



Air Traffic Control To Public Affairs; Lou Torraca Gets Top Hawaii PRSA Award

The Hawaii chapter of the Public Relations Society of America bestowed its highest award, the Hall of Honor Award on AFPAAA Lifetime Founder Lou Torraca, July 26. He received the award for his tremendous contributions to the Hawaii chapter over the years and his notable career accomplishments – not bad for a guy who, despite having a degree in Public Relations from Boston University and being commissioned as an AFROTC Distinguished Military Graduate, spent his first thirteen years as an Air Traffic Control Officer.



Lou's late entry into Public Affairs came when he earned his MA in communications from the University of Oklahoma. Among assignments that followed were 7th Air Force and the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) Air Briefer in Saigon; PACAF; Clark AB for the return of the POWs from Vietnam; and Director of Public Affairs for Communications Service and Military Airlift Command.

Prior to retirement in Hawaii, 1983 he was Director of Public Affairs for Pacific Command at Camp H.M. Smith. Lou soon was immersed in the public relations community in Hawaii holding positions as the Special Assistant to the President of the Bishop Museum, Department of Education Director of Communications, Executive Director of the Combined Federal Campaign, President of International Public Relations, and teaching at Chaminade and Hawaii Pacific University.

Frank Jennings: Aerospace's Father, Author, San Antonio Founder's Day Spirit – Passes

Frank Jennings passed peacefully on August 16. He was 92. His impact, for the better part of four decades and even beyond his retirement from civil service in 1985, on the Air Force Public Affairs community is incalculable.

His career began as an Army officer at the end of World War II and ended when he retired from the Air Force Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1972.

Aside from being the 'ghost' behind the Air Force Policy Letter For Commanders – he made the Puzzle Palaces bureaucratize comprehensible – Frank will be remembered as the man who in 1958 introduced the world to the term 'aerospace.'

Retirement was anything but for Frank. He plunged into the history of San Antonio and authored "SANANTONIO: The Story of an Enchanted City," a widely used 400-page history and guide, published in 1998.

And, as his love for San Antonio grew, Frank became



the driving force that planned and organized the first of the now annual Founder's Day fetes in 2004.

Frank is survived by his wife Lita four children, Gretchen, Gregory, Frances, and Joanne from a previous marriage.

He was laid to rest at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. The family requests donations be made in Frank's name to the San Antonio Founders Day Association, P.O. Box 700767, San Antonio, TX 78270

For additional remembrances of Frank, go to page four.

New Director Optimistic Of PA Future Despite Personnel And Communications Challenges

Colonel Les Kodlick, Air Force Director of Public Affairs, is optimistic about the future of the career field in the face of the very serious personnel and communications challenges that are faced today. He expressed those views to a luncheon audience of retired Air Force Public Affairs practitioners, July 31, at the National Press Club.

The active duty and reserve Public Affairs community is being stretched to its limits, the Colonel observed, as is the rest of the Air Force. Deployments are, in many instances, on an almost revolving door basis, with half the staff of a stateside unit gone at any point in time. "Our people are home for the minimum amount of time, then they are gone again," he observed.

It is not unusual for an individual to be deployed three or four times in a similar period of years. What was uncommon a few years ago is now common, even civilians are being deployed.

Couple the deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other places, with the shrinking of the PA force – officer, enlisted, and civilian – that has taken place over the past decade and it is not uncommon for the top slot at a wing PA office to be held by lieutenants or technical sergeants. The shortage of senior PAs is also a matter of critical concern with many vacancies in O-6 positions.

The communications equation for the Air Force, and all the services, has changed dramatically as technology has exploded in recent years, Colonel Kodlick explained. "We have to be able to reach the younger people, both in the Air Force and in the nation as a whole. They get their information from the Internet and social media – they twitter and use Face Book while viewing YouTube. And we must still connect with an older audience that is geared to traditional print and broadcast media." Part of the challenge is to educate Air Force commanders on how to effectively use what will best reach both groups.

Colonel Kodlick believes, with the groundwork laid by his predecessor, Major General Darren W. McDew, and the support of Chief of Staff, General Norton A. Schwartz, under whom he was Director of Public Affairs at Alaska Command, while the challenges are there, the means to meet them are too.





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From The President's Pen



Greetings from the cornfields of Illinois. The plans for the 2010 AFPAAA Annual Membership Meeting are moving along. Tom Halbert and his committee are working hard to keep the costs down. In fact, Orlando area hotel per diem is down a couple of dollars - more money to spend at the bar. Our vice president, Bud Ross, is working closely with Tom to ensure that everything stays on track. Great job, all. Can't wait to see you all in Orlando at what will be another outstanding Annual Meeting.

Last newsletter I requested names of coworkers that are not on our membership roll. To my surprise no one forwarded any names to my e-mail account (cjqueen@comcast.net). Which begs the question, "Does anyone really read From the President's Pen column?" After talking with past presidents they seem to think the same thing. I'm trying to be optimistic.

Did anyone read "What are you doing to get more members - younger members?" And, every president has answered with words to the effect "If the Association is to survive and prosper, younger public affairs professionals with fresh new ideas and energy must step forward and assume the mantle of leadership."

We need to ask ourselves "Who were the military and civilians we used to work with? Are they members?" – that's easily determined by checking our print and on-line directories. Then we need to contact them and urge them to join."

Did anyone take the time to give a membership gift? mmmm. I've contacted Judy (Scott) McSpadden and asked if I may sponsor her for a membership.

Having read my column, again, please send me an e-mail with names of eligible Air Force Public Affairs Alumni and we'll put out a master list trying to find them. I know there are several coworkers you've lost touch with over the years and would like to reconnect. Use the membership form opposite this page; make as many copies as you need for those you recruit or provide gift memberships.

Here is my list: Kathy Hitt, George Titus, Jerry Hendrix, Donna Edwards, Ingrid Bradley, Mike Brooks, Mike Young, Lisa Jeffery, Nate Tall, Bob Schultz, Deborah Rumph, Dave Smith, Bill Young, Carolyn Hodges and Sara Beavers. Does anyone know how to contact them?

Step-up to the plate and get involved.

– Christine Queen

Lord Guard & Guide

Frank W. Jennings

We first met our friend Frank in the early 1970s, when I was a young Captain in SAF/OI Internal Information. I was awed by his impressive writing/editing successes with the “Blue Letter” and “Commander’s Digest.” It soon became apparent, however, that Frank was a man richly blessed with many other fine attributes in addition to his renowned capability to communicate the thinking of Air Force leaders.

One such attribute was his steady interest in and ability to reach out to his younger colleagues and their wives and to bring us into his circle of friends. Yes, he was interested in our professional well-being, but he was also genuinely interested in our families’ lives, our children and their schooling, our personal interests, and, what kind of music we liked! Yes, music! We appreciated this openly emotional part of Frank’s personality, about which he was never shy with his friends. He loved a rich variety of music and had his well-known favorites, of course. Through this medium he found the means to celebrate many achievements and friendship with others, as well as relax during difficult times. What a pleasure to see him enjoying music.

Frank’s professional accomplishments as a communicator are recorded, well-known and respected by those in our community and beyond. We salute him. With equally great admiration and esteem, Bridget and I also remember Frank as an exceptionally fine human being who really cared for others. No matter what he was doing, he lived his life deeply, fully and intensely, permitting us to share in the joy of his journey. We’ll know only a few like him in our lifetimes.

– Art & Bridget Dederick

Another one of our Air Force public affairs legends has crossed to the other side. May God rest his soul.

– Art Forster

Roz and I used to socialize with Frank when he lived in Old Town Alexandria. Frank was one classy guy. Glad our lives crossed.

– Charley Powers

Frank Jennings was a friend, a confidant, a colleague. That was our personal relationship, but Frank was bigger than his friends and colleagues. Frank was a unique public servant. He was a “word warrior”. As a senior Air Force public affairs professional, Frank knew the power of words—particularly those used by historical and contemporary Air Force leaders.

So it was that Frank “invented” the “Blue Letter” and “Commanders Digest”, publications meant to keep leaders in the field in touch with the visions of the policy makers; those who shaped thinking. After all, he’s the man who “invented”

the word “aerospace” to better describe the sphere of influence the Air Force had grown into. He too was a visionary who appreciated all that came before and might be in the future.

He was literati—as his library will attest. He was an historian,—as his publications and honors will attest. However, the measure of a man is not necessarily his fame or accomplishments as crowning as those are for Frank. For me, Frank’s soul was his crown. His favorite song, “Born To Lose”, betrayed my friend’s Irish melancholy and hinted at the complex of emotions he held deeply. In his typical, beautiful melancholy Frank thought of this part of life. He wrote:

*I got a nod from Death today
An unseen smile,
A friend unseen.
I heard his soundless breath
As wordlessly he said: “It’s all okay,”
And “Peace,” he said,
“Sweet peace is what I mean.”*

While Frank may be best known for his prose and documentary and his place in Air Force and San Antonio history, I will remember this guy from the “big sky country” inhaling the sweetness of sadness, a particular bent in his soul; something that made him genuine, loving, and lovable. In a poem by Thomas Moore, I think Frank would agree with my sense of him through this stanza:

*In climes full of sunshine, though splendid
the flowers,
Their sighs have no freshness, their
odour no worth;
'Tis the cloud and the mist of our own
Isle of showers
That call the rich spirit of fragrancy forth.
So it is not ‘mid splendour, prosperity,
mirth,
That the depth of Love’s generous spirit
appears;
To the sunshine of smiles it may first owe
its birth,
But the soul of its sweetness is drawn out
by tears.*

– Bob Hunter

Frank Jennings was the “scribe” of the US Air Force for many decades. His thoughtful prose brought wisdom and clarity to Air Force commanders worldwide via the command documents he produced that kept them updated on the rapid and complex changes occurring at USAF Headquarters. But Frank Jennings was so much more than a dutiful scribe. He mentored public affairs officers, advised Air Force leaders, encouraged creativity and sensible change, and was the touchstone for all of us in fathoming and elucidating Air Force issues and doctrine.

Frank’s name is synonymous with the term he coined and promulgated “Aerospace.” A visionary, Frank knew the expanded role of the US Air Force from flight into space was significant and that this new Air Force role required a name equivalent to this expansion and image of its mission. He also knew the American people would identify the space mission with the USAF and so he appropriately offered them an enduring name for this new venture and dual mission.

However, Frank’s value was more than his deep understanding of Air Force history, missions, and future roles; he was the personification of integrity and a devoutly religious man who lived his faith. He exuded friendship, kindness, and honesty, so much so that anyone who



Frank, Alice Price & Mike Gallagher

met him will quickly recall their association with pleasure and respect. His intelligence, good humor, and ready smile were hallmarks of this gracious man. I can recall long discussions with him on a wide range of topics. He sought opinions and shared insights. He had a challenging, analytical mind but never made others uncomfortable or angry. I was proud to call him my friend and to have him as godfather to one of my sons.

Now, this fine gentleman has left us. For those who ponder how the US Air Force developed and who were the important behind-the-scenes participants, I trust they will remember Frank Jennings for his contributions, character, and example. I know I will.

I feel certain Frank Jennings is now in a place where he can "touch the face of God."
God Bless Him.

– Vince Tocci

Frank Jennings was a super asset for AF Public Affairs. I count it blessing to know him and have Frank as a friend.

– Dick Abel

Frank's passing is a great loss to the Air Force and all of us who knew and respected him.

– C. B. Kelly

He was an advisor and mentor to so many of us in the profession. He could take typical cumbersome policy statements and make them readable and understood.

– Chet Gardner

An early editor of the Air Force News Service, he set a standard for all who followed. However, "Aerospace" will always be his legacy.

– Chuck Lucas

We received this news while visiting family in Maryland. Lita, we join your many friends and family in offering our condolences. Frank was a great friend, and an important public affairs mentor, going back to 1973. I agree that this is a time to celebrate his life and enjoy the many memories he provided us.

God's peace!

– Gene and Jeannie Townsend

A quiet giant in our Air Force and our nation has left us.

– Bud Ross

Frank was a dear friend and mentor to me. I feel inadequate to the task of paying him the tribute he deserves. I first met Frank Jennings in March 1969 when I was a very young Captain newly arrived in the Internal Information Division in SAF/OI, under Colonel Leo Beinhorn. I quickly found Frank to be a friend and very wise counselor.

I did not work for him, I was one cubicle down in that warren of desks. But he was always available the next 4 years to help when I asked; to comment, suggest, instruct, edit a letter, and

gave it the wisdom of his intellect, his excellent judgement, and his years of experience. He was the "go-to" guy for advice on just about any matter to so many people, in all the SAF/OI Divisions. And he remained that, throughout his career.

Fifteen years later in the mid 80s he sponsored me to General Dick Able and Colonel Don Hilkemeier at AFSINC for the job of Deputy Chief of Internal Information, which later led to the job of Director of Internal Information - the best job I ever had and Frank was the man who made it possible. But more than that, he always made me better than I would have been on my own — better able to serve the Air Force, and all those I worked for and with. Bud Ross said it best: Frank Jennings was a quiet giant - he never asked for or expected praise or recognition, and quietly helped so many of us in blue along our way and

made all of us much, much more for our association with him than we would have been without him.

– Jack Gregory



Frank received the first San Antonio Coneservation Society's Texas Hero of Historic Preservation Award in 2006 for his efforts in establishing San Antonio Founders Day. (Photo by Paul Overstreet, Overstreet Photography Studios, San Antonio)

What a man, what a gentleman, what a patriot Frank was and always will be in my mind.

As director, I found comfort with Frank's willingness to listen to a problem and offer solid, profound advice in such a way to make me, and others like me, feel it was my idea in the first place. Not many could do that. He was always just a phone call away and was always interested, alert, polite and on target. He was the consummate mentor to many of us in SAF/PA and always fun to be with.

He and Lita stirred life and fun into many SAF/PA Christmas Parties with their spirited dancing. They gracefully moved as one on the dance floor and more than once I heard them call Frank the Fred Astair and Lita the Ginger Rodgers of AF Public Affairs.

It was his intellect and sense of Air Force culture, history, and importance to our national security that really set Frank well ahead of his contemporaries. His reasoned writings were works of art and piercingly relevant to the place the Air Force held in national security matters. More than a few senior officers sang his praise and sought his advice. God bless Frank and our heartfelt condolences to Lita.

– Mike and Susan McRaney

Ronald S. Scharven

Ron Scharven, who was born in Chicago, died July 7, in San Antonio. Ron joined the Air Force in 1961 and served 28 years in uniform, retiring as a Senior Master Sergeant.

After retirement he continued to serve his nation as a civil servant for 18 more years at various USAF locations. Ron was an avid photographer and could always be found with a camera around his neck, looking for the next great photo opportunity.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Joyce; son Chris; daughter Debbie; sisters Dori and Cathy; and four grandchildren. A graveside service with full military honors was held July 23, at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Donations in Ron's memory may be made to: Air Force Museum Foundation, Inc., PO Box 1903, Wright Patterson AFB, OH 45433 or www.afmuseum.com

April 22-25, 2010
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