

Videmus Omnia
55th STRAT RECON WING
ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2009

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Greetings to all, the faithful of our **Association**:

Another grand, successful **55th** reunion is in the history books. **Don** and **Barbara Gurney** picked up the flag for us and carried it to a victory. Great location, great weather, beautiful pacific blues and emerald greens of Lake Tahoe; great hospitality, good friends and old comrades - what a combination! What a grand reunion! Small compared to other reunions in total numbers, but rich in participation and camaraderie. Hats are off to.... Don and Barbara!



The membership meeting was well attended and a very productive one it was. One topic of discussion captured the attention and participation of many for nearly a whole hour. The topic was introduced within a discussion of the evolution of my two, most favorite organizations, this **Association** and the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**, and it went something like this.

The **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** started as a photo reconnaissance group, then a wing. It then

transitioned to a SIGINT mission, cycling over the years through different aircraft such as the RB-17, the RB-50, the RB-47, and now, nine series of the RC-135 (*Rivet Joint*).

At the end of the Cold War, the tag 'strategic' was replaced with an overall tactical employment due to technology upgrades of equipment and the nature of warfare. Other missions have been added to the unit, providing dominant intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); active electronic attack; command and control; and precision awareness to national leadership and warfighters across the spectrum of conflict.

The organizations of the Wing now include national guard units, intelligence squadrons, linguists, and special operators. The same **55th** we knew years ago is buried away in a huge organization of 30+ squadrons with approximately 7,000 active duty assigned. The name of the Wing was changed eighteen years ago from "strategic reconnaissance" to a generic form, **55th Wing**, because of the many varied missions.

Our **Association** has also evolved over the years. Starting as the **55th Elint Association** and changing in 1985 to the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association** to better reflect the entire makeup of the Wing at that time. It matured from a group of military comrades celebrating their service and comradeship, as an informal organization holding periodic reunions, into an incorporated, tax-exempt, war veterans association actively involved with the **55th Wing**, often participating directly in wing events.

We have the distinctive advantage over other unit-specific veteran organizations: we are connected to a living, breathing, active duty Air Force unit. We have a large pool of potential members. Other veteran organizations whose lineage units were disbanded years ago have a finite pool of members. Unfortunately, their days are numbered.

Our **Association** with its noble purposes has the possibility and responsibility of carrying on the cause, the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** legacy. In order to

continue that legacy, we must remain an active, viable association with an increasing membership ...and especially in attracting active duty members. This has been a tough challenge in recent years.

Some facts to consider as time marches on are: the last member of the **55th Wing** who also served in the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** retired this past July; again, it has been eighteen years since “strategic reconnaissance” came off the name of the **55th Wing**. A significant fact now is: our **Association** must be more attractive to the vast member pool of these past eighteen years and into the future.

My question put to the membership, only as an item of discussion and with no proposals for action was: “Is it time for us to consider changing the name of the **Association**?” It was then so wisely stated by **Dick Nussbaum** that we must remain “relevant” as an association. I could not agree more.

Flexibility, being the key to air power, for the future, we must adapt when the necessity to adapt has you surrounded. The outcome of the discussion at the Membership meeting is described very well in the minutes of the Membership meeting in following pages. Beyond that, the discussion still continues....stay tuned.....

Some very good news for the **Association**. A request to the Internal Revenue Service justifying our tax status and requesting a change was successful. We remain a federal tax exempt 501(C) 19 veterans organization. However, the IRS now recognizes us as a veterans organization with at least 90% (actually 97%) members being **war veterans**, and that we are organized primarily for the purposes consistent with a war veterans organization; thus, **donors can deduct from their federal income taxes contributions made to the Association**. Specific receipts for donations will be given to donors.

I have gone a bit long this time, but these two items are important to the future of the **Association**.

All the best for the Holiday Season. Best of health and reunions with family. Come see us at the

Birthday Ball in April. A basket full of luck in 2010.

Videmus Omnia, Jim

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27th REUNION 55 SRWASSOCIATION RENO, NV 15-18 SEPTEMBER 2009

Members, families and friends of the **55th Association** met in “*The Biggest Little City*” at the **Silver Legacy Resort Casino** for yet another sterling (*get it? Silver.....sterling*) reunion of camaraderie, memories, renewal, and otherwise good times.

Chairman Don Gurney with his trusty sidekick, Barbara, did an outstanding job of organization and coordination to pull it off.

This gathering could best be described as ‘minimalist’ in that there was ample time for all attendees to spend in the hospitality room, roam the city, attend the air races, museums, whatever. Some even found time to shop, or dare we say, try their luck at games of chance?

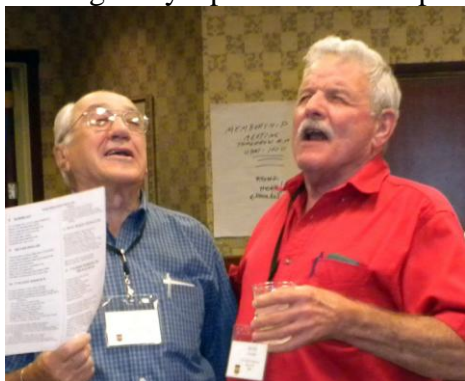


Registration began on Tuesday the 15th and was steady through the next day. Here are **Charlie and Jane Waters** manning the table.

Almost 100 folks took the scenic bus ride up to Zephyr Cove at Lake Tahoe to enjoy a luncheon cruise aboard the *MS Dixie II*. The weather and scenery were idyllic for the two hour voyage. A few

souls without hats or sun screen found out that at 7500 feet, Ol' Sol is a bit closer and the air thinner to help cook some seasoned hides.

On one bus, during the ride back to the hotel, **Jumpin' Joe Gyulavics** attempted to lead a sing-a-long, but mostly he just disrupted some folks' afternoon siesta. He later was joined by other voices in a songfest in the hospitality room that went deep into the evening. Mayhap a little **too** deep for some.



Joe and Reggie exercise their pipes (or howling at the moon? It would seem.)

Thursday's morning membership meeting was well attended, lively and fully informative. (See the minutes following this article.) That evening's banquet was delightful and many commented that the meal was among the best ever for a gathering that size, and the service was superb.

Highlights included President Jim Thomas' remarks and **Reverend Fred Glass'** always entertaining style. On display was the **55th Wing** Hall of Fame plaque dedicated to all **55th** spouses, past, present and future, that was presented at last spring's **55th Wing** Birthday Ball. (Full coverage was published in last April's issue of the **Videmus Omnia**). It was the appreciated center of attention for the rest of the evening.

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The president also read a letter from the **55th Wing** Commander, to the assemblage. The content follows:

From: **BGen Jack Shanahan**, Commander, **55th Wing**, Offutt AFB, NE.

To: The men and women of the **55th SRW Association** at their reunion in Reno, NV.

First and foremost, I would like to express my regrets that **Laura** and I cannot be with you at the reunion. The ORI inspection here at Offutt will have me fully engaged.

As you receive these words at your banquet, I fully expect to be celebrating yet another outstanding performance with the men and women of the **Fightin' Fifty Fifth**.

Beyond this inspection, the Airmen of the **55th** continue to fly combat missions in Operation Enduring Freedom (*SW Asia*), as they have done in that region since 1990. It is an honor to be their commander.

I am impressed daily by our innovative, young airmen and officers, who have adapted the RC-135 and our tactics to fight and win a war that is very different than that for which the airplane was originally designed.

These warriors are saving US and coalition lives on the ground, while helping hunt down and eliminate some very bad people. At the same time our **strategic** missions continue unabated around the world, doing those things that provide vital intelligence to our national leaders, assure our allies, and dissuade/deter our enemies. The **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** is still truly "in the fight".

We are carrying on the legacy that the members of the **55th SRW Association** left for the **55th Wing**. No other group has such close and enduring ties to our current mission. You represent a very proud lineage of airmen who have flown and supported some of our nation's most important and sensitive missions...often without much glory or recognition outside a small "Band of Brothers".

Continued success in any mission depends on honoring the past and acknowledging all that has been done by those who have gone before. It is no different in the **55th**. That is why the **55th SRW Association** mission is so important---you preserve those ties.

My sincere thanks for all that the **Association** has done, and will continue to do, on behalf of the

Fightin' Fifty-Fifth. I look forward to continuing our association. Laura and I are certainly looking forward to the Birthday Ball and the *Tales of the 55th* in the spring.

Have a great time at the reunion! *J.N.T.S.*

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All in all, the three days passed very quickly and it can be noted that this reunion was one more in a long line of memorable occasions.

Later in this issue you will find the list of attendees and a picture montage of the people and events from the reunion.

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55th STRAT RECON WING ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

17 September 2009

Silver Legacy Hotel, Reno, NV

The meeting was called to order by **President Jim Thomas** at 0903. He stated that the meeting notification was in the April 2009 **Association** newsletter, and that a quorum was present. He made opening remarks welcoming the assemblage, among other general statements.

He called upon **Secretary Max Moore** to read the minutes from the last membership meeting of 17 May 2008. Moore stated for the record that the subject minutes were published in the June 2008 issue of the *Videmus Omnia*, and were posted on the **Association** web site. **Charles Waters** moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Seconded by **Bill Simon**. Motion passed.

Pres Thomas then **recapped Association** business and Board actions since the last reunion in May of 2008. It was a busy 18 months with significant events. The financial issues resulting from the 2008 reunion in DC were resolved through the diligent efforts of **Ricky McMahon**, the reunion chair. It took several months to settle the hotel and bus company charges, but all came out in the **Association's** favor and funds were returned to the treasury.

Thomas talked of the success of the *Tales of the 55th*, the **55th Wing** Birthday Ball, the Wing Hall of

Fame, and the **Association's** Award for Excellence (Winner: **MSgt Maria Bell** of the **55th Security Police Sqd's Elite Guard**). He iterated how the **Association's** involvement is a continuing source of positive exposure for the Association to the active duty Wing personnel.

He told of how the **Association** Offutt-area members helped say farewell to the outgoing **55th Wing** Commander, **BGen James Jones**, and his Vice, **Colonel Rob Maness**, this past summer. The members then continued the **Association** tradition of welcoming the newest wing commander, **BGen John N. T. Shanahan**, by hosting a dinner for him shortly after his arrival.

The president recognized **Bill Ernst**, the Nomination Committee chair, to put forth the slate for **election to the Board of Directors**. Ernst explained that under the **recently revised Association Bylaws**, all the directors were now elected positions. He listed the nominees for the maximum 19 allowed slots as: **Sparky Adams, Sam Pizzo, Don Griffin, Joe Gyulavics, Bill Ernst, Max Moore, Robb Hoover, Errol Hoberman, Jim Thomas, Michael Cook, Ricky McMahon, Dennis Haun, Larry Utley, Jim Maloney, George Ross, Fox Censullo, Pete Glenboski, Kevin Todd, and Don Kelly**. (Charles Waters chose to retire from the Board.) (*Note: Kelly previously served on the BoD as an active duty rep when he was the Deputy Ops Group Commander*)



Waters moved the slate be accepted and that the nominations be closed. Seconded by many. The motion passed, and the nominees were elected by acclamation.

It was announced that the **next reunion** in the spring of 2011 would be headed up by **Greg Smith**, and be held at the Holiday Inn in McKinney, TX, near Dallas. **Sandy Feldkamp** has volunteered, with the help of her husband **Alan**, to run the reunion in the fall of 2012 in Colorado Springs, CO. A vote by the members in attendance approved the reunion sites.

Pres Thomas recognized **Don Gurney** and his wife, **Barbara**, for their outstanding work in setting up and running this reunion. They were afforded a standing ovation.

He then gave the latest information on an in-progress action dealing with **the tax status of the Association**. IRS documentation, discovered in the run-up to our Omaha reunion, showed that the IRS claimed that the **Association** did **not** qualify for donors to be able to deduct contributions made to our organization. Efforts to make administrative changes in operations, redefining our membership classes, codifying our purposes, **rewriting our bylaws** to document our compliance with the IRS rules were recently completed. As an association, we have for some years walked the walk of the IRS. We needed to document that and lockdown our administrative definitions to better show compliance. **Contacts with the IRS indicated that our request for relief was favorably judged and that contributions made to, and for the use of the 55th SRW Association, may be deducted for federal income tax purposes.** The final approval letter is “in the mail” to arrive by 25 September. We will include specific details of the provisions and effects to the membership and Association in the upcoming newsletter.



Charlie Waters was recognized for his long and dedicated service to the organization, and for his leadership in laying the foundation for what the **55th SRW Association** has become. His wife Jane was praised for her support and service, as well.

Pres Thomas noted that outgoing secretary Max Moore had been awarded Life Membership for his dedicated service and many contributions to the success of the **Association**.

The president then presented some background information on the evolution of our association and the evolution from the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing**

with its Cold War mission to the new missions of the **55th Wing**. He touched on the generational changes, multiple types of mission aircraft, changing and additional missions and growth to a wing with 30+ squadrons, and permanent locations around the globe.

It has been nearly 18 years since the Wing carried the distinguished handle of strategic reconnaissance. The Wing name now more generically reflects its multi-mission purposes. The president then initiated a discussion by posing a question to the membership: **“Is it time for us to consider changing the name of our association?”** He emphasized that this was an **initial inquiry**, an open discussion to gain the feelings of the membership present (70-80 attending), and **that there was no intent to put in play any eminent proposals.**

There followed an open, civil, wide-ranging discussion as many members voiced their opinions, asked questions, gave suggestions, etc. It was acknowledged the **Association** needed to remain **relevant** to the present and current day relationship with the active duty Wing. Quotes such as ‘survive...evolve...change or die’, ‘we need to continue to adapt’, ‘appeal to younger generations.....active duty’, were expounded. It was noted that ‘we’ had been through the process before and changed the name in 1985 from the 55th ELINT Association to the current name in order to be more inclusive in membership.

Names suggested were: the generic ‘**The 55th Association**’; ‘**The 55th Wing Association**’, as the present day 55th is designated; ‘**The Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth Association**’, which transcends and is inclusive of all generations of the Wing.

While no consensus was sought, no motions made, nor action taken, it can be stated that there was **no overt opposition, nor open resistance** to the idea of a name change. In fact Secretary Moore asked at the conclusion of the nearly hour-long discussion, if the following characterization could be used in these minutes to sum up the tenor of the assemblage: **“There was general acceptance of the prospect of changing the name of the Association”**. There was tacit approval of that statement.

The membership will be kept apprised of any and all ensuing steps in this process, and it was conceded that a vote from the entire membership would be sought before any final action.

Newsletter Editor Moore opened a general discussion on the **Association**’s newsletter’s (*Videmus*

Omnia) purpose, content, publishing, etc., and encouraged any and all for article and news input, and/or suggestions to make the issues more diverse, interesting, and relevant to the membership at large.

The meeting adjourned at 1028.

Respectfully submitted,

Max R. Moore, Secretary

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Immediately after the membership meeting, the Board of Directors met and the following members were elected or appointed to the positions indicated in the following directory.



L to R: Ross, McMahon, Maloney, Waters, Ernst, Hoover, Gyulavics, Griffin, Thomas. Photo by Max.

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ASSOCIATION BOARD AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Business/Policy/Reunion Suggestions:

President Jim Thomas

4418 Anchor Mill
Bellevue, NE 68123-1168
E-mail: JThomas927@aol.com

Vice President Ricky McMahon

14325 Orlando Road
Nokesville, VA 20181
E-mail: Rick_CaryMc@comcast.net

Membership/Dues/Changes of Address:

Treasurer Michael Cook

3204 Rahn Blvd
Bellevue, NE 68123
E-mail: Michael.Cook@cox.net

Secretary Kevin Todd

2922 Blackhawk Circle
Bellevue, NE 68123-3711
E-mail: Guyn5gals@msn.com

Newsletter Editor Max Moore

201 Basswood Court
Bellevue, NE 68005-2001
E-mail: MaxMoore55@aol.com

Association Historian:

Robb Hoover

13412 Tregaron Circle
Bellevue, NE 68123
E-mail: RobbHoover@aol.com

Association Web Page Comments/Ideas:

Jim Maloney

7908 Kona Circle
Papillion, NE 68046-5619
E-mail: jim@maloney.com

Other Members of the Board of Directors:

Sam Pizzo, Sparky Adams, Bill Ernst, Errol Hoberman, Don Griffin, Joe Gyulavics, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Dennis Haun, Pete Glenboski, Larry Utley, Don Kelly. Active Duty: LtCols John Cooper and Mo Krishna.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of 30 September 2009, the **Association** had 747 members **in good standing**. That is **increase of 48** from April 2009. Due to a continuing effort to encourage members to renew their dues, and the recruiting of new members, memberships and renewals are coming in regularly.

Last January, 212 letters were sent to members whose dues had expired in 2008. Responses were received from 102 to renew. There has been an e-mail ongoing 'crusade' of reminders, as well.

It is hoped this newsletter will prompt more of the same as we await those who need to update for 2009 and beyond.

Another 38 **55th Wing** units, plus other associated organizations, receive the newsletter for public relations purposes.

Approximately 160 widows of former members receive the newsletter at no cost, and are welcome to participate in any and all **Association** activities.

Please note that as a result of the recent revision of the **Association** Bylaws, the categories of membership have been redefined. (See pages 8-10)

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The **Association** still claims members in all **50 states**, plus DC, Guam, Puerto Rico, and APOs in Europe and the Pacific. **Nebraska** leads with 227. Texas, Florida and California in that order are in triple digits.

The number of **active duty members** continues to increase, largely due to the **Association's** exposure to the **Wing** at events such as the *Tales* and Birthday Ball, in addition to the solid support of the **Wing** senior staff at Offutt.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

The **Association**, as of 30 September 2009, had an account balance \$23,909. **Please pay your dues promptly, or early and frequently.** We have expenses, obligations and bills to pay.

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Occasionally, members include modest amounts of money over and above what is required for dues to add to the treasury. Those donations (NOT DUES) are now tax deductible under a recent IRS ruling for the organization. Every dollar is much appreciated. We can use the economic stimulus like every other group.

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The most asked question of the membership chairman is, "What is the expiration date of my dues?" **It is indicated on your address label under your name: YOUR DUES EXPIRE: 20xx**

For example: **2009** on your address label means your dues will expire on 31 December 2009. Any other year indicates that your dues will expire on 31 December of the **indicated year.** **If you are**

delinquent, or run out on 31 December this year, please renew soonest.

Anyone whose membership expired in **2008** was taken off the member-in-good-standing roll effective **1 April 2009.** To be reinstated, please remit **\$20** to become current through 31 December **2009.** Another \$20 will be due for 2010. There are 110 persons whose dues went delinquent as of 1 April, and we will be contacting once again, each of those lost members.

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Effective 1 January 2009, membership dues became **\$20 per year, or \$55 for three years.** All advance years' expiration dates are being honored if you paid at the former rates. The new dues rates commenced for any membership expiration date of 2008 or later.

Dues are payable anytime during an expiration year, so, please renew now. The calendar year is the dues year.

Dues become delinquent on 31 March of the year following the expiration year. After 1 April of that year, delinquent members will be notified that their membership has expired and they will no longer receive the **Association** newsletter. (*Ouch.*)

This provides a 15 month window to pay your dues. Of course, we prefer sooner rather than later.

Notice a continuing theme here?

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If your dues expire in 2009, please remit payment to **55SRW Association as soon as practical for future years.**

Mail to: **55th SRW Association,**
ATTN: Michael J. Cook
PO Box 13165
Offutt AFB, NE 68113

For whatever reason, if you do **not** know your expiration date, to inquire on same, please e-mail **Michael.Cook@cox.net;** or drop him a note at the above address to get an update on your dues status.

You will also find a membership/information update form at the back of this newsletter. This

form may used to report any address or other changes in your contact information.

New members receive the **Association's** dual-shield lapel pin and a **55thSRWA memorial** coin when they join.

Current members desiring replacement or additional lapel pins can get them from Cook for \$5.00 prepaid (*if you want more than one pin, the cost is just \$3.00 for each additional pin if mailed at the same time; i.e. one pin, \$5; two pins, \$8; three pins \$11; etc.*).

Thomas and Moore have pins and coins, as well, so members in the Omaha area can get the pins from any of those three for \$3.00 without the postage. Extra Memorial coins are \$5.00 each.

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THE ASSOCIATION HOSTS NEW 55TH WING COMMANDER

Keeping alive what is now an established tradition which began in 1997, members of the **Association** in the Offutt/Omaha community hosted **Colonel (BG-sel) John (Jack) Shanahan** on 19 May 2009, for dinner at Anthony's Steak House in south Omaha. He took command of the **55th Wing** at Offutt AFB, NE, on 24 April 2009.

Seventeen gents met Col Shanahan for a social hour and the event opened with the obligatory ringing of the **55th** Ceremonial Bell.



*Seated, L to R: Larry Utley, Jim Thomas, Colonel Shanahan, Reg Urschler, Dennis Haun. (con't)
Standing, L to R: LtCol Bill Jensen, Dick Purdum, Arlen Howe, LtCol Mike Kelly, Mike Cook, Don Kelly, Max Moore, Fred Schapker, Robb Hoover, Harry Tull, John Tresmer, Frank Hicks, Jim Maloney.*

President Jim Thomas welcomed Col Shanahan with opening remarks that included noting that the assemblage represented nearly 250 accumulative years of service with the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**. Then the attendees did a round-robin of introductions of themselves. Always an illuminating and riveting exercise. (*Say what?*)



Col Shanahan was presented with a copy of the book *We See All*, by **Bruce Bailey**, and **Bill Burrow's** book, *By Any Means Necessary* by Pres Thomas.

The colonel then wound up the convivial evening by expressing his appreciation for the service and dedication of the **55th SRW Association** and its members, the presentations, and for the hosted gathering. He said he was looking forward to a continued close relationship with the **Association** during his tenure as leader of the best wing in the Air Force.

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COLD WAR MONUMENT UPDATE

Ever the diligent monitor, **Jack Kovacs** has continued to give updates on the status of the **55th SRW** Cold War Memorial at the National Museum of the Air Force near Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

Last February he first reported there was a hairline crack in the base of the monument, and contacted Dodds Monuments who made good their guarantee on replacing the base. The replacement base was ordered to match the original design and material.

That story was covered in detail in an article in the last issue of *Videmus Omnia*, April 2009.

The replacement base arrived in early August this year, and was put in place on 9 September.

As always, the **Association** extends its sincere appreciation to Jack and to **Larry LaFlair** for their constant and unrelenting efforts for the Memorial.

Well done, brothers!



Larry LaFlair (Left) and Jack Kovacs, the intrepid and dynamic duo who are the on-scene guardians of the Memorial, the day the new base was installed.

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Of note, the November/December 2009 issue of the **VFW** magazine has an article (pg 34) about casualties of the Cold War. Featured prominently is a picture (credited to Jack) and caption of the **55th** Memorial. The magazine also portrayed the monument to **55th** warriors in May 2004.

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MEMO FOR RECORD

55th SRW Association Bylaws Revision – July 2009

President Jim Thomas announced in an e-mail to the Board of Directors, dated 5/11/2008, the establishment of a

committee to review the Association’s Articles of Corporation and Bylaws “with the goal to provide clarification, remove contradictions and to increase their effectiveness” and recommend whether revisions were needed. That committee was to report back NLT 15 June 2008 and a determination would be made on the next steps to be taken.

Subsequently, it was determined that a thorough update/revision of the Bylaws, which were last revised in June 2005, would be beneficial to the Association.

Robb Hoover was appointed to chair a Bylaws Rewrite Committee, consisting of Michael Cook and Dennis Haun. Over the ensuing months diligent, deliberate and intense work by the committee produced an in-depth review; consultations were sought; several draft proposals were made, scrubbed, edited, altered, and refined.

The process included a June 2009 mailing to all the BoD members of the 7 June version of the revised Bylaws. The cover letter from the president gave a thorough explanation of the purpose, objectives, and all of the suggested changes. A major function of the revision was to meet certain IRS code requirements for the Association to maintain its veterans not-for-profit organization. Feedback, comments, input of the draft product were requested from the BoD members.

Once those were submitted to the Bylaws Rewrite Committee, considered and/or incorporated, the final version of the Bylaws was completed, dated 16 July 2009. That was mailed to the BoD members with a cover letter from the president dated 22 July 2009. The question was presented to adopt or not adopt the document in its entirety.

In voting responses via e-mail or postcard, dating from 24 July to 3 August, the ensuing vote was 19 Yes, zero No. (Note: the active duty positions are vacant at this time.)

As recorded by the president, secretary and the Rewrite Committee chair, the question was certified as carried on 3 August 2009. They were implemented the date of this MFR.

Respectfully submitted,

Max R. Moore

Secretary, **55th SRW Association**

4 August 2009

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55th STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE WING ASSOCIATION BYLAWS 16 JULY 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Bylaws are rules by which the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association** operates as a not-for-profit, veteran’s organization. The Bylaws prescribe how meetings are held, the powers and duties of the officers of the corporation and Board of Directors, maintenance of the budget, and other provisions of governance.

1.2 Compliance with the IRS Code is necessary to maintain our status as a not-for-profit, war veterans organization and to retain certain tax advantages in order to benefit the Association.

2. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 To be eligible for regular membership (RM) in the Association personnel must be veterans of the [55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing](#), and/or retired or active duty personnel of the [55th Wing](#).

1.2 Classes of membership include Regular Member (RM), Life Member (LM), and Associate Member (AM).

1.3 Annual membership dues for Regular Membership (RM) will be as determined by the Board of Directors (BoD) and expire at year's end on December 31st. Dues are deemed delinquent on the following April 1st. After that date a member shall be placed in delinquent status with loss of membership privileges. They will no longer be mailed the newsletter.

1.4 Life Membership (LM) is granted by the BoD to members who have made sustained special contributions in service or otherwise to the Association. LMs are exempt from payment of dues.

1.5 Associate Membership (AM) may be granted by the BoD to certain Active Duty (AD) positions (AM-AD) in the 55th Wing (AM-AD). Other Persons (non-veterans) with special relationships to the Association may be granted AM status (AM-OP). The Membership Chairman may approve an AM-OP; however, the number of AM-OP (non-veterans) may not exceed IRS limitations adversely impacting the Association without BOD approval. AM-ADs are exempt from dues. AM-OP will normally pay dues unless exempted by the BOD. Non-55th Military veterans (AM-Mil) are eligible for dues-paying Associate Membership.

3. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS 3.1. Membership meetings shall be held at times determined by the BoD, during reunions held approximately every 18 months, for purpose of electing directors and transacting business.

3.2. A quorum at the membership meeting shall consist of those members in good standing attending the membership meeting.

3.3. The Membership Chairman in consultation with the Secretary shall verify the member in good standing status (dues not delinquent) of those attending the membership meeting. Such members are thus eligible to vote.

3.4. The President, or his designate, shall chair the meeting.

3.5. Roberts Rules of Order shall be used to facilitate the full and orderly deliberation and, to the maximum extent possible, to help, not hinder the business of the assembly.

3.6. The order of business at membership meetings as far as practical shall be as follows:

- A. Proof of notice of the meeting.
- B. Reading of approved minutes and advising of disposal of any unapproved minutes.
- C. Reports by Officers.
- D. Reports by Committees.
- E. Election of Directors.
- F. Unfinished Business.
- G. New Business.
- H. Adjournment.

4. BOARD of DIRECTORS (BoD)

4.1. Directors: The affairs of the Association shall be managed by the Board of Directors.

4.2. Election of Directors shall be held at membership meetings conducted during the Association reunions.

4.3. The term of each elected director shall extend until the next reunion membership meeting.

4.4. The Association has two types of Directors: Elected and Active Duty. All directors must be members in good standing of the Association.

4.4.1. Elected Directors: There shall be not less than eleven or more than nineteen elected directors.

4.4.2. Active Duty Directors: The serving 55th Wing Commander may nominate two volunteer active duty persons from the Wing to serve on the Board. The two 55th nominees shall be submitted to the BoD for approval. Their terms of office will continue as long as they remain assigned to the 55th Wing, unless replaced by Board approved nominee(s) of the 55th Wing Commander. Active duty directors will not be eligible to hold the office of President.

4.5. Meetings of the BoD: The newly elected Board shall meet immediately following the membership meeting at which they were elected. The Board will elect from its members the Executive Officers per Bylaws 5.1 and 5.2.

4.5.1. The normal recurring meeting(s) of the BoD will be held at the Association Reunion. Additional meetings of the Board may be held at such time and place as determined by a majority of the Directors. Notice of such meetings shall be given to each Director at least 30 days in advance.

4.5.2. Special on-line meetings of the Board may be called by the President with the approval of 1/3 of the Directors with one week's notice.

4.5.3. A quorum at a meeting of Directors consists of a simple majority of the number of elected Directors.

4.5.4. The presiding officer at Board meetings shall be the President. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside.

4.5.5. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be used to facilitate the full and orderly deliberation and, to the maximum extent possible, to help, not hinder actions of the Board of Directors.

5. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

5.1. Per Bylaw 4.5, the Board will elect from its members the Executive Officers per Bylaw 5.2 and conduct other business that may come before the Board. The results of the election shall be announced at the reunion banquet.

5.2. The Executive Officers of the Association shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary; all of whom shall be Directors. The BoD from time to time shall elect such other officers and designate their powers and duties as the Board shall find to be required to manage the affairs of the Association.

5.2.1. The President shall have all the powers and duties normally vested in the office of President of an association, including, but not limited to, the power to appoint committees from time to time as he/she shall deem appropriate to assist in the conduct of affairs of the Association.

5.2.2. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the President.

5.2.3. The Secretary shall serve notice of all meetings, keep records of all proceedings of the Board and membership meetings, serve such notices as required by the Bylaws, and keep the records of the Association, except those of the Treasurer. In the event of the Secretary not being available to attend a scheduled meeting, the President shall appoint a replacement to attend such meetings and perform the functions of the Secretary.

5.2.4. The Treasurer shall have custody of all property of the Association including funds, securities and evidence of indebtedness. He/she will keep accurate records of the members in good standing and will keep the books of the Association in accordance with good

accounting practices. He/she will perform other duties incident to the office of Treasurer.

5.2.4.1. The Treasurer shall submit NLT than December 31st an annual treasurer's report to the Board for review and an annual balanced budget proposal to the Board for approval. The status of the budget/treasury will be briefed to the Board/Membership at the Association reunions.

6. AMENDMENTS

6.1. An amendment to or amending these Bylaws may be proposed by any Board member. The BoD shall review and take action on any such proposals.

6.2. An amendment to these Bylaws may also be proposed by any Association member in good standing. All proposed amendments shall be presented to the BoD for review and action.

6.3. After review of a proposed amendment the Board by majority vote of the entire Board may do one of the following:

A. Reject the amendment.

B. Implement the amendment and advise the membership via newsletter and/or website.

C. Conditionally implement the amendment while awaiting final approval by a majority vote of the members at the next membership meeting.

D. Present the amendment to the membership for adoption by majority vote at the next membership meeting.

6.4. The President may establish a committee every two years to consider any change(s) to these Bylaws worthy of further consideration by the Board.

7. NEWSLETTER RECIPIENTS

7.1. All widows of 55thSRWA members (NLR-W) are entitled to receive complimentary newsletters at no cost. Participation in SRWA events by NLR-W is encouraged and welcomed.

7.2. The 55thSRWA newsletter may be distributed to positions of the 55th Wing, other persons or organizations at no cost (to them) for the benefit of the Association. Those will be designated Newsletter Recipients (NLR).



Opportunities always look bigger going away than when coming in.

55th VETERAN BECOMES NEBRASKA'S HEAD AVIATOR

Ronnie Mitchell moved from the pilot's seat to the director's chair within the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics (NDA), **Gov. Dave Heineman** announced on 15 July.

Mitchell, 68, assumed his new position on 10 August 2009. He has been an executive pilot with the department since 2002. He was the writer and photographer for the *PIREPS* state aviation

newsletter. As the director, he is a member of the governor's cabinet.

Mitchell has logged more than 13,000 flying hours since beginning his aviation career in 1965. He served in the US Air Force for 23 years, retiring with the rank of colonel.

While serving in the **55SRW** at Offutt AFB, NE, he was selected as command pilot for Commander in Chief, **Strategic Air Command** and senior staff. As a member of the **55th**, he flew -135 aircraft and commanded air crews on worldwide, strategic reconnaissance missions, logging more than 100 classified missions during the Cold War.

He also served for three years at the Pentagon. After retiring from the Air Force, he spent 11 years as a commercial pilot and captain for United Airlines. Mitchell and his wife, **Doris**, reside in Bellevue, NE

The NDA maintains and directs the Nebraska Aviation System Plan, and the use of state and federal funding for airport development. The department oversees 81 public-use airports, manages three airports and provides air transportation for state officials.



ANOTHER 55TH ALUM IS NAMED TO NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

Robert Krist, 52, will represent Omaha's District 10 in the Nebraska Unicameral after Gov. Dave Heineman appointed him to that post on 13 September. Heineman chose Krist to fill the vacancy left after the governor tapped State Senator Mike Friend as director of the new State Office of Violence Prevention.

Krist was sworn in the day after his appointment. He will serve in the state legislature during next year's legislative session, and be up for election to a four-year term in 2010.

Krist is currently a contract manager and chief pilot for the northwest division of the Army Corps of Engineers. A retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, he served for 21 years before retiring in 2000. Part

of that career was spent in the **55th SRW** at Offutt as a pilot who flew EC- and RC-135 aircraft. He also served as a commander in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and was a senior advisor to the Nebraska Air Guard.

He is a past member of the **Association's** Board of Directors, and has served for the past four years as board chairman for the Madonna School, a school for special needs children in Omaha. He has been on that board since 1992. He and his wife, **Peggy**, have two children and a grandchild.

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*(Ed. Note: If it seems as though **55th** alumni are staging a coup d'etat in Nebraska, it actually reflects ample testimony of what leadership is developed and recognized among such a group.*

*But, be advised there are several thousand state government jobs and 30-something senators in Nebraska who are NOT **55th** alums.*

*Any other areas/states out there showing similar trends? There must be other former **55thers** serving elected or appointed government positions. Let us know about them for recognition.*

City Council, sheriff, dog catcher?

The village idiot or town drunk do not count. No offense meant to any who hold those distinctions☺.

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55th WING NAILS ANOTHER ORI

On 10 September the **55th Wing** sprang into action as over 75 inspectors from HQ Air Combat Command arrived at Offutt AFB. Their mission was to evaluate the ability of the USAF's premier reconnaissance force to perform, survive and operate in a high threat environment.

From the blue smoke signal on the first day, to wheels up six days later, the **Wing** put forth enormous effort in hosting the inspectors as well as 20+ observers. Wing personnel professionally, ably and fully demonstrated how they provide dominant intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) to the nation's warfighters.

The **55th Wing** was tasked to provide 30 hours of ISR coverage over two days. In addition, maintenance, communication, medical and command and control personnel teamed to insure accomplishment of the mission.

The results of the inspection speak for themselves: The men and women of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** earned an overall rating of **Excellent** for its 2009 inspection.

(Contributed by Major Michael S. Zimmerman, 55th Wing Inspections Office, 9 October 2009.)

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T A P S



BROWN, Mary Kathryn, 61, Kingman, KS, died 6 May 2009. Wife of **Leland (Lee)**, a former RB-47 EWO with the **55th SRW** at Forbes AFB, KS in the 1960s.

BURNS, James (Jim) A., 71, Bellevue, NE, 18 July 2009. Jim was in the **55th A&E Sqd** working RB-47s at Forbes in the 1960s. He also was part of the cadre who readied the first RC-135s at Baltimore, then served in the **55th** at Offutt AFB, NE, as an Inflight Maintenance Technician. He was a past commander of the VFW post in Bellevue.

CLANCY, Orville W., 85, East Portland, OR, 10 January 2009; wife of 64 years, **Bette**. He was a Montana native and a WWII veteran with 17 combat missions over Germany as a B-17 pilot. Orville flew missions with the **55th** during the

Cuban Crisis in 1962 and later served in the SAC Recon Center in the early 1970s.

DESROCHE, George D., 79, Spring, TX, 27 August 2009; wife **Doris**. George was an RB/ERB EWO at Forbes from the late 1950s and into early 1960s. They were regular reunion attendees.

EISENBERG, Marilou (Mary), 72, Wilmington, DE, 23 June 2009. She was the wife of **Lou**, an RB-47 pilot with the 38th and 343rd at Forbes in the 1960s.

GOWAN, Clarence G., 95, Boonville, MO, 25 April 2009; wife **Eula**. A WWII veteran who enlisted on 8 December 1941 and flew combat missions in the Europe. He later served in the 55th for many years, and was at Forbes when he retired in 1963. He then worked for Lockheed with **Kelly Johnson** at the fabled *Skunk Works* where the U-2 and SR-71 were developed.

HOWARD, Dodie, Midwest City, OK, 1 October 2009. She was the wife of **Sid**, a COMBAT SENT EWO in RCs at Offutt in the 1970s.

HUBBARD, David B., 70, Spokane Valley, WA, 6 September 2009; wife **Lucia**. He was an EWO in COMBAT SENT RC-135s at Offutt, and served in the 82nd SRS at Kadena AB, Okinawa, in the 1970s. He later was the Professor of Air Science for AFROTC at Central Washington University.

HUTCHINSON, Janet, 71, Puyallup, WA, 20 October 2008. Wife of **Richard (Hutch)** a former COMBAT SENT EWO in RCs at Offutt, INY SAC HQ and 55th SRW staff (1972-85).

KING, Beth McMullen, 88, Jackson, MS, 25 August 2009. She was the widow of **Richard Q.** (Feb 2001), an RB-47 navigator and staff officer in the 55th at Forbes from 1954-1967. Beth taught school for many years and was active in several community organizations.

KNECHT, Donna, 71, Fairfax, VA, 1 September 2009, wife of **Ron**, an EWO in the 55th in RBs at Forbes and RCs at Offutt, he later served in SAC HQ and the Pentagon. Her father **Floyd Shirk**, was an RB-47 A/C with the 38SRS.

KOBELT, Richard (Dick) W., 75, Warsaw, MO, 7 May 2009. Dick enlisted in the AF in 1952

before getting a commission and navigator wings. He flew in Vietnam and on the EC-135 with the 2ACCS of the 55th at Offutt, and later served with CEVG at Barksdale AFB, LA.

LEATHERWOOD, Arthur K., 88, Austin, TX, 29 August 2009. He enlisted in the US Army Air Corps in 1939; he earned his pilot wings in May 1943, and flew P-38 and Spitfire photo recon missions in Europe. He was in the 55th from 1955, retired in 1965 and became a high school social studies teacher in Austin.

LUCERO, Carlos, Jr., 76, Bloomfield, MN, 20 April 2009; wife, **Andrea**. A 20 year veteran of the AF who retired in 1971 as a master sergeant, Carlos was an avionics/navigation equipment specialist in 55th A&E Sqd at Forbes during the 1960s. He later was stationed at Eielson AFB, AK, for three years.

MURPHY, Gregory L., 52, Auburn, IN, 18 October 2009; wife, **Susan**. Greg had a long career in recon as an RC-135 EWO with the 343rd SRS at Offutt, and in the COBRA BALL with the 24th SRS at Eielson in the 1980s. He also served with SAC Stan/Eval at Barksdale, SRC in SAC HQ Offutt and AF/IN at the Pentagon before retiring in 1998.

POWERS, John K., 84, Tucson, AZ, 5 April 2009; wife of 58 years, **Patricia**. A Nebraska native, John served in four wars: 25 WWII combat missions on B-24s in Europe; 30 missions in Korea in B-29s; and a tour in Vietnam as an intel officer in 1967. His Cold War duty was as an RB-47 EWO with the 55th SRW at Forbes from 1955-1963. He retired in 1974.

SNOOK, Richard (Dick), 75, Round Rock, TX, 6 May 2009; wife, **Barbara**. Originally a tanker navigator, he came to the 55th in RC-135s at Offutt, then went to the 82nd SRS at Kadena in the early 1970s. He had a staff tour at Beale AFB, CA, and later served in the SAC Recon Center at Offutt.

STRATTON, Mark E. II, LtCol, USAF, 39. Killed in action in Afghanistan, 25 May 2009; wife **Jennifer** with three young children, Stafford, VA. Mark was an RC navigator with the 45th RS, in Stand/Eval, and served in the 55th Operational Support Sqd, at Offutt in the mid-late 1990s and

early 2000s, He was a Provincial Reconstruction Team commander out of Bagram Airfield when his convoy was hit by an explosion.

TULL, Harrison (Harry) G., 89, Bellevue, NE, 11 October 2009. A legendary figure in the **55th**, Harry was in the Tuskegee Aviation Cadet program and became a rated observer in 1944. In 1956 he was assigned as an EWO in the RB-47 at Forbes, and later in the RC-135 at Offutt. After retiring from the Wing and the AF in 1970, he taught school and was a counselor in Omaha high schools for 20 years.

Among his many honors, Harry is an original member of the **55th Wing** Hall of Fame and in the Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame. He received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007 which **President George W. Bush** presented to the Tuskegee Airmen.

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A process to honor Tull in some manner is under consideration by the Offutt/Omaha chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. As a result of the suggestion of **Shirley Hoover**, and communicated by Robb Hoover, **generous** donations to its education assistance fund in Harry's memory rolled in from many members of the **Association**, the **55th Wing**, the Strat Roost of the Association of Old Crows, et al. A scholarship may be named for him in recognition of both his military career and that as a teacher and mentor.

Those who care to donate can send same in Harry's name directly to the **Alfonza W. Davis Education Assistance Fund**, PO Box 13036, Offutt AFB, NE, 68113; or to the **55th Strat Recon Wing Association**, Inc, at PO Box 13165, Offutt AFB, NE 68113. Those funds will be compiled and sent to the Tuskegee chapter, and receipts will be sent to each donor for proof of tax deduction IAW the **Association's** current IRS status.

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TAPS notification of **Association** members, spouses, friends and associates taking the Big PCS

should be sent to Jim Thomas and Max Moore (*see DIRECTORY, page 6 for contact info*).

Please include next of kin and an address to whom the **Association condolence card may be sent; date of demise, age, location, crew position/aircraft, and/or duty specialty, organization and bases and approximate years with 55th; and any other pertinent information you wish to relate.**

The news in TAPS is limited by how much and how accurate the given information.

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YOUR 55TH SRW ASSN WEB SITE

www.55srwa.org

The web site continues to evolve in the capable hands of webmeister **Jim Maloney**. The home page is an integral and vital part of the **Association's** line of communications and information.

Among other things, our internet presence provides two primary functions: First, is to keep viewers up to date. It provides members a forum to keep in touch, learn about current and ongoing **Association** activities, and reference previous projects and/or events.

A second increasingly important function in this rapidly evolving cyber-age is that our internet link to the world provides former **55th** warriors a means to come back to the fold. It is consistently common for past **SRW/55th Wing** members, or friends and families, to find our web site after an internet search, and reconnect with friends and comrades from their days with the Wing.

A year long organizational upgrade of the site has been accomplished and placed online. The conversion was a complete overhaul, so you will notice many differences. Some links are still in work.

Last year the web site averaged over 600 hits a month with the highest (984) coming in December 2008, and the least in June 2009 (205).

You are urged to check it out often for timely news, activities and information exchanges. Everything you want to know about the **Association** is there: “Corp HQ” includes the constitution, bylaws, memos for record, officers and bios; and a **membership/info update form**.

Updated news on upcoming reunions, the Birthday Ball, and other events are covered; plus important bulletins on any projects in progress. “Mail Room”, “Clothing Sales”, “Memory Lane”, a picture gallery, and links to other associated and interesting sites are included.

There is also an archive of past newsletters for review and research. As examples: the October 2005 issue has an article on the **history** of the **Association**; the August 2002, April 2003 and February 2004 issues have all one would want to know about the **55th SRWA’s** Cold War Memorial; and the January 2001 issue has an item on the Wing Hall of Fame evolution.

Jim is always looking for new and fresh ideas. Inputs from members are encouraged and welcome. Jim’s input contributed significantly to this article.

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MEMORY LANE FEATURE

The **Association** web page *Memory Lane* feature continues to grow, with factual, non-fiction stories on **55SRW** or **55th Wing**, individuals, crews or events. Browse it and you may be surprised at what you view. You may even be inspired to contribute a first person story yourself.

You are invited, encouraged, urged, and welcomed to submit your inputs. This is your chance to let the **Association** membership learn of your experiences, ‘war stories’, and ‘there I was’ tales. Take advantage of this opportunity to share and preserve history.

You do not have to be a seasoned old vet to contribute. We would be particularly pleased to get tales from the active duty troops of the Association regarding Operation Desert Storm on thru the current Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom efforts in SW Asia.

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LETTERS AND STUFF



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To: Veterans and Friends of the **Strategic Air Command** August 10, 2009

From: **Ron Resh**, 2008 SAC Memorial Project Coordinator

Subject: SAC Memorial-Nebraska

As most of you are aware, **in May 2008, an impressive monument to the Strategic Air Command was dedicated at the National Museum of the USAF (NMUSAF)**, at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH. This was made possible through the generosity of individual **SAC** veterans, organizations and friends. I was privileged to serve as coordinator for that project.

Among those participating in the 2008 dedication ceremony were **Peach Janssen** of San Antonio, TX, and her son **Carl Janssen, Jr.**, of Monument, CO. They represented **SAC** families at the unveiling of the monument. This was most fitting because Peach’s late husband, **Carl, Sr.**, besides being a decorated combat pilot, played a key role in the development of the B-47, and served as first curator of the original **SAC** Museum when it was located adjacent to Offutt AFB, NE.

Pursuing their family legacy of involvement with, and service to, **SAC**, and following on the successful 2008 dedication at the NMUSAF, Peach and Carl have undertaken a project to place a similar **SAC** Memorial in Nebraska, the state where HQ **SAC** was located. I am pleased to be able to assist them in an advisory capacity.

The (*proposed*) monument in Nebraska would be a duplicate of the **SAC** monument at the NMUSAF. The new monument would be located

the Strategic Air and Space (SAS) Museum just off Interstate I-80 (exit 426 near Ashland), between Omaha and Lincoln. It would be situated inside a hanger containing a variety of aircraft associated with SAC during the Cold War. It would serve as a focal point and anchor of a major new exhibit honoring the history and legacy of SAC.

Having spent a week in Nebraska working on this project, and having met at length with the then-Director **Mac McLean**, and key staff of the SAS Museum, I can assure you that this facility is far different from the one some of us remember with mixed feelings immediately following the merger (and name change) of the Museum and the Society of the Strategic Air Command some years ago.

Exhibits and displays recognizing and honoring SAC are now prominently located throughout the facility. A variety of SAC items are available in the gift shop. The Director and staff clearly grasp the importance of SAC, and are committed to the success of the SAC Memorial—Nebraska Project.

Further information on this project will be forthcoming from the Project Coordinator, Carl Janssen, Jr. I urge you to give him the same type of encouragement and support shown to me in connection with the 2008 SAC project.

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(Ed. Note: McLean left the position of Executive Director as of 1 October. The interim director, Ms Evonne Williams, was quoted as saying she plans no changes in the general operation of the Museum.)

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MINI-MINI-REUNION

Max: Here we are again for yet another 55th mini-reunion, 25 April 2009. I have lost track how many years we have been doing this.....5, 8 years?



L to R: Roy Lewis, Anthony Long, AnthonyPisano

Lewis and Long were stationed at Offutt 1968-1970, and served TDYs to Okinawa, Eielson and the UK during that time. Both were AMS guys.

Piasano is an army veteran of Viet Nam.

We will get together again on 14 November at the Olive Garden in Danbury, CT.

Regards,

Roy Lewis, Wappinger's Falls, NY

(From an e-mail, 26 April 2009)

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Max: Another great newsletter.

I'm continually impressed by the history and passion our brothers put into the **Association**.

VO, **Bill Jensen**,

LtCol, Deputy Commander Ops Group, Offutt AFB, NE

Association Board Member *(Went PCS in July)*

(E-mail, 30 April 2009)

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Hi Max: I just finished reading the latest newsletter *(April 2009)* – another masterpiece.

Thank you very much for including the information about the B-47 Stratojet Association reunion. Just can't get too much publicity.

Cheers and congrats on the newsletter.

Dick Purdum, Bellevue, NE

Stratojet Assn Membership Chairman.

(E-mail 1 May 2009)

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Thanks, Max, for another great 55th **Association** newsletter.

I know everyone is grateful for your dedication, interest and efforts. It helps keep the old unit alive.

Reg Urschler, Bellevue, NE
(E-mail, 4 May 2009)

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A good newsletter, again.

Let's **not** have so many TAPS next time.

Errol Hoberman, Navarre, FL
(E-mail 29 April 2009)

(Ed. Note: Sorry, my man. 'We' have no direct control over that circumstance. See the following.)

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RETIREE LIFE EXPECTANCY

Results of new study provide more evidence that participating in **volunteer activities** may add years to an older person's life. In a study of U.S. retirees, researchers found that volunteering significantly reduced the chances of dying over a four-year period. Volunteering may improve health outcomes by expanding retirees' social networks, increasing their access to resources and improving their sense of self-worth.

In the study, **Dr. Sei J. Lee**, and colleagues from the VA Medical Center and University of California, San Francisco, examined 6360 retirees (whose average age was 78 years), who enrolled the Health and Retirement Study in 2002. As part of the study, the men and women, were asked: "Have you spent any time in the past 12 months doing volunteer work for religious, educational, health-related, or other charitable organization?"

Lee and colleagues found that volunteering was strongly associated with lower death rates, with 12% of 1766 volunteers dying by 2006 compared to 26% of 4594 non-volunteers.

Even after adjusting for numerous factors that could influence the results, such as the seniors' socioeconomic status, chronic illnesses, and functional limitations, **volunteering remained strongly correlated with lower death rates.**

The findings were reported at the American Geriatrics Society annual meeting in Chicago.

(Source: Reuters Health Megan Rauscher article, 4 May 09)

(Ed. Note: Of course all 'seasoned' **55thers** know this since so many are active volunteers for, and involved in, numerous, varied and worthy causes, organizations, and projects.)

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Editor's plea: If any members wish to contribute letters, stories, photos and articles, please send them to me. If events occur in your area that you think would be of interest to **the general readership**, mail or e-mail the pertinent details, and include the names of those **Association** members who attend. **Names are news.** The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from the near and far reaches of **Fifty-Fifth-land.**

Thanks, and **Videmus Omnia**, Max
(Contributions may be,..... well, very likely will be, edited for content, readability, and spacing.)

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55th WING MARKS ANOTHER MILESTONE

Aircraft and personnel of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** from Offutt AFB, NE, have been deployed to the US Central Command's area of responsibility (*SW Asia*) for 7,000 consecutive days (*and counting*). The mark was reached in September this year after the first RC-135 Rivet Joint planes, crews and support troops arrived there on 9 August 1990.

The code named 'Rivet Joint' aircraft are reconnaissance platforms supporting theater and national level consumers with the near-real time, on-scene intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination capabilities.

Warfighters from Operation Desert Storm, through present day operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, have benefited from the outstanding efforts provided by the aircrews, maintainers and support personnel of the **55th Wing**. The end, as yet, is not in sight.

To review Military Retiree Life Expectancy tables, refer to the Do

BrigGeneral John N. T. Shanahan, **55th Wing** Commander noted: “To reach 7,000 days deployed continuously in the AFCENT theater is a testament to the hard work, commitment, and pride of the **55th Wing** airmen. It is an incredible milestone as there are few other units (*if any*) in our service that can match our record. The sacrifices of the aircrews, maintainers, and their families over the past 19 years are truly remarkable.”

(Compiled from material in an article by Amn1stClass David Dobrydney, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs)

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AF REALIGNMENT PUTS **55TH** UNDER 12AF

In yet another transition, the **55th Wing**, Offutt AFB, NE, as of 1 October 2009, was placed under 12th Air Force (AFSouthern), Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ. The realignment is part of the ongoing Nuclear Enterprise Transformation. 12 AF also gained the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale AFB, CA, and the 552nd Air Control Wing at Tinker AFB, OK.

These moves are the last of non-bomber units to move from 8th AF and other numbered AFs. This movement is part of the continuing process of 8th AF moving from Air Combat Command to Global Strike Command in 2010.

Ten active duty wings now are under 12 AF (AFSouthern). All provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), command and control, battle management and/or cyberspace operations capabilities.

The **55th Wing** is the premier, and leading edge, unit to support national leaders and warfighters across the spectrum of conflict anytime, anywhere. Operating 46 aircraft, with 13 models of seven different types, the **Wing** accomplishes diverse ISR mission capabilities on a global scale.

As host unit at Offutt it supports over 80 tenant organizations, including US Strategic Command. All US military branches are represented among the

approximately 10,000 military and civilian personnel assigned at Offutt.

*(Compiled from an article by TSgt Eric Petrosky, 12th AF (AFSouthern) Public Affairs. Ed. Note: In its history the **Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth** has been under 2nd, 8th, 15th, and now, 12th AFs.)*

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ASSOCIATION BX

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ASSOCIATION COINS



Front



Back

Coin shown as actual size

Depicted above is the **official Association** coin (1.75” diameter) that was a gift commissioned and presented to all who registered for the September 2006 reunion in Omaha.

It is available for purchase. Make checks payable to the **55th SRW Association**. Send check and mailing instructions to Jim Thomas’ home address: 4418 Anchor Mill Dr, Bellevue, NE, 68123. **Coins are \$5 each, plus postage for 1-3 coins...\$1; 4-6 coins...\$2; 7-9 coins...\$3. For 10 or more coins, please contact Jim for cost and availability.**

You can view a color rendition of the coin on the **Association** website: www.55srwa.org/sales.

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ASSOCIATION POLO SHIRTS/CAPS

These are ‘must have’ items for the reunions, and they look good on the golf course, for casual Fridays at the office, and any leisure time.

Give a big hint to the family and mayhap some generous loved one will give you one for whatever you have going: Fathers Day, birthday, anniversary, Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Kwanzaa.

Great gifts! The shirts and caps are **unisex**, so get one for your spouse, significant other, or other family members. The family pet, even. Who cares, as long as we sell ‘em?

There are currently two designs available. Both have the dual shield on the left breast, no pocket.



The former design is white with red collar and sleeve trim, navy blue front placket. They are 100% pre-shrunk combed cotton pique. The quality is such that there is little fading or shrinkage. This shirt’s **cost remains \$25 per shirt.**

The **new** all white design is 100% polyester micro pique, moisture wicking and anti-microbial control. **The cost of this design is \$30 per.**

Be sure to state the design and size you want: S, M, L, XL, and XXL. We can order 3XL if the need arises; and yes, we have sold that size in the past. *Whoa, Big Fella! Whoa!*

The golf/ball caps are royal blue with the dual shield logo on the front, and an adjustable back strap. **They go for \$7 each.**

The items can be viewed in color on the **Association** web site at www.55srwa.org, and click on the *BX, Clothing Sales* links.

There are charges for priority postage to be added to the individual item cost, and the rates have increased thanks to the USPS: **\$10.35 for one or two shirts**; same **if both a shirt and cap** are ordered; **\$5 for a cap only.**

More ways to identify with your **Association** and “show the logo” at appropriate official and social functions.

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THE ASSOCIATION TIE

The **Association’s** ‘regimental’ tie is a distinguished blue and red striped design with the **Association’s** dual shield logo prominently displayed in the tie’s center. A fine gold line defines every fourth blue/red stripe. It can also be seen in color on the web site.

The price is \$25 per tie, including shipping and postage.

Order now! This item is a must have for the reunion banquets and other appropriate events. This may be our last batch.

* * * * *

Anyone desiring to purchase shirts, caps or ties can contact **Larry Utley** at his **new** e-mail **OFFWEGO@cox.net**; phone: 402-592-6627; or write **2409 Leigh Lane, also new**, Papillion, NE **68133**. **Checks for the full amount of your order should be made to the 55th SRW Association.**

As Larry reports, “The orders keep coming in and I ship ‘em out.”

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55TH FASHION PINS



*(Shown larger than actual size.)
(Note: The new version is smaller at .5 by 1.25 inches than the one previously offered.)*

As a direct result of newsletter notices, the pins continue to be sold to **55SRWA** members all over the country. They are particularly evident at official and social functions at Offutt and at **55th** reunions.

You will want to acquire one for that special lady in your life to wear on any occasion. Gents, it makes a great birthday, anniversary accessory gift, or holiday stocking stuffer.

(Ladies, if the ol' dude doesn't take the hint, order one for yourself.) Classy, but inexpensive.

The **Association** does **not** sell these pins and receives **no** money. But, as a service for those who wish to possess same: **Erwin's Jewelers, Frank Kumor**, proprietor *(and a good friend, supporter, and new member of the Association)*, offers them and **you can purchase directly from the store.**

Send order requests to 223 W. Mission Ave, Bellevue, NE; or call: (402) 291-2454, or fax to (402) 293-5873 to order the pins. **Costs are \$9 for the pin and \$4 for shipping.**

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REUNIONS

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B-47 STRATOJET ASSOCIATION

The B-47 Stratojet Association's next reunion will be in **Omaha, NE, 23-25 September 2010.** Mark your calendars now and please plan to attend.

Much more info is on the web site: **www.b-47.com** The organization is for anyone who flew, maintained, supported and loved the B-47 *Stratojet*.

Those who wish to join the Stratojet Association can contact Membership Chairman **Dick Purdum** at 13310 S. 26th Avenue, Bellevue, NE, 68123; Ph: (402) 291-5247; or e-mail him at dickpurdum@cox.net.

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SAC VETERANS REUNION

This group is picking up the baton from what once was the Society of **Strategic Air Command**, but it has a whole different makeover and administration.

It is one more in a series of reunions since the reformation. It will be held **25-29 August 2010, in Tucson, AZ.**

This reunion has been fully planned for some time with a schedule of events, registration form, and the whole enchilada. *(Yet another clever tie-in.....enchilada, Tucson,...maybe not.)* It is likely many of you may already have received the announcement, information, and registration package.

Event Coordinator is **J. T. (Toby) Romero**. You can get all the info from him, request a registration package, whatever, by using any of the following contact info: e-mail: **jtrome-25@excite.com**; phone: 1-520-203-8809; or write to: PO Box 14223, Tucson, AZ, 85732.4223

* * * * *



Giambri, Simon, Moore listen to Urschler's briefing on emergency procedures

* * * * *

55th WING BIRTHDAY BALL 2010

The gala **32nd Birthday Ball**, celebrating the 69th anniversary of the origin of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** in WWII, will be held on **Saturday, 10 April 2010** at the Embassy Suites in LaVista, NE. This is a new venue. **55th Wing** Commander BGen Shanahan will host the largest wing formal social event of the year, attended by 850 last year.

The guest speaker is **MajGen Thomas K. Andersen**, Director of Requirements at HQ Air Combat Command, Langley AFB, VA. The general served in the **55th SRW** as an RC-135 EWO, 1986-89. He also had tours at SAC HQ and USSTRATCOM at Offutt.

For the first time, the **55SRW's** Cold War contributions will be specifically recognized as a part of the program. The **Association's** Award for Excellence annual presentation is on the program, as well.

Another edition of the **Tales of the 55th** will take place the day before, as will the **Wing** Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend. Many **55thers** travel to this event and join the nearly 100 local members and guests who regularly attend, and make the weekend another mini-reunion



55th SRW ASSOCIATION RENO REUNION ATTENDEES

They were there and you weren't.

AGRONIS, Gil and Ellen
 ANDRIJESKI, Frank and Alene
 BACK, George and Gerrie
 BAILEY, Bruce and Fay
 BARRETT, Burton
 BEAUVAIS, Moe and Cris
 BENNETT, Jerry
 BLOUNT, Harris and Norma Kussmann
 BOOTHBY, George and Diana
 BOYDSTON, Ted and Marlene
 BROWN, Leland (Lee)
 CARBAUGH, Phil and Mickey
 CLARK, Rich and Thelma
 COFIELD, Ralph
 COOK, Bill and Beverly
 CROSS, Bill and Barbara
 DANT, Richard and Mary
 D'ORVILLIERS, Larry
 DRAGON, Gene
 DUER, Glen and Ann
 EDDINS, Douglas and Ann McFate
 ERNST, Bill and Linda
 EVERLING, Tom and Monica

GIAMBRI, Phil and Margareta
 GLASS, Fred
 GLOVER, Margaret
 GOEDEN, Sam and Pat
 GRIFFIN, Don and Marsha
 GRIGSBY, Don
 GURNEY, Don and Barbara
 GYULAVICS, Joe and Dottie
 HALL, Dave and Dottie
 HOOVER, Robb and Shirley
 HUTCHINSON, Richard
 KENNEDY, Ham and Pat
 KLAUSNER, Toody
 KOTHANEK, Joan
 LAWRENCE, Gene and Doris
 LEWIS, Bill and Carol
 MALONEY, Jim
 MALUNAT, Don
 MANLEY, Frank and Joan
 MARTIN, Dan and Mary Burg
 MCMAHON, Rick and Cary
 MICHAEL, Alan, Peggie and Allison
 MITCHELL, Larry and Susan

WHO SHOT WHAT



Graphics and official logos from various sources. Photo credits to: **Bruce Bailey, Frank Rasmussen**, Griffin, Thomas and Moore for the variety of reunion pictures throughout; BG Shanahan: official AF photo; his dinner pictures by Moore; Monument from Kovacs; Ronnie Mitchell provided by him; Krist from *Omaha World-Herald*; Tull by Moore and Tull family; Mini-reunion from Roy Lewis; *Mad Max* graphic by **Patricia Gros**; RC photo from *Air Force Magazine*; **Association** coin, Cook; **Association** shirt/cap, by Utle; **Association** tie, Pizzo; **55th** pin by **Beth Horine**.

MOORE, Max
 NAVARRO, Sylvia and Les (son)
 NELSON, Jim and Ruth
 NELSON, Jim and Sharon
 NUSSBAUM, Dick and Barbara
 O'KELLEY, Jean and Jim (son)
 PALMIERI, Elvio and Darlene
 PERRIZO, Jack and Michiko
 PHILLIPS, Patricia and Roxann (dau)
 POTTER, Pete and Treva
 RASMUSSEN, Frank and Connie
 REINHARDT, Ex
 RIEDEN, Hank and JoAnn
 ROSS, George and Betty
 ROSSER, Bill and Elly
 RUID, Glen and Kay
 SAENZ, Roland, Kathy
 SAENZ, Ray (brother) and Mary Jo
 SAVAGE, Walt and Ann
 SCHAPKER, Fred
 SCHOONOVER, Frank and Hilde
 SCHULTZ, Don and Lucienne
 SIMON, Bill
 SIMS, Robert and Susan
 SJOLUND, David and Carol
 SMITH, Gary and Patty
 TAYLOR, Jim and Marion
 THOMAS, Don and Barbara
 THOMAS, Jim

THOMPSON, Rick and Jacque
 URSCHLER, Regis
 WAPLE, Hugh and Etta
 WARD, Lloyd and Mary
 WATERS, Charlie and Jane
 WAXHAM, Frank
 WHITE, Ben and Betty
 WINTERS, Darlene
 WINTERS, CMDR Robert (son) and Christine
 YANUZZI, Nick and Georgina
 ZIRKLE, Bill and Bess



Don Thomas says, "Shoudda been here, folks. I'm pretty sure we had a great time."

RENO REUNION ALBUM



Hospitality abounds



.....And there I was.....



A goodly group yaks it up



Walt Savage and Jim Taylor commiserate



Margaret Glover and Marsha Griffin shine



MS Dixie II awaits



Deck hands Mitchell, Ernst, GSmith, Schapker



Banquet Social Hour



AF Reserve Color Guard



Some oldies but goodies



Reverend Fred Glass at his best



*Patricia Phillips, Jean O'Kelley, Don Malunat
(Nice tie, Pat!)*



McMahons, Rosses, Maloney, Connie Rasmussen



Riedens, Kennedys, Giambris, Bruce and Fred



Milling about as Mitchell, Gurney chat



Videmus Omnia

55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association, Inc.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

email: _____

Are you a Veteran? ____Yes ____No Branch of Service _____
(Dates of Service)

Are you a former member of the 55th Strat Recon Wing? _____

When were you a member of the 55th Strat Recon Wing? _____

(Dates of Service)



Are you a current or former member of the 55th Wing? _____

When were you a member of the 55th Wing? _____

(Dates of Service)



Which 55th Unit(s) were you a member? _____

Are you on active duty? ____ If so, with what unit? _____ Rank _____

What is your present occupation? _____

Return this form with dues, if applicable
(\$20 per year or \$55 for 3 years)*

to:

**55TH STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE WING ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 13165
OFFUTT AFB, NE 68113**

*Note - Dues expiration date – 31 December
Expiration Date for New Members Joining After 1 October is 31 December of the Next Year

