

## 42nd Air Base Wing Editorial Policy & Submission Guidelines

This website, [www.maxwell.af.mil](http://www.maxwell.af.mil), is the only official, publicly accessible website for the 42nd Air Base Wing.

This website is a means for the 42nd Air Base Wing commander to keep Airmen and members of the general public informed of news and information affecting the installation.

Only information cleared for public release in accordance with Defense Department Web Policy and Air Force Instructions 35-101 and 33-129 will be posted to this public Web site. The guidelines on this page are intended to help members of the Maxwell-Gunter community submit appropriate information for publication on this site.

For more information, call the 42nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs Office at (334) 953-2014 or e-mail [MAXWELL.DISPATCH@us.af.mil](mailto:MAXWELL.DISPATCH@us.af.mil)

### Editorial Policy

The Maxwell Air Force Base website is one of the commander's primary communication tools to transmit information to the Maxwell-Gunter community. The following editorial policy guidelines apply to achieve this goal:

1. The Maxwell AFB public website provides the commander and key leadership a primary means of communicating mission-essential information to members of the organization. The commander normally defers all decisions on news propriety, story placement, publication date and use of photography to the Public Affairs director.
2. News and feature stories on people and organizations provide recognition of excellence in performance and help set forth norms for mission accomplishment.
3. News coverage and content will conform to policies of the Air Force and the commander. News reporting will be factual and objective. News coverage will avoid morbid, sensational or alarming details not necessary to factual news reporting. News writing will distinguish between fact and opinion. When an opinion is expressed, the source will be identified and attributed to someone.
4. This public website will keep Airmen and members of the general public accurately informed about military matters affecting their futures. This will assist the commander in improving morale and quelling rumors.
5. News and editorial content will provide information to all members of the Maxwell-Gunter AFB community to improve the quality of their lives and thereby the effectiveness of the work force. This includes officers, enlisted members, civilian employees, contractors, family members, retirees, and Reservists and Guardsmen.
6. This website will de-glamorize the use of alcohol and tobacco products. Articles concerning the club, unit, or other activities may mention these products as long as the emphasis is on the activities and not the products.
7. This public website will not display commercial advertising.
8. Event announcements published on this website must be made available to all readers without regard to race, religion, sex, national, origin, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor.
9. The contents of this website will conform to applicable regulations and laws relating to libel and copyright, the Air Force Privacy Act Program and Standards of Conduct, as well as U.S. Government printing and postal regulations.
10. Locally originated articles will reflect the policies of the commander and be in the interest of the Air Force. Editorials should help readers understand Air Force policies and programs. They must not imply criticism of other government agencies, nor advocate or dispute specific political, diplomatic, or legislative matters. Statements or articles on legislative matters by people or agencies outside the DOD, including officials or candidates for public office, will not be used.

### Specific Publication Guidance

**Deadline:** All elements of this website are updated daily, as time and mission requirement permit. In order to ensure adequate coverage or advertising of an event, information should be submitted to the Editor no later than one week

prior to the event.

**Rewrite:** All copy submitted to the editor will be rewritten as needed to ensure it conforms to Air Force journalism guidelines for news writing. This includes conforming to the guidelines in the Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law and appropriate story length.

**Prominence:** The location and manner in which an item is presented on this website will be determined by the Public Affairs director.

**Recurring Columns:** Recurring columns from base agencies are normally discouraged because of the time and commitment required to keep the Web pages up to date.

**Award Winners:** Stories and/or photos are limited to annual awards for the 42nd Air Base Wing and major tenant organizations on Maxwell-Gunter AFB, as well as local winners at the major command, Air Force and Department of Defense levels.

**Change of Command:** Stories and/or photos are limited to group-level ceremonies or higher to include major tenant organizations on Maxwell-Gunter AFB. The posting of stories/photos of changes of command below the group level will be determined by the Public Affairs director.

**Photos:** Photos normally accepted for publication include on-the-job action photos. Photos containing classified information, alcoholic beverages or cigarettes, dress and personal appearance violations, safety violation or which compromise force protection measures will not be published. Photos should be accompanied by a brief description of the action pictured, the date of the photo, the ranks, names and units of people featured in the photo, and the rank and name of the photographer.

**Fund Drives:** Coverage will be limited to those campaigns authorized by Air Force regulations, namely the Combined Federal Campaign and the Air Force Assistance Fund.

**Coordination:** Articles published on this site will be coordinated with affected agencies as deemed appropriate by the Public Affairs director. Controversial or "sensitive" articles will be coordinated with the affected commander (or his/her representative) and higher headquarters, when necessary, before publication. Changes to style or news writing will only be made when directed by the Public Affairs director.

## **Writing Guidelines**

**Passive Voice:** Avoid the use of passive voice (e.g. The policy was approved.) and use active voice instead (e.g. The committee approved the policy.)

**Direct Address:** Only address your audience directly (e.g. You should do...) in commentary and editorial articles.

**First Person:** Only use first person (e.g. I, we, me, my, etc.) in commentary and editorial articles.

**Full Identification:** Full ID includes a person's rank, first name, last name, unit of assignment and duty title with all information spelled out.

**Abbreviations and Acronyms:** Do not use abbreviations. Acronyms are only used on second reference when the meaning is clearly understood.

**Jargon:** Avoid the use of jargon and technical language. Have experts explain technical in common terms.

**Attribution:** All news articles should include direct or indirect attribution from two or more sources.

**Military Ranks:** Associated Press style is used for military ranks on first reference. Appropriate Air Force abbreviations are:

**Rank**  
Airman Basic

**Abbrev.**  
Airman

Airman	Airman
Airman First Class	Airman 1st Class
Senior Airman	Senior Airman
Staff Sergeant	Staff Sgt.
Technical Sergeant	Tech. Sgt.
Master Sergeant	Master Sgt.
Senior Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sgt.
Chief Master Sergeant	Chief Master Sgt.
Second Lieutenant	2nd Lt.
First Lieutenant	1st Lt.
Captain	Capt.
Major	Maj.
Lieutenant Colonel	Lt. Col.
Colonel	Col.
Brigadier General	Brig. Gen.
Major General	Maj. Gen.
Lieutenant General	Lt. Gen.
General	Gen.

**Courtesy Titles:** Courtesy titles or conversational ranks, as appropriate, will NOT be used on second and later references to people in all internal information products. For example, Lt. Gen. William Johnson on first reference would be referred to as 'Johnson' throughout the remainder of the product or, in subsequent references, individuals can be referred to by their job title (e.g. the maintainer) or by generic rank alone: the general, the sergeant, the senior airman, the colonel, etc. Refer to civilians by their first and last names on first reference. Use their last name only on second and subsequent reference; do not use Mr., Ms. or Mrs. at any point.

**Capitalization of Airman:** Capitalize Airman and Airmen when referring to individuals (military of all ranks, civilians and contractors) in the U.S. Air Force: He is an Airman. If a generic term is needed, use the term Airmen: The Airmen returned to their base. An exception is when "airman" is part of a compound lower-case noun: A staff sergeant and a senior airman received awards.

## Elements of the News

### Timeliness

Air Force public websites, along with Air Force base newspapers, stress current information - stories occurring today or yesterday, not several weeks ago. News story submissions should generally be no more than one week old.

### Impact

Stress the important information that impacts the audience - Airmen and family members, and members of the general public, when appropriate. Do not overlook the "me factor" that your audience craves. Broad appeal is important.

### Prominence

News stories about prominent people tend to generate more interest than those about ordinary people. Readers are especially interested in what our leaders have to say about important issues and events. That is not to say that we should exclude articles about ordinary people, but that we appreciate the importance of prominence.

### Proximity

This element can be physical - stories occurring here at Maxwell-Gunter - or psychological -- Airmen interested in the lives of other Airmen around the globe. On one hand, the Air Force community is local and on the other hand, it is global.

### Singularity

Deviations from the normal - unexpected or unusual events, drama or change - are more newsworthy than the commonplace. In the Air Force community, most stories with this characteristic will deal with change: budget, manpower, infrastructure, processes, etc.

### Conflict or Controversy

Conflict is also another common thread in Air Force new stories: overcoming hardships, balancing career and family, war. Conflict is also present in organizational and service rivalries, sports news and features, and self-improvement. In each of these stories, the conflict can be positive.

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While the focus of the 42nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs Office is typically on mission, people and infrastructure articles, writers can submit several other types of article as long as there is a clear military relationship demonstrated in the writing. These other articles include:

- Sports
- Travel features
- Self-improvement articles
- 'How-to' articles
- Hobby features
- Personality features
- Historical features
- Editorials/commentaries