Newsletter and Reunion Packet 2009

Plans and meetings have been underway by the Blackbird Reunion Committee for many months in an effort to make the 2009 Reunion our best ever. With this newsletter you're also receiving the reunion packets early so you can make your travel plans to attend. The Reunion will be held in Reno, Nevada at the Nugget Hotel from June 11-14th. To make the Reunion the success it is known for we rely not only on our Committee members, but also on volunteers to help with other aspects of our activities...should you feel inclined to take a stint at the reception desk (a GREAT way to see who is coming or going as well as getting a few extra hugs and kisses) please contact Clyde Nickinson (cmnick21@aol.com) or Rich Graham (habu5@verizon.net) ASAP.

On Saturday, June 13th we will offer a golf tournament, hosted by the Ben Raines and the Wildcreek Golf Course (less than 10 minutes from the Nugget), using a 4-man Best Ball format, with tee times starting about 7:00. We have played this course during Reunions several times in the past with many accolades. It is approximately 6200 yards long with a slope rating of 69.4....not too difficult even for those who have made the most of Friday evening socializing! Saturday afternoon a military representative from Beale AFB will give an update on the U-2 program, Global Hawk and the base in general. Following that, Renee Swanson, the wife of one of our members who works with TRICARE, will give a briefing to our members and answer all your questions.

Joe Kinego has again agreed to be our MC for the Saturday night banquet. Our guest speaker will be Bill Weaver. As a test pilot for Lockheed, Bill has flown many aircraft including the A-12, YF-12 and SR-71. You will hear first-hand about his fascinating and legendary "ejection" from an SR-71 and possibly a few Kelly Johnson stories.

Our Association funds remain solid---newsletters and mailings for the Reunions can continue for quite some time. We would like to thank those who continue to send in voluntary dues---and to those who have made cash donations to the Association to defray mailing costs. Our thanks, too, to those who have made donations at the Reunions for items which were auctioned to those attending.

At the 2007 reunion, Uhl Sagraves donated a Mach 3+ wooden inlay plaque that was auctioned. He has subsequently been contacted by several members to commission another plaque. He declined their offers in order to make this a unique and rare piece of art. However, he has completed his second wooden inlay plaque and graciously donated it to the Blackbird Association for auction at the Reunion. It is made with both exotic and domestic hard woods and boasts a hand rubbed finish. A shipping container is included for the lucky winner of the auction. We thank Uhl for his efforts to help raise funds for your Blackbird Association. If anyone has items they would like to donate for auction at the reunion, contact Tommie Thompson (Tommie.Thompson@beale.af.mil) or Charles Stewart (Charles.Stewart@beale.af.mil) as soon as possible.

We are elated to announce that the LERC will be among the vendors at the Reunion, as well as Larry Chambers with his insightful aviation art. A few others are pending---you will be very pleased with the showing. Speaking of showing---our Memorabilia area will be open from 12 to midnight Thursday, 8am to midnight Friday and Saturday, and until about noon on Sunday.

Fred Carmody

Rich Graham

Jim Wilson

2007 Blackbird Reunion DVD Available

This is the entire video presentation shown at the Saturday night banquet at the Golden Nugget Hotel in Reno, NV on 23 June 2007. The video slide show has four chapters that include: The New York to London speed record run in 1974, the world speed and altitude records set in 1976, Beale AFB today with photos of the U-2 and Global Hawk operations, and 250 images of those associated with the program over a span of 25 years.

If you did not attend the reunion, this DVD will keep you informed of the Blackbird's community commitment to excellence. Relive some of the golden years of the Blackbirds and see what is happening in reconnaissance today. Price of \$25.00 includes shipping. The DVD was produced by Leland Haynes and can be ordered at his web site address: www.wvi.com/~sr71webmaster/PayPal_Order.htm.

New SR-71 Book

Rich Graham's newest book, "Flying the SR-71 Blackbird," was released in July. Royalties from book sales go to the restoration, upkeep and maintenance of the SR-71 simulator at the Frontiers of Flight Museum in Dallas. The long-term goal of the museum is to eventually get the simulator up and running. Link Corp has pledged the manpower and money to do that. You can contact Rich at habu5@verizon.net if you would like to purchase an autographed copy. He will bring copies to the Blackbird Reunion as well.

Kelly Johnson Award Selection Process

The Blackbird Association steering committee has decided to select the Kelly Johnson award winner differently, starting with the 2009 reunion. A group consisting of former Kelly Johnson award winners, headed up by Don Emmons, will select the winner from YOUR nominations.

Before you send in your nomination, think about who fits the criteria for the award. The Kelly Johnson trophy is a lifetime achievement award presented to an individual who has significantly contributed to the Blackbird Program. The winner of the award will have gone above and beyond what was required in the performance of his/her normal duties to perpetuate, foster, and improve the Blackbird Program over a lifetime.

We solicit the nomination of who you think deserves to be honored with the award. Include a justification detailing why the individual you are nominating is apart from all the others. Specifics and substance of what the nominee has done to meet the criteria is important. Keep your written justification to no more than three paragraphs. Send your written input to Don Emmons at: demmons 352@aol.com no later than May 1, 2009.

Missing members

LaVONNE ABBOTT **DEAN ADAMS** JOHN ALBERTSEN DAVID ALDOUS JERRY ALECKSON LANDON ALLEN DUDLEY ALTON MIKE ANTHONY JOHN ARCHER TOM ARMSTRONG DON ARNOTE JIM ARVIN **BLAINE BACHUS** GREG 'SPANKY' BARBER ED (Eddie-da) BARNETTE STEVEN BARRAZA **BILL BAUER** CORY BARTHOLOMEW **BRIAN BEALS** PAUL W. BECKER STEVE BELGAU **CHRIS BENNETT ROLAND BERRY** RICHARD BOSZE STEVE BRAGG RON BROOKS LARRY BROOKS TOM BROWN **GEORGE BROWN** MIKE BURROW JOYCE CADY MICHELLE CALLISON ART CANTIN JOHN CARNOCHAN CAROL (MILLER) CAUGHEY JIM CHEELEY ARTHUR CLEVELAND RANDY CLINTON AL COBB MICKIE COCKRELL JIM COLAS DOUG COLE ROBERT G. CONNELL PAUL COOK TIM COX **BRUCE CUCUEL BILL CURRY** MIKE DANIELLE RICHARD DALY LEX DAVIS PAT DAVIS **NILA DECKER** TONY DeMARINI WILLIAM DERDOCK RICHARD DESTEFANIS ALBERT DOBYNS MATTHEW DONOVAN GREGG 'DOTMAN' DOTTER **BOB DUNN** LANE DURGIN HARRY EBERFLUS MATTHEW EDWARDS JOHN FEDA RAYMOND FLORES JIM FLOWERS **CURTIS FLUKE BOB FORD** ELMER (JESSE) FRANCE JERRY FRAZIER DOTTIE FROMME **ELOY FUENTES** JOHN FUQUA CARL GAMBLE MARK GAULIN **DENNIS GEARHART** TERESA GLASSMYER DAVE GIST RICHARD GLEERUP HECTER GONZALEZ RICK GOODYEAR **ELLIS GRACE** KENNY GRANNUM HAL GREENWALD **BUCK GROSS** LARRY GROSS MARIA GRYBKO BYRON HALL THOMAS HALL **GARY HAMILTON ELMER HANSON** MARK HARGRAVE **BILL HARWOOD** DON 'MUFF' HECKERT MICHAEL HELTON DAVE HENSLEY STEVE HERMAN **CHUCK HESS EDDIE HICKMAN** CHARLIE HICKS WILLIAM HOLMAN **BETTY HOLMAN** MICHAEL HOLMES JOHN HOROSZEWSKI **BILL HORTON** VIC HOSTEHER KIM HOWELL PETE HOYNES CHARLES R. HULEN 'SCOOP' JACKSON JACQUE JEFFORDS DICK JIMMINK JACK JOHNSTON **BRAD JONES EDWIN WELDON JONES HOWARD JOSS** DAN KELLY JAMES KELLY **KEVAN KEY** JIM KIPPERT EDWARD J. KIRKUS WILLIAM KITE CHRISTIE KLEVEN CRIS KOEHLER DAVE KOEHLER JOHN KORHELY **GARY KRIER** JOHN LAPOINTE SANDRA LEONARDELLI PETE LEWIS STEVEN A. LEWIS WAYNE 'LIB' LIBBY **BRIAN LONG** LEONARD LIST WALTER LOFTON **DENNY LYDSTON** DON LYKINS TIM (JUG) LYLE JOHN LYNCH **PEGGY MALCOMB** MARC E. MANIS J.L. McBRIDE LARRY McCALL GEORGE McDONALD VERN McDORMAN JERRY McKEAN **GEOFFREY McKINLAY** THOMAS MELLODY **BOB MEYER** AL MILLER MICHAEL MONAHAN JERRY MONCREE **BOB MOORE CHRIS MOYER BILL NAGEL** ROGER NAGEL ROBERT NAKA **BRUCE NEGRO** STANLEY NOVAK JAN NYSTROM TIM O'KEEFE **ROY OWEN** DANIEL PATTERSON **BRENT PATTON BRUCE PERCIFIELD** PAT PETERSON ADRIENNE PICHETTE **BRYAN POLLOCK** DAN PREWITT **BOB RADTKE** LEE RANSOM DAVID RANDALL KATHY RICE **BOB RIETZKE** DON RIETZKE GEORGE RISSE PAUL ROBERTS FRED ROBINSON ROBERT ROTHSTEIN **EDWIN RODRIGUEZ** STEPHEN ROSS PHIL SAGE KEN SASINE **RON SAVAGE** RUPERT SCAMMELL VINCE SERGI DONALD A. SEURER PHIL SIMPSON MARK SMITH MARK SPENCER NORM SWANSTROM JOY STEVENS MIKE SWICK LYNN TATRO **ED TAYLOR** TARA THIESSEN WARREN THORNTON JAMIE TOOMBS **DENNIS TOWNSEND EVAN TREVINO** FRANK TROFFER JOHN TURNER WAYNE TURRELL STELLA TYSON KENNETH VAN ZANDT WOODY VONDRACEK JERRY WAGNON **GREG WARE** MICHAEL WELCH JOE WELLER STEVE & SUE WEST MERL WESTERN CHRIS WHEATLEY DON WHITE **RICK WILLIAMS** TOM WILSON STEVE WILSON LYLE WILSON LLOYD WITTLAKE **BILL WOOD** MERVIN WREN **JOE YAROSS** TOMMY YATES LARRY ZIMARIK

We would like to find these "lost" Members----if you can help please send an e-mail to: blackbirdmail@aol.com or Jack Madison at: 1729 North Nelson St, Alexandria, VA 22207

Habu follows different path and calling

After retirement from the Air Force, many former SR-71 crew members gravitated to defense contractor or airline jobs. One of our Habus, Frank Stampf, found a much different track. Here's how he has given, and continues to give, back to the community.

I was asked to write about my past eight years in the nonprofit community working with Partners In Housing (PIH) — an agency whose mission is to help homeless families with kids get back on their feet and become productive, contributing members of our community. The most important thing I've learned is that spectacular things can be accomplished by people sometimes looked upon by our society as less-than-spectacular...

One cold winter night, a young mom named Caitlyn and her two young children were literally running for their lives from an increasingly violent domestic abuse situation. In fear and despair, and with nothing but the clothes on their backs, they had no money and nowhere to go. Fearful of being found by their abuser, she could not return to her job, and she couldn't let the kids go back to their school. Facing a bleak, uncertain future, Caitlyn was told about PIH.

Of the almost 600 homeless families helped by PIH since it's inception in 1991, most are headed by a single mom, and about half are escaping violent or abusive relationships. After entering the PIH program, Caitlyn went on to complete a degree and begin a successful career in medical sales. In June 2008 I was fortunate enough to be present when she closed on the purchase of her first home. There weren't many dry eyes in the room. Think about it — through her hard work and some help from PIH, she and her kids went from homelessness and utter destitution to home ownership and a happy, healthy life in less than two years.

The challenges in running a nonprofit program are many. Funding is a constant battle, resources are scarce, and setbacks by individual families can be heart-wrenching. However, the difficulties and demands of the PIH mission are the price to be paid for something more important than just a "bottom line." We're helping homeless families build a newer and brighter future. We witness first-hand how empowering someone who is down and out and giving them trust, along with accountability, can change their entire perspective on life. This nonprofit thing ain't so bad...

Evergreen Museum

On June 13-15, 2008, the Evergreen Museum in McMinnville, Oregon hosted an SR-71 Symposium. Those attending were: Mike Hull, Lew Williams, Phil Loignon, Mort Jarvis, B.C. Thomas, Kirk Knutson, Buz Carpenter, Dave Peters, Dewain Vick, Don Walbrecht, George Morgan, Cec Braeden, Tom Alison, Barry MacKean, Don Emmons, Rich Graham, Dave Burns, David Dempster, Chuck Woodward, Bob Roetcisoender, Pat Halloran, Blair Bozek, Charlie Daubs, Jim Shelton, Al Payne, Leland Haynes, and Donn Byrnes. On Sunday afternoon, Tom and Deanna Pugh were flown down by John Kastien to spend the afternoon with the group. Tom was looking good and happy to see everyone.

The museum has a new IMAX theater and space museum, located in separate buildings. The weather was excellent and provided opportunities to visit the many local wineries. The Evergreen Museum has their own winery and featured bottles of wine with a classy SR-71 label. Unfortunately, it was "grape juice" wine!

Oshkosh 2008

On August 2nd, seven crew members participated in an SR-71 Symposium at the world's largest fly-in airshow at Oshkosh, WI. Those attending were Blair Bozek, Rich Graham, Jim Greenwood, Pat Halloran, Al Payne, Lee Shelton and Bernie Smith. Beale supported Oshkosh with a T-38 and U-2 aircraft for static display. The U-2 pilots held an impromptu pizza and beer function at their rented house on Tuesday evening.

WEB SITES

E. D. McKim—www.habus.net

John Stone-www.blackbirds.net

David Allison— www.habu.org Larry Johnson—www.friendsoftheblackbird.com

LERC-www.lmaeronautics.com/palmdale/lerc/

RoadRunners—www.roadrunnersinternationale.com

Leland Haynes—www.wvi.com/~lelandh/sr-71~1.htm

DragonLady Assoc-www.u2dla.org

Paul Kucher—www.sr-71.org

Bob Stoner-www.habus.org

Mike Trojano-miketrojano.com/beale.html

Daniel Freeman-- Mach3ti.com

Some sites may require an "http://" prefix depending on your computer

TRICARE Briefing at 2009 Blackbird Reunion

On Saturday, Lt. Col. (ret) Renee Swanson, wife of Erik Swanson, KC-1350 Instructor Pilot and 9th AMS Commander, will present a 45-minute program on what one should know about TRICARE for Life, as well as discussing TRICARE Prime, Extra and Standard. She will have copies of the slides and handouts and will answer questions for all aspects of TRICARE service.

Renee retired in 2005 after 22 years as a hospital administrator. The last ten years she worked at different levels of TRICARE. She wrote the transition plan for the current TRICARE program for all beneficiaries in the DOD. She has held numerous positions including Squadron Commander and Hospital Administrator. She was deployed as the Deputy Medical Group Commander at Prince Sultan Air Base in 2000 while serving as the TRICARE Flight Commander at the 55th Medical Group, Offutt AFB. She was part of the team that implemented the first TRICARE contract in 1996 and also participated in the Education With Industry Program in a managed care fellowship at John Hopkins University Hospital, Baltimore in 1995.

Gone but not Forgotten

Lolly Kennon John Walleman Gus White Eugene Smith David Harrington Irv Bollendorf

Chappy Chapman Gil Cefaratt Jim Cooney

Jack Weeks

Steve Heyser _ Ray French Larry Johnson Tom Brown Dwain Allen

Jim Daniels

MEMORABILIA COMMITTEE

Hello Blackbird Members:

Just a note from your Memorabilia Committee - we are so looking forward to this reunion and seeing everyone again. We have wonderful vendors this year - some old favorites and some new, soon to be favorites! Last year we offered our raffle tickets for sale at the time we sent out the registration packets. You can buy raffle tickets at the same time that you send in your registration if you like. We will put the one half of your ticket in our sealed box and will mail you the other half. For those of you who will not be able to attend the reunion, you can still get in on the raffle. You can purchase your raffle tickets by sending in your checks to the same place you would send your registration and if you are a winner, we will mail your winnings to you - now that is a great deal!!!

TICKETS - TICKETS - TICKETS

\$1.00 each // 15 for \$10.00 // 40 for \$20.00

TICKETS - TICKETS - TICKETS

18th Blackbird Reunion

Come one – Come all to the spectacular 18th Blackbird Reunion in fabulous Sparks, NV!!!

We are so excited to be able to present the following vendors for your shopping pleasure

THE LERC LOCKHEED EMPLOYEE'S STORE

All manner of SR-71 and U-2 aviation items plus outer ware items, books, models, jewelry, stationary, coins, pins, etc.

GARY SCHROEDER PERSONAL TOUCH CREATIVE IMAGES

Beautiful etched glass, mounted aviation prints, custom T-shirts made while you wait and much more,

LARRY JOHNSON & LARRY DECEW FRIENDS OF THE BLACKBIRDS

Aviation photos, historic flight VHS and DVDs along with other items.

THE CIA GIFT SHOP

Many CIA memorabilia items from days past, books, etc.

LARRY CHAMBERS AVIATION ARTIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

Many early aviation prints as well as modern flight prints.

Subject: ALERT - TRICARE FOR LIFE ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

I don't know how many of you partake of the Tri Care for Life program but here is a very interesting note on the subject. Seems as though our President Elect has placed a priority on cutting it out of the budget as a means to provide funding for those things he promised during the campaign. In any case, on page 189 of the Congressional Budget Office report, see the note below on how to get to that spot, there is a strong recommendation to eventually eliminate the program as it is too expensive. I would ask that you contact your elected officials and register your strong opposition to the elimination of this program.

This is a HEADS-UP from BG Bob Clements, USAF Ret (P38 Bob) The following has been added to the Congressional Budget Office Web Site(www.cbo.gov < http://www.cbo.gov/): a. Budget, Options, Volume 1: Health Care (http://www.cbo.gov/doc.cfm?index=9925

"Now here it is folks and I will guarantee if you sit around on your behind and do nothing about it as they bring these options forward this coming year, you will lose one of the best healthcare benefits that the Medicare eligible retired military have. It is short of the promises made that we fought so hard for back in the late 90s and early 2000s but it is still the best healthcare program that anyone in the United States has, bar none.

People who are professionals always look for the channel of least resistance when it comes to cutting money out of the Federal and DOD budget. I can tell you this straight on, military retirees are one of those channels of least resistance noted for sitting around, doing nothing, and waiting for ole Joe to do it for them. You had better wake up. Your medical benefits are prime target. If you lose them, you have nobody to blame but yourself. Let me repeat that ... you have nobody to blame but yourself. The way to secure your benefits is to write to your members of Congress and to keep writing and writing and writing. ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH!! Keep repeating the above statement until you are blue in the face.

Now I'm going to make one more statement to all of you younger people out there who are not yet eligible for Tricare for Life. HEALTH CARE WILL EVENTUALLY BECOME THE DOMINATING FACTOR IN YOUR LIFE. Remember that it will impact you big time with the utmost in cruelty unless you are fortunate enough to die from a heart attack . . . or get run over by a truck.

Now, I am going to attach AGAIN exactly what OMB has in store for military retirees using TFL. This source is directly from OMB and is not something that I have dreamed up. They are telling you exactly what they are going to do with your benefits. If you do nothing, this is what you will get.

The service organizations will put up a fight and are aware of this and will put up a fight but, they will need your help and can't do it by themselves. I hope this makes it clear as to what you can expect if you do nothing.

To show you how stupid these professionals can be at times if you will read the attached document closely you will see that in spite of the MTFs (Military Treatment Facility) need to get patients back to keep their doctors busy and the hospitals from going to clinic status, these people from OMB would employ a means to keep retirees from using MTF facilities by charging them a fee for services. How dumb can you get.

Even if you are an Obama lover, and believe that change cometh, TFL option from OMB will not go away. They need the money they spend on you for other programs for people who produce nothing but votes to keep their boss in office. chk6.. bob"

A footnote: BG Bob Clement is known with affection as "P38 Bob". He flew P38s in WWII. He was one of the stalwart warriors that led effectively from the front when the hard battles were being fought to bring Tricare for Life to reality. I was honored and pleased to be a player in that effort by following P38 Bob's lead. (in those days I was known as MilVet99) MilVets: it looks like we will again be confronted by the 'attack of the bean counters' who, by and large, wouldn't know (and probably never will know)genuine unselfish service to our country and are solely motivated by crunching numbers so that those numbers will reflect favorably on their bosses and their boss's causes. They have no thought to the havoc they would cause... in many cases the loss of any amount of TFL benefits would be a an insurmountable hardship and to some it would truly be a death sentence. It is well that we gear up for the fight now. As P38Bob says, we must write, write, write and write. Once is not enough! In time I will be preparing letters for your use in writing to your elected officials and submitting them to the TREA Membership, and to others who may want to join the fight.

Fred Langston, President (2008), Legislative Affairs Chair, Greater San Diego Chapter 128, The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), fglangston@yahoo.com < mailto:fglangston@yahoo.com>

Please complete the reverse and return this portion with your check by 31 May 2009.

* *

Your cancelled check is your reservation confirmation.

To get a refund, written cancellation must be received No later than 1 June 2009.

Mail this portion (with check) to:

Blackbird Reunion

P.O. Box 338

Penn Valley, CA 95946

NOTE: Hotel Reservations

Are made directly with the Nugget Hotel.

Phone 1-800-648-1177

Be sure to indicate you are with the BLACKBIRD Reunion

Your room reservations, with deposit should be made by \frac{21 May, 2009}{200} to:

John Ascuaga's Nugget

1100 Nugget Avenue, PO Box 797

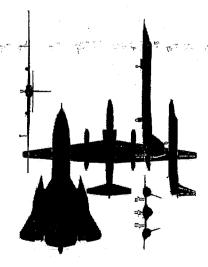
Sparks, NV 89432-0797



The Eighteenth Reunion

June 11-14, 2009

John Ascuaga's Nugget Sparks (Reno), Nevada



For additional Blackbird Reunion information, contact:

Fred Carmody
(530) 432-2232
or Rich Graham

(972) 491-0011

Blackbird Reunion Committee P.O. Box 338 Penn Valley, CA 95946

2009 Blackbird Reunion Schedule of Events ±

Thursday, June 11st

1200-2000 Registration /Golf sign up (2nd Floor)(**WEST TOWER**)
1200-2400 Hospitality Suite & Memorabilia Open

PAVILION(A & B)(2nd Floor)

Friday, June 12nd

0800-1800 Registration / Golf
0800-1730 Hospitality Suite Open
1730-2000 Hospitality Suite CLOSED
1800-2000 Reception (No Host Cocktails—Rose B)
2000-2400 Hospitality Suite Open
2000-2100 U-2 Memorabilia Hospitality Suite Area
0800-2400 Memorabilia Open

Saturday, June 13rd

0800-1800 Registration
0800-1700 Hospitality Suite Open
0800 Golf Tournament Start Times
1700-2200 Hospitality Suite CLOSED
1800-1930 "No Host" Cocktails (Rose B Foyer)
1915-1945 "Open" Banquet Seating (Rose "B")
1945 Banquet Introductions
2000 Banquet Dinner Served
2200-2400 Hospitality Suite Open—SR-71 Auction
0800-2400 Memorabilia Open

Sunday, June 14th

0700-1100 Coffee/Juices/Pastries—in the Hospitality Suite 1100 Hotel Room Checkout Time 1130 Hospitality Suite CLOSED (S)

Plan to buy lots of our Raffle Tickets

Please make checks payable to the "Blackbird Reunion Fund"

Looking Forward to Seeing You!!!

Please Fill OutThis Side and Return With Reunion Fee:

Golf Tournament (Northgate Golf Course) \$55.00 per person X persons = \$ TOTAL Reunion Fees = \$	Saturday Night Banquet and Hospitality Suite (You'll be here Saturday only) \$80.00 per person X persons = \$	Reception and Hospitality Suite only (You Don't want to go to the banquet) \$75.00 per person X persons = \$	Reception, Hospitality Suite and Banquet (The Whole Works!) \$108.00 per person X persons = \$	Reunion Fee	Full names of other people you are paying for and registering:	Spouse/Guest Name Tag Are you staying at the Nugget Hotel? YES NO	Blackbird Association Number Your Name Tag	Phone Number () E-Mail Address	Address City/State/Zip	Your Name
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