

WINGS



NEWS

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Ed Reynolds Editor

Wings Over Wendy's Loses an Icon



Bonifacio "Barney" Leone

On Monday, February 26, 2024, the members of Wings Over Wendy's were deeply saddened to learn that Barney Leone had passed to join his wife, Phyllis, his close friends, Leon Waldman, Howard Swerdlick, Art Sherman, Anarg Frangos, Lee Levitan and the other members of the Greatest Generation, in the world beyond.

His effervescent personality captured the audience whenever he entered the room. You knew he was there, and often he would sing, compliment the people near him, tell a joke, or show them pictures of him and his father in uniform, which he always carried in his back pocket.



Barney is showing Stuart Bird-Wilson his pictures.

Barney was born in the Bronx and, as he would say, the only borough in New York that was connected to the land. He attended the same school system as Ethel Margolin and Leon Walman, which made him fit right into Wings Over Wendy's, even though he wasn't an aviator.

When he joined the Navy, he was assigned to a new ship, USS Nemasket (AOG-10), a Patapsco-class gasoline tanker, commissioned at New Orleans. This made Barney a very proud "Plank Owner" of the ship, and he loved to display a model of it.



He sailed through the Panama Canal, San Diego, to Pearl Harbor (where he fell overboard, and he loved to tell the story). From Hawaii, the ship transported petroleum to numerous Pacific Islands. In November 1944, it was close to being damaged when it left the side of the Fleet Oiler

USS Mississinewa to move outside the harbor, and the Mississinewa was sunk by a Japanese torpedo that night.

On another occasion, a Kamikaze aircraft was flying directly at his ship when the guns hit it from a US ship close by. As Barney reported, "Nobody wanted to be around us because we were, really, a floating time bomb,"

Barney's ship arrived off Iwo Jima on 20 February and fueled over 200 ships in twenty days. They were ordered to anchor 100 yards off the beach.

He remembers that misty, cold February day, watching the Marines go in. "You could see on their faces that they felt we were lucky that we were staying stationary. Sad to say, not long after that, some of them were floating back in the water."

"But what was amazing was, after a couple of days of the invasion, I was at my gun position up on the bridge, and I could see this flag flying up on Mount Suribachi. I couldn't tell which flag it was, never thinking it was ours so soon in the invasion. Then, the second American flag went up, and we were able to identify it. I was proud to see that flag flying up there."

Leaving Iwo Jima, the Nemasket sailed to Saipan and Ulithi and then steamed to Kerama Retto, where they spent three months amidst kamikaze attacks and interminable hours at general quarters. Barney was able to obtain the flag that was flown on the Nemasket during the battle, and it became a source of pride wherever he talked to a group.



Captain Steve Shepard, Leon Waldman, Gary Sinise, Barney, and Gary Rehm (Soaring Valor escort to Iwo Jima in 2019)

Following the surrender, the Nemasket spent nine months in Shanghai, where Barney was able to go ashore.

Released from Active Duty, Barney returned to the Bronx, married Phyllis, and worked for many years as a Full Maintainer for the NYC Transit Authority, where he utilized his skills learned at sea in the boiler room of the Nemasket.

During his time at the Bronx yard, he became injured, and he began to reassess his life. Being a devout man with a gift for teaching and reaching out to people, he felt a strong calling from God to go into ministry.

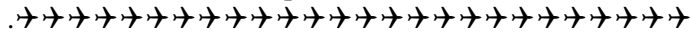
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After some study, they moved to Ohio, where he headed a small church. Those parishioners still reached out to him and visited him up until his death. He retired at the age of 65 and moved to California, where his daughter lived.

Phillis passed in 2005, and in 2010, he started to attend the Wings Over Wendy's meetings.

On his Facebook page, Barney stated that his mission as a WWII veteran was to speak to HS students about the value of our freedom and the Vets who died. He accepted every opportunity to speak at schools and was a regular at Oaks Christian High School in Westlake Village.

At Wings Over Wendy's, he scheduled the weekly speaker until the move to the ECRCHS Auditorium and the COVID shutdown. His presence will be missed.



Wings Over Wendy's Tours the Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum



Photo by Dave Anderson

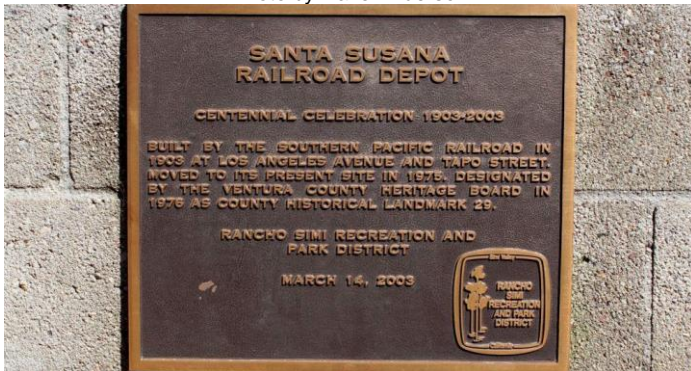


Photo by Dave Anderson

On February 22, 2024, Wings Over Wendy's members toured the Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum. The depot was built in 1903 in Rancho Simi and moved to the present site after the railroad no longer needed a depot.

Plans and construction for the building were based on Southern Pacific Railroad standard design Two Story Combination Depot No. 22. The depot served the community of Rancho Simi as a passenger station, telegraph office, and freight depot where farmers could

deliver crops for shipping and pick up farming equipment delivered by the railroad.

Due to lessening passenger traffic and changes in the shipment of freight, Southern Pacific closed the station in the early 1970s, leaving Santa Susana Depot empty and destined for demolition. The County of Ventura purchased the depot from the railroad for \$1.06. In May 1975, the building was divided into three parts and moved by truck to a county property two miles east of the site on which it was built. The County of Ventura designated the building Landmark #29 in January 1976.

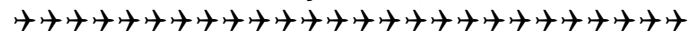
The group toured the main office, which served as the post office, early telephone, and telegraph operator. The next room, which served as the passenger waiting room, was visited. It now serves as a museum for the Simi Valley area.

On the second floor, the group saw the apartment for the telegraph operator and Station Master.

The former baggage area now houses an outstanding HO-size model railroad.

Following the tour, the group had lunch at the Susana Café.

Attending the tour were Wings Over Wendy's members: **Dave and Lillian Anderson, Ron Boggess, Michael Castro, Barry Chapman, John Cromwell, Bob Donovan, Bob and Nancy Eisenhart, Gordon Fell, David Freeman, Bill and Dolores Garland, David Greenberg, Fred Kaplan, Larry Kushner, Erick Lace, Ed Reynolds, Ronald Roscoe, Earl and Esther Roth, George Rothman, Bob Stiles, Karen and Timothy Velarde, and Stuart Weinstein.**



Wings Over Wendy's Attends Buffalo Soldiers Ceremony



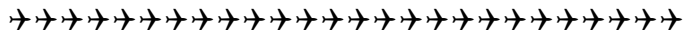
Photo by Larry Kushner
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On February 22, 2024, Wing Over Wendy's members attended a ceremony and display by the Buffalo Soldiers at the Birmingham Veterans Hall.

The Director of LA County Veterans Affairs introduced the Commander of the Buffalo Soldiers to open the ceremony.

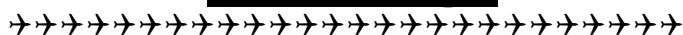
The Buffalo Soldiers were formed from the US Army 10th Cavalry on September 21, 1866, a year and one half after the end of the Civil War. Thus, the display unit wore US Army uniforms worn by the US Army soldiers during the war and tents, weapons, and equipment to sustain themselves in the field. The display group also included two Chestnut Mair horses.

The ceremony included a free BBQ and an LAPD Helicopter flyover. **Dave Anderson, Ron Bogges, David Greenberg, Fred Kaplan, Victor and Penny Korechoff, Larry Kushner, Bill Ratner, Bob Stiles, Karen Velarde, and Stuart Weinstein** attended the event.



February 2023

Meetings



February 5, 2023



New York's Secret Tunnel Societies | Cities Of The Underworld

On February 8, 2024, the featured presentation was an episode from the *Cities Of The Underworld* series on the History Channel titled *New York's Secret Tunnel Societies*.

Part 1: Underground New York: Tunnels, Speakeasies, and Wine Cellars

Don Wildman, the host and narrator of the documentary, discussed the underground world of New

York City, its network of tunnels and sewers, and the history of Prohibition-era speakeasies such as the 21 Club. Brian Mcguire, the manager of the 21 Club, showed the original restaurant's brownstone building and shared about its history of being a haven for the city's elite and its strategies to evade Federal raids and mobster threats. Don also conducted a tour of a unique wine cellar with a 4,000-pound door secured by a meat skewer and hinted at its possible role in the foundation of the city. He recounted the history of the wine cellar at the 21 Club, which was a key part of the establishment's security measures during prohibition, and its transformation into one of New York's most exclusive restaurants.

Part 2:

New York's Sand Hogs: Tunneling Pioneers

Next, Don discussed the role of the Sand Hogs, a group of workers responsible for tunneling and engineering beneath New York City since 1872. He highlighted their work in constructing the subway, sewers, and the Lincoln Tunnel, as well as the dangerous nature of their job, with many having lost their lives. Don also mentioned the ongoing East Side Access project, a 3.5-mile tunnel connecting the Long Island Railroad to Grand Central Terminal, where tunnel boring machines are used for efficiency and safety. Finally, he talked about the discovery of a lost subway tunnel in Brooklyn, using a combination of nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution techniques and Roman civil engineering practices.

Part 3: Freemasons, Corruption, and Immigration in New York History

Don then discussed the historical role of the Freemasons in the founding of the United States and their influence on its infrastructure. He highlighted their involvement in projects like the Erie Canal and the design of Washington, DC. Don also delved into the corruption that ensued when a greedy real estate developer took control of the Long Island Railroad project, resulting in illicit activities and alleged mafia operations.

He also discussed the history of immigration in New York and the formation of neighborhoods such as the Irish in 5 Points and the Italians in Little Italy.

Don focused on the Chinese immigrants who came to New York in large numbers in the 1870s and formed their own associations and secret societies, known as tongs, which eventually turned into powerful gangs. He also mentioned the formation of Chinatown and the underground maze of tunnels and manholes used by Chinese gangs for surprise attacks and escape in the 1900s. Don concluded by saying that gangs, even today, continue to fight for control of the area.

Part 4: Exploring Fort Totten's History

Don explores Fort Totten, a strategic fort and underground network that once protected New York City's waterways but is now almost forgotten.

(Continued page 5)

The Fort was built in 1862 as the Civil War was heating up, with high lookout points and soldiers ready for Confederate gunboats. The Fort was built on one side of a narrow channel where the East River spills into the Long Island Sound and less than a mile across the water from another stronghold, Fort Skyler.

February 12, 2023



Mike Greenhill, Warden Pilot for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

On February 12, 2024, the featured speaker was Mr. Mike Greenhill, a Warden Pilot for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife based at Camarillo Airport.

Mike started his presentation with a short video of the various aircraft and the Department's various missions and challenges.

He showed us pictures of the planes he is qualified to fly and maintain.



Cessna A185F Skywagon

His primary aircraft is based with him at Camarillo.



Beechcraft King Air 200



Partenavia P68 Observer.



MD 539F

He highlighted the different roles within the Department, including those in the air services unit, which he described as the oldest specialized unit in the Department, founded in 1945. He then shared his experience as a pilot and mechanic, discussing the history of the Department, the requirements needed to be a pilot, and the different types of aircraft they utilize. He also touched on the diverse operations of the Department, including law enforcement, wildlife management, aerial fish stocking, and the waterfowl and wolf programs.

Mike discussed the various operations and roles of their team, which included air and marine patrol, interdiction efforts, and supporting game wardens.

He shared updates about a plane currently down for repairs and the potential for future fishing trips. Mike highlighted the team's involvement in law enforcement aspects such as oil spill response, search warrants, helicopter operations, spotlight patrols, prisoner transport, and the transport of high-level government officials.

Mike also discussed the use of aerial footage to obtain search warrants and assess Marijuana Grows. He emphasized the importance of interagency collaboration, the challenges posed by organized criminal drug cartels involved in illegal immigration and drug smuggling, and the use of large patrol boats to monitor designated marine protected areas.

(Continued page 6)

Towards the end, he discussed his work as a game warden in California, emphasizing safety and the challenges faced based on location within the state. Mike also highlighted the crucial role of district attorneys in deciding what cases to prosecute.

February 19, 2023

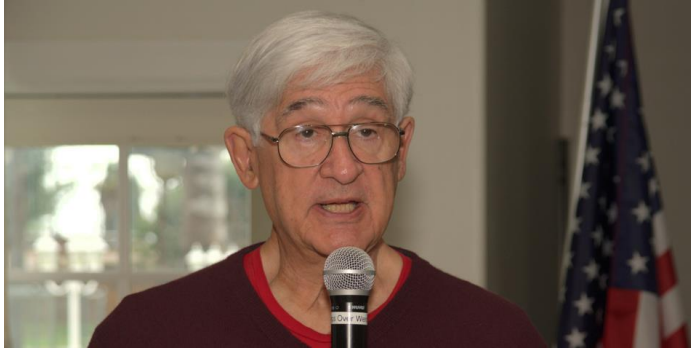


Photo by Larry Kushner

George Pappas, A Marine Corps Veteran and NRA Handgun Instructor, Discussed Firearm Safety and Demonstrated The Manx 6 Training Device.

On February 22, 2023, the featured speaker was George Pappas, a Marine Corps veteran and NRA handgun instructor, who discussed firearm safety and demonstrated the Manx 6 training device.

He shared his knowledge about concealed carry laws in Ventura County. He emphasized the importance of treating all handguns as if they were loaded and checking for any rounds before handling them. George emphasized safety rules and the history of certain types of ammunition. He advised to remain silent and have a lawyer present when dealing with law enforcement.

Next, George discussed the laws and regulations related to firearm and ammunition possession in California. He explained that there are no limits on ammo ownership, but it must be stored safely. Individuals can own as many firearms as they wish and can purchase one every 30 days. He also highlighted the procedure for buying firearms. He noted that due to the restrictions and procedures, places such as Walmart no longer sell firearms and ammunition, and he expressed his opinion that these laws limit the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

George also discussed the importance of firearm registration and the potential advantages of doing so and clarified that certain firearms, such as CO2 handguns, do

not require registration.

The discussion shifted to Self-Defense and Legal Implications. George proposed the use of pepper spray as a non-lethal self-defense tool and shared a personal experience. He also highlighted the potential dangers of carrying airsoft guns, which could be mistaken for real ones.

He recommended the NRA's program for teaching children about handguns and stressed the importance of alerting an adult about potential threats. He further discussed the legal implications of self-defense situations, emphasizing the castle doctrine and how garages are not considered to be part of the "castle" in most cases. As an example, he told of a man being charged when he rigged a shotgun to go off when kids were stealing from his garage.

George emphasized the importance of obtaining gun insurance. He also explained the rules regarding concealed carry permits and the need for an attorney if involved in a shooting incident. The discussion concluded with a Q&A session on law enforcement detectives' methods of questioning and the importance of honesty.

Next, George introduced a device called Mantis X, a laser device that attaches to a firearm and records shooting data. We saw a short video on the device, and George showed it to the audience.

He highlighted its various functionalities the potential risks of using BLM land for shooting, and offered advice on handling encounters with law enforcement. George also provided information about various shooting ranges and shared his thoughts on gun laws, including the classification of assault rifles and the necessity of a featureless rifle.



Photo by Larry Kushner

Ed Reynolds presents George Pappas with a Certificate of Appreciation for his presentation.

February 26, 2023

Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron Three

HA(L)-3 SEAWOLVES



Sam Feola, a US Navy “Seawolves” Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam

On February 26, 2024, Sam Feola, a US Navy "Seawolves Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam, was our featured speaker.

Sam started his talk with a video clip from a longer video, *“Scramble The Seawolves,”* from the GI Film Festival San Diego.

Sam is a former Brown Water Navy member who served in Vietnam. He discussed his experiences and the history of the HAL 3 Seawolves, a unique helicopter squadron established by the Navy in 1967.

Seawolves in 6 years – 1966 to 1972

During the entire war in Vietnam, no squadron flew more at night or in the day. No squadron flew more combat missions and no squadron earned more awards or recognition.

There were **2,556 Seawolves** who served in HAL-3.

78,000 combat missions flown
131,000 flight hours
8,200 enemy killed
8,700 enemy vessels destroyed
9,500 enemy structures destroyed
17,339 decorations or medals awarded

He detailed the squadron's mission to provide close air support for river patrol boats and forces in the Mekong Delta, insertions and extractions of seals, army and special ops, and the challenges they faced due to having hand-me-down helicopters and few mechanical supplies. Sam also shared his statistics, including his qualifications, flight

hours, and combat missions. He concluded by explaining the structure of the squadron, with each detachment consisting of eight officers, eight door gunners, and two helicopters.

Next, Sam discussed his experience as a naval aviator in Vietnam, focusing on his role in helicopter missions. He detailed the process of being trained on the Huey helicopters, the challenges of maintaining the aircraft, and the tactics used in combat. Sam also shared his progression in the squadron, starting as a trail ship copilot, then moving up to lead copilot, aircraft commander, and finally, a fire team leader. He recounted the dangers and challenges faced during missions, including navigating at night and using maps for navigation. Sam also compared the qualifications and experiences of naval aviators with those of the army's helicopter pilots, highlighting the differences in training and qualifications.

Sam then shared his experiences serving in the Brown Water Navy and as a Seawolf during the Vietnam War. He discussed the use of weapons such as the Minigun and rocket site, as well as the challenges they faced due to the lack of uniforms among enemy combatants. Sam also shared about the geographical context of the war, particularly the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and the importance of stopping North Vietnamese and VC personnel and supplies at the terminus of the trail. He also talked about his living conditions, including the constant threat of rocket attacks and the challenges of identifying friend from foe. Sam ended his discussion by sharing about the Flushettes, a weapon that was effective in killing people and penetrating tree trunks.

Sam next focused on his involvement with the Riverine forces in the Navy. He detailed the dangers they faced, including ambushes, firefights, and the threat of captured armored personnel carriers. Sam also discussed the challenges of operating in difficult terrain, such as unsecured airfields and rivers, and the need for careful navigation to avoid enemy-controlled mountains. He also mentioned living conditions, including the presence of a SEAL team and a humorous incident involving a pet ferret. Lastly, Sam discussed the difficulties of flying underweight due to high humidity and underpowered engines.

Maintaining and operating helicopters in a war zone was a challenge. Sam described the multifaceted role of his maintenance crew, who not only performed routine maintenance but were also qualified to handle jet engines and airframes. He detailed the standard flying gear, survival equipment, and the use of a pistol. He also discussed the cockpit setup and the role of door gunners. Sam shared instances of being involved in combat situations, adjusting fire based on enemy movements, and the dangers of firing rockets. He also mentioned the use of different types of ammunition, the challenges of navigating waterways and canals, and the dangers posed by rice paddies.

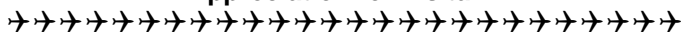
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Sam shared his experiences as a helicopter pilot, including a harrowing incident where the helicopter flipped due to a skid. He discussed the challenges of night flying and target acquisition. Sam also shared about the weaponry they carried, including 10,000 rounds and 14 rockets. He recalled how they used beer cans to plug bullet holes in the airframe. Towards the end of the discussion, Sam responded to several questions from the audience about his experiences.

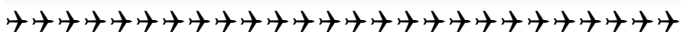


Photo by Larry Kushner

Ed Reynolds presents Sam Fiola with a Certificate of Appreciation for his talk.



Los Angeles Daily News



Saluting Barney Leone, a World War II vet who shared stories of war and peace

Leone, a United States Navy veteran, a man of laughter and smiles, dies at age 99



WWII veteran Barney Leone at his home in West Hills, Tuesday, March 29, 2022. (Photo by Hans Gutknecht, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

By **[DENNIS MCCARTHY](#)**

PUBLISHED: March 1, 2024 at 7:45 a.m. | UPDATED: March 1, 2024 at 3:36 p.m.

"If Barney was in the room, you knew it. He lit it up," Ed Reynolds, head of the veteran's group Wings Over Wendy's

He stood a shade over 5 feet tall, but to those who knew World War II veteran Barney Leone, he was a giant of a man — in war and in peace.

His passing in his sleep last week at age 99 hit the people who knew him hard.

The thought of never sitting down with Barney again and listening to his riveting stories, never hearing his laugh or seeing his smile, brought tears that Barney would not have accepted.

Why cry when you can smile and laugh at all the good times we had, he would have said. Enjoy the memories.

"You could not help but love Barney," said Maria Rodriguez, who spent every Monday morning for more than 15 years with him at Wings Over Wendy's, a local veterans group where Barney held court.

"He was genuine, and people loved that about him," she said.

You'd find him most afternoons sitting in the front yard of his West Hills home singing along with arias from his favorite Italian operas, said neighbor Tom Thorley.

"He had a youthful spirit," he said. "When we walked past, he'd turn off the music and regale us with jokes or stories about his past."



WWII Veteran Barney Leone is honored during the 31st Canoga Park Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 29, 2023. (Photo by Andy Holzman, Contributing Photographer)

Stories that Melissa Giller knew well. She interviewed dozens of World War II veterans for the "Secrets of World War II" exhibition in 2022 at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, ultimately choosing six to be honored with special display cases. One of them was Barney.

"I will never forget his interview," she said.

He was a 23-year-old motor machinist mate second class on the USS Nemasket, a fuel ship anchored 150 yards offshore of Iwo Jima — the last ship the Marines in landing crafts would see before hitting the beach.

As the first wave of Marines passed by, Barney gave them the high sign. Not one Marine looked over and acknowledged it. They just stared straight ahead, clutching their rifles straight up in front of their faces.

(Continued page 9)

They knew what was waiting for them: a hell storm. Almost 7,000 Marines were killed, and 17,000 were wounded in the battle for Iwo Jima. It went on for five weeks.

Finally, one morning around 10:30 a.m., Barney fixed his binoculars on the top of Mount Suribachi as six Marines used every last ounce of strength in their weary bodies to raise the American flag.

Barney let out a yell, “Hey, it’s our flag up there, guys — OUR FLAG! We won!”

In that emotional moment, as everyone cheered, he turned to look at his own ship’s weather-beaten flag.

He knew it would be taken down and burned in a flag retirement ceremony soon. He couldn’t let that happen.

They had been through too much together. He went to the quartermaster and asked if he could have it. He could, but don’t let anyone on board know.

When Barney got home from the war, he put the flag in a box in the back of his closet and never talked about it again.

“As Barney shared his story with me, he was holding that flag to his face, as if he was on that Marine landing craft and the flag was his rifle,” Giller said. “It was so intense and emotional. I’ll never forget it.”

For more than 60 years, that war flag had been in mothballs until Barney took it out and used it as a message of peace when he was invited by local high school teachers to talk to their senior classes on how we won the freedoms they enjoyed.

Barney wanted the kids to see the tattered flag and touch it as it was gingerly passed around the classroom.

He fought for that flag he told them, but when he came home, he became a man of peace — a minister.

Then he ended with a story of two Chinese men arguing angrily in the middle of the street in Shanghai where he was on shore patrol duty.

“It went on for 20 minutes, and I thought for sure they were going to get into a fistfight, but they never did. They just broke up and left. I asked a well-dressed Chinese gentleman standing near me how come they didn’t fight?”

“In China, he said, if two people are arguing, the first person to raise their hand to hit the other automatically loses the argument because they have nothing more to say.

“It’s okay to debate one another, you can have a difference of opinion. But if you think you’re going to convince someone by beating them up, you’ve already lost.”

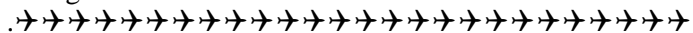
Did the kids get it? I asked Barney?

He smiled. In the back of his closet with his old flag were a dozen shoe boxes filled with handwritten notes from students thanking him.

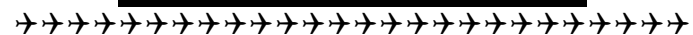
They got it. Bullies always lose in the end because they’ve run out of words.

You’re going to be a hard man to get over, Barney Leone.

Funeral arrangements have been set for 3 p.m. Sunday, March 10, at Calgary Community Church in Westlake Village.



In Other News



Air Force Warrant Officer Program to Focus on IT, Cyber Career Fields

Feb. 12, 2024 | By David Roza

AURORA, Colo.—The Air Force plan to bring back warrant officers will be limited to Airmen in the information technology and cyber career fields for the foreseeable future as the service evaluates the outcomes of the effort, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Allvin said Feb. 12.

“We are going to be cautious before we broaden this beyond these particular career fields because we want to make sure what we’re doing is fit for purpose, specific to the need that we have,” Allvin said in a keynote address at the AFA Warfare Symposium.

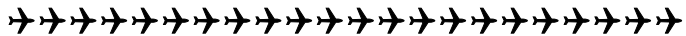
Allvin officially confirmed news first leaked last week on social media: the Air Force will try out bringing back warrant officers in a bid to retain highly skilled technical specialists, 45 years after the last Air Force warrant officer retired in 1980. The Air Force and Space Force are the only military services that do not include warrant officers, who fill technical rather than leadership functions in the other military branches.

“We are in a competition for talent, and we understand that technical talent is going to be so critical to our success as an Air Force in the future,” Allvin said. The warrant officer track could allow Airmen “to pursue the technical path without having to choose between that and the leadership path.”

Some people “just want to code for their country,” he added. “But everybody needs to see themselves in the future, beyond just this assignment or the next. So, developing the warrant officer track for this narrow career field, we anticipate, will help us drive that talent in and help us keep that talent.”

Warrant officers could be important in cyber and software, where technology moves particularly fast, he explained.

A document posted anonymously on the unofficial Air Force AMN/NCO/SNCO Facebook page and the Air Force subreddit directs Air University to develop a concept of operations for establishing a training pipeline at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. (Continued page 10)



First USAF Warrant Officers to Include Air National Guardsmen

Feb. 20, 2024 | By Chris Gordon

AURORA, Colo.—The Air National Guard will play a vital role in the Air Force’s new warrant officer track, the ANG’s boss said at the AFA Warfare Symposium.

“In the first class of warrant officers, we are going to bring National Guard professionals into that warrant officer corps,” director of the Air National Guard Lt. Gen. Michael A. Loh said in an interview with Air & Space Forces Magazine.

With its warrant officer program, the Air Force hopes to retain cyber and IT talent that would otherwise leave the service.

“In the last few years, we’ve had about 100 people leave the Air Force to go be warrant officers in another service in those areas,” Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall explained on Feb. 14. “The things that warrant officers can provide you with is people who are very technically proficient and stay current all the time. That’s all they’re going to do.”

That leaves the Air National Guard naturally positioned to take on the warrant officers, as cyber operations are one of the ANG’s primary missions, Loh said.

“The folks that bring the predominant force structure from a cyber, IT perspective is the National Guard; over two-thirds of the Air Force capability resides in the National Guard,” Loh said.

The Air Force is starting small with a “cautious” effort, according to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David W. Allvin. Previously, the Air Force and the Space Force were the only services that did not have warrant officers, who filled technical rather than leadership functions. Forty-five years after the last Air Force warrant officer retired in 1980, the Air Force will now reintroduce warrant officers for technical tracks in IT and cyber. Due to its small size, the Space Force is putting off the change.

The Air Force, on the other hand, has a sizable corps of cyber and IT specialists to draw upon for warrant officers—the Air Force Specialty Code for Defensive Cyber Operations alone boasts over 30,000 Airmen, according to 2022 figures.

“We need continuity in some of these people,” Kendall said of the cyber and IT fields.

Continuity is already a selling point for the Air National Guard, with units primarily deployed in place, especially in cyber and IT, allowing them to become experts at their particular mission. (Continued page 11)

The initial cohort, according to the document, would consist of 30 prior-service personnel, but a separate planning document obtained by Air & Space Forces Magazine says the pipeline could scale up to 200 junior warrant officers and 50 senior warrant officers a year.

Success may involve measuring how long warrant officers stay in the service, what level of talent they develop as warrant officers, and how much they increase productivity and effectiveness in the IT and cyber arenas. Those metrics may take years to collect, but Allvin cautioned against expanding the program too quickly.

“We’re still a force that develops leaders, so we’re not going to relegate the entire force to warrant officers,” he said. The same goes for the enlisted force, which he described as “the envy of the world, and it scares the [bejesus] out of the adversary. We need to make sure we maintain that.”

The warrant officer program was one of several new personnel changes announced in the keynote panel, where Allvin, Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall, acting undersecretary Kristyn Jones, and Chief of Space Operations Gen. B. Chance Saltzman laid out 24 steps the service is taking to “reshape, refocus, and reoptimize” the Air Force and Space Force to prepare for possible conflict against a near-peer adversary such as China.

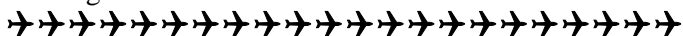
In that vein, the warrant officer program was just one of several “pathways” to sustaining technical expertise, according to an Air Force document that accompanied the announcements. Others include expanding technical tracks for officers, creating technical tracks for enlisted Airmen, and “tailored career categories” for “critical technical areas, notably cyber and IT.”

Other changes on the personnel side include:

Expanding the Air Education and Training Command and renaming it Airman Development Command. The move is meant to better align education and training efforts across the service to ensure “a more standardized Airman experience and development with a shared understanding of the threat environment” and the “development of the right Airmen for the right place and time,” according to the Air Force.

Emphasize “Mission Ready Airmen” by aligning Basic Military Training, tech school, doctorate and fellowship programs, and more with the current and future threats that the Air Force is preparing for, including how to work in small groups on difficult problems under contested conditions.

“Mission Ready Airmen” would also apply to commissioning programs, where Allvin hopes to develop leaders who graduate from those programs who are prepared to solve complex problems in small units cut off from higher levels of command.



"We have that talent base in the Guard," Loh said. "When we look at technical expertise, long term, we need some technical expertise in the Active component that we tend to lose."

Last year, the Air Force Reserve launched a program to directly commission cyber professionals to bolster its ranks. The Air National Guard set up its first dedicated Cyberspace Wing last September.

The Guard and Reserve also have "some unique attributes because of the civilian skill sets that you bring to the fight" that helped shape the broader Department of the Air Force re-optimization efforts, such as moves to reform training, Loh said.

Loh said he was able to help inform Kendall, Allvin, and Chief of Space Operations Gen. B. Chance Saltzman about warrant officers because of his previous role as Adjutant General of Colorado, in which he oversaw warrant officers in his role managing Colorado's Total Force across the services.

"Being from the Guard, and especially in my former job as an Adjutant General, I actually managed warrant officers," Loh said. "I was in the Secretary's ear, 'Hey, if you're going to bring warrant officers back, just realize, here's what that means.' He took a deliberate approach."

Now that the Air Force, including the Air National Guard, will have warrant officers, Loh's next task is identifying those Airmen.

"I'm going out to the states right now to look at our big cyber states and go out there and look at that," Loh said. "We were actually integrated from the start, like any other major change. This is a major shift and a major change in our Department of the Air Force. It was good to be at that ground level."

Ohio, California, Washington, Kansas, Virginia, Michigan, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Maryland all have Guard cyber units.

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General Atomics' XQ-67A Off-Board Sensing Station Drone Breaks Cover

The secretive Off-Board Sensing Station (OBSS) program now has a real aircraft, and it's likely a glimpse of much more to come.

By Jamie Hunter, Joseph Trevithick, Tyler Rogoway

PUBLISHED FEB 7, 2024 3:31 PM EST



General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) has released images of a brand new, fully constructed advanced air combat drone called the XQ-67A. The company built it as part of a contract to support the U.S. Air Force's secretive Off-Board Sensing Station (OBSS) program. Though an explicit connection has not been made, there have been indications in the past that this design leverages work the company is doing on Gambit, a novel family of advanced drones that involves different airframes that can be mated to a modular common 'core' chassis.

The pictures of the XQ-67A shown in this story were taken at an undisclosed location. General Atomics and Kratos first received a contract under the OBSS program in October 2021. The Air Force subsequently chose General Atomics alone to proceed actually to build and flight test its design.

"General Atomics Aeronautical is very excited to introduce the XQ-67A Off-Board Sensing Station (OBSS) to the world for the first time. We think you're looking at the future of unmanned combat air vehicles," C. Mark Brinkley, a General Atomics spokesman, told The War Zone. "There is a lot of talk about UCAVs [Unmanned Combat Air Vehicles] and what the future might hold. But as people learn more about the XQ-67A OBSS and how the Air Force Research Laboratory and General Atomics have approached this project, they'll discover it really is unlike anything they've seen so far."

"Specifically, XQ-67A is an AFRL [U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory] program, and GA-ASI was selected to design, build, and fly that new aircraft," Brinkley added. "Without getting into specifics, I can say that we are stepping through that program methodically and working closely with our government partners to hit all of the markers for the project and deliver on our promises. We're focused on speed to ramp, accelerated design processes, and bringing true capability to the fight."

The images we have now of the XQ-67A, which carries both General Atomics and AFRL markings, show that it has retractable tricycle landing gear, a broadly splayed v-tail, and a main wing with low, if any, sweep. It also has a top-mounted dorsal engine intake and a stealthy chine line that wraps around the fuselage. The design is broadly similar in basic configuration to General Atomics' own Avenger, as well as Boeing's MQ-25 Stingray tanker and Kratos' XQ-58 Valkyrie.

Wings Over Wendy's Future Events:



MOAA/MOWW CHAPTER MEETING 20 March 2024



Capt Ted Valles [fmr]

After graduating from ASU Capt Valles received his Pilot wings at Williams AFB. His first assignments were in the F-4 at Seymour Johnson AFB, Homestead AFB, and Kunsan AB. From January to December 1971 he flew the F-4E from Korat AB in Thailand for 190 missions over Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam. Awards were 2 DFC's and 13 Air Medals.

Date: Wednesday, 20 March 2024

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 or 805-807-7788
NLT 15 March
Los Robles Greens Banquet Center
299 S. Moorpark Road,
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360



FOB Assembly Day New Facility

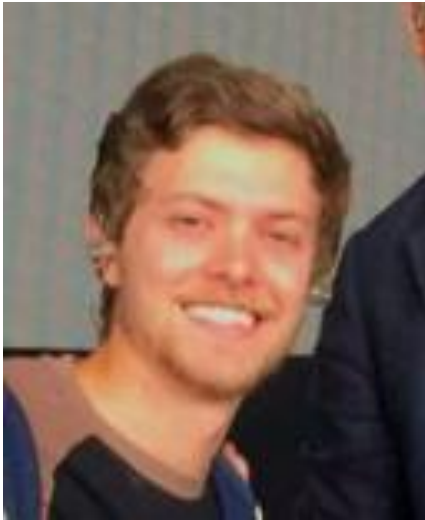


March 16th
Saturday, 9 am - 12 pm
Sign up to attend @
<https://www.operationgratitude.com>

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448-1737**
pcinfoman@gmail.com.
Charles has offered to help
**Wings Over Wendy's
members with their computer
problems for FREE.**

Memoriam

Wings Over Wendy's learned of two members "flying west" since the last issue. Mac Harris and Barney Leone.



McCanna Anthony Sinise Aka “Mac Harris”

McCanna Anthony “Mac” Sinise, a multi-instrumental musician and the son of actor Gary Sinise, died of a rare cancer called chordoma on Jan. 5. He was 33.

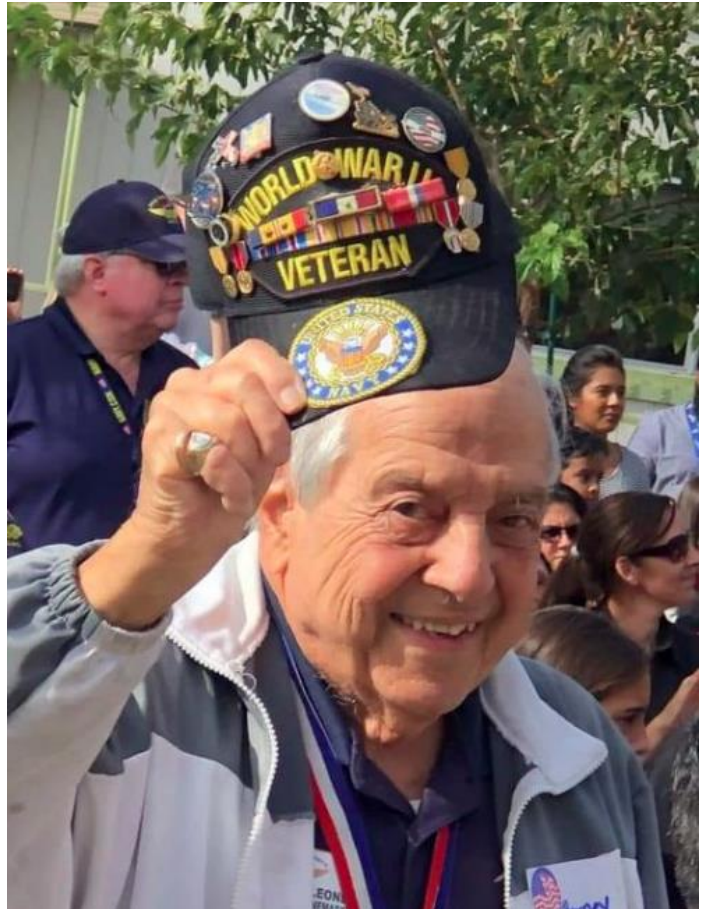
When he lived in Calabasas, he attended Wings Over Wendy’s meetings with his brother-in-law, Bobby George. He listed his name in our roster as “Mac Harris” and was available to assist the group when called upon.

Gary Sinise confirmed his son’s passing in a tribute posted to his foundation’s website, in which he detailed his years-long battle with the disease as well as his unfaltering commitment to making music, which included recording his album “Resurrection and Revival” in the final months of his life.

Gary Sinise wrote, “The week the album went to press, Mac lost his battle with cancer. He died on January 5, 2024 at 3:25pm, and was laid to rest on January 23rd. Like any family experiencing such a loss, we are heartbroken and have been managing as best we can. As parents, it is so difficult losing a child. My heart goes out to all who have suffered a similar loss, and to anyone who has lost a loved one. We’ve all experienced it in some way.”

The following was posted on the Gary Sinise Foundation website:

Rest in peace, Mac, from the members of Wings Over Wendy’s. We cherish memories of the times you and Bobby attended our meetings in Woodland Hills. Say hello to Barney and Leon up there. We miss all of you.
- E. Reynolds
California



Bonifacio (Barney) Pietro (Peter) Leone 09/25/1924 to 02/26/2024

Bonifacio (Barney) Pietro (Peter) Leone, age 99 passed away in his sleep on Monday, February 26, 2024, at his home in West Hills, CA.

He was born on September 25, 1924, in New York City to Pietro (Peter) and Angelina Leone. Barney was a proud resident of the Bronx and always identified as a South Bronx native. Barney graduated from James Monroe High School in 1942 and joined the US Navy, serving from 1943 to 1946, achieving the rank of Motor Mechanic’s Mate Second Class. His tour of duty included China, the Philippines, and Iwo Jima, where he witnessed the famous raising of the U.S. flag atop Mt. Suribachi.

Barney received the Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, Letter of Commendation, and the Asiatic Pacific Medal.

Barney married Philomena (Phyllis) Vicari on September 24, 1949, in the Bronx, New York. He initially worked for the New York City Transit Authority as a mechanic, but his heart and passion were rooted in the Bible and the teachings of Jesus.

(Continued page 12)

He began a lifetime journey serving as Senior Pastor in the Mount Vernon, New York, Christian Assembly Church from 1959 -1963 and then in Warren, Ohio, at The Christian Assembly Church from 1963 - 1991 until his retirement in 1991.

Following his retirement, Barney and Phyllis moved to Los Angeles, CA, to be closer to family. Barney was a member of Calvary Community Church in Westlake Village, California.

Over time, Barney found his final connection to a mission in joining the Veterans group "Wings Over Wendy's." He engaged in numerous educational events concerning the events of World War II and the sacrifice of those who fought and died in the service of freedom. He developed close ties to the many Veterans living in Southern California.

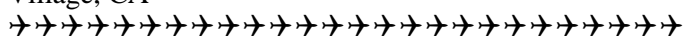
He enjoyed speaking at schools, churches, and memorial events about his time in the Pacific Theater in WWII. Highlights included being honored at the L.A. Dodgers playoff game in 2023, being honored at the LA Galaxy Soccer Game, and being part of the "Secrets of WWII" exhibit at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. He also loved meeting and spending time with Gary Sinise. When he was not speaking, Barney could be found cooking Italian food, gardening, fishing at the Malibu Pier, "holding court" at the Topanga Mall Food Court, or sitting in the front yard of his home in West Hills singing and greeting neighbors. He cherished his time with family and became lifetime friends with so many people that he met over the course of his long life.

Barney was preceded in death by his wife of over 50 years, whom he loved dearly, Phyllis Leone. He is survived by his three children, his Son Paul Leone of Pittsburg, PA, his Daughter, Ruthanne Bright of Simi Valley, CA his Son Dr. Peter Leone of Chapel Hill, N.C., His 6 Grandchildren, Jennifer Leone Rountree, Michael Bright, Gina Bright Spivey, Benjamin Leone, Mireille Leone and Gavin Leone and his 7 Great Grandchildren, Payton Spivey, Dominick Spivey, Mac Bright, Margaux Bright, Greyson Rountree, Natalia Leone and Luca Leone and his caretaker and "Buddy" Tony Cubarrubia who will always be part of our family.

His memorial service will be held on Sunday, March 10th at 3:00 P.M. at Calvary Community Church, 5495 Via Rocas in Westlake Village, CA, 91362.

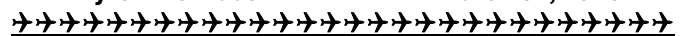
Interment will be on Monday, March 11th at 11:00 A.M. at Pierce Brothers Mortuary, 5600 Lindero Canyon Road, Westlake Village, CA 91362.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to be made in the name of Barney Leone to the Gary Sinise Foundation or to Calvary Community Church, Westlake Village, CA



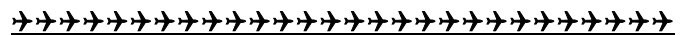
March Birthdays

Michele Croson	March 01, 1956
Monte Merken	March 01, 1948
Joan Mueller	March 04, 1956
Franky Ortega	March 09, 1982
John Boiko	March 12, 1946
Piero Cocchella	March 17, 1958
Ron Fleishman	March 17, 1943
Don Maclay	March 20, 1933
Bob Stiles	March 22, 1937
Chip Stevens	March 28, 1958
Niko Dimopoulos	March 29, 1966
Ron Boggess	March 30, 1945
Fred Kaplan	March 30, 1938
Byron McKibben	March 31, 1926



Prayers

Unfortunately, our most active members are at home. Our prayers are for a speedy recovery: **Duke Dao**



Wings News Patrons

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

David Alvarez	Lee Ambers
Shirley Ambers	Steve Andersen
Dave Anderson	Lillian Anderson
Shirley Andrews	Lee Auger
Mark Ax	Peggy Jean Bassett
Tom Bates	Bob Bermant
Karl Boeckmann	Thyra Boeckmann
Ron Boggess	Paul Boghossian
John Boiko	Gary Burcham
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(Continued page 15)

Larry Kushner
Jill Lace
Barney Leone
Vivian Lewis
Morris Litwack
Don Maclay
Chuck Mathews
Rosadel McClure
Maurice Portnoy
Richard Raskoff
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- 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: **kswpwdaevnb1jans4**

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Reminder

Wings Over Wendy's monthly food drive is Monday, March 4th



at a uniquely intergenerational

"Telling the Stories of Our Elders' Service" event

**Saturday
March 23rd, 2024**

11:00am - 1:00pm
includes time for refreshments

in the Van Nuys area of Los Angeles'
San Fernando Valley

exact location & parking information
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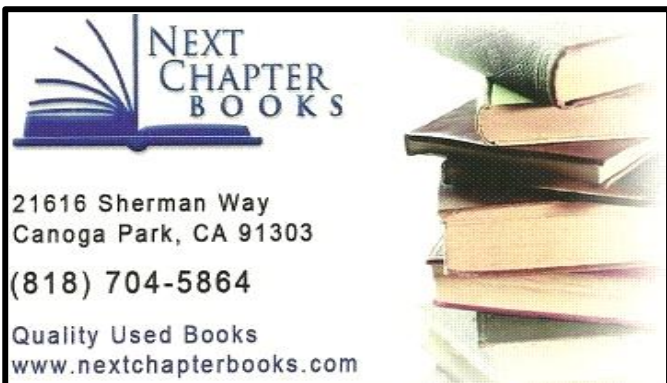
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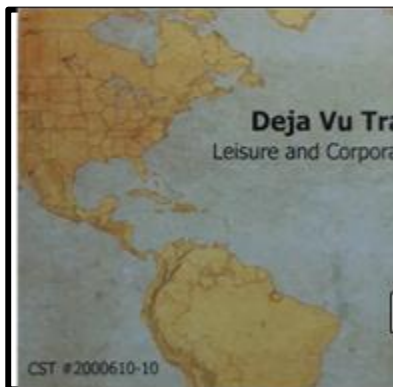


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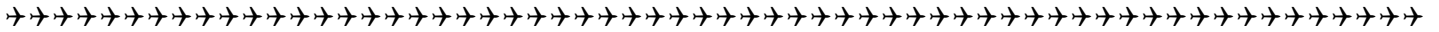
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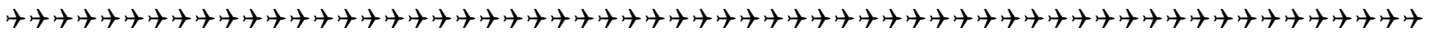
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Nelsonsgreenhouse@yahoo.com



Wings Over Wendy's Upcoming Events



Bi-Annual Picture: MAR 18



March 2024 TOUR



March Air Field Museum

22550 Van Buren Blvd., Riverside 92518

Parking: There is plenty of parking if you choose to drive yourself

DATE: Thursday, March 21, 2024

Transportation: BUS

Meeting Location: Burlington Factory parking lot

Bus Loading Time: 07:15

Cost: \$15 due at registration.

Lunch: Jersey Mike's sandwiches will be served at the museum

Note: The museum is approximately 90 miles away. Under ideal traffic conditions, the trip should take an hour and a half. Expect the drive to take longer due to construction and rush hour traffic.

