**Local Heroes**

**Target Audience:** All Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To remind all personnel of the heritage, pride, esprit de corps and unit cohesion created by those that served before us.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Want to reconnect to your Air Force identity? Every community has local heroes that live among us. Some are highly decorated veterans that won medals and awards. Others are all-star professionals that worked in the background quietly making all the difference in the world. Others fall somewhere in the middle. No matter where they fall on the spectrum, the heroes living in our communities all provide a link to our history and heritage through their experiences and wisdom. Share the connection to living history and heritage by inviting our local heroes to visit, tour, speak, and interact with today’s Airmen.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Employ      | • Compile a list of heroes in your local community  
• Heroes can be veterans, civil servants, community leaders, recognized experts, etc.  
• Contact local agencies to begin to learn who lives in your community  
  o VFW, Chamber of Commerce, Retired Colonel or Chiefs groups, Commemorative Air Force, local museums, local colleges, industry, honorary commanders, and even newspapers published by your wing or local city (see images below)  
• Maintain your list of heroes and their contributions to and connection with our heritage  
• Invite local heroes to events, activities, speaking engagements, brown bag lunches, ceremonies, etc., anywhere they can have contact with our Airmen. Most will gladly speak or attend for no money or other compensation  
• Tailor your invites based on the local hero and what makes them unique  
• Spread the invites out to as many local heroes as possible in order to increase contact with our Airmen and our local community  
• Check with legal authorities before offering any form of compensation  
• See the examples on the following page |
A lifetime of steadfast service, commitment
By Amanda Groves
For ESD Community Paper (Des Moines)

As a career Air Force personnel, Pat Keggs has spent a lifetime in military service, and it’s no different from his personal life. He has been married to his wife, Carol, for 46 years, and they have two children and two grandchildren.

The first incident that he remembers of his military service was during the Korean War. He was serving as a radar operator and was responsible for monitoring radar screens for enemy aircraft.

The most memorable event in his life was when he was shot down over North Vietnam. He was on a mission when the plane was hit by enemy fire and forced to make an emergency landing in the jungle. He spent 29 months as a prisoner of war and was released in a prisoner swap.

Keggs has also been involved in community service, including volunteering at the local veterans’ hospital and helping to organize events for military personnel and their families.

For more information about Pat Keggs, please contact the ESD Community Paper at 515-123-4567.

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Teuskegee Airman celebrates 90th birthday with 99th FTS
By Senior Airman Alexandria Tidus
Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Public Affairs

Dr. Granville Coggs, a documented original Tuskegee Airman, celebrated his 90th birthday by flying during a "flying" flight and ceremony with the 99th Flying Training Squadron July 20 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

"A Coggs is an American hero" and a pioneer," Lt. Col. Kevin York, 99th FTS commander, said. "This is a huge day for the 99th FTS and the 12th Flying Training Wing. We get to celebrate with Dr. Coggs, one of the original Tuskegee Airmen pilots, who left one of the 992 pilots originally trained in Alabama, all while celebrating our mission.

In regard to spending his 90th birthday in the air, Coggs had said "he needed" his week for his excitement.

"I remained and the most associated with the 99th FTS," he said. "I am impressed and the amount we have accomplished in the Tuskegee Airmen during the war years as well as the 99th FTS has also been wonderful."

Following his flight, Coggs was presented with 99th FTS memorabilia and had his name engraved "redacted" during a ceremony in honor.

At all African American government units of the United States Air Corps established in 1941 and based in Tuskegee, Ala., the Tuskegee Airmen included pilots, navigators, bombardiers, maintenance and support staff, instructors and others who kept the flying mission running.

After joining the Tuskegee Airmen, Coggs was trained as an aerial gunner in 1944, commissioned as a bombardier and flew a B-25 Mitchell bomber, but finished training too late to be deployed into the war.

"I hope Americans remember the Tuskegee Airmen as a group of role models, but that this group also inspired young people to know they can accomplish anything and overcome any obstacle," Coggs said.

Johnson said he and other members of the 99th FTS pride are proud to uphold that heritage.

"It is the central character of my life to be part of the history and heritage of this squadron," he told the audience. "I am very thankful to have the opportunity to work on this day to teach what we did as a trailblazer to our youth and overcome adversity and they refused to fail.

They admired the program and the dedication to their country.

Consistently, throughout this flight and the multiple gold medals at the Texas State Senior Games in the 400 meter run. Coggs said his "spring days are past."

"It is true that I'm not the physical specimen I was 10 years ago, but I'm glad I got to where I am now," he said. "I'm still doing everything I can."

For more than 30 years, Coggs worked as a diagnostic radiologist, focusing on breast cancer detection and inventing new ultrasound devices. Coggs lives in San Antonio with his wife, Marilyn.

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Alamo Wing honorary commanders visit medical and operation units
By Senior Airman Bryan Baum
SIXTH AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Alamo Wing honorary commanders heard about the mission of the 432nd Medical Group and visited with our uniformed personnel at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Dec. 8.

The group enjoyed a welcome reception and briefing by both group commanders, Col. Jeffrey Yingling Col. Lee McHale, 432nd WG commander, and 432nd Air Force commander, who explained how the medical group helps airmen stay ready every day.

The next stop for the honorary commanders was the 432nd Training Group where they learned about the mission of training the next generation of Airmen. The 432nd Training Group is the largest training group in Air Force Reserve.

The Alamo Wing honorary commanders have visited with airmen on a variety of issues including the importance of education and how their service helps make the world a better place.

"It was a privilege to see the dedication of the airmen working at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland," said Maj. Michael Knecht, 432nd Aerial Port Squadron honorary commander and senior Airman of West, Texas Baptist Church. "I found out that there are many more military members in their units who work in various career field in their military jobs, which gives them an immediate connection to their communities.

The Alamo Wing honorary commanders mentored an extensive briefing by members of the 432nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

Alamo Wing honorary commanders are former military personnel and are named by the Air Force Reserve Command to serve as a mentor to the airmen who have served in the military.

For more information about the Alamo Wing honorary commanders, visit the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland website at www.sixthaf.com.

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The Dreaming of the Masters: Living in the Bush
By Jonathan Perry
Wayland Baptist University

Wayland Baptist University welcomes Dick "LEFTY" O’Neal to Amarillo on Wednesday to share his story as the only black baseball player to play for two Negro League teams.

O’Neal will speak at Wayland’s weekly chapel service at 11 a.m. Wednesday. He will have lunch with members of the baseball team and spend the afternoon touring the baseball facility and meeting with others who are interested in his story.

O’Neal’s story is chronicled in his book, "Dreaming of the Masters: Living in the Bush," and he will be discussing his book on the topic of baseball.

While his story deals with race and race relations more than 25 years after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball, O’Neal’s testimony is one of God working in his life to bring him to where he is today. His love for the game and love for the people with whom he played gave him a deeper understanding of Christianity.

In his case, I had to realize that there is more to life than baseball, but baseball gave me a great opportunity to share how I helped my team with my faith as a Christian," O’Neal says in the introduction to his book.

O’Neal currently lives in San Antonio and is still involved with the sport as an umpire.