

By Frances McKenney, Assistant Managing Editor

## Symposium Success Story

With the **Alamo Chapter** as a partner, the fourth annual 2010 Air Education and Training Command Symposium drew 3,700 people to San Antonio in January. It was the largest turnout to date.

The two-day symposium took place at a downtown convention center and featured nearly 100 seminars on Air Force topics.

A seminar track on leadership, communication, and culture featured a panel discussion with USAF's five living Medal of Honor recipients: Leo K. Thorsness, Bernard F. Fisher, George E. "Bud" Day, Joe M. Jackson, and James P. Fleming. All of them, now retired colonels, had received Medals of Honor for actions in the Vietnam War.

Another symposium highlight: the AFA Technology Exposition, organized and managed by the Alamo Chapter. Expo visitors took in more than 130 vendor and military unit demonstrations, including a medical operating room display and simulators. There was even a TH-1H helicopter, flown in from Ft. Rucker, Ala. It landed right on the street outside the convention center, with San Antonio police stopping traffic for it.

A black-tie ball, described as AETC's largest annual formal, highlighted the Medal of Honor recipients.

More than 1,000 guests at the ball—funded with help from the Alamo Chapter—listened as Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, USAF Chief of Staff, delivered the keynote address. He noted how rare it was for all five Medal of Honor recipients to gather in one place.

Other keynote speakers for symposium events were Gen. Stephen R. Lorenz, the AETC commander; Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr., Air Mobility Command's new commander; and Maj. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, 2nd Air Force commander at Keesler AFB, Miss.

Alamo Chapter President Gary L. Copey pointed out that the chapter also hosted an Executive Dinner and two Executive Receptions for the many general officers attending the events.

## Update From AMC

Maj. Gen. Susan Y. Desjardins described Air Mobility Command's ob-



USAF photo by Don Lindsey

**AFA Board Chairman Joe Sutter and Alamo Chapter President Gary Copey (back row, l-r) joined Medal of Honor recipients for a photo at the AETC symposium. Front row, l-r: Leo Thorsness, Bernie Fisher, Bud Day, Joe Jackson, and Jim Fleming.**

jectives and plans to a **Carl Vinson Memorial Chapter** luncheon audience at Robins AFB, Ga., in January.

Desjardins is AMC's director of strategic plans, requirements, and programs.

The local macon.com news reported that in her remarks, Desjardins covered tactical and strategic airlift, air refueling, and aeromedical evacuation.

She spoke about AMC's newest airlifter, the C-27J Spartan, a topic of interest to the audience since the schoolhouse for it opened at Robins this past September.

Originally a KC-135 pilot, Desjardins said that AMC's main acquisition focus is a replacement for that 1950s-era tanker. She told the audience she could also recall when the KC-10—USAF's younger aerial refueling aircraft—was introduced in 1985 at Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., where she was stationed.

Timothy Callahan, chapter president, said that his group invited Desjardins to be their guest speaker after they learned that she was visiting Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and headquarters, Air

Force Reserve Command, also located at Robins.

During the luncheon, chapter officials presented Melissa G. Spaulding, director of education from the Museum of Aviation at Robins Air Force Base, with an award for her work in community education.

## French Legion of Honor

A recipient of the French Legion of Honor spoke to New Jersey's **Shooting Star Chapter** in January about the World War II experiences that led to his receiving France's highest honor.

Frank Wiswall, from Boonton, N.J., flew over France during the war, as a B-17 crew member. This past Veteran's Day, he was presented with the Legion of Honor at the French Consulate in New York City.

Wiswall told his local newspaper that the award probably came about because of a 2008 chat with a French cadet. Wiswall figures the cadet began the process of nominating him for the award.

The French Legion of Honor was established by Napoleon in 1802 to inspire both soldiers and the general

public. It is bestowed for achievements in all fields. Past foreign recipients have ranged from the Gen. of the Army Omar N. Bradley to Thomas Edison. The 2009 list included not only Wiswall but also J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter book series, and Gen. James T. Conway, the Marine Corps Commandant.

**Honor Flight: Hoosier State**

In Bloomington, Ind., the **Southern Indiana Chapter** meeting in November spotlighted Honor Flight in the Hoosier state.

Retired Army Col. John Tilford, who founded Hoosier Honor Flight in 2008, spoke to more than 40 chapter members about the Honor Flight project. It involves flying World War II veterans to Washington, D.C., for a day, to visit the World War II Memorial.

Southern Indiana Chapter President James E. Fultz said that Tilford enlisted as a marine, serving in Vietnam in 1965. He retired from the Army Reserve in 2009. Tilford has so far organized three flights for some 200 veterans. Another is scheduled for this month.

According to its Web site, the Honor Flight program began with Earl Morse, a retired Air Force captain and physician assistant at a Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Springfield, Ohio. Morse learned that many World War II veterans wanted to see the memorial but couldn't make the trip because of financial and physical limitations. Morse rounded up fellow members of an aero club at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and the inaugural Honor Flight took place in 2005 with six small airplanes and a dozen veterans.

The number of vets wanting to make the flights quickly led to transitioning the program to commercial airlines. Last year, just under 18,000 veterans, including those from the Korean War and Vietnam War, were flown to Washington, D.C.

**From the P-47 and P-51 Cockpit**

A World War II fighter pilot addressed the quarterly meeting of the **Dobbins Chapter (Ga.)** in January.

Bob Powell, now an 89-year-old Decatur resident, described his experiences both dramatic and comical in flying 87 missions over Europe in P-47 Thunderbolt and P-51 Mustang aircraft.

Chapter President Arthur Johnson wrote that guest speaker Powell's missions spanned air battles over the Ardennes, the Battle of the Bulge, and the D-Day invasion.

Powell, who joined the Army Air Corps after leaving West Virginia University,

had named his P-51 *The West by Gawd Virginian*. He recounted to the chapter how he had to be lifted out of its cockpit because he'd become so stiff after flying three sorties from England in 24 hours, just after the Normandy invasion.

Johnson said that in the audience, enjoying Powell's presentation, were Maj. Gen. James T. Rubeor, 22nd Air Force commander, and Gerald R. Murray, the retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

**Visions in Chicago**

One of the newest high schools in Chicago has two classrooms in the Visions of Exploration program, thanks to the **Chicagoland-O'Hare Chapter**.

Air Force Academy High School began classes for the first time this past September, but the chapter first became aware of it about two years ago, when a city official mentioned it to Chapter President Russell A. Klatt. It is the sixth public military academy—and the first oriented toward Air Force JROTC—in the area.

Last summer, school principal Yashika N. Tippet-Eggleston spoke at a chapter meeting about the high school. Klatt brought up the idea of providing some classrooms with the Visions of Exploration program. A joint AFA-USA *Today* endeavor, it brings newspapers into classrooms to encourage students' interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.

The school jumped at the opportunity, and the chapter sponsored the Visions program for a social studies and science

classroom at the school that, for now, has some 130 students enrolled.

**Honorary Wing Commander**

AFA was front page news again in *The Niles (Ohio) Times* when the local AFRC wing named **Steel Valley Chapter** Vice President Fred Kubli Jr. as its honorary commander.

The December ceremony took place at the commander's call for the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown ARS, Ohio.

In front of hundreds of people, Col. Udo K. McGregor, head of the Reserve unit, "promoted" Kubli—an Army enlisted medic in World War II—to full colonel.

This was the second time in two months that Kubli had made headlines. In November, he represented veterans at an NFL football game, conducting the coin toss for the nationally televised Monday Night Football game between the Cleveland Browns and the Baltimore Ravens.

Kubli, at age 90, earned these honors through his many community volunteer projects. Foremost among them: guiding the Steel Valley Chapter, as its president, through more than two decades of activities supporting the Air Reserve Station.

The chapter, now headed by Carolyn Milkovich, later held a dinner to recognize Kubli's newest role as wing commander.

**More Chapter News**

■ The **Leigh Wade Chapter** in Petersburg, Va., featured an Army



*For a Dobbins Chapter meeting, fighter pilot Bob Powell (second from left) recalled his World War II combat missions. At left is Chapter VP Maj. Jacqueline Jackson. Chapter Events VP Army Col. Brent Bracewell is at right.*

Reservist as guest speaker for the January meeting. Maj. Steven J. Lacy, an attorney, spoke about his year in Afghanistan with the US Army and Marines. He led a Marine Corps team that interacted frequently with Afghan villagers to build rapport, gather information, and gain an understanding of the people. Lacy's audience at Ft. Lee included Jeffrey Platte, Central East Region president; John J. Murphy Jr., president of the **Langley Chapter (Va.)**; Army Col. Shelley A. Richardson, president of Ft. Lee's Army Logistics University; and members of several veterans organizations.

■ In January, the **Gold Coast Chapter (Fla.)** hosted a visit to Pompano Beach, Fla., by three World War II-vintage aircraft. The B-17 Flying Fortress, B-24 Liberator, and P-51 Mustang were flown to the Pompano Beach Air Park by the Collings Foundation, an educational organization based in Stow, Mass. The group conducts living history events spotlighting old-time transportation and, in particular, restored warbirds. Gold Coast Chapter President Virginia S. Montalvo said the Collings Foundation's three-day visit gave chapter members an opportunity to talk to a "steady stream of visitors" about AFA.

■ The **Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter (Va.)** sponsored a field trip in December by a group of students to the National Air and Space Museum's annex. The eighth-graders from Sacred Heart Academy in Winchester, Va., were met by docent Buz Carpenter when they arrived at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Dulles, Va. The chapter had arranged for a tour specifically guided by Carpenter, who has more than 700 hours flying the SR-71 Blackbird, a featured exhibit at the museum. The students also spent classroom time at the museum, learning about the Wright brothers. ■

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# Reunions

reunions@afa.org

**11th CDS (Air Police).** June 4-6 in Las Vegas. **Contacts:** Richard Lindbeck (262-334-9753) (thunderbird14@charter.net) or Richard Phelan (714-893-5649) (wfo426@msn.com).

**57th MAS.** May 28-30 at Altus, OK. **Contact:** Woodie Hall (407-498-1020) (wwhallii@yahoo.com).

**84th ATS/MAS.** May 14-15 at the Hampton Inn in Vacaville, CA. **Contact:** John Burnett, 3013 Red Maple Ct., Vacaville, CA 95687 (jnburnet@cwnet.com).

**90th TFS.** June 27-29 at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, TX. **Contact:** Jack Doub (229-259-9399) (jack.doub@gmail.com).

**353rd TFS,** Myrtle Beach AFB, SC. June 10-13 in Tucson, AZ. **Contact:** Dave Culbertson (520-370-6769) (dculbertson@comcast.net) (www.radisson.com/353tacticalfighter).

**377 Security Police Sq,** Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN. April 28–May 1, 2011 in Branson, MO. **Contact:** James Stewart (810-639-5755) (jstewart@centurytel.net).

**Army Air Corps Pilot Classes of WWII.** Sept. 9-12 in Nashville, TN. **Contact:** Stan Yost, 13671 Ovenbird Dr., Fort Myers, FL 33908 (239-466-1473).

**C-123s in Southeast Asia.** May 17-22 in Hampton, VA. **Contact:** Ray Merritt (757-851-1305) (pilotrlm@gmail.com) (www.c123sinsea.org).

**Hardened Intersite Cable Sys. & Minuteman Comm. personnel.** June 23-26 in Rapid City, SD. **Contact:** Rick French, (509-435-5839) (rd\_draft@comcast.net).

**Jolly Green Assoc.** April 29-May 1 at the Ramada Plaza Beach Resort in Fort Walton Beach, FL. **Contact:** Lee Massey (850-863-3131) (leetmassey@earthlink.net).

**Nagoya/Komaki Air Base.** May 23-26 at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel in Flagstaff, AZ. **Contact:** John Campo (816-407-0055) (jaymcee@aol.com).

**Pilot Tng Class 52-B.** May 3-6 at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin, TX. **Contact:** Frank Hense, 618 Golfcrest Dr., San Antonio, TX 78239 (210-655-5411) (fhense@earthlink.net).

**Pilot Tng Class 52-C.** May 2-6 at the Best Western in Charleston, SC. **Con-**

**tact:** Steve Sheedy (843-215-1257) (ssheedy@mac.com).

**USAF Airborne Missile Maintenance Sq.** April 12-16 at the Boomtown Hotel in Bossier City, LA. **Contacts:** Tom Hudson, 3223 Caroline Dr., Bossier City, LA 71112 (318-747-1836) (twh-hah@suddenlink.net) or Buck Leach, 4805 Birdwell Ln., Bossier City, LA 71111 (318-747-7779). ■

E-mail unit reunion notices four months ahead of the event to reunions@afa.org, or mail notices to "Reunions," *Air Force Magazine*, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Please designate the unit holding the reunion, time, location, and a contact for more information. We reserve the right to condense notices.



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