



## Shreveport-Bossier Military Affairs Council

### Your Quarterly Update April 2025

The MAC impact happens every day through our faithful members, military and community partners. Please visit our website to see regular news and events of the organization and our partnering Barksdale Air Force Base community!

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### **Mac Member Highlight**

**BERT SCHMALE**  
*Senior Vice President*  
Home Federal Bank

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Bert has been a proud member of the MAC since 2015, in 2017 and 2018 he served as the Vice President over the Celebrate Barksdale. In June 2021, Bert became the Treasurer of the MAC Board and this year he was part of the Defenders of Liberty Air Show 2025 Planning Committee.

Bert is a Senior Vice President in commercial banking at Home Federal Bank. He has been involved in real estate and banking for over 25 years. In addition to the MAC, he has served on multiple boards, notably, President of the Providence House board, and he just finished his term as Treasurer of the Independence Bowl Foundation. He is currently Past President of Riverbend Rotary and current Assistant District Governor (for Rotary Dist. 6190). His passion for giving back to the community and being a part of local non-profits is one way that he feels he can directly affect change.

Bert Schmale is a lifelong Shreveport resident; born, raised and educated in Shreveport. He graduated from LSUS in 1993. In June 2025, he and his wife, Valarie, celebrated their 34th wedding anniversary. The two have no kids but are active with nieces and nephews, as well as an 8-month-old pug, Remy. Bert actively serves in his church as one of the media assistants each Sunday. He enjoys spending time with his family and coaching his nephews in golf and football, as well as attending college football games. Bert and Valerie have attended many Independence Bowls, LSU and Nebraska games where his family has had season tickets since 1962. Bert and Valarie also love to travel to the mountains of Colorado with their Jeep or head to the beach with family.



## Barksdale Air Force Base Defenders of Liberty Air Show March 29-30, 2025

### Letter from Senate President Cameron Henry



#### SENATE STATE OF LOUISIANA

J. CAMERON HENRY, JR.  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

P.O. Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804  
(225) 342-9990

April 6, 2025

To the Organizers, Participants, and Supporters of  
the Defenders of Liberty Air Show:

I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation to everyone who made this year's Defenders of Liberty Air Show at Barksdale Air Force Base such a resounding success. This incredible event not only showcased the skill and dedication of our Airmen, but also strengthened the bond between Barksdale and the Shreveport-Bossier community. The air show serves as an important bridge between our military and the public, fostering a deeper appreciation and respect for the men and women who serve our country.

With an astounding 200,000 attendees over the weekend and an estimated \$5 million in economic impact, it is clear that the Defender of Liberty Air Show is a major state event. I would like to personally thank Senators Adam Bass, Sam Jenkins, Thomas Pressly, and Alan Seabaugh for their support and commitment to making this event a success. Additionally, I want to specifically recognize Colonel Michael Maginness, Commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing; General Jason Armagost, Commander of the 8th Air Force; and General Thomas Bussiere, Commander of Air Force Global Strike Command, and thank them for their leadership and dedication.

Beyond the amazing display of aircraft in the sky, the Defenders of Liberty Air Show brought families, veterans, and aviation enthusiasts together as a community, while reinforcing Louisiana's commitment to supporting our military. I would like to extend a special thank you to the Shreveport-Bossier Committee of 100 and its president, David Dethloff, for hosting the Friday night event for legislators, as well as to the Shreveport-Bossier Military Affairs Council and its president, Trey Giglio, for their outstanding efforts in organizing and hosting this year's air show.

As we look ahead to the next air show, I am confident that this tradition will continue to inspire and unite the community. The Defender of Liberty Air Show is and has been a major event for Louisiana for decades. Thank you again to everyone — organizers, volunteers, performers, and attendees—who made this event a success.

Best Wishes,

  
Cameron Henry

President, Louisiana State Senate



[www.SenatorCameronHenry.com](http://www.SenatorCameronHenry.com)

**Paid for by Friends of Cameron Henry**



With an estimated 200,000 visitors and \$5 million dollars in economic impact this year's 2025 Defenders of Liberty Air Show was a high-flying success!

This world-class air show featured: The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, U.S. Army Golden Knight, the Smoke n Thunder Jet Truck, Randy Ball's FighterJets Inc. MiG-17s, Red Bull Air Force, Nate Hammond GhostWriter, Titan Aerobatic Team, Quicksilver Air Shows P-51 Mustang, Army Aviation Heritage Foundation's Sky Soldiers, numerous heritage aircraft, BAC Jet Provost, Jeremy "Gunner" Holt's bi-plane, a flightline packed with static display aircraft and so much more!

If you were a President's Club member you know that the catering was awesome, and the views of the acts were spectacular! The air show committee's hard work paid off with an amazing experience afforded to our members.

This year's air show also featured a couple of first-time ever acts! For the first time ever, at any air show, Randy Ball and FighterJets Inc flew four MiG-17 aircraft in formation. For the first time ever, the Air Force's newest aerial refueling aircraft, the KC-46 Pegasus, flew a demonstration in an air show; the KC-46 flew with a C-17 Globemaster and one of Barksdale's B-52 aircraft. The Defenders of Liberty Air Show is proud to have been chosen as the air show to debut these hot new demonstrations of aeronautics and air power!

Most importantly, we'd like to extend a huge thanks to the air show committee and the volunteers that made this year's event such a success:

**Air Show Committee:** Trey Giglio, Parker Maxwell, John Michael Moore, Holly George, Toni Goodin, John David Person, Walt Gaskins, Scott Ward, Michael Corbin, Bert Schmale, Russ Mathers, Deb Poore, Francesca Benton-Moreland, & Robert Tibi

**Volunteers:** Graeme Weinland, Sarah Ardis, Mike Patronis, Allison Richardson, Jayda Spillers, Keith Rutherford, Lynn Barnard, Hannah Carey, Gary Eakin, Melissa Eakin, Steve Davis, Kay Goke, Teresa Stewart, & Jill Baton

**Planning for the 2027 air show will begin very early in 2026 so if you want to be a part of the air show team, please let us know now!**



## Upcoming Events

### Barksdale Air Force Base CELEBRATE BARKSDALE FESTIVAL

**Early 2025 October**  
**@ Barksdale Air Force Base**

This event celebrates Barksdale's nearly 3000 military personnel and their commitment to preserving America's freedom. SB Military Affairs Council volunteers and community partners host this event to promote fellowship and community through fellowship, great food, live music and games. Celebrate Barksdale is a terrific way to meet other MAC members and deliver a big "Thank You" to the men, women and families serving at Barksdale.

*If you're interested in helping, please contact John David Person @ [jperson@wielandbuilds.com](mailto:jperson@wielandbuilds.com)*

### Volunteer with OKTOBERFEST

**Friday, 3 October**  
*Tentative Date*

The MAC partners with the Barksdale Company Grade Officers Council to put on the **Oktoberfest** as a fundraiser for Operation Bright Holiday. **Operation Bright Holiday** is a program that sends first-term junior enlisted Airmen, stationed at Barksdale, home to see their families for the Thanksgiving or Christmas holidays. Last year the MAC raised and donated over \$16,000 to this program! Please join the team for authentic live Oktoberfest music, awesome food, and plenty of fun. Watch for updates as the date draws closer!

*If you're interested in helping out, please contact West Anderson @ [west.anderson@boeing.com](mailto:west.anderson@boeing.com).*



## MAC Scholarship Program

**Scholarship Donation**



The **Shreveport-Bossier Military Affairs (MAC) Scholarship Fund** was established in 2013, and reauthorized by the Board of Directors in March 2022. The mission of the scholarship fund is to provide financial assistance to individuals enrolled for undergraduate study.

The MAC scholarship provides \$1,000 scholarships to 20 deserving Airmen each year to support them in their academic journey while they simultaneously work to preserve America's freedom! This year, we are excited to offer you again, the opportunity to have a scholarship award named after you for a donation of \$1,000 or more, and an opportunity for you to personally present the award to the recipient at our scholarship awards luncheon to be held in July. Solicitation letters will be mailed soon so please watch your mailbox and support this worthy program!

New this year the MAC has assumed administrative control of the Lt. General (Ret.) Edgar Starr Harris, Jr. Scholarship, which was established in 2010 to benefit students planning to pursue a professional career in the United States military. Preference is given to students interested in a career with the U.S. Air Force and to dependents of Air Force members currently serving or who have served at Barksdale Air Force Base. The scholarship is named in honor of Lt. General (Ret.) Edgar Starr Harris, Jr., who served as commander of the Eighth Air Force, Strategic Air Command, with headquarters at Barksdale Air Force Base. While the MAC controls the administrative aspects of this scholarship it is still funded by a grant from the Community Foundation of Northwest Louisiana. This year's award will be \$1,821.

All scholarships will be presented at our **July Scholarship Banquet on 30 July 2025 at 5:30pm at the Petroleum Club of Shreveport** — save the date on your calendars!

## Striker of the Month

The SB Military Affairs Council is proud to announce that beginning **March 2025**, this award will officially be named the **Colonel (Ret) David Lay Striker of the Month Award** in memory of, and in honor of, the late Colonel (Ret) David Lay.

### DECEMBER WINNER

**Senior Airman Alexys Taylor** from the **2d Operational Medical Readiness Squadron**

## 2d Bomb Wing 2024 Award Winners

The quarterly awards program recognizes individuals for exceptional duty performance, base and community involvement, superior leadership and outstanding contribution to Barksdale's mission. The MAC supports this program through a modest cash award and presentation of a commemorative MAC coin.

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Airman winner, **SrA Brooke Johnson, 96th Bomb Squadron**  
NCO winner, **TSgt Joshua Evans, 2d Civil Engineer Squadron**  
SNCO winner, **SMSgt Michael Hayes, 2d Contracting Squadron**  
CGO winner, **2d LT Ethan Grandolfo, 2d Comptroller Squadron**  
FGO winner, **Major Shane Lockridge, 2d Civil Engineer Squadron**  
CIV CAT I winner, **Brian Whitner, 2d Civil Engineer Squadron**  
CIV CAT II winner, **David Frye, 2d Logistics Readiness Squadron**  
CIV CAT III winner, **Royce Kerbow, 2d Bomb Wing Command Post**  
Honor Guard Member winner,  
**SrA Manich Prak, 2d Logistics Readiness Squadron**  
Honor Guard Program Manager winner,  
**MSgt Dale Cain, 2d Force Support Squadron**  
Volunteer winner, **A1C Kaleska Fox, 11th Bomb Squadron**  
Team of the Year, **2d Bomb Wing Command Post**  
Flight Commander winner,  
**Major Johanna Echigo, 2d Operational Medical Readiness Squadron**  
Innovation winner, **SSgt William Oskay, 2d Munitions Squadron**  
First Sergeant winner, **MSgt Joseph Perez, 2d Security Forces Squadron**

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## 307th Bomb Wing 2024 Award Winners

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Airman winner, SrA Abdul Sesay, 307th MDS  
NCO winner, TSgt Mitchell Hakun, 307th Operations Support Squadron  
SNCO winner, SMSgt Erin Chitwood, 489th AMDF  
CGO winner, 1st Lt John Putz, 307th Force Support Squadron  
FGO winner, Lt Col Stephanie Guyette, 489th Bomb Group  
CIV CAT I winner, Michelle Rivera Flores, 307th Mission Support Group  
CIV CAT II winner, William Avants, 307th Operations Support Squadron  
First Sergeant winner, SMSgt Crystal Jones, 307th Bomb Wing

### Display Your MAC Pride with a MAC Polo

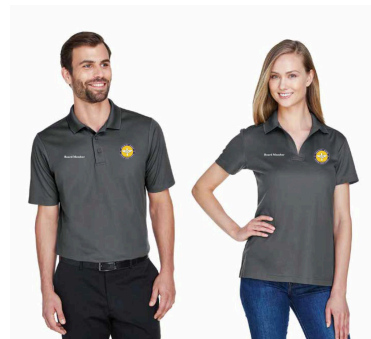
#### STORE OPENS 1 MAY CLOSES 31 MAY

**\$48 per shirt** | Available Sizes: Small -  
XLarge (with additional costs for larger  
sizes)

[CLICK HERE TO ORDER](#)

The online store is open for a limited time to purchase your MAC Polo shirts. "MAC Member" will be on the left-hand sleeve and the chest embroidered with the MAC logo. Your purchased item will be mailed directly to you.

*Note: the vendor will collect orders for the month of May, and at the end of the month all orders will be placed and shipped directly to you. Expect 12 business days for production **after the store closes on May 31st** for delivery.*



### Put It On Your Calendar

#### BOARD MEETINGS

**Tuesday, 29 May**  
4:30 – 5:30 pm

2 BW Commander's  
Conference Room,  
Barksdale AFB

#### Quarterly Membership Update Luncheons

**Tuesday, 7 May**  
11:30 am - 1:00 pm | Petroleum Club

**Guest Speaker:**  
**Mr. Richard L. Crockett**  
MBA, Medical Center Director of Overton Brooks VA  
Medical Ctr

*Hear updates from the Major Command, Numbered Air Force, and both Bomb Wings*

[PURCHASE TICKETS](#)

[Celebrate Barksdale Balloon Glow](#)

Thursday, 17 July

[Adopt-an-Airman/Roots for Boots](#)

This event is new this year and will be held the day prior to the Red River Balloon Rally. Four hot air balloons will perform a static glow on Barksdale Air Force Base, along with offering tethered rides. Our goal is to create a fun family evening, and the committee will need new ideas and volunteers to ensure the success of this new event.

*If you're interested in helping out next year, please contact John David*

*Person. [jperson@wielandbuilds.com](mailto:jperson@wielandbuilds.com).*

Our MAC team has been working hard to revitalize our Roots for Boots program. This program pairs host families with single airmen on base who are seeking mentorship and family activities throughout the year and who might otherwise spend Thanksgiving and/or Christmas dinner alone.

*If you are interested in being a host family and "adopting" an Airmen to occasionally join you and your family for family events, or if you want more information on the program please contact Kem Smelser via email at [Kem\\_smelser@yahoo.com](mailto:Kem_smelser@yahoo.com).*

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Visit our Website



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