

By Frances McKenney, Assistant Managing Editor

## Coffee Talk

Air Force Association Chairman of the Board S. Sanford Schlitt headed to Alaska in July, at the invitation of Alaska State President Harry Cook and former AFA National Treasurer Steven R. Lundgren. Cook and Lundgren, both members of the **Fairbanks Midnight Sun Chapter**, wanted Schlitt to meet community leaders and airmen in the 49th state.

In Fairbanks, Cook saw an opportunity to set up a quick chat between Schlitt, AFA's top elected official, and US Sen. Mark Begich. Cook arranged the get-together on a day's notice, after learning the senator—who was visiting several cities in Alaska—would be in Fairbanks while Schlitt was.

Schlitt and Begich—a Democrat elected to Congress in 2008 and member of the Senate Armed Services Committee—rendezvoused at a coffee shop in the late afternoon. Schlitt had been given 15 minutes to talk, but he and Begich began discussing the Air Force budget challenges, congressional hearings for the Air Force Chief of Staff nominee, and other topics, and before they knew it, nearly an hour had gone by.

At Eielson AFB the day before, Schlitt had received a briefing on the 354th Fighter Wing and toured the resident 18th Aggressor Squadron. He then spent time with explosive ordnance disposal personnel at the ammunition processing facility and ate lunch with a group of all-ranks airmen. An afternoon with the Air National Guard's 168th Air Refueling Wing followed.

Schlitt also attended a meeting of the Midnight Sun Chapter and conducted an installation ceremony for the new chapter president, Lisa Hall.

Gregory Miller, president of the **Edward J. Monaghan Chapter**, hosted Schlitt's AFA activities in Anchorage.

At JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Schlitt spent a jam-packed day learning about the base's fighter, airlift, and rescue operations, as well as its medical and family support organizations. He paid an office call on Lt. Gen. Stephen L. Hoog, the top military officer in the state. Hoog accompanied Schlitt as he spent an afternoon learning about the mission of airmen on "The Last Frontier."



*During a visit to Alaska in July, AFA Board Chairman Sandy Schlitt (left) listens to US Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska). An informal meeting between them turned into a long discussion on Air Force topics.*

More photos at <http://www.airforce-magazine.com>, in "AFA National Report"

## Yes, I Know Polly

When Pauline K. Morrisey of the **Gen. Bruce K. Holloway Chapter** presented an AFA medal to a local high school student, she didn't just show up, shake hands, and disappear.

In April, chapter treasurer Morrisey attended the AFJROTC dining-in at William Blount High School in Maryville, Tenn., to present Emily Easterling with an AFA Bronze Medal for cadets. Morrisey also gave the junior an AFA membership.

Easterling earned the awards because of her achievements—among them qualifying for solo wings after two months of training in a Cessna—and her leadership skills: Retired Col. Thomas M. Shaughnessy, the AFJROTC instructor at Blount and a chapter member, put her in charge of 30 students, organizing the very dining-in where she received her AFA medal and ribbon.

After the event, Morrisey—whom everyone calls "Polly"—continued to keep in touch with the young award winner. Easterling attended a chapter meeting and later on saw Morrisey at the Tennessee State Convention in

Chattanooga this May. Easterling not only performed in the color guard at that gathering but also went home with the Outstanding JROTC Cadet Award for East Tennessee.

Morrisey arranged for Easterling to tour the Air National Guard facility at McGhee Tyson Airport in Knoxville in June. A month afterward, the high-schooler still spoke with excitement about the 134th Air Refueling Wing's tankers, the maintenance hangar, and the KC-135 crew chief she met.

Morrisey's contacts with Easterling clearly put her on the student's radar. A couple months after Easterling first met Morrisey at the high school AFJROTC banquet, her name came up in a conversation, and Easterling said without hesitation, "I know Polly."

## Recalling 9/11

*Air Force Magazine's* September 2011 issue featured Heather R. Penney in its "Airmen on 9/11" collection of stories about that day. This past July, **Iron Gate Chapter** members in New York heard the Air National Guard fighter pilot recount her Sept. 11, 2001, mission in person.

"Hearing it from her, everything meant a lot more," commented Chapter President Frank T. Hayes.

As he had told chapter members when inviting them to this meeting, Penney has served two tours in Iraq since 9/11 but didn't have to go to Southwest Asia for the War on Terror. It came to her.

Penney had launched on 9/11 from Andrews AFB, Md., to intercept a hijacked commercial airliner believed to be inbound for Washington, D.C. (This was United Airlines Flight 93, and it had already crashed in Shanksville, Pa., after its passengers took on the hijackers.)

Penney's and her flight lead's F-16s were armed only with training ammunition, so she decided that if she had to take down the airliner, she would ram its tail. This meant killing everyone on board and probable death for her.

Hayes said Penney's chapter presentation "was about our US Air Force at its best," well-trained and -equipped, and willing to carry out the mission.

The "oversold event," as he called the chapter meeting, attracted nearly 90 guests to New York City's 21 Club, the group's usual meeting site.

A **Thomas W. Anthony Chapter** (Md.) member, Penney now works for Lockheed Martin in Washington as director, Air Force Air Superiority Systems. She focuses on F-22, F-35, and F-35 training, and reported Hayes,

she is a Reno Air Race pilot and has been teaching her two daughters to fly a 1941 Taylorcraft.

### Sixteen Eagles

The **Montgomery Chapter** in Alabama hosted its annual Gathering of Eagles Brunch in June, paying tribute to 16 notables in aviation history. Their number included combat controller TSgt. Robert Gutierrez Jr., who received the Air Force Cross in 2011 and was the only active duty "Eagle" in this year's group of honorees.

The chapter's brunch takes place during a week of activities held as a capstone for Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, Ala. The events aim to bring ACSC students together with airpower legends. The Eagles are interviewed over the course of three days, before an auditorium that this year was filled with more than 500 majors about to graduate from ACSC.

The first official Gathering of Eagles took place in 1982, and one of those original Eagles, retired Col. Gail S. Halvorsen—the Berlin Airlift "Candy Bomber"—returned to participate again.

Along with Gutierrez and Halvorsen, other Eagles attending the chapter's brunch, held at a golf and country club in Montgomery, were: Retired Army Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, a Desert Storm POW; retired Col. Henry P. Fowler, a Vietnam War POW; retired

Lt. Leon Frankel, a World War II Navy Cross recipient; retired CMSAF James M. McCoy, the sixth Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force; and retired Lt. Col. Edward Saylor, a Doolittle Raider.

Two former Eagles attending were retired Lt. Gen. Charles G. Cleveland, Korean War ace, and Kenneth Rowe, who defected from North Korea in a MiG-15 in 1953.

Other Eagles who took part in activities that week were: retired Brig. Gen. Robert L. Cardenas, World War II and Vietnam War pilot; Tuskegee Airman retired Lt. Col. James H. Harvey III; Women Airforce Service Pilot Gloria W. Heath; Polish cosmonaut retired Brig. Gen. Miroslaw Hermaszewski; Vietnam War "River Rat" retired Col. Howard C. Johnson; three-war vet and Vietnam War POW retired Col. James H. Kasler; and retired Col. Leo K. Thorsness, Medal of Honor recipient.

Chapter Communications VP Joseph Panza and Maj. Meghan Doherty from ACSC headed up the team organizing the brunch for the chapter, whose president is Larry Carter.

### Training Cadets To Be Leaders

In West Virginia, the **Chuck Yeager Chapter** of Charleston co-sponsored the 12th annual Mountaineer Cadet Officer Leadership School.

Called MCOLS, for short, the week of AFJROTC leadership training in

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**AFA Conventions**

Sept. 15-16	<b>AFA National Convention</b> , National Harbor, Md.
Sept. 17-19	<b>AFA Air &amp; Space Conference</b> , National Harbor, Md.

June took place at Concord University in Athens, where 175 cadets gathered from five states: North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and of course, the Mountain State itself.

Retired Lt. Col. Steven H. Boyd, a **Roanoake (Va.) Chapter** member, served as MCOLS commandant. The senior aerospace science instructor at Patrick Henry High School in Roanoake led the students in five days of education, training, athletics, and drill practice. Hershey Flores from Monticello High School in Charlottesville, Va., received the overall Outstanding Cadet Trophy for the highest scores in these categories.

The Yeager Chapter provided all plaques and trophies awarded at the culminating pass-in-review graduation ceremony.

Chapter President Ira S. Latimer and Secretary Herman N. Nicely II both attended the event. Cadets from AFJROTC units in Virginia all but swept these awards, taking home eight out of 10 top honors.

The awards ceremony appears on YouTube. (Search for MCOLS 2012.)

**Salute to SMC**

In June, the **Gen. B. A. Schriever Los Angeles Chapter** sponsored a symposium and black-tie formal, with the Space and Missile Systems Center's commander, Lt. Gen. Ellen M. Pawlikowski, as co-host.

The 31st annual SMC Executive Forum took place at a hotel near Los Angeles AFB, Calif. It brought together the center's senior managers and aerospace industry leaders for panel discussions on three topics: transitioning from RDT&E to production; tailoring mission assurance and oversight for lower cost and manageable risk; and future architectures.

Brig. Gen. Kenneth J. Moran, director of SMC's Program Management and Integration Directorate; Douglas L. Loverro, SMC executive director; and R. Scott Correll, Air Force program executive officer for space launch, moderated the forum.

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That evening, everybody donned tuxedos and mess dress uniforms for the 38th annual Salute to SMC, this year celebrating the Infrared Space Systems Directorate's accomplishments. Col. James Planeaux leads the section.

During the awards presentations that evening, Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley accepted the Gen. Bernard A. Schriever National Space Leadership Award, acknowledgment of his support for Air Force space and missile programs.

Among the airmen and civilians receiving SMC Salute awards for outstanding performance were Capt. Brian A. An, Ann R. Birbeck, Capt. Kristen A. Clark, Capt. Phillip M. Dobberfuhr, SSgt. David

L. Dvorak, 1st Lt. Sean R. Fisher, Lt. Col. Donald R. Frew, Kathleen J. Helwig, Capt. Jason M. Holman, Louis M. Johnson Jr., Lt. Col. David M. Learned, Lt. Col. David D. Lessick, and SrA. Madeline J. McLain.

**NY Chapter's Teacher of the Year**

In New York, the **Albany-Hudson Valley Chapter** awarded Lawrence Perretto the Chapter Teacher of the Year honor at an AFA state executive committee meeting held at West Point in June.

Chapter President Michael A. Szymczak made the presentation.

A science teacher at Hommocks Middle School in Larchmont, Perretto has taught sixth through eighth grades. He created a program to reinforce his

school's science curriculum, integrating earth science, engineering, math, and technology into a unit that had students designing and constructing earthquake-resistant towers out of balsa wood.

Szymczak wrote that Perretto secured a \$60,000 grant to equip his school's science department with interactive whiteboard technology and landed a \$30,000 grant to implement a robotics program for 400 eighth-graders.

Also during the executive committee meeting, Dave Ribbe stepped forward to become president of the **Gen. Carl A. "Tooe" Spaatz Chapter** in White Plains. He plans to lead a chapter revitalization. ■

[reunions@afa.org](mailto:reunions@afa.org)

## Reunions

**21st Fighter-Bomber Wg** and 66th Destroyer Sq, Chambley AB, France. Oct. 18-22 in Tucson, AZ. **Contact:** Jim Kirkpatrick (480-688-3465).

**366th Fighter Assn**, 366th Fighter Gp, 366th Fighter-Bomber Wg, 366th Tactical Fighter Wg, 366th Fighter Wg. Oct. 10-14 in Charleston, SC. All former and current members invited. **Contacts:** Wayne Pickelsimer (864-642-5801) or Joe Daniel (919-365-7123) (jdanield171@aol.com).

**445th Fighter-Interceptor Sq**, Wurtsmith AFB, MI. Oct. 16-19 in San Antonio. **Contact:** Larry Flinn (210-695-1944) (c24712@aol.com).

**F-4 Phantom II Society**, Holloman AFB, N.M. Oct. 15-19. **Contact:** Bill Crean (856-461-6637) (www.f4phantom.com).

**F-100 Maintainers Assn.** Oct. 18-20 in San Antonio. **Contact:** Mike Dean (610-486-6320) (mvdean@verizon.net).

**UNT 63-04**, James Connally AFB, TX (1961-62), instructors welcome. Nov. 4-8 in New Orleans. **Contact:** Don Nash (504-715-6509) (dnash22@cox.net).

**USAF, Airspace, & Air Traffic Services Div & AF Reps** (1976-91). September 2013 in Oklahoma City. **Contact:** Les Heavner (828-675-0290) (lrheavner@earthlink.net).

**USAF Military Training Instructor Assn.** Oct. 16-19 at Lackland AFB, TX. **Contact:** John Pavey Jr. (828-586-8987) (j.pavey@pdlawnc.com). ■

E-mail unit reunion notices four months ahead of the event to [reunions@afa.org](mailto: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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