



# AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION COWBOY CHAPTER 357

....the force behind the force

Winter, 2014



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## 2014 In Review

As we leave 2013 and look forward to a new and challenging 2014, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to our absolutely incredible board, our phenomenal community partners, our military leadership, and last but not least our civilian and military counterparts. It is impossible to put into words the humility and pride we feel for the many lives we have touched, the dynamic challenges we successfully faced and the unbelievable support we have had the opportunity to offer our uniformed personnel. From a personal standpoint, I cannot express the pride and humility I feel for the support I have received from the many many individuals who have stepped up to the plate to insure successful and meaningful programs that have made us the organization we are and have fostered the reputation we enjoy. - **Irene**

## Community Partner Spotlight

**HIGH WEST ENERGY**



High West Energy is an electric utility that serves customers in Wyoming, Nebraska and Colorado. Based in Laramie County, Wyoming, High West is a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by its customers. They currently serve about 10,000 member accounts, including residential homes, businesses and government facilities – and they contract to provide power at F.E. Warren AFB. High West Energy gets high marks from its member-owners for reliability, good communication and for delivering what they promise. The company is known for treating members fairly, looking out for their best interests and for providing the best service at the lowest possible cost.

High West Energy's service territory includes more than 4,200 square miles and more than 3,500 miles of power lines and serves over 9,000 meters at an average of 2.6 customers per mile.

## Air Force Anniversary

The highlight of our Fall functions was our Air Force Anniversary Banquet. We express our gratitude and appreciation to our dynamic guest speaker, **Colonel Tracey Hayes**. She has hit the ground running since she arrived on F.E. Warren Air Force Base and has rapidly gained the respect and confidence of the entire city in a very short period of time. We are so very fortunate to have her at the helm of our military at F E Warren, and we not only thank her for making our Banquet a resounding success, but express our profound appreciation for taking the time out of a very busy schedule to accommodate us and to impart her knowledge to our local populace. The generosity of our great community partners allowed us to sponsor over 100 airmen for the evening and we are so grateful for their support.

## Quarterly Awards

Many of us were privileged to attend the 90th Missile Wing quarterly awards breakfast. The preparations, recognitions and overall esprit de corps that is seen at these awards breakfasts are unparalleled. We thank **Colonel Hayes** for allowing us to participate in this phenomenal event. We are always honored to include some tangible presentations to the young professionals, who constantly remind us of how fortunate we are.

Since 1942, High West Energy has owned and operated infrastructure throughout the region, including a substation and electric lines inside the city of Cheyenne. They also serve many rural communities throughout the region. They are proud community partners of the Air Force Association, and support many great causes in the local communities of Southeast Wyoming.



Col. Tracey Hayes receives a token of our appreciation at the Air Force Anniversary Banquet. (U.S. Air Force Photo Courtesy R.J. Oriez)

# AFA National Convention and Award Winners

It is imperative that we address the National Air Force Association Convention that was held in September. Unfortunately, sequestration and many other factors dictated that we not attend this year. We were saddened to cancel the Congressional Breakfast and to miss the camaraderie that we enjoy at that venue. However, we must congratulate the **Thomas H. Powers** winners that are stationed at Francis E. Warren. This is a most prestigious award that is coveted by the missile career field and obviously they are the best of the best. We are honored to have them in our midst and congratulate them for a job extremely well done. Additionally, we captured two national individual awards: **Capt. Ellie Constantine** was selected to receive the **National Medal of Merit** award. Ellie was reassigned to Thule AB, Greenland before the award arrived and we were pleased to forward it to her new commander for presentation. Ellie was a shining star in our chapter, taking on every available challenge and making it look easy. We certainly miss her. **CONGRATULATIONS, ELLIE!** **Mary Thompson** was also selected to receive the **National Exceptional Service Award** and it will be presented at the upcoming Armed Forces Day Banquet. Our Chapter was honored by the **Gold Community Partner Achievement Award**. That is not a surprise to us, given our spectacular Community Partners who always make us look great. Also, our hats off to **Col. (Ret) Carol Holland**, who has masterfully orchestrated our Aerospace Education Program and brought home the **Aerospace Education Achievement Award**.



Capt. Ellie Constantine.  
(Photo courtesy USAF)



Mary Thompson



Col (ret) Carol Holland, pictured with USAF Academy Cadet and former F.E. Warren Airman Lt. Eric Johnson

## Other Fall Events We Supported



Deployed Families Dinner. (U.S. Air Force  
Photo courtesy A1C Brandon Valle)

We were honored to support the **NCO Induction Ceremony**, the **Combat Dining In ceremonies**, **Frontiercade** and many other programs on the base. Also, we are understandably proud of our support for the Deployed Families in our area. Through the generous donations of **Warren Federal Credit Union** and **Mary Carroll**, we were able to sponsor a first-class event for these families at the end of September. We were pleased to present toys to all of the children of deployed troops, and also poinsettias for the holidays. Additionally, it was our distinct pleasure to support the picnic that the **Airman and Family Readiness Center** orchestrated. What a blessing it is for us to be able to sponsor these meaningful events.

# Holiday Happenings



## Annual VA Visit

Our visit to the **Veteran's Administration Hospital** is always a source of humility and great pride. Our grateful appreciation goes out to Board member **Tim Joannides**, President of Halladay Motors, for presenting each resident with a live poinsettia to brighten their rooms for the holidays. Board members **Dusty Thein and Lorrell Walter (accompanied by her staff)** were also there to assist him and recognize these heroes. They also presented the residents with Canteen Certificates. It is impossible to describe the emotion, humility and pride you feel in the presence of these warriors. They are so very grateful to be remembered, and we are so fortunate to have that opportunity.



**Dusty Thein, Tim Joannides, Irene Johnigan, Lorrell Walter and staff members from High West Energy** deliver boxes of poinsettias to the residents at the VA Hospital during our annual Christmas visit. Thank you Tim, for making the holidays brighter for our Veterans! (Photo courtesy High West Energy)

## Cookie Drive!

The Cookie Drive, hosted by the **Warren Spouses' Club**, is truly a sight to behold. Many, many hands - including those of many volunteer airmen, met cars at the curb to collect cookies, filled cookies trays, and made sure they were delivered to the designated recipients. Our sincere thanks go out to our community partners who were the catalysts for this tremendous undertaking. It is our understanding that there were many more airmen in the dorms this year, and we are sure that their day was brightened by your generosity. We were honored to furnish over 6000 cookies to supplement this program. This is a spectacular event that encompasses virtually every member of the base. **A GREAT BIG THANK YOU** for allowing us to be a part of this event.



CMSgt Mike Garrou, SSgt Rivera, and SSgt Harter fill trays of cookies during the Cookie Drive. (Photo courtesy USAF)

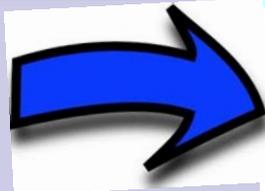


## Wing Christmas Party

It was an honor and a privilege to attend the 90th Missile Wing Christmas party. This extravaganza defies description. There were drinks everywhere, food everywhere, music everywhere and entertainment everywhere.... for hundreds of airmen and their guests, not to mention an unbelievable decorated sweater contest that was one of the highlights of the evening. **Colonel Tracey Hayes** and her staff can be justifiably proud of honoring their personnel in the best possible manner. We were proud to support this dynamic function and congratulate the 90th Missile Wing leadership for their foresight and ingenuity in offering this venue for their young professionals.

# You want to know...

Our Treats for Troops program is an extraordinary, state-of-the-art event that only occurs in Cheyenne, Wyoming. This program honors our elite professionals who find themselves in the field during the holidays. Many thanks to **Senior Master Sergeant Shawn Swidecki** and Board members **Stephan Pappas** and **Rich Ames** for orchestrating this time-consuming and labor-intensive program. Witnessing these professionals at work is an incredible experience, replete with total orchestration of every minute detail to assure an overwhelming success. Many thanks to **Colonel Craig Allton**, 90th Security Forces Group Commander, for allowing us to utilize his conference room to pull this all together. To the **missile crews** who deliver the packages on Christmas Day, the **Air Force Association Members**, our **military helpers** and the positive direction of the **Leadership**, we say a great big THANK YOU! This is one of our proudest programs during the holidays. Not only do we honor our young troops in the field, but we also find ways to honor our gate guards and other personnel who are on duty over the Christmas holidays. Irene enjoys interfacing with the gate guards every morning on her way to the gym, and offering her thanks for all they do for us. Many thanks to **Bob, Agneta, Mary, Carol, Lorrell and her staff at High West Energy** - and all who made this program a super success! Take a look at how we do it:



## How Do We Pull Off Treats for Troops??

## Aerospace Education News by Col (ret) Carol Holland, VP Aerospace Education

# AFA SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

**Spencer Scholarship: \$5,000** (Grad study in management/administration in preparation for senior leadership)

Deadline: 30 June 14

for officer or enlisted, Air Force civilian, full time National Guard and full time Reserve to pursue graduate level education in management and administration fields in preparation for senior level leadership roles.

<http://www.afa.org/informationfor/teachers/scholarshipsteachers/spencer>

**Ferretti Scholarship: \$2,500** (Undergrad study in STEM)

Deadline: 30 June 14

for minor dependents of Air Force (active duty or retired) Reserve or Air National Guard enlisted airmen pursuing an undergraduate degree in the area of science, technology, engineering or math. Must be a 2014 high school graduate.

<http://www.afa.org/LtColRomeoandJosephineBassFerrettiScholarship>

**Donley Spouse Scholarship: \$2,500** (Assoc, bachelor, masters, post grad degree - 10 MAJCOMS)

Deadline: 30 April 14

to encourage Air Force Spouses worldwide to pursue an associate/bachelor or graduate/postgraduate degree. <http://www.afa.org/SpouseScholarship>

**Callahan Memorial Scholarship \$1,000** (Non-tech masters degree)

Deadline: 30 June 14

provides financial assistance and recognition to an active duty Air Force, full time Guard or Reserve person who is pursuing a Master's degree in a non-technical field. <http://www.afa.org/CallahanScholarship>

For additional information, contact:

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**THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!!!**

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**AFA Cowboy Chapter 357**

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**Executive Board**

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- Chapter Chaplain - Fr. Peter Harrison

**Newsletter**

Editor In Chief - Irene Johnigan  
Publisher - Leslie Swidecki

**From President Irene's Desk.....**

In closing, it is important that we are all aware, in these days of much turmoil, that we must continue to keep our focus and insure that we are doing our utmost to support our uniformed personnel. Theirs is a thankless job, and the days ahead will undoubtedly bring more and more challenges to their plates. Be the one that is there for them. Reach out to airmen when you see them. A smile and a kind word go a long way. These young professionals put their lives on the line for us on a daily basis, and it is inherent upon each and every one of us to assure them that we are there for them.

**- Irene**

**... COWBOY CHAPTER PRIDE - 348 MEMBERS AND COUNTING!**

**Community Partner Lunch**



We would like to remind you that we will be hosting a Community Partner Recognition Luncheon on Tuesday, the 11th of February, 11 a.m. at the Plains Hotel. This is a very meaningful event that recognizes those who are there for us and make us shine on a daily basis. SEE YOU THERE!