

WINGS



NEWS

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Ed Reynolds Editor

# Richard Nixon Presidential Library - *Captured: Shot Down In Vietnam* Exhibit



Photo Courtesy of the Nixon Library

On September 7, 2023, thirty-two members of Wings Over Wendy’s visited the Richard Nixon Presidential Library to see the *Captured: Shot Down In Vietnam* Exhibit. Most of the group traveled on a bus provided by Councilman John Lee. Attending were **David Alvarez, Lee Ambers, Lee Auger, Mark Ax, Ron Boggess, Dick Burns, Michael and Edith Castro, Barry Chapman, Bob Donovan, Bob Eisenhart, Nancy Eisenhart, Gordon Fell, Bill and Dolores Garland, David Greenberg, Fred Kaplan, Steve and Lila Klausner, Andy Kopetzky, Victor Korechoff, Eric Lace, Marion Lovelace, Joe Muller, Kurt Rademacher, Ed Reynolds, Ray and Maria Rodriguez, Bruce Schultz, Jim Sivazlian, Mike Sugar, Karen and Tim Velarde, and Joe Weber.**

Each Vietnam War veteran was awarded a **Vietnam War Veteran ~ “A Grateful Nation Thanks You”** lapel/hat pin.

# Jimmy Weldon Celebration of Life



Photo by Larry Kushner

On Saturday, September 23, 2023, over forty members of Wings Over Wendy's joined members of the Hollywood American Legion Post 43, Jimmy's friends, and relatives to celebrate Jimmy Weldon's life on what would be his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The celebration was held at the Hollywood American Legion Post 43. The celebration was conducted by Glen Schecter and the Post Officers. Clips and pictures were shown from his TV acting days, and stories were told by his many friends. Sandwiches and cake were served by the Post. It was an emotional tribute to a very talented and great gentleman.

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## Meetings

### September 4, 2023



## Genius of The Jet: The Invention Of The Jet Engine: Frank Whittle

On September 4, 2023 we watched a documentary titled the "Genius Of The Jet | The Invention Of The Jet Engine: Frank Whittle."

This is the Story of how Frank Whittle invented the jet engine. He overcame all the odds only to see the British government almost throw his idea away and miss a chance to shorten the Second World War.

Frank was born on June 1st, 1907, in Coventry, England. His parents were working class and his father was a foreman in the machine tool manufacturers. As he grew up he worked in his father's shops and developed skills of mechanics and manufacturing.

He was fascinated with flight and joined the RAF and obtained a cadetship and learned to fly. In between learning to fly and studying at Cranwell, Whittle first conceived the idea that would make him famous.

It all started with a student thesis. He chose to write about future developments and aircraft design rather ambitiously and concentrated on the engine side, connecting speed range, engine efficiency, and so forth. To him, that meant that if you wanted to go very fast and far, you would have to go to very high heights of 50,000 feet.

(Continued page 3)

An area where the piston engine obviously wouldn't work, and at speeds where the propeller wouldn't work. So he started to look for a new kind of power plant. Whittle prepared this paper during the first half of 1928.

When the professor marked it, he wrote on it. In effect, he didn't really understand it, but he gave him 30 out of 30, which Frank thought was quite satisfactory.

Whittle envisaged flying speeds of 500 miles an hour at a time when propeller planes struggled to reach 150. The machines of the era were noisy and shook the pilot terribly. That's because their engines were actually automobile motors on a bigger scale, with many moving parts.

Whittle felt an aesthetic dislike for such power plants. The problem with the piston engine as you go up height, even though you supercharge it the power drops off as the air gets thinner and there eventually comes a point where it won't generate enough power to turn itself over against its own friction.

Whittle's idea would use the same principle as a balloon filled with air. When this escapes, every child knows what happens, but it wasn't clear how an engine might recreate such a force.

He considered a piston engine driving a fan inside a hollow fuselage, and then thought, well, why not throw that piston engine away up the compression ratio of the fan and substitute a turbine for the piston engine? And there was the turbojet.

Whittle's plan proposed just one moving part, a shaft with a compressor driven by a turbine at the other end.

The compressor spins around, sucking air into combustion chambers many times at the spheric pressure. This air is mixed with vaporized fuel and ignited. The hot gas created expands through the turbine, turning the shaft, and escapes into the atmosphere. It is this continuous force that propels a jet airplane along.

The turbojet concept brought with it so many natural advantages. One big factor in favor of a jet engine was that when you went up high, the air temperature was very low, which greatly benefited the compressor. It meant that you could get much better conditions for the compressor, and the other thing is that in a normal tone, the velocity coming out of it is wasted. But in the case of the jet engine, that was completely used.



Whittle patented his design and offered his idea to the engine industry. No one thought it could ever work. According to the theories of the time, there was this fundamental difficulty with gas turbines, inefficient compressors, inefficient turbines and the other big snag was the materials that existed in 1929 couldn't stand temperatures more than, say, about 500 degrees centigrade.

Frank also went to London to put his revolutionary concept to the Air Ministry.

It was very coolly received, and he got a letter from the amnesty saying, in effect, that they weren't really interested and so forth.

At this time in Germany, a young scientist was eagerly looking forward to his first trip in an airplane. His name was Hans von Ohain. Hans always dreamed about the beauty of flying, but his first flight in a three-engine passenger plane was a great disappointment. It was so noisy and vibrated a lot.

He felt the piston engine and propeller is not a good propulsion system. The elegance of flying is destroyed by it. The sight of smoke rushing from chimneys inspired Ohain to think that if a turbine could create that force, he could make a smoother aero engine.

High speed was not the primary goal. Smoothness and low noise was more the starting point of his thinking, but as he thought about it, he noticed that as a matter of fact, it would be capable of driving the airplane faster.

Britain's Air Ministry had declined to keep Whittle's patents a secret. Freely available, they quickly made their way to Germany just as the Nazis came to power.

These patents were widely read in German aviation circles while Hitler was rapidly building a new Luftwaffe. Whittle's idea aroused no interest in Great Britain, and his jet engine remained stillborn.

The Royal Air Force send Whittle to Cambridge where he gained additional engineering knowledge and met influential people that led to his forming the Power Jets Limited company and hired British Thomson Houston (BTH) to build an engine. The Air Ministry was still not impressed.

Meanwhile, Ernst Heinkel was interested in Germany, and Nazi Germany had the money to pursue jet engine development.

**As the Nazi threat grew, Whittle had a war winner. Yet Britain was set to abandon it.**

But, in 1938, they gave Whittle a limited contract to continue to develop his jet engine. In June 1939, they impressed the director of scientific research of the advantages of jet engines.

The turbojet was saved for Great Britain, but Germany, unaware of Whittle's breakthrough, already had a jet plane, Heinkel's 178. Then the 280.

By May 1941, Whittle's engine was ready to go in Britain's first jet plane, the experimental Gloucester, E 28/39. (Continued page 4)

On its first flight, it was faster than a Spitfire. Churchill ordered 1000 Whittle engines, but England was now at war and couldn't build them, so they turned to the US, which had not entered the war. General Electric was selected to build the engines. Six months later, Bell Aircraft built their twin jet aircraft.

In England, the Air Ministry awarded the contract to Rover, and it didn't perform. Rolls Royce took over building Whittle engines. **Had the ministry pursued Whittle's idea in 1929, a similar plane would have been available by the start of the war to repel the Luftwaffe. Lives would have been saved. The war even shortened.**

At least the work of Frank Whittle could now have a bearing on how that war was fought. In July 1944, the Gloucester Meteor became the first jet fighter to enter operational service in Kent. By now, the Luftwaffe could no longer mount air raids over Britain, but these Meteors were quickly put to work intercepting a lethal new menace. The V1 guided missile.

Around this time, Allied pilots were startled to find themselves attacked by a German plane with no propeller. It was the Messerschmitt 262.

Germany's jet program had by now advanced to this sophisticated design. It had been chosen instead of the HG 280. The Nazis never liked Heinkel and had canceled his promising jet fighter. Yet, it could have been mass-produced by 1944. By contrast, the 262 arrived late and was rushed into battle too soon.

In 1976, Whittle went to live in the United States. He felt more recognized in the States than he did in England. After the war, Hans von Ohain moved to America to work on Jet Propulsion for the US Air Force. Fascinated by each other's work, Whittle and Ohain became good friends. Britain eventually rediscovered its genius of the jet.

In 1986, the Queen took her hand and ordered him the Order of Merit. And other honors came along following that. So I would say from about the early 80s onwards, people began to remember who it was, who was the prime pioneer of the turbojet. And also a man with a profound legacy.

## September 11, 2023



# Bob Donovan: Recognizing the War Hero Who Led WTC Survivors to Safety on 9/11

On September 11, 2023, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center Towers, we remembered the history of the date. Bob Donovan told the story of Richard Rescoria, Morgan Stanley's VP of Security.

Fire paramedics in the operating room. Some are just teachers, but some are heroes. Heroes always arise, and in a tragedy, they are special heroes. Uncommon Valor was a common virtue. Those men are trained to run towards the fire and know that they will perhaps face their own death. That was the case at 911. We lost a lot of firefighters, I think right around 350. They ran into a building knowing that they were running to certain death. But there's one person, Rick, Rescorla. Rick was a young man born in Cornwall, England, impressed with some of the American soldiers he had seen during his young life. He wanted to be a soldier, so he joined the British Army. They sent him to Rhodesia to fight. And he fought. He came home. He decided he liked Americans.

He came to America, became a US Army soldier, and was sent to Vietnam. He realized in combat, as anybody that's ever been trained, even if you're a musician, you know, you have to keep practice, practice, practice. Because during that time, when you're up on stage or whether it's the whole world is watching and nobody's watching but this chaos, you'll forget where you are if you don't have muscle memory. Even though you use rules to follow muscle, you need memory.

After a couple of years, most people in the trade towers, but old Rick, no longer did fire drills. He was a military guy who knew train, train, train. Oh, they hated Rick. He had the bullhorn out there yelling and screaming at his people at Morgan Stanley. OK, file two by 2.

Oh, another damn fire drill. Well, guess what? When 911 hit, everybody in Morgan Stanley that he had trained survived. They got out of that building. He saved these people. After all, they knew what to do. Because they trained as Rick Rescorla had directed them, the military guy had taught them to train. But once he got all these people out accounted for him, said Yep. They're all here.

It was then he said let me go back to the building to see if I could save anybody else that cost Rick Rescorla his life.

(Continued page 5)

But what a great guy. And why you don't hear that story more often boggles my mind. But that's just one of the great heroes, and they're all they're out there all the time. But Rick just happened to be one of them. Those guys that rose to the occasion, knew what to do and trained his people. It's about discipline. If you look at that person sitting at that first chair and that violin, that's someone that trained, trained, trained, there's a conductor and there's sheet music, but you still gotta train. It's all about training. So Rick Rescorla, look him up. It's a great story. And one of the great guys. So thank you so much.



Photo by Larry Kushner

## Briana Céspedes, former USAF Broadcast Journalist and Public Affairs Specialist

On September 11, 2023, the featured speaker was Briana Céspedes, former USAF Broadcast Journalist and Public Affairs Specialist.

Briana started her talk with a comment about 911, it's interesting because when she joined a lot of the sergeants in her units said that they joined the USAF because of 911. That was their motivation and that has been the motivation for a long time and she just can't believe it's been 20 years and now we are beyond that conflict, it's been tough on the sergeants that joined for that reason. They were a part of

Afghanistan. And then the way it all ended, it's it's really sad. So I know when I was in the military that was a very, very impactful time. We've never forgotten that is still what we dedicate today.

But Briana was here for a different reason. Briana is 24 years old and spent five years in the US Air Force. She is an **involuntary veteran**. That means that she didn't choose to get out. She was forced out. She didn't have the privilege to, to finish, or to continue because she didn't get the vaccine.

It's controversial, but she was not here to talk about the politics, the party, or the vaccine. Briana believes that everyone should have a choice, and that is the principle that she was standing on when she decided not to get the shot.

So she started a group called **Involuntary Veterans**, and she has traveled around California and talked about the situation. There are thousands that have been affected by this: LAPD firefighters, nurses, civilians, there are so many people, but just within the military, we have over 8500 active duty, and that number was in 2020 to early 2022, so we don't know the more recent numbers of how many people have actually been completely discharged.

It also was applied in the Reserves and the National Guard. In June 2022, the Army Reserves put 60,000 soldiers in nonpaid status, permanent nonpaid status. So many of these members have been affected because of their religious convictions. Briana was here telling her story, and it's one of many others.

Briana was born in 1998 in California. Her parents raised her in biblical principles. She was home-schooled and graduated from high school at the age of 13.

Her mother designed the curriculum. Approved by the state and Magnum Opus Preparatory.

The kind of principles that she grew up in included a belief of the Constitution of freedom, of religious liberty. Freedom of speech. The Bill of Rights, the things that are so unique to our country. And she knew that she wanted to study law and defend the Constitution.

Briana wanted to do something rough and growing up around sisters and being homeschooled she wanted to join the military. Her dad was not supportive, but she was convincing him little by little. Telling him she could learn a trade and be trained in something professional and serve the country.

As a Cuban and a very thankful immigrant to be here, to be able to work. Her family built up a business and she just wanted to give back. It was that kind of feeling that convinced him over time. At first she was going in the Marines. Her dad talked her out of it and she chose the Air Force and learned broadcasting. Her job was to inform and to entertain. She learned how to speak, how to broadcast, video and photo. She was stationed at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Then she transferred to Camp Humphreys, South Korea. Next, she was sent to Belgium, at the SHAPE NATO base. (Continued page 6)



Photo by Larry Kushner  
**Bob Eisenhart and Ed Reynolds present Briana Céspedes with a Certificate of Appreciation and WOW logo bumper stickers**

Things started to change in March 2020, when COVID hit. Briana said “The military all worked from home and in the beginning, it was awesome she didn’t have to dress in uniform. Just staying home, but three months later, four months later, six months later, you’re starting to get a little stomach, and then you got to pass your PT test. Still, and you’re like, what am I doing? I need to get out of here and that’s when I volunteered to go on a short tour to Korea. And I got the slot I was sent over there and that’s when things started. To change. A little bit. They were stricter over there.”

DoD mandated that all service members obtain COVID vaccinations. Briana and many others questioned if it was a good thing to take when it didn’t prevent COVID. She received orders from her Commander to take or be court marshaled. She was going to take it motivated by fear.

Overwhelmingly, there was so much fear during this time, and as a Christian, I am not a person who makes choices based on fear. The only fear she has is the fear of God, which frees her from all other fears. Briana started the religious exemption process.

She was getting masked and constantly discriminated against. People would walk around her. She was not allowed to be in the same room as her coworkers. “Just a lot of isolation, a lot of isolation.” She remembers being in quarantine over 18 months, two weeks at a time. She spent over 140 days in isolation.

Briana had to stay quiet, waiting on her exemption. Then she was transferred back to Belgium, and the same thing was happening. She was promoted to staff Sergeant, and and was waiting to pin on the rank when her major commander told her that she was not recommended for promotion because she was not taking the vaccine. She got a letter of reprimand.

She was punished for her religious conviction, which according to Air Force Instruction Air Force policy, they’re not allowed to do. Eventually, she was discharged. It was a General Discharge, not an Honorable Discharge.

She is speaking about her situation and all the others who suffered the same fate.

She started the **Involuntary Veterans** with the motto: **“Because you did honorably.”**

## September 18, 2023



Photo by Larry Kushner

## **State Assembly Recognizes Ethel Margolin’s 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday**

On September 18, 2023, we honored Ethel Margolin, who turned 101 years old on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Jack Trent-Dorfman, Field Representative, Office of Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, presented Ethel with a *California Legislature Assembly Certificate of Recognition*. ***In celebration of your 101<sup>st</sup> birthday on September 17, 2023, we thank you for the longstanding service to the West Hills and San Fernando Valley.***



## Gary L. Wales - The Most Interesting Car Guy In The World, An Interview With a Living Legend

On September 18, 2023, we watched a YouTube video filmed by Dustin Troyan, organizer of Supercar Sundays at Pierce College.

Dustin started the video by telling us that he lived two blocks from Gary, would jog by his house, and wondered if he went to car shows. At one show, he entered two homemade vehicles and stole the show. Dustin and Gary became fast friends.

The first scene is in Gary's shop, where Gary showed and described a 1917 Rio in which he installed a 1917 Oakland engine and named the car a REOAK. He custom-designed the body with a copy of a 2020 McLaren Speed tail.

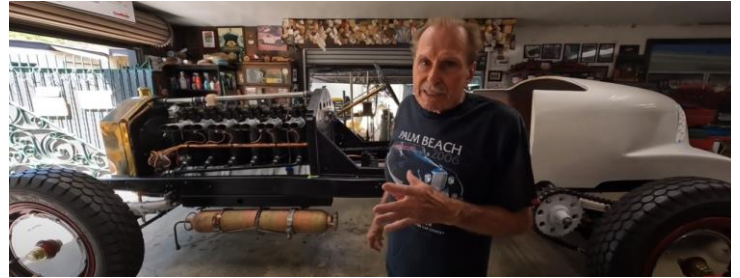
Dustin then talked about how Gary builds his unique cars on 1915-era firetrucks. Gary likes the sturdy frames and large engines. Some have six cylinders with 24 spark plugs because the gasoline in those days varied in octane.



The next subject was the car pictured on Gary's shirt. Gary explained the car was a Bentley that he had owned for 20 years and won 50 Best of Show awards. He sold it for \$1,750 and he was happy. Then it was sold for \$2.5 million

and then Carlos Slim bought it for \$4 million.

The next car Gary showed was a yellow, flawless 1912 Oldsmobile Defender. Gary showed some of the unique features of the car and instruments. He has never started it; if he tried, it would have to be hand-cranked.



Gary then moved on to his current project based on a 1917 American LaFrance fire truck. He sold the engine to a San Diego Fire Chief and purchased a 11917 Fiat A12 aircraft engine from the Boston Air Museum. He installed it so the prop would be in the back, and Gary has to now design a reverser with a flywheel on it and add a starter motor and exhaust pipes.

Andreas Aranda does the mechanical work. He does the heavy mechanical, and has the knowledge he had that training. Gary says, "he can't even draw straight lines." But Gary does the design and the building of the bodies, and that, and they do metal work together.

Dustin then asked Gary about the drive chain. Gary responded that he can still buy them, but they don't wear out. The old fire trucks have low mileage, never more than 15,000 miles.

They then moved to a discussion about the paint job on "Rusty," the award-winning car, in the picture at the head of this column.

From the shop, the video moved on to the house. Gary led Dustin to the office and discussed the awards, pictures, posters and books in the room.



The house has amazing custom-designed stained glass windows, He has a large collection of swords.

(Continued page 8)



Gary Wales living room.



Photo by Larry Kushner

Ed Reynolds presents Gary Wales with a Certificate of Appreciation and WOW logo bumper stickers

## September 25, 2023



## Nazi Germany's Fatal Mistakes | Jet Fighters

On September 28, 2023, the featured presentation was a DroneScaps documentary titled: *Nazi Germany's Fatal Mistakes | Jet Fighters*. The documentary follows the video *Genius of The Jet: The Invention Of The Jet Engine: Frank Whittle* that we watched on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

The documentary tells viewers about the first Jet

fighters, the Heinkel 280, Messerschmitt Me 262, and Heinkel He 162. It then reviews led to the defeat of the Luftwaffe, and the mistakes that prevented these wonder weapons from making a difference at the end of WWII.



Heinkel He 280

The Heinkel He 280 was an early turbojet-powered fighter aircraft designed and produced by the German aircraft manufacturer Heinkel. It was the first jet fighter to fly in the world.

The He 280 harnessed the progress made by Hans von Ohain's novel gas turbine propulsion and by Ernst Heinkel's work on the He 178, the first jet-powered aircraft in the world. Heinkel placed great emphasis on research into high-speed flight and on the value of the jet engine; after the He 178 had met with indifference from the Reichsluftfahrtministerium (RLM) (the German Reich Aviation Ministry), the company opted to start work on producing a jet fighter during late 1939. Incorporating a pair of turbojets these were installed in a mid-wing position for greater thrust. It also had a then-uncommon tricycle undercarriage, while the fuselage design was largely conventional.

During the summer of 1940, the prototype airframe was completed; however, it could not proceed with powered test flights due to development difficulties with the intended engine, the HeS 8. Thus, it was initially flown as a glider until suitable engines could be made available six months later. The lack of state support protracted engine development, thus setting back work on the He 280; nevertheless, it is believed that the fighter could have been made operational earlier than the competing Messerschmitt Me 262 and offered some advantages over it. On 22 December 1942, a mock dogfight was performed before RLM officials saw the He 280 demonstrate its vastly superior speed over the piston-powered Focke-Wulf Fw 190; shortly after that, the RLM finally opted to place an order for 20 pre-production test aircraft to precede a batch of 300 production standard aircraft.

The Messerschmitt Me 262, nicknamed Schwalbe (German: "Swallow") in fighter versions or Sturmvogel (German: "Storm Bird") in fighter-bomber versions, is a fighter aircraft and fighter-bomber that was designed and produced by the German aircraft manufacturer Messerschmitt. (Continued page 9)

It was the world's first operational jet-powered fighter



aircraft.



**Messerschmitt Me 262**

The design of what would become the Me 262 started in April 1939, before World War II. It made its maiden flight on 18 April 1941 with a piston engine and its first jet-powered flight on 18 July 1942. Problems with engines, metallurgy, and interference from Luftwaffe chief Hermann Göring and Adolf Hitler delayed progress.

The German leader demanded that the Me 262, conceived as a defensive interceptor, be redesigned as a ground-attack/bomber aircraft. The aircraft became operational with the Luftwaffe in mid-1944. The Me 262 was faster and more heavily armed than any Allied fighter, including the British jet-powered Gloster Meteor. The Allies countered by attacking the aircraft on the ground during takeoff and landing.

One of the most advanced WWII combat aircraft, the Me 262, operated as a light bomber, reconnaissance, and experimental night fighter. The Me 262 proved an effective dogfighter against Allied fighters; German pilots claimed 542 Allied aircraft were shot down, although higher claims have sometimes been made.

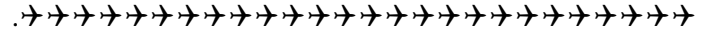
The aircraft had reliability problems because of strategic materials shortages and design compromises with its Junkers Jumo 004 axial-flow turbojet engines. Late-war Allied attacks on fuel supplies also reduced the aircraft's effectiveness. Armament production within Germany was focused on more easily manufactured aircraft.

Ultimately, the Me 262 had little effect on the war because of its late introduction and the small numbers that entered service.

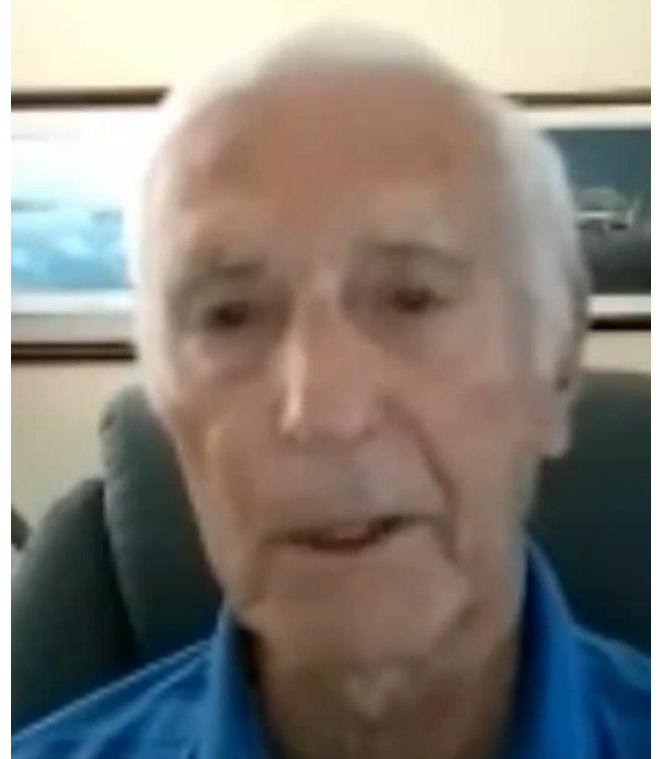
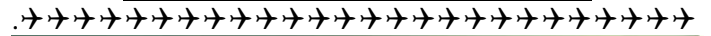
Although German use of the Me 262 ended World War II, the Czechoslovak Air Force operated a small number until 1951. Also, Israel may have used between two and eight Me 262s. These were supposedly built by Avia and supplied covertly, and no official confirmation of their use has been confirmed. The aircraft heavily influenced several prototype designs, such as the Sukhoi Su-9 (1946) and Nakajima Kikka.

Many captured Me 262s were studied and flight-tested by the major powers, influencing the designs of production aircraft such as the North American F-86 Sabre, MiG-15, and Boeing B-47 Stratojet. Several aircraft have survived

on static display in museums. Some privately built flying reproductions have also been produced; these are usually powered by modern General Electric CJ610 engines.



## **In Other News**



## **Dan Pemberton Interviewed on ABC 7 Regarding AB 46 For Military pensions to be exempt from California state taxes**

(Continued page 10)

On August 30, 2023, Dan Pemberton was interviewed on ABC7 regarding AB 46.

California is home to the largest number of active-duty military personnel and veterans in the nation, but when it comes to making the state a permanent home many are leaving when they retire from the armed forces.

"Military retirement is not the only source of retirement income for me but it is a substantial portion," said retired Brigadier Gen. Dan Pemberton.

Pemberton served in the U.S. Air Force and then the Air National Guard for a total of 24 years, earning a military retirement. Like any income in California it's taxed.

But a state Assembly bill working its way through the California Legislature aims to exempt retirees and their surviving spouses from paying state income taxes on military pensions for the next decade.

"Veterans have put their lives on the line for this country, have served their country in many cases in very dangerous environments and I think it is a good thing to give back to those who have served us," said Mike McNerney, director with Vets In Tech.

McNerney is a former Air Force captain and his veteran group is one of several that supports the bill introduced by Highland Assemblyman James Ramos.

California is one of three states in the nation that fully taxes veterans' pensions. An exemption law on military pensions would align the state with the rest of the nation.

"California supplies more active-duty service members than any other state in the country but we are ranked near the bottom when it comes to veterans who choose to make California their home after they retire from active duty," said McNerney.

McNerney says ending the tax on military pensions would encourage retirees to put down roots in the Golden State and in turn, be an economic generator with retirees paying taxes in post-military careers.

"Studies have shown that reversing this tax would increase veterans' incomes by over \$830 million a year and add over 12,000 additional jobs right here in California for veterans and military families," he said.

Pemberton has plans for the extra money should the bill pass and he no longer has to pay taxes on his military pension.

"I am going to help my grandkids with college," said Pemberton.

Right now, the bill known as AB46 is in the Senate Appropriations Committee and due to be voted on this Friday. If it passes out of committee, it will then be voted on by the entire California state Senate. It would then go to Gov. Gavin Newsom to potentially be signed into law.

NOTE: It didn't get voted on and is held over until the next year.

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# First Step to Modernizing Air Force Tech School: Free Wi-Fi in the Dorms

Sept. 27, 2023 | By David Roza

The Second Air Force, which oversees BMT, tech school, and other training programs, wants to move its enlisted technical training beyond classrooms and PowerPoint slides, but first it must implement what many civilian schools take for granted: free, widespread wireless internet access.

Many students at tech school, where enlisted Airmen train in their job specialties after Basic Military Training, have to pay \$55 per month for Wi-Fi in their dormitories, without which they have limited access to coursework.

"They should be able to learn on demand anytime, anywhere, whenever they're ready to do it," Maj. Gen. Michele Edmondson, commander of the Second Air Force, told reporters on Aug. 22. "If they want to go back to their dormitory or sit outside at a picnic table and practice what they learned that day or prepare for a lecture the next day, we give them an environment where they can do it."

Six locations within Air Education and Training Command (AETC), to which the Second Air Force belongs, now provide Wi-Fi in dormitories at no cost to Airmen. Two new investments of \$18.5 million and \$25.8 million should expand that access to new locations. All of AETC's 15 main training locations are expected to be online by the end of fiscal year 2024, followed by geographically separated units.

Expansion is expensive; installing no-cost Wi-Fi at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, alone took \$6.5 million. But officials there say it has improved student retention and attention in and out of class. Edmondson said campus-wide Wi-Fi is the foundation for modernizing tech school.

"We can make the environment something they're used to learning in, rather than saying, 'come sit in a brick and mortar classroom eight hours a day, in a desk, with an instructor standing in front of you with a whiteboard and PowerPoint slides,'" she told reporters. "That's not how they've been learning in school."

The general referenced her own 13-year-old daughter answering science questions while watching video lessons at home. Edmondson said that the Second Air Force must adapt to the learning model its trainees grew up with so that Airmen can hit the ground running when they arrive at tech school.

"I'm not saying that we're going to 100 percent across the board look like every high school classroom in America, but there is a lot of goodness we can learn from that," she said.

(Continued page 11)

The Second Air Force is pursuing several changes to make enlisted education more personalized, such as allowing instructors to tailor the training pace to each Airmen and giving Airmen access to course materials through tablets, audiobooks, videos, or augmented or virtual reality.

The personalized model is showing promise at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., where cyber Airmen have “a degree of choice about direction and pace of their pathway, which often results in completing the curriculum more quickly than in the past,” Edmondson told Air & Space Forces Magazine. Some students with previous cyber experience are graduating early after demonstrating they have the skills to do so.

Wider access and self-paced learning also seems to be making a difference at Sheppard, where maintenance trainees interact with virtual C-130 aircraft. Instructors are seeing improved performance compared to students in the past, who were limited to purely hands-on interaction with aircraft.

“The Airmen, when it came to doing their hands-on tasks throughout tech school here, were far more competent,” Tech. Sgt. Kyle Ingram, a curriculum development writer at Sheppard, said in a 2022 press release. “They knew exactly where to go and what to do on that aircraft right then and there. You only had to tell them what to do, and then they knew exactly where to go and what to do in that procedure.”

Edmondson said her command has learned much from the 19th Air Force, which oversees flying training and recently reformed undergraduate pilot training with a greater emphasis on self-paced learning, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and increased simulator time. A key takeaway was developing faculty to keep pace with the new technology, new changes, and to “understand the ‘why’ behind what we’re doing,” she said.

Other changes are in the works. One idea is to use artificial intelligence to analyze Airmen’s learning records and give commanders real-time knowledge of “the training readiness of the force,” one press release explained. A unit of AETC known as Detachment 23 is building an application within the learning management system myLearning called MOTAR (Member Operations Training Analysis Reporting) to pursue that idea.

“Our vision, all the way up to the Air Force chief of staff, is for commanders to be able to log in on one system and view their commander dashboard,” detachment commander Maj. Jesse Johnson said in the release. “This is going to tell them the readiness of the entire force right then and there.”

Edmondson also hopes to integrate nutrition, sleep hygiene, and physical fitness into tech school so that any health gains made by Airmen in BMT do not stop after graduating. But pursuing all these efforts will take time, money, and, in some cases, major renovation of the Air

Force’s IT infrastructure, which many critics say is outdated and dysfunctional.

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## Monday Zoom Meeting Agenda

The URL is always the same:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/661372701?pwd=NEZCWjIUTArRWItREtWUWRLNmpDQT09>

- Meet & Greet starts at 8:00 am.
- The formal meeting starts at 9:30 am.
- Visitors and guests interviewed about 9:40 am.
- The presentation starts around 10 am

**Meeting ID: 661 372 701**

**Password: 200220**

**THE MEETING ID and PASSWORD DO NOT CHANGE**

- ANA Meetings
- MOAA/MOWW Meetings
- Non WOW Events
- Operation Gratitude Events
- WOW Events/Tours
- WOW Meetings

## WOW Events Calendar Additions

Because of Wings Over Wendy's members' high participation in their events, the **teamup.com WOW Events Calendar** has been extended to include: ANA Meetings, MOAA/MOWW Meetings, and Operation Gratitude Events.

The key is: **kswpwdaeovnb1jans4**

## Wings Over Wendy's Future Events:



## FOB Assembly Day

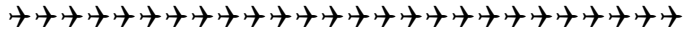
### Location to be announced

**October 23**

**Monday, 9 am - 12 pm**

**Sign up to attend @**

<https://www.operationgratitude.com/event/fob-assembly-oct-23/>



## MOAA/MOWW CHAPTER MEETING 18 October 2023



**COLLEEN DRAGOVICH**

Colleen Dragovich has been a Member of the Daughters of the American Revolution since 2018 and in 2021 she was awarded the highest honor of a DAR Member under the age of 35 as California's State Outstanding Junior Member.

She is a proud Navy brat, born and raised at the Naval Base Point Loma in San Diego. Her father served for 10 years during the Persian Gulf Conflict. She has two Master's Degrees and Colleen currently works in Homeless Services. Her presentation is on women serving in Afghanistan assigned to Cultural Support Teams.

**Date: Wednesday, 18 October 2023**

**Check-in starts at 5:30**

**Buffet line starts at 6:30**

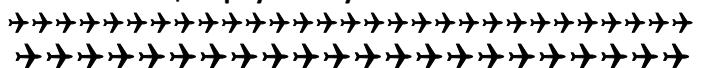
**Program starts at 7:30**

**RSVP to Dan Pemberton at [dhpinto@aol.com](mailto:dhpinto@aol.com)  
or 805-807-7788**

**NLT 13 October 2023**

**Los Robles Greens Banquet Center  
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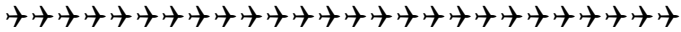


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**Charles has offered to help Wings Over Wendy's members with their computer problems for FREE.**



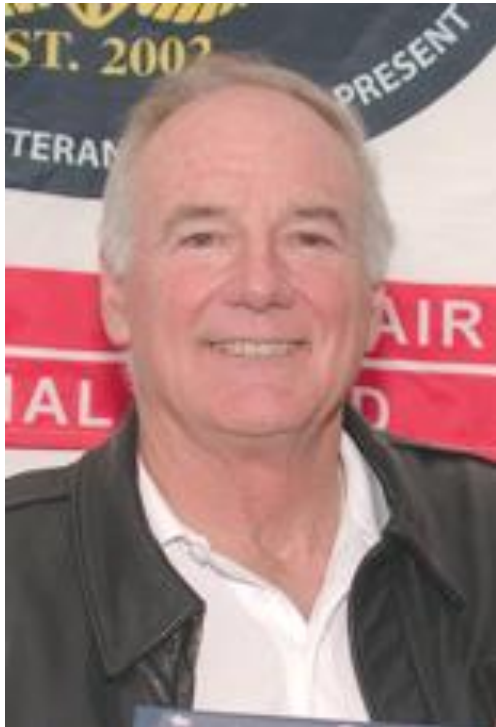
# Memoriam

During September 2023, we learned that three members of the Wings Over Wendy's member died.



**John Helm**

**12/24/1929 to 09/06/2023**



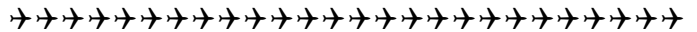
**Chris Rushing**

**08/06/1958 to 09/17/2023**



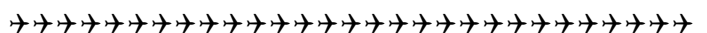
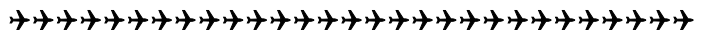
**Reed King**

**08/24/1924 to 09/25/2023**



## October Birthdays

Steve Bordofsky	October 04, 1942
Andy Romanisky	October 07, 1947
David Freeman	October 10, 1943
Steve Shepard	October 10, 1967
David Tostenson	October 12, 1946
Bob Shattuck	October 20, 1948
Bill Garland	October 22, 1943
Howard Lewis	October 23, 1946
Michael Castro	October 25, 1958
Joe Weber	October 27, 1926
Bruce Schultz	October 28, 1949
Bill Tapp	October 28, 1936
Chris Voronin	October 29, 1981



## Wings News Patrons

The following is a list of WOW members who have contributed \$10 to fund the publication for **12 months**.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
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| Lillian Anderson   | Shirley Andrews |
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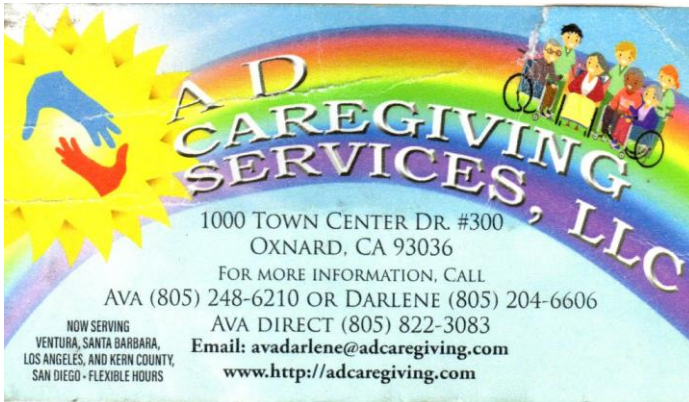
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## Reminder

**Wings Over Wendy's monthly food drive is Monday, October 2nd**





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**For Help with your Zoom Connection**  
Contact: **Charles Scott**  
(818) 448-1737  
[pcinfoman@gmail.com](mailto:pcinfoman@gmail.com).

The WOW Zoom Equipment GoFundMe account link is [gf.me/u/x9pst6](https://www.gofundme.com/gf.me/u/x9pst6).

Charles has offered to help Wings Over Wendy's members with their computer problems for FREE.



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President

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