



Videmus Omnia

55th WING ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2023

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(AKA: Prezgram)

Fightin' Fifty-Fifth Faithful, Friends, Family and Followers,

Yep, more info follows in this "Max Missive"; but our 2023 Reunion/Rendezvous in Colorado Springs, hosted by **Al** and **Sandy Feldkamp** and other "Rockies Alums" is on the doorstep. **REGISTER NOW!**

In addition to our planned fun activities, there will be plenty of "real business" to conduct: Board of Directors/officer elections, Board of Directors restructuring, By-Laws changes, Incorporation Relocation and more! Looking forward to seeing you there!

With Independence Day activities now behind us, where are your **Association's** "fireworks" between now and the Rockies Rendezvous? Throughout the summer, several of your local Omaha alums have attended a number of unit Change of Command ceremonies highlighted by the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* commander changeover (reported below).

Continuing our **Association's** tradition of taking the new "Wing King" to dinner soon after Command change, all **Association** members are welcome to attend the reception on 21 August (separate flyer with details soon). As always, **Colonel "Chili" Howard** will be presented a copy of **Bruce Bailey's VIDEMUS OMNIA**, and also, a copy of **Dave Connaughton's** sequel (detailed later).

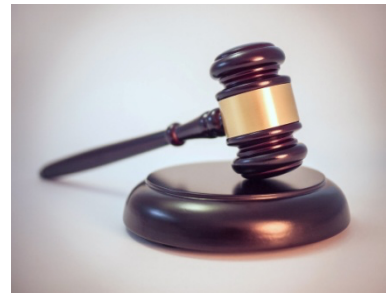
The Wildcats of the 45th RS will host a ceremony on 15 September to honor the RIVET AMBER aircrew monument installed last year next to the one dedicated decades ago to Aircraft #664 in front of Bldg 45 east of the parade ground.

Immediately following the new dedication, the **Wing** will, once again, celebrate the US Air Force Birthday with a gala Ball the night of 16 September.

Leading us right into Autumn--and our much-anticipated Rendezvous.

Once more, "The Sun Never Sets on the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*".

Videmus Omnia, Spy V



FIGHTIN' FIFTY-FIFTH REUNION #35 COLORADO SPRINGS 3.0

Greetings ***Fightin' 55th*** 'ers!

Welcome to the Springs in the Fall! It's been 11 years since we last hosted a reunion here. Much has changed here in Pike's Peak country. If you haven't been to the Springs in the last several years, you are going to find a very changed city.

The population in 2012 (last reunion here) was about 640,000. Now there are nearly 900,000 people in the city and surrounding areas. As a result, there are many new and improved venues here that we think you'll enjoy during the reunion.

Besides the beautiful scenery and the many natural wonders such as the Garden of the Gods, voted the most beautiful city park in the nation, you will find some interesting man-made attractions.

So, due to the possibility of inclement weather, we have a good program set up for you that includes these new attractions.

The first day tour on October 18th is the newly improved and enlarged National Museum of World War II Aviation. See details at: <https://www.worldwariiaviation.org> You will be amazed at these aircraft, all flyable, and the factory that does the restorations.

On the second day, the 19th, we will tour the U.S. Olympic Training Center and the new U.S. Olympic Museum: <https://usopm.org> See why athletic training is done at 7,000 ft above sea level.

You will be staying at the newly remodeled Colorado Springs Double Tree on the south end of the city close to many other attractions if you chose to explore on your own before or after the reunion.

During the reunion, we will provide bus transportation on both days. Our hospitality suite is large enough for 100 people and has spectacular views of the mountains.

Golf is available at the USAF Academy on registration day, the 17th.

The mixer that evening will not disappoint. The sit-down evening meals and receptions on the 18th and 19th are first class and will be memorable.

We guarantee that you will enjoy the food, the hospitality suite, and the rooms at the Double Tree. We chose not to use an agent for the reunion so if you need any help, just call/text Alan at 719-332-8541, or Sandy at 719-351-3113, and we will immediately take care of any issues.

We look forward to seeing friends and comrades of the **55th**!

Please consider attending this reunion, we think it will be a memorable time!

The Feldkamps



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Please share this link with anyone who needs to book the 55th Wing Association Reunion rates. The group booking link is ready for use. Simply copy and paste the URL below into your browser to access the exclusive rates available for this group. .

Please note, the entire URL must be copied/pasted to work properly.

Booking Link: <https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=COSP-DT&groupCode=CDT90G&arrivaldate=2023-10-17&departuredate=2023-10-20&cid=OM>

Hotel: Double Tree by Hilton Colorado Springs
1775 E Cheyenne Mountain Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Group Name: **55th Wing Association Reunion**

Group Code: 90G

Arrival Date: 2023-10-17

Departure Date: 2023-10-20

Cutoff date for reunion rate is 17 September 2023

The reunion rate is good for days two before and after the reunion,
15-22 October 2023, for those who want to come early or stay after.

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The reunion registration form is near the back of this issue.

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55th WING HAS A NEW COMMANDER

55th Wing Public Affairs

Photos by Charles Haymond, professional photographer extraordinaire.

The **55th Wing** officially welcomed its new commander (Warhawk 01) during a change of command ceremony at Offutt Air Force Base, NE, 22 June 2023.

Colonel Mark Howard accepted the **Wing** guidon from the presiding official, **LtGen Kevin B. Kennedy**, 16th Air Force commander, during the tradition-filled ceremony at the Bennie L. Davis Maintenance Facility.

“When selecting a wing commander, I look for a leader who has demonstrated the ability to build teams, communicate their vision and continually seek a connection with the Airmen who are entrusted

to their command, and continually seek greater understanding and deeper insight on the mission they are charged to lead,” said LtGen Kennedy. “Colonel Howard is that Airman.”

The new Warhawk 01 has spent much of his career serving the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*. He is a master RC-135V/W Rivet Joint combat systems officer with more than 2,400 flying hours, including 940 combat and 140 combat support hours.



LtGen Kennedy, left, Colonel Howard, right.
55th Wing Command ChiefMSgt Melissa Royster,
partly hidden center, was the guidon bearer.

He has served as the **Wing**’s vice commander since July 2021.

“I am incredibly honored and humbled to serve this elite group of warfighters,” Howard said.

“Our new systems require new tactics, techniques and procedures and we are excited and more than ready for that challenge,” he continued. “Our courage and resolve will be tested, but we are in this together and we have what it takes.” *(Edited by Moore)*

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Kennedy awarded outgoing commander, **Colonel Kristen Thompson**, the Legion of Merit during the ceremony. She led the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth* through the end of the COVID pandemic, a runway replacement project, and ongoing flood recovery projects, while also establishing an A-Staff and Lead Wing operations simultaneously. She is the first female to lead the **Wing**.

“Leading a **Wing** of the scale, scope and complexity of the **55th** is no small task,” Kennedy said. “Not only did she lead the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*, she also ensured the welfare and discipline of the entire Offutt installation. Thanks to your vision and dedication, you empowered your team and elevated them to unprecedented achievements.”

Thompson departs the **Wing** for New York where she will serve as a military fellow to the Council on Foreign Relations.

“The sun never sets on this incredible fighting force,” she said. “We foster a culture here that captures our Airmen and nation’s imagination, our civilian leadership’s trust, and our service’s brilliance.”

“Commanding this **Wing** has been the honor of a lifetime and I’m forever grateful,” Thompson concluded.

As the **Wing** transitions to its new leader, Kennedy said our nation is approaching a decisive decade that will set the course of our nation’s security for the next century and the Warhawks of the **55th Wing** will play a key role.
(Edited by Moore.)

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55TH WING’S NEW VICE COMMANDER

55th Wing Public Affairs

Colonel Aaron T. Gray is Warhawk 02, and yet another multi-tour **55th**’er. This is his third assignment with the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*. He assumed his current position 22 June 2023.

He received his commission in 2002 as a graduate of the ROTC program at Brigham Young University, where he earned an undergraduate degree in Economics.

Colonel Gray was first assigned to the **55th** Electronic Combat Group at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, as an instructor pilot in the EC-130H, Compass Call, and as flight commander (October 2005-December 2009).

He then came to Offutt AFB, NE, transitioning to the RC-135, and positions as Deputy Director of the Commander’s Action Group, then Wing Executive Officer (October 2010-June 2013).

His previous responsibilities included serving as an expeditionary squadron commander and deputy division chief on the Joint Staff.

Prior to his current assignment, Colonel Gray was Chief, Reconnaissance Operations Division, Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Operations, the Air Staff, Pentagon.



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55TH WING UNITS DEMONSTRATE ACE CAPABILITIES WITH EXERCISE IN NORWAY

55th Wing Public Affairs, 9 June 2023

Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England. The 95th Reconnaissance Squadron (RS) and 488th Intelligence Squadron (IS) tested their Agile Combat Employment (ACE) capabilities by deploying an RC-135V/W Rivet Joint aircraft to Ørland Air Station, Norway, as part of Exercise Dagger Fjord, 8-12 May 2023. This was the first Rivet Joint ACE exercise to a NATO country outside the United Kingdom, and demonstrated the unit’s ability to rapidly deploy to unfamiliar operating locations.



“Dagger Fjord opened new partnerships and avenues for mission planning and execution, and RC-135 operating locations,” said **LtCol Jonathan Beha**, 95th RS commander.

“We couldn’t be more pleased with how things went, and we look forward to building upon this in the future,” said **LtCol Bradley Higby**, 488th IS commander.

After launching from RAF Mildenhall, the RJ landed at Ørland and executed three missions before returning to its home station. “To limit the forward deployed footprint, home station staff support was provided remotely from Mildenhall, including mission directors, squadron aviation resource managers, unit-support intel, and a mission planning cell,” Higby said.

“Norway was an excellent host nation supporting transportation, lodging, dining and other logistics,” Beha said. With the success of this exercise, the 95th RS and 488th IS are now looking to further expand their ACE capabilities.

“Our future ACE exercises and initiatives will focus on furthering the capabilities of operating and maintaining the RC-135 without typical aerospace ground equipment, usage of multi-capable Airmen concepts for security forces and reactive maneuver,” Beha said.

“Use of mobile communication suites with more diverse capabilities will further enable RC-135 operations throughout the AOR with little to no support from home station,” Higby said.

(Minor edits by Moore.)

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55TH WING ASSOCIATION
WEB SITE 3.0
55WA.org

Members of the ***Fighting’ Fifty-Fifth*** see a lot (in fact, *We See All!*) on the front lines in our challenging world. Share your stories with our members and for posterity! Send them to the Webmaster by clicking the **’support@55wa.org’** button on our home page, **https://55wa.org**.

Semper Videmus Omnia!


Dave Connaughton, The Web Guy



Web site front page by Dave



**Videmus Omnia:
80 Years at the Front**



A Sequel to Lt Col Bruce Bailey's
We See All
Edited by David Connaughton

Now Available on Amazon

The story of the Fightin' Fifty-Fifth from its 1941 inception to 2021, featuring

- The commanders
- The notable characters
- The key events
- The locations
- The aircraft we flew
- The MiGs we met
- And 106 first-hand harrowing and humorous accounts

This meticulously researched book will remind those who were there of what it was like, and explain to those who weren't why the 55th holds such pride in our past and hope for our future.

Hardcover 503 pages, \$24.00.

https://www.amazon.com/Videmus-Omnia-80-Years-Front/dp/B0C5KNGNW6/ref=sr_1_2?crd=3QKCFHIY91BV1&keywords=videmus+omnia&qid=1689077759&prefix=videmus+omnia%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-2



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TREASURER’S REPORT

As of 12 July 2023, the treasury had an account balance (rounded) of \$29,500. The account is down due to up front monies paid to the reunion hotel. That should be recouped once attendees make reservations and the reunion finances shake out.

A significant portion of the money in the account comes from dues paid in advance. Therefore, we must keep money in reserve for each calendar year to which the dues apply. For example, dues paid for years thru 2026 (or more) are prorated and allocated through the ensuing years. One optimistic member is paid thru 2048!!



Although the **Association** is solvent, we have expenses, obligations, and bills to pay, such as the Birthday Ball, publishing this newsletter, reunion seed money, and projects and donations as they are deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.

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The **Association is a non-profit IRS 501(C)19 veterans, federal tax exempt organization.**

Thus, you may **donate** additional funds to the treasury, or in the memory of a comrade or loved one who has taken their final celestial journey.....or because of your generous nature.

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, and thank you very much.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There has been no significant change in the membership since the June newsletter with 423 members in good standing on 11 June 2023.

Holding steady here, but more members need to renew their memberships and the Association needs to add new ones to remain viable.

132 widows receive the newsletter gratis. As always, they are welcome to any and all **Association** functions.

Fifty **55th Wing** and associated units and offices, are sent the newsletter for PR purposes, and to keep them connected with the **Association**, and vice versa.

Occasionally, this initiative has a payoff of exposure for the **Association**, and new active duty members to the organization, now at 20, including the outgoing **55th Wing** commander, Colonel Thompson.

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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: 20XX.**

Please make a note of this year-date to keep up with your dues.

Dues are due in January of the calendar year after member's expiration year with a grace period through 31 March before going delinquent.

Now is a good time to renew.

If you are still not sure of your dues expiration date, to inquire on same, please e-mail to **Membership Chairman Mo Krishna** at volvomo@gmail.com, or drop him a note to 13704 Tregaron Drive, Bellevue, NE, 68123 to get an update on your membership status.

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

Life Members and widows are dues exempt.

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When using the traditional US Postal Service to send in your dues, your contact info, use the following address:

**55 Wing Association, Inc.,
PO Box 13165
Offutt AFB, NE 68113**

When paying on-line use this site:
<https://55th-wing-association.square.site>

Please remember to e-mail your membership form (also on that site) to volvomo@gmail.com
Sending Mo the PDF membership form is the best technique, but we will take your information however you send it!

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Please help us stay current.

There is a membership/information update form at the back of this newsletter, as well as our Square site:

<https://55th-wingassociation.square.site>

Please use that form any time you pay dues, and/or to report any address or other changes in your contact information.

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

ALL CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE SENT TO YOUR ADDRESS IN THE ASSOCIATION DATA BASE.

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The newsletter editor is not responsible for the membership dues date. Bug, Mo.

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COLD WAR MEMORIAL

Your 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Cold War Monument remains in the care of Association member **Perry Peloquin** and his stalwart crew year round as seasonable weather allows.

Perry sends: (E-mail 17 July 2023.)

The memorial is weeded and trimmed for the mid-summer avalanche of school tours and vacationers!

The National Museum of the USAF is 100 years old and has a commemorative display in Hangar 3 (Cold War) all year long.

For those making the trek to Dayton for the Big Safari Reunion in September, you may want to carve time for a special exhibit that looks into the thinking of visionaries

and innovators in the 1800s and their technology, tinkering and predictions.

(Photo from the right front corner, showing brick patio and benches. July 2023.)

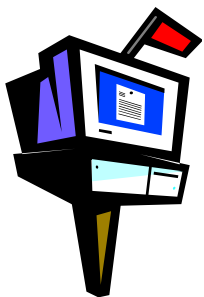
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LETTERS 'N STUFF

Terrific job **Max**! Don't know how you do it! Every newsletter seems to be better than the last. Remarkable!

Bill Ernst, Sarasota, FL. (E-mail 13 June 2023)

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Dear Max

I just finished reading the June 2023 newsletter, and really appreciate the work you do in putting the **55th** newsletters together

Madeline and I were saddened by the news of **Hank** and **Loretta Schuring's** deaths. They were our greeters when Madeline and I arrived at Kadena late 1968. They were really great people! Hank was a straight shooter, and insisted that things should be done the correct way. He was truly a good man.

Hank hated that low level, low speed turn that takeoffs from Hickam required for noise abatement.

This brought to mind the night (summer of 1972) that he led the take off of a task force formation (eight aircraft: his RC and seven tankers) down Waikiki beach!

On a different note, I have always wondered how **Reg Urschler** got away with the numerous stunts he pulled off. (*As do others including RFAU himself! Max.*)

In the two wing commander tale, he mentioned **Bill Klausner**, who I much admired. Klausner had the challenging task of teaching me how to do receiver refueling!

Are those nice looking pictures of RCs refurbished aircraft that we flew? (*Yes they are.*)

Bob Arnold, Denver, CO (*E-mail 14 July 2023.*)

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ORIGINAL 82ND SRS ALUMNI DO DINNER

For several years a group of friends in the Offutt area, who were stationed together at Kadena AB on Okinawa in the late 1960s thru mid-1970s, would meet at local eateries for social renewal of 'the good ol' days'. Originally begun by **Roland** and **Kathy Saenz**, the hosts and locales would rotate about every other month.

Of course the COVID years interrupted things and the gatherings were slower to return to the previous norm. However, on 22 June 2023 at the Le Mesa restaurant in Bellevue, the event was noteworthy because it had been several months between socials, the size of the crowd, and some surprise attendees (persons who do not come out often.)

Ham and **Pat Kennedy** pulled together the group with personal 'friendly persuasion', and here is who enjoyed the camaraderie, Mexican cuisine and margaritas:

John and **Toni Johnson**, **Patsy** and **John Freeman**, **Pat McMahon**, **Brenda Robeson** and her daughter **Becky**, and granddaughter; **Kathy** and **Roland Saenz**, **Jim** and **Barbara Ruane**, **Max** and **Carol Moore** and their daughter, **Vicki Patten**.

At another long table: the Kennedys, **Shirley Hoover**, **Pam Arbuckle**, **Dick Scott**, **Fred Schapker**, **Spud** and **Margaret Myers**. **Mick** and **Emily Vinckier**, **Mike** and **Sue Tabler**.

During the social time and all evening, of course there were plenty of warm greetings, hugs, conversations on catching up, remembering 'back when' times,.....and a minimum of medical talk. (*The **Robb Hoover Rule**.*)

These men and women have maintained a lasting bond for decades, so the warmth and shared love was genuine throughout the evening. Folks lingered for awhile, seemingly not wanting the evening to end.

They were already looking forward to the next gathering. Max.



Photo by Vicki Patten



82RS (55th WING) HOLDS MINI-REUNION

6 - 9 July 2023

By *Mace Macelhaney*, Colorado Springs, CO. (E-mailed 10 July 2023.)

Max

Well it finally happened after at least three previous tries. Of which two were aborted due to Covid, and one due to scheduling conflicts.

After the 82nd anniversary celebration of the 82nd Reconnaissance Squadron (RS) held at Kadena AB, Okinawa, Japan, summer of 2019, we decided to have another get together somewhere in the US.

After some discussion we selected Colorado Springs as the location. We had just nine attendees, but it was a great time seeing some of these guys for the first time in over 30 years. All of the attendees were from the early days when the squadron was reactivated in the early 1990s including the first two commanders, myself and **Craig Allen**.



L-R: Allen, Prior, Whitehead, Gay, Mace,
Cadet Erik Pfaffenbichler, McAneny, Dennon.

The above photo is at the Air Force Academy where I gave the group the \$5 tour including having a real cadet join us for a portion of it, and here for this picture. My wife **Gladys** and I sponsor this young man, who is in his senior year.

The picture below is our Saturday night dinner at Biaggi's.

We were joined by a former 38th RS navigator **Jim "Moon Pie" Whitehead** who lives in Denver.



L-R: Whitehead, Prior, Dennon, Gay, Allen, McAneny, **Becky McAneny**, Mace.



The final night was at my house, (L-R) **Mace MacElhaney**, **Tom Prior**, Craig Allen, **PJ McAneny** (our maintenance officer), **Mike Gay**, **Jerry Dennon** attending. We were having such a grand time telling war stories that the next thing we knew it was almost midnight!

Max, your name was mentioned more than once, and we also pulled out some crew pictures you had sent me of you in the 82nd circa 1968-9.

Overall, despite the low number, which was disappointing, we had a marvelous time, and we all agreed to do this again in 2-3 years. PJ volunteered his home base in Tampa as the location. Will see how that pans out!



*The following essay was originally contributed by the late duo, **Bud Morss** and **Don Griffin**, and was 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.*

No date is noted, but it seems appropriate as yet another reunion approaches. Max

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 anymore. 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 fractured 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.

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NEWSLETTER INPUTS ENCOURAGED AND WELCOME

Yes, we are aware that these newsletters tend to be Offutt-centric. It is where stuff happens.

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 on the Directory page.

We encourage and welcome any and all input.

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When events featuring 55th members occur in your area (Florida, Texas, MD/VA/DC metroplexes, Denver/CSprings, California, Dayton, wherever), gatherings great or small, 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. Send 'em in.

The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from throughout Fifty-Fifth-land.

Letters, articles, photos, and other items in this issue are examples.

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

Also welcome would be any suggestions on how to improve these issues to better inform the membership, so that they do not become stale, which is this editor's biggest concern.

Thanks, and Videmus Omnia, Max.



Old fat guy at work on his 88th birthday. Note first page of this newsletter is on screen.

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EC-135C RESTORATION EC- 135 #049

After six years and over 34,000 volunteer hours, the interior and exterior restoration of our EC-135 "Looking Glass", #63-8049 was completed and the aircraft has been restored to its former glory (without wings and engines for floor space saving) and sits proudly in Hangar B at the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum.

Veteran SAC warriors can visit and remember how 'we' won the Cold War. *Hoo-rah!!*

To learn more about the EC-135, visit:
<https://www.sacmuseum.org/what-to-see/aircraft/ec-135-looking-glass/>



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Please visit the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum's Facebook site to read about updates, and to make any comments/feedback directly to the Museum.

The Museum still needs more members interested in preserving the history of SAC. More funds are needed to prepare exhibits that will tell the public about the significant contributions of the SAC in winning the Cold War.

Funds are also needed to establish an account for future maintenance of aircraft 049 and its exhibits.

You can join, or renew memberships, at <https://sacmuseum.org/join-give/membership/>.

Your donations may be sent to: Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum, Attn: Development, c/o EC-135C, 2821 West Park Hwy, Ashland, NE, 68003; or on-line at: SACMuseum.org/donate.

Please specify that the donation is for the EC-135C project.

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T A P S



ALSPAUGH, Dona L. 82, 30 November 2022, Aurora, CO; widow of **James** who passed in November 2019. Jim was an RC-135 EWO in the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW)** at Offutt AFB, NE, from 1966-1971.

CLARK, Richard H., 88, 30 May 2023, Papillion, NE. An Ohio native, Rich entered the USAF in 1956 and retired in 1984. Except for a Vietnam tour, most of his career was in the **55th SRW** as a pilot in RB-47s at Forbes AFB, KS, for ten years, then he was among the first cadre of crewmen to transition to the RC-135s and move to Offutt in 1966.

DENNY, Colleen J., 75, 23 April 2023, Round Rock, TX,; married to **Bob** for 41 years. He was a pilot in RCs at Offutt in the 1970s and a former 343rd SRS commander circa 1985. A Colorado native, Colleen was the ideal Air Force wife. She taught high school for a time, and later ran a successful wedding coordination business. She also was a co-founder of Court Care for Pikes Peak Region, an organization providing quality child care in a safe environment for the children of individuals who have court related business.

GIAMBRI, Phillip, 86, 25 June 2023, Oak Harbor, WA; wife **Margaretta** (a former flight attendant for SAS Airlines). Phil was an EWO in B-52s before joining the original cast of the 82nd SRS in RC-135s at Kadena AB, Okinawa, in 1967. After retiring, he worked for Boeing for ten years.

MCALOON, Margaret (Peggy), June 2023, Bar Harbor, ME. She was the widow of **Chris** who passed in 2006. He was a pilot in RB-47s at Forbes, then RC-135s in **55th SRW** at Offutt and at Kadena, mid-1960s to mid-1970s. Chris was the last commander of the 82nd SRS in the April 1975

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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.

*It is **not** an imperative that the departed be a member of the **Association**. If one has any relevant connection to **55th** history, they will be remembered.*

Please include next of kin and an address to whom an **Association** condolence message 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 specialty (i.e.: crewmember, maintenance, communications) 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 a listing for access to the names and dates of those in the 55th family who have passed beginning in 1996.

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 webmaster to do so.

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

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This cartoon needs a clever caption, but I'm stumped.

Suggestions welcome. Max.

(Another Dave Cannaughton creation.)

* * * * *

ASSOCIATION BX

Major changes and additions have been made to the 55th Wing Association "BX". Management is by **Dennis Haun**. He established a new vendor and inventory of items for the membership.

The inventory makes for great gifts for birthdays, the holiday season, and other occasions for current and former *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth members*.

The items are now viewable in color on the new web site BX section.

The BX now has available to **Association** membership the following items:

Long Sleeve 55th Association ¼ Zip Pullovers

White, Royal Blue, Red, Navy, Grey (S-XXXL). Cost \$43 + \$6.50 Shipping (\$49.50).

Short Sleeve 55th Association Polos

White, Red, Royal Blue, Dark Navy. (S-XXXL). Cost \$40 + \$6.50 Shipping (\$46.50).

Long Sleeve 55th Association Shirt

Red, White, Navy Blue. (S-XXXL). Cost \$63 + \$6.50 Shipping (\$69.50).



Long sleeve button down-shirt



Short sleeve polo



Long sleeve pullover

55th Wing Association Hats

Navy Blue, Red, Grey (Adjustable). Cost \$20 + \$6.50 Shipping (\$26.50).

55th Wing Association Hot/Cold Tumblers Blue.

Cost \$30 + \$6.50 Shipping (\$36.50) (All item photos by Haun)



Members wishing to purchase any of the above listed items please contact:
Denny Haun, 918 Oxford Circle Papillion, NE, 68046

Please make checks for the full amount of purchase to: **55th Wing Association.**

NOTE: Procedures are now in place to order off the BX section of the 55th Wing Association web site!!

Questions/Comments please contact Denny Haun at papahaun@cox.net.

Members should/could load up on this stuff before the reunion in October.

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55TH FASHION PINS

The pins are sold to **Association** members all over the country. They are particularly evident at 55th reunions and at official and social functions at and near Offutt.



Gents and ladies, the pin makes a great birthday or anniversary accessory gift, or holiday stocking stuffer. Classy but not expensive.

(Shown actual size)

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, offers them and **you can purchase directly from the store.**

Send order requests to 223 W. Mission Ave, Bellevue, NE, 68005, 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.**

The former owner, the late **Frank Kumor**, was a long time member and ardent supporter of the **Association**. His daughter, **Rebecca Zurcher**, is now the proprietor.

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*Both of these items were published in the July 2001 **Videmus Omnia** newsletter.*

Published again in December 2020 issue.

*The following article was written by **Eugene Curtin**, Senior Writer for the Bellevue Leader in its March 7, 2001 issue.*

*He was moved to write the piece after attending the "Tales of the 55th" gathering at the Offutt O-club on a Friday evening in February 2001 before the Birthday Ball. It is an emotional tribute to the men and women of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**. It is reprinted here with his gracious permission. Max.*

OLD CROWS NEVER DIE

I never considered a military career.

I simply never thought about it, any more than I thought about becoming an oil rigger or a traffic engineer.

Perhaps I would have if someone had suggested it. But no one ever did, and so the idea never occurred to me.

I felt a twinge of regret about that last month when I attended the tribute to the **55th Wing** sponsored by the Association of Old Crows and the **55th SRW Association**.

For 23 years it has been my job to take a seat in the back of the room, shut up and watch. That's basically what we reporters do, or are supposed to do: Observe, and then report on what we see, preferably with some fairness and accuracy. So I took my seat and shut up.

What I saw was a series of retired warriors recount some hair-raising experiences. They were war stories of a familiar kind, seen in countless movies: Airplanes being shot at, adventures in foreign lands, long hours under appalling conditions, lengthy separations from family.

But there was a subtext, one that made me suspect these guys possess something that can't be measured in money or medals, something I'll never own.

Like most subtexts, it's easy to miss. This particular one is probably best described as camaraderie, but a mellow form, far more mellow than its close relative that was much on display the following day during the **Wing's** 60 year anniversary Birthday Ball at Harvey's Hotel in Council Bluffs. IA.

I noticed it in their greetings and manner of relating to one another. Handshakes were close up, not at arm's length. They patted each other on the back, gently massaging shoulders in a manner that might almost be described as – forgive me, guys – affectionate.

They looked each other in the eye with the ease and comfort of brothers; they refilled each other's glasses, seemed to have little sense of "personal space" when chatting face to face, often whispering jokes and asides into each other's ears.

There was an intimacy there. It was an easy intimacy, too. Generals, colonels, captains and everything in between seemed to mingle freely. I did not sense, among these retired military, any continuing sense of rank. Perhaps my familiarity with their world is too slight to observe such subtleties, but it seemed to my untrained eye a pretty egalitarian gathering, devoid of awkwardness related to higher or lower, exalted or lowly.

To the rest of us, who pursue our careers in the relative stability of a rooted home, an ever-present family, and familiar streets and shopping malls, this intimacy is hard to come by. We have not seen co-workers get their heads blown off by some Vietcong killer. We have not spent months and years away from our kids in a remote desert or jungle, shared a sleeping bag with two other guys splitting 24-hour duty, or had to wear suits protecting us from chemical attack in the sweltering heat of deserts. Certainly, the airplanes in which we travel have never been fired upon.

It's an odd life. You haul your family all over the world, enroll your kids in 10 different schools, live always in a house, never a home. Your natural friends – those with whom you grew up and went through high school – fall by the wayside as you make a series of fleeting friendships in whatever civilian neighborhood you land. The lasting friendships, I imagine, are found in the service.

The gentle spirit of the retired Crows was nowhere present the following night when active-duty members of the **55th Wing** gathered at the grand ballroom of Harvey's Casino for their annual Birthday Ball.

These guys are in the game still. The sense of rank was strong, with adulatory applause directed to the **Wing** commander whose speech was packed with ringing declarations of the **Wing's** worth and superiority. The wives were all stunning, dressed in strapless gowns that gave testimony to the virility of their warrior husbands.

The stories of these men and women, of course, are still being written, and one could sense they were competing to make them as brilliant as possible. Ladders are still being climbed, favor still being courted, promotions still being sought. Stars or stripes dangle elusively on their horizons.

This I did not envy. It was a world I know too well.

But I know that something more attractive awaits them in retirement.

There they will join organizations and mingle with men and women who know their souls, who know the hells they have endured, who can welcome them with a rub of a shoulder into a fraternity forged by fire.

And people like me will hover around the edges, noticing all this, forever aware that we cannot be where they are, because we have not been where they have been.

* * * * *

(This is a letter I wrote in response to Mr. Curtin's article. It was published March 14th 2001 in the Bellevue Leader. Max.)

Eugene Curtin's piece, "Old Crows Never Die" (March 7), was indeed a stirring and respectful tribute to the personnel who have served, and are serving in, the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**. Any reader could tell it was personal, sincere, and heartfelt. Mr. Curtin is to be commended for sharing his feelings with readers of the Leader.

He mentioned the easy camaraderie, the intimacy of fellowship, and, yes - affection among the retired warriors. But that merely scratches the surface of how true and solid the bond is for those kindred troops.

There has been, is, and always will be, the deep feeling of pride of wearing the uniform and serving one's country. Plus, the job satisfaction and sense of duty in spite of sacrifices made.

The **55th** has a storied heritage with roots in WWII as the **55th Pursuit Group** (1940-41), then as the **55th Reconnaissance Group** (1947) in Strategic Air Command. It evolved into the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing**, its designation for 42 years, succeeded by the current **55th Wing** in 1992.

The unit has always held a singular place in SAC and the US Air Force due to its varied operational missions of national and global significance, through the Cold War and into some hot ones. Even today, it is the largest and busiest wing in Air Combat Command.

It was my distinct privilege to have served in the **55th SRW** for 23 years, the last 16 here at Offutt. I know its history and lived much of it with legions of dedicated men and women, many of whom, both locally and across this country, have known each other and stayed connected for 30, 40, even 50 years. They may move away, return, retire here or elsewhere, but it is a unique bonding of memorable experiences in a truly great organization that is the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** which unites us as a proud fraternity.

Max R. Moore, LtCol, USAF-Retired



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REUNIONS

2023 BIG SAFARI ASSOCIATION and BERLIN for LUNCH BUNCH JOINT REUNION

21-24 SEPTEMBER 2023

Holiday Inn Dayton Fairborn

2800 Presidential Drive

Fairborn, Ohio 45324

Detail update for the 2023 BSA reunion has been published! Please stay up to date at this page: <https://bigsafariassociation.org/wp/2023-bsa-berlin-for-lunch-bunch-joint-reunion/>





THE
DISTINGUISHED
FLYING CROSS
SOCIETY



WELCOME HOME

Distinguished Flying Cross Society Reunion '23

TUCSON, ARIZONA - OCT 19-22

Get complete information at DFCS@dfcs.org

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WHY WE REUNITE

"I now know why people who have been to war **yearn to reunite**. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with others who once acted at their best; who suffered and sacrificed.

I did not pick these men and women. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no others. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life.

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

As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades... Such good people."

Author Unknown. Undated.

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REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
55th Wing Association Reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado
17-20 OCTOBER 2023

Please print all information and make a copy for yourself.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Cell Phone (____) _____ E-Mail _____

Additional Guest names for Name Tags (Use additional form for more than one)

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Reminder: If you are staying at the Double Tree Hotel your breakfast is included.

Registration Fee: Number attending _____ x \$105 = \$ _____

Registration Fee includes: Hospitality Room, Tuesday Evening Reception and Administrative costs.

Wednesday Dinner Chicken Nbr _____ x \$57 = \$ _____

Thursday Dinner Beef with Salmon Nbr _____ x \$70 = \$ _____

Wed. Oct 18

National Museum of World War II Aviation and Bus Nbr _____ x \$47 = \$ _____
LUNCH AT THE AIRPLANE RESTAURANT ON YOUR OWN

Thur. Oct 19

**United States Olympic Training Center and
Olympic & Paralympic Museum and Bus** Nbr _____ x \$56 = \$ _____
LUNCH ON YOUR OWN AT THE MUSEUM

Total (registration fees, dinners and tours) \$ _____

Golf: Golfing is available at the Air Force Academy or Peterson AFB. Contact Alan Feldkamp
Shopping: Downtown, Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs, Park Meadows Mall

Fees for cancelled tours (due to low participation) will be refunded after the reunion.
Make a copy of this form and mail the original form along with your check payable to:

55th Reunion cut off by August 31

Mail completed form and check to: Alan Feldkamp, 17575 Colonial Park Drive, Monument, CO 80132

**Contact Info: Sandy 719 351 3113 sandyfeldkamp@gmail.com
Alan 719 332 8541 alanfeldkamp@gmail.com**



Videmus Omnia



55th Wing Association, Inc.
(Formerly – 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (Contact Information Update)

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

email: _____

Are you a Veteran? ____ Yes ____ No Branch of Service _____ (Dates of Service) _____

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

When were you a member of the 55th Strat Recon Wing? _____ (Dates of Service) _____



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

When were you a member of the 55th Wing? _____ (Dates of Service) _____



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

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

What is your present occupation? _____

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

to:
55TH WING ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 13165
OFFUTT AFB, NE 68113

* Note – Expiration date of **NEW MEMBERS** only joining after 1 Oct extended to 31 Dec of following year
** Note – Dues expiration date – 31 December
***Note - Questions? **Contact Mohan Krishna, Membership Chairman, at volvomo@gmail.com, or at the above mailing address.**

April 2020



