



The US Air Force Honor Guard, from JB Anacostia-Bolling, D.C., presents the colors at the Air Force Memorial during AFA's annual memorial service and wreath laying ceremony in September.

Convention 2013

By Merri M. Shaffer



Photos by Chuck Fazio Photography

More than 6,000 attendees gathered for the 2013 AFA National Convention and the Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition, dedicating time to better understand Air Force issues.

Top USAF leaders, such as Acting Secretary Eric Fanning, Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, and CMSAF James A. Cody, took the stage at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Md., just outside Washington, D.C. Adm. James A. Winnefeld Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, gave an A&SC keynote address. All speakers shared with audiences their present challenges as well as their visions for the Air Force's future.

The annual AFA National Convention began Saturday, Sept. 14, with two days of AFA business as part of the National Convention, followed by three days of conference activity, filled with 55 speaker sessions and 35,500 square feet of exhibit space displaying cutting-edge technology of the future. It culminated with the Air Force Anniversary Dinner on Wednesday, Sept. 18.

The conference commenced with welcoming remarks by Welsh, followed by an awards ceremony that highlighted 40 individuals and groups for their contributions to the aerospace community. Fanning, Welsh, and specific command leaders helped present citations of honor, in addition to Air Force crew and team awards, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve awards, and civilian professional awards.

AFA formally honored the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year with a ceremonial dinner following a reception sponsored by Northrop Grumman on Sept. 16. Cody congratulated the airmen during his keynote address at the dinner ceremony. SMSgt. Laura A. Callaway, one of the 2012 OAYs, acted as master of ceremonies, and Brig. Gen. Richard M. Erikson, mobilization assistant to the chief of chaplains, led the gathering in prayer. The US Air Force Band provided entertainment during the evening's festivities.

Thanks to financial support from Lockheed Martin, the 12 OAYs attended events in and around D.C. throughout the conference. The dozen met with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill, took a guided D.C. tour, and visited the Pentagon.

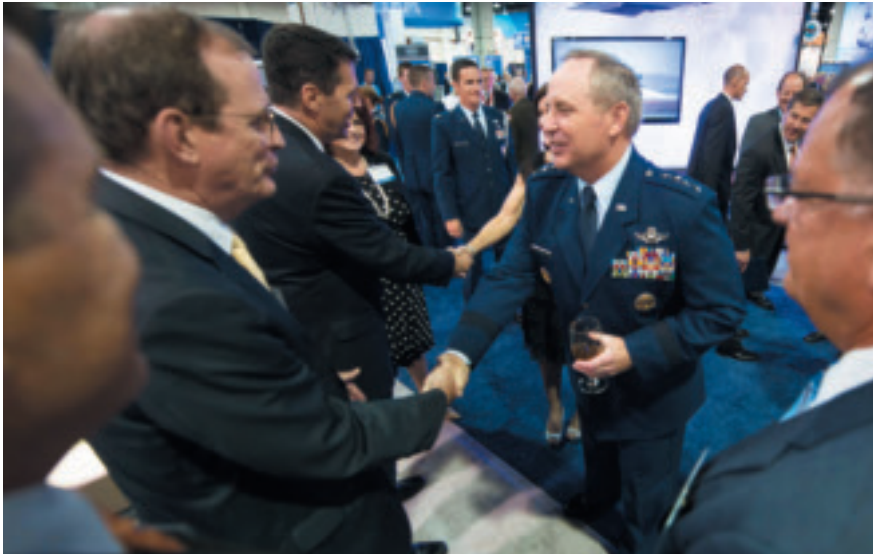
The conference celebrated the achievements of airmen while acknowledging the many challenges the US defense complex is facing today. Throughout the event, participants heard from military leaders and national defense and policy experts on topics ranging from cyber, space, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to nuclear and energy issues. The Four-Star Forum included 11 senior leaders discussing topical issues such as training, sequestration, and innovation. The Command Chief Master Sergeants Forum offered insight into what affects airmen, addressing areas such as professional development, readiness, resiliency, and force management.

Sessions covering events in the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region also were on the agenda.

Fanning, joined on the main stage by Welsh, Cody, and AFA leaders, snipped the ceremonial red ribbon with oversized scissors—a sign of the official opening of the technology exposition—on Sept. 16. Ninety-one exhibitors showcased their products. Highlights included Lockheed Martin's two-stage hypersonic missile; Sikorsky's experimental X2 Technology Demonstrator; EADS' UH-72 Lakota light helicopter; and dogs with the Warrior Canine Connection, a program that provides therapy dogs to help vets with post-traumatic stress disorder.

As the event explored the future of airpower, it also celebrated Air Force heritage. A wreath laying ceremony took place on Sunday morning, Sept. 15, at the Air Force Memorial. "It is not length of life, but depth of life," said AFA Chairman of the Board George K. Muellner, quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson, as he honored the lives and contributions of AFA members and friends who have died in the last year. AFA National Chaplain retired Maj. Gen. William J. Dendinger provided the invocation and benediction for the somber event. A memorial tribute list of the deceased was read by Muellner with Scott P. Van Cleef, Vice Chairman of the Board for Field Operations, and Jerry E. White, Vice Chairman of the Board for Aerospace Education. Assistant Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Stephen L. Hoog, Cody, and Muellner laid a ceremonial wreath for the Air Force.

AFA's Air Force Anniversary Gala toasted the service's 66th anniversary



Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh greets exhibitors on the technology exposition floor.



AFA Chairman of the Board George Muellner speaks to the audience at the National Convention. Muellner was re-elected for a second term.



Acting Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning spoke about how Air Force heritage informs the present and future force.



Col. Jodi Tooke (c), chief of cyber force development, greets another conference attendee during a break between sessions.

on Sept. 18. Guests enjoyed music by the Air Force Band's Silver Wings, and Patrick Coulter and Ken Goss served as masters of ceremonies. During the event, the following were saluted with national aerospace awards:

- Retired Gen. Douglas M. Fraser, former commander, US Southern Command, with the H. H. Arnold Award, recognizing the year's most significant contribution to national security by a member of the military;

- Michael B. Donley, former Air Force Secretary, with the W. Stuart Symington Award, recognizing the year's top contribution by a civilian in the field of national defense;

- Boeing's X-51A WaveRider team, with the John R. Alison Award for the most outstanding contribution by industrial leadership to national defense;

- The 93rd Air Refueling Squadron, with the David C. Schilling Award for the most outstanding contribution in the field of flight.

- The Civil Air Patrol's aerospace education programs were recognized with the AFA Chairman's Aerospace Education Award, for long-term commitment to aerospace education.

AFA Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to: Retired Maj. Gen. Joe H. Engle; Rep. Sam Johnson (R-Tex.); and the Arlington Committee of the Air Force Officers' Wives' Club—the "Arlington Ladies"—a group that sends a member to the funerals of USAF personnel buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

In addition, the Air Force Association Cycling Classic and Northrop Grumman (in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the company's first B-2 delivery to the Air Force) received Chairman's Citations.

This year, AFA also hosted the annual Spouse and Family Forum, previously presented by the Air Force. The forum was held Sept. 16, with a full day of speakers, panels, and working discussions on issues facing military families and an emphasis on empowering spouses. Guest speakers included Air Force senior leader spouses Betty Welsh and Athena Cody as well as Fanning, General Welsh, Chief Cody, and Lt. Gen. Darrell D. Jones, USAF's deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel, and services.

Awarding Education

Margaret Spigner, a teacher at West Ashley High School in Charleston, S.C., was honored as the 28th recipient of the AFA's National Aerospace Teacher of the Year Award. Spigner has been an educator for 31 years, having taught honors and college

prep marine science, biotechnology, investigative research, and other science-related courses. The award recognizes classroom teachers for their accomplishments and achievements in promoting and engaging today's youth in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. As AFA's top educator, Spigner receives a \$3,000 cash award and plaque.

In addition, AFA awarded Joan Ozdogan, from Chantilly Academy in Chantilly, Va., and William Beckman, from Marine Military Academy Marine Corps Junior ROTC, Harlingen, Tex., as CyberPatriot Coaches of the Year. CyberPatriot, AFA's flagship STEM program, is the nation's largest high school cyber defense competition.

AFA Business

Forty-one state delegations with 205 authorized delegates attended the National Convention where they conducted AFA business, including elections and program management. In concert with AFA's mission to educate, advocate, and support, the delegates approved a Statement of Policy and Top Issues for 2014, a document that represents AFA's position on important matters pertaining to the Total Force, as well as key modernization and national security issues.

Delegates attended briefings on the Arnold Air Society and Silver Wings, the Wounded Airman Program, the Transition Program, CyberPatriot, and AFA's IT infrastructure. Retired Gen. John A. Shaud, former chief of staff, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, was the guest speaker. He was AFA's Executive Director—the post now renamed President—from 1995 to 2002.

AFA Elections

In national officer elections, George K. Muellner, of Huntington Beach, Calif., was re-elected for a second term as Chairman of the Board. Scott P. Van Cleef, of Fincastle, Va., was re-elected for a second term as Vice Chairman of the Board for Field Operations. Jerry E. White, of Colorado Springs, Colo., was re-elected for a second term as Vice Chairman of the Board for Aerospace Education. Marvin L. Tooman, of West Des Moines, Iowa, was elected for a first term as National Secretary. Leonard R. Vernamonti, of Clinton, Miss., was re-elected for a fourth term as National Treasurer.

Other election results included national directors, a three-year term: David A. Dietsch, of Arlington, Tex., was elected as the Central Area Director. Peter E. Jones, of Potomac Falls, Va., and David B. Warner, of Colorado Springs, Colo., were elected as Directors at-Large.



Don Bolling (l), a business development representative with Lockheed Martin, speaks with airmen during the technology exposition.



*Author Jerry Yellin signs a copy of his book *The Blackened Canteen* for a tech expo attendee. Yellin was a fighter pilot in World War II.*



From l-r: Welsh, CMSAF James Cody, Gen. Edward Rice, Gen. Mike Hostage, Gen. Janet Wolfenbarger, and Gen. Herbert Carlisle were among the Air Force top leadership who spoke as part of the Four-Star Forum panel on Sept. 18.



Newly elected Region Presidents are: F. Gavin MacAloon, Central East; Wayne R. Kauffman, Far West; Ron Adams, New England; Maxine Rauch, Northeast; James M. Mungenast, South Central; Ross B. Lampert, Southwest; and Richard D. Baldwin, Texoma.

DOD and USAF Leaders

Many Air Force leaders participated in the conference, as presenters and session attendees, helping to create a venue for open dialogue on Air Force issues. Many senior Air Force leaders also took part in media-only sessions.

Betty Welsh, wife of the Air Force Chief of Staff, spoke at the Spouse and Family Forum.



David Deptula, dean of AFA's Mitchell Institute for Airpower Studies, participated in panels on long-range strike and on USAF's role in the joint arena.



AFA President Craig McKinley (l) thanks Adm. James Winnefeld, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after Winnefeld's keynote address on the future of the joint force, Sept. 18.

Senior leadership speaking at the conference included Winnefeld, Fanning, Welsh, and Cody. Other high-level leaders included Gen. Herbert J. Carlisle, commander, Pacific Air Forces; Army Gen. Frank J. Grass, chief, National Guard Bureau; Gen. G. Michael Hothage III, commander, Air Combat Command; Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr., commander, Air Education and Training Command; Gen. Paul J. Selva, commander, Air Mobility Command; Gen. William L. Shelton, commander, Air Force Space Command; and Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger, commander, Air Force Materiel Command.

A number of other senior officers took part: Lt. Gen. Michael J. Basla, chief of information dominance on the Air Staff; Lt. Gen. Christopher C. Bogdan, F-35 program executive officer; Lt. Gen. Stanley E. Clarke III, director, Air National Guard; Lt. Gen. Eric E. Fiel, commander, Air Force Special Operations Command; Lt. Gen. Stephen L. Hoog, assistant vice chief of staff; Lt. Gen. James Jackson, commander, Air Force Reserve Command; Lt. Gen. James M. Kowalski, commander, Air Force Global Strike Command; Lt. Gen. Robert P. Otto, deputy chief of staff, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; Maj. Gen. Sandra E. Finan, commander, Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center; Maj. Gen. Garrett Harencak, assistant chief of staff, strategic deterrence and nuclear integration; Maj. Gen. Steven L. Kwast, director, Air Force Quadrennial Defense Review; Maj. Gen. John F. Thompson, program executive officer for tankers; Maj. Gen. Brett T. Williams, director of operations, US Cyber Command; Brig. Gen. Albert M. Elton II, director, plans, programs, requirements, and assessments, AFSOC; and Brig. Gen. John E. Michel, commander, NATO Air Training Command-Afghanistan.

Acknowledgements

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AFA National Convention Parliamentarian was David T. Buckwalter, AFA's former executive vice president. Inspectors of Elections were Buckwalter (chairman), George L. Castle, and David T. Hanson. Mark L. Tarpley chaired the Credentials Committee, serving with Geri Sutter, Karel J. Toohey, and Sharon White. ■