

By Frances McKenney, Assistant Managing Editor

## Meet the Vietnam War's Top Ace

Hosted in Massachusetts by the **Paul Revere Chapter** in March, Vietnam War ace Charles B. DeBellevue gave presentations to several groups around Hanscom Air Force Base during his visit.

Then-Captain DeBellevue was the first Air Force weapon systems officer to become an ace during the Vietnam War.

He earned the monicker America's top "MiG Killer" when he and pilot Capt. John Madden downed two MiGs on Sept. 9, 1972. This gave the backseater six aerial victories, the most earned by USAF's three Vietnam War aces. (Pilot Capt. Richard S. Ritchie and WSO Capt. Jeffrey S. Feinstein were the other two.)

At Hanscom, DeBellevue delivered a keynote address to an afternoon gathering at the base's Minuteman Commons community center. His lecture was part of the chapter's ongoing series of events spotlighting leadership and Air Force heritage.

DeBellevue told the audience that he learned extremely focused teamwork during hours in the cockpit and that his post-Vietnam assignments as 5th Air Force deputy chief of staff at Yokota AB, Japan, and as commander of the 95th Air Base Wing, Edwards AFB, Calif., underlined for him the importance of taking care of airmen.

At Hanscom, DeBellevue also visited the NCO leadership school, met with a group of company grade officers in the acquisition and program management field, and dropped in at the Bedford Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

He completed his time in the Boston suburb by briefing AFROTC Det. 345 cadets at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. DeBellevue, too, had been commissioned—in 1968—through ROTC.

In all, more than 200 people turned out to hear DeBellevue speak at various venues around Hanscom, said Chapter President Keith Taylor.

DeBellevue belongs to the **Central Oklahoma (Gerrity) Chapter** and is a consultant, specializing in small businesses.



*Chuck DeBellevue (far right), speaks to AFROTC cadets at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Paul Revere Chapter member Bob Holby knew DeBellevue from their active duty days; this led to inviting the Vietnam War ace to the Bay State.*

## Green Mountain Rally for the F-35

In February, the **Green Mountain Chapter** in Vermont joined civic leaders at a rally for the state Air National Guard's bid to host F-35s.

"The event was exceptionally well-attended," wrote Richard F. Lorenz, chapter membership and communications VP.

The crowd of some 300 included the chapter president, Raymond Tanguay, secretary John Roach, treasurer Carl F. Lozon III, leadership VP Michael Morgan, community partners VP James Navarro, public affairs VP Lloyd J. Goodrow, and Joel A. Clark, former chapter president.

Media coverage of the rally—held in a hotel in South Burlington—featured chapter member Maj. Gen. Steven A. Cray, then newly selected as the adjutant general for Vermont. Also on hand was Col. David P. Baczewski, a chapter member and commander of the 158th Fighter Wing at Burlington Arpt., Vt. The unit flies F-16s.

Last year the Air Force picked the ANG location as one of the preferred

sites for an operational F-35 Guard base. This rally—organized by local businesswoman Nicole Citro of the group called Green Ribbons for the F-35—aimed to demonstrate Burlington's support for basing the strike fighter in the community.

## San Antonio's Cyber Send-off

Four teams from San Antonio headed into the final round of CyberPatriot V competition in Washington, D.C., knowing they had tremendous support from the folks at home—and in particular, the **Alamo Chapter**.

Alamo Chapter President Al Swaim; chapter executive VP for CyberPatriot Tex Brown; and the chapter's Aerospace Education Foundation President David Pope were among the local AFA leaders who gathered in February for a luncheon to honor the city's CP teams. The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and the mayor's office sponsored the event.

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## How To Render a Salute

"When I was flying SR-71s," recalls Thomas Veltri of the **Donald W. Steele Sr. Memorial Chapter** in Virginia, "every time I came down the ladder after a mission, there was someone there to hand me a beer and tell me what a great job I had just done."

He says that in follow-on Air Force assignments, "I worked harder than ever, and I felt I was making a real impact, but there was nobody there with a beer or a pat on the back."

Veltri now makes sure the airmen and civilians in the chapter's area receive a thank you for a job well done. For the past 17 years, he has been the VP in charge of the chapter's Salute program.

Five times a year, the chapter hosts a "Salute to ..." honoring a different Air Force directorate based at the Pentagon.

In January the chapter held a Salute to the Strategic Plans and Programs directorate. Salute to the Air National Guard took place at the Sheraton Pentagon City on March 13. Salute to A3/5 was on tap for this month at the Ruth's Chris Steak House in Crystal City.

Such close scheduling keeps Veltri—who inherited the program from former Chapter President Richard Siner, Mary Anne Thompson, and Steve Gress—working his database.

*L-r: Donald W. Steele Sr. Memorial Chapter President Gavin MacAloon with Lt. Col. Thomas Koory, Cheryl Franklin, Capt. Dustin Jones, Sarah Hobbs, Lt. Gen. Michael Moeller, and Salutes VP Tom Veltri. Moeller shut down the A8 shop on this January afternoon so everyone could attend the Salute to Strategic Plans and Programs.*



That's his first piece of advice on how to carry out a Salute program:

- Maintain a database of companies, points of contact, and guests who've been consistent participants.
- Make sure past guests have signed up for the next event.
- Choose a Salute venue for its "first-class atmosphere." He zeroed in on the chapter's locations, based on their unique views, proximity, and quality food.
- Work with a point of contact to ensure the awardees have been selected and that invitations go out not just to airmen but also to civilians, in-house contractors, and families.

■ Stick with it. Veltri says that after nearly two decades, he's a familiar face at the directorates' front offices, so is able to get on the calendar.

■ "It's industry sponsorship that makes this work," Veltri acknowledges. The chapter charges corporations \$600 for four tickets and counts on the companies to cover the costs. Over the course of a year, "we break even," he says.

At these events, guests sometimes run into people whom they didn't realize worked in the same organization, Veltri says. It's one reason he's pleased to "pay tribute to the day-to-day activity of folks working in the Pentagon."

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*At the Indiana State meeting are (l-r): AFA President Craig McKinley; honorees Tom Eisenhuth, Jim Fultz, Bill Howard Jr., Bill Grider, Harold Henneke; and Great Lakes Region President Kent Owsley.*

Each year, the top-scoring team from the metro area receives the Mayor's Cyber Cup, and for the third consecutive time, an Alamo Colleges' Alamo Academies Information Technology and Security Academy team, ITSA New Braunfels No. 2, won the trophy.

The team members were: Kenny Graves and Maggie Schmeltekopf, both New Braunfels High School seniors; from Canyon High School, Paul Hopson, a senior, and Stephen La Rosa, a junior; and Jason Mirch and Cory Nichols, both juniors from Seguin High School.

San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro presented the award. He gave each

team member a \$1,000 scholarship, a leather bomber jacket, and an iPad mini.

ITSA New Braunfels No. 2 competed against nearly 60 CP teams from San Antonio to earn the trophy. Three other area teams survived the first rounds and won a trip to the Nation's Capital, along with New Braunfels, for the national finals: East Central Army JROTC, John Jay High School AFJROTC, and Medina Valley High School AFJROTC.

John Jay High School went on to win the Best in Service Air Force award in national-level competition.

The City of San Antonio had been named a CyberPatriot Center of Ex-

cellence last year. The designation recognized—among many measures of support—the establishment of the Mayor's Cyber Cup and the Alamo Chapter's recruitment of CP teams.

**A Tribute to Leadership in Indiana**

At an AFA state meeting in Indiana in March, five field leaders received honors at an AFA Hoosier Recognition Banquet.

Thomas Eisenhuth and William Howard Jr. from the **Fort Wayne Chapter**; James E. Fultz and Harold F. Henneke from the **Southern Indiana Chapter**; and William R. Grider from the **Grisson Memorial Chapter** in Indianapolis had been "long overdue" for this tribute, commented State President Paul Lyons. He described the five as "the driving forces behind the active Indiana state organization." They have served in chapter, state, regional, and national AFA roles, Lyons pointed out. Most recently, Grider was elected as a national director at large at September's National Convention.

Lyons wrote that "Henneke stands out as a first among equals." A national director emeritus, Henneke is an AFA charter member and began military service in 1942.

AFA President Craig R. McKinley, banquet speaker, and Great Lakes

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Region President Kent Owsley, from the **Wright Memorial Chapter** in Dayton, Ohio, presented the honorees with an AFA Certificate, challenge coin, and desk set.

Jonathan Fitzgerald also received an AFA award as CAP Cadet of the Year for the Grissom Squadron, GLR-IN-086.

The audience of more than 80 guests included the state's adjutant general, its Air National Guard leaders, Civil Air Patrol cadets, and AFROTC cadets from Purdue University in West Lafayette and from Indiana State University and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute.

In addressing the banquet audience, gathered at the Fort Harrison State Park Inn in Indianapolis, McKinley mentioned that he was encouraged by a luncheon—organized by Grider earlier that day—where he met US Rep. Susan W. Brooks (R-Ind.) and aides from several congressional and state districts.

In addition, Brig. Gen. John P. McGoff attended the downtown Indianapolis event. McGoff is chief of staff of the state Air National Guard and a **Central Indiana Chapter** member.

#### STEM in Washington, D.C.

WashingtonExec, an online media and events company aimed at Washington, D.C.'s, executive community, recently featured an interview with one

of the winners of the **Nation's Capital Chapter's** science, technology, engineering, and math award.

Meg Hunt, a junior at Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, had just been named the chapter's female STEM Student of the Year.

She told the reporter that her interest in this subject area had begun with reading *National Geographic* magazine and progressed to the biological sciences, then engineering and math topics.

Hunt's award garnered mention in her school's news bulletin, too. She was, however, only one of a half-dozen award winners selected by the chapter.

Sam Sherman, from Saint Anselm's Abbey School, received the male STEM Student of the Year award.

The chapter gave Hunt and Sherman \$500, a large AFA flying eagle plaque, a certificate of excellence, and a year of AFA membership.

Honorable mentions went to Owen Duffy of McKinley Technology High School, Rachel Kellogg from National Cathedral School, and Mackenzie Moore and Raphael Hviding, both of Washington International School.

Chapter Education VP Col. Rene L. Bergeron, who created and carries out the STEM Student of the Year Program, said it began two years ago as a way to help motivate exceptional 11th-graders in D.C. who have a career interest in STEM.

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**More Chapter News**

■ The **Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter** hosted the Virginia State Meeting in Front Royal, Va., in March, with retired Lt. Gen. Michael E. Zettler, USAF's deputy chief of staff for installations and logistics until his retirement in 2004, as guest speaker. He described the strike fighter program and showed video clips of the F-35 in flight. Also on hand: AFA Vice Chairman of the Board for Field Operations Scott P. Van Cleef.

■ An Air Force recruiter was guest speaker for the March meeting of the **Gen. Carl A. "Tooley" Spaatz Chapter** in New York, reported Chapter President David K. Ribbe. TSgt. Carlos Castro spoke to a group that included several AFA field leaders: New York State President Maxine Rauch, State Treasurer Ron Campbell, State Chaplain Brother Robert Francis Matthews, and Michael Szymczak, president of the **Albany-Hudson Valley Chapter**.

■ Retired Col. Jim Elder of the Joe Foss Institute was guest speaker for the **Lewis E. Lyle Chapter** in Hot Springs, Ark. Based in Scottsdale, Ariz., the institute was founded by Foss, a Marine Corps Medal of Honor recipient—who also served as AFA President and Chairman (1961-1963)—to further civics education in schools. Elder spoke to the AFAers about the American flag. ■

**Reunions**

[reunions@afa.org](mailto:reunions@afa.org)

**303rd Air Refueling Sq.**, Bermuda and Tucson (1953-63), including associated units. Oct. 23-27 at the Hyatt Place Hotel, Grapevine, TX. **Contact:** Marianne Madory, 1805 Rim Rock Trail, Mansfield, TX 76063 (951-232-9192) (rmmadory@att.net).

**324th Fighter Gp.**, 9th AF (WWII). June 20-23 in Lexington, KY. **Contacts:** 324thfightergroupreunion@insightbb.com or Judith Wurmser (859-221-1509) or Linda Noffsinger (859-608-1208).

**504th Bomb Gp.**, Tinian (1945). Sept. 20-24 in Washington, DC. **Contact:** Kaz Barcynski (252-637-0587) (mskb134@gmail.com).

**Air Force Transportation Officers.** June 6-9 in O'Fallon, IL. **Contact:** Dick Glogowski (618-624-6115) (dglogowski@charter.net).

**Former Military/Overseas "Brats."** East

Coastreunion: Aug. 8-11 in Daytona Beach, FL. West Coast reunion: Oct. 10-13 in Laughlin, NV. **Contact:** Joe Condrill (316-269-9610) (joeosbpres@sbcglobal.net).

**NAM POW, Assn of Vietnam War POWs.** May 22-25 at the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, CA, and the Hyatt Regency in Newport Beach, CA. **Contact:** Tom Hanton, 2050 Jamieson Ave., Unit 1115, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703-615-8238) (tom.hanton@comcast.net). ■

E-mail unit reunion notices four months ahead of the event to [reunions@afa.org](mailto:reunions@afa.org), or mail notices to "Unit Reunions," *Air Force Magazine*, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Please designate the unit holding the reunion, time, location, and a contact for more information. We reserve the right to condense notices.

**AFA Conventions**

June 14-15	<b>California State Convention</b> , Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
July 12-13	<b>Florida State Convention</b> , Jacksonville, Fla.
Sept. 14-15	<b>AFA National Convention</b> , National Harbor, Md.
Sept. 16-17	<b>AFA Air &amp; Space Conference</b> , National Harbor, Md.

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