

RECON RECORDER

Volume 8, Issue 1

January 2003

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Maurice Cea

WOW another year has past! We have wonderful memories and stories of our get together at Colorado Springs and the great OHIO PIG ROAST hosted by Angelo DeFelice and his wife Betty. We look forward to joining our friends on 3-6 September 2003 at Wright-Patterson AFB. The Air Force Museum (AFM) and the 55th Strat Recon Wing will host the Big Recon Rendezvous. We will have a full schedule of golfing, tours, Cold War Symposium, dedication ceremonies, Bar-B-Que dinner, and a gala banquet in the Museum. The guest speaker will be the captivating historian of the Air Force, Dick Hallion.

In September of 2004 we will be getting together in Connecticut. Many thanks to Phil VanDeusen for providing a great program for this reunion.

We welcome our new members:

Bruno "Buzz" Sinopoli

Robert Gooding

Raymond Lendabarker

Lawrence Cogswell

Annis Casetta

Larry R. McGuire

Edwin Barnes

Thanks for joining in and we know you will enjoy all the get togethers and the friendship of all.

May the New Year bring you peace, happiness and good health.

VP COMMENTS

Jerry Haines

Angie DeFelice hosted a pig roast for the 91SRWA at his Ohio hunting lodge in September. Folks came from MA, MD, PA, IN, IL, OH, & TX. The consensus was: "Do it again." Angie also fixed breakfast; just stay out of his kitchen. Thank you Angie, Betty and your son Joe for a great affair.

MEETING MINUTES

Jim Bard

A special Board meeting was held on 22 Sep 02. Discussion/Actions were: By-laws - Terms of office, no change. 2004 Reunion - Basic info provided. Annual donation - \$250 forwarded. Recon Rendezvous 2003 (RR03) - The 91SRWA will participate. Memorabilia - Prices reduced. Reunions - Annual reunions will be discussed in Connecticut in 2004.

FINANCES

Stan Kopala

The last quarter and year-end report is attached. We are financially sound. Want to rejoin? An application is on page 7 of the roster. Want to pay your \$30 dues? My address is on the mailing list.

RECON RENDEZVOUS 2003

Betty Cea & Jim Bard

The USAF Museum and the 55th SRWA are co-hosting "Recon Rendezvous 2003" at Wright-Patterson AFB, 3-6 Sep 2003. Attachment 1 (55SRWA letter) provides initial information. Attachment 2 (General Metcalf letter and registration form) provides more detail. Attachment 3 (91SRWA and Lockbourne AFB Group instructions and registration form) is 91SRWA specific. Attachment 4 (Hotel & RV Park Information) completes the package.

During RR03 the 91SRWA and the LAFB Group will be having a combined mini-reunion at the Hope Hotel; therefore, **one pre-registration and two registrations are necessary**. One form for the Museum / 55SRWA and one form for our mini-reunion should be sent in immediately. (They are attached.) Later, you will receive one from RR03 for sponsored activities that must be returned **Please submit each to the proper address**.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

Attachment "5" is a proposed amendment to our constitution. A majority of the Board of Directors favor passage.

The primary change would be to allow for Life memberships; this would save a lot of renewal hassles. It will also assure a membership base, save future postage, and reduce the workload of the Treasurer and Secretary.

Please complete the ballot; fold twice to form an envelope with mailing address visible; affix stamp; seal (tape or staple); and post. (Or, if registering for Recon Rendezvous 2003, place it the same envelope with the 91SRWA form.)

91SRWA 2004 REUNION

Phil Van Deusen

The next 91SRWA reunion, with a membership business meeting, will be held the second week of September 2004 at the Radisson in New London Connecticut. Details to follow later.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Don Harrison

Betty Cea and Betty Schocken will soon be having surgery. We wish them the best. If you or someone you know from the 91SRW is ill, or if you hear of a passing, please contact me ASAP. My home address, e-mail address, and phone number are on the roster.

MEMORIES

Jim Brennan

I am always searching for photographs, documents, or even handwritten memoirs related to the 91SRW. My home address, e-mail address, and phone number are on the roster. "My Road to Sampson" is attached.

MEMORABILIA
Art Schocken

Do I have some deals for you guys –

Polo shirts - \$12
Hats - \$5
Sweat shirts \$20 (or less)

My home address, e-mail address, and phone number are on the roster.

91SRWA MAILING LIST

The updated list of association members, and some others that should be, is attached. The list now includes "Spouse" and "E-mail." Send me updates and corrections to any and all of the data; my address is on the list.

If you have e-mail, just send it to:
JimBardJr@cs.com

In the event that I switch ISP's, the alternate is jimbardjr@hotmail.com.

91SRWA IS ON THE INTERNET

With much thanks to Jim Brennan we're there, our web address is:
91stsrw.microway.com

**91st SRW ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS**

President:
Maurice Cea
157 Green Valley Drive
Howard, OH 43028
Phone: 740-392-7750

Vice President:
Jerry A. Haines
4460 Dayton Rd., #20
Springfield, OH 45502
Phone: 937-325-9306

Secretary
James F. Bard, Jr.
3424 Nottingham Rd.
Westminster, MD 21157-8304
Phone: 410-549-1094

Treasurer:
Stanley E. Kopala
4999 Doral Ave
Columbus, OH 43213
Phone: 614-864-2171

Archivists:
James B. Brennan
110 South Station Street
Duxbury, MA 02332
Phone: 781-934-5894

Chaplain:
Donald Harrison
6966 Squaw Prairie Road
Belvidere, IL 61008
Phone: 815-547-7785.

Directors:
Don Furlong
447 Golden State St.
Henderson, NV 89012
Phone: 702-837-9375

Thomas I. Griggs, Jr.
47 Deerhaven Road
Lincoln, MA 01773-1809
Phone: 781-259-9340

John A. Tilley
133 McClellan Road
Greenfield, IN 46140
Phone: 317-462-5630

Philip Van Deusen
50 Mansfield Grove Rd.
East Haven, CT. 06572
Phone: 203-468-2308

John P. Noonan
Rt. 1, Box 192B
Linden, TX 75563-9738
Phone: 903-835-1014

MEMBERS' NOTES

Summary reminder for members attending Recon Rendezvous 2003 – You must complete three actions:

- (1) Complete and mail the pre-registration form to Jack Kovacs (55SRWA).
- (2) Complete and mail the 91SRWA/LAFB registration form to Jim Bard.
- (3) After you receive the event registration package from Jack, complete and return it with payment to him. (You will not receive this package unless you mail Jack the pre-registration form.)

Amendment to Constitution – Don't forget to complete and return your ballot. (If you can't figure out how to fold it twice so that my address is visible, put it in an envelope with the 91SRWA RR03 registration form.)

Members may submit short announcements and articles for inclusion in this section.

NOTICE TO NON-MEMBERS

You can join at any time by sending \$30 for two years dues to Stan Kopala. Give him your name, spouse's name, address, phone number, 91SRW affiliation, and e-mail address. Make your check payable to "91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association." Otherwise, this may be the last Recon Recorder sent your way.

THE RECON RECORDER - Copyright [9 January 2003 by 91st SRW Association]

The "RECON RECORDER" is the official publication of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association. This newsletter is to keep our members informed about the organization, its activities, and pertinent related information.

Original recipients for their individual use may reproduce the Recon Recorder entirely or in part.

As the association's Secretary, I solicit, accept and review items to publish. Send your input to:
Jim Bard, 3424 Nottingham Road, Westminster, MD 21157-8304 or e-mail JimBardJr@cs.com

GOD BLESS AMERICA AND OUR WARRIORS IN HARM'S WAY.

(2) 55th Strat Recon Wing Association

William H. Ernst, President
410 Greenbriar Ct.
Bellevue, NE 68005
BillErnst@aol.com

25 August 2002

Dear Cold War Reconnaissance Veteran,

Once again it's time to alert you to plan on attending **Recon. Rendezvous 2003** reunion hosted by the United States Air Force Museum (AFM) and the 55th Strat. Recon. Wing Association. The planning is progressing nicely and the reunion is set for 3-6 September 2003. Headquarters will be at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, Fairborn, Ohio (737-426-7600) conveniently located just off I-675 at exit #17 and adjacent to Wright Patterson AFB and the AFM. The Cold War Annex (Eugene W. Kettering Gallery) of the AFM is on schedule and they are completing the restoration of the only RB-47H in existence. Attendees will register at the Hotel, pick up their welcome packages, and head off to the Hospitality Suite to rendezvous and socialize with old friends. If you choose not to stay in the Holiday Inn, there are additional accommodations available within 200 yards to include the Fairfield Inn, Hampton Inn, Ramada Inn, Marriott and Homewood Suites. There is a large Mall and a plethora of restaurants close the Hotel(s). The draft schedule of events is as follows:

Wednesday, 3 September, registration will begin at 1200 along with the opening of the Hospitality Suite.

Thursday the 4th will include a golf tournament and tours. Thursday evening 55th SRWA will be providing hors d'oeuvres in the hospitality room.

Friday the 5th we will have a very interesting Cold War Reconnaissance Symposium at the Museum directed by R. Cargill Hall, Chief Historian of the National Reconnaissance Office, who will also Chair the Panel Discussion assisted by Robb Hoover. Afterward, we have scheduled time for the dedication ceremony(s) for Association Memorial Monuments in the Memorial Gardens adjacent to the Museum. Please coordinate with Jack Kovacs, the reunion coordinator, if you plan to dedicate an organization memorial. The dedication(s) will be followed by a Bar-B-Que dinner and you'll have time to walk through the Museum and climb through the RB-47H.

Saturday the 6th, there is adequate time for Association business meetings. If your organization wants to schedule a meeting and need a facility, contact Jack Kovacs. Depending on availability, we expect to have some of the current Recon Aircraft on static display. Saturday evening we'll have a gala banquet in the Museum beginning with cocktails at 1800, music provided by the AFMC Band and our Guest Speaker will be the captivating Historian of the Air Force, Dick Hallion.

We have tacit approval for an area in the Memorial Gardens that I refer to as the Recon Park where the Big Safari and 55th SRW Cold War Memorials are under construction. There is adequate space for many more memorials than are currently committed. There is also interest by the Freedom Through Vigilance/Prop Wash Association (Former AF Security Service/ Electronic Security Command) and the Road Runner Associations in locating possibly memorials in the "Recon Park" area. Because of it's beauty and serenity, we think this is the premiere location in the Gardens. We hope that the Blackbird, Dragon Lady, RB-66 and other AF Units that flew/supported Cold War Reconnaissance will commit to a memorial in the area as well. If you haven't gotten started on your unit's memorial, time is of the essence.

We hope that you and your Association will make plans to join us in Dayton remembering and relishing those exciting days that were. If it is not feasible for your unit to participate, we encourage participation on an individual basis. **Please publish this letter in you newsletter & web page along with the personal invitation from Major General Metcalf, Director of the AF Museum.** For our planning purposes, if you haven't done so already, please take time to fill out and return the form/letter of intent at the bottom of Gen. Metcalf's letter. For more details, feel free to contact Jack Kovacs at J1a2c3k@aol.com 937-879-1390 or me at BillErnst@aol.com, 402-292-1205.

Sincerely,
Bill Ernst

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE MUSEUM
1100 SPAATZ ST.
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO 45433-7102

MEMORANDUM FOR COLD WAR RECONNAISSANCE VETERANS

FROM: USAFM/MU
1100 SPAATZ STRET
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO 45433-7102

SUBJECT: RECON RENDEZVOUS 2003

1. The USAF Museum and members of the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association take great pride in our reconnaissance heritage and indeed are pleased to host Recon Rendezvous 2003. This cosponsored event will celebrate the addition of a new building to the USAF Museum complex as well as the addition of a Cold War Era RB-47H aircraft to the USAF Museum exhibits. A gala event is being planned to include, but not limited to USAF Cold War reconnaissance organizations that operated, modified or maintained the RB-29, RB-50, RB-36, RB 45, RB-57, RB-66, RB-47, RC-130, RC-135, DC-130 with Drones, UAV's, U-2, SR-71, and USAFSS/ESC/AIA and Big Safari organizations.

2. The Recon Rendezvous 2003 event will be an outstanding opportunity to recapture memories and hanger fly Cold War reconnaissance flights with members of various USAF reconnaissance organizations at the USAF Museum near Dayton, Ohio, 3-6 September 2003. We hope you can attend and be a part of this festive celebration.

SIGNED
CHARLES D. METCALF
Maj Gen, USAF (Ret) Director

Recon Rendezvous 2003 Pre-registration

Please help facilitate our planning by providing the following information and returning it ASAP to John A. Kovacs, 564 Sartell Dr., Fairborn, OH 45324-5745 or email to J1a2c3k@aol.com:

I and #___ other guests plan to attend Recon Rendezvous 2003 at the USAF Museum on 3-6 September 2003. I understand that this is a rough survey and I will make my final commitment and send any money after receiving the registration form.

Name (Please print) _____

Address _____ e-mail _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone # (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Unit(s) served with and related aircraft:

(1) Wing _____ Squadron _____ Acft T/M/S _____

(2) _____ (3) _____

(4) _____ (5) _____

Comments: _____

I understand that this is for the 91SRWA/LAFB mini-reunion and I also need to submit a pre-registration form to the 55SRWA. The final registration package will be mailed by 55SRWA only if you pre-register now.

Recon Rendezvous 2003 Hotel & RV Park information

Hotel reservations and expenses are each individual's responsibility. Reservations can be made at the hotel of your choice at this time. At several of the hotels, all the rooms are blocked. Bill Ernst, 55SRWA, personally visited all the motels listed below to verify that each is of proper standard, and ready to take reservations now. All the hotels are multi-storied except the Best Western, which is single story. In the descriptions below is the approximate distance from each hotel to the Holiday Inn since that's where the RR03 hospitality room is located and that's where buses will depart from for golf, the tours, and the aircraft displays. The travel-time from any of the hotels to the AFM is nominally 10-15 minutes.

Reservations at any of the hotels must be made prior to 03 Aug 2003 or you may not qualify for the group rate even if rooms are available. If you plan to arrive before the start date or stay after the finish date verify the room rate with the hotel for your extra days; in many cases you can have the same special group rate for those additional days, except perhaps for the Labor Day weekend. Please remember that the entire year 2003 is special for Dayton and Ohio, and that the weekend before RR2003 is Labor Day Weekend. 2003 is Ohio's bi-centennial, and it is the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brother's famous first powered flight. Dayton is the home of the Wright Brothers. So there will be many things going on in Ohio and in Dayton throughout the year, including at the USAF Museum, which is normally busy anyhow.

Keep an eye on this list as well as the Newsletter for items of interest. When making reservations with any hotel, **other than The Hope**, you MUST mention "Recon Rendezvous 2003" or a Code-designator, if noted below in a hotel description, to get the special RR2003 group rate that has been arranged. **When making reservations at The Hope you must mention that you are with the "Lockbourne Group."** You must call the hotel direct, unless otherwise indicated, and not the central reservation facilities for the hotel chain. These are not huge hotels, which is why arrangements have been made with 12 motels. The Holiday Inn has 204 rooms, and each of the others about 50-60 rooms. Many reconnaissance organizations have been invited to participate in this event and the response has been very favorable. In anticipation of this, we estimate we could have approximately 800 attendees.

The arrangements made with the hotels are for special room rates, and not for any special amenities. All hotels generally feature some kind of free continental breakfast or hot breakfast buffet, iron/ironing board, coffeemaker, hair dryer, data port, interior corridors, fitness room, pool, and cable TV. Additionally, some have room safes, voice mail, social hour, and Jacuzzis. If you desire a particular feature, please verify that the hotel has it. Also state Smoking or Non-Smoking. For groups that may desire to concentrate at a particular motel, meeting rooms of various sizes may be available. Check the hotel's capacity as well as the size of the meeting room to make sure it can accommodate your group. Some of the larger hotels have the smallest meeting rooms. The name in brackets after the reservation number is the name of the Reservations Manager; contact only if you need to discuss meeting space or have reservations problem.

PRIMARY HOTELS

The Hope Hotel & Conference Center (91SRWA & Lockbourne Central) is a contract hotel "almost" on base. In fact, it is on base, but is accessible without going through the gate [a post 9/11 application]. **The 91SRWA/LAFB Hospitality Room will be here.** There is a restaurant and lounge [Packy's - open to the public] within the hotel. It's about **6 minutes** from the Holiday Inn and the same distance from the AF Museum as the Holiday Inn. Rooms are basic motel type rooms. **\$60 a night for Lockbourne Reunion Group.** **You must mention that you are with the "Lockbourne Group."** Call 937-879-2696 for reservations or www.janturner@aol.com. [Angie Turner] (\$75 a night for RR2003.)

Holiday Inn I-675 Fairborn (200 rooms) is **RR2003 Central** hotel where their Hospitality Room will be located and from which the shuttle/tour buses will depart. [Indoor pool/Chop House restaurant] Sugar's Lounge will be the Hospitality Room. 937-426-7800 for reservations or www.hifbns3.one.net. [Susan See]

Standard double [2 double beds] \$89/night
King Leisure [1-King bed] \$89/night
King Sofa [1-King bed & 1 sofa bed] \$89/night
Roll Away [limited nr; \$10/night]

Almost sharing the same parking area as the Holiday Inn are the:

Homewood Suites (40 rooms) [In addition to the bedroom, each suite features a pullout sofa sleeper in the living area, fully equipped kitchen with microwave & dining table among other features. Meeting room for up to 20 people. 937-429-0600 for reservations. www.homewood@one.net. [Polly] King Homewood Suite \$109/Rm/Night (Make reservations NLT 03 Aug 2003)
Two double bed suite \$129/Rm/Night (Make reservations NLT 12 July 2003)

Fairfield Inn - [Typical Fairfield Inn] \$74/night [no pool]. 937-427-0800 for reservations [Jeff Fisher]

Hampton Inn - [(59 rooms) Typical Hampton Inn] Use Codeword "REC" for reservations. Has Single rooms [1B-1P], Double [2B-2P] or Triple/King Study [2B-3P]. Indoor heated pool & spa. \$74/night. 937-429-5505 for reservations or fairbornhi@tharaldson.com. [Victoria]

Within walking distance of the above hotels are several eateries: Bob Evans, McDonalds, Taco Bell, Arby's, Kim's Oriental, Cold Beer & Cheeseburgers, Greek Deli, El Rancho Grande.

The below listed hotels are just a short drive from the Holiday Inn and AFM

Comfort Inn is about 15 minutes from the AFM and **8 minutes** to the Holiday Inn. It's in downtown Fairborn. Within walking distance are MacDonald's, Wendy's, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Friendly's Restaurant, & KFC. Breakfast area is available as a small meeting room; in a separate building is Bartyle's Lounge, which is only open evenings and would possibly be available for meetings during the daytime. \$69/Night. 937-879-7666 for reservations. [Jody]

Best Western Wright-Patterson (75 rooms) is next to Comfort Inn in Fairborn. One story. [Was originally a Holiday Inn, then a Ramada Inn]? Damon's Rib Restaurant inside. Meeting/Hospitality room is available. Indoors pool. About **8 minutes** from Holiday Inn [via I-675] & about 15 minutes from AFM through Fairborn. \$69/Night for two double beds or King bed. 800-528-1234 or 937-879-3920 for reservations. [Victoria]

Hawthorne Inn & Suites was new in early spring of 2002. In a different location in Fairborn, nearer to I-675, about **7 minutes** from Holiday Inn [via I-675] and about 15 minutes from AFM through Fairborn. Choice of rooms with two double beds or a suite with sofa bed. Daily hot breakfast. Evening social (Happy Hour). Each suite has microwave & refrigerator. Large Conference room available. Points under the Hyatt plan. \$74/night. 877-754-9109 [toll free] for reservations. [Karen]

Courtyard by Marriott (50 rooms) was new in Spring 2002. It is just across the Interstate behind the Holiday Inn, and next to the Mall parking area. Small meeting room. In addition to the nearby Mall's food-concession area, Max & Erma's, Paneria, Don Pablo's, and Red Lobster are a short walk away, as well as Burger King. **5 minutes** from the Holiday Inn. Room with double-queens or single King \$99/night. 937-429-5203 for reservations [Angie]

Residence Inn (25 rooms) Next to the Courtyard Motel. Opened about 01 Nov 2002. Hot breakfast buffet available. In addition to the nearby Mall's food-concession area, Max & Erma's, Paneria, Don Pablo's, Red Lobster, and Burger King are a short walk away. Located less than **5 minutes** from the Holiday Inn. \$109.99/ Night. 937-427-3914 for reservations [Cheryl]

Holiday Inn - Xenia [not the central hotel] is a few blocks from downtown Xenia on U.S. Route 35. It is about **15 miles** from our Holiday Inn, about 20 minutes drive. In addition to it's own restaurant, there are several eateries within walking distance. \$64/Night. 937-372-9921 for reservations [Dee Cox]

Ramada Limited & Suites new in March 2002. Spacious rooms. Located about a **tenth of a mile** from the Holiday Inn on the same access road. Frisch's Big Boy restaurant is a short walk. Pool, meeting room, laundry, and hot waffles/continental breakfast. For this one you can use the Ramada Reservation Center (800)-2-RAMADA; tell them it is for the Ramada Limited & Suites Site 13045 in Fairborn, Ohio. \$72.25/night for King size suite or Double-Queen rooms. You should specify one of the following codes: Non-Smoking [CGRECO] or Smoking [CGREND] or call the motel direct at 937-490-2000 for reservations. <http://www.ramadafairborn.com> or ramada13045@aol.com [Nayeem - Owner]

******Local RV Camping******

Regretfully, facilities appear to be limited in this area. Please check with the park to insure suitability for your vehicle and distance to AFM. The following are available:

Dayton Tall Timbers Resort KOA [7996 Weilbaum Rd, Brookville, OH] 937-833-3888 or 800-KOA-3317
DIRECTIONS: I-70 **Westbound**, Exit-24, SR-49 North to 2nd crossroad [Pleasant Plain Rd], 0.5 mile to Weilbaum Rd, left to KOA. I-70 **Eastbound**, Exit 24, SR-49, right on first road [Brookville-Salem] 0.5 mile, right on Weilbaum Rd, 0.5 mile to KOA. \$24/no hookup to \$45/elect & water

Huber Mobile Home Park, [4311 Kitridge Rd, Dayton, OH 45424] 937-233-8822 DIRECTIONS: I-70 [East or West bound], to exit 41 [SR-4 south], go south 3.6 miles to right on Bath Road, then 0.3 mile to Kitridge Rd, west 0.3 miles, turn left. \$23/Pull thru; \$21/ back in.

John Bryan State Park [3790 SR 370, Yellow Springs, OH 45387] 937-767-1274 DIRECTIONS: I-70 Exit 52 [SR 68 south], go south toward Yellow Springs to left onto SR 343, go east one mile to SR 370 to park entrance. Deeply wooded park with walking trails. Non electric-\$11; w-electric-\$15.

Wright-Patterson AFB FamCamp [RVs & Campers] On base; open only to active/retired military personnel, it requires military ID card to access the base. The Parking area has 20 concrete pads and electrical hookups. Near Base Lake. Computer hookup in Laundry Room [for email checking but not for surfing]. Reservations suggested. Check gate-open times upon arrival. Cost is \$16/Night or \$80/week. Call 937-257-2924 for more info or 937-257-2579 for reservations.

My Road to Sampson

By: Jim Brennan

Archivist, 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association

Copyright (C) 2003 James B. Brennan (Reprinted here with his permission.)

I graduated from Utica Free Academy in Utica, NY, in June of 1952, with all the usual emotions - glad to be released from schooling, but also a little bit nervous about what lay ahead. I had been a mediocre student on average, not for lack of brains, but a definite lack of motivation and enthusiasm for schooling. One of the results of this was that I hadn't scored high enough in the New York State Regents Scholarship Test to get a scholarship, which would have meant a more-or-less free ticket to the State Teachers College in Albany, NY - four more years of school, a mixed blessing at best.

My parents, having brought up four kids (I was the fourth) during the Depression, hadn't had any money to save for my eventual higher education. This was pretty normal stuff for the times and I really hadn't expected them to do any more than what they already had.

So it was off to work for a living. The times weren't particularly good in 1952, and I had trouble finding a full time job. So it was bagging groceries every weekend at Chanatry's Supermarket on Bleeker Street. Utica, then as now, was pretty much a disaster area. Anyway, at the end of October I finally landed a job as a mail boy at a business at the other end of town - requiring two long bus trips each way, every day. The job surely wasn't much and I wasn't getting rich on \$40.00 a week. But I needed money - I couldn't put the touch on my parents anymore.

And, having begun to see the light, I, the hater of school ever since kindergarten, enrolled in night school, to learn how to do drafting. But as you might expect, I quickly found drafting boring and school hadn't improved much since the previous June. So after a month or so, night school was also history.

As December arrived, six months after leaving High School, there I was, stuck in Utica, with a minimum wage job having little to no prospects, and largely friendless as my old pals had spread out in all directions. My life was at a low ebb, and I knew it.

It was at this point that Fate stepped in, and my life started on a different tangent, although it was not apparent to me at the time.

I was on my way home from work on a snowy Friday just before Christmas. This trip necessitated changing busses in downtown Utica. So I was standing there on the main street in town in the snow waiting for the bus home, when Fate's first play started in the person of Ralph Moore and some of his friends walking down the street right past me. Ralph had been a good friend for years, though I hadn't seen him since June. After all the "Hello's" and "What'cha been doing with yourself?" and such, I at last asked the question on which my life finally turned. "Where you guys going?" "To the Post Office - we're going to enlist in the Navy." A slight pause ensued and then Ralph said, "Why don't you come along?" After a slightly longer pause, I replied, "Why not!" Things couldn't get any worse than they already were.

So off we went to the Naval Recruiting Office, about six blocks away - only to have our plans quickly shot down by the Recruiter when he told us that he had a six-month waiting list of people. Hell, that was no good, we wanted to go now. As we stood there trying to decide what to do, he made our day with, "I know the Air Force Recruiter a few doors down the hall is taking people right away."

Problem solved! Away we went to the Air Force. Sgt. Blauvelt (whom I was to meet under very different

circumstances about three years later) said that sure, we could enlist in the Air Force and get going right away. Just had to give him our name and address and we would be hearing from him shortly. So we did, and the rest of the trip home that Friday had a noticeably different taste to it.

Sgt. Blauvelt was a man of his word. A week later, a letter arrived at the house, telling me when and where to report for a physical exam. Not unexpectedly, my parents were curious about my mail from the Air Force, so I had to tell them the good news. They thought I was crazy. "Don't you know there's a war on?" and so on and on. Well, there's an idiot child in every family.

A week or so later, I boarded a bus for Syracuse. In the Chimes Building, I went thru the physical exam, filled out a lot of papers, took some sort of general intelligence test, and got talked at a lot. At the end of the day, we were sent home to await the results and (assuming we were accepted) the date and time to show up again in Syracuse.

The letter came quickly. So on January 30, 1953, with a small bag in hand, I was back on the bus to Syracuse, after being seen off by both my parents, who, much to my surprise, seemed sad to see me go. I spent the whole day again in the Chimes Building, learning the hurry-up-and-wait routine, which was to come in so very handy later on.

Finally, towards the end of the day (a Friday), we were sworn in and put on another bus bound for Sampson Air Force Base, just south of Geneva, NY. Now, Geneva isn't very far from Syracuse, but this was before the day of decent highways in that part of New York State, and of course there was a lot of snow on the ground.

As best as I can recall, we got to Sampson about 10 PM. The AP's told us all to get off that bus and line up in the snow beside the road and wait for an Air Force bus to take us somewhere else. Being Friday night, they evidently had some difficulty finding a driver, so we were all pretty cold by the time the bus showed up - one of the typical school bus types but painted blue with a white U. S. Air Force logo on the side. We were taken to the mess hall for our first Air Force meal. The cooks didn't seem too happy to see us. I didn't learn until later that cooks never looked happy.

The meal consisted of luke warm scrambled eggs mixed with stewed tomatoes and all the coffee you could drink. If there's anything I hate, then and now, it's scrambled eggs and stewed tomatoes, together or separate. And at the time, I wasn't a coffee drinker. Fate just having some fun with me.

Once the meal was finally over - it must have been midnight by now, we were herded back on the blue bus again. For about ten minutes or so we just sat there. Then the bus door opened again and a tall guy in dress blues (but no overcoat, I noticed, despite the cold) jumped up the steps and turned to look at us. Finally, in a voice loud enough so that no one could fail to hear him or to understand his message, he said, "Mah name is Airman Third Class Peasley. And I am a p__k!"

As things turned out, he was right about that. But at the time all I knew was that I had well and truly arrived and that my trip on the road to Sampson was complete.

Proposed Amendment to the 91st SRWA Constitution

The following proposed amendment is recommended by the Board of Directors and is submitted in accordance with Article 8 of the Association's Constitution:

Constitution Article 4. Dues:

Current wording: *"The dues of this association shall be \$30.00 and payable every two (2) years in the month of June."*

Proposed wording:

The bi-annual dues of this Association shall be \$30.00 and payable in the month of June of even numbered years; they are delinquent 1 July. Dues of new members will be prorated for the bi-annual period, but to no less than \$15. New members joining between 1 January and 30 June of an even numbered year will pay only the dues to be due in June.

Life Membership dues (non-refundable) may be paid as an alternative, based on the following table:

Age as of 1 July of the even numbered year in which dues is being paid:

65 or less @ \$325	76 - 77 @ \$175
66 - 67 @ \$300	78 - 79 @ \$150
68 - 69 @ \$275	80 - 81 @ \$125
70 - 71 @ \$250	82 - 83 @ \$100
72 - 73 @ \$225	84 - 85 @ \$75
74 - 75 @ \$200	86 - 87 @ \$50 88 or older \$25

Widows (ers) of Founding, Active and Associate members shall be deemed as Life Associate Members at no cost.

The rationale behind this proposed amendment are: The "two years" are not now defined. New members should not be charged dues for the period they were not in the Association. Most similar organizations offer Life Membership; the money is placed in an interest bearing account and entered on the books as an asset under Deposit Account and a liability called Prepaid Dues. We establish an assumed organization life and then withdraw the proper amount each two years and put it in the dues income account. Life memberships save a lot of renewal hassles. It will also assure a membership base, save future postage, and reduce the workload of the Treasurer and Secretary.

Mark one: I favor passage _____ I do not favor passage _____

Print name: _____ Date: / / 03 Signature: _____

Make 2 folds inward so that the mailing address appears; tape edge; affix 1st class stamp; mail by 28 Feb 03.

FROM:

Affix 1st Class Stamp

*James F. Bard, Jr.
Secretary, 91st SRWA
3424 Nottingham Road
Westminster, MD 21157-8304*