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History of Williams Air Force Base

In many ways, this facility came about by luck. In early 1941, some Mesa citizens were trying to attract an Army Air Corps facility to the area. There were other sites in contention, but these active citizens managed to assemble a large piece of land from 33 individual properties, and work out the logistics for utilities and a railroad spur. Their hard work paid off, and the War Department announced the to-be-built facility in June, 1941.

By December 1941, the air base was basically up and running. Several names were tried, but eventually the name of Lt. Charles Williams, an Arizona born airman, was selected. Lt. Williams had died in the crash of his pursuit plane in Hawaii in 1927.

The air base was the major training facility for the Army Air Corps, and later the Air Force, supplying roughly 25% of all military pilots annually, mostly for fighter and bomber aviation. During World War II, large numbers of Chinese pilots and support and technical personnel were also trained here, over 3500 total.

Williams Air Force Base remained a major training facility for decades after the end of WWII, providing gunnery training and flight training for the various jet fighters being built for the Air Force. The base was finally closed in 1993.

Today, Williams has a new life as Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, a regional commercial and passenger facility, as well as being the southeast campus for ASU Polytechnic and Chandler Gilbert Community College, and a burgeoning commercial/industrial enterprise park. It's a rebirth of which Arizona can be proud.



I often sign emails about our military with: "No greater love...". It is the beginning of: "No greater loves knows a man than he who is willing to put his life down for another". There are many different renditions of this saying, but the essence is the same. Very few are willing to sacrifice everything so that others may live in peace and in freedom. We live in troubled times, times more scary than I ever can remember. The one thing that I have always believed in, growing up and as an adult was our military. Not every soldier is a role model, and not everything they do is perfect, but the values, principles, dedication and honor that they exemplify are the foundation our company was built upon. It is not just the might of our military, it is the fact that they have fought again and again to afford us our rights and our freedom. It is thanks to them that we have never had to confront an enemy on our own shores.

No one can appreciate the bravery, sacrifice and suffering and also the brotherhood that exists in the military, unless you have lived it. It is not just the members of the military, but also their families that go to war. The wives, husbands, parents and children of those deployed live every day with the same razor's edge of tension, alertness and anticipation that a fighting soldier feels.

I grew up with the military, and went to Department of Defense schools. I honestly think I got the best, most rounded and unbiased education I could get anywhere. For those of you who do not know what US Military schools overseas are like, they are just like any other school here, with American kids and teachers. You do not wear uniforms, or march around. You take the same classes as everywhere else here in the USA. The only difference is that it is really hard to make friends, because as soon as you have a best friend, his or her family gets reassigned to a new duty station, and the whole family packs up and moves to some other place in the world. There was something else about that education I will never forget. I went to school at the end of the Vietnam War. I saw the disrespect given to our soldiers. I never saw the hippies yelling or spitting at our troops coming home, but I know it happened. My friends told me how it happened to their fathers. I was very young and did not understand it all, but I never forgot it. I think we as a nation learned from that, and pray that never happens again. The other thing I will never forget is those kids who were in school one day, and gone the next. You always knew ahead of time when you were going to rotate to your next assignment. What you did not know was when your father might come home in a flag draped coffin.

Never miss the opportunity to thank a veteran, and remember – They have fought and earned rights. Those who only reap the rewards of their sacrifice have privileges, not rights. As Ronald Reagan said – we are only one generation away from losing our freedoms. It is our military who will guarantee those rights as long as we are a nation, no politician, no actor and no businessman. God bless and protect our military and its veterans.

-Mick Hirko

Amateur photographer Frank Glick was on his way to work when he drove through Fort Snelling National Cemetery early one morning. He spotted a bald eagle through the mist, perched on a gravestone, and snapped shots with his camera. The grave belonged to Maurice Ruch, who's widow was still alive and was delighted to get a copy of the picture of the eagle watching over her husband.

[Click here to read the whole story on this amazing picture.](#)



Upcoming Events

DATE	VENUE	EVENT
Nov 4	Ashley Pavilion	Chris Brown
Nov 4	Wrigley Mansion	Noche De Gourmet
Nov 4-6	Downtown Carefree	Carefree Fine Arts & Wine Festival
Nov 5	Camelback Ranch	MMA Fight
Nov 12	Comerica Theatre	Prince Royce
Nov 12	Tempe Beach Park	Walk to Save Animals
Nov 18-20	AJ Rodeo Grounds	Gilbert Rodeo Days
Nov 19	The Farm at South Mountain	Wine Festival
Nov 22	Comerica Theatre	Sting
Nov 25-27	Salt River Fields Stadium	Fine Art & Wine Festival
Nov 25-27	Downtown Glendale	Glendale Glitters
Nov 26	Downtown Tempe	Fantasy of Lights
Nov 26	Comerica Theatre	Max & Ruby

This month we are excited to be part of a very special event—the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall. It will be coming to Tempe November 9th, escorted by the Patriot Guard Riders, and will be assembled on November 10th. The wall will be at Gonzales Field in Tempe Beach Park and we don't know that it will ever be here again, so we hope that everyone will get a chance to come down and see it while it's here. They will need volunteers, so if any of you are interested in helping us out please send me an email. I am still working on getting the finer details, so I can respond and give you more information once we get those squared away.

It's also that time of the year again. The end of the month (November 26th) means another trek up A Mountain (also known as Hayden Butte) to make sure the Wise Men are pointing the way and that the star is shining over the city. If you've ever driven through Tempe during December at night, you have probably seen these Wise Men on the mountain. I always get a great sense of pride seeing them all lit up after all of our hard work getting them assembled and set. Those camels are super heavy! I found that out last year when I tried to help one of the guys carry one.

If any of you are interested in contributing to our cause, you can help us in 1 of 2 ways. Every time we hoist these things up, we have to check to make sure all the light bulbs are working, and it also costs us money to keep the electricity on while they are up there. Plus we get vandals sometimes, which doesn't help. If any of you would be interested in sending money to help us keep this project alive we would be grateful. It's a tradition that has been going forever and we have made a promise to keep it going. We also need volunteers to help us put them up on the mountain, so if you'd like to help out that way please shoot me an email at Ashleigh@teamsecurity.net and let me know. I would love to have your help with either of these projects.



Help Yourself

Social Media is the new way to get your name out there but chances are you have someone else handling it for you, or maybe you have a few different people contributing. If this is the case, you probably want to make sure you have a policy laid out with rules and guidelines for the way it is handled. [Click here for advice.](#)

Apps are all the rage right now—they are the building blocks of any smart phone. I know I've have my fun exploring what all I can do with my phone. One of my favorites is "Beat the Traffic" which I always pull up to see where the crash is when I run into traffic. :) But what's even cooler, is you can create your OWN. [Click here](#) to read about the program that lets you create your own apps!

Shop 'til you drop...OR plan ahead and strategize so you can get all of your holiday shopping in the best possible way. Black Friday is upon us, and if you are crazy enough to brave the crowds like I do every year, then maybe [these tips](#) will help you do it more efficiently.



A champion is someone who gets up, even when they can't. - Natalie Rogers

Thank You for Your Service



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