

The Houston Home Journal

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For here or to go?

Houston County School District offers free meals to children all summer long

By **OWEN JONES**
HHJ Staff Writer
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HOUSTON COUNTY — Houston County has over 44,000 children, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. That's a lot of mouths to feed and the school district wants to ease the burden on guardians.

The Houston County School District is continuing its tradition of offering free meals throughout the summer to those under 18 as part of its Summer Feeding Program, running from May 26 through July 24.

The District offers mobile van routes that go through various neighborhoods around the county offering meals to the children. The routes include one in Perry, three routes in Warner

Robins (Central, North and East), one Bonaire route, one Centerville route, and one Northside High route.

The van will go through Kings Chapel Road, Moody Road, Tabor Drive, Feagin Mill Road, South Houston Lake Road, Carl Vinson Parkway, Green Street, Elberta Road and several others.

Meals will be served daily at Northside and Perry High School from 8 a.m. to noon.

The District will be closed on each Friday in June, as well as Friday, July 3. Meals will not be served on those days.

Dietitian Lauren Koff said the daily meal sites at Northside and Perry High Schools serve hot meals such as chicken sandwiches, hamburgers, hot dogs,

and corn dogs, among others. In addition, each meal will come with fruit, vegetables and milk. Children are required to be present at the sites and are asked to eat the meals on location.

Multiple-day meal packs start every Thursday at 9 a.m. from May 28 through July 23. These packs will be at Bonaire Middle School, Langston Road Primary and Northside Elementary. Unlike the first two options, parents can pick up the packs on behalf of their children.

Koff said these meals have the same items as the daily meals but are frozen so that families can store the packs at home. Koff said this is their third year offering meal packs.

See **MEALS** page 2A



Courtesy: Houston County School District

The mobile van makes a stop at Creekwood Park in Perry during a previous summer feeding program.

Warner Robins about to 'take flight' with cinnamon rolls, cocktails



Courtesy: City of Warner Robins

Guests are invited to try unique flights of drinks, desserts and savory bites during the Take Flight tour from the City of Warner Robins. Pictured is Between Friends Coffee's cinnamon roll flight.

By **SANDRA HERNANDEZ**
HHJ Staff Writer
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WARNER ROBINS — Ready for your tastebuds to take flight? Starting on June 5, local businesses will be offering multiple items for only \$10, part of the city of Warner Robins' Take Flight Tour.

Participating restaurants are selling their most delicious creations in a flight. The flights will come in a three or four-set bundle, ranging from drinks to desserts and everything in between.

Restaurants will offer different items, like a cocktail flight at Tap and Pour. A cinnamon roll flight at Between Friends Coffee will have different flavors like cookie butter and orange cream.

Kate Hogan, the city's community and economic development director, said

there are more creative options, too. The Butcher Shop will offer sliders. Thai Pepper and Kin.D 96 Thai and Sushi will sell Asian cuisine.

Even more unique, Gigi's Comfort Food will be offering a flight of four egg rolls.

The tour is a culinary opportunity to boost visits for small businesses and introduce customers to local cuisine, Hogan said.

She said the beginning of the summer is typically slower for local businesses since people are out of town vacationing. The economic department aimed to find a way to support small businesses during the slowdown.

Hogan said this event is an ultimate celebration of the city's culture of encouraging local talent.

"We also thought it was a great opportunity to play off of the city's new tagline,

'Take Flight'... Aiming to support those small businesses, but really trying to hone into our new brand," she said.

Mayor LaRhonda Patrick believes this will be a unique and exciting event. The tour is part of a series celebrating America's 250th birthday.

"We're really excited about blending Take Flight tour into the America 250 events," Patrick said.

Patrick believes 2026 is the best year to further reveal the city's new branding. In July of last year, the city unveiled its new logo reflecting its military heritage.

"[It is] introducing our new brand in a fun, tasty way," she said.

This is similar to another city event called Burger Week, which took place in September of last year.

See **FLIGHT** page 3A



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PERIODICAL

Coming up in 'This is Robins': Laser Eye Protection is Key



U.S. Air Force photo by Lauren Boggs

Three devices of the six Block 3 family of Aircrew Laser Eye Protection products sit at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Jan. 21, 2026. Find out what these devices mean for pilot safety in the Air Force in this month's edition of This is Robins...

Habitat for Humanity will soon open summer applications to own a home in Houston County

By **OWEN JONES**
HHJ Staff Writer
owen@hhjonline.com

WARNER ROBINS — Owning a home can be difficult these days. According to Zillow, the average price for a home in Warner Robins is \$212,565, a 3.4% increase over the past year.

However, through the Houston County Habitat for Humanity's affordable homeownership program, families can live that dream of owning a home.

Their latest community build under construction is located on Tiffany Lane in Warner Robins. The homes are projected to be ready by July.

Since they originated in 1991, the non-profit has built 75 homes in the county.

Every year, Houston County Habitat for Humanity opens its affordable homeownership program to any



Owen Jones/HHJ

The latest Houston County Habitat for Humanity home build is located on Tiffany Lane in Warner Robins.

resident who lives or works in the county, has a stable income, and enough money to cover a mortgage payment.

For example, a family of four would have to have a minimum income of \$28,805 yearly and a maximum of \$57,610. The application process will open later this summer.

Chiquella Taylor and her

family applied for the program last May. They were approved the following month and are moving to Tiffany Lane.

"I think this program is amazing," Taylor said. "I've been telling everybody that would listen about it because right now, even at a middle

See **HOME** page 3A

Word of the Day

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. — John 14:27 (NKJV)

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A division of The Georgia Trust for Local News

CAPITOL UPDATES

Georgia voters to get final look at runoff candidates in Sunday and Monday debates

By **TYTAGAMI**
Bureau Chief
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Voters recovering from the long list of candidates that greeted them on their primary election ballots last week will have to return to the polls soon for runoff elections.

The Atlanta Press Club will help voters make informed choices with a final round of livestreamed debates Sunday and Monday.

It is the latest installment in a two-decade tradition that "provides the most comprehensive, timely and widely viewed series of political debates during every election year in Georgia," according to the press club, which has been hosting the forums with Georgia Public Broadcasting.

Their forums in late April featured crowded fields, with each candidate receiving minimal airtime. Now,

with some primary races decided and others whittled to two candidates from each party, each office seeker who accepts an invitation to debate will get more time.

Sunday's schedule features the remaining two Republicans vying for U.S. Senate and hoping to contest incumbent Democratic Sen. Jon Ossoff in the November general election, along with the two Republican candidates for Public Service Commission District 5 to succeed Tricia Pridemore, a Republican who did not seek reelection.

Also on Sunday, the press club will host forums for the two surviving candidates from each party running for lieutenant governor and secretary of state.

Monday's schedule features the governor's race. Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and billionaire Rick Jackson were the top vote-getters in last week's GOP gubernatorial

primary.

The winner of their June 16 runoff will run against former Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, a Democrat. She won her primary outright last week.

Also on Monday are two Republicans for state school superintendent, one of them incumbent Richard Woods, and the final two GOP candidates for the 11th Congressional District in north metro Atlanta, where incumbent Rep. Barry Loudermilk, a Republican, is retiring.

On the Democratic side Monday are debates for candidates seeking their party's nominations for labor commissioner and insurance commissioner; the winners will face the Republican incumbents in November. Also on the schedule is a debate for the remaining two Democratic candidates for the 1st Congressional District, a coastal post held

by Rep. Buddy Carter, a Republican who lost his bid for U.S. Senate last week.

The forum lineup also includes the Fulton County Commission chair race, in which Democratic incumbent Robb Pitts was invited to debate his remaining Democratic challenger, Mo Ivory.

No runoff was required for attorney general, agriculture commissioner, Public Service Commission District 3 or for the congressional races in the 10th, 13th and 14th districts.

Debate times and streaming information are available on the Atlanta Press Club website: <https://atlantapressclub.org/debates/>.

This article is available through a partnership with Capitol Beat News Service, a project of the Georgia Press Association's nonprofit, tax-exempt Educational Foundation.

Liberty Tree Marker Dedication Ceremony to be held at Houston County Courthouse



Courtesy: John Trussell

The Liberty Tree Marker has been installed and will be dedicated on June 2 at 10:30 a.m. The Liberty tree is a 20-year-old oak.

Special to The Journal

PERRY — Residents of Middle Georgia are invited to attend a special Liberty Tree Marker Dedication Ceremony on the grounds of the Houston County Courthouse, located at 201 Perry Parkway, Perry, Georgia, on June 2, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. and following the Houston County Board of Commissioners meeting.

Local chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) will come together to dedicate a Liberty Tree and formally unveil a commemorative Liberty Tree Marker. The ceremony honors the enduring legacy of the original Liberty Trees, which served as import-

ant gathering places for American patriots during the Revolutionary era. As part of the program, attendees will experience a traditional SAR musket salute and a ceremonial cannon firing, adding a dramatic and historically significant element to the event.

This ceremony is being held in recognition of the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America. Community members of all ages are encouraged to attend and take part in this meaningful tribute to the nation's history and heritage.

For more information about the event, please contact John Trussell, Publicity Chair for the Georgia SAR, at 478-957-7411.

MEALS

From page 1A

She said each year, the Summer Feeding Program is a huge undertaking, but for a good cause.

"Last year we served close to half a million meals over the course of June and July, so it's a big deal," she said. "We are more than capable and more than happy to do so."

With grocery prices still on the rise, Koff believes the summer feeding program can be relied on now and in the future.

"I think the families really appreciate the variety that we are able to include in the [meal packs] and it definitely lowers their grocery bill," she said.

Given that the program serves any child in the county, some may have

dietary restrictions. Koff said those who may have concerns about what food is offered can reach out to the school district by calling (478) 988-6200.

"They just have to let us know what their needs are, and we can let them know what ingredients are in the food. We just address it one by one," she said.

The Summer Feeding Program is one of several

options for feeding children over the summer.

According to the USDA, several churches and organizations are offering meals, including The Boys and Girls Club of Central Georgia, Starbase Robins, Life Point Church, and Centerville Community Church.

Find a site near you at fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sitefinder

To stay up to date with the Summer Feeding program, go to the Houston County School Nutrition Facebook page: facebook.com/HCSNutrition/

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CALL TO BOOK TODAY!

8th Annual HALO Group 5K

Saturday | June 6, 2026 | 8:00 AM

Georgia National Fairgrounds
(South Gate - Starbuck Learning Garden)

Join us in supporting The HALO Group, a 501(c-3) nonprofit serving adults with disabilities through vocational and life skills programs. Proceeds provide scholarships for those in need

Enjoy a fun-filled morning with concessions, inflatables, field games, and more!
Register: Scan the QR code or visit HaloGroupGA.org (Events tab) \$25 Race Fee + \$2.50 Registration Fee
There will be a \$100 prize for the top Male and Female winners and the top Male and Female Masters.

Thank you to our event sponsors!

CALENDAR

Spencer's Grand Opening

May 30 | 1 - 5 p.m.
2620 Watson Blvd Suite 10,
Warner Robins

Spencer's upcoming Grand Opening event will take place on Saturday, May 30th at City Crossing. The first 100 guests will receive \$10 gift cards, along with sweet treats, freebies, giveaways, games and more.

Why is this such a big deal? We are venturing into new territory and making our way to Warner Robins, where the vibes are just as legendary as our edgy style.

Spencer's is the ultimate destination to find the latest edgy, outrageous, and unique accessories and apparel. For 75 years, the brand has celebrated individuality by embracing and creating current trends through t-shirts, accessories, jewelry, drinkware, sexual wellness, and more.

Founded in 1947 as a mail-order catalog in Pennsylvania,

the company opened its first brick-and-mortar store in 1963 and has since grown to 680 retail locations, in addition to a lucrative online presence.

We can't wait to welcome you to this incredible new space.

America 250th Anniversary Celebration

June 9 | 10 a.m.
1942 Heritage Boulevard,
Robins AFB

The Greenbriar Garden Club of Warner Robins cordially invites you to join us in celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States of America at the Museum of Aviation.

NARFE Chapter Meeting

June 10 | 11 a.m.
155 Maple Street, Warner Robins

Join The National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE). All active and retired federal employees from RAFB or any federal agency are invited for a \$5 sub sandwich lunch and a brief business meeting followed by a free presentation.

You are welcome to come, bring a friend and enjoy your lunch with NARFE members and visitors.

NARFE is the only national organization dedicated to protecting earned benefits of active and retired federal employees. As a member of NARFE, you can connect with other feds, participate in NARFE webinars, learn about legislative advocacy and gain information from our federal benefits experts. Have a great day and join us for the excellent presentation on What's Going On In Town by Warner Robins Mayor LaRhonda Patrick.

OBITUARIES

Patricia T. "Pat" Croft

WARNER ROBINS — Patricia T. "Pat" Croft, 81, of Warner Robins, Georgia, passed away peacefully on Saturday, May 23, 2026, after a brief illness. Pat was born on April 26, 1945, to the late Roland J. Baggett and Eloise Taylor. Beginning at the age of four, she was lovingly raised by her maternal grandparents, Rev. William and Eugenia Gray Taylor, who later changed her last name to Taylor. Their home and guidance shaped the foundation of her faith, character, and devotion to family.

In May of 1961, Pat met the love of her life, Colin Croft, and the two were married on July 9, 1963. Their life together was an enduring partnership of 62 years—rooted in love, faith, and unwavering commitment. Shortly after marrying, they moved to Abilene, Texas, where Colin was stationed with the United States Air Force. There, on January 19, 1965, they welcomed their first daughter, Cynthia (Cyndi) Denise.

Following Colin's discharge, the family relocated to the Atlanta, Georgia, area. Pat worked as Secretary to the Personnel Manager at Sears, while Colin began his career with AT&T. Their family grew again on October 5, 1972, with the birth of their second daughter, Candice (Candi) Rebecca.

As Colin advanced in his career, the family lived in several states—Paintsville, Kentucky; Birmingham, Alabama; Randolph, New



Jersey; and Charlotte, North Carolina—before Colin's retirement in 1997. They then settled in Warner Robins, Georgia, where they built their final and most cherished home together.

Wherever life took them, Pat faithfully taught Kindergarten and First Grade Sunday School, touching countless young lives with her gentle spirit and patient heart. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a steadfast Christian whose faith guided every chapter of her life.

Pat was also an exceptionally talented seamstress. She poured her love into every stitch—creating Cyndi's wedding gown, three prom dresses for Candi, and many other treasured garments for her daughters. Her creativity extended beyond sewing; she found joy in playing the piano, reading, drawing, painting, and cooking.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents, Rev.

William and Eugenia Taylor; her father, Roland Baggett; her mother, Eloise Howell; her stepfather, I. J. Howell; two sisters, Maribeth and Annette; a brother, John Baggett; and several beloved aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Pat is survived by her devoted husband of 62 years, Colin; her daughters Cyndi Henderson (fiancé, Paul Brackett) of Tallahassee, Florida, and Candi Margraves (husband, Kevin) of Matthews, North Carolina; her granddaughter Elizabeth Henderson of Climax, Georgia; her grandson Jacob Margraves of Matthews, North Carolina; and her great-grandson Ray Rentz of Climax, Georgia. She is also survived by her sister Terrie Baggett Benedict of Quincy, Florida; sisters-in-law Ann DeCicco Lane and Rose Croft of Miami, Florida; and numerous cherished cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Visitation will be at 12:30 p.m. followed by the funeral service at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 28, at McCullough Funeral Home. A graveside service will follow at 4:30 p.m. at Sparks Cemetery in Sparks, Georgia. Rev. Tim Millwood, Director of Missions for the Rehoboth Baptist Association will officiate.

Pat's legacy is one of faith, family, creativity, and quiet strength. She will be deeply missed and forever loved.

McCullough Funeral Home and Crematory has the privilege of being entrusted with these arrangements.

FLIGHT

From page 1A

Patrick hopes the Take Flight tour will have the same effect as Burger Week, bringing new customers to the businesses and giving them exposure on social media.

"Local businesses are the heart of our community. These are people who put their life savings into a dream," she said. "We know that the more opportunities that small businesses get to reach a larger audience, the more likely they are to continue suc-

ceeding. Anything we can do to help highlight small businesses is something we will always do."

To participate in the Take Flight Tour, visit the city's website, download their app and check in at each participating restaurant.

If patrons visit 10 locations, they will be eligible for a limited-edition Warner Robins patriotic t-shirt.

Currently, 16 restaurants are signed up to participate. This includes:

- 7 Spices
- Acres and Oaks Kitchen
- Between Friends Coffee

• Decadent Coffee and Dessert Bar

- Gigi's Comfort Food
- Kin.D96 Thai and Sushi
- Little Sweeties Cakery
- PROPS
- Salsa's Mexican Grill
- Slice and Spice
- Sushi Thai
- Tap and Pour
- Thai Pepper
- The Butcher Shop
- Woodlands Coffee Roasters and Cafe
- ZAAP Thai Street Food

The Take Flight tour will span from June 5 to June 14. For more information, visit the city's website: wrga.gov/page/take-flight-tour

HOME

From page 1A

class family level, one of the biggest issues is affordability.

Community Outreach Manager for Houston County Habitat for Humanity, Billie Cook, said the homeowners purchase the home from the non-profit. The organization uses donations to buy materials to build the homes.

Then, the homeowner will purchase the home with 0% interest.

Qualifiers must also do "sweat equity," over 300 hours of volunteer work, such as helping build homes

or homeownership-related courses. Taylor took courses on homeowners' insurance, home maintenance, credit repair and budgeting.

Her work behind the scenes was her payment for a brighter future.

"This program makes it so that home ownership is affordable and that's great for me and my family," Taylor said.

Cook said the four homes on Tiffany Lane vary based on the family's preference.

Taylor's four-bedroom house will be perfect for her family of five, and she can't wait to move in.

"We're most looking forward to decorating," Taylor

said. "We've been making lists and shopping carts, and we're just ready to make it ours."

This is not her first experience with Habitat for Humanity. Taylor volunteered to maintain homes in high school.

Now, receiving a house is a full-circle moment that she is ready to pay forward.

"I want to continue this because [Habitat for Humanity] is making a difference in so many families' lives and are doing hard work," she said.

For more information about Houston County Habitat for Humanity, go to www.hoco-habitat.org/

City of Warner Robins, GA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW OF PROPOSED

FY 2027 GENERAL FUND BUDGET AND FY 2027 BUDGET HEARINGS

The City of Warner Robins will make available for public review at the City Clerk's Office, located at City Hall, 700 Watson Blvd., the Proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 General Fund Budget. This document can be viewed beginning Friday, May 15, 2026, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The Proposed FY 2027 General Fund Budget can also be viewed on the City's website, which can be found at www.wrga.gov.

Public Hearings on the Proposed FY 2027 General Fund Budget will be held on the following dates and times: **Monday, June 01, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. and Tuesday, June 09, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.** All hearings will be located in the Council Chambers, City Hall. All citizens wishing to comment on the Proposed FY 2027 General Fund Budget are invited to attend these public hearings.

City Clerk
City of Warner Robins

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We are seeking a reliable and motivated Delivery Driver to join our team. The ideal candidate will be responsible for transporting bundled newspapers to one of our other newspaper offices as well as to replenish/replace newspapers placed in racks/stores each week throughout Houston and Bibb counties. This role requires strong driving skills, attention to detail, and the ability to manage time effectively.

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 FORDHAM, LESLIE WANTED BY HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR CRIMINAL TRESPASS-PROPERTY DAMAGE.	 GLOVER, JAQUAN WANTED BY THE HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR BENCH WARRANT/RACKETEERING.	 GRAHAM, ALISHA WANTED BY HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR BURGLARY WITH INTENT TO COMMIT A THEFT (FELONY) AND THEFT BY TAKING (FELONY).	 GRAY, ARCHIE WANTED BY THE HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FAILURE TO APPEAR/SIMPLE BATTERY.
 HOWARD, TODD WANTED BY THE HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR THEFT BY TAKING-FELONY.	 JOHNSON, JAMES WANTED BY HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR BURGLARY WITH INTENT TO COMMIT A THEFT OR FELONY - SECOND DEGREE.	 MCCRARY, DIONDRE WANTED BY HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR SUPERIOR COURT - VOP - THEFT BY TAKING.	 MESERVEY, JEFFERY WANTED BY THE BIBB COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FINANCIAL TRANSACTION FRAUD (MULTIPLE ACCOUNTS) - FELONY AND CRIMINAL ATTEMPT TO COMMIT A FELONY (MULTIPLE ACCOUNTS) - FELONY.
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If You Have Information On The Whereabouts Of An Above Shown Individual, Call Our Tip Line at 478-742-2330 or 1-877-68CRIME

VIEWPOINTS

The Houston Home Journal

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Our Goal

The Houston Home Journal is published for the citizens of Houston and surrounding counties by a division of The Georgia Trust for Local News. Our goal is to produce quality, profitable, community-oriented newspapers that you, our readers, are proud of. We will reach that goal through hard work, teamwork, loyalty and a strong dedication towards printing the truth.

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Share Your Viewpoint

There are three ways to submit a Letter to the Editor: Email it to brianna@hhjonline.com, mail it to Houston Home Journal at 1210 Washington St., Perry, GA 31069, or drop it off at the same location between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number (the last two not to be printed). The newspaper reserves the right to edit or reject letters for reasons of grammar, punctuation, taste and brevity.

P.O. Box 1910
1210 Washington Street, Perry, GA 31069
478-987-1823

Editorial Policy

All columns, editorials, viewpoints, letters to the editor, cartoons, and the like are of the express opinion of the author and NOT the Houston Home Journal, its sister newspapers, or the Georgia Trust for Local News unless otherwise expressly stated.

We welcome all letters to the editor, and authors may write about any subject. However, we reserve the right to refuse to publish letters that may be offensive or break our editorial guidelines. We also reserve the right to edit letters for grammar, spelling, or style, but we will not purposely change the author's intended meaning.

Letters should be no more than 500 words and should include the author's name, address, and phone number. (Only the author's name and city of address will be published.) Unsigned letters and pen names will be rejected.

Authors must be the original creator of the letter; no one may submit a letter on behalf of another person. Writers may only submit one letter every month. If a writer is critical of a subject that you, a reader, take issue with, please write a responding letter to the editor. You may mention the other letter, but letters should focus on issues rather than writers.

To submit a letter to the editor, email brianna@hhjonline.com or send it to Houston Home Journal, 1210 Washington St., Perry, GA 31069.

Read
YOUR VIEW
in the
Houston
Home
Journal

We need more bravery challenges

Back story: Declan is my first grandson. He just graduated kindergarten from a Montessori school in Knoxville. His mother, Maryl, gave the parent address to the graduates. It's a speech I will address in future segments, but today I'm talking about one important aspect of her speech: bravery.

Maryl, speaking of the Montessori school's unique, child-focused, learning:

"And this year, they listened to my child in the most meaningful way."

"All year long, Declan has been working on something called 'Bravery Challenges.' "At the beginning of the year, he was a pretty cautious kid. He didn't like being alone—not even at home. New situations and new people made him nervous. There were tears about going to summer camp and imagining going to a new school next year."

"So we started small." "A 'bravery challenge' meant taking a small step outside his comfort zone. Doing something that felt just a little bit hard. And then celebrating it—because the goal isn't perfection, it's courage."

"We tried it at home first, and then we brought the idea to his teachers."

"And they didn't just support it, they ran with it."

"They came up with new 'bravery challenges' every single day for him. They put it on his work plans. They celebrated his effort. And every Friday, if he completed a week of bravery challenges, he got the penultimate reward for a kindergartener — a gas station slushie."

"By April, something incredible happened. They ran out of bravery challenges. He had done every single scary thing they could think of."

"Meanwhile, we saw the changes at home. He didn't get scared when I left the room. He didn't need to follow me everywhere."

He was steady, confident, and brave."

"One day this past month there was a moment I will never forget."

"We had a package we were waiting for, and when we got home, I realized I had forgotten to check the mailbox at the top of our very long, very steep driveway."

"I told Declan I would go with him, but I needed

COLUMNIST

KELLY BURKE



to go inside first." "And he looked at me, with a twinkle in his eye, and said:

"Mom, I am brave enough. I can go by myself."

"And HE DID!"

"He walked all the way up that driveway—hundreds of feet, lined with dense forest—completely on his own. No turning back. Just bravery."

"And I stood there in the driveway, crying happy tears, jaw wide open, completely in awe."

"Because in that moment, I knew his potential had been freed."

What a wonderful speech!

Realized potential and conquering fear at six years old! Learning to be brave. Lots of people grow up never learning personal bravery.

Our public school sys-

tem does not lend itself to self-development, individuality, or nonconformity. We squeeze kids into a society-compliant mold.

But parents are responsible for recognizing and instilling those things that make kids unique. Yet there is a large segment of our population who turn their children over to the schools expecting the school to raise their kids. At best, you get a conformist.

There are people with the intellect to break through on their own, for sure. So I congratulate them. But there are wonderful teachers who are not like the ruler-slapping nuns in the movies. There are teachers who look for ways to connect with every kid and help them realize their potential, all the way through the school system.

I can't begin to recognize all those teachers, obviously. But what I can do is suggest that standardized testing shouldn't be our focus. Because the world needs more Declans. Not robots who remember every continent before graduating kindergarten, but young people who are brave enough to take on the challenges of life.

Starting with walking up a long, scary, driveway.

Kelly Burke was born in Knoxville where he spent his younger years, followed by high school years in Atlanta where he graduated from Georgia Tech, and Mercer Law School. He has been in private practice, a magistrate judge, and an elected district attorney. He writes about the law, politics, music, and Ireland. He and his wife enjoy gardening, playing with their Lagotto Ramanolo named George Harrison, and spending time with their grandchildren. To see this column or Kelly's archives, visit www.kellyburke.com. You can email Kelly at dakellyburke@gmail.com.



Hunting for a snake in the grass

The first snake sighting of the year occurred on May 21. Eyewitness accounts put a rat snake somewhere along the driveway in a thick clump of grass. It was last seen headed towards the woods.

I didn't lay eyes on this slithering critter myself, but its existence was reported multiple times by both of my children, only one of which actually saw the snake is my understanding. Depending on who was telling the story, the situation became more dire.

Funny how perspective works.

The first version of the tale is this: While performing his job of keeping the sticks and pinecones picked up around the yard, my son came across the snake. They saw each other at the same time, and like most serpent encounters, they went in opposite directions.

And it's a good thing I

NEW
SOUTHERN DAD

KYLE DOMINY



talked to him first, because it was vastly different from the yarn spun by my daughter. Words can hardly describe the fear and trepidation my precious girl child expressed when the existence of a, dare I mutter the term, snake, was discovered.

Remember, she didn't actually see it. I'm not even sure she was outside, but this animal really got under her skin. There is a passage pretty early in the Scriptures about the relationship between people and snakes. You should check it out, something about enmity for the rest of time.

In her eyes her peace was destroyed, the outside world off limits to any living creature (ones we wanted to keep alive at least). If the dog wanted to go out, you might as well go ahead and dig its grave. And don't you even dare to think she was ever going to touch grass again.

So, after hearing these two tales I did what any half-way decent father would do and implored upon me by my snake-terrified child—I patrolled the property. I could have sat her down and explained that snake sightings are common in our area, that I see them every year and

as long they are going the opposite direction, which they usually are because snakes are just as scared of us as we are of them, I let them alone.

But it was not a time for rational thought. It was a time for action.

There's more than one way to kill a nuisance snake. Most folks prefer a firearm of some kind but prefer more archaic methods. I keep a garden hoe at the ready, its blade sharpened to a fine edge. I don't do much gardening anymore, so this tool is strictly a weapon. Something about plowshares into swords can also be found in the Bible.

As you can imagine the snake was long gone before I could make my way to the alleged sighting. I gave the all clear and before nightfall the yard was alive again with activity of the human variety.

Even the dog was allowed to go back outside.

LIFESTYLE & FAITH

Ezekiel's vision: The Valley of Dry Bones

Ezekiel, one of the four major Jewish prophets along with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, was deported to Babylon in 597 B.C. Eleven years later, in 586 B.C., King Nebuchadnezzar's army destroyed Jerusalem, the final stronghold in Ezekiel's homeland. Residing in Babylon at the time of Ezekiel's captivity was the prophet Daniel. Additionally, Ezekiel may have been a pupil of Jeremiah. One of Ezekiel's best known visions is the valley of dry bones.

At the time of Ezekiel's writings, the Hebrew people were suffering under Babylonian captivity. When the northern kingdom of Israel (same name as nation) fell to the Babylonians, the Hebrew people living there were taken into captivity extending from 734 to 721 B.C.

The next round of captivity came with the fall of the southern kingdom of Judah. Likewise, its people (including Ezekiel) were carried into Babylon (modern day Iran) from 606 to 586 B.C. At the time of Ezekiel's prophecies, Israel no longer existed as a nation. Deprived of their land, their king and their temple, the Hebrew people were in a state of living death. No end of their captivity was in sight. At this critical juncture was when God gave Ezekiel the vision.

Ezekiel 37 begins with God transporting Ezekiel to a valley full of dry bones.

PARABLES TO PONDER

BILLY POWELL



Ezekiel is directed to speak to the bones.

"Prophesy to the bones," said God. "Tell them that I am going to put breath in them and and bring them back to life."

As Ezekiel spoke to the bones, there arose a loud rattling noise, and the bones began to join together. Suddenly, the bones began to take on sinews and muscles, and finally flesh. Yet, there was no breath in the dead bodies.

Then God instructed Ezekiel to prophesy to the wind: "Tell the wind that the Sovereign Lord commands it to blow into these dead bodies and bring them back to life."

Immediately, the dead bodies came alive and stood erect. "There were enough resurrected bodies to form an army," declared the scripture.

God then told Ezekiel the meaning of the vision: "My people are like these bones. They are dried up, without hope and without a future. When I open their graves and bring them back to their land, they will know that I am the Lord."

God instructed Ezekiel to touch two sticks together—one representing the northern kingdom of Israel and the other, the southern kingdom of Judah—to form one stick. This exemplified the future unification of Israel.

God delivered on His promise. In 536 B.C., the Persian Empire conquered Babylon. That same year, King Cyrus of Persia permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem and issued a decree authorizing the rebuilding of the temple. The temple in Jerusalem was completed in 516 B.C. Seventy two years later, in 444 B.C., Nehemiah rebuilt the city walls of Jerusalem. The Jewish people had been restored.

Sometime in the future, the mighty trumpet call of God will set off another rattling of dry bones. This will occur when Jesus returns. The dead in Christ shall rise first, then those still alive will join them in the clouds. Graves across the world will suddenly burst open as the Lord raptures His church.

Bluebirds thrive in Middle Georgia

A constant stream of year round bluebirds inspired my wife Billie and I to plant a wide variety of flowering plants that turned an ordinary Georgia backyard into a place where bluebirds would find welcoming all year long.

Eastern bluebirds prefer open spaces rather than dense forests. In Georgia, they thrive near fields, orchards, pastures, and wide lawns scattered with low perches where they can hunt insects. A yard with room to fly, patches of native plants, and a quiet nesting place can become ideal bluebird habitat.

The first step was installing a proper bluebird house. The wooden nest box was mounted on a smooth metal pole about five feet off the ground, facing east toward the morning sun. It stood far from thick shrubs where predators might hide. The location overlooked my garden and open grass where insects moved through the clover and weeds.

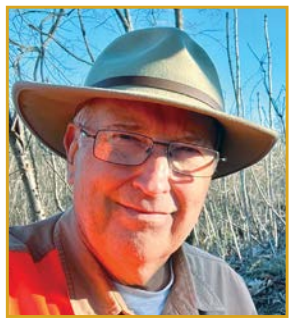
At first, the box attracted all the wrong visitors. House sparrows darted around noisily. Chickadees landed on the roof as if inspecting the construction. A curious squirrel climbed on the box and started causing trouble. The squirrel tried to gnaw the 1.5 entrance hole to a bigger size but I installed a 1.5 inch metal ring from Amazon that I hoped would solve the problem.

Then I started noticing a pair of bluebirds hanging around one of my other nest boxes.

The male glowed bright blue and orange against the pale spring grass. Beside him perched the female, softer in color but equally beautiful, with gray-blue wings and warm peach feathers across her chest. They explored cautiously, hopping through the yard

GUEST COLUMNIST

JOHN TRUSSELL



Courtesy: John Trussell

These two baby bluebirds wait at the nesting box entrance hole with open mouths to be fed.

in quick movements while searching for insects.

Every few minutes, the male flew to the roof of the nest box. He seemed to be saying, "hey, honey, check out this house!"

The female inspected the entrance carefully. I knew that if the female when inside the entrance hole and liked it, the deal was done.

Within days, pine needles and dry grass began appearing inside the box. Nest building had started.

From that point forward, the backyard felt different. Bluebirds became part of the rhythm of each day. Early mornings brought soft warbling calls from fence posts and tree branches. The pair hunted beetles and caterpillars across the grass while butterflies drifted among the blooming flowers nearby.

Bluebirds are gentle birds, but they are also hardwork-

ing parents.

By April, the female spent most of her time inside the nest box, incubating the eggs, while the male guarded the territory closely. He perched high on poles and branches, scanning constantly for danger. Whenever another bird or squirrel wandered too close, he chased it away with surprising speed.

Soon faint chirping could be heard from inside the box. The eggs had hatched.

The parent birds worked tirelessly from sunrise until dusk carrying insects back to the nest. Crickets, beetles, grasshoppers, and caterpillars disappeared into the hungry mouths of growing chicks. The adults visited the box dozens of times each hour.

As spring deepened across Georgia, the chicks grew rapidly.

Tiny sounds inside the box became loud chatter.

Edison diamond disc records

Have you ever been to an antique shop or estate sale and seen a really thick heavy record with Thomas Edison's picture on the label? Some of these records are quite rare and can bring hundreds of dollars on eBay.

Edison's first creations were the wax cylinders that were played with a needle stylus connected to a small horn and were cranked with a handle to play. You may have seen some of the models that had a great big "morning glory" horn. They usually had a beautiful oak case with a lid. There was even an adaptation to "record" on the cylinder.

These thick records were marketed from 1912-1929. Manufacturing processes varied on materials that were readily available during the war and depression era. These were often made of wood flour and china clay. Never get these records soaking wet, you must be very careful when cleaning them.

These discs were called diamond disks because they could only be played properly on diamond disc machines produced exclusively by Edison and the stylus that

ALL ABOUT ANTIQUES

JILLINDA FALEN



played the record was actually made of diamond, not steel as the other victrola type machines of the day such as Victor, Columbia and Pathe. Some of the Pathe's can only be played with a sapphire ball stylus. You can find adapters to put on the Edison machines to play the other kinds of records but the quality is not as good. Another thing about the Edison discs is that the groove process he used allowed his records to play longer.

Edison did not keep up with market trends of the day, preferring old-timey songs and ballads instead of the jazz craze that was sweeping the nation. If you find the jazz discs, they are usually the most valuable because Edison wasn't crazy about them. Some of his records simply stat-

ed "Soprano" or "Tenor" on them instead of an artist's name so he didn't have to change the labels on the records!

You will often find these records to be one sided or the later ones that were two sided. Labels varied as well, as Edison experimented with the process to stamp or adhere them to the record itself.

Edison records went out of business the day before the stock market crash. He failed to keep up with the technology of the day and by the time he switched to the thin shellac records that had been electronically recorded, it was too late. These records are great for decorating if they have been worn out from playing! Happy Collecting!

The big fat deception on food packaging

If I were to pick two words in our vocabulary that have confused and added more to the obesity epidemic than any phrase in our country, it would be "Fat Free." When we are trying to lose body fat and we see a food item that looks delicious with the marketing label staring back at us with those words FAT FREE, it makes us feel like we're staying on track with our weight loss commitments and goals. These foods are convenient but work directly against what we're trying to do.

For example, if we were to eat an energy bar with 200 calories it would cause an insulin spike, leading to additional fat storage (unless we're active after eating it and doing something to burn it off). If we would take in that same amount of calories in organic butter, it would have an insulin blunting effect, sustained energy (from the fat) over a longer period of time and longer lasting satiety. Remember: insulin spikes will in turn cause false hunger signals later even though you have plenty of food in your system.

The problem with these processed ingredients that make these food and drink items taste good, (such as sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners) is that they cause our body to have anything from sugar spikes to neurotoxic inflammatory responses that in turn cause us

YOUR HEALTH

WADE YODER



to store fat. Keep in mind the above listed items are put into foods NOT for your health but rather to keep you returning to a deceptive food or drink product that is working against your health and your fitness goals!

Most processed snack foods (diet snacks included) are loaded with these things, this is how they keep their diet items from tasting like cardboard. The key in avoiding these items is to select foods for your diet and snacks that have very few ingredients in them.

Here is what happens with foods and drinks that have added sugar and high fructose corn syrup: when the levels of sugar spike beyond our current energy needs, our body will simply store it for later use, either in our liver or fat cells.

However with artificial sweeteners such as (Sweet n Low, Equal, Splenda), the effect is a little different and may be an indirect cause of weight gain but is a negative effect all the same on our weight loss efforts; they have a bad effect on our thyroid, and this is the gland that helps

regulate our metabolism. These artificial sweeteners are also neurotoxic causing an inflammatory response from our body, which will cause us to release cortisol, and cortisol is THE stress hormone that causes us to retain belly fat!

Keeping it simple works best. Only eat or drink sweets before or right after long or intense periods of activity, avoid food or drink products with artificial sweeteners or high fructose corn syrup.

Most times fat is not the problem. An overabundance of starches and or sugars in our diet is the real culprit. However when high fat foods are consumed in combination with sugary foods or drinks, the fat can be a problem because of the spike in insulin due to the sugar intake.

When we learn what real food and drink is, we can spot the foods that are wasting our time in our health and fitness efforts and when we truly visualize how much these foods and beverages are working against our efforts, they will not taste or look so good!

One morning, fuzzy heads appeared at the entrance hole for the first time. They wanted out! The young birds blinked at the bright world outside while warm southern breezes moved through the yard. The parents continued feeding them constantly.

Then came the moment every bluebird watcher hopes for, but is rarely seen. One chick climbed to the opening, hesitated, and launched itself into the air.

Its flight was clumsy and uneven, but it reached a nearby fence post safely. Another chick followed soon after. Then another. By afternoon, the nest box stood empty while the young bluebirds fluttered awkwardly around the yard beneath the watchful eyes of their parents.

The backyard had become more than grass and fences. It had become a habitat.

Now it's almost summer, and bluebirds continue to return to the feeders and birdbath. Young birds practiced flying between fence posts while cicadas buzzed in the Georgia heat.

Attracting eastern bluebirds to a Middle Georgia yard requires patience more than anything else. They search carefully for safe spaces with open ground, native plants, fresh water, and secure nesting sites. But once they come, they bring something special with them.

A quietness and a peace of watching gods creations living in the wild world. A flash of bright blue against green summer grass is a great sight as they are one of Georgia's prettiest birds.

As I write this in late May, another set of blue birds are starting to nest in the same ceramic box, totally ignoring my nicer "build to blue bird

regulations "boxes. We'll see if this brood succeeds, but late season success is tough.

I put small nylon mesh netting under the box to keep out snakes and spray environment friendly pesticide on the post or tree trunk to keep the fire ants away. Yes, snakes can easily climb into a bird box and ants can invade and kill the birds.

Also, because the hot sun becomes an issue, I'll take a White piece of cardboard and place it over the roof to keep down the temperature inside the box. All these safety factors are a little trouble, but can mean the difference between failure or success and bluebirds can thrive with a friendly helping hand. Good luck with your bluebirds!

Check out the author's book "Saving Oaky Woods" on Amazon.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

BBB offers tips to help graduates protect their money and identity

Congratulations to our high school and college graduates who are getting ready to start their new lives! It's a big transition that includes several important changes. Grads may be moving to a new city, finding a new place to live, or searching for a new job.

As graduates begin navigating these life changes, scammers are eager to exploit their inexperience. How can new grads avoid common scams during this time in their lives?

Know the terms of your student loans

One of the most common ways scammers target college graduates is by offering fake loan-forgiveness opportunities. You may receive an unsolicited email, phone call, or text message stating that you can qualify for lower payments through a debt relief or debt forgiveness program. All you have to do is fill out a form and pay a fee to use the company's services. Some of these companies are real, but they pitch their services with false claims and incomplete information. Other companies are fakes, only hoping to get their hands on your personal information and money.

Understanding the ins and outs of your student loan - what kind of interest

BBB TIPS

KELVIN COLLINS



you owe, when you need to start paying (in most cases, you won't need to make a payment until six months after you've graduated), and for how long you'll be expected to make payments - will protect you from these scams. BBB offers additional tips about student loan forgiveness.

Be wary of unsolicited messages about unpaid tuition

Some con artists contact graduates or their parents, claiming some of their tuition was left unpaid and the graduate's degree will be revoked if it isn't paid immediately. Scammers may ask you to send money via wire transfer or prepaid debit cards.

Whether you are contacted by phone, email, or text message, be wary of anyone who contacts you out of the blue and demands money. Government agencies, as well as most higher education facilities, will contact

you by mail. If you aren't sure if a message is legitimate, stop communicating with the individual and do some research by looking up information on the official school website or calling your school's bursar's office. Don't give in to pressure to make a decision or provide payment right away.

Do research before accepting jobs or job interviews

Scammers may offer recent graduates high-paying, remote, and easy entry-level jobs. Con artists are skilled at drawing new grads in by promoting unrealistic wages for generally labeled job positions, such as "virtual assistant" or "customer service rep." Shortly after a very brief interview process, they may offer you the job on the spot and may ask for your personal information, including your bank account and Social Security number, claiming they need it to set up direct deposit or file

taxes.

In other cases, scammers require you to pay for training or your office equipment. In yet another version, you may be "accidentally" overpaid with a fake check and asked to send back the extra funds.

If you are considering a job with a company you aren't familiar with, do some research before you complete an application or agree to an interview. Ensure the company has legitimate contact information and the position is posted on their corporate website. Scammers often steal the names of real companies for their phony job postings.

Is that really a graduation gift? Don't accept every offer you come across.

Scammers often take advantage of graduation season by sending congratulatory messages that appear to offer free gifts, scholarships, or exclusive deals. These offers may come via email, text message, phone calls, or social media—and they can look like they're from well-known companies, universities, or even friends.

To claim it, they're asked to provide personal info or pay a shipping or processing fee. For more gifts and sweepstakes tips, see BBB's scam study.

Moving soon? Know the signs of common moving scams

It's likely that you'll be moving away from campus after graduating. With the amount of people moving during the spring and summer, the likelihood of falling victim to a scam increases. Common moving scams involve no-show movers after paying a deposit, being charged for more money than you were quoted, hidden extra fees, and even stolen items.

Watch out for rental scams

Did you find a gorgeous apartment in a trendy neighborhood at an affordable price? Take extra caution because it could be a scam. In many cases, scammers copy the photo and description of a real property. Then, they post it online with their contact information and try to get a deposit and the first month's rent from the victim.

If you want to rent a home or apartment, find out how much other rental properties in the area cost before signing a lease. Scammers often lure victims by promising low rents, extra amenities, and a great location. It may be a scam if the price seems much better than elsewhere.

Also, be sure to see the apartment or house in per-

son. Don't send money to someone you've never met for an apartment you haven't seen. If you can't visit an apartment or house yourself, ask someone you trust to go and confirm that it is what was advertised.

Finally, read the lease agreement documents before you sign. Don't be embarrassed to consult with friends or family members who may be more knowledgeable on the subject if you have doubts or questions.

Kelvin Collins is president & CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama, West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia, and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the International Association of Better Business Bureaus (IABBB). The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: BBB.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org

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Houston County's 2026 football schedules and most interesting matchups

By **CLAY BROWN**
HHJ Sports Editor
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Spring football is a couple of weeks behind us, which means the first kickoff of the 2026 season is that much closer.

With the introduction of the Post Season Rankings formula the schedules might look a little different, but here's a look at the slate and some of the most interesting matchups:

An asterisk* denotes a region game. Games in bold are expanded on in the next section.

Houston County
8/21/26 - HoCo @ West Forsyth (Corky Kell Classic at Center Parc Stadium)
9/4/26 - HoCo vs Jones County
9/11/26 - HoCo @ Central-Carroll
9/18/26 - HoCo vs Westlake
10/2/26 - HoCo vs Tift County*
10/9/26 - HoCo vs Thomas County Central*
10/16/26 - HoCo @ Coffee*
10/23/26 - HoCo vs Veterans*
10/30/26 - HoCo vs Northside*
11/6/26 - HoCo @ Lee County*
Northside
8/21/26 - Northside vs Eagle's Landing
8/28/26 - Northside @ Mays
9/4/26 - Northside vs Warner Robins (Crosstown Showdown)
9/11/26 - Northside vs Westlake
9/25/26 - Northside @ Veterans*
10/9/26 - Northside @ Tift County*
10/16/26 - Northside vs

Lee County*
10/23/26 - Northside @ Coffee*
10/30/26 - Northside vs HoCo*
11/5/26 (Thursday) - Northside vs Thomas County Central*
Perry
8/21/26 - Perry vs Peach County
8/28/26 - Perry @ Dublin
9/4/26 - Perry vs Howard
9/11/26 - Perry @ Northeast-Macon
9/18/26 - Perry vs Ola*
9/25/26 - Perry @ Locust Grove*
10/9/26 - Perry vs Jones County*
10/23/26 - Perry vs Union Grove*
10/30/26 - Perry @ Eagle's Landing*
11/6/26 - Perry @ Warner Robins*
Veterans
8/21/26 - Veterans vs Warner Robins
8/28/26 - Veterans @ Trinity Christian
9/11/26 - Veterans @ Forsyth Central
9/18/26 - Veterans @ Sumter County
9/25/26 - Veterans vs Northside*
10/2/26 - Veterans @ Thomas County Central*
10/9/26 - Veterans @ Lee County*
10/23/26 - Veterans @ Houston County*
10/30/26 - Veterans vs Tift County*
11/6/26 - Veterans vs Coffee*
Warner Robins
8/21/26 - Warner Robins @ Veterans
8/28/26 - Warner Robins vs Northeast-Macon
9/4/26 - Warner Robins @ Northside (Crosstown Showdown)
9/11/26 - Warner Robins

@ Newton
9/18/26 - Warner Robins @ Union Grove*
9/25/26 - Warner Robins @ Eagle's Landing*
10/2/26 - Warner Robins vs Locust Grove*
10/23/26 - Warner Robins vs Ola*
10/30/26 - Warner Robins @ Jones County*
11/6/26 - Warner Robins vs Perry*
Westfield
8/14/26 - Westfield vs Brookstone*
8/21/26 - Westfield vs Strong Rock*
8/28/26 - Westfield @ First Presbyterian Day
9/4/26 - Westfield vs Southwest Georgia Academy
9/11/26 - Westfield @ Bulloch Academy
9/18/26 - Westfield @ Stratford Academy
10/2/26 - Westfield vs Tiftarea Academy
10/16/26 - Westfield @ Central Fellowship Christian Academy
10/23/26 - Westfield vs Terrell Academy
10/30/26 - Westfield @ Deerfield-Windsor
Interesting matchups:
8/28/26 - Perry @ Dublin
Perry and Dublin haven't played each other since 2003, a 14-0 road win for the Panthers.
The two programs first locked horns in 1962, and played nearly every year after until 1987 as both region and non-region opponents. A 13-year break ended in 2000 when the teams were put in Region 1-3A along with teams like Westover, Thomasville and Dodge County.
Last year the Fighting Irish finished second in Region 2 A-D1 with a 10-3

overall record. They won the region championship in 2024 and made it to the semifinals to finish 13-1, their best record since their 2019 state championship season.

Dublin leads the all-time series 21-10.
8/28/26 - Warner Robins vs Northeast-Macon

Northeast High School opened in 1970, and they were placed in Region 2-3A with Southwest, Central-Macon, Warner Robins, Northside and Peach County.

The Demons' inaugural matchup with the Raiders was a 20-0 home victory in that same year, and their record has remained perfect ever since.

The two programs played four times in the 1970s, but the series became annual in 1980 until 1999, the last game until now.

Warner Robins has remained in firm control of the all-time series since its inception; there has only been one game decided by one score and Northeast has been shut out 12 times. They've only scored 10 or more points four times.

The Demons lead the all-time series 24-0.

9/4/26 - Northside vs Warner Robins (Crosstown Showdown)

Northside just finished their first season under head coach Daniel "Boone" Williams, a complete reset after a downward trend in recent years.

There were positives, namely the early-season defense, but they still fell in the Crosstown Showdown for the ninth straight year.

The current streak is a series worst for either pro-

gram, and while this likely isn't the year the Eagles turn it all around, it's a chance for them to turn some of these recent close losses into a win.

Chandler Dyson's 41-yard run sealed the Demons' 22-13 win in 2025, and both the 2022 and 2023 games were decided by one score.

When it comes to rivalries you can throw out records and streaks, and this might be the year for the Eagles to get it done. Warner Robins leads the all-time series 43-25.

9/11/26 - HoCo @ Central-Carroll

Houston County's game against Central-Carroll is the only one on the list that is a first-time matchup.

The Lions are not a historically relevant team; they won back-to-back 2A state championships in 1986 and 1987 under Ronnie Burchfield, but after that they didn't make it past the second round again until 2013.

However, since Umbrah Brown's arrival in 2023, Central-Carroll has won three region championships, been to the quarterfinals twice and tallied a 33-5 overall record.

In 2025 the Lions were 12-1 and ranked in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution's top 10 from Week 3 through the rest of the season.

When Georgia high school football schedules first released this was quickly labeled a must-see matchup. It's too early to tell what the teams will look like in 2026, with each losing big contributors on both sides of the ball, but it's bound to be one of the best games of the

early season.

9/25/26 - Veterans vs Northside*

For the past couple of years this game has come at the end of the season in what was a battle between the two bottom teams, record-wise, in Houston County. Now it comes about halfway through the second year under their new coaches, Steven DeVoursney for Veterans and Daniel "Boone" Williams for Northside.

You don't often see significant results in year two of a complete reset, but this game will serve as a progress report for their respective rebuilds.

Northside leads the all-time series 6-2.

10/30/26 - Westfield @ Deerfield-Windsor

Deerfield-Windsor has been the bane of Westfield's last two seasons.

The Hornets lost the 2024 regular season game 33-29 after Cole Jones' 65-yard rushing touchdown with four minutes to go. In the semifinals rematch the Knights again pulled the rug on Westfield with a last-second score to win 27-24.

Last year's 33-7 regular season loss was the turning point for Westfield, who suffered another semifinals loss to Deerfield-Windsor later that same season, 26-14.

The only time the Hornets have beaten the Knights under Chad Campbell was in 2023, a 27-23 victory at home. This isn't a new series, but the rivalry has certainly intensified in the last couple of years.

Deerfield-Windsor leads the all-time series 26-17.

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Volume 8 Number 6

June 2026

1 Section, 8 Pages

Robins, Wright-Patterson AF Bases partner up to protect pilots' vision

By **BRIEANNA SMITH**
HHJ Managing Editor
brieanna@hhjonline.com

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE — Pointing a laser at an aircraft is a federal crime that can lead to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Yet it still happens often at Georgia airports.

There have been 92 reported laser attacks on aircraft in Georgia so far in 2026, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. Most incidents happen around the Atlanta, Augusta and Savannah areas. In total, the agency has reported nearly 2,800 laser strikes in the state so far just this year.

High-powered lasers can be debilitating. That's why Robins Air Force Base partnered with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base to protect pilots.

Protective eyewear for crews operating Air Force aircraft worldwide was upgraded in 2023 by the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center. The AFLCMC says it aims to send over 42,000 devices to units by 2027, and over 45,000 by 2029.

Wright-Patterson and Robins are distributing a kit that includes glasses for daytime and nighttime, and visors designed to fit under night vision goggles.

The devices provide both laser and ballistic protection.

Kevin Frost, an AFLCMC mechanical engineer, and Eric Miltner, an operations specialist, say the new devices filter more wavelengths of light while increasing instrument visibility.

"The new technology helps address any upcoming things outside of what's already a threat to help protect from that," Frost said.

The duo works for Robins as an integrated product team. Wright-Patterson is responsible for device acquisition and testing, while Robins is responsible for program sustainment.

Frost ensures devices comply with safety standards. Miltner's pride and joy is the technical manual he developed, which outlines how the devices must be used and maintained.

"We work hand in hand. We deal with all equip-

ment already in the field. [Wright-Patterson] goes out to get new technology and new equipment. They do a lot of the initial groundwork to get the equipment working with contractors, and we're here to make sure the program is carried out and it has everything it needs," Frost said. It's something we help to mitigate. We'll find sources, find out what the issue is," Frost said.

Frost has always been interested in engineering, and Miltner started working in technical ordering. For Miltner, working directly with customers is fulfilling, and Frost is happy to provide an essential service.

"It's neat to work on multiple different pieces of equipment, especially equipment that goes to our air crew and protects them and ultimately protects all of us. It's rewarding to be able to provide the service to the people that are protecting us, and knowing that it works and helps them do their job," Frost said.

Miltner says a common misconception is that eye protection for lasers must be worn all the time.

"Ground-based lasers lose their effectiveness when the planes are at altitude," Miltner said. When they're taking off and landing is when you're supposed to wear [laser eye protection] because that's where the threat of getting lasered is highest."

Takeoff and landing are the highest risk scenarios, according to Frost and Miltner, so providing protection during those times is paramount for mission readiness.

"Flying at altitude is equally as important, but [take off and landing] are the instances where things can really go wrong," Frost said. "Having that added layer of protection helps keep the air crew safe, keep everyone in the air and get them back home."

Overall, both Frost and Miltner say the technology, the partnership and their work is key.

"We're protecting pilots' eyes, so they can do their mission," Miltner said.



U.S. Air Force photo by Lauren Boggs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Three devices of the six Block 3 family of Aircrew Laser Eye Protection products sit at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Jan. 21, 2026. The Block 3 products were designed to filter a wider range of light wavelengths, increasing protection for aircrews.



U.S. Air Force/Courtesy photo

A B-52 aircrew member participates in a laser eye protection test.

Blue Angels to headline 2027 Georgia Skies: The Robins Open House and Air Show

By **SHELLIE-ANNE ESPINOSA**
78th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, will host the Georgia Skies Open House and Air Show April 17-18, 2027, delivering two days of aerial power and ground-level access to the mission.

"We're proud to showcase airpower with the Middle Georgia community," said Col. Johari Hemphill, Robins Installation and 78th Air Base Wing commander. "For more than 85 years, this community has stood behind Robins AFB. This event opens our gates so we can stand alongside them and show exactly what that support makes possible."

The U.S. Navy Blue

Angels, based at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, will headline the event, delivering a high-speed demonstration of the precision and discipline behind military aviation.

Behind the six-jet demonstration team is a unit of more than 150 Sailors and Marines, each playing a critical role in executing a performance that reflects the skill, coordination and standards of American warfighters.

Established in 1946, the Blue Angels were formed to strengthen public interest in naval aviation and boost Navy morale following World War II. From early aircraft like the F6 Hellcat, F8 Bearcat and the F9 Panther to today's F/A-18 Hornet, the team has evolved alongside the Navy for nearly 80 years.

That legacy continues today, as the Blue Angels have demonstrated the precision, discipline and capability that define modern military aviation for nearly 500 million spectators.

"The Blue Angels set the tone for the entire air show," said Capt. Britian Mixon, 78th Force Support Squadron Military Personnel Flight commander and Air Show director. "We're building a lineup of aerial acts, static displays and family-friendly experiences that showcase our mission and reflect the strong partnership between the installation and the community."

For the most up-to-date information, visit www.robins.af.mil/airshow.

Follow Robins on social media for announcements, performer updates and event details as they are released.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Crayton Agnew

AUGUSTA, Ga. — The U.S. Navy Blue Angels perform at the Air Dot Show in Georgia, April 26, 2025. The aerial demonstration team joined the air show at the event's headlining act and performs to showcase the forces lethality in the air and to encourage recruitment.

Citizen Airmen and the legacy of airpower: AFRC's enduring bond with Team Robins

By AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND HISTORICAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

The sun is just starting to rise over the flightline at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. The air is cool, and the sound of tools and equipment carries across the ramp. Airmen move with focus around a parked aircraft, checking systems and preparing for the day's mission. Among them are Citizen Airmen from Air Force Reserve Command, working side by side with active duty and civilian teammates. It is a familiar scene, but it tells a much bigger story about teamwork, readiness, and the strength behind American airpower.

As the nation approaches its 250th anniversary, that story is not only about aircraft or technology. It is about people. It is about partnerships like Team Robins, where active duty, reservists, civilian and contractor personnel come together to support the mission. At Robins AFB, that partnership is on display every day, and AFRC plays an important role in making it work.

A Legacy Rooted in Readiness

AFRC traces its origins to 1948, when it was formally established following the creation of the U.S. Air Force as a separate service in 1947. Over the decades, the Reserve has grown from a force held in reserve for major conflicts into a fully integrated, operational force that supports missions around the world every day.

That evolution is easy to see at Robins AFB. Reserve Airmen contribute to a wide range of missions that keep the Air Force ready. Many support aircraft sustainment and logistics efforts that help ensure systems are available and mission capable when needed. Others serve in flying, command and control, medical and support roles.

The 78th Air Base Wing helps make all of this possible. As the host wing, it provides installation support that allows every unit on base to do its job. That includes AFRC units, which rely on that support to train, maintain readiness and deploy when called.

For Citizen Airmen, readiness is not something that happens only during deployments. It is built through regular training, strong partnerships and a commitment to being ready to step in at any time.

History Connected to Robins AFB

The connection between AFRC and Robins AFB

goes back decades. In 1961, Continental Air Command moved its headquarters to Robins, establishing a lasting link between the Reserve and the installation. That move helped shape Robins AFB into a center for Reserve leadership and set the foundation for the partnership that exists today.

In August 1968, Headquarters Air Force Reserve was activated at Robins AFB. This marked an important step in strengthening the identity and organization of the Reserve force. From that point forward, Robins became a key location for guiding how Reserve Airmen trained, organized, and supported the broader Air Force mission.

That relationship continued to grow over time. In February 1997, Headquarters AFRC was activated, also at Robins AFB. This change reflected the Reserve's transition into a more operational role, with increased responsibility in day-to-day Air Force missions around the world.

Through each of these milestones, one thing remained constant. Robins AFB has served as a home for Reserve leadership and a place where ideas, planning and execution come together to support airpower.

Today, that history is still visible across Team Robins. The partnership between the 78th ABW and AFRC is built on decades of shared experience, trust and mission focus. What started with a headquarters move in 1961 has grown into a strong and lasting connection that continues to support the Air Force and the nation.

The Power of Partnership Team Robins is built on the idea that the mission is stronger when people work together. The Total Force model brings active duty, Reserve, Air National Guard and civilian personnel into one team. Each group brings its own strengths, and together they create a more capable and flexible force.

AFRC adds a unique dimension to that team. Citizen Airmen often have civilian careers that directly support their military roles. They are engineers, mechanics, healthcare professionals, pilots and more. They bring those skills with them when they put on the uniform, which helps strengthen the mission.

At Robins AFB, that teamwork is easy to see. Reserve Airmen work alongside their active duty and civilian counterparts every day. Whether they are maintaining aircraft, supporting logistics operations or planning future



U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — The 558th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Corrosion Control team with the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex, apply stencils and remove protective masking from a freshly painted C-17 Globemaster at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Nov. 6, 2020. Engineering teams are collaborating to reduce the time it takes to strip and paint aircraft, allowing more aircraft to be painted at the complex annually.

missions, they are part of the same team working toward the same goal.

That kind of integration does not happen by accident. It takes trust, communication, and a shared commitment to the mission.

Airpower in Action

Airpower depends on more than aircraft taking off and landing. It depends on the people who keep those aircraft ready to fly. At Robins AFB, much of that work happens behind the scenes.

AFRC plays a role in sustaining the aircraft and systems that support operations around the world. Robins is home to major logistics and sustainment organizations, including the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex, which performs maintenance, repair and overhaul on key Air Force platforms.

Citizen Airmen support these efforts in a variety of ways. Their work helps ensure that aircraft are available when needed, whether for combat operations, training missions or humanitarian response. That support allows the Air Force to maintain global reach and respond quickly to changing situations.

Without the work done on installations like Robins, airpower would not be possible. The mission starts on the ground, with the people who make sure everything is ready.

Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future

As America prepares to celebrate 250 years of inde-

pendence, it is a good time to reflect on the people who have served and continue to serve. AFRC has been part of that story for more than seven decades, adapting to meet the needs of the nation.

At Robins AFB, that legacy continues through the work of today's Airmen. They build on the experience of those who came before them while preparing for the challenges ahead.

The role of the Reserve is likely to keep growing. Modern missions require

a force that is flexible, experienced and ready to respond quickly. Citizen Airmen are well positioned to meet those demands.

A Legacy that Endures

As the morning continues on the flightline, the work moves forward. Inspections are completed, equipment is secured and another aircraft is ready for its next mission. For the Airmen of AFRC and their teammates at Team Robins, this is part of a daily routine that supports something much larger.

It is a commitment to

readiness.

It is a commitment to teamwork.

It is a commitment to serving the nation.

The America 250 celebration highlights the long history of that service. At Robins AFB, that history is still being written every day. Through steady work, strong partnerships and a shared sense of purpose, AFRC and Team Robins continue to support the mission and strengthen the future of American AirPower.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tommie Horton

Philip Blackwell, 560th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron sheet metal mechanic, attaches an Air Force Special Operations Command MC-130H's clam shell door with the assistance of fellow mechanic Brian Tindall. Returning air power as quickly as possible to the warfighter – that's the goal of the C-130 Air Force Special Operations Command Acceleration Team at Robins Air Force Base, Ga. These high-demand aircraft are a direct result of a team effort that once again showcases that Success Here = Success There!

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Applications open through July 31 for Acquisition Instructor Course

By **MARISA ALIA-NOVOBILSKI**

Air Force Materiel Command

WRIGHT-PATERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — High-performing acquisition officers and civilians have until July 31 to apply to Class 27A of the Acquisition Instructor Course (AQIC). This elite 5.5-month program, running from Jan. 4 to June 11, 2027, is designed to develop the next generation of tactical acquisition leaders and integrators for the Department of the Air Force.

The AQIC curriculum, which mirrors the rigor and methodology of the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, provides a unique opportunity for acquisition professionals to develop their integration, tactical acquisitions and instructorship skills. Attendees can expect a demanding, in-residence program that includes over 300 hours of aca-

demics in program management, systems engineering, contracting and leadership, as well as more than 200 hours of warfighter capabilities and employment training. The course is designed to bridge the gap between acquisition and operations, preparing graduates to become leaders and change agents within the acquisition enterprise.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Military Officers:
 - AFSC 61X, 62E, 63A: Captains (O-3) or Majors (O-4) with 4 to 8 years' time-in-service
 - AFSC 64P, 65F/W: Captains (O-3) with 4 to 8 years' time-in-service
 - Civilians:
 - Grade GS-12/13, NH-03, or DR-3 (non-supervisory) in acquisition-coded series (13XX, 08XX, 1101, 1102, 0501, 1515) with 4 to 10 years of acquisition experience.

All nominees must possess or be able to obtain a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) clearance. Nomination packages require endorsement from the nominee's first O-6 or equivalent leader.

Following graduation, members earn a Special Experience Identifier and incur a three-year service commitment, during which they will be expected to contribute significantly to the acquisition community and the AQIC schoolhouse.

For detailed application instructions and to submit a nomination, internal candidates can visit the AQIC Nomination Site at <https://usaf.dps.mil/teams/AFMC-AQIC/nomination>.

For any questions, please contact the AQIC Workflow at afmc.aqic.workflow@us.af.mil.

ACQUISITION INSTRUCTOR COURSE -AQIC


Class 27A Nomination Call

Application Deadline: July 31, 2026

Course Dates: Jan. 4- June 11, 2027

AQIC is a 5.5-month course operating under a strategic partnership with the USAF Weapons School to develop operationally informed acquisition professionals as skilled tacticians, leaders and unit integrators to tackle DAF's toughest acquisition problems.

Info: afmc.aqic.workflow@us.af.mil



High-performing acquisition officers and civilians have until July 31 to apply to Class 27A of the Acquisition Instructor Course (AQIC). This elite 5.5-month program, running from Jan. 4 to June 11, 2027, is designed to develop the next generation of tactical acquisition leaders and integrators for the Department of the Air Force.

WR-ALC achieves manufacturing certification, enhancing Air Force readiness

By **JOSEPH MATHER**
78th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — The Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex has achieved the AS9100D certification for its manufacturing processes, a move that enhances its industrial capabilities and positions the complex to take on new, high-tech workloads for the Department of War.

The certification, an internationally recognized quality management standard for the aviation, space and defense industries, specifically impacts the 402nd Commodities Maintenance Group and the 402nd Electronics Maintenance Group.

Brig. Gen. David Miller, WR-ALC commander, emphasized the strategic importance of this milestone.

"Achieving the AS9100D certification is a monumental achievement for the entire WR-ALC Miller said. "It formally recognizes the dedication to excellence that our maintenance professionals demonstrate every day. Their work in bringing our manufacturing processes to this internationally recognized standard directly enhances warfighter readiness, fosters innovation and strengthens our partnerships across the defense industrial base. We are not just making parts; we are building a more lethal and capable force for the future."

The effort to secure the certification was a year-long, intensive process led by a team of six WR-ALC Quality Assurance AS9100D/9110C program managers.

According to James Circle, WR-ALC Quality Assurance AS9100D/9110C Program lead, the AS9100D standard is a level on par with AS9110C certification for maintenance, repair and overhaul, which the complex already holds.

"AS9100 is more for manufacturing from start to finish, from cradle to grave," said Circle.

This distinction is critical for groups like the 402nd Electronics Maintenance Group, which manufactures complex components like circuit cards for the Defense Logistics Agency supply chain. The certification validates their entire process, from initial design to the final product.

The immediate benefit is a significant enhancement to Air Force readiness, Circle said. By producing high-quality parts in-house, the ALC can fill critical gaps in the supply chain, especially for components that commercial manufacturers may not produce in small quantities. This capability is not just a cost-saver but a direct contributor to aircraft readiness.

The process involved identifying all manufacturing workloads and undergoing a rigorous audit. The standards themselves are set by the International



U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather

High-performing acquisition officers and civilians have until July 31 to apply to Class 27A of the Acquisition Instructor Course (AQIC). This elite 5.5-month program, running from Jan. 4 to June 11, 2027, is designed to develop the next generation of tactical acquisition leaders and integrators for the Department of the Air Force. From left to right: Patrick Carter, Jeffrey Plunkett, Kendall Green, Lacey Mullis, Johnny Barrett, and James "Bud" Circle.

Aerospace Quality Group and published by Society of Automotive Engineers International. To maintain the certification, the complex will undergo annual audits on a three-year cycle.

This achievement was built on a foundation of

deep expertise. The quality assurance team working to achieve and maintain certification has over 100 years of combined experience in aerospace and quality management.

"I'd like to say that our team does a very good job," Circle said. "We have

a lot of diverse knowledge and expertise across all the fields, and not only do we go out and do our auditing, but we also do a lot of consulting for the groups when they have questions."

With this certification, the WR-ALC joins

the Ogden Air Logistics Complex at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in holding both the AS9100D and AS9110C certifications, positioning it as a leader in advanced manufacturing and sustainment within the Air Force Sustainment Center.

Storm drain markers — small signs with big impact on water quality

By **78th CIVIL ENGINEERING GROUP**

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Have you ever noticed a small metal marker next to a storm drain that says, "No Dumping – Drains to Waterway"? These storm drain markers may be easy to overlook, but they play an important role in protecting local streams and rivers, and they are an important part of Robins Air Force Base's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System program.

What do storm drains do? Storm drains are designed to collect rainwater and runoff from roads, parking lots, sidewalks and other paved

areas. Unlike sanitary sewers, storm drains do not lead to a treatment plant. Instead, stormwater typically flows directly to nearby creeks, streams or rivers, without any treatment at all. That means anything that enters a storm drain can end up in surface waters downstream.

Why do storm drain markers matter?

Storm drain markers serve as a simple but powerful reminder that storm drains are part of the environment, not a disposal system. Their primary goal is to increase awareness and minimize pollution before it happens.

Markers help: Remind base personnel

and contractors that storm drains discharge directly to waterways

Reduce accidental dumping of materials like oil, chemicals or wash water

Support pollution prevention education required under the MS4 permit

Reinforce Robins AFB's commitment to environmental stewardship

Even small releases such as soap from washing equipment or sediment from stockpiles can degrade water quality when carried by stormwater. Storm drain markers help everyone pause and think before letting something flow into a curb inlet or catch basin.

Storm drain markers at

Robins AFB

As part of ongoing MS4 compliance activities, Robins AFB installs storm drain markers to reinforce stormwater awareness. The storm drain markers may be small, but the message they carry is critical. By paying attention to these signs and taking simple preventative actions, everyone at Robins AFB helps protect local waterways.

Stormwater Straight Talk is a quarterly column intended to educate and inform base personnel and families about stormwater management and water conservation. For more information, contact the Environmental Management Office.



Courtesy Photo

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78th CPTS powers financial readiness at Robins AFB

By **LAUREN BOGGS**
78th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Although the mission of financing the fight can sometimes fly under the radar, the 78th Comptroller Squadron keeps operations on track at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, and plays a significant role in Air Force readiness across all levels of operations. “Our mission is three-fold,” said Lt. Col. Marvin-Ray Arida, 78th CPTS commander. “We ensure that all personnel on Robins Air Force Base are paid, fund the sustainment of Robins’ infrastructure, and certify over \$13.9 billion in funding across all 54 mission partners.”

From advising the commander on budget decisions to managing payroll that ensures morale and readiness, the squadron’s impact resonates across the entire installation.

“We fund the warfighter so they can focus on the mission,” Arida said. “We fund the mission by making sure Robins is a projecting platform and supporting our mission partners.”

Translating those massive budgets into real-world operational capabilities is a continuous, behind-the-scenes effort.

“We turn resources into readiness. That’s what our Airmen do daily,” added Senior Master Sgt. Traci Coston, 78th CPTS senior enlisted leader.

To further this mission, Arida says the squadron is taking steps to broaden uniformed Airmen’s development across all aspects



U.S. Air Force photo by Lauren Boggs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Senior Airman Bao Nguyen, 78th Comptroller Squadron financial operations technician, works behind the office’s reception desk at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, May 18, 2026. In 2025, members of the 78th CPTS participated in exercise Diamond Saber, a joint-service financial exercise that trains and evaluates finance and comptroller units in warfighting functions.

of financial management by giving them the opportunity to work across various flights within the squadron, ensuring they are well-rounded experts.

Beyond operations at Robins AFB, 78th CPTS is also training with other services to advance the Air Force’s joint interoperability in financial management.

In 2025, two 78th CPTS Airmen participated in Diamond Saber, a U.S. Army Reserve-led exercise that brings together finance and comptroller units from across all components of the Army, Air Force and Marines, to train on warfighting functions.

The exercise focused on essential capabilities like funding the force, payment support, disbursing operations, accounting, fiscal stewardship, decision support and data analytics.

After a week in the classroom, the Airmen participated in hands-on, realistic, scenario-based exercises, allowing them to practice their skills in a simulated deployed environment, fostering the joint financial interoperability that is crucial for success in austere multi-service operations.

“They forged a lot of relationships while there, and it’s going to help further the fight and make

things run more smoothly when we go out to the field together,” said Coston. “We’re completely integrated with the Army, but this upcoming year, we’re going to incorporate more integration with the Navy.”

Due to the success of 78th CPTS’s previous involvement in Diamond Saber, eight 78th CPTS Airmen will be attending the next iteration of the exercise.

“We’re trying to collaborate with all of our mission partners,” explained Coston, “because we fight together downrange, we deploy together, and we work here together as one team.”

Grand Forks AFB begins runway resurfacing project

By **SENIOR MSGT. BREEANN SACHS**
319th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs

GRAND FORKS AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. — Work has officially begun on the \$20.4 million resurfacing project for the runway, here.

The project is estimated to take six months. The top 4 inches of existing asphalt will be removed during a mill and overlay process. This will replace 10,270 feet of the runway surface originally installed in 2005.

“The runway is about ten years past the recommended period of renovation, and we are excited to see the hard work of our civil engineers, contracting personnel and operations support personnel all come together,” said Lt. Col. Eugene Bently, commander for the 319th Civil Engineer Squadron. “This has been a highly anticipated project for years, with advocacy at multiple command levels and even within the Senate. Various key leaders may even have small chunks of our degraded runway sitting on their desk.”

To prepare for the project, the 319th Reconnaissance Wing temporarily relocated the RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 40 fleet to Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, in early April of this year.

The temporary relocation facilitates launch and recovery operations for the Global Hawk and ensures continuation of operations at the 319th RW’s geographically separated units the 7th Reconnaissance Squadron at Sigonella Naval Air Station, Italy and the 4th Reconnaissance Squadron at Yokota Air Base, Japan.

“Time and time again, our Global Hawk aircrew and maintenance personnel prove to be a very agile and adaptable,” said Col. Alfred Rosales, commander for the 319th RW. “This temporary relocation is a display of the flexibility of this aircraft and



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Trevor Gardnier

A contractor oversees the transfer of debris from a road milling machine to a material transfer truck during a runway resurfacing project at Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota, May 5, 2026. During construction, the top 4 inches of the 10,270-foot runway will be replaced through a mill and overlay process.

how laser focused our airmen are on continuing the mission. They understand the criticality of the RQ-4 and how important the situational awareness they facilitate for our joint force commanders is to the fight.”

The Global Hawks will continue to be piloted remotely by aircrew assigned to the 348th Reconnaissance Squadron at Grand Forks AFB during the relocation.

The project is estimated to be completed in September, when the RQ-4 fleet will return to Grand Forks AFB and the 319th RW and collocated mission partners will resume local flying operations.

“This project improves power projection capabilities for not just the 319th RW mission, but also our mission partners at U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Grand Forks County’s GrandSKY and will improve our support

to the University of North Dakota’s pilot training program,” said Rosales.

Rosales added, while the RQ-4 flying mission is relocated the wing’s new mission to host Air Combat Command’s Point Defense Battle Lab will continue local flying operations during the closure.

The PDBL is an initiative subordinate to ACC’s Point Defense Task Force and is tasked with exercising existing Counter-small Unmanned Aerial System technology to develop tactics, techniques and procedures necessary for U.S. Air Force installations in the continental United States to defend against aerial threats.

“The reduction in air traffic during this construction project is an opportunity for our PDBL team to increase exercises with Counter-small Unmanned Aerial Systems,” said Rosales. “They will essentially have sanitized air-

space here and can also focus on our internal drone pilot program as we work Small Unmanned Aerial Systems into wing readiness exercises and inspections.”

Rosales added, the Grand Forks community can expect a reduction in aircraft flying overhead but that isn’t reflec-

tive of the amount of work the airmen of the 319th RW are executing day in, and day out.

“Our airmen here will remain gainfully employed supporting deployments across the globe, continuing the Global Hawk mission, executing our High-Frequency

Global Communications System operations, oversight of the E-11 Battlefield Airborne Communication Node mission, supporting the Space Development Agency’s operations and surging the Air Force’s point defense capabilities,” said Rosales.



THE MISSION OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE IS

**TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN...
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Aircraft integrity: Inspectors ensure force stays battle ready



U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Ben Wheeler, 558th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron nondestructive inspector, performs an ultrasonic straight beam inspection delamination test to the outboard side of an F-15 aircraft stabilizer at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Dec. 10, 2025. NDI inspectors at Robins AFB tested the F-15 to ensure the integrity of the aircraft as part of its programmed/scheduled depot maintenance.



U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Dakota Holt, 558th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron nondestructive inspector, performs an eddy current array scan on a horizontal box beam panel for a C-5 aircraft horizontal stabilizer at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Dec. 10, 2025. The eddy current radius scan array checked for cracks and allowed NDI technicians to test the structural integrity of the aircraft skin.

By **JOSEPH MATHER**
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Before an Air Force aircraft takes to the skies, a dedicated team of inspectors at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, meticulously examines every inch of the airframe, searching for hidden flaws that could compromise safety and mission readiness.

These aren't your everyday visual checks. The

Non-Destructive Inspection team employs a sophisticated arsenal of high-tech methods to detect even the most minute imperfections.

This critical work directly supports the Air Force Structural Integrity Program ensuring aircraft remain structurally sound and warfighters have confidence in the aircraft's ability to perform the mission.

"The inspection process helps support the AFSIP, designed for maintaining structural integrity of the aircraft and instill confidence in the warfighter

of our aircraft's airworthiness," said Amy Day, a 558th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Level II non-destructive inspector.

To find these hidden flaws without harming the aircraft itself, inspectors employ a range of sophisticated techniques that allow for thorough examination with minimal disassembly.

"We use a variety of NDI methods to find flaws without ever damaging the aircraft parts. We send ultrasound waves through the metal to find hidden cracks and use a fluorescent dye

that makes tiny defects glow," said Ben Wheeler, a 558th AMXS nondestructive inspector. "The best part of NDI is that we see the results immediately, and the airframe structure remains intact."

The data collected from these inspections is invaluable, helping to determine the overall structural health of the aircraft and allowing engineers to devise appropriate solutions, known as a Total Technical Resolution.

The data collected includes cracks, stress, fatigue, gouges, corrosion,

manufacturing defects, water entrapment, foam adhesive separation and foreign objects. This data is utilized by structural engineering and various skills to determine TTR.

The process begins with rigorous training where inspectors undergo thousands of hours of training and face multiple written and practical exams to become certified. Once certified, they must take a yearly practical test to remain proficient.

While technicians prove their proficiency through

these tests, the future of the mission is advancing toward AI augmentation and integrated robotics.

Broderick Henry, a 402nd Aircraft Maintenance Support Squadron Production Support Flight supervisor, said the next evolution involves intelligent systems and collaborative robots.

"These robotics will work in tandem with both human technicians and other robotic platforms to create a more efficient, proactive and safer inspection environment," he said.

101 Critical Days of Summer safety hazards

By **JOSEPH MATHER**
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — Your safety is critical this summer. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, historically known as the '101 Critical Days of Summer'. Significant increase in accidents and injuries happen during this period, so let's prevent an accidental tragedy by proactively engaging risk management.

Consider the cost of ignoring safety: from 2021 to 2025, the Department of the Air Force lost 50 members in preventable motor vehicle accidents. In 2025 alone, we lost 8 members to water-related incidents, the highest number in five years. Plan ahead, assess the risks, and make this a safe, injury-free summer.

"Our operational readiness is directly tied to how we conduct ourselves off-duty," said Brig. Gen. Otis Jones, DAF Chief of Safety. "The tragic loss of 50 personnel on our roads over five years and eight on the water last summer shows that complacency is our deadliest adversary. We must apply the same rigorous risk management at home as we do in the workplace—it is a fundamental duty of every Airman and Guardian to protect themselves and each other."

Here are important safety hazards to be aware of and tips to help avoid them:

Travel:

Motor Vehicle Accidents: Increased road travel during vacation season leads to more accidents. Factors include distracted driving, speeding, drunk driving, drowsy driving, risk of tire blowouts and increased traffic congestion.

•Tips: Never drink and drive and follow all speed limits, keep your eyes on the road and don't drive distracted.

•**Motorcycle** Accidents: More motorcyclists on the road during the summer months, the risk of accidents. Factors include speeding, drunk riding, and no personal protective gear.

•Tips: Always wear your personal protective gear for every ride, never drink and ride and don't speed.

•**Bicycle** Accidents: Bicyclists should ride a bike that fits them, follow the rules of the road and yield the right of way to motorists.

•Tips: Always be seen, wear a properly fitting helmet and ride defensively to avoid accidents.

•**Pedestrian** Accidents: Increased pedestrian traffic, especially near tourist attractions and beaches, can lead to accidents.

•Tips: Always watch for pedestrians and pedestrians should refrain from phone distractions, use crosswalks and always look both ways.

Water:

•**Drowning:** Increased swimming, boating, and other water activities significantly raise the risk of drowning. Factors include lack of swimming ability, unsupervised children, alcohol consumption near water.

•Tips: Always keep an eye on children, use life jackets anytime you are on or near the water and never swim alone or use alcohol.

•**Boating** Accidents: Higher boating traffic leads to increased collisions, capsizing, and falls overboard. This is compounded by factors like speeding, alcohol use, operator inexperience, and lack of life jackets.

•Tips: Take a boating course, don't speed and follow all water rules, and everyone should have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket while on the boat or near the water.

•**Rip Currents:** Strong, narrow currents moving away from shore can quickly pull swimmers out to sea.

•Tips: First of all, don't panic. Don't fight the current directly, swim parallel to the shore to get out of a rip current and never swim alone.

Heat:

•**Heatstroke and Heat Exhaustion:** Prolonged exposure to high temperatures and humidity can lead to these dangerous conditions. Factors include strenuous activity in the heat, dehydration, lack of acclimatization, and underlying medical conditions.

•Tips: Know the signs to avoid heatstroke or heat exhaustion, remove the per-

son from the heat and cool them down, and call 911. Vehicles can be a danger to children and pets, the temperature inside a car can rise to deadly levels rapidly.

•**Dehydration:** Whether working on the flightline or in your yard not drinking enough fluids, especially during hot weather and physical activity, can lead to dehydration and its associated health problems.

•Tips: Drink water often and before you start feeling thirsty, as that is a sign of dehydration. Choose water or drinks high in electrolytes to stay hydrated. Remember sugary drinks, caffeine, and alcohol can dehydrate you.

•**Sunburn:** Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause sunburn, increasing the risk of skin cancer.

•Tips: Use sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher to protect you from sunburn. Use a hat or find shade.

These hazards are not exhaustive, and specific risks may vary depending on location and individual activities. It is essential to be aware of potential dangers and take appropriate precautions to stay safe during the summer months. Remember to prioritize safety, plan for the unexpected, and always be mindful of your surroundings.

"People, our most valuable resource," said Keith Lear, chief of Occupational Safety, Air Force Safety Center. "The '101 Critical Days of Summer' challenges us to protect that resource with unwavering vigilance. Don't let a preventable accident be the last chapter of your summer story. Plan, prepare, and consider the risk, bottom line, think before you do! Preventive measures you take can make this summer the best one yet!"

For additional information: <https://www.safety.af.mil/Divisions/Occupational-Safety-Division/Summer-Safety/>



U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — James Brownlee, 558th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron nondestructive inspector, reviews and makes annotations on an image while looking for water entrapment from a digital photo of a F-15 aircraft rudder at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Dec. 10, 2025. The water entrapment test was conducted to identify any fluid inside the aircraft part.



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How to run a faster 2-Mile for the Air Force Physical Fitness Readiness Assessment



U.S. Air Force photo by Jim Varhegyi

Air Force Uniform Office members 1st Lt. Avery Thomson and 2nd Lt. Maverick Wilhite participate in physical training at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio in 2021. The 2-mile run is the primary measure of cardiorespiratory fitness for the Air Force Physical Fitness Readiness Assessment.

By GREG CHADWICK

Air Force Materiel Command
Office of the Command Surgeon
General

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The 2-mile run is the primary measure of cardiorespiratory fitness for the Air Force Physical Fitness Readiness Assessment.

The 2-mile run tests your aerobic endurance — your body's ability to use oxygen efficiently during prolonged physical effort. The 2-mile run isn't just about passing a fitness assessment; it's about building the stamina needed for military readiness.

Training to run faster is most effective when utilizing the following core training principles:

◦ **Progressive Overload:** Gradually increase workout intensity and volume. Too much overload too soon leads to musculoskeletal injury.

◦ **Specificity:** Train according to the goal. Focus on runs that mimic the 2-mile run's demands. Running is more effective for improving 2-mile run score than cycling.

◦ **Variety:** Use different workouts to target endurance, speed, and lactate threshold conditioning.

◦ **Recovery:** Include rest days to let your body adapt and grow stronger. Do not ignore recovery because your body can only improve if it has time to rebuild.

◦ **Consistency:** Stick to the plan for steady improvement.

Running faster isn't just about pushing yourself harder- it's about training smarter. Brandon Powers, 88th Air Base Wing Operational Support Team strength and conditioning specialist, offers the following training

tips to build endurance, improve speed, lower injury risk, and run faster on your 2-mile run.

1. Develop the base fitness foundation with consistent, moderate-effort running workouts

Powers advises Airmen to ease into hard running workouts. "Increase running volume slowly to avoid overuse injuries like shin splints," states Powers.

For an Airman returning to running after being off 4+ weeks, Powers recommends a walk-to-run program. A walk-to-run program gradually builds running stamina by alternating intervals of walking and jogging, typically starting with 1-2-minute jogs and longer walking recovery over 8 weeks. This method reduces injury risk, improves endurance, and allows an Airman to comfortably reach 20-30 minutes of continuous running.

2. Utilize different types of run training methods to build endurance, improve speed, and enhance lactate threshold. "A good training regimen should include long slow distance, interval training, and continuous sustained effort conditioning," states Powers.

Long Slow Distance runs (LSD) build endurance, improves cardiovascular efficiency, and strengthens muscles and joints to handle the stress of high-volume running.

"The intensity of LSD work is low to moderate, so your pace should feel relatively easy and relaxed," states Powers. To establish the appropriate training intensity, aim to workout at 55-75% of your maximum heart rate (maximum heart rate = 220 -your age).

To calculate Target Heart Rate Training Zone for a 25-year-old:

1. Determine Maximum Heart Rate (MHR): 220-25= 195 beats per minute (bpm)

2. LSD Target Heart Rate Zone: 55-75% of MHR

3. LSD lower zone: 55% of MHR: 195 x 0.55 = 107 bpm

4. LSD upper zone: 75% of MHR: 195 x 0.75= 146 bpm

5. Target Heart Rate Zone: 107 bpm-146 bpm.

How to measure:

◦ **Manual pulse:** Count beats on your wrist (radial artery) or neck (carotid artery) for 30 seconds and multiply by 2, or count beats for 10 seconds and multiply by 6.

◦ **Wearable devices:** Use smartwatches or chest strap monitors.

Knowing your target heart rate helps you pace your workouts. Exercising at the right level of intensity will help you avoid burning out or wasting time with a workout that's not vigorous enough to help you meet your goals.

When you first start training, aim for the lower bpm number for your age range. As you get fitter, you can slowly work towards the higher number.

If you don't have access to heart rate monitoring, you can use the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale to gauge your intensity. RPE is a subjective measure to use for a single effort. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the greatest effort, the LSD workout should feel like a 5.

For LSD workouts, focus more on duration than intensity. Powers recommends that the LSD training schedule start with 20 min runs at a comfortable pace for weeks 1-2, pro-

gressing to 30-40 minute runs for weeks 5-6. Goal is 30-40 minutes of easy activity.

Practicing running faster for specific periods or distances is key to improving your 2-mile run time. Interval training alternates short, intense work intervals with periods of recovery.

"Interval training improves running speed by conditioning your body to adapt to training intensities higher than your normal LSD running pace," states Powers.

The desired training effect from the short bursts of intense running activity is to get your heart, lungs and active muscles acclimated to exercising at a higher level, which makes it easier for you to do more work at the elevated training level over time.

When performing interval training, the work interval (fast run) is followed immediately by an active recovery interval (walk). An appropriate work-to-recovery ratio for improving speed is 1:2. For example, during the work (run) interval, you will run at a brisk pace for 30 seconds. During the recovery (walk) interval you will walk for 60 seconds. Completing the 30 second run and 60 second recovery is one repetition.

Powers offers an example of a basic interval workout to improve running speed:

◦ 10-minute warm-up with walk/light jog, dynamic warm-up/movement preparation.

◦ Start intervals- Run at a brisk pace for 30 seconds.

◦ Recover for 60 seconds by slowing down to an easy jog or a walk.

◦ Repeat run interval-30 seconds/recovery inter-

val-60 seconds for 3-4 repetitions.

◦ 10-minute cooldown-walk/stretch

Interval training is not about sprinting. A targeted speed that you can maintain in all repetitions through the total workout is most important. The difficulty lies not in a single repetition, but in a series of repetitions. Work on consistency, trying to keep little variation between your fastest and slowest interval and pacing yourself to be fastest at the end of the workout.

Prior to beginning an interval training program, an Airman should establish a foundational conditioning level of fitness. The base level is consistent running activity for several weeks (2-3 times a week for 20 minutes of LSD running). The base fitness level will prepare your muscles and joints for the increased intensity of interval training.

Powers advises that when starting interval training, an Airman should prioritize safety by gradually easing into the workouts to avoid overtraining and injury. Begin with shorter, less intense intervals and progressively increase the intensity and duration as your fitness improves.

Tempo/threshold runs are workouts designed to improve your lactate threshold- the intensity at which lactic acid begins to accumulate in your blood faster than your body can clear it.

You can increase the threshold at which lactate builds up in your bloodstream with tempo/threshold runs. That means you can go faster for longer, without getting worn out.

Powers recommends a tempo/threshold run

should be performed at a "comfortably hard" pace. The workout should be demanding but not totally exhausting. On the Rating of Perceived Exertion Scale of 1-10, with 10 being the greatest effort possible, the workout should feel like

6-8. These sessions typically involve running for 6-8 minutes without stopping at a pace approximately 90% of the maximal pace you could hold for that duration.

When starting tempo/threshold workouts, 2-3 repetitions of 6-8 minutes is sufficient. As fitness levels improve, interval repetitions and duration per workout increase. When performing tempo/threshold runs, allow sufficient recovery between repetitions so you can maintain the desired intensity of 90% of maximal pace. A reasonable recovery period is approximately half of the work time. During this time, keep moving at a low intensity- slow jog or brisk walk. Do not come to a complete stop.

Keep a record of your training. Record basic information such as time and distance for run workouts including individual times for each interval. A tangible record of your performances allows you to establish specific goals and can increase your motivation to train. Training records make it easier to avoid training mistakes or recognize potential problems before they become serious.

The Warfighter's Fitness Playbook offers detailed guidance on workouts, recovery strategies, sleep optimization, and nutrition- all interconnected elements essential for sustained performance.

'The hose is our lifeline in a fire': Robins Fire and Emergency Services team conducts annual hose testing

By **CARCE**

78th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — The 78th Civil Engineering Squadron's Fire and Emergency Services team recently conducted their annual hose testing, working diligently on one truck's worth of hoses at a time.

Although hose testing might seem routine, it directly supports both mission readiness and safety. This helps them identify faulty hoses ahead of time, ensuring they can eliminate potential risks before responding to emergencies.

"We perform this every year to ensure that if we have to use any of our hoses on an emergency, we won't be surprised by any damage or wear and tear that could potentially cause that hose to fail," said Quinton Doss, 78th CES firefighter. "The hose is our lifeline in a fire, and this is our way of making sure our lifeline is dependable."

Doss explained if they have a hose that fails during an emergency response, the

fire team is ready to react. They have back up hoses ready to deploy as needed, or worst-case scenario, they would call for a rescue team, who would then arrive with their own hose line to intervene.

After the emergency, the failed hose would be annotated by the hose testing team as out of service and replace it with an in-service hose. All firefighters are trained in how to maintain the hoses. However, to ensure continuity, they have a designated group of three firefighters who oversee the program.

"An untested hose is an unknown," Doss said. "If an untested hose fails while we're using it to try to save someone's life, then that's just one thing that could have been easily prevented. We do what we do to ensure that no matter what, our equipment will not fail us. It's quite simple, but it's just one more important part of all the things we do here to ensure our community receives the highest level of protection and service possible."



U.S. Air Force photo by C Arce

Daryl Young, 78th Civil Engineering Squadron's Fire and Emergency Services firefighter, pulls a fire hose at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, April 8, 2026. The team conducted their annual hose testing, which helps them identify faulty hoses ahead of time, ensuring they can eliminate potential risks before responding to emergencies.



U.S. Air Force photo by C Arce

Quinton Doss, 78th Civil Engineering Squadron's Fire and Emergency Services firefighter, tightens a fire hose coupling at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, April 8, 2026. The team conducted their annual hose testing by testing one truck's worth of hoses at a time and pressurized them to either 200 or 300 psi, depending on the diameter of the hose.



U.S. Air Force photo by C Arce

Adam Hopper, 78th Civil Engineering Squadron's Fire and Emergency Services firefighter, tightens a fire hose coupling at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, April 8, 2026.

778th CES Fire and Emergency Services Flight primed for pediatric care



U.S. Air Force photo by Lauren Boggs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Sarah Grove, United Medevac Services paramedic, shows first responders with the 778th Civil Engineer Squadron how to secure a child onto a stretcher during pediatric refresher training at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, April 24, 2026. The paramedic also helped train infant and child CPR during the class.

By **LAUREN BOGGS**
78th Air Base Wing

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — In April, first responders with the 778th Civil Engineer Squadron Fire and Emergency Services Flight at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, were called to a high-stress scene: an active childbirth on base where a newborn was in respiratory distress.

Relying on their training, emergency medical technicians were able to assist in the breech delivery and restore the infant's breathing, ultimately saving one of the tiniest members of Team Robins.

Real-world emergencies like this highlight the importance of continuous training in emergency medical care. Just weeks after the successful delivery, the first responders completed

pediatric CPR and transport training April 20-24, 2026.

"Just like out in the city, we have children who live on our base, so we have to be prepared for any type of emergency from adults to infants," said Patrick Gilbert, 778th CES battalion fire chief of training.

The 778th CES's EMTs are qualified to provide care for patients of all ages, participating in regular training in adult and pediatric care to keep their certifications current and their skills sharp. Gilbert noted that this readiness is critical for the wide variety of calls the squadron responds to.

"We do everything from pediatrics, adults, trauma and respiratory to special needs care. We have to be ready for any issue

that could come up," added Gilbert.

Pediatric emergency calls are widely known to be among the most high-stress situations for first responders. To ensure they are prepared, the training put the first responders through full-scale simulated scenarios known as "mega codes."

The EMTs assessed and treated a simulated pediatric cardiac arrest from initial contact all the way through advanced life support interventions, practicing chest compressions, using bag-valve masks for rescue breaths, and applying an automated external defibrillator, or AED, on infants and children.

Beyond life-saving medical interventions, the training also featured a quick in-service on pediatric transport. Paramedics with on-base ambulance services provided a hands-on demonstration of a newly implemented ambulance child restraint system.

Because standard ambulance stretchers are designed for adults, securing a small child for transport can be a unique challenge. The transport kits feature harnesses that attach directly to the adult stretcher. This system safely secures children, acting like a specialized seatbelt to ensure they remain safe while the ambulance is in motion.

By combining realistic scenario training with the latest transport equipment, the 778th CES ensures they are always ready to protect the youngest and most vulnerable members of Team Robins.

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America 250 Robins legacy: A brief history of Robins AFB during World War II era

By **WILLIAM HEAD**
78th Air Base Wing History
Office

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – When the War Department gave official approval for the construction of an Army Air Depot in Georgia June 14, 1941, leadership believed it would be part of a long-range plan to prepare American defenses in case of war. Instead, the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor gave urgency to the construction of this vital military base. Construction had officially begun on the new Georgia Air Depot, located 16 miles south of Macon, Georgia, Sept. 1, 1941.

The name of the new air field and depot honored the memory of Brig. Gen. Augustine Warner Robins, one of the Army Air Corps' first general staff officers and commander of the Fairfield Air Intermediate Depot, Ohio, from 1921 to 1928; and deputy commander of the Materiel Division, Wright Field, Ohio, from 1931 to 1933, and commander from 1935 to 1939.

Spurred on by the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor and American entry into World War II, builders completed the new airfield's industrial and cantonment areas by August 31, 1942. The second and third phases were completed by April 10, 1943. As a rule, parades and military celebrations were held to a minimum during World War II, particularly in the early years when the outcome was still in doubt. Neither the president nor U.S. military leaders deemed it appropriate to hold formal military ceremonies since nothing had been won as of April 1943.



Courtesy Photo

As America marks 250 years of American independence, Team Robins is proud to honor the nation's history, values and all those who have served in defense its freedom. The construction of Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, began Sept. 1, 1941, and all three phases were completed April 10, 1943.

However, in the case of Warner Robins Army Air Depot, the local citizenry was so enthusiastic and so insistent that the depot commander, Col. Charles E. Thomas, agreed to hold the dedication ceremonies anyway. An earlier example of this local enthusiasm had been the willingness of Wellston city fathers to rename their town to Warner Robins Sept. 1, 1942. This

action allowed Thomas to name both the field and the depot after his mentor and friend, the late Robins.

"It is most gratifying that such an important project bears the name of one who held supply and maintenance functions so close to his heart, and who inspired so many improvements in the performance of these functions," Thomas said during a dedication ceremony for Robins.

Known as the Georgia Air Depot during the early days, the depot's name has had many incarnations during its history. During World War II, it was re-designated seven times. It was known as the Southeast Air Depot, Wellston Air Depot, Wellston Army Air Depot, Warner Robins Army Air Depot, Warner Robins Air Depot Control Area

Command, Warner Robins Air Service Command, and Warner Robins Air Technical Services Command. Throughout the war, the installation performed an essential role in winning and restoring peace. Not only did depot personnel repair aircraft weapon systems, such as the B-17, B-25 and B-29, but they also maintained spares, trained Air Corps troops and overseas repair

personnel, flight tested aircraft, and trained pilots.

Originally, Robins Field consisted of just over 3,000 acres valued at \$1 million. The original construction cost just over \$20 million. Today, Robins AFB is situated on over 8,000 acres of an upper coastal plain, of which 2,300 acres are natural wetlands and 1,150 acres are timberlands.

JUNETEENTH

A Celebration of Freedom & Resilience

ANNUAL FREEDOM FESTIVAL

JUNE 20, 2026

3:00 – 8:00 PM

**NORTH HOUSTON SPORTS COMPLEX
900 N. HOUSTON ROAD**

