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# 162nd Wing Retiree News

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This newsletter is published by the 162nd Wing Retirees Office for the sole purpose of providing information relevant to retirees. Photos in this publication are from Retirees Office files or public domain, unless otherwise noted. Questions or comments regarding this publication should be forwarded to the address listed in the upper left-hand corner of this page.



The Convair T-29 "The Lizard" support aircraft was flown by the 162nd from 1972 to 1975.

## 152nd Fighter Squadron celebrates 75 years

When the Tucson Air Guard was activated as the 152nd Fighter Interceptor Squadron in 1956 that was not the beginning. On October 13, 1939 the 152nd designation was assigned as the 152nd Observation Squadron at Hillsgrove, Rhode Island, flying Douglas O-38 biplanes. In 1940 the 152nd moved from Rhode Island to Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. Then, from 1943 to 1946, the 152nd was assigned to several more states, including Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Virginia and back to Rhode Island in 1946. In 1943-44 the 152nd was deployed overseas to support our allies in WWII.



Douglas O-38



On May 1, 1956 the 152nd was moved to the State of Arizona. Soon after, on May 18, 1956 it was recognized as a unit of the Tucson Air Guard and became the 152nd Fighter Interceptor Squadron. The 152nd has been assigned to Tucson ever since.

To commemorate the 152nd's 75th anniversary, the squadron has painted the tail of one of its F-16's. The original idea of a commemorative paint scheme was the brainchild of Lt. Col. "Scratch" Haase, 152nd DO and Maj. "Mojo" Balazs, 152nd Flight Commander. They shared their idea with 162nd Structural Repair Shop Supervisor MSgt Sean Pierce who finalized the design and turned the project over to two of his personnel.



Artwork for the 75th Anniversary aircraft was created by the 162nd Aircraft Structural Repair Shop

Photo by 162WG Public Affairs

The finished product resulted from the talents and skills of SRA Nicholas Hoffman and Rudy Mendez who fabricated and installed the design on the aircraft. The artwork is a combination of decals and paint methodically applied in layers. As a final step, several clear-coats were applied to ensure survival of the graphics during supersonic flight.

This proud visual tribute to the longevity of the 152nd can remain on the aircraft for a designated period of time. It then must be removed and becomes a memory that is relegated to pictures in the unit historical files.

## SBP Benefits are not automatic; you have to apply

Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) claims are not automatic. Proper paperwork must be submitted to ensure benefits will be paid to survivors. Also, there is a statute of limitations of six years for submitting a claim for SBP. This rule is written in 31 U.S.C. § 3702(b) and is called the Barring Act. This limitation rule states that if a claim is not submitted within six years of death, the claim is barred and DFAS does not have jurisdiction to consider it. Basically stated, if a claim is not submitted within six years these benefits are lost forever. For this reason surviving spouses will need to submit claims soon after the death of the retiree by completing the appropriate DD Form 2656 and submitting it to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). The retiree needs to ensure family members are aware of all SBP rules and contacts. Then, when the time comes, the survivors will know what to do.

Another factor the retiree should consider is to ensure taking care of a new spouse when remarrying. After the loss of a spouse through death or divorce, when marrying again, be sure that any Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) is updated to take care of new family members. Having current information in the system is essential to ensure proper execution of any benefits when the time comes.

It's difficult to believe that survivor benefits would not be paid. However, due to not keeping information current, and not submitting the proper forms in a timely manner, we know of situations where survivors have been left with no financial benefits. Unfortunately, a surviving spouse, while dealing with the loss of a loved one, also found they were left without expected income. This is a tragedy that should never happen.

Taking care of family members should be at the top of any priority list. If you have doubts about what you and your family have signed up for and are entitled to, call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 today.

## Retiree Events

January – April 2015

**Monthly Retirees Luncheon**  
Held the second Tuesday of each month at the Golden Corral Buffet, 6865 N Thornydale Rd., 11:00 a.m. Scheduled dates are:

Jan 13  
Feb 10  
March 10  
April 14



**Monthly Flightline Luncheon**  
Held the last Monday of each month at the Skybox Restaurant, NE corner of River Rd. and Craycroft, 12 noon. Scheduled dates are:

Jan 26  
Feb 23  
March 30  
April 27



**Monthly Pilot's Breakfast**  
Held the first Tuesday of each month at the IHOP, 5101 E. Grant Rd., 7 a.m.



## Annual White Mountain Picnic

The 2015 AZANG White Mountain Retirees Picnic is scheduled for Thursday, June 18, 2015 at Charlie Clark's Steakhouse in Pinetop, AZ. Put this date on your calendar.

Stay tuned for more information.



## Retirees Remembered

The following former 162nd members recently passed away. Sincere condolences to the family and friends of these dedicated Guardsmen:



**Robert E. Baum:** Bob was an early 162nd member who served in the Maintenance and Support squadrons.

**Oscar Valenzuela:** Oscar was also an early unit member who served with us in the AGE shop.

**Ramiro "Ray" Romero:** Ray served the 162nd in Maintenance as a painter in the Fabrication Section.

**Arthur Hannebohm:** Art was one of the early unit members who served for many years in Base Supply.



## Help with Income Tax available for Guard retirees

Free income tax assistance for military members, including Guard retirees, is available at Davis-Monthan AFB. **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** is the organization that provides this tax preparation by trained, IRS certified volunteers.

When you go you will need your last years tax return, all tax forms showing income (W-2's, 1099's, 1098's, etc.) and social security cards with numbers for anyone listed on the return. You will also need necessary information for direct deposit, including institution, routing number and account number (taxes will be completed and filed during your visit).

For more information, and/or to make an appointment, call (520) 228-3489. Appointments for Guard retirees can be made starting February 2, 2015.

## Hearing Aids are available for military vets

Retired Guard members with hearing loss may be eligible for free hearing aids from the Veterans Administration. Every retiree's situation is different but you won't know if you qualify unless you ask. To check on your status, visit the VA Hospital in Tucson. First go to Eligibility and Enrollment in Bldg. 69 (If you already have a VA card skip this step). Next, Visit the Veterans Service Officer in Bldg. 13. Take your AFSC and a list of all noisy equipment you were exposed to.

If you prefer to have a Veterans Advocate assist you contact the AZ Dept. of Veterans Services at (520) 207-4960, or call Veterans Benefit Representative John Roseberry at (520) 228-7205.

## In Memoriam 2014

As another year ends we would like to recognize former unit members who were no longer with us at the end of 2014. These individuals were our friends and coworkers who helped create the proud history of the 162nd.



C. L. Coward	Richard Ward	Bob Baum
Willie Wilson	F. Donald Ahee	Oscar Valenzuela
Carlos Lopez	Darryl Gould	Ray Romero
Jon Nelson	Ruben Perez	Art Hannebohm

## Retirees generosity shines at December Lunch

The Monthly Retirees Luncheon held on December 9th was an event to remember. The more than 55 retirees who showed up were in the Christmas spirit as they donated a truckload of food and a sizeable amount of cash to help lift the



Holiday Spirits of less fortunate current Guard members. Barb Gavre, 162nd Airmen and Family Readiness Program Manager, was present to accept the donations. She presented a trophy to the retirees and thanked them for their generous support of needy Guard members.

Some retirees also dug into their pockets and donated money to support the Tucson Air Guard Memorial Fund.

Attendees shared some lively conversation over lunch reviving memories of old times while telling war stories about their military careers. It was an outstanding event and a good time was had by all.



On November 8, 2014 a formal ceremony was held in Marana to signify groundbreaking for a new Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery. Project completion is scheduled for early 2016.

Many dignitaries were present, including public figures from Tucson, Marana, Oro Valley, Sahuarita, Pima County and the State of Arizona. Also represented were Davis-Monthan AFB, the Air National Guard and the Tohono O'odham nation. Guests of honor at the ceremonies were members of the Kai family, long-time Marana farmers whose generous land donation made this cemetery possible.

Posting of the colors was performed by the DMAFB Honor Guard.

The event was well attended by an interested and enthusiastic group of military veterans from all services. A prominent flag display by members of the American Legion Riders, many of whom are also military veterans, highlighted the ceremonies.

When construction is completed, this will be the third veterans' cemetery in Arizona. The two current locations are the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix and the Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista.

A new veterans cemetery is also under construction at Camp Navajo in Northern Arizona.



Keeping with tribal customs, the cemetery land was blessed by a member of the Tohono O'odham nation



Veterans and local dignitaries joined forces to formally break ground at the new cemetery