronaut — launched early Thursday morning on NASA's SpaceX Crew-6 mission.

Liftoff occurred at 12:34 a.m. Eastern time from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, according to a release from the space agency. This was the second attempt to get the mission off the ground after a planned launch on Monday was scrubbed just before liftoff.



Ukrainian pilots undergo skills assessment in the U.S. for F-16 training

By: Alert 5

Two Ukrainian pilots are undergoing skills assessment on simulators at a U.S. military base in Tucson, Arizona to determine how long it could take to train them to fly attack aircraft, including F-16 fighter jets, according to two congressional officials and a senior U.S. official. The U.S. has approved bringing up to 10 more Ukrainian pilots to the U.S. for further assessment as early as this month, NBC News reports.



Preparing for Russia: Inside NATO fighter pilot training in Texas

By: Rachel S. Cohen, Military Times
SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — More than 5,000 miles from NATO's eastern flank, a new generation of allied fighter pilots is coming of age in North Texas.

After decades of peace at home, American and European airmen here face a new reality: They are the frontline flyers who will keep Russia's war in Ukraine from spilling across NATO's borders, and the instructors who will teach the new pilots how to do it.



The Pentagon's Mysterious New Aircraft Doesn't Need a Runway

By Sascha Brodsky, Popular Mechanics

The U.S. government wants to help special operations forces by building a new type of high-speed aircraft that doesn't need a runway.

The Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) announced on Wednesday that it's working with the Special Operations Command on the Speed and Runway Independent Technologies, or SPRINT, program. The project could meet a growing demand for aircraft that can land on unprepared surfaces.



U.S. Air Force Reveals New B-21 Design Details

By Steve Trimble, Aviation Week
A newly released Northrop Grumman B-21 picture offers the first clear view of both of the bomber's unique air inlets.

The image, which the U.S. Air Force published March 7, reveals for the first time that the inlets are shaped like sideways teardrops.

US Air Force wants to retire all A-10s by 2029

By Stephen Losey, Air Force Times
AURORA, Colorado — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown said Tuesday the Air Force would likely retire all its A-10 Warthogs over the next five or six years.

Until recently, the Air Force and Congress have disagreed over what to do with the famed and rugged attack airplane. While the A-10 was known and beloved for its close air support role in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last two decades, the Air Force says the low-and-slow-flying plane would not be able to survive in a fight against a nation with modern air defenses, like China.



Inside Indo-Pacific Command's \$87 billion wish list to deter China

By Joe Gould, Military Times
WASHINGTON — U.S. Indo-Pacific Command has outlined new spending requirements to boost deterrence against China, including billions of dollars in new weapons, new construction and closer military-to-military collaboration with America's allies in the region. The command's congressionally-ordered assessment delivered Wednesday calls for more than \$87 billion in spending between 2024 and 2028; with \$15.4 billion for fiscal year 2024 alone. That represents a significant jump from last year's \$9 billion request for FY23 and five-year projected spend of \$77 billion.



Member Memory Pictures

Steve Mefford

A shot from back
in 1969-1970



**What Did You Fly?
Got any Pictures? Hero
Pictures?**

Kurt Gearhart, fellow Willie Flight member and Master Webmaster, has been diligently working to vastly improve our web site. He has asked for photos of our members with the airplanes they flew. We would like you to send photos to both him at kurtgearhart@mac.com and Bill Follette, Newsletter Editor, at bill@strategicquality.com

Art Stark

F-4 Phantom II,
Killer Fighter Jet

Bill Follette

Special Ops
CH-3E

