

Videmus Omnia

55th WING ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2015

REUNION

55th WING ASSOCIATION

SAN ANTONIO, TX

21-24 OCTOBER 2015

EMBASSY SUITES RIVERWALK

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The hotel contract has been signed and sealed.

The reunion rate is based on double or single occupancy at \$179, plus \$30 taxes/fees = **\$209. To make your reservations call 1-800-362-2779, and use the code 55th Wing Association Reunion.** Reservations can be booked on-line at **www.hilton.com** referencing the site, Embassy Suites San Antonio Riverwalk-Downtown, and group code **55W** in box indicated.

It is recommended you book reservations now, if not sooner.

Cutoff date for reservations at the venue is 30 September 2015.



You can get a look at this impressive hotel by going to *embassysuites3.hilton.com*, and then in the find a hotel block, put in Embassy Suites San

Antonio Riverwalk for a visual tour, plus loads of other information re: amenities, etc.

All Embassy Suites offer a complimentary cooked breakfast and a manager's 'happy hour'.

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HOTEL DOES NOT PROVIDE TRANSPORT FROM/TO AIRPORT.

Shuttles run 7:00 AM until 01:30 AM, every 15 minutes from airport to downtown hotels. Passengers may purchase tickets at the airport's baggage claim area: Ticket Rates--\$19.00 per person to downtown hotels, or \$34.00 for a round trip. Booking on-line saves \$4.00.

Options to book on-line or by phone are: www.gosaairportshuttle.com, or call 210-281-9900.

Or:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/SAT/GroundTransportation/shuttle>. It is San Antonio International Airport's authorized single and shared ride service.

Taxi is \$48 round trip. If you are not renting a car, shuttle is way to go.

Hotel offers valet parking at \$30 per day, plus tax, with **in/out** privileges, or \$15 per event/day parking, plus tax, (based upon availability) with **no in/out** privileges, meaning you pay every time you go in, **if** spots are available. Otherwise, parking is limited in the immediate area.

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Reunion Chairman is **Jeff "Buffalo" Herd**, a former **55 Wing** Operations Group Commander, and a member of the **Association** Board of Directors.

Anyone wanting to volunteer to assist with the various committees should contact Jeff at Buffaloherd14@yahoo.com, or phone: 719-963-2150. **Charlie McBride, Ned Gates, John Olivo, Jeff Ford** and **Nick Richter** are such stalwarts already.

Registration helpers, hospitality suite ‘attendants’, and such are areas where person power is needed. There are numerous **55th** alumni, spouses and widows in the general San Antonio area (*and we know who you are and where you live*).

The Board meeting will be on Wednesday, 21 October 2015. Time TBD.

The general membership meeting will be on Saturday morning at 0900. Any and all appropriate **Association** business will be discussed. Election of the Board of Directors is a major agenda item, **as is determination of where and when of next reunion. Give it some thought, people.**

Members, spouses, widows are all welcome.

There will be generous hospitality suite hours, an informal reception on Thursday evening, river dinner cruise on Friday, and dinner on Saturday (*coat and Association tie recommended for gentlemen*).

Selected tours and ‘things to do’ abound (*See list in reunion section*); plus the obligatory golf outing on Friday morning at the Quarry Golf Club, noted for its unique setting and design.

Updated information will be posted on the web site as it becomes available. Additionally, the site will have periodic postings of who is signed up to attend for your perusal.

The reunion registration form, agenda and other detailed information can be found at the back of this newsletter.

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A PERSPECTIVE

"I now know why men (and women) who served yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at faded pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men (and women) who once acted at their best; they who suffered and sacrificed.

They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other people. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than lives.

They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so prepared to die for one another.

As long as I have memory, I will think of them every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my

last thought will be of my family and my comrades.....Such good men (and women)."

Author and date - Unknown.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



“Strike”, our no-nonsense, hard-working, dedicated, and commanding leader.

Greetings from the Heartland:

I hope that everyone is having a pleasant and restful spring and summer. Extreme weather patterns seem to keep disrupting things though, especially in Texas where water has been an issue on the “not enough” side and now, in many parts of that state, “too much”. But, I guess that’s not all that’s disruptive out there.

Top of the morning to you! Here comes another chance to touch base with the membership with our prime communiqué and bring all up to date on happenings in the **Association** and events in the **55th Wing**. A lot has happened since the last newsletter.

The events of Heritage Week: Hall of Fame induction, Birthday Ball, Tales, Palm Trophy rededication, and other heritage events, were the culmination of lots of time and the efforts of many and were, all considered, a grand success for the **Wing** and the **Association**. Many contributed and fun times were had by all. You will see the pictures and stories here.

Shortly after the Birthday Ball came the change-over in command of the **Wing**. General Greg Guillot and family departed for their next challenge at PACAF Headquarters in Hawaii. We convey our best wishes to Gen Guillot for continued success, and we hope that there will be some down time often enough for the family to enjoy the islands. Our

thanks for always being a friend to, and supporter of, the **55th Wing Association**.

I need to continue to request and stress that all members help us with certain individual information the **Association** needs to maintain. The **Association** is a 501(C) 19 veterans organization, federal tax exempt. In order to take maximum advantage of various tax exempt provisions in the law, the IRS requires that we maintain data on members' military service. We changed our membership form in 2012 to include some of your military service information. This is our attempt to maintain the best practical data without privacy concerns being an issue. Thus, if the IRS audits us, we can say that we gave this matter our honest attention to document our members' military service and are in compliance with the tax code. Please help us in this matter.

If you have not filled out a membership application dated May 2012 or later, OR if you do not remember giving this service data to us, please go to our website, make a copy of the form, fill it out updating any other changed data, and mail it to Mike Cook, P O Box 13165, Offutt AFB, NE 68113. Thank you. *(The form is also included in this newsletter at page 23)*

Planning and organizing for the reunion is coming together. San Antonio awaits our return to the River Walk. It's a great town to have a gathering and we have engaged another great Embassy Suites Hotel. Lots to see and do. So much to do, we are taking a little different approach to tours and "things to do". With so many choices and so many very close to the hotel, we are leaving the schedule open to make room for your choice of "things to do".

Our anchor will remain as always, the Hospitality Suite(s). There will be plenty of information, maps and contacts for you to discover and make your selections. Starting with the registration form and agenda information herein, and more in the welcome package, and using the net, you know that a little reconnaissance of the target before the attack goes a long way toward final victory. **Let's make it another great get together.**

All the best this summer. Save some vacation time to come to San Antonio in October and see the "old gang".

As always, Y'all be careful out there, now.

Videmus Omnia, Jim.



DIRECTORS DIRECTORY

Association Business/Policy/Issues:

President Jim Thomas

4418 Anchor Mill
Bellevue, NE 68123-1168
E-mail: JThomas927@cox.net

Vice President Ricky McMahon

14325 Orlando Road
Nokesville, VA 20181
E-mail: potomacpistol@gmail.com

Membership/Dues/Changes of Address:

Treasurer Michael Cook

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

Secretary Trish Seinwill

9335 Branchside Lane
Fairfax, VA, 22031
E-mail: pseinwill@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor Max Moore

201 Basswood Court
Bellevue, NE 68005-2001

It is never too soon to renew your dues.

E-mail: MaxMoore55@aol.com

Webmaster Jim Maloney

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

Other Members of the Board of Directors:

Sam Pizzo, Bill Ernst, Errol Hoberman, Don Griffin, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Pete Glenboski, Kevin Todd, Don Kelly, Paul Jeanes, Val Dugie, Jeff Herd, Colonel Mohan Krishna.
Active Duty: MSgt Rick M. Brown, MSgt Vanessa Johnston.

Appointed Awards Chairman

Hamilton Kennedy

13701 S. 129th St
Springfield, NE 68059
HHAAMMKK@aol.com

Appointed Historian:

William (Bill) Sargent

2711 Northwood Circle
Papillion, NE, 68133
William488@cox.net

Appointed Enlisted Affairs Liaison:

Elvio Palmieri

1060 Highland Avenue

Lake Forest, IL 60045-3873

Elvio13@comcast.net



TREASURER’S REPORT



As of 30 June 2015, the treasury had an account balance (rounded) of \$51,000.

A significant portion of the money in the account comes from dues paid in advance. Therefore, we must keep money in reserve for each year to which the dues

apply.

Some members have paid as far ahead as 2020, 2022, 2025 (and he is over 90 years old!), and 2027 (just showing off)! Now that is loyalty and optimism, folks.

Although the **Association** is solvent, we have expenses, obligations, and bills to pay, such as this newsletter and directory publication and mailing.

It is never too soon to renew your dues.

So, please pay your dues promptly, or early and often. Thank you very much.



Remember that the **Association** is a **non-profit IRS 501(C) 19 veterans, federal tax exempt organization**. As such, you may **donate** additional funds to the treasury, or in the memory of a comrade taking that final flight. Those **donations (NOT DUES)** are tax deductible under an IRS ruling for the organization. Every amount, large or small, is very much appreciated. It happens.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There were **536 members in good standing as of 30 June 2015, compared with 547 on 31 December 2014**. Unfortunately, dues and members do expire. (See *TAPS*.)

Of those 547 members on 31 December **who did not renew by 1 April 2015**, regrettably, were **deleted** from the membership data base and the new directory.

Through ‘friendly reminders’ and such, over half have returned to the fold, plus a few lapsed members from years past, and some new recruits.

Retaining members, and recruiting new ones, is a recurring and never ending priority.

While not actual members, about 170 widows receive the newsletter gratis. As always, they are welcome to any and all **Association** functions.

Fifty-one **55th Wing** units and offices are sent the newsletter for PR purposes, and to keep them connected with the **Association**. Occasionally, this effort has a payoff of exposure for the **Association** and new active duty members, now at 24.



While the **Association** has members in nearly every state in the union (*none in Alaska or North Dakota. Go figure.*), plus in Europe and the Pacific, these states have the higher numbers: Nebraska, 123; Texas, 68; Virginia, 46; California, 31; and Florida, 30.



WHEN DO MY DUES EXPIRE?

That is the most asked question of the membership chairman. That date is on the address label to the RIGHT of your name in bold print: 20XX. Please make a note.

Life Members (LM) and widows are exempt.

You can now go to the **Members Only** section of the **Association** web site and see a listing of members and dues expiration year to check for yourself.

You must be a dues paid, member-in-good-standing to gain the password and access.

If you do **not** know your dues expiration date, to inquire on same, please e-mail **Michael.Cook@cox.net**; or drop him a note at the following address to get an update on your membership status. **When in doubt, send money.**

Please pay your dues prior to 31 December of your expiration year; but no later than 31 March to remain in good standing.

Mail to: 55th Wing Association
ATTN: Michael J. Cook
PO Box 13165

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There is a membership/information update form at page 23 of this newsletter, as well as on the Association web site.

Please use that form any time you pay dues, and/or to report any address or other changes in your contact information. That is the best way to ensure we have your latest information on file.

It is **imperative** to update your latest contact information, **especially** if you have relocated, changed your e-address, etc., within the past year.

The **Association** Directory accompanying this newsletter reflects the latest contact data in our records as of **30 June 2015**.

If you own more than one home, please give us **the** address you want any **Association** correspondence mailed to, and go into our data base.

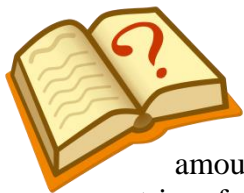
ALL CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE SENT TO YOUR HOME OF RECORD. Please keep us informed of any changes in your address or other contact information. Invariably we get returned mail because of outdated addresses. Third class mail is **not** forwarded. **Please help us stay current.**

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THE ASSOCIATION DIRECTORY

What is the first thing you do when you get a new directory? You look up yourself to see what's there, huh?

Then, if something is amiss, most comments will be some version of: "My (insert item) is wrong!!" A more correct term should be 'outdated'.



After months of diligent work in trying to make it the best directory possible, unfortunately, feces occurs. No amount of proofreading over 700 entries of names, addresses, phone numbers, etc., will catch every typo, and we *mea culpa* on those.

But, if members relocate and do not tell us, how can we know? Changes are even more prevalent with e-mail addresses as folks drop or change servers, or revise their e-addresses.

Worse yet, some packages will be returned as **non-deliverable** for whatever reasons to which the USPS attributes. First-class mailed is forwarded unless the addressee has moved over one year before.

Otherwise, it is returned to sender. Third class mail is not forwarded nor returned.

If/when mail is returned to the **Association**, then 'we' research and try to locate those members, or widows, and resend when possible.

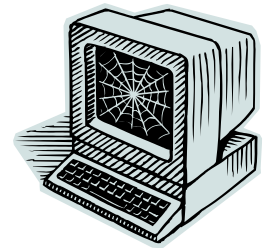
We need members' help in keeping all the contact info current.

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YOUR 55TH WING ASSOCIATION WEB SITE

www.55wa.org

The **Association** web site continues to be an integral and vital part of the **Association's** communications. It is where one can keep informed between newsletters, and where news is reported and updated in a timely manner.



From calendar year June 2014 to June 2015, nearly 3500 users visited the site for over 11,000 sessions, indicative of its popularity.

It is not uncommon for past **55th** members, or friends and families, to find the web site after an internet search, then reconnect/reengage friends and comrades from their days with the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**.

The **BX** section is where to find how to purchase the **Association** polo shirts, ties and other items.

Articles are added to the **Memory Lane** section as they are submitted. Please contribute **your own** to share with others.

Also, be sure to check out, contribute, and "Like" the **Facebook** page at <http://www.facebook.com/55thAssociation>. There have been 256 'likes' since its inception.

Check the web site regularly for the latest information on the next reunion, Birthday Ball, and other significant events.

A section listing who has signed up for the San Antonio reunion will be posted regularly.

There is a **Gallery** with a plethora of pictures: crews, planes, and other good stuff.

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An added link is in the **Members Only** page, where any member can check on his/her **DUES**

EXPIRATION DATE. This area is updated periodically and may not reflect recent renewals.

Another feature: On the front page is an area for members to enter their email address, and then they will be notified when there's been a change or update to the web site.

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Any member who wishes to read and/or download **Association** newsletters from the web site, rather than receive them by snail-mail, can notify **Michael Cook** of that decision.

That allows members to read the latest issue as soon as it is published, as well as read it wherever in the world one might be at anytime.

Thus far, that number is not significant.

Question arises: "How will I know when a new issue is published?" Historically, about six months from the last one.

Newsletters are usually published about four months **before** a reunion, a couple of months **after** a reunion, and about six months from that one.

Based on that 'schedule', you just have to make periodic look-ins at the web site to find out.

In order to do so, you will need to visit the **Members Only** page on the web site, and read the newsletter, or download it from there. **Simply request the username and password from the web-guy and you're all set.**

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25th AIR FORCE STANDS UP

*This article is somewhat dated, but has relevancy to those to whom it is news, and in other aspects, as will become evident as you read further into this issue of **Videmus Omnia**.*

On 14 July 2014 the Air Force announced the creation of a new numbered Air Force. The Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Agency (AFIRSA) essentially formed the 25th Air Force in a standup ceremony held 29 September 2014 at the headquarters of Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, TX, where the 25th is assigned.

Aligned under Air Combat Command (ACC), the 25th AF will focus ISR, electronic warfare, airborne national command and control, nuclear detection and treaty monitoring, targeting and analysis operations. It will provide decision advantage from those

operations to joint combat commanders, national leaders and coalition partners.

Units under the new AF are the **55th Wing** at Offutt, AFB, NE (*Hoo-rah!*), and the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale AFB, CA.

(Ed. Note: If this seems familiar, a similar realignment happened under Strategic Air Command in 1999 when 2nd AF stood up at Beale with BGen Larry Mitchell commanding.)

MajGen John N. T. (Jack) Shanahan, who had commanded AFISRA, was named commander of 25AF by, **General Michael Hostage**, ACC commander. MajGen Shanahan is a former **55th Wing** commander (April 2009–March 2011).

(Basic article from AF news, edited by Max Moore)

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55th WING HALL OF FAME 2015

The 2015 inductee into the **55th Wing** Hall of Fame was the late **Colonel Joseph J. Gyulavics**, USAF Retired.

The induction ceremony was held on 15 May 2015 in the Dock I of the Davis Maintenance Facility, officiated by **Colonel Mark Williamson**, Vice Commander of the **55th Wing**.

Association President Jim Thomas acted as emcee, a **first** for the event usually manned by active **55th** personnel.

He opened the festivities by relating the history of the **55th** Ceremonial Bell, and then invited the nine attending members of the **55th Wing** Hall of Fame to each give the bell a clang. Then they posed for a traditional lodge photo, a rare opportunity for such a gathering.





L-R: Lynn Duncan, Jeff Needham, Joe Siniscalchi, Mike Cook, James Taylor, Bill Ernst, Steve Stevens, Larry Mitchell, Max Moore.

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Members of the Gyulavics family attending were: **Barbara** and **Jim Mahoney**, **Linda** and **Terry Cadwell**, **Donna** and **Ron Jensen**, **Christine Gyulavics-Reyes**, **Conrad Gyulavics**, and other relatives and guests; along with many of Joe's friends and former crewmates and comrades.



Receiving the Hall of Fame plaque were Col Gyulavics' adult children.

L-R: Conrad Gyulavics, Christine Gyulavics-Reyes, Donna Jensen, Linda Cadwell, Barbara Mahoney.

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Colonel Gyulavics was a WWII and Korean War veteran before he became a strategic reconnaissance pioneer, flying sensitive surveillance missions over and near hostile Communist countries in Europe and Asia from the earliest days of the Cold War.

Of his career, over **19 consecutive years** were in the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW)**. He came to the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* as a second lieutenant co-pilot in RB-50s in 1952, became an aircraft commander in RB-47s, moved with the **Wing** from Forbes AFB, KS, to Offutt AFB, NE. His crew was the first to transition into the RC-135C. He departed the **Wing** as commander of the 343rd SRS when selected for promotion to colonel in 1971, without taking any PME courses!



A leader, mentor, role model, patriot and consummate professional, **Colonel Gyulavics** is eminently qualified for, and has earned, induction into the **55th Wing Hall of Fame**.

He and his devoted wife **Dottie** were regular attendees at **55th** reunions (when Joe relished in leading sing-a-longs).

Dottie died on 28 January 2011, and in less than six weeks, Joe passed on 9 March, two days short of their 65th wedding anniversary, 11 March 2011. He and Dottie were a remarkable team all that time.

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TALES OF THE 55TH

This year the Tales immediately followed the Hall ceremony, **also a first**, and President Thomas continued as emcee.

His opening tale recounted some Cold War history, including Operation Home Run in 1956, a series of **55th SRW** RB-47 overflights of Soviet Union northern areas for surveillance of military installations and to test defensive reactions.

There were incidents that made it a hot war as 75 Navy and Air Force crewmen died in the line of duty as a result of hostile actions by the Soviets, Communist China and North Korea.

One such event occurred on 1 July 1960 when a **55th** RB-47 operating out of RAF Brize-Norton, UK, was shot down by a Soviet MiG in an unprovoked

attack over international waters above the Barents Sea north of Murmansk.

The aircraft commander, co-pilot and navigator ejected from the aircraft, but the three EWOs perished: **Major Eugene Posa, Capt Dean Phillips, Capt Oscar Goforth.**

Aircraft Commander **Major Willard (Bill) Palm** died of exposure in the frigid waters; while copilot **Capt Bruce Olmstead** and navigator **Capt John McKone** survived for six hours in their life rafts until picked up by a Russian fishing boat. They were held in the infamous Lubyanka Prison in Moscow for seven months. They were released back to the US in January 1961 by **Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev** as a goodwill gesture to newly-elected **President John F. Kennedy.**



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In the late 1960s, Major Palm's brother commissioned a trophy in honor of Bill and his crew and presented it to the **55th SRW** at Offutt to be used to recognize outstanding flight crews during the ensuing years.

As can happen when there are changes in personnel, relocations, renovations, etc., over the several years, the trophy was misplaced. Just last year, an extensive search could not locate the trophy and its companion plaque.

Thus, at the suggestion of a long time **55th** veteran and **Association** member, **Tom Shepherd,** the **Association**



decided to replicate and replace the Major Bill Palm Memorial Trophy in order to restore history and to honor the sacrifices of

that RB-47 crew.

It took dogged determination and effort to find a vendor and the exact parts to produce a detailed replica, but it happened. Jim Thomas spearheaded

the process with innumerable, dedicated hours and diligent research all the way.

As a result, the new Palm Trophy and plaque were presented back to the Wing with Colonel Williamson accepting at the Tales.



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Another feature of the Tales is the 'redistribution of **Association** property', such as lithographs, memorabilia, and items from Erwin's Jewelers in Bellevue, an every year generous donor for that purpose.

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The crowd: Literally a cast of thousands filled the venue. Easily a record for the combined events, topping last year's attendance, due to the support and encouragement of the wing senior staff.

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SSgt Daniel Hinsely, 55th Contracting Sqd, recounted how he was 'outside the wire' in Afghanistan setting up contracts for local business and base support, and came under ambush. He had to lead his group back 'to break into' the friendly compound. An exciting tale indeed. (*Who knew contracting was a combat operation?*)



Major “Rub” LaFureny, operations officer of the 97th Intelligence Support Sqd, explained how the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth* takes the initiative toward adversaries has changed over the years

with numerous advanced technologies.



Information/intelligence is the key to modern warfare, and the side that ‘knows it’ and ‘uses it’ rapidly and effectively will have the upper hand.

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55th WING 2015 BIRTHDAY BALL

The 55th Wing held its 37th annual Birthday Ball, Saturday, 16 May 2015 at the Embassy Suites Convention Center in LaVista, NE.

It was hosted by **Brigadier General Gregory Guillot**, 55th Wing Commander, and his wife, **Caroline**.

The gala event celebrated the 74th anniversary of the unit from its roots in the activation of the 55th Pursuit Group at Hamilton Field, CA, in January 1941, during World War II.



The theme was “*Out of Many, We Are One*”, with the overriding idea being wing unity for the diverse missions of the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*.



The ceremonial cake cutting was done by, at left, Col (Ret) **Bill Ernst**, past president of the 55th Wing Association and a member of the 55th Wing Hall of Fame, as a representative of a senior generation of the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*; **Ann Dylan Gabel**, of the 55th Security Forces Sqd, the youngest enlisted in attendance (center), and **BGen Guillot**.

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Dave Webber, a local TV personality, was again the master of ceremonies and did his usual affable job. Dave served four years in the Air Force and was a member of the SAC Elite Guard in the early 1960s.

The program was highlighted by the presentation of Hall of Fame inductee, the late Colonel (Retired) Joseph J. Gyulavics, and the announcement of 2014 55th Wing Association Award for Excellence winners.

Guest speaker was **MajGen John “Jack” Shanahan**, currently 25th AF Commander. He has been nominated for a third star and will be assigned as Director for Defense Intelligence, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Pentagon. (*Whew!*)



This year's planning committee was headed by **Capt Michael Skarda** of the 97th Intelligence Sqd. The committee and workers are all volunteers from throughout the Wing who plan and execute this important event, the largest wing formal social function of the year.

Nearly 800 active duty, 55th alumni, local dignitaries, and assorted guests attended this year's gala. About 130 of those were **Association** members, locals and those from out of town who travel in for the week's festivities.

Among the dignitaries were Nebraska Governor **Pete Ricketts**, Bellevue Mayor **Rita Sanders** (*she and her husband Rick are 55th Commander's Wingmen*), Congressman **Brad Ashford**, four Nebraska State Senators, one of whom, **Bob Krist**, is a 55th alum and member of the **Association**.

There were six former wing commanders: in addition to MGen Shanahan, **Steve Stevens**, **Larry Mitchell**, **Dan Peterson**, **Don Bacon** and **BGen John Rauch**; plus eight members of the 55th Wing Hall of Fame, and eight **Association** Board directors were in attendance.

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The **Association** donates \$1000 every year to help defray the tickets for younger airmen. Max Moore represented the **Association** as an advisor to that committee.



Michael Cook, **Association Treasurer** (right), presents a check for \$1000 to **Capt Michael Skarda**, **President of the Birthday Ball Committee** (center), and **TSgt Olivia Fernandez**, **Fund Raising Chair**, on 30 March 2015, in the 55th Wing Commander's Conference Room.

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PLEASE TAKE NOTE: THE NEXT WING BIRTHDAY BALL HAS BEEN 'PENCILED IN' FOR 21 MAY 2016.

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55TH WING ASSOCIATION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The **Association** Selection Board during its deliberations to choose the winner of the past calendar year for the annual award, decided it was difficult to select a single person from so many outstanding performers; thus two nominees were chosen to be honored. The Board was unanimous in its decision.

TSgt William I. Nelson, an aircraft fuel section chief with the 55th Maintenance Sqd, was one winner. He had previously been named Wing NCO of the Year and recognized as a 25th AF Leo Marquez Award recipient for his superior record.



Association Board member MSgt Vanessa Johnston is shown presenting **TSgt Nelson** with the **Award for Excellence** plaque, as **Awards Chairmen Ham Kennedy** witnesses.

Senior Airman Tomas Carrion, a munitions operations crew member in the 55th Maintenance Sqd was the second winner for 2014, a young and outstanding performer. SrAmn Carrion was enroute to a new assignment, so the elements of the award will be forwarded to his commander with a request that they be presented at an appropriate time.

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The original trophy (shown left) commissioned in 2000, is to be retired and put on permanent display in the General Russell Daugherty Conference Center, just north of the Patriot Club, at Offutt once a newer high tech version is completed.



The has a screen displaying a of past ceremonies, This retained by and stored in a custom-built carrying case until needed for appropriate occasions.



Association Historian Bill Sargent is working that project. new version viewing capable of looped video winners and for example. one will be the **Association**

in a custom-built carrying case until needed for appropriate occasions.

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55TH WING GETS YET ANOTHER NEW COMMANDER

In keeping with a routine rotation, the 55th Wing got a new wing commander after two years, although it seems to come more often.

(Tempus fugit, it do.)

Colonel George Martin (Marty, "Moose")

Reynolds took the wing flag on 1 June 2015 from Major General "Jack" Shanahan, 25th AF commander, and himself a former 55th CC.

(Shown here:)

Colonel Reynolds is a



1992 graduate of the USAF Academy and a career EC-135 (COMPASS CALL) pilot. Since 2001 he has served in the 55th Electronic Combat Group (ECG) at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, in various capacities, broken by the occasional school or staff assignment.

He comes to Offutt from the position of commander of the ECG, one of six groups under the 55th Wing.

BGen Greg Guillot departed the Wing to be the Director of Strategic Plans and Programs for Pacific Air Force in Hawaii. Aloha!!

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A SALUTE TO HERITAGE

*By Josh Plueger, 55th Wing Public Affairs
January 2015*

There are special areas in the 55th Wing's flying squadrons where airmen convene. Places that display each squadron's history, which helps bond that unit's history to the present. Places where squadron heritage is alive and celebrated through the rituals of roll call. These designated spaces, the epicenter of the squadron and *esprit de corps*, are referred to as 'heritage rooms'.

"The Hoover Lounge is more than just another room in our squadron. It is where many Ravens call home," said **Capt Alicia Mikulak**, 343rd Reconnaissance Squadron (RS). "It builds a sense of community and family, and often brings people back long after they have PCS'ed, or moved to other squadrons on base.



A duo of crewdogs tend bar in the 343rd's Hoover Lounge. Note the 55SRW shield at lower center of back-lit wall.

Just a few units in today's military can say that they have a place like Hoover Lounge, where you can

walk in and be welcomed solely because of our heritage and tradition," she added. "It is one of the many reasons why the 343rd has been, and will continue to be, one of the best squadrons in the US Air Force."

A commonality exists among many of the Wing's units at the end of the work week. Airmen convene at times based on their squadron numbers. The men and women of the 343rd RS get together at 3:43 p.m., for example.

Squadron commanders hold roll calls with the assistance of an elected crewman designated as "mayor". It is usually standing room only as the commander holds court.



38thRS roll call 9 January 2015

New members are introduced and others may say farewell. Many leave their nametags attached to a wall or column, adding another layer to the living history in their heritage room. Even without squadron commanders present, roll call is held by the elected "Mayor" of the heritage room.

"It (*the heritage room*) is an excellent resource to make everyone feel like family, and to bring the new guys in and have them realize that they are now a part of something bigger," said **Capt Adam Wienk**, acting mayor of the 38th RS's heritage room. "They see that they are now part of a group dating back to 1941."

1Lt Shayler Pierson who works in the 97th Intelligence Squadron, said, "Because over 80 percent of our 400-plus airmen are first-termers, our heritage room is integral to educating them on our past, and definitely contributes to our unit's high morale and *esprit de corps*."

The 338th Combat Training Squadron (CTS) has been training RC-135 crewmembers since 1999. Its lineage dates to WWII, and was a weather

reconnaissance squadron at Forbes AFB, KS. That heritage room reflects its history.

Even though crewmembers rotate through this unit for training and move on, they know this is a place where they got their first exposure to the ***Fightin' Fifty-Fifth's*** legendary camaraderie.

"Our heritage room was fully remodeled by members of the squadron," said **Capt Christopher Pauly**, 45th RS. "The bar and the checkered green and white polka-dot wall patterns are just two examples of the exemplary work, time, commitment and pride put forth by squadron members to leave a legacy for future Wildcats."

With reconnaissance being the earliest of wartime aviation, it is fitting that the ***Fightin' Fifty-Fifth's*** flying squadrons have their own heritage rooms, rules and customs. Heritage room rituals connect today's airmen with crewmen of the past. In these rooms, rich in history, airmen forge a bond that is unique to the military; bonds that are remembered most as flyers bid farewell.

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(Ed. Footnotes: Basic article and photos by Plueger, condensed and edited by Moore.)

*The 343rd's lounge is named for the late LtCol (Ret) **Robb Hoover**. Two other squadron rooms are named for Hall of Famers, as well: the 38th for BGen (Ret) **Regis Urschler**, and the 338th for LtCol (Ret) **Ricky McMahon** (*The Godfather of RC Crew Training*).*

Interestingly, while Urschler was in the initial cadre of inductees in 1999 (in what evolved into the Hall of Fame) when the 38th's lounge was dedicated in March 2007 (and again in June 2013), both Hoover and McMahon had rooms named for them before they were in the Hall.

The 343rd dedicated Hoover Lounge in July 2006 (and again, after it was renovated, in April 2010). His was the first to be dedicated to an individual. Robb was inducted into the Hall in 2011. Sadly, he passed in October 2012.

The 338th room was dedicated in March 2009 and Ricky Mac went into the Hall last year.

*Also of note: The 45th RS dedicated its briefing/conference room in the name Chief MSgt (Ret) **Dennis Haun** in June 2007.*

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RUSSIAN FIGHTER INTERCEPTS 55TH RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT

The United States officials complained after a Russian fighter jet intercepted a USAF reconnaissance plane using hazardous maneuvers.

An RC-135U (COMBAT SENT) special use aircraft from the **55th Wing** at Offutt, was flying a routine mission on a regular route in international airspace from an operational location on 7 April, when it was intercepted "in an unsafe and unprofessional manner" by a Russian SU-27 Flanker, according to a US European Command statement.



"You can be assured that the United States is raising this incident with Russia in the appropriate diplomatic and official channels," a spokesperson for US European Command added.

(Bet that scared the vodka out of 'em!)

A Pentagon spokesman told CNN that the Russian jet performed "aggressive maneuvers" near the US aircraft, which was reportedly flying over the Baltic Sea north of Poland when it was intercepted.

The Russian state news agency *Sputnik* reported that the US airplane had its transponder turned off, and the fighter jet circled it several times to see its tail numbers during the 7 April morning incident, according to a Russian Defense Ministry spokesman MajGeneral Igor Konashenkov. *(Who cares what a Rooski says?)*

A US European Command official said the transponder **claim was completely false.** *(Surprise!!)*

("Deju vu all over again" for 55th SRW veteran crewdogs of 'the good ol' days'. Can you say COLD WAR II?)

(Excerpted and edited from THE HILL'S NEWS Blog by Jesse Byrnes, 11 April 2015)



MEMORIAL DAY IN THE UK

Major Nick Solis, Assistant Operations Officer, 95th RS, RAF Mildenhall, UK, prepares to lay a wreath at the Wall of Honor at Madingly American Cemetery, Cambridge, UK, on 25 May 2015. The wreath was placed in recognition of the WWII **55th Fighter Group** members who are buried there.



Major and Mrs. Solis and other members of the 95th were present at the Memorial Day ceremony representing the present day **55th Wing**. *(Photo by Mrs. Solis.)*

This was a joint coordinated project of the **55th Wing Association** and the **55th Wing**.



MAIL 'N STUFF



Max:

GREAT NEWSLETTER! *(January 2015 issue)*
Don Griffin, Wilton, CA.
(E-mail 18 January 2015)



Max:

Just read it cover to cover! I always enjoy the newsletter.

Much thanks to you and Jim *(Thomas)* for all the work you do.

Respectfully, **Don Bacon**, Papillion, NE.
(E-mail 19 January 2015)

(Bacon is a former 55th Wing CC, March 2011-June 2012, who returned to the Offutt area for personal reasons, family opportunities, etc. On 25

March, he announced his candidacy for congressman from the Nebraska Second District.)

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Max:

Hello from Lisbon, Portugal! Just got your e-mail over the past weekend.

Jennie and I are still at the US Embassy in Lisbon where I've been the Defense Attaché for the last 3.5 years. We depart the Post in two months on terminal leave. I will retire from the USAF after 30 years of service on 1 June 2015.

Jennie retired from the Reserves in 2012 after 20 years of Active/Reserve time. We are returning to Charleston, SC, where we have a home.

Hope you're doing well, and the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** still standing strong. Pass our regards to everyone.

All our best. Cheers,

Will Hampton, Lisbon, Portugal

(From an e-mail, 19 January 2015)

(Ed. Notes: Hampton is a former 338th CTS Commander, and was an active duty member of the Association Board of Directors, 2003-2005. In that capacity he wrote a superior article for the **Videmus Omnia** in the February 2004 issue. He also wrote an item for the Offutt base paper in which he said: "**The 55th SRW Association is the soul of our heritage.....**" He further stated that the Association preserves that heritage "through its members, who maintain the knowledge of our past accomplishments and current endeavors, a rich camaraderie, and friendships we cultivate in our military service.")

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Max:

I'm the 42nd Air Base Wing/CC at Maxwell AFB, AL; another wing with great SAC heritage from the B-52 days, and quite a number of streamers from WWII.

The wing turned 68 last week. Spring chicken by **55th** standards! **Colonel Terry Burke** (retired) was our guest speaker. I stole a page from **55th** heritage traditions!

There is a large posse of former **55th**'ers in this area.

Andrea Tullos, Maxwell AFB, AL

(Edited from a series of e-mails 19-20 January 2015.)

(Note: Col Tullos responded to being sent an e-newsletter and query on her duty. She was the **55th**

Mission Support Group CC 2011-2012, and an ardent supporter of the Association. Col Tullos was given a history article on the naming of the OTC HQ Building Auditorium for Robb Hoover at a dedication in May 2006.)

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Max:

It pains me to write this, BUT, the latest news letter was just as (??) as always!!!

When I receive an issue, I (*usually*) can't wait to read it in stages, (*but this one*) I read the entire thing just as soon as I opened it.

Your ex-friend,

Roby Craft, Satellite Beach, FL

(From an e-mail 28 January 2015)

(Note: There is a long running inside joke here.

He really is a friend.....I think. Max)

* * * * *

Max:

I joined up in 1989 (*at the reunion*) in New Orleans, when I first heard of the **55th SRW Association**.

When I walked in to the hotel meeting room and saw "**Hoss**" Walker and **Charlie Ward** from my RB-50G crew in 1951-1953, standing there telling true stories that I had convinced myself were merely dreams, I knew I had come to the right place.



I'm proud to have served with the 343rd SRS and the **55th SRW** during Korea era. We had a great crew and 'toured' often from Yokota AB, Japan, over North Korea, down along the China coast past Hainan Island, along the Siberian coast up to Fairbanks, AK; then from there to a point halfway to England, and back to, and in and out of Yokota, plus a couple of missions near Vladivostok.

We were the lucky ones. We went back to Forbes AFB, KS, in February 1953, and **Stan O'Kelley's crew** came in. They were not so lucky in July 1953. (*The crew of RB-50G, shot down by North*

Koreans, 29 July 1953, the first 55th Cold War casualties).

Ravens **Warren Sanderson** and **Bob Stalnaker** trained with us at Keesler AFB, MS, and we knew them and others on that crew well. **Jean O'Kelley** and the other wives were dolls, and it was a pleasure meeting them at **55th** reunions.

I was a Raven 3, ECM, "Old Crow", first lieutenant; with other Ravens **Charlie Rawson**, **Phil Halbman** (who was my best man in March 1953, when I got married in uniform), **Gordon Storm**, **Alfred Beacom**). In **Bruce Bailey's** book, we were the crew on page 36.

That crew was issued very obfuscated set of orders at Ramey AFB, PR, 10 July 1952, to **go to someplace, for some purpose** for approximately 200 days, and **return someplace** else. That last someplace turned out to be Forbes and we were glad to return there, kiss the ground, shake the general's hand, and go off for 30 days R&R.

In my case, that time included some celebratory days on trains going to various cities with fellow Ravens, eventually getting to NY/NJ, and getting married, and then driving back to Forbes, circa April 1953.

I was offered a captaincy in 1953 to stay in and go right away to England with my new bride in tow. But a joint decision was made to decline and for me to go on to law school instead, on G.I. Bill, of course.

My great friend Gordon Storm (ultimately, a LtCol) did stay in and went in to the RB-47's and flew some really hairy missions.

I've instructed my kids to put my **Association** pin on me when I'm permanently horizontal and have assumed room temperature. As long as I stay in the **55th**, I'll be forever young.

Regards to all, and **VO**,

Dan Martin, Glen Ridge, NJ.

(Composite letter edited from e-mails 10 and 16 April 2015)

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Max:

I am Jim Nelson. I flew with Joe Gyulavics as his navigator from 1957-1962, when I left to go to AFIT. Joe was a new A/C when I arrived at Forbes AFB, KS, in September, 1957, fresh out of B-47 upgrade training at Mather AFB, CA, (along with **Dave Romanick** and "Smokey" Slover).

Andy Cora (*the wing navigator*) assigned me in October 1957 to Joe's new non-ready crew, with **Les Frank** as a co-pilot. We picked up **Bob Albers**, **John Kothanek**, and **Ed Wakeman** as crews and became a "Ready" crew in November of that year. Our first deployment was to Thule in January thru April 1958.

We flew subsequent deployments to Japan in 1959-60, and to RAF Brize-Norton in 1961-62, the first **55th** deployment back into the Barents Sea after the loss of Palm's crew in (*July*) of 1960 (although one mission was flown there earlier by a **55th** crew).

(*Our RB*) was the first "*Silver King*" configuration and Joe had the aircraft painted (*by a local Brit artist*) as shown in the picture of our crew **Rich Clark** sent me. (*Below*) Rich joined our crew as a co-pilot before our Japan deployment.



L to R: Joe G, Clark, Nelson, Schulz, Redman, Kothanek

In that five-and-a-half years Joe and I flew together, we progressed from Ready to Lead to Select to Select Standboard (*crew status*) before our UK deployment in 1961.

During that deployment, we had the first KC-135 support and we flew #4293 approximately 300+hours from just after Thanksgiving in '61 to early April 1962. That was heavy utilization in those years.

We did fly the airplane home a couple of days before Christmas, and returned to Brize the day after New Year's, as I recall. **Don Schulz** was the Raven 1 on that deployment, and **John Redman**, Raven 2, and Kothanek was still Raven 3.

(*At Dayton, September 2003*) Joe, Clark, Schulz and I stood by (*the RB-47, 4299*) in the USAF museum during the reunion and for the dedication of the new Cold War annex with that bird in the center of the displays.

We marveled at how (*back in the day*) we were able to put on all that winter gear, carried our backpacks, briefcases, and gear up the ladder, and strapped into those birds for sometimes 14+ hours! It was an amazing time with amazing operations!!!

I often think about what luck it was that the **55th** needed navigators just as my refresher class graduated from Mather!!! I was lucky to fly with great crews in B-29's out of Yokota AB, Japan, during the Korean "police action", and with KC-97 crews in the 308th out of Savannah, GA, 1954-56, and those experiences were good training for the "graduate school" of the **55th** operations!!!

Also got a "sabbatical" back to crew duty in 1963 to go to 'Nam! I really didn't need the **55th** experience to fly the missions there!!!

Need to emphasize that I am Jim Nelson (#1) on Joe's crew (1957-62), since another, younger **Jim Nelson** (#2) served as Joe's navigator in later years (*in the RC-135*).

I have remained a **55th** (*SRW Assn*) member and am current (*with my dues*).

James R. Nelson, Spearfish, SD.

(*A composite edited from an e-mails 27/28 April 2015*)

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Max,

Thanks for your timely note. My time in Korea was cut short. We just moved to Robins AFB, GA, this week and I'm taking command of the 461st Air Control Wing (*E-8C, JSTARS mission aircraft*) on Monday, 22 June.

Sharry and the family are doing great. Sharry loved it there, shopped her way across Korea. She surprised us all with her outstanding linguistic abilities and quickly became the family translator.

Hope all is well with you and your family.

Say hi to the Recce gang for me.

V/R, **Coop** (*From an e-mail, 20 June 2015, Colonel John Cooper, is a former commander of the 338th CCTSqd at Offutt. He responded to an inquiry on his duty status.*)

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NEWSLETTER INPUTS WELCOME

Here is how members can help diversify the coverage in Videmus Omnia:

Editor's usual plea: *If anyone wishes to contribute letters, true (humorous or otherwise) stories, photos and articles, please do so.*

Send them to MaxMoore55@aol.com, preferably; or mail to the address in the Director's Directory, pg 3. We encourage and welcome the input.

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When 55th events occur in your area (Florida, MD/VA/DC complex, Denver/CSprings, Texas, California, wherever) that you think would be of interest to the general readership, mail or e-mail the pertinent details, and include the names of those who arrange and attend.

Names are news. Use 'em. Pictures are good.

The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from the near and far reaches of Fifty-Fifth-land.

Please see following items as examples.

(Contributions may be,..... well, of course they will be, edited for content, readability, and spacing. It's what I do.)



Thanks, and Videmus Omnia, Max.

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EAST COAST "CHAPTER"

East coast area alumni, including active duty, retirees and 'beltway bandits', have occasional social gatherings. Events are organized periodically for reconnecting, exchanging information, and camaraderie in the **55th** spirit.

With **Rick Mac's** leadership, the usual summer gathering for BBQ and a baseball game at the Potomac Nationals' minor league park in the Woolbridge area is in the works for later this summer.

For information on future 55th Wing Association East events, or to get on the e-mail listing, drop Ricky McMahon an e-mail at potomacpistol@gmail.com, or find him on the Pentagon Global for those with access, then pass him your contact information.

The more the merrier (*obligatory cliché*).

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SAN ANTONIO LUNCH BUNCH

This alumni 'chapter' is growing and flourishing. As **Dave Frutchey** and **Charlie McBride** have reported, they gather the last Thursday of the month, 1200 hours, at the *Lion and Rose Pub*, Blanco and Loop 410. Charlie secured a private room and the service has been very good.

Initially, a little over a year ago, five veteran crewdogs began the group that has now grown to over 20 'members'. About 12-15 typically attend each 'monthly meeting'.

The most recent was on Thursday, 25 June, when Reunion Chairman Jeff Herd attended and went over the planned reunion activities. He also requested volunteers for Registration and Hospitality. **Ned Gates** volunteered to oversee registration, and McBride said he would take responsibility for the hospitality suite. (*Good on 'em!*)

It was also a time of reliving the past, and just enjoying one another's company. In attendance, besides those mentioned, were: **Jeff Ford, Nick Richter, Bruce Barker, Jim Hilliard, Ken Bryars, Hiram Goya, Ralph Cofield, Mike Morris, Bill White, Ron Nickerson, Bill O'Hara, Chuck Younkin, and Howard Ham.**

One of these days they will get around to taking pictures.

Anyone wishing to join this convivial group can contact Dave at dfrutchey@att.net, ph: 210-355-0040; or Charlie at cmcbride40@yahoo.com, ph: 830-438-3349. Better yet, just show up.

The more the merrier (*obligatory cliché*).

(*This is a recording.*)

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CSPRINGS/DENVER AREA

Kerm Neal is the man-what-am in Rocky Mountain country. If you are interested in being included in future alumni events when planned,

or to get on his e-mail listing, send your contact info to him at Kermit.d.neal.civ@mail.mil.

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If there are any new 'chapters' forming out there in Fifty-Fifty -land, please let it be known so the word can be spread. California, Florida, and other parts of Texas (to list just a few) all have pockets of alums where such activity may occur.

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MEMORIAL BRICK ORDERS: STILL CAN DO

Fellow Members:

There may be some 55th veterans and/or family members, friends, associates, who want to order bricks for the 55th SRW Cold War Memorial patio in the National Museum of the USAF Memorial Gardens.

If you wish to buy a brick, or know of anyone who wants one, now is the time to place an order.

Any new bricks will be placed when weather conditions permit this summer and fall.

The cost is **\$65 for per brick**, and the engraving is **limited** to three lines, 13 characters per line including spaces, dashes and slashes. (**No periods, commas, colons, semicolons or quotation marks.**)

You can e-mail **exactly how you want your brick to read (all caps, please)** to BillErnst1@cox.net. Make your checks payable to **55 Wing Association** and mail to Bill Ernst, 410 Greenbriar Court, Bellevue, NE, 68005.

Videmus Omnia, Bill

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EC-135 RESTORATION BEGINS

On Friday, 13 March 2015, the Strategic Air and Space Museum, near Ashland, NE, held its "Kick-Off" event to begin the restoration of EC-135C, Aircraft tail number 38049.

The Museum Director, **Dr. Mike McGinnis** welcomed the audience of over 100, most of them veterans of the SAC Airborne Command Post, *Looking Glass* era. He then summarized the Museum's plan for restoring aircraft 38049.

That specific plane flew the final *Looking Glass* mission 24 July 1990 with CINCSAC **General Jack**

Chain as the AEAO and pilot for takeoff and landing.

The plan projects the restoration cost at approximately \$200,000; will take until November of 2017, and require 200 hours per week of volunteer time to work on the aircraft. Just over \$30,000 has been donated, so far.

Donations signifying “EC Restoration” can be sent to: Strategic Air and Space Museum, 28210 West Park Highway, Ashland, NE, 68003.

The EC is to be restored inside and out to its original condition (*as much as possible*) during its heyday. But, it will be displayed without wings due to space limitations.



The **55th Wing** was represented by Vice Commander **Colonel Mark Williamson** at the event.

The lead-off speaker was US Navy **Admiral Cecil D. Haney**, US Strategic Command commander. Admiral Haney reviewed the history of the SAC Airborne Command Post (ABNCP), and the EC-135s. He stressed the importance of the ABNCP mission to the success of the United States’ nuclear deterrence strategy during the Cold War.

The admiral lauded the actions of the SAC personnel, and later STRATCOM members, who laid the basis for the procedures used on the current STRATCOM ABNCP. An ABNCP is still required to ensure that the United States will continue to have command and control of its nuclear forces before, during and after any nuclear attack, and therefore, deter any nuclear exchange.

At the conclusion of Admiral Haney’s presentation, the lights on the restoration hanger were turned on to reveal 049 sitting in the hanger.

It shows the wear of being outside exposed to the elements since 1993, but still featured the faded, but prominent SAC and **55th SRW** shields.



LtGen (Ret) **Bob Hinson**, a former Deputy CINC of STRATCOM, also one of the Museum’s directors, expressed the Directors’ commitment to the EC-135C restoration project. He emphasized that the Museum is committed to placing much more emphasis on SAC’s history and the Cold War.

The issue of **renaming** the Museum was on the Directors’ agenda for a meeting the week of 15 March 2015, but Hinson did not forecast the outcome of that issue at the meeting.

(See following updates.)

MajGen (Ret) **Bill Doyle**, reminisced about his flights as an Airborne Emergency Action Officer (AEAO) on the SAC ABNCP. General Doyle had the second most number of missions as the AEAO. (MajGen **Jack Watkins** (*Deceased*) had the most.)

Colonel Tim Murtha also spoke. He is in charge of STRATCOM command and control, which includes the current STRATCOM ABNCP. A STRATCOM general pulls alert as the AEAO. The crews stand mostly ground alert, much as SAC crews did to man and fly *Looking Glass* missions.

After taking a few questions, Dr. McGinnis invited the attendees to view and board aircraft 049.

Hank Carriger, (LtCol, Retired) and **Al Buckles** (CMSgt, Retired) are co-chairing the Restoration Committee, but are not on the Museum staff. They will be seeking donations and recruiting volunteers to work on the EC.

Several people signed up to volunteer on the restoration and/or to provide oral histories. More volunteers will be needed, so please encourage your friends who live in the **Omaha/Lincoln area** to volunteer. They can do so by using the Museum’s website: SASMuseum.com.

UPDATE- 29 May:

Please note that SAC history is a **principle** mission of the Museum, but not its **only** mission.

At subsequent meetings the Museum Board of Directors decided to move forward with renaming the Museum. There were five proposed names considered, and the Board has been seeking input from members and SAC veterans.

The directors wanted at least 500 votes before making the final decision.

(Basic article and updates provided by Hank Carriger; added info and edited by Max Moore)

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NEWS FLASH!!! MUSEUM CHANGES NAME

A press release dated **25 June 2015**, announced that the Strategic Air and Space Museum Board of Directors approved the Museum staff's recommendation to rename the museum the "**Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum**".

The process began in March and the Museum asked for public opinions, through various modes of communication, as to whether or not the Museum should consider a name change, and asked for suggestions on what that name should be.

"Nearly 2,000 voted on the name – 92% agreed it should change to something with **SAC** included." Of the five names considered, two were clearly the front runners.

"The museum staff and board of directors agreed it is important to pay tribute to SAC, but also important to tell others outside of the local community what we are. We are an air and space museum offering educational platforms. We feel it is important to include the Aerospace in the naming convention."

"The name will become official immediately but the unveiling of the logo will occur in the Spring of 2016."

(Edited and condensed by Moore from an original press release by Deb Hermann, Marketing Director, Strategic Air and Space Museum)

*(Added info: **The Strategic Air Command Museum** was the leader in vote total, but the selected name was "a close second" and used for the rationale stated above.)*

(Also FYI: The original museum in 1959 was the Strategic Air Command Museum until 1966 (when it was at the north end of Offutt AFB), and again from 1991-2001. The name was the Strategic Aerospace Museum from 1966-1991.



The new building near Ashland, NE, opened in 1998 as the Strategic Air Command Museum. The name was officially changed to Strategic Air and Space Museum in 2001. That was done without any public input from museum members or SAC veterans, or the public, and without any prior notice.

Everyone should remember the rancor and controversy that caused. At least now there is a different attitude and accommodation.)

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ACTIVE DUTY BOARD MEMBER HONORED

MSgt Vanessa L. Johnston, an active duty representative to the **Association** Board of Directors, returned in late April from the Senior NCO Academy. She was recognized as a Distinguished Graduate of the seven week course, and was also presented with the Commandant's Leadership Award.

She is Superintendent, Airborne Cryptologic Training, **55th** Intelligence Support Squadron.

Hearty congratulations to this outstanding member of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*.

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ASSOCIATION TO FETE NEW 55TH WING COMMANDER

Local members of the **Association** Board of Directors and others from the local area will host Colonel Marty Reynolds at an informal social and dinner on Wednesday, 8 July 2015, at Piccolo Pete's Restaurant in Omaha.

Col Reynolds is the twelfth commander to be so greeted in a tradition begun by past president Bill Ernst in 1996. The purpose is ‘a get to know each other’ in a casual atmosphere so as to let the commander know who and what the **Association** is; and to show him he has another resource to assist and support the active duty wing in several ways.



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T A P S

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ADAIR, Jerry E., 80, 13 February 2015, Charleston, IL; survived by wife of 56 years, **Lelia**. An RB-47 crew chief in the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW)** at Forbes AFB, KS, in the 1960s, he was a veteran of the Korean, Vietnam, and Cold Wars. He worked for Moore Business Forms for 27 years after his Air Force career.

CARCICH, Marvin J., 90, 27 May 2015, LaVista, NE; wife of 62 years, **Patricia**. A veteran of WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and Cold Wars, Marv was an RB-47 EWO with the **55th SRW** at Forbes circa 1955-61. He later served in the Pentagon, and at 8thAF, and was Deputy Director of Reconnaissance in SAC HQ/IN, 1971-74. After retiring, he was active in local and civic government for several years.

CLOSSON, James, (*Age not reported*) 1 April 2015, La Jara, NM. Jim was an RC-135 EWO in the **55th** at Offutt, circa 1970s. He later flew and worked for the Navy’s NKC-135 program at Tulsa, OK, and Waco, TX, for a number of years.

DETTMER, Paul A., 59, MGen (Ret), 29 December 2014, Centerville, VA; wife, **Catherine**. A 1977 AF Academy graduate, he began his career with the 6944th Security Sqd at Offutt, and was in electronic security squadrons and intelligence

assignments most of his career, including Deputy Director of ISR, HQ, USAF in 2005.

EMIG, Charles W. (Chuck), 82, 12 March 2015, Williamsburg, VA. A tanker pilot before coming to the **55th** at Offutt, where he flew the EC-135 Airborne Command Post, and later was on staff, circa 1970s. He operated the Olde Fontenelle Gun Shoppe in Bellevue, NE, for 33 years. He was very active in community activities, serving on the city council March-December 2002. He had two sons who were AF officers and commanders.

GRAY, Charles E. (Eddie), 83, 24 April 2015, Tallahassee, FL; wife of 60 years, **Lisbeth (Libby)**. Eddie served in the **55th SRW** at Forbes as a pilot in the RB-47 from 1955-1965. He then was in the intelligence field, including a Vietnam tour and the Pentagon, until he retired in 1978.

HALL, David W., 81, 28 January 2015, Roseville, CA; he was married to **Dorothy** for 59 years. He was an RB-47 crew chief in the **55th SRW** at Forbes in the 1960s.

HUESER, Ralph, L., 78, 26 May 2015, Bellevue, NE; wife, **Ruth Ann**. An RB-47 and RC-135 EWO in the **55th** at Forbes and Offutt thru the 1960s, early 1970s, he also was on staff until he retired in 1973. He was a deacon in the Omaha Archdiocese for 40 years. He was recognized as the *Bellevue Leader’s* **Person of Year in 2009** for his inspirational leadership of many and varied charitable activities over several years.

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TAPS notification of **Association** members, spouses, friends and associates should be sent to Editor Max Moore, 201 Basswood Court, Bellevue NE, 68005; or e-mail MaxMoore55@aol.com

Please include next of kin and an address to whom an Association condolence card may be sent.

The date of demise, age, location; and if known, connection to the 55th - base, time frame and Air Force duty will be helpful.

Please note that the news in TAPS is determined and limited by how much and how accurate the given source information.

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TAPS ON THE ASSN WEB SITE

The TAPS section has an alphabetical, as well as chronological, listing for easier access to the names and dates of those in the 55th family who have passed.



Anyone who wishes to have the name of a family member, friend, or comrade who was a former member of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* added to the listing can request the web-guy to do so.

Please have the date of demise (*at least the year*) for placement.

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FLAGS FLOWN OVER THE AIR FORCE MEMORIAL ARE AVAILABLE

The Air Force Memorial staff has available for purchase, **US flags** flown over the memorial. These are great gifts for retirement, birthdays, Christmas, etc. All flags purchased through the Air Force Memorial are **made in the USA** and include a certificate of authenticity.

Pricing: 3 x 5 - \$24 Nylon, \$34 Cotton; 5 x 8 - \$42 Nylon, \$59 Cotton (plus \$6 shipping). Nylon is recommended if the flag will be flown outside.



You may choose a **specific significant date** on which you would like the flag flown over the Memorial.

You can also request that a flag you already own to be flown for free.

For specific and updated information, contact the Air Force Memorial staff at Ph: 703-979-0674, or go to afmf@airforcememorial.org home page, click on the EVENTS block, then the 'Flag Flying Request' link (*left side*) to download the order form

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ASSOCIATION BX

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ASSOCIATION POLO SHIRTS/CAPS

These are 'must have' items for reunion events; plus, they look good on the golf course, for casual Fridays at the office, and any leisure activity.

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



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

Great gifts! The shirts and caps are **unisex**, so get one for your spouse, significant other, or other family members, the family pet even.

The all white design is 100% polyester micro-pique, moisture-wicking and anti-microbial control; available in sizes medium, large, XL, and XXL. Size 3XL can be ordered if requested. **The cost is \$35 each.**

Be sure to state which size you want in your order.

* * * * *

The golf/baseball caps are royal blue with the dual shield logo on the front, and an adjustable back strap. **They go for \$12 each.**

There are charges for priority postage to be added to the individual item cost: \$5.45 for one cap; \$10.45 for one shirt; \$11.35 for both a shirt and cap order; \$11.35 for two shirts.

More ways to identify with your **Association** and “show the logo” as appropriate for official, social and casual functions.

* * * * *

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.



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

Conceived by Sam Pizzo, this item is another ‘must have’ for **Association** reunion banquets and other appropriate events.

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Anyone desiring to purchase any of the advertised items should contact the haberdasher, **William (Bill) Sargent** at 2711 Northwood Circle, Papillion, NE, 68133 or William488@cox.net

Checks for the full amount of your order should be made to the 55th Wing Association, and Bill will be promptly on your order.

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55TH FASHION PINS



(Shown actual size)

The pins continue to be sold to **Association** 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 or anniversary accessory gift, or holiday stocking stuffer.

Classy, but inexpensive.

The **Association** does **not** sell these pins and receives **no** money from the sales. But, as a service for those who wish to possess same: **Erwin’s Jewelers, Frank Kumor**, proprietor, 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.**

* * * * *

Frank is an **Association** member and ardent supporter. He is also a **55th** Commander’s Wingman, and recently was inducted into the Sarpy County (NE) Business Hall of Fame.

* * * * *

WHO SHOT WHAT

Hotel from its web site. Graphics from various sources and web sites. Pictures not previously attributed: official AF of MGen Shanahan; Thomas, Hall of Fame, Shepherd with Palm trophy, and Tales crowd, Ball check and Award for Ex pix by Moore; Joe G’s last official AF photo. Tales photos and Ball logo by Josh Plueger, **55th** Wing Public Affairs (PA); Ball cake and speaker pix, **Jeff Gates, 55thPA**; new trophy by Bill Sargent. Change of Command by **Charles Haymond, 55thPA**; EC-135 restoration pix by Moore; AF Memorial from its web site.

Association shirt/cap by **Larry Utley**; tie by Pizzo; **55th** pin by Moore; ‘Mad Max’ at desk graphic by **Patricia Gros**, friend of the **Association.**

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Videmus Omnia



55th Wing Association, Inc.

(Formerly – 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Address Update)

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

e-mail: _____

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 WING ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 13165
OFFUTT AFB, NE 68113

* Note – Expiration date of new members joining after 1 Oct extended to 31 Dec of following year

** Note – Dues expiration date – 31 December

***Note - Questions? *Contact Michael J. Cook, Membership Chairman, at Michael.Cook@cox.net, or at*

the above mailing address, or call (402) 578-5848.

SAN ANTONIO 55TH WING ASSOCIATION
21-24 OCTOBER 2015
AGENDA

WEDNESDAY ASSN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING TBD
MANAGER'S RECEPTION – 1730-1930

THURSDAY HOTEL COMP BREAKFAST 0600-1000
REGISTRATION 1200-1730
HOSPITALITY SUITE 1200-1730
MANAGER'S RECEPTION 1730-1930 (FYI)
INFORMAL RECEPTION 1830-2030
(Dinner on own as desired)
HOSPITALITY SUITE 2030-2300

FRIDAY HOTEL COMP BREAKFAST 0600-1000
 GOLF TEE TIMES 0930-1040
REGISTRATION 1200-1730
HOSPITALITY SUITE 1200-1730
MANAGER'S RECEPTION 1730-1930 (FYI)
DINNER RIVER CRUISE, *Casa Rio*, 1730-2000
(Min: of 14 to go, max: is 20 per barge; i.e., 35 = two barges, etc.)
(Otherwise, dinner on own)
HOSPITALITY SUITE 2000-2300

SATURDAY HOTEL COMP BREAKFAST 0700-1100
MEMBERSHIP MEETING 0900-1100
REGISTRATION FOR LATE ATTENDEES IN THE
HOSPITALITY SUITE 1200-1730
MANAGER'S RECEPTION 1730-1930 (FYI)
REUNION DINNER SOCIAL 1800, DINNER 1830
HOSPITALITY SUITE AFTER DINNER - 2300-??

SUNDAY HOTEL COMP BREAKFAST 0700-1100
SAYING FAREWELLS (OR NOT)

***PLEASE NOTE THIS ITEM MAY HAVE CHANGES BETWEEN NOW AND REUNION .
FINAL AGENDA WILL BE PROVIDED AT REUNION REGISTRATION.***



55th Wing Association Reunion SAN ANTONIO “THINGS TO DO”

**These attractions are self-guided; contact the attraction directly for more information
SIGN UP ON LINE BEFORE GETTING TO REUNION TO SAVE ON PRICES.
Most Offer Military Discount – ASK FOR IT**

VisitSanAntonio.com for more details or *TheSanAntonioRiverwalk.com*

San Antonio “Things to do”	Address	Contact info
The Alamo – Hours 0900-1730	300 Alamo Plaza (0.57 miles from Embassy Suites)	(210)225-1391
San Antonio Missions National Historical Park	2202 Roosevelt Ave (3.36 miles from Embassy)	(210)534-8833
City Sightseeing Double Decker San Antonio (Bus Tour)	204 Alamo Plaza (0.55 miles from Embassy)	(210)224-8687
Alamo Trolley	216 Alamo Plaza (0.53 miles from Embassy)	(210)247-0238
Rio San Antonio Cruises (River Boat Tour of River Walk Area)-- Hours 0900-2100	315 E. Commerce St (0.4 miles from Embassy)	(210)244-5700
San Antonio Museum of Art— Hours Tues-Fri 1000-2100 & Sat-Sun 1000-1700	200 W. Jones Ave. (1.27 miles from Embassy)	(210)978-8100
Briscoe Western Art Museum-- Tues-Thurs 1000-1700 & Fri-Sun 1000-1800	210 W. Market St. (0.42 miles from Embassy)	(210)299-4499
Buckhorn Museum and the Texas Ranger Museum	318 E. Houston St. (0.24 miles from Embassy)	(210)247-4000
Majestic Theater	208 E. Houston St (0.11 miles from Embassy)	(210)223-8781
Arneson River Theater at La Villita	418 Villita St. #900A (0.43 miles from Embassy)	(210)207-8612
La Villita Historic Arts Village	418 La Villita St (0.43 miles from Embassy)	(210)207-8614
A.R.T. Massage Body Spa & Yoga	215 W. Sunset Rd (7.92 miles from Embassy)	(210)832-0892
Alamo Plaza Spa @ the Menger Hotel	Next to the Alamo (0.57 miles from Embassy)	(210)223-5772

Boerne, TX “Bur-nee” Antique Stores, Food and Shopping	Boerne, TX (32 miles from Embassy)	Visitboerne.org; Visitor Center; 888- 842-8080
Multiple Shops, Restaurants and Bars	On the River Walk a Short walk from the Embassy	

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

The Alamo is a **must do** if you have not been there.

After visiting the Alamo, see the crypt of Bowie, Crockett, and Travis. Do not miss the beautiful stained glass and the evening light show on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday at dusk thru darkness. You won’t forget the experience.

Another **must do** is the San Fernando Cathedral, two blocks from the hotel, newly restored, the oldest active Catholic Cathedral in the United States.

Lunch and Shopping at the *Mercado*

Catch the trolley a block south of the hotel. It will take you across the street from the *Mercado*. After shopping, catch the trolley there for a trip back to the hotel or just make the 10 minute walk you; or have lunch and some margaritas at *Mi Tierra*. There will be a signup list at registration desk for a shopping and lunch trip Saturday after the Membership Meeting departing about noon. Sign up early so we can call ahead for prompt service, etc.; or just stay with the margaritas at *Mi Tierra* while the wife shops at the *Mercado*.

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*The following essay was originally provided by **Bud Morss** and **Don Griffin**, and was first published in the August 2002 issue of **Videmus Omnia**, and again in February 2011 and July 2013.*

All the specifics may not apply to our group, and the exact atmosphere of our gatherings, but it captures the essence of any military reunion, and is moving enough to share and savor.

It still seems appropriate as yet another reunion approaches.

THE REUNION

By **Rachel Firth**

Autumn leaves rustling, together at the appointed place, the old warriors come. Pilgrims, drifting across the land they fought to preserve. Where they meet is not important. They meet and that’s enough for now.

Greetings reach across a lobby. Hands reach out and arms draw buddies close. Embraces, that as young men they were too uncomfortable to give, too shy to accept so lovingly. But, deep within these Indian summer days, they have reached a greater understanding of life and love. The shells holding their souls are weaker now, but hearts and minds grow vigorous, remembering.

On a table, someone spreads old photographs, a test of reflection. Friendly laughter echoes at shocks of hair gone gray or white,or gone. The rugged, slender bodies lost forever. Yet they no longer need to prove their strength. Some are now sustained by one of those “medical miracles”, and even in this fact, they manage to find humor.

The women, all those who waited, all those who loved them, have watched the changes take place. Now, they observe and listen, and smile at each other, as glad to be together as the men.

The talk turns to war and planes and foreign lands. Stories are told and retold again, reweaving the threadbare fabric of the past. Mending one more time the banner of their youth. They hear the vibrations, feel the

shudder of metal as engines whine and whirl, and planes come to life. These birds with fractures wings can be seen beyond the mist of clouds, and they are in the air again, chasing the wind, feeling the exhilaration of flight close to the heavens.

Departed comrades, hearing their names spoken, wanting to share in the time, if only in spirit, move silently among them. Their presence is felt and smiles appear beneath misty eyes. Each in his own way may wonder who will be absent in another year.

The room grows quiet for a time.

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***PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT PARTIALLY BLANK
(WHY? 'CAUSE THE SPACING WAS NEEDED)***

**REGISTRATION FORM IS LAST PAGE TEAR OFF TO MAIL IN
PLEASE REMEMBER TO MAKE A COPY FOR YOURSELF**

***San Antonio Recon Rendezvous Reunion Registration Form
(Please Mail Not Later Than 15 September 2015)***

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Contact Phone (H) (_____) _____ (Cel) (_____) _____

Email Address (please print) _____

Additional Guest name(s) for Name Tags

First Name(s) _____ Last Name(s) _____

REGISTRATION FEE includes: Welcome Package; Hospitality Suite; Thursday Night Reception.

REGISTRATION FEE:

Nbr _____ x \$75 = \$ _____

Thursday, Oct 22 -- Wear your name tag to all events.

Reunion Registration – 1200-1730 (Pick up welcome package/name tags etc)

San Antonio “Things To Do” Self-Guided– see list

55th Reunion Reception – 1830-2030 (*Hors d’oeuvres and two drink tickets*)

Friday, Oct 23 -- Wear your name tag to all events.

18 Holes of golf w/ cart @ The Quarry Golf Club (<http://www.quarrygolf.com>) Golf POC Jeff Herd

32 Slots available; Tee Times from 0930-1040 Nbr _____ x \$85 (military rate) = \$ _____

Reunion Registration – 1200-1730 (Pick up welcome package/name tags etc)

River Barge Dining – 1730-2000 (Min: 14 to go, max: 20, per barge) Nbr _____ x \$38 = \$ _____

Dinner choices (*put # in each meal choice*)

Deluxe Mexican () Chicken Enchiladas () Enchilada Platter ()

San Antonio “Things To Do” Self-Guided– see list

Saturday, Oct 24 -- Wear your name tag to all events

Membership meeting 0900-1100 (*Association polo, casual*)

San Antonio “Things To Do” Self-Guided – see list

55 Wing Association Dinner - Social 1800-(*Coat and tie*)

Dinner choices (*put # in each meal choice*)

Nbr _____ x \$60 = \$ _____

Meat () Poultry ()

Grand Total (Registration fees, Fri. barge and Sat. dinners, and golf)

\$ _____

**MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO JEFF HERD.
ON MEMO LINE WRITE: "55TH WING ASSOCIATION REUNION".**

**MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO: JEFF HERD, 29906 CIBOLO COURT, FAIR OAKS RANCH,
TEXAS, 78015 .**

PLEASE MAIL FORM AND PAYMENT NLT 15 SEPTEMBER 2015

****RECOMMEND MAKING A COPY OF FILLED IN FORM FOR YOURSELF****

List names below if you want to be paired specifically with someone in your golf foursome

