

COVID-19 Virus Cancels Annual Meeting, Board “Members Well-Being” First; Refunds On The Way

“Cancelling AFPAAA’s 27th Annual Membership Meeting, scheduled for April 30-May 2, was a unanimous decision the Board made for the well-being of all,” said Chairman Tom Dolney.

“Events were and still are continuing to move rapidly with the COVID-19 virus. Ohio’s governor banned gatherings of more than 100 people and closed the state’s public schools, similar actions have taken place nationwide,” Tom explained.

“The clincher was Wright-Patterson AFB officials telling us that TDYs and public gatherings for the next 60 days were restricted and recommending that we cancel.”

Many of our members who had registered were in the over 60 years of age group. The Centers for Disease Control has identified it as one of the most vulnerable groups, with a disproportionate

number of COVID-19 fatalities, which reinforced the decision.

Registration fees and any additional charges for payments by credit card, are being refunded. Those who had registered to attend have been notified to give them time to change or cancel hotel and airline reservations. Reservations for the Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn can be cancelled toll-free at (877) 410-6667.

Surprisingly, there was one positive thing. “Our treasurer, Phil Ratliff, was able to work with the Holiday Inn, which agreed we could void our contract without penalty,” Tom said.

“Wright-Patterson is still in our plans,” Dolney emphasized. “We expect the COVID-19 crisis to be under control by next year. We don’t have dates set yet but, although a year late, we’ll see you at AFPAAA’s “reborn” 27th Annual Membership Meeting at Wright-Patt next year.”

Air Force Song Changed, Now Gender Neutral

On February 27th, General David L. Goldfein, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, approved and announced an immediate change to the official Air Force song to make it more inclusive by being gender neutral.

The change to the third verse, General Goldfein said, makes the song “reflect all of us and who we aspire to be.”

More changes could be coming. “I want to open a conversation here, which I hope to have over the next few months, about whether we also want to update the first verse,” he said.

Chief Wright embraced the change as well. “The Air Force is changing . . . We talk a lot about diversity and inclusion; we have to take a look at those traditions that are written and unwritten,” he said.

The change was announced at the Air Force Association’s Air Warfare Symposium, Orlando, Florida, to 2,000 Airmen, industry officials, and

The New Lyrics

*Here’s a toast to the host
Of those who love the vastness of
the sky,
To a friend we send a message of
the brave who serve on high.
We drink to those who gave their
all of old,
Then down we roar to score the
rainbow’s pot of gold.
A toast to the host of those we
boast, the U.S. Air Force!*

retirees at a joint appearance with Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright. When the new lyrics were announced there was sustained applause in the auditorium.

General Goldfein moved slowly in making the change when the issue was raised at the Academy. He recognized the status of the song and the emotions it could trigger.

“We started down this path and I actually started having a lot of conversations with both men and women about our Air Force song which is a part of who we are and it defines us. The cadets themselves came up with what they thought was the better third verse.”

With women now in all combat fields, flying, fighting, and dying, the new lyrics reflect today’s Air Force.

Ryder Nominated For Star, Next SAF/PA Director

Colonel Patrick S. Ryder has been nominated for promotion to brigadier general and selected to be the next SAF/PA Director.

Colonel Ryder is now serving as the Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the current director, Brigadier General Ed

Thomas, who has been selected to head Air Force Recruiting Service.

Prior to his current position, Colonel Ryder served two years as Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was Chief of SAF/PA’s Media Operations Division.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising and an AFROTC commission in 1992 at the University of Florida. He has masters degrees in public administration, strategic intelligence, and national resource strategy.

His assignments have included SAF/PA Executive Officer; the DoD Press Desk; Strategic Communication Advisor to the Secretary of the Air Force, and Director of

Public Affairs, and Deputy Director, Communication Integration, U.S. Central Command.

He deployed in 2009 to Pakistan during Operation Enduring Freedom as the Director, Public Affairs, Office of Defense Representative-Pakistan in Islamabad. In 2004, he was sent to Baghdad to assist the Coalition Provisional Authority’s Strategic Communications Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom.



News & Notes

April 2020

Public Affairs Alumni Association

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Wounded Warrior Mentor Program

Assisting Wounded Warriors and their families transition to new, productive lives

Denny Gauci Aids Service Members In Small, Unheralded Life Transitioning Program

Denny Gauci goes to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on Tuesday mornings. But the AFPAAA Life Member is not heading to the commissary, exchange, gym, or hospital. Instead he heads to the Soldier & Family Assistance Center for “one of the most satisfying things I’ve ever done.” He is the site manager for a small, little known program that helps wounded, ill, and injured members of the military who will meet Medical Evaluation Boards (MEB), most of whom will leave the military, prepare themselves for the next stage of their lives.

The program is the Wounded Warrior Mentor Program (WWMP) which he explains “Is not to be confused with the similarly named program that is widely known through its national television advertising. WWMP is a totally non-profit, all-volunteer organization.”

Three years ago a retired Army friend hooked Denny up with the Wounded Warrior Mentor Program.

“I got involved,” he said. “I was looking to volunteer for something meaningful and this has been the perfect fit for me.”

The WWMP does not get involved in medical treatment or military issues.

“We are a conduit, a facilitating program that provides links to resources that can assist at no cost to the individuals who seek our help,” Denny said.

WWMP began in 2004 when four members of West Point’s Class of 1958 recognized casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan needed help to map out what to do after they met the MEB and left the service. Initially they focused on education, but soon realized other assistance was needed.

The Program started at Walter Reed Army Medical Center; as WWMP grew Fort Belvoir was added several years later. It aims to help transition service members facing a MEB in the Washington, D.C. area. The WWMP is open to almost everyone needing its assistance - all ranks,

all services, and the same applies to the mentors.

Today, mentors are trained to help service members develop and use a three-to-five-year plan for their lives after the military. The plan may include continuing education, finding internships, or guiding them through the civilian/federal employment process. It can identify experts for the individuals to use as they go through their MEBs, or ones for dealing with the Veterans Administration, Social Security Disability, employment opportunities and other issues.

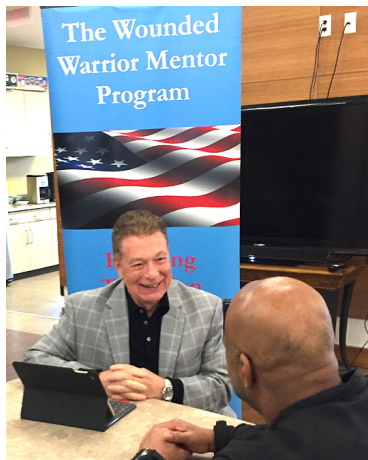
Mentors help the service members create transition plans based on their individual needs and interests, then encourage them to stay on that plan, revising it as necessary.

“We don’t have a ‘one size fits all’ approach, Gauci explained. “We listen closely to the service member then help them design a plan that meets his or her transition needs.”

An increasingly vital part of WWMP is its Follow-On Mentor Program, where volunteer mentors in or near Wounded Warriors home towns are paired with them and continue to provide the kind of one-to-one advice and guidance that they received at Walter Reed and Fort Belvoir.

WWMP has successfully transitioned over 700 service members since it started.

Full information on WWMP is at its website: <http://wwmp.us> If you are interested in learning more about mentoring contact Denny at: djgauci@verizon.net As he says “It is a great opportunity to give back.”



Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association News & Notes, John Terino, editor, is published quarterly for members by the Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association, P. O. Box 2446, East Peoria, IL 61611-2446. On-line subscriptions are available at www.AFPAAA.org **Membership Information:** Those who have served in Air Force Public Affairs, an Air Force Band, as an Air Force Broadcaster, or in the multimedia career fields, as either military or civilian, are eligible for *Full Membership*. Current or former members of those career fields, still on active duty, or in the Guard or Reserve are eligible for *Associate Membership*. **Membership Rates:** Lifetime \$300 (payable in four quarterly \$75 installments); Full Membership, one-year \$25 or three years \$50. Associate Membership, one-year \$10 or three years \$20. Membership applications are available at www.AFPAAA.org **Board of Directors and Officers:** Chairman, Tom Dolney; President, Jay DeFrank; Vice President, Perry Nouis; Secretary, Brett Ashworth, Treasurer, Phil Ratliff, Bryan Bouchard, John Dorrian, John Gura, Doug Kennett, David Phillips, Greg Smith, Carla Sylvester, and John Terino. **Committee Chairmen:** Annual Meeting Coordinator, Perry Nouis; Communications, John Terino; Development, Joe Purka; Elections, Kathy McCollom; Finance, Phil Ratliff; Membership, Christine Queen; Oral History & Website, John Gura; SAF/PA Liaison, Clem Gaines.

From The President's Pen



Maintaining and growing AFPAAA's ranks by giving you a worthwhile membership experience is always a concern. The Board believes we have done that as our number of members has been stable, but there are opportunities to do even better.

Over time the Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association has expanded to include broadcasters, bands, and multi-media in our tent, yet we are still almost all from the Public Affairs community. While we want to add retired Public Affairs practitioners, we really want to increase our attractiveness to those others. You can reach out to those you know from all the groups that AFPAAA encompasses and encourage them to fill out the form on page 7; you could even give a close friend a gift membership

Regardless of who our members are, the key to maintaining and growing is making AFPAAA worthwhile to current and potential members. Last year's survey, which almost half of us answered, supports that value premise, you like what AFPAAA does.

But the survey was just a snapshot in time. Your Board needs your continuous feedback to keep us up to date on what is important to you and what you think AFPAAA should be doing to keep your membership worthwhile and add new members.

While more than half of you said you hadn't attended our Annual Membership Meeting in the past five years, you said our directory, newsletter, website, and Facebook page keep you informed about AFPAAA and its members, Air Force Public Affairs, and the broader Air Force community. With your inputs, we have focused on sharpening and refreshing all of those vehicles – take a look at our new, dazzling website at afpaaa.org created by Jim McGuire with the guidance and support of John Gura.

The Board will respond if you tell us how to make AFPAAA better – give us suggestions and recommend how your membership can be more meaningful and valuable to you.

You can contact Board members directly, that information is on our website and in the directory. Our Annual Membership Meeting is also an opportunity to give your thoughts to the entire Board or to individual members face-to-face. And, regarding our Annual Membership Meetings, we'd like to see more than the 10% or so of the members that is the usual turnout at next year's gathering. Are there things we can change regarding the format, sites, length, etc. that can increase attendance? Please let us know.

AFPAAA is our organization. Keeping it healthy and thriving takes all of us. We need your best ideas, thinking, and feedback. Please let us know your thoughts on how we're doing and what we can do to make a great organization even better.

– Jay DeFrank

Lord Guard & Guide

James A. George

Jim George, whose career included the Army, Air Force, Civil Service, and as a civilian journalist spanning from 1946-1989 when he retired as executive editor of Airman Magazine, passed away December 5th at his home in Bedford, Virginia. He was 91.

He was born in New Castle, Pennsylvania. His military service began with the Army after he attended Dover High School in Ohio. He served in Austria and Germany with the 1st Infantry Division in the post WW II Army of Occupation.

In 1950 Jim started his uniformed Air Force career. His assignments included newspaper editor at Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, where he also had popular music shows on Columbus' WTVN Radio.

He spent a year as program director and station chief of Armed Forces Korea Network radio stations at Osan and Kunsan Air Bases. Assigned to Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, he traveled extensively throughout the command's vast area generating articles and photography about the personnel, aircraft, and operations of PACAF.

As a writer and editor on the Airman Magazine staff in the 1960s he was perpetually on the road covering the Air Force in action around the world.

Jim's 19 year career in an Air Force uniform ended in 1969 with his retirement as a senior master sergeant.

Transferring his journalistic skills to the civilian world, from 1969 until 1977 he was managing editor of Washington Crime News Services.

He returned to the Air Force via Civil Service as managing editor of Airman, adding 12 years to his career with the military that concluded with his last retirement in 1989 as Airman's executive editor which earned him the Air Force Outstanding Civilian Service Award.

Jim is survived by his wife of 69 years, Esther; daughters Dorothy, Susan, Esther, Jeri, and Dena; sons David, James, Thomas, and Nicholas, and, nearly 50 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jim was one of my favorite people back in the day. He was funny, a great human being, and the ultimate professional!

– Terry Arnold

Sorry to hear of Jim's passing, he was a great credit to the Air Force and Public Affairs.

– Ted Tilma

Ronald C. "Ron" Hall

Ron Hall, who spent 51 years supporting the Air Force mission in the Pentagon and elsewhere, died peacefully of complications from congestive heart failure at home with his family by his side on January 12th. He was 87.

He was born in Detroit, Michigan and graduated from Ann Arbor High School. While attending the University of Michigan he joined the Navy in 1952.

Ron had an interest in photography as a teenager and the Navy aided him in that pursuit by sending him to its Pensacola, Florida, photo school. He had assignments in Jacksonville, Florida; Norfolk, Virginia, and for five years at the Navy Photographic Center, Washington, DC. During that period he attended American University at night and earned a BS degree.



After his enlistment was up he worked at the Pentagon in the Air Force's color lab for five years. In 1961 he was hired as a staff photographer to support the Air Force Secretary, Chief of Staff, and the Air Staff.

When Ron retired 51 years later, he was the Air Force's Chief Still Photographer, and had covered 18 Secretaries and 16 Chiefs of Staff. During his career he was awarded two Meritorious Civilian Service Awards and an Exceptional Civilian Service Award.

Ron is survived by his wife, Wilma; daughters Ronda, Fawn, and Meredith; granddaughters, Kelsea and Lisa, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be made in the Parish Memorial Funeral home guest book at: Memorial donations in Ron's name may be made to the Air Force Aid Society, 1550 Crystal Drive, #809, Arlington, VA 22202, or via the internet at: https://secure.afas.org/site/Donation2?df_id=1500&mfc_pref=T&1500.donation=form1

A true class act now photographing the angels.

– Doug Kennett

Tragic loss is an ultimate understatement. Indeed, we've lost a giant.

– Alan Shoemaker

Billy "Bill" E. Turner

Bill Turner, an AFPAAA member, who had a 26 year enlisted and officer Air Force career in Public Affairs and Broadcasting, passed away December 6, 2017, in Schertz, Texas. He was 87.

He was born in Greenville, South Carolina. After his junior year in high school he enlisted in the Air Force. While on active duty he earned associate, bachelor and master's degrees.

Bill rose through the ranks from airman to master sergeant. He had been selected for promotion to senior master sergeant when he entered Officer Training School and was commissioned on November 2, 1971. He ended his uniformed career in 1981 as chief of internal information for Air Training Command, retiring as a captain.

For 24 more years Bill continued his Air Force service as a civilian at Kelly AFB and the Air Force Military Personnel Center at Randolph AFB.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years Frances (Jeanette) Ensey Turner, daughter Melody and son Kevin; four grandchildren, and two great grandsons. Bill was interred at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.



I was saddened to learn of the passing of Bill Turner. Prior to his commissioning in 1971, he had an exemplary career as an enlisted man in a variety of public affairs assignments. As a captain, he worked for me when I was the director of Public Affairs at the former Air Training Command from 1977 to his retirement in 1981. With extraordinary writing skills, Bill was a key member on my Internal Information staff. Rest in peace, my friend.

– Dave Shea

MAIL ONLY THIS BALLOT - DO NOT ENCLOSE REGISTRATION FORMS, CHECKS, OR OTHER ITEMS

Election - Vote Below For Six Board Members

The AFPAAA Board of Directors has 12 elected members serving overlapping two-year terms. Six positions are open this year for terms that begin July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2022. Only Full Members of AFPAAA in good standing (dues paid) may vote. Select or write in up to six names. Please do not enclose any other materials with the ballot. To be counted, ballots must reach the Election Committee by Friday, April 17, 2020. Provision is made for a write-in vote but ballots may only be cast for six persons. If you wish to vote electronically go to <http://www.afpaaa.org/vote.html>



Brett Ashworth served 21 years as an Air Force public affairs officer at the wing, DRU, MAJCOM, joint and Air Staff levels. He served as public affairs officer at Whiteman Air Force Base and Director of Public Affairs at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He also served as commander of the 344th Recruiting Squadron. He retired in 2014 from the Pentagon where he was Director of Air Force Media Operations. Upon military retirement he assumed the role of Vice President of Communications and Marketing at The Citadel. Brett became Vice Chancellor of Communications and Marketing at the Texas Tech University System in October of 2016. He, his wife Katy, and their 15-year-old triplets reside in Lubbock, Texas. He is a Life Member of AFPAAA.



John Dorrian is a Life Member of AFPAAA and Vice President for Communications and Marketing at The Citadel, consistently ranked as the number one public regional university in the South. After graduating from The Citadel in 1990, John entered the Air Force as a public affairs officer and spent 25 years serving at the wing, numbered air force, major command, Headquarters Air Force and combatant command levels. John also commanded the 305th Mission Support Squadron at McGuire AFB, N.J. His many deployments included duty as chief of press desk operations for the International Security Assistance Force, Kabul, Afghanistan, and as principal military spokesman for CJTF Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq. John retired from active duty in 2017. He and his wife Valerie reside in Mount Pleasant, SC. They have 3 sons, Jay, Nicholas and Ryan.



John Gura is a Lifetime Founder who served as AFPAAA's 3rd President and Board Chairman. In 1997 He created and continues to provide support for the AFPAAA web site and Oral History Program. He has also chaired five Annual Meetings. John spent 21 years as a USAF Public Affairs Officer, holding wing, MAJCOM, SAF/PA and Joint jobs, including stints as Chief of the Chicago field office and Department Director and Deputy Commander of DINFOS. He retired in 1983. Subsequently he worked in corporate marketing and video production positions until 2000, when he co-founded HomeSafe, Inc. a California environmental testing and training firm. Since 2018 he has been managing partner of JKG Properties, LLC. He and his wife Kathleen live in Redlands, CA.



Doug Kennett is an AFPAAA Lifetime Founder. He has 30 years experience as an Air Force Public Affairs Officer and 14 as a senior Boeing Spokesman. From 1967-74 he headed Public Affairs at bases in Texas, Korea, and England. Following time as Public Affairs deputy for USAFSS, he joined the SAF/PA Press Desk handling highly controversial policy issues. He then became Chief of the Air Force Press Desk in DoD. His further assignments included Director of Public Affairs for 3rd Air Force and Air Force Systems Command, Director of AF Media Relations and Director of Press Operations for DoD. His time as a national security spokesman for Boeing included being vice president of Communications for their Aircraft and Missiles Business. In 2011 he was honored by AIA with the Lyman Award for lifetime achievement in Aerospace Public Relations.



Chuck Merlo was an enlisted teletype repairman until he was selected for officer training. As a first lieutenant he was the Public Affairs advisor to the Under Secretary of the Air Force. Later, the Chief of Staff handpicked him to revamp operations in his International Affairs Division and selected him to serve as an assistant secretary for JCS and NSC matters. He directed a 40-man team that demonstrated US Special Operations Command's capabilities to legislative, business, and military leaders. He was director of Public Affairs for Air Mobility Command when he retired in 2002. After his retirement, Chuck was a consultant to ITT Systems Division, the multinational engineering firm AECOM, and Aegis Defense Services, a British security company with offices throughout the Middle East. He and his wife own a ranch in San Saba, Texas.



Carla Sylvester served nearly 21 years as an Air Force Public Affairs officer. In addition to wing and MAJCOM positions, her assignments included special assistant to the chief of staff of the 1992-93 Armed Forces Inaugural Committee; operations officer for the AF European Broadcast Squadron; Education With Industry fellow at Hill and Knowlton, and chief of marketing at AF Recruiting Service. At SAF/PA, from 1998-2001, she helped establish the Air Force's new symbol and identity. She had deployments to Incirlik AB, Turkey and Bagram AB, Afghanistan. Carla was named AF Outstanding Field Grade PAO of the Year in 1996. After retiring in 2004, she worked for Martha Stewart Crafts and the Central Park Conservancy in New York City. A Lifetime Member of AFPAAA, she lives in Florida and is married to retired Air Force PAO Jim McGuire.

Ballot – AFPAAA Board of Directors Candidates – 2020

Instructions

Only Full Members of AFPAAA in good standing (dues paid) are eligible to vote.
Select or write in up to six names. Please do not enclose any other materials with the ballot.

Brett Ashworth **John Dorrian** **John Gura** **Doug Kennett** **Chuck Merlo** **Carla Sylvester**

Other _____

Print Your Name _____ Signature _____



Place
Stamp
Here

Kathy McCollom
AFPAAA Elections Chairman
5009 Donovan Drive
Alexandria VA 22304-8620

Kathy McCollom
AFPAAA Elections Chairman
5009 Donovan Drive
Alexandria VA 22304-8620



Membership Application

Full Members – former members of the Air Force Public Affairs, Broadcasting, Bands, or Multimedia career fields, military or civilian, retired or separated. *Associate Members* – current or former members of the Air Force Public Affairs, Broadcasting, Bands, or Multimedia career fields, military or civilian, still in service.

I am applying for: () Full Membership () Associate Membership
() Active Duty Introductory 2-year Complimentary First Time Membership (No payment required)

Name _____ Date _____

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Home Phone _____ Home Fax _____

Home e-mail address _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Business Phone _____ Business Fax _____

Business e-mail address _____

I am () Currently Retired () Part of the active duty, guard, or reserve force

My last/current Air Force Public Affairs/Broadcasting/Band position was/is

It was/is at (base) _____

My grade/rank/GS/GM was/is _____

That was in (month & year) _____

I retired/separated from the USAF in the grade/rank/GS/GM of _____

in (month & year) _____

I am enclosing a check (U.S. funds) payable to:

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() \$ 50 Three-year Full Membership

() \$ 10 One-year Active Duty, Guard, Reserve Associate Membership

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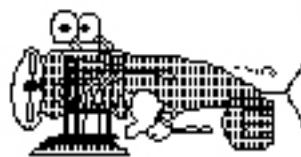
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Welcome Aboard To . . . new members
*Wayne Specht, Patrick Ryder, and Michael
Hammond.*

**New Lifers . . . congratulations to Wayne Hall,
Bonnie Heather, Terrance Holliday, Mike
Miley, Daela Torres, and Naomi Russi.**

It's Spectacular! . . . *If you haven't been to AFAAA's
website – afpaaa.org – recently, take a look, it's
dazzling. Completely revamped by Jim McGuire, it
has all the information you could want about us and
links to sites to keep you up to date of what is going
on in the Air Force.*

Public Affairs Legends At Your Fingertips . . .

*John Gura has added a great feature to AFPAAA's
Oral History Project: easily accessible, readable,
online, volumes of the Public Affairs legends we
have accumulated. There are two ways you can
get to the volumes – go to the Explore AFPAAA
area of our website at afpaaa.org and click
Learn From Legends or go directly to [afpaaa.
org/oralhistory.html](http://afpaaa.org/oralhistory.html)*

*You'll find the stories in their own words of those
who built the Public Affairs, Broadcasting, Bands and
Multimedia fields from WW II to the present.*

*Among those available are Bill Coleman, Arnald
Gabriel, Bill McGinty, Barney Oldfield, Reade Tilly,
and Betty Jane Williams, who flew or were in
ground combat in WW II. And there are those
from the postwar era to the present, including,
Dick Abel, Jerry Dalton, Bill Greener, Mike
McRaney, and Bill Robinson. You can literally
flip the pages on the screen. And if you can put
down these great stories you can bookmark the
spot and come back later.*