



# Depot Fallout



AFTAC Alumni Association - West Coast Chapter  
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## JANUARY 2018 EDITION

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### WCC 2017 FALL SOCIAL - 12 Nov 2017

*by Bob Fitzgerald, WCC Vice President & Webmaster*

For the Annual WCC Fall Social for 2017, which is most always held around Veteran's Day each year, was held at Sam's Hof Brau as it was last year - except this year it was moved to a Sunday, Nov 12<sup>th</sup> in order to reserve the large room for 11:30am-2:30pm. Last year (2016) there were some folks that couldn't make it to the social because we had to have it from 3:30pm-5:30pm in order to get that room on a Saturday and it would be too dark to drive afterward. We had hoped that by moving it back to the lunch hour by scheduling it on Sunday more members would be able to attend. Wrong! We had only 15 attendees this year, (*photos online and elsewhere this issue*)perhaps because it was on a Sunday instead of a Saturday? So what do we do now since that room at Sam's Hof Brau is always reserved by another group for the lunch hour on Saturday during Veteran's Day weekend? Maybe we go somewhere else!

At our WCC December business meeting, the "**Old Spaghetti Factory**" on Sunrise Ave in Roseville was suggested for our 2018 Fall Social, which would be held on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am-2:30pm. Reservations have been made, however we have enough time to cancel and make reservations at a different place if you have a better idea? If so, send your thoughts to [FallSocial@AFTACWCC.org](mailto:FallSocial@AFTACWCC.org) so the Officers can consider them at our next meeting, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Thank you!

### WCC ELECTION OF OFFICERS

*by Bob Fitzgerald, WCC Vice President & Webmaster*

The WCC is very fortunate this election cycle in that most all of the Officers from the 2016-2017 term volunteered to run again for their same positions. We are even more fortunate to have a volunteer, **Rod Hinkle**, step up to run again for WCC President, an office Rod held previously for the 2004-2005 term. Since there were no opposing candidates for office, the slate was unanimously elected by a voice vote at our Fall Social. (*See a photo of the Officers online on our "Contacts" page as well as elsewhere in this issue.*)

As you know, the WCC did not have a President for the 2016-2017 term, which required our Vice President, **Joe Johnson**, to fulfill the duties of President until Joe resigned that position after the AFTAC Worldwide Reunion was successfully held here in Sacramento in June 2017. (**Bob Fitzgerald** volunteered to act as interim VP until the election.)

Please look at the panel to the left on this page and when you see any of these folks thank them for "**keeping the fires burning**" for the WCC out here in the west. They are all doing a really good job. Now you need to do your part by participating in our activities: i.e. Spring Picnic-19May18; Fall Social-10Nov18; our quarterly business meetings (*2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays of Mar, Jun, Sep & Dec*); and online comments by you!

# LATEST WCC PHOTOS

By Bob Fitzgerald, Vice President/Webmaster

## AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION - WEST COAST CHAPTER OFFICERS for 2018-2019



## WCC FALL SOCIAL Nov 12, 2017



Front: Darlene Fitzgerald, Cathy Denbleyker, Donna Fritts, Ann Pavik, Corinne Miner, Rose Dunn & Tommie Baker  
Back: Bob Fitzgerald, Al Pavik, John Miner, Ken Denbleyker, Charlie Penn, 'Butch' Kemna, Bart Bias, Bob Baker  
& Joe Johnson

## A BIT OF HUMOR

*by Joe Johnson, Past President*

### Repercussions of a Power Outage...

We had a power outage at our house this morning and my PC, Laptop, TV, Blu-Ray, iPad & the new surround sound music system were all shut down.

Then I discovered that my smartphone battery was dead and to top it all off, it was raining outside, so I couldn't go play golf.

I went into the kitchen to make coffee and then I remembered that this also needs power, so I sat and talked with my wife for a couple of hours.

She seems like a nice person...

## REUNION STORY

*by Don King, Depot Fallout Editor*

I picked up this story at the recent reunion, but the teller wished to remain anonymous, so I apologize for any inaccuracies.

After his USAF career, he became an air traffic controller. Not a job for the faint of heart or slow to make decisions. So it was a normal day until things seemed to be getting complicated. With many blips on the screen, 2 were standing out. Those 2 bright spots representing commercial aircraft were approaching the same space on the display. This is not a desirable situation, and he started drawing a crowd around him. He contacted both of the aircraft to alert them to expect a course change request. (This, of course, brought both flight deck crews to a higher level of attention.) Now he started talking about possible solutions. When he came to a conclusion, he paused and then said, “**No, that’s not going to work!**” Unfortunately, this was all being broadcast out over the air for all pilots to hear! The two pilots realized that they were heading for a very unsatisfactory point in the sky, and the person controlling them didn’t seem to have a solution!

P.S. He did quickly come up with a solution and everything ended ok. After that, he was very careful to control transmissions!



## **IN MEMORIAM**

(Refer to [www.AFTACWCC.org](http://www.AFTACWCC.org) "Departed" page for additional photos, details, etc., and other entries.)

### **FREDRICK KENNETH BREWSTER, TSgt USAF Ret. d. 19-Dec-2017 in North Highlands, CA**



*(Obit as published in the Sacramento Bee Newspaper 24Dec2017):*

FREDRICK BREWSTER, TSgt USAF Retired, d. 19Dec2017 North Highlands, CA:

*(Obit as published in the Sacramento Bee Newspaper 24Dec2017):* "Fredrick Kenneth Brewster, age 85, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Dec 19, 2017. Fred served 22 honorable years in the U.S. Air Force and went on to work 20 years as a Letter Carrier with the US Postal Service. He is survived by his beloved wife of 62 years, Catherine, his son, Mark, his daughter, Nancy, their spouses, and numerous grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Cathy. He was loved by all who knew him and will be dearly missed." Family and friends were invited to attend a memorial service at East Lawn Mortuary & Sierra Hills Memorial Park on 28 Dec 2017.

Fred's son, Mark, told Bob Fitzgerald at the memorial service that in the 1950's – before "AFTAC" and while stationed in New York, Fred was a member of the Air Force Honor Guard. Mark also said that besides being assigned to the 1155<sup>th</sup> TechOpsSq at McClellan, Fred was stationed with Bob in the late 1960's at an AFTAC unit at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Fred retired from AFTAC and the USAF in 1973. ... *Bob says: "Fred was a good man who always had a ready smile that brightened your day. He will be missed by all who knew him."*

### **JOSEPH AMERENA, 1155<sup>th</sup> TOS & TOD Civilian Tech Writer d. 14-Aug\_2017 Norco, CA**

*Photo provided by Dale Klug from AFTACAA 'WALL 20 YEAR' Section.*



JOSEPH AMERENA, 1155<sup>th</sup> TOS & TOD Civilian Tech Writer, d. 14Aug2017 Norco, CA:

In an email sent to John Miner from Tina, *Joe's Daughter*, she said: "Joe has passed away...I am so sad to say. He went in the hospital Thursday, (*Ed: 8/10/17*), with a very bad infection.

He was not able to beat it. I miss him already. Please inform his friends. You were so very important to him. Thank you for your valued friendship, Tina”.

Dale Klug said that Joe was at 1155<sup>th</sup>/TOD from 1967-1999 and that Joe was a US Marine Corps veteran who firmly believed “Once a Marine, Always A Marine” and ended his emails with “Semper Fi”.

In an update Dale received from Tina on 5Jan2018, Tina says “No obituary was published. A small ceremony will take place at Punchbowl (ed. “*National Memorial Cemetery Of The Pacific*”) on 14 Feb 2018 at 2pm. We will place mom (*Joe’s wife Jane*) and Joe’s ashes together in a niche there.”

## **BEVERLY FRITH HALL**

d. 26-Dec-2017 Satellite Brach, FL



Beverly Frith Hall of Satellite Beach passed away on December 26, 2017 after a courageous battle with Parkinson's disease and lung cancer. Beverly was born in Columbia, South Carolina. She was predeceased by her parents Carl and Esther Frith, and her brother Curtis who died at age 29 from diabetes.

Beverly is survived by her husband, Frank Hall of Satellite Beach, her daughter Deborah Davidson, and son Scott F. Hall; her children's spouses, Steve Davidson of Melbourne and Scott's wife Eleni Hall Manolaraki of Merritt Island; her grandchildren, Shelby Davidson of New York City and Tyler Davidson of Hurlburt AFB, Florida; her sister Brenda French, Brenda's spouse Al French, and Brenda's children.

Beverly graduated from Dreher High School in Columbia, South Carolina, and attended the University of South Carolina. In 1956, Beverly met her future husband, Frank, while working as a secretary for the SC Highway Department in Columbia; Frank was attending USC and was also working at the Highway Department. On December 28, 1956, Beverly married Frank, after he had entered the Air Force. For the next 30 years, Beverly was with Frank in Europe and numerous assignments in the continental United States and Hawaii, ending their military traveling at Patrick AFB in Florida.

## **HEALTH & WELFARE REPORT(s)**

*by Bob Fitzgerald, WCC VP*

**DENNIS NOLAN:** As some of our members may be aware, **Dennis Nolan, WCC Director At Large**, had a hemorrhagic stroke (*bleeding on the brain*) on 4 November 2017 and was in the hospital for some time but finally was sent home to recover with therapy. I am very happy to report that Dennis told me today, 11 January 2018, that he is doing much better. He is still getting therapy but has pretty much recovered and is able to drive again. Dennis said that his Doctor will have him go through another CT-Scan before he will be cleared to ride his bicycle again, which Dennis says he does miss doing. We all wish Dennis well and will keep him in our prayers for continued rehab to 100% again. ... *Bob Fitzgerald, WCC V.P.*

## EVENTS CALENDAR

The WCC Business Meetings, open to all AFTAC Alumni, are held the **2<sup>nd</sup> Monday** of March, June, September and December at 7pm at the Lionsgate Hotel Restaurant on McClellan Park. The meetings usually last no more than one hour. These are also a good time for informal get-togethers to catch up on what's happening. The next business meeting will be on March 12, 2018. Always check our [www.AFTACWCC.org](http://www.AFTACWCC.org) website "Events" page to confirm.

Our next social event will be our annual **WCC Spring Picnic** to be held on **Saturday, 19 May 2018, 11:30AM-2:30PM** at Tempo Park. **This is a free Alumni BBQ & Pot-luck event.** The details and a signup form will be published in our April issue of the Depot Fallout and also available earlier on our website. Please put this on your calendar and watch for news!

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

*by Dave Price, Membership Chairman*

As of Jan 2, 2018

**Total Active Members = 147    Life Members = 140.**

**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 Oct 2017 –31 Dec 2017  
Submitted 1-Jan-2018 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>
<b>3,436</b>	11/20 – 11/26 ( <b>427</b> )	<b>3,729</b>	Contacts ( <b>344</b> )	Albums** ( <b>291</b> )

Notes: \* Does not include our 'Home' page, which almost always is the most popular page.  
\*\* The 17 May 2014 Spring Picnic Album was the second most visited page.

**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.**

## LAB RATS

*AFTAC Press Release*

### Ions and betas and treaties, oh my!

*By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs / Published November 08, 2017*

**PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** -- In a world filled with uncertainty and growing concerns about the global proliferation of nuclear weaponry, there is one organization in the Department of Defense dedicated to identifying debris from possible atomic explosions and analyzing the findings for national decision makers.

The Ciambrone Radiochemistry Laboratory, which opened its doors at Patrick Air Force Base in March 2014, is the sole DoD laboratory dedicated to the analysis of radioactive debris. The 38,000 square foot facility is manned by scientists of varying backgrounds – chemists, physicists, nuclear engineers, radiation safety – and their primary focus is simple: determine if effluents from a potential nuclear explosion are present in environmental samples collected globally by AFTAC personnel.

Simple, yes, but not always easy. It takes a team of highly skilled, technically adept experts to operate high purity germanium, x-ray and gamma-ray detectors, alpha and beta radiation monitoring systems, mass spectrometers and precision analytical chemistry equipment.

Lt. Col. James J. Thomas, director of lab operations for the Air Force Technical Applications Center and trained physicist himself, leads nearly 60 CRL personnel who support the nation's critical nuclear treaty monitoring mission.

"Our senior leaders rely on our network of labs to assess compliance with nuclear weapons testing in support of the U.S. Atomic Energy Detections System, as well as AFTAC's Nuclear Debris Collection and Analysis Program," said Thomas. "Our lab professionals identify radiological or nuclear debris collected from air or ground samples to ensure signatories are complying with established treaties like the Limited Test Ban Treaty."

The lab was named after Col. Thomas Ciambrone, a career Air Force officer who spent 20 of his 30 active duty years with the nuclear treaty monitoring center. The lab became operational in March 2014 when AFTAC moved into its new \$158 million facility. Establishing the Ciambrone Lab at Patrick AFB filled a void created when the center's central laboratory at McClellan AFB, Calif., closed after the 1995 Base Realignment and Closure actions.

"From 1995 until 2014, AFTAC had to rely solely on another contracted lab to conduct the NDC&A mission," said Thomas. "Most, if not all, military leaders don't relish the idea of a single point of failure. In 2011, one of our contracted labs had to evacuate due to a major natural disaster, and that lab's operations had to be temporarily suspended. Time becomes an issue, especially when we're dealing with radioactive decay and the importance of preserving perishable evidence. That's why it was so important for us to have this redundancy."

The lab has stringent rules, regulations and safety precautions it must take to ensure its environment is free of impurities. It's vital to their mission.

"Much like a court trial, nations require definitive evidence before accusing another nation of violating a provision of a treaty," said Thomas. "In some circumstances, the only unambiguous evidence of a treaty violation may be trace amounts of radioactive debris. In these cases, laboratory analysis is required to confirm the presence of nuclear materials from an explosion and distinguish them from naturally-occurring radioactive materials, or releases from peaceful uses of nuclear materials such as medical facilities or nuclear power plants."

He added, "Because of this critical need and role, our laboratory must be ready at any given time. It is extremely important that samples are rigorously processed and protected from contamination with the environment after being collected. CRL's environment needs to be free of impurities and pollutants such as dust, particles and vapors that may contain natural radioactivity. Lab personnel take several steps and precautions to ensure the laboratory maintains its pristine atmosphere."

Thomas, a 2001 Air Force Officer Training School graduate, credits his success and the success of the lab directly to the men and women he works with each and every day.

"I brag on my folks as often as I can because they're that good," Thomas said. "We affectionately call each other The Lab Rats, and we're very proud of the brand we've created for ourselves. Morale in our work center is extremely high and everyone goes the extra mile for one another – not just on the job, but also off duty. People look out for each other, and a leader can't ask for much more than that. It's like the old saying, 'Take care of the people, and the people will take care of the mission.' It certainly is the case here at Ciambrone."

When asked what his leadership philosophy is, Thomas took no time answering. "It's so important to lead from the front – always. I will do anything that I ask the men and women of the lab to do. I've learned that if you are too big for the small jobs, then you're probably too small for the big jobs."

While the Ciambrone Lab is not a squadron, per se, its structure mirrors that of a typical squadron found throughout the Air Force. Gen. David L. Goldfein, Air Force Chief of Staff, referred to squadrons as the "beating heart of the Air Force" and the "engines of innovation and esprit de corps" where standards are set, excellence is fostered and healthy work environments are cultivated.

"We have five branches within the lab that are very similar to flights found in a squadron," explained Thomas. "Our radiochemistry branch and mass spectrometry branches isolate specific elements brought to the lab. This allows them to remove the relatively large amount of radioactivity from the samples and identify the tiniest amount of nuclear debris. The measurements branch uses high purity germanium detectors and other alpha/beta detectors to capture the radioactivity levels in each sample. Our operations branch analyzes the data and produces a report to NDC&A customers to provide germane information to senior leaders and our higher headquarters. And the support branch makes up the 'unsung heroes' of the lab – the folks who keep operations flowing smoothly from personnel issues to computer networks."

A squadron is also considered to be the USAF's most basic unit that's responsible for vital, day-to-day operations. The Ciambrone Radiochemistry Lab certainly meets those criteria. And CRL's contributions to AFTAC's nuclear treaty monitoring mission continue to impress the center's commander.

"The technical analysis performed by the men and women of the Ciambrone lab provides the evidence used and scrutinized at the highest levels of government, often with great urgency," said Col. Steven M. Gorski, AFTAC commander. "I am continually impressed with the level of expertise and degree of proficiency these scientists and technicians display on a daily basis. We recruit the best of the best in the field of radiochemistry, and that shows in the superior work they perform for our national decision makers."



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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / ROSTER UPDATE

**Annual membership fee of \$10.<sup>00</sup> 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.<sup>00</sup>.**

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CHECK OUR WEBSITE AT [www.AFTACWCC.org](http://www.AFTACWCC.org) FOR THE LATEST WCC NEWS & PHOTOS



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