

# CHAPTER NEWS

By June L. Kim, Associate Editor

## FLORIDA WEST COAST CHAPTER

The Florida West Coast Chapter recently awarded four students for their science projects in a local science fair in Manatee County, Fla.

Lockheed Martin sponsored the fair and the February awards ceremony where Braden River High School student Beau Cunningham and R. Dan Nolan Middle School student Elijah Engel received their awards.

Cunningham's science experiment "measured the sound generated by Boeing 737 aircraft taking off and landing at Tampa International Airport. His conclusion was that the aircraft generated more sound during the landing phase," according to Chapter President Mike Richardson.

Engel was recognized for his project on wind turbines and how "the number of blades on a Savonius turbine affected the electrical output," wrote Richardson.

In another awards ceremony held the following month, the chapter recognized two more students for their projects with the chapter's "Dr. Y" Award, named after chapter member Michael I. Yarymovich, who was the Air Force's chief scientist from 1975 to 1977.

Jack Gallahan, a ninth-grader from Pine View High School, was awarded the high school-level award and Alanna Densmore, a seventh-grader from Pine View Middle School, received the middle school award.

Gallahan's project focused on the application of cyclic space theory to transfinite mathematics, and Densmore



Florida West Coast Chapter President Mike Richardson (left) and Michael Yarymovich (right) present award winners Alanna Densmore and Jack Gallahan with some of the items each won for their science fair entries.

used her bicycle to investigate speed and the Doppler effect, according to Richardson.

Cunningham, Engel, Gallahan, and Densmore all received the Dr. Y Award. Gallahan and Densmore received it directly from Yarymovich at the March awards ceremony, said Richardson.

The winners took home certificates, medals, a book about space, an AFA calendar, and \$50.

## SHOOTING STAR CHAPTER

The Shooting Star Chapter (N.J.) dedicated a painting to the Morris Plains Borough Museum in Morris Plains, N.J. The painter was none other than chapter member and aviation artist Keith C. Ferris.

Purchased by the chapter in March, the painting, "Old Number One," was donated in early April to mark the centennial anniversary of the US' entry into World War I, said Chapter Treasurer Howard Leach.

"Old Number One" depicts WWI ace and Medal of Honor recipient Capt. Eddie V. Rickenbacker in a SPAD XIII of the 94th Squadron. The number "1" and a "hat in the ring" insignia is on the side of the fuselage. The painting was purchased for \$350, said Leach. The chapter donated it "as part of [the

museum's] WWI displays," he said. The dedication was also in memory of Robert E. Hodges and Arthur R. Brooks, former chapter president and chapter member, respectively.

Chapter Secretary James H. Morgan and Leach were present for the dedication, as were borough officials.

## LANCE P. SIJAN CHAPTER

Members of the Lance P. Sijan Chapter (Colo.) attended a "sold-out" luncheon at the Space Foundation in Colorado Springs, Colo., early this year, said Chapter President Kristen Christy.

The "Lunch and Learn" event—similar to a brown-bag meeting—was the result of the two organizations joining hands "to highlight the Space Foundation, the Discovery Center, their corporate memberships, and AFA," said Christy.

The group watched a video on space technology and after a catered lunch that consisted of barbecue pulled pork, they went on a guided tour of the Space Foundation's Discovery Center and watched a presentation, said Colorado State President Linda Aldrich.

The Space Foundation's Discovery Center is the area's "first and only dedicated space, science, and technology center and museum," according to the foundation's website.

Chapter member and former Chapter President Gayle White was the one who brought up the idea to work with the Space Foundation for future events, said Christy. The Space Foundation is a Community Partner.

The attendees received 10 free passes to the Discovery Center, a value ranging from \$50 to \$100, said Aldrich.

## AFA EMERGING LEADER: SONYA R. A. YELBERT

### How did you first hear of AFA?

I first heard about AFA when I was an airman first class. ... I had won Airman of the Year and I was awarded with a one-year membership. ... I had no idea what it was and had only learned about [Air Force Sergeants Association] at the time. I went to my first AFSA meeting and AFA was there discussing what they do and what they were about.

### What compelled you to join?

I loved that it was open to everybody and that AFA wanted to build the Air Force's future generation as well as preserve the benefits for those who are already in.

### What do you enjoy most about it?

The ability to be a part of this prestigious society that is moving and shaping the Air Force and that my membership is helping play a part.

### What does AFA need to do to get more members?

I think AFA needs to stop being so hum-



Sonya Yelbert with her husband, Stephen, in 2015.

**Home State:** New York

**Chapter:** Concho Chapter (Texas)

**Joined AFA:** 2013

**AFA Office:** Chapter President, Concho Chapter, former vice president and acting secretary

**Military Service:** 2010-current, Active Duty

**Occupation:** Medical Administrator

**Education:** B.S., Actuarial Mathematical Sciences, University at Albany-SUNY; M.A., Economics and International Finance, University at Albany-SUNY

ble and show and broadcast all the great and amazing things that they are doing on a constant basis for airmen. Airmen do not know what AFA is doing behind the curtains and I think it is time to redirect our marketing campaign and start getting out there and tooting our horn and bragging on how amazing we are.

**How do we build awareness about it?** Social media and working with other organizations so that we have a constant presence. Get involved in basic training and [Officer Training School]. As an officer, many officers have no idea what AFA is and this is a shame, because we wear the uniform that was built on AFA.

Photo courtesy of Sonya Yelbert

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