

News and Notes

January-March 2026



INSIDE

From the President's Pen 2

Board of Directors Election 4

AFPA Hall of Fame Class of 2026 6

Lord Guard and Guide..... 14

2026 USAF Heritage Flight Training and Certification Course 24

On final approach to Fairfield 29

Oral History 31



Lt. Col. Hope R. Cronin is this year's recipient of the Brig. Gen. James R. Hart "Best of the Best" Award. Cronin served this past year as the 48th Fighter Wing's Chief, Public Affairs, at RAF Lakenheath, U.K. (Official USAF Photo)

Lieutenant Colonel PA Chief named 2026 "Best of the Best"

By Dick Cole
Editor

The 48th Fighter Wing Chief of Public Affairs, Lt. Col. Hope R. Cronin, was named as the Air Force Public Affairs Association's Brig. Gen. James R. Hart "Best of the Best" Award recipient for 2026.

"It's a humbling privilege to receive this award given the exceptional caliber of talent across our community," said Cronin when she learned she had won the award. Cronin was nominated by her boss, 48 FW commander Brig. Gen. Jack R. Arthaud.

"Congrats, Hope, on this major

(Cont'd on p. 3)



From the President's pen...



As we step into spring, we have much to look forward to. I'm especially excited about our annual meeting and reunion in Fairfield, Calif., near Travis AFB, from April 30 to May 2. It promises to be a memorable event. Don't miss it—time is running out to sign up!

Not only will we get to reconnect with old friends and gain insights into the current state of our Air Force, but we'll also celebrate the remarkable contributions of our fellow PA professionals, including the newest inductees into the Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame. In addition, we'll get to sample treats from the local area, including wine and jelly beans—not necessarily together, but maybe?! I do hope we see you there. A big thank you to Perry Nouis, Bud Ross, Phil Ratliff, and the rest of the team who have crafted an exciting and engaging schedule again this year.

In addition to the reunion in California, we also have our annual elections at hand. With several positions to fill this year, the nominations committee has put forward an outstanding slate of candidates. Please take a moment to cast your vote. Special thanks to Vice President Chuck Merlo for keeping our election cycle on track, and to this year's nominating committee—Judy Bivens, Jay DeFrank, and John Gura—for their hard work.

In other exciting news, our Club Express platform is expanding. If you haven't already done so, I urge you to activate your account at <https://afpaa.clubexpress.com/>. This is now the place to vote in elections, register for the annual meeting, and renew your membership. Here you can also personalize your directory listing with your photo and bio, and you can control the visibility of your contact information to ensure your privacy is protected. Longer term, this platform will make it easier for AFPAA to manage its membership list, news distribution, and more.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Christine Queen for her many years of dedicated service as our Membership Chair. This vital role is often thankless but crucial to our success. Christine has given tirelessly to AFPAA, and we are grateful for her unwavering commitment. She has now passed the torch to Beth Horine, and we look forward to working with Beth in her new role. Thank you, Christine, for everything you've done!

And thank YOU, as always, for your continued support and involvement. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at carla.s.sylvester@gmail.com with any questions or feedback.

Carla

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“Best of the Best” (cont’d from p.1)

achievement and we hope to see you in Napa Valley to accept in person,” wrote AFPAA Chairman of the Board Eric “Flak” Schnaible, Feb. 12. “Have been proud of you since we first worked F-35 together at Eglin and wish you continued success in our PA career field’s leadership roles.”

As the senior U.S. spokesperson in the United Kingdom, Cronin expertly aligned critical European Command requirements impacting 32 American operating locations and 24,000 personnel at the first US-UK military forum since 2010. The forum resulted in publishing shared priorities between Allied forces, advancing authorities-driven dialogue and strengthening key partnerships for future operations.

She drove a global media campaign to spotlight how Air Force combat airpower neutralized an Iranian drone attack; securing CNN, ABC World News Tonight and *Air & Space Force Magazine* coverage driving 170 unique media products in 30 days, reaching 699,000 viewers, preserving geopolitical maneuverability and showcasing decisive action and lethality.

Hope weaponized 48 FW/PA as the wing commander’s information system; engineered communications strategies and a tiered PA employment plan, mitigating 45 percent manning during 2025, cutting low-value output and generating 1,500 targeted messaging products.

She secured eight higher headquarters’ buy-ins to fund and produce a film with 3rd Audiovisual



One doesn’t have to look very hard to find products by Cronin, like this photo of a Marine participating in Exercise Eagle Resolve in Kuwait in 2015 (DVIDS Photo)

Squadron capturing first-hand contemporary warfighter experiences from the largest air fight in 50 years. She leveraged release timing to debut the film at the Air Force Association’s 2025 Air, Space and Cyber Conference to more than 1,200 airmen and 500 Air University operational planners.

Cronin directed four PA and combat camera teams through UK-wide drone incursions, fielding 100 media queries across 33 organizations. Her PA guidance and tactics developed in ops field testing set the Air Force benchmark for low and no-light counter-drone video documentation and enhanced base defense and deterrence tactics against emerging drone threats.

She also led public affairs efforts supporting a state visit by the President of the U.S., synchronizing EUCOM, U.S. Embassy London, and His Majesty’s teams to drive a total combined audience reach of 55 million people with 83 percent positive sentiment, amplifying the unshaka-

ble US-UK alliance to NATO.

She directed strategic communications integration for Exercise Diamond Dragon—a high-visibility US-UK crisis response exercise—spearheading 10 months of joint training and quadrupled PA responder readiness, directly supporting top priority missions.

Hope forged a crisis communications benchmark through a regional water contamination incident, informing 2,700 families, averting litigation with a teachers’ union, while delivering the United States Air Forces Europe Surgeon General’s “gold standard” playbook for health communications.

She integrated public affairs and information warfare into five NATO exercises. Her concept of operations template was benchmarked to all USAFE wing commanders as the model for operational integration.

Cronin delivered wing and enterprise-validated impact, netting 72,700 media mentions (a 320 percent increase) and 76.7 billion total reach (a 241 percent increase) over FY25.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

By Dick Cole

Editor

It's that time of the year again! AFPAA's by-laws call for an annual vote of the association's membership to ensure its leadership remains responsive to the needs of its members.

The association is led by a board of directors consisting of 13 voting members and one non-voting member. Voting members are elected to two-year terms, with approximately half of the board standing for election in alternate years. The non-voting member serves in an advisory capacity and is appointed by the SAF/PA Director and approved by the voting members of the board. This year we are electing seven board members for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2028. You may also cast write-in votes on the ballot.

The two-year terms of office for Eric Schnaible, Carla Sylvester, Chuck Merlo, Brett Ashworth, John Dorrian, Cheryl Law and Annette Crawford all expire July 1, 2026.

Notice went out to the membership in the October - December 2025 *News and Notes* and the AFPAA website requesting potential candidates make their decision to run for office known by Feb. 1. No submissions were received.

The nomination committee submitted Schnaible, Sylvester, Merlo and Crawford for reelection. In order to provide the requisite number of candidates for the seven board seats, the nomination committee chair Judy Bivens also provided Chairman Eric Schnaible with three new proposed candidates for the Board of Directors election. These include John Banusiewicz, Beth Horine and Jerry Renne. The three nominees have all agreed to serve if elected and the chairman approved all seven candidates.

This year, all voting will take place electronically through the AFPAA website or using the printed ballot in this issue of *News and Notes* on page 16. To vote online,

use the online [ballot](#), which is expected to go active April 1. Voting will conclude at midnight Tuesday, April 21, 2026. To be counted, all ballots, print or electronic must be received by that time.

Only full members in good standing (dues paid up-to-date) may vote. Please read the ballot instructions carefully to ensure your vote gets counted!

Results will be announced on May 2 at the AFPAA Annual Meeting in Fairfield, Calif.

The Candidates



Eric Schnaible

Eric (aka "Flak") Schnaible is a life member and is presently serving as the Chairman of the AFPAA Board. He served 27 years in AF PA. He earned an AFROTC commission in 1985 with a BS in mass communications from Norwich University, the Military College of Vermont.

His PA assignments included PA chief at two USAFE Ground-Launched Cruise Missile wings, standing up 14th AF and the Defense Media Agency; Thunderbirds #12; EWI with Hill and Knowlton; and USAFE deputy. He deployed to MNF-I Baghdad and was the PA director for the Space and Missile Systems Center, U.S. Forces Japan, Air Combat Command, and AF CENTCOM. Since retiring in 2012, his civilian jobs have included the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Armed Forces Medical Examiner System, Lockheed Martin F-35 International Communications Manager, LM-Sikorsky, and speechwriter for the ACC commander. He is now the VA's National Cemetery Administration PAO and Chief of Outreach.



Carla Sylvester

Carla Sylvester served nearly 21 years as an Air Force Public Affairs officer. In addition to wing and MAJCOM positions, her assignments included special assistant to the chief of staff of the 1992-93 Armed Forces Inaugural Committee; operations officer for the European Broadcast Squadron; Edu-

cation With Industry fellow at Hill and Knowlton; and chief of marketing at AF Recruiting Service. At SAF/PA, from 1998-2001, she helped establish the Air Force's new symbol and identity. She deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey in 1997 and Bagram AB, Afghanistan in 2002.

Carla was named AF Outstanding Field Grade PAO of the Year in 1996. After retiring in 2004, she worked for Martha Stewart Crafts and the Central Park Conservancy in New York City. A Lifetime Member of AFPAA, she lives in New Jersey and is married to retired Air Force PAO Jim McGuire.



Chuck Merlo

Chuck Merlo is an AFPAA Life Member, who served as an enlisted teletype repairman until he was selected for officer training. As a first lieutenant he was the Public Affairs advisor to the Under Secretary of the Air Force. Later, the Chief of Staff hand-

picked him to revamp operations in his International Affairs Division and selected him to serve as an assistant secretary for JCS and NSC matters. He directed a 40-person team that demonstrated US Special Operations Command's capabilities to legislative, business, and military leaders. He was director of Public Affairs for Air Mobility Command when he retired in 2002. After his retirement, Chuck was a consultant to ITT Systems Division, the multinational engineering firm AECOM, and Aegis Defense Services, a British security company with offices throughout the Middle East. He and his wife own a ranch in San Saba, Texas.



John D. Banusiewicz

John D. Banusiewicz is an AFPAA Life Member and member of both the Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame and the Defense Information School Hall of Fame. He enlisted in 1974, serving first as a computer programmer. He retrained in 1978 and was the distinguished honor gradu-

ate of his class at DINFOS. Until his retirement as a senior master sergeant in 1996, he served in a variety of base-level and headquarters assignments and as a DINFOS instructor. Following his retirement from active duty in 1996, he began his civil service career at DINFOS where he was lead instructor and course coordinator for the Editors Course, Journalism Division chief and the Public Affairs Department's academic director. He then served for more than a decade as managing editor of Department of Defense News until his 2020 retirement.



Beth Horine

Beth Horine served 29 years in the Air Force and Public Affairs community. She most recently served as the SAF/PA Director's Mobilization Assistant from March 2023 to December 2025 during which she was dual-hatted as the acting deputy director for six months. As the MA, Beth

hosted the Director's Luncheon at the past two AFPAA Annual Meetings and is our incoming membership chair. She's led PA teams as the Director at Air Force Reserve Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Africa, and Air Combat Command. She also served as PA Director for NATO Air Command and as Partnership for Peace Committee Co-Chair for NATO's International Reserve Officer Confederation. Additional assignments included commanding the 4th Combat Camera Squadron and leadership roles in information operations, legislative liaison and the Defense Innovation Unit. A recently retired colonel, she continues as an Air War College/ Air Command and Staff instructor and Girl Scout volunteer and troop leader.

(cont'd on p. 27)



Class of 2026

Hall of Fame

Five selected for induction into 2026 Class of AF Public Affairs Hall of Fame



The Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame recognizes those Public Affairs professionals who have made unique, significant, and lasting contributions to the United States Air Force. Members of the Hall of Fame, whether enlisted, officer, or civilian, were groundbreaking leaders in one or more of the specialties encompassed by the Air Force Public Affairs career field—band, broadcasting, visual information/ combat camera, and information/public affairs. They secured their places of honor in the history and traditions of the Air Force by their ceaseless and eminently successful efforts to earn it the trust, confidence, and appreciation of the American people and our overseas hosts.

Hall of Fame members are selected on an annual basis and honored each year at the AFPAA annual meeting. Each new member—or their family representative—receives a unique trophy commemorating the honoree's contributions to Air Force Public Affairs.

The first fifteen members of the Hall of Fame—the "pioneers"—were announced by the AFPAA Board of Directors and SAF/PA on July 1, 2021. Since then, 28 more members were selected, including the most recent ones—the five members of the class of 2026.

Because of the AFPAA Board of Directors' decision to move the association's annual meeting from the fall to the spring, no annual meeting was conducted last year. As a consequence, the members of the Classes of 2025 and 2026 will be inducted at the annual meeting in Fairfield, Calif., April 30 through May 2, 2026.



Colonel Douglas Kennett

Doug Kennett devoted his life to service, leadership, and the power of clear, principled communication.

tion. Over a 30-year Air Force career and a second distinguished career in the aerospace industry, he became one of the most respected public affairs professionals of his generation — known not only for his mastery of the craft but for the kindness, humility, and mentorship that defined his leadership.

Born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and raised in New Jersey, Doug was a naturalized U.S. citizen—and he became one specifically so he could join the Air Force. With a journalism degree from Rutgers and an AFROTC commission, he entered the service in 1967, and soon after picked up a master's degree in counseling from Ball State.

Doug quickly emerged as a communicator with rare clarity and steadiness. Across three decades, he headed Public Affairs offices at bases in Texas, Korea, and England, served as Public Affairs Deputy for the Air Force Security Service, and then headed to the Pentagon to join the Air Force Press Desk, where he dealt with some of the most sensitive and controversial policy issues of the day. His leadership trajectory continued upward: Chief of the Air Force Press Desk, Director of Public Affairs for 3rd Air Force, Director of Public Affairs for Air Force Systems Command, Director of Air Force Media Relations, and finally Director of Press Operations for the Department of Defense.

He handled a multitude of tough issues. To name just a few: managing media during a multi-day commercial aircraft hijack-



Doug Kennett, second from left, poses with members of the Air Force Systems Command and Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs media relations staffs during the first-ever “Stealth Week” display of the B-2A, F-117A Stealth Fighter, and advanced cruise missile for members of Congress at Andrews AFB, Md., 1991. (Photo courtesy Dick Cole)

ing in Korea, leading efforts to calm public fears about potential microwave hazards from a new ballistic missile radar warning system, directing media access for the unveiling and first flight of the controversial B-2 Stealth Bomber, and serving as lead spokesman on two international trips with Secretary of Defense William J. Perry; first to former Communist countries in Eastern Europe and then to Rwanda in the aftermath of the genocide there.

It was that kind of stellar public affairs work that led to the Aviation and Space Writers Association recognizing Doug as the top public information officer in the federal government when he was only a major.

But there was still more recognition to come. After retiring from the Air Force in 1996, Doug continued to shape national security communication as a senior

aerospace spokesman for the next 14 years. He joined McDonnell Douglas, where he soon coordinated the surprise announcement of its merger late that year with Boeing. He became Vice President of Communications for Boeing's Aircraft & Missile Systems in St. Louis, leading 160 employees and managing an annual budget of \$20 million. After St. Louis, he returned to Washington to lead Boeing's media relations there from 2002 to 2010.

In 2011, he received the Aerospace Industries Association's prestigious [Lauren D. Lyman Award for lifetime achievement](#)—one of the highest honors in aerospace communications. The award recognized his commitment and ability to ensure journalists “got the facts they needed and access to tell the aerospace story, both good and bad.”

Doug's dedication to service

(cont'd on next page)



In 2011, Kennett received the prestigious Aerospace Industries Association Lauren D. Lyman Award for lifetime achievement—one of the highest honors in aerospace communications.

extended into every part of his life.

He spent 28 years on his condominium board—23 of them as president or vice president—and served on the Board of Directors for United Community, supporting families in need in Fairfax County, Va. For Doug, volunteering was never a discretionary activity, it was a component of his character.

Whether in the military world or the corporate world, Doug’s leadership remained rooted in the same values that defined his Air Force service: honesty, accessibility, and respect for the people around him. While mission always came first, his management style meant he was also just plain fun to be around.

In a field defined by words, Doug Kennett’s greatest message was the example he set. Nowhere was that more evident than the role he played in promoting the professional growth and development of women in the military.



Colonel Samuel T. Moore

Colonel Samuel Taylor Moore was one of the earliest and most influential communicators in American airpower history—a journalist, combat veteran, public affairs leader, and prolific writer whose career bridged three wars, the birth of American airpower, and the rise of modern military journalism. His life’s work shaped how Americans understood aviation, the U.S. Army Air Service, and later the U.S. Air Force itself.

Moore arrived at the intersection of American military aviation and public affairs through an unlikely path: a Massachusetts newsroom. Before even four years of high school, he became a reporter for the *Springfield Union*, covering local National Guard units. When the Second Massachusetts Infantry deployed to the Mexican border during the [1916 Punitive Expedition \(also known as the Pancho Villa Expedition\)](#), Moore accompanied

them as an embedded journalist. It was during this assignment that he met the [pioneering aviator Benjamin Foulois](#) when Foulois was just a captain — an encounter that inspired him to enlist in the Air Service when the United States entered World War I.

Moore joined the Air Service’s Balloon Section, a vital but hazardous branch responsible for artillery spotting and battlefield observation. He commanded the 7th Balloon Company in France, leading 180 soldiers and flying Caquot balloons during the St. Mehiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. For his service in France, he was awarded the Silver Star. In a not-to-be-missed article he wrote for *Air Force Magazine* in 1963—“[When Sausages Blazed in the Sky](#)”—he described his experiences as a balloon pilot.

After World War I, Moore remained in the Air Corps Reserve — a connection that would define his life for the next three decades — while becoming a nationally recognized journalist and commentator on aviation, preparedness, and national defense. His many talents were not confined strictly to military issues though, as he investigated immigrant smuggling, rum running, the Ku Klux Klan, government corruption, and more, publishing in *Harper’s*, *The American Mercury*, *The Forum*, *Everybody’s* and *The American Legion Monthly*.

He also became a prolific author of aviation fiction. His stories appeared in *Flying Aces*, *Sky Birds*, *War Aces*, and other popular magazines. His books—including *Aces All*, *Fighting Aces*, and *The Balloon Boys*—were consumed by a genera-



A World War I Caquot observation balloon of the type piloted by Moore.

tion of teenage readers. In the 1920s and 1930s, Moore was quietly cultivating the next generation of aviators and air power supporters. By the time those readers came of age during World War II, many were ready, and eager, to join the Army Air Forces. It was perhaps the most far-reaching public affairs mission of his career.

Recalled to active duty in 1941, Moore initially worked with balloons, but his experience soon carried him to the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater—one of World War II's most challenging environments. He flew 11 combat missions, traveled over the dangerous Hump route to China, and in 1944 participated in [Operation Thursday](#), landing behind Japanese lines in Burma with British Major General Orde Wingate's famed Chindits at Chounginghee — one of the most audacious airborne operations of the war.

But his most enduring contribution came as the Public Relations Officer for the 10th Air Force. In a theater marked by shortages, disease, and low morale, Moore built

a highly effective public affairs operation. His teams produced news releases that appeared in American newspapers, created radio programming that reached forward units building the Ledo Road across Burma, and—most famously—launched one of the most celebrated [command newspapers of the war: the CBI Roundup](#).

Moore's mentorship shaped a generation of military journalists. Many of his young enlisted writers went on to distinguished careers at CBS News, the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and in broadcasting and entertainment. (If you're interested in reading more *CBI Roundups*, you can find [links to almost all the issues here](#).)

After the war, Moore edited a study of Luftwaffe fighter operations in Europe and authored a comprehensive two-volume history of troop carrier and glider operations.

Recalled to active duty twice more in 1948, and again in 1950, he became the first commander of the USAF Air-Ground Operations School, preparing pilots for close air support missions in Korea.

In 1953, after more than three decades of combined active and reserve service spanning three wars, Moore retired as a colonel. But even in retirement, he continued his mission of keeping air power before the public. His 1958 book, *U.S. Air Power*, traced the evolution of American military aviation "from hydrogen bags to hydrogen warheads," preserving the story of airpower at a pivotal moment in the Cold War.

He was also a regular contributor to *Air Force Magazine* throughout the 1950s and '60s, writing for a new generation of airmen and veterans about the long heritage of the Air Service, the Army Air Corps, and the Army Air Forces.

Equally at home leading a balloon company in the Meuse-Argonne or crafting a press release in New Delhi; writing adventure stories for teenagers or briefing journalists in wartime; Samuel Taylor Moore understood that the story of American air power was worth telling — and that telling it well was itself a form of service. He passed away in 1976, leaving behind a legacy as wide-ranging and enduring as the sky he spent his life writing about.



Sherry Medders

A celebrated figure among Air Force public affairs professionals, Sherry Medders has dedicated more than 50 years of service to DoD. With 42 years in Public Affairs and 27 at the Pentagon, she has become PA's institu-

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tional memory. She has not only steered the career field through every major transition over the last quarter century but has served as a guiding force in the careers of hundreds of PA professionals.

In the “engine room” that powers the enterprise, she leads her team as the Chief of SAF/PA’s requirements and development division. They manage career field development, manpower, and deployments; advance information advantage; and shape doctrine. Her reputation as the “go-to” expert is well-earned, built on her ability to plan, communicate, and navigate large-scale change.

Raised in Anaheim, Calif., her elementary school principal predicted she would have a career in public service. Graduating at the top of her high school class, she bypassed college to begin her civil service career just 10 weeks after graduation. But her early career gave little hint of her future in public affairs. Her first jobs were at the U.S. Navy base at Port Hueneme, Calif., and the USAF regional hospital at Incirlik, Turkey.

She then moved to San Antonio’s USAF School of Aerospace Medicine, where a project used chimpanzees in flight simulators to study radiation’s effects on pilots. She later reflected on the irony of choosing a PA career, recalling her terror when left alone at that job, convinced Mike Wallace from “60 Minutes” would show up and she would have no idea how to respond.

It turned out that observing unpredictable subjects in a high-stakes environment was excellent

preparation for her next role: youth activities director at Iraklion Air Station, Crete, returning to her high school summer job roots working for local parks and recreation.

In 1983, she found her niche in the PA office at Columbus AFB, Miss. Though it meant taking a downgrade to broaden her experience, it was a trade that paid off for her and for the Air Force. She hit the PA ground running and never looked back.

A graduate of both the DoD Executive Leadership Development Program and the Defense Leadership and Management Program, she has been recognized twice at Air Force level, once as the Air Force Public Affairs Civilian of the Year and once for championing leadership and development for Air Force civilian women.

And it would not surprise her elementary principal to learn she was also presented the Congressional Award for Exemplary Service to the Public at a ceremony on Capitol Hill.

Leaving Columbus after 16 years, Sherry became one of the first PA civilians to attend Air Command and Staff College in residence, graduating in the first class awarded a Military Operational Art and Science master’s degree and earning the international security studies award.

Since arriving at the Pentagon in 1999, she has managed the career field’s movement through every large transition or organizational change across the Air Force, earning her reputation as “SAF/PA’s sherpa” and the “go-to” expert on planning, execut-



Medders, right, accepts the Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Senior Civilian of the Year Award from SECAF Sheila Widnall.

ing, communicating, and successfully navigating change.

After the 9/11 attacks, only a few people in SAF/PA had a Top Secret clearance; Sherry was one of them. She readily shifted gears and joined the Air Force Crisis Action Team that worked tirelessly for months to manage the Air Force response.

During the subsequent Global War on Terror, facing an unprecedented surge in deployment requirements, she and her team worked to identify PA civilian volunteers to deploy, providing relief to our warfighters and ensuring the delivery of critical capabilities.

From responding to how to reorganize in the wake of a 28 percent force structure reduction in 2006, to helping stand up new organizations like Air Force Global Strike Command and the U.S. Space Force, to adapting to new priorities and new deployment models, what Air Force PA is today carries

her imprint in significant ways.

Sherry's leadership is defined by trust and a calm, confident demeanor. A former team member recalled how she embodied General Patton's philosophy of not telling people how to do things but instead telling them what to do, which empowered them to "surprise you with their ingenuity." This confidence enabled her people to grow and excel. Known to command respect through her own actions, "she is also quick with a pun."



Colonel Johnny Whitaker

When Johnny Whitaker graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1973, the Air Force was navigating a turbulent era—Vietnam's aftermath, evolving Cold War pressures, and a public increasingly skeptical of its military institutions. Over the next four decades, Johnny would help smooth the turbulence by shaping how the Air Force communicated with the



In retirement, he couldn't stay away: Johnny with his favorite aircraft, built by his favorite company, at his favorite school.

American people and the world—building a legacy that combined a rare blend of operational understanding, communication skill, and people-first leadership.

Beginning at Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C., and later at Thule AB in Greenland, Johnny learned public affairs from the ground up—gaining a foundation in community relations, media engagement, and crisis communication. A formative stretch at Ohio Bell Telephone as part of the Air Force's Education with Industry Program gave him a civilian communications perspective that few of his peers possessed, and it showed throughout his subsequent assignments.

After EWI, Johnny got his first taste of the high visibility environment of Washington, D.C., excelling in assignments at the Andrews AFB, Md., PA office and in SAF/PA's media relations division in the Pentagon.

Those jobs prepared him well

for the diplomatic challenges he would face while assigned to Ramstein AB in Germany, where he served first at HQ USAFE's media relations shop and then as the chief of the Ramstein PA office. In Europe, he navigated some of the most sensitive and consequential communications challenges of the Cold War era: the controversial beddown of ground-launched cruise missiles in the European theater, the delicate repatriation of hostages following the hijacking of TWA Flight 847, and Operation Eldorado Canyon—the U.S. air raid on Libya in 1986. Each episode demanded precision under pressure, credibility with a skeptical press corps, and the ability to represent American policy while protecting operational security. Johnny handled all those challenges with distinction.

Returning to the states, Johnny's work at Lackland AFB, Texas, placed him at the center of another

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'Hall of Fame' (cont'd from p. 11)

er defining moment—serving as lead spokesman for casualty reception operations following Operation Just Cause in Panama. Communicating with families, the media, and the public about wounded service members required a rare combination of accuracy, compassion, and composure. He delivered all of it.

Whitaker's ascending leadership roles in the 1990s transformed him from a skilled practitioner into a field-shaping executive. As Director of Public Affairs for Air Education and Training Command, support group commander at Columbus AFB, Miss., and later in multiple tours as Director of Public Affairs for Air Combat Command, he built and led organizations that earned Air Force-wide recognition for their excellence. Under his leadership, ACC's public affairs office was named the Air Force's best major command public affairs organization three times. That's not a coincidence; for Johnny, it's a standard.

His appointment as Deputy Director of Public Affairs in SAF/PA from 1998 to 2001 placed Johnny at the center of all Air Force public communications—a role that required him to think strategically across a global enterprise at a moment of significant institutional change. He brought to that position the same rigor and judgment he had demonstrated at every prior assignment, and he helped guide Air Force public affairs through a pivotal period in its development.

Johnny's impact on the public affairs community continued long

after he hung up his uniform in 2003. As the first senior civilian Director of Communications at the Air Force Academy, he stepped into one of the most challenging institutional communications environments in the service's history; advising the Superintendent and senior Academy leadership through a major sexual assault scandal, a significant honor code violation, and allegations of religious impropriety. There was no playbook for much of what he encountered. He wrote one.

Whitaker's third career helped shape public understanding of programs central to national defense and global security. As a senior communications executive with Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, he led communications for programs including the F-22 Raptor, C-130J, and F-35 Lightning II. In that role, he demonstrated that his skills translated far beyond the uniform — a further testament to the breadth and quality of the career field he helped define.

Across every chapter of that career, Johnny Whitaker exemplified the highest ideals of the public affairs profession. He built teams that thrived under pressure and mentored generations of communicators. He belongs in the Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame not because of any single achievement, but because of a lifetime of them.



Renée Tyron

Renée Tyron didn't just shape the Air Force's combat camera and public affairs fields—she helped define them. Over 46 years of combined military and federal civilian service, she mentored hundreds of airmen, transformed how the Air Force managed professional development across the entire public affairs family, and wrote the book on what it means to lead a global combat camera mission.

Tyron's Air Force story began in 1979 with Basic Military Training at Lackland AFB and accelerated quickly after she completed the still photographic specialist course at Lowry AFB, Colo. From those early days behind a camera, she demonstrated the technical mastery and mission focus that would define her career.

Over the next three decades she served as a photographer, aerial videographer, and visual information manager at bases from Nellis to RAF Lakenheath, from the Air Force Academy to Kadena

AB in Japan, and from Hickam in Hawaii to Osan in Korea. She deployed into contingency environments, recorded military operations across the globe, and built the operational expertise that would make her one of the most trusted voices in the combat camera community. Along the way she earned a bachelor's degree in radio, TV and film from the University of Maryland—graduating on the Dean's List—and was an honor graduate of the visual information documentation-production course at Lowry AFB.

Renée honed her leadership and management skills during her two tours with the 1st Combat Camera Squadron at Wright Patterson and Charleston AFBs, where she served as an aerial videographer and superintendent. Her promotion to chief master sergeant was no surprise to those who knew her, and her stellar work as the chief enlisted manager for 9th Air Force and U.S. Air Forces Central Public Affairs extended her influence far beyond combat camera. In that role, she oversaw more than 200 deployed public affairs, combat camera, visual information, and band professionals at 20 expeditionary and joint war fighting installations across the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

Retiring from active duty in 2009, Renée transitioned seamlessly into civilian service—continuing to shape the PA career field as the chief of training man-

agement, requirements, and development at SAF/PA. She greatly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of public affairs professional development efforts by centralizing control of training selections and producing the Air Force's first-ever public affairs officer and civilian career field education and training plan. These were not administrative tasks—they were the structural architecture of how an entire career field grows its talent. Her work fundamentally modernized how the Air Force develops its communicators, ensuring training aligned with emerging operational demands and the evolving information environment.

After three years at the Pentagon, Renée returned to her roots at Joint Base Charleston's 1st Combat Camera Squadron, where she would serve for over a dozen years. As the director of operations, she led the planning and execution of worldwide multimedia documentation and combat camera mobility missions, deploying combat-ready teams on short notice around the world.

Tyron earned a whole cluster of awards that speak to the breadth of her contributions to the Air Force, including the Air Force Public Affairs Award for Communication Excellence in 2020, and the Air Force Public Affairs Agency Civilian of the Year award in both 2016 and 2021. But no award fully captures the kind

of leader she was — one who gave freely of her experience, elevated everyone around her, and built something lasting in every assignment she held.

Her impact on people was immeasurable. Over the course of her career she mentored more than 500 combat camera airmen, shaping not just their technical skills but their professional character and career trajectories. She integrated the combat camera mission more tightly within the broader Air Force public affairs family, building bridges between communities that defined the career field's future.

Renée Tyron enlisted as a photographer and became something rarer: a career-field architect. The ultimate authority on all things combat camera, Ken Hackman, best known as the "Godfather of Combat Camera," had it right when he called Renée "a phenom in the field." Joining Ken in the Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame honors not only Renée's extraordinary accomplishments, but also the generations of airmen she lifted, guided, and inspired along the way.



Read a good book lately that your colleagues should read?

Feel free to submit a review for publication in News and Notes! Send your submissions to editor Dick Cole at dickcole1853@verizon.net. Ideally, reviews should be 500 to 700 words.

LORD GUARD AND GUIDE



**RICHARD C. "DICK"
HYDE**

The Air Force Public Affairs community lost a true friend, colleague and mentor when Dick Hyde died this past summer at the age of 89. The long-time executive director of Hill & Knowlton Public Relations in New York City, Dick was the consummate public relations professional—smart, gifted writer, polished speaker and charismatic.

A proud and devoted patriot, Dick served his country with honor in the U.S. Navy, completing four years of active duty and 20 in the Naval Reserve, ultimately achieving the rank of commander. His naval experiences sharpened the quiet discipline, steadiness under pressure and deep sense of duty that would later mark and define his profes-

sional life.

Graduating from Boston University's School of Public Relations, Dick began what would be a flourishing 46-year career at Hill & Knowlton. He would go on to run the firm's Chicago office, lead its Crisis Communications practice and serve as trusted counsel to numerous Fortune 500 companies, governments and organizations around the world. His professional creed was simple: "Have a plan. Tell the truth. Show them you care. Stay on message. Stay close to your constituents and the media."

I had the good fortune of working with Dick after I retired as Director of the Air Force Eastern Region Public Affairs Office in Manhattan. Over the next seven and one-half years, I continued to learn from and work with one of the best in the business. Dick was truly, "Mr. H&K." He was a man of style and sartorial conviction. He was always impeccably dressed—tailored suits, polished shoes, Barbour jackets—and had a dry, British-tinged wit to match. He loved cars—none more than his 1953 MG TD, which he owned and drove daily for more than 63 years.

In addition to his normal responsibilities, Dick managed the Air Force Education with Indus-

try program at H&K for more than 30 years. Designed to provide mid-grade Air Force public affairs officers with broad exposure to corporate public relations, each year an EWI officer served as a member of the H&K staff in Manhattan. Under Dick's watchful eye, these officers applied their communications skills and experiences in servicing a wide range of corporate clients. Invariably, these officers went on to achieve senior rank and public affairs leadership positions. Dick's positive influence on Air Force public affairs will be with us for many years to come.

— Art Forster

I was honored to be mentored by Dick 1997-1998 as the EWI fellow at H&K in NYC. I was impressed with his openness to leveraging my junior PAO credentials given his decades of crisis communication expertise. He trusted me to serve client accounts and contingency event exercises, traveling overseas to support international clients. His wit and sage guidance still is part of me, shaping my 40 plus years of public affairs experience.

— Eric Schnaible

Dick Hyde was, upon meeting him for the first time, the kind of PR/Communications professional I always wanted

(cont'd on p. 17)



BOARD OF DIRECTORS BALLOT

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**Kathy McCollom
AFPAA Elections Chair
5099 Donovan Drive
Alexandria VA 22304-8620**

2026 Election - AFPAA Board of Directors

Mail-in Ballot

This year we are electing seven board members for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2028. You may also cast write-in votes on the ballot.

To vote, place an X in the box next to the declared or write-in candidates of your choice. Please note that any ballot submitted with more than seven names cannot be counted.

To complete the voting process, please provide the contact information requested at the bottom of the ballot. You will not be able to submit the ballot unless your contact information entries (marked with a red asterisk) are filled in, as the Election Committee needs this information to verify that it is your ballot. For verification purposes, a member of the Election Committee may get in touch with you.



Eric Schnaible

Carla Sylvester

Chuck Merlo

John Banusiewicz

Beth Horine



Write-In #1

Write-In #2

Write-In #3

Jerry Renne

Annette Crawford

First and Last Name*

Email Address*

Phone*

as a boss and a mentor. He instantly had a way of making everyone around him feel essential, important and totally at ease. His personal enthusiasm for the Education With Industry program with Hill & Knowlton injected an extraordinary level of professionalism into our Air Force public affairs career field. Those PAs who worked for him learned from the very best in the business. He was clearly the respected giant in the PR world and a damn fine gentleman.

—Mike McRaney

There are legends in the PR business and there was Dick Hyde, an icon in the industry. A master at crisis communications his reputation was global. Even in the midst of the most unimaginable situation his calm demeanor, unflappable manner, and sage advice reassured clients and guided corporations through their most challenging times. All the while, he took the time to teach and mentor an EWI intern (me). I still have a typed...yes typed... note from Dick from his original (antique), manual, Royal typewriter. Despite his affinity for outdated tools, Dick was always on the leading edge providing clients invaluable advice and counsel; and mentoring Air Force captains. That's what I remember most about Dick—a gracious, humble, intelligent leader and dear friend. He will be greatly missed.

— Les Kodlick

I got to know Dick best during my time at Hill & Knowlton in Manhattan. He was widely recognized and respected as one of the best minds in the business. I especially valued his ability to provide his wise, mentoring

counsel with a touch of humor. He used to regularly chide me for “overservicing” the client. Once when they were holding a little celebration because I grew one of my accounts 10 times larger, Dick’s toast was “Here’s to giving away 10 times more billable hours.” We laughed but I learned one of the most valuable lessons of my tenure there - the value of my time.

— Jay Defrank

Dick Hyde taught me the “why” behind crisis communication responses that I had learned on the fly, and gave simple structure to those responses so I could not only repeat them with consistency but readily teach them to others. He had a great appreciation for us Air Force fellows, except, I believe, for our sense of fashion (I hope it wasn’t just me) — I believe he had to teach all of us the dress code nuances of the corporate environment. He coined “pithy” as a stand-above-the-fray key element in public communication well before Bill O’Reilly made it an overused word. Dick recognized the accelerated experience levels of the Air Force fellows and gave us responsibilities and empowerment that well exceeded those given to H&K colleagues with similar time in the PR field — I was allowed to supervise, to carry the 24/7 crisis pager of a very big client, etc. He was kind. Eight years after my fellowship I visited him in the new Manhattan offices. When I entered his office I was surprised to see a steaming cup of hot chocolate on the desk opposite him. “As I recall, you like hot chocolate,” he said with a warm smile. Dick taught profession-

als how to be professional. He had presence—confident and reassuring with C-suite execs, yet also quite unassuming as corporate leader. His wit was sharp and always in the “on” mode. He was a giant in the PR world, and a kind mentor and friend.

— Mike Paoli

I have fond memories of my time at H&K working with Dick Hyde. Thanks to his Navy background, he knew what an EWI officer could bring to the table, and trusted me to shape my own experience. Even though he led the crisis communication practice—the “noble” work of PR, as he called it—he allowed me to also rotate through several other departments to broaden my exposure to corporate PR practices. He was warm and wise, and a highly respected leader. He always spoke appreciatively of the Air Force EWI fellows, and we in turn were privileged to have him as a mentor and friend.

— Carla Sylvester



H. BRUCE GILKES

H. Bruce Gilkes passed away December 16, 2025. He was born on Thanksgiving Day,

November 23, 1944, to Alfred Armstrong Gilkes and Marianna Orsini in Oceanside, Long Island, N.Y.

Bruce loved music from an early age and pursued it through his studies, his 33-year career in the USAF, his post-retirement conducting roles and his music publishing business.

While music was his career, it wasn't his only passion. Bruce was an excellent chef and host and his reserved manner belied his witty and dry sense of humor and a great laugh. He was a great entertainer both on stage and off. He loved his time with family including his wife, sons, daughters-in-law, stepson and daughters and especially his grandchildren. He was head over heels in love with those three kids and relished being called "Grandpa" by Ethan and Cora Gilkes and Bobby Ellis.

At the time of his USAF retirement in 1998, Colonel Gilkes was the Commander and Conductor of The United States Air Force Academy Band and The United States Air Force Band of the Rockies, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

He started his 33-year Air Force career with The USAF Band in Washington, DC, first as an enlisted musician, and then after his commission as the conductor of the Singing Sergeants. Subsequent assignments included command of AF Bands at Pease AFB, N.H.; McGuire AFB, N.J.; Scott AFB, Ill.; and the Air Force Academy, Colo.

After retirement from the Air Force, he was the conductor of the USAA Band in San Antonio, and founded Musica Propria Publishing. Anyone who knew Bruce, or

was fortunate enough to serve under his command, knew of his tremendous artistry, tireless energy, exemplary leadership, and superb wit.

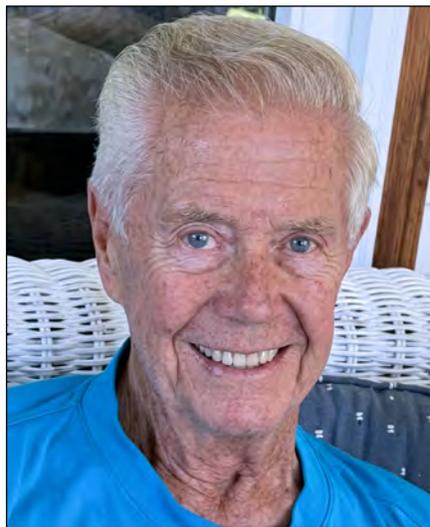
His celebration of life was held January 5, 2026, at Sunset Funeral Home in San Antonio. He was interred the same day at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery,

We lost a true friend and a wonderful officer!

— Hal Smarkola

A big void amongst our clan. I was fortunate to have witnessed many of his performances in D.C. years ago. None better than he.

— Bud Ross



ALAN M. SHOEMAKER

Alan Mott Shoemaker, 88, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on February 27, 2026, in Centerville, Mass.

Born on April 16, 1937, in

Spring Valley, N.Y., Alan's life was a profound testament to dedication—to his country, his community, and above all, his family.

Alan's love of learning shone brightly through his academic achievements. He earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from Lehigh University and years later went on to complete his master's degree in communications. These foundations shaped a distinguished career marked by service and excellence.

For over three decades, Alan served with honor in the United States Air Force, rising to the rank of colonel. His tenure with the 56th Special Operations Wing at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base during the Vietnam War became a defining chapter of his military career. His dedication and valor earned him numerous honors, including the Bronze Star and two Oak Leaf Clusters for meritorious service.

After retiring from military service, Alan embarked on a second career as Director of Corporate Communications at The MITRE Corporation in Bedford, Mass. He remained actively involved with Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association's Lexington-Concord Chapter and was honored with the Chairman's Lifetime Achievement Award for his enduring contributions.

Alan found immense joy in life's simplest pleasures. An avid sailor and pilot, he cherished navigating Cape Cod's waters and soaring above its skies. Lifelong summers spent at Craigville Beach became treasured memories that inspired his permanent residence near its

shores. Known for his storytelling, humor, and warm hospitality on the sunporch of his home, Alan brought light and love to all who knew him.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 63 years, Wiltrud; children Kristen (Ryan) Kelly, Jamie (Grant) Ziegler, and Deborah (Dennis) Vidro; grandchildren Julie (Colby) Kaiser, Jennifer Giardino, Drew Ziegler, and Owen Ziegler; great-grandchild Christina Giardino; and goddaughter Cheryl Friedrich.

Visitation was held Friday, March 13, 2026, at Doan Beal & Ames Funeral Home, Hyannis, Mass. A funeral service followed on Saturday, March 14 at Beechwood Cemetery, Centerville, Mass.

“Shoe” was a great guy and a stalwart at the SAF/PA Eastern Region Office in New York City in the 80’s. One of a kind, good friend and a PA Pro! RIP

— **John Gura**

Al Shoemaker was “SAFOI New York.” I got to know him well during my NY EWI assignment. He knew the media market better than anyone. If you needed results in the New York market, he was the only one to go to. I’ll miss him.

— **Joe Purka**

Another very sad loss. I worked for “Shoe” at Systems Command. He taught me a lot. When he retired, I believe he went to work for the MITRE Corporation.

— **Sam Giammo**

Awesome boss. RIP Al.

— **Jim Stratford**

A Gentleman thru and thru. Always had a smile and a good joke to make your day. Rest in Peace my friend.

— **Jim “J.C.” Corcoran**

Another unique and shining light of Air Force Public Affairs left us sad when Al passed. He totally knew New York... from Wall Street to the Diamond District and every network news director in the Big Apple. Many of us have wild and funny Shoemaker stories to tell... and should.

Rest easy ole friend...you’ll be missed by us all.

— **Mike McRaney**

Al Shoemaker is one of the real legends in the annals of Air Force public affairs. Bright, witty and charismatic, “Shoe” was the longtime director of the SAF/PA Eastern Region office in New York City. When I was fortunate enough to assume this position, Al had already retired and was working for the MITRE Corporation in Boston, but his presence had not left the Big Apple. His reputation among business and civic leaders and the news media was strong and enduring. He was truly “Mr. Air Force” in Manhattan. By sharing his experiences, contacts and lessons learned, we maintained and polished the Air Force image in the media capital of the world. Here’s to you, Big Al, you’ll be

missed but never forgotten!

— **Art Forster**



ROBYN CHUMLEY

Robyn Annette Chumley, a proud and dedicated colonel in the United States Air Force, passed away March 13, 2026, in Pensacola, Fla. Born May 19, 1963, in Louisville, Ky., Robyn’s life was one marked by service, leadership and an unwavering commitment to her nation—a devotion she held from her earliest days. She received her Air Force commission through Officer Training School after graduating from Baylor University with a master’s degree in journalism in 1988.

Robyn came from a lineage steeped in military honor and Christian virtue. Her father, Ted Chumley, who honorably served as a chaplain in the Air Force for 23 years, set a noble foundation. Robyn’s upbringing, under the loving care of her father and mother, Norma Chumley, was deeply rooted in faith and steadfast values.

From her youth, Robyn was no stranger to sports. She enjoyed

(Cont’d on next page)

tennis, baseball, and swimming, but football captivated her heart above all. Although an Ohio State University fan because of the football team, her heart belonged to the Dallas Cowboys. She drew inspiration from long-time Cowboy Roger Staubach, a quarterback whose service to the nation before the NFL exemplified the character and dedication Robyn herself would embody—she often reflected on what it meant to raise one's right hand in oath to country first, then to the team.

Family was essential to Robyn. Her sister, Laura, her closest childhood companion, brought joy and laughter throughout their family's Air Force relocations. Laura's wit and quick mind brought warmth and light into Robyn's surroundings. In her nephew, Ted Sasser, she found a kindred spirit of history and love for adventure and a traveling companion during trips to Europe after retirement.

Robyn would say her proudest achievement was when she donned the Air Force uniform. She loved, loved, loved serving her nation. As an Air Force spokesperson, she was "pretty OK" with communicating at every level. But what truly mattered to her was leading people. During her Pentagon assignment, she expressed a simple, yet profound, desire: to lead warriors—it turned out to be her favorite part of the mission.

Throughout her Air Force career, worldwide deployments and assignments, as well as serving bosses such as Bill Caffall

and Susan Strednansky, shaped her as a leader. During her retirement ceremony, she told them she wore a mental "WWCD" or "WWSA" bracelet to help guide her. While she admired and respected so many during her career, what she didn't realize was how much she was admired by those she led. Many salute her as their favorite boss.

Robyn was a warrior—not loud, but proud. She wore the Air Force "can do" spirit as both armor and weapon against challenges and enemies that threatened her beloved institution. Her legacy is one of faith, leadership, resilience and an unwavering love for her country. Robyn Annette Chumley's life was a beacon for those who value service and the quiet strength found in honor and duty. She departs, leaving behind the profound mark of a true Air Force colonel, warrior, daughter, sister and aunt; forever admired and immensely missed.

Robyn is predeceased by her father, Ted Chumley; her mother, Norma Chumley; and her sister, Laura Sasser. Surviving her is her nephew, Ted Sasser.

As for her memorial service, her nephew Ted is aiming for May sometime, but hasn't picked a date just yet. She was interred at Barrancas National Cemetery at NAS Pensacola, March 30, in a private family ceremony.

Colonel Robyn Chumley was an incredible leader and officer who really looked after the troops no

matter where we were in the world. In 2013 Afghanistan right after I took charge of the network, she called me up to read me the riot act for a social media stunt gone haywire by one of our detachments, and it was quickly cleaned up. However a week later we got a big ole care package from her to make sure we knew she was there when needed good or bad. She was a great commander, a real fighter, and all around great person.

— **Brendan C. Vargas**

I deployed with her for direct support/ no weapons out of Kuwait. She was Capt. Chumley with Airman Magazine at the time. I can't say enough great things about her. She never took herself too seriously and had a great sense of humor. Many years later, this time as an O-6 with AFRTS, she was even more amazing. A great leader and friend. I will never forget our time together.

— **David Pullen**

Colonel Chumley was one of those officers we enlisted folks adored. She was an incredible leader, gave great feedback and was her Airmen's biggest cheerleader. We are all better for having known her and she will be so missed.

— **Cindy Dorfner**

Robyn fought the good fight. She was one of the best.

— **Don Hessenflow**

"Chumerly!" One of the great officers and PA practitioners with whom I had the privilege to serve. Our world's a

little sadder with her passing. RIP, old friend!

— **Johnny Whitaker**

You will be missed! Absolutely loved working with you! Sending love and prayers!!!

— **Jeremy Lock**

Robyn and I were wingmen at Airman Magazine and she was such a wonderful friend. Grateful for her life.

— **Ed Thomas**

I loved seeing the updates of her health, her mom and family over the years. I served with Col. Chumley briefly while deployed and was impressed by the way she led. Sending peace and love to her family. Safe travels Col into whatever comes after this life I imagine you will have a wild story to put to pen.

— **Alexandria Mosness**

Robyn was a wonderful and caring person who made the world a better place. She will be missed. RIP Robyn.

— **John Tewes**

Prayers for Robyn's family. Robyn was an amazing and inspiring person. I was her replacement at Malmstrom AFB in the 1990s. She was so kind to me during the transition. Even helped me take over her apartment when she left!

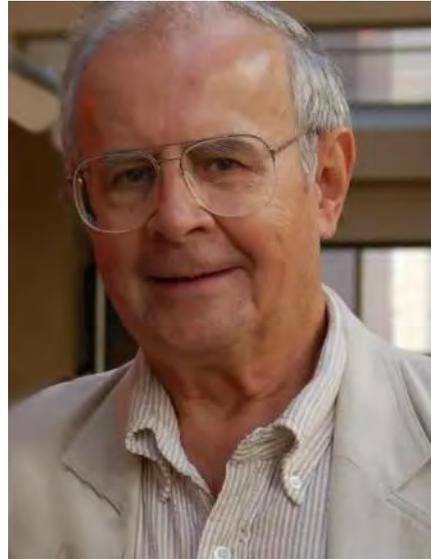
— **April Jackson**

I went through PAOC with Robyn!

— **Rocky Willett**

Robyn was one of the greats. She deserves all these tributes and more. Until we see her again...fly high!

— **Michael Perini**



**MARVIN WYNN
HEININGER**

Marvin Wynn “Mike” Heining of Lake Ridge, Va., died December 1, 2025, at age 86. He was a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, public relations director, writer, editor, and teacher.

Born in 1939 to Winfield and Madonna Heining and raised in Evansville, Ind., he worked his way through Evansville College as a reporter-photographer for the *Sunday Courier and Press*, graduating in 1961. Mike then served 20 years in the Air Force, primarily as a public affairs officer in locations including Ohio, Labrador, Nebraska, Massachusetts, Hawaii, and the Pentagon.

While in the Air Force, he re-

ceived his master of science degree in public affairs from Boston University in 1969. Mike retired in 1981 as Chief of the Plans and Programs Division, Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs at the Pentagon. His decorations included the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal.

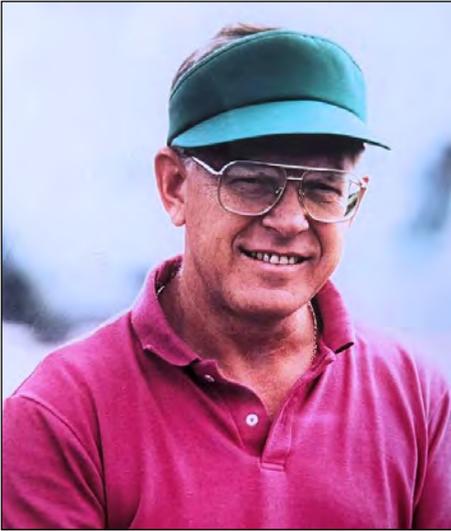
Mike was later Director of Communications for the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute and a professor at Strayer University (then Strayer College) in Potomac Mills, Va. He also wrote various articles, sometimes under the pen name Mark Wynn.

Recreationally, his interests included reading, photography, surfing, windsurfing, softball, sporting clays, computing, and music. Mike also played clarinet and tenor sax in the Prince William Community Band for 16 years.

Loved ones include his beloved wife of 65 years, Judith Ann (Hazelwood) Heining; three children, Amy (Charles), Eric, and Holly (Paul); eight grandchildren, Hannah, Naomi, Oren, Robert, Alex, Michael, Caroline, and Lauryn; and six great-grandchildren. Mike was predeceased by his sister, Jeanne Woolems.

A private gathering was held at Mountcastle Funeral Home prior to interment at Quantico National Cemetery. Later, a memorial reception was held at Westminster at Lake Ridge.

(Cont'd on next page)



WILLIAM H. "BILL" JOHNSON

AFPAA Life Member, retired Colonel William H. "Bill" Johnson passed away at his home in Titusville, Fla., on January 22, 2026. Born November 1, 1941, he was 84. His family was by his side when he died.

He is survived by his wife, Patti, and their son, Cory.

He was commander of the Air Force News Agency when he retired.

His funeral service was held at the Cape Canaveral Veterans Cemetery on March 23.

I am sorry to hear this. I dealt with Bill many times. He was always a pro. RIP.

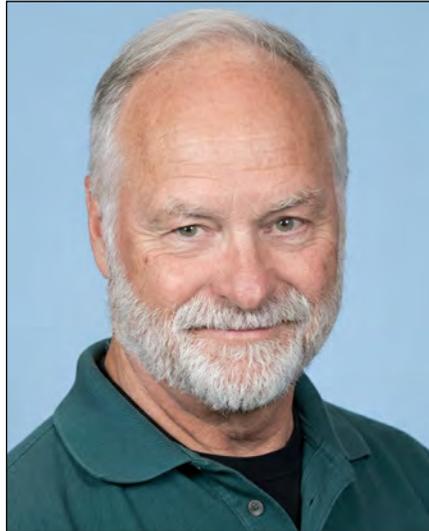
— *Don Hessenflow*

RIP old friend!

— *Rick Fuller*

Colonel Billy-Bob was a great boss.

— *Gail Hayes*



DANIEL RAY MINKLER

Daniel Ray Minkler of Clermont, Florida, died unexpectedly on Tuesday, January 13. He was 71.

Minkler was born Feb. 28, 1954, in Lyons, Colo., the son of the late Chester and Mary Louise Minkler. He graduated from East Aurora High School in 1973.

He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and cherished friend.

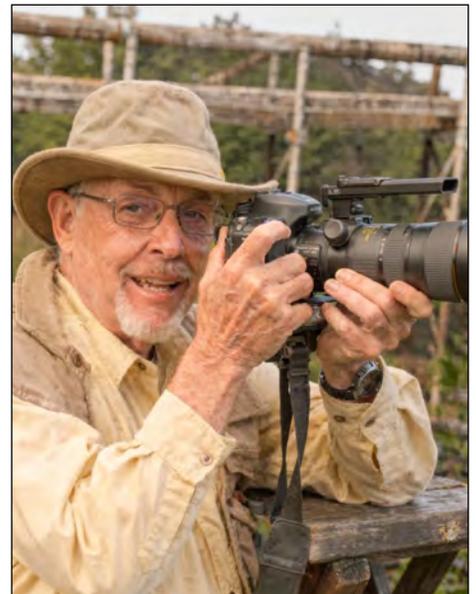
After his family, his greatest joy was music. He began playing the piano at the age of four and later learned to play the clarinet, upright bass, and electric bass.

Following high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, serving as a clarinet player and later a bass player in the Air Force Band. He retired as a master sergeant after 24 years of service.

He continued performing throughout his life, playing at church services and community events, with favorite venues including the Citrus Club, Del Frisco's and Ole Red with the Mountain Mavericks.

He is survived by his wife Darla (DeVries) Minkler; children Amanda (Craig) Ogden, Jennifer Minkler, Jeremy (Erin Stolz) Minkler and Joshua (Heather Graves) Minkler; grandchildren Audriauna Ogden, Geoffrey Ogden, Greyson Ogden, Ryan Minkler, Nicholas Linares, Zachary Linares and Olivia Stolz; siblings David (Kathryn) Minkler, Peter (Bonnie) Minkler, Andrew (Norma) Minkler, Chris Minkler and Cathy Minkler; sister-in-law Karin (late Paul Minkler) Tooley; and stepmother Betty Minkler Pitcher and her children Mark and Rebecca. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brother Paul Minkler.

Services were held January 25, in Orlando, Fla., and interment took place January 26, at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida.



ROBERT G.H. CARROLL III

Robert G.H. Carroll III, known affectionately as Bob, a lifetime founding member of

AFPAA, passed away on November 10, 2023, at the age of 83 in Jacksonville, Fla.

He was born on January 4, 1940, in Ellicott City, Md. Bob was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

Bob proudly served his country for 30 years both active and reserve in the United States Air Force. His career in public relations/communications spanned 21 years at United Technologies for both Sikorsky and Pratt & Whitney.

In his free time, Bob had a passion for boating, whether it be on his sailboat or trawler. He also had a keen eye for nature photography, capturing the beauty of the world around him.

Bob also believed in giving back to the community and volunteered his time to make a positive difference.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Joann, their children Harper (Camille) Carroll and Meg (Michael) Hall, and three beloved grandchildren, Kyla, Owen, and William. He is also survived by his sister, Mary Richardson Miller.

A celebration of Bob's life will be held at a later date.

*I got to know Bob well when he was a reservist at SAF/PA. We had many wonderful conversations and I always was glad to hear some new stories.
RIP Bob.*

— Don Hessenflow



**LORRIE JEAN
BOURLAND**

AFPAA Life Member Andy Bourland reported the passing of his wife of 43 years, Lorrie, on December 19, 2025, following a lengthy illness. She was born in 1954 and was 71 years of age at her passing.

Lorrie was an outstanding Air Force Public Affairs officer and served in SAF/PA in the Pentagon as a captain at the same time as her husband during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Immediately prior to her assignment to SAF/PA, Lorrie was the base public affairs officer at Rhein-Main AB, Germany, during the repatriation of 39 American hostages held by Hezbollah terrorists who hijacked a TWA 727 airliner demanding the release of a total of 766 Shia Muslims from Israeli custody. It was during this incident that Navy Diver Robert Stethem was mur-

dered by the terrorists.

Lorrie served in the Air Force Reserve, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

I worked for her at Headquarters MAC. She was one of my favorite bosses. She was a beacon of good cheer.

— John Banusiewicz

So sorry to hear this news. My condolences.

— Gail Hayes

She was an amazing woman and a great PA.

— Sara Francis

I enjoyed working with Lorrie when we were serving in SAF/PA together. She was a great PA, indeed!

— Dick Cole



If you become aware of the passing of a former Air Force public affairs professional, band member, visual information professional, or combat camera member, please notify Dick Cole, News and Notes editor at dickcole1853@verizon.net. He will notify our membership chair, our Facebook page administrator, and members of the AFPAA board.

2026 USAF Heritage Flight Training and Certification Course

By Cassidy Cristello

Courtesy of *Vintage Aviation Magazine*

Imagine your PA office is contacted by a 16-year-old aviation photographer and writer, Cassidy Cristello, who wishes to write an article about an activity at your base for an online aviation publication. Would you approve and support his access? Kudos to the staff at Davis-Monthan AFB who gave access to Cristello to document the 2026 USAF Heritage Flight Training and Certification Course. Through both his photography and firsthand observations, Cassidy captured the unique sight of modern USAF fighters flying alongside historic warbirds as pilots prepare for the upcoming airshow season for Vintage Aviation News. Here are some of his photos and his article reprinted with permission of Vintage Aviation News. Who knows? Perhaps this young man is a future PA in the making! —Ed.

The Air Force [Heritage Flight](#) has become a unique and beloved staple of the American airshow circuit. The formation brings the storied past of the United States Air Force into the present day by pairing historic warbirds with one, two, or sometimes three modern fighter aircraft.

The goal is to showcase the evolution of the USAF and aviation as a whole, allowing a living witness to history to fly alongside some of the most technologically advanced machines ever built. Behind the



An Air Force F-35 and the P-51D “Val-Halla” practice formation flying together. (Photo by Cassidy Cristello)

elegant formations seen by airshow crowds lies a tremendous amount of precision and practice.

Each year, pilots from the USAF and the civilian warbird community gather at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz., to rehearse the routines that will be performed throughout the upcoming airshow season.

In 2026, the USAF Heritage Flight Training and Certification Course marked its 25th anniversary. The annual conference trains active-duty USAF demonstration pilots alongside their civilian warbird counterparts, ensuring that the demanding formation can be performed safely while presenting a spectacular display of skill and discipline.

Over time, the conference has become something of a mini airshow for Arizona aviation enthusiasts. Each February, base personnel and local aircraft fans gather at Davis-Monthan to watch formations of Mustangs, Raptors, Vipers, and Freedom Fighters take to the skies.

This year’s conference ran from Thursday, February 26, through Sunday, March 1, and included roughly 30 sorties featuring six different aircraft types.

The returning USAF demonstration teams included the F-22 Raptor, F-35A Lightning II, and F-16 Fighting Falcon, led respectively by Capt. Nicholas “Laz” Letourneau, Maj. Melanie “Mach” Kluesner and Maj. Taylor “FEMA” Hiester.



Two F-35A Lightning IIs fly in formation with a WWII-era P-38 Lightning in a striking Lighting heritage formation (Photo by Cassidy Cristello)

The 2026 event was also notable as Maj. Kluesner's final appearance as the F-35A demonstration team pilot. Leadership of the team for the 2026-2027 airshow season will pass to Maj. Sean "Rambo" Laughlin.

A total of eight warbirds attended the conference this year, representing several prominent operators. One aircraft came from the Planes of Fame Air Museum, three from Comanche Maverick Air, one from the National WWII Aviation Museum, one from the Air

Force Heritage Flight Museum, and two from Comanche Warbirds.

Three F-5E Tigers that attended formerly served with the Swiss Air Force and were all painted as USAF aggressor aircraft. One of the P-51 aircraft that attended was originally built as an F-6 photo reconnaissance aircraft that served in both the USAF and the Dominican Air Force.

Prior to flying each day, the participating aircraft were positioned on the ramp for visitors to

walk around and photograph and, in some cases, speak to the pilots.

Planes of Fame had originally planned to bring its F-86 Sabre, P-38 Lightning and P-47 Thunderbolt, but these aircraft were apparently withdrawn at the last minute. Even so, the final lineup still included 14 aircraft, and the flying proceeded smoothly.

Thursday's flying consisted primarily of two- and three-ship practice formations. The first Heritage Flight of the day featured Maj. Kluesner in the F-35A alongside the P-51D Val-Halla, creating a striking visual contrast between the fighter's gray camouflage and the Mustang's bright red markings.

Major Hiester and the Viper Demonstration Team flew next using their backup F-16, which lacks the distinctive "Falcon 50" paint scheme commemorating the 50th anniversary of the F-16's first flight. In this formation, the Viper flew alongside the Mustang Frenesi.

Friday began slightly differently from the prior day, with the F-35 demo team performing a solo tactical demonstration before joining the Heritage Flight schedule.

Later the specially painted "Falcon 50" F-16 flew accompanied by an F-5 and two Mustangs.

Saturday's flying began with Maj. Kluesner flying the F-35A in formation with a P-51. One of my favorite formations followed shortly afterward: an F-22 flying alongside the P-38 and a P-51 "Happy Jack's Go Buggy."

Sunday featured several familiar formations but also included one that had not been seen in two

(cont'd on next page)

years. Majors Kluesner and Laughlin flew together in two F-35s, joined by a P-38 in a striking Lightning heritage formation. The flight also marked Kluesner's final demonstration with the team before passing leadership to Laughlin later that day—a fitting finale as she flew alongside the pilot who will now lead one of the most technologically advanced fighter demonstration teams in the world.

The 2026 Heritage Flight Training Conference concluded Sunday with all participating airshow performers certified to fly the demanding formation during events across North America and beyond. The Heritage Flight is far more than a simple maneuver performed at airshows. It represents a living bridge between generations of aviators and aircraft, celebrating the legacy of the United States Air Force while demonstrating the discipline and skill required to safely operate such diverse machines in close formation.

For more information about the Air Force Heritage Flight program and the 2026 performance schedule, visit <https://www.airforceheritageflight.org>.



***If you wish to send a letter to the editor, you may do so by email at dickcole1853@verizon.net or by snail mail at:
Dick Cole
10600 Krenmore Lane
Chester, VA 23832-9202***

Dalton Scholarship applications accepted until May 31

May 31, 2026, is the deadline for applying for the Brig. Gen. H.J. Dalton, Jr., Scholarship program. All active, Reserve and Guard 3NXX or 35X members and Air Force civilians in core public affairs occupational series or assigned to a public affairs office are eligible to apply. This includes traditional public affairs members as well as band members, Combat Camera and audiovisual Air Force personnel and employees.

The program offers recipients up to \$1,000 to fund not just college courses but also seminars, workshops, music lessons and courses provided by professional organizations (e.g., PRSA) specifically aimed at enhancing skills related to the PA career field. Up to five \$1,000 scholarships can be awarded each year. Payment will be made to the scholarship recipients upon successful completion of the approved course work.

Those wishing to apply should visit the AFPAA webpage at www.afpaa.org and click on Apply For A Dalton Scholarship for a full description of the program and to access an application form. Completed applications must be sent to the AFPAA Dalton Scholarship Committee at scholarship@afpaa.org.

Got Your Challenge Coin?



Challenge coins are traditionally given out to prove membership when challenged, to enhance morale and to be collected. AFPAA has continued that tradition with its own challenge coin. You can get the AFPAA Challenge Coin for a \$10 donation, plus \$9.95 for shipping and handling by going to <https://afpaaa.org/challengecoin.html>.

Board Elections (cont'd from p. 5)



Jerry Renne

Jerry Renne—an AFPAA Life Member, Jerry entered the Air Force in 1981 through AFROTC. His operational career began as a Titan II ballistic missile launch officer. In 1992, he transitioned to the public affairs career field. During his first Pentagon tour, Jerry served as PA advisor to the to the Air Force Chief of Staff. Jer-

ry's PA experience includes service at Center level, three Major Commands, the Air Staff, two Combatant Commands, and multiple overseas deployments. Jerry retired from active duty in 2007 after 26 years of commissioned service, concluding his uniformed military career as Director of Public Affairs, U.S. Central Command. He continued his service as a civilian leader, first as Strategic Engagement Senior Advisor at U.S. Special Operations Command, and later as Public Affairs Director for U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa. Prior to his 2023 appointment as Director of Air Force Public Affairs, Jerry served for five years as Principal Deputy Director.



Annette Crawford

Annette Crawford has been an AFPAA Life Member since joining in 1996. She served as a medic the first six years of her Air Force career, and retrained into Public Affairs in 1982. Her assignments in PA included wing and headquarters positions in Illinois, Colorado, New York, Turkey and Texas. After retiring in 1996 as a

master sergeant, she worked at several corporations and nonprofits before returning to PA in Civil Service, with assignments at AFNEWS, Air Force Recruiting Service, and the 37th Training Wing, home of Air Force Basic Military Training. She also worked as a contractor, supporting the PA missions at AF Civil Engineer Center, the AF Small Business Office, and the Cryptologic and Cyber Systems Division. Since retiring in January 2025, she has enjoyed volunteering at the San Antonio Central Library and the Order of Daedalians. Originally from St. Louis, she has called San Antonio home for nearly 29 years. She joined the AFPAA board in 2025, and assists with archiving the organization's documents.

Deadline for the next *News and Notes*

Please make your submissions for the April-June edition of *News and Notes* to editor Dick Cole no later than May 15. Send your submissions to dickcole1853@verizon.net



To earn the trust and confidence of the American people, the Air Force needs talented public affairs professionals who have the knowledge and expertise required in today's information environment. Programs offered by the [Public Relations Society of America \(PRSA\)](#) or the [International Association of Business Communicators \(IABC\)](#) can help Air Force PAs develop the advanced public relations skills that will enable them to provide expert communications counsel to commanders at all levels.

That's why AFPAA strongly supports membership in PRSA or IABC and urges PAs to earn the credentials these organizations offer. As part of its commitment to support the active force, AFPAA has established a stipend program to help PAs offset the costs involved in applying for accreditation by PRSA or certification by IABC.

Up to four stipends of \$250 each per fiscal year are available to Air Force personnel who successfully complete one of the PRSA or IABC credentialing programs. For more information, go to <https://afpaaa.org/prsa.html>. If you have any questions, contact us at scholarship@afpaaa.org.



Public Affairs
Association™



JOIN US!

Annual Meeting & Reunion

Fairfield, Calif., is the site for the Air Force Public Affairs Association's 29th Annual Membership Meeting. The host facility for the gathering is Fairfield's Hilton Garden Inn, including a visit to Travis Air Force Base, the "Gateway to the Pacific," on Friday, May 1.

Hilton Garden Inn
2200 Gateway Court
Fairfield, CA 94533



**Air Force Public Affairs Association
Annual Meeting & Reunion
April 30 - May 2, 2026
Travis AFB • Fairfield, CA**



For more information:
afppaa.org/fairfield-2026.html



The Lockheed C-5M Super Galaxy is just one of three aircraft operated by the 60th Airlift Wing at Travis AFB, Calif. (Photo courtesy 60th AW)

On final approach to Fairfield...

By Perry Nouis
Annual Meeting Chairman

Anything new? Let's find out. You may have noticed the U.S. Air Force has been in the news. Your opportunity to learn first-hand what is currently happening with the Air Force, Space Force, and the Department of Defense/War is fast approaching; in fact, it is on final approach into Fairfield, Calif. Fairfield is the site for the Air Force Public Affairs Association's 29th Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for April 30-May 2, 2026.

Members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. Fairfield's Hilton Garden Inn will again host the Association; it is the same facility that was used when the Association last met there in 2011.

The current itinerary includes a visit to Travis Air Force Base, the "Gateway to the Pacific," on Friday, May 1. Travis is home for the 60th Air Mobility Wing, the largest air mobility hub on the west coast. The base hosts a versatile fleet of aircraft including the C-5M Super Galaxy, C-17 Globemaster III, and KC-46 Pegasus aircraft.

The "Annual Meeting" (we last met in San Antonio in October 2024) includes the membership meeting, guest speakers, receptions, luncheons, and conclud-

ing with the Awards Banquet and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

Scheduled speakers include former SAF/PA and retired Maj. Gen. Ed Thomas, Capt. Stuart Thrift (60th AMW/PA) discussing "A look at base-level public affairs today," and a presentation by Sandy Person and Joe Dingman of the Travis Community Consortium. They will present a case study on advocacy for an effort titled "California Forever."

There are optional events offered, including a golf outing at Solano Golf Course and free wine tasting. Another popular event will be a Jelly Belly Factory tour where visitors can take a self-guided tour to see how the famous jelly beans are made. The experience includes interactive exhibits and plenty of sweet, wild-flavor samples. Details about these events will be provided separately to those who register.

The AFPAA Board has identified the Washington, D.C., vicinity to host the Association's 30th Annual Meeting in the April/May 2027 timeframe with the dates yet to be determined. Initial planning for that meeting includes a visit to the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, MD. DINFOS now hosts the Air Force Public Affairs Hall of Fame.

We hope to see you in Fairfield. To register for the meeting online visit the Association's website at <https://www.afpaa.org/>.

AFPAA ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ First Annual Meeting? Yes ___ No ___

Address: _____ Are you a new member? Yes ___ No ___

Email: _____

Phone: _____ (Do you accept texts? Yes ___ No ___)

Guest(s) (Please indicate how you want names reflected on name tags)



How many in your party will go on the bus tour to Travis AFB? _____

Do you want to play golf on Thursday morning, April 30th, 8 am-1 pm, at Solano GC (Extra cost: \$69): Yes ___ No ___

Full Registration - Includes all events, except golf on Thursday.

Member Attending _____ x \$250 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$250 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$300 = \$ _____

Individual Event Registration

Icebreaker Reception – Hotel, Thursday, April 30, 5-7 p.m.

Member Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$45 = \$ _____

Breakfast – Hotel, Friday, May 1st, 6-7:30 a.m.

Member Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$45 = \$ _____

President’s Luncheon – Travis AFB, Friday, May 1st
 (Includes bus transportation from the hotel to Travis AFB for Friday’s tours)

Member Attending _____ x \$70 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$70 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$75 = \$ _____

President’s Luncheon Only– Travis AFB, Friday, May 1st

Member Attending _____ x \$50 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$50 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$55 = \$ _____

Breakfast – Hotel, Saturday, May 2nd, 6-8 a.m.

Member Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$45 = \$ _____

SAF/PA Director’s Luncheon, Hotel, Noon Saturday, May 2nd

Member Attending _____ x \$60 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$60 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$65 = \$ _____

AFPAA’s Annual Awards Reception & Banquet, Hotel Saturday, May 2nd, 6-9:30 p.m. Please indicate your meal choice(s) :
 *Beef _____ *Fish _____ *Chicken _____ *Vegetarian _____

Member Attending _____ x \$105 = \$ _____
 Guests Attending _____ x \$105 = \$ _____
 Non-Member _____ x \$110 = \$ _____

(*Use M for Member Choice/G for Guest(s) & Non-Member Choices)

Please make checks or money orders payable to: **AFPAA**

Centurion Donation - \$100 \$ _____

Mail form and check/money order to:

Total Remitted \$ _____

Phil Ratliff, Treasurer
868 Trevino Terrace
Lady Lake, FL 32159

Optional Events:

Free Wine Tasting, Friday, May 1st, 6-8 p.m., Hilton Hotel, Number Attending _____
 Jelly Belly Factory Tour, Friday afternoon, May 1st, Number Attending _____

Meeting Registrations are **Due NLT Midnight April 1, 2026**. Registrations received after this date will be charged a \$25 Per Person Late Fee.

Hotel Reservations: AFPAA has a block of rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel in Fairfield, CA, at the rate of \$110.00+tax per night (single or double). The rate is valid April 30-May 2, 2026, while rooms are available. Make reservations at: <https://afpaaa.org/hotel-2026.html>, or call the hotel at (707) 426-6900. The reservation code is “AFPA25”. Deadline for hotel reservations is April 9, 2026. A very limited number of rooms will be available at this rate up to three days prior and three days post the established meeting dates: Check-in April 30, 2026/Check-out May 3, 2026. * The cost of golf is \$69/person, payable at the Pro Shop. Further details will be provided separately to those wanting to play.



Oral History

Below is a gem from an Air Force public affairs practitioner who preceded us and shared these comments during their oral history interviews with John Gura.

It's who you know...

"It's something we need to teach all Public Affairs people early in their careers ... you can almost always count on a person who is chosen as an aide as a person going places. Those people, they don't get chosen for those jobs ...if they're not sharp. So, we sure ought to develop friendships with those people. We ought to get to know them, get them to know us. Public Affairs Officers ought to recognize that aides and execs are guys that are chosen because they're going to move up. People like that are going to go on to bigger and better things.

And you can get lots of key intelligence. There have been a lot of good plans, a lot of great ideas, that never got off the ground because the Public Affairs guy wasn't sensitive to timing. So, you really do need [to know] those people and let them know that you're not a threat, that you're not trying to take their job. The aides and execs I've worked best with are ones that I could tell "Hey, I know your job, and I know what your responsibilities are, and I don't want your job. Here's my job and I need your help. If you think I'm out of line, let me know." — **Brig. Gen. H.J. Dalton**

Quote from Brig. Gen. Dalton's Oral History at: <https://www.afpaaa.org/oralhistory.htm>

[Editor's Note: General Dalton was the first career public affairs officer to be promoted to Brigadier General (07) and to be named Director of Information. He has been inducted into the Defense Information School and the Air Force Public Affairs Association Halls of Fame and is a member of PRSA's College of Fellows. He passed away on November 1, 2020.]



P. O. Box 2446
East Peoria IL 61611-2446
(Address Correction Requested)

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

AFPAA Public Affairs Association **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Greetings

AFPAA would like to welcome Beth Horine as the new Membership Chair. After 10 years serving as the Association’s membership chair, Christine Queen has decided to step back from the position.

New Members

- Julia Ahaesy
- Cheran Campbell
- Codi N. Clemmons
- Megan Cotnoir
- Christopher J. Herbert
- Tiffany Holloway

- Courtney A. Landsberger
- Branden Laredo
- Renee Tyron

Life Member Payment Plan

- Miguel Lara (upgraded)

Life Members

- Cynthia Dorfner (New)
- Ariel C. O’Shea (New)

AFPAA Correspondence USPS Returned—Did you move?

- Jon Anderson (Life Member Best of the Best 2003)
- Laura Beckley (Life Member Best of the Best 2019)

- Jonathan Cotto
- John “Tom” Halbert (Lifetime Founder)
- William Hickman, Jr. (Life Member Best of the Best 1998)
- Ed Sharpe
- Anna Sullivan

