

#### U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO | AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALYSSA M. AKERS

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## An integrated force

TECH. SGT. JARAD A. DENTON | 5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

INOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. --The man stopped in the narrow hallway, his eyes turning to rows of glossy portraits hanging symmetrically on the wall.

"He was my first wing commander," the man said.

It was 1986 when a young, U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Anthony Cotton first laid eyes on the main gate at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota; with the words, "only the best come north," proudly displayed for all to see.

"It all started right here," Maj. Gen. Anthony Cotton, 20th Air Force commander, said, during a visit to Minot, Sept. 29. "Coming to Minot as a brand new second lieutenant in late October of 1986, I wanted to do the best I could as a missile crewmember."

Cotton said the drive to do his best was something his father, a former Air Force chief master sergeant, emphasized heavily throughout his life.

"My dad instilled the Core Values in me," he said. "But, even more important, he told me to do the best you can at the job you are in."

Setting goals kept the motivation to constantly improve strong, Cotton said. Now, nearly 31 years later, the general returned to where his career began to see the same passion for excellence on the faces of Airmen at Minot.

"I use the words of my dad to mentor the Airmen I see here," Cotton said. "Stand by the Core Values, do your best and everything plays out pretty well."

As Airmen push forward to adapt to an ever-changing world, Cotton challenged them to incorporate innovation into their daily lives and work toward creating a modernized, more lethal Air Force.

"In the ICBM world, the modernization has been ongoing," he said. "Even though I was a Minuteman III guy, I was part of the generation that saw the deployment of the first Peacekeeper. That was game changing for us." Speaking on the deployment of the LGM-118 Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile in 1986,

Cotton said many of the advances and innovations gleaned from the nowdeactivated program have been applied to the LGM-30G Minuteman III ICBM program and beyond.

"I think some of the technologies and processes we saw, during the Peacekeeper program, we will see again," Cotton said. "But, I think the next game changer is one I haven't seen yet – and that is GBSD."

GBSD, or Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, is an ICBM weapon system replacement for the Minuteman III. With a focus on developing and delivering an integrated weapons system, Cotton said GBSD will employ a modular architecture making the overall platform more responsive to the needs of combatant commanders, and the challenges of technological change and new threat environments. "It is a modernization of

the entire weapon system – not just the missile itself," said Cotton. "The command and control, the launch control system itself, the missile alert facilities, all of those will look different – and rightly so."

Cotton said while certain components and subsystems of the Minuteman III system have been upgraded over the years, the infrastructure and much of the original equipment has remained unchanged since 1970.

"I can go to India-01 right now and it will look exactly as it did when I pulled alerts there from 1986 to 1991, granted as a CDB crewmember without the REACT console" Cotton said. "Not that it's a bad thing, but the brick and mortar of the system is what it is. I think the greatest change we are going to see in the nuclear enterprise will be GBSD."

As the Air Force transitions to GBSD, Cotton said it is important for Airmen at all levels to fully understand how their dayto-day jobs contribute to overall mission success. "It is a team sport," he said. "We have remarkable Airmen doing remarkable things here. Deterrence is about credibility, and credibility is about knowing

what you are doing and getting the job done."

That credibility extends to the Airmen of the 91st Missile Wing, who work together to ensure Minot remains a strong, deterrent force, Cotton said.

"I can sleep well at night knowing that the team at Minot is both a credible and an incredible deterrent force," the general said. "The Airmen here are striving and thriving to be on the forefront of innovation."

With Airmen of the 91st Missile Wing leading the charge of innovation and dynamic leadership, Cotton said the future of the Air Force rests with the empowerment of squadron commanders.

"The squadron commanders can do something I can't," Cotton said. "They can reach out and impact the lives of not just Airmen, but anyone who is a part of their lives. That's



J.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO | AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALYSSA M. AKERS

Maj. Gen. Anthony Cotton, 20th Air Force commander, speaks during an interview at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., Sept. 29, 2017. Cotton spoke with 91st Missile Wing Airmen and toured several facilities during his visit.

important. The success of the Air Force is right there at that squadron level."

As this reinvigoration continues, Cotton said he expects to see more positive changes over the years throughout the Air Force.

"I see a more integrated force," he began. "One that isn't stove piped. One that isn't just operations, maintenance or security, but rather one that is interwoven and integrated. While GBSD will help drive that, I think the path we are following with our leadership teams is one that leads to the cohesion necessary to meet the challenges we will face in the future."



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## The uniform, the rank, the badge – the attitude

TECH. SGT. JARAD A. DENTON | 5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. --

The colonel leaned back in his seat, pausing for just a moment as he scanned his memory.

"Not really," he said, recounting if the U.S. Air Force had always been a goal. "It was kind of tradition in the family – to serve. It was something the family did. I figured I'd get in, do five years and then get out."

Smiling, Col. Patrick Matthews shook his head as if trying to imagine the journey from his home in Texas to serving as the Eighth Air Force vice commander, at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.

"One day you wake up and it's been 20 years," he said. "Wake up again and it's 30. It wasn't really in the cards, but I thought I'd give it a shot."

With his retirement only a

couple short months away, Matthews made it a point to visit, speak with and mentor Airmen at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota – his first assignment after completing training as a B-52 Stratofortress navigator, in 1989. Throughout his career, he said the success he experienced all came down to one thing: attitude.

"Wherever you go, there you are," Matthews said, borrowing the title of a book by Jon Kabat-Zinn. "It's all about attitude. There's opportunity wherever you go, because you make it."

Expanding on that, Matthews explained how a pre-conceived perception could ultimately define an entire experience.

"If you walk into a situation and you say, 'this sucks,' guess what?" he said, rhetorically. "It's going to



An unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launches during an operational test at 2:10 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time Wednes-day, Aug. 2, 2017, at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

## **Boosting the brain**

TECH. SGT. JARAD A. DENTON 5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

STEP."

During OLYMPIC

STEP, which refers to

the annual ICBM code

change operation,

#### MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. --

As part of move to further modernize the nuclear enterprise, Airmen from the 91st Missile Wing, at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, recently implemented a \$68 million upgrade to the LGM-30G Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile.

First used on June 23, this new device – known as the Data Transfer Unit. was designed to replace the legacy Cartridge Tape Unit and Launch Facility Load Cartridge systems.

"The DTU loads the Missile Guidance Set, which is the brain of the Minuteman III, with sensitive cryptographic data and other information the missile needs in order to function," said Capt. Kevin Drumm, 91st Operations Support Squadron ICBM codes operations chief. "After its first operational use, we transitioned to using DTU's 100 percent of the time during the 742nd Missile Squadron's **Operation OLYMPIC** 

maintenance teams using DTU's observed a significant increase in productivity. "The legacy LFLC's take about 45 minutes to produce of the Wing Codes Processing System, and about 30 minutes to load at a launch facility," said Drumm. "The new DTU takes less than 30 minutes to produce, and about seven minutes to

> load." Additionally, the LFLC can only hold enough data and information for a single launch facility; which meant Airmen would need to carry up to 50 LFLC's to accomplish a complete code change. A single DTU is capable of storing the same amount of data as 12 LFLC's.

"The DTU has increased productivity and shortened the time required to conduct coding operations," said Drumm. "It's also 25-pounds lighter than the CTU."

Under the previous svstem. Airmen

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## State Fair Center, Minot, N.D. 5-8 6:30 | OCTOBER 8 \*\*\*\*\* **PLUS!** Expo and Trade Show, Chili Cook-off, Crowning of Miss Rodeo ND 2018 and so much more! **MORE AVAILABLE AT:** www.MinotYsMensRodeo.com RAM

carried two CTU's - which weighed roughly 90-pounds. Now, they only need to take one DTU, which is only 20-pounds. Drumm said this new system enables faster, more reliable and more secure ICBM operations.

"Simply put," he said. "The DTU loads the missile with the information and data required for it to function properly day-to-day, as well as launch, or prevent a launch, based on presidential direction."

# **DETERRENCE FROM THE GROUND UP**

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. -- The 791st Maintenance Squadron Mechanical and Pneudraulics Section inspects a crane at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., Sept. 21, 2017. MAPS maintains the upkeep of 91st Missile Wing equipment through periodic inspections to support U.S. Strategic Command's

deterrence mission.

U.S. Air Force photos | Airman 1st Class Alyssa M. Akers







## CROSSWORD PUZZ

#### Across

1. Put (out), as a cigar 8. One that gets around? 15. Moldova neighbor 16. Unquiet 17. Near miss 18. Mixture 19. Set the stage for 21. Star seen around midnight 22. Makes a splash 25. Men's wear accessory 27. Greek queen of heaven 28. They may be smacked 29. Site of an oracle of Apollo 33. Directs Make merry 36. "Let's try this again" 38. Up the proverbial creek 39. Aristocracy, colloquially 40. Anchor position 41. Ending with brawn or brain Leander's love 43. Bit of frippery: Var. 45. \_\_-slipper 46. Neutral color

- 49. Bust a gut
- 51. Obvious sham
- 53. Off one's guard
- 57. Beginning
- 58. Was down a lot, maybe
- 59. Rustling sounds
- 60. They may be Italian



8. Holds forth

9. Clean over

14. San \_\_\_

20. Twerp

- Down
- 1. Wd. ending
- 2. Bout ending
- 3. Arg. neighbor
- 4. They're not exact
- 5. Takes the bait 6. Patient lady of Arthurian legend

7. Seconds

- 10. Eagles' org. 11. "Not a chance!" 12. Buster Brown's dog 13. Politician Bavh de' Medici
  - 22. Therapy focus 23. Eastern Mediterranean region 24. Mine vehicle 26. "\_\_\_ you!" 28. Pope born Giovanni 30. Sacked 31. Surly

- 32. Some pool pros 34. Michael of R.E.M. 35. Mil. title 37. Investors' boons 41. "Maybe"
- 44. Singer Gorme
- 45. Leblanc's gentleman burglar Arsene \_\_\_\_
- 46. ER tests
- 47. Meditate (on)
- 48. Asian royal
- 50. Hawaiian staple
- 52. Matter of the hearth 54. "\_\_\_ got it!" 55. Catcher
- 56. Mdse.









## SUDOKU Solution to puzzle on page 10

1		2			3		
3	4		1		5	6	7
		8		9			4
	3		2	4			
7							1
			8	5		9	
5			3		9		
4	9	3		1		7	2
© 2009 Hom		6			4		5

Solution to last week's Crossword puzzle.

## IT • (R) FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6 • 1800 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8 • 1500

A group of bullied kids band together when a shapeshifting demon, taking the appearance of a clown, begins hunting children.

Studio Appreciation Advance Screening -Free Admission – Rated \*. Tickets available at your local Exchange Food Court. Seating open to non-ticket holders 30 minutes prior to showtime. 1700.

L	А	Μ	В		А	Ρ	R	Ι	L		К	Е	Ρ	Т
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Е	Μ	А	С	Ι	А	Т	Е			0	Μ	Е	Ν	S
			К	А	R	Т		Е	Μ	Μ	А			
В	А	R	Е	L	Y		S	А	R	Ι		Н	S	Т
А	W	А	Υ			0	А	Т	E	Ν		Е	W	Е
Т	А	К	Е	Н	Е	R	Т	0	D	Ι	Ν	Ν	E	R
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## **Doolittle Center First Friday To Feature Spooky Themed Menu**



The Jimmy Doolittle Center invites you to enjoy a special First Friday event on Friday, October 6 from 4-9 p.m. Join the fun with corn hole, darts, and crud as well as dress your best costume contests.

A delicious spooky themed menu will be served from 4-6 p.m. Cost is FREE for Club Members and spouse, \$7 for adult non-members, \$3 for children 6 years of age and older, and FREE for children age 5 and under. The event is family friendly. For additional information, call the Jimmy Doolittle Center at 723-3731.

## **Free Admission For Club Members To UFC Fight Night**



## **Enjoy Family Fun Fest At The Youth Center On October 27**

Arts & Crafts Center Offering Wine & Paint Class On Oct. 20

Family Fun Fest is coming to the Youth Center on Friday, October 27 from 6-8 p.m. Children of all ages can enjoy wearing their costumes and trying their skill at a variety of games. There will be 2 full gyms of activities and a haunted maze.

The event is open to everyone with no registration necessary. Tickets for games are \$1 for 2 tickets and may be purchased at the door. You'll enjoy games, candy, prizes, food, and more at this annual event. The Family Fun Fest is sponsored by Dakota Kids Dentistry and Minot Spouses Club. No Federal Endorsement of Sponsor Intended. For more details, call the Youth Center at 723-2838.



Club members receive FREE admission to the UFC 213 pay-per-view event at Rockers Bar & Grill on Saturday, October 7. Non-members price is only \$7.

The action features the UFC Interim Lightweight title bout between #2 ranked Tony "El Cucuy" Ferguson and #7 ranked Kevin "The Motown Phenom" Lee. In other main event action, Fabricio Werdum takes on Derrick Lewis while Paige VanZant in her UFC Flyweight debut battles Jessica Eye.

Preliminaries begin at 7 p.m. with the main card starting at 9 p.m. This is an adults only event - no children. For more information, call 727-ROCK.



The Arts and Crafts Center invites you to their Wine & Paint class on Friday, October 20 from 6-8 p.m. Gather your friends for a fun evening out painting a masterpiece. Cost is \$26 per person for a two-hour exciting painting experience. Step-by-step instruction will be provided.

Pre-registration is required at the Arts & Crafts Center from October 10-19. There is limited seating available so be sure to register early. Class is open to adults 17 years of age and older only. Wine is not included in cost. You must provide your own wine if desired. For more details, please contact the Arts & Crafts Center at 723-3640.









Halloween Spooktacular Fitness Event Saturday, October 21, 9-11 a.m., Fitness Center

## **CLUB MEMBER DRAWING ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6 WILL BE FOR \$350.**

You must be present to win. Become a club member today to qualify. Simply visit Rockers Bar & Grill or the Jimmy Doolittle Center to obtain your application. The next weekly club member drawing will be held on Friday, October 6 at Rockers Bar & Grill and the Jimmy Doolittle Center. Drawing time varies each week between 5:30-6:30 p.m.

#### FAMILY and YOUTH EVENTS & PROGRAMS

#### Oct 18 Bundles For Babies

Expectant mothers are invited to attend Bundles For Babies at the Airmen and Family Readiness Center on October 18 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The class is open to all ranks and not limited to a first pregnancy. Attendees will learn how to budget for your growing family and about many of the support programs that are available. Plus participants receive a free gift for your new baby courtesy of the Air Force Aid Society. Please register by noon on October 17. For more information, call 723-3950.



#### Youth Indoor Soccer Registration

The Youth Center is holding Youth Indoor Soccer registration for Youth Center members 3-12 years of age now through October 31. Cost is \$30 for Smart Start ages 3 & 4 and \$40 for youth ages 5-12. Youth Center membership and a current immunization record as well as a sports physical must be on file to register. The Youth Indoor Soccer season begins January 2. For additional information, please call the David C. Jones Youth Center at 723-2838.

#### Family Fun Night

Take the whole family out for a delicious meal. Rough Riders invites you to enjoy their Family Fun Night every Tuesday from 5-9 p.m. Club members can enjoy 2 large one topping pizzas, 12 breadsticks, and 2 pitchers of soda for only \$25. Nonmembers can join the fun for only \$32. Plus children are sure to enjoy spending time in the Lil' Rider Indoor Playland. For more details, call 727-4377.

For 5th Force Support Job Opportunities, visit www.nafjobs.org or call 723-2812



#### YOUNG AIRMEN EVENTS & PROGRAMS

#### Oct 6 Friday Night Karaoke

Come and show off your talent during Friday Night Karaoke at Rockers Bar & Grill on October 6 from 8 p.m. to close. Sing solo, do a duet, or grab a group! Rockers has a great karaoke selection for your enjoyment. Gather up your friends and enjoy all of the fun. Rockers is hosting Karaoke Nights on Fridays throughout the month of October with the exception of October 27. For additional information, contact Rockers Bar & Grill at 727-ROCK.

#### Oct 16-19 Off-Base Budget Classes

Planning to move off base? The Airman & Family Readiness Center is hosting Off-Base Budget Classes on October 16, 17, 18, & 19 from 2:30-4 p.m. Airmen will obtain important information on leases, military clauses, renters insurance, complete a budget worksheet, and determine an affordable rental price range. Attendees should bring their current LESs and have knowledge of their bills. Call 723-3950 for additional information.

#### Oct 10 After Columbus Day Special

Strike up some fun on Tuesday, October 10 during the After Columbus Day Bowling Special at Rough Rider Lanes from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adults can bowl for only \$2.75 per game and youth under the age of 18 years old bowl for \$2.00 per game. Plus if you get a strike with the "red pin" as the head pin, you'll receive a free game coupon (one free game per person per game). For more information, call Rough Rider Lanes at 727-4715.

#### Oct 13 Freaky Friday

The Jimmy Doolittle Center invites you to Freaky Friday on Friday, October 13 from 4-9 p.m. You will enjoy great food, bar specials, DJ, and even a costume contest. Come dressed to part and enter the costume contest for a chance to win the \$100 top prize. Second prize is \$25 plus free lunch certificates for runner-up and honorable mention. Food will be served from 5-7 p.m. featuring bloodshot deviled eyeballs, graveyard chicken enchilada dip, mummy meatloaf, pork brains in chili sauce, and spider web chocolate cake. This is an adults only event. Cost is \$5 for club members and \$10 for non-members. For more information, contact the Jimmy Doolittle Center at 723-3731.

#### Oct 14 Monster Mayhem

The Base Library invites children of all ages to their FREE Monster Mayhem event on Saturday, October 14 beginning at 1 p.m. This Second Saturday program features monsterous stories, creature crafts, and abnormal activities. Halloween costumes are welcome but not required. Call the Base Library at 723-3344 for additional information.

#### Oct 19 Creative Kids Class

Spend the morning with your preschooler having fun decorating pumpkins during the Creative Kids class at the Arts & Crafts Center on Thursday, October 19 from 10:30-11 a.m. Age appropriate projects are offered for children ages 3-5. Cost for the class is \$5. Please call at least one day prior to class to sign up for the class. Call the Arts & Crafts Center at 723-3640 for details.





For more 5th Force Support events, visit us at www.facebook.com/5thforcesupport





Visit our website at www.5thforcesupport.com

## Rodeo Discount Minot rodeo to offer discounted tickets for military

#### **MINOT Y'S MENS RODEO**

Colorado Springs, and the

Minot, N.D. (October 2, 2017) – For military folks looking for something fun to do, the Minot Y's Men's Rodeo has just the ticket.

With a military ID, armed forces personnel are able to purchase tickets to the October 8 rodeo performance at a discount. Tickets must be purchased at the gate the day of the rodeo, or at the Minot Family YMCA, Monday through Friday, from 8 am to 5 pm.

The Y's Men have invited military personnel to the rodeo each year, and Colonel Colin Connor, 91 Missile Wing Commander, attended the rodeo last year and will this year as well. A rodeo aficionado, Col. Connor has gone to Cheyenne Frontier Days and rodeos in Denver,

Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. He enjoyed the Minot rodeo last year and looks forward to it this year. "It's an absolutely great event that allows families and friends to go out and enjoy themselves in a casual environment." His daughters, ages fourteen and eleven, ride horses and enjoy the rodeo as well. He and one of the girls went to the National Finals Rodeo a few years ago, but he appreciates the Minot rodeo more. "I enjoy rodeos like Minot more because it's more family oriented, a more relaxing setting, and it doesn't cost an arm and a leg to get in." Col. Connor and his wife took their honeymoon to Cheyenne Frontier Days, and their daughters

have been attending rodeos "since they were born." Tickets are discounted for

military personnel on October 8, when the rodeo starts at 1:30 pm; the rodeo also runs Oct. 5-7 at 6:30 pm each night. Tickets can be purchased online at www. MinotYsMensRodeo.com; to get the military discount, military ID must be shown in person and the tickets purchased in person at the Minot Family YMCA or at the gate the day of the rodeo. Active and retired military personnel are eligible for the discount. Regular priced silver tickets are \$23 and gold are \$33; with the military discount, they are \$13 and \$18.

For more information, visit the rodeo's website or Facebook page.

## Dancing for Special Stars comes to Minot

BETH DUCHSHERER | NORTHERN SENTRY

A night of fun and dancing entertainment is set for the "Dancing for Special Stars" next week on Wednesday, October, 11th at the Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, Minot State University. Starting with the reception at 6:15 pm, celebrity dancers from all over Minot with their coaches will be performing to their own personal "choice" songs. The performance begins at 7:00 pm and will follow up after the show with meet and greet with the performers.

The entertainment program is a fundraising event for the Special Olympics of North Dakota (SOND). Each year different area celebrities are paired with local dance instructors and enthusiasts. 2016 brought almost thirteen thousand dollars raised for the event. This year the 2017 participants look to increase that number and raise the bar for the years to come. Kathy Meagher, President of Special Olympics of North Dakota, stated that the idea of "Dancing for Special Stars" all started eight years ago from a volunteer who watched the popular television program and thought if they could do something similar it would turn into a great fundraising event. "This event has helped the Special Olympics tap into a new audience and help raise awareness for the Special Olympics and what their mission is" stated Meagher. The event is held in Grand Forks in April, Minot in October and coming soon there will be dancing in Bismarck.



dancers is Mike Pankow. Pankow signed up simply because he loves to dance. Pankow is the owner of Dakota Custom Furniture has been making custom furniture for over 30 years. He is also a member of the Minot Heritage Singers. He mentioned that he always enjoyed dancing and performing. Humorously he joked that his Mother didn't want him to get hurt, so he was more involved with dance classes and piano lessons growing up. Pankow noted that he has always had a special place in his heart for the Special Olympics. Back in the 1970's, he taught swimming to students with disabilities at Utah State University and his team took first place in the state. He is excited to take on this challenge and help out a worthy cause as well as give back to the Special Olympics.

One of the featured "celebrity"

His partner and choreographer/ dance coach is Tonya Stuart-Melland who is the Manager and Editor of the Minot Air Force Base Newspaper, The Northern Sentry. Tonya is no stranger to dance either. In her early years she was a prominent figure with her dance company, Jacquie's Dance Academy in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, for over 10 years. She still enjoys dancing and was thrilled to be asked to be a performer. Her and Pankow have spent many hours practicing their 1920's themed dance and are excited to be able to share this performance.





MIKE PANKOW AND TONYA STUART-MELLAND DANCE PARTNERS FOR DANCING FOR SPECIAL STARS

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased by calling Special Olympics North Dakota at 701.746.0331. All proceeds go to Special Olympics of North Dakota and will help support their mission: "...to provide year-round training and athletic competition in a variety of well coached, Olympic-type sports. Special Olympics provides continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness skills; prepare for entry into school and community sports programs; express courage; experience joy; and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with families, other Special Ólympics athletes, and the community.'

For more information contact SOND at (701) 746-0331 or email at www. specialolympicsnd.org.

# Pumpkin French Toast With Whipped Pumpkin Butter



.....

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

#### 4 eggs

- 2/3 c. milk (whole, low-fat or skim) 1/2 c. pumpkin puree 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tsp. vanilla extract
- tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 12 slices Texas toast, french bread, challah, croissant halves
- Whipped pumpkin butter:
- 1/2 c. (1 stick), salted or unsalted butter, room temperature 1/3 c. pumpkin puree
- 3 tbsp. maple syrup or honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Set a large non-stick skillet set over medium heat, add a small amount of butter and melt.

.....

In a rectangular baking dish, whisk together the eggs, milk, pumpkin puree, vanilla, cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. Dip the bread into the mixture, flip sides and then place on the hot skillet. Cook until each side is golden brown, about 2-3 minutes on each side. Repeat with remaining ingredients, serve hot with whipped pumpkin butter, maple syrup and toasted chopped nuts (if desired).

To make the pumpkin butter, in a small mixing bowl, add the softened butter and beat with a hand mixer for 2 minutes or until light and fluffy. Add the pumpkin puree, maple syrup or honey, vanilla, cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. Beat for an additional minute or until fluffy. Store in an air-tight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

I've made the whipped pumpkin butter with both honey and maple syrup. I prefer maple syrup when using it on pancakes, waffles and french toast, and honey when using it on rolls. Feel free to use whichever you prefer!

-If you like your french toast on the sweeter side, add 1 tbsp. of brown sugar to the mixture.

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#### THE UNIFORM, THE RANK, THE BADGE from page 3

suck, because you preordained it. But if you walk into the situation and you say, 'well this is interesting, let's see what I can do with this,' then that opens more opportunities."

Matthews said the opportunities afforded him throughout his career would have remained abstract, if not for a constant drive to overcome what he called, "the doldrums."

"We hold ourselves back so much because of our attitude," he said. "In reality, we're really only limited by ourselves. Make the best of where you're at – but always evaluate."

During his career, Matthews said he constantly evaluated if the next move, assignment or position would be best for his family. Then, he weighed those evaluations with, or against, his passion to continue serving and working

alongside Airmen.

"The little known secret is we get to hang out with some of the best, most talented people in the world," he said. "It's incredibly rewarding."

With such a positive outlook, Matthews said he tends to look at every day as his "best day."

"I think every day is the best day," he began. "Because you wake up – and that's a damn good start. Because one day you're not going to wake up, and you never know when that day is. The realization that it's a good thing to wake up and go do something is what motivates me."

Matthews said that idea came to him as an epiphany born out of tragedy, when what began as a routine flyover near Andersen Air Base, Guam, turned into death for six Airmen, July 21, 2008. Scheduled to participate in the 64th Guam Liberation Day

parade, the B-52, under the call sign "Raider 21," crashed into the ocean, 25 miles off the coast of the island. No one on board survived.

"It's the worst day when you have to bury your friends,' said Matthews, who was the 96th Bomb Squadron commander, when the crash happened. "For me, it's a day that never finishes. I was back at Barksdale, and the 20th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron was deployed to Guam, when we found out we had a plane missing."

The uncertainty, Matthews said, was horrible. However, that initial shock was soon replaced by another feeling as more information was discovered and communicated.

"It was just a sinking feeling," he said. "Then, having to tell families that their loved ones are gone, while also trying to keep the unit motivated and organized. I raised them, almost from

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pups, and to see their lives tragically cut short was, and still is, an incredibly hard thing.'

However, from the ashes of Raider 21, Matthews said he carried on with a new perspective.

"It made me realize how important life is," he said. "Since you never know when your last day is, you really have to enjoy every minute and make today your best day.'

Truthfully, Matthews admitted, not every day starts off as that best day. He said that's when it takes a team to make it past the doldrums and turn those days around.

"Just having someone help you through stuff is important," he said. "That's why it's really important we know our people. How do you know if something is wrong with someone, unless you know them?"

Matthews said that commitment to knowing Airmen is a two-way street.

"It goes up and down the chain, it goes side to side," he said. "That's how we take care of each other."

He smiled again and paused. "A few months ago I woke up on the wrong side of the bed. I was cranky and everything," Matthews said. "I had to meet a group of folks at the dining facility on Barksdale. I go in and I put the façade on, and the guy serving my eggs looked at me and said, 'what would you like, sir?"

Matthews, still stuck in the doldrums, said he robotically asked the Airman for scrambled eggs.

"He looked at me and said, 'I'm going to get you the best omelet you've ever had," Matthews said. "No kidding, this airman first class saw I was kind of down a little bit and his attitude perked me right up. This kid put me right past the doldrums.'

With such a simple gesture, Matthews said the attitude and smile this Airman projected was contagious.

"He made a difference in my day," Matthews said.



As a career spanning nearly three decades comes to a close, Matthews said he hopes any legacy he leaves behind will be one rooted in kindness.

'Over 30 years, I hope my little acts of kindness have made an impact," he said. "I hope they have gone through the Air Force, set the right example and made things better.'

Matthews paused, seemingly to reflect, before continuing.

"The Air Force has really changed since I came in," he said. "Today, there is a different mentality. Through the 90's, we were reforming. Then Iraq happened and we moved from a Cold War to a bunch of little hot ones which changed our attitude."

Those changes, Matthews said, diverted the strategic focus away from the Air Force's nuclear mission and onto other priorities. That shift indirectly led to one of the most serious nuclear incidents in America's history, when six nuclear warheads on cruise missiles were mistakenly transported on a flight from Minot to Barksdale, September 2007.

"It's never good when you have to wake the President up and tell him you have a situation like that," Matthews said. "It had a strategic-level impact across the world."

Matthews said that from this ordeal emerged a renewed focus on the security, procedures and management of America's nuclear-capable assets.

"The stand-up of Air Force Global Strike Command, which came out of the incident, was actually a good thing," he said. "We put our eyes back where they should be. It may take a thousand attaboy's to overcome one moment like that, but our Airmen keep working to make every day better."

Despite setbacks, incidents and tragedies, Matthews said the lessons learned have been passed along to Airmen, who will carry the torch long after he retires.

"We pass along our identity as Airmen," he said. "What we are as a service and how we are bound together are more important now than ever. Number one, you are all Airmen – we all wear the same uniform. Number two is your rank, or more importantly, what you do with your rank to make the Air Force better. Number three is your job, your career field, your badge.'





He smiled again.

"It should be transparent to anyone out there," Matthews said. "The uniform, the rank, the badge – it all makes us work better as a team. And above all, the attitude you bring to the table, regardless of the other three things, directly impacts our ability to combat airpower anywhere on the planet."