

Minutes
Air Force Public Affairs Association
Annual Membership Meeting
Tampa, Florida
Saturday, October 28, 2023

Call to Order: President John Dorrian, on behalf of Chairman Brett Ashworth, called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. EDT.

Roll Call: Secretary Carla Sylvester called the roll. A quorum was present.

Board Members Present: President John Dorrian, Vice President Eric Schnaible, Treasurer Phil Ratliff, Secretary Carla Sylvester, Julie Briggs, Dick Cole, Jim McGuire, Chuck Merlo, Perry Nous.

Board Members Absent: Chairman Brett Ashworth, Col Allen Herritage, Mike Paoli.

Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes: Jim McGuire moved to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2019 annual meeting. John Gura seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Report: Treasurer Phil Ratliff reviewed AFPAA's finances.

1. Phil said our financial records are with the accountant for preparation of the 4th Quarter financial statement and taxes for the end of the fiscal year.
2. He noted the purpose of the endowment fund is to cover the costs of operating the association and to defray some costs of the annual meeting. The initial goal for the fund was \$300,000; the balance is currently approximately \$508,000 and fluctuates according to the market.
3. Phil reported the cost of the annual meeting is more than \$30,000. He said we received registrations and a donation from Lockheed Martin totaling about \$17,000 or \$18,000. The association will cover the remainder of the cost, which will be about \$12,000 - \$14,000. The expenses will be further offset by the sales of coins, totaling about \$600, and by the Centurion Fund, which will generate about \$2,000 after three rooms are reimbursed.
4. Phil said he will have the end-of-year FY financials available for anyone who wants to review them; meanwhile, the one in the directory is current.
5. **Dave Smith moved to accept the treasurer's report. Julie Briggs seconded.** President Dorrian commented we are on strong financial footing thanks to Phil's work. Phil in turn recognized finance committee members Jim McGuire and Hank Hufnagel, both finance professionals. With discussion concluded, a vote was taken and **the motion carried.**

Committee Reports

- A. **Annual Meeting Committee:** Perry Nous stated the evening's reception and dinner will conclude the annual meeting, which was the first in 4.5 years because of the COVID pandemic. He announced next year's meeting will take place in San Antonio, Oct. 3-5. He added we have a contract thanks to Phil Ratliff, at the same facility as the annual meeting 10 years ago.

1. Future Meetings: Perry added we haven't decided the location of the annual meeting after San Antonio. In a lengthy discussion, locations mentioned included Tucson, Washington DC, and Dayton, which had been the location planned for 2020 before the pandemic. Jim McGuire asked about scheduling the AFPAA meeting to coincide with a SAF/PA Worldwide. In discussion, Jay DeFrank suggested 2025 might be a good year to schedule it around a Worldwide or other Air Force public affairs meeting. Members also discussed whether AFPAA might be able to host an event for the active duty, keeping ethics considerations in mind. Perry thanked the members for their many comments and said he would look into the suggestions and bring them to the board.

B. **Membership Committee**: Christine Queen reported membership has dwindled a little. We have 451 members now, including 228 life members. The complete report will be available on the website. She also reported she created a new membership certificate to reflect our new name. She encouraged the members to take a moment to send an email to a new member; new members are listed in the newsletter and on the website. She noted the current membership application is valid until the end of this year, and a new application with the new categories of membership will be available on Jan. 1. At that time, everyone will be a full member, including all active, reserve and guard officers, enlisted, and civilians. Jim McGuire mentioned one of the active duty members is a member of the board, Col. Allen Heritage. President Dorrian also asked members to keep their addresses up to date, and challenged each member to invite three people to join the association.

C. **Communications/Newsletter**: Dick Cole said he took over the newsletter almost a year ago, and recognized John Terino's work on the newsletter over many years. He said the newsletter should be ready in early November; it was delayed to allow for coverage of the annual meeting. He solicited input from members, including book reviews, experiences, and lessons learned. The newsletter is scheduled for publication the first month of each quarter (January, April, July, October) and submissions are due at the beginning of the month prior to publication. Dec. 1 is the deadline for input for the January newsletter. He welcomed members' photos from the annual meeting.

1. Postage: Neil Buttimer suggested if members get the newsletter by email, they can save the association the cost of postage. John Gura said every member gets an email with a link to the newsletter online, two to three weeks before they receive the print version. In response to questions about how to opt out of the mailing, Dick Cole replied that members can email Christine Queen, because she provides the mailing list — but then it creates additional work for her to customize the mailing list. John Dorrian noted this might change with the implementation of the membership management system, which will be discussed next.

Website: Jim McGuire said he is always looking for ideas for the website, especially photos of PAs doing their jobs. He encouraged members to reach out via the Contact page on the website. He added that a new membership application, reflecting the recent changes in membership categories and dues structure, will be active on the website as of Jan. 1.

2. Member Management System: Longer term, he said, we are looking at implementing a member management software system. If adopted, we will see a number of changes on the website, with a more robust password-protected area, and an online directory that is more user friendly. The system would also alleviate some issues with the mailing list and offer other benefits as well. Al Defend commended Jim and Dick for their work on behalf of the association.

3. Marketing: Mike Kinchen asked if we have a person who does marketing for our organization, and suggested we have a handout to promote membership. Phil Ratliff and Judy Bivens explained we

present PA badges at DINFOS graduations along with a card that describes the association and the benefits of joining. Mike suggested letting new graduates join one year for free. Judy replied that we did that, but no one took advantage.

4. **Newsletter:** In response to questions, Jim McGuire noted the newsletter is posted on our website. On the home page, click News, which takes you to the current newsletter. You can also go to the hamburger icon and find the News section and newsletter archives. Every issue of the newsletter is posted on that page. He said collectively they provide a fascinating look at the history of the association since 1994.
- D. **Oral History:** John Gura encouraged everyone to view some of the oral histories and read the fascinating stories of what many of our people have done. He added that John Terino used to conduct some of the interviews, but is no longer able to do so; thus, John Gura is seeking someone else to be an interviewer. He said it is not a short phone call, but a two-and-a-half- to four-month process. Cindy Dalton echoed the significance of the oral histories. She expressed gratitude for having learned so much about her father, Brig. Gen. Jerry Dalton, through his oral history, and said it was a wonderful gift to the families of those who are profiled.
- E. **Facebook:** Judy Bivens said our Facebook group has about 1,000 members, about half of whom are paid members. This is not a problem, because it's an opportunity to recruit new members. It is a private group, meaning you search for Air Force Public Affairs Association, select Join, and answer a few screening questions. She encouraged anyone to post anything related to the association, PA, or the Air Force. It provides a place for active and former PA professionals to connect. Don Black asked if we can we automatically send group members a membership application. She said no, but some people do join because of the group. Christine Queen said she has been posting when people join or renew, and she posts a link to the membership application on the website. In response to a question from Julie Briggs, Judy said the membership application doesn't ask for Facebook information; Facebook doesn't allow you to invite a person to join the group unless you are already friends on Facebook. Jim McGuire noted every page of the website links to our Facebook page.
- F. **Organization Transition:** Jay DeFrank reviewed recent changes to the organization's name and structure, which in a vote of the entire membership were approved with 9 of 10 members in favor of the transition.
1. **Status:** Jay recognized the members of the committee: John Terino, Jim Hart, Steve Everett, Jim McGuire, John Gura, Phil Ratliff, Art Forster, and Dick Cole. He said the committee has benchmarked with the other services' PA associations and met with active duty PAs. They have worked through the legalities of changing the name and bylaws. Now AFPAA is into the next phase, focusing on how we present ourselves to the active population whom we want to attract to be members.
 2. **Next steps:** Jay stated we want to gain visibility with the active force, and when we do so, create a positive impression. He presented a one-liner and elevator speech. He also presented a proposal for a repository for talent and resources, and presented a sample biography that would provide that kind of information to active duty members. Among the next steps, in alignment with the lessons learned from the other services and discussions with Air Force active PAs, is including Air Force leadership in directing attention to the organization's value proposition and also looking at conducting a webinar.

3. **Marketing ideas:** Mike Kinchen suggested we create a Wikipedia page; Jay said it's a good idea and the committee will look into it. Further discussion prompted by Beth Dennard and M.J. Jadick related to showing the active force how others have been mentored by members, and the possibility of creating videos to help carry our message to the active force.
4. **Benchmarking:** Ron Rand asked how long it took the Army PA association to get 60% active duty. Jay recalled it was surprisingly quick, about two to three years. He said Art Forster did the original benchmarking with them. The Navy lags because legal problems limited them. Jay said the Army involved its active duty leadership, including NCOs. They also scheduled active duty and association events together. John Gura said they also designated board members from the guard and reserve as well as active duty. Art said they started with a couple hundred members, and now have about 550. He added that of the three services, the Army PA Association has the closest working relationship with its active duty PA office.

Old Business:

- A. **Hall Of Fame:** Art Forster presented an overview of the evening's banquet. He noted the first Hall of Fame class was inducted in 2021, but this is first time we've been able to recognize inductees in person. This year we have seven inductees; two are here, and others will be represented by family members. John Gura will arrange for Jack Oswald's award to be presented in California.
- B. **Dalton Scholarships:** Chuck Merlo reviewed the scholarship program, which was founded in 2021 in honor of Brig. Gen. Jerry Dalton, thanks to the cooperation of his family, especially his daughter, Cindy. The scholarship focuses on education and professional development for all ranks and disciplines in the PA community. Chuck reported in its inaugural year, six people applied, and the board decided to award all six. This year we had 12 applicants, and selected five, in accordance with the award guidelines. Priority was given to candidates pursuing courses to improve their PA skills with the greatest and most immediate benefit to the Air Force. We awarded scholarships to three enlisted and two civilians; one was a band person, and one was based overseas. Under the guidelines, we require the recipient to provide their grade from the course and proof of payment, and then we reimburse them.
- C. **Archives Project:** President Dorrian reported the board has decided to form a committee to compile the association's archives, and to seek a chair for the committee. He gave the floor to Jim McGuire, who thanked Art Forster for his persistent leadership on this subject. Jim announced we were fortunate this weekend to identify the perfect volunteer, Linda Chick-Haseloff, who was his exec at USAFE/PA. He added this is a long-term project, and Linda has commitments early next year, so there will be more information to come. He said if members have documents that would be important to the organization, they can reach out through the Contact Us link on the website.

New Business: None.

President John Dorrian: President Dorrian asked for any final comments. Art Forster reminded the members that Dec. 1 is the deadline for nominations for the Hall of Fame.

Adjourn : With no further business, **John Gura moved to adjourn and Perry Nouis seconded. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at about 4:15 p.m.**

Note: Traditionally, at the annual meeting we read the names of members who have passed away since our last annual meeting. This year, for various reasons, that did not happen. Instead, it was done at the awards banquet, where Perry Nouis read the names of those who passed on since our 2019 meeting in Charleston. The list is attached to these minutes.

Minutes prepared by Secretary Carla Sylvester

Atch: Member Deaths Since 2019



Member Deaths Since 2019

Peter 'Pete'	Alexandrakos	Col	2019	2020 Winter
Albert 'A.L'	Douthitt	Maj	2019	NA
Eldon G.	Francis	Lt Col	2019	2019 Summer
James A. 'Jim'	George	SMSgt	2019	2020 Spring
Michael N. 'Mike'	Greece	Maj	2019	2019 Summer
Douglas P. 'Doug'	Lay	SMSgt	2019	2019 Summer
Jordon E. 'Buzz'	Rizer	Lt Col	2019	2020 Winter
Mitchell S.	Rose	GS-14	2019	NA
Brian T.	Sheehan	Lt Col	2019	2019 Spring
William M.	Taylor	Col	2019	2020 Fall
Scott M.	Ash		2020	2020 Summer
Brent B.	Boller	Capt	2020	2020 Summer
Eldean 'Dean'	Borg	Lt Col	2020	2020 Fall
Charles A.	Brown	Maj	2020	2021 Winter
Frank J.	Brown	Maj	2020	2021 Spring
Barbara A.	Carr	Lt Col	2020	2021 Winter
H.J. 'Jerry'	Dalton, Jr.	Brig Gen	2020	2021 Winter
Charles E. 'Chuck'	Davis	MSgt	2020	2020 Summer
Allen 'A'	Eakle	MSgt	2020	2020 Fall

Ronald C. 'Ron'	Hall		2020	2020 Spring
Perry D.	Jenifer		2020	NA
Richard L. 'Rick'	Oborn	Lt Col	2020	2021 Spring
Mark V.	Rosenker	Maj Gen	2020	2021 Winter
James E.	Skarsten	MSgt	2020	2020 Fall
L. Michael	Terrill	Col	2020	2020 Fall
Dennis R. 'Denny'	Weddle	Lt Col	2020	2020 Fall
Ralph	Baldwin		2021	NA
John	Correll		2021	2021 Summer
James M. 'Jim'	Fillmore	SMSgt/GM-13	2021	NA
William F. 'Bill'	Frensley	LtCol	2021	2021 Winter
John H.	Price JR	Col	2021	NA
Robert A. 'Bob'	Schultz	Lt Col	2021	NA
DeWitt Richard	Searles	Maj Gen	2021	NA
Vincent R. 'Vince'	Tocci	Lt Col	2021	NA
Richard F. 'Dick'	Abel	Brig Gen	2022	2022 Fall
Marvin L. 'Marv'	Braman	Col	2022	2022 Spring
James R. 'Dick'	Cassin	TSgt/GS-11	2022	2022 Fall
Arthur 'Art'	Dederick	Col	2022	2022 Summer
Darrell C.	Hayes	Lt Col	2022	2023 Winter
James H. 'Jim'	Heaberg	Maj	2022	2022 Summer
Donald 'Don'	Hilkemeier	Col	2022	2023 Winter
Elliot	Johnson	Maj	2022	2023 Winter
Cornelius B. 'C.B.'	Kelly	Lt Col	2022	
Jeanette	Minnich	Col	2022	2022 Summer
Henry D. 'Dan'	O'Hair		2022	2023 Winter

Morton M. 'Pat'	Pasco	SMSgt	2022	2023 Winter
Alice B.	Price		2022	2022 Spring
Rick	Rice		2022	2022 Spring
William M. 'Bill'	Dempsey	Maj	2023	2023 Summer
Nils	Hannevig	MSgt	2023	
Walter S. 'Woody'	Hogle	Lt Gen	2023	2023 Summer
Douglas J. 'Doug'	Kennett	Col	2023	2023 Fall
Douglas H. 'Doug'	Moore, Jr.	GS-13	2023	
Paul E.	Muehring	Lt Col	2023	
Hallie E. 'Ed'	Robertson	Brig Gen	2023	
David J. 'Dave'	Shea	Col	2023	
Beverly Harris	Simmons		2023	
Welda Anne	Smith	Lt Col	2023	2023 Summer
Barry W.	Thigpen		2023	
Ted G.	Tilma	Col	2023	
Lou	Torraca	Col	2023	
Peggy A.	Whitlow		2023	2023 Summer