

DECEMBER 2013

- ◆ AIR FORCE MUDDER
- ◆ OBTAINING A PPL
- ◆ PILOT SLOTS
- ◆ ACTIVE DUTY Q&A
- ◆ DEPENDENTS & BRATS

# EAGLE

*Det. 027*

“THOUSANDS OF MEN HAD **THOUGHT** ABOUT FLY-  
ING MACHINES AND A FEW HAD EVEN BUILT **MA-**  
**CHINES...** BUT THESE WERE GUILTY OF ALMOST EVE-  
RYTHING **EXCEPT FLYING.**”

-WILBUR WRIGHT



# Air Force Mudder

Thanks to Captain Fleshman and many others at Luke Air Force base, many cadets from not only Detachment 027, but also Arizona State University and Embry Riddle, were lucky to experience a day filled with challenges set up by Officers and other Airman on Luke Air Force base. More than seven teams took on the task of a mile and half obstacle course. The course included obstacles such as: mud pits, trust and guidance, and other challenging tasks. On top of the original plans for the course, there was also continuous rain through out the day, turning the entire course into a mud pit. Still this opportunity was more than just fun; it was beneficial to not only those attempting the course but also to the ones who put this all together.

Some of the opportunities included interaction with other detachments, the opportunity to interact with Air Force Officers and Airman, the chance to show our knowledge of the Air Force Manual, and, of course, the chance for healthy competition between our own detachment and the others. Another opportunity that cannot be overlooked is the chance to engage in communication on separate levels, the creativity, and the teamwork shown by every team going through the course.

One of the most important opportunities available that day was the communication

with those who put the course together. Through out the course teams communicated with each other and the airman at every stop. For some who do not come from a military family, this chance to interact with officers and airmen and to learn about jobs and more functions of the Air Force was an advantage that not every detachment obtains.

Just like many other teams through out the course, I know that my team showed creativity in many ways. A certain part of the course that put the phrase, “Work smarter, not harder,” into perspective was when our team had to get from one point to another with just the use of two boards with rope attached. Instead of trying to use both boards to maneuver through the mud and puddles of water, we all would stand on one of the boards and then put the other in the front a few feet away. One by one we jumped to the next board and repeated the process until we finished the obstacle and that was just the start. Other participants in the mudder spoke of their favorite parts of the course. For example Cadet Soza of Detachment 027 stated, “That her favorite part of the mudder was the interaction with Embry Riddle and the experience of having Colonel Friend and Captain Fleshman participate on her team.” Other cadets also claimed the final mud pit as their favorite obstacle.



From climbing mud hills, low crawling through water and mud, to reciting information from the Air Force manual after pulling a Humvee the length of a football field, I know I speak for all of the cadets when I say even with the rain and cold temperatures that every single one of us would repeat this day again. We are thankful for the enlisted airman who stood in the rain and made this day possible for so many. Captain Fleshman, again we thank you for setting up such a great opportunity! We hope that we can do it again in the future!



By Cadet 3/C Taylor Halcomb

# Obtaining your Private Pilots License

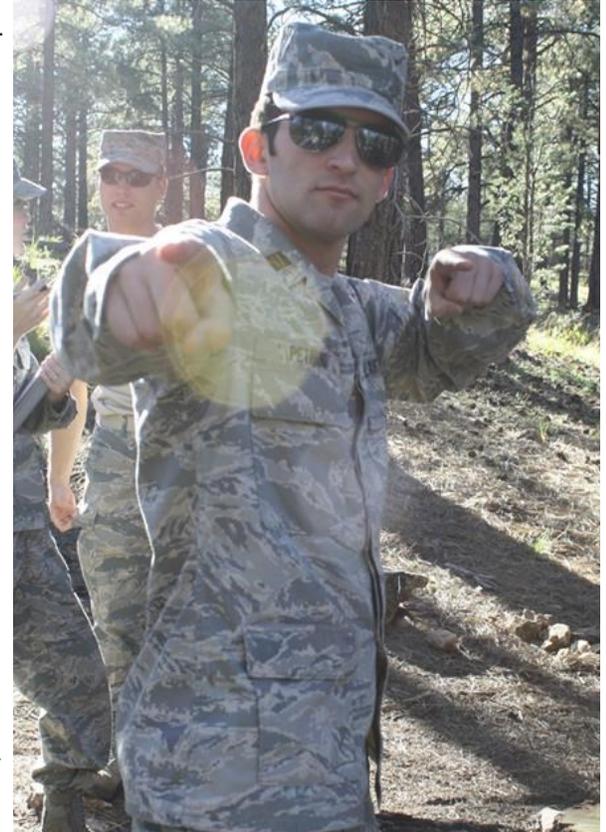
Every year cadets in the Professional Officer Course compete for a pilot slot in the Air Force. The ROTC pilot selection board looks for highly qualified individuals with exceptional characteristics that prove candidates are superior performers. These areas include Pilot Candidate Selection Method (PCSM), Cadre Ranking, GPA, PFA, and Field Training ranking. One's PCSM score is composed of the pilot score on the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test (AFOQT), Test of Basic Aviation Skills (TBAS), and flight hours. The PCSM 2.0 version puts more emphasis on flight hours, and there are a few things you could do to boost your scores; however, the best way is flight hours. I personally have had a dramatic change to my PCSM score because of my experience flying. After completing the TBAS, I received my PCSM score which I was pretty happy with but after adding my flight hours, it jumped up 15 points on a 99 point scale. In case you are wondering, 15 points on your PCSM is a hefty jump.

Anyways, I began flying in the Spring of my Sophomore year because I want to obtain my Private Pilot License (PPL) before my senior year. For those of you who want to be pilots, getting your PPL in college is not easy, it's not cheap, but it has its benefits. First of all, it will give you tons of flight hours and experience that you can add to your PCSM score and make you a more competitive candidate for a pilot slot. Second, if you have your PPL before going to Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT), you are allowed to skip Initial Flight Screening (IFS) which is another phase where the Air Force essentially

“cuts the fat”. Flying is not easy and it's better to learn and make mistakes now before you start “hooking” check rides at UPT—bad juju.

If you want to be a pilot I am not saying you have to go out and get flight hours and get your PPL because there are certainly hundreds of cadets who receive pilot slots every year without either. Like I said, it's not easy, cheap, or convenient. However, if you are willing to put in the time and the effort, I promise the outcome is well worth the stress. As of now I am about halfway to obtaining my PPL and the experiences I have been blessed with such as flying over the red rocks in Sedona, around snowy San Francisco peaks, up and down the California coast, and pretty soon aerobatics, are ones that I will carry with me for the rest of my life, pilot slot or no pilot slot.

If anyone has any questions about how to be more competitive, how to begin, how to boost scores, or need a reference about who to fly with, please do not hesitate to contact me. Aim high.



By Cadet Captain **Dominic Petrini**

# Pilot Slots

Becoming a pilot wasn't my life-long dream like it is for some people in ROTC. For me, it was more of, "Oh wow, flying seems cool!" Since I didn't know much about being a pilot, I had no idea what needed to be done to get that glorious pilot slot. And so my blind journey began with studying, practice flights, and trying to be the best cadet possible. I came to find that there is a specific formula for figuring who receives a pilot, remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) pilot, air battle manager (ABM), or combat systems officer (CSO) slot. Here is the breakdown:

| FACTOR                 | WEIGHT |
|------------------------|--------|
| Detachment Ranking     | 20%    |
| Cumulative GPA         | 10%    |
| PFA                    | 15%    |
| Field Training Ranking | 15%    |
| PCSM*                  | 40%    |
| AFOQT-N*               | 40%    |
| AFOQT-AA*              | 40%    |

\*The PCSM used for categorization processing if applying for pilot and RPA. The AFOQT-N is used for categorization processing if applying for CSO. The AFOQT-AA is used for categorization processing if applying for ABM." --Courtesy of a Colonel Doan email

Each factor is pretty self-explanatory with the exception of the PCSM score (the score most people use since it is designated for pilots). This score has changed recently. Technical Sergeant Steve Grever wrote an article about the PCSM saying that "The PCSM scores assess a combination of cognitive ability, knowledge, psycho-

motor skill and experience as measured by the AFOQT-Pilot composite, Test of Basic Aviation Skills [TBAS] and flying hours. Results are combined using a mathematical algorithm to rank candidates based on their aptitude for success in pilot, CSO, or ABM training" (2013). The mathematical algorithm used is confidential, but future applicants should know that flight hours are now worth more than ever. My biggest tip for anyone wanting a rated position would be to really take a close look at each piece that goes into your score and prepare! Here are a few more suggestions:

- Get noticed by the Cadre for doing something well. Be the cadet everyone looks up to!
- Push yourself as hard as you can in and out of PT.
- Get a 4.0. Seriously, just do it!
- Take your preparation for FT seriously, starting your 100 year, by attending flight meetings, practicing marching, and getting help with your weaknesses.
- Take your AFOQT and TBAS early since you have to wait 180 days between retaking either one. You don't want to fail and be stuck!
- Study for the AFOQT!!!! Chances are, you will not do well on the pilot section if you don't study! Buy one of the books, they are helpful.
- Get as many flight hours as you can since they are worth so much more now!
- Look for more tips online. [www.WantsCheck.com](http://www.WantsCheck.com) is a great resource for people trying to become a pilot in the Air Force. They have several free resources, from study tools to pilot training blogs.
- Lastly, talk to the POC who have

been through it already for advice! We love to share our knowledge and to help others get to where we are now.

Overall, you have the power to make yourself a prime candidate for receiving a rated slot. If you want it bad enough, then put in the time and dedication required and show everyone that you deserve to be a pilot!

If there are questions about any of the information from this article please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (832) 221-3609 or by email at [hrb47@nau.edu](mailto:hrb47@nau.edu).



By Cadet Lt. Colonel Heather Bleuer



# Life of a Fighter Pilot

Major Jeff “Deadeye” Carder is an F-16 pilot with over 2800 hours flying time, two Air Medals for flight operations during combat, award recipient of the Columbian Trophy for excellence in flight safety, and the Instructor Pilot of the Year award in his 15 year career. Major Carder discusses below the life of a fighter pilot, from his initial reasoning for wanting to fly and what the life actually entails.

## **What made you want to become a fighter pilot and what keeps you going?**

I have loved airplanes ever since I could remember, so I always knew I wanted to be a pilot. My goal of becoming a fighter pilot began while attending air shows as a young boy. The speed, maneuverability, and the sound hooked me. The experience of flying an F-16 more than lives up to the dreams I had as kid. Flying the F-16 is pure exhilaration, who wouldn't want to keep doing that?

## **What is the typical day of a fighter pilot; flight days and desk days? The atmosphere?**

The day prior to a flight, each pilot in the flight will meet to plan the mission. This is also the time when we will study to ensure each flight member is prepared for each element of the mission. On the day of the flight, we usually spend from six to eight hours beginning with the mission briefing, flying the mission, and then debriefing the mission. The mission briefing is conducted by the flight lead and tells each flight member what to execute in each phase of the mission. The mission briefing also covers the rules and regulations that will be applicable during the upcoming flight. After the briefing is complete, we get into the jet and fly the mission. Most training missions last for one to two hours. One

of the fantastic parts of flying a multi-role fighter is there are so many different missions to fly. On one day you could be flying air to air combat and the next day you could go to the bombing range. Once we have all landed, the flight lead will debrief the mission. The debrief is where most of the learning takes place. We break down each element of the mission to determine what we can improve for the next flight.

## **How are the deployments and stations as a fighter pilot compared to other careers in the Air Force?**

Duty stations for fighter pilots, and pilots in general, are much more restrictive than for other career fields. Once you are assigned to an aircraft, you will only be assigned to bases that have that aircraft, with rare exception. Deployments are not that much different for us, except for the extra time it takes to prepare to fly combat operations in the specific theater we have been assigned. The benefit we have over most career fields is that are stuck on base for the duration of their deployment we get to leave the base every time we fly. This has given me the opportunity to have fantastic views of the countries I have deployed to.

## **Why do you think there is a shortage of fighter pilots right now? Sequestration? Fatigue?**

Fighter pilots bring a unique skill set to the fight that can't be filled by anyone else. With ongoing conflicts, these skills have been in very high demand for the last decade. Unfortunately, many of the jobs take us out of the cockpit, leaving a shortage of fighter pilots.

## **What other fighter planes have you flown? Would you still want to be flying the F-16 or one**

## **of the others that you've flown before?**

The F-16 is the only fighter I have flown. It is quite rare to change to a different fighter. Other than during pilot training, the only other aircraft I have flown is the T-38 as an instructor pilot for Euro NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training. The only aircraft I desire to fly is the F-16.

## **Retirement plans?**

I plan to relax after a long career, but I will have to find something to replace the thrill I get to experience every time I go up in an F-16.



By Cadet Third Class Zoe Daugherty



# Air Force Dependents & Brats

Growing up as a dependent in the military and having a fighter pilot as a dad is an experience I wouldn't change for the world. It was not always easy, but in the long run it was the best way to spend my childhood. My dad, Lt. Col. (ret.) Scott Kelly, spent 26 years in the United States Air Force flying the F-4. Not many people know that when being a pilot in the military, they have other jobs at the same time. All the jobs he held in his 26 years can't fit into 400-600 word article, below are just a FEW he had throughout his career.

- - F-4 Pilot, Osan AB, South Korea – Wingman
- - Assistant Squadron Weapons Officer. Osan AB, South Korea and Seymour Johnson AFB, NC - ran both air-to-air and air-to-ground training programs
- - Pave Tack Instructor, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC - Laser Guided Bomb instructor
- - Wing Chief of Safety, Clark AB - 3 Tactical Fighter Wing Chief of Safety - managed flight and ground safety programs for the wing.
- - Flight Commander, Clark AB, George AFB, CA and Davis Monthan, AZ
- - Air-to-Air Instructor in F-4 training squadron, George AFB
- - Secretary of the Air Force/ International Affairs Saudi Arabia Desk Officer, Pentagon
- - F-4 Weapons School Commander, Holloman AFB
- - F-4 Squadron Operations Officer, Holloman AFB
- - F-4 Squadron Commander, Holloman AFB
- - Chief, Offensive Operations, Combined Air Operations Cen-

ter, Qatar - Executed offensive air operations for Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa

- - 12 AF Combined Air Operations Center Inspector General, Davis Monthan AFB

As I am sure, everyone knows being in the military there comes a lot of goodbyes. In my lifetime alone my dad had gone on two deployments, countless TDY (Temporary Duty), which is when a member goes away from his/her duty station to accomplish a specific mission, and a total of two years in Saudi Arabia. Goodbyes never get easier, but the feeling someone gets seeing their loved one return is one that can't be beat.

I was born in Ft Belvoir, Virginia then moved to Holloman Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and then I was lucky enough to move overseas to High Wycombe, England, then finally Davis–Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona where my dad eventually retired. Each base brought new adventure, new friends, and brought my family closer together.

Growing up as a dependent is a hard experience to explain. I have never known anything else, but I can say it comparing my life to others who grew up in the civilian world that even through all the hard times, I am so thankful for every experience and opportunity it gave me. As a dependent, you start to appreciate the small things like emails, webcam, and phone calls because those are what

get you through the long months your loved ones are gone.

Every single time I had to say goodbye to my dad I knew why he had to do it. I have come from multiple generations of military officers and I would be proud to follow in their footsteps.



By Cadet Third Class Casandra Kelly



# AIRMAN'S CREED

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.

I AM A WARRIOR.

I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.

MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.

I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,  
A TRADITION OF HONOR, AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.

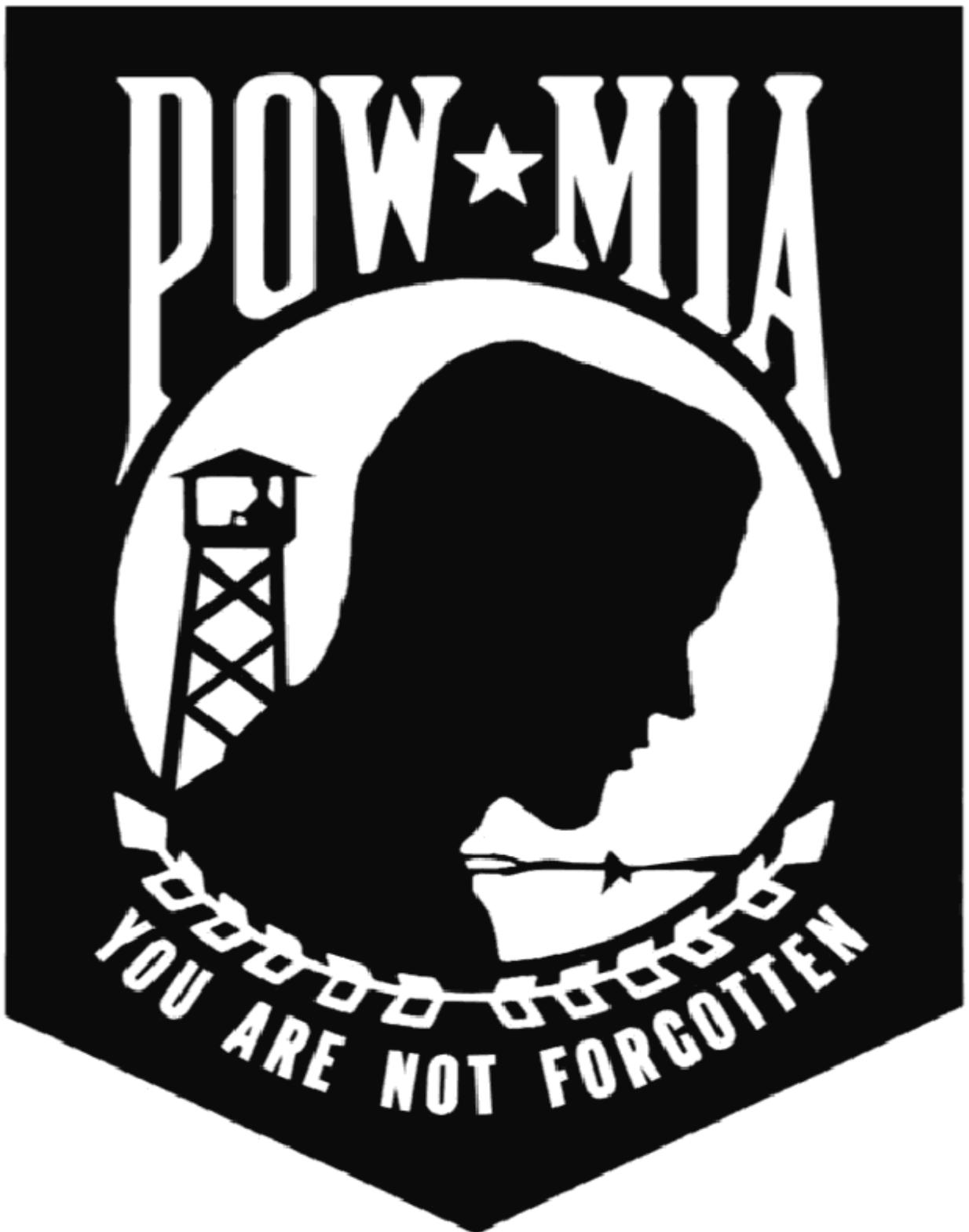
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,  
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,  
MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD,  
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.

I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:  
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.

I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,  
I WILL NEVER FALTER,  
AND I WILL NOT FAIL.





REMEMBER THOSE WHO  
FOUGHT FOR YOU