

Videmus Omnia

55th WING ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2016

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the Heartland,

I hope all are weathering this wild winter. What a blast of not normal weather, i.e.: floods in Texas, Alabama, and the Upper Mississippi Valley in December; 60's and 70's in New York in December, and a tornado in Florida in January. What next? I guess it's that climate change rumor thing that keeps going around. Or, maybe not. Anyhow, keep an eye out for that severe weather stuff.



Glad to report to all that we put another successful **Association** reunion in the history books. Lots of effort goes into putting our reunions together. They are not small tasks. As it was this time, good leadership and the helpful hands of many volunteers was key, as Max details specifically in the next article, the **Association's** 31st was such adventure.

In Tampa, FL, **Richard Ray** is already busy establishing the basics, when and where, for our spring 2017 reunion.

There will be a project following up behind this newsletter to survey our membership on the subject of our reunions. We are making this survey to get your ideas on our reunions so that we can make them better, and perhaps up those participation numbers that have been decreasing markedly for the last four or five reunions. If we don't ask the right questions, tell us what you think anyway.

Key to this survey will be having the latest contact information on the membership, both snail mail and e-mail. Please use the membership application form (page 27) in this news letter to update your contact data as needed.

For those who have not lately checked our web site, www.55wa.org, please do so soon.

Besides the normal wealth of information about all things 55th, we will be putting a link on our site to two power point pictorial presentations. **Jack Kovacs** has spent considerable time putting together a documentary on the most important project our **Association** has accomplished: the story of the creation of the 55th **SRW Association** "Cold War Memorial"; and another very important project that memorializes what many in the 55th did in the Cold War: the restoration of the RB-47H at the National Museum of the US Air Force.

Many thanks to Jack for helping to preserve the facts and details in picture as well as words.

To all those who had a 2015 near their address label, you are reminded that your dues are now due. Thank you for your patronage and loyalty to the **Association**.

Time for me to exit stage left so all can get on to reading another Maximus newsletter.

All the best in the coming year. I pray that it is better than last and not half as bad as the fortune tellers suggest.

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

Videmus Omnia, Jim

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REUNION RECAP
55th WING ASSOCIATION
SAN ANTONIO, TX
21-24 OCTOBER 2015

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The 31st edition of another memorable gathering was an outstanding success in every way. With the Embassy Suites San Antonio Riverwalk as the headquarters, located within easy reach of many of San Antonio's attractions, made for a free flow of activities for the attendees. Just strolling the

Riverwalk itself was worth the price of admission (*zero*) for its scenery bistros, shops and eateries.



The weather was misty and a tad rainy at times, but did not dampen (*pun intended*) the spirits of the hardy **55th**ers intent on having a good time.

Many folks walked the few blocks to the Alamo where the tour bus/trolleys were centered, and took advantage of those hop-on and hop-off tours around the greater San Antonio area.



There were the five missions and historic districts, and the Mercado mall with its many colorful shops and cafes, among other sites. Others took the scenic river boat cruise.

Embassy Suites offered a complimentary cooked breakfast and a manager's 'happy hour', every day, which were added opportunities for those booked at the Embassy Suites to enjoy more time commiserating.

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

Directors, did yeoman work in getting the hotel contract, and setting up major functions.

His efforts were recognized at the membership meeting and the banquet by Pres Thomas to appreciative audiences.

Aby assisting were **Charlie McBride** as the hospitality suite honcho, "**Nasty**" **Ned Gates** heading up registration.

Due to an unfortunate set of circumstances, a planned Friday evening river dinner cruise did not occur, but **Jim "Strike" Thomas** took the reins and dealt long distance with the legendary *Casa Rio* Restraunt to set up a deluxe Mexican dining experience for 74 attendees that evening.

In addition to generous hospitality suites hours, the Thursday informal reception was well attended by most of the 123 registered alums. A small cadre of golfers hit the Quarry Golf Course on Friday morning.

The Friday evening trip to and from *Casa Rio* was made by a colorful tourist trolley, but several folks decided to walk off the dinner via the Riverwalk afterwards vice return by trolley.

An extra added attraction on Friday was a tour of Blue Skies of Texas, East and West, living areas near Lackland AFB, (formerly the Air Force Village) arranged by **Bill O'Hara**. Free transportation and a lunch were provided. Information on the facilities was available to those interested.

The Saturday orderly membership meeting provided an update on **Association** activities during the past several months, and the Board of Directors was elected. (*See minutes following.*)

The Saturday evening social hour and banquet were excellent in every way. Delicious meals, great service and plenty of good fellowship.

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Registration helpers and hospitality suite 'attendants' were numerous. Most were from the general San Antonio area: **Ruby Gates, Ralph and Mary Cofield, Hiram Goya, Sylvia Navarro, Jim Hilliard, Howard Ham** at registration.





L-R: Howard Ham, Ned Gates, Jim Hilliard, Ruby Gates greet a guest at sign in.

Dave Frutchey, Ron Nickerson, Al and Sandy Feldkamp, Hank Dubuy, Chuck Younkin, Clay Harvey, Ham Kennedy, Howard Ham, McBride and Herd manned the beverage dispensing. (*Mea culpa if anyone was missed,*)

Sunday morning breakfast provided one final chance to gather then say ‘adios’ before departing by land and air.

Next stop: Tampa, FL, 19-22 April 2017.

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

55th WING ASSOCIATION

San Antonio, TX, 24 October 2015
Embassy Suites San Antonio Riverwalk

President Jim Thomas opened the meeting at 0900 and noted that notice of the meeting was announced in the July issue of the newsletter, and that a quorum was present.



Other BoD members present: **Max Moore, Val Dugie, George Ross, Pete Glenboski, Jim Maloney, Ricky McMahan, Trish Seinwill, and Jeff Herd.**

After welcoming remarks Pres Thomas gave the president’s report. He shared that his evaluation of the health of **Association** was that we are in good stead. Membership numbers remain steady; due to

a monster effort by **Mike Cook** and Moore who actively remind/encourage folks to keep their dues up to date. Finances also remain sound. The July 2015 newsletter was outstanding covering all activities of the **Association**.

The **Association** remains in good standing with current **55th Wing** leadership. The relationship with the out-going wing commander, **BrigGen Greg Guillot**, was solid. The new wing commander, **Colonel Marty “Moose” Reynolds**, an EC-130 pilot, was the guest of the **Association** at a recent dinner, beginning yet another strong relationship. (*Story following*)

The **Association** picked up the flag of the now-defunct WWII **55th Fighter Group** due to its annually dwindling membership. The **Association** provides a floral wreath honoring that group placed on Memorial Day at Cambridge National Cemetery by members of the 95th Recon Squadron in RAF Mildenhall, UK.

At the *Tales of the 55th*, in conjunction with the May 2015 **55th Wing** Birthday Ball, the **Association** presented a replica of the Palm Trophy. After an exhaustive search of the **Wing**, the Air Force Museum and the Air Force Historian, it was determined that the original was not to be found. The **Association** provided replicas of the plaque and trophy which will be awarded to the **55th Wing’s** Recon Crew of the Year as administered by the **55th Wing** Operations Group.



Jim Nelson in rapt attention.

The minutes of the last membership meeting were published June 2014 newsletter and on the **Association** website. Moore moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes; motion was seconded by the entire room, and carried.

President Thomas then provided the Treasurer and Membership reports prepared by Mike Cook, our very precise treasurer. Thomas noted membership remains strong overall due to the loyal members who are unable to participate in reunions, but continue their strong support of the **Association**. He also noted that about 160 widows continue to be associates of the **Association**.

Unfortunately, Active Duty membership continues to decline. Members pointed out that the current active duty members have different priorities than many **Association** members (they do not join clubs, associations, etc.).



Members getting the word.

The president reiterated that finances remain strong growing from \$6K in 2008 to nearly \$50K as of 1 October 2015; however, dues Paid in Advance to the total of \$35K must be held in reserve over a period of years. Fortunately, this leaves \$13K in surplus funds that are not earmarked for any specific activity. The average budget for the **Association** is \$14-15K/year; the surplus would allow the **Association** to continue to operate for three years without any additional funding should that unfortunate happen; and/or support unbudgeted projects.

The president shared that in 2012 several donations and 3-year dues payments, as well as some expenditures were deferred to 2013, allowed for an income bump that year.

Moore noted the outstanding efforts of Cook on managing and balancing the budget. Moore noted that Cook was the first treasurer to establish an annual budget to manage the funds.

The president asked the members to keep the **Association** up-to-date on contact information to allow for **Association** news. He also shared that the

IRS now requires more information to prove veteran status to allow the **Association** to retain its tax exempt status. Members can assist in this effort by updating their membership forms to document veteran status, and for updating the data base for the Directory.

He also stated that the Director of new cemetery in Sarpy County (NE) came to the **Association's** informal Tuesday breakfast (*at the Lodge in LaPlatte*). She informed the group that the Omaha National Cemetery will begin to take burials in the fall of 2016.

President Thomas noted that reunion attendance has been in a downward trend in recent years, and stating that this is the lowest attendance in many years. He stated that a survey on reunions will be prepared and sent to the membership asking members what could be done to increase participation in reunions. An informal show of hands showed continued interest in reunions every 18 months.

It was noted that fall is a good time for reunions as it tends to be less busy

The next topic was the possibility of a reunion for spring 2017. **Larry Mitchell** suggested Tampa as an opportunity with SOCOM as a host. Val Dugie pointed out the strong presence of the **55th Wing** in the Command. A show of hands indicated a majority of members supported Tampa as the next reunion location. **Richard Ray** offered to host the reunion in Tampa, exact date TBD. He stood to introduce himself and give his background.

The president then opened the floor to questions. Ray asked about the **55th SRW** Cold War Memorial at WPAFB. Mitchell shared there was a crack in the back of the Memorial, but that repairs were being explored and it appeared it would cost \$400 to fill the crack. Members noted the special nature of the memorial. Moore noted that **Jack Kovacs** and **Larry LaFlair** of Fairborn, OH, continue to monitor the condition and care for the Memorial. Both have been awarded Lifetime memberships for their dedicated and continued efforts. The **Association** is fortunate to have such 'caretakers' on-site.

Thomas noted that there will be a section of the Omaha National Cemetery for memorials; a possible smaller memorial for the **55th** might be an activity for the **Association** at a point in the future.

Pres Thomas then brought up the BOD members' election and recognized Moore as the nominating chair. Moore noted that the Bylaws allow for 19 elected BoD members, and that there are currently 19 serving. All current directors had expressed a desire to stand for election.

As the names were read, those in attendance stood for the membership to recognize them. It was moved by **Hank Rieden**, and seconded by many, that the BoD slate be accepted and elected by the membership to continue as the BoD. Motion carried.

It was noted by the president that Jeff Herd did an excellent job as the reunion chairman. He was recognized and congratulated with a round of applause.

Cliff Lambert complimented the outstanding job that Moore does with the newsletter.

Jim Maloney asked for comments regarding the **Association** website and told of newer features.

Moore asked anyone who had been taking pictures during the reunion to send same to Maloney for a reunion album on the web site, and to him for newsletter use.

It was moved and seconded by many that the meeting be adjourned; carried, and the president adjourned the meeting at 0955.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Seinwill, Secretary

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Notes from post-membership discussion meeting of the Board of Directors (1010-1030):

Attending were: Jim Thomas, Max Moore, Val Dugie, George Ross, Pete Glenboski, Jim Maloney, Ricky McMahon, Trish Seinwill, and Jeff Herd.



L-R: Dugie, McMahon, Moore, Seinwill, Thomas, Maloney, Ross, Glenboski, and Herd.

As no quorum was present (10 are required), the meeting was informal and no official business could be conducted. **Thus, it was noted that all serving officers (and appointed positions) would continue to serve until such time as an election could occur.**

The president asked the BoD members present about the timing of the BoD meetings at reunions.

Jim Maloney suggested it be held immediately before the Members' meeting. Discussion noted that in non-controversial years that would not be a problem, but in years where there were more in-depth discussions, timing could be challenging.

It was suggested the BoD meeting be held later in the day, possibly even with dinner. Several BoD members noted their spouses wished to have dinner.

Final suggestion was to hold the BoD meeting after dinner, around 1930-2130. All members present agreed that might work, and that it would be discussed before the next reunion.

Discussion adjourned.

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DIRECTORS DIRECTORY

Association Business/Policy/Issues:

President Jim Thomas

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

Vice President Ricky McMahon

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E-mail: potomacpistol@gmail.com

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Secretary Trish Seinwill

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E-mail: jim@maloney.com

Other Members of the Board of Directors:
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: SMSgt Vanessa Johnston, MSgt Rick M. Brown.

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

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TREASURER'S REPORT

As of 31 December 2015, the treasury had an account balance (rounded) of \$50,000.

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 its mailing.



It is never too soon to renew your membership. So, please pay your dues promptly, or early and often. Thank you very much.

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Remember that the **Association** is a **non-profit IRS 501(C) 19 veterans, federal tax exempt organization.** (*See the Association web site: http://www.55wa.org/CORP_HQ/TaxExemptStatus.html*). 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.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

THIS IS THE MONTH TO RENEW YOUR DUES.

There were **542 members in good standing as of 31 December 2015, compared with 547 on 30 June 2015.** Unfortunately, dues and members do expire. (*See TAPS.*)

The 135 members whose dues expired on 31 December **2015 who do not renew by 1 April 2016**, regrettably, will then be **deleted** from the membership data base.

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

About 160 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 20.



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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. It is your responsibility to keep up with your dues.

There are several ways to keep up on that information. However, 'friendly reminders' may be sent as required.

Life Members (LM) and widows are dues 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
Offutt AFB, NE 68113
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There is a membership/information update form at page 27 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.

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 (*July 2015*)? 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.

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

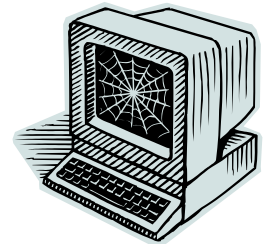
On a positive note: There were fewer returned packages after the July 2015 send than any mailing in the past that we can recall.

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YOUR 55TH WING ASSOCIATION WEB SITE

www.55wa.org

The **Association** web site continues to be an integral and important 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.



The **BX** section is where to find how to purchase **Association** 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 nearly 300 'likes' since its inception.

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

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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.

Also 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 can do so. 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.

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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DINNER WITH NEW 55TH WING COMMANDER

Members of the Offutt-area **55th Wing Association** met with **55th Wing Commander, Colonel Marty (Moose) Reynolds** for an informal social hour and dinner on 8 July 2015. The event was held at Piccolo's, a long time favorite restaurant in Sout' Omaha. (*Note: Piccolo's closed its doors for good on 31 Dec 2015.*)

He is the twelfth commander to be so hosted in a tradition that began in December 1996 by then-president **Bill Ernst**. This event provides an

opportunity for the new commander to meet **55th** veterans in a social setting early in his tenure. The group has **no** agenda other than the success of the **Wing**, and to let the commander know we have, and are, resources to be used to support that effort.

Colonel Reynolds took command of the **55th** on 1 June 2015. A 1992 Air Force Academy graduate, his previous command was the **55th Electronic Combat Group (ECG)**, at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, from June 2013. He is a career EC-130 (COMPASS CALL) pilot, stationed at D-M from August 2001 to June 2010.

(*The 55th ECG at D-M is one of six groups under the 55th Wing, and has been since February 2003.*)

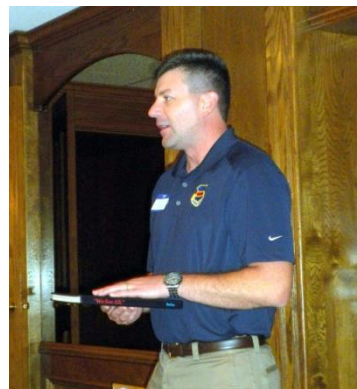
The evening began with Col Reynolds ringing the ceremonial bell, and then a meet-and-greet social time, during which he got acquainted with those attending.



President **Jim Thomas** made a brief welcoming introduction, and the group enjoyed dinner.

Each one there was given the opportunity to relate their AF history and time with the **55th** in a crisp round-robin.

Pres Thomas also presented Col Reynolds with a copy of "*We See All*", **Bruce Bailey's** book of **55th** pictorial history.



Colonel Reynolds addressed the group expressing his pleasure with meeting everyone, hearing the stories, and the gathering in general.

Those at the event were: **Association** Board Members: President Thomas, Max Moore, **Don Kelly** (who flawlessly organized and coordinated the event), **Jim Maloney** and **MSgt Vanessa Johnston**.

Former wing commanders **Reg Urschler, Steve Stevens, Dan Peterson, and Don Bacon** attended.



L to R: Bacon, Peterson, Stevens, Col Reynolds, Urschler

Others were **Dick Purdum, Ham Kennedy, Dave Wolfe, Hank Rieden, Fred Schapker, John Tresmer, Hank Dubuy (flew in from Texas), Bill Sargent, Roger Craig, Mike Tabler, Larry Wolfe and John Johnson.**



*In the traditional lodge pose (the Last Supper?)
Back row: L to R: Kennedy, Kelly, Stevens, Larry Wolfe, Maloney, Bacon, Col Reynolds, Tresmer, Urschler, Tiny Wolfe, Sargent, Thomas. Seated front: MSgt Johnston, Moore, Johnson, Dubuy, Purdum, Peterson, Tabler, Rieden. Not pictured: Craig (He had to get back to Iowa before they closed the border.)*

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RC-135 CREW EARNS 2015 O'MALLEY AWARD

By **SSgt Rachelle Blake**, 1 October 2015
55th Wing Public Affairs

The Air Force Association recognized an RC-135V/W Rivet Joint flying crew of the **55th Wing** at Offutt, AFB, NE, as the 2015 General Jerome F. O'Malley Award winners.

Each year, the title is given to the **best reconnaissance crew** in the U.S. Air Force. The award's namesake was a US Air Force pilot who served in and/or commanded reconnaissance wings.

"I am extremely proud of what our ***Fightin' Fifth*** members are doing around the world, and this team certainly earned this recognition for their actions," said Colonel Marty Reynolds, **55th Wing** commander.

This year's winning crew was comprised of airmen from the 38th Reconnaissance Squadron, 97th Intelligence Squadron, and 55th Intelligence Support Squadron. They were recognized for their actions during their deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in 2014.



Col Mo Krishna, 55th Ops Group CC and a member of the 55th Wing Assn's Board of Directors, is pictured second from right. (ID on others was not provided.)

As stated in the award citation, their outstanding contributions ensured dedicated airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance coverage was available to support American and coalition forces attempting to locate a downed pilot who had been captured by enemy troops.

Their actions also supported the larger efforts of OIR. "This crew answered the call as our wing has done now for more than 25 consecutive years in the CENTCOM area of responsibility," Reynolds said. "I congratulate them on their honor."

The crewmen were presented the award in conjunction with the 2015 Air and Space Conference and Technology Exposition in National Harbor, MD.

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GREETINGS FROM THE COMMANDER

Members of the **55th Wing Association:**

I thought I'd take a few minutes to provide you some information on what's happening at Offutt AFB. We have a really busy holiday calendar and lots of activities.

The General's Row is decorated with probably the same decorations some of you used in the past!



We hosted about 1500 people during our Tree Lighting ceremony at the Patriots Club, and as I understand it, this was one of our biggest tree events to date.

Yet, while we support our Airmen, families, dependents, and retirees this holiday season, we have aircraft and Airmen at

10 locations around the globe...so it is still true that the "Sun never sets on the *Fightin' Fifty Fifth!*"

This year we have a few historic milestones approaching. We just passed 25 consecutive years deployed to the Middle East which we think is the AF's longest continuous deployment in our services' history.

In 2016, we are also celebrating two historic events. First, we'll celebrate our 75th Anniversary...from the 55th Pursuit Group (1941) to today. Second, we'll celebrate our 50th Anniversary of moving to Offutt AFB, Bellevue, Nebraska...this one I know the community will really rally around.

I'm really excited to highlight all three of these milestones. In fact, we are calling 2016 the year of 25/50/75, and will emphasize those achievements during our **May 21st Wing Birthday Ball** and **July 30-31 air show and open house**. **Speaking of, plans are on track to host the air show featuring the USAF Thunderbirds flying their F-16s.**

For the **Wing**, we are on the cutting edge of some amazing capabilities and integrating in ways we have not in the past. We now fall under 25th Air Force, which is already paying big dividends. We are focused on integrating ISR, electronic warfare and cyber capabilities today and tomorrow...and we really making some head way.

To support this emphasis, I'm pushing the **Wing** to improve innovation, communication, and education. I'm convinced we have to innovate to maintain our technological and combat edge...and the good news is our Airmen are fantastic and are motivated, dedicated and are incredibly smart. Your Air Force is in good hands!

I'm sure many of you are aware the state of our runway has gained local media attention. As we continue to work through the planning process, we'll provide updates, but so far, the staff work is trending positively.

Thanks again for your service and continued support of Offutt and all our Airmen. It really means a lot to all of us!

Very respectfully,
Colonel Marty "Moose" Reynolds
55th Wing Commander
(E-mail dated 15 December 2015)

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Additionally, **Mr Ryan Hansen**, Director, **55th Public Affairs**, announced a series of articles publicizing the anniversaries and events noted in Col Reynolds missive. The pieces will be in local newspapers and on the base web site, among other media.

He has requested the assistance of Pres Thomas and this editor in compiling information on the history and heritage of the **Wing** to include stories on the Hall of Famers.

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TALES OF THE 55TH

On Friday 20 May 2016. Details and speaker array TBD.

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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55th WING 2016 BIRTHDAY BALL

The **55th Wing** will hold its **38th annual Birthday Ball, Saturday, 21 May 2016** at the Embassy Suites Convention Center in LaVista, NE.

Make a note and plan to be there.

Details, theme, speaker TBD. However, Colonel Reynolds has directed the committee to emphasize that 2016 is a year of anniversaries for the **Wing**: 75 years since its founding, 50 years at Offutt, 25 years deploying to SE Asia.

The committee is headed by **1Lt Meagan Kusel** and **MSgt Timothy Coenen** of the **55th Maintenance Squadron**.

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

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55TH WING ASSOCIATION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The **Association** awards committee will be meeting in the near future to select the 2015 winner, which is announced at the annual Birthday Ball.

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PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

2000 - **Lt Col Ricky McMahon**, Commander, 338th Combat Training Squadron

2001 - **MSgt Steven** and **MSgt Lisa Hagggett**, 55th Wing Protocol Superintendent, and **55th Wing Command Section**, Administration NCOIC

2002 - **LtCol Kurt Kramer**, Commander, 38th Reconnaissance Squadron

2003 - **LtCol Glen Gulleckson**, Commander, 343rd Reconnaissance Squadron

2004 - **TSgt Terry Hunt**, Medical Support Group, Enlisted Manager, Pediatric Clinic, Erhling-Berquist Hospital

2005 - **MSgt Norman de la Vega**, 55th Security Forces Squadron, Elite Guard

2006 - **MSgt David A. Cain**, 55th Aircraft Maintenance Sqd, Production Superintendent

2007 - **SMSgt James H. Leichtenberg**, 55th Aircraft Maint Sqd, Asst Superintendent

2008 - **MSgt Maria C. Bell**, 55th Security Forces Sqd, Superintendent, Elite Guard

2009 - **SSgt Bernard Byer, Jr.**, 390th Intelligence Sqd, Network Administrator

2010 - **SrAmn Enrick D. Earle**, 55th Medical Group

2011 - **MSgt Dennis W. Carr**, Dpty Flt Chief, CE Support, 55th Contracting Sqd.

2012 - **SSgt Joel T. Therrien**, 55th Security Forces Sqd

2013 - **MSgt Justin J Rust**, Production Superintendent, 55th Aircraft Maintenance Sqd

2014 - **TSgt Wm. I. Nelson** and **SrAmn Tomas Carrion**, 55th Maintenance Sqd.

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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 as a newer high tech version has been completed.

Association Historian Bill Sargent worked that project with **Ham Kennedy**, the **Association's** Awards Chai

rman.

The new version (*right*) has a viewing screen capable of displaying a looped video of past winners and ceremonies, for example.

This one will be retained by the **Association** and stored in a custom-built carrying case until needed for appropriate occasions.



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MAIL 'N STUFF



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Max:

Another terrific production (*July 2015 Videmus Omnia*).

Thanks, Max, for all you do to keep the membership up to speed on the **Association!**

Keep up the great work!!

Bill Ernst, Bellevue, NE

(From an e-Email, 6 July 2015)

* * * * *

Wow Max!

Another gem (*July newsletter*)!

You continue to prove why you are (*still the newsletter editor*) time after time!

George Ross, Clayton, NC

(*From an e-mail, 2 July 2015*)

* * * * *

Dear Max:

I just want to thank you, and let you know how much I appreciate receiving the **55th** newsletter and directory.

Clete (*and I*) spent 34 years in the Air Force, and from 1951 to 1962 in Topeka, KS, (*at Forbes AFB*). He flew in RB-29s and RB-47s. So many great friends in a great **Wing!** (*Clete passed in March 2011*)

Thank you so much.

Sincerely, **Marge Kresge**, Alexandria, VA.

(*In a note, 14 July 2015*)

* * * * *

Hi, Max,

Thank you for sending Jim and me the July issue of **Videmus Omnia** newsletter.

We really enjoyed reliving that amazing weekend with the **55th**, (*to include*) visiting and reading the Hall of Fame plaques (*in Wing HQ*).

We were honored to be there to see Dad inducted, and we had such a good time at the Hall of Fame ceremony and the Birthday Ball.

Thank you for everything.

Your reunion this fall in San Antonio will be a great location. Have FUN!

Sincerely,

Barb Mahoney, Albany, MO (*Barb is the first daughter of Joe [and Dottie] Gyulavics, the 2015 Hall inductee*).

(*From an e-mail, 27 July 2015*)

* * * * *

Max:

Would it be possible to obtain a digital copy of the **55th Wing Association** newsletter that I could pass on to the entire squadron?

We get a single hard copy here at the 95th.

Sincerely,

Kevin Webster, LtCol, USAF

Commander, 95th RS, RAF Mildenhall, UK

(*E-mail 24 July 2015*)

(*Ed. Note: The request was honored, also urging those receiving same to consider joining the Association. LtCol Webster acknowledged he would do so. Nice that interest was shown.*)

* * * * *

Thanks, Max, (*Regarding the passing of Sam Pizzo*)

I have received a number of notes about my old friend. I imagine Sam and Mary are having one joyful reunion.

I expect Sam will have a tee time for our foursome when I make my final celestial journey. I don't think Sam would want us to sing any sad songs; he lived a full life and now is enjoying his eternal reward with a long list of old comrades.

Bill Lewis, the Elder, Kerrville, TX

(*From an e-mail 18 December 2015*)

(*Note: Sam and Bill were the squadron navigators in the 343rd in the early 1960s, shepherding veterans and rookies alike.*)

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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 5**. 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.

For information on future 55th Wing Association East events, or to get on the e-mail listing, drop Ricky McMahan 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 Frutchet** and **Charlie McBride** have reported, they gather the **second** Thursday of the month, 1200 hours, at the *Lion and Rose Pub*, Blanco and Loop 410.

Initially, five veteran crewdogs began the group a couple of years ago, that has now grown to over 20 'members'. About 12-15 typically attend each 'monthly meeting'. It is a time of reliving the past and just enjoying one another's company.

Others who occasionally attend are: **Nick Richter, Bruce Barker, Andy Borden**, Jim Hilliard, **Ken Bryars**, Hiram Goya, Ralph Cofield, **Mike Morris, Mark Morris, Bill White**, Ron Nickerson, Bill O'Hara, Chuck Younkin, **Gil Dewind**, Jeff Herd, **John Olivo**, Hank Dubuy, Howard Ham, Clay Harvey, **Marc Anderson** and **Jeff Ford**.



*Taken 10 December 2015 from McBride.
L-R: In front: Younkin, Gates. Back: Borden, Ham, McBride, White, Dubuy.*

Anyone wishing to join this convivial group can contact Dave at dfrutchet@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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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, Colorado, 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.

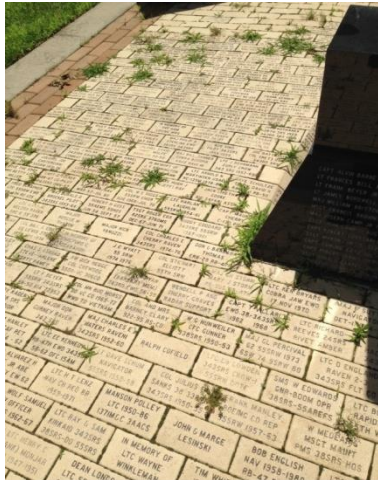
Videmus Omnia, Bill

* * * * *

(From an e-mail 1 July 2015 from Jack Kovacs, Fairborn, OH.)

Regarding summer clean up of the Cold War Monument patio. Before and after pictures depicts what about 8+ man hours of spraying and pulling weeds, and scraping moss from between the bricks, by **Larry Laflair** and me accomplished. The Memorial was then ready for the 4th of July and summer visitors to the Museum.

BEFORE with weeds, dirt, etc.



AFTER the sprucing up.



*(Ed. Note: This was hands and knees, grunt labor, folks, and shows once again how fortunate the **Association** is to have such committed stewards of the Monument. The Museum has noted that not*

many, if any, other monuments have such caretakers.)

Kudos once again to our dedicated stewards.

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In November, Jack Kovacs further reported that at least 26 installed bricks in the Memorial patio are in varying degrees of deterioration. They may need replacing and the Monument/brick committee is considering options on how to take care of that, logistically and financially.

More details as they develop

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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 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 change became official immediately, but the name dedication and unveiling of the logo will occur in the May 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 newer 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. Of course there was controversy and a backlash at that time.

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EC-135 RESTORATION UPDATES

On March 13, 2015, EC-135C Aircraft 38049 was moved into the Strategic Air & Space Museum's (now Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum) restoration hanger for the restoration kick-off event. The event announced the beginning of the restoration project, to begin fund-raising, and began to solicit volunteers for the various restoration sub-projects (fund-raising, work on the aircraft, build exhibits, write stories, etc.). Immediately after the event, the EC-135 was moved back outside.

This project is the largest restoration effort the Museum has had to date, estimated cost at \$200,000.

Restoration work began in earnest during the summer and made steady progress all year. No detail was too minor or too major to escape the attention of the dedicated volunteers. The ultimate goal is to return the entire aircraft, inside and out, back to the condition it was when flying those historic *Looking Glass* missions during the tense days of the Cold War, 30 years from February 1961.

The aircraft had been sitting outside for over twenty years, and removal of the equipment required lots of penetrating oil, prying, grinding, elbow grease/leverage, and cussing. As of mid-December, the equipment and consoles had been removed from compartment area just inside the cargo hatch, the communication area, the battle staff area, part of the galley and part of the cockpit.

Work on the aircraft was slowed due to the advent of cold weather and the volunteers began working inside the hanger to clean up and restore the equipment that had been removed and moved indoors.

On 9 December 2015, the aircraft was moved into the Museum's restoration hanger and will be inside until restoration is complete. By mid-

December, volunteers had expended nearly 1600 hours of labor.



Much of the early work was by regular Museum volunteers, but former **55th SRW** crewmembers **Richard Doolittle (55th WgAssn)**, **Amy Walton**, **Norma Kathman**, **Dennis Kathman**, **Dan Elder**, **Steve Shirley** and **Hank Carriger (55th WgAssn)** have worked hundreds of hours.



Dick Doolittle doing a lot.

With the plane back inside, and with the work that can be done both on the plane and in the restoration shop, the Museum anticipates ramping up the number of volunteers.

The Museum can accommodate out-of-town persons who might want to work on the aircraft while on trips into Omaha. Persons wanting to be added to the volunteer list should complete the volunteer application on the Museum's website (www.SASMuseum.com).

The Museum, local corporations and over 140 individuals have donated approximately \$69,300 in cash and in-kind donations. A local family associated with SAC has pledged another \$10,000. A letter, signed by former CINCSAC **General (Ret) John "Jack" Chain**, requesting donations was sent in November to several large corporations associated with the SAC ABNCP.

Individuals can make a donation, dedicated to restoration of the EC-135, using the Museum's website. (www.SASMuseum.com).

(Basic article contributed by **Hank Carriger**, Bellevue, NE, who volunteers as Restoration Committee Co-Chairman and Volunteer Liaison. Edited by Max Moore.)

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Editor's note: Stories from former **Looking Glass** crewdops and battle staffers would be welcome for future issues of **Videmus Omnia**.

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A BIT OF 55TH HISTORY

Perhaps most of the **Association** members are not aware that the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** once had its own tanker outfit. Those seasoned veterans who go back to the (SRW) days at Forbes AFB, KS, in the late 1950s to early 1960, should remember the **55th Air Refueling Squadron (ARS)**.

The unit was activated at Forbes on 1 October 1955, **LtCol William R. Lawley, Jr.**, commanding. Assigned were 23 aircrews and 22 KC-97 tanker aircraft. A flight crew was an aircraft commander, co-pilot, navigator and boom operator.

The ARS's mission spanned the globe giving air refueling support to **55th RB-47** and other Strategic Air Command (SAC) aircraft.

The squadron won numerous awards during its tenure, including Air Force Outstanding Unit citations; but not the least of which was in 1959 when unit crews won the 2nd Air Force bomb/nav contest. Then, it was the first tanker unit ever invited to the SAC Bomber/Navigation Competition. Held at Homestead AFB, FL, the **55th ARS** swept every category award: best tanker unit, best KC-97, best refueling, and best navigation.



During the Cuban Crisis of 1962, the unit had its highest operations tempo and still maintained its

world-wide mission of air refueling 'anytime, anywhere'.

The ARS flew its final mission in February 1963, and the last KC-97 departed Forbes on 15 February. The squadron formally deactivated 15 March 1963.

The squadron never had a reportable accident in its entire history, a remarkable achievement attributable to the professionalism and dedication of the flight crews and maintainers working with the venerable KC-97.

(Article edited from item in the 15 March 1963 issue of the base paper, "The Forbes Sky Schooner". No author noted.)

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T A P S

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BARRON, Richard A., 80, 11 June 2015, Sumter, SC; survived by wife of 55 years, **Laura**. Dick was a 343rd SRS EWO in RB-47s at Forbes AFB, KS, in the 1960s. He later had assignments at Wright Patterson AFB, OH; Elmendorf AFB, AK; and Shaw AFB, SC. He retired in 1980, and then worked for 15 years at Allied Signal Bendix

CALLIER, Charles G., 82, 8 December 2015, Papillion, NE; survived by wife, **Marjorie**. "Chuck" came to the 2ACCS as a boomer and progressed to NCOIC of the ABRN Battle Staff, and superintendent of the Alert Facility, circa mid-1970s He retired as a ChiefMSgt in 1985 after 32 years service, including a Viet Nam tour.

CRAWFORD, Robert S., 79, 19 July 2015, Walker, LA; wife, **Junel** for 55 years. Bob was a navigator in RBs at Forbes and RCs at Offutt, mid-1960s to mid-1970s. He also had a tour in Thailand during the Viet Nam era. After AF retirement, he worked for the US Postal Service for 20 years.

DENNIS, Denise Day, 63, 23 August 2015, N. Chesterfield, VA: wife of **John Wm. (Bill)** for 32 years. He was an RC-135 navigator with the 38th at Offutt AFB, NE, from 1985. Prior to her marriage,

Denise was a civil servant in public affairs for the US Army.

IRWIN, John O., 67, 18 December 2015, O'Fallon, IL; wife **Ruth**. A native of Minneapolis, John was an RC pilot at Offutt circa 1970s. After retiring from the AF, he worked as a program manager for Computer Services Corp.

JOYCE, Keith B., 52, 19 December 2015, Bellevue, NE; wife, **Jacqui**. Keith was a linguist with the 95th RS at RAF Mildenhall, UK, and 97th IS at Offutt from the early 1990s until he retired in 2008 after 22 years. After retiring, he worked for Spiral Solutions on Offutt.

KAMINSKI, Catherine E., 82, 21 May 2015, Princeton, WV; wife of **Joe**, a long time 'legendary' 55th SRW EWO in RBs at Forbes and RCs at Offutt, then on staff, circa 1960s-1970s.

KITCHINS, James E., 85, 12 December 2015, Wichita, KS; a paratrooper with the Army Air Corps in 1947, he transitioned to aircraft maintenance and came to the 55th after the Korean War in 1953 working on the RB50Gs, then the RB-47Es at Forbes AFB. He retired in 1967 as a ChiefMSGT.

KISS, Gerald A., 78, 11 August 2015, Jenner Township, PA; wife of 44 years, **Antoinette**. Gerry was in the 55th AEMSqd at Forbes as an ECM repairman in the late 1950s-1960. He primarily worked on the ERB-47 models. After the AF he was employed at various times by Bethlehem Steel, Volkswagen of America, and the Ford Stamping Plant for 12 years retiring again in 2000.

KLECK, Peter G., 87, 13 August 2015, Fredericksburg, TX; wife, **Patricia**. Pete had a varied and interesting career beginning in 1945; served in the new USAF Security Service as a civil servant. Commissioned in the AF in 1951, he later was an RB-47 EWO at Forbes in the late 1950s. Retiring after 20 years at various locales, he then worked for the Texas Criminal Justice Council until retiring again.

KRAUSE, Lois (Rusty), 82, 11 November 2015, Sun City, AZ. She was the wife of Colonel (Ret) **Don Krause**, former 55th SRW commander (Aug 90-Mar 82). They were married 60 years. The consummate AF wife devoted to her family; she also was a real estate agent.

MCATEE, (GOFORTH) Marie Amparo, 83, 7 August 2015, Washington, DC. A native of Puerto

Rico, she was the widow of **Oscar Goforth**, an EWO on **Bill Palm's** 55th SRW RB-47 crew that was shot down on 1 July 1960 by a Soviet MiG over the Barents Sea.

PETERS, Leroy R., 82, 21 March 2015, Vera Cruz, Mexico; married to **Janice** for 63 years. "Pete" was an RB and RC navigator in the *'Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* at Forbes (1958-64) and Offutt (1667-1976), including staff duty; separated by a tour in the 6th SW at Eielson AFB, AK. After retirement he worked in the trucking industry and ran his own company, LARP Industries in Mexico.

PIZZO, Samuel E., 93, 6 December 2015, Mandeville, LA. He was a veteran of WWII, Korean and Cold Wars. Sam had an interesting and varied career, plus his many contributions to the **Association** were notable. He came to the 55th SRW, 343rd SRS at Forbes in 1954 as an RB-47 navigator. (*See article following*)

RILEY, Roberta L., 88, 3 June 2015, St. Simons Island, GA; widow of **James**. Jim, who passed in November 2009, was a WWII combat veteran B-24 pilot. He served in the 55th SRW Forbes for 17 years in RB-47s, and in staff and command positions.

STOUT, Mary Iona, 88, 23 July 2012, Lincoln, NE. A 40-year civil service veteran beginning at Lincoln VA Hospital and Lincoln AFB. For sixteen years, Mary commuted to Offutt to serve as the executive secretary for thirteen 55th SRW Commanders. Began in a car pool, but went solo the last few years. She retired in 1986 and was active in her church, American Legion auxiliary, Elks, and was a devoted Big Red Husker fan.

TELFORD, Joe W., 83, 19 December 2015, Ft Walton Beach, FL.; wife of 54 years, **Marjorie "Jerry"**. An RB-47H EWO in the 38th SRS at Forbes 1958-60. He retired from the AF in 1985.

WAPLE, Hugh L., 82, 6 February 2015, Gainesville, VA; wife, **Etta**. Hugh was an RB-47 navigator with the 343rd SRS at Forbes 1955-60.

WHITE, Margaret S., 91, 29 November 2015, Granbury, TX. She was the wife for 66 years of **Don**, an original Hall of Famer, who was the 38th SRS commander circa 1966-67 when its missions were the Airborne Command Post (*Looking Glass*) and nuclear test monitoring. Margaret was devoted to her family, and enjoyed tennis, golf and traveling.

WILLIAMS, Barbara, 74, 4 January 2015, Deerfield, WI; married to **Herbert, III**, an RB pilot in the **55th** at Forbes, who left the Air Force to fly for TWA in 1965. Barbara was active in her church and served as a library volunteer.

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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 by the President.

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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Sam Pizzo, a native New Orleanian, had a long, distinguished and colorful career. All told, he served nearly 30 years in the military, active, guard and reserves.

Pizzo's service career began when he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in



1942. Earning his bomb/nav wings as an aviation cadet in 1944. He subsequently spent 15 months in Italy from where he completed 30 air combat missions in B-17s.

After mustering out, Sam returned to New Orleans in 1945 where he was employed by Delta Airlines, and joined the 122nd Light Bombardment Sqd, Louisiana Air National Guard in 1947. He was recalled to active duty in March of 1951 for the Korean conflict and spent a year training B-26 bombardiers at Langley AFB, VA.

Sam's next assignment was with the 301st Bomb Wing (SAC) at Barksdale AFB, LA, as a bombardier in B-29s on a select crew.

He came to the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** at Forbes AFB, KS, in 1954 as an RB-47 navigator flying strategic reconnaissance missions. He was on a select Stand/Eval crew, and later was the 343rd Sqd navigator.

While with the **55th**, he was selected to be a crew member on board a Russian aircraft flying Soviet Premier **Nikita Krushchev** and staff between Russia and Washington. Upon the termination of the Premier's visit to the US, then-Major Pizzo was the USAF navigator assigned to the Premier's aircraft returning to Russia.

After seven years with the ***Fightin' Fifty-Fifth***, where he left a plethora of memorable and legendary tales, Sam was assigned to a highly classified Air Force program at the Nevada Atomic Test Site (the near-mythical Area-51, "The Ranch"), December 1961.

At the Site, he was a Program Manager to develop various programs during the development of the CIA's A-12 aircraft, the forerunner of the SR-71 (Blackbird), the most sophisticated reconnaissance aircraft in the world, and it was the fastest military aircraft, attaining speeds in excess of Mach 3, until its retirement.

Now-Colonel Pizzo was transferred to HQ, Strategic Air Command at Offutt AFB, NE, as the Director of Operations for the SR-71, in August 1965, planning and coordinating all operations worldwide conducted by the SR-71.

In August 1969 he moved to Lindsey Air Force Station at Wiesbaden AB, Germany, where he was Director of Collections for intelligence for USAFE.

He was the first USAF officer to receive the German Air Force Electronic Warfare Wings in

recognition of his contribution to a highly classified joint USAF and German Air Force program.

Upon his retirement from service in 1973, he joined Lykes Bros. Steamship Co. in New Orleans attaining the position of Assistant Vice-President, Intermodal Operations until retiring again in 1988.

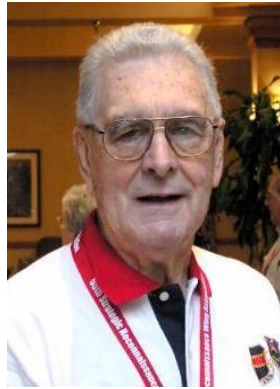
Sam was married to Mary (nee') La Plante for 61 years and they had two sons. Mary passed away in January 2013.

(Of note, Sam wrote a book on his life and career in 2008 titled, "As Good As It Gets- Written by a Man of Many Hats". Published by wewerecrewdogs.com, it is about 120 pages and well worth the read even if you did not know Sam.)

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For the edification of us all, Sam's contributions to the **55th Wing Association** cannot be overstated.

He was a member of an ad hoc committee formed in April 1994 when the realization became apparent to a group of leaders that the **Association** had grown from the loose knit organization that went before, and needed a more formal structure.



That committee evolved into a steering committee that kept the organization together after the resignation of its former volunteer president. They also developed the Articles of Incorporation and the initial set of Bylaws, the foundation upon which the current **Association** was built.

Sam was the first elected president under the new structure in September 1995, and by his choice, served one year. He was a member of the BoD all that time and until his passing.

He also designed and initiated the **Association's** sympathy card; came up with the idea for and followed through to establish the **Association's** 'regimental' tie; and planted the seed for what became the **Association's** Award for Excellence.

Additionally, Sam was an ardent believer that the cadre of BoD in the Offutt area was essential to the **Association's** connection to the active duty wing.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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, Clip art, and web sites. Pictures not previously attributed: EC-135 tow and Doolittle, Carriger; Pizzo pix from Sam's archives; reunion pix by Carol and Max Moore, Marilyn Brookie; commander's dinner pix, Moore; Assn trophies by Moore and Sargent. Col Reynolds official AF photo; 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**.

* * * * *

REUNIONS

* * * * *

42ND EWS/355 TFW
2-6 MARCH 2016
TUCSON/D-M, AZ

Many navs and EWO's came to the **55th** from the 355th in the late 1960s and early 1970s after a SEA tour.

The 42nd Electronic Combat Squadron, of the **55th** Electronic Combat Group, will have on open house and briefing during the reunion.

All former B-66, F-105 members are invited to the reunion.

Questions? E-mail: Bigbill355fa@aol.com, or call him at (330) 541-2653 for more details.

* * * * *

DFC SOCIETY NATIONAL CONVENTION

25-29 SEPTEMBER 2016

DALLAS, TX

**DALLAS MARRIOTT
MEDICAL/MARKET
CENTER**



Details in winter issue of DFC news and should be on the DFC web site soon: www.DFCSociety.org

One can learn how to join the

DFC Society by going to the web site, as well.

* * * * *

**B-47 STRATOJET
ASSOCIATION**
28 SEP-2 OCT 2016
WASHINGTON, DC
SAVE THE DATES



Details on agenda, registration, et al, at this link: <http://b-47.com>

* * * * *

55th WING ASSOCIATION
TAMPA, FL
19-22 APRIL 2017

Richard Ray is the reunion chairman and he is already focusing on hotels, rates, etc.

As details become available, they will be posted on the **Association** web site.

* * * * *



SAN ANTONIO
OCTOBER 2015



L-R: Kris and 'Crash' McFall, Ron Knecht, Val Dugie, Mike Tabler and Al Feldkamp enjoy the hospitality suite.

* * * * *

REUNION ATTENDEES

They were there and you weren't.

Gil and Ellen Agronis and Evelyn Craig, Ellen's sister
B.J. and Lou Bates
Andrew and Sue Borden
Jim and Marilyn Brookie
Ken and Gretchen Bryan
Chuck and Carol Burmeister
Jim and Nancy Caldwell
Ralph and Linda Cofield
Gil and Bonnie Dewind
Hank and Sandra Dubuy
Val and Laura Dugie
Bill and Eileen Everett
Al and Sandy Feldkamp
Jeff and Amy Ford
Phil and Kris Ford
Dave and Rosie Frutchey
Ned and Ruby Gates
Phil and Margareta Giambri
Pete and Margot Glenboski
Hirmou Goya
Cargill and Shirley Hall
Howard and Margaret Ham
Thomas and Betty Harris and daughter Wendy
Clay and Barbara Harvey
Dale and Pat Hensley
Jeff Herd
Jim and Judy Hilliard
Clark and Valerie Hinkel
Shirley Hoover
Paul Jeanes
John and Toni Johnson
Ham and Pat Kennedy
Ron Knecht
Cliff and Kay Lambert
Tim Lamons and Shannon Gratland
Jim and Peg Maloney
Charles and Lexy McBride
Bob and Betty McCall
Craig and Kris McFall
Mike and Pearl McFarland
Ricky and Cary McMahan

John Meyer
Larry and Susan Mitchell
Max and Carol Moore
Sylvia and daughter Lela Navarro
Jim and Sharon Nelson
Ron Nickerson
Bill and Dolores O'Hara
John and Chris Olivo
Frank and Connie Rasmussen
Richard Ray
Hank and JoAnn Rieden
Lew Riggan and Sang Eyesermans
Bob and Brenda Robeson
George and Betty Ross
Roland, Katherine, Ray, Mary Jo and Patricia Saenz
Fred Schapker
Jeff and Trish Seinwill
Stan and Shirley Sievers
Gary and Patty Smith
Keith and Fran Smith
Mike and Sue Tabler
James and Susan Taylor
Jim Thomas
Jeff Turner
Bill White and Rasa Silenas-White
Herb Williams



*Ladies clatch in the hospitality suite.
L-R: Messdames Tabler, Brookie, Lambert,
Agronis, Olivo, Maloney, Sievers.*

* * * * *

*If a man has enough horse sense to treat his wife
like a thoroughbred, she won't turn into an old nag.*

REUNION ALBUM



Hospitality group: L-R: Gil Agronis, Herd, Sue Tabler, Carol Moore, Sandy Feldkamp



Reception fun bunch: L-R: Ricky Mac, Sandy Feldkamp, Laura and Val Dugie, Shannon Gratland, Patty Smith



*Sisters of the Shirt. They do this at every reunion to get in the newsletter. It works.
L-R: Mesdames Ross, Sievers, Olivo, Maloney, Lambert, McFarland*



*A goodly group at the reception, smiles all around:
L-R: Marilyn Bookie, Betty McCall, Pat Kennedy, Cash McCall, Jim Brookie, Ham Kennedy*



Get on the trolley, amigas and amigos.



At the Casa Rio for a deluxe Mexican dinner. Ole!



*Front: Patty Smith and Sandy Feldkamp
Standing: Larry Mitchell, Val and Laura Dugie, Susan Mitchell,
Al Feldkamp, Max and Carol Moore, Gary Smith*



El Presidente speaks at the banquet.



L-R: Susan and Larry Mitchell, Amy and Jeff Ford, Kris and Phil Ford

GALLERY



Ellen and Gil Agronis



Lou and Bobby (BJ) Bates



Gretchen and Ken Bryan



Susan and Larry Mitchell



Jim and Sharon Nelson



Jeff and Trish Seinwill

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**WHY? BECAUSE IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN DONE THAT WAY;
AND WE NEEDED THE SPACING FOR THE PRINTER**





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 only** joining after 1 October 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.

