

Air Rescue Association Newsletter

Vol 76 | Issue 2
Jul 2024

**2024
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ARA Newsletter
Published by the
Air Rescue Association

Hello Rescue Warriors and Friends!

I hope you are all well as we move to the second half of 2024. As we move into summer, we are wrapping up the planning for another great reunion this year. This year, the ARA Symposium will be held just outside our nation's capital, Crystal City, Virginia. This will be a great opportunity to visit many of D.C.'s sites that are special to many of us who have served in the Rescue tribe.



Huge changes are afoot in the Air Force and will have wide-ranging effects on how our rescue community will organize, train, and equip to face future challenges. It will be great to see you all and get your thoughts as the Air Force moves forward facing these challenges when we meet at the Symposium. We will start with our Wednesday night “cocktail social with heavy hors d’oeuvres.” at the Embassy Suites in the heart of Crystal City, just moments on the Metro or via Uber to many of the capital’s highlights. Thursday, we will offer complimentary Metro passes for anyone who would like to visit the monuments, museums, or Arlington on their own, but we will also have a bus to take any of those interested to the Udvar-Hazy National Air and Space Museum near Dulles, where a private tour will be set up. We will again be holding our Rescue symposium on Friday; this year, we are looking to provide some big-picture briefs on the massive changes occurring in the Air Force as we shift our focus to Great Power Competition with China with our briefings from across the Rescue community. We will have our exciting, engaging, and colorful “war stories” on Friday afternoon. We have activities planned for get-togethers on Thursday and Friday nights, but if you’d rather, you can enjoy yourselves in the variety of activities that the D.C. area has to offer at your own leisure.

In addition to the general meeting, I’d like to organize a trip to the Vietnam War Memorial on Saturday so those of you who served during that conflict can pay your respects as a group. We will wrap up on Saturday night with the Rescue Ball, where a new Kight Award, Squadron of the Year, and Jolly Green Mission of the Year winner will be announced.

As always, I would like to end this note with a heartfelt “thank you” for all you have done for your country and the sacrifices you made along the way. This will be my last note as President, as I will step down from this position after the Gala this October. It has been an honor the last three years to serve in this position and help the ARA with its mission. I will continue to stay involved, but it is time for new leadership and new ideas. We will elect a new president at the general member meeting in October. While we have people presently on the Board who can take over and will do great, those who are not on the board can apply, too! Shoot me a note if you are interested!

I look forward to the camaraderie and stories. It will be great to see all of you!

Chris “Skip” Barnett
President, ARA



**2024 AIR RESCUE SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION FORM
16-20 OCTOBER 2024**

THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR ALL EVENTS IS: 15 September 2024

ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION: <https://www.usafrescue.org/events-reunion-news>

Prefer to register via mail? Send to: (prior to 15 September deadline):

**Air Rescue Association
Greg Gaunt
1321 W Tee Up Way
Oro Valley, AZ 85737
520-269-5146
greggaunt@msn.com**

- Your Name:
 - Spouse/Guest Name:
 - Address City, State, Zip:
 - Phone:
 - E-Mail:
 - Arrival Date:
 - Departure Date:
 - Is this your FIRST reunion? Yes ___ No ___
 - ADDITIONAL GUEST INFORMATION:
 - Name:
-

HOTEL

- HOTEL:** Crystal City Embassy Suites
 - USE THE FOLLOWING RESERVATION LINK:
 - [ARA Symposium 2024 Hotel \(hilton.com\)](https://www.hilton.com)
 - OR Make your hotel reservations directly with the Embassy Suites and say that you are with the Air Rescue Association to receive a rate of:
 - 2 Queens or 1 King: \$239.00 + tax
 - Breakfast is complimentary
 - Phone number: 1-703-979-9799

IMPORTANT: Non-reserved rooms will be released back to the hotel after 15 September 2024

AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

- I AM ALREADY AN ARA LIFETIME MEMBER
 - I AM A FORMER JOLLY GREEN LIFETIME MEMBER: MEMBERSHIP TRANSFERRED TO ARA LIFETIME
 - ARA MEMBERSHIPS
 - I AM OLDER THAN 80 YEARS YOUNG: FREE
 - I AM BETWEEN 70-79 YEARS OLD: \$100 FOR LIFETIME (SPOUSE INCLUDED) \$100
 - I AM BETWEEN 60-69 YEARS OLD: \$200 FOR LIFETIME (SPOUSE INCLUDED) \$200
 - I AM BETWEEN 0 - 59: \$300 FOR LIFETIME (SPOUSE INCLUDED) \$300
 - I WANT TO PAY ANNUALLY: \$10 PER YEAR (SPOUSE INCLUDED)
 - INDICATE HOW MANY YEARS: _____ \$10 x ____ = \$ _____
 - I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION \$ _____
-

AIR RESCUE SYMPOSIUM AND AWARDS GALA REGISTRATION FORM

- 2024 AIR RESCUE SYMPOSIUM & AWARDS GALA REGISTRATION FEE (**REQUIRED FOR ALL ATTENDEES**)
 - ARA MEMBERS: \$35 x _____ = \$ _____
 - NON-MEMBERS: \$50 x _____ = \$ _____

◇ ALL COSTS BELOW ARE PER PERSON, WHICH INCLUDES TAX AND GRATUITY

WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER

- 1800-2000 WELCOME SOCIAL**
 - Welcome Social: Heavy hors d'oeuvres \$60 x _____ = \$ _____
 - CASH ONLY Bar
- 2000- TBD HOSPITALITY SUITE**

THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER

- Hotel Breakfast: Served 0700-0900**
 - OPTION A:** Udvar-Hazy Museum Tour 0900-1400 \$25 x _____ = \$ _____
 - Lunch @ museum (own cost)
 - OPTION B:** Sightseeing Adventures in the D.C. Area (Metro Passes provided by ARA)
 - Lunch on your own**
- DINNER ON YOUR OWN TO EXPERIENCE THE D.C. CAPITAL AREA**

FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER

Hotel Breakfast: Served 0700-0900

AM EVENT: TOTAL FORCE RESCUE BRIEFS AND SYMPOSIUM

- For the AM event, guests will interact with Airmen as they listen to Rescue Total Force briefings.

Lunch:

- Option A: Hotel “Build Your Own” Lunch**

\$50 x ____ = \$ ____

- Option B: On-The-Town**

OWN COST

PM EVENT: 1230-1600 SYMPOSIUM/WAR STORIES

- For the PM event, guests will listen to extraordinary Rescue missions from “current” and “vintage” Rescue warriors.

EVENING Social: Skydome Restaurant, Crystal City

OWN COST

- Attending + indicate number in party: _____**

2000- TBD Hospitality Suite + Evening Registration for Friday Late Arrivals

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER

AM EVENTS

- Hotel Breakfast, Served 0700-0900**

- 0900-1000 ARA BOARD MEETING (ARA BOARD MEMBERS ONLY)**

- 1000-1100 ARA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

LUNCH + SIGHTSEEING!

OWN COST

EVENING GALA

- 1700 COCKTAIL HOUR (OPEN CASH BAR)**

- 1800 AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION GALA BUFFET**

\$95 x ____ = \$ ____

- Mixed greens, carrots, tomatoes, buttermilk ranch, balsamic vinaigrette

- Classic Caesar salad

- Seared airline chicken breast with marsala

- Pan-seared Atlantic salmon with lemon butter sauce

- Grilled teriyaki flank steak

- Garlic potato puree

- Broccolini and baby carrots

- Cheesecake, Chocolate decadent cake

- Open CASH BAR.

- 2100- TBD HOSPITALITY SUITE After Party**

THE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE IS BELOW, SCHEDULE WILL BE UPDATED AS CHANGES OCCUR ON THE AIR RESCUE WEBSITE, LOCATED HERE: [REUNION NEWS | Air Rescue Association \(usafrescue.org\)](https://www.usafrescue.org)

FINAL SCHEDULE PROVIDED AT CHECK-IN AND POSTED DAILY IN THE HOTEL MAIN FOYER

2024 Air Rescue Association Symposium Schedule



WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER

1430-1730: ARA Check-in (POTOMAC ROOM, HOTEL)

1800-2100: Welcome Social (CAPITOL HILL/ADAMS MORGAN ROOMS, HOTEL)

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER

0630-0930: Breakfast on your own

0900-1600: **Option 1:** National Air and Space Museum tour (Udvar-Hazy); depart hotel NLT 0900*

*Meet in Hotel lobby 0830; ARA will coordinate transportation

Option 2: Explore D.C. on your own. ARA will provide free metro passes

1800-2030: On your own to explore Crystal City

FRIDAY, 18 OCTOBER

0630-0900: Breakfast on your own

0900-1500: Rescue briefs & Symposium with lunch ~1200 (CAPITOL HILL/ADAMS MORGAN ROOMS, HOTEL)

1700-2000: **Option 1:** Informal get-together at the Skydome Restaurant, (CRYSTAL CITY)

Option 2: On your own to explore Crystal City

SATURDAY, 19 OCTOBER

0600-1000: Breakfast on your own

0900-1000: ARA Board of Directors Meeting (CAPITOL HILL ROOM, HOTEL)

1000-1100: ARA General Membership Meeting (CAPITOL HILL ROOM, HOTEL)

1100-1300: TOMLF Board of Directors Meeting (CAPITOL HILL ROOM, HOTEL)

1300-1500: **OPTIONAL:** Visit to Vietnam Veterans Memorial; ARA will coordinate transportation

1700-1800: Cocktail hour (CAPITOL HILL/ADAMS MORGAN ROOMS HOTEL)

1800-2100: Gala & Awards Dinner (CAPITOL HILL/ADAMS MORGAN ROOMS, HOTEL)

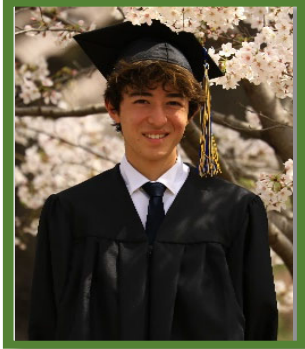
HOSPITALITY ROOM: Opened nightly for camaraderie & late check-ins
(POTOMAC ROOM, HOTEL)

If you have any questions, call/text Chris "Skip" Barnett at 512-676-7726

2024 Jolly Green Merit Scholarship (JGMS)

By Sarah Lively, Program Manager

An all-volunteer team of ARA-TOMLF facilitated the 2024 Jolly Green Merit Scholarship (JGMS) program, continuing the 40+ year Jolly Green Legacy. This year we teamed up to award \$18 to eight students. A six-person team scored applications on demonstrated academic and extracurricular achievements. Thank you to Committee Chair Ken Price, Tony Ray, Margarita Mailander, Vic Pereira, Gene Manner, and Mick Harper for taking the time to review and score 36 applications.



This year's **first-place** student is Thomas Vogeley. He is the grandson of pararescueman (PJ) SSgt Charles Vogeley, who was once assigned to the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (ARRS) at Wheelus Air Base, Libya. He will receive **\$5,000** toward an undergraduate degree in Applied Economics at Cornell University. After graduation, Thomas plans to pursue his graduate degree and a career in Sustainable Agriculture.

This year's **second-place** student is Kelson Dugdale. He is the son of pilot LtCol Jameson Dugdale. He will receive **\$3,500** toward a degree in Mechanical Engineering with a specialization in Control and Robotics at the University of California, San Diego. Kelson's dream is to research and develop technological solutions for individuals with limb differences.



This year's **third-place** student is Lila Kelly. She is the granddaughter of SMSgt Robert Kelly, a PJ, who was once assigned to the 305th ARRS at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, MI. She will receive **\$3,000** toward an undergraduate degree in Political Science at the University of Michigan. After graduation, Lila plans to work in the Department of Labor.

This year's **fourth-place** student is Athena Hicks. She is the daughter of Maj Brian Hicks, a PJ, formerly assigned to the 48th Rescue Squadron (RQS) at Holloman AFB, NM. She will receive **\$1,750** toward a Nursing degree at Florida State University. After graduation, Athena intends to work as a NICU nurse.



2024 Jolly Green Merit Scholarship (JGMS)

By Sarah Lively, Program Manager

This year's **fifth-place** student is Savannah Allgeyer. She is the granddaughter of Flight Engineer MSgt John Kriletich, who was assigned to the 37th ARRS in Danang, Vietnam. She will receive **\$1,500** toward a degree in Environmental Engineering at Doane University. After graduation, Savannah aspires to intern at NASA.



This year's **sixth-place** student is Rowan Watson. She is the daughter of former HH-60 pilot Col Shelly Black, last assigned to the 33rd RQS at Kadena AB, Japan. She will receive **\$1,250** toward an Aerospace Engineering degree at the University of Washington. Her career goals are to work as a design engineer in Astronautics or Aeronautics.

This year's **seventh-place** student is Natasha McCarthy. She is the daughter of former HH-60 pilot Col Thomas McCarthy, last assigned to the 33rd RQS at Kadena, Japan. She will receive **\$1,000** toward an undergraduate degree in Behavioral Biology at Boston University. Upon graduation, she intends to pursue a graduate degree in Clinical Psychology and become a therapist.



This year's **eighth-place** student is Sidney Looney. He is the son of pilot LtCol David Looney, formerly assigned to the 210th RQS at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK. He will receive **\$1,000** toward an undergraduate degree in Biochemistry at the University of Utah. Upon graduation, he plans to attend medical school and eventually work abroad in the field of revolutionary technologies such as CRISPR DNA.

Billy R. Davidson's Jump

John C. Ratliff

Editor's note: Photos resized for inclusion in the newsletter



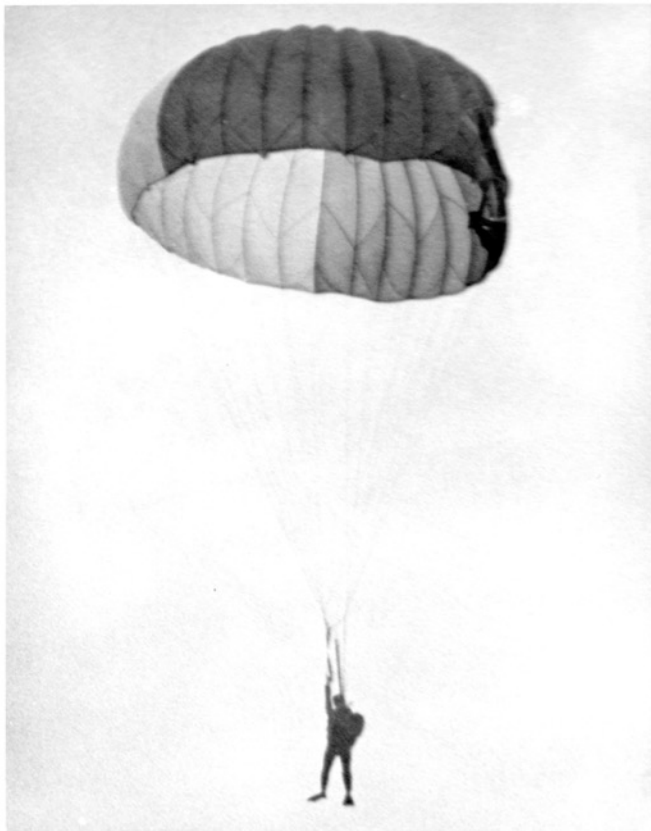
We regularly made water jumps out of the HU-16B Albatross. Jumping this bird, especially with full parascuba gear, is a real chore as there really is not a door to jump out of, but rather a hatch. The hatch is located above the floor, so we needed to put one slipped foot up on the bottom edge of the hatch, our two hands on the outside, and to jump first duck and pull ourselves up into the door with our arms, then with our leg push off to clear the fuselage of the aircraft. Sometimes, we got really blown around by the prop blast, and at other times the opening parachute was influenced by the prop blast.

Billy Davison made his jump, then looked up and instead of a fully-inflated parachute, saw instead three bubbles of inflation, with lines going over the parachute rather than straight down to his risers. This is a problem! So on the way down, he was very busy trying to manipulate the risers (the only things he could grad and influence), trying to get those lines to roll over off the top of the 'chute.

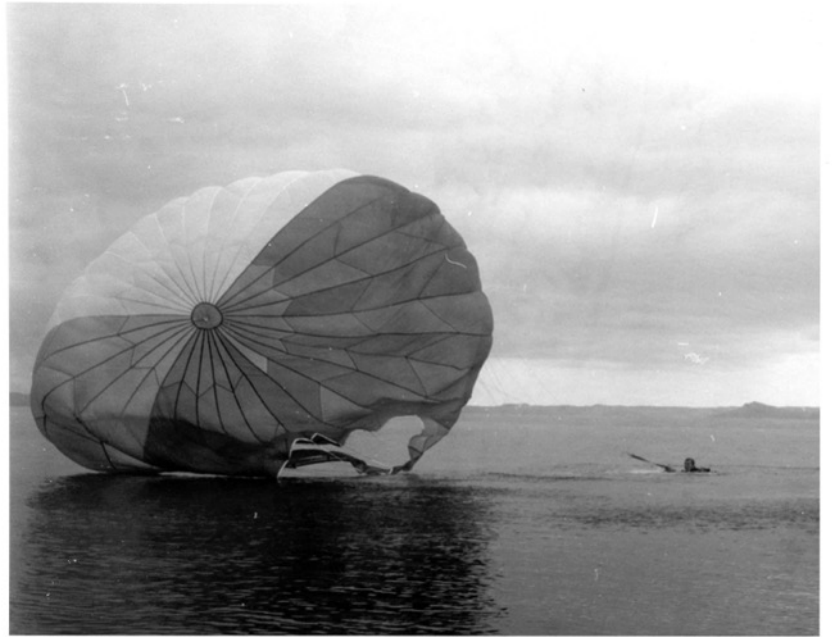
I was taking photos of this jump, and you can see in the first photo that the parachute looks abnormal. In the second photo, Billy is trying very hard to get those lines rolled off, and was successful.



In the third, he's just hanging there, thanking his luck stars that he didn't have to use the reserve parachute. And in the fourth photo (next page), he's preparing to enter the water.



What he did not know at the time is that he didn't get those lines to "roll off" the canopy. What actually happened, as you can see by tracing the lines of his parachute and the risers, is that the parachute opened inside-out! Billy's very strong work had caused the parachute to invert, and then fully open. He said on Facebook decades later that "I was talking to the big guy all the way down" (or something equivalent).



From my memoir, still unpublished, Between Air and Water, the Memoir of a USAF Pararescueman, by John C. Ratliff.

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The First Military Combat Helicopter Rescue – 25 April 1944 – The Wright Field Story

Kevin Rusnak

Chief Historian, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center History Office

Eighty years ago, on April 25, 1944, US Army Air Forces Lt Carter Harman completed the first combat search and rescue operation by helicopter, a grueling four-day effort to extract a fellow American pilot and three wounded British soldiers trapped behind enemy Japanese lines in Burma.



[Photo 1 - Lt Carter Harman. Credit: US Army Center for Military History]

Helicopters are a subset of “rotary wing” aircraft, where the airfoil-shaped blades spin rapidly to move air over them and generate the lift that gets them off the ground (compared with “fixed wing” airplanes that require forward motion to generate lift from their wings). This idea had been around for centuries, famously conceptualized by Leonardo da Vinci, but it was in the first decade after the Wright Brothers flew that more serious, though ultimately unsuccessful, attempts at building actual helicopters were made.

The US Army Air Service made its first foray into rotary wing aircraft in 1921 through its Engineering Division at McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio – the predecessor to the modern Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC). It expended over \$200,000 under a contract with Russian scientist George de Bothezat for a 4-rotor helicopter that was designed, built, and tested entirely at McCook Field. The quadcopter first took flight—just barely—there in December 1922, with McCook Field’s commander, Maj Thurman Bane, at the controls. After more than 100 flights proved the craft was unstable and couldn’t rise more than a few feet off the ground, McCook cancelled the program, de Bothezat hastily left town, and the Army didn’t look seriously at helicopters again for another 15 years.



[Photo 2 - De Bothezat helicopter flying at McCook Field. Credit: National Museum of the US Air Force]

The autogiro was another rotary wing alternative, resembling a hybrid between an airplane and a helicopter. They had a propeller for forward motion but used rotor blades for lift instead of fixed wings. Unlike a helicopter, the rotor was not powered by the engine but instead spun freely in the air to create lift as the vehicle moved forward. That setup meant autogiros had very short takeoff and landing capabilities, but not sustained vertical flight, and sometimes needed small wings for additional lift. A few of these were developed in limited numbers for both the military and commercial aviation, but they inadvertently contributed to their own obsolescence by their primary competitor: helicopters.



[Photo 3 – A pair of US Army Air Corps Pitcairn PCA-3 Autogiros. Credit: National Museum of the US Air Force]

The Pitcairn company of Pennsylvania was the leading manufacturer in the American autogiro industry that suffered from a small market and a lack of funds. Looking for a boost in its fortunes in 1938, Pitcairn successfully lobbied its congressman to appropriate \$300,000 for the Army Air Corps to expend on “rotary wing aircraft research, development, procurement, experimentation, and operation.” That language in the resulting bill left the door open for the Army to choose between autogiros and helicopters. Unfortunately for Pitcairn, German inventor Henrich Focke debuted the first practical helicopter around that same time. Movies of his achievement convinced the Air Corps’ technical experts, who had moved from McCook Field to the new Wright Field (the modern Wright-Patterson AFB) just outside of Dayton in 1927, that helicopters were the future, not autogiros. As a result, the government funds Pitcairn had lobbied for went instead to its primary competitors.

One of the beneficiaries of that money was Igor Sikorsky, a Russian émigré who had worked at McCook Field, like his countryman George de Bothezat, then gone into industry. Sikorsky built

America's first successful helicopter in 1940, the VS-300 "Hoverfly," though he admitted that "one of the minor engineering problems we have not yet solved" with it was "forward motion." Wright Field allocated an initial \$3000 contract to him for the helicopter's engineering data in July 1940, then a total of \$60,000 to procure a militarized version of his improved Hoverfly model VS-316, dubbed the XR-4 by the Army.

W-195
State Wing

WAR DEPARTMENT
 AIR CORPS
 Form No. 98a
 (Rev. Sept. 18, 1937)

WAR DEPARTMENT
 AIR CORPS
PURCHASE ORDER

W 535 ao-15392
 CONTRACT No.
 ORDER No. 41-120

Address all correspondence regarding this order for attention of
FJK:MG

To **United Aircraft Corporation,
 VOUGHT-SIKORSKY AIRCRAFT DIVISION,** Date **July 11, 1940.**
 Stratford, Connecticut.

Ship to **Quartermaster, Wright Field,
 Wright, Greene County, Ohio,
 marked for: Air Corps Supply
 Officer.**

Ship via **Perthwith**
 Delivery within **10** days from date of receipt of this order.
 Terms: **Net** days after receipt and acceptance of material.

ALL ARTICLES MUST BE DELIVERED F. O. B. destination.

In accordance with your **Circular #40-260 & letter** proposal dated **4/19 & 6/27/40 resp.** subject to all conditions and requirements hereof and to all advertisements, circulars, specifications, and samples pertaining hereto, award is hereby made you for furnishing the following articles at the prices shown and at the time, place, and in the manner herein specified.

Item No.	Quantity	Unit	Class.	ARTICLE	Unit Price	Total Price
1.	1 set (in triplicate)		DESIGN DATA:	Preliminary Engineering Data comprising the data submitted under item 1 of Circular Proposal 40-260 covering Vought-Sikorsky Model VS-311.		\$3,000.00

Approval recommended:
 July 16, 1940
 (Signed)
 B. K. Yount
 Brig. General, Air Corps,
 Acting Chief of the Air Corps.

Approved: July 19, 1940
 By direction of the Secretary of War
 under the provisions of Section 10(k)
 Act of July 2, 1926.
 (Signed)
 LOUIS JOHNSON
 The Assistant Secretary of War.

RESTRICTED

Acknowledge this order and state definitely when shipment will be made.

~~Inspected~~ Inspected and found acceptable.

When ready for inspection, or, if practicable, ten days in advance thereof, notify
 5 - DESIGNER AND SOLE MANUFACTURER - Purchased under the provisions of
 Section 10 (k), Act of July 2, 1926.

The supplies and/or services to be obtained by this instrument are authorized by, are for the purpose set forth in, and are chargeable to,
 Procurement Authority **AC 6 P 1-1381 A 0707-N** the available balance of which is sufficient
 to cover the cost of same.

The Finance Officer **Wright Field, Dayton, O.** is hereby designated to make payment for such supplies and/or services.

Aircraft Projects
 DEPT. No. (Gregory) CHARGE No. **420-1-18 (XR-1)** (Signed)
 REQ. No. **165263 dated 7/3/40.** **J. O. SILVERMAN, Major, A.C.** Contracting Officer

CONDITIONS ON REVERSE SIDE OF ORIGINAL ARE MADE PART OF THIS ORDER, TO WHICH VENDOR AGREES BY HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THIS ORDER

99

[Photo 4 – US Army Air Corps Purchase order to United Aircraft for Sikorsky helicopter data. Credit: Air Force Life Cycle Management Center History Office]

The Sikorsky XR-4's first flight was in January 1942, barely a month after Pearl Harbor, at the company's plant in Connecticut. It was subsequently flown from there to Wright Field on 17 May 1942, with Sikorsky himself in the passenger seat. That accomplishment was significant enough that Army Air Forces chief Gen Hap Arnold, Army Chief of Staff George Marshall, the Secretary of War, and Orville Wright himself all greeted the arriving helicopter.



[Photo 5 – Igor Sikorsky (left) and Orville Wright (right) with the XR-4 at Wright Field shortly after its arrival from Connecticut. Credit: Air Force Life Cycle Management Center History Office]

The success of the “experimental” XR-4 led to the acquisition of over two dozen more capable “production prototype” YR-4As for rigorous service testing with the Army, Navy, and British, with the first delivered in July 1943. All but three of these were converted to or built as B models, which had upgraded engines and external attachments for carrying 300 pounds of bombs or a litter for medical airlift patients. The Army’s first 16 helicopters were distributed among various sites, including 6 to Wright Field, to wring out any remaining deficiencies in the design before they went into production.



[Photo 6 – A Sikorsky YR-4B after a testing accident at Wright Field. Credit: National Museum of the US Air Force]

News of the helicopters' capabilities spread quickly within the Army Air Forces that was now heavily engaged in World War II. Lieutenant Colonel John Alison, who was tasked by Gen Hap Arnold to start up the "Air Commando" special forces, headed to Dayton to assess the novel aircraft and possibly procure them for his nascent organization to use in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater. The office at Wright Field that managed the helicopter program was initially reluctant to send any of their few prototype helicopters to war before they had undergone even the "accelerated testing" that it was then employing to hurry along other aircraft into service. However, Lt Col Alison's vehement lobbying convinced senior Army Air Force leadership to order their deployment. As a result, Wright Field released four YR-4Bs for rescue use in India in late 1943, making these the Army's first operational helicopters. Of those, one was destroyed in a crash of the C-46 cargo plane that was carrying it overseas and two others were quickly wrecked by one pilot, who had crashed two other aircraft and was subsequently relieved of duty—perhaps justifying Wright Field's reticence to prematurely deploy them – necessitating the shipping of a fifth YR-4B to the CBI for use with the 1st Air Commando Group.



[Photo 7 –Sikorsky YR-4, tail number 43-28247, shown in India with Lt Carter Harmon at the controls. This was the helicopter used for the first combat rescue. Credit: National Museum of the US Air Force]

The helicopters' short range, light load, and tendency to attract attention limited their utility at first, leaving light aircraft such as the L-1 Vigilant to carry out combat medical evacuations and rescues using short, makeshift landing strips. On April 21, 1944, one of those Army L-1s was transporting three wounded British soldiers in Burma when it was shot down behind Japanese lines. The thick jungle terrain prevented the injured men from reaching a spot where fixed-wing planes could land and pick them up, forcing the Air Commandos to turn to their meager helicopter fleet for its first combat rescue mission. Lieutenant Carter Harmon received the assignment in one of those first Sikorsky YR-4Bs (tail number 43-28247, shown above with Lt Harmon piloting). The only problem: he was more than 700 miles from the crash site. It took him over a day just to traverse the distance to one of those temporary landing fields nearer the trapped troops. Once there, the high temperatures and altitudes and mechanical problems impacted his helicopter's performance and painfully dragged out the mission. Nevertheless, Lt Harmon managed to extract the men one by one over the next day and a half, while surrounded by enemy forces. For his bravery in completing the first helicopter based military combat rescue on 25 April, Lt Harmon earned the Distinguished Flying Cross.



[Photo 8 – Lt Carter Harmon standing next to the cockpit of another Sikorski YR-4B in Burma, the day after his heroic rescue mission. Credit: National Museum of the US Air Force]

Memorial Roster

We have been notified of the passing of the following members since publication of the Feb 24 Newsletter.

Editor's note: please notify the ARA Board via Gene Manner (genemanner@gmail.com) if you are aware of the passing of any ARA members. If we were able to locate an online obituary, you can view it by clicking on an underlined name below.

We did not receive any notifications this time around

♥ May they rest in peace

Reunion Sites

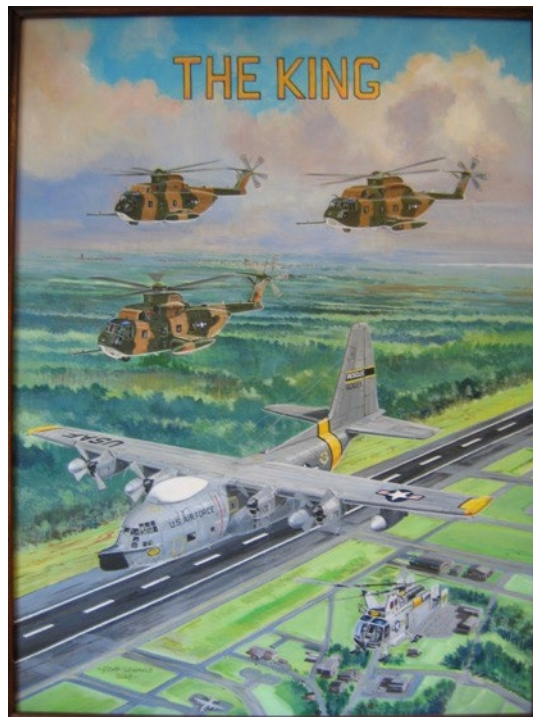
1976	Coeur D'Alene, ID	Bob & Jake Dyberg	2000	Branson, MO	Shad & Mary Shaddo
1977	Albuquerque, NM	Rich & Lou Anne McVay	2001	Las Vegas, NV	Bob & Jake Dyberg
1978	Albuquerque, NM	Dick & June Kight	2002	Atlanta, GA	Sandy Gonzalez
1979	San Diego, CA	Ed & Bobbie Ladou	2003	Dayton, OH	Dan & Jane Bigelow
1980	San Antonio, TX	Bill & Oleta Montgomery	2004	Seattle, WA	Bruce & Jan Haskins
1981	Ft. Walton Bch, FL	Glen & Nadine Sullivan	2005	Colo. Springs, CO	Dan & Martha Beatty
1982	Scottsdale, AZ	Roy & Charlotte Jacobsen	2006	Savannah, GA	Rip Powell
1983	Colo. Springs, CO	Warren & Alice Ruppert	2007	Louisville, KY	Tony & Betty Muchling
1984	Charleston, SC	Hank Tammenga	2008	San Antonio, TX	Keith Sullivan & BRAT
1985	Seattle, WA	Al & Gladys Scott	2009	Philadelphia	Ron & Peg German
1986	Williamsburg, VA	Bob & Alice Mennell	2010	Sacramento	Bill & Marcie Farnham
1987	Honolulu, HI	Bob & Dee Dyberg	2011	Branson	Gatherings Plus (Sandy G.)
1988	Dallas/Fort Worth	Bob & Dorothy Walsh	2012	Chatanooga	Walt & Mary Eleanor Hines
1989	Hyannis, MA	Vince & Ginny McGovern	2013	Fort Worth, TX	Gene & Jeanette Lewis
1990	San Francisco, CA	Verd & Fran Rasmussen	2014	Charleston, S.C.	Bill & Mary Severns
1991	Denver, CO	Lou & Dee Sacane	2015	San Diego, CA	John & Eleanor Colombo
1992	Tucson, AZ	Don & Kathleen Godbey	2016	Las Vegas, NV	Walt Hines/TOMLF
1993	Hot Springs, AR	Gene & Lou Watkms/George & Marge Tuck	2017	Melbourne, FL	920 Rescue Wing/Walt Hines
1994	Portland, OR	Joe & Dory Herrmann	2018	Westhampton, NY	Walt Hines/Mike & Carla Cassels
1995	Nashville, TN	J. B. McCarley	2019	Tucson, AZ	Heidi Meisterling
1996	Orlando, FL	Sandy & Gina Gonzalez	2021	Ft Walton Beach, FL	Dan Beatty
1997	Orlando, FL	Ted & Bev Tatum	2022	Valdosta, GA	Dan Beatty
1998	Catskill Mtns, NY	Bob & Jake Dyberg	2023	Las Vegas, NV	Vic Peirera

Kight Award Winners

2023	Caranda M. Gerke	2008	Stephen H. Thackery	1993	Keith A. Sullivan
2022	Leslie Weisz	2007	Jason E. Snyder	1992	Karen A. Pickering
2021	Matthew C. Blankenship	2006	Eric T. Trocinski	1991	Michael A. Wayt
2020	John H. Konkol	2005	Trevor J. Boyko	1990	Michael Callahan
2019	Mark E. Fraser	2004	John B. Creel	1989	Terry L. Muncy
2018	Dustin Jespersen	2003	Keith A. Sullivan	1988	Dell T. Hamilton
2017	Kevin M Rynbrandt	2002	Robert H Walker	1987	Timothy P. Malloy
2016	Maurice Muro	2001	Randall R. Nelson	1986	William H. LeRoy
2015	Brian Scott	2000	Kevin P. Mullins	1985	Carl R. Binford
2014	Brandon T Casteel	1999	John McGonagill	1984	Bruce C. Johnston
2013	Brian R. Dicks	1998	Robert G. McNeil	1983	Lee A. Roberson
2012	Jose L. Cabrera	1997	Crews of AF Rescue 206/212	1982	Joe Martinez
2011	Matthew C. Leigh	1996	Crew of AF Rescue 986	1981	Richard G. Flaherty
2010	Salvatore L. Portelli	1995	Crew of AF Rescue 26114	1980	Jay G. Jinks
2009	James E. Hangsleben, Jr.	1994	Crew of AF Rescue 811	1979	Louis DeMartino

Become an ARA Lifetime Member!

Tired of having to get reminded about annual dues? Become an ARA Lifetime Member! It's easy and just work with Gene Manner (genemanner@gmail.com) on the application. If you've paid for this year or more, we can deduct that amount off the total! Lifetime Memberships are available to those at least 70 years of age for \$100.00; for those at least 60 for \$200.00 and for all others for \$300.00. If you're at least 80, congrats because your Life Membership is free! Life Memberships also include the member's spouse! Come on in and join the ARA Lifetime Member team!



Air Rescue Association

Application for Membership

Since 1976, and 47 successful reunions later, the Association still seeks and accepts eligible persons who wish to enjoy the camaraderie of "rescue" people. As stated in the bylaws, "Membership in the Association is open to all persons, regardless of grade, rank or position who were or are assigned to the USAF Air Rescue Service or its antecedent and descendent organizations. Other military personnel, government civilian employees, or contractor representatives who were associated with Air Rescue; current and former members of the U.S. Coast Guard and Civil Air Patrol; plus any persons who have been rescued, recovered, or rendered emergency assistance by Air Rescue are also eligible and welcomed for membership. Adult close family members (parents, spouse, children and siblings) of those eligible for membership in accordance with the foregoing are also eligible for regular membership in their own right." If interested in becoming a member, please supply the information requested in the form below, with a brief summary of applicable Air Rescue service and other pertinent information.

Join online at the following link: <https://www.usafrescue.org/membership>

Please check all applicable: New Member ___, Update Dues ___, Update Contact ___, Other ___

Dues \$ _____ for ___ years. (\$10.00 per year [including Spouse] up to 5 years in advance).

Individuals who are at least 80 years old, or have hosted an ARA Reunion, or have paid dues for at least 20 years, or were Life Members of the Jolly Green Ass'n are eligible to become ARA Life Members. (Member must notify the ARA VP, Sec'y or Treas of their eligibility).

Life Memberships are also available to those at least 70 for \$100.00; for those at least 60 for \$200.00 and for all others for \$300.00. Memberships also include the member's spouse.

My check # _____ for the total amount of \$ _____ is enclosed. (No cash, please).

_____ Last Name First Name Spouse Name (if applicable)

_____ Address (City, State & Zip)

_____ Home Phone Cell Phone or Fax Email Address

Air Rescue Assignments (Yours or relative's) Include Unit, Base, State/Country, Years There

Unit 1: _____

Unit 2: _____

Unit 3: _____

Unit 4: _____

If New Member, how did you hear about us? _____

Mail this form and check (no cash, please) to: Air Rescue Association
20429 Wahl Lane
Garden Ridge, TX 78266

Air Rescue Association Store

If you'd like to purchase some cool USAF Rescue swag, please go check out Undaunted Apparel at <https://undauntedclothing.com/product-category/collections/air-rescue-association/>

There are great items including hats, mugs, coins and more!

