

# Dayton Daily News

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## Museum opened, but will close again today

By Barrie Barber  
Staff Writer

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE — Wright-Patterson recalled virtually every furloughed civilian employee back to work Monday, but even with 8,700 workers again on the job many tasks could be delayed because of a lack of money for new operations, base officials said Monday.

After reopening Monday, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force will close again today and remain shuttered because of the partial federal

government shutdown, a spokeswoman said.

The mood among thousands of Wright-Patterson employees who came back to work after 3 ½ half days off on an emergency furlough last week was upbeat during an “unprecedented year” of summertime and now fall furloughs, according

## Furlough pay still up in air

### Base

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to Col. Cassie B. Barlow, 88th Air Base Wing commander at Wright-Patterson.

“We have a budget to pay people right now, but we don’t have an operating budget so we can’t buy things, we can’t maintain things, we can’t travel, we can’t go to training,” among other spending restrictions on new activities, she said.

Further review of Air Force and Department of Defense guidance showed, the Air Force museum “did not fit a list of operations that can continue to be supported” without a continuing spending resolution or a defense appropriations bill, museum spokeswoman Diana

Bachert said in an email. The region’s top tourist attraction with more than 1 million visitors a year will remain closed until Congress appropriates the money to reopen it, she said. Museum employees will work on site to “accomplish a variety of duties while it’s closed,” she added.

Congress has not approved a defense spending bill or a continuing resolution for the 2014 fiscal year that began Oct. 1. Lawmakers approved the “Pay Our Military Act,” prior to a partial government shutdown last week, that legal counsel interpreted to mean most, but not all, civilian workers could return.

### Base workers will get paid for working

The 3,200 civilian Wright-Patterson employees who were exempt from the furlough last week will be paid for working, but it’s still unclear if those who were furloughed and did not work will be compensat-

ed, defense officials said. Congress may have to appropriate money for those furloughed, but the issue remains under study, officials said.

“No decisions have been made on (compensating) the furlough time,” said Navy Cmdr. Bill Urban, a Pentagon spokesman.

The Air Force Materiel Command, headquartered at Wright-Patterson, recalled all but fewer than 100 civilian employees Monday out of 24,000 furloughed at bases around the country, said spokesman Ron Fry.

The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, also headquartered at Wright-Patterson, brought 13,000 furloughed employees back to work, or half its workforce at 77 sites worldwide, without whom work had “effectively stopped,” said Lt. Gen. C.D. Moore II, AFLCMC commander. But without a fiscal year budget, the life cycle management center that manages ev-

everything from aircraft to munitions on more than 1,000 programs can't move forward on "new start" contracts, such as modernizing weapon systems; the three-star general said in an interview Monday.

"As soon as we have an appropriation we'll be able to execute that activity," he said, adding: "There's a spillover effect for industry."

The Air Force Institute of Technology will resume classes today for about 600 students at Wright-Patterson. The educational institution decided to close classes last week when most of 89 civilian faculty members and hundreds of other civilian support staff were furloughed.

The 445th Airlift Wing called all 360 air reserve technicians back to work, but it's still not business as usual at the Air Force Reserve unit that flies C-17 cargo jets out of the base, said Lt. Col. Cynthia Harris, a unit spokeswoman.

Most of the air wing's

jets will stay grounded because only a handful of flights in support of wartime contingency operations may fly without new federal appropriations, she said. More than 1,900 reservists won't be called to weekend drill activities until money is available, also, she said.

Clay Pittman has a dual status as a military reservist with the rank of a lieutenant colonel and a full-time air reserve technician at the Air Force Reserve unit where he is the chief of training for the 445th operations group.

"Everybody is glad to be back," said Pittman, 54, of Bellbrook. "We're all here to do our jobs."

He was trying to get training schedules back on track.

"It was pretty chaotic leaving the office last Tuesday and lots of unfinished business pending," he said. "... It just threw a wrench in everything we were trying to accomplish."

The emergency furloughs were "very disruptive

not knowing exactly if we were going to get paid and when we were coming back to work. All those things were disconcerting and depressing."

Kevin Geiss, a graduate of Cedarville and Miami universities and a former Wright-Patterson contractor, returned to his Pentagon office Monday in Washington. The deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force was among the 350,000 Department of Defense workers furloughed, even as his office was credited with saving the Air Force about \$1 billion a year in energy costs.

"I was frustrated because I wanted to get back to work and continue to work on the initiatives we have in my office," said Geiss, 46. "I do this job because I want to improve how the Air Force operates and at the end of the day I want to save them money."