

September 2014



Published by the Air Force Association

WINGMAN

MAGAZINE

LIVING COLOR *for* THE FALLEN



ALSO

A Story of Resiliency
Doolittle Raiders' Congressional Gold Medal
Airman Reaches Higher With Mentor's Help
Life After Air Force ROTC



USAA is proud to be the
Preferred Provider
 of Financial Services for
 the Air Force Association



**Ours was earned in
 Kyrgyzstan. By our dad.**

Darius & Daria M.,
 future USAA members

Once earned, access to USAA Auto Insurance is often passed down from generation to generation.

At USAA, our commitment to serve the financial needs of military members, veterans who have received a discharge type of honorable and their eligible family members is without equal. In fact, families regard USAA Auto Insurance so highly, 98% of our members have stayed with us year over year.¹

Begin your legacy. Get a quote.

usaa.com/afa | 877-618-2473



Insurance Banking Investments Retirement Advice

We know what it means to serve.[®]

USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. USAA products are available only in those jurisdictions where USAA is authorized to sell them.

¹Based on member data from 2008–2012. Use of the term “member” or “membership” does not convey any eligibility rights for auto and property insurance products or legal or ownership rights in USAA. Ownership rights are limited to eligible policyholders of United Services Automobile Association. “Honorably served” means a discharge type of “honorable.” Membership and product eligibility and underwriting restrictions apply and are subject to change. Eligible former dependents of USAA members may purchase auto or property insurance if the member obtained USAA auto or property insurance. Automobile insurance provided by United Services Automobile Association, USAA Casualty Insurance Company, USAA General Indemnity Company, Garrison Property and Casualty Insurance Company, and USAA County Mutual Insurance Company, San Antonio, TX, and is available only to persons eligible for P&C group membership. Each company has sole financial responsibility for its own products. AFA receives financial support from USAA for this sponsorship. © 2014 USAA. 203351-0814



ISSUE 2

Publisher Craig R. McKinley
Editor in Chief Adam J. Hebert
Wingman Editor Michael C. Sirak

Managing Editor Juliette Kelsey Chagnon
Editorial Director John A. Tirpak
News Editor Amy McCullough
Senior Editor Marc V. Schanz
Senior Designer Heather Lewis
Special Projects Manager Gideon Grudo
Designer Kristina Parrill
Assistant Managing Editor Frances McKenney
Associate Editors Autumn A. Arnett
 Aaron M. U. Church
 June L. Kim

Production Manager Eric Chang Lee
Photo Editor Zaur Eylanbekov
Media Research Editor Chequita Wood

Senior Correspondent Otto Kreisher

Contributors

Matt Bearzotti, Chet R. Curtis, Devin DePalmer, Bridget Dongu, Bob Gehbauer, David G. Henderson, Kelsey L. Hendrix, Bob Kjar, Susan Mallett, Mary Paltzer, Paula Roy, Susan Rubel, Merri M. Shaffer, Barbara S. Taylor, Jill C. Westeyn

Advertising Andrea Guarnero
 Mohanna Sales Representative
 214/291-3660 airforcemagsales@afa.org

1501 Lee Highway
 Arlington, Va. 22209-1198
 Tel: 703/247-5800
 Telefax: 703/247-5855
 afmag@afa.org



ON THE COVER: Ken Pridgeon, whose portraits honor fallen US service personnel, stands in his art gallery in Baytown, Texas, July 8, 2014. See "Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Art Gallery," p. 8. *Photo by Kim Smith, Affinity Photography*



Published by the Air Force Association

WINGMAN

MAGAZINE

FEATURES

2 Chairman's Welcome

By George K. Muellner

6 Meet the Staff

By June L. Kim

Meet AFA's Senior Advisor John A. Shaud.

8 Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Art Gallery

By Bob Kjar

One AFA member uses art to honor Texas' fallen military personnel.

20 Reaching Higher

By Merri M. Shaffer

With a mentor's help, an airman is fulfilling his dream of flying the F-15C.

22 Stone by Stone

By Jill C. Westeyn

A story of hope and resiliency.

24 Life After Air Force ROTC

By Kelsey L. Hendrix

Advice from graduates.

26 Come Fly With Me

By Susan Mallett

AFA and CAP join hands to support ACE schools.

28 Patriotic Education for Future Leaders

By Bob Gehbauer

Seidel Chapter sponsors students at youth leadership conferences.

30 Air Force Memorial Spotlight

By Barbara S. Taylor

On the Honor Flight Network.

DEPARTMENTS

4 Talk Back

13 Legislative Note

14 Chapter News

18 Index to Advertisers

29 Hugs From Paula

32 Communications Corner

34 Benefits Tailored to You

35 Résumé Tips

36 The Gadgetist

38 AIRitage

39 Books

40 Area 52 Fun Hangar

Air Force Magazine (ISSN 0730-6784) September 2014 (Vol. 97, No. 9) is published monthly by the Air Force Association, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Phone (703) 247-5800. Periodical postage paid at Arlington, Va., and additional mailing offices. **Membership Rate:** \$45 per year; \$110 for three-year membership. **Life Membership (nonrefundable):** \$600 single payment, \$630 extended payments. **Subscription Rate:** \$45 per year; \$29 per year additional for postage to foreign addresses (except Canada and Mexico, which are \$10 per year additional). Regular issues \$10 each. USAF Almanac issue \$20 each. **Change of address** requires four weeks' notice. Please include mailing label. **POSTMASTER:** Send changes of address to Air Force Association, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. Trademark registered by Air Force Association. Copyright 2014 by Air Force Association.



CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME



The film “Field of Dreams” taught us—and I’m paraphrasing here—that “if you build it, they will come.” That adage could not hold more true for *Wingman Magazine*.

Thank you for your letters and comments telling us how much you enjoyed reading May’s issue and how much you appreciate our new publication. *Wingman* has proved to be a valuable outlet for news and information for our chapters and the broader Air Force community we serve.

We’ve included some of your letters in our new “Talk Back” section in this issue—but that’s not all that’s new for September. We’ve also updated our layout with a distinctly clean, contemporary, and refined design for enhanced readability.

Leading this issue is the story on Ken Pridgeon and his Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Art Gallery in Baytown, Texas, east of Houston, as told by Bob Kjar, vice president of communications for our San Jacinto Chapter in Houston. Pridgeon, a 79-year-old former airman, has already painted more than 150 portraits of fallen US service personnel from Texas or assigned to units in the Lone Star State at the time of their deaths.

As Kjar tells us, Pridgeon has a way of bringing to life on canvas the personali-

ties of these fallen personnel. One of the portraits highlighted in Kjar’s piece is that of bomber pilot Maj. Christopher M. Cooper, who died at age 33 in July 2008 in a B-52 crash near Guam.

We hope Kjar’s article moves you to visit Pridgeon’s gallery one day. Pridgeon intends to paint more than 600 portraits of men and women who died serving our nation. Ultimately, he would like to see similar galleries sprout up in every state to honor our military fallen. He’s also embracing technology by adopting state-of-the-art computer software to create these portraits in digital format.

Also in the issue is a story on the power of mentorship written by Merri M. Shaffer, formerly AFA’s manager of media activities. As Shaffer describes it, 2nd Lt. Kyle Wheeler used to load munitions on F-15Cs as an enlisted airman. Now he is training to be an F-15C pilot, thanks in large part to the guidance and counsel of now-retired Maj. Gen. Brett T. Williams.

Resiliency is the topic of Jill C. Westeyn’s article “Stone by Stone.” Westeyn, AFA’s manager for awards and scholarships, chronicles her own journey of recovery after suffering a mild traumatic brain injury on duty while in uniform.

Matt Bearzotti, our legislative manager, writes about how AFA helped secure a Congressional Gold Medal for the Doolittle Raiders of World War II, while Kelsey L. Hendrix, a former AFA member relations associate, passes on worthwhile advice for young officers embarking on their first assignment in “Life After Air Force ROTC.”

These are just a few of the pieces in September’s issue. We hope you will enjoy it in its entirety.

Speaking of Doolittle, this month is special for AFA as we will dedicate our operations building in Arlington, Va., in the name of Gen. James H. “Jimmy” Doolittle, the association’s first president and leader of the daring bombing raid on Tokyo in April 1942. For that, he received the Medal of Honor.

We look forward to meeting with you later this month at our Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition in National Harbor, Md.

We’re already working on *Wingman’s* next issue. Please keep your feedback coming. We’re listening. See you again in January!



George K. Muellner is AFA’s Chairman of the Board.



Hear More. Anywhere. Anytime.

Your sense of hearing is a vital link to your world

- a source of pleasure, information and communication. Hearing loss can be a result of active duty deployments, exposure to loud noise at work, a lifetime of noise, or simply getting older.

Hearing problems can make you feel anxious, depressed and left out.

Family and friends may think you're confused, uncaring, or difficult when you're really just having trouble hearing. The extra effort needed to understand words and keep track of who is speaking can be mentally exhausting.

If you have started to detect changes in your hearing, don't wait.

Take control of the situation. Doing something to address your hearing health can change your life for the better.

Regain your sense of confidence and communicate more freely and effectively in almost any situation.

Experience Alta, the ultra high-performance hearing instrument that is customized specifically for you. Alta's sound-processing architecture is our most advanced ever. Think of it as a micro-brain that works in harmony with your brain. Your personal sound preferences are actually used by the Alta chip so you can differentiate sounds and hear with more clarity, even in difficult hearing situations.

Consult with a hearing care professional at your local VA Hearing Care Center and hear the difference Alta Pro can make in your life. Ask for Oticon by name.



Get Connected!



For more information on hearing health, visit the Military section of www.oticonusa.com

oticon
PEOPLE FIRST

TALK BACK

WELL DONE

Please allow me to compliment you and those who work with and for you on your magnificent publication. I enjoyed all of it, but I was especially impressed by two pieces: Michael Sirak's tribute to his dad and Barbara Taylor's story about Col. Larry H. Lang.

Thank you and please continue. I look forward to your next issue!

Maj. William L. Umberson,
USAF (Ret.)
San Diego

■ *We appreciate your kind feedback.* —THE EDITORS

B-29 RECOLLECTIONS

I read your article "What's Up, Doc?" in the May issue [p. 40]. It was very interesting and a whole lot of personal pleasure for me to see that *Doc* will soon be flying. I was a flight engineer on a B-29 crew that crew-trained in 1944 and flew 26 missions while assigned to the 28th Squadron, 19th Bomb Group, 314th Bombardment Wing, at North Field, Guam, in spring and summer 1945.

I've followed *Fife* for years and visited her in New Orleans some years ago. It's truly great what the guys at Wichita are doing with *Doc*. Hope to see *Doc* one day soon.

CWO-4 Thomas D. Adams Jr.,
USAF (Ret.)
Pass Christian, Miss.

■ *We're pleased to hear our coverage of Doc's restoration brought back such fond, personal memories and share your hope of seeing this beautiful B-29 airborne again as a salute to our World War II airmen.* —AARON M. U. CHURCH

REMEMBERING THE TROOP CARRIERS

I have read your interesting story about [Michael J. Sirak] in the May issue of *Wingman Magazine* [p. 18] and wanted to thank you for the good words about troop carriers in World War II. I was a troop carrier pilot with the 6th Troop Carrier Squadron in the southwest Pacific and have observed that Troop Carrier Command was never given much credit for the work it did or the risks taken.

[Michael J. Sirak], whose life you have kindly shared with us, is deserving of praise and gratitude for his willingness to offer up his life and give his best efforts at a critical time both to him and his country. Although I did not know him, I knew many like him, enlisted and officers who gave of themselves, and all are to be appreciated, their memory handled with respect. Although two years separated us in age, I suspect that many of my experiences after enlistment were similar to his.

The picture of the C-46 [p. 20] in your story shows the fix for the dangerous Curtiss electric four-bladed propeller, which was replaced with the much safer Hamilton Standard three blade. Planes brought back to the United States were required to have this change.

Frank G. Hathaway
Big Sur, Calif.

■ *Thank you for your kind words and for sending us the book you authored: *Memoirs of a World War II Troop Carrier Pilot* (Trafford Publishing, 2006).* —THE EDITORS

GIVING HER THE PROPER DUE

On the right lower corner of p. 15 of the May issue, you've incorrectly noted an elderly female's rank. Please give her the full benefit of her attainment. Her rank is T/3, staff sergeant, not T/4, sergeant. Other than that, your initial effort is a beauty.

Capt. Joseph L. Gehris III,
USAFR (Ret.)
Indianapolis

■ *Thanks for alerting us to this error. Our apologies to former Army Tech. 3 Norma Jameson.* —THE EDITORS

Do you have a comment about an article in the current issue of *Wingman Magazine*? Write to "Letters," *Wingman Magazine*, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Or send an email to letters_wingman@afa.org. Letters should be concise and timely. We cannot acknowledge receipt of letters. We reserve the right to condense letters. Letters without name and city/base and state are not acceptable. Photographs cannot be returned.

A PLACE TO ENGAGE US—AND US YOU



Photo by Angela DeWitt

CONTEST: CALLING ALL LONG-RANGE THINKERS!

Just because the Air Force is developing the future Long-Range Strike Bomber behind a shroud of secrecy doesn't mean we can't start a public dialogue on what the bomber's name should be. Send us your most creative and compelling names (one name per person, please). We'll pick a selection of the best ones and present them to the Air Force for consideration. Send your names to wingman@afa.org, "Attn.: Name the Bomber." The top five names we choose will win a prize.

FEEDBACK FROM THE FIELD

Thanks to Ernst Linnemann of Issaquah, Wash., who shared this photo of the Boeing-Insitu Group ScanEagle remotely piloted aircraft hanging in the main gallery of the Seattle Museum of Flight (www.museumofflight.org). We covered this ScanEagle in May's "Wingman AIRitage" section.



MISS MITCHELL'S CREW

From left: Matthew DeWitt, 9, of Eagan, Minn., and his brothers, Andrew, 7, and Michael, 5, peer out the nose of the World War II B-25 bomber *Miss Mitchell* at Fleming Field in South St. Paul, Minn. Matthew is one of the winners of May's Area 52 Fun Hangar challenge. Congratulations, Matthew! Kudos, too, to Eric S., 9, of Sandy, Utah, another winner!

Shop the AFA Hangar Store



AFA Sport-Tek Contender Tees
Men's \$25.50 Ladies' \$24.00



Structured Chino Twill or Brushed Twill Caps
\$14.65 to \$15.25

Men's and Ladies' Apparel



Page & Tuttle Free Swing Inverse Technology Quarter Zip Peached Twill Windshirt
\$44.50

Choose Your Logo
(on a large selection of apparel)



Visit www.afa.org/store or call 1-866-860-9293

Answers to May's Area 52 challenge: a-5, C-124 Globemaster II; b-4, F-117 Nighthawk; c-8, C-54 Skymaster; d-1, Mirage F1; e-6, CV-22 Osprey; f-7, AH-1Z Viper; g-2, A-6 Intruder; and h-3, A-4 Skyhawk. Thanks to all who participated!

MEET — THE — STAFF

By June L. Kim, Associate Editor

When retired Gen. John Albert Shaud stepped down as the Air Force Association's executive director in 2002 after seven years, he didn't foresee returning to serve again in AFA's national office. More than a decade later, however, he returned as senior advisor to the association in May 2013. He described his job as acting as "a sounding board" for AFA's senior leaders.

Shaud retired from the Air Force in 1991 after 35 years in uniform and more than 5,600 flying hours in 35 different aircraft types, including 251 combat hours in the RF-4C during the Vietnam War.

Born on the outskirts of Cleveland in 1933 to parents who were schoolteachers, Shaud grew up with a strong affinity for the military. "As a little boy in elementary school during World War II, soldiers were our heroes," he said. Shaud was six years old when the war broke out in Europe. As a youngster, his father took him to see the Cleveland National Air Races where "a lot of very famous airmen raced," he said.

In 1951, Shaud was studying premed at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., when an Ohio congresswoman wrote him asking if he'd like to take a vacant spot at West Point. He accepted.

At West Point, Shaud grew increasingly interested in the newly formed Air Force.

"You had to be qualified for pilot training to go to the Air Force out of West Point," he said. He decided to pursue that route, and after graduating in 1956, went on to pilot training school at Reese

JOHN A. SHAUD, SENIOR ADVISOR TO AFA



AFB, Texas. It was during this time that he met Janelle Ohlenbusch through his association with a church choir in Lubbock, Texas. They married and had three children: Patty, Jim, and Kathy.

Janelle passed away in 2006. In 2010, Shaud met Beverly Brockus during a dinner party. The two married the following year.

Among Shaud's notable Air Force memories is his time as commander of the 92nd Bombardment Wing at Fairchild AFB, Wash., when Mount St. Helens erupted in May 1980. "I knew we could fly from Spokane to Mount St. Helens. What I didn't know was Mount St. Helens could fly to us," he said. Fairchild was hosting an air show that day, but volcanic ash was approaching. "I stopped the demonstration teams and [started] to send people home," he said. Within a few short hours, the sky "became like dusk."

Shaud had a brief (a year and two months) stint at Minot AFB, N.D., before one of his favorite assignments as director of plans on the Air Staff. He went on to lead Air Training Command

at Randolph AFB, Texas, where he helped transform pilot training.

Shaud's last military assignment was as chief of staff of NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium. This tour "was incredible," he said. "It went from full-up NATO and Warsaw Pact in 1988 to the Berlin Wall coming down on Nov. 9, 1989," and the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union. "All of that [was] happening before our eyes," he said.

In his AFA role today, Shaud is advocating for more interaction between the association's chapters and the national office. As chapters become more aware of what's available to them as an outlet, such as *Wingman Magazine*, AFA's CyberPatriot initiative, Mitchell Institute events, and the Wounded Airman Program, he thinks chapter members will "want to DO something, not just show up for meetings."

To have *Wingman* focus on what chapters are doing helps other chapters "get feedback: what seems to work, what doesn't," said Shaud. "There is more appetite for that sort of engagement than you might think," he said. "People are interested." 



AFA's Senior Advisor John Shaud (right), then a major, stands with his backseater, Maj. Vic Coopland, at Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam, in January 1969, after a hose-down marking completion of a combat tour flying the RF-4C Phantom II.



DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF THEM?

As an AFA member, you understand the meaning of commitment to the needs of your family. But stop and think for a moment — would you feel confident about your family’s financial future in the event that something happens to you and you’re not around to fulfill that commitment? Would you have enough life insurance to take care of them?

Life insurance can offer peace of mind to help your loved ones with the burden of extra expenses, as well as the taxes and debt you may leave behind. And it’s the assurance that your dreams for your family can live on after you’re gone.

At AFA, we mirror that commitment to our members. And that’s why we offer the budget-friendly group rates of our AFA Term Life Insurance Plan to our members, with no military exclusions and protection 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. And that includes if you’re flying military aircraft.

The AFA Term Life Insurance Plan leads the way with:

- AFFORDABLE GROUP RATES — no higher premiums for flying personnel
- VALUABLE COVERAGE — with an “accelerated benefit” to help loved ones immediately
- NO MILITARY EXCLUSIONS — even when flying military aircraft
- PREMIUMS WAIVED — if a sickness or injury leads to a Total Disability
- FAMILY COVERAGE AVAILABLE FOR SPOUSE AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Learn more about the Term Life Insurance Plan.

Call 1-800-291-8480 or visit www.afainsure.com

Hearing-impaired or voice-impaired members may call the Relay Line at 1-800-855-2881.



MetLife

Like most group insurance policies and plans, group insurance policies and plans offered by MetLife contain certain exclusions, exceptions, waiting periods, reductions, charges, limitations, termination provisions and terms for keeping them in force. Ask your MetLife representative for costs and complete details.

L0414371368[exp0615]

AR Ins. Lic. #303439
CA Ins. Lic. #0G39709
In CA d/b/a Mercer Health & Benefits Insurance Services LLC

68801 (7/14) Copyright 2014 Mercer LLC. All rights reserved.



PORTRAIT OF A WARRIOR

Memorial Art Gallery

Text by Bob Kjar
Photos by Kim Smith, Affinity Photography

Baytown, Texas—On a downtown street here stands an inconspicuous building housing an art gallery. The paintings on the façade do not convey the full impact of the art one encounters upon entering this place, a striking memorial to scores of US military personnel from Texas who gave their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq.



One AFA member uses art to honor Texas' fallen military personnel.

Conceived by former commercial sign painter Ken Pridgeon as a site to honor Texas' sons and daughters lost in those conflicts, the Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Art Gallery on West Texas Avenue is now overflowing with the portraits of more than 150 fallen warriors: Texas natives and those Americans serving abroad with units from Texas when they lost their lives.

The lifelike, soulful faces on these portraits are our fallen heroes one and all, and the 79-year-old Pridgeon, an Air Force Association member and former airman, is the unsung hero who honors them through his art. In April and July, I had the opportunity to visit the memorial in this city of some 72,000 residents on the eastern outskirts of Houston. I was able to admire firsthand the portraits and the lives they capture. I also had the privilege of spending time with Pridgeon.

Entering the memorial is a humbling and moving experience as the portraits surround you and the eyes of the fallen seem to gaze upon you. It feels like sacred ground. The silence is broken only by Pridgeon's voice and the quiet questions that visitors pose. In a way, this place is a most-fitting monument to these fallen warriors. There is

nothing fancy and no distractions from the beautiful portraits.

One of the unique stories of bravery that Pridgeon tells is that of Army Sgt. 1st Class David J. Todd Jr. This 36-year-old San Antonio native would call his mother daily from Afghanistan, asking her to send more coffee, which he shared with his fellow soldiers. When insurgents surrounded 12 members of his platoon there in 2008, Todd jumped on top of a burning fighting vehicle to man a machine gun mounted on its roof. He eliminated the insurgents and saved his colleagues, but lost his life in the process. One can sense the emotion in Pridgeon's voice as he tells Todd's story, and Todd's portrait comes alive as one relives those moments of battle by this true leader.

Pridgeon was a communications specialist in the Air Force for 10 years. He was born in Perry, Fla., in 1935. His father was a grocer, his mom a homemaker who helped in the grocery store. Not wanting to spend his entire life painting grocery store windows with produce advertisements, Pridgeon joined the Air Force in 1953. He loved his work building Military Auxiliary Radio System, or MARS, stations and

communications sites all over the world, but his career field was frozen for promotion.

Seeing little opportunity for advancement, Pridgeon returned to civilian life in 1963 and settled down here to raise a family. He returned to his old talent: painting advertisements. He got a job with an auto agency painting signs, only this time, atop a 50-foot billboard. Not surprisingly, others soon saw his artistic talent.

Fast forward to 2010. Family members of Army Pfc. Wesley R. Riggs asked the now-retired Pridgeon if he would paint a portrait of their son, a Baytown native killed in Iraq in 2005 at age 19. Pridgeon accepted, but first he wanted to know all about the fallen soldier: his hobbies, skills, and personality. The result was a stunning, lifelike portrait that captured the essence of this young hero. The family was ecstatic. Pridgeon made one portrait for the family free of charge and one for himself.

Word soon spread about Pridgeon's ability to bring to life the personalities of the young heroes. More and more Texas families began coming to him for portraits. Army SSgt. Jessie W. Ainsworth was Pridgeon's second portrait.



Top of preceding pages: Ken Pridgeon (right) discusses his portraits honoring Army Spc. Clinton R. Gertson and Army Pfc. Nathaniel A. Given (far right) with Bob Kjar of AFA's San Jacinto Chapter, the author of this article, at Pridgeon's art gallery in Baytown, Texas, July 8, 2014.
Top of this page: Ken Pridgeon shows a print of his portrait of Army Sgt. 1st Class David J. Todd Jr. to Kátia Smith of Baytown during Kátia's visit to the gallery.

This soldier, from Dayton, Texas, was killed in Afghanistan in 2010; he was 24.

As Pridgeon relates it, the inspiration just wasn't coming to him as he began Ainsworth's portrait. It almost scuttled the entire memorial project. But Pridgeon kept at it, and about halfway through the portrait, the inspiration came, and he finished painting Ainsworth with a newfound sense of purpose for the portraits. He resolved never to let these young heroes be forgotten. This was when the real vision of the memorial came into Pridgeon's mind.

Pridgeon was quickly becoming overwhelmed by storing all of the portraits he'd done until Gerald Yates, a Baytown businessman and store owner, gave him the small one-room storefront on West Texas Avenue to display the paintings. Thus, the Portrait of a Warrior Memorial

Art Gallery was born. It gained notoriety when articles on it began appearing in Texas magazines and newsletters. The pressure on Pridgeon to paint more portraits increased even more.

Dozens of visitors now come from all over Texas and the nation each day to view the portraits. Every painting is wonderfully artistic and deftly weaves in features that describe each fallen hero's personality and interests. Pridgeon, in his deep baritone voice, brings every fallen warrior back to life, telling their stories to the visitors. He continues to display the original of a portrait in the gallery and donates a print of the portrait to the fallen hero's family.

Pridgeon could be quite wealthy, as he is a talented painter. Instead, he chose the memorial as his final life's effort and paints the portraits for free. Amazingly,

he lives off his social security checks and the three free meals per day that the local Golden Corral restaurant provides him. He uses the donations to the memorial to buy materials, equipment, and art supplies.

Pridgeon has become well-known in the art world around Houston and exhibits memorial paintings at various art festivals. He also displays his work each year at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, the largest livestock show in the world. Pridgeon has also taken many of his paintings to the Texas State Capitol building in Austin and made presentations to the state legislature.

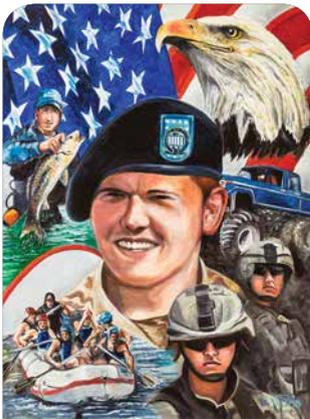
The photos accompanying this article highlight but a few of the heroes represented in the Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Art Gallery. As Pridgeon

Story continued on page 12



“Their lives still make a *difference* as long as we *don't forget.*”

Top, the entrance to Pridgeon's art gallery on West Texas Avenue in Baytown, Texas, on the eastern outskirts of Houston. Pridgeon, a former airman, would like to move the gallery to a new location in the area with more room for his growing collection of portraits honoring US military personnel from Texas who gave their lives in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere serving the nation. Below, the portraits of the four fallen servicemen featured in this article. Pridgeon has already completed more than 150 portraits.



Pridgeon's first portrait of a fallen US serviceman was of Pfc. Wesley R. Riggs. A Baytown native, Riggs was killed in Iraq in 2005 at age 19.



Sgt. 1st Class David J. Todd Jr., a San Antonio native, died in a firefight with insurgents in Afghanistan in 2008 at age 36.



Army SSgt. Jessie W. Ainsworth was the subject of Pridgeon's second portrait. This 24-year-old native of Dayton, Texas, was killed in Afghanistan in 2010.



B-52H bomber pilot Maj. Christopher M. Cooper died at age 33 in July 2008 in a B-52 crash near Guam in the Pacific.



Pridgeon puts the finishing touches on an HH-3 rescue helicopter in his art gallery.

Word soon spread about Pridgeon's ability to bring to *life* the *personalities* of the young *heroes*.

continues his painting, he needs our help. With the current gallery overcrowded with portraits, he would like to establish a new permanent home for them. He'd like to move the memorial into Baytown's old Texas National Guard Armory here, which is currently empty and surplus to the Guard's needs. That will require funding to facilitate the move and renovate the armory.

AFA's San Jacinto Chapter in Houston (www.afahouston.org) is among the entities stepping up to help enable a move to the armory and ensure that the memorial will become equal to other famous Texas shrines. Sup-

porters have formed the Portrait of a Warrior Memorial Foundation (www.portraitofawarrior.org) to help Pridgeon relocate to a larger, more modern facility. The Art Institute of Houston has expressed interest in assisting; so has a large Baytown-based corporation.

Another supporter is Michael L. Cooper of Round Rock, Texas, father of B-52H bomber pilot Maj. Christopher M. Cooper, one of the fallen whom Pridgeon has honored. Major Cooper died at age 33 in July 2008 in a B-52 crash, not in Southwest Asia but near Guam in the Pacific. His father is working with family members of other fallen

heroes and the American Legion to support Pridgeon.

Pridgeon's goals do not stop here. He wants to see memorials established in every state in the union so that we preserve the memories of the men and women who sacrificed all in the recent wars, so that our freedoms may continue. Said one father of a fallen hero featured in Pridgeon's gallery: "Their lives still make a difference as long as we don't forget." 

Bob Kjar is vice president of communications for AFA's San Jacinto Chapter in Houston.

A FITTING HONOR

AFA's work on Capitol Hill helped secure a Congressional Gold Medal for the Doolittle Raiders.



LEGISLATIVE NOTE

By Matt Bearzotti

Do you know who Jimmy Doolittle was? It's a question I've often asked in meetings with Capitol Hill staff as a way of explaining how the Air Force Association came into being in October 1945 to advocate for an independent air service.

The answer is seldom yes, even though the late Doolittle received the Medal of Honor during World War II and became AFA's first president.

Perhaps even fewer know about the daring raid that Doolittle led on Tokyo with 79 courageous airmen 72 years ago. But theirs is a story worth honoring, and AFA has worked tirelessly to ensure their brave acts are not forgotten.

The events preceding the raid are well-known. On Dec. 7, 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on US forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as part of a full-scale offensive in the Pacific. The Japanese made rapid gains; the United States and its allies were in retreat and despondent. Any sort of victory was desperately needed.

In the Pentagon, operational planners put into motion a bold retaliatory strike: B-25 Mitchell bombers would launch from the deck of a Navy aircraft carrier steaming in the western Pacific. They would then fly on to Tokyo, bomb it, and continue to allied China.

The raid took place on April 18, 1942, with Doolittle piloting the first of the 16 B-25s that departed the carrier *Hornet*. The mission succeeded in inflicting a critical psychological defeat on Japan early in the war and boosted Allied morale.

It came with a human cost: Three Raiders died as the crews tried in vain to reach prearranged landing fields in China with

their too-low-on-fuel bombers. Further, Japanese forces in China executed three captured Raiders, and one more died later in Japanese captivity.

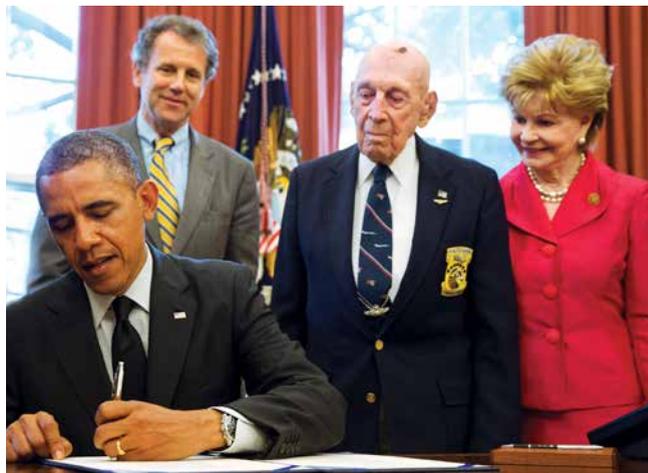
A month after the raid, President Franklin D. Roosevelt awarded Doolittle the MOH for his valor and leadership. All of the other Raiders—each of whom had volunteered for the secret mission—received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Three of them were also awarded the Silver Star.

Nearly 70 years later, in 2009, AFA presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to the Raiders, represented by two surviving members, Richard E. Cole and Thomas C. Griffin. (The latter died in February 2013.)

However, for Raider supporters like Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Brian Anderson, the sergeant at arms for the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders Association from Dayton, Ohio, there was more work to do in recognizing the achievement.

In 2012, Brown's office, working with Anderson and AFA, put forward a Senate resolution to recognize the 70th anniversary of the raid. It easily passed. A year later, Brown introduced S 381, legislation to award the Doolittle Raiders a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award that Congress can bestow.

AFA's government relations team lent support, writing letters to Congress en-



President Obama signs HR 1209 into law at the White House, May 23, 2014. The legislation awarded the Doolittle Raiders a Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their military service during World War II. Behind Obama (from left) are: Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Doolittle Raider retired Lt. Col. Richard Cole, and Rep. Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam).

AP photo by Jacquelyn Martin

couraging the bill's passage and providing Anderson with a space at the association's Air & Space Conference in National Harbor, Md., to increase awareness.

In May 2014, the House and Senate agreed to a bill awarding the Doolittle Raiders the medal. Days later, President Obama signed the bill into law. Cole, one of the four surviving Raiders, was present at the President's signing ceremony.

The medal recognizes the Raiders for "outstanding heroism, valor, skill, and service to the United States in conducting the bombings of Tokyo" and for volunteering for "an extremely dangerous mission" and "willingly put[ting] their lives in harm's way, risking death, capture, and torture."

AFA's work honoring Doolittle and the Raiders is not done. In September, the association will dedicate its operations building in Arlington, Va., in Doolittle's name.



Matt Bearzotti is AFA's legislative manager.



CHAPTER NEWS

UPDATES FROM ACROSS THE NATION ON AFA'S ACTIVITIES, OUTREACH, AWARDS, AND ADVOCACY.

By June L. Kim, Associate Editor



Photos by Dave Cross Photography

WELSH ADDRESSES New York City BUSINESS, FINANCE LEADERS

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III was the keynote speaker in New York City on May 13 at a half-day symposium titled “National Security in Uncertain Times,” sponsored by the Air Force Association’s Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, AFA’s Iron Gate Chapter, and the Union League Club of New York City.

Welsh told the audience of New York business and finance community leaders that some 220,000 airmen provide vital support to US military operations around the world each day, yet their contributions are often unfairly reduced to the term “enablers” in Pentagon budget conversations.

“It is not evil intent. It is just lack of understanding, but it is crushing the Air Force,” said Welsh. “This is a big deal and it is our fault,” he added, because the Air Force hasn’t told the story of these airmen “well enough.”

Welsh equated the work of these airmen—who serve in missions like airlift; command and control; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and nuclear deterrence—to the foundation of the Statue of Liberty. “That foundation is not visible so people don’t really understand it,” he said.

Top: The Air Force represents America's spirit, said Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh at New York City's Union League Club. Circle: Welsh chats with former Iron Gate Chapter President Frank Hayes (left), as Col. Robert Spalding, chapter member and China Division chief in the Joint Staff's Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, looks on.

Mitchell Institute Dean David A. Deptula began the symposium with a speech on the value of airpower. The other speakers included: Lt. Gen. Russell J. Handy, 11th Air Force commander at JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; Maj. Gen. Steven L. Kwast, commander of the Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education at Maxwell AFB, Ala.; and Christopher D. Miller, retired Air Force lieutenant general. Heidi H. Grant, the Air Force’s deputy undersecretary for international affairs, moderated a panel of foreign air attachés.

The Union League Club, located in Manhattan, hosted the event. New York opera singer Sarah Viola sang the national anthem at the dinner prior to Welsh’s speech. Broadway actor Daniel Siford led the crowd in a rousing rendition of “The Air Force Song” following Welsh’s speech before the symposium adjourned.

CIVIL AIR PATROL CADETS VISIT INTREPID MUSEUM

About a dozen local Civil Air Patrol cadets attended a Memorial Day ceremony at Manhattan's Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum Complex. The ceremony took place during New York City's Fleet Week, which brought in huge crowds.

Susan Loricchio, vice president for government affairs for the Air Force Association's New Jersey state organization, extended VIP invitations to the cadets of New Jersey's Jersey City Composite Squadron and New York's Phoenix Composite Squadron.

Loricchio said she began inviting civilians and veterans several years ago to "the very well-organized memorial tribute" onboard USS *Intrepid*, a decommissioned Navy aircraft carrier-turned-museum that is anchored in the Hudson River on Manhattan's west side. "It became a yearly 'pilgrimage' for me, as it gave depth to the meaning of [veterans'] sacrifices." The Intrepid Museum began offering the VIP invitations around that same time.

Adm. Bill Gortney, head of US Fleet Forces Command and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio spoke briefly and paid their



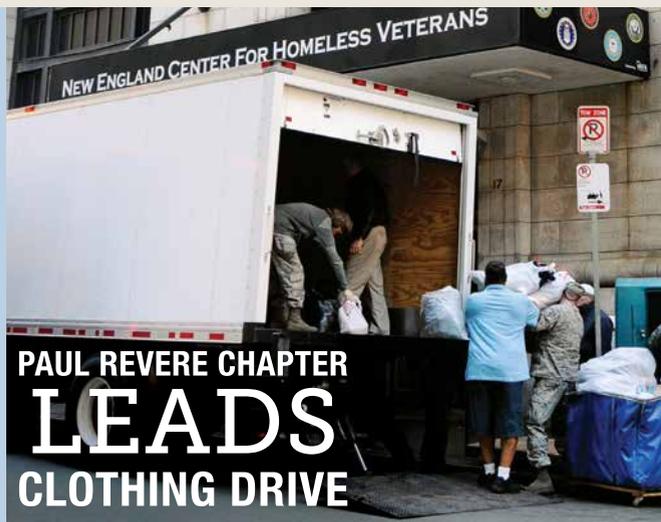
Photo courtesy of CAP Maj. Eric Santos

New Jersey and New York CAP members pose as part of a group during the Memorial Day ceremony at Manhattan's Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum Complex, May 26, 2014. Second from right is Susan Loricchio, vice president of government relations for AFA's New Jersey state organization.

respects before presenting a commemorative wreath in honor of the men and women who serve or have served.

The ceremony "really hit home," said Loricchio. It was a "very touching program." The goal was "to have a day of appreciation that overrode the department store sales and barbecues—no easy task," she said.

Photos courtesy of Paul Zauner



PAUL REVERE CHAPTER LEADS CLOTHING DRIVE



Top and left: Volunteers deliver clothing donations collected at Hanscom AFB, Mass., to the New England Center for Homeless Veterans in downtown Boston, April 6, 2014.

Members of the Paul Revere Chapter in Bedford, Mass., spearheaded a clothing drive early this spring to help the New England Center for Homeless Veterans in Boston. The response was overwhelming. Clothing donations poured in from the greater Boston community, along with more than \$2,500, said Chapter President Paul F. Zauner.

The clothing drive began when Zauner received an email from AFA New England Region President Ronald Adams informing him that a burst sewer pipe had ruined a large amount of clothes the homeless center had on hand. Zauner contacted the center and promised to help replace the lost items.

Zauner joined forces with airmen from Hanscom Air Force Base west of Boston and the Massachusetts National Guard. He also enlisted help from other organizations, such as the Air Force First Sergeants Association. Together, they

spread the word about the need for donations and ran the clothing drive for a month, said Zauner.

AFFSA members placed collection boxes in buildings all around Hanscom. Lt. Col. Karin Killeen of the Massachusetts Air National Guard helped coordinate the efforts, noted Zauner.

In early April, volunteers used a National Guard truck to haul clothing donations to the center. Zauner later used his Ford pickup truck to move another load of clothes to the center.

Center officials thanked the volunteers by giving them a tour of the facility, which dates back to after World War II, when the building was an outpatient clinic for veterans.

The Paul Revere Chapter maintains a close relationship with the center and has helped fund its educational activities in the past.



DID YOU KNOW?

- With its name, one AFA chapter pays tribute to a President: the Harry S. Truman Chapter (Mo.).
- Three chapters are named for Medal of Honor recipients from World War I: Lt. Erwin R. Bleckley Chapter (Kan.), Frank Luke Chapter (Ariz.), and Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker Memorial Chapter (Ohio).
- Five chapters bear the names of Air Force Chiefs of Staff: the Gen. Carl A. "Tooe" Spaatz Chapter (N.Y.), Waterman/Twining Chapter (Fla.), Orange County/Gen. Curtis E. LeMay Chapter (Calif.), Gen. David C. Jones Chapter (N.D.), and Gen. Charles A. Gabriel Chapter (Va.).
- One chapter is named for a Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force: the Richard D. Kisling Chapter (Iowa).
- One chapter is named for a husband-and-wife team: the Seidel-AFA Dallas Chapter (Texas). The late Bob Seidel was a World War II B-24 flight engineer/turret gunner. Helen Seidel has held AFA offices at the chapter and state level.
- One chapter memorializes a local mayor: the Scott Berkeley Chapter (N.C.) is named for Goldsboro's Scott B. Berkeley Sr. He championed the reopening of Seymour Johnson Field after its inactivation following World War II.



GREEN MOUNTAIN CHAPTER RECOGNIZES NORWICH CADET

Leaders from the Green Mountain Chapter in Burlington, Vt., attended Norwich University's achievement awards ceremony on April 22 to honor an Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps cadet.

Spencer Nath, now a senior at the private military college in Northfield, Vt., received an AFA certificate for "his leadership and future value in positions of responsibility," according to the citation. Chapter President Raymond Tanguay presented the award to Nath and the two posed for a photo with university President Richard W. Schneider.

Nath, who is studying electrical engineering, has "a positive attitude toward AFROTC and school, personal attributes, personal appearance, courtesy, and officer potential," reads the certificate.

"He ranks in the upper five percent of [his AFROTC] class and ranks in the upper 10 percent of his graduating class," said Richard F. Lorenz, chapter vice president. Nath was one of nearly 100 cadets recognized out of the class of 1,400 cadets.

The awards ceremony is an annual event honoring cadets for "specific achievements in academia, social, military, and athletic areas," said Lorenz.



Left: Minneapolis commercial artist Liliana Payne puts the finishing touches on her 25-foot-wide wall mural at the officers club of Air Force Reserve Command's 934th Airlift Wing in St. Paul, Minn. Rawlings Chapter members and partners funded the \$5,000 project, which took Payne about 95 hours to complete. The mural honors the Air Force's ties with the Twin Cities. Right: Payne mixes paint. Bottom: Rawlings Chapter President Lawrence Sagstetter stands with Payne in front of the completed mural. Left of Sagstetter is a B-25 Mitchell bomber from the Doolittle Raid. Mechanics modified the B-25s used in the April 1942 raid at Minneapolis' Mid-Continent Airlines hangar to extend their range. To Payne's left is a portrait of the late, retired Col. Kenneth Wofford, a former Tuskegee Airman and longtime chapter member.



RAWLINGS CHAPTER GETS MURAL

The Gen. E. W. Rawlings Chapter in Minneapolis hired local commercial artist Liliana Payne to paint an Air Force historical mural in the officers club at Minnesota-St. Paul Air Reserve Station, home to Air Force Reserve Command's 934th Airlift Wing.

The mural focuses on the ties between Minneapolis and the Air Force. It honors the late retired Col. Kenneth Wofford, a former Tuskegee Airman and a longtime chapter member. It is because of his "focus on educating youth that we highlighted him in the 25-foot-by-four-foot mural," said Lawrence J. Sagstetter, Rawlings Chapter president.

The mural also features a B-25 Mitchell bomber from the Doolittle Raid taking off from USS *Hornet*, a C-47 Skytrain troop carrier, Red Tail P-51 Mustangs, and the Air Force Memorial.

The project kicked off at the end of March and cost \$5,000. After working on it for nearly 95 hours, Payne completed the mural in late April, said Sagstetter.

The mural spans the length of one wall of the officers club's meeting room. Sagstetter had to secure the approval of the 934th AW commander and the officers club's advisory board. The whole process took nearly a year of "arduous labor to get done," he said, but the "chapter organized [the] effort unlike any project of any other AFA chapter that I know of."

The chapter, which holds its monthly meetings in the room, contributed about half the funds to cover the project. Chapter partners, such as Hubbard Broadcasting, along with veterans and veterans groups, pitched in the rest.

Sagstetter hopes to have murals painted in the rest of the room as funding becomes available. The second wall, which is in the planning stages, is 40 feet long and will include a painting of a Waco glider.

"The history of the Air Force in the Twin Cities began with production of the Waco CG-4A Hadrian glider and modification of Doolittle Raider B-25s at manufacturing plants and hangars in south Minneapolis," said Sagstetter.

FALCON CHAPTER MEMBERS

“FLY” IN F-35 DEMONSTRATOR

Lockheed Martin invited members of the Falcon Chapter in Jacksonville, Fla., to take a spin in the F-35 flight demonstrator in March as a way to thank them for their support of the strike fighter program.

The defense contractor had previously asked the chapter to contact their members of Congress about the F-35, said Bruce A. Fouraker, chapter president. Members “sent letters to key congressional members in 2013 and again in 2014 with regard to supporting and funding the F-35,” he said.

The flight simulations took place at Unison Industries in Jacksonville. Unison supplies the ignition system for the F-35’s F135 engine. Participants took turns in the demonstrator where they simulated an F-35 taking off from an aircraft carrier, flew to speeds of Mach 1.1 to an enemy ship, and dropped a 500-pound Joint Direct Attack Munition, said Fouraker.

The next stage was the fun part, he said. “You do a victory roll. The stick is easy to use and the airplane is responsive.”

The chapter also received an update on the status of the program.

Rep. Ander Crenshaw (R-Fla.), one of the congressmen the chapter had written to, came out to show his support. He spoke about the importance of the fifth generation fighter, especially with China and Russia developing their own fourth and fifth generation fighters, reported Fouraker.



Index to Advertisers

Dell.....	Cover IV
MetLife.....	7
Oticon.....	3
USAA.....	Cover II

CyberPatriot.....	19
AFA Hangar Store.....	5
AFA Member Benefits.....	33
AFA Membership Application.....	Cover III
AFA Résumé Service.....	27
Text 2 Give.....	35



Lawrence Belge, AFA’s Florida Northeast Area vice president and Falcon Chapter director, takes his turn in the F-35 mobile cockpit demonstrator at Unison Industries in Jacksonville, Fla.

SIJAN CHAPTER TURNS TO YOUTH TO HONOR FALLEN, VETERANS

The Lance P. Sijan Chapter in Colorado Springs, Colo., broke away from the norm when it called on two teenagers to represent the chapter and lay a commemorative wreath in honor of the fallen at the Pikes Peak Veterans Council’s Memorial Day Ceremony.

Most ceremonies have family members of the fallen and veterans participate, said David Shiller, chapter president. But in an ongoing effort to include younger members of the community, the chapter sent recent high school graduates Avery Austin and Shiller’s son, Kyle, to be the chapter’s representatives.

The crowd of nearly 150 “made it very clear they all strongly approved,” said Shiller. “Everyone who was there ... left with joy in their hearts for our younger generation and their promise of a better future for all of us,” said Carmen Pesek, the council’s event organizer.

The *Colorado Springs Gazette* praised the boys for their “respect for those who came before them.”

“I feel very honored to just be in a room with so many people who have made so many sacrifices for their nation,” said Austin. His father and mother were Army officers and he plans to attend the US Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., this fall.

“I just really wanted to follow in his path and go into the Air Force to serve our country,” said Kyle Shiller of his father, who is a retired Air Force colonel. The younger Shiller plans to join the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program this fall at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

NEWSVIEWS



Photo courtesy of Morris Cash



Photo by Randy Kelly

Larry Loudon, president of the Lewis E. Lyle Chapter in Hot Springs, Ark., presents an AFA citation to high school junior Bridget Gilmore during an awards banquet and ceremony in May. Gilmore, now a senior, was the JROTC cadet commander at Arkansas High School in Texarkana, according to Chapter Secretary Morris Cash. Gilmore hopes to attend the Air Force Academy in 2015 and study aerospace engineering. More than 100 people gathered in the school cafeteria for the event.

AFA members in California honored Ken Nishiyama (right) in March at the Bakersfield Airport with an AFA certificate and plaque. Nishiyama, of the Charles Hudson Chapter in Bakersfield, has been an AFA member since 1957 and "held every officer position" at the chapter before stepping down in 2013 as chapter vice president, said Donald Vanhook (left), president of the California AFA Area II. "Ken has been a great asset to AFA during his 56 years of dedicated service," said Vanhook.

SUPPORT CYBERPATRIOT, AFA'S NATIONAL YOUTH CYBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

IS YOUR AFA CHAPTER...

- Establishing a CyberPatriot coordinator within the chapter?
- Staying connected with CyberPatriot news?
- Reaching out to local high schools, middle schools, and community organizations?

When CyberPatriot experimented with opening up to middle schools in 2013, more than 80 teams registered. With that resounding success, **Middle School** is now an official division of CyberPatriot VII.

REGISTRATION FOR
CYBERPATRIOT VII
ENDS OCTOBER 10, 2014



GET MORE INFO OR REGISTER A TEAM AT WWW.USCYBERPATRIOT.ORG

WITH A MENTOR'S HELP, A FORMER ENLISTED AIRMAN IS FULFILLING HIS DREAM OF FLYING THE F-15C.

REACHING HIGHER



By Merri M. Shaffer

The weather that day was partly cloudy and a bit windy, with temperatures in the mid-70s. That was quite the norm for Wichita Falls, Texas, in April. But for 2nd Lt. Kyle Wheeler and his classmates, this day was special.

On April 4, 2014, Wheeler graduated from the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program, or ENJJPT, Class 14-04. He was on his way to flying the F-15C, the same aircraft type that he loaded weapons on several years before as an enlisted munitions system maintainer.

As much as hard work and focus brought him to this point in his career, Wheeler also credited another key component: mentorship. "There are a lot of opportunities that you may miss if you don't have that person to guide you," he said.

That mentor was Brett T. Williams, who retired from the Air Force as a major general in June 2014. Williams pinned pilot wings on Wheeler's uniform that April day at Sheppard Air Force Base. Their relationship had developed over the previous six years.

Williams himself had been at the same place Wheeler was now. It was some 33 years earlier when Williams started his Air Force career. He, too, became an F-15C pilot.

"The whole thing was a circle," said Williams. "Your main job as a leader is to train the leaders who will replace you. I feel like I have done that," he said.

Mentorship is a "role" that is part of a leader's responsibility, said Williams. Mentoring leaves a feeling that "you are contributing to the next generation," he said.

The Air Force is a large community, with many career paths to choose. To excel sometimes takes more than just ambition.

Williams first met Wheeler in 2008 at Kadena AB, Japan. Williams, then commander of the base's 18th Wing, hosted an informal social gathering at his home for the base honor guard. It was an opportunity for him to get to know the members and their families on a more personal level.

Then-Senior Airman Wheeler, his wife Autumn, and approximately 20 other base honor guard members and

their families were in attendance. It was here that Wheeler expressed his desire to Williams to attend Officer Training School and perhaps fly. "He was very enthusiastic and energetic, with a purpose," said Williams. "That was the first time I met him, learned his goals, and saw how squared away he was in terms of the Air Force."

Base honor guard members perform military honors at events in their community and are responsible for projecting Air Force standards of conduct to serve as an example for all airmen. Thus, being a member is itself an honor. There's a vigorous, competitive process to earn a spot. Wheeler said he liked the honor guard's "structure," the sharp, crisp uniformity, and he "wanted to portray that image." The process called for a 2.5-week training course before "being on the team where they teach you everything you need to know," he said.

This duty came on top of Wheeler's full-time position as a munitions systems journeyman and his pursuit of a bachelor's degree at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Wheeler fulfilling honor guard duties, succeeding

2nd Lt. Kyle Wheeler stands in front of a T-38C trainer at Sheppard AFB, Texas. Wheeler is now training to fly the F-15C.

at his main job, and working toward his degree “talks about how committed he was to improving himself,” said Williams.

Wheeler said he thrived in such working conditions, driven by his ambition. He found the base honor guard to be a “great additional duty” that granted him a “lot of opportunities” he wouldn’t have been exposed to otherwise. “Any big event going on [at Kadena], the honor guard was present,” he said. “Airmen 1st class or senior airmen wouldn’t have had the opportunity to [be present] otherwise.”

He excelled at Kadena, earning accolades as the Honor Guard Airman of the Year in 2007 and 2008. That was just the start. In 2009, he made a permanent

“It’s really important to have a role model in your career”

change of station to Washington, D.C., for a special-duty assignment: a three-year tour at JB Anacostia-Bolling, D.C., as part of the US Air Force Honor Guard.

It was during the second half of Wheeler’s tour that he learned Williams had a new assignment in the Pentagon. He reached out to Williams’ office in the hopes of seeing his former commander.

“Whatever job I’ve been in, I’ve always picked a mentor whom I wanted to be like,” said Wheeler. “It’s really important to have a role model in your career so that you have ... an example of how to be a good airman.”

Wheeler still intended to apply to Officer Training School and was interested in being a pilot. Williams supported this.

“One of the things I encouraged him to do was to apply to the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program,” said

Wheeler, his wife Autumn, and Maj. Gen. Brett Williams.



2nd Lt. Brett Williams and his wife, Marianne, also a second lieutenant, pose in front of a T-37 trainer at Sheppard AFB, Texas, in spring 1982.

Photo courtesy of Brett Williams

Williams, who himself graduated from the program in December 1982. Sheppard’s 80th Flying Training Wing oversees ENJJPT, which produces combat pilots for NATO countries.

A few months later, Wheeler reported back with news that he was selected for both: to OTS and a rated pilot slot at Sheppard. In 2012, he completed OTS and went on to finish his pilot training program before starting ENJJPT. Wheeler was close to achieving his dream.

Then on that early April day at Sheppard, Wheeler walked across the stage, having completed ENJJPT, with his wings on his uniform, knowing that everything he had worked hard for had come true. He made sure his mentor was present, asking Williams to pin on his wings.

“It was ... an easy choice for me to pick him,” said Wheeler. “I had several instructors ... at Sheppard, but because

[Williams] was my mentor through everything, that’s why I chose him.”

Williams, then US Cyber Command’s director of operations at Fort Meade, Md., also delivered the graduation remarks for his alma mater.

“When he said he’d fly out to Sheppard, not only to pin [my] wings, but to be a graduation speaker, that’s a whole lot,” said Wheeler. “It really shows that he cares, ... and it was a great thing.”

Although Williams is now retired, he’s not done being a mentor.

“That’s a role I think we have a responsibility to do,” said Williams. “As long as people want [my] help, I’ll be there to provide it. The fact that I’m not in uniform anymore is not significant.”



Merri M. Shaffer is a former Air Force Magazine associate editor and was AFA’s manager of media activities until June 2014.



Photo courtesy of Frank Carter, 82nd Training Wing

A young man in a blue Air Force uniform is shown in profile, playing an oboe. He is wearing a dark blue jacket with a white Air Force wingman emblem on the sleeve. The background is blurred, showing other musicians and a stage setting.

Stone by Stone

By Jill C. Westeyn

A Story of Hope & Resiliency

Since the age of 11, I have known what I wanted to be when I grew up. I spent hours each day blowing air through two blades of cane and a conical piece of wood to make my dream of becoming a professional musician come true. I loved playing the oboe and I was determined to do it for the rest of my life.

In the spring of 2000, my childhood dream blossomed into reality after I won an audition with The United States Air Force Band. All I had to do was enlist and graduate from basic military training to realize my dream.

I passed the audition, but shockingly, I couldn't decide what to do. Fear of the unknown has a way of paralyzing an individual. As I contemplated this life-changing decision, my father told me, "The Air Force will always take care of you." My dad, a drafted Vietnam War veteran, never spoke positively about his military experience, so when he pleaded with me to accept the position, I listened.

Enlisting was the best decision I ever made. Not only was I living my dream of being a professional musician, but I was doing so in service to my country.

Around the time of my reenlistment, the Air Force rolled out a resiliency program. It started as a way to care for fellow wingmen, but eventually turned into a day-long session of instructing airmen on the four pillars of wellness. At the time, I viewed the program as trite. I didn't see the need to learn about the importance of physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellness. Earning two music degrees and serving on Active Duty taught me all I needed to know—or at least that's what I thought at the time.

I loved being an airman. In my ninth year of service, I'd already decided I

Photo by SMSgt. Robert Mesite

would serve for 30 years. While I initially took the job for the musician in me, I was now serving for the airman in me. Within a decade, I had performed for numerous world leaders and presidents, honored our fallen heroes, and connected the Air Force with countless people across the world. I was living the dream.

And then it happened.

I boarded the C-130; I selected the seat. Suddenly, a series of life-changing events took place that could never be undone.

It was Oct. 24, 2009. I was headed to Nashville, Tenn., for a three-day recording session at the Grand Ole Opry. The broadcast would be aired during the winter holiday season for the troops serving overseas. The airplane had just taken off when suddenly I was struck in the head by a loose metal hook.

It would take six months of questioning myself, visiting doctors, and undergoing tests to discover I had sustained a mild traumatic brain injury that day.

Most people had no idea what I was going through. Many whom I worked with never realized I'd been injured. Even some doctors insisted there was nothing wrong with me. Was I imagining the pain? Were the side effects, such as the hypersensitivity to sound, real?

While I didn't realize it at the time, my four pillars of wellness were breaking apart. Physically, I was in extreme pain that was keeping me from performing, exercising, and sleeping. Mentally, I was confused. I was processing information more slowly than I had in the past, and I was having memory problems. Socially, my symptoms were keeping me from interacting with friends or having consistent relationships with those I cared about. Spiritually, I was questioning my faith, asking, "Why did this happen? Is God mad at me?" Once again, I was paralyzed by fear.

I continued to do everything the doctors told me to do, hoping to make a full recovery. I was thankful for what I had and that my injury wasn't worse. After about 18 months, I started to attend rehearsals and to perform chamber music. I accepted a nomination to be a deacon at my church so I could give back to others. I tried to build a fitness plan into my routine. I worked daily on cognitive exercises. And I attended some social functions. I was grateful for my care providers who went above and beyond for me. I was making slow but steady progress—and then the unthinkable happened. I was rear-ended in a car accident.



Jill Westeyn, center, with stepsons, clockwise from 11 o'clock: Trevor Smith, Lucas Smith, Dustin Smith, and Ryan Smith in Herndon, Va.

My head slammed into the headrest repeatedly and all of my symptoms reappeared. My four pillars of wellness? They had crumbled.

My injuries from the car accident limited my ability to perform my job, which eventually triggered a medical evaluation board. My Air Force career would soon be over. Would I be separated or retired?

In the meantime, I was transferred to a new administrative position where I had to work in an environment with which I was unfamiliar. I found myself paralyzed by fear yet again. Thankfully, I had a supportive family and a handful of wingmen who stayed by my side and helped me rebuild my pillars stone by stone.

Was this the end or the beginning? I found myself doing things I never would have done in the past. I started confronting my fears. I became more patient with people. I applied to Georgetown University to study public relations and corporate communications. I mentored a first-term airman. I became passionate about things other than music. I learned how to ask for help. I developed a stronger faith. I took nothing for granted. And most importantly, I accepted my current condition as the new normal. And that was OK.

A colleague asked me if I had any regrets associated with my injury. If I could turn back time, would I make the same choices? I said I would not change a thing. Yes, I lost my career as a musician along with one in the Air Force. But the person I became as a result of that loss would not exist today without the experience of having to rebuild my life stone by stone. Instead of failing in what I set out to do, I now see that I gained an opportunity to start over, think big, and turn dreams into reality once again. My therapist explained to me that I was experiencing what psychologists call post-traumatic growth: experiencing positive change as a result of struggling with major life crises.

While my wish was for the Air Force to retain me, I knew it could not. The service did the right thing and medically retired me.

Remember my family and those few wingmen I mentioned earlier? They cheered me through my first semester at Georgetown. They encouraged me and helped me find employment in a meaningful way: educating, advocating and supporting airmen and their families. These wingmen are my dearest friends. And to this day, my father's words sound clearly in my head: "The Air Force will always take care of you."

To this day, it still does.



Jill C. Westeyn is AFA's manager for awards and scholarships.

LIFE AFTER AIR FORCE ROTC



By Kelsey L. Hendrix

ADVICE FROM RECENT GRADUATES

Every year, as thousands of college undergraduates launch their journeys in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, many others graduate as newly commissioned Air Force second lieutenants. While many may think they know what awaits them, the reality is that they may be surprised at what they find in the Air Force.

I had the opportunity to interview a handful of recently commissioned officers so that I could pass on their advice, along with what they wish they'd known before entering Active Duty.

"One of the first things you should do is find a [senior noncommissioned officer] as a mentor," said 1st Lt. Christina Mattison, a civil engineering officer. "You may think you know everything, but you don't. You're not even close. [Lieutenants] are supposed to be sponges, absorbing every bit of information you can get from the people around you. The people who can give you the more valuable information to absorb are your SNCOs.

"They have usually put in 15 to 25 years in the Air Force, where you have put in 15 to 25 minutes," she continued. "Ask tons of questions. Learn everything you can from your master sergeants and senior master sergeants and even chief

master sergeants, if you can get them to stop being grumpy long enough to talk to you. Find a mentor. Get out of your cubicle, and follow him or her around your squadron. My chief constantly invites me to go with him to the shops, and those are the moments where I learn the most."



Photo courtesy of 2nd Lt. Matt Herten

2nd Lt. Matt Herten stands before a T-1 Jayhawk during pilot training.

Second Lt. Matt Herten, who was in undergraduate pilot training at the time of his interview, offered this advice: "Enjoy college while it lasts. It will go by faster than it seems now, but by the time you're sitting on Active Duty, you will miss it," he said. "Remember that the

Air Force is a need-driven organization. What do they need now? What will they need tomorrow? Some of you may not get your first choice career field, and some of you may decide that serving long term isn't for you. That's fine.

"But whether you're happy with where you are or not, you need to be committed to your job and to your people from Day One until your last day in uniform," he added. "My former squadron commander told us in a commander's call once, 'There are no such things as bad assignments in the Air Force, just bad attitudes.' Remember that, and be ready to hit the ground running when you come onto Active Duty."

Second Lt. Matt Powell, also in pilot training at the time of his interview, noted how hectic life can be when beginning an Air Force journey. "My biggest shock was just showing up and in-processing with all of the different forms and paperwork that are required, especially after moving," he said. "That, plus figuring out which squadrons do what, and how I can best utilize all of the base agencies."

Mattison said, in retrospect, she should have saved more money before entering the Air Force. "Being [a lieutenant] does not mean you are going to automatically have money," she



Photo courtesy of 1st Lt. Christina Mattison

1st Lt. Christina Mattison trains with the Hulburt Field Fire Department.

said. “It took about a month for me to get processed in the system and actually start getting paid. The paychecks go by fast. Between rent, groceries, bills, and student loans, there wasn’t a lot of money left over at the end of the month. The reality was, I needed a stricter budget and should have had more money saved up to get me through the initial month of not having a paycheck.”

Sometimes, despite doing research beforehand and reaching out to airmen already performing a specific job, it’s difficult to grasp what exactly you’ll be doing until you start your first assignment. “I did not understand the concept of ‘additional duties,’” said 1st Lt. Nate Amsden, a cyber-exploit engineer. “I figured I would go to work, do my job as an engineer, and go home. That’s not the case,” he explained. “There are tons of random, odd jobs that need to be completed in order for the unit to comply with regulations. Someone has to take care of the software-license management, physical fitness, safety, training, the unit’s spring picnic, security, [information technology] equipment, just to name a few.”

An important lesson for Mattison was to let go of her past as a cadet. “I wish I had known how little people would care about what I did and who



Photo courtesy of 1st Lt. Nate Amsden

1st Lt. Nate Amsden teaches Boy Scouts about nuclear treaty monitoring.

I was in ROTC,” she said. “While your experiences in ROTC are important and provide valuable training tools, not a soul will care if you were the cadet wing commander. I wish I had focused more on learning to write effective bullets and [enlisted performance reviews], how enlisted promotions work, how to spot a colonel from a mile away, and how to be a genius with Microsoft Outlook.”

For those going into a training program, it’s vital to maintain a positive attitude and strive to do your best in every situation, said Herten, reflecting on UPT. “You are going to have a lot

BRUSH IT OFF AND BE READY TO GO FORWARD THE NEXT DAY

of screwups. There are going to be some awesome days and some terrible ones,” he explained. If you have a rough spell, “brush it off and be ready to go forward the next day,” he said. “The way pilot training is set up, you do your best with sometimes minimal information. So it’s hard to truly be 100 percent prepared for everything.”



Photo courtesy of 2nd Lt. Matt Powell

2nd Lt. Matt Powell poses on the ladder of a T-38 Talon at Laughlin AFB, Texas.

Amsden, recounting his participation in a four-week acquisition management course, noted that “paying attention in class, working well with your classmates, and studying materials hard” are crucial. “You are always being evaluated, and every chance you have to excel will only help you in your career,” he said.

Here’s to all you students about to embark on your Air Force adventure. I hope you take the time to seek advice from your SNCOs, continue to keep a positive attitude—even if you’re in a job you don’t want—and create memorable moments. Your AFROTC life may be coming to a close, but remember: Your Air Force career is just beginning.

Despite any growing pains, the journey is worth it. “The Air Force handed me a multimillion dollar jet aircraft after only 12 hours of flight time in it and trusted me to take it out to a military operating area and perform advanced aerobatics and come back safe,” said Powell, reminiscing on his pilot training. “Flying solo is a unique and amazing experience, especially in a supersonic jet.”



Kelsey L. Hendrix was an AFA membership relations associate from September 2013 to June 2014. She now teaches third grade in Auburn, Ala.

Camino Real students play along as a CAP pilot shows them how airplanes fly during a field trip to San Marcos Airport, Texas.



By Susan Mallett



Come FLY With ME

Photo by Susan Mallett, CAP National HQ

AFA and CAP join hands to support ACE.

In a rural setting near the airport in San Marcos, Texas, sits an elementary school full of dedicated educators trying to inspire the young students who enter its welcoming doors each day.

Through a program called Aerospace Connections in Education, or ACE, that the Civil Air Patrol and Air Force Association support, Principal Marivel Sedillo, her staff, and volunteers have created new opportunities for the students of Camino Real Elementary School in Niederwald, a small city located between Austin and San Antonio.

At ACE-sponsored quarterly field trips to the San Marcos Airport, Camino Real educators are given CAP teacher orientation flights while students tour the airport and climb into the control tower to observe their teachers in the sky. Students at the school observe the flights from the school grounds and participate in live video teleconferencing with the airborne teachers.

While at the airport, the students fly in simulators in the flight training center, feel history come alive at the Commemorative Air Force Museum,

and interact with positive role models and mentors. Both CAP and AFA volunteers work these events, giving specialized attention to these young students in hopes of igniting in them a spark of interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM, subjects and careers as they move into higher grades.

Three years ago, Camino Real adopted ACE after a teacher learned of it at a national conference for educators. ACE uses the aerospace theme to focus on STEM academics, character educa-

tion, and physical fitness for living a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

Trying to reverse a high absenteeism rate on Wednesdays, Sedillo designated Wednesday as “ACE Day.” Students now participate in hands-on activities, hear motivational speakers, and wear their distinctive orange ACE T-shirts. Attendance has increased, as has the students’ appetite to learn about new career options.

Sedillo’s school is receiving national recognition for its efforts to make learning relevant for these students, 85



Camino Real students give high-fives to Texas Wing CAP Lt. Col. Ed Garland as they leave the Commemorative Air Force Museum at San Marcos Airport.

Photo by Tom Roach, Texas CAP



Camino Real students smile for the camera during a tour of the Commemorative Air Force Museum.

percent of whom are ethnic minorities. This includes winning the 2014 CAP National ACE School of the Year award. AFA and CAP representatives presented the award to the school, along with certificates to students and a reward check to purchase more STEM materials.

Among the volunteers, three members of CAP's David Lee "Tex" Hill Composite Squadron in San Marcos have been the driving force behind ACE becoming an integral part of Camino Real's STEM activities: CAP Lt. Col. Ed Garland, a member of AFA's Alamo Chapter in San Antonio, who works as a CAP pilot and standardization/evaluation officer; CAP

Maj. Leroy E. Friesenhahn, squadron commander; and CAP 1st Lt. Kirk McManus, squadron spokesman.

They and the other volunteers have taught ACE lessons, supported the school's science night, coordinated multiple airport field trips, and attended schoolwide events to show their support for students and staff.

ACE uses a grade-level-specific curriculum, with 21 lessons per grade level. In the 2013-14 academic year, ACE reached about 16,000 students from kindergarten through sixth grade. They were spread among some 700 classrooms in more than 100 schools across 28 states, along with a Defense Department school in Turkey.

Just as in Texas, many other AFA chapters and CAP units are beginning to join forces to maximize STEM support, like ACE, to schools, youth organizations, and museums, and to increase public awareness of these initiatives.

Chapters can now begin introducing educators to the no-cost STEM opportunities available to them through the AFA-CAP partnership. AFA chapters can work as much as desired with schools, from helping with activities to providing speakers or presenting awards.

For assistance in getting involved, contact afa@capnhq.gov. To find out about all programs CAP provides at no cost to AFA, go to www.capmembers.com/afa or check out AFA's Aerospace Education page at www.afa.org/afafieldleaders/aeprograms.



Susan Mallett is the Youth Development Program coordinator and AFA partnership liaison for the CAP's national headquarters and a member of AFA's Aerospace Education Council.

Client Testimonials

"I am ecstatic with the products I've received and the care you have put into crafting them. I am confident that I will not have a problem getting in the door for an interview with these." Colonel, USAF

"Your product is undeniably one of the finest on the market. I thank you for taking so much material, condensing it and returning it to me so quickly. And your price is low! I will not hesitate to recommend your services to my friends. I am a very satisfied customer!" Major, USAF

Why does AFA's Résumé Service have completely satisfied clients?

Because AFA's principal résumé writer is David G. Henderson, author of "Job Search: Marketing Your Military Experience." Mr. Henderson is a leading expert on planning a smooth transition of military experience to well-paying civilian jobs.

Full Résumé Preparation..... \$160

Résumé Review and Critique Service..... \$50

OF612 Résumé Preparation..... \$225

Visit WWW.AFA.ORG/RESUME or call 1-800-727-3337 for more information.

OVER 28,000 SOLD

PATRIOTIC EDUCATION FOR FUTURE LEADERS

By Bob Gehbauer

For the past four summers, the Seidel-AFA Dallas Chapter in Texas has sponsored high school students who have finished their sophomore or junior year to attend a five-day youth leadership conference, or YLC. The Military Order of the World Wars manages these conferences; we here at Seidel work with the local chapters of the Alexandria, Va.-based organization.

Our members select students through interviews at the various local high schools. After these students attend a conference, we invite them, along with their parents, to be our guests at the chapter's third-quarter membership meeting. There, they recount their experiences and what they feel they have gained at the YLC. This chapter get-together is always one of the year's most popular.

Our YLC program participation began in 2011 when the chapter sponsored three students. Our executive committee was impressed with the students' enthusiasm and the positive influence the program had on them. As a result, we have sponsored more students each year since. For 2014, we selected 18 students.

"Sponsoring students for YLCs has proved to be a most impactful way to spend the chapter's funds," said John R. Tannehill, Seidel Chapter president. "These youngsters are typically among the top students in their school, and several of those we've sponsored have gone on to be selected for military academy appointments and [Reserve Officer Training Corps] scholarships. It fully supports the 'educate' aspect of the AFA mission."

The conferences are designed to expose the students to "patriotic education, including elements of leadership

AFA's Seidel Chapter sponsors student attendance at summer youth leadership conferences.

needed to maintain a free society, concepts of a free-enterprise system, and the founding principles upon which the United States was built," according to MOWW's description. "Attendees develop an appreciation for the US Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc., and an awareness of the civic responsibilities associated with preserving rights and freedoms. Students also develop leadership and public speaking skills

in 18 states—students come from more states than that.

Most conferences take place at universities; some are held on military installations. Typically, MOWW members instruct at the conferences. One of the southwest conferences—always the most popular—is held aboard USS *Lexington*, a retired World War II-era aircraft carrier converted to a museum in Corpus Christi, Texas.

It normally costs the Seidel Chapter \$200 to sponsor a student's attendance at a conference in the region. This covers the student's transportation to and from the venue, lodging and meals, and all materials.

In addition to MOWW chapters, organizations such as the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Foundation, Joe Foss Institute, and National Sojourners also sponsor students.

At the end of a conference, students write letters thanking their sponsoring organizations. Phrases such as "life-changing experience," "made friends I'll have for many years," and "best five days I've ever spent" are what we often see.

AFA and MOWW are drafting a memorandum of understanding to formalize their relationship. This MOU will encourage AFA chapters to consider sponsoring students in their area.

If your chapter wants to become involved, contact Richard E. Minor, MOWW Patriotic Education chair, at DandDMinor@aol.com. You won't regret the decision.



BobGehbaueristheexecutivevicepresident of AFA's Texas state organization.



Youth leadership conference participants, like those shown here in Corpus Christi, Texas, learn about the founding principles that the United States was built on.

that help them be better citizens and future leaders."

At many conferences, there is also a mock trial session where a current or retired judge typically presides and explains the US judicial process.

Conferences vary in length. Some are only one-day events, but most, including the five YLCs in the southwest United States, are five days long.

The number of students at each conference also varies, from as few as 24 to as many as 97. The average number hovers around 55. Some 1,300 students participated in YLCs in 2013. For 2014, 35 conferences are scheduled

Photo courtesy of Bob Gehbauer

AFA'S AIRMEN & FAMILY PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS



HUGS FROM PAULA

By Paula Roy

Humbled. That's a word I would use to describe myself. Here's an update since I last briefed you in May.

WOUNDED AIRMEN AT THE CYCLING CLASSIC

I had the privilege of spending time in June with wounded airmen at the AFA Cycling Classic, which raised \$20,000 for our Wounded Airman Program. These amazing airmen continue to give, care, love, and live life to its fullest. Opportunities such as this make me proud to be a part of our Air Force family!

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

Based on research and the results of our pilot program with 12 AFA chapters, we have concluded that our original goals needed adjustment. We found that nonprofit, government, and commercial entities were already addressing many of our proposed initiatives.

Our focus has always been to serve our members, airmen, spouses, and veterans. We're creating a transition reference library on the AFA website with descriptions of programs and services available.

WOUNDED AIRMAN PROGRAM

We continue to support the work of the Air Force Wounded Warrior program: fulfilling needs and cheering on airmen in adaptive sports events across the country. These competitions have been great venues to involve our AFA communities with the WAP and to allow our members to meet the airmen they are helping by donating to our program.



Photo by Devin DePalmer

Wounded airmen met with Air Force spouse leaders and AFA members and staff at the AFA Cycling Classic in Arlington, Va., on June 5, 2014. Pictured from left: Capt. Mitch Kieffer, Kevin Lewis, retired SSgt. Daniel Crane, Betty Welsh, SSgt. Melissa Garcia, Athena Cody, Paula Roy, and Caitie Craumer.

In June, a group of 39 wounded airmen participated in the Army's Warrior Games Trials in West Point, N.Y. Our chapters in the northeast went above and beyond to support them, raising \$5,000, working logistics, and spending time with these inspirational warriors. The numbers of wounded airmen are growing every month. We are proud to be here for them.

SPOUSE SPOTLIGHT: VERENICE CASTILLO



Photo by DiAnna Pauik

Verenice Castillo, the Armed Forces Insurance Air Force Spouse of the Year in 2013, established the Military Spouse Advocacy Network.

I met Verenice Castillo in 2012 while visiting Maxwell AFB, Ala. Seeing the need to help military spouses become more resilient, Castillo, an Air Force Key Spouse Mentor, and her team of spouses developed a program called Strength for Spouses. I was not surprised to hear that she was named the Armed Forces Insurance Air Force Spouse of the Year in 2013. She used this platform to found the Military Spouse Advocacy Network. The

goal of this initiative is to improve upon and provide a better support system for all military spouses at their military installations across the country and abroad.

Advocates volunteer at their installations and work directly with other military spouses, installation agencies, military leaders, and private organizations. Recently relocated to Holloman AFB, N.M., Castillo has already reached out to the local AFA chapter, and together they are working on planning spouse get-togethers. They are also planning to co-host a banquet this fall to help integrate spouses into the chapter.

Check out the MSAN website (www.milspouseadvocacynetwork.org/) to find out if there's already an advocate in your area. This is a wonderful resource to help strengthen our relationship with our local bases and communities.

Your dedication and commitment to continue serving those who are daily sacrificing for our freedom are greatly appreciated by so many. Thank you!

Blessings.



Paula Roy is AFA's director of Airmen and Family Programs.

We'll be interviewing Air Force leadership spouses Frank Beatty (husband of Secretary Deborah Lee James), Betty Welsh, and Athena Cody for the next issue of *Wingman Magazine*. Please send questions you'd like to ask them about your Air Force to proy@afa.org.

Air Force Memorial Spotlight on: HONOR FL



By Barbara S. Taylor

There are many components of my job that I really enjoy. Scheduling military ceremonies for airmen, coordinating wreath-laying events for school groups or families that want to honor a loved one, and putting together our Friday evening concerts by the US Air Force Band are all really high on my list.

However, the one that gives me the greatest joy is welcoming a busload of veterans from the Honor Flight Network program to the Air Force Memorial.

Typically, each veteran has a lanyard around his or her neck, distinguishing which military branch he or she served in. I greet each of the veterans warmly regardless of service branch, but I love seeking out Air Corps or Air Force veterans. I go up to them, introduce myself, shake hands, and welcome them to the memorial.

On more than one occasion, this has brought some of our visiting airmen to tears. They are overwhelmed to realize that this beautiful Air Force Memorial was constructed for them.

The Honor Flight Network, known initially as just Honor Flight, has brought veterans to our nation's capital since May 2005. On its inaugural tour, six small airplanes brought 12 World

War II veterans from Springfield, Ohio, to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., according to the narrative at the organization's website, www.honorflight.org. In August 2005, the tours started using commercial airlines to accommodate as many veterans as possible as the waiting list for tours burgeoned.

Earl Morse, a physician's assistant and retired Air Force captain, conceived of Honor Flight to honor the veterans he had taken care of over the course of three decades.



After retiring from the Air Force in 1998, Morse joined the staff of a small Veterans Affairs clinic in Springfield. In May 2004, the World War II Memorial was finally completed and dedicated in Washington, D.C., and quickly became the topic of discussion among his World War II veteran patients. Many thought they would never get the opportunity to see all the great monuments and memorials in the Washington area that represented their service and sacrifice, but the Honor Flight program changed that.

By the end of its first year, Honor Flight had transported 137 World War II veterans to their memorial, according to the organization.

The mission and ideals of the program began to spread. People in other cities and states became aware of the tours, and working relationships with community leaders in several states formed. Jeff Miller, with his HonorAir initiative in Hendersonville, N.C., led the expansion into areas not served by direct commercial flights to Washington, D.C. He succeeded in organizing and obtaining funding to fly an entire commercial jet filled with local area veterans to the nation's capital.

In February 2006, Morse and Miller combined efforts and co-founded the Honor Flight Network.

Today, Honor Flight Network also pays tribute to those who served in Korea, Vietnam, and more recent wars.

In 2013, more than 100 Honor Flights from across the country brought veterans to the Air Force Memorial. In addition to viewing the memorial itself, many of those visitors take advantage of our small gift shop and our outdoor picnic areas and enjoy our breathtaking view of many of D.C.'s monuments.

Several Honor Flight visits occurred during the government shutdown last year. While most monuments were closed, the Air Force Memorial stayed open, due to its nonprofit foundation status and the generous contributions of thousands of Air Force Memorial supporters.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

I have spent a great deal of time talking with many of the HFN veterans who served in the Air Corps or the Air Force. I ask them about where they now live, what they did in the military, and what the majestic Air Force Memorial means to them. Here are a few comments from this year's visitors:

"I am just awestruck by it, really. ... It's such a beautiful thing and very impressive," said **Charlie Duncanson**, a Tennessee veteran of the Air Corps, who worked as a firing systems technician and instructor on B-29s. "It certainly sends the message of the Air Force, in that it goes to the sky and projects way beyond the tips of the three spires. I think it is just absolutely beautiful," he said.

Peter Orr, a Korean War pilot who flew 100 combat missions in the F-84, came from Columbia, Mo., with the

Central Missouri Honor Flight. "This is just fantastic. It is unreal. You are way up on the hill. That is where the Air Force Memorial belongs. This place is ideal. I love it!" he said.

Retired MSgt. Eric Farr, also from the Central Missouri Honor Flight, served in the Air Force from 1976 to 2002 and was a first sergeant during Operation Desert Storm and Operation Southern Watch. "When I first saw [the memorial], my first impressions of it were that it was open and inviting and very appealing. I mean, there's just a clean look to the memorial. It really epitomizes what we do. That missing man formation says it all to me," said Farr.

If you know of someone who served in the US military (especially during World War II, the Korean War, or Vietnam War) who has not taken part in an Honor Flight excursion to Washington, D.C., I encourage you to visit www.honorflight.org for more information.

Pete Mitchell, from the Northern Colorado Honor Flight, served in the Korean War and traveled to Washington, D.C., with his son, Tom, also a former airman, and his granddaughter Courtney, who attended the Air Force Academy. I gave the elder Mitchell a hard time for having the same name as actor Tom Cruise's character in the movie "Top Gun." Mitchell said it was his first visit to the memorial. "I love it, I love it," he said. "I liked the World War II Memorial, but I am very partial to the Air Force Memorial. My son was in the Air Force; my granddaughter was in the Air Force. That is three generations of Air Force service."



Barbara S. Taylor is the managing director of the Air Force Memorial.



▲ Charlie Duncanson



▶ Pete Mitchell (center), son Tom (right), and granddaughter Courtney



▶ Peter Orr



▲ Retired MSgt. Eric Farr

Photos by Barbara Taylor

COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

By Merri M. Shaffer



VISIONS STATEMENT

AFA-USA Today Education partnership promotes STEM education in US classrooms.

The Air Force Association and *USA Today* Education, an arm of the Gannett Co.-owned national newspaper, have worked together for 23 years to sponsor the Visions of Exploration program in fourth-grade-to-12th-grade classrooms throughout the country.

The program's goal is to motivate students to explore topics and careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Visions of Exploration provides teachers with Common Core-aligned lessons, along with regular classroom access to the *USA Today* newspaper either in print or online format, to enhance students' understanding of STEM. Teachers use *USA Today* articles on aerospace topics to guide discussions on STEM issues. The program also aims to enhance students' reading comprehension and writing skills.

"The online lesson plans and problem sets get kids applying STEM to real-world aerospace problems," said Lawrence Sagstetter, president of AFA's General E. W. Rawlings Chapter in St. Paul, Minn. "In general, the teachers and students like the program, especially in school districts with limited or declining financial resources."

Since its inception in 1991, Visions has reached nearly 13 million students overall, said Mary Leaphart, *USA Today's* curriculum manager. To bring Visions to a classroom, an AFA chapter must sponsor the classroom.

"Chapter members love seeing chapter funds being used for STEM and aerospace education in the classroom," said Sagstetter. "Members love to see kids getting exposed to STEM and aerospace



simulators, aerospace problem solving, learning what makes airplanes work, and how they operate. The program gets kids thinking broadly about possibilities for the future—their future."

Access to *USA Today* exposes the students to national and international events and generates conversations on subjects they wouldn't regularly discuss, according to educators.

"It's an amazing resource for research and keeping up to date with everything," said Sheila Miles, the principal of Trinity Lutheran School in Kissimmee, Fla. "There's always something for them to understand and learn about. It has up-to-the-minute new research for them, and a lot of these kids don't get a chance to see a newspaper," she said.

When Miles started using Visions, she was teaching fifth-grade social studies and science. Now, she said, it's used across different grade levels in her school, a testament to the program's versatility.

"So much of what [students] do in the classroom can get limited by the four walls," said *USA Today's* Leaphart. "What [Visions] does is take them beyond the walls of the classroom and lets them see a bigger picture of what's going on in the world and how their life fits into that."

Leaphart, who spent 11 years in secondary school classrooms before working for *USA Today*, led the Visions revamp that took place in the 2013-14 school



year. The changes brought the program into the 21st century by providing "fresh and new, engaging, and exciting materials for the students," she said.

One of the biggest changes in the new curriculum is the alignment of the lessons with Common Core state standards, a requirement for many teachers. It also includes a focus on careers—more specifically STEM careers, including those in the Air Force.

"[The curriculum] gives teachers a ready-made tool that they can implement in the classroom with very little preparation time on their own," said Leaphart. "It's prepackaged and designed for them to run with it."

Ryan Knutson, a sixth-grade social studies teacher in Woodbury, Minn., who has used Visions for seven years, said it's nice to see how the program helps students "read at a higher level." The program is also a great source for graphs and charts to supplement lessons in economics, he said.



Merri M. Shaffer is a former Air Force Magazine associate editor and was AFA's manager of media activities until June 2014.

For more on Visions of Exploration, visit <http://usatodayeducation.com/afa/> or contact Shannon Aud at saud@afa.org.



WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU USED YOUR AFA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS?

You get the most out of your membership dues when you use these exclusive products and services available to you at special savings.

INSURANCE

Multi-Benefit Accident Insurance
Level Term Life Insurance
Decreasing Term Life Insurance
Senior Whole Life Insurance
Long Term Care Insurance
Auto & Home Insurance
Dental Insurance
TRICARE Supplements
Medicare Supplements
Hospital Indemnity Insurance
CancerCare Insurance
Hospital Income &
Short Term Recovery Insurance
Pet Insurance
1-800-291-8480 or www.afainsure.com

FINANCIAL

AFA USAA Rewards™ Credit Cards
USAA Bank
USAA Financial Advice, Planning
& Investments
1-877-618-2473 or
www.usaa.com/afa
LifeLock® Relentlessly Protecting
Your Identity™
1-800-LifeLock or www.LifeLock.com
Use code AFA1 for 10% OFF

LEGAL

Hyatt Group Legal Services
Open enrollment each Nov/Dec
1-800-821-6400 or
<https://info.legalplans.com>
Use code 8539007

HEALTH

Medical Air Services Program
1-800-423-3226 or
www.masaassist.com/afa
Dental Benefits Max
1-866-481-6289 or
www.benefitservices.com/afa
to try this plan free for 30 days

Prescription Discounts
1-877-321-6755 or
www.dprxcad.com/AFA
for your free RX discount card

Hearing Benefits
1-888-809-7786 or
www.americanhearingbenefits.com/partners/afa
for a free consultation

Coast-to-Coast Vision Plan
1-888-632-5353 or
www.afavisionplan.com
Use code EYECARE for 20% off
and 3 months free

AFADentalPlans.Com
1-888-606-8401 or
www.afaDentalPlans.com
Use code AFA20 for 20% off
and 3 months free

LifeLine Screening,
The Power of Prevention
1-800-908-9121 or
www.LifeLineScreening.com/AFA
Use code BBPA-001 for discounts

Brain Training
www.mybrainsolutions.com/afa
for brain training games.

SHOPPING

Promotive.com
Discounts on Top Brands
888-814-4764
www.promotive.com/afa

Purchasing Power
800-540-4142
www.afa.purchasingpower.com

Sam's Club® Gift Card
1-800-727-3337 or
www.afa.org/benefits by August 31

GOVX
1-888-468-5511 or
www.GovX.com/AFA for
20-50% off apparel and sporting gear

AFA Hangar Store
Items with AFA, AFM,
CyberPatriot logos
1-800-727-3337 for a catalog or
www.afa.org/store

Apple Member Purchase Program
1-877-377-6362 or
store.apple.com/us/go/eppstore/airforce

Dell's Member Purchase Program
1-800-293-3492 or www.dell.com/afa
Use ID DS 126348550

AFA Christmas and Holiday
Cards & Gifts (July-Dec)
1-800-556-5489 or
www.holidaycardcenter.org/afacards

CAREER/EDUCATION

Résumé Assistance
1-800-727-3337 or
www.afa.org/benefits

eKnowledge™ SAT/ACT Discounts
www.eKnowledge.com/AFA or
1-951-256-4076 Reference AFA

TRAVEL

Exclusive Worldwide Hotel
Discount Program
1-800-892-2136 or
www.afa.org/hotels
Enter afa (lower case) for both login
and password.

Veterans Holidays®
Vacation resorts for \$349/week
1-877-772-2322 or
www.veteransholidays.com
Choose Air Force Association from
"Installations" list.

Government Vacation Rewards
1-866-691-5109 mention
AFA Membership or
www.govvacationrewards.com/afa

Car & Truck Rental Discounts
AVIS: 1-800-698-5685 Reference
D453800 or www.avis.com/afa

Budget: 1-800-455-2848 Reference
BCD X201400 or www.budget.com/afa
Budget Truck: 1-800-566-8422
Reference 56000083928 or
www.budgettruck.com/airforce.aspx

zipcar
www.zipcar.com/partners/afa
1-866-4ZIPCAR (866-494-7227)

BENEFITS TAILORED TO YOU

By Susan M. Rubel



DO I NEED AFA INSURANCE?

How much insurance do you really need—and what kind? Term or Whole Life? Before advising you, an insurance professional needs to know more about your personal, family, and financial situation. At the same time, you need to have a basic understanding of the concept of insurance.

RISK POOLING / GROUP SHARING OF LOSS

Insurance is basically risk pooling. Here's an example taken from "McGill's Life Insurance" guide:

Suppose there are 1,000 houses in your community, each worth \$100,000. The odds that a fire will destroy any one of them in a given year are extremely small, perhaps no more than one in 1,000. But if it happens, the loss to the owner would be staggering: \$100,000.

If you assume, however, that only one of the 1,000 houses is destroyed by fire in a particular year, a contribution of only \$100 by each homeowner would create a fund large enough to reimburse—in full—the unfortunate person who has lost a home. Thus, by accepting a \$100 insurance payment, each homeowner no longer faces the risk of a \$100,000 loss.

Life insurance is similar. Last year the Air Force Association paid a \$300,000 death benefit to the family of a young AFA member who'd paid less than \$100 into the pool. The member died soon



after applying for coverage. This death benefit was offset by members who paid into the pool for many years and didn't die during the term of their insurance.

TERM LIFE OR WHOLE LIFE?

Whole Life provides protection for a lifetime, while Term Life provides protection for a particular period of time. A young man with a family and a tight budget may find term insurance to be the best fit. Premiums are relatively small for the benefit that his dependents would receive if he dies young. As his children become adults and no longer depend on him financially (and possibly his mortgage is paid down significantly), the need for the benefit decreases.

Some of you may consider life insurance an investment and want it to have cash value. If you can afford larger premiums, Whole Life may be the best option. Some of you don't have, or expect to have, dependents. You may only need enough to cover burial expenses, so a small Whole Life plan may be the better choice.

AMOUNT OF COVERAGE

It can be hard to determine the "economic value" of your life. Such calculations shouldn't focus on your salary or earning potential alone. Your economic value is calculated for life insurance as it relates to those who depend on you.

There are various ways to calculate that amount; a licensed agent needs to understand your personal situation to figure it out. Considerations include:

- Immediate expenses like medical, burial, estate administration, and debt.
- An amount up to twice your annual salary while your family adjusts to the financial impact of your loss. A widowed spouse may need schooling before finding suitable employment.
- Support of children to at least age 18.
- Children's college education expenses.
- Life income for dependent spouse.
- Special needs, such as the indefinite support of a handicapped child.

If people depend on you, you probably want to protect their standard of living in the event of your death. AFA offers a wide variety of insurance products. One or more of them may be the right fit for your unique situation. 

Susan M. Rubel is AFA's senior director for insurance and member benefits. She is a licensed insurance agent, a registered health underwriter, and a chartered life underwriter.



"For someone your age, the yearly premium on a \$5,000 policy is \$8,000."

COMMON RÉSUMÉ MISTAKES TO AVOID



RÉSUMÉ TIPS

By David G. Henderson

Résumés are like meeting someone for the first time: Initial impressions make a difference. Here are some tips to optimize your résumé.

HEADER TOO LARGE

Many people are confused about how much space they should allow for the header of their résumé. The header should never comprise more than three lines, with basic address information including your name, home address (no P.O. Box unless you're overseas), phone number, and email address. Cell phone information is optional; it's OK to substitute a cell phone number for your home phone if you're often away on temporary duty.

Some people feel the urge to write their name in huge letters and then spread the address, phone number, and email address for another four or five lines below, thereby taking up almost a quarter of the first page. Economy of space and presentation are important. Allotting that much space for that information cuts into the résumé's heart, which should instead highlight your education, experience, career employment history, and specific achievements.

SECOND PAGE

Most people coming out of the Air Force whom I prepare résumés for have 20 or more years of service. There is no way to fit all those years of experience on one page. Thus, going to a second page

is recommended. Remember to include your name at the top of the second page. In my experience, companies often receive more than 300 résumés for a job opening. If your pages become separated, the reviewer is probably not going to search through the stack to put your résumé back together again.

PLACEMENT OF AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

There seems to be universal misunderstanding over the placement and use of awards and achievements. While some individuals place their achievements and commendation medals in their résumé's work experience section, others place them in laundry-list fashion. I recommend a separate section like this, toward the end of your résumé:

AWARDS/ACHIEVEMENTS

Recipient of Bronze Star Medal for service in Southwest Asia and seven Department of Defense noncombat commendations for superior achievement and outstanding performance of duties in the areas of aviation, mobility logistics, aerial port operations, and maintenance management.

Air Mobility Command Field Grade Transportation Officer of the Year for 2013.

Command pilot with more than 3,000 accident-free flight hours in C-5A/B, KC-135R, and T-37 aircraft.

Keep in mind that Good Conduct Medal awards, campaign ribbons, shooting medals, and theater campaign ribbons are not considered in the same category as service commendation and achievement medals. Include them only if you've never received commendation and achievement medals.

ACCOMMODATION VS. COMMENDATION

A common mistake is the incorrect use of the word accommodation when citing service awards. An individual is awarded a Commendation Medal, not an Accommodation Medal, for outstanding performance of duties. Accommodation refers to an arrangement that results in something favorable for an individual; it has nothing to do with commending someone for superior achievement. 🌟

David G. Henderson is the principal writer for AFA's résumé service. Visit www.afa.org/resume for more information.

AFA'S WOUNDED AIRMAN PROGRAM NEEDS YOUR HELP. WITH 100% OF PROGRAM DONATIONS RECEIVED DIRECTLY SUPPORTING WOUNDED AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES, AFA IS ABLE TO USE YOUR GIFT TO FULFILL MUCH NEEDED EQUIPMENT, CARE, AND QUALITY-OF-LIFE ITEMS FOR WOUNDED AIRMEN.



TEXT GIVEAWAP TO 501501 TO DONATE \$10 TO AFA'S WOUNDED AIRMAN PROGRAM

A one-time donation of \$10.00 will be added to your mobile phone bill or deducted from your prepaid balance. All donations must be authorized by the account holder. All charges are billed by and payable to your mobile service provider. User must be age 18 or older or have parental permission to participate. By texting YES, the user agrees to the terms and conditions. Service is available on most carriers. Message & Data Rates May Apply. Donations are collected for the benefit of AFA's Wounded Airman Program by the Mobile Giving Foundation and subject to the terms found at www.hmgf.org/t. You can unsubscribe at any time by texting STOP to short code 501501; text HELP to 501501 for help.

THE GADGETIST

MAKING SENSE OF THE AIR FORCE'S HIGH TECH

By Gideon Grudo, Special Projects Manager



Invisible Informant

How personal locator beacons get rescuers the information they need when they need it.

Saving airmen who are in trouble is no easy task. Getting information on their identity and whereabouts quickly makes a difference.

Studies on rescues of civilian and military personnel stranded on land or at sea show that the survival rate is 60 percent if the rescue takes place within eight hours of an emergency. So say officials with Cospas-Sarsat, an international satellite-based network that detects distress alerts from military personnel or civilians and distributes information to rescuers. If it takes longer than two days for a rescue, the survival rate plummets to 10 percent.

Enter personal locator beacons, devices that transmit coded messages about the person needing support. PLBs send location coordinates and unique identifying information with the distress messages such as an airman's unit or aircraft tail number. These beacons are just some of the survival gear airmen carry. They aren't meant for missions flying over enemy territory, as the Air Force has other specialized equipment

for that. Nonetheless, those beacons are an important tool for locating downed or in-distress airmen in many situations.

Wingman Magazine spoke with John Thompson, the founding president of Signal Engineering, a San Diego-based company that's been designing beacons for the Navy since 1991 and for the Air Force since 2006. Thompson said PLBs do much to save lives, but conditions that the general public often doesn't understand can inhibit operations.

PLBs used in military ejection seats operate in two cycles when an airman is in trouble. The first phase is on pilot ejection when the beacon is activated and its trailing antennas deploy. They dangle about 46 inches beneath the airman's survival kit during his or her parachute descent, said Thompson.

Shortly after activation, the PLB starts transmitting data through Cospas-Sarsat satellites to terrestrial-based local user terminals in the network. These forward the information to mission control centers, which alert rescue forces and get them into gear.

It can take as little as 65 seconds for data containing a GPS location fix to get from the in-distress airman to combat or civilian search and rescue forces, said Thompson.

Once the airman has landed, the chances of the trailing antennas still working is small. They will likely be lying flat on the ground or rendered useless if submerged in water. That is, "unless [the airman] happens to be very, very lucky," Thompson said. "Some signal will get out, but it will be nowhere near the signal ... if either of the antennas were deployed correctly. It's basically a weak signal."

Thus comes the second phase of the PLB's life cycle. The airman, if conscious and physically capable, manually disconnects the trailing antennas and deploys the beacon's integral antennas, which until now have been coiled around the PLB or folded in a stowed position. To deploy these, all the airman has to do is release an antenna retention device, like a Velcro strap or snap button. The rest happens automatically.

"You have to imagine what a pilot goes through ejecting from his airplane,"

said Thompson. “It’s gotta be one of the most violent experiences he’s ever gone through. What if the pilot broke one of his arms?” That’s why the process of deploying the integral antennas “has to be so simple.”

Thompson said the biggest misconception people have about these beacons is their resilience. Unless the antennas are placed perpendicular to the Earth, their

signal simply isn’t as strong as it can be.

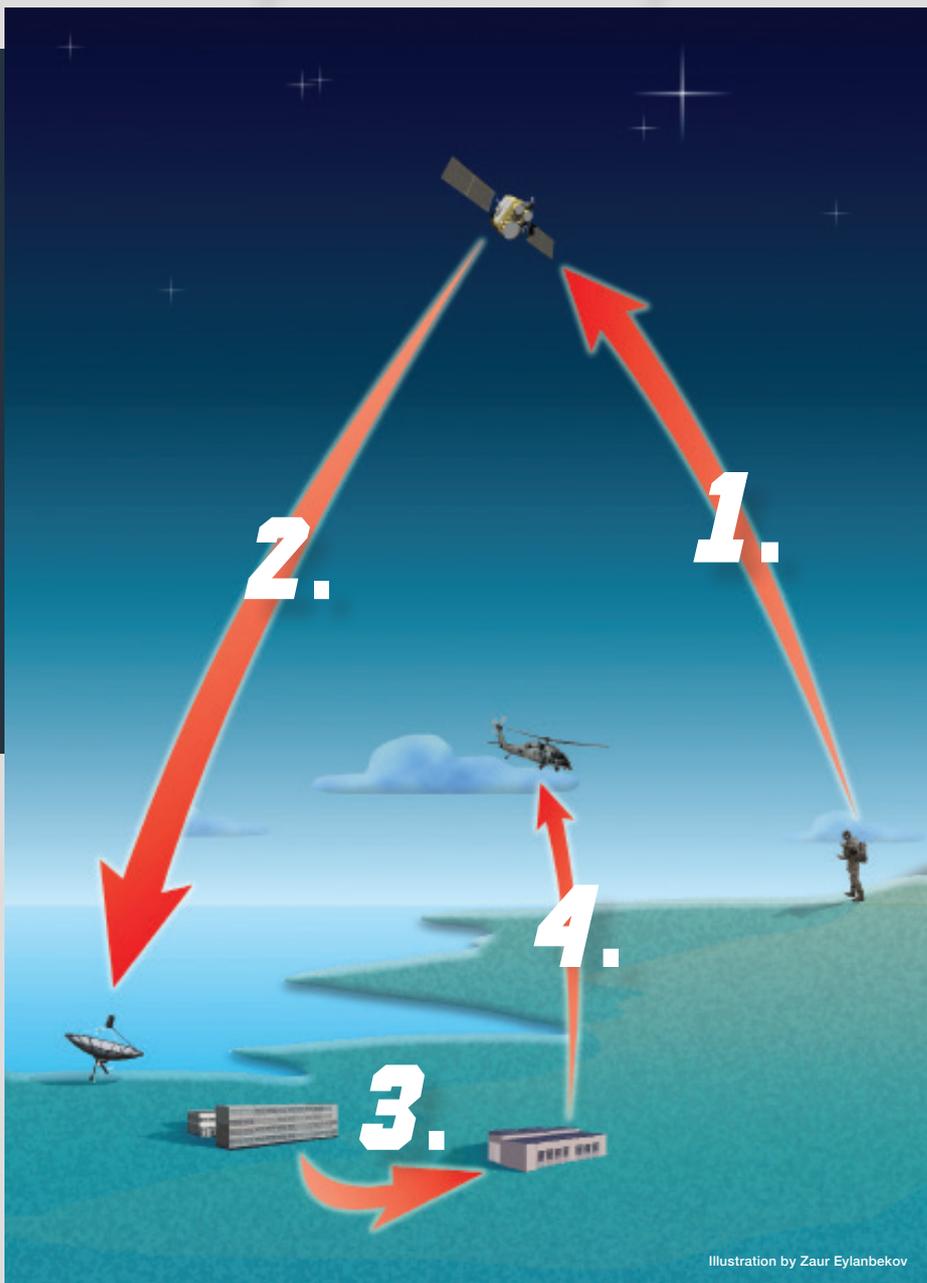
“If those beacons are submerged in the water, you’re not going to get anything. If [one is] lying on the ground, it’s a very weak signal,” he said.

Airmen do not use the PLBs in the Cospas-Sarsat network when operating in a hostile area since the multinational rescue network is not combat-secure. “They don’t want that beacon going off

if they’re flying over enemy territory,” said Thompson.

For those situations, pilots use equipment like combat survival evasion locator, or CSEL, handheld radios. These operate through a separate satellite system that allows airmen to securely exchange voice and text messages with rescue centers with a low probability of detection. 

The Cospas-Sarsat System works like this:



- 1.** When a pilot ejects, his personal locator beacon sends a distress transmission into space.
- 2.** One of the 12 satellites of the Cospas-Sarsat constellation picks up the signal and relays it to a terrestrial-based local user terminal.
- 3.** The LUT receives the information and sends it to the appropriate mission control center.
- 4.** The MCC manages the data and sends them to rescue forces.

What technology should we decipher next? Let us know at wingman@afa.org.



HISTORY TO SEE, SUPPORT, AND RELIVE

William Prindible at the controls of Whiskey 7.
Left: Whiskey 7 flies with a 37th Airlift Squadron C-130J over Germany.



By Aaron M. U. Church,
Associate Editor

WHISKEY 7'S TOAST TO D-DAY

In the predawn hours of June 6, 1944, a C-47 Skytrain designated Whiskey 7 ran a gauntlet of flak and fog to insert paratroopers of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division behind enemy lines over Normandy, France.

Seventy years later, church bells instead of flak greeted Whiskey 7 as it roared over the village of Sainte-Mère-Église, France. For several minutes on June 5, 2014, D-Day C-47 pilots Julian Rice and William Prindible, both from Whiskey 7's wartime 37th Troop Carrier Squadron, took the yoke over the countryside they helped liberate. "Who thought, 70 years later I'd still be in an airplane that I'd flown so long ago," Rice, who flew Whiskey 7 later in the war, told "NBC News."

Whiskey 7's return to Normandy started at a small grass airfield in upstate New York two years ago at the National Warplane Museum in Geneseo, a volunteer there told *Wingman Magazine*.

The museum received this C-47, serial No. 43-30652, as a donation in 2005 after the aircraft's lengthy postwar civilian career. It was museum volunteer and

wartime C-47 crewman Mike Ingrisano's dream to fly it back to Normandy for a D-Day commemoration. Though he passed away before the C-47 could make the journey, other museum volunteers finished restoration and preparations in April, just in time for the 70th anniversary and an epic trans-Atlantic flight.

"The significance of flying our C-47 to Europe in 2014 is huge," said volunteer Chris Polhemus, a US Airways captain and Whiskey 7's pilot for the trip. "Whiskey 7 was the lead aircraft in the second wave" during the Normandy invasion, said Polhemus in a video posted before the flight at the museum's Whiskey 7 project webpage, www.rtn2014.org. "There will be quite a few veterans from the D-Day invasion who will be celebrating the 70th anniversary over there in Normandy," he said. "This flight will probably be the most honorable thing that any of us could ever do."

Whiskey 7 lifted off from Geneseo on May 15 and hopped nearly 3,600 miles from Maine to the European mainland via Labrador, Greenland, Iceland, and Scotland. Before heading to France, Whiskey 7 paid a visit to the 37th Airlift Squadron, the unit that carries on its heritage, at Ramstein AB, Germany.

Rice and Prindible celebrated Memorial Day with airmen at Ramstein, capped off by a unit heritage formation flight with Whiskey 7 and one of the squadron's C-130J Super Hercules transports.

The C-47 continued on to Normandy and dropped Liberty Parachute Team re-enactors several times during the week leading up to the D-Day anniversary. On June 8, Whiskey 7 joined Air Force and Allied airlifters in scattering nearly 1,000 US and Allied paratroopers, along with re-enactors, over its D-Day drop zone at Sainte-Mère-Église.

"The night we came in, we had 800 airplanes with 10,000 paratroopers, ... so it was a little more," Rice told Britain's *Daily Mail*, watching the spectacle alongside crowds of veterans, citizens, and dignitaries. "We're the lucky ones," Rice told airmen during his visit to Ramstein. "One-hundred fourteen pilots didn't survive. ... We were all just young kids doing our job."

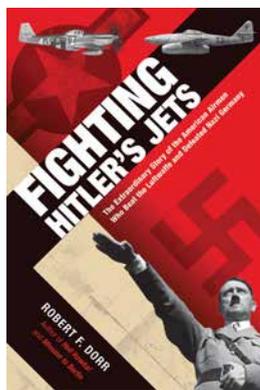
Whiskey 7 arrived back in New York on June 14. Its volunteers are still raising the last bit of funding to cover the airplane's transcontinental salute to the World War II airmen. To donate, visit the project webpage at www.rtn2014.org. 

All books can be found at
amazon.com



AUTHOR PORTAL

By Chet R. Curtis and Bridget Dongu



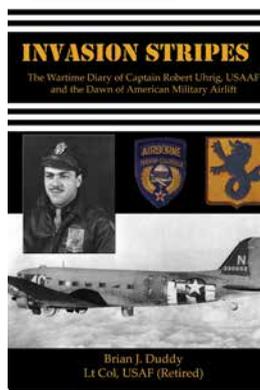
Fighting Hitler's Jets

Robert F. Dorr, an Air Force Association Life Member, has written more than 70 books and thousands of articles and opinion pieces on aviation history and the Air Force.

His recent work, *Fighting Hitler's Jets: The Extraordinary Story of the American Airmen Who Beat the Luftwaffe and Defeated Nazi Germany*, presents the personal accounts of American pilots who battled Luftwaffe jet- and rocket-powered aircraft such as the Me-262 Schwalbe and Me-163 Komet in the skies above Germany near the end of World War II.

The book also chronicles the German pilots who flew these machines in the hopes of turning the tide of the war in Germany's favor, along with the scientists and engineers who created the aircraft.

Dorr examines the challenges these airmen faced in flying against one another in combat and, for the Germans, in coping with utilizing cutting-edge technology under the pressures of war.



Invasion Stripes

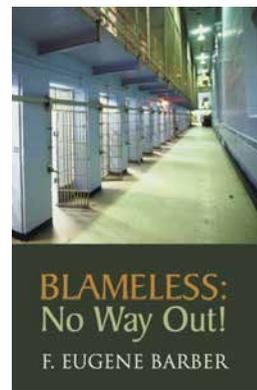
Robert Uhrig was a young man during the 1930s when the landscape in Europe began to change and World War II neared. He decided to drop out of high school and marry Toots, the love of his life, and to enlist in the Army.

During the war, Uhrig served in North Africa and Sicily and later spent time in England. He was away from his wife for more than three years. During that time, he wrote Toots weekly letters.

Invasion Stripes: The Wartime Diary of Captain Robert Uhrig, USAAF, and the Dawn of American Military Airlift chronicles Uhrig's wartime experiences as an aircraft mechanic and later as an engineering officer. It is based on diary entries and his more than 300 letters to Toots.

Invasion Stripes is the second book by Brian J. Duddy, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and AFA Life Member, following 2008's *Wings Over Leroy*.

Duddy discovered the story of Uhrig from a friend while at an air show.



Blameless

Carly is on a double date with friends and another man, a fifth wheel. The five of them are in a car together when the man has them stop at a convenience store for beer. Instead, he robs the store and the cops arrest the group within minutes. Carly is sentenced to six years in jail.

When Carly is paroled, she tries to start a new life and lands her dream job. Somehow, she gets caught up in an international bank robbery. Can Carly figure a way out of this situation?

Blameless: No Way Out is the 17th novel by F. Eugene Barber, an Air Force Association Life Member. *Blameless* is packaged together with the novel *Dead Ringer #4*, giving readers two books for the price of one.

Barber began writing his first book when his wife, Yvonne, was diagnosed with cancer. He spent four years in the Air Force, including assignment as a B-36 engine mechanic during the Korean War. He later worked in the defense aerospace industry and in intelligence. 

Are you an AFA member who has recently had a book published?
Let us know and we will consider covering it. Write us at wingman@afa.org.

Chet R. Curtis is AFA's director for education and communications. Bridget Dongu is AFA's manager for Outreach Programs.

AREA 52 FUN HANGAR

By Zaur Eylanbekov



ASPIRING WINGMEN, WE'VE GOT A CHALLENGE FOR YOU!

FIND THE 10 DIFFERENCES IN THE BOTTOM PHOTO

Can you identify all the changes we made in the bottom photo? Send a photo or a copy of this page with each difference circled to wingman@afa.org, "Attn: Area 52 Fun Hangar Editor," by Oct. 15. First 10 boys/girls age 12 and under with correct answers win a cool prize. Good Luck!





AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

Membership Application



Air Force Association
1501 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22209

Join Online at www.afa.org/join

AFA members receive 12 monthly issues of Air Force Magazine and other benefits, including up-to-the-minute information and access to discounts and savings on products and services that you use daily.

NAME _____ RANK (IF APPLICABLE) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

CURRENT MILITARY STATUS

I understand the annual \$45 fee includes an annual subscription to Air Force Magazine (value \$25).

- Current Active Duty US Armed Forces
- Current Service US Reserve
- Current Service US National Guard
- Retired US Armed Forces
- Previous Service US Armed Forces
- Spouse/Widow(er) of current or former US Armed Forces
- Lineal Descendent/ancestor of current or former US Armed Forces
- Civilian (no service with US Armed Forces)

Branch of Service _____

JOB FUNCTION

- Management
- Engineering
- Procurement
- R and D
- Other
- Retired

PROFESSION

- US Government
- Aerospace Industry
- Retired
- Other

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- \$30 NEW** e-Membership (no print copy of Air Force Magazine)
- \$45** for 1 year
- \$110** for 3 years
- \$22.50** for 1 year for: (check one)
 - Current Enlisted E-4 & below
 - Cadets (please check one:):
 - ROTC
 - JROTC
 - CAP
 - Silver Wings
 - Other Students

Lifetime

- \$600 single payment
- \$630 extended payments
- Initial payment of \$90 with four quarterly payments of \$135 each
- Initial payment of \$90 with eight quarterly payments of \$67.50 each

MAKE A DONATION

I wish to include a charitable donation to support AFA.

- \$10
- \$25
- \$50
- Other \$ _____

Contributions to AFA are fully tax deductible for federal income tax purposes.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- Check enclosed (not cash)
 - American Express
 - MasterCard
 - Visa
- EXP. DATE _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

Dell recommends Windows.



Dell salutes the Air Force. For a limited time, AFA members have access to this member exclusive offer.

Member Exclusive Coupon

\$50 off

\$499.99 on select consumer PCs and tablets with coupon.

Use coupon* code: **WVZLQ4D\$XG6QWL**

14"



New Inspiron 14 5000 Series

Some apps sold separately; vary by market.

Shop your military store today at:
www.Dell.com/AFA or **800-695-8133**
Member ID: GS126348550



No Federal endorsement intended.

All are subject to approval acceptance by Dell. Offers subject to change, not combinable with all other offers. Taxes, shipping, *Additional Savings: 10% additional savings is on top of the standard MPP discount. *10% off Dell Coupon Offer: Offer valid 8/1/2014 7:00am - 10/31/2014 7:00 a.m. EST until redeemed or while supplies last, whichever comes first. Coupon is good with select other offers, but not with other coupons. Coupon is valid on select order codes. Offer does not apply to, and is not available with, systems or items purchased through refurbished items or spare parts. Purchase limit of 3 items per order. Not valid for resellers and/or online auctions. Only valid on select order codes. *\$50 off Dell Coupon Offer: Offer valid 8/1/2014 7:00am - 10/31/14 7:00 a.m. EST until redeemed or while supplies last, whichever comes first. Coupon is good with select other offers, but not with other coupons. Coupon is valid on select order codes. Offer does not apply to, and is not available with, systems or items purchased through refurbished items or spare parts. Purchase limit of 3 items per order. Not valid for resellers and/or online auctions. Only valid on select order codes. Trademarks: Inspiron is a trademark of Dell, Inc.