



The Alamo AFA

DEFENDER

The Newsletter
of the Alamo AFA
Chapter 234

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Alamo Garners "AFA Texas Chapter of the Year"

Congratulations to all the members of AFA's Alamo Chapter for a tremendous year of accomplishments. This recognition would not have been possible without the commitment of each member who contributed their time and talent to make our programs successful.

Annual TEXOMA Meeting set for July 2008

This year's meeting will be hosted by the Gerrity Chapter 215, Oklahoma City, 11 - 12 July 2008. See the AFA Texas website for more information.

Chapter Officers Selected

Elections were held in March at the Annual Awards Banquet. Selected for the four top positions were:

President: Gary Copsey
Exec VP: John Politi
Secretary: Tom Peterson
Treasurer: Dave Stoltz

In this Edition

- ★ 2008 Awards
- ★ New Chapter Officers
- ★ Calendar of Events
- ★ 2009 Symposium/Expo
- ★ 2008 Awards Banquet
- ★ Member Comments: Camp Bullis and AF Training
- ★ Presidents Comments

Alamo Members Selected for National and State Annual Awards:

AFA Member of the Year: John Politi
AFA Exceptional Service Award: Annie Howell
AFA Medal of Merit: Eric Bailey
Mary King

AFA Texas Awards:

AFA Texas Member of the Year

Kaye H. Biggar

Active Duty

Senior NCO of the Year: SMSgt Debra J. Westmoreland
HQ AETC

Airman of the Year: SrA Jennifer L. Booth
AFPC

Civilian of the Year: Brian K. Hunter
AFPC

Reserves

Senior NCO of the Year: CMSgt John E. Shroyer
433 AW

Calendar of Events



TEXOMA and AFA Texas Annual Meeting 11-12 July, Oklahoma City
AFA National Convention 13-14 Sep, Washington DC
Air & Space Symposium 14-17 Sep, Washington DC
Celebrate America's Military Week, 9-15 Nov
Combat Breakfast, 12 Nov
Air Show, Lackland AFB, 15 Nov
Air Education and Training Symposium, 14-16 Jan 09, HB Gonzales Convention Center
Kellogg/Loos Awards Banquet, TBA (Mar 09)

Alamo Chapter Partners with Air Education and Training Command for 2009 Symposium/Expo - by DJ Roberts, Expo Committee Chair

The Alamo Chapter is working with Air Education and Training Command to plan the 2009 AETC Symposium, scheduled for January 15-16 at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. A crowd of more than 2,000 military and civilian attendees from around the country attended the 2007 AETC Symposium, which highlighted "First Command's" mission, initiatives and impact to the Air Force. The event concluded with the Air Force's 60th Anniversary Ball. The upcoming event promises to be similar in the overall structure and schedule, but will feature different lectures and briefings, as well as an expected larger pool of exhibitors, according to Colonel Kevin McNeight, overall coordinator for the 2009 Symposium.

All commands in the Air Force, as well as international audiences, are invited to this year's event. Expected attendance will approach 3,000 people for the symposium and 1,500 for the AETC Ball.

Alamo AFA Chapter President, Gary Copsey, said, "The Alamo Chapter of the Air Force Association is proud to partner with Air Education and Training Command to hold the 2009 Air Education and Training Symposium. In the heart of San Antonio--"Military City USA"--we'll showcase the very best in Air, Space, and Cyberspace education and training. Please join us for this spectacular event and salute to America's Airmen and their outstanding accomplishments."

To learn more about the 2009 AETC Symposium and to register, visit <https://www.aetcsymposium.com>

2008 Kellogg Blue Suit/Loos Civilian Awards Banquet a Huge Success

Once again, the Alamo Chapter hosted a fitting salute to the Airmen and Air Force Civilians from the San Antonio area who represent "The Best of the Best." This year's event was held at Lackland's Gateway Club on March 13th, where over 90 local airmen and civilian winners were recognized. Each year, every Air Force active, reserve and guard organization selects their best in each of the military and civilian categories. This year, each winner received a certificate and an acrylic cube with "Alamo Chapter AFA" and a likeness of the Air Force Memorial laser engraved in the cube. This sits on a wood base with the recipients name engraved on the front edge.

Attending this years event were Dick Loos who presented the Loos Civilian Awards named in honor of his parents, Charlotte and Carlton Loos, and Col (ret) James Kellogg and Dr. John Kellogg, sons of Joe Kellogg. Col Kellogg presented the Kellogg Blue Suit awards. Special guests included local business man Ernesto Ancira, our Community Parter of the Year. Several general officers, commanders, command chief master sergeants and first sergeants were present to show support for the winners. Over 400 attended the banquet.

Member's Comments: Construction, Camp Bullis, and the future of training airmen in San Antonio for combat.

I am sure all of you are aware of the controversy involving the clearing of a wilderness area by land and real estate developers around Camp Bullis which is located in Northwest Bexar County. The clearing does two things:

1. destroys the habitat of an endangered bird, the Golden Cheeked Warbler (which I am not particular interested in but it forces the birds to move into Camp Bullis causing the Army and its training operations to move out of the areas where they settle reducing the land available for military training) and 2. the encroachment causes light pollution that interferes with night training.

It seems that neither Bexar County nor the City of San Antonio has the interest or ability to oppose what could be the death knell of both Camp Bullis and Fort Sam Houston. Our Air Force has a vested interest in keeping Camp Bullis open as many of our airmen are being trained at the facility. I suggest that we go on record condemning the destruction of any more land adjacent to Camp Bullis and let our position be known. It is evident that the developers are interested in the dollar and not the security of our country.

Note: Anyone is welcome to submit articles expressing their opinions to the Defender. Send your views to the chapter president or the webmaster for review and inclusion.

President's Comments:

I want to take a few lines to discuss four things.

Your Voice: First, our Air Force needs the AFA now more than any time I can think of in our history. It is critical that our elected officials understand the impact our Air Force has on preserving freedom and national security...it seems that not all are in agreement that the Air Force has played a pivotal role in current operations. Recent remarks from top officials make me believe that there is a move afoot to move us back about 60 years or more. It is imperative that we all let our elected officials know how important air power is to our national defense...and it's a perishable asset that needs to be recapitalized. I encourage all our members to keep up with current events by not only reading the Air Force Magazine but also by viewing the AFA website and reading daily updates. Take the time so share your thoughts with our elected members of congress. Remember, the number of elected officials with any military experience is at an all time low, so our input can be critical to decisions made on Capital Hill.

Chapter Modernization: On another note, we are attempting to move forward with the Defender by making it an online resource through our website. I know that a number of our chapter members do not have access to the web, so we will continue to provide hard copies through the mail to those who indicate to us in writing that they desire to receive

it this way. With around 3700 members, you can imagine the expense of printing and mailing this document. AFA National Hq has made a provision that chapters may go to an electronic newsletter, and that is what we intend to do. But we also want to make sure we are serving the needs of all our members.

Your Help: We have a number of events that the chapter takes on, and we need help to make these world class. We have some exceptional talent in the Alamo Chapter, and we need to make the most of it. Since arriving here around three years ago, I have seen the chapter move forward, but we have a ways to go to make us truly effective. With 3700 members, we ought to have enough volunteers to take on some major efforts. But it seems it's always the same few who step forward. I ask for everyone's help...by raising your hand to volunteer some of your time, you can make a tremendous impact on our Air Force. Take the time to view the chapter website for upcoming events. By volunteering your time and talent we can make these events and activities even better!

Membership: San Antonio is commonly referred to as "military city." That being the case, and with the number of Air Force active, guard, reserve, civilian and retirees in the area, we should have no problem bringing in new members. But that's not the case. Last month we had zero new applications. We need everyone's help in spreading the word and getting new members. The AFA is the professional association that every AF member should be a part of. The activities of the AFA benefit each and every Airmen...we just need to make sure everyone understands that.

Educate...Advocate...Support

Regards,
Gary Copsey
President, Alamo Chapter AFA



Alamo Chapter AFA Community Partners

We wish to thank our Community Partners who continue to support the AFA and make our programs possible...

We couldn't do it without you!

For information on our community partner program and how to join, see our website at www.alamoafa.org. Our VP for Community Partners is John Dipiero

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 Joel's Images
 Karta Technologies
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