

By Frances McKenney, Assistant Managing Editor



Emerging Leaders

The Air Force Association recently began an Emerging Leaders Program as an avenue for securing AFA's future.

Emerging Leaders volunteer for a year. With guidance from a mentor, they participate on a national-level council, attend national leader orientations, and serve as National Convention delegates.

Emerging Leaders will be profiled here in the coming months.

Capt. Leanne M. Babcock

Home State: Oregon.

Chapter: Charleston Chapter (S.C.). Previously belonged to Columbia Gorge Chapter (Ore.), San Diego Chapter, and Lance P. Sijan Chapter (Colo.).

Joined AFA: 2004.

AFA Offices: Field Council member. Was a chapter VP of membership. Served on the AFA national Membership Committee.

AFA Awards: California Meritorious Service award; Sijan Chapter's Exceptional Service award.

Military Service: 10 years, beginning as a vehicle mechanic, Oregon Air National Guard. Commissioned through San Diego State University. Served on Active Duty at Peterson AFB, Colo. Now a Reserve captain, a flight commander with the 38th Aerial Port Squadron at JB Charleston, S.C.

Education: AAS, Community College of the Air Force; B.S., San Diego State; M.S., Colorado State University. Working on an M.A. from The Citadel.

Social Media: Find Leanne Babcock on Facebook and on LinkedIn.

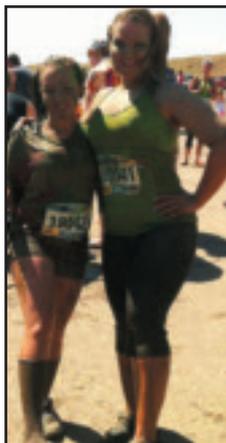


Q&A

What did you learn at the National Convention? How the grassroots is so important. It's the most vital way that AFA is going to survive.

Who taught you the most about leadership? MSgt. Bill Taylor, vehicle maintenance supervisor; retired Col. Linda Aldrich, thesis advisor; my mom, Debbie.

How can AFA increase membership? I did my whole master's thesis on this. ... People need to feel they belong to the organization, that their membership stands for something (organizational commitment). The Total Air Force needs to be the target.



Babcock (r) and her cousin Shaylan after the Dirty Dash muddy obstacle course in Colorado last year.



AFA's National Aerospace Teacher of the Year Margaret Spigner speaks to the AFA National Convention audience about her students' science activities.

National Teacher of the Year

At the Air Force Association's National Convention, a science teacher from Charleston, S.C., became the 28th recipient of AFA's National Aerospace Teacher of the Year award.

Margaret Spigner is the science department chairwoman at West Ashley High School, where she has taught for 26 years. During that time, she has covered marine science, biotechnology, investigative research, biology, and environmental and physical science.

One of her pupils' recent projects involved storm water-detention ponds. The students designed mitigation measures for the pollution levels, created a floating wetland, and installed an artificial reef for the ponds' fishes. These projects required them to learn about water quality testing, computer-aided design, 3-D printing, and underwater remotely operated vehicles, among other skills.

"Can you imagine how excited the students must be to attend her class?" asked South Carolina State President Arthur Rooney Jr. in his letter nominating Spigner for the top teacher award.

Spigner had previously been named the **Charleston Chapter's** Teacher of the Year and received the statewide honor as well. [See photo at airforcemag.com. Search "Margaret Spigner."]

Reunited: Purple Hearts and Heroes

Army National Guard Capt. Zachariah L. Fike has been awarded two Bronze Star Medals, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Commendation and Army Achievement medals multiple times, not to mention four kinds of badges. In September, however, he spoke to Vermont's **Green Mountain Chapter** about the one medal that has become his focus: the Purple Heart.

Established by Gen. George Washington, the Purple Heart is the oldest US military award and is bestowed on those wounded by the enemy or given to the next of kin of those killed in action.

Guest speaker Fike commands the Bennington, Vt.-based reconnaissance soldiers of Blackjack Troop, 1st Squadron,

172nd Cavalry Regiment, but a more personal mission has been to return lost Purple Hearts to their recipients or the descendants of the awardees.

Fike told the Green Mountain audience that this effort began in 2009 when his mother gave him a Purple Heart she had bought in an antique shop. Fike said he knew he couldn't keep the medal because it really belonged to the family of the soldier whose name was engraved on the back of it. He tracked down the family of Pvt. Corrado Piccoli and presented the medal to them in 2011.

Since then, he has returned 30 lost Purple Hearts and in 2012 founded the nonprofit Purple Hearts Reunited to support this work. Fike told the AFA chapter that today he has more than 100 other Purple Heart cases.

A quick look at the organization's website reveals how these medals get mislaid. A man in Texas, for example, found a Purple Heart left behind at a rental property. Other places they've been rescued from: flea markets, pawn shops, estate sales, attics, and old vehicles and furniture. Some have been stolen.

Chapter President Raymond Tanguay said the meeting's topic brought out nearly 30 members and guests, including several Air National Guardsmen led by the 158th Fighter Wing commander, Col. David P. Baczewski.

Barbecue

The line of hungry people at the **Paul Revere Chapter's** barbecue snaked through the parking lot at the Veterans Affairs facility in Lowell, Mass.

Veterans, caregivers, chapter members—more than 70 guests queued up for the chapter's annual summer picnic of hamburgers, hotdogs, and Italian sausages.

Dick Codling displays a thank-you card and gift from the Paul Revere Chapter. Air Force Sergeants Association volunteers surrounding him helped with the chapter's barbecue.



Zac Fike speaks at a Green Mountain Chapter luncheon about Purple Hearts Reunited. The organization returns lost Purple Hearts to their rightful owners.



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Meeting with US Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), second from left, on Capitol Hill during AFA's National Convention are l-r: Al Palmer, Red River Valley Chapter; Jim Simons, Gen. David C. Jones Chapter; Mike Haugen, Happy Hooligan Chapter; and Capt. Bernard Harper, Jones Chapter.



Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) holds a stuffed-toy aviator, presented by Lawrence Sagstetter (left) of Minnesota's Gen. E. W. Rawlings Chapter. The chapter communications VP visited Klobuchar on Capitol Hill during AFA's National Convention.

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Richard B. Codling, the chapter VP for veterans affairs for 10 years until his retirement to Florida last month, organized the event. It's one of several the chapter carries out each year specifically for veterans.

Chapter President Keith M. Taylor wrote in an email, "On average, 1,000 veterans per year have benefited from the service and barbecue planning of Dick and his Paul Revere Chapter team."

The chapter buys the food and rents the grills, but the barbecue team always includes Air Force Sergeants Association volunteers from Hanscom AFB, Mass., who man the grills. "We partner with them for our veterans events," explained Taylor. "They come out in great numbers."

Birthday Bash: '50s Flashback

The Arnold Air Society cadets are in their 20s, while the North Carolina **Tarheel Chapter** members—well, one of them, Gilbert M. Slack, turns 90 next month.

But age makes no difference when it comes to partying—in this case celebrating the Air Force's birthday anniversary with a 1950s-themed sock hop in September at North Carolina State University.

The cadets arranged for the venue on campus and turned to the Web to figure out what to wear, while chapter members showed up with the food, decor, AFA door prizes, and music—on then-State President Patrick H. Yanke's iPod.

In Italy, Aviano High School robotics teacher Dave Izzo (left) received a Teacher of the Year award from Dolomiti Chapter officers SSgt. Daisha Bey and TSgt. Joshua Roberts. The presentation took place at a faculty meeting in September.



For the '50s look, the cadets favored jeans and white T-shirts with the cuffs or the sleeves rolled up. Chapter Secretary Joyce W. Feuerstein, now the state president, went through the trouble of sewing herself an orange skirt with the classic poodle applique on it.

The young adults "didn't have any problem rockin' and rollin'," she said, but she ended up teaching a cadet how to foxtrot.

As for decor, a banner showing a giant jukebox hung on one wall. Feuerstein compiled a photo slideshow, projected on a big-screen TV, of famous personalities from the 1940s and 1950s and shots of past events that the cadets and chapter members have carried out together.

Pizza provided by the chapter turned out to be the spark plug, though. After the cadets ate, Feuerstein said, "they all got on the floor and didn't stop dancing for the rest of the evening."

More Chapter News

■ **Iron Gate Chapter's** luncheon in New York City in September featured Maj. Gen. Michael J. Carey, then 20th Air Force commander, who described the readiness of missile wings. Following the luncheon, then-Chapter President Frank T. Hayes and chapter member Adelle L. Roban attended a briefing that Carey delivered to military fellows—**Whiteman Chapter (Mo.)** member Col. Robert S. Spalding III among them—at the Council on Foreign Relations. ■

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AFA National Report



Long Island Chapter President Fred di Fabio (right) poses with World War II re-enactors at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, N.Y. The chapter set up a display in the museum's hangar for a World War II program on Labor Day weekend.

At right di Fabio greets a visitor: a World War II veteran, Tuskegee Airman Julius Freeman.



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Sarasota-Manatee Chapter President Mike Richardson (center) watches Jacob Mann and Tuskegee Airman George Hardy (right) cut the birthday cake at the Florida celebration for USAF's 66th anniversary. Hardy and Mann were the oldest and youngest guests.



In Virginia, the Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter arranged for a demonstration of US flag protocol to students at Sacred Heart Academy in Winchester. The honor guard performing the flag ceremony came from nearby Randolph-Macon Academy.

reunions@afa.org

Reunions

B-58 Hustler Assn. May 1-4 at Fossil Creek Radisson Hotel, Fort Worth, TX.
Contact: Richard Bolcer (817-249-5019) (rich92437@sbcglobal.net).

Email unit reunion notices four months ahead of the event to reunions@afa.org, or mail notices to "Unit 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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