



DR AHEAD



THE AIR FORCE NAVIGATORS OBSERVERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Daedalian flight members join new Daedalian and AFNOA member Richard H. Weir (Selman 43-09), at center holding a green folder, in front of the B-58 Hustler that now bears his name. See also the AFNOA San Antonio Reunion article starting on page 8 within. Photograph from the Daedalians *Flightline* newsletter.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John D. Bridges, James Connally 63-19

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to be a member of **AFNOA**. It is even more than humbling to become president of this fine organization with such a rich history of service by the membership in both wartime and peacetime.

Since I am not a retiree and have not had the pleasure (and I would wager hardships) of lifelong experiences with the membership's profession, it is also a bit daunting!

It was approximately fifty years after my UNT graduation that I became a member of **AFNOA** and attended my first reunion in Savannah, Georgia. Meeting fellow classmate Dennis Ehrenberger, **AFNOA** Treasurer, and several others who I knew from my service on active duty as a B-52 EWO at Dyess AFB, Texas, was certainly the highlight of my first reunion.

Each reunion since Savannah has been similarly enjoyable. Visiting with attendees and hearing the stories of others' life experiences, both in and out of military service, is a very rewarding aspect of **AFNOA** reunions.

It is my hope and goal to encourage our current membership to attend every reunion that they are able to attend. It is also my hope that each member will seek out

former classmates or fellow flight crew members that they may have flown with, or been stationed with, and ask them to join **AFNOA**.

When membership growth is discussed, it is imperative that I thank Jim Faulkner personally for his help with my search for classmates. He is a tremendous asset for membership growth and he can probably help anyone seeking missing classmates.

I would like to challenge every member to attempt contact with one or two members in their respective class. I believe we can add new and hopefully some younger members if we just ask!

As our membership continues to mature (age), it is necessary that we replace those who have departed on their Last Flights. The memories and experiences of **AFNOA** members are a unique and valuable addition to the history and traditions of aerial navigation.

I wish to thank all of you who attended the last reunion in San Antonio for your support. I look forward to hearing from all.

Please plan to attend our next reunion in 2019, the location to yet be determined. We will have a great reunion and renew old friendships and form new ones.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

AIR FORCE NAVIGATORS OBSERVERS ASSOCIATION

Name _____
 Spouse's Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____
 State/ZIP _____
 Home Phone _____
 Work Phone _____
 Cell Phone _____
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Send a Tax Deductible \$15.00 Annual Membership check payable to **AFNOA** to:

Dennis Ehrenberger, **AFNOA** Treasurer
 2783 Glenview Drive
 Sierra Vista, AZ 85650-5734
 Telephone: 520-378-1313

Tax Deductible Life Membership Contribution payable to AFNOA

Under 55	\$190.00	66-70	\$90.00
55-60	\$165.00	71-79	\$50.00
61-65	\$140.00	Over 80	\$35.00

If you are currently a member, GREAT! Please consider a donation to the operating account, grant fund, or both. If you are not a current member, please consider joining and giving a donation to the organization. Thank you.

Membership \$ _____
 Donation to Operating Account \$ _____
 Donation to Scholarship Fund \$ _____
 Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

DR AHEAD

DR AHEAD is the official publication of the Air Force Navigators Observers Association; a non-profit, non-political organization dedicated to maintaining the peace and security of the United States of America and a spirit of comradeship among the navigators, observers and bombardiers of the USAAC, USAAF, or the USAF. TENOA, the forerunner of **AFNOA**, was organized by Clarke Lampard, Ellington Class 50-D, in 1985.

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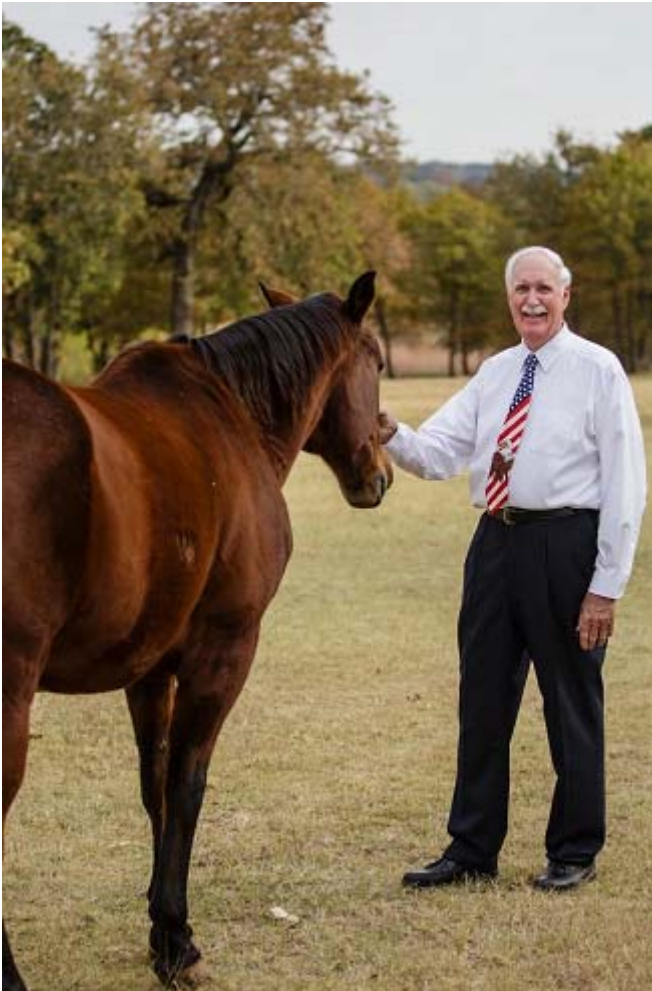
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ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS are strongly preferred. If you cannot send information through electronic mail or on CD, copy should be typed. Photographs and drawings are also very welcome.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please report changes of address to: **AFNOA**, Inc., 4109 Timberlane, Enid, OK 73703-2825; jfaulkner39@suddenlink.net; 580-242-0526

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New AFNOA President John D. Bridges with Stoney.
Photograph by Vickie Coody.

NEW AFNOA PRESIDENT JOHN D. BRIDGES

by John D. Bridges, James Connally 63-19

I graduated from The University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Arts in Government in June, 1962. I received a direct commission as a 2nd Lieutenant from AFROTC. June 1962 was a busy month for me as I graduated, was commissioned, and was married all within three days.

Prior to college I received an early education far greater and interesting than any college offered. My early life revolved around airports and aircraft. My father, Herbert Bridges, was associated very early with the beginning of the Civil Aeronautics Administration. He established airways facilities throughout the Territory of Alaska, in mostly remote places in those years, prior to, during and after WWII. It was an experience I will never forget. We lived in places where we were the only family at first, in blacked out camouflaged houses, and mostly off the land. However, the fishing and hunting was very good and we had many Christmas trees each year.

In 1948 my father was transferred to the fledging C.A.A.

academy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, as an instructor in communications. In 1951-53 he was transferred to Jakarta, Indonesia, attached to a United Nations International Civil Aeronautics Organization, where he helped to establish the Indonesian Air Force Academy. Flying to Indonesia in the early 1950s was a several week trip on a Boeing Stratocruiser (based upon the C-97) stopping for fuel or crew rest on nearly every island with a landing strip from Hawaii to the Philippines. Quite an experience for a ten-year-old on my first big airplane flight. My first airplane flight was from Seattle to Annette Island, Alaska, at age two months on a single-engined Army plane and I was posted as First Class mail, according to my mother, since there were already three other passengers plus the pilot. Thus, you can imagine how I feel my early education was unique, interesting, and certainly different than other children. Seeing tanks in the water off the end of the runway and other WWII relics on Wake Island is still vivid in my mind to this day.

My USAF career was probably very similar to many of you reading this article. I attended UNT at James Connally AFB, graduating in class 63-19. It was not my first choice. I had planned to go to pilot training. Believing the USAF, I was pretty much promised pilot training after navigation school. Wrong again. I was assigned to EWO school. Oh well, the "promise" of pilot training was just around the corner, or at least so I thought. After EWO training, survival school, and B-52 training I was assigned to the 337th Bomb Sqdn at Dyess AFB, Abilene, Texas. It was considered a good assignment as Dyess was just adding a B-52 contingent. While I was still in EWO training at Mather AFB, I was offered a Regular commission and I accepted. I assumed being a "Regular Officer" would enhance my opportunity to attend pilot training in addition to the fact that I had been certified by the FAA as a pilot while at Mather AFB.

I continued my pursuit of pilot training unsuccessfully each time I had the opportunity. I ultimately attained FAA certification as a Commercial Pilot with single, multi-engined, and instrument ratings. After owning interests in two light aircraft, I essentially ceased personal flying at age 70.

Returning to my brief USAF career, I was a typical EWO: on alert, flying, ORIs etc., until the use of B-52s began in Southeast Asia. Dyess AFB cross-trained with conventional weapons and crew by crew we joined the operation in S.E. Asia. In the late summer of 1968 we arrived at Guam. Flying missions from Guam, Kadena AFB, and U-Tapao, Thailand, we completed forty-two credited combat missions wherever they directed us.

Finally realizing the likelihood of no pilot training with the USAF without some dramatic action, I submitted my resignation and was greeted with a year's extension. Resignation threats had worked for junior pilots wanting out of

the B-52 or SAC in general. It did not work for me and I separated on August 1, 1969.

In the civilian world, I entered the investment and insurance business. I trained as a stock broker, visited Wall Street in New York, and began selling securities and insurance in Fort Worth, Texas. Eventually I was training agents for the MassMutual Life Insurance Company. Early on, I figured out not everyone wanted or needed life insurance (or at least they didn't want to pay for it) and I added Property and Casualty products to my portfolio. Now, nearly everyone became a suspect. I have now practiced as a Chartered Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Consultant for more than forty-eight years. I owned and operated a Property and Casualty Agency for about twenty years until I semi-retired from that product line.

I have been married since 1982 to a wonderful wife, Marilyn. I have two grown adult children, a son Glenn and daughter, Johnna from my first marriage that ended in 1979.

I am a Life Member of the VFW and was a member of Kiwanis International for more than forty years. I spent fifteen years as a Reserve Police Officer for the City of Fort Worth, retiring with no benefits in 2001. I hold a Masters Certification in Law Enforcement from the State of Texas. Marilyn and I currently reside in the country outside Weatherford, Texas, where we built a log home—which took me about three years and we moved into in 1991. We finished most of it by ourselves and I raise a few Angus cows, calves and an occasional steer. We don't eat them, Marilyn names them and I take care of them.

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

by Ron Barrett, James Connally 63-06

Happy 70th Birthday to the USAF. What a ride it has been—and continues to be for all types of navigators.

Early on AAF aircraft crews consisted of many types of crew members. Look at the B-17 *Memphis Belle* crew pictured here in WWII. WWII and Korea produced some 44,000 navigators, fewer pure bombardiers, and fewer yet new radar operators.

In September 1947 with the implementation of the National Security Act President Harry S. Truman watched over the creation of our National Military Establishment, which was soon after renamed the Department of Defense. The USAF was created right then as a separate branch of DoD, equal to the Army and Navy.

At the beginning of the USAF in 1947, there were lone navigator stations in most cargo planes like the C-45, C-47, C-54, C-69, and C-82. The sextants were the A-10 hand-helds and the ADF was the main navigation radio. Communications on most aircraft was by short range voice and long range "key" Morse code. Morse Code was taught

to navigators into the 1960s. The greatest majority of bombers in 1947 were WWII types like the B-25, B-26, B-29. All had navigators, bombardiers and some also had radar operators (ROs).

Then came the Korean War and the Cold War. Aviation Cadet schools supplied most of the navigators and bombardiers from 1950 to 1965. Navigation schools were almost a full year long, with specialty schools thereafter four to six months long, followed by specific aircraft flight training.

The biggest change in cargo planes was due to the new and more powerful engines. This made for the evolutions of the: C-74/C-124, C-69/C-121, C-54/C-118, C-82/C-119, and an entirely new fleet of tactical lifters like the C-123 and C-130. All had navigators. Later came the beautiful missile transport, the C-133 by Douglas.

In the bomber world the B-29 morphed into the B-50 which was a nuclear bombardment aircraft, in parallel with the very long range B-36, with large crews. The medium bomber fleet was dominated by the B-47 wherein the navigator took on the job as a Radar-Navigator-Bombardier. Radar-Navigator-Bombardiers were also inflight repairmen as the K-systems went often haywire. At the same time a smaller fleet of the special B-47H and the B-57F/G evolved into the very busy, super-secret Raven reconnaissance mission which later had its own aircraft: the U-2 and later the SR-71.

The B-47 medium bombers were replaced by the F-111 wherein the Radar-Navigator-Bombardier sat in the right seat next to the pilot. Then we developed the electronic jammer aircraft which had evolved from the Viet Nam cadre of F-100F two-seaters and F-105F/G two-seater Wild Weasel aircraft.

In the middle of the Cold War came the Radar Intercept Officer/RO who scoped the skies for the enemy bomber fleets with their new air-to-air intercept radars flying in the F-82 (right side), F-94, F-89J, and F-101.

The all-jet strategic B-52 bomber came into being in the 1950s to replace the B-36. The B-52 had two or three (depending how one looked at the wings) navigators, two downstairs (navigator and bombardier side-by-side), and one upstairs (EWO). Two wings of B-52H remain in operation to this day.

For only ten years (1960-70) we also had the beautiful supersonic B-58 Hustler with its very busy Radar-Navigator-Bombardier and rear seat WSO/tail gunner (yes the seat turned 180 degrees to the aft), manned the tail-gun. The last of the bomber navigator crews are now in the remaining sixty B-1B Lancers with its two aft side-by-side navigators called offensive systems officer and defensive systems officer. The B-2 has only two pilots, but it is interesting there are navigators in the operations and planning groups.

Today, the Stealth XB-47 drone has no crew.



Above: Crew of the Memphis Belle. Photographs provided by Ron Barrett.

Below: Crew in a more modern aircraft.



The medium bomber evolved from the B-26, the B-47, the B-57, the B-111 to what? Here it could be tactically argued that the F-4, F-15E/F, and F-18E are medium-bombers as their weapons loads are mostly bombs. Lots of NATO F-16s are two seaters. The Stealth F-117 was certainly a medium bomber and it had no air-to-air fighter capability.

A much overlooked evolution that was going on in parallel to all the above, and continues to this day, is that of the tanker-planes. The KB-50Js to large fleet KC-135, the KC-10 to the present KC-46 Pegasus tanker, a Boeing 767-spin-off which has only two pilots and a boom operator.

Then and not the least is that of the navigator in special operations aircraft. For the USAF that is mostly the arena of the MC/AC-130J gunships.

Atop of all this is the present threat of the loss of the GPS by satellite or cyber attack. This created the need for fundamental navigation skills, which are now being taught to the Combat System Officer cadre (EWO & WSO) at NAS-Pensacola, Florida. The AFNOA thumb-drive "Comprehensive Navigators' History" helped here.

The USAF Mission is ever important and evolving rapidly as we see from this study. For the sake of brevity I will later do a Navigator's Equipment History as a separate article. One can only guess what the next 70 years will look like with the RQs and new cyber space missions. It was great being a trained flight crew member.

BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

by Henri L. Bailey III, James Connally 64-05

Some nights during our flights over Laos, the weather would be perfectly clear, targets of opportunity would be available and no attack resources were in the area. Those were frustrating times. On one of those nights, Alley Cat, the ABCCC, called and asked if we were busy. Lieutenant Colonel Holl, our A/C, answered and told them we had occasional targets but no strike resources. We were just recording our sightings. Alley Cat asked us, "Would you accept another and different tasking?" We all looked at each other because that wasn't a usual approach. Colonel Holl answered, "As long as it is something that we are allowed to do and it is within our capabilities, we will accept it."

Alley Cat responded, "You handle strike aircraft and do bomb damage assessment (BDA) all of the time. SAC conducts ARC Light missions from a high altitude and carpet bombs a particular area. However, we don't have any way to get accurate BDA from their strikes. Would you be willing to do BDA on an ARC Light that is scheduled to begin in 45 minutes?" Colonel Holl said, "Stand by

while I discuss what this means and what we may have to do with my crew. I'll get back to you within five minutes."

Alley Cat said, "Roger, Lamplighter." Colonel Holl said, "Crew, Listen up! Alley Cat wants us to do BDA for a SAC Arc Light. What do we need to do to do this safely?" Ray Coley said, "We don't know any of SAC's frequencies to contact the bombers. They don't share those with anyone." Colonel Holl said, "Roger. Buddha, you're next. You have to keep us a safe distance away if we can do it." I said, "Several things, sir. We will be at 5,000 feet AGL. They will be dropping bombs from somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000 feet AGL. We have to consider target error and bomb spread. It is essential for us to know the planned bomb run so that we can be at least 20 miles away, initially. We don't want SAC dropping bombs on top of us and we don't want the concussions from the explosions to affect our control of the aircraft. It is a clear night and we will see the initial explosions from 20 miles. Then, we can move in as closely as you determine to be safe and make our observations." Colonel Holl said, "Roger. Next. Anybody, only one at a time." Bill, our flight engineer, said, "Sir, Major Coley and Captain Buddha covered all of my concerns." Frenchy, the other flight engineer said, "Me too, sir." Colonel Holl said, "Okay, if they give us all of the information we need shall we do this. Start with the loadmasters, then the engineers, navigator, and co-pilot." The response was a unanimous affirmation.

Colonel Holl then called Alley Cat and said, "Alley Cat, this is Lamplighter." We heard, "Go ahead Lamplighter." Colonel Holl said, "We accept your tasking. We need to know the bomb run coordinates so that we can get a safe distance away, initially. It also would help if we had frequencies to contact the bombers to insure there are no surprise changes to the mission." Alley Cat responded, "No problem with the bomb run coordinates, Lamplighter. We will have to be the middle man on any communication with the bombers. We are not allowed to give out those frequencies. By the way, there will be three separate bomb runs separated by thirty minutes." Colonel Holl answered, "Okay Alley Cat. We can live with you being the middle man between us and the bombers. Please check with them and ensure that there have not been any surprise changes to the mission. Now, on the three bomb runs, are they all identical, or do we need three sets of coordinates?" Alley Cat responded, "They are all identical." Colonel Holl said, "Okay. We will set up south of the bomb run and look for targets until the Arc Light starts." Alley Cat said, "Here are the IP coordinates in georef and look to 8 o'clock." Colonel Holl said, "Buddha, do you have that?" I said, "Yes sir. I am plotting the IP, now, and the bomb run will go west southwest (WSW) from there." Colonel Holl keyed the mike and said, "Copy, Alley Cat!"

I penciled the IP in on my chart and lightly penciled in the bomb run going in a WSW direction. Then I picked out

several visual landmarks 20 miles south southeast (SSE) of the bomb run for the pilots to use to keep us at a safe distance. I tried to pick out some landmarks along the bomb run but it was all jungle canopies. The NVA was moving men and supplies down through the jungle under the canopy. Observers and sensors had picked up the movement. We stayed 20 miles south of the bomb run until it actually began. Then we were able to safely move to within 12 miles and not be affected by the concussions. We noted that the first bombs would start fires but then they would go out. It looked as though they were being blown out. Initially, we were puzzled. Then we realized that the concussions of succeeding bombs were blowing out the fires started by the first bombs in the string. What we were able to see were the explosions. But because of the number of bombs being dropped, we were not able to distinguish between bomb explosions and secondary explosions. After the last bombs in the initial bomb run, we flew over the bomb run to see if we could get better BDA. There were a few small fires but most everything had been blown to splinters. There was not much to see. We moved back to 12 miles away from the bomb run for safety before the second bomb run began.

As the second bomb run began, we realized we were in trouble. Bombs were raining down on both sides of the aircraft. Alley Cat called, "Lamplighter, the second bomb run is commencing." Colonel Holl keyed the mike, "Dammit Alley Cat, there are bombs falling on both sides of our aircraft. We are in the middle of the bomb run and not offset to the side. I've got to fly the airplane. If we live through this, I'll call you back!" Alley Cat did not respond. God was looking out for us. The bombers were not in trail formation but were in echelon formation. We were miraculously between formation lead and the left wingman for the bombers. When we saw the string of bombs from lead end, we peeled away to the right. Miraculously, no 500 pound bomb hit our aircraft for it would have knocked us or blown us out of the sky. That put us on the north side of the bomb run and we moved to 12 miles north of the current bomb run which was right over the first bomb run. Once we were clear of the bombs, the rest of the crew did BDA while Colonel Holl got his composure back. Continuing with the work helped keep the rest of us from dwelling on what had just happened. The BDA report was no different from the first one. We saw the same results.

Colonel Holl keyed the mike, "Alley Cat, this is Lamplighter!" There was a pause before Alley Cat responded, "Go ahead, Lamplighter. Glad to hear from you!" Colonel Holl said, "You damn near got us killed that time, Alley Cat. You told us that the bomb runs were identical. My navigator has plotted a definite and constant offset of the second bomb run from the first. We need you to get whomever is looking at the information to see if there is an offset for the third bomb run and whether it is the same or

different. If it is different we need to know by how much." Alley Cat responded, "Perhaps this is too dangerous. Maybe we need to scratch this tasking!" Colonel Holl said, "We have already done two-thirds of the job. The only thing we need to do the rest of it safely is to have an accurate position for the third bomb run. Please have your people recheck the frag." Alley Cat responded, "Okay Lamplighter, standby!"

There was nearly a 10-minute delay before we heard from Alley Cat. Colonel Holl responded, "Go ahead, Alley Cat!" Then there was an incredible transmission. "Lamplighter, I want to apologize to you and your crew. One of my crew failed to do his job properly and it almost cost you and your crew your lives. We are glad that you survived and I've taken action to see that it isn't repeated. You said your navigator had plotted an offset of the second bomb run in a definite direction and distance from the first bomb run. The third bomb run will be offset in the same direction and the same distance from the second bomb run. That information was in the frag. Will that be enough information?" Colonel Holl responded, "Thank you for that transmission Alley Cat. It means a lot to us. My navigator shook his head: yes that you have provided sufficient information. He is plotting the third bomb run now. We will get back to work and complete our tasking. Lamplighter out!"

We observed the third bomb run, reported the results to Alley Cat and I continued writing up the BDA assessment for the crew. Overall, as far as BDA was concerned, we had not accomplished much. There was a problem with succeeding concussions blowing out fires started by earlier bombs and it was incredibly difficult to distinguish between bomb explosions and secondary explosions. We had a new admiration for the ability of the SAC navigator-bombardiers putting their bombs on any target assigned and a special appreciation for the damage they could do.

When we returned to base, an amazing thing happened. We were just finishing up our post flight duties at the airplane when, one by one, we began to tremble and our knees began to shake. One by one we fell to our knees, unable to stand. One of our loadmasters, who was on his hands and knees by this time, said, "I think God is reminding us to thank Him for bringing us back alive." We all looked at each other. Colonel Holl responded, "That is a good thought. Hold on to it!" We all knew we had been in God's hands that night.





AFNOA 2017 Reunion Banquet WWII Speaker Gerry Auerbach, Selman 44-02. All photos for this article by Jim Faulkner.

All from Harlingen 60-07: Andy Lachance, Chuck Korus, Ralph Meyer, and Jerry O'Halloran.

THE 2017 AFNOA REUNION

by James Faulkner Connally 64-04

The 2017 biennial reunion was held from 26 to 28 September 2017 at the Holiday Inn on the Riverwalk in San Antonio Texas.

There was an excellent turnout—one of the biggest with over 240 people attending. There are several things we will remember about this reunion. They are, first, outgoing President Phillip Barber and his lovely wife Sarah celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary at the banquet dinner. Second, one of the original members of **AFNOA**, George Schropp, attended the events, and third, we were honored to have three people who flew in WWII attend the reunion. More on each of the WWII people later.

For most, the reunion started on Tuesday—many people used the hospitality suite to reunite and discuss navigating around the world. On Tuesday night about one hundred and seventy attended the social hour followed by a Mexican dinner buffet.

On Wednesday the Membership Meeting was called to order by President Phil Barber (James Connally 64-04) and a prayer was given by Gordon Denton (James Connally 61-08). Ninety people attended the business meeting. The attendees made some suggestions for the board to consider on ways to increase membership above the current 1300+. In recent years, the gains have offset the losses. Dennis Ehrenberger indicated that we have enough money to last for five years if we have no other people join **AFNOA**. The new **AFNOA** Board was elected (see the rear cover of **DR AHEAD** for listing of all **AFNOA** board members). The new board members are President John Bridges (James Connally 63-19) and Secretary Gene “Hoot” Hollrah (James Connally 61-02). Additionally the by-laws written by Past President Phillip Barber were approved. The scholarship

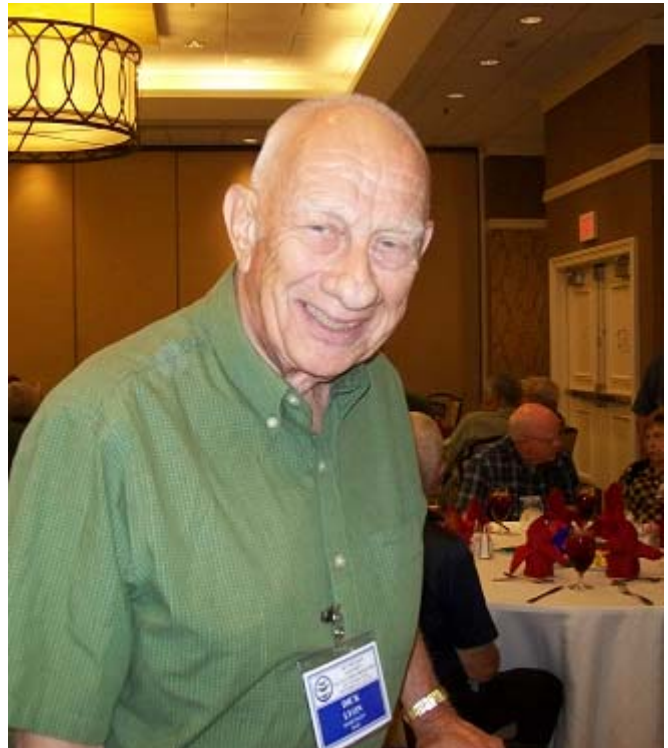




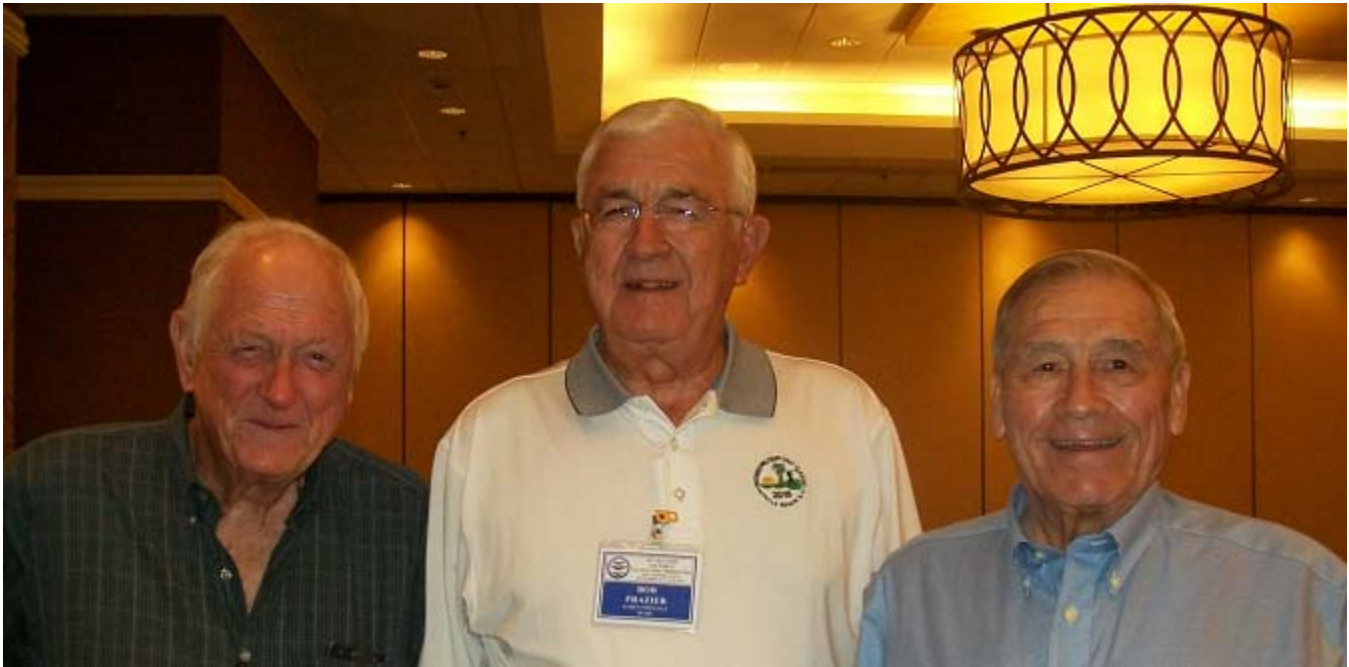
Jan Reeves; life member Garey Reeves, Harlingen 57-07; and Harold Rumzek, James Connally 63-13.

committee will be replaced with the Grants Committee headed by Dr. Seth Hudak (James Connally 64-03). This program will enable **AFNOA** to grant money to projects that would further navigation/aviation heritage. Errol Hoberman (Harlingen 60-09) and BGen (Ret) Donald Roth (Harlingen 56-02) gave a report on the **AFNOA**-and-navigation training school interface at NAS Pensacola. The group at Pensacola currently supplies articles about the Combat Systems Officer training program for each issue of **DR**

Dick Lyon, Harlingen 56-02.

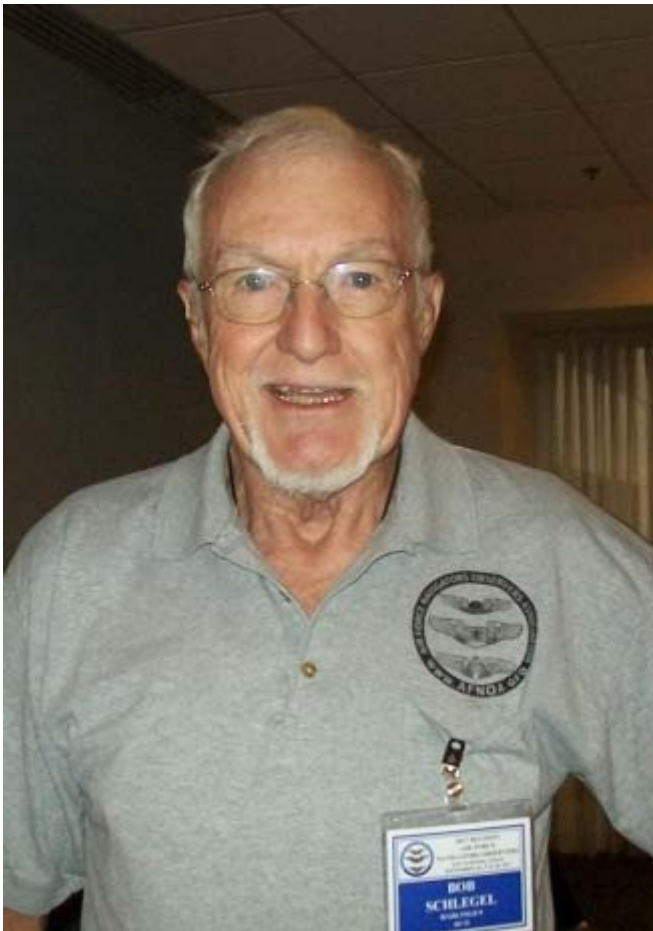


Sandra Ropp and Jim Ropp (James Connally 65-21).



Dixie Howell, Robert Frazier, and MGen Bill Treu, all from James Connally 59-18.

Bob Schlegel, Harlingen 60-11.



AHEAD.

After the meeting, attendees went to the hospitality room for conversation, snacks and beverages provided by the Reunion Brats.

On Wednesday evening more than two hundred twenty attended the dinner banquet. President Phil Barber opened the meeting with a pledge to the flag and David Morris (James Connally 64-18) gave a blessing. Jerry O'Halloran (Harlingen 60-07) lead the attendees in the singing of *God Bless America*. A toast was made to the navigators who have made their last flights. Following the dinner Phil Barber read the impressive biographies of the three WWII veterans who attended the reunion.

The three were Lt Colonel (Ret) Gerald L. (Gerry) Auerbach (Selman 44-02), Colonel (Ret) Kenneth N. Beckman (Selman 43-11), and Lt Colonel (Ret) Richard H. Weir (Selman 43-09).

Lt Colonel (Ret) Gerald L. (Gerry) Auerbach (Selman 44-02) flew fire bomb missions over Japan. In December 1944 he was assigned to Saipan where the first mission for his B-29 crew was a weather reconnaissance mission over Japan on Christmas morning of 1944. In July 1947 after the war, he attended pilot training at Randolph. He completed primary and basic at Randolph and was sent to the 4-engine B-17 school at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. In 1948 he was assigned to Kelly AFB, Texas, in Military Air Transport Service (MATS) where he flew the C-47 and the C-54. From August 1948 to February 1949 he flew the Berlin Airlift corridor in the C-54. In 1952 he was accepted for B-47 training. In 1952 he was assigned to McCoy AFB, Florida, where he became jet qualified by flying forty hours in the T-33 and forty hours in the B-47. In 1953 he was



Art Prahinski, Harlingen 56-11; Mike Barber, Mather 70-01; and Tom Kawamoto, James Connally 64-04. Kawamoto travelled to the Reunion from Hawaii, the longest trip to this Reunion.

assigned to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, in the RB-47. In 1955 he was assigned to Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, in the RB-47. He flew one of the first three RB-47 aircraft to land at Little Rock. In 1960 he attended the University of Oklahoma where he earned a degree in Aerospace Engineering. He has flown over 7,300 hours in a variety of military aircraft such as the B-29, the B-50, and the RB-47.

Colonel Kenneth N. Beckman (Selman 43-11) attended the US Naval Academy from 1940 to 1942, then jumped ship and entered the Army Air Corps, starting training at Selman Field. Following training in 1943 he was assigned to the 305th Bomb Group in England under the command of General Curtis LeMay. He flew 48 combat missions in the B-17 and he completed two combat tours in the European Theater. Beckman was the youngest major in the 8th Air Force at the age of 22. From 1945 to 1948, he was Chief Navigator in the Pentagon and ferried VIPs while assigned to Air Transport Command. He had a distinguished 30-year career in the Air Force.

Lt. Colonel Richard H. Weir (Selman 43-09) is now 100 years of age. His name is on the B-58 aircraft

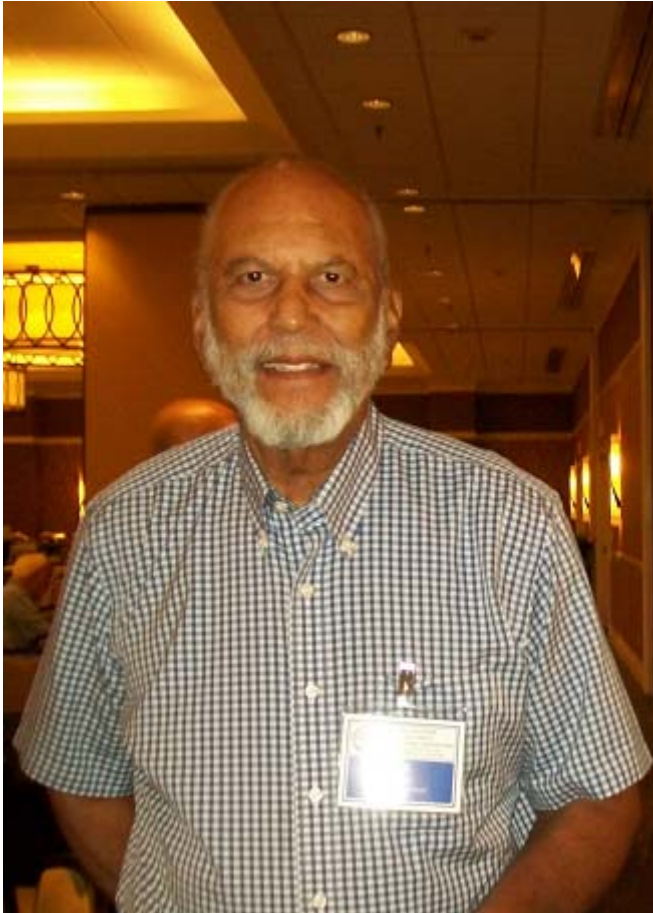
Lynn and Tom Hutchinson (Mather 80-13).





Bob Long, Vivian Long, Sally Morris, and Dave Morris. Bob Long and Dave Morris are both from James Connally 64-18.

Joe Lee, James Connally 64-08



at Lackland AFB that set a land speed record. Here are a few of his achievements. From 1943 to 1945 he was assigned to Memphis, Tennessee, in a ferry unit. This unit would ferry aircraft to various squadrons around the world. In February 1945 he was sent to Kunming, China, and flew the hump carrying supplies to the Chinese forces. From September 1945 to November 1945 he was assigned to the Far East where he picked up prisoners from POW camps. In 1949 he was recalled and assigned to Spokane, Washington, as a B-29 navigator. From July 1950 to March 1951 he was assigned to Japan in the B-29 and flew missions over Korea. In 1953 he was assigned to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, in the RB-47. In 1955 he flew spy missions over Russia in the RB-47. In January 1959 he was assigned to Fort Worth, Texas and to Carswell AFB. He worked at the General Dynamics Plant on the B-58. He later flew test flights in the B-58 at Carswell AFB.

Each of the WWII members were offered time to talk and one accepted the offer. Lt Col Auerbach made an interesting twenty-five minute presentation on his experiences in the Army Air Corps and the U.S. Air Force. Among the noteworthy events mentioned were his first mission for his B-29 crew—a weather reconnaissance mission over Japan on Christmas morning in 1944. He also discussed some of the engineering projects he worked on in the Air Force.

Thursday was tour day. Some attendees took the bus to see the Nimitz Museum and the L B Johnson Ranch. Others rode the red tour bus around San Antonio to sites such as the Alamo and the Lone Star Brewery. Some members did self-guided tours of the missions in San An-

tonio. A few went to Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB to see the aircraft in which they navigated or flew. Among the aircraft they saw were a T-29, T-43, B-52, B-57, B-58, B-66, C-47, C-54, C-118, C-119, C-121, C-123, C-130, C-131, SR-71, C-141, C-5, A-26, plus a B-17, B-24, F-101, F-105, F-4 and F-15.

I think all agree that San Antonio is an excellent reunion location. The hotel was accommodating and there are many places to dine and to visit. Several indicated they would like to return to San Antonio soon.

ADDITIONAL REUNION PHOTOGRAPHS

by Jim Faulkner, James Connally 64-04

More than 190 photographs taken at the 2017 Reunion are posted on the Connally/Harlingen website. The link is <http://james-connally.org/gallery/> If you would like a copy of a specific photograph, please advise me of the number of the photograph and your address, and I will send it to you. My address is: jfaulkner39@suddenlink.net

A1C HOT PILOT

by Joe Lyons, Ellington 50-D

When the Air Force first got out of the Army, many strange things happened. In fact you rather expected them after a while.

One chap was assigned Operations Officer at Homestead AFB and he was assigned an exceptional A1C to work there. The airman really knew his business, in fact he knew it too well. He continually corrected the pilots. He was always right, he was courteous, but some of the pilots got tired of his continuous corrections and complained. So the Operations Officer decided to teach him a few things about the flying business.

"Airman Brown, would you like to take a ride in a B-25?"

The eager reply, "Yes Sir, I really would like that!"

The Operations Officer put Airman Brown in the right seat and put the old bird through its paces. Stalls, unusual attitudes. Brown sat there with a silly grin on his face.

Then he asked Brown if he would like to fly the bird.

"Yes Sir, that would be great, Sir!"

It was evident from the first that Brown could fly an airplane, so he kept telling him to do increasingly difficult maneuvers. Brown handled all of them with ease.

He finally simulated an engine failure and a go-around on final, and Brown handled it perfectly.

"So what is the deal Brown? How did you learn to fly

a B-25?"

"Well Sir, I was a test pilot flying these things during the war. When the war was over, they drafted me."

LETTERS

24 October 2017

Editor:

I enjoyed the two-part article titled *Cadet Dayz* by Robert Jacobson of Harlingen 59-21N.

I went through Harlingen from December 1952 to June 1953 in Class 53-13. At that time basic navigator training was at Harlingen and Ellington. Following Basic training we went to either Mather AFB or Keesler AFB for Advanced. In my case, I went to Mather AFB for A-26 Bombardier/Navigator training with Class 53M. The training was focused on the Norden bombsight, SHORAN, and low-level navigation. We also were commissioned midway through Mather. Afterwards, I went to A-26 crew integration at Langley Field, then to Stead AFB, for Escape & Evasion and Survival, and then to Korea. My group was near the last of the integrated A-26 crews arriving in Korea. New replacements came in individually and were rarely trained in Norden, SHORAN or low-level navigation. Shortly after my arrival at the 3rd Bomb Group, 13th Bomb Squadron (L-NI), K-8 Kunsan, Korea, I became an instructor (as well as combat crew duty) and trained many navigators in the fine art of dropping bombs accurately. Several years later, I passed through Mather a second time for upgrade training on K-Systems, a brush-up on celestial and other navigation techniques prior to being assigned to SAC and B-47s at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska.

Harlingen AFB was activated in late March 1952, following its post-WWII closure in 1945. It was not as well established as was Ellington. Our barracks were under-going construction, so beginning with cadet quarters without walls, we progressed through studs, then drywall, and finally painted walls. Four to six cadets were "roommates" in a 10-foot by 10-foot room. We shared the bathroom with another four to six cadets as their room was on the other side of the bathroom. Looking back, this arrangement was the standard BOQ arrangement, but only for one person assigned to each bedroom. Mornings were a controlled rush and showers were short. We moved from barracks to barracks following the builders. I have often thought that the end product likely had the cleanest studs in the Air Force.

Few of my classmates had prior service, and most were like me, straight from civilian life. We never went through a pre-stage or basic training. My introduction to the Air Force was after being accepted for Flight School, a

swearing-in ceremony in Cleveland, Ohio, a train ride to Texas, and reporting in at Harlingen. As casual labor, I was an Airman Basic, and in my civvies doing three weeks of KP before my Class 53-13 started and I received a clothing issue. Once Cadet Training began, the upper classes, primarily 53-01 through 53-04, saw that we stayed on the straight and narrow. However, there was little hazing and few demerits. We ate "square meals" for six weeks and responded to "dumb" questions. A sense of humor and comradeship with classmates was all that we required "to stay the course." When we reached upper class, hazing was the exception. As we had both newly commissioned officers (newly graduated ROTC and Military Academies) the classes were hazing-free. For the first six weeks we cadets did march to and from classes and the mess hall. During this period we also ate "square meals." I believe it was after three months before we had our first "open post." Each day began with calisthenics, march to the mess hall, after breakfast clean the room, march to class, eat lunch, march to the mess hall and back, march to class, evening meal, study time, lights out around 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. the next morning start all over.

Exercise periods were worked in as well as some nighttime training with handheld sextants. Thursday evening was reserved for de-waxing the floor with razor blades. Friday evening was re-wax the floor, and prepare the barracks for the Saturday morning "white glove" inspection. Each week, one of us was assigned bathroom detail: clean the shower, sink, stool and floor. Following the inspection, the Saturday Parade, then we were free for the rest of the day and Sunday. Monday the schedule repeated itself. We did have an officer, a 2nd Lt who was in charge of administrative details, but he rarely was around. Unfortunately, he enjoyed partying late and then bringing out his dates to the base in the wee hours of the night, and firing off the fire alarm to the supposed "delight" of his date as we exited the barracks and formed ranks. As you can imagine, he was not popular with us.

At Mather, we lived in open bay, WWII barracks. As BOQ quarters were not available for newly commissioned 2nd Lts, each bay was a mixture of new officers and cadets. Much to our delight this led to a de-grading of our cadet restrictions. We still had weekly inspections, but it was more a "free-pass" as the inspectors had difficulty separating cadet areas from those of graduates. Also, the early morning exercises were frequently attended by only part of the cadets. We took turns staying in bed. Again demerits were few, and I only remember walking one tour and I have forgotten what the infraction was. Another distraction was the WAF Barracks in the middle of the Cadet Area, but that is another story. Once we received our gold bars, we too "protected" our cadets. However, we had little money as our cash went to paying for new officer uniforms. All of this seemed okay, as we all received our

wings and graduated.

Thanks for the fine article.

Perry R. Nuhn, Harlingen 53-13 and Mather 53M.

LAST FLIGHTS

Jim Faulkner, James Connally 64-04

Thanks to all those members who advise us when a navigator/observer/bombardier/EWO or combat system officer has made their last flight. I have received notices that the following are no longer with us. Please keep their families in your prayers.

ELLINGTON

Holden Jr., Sam R.	Sulphur	LA	45-08
Walke Jr., Emil P.	Del City	OK	45-09N
Carver, Richard W.	Rock Hill	SC	50-D
Lafave, Richard E.	Gwinn	MI	50-D
Tanner, Robert L.	Austin	TX	51-09
Armbruster, Owen R.	Abilene	TX	52-00
Marcella, Pat	Monticello	MN	52-18
Codwell Jr., John E.	Houston	TX	55-00
Duffin, Rey L.	Tooele	UT	55-02
Edds, James T.	Pensacola	FL	56-03

HARLINGEN

Zavatson, William G.	Abilene	TX	54-03
Allen, Theodore J.	Leander	TX	55-20
Horne, David W.	Colorado Springs	CO	55-20
Jones, Jack D.	Fort Worth	TX	55-20
Poland, Ronald K.	Great Falls	MT	55-20
Powers, John	Springfield	IL	55-20
Quinn, Edward P.	Mission Viejo	CA	55-20
Snowden, Richard M.	Bellevue	NE	55-20
Tinsman, Patrick D.	Santa Maria	CA	55-20
Younkman, Robert J.	Taylors	SC	55-20
Bonde, James R.	Glen Ellyn	IL	56-19
Dilenno, Thomas R.	Adamstown	MD	56-20
Chernin, Sidney	Mount Laurel	NJ	57-02
Radke, Thomas L.	Lacey	WA	57-02
Davis, Eddie R.	Homewood	AL	57-07
Weissmueller, Courtney E.	Orlando	FL	57-15
Wood Jr., Harry F.	Aiken	SC	57-17
Andonian, Paul M.	Portland	OR	57-19
Coburn, Harry L.	Vacaville	CA	57-19
Drew, Rodger A.	San Antonio	TX	57-19
Farrar, Glenn W.	Swainsboro	GA	57-19
Faulkner, Peter Tappen	Santa Clara	CA	57-19
Gooch, George E.	Orlando	FL	57-19
Lifsey, Truman W.	Westminster	CA	57-19
Oberg, Duane C.	Renton	WA	57-19
Phillipson, Howard C.	Inglewood	CA	57-19
Sandelin, Thomas D.	Dade	FL	57-19
Sexson, Richard W.	Alabaster	AL	57-19

Turki, Lawrence M.	Presque Isle	ME	57-19
Tyndale, David H.	South America		57-19
Vance, Jerry D.	Richmond	IN	57-19
Yezzo, Vincent F. X.	Westminster	PA	57-19
Baker, Terrence Dean	Cottonwood	AZ	57-20
Bunch, Kenneth J.	Oklahoma City	OK	57-20
Christie Jr., Vernon W.	Austin	TX	57-20
Colton, Thomas A.	Portland	OR	57-20
Lanahan, Joseph W.	Elkridge	MD	57-20
Rozsula, Bozydar H.	Lisle	IL	57-20
Palka, Joseph F.	Highlands Ranch	CO	57-20
Rineheart, Benjamin J.	Lowell	IN	57-20
Ripper, Tommy J.	Farmington	NM	57-20
Smith, Bernard W.	Fort Worth	TX	58-15
Dull, Rex L.	Camdenton	MO	59-10
Denison, Robert Gail	Catonsville	MD	59-21
Caffrey, Martin M.	Anaheim	CA	60-03
Pelini, Louis V.	Covington	KY	60-03
Shellhamer, Dale M.	West Redding	PA	60-03
Stoddard, David D.	Bellevue	NE	60-03
Newby, Jerry L.	Russiaville	IN	60-16
Gilliand, Jerry H.	Burnsville	MN	60-18
Wells, Robert M.	Summerville	SC	61-06
Bauer, Harvey G.	Moulton	TX	61-09
Inman, James E.	Pellville	KY	61-09
Lindsey, Joe W.	Lenox	GA	62-15
Walden, Foy T.	Headland	AL	62-16
Adams, John W.		CA	62-17
Maxwell, William N.I	Lancaster	CA	62-21

JAMES CONNALLY

Atto, Billy J.	Grapevine	TX	50-00
Goldberg, Irwin L.	Korea		50-00
Stewart Jr., Henry J.	Nakomis	FL	52-21
Sundhal, Roger D.	Presque Isle	ME	54-00
Bishop, Joe D.	San Antonio	TX	54-06
Darracq, Dal J.	Sacramento	CA	59-05
Curry Jr., John L.	Florence	NJ	61-04
Feindt, Theodore H.	Fort Myers	FL	63-05
Butcher, Robert L.	Plymouth	NC	63-07
Watts, James G.	Glennville	NC	63-16
Becker, Donald T.	Carmichael	CA	64-01
Coffman Jr., Lester P.	Fort Wayne	IN	64-01
McGraw, Spencer D.	Helotes	TX	64-06
Fournier, Robert E.	Rocklin	CA	64-07
Johnson III, Alexander T.	Fort Worth	TX	64-13
Ahearn, Terrence J.	Seabrook Island	SC	64-19
Sellers, Archie	Virginia Beach	VA	65-04
Marqua, Francis C.	Boise	ID	65-13
Dryer, David D.	Highlands Ranch	CO	65-19
Khouphongsy, Phouvang	Waukesha	WI	65-19
Nevils, Timothy F.	Lynnfield	MA	65-20
Baker, William C.	Las Vegas	NV	66-05
Schuenemeyer III, George E.	San Antonio	TX	66-13

LOWRY

Woinowsk, Russell K.	Ann Arbor	MI	41-03
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MATHER

Foster, Ralph N.	Fort Walton Beach	FL	42-08
Dolim, Abel L.	Kihei	HI	43-15
Johnson, Theodore W.	Westfield	NY	67-00
Tanner, Ronald L.	Chapel Hill	NC	68-00
Smithhart, David A.	San Antonio	TX	86-00

SELMAN

Scott, Linus A.	Temple Terrace	FL	43-14
Bennett, George W.	Panama City	FL	44-08
Metsky, Leslie	Maplewood	NJ	44-09
McInnis, Raymond J.	Westwood	MA	44-11
Reekers, Lester R.	Tulsa	OK	44-11
Mote Jr., Thomas A.	San Antonio	TX	44-15
Vickery, Donald B.	Sarasota	FL	45-03
Kayea Jr., Raymond F.	Annapolis	MD	45-415

SAN MARCOS

Glesne, Nels G.	Paia	HI	43-09
Bauer, Clifford H.	Greenbrae	CA	44-12

SCHOOL UNKNOWN

Deaton, Charles R.	O'Fallon	MO	40-00
Hennessy, George C.	Englewood	FL	41-00
Jenks, Robert R.	Palo Alto	CA	42-00
Post, Myron L.	Plymouth	MN	42-00
Davis, Charles N.	Houston	TX	43-00
Tschirhart, John H.	Austin	TX	43-00
Wilson, Robert B.	Austin	TX	43-00
Hooster Jr., Samuel		PA	44-00
Lister, James L.	Tampa	FL	44-00
Young, John K.	Winter Park	FL	44-00
Shepard, Samuel	West Bloomfield	MI	44-B
Cusack Jr., Charles E.	Houston	TX	45-00
Whatley, Charles W.	Pensacola	FL	45-00
Choffel, Merle Leo	San Antonio	TX	46-00
Gomes, Eugene M.	San Diego	CA	48-00
Schurr, Harry W.	Miami	FL	48-00
Campion, Alan J.	Galena	AK	50-00
McDonald, William E.	Memphis	TN	51-00
Schales, Jacob D.	Carmichael	CA	51-00
McNamee, Albert R.	Layton	UT	52-00
Hezel, Karl D.	Cranford	NJ	53-00
Hunter, Harold M.	San Antonio	TX	53-00
Nicoloff, George J.	Shalimar	FL	54-00
Vallar, Edgar J.	Saint Petersburg	FL	54-00
Becraft, William R.	Monsey	NY	56-00
Taylor Jr., Alvin	Upper Marlboro	MD	56-00
Benitez, Robert L.	Tampa	FL	57-00
Calhoun, Gerald G.	Nashville	TN	58-00

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