



Air Force Association

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AFA's Mission

Our mission is to promote a dominant United States Air Force and a strong national defense and to honor airmen and our Air Force heritage. To accomplish this, we:

Educate the public on the critical need for unmatched aerospace power and a technically superior workforce to ensure US national security.

Advocate for aerospace power and STEM education.

Support the Total Air Force family and promote aerospace education.

Aviano Danger Close

After reading "Watershed Air War," April, p. 58, I wanted to share that there were fatalities omitted from the article. In the June issue, I read where Lieutenant General Short did note that two pilots lost their lives in an Apache helicopter mishap [*"Letters: Setting it Straight," June, p. 6*].

There are two other things worthy of note: The Apache crew was NOT in the war zone, and if I recall, they (A1C John M. Johnson and A1C Jovan D. Griffin) were exercising to prepare to deploy, not in a deploy mode to Kosovo.

Also, there were two other fatalities. Two airmen deployed to Aviano lost their lives in a vehicle mishap (crash) on the autostrada.

I was stationed at Aviano, which was considered a hazardous duty location during OAF. I received hazard pay but went home to my family each night. It was odd.

SMSGt. Mark Cipriano,
USAF (Ret.)
Elyria, Ohio

Almanac Umbrage Taken

In the June issue of *Air Force Magazine* [*"Letters: I Just Can't Even. Floppy Disks?" p. 6*], there are two letters bemoaning the use of ancient 5.25-inch floppies shown in your April 2015 issue. Sorry, it's even worse than that. Those are eight-inch floppies, which preceded 5.25-inch floppies [*"Nuclear Force Improvements," p. 40*]. I even saw a discussion of these dinosaurs on what I seem to recall was a CBS "60 Minutes" segment on missile silos and how out-of-date they are. Unfortunately, those ancient floppies are only a small example of how outdated things are in the strategic missile organization's silos.

Next, I take umbrage at your failing to mention USAFSS (USAF Security Service) in the May 2015 issue. You failed to mention the existence of USAFSS, which was subsequently "redesignated" ELSEC (Electronic Security Command), which eventually became AIA (Air Intelligence Agency), which disappeared completely into the bowels of Air Force Air Combat Command. Sorry, but I can see no reason to have ever changed the name from USAFSS. What earthly purpose is served by renaming such a fine organization, which was of such great

value during the Cold War? "Security Service" says everything and means nothing, as should a name of such an intelligence organization. Its name today is as meaningful now as it was then. Now intelligence organizations seem to be relegated to an administrative black hole of nameless organizations.

Thomas B. Roach
Lincoln, Calif.

■ *USAF Security Service was listed on p. 109 of the May issue as part of the lineage for Electronic Security Command/Air Force Intelligence Command.—THE*

EDITORS

[On] p. 57 under AFMC, AFTC, 96th Test Wing, you show F-35A/B/C. 96th is at Eglin and there are F-35s at Eglin, but they *all* belong to AETC 33rd Fighter Wing. Test Wing has none that I know of.

Col. Al Habermusch,
USAF (Ret.)
Niceville, Fla.

It looks like your HH-60G inventory in the almanac is off by one [*"Gallery of USAF Weapons," p. 80*]. Number should be 97. It also appears that you reflect a HH-60U as a L based platform. It is 60M based.

Patrick Dugan
Springfield, Va.

After reading the 2015 annual USAF Almanac, I thought that the addition of the current pay scales for all ranks would be an excellent addition.

At my USAF reunions, many ask, "How much would we be paid today?"

Lt. Col. Richard L. Pinkerton,
USAF (Ret.)
Strongsville, Ohio

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■ We stopped publishing the DOD pay scales in May 2010 because the information is accessible online. You can find pay scale information at: <http://militarypay.defense.gov/mpcalcs/Calculators/RMC.aspx>.—THE EDITORS

Pretty Famous, I'd Say

First, I'd like to say thanks for a great magazine. I've been a loyal subscriber for 20-plus years. I'm retired Air Force of 24-plus years, having spent 10 of those on the KC-10 Extender at three different bases.

I wanted to point out what I'm sure was an oversight but should be mentioned in May's issue [*"Airpower Classics: KC-10 Extender,"* p. 144].

Of the "Famous Fliers," I was shocked to see Col. Pamela Melroy, USAF and NASA retired, not mentioned. Colonel Melroy was one of the first female pilots accepted, assigned to the KC-10 with the 32nd Air Refueling Squadron, alongside General Paul Selva (mentioned) at Barksdale AFB, La., deploying on the KC-10 to Desert Storm. I know because I was with her as her crew chief.

After a very impressive Air Force career, including test pilot school at Edwards Air Force Base, she was selected by NASA as a space shuttle pilot, eventually becoming a shuttle commander, and flew at least three shuttle flights and spent several combined weeks aboard the International Space Station.

Again, thanks so much for a great magazine. I look forward to it every month and will be a subscriber for life.

MSgt. Roger G. Kennedy,
USAF (Ret.)
Red Bud, Ill.

Open It Up

I appreciated your brief yet concise description of "The RPA Problem" in *Air Force Magazine* [*"Editorial,"* May, p. 4]. While it evokes empathy for those who are obviously "overworked and underpaid," I find it nearly impossible to weep for the Air Force commanders from General Welsh on down. I could not agree more with the assessment of Secretary Gates, who has at times veiled his opinions but at others revealed them quite blatantly. He has complained that the while USAF is technologically the most advanced state-of-the-art military power on the planet, its command structure and organization is inexplicably stuck in the 1800s.

The concern for a lack of or loss of pilots is almost comical, not to mention a self-inflicted wound. Today's enlisted airmen are very often brighter and in many cases more technologically savvy than the smartest officer you can dig up. Has the Air Force readjusted itself to that fact? NO!

There are plenty of qualified enlisted airmen capable of flying a drone. These "youngsters" are after all the video-game monarchs back at the dormitory. If they are held liable to repair the multimillion dollar aircraft

and keep it airborne, then they are certainly responsible enough to fly it. Just give them the training. Hap Arnold and Curtis LeMay would have drooled over these guys 50 years ago. Certainly more money might resolve the training and equipment issues incurred by increased demand. But as for the morale problems due to lack of personnel, I don't think America will shed any tears.

It's time the Air Force re-evaluated its command structure. I encourage the Air Force Association to lobby for returning the warrant officer or creating a limited-duty-officer position. But I'll take an E-5 aircraft mechanic with video gaming expertise off the flight line and match him against an ROTC, 22-year-old cadet who just finished drinking his way through college—any day of the week. You don't need to know Bernoulli's principle of fluid dynamics to fly a drone. Today's enlisted Air Force is exceptionally educated, and yet they continue to be treated like the unschooled folks they might have been 50 years ago.

In closing, let me ask: Who was that guy that earned his pilot wings under the flying sergeant program in 1943, never went to college, and yet mysteriously became one of the most celebrated fighter pilots in United States Air Force history? Oh, that's right, Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager!

Hmmm. Makes you wonder.

Paul Stonehouse
Ashburn, Va.

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