

FLORIDA WEST COAST CHAPTER AIR AND SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION



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NEWSLETTER

Oct – Dec 2022

CHAPTER NEWS

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS



President Scott Gray

Veterans Day is a National holiday held on November 11 -- the anniversary of the end of World War I -- to honor US veterans and victims of all wars. This holiday is a celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day because it marked the one-year anniversary of the temporary cessation of hostilities between the Allied nations and Germany during World War I. That armistice went into effect at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

While Memorial Day honors Americans who died in the line of duty, Veterans Day commemorates all Americans who have served their country honorably, both living and deceased.

Being a Veteran separates us from most Americans. We have taken an Oath to serve and protect the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. This is an Oath that is never taken lightly. It makes us professionals that have placed our country and its constitution as the most important ideal form of government the world has ever known, and one we are sworn to protect at all costs.

I hope on this important day you take time to remember the Airmen you served with, the missions you were on that brought humanitarian aid to those in need or pain to those who were inflicting harm on others. Think of the sacrifices you and your families made and of the families that were fortunate enough to have served their Country with you. Hold your head high; shed a tear for those you lost and a keep smile on your face knowing that you have flown where others have not.

Congratulations to our own **Mike Richardson** for his AFA EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD. We all know how lucky we are to have Mike in our Chapter. He works tirelessly on publishing this newsletter and serving as Chairman for our Aerospace Education programs. I promise you, Mike is the heart and soul of this organization and I cannot thank him enough for being my Wingman in this effort to keep this Chapter active, informative and relevant! ★



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED • 11TH NOVEMBER • VETERANS DAY

CHAPTER CELEBRATES AIR FORCE 75TH ANNIVERSARY



time period he flew 135 combat missions in three vastly dissimilar aircraft earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Legion of Merit and 13 Air Medals.

Additionally, he was one of approximately 350 Tuskegee Airmen who on March 29, 2007, at a ceremony in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, received the Congressional Gold Medal -- the most prestigious award Congress can give to civilians -- "in recognition of their unique military record, which inspired revolutionary reform in the Armed Forces."



The chapter met on Saturday, September 17th to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the Air Force. On September 18, 1947, **President Truman** -- while on board the "Sacred Cow" presidential aircraft -- signed The National Security Act of 1947 Act which created the Air Force as an independent military service within the new Department of Defense.

The speaker for the event was **George Hardy** -- a chapter member whose service spanned from 1943 to 1971, and bridged gap the from the Army Air Force days well into the "new" United States Air Force era. In that

Joining the service at age 18, Hardy was the youngest Tuskegee pilot and now -- at 97 -- is one of only five Tuskegee pilots still living. Hardy retired from the Air Force in 1971 in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

During his initial training he flew P-40, P47 and P-51 aircraft. One of only 355 Tuskegee pilots to deploy into the European combat zone, Hardy was sent to Italy where he flew the P-51 on 21 combat missions - primarily providing escort for bombers en route to their targets.



Hardy separated from the service in 1946, but was recalled 1948. He noted the Air Force took the initiative to begin racial desegregation in April of 1948, which was followed that July when President Truman issued an Executive Order ordering all of the services to end segregation in their ranks.

He had never set out to be a pilot, but rather had wanted to be an Engineer. So during his post war hiatus from the Air Force, he attended New York University where he studied Electronics Maintenance. In 1948 he trained for 50 weeks at Keesler AFB to become an Air Force Maintenance Officer. In 1955 the Air Force selected him to complete his Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) -- followed in 1962 when he returned to AFIT to earn a Master's degree in Reliability Engineering.



In 1949, Hardy went to the 19 Bomb Group in Guam where he served as a Maintenance Officer as well as a pilot on B-29s. During the Korean Conflict he flew 45 combat missions in the B-29. ➡



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Post Korea he served in a variety of positions related with – among others -- the B-36, the B-57 and KC-97 aircraft -- eventually ending up in Systems Command working on the AUTOVON telephone service.

He was called back to piloting for the Vietnam War – flying AC-119K Gunships out of Udorn Royal Thai AFB and Da Nang AB, Vietnam as well as commanding the Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. During that period he flew 70 combat missions – primarily at night interdicting traffic on the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

He returned to Systems Command in 1971 serving in the Inspector General's Office and retired in November of that year. He subsequently worked GTE for 18 years until 2003 when he retired.

At the conclusion of the meeting Hardy – as he oldest AF member there – cut the Chapter's 75th Anniversary cake for servings to the 20 people in attendance. ★

RICHARDSON RECEIVES AFA EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD

Former chapter President **Mike Richardson** was awarded AFA's Exceptional Service Award during the National Convention held September 17 – 18, 2022 at the Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, MD. The award is presented to those individual AFA members who have performed exceptional services for AFA in local, regional or national fields.

Richardson's award nomination cited his efforts to found a new Sarasota based chapter in 2011 and his initiatives to keep it a functioning organization throughout his 10 year stint as Chapter President. He was also cited for his Aerospace Education initiatives which recognized local students competing in the two county STEM/Science Fairs and his efforts to establish a viable STEM Teacher of the Year Award.



Richardson was also recognized for his efforts in publishing the Chapter Newsletter. Over the past 10 years – including throughout the COVID restrictions – he published over forty editions of the 8 page, full color newsletter designed to keep members informed about chapter activities and ongoing Air Force issues. Additionally, he originated an Air Force Trivia series and an Air Force Factoid column within the newsletter specifically designed to reinforce Air Force history within the membership.

He had previously been awarded two AFA Medals of Merit – the first was for his efforts to regenerate the chapter in Homestead, Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew (1992). Reflecting the excellence of his leadership, the Homestead chapter was recognized as the Florida's Outstanding Middle Sized Chapter 1995 and 1998 and as AFAs Outstanding Medium Sized Chapter in 2000. He was also named the AFA Florida Member of the Year for his efforts in Homestead. His second Medal of Merit was presented specifically for his exceptional efforts to establish the Sarasota based chapter. He was recognized as the Chapter Member of the Year in 2013 and 2021. ★

If you are interested in the future of the Air Force, you need to stay abreast of what Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) Frank Kendall is saying. His perspectives are going to influence the Air Force for years to come. We've included some of his comments drawn from multiple articles in the AFA Daily News.

USAF TO DISCARD 386-SQUADRONS GOAL

May 2, 2022 | By John A. Tirpak

Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall said he is more interested in quality systems that are able to deter an adversary than the size of the force structure, signaling an end to USAF's pursuit of 386 squadrons as a force-sizing goal. Speaking during a May 2 Brookings Institution webcast, Kendall said he's "not focused on" the 386 squadrons goal, officially unveiled in 2018.

The 386 squadrons goal—up from 312—was promoted by former Air Force Secretary **Heather Wilson** and former Chief of Staff **Gen. David L. Goldfein**. However, the goal was couched as an aspirational one and was not programmed with budget dollars.

"I'm not focused on counting end strength or squadrons or airplanes," Kendall said, but rather on "the capability to carry out the operations we might have to support [toward] ... defeating aggression. If you can't ... deter or defeat the initial act of aggression, then you're in a situation like we're seeing in Ukraine: a protracted conflict."

Kendall noted that "an awful lot of the equipment that we have is old," saying the average age of USAF aircraft is 30 years and rising.

The future Air Force is also not far off, he said, noting that B-21 production money is in the FY'23 budget and that the Next-Generation Air Dominance aircraft and its family of supporting systems are "not far out," as are programs like the Joint Advanced Tactical Missile, or JATM, which will equip USAF's fighters mid-decade. These systems will "phase in" over "the next few years."

As an example of the new approach, Kendall said the E-7 Wedgetail USAF will buy to replace the E-3 AWACS "is going to dramatically lower the cost of sustainment. So I'd rather have that platform, which also gives us a lot more capability ... than the current fleet, even though the current fleet might be larger. So size isn't ... important to me. Its quality and getting as much quality into the force as I can as fast as I can." ✨

GETTING IN THE GAME

By Abraham Mahshie



Kendall said he wants to "get in the game" with something that makes a difference operationally and then build on that." Among Kendall's seven operational imperatives are uncrewed aircraft that will escort manned aircraft. "I want to go directly to EMD [engineering and manufacturing development] on that," he said.

"The technology is mature enough that we can gamble on that, take some risks there, and move out quickly. So we're not going to wait for a round of risk reduction

experiments. We will conduct them in parallel with the work we need to do to get a platform moving forward."

He envisions a three-year process between getting funded for a new capability and having something operationally usable. It's riskier, though, because "the more aggressive you are with the risk you're taking on design, the harder it is to be sure you have a stable design." That's needed, though, because China is moving out aggressively in fielding new systems, he said. ➡

Kendall said he returned to government service because of “China, China, China. He believes China “has ambitions to be the great power on the face of the Earth,” and to do it, they must “displace the United States.” China’s ambitions have changed with its capability, he said, shifting from being a regional power to a global superpower. While not, perhaps, as interested as much in “territorial expansion,” China wants “as much influence as possible,” evidenced by their One Belt, One Road initiative.

Asked what technologies “excite” him as having the greatest potential, Kendall said, “autonomous behaviors.” Artificial Intelligence is both a near-term capability and one that must be introduced as quickly as possible as a “decision-making” enhancement, he said. Autonomous systems will “open up a whole range” of new tactical capabilities, he said, “and I don’t think we need to wait for more development on that.”

However, the technology “does invoke some really interesting questions about human control, and the degree of autonomy you’re really going to tolerate operationally.” If the U.S. doesn’t pursue this, “we’re going to lose” and “some of our competitors are not going to be as constrained as we are by those things.” The Air Force needs to “work those problems as we mature the capabilities.” ★

RACE FOR TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY WITH CHINA WARRANTS DIVESTMENTS

A record investment in research and development by the Department of the Air Force will help the United States win the long-term technology race with China, even while shrinking the fleet size before a possible mid-decade Taiwan contingency, Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall said May 17. “With the Air Force [and], Space Force, we need to transform two different sets of capabilities over time, and we need to do this as quickly as we can while maintaining a reasonable level of current capability,” the Secretary said before a crowd of several hundred service members, students, and China watchers gathered for the biennial China Aerospace Studies Institute conference. ★

PACAF HAS A ‘WAYS TO GO’ TO PREPARE FOR A CHINA FIGHT

Kendall admitted that the Air Force’s front line defenses in the Pacific have “a ways to go” in the areas of deception, defense, and practicing agile combat employment (ACE). “When I look at the western Pacific, it’s a very different situation geographically, geopolitically,” he said during an event at the Heritage Foundation, comparing China to Russia’s threat in Europe, which is deterred in part by the NATO alliance. ★

Three articles in the September 12 – 25, 2022 issue of [Aviation Week and Space Technology](#) – “Future Force”, “10 Programs Shaping the Future of the U.S. Air Force” and “A Little Bit Ruthless” provide a more detailed look at the projected Air Force of the future. They are worth your time to read.

SPACE FORCE NEWS



SENATE CONFIRMS SALTZMAN TO BE SPACE FORCE’S NEXT CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS

The Senate on Sept. 29 easily confirmed Lt. Gen. B. Chance Saltzman to be the U.S. Space Force’s next Chief of Space Operations, positioning him to lead the nation’s newest military service at a crucial moment in its young and still evolving life. Saltzman will pin on a fourth star and take command of the Space Force, succeeding Gen. John W. “Jay” Raymond, after lawmakers voted to approve his nomination by voice vote Sept. 29.

“I’m humbled and honored to be confirmed as the next Chief of Space Operations,” Saltzman said in a statement. “I look forward to leading the U.S. Space Force and building on the strong foundational leadership Gen. Raymond has provided for almost three years.” ➡

Saltzman will ascend to the role after previously serving as the Deputy Chief of Space Operations for operations, cyber, and nuclear, a job he first took on in August 2020.

Over the course of more than 30 years in uniform, Saltzman has also commanded at the squadron, group, and wing levels in the Air Force. He has served as a satellite operator for the National Reconnaissance Office, commanded two space squadrons within Air Force Space Command, and worked at headquarters of AFSC.

Saltzman will take over a Space Force still developing and maturing its infrastructure, organization, plans, and traditions. In the coming months and years, the young service plans to fold in the Space Development Agency, launch a new resilient constellation of satellites in low Earth orbit, and build up its “lethality” and capability to respond to aggressive actions by competitors such as Russia and China. ★

INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A SPACE NATIONAL GUARD

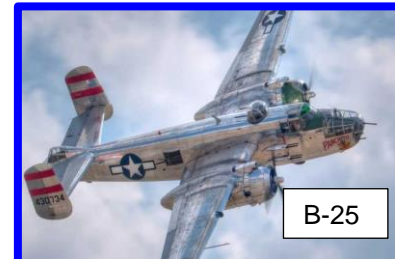
May 12, 2022 | By Greg Hadley

Twelve senators have backed legislation that would create a Space National Guard, reigniting a debate over how the Space Force will organize its part-time components. **Sen. Dianne Feinstein** (D-Calif.) and **Sen. Marco Rubio** (R-Fla.) introduced the Space National Guard Establishment Act on May 10, with four Democrats and six Republicans joining them in co-sponsoring the legislation.

The proposal was “a new idea,” **Brig. Gen. Steven J. Butow**, commander of the California Air National Guard, said during a recent virtual Schriever Spacepower Forum event hosted by AFA’s Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies. “But what it does is it fails to recognize the way that we operate. We are creatures of doctrine. And doctrine comes from lessons learned in the battlespace. ... Unity of command, unity of effort—these are very important concepts. ... If you don’t own it, you don’t control it. How can you rely on it? And somebody else is going to have a higher priority for that capability. It is unfair to create the Space Force and then tie the arm behind the Chief of Space Operations’ back because you gave him a less than full complement of capability.” ★

AIR FORCE TRIVIA

Match these six aircraft flown by the Tuskegee Airmen with their manufacturer and their nickname. Be careful, this puzzle has some tricks. Answers are on Page 7.



Bell	Boeing	Curtis	Fairchild	Lockheed	North American	Republic
Airacobra	Corsair	Lightning	Mitchell	Mustang	Texan	Thunderbolt
						Warhawk

4rd QUARTER FACTOID

AIRMAN EARNS MEDAL OF HONOR

On November 26, 1968, **1st Lieutenant James Phillip Fleming** -- a U.S. Air Force pilot assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron in Vietnam -- displayed, "... conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty"

While flying as the Aircraft Commander of a UH-1F transport Helicopter near Duc Co, Republic of Vietnam, Lieutenant Fleming went to the aid of a 6-man Special Forces long range reconnaissance patrol that was stranded between heavily defended enemy positions and in danger of being overrun by a large, heavily armed hostile force. Despite the knowledge that 1 helicopter had been downed by intense hostile fire, Lt. Fleming descended and balanced his helicopter on a river bank with the tail boom hanging over open water. As the patrol could not penetrate to the landing site, he was forced to withdraw. Dangerously low on fuel, Lt. Fleming repeated his original landing maneuver. Disregarding his own safety, he remained in this exposed position until the Special Forces team boarded the helicopter. Fleming made a successful takeoff through a barrage of hostile fire and recovered safely at a forward base.



For his profound concern for his fellowmen and at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, Fleming was awarded the Medal of Honor. It was presented by **President Richard Nixon** in a ceremony at the White House on May 14, 1970. Fleming's other decorations include the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross and eight Air Medals.

Fleming remained in the Air Force attaining the rank of Colonel. He was serving as a member of the Officer Training School staff at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, before his retirement in 1996. ★

AIR FORCE TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. AT-6 Texan, North American.
2. P-39 Airacobra, Bell.
3. P-40 Warhawk, Curtis.
4. P- 47 Thunderbolt, Republic.
5. P-51 Mustang, North American.
6. B-25 Mitchell, North American.

**AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR
AIRMAN FOR LIFE**

The Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Florida West Coast Chapter of the Air & Space Forces Association, a non-profit civilian organization. It is normally published in February, May, August and November. Special editions or supplemental issues may be published as required. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Air Force, the Air & Space Forces Association or their officers.

We welcome articles, editorials or comments of interest to the membership. Please include your name, mailing address, e-mail address and phone number with submittals. We reserve the right to edit any submissions for length and/or clarity. Submissions can be sent via e-mail to michaeler@mindspring.com ; or mail to: Air Force & Space Forces Association, Florida West Coast Chapter #429, Attn: The Newsletter, 1580 Shadow Ridge Circle, Sarasota, Florida 34240.



THE AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION



AFA Mission

Our mission is to promote dominant U.S. Air & Space Forces as the foundation of a strong National Defense; to honor and support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families; and to remember and respect our enduring Heritage.

To accomplish this, we:

- **EDUCATE** the public on the critical need for unrivaled aerospace power and promote aerospace and STEM education for a technically superior and professional workforce to ensure national security;
- **ADVOCATE** and promote aerospace power to favorably shape policy and resourcing decisions to guarantee the strongest aerospace forces in the world;
- **SUPPORT** Airmen, Guardians, and the families of the Total Air Force and Space Force, including Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, civilians, families, and members of the Civil Air Patrol.

The Florida West Coast Chapter of the Air Force Association is incorporated in the State of Florida as a qualified 501(C)(3) charitable organization. Our Registration Number is CH48270.

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