



Depot Fallout

AFTAC Alumni Association - West Coast Chapter
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Email: TOD.Alumni@AFTACWCC.org



OCTOBER 2017 EDITION

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LOOK US UP AT

www.AFTACWCC.org

A TRIBUTE TO JOE JOHNSON

by Bob Fitzgerald, Webmaster & WCC Interim Vice President

Joe Johnson has retired ... again! Joe finally called it quits after the 2017 reunion was completed. Joe was 'arm twisted' into continuing in the job of WCC Vice President when the WCC did not have anyone to fill the office of President after December 2015, and no one else wanted to run for and take his place as VP. He only agreed to do stay in that job in order to insure that we actually put on a reunion in 2017. Continuing as Vice President, Joe essentially did the duties of the President this past year and a half, as well as taking on the job of Chairman of the 2017 reunion committee. **The West Coast Chapter won't be the same without Joe's consistent help.** By consistent, here's what I mean:

- AFTAC World Wide **Reunion Chairman** Apr-1999; (*the year of the deactivation of TOD*)
- A signer in 2/1999 of a "**Declaration of Intent**" to form an AFTAC Alumni Chapter in Sacramento, California. (*Joe, Dale Klug & myself are the only members left of the 15 who signed that document. See our website "Fallout" page, near the bottom, to see it.*)
- Joe helped write the **Articles of Association** to form the WCC in April 1999;
- **First WCC President**: April 1999-September 2001;
- **WCC Vice President**: Oct 2001-Nov 2005; (*two terms*)
- Named **AFTAC Alumni Of The Year (AOY)**: Feb 2003;
- **WCC President**: Dec 2005-Nov 2007;
- **WCC Vice President**: Dec 2011-July 2017; (*two & 3/4 terms*)
- AFTAC World Wide **Reunion Chairman** June 2017

There are very few others who have worked as hard and as consistently as Joe has for the wellbeing of our West Coast Chapter and all our members. So, in closing I'd like to say on behalf of all our WCC members:

**Many thanks Joe for all you have done for us over these years.
May God Bless You!**

FALL SOCIAL & WCC ELECTION

by Bob Fitzgerald, WCC Interim Vice President & Webmaster

The deadline of November 5th for signing up for our **Fall Social** is getting near. It will be a luncheon held this year on **Sunday, November 12th from 11:30am-2:30pm at Sam's Hof Brau** near the Country Club Bowling Alley on Watt Avenue near El Camino Avenue in Sacramento's Arden Arcade area. At Sam's you will order cafeteria style, take your food to pay at the register, then take your tray to the back room where we will have our luncheon. Sign up for this event by mailing the form, or emailing your information as stated on the form, which is elsewhere in this issue.

At Sam's, we will also hold our bi-annual WCC **Election of Officers** right after we have all had a chance to eat and enjoy each other's company. You will have a chance to orally nominate someone as a 'write-in' candidate for office before we ask everyone to mark their ballot. The forms for this event will be handed out there.

If you cannot make the Social but want to nominate someone for office, or volunteer yourself ☺, see the "Nomination/Volunteer" form elsewhere in this issue, fill it out & mail it to us by November 5th as well.

CONTRAILS FROM THE 1009th SWS

PROPS FROM THE 50'S

By Jack Oconnor, SEO

Our Airborne Home - The rear compartment of a WB-29/WB-50.



For takeoff and landing, my official station was on the floor with my back against the rear bomb bay bulkhead without anything but the floor to hang onto, A few feet farther aft, on either side of the aircraft, were the scanner positions, which were originally the waist gunner positions. They now were crew positions with seatbelts and sunk below the floor level a few feet with a huge plastic blister for a window. Now the blisters were used primarily to observe engine start and wheel retraction and extension and positioning of the flaps and report their observations to the forward flight crew. They gave a great view of the entire aircraft from the wing aft. Reporting the flap position was a very important element if you wanted to get safely into the air and back on the ground! Often, the scanners were the first to see a problem with the engines, flaps and often, the ailerons: it wasn't just a sit-and-watch position. The left scanner was also the dropsonde* operator. The right scanner was astute in the mechanical area. Their input was vital to the mission. As soon as the SEO deemed it necessary, or advisable, or whenever he felt like it, the SEO took over the right scanner position, which had been modified to enable the mounting of the B-199 detection equipment. I normally let the scanner keep his position until level off at 10,000 feet. On routine missions, the two scanners and SEO kind of rotated the two positions. We monitored the Esterline Angus ink chart recorder (which just sat on the floor) and the dials of the B-199, the main piece of equipment for detection. If I saw a problem with the aircraft while in the right scanner position, I scampered out of the seat and got the right scanner to take over immediately. It happened more often than I liked!

Routine missions were normally a boring 15-hour trip of just boring holes in the sky in the WB-29. When the WB-50 came along, they became an even more boring 17-18 hours. Of course, attitudes throughout the aircraft crew changed if I noticed something different in my readings. I would advise the AC and NAV so that they would be ready for any request from me. In the events that followed we would sometimes see really interesting things outside the bubble, such as when we witnessed about eight sunrises and sunsets! The weird and strange phenomenon of all those risings and settings was an unusual happening. Not something you see every day--or night! Back to the aircraft: Behind the left scanner position was the dropsonde* position followed by the Honey Bucket, then an open space about 4x4.

- A dropsonde is an elongated package that was shot down a chute by release of the pressure inside the aircraft. This package shed its outer skin after it was ejected and deployed a small parachute, sized to keep it airborne for about 15 minutes. It supported instruments that measured temperature, pressure and humidity.

This information was transmitted back to our aircraft and received by the Radio Operator. He would work like a madman to get this vital info to a ground station in the US. To do that, we had an antenna that reeled out of the tail of the aircraft. It would send our dropsonde information and any other info to a 17-19 hour even more boring RC-121 flight, in racetrack configuration, far off the California coast over the Pacific Ocean.

This plane would be gathering and imparting weather information, but its main mission was as part of the “picket system”---being alert for a Russian invasion by aircraft or ships. That is why the “R” for Reconnaissance designation instead of the Weather Service “W”. One of these RC-121’s were “on station” at all times. This was all the improved information the meteorologists, forecasting for the lower 48, had to work with for developing their forecasts. This amount of information was more copious and much more reliable than just a few years earlier. Remember, this was the 50’s---long before most of us ever thought of satellites or how the weather was forecast.

BTW: I have often referenced the word “boring”. Military flying in those days was described as: “Hours and hours of boredom punctuated by moments of stark terror”. Had enough of those!

In the WB-29, aft of the left scanner there were the dropsonde, honey bucket, open space with 22 lunches, racks of spare parts and sets of various equipment and other paraphernalia, including the parachutes for the aft crewmembers. Behind the right scanner position was a narrow bulkhead and then the radio Operator position. Aft of that was the unpressurized exit hatch and tail gunner position.

The aircraft had no weapons, so this position was, as I remember, empty. I was disappointed when I saw it like that. I had wanted to sit in the tail gunner’s position.

In the WB-50, the radio operator had been moved to the flight deck up forward, and the tail gunner position was designed out. We hung our front-pack chutes just behind us. The APU was still in the rear, but it still made for a lot of space to get our work done.

TIMES WERE A-CHANGING

by Don King, Fallout Editor

There was a time when change was a pretty darned slow. It seemed forever between pre-telephone days and television. We didn’t have a telephone in our home until 1947, and it didn’t have a dial. It was a party line with four other families hooked together. You cranked it a certain way to get someone or an operator. By the time we got a TV in 1952, we could actually dial someone up and talk to him or her directly! Radio and TV were loaded with vacuum tubes to make their magic work. The first point-contact transistor was demonstrated in 1947, but it took another 10 years before it became a simple device that could replace some of the simple vacuum tubes. It had many advantages that would soon lead to its widespread use in electronics. However, for all of the alphabet soup people in the early days of AFTAC, we had to rely on tube equipment, mechanical chart recorders, rudimentary GM tubes, simple lab paraphernalia, and learn-as-we-went strategies. We were still confident that we could do our mission with a high degree of success and results confirmed it.

Then, one day an SEO went up to do his job. After the usual hours of routine results, an apparent positive indication of something different appeared. Following the standard procedures that were called for by our state-of-the-art equipment, he checked to determine whether it was a significant indication calling for him to initiate appropriate actions. After running the prescribed tests, he determined that nothing indicated a need to change from the routine work. Upon returning to base, he turned over the materials to the C guy.

As the C guy had done with countless prior routine deliveries, he opened the materials and followed the usual procedures with no indications of anything other than mostly normal results. He did see a little change is some of it, so that was sent off with the report of findings to the east coast for further analysis.

Communications was much better than a few years before as was evidenced by the reply back from the east coast. Excitement was way too soft a word to describe the conversation. Removing possibly objectionable quaint colloquial expressions along with sensitive references, “This is way over the top of what we had hoped for!!!! You have (Deleted for security reasons.)” Needless to say, the level of activity everywhere went to 7/24!

What had happened? Have you ever had a problem with your computer when certain software doesn’t work right anymore? Those clever developers had made little changes to make it work with newer operating systems but not with your older one. The old technologies of A and C were not capable of analyzing this totally new level of results. It also was an unwelcome surprise to the A and C guys when they realized that they had handled the material as if it had been just an omelette.

DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY

By Don King, Fallout Editor

Excerpts from the speech that General Douglas MacArthur gave at West Point on 12 May 1962

Duty, Honor, Country: -- the code of conduct and chivalry of those who guard this beloved land of culture and ancient descent. For all eyes and for all time, it is an expression of the ethics of the American soldier.

Duty, Honor, Country: Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying points: to build courage when courage seems to fail; to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith; to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.

Duty, Honor, Country: The unbelievers will say they are but words, but a slogan, but a flamboyant phrase. But these are some of the things they do: They build your basic character. They mold you for your future roles as the custodians of the nation's defense. They make you strong enough to know when you are weak, and brave enough to face yourself when you are afraid. They teach you to be proud and unbending in honest failure, but humble and gentle in success; not to substitute words for actions, not to seek the path of comfort, but to face the stress and spur of difficulty and challenge; to learn to stand up in the storm but to have compassion on those who fall; to master yourself before you seek to master others; to have a heart that is clean, a goal that is high; to learn to laugh, yet never forget how to weep; to reach into the future yet never neglect the past; to be serious yet never to take yourself too seriously; to be modest so that you will remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, the meekness of true strength. They give you a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a freshness of the deep springs of life, a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of an appetite for adventure over love of ease. They create in your heart the sense of wonder, the unflinching hope of what next, and the joy and inspiration of life.

Duty, Honor, Country: The code which those words perpetuate embraces the highest moral laws and will stand the test of any ethics or philosophies ever promulgated for the uplift of mankind. Its requirements are for the things that are right, and its restraints are from the things that are wrong.

The soldier, above all other men, is required to practice the greatest act of religious training -- sacrifice. In battle and in the face of danger and death, he discloses those divine attributes which his Maker gave when he created man in his own image. No physical courage and no brute instinct can take the place of the Divine help which alone can sustain him. However horrible the incidents of war may be, the soldier who is called upon to offer and to give his life for his country is the noblest development of mankind.

And through all this welter of change and development, your mission remains fixed, determined, inviolable: it is to win our wars.

Everything else in your professional career is but corollary to this vital dedication. All other public purposes, all other public projects, all other public needs, great or small, will find others for their accomplishment. But you are the ones who are trained to fight. Yours is the profession of arms, the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no substitute for victory; that if you lose, the nation will be destroyed; that the very obsession of your public service must be: ***Duty, Honor, Country***.

You are the leaven which binds together the entire fabric of our national system of defense. This does not mean that you are warmongers. On the contrary, the soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war. But always in our ears ring the ominous words of Plato, that wisest of all philosophers: "Only the dead have seen the end of war."¹

The shadows are lengthening for me. The twilight is here. Always there echoes and re-echoes: ***Duty, Honor, Country***.

He was speaking to the Army ground troops in this message, but this applies to all of my fellow AFTAC airmen as well who have fought and are fighting a silent war that has enormous impact on the very future of this great nation. You should be proud that we have helped to avert wars.

We exemplify those words that he said;

Duty, Honor, Country.

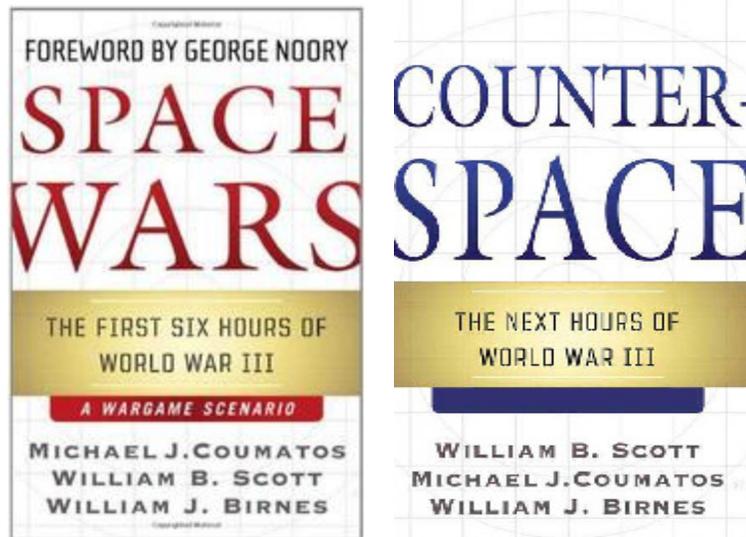
EVENTS CALENDAR

Just a reminder that our business meetings are held the **2nd Monday** of March, June, September, and December at 7:00 PM at the Lionsgate Hotel on McClellan Park. The meetings last about an hour and all Alumni are welcome. It is also a great time for the kind of informal get-togethers that we had when we were on active duty at a site or on TDY somewhere, or when we are in the hospitality rooms during a reunion. The date of the next meeting is **Mon Dec 11.**

Always check our 'Events' page at www.AFTACWCC.org or call ahead to our Vice President to confirm time & place

MUST READ BOOKS

by Don King, Fallout Editor



SPACE WARS, Chapter 1 DEADSATs

3 APRIL 2010/IN ORBIT, 200 MILES ABOVE THE EARTH

The first shots were silent.

No incendiary blast of explosives. No bombs exploding over a battlefield. No dramatic flash of a nuclear fireball to signal the onset of high-tech combat. Only a silent, single burst of electrons.

High above the Earth, drifting noiselessly in the black deep freeze of orbital space, a multimillion-dollar satellite simply died, a casualty of tiny but critical electronic circuits that failed when bombarded by a surge of electrons, exceeding the microprocessor's design tolerances.

COUNTER SPACE, Chapter 1 MAYHEM IN THE HEAVENS

5 MARCH 2011/GEOSYNCHRONOUS ORBIT

An aging Defense Support Program (DSP) satellite positioned 22,500 miles above the western Pacific Ocean was the first to spot a white-hot tail of fire streaking skyward from the Korean peninsula.

... One hundred miles... 120 miles... 130... Then a massive explosion of scorching ultra-white light temporarily blinds both the DSP and SBIRS spacecraft's thermally sensitive "eyes." Instantly, nuclear detectors, or nudets, on both of the missile-warning platforms, plus similar nudets on a handful of Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites in mid-Earth orbit registered a barrage of radioactive particles and high-energy gamma rays. Once the mayhem was sorted out...

Written by one of our own, SEO Bill Scott, along with Michael J. Coumatos and William J. Birnes, these novels are profound glimpses into the possible world of today. Great reading!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

by Dave Price, Membership Chairman

As of Sep 10, 2017

Total Active Members = 145 Life Members = 139.

Annual membership fee of \$10 is due by 01 Jan each year. Check your mailing label, or check the "WCC Roster" from our website "Forms" page. Life memberships are available for \$75. You can use the "Membership Application/Roster Update" form on the last page of this newsletter or the one from our web site "Forms" page to send with your dues. Don't let your membership lapse. Those alumni who are not current with their membership dues will be dropped from the "active" roster along with our newsletter distribution & email notification lists. (See our web site "Forms" page, "WCC Roster" link to check your status.

www.AFTACWCC.org

Website Quarterly Activity Report for the period 1 Jul 2017 –30 Sep 2017
Submitted 9-Oct-2017 by Bob Fitzgerald, WCC Webmaster

<u>Visitors This Quarter</u>	<u>Highest Visitors Week</u>	<u>Total Sessions</u>	<u>Most Popular* Page (#Sessions)</u>	<u>Next Most Popular* Page (#Sessions)</u>
5,941	08/14-08/20 (631)	6,214	Albums** (805)	Albums*** (793)

Notes: * Does not include our 'Home' page, which almost always is the most popular page.

** The 6 Reunion Slideshow albums were most popular. ***Followed closely by the 3 Reunion Banquet Videos.

Visitors: This evaluation shows how many visitors accessed our website. Visitors are uniquely identified on the basis of the IP address and the browser ID. **If a visitor goes to our website more than once a day, only one visitor is counted.**

Sessions: This evaluation shows the number of sessions. A session starts when a visitor accesses our website and ends when he or she leaves it. A session ends automatically after 30 minutes without activity. **If a visitor goes to our website more than once a day, multiple sessions are counted.**

AFTAC SHINES

AFTAC Press Release

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Six Airmen from the Air Force Technical Applications Center here earned Air Combat Command accolades for their accomplishments in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

The winners, all of whom are assigned to AFTAC's Technology Coordination Office (TC), learned of their selection from AFTAC's commander, Col. Steven M. Gorski, after ACC's 4-star general made the final selections.

The awards were broken up into two distinct groups: one for Science and Technology, and one for Acquisitions. Within the groups were specific categories and recipients were required to submit a lengthy nomination package for each award.

Three of the six awards are named after luminaries associated with the respective award. Capt. Jeffrey B. Archer, chief of TC's Aerospace Systems Branch, won the Harold Brown Award.

Capt. Kimberlee S. Pottinger, chief of TC's Sensors, Surveillance and Development Branch, won the Air Force Science and Engineering Award/Research and Development.

Maj. Ernesto F. Curiel, TC's deputy director, earned the Air Force Science and Engineering Award/Research Management category.

Maj. Michael Butler, who serves as the chief of TC's Space Situational Awareness Sensors Branch, was selected for the Air Force Science and Engineering Award/Advanced Technology Development. This is Butler's third consecutive win (same group, different categories), and the past two years he went on to win at the Air Force level as well.

Curiel collared a second award from the acquisitions group—the Gen. Lester L. Lyles Developmental Engineer of the Year award.

The sixth winner was Capt. Joshua J. Ford, a TC systems engineer, who was presented with the Dr. Paul G. Kaminski Most Promising Systems Engineer.

"AFTAC Airmen absolutely overshadowed the competition and came away with impressive hardware," said Lt. Col. David Laird, director of TC. "These awards are a true testament to the caliber of our workforce here, and the recognition our Airmen continue to receive around the Air Force is well deserved. I am honored to serve with them, and I am confident their hard work will continue as it always has."

AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION - WEST COAST CHAPTER

FALL SOCIAL AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

SUNDAY, 12 NOV 2017 – 11:30AM-2:30PM



AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOC. – WEST COAST CHAPTER FALL SOCIAL & ELECTION
 Sunday, 12Nov2017 @ 11:30AM at Sam's Hof Brau, 2500 Watt Ave, Sacramento, CA

SIGN-UP FORM - (Please Print)

Name: _____ Spouse/Other: _____
 Add'l Name(s): _____ Total Attending: _____

Note: No money required with sign-up form. You order at the counter and pay the restaurant.
 We will be in the back room where we will eat, visit and hold our Election of Officers for 12/17-12/19.
Space is limited to 40, so don't wait!

Mail your sign-up form to: **AFTAC-WCC, P.O. Box 3974, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-3974 ... or ...**
 Email your sign-up information to: FallSocial@AFTACWCC.org. **Deadline for receipt: 5Nov'17.**
 [from the Depot Fallout newsletter]

NOMINATION/VOLUNTEER FORM FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTION

AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOC. – WEST COAST CHAPTER

Please Print

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

WCC President: _____ Chmn of The Board: _____
 Asst Chmn of the Bd: _____ Director At Large: _____

OTHER WCC ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Vice President: _____ Treasurer: _____
 Secretary: _____ Asst Treasurer: _____
 Asst Secretary: _____

VOLUNTEER OFFICER POSITIONS

Membership Chmn: _____ Asst Memb Chmn: _____
 Newsletter Editor: _____ Asst NL Editor: _____
 Webmaster: _____ Asst Webmaster: _____
 Publications Distribution Chmn: _____
 Asst. Pubs Distribution Chmn: _____

See www.AFTACWCC.org website "**FORMS**" page "**Articles of Assn**" link for description of duties.
Volunteer yourself or nominate another WCC member for any of these positions & mail this form to:
AFTAC-WCC, ATTN: Election Committee, P.O. Box 3974, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-3974 .. or
 Email your entries to: ElectionCommittee@AFTACWCC.org. **Deadline for receipt is: 5Nov'17.**

[from the Depot Fallout newsletter]



AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WEST COAST CHAPTER

P.O. Box 3974, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-3974
Email: TOD.Alumni@AFTACWCC.org



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / ROSTER UPDATE

Annual membership fee of \$10.⁰⁰ is due by 01 January each year. Check your mailing label for expiration date. Your last newsletter will be the one following your expiration date. Life memberships are available for \$75.⁰⁰.

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____
Last, First MI Last Rank Held Nickname Name of Spouse

Addr: _____
Street, Apt #, etc. City State Zip Code

() - _____
Home Phone Work Phone Email Addr

Active Duty: _____
Branch of Service From: mm/yyyy - To: mm/yyyy Branch of Service From: mm/yyyy - To: mm/yyyy

AFTAC Dates: _____
From: mm/yyyy - To: mm/yyyy From: mm/yyyy - To: mm/yyyy From: mm/yyyy - To: mm/yyyy

Support Your West Coast Chapter: Please pass a copy of this form to your AFTAC Alumni friends. *[From the Depot Fallout]*

CHECK OUR WEBSITE AT www.AFTACWCC.org FOR THE LATEST WCC NEWS & PHOTOS



== FIRST CLASS MAIL ==



RETURN ADDRESS:
AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
WEST COAST CHAPTER
P.O. Box 3974
Citrus Heights, CA 95611-3974