

HERITAGE TODAY



LOYALTY

Every now and then we'd bellyache about this or that. You know... But we loved this Air Force the way we loved our country. We could gripe about it, but if you said anything crossways about it, there was gonna be trouble. We loved this Air Force... There are a lot of ways to define loyalty. Patriotism. Duty. Sacrifice. Devotion. Loyalty is a magnet that pulls you back home to courage. Loyalty is that bone that runs down your back. When you stand by your country, you stand for your country. You are your country. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, we were ordered to hit the enemy on their own soil. The Doolittle raid on Tokyo. Sixteen crews volunteered to take off from an aircraft carrier they knew they couldn't come back to. They dropped their bombs and ditched their planes in China and the Soviet Union. Thirteen crewmembers were captured. Three were executed. We don't make sacrifices out of obligation. We make sacrifices out of loyalty. What happens to the country happens to you. What America feels you feel. In your gut. Loyalty is what keeps you from letting go. Loyalty is what makes you get back up. Battles are won with orders and weapons. Wars are won with loyalty and commitment. Loyalty to mission, loyalty to each other. Every one of us is a wingman. You don't prove yourself through one heroic act. You prove yourself through a lifetime of honor, integrity and valor. Your devotion to duty and to your fellow Airmen, your love of country, your moral choices (on and off duty), will inspire loyalty in others. You will never love this country more than we did. But you will love it just as much. Aim high, Airman.