

THUNDER ROLLS



2013
Volume 20 No. 3



Alumnus Tom Ahlman (Non-Destructive Inspection/ Assistant Crew Chief #7 1988-92), holding an M4-type rifle, has a number of weapons he will make available to participants in a new activity scheduled during reunion Nov. 14. His weapons include (left to right): Polish AKMS under-folder with 75-round drum; Khyber Pass Replica AKM; Bulgarian AK-74M with Kobra holographic optics; and a Mosin-Nagant M91130. In front of him is a Hungarian PKM belt-fed rifle. All are semi-automatic and legal. Not pictured is his Dragunov sniper rifle. The new optional activity added to Thursday's agenda will be held at the Clark County Shooting Complex from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Thunderbirds Gather for Reunion Nov.14-16

With registration days away, planning is in full swing for the Thunderbirds Alumni Association's 60th Anniversary Reunion. A number of activities are planned as Thunderbirds alumni gather at the South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa in Las Vegas Nov. 14-16.

And for those coming into town a few days early, local alumni have moved their monthly luncheon to coincide with the start of reunion.

Las Vegas-area Thunderbirds alumni will meet for a buffet lunch at 11:30 on Wednesday (Nov. 13) at Boulder Station. All alumni are invited to attend. For details, email Jerry Jones (Ground Radio Communications Technician 1965-69) at tbird13@cox.net.

"A number of activities are planned which will make this a memorable reunion," said Bruce Voigt, Reunion chairman. "We've added a couple of additional functions on Thursday (Nov. 14) for those who don't golf but are

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Temporary Funding Allows Limited Training Flights

By Maj. Darrick B. Lee
USAF Thunderbirds Public Affairs

NELLIS AFB, Va. – Temporary funding for flying hours has been restored, allowing the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron to resume flying again through the end of fiscal year 2013.

The team will not resume aerial demonstrations previously scheduled for the 2013 calendar year.

On July 15, Gen. Mike Hostage, commander of Air Combat Command, announced the temporary restoration of flying hours that will be allocated to combat aircraft and crews across the command's operational and test units, including the Thunderbirds. Due to sequestration, the team cancelled participation in air shows and stopped flying in April of this year.

While the return to the skies means a return to crucial training and development for Thunderbirds pilots and maintainers, the leader of the Combat Air Forces' fleet cautions that this is the beginning of the process, not the end.

"Since April we've been in a precipitous decline with regard to combat readiness," said Gen. Hostage. "Returning to flying is an important first step, but what we have ahead of us is a measured climb to recovery."

The restoration of flying hours only addresses the next two and a half months of flying up until October 1, 2013. Lt. Col. Greg Moseley, commander and leader of the Thunderbirds, clarifies that the return to flying does not mean the team has been cleared to resume performing demonstrations. The team will resume training flights with the anticipation that it may be able to resume a limited number of aerial demonstrations next calendar year.

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From the Chairman



This will be my last edition as your chairman. First, I want to thank you, the membership, for staying engaged with your Association. Next, I offer my heartfelt thanks to all the 2010–13 directors, who have worked tirelessly on your behalf to ensure our Association remains viable and successful. They have all served you well!

The Thunderbirds Alumni Association has been receiving many inquiries regarding the sequester decision and the impact it will have on the Thunderbirds 60th Anniversary Reunion.

This year's demonstration season for the team ended April 1, and eight days later, the Air Force began to stand down active duty combat units to ensure the remaining units supporting worldwide operations could maintain sufficient readiness through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Flying resumed a few weeks ago just to maintain basic airman proficiency until Sept. 30. It's important to understand the team is not performing demonstrations.

What will happen when fiscal year 2014 kicks in on Oct. 1 is anyone's guess. At this point, we simply don't know whether or not the team will be able to perform a demonstration for us when we visit the squadron. Meanwhile, reunion and TBAA business move on.

Seven people were certified as qualified to run for six positions on the TBAA Board of Directors when nominations closed April 1. Within the past several weeks, however, two candidates withdrew their names from consideration for personal reasons.

We're in an unusual situation this year, and we made the decision these five volunteers will join the board in the new year. Their names and biographies are published elsewhere in this issue of *ThunderRolls*. We've also decided to take nominations for the vacant seat during the TBAA board meeting Nov. 16.

As required by the bylaws, the current Board of Directors unanimously elected Jeff Remington as the next TBAA Chairman. Kevin Mastin will continue as TBAA Vice Chairman. The secretary and treasurer, along with various committee chairmen, will be announced at the business meeting during reunion.

The bottom line is this – regardless of what you are hearing about sequestration, the 60th Anniversary Reunion (Nov. 14–16) will occur. We have the contracts in place for the hotel, barbecue lunch in the hangar, golf, business meeting and the banquet.

We know many of you are not golfers, so we have added skeet shooting to the Thursday schedule. We've reserved the new Clark County Shooting Complex. Shooters testing out the new course will ride in golf carts outfitted with gun racks to travel to 30 different shooting stations spread across 75 acres of desert north of the 215 Beltway.

Read more at <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2013/jan/17/county-shooting-complex-now-offering-golfing-guns/#ixzz2QixV97II>.

We'll visit the squadron on Friday, have a Memphis BBQ lunch there and help the team rededicate the F-105 model in front of the hangar.

We're extremely pleased to have Gen. John Jumper, former Air Force Chief of Staff and Honorary Thunderbird (1988), join us as the guest speaker at the banquet Saturday night.

I hope that all of you (from 1953 to 2013) will join me and Boss Moseley's truly amazing Airmen in November for an outstanding reunion.

In farewell, I'd like to say it has been my honor to serve as chairman of this outstanding Association. We still have plenty to do, but we also have the talent pool to make virtually anything possible. Don't sit back – offer your talents – make the TBAA better.

**Mike "Slam" Byrne (Advance Pilot/Narrator 1999-2000)
Chairman**

From the Boss



Hello, fellow Thunderbirds!

To say the least, it has been an interesting and challenging few months.

Our last flight along with the last practice demonstration was Friday, 5 April 2013. Since that date, we have been officially stood down with no flying.

But like I told the entire squadron on the afternoon of the 5th, "flying ain't everything" and to be completely honest, we have never been busier representing our Air Force and the nearly 700,000 Total Force Airman.

We have the squadron focused on four main objectives in preparation of an expected 1 October 2013 return-to-fly date.

The first objective is to continue a local, regional and national public outreach program.

Our second objective is to remain postured and ready, within the framework of sequestration, both maintenance and operationally.

The third objective is to promote both professional and personal development.

Finally, the fourth objective is to increase the squadron's involvement to Nellis, including the Warfare Center and the Wings assigned here.

I will tell you I have never been prouder of this team! They continue to represent our great Air Force and you, the alumni, in these most uncertain and challenging times.

Above all!

**Lt. Col. Greg Moseley
USAFADS Commander/Leader (2012-13)**

Meet the New Members of the TBAA Board of Directors

Seven people were certified as qualified to run for six positions on the Thunderbirds Alumni Association Board of Directors. However, two candidates withdrew their names from consideration for personal reasons.

“We’re in an unusual situation this year, and we made the decision these five volunteers will join the Board in the new year,” said Mike Byrne, TBAA Chairman. “We’ve also decided to take nominations for the vacant seat during the TBAA board meeting Nov. 16.”

As required by the bylaws, the current Board of Directors unanimously elected Jeff Remington as the next TBAA Chairman. Kevin Mastin will continue as Vice Chairman, and the Secretary and Treasurer, along with various committee chairmen, will be announced at the business meeting during reunion.

The following five new board members will succeed Joe Barron, Mike Byrne, Al Eakle, R. D. Evans, Sarah Johnson-Robles and Bruce Voigt who have completed their four-year terms.



Kati (Garcia) Grabham

Position(s) on the Team: Chief of Media Relations, Public Affairs (2002-07)

Current Position: First Sergeant, 1st Special Operations Maintenance Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Biography: A 19-year Air Force veteran; entered the Air Force as an F-15C/D aircraft maintenance apprentice in June

1994, retrained into Public Affairs in February 1997 and has held a variety of duty positions at the wing and base levels; has multiple contingency deployments supporting Operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom

Areas Where I Believe TBAA Needs the Most Improvement:

I would love to see more interaction between each era and better support of the current team. I am frustrated each time a change is made and I see the infighting between old and new. I would like to be able to help better communicate changes (the team’s thought methodology behind some changes) to help alumni better understand and support the team of today (and tomorrow).

Statement: “I would like to use my 19 years of Air Force public affairs experience to continue the board’s outstanding tradition of communicating current events, alumni activities and opportunities with our team members past and present. I strongly enjoy the connections I see between each of the eras and would like to continue to improve upon the already outstanding processes in place today.”

Frank Howe

Position(s) on the Team: Assistant NCOIC, Maintenance Administration and Public Affairs Administrator (1995-98)

Current Position: Special Officer, U.S. Secret Service

Biography: Active duty Air Force (Sept. 1987-Nov. 1998); Certified Air Traffic Controller (tower), then retrained into Information Management to finish college degree.

Stationed at Andersen AFB, Guam; Homestead AFB, Fla.; Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.; and Nellis AFB, Nev.

Areas Where I Believe TBAA Needs the Most Improvement:

Recruiting and fundraising

Statement: “It would be a true honor to serve on the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds Alumni Association board – what a great opportunity to continue the team experience of close friends/network while helping carry the Thunderbirds alumni torch worldwide. In my current law enforcement position, I have demonstrated the ability to be worthy of trust and confidence. This is a great attribute when dealing with decisions/appropriations of alumni funds. I believe in making decisions through compromise and consensus and would listen to over 60 years of alumni thoughts and ideas equally. My enthusiasm and dedication have also not changed since departing the team. This was recently demonstrated with my volunteering on this year’s 60th Anniversary Reunion committee. Finally, my vision for the board is to continue an effective alumni board by engaging in current social networking devices, increasing recruiting numbers and exploring various reunion fundraising avenues. Once a Thunderbird, always a Thunderbird.”



Brian Plauche

Position(s) on the Team: Aircraft Maintenance, Crew Chief #7, Crew Chief #1, Crew Chief #8, Quality Assurance (2001-05)

Current Position: Captain (Air Reserve Technician), Commander 917th AMXS

Biography: More than 20 years in aircraft maintenance in the Air Force Reserve and active duty; first Air Force reservist selected for the Thunderbirds; deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

Areas Where I Believe TBAA Needs the Most Improvement:

Membership from team members who have left within the last 10 to 15 years

Statement: “The reason I would like to join the TBAA board is to not only ensure that current alumni still remain an asset to the current team, but also to reinvigorate members who have recently left to again become active members. Many of us leave the team and feel that we need to distance ourselves so as not to seem as though we can’t ‘let go.’ It is my belief instead that we are tasked with building a stronger current team.”



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Team Resumes Training Flights; Officer Tour Lengths Extended

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“We have a long road ahead of us and will take it one day at a time,” said Moseley. “This is the first step in safely returning the squadron to a mission-ready status.”

In an effort to maximize training while anticipating limited 2014 funding, ACC has also announced an extension of the tour length for officers currently serving with the Thunderbirds. Moseley says the decision was difficult but necessary.

“It takes a significant amount of training to get our pilots qualified to safely execute with the team,” said Moseley. “Faced with limited funding in the future, we have to take every opportunity to ensure we put on a safe demonstration. Capitalizing on the experience we currently have is the right thing to do from a safety perspective, and it’s the right thing to do from a fiscal perspective.”



The 12 officer positions on the team are two-year tours of duty. By design, the position openings are staggered, allowing the squadron to maintain continuity of experience and leadership. This year, Thunderbirds 1, 3, 6 and 8 were hired. The Thunderbirds announced the selection of these new officers in April. The decision to keep the current team rescinds this hiring announcement; the officers currently serving on the team will serve a third year.

Thunderbird fans in the Las Vegas area should see the red, white and blue jets take to the sky in the next few days.

Air Combat Command Public Affairs contributed to this report.

Meet the New Members of the TBAA Board of Directors

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“As former team members, especially those of us who are still actively pulling military duty, we should be searching for the next generation of Thunderbirds in our organizations. A strong alumni association ensures that we have a direct line to ask questions and give our people the tools they need to become future Thunderbirds and alumni.”



Jeff Remington

Position(s) on the Team: Opposing Solo (1988), Lead Solo/Operations Officer (1989)

Current Position: Vice President and Corporate Lead Executive, Northrop Grumman Corporation, Honolulu, Hawaii

Biography: Retired lieutenant general with a 35-year military career in the Air Force; most recently served as the deputy commander of the U.N. Command Korea, deputy commander of U.S. Forces Korea, commander of Air Component Command, Republic of Korea/U.S. Combined Forces Command and commander, 7th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces

Areas Where I Believe TBAA Needs the Most Improvement: Maximizing ways to help the current team in their duties and serve the TBAA membership

Statement: “I desire to keep the Thunderbirds Alumni Association and the current team well connected. The TBAA needs to support the team through these trying times of sequestration so the team can continue to showcase the talents of the men and women of the U.S. Air Force. Recruiting will be even more important as the American public works its way through drawdowns, reorganizations and shrinking budgets. I bring a 35-year career of Air Force leadership experience to the TBAA and current experience on the board of directors for two non-profit organizations and two business community councils.”

Shellie Vaught

Position(s) on the Team: NCOIC Assignments (1998-2000)

Current Position: Captain, Staff Officer, HQ Pacific Air Forces, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

Biography: 19-year Air Force career; as an NCO, served as a personnel specialist; received a military scholarship to complete college, separated and was later commissioned, serving as an Airfield Systems and Operations officer and flight commander

Areas Where I Believe TBAA Needs the Most Improvement: Some ways the TBAA could improve would be having the alumni explain the importance of the TBAA and membership prior to the members’ leaving the active team. There seemed to be a stigma associated with prior Thunderbirds being called “boogers,” when in all actuality they were simply carrying on the Thunderbirds family tradition. Being able to have direct access to prior family and a network is important, and this should be better explained. Having a chance to serve on the TBAA board would provide an opportunity to continue to support this great squadron and the current and past members while promoting a true family support system for all active and alumni alike.

Statement: “There are many reasons I would love the chance to serve on the Thunderbirds Alumni Association, but the biggest reason has to be PRIDE. Becoming an active member and serving on the TBAA board is just one way to show the current team and other alumni how much they are supported and cared about. I have been in the Air Force for 19 years, and the tour I spent working with the Thunderbirds is still the best tour I have had to date. There were so many good people I worked with and people I met while serving on this tour. You could not go to a show site without running into a Thunderbirds alumni, and I never met a disgruntled alumni.”



These individuals will join Lennie Coleman, Kevin Mastin, Shawn Pederson, Eric Schnaible and C. B. Shoff in comprising the 2014–15 TBAA Board of Directors.



The Lexington course at the Revere Golf Club will again host the golf outing Nov. 14 during reunion. “This is the challenging course we played at the 50th Anniversary Reunion in 2003,” said organizer Jerry Jones. “It is a beautiful setting with many holes overlooking the Las Vegas Valley.”

2013 60th Anniversary Reunion Preview

Numerous Activities on the Agenda for a Fun-Filled Weekend for Attendees

Continued from pg. 1

looking for something to do. And we’ve tried to keep costs down wherever possible.”

The Clark County shooting complex has been reserved for reunion attendees from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees can take advantage of the archery, shotgun and rifle-pistol centers at the complex.

The Dennis Bono Show presents classic Las Vegas entertainment in a music, talk and variety show format with celebrities performing on The Strip, as well as new talent making their mark in the Live Entertainment Capital of the World. The Dennis Bono Show is recorded before a live audience in the main showroom at the South Point on Thursday (Nov. 14) at 2 p.m. TBAA has reserved 25 seats on a first-come, first-served basis.

A number of activities are planned for a fun-filled weekend for those attending the TBAA’s 60th Anniversary Reunion Nov. 14–16 at the South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa.

Reunion Hotel

South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa
9777 Las Vegas Blvd. South
Las Vegas, NV 89183

The South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa is a premier property that brings together all the best amenities.

The South Point offers a scheduled shuttle to and from McCarran Airport free of charge. Hotel guests planning on using the airport shuttle are asked to make reservations by calling toll-free 1-866-791-7626 and/or local 702-797-8901. Airport shuttle reservations are required at least 24 hours prior to arrival. Seating is limited, and only those with reservations will be allowed to board.

The South Point offers rooms with either one king- or two queen-sized beds. Room rates are \$45 Sunday through Thursday nights and



Thunderbirds 60th Anniversary polos are now available through Flightline America. To order, download a form from www.tbaa.org or call Diane at 970-250-8741. A percentage of sales benefits the TBAA. Items will be for sale at reunion as well.

\$70 Friday and Saturday nights. Alumni can call the hotel at 1-866-791-7626 or make reservations on the hotel’s website at www.southpointcasino.com.

Attendees should let the hotel know they are with the Thunderbirds Alumni Association if they call, or they can use the group code **THU1120** when making reservations online.

The South Point also features a variety of restaurants including the Silverado Steakhouse, Don Vito’s Italian, Garden Buffet, Coronado Cafe, Michael’s Gourmet Room, Big Sur Oyster Bar, Del Mar Deli, Kate’s Korner Ice Cream Parlor and Seattle’s Best Coffee.

Registration

Attendees will need to check in at the reunion

registration desk located on the second floor of the South Point. They will be given a welcome packet which includes name tags, tickets for the events they have paid for and a schedule of events and times. The registration desk will be open Wednesday (Nov. 13), 2 to 6 p.m.; Thursday (Nov. 14), 2 to 6 p.m.; Friday (Nov. 15), 8 to 10:30 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.; and Saturday (Nov. 16), 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Hospitality Suite

A hospitality suite will be available in the South Point for attendees to socialize after events. Check at the reunion registration desk for the location and hours of operation.

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Reunion

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Thursday, Nov. 14

Revere Golf Club
2600 Hampton Road
Henderson, NV 89052

The Lexington Course at the Revere Golf Club will again host the golf outing. It's a 9 a.m. shotgun start, with a cost of \$98 per player. Pastries and coffee will be served prior to play, with a light lunch served after play. There will also be a no-host beverage cart. The driving range provides unlimited range balls with complimentary tees. New Callaway rental clubs will also be available for \$25. "The Peoria scoring system will be used," said organizer Jerry Jones, "which is a combination of skill and luck. It is a format whereby no team can 'stack the deck' and win on skill alone." The course is located a short drive from the South Point. Transportation will not be offered to the course this year as only a small number of players used it in 2011. "We are asking players with vehicles to share rides with others," Jones said. Dress is casual, but no jeans.

Clark County Shooting Park
11357 N. Decatur Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89131
702-455-2000

A new optional activity added to the Thursday (Nov. 14) agenda is a visit to the Clark County shooting complex, which has been reserved for reunion attendees from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees can take advantage of the archery, shotgun and rifle-pistol centers at the complex. The Archery Center houses a known-distance archery range and covered firing points. The Shotgun Center contains 24 combination trap and skeet fields. The Rifle-Pistol Center offers 30 shooting points to 50 yards, 15 points to 200 yards and 15 points to 100 yards. Alumnus Tom Ahlman (Non-Destructive Inspection/Assistant Crew Chief #7 1988-92) has a number of weapons he will make available to participants. These include an AK-47, AK-74M, M-4, a Soviet-design SVD Dragunov sniper rifle and a belt-fed, tripod-mounted PKM. There are several rental features for range patrons, which include shotguns, .22 rifles and bows and arrows. All fees are paid at the site. Pricing information is available at <http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/parks/Documents/shooting-park/ccsc-fees.pdf>.


Flightline America.

60th Anniversary Outer Wear

Left Chest Embroidery - Unisex Sizes

S,M,L,XL - \$42.00ea

2XL,3XL - \$44.00ea



Red Zip-Up



Red Zip-Up Hoodie



Red Fleece Sleeveless Zip-Up



Blue Zip-Up



Navy Blue Zip-Up Hoodie



Navy Blue Fleece Sleeveless Zip-Up

Thunderbirds 60th Anniversary outer wear is now available through Flightline America. To order, download a form from www.tbaa.org or call Diane at 970-250-8741. A percentage of sales benefits the TBAA. Items will be for sale at reunion as well.

Friday, Nov. 15

Thunderbirds Hangar Visit

Reunion attendees can visit the Thunderbirds hangar. Shuttle buses will leave the South Point beginning at 11 a.m. Lunch will be catered by Memphis BBQ and served from noon to 1:30 p.m. Menu includes two mini-sandwiches (sliders) with barbecue pork or chicken, baked beans, cole slaw and a beverage. The team plans to rededicate the F-105 model/memorial that day. Shuttle buses will make return trips to the South Point beginning at 3 p.m. Cost for lunch is \$15 per person (children under 12 free). Round-trip bus transportation from the South Point is \$18 per person. Dress is casual.

Perch Party

South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa

This is the place to socialize with friends from 5 to 7 p.m. while visiting and catching up before dinner. This year's menu includes carving stations with steamship round of beef, roast turkey and sugar-cured ham; along with assorted mini rolls, potato salad, cole slaw, potato chips, corn chips and pretzels; and salsa, hot spinach and artichoke, sour cream and onion, and queso dips. Pay-as-you-go bars will be available as well. Cost is \$40 per person. Dress is casual.

Saturday, Nov. 16

Business Meeting

South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa

The Thunderbirds Alumni Association Board of Directors will present an overview of the most current TBAA information and discuss old/new business. Dress is casual.

Reunion Banquet

South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa

The evening begins at 5 p.m. with an hour for cocktails and reconnecting with friends, followed by the Reunion Banquet at 6 p.m. Attendees will celebrate the Thunderbirds' 60-year legacy with the current team. Dinner features the Southern Shores Dinner Buffet of Seafood Lasagna with shrimp, scallops, lobster, crabmeat, spinach and mozzarella; Marinated Chicken Breast with mango pineapple salsa; and Char-Crusted Flat Iron Steak with bleu cheese cream. After dinner and a short break, the team will name the 2013 Fitzgerald Award winner. The Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame will then enshrine the Thunderbirds team, from 1953 to the present. Our distinguished speaker will be Gen. John P. Jumper, former Air Force Chief of Staff and Honorary Thunderbird (1988). Cost is \$75 per person. Dress is business attire.



**Thunderbirds Alumni Association
Reunion Registration
November 14–16, 2013
South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa
Las Vegas, Nevada**



REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Name _____ Name on Badge _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____

Telephone _____ Email* _____

If riding bus to the Thunderbirds Hangar and don't have a military ID, we need your party's date of birth (DOB).

DOB(s) _____

If driving to the Thunderbirds Hangar and don't have a military ID, we need DOB and driver's license of your party.

DOB(s) _____ DL Numbers _____

DOB(s) _____ DL Numbers _____

I Plan To Participate in Skeet Shooting. _____ Number in Party. Transport Required? Yes No

*We will confirm your registration via email.

EVENT FEES (Per Person)

_____ \$98 Golf _____ \$15 Hangar Lunch _____ \$40 Perch Party _____ \$75 Banquet

Guest 1 _____

Guest 2 _____

Guest 3 _____

TOTAL FEES

Events Purchased \$ _____

Registration Fee (\$10 per Person) \$ _____

Bus Transportation Tickets to Hangar (\$18 per Person) \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

**Please make checks payable to Thunderbirds Alumni Association.
Payment and registration form should be mailed to
Doris "Doe" Wilson, 7661 Angel Crest Circle, Las Vegas, NV 89117.**

Online registration and payment by bank/credit card also available at www.tbaa.org.

Thunderbirds 60th Anniversary Commemorative Coins Benefit TBAA



In observance of the 60th Anniversary of the Thunderbirds founding and to mark the more than 30 years the team has flown the F-16 Fighting Falcon, the Thunderbirds Alumni Association, in cooperation with Flightline America, is offering commemorative coins. Each coin design was handcrafted by Honorary Thunderbird Mike Cooney to commemorate Thunderbirds, past and present. The commemorative coin set depicts all the aircraft flown during the team's 60-year history.

Additionally, an F-16 Fighting Falcon commemorative coin marks more than 30 years of service with the Ambassadors in Blue. Since its founding on May 25, 1953, the team has flown the F-84G Thunderjet, F-84F Thunderstreak, F-100C Super Sabre, F-105B Thunderchief, F-100D Super Sabre, F-4E Phantom II, T-38A Talon, and F-16A and C Fighting Falcon.

Included with the first 250 commemorative coin sets is a ninth coin for displaying the TBAA 60th Anniversary logo, which appears on the back of each coin.

60th Anniversary Comemorative Set Order Form

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

60th Anniversary Coin Set _____ x \$100 per Set Total \$ _____

F-16 Coin Only – \$15 Each or 2 for \$25 Total \$ _____

Sales Tax (Nevada Residents Only) Total \$ _____
 (Go to <http://www.taxrates.com/calculator/> To Figure Sales Tax Amount)

Shipping Priority Flat Rate Box \$5.80
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Thunderbirds Alumni Association. Payment should be mailed to Doris "Doe" Wilson, 7661 Angel Crest Circle, Las Vegas, NV 89117.

Order and pay for commemorative coins online with a bank or major credit card at www.tbaa.org.

Reunion Sponsorship Opportunities Available

A number of sponsorship opportunities (see packages below) are available this year, running the gambit from as little as \$100 up to \$15,000.

“We’re sharing this information with alumni this year,” said Lennie Coleman, Fundraising chairman, “as alumni may have some ideas for potential sponsors.”

Anyone with ideas for potential sponsors can contact Coleman at leonardcoleman81@aol.com.

\$15,000 High Show Bomb Burst

This signature maneuver showcases the Thunderbirds’ timing skills and features a vertically spiraling solo. Sponsorship includes:

- Special recognition by master of ceremonies at reunion banquet as a Presenting Partner of 2013 reunion
- Printed recognition in *ThunderRolls* and the banquet program plus sponsorship level recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events
- Complimentary table for 10 at banquet
- Two foursomes for Alumni golf tournament
- Invitation for 10 to Perch Party reception
- Invitation for 10 to Thunderbirds airshow
- Special invitation for 10 to lunch in the Thunderbirds hangar with complimentary bus transportation

\$10,000 Delta Pass

The Thunderbirds’ six-ship aerial ballet requires the complete commitment of all six pilots to precise formation. Sponsorship includes:

- Special recognition by master of ceremonies at reunion banquet as a Delta Pass sponsor of 2013 reunion
- Printed recognition in *ThunderRolls* and the banquet program plus sponsorship level recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events
- Complimentary table for six at banquet
- One foursome for Alumni golf tournament



- Invitation for six to Perch Party reception
- Invitation for six to Thunderbirds airshow
- Special invitation for six to lunch in the Thunderbirds hangar with complimentary bus transportation

\$5,000 Diamond

This signature formation challenges the three wingmen to keep tight formation on the leader during rolling and looping maneuvers. Sponsorship includes:

- Special recognition by master of ceremonies at reunion banquet as a Diamond sponsor of 2013 reunion
- Printed recognition in *ThunderRolls* and the banquet program plus sponsorship level recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events
- Complimentary seating for four at banquet
- Golf for two at Alumni golf tournament
- Invitation for four to Perch Party reception
- Invitation for four to Thunderbirds airshow with complimentary bus transportation

\$2,500 Sneak Pass

An unexpected 500-MPH pass from behind the crowd with afterburner roaring – a guaranteed adrenaline rush! Sponsorship includes:

- Special recognition by master of ceremonies at reunion banquet as a Sneak Pass sponsor of 2013 reunion

- Printed recognition in *ThunderRolls* and the banquet program plus sponsorship level recognition by name on the welcome board at reunion events
- Complimentary seating for two at banquet
- Invitation for two to Perch Party reception
- Invitation for two to Thunderbirds airshow with complimentary bus transportation

\$1,000 Bon Ton Roule

The good times roll as the four diamond pilots execute simultaneous rolls while in close formation. Sponsorship includes:

- Printed recognition in *ThunderRolls* and the banquet program plus sponsorship level recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events
- Invitation for two to Perch Party reception
- Invitation for two to Thunderbirds airshow with complimentary bus transportation

\$500 Calypso Pass

Sponsorship includes:

- Complimentary lunch in the Thunderbirds hangar
- Printed recognition in banquet program and by name on welcome board at reunion events

\$250 Crossover Break

Sponsorship includes:

- One set of 60th Anniversary commemorative challenge coins (F-84G, F-84F, F-100C, F-105B, F-100D, F-4E, T-38 and F-16)
- Recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events

\$100 Thunderbirds Patron

Sponsorship includes:

- One 60th Anniversary commemorative challenge F-16 coin
- Recognition by name on welcome board at reunion events

Special 60th Anniversary Thunderbirds Alumni Ring Sales End Dec. 31

To mark the 60th Anniversary of the team, the Thunderbirds Alumni Association is offering a special Jostens-manufactured Thunderbirds ring for alumni as well as current team members. The ring is available in men’s and women’s sizes. It joins the traditional ring which indicates the wearer was or is a member of the Thunderbirds.



The special ring has the Thunderbirds patch on one side, the 60th Anniversary reunion logo on the other and “USAF Thunderbirds” across the top. A brochure featuring photos of the rings and pricing is available on the TBAA website at www.thunderbirdsalumni.org. For order forms, email Al Eakle at al.eakle@gmail.com. Sales of the 60th Anniversary ring will end Dec. 31.



Maj. Gen. Brian T. Bishop (Commander/Leader 1998-99) will become commander, Spaatz Center for Officer Education, and commandant, Air War College, Air University, Air Education and Training Command, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. He is currently deputy chief of staff for United Nations Command and U.S. Forces-Korea, U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, Republic of Korea.

Maj. Gen. Russell J. Handy (Honorary Thunderbird 2008) has been nominated for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and for assignment as commander, Alaskan Command, U.S. Pacific Command; commander, 11th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; and commander, Alaskan North American Defense Region, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. Handy is currently serving as director of operations, plans, requirements and programs, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Brig. Gen. Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy (Honorary Thunderbird 2011) has been nominated for promotion to major general. He is currently deputy director, Politico-Military Affairs (Asia), Joint Staff, the Pentagon.

Col. Carl A. Buhler (Maintenance Officer 1997-98) has been nominated for promotion to brigadier general. He is currently director, Logistics, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Col. Russell L. Mack (Right Wing 1999) has been nominated for promotion to brigadier general. He is currently director, Secretary of the Air Force/Chief of Staff of the Air Force Executive Action Group, Headquarters United States Air Force, the Pentagon. He is slated to become vice commander, 7th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces, and chief of staff, Air Component Command, Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea.

Congratulations to **Col. Todd "Tales" Canterbury** (Solo 2002-05), who assumed command of the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., and officially took over the post during a change of command ceremony.

Congratulations to **Col. Stacey Hawkins** (Maintenance Officer 2000-02), who assumed command of the 10th Air Base Wing at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

Congratulations to **Master Sgt. Katherine Grabham** (Public Affairs 2002-07), 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron, who was named 1st Special Operations Wing First Sergeant of the Year.

The TBAA welcomes new Life Members: **Brian Baker** (Honorary Crew Chief 1998), **Thomas Bowden** (Flight Surgeon 2010-11), **Denise Decker** (Honorary Crew Chief 2009), **James Dye** (NCOIC Aerospace Ground Equipment/Assistant Crew Chief #7 1995-99), **Johnny Gomez**, **Jerry Gordon** (Communications Flight Chief 1988-92), **Shaun Hardwick** (Crew Chief #2, #1 1999-2002), **Aaron Hassemer** (Avionics 2003-05), **Rick Korthuis** (Operations 1980-82) **Michael Makowicz** (Non-Destructive Inspection 1988-91), **T. Michael Moseley** (Honorary Thunderbird 1997),

Congratulations to Lt. Col. Dan Mattioda (Environmental Systems, Crew Chief #3 1990-93) (center), who assumed command of the 33rd Maintenance Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Alumni on hand to witness the ceremony were (left to right) Al Eakle (Airshow Coordinator 1989-91), Danny Greaves (Avionics/Assistant Crew Chief #7, #1, #8 2003-06), Linda Mayfield (Aircraft Electrician/Assistant Crew Chief #2, #3 1988-91), Delilah Richmond (Operations 1989-92), Chad Shipman (Aircraft/Non-Destructive Inspection Technician 2000-03) and Larry Reese (Aircraft Maintenance 1992-95).

Dale Sullivan (Assistant Crew Chief #6/Jet Engine Technician 1989-91), **Allen Trump** (Inspection Dock/Dedicated Crew Chief #5 1986-89) and **Shellie Vaught** (Personnel 1998-2000).

The TBAA welcomes new Annual Members: **John Blackburn** (Public Affairs Superintendent 1983-85), **Case Cunningham** (Commander/Leader 2010-11), **Mrs. Christine Gibbs** (widow of Thomas Gibbs, Narrator/Slot 1969-71), **Ron Givens** (Training Manager 1991-94), **James Goodman** (NCOIC Support/Assistant Crew Chief #8 1980-84), **Daniel T. Gurney** (Inspection Flight/Crew Chief #3/Quality Control 1983-85), **Charles Hamm** (Left Wing 1964-65), **Vincent Hammons** (Crew Chief #7/MOCC 1986-89), **Kevin Harper** (Honorary Crew Chief 1992), **John H. Hemphill** (Communications-Navigations 1974-77), **Stephen Hyle** (Executive Officer 1977-79), **Betty Jones** (widow of Jerry T. Jones), **Gregory Joyner** (Assistant Special Flight Chief 1988-91), **Charles D. Langgin** (Pnedraulics Technician 1976-79), **Kim Lilly** (Crew Chief #1 1985-89), **Joseph L. Martin** (Corrosion Control Specialist 1983-86), **Richard McSpadden** (Commander/Leader 2002/2004), **Jeff Mielke** (Public Affairs Officer 1988-90), **Beverly Moore** (widow of Joe Moore, Commander/Leader 1968-70), **Juergen Odium** (Honorary Crew Chief 1993), **Robert H. Scheiff** (Quality Assurance/Phase 1989-92), **Alan G. Schreihofner** (Information Officer 1966-69), **Sean Tucker** (Honorary Thunderbird 1998), **Dean W. Wright** (Solo 1998-2001), **Don Wright** (Egress 1986-88) and **Gary Younglove** (Administrative Officer 1970-72).

Save the date! April 5, 2014. Alumnus **Jeff Mielke** (Public Affairs Officer 1988-90), wife, Hillary, and their company, "Living the Dream Cruises," are organizing a Thunderbirds alumni mini-reunion cruise in 2014. Plans are for a seven-day Western Caribbean cruise onboard the *Caribbean Princess*, sailing from Houston, Texas. Stops include Costa Maya where visitors can explore the great Mayan ruins of Kohnunlich; Island of Cozumel where people can head to the Mayan ruins of Tulum, swim with dolphins or snorkel at Palancar Reef; and Island of Roatan where guests can scuba dive with dolphins. Costs starts at \$759++ per person, based on double occupancy. "Your deposit reserves your cabin and locks in the price," said Mielke. Final payment on the fare isn't due until Jan. 20, 2014. Deposits are also fully refundable up to that date as well. Also, all active duty, retirees and veterans who book with *Princess* can also get a \$100 onboard credit. Details are available at: http://www.princess.com/military_benefit_program/index.html#_UO2gQ-y9KSM.

Look for more details on the cruise at www.tdcruises.com/thunderbirdalum.html.

Gone But Not Forgotten

EDITOR'S NOTE: There may be some time between an individual's death and when we print an obituary. They are printed after the TBAA receives them. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family members and friends of these cherished members of the Thunderbirds family.



Retired Senior Master Sgt. Henry T. (Hank) Bruggeman

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Henry T. (Hank) Bruggeman (Crew Chief #2 1970-73) died of pancreatic cancer Feb. 23, 2013. A 20-year Air Force veteran, he is survived by wife, Kay, of Waddell, Ariz.; sons, Christopher, James and Aaron; two grandchildren; mother, Theresa Barlie; and sister, Pam Wells. Interment was March 8 at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix.

Timothy J. Cyphert

Timothy J. Cyphert (Crew Chief 1983-86) died of cancer April 7, 2013. He is survived by wife, Elizabeth (Beth) Weaver Cyphert; son, Tyler James Cyphert; and parents, Stanley John Cyphert and Elizabeth A. Schill Cyphert.



Retired Maj. Gen. Billy J. Ellis

Retired Maj. Gen. Billy J. Ellis (Solo/Right Wing 1955-57), 84, died March 12, 2013. General Ellis served more than 30 years in the Air Force. He flew one combat tour in Korea and three combat tours in Vietnam. His military decorations include two Distinguished Service Medals, two Legions of Merit, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star Medal, 11 Air Medals and the Air Force Commendation Medal. He earned parachutist and missile badges. He is survived by wife, Barbara Higgenbotham Ellis; daughters, Adele, Elaine and Yvonne; sons, Brian, Mark and Kevin; sister, Betty Breaux; brother, Donald; 12 grandchildren; and great-grandson. Burial was held at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.



Retired Staff Sgt. William John Ellsworth

Retired Staff Sgt. William John Ellsworth (Aircraft Maintenance 1984-87), 54, of Sterling, Va., died April 3, 2013, at INOVA Fairfax Hospital in Fairfax, Va. Bill enlisted in the Air Force in May 1978. He served as a tactical aircraft maintenance technician for nine years until he was medically retired in February 1988. Following his Air Force career, he worked for Northrop Grumman as a program design engineer for 13 years.

Survivors include his wife, the former Linda S. Precopio (Public Affairs 1984-86), whom he married Aug. 15, 1987. Funeral services and burial with military honors were April 11.

Retired Master Sgt. Robert R. (Bobby) Hull

Retired Master Sgt. Robert R. (Bobby) Hull (Crew Chief 1968-71), 70, died March 7, 2012. A 20-year Air Force veteran, he is survived by daughter, Heather Eileen Hull; son, Robert R. (Robby) Hull II; and a granddaughter.

Altar (Al) Samerkand Jr.

Altar (Al) Samerkand Jr. (Administration 1981-84), 56, of Las Vegas, died March 5, 2004. He was a retired limo driver and a Vietnam War and Persian Gulf War Air Force veteran. He is survived by wife, Minnie R.; daughter, Ebony Samerkand-Glover; and son, Kevin Samerkand Pough.

ThunderRolls

This is the final issue of *ThunderRolls* to be printed in 2013 for members of the Thunderbirds Alumni Association. The next issue will be Quarter 1 (January– March) 2014. The deadline for submissions is Jan. 6, 2014. Submissions (including high-resolution photos in .jpg format) may be emailed to al.eakle@gmail.com. Submission does not guarantee publication, and editorial staff may edit for style and content.

Submit change of address to Doe Wilson, TBAA Administrative Secretary, 7661 Angel Crest Circle, Las Vegas, NV 89117. Phone 702-871-7197. Email DoeWilson@aol.com.

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The Thunderbirds Alumni Association thanks Lockheed Martin for its continued support of *ThunderRolls* and the TBAA.

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Lyndy Benson
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LOOK FOR . . .

Official TBAA website

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THUNDERROLLS

THE USAF THUNDERBIRDS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

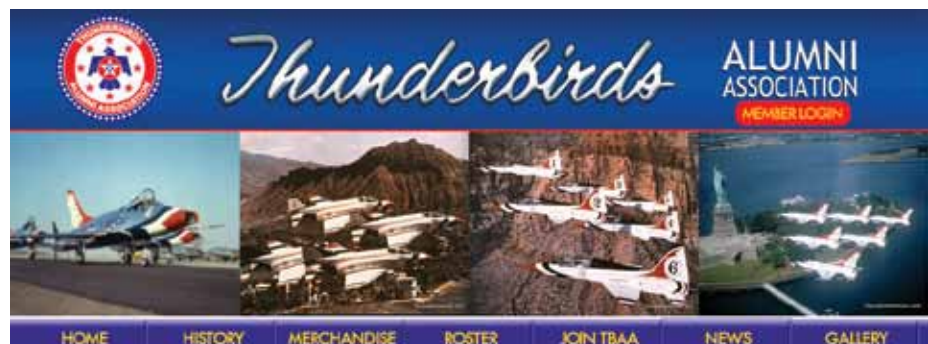
Changes Continue as TBAA Website Fine-Tuned

Visitors to the Thunderbirds Alumni Association website (www.tbaa.org) will continue to notice improvements as Web developers fine-tune the site.

“We’ve created a roster of all living alumni, associates, Honorary Thunderbirds and Honorary Crew Chiefs up to the end of 2011,” said Al Eakle, TBAA Communications chairman. “As soon as someone registers, they will be able to update their profile and to add two different portraits.”

Everything posted on the site can be viewed by anyone; however, a user name and password are required to update a portrait.

Anyone who is NOT listed on the roster can go into the Member Login section and click the tab “Name not in ROSTER? Join Us.” A request will be sent, and as soon as approved, directions on how to log in will be sent by return email.



Another feature in the Member Profile is the Make Contact button. After registration, individuals can Make Contact with a member without revealing the recipient’s actual email address.

Individuals can join TBAA online with a fill-in-the-blank membership application or can download the same form, fill it out and mail it. TBAA dues can be paid online with either a bank or credit card through PayPal.

A new Merchandise tab has been added to the home page, and developers were working at press time to add the reunion registration form online. With these additions and a link to the association’s PayPal, individuals will be able to pay with either a bank or credit card.

Items for sale include 60th anniversary coins, Thunderbirds rings and T-shirts. Since ring and T-shirt sales are restricted to alumni only, individuals will need to enter their user name and password (which they get when they register).

The TBAA website features past issues of *ThunderRolls* and team VIP books from 2010 (none were published in 2008, 2011 or 2012).

The site also features a News and Events feature on the home page that will be updated continually.

“We’ll also be able to send emails to all who are registered on the site,” Eakle added.

Anyone in the roster who needs login directions should email al.eakle@gmail.com.