



The Sentinel

Arizona's First Chapter



THE ARIZONA CHAPTER, P.O. Box 7644, Cave Creek, AZ 85327

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CHARTERED IN 1956 - OVER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO COUNTRY

MARCH 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again Jim Seidl did a sterling job in getting a speaker for our February dinner. BG



Maxon gave a very interesting talk. I'm sure that all of us that attended now have a better appreciation of the Guards involvement in our Homeland security and the absences from home and family to which they are now committed.

Jim Seidl and I made a coordination run to Falcon Field on 12 February where we talked to responsible people at both the Falcon's Roost and the Champlin Fighter Aircraft Museum. This promises to be a very interesting day and will provide the opportunity to be a patriotic information-gathering outing. We are designing the schedule to be very flexible so you can bring friends, neighbors, kids and grandkids.

The luncheon is being set up in the main bar (as that is big enough to accommodate us) where smoking is allowed (but we didn't notice the smell of smoke due to their excellent air exchange system). If people desire or we exceed the authorized number for that room, we can spill over into the non-smoking restaurant immediately adjacent where the small bar there is hidden by booth level walls. No one is likely to be using either bar at that time of the day. If youngsters that want a different meal accompany you, you may omit them from the TROA meal and purchase a meal from the kid's menu.

If you wish you may join us for the guided tour of the museum and then consume your own picnic lunch at the covered picnic tables in the large grassy area in front of the museum. The guided tours start at 11:00 AM, but come early and enjoy the gift shop that has many interesting items. At 10:30 AM we will set up in the picnic rotunda, right in front of the museum, where you may join us for a social hour that will include a variety of soft drinks and chips.

I believe that there are three hangers to view and the tour lasts about 1 1/2 hours. There are

chairs in each hanger where you may sit and rest. If I heard right, you may return to the museum and wander around after lunch.

Please see the write-up by Chuck Schluter on the museum that immediately follows. Hope to see you there!

Ronald R. Green

LtCol (Ret) USAF

President, Arizona Chapter TROA

Champlin Air Museum: "A Passionate Memory"

This month our Chapter will enjoy a trip to the Champlin Fighter Museum in Mesa, where, compliments of our wonderful social director we'll partake of a hearty snack and take a step back in time.

Frankly, I enjoy a visit to the "past" and for that reason alone I have owned several vintage sports cars. My current ride is a 1948 MGTC, which I recently drove to the Champlin Museum where we participated in a nice little event. The MGTC is the car that our boys "over there" brought back after WW II. The little car was quick, nimble, fun to drive and cost about the same as a big ol' car made in Detroit. They became extremely popular and started the whole "sports car" market. When I was growing up, it was the car I wanted to own – sometimes that's how a passion starts.

A few months ago, just about the time the movie Pearl Harbor was released, I was speaking with Velma Birtciel, and she told me that her husband, Frank, like the lead characters in the movie, also had a passion when he was growing up. His was to fly airplanes. Eventually Frank flew the P-38 Lighting, the P-51 Mustang, and many others. When he was assigned to the 343rd squadron during WW II, they flew the P-38 and the P-51. A previous issue of our Sentinel showed a picture of Frank's plane with "Miss Velma" painted on the nose. Well this being the small world that it is – it turned out that a P-51 Mustang from the 343rd Squadron was on display at the Champlin Fighter Aircraft Museum.

Arizona Chapter Calendar

March 16

Luncheon & Air Museum Tour

March 17

St Patrick's Day

March 24

Palm Sunday

March 28

Peace in Vietnam 1973

March 31

Easter Sunday

April 4

Board of Directors Meeting

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SUPPORT OUR TROOPS — REMEMBER OUR FALLEN COMRADES — FLY YOUR FLAG



The picture shown above is of that particular Mustang and my little ol' MGTC. Some things are just meant to be.

The museum is only going to be open for another few years, and then many of the planes and artifacts will move to Seattle, WA. But this Chapter has solid links to the museum today. Planes that were flown by our members are throughout the museum – 38 legendary fighters from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm are on display. In addition, a "Hall of Aces" with more than 700 autographed photos honor the world's top fighter pilots, and they have an extensive display of memorabilia, weapons, flight gear, medals, a large collection of oil paintings and a fabulous gift shop! As a Chapter, we'd really be remiss not to visit this wonderful museum as a group. The stories will be great so bring your cameras (and your boots). Off hand I can match at least a half dozens guys from our chapter with various, incredibly historic planes and I'm looking forward to every minute of it. These guys are our guys, this is our history, this is our Chapter, and believe me, it'll be well worth the visit.

Old cars and old planes – and us, just a bunch of young guys and gals, thankful for the opportunity to step back, to remember, to give thanks - and perhaps a bit more. See you there! The museum is located on Falcon Field Airport at 4636 Fighter Aces Drive. From U.S. 60 take the Greenfield exit north to McKellips Road. Make a right on McKellips and then make your first left onto Falcon Drive. Then turn left on to Fighter Aces Drive. The museum will be on your right.

Chuck Schluter

Footnote: Bill Hane's P-51 was a surplus Mustang and not from the 343rd Squadron. At the end of the war our aircraft were either destroyed by plastic explosives on the engine block or sold to Sweden. However, the aircraft is painted in the 343rd colors and carries the 343rd letters CY designating the 343rd and the H letter was assigned to flight leader Major Hoepfer's aircraft.

Frank Birtweil

Membership

Membership remains relatively unchanged from last month. There are 121 Regular active members and 40 Auxiliary members. However, with the approach of the end of March those numbers may change. March 31 marks the end of the probationary period for members who have not paid the current years dues, and regretfully they must be dropped from the rolls. We, most of us anyway, feel that membership is beneficial, informative,

and a way to stay abreast of what's going on with our national defense system. We hope you feel the same way. If you haven't been to a meeting lately, you should try it.

Raymond Deane, Membership

Scholarship

We're getting to the good part of the scholarship program. That's the time when we pass out the medal awards to the 3rd year students, and a few bucks to some graduating seniors. All of us who have participated in this exercise come away with the feeling that there are some good kids enrolled in these programs, and what we offer is possibly just the incentive they need to go on to bigger and better things. If you would like to help, we will need 5 to 7 members to serve on the scholarship selection board, and up to 15 members to help with the medal awards night at the high schools. Don't be bashful, pick up the phone and call the Scholarship Chairman and volunteer.

Raymond Deane, Scholarship

TAPS

We regret to inform you of the passing of one of our fellow members:

Walter W. (Bill) Thompson

LtCol USAF (Ret)

February 29, 1927— February 16, 2002

Past President 1996-1997

Interment will be in Arlington National Cemetery

Our heart felt condolences to the family.

If you know of any member or member's spouse who enters the hospital or passes away, please notify any of the Chapter Officers so we may take the appropriate action.

Roster Corrections

For corrections or changes to the roster, please phone Raymond Deane at (623)939-8517 or Email RDDeane@aol.com.

Unified Arizona Veterans

With the State Legislature tied up with the budget, there will be no Veteran's legislation this year. The only casualty so far is that planning for a Northern Arizona Veteran's cemetery is on hold. Funding for other State Veterans' programs appears to be secure.

Cherie Holm who is Arizona Director for U.S. Vets gave a presentation on a new homeless veterans' facility being built in Phoenix. U.S. Vets is a public/private partnership funded in part by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs. The facility will provide housing, counseling, and training for homeless veterans. The facility is expected to be in full operation by years end. It will provide an opportunity for volunteer work with a very important segment of our society for our members. I will keep you up to date.

Deadline for nominations to the Veterans' Hall of fame is June 30th. We expect to nominate at least one of our members for this honor. Please make your wishes known to Ron Green if you have a favorite candidate.

Arizona Council of Chapters

The Arizona Council of Chapters met February 22nd in Sierra Vista. Chapter reports included reports on fund raising while having fun. Luke Chapter reported on its very successful annual golf tournament. The Arizona Chapter reported on its annual silent auction. In both cases, they were fun events and very productive relative to fund raising.

The main business was the election of Chuck Schluter as vice president. He filled the position vacated by Dan Conway who moved up to president in November following the resignation of Sam Apuna. The Council was assured that even with the president and vice president from the same Chapter, the Council is dedicated to serve all of the Chapters throughout the state.

The next Council meeting will be in Prescott on Monday, May 20th following a picnic on Sunday sponsored by the Northern Arizona Chapter. *Dan Conway*

Veterans' License Plates

The veterans' license plates serve a dual purpose. First, they identify that your family includes a member who has served in one of the uniformed services. Second, they provide support to the Arizona veterans home with \$17.00 of the \$25.00 cost of the plates dedicated to the home. This is the most important purpose. At the present time, less than 2% of eligible veterans have purchased these plates. Possibly part of the reason is that they don't know that they are available. This excuse is no longer available to you. By purchasing the veterans plates when your registration is due for renewal, you will let your neighbors and other eligible veterans know that they are available by seeing them on your vehicle. Hopefully, that will encourage them to do the same. How about making it our goal to have 100% of our Chapter membership displaying these plates?

Please consider this request seriously when renewal time arrives. *Dan Conway*

Federal Legislation

TROA National still hasn't given up on some concurrent receipt legislation. On behalf of the Chapter, letters were written to the entire Arizona congressional delegation asking their support. *Dan Conway*

Nation's Largest Military Officers Association To Vote On Name Change

Alexandria, VA...The Retired Officers Association (TROA), the nation's largest association for active duty and retired military officers, will ask its membership to vote on changing its name to the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). TROA members will begin voting in August with ballots they will receive with TROA's August magazine. The unanimous recommendation by TROA's 35-member Board of Directors at their February 5 meeting in Alexandria, VA., resulted from a year's study to see if the current name still clearly defines the membership and what the organization does for them.

"The name Military Officers Association of America was chosen over dozens of possibilities because TROA's Board believes it more accurately defines who the association is and what we do," says General Joseph P. Hoar, TROA's Board Chairman. "There's no change in our mission, but we are convinced that the change will very likely result in better recruiting and retention among younger officers--something we must do for the health of the organization."

TROA's goal is promoting a strong national defense, and it has long lobbied for fair entitlements and benefits for all military personnel, including active duty pay raises, equitable health care, repeal of the old REDUX retirement system that caused retention and readiness problems, and improvement in compensation for military moves.

TROA officials began to look at the organization's name when more and more younger active duty and retired military officers showed reluctance to join a "retired" organization, even though many of TROA's legislative efforts are aimed at supporting military people's rights and benefits in all phases of their careers.

The study included discussion with an outside expert, surveys, and interviews with TROA members, TROA council and chapter leaders, Congressional staff members, members of The Military Coalition, and key magazine advertisers.

Members confirmed TROA's thinking that a new name would lend credence to TROA's already strong voice on Capitol Hill on behalf of the active duty and second career personnel. Once they understood that a name change would not alter TROA's current mission, the overwhelming majority said they would readily accept a name change. Additionally, the members supported a change as better reflecting TROA's current and future legislative goals.

The research also confirmed that the word "retired" confused prospective members because people thought they had to be retired to join. Additionally, TROA's membership has broadened to include more active duty, Guard, and Reserve officers. Also, the concept of what is "retired" has changed over time, because many former military people and spouses are on their second or third careers or actively involved in community service. In recommending the Military Officers Association of America, TROA officials noted that "military" will clarify what kind of officers are members. "Officers" and "Association" are self-explanatory. The "of America" acknowledges the patriotic inclinations of the membership and prospective members.

In recent years, other major organizations, such as insurance giant USAA in Texas and the 35 million-member AARP have changed their names to reflect their diverse services to different populations and age groups.

"It's important to remember that the name change is a recommendation that the members still must vote on," stresses Gen. Hoar "There is no change in TROA's direction or high-quality service, but we believe a name change is a positive step for the organization that will help

ensure its future strength.”

TROA is the largest organization for active duty and retired military officers in the United States. Membership is open to active duty, Reserve, Guard, former and retired military officers and their surviving spouses, including all military services, and the uniformed portions of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). *February TROA Gram*

Chaplain's Corner

Lent did not begin as a 40-day season. From earliest church history we know that almost from the beginning there had been a pre-Easter fast, but its duration varied widely from place to place. Some kept one day, some two days, some the forty hours from Good Friday to Easter morning, some three weeks, some six weeks. Gregory the Great, late in the sixth century, established the forty-day period. He had to leave out Sundays, of course, because every Sunday is a feast day in commemoration of Easter. This is why Lent begins on a Wednesday; to make up the forty days without counting the Sundays.

Robert Rutherford, Chaplain

Chapter Web Page

All households having a computer with internet access can access our chapter web page. It can be accessed by going to: www.troa.org. When the TROA web page comes up, click on Chapters & Councils. You will get a list of states. Click on Arizona and when the list of Arizona chapters comes up, click on Arizona Chapter. It contains all types of information of interest to our chapter members. Particulars on the next meeting and other items of interest are kept up-to-date. Accessing our site once a week will keep you current in chapter happenings. Make our site one of you favorites for ease of access.

Editor

The Positive Side of Life

Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include a free trip around the sun every year.

How long a minute is depends on what side of the bathroom door you're on.

If WalMart is lowering prices every day, how come nothing is free yet?

Birthdays are good for you; the more you have, the longer you live.

Happiness comes through doors you didn't even know you left open.

Ever notice that the people who are late are often much jollier than the people who have to wait for them?

Most of us go to our grave with our music still inside of us.

You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.

Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.

Don't cry because it's over; smile because it happened.

We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colors....but they all exist very nicely in the same box.

A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

CHAPTER FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION

If you would like to make a donation to one or more of the AZ Chapter Funds or renew your chapter membership, include your check identified as the appropriate fund and mail to: Bill Johnson, 13410 N. 12th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944.

Membership Renewal: \$ 20 Full Member _____ \$10 Auxiliary Member _____ 50th Anniversary Fund: \$ _____
General Fund : \$ _____ Scholarship Fund: \$ _____

* It is OK to identify me as a donor in the next newsletter. YES _____ NO _____

Name Full Member: _____ Auxiliary Member: _____

MEAL/MEETING RESERVATION FORM FOR CHAMPLIN AIR MUSEUM

Please reserve _____ spaces identified below for (Name) _____

Champlin Museum Only: 12 years and older (Adults) \$5 each _____,
5—12 yrs (Youth) \$1.50 each _____, Under 5 years (Children) Free.

Falcon Roost Restaurant Number of Meals _____ at \$12 each _____.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for 16 March 2002

Make check payable to: AZ Chapter TROA No Later Than: 9 March 2002

Send to Bill Johnson, 13410 12th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944. Phone 602-689-5379 (Office)
Phone 602-942-4549 (Home)

March Luncheon Meeting

WHEN: 11:00 AM
WHERE: Champlin Fighter Museum
 4636 Fighter Aces Drive
 Mesa, AZ and Falcon's Roost Restaurant
 Falcon Drive, Mesa, AZ-2 blocks east of museum.
COST: \$17.00 Includes lunch and museum
 entrance fee.
MENU: Hot Open Face Turkey Sandwich, Mashed
 Potatoes, Vegetable, Coffee or Tea, Carrot
 Cake dessert.
PROGRAM: Meet at museum entrance between 10:30—
 11:00 AM. Soft drinks & chips will be served
 at the picnic area across the street until
 11:00 when the tour begins. Guided tour of
 the Fighter Museum includes vintage
 fighters, WWII planes and jets.

Directions to the museum are elsewhere in the Sentinel.

Please make your reservations early and send your check to Bill Johnson using the Meal/Meeting Reservation Form in this newsletter.

Jim Seidl, Programs

The Arizona Chapter TROA - 2002 Officers and Committee Chairmen	
President, LtCol Ron Green, USAF	480-595-8693
1st Vice President, LtCol Raymond Deane USAF	623-939-8517
2nd Vice President, LT Jim Seidl, USCG	602-841-6026
3rd Vice President, LtCol Chet Baumer, USAF	623-582-8595
Secretary, LCDR Terry Tassin, USN	623-931-1546
Treasurer, Maj Bill Johnson, USAF	602-942-4549
Past President, Col Charles Schluter, USA	480-563-8480
Appointed Directors at Large / Committee Chairmen	
Membership, LtCol Raymond Deane, USAF	623-939-8517
Legislative, CAPT Dan Conway, USCGR	480-368-1427
Programs, LT Jim Seidl, USCG	602-841-6026
Sentinel Editor, LCDR Terry Tassin, USN	623-931-1546
Web Master, Maj Ron Drew, USAF	602-493-8806
TOPS Liaison, LtCol Bernie Conway, USAF	480-994-0440
Chaplin/Pers Affairs, LTC Bob Rutherford, USA	602-944-4224
Historian/Photographer, LtCol Bill Adams, USAF	480-483-3180
Morale, LtCol Bernie Conway, USAF	480-994-0440
50th Anniversary, LtCol Chet Baumer, USAF	623-582-8595
Scholarships, LtCol Raymond Deane, USAF	623-939-8517
Advertising, Col Charles Schluter, USA	480-563-8480
Electronic Communications, LtCol R. Deane	623-939-8517

Veterans Home Loan Guaranty Increased

The Veterans Education and Benefits Expansion Act of 2001 recently passed by Congress has increased the guaranty on VA home loans from \$50,750 to \$60,000. The increase means eligible veterans can use their loan benefit to purchase a home costing as much as \$240,000 *February TRCA Gram*

The Retired Officers Association
Arizona Chapter
P.O. Box 7644
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Show Your Colors By
 Proudly Displaying The
 Arizona Veteran Plate
 On Your Vehicle.
 Show How Veterans
 Help Veterans.