



A Word from Willie

Society of Wild Weasels Newsletter February 2020



CINCWW's Corner

Fellow Weasels,

Well, here we are, 2020. A new decade, New Year, and a time to reflect. In addition, it will be a year filled with politics with an ongoing attempt to impeach our President (now resolved), a State of the Union address, and an upcoming Presidential Election which portends even further political divisiveness in our social fabric.

I take heart in knowing our military has done a remarkable job over the years in staying apolitical and largely stuck to our oath of office by "supporting and defending the Constitution" and "following the orders of those appointed over us". Note I didn't say supporting political agendas which I personally classify as an unlawful order. I'm not saying we shouldn't

participate in the political process as citizens, but then I also believe we also know the dividing line in what you are legal to do in and out of uniform. Having spent 16 years overseas, served in Major NATO and Coalition Headquarters, numerous Southwest Asia and IFOR deployments, and been involved in NATO force apportionment conferences and basing rights surveys, one begins to understand the brilliance with which our founders made the military subservient to civil authority and why so many countries try to emulate our system. It's a driving factor behind foreign military officers attending our PME schools in residence and The Marshall Center Partnership for Peace School in Garmisch, GE.

So, I think a good theme for this Words from Willie is it's time we take a deep breath, let's review where we're at and let's recharge those batteries. Think of this edition as A State of the SoWW Address. For starters, we are working a handful of ideas and projects either with or augmenting efforts by the River Rats. Most of you are aware Dave Brog has been the front man for years for Air Warrior Courage Foundation (AWCF). However, some of you may not be aware the scope of AWCF has expanded from members only to disaster relief assistance and scholarship grants as well. At least 3 Weasels are involved in collaborative projects with the River Rats as well that affect all of us. Quack Bear has penned an excellent update on the status of those of us that may have cancer related to military flying. Rest assured you'll be hearing more and more on this in the months and years ahead. Also included is a partially plagiarized piece from the Fall Mig Sweep on the River Rat Museum being built in Bowling Green, KY. The key takeaways there are Frank A;fter is on the ground floor planning committee and we've been promised we'll have a section to tell the Wild Weasel story.

Mentioned in previous newsletters are Air Force Academy Cadet Sq 35 (Wild Weasels) desire to have a WW Memorial Room in their squadron. And our own review and revision of the SoWW Charter and By Laws. Suffice it to say neither are ready for prime-time release yet. In addition to the Financial and Membership updates our new editor Budman and computer whiz son Josh have continued much appreciated improvements and additions to our site.

Finally, it's not too early to start thinking about our next reunion, Phoenix 2021. Dates are 29 Apr - 2 May (primary) and 6-9 May (back up). Preliminary spadework has already been done on hotel(s), transportation, Friday Night at the Club, etc. but I have refrained from dealing directly with the 56 FW/CC as he's due to change out this summer. I expect to wait until after the change of command before we start asking for any favors or commitments. Again, Happy New Year and hope to see you in Phoenix if not sooner.

Uke

YGBSM/FILO

CINCWW

Fallen Wild Weasels

Lawrence E "Larry" Day, WW #1849, Pilot, F-4G, 17 Jul 2019

<https://www.lucaseatonfuneralhome.com/notices/MajorGeneralLawrenceE-DayRetUSAirForce>

Richard J "Dick" Keppler, WW #732, Program Office for STANDARD ARM and Shrike, F105 and Navy A6 Intruder, 18 Dec 2019

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/abqjournal/obituary.aspx?n=richardkeppler&pid=194773088&fhid=7152&f=portal>

William E "Sky King" Malerba, WW #1302, Pilot, F-105G, 21 Dec 1998

Morris L "Morris" McDaniel, WW #311, Pilot, F-105F, 4 Oct 1967

John P "Mo" Mojica, WW #117, EWO, F-100F F-105, 26 Sep 2019

https://obits.reviewjournal.com/obituaries/lvrj/obituary.aspx?n=john-petermojica&pid=194087252&fhid=12179&utm_source=MarketingCloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ObitShare+-with+PowerInbox&utm_content=ViewObituary&sfmc_id=45314583

William W "Bill" Rowley, WW #609, Pilot, F-105, 27 Jun 2019

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/staugustine/obituary.aspx?n=william-warrenrowley&pid=193434697&fhid=12938>

John N "Bill" Sexton, WW #519, Pilot, F-105F, 16 Sep 2019

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/mesa-az/john-sexton-8858153>

John "Tom" Halley, WW #896, Pilot, F-105G, F-4G, 14 Jan 2020

<https://obituaries.tylerpaper.com/obituaries/tylerpaper/obituary.aspx?n=usaf-ret-col-johnthomas-halley&pid=195128441&fhid=6512>

Our Condolences to their families, friends, and brothers in arms. Hand Salute! Rest in Peace!

Chili

Membership Update

New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Darryl "OBD" Roberson WW # 2792, Pilot F-4G and F-16

Garret Schmitz, WW #2791, Pilot, F-16
Robert "Pipes" Stimpson, WW #2790, Pilot, F-16
Scott W "Spyder" Walker, WW #2789, Pilot, F-16
Chili

Surviving Family Members.

We are pleased to welcome one new Surviving Family Member who picks up the number of their deceased family member:

Brad Webb, WW #1112, Surviving Family Member

Once again, if you know of family members who qualify, have them contact us at membership@wildweasels.org.

Chili

AMIC Report

In the Fall 2019 MiG Sweep, Gary (Shooter) Kurdys announced the establishment of a River Rats Aviation Medical Issues Committee (AMIC), along with a 6-question Fighter Pilot Cancer Survey. Phil (Quack Bear) Steeves has been placed on this committee. There are actually four flight surgeons on the committee of 10 Rats, and Phil has been assigned the lead for the "doc 4ship." We hope all Wild Weasels responded to the survey, which closed out 31 Dec 2019 (it's too late to respond now). Quack Bear and his 4-ship of docs will be collating the survey results and reporting through the AMIC to the RRVA executive committee. Look for the results in the next MiGSweep. There were almost 900 responses to that initial survey, out of a RRVA membership of over 3,400. Hopefully all Weasels responded.

There is a plan to create a more extensive survey in the near future, which will include more specific questions about various medical problems, not just cancer. Other areas of interest will be spine problems and other Repetitive Stress Injuries. It could potentially expand to include immunological problems, maybe also family members such as birth defects in children, and such. It may also ask about other potential exposures including toxic chemicals, fuels, Agent Orange, radiation, pulling G's, etc. When this survey comes out, be sure to submit your personal experiences. The more data we can collect, the better chance we have of getting Congress's and/or the VA's attention.

Millennium Cohort Study

In response to concerns about the health effects of deployments following the 1991 Gulf War, Congress and the Institute of Medicine recommended that DoD conduct prospective epidemiological research to evaluate the impact of military exposures, including deployment, on long-term health outcomes. The Millennium Cohort Study, the largest prospective health study in the military with more than 200,000 participants, meets this critical need. In our Words from Willie we wanted to republish the website for your continued support for those that may have participated in this study previously:

<https://www.millenniumcohort.org/about>

Update on the River Rat Museum (from River Rat Magazine)

As CINCWW discusses in the opening update it's now official. Below is the article from Craig "Pontiff" Pope, River Rat Museum Director.

The River Rat Executive Board has established a River Rat Museum Committee to begin the initial steps to design and coordinate the beginnings of what will become the River Rat museum ... and it only took 52 years! Request for volunteers to help on the committee was sent out in July and the response was great. Here's the team so far: Tom Hanton, Robert Moynihan, Ron Bartlett, Frank Alfter, Mat Garretson, Dean Vikan, and Craig Pope. The museum will be located in the Aviation Heritage Park (AHP) Museum building, which is located in Bowling Green, KY, and is currently under construction. For more information on AHP, see the back page of the Summer 2019 MIG SWEEP or visit the website, address listed at the bottom of this page.

Each committee member will oversee different sections of the museum. There may be one or two more members asked/needed to join as we decide exactly how many different sections will be covered. by the museum initial steps to design and coordinate the beginnings of what will become the River Rat museum ... and it only took 52 years! Request for volunteers to help on the committee was sent out in July and the response was great. Here's the team so far: Tom Hanton, Robert Moynihan, Ron Bartlett, Frank Alfter, Mat Garretson, Dean Vikan, and Craig Pope. The museum will be located in the Aviation Heritage Park (AHP) Museum building, which is located in Bowling Green, KY, and is currently under construction. For more information on AHP, see the back page of the Summer 2019 MIG SWEEP or visit the website, address listed at the bottom of this page.

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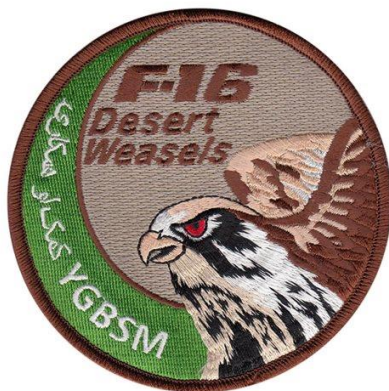
we will then start to "pencil in" the different aspects of what will ultimately tell the story of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association. Our initial plan is to start with a main display with an overall historical display, starting with the formation of the River Rats, covering all the major people, dates, places, events, right up to the current reunions. As there are so many aspects that are under the River Rats area of operations, we are hoping to have displays for each "subset" to help tell the complete story. Just a few of the many areas that will have their own displays are: Air Force and Naval Operations, Fighters, BUFFs, Tankers, FACs, Rescue/Sandys, Reece, Reunions, Key Individuals, and on and on. In addition, there will be special displays highlighted with Artifacts, Flight Suits, Hats, Patches, Challenge Coins, Artwork and much more. We feel the best way to make sure that each "groups" story is historically correct is to involve that group" in the design and displaying of their artifacts. Our goal is not to be an Air Force or Naval museum annex; it is just to make sure that we tell our story and include all aspects that make up the history of the River Rats. Each display case will have photos with detailed descriptions, related memorabilia, artwork, and professionally built models. It's no secret ... This project will require a lot of funding. That's where YOU can help.

A website has been setup billysparkspack.com/rr-museum so you can get the latest updates on the museum status, including construction, funding raising and other news on AHP and the River Rat museum project. If you have any thoughts/leads/inputs in the area of fundraising, forward them to the Museum Committee at museum@river-rats.org, and we will take a look and see what we can do.

Virtual Museum on Our Website Update

FYSA, thanks to Don Ayer and Tom "Gummibear" Gummo and their contributions the virtual museum is being produced. It has some great stuff on both the early history of the Wild Weasel (to include seminal documents) as well as our legacy from Vietnam through Desert Storm to the great Airmen of today. Below are some of the pictures we have collected and shooting to be open to the public by 30 March. Each month we will highlight some of the collections and this month are F-16 for our newest members carrying on the tradition!

Budman





Wild Weasel History

We are continuing to populate personal histories from Howard Plunkett's WW#2445 database. Check it out at Personal Histories Note: you must be a current, active member to view this page.



Keep your coin handy! ROE is in effect!

Upcoming Events

River Rat Reunion, San Antonio Texas (<http://www.river-rats.org/events.php> to register) 2 - 5 Apr 2020

Warhawk Nation Reunion 23-26 April 2020 Las Vegas Nevada, POC Pete Zimowski reunion, (petezimo@me.com)

(Warhawk website: <http://greatwarhawknation.com/>)

12th TFW Assoc (MacDill, Cam Ranh Bay, and Phu Cat); Crowne Plaza; Dayton, OH, 6 - 9 May 2020 POC: River Rat POC, Bill Cathey, 830-370-3386

Wild Weasel Reunion, Phoenix Arizona Primary--29 April - 2 May (6-9 May backup) 2021, POC Jim "Uke" Uken

Links of Interest (in this section we will periodically scan links for reading):

Society of Wild Weasels, P.O. Box 877, Silver Spring, MD 20918

wild-weasels-board@googlegroups.com

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