

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society ***News Magazine***

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DFCS 2006

Reunion/Convention

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Las Vegas
Oct. 22 - 26, 2006

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society
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...for deeds accomplished while participating in aerial flight.

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society

The Distinguished Flying Cross News

January 2006

Michael & Beverley O'Neil
CO-EDITORS

Regional Chapters



1. Air Force Village West
Riverside, CA
[Redacted]
2. Arizona Chapter
Scottsdale, AZ
[Redacted]
3. Ira Eaker Chapter
Sherwood, AR
Rick Ivars, President
[Redacted]
4. Lewis & Clark Chapter
Milwaukie, Oregon
Michael Scorcio, President
[Redacted]
5. Great Plains Chapter
Papillion, NE 68128-5619
Jim Maloney, President
[Redacted]
6. Nation's Capital Region Chapter
Lanham, MD
Bill Withuhn, President
[Redacted]
7. New Jersey Chapter
Bound Brook, NJ
Thomas E. Johnson, President
[Redacted]
8. North Texas Chapter
Plano, TX
Al Sloan, President
[Redacted]
9. Northwest Chapter
Puyallup, WA
Steve Vermillion, President
[Redacted]
10. Orange County California Chapter
San Clemente, CA
Arthur W. Overman, President
[Redacted]
11. San Antonio Alamo Chapter
San Antonio, TX
Tom W. Wood, President
[Redacted]
12. San Diego Lindbergh Chapter
San Diego, California
Harry Kaplan, President
[Redacted]
13. Southeast Florida Chapter
Hollywood, FL
Russell Castaline, President
[Redacted]
14. Southwestern Ohio Chapter
Dayton, OH
Charles Hatfield, President
[Redacted]
15. Tampa Bay Area Chapter
New Port Richey, FL
Robert L. Hutchinson, President
[Redacted]
16. Mid-America Chapter
Wichita, Kansas
Robert Carter, President
[Redacted]

Message
From:

Chairman of the Board



Passing the Flag



Well, we do not have a flag at our Society, but maybe we should. If we had one, I would have proudly passed the flag to Michael O'Neil who assumed the duties of President and CEO for the DFCS during our December board meeting. Michael, who has been and continues to be a successful businessman, brings a great deal of experience to our organization. But more importantly, he is driven by the love for our Society, and his dedication has been apparent as he has spent many years unselfishly advancing our mission. Of course, backing Michael up is an equally dedicated behind-the-scenes wife, Beverley. Kudos for your support and friendship, Beverley, and best of luck, Michael, as you assume your new duties!

I would like to thank the Society for your support over the past few years during which I have been a board member and officer. I hope I have helped navigate our ship on a steady course. I think it is very healthy for any organization to limit terms in office in order to continually rejuvenate energy and keep the momentum going.

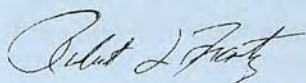
As a result of the elections by our Board, I now have to fill the very large shoes of Jack Mates, as Chairman of the Board. Jack will be moving on to assume the position of Chairman for our Advisory Board. He will also stay very active in answering the Society's daily e-mails and will continue as the Committee Chairman for our 2006 Convention in Las Vegas. Jack has been a great friend and has always been there when we needed sound opinions.

This year we have brought on three new board members expanding our total to eleven. We have purposely advocated the slow growth of our Board expansion to ensure we have continuity for existing programs but, at the same time, allow for fresh ideas and viewpoints. Our new board members will be introduced later in this issue.

Finally, I would like to thank our membership for their strong support. Our election results were the best ever with a return of 4004 votes. Our Society is still young, but it is maturing rapidly as a nationally recognized veteran's organization. As I have always said, we are a very unique organization in that we represent all of the services and all of the ranks. We have participated in all of the wars and eras of military history, as well as most of the campaigns, and we have participated in almost every aspect of aerial combat. Our sons and daughters

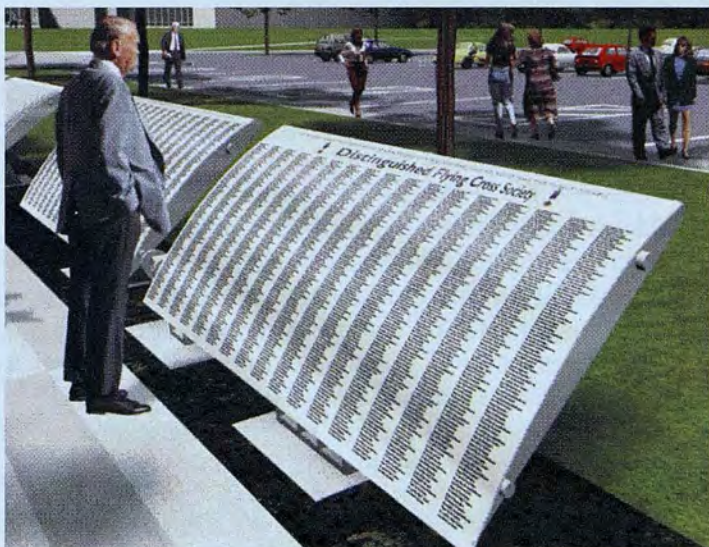
and grandchildren (and I assume our future descendents) will want us to preserve our history, which is what our Society's mission is all about.

I hope that 2006 will be a great year for you, your families, and our Country. Our commitment to freedom and democracy will continue to be challenged this year, but our resolve and the bravery of our dedicated men and women in service will prevail.



Lt.Col. Robert (Bob) Frantz USMC (Ret)

More Names on The Wall of Honor



The Wall of Honor at the National Aviation and Space Exploration Museum at the Dulles Airport has been so successful that we have made arrangements to have additional names put on the Wall of Honor. Initially, we planned for 500 names on two of the four quarter panels of the wall. However, we exceeded this number by 57. We are now planning to complete three quarter panels for a total of 750 names. The 4th panel will have a graphic of representative military aircraft and a short history about the DFC & the DFC Society. This will match what the Flying Tiger Association has done on an adjacent wall which displays very elegantly. If you would like to have your name inscribed on the wall, please download an application form found on the museum website at www.nasm.si.edu. Click on "Wall of Honor" & download & print an application. IMPORTANT: Be sure to write "DFC04" so it will be properly identified for placement on our DFCS panel.

Bob Frantz

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Bob Frantz

email: [redacted]

- President CEO

Michael O'Neil

email: [redacted]

- Vice President

Reed Phillips

email: [redacted]

- V. P. for Membership

Rick Ivars

email: [redacted]

- Secretary & General Counsel

Dennis Schoville

email: [redacted]

- Treasurer

Bill Bradfield

email: [redacted]

- V.P. for Chapter Development

Eddie Mims

email: [redacted]

- Director of Planning Special Projects

Harry Kaplan

Email: [redacted]

- Director of Fund Raising

Bill Withuhn

Email: [redacted]

- Director Asst. Chapter Development

John Appel

email: [redacted]

- Director Asst. Chapter Development

Jim Ellis

Email: [redacted]

President's Message



I have had the privilege of being an integral part of The Distinguished Flying Cross Society since 1996, and it is with a deep sense of pride that I accepted the honor of being our Society's President. My present connection with DFCS & San Diego actually began in the early years of its founding. My wife, Bev, and I attended a Vietnam Helicopter Pilots

Association reunion in 1991 in Reno, Nevada. At that reunion, I re-connected with an old flight school buddy of mine, Ernie Arzabal (also a recipient of the DFC). It was the first time we had seen each other in 20+ years. Ernie was living in San Diego with his family when we visited him in 1994. Bev and I fell in love with San Diego and moved from Boston to the "left" coast in 1995.

In the summer of '96 Ernie and I gathered up our DFC citations and attended the first DFCS reunion in San Diego (saw an article in local newspaper about the gathering). We were greeted with open arms and quickly realized we were not only the newest members of the Society, but also the *youngest* at the convention. My, how things change in just a few years!

I met the Founder and Past President of the DFC Society, Al Ciurczak, and its Board of Directors at that first reunion. I was so impressed with the "esprit de corps" of its Directors and members, I knew immediately I wanted to be part of this organization. I volunteered my business & computer skills shortly thereafter. I was first elected to the Board of Directors in 1998 and have been an active volunteer since then. But I have to point out, I am the youngest... *no longer!*

We have grown from seven directors to eleven, which includes three newly elected directors - John Appel from Florida, Jim Ellis from California, and Rick Ivars from Arkansas. Each of our Directors brings a unique background and talent to our Society.

I have several goals I would like to accomplish over the next year. The first is to develop better and consistent communication between National and our chapters. I believe active chapters produce active members. It is my vision to increase our number of chapters; and by doing so, it will increase the number of *involved* members.

The formation of committees will be necessary to distribute the workload of keeping our organization functional

and viable. During our first Board meeting of 2006, we formed a Public Relations Committee and a Fundraising Committee. We have also added two more directors with Chapter Development to help Eddie Mims. I encourage all chapters to contact Eddie Mims, VP/Chapter Development with any questions, suggestions, and/or comments. If Eddie cannot answer it immediately, he will bring it to the Board.

The first action of the Board this year was to downsize the DFCS store front. In order to decrease operational expenses, the administrative work will be done from an external office with no expense to the Society. This will save a substantial amount of money that can be better utilized for other expenses. We are looking into other venues for the future and will keep our membership advised. Please note the new mailing address. Email and phone numbers remain the same.

We have a number of ongoing commitments in 2006 that include a reunion in Las Vegas (October 2006 - see this issue for complete registration information); a temporary display on the USS Midway Museum in San Diego; a video history of the DFCS; ongoing affiliation with the San Diego Aerospace Museum; implementation of a newly completed fundraising prospectus; increasing public awareness of our Society and its history; updating our membership database and computer software; and adding 200 names on the 3rd panel on our foil at the National Air and Space Museum at Dulles airport. We have a very busy year ahead of us, and I'm very honored and excited to have this opportunity to work with everyone.

On a somber note, our Founder and President Emeritus, Al Ciurczak, is fighting cancer and is in serious condition. His daughter, Alexis, and hospice are with him. In speaking with Alexis today, she assured me Al would enjoy getting a note or card from the members to lift his spirits. Al's address is [REDACTED]

**Fill out Reunion Registration Form
and Hotel Riviera Registration Form.**

**Send FORMS to address
listed on each form.**

V.P. Update

The National DFCS Board of Directors recently voted on new Officers for Calendar Year 2006, and I am pleased to say I will continue as Vice President. I look forward to working in partnership with Michael O'Neil, President, and the entire National Board.

One of the most exciting projects I am working on is heading up the DFCS Oral History Program. This project is being directed by Dr. Barry Lanman. Dr. Lanman has a PhD in Oral History and teaches at Martha Ross Center for Oral History at the University of Maryland. His Assistant Program Director is Dr. Laura Wendling, Professor at California State University.

The mission of this program is related directly to visitors of the San Diego Aerospace Museum and their requests for more personal accounts of aviators. We have completed 33 video recordings of DFCS members. A copy of the interview is sent to each member for family retention and use. Our Society is fortunate to have such talented, educated people developing this project, as well as the cooperation of several organizations and individuals. The consortium of participants in the DFCS Oral History Program includes:

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society
Midway San Diego Aircraft Museum
San Diego Aerospace Museum
Martha Ross Center for Oral History, Department of History,
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
College of Education at California State University, San Marcos
Consultant, Bill Withuhn, Director, The Distinguished Flying Cross
Society and Curator of Technology, Smithsonian Institution
The Consortium of Oral History Educators



We have been working on this project for several months, and we are ready for the next step. Eddie Mims, National Director of Chapter Development, and I will work with the DFCS Chapter Development Team to identify key DFCS members. With the assistance of Jim Ellis and John Appel, newly elected National DFCS Board Members, we will be contacting DFCS chapters to work with us. I encourage all DFCS members to support this project.

Reed Phillips,
Vice President

Captain Armando Espinoza, Operation Iraqi Freedom



Captain Armando Espinoza, United States Marine Corps, is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism while participating in aerial flight as a Helicopter Aircraft Commander in a two-plane section of CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters while attached to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 26B, Marine Aircraft Group 39, 3D Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 10 April 2003. Captain Espinoza provided multiple day and night casualty evacuation missions in support of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines' attack into Baghdad. His ability to tactically maneuver his helicopter in urban areas and maintain flawless situational awareness, helped render the enemy's attack ineffective. Landing under enemy fire, he loaded casualties while the lead aircraft provided suppressive fires. He departed the zone while returning fire and conducting evasive maneuvering enroute. He made four repeated trips in order to ensure the evacuation of all wounded personnel. His leadership, situational awareness, and calm presence under fire ensured the safe evacuation of 28 Marines and a family of seven Iraqi nationals. By his superb airmanship, inspiring courage, and loyal devotion to duty in the face of hazardous flying conditions, Captain Espinoza reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.



Treasurer's Report

Calendar Year 2005



The Distinguished Flying Cross Society expanded its membership in 2005, and we are continuing to work on many fundraising projects. During this past year, The Board of Directors formulated a Fundraising Plan, which we hope to implement in 2006. We also developed the "DFC Minute" and are continuing to work in partnership with the USS Midway for a display aboard that ship. It has been our mission to teach the general public about the wonderful heritage of the DFC, but the downside of these endeavors is our expenses have exceeded our income for the past two years.

In 2005 income was just under \$88,000, while expenses totaled approximately \$106,000. Both membership dues and sales of memorabilia were less than our projections. The balance sheet below shows our Year-End 2005 position.

2005 Balance Sheet

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	\$ 61,015
Inventory	10,287
Total Assets	\$ 71,302

LIABILITIES and EQUITY

Liabilities	\$ 0
Equity	
DFCS Foundation	\$ 10,198
Macauley Scholarships	12,255
Opening Equity	66,326
Net Income	-17,477
Total Liability & Equity	\$ 71,302



The Board is looking at a number of ways to stop the negative cash flow. We have done a thorough review of the budget and taken steps to significantly reduce our administrative and operating costs.

Two major areas we plan to work closely with is membership and chapter growth. We have formed committees to get our organization more in the public eye utilizing different media venues; encouraging our members and existing chapters to formulate telephone campaigns; utilizing monthly reports to initiate new chapters; etc.

These efforts must be done without impacting our effort to grow the organization and to create more public awareness of the heritage of the DFC. Our vision is to bring our cash flow back in line and put the DFCS on a more positive footing.

Regards,

Bill Bradfield

Bill Bradfield, Treasurer

DFCS Scholarship Winners for Spring 2006

Anna Ingram Jones

Madison, IN

Major: Pre Med at

University of the South

Her DFCS sponsor is her father,

Richard Sheffield Jones

Britney Anne Scannell

Palos Verdes, CA

Major: Economics at UCLA

Her DFCS sponsor is her grandfather,

Dr. William E. Scannell

Stephen Doe

Newfane, NY

Major: Business Management at

Grove City College

His DFCS sponsor is his grandfather,

Norman H. Doe

April Marie Smith

Charleston, SC

Major: Pre Professional Health at

Clemson University

Her DFCS sponsor is her grandfather,

Alfred E. Smith

THE
DISTINGUISHED
FLYING CROSS
SOCIETY



And the Winner is . . .

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society Board of Directors was pleased to present the first, annual *Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award* to the **ALAMO CHAPTER** of Texas. The DFCS Chapter of the Year Committee selected the chapter based on criteria shown below. The award was presented to Tom Wood, Chapter President, on behalf of the Alamo Chapter at the DFCS Annual Membership Meeting on October 22, 2005 at the San Diego Aerospace Museum.

The award, named for our Founder, recognizes the outstanding efforts of the chapter that best promotes The Distinguished Flying Cross Society, as outlined in Article II of our Society's by-laws. As part of this award, National Headquarters purchased an airline ticket for Tom to attend the Annual Meeting. The Alamo Chapter is featured in this issue of the DFCS News Magazine, and it will be highlighted on the DFCS website until the next News Magazine is published.

The following criteria was used to select the chapter of the year:

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award Criteria

1. **Demonstrate efforts in continuing to build chapter**
 - a. Conduct regular chapter meetings
 - b. Market the existence of the chapter through articles, ads, radio, television, etc.
 - c. Host speakers to inform chapter members
 - d. Pursuit of associate members
2. **Contribution to national organization**
 - a. Dues
 - b. Consistently contribute to newsletter
 - c. Provides ideas to and responds timely to request from the national headquarters
3. **Building awareness in community**
 - a. Participation in veterans outreach events
 - b. Community service in support of veterans
4. **Perform noteworthy accomplishment during the reporting year**
 - a. Distinguish the chapter
 - b. Illuminate the DFCS standing in the community
 - c. Promote the overall mission of the organization



The Board believes this award serves to promote good-natured competition between chapters, encourages interaction between National and chapters, motivates chapter members to contribute to their Regional Chapter, and highlights both individual and chapter activities.

The Board of Directors wishes to thank all chapters for their submissions and takes great pride in bestowing this honor to the **Alamo Chapter of The Distinguished Flying Cross Society**.

U.S.S. Ronald Reagan

Boy!!! When the Bridge pipes "Man the Rail", there is a lot of rail to man on this monster - shoulder to shoulder around 4½ acres. This doesn't give her displacement, but it's about 100,000 tons with full complements. **Capability:** Expected to operate in the fleet for about 50 years; carries over 80 combat aircraft; top speed exceeds 30 knots; powered by two nuclear reactors that can operate for more than 20 years without refueling; three arresting cables can stop a 28-ton aircraft going 150 miles per hour in less than 400 feet. **Size:** Towers 20 stories above the waterline; 1,092 feet long; nearly as long as the Empire State Building is tall; flight deck covers 4.5 acres; four bronze propellers, each 21 feet across and weighing 66,200 pounds; two rudders, each 29 by 22 feet and weighing 50 tons; four high-speed aircraft elevators, each over 4,000 square feet. **Dates:** Dec 8, 1994 - Contract awarded to Newport News Shipbuilding; Feb 12, 1998 - Keel laid; Oct 1, 2000 - Pre-commissioning Unit established; March 4, 2001 - Christened by Mrs. Nancy Reagan; May 5, 2003 - First underway; July 12, 2003 - Commissioned; July 23, 2004 - Arrived at homeport in San Diego, CA. **Capacity:** Home to about 6,000 Navy personnel; carries enough food and supplies to operate for 90 days; 18,150 meals served daily; distillation plants provide 400,000 gallons of fresh water from sea water daily, enough for 2,000 homes; nearly 30,000 light fixtures, 1,325 miles of cable and wiring, 1,400 telephones, 14,000 pillowcases, and 28,000 sheets. **Costs** the Navy approximately \$250,000 per day for pier side operation; **Costs** the Navy approximately \$2.5 million per day for underway operations (Sailor's salaries included).





Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award

Message from Tom Wood, President, Alamo Chapter:

It was a proud day for the Alamo Chapter of The Distinguished Flying Cross Society, as I represented the Chapter in accepting the DFCS **Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award** in San Diego on Saturday, October 22, 2005. There were well over 100 in attendance from chapters all over the country. Below are my remarks given at the Annual Membership Meeting of The Distinguished Flying Cross Society held at the San Diego Aerospace Museum:

"Mr. President, Officers of the National Board, on behalf of all of the members and officers of the San Antonio Alamo Chapter, I am very pleased to accept this first annual Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award. It has been my honor over the past three years to serve as President of the Alamo Chapter. It has been such a pleasure to work with outstanding men who served in conflicts from WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf Wars, in all military ranks, from all military services and varied walks of life who all hold that one precious thing in common, the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Being selected for this award from among so many outstanding chapters is very humbling indeed. It was truly a team effort from everyone on our outstanding Board of Directors and from our entire membership as well, and especially from our founder and first president, Gene McIntyre, whose vision, enthusiasm and leadership set the Alamo Chapter on the right course at our very beginning.

The men of the Alamo Chapter appreciate the efforts of our National DFCS Leadership and pledge their support to you and all of the chapters throughout the country in bringing our organization to even greater heights in the future."

"Thank you so much for this honor."



Tom Wood (left) receiving award from Bob Frantz, President of National

Chapter of the Year submissions

Let it be told that The Southwest Ohio Chapter led by Charles Hatfield, President and The Ira Eaker Chapter of Arkansas with Rick Ivars, President, also submitted very compelling and equally competent Chapter of the Year submissions.

One of the hardest jobs any committee member of the Society must do is selecting only one chapter for this award. The three-man committee is randomly selected from the National Board of Director, excluding the President.

Each chapter that submits documentation for this award is to be congratulated and I, thankfully, as President, will not have to sit on the next committee!

Well done.

Michael O'Neil

AL CIURCZAK DFCS CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

*San Antonio Alamo Chapter
The Distinguished Flying Cross Society*

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society Board of Directors is proud and honored to present this award to the Alamo Chapter in recognition of the outstanding efforts they have made in upholding the standards of the DFCS.

October 22, 2005

Robert L. Frantz
President

Robert L. Frantz

Alexander D. Ciurczak

Alexander D. Ciurczak
Founder

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society's Annual Meeting

If you missed it and had no good reason - you missed the best DFCS Annual Membership Meeting ever held. It began on time, 1 PM at the San Diego Aerospace Museum, 2001 Pan American Plaza, San Diego. A full house affair, every seat filled. Even the opening sequence slide projection was professional, and the same system continued throughout the program. Bob Frantz can take the credit for that. Only one slight problem was encountered, a microphone malfunction, but with a full house of eager listeners, there was no problem hearing the speaker from the podium.

The guest speaker was the biggest hit -- a F-105 Jock with four DFC's and 125 combat missions over North Vietnam. We could have listened to him all day long, and I'm thankful he picked a mission covering actions encountered during the "Rolling Thunder" portion of the North Vietnam bombardment actions. Col. Krone's delivery got you back to the feel of flying to the target, spotting the target, delivering the strike and heading back to home base. The only thing different was the 450 knot course. Can you imagine flying to the target in tight formation with four Thuds and not spotting the target until you were 9 miles away from it. Flying low in heavy cloud coverage to keep the surprise factor on your side, pulling up at the last minute, spotting the target for the first time, forming up in single file, delivering the ordinance, pulling up for Tonkin Bay and heading home. Mission Accomplished.

The camera ship provided the success story. The bad news came during debriefing. Two Thuds lost from other flight, one pilot KIA another pilot held POW for six years.

Then came the niceties - presentation to the selected Chapter of the Year, certificates to Jack Mates and Al Ciurczak, and finally another business touch by Ciurczak to start the ball rolling for a large Honor Roll Commendatory Plaque that will contain the names of all former and present Board members of the Society and all of its Chapters.

Written by Al Ciurczak



Bob Krone (left) receiving a DFC aviator bear as a token of our appreciation for a spellbinding talk. Bob holds many formal educational degrees and has lived in over 13 countries & cultures with his lovely wife, Sue. The Society is proud to count Bob as "one of us" and thank him again for sharing his emotionally charged journey over North Vietnam.



Jack Mates (left) presenting Al Ciurczak with an Appreciation Certificate from the Society. A few minutes after this presentation Jack Mates was presented with a similar citation along with a carved wood plaque of appreciation. Two emeritus icons of the Society signal a new era of "passing the torch."



Summary of Action: Recommendation for the DFC

Captain Armando Espinoza is enthusiastically recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for actions as the Helicopter Aircraft Commander of the second aircraft in a section of two CH-46E Sea Knight Helicopters during combat operations in OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM in support of Regimental Combat Team 5 during heavy fighting in Baghdad, Iraq on 10 April 2003. Service member is receiving Imminent Danger Pay.

On 10 April 2003 at 0630L, Captain Espinoza's section launched on its first Casualty Evacuation tasking of the day. The night prior, 1st battalion 5th Marines had conducted a raid south into the city along Highway 2 to one of Saddam's palaces on the banks of the Tigris River. 1/5 was in control of the palace, but had taken casualties. Upon launching, the lead aircraft experienced radio and navigation equipment problems and the tactical lead was passed to Captain Espinoza. Capt Espinoza led the section to the south at 120 knots and 50 feet above the ground (AGL), paralleling a main road through the city to the east of the palace. A division of Cobras was departing 1/5's area of operation in the city. They advised the 1/5 Forward Air Controller (FAC), call sign "Spaz", to provide routing to the Casualty Evacuation section because the Cobras had taken fire earlier that morning from the location the section was about to fly through. By that time, the flight was over the Tigris River and close to the Forward Air Controller's position, which had started to receive fire.

On ingress, the section received concentrated small arms and Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) fires, which was reported by the FAC, observers in both aircraft, and the Cobras. As the section maneuvered to avoid the effects of the small arms and RPG fires, Captain Espinoza identified the landing zone. The landing zone was in the backyard of a palace marked by purple smoke, next to a swimming pool. The entire east wing of the palace was destroyed from an air strike. The zone was tight, surrounded by 50-foot palm trees, but large enough for one aircraft to land. Captain Espinoza was able to establish his aircraft on short final and land in the zone while Major Presto waved off and held south of the Landing Zone over the river at 75 feet as the Cobras called low fuel and returned to base.

As soon as Captain Espinoza's aircraft landed, the FAC reported that they were taking fire from snipers on a rooftop somewhere in his vicinity and that RPGs were exploding in the zone. Captain Espinoza maintained his position in the LZ as HM3 Burnette exited the aircraft to assess oncoming casualties and to help carry the casualties into the aircraft. The corpsman immediately stabilized the four urgent casualties. The LZ continued to take fire from the East and North at street level while the Marines were on the deck in the prone position returning fire. Upon confirming that all casualties were loaded and ready to lift, Captain Espinoza lifted from the zone and proceeded north out of the city at 50 feet AGL and 120 knots. While flying to the medical station at Sterling Court, the section spotted a S-60 Anti-aircraft Artillery gun and a T-72 Tank while observing small arms fire originating from the same location. Captain Espinoza immediately ordered his gunners to return fire as he maneuvered his aircraft to avoid the effects of incoming fires. The section continued to Sterling Court where they dropped off the casualties and then proceeded to Ebbets Field for fuel and follow on tasking.

At Ebbets field, the only division of Cobras on station in the AOR at the time departed to Three Rivers Airfield due to crew day. When the section returned to RCT-5, they were immediately assigned another CASEVAC mission at the palace. Major Presto, in the lead aircraft, led the section from RCT-5 to the west and followed the Tigris River south to the palace at 130 knots and 50 feet AGL. Captain Espinoza's co-pilot and Aerial gunner/observer reported the section was taking fire from 6-8 Fedayeen soldiers along the east side of the Tigris River, about 1 mile north of the zone. Captain Espinoza continued to maneuver his aircraft to avoid incoming tracer rounds and RPGs which continued to fire at the aircraft the entire time it was en-route to the landing zone. As the lead aircraft landed in the palace LZ to pick up the casualties, Captain Espinoza landed 50 meters away on the riverbank to provide cover fire. The landing zone continued to receive small arms fire while the Marines in zone remained in covered positions as they returned fire.

As the section started to depart the zone the FAC advised the section that more casualties had arrived in zone for pick up. Captain Espinoza was immediately tasked with breaking off from the section and proceeded back into the landing zone to pick up the remaining casualties. Captain Espinoza held in the zone until all casualties were on board and then egressed north along the Tigris River. After coming under fire and spotting numerous targets, Captain Espinoza instructed his crew to hold their fire due to the close proximity of Marine Corps M1A1 Abram Tanks and infantry personnel engaging the enemy in the surrounding area. The flight continued to Sterling Court where the section joined on the deck and

dropped off their casualties.

During the flight back to RCT-5 after leaving Sterling Court, the section was tasked for a third time to return to the palace for another CASEVAC. Captain Espinoza egressed along the route had flying at 50 feet AGL, 1 mile east of and parallel to the Tigris River. Captain Espinoza again piloted his aircraft for landing on the riverbank to provide covering fire for the lead aircraft in the zone. The landing zone continued to receive small arms and RPG fire. The section observed three RPG rounds impact the zone while they were on deck. Two RPG rounds split the section and the third impacted forward of the lead aircraft spraying the FAC party with shrapnel and wounding the FAC in the leg. The lead aircraft loaded 3 casualties and received a message from the FAC for RCT-5 requesting immediate re-supply of ammunition. The section continued to receive small arms fire as it egressed Baghdad directly to the north and continued to Sterling Court for casualty drop off.

At approximately 1900hrs, Captain Espinoza's section was tasked with a CASEVAC and re-supply mission. They received a request from 1/5 ordnance to bring MK-19, .50 caliber machinegun parts, ammo and water to the Palace. All the parts and ammunition were loaded into Captain Espinoza's aircraft. Once loaded with the gear, Captain Espinoza assumed the tactical lead and departed on NVG's in severely degraded weather conditions, to drop off the much needed ammunition, water, and equipment. Captain Espinoza deftly maneuvered his aircraft to landing in the tight landing zone as his section lead positioned himself on the river bank to provide cover fire. As Marines transferred equipment and loaded casualties, tracer rounds were observed impacting in and around the vicinity of the landing zone. After receiving several casualties from the FAC, Capt Espinoza launched from the LZ and proceeded as dash 2 to the next casualty pickup point.



Captain Armando Espinoza

The next CASEVC LZ was located 3 miles to the northeast from the palace. The CASEVAC request was from 2/5, which had five injured Marines who sustained wounds from a suicide bomber. Sporadic gunfire was observed on the inbound route to the LZ. The LZ was under a layer of smoke and backlit from fire and civilian vehicles which resulted in degraded Night Vision Device performance. As the lead aircraft approached the LZ, Captain Espinoza maneuvered his aircraft to take up an over watch position to the north at 100 feet AGL. Once all the casualties were on board, the section departed Baghdad directly to Sterling Court and maneuvered to avoid an observed AAA cone of fire originating from Saddam City.

While on deck at Sterling Court, Major Presto's aircraft's encrypted radio suite was performing intermittently, so he tasked Captain Espinoza to monitor and maintain communications with the Direct Air Support Center. The Section departed Sterling Court for RCT-5. En-route to RCT-5, the DASC tasked the section with another CASEVAC back to the Palace LZ at approximately 2200 and advised them that they had fixed-winged escorts available. Captain Espinoza made contact with the section of F/A-18's on station and coordinated clearance of the route and the LZ. The F/A-18's cleared the ingress route and the LZ and almost immediately provided a winter call which enabled Captain Espinoza to lead the section into the Palace LZ. Soon after Captain Espinoza's section departed, the F/A-18's made a bingo call and the section proceeded back to Baghdad for the fifth time without escorts.

Captain Espinoza led the section directly to the Palace LZ on NVG's at 120 knots and 50 feet over the rooftops as they continued to observe small arms and RPG fire throughout the city. When Captain Espinoza's aircraft landed in the LZ, he was advised that the causality victims were Iraqi civilians with the injuries ranging from a late twenty year old pregnant woman with shrapnel wounds to the face and chest to a two-year-old girl with critical shrapnel wounds throughout her body. Without hesitation, HM3 Burnette loaded the seven casualties onto the aircraft. Once ready, Captain Espinoza lifted from the zone, joined on his lead aircraft and egressed to Sterling Court for casualty drop off and Ebbet's Field for fuel. En-route, Captain Espinoza again safely maneuvered his aircraft to avoid an observed cone of AAA fire originating from Saddam City. Captain Espinoza shutdown his aircraft at 2330 and he and his crew rested until 0700, when they were ready again for tasking.

Until mission complete at 2330 on 10 April, Captain Espinoza had flown over eleven combat hours of which the four and a half were under low light level conditions. The aircraft's Aviation Survivability Equipment gave indications of missiles firing at the aircraft as well as receiving radar strobes from the aircraft being acquired. At the end of the day,



Captain Espinoza had expended almost all of his aircraft's chaff and flares, 250 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, and evacuated thirty-five casualties. Captain Espinoza's bravery and superior airmanship and tactical leadership while under constant hostile fires and challenging atmospheric conditions were instrumental in saving the lives of his fellow Marines in the Fifth Regimental Combat Team and the lives of Iraqi civilians.

He is most deserving of this prestigious award.

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

Summary of CASEVAC's

TOTAL CASUALTIES EVACUATED: 35

TOTAL MARINES EVACUATED: 28

TOTAL MARINE KIA EVACUATED: 1

TOTAL IRAQI CIVILIANS EVACUATED: 7



CASEVAC CREW Standing from left to right:: HM2 Mike Burnette, Sgt Joe Morales, Capt Armando Espinoza, Capt Chris Graham, Kneeling: Sgt Chris Oakenson



Captain & Mrs. Armando Espinoza



Standing from Left to Right: Capt Chris Graham, Capt Dave Roen, Sgt Peter DiMartino, Marine, Maj Don Presto, Sgt Joe Morales, HM2 Mike Burnette, Chief Barns Kneeling from Left to Right: Capt Armando Espinoza, Unknown Marine from 1/5, Sgt Chris Oakenson



Fellow Marines fall into formation to honor Capt. Espinoza on February 25, 2005. The Distinguished Flying Cross Society was invited and attended the ceremonies.

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society Foundation

THE
DISTINGUISHED
FLYING CROSS
SOCIETY



The purpose of this foundation is to help sustain the administrative costs of this fast-growing organization through the employment of a few key personnel including an executive director, an accountant, and a secretary.

Your contribution qualifies for tax-deductibility to the fullest extent of the law. The Society can receive donations, as designated by you, towards The Ward Macauley Scholarship Fund or The Distinguished Flying Cross Society Foundation or both. We have inserted a donation envelope with this newsletter. Please support your Society.

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society will establish an endowment, in either case, ensuring the perpetuity of the funds. The interest only will be used to provide scholarships or utilized in the promulgation of U.S. American aviation history.

For more information on the above, contact The Distinguished Flying Cross Society National Headquarters at 1-866-DFC-MEDAL (332-6332), and the appropriate individual will get back to you.

Thank you for your support,

The Directors and Officers of the Society



The Ward Macauley Scholarship Fund



As a tribute to the heroism, patriotism, community service and scholastic achievement portrayed during the lifetime of Colonel Ward Macauley, The Distinguished Flying Cross Society has officially established an academic scholarship in his name. This program is available to undergraduate students enrolled in college and should continue annually based on anticipated future donations to this scholarship fund from both the membership and corporate sponsors.

Having survived 53 bombing missions during World War II, Col. Macauley went on to complete a 28-year career in the Air Force Reserves. At 40, he enrolled in San Diego State University, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting and finance, and he went on to become a college professor. Eventually, Col. Macauley was appointed Dean of Business at City College and later mesa College. Additionally, he was an active officer and important contributor for the DFC Society. At age 77, he passed away but left behind a rich history of high standards and achievements that will be memorialized through this scholarship program.



Ward Macauley

We would like to thank the volunteers from the various DFCS chapters who participated in the development of this scholarship program. We hope that those students who receive future awards will continually strive for the same high levels of achievement as Col. Macauley demonstrated throughout his lifetime.





The B-17 Ball Turret position

Ask any man who went to war in a Fortress which was the worst crew position on the aircraft, and the chances are he will immediately reply, "The ball turret". Indeed, this tight little glazed sphere buttoned to the underside of the fuselage needed a stout-hearted occupant, immune from claustrophobia and bolstered against the thought of being without a parachute, if the aircraft was suddenly stricken. So cramped was the gunner's position that an early British assessment of the turret considered it quite untenable for long flights - "there were many American airmen who would have agreed" so noted Eighth Air Force historian, Roger Freeman, in his book, *B-17 Fortress at War*. But Steve Perri is not just any man. Almost from the moment he was introduced to the Sperry Ball Turret, he decided that was where he wanted to fly. "I loved it - I felt like I was flying my own airplane. It was unbelievable! I could move it straight down and 360 degrees around." Of course, small (5'6" 138 pound) frame was certainly a factor. (Translation: You had better like it, because you're one of the few gunners who can fit inside one.)

Perri was born on January 18, 1922 in Asbury Park, NJ and moved to neighboring Long Branch when eleven months old. He attended elementary and high there and played on the school golf and tennis teams. After high school he attended the Casey Jones School of Aeronautics in Newark, NJ from which he was inducted into the Army. He started mechanics school just a week before Pearl. There was a need for flight engineers when he completed the course, so he was sent to Air Mechanics School in Shepherd Field, in Wichita Falls and after graduating from there went on to Gunnery School in Harlingen, Texas. After completing the gunnery course, which qualified him as a flight engineer, and where he became acquainted with the ball turret, he was sent to a replacement center at the Salt Lake City, UT air base and from there sent to Walla Walla, WA for crew training with the 323rd Bomb Squadron, 91st Bomb Group.

The 91st Bomb Group (H) was activated April 15, 1942 at MacDill Field, Tampa, FL. The 323rd Bomb Squadron was activated on May 16, 1942 at MacDill Field, Tampa, FL. and in late June the Squadron transferred to Walla Walla, Washington where combat crews were formed. At Walla Walla the crews were formed and Steve met his Pilot, 2/Lt. George Birdsong, Jr. and the rest of the crew of what would become the crew of the Delta Rebel.

He recalled there were only three aircraft available for each of the four squadrons. "Those airplanes were in the air 24 hours a day," he said. On August 24th, the squadron divided into air and ground echelons. The latter (17 officers, 257 enlisted men left immediately by train for the East Coast where they boarded a ship for England. The air echelon (38 officers and 47 enlisted) proceeded to Boise, Idaho and turned in the training airplanes, then proceeded by rail to the B-17 Modification Center at Dow Field, Bangor, Maine where they drew brand-new B-17F models to take overseas.

In order to minimize disruption to the aircraft production lines it was common to move completed ships to a modification center for installations of late design changes and field changes.) One field change was the installation of stowage racks for six .30 caliber carbines, ostensibly for the crew's use if brought down in enemy territory. While at Bangor, the crew had the name Delta Rebel painted on their ship. Unfortunately, the original Delta Rebel never left the United States. They had taken it out on a long-range cruise control mission from Dow Field over the water to Tampa, Florida and back. On the return flight they were diverted to Mitchell Field, Long Island because of weather. Transient maintenance, in the process of taxiing the Delta Rebel for dispersal, collided with two other planes, inflicting damage to all three. They had been assured the spot we had been parked on after we landed was okay. Then, after they had secured the plane and departed, the NCO-in-charge decided to move it to another dispersal point. Being unqualified to taxi a B-17F, he failed to turn on the main hydraulic switch which actuated the brake pressure and therefore had no brakes when he tried to taxi the aircraft, thus the bang up B-17.



The air echelon ferried their aircraft to England via Gander, Newfoundland and Prestwick, Scotland. The runway at Gander was so wide that 3 B-17s took off three in formation. It also had a significant hump in the middle. "Once you got over that, you picked up speed like crazy," recalls Perri. Shortly after-off they encountered icing and Birdsong climbed above it. An echelon of the 303rd Bomb Group followed their aircraft although, most of the B-17s elected to fly beneath the weather. When they arrived at Prestwick, the 303rd BG Commander, a full Colonel, was noticeable irritated when he realized that he had followed a "lowly Second Lieutenant" into severe icing conditions while the majority of his group had taken a more prudent altitude.

The ground echelon arrived in Great Britain on September 11, 1942 and spent a month at Kimbolton Air Base before moving to their permanent station to Bassingbourn, where they flew three practice missions before the group's first combat mission on Nov. 7th, the submarine pens at Brest, France. Although the 323rd was "stood down" that day, Perri, and a Navigator 1/Lt. John Roten, were replacement crewmen in the 322nd Bomb Squadron. They earned the distinction of beating their squadron-mates into battle. Perri completed 25 missions as a Ball Turret Gunner and 23 of those were made in the Delta Rebel #2, piloted by Lt. George Birdsong. During his tour, he was officially credited with four enemy aircraft destroyed including two Me-109's, an Me-110 and a FW-190. "I actually claimed seven but four of them were confirmed." For his contributions he received the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters and a Distinguished Flying Cross. All airmen received the Air Medal upon completion of five combat missions. He was awarded the DFC for the third kill and clusters to the Air Medal for the others. The passage of time has dimmed some of those aerial encounters. Unit records show that he got his first kill, an FW-190 on December 30, 1942 on a mission to bomb the submarine pens at Lorient, France. His third and fourth kills were Me-109s on April 18th-Bremen, Germany and May 19th - Keil, Germany respectively, remembers with vivid clarity however, the mission to Hamm, Germany on March 4, 1943. Five times previously the fledgling Eighth Air Force had set out to make a reasonably deep penetration into Northwest Germany, only to be frustrated by the weather. This day they took off into a gray dawn, although the weather over the target was forecast to be fair. As the formation crossed the occupied coast, however, there seemed to be little improvement and three groups turned back. Perri's own crew had already experienced an omen of what lay ahead when they lost an engine during take-off. The crew of the Delta Rebel #2 jumped into a spare ship appropriately named Stormy Weather, a brand new plane that was never on a mission, and rejoined their group. The sixteen B-17s of the 91st stayed above the "soup" and lost contact with the other groups. As they approached the target, the weather cleared and it became apparent that they were alone. Major Paul Fishburne, a 22-year-old Squadron Commander of the 322nd, was leading the group and elected to press on and subsequently made an excellent bomb run.

Approaching Hamm at 22,000 feet, Pilot Birdsong asked Perri whether he could see another B-17 Group. What Perri saw was 60 enemy day-fighters that had initially been confused by the diverging bomber tracks but were now determined to exact a price. They pressed their attacks from all directions. Perri's bullets sawed canopy off the top of an Me-110 forcing the pilot and gunner to bail out. It was his second confirmed kill. "He was coming up from hitting us in the rear and he started to go back down. He was really close to us, must have been 80 to 100 yards. I was tracking him and firing, trying to stay in front of him - leading and leading and leading him - until the turret stopped at dead zero, so I just held my finger on the trigger and he went through the fire and I raked the back of him. I spun around and saw they were shot up. They were close enough that I could see the pilot and gunner fighting to get out - there were two of them in a 110. It was the first time I actually saw a German. Then I saw them bail out." "Then we really caught it," he said. "A Focke-Wulf came after us - they have 20millimeter cannons synchronized to fire through their props and we took a 20mm shell right through the windshield hitting our co-pilot and our pilot had bits of glass in his right eye. Another shell knocked out our number three engine." When the bombardier hit the salvo switch, nothing happened. Battle



damage had sheared the wires to the bombay, hence the bombs had not released.

With two engines out, Birdsong dropped to the deck to avoid enemy fighters. The top turret gunner, T/Sgt. Eugene Remmell, crawled into the bombay and replaced the arming pins and had to land the plane with only two engines, four wounded men and a load of bombs on board and no brakes. As our pilot set the wheels down on the runway, he hit the brakes and the pedals went right to the floor. The main brakes were out and the end of the runway was coming up fast.

We went through the perimeter fencing, across the main road, over a ditch and between two telephone poles, through a farm full of Brussel sprouts, over a plow which ripped off the ball turret and then we crashed into a haystack and stopped.

Perri's experiences refute the British claim that the ball turret was "quite untenable for long missions" He estimated that his longest missions involved 6 1/2 to 7 hours actually inside the turret. However, he had completed his tour before the really deep penetrations into Germany. For Perri the mission preparations began the day before take-off. Each gunner was assigned his own .50 caliber machine guns that were stored in the base armament show between missions. He cleaned and oiled them the day after each mission and covered the breech mechanism with an athletic sock. When alerted for a mission, he stopped by the armament shop and thoroughly removed the oil lest it freeze at altitude and cause the gun to jam. After briefing, the gunners drew their guns and were transported to their aircraft. From outside the turret, Perri removed a small cover on each side of the entrance door and inserted the guns into their rigid mounts. After pre-flighting the turret, he helped the pilot and flight engineer pre-flight the aircraft. The turret was not manned for take-offs and landings. Perri entered and exited while the aircraft was over the English Channel. With a hand crank he cranked the turret straight down, which moved the entry door inside the. The waist gunner, Sgt. Harry Kulchesky, helped him get into and out of the turret. Inside the ball turret there was neither room for a parachute nor for the heavy fleeced-lined flying suit that waist gunners wore. Perri wore flight coveralls, a light-weight flight jacket and English flying boots, depending primarily upon the electrically-heated undergarment to keep him warm in temperatures as low as - 30degrees F. One hazard was when he received burns in the groin, resulting from crimped wires in the electric suit. Once inside, he connected his throat mike, earphones and oxygen hose and fastened his safety belt. He was curled up with his back resting against the door, his legs bent and his feet resting on each side of the 13-inch diameter armored glass panel that was his main window on the world. The two 50s were just inches away from his head with the ammo boxes above them. His face was about 30 inches from the armored glass panel and suspended in between was the optical display glass for the computing gun sight. With his left foot he could adjust the lighted reticules projected onto this glass. When they framed a target, the range was correct. Two post handles projected rearward above the sight and flexing then moved the turret in azimuth and elevation. The firing buttons for the guns were in the ends of these handles; hence, to move the turret and fire the guns, Perri's arms were bent with his hands above his head. As cramped as it sounds, it was actually quite comfortable "If I was firing straight out, it was like an easy chair". Perri also refuted the common belief that the ball was the most dangerous crew position. Although he wore his parachute harness, the chest pack itself was stowed in the fuselage by the radio room bulkhead. He was able to get out in 30 seconds. As far as danger, the pilots and the crewmen in the nose had it worse the Luftwaffe's preferred to attack from ahead (12 o'clock high).

The B-17F had less defensive machine guns forward and the fighters had a better chance of hitting the pilots and/or the bombardier thus breaking up the attack. "REEL" Air Gunner . One famous person need not have exposed himself to the hazards of aerial combat and did so anyway, was movie actor, Clark Gable. In January 1942, his wife, actress Carol, was killed in an airline crash. Gable grieved so much that he couldn't resume acting, and joined the Air Force. There are conflicting accounts,, about his military service. Whether it was his

idea to enlist or Arnold's is unclear, but the 41-year-old actor, did not go in with the rank of captain, as an MGM press agent suggested. Private Gable's first assignment was to Officers' Candidate School, graduating in 1943 as a second. It was no coincidence that an MGM cameraman, Andrew McIntyre, took training with him. On completion, he reported to General Arnold for a assignment- to make movies of AAF activities for public relations purposes, beginning with one about aerial gunners. Gable and McIntyre dutifully entered gunnery training at Tyndall Field, Florida, where the former made first. In April 1943 Gable, now a Captain just six months out of OCS, and McIntyre went Overseas with the 351s BG.

This Photo was taken In June of 1943, while Clark Gable was visiting the 91st Bomb Group at Bassingbourn, England . While in England, he is credited with having flown 5 Combat Missions with the 351st Bomb Group. By the fall of 1943 Gable's crew had exposed 50,000 feet of film and the team returned home. At least five war films used the combat footage shot by the Gable team, some of which was in the famous Wyler film The Memphis Belle B-17.

Perri remembers him as "a great friend of the enlisted men as well as a great all-around guy.

Steve Perri , Member of the DFC Society



NCR Chapter members attended the Airshow at the Patuxent River Naval Air Test Center and Naval Test Pilot School on 3-4 September, as guests of the NATC Commanding Officer, Capt Z. A. Henry.

Pic 1 - At the Commanding Officer's tent, L to R: NCR members Jim Patterson (F-106 and Vietnam FAC) and Mark Dunker (AT-28 Air Commando); Captain Henry, Pax River Commanding Officer; the Baltimore Orioles "Bird;" NCR member Glenn Cooper (B-17 8th AF); and NCR Chapter Pres Bill Withuhn (AC-119G Spcl Ops).



NATIONAL OFFICER ELECTION RESULTS

The National officers shall be elected annually by the DFCS Board of Directors. They shall serve for a term of one year until a successor is duly elected and installed. The Board of Directors met on December 17, 2005 and by unanimous vote elected the following officers for year 2006:

Chairman of the Board:	Robert Frantz, Ashburn, VA
President & CEO:	Michael O'Neil, San Diego, CA
Vice President:	Reed Phillips, San Diego, CA
Treasurer:	Bill Bradfield, Seattle, WA
Secretary/Gen. Counsel:	Dennis Schoville, Hemet, CA
V. P. for Membership:	Rick Ivars, Little Rock, AR
V. P. for Chapter Development:	Eddie Mims, San Antonio, TX



B-24 replica will be garden centerpiece

By Shannon Snow
UNION-TRIBUNE
August 23, 2005

Construction of the Veterans Memorial Garden in Balboa Park is almost complete. Walkways are laid, an amphitheater built, and the base of a reflecting pool cemented and dried.

The garden, set for a Veterans Day dedication, will have as its centerpiece a bronze reproduction of the B-24 Liberator, a plane that touched the lives of tens of thousands of San Diego residents.



More than 30,000 people in San Diego were involved in the production of the B-24 Liberator, America's first mass-produced airplane. Many more local residents maintained and flew the craft during World War II. "This is a chance to keep history alive," said George Welch, president of the B-24 Memorial San Diego Committee.

Welch, a military buff who edits Bomber Legends magazine, came up with the idea to memorialize the B-24 five years ago at an event honoring the 60th anniversary of the plane.

"Big-mouthed me," joked Welch, a former Navy brat who served in the Air Force for four years. "I said we should have a memorial in San Diego and everyone thought it was a great idea."

Welch ended up spearheading the B-24 Memorial Committee. The group located a sculpture of the B-24 at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. The San Diego memorial will be a recast of that original, a one-sixth scale model of the plane, with a wingspan of 18 feet.

After a long search, the B-24 Memorial Committee found a home for the sculpture in the new Veterans Memorial Garden. The B-24 model will stand in the center of the garden, which is being built on the south end of Balboa Park next to the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center.

Money is an issue. While the \$1.4 million garden is funded by a state parks bond, the B-24 Memorial is not. The B-24 Memorial Committee needed to raise \$175,000 to pay for the project, including a \$40,000 fund for long-term upkeep required by the city.

The group has received \$130,000 in donations, mostly in small contributions from veterans. Upon hearing about the project, "people would reach into their wallet and pull out a \$10 or a \$20," Welch said.

The committee is seeking corporate backers and soliciting donations on its Web site, www.b24memorial.org. If the group does not collect the remaining \$45,000 in the next 60 days, the memorial will have to be dedicated Nov. 11 without a pair of 3-foot by 5-foot bronze plaques honoring the major contributors. The group also owes the sculptor about \$40,000.

Of the 19,257 Liberators built since 1938, almost half were constructed in San Diego. The most advanced bomber of its day, the B-24 was adapted to fill more roles than any other aircraft during World War II.

A B-24 was the first U.S. aircraft lost in the war, destroyed during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Liberators were used in the first strategic bombing mission over occupied Europe. They flew combat operations over Japan until it surrendered.

Richard Baynes piloted B-24s at the age of 20 in 1944 as a lieutenant in the 466th Bomb Group, 2nd Division, 8th Air Force. Now 81, Baynes is involved in the memorial planning.

"We like to think that by having a memorial, people will remember the sacrifices of World War II," Baynes said. "We think it's part of the legacy we are leaving for the future."

I am writing on behalf of two officers who were killed in action on April 11, 2004 in Iraq. Their names were CW3 Wesley C. Fortenberry and CW2 Lawrence "Shane" Colton, both AH-64D pilots. Their aircraft was shot down by a suspected surface to air missile while providing direct fire from their aircraft to suppress and destroy an enemy ambush which had pinned down a U.S. Army convoy. Both officers were awarded the DFC for their heroic actions. On Dec 9, 2005, we are dedicating a building on Fort Rucker to these Soldiers, and will be placing a shadow box with their DFC's and actions inside the trophy case of the building. As a son of a 5 time DFC recipient, I found your website while searching for memorabilia for these officers, and thought you would be interested in this dedication ceremony. Maj. Jason Blevins, Ft. Rucker,

**NARRATIVE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
FOR CW2 LAWRENCE S. COLTON**

I recommend that CW2 Lawrence "Shane" Colton receive the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions in direct combat with an enemy of the United States on 11 April 2004. On that day, CW2 Colton performed acts of valor while under enemy fire. His courage, devotion to duty and selfless actions deserve distinct recognition.

On 11 April 2004 CW2 Colton and CW3 Fortenberry were tasked to provide convoy coverage and route reconnaissance of Main Supply Route Tampa in their AH-64D Longbow Apache. On their initial turn, the crews completed two hours of coverage and returned to LZ Ruins, in the vicinity of Babylon, to refuel. As the crew completed the refuel of the aircraft they were called by ground elements that were being engaged by the enemy.

Without hesitation, CW3 Fortenberry and CW2 Colton, with their wingman, responded to the call on Sheriff Frequency, made hasty coordination and were at the target area within minutes. As the Gunner, CW2 Colton immediately assessed the situation and began engaging hostile targets, covering the ground commander with the firepower necessary to break contact with the enemy.

While breaking contact, the ground element began receiving heavy small-arms fire from a building on their flank. Immediately, CW2 Colton engaged the building with 50 rounds of 30 MM, destroying it and killing the enemy within. Despite receiving direct fire from enemy elements on the ground, CW2 Colton continued to engage enemy targets in order to cover the ground forces in contact. During the course of the engagements, CW2 Colton's Longbow received a direct hit by a Surface to Air Missile that was later determined to be part of an Air Defense Artillery Ambush. The missile impacted aft of the engines and the aircraft began to sink. The crew continued to maneuver the aircraft in an attempt to maintain control. Despite their best efforts, the damage was too severe. The aircraft turned sharply to the right, the tail boom jackknifed and the helicopter began to corkscrew. As the aircraft descended, the Fire Control Radar separated and several pieces of the aircraft were observed flying from the fuselage. When the aircraft impacted the ground, it immediately burst into flame, trapping the crew inside.

CW2 Colton selflessly provided cover for the ground element in direct contact with the enemy. His actions directly enabled the ground element to break contact with the enemy while taking no casualties. It is therefore recommended that CW2 Lawrence S. Colton be posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for exceptional courage and valor.

CW2 Colton is a posthumous member of the DFC Society.



**NARRATIVE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
TO CW3 WESLEY C. FORTENBERRY**

I recommend that CW3 Wesley "Chuck" Fortenberry receive the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions in direct combat with an enemy of the United States on 11 April 2004. On that day, CW3 Fortenberry performed acts of valor while under enemy fire. His courage, devotion to duty and selfless actions deserve distinct recognition.

On 11 April 2004 CW3 Chuck Fortenberry and CW2 Shane Colton were tasked to provide convoy coverage and route reconnaissance of Main Supply Route Tampa in their AH-64D Longbow Apache. On their initial turn, the crews completed two hours of coverage and returned to LZ Ruins, in the vicinity of Babylon, to refuel. As CW3 Fortenberry completed the refuel of the aircraft they were called by ground elements that were being engaged by the enemy.

Without hesitation, CW3 Fortenberry and CW2 Colton, with their wingman, responded to the call on Sheriff Frequency, made hasty coordination and were at the target area within minutes. Upon arrival, the CW3 Fortenberry assessed the situation and began engaging hostile targets, covering the ground commander with the firepower necessary to break contact with the enemy. While breaking contact, the ground element began receiving heavy small-arms fire from a building on their flank. Immediately, CW3 Fortenberry maneuvered his Apache Longbow to cover the ground force's movement, engaging the building with 50 rounds of 30 MM, destroying it and killing the enemy within. Despite receiving direct fire from enemy elements on the ground, CW3 Fortenberry continued to maneuver in order to cover the ground forces in contact. During the course of the engagements,

CW3 Fortenberry's Longbow received a direct hit by a Surface to Air Missile that was later determined to be part of an Air Defense Artillery Ambush. The missile impacted aft of the engines and the aircraft began to sink. CW3 Fortenberry continued to maneuver the aircraft in an attempt to maintain control. Despite his best efforts, the damage was too severe. The aircraft turned sharply to the right, the tail boom jackknifed and the helicopter began to corkscrew. As the aircraft descended, the Fire Control Radar separated and several pieces of the aircraft were observed flying from the fuselage. When the aircraft impacted the ground, it immediately burst into flame, trapping the crew inside.

CW3 Fortenberry selflessly provided cover for a ground element in direct contact with the enemy. His actions directly enabled the ground element to break contact with the enemy while minimizing their casualties. It is therefore recommended that CW3 Wesley C. Fortenberry be posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for exceptional courage and valor.

CW3 Fortenberry is a posthumous member of the DFC Society



DFCS Annual Meeting 2006





DFCS News Magazine

We Need Your Stories...

We are looking for your personal "war stories" to publish in the DFCS News Magazine. This is your magazine about you, a Distinguished Flying Cross recipient. If you would like to see your story in print, mail it to DFCS, Attn. Editor, P.O. Box, San Diego, CA 92154.

If you received the DFC for a specific event, tell us what was happening to you on the day you received your Distinguished Flying Cross. If you received the DFC for accomplishing several missions, send us a story of your most vivid memory. We want stories about specific events, about your thoughts at different times, about what you personally did to survive.

Let's not let the history of this prestigious award die with us. We are an intricate part of this country's history, and we need to keep our history alive and real. Our friends and families need a place to go to learn what war is really like and to know that freedom is NOT free.

We are slowly but surely adding citations to the DFCS website, and they are available for viewing. The citations are an excellent tool to acknowledge the details of the award, but personal stories make it "real" to those who read this magazine.

It all Started in Cambodia 1970

My story starts in the year 1970. I was flying escort for a 3-ship insertion into a small LZ in Cambodia. My Cobra circled at 1500 ft above the dense jungle and covered the three UH-1's flying in trail formation. The first insertion went off without a hitch, and the men were securing the perimeter when the second flight-of-three were on short final. I knew most of the pilots because we had flown together on many insertions, hot and cold; but this was Cambodia, and we had been in the area for less than a week. As the second flight was dropping their troops off, I saw the first ship explode. Before it hit the ground, the second ship got hit by another B-40 rocket in the cockpit. We dove into the hot LZ, and I spotted two bad guys running from the perimeter into the tree line. We saw just enough of them to fire two pairs of 10lb. 2.75in rockets over the downed helicopters. We got them! Simultaneously the third ship took off and made it out of harms way. We stayed on-site till our fuel was low. By this time there was a full company of aircraft to the rescue, and we left the station to rendezvous with the third ship. We landed at a large firebase called LZ Brown in Cambodia, we had lunch together, talked of the day's actions and the loss of our friends. That day was forever imprinted in our memories.

Now . . . fast forward to 1982. . .civilian life . . . I was leading an organization of combat veterans in a Boston Veterans Day Parade. Over 300 RVN veterans had formed to march that day, a first for all of us. I was wearing my RVN Cavalry flight suit. I looked up and noticed an Army aviator in his flight suit with a 1st Cav patch. His name was CW2 Geoffrey Boehm; and as we exchanged war stories, we discovered something amazing. It was Geoff's company that we had flown cover for on that fateful day of May 1970 in Cambodia. CW2 Geoffrey Boehm was the pilot of the third ship in that 3-ship lift. We had last seen & talked with each other on LZ Brown in Cambodia. What a small world, indeed!

Geoff and I saw each other often during the 80's and early 90's. We both attended functions at the newly formed New England Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. In 1995 my wife, Bev, and I moved from Massachusetts to California, and our life gave way to new adventures and new friends.

Fast forward to summer 2005 . . . Bev and I attended the annual VHPA reunion in San Francisco. While waiting in the reunion registration line, we spotted some old friends. We were all visiting and laughing together when I heard a voice call out, "Hey, Cobra 10!" It was my old buddy, Geoff. He had come to the reunion with his bride. Bev and I were both very happy to see them, and all I could think of was how much fun this reunion would be.

During that weekend, Geoff got us all together and said he had something to tell us. He told us he had stayed in the Army reserves all these years and had been looking forward to his retirement at age 60 as a CW4. He was one of the youngsters among us at age 57. Then he hit us with his news, "Guess what? My unit has been called up, and I'll be going to Iraq in November 2005."

My gut clenched, and my heart froze. I was hit with so many different emotions, I couldn't react right away to his news. My friend was going back – I was jealous . . . I was envious . . . I was scared . . . my friend was going back – I couldn't believe it. I wanted to go with him so we could cover each other, but I couldn't.

So, here we are – present day . . . Geoff is in Iraq via Kuwait flying H-60 Blackhawks. He emails me often and sends pictures of the AO. I recently sent him a care package of baked goodies, pistachios, and more SD memory for his camera. He'd love to receive cards or letters. His address is:

**Geoffrey M. Boehm – CW4,
3/126 AVN BN, Company A
APO AE 09330.**

All you RVN veterans, remember what they called new guys – "FNG's", they call Geoff "T.O.G". Stands for "Token Old Guy"! Some things change, and some things never change . . . War never changes.

Michael E. O'Neil
President, DFCS



Geoff with H-60 in the "Sandbox"

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Email: bevd fcs@dfcsociety.org
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DFC Medal replacement			\$28.00	
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DFCS NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Give this to a friend who has a DFC - Membership Drive

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TEL: () _____ - _____ FAX: () _____ - _____

E-MAIL: _____

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

I am a DFC Recipient and I wish to:

- () Submit application for a One-Year Membership - \$35 (includes processing fee)
- () Submit application for a Three-Year Membership - \$75 (processing fee waived)
- () Submit application for a Lifetime Membership - schedule of fees below (processing fee waived):
- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| () Below 55 | \$400 | () Age 65 - 69 | \$200 |
| () Age 55 - 59 | \$300 | () Age 70 - 74 | \$150 |
| () Age 60 - 64 | \$250 | () Above 74 | \$100 |



SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

- ☐ If the above-named DFC Recipient wishes to purchase an Associate Membership for a spouse, child, or parent, please provide name & relationship to you below and include an **additional check for \$20.00:**

Name of Associate Member: _____ Relationship to DFC Recipient: _____

- ☐ If you wish to add a deceased DFC Recipient to the DFCS Honor Roll, complete the above form in your name and list the Recipient's name below. Upon acceptance of application, the deceased DFC Recipient's name will be added to the DFCS Honor Roll and remain there in perpetuity. You may become an Associate Member by checking the box above plus an additional fee as listed above. **The fee is \$75.00**

DFC Recipient's name: _____ Relationship to DFC Recipient: _____

I have read and understand the "Qualifications for Membership", as outlined below, and enclosed required documentation.

1. You must be either a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross or be the spouse, child, parent, or descendant of an individual who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.
2. You must submit, as proof positive, documentation of receipt of a DFC. We will accept a copy of orders or the citation awarding you the Distinguished Flying Cross or a copy of your DD-214 or Separation Papers, indicating receipt of the DFC.
3. Your signature on this application gives authorization for DFCS to publish same in the Society newsletter, web site, or any DFC Society sponsored publications.
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\$15

Scholarship Form On The Web

Scholarship is for the Spring Semester 2007.

We award four (4) \$1,000.00 scholarships to descendants of DFC recipients who are or were members of the Society.

Form is available as an online at
www.dfcsociety.org on the Home page.

The San Diego Lindbergh Chapter activities for 2005

We started out the year with 152 members, of which 132 were regular, 14 were associate and 6 honorary.

Cpt. Armando Espinoza USMC was presented with his DFC at Camp Pendleton on 2-25-5, and several members of the Chapter & National attended the presentation. Tony Adessa, Chapter Member, sponsored Cpt. Espinoza's membership in the National DFCS, and he was given a free membership into our Chapter.

The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park held a ground breaking ceremony of their B-24 Memorial Gardens on 3-9-5, and a number of our Chapter members attended.

On 3-17-5 The San Diego Lindbergh Chapter joined with the Riverside AFVW Chapter for a joint luncheon meeting and a tour of the March Air Force Base. We had an extremely interesting tour of the "Armed Forces Radio" facilities which has been broadcasting to our forces overseas for 60 plus years. It was a very enjoyable meeting, and many thanks to the Riverside Chapter for their gracious hospitality.

On 4-16-5 our Chapter was invited to attend a panel discussion and exhibit featuring distinguished members of the San Diego County Chapter of American Ex-Prisoners of War.

Our Past Presidents Committee met on 5-23-5 to start the process of electing officers for the years 2005-2007.

On 5-28-5 a large number of our members attended the very impressive "Wreath Laying Ceremony" aboard the USS Midway.

The World War II 60th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony at the Embarcadero Marina Park South was held on 5-29-5 and several of our members participated.

On 6-8-5 the Past Presidents committee met with Chapter volunteers for creating the ballot for the upcoming election.

160 Chapter Newsletters were mailed out to members and friends on 7-6-5

On 8-14-5 our Chapter had a brunch meeting at Camp Pendleton O Club. Rudy Matz was our guest of honor. About 106 attended.

A commemoration of the 60th anniversary of "VJ" day was held at North Island Naval Air Station on 8-30-5 and President Bush was the main speaker. At least 10 members of our Chapter attended.

Our Chapter was very active and participated in the annual National DFCS meeting that was held at the Aerospace Museum in Balboa Park on 10-22-5.

Again this year our Chapter participated in the Veterans Day Parade on 11-11-5. Also, on 11-11-5 many of our members participated in the dedication ceremony of the B-24 Memorial Gardens in Balboa Park.

We ended up with 167 members of which 140 were regular, 19 were associate and 6 honorary.

The above list is just a bare outline of what transpired during this very busy and also very exciting year. If anyone desires to have more information about any of the activities listed above just let us know, and we will be glad to comply.

San Diego Lindbergh Chapter Board:

Harry Kaplan, President
Chuck Sweeney, Vice President
Wayne Turner, Secretary
Fred Shein Treasurer





Royce Williams F9F on USS Midway

On December 27, 2005, the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum "Midway" Curator Collections Manager, Dave Hanson, invited Royce Williams and I to attend the arrival of Royce's F9F fighter aircraft that Royce flew in the Korean War. The Midway was able to purchase the F9F aircraft and after restoration at Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, CA, was delivered by barge to the Midway along with a restored F-8 aircraft. On hand to witness the event was Royce's wife, Camilla, and his Korean War squadron mate. The F9F was the finest Navy jet aircraft to enter combat. Royce was credited for two MIG 15 kills and two probable on 18 Nov 1952. Dick Tyhurst and Ed Baker (Jim's brother) were on hand to film the event for the DFCS. Reed Phillips, V.P.



Situation: Task Force 77 (including four Carriers) arrived off the coast of Chonjin, North Korea, in the cover of night and bad weather in November of 1952. This was farther north than usual and very close to Soviet air space. The purpose of the mission was to launch air strikes against manufacturing centers in the area of the Yalu River. Lt. Royce Williams was an F9F-5 Panther pilot with VF-781 "Pacemakers" on board the USS Oriskany. The pilots were carefully briefed regarding the proximity to Soviet air space. Williams flew a dawn strike against an industrial complex at Hoeryoung. Upon recovery to the Oriskany, Williams learned that the morning attacks had stirred up Soviet air activity in the Vladivostok area. All follow-on strikes were put on hold until the Soviet activity could be assessed. Around noon Williams suited-up for a combat air patrol flight consisting of four Panthers. Taking off in a light snow storm under a low overcast, the four Panthers climbed to 12,000 feet. Combat Information Center (CIC) radioed the jets to inform them of bogies in their area. As they broke through the cloud cover they could see contrails from seven Migs about thirty miles north, and at much higher altitude. The division lead reported a fuel pump warning light and remained with his wingman at 15,000 feet, while Williams and his wingman climbed higher. As the Migs passed directly over Williams he could see them clearly and counted a total of seven. The Migs reversed course and headed north at about 50,000 feet. When they were about thirty miles distant they split into two flights, turned in opposite directions, as to bracket the Panthers, and began descending. Williams lost contact with the bogies as they dropped below contrail altitude. A few minutes later Williams spotted four Migs closing fast from the 10 o'clock position in a loose trail formation. All four were firing. Williams maneuvered a rising hard left turn and came in right behind the last Mig in the formation. He fired a burst and the Mig began smoking, dropped its left wing and started to descend. Reporting the hit to CIC, the controller advised "do not engage." Williams reported back, "I am engaged!" The CIC reported back, "Go get em!" Williams wingman had followed the first Mig down. Minutes later Williams spotted a Mig coming in fast from the 5 o'clock position. He pulled a hard right and kicked a hard reverse, putting the Mig in his sight as it overshot. Although the Mig was pulling away fast, Williams put a burst into him which disintegrated the jet. The turning duel continued for many more minutes, and another Mig began smoking. Williams' Panther was eventually hit and he lost his hydraulic system and many of the aircraft controls. Diving for cloud cover, another Mig had settled in behind to finish off the Panther. Fortunately for Williams, his wingman had rejoined the fight despite having jammed guns. He successfully bluffed the Mig on Williams tail to disengage. Williams was able to nurse his badly damaged Panther back to the Oriskany where he had to make a landing at excessive speed.



A Spooky Pilot Tells of Low-Level Flight

Citation

Captain Robert K. Stein, Jr. distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an AC-47 Pilot near Vi Thanh, Republic of Vietnam on 23 April 1966 and 24 April 1966.

On these dates, Captain Stein flew two sorties in support of the highly successful Dan Chi 219 operation. During the encounter, Captain Stein found hostile forces trapped against a river bank and despite formidable anti-aircraft defenses and poor visibility, he remained in the extremely dangerous environment for more than seven hours helping to route the hostile forces and causing them heavy losses. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Stein reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Detailed recollections.



At 1800 hours on 23 April 1966, we took off from Binh Thuy AB in Spooky 51 and were called to a target almost immediately after take-off. We learned that an ARVN force had trapped a large group of VC along a riverbank. Illumination from flares prevented the VC from escaping across the river. When our AC-47 arrived we were given permission to fire into the riverbank area at will. We also carried flares that we used to illuminate our target area. Our standard load on the AC-47 was a crew of six – pilot, co-pilot, navigator, loadmaster and two gunners – forty flares and 23,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition for the three mini-guns. We almost always used the mini-guns one at a time so our ammunition would last longer. Each gun would deliver 6000 rounds a minute into a 36-foot circle tracking across the target area as we flew a modified pylon turn. To make a long story short, our crew flew four missions on that target over the next twelve hours and, as the sole armed aircraft in the area, received credit for over 300 KBA. Each time we used up our flares and ammo we returned to Binh Thuy to refuel, re-arm and get a cup of coffee before returning to the target. On each mission we two pilots would also trade seats and swap jobs, which accounts for the two sorties noted in the citation above.

The end of the night was also memorable but more embarrassing than exciting. It was 0600 and just about dawn when we returned from the fourth sortie. I happened to be in the left seat and making the landing. As I

rounded out I let the airspeed get a little low and the AC-47 tail dragger veered off into the tall elephant grass along side the runway. After applying full power, I was able to fly (at about six inches of altitude) back to the runway and complete the landing. I figured the crew would be tight lipped about it but as we exited the plane we heard the ground crew laughing as they approached. My relief turned to embarrassment as I turned to see the main gear covered with elephant grass....so much for graceful entrances.

Robert K. Stein, Jr.
Colonel, USAF, Retired
Member of

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society

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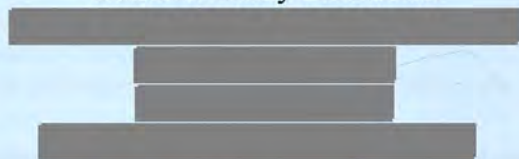
Reunion Notices

The Mosquito Assn. Korean War Reunion

6147 TCG and Associated Sq. flying T-6 and Operating
TACP Jeeps, 2006 reunion, Atlanta, 19-24 Sep.
Info, Dr. Ted Ridgeway,
Po Box 267
LEXINGTON, GA 30648-0267

73rd Bomb Wing Association 2006 Annual Reunion

April 2 - 6, Memphis, TN
Contact: Cathy Debbrecht



If any member is attending a reunion, please help the Society spread the message of membership. Use the application in this magazine or call/email the National DFCS Headquarters for membership applications, and we will provide 15-25 applications.

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Celebrate this year with the DFCS 2006 Calendar. This calendar features stunning photographs of aircraft from all eras along with pilots and aircrew. Key events in the history of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society is printed on the actual date of occurrence. This oversized (BIG) 17"x11" wall calendar is the perfect gift for any veteran who received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Order today!

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And although your support is extremely important now, it can even be more valuable in years to come.

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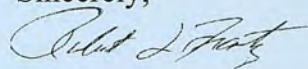
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With your support we can teach future generations about our rich history and encourage them to lead us to new heights.

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Sincerely,



Robert L. (Bob) Frantz USMC Ret.
Chairman, DFCS

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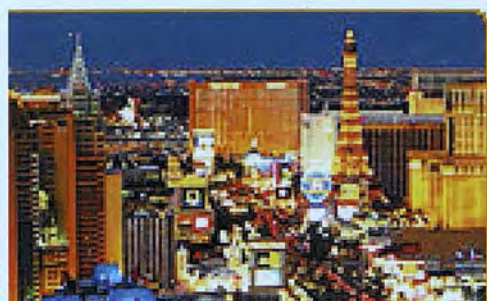
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Historical Moments

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The Distinguished Flying Cross Society's

Al Ciurczak Chapter of the Year Award



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Tom Wood, President,
Alamo Chapter (Left)
Al Ciurczak, Founder,
Distinguished Flying Cross Society (Right)



Harry Kaplan, President,
Lindbergh Chapter (Left)
Tom Wood, President,
Alamo Chapter (Right)



Tom Wood, President, Alamo Chapter (Left)
Al Ciurczak, Founder, Distinguished Flying Cross Society (Center)
Ed Mims, National Vice President, Chapter Development, Vice President, Alamo Chapter (Right)

2006
Las Vegas Reunion



THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

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LAS VEGAS - 2006



Tom Wood, President,
Alamo Chapter (Left)
Michael O'Neil, National
Vice President, Membership
(Right)