



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION COWBOY CHAPTER 357

....the force behind the force

Fall 2015 / Winter 2016

Inside this issue:

The Year in Review	1
Deployed Families	1
Awards Ceremonies	1
Wyoming Guard News	1
Community Partner Luncheon	2
Christmas Events	3
Out and About	4
Upcoming Events	4
Treats for Troops	5
Wyoming National Guard	5
Volunteer Opportunity	5
New Website!	6
President's Corner	6

The Year In Review

As we reflect on 2015, we are mindful of our challenges, accomplishments and successes. It is with a great deal of pride and a great sense of accomplishment that we forward this newsletter. This year has been replete with overwhelming successes at every avenue. As always, our key focus is with the young men and women in the military who give their all daily to assure our freedoms and our right to a life of our choosing. They are far from home, away from family, and dedicate themselves to defending us. I wonder how many times we remind ourselves how fortunate we are. We salute our phenomenal community partners who are the catalysts for the successes of our programs and extend a profound debt of gratitude for their support. We now look forward to the challenges and avenues in 2016 that will allow us to better support our men and women in uniform. With the advent of more and more deployments and the need for many changes in the structure of our military forces, it is incumbent on us all to stop and think of what we can do to make life easier for our young professionals.

Deployed Families

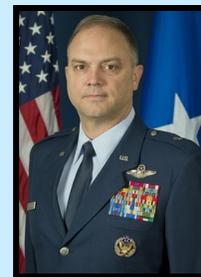


Our **deployed spouses program** continues to flourish. We were very proud to sponsor the deployed family function that was orchestrated by the **Family Support Center**, during the Christmas holidays. We were pleased to present each spouse with a poinsettia for their home, and a toy for each child. The staff at the Family Support Center are committed to staying in touch with deployed spouses and children and strive to honor them with meaningful events. We salute them for a job extremely well done and pledge our continued support. We are proud to participate in any and all programs for these brave families who manage like true professionals while their spouses are in harm's way. We will continue to find avenues where we can make a difference. Many of us remember the days when we were far from home and someone always stepped up to support us, and how very meaningful that support was at the time.

Awards Ceremonies

As always, we were honored to attend the **90th Missile Wing Quarterly and Annual Awards** and the **Guard Annual Award** functions. We continue to be amazed at the talent and expertise we witness at these events. We are proud to be the catalysts for the tangible awards to the outstanding airmen. Our sincere thanks to **General Reiner and the Wing Commanders** for allowing us to participate. We share their pride in these young men and women!

Guard News - Congratulations to General Swanson and Colonel Lyman!



(Photos courtesy Wyoming Military Dept.)

We were honored and humbled to be included in the promotion of **Colonel Bradley Swanson** to **Brigadier General**. We offer our sincere congratulations on this very prestigious event. We were also privileged to attend the change of command ceremony where **Colonel Paul Lyman** assumed command of the **153rd Airlift wing** from General Swanson. Two great supporters of AFA and two outstanding professionals. We truly enjoyed being part of these important functions and thank **General Reiner** for including us. We congratulate the promotees and wish them every success. General Swanson has left us for bigger and better challenges in Washington, D.C. and we will miss his constant support.

Community Partner Luncheon

Our community partner luncheon was an overwhelming success. We were fortunate that **Major General Tony Cotton, Commander, 20AF and Task Force 214** graciously accepted the invitation to be our keynote speaker. He was an incredible speaker whose remarks were truly on target. He produced thought-provoking scenarios that brought to light the abundant challenges and accomplishments that have been abundantly evident.

General Cotton insured that our community partners were appropriately recognized and stressed the importance of community support. He was very thorough on the importance of the nuclear contingent and the many changes that have been realized in a very short period of time.

We were honored by the attendance of 95% of our community partners and are confident that they are aware of how valuable their support is. We thank the General and his lovely wife Marsha for taking time out of their busy schedule to join us.



Major General Tony Cotton, and Cheyenne Mayor Rick Kaysen listen to opening remarks.



An overwhelming majority of our valued **Community Partners, along with several military leaders** were present to hear the presentation by General Cotton. We have some terrific community leaders who never decline to pledge their help in supporting our military programs.

Holiday Happenings



Annual Holiday VA Visit

Our annual holiday visit to the **Veteran's Administration Hospital** is always a source of great humility and pride. Our sincere thanks go out to **Tim Joannides of Halladay Motors, Bob Johnigan from Traders Publishing, and Dusty Thein from KLWY-TV FOX and KKTQ-TV ABC** for their administration of this very meaningful program. Tim graciously presented each resident with a poinsettia for their room. Our local heroes living in the VA facility were also presented with canteen books. It is difficult to describe the emotions you feel in the presence of these men and women and the graciousness with which they receive us. While we know how grateful they are for the visit, we still feel we have not done enough, and will strive to build on that program. We sincerely thank Tim for his generosity in providing the poinsettias at his personal expense.



Tim Joannides and Bob Johnigan deliver several poinsettias to the residents at the VA Hospital during last year's 2015 Christmas visit. Thank you to all our volunteers for making the holidays brighter for our Veterans!

Cookie Launch!

The Cookie Launch was again an overwhelming success. This drive assures cookies in the dorm rooms for our airmen that have duty commitments and cannot go home for the holidays. The support we receive from our community partners for this program is second to none and assures a spectacular event. It is an extraordinary operation that encompasses virtually all of the base. We are proud to be the catalysts for this program and thank **Colonel Kravitsky** for allowing us to be an integral part of this.



This year, the sorting and delivering of cookies took place in the Fall Hall Community Center on December 7. Airmen received a card and several cookies, making their holidays a little brighter. (Photo courtesy USAF, Senior Airman Brandon Valle)

We express our gratitude to **Colonel Kravitsky** for including us in his **holiday reception**. It was a great evening with super refreshments and the opportunity to visit with his guests.

Out and About....

Many of us were privileged to attend both the **90th Missile Wing Christmas Party** and the **Guard Reception**. This is truly an honor for us all, and we extend our gratitude to **Major General Reiner** and **Colonel Kravitsky** for allowing us to participate in these outstanding events.



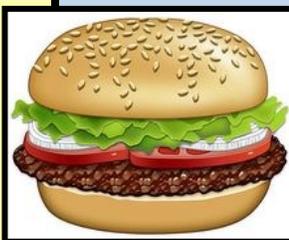
We were proud to sponsor a Valentine's Dinner for the residents at the **Veteran's Administration Hospital**. This is a fun event, and we heard that a great time was had by all!

We also attended the prayer luncheon held at the base. This event is always first-class and well-staffed. We thank **Colonel Kravitsky** for including us.



We were proud to sponsor a burger-burn for the **90th Security Forces Police Group** upon the completion of their recent inspection. We offer our sincere congratulations for emerging with flying colors!

We were privileged to be included in a volunteer luncheon with the Guard leadership. It was an outstanding function that highlighted the many events they host for their airmen and deployed spouses. We were totally impressed by the entire event. Thanks, **Denise Rampolla**, for allowing us to attend!



Upcoming Events

- **Armed Forces Day Banquet May 20**
- **Governor's Receptions July 22 & 29**
- **Thunderbirds BBQ July 26**
- **Thunderbirds VA Visit July 26**



We congratulate our own **Senior Master Sergeant Shawn Swidecki** on his recent retirement from active duty. The ceremony was very impressive and one of the most professional and meaningful ceremonies we have attended. Shawn is a very valuable member of our board and it is our hope that he will continue to be an integral part of all the programs we sponsor. We wish **Shawn, Leslie and Michael** the very best.

Check Us Out on Social Media for the most up-to-date-news!



cowboychapterAFA

@AFA_Wyoming

Out and About...Continued

Treats for Troops...



Our **Treats for Troops** program is our pride and joy. It is a state of the art event that only happens in Cheyenne, Wyoming, honoring our elite professionals (both base and guard) who are on active duty over the holidays. Our hats off to **SMSgt (now retired) Shawn Swidecki and board members Rich Ames, Stephan Pappas and Lorrell Walter** for orchestrating this time-consuming and truly labor-intensive project. Witnessing these professionals at work is a phenomenal experience, and they assure that every detail is perfect. This is one of our proudest endeavors during the holidays. Not only do we honor the troops on duty, but we also find ways to honor our gate guards and other personnel who work so hard during the holidays. We sincerely thank **Colonel Corley** for allowing us to use his conference room to stage this program.



Wyoming National Guard Birthday Banquet



Board Member / State Senator / Retired Brigadier General Stephan Pappas attends the **146th birthday of the Wyoming National Guard** and had an opportunity to meet speaker and former **Vice President Dick Cheney**. (Photo courtesy Stephan Pappas)

Volunteers Needed

The **"No Veteran Dies Alone"** project at the **VA Medical Center** is a program we can all get behind. Please consider participating and attend the required 20 hours of training that will be held on Thursday evenings between August 4 and September 15. This project will ensure that none of our heroes are left alone at the end of their life. Contact **Chaplain Carol Carr** at 778-7377 for more information, or to register, please call 778-7550 ext. 7317. Consider making a difference to our Veterans in need of comfort.

AFA Cowboy Chapter 357

P.O. Box 2759

Cheyenne, WY 82003

www.cowboychapterafa.org

Executive Board

President - Irene Johnigan
 First Vice President - Stephan Pappas
 Second Vice President - Mary Carroll
 Secretary - Gaylene Dizmag
 Treasurer - Rich Ames
 Assistant Treasurer - Leslie Swidecki
 VP Aerospace Education - Carol Holland
 AVP Aerospace Education - Scott Fox
 VP Veterans Affairs - Dusty Thein
 VP Governmental Affairs - Pete Illoway
 VP Special Activities - Bob Farr
 VP Communications - Bob Johnigan
 VP AFROTC Affairs - Dan Clark
 VP Membership - Merrie Elsberry
 VP Special Programs - Lorrell Walter
 VP Fundraising / PR - Tim Joannides
 VP Cyber Patriot Program - Harold Jalonen
 Chapter Chaplain - Fr. Peter Harrison

Newsletter

Editor In Chief - Irene Johnigan
 Publisher - Leslie Swidecki

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!!!

ANB BANK
BLACK HILLS ENERGY
BOUQUETS UNLIMITED
BURNS INSURANCE AGENCY
CAPITAL LUMBER COMPANY
CENTURYLINK
CHEYENNE MINUTEMAN
CHEYENNE PET CLINIC
THE COMPASS WEALTH GROUP
DYNO NOBEL
FIRST CHEYENNE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
FIRST INTERSTATE BANK
GROATHOUSE CONSTRUCTION
HALLADAY MOTORS
HAROLD F. JOHNSON MASONRY
HIGH WEST ENERGY
THE HISTORIC PLAINS HOTEL
HOLLYFRONTIER
JACKSON'S SPORTS GRILL
JONAH BANK
KIA OF CHEYENNE
KUZMA SUCCESS REALTY
MCGEE, HEARNE & PAIZ, LLP
NORTHROP GRUMMAN
PAPPAS & PAPPAS ARCHITECTS
PLATTE VALLEY BANK
PUMA STEEL
RADISSON CHEYENNE
SECURITY FIRST BANK
SPRADLEY BARR MOTORS
TOM SEGRAVE STATE FARM INSURANCE
TRADER'S PUBLISHING
TYRRELL-DOYLE AUTO CENTERS
WARREN FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
WELLS FARGO BANK
WESTERN VISTA FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
WYOMING BANK & TRUST
WYOMING TROPHY & ENGRAVING

Check Out Our New Website!

We are very proud of our very own AFA website and invite you to visit us at cowboychapterafa.org. You will learn all about your local AFA and our many programs, including an officer's roster, meeting minutes, past newsletters, etc. Our sincere gratitude to **Scott Fox**, who championed this effort and brought it to fruition. We also thank **Lorrell Walter, Curtis Lund and the staff at High West Digital Solutions** for their assistance and expertise.

... **COWBOY CHAPTER PRIDE - 299 MEMBERS AND COUNTING!****From President Irene's Desk.....**

In closing, it is impossible to tell you how very proud I am of this chapter and its accomplishments. We have a very strong, dedicated board that is committed to supporting the men and women in uniform. These professionals have a thankless job and they keep stepping up to the plate to protect our freedom and way of life. Most of them have no family in the area and they give us their all. I would ask each and

every one of you to extend a helping hand when you can, and be mindful of the many deployments and escalated duty requirements and make a concerted effort to speak to military members and their families when you encounter them. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our community partners. We **SINCERELY** appreciate your support.

- Irene

REMEMBER...**EVERY MEMBER COUNTS!!**

Please consider transferring your existing AFA membership to the Cowboy Chapter when you transfer to our state. Part of the funding that supports the programs which benefit you and your family is based on the numbers on our membership rosters.

