

THE TALLAHASSEE FLYER

Air Force Association Bud West Chapter 419

August 2019

I hope everyone is enjoying a safe summer season thus far and that everyone is doing well.

In case some of you may not have heard, the Bud West chapter recently lost one of its cherished members. Charles “Chip” Collette passed away on 21 June unexpectedly while visiting his daughter’s family in North Carolina. Chip had graciously offered to serve as our guest speaker at our upcoming quarterly meeting on 15 Aug. Chip had planned to discuss his son’s Dan (“Fang”) assume of command at one of the U2 squadrons at Beale AFB in California, which took place during the first week of July. Ironically, I had mentioned to Chip in early May that I would be in California during the same time, as I had visited my daughter, who lives in Burbank. It was during the following weekend (6 July) that I learned of Chip’s passing while I was still out west. Chip’s Memorial Service held at Trinity Methodist Church was very well attended – well over 100 folks had turned out, which is certainly a tribute to the gentleman and proud Air Force veteran and family man that Chip was. Chip and his family will always remain in our thoughts and prayers.

ROTC Awards Although I had covered the annual ROTC awards in our last newsletter, I’m happy to recognize Cadet Caleb Gove was our Civil Air Patrol AFA Cadet of the Year winner for the past academic year. Cadet Gove was recognized in a ceremony held at the CAP squadron on 23 May. Many thanks to Lynn Damron and the CAP crew for organizing a good recognition ceremony.

Honor Flight On Saturday, 18 May, the Tallahassee Honor Flight took many veterans and their sponsors to our nation’s capital for a tour of the various monuments – including the World War II, Korea, and Vietnam Memorials. Among those participating was our very own Charlie Hopkins of the Bud West chapter. We look forward to having Charlie share his stories of the Honor Flight.

State Convention Our annual state convention was held the weekend of 12-14 July in Ocala. Many thanks to the Red Tail AFA Chapter who hosted the convention. Multiple topics were covered, with emphasis placed on the AFA portal and compliance with various reports and the tools available to assist with such things as annual award packages. Other topics included struggling chapters and the types of factors that tend to contribute toward a particular chapter’s demise. Obviously, different chapters face different sets of circumstances (as well as demographics). Fortunately, Florida has good leadership – both as a state and region. Sharon Branch has done an outstanding job as both the region and state president and will step down 1 Oct. Mark Chapman, our current state VP, will succeed Sharon as state and region president at that time.

Speaking of state conventions, I’m pleased to announce that the Bud West chapter will host the state convention here in Tallahassee in 2021. We’ll be receiving enthusiastic support from our two panhandle sister chapters (Eglin and Hurlburt) – so we’ll have an opportunity to showcase our new Holiday Inn facility on Apalachee Parkway for our out-of-town AFA chapters. Our chapter members will also be able

to get a first hand look at our state leadership at work. The dates are yet to be determined, but should be sometime in July. Next year's state convention will be in Jacksonville the weekend of 24-26 July, 2020.

Chapter Website Speaking of Mark Chapman – Mark was very instrumental in assisting with the updating of our chapter website. If you haven't seen our website recently, please log into <http://www.budwest.afaflorida.org/>). Of course, there is still more work to be done, but this is our first update to the website in 5 years.

Other newsworthy items:

- During the June American Legion Post 13 meeting, Jim Geuin (who's in charge of the Honor Guard for the Tallahassee National Cemetery) had mentioned that the Honor Guard is in need of Air Force veterans who'd be willing to participate in various types of ceremonies. I'm working with Jim to get a better idea of the types of qualifications and the types of commitments that are expected. Please let me know if you might be interested
- The Bell Tower project for the Tallahassee National Cemetery is taking shape. I had mentioned in the May newsletter about making contributions to our AFA chapter – and then have one single check (from the Bud West chapter) be made to the project. Please consider making a monetary donation to our Bud West chapter, with the goal of presenting a collective donation in the name of the Bud West chapter to the bell tower project. Gordon Lightfoot, the AMVETS Post 1776 Commander, has offered to be our guest speaker at the upcoming 15 Aug meeting to advocate for the project and answer any questions you might have

Community Partners

1. Commercial Consultants Corporation
2. Comprehensive Dental Care
3. Emanuel Joanos
4. Firehouse Subs
5. Import Authority Inc
6. Jowers Auto Service
7. Kraft Nissan
8. Leon County Sheriff's Office
9. Newk's Eatery
10. Osaka Japanese Steakhouse
11. Palmer Eye Center
12. Woodmen of the World

As always – I welcome any suggestions for how we can enhance our chapter. I also encourage any of you to submit any news items I might not be aware of for inclusion in future quarterly newsletters.

AIRMEN FOR LIFE

Tom Carney, President
AFA Bud West Chapter #419 Tallahassee