

# WINGS



# News

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Fred R. Kaplan Editor



Pictures by Harlis Bend

## We Keep Growing!

It has been over fourteen years since Wings Over Wendy's was formally established and we remain strong and keep growing. Despite the loss each year of great heroes, our organization has continued to attract new people and with them more stories, (some of which are true!).

On Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> we had approximately 170 attendees for our anniversary celebration and group picture. Wendy's was decorated Sunday night for the occasion. In addition to our weekly attendees, we had several faithful supporters such as: Ron and Diane Ross, owners of Wendy's; Councilmembers Mitch Englander and Bob Blumenfield; ex-Councilmember Dennis Zine and Newspaper Columnist Dennis McCarthy attend the event.



Mitch Englander

Dennis Zine

Dennis McCarthy

Ron Ross

Diane Ross

## Members in the News

Two of our members were honored by the French Government for their service in World War II flying missions over France. In a ceremony March 9<sup>th</sup> at the French Consulate the French Legion of Honor was awarded to: Al Lewis and Lee Levitan



Al receiving his medal- the medal- Lee wearing his medal

Pictures by Mike LaVere

# The Citations

**Captain Charles A. Lewis** was born in January 1924 in Holdrege, Nebraska and grew up in the Omaha area. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Aviation Cadet Program in December, 1942 and after initial pilot training in Santa Ana, California was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. in May, 1944. Further B-17 training followed, and in January 1945 he deployed to England with his flying unit to join the 384<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group. Charles flew 25 combat missions as a B-17 pilot to targets over France and Nazi occupied areas. On one mission, his aircraft was significantly damaged in a mid-air collision with another B-17 and he was able to land safely.

During the post-war occupation, his bomb group flew French refugees from North Africa back to mainland France.

His significant decorations included four Air Medals, the EAME Campaign Medal with 3 battle stars, and the World War II Victory Medal. Charles' post-war career was focused on institutional financing of real estate and financial advisory services. He retired in 1990 and along with his wife Dolores of 68+ years they enjoyed extensive traveling around the world.

They reside in Woodland Hills, California and their extended family includes children Thomas and Merrin, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

**Staff Sergeant Leo Levitan** was born in January 1924 in New York City, New York and spent his childhood there graduating from Abraham Lincoln High School in Brooklyn. He enlisted into the U.S. Army Air Corps in March 1943 and did his Basic Training at Miami Beach, Florida and specialized training at Scott Field, Illinois as a radio operator, aerial gunner and G-Box radar navigator. In October of 1944 Lee deployed to France with his B-26 crew as part of the 557th Bomb Squadron of the 387th Bomb Group.

He flew 35 combat missions out of the air base near San Quentin, France during the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns. Lee was discharged at Ft. Dix, New Jersey in October of 1945.

His significant decorations included seven Air Medals, the Presidential Unit Citation, the EAME Campaign Medal with 3 battle stars, and the World War II Victory Medal

Following World War II, he entered the publishing business, later had his own pet novelty business and retired in 2011 from the advertising industry. Lee and his wife Barbara reside in Woodland Hills, California and their family includes daughters Rhonda, Susan, Laura (RIP), and Nancy, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

## Member Profile

### Ed Reynolds - More than a World Traveler



Photo by Harlis Bend

We all know that Ed Reynolds is a world traveler, having visited 193 countries that are members of the United Nations, plus 10 or so "want-to-be" countries. However, did you know that he retired from the U.S. Air Force after serving at the Pentagon for six years and was selected to full colonel?

More on his military career later. He began his global travels at the tender age of 12, journeying from Connecticut across Canada, down to Baja and returning via the Southern states with his stepfather, who had lots of vacation time accrued during WW II as the government acceptance inspector of Corsairs built in Connecticut.

Reynolds relates sorrowfully that he went through World War II without his parents, who had divorced. Ed wound up in a Christian Science boys' camp, then went K through 12 in Weston Connecticut. He spent his summers in Texas and later went to Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas.

Born in 1935 in New York City, he became eligible for the draft and enlisted in the USAF Aviation Cadet program in 1957. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and awarded navigator wings in 1958 at Harlingen AFB, Texas and assigned to SAC KC-97's at Dow AFB, Bangor, Maine.

At the end of his enlistment, he planned on leaving active duty to fly for Seaboard World Airlines, but President Kennedy froze everyone on active duty for the Berlin Wall crisis and he couldn't get out. He then was assigned to Kindley AFB, Bermuda. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, he flew reconnaissance missions in a KC-97 to track Soviet ships and count the missiles on their decks.

In the late 1960's he was assigned to the Joint Strategic Targeting Planning Staff (JSTPS) and was in charge of assigning all the free world's strategic missiles.

Like Art Sherman, he was classified as an Intelligence Officer and Ed served as the Senior Advisor to the Chief of Vietnamese Air Force Intelligence at Tan Sot Nhut AB, 1971-72. After his Vietnam tour he completed an MA at the University of Nebraska and was assigned to the Pentagon in charge of the USAF Aircraft Inventory. He was responsible for the implementation of word processing and computer workstation terminals throughout the Pentagon Air Staff.

After selection to full colonel in 1979, he retired as a Lt. Colonel. to take a job at United Airlines' computer department in San Francisco.

He continued his association with the USAF, serving as president of the Tennessee Ernie Ford chapter of the Air Force Assn. and then served as president of the Jimmy Doolittle Chapter in Los Angeles. Pretty impressive, huh? We have left out most of his meritorious career since it would fill a book, which it has.

But the rest of his life is even more interesting. Reynolds has a joyous air about him, ever smiling and willing to share his adventures with everyone. He's been married to Judy for 53 years, has two daughters, Wendy and Robin. His father was an artist and young Ed posed for many Dutch Boy paintings in wooden shoes.



Always a lucky guy, he won a 1953 MG in a contest for "Why I like my Paper Mate Pen" in 25 words or less. I bought a similar car in the 50s but dumped it later, but Ed was smarter and still has it today and shows it off at car shows. He also drives a Mazda Miata.

He found out in 30's that he has dyslexia, so he doesn't read much, instead listens to books on tape.

That did not stop him from becoming an athlete, playing high school football as a 150 lb. lineman and later served as manager of the SMU football team. Ed has run several marathons, but wore his knee out and had to quit running and replace it

He stopped traveling in November and now works out three times a week, having lost over 20 pounds.

Reynolds' latest adventure is as publisher of this newsletter for Wings Over Wendy's, having taken over for Neil Baliber, who served meritoriously.

As he has done with everything else in his life, Ed is bound to succeed.

Ray Rosenbaum, reporter

## **New Members**

We welcomed the following new members during the month of March:

**Bernard Dickson**

**Max De Pedro**

**Perry Sperling**

**Robert Lanthier**

**Steve Morse**

**Tom Blatz**



# In Memoriam

## **Gilberto Rendon**



09/01/1921 to 03/25/2016

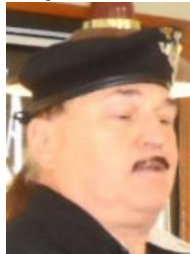
Gil served in the US Army Air Corp 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, flying 50 missions as a Radio Operator. He flew to heaven on Good Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## March Speakers

### **Ed Reynolds**

On March 7<sup>th</sup> Ed Reynolds talked about his trip to Easter Island last November.

### **Gary DeMaio**



Picture by Mike LaVere

On March 14<sup>th</sup> Gary DeMaio, ex-US Army 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Paratrooper talked about his Vietnam experiences.

### **Mort Sherman**



Picture by Harlis Bend

On March 21<sup>th</sup> Mort Sherman talked to us about his service in the US Army followed by his service in the Los Angeles Police Department. Mort grew up in Brooklyn, NY, was drafted into the US Army near the end of the Korean War and served a tour in Korea which didn't involve combat. He finished his enlistment back at Ft. Dix as a training instructor.

## **Anniversary speakers**

On March 28<sup>th</sup> at the Wings Over Wendy's anniversary party we were treated to talks from Dennis Zine. Then Dennis McCarthy who told us about the initial meetings he attended that resulted in the formation of the Wings Over Wendy's organization. Mitch Englander who told us about growing up across the street from Wendy's. He told us about the hardship of growing up with a father that was a disabled veteran. Mitch also provided inside stories about Dennis Zine's career in the LA Police Force. Ron Ross also spoke.

## March Field Trips

### **Lockheed Martin U-2 Overhaul Plant**



Picture by Richard Myers

On March 16<sup>th</sup> eight WOW members (David Loppnow, Bob Donovan, Don Foster, Warren Weinstein, Howard Swerdlick, Ed Reynolds, Neal Houston and Richard Myers) drove to Palmdale to tour the TR-1/U-2 Lockheed Martin Overhaul facility. Warren Weinstein arranged for a guided tour by Colonel Robert "Skid" Rowe, Lockheed test pilot. Colonel Rowe retired from the USAF where he flew missions in the U-2 and now flies acceptance test for aircraft finishing overhaul. The group was able to see several aircraft in various states of overhaul including the cockpit of an aircraft ready to return to operation.

After the tour, the WOW group treated Colonel Rowe to lunch at a nearby BJ's Restaurant.

## Guide Dogs of America



On March 30 eleven WOW members (Bill Blair, Delores Wideman, Barney Leone, Marion Lovelace, Bob Stials, Warren Wienstein, Ira Kanarek, Don Foster, Richard Myers, and Ed & Judy Reynolds) toured the Guide Dogs of America facility in Sylmar, CA.

Marion Lovelace arranged the tour and Warren Weinstein organized the trip. Judy Reily, a volunteer staff member of the organization gave a one-hour presentation on the history and the procedures followed by the organization. She then led the group on a tour of the facility where we were able to see dogs in various stages of training,

## REMINDERS

WOW's monthly food drive is April 4<sup>th</sup>!



## Submissions to Wings News

**No later than the Last Wednesday of the Month**

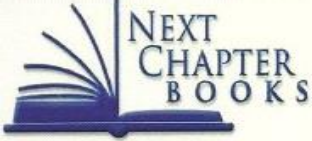
Email to: [Ed\\_ReynoldsJr@MSN.com](mailto:Ed_ReynoldsJr@MSN.com)

## April Birthdays

Thomas Maiden	April 4, 1949
Edward Nolan	April 7, 1921
Mark Ax	April 7, 1949
Clifford Wolf	April 14, 1919
Luis Galindo	April 15, 1936
Marion Lovelace	April 16, 1927
Vincent Cicone	April 16, 1941
Harry Nelson	April 18, 1923
Bob Johnston	April 19, 1928
David Cohen	April 20, 1924
Connie Hein	April 24, 1947
George Stone	April 24, 1927
Andy Kopetzky	April 25, 1951
Barry Pravorne	April 25, 1953
Joseph Mueller	April 26, 1949
Peter Marshall	April 30, 1940
Tom Blatz	April 30, 1945


**We all want raffle prizes!**

**Please search your closets and garages and bring your items to the next Wings Over Wendy's meeting!**



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