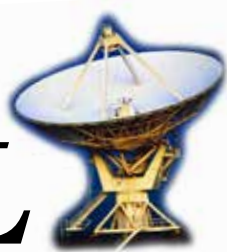


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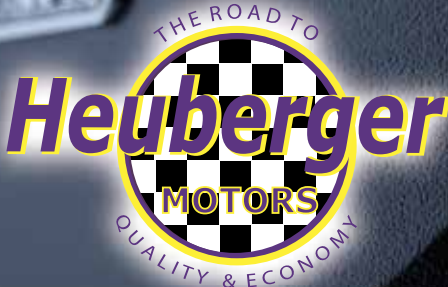
Vol. 13 No. 1

YEAR *in* Review

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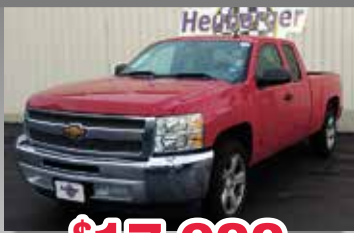
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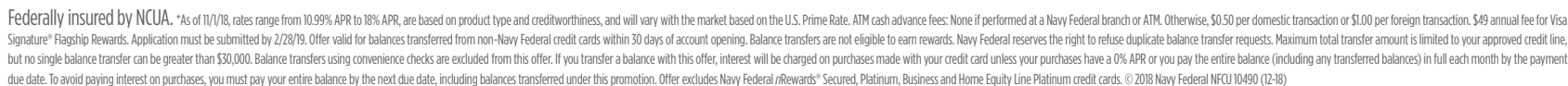
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YEAR IN REVIEW: Schriever charts way through space, future



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman William Tracy

The 2nd Space Operations Squadron operations floor is a flurry of activity during 2nd SOPS's formal command of Architecture Evolution Plan 7.5 at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Nov. 16, 2018. Airmen worked extensively to ensure a smooth integration of the biggest GPS architectural change in operational history, improving squadron cybersecurity capabilities and overall operations. The formal command and the launch of the first GPS III satellite in December closed out a dynamic year for space and cyberspace and furthered the 50th Space Wing's dominance as its epicenter.

By Senior Airman William Tracy
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — This past year brought a unprecedented focus on the ever evolving space and cyberspace warfighting realms, with the 50th Space Wing advancing its dominance as the epicenter of space through a series of notable achievements.

The year commemorating the 26th anniversary of the wing began with Airmen throughout the wing successfully executing a week-long repair and reconstruction of the base's power in addition to the successful deployment of space operations to alternate locations.

"We had seven straight days of activity and when we tallied up the numbers we had a total of 575 people working, intensely over the three day weekend," said Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th SW commander, during a commander's call. "You did it and you made it look easy. We just proved we could do what nobody thought we could, without a severe impact to operations."

The 1st Space Operations Squadron accepted control authority of a new satellite during an on base ceremony in March. The Operationally Responsive Space-5 satellite furthered the 50th SW's power projection providing increased global situational awareness of space objects.

"ORS-5 is definitely a game changer," said Maj. Patrick Gaynor, 1st SOPS operations officer. "Because this satellite flies directly over the equator, it gives us a different capability to bring on board. Instead of only seeing parts of the geosynchronous belt, we're seeing the satellite constantly scan it."

The event shows the expansion of the wing's influence, part of the evolution of space and cyberspace warfighting superiority through integrated and innovative operations.

Additionally, 1st SOPS combined its Geosynchronous Space



U.S. Air Force graphic by 1st Lt. Scarlett Trujillo

Modeled after the Air Force Space Command's "Shark Tank" competition, 2018 marked the beginning of the 50th Space Wing's Innovative Warfighters Advancing Readiness program, a source of new ideas and a landmark event for the year. The program has Airmen pitch their ideas for funding directly to wing leadership, with many ideas earning funding throughout the year.

Situational Awareness and Space Based Space Surveillance ops floors to full functionality in April.

Midway through the year, the wing started its Innovative Warfighters Advancing Readiness program, seeking innovative ideas from Airmen of all ranks throughout the base.

The program, based on the Air Force Space Command's "Shark Tank," encourages Airmen to submit their ideas to improve the wing and then present their ideas and proposals to a leadership panel.

The iWAR program fostered many successful ideas, such as a 2nd Space Operations Squadron Mission Planning Cell multimedia computer to increase their ability to support users in theater.

The wing's operational effectiveness starts with individual Airmen, with life on the home front essential to the mission.

The summer was in line with the 50th SW priority of take care of Airmen and their families always through 50th Force Support Squadron events such as the monthly First Fridays, which brings Airmen from all squadrons together for a chance to unwind and relax.

October marked the successful launch of the Advanced Extremely High Frequency Four satellite and the 4th Space Operations Squadron's successful contact minutes after.

"This launch provides some new capabilities as far as security and increasing bandwidth for our strategic and tactical users," said Lt. Col. Armon Lansing, 4th SOPS commander.

AEHF-4, as the name indicates, is the fourth satellite in the AEHF satellite system, each satellite providing greater capacity than the entire five-satellite Milstar program; a major step for the wing's dominating presence in space.

In November, the 2nd SOPS's achieved a GPS milestone installing and taking formal command of Architecture Evolution Plan 7.5, the largest GPS architectural change in operational history.

"Our cybersecurity capabilities are improved and this postures us to better operate in a contested, degraded and

See **Future** page 5

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U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Dalton Williams

United Launch Alliance's Atlas V Advance Extremely High Frequency Four rocket as it launches from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, Oct. 17, 2018. The 4th Space Operations Squadron made first contact with AEHF satellite minutes after launch, a major milestone in 2018 for the squadron and wing as the satellite adds increased operational capabilities.

Future

From page 4

operationally-limited environment,” said 1st Lt. Jonathan Campbell, 2nd SOPS assistant operations flight commander.

The successful installation and command of AEP 7.5 sets the platform for the installation of AEP 8.0, which will deliver the capability to command and control new GPS III satellites, planning and posturing for tomorrow’s engagements, a wing priority.

“This will provide combat ready space warfighters delivering position, navigation and timing to optimize the full range of Air Force, joint force and civilian operations, across all domains,” Campbell said.

The year concluded with the launch of the first GPS III satellite from Cape

Canaveral, Florida, Dec. 23, providing stronger GPS capabilities than ever. Its launch is a marking point for the future of 2nd SOPS and GPS, and ushers in a new era of space and cyberspace power projection for the 50th SW.

On top of all these milestones, throughout the year the 50th SW Inspector General’s office conducted more than 20 horizontal and vertical inspections and five onsite inspections ensuring the wing is mission ready all the time, a proactive approach that unites the base to be prepared now and into the future, fulfilling the 50th SW vision.

These achievements cumulate a dynamic year of milestones. Decades after the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing’s activation as the 50th SW at then Falcon Air Force Base, Colorado, the wing continues to serve as the epicenter of space now and into the new year.

Editor’s note: Senior Airman Arielle Vasquez, contributed to this article.



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U.S. Air Force photo by Halle Thornton

Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th Space Wing commander, briefs attendees on the 50th SW mission, vision and priorities during the annual State of the Base at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, March 7, 2018. Attendees spent the morning learning about the installation's progress and future endeavors. The event serves a key time for base officials and civic dignitaries to enhance long-standing partnerships.



U.S. Air Force photo by Christopher DeWitt

Airmen take a look at new technology at the Tech Expo in the Schriever Air Force Base Fitness Center, Colorado, March 20, 2018. Approximately 150 people turned out to the event, which served as an open forum for industry partners to showcase their latest mission-centric technologies. Community members and Airmen were able to bond at the event, which was part of a larger effort to strengthen bonds.

YEAR IN REVIEW: Strengthening community bonds

By Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE, Colo. — The 50th Space Wing always aims to maintain its close relationship with the local community and 2018 was no exception.

In February, Airmen from the 50th Operations Support Squadron donated 122 man hours sorting more than 11,000 pounds of food for needy families throughout the state with the Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado.

“It’s a huge impact,” said Joanna Wise, CSFBSC marketing and communications director. “To give perspective, they organized and sorted 9,000 meals that will be distributed throughout Southern Colorado.”

The event’s organizer, Staff Sgt. Yakov Kim, 50th OSS staff instructor, said the goal was to give back while strengthening partnerships.

“Schriever is a little out of the way,” Kim said. “To form stronger bonds with our community, we have to make an effort to get out there and say, ‘hey, we’re here, we appreciate you and we want to give back.’”

Wise agreed.

“We have such a great partnership,” she said. “Our Air Force members already do so much for our country so for them to take the extra step and give back locally ... there’s nothing more inspiring.”

Later in February, members of Leadership



U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

Children wave American flags during a Veterans Day appreciation event at Ellicott High School in Ellicott, Colorado, Nov. 8, 2018. Base leadership and personnel attended the event to honor those who have or serve today. The event was one of many attended by 50th Space Wing personnel as part of a year-long effort to strengthen community ties.

Pikes Peak, a local organization working to build community-centric leaders in the Pikes Peak Region, visited the base to engage with base leaders. Attendees were able to gain a better appreciation of the base’s mission and economic impact, as well as share valuable leadership principles.

In March, base leadership welcomed 37 Colorado Springs community leaders at its annual State of the Base to strengthen relationships with their civic counterparts. During the State of the Base, leaders briefed 50th Space Wing missions, installation challenges and future opportunities.

“We are really in a new era and we have adjusted and adapted our mission to ensure we evolve our space and cyberspace superiority through innovation and collaboration,” said Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th SW commander. “Our mission is expanding.”

Later in March, more than 30 civilian vendors hailing from space, cyberspace and administrative disciplines, in the local community, gathered for a technology expo that served as an open forum for industry partners to showcase their latest mission-centric technologies.

Tech. Sgt. Lee Cobb, 25th Space Range Squadron non-commissioned officer in charge of cyber operations, saw the event as crucial to maintaining important relationships.

“Nowadays, we work hand-in-hand with civilians and contractors,” he said. “I think these events are key because it helps foster a working relationship with people on the leading edge of technology.”

Nicholas Cakounes, one of the event vendors, said process improvement and sharing knowledge are key takeaways for many of the exhibitors.

“We have a great relationship with the military,” he said. “These shows give us a chance to meet our end users and get feedback. Collaboration is important for any kind of advancement in technology. We all

See **Community** page 7



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Yakov Kim

Airmen from the 50th Operations Support Squadron gather in front of Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Jan. 29, 2018. The volunteers donated a total of 122 man hours sorting more than 11,000 pounds of food for needy families throughout the state. The event was just one of many opportunities in which the 50th SW gave back to the community as a demonstration of gratitude and partnership.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster

Senior Airman Xavier Brezniak, 50th Operations Group staff evaluator, throws the first pitch at the Colorado Springs Sky Sox game versus the Oklahoma City Dodgers at Security Service Field, Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 12, 2018. The Sky Sox hosted a U.S. Air Force appreciation night where they honored Airmen and their family members. Base leadership selected Brezniak to throw the first pitch due to his acceptance into the United States Air Force Academy. The event was one of many attended by 50th Space Wing personnel as part of a year-long effort to strengthen community ties.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster

Chief Master Sgt. Boston Alexander, 50th Space Wing command chief; Col. Jacob Middleton, 50th SW vice commander and Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th SW commander, enjoy the 78th annual Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo Parade, in downtown Colorado Springs, Colorado, July 10, 2018. The Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo has been a Colorado Springs tradition since 1937, showcasing the top rodeo talent and action, while providing entertainment for the Pikes Peak community. The event was one of many attended by base leadership as part of a year-long effort to strengthen partnerships.

Community

From page 6

have expertise and knowledge that needs to be shared.”

In May, Schriever AFB leadership participated in a Front Range Tribal Relations meeting in Colorado Springs. The purpose of the meeting was to build relationships with tribal leaders that have or may have an interest in the resources on the land encompassed by Front Range military installations.

“The mission and goal of these meetings is to become one team in collaboration with tribal members and installation commanders to identify and preserve tribal landmarks and interests,” Grant said.

“I believe that these meetings are good in that local commanders can meet with tribal officials, discuss a collective future and make arrangements on their level to benefit culturally both tribal and military interests,” said Steve Vance, Cheyenne River Sioux tribe, South Dakota. “Acknowledging the presence of Native Americans across America and preserving the culture is the ultimate benefit.”

The Airman and Family Readiness Center hosted a volunteer expo in May with the theme of community partnership. Ten non-profit groups and community organizations from throughout the Front Range attended, looking for individuals willing to step up and serve their community.

“I thought it was a great event to have all options in one area,” said Alexandra Finan, Children’s Literacy Center volunteer. “This is amazing for allowing members to match their skills with organizations and have dialogue with prospective groups like mine. I have also found resources I can pass on to my group and other groups.”

“We are really in a new era and we have adjusted and adapted our mission to ensure we evolve our space and cyberspace superiority through innovation and collaboration.”

— Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th SW commander

Several of the volunteers were impressed with the attendance and enthusiasm of the installation.

“The base staff and military members attending were engaged, attentive and asked great questions,” said Uriko Stout, Court Appointed Special Advocates of the Pikes Peak Region volunteer recruitment manager. “The military not only serve our country but look for ways to connect with their local community as well.”

In June, eight Schriever AFB firefighters teamed up with four Falcon fire department firefighters for a fire training exercise strengthening community ties and future response efforts.

“We’ve had mutual aid agreements for many years, and we’ve done some building familiarization, but haven’t trained together very often,” said Jeff Petersma, Falcon FD deputy chief. “This was just a great opportunity and I hope we get to come out here more in the future.”

With warm weather peaking in July, base leadership attended the 78th Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo parade, in downtown Colorado Springs. The Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo supports service members and their families as-

signed to Front Range military installations.

As the school year loomed on the horizon, helping agencies, local community school representatives and other organizations hosted a back to school seminar at Schriever AFB in August.

Parents had the opportunity to register their children for school as well as learn about on and off base educational resources. Children received hands-on bus safety training, petted live falcons and watched a military working dog demonstration during the action-packed day.

Rebecca Howland, Ellicott Middle School principal, was on hand for the event.

“This is a fantastic event,” she said. “We love our Schriever families. This is my first year as principal and I really wanted to come meet the families. It’s important parents know we are committed to our military children and they will receive the best education in the best environment.”

The base invited Oscar Sladek, a Holocaust survivor, to speak during Days of Remembrance in August to share his and his family’s struggle.

“My Holocaust started at the age of five,” Sladek said. “Kids at school slowly started to distance themselves from me as their parents gave in to political pressure and threat of violence from the authorities.”

Senior Airman Adrian Ordonez, High Frontier Honor Guard guardsman at the time, took Sladek’s words to heart.

“It’s important to remember the events that happened and has reminded us of what prejudice, intolerance, and injustice can do to everyone,” he said. “It reminds us to not repeat what happened in the past. Mr. Sladek stressed the propaganda was so strong from Nazi Germany that even the best of people can turn and do the worst things.”

In mid-September, ten Schriever members volunteered as mentors at a Good Grief Camp event in Denver, Colorado.

See Bonds page 8



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U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class William Tracy

Airmen from the 50th Space Wing face off with Ellicott High School faculty members during the second match of Ellicott High School's donkey basketball mini tournament in Ellicott High School, Ellicott, Colorado, Sept. 20, 2018. The team from Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, won the match, advancing to the championship game. The event served as a means for Ellicott community members and Airmen to strengthen bonds.

Bonds

From page 7

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors sponsored the two-day event, pairing mentors with children who lost family members to provide support, establish communication and maintain a military connection.

Airman Kalissa Vue, 50th FSS career development journeyman, said this was her first time attending a Good Grief Camp.

“My favorite part of the experience was building a connection with my mentee,” she said. “She lost her dad when she was a baby, so she didn’t remember anything about him, but she expressed to me she wished he was here. From the start, she was open and excited to do everything we had planned. It was a wonderful experience to be able to mentor her and I am looking forward to meeting with her and her mom for future events.”

In one of the more unusual events of the year, ten Schriever Airmen went head-to-head against Ellicott High School students and faculty members during a donkey basketball mini tournament in late September at Ellicott, Colorado.

Each team consisted of four riders who substituted in between two eight minute matches making up a 16 minute set. Schriever AFB’s ten-person team prevailed over the high school faculty members’ team in the first set with a score of 6-4, before moving on to the eight minute championship match.

The title match pitted the Schriever AFB team against the Ellicott boys team, which ultimately required a rock-paper-scissors tiebreaker, with the Ellicott teaming winning in the end.

In November, Schriever Airmen, from a variety of ranks and squadrons, participated in the annual Colorado Springs Veteran’s Day Parade in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Also, during this time, the Ellicott community honored veterans, including Schriever Airmen, during a Veteran’s Day assembly at Ellicott High School Nov. 9.

Throughout the year, Schriever members supported game festivities, including throwing out the first pitches and singing the national anthem for the Colorado Springs Sky Sox, who held several Military Appreciation Nights.

Additionally, Team Schriever demonstrated their community support through volunteer opportunities, creating care packages for deployed Airmen and the annual Angel Tree program supporting base and Ellicott families in need.

In all, Schriever conducted 44 community events and 18 tours showcasing the base’s mission and facilities to more than 500 people. Additionally, base officials attended 32 civic meetings designed to strengthen the partnerships.

Strengthened relationships with the local community proved fruitful in tangible ways. Throughout the year, community partners championed improved access to the base, conducted surveys and identified potential projects to address concerns along Highway 94. Additionally, local civic leaders and community sponsors supported our monthly and annual events with donations, recognition awards, and refreshments.

As we head into 2019, the 50th SW will bolster community relations by continuing to host annual events like the State of the Base, partnering with Ellicott, as well as welcoming new opportunities on the horizon.

Editor’s note: Halle Thornton, Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster and Cameron Hunt contributed to this article.



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YEAR IN REVIEW: GSU's strengthen connection, mission

By Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — The 50th Space Wing's Geographically Separated Units furthered their vital world mission, building on connections and missions this past year.

In February, Ka'ena Point Satellite Tracking Station celebrated 59 years of service in space operations. The tracking station, located on Ka'ena Point above Keawa'ula Bay, Hawaii, is one of eight Air Force Satellite Control Network sites enabling satellite command and control use for launch and on-orbit operations to more than 185 Department of Defense, allied and civil space systems.

In April on the other side of the country, the 23rd Space Operations Squadron showcased their readiness racing to neutralize a simulated active shooter threat for an inspection and short sprint exercise at New Boston Air Force Station, New Hampshire.

Airmen on the installation exhibited their professional response to the simulated emergency and quick acclimation to active shooter lockdown protocols.

"This is the first time we have done an exercise in conjunction with an inspection," said Tech. Sgt. Martin Howard, section chief of wing exercises with the 50th SW Inspector General's Office.

Security forces personnel were able to gain control of the simulated active shooter incident in a short amount of time, demonstrating professionalism and readiness.

"The exercise portion of our visit was important," said Capt. Joseph Villapando, then wing exercise program manager with the 50th SW IG. "New Boston AFS is in a class of its own when you are talking about geographically separated units. They don't fall under another base for exercises like our other GSU's, they are responsible for conducting their own exercises."

Keeping spirits light, the 23rd SOPS, defeated the 6th Space Warning Squadron in the annual New England Space Cup, a golf tournament at Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton, Massachusetts, May 9, avoiding taking home an ugly rug, a "hideous" symbol of defeat for the event's losers.

According to tradition, the rug must be prominently displayed in the losing squadron's director of operation's office until the next year's tournament.

Lt. Col. Kenneth Holmes, 23rd SOPS commander, highlighted the value of such an event for his squadron and cohesion between the units.

"Working as a team is vital to the success of the squadron," Holmes said. "Participating in sporting events is a good way to learn how to work as a team and carries over into the work environment. We are able to compare notes and build a relationship that will benefit us in the future."

In the summer, Ka'ena Point recognized members for heroic acts of service within the community.

Two members from Detachment 3, 21st Space Operations Squadron, at the tracking station earned the Air Force Civilian Award for Valor, at Ka'ena Point, July 23.

Nearly two years ago, Jason Fukumoto, electrician, Detachment 3, 21st Space Operations Squadron and Robin Albios, heating, ventilation and air conditioning specialist, Det. 3, 21st SOPS, risked their lives to save a member of the state of Hawaii's volunteer field crew.

On Sept. 15 2016, three members of a volunteer field crew were clearing an area near KPSTS to prepare for game bird season at Kuaokala Game Area, Hawaii. While spraying herbicide, the field crew discovered a small patch of grass burning underneath their vehicle.

David Yingst, a member of the field crew, jumped out of the vehicle to extinguish the fire while the other two crew members

See **Mission** page 10



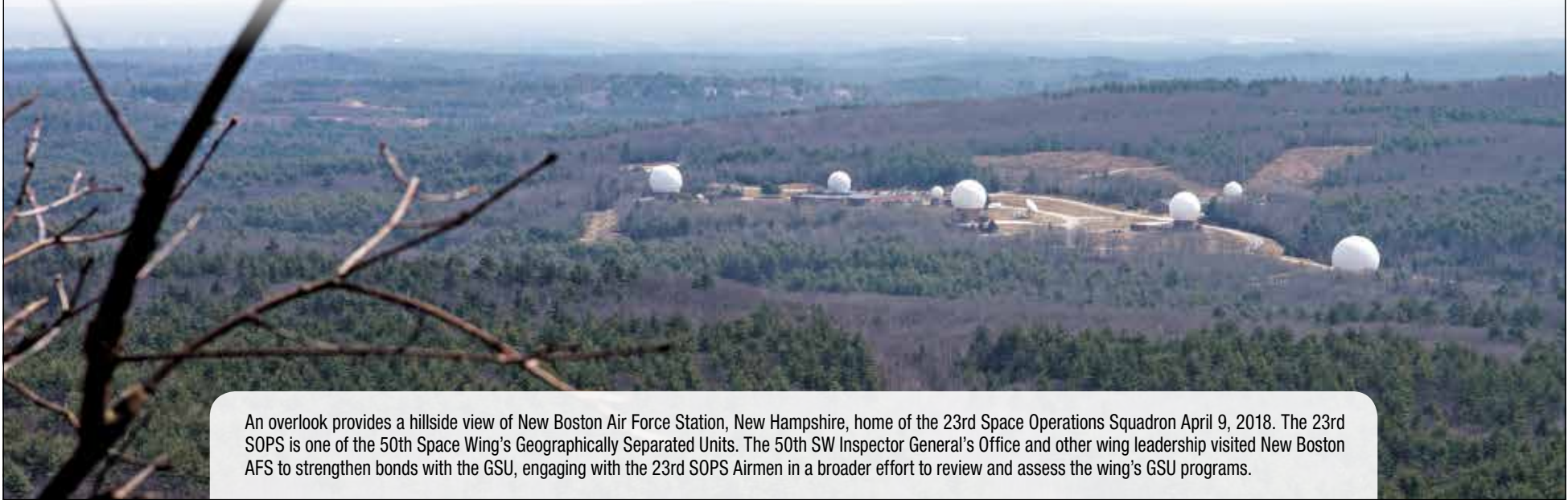
U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster

Ralph Marschhausen and Matthew Nolan, Security guards with the 23rd Space Operations Squadron, prepare to clear the 23rd SOPS command section office in Building 100 at New Boston Air Force Station, New Hampshire, April 10, 2018. Marschhausen and Nolan swiftly responded to the active shooter threat exercise scenario, conducted by the 50th Space Wing Inspector General's office during their inspection visit to the wing's geographically separated unit.



Photo courtesy of SpaceX

A Falcon 9 carrying GPS III SV01 lifts off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, Dec. 23, 2018. The first GPS III to be launched will join the current GPS constellation comprised of 31 operational spacecraft. GPS satellites operate in medium earth orbit at an altitude of approximate 12,550 miles in six planes.



An overlook provides a hillside view of New Boston Air Force Station, New Hampshire, home of the 23rd Space Operations Squadron April 9, 2018. The 23rd SOPS is one of the 50th Space Wing's Geographically Separated Units. The 50th SW Inspector General's Office and other wing leadership visited New Boston AFS to strengthen bonds with the GSU, engaging with the 23rd SOPS Airmen in a broader effort to review and assess the wing's GSU programs.

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Heather Redman

Jason Fukumoto, Detachment 3, 21st Space Operations Squadron electrician, and Robin Albios, Det. 3, 21st SOPS heating, ventilation and air conditioning specialist, pose for a photo after earning the Air Force Civilian Award for Valor at the Ka'ena Point Satellite Tracking Station, Hawaii, July 23, 2018. Two years ago, Fukumoto and Albios provided medical aid to a state of Hawaii volunteer field crew member who suffered from smoke inhalation during a fire at the Kuaokala Game Management Area.



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

Members of the 23rd Space Operations Squadron display the winner's trophy following the New England Space Cup, a golf tournament at Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton, Massachusetts, May 10, 2018. The 23rd SOPS defeated the 6th Space Warning Squadron and avoided taking home the ugly rug, a symbol of defeat and object of good natured ribbing in the tournament.

Mission

From page 9

moved the vehicle to a safe area. Yingst attempted to control the fire, but the fire extinguisher stopped working.

Fukumoto and Albios were driving along the perimeter of the station when they came across the field crew. While they assisted the two state workers in the vehicle, Yingst collapsed from the smoke before he could reach the designated rally point.

After discovering Yingst was left behind in the fire hazard, Fukumoto and Albios ran into the fire area to help Yingst.

"Our first instinct was to help someone out," added Fukumoto. "It was something I hope anyone would do."

The fire was contained and extinguished resulting in no casualties or property damage.

"Two years ago, they made a lifesaving decision. They didn't wear capes or an iron suit, but they did step up to help someone in need," Lt. Col. Wade McGrew, 21st Space Operations Squadron commander said. "Thanks to them, loved ones are out there who don't have to ask themselves 'what if'".

The 50th Network Operations Group spent 2018 successfully supporting more than 20 U.S. national and commercial space launches, alternating between 21st SOPS at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, and the 23rd SOPS Eastern Vehicles Checkout Facility at Cape Canaveral, Florida, ending 2018 with 29 supported launches — three more than in 2017.

50th NOG also delivered more than

160,000 satellite contacts garnering a 99.1 percent mission success rate through \$6.8 billion Air Force Satellite Control Network command and control operations

The year closed out with the launch of the first GPS III satellite at 8:51 a.m. Dec. 23 from Space Launch Complex-40 at Cape Canaveral AFS.

The Lockheed Martin-built satellite, known as "Vespucci," in honor of Amerigo Vespucci, the Italian explorer for whom the Americas were named, was carried to orbit aboard a Space Exploration Technologies Corporation Falcon 9 Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle.

"Launches are always a monumental event, and especially so since this is the first GPS satellite of its generation launched on SpaceX's first National Security Space mission," said Lt. Gen. John F. Thompson, commander of the Space and Missile Systems Center and Air Force program executive officer for space. "As more GPS III satellites join the constellation, it will bring better service at a lower cost to a technology that is now fully woven into the fabric of any modern civilization. It keeps GPS the gold standard for positioning, navigation and timing information, giving assured access when and where it matters. This event was a capstone, but it doesn't mean we're done. We're going to run a series of procedures for checkout and test to ensure everything on Vespucci functions as it was designed."

Heading into 2019, the 50th Space Wing's GSU's continue to make their mark by providing critical information to the warfighter throughout the world and in space and cyberspace warfighting realms.

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YEAR IN REVIEW:

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. —

See **Sports** page 15




U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

(Right) Veronica Leddy, formerly with the 50th Civil Engineering Squadron, and Nick Ruiz with the 50th Mission Support Group show off their Air Force Space Command running attire before the Air Force Marathon at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, Sept. 15, 2018. Leddy finished the half marathon with a time of 1:43:40, and Ruiz finished with a time of 1:25:36, with AFSPC placing first among twelve teams in the Major Command Challenge.



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo



Martin Luther King Jr.

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8—10 a.m.

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Rev. Dr. Stephany Rose Spaulding

Tickets are \$7 and only available at the Worner Center information desk, (719) 389-6607, from Jan. 7 – 18. Tickets are limited and will not be sold at the door; event doors open at 7:30 a.m. For those without tickets, live-streaming will be available in the Worner Center.

10 a.m.—Noon

COMMUNITY RALLY AND MARCH

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YEAR IN REVIEW: A photo look back



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

Staff Sergeant Matthew Coleman-Foster, 50th Space Wing Public Affairs office, noncommissioned officer in charge of community engagement, prepares the flag for folding during Schriever Air Force base's retreat ceremony at the base flag pole Jan. 31, 2018 to honor the flag. Members of the wing staff agencies made up the formation.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

Schriever Airmen conduct a POW/MIA flag raising during a reveille ceremony at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Sept. 17, 2018. The ceremony was conducted to honor and remember U.S. service members who were prisoners of war and those still missing in action.



U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th Space Wing commander, uses a fire hose to extinguish flames from a simulated car fire during leadership fire training at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Aug. 21, 2018. The training gave leadership experience with putting on firemen's gear and carrying their equipment.



U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

Airmen race for dodgeballs during the Eighth Annual Dodgeball Tournament at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, April 20, 2018. Fourteen teams competed in the tournament, and the 50th Operations Support Squadron defeated the 4th Space Operations Squadron for the title and associated bragging rights.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright

Izabella Nuttall, 6, displays a plant she potted during the parent enrichment summer celebration at Tierra Vista Communities at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, June 8, 2018. Izabella's family took advantage of the opportunity to strengthen their family bond. The Airman and Family Readiness Center hosted the event, which included games, crafts and more.



U.S. Air Force photo by Christopher DeWitt

Senior Airman Marlone Delgado, the 50th Security Forces Squadron response force leader, clears a building during Opnicious Vista 18-1 at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, March 6, 2018. Exercises are conducted regularly to test the base's response. The 50th Space Wing Inspector General's office members evaluated emergency responders and offered feedback following the exercise.



Bailey Hansen, 11, takes aim during an archery tournament after the conclusion of the School Age Care program archery camp at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 27, 2018. Hansen won best shot of the week for a 10 point bullseye midway through the tournament.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Wes Wright

Col. Jennifer Grant, 50th Space Wing commander, reads "Ada Twist, Scientist" to families during the event "Me A Story: Making Connections through Literature" at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 12, 2018. The Child Education Coalition put the event together to empower military-connected children and children's own stories to foster peer and parent connection, sense of accomplishment and caring for the community.

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Wes Wright



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class William Tracy

Staff Sgt. Anthony Presti, 21st Medical Squadron medical laboratory technician, examines a blood sample at the 21st MDS clinic at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, June 18, 2018. Providing blood samples can identify health risks such as high cholesterol and other heart issues.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

James Kuhn, Jerry Quintana and Jon Rinesmith, Schriever Air Force Base Fire Department firefighters tend to an exercise victim during Opinicus Vista 18-1 at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, March 6, 2018. The 50th Space Wing Inspector General's office conducted OV 18-1 to evaluate the wing's first responders' ability to respond to an emergency situation.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster

Col. Jacob Middleton, 50th Space Wing vice commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Boston Alexander, 50th SW command chief, render a salute as the colors and formation of a high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps detachment passes by during the 2018 Colorado Springs Veterans Day parade in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Nov. 3, 2018. The parade featured military personnel throughout the Front Range.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

Airmen from the 50th Space Wing lower the United States Flag during a retreat ceremony in observance of President's Day at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Feb. 26, 2018. Since Feb. 19, 2018 was a federal holiday, the wing originally planned to hold the observation Feb. 16, 2018, but weather forced organizers to reschedule. Schriever regularly conducts reveille and retreat ceremonies throughout the year for special observances and to honor military tradition. Retreat signifies the end of the duty day and pays respect to the nation's flag.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

First Lt. Hillary Keltner, 50th Operations Support Squadron staff instructor for space situational awareness, follows a dress right dress command during an open ranks inspection at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Aug. 21, 2018. The inspection was the first one the squadron has held in years.



Sgt. Matthew Coleman-Foster

Wing commander, families attending Tell and Finding Support Center at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 20, 2018. The Military event together to learn, using literature skills in resilience, sense of pride, sense of community.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Arielle Vasquez

Acrobats with the Colorado Renaissance Festival perform for a crowd at the annual Summer Slam Base Picnic at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 20, 2018. Activities at the picnic included face painting, inflatable obstacle courses, pony rides and more.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class William Tracy

MORE PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE

YEAR IN REVIEW: A photo look back

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright

Derrick Randerson, 6, putts as mom, Kendra, cheers him during a deployed family program event at Glow Golf in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Feb. 17, 2018. The program is designed to provide support, resources and a sense of belonging to the families of deployed service members.



U.S. Air Force photo by Steve Kotecki

A member of the Superhero Stunt Team performs a backflip for Schriever Airmen during the Customer Appreciation Day at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Sept. 21, 2018. The stunt team performed for Airmen twice, pumping up the crowd and enhancing camaraderie between squadrons.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright

Airmen from the 2nd Space Operations Squadron carry a 450-pound weight called "The Worm" on the outdoor track at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Aug. 13, 2018. The Worm's flexible design makes it difficult to maneuver, requiring strength and teamwork to move it efficiently. The squadron regularly does physical training as a team to improve their physical fitness and strengthen team dynamics.



U.S. Air Force Photo by Dennis Rogers

Airmen raise and then lower the U.S. flag to half-staff during the 9/11 reveille ceremony at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Sept. 11, 2018. The ceremony marked the 17th year since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and also included a striking of the four fives and wreath laying at the base's 9/11 artifact.



U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

School Age Care program children help plant a tree during the 20 year anniversary of Schriever Air Force Base's partnership with Tree City USA and observance of Arbor Day at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 27, 2018. Children spent the morning learning about the importance of trees and how they can shape the future environment.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

Brad Truver, Schriever Fire Department assistant chief of fire prevention, stands at attention next to the 9/11 artifact and ceremonial wreath at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Sept. 11, 2018. SFD members conducted the striking of the four fives, a ceremonial bell ringing in honor of the firefighters, police and emergency medical providers who gave their lives following the attacks.



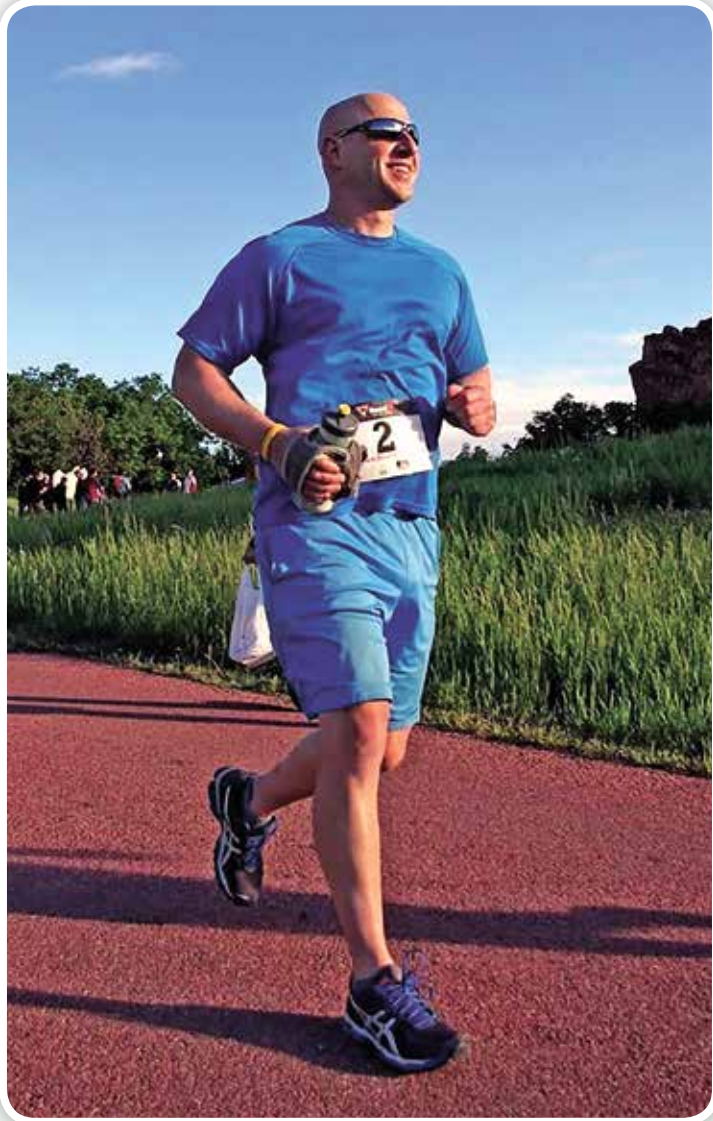
U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright

Staff Sgt. Alayna DeHerrera, executive assistant to the 50th Space Wing command chief, performs a chin-up at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, March 29, 2018. DeHerrera is a bodybuilding competitor who use fitness as a means to improve her body and mind. She plans on competing for her pro card in July.



U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

Chief Master Sgt. Boston Alexander, command chief of the 50th Space Wing, extinguishes a simulated car fire during leadership fire training at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Aug. 21, 2018. 50th SW leadership practiced real-world scenarios, gaining a better of understanding of the fire department's mission.



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo



U.S. Air Force photo by Kathryn Calvert

(Above) Airmen run with the POW/MIA flag in the early morning hours during a 24-hour run at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Sept. 19, 2018. Airmen from various squadrons continuously ran with the POW/MIA flag in 30 minute intervals, with more than 70 participants carrying the flag for a total of 120 miles.

(Left) Pete Aronson with the 19th Space Operations Squadron runs in the Run for Aurora ultramarathon at Roxborough State Park, Colorado, June 2013. Aronson has raced in various ultramarathons, but the Lazyman Triathlon was his first triathlon-based event.

Sports

From page 11

no particular order.

The triathlon's process is based on the honor system, and the fitness center provided a tracker that allowed competitors to see how many miles or laps they completed.

Due to the winter weather, participants were able to run or bicycle inside at the fitness center or their own gyms.

Pete Aronson with the 19th Space Operations Squadron, beat the previous Lazyman Triathlon record of finishing in three days, taking just 19 hours and 45 minutes during his inaugural involvement.

"I read online that the average Ironman Triathlon time is between 11-15 hours, so I'm satisfied with my time considering I put in zero training and haven't swam in years," he said.

The Archery Tag Tournament debuted this year, where participants teamed up and shot foam-tipped arrows, trying their best to eliminate all players on the opposing team.

Four squadrons participated in the event, with the Joint Force Space Component staff earning first place.

Intramurals:

The 50th Space Wing Wing Staff Agencies defeated reigning champion the 4th Space Operations Squadron, in the 2017-2018 Intramural Basketball Championship Feb. 27.

The 50th WSA was ready to redeem themselves after losing to the 4th SOPS in the semifinals last year.

The 50th WSA sealed their victory with a score of 44-41, holding onto the lead the entire game.

Michael Kilbourn, 50th WSA shooting guard, said the 50th WSA's road to the championship was not easy, as their team was small however, they had seasoned veterans.

"It was a rollercoaster for our team, but overall, we had a strong regular season," he said. "Like all teams, it took us



U.S. Air Force photo by Christopher DeWitt

Michael Kilbourn, left, shooting guard with the 50th Wing Staff Agencies, gets a shot off while guarded by Franklin Eason, with the 4th Space Operations Squadron, during the second half of the 2017-2018 Intramural Basketball Championship game at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Feb. 27, 2018. The 50th WSA won the game 44-41, earning the championship title.

a while to form and get there. It was a challenge because unlike your traditional sport seasons where you have practices, we just played the games."

Beating the combined 6th Space Operations Squadron and 310th Space Wing team, the 22nd Space Operations Squadron earned the Intramural Volleyball Championship title May 16, wrapping up an undefeated season.

John Baldwin, 22nd SOPS team captain, has been playing volleyball for more than 40 years, and has played on the 22nd SOPS team since his arrival at Schriever

AFB in 1999.

He said the team played well, and their mentality going into the championship game was to treat it like any other game.

"Although it was a championship game, it's just volleyball," he said. "If we lose we lose, and it's been a great season. We went undefeated, and I had a really good supporting cast on this team."

Baldwin added during the entire season, up until the final three matches, the team was playing with only five players instead of six, and still managed to secure the undefeated title.

Special events:

Two Schriever Airmen were selected to compete in the 2018 United States Air Force marathon Sept. 15 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

U.S. Air Force Space Command finished first among twelve teams representing competing in the Major Command Challenge.

Veronica Leddy, formerly with the 50th Civil Engineering Squadron, finished the half marathon with a time of 1:43:40, and said the experience was great.

"It's so cool there is an opportunity to represent where you work to do something I love to do and be surrounded by other people doing the same thing from a similar military background," she said. "Everyone I met was really nice and I had a lot of fun."

Returning competitor Nick Ruiz with the 50th Mission Support Group finished the half marathon with a time of 1:25:36, and said the well-planned event was morale-boosting, and running around thousands of other competitors was energizing.

A week later, Schriever AFB hosted a 24-hour POW/MIA run Sept. 19, where Airmen from various squadrons continuously ran with the POW/MIA flag in 30 minute intervals. More than 70 participants carried the flag for a total of 120 miles.

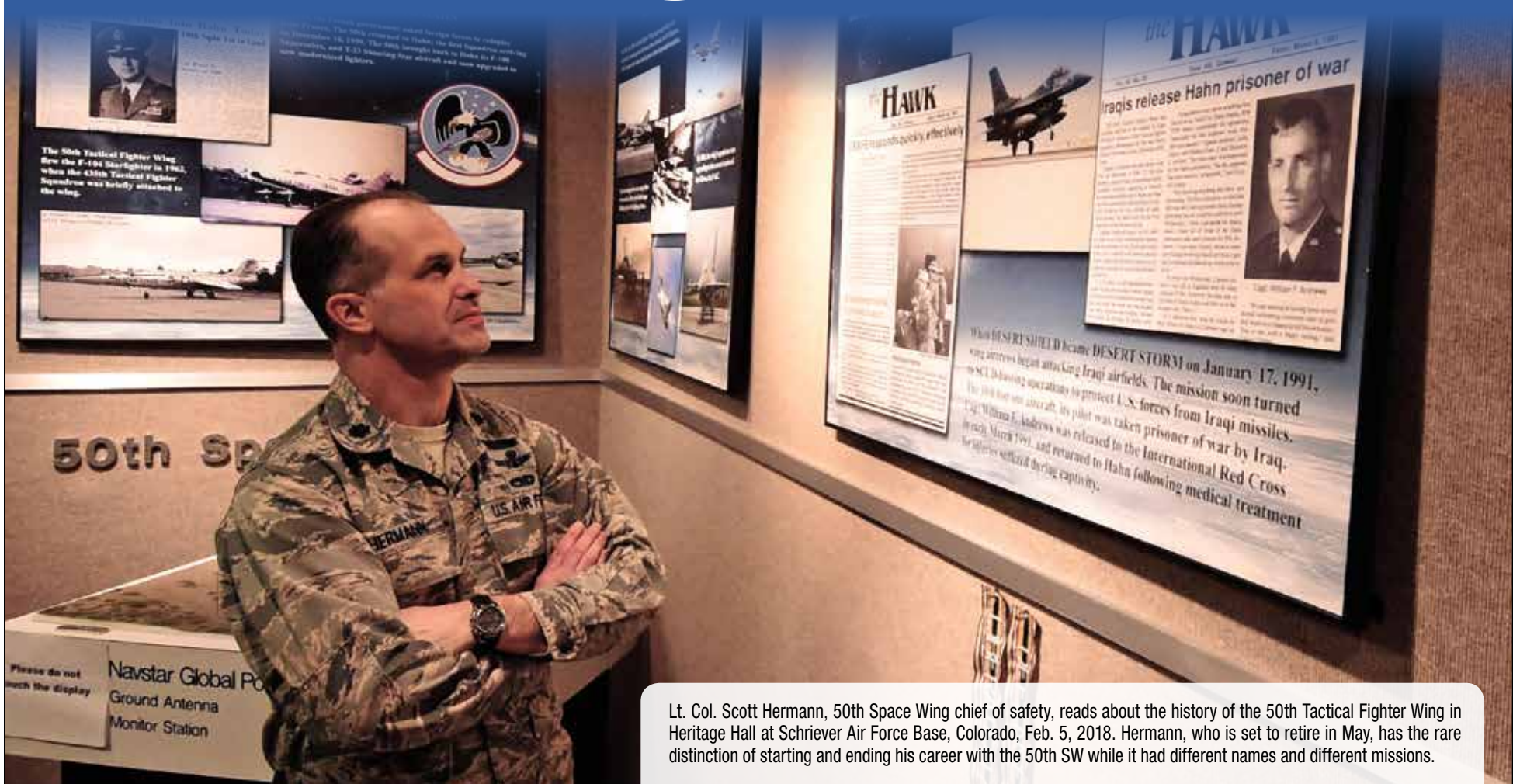
Airman 1st Class Michael Weersma, 50th Space Communications Squadron client systems technician, participated in the run and said it was an honor to carry the flag.

"I felt like it was part of my duty," he said. "It was a rewarding, meaningful experience I would gladly do again next year."

The fitness center's goal is to fulfill the 50th Space Wing priority of "take care of our Airmen and families always," offering sporting events for all skillsets to participate in, even if it's just from the stands.

Editor's Note: Senior Airman William Tracy, contributed to this article.

I AM SCHRIEVER: Reaching final orbit



Lt. Col. Scott Hermann, 50th Space Wing chief of safety, reads about the history of the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing in Heritage Hall at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, Feb. 5, 2018. Hermann, who is set to retire in May, has the rare distinction of starting and ending his career with the 50th SW while it had different names and different missions.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright

By Tech. Sgt. Wes Wright
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Late one evening in 1988, an airman basic F-16 avionics technician tinkered with the electronics systems in the cockpit of the jet fighter at the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing, Hahn Air Base, Germany.

Wiping the sweat from his brow with the sleeve of his fatigues, he paused to gaze up into a starry night sky, contemplating how fortunate he was to have the job he had. He had no way of knowing the realm of space would be where he would end his career 30 years later.

Lt. Col. Scott Hermann, 50th Space Wing chief of safety, has the rare distinction of living the wing's history. The 50th TFW was inactivated in 1991 and re-designated as the 50th SW in 1992.

"At that time, the 50th was an F-16 wing," Hermann said. "We still had the Cold War mission. For perspective, this was before the Berlin Wall came down."

Working on avionics was the first star in Hermann's career orbit, a job he thoroughly enjoyed.

"Avionics is great from a job satisfaction standpoint because it's very immediate," he said. "A jet comes in broken; you fix it and you see it fly away and do another sortie. I love that. As a young man, I couldn't believe the Air Force was letting me work on multimillion-dollar aircraft."

It's been said before the only constant in the military is change, and Hermann, assigned to the 313th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, was about to find that out when the Gulf War kicked-off in 1990.

"The 10th AMU went first," he said. "I was on their aircraft generation team and helped get them out to the United Arab Emirates. Later, I deployed as an enroute support team to Spain."

It was there Hermann would meet his future wife, Galynn, a KC-135 avionics technician, deployed out of Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. Their romance quickly blossomed, both Airmen unsure as to where it would lead.

Uncertainty loomed large on multiple fronts. Hahn was shutting down. Meaning, while the United States

was winning a war, Hermann was losing his home station.

"I had no idea where I was going when I got back," he said. "Galynn went back to Tinker and I arrived home to a special assignments team, which determined my next location was Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada."

Scott and Galynn made the relationship work, marrying in 1993. Hermann decided at this point to switch Air Force Specialty Codes to Aerospace Medicine in order to increase the chances of him and Galynn being stationed together.

"The most rewarding part was the opportunity to receive the education," Hermann said. "I love science, physiology and anatomy. Also, working in the hospital in the Air Force is a totally different world. There's a much more civilian feel to it."

Galynn earned her commission in 1999 and gave birth to their son Jeffery in February, 2001. Two weeks later, Scott departed for Officer Training School and technical training, separating the family for the next 14 months.

Galynn was the commissioning officer at Scott's graduation.

"It was a very proud moment," she said. "We both worked really hard to earn our commissions and it was an honor for me to conduct his ceremony."

In 2002, after serving 13 years as an enlisted member, now Second Lieutenant Hermann, a space vehicle operator, was assigned to the 4th Space Operations Squadron at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado.

"I was starting to learn adaptability is a big part of being in this Air Force," Hermann said. "Not only was this my third job change, I was now an officer, which is its own unique dynamic."

Hermann pointed to three things he learned are key to having success in the Air Force.

"There's always the constant of change," he said. "However, I've found that if you have motivation, commitment and adaptability, there's nothing you can't do."

See **Missions** page 17



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

Airman Basic Scott Hermann is shown in a photo during technical training at Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado, circa 1988. Hermann's first assignment was as an F-16 avionics technician with the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing at Hahn Air Base, Germany, which would later be recommissioned as the 50th Space Wing in 1992.

"A jet comes in broken; you fix it and you see it fly away and do another sortie. I love that. "

Missions

From page 16

Hermann proved his adaptability as an SVO; he was selected to be an SVO instructor at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

“That was probably one of my favorite jobs,” he said. “I love helping people connect the dots as to what we do. Having the breadth of experience I did at that point helped me to do that. I found it very rewarding.”

While space itself may have undefinable dimensions, the Air Force space world is considered a small community among its operators. The current 4th SOPS commander, Lt. Col. Armon Lansing, was one of Hermann’s first students.

“You wouldn’t have known this officer was in the process of learning,” Lansing said. “He was so knowledgeable. We were the system experts that responded to satellite anomalies. It was one of the most intensive courses. His intelligence and breadth of experience really helped positively affect the future of space through his influence with students.”

Hermann’s next stop was the Joint Space Operations Center where in 2008 he became the first-ever chief of space defense. According to him, this was when the mindset of space operators started to shift.

“It’s the first time we started to change the mindset of thinking of things as hostilities first and anomalies second when something happens,” Herman said. “It is somewhat of an occupational art. Many jobs are checklist driven. There’s no checklist for the things we were doing. I had to ask myself ‘how do I adapt to this? How do I adapt physical tools as well as my own mindset and meld the two?’”

After a couple of headquarters jobs at various locations, Hermann finally found himself coming “home” to the 50th Space Wing for the final time as chief of safety.

Shortly after arriving, he visited the Heritage Hall in Building 210 and saw pictures of his old AMU hanging on the wall.

“I was blown away,” he said. “I saw pictures of people I knew. It’s a special feeling to know you’re a part of the history and legacy of this wing. It’s fun to be part of that evolution.”

James Mesco, historian, 50th SW, agreed.



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

Airman 1st Class Scott Hermann is shown in a photo at Hahn Air Base, Germany, circa 1990. Hermann was an F-16 avionics technician with the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing, which would later be recommissioned as the 50th Space Wing in 1992. Now a lieutenant colonel, Hermann is set to retire in May.

“It’s certainly a nice thing to be part of the heritage like he is,” Mesco said. “While not unheard of, it’s rare to have this distinction. He’s seen this wing when we were flying F-16s and now we’re flying satellites. It’s special.”

Hermann finds the change and evolution to be one of the surprisingly exciting parts of being in the Air Force.

“In a way, the great thing about the Air Force is things are temporary,” he said. “You have the security knowing you’re going to be able to clothe and feed your family. On the career side, there’s always different people, places and jobs. Your unit gets decommissioned and then recommissioned. It’s been a fun ride.”

The 30-year veteran reflected further on his career.

“The Air Force is the greatest organization on the plan-

et,” Herman said. “You’ll never be in another organization that has so many opportunities to advance. There’s no other institution that is so interested in deliberately developing you, especially if you choose to maximize those things.”

After 30 years of service, Hermann has decided to settle into final orbit and focus on his family. The young face that stared into the skies one night in 1988 is a little older now, but the same smile still crosses his face when he looks up at those stars.

“My family is what drove a lot of my decision to retire,” he said. “I’ve had the opportunity to do a lot of special things, but it’s time to move on. Move on to what, I’m not sure just yet. I have some potential family business opportunities. I probably won’t know until after next year. There will be a lot of soul-searching.”

While there are many proud moments throughout his career, he is especially proud of being a part of the initial push to change the space operations mindset.

“Now, the mind shift is complete and there’s a lot of momentum behind the space warfighting construct,” Hermann said. “The next step is honing the tools and expanding the capabilities needed to prevail in conflicts that extend to space.”

“There’s a generation of older space officers who are passing the baton,” he continued. “There are a lot of young, smart energetic people who are ushering us into new kinds of capabilities. The path has been set down and now they can start running on it.”

Lansing agreed.

“The foundation he and other instructors laid has allowed us to get to the point where we are now,” Lansing said. “He helped set the standard early on for so many SVOs today. There’s a standard of excellence and knowledge in place today because of him.”

While the colonel is quick to defer praise on his contributions to the 50th SW legacy, perhaps the words of a former supervisor in a letter he received Sept. 19, 1990, sum it up best.

“You have proven yourself as an exceptional Airman at each and every opportunity, accepting whatever tasks or responsibilities were asked of you. [Your] accomplishments and many others are indicative of an exceptional performer. Your conduct has been noteworthy in every respect and sets a fine example for others to follow.”

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I AM SCHRIEVER: Go big or go home



Tech. Sgt. Carmen Mena-Flores, National Reconnaissance Office Operations Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of commander's support staff, survived stage three breast cancer and is now active in the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program. Mena-Flores received the Chief's Choice Award for her work in the military and local community.

U.S. Air Force photo by Dennis Rogers

By Halle Thornton

50th Space Wing Public Affairs

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — After she was diagnosed with stage three breast cancer in 2015, Tech. Sgt. Carmen Mena-Flores, National Reconnaissance Office Operations Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge, commander's support staff, first words were, "This too will pass."

Mena-Flores' journey through an often fatal illness inspired her to help other wounded service members, and eventually led her to win the Chief's Choice Award at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, July 2018.

"My daughter was two at the time, and all I could think about was being there for her and watching her grow," she said. "My end goal was to survive. I'm the type of person that goes big or goes home. This was not going to beat me."

Chief Master Sgt. Roderick Schwald, Air Force Wounded Warrior Program recovery care coordinator, along with other leadership members, nominated her for the Chief's Choice Award while working with her in the AFW2 Program, a congressionally mandated and federally funded program that provides care and services to ill, wounded service members, both combat and non-combat related.

The Chief's Choice Award recognizes outstanding Airmen in their work both in the military and local community.

Mena-Flores has been an ambassador and Recovery Airman Mentorship Program mentor since 2016.

"She graciously assists them during their medical treatment, recovery and transition back to duty or civilian status," Schwald said. "She is currently a RAMP Mentor for nine active duty and retired junior enlisted, senior NCOs and officer wounded warrior mentorees."

As a mentor, Mena-Flores is paired up with other wounded warriors, reaching out to them and has them tell her their stories.

"This builds a strong relationship and trust," she said. "Sometimes, all they want to do is talk, so I listen, and it goes a long way; people need that sometimes."

As an ambassador, Mena-Flores talks about her battle with breast cancer, and how leadership has helped her through the journey.

"That's also why I decided to apply to be a mentor," she added. "It's a way for me to give back to people who have been diagnosed with similar illnesses, not just breast cancer related."

Mena-Flores' inspirational leadership resulted in at least three mentorees asking Schwald for permission to become RAMP mentors themselves.

During her battle with cancer, Mena-Flores took col-



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

Tech. Sgt. Carmen Mena-Flores, National Reconnaissance Office Operations Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of commander's support staff, stands with an Air Force Wounded Warrior mentor and ambassador at the Air Force Wounded Warrior Games pep rally at the Great Wolf Lodge, Colorado Springs, Colorado, June 2018. Mena-Flores currently mentors nine wounded warriors, sharing her story and advice to others.

lege courses with the help of a full Wounded Warrior Scholarship from Colorado Technical University, saying because if she was not able to return to duty, she wanted to have a secure plan for her future.

"I'm a very hopeful person and have faith, but if I do survive this and don't get to return to duty, I want to make sure my backup plan is ready to go," she said.

Mena-Flores eventually earned her Bachelor's in management with a concentration in human resources, and is currently pursuing her Master's degree in project management, planning to graduate in June of 2019.

Mena-Flores takes her story with her to commander's courses, teaching fellow Airmen how to be resilient.

After six, six hour chemotherapy sessions, three separate surgeries and 25 radiation treatments, Mena-Flores overcame her diagnosis and is now in remission, has since returned to duty and was promoted to Technical Sergeant, thankful her leadership had faith she would make it through.

"Here I am, I'm a survivor, and I couldn't have done it without support from leadership, squadron, family and local friends," she said. "It truly makes all the difference."

Mena-Flores was unaware of her acceptance, or even nomination for the Chief's Choice Award.

"We were in our morning meeting with the commander, and I started crying when they presented me the award," she said. "All these things were coming into my head, the personal challenges I had to overcome and what my mentorees have gone through and are still going through, and how I have helped them in some way through it."

Mena-Flores said the award motivates her to take care of others even more.

"I don't do things to get recognized, but I know I'm doing the right thing by our people," she added.

Not only does Mena-Flores perform highly with the AFW2 program, she excels in her job as well.

Schwald explained Mena-Flores led administrative support for nine launches and seven thousand satellite contacts, meeting mission requirements at a 99.9 percent success rate, ensures the uninterrupted operations of a multi-billion dollar constellation.

Additionally, she tracked, monitored and closed 40 higher headquarters staff action responses, beating the average deadline by three days, saving the unit 72 hours a month.

Mena-Flores also developed a new readiness tracking program which automatically tracks 50 items and drove the NOPS into 100 percent compliance on all individual medical readiness and ancillary training requirements.

Finally, Schwald said she spearheaded a working group to develop the first ever Office of Space Launch Visitor Operating Instruction, a document shaping the future process NRO launch attendees.

"Technical Sergeant Mena-Flores' short-term goal is to become a first sergeant, and judging by her accomplishments, professionalism and care for the mission and her fellow Airmen, I think she's heading in the right direction to reach her CCF goal," Schwald said.

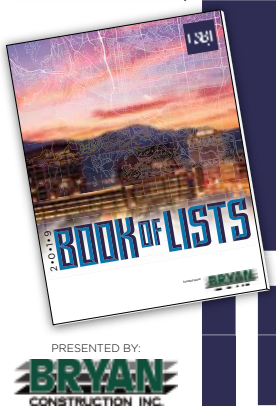
Mena-Flores will continue to give back and motivate people who are going through medical issues.

"I want them to know that if I can do it, they can too," she said. "It's so easy for us to be negative, so why don't we just try being positive? Just look ahead to that finish line."

"My end goal was to survive. I'm the type of person that goes big or goes home. This was not going to beat me."

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Comedy Open Mic, an opportunity to get some stage time, sharing jokes in front of a supportive group. Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Free. Playing Field Sports Bar, 3958 N. Academy Blvd., #112, 210-1316, theplayingfieldsportsbar.com.

ART EVENTS

Free Day, a chance to visit the arts center and Buell Children's Museum for free. Second Sunday of every month. Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, 210 N. Santa Fe Ave., Pueblo, 719/295-7200, sdc-arts.org.

Museum Free Day, providing access to the FAC's general admission offerings to the widest possible audiences in the Pikes Peak region. Second Saturday of every month, 10 a.m. Free. Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College, 30 W. Dale St., 634-5581, fac@coloradocollege.edu, coloradocollege.edu/fac.

Oil Paintings Program, a class on oil painting that will teach students to approach various genres by focusing on fundamental skills. Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Drop in \$30, 5 class punch pass \$125. Alvarez Art School, 2418 W. Colorado Ave., Studio J, 337-2863, chrisalvarezpaintings@gmail.com, alvarezschool.com.

Sustainability Skillshare, an opportunity to learn new skills like canning, basic construction, up-cycling, bike maintenance and cold frame construction. Second Saturday of every month, 9 a.m. to noon. Concrete Couch, 214 E. Vermijo Ave., 373-7694, concretecouch.org.

CONCERTS

The Arts at Benet Hill Monastery: Chamber Concert Series, representing a time-honored tradition of the Benedictines' appreciation for God's gift of music. Features flutist Nancy Andrew. Sun., Jan. 13, 2:30-4 p.m. \$20-\$25. Benet Hill Monastery, 3190 Benet Lane, 633-0655, info@benethillmonastery.org, tinyurl.com/BHMFluteConcert.

Intimate Conversations: Unplugged, a raw and authentic music series that will feature and spotlight vocalists, bands and instrumentalists who want to capture music lovers with an up-close and personal experience. Second Saturday of every month, 4-6 p.m. \$25. Tim Gill Center for Public Media, 315 E. Costilla St., 459-7663, 360spectrumgmt@gmail.com, facebook.com/360spectrumgmt.

DANCE

Ahorita Salsa Bachata Social, the best place in the Springs to come out, dance and meet new people. Bring friends and come dance the night away. Second Saturday of every month, 8:45 p.m.; through June 29. \$10. Third Space Coffee, 5670 N. Academy Blvd., 801/449-7879, tish@latishahardy.com, facebook.com/AhoritaSocial.

Broadmoor Waltz Club, teaching 12 patterned waltzes to interested dancers of all levels. Thursdays, 6 p.m. \$5/couple. Westside Community Center, 1628 W. Bijou St., 592-1418, springsgov.com.

CommuniDance, a free-form dance group. Saturdays, 9-10 a.m. and Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m. By donation. Movement Arts Community Studio, 525 E. Fountain Blvd., #150, movementartscs.com.

Dancing with Live Bands, weekly dancing to a variety of music, including Big Band, Swing, Country, Latin and more. Free dance classes every Saturday from 5:45-6:45 p.m. \$10. International Dance Club, 2422 Busch Ave., 633-0195, international-danceclub.org.

Hex Fusion Dance, an opportunity to explore and

blend different styles of music and dance. No partner required. Second and Fourth Saturday of every month, 8 p.m. \$10. Yoga Studio Satya, 1581 York Road, kkschmidt@hexdance.com, hexdance.com.

Swing Dancing, no partner needed. Attend the first half-hour for a free beginner lesson. Occasional live bands. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. \$8 online, \$15 at the door. The Loft, 2506 W. Colorado Ave., 445-9278, info@loftmusicvenue.com, loftmusicvenue.com.

Tango Mondays, beginners welcome. Mondays, 6 p.m. \$5-\$10. Cucuru Gallery Café, 2332 W. Colorado Ave., 520-9900, cucurugallerycafe.com.

FILM

Film of the Absurd, an ongoing series of curated independent films, featuring a wide range of filmmakers from all over the world. Thursdays, 8 p.m. Free. Urban Steam Coffee Bar, 1025 S. Sierra Madre St., 473-7832, facebook.com/urbansteam.

Film Series: Shorts Night, presented by Benet Hill Monastery, which wants to educate and enlighten the community about contemporary issues and the inspiration of people of extraordinary strength and faith. Fri., Jan. 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free; registration required. Benet Hill Monastery, 3190 Benet Lane, 633-0655, registrations@benethillmonastery.org, tinyurl.com/BHMSHORTSNight.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Mindful Resilience Yoga Therapy, a class designed for combat veterans with PTSD, taught by a veteran. "Students learn the tools of mindful resilience to help cope with the symptoms of their trauma." Saturdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. Free for veterans and active duty personnel. Hot on Yoga, 5740 Care-free Circle North, #360, 440-4800, support@hotonyoga.com, hotonyoga.com.

New Year, Healthier You, a self-care holistic fair. There will be 20 holistic vendors offering services or products for you to try as well as workshops and presentations all day. Sat., Jan. 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. Ivywild School, 1604 S. Cascade Ave., 210-2065, essentialwellnesssociety@gmail.com, facebook.com/essentialwellnesssocietycos.

Senior Wellness, a health and wellness class for seniors. Tuesdays, 12:45 p.m. Senior Resource Development Agency, 230 N. Union Ave., Pueblo, 719/545-8900, srda.org.

KIDS & FAMILY

Active Adventurers Group, a weekly indoor group for parents/caregivers and their children. Activities will include toy time, a craft, socializing, a group activity and clean up. Mondays, 9:30 a.m. Hillside Community Center, 925 S. Institute St., 520-9463, springsgov.com.

Baby Time, Stories and activities for babies and their families. Thursdays, 10 and 11 a.m. Library 21c, 1175 Chapel Hills Drive. Stories and activities for babies and their families. Tuesdays, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. Fountain Branch Library, 230 S. Main St., Fountain.

Chess for All Ages, all experience levels welcome. Thursdays, 3 p.m. Fountain Branch Library, 230 S. Main St., Fountain.

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B.I.G. Trouble

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ACROSS

1 Hockey shot

5 Birthstone before topaz

9 Goldman's partner

14 Oaxacan water

15 Actress Suvari

16 Famously Auto-Tuned rapper

17 Move before taking off

18 Really top-notch?

20 Glass of NPR

22 Meat safety org.

23 Column counterpart

24 Eyeball cover

27 Study of every body?

30 Scratching a New York governor's back if he scratches yours?

33 Nine-digit no. issuer

34 Angry genre

35 Track event

38 Most likely mag in the waiting room?

43 "Sharknado" channel

44 Peace activist Yoko

45 Cook onion rings

47 Busy teen's social dilemma?

52 When you vote, usually

55 Actress Bacall

56 Six-pack muscles

57 Ridiculously Photogenic Guy, for one

60 Peaks, briefly

61 Consequence of mo' money, per Biggie Smalls ... or what's afflicted the theme answers?

65 Tabloid twosome

68 HBO, e.g.

69 Still a contender

70 Minifigure toymaker

71 Confused

72 Obligation

73 "Hence ..."

DOWN

1 Enjoyed a recliner

2 NYC hub

3 Backup

4 Linked, as devices

5 "LOL, I can't even!"

6 Paddington Bear's home country

7 Santa ____ (hot winds)

8 Martin of "Ed Wood"

9 Indy sponsor

10 Car ad abbr.

11 Capital near pyramids

12 Words mouthed to a camera

13 White and wintry

19 "Little Miss Sunshine" actor Paul

21 Dadaist Jean

24 Times and Trafalgar (Abbr.)

25 Crescent moon points

26 2-D calculation

28 Cartridge contents

29 Flip-flop grippers

31 Fed. fiscal group

32 :

36 "Towards 41-Down" novelist

37 "The Christmas Song" co-writer Mel

39 Show-____ (braggarts)

40 Antarctic admiral

41 See 36-Down

42 Nifty

46 Thataway

48 Shakespeare's foot

49 Site of many lashes

50 L.A. athlete

51 Pointless

52 City northwest of Miami

53 WWII menace

54 Simone Biles' awards

58 List with entrees

59 Give off

62 GPS suggestion

63 Some gametes

64 Pig's digs

66 McMuffin ingredient

67 Low sound?



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