



# PANTANELLA NEWS

Published by 781st Bomb Squadron Association©

#98 January 2010

## GOOD BYE INDEPENDENCE, MO IT'S TAMPA, FL IN 2010



781st Bomb Squadron Association members pose for a "Kodak Moment" in front of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum in Independence MO.

The facility was the first presidential library to be created under the provisions of the 1955 Presidential Libraries Act, and is one of twelve presidential libraries administered by the National Archives and Records Administration.

From the time the Library opened, President Truman maintained a working office there, often working five or six days a week. The office appears today just as it did when Harry Truman died on December 26, 1972.

## MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH

Notify or contact any or all of  
the individuals listed below for any  
FW's---Address Changes--News  
Or Whatever

### PANTANELLA NEWS

Editor:- Frank Ambrose:-  
News Stories, FW's and Obits  
**FRANK AMBROSE**  
44 East Blvd.  
Gloversville, NY 12078  
email: <frank@frankambrose.com>

### 781st. Asso. President:-

**Orren Lee:**  
2312 Braemar Dr.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605 339 1297  
email: <cleee75@q.com>

### 781st. Asso. VP:-

**Marilyn Horne**  
17933 Bahama Isle  
Tampa, FL 33647-2777  
email: <marilynkhorne@yahoo.com>

### 781st. Sqd. Treasurer:-

**PATTY KILL**  
35 Southfield Ct.  
Springboro, OH 45066  
email: <pkill@woh.rr.com>

### 781st Asso. Executive Sect:-

**Carole Lee:**  
2312 Braemar Dr.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605 339 1297  
email: <cleee75@q.com>

781st Bomb Squadron Association  
c/o Orren Lee, Pres.  
2312 Braemar Dr.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
Email: <cleee75@q.com>

#### Officers

Orren Lee: President  
Vice President: Marilyn Horne  
Patty Kill: Treasurer  
Secretary: Connie Ogden

#### Board of Directors

Frank Ambrose  
Earl Leinart  
Frank Wassenaar

Chaplin: Frank Wassenaar

PANTANELLA NEWS  
Editor: Frank Ambrose

781st BOMB SQUADRON (H)  
Part of the 465th Bomb Gp. 15th AF  
Italy 1944-1945

Flew 191 Missions  
over Southern Europe  
dropping thousands of tons of death  
and destruction to the enemy.  
Shot down 25 enemy aircraft  
Received Two  
Presidential Unit Citations  
In Seven Battle Campaigns

## Veterans, Families and Friends Who Attended The 2009 781st Sqd. Reunion

**Frank Ambrose**  
and son William Ambrose  
**Bernie Badler**  
**Charles "Bubba" Braud**  
and sons, James, Robert, and Thomas  
**Carl Dahl**  
and companions, Jaime Greer and  
Greg Sonick  
**John Fandrey**  
and daughter Norma Cheesebrow  
**Donald Fleming**  
and family, Chris Kirk, Matthew  
Kirk, Erica Kirk and Judith Bono  
**George Hausold**  
and wife Veni and son Glenn Hausold  
and wife Katherine  
**Glenn Haywood**  
and companion Carolyn Harman  
**Francis "Ken" Kill**  
and wife Betty  
**Patricia Kill**  
**Thomas Kyle**  
**Albert LeBlanc**  
and daughter, Marilyn Horne and  
husband, Ron Horne

**Orren Lee**  
and wife Carole and son, Don Munce  
and wife Marie, granddaughters,  
Audrey, Jessica and Jamie Munce,  
granddaughter-in-law, Beth Munce  
**Earl Leinart**  
and wife Grace  
**Albert Nagel**  
and granddaughter Kristin Nagel  
**Constance "Connie" Ogden**  
and daughter Candace Tannery  
**Curt Reed**  
and son Curt Reed, Jr.  
**Kenneth Rehn**  
and wife Lois  
**Anna Russell**  
and son Barney "Bud" Russell, Jr.  
**Roland "Ron" Soucy**  
and sons, Gregory and Rodger  
**Elliot Sweet**  
and companion Laurie Bedus  
**Frank Wassenaar**  
and wife Dorothy  
**Bryan York,**  
Curator of Strategic Air and Space  
Museum, speaker

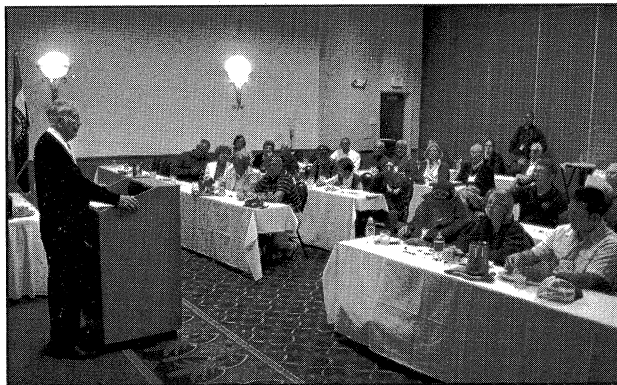




## Minutes of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association General Meeting

October 6, 2009

The 2009 Business Meeting of The 781st Bomb Squadron Association was held in the Santa Fe Room, Hilton Garden Inn, Independence, Missouri on October 6, 2009.



The Meeting was called to order at 5:05 P.M. by President, Orren Lee.

The Invocation was given by Frank Wassenaar, Chaplain and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Orren Lee, Special Treat: a Thank You, to George Gaines who provided the special treats (cheese and vegetables) for the meeting.

Veterans were asked to rise for a standing ovation, then the Associate Members were asked to stand to be recognized.

President Orren Lee appointed James Braud to act as Parliamentarian for this meeting.

**SECRETARY REPORT:** The report of the 2008 Business Meeting was published in the January 2009 issue of the Pantanella Newsletter. Earl Leinart made a motion to accept the Minutes of the Meeting as published. Motion seconded by John Fandrey. Motion approved.

**TREASURERS REPORT:** Report was read by Patty Kill, Treasurer. Motion was made to file Report for Audit by James Braud. Seconded by Charles Bubba, Braud. Motion approved.

**REUNION REPORT:** This will be published

in the Pantanella Newsletter. Estimated expense about \$5,000.00. Estimate from Registrations \$5,000.00 A motion to accept the report was made by Frank Wassenaar, seconded by James Braud. Motion approved.

**FUTURE REUNIONS:** Carole Lee gave a proposal for Branson, Missouri. \$169.00 per person. Carole mentioned Veteran Museum, Branson Belle Showboat, Memorial Service, Titanic and Hughes Brothers Show. Air Tram goes into Branson.

Ron Horne gave a proposal for Tampa, Florida. McDill Air Force Base has a new Officer Club and Chapel. Doubletree or Marriott Suites. Will need a bus to get to the air base. Liberty Ships mass produced during WWII in Tampa Bay, Busch Gardens, Adventure Water Area and C135 Aero refueling for Air Force.

Carole Lee made a motion that we go to Branson. Seconded by Earl Leinart. President Orren Lee asked for a show of hands. 8 in favor.

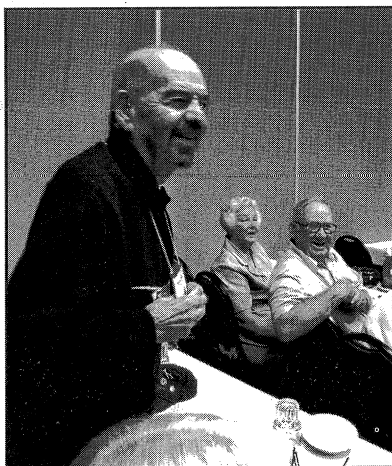
James Braud made a motion we hold the 2010 Reunion in Tampa. President Orren Lee asked for a show of hands. All in favor with one exception. Motion carried. "We're Going to Tampa!"

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Earl Leinart gave the following slate of officers. Orren Lee, President Marilyn Horne, Vice President Connie Ogden, Secretary Patty Kill, Treasurer Frank Wassenaar, Chaplain

Frank Ambrose, Editor Newsletter Board of Directors: Frank Ambrose, Frank Wassenaar, Earl Leinart.

Frank Ambrose made a motion the nominations be closed and the slate be accepted as read, seconded by Frank Wassenaar and the Motion carried.



**OTHER BUSINESS:** Carole Lee made a motion to move \$5,000.00 into the Scholarship Endowment Fund at Strategic Air and Space Museum. Connie Ogden, seconded. Motion carried with 1 opposed.

### LAST MAN STANDING TOAST:

Frank Wassenaar introduced Earl Leinart who proposed a toast to the Men of the 781st, Shot glasses emblazed with the 781st emblem, inscribed as "Last Man Standing, October 6, 2009" were distributed to veterans filled with bourbon. Frank Wassenaar introduced Earl Leinart who proposed a LAST MAN STANDING TOAST to the Men of the 781st, The Last Man Standing bottle is still intact and will be placed in the Strategic Air and Space Museum until the last man is located.

Motion to adjourn by James Braud. Seconded by Ron Soucy. *Respectfully Submitted.* *Connie Ogden, Secretary*

## eMail.....

From: frankw@cmsinter.net  
Subject: Thankyou  
Date: November 16, 2009  
To: frank@frankambrose.com

Dear Frank, Please accept this belated thank you for your ambitious help at the last squadron reunion. Your photography presentation was greatly enjoyed and I know your new photos will be welcomed at the next reunion. I also appreciated your evaluation of "The last man standing" at our directors meeting and the toast met with great success. Have a good New Year and a Happy Holiday Season.

Ps. Dottie sends greetings and appreciation for all your kind word and for the many thoughtful details that make the Squadron gathering interesting and enjoyable.

*Frank Wassenaar*

## Via the US Mail.....

10-30-09

Dear Frank-

First a change of address:

**Walt Clausen**  
7003 Sunset Way #2  
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706

Walt had problems getting around at Dayton. Feb. 6, 09 he went to the hospital with heart and blood pressure problems.

From there he went to a nurse rehab facility. Eight months later I have him with me.

We moved here to be with our son. Walt is doing fine. He uses a walker or chair. He doesn't want to eat so I feed him through a tube.

I'm sure we will not make anymore reunions. We think of all the great times we had and will miss the great friends we have made.

*Connie Clausen*

PS We enjoy the news. A little towards the postage

## The Reunion... As I recall it-

By Frank Ambrose

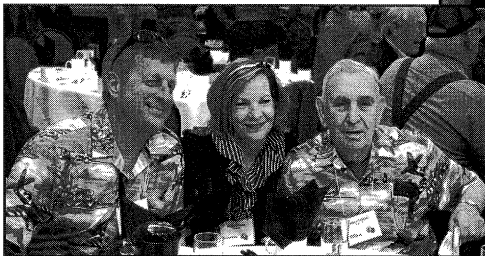
I departed on Sunday October 4th., around 8:30 in the morning, from my home in Gloversville, New York for a one and one half hour drive to the airport in Albany, NY.

My flight was due to takeoff a few minutes before noon and I wanted to give myself time for going through security. I had had a hip replacement a few years ago so that now whenever I try to go through airport security the whole airport is put on alert, or so it seemed.

As I entered the body scanner attempting to go through security all the lights and bells went off. I was immediately escorted to a holding cell where a much higher level of security measures were employed. Needless to say, after the Security Guards determined that I was of no threat to anyone, they allowed me to pass.

I will not go into the details of the flight other than to say that my plane landed six hours later in Kansas City.

Al Leblanc, his daughter and son-in-law Ron Horne had arrived roughly at the same time at an other terminal and were in the process of renting a car.



Carole had made arrangements for us to contact one another to share the ride from the airport to the hotel.

Contacting Ron, we arranged for a meeting and shared the ride to the hotel.

As I was checking in, I was greeted by a number of other members who had already arrived before us.

It had been a long day. By the time I unpacked, freshened up, spent some time in the Hospital-ity Room, I was ready for the sack.

Monday morning I availed myself of the 'Breakfast Buffet' the hotel offered. The day sped by rather quickly, I had brought with me a DVD showing WWII Air Force Re-Enactors at a recent Air Show in Geneso, NY. (See #96 June Issue, page 4 and 5).

This group of individuals took on the 781st Bomb Squadron's name and re-enact the daily routines of our days in Italy.

The video proved to be quite a sensation as many of the guys requested a re-showing of that video a number of times over and many purchased reprints of the disc to be sent back to their homes.



By five it was already time for me to attend our annual Board meeting.

Just as the Board meeting ended, my son William, who had been driving up from Dallas, contacted me on my cell informing me he had just arrived and was in the Hotel parking lot and checking in. It had been a long non-stop drive for him, by the time he unpacked and the fact that we were to get up early the next morning we decided to call it a day and retire.

Tuesday, wow! For me, this day was the most memorable and the highlight of the reunion.

After eating a hearty 'all you can eat breakfast buffet' we began boarding a bus at 8:30 for the trip to Whiteman AFB.

The trip was rather lengthy, arriving around 10:30 or so. After a short comfort break our group assembled at the 'Whiteman Spirit Chapel' for a 'Memorial Service' for our fallen and departed comrades.

As always the service was both solemn and memorable. (see page 10 this Issue)

Following the Memorial Service a buffet lunch was served at the 'Mission End' Service Club after which a most enlightening briefing was given by Lt. Col. Edwin Redman on the present day Air Force and the role of the B-2 Bomber.



### Photographing the 781st Vets in front of the B-2

Whenever a "photo-op" appeared the 'Paparazzi' were sure to be there. I don't think Obama has had this many of the White House Corps' chasing him

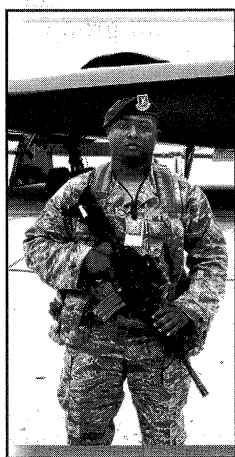


Lt. Col. Edwin Redman, an Air Force Academy graduate and 15-year veteran of the Air Force, had flown B-52s and B-1 bombers before graduating to the B-2. He related his experience of leading a massive flight of American bombers against targets near Baghdad.



Of great interest to most of us was the tremendous amount of assets the B-2 could carry with only a crew of two, where as the 24's we flew in carried 10, that is unless there was a photographer along, and then of course, if my math is correct, there would be 11. In our 465<sup>th</sup> BG there would be at least one B-24 carrying a photographer on each mission flown.

Following the briefing, Redman and his aides escorted our group to the flight line describing the B-2 on a one to one basis with anyone that would inquire.



We were allowed to take as many photographs as we wished, the only restriction was that we were not to photograph any part of the back of the "Stealth." (Otherwise those formidable looking guys with

those weird looking BB Guns will make little holes in you)



And also, for our benefit and placed on display on the flight-line along with the B-2, was an Apache Helicopter and a A-10 Thunderbolt'.

At a certain point we assembled our group in front of the 'Stealth' to pose for a gigantic 'Panoramic Photograph'. (Shown on the Centerfold of this News)

As if to add frosting on the cake, as we were being photographed, an Apache Helicopter executed a fly-over us as if to salute us..

Back at the hotel at 5 O'clock found us at in the Santa Fe Room gathered for our yearly Business Meeting (see page 3).

Wednesday was spent at the Truman Presidential Museum in Independence where many fond memories were re-ignited recalling the last days of WWII and the part President Truman played in it.

That evening our Banquet was held in the California Room of the Hilton Garden Inn.

A heart wrenching acappella rendition of the National Anthem was sung by Beth Munce, Orren and Carole's granddaughter. An assortment of musical selections were provided by the Preludium Singing Group from Lee Summit High School. Speaking that evening was Brian York, Curator of the Strategic Air and Space Museum. Following the Banquet festivities the gang once again gathered in the Hospitality Room, wishing each other, " 'good byes', 'safe trip home', 'bon voyage', and 'till we meet again'".

....Frank Ambrose



## Treasurer's 781st 2009 Reunion Report



### Revenue:

Transfer from checking	
(Balance from last reunion)	\$787.36
Donations:	\$100.00
Registrations & Fees	\$5,160.00
Total	\$6,047.36

### Disbursements:

Bus	\$890.00
Miscellaneous...	
Hospitality refreshments,	
Gas for airport pickups	\$654.14
Truman Library	\$377.25
Lunch at Truman Library	\$264.00
Lunch at Whiteman Inn	\$550.20
Pianist	\$75.00
Speaker Donation	\$100.00
School Donation	\$100.00
Banquet / Hotel Misc.	\$1,974.88
Total	\$4,985.47

Reunion Balance	
(Revenue Less Disbursements)	\$1,061.89
Respectfully Submitted,	
<b>Patricia Kill, Treasurer</b>	

### Editor's Note:

While we are on the subject of money, take a short break and check your address label on this Newsletter. If the date above your name is not 2010 or higher your dues are due. I won't say any more-- You know what to do.....

## REPORT FROM STRATEGIC AIR and SPACE MUSEUM

Strategic Air and Space Museum in Ashland, Nebraska reports that Earl Leinart established a scholarship endowment honoring the 781st Bomb Squadron Association and those who have "Folded Their Wings" in service to our nation.

Earl made a contribution to the endowment in honor of his twin brother, Carl Leinart.

Earl's brother Carl passed away August 23, 2006.

The endowment hopes to support students participating in educational programs and hope other 781st association members might consider growing the endowment to accommodate more youngsters in their programs.



### 781st BS Vets at the 2009 781<sup>st</sup> B.S. Assoc. Reunion in Independence, MO

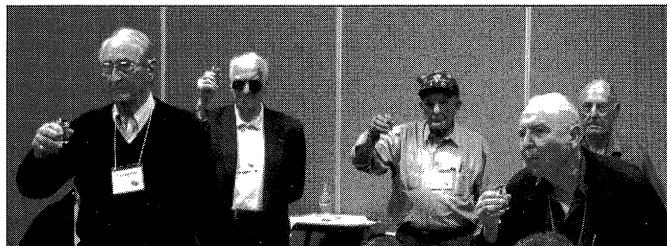
Standing Left to Right:- Glenn Haywood, John Fandrey, Curt Reed, Charles "Bubba" Braud, Albert LeBlanc Elliot Sweet, Orren Lee, Frank Wassenaar, Kenneth Rehn, Earl Leinart, Thomas Kyle, Francis "Ken" Kill  
Sitting L to R:- Albert Nagel, Carl Dahl, Frank Ambrose, Roland "Ron" Soucy, Bernie Badler, George Hausold, Donald Fleming.

### Earl Leinart's 'Last Man Standing' Toast

At the conclusion of the 781st BS Association business meeting, Board member, Earl Leinart proposed the following toast to the all the 781st veterans attending and to all other 81st. Vets still living, wherever they are and to all those that have sacrificed their lives and have Folded their Wings before us.

Gentlemen of the 781<sup>st</sup> Heavy Bomb Squad, I stand before you to propose a toast to the 19 men present who are left standing after over 64 years since last we flew and fought together out of Italy in 1944 & 1945.

You flew, and you supported those who flew. You responded to your country's call to arms, you endured cold, long hours or boredom, frightful AA fire (flak), damage to aircraft, mechanical failure, weather, capture by the enemy and an almost endless list of dangers. "Climbing through cloud cover, trying to maintain formation, flying wing tip to wing tip, made for a high pucker factor."



You served well, true and without hesitation. I say to you in the words of the Apostle, Paul, written to Timothy. [2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy Ch. 4, verses 6 to 8.]

"You (I) have fought the good fight.

You have finished the race.

You have kept the faith."

You have done more and I quote from Stephen F. Ambrose's widely acclaimed book on WWII in the ETO, 'Citizen Soldiers.'

"The Luftwaffe was without fuel. The all-out strategic bomber assault on German refineries and other oil related targets had a cumulative effect that was devastating to the German army and air force...by the Spring of 1945. The Wehrmacht was out of gas. In and of itself, that justified the investment in four-engine bombers. The war could not have been won without them.

I am sure that it is altogether fitting that we toast here today with whiskey. You will remember our stops on the way to debriefing after the mission at the window in Doc Rapporte infirmary. Let me read again from Ambrose's book.

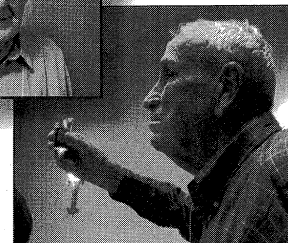
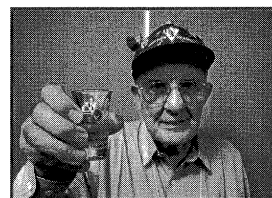
Lt. Raymond Murray, pilot, was 19 years old, "I was so young that with the passing years time has erased most of the bad things I'd seen. The only memories that I now have of combat missions are hours and hours of boredom inter-

rupted by moments of sheer terror."

"I talked to our flight surgeon, Capt. Jack McKittrick about this one day. He was a very nice guy. He said, 'That's why we give you whiskey, and that's why you're all so young. If you thought about it, you wouldn't fly combat.'"

"McKittrick saw to it that crews got liquor rations after a mission during debriefing, and it did a great deal to settle them down. It helped to relax them slightly from the horrors of a particularly terrifying

mission that, all too often, surpassed fiction. And I'll



be damned if the Women's Christian Temperance Union didn't try their best to put a stop to that."

Brothers, raise your glass in a toast to the 19 men left standing here. The men who made the ultimate sacrifices in Europe, those who since the end of the Air War in Europe have folded their wings, and the 275 men thought to be still standing, but not keeping in close touch with us.. We salute you! Salute!

"Here's to mud in your eye."



## 2010 Reunion Committee Report... TAMPA, FLORIDA... WHAT TO SEE and Do...

Ron and Marilyn Horne report that they have been busy scouting various sites and venues planning for next years reunion.

They are targeting the 1st, 2nd or 3rd week of October as a date. To that end, they are still in the process of trying to get the most bang for the buck.

MacDill AF base will be a priority and there's so much to do in the Tampa Area.

Opting for events the group would enjoy the most is becoming a challenge.

Marcel Snyder has once again come forward volunteering his expertise guiding Ron and Marilyn towards another successful reunion. Also on board is Bubba's grandson, Jeremy. Considering all the possibilities, this one is going to be a big one!



KC-135R Stratotanker assigned to the 6th Air Refueling Wing, 91st Air Refueling Squadron, at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., flies a training mission over central Florida. The KC-135's principal mission is air refueling. This asset greatly enhances the U. S. Air Force's capability to accomplish its mission of Global Engagement. It also provides aerial refueling support to U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and allied aircraft. Four turbofans, mounted under 35-degree swept wings, power the KC-135 to takeoffs at gross weights up to 322,500 pounds. Nearly all internal fuel can be pumped through the tanker's flying boom, the KC-135's primary fuel transfer method. A special shuttlecock-shaped drogue, attached to and trailed behind the flying boom, may be used to refuel aircraft fitted with probes

### MacDill AFB, FL

MacDill (sometimes mis-spelled McDill) AFB is located eight miles south of downtown Tampa. Now an operational base, MacDill has about 6,000 airmen and civilians on 5,000 acres, located on the Southwestern tip of the Interbay Peninsula on the west coast of Florida.

MacDill Army Air Base was named after Col. Leslie MacDill who died in a plane crash near Washington D.C. in 1938. Its first mission was training World War II airmen on B-17 and B-26 aircraft.

During the Spanish-American War (1898), Tampa, because of its strategic location, was chosen as a rendezvous point for troops heading south to help Cuba gain

independence from Spain. Approximately 10,000 of the 66,000 troops in Tampa waiting for ships headed to Cuba set up camp around what was then known as Port Tampa City, which bordered what is now MacDill AFB.

Flying operations at MacDill began in 1941 with the base, first mission including transitional training in the B-17 Flying Fortress. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, MacDill became a major staging area for Army Air Corps flight crews and aircraft.

During the war as many as 15,000 troops were stationed at MacDill at one time. Estimates of the number of crew members trained at the base vary from 50,000 to 120,000.

In 1996 the Air Refueling Wing marked the beginning of a new era for MacDill. The redesignation marked the addition of a KC-135R squadron and mission which expanded in 1997 with the add-on of EC-135 and CT-43 aircraft and missions.

Since the redesignation, MacDill and the 6th Air Refueling Wing, have contributed to military operations around the world at locations including Istres, France; Ramstein AB, Germany; Soto Cano and Taszar, Hungary; Zagreb, Croatia; Tuzla, Bosnia; Incirlik AB, Turkey; and Al Kharj and Riyadh, Saudia Arabia.



A Marine AV-8 Harrier takes off from MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., for an Atlantic Strike exercise mission Oct. 24. The fighter, from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., was at MacDill for the U.S. Central Command bi-annual Atlantic Strike training event.

## And In The Bay Area...

Tampa is a major Gulf Coast city in Hillsborough County, on the west coast of the state of Florida.

According to the 2008 estimates, the city's population had grown to 340,882 making it the 53rd largest city in the United States.

Tampa is a part of the metropolitan area most commonly referred to as the "Tampa Bay Area". The four-county area is composed of roughly 2.7 million residents, making it the second largest metropolitan statistical area in the state, and the fourth largest in the Southeastern United States, behind Miami, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.

The "Greater Tampa Bay" area has just over 4 million residents and generally includes the Tampa and Sarasota metro areas.

Tampa's port and international airport make it an easily accessible, popular destination in Florida. Its rich history mixes with its modern landscape, giving visitors and residents a medley of activities and attractions to choose from. Busch Gardens, various large museums, and the city's resident football team, the Buccaneers, are just a few of the major highlights. The area is rife with small towns as well, offering a glimpse into Tampa's history and diversity.

### Via the Internet...

From: ian.wilson-dick@virgin.net  
Subject: Pantanella News.  
Date: October 26, 2009  
To: frank@frankambrose.com

Dear sir, I painted this picture a few years ago and as I started cleaning up records today could not determine whether I had mentioned it to the Pantanella News.

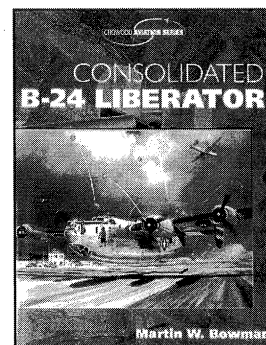
The picture is based on information provided by Major Bernie Badler. It is titled "The Finishee", a crews celebration of completion of their 50 missions. Bernie, who named the aircraft 'Long John Silver', is, I believe is still doing well in Petaluma Ca. Some years ago gave me some copies of the paper which I used to get background for the airfield.

The painting became the cover of a book on the B24, ISBN 1 86126 709 6.

With kind regards

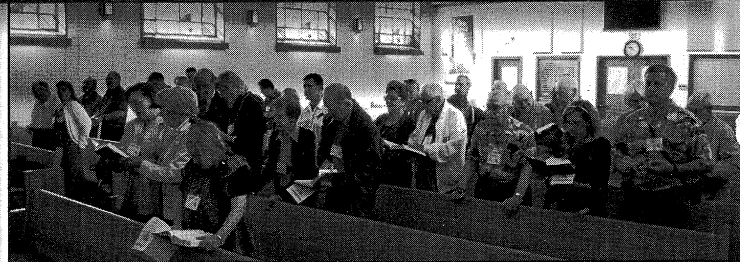
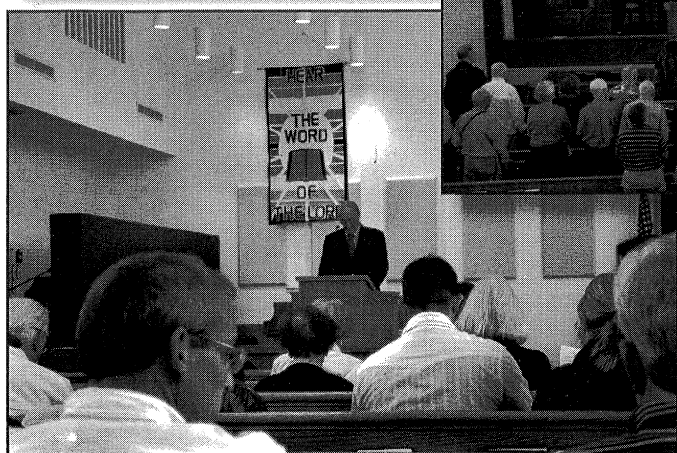
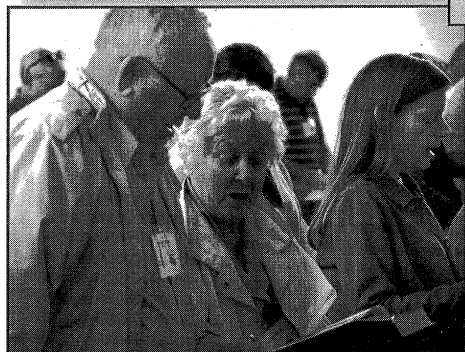
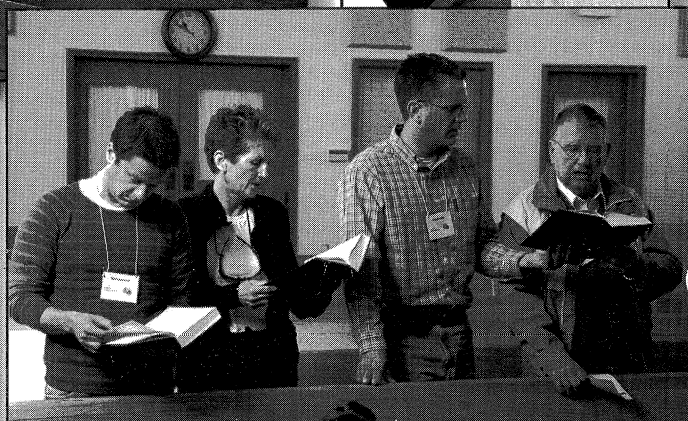
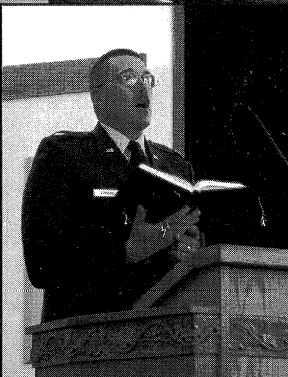
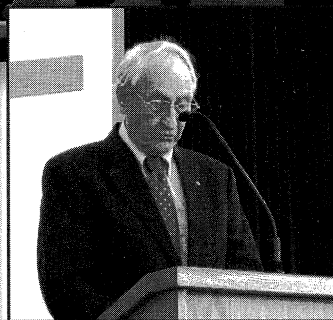
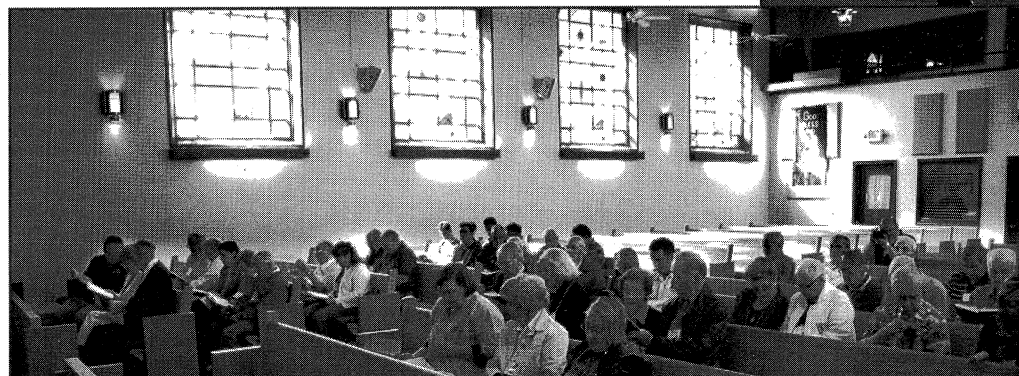
**Ian Wilson-Dick**

Site: [www.ianwilson-dick.com](http://www.ianwilson-dick.com)



## Service of Remembrance

Whiteman Spirt Chaple  
Whiteman Air Force Base, MO  
06 October 2009





## FOLDED WINGS

**Barney G. Russell;**  
ALTHOFF NAVIGATOR

**Dr. Barney Gaston Russell, Jr., 86,** of Magnolia passed away September 24, 2009 at Magnolia Hospital.

From January 1942 to October 1945 he served in the Army Air Force during WWII as a navigator on B-24, with the 15th Air Force, 781st Bomber Squadron as part of the 465th Bomb Group stationed at Pantanella Airfield near



...Barney Russell 1944

near Canosa, Italy from July 1944-June 1945.

His unit received the Presidential Citation. After flying 62 missions he earned the Air Medal with 7 Oak Leaf Clusters and the European Theatre of Operations Ribbon with 8 battle stars.

In his most recent years he was the past President and Board member of the WWII Reunion Group of the 781st Unit of the US Air Force.

Those left to cherish his memory are his wife of 60 yrs., Anna (Holloway) Russell of Magnolia; one son, B.G. Russell, III of Tulsa, OK; one daughter, Suzanne Spain and husband, John of Fort Smith, grandsons, Todd Curtis Spain of Fort Smith, Bradford Russell Spain and fiancée, Katie Carlisle both of Little Rock, one sister, Amanda Harrison of Brinkley, and his dog, Pepper.

A private interment was held on September 25, 2009 at Memorial Park Cemetery, Magnolia, Arkansas.

**Niel C. Nelson**

Tail Gunner: Becker Crew

To Whom It May Concern:

Just wanted to advise that my father, **Niel C. Nelson**, passed away on 3 March 2009 after a lengthy illness. Dad had been a tail gunner aboard a B-24 (piloted by Alfred Becker) of the 781st Bombardment Squadron (H).

*Rick Nelson*

**Melvin R. Fulkerson:**

Nose Gunner: Roberts Crew

From: carolmyers44@gmail.com  
Subject: Deceased member  
Date: August 7, 2009  
To: frank@frankambrose.com

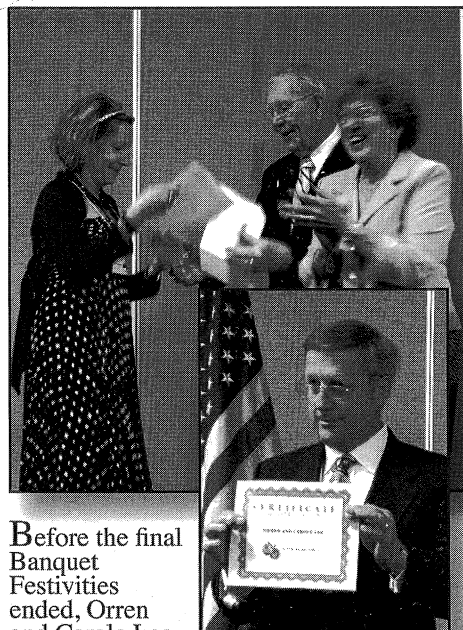
My father, Melvin R. Fulkerson, of 15603 Terrier Road, Stark City, MO 64866-7911, passed away on Aug. 8, 2007.

Please cancel Pantanella News for him.

*Sincerely,  
Carolyn Myers*

Our thoughts and prayers are with all our fallen comrades who have found everlasting peace. You have served your country well. We will remember you forever

## Orren and Carole Lee Honored



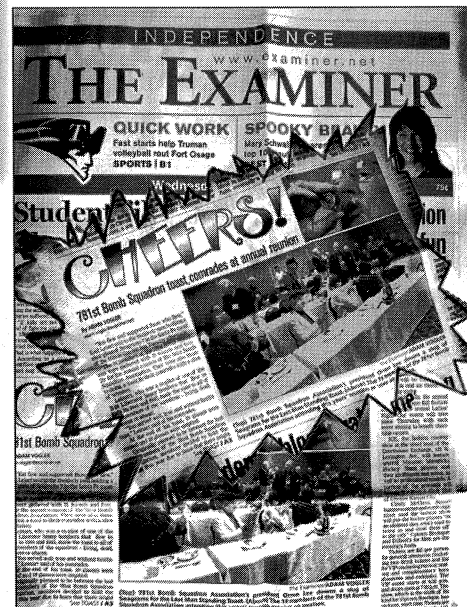
Before the final Banquet Festivities ended, Orren and Carole Lee were presented with a 'Certificate of Appreciation'.

The presentation was made by incoming Vice President Marilyn Horne and her husband Ron on behalf of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association. The inscription read, "Presented to Orren and Carole Lee. For your hard work and distinguished service to the 781ST BOMB SQUADRON in making the 2009 reunion a great success."

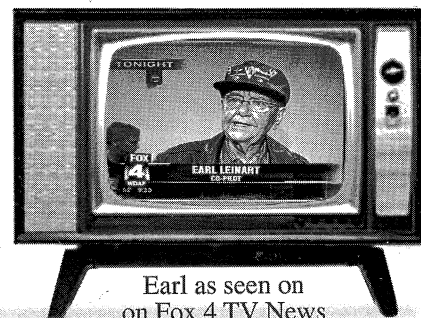
## 81st Reunion Makes Headlines in Local News Media

The 2009 781st Bomb Squadron's Business Meeting, held in the Santa Fe Room of the Hilton Garden Inn was the focus of Independence, Missouri's Media outlets.

'The Examiner', Independence's local newspaper, featured a front page story and photograph which continued on page three expounding in great detail the 'going's on' of our organization.



In the meanwhile, the local Fox TV Outlet, filmed the occasion interviewing our 'celebs' for airing to it's Cable Subscribers within the hour.



Earl as seen on Fox 4 TV News

## President's Corner

781<sup>st</sup> Friends –

I have had positive feedback on our reunion in Independence. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

Thank you to our new Vice President Marilyn Horn and her husband, Ron, for coming forward with a great plan for our next reunion in Tampa, FL.

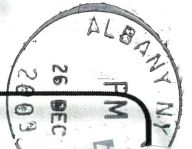
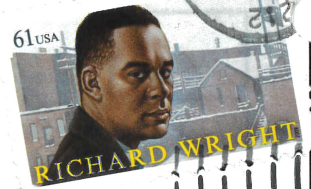
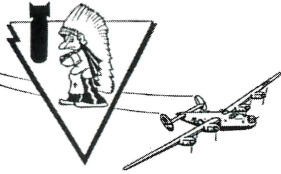
We are looking forward to it. If anyone has some ideas for 2011 – now is the time to do some research.

*Orren Lee*



# PANTANELLA NEWS Jan. 2010

781st "PANTANELLA NEWS"  
c/o Frank Ambrose, Editor  
44 East Blvd.  
Gloversville, NY 12078



ASSOC 2010  
CAROLE J. LEE  
2312 BRAEMAR DR.  
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57105-4126



781st Veterans visiting the Whiteman AFB, home of the B-2 Bomber  
Shown left to right:- Frank Ambrose, Glenn Haywood, Al Nagel, Orren Lee,  
Ken Kill, Kenneth Rehn, Charles Braud, Albert LeBlanc, John Faudrey,  
Tom Kyle, Donald Fleming, Bernie Badler, Earl Leinart,  
George Hausold, Ronald Soucy, Frank Wassenaar,  
Curtis Reed, and Carl Dahl