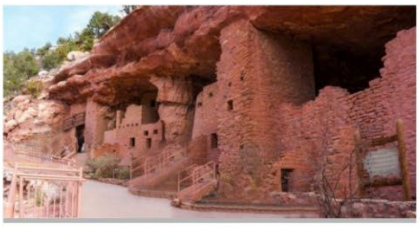
# RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association Newsletter

**Fall / Winter 2026**

## Colorado Springs: Our Next Convention/Reunion, September 21-24, 2027














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### Board of Directors meeting in Colorado Springs




***Note:*** *As we release this issue of the newsletter, the final dates and hotel venue for our 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion in Colorado Springs have not been finalized. We will notify our members with these details as soon as they are known. Registration forms will be provided in the 2027 Spring/Summer Newsletter.*

***This Newsletter Is Dedicated to Air Force Military Civil Engineers (RED HORSE and Prime BEEF) Past, Present and Future.***




## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE November 2026






Colorado Springs is calling!

Our next RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association Convention/Reunion is coming in 2027, and I encourage everyone to start making plans now to join us. Colorado Springs promises to be a terrific destination, offering opportunities to reconnect with old teammates, make new friends, and share our experiences with the families who have supported us throughout our careers.

Our Board of Directors recently visited Colorado Springs to explore venues, meet with local Air Force civil engineers, and plan activities for our gathering. We're also exploring special events for spouses, including a potential tea at the beautiful, historic Glen Eyrie Castle. More details will follow as plans take shape, but I'm excited about what's ahead!

This edition also reminds us that the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF legacy is alive and well. The stories of today's civil engineers demonstrate the same ingenuity, adaptability, and can-do spirit that have defined our community for generations. Their accomplishments are a source of pride for all of us.

As we look to the future, I ask you to support our scholarship program, participate in our Association initiatives, and help grow our membership. These programs depend on our collective commitment. Reach out to a former teammate and invite them to join us. Your support helps preserve our heritage while investing in the next generation of our Air Force Civil Engineering family.

Our Association is strongest when we stay connected. I hope you'll make 2027 the year you join us in Colorado Springs. Let's come together to celebrate our shared history, strengthen old friendships, and build new memories.

Also be reminded that if you go into our website RHPBA.com and register for the newsletter, that will ensure that you automatically receive the newsletter as well as other important updates about the 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion. See Website instructions on page 19, Note 1.

Thank you for your continued support and for being part of this outstanding community. I look forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs!

Lead the Way!

Tony



Warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a happy New Year and . . . . . a reminder that Santa wears a red hat!

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**RED HORSE AND PRIME BEEF 2027 CONVENTION/REUNION PLANNING** by Doug Wise, 9 October 2026.

Approximately every two years, the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association (RHPBA) holds a convention/reunion in various locations across the United States. During the 2025 RHPBA Convention/Reunion in Las Vegas, NV, it was announced that our next convention/reunion would be held in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 2027. This location was selected after garnering input from members and discussions within the RHPBA Board of Directors (BoD). As part of the continued planning for this next convention/reunion's events and activities, the BoD recently visited Colorado Springs to flesh out details for the agenda, assess potential hotels/convention centers, and make connections with some of the local military agencies in the area.



*The BoD arrived in Colorado Springs on September 21-22, 2026, and held an ice breaker the evening of September 22 with some of the USAF civil engineers that live along the Front Range.*

This was a great opportunity to meet with some of our local USAF engineer brethren and get their input as part of our planning for the upcoming convention/reunion.

Afterward, the BoD visited several hotels/convention centers to assess the best location for this next convention/reunion. This included assessing the convention centers (size, layout, audio-visual capabilities, etc.), in-house and area bars/restaurants, hotel rooms, requesting a price list capturing all costs, and talking to the staffs to ensure an understanding of their capabilities to support. Once all the information is captured, the BoD will finalize their decision on the location for the 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion.

The BoD also visited the 21st CES at Peterson Space Force Base (SFB), where we met with the 21st CES/CC and his staff, Shriever SFB CES/CC and others. They are all very interested in hosting us during the convention/ reunion, will identify a POC for us to work with, and expect to organize an event during the convention/reunion.



A visit to Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station (SFS) went well, but, due to the amount of security at this site, the extensive time required to gain entry, the limited size of groups allowed into the Mountain on visits, the frequency of visits getting bumped by VIPs, etc.; it was determined that visiting this location during the convention/reunion would not be viable.




We also made a visit to the Field Engineering and Readiness Lab (FERL) at the Air Force Academy (AFA). As background, the FERL provides USAFA cadets the opportunity to have hands-on experience in civil engineering missions, bridging theory and practice through real-world engineering tasks. It is also used by USAF and USSF bases in the area to complete their civil engineering field training exercises. The staff at the FERL are highly motivated to provide support during the 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion. The BoD did not have time to fully visit the USAFA but will continue to work with this organization so as to include them in our convention/reunion planning.





An anticipated event for the 2027 RHPBA Conference is a Spouse's Tea Event at the beautiful and historic **Glen Eyrie Castle** in Colorado Springs tentatively planned for Wednesday, September 22, 2027. Enjoy an afternoon of tea, delicious treats, fellowship and friendship as the RHPBA spouses gather together in one of Colorado Springs' most beautiful settings. To learn more about the castle and its traditional tea experience, visit Glen Eyrie Tea. Also, a great map of Colorado Springs event/activity locations can be found on Colorado Springs, CO - Discovery Map.



Overall, the trip was very successful in terms of helping members of the BoD get a better lay of the land while initiating contacts with some of our local counterparts, and allowing the BoD to get eyes-on potential convention/reunion locations. Planning for the 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion will continue over the next year as we work to make this next convention/reunion another unforgettable event.



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## THE 2026-2027 BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM "TOM" MEREDITH HONOR SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PROGRAM

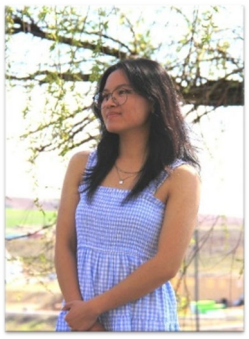
The RHPBA Board of Directors is pleased to announce the General "Tom" Meredith Award Winners for 2026: Gabrielle Amadeo, Eric Bowden, Ireland Kasper, Alexa Taillon, and Carson Williams.

We received 15 applications for this year's award program, six more than last year, including several from previous year programs. As our Scholarship Committee experiences every year, every applicant revealed a consistent trademark of our RHPBA scholarship program; awesome credentials and achievements, strength of character and impressive career journeys. Consequently, the Committee's review and evaluation process was more challenging than ever in distinguishing the best of the best.

Here's a snapshot highlighting our five Award Recipients remarkable credentials and achievements:

### GABRIELLE (GABBIE) AMADEO

Application Highlights:



- ★ Resides in Orting, WA and is a junior at Washington State University (WSU), Pullman, WA, majoring in Landscape Architecture.
- ★ Gabbie's dad is Mario Amadeo, an RHPBA member residing in Orting, WA.
- ★ College Achievements: American Society of Landscape Architects– Student Chapter Community Design Team; WSU Top Scholar in top 10% of incoming students (2024), President's Honor Roll (Fall 24, Spring 24 and Spring 25), Volland College of Engineering and Architecture Student Excellence Award, Outstanding Sophomore in Landscape Architecture (2024).
- ★ High School Achievements: National Jr. Honor Society (2 yrs), National Honor Society (3 yrs), Marching Band (6 yrs), Indoor Percussion (4 yrs).

### ERIC BOWDEN

Application Highlights:



- ★ Resides in Live Oak, CA and is a freshman at Butte College, CA, majoring in Audio Engineering.
- ★ Eric's grandad, Bill Eves, is an RHPBA member residing in Lincoln, CA.
- ★ High School Achievements: Honor Roll (4 yrs), Perfect Attendance (4 yrs), Concert Band/Pep Band/Honor Band Club (4 yrs), Most Outstanding Musician Award, Choir Club and Honor Choir (2 yrs), California Music Education Association (CMEA) Northern Section-Music in the Parks Winner, Drama Club/Musical Theatre (2 yrs), Best Leading Actor, Drumline Club (4 yrs), Captain and Recipient of GOAT Award, John Philip Sousa Award for Leadership 2026, Live Oak High School (LOHS) Grit and Goodness Award for Leadership and Academics (2025), Highest Honors in the LOHS Music Department, Golden State Merit Award for Top Performing Student in Geometric Statistical Reasoning (2026), Golden State Merit Award for Top Performing Student in The Sciences including Chemistry and Physics (2026), Cross Country (4 yrs), Lion Pride award for Leadership.
- ★ Certificate of Appreciation from Yuba City Mayor (2026); testimony of sincere patriotism, loyalty, love for our country, and respect for our Flag.
- ★ Eagle Scout, including Order of the Arrow Member, Scouting Honor Society, Vigil Honor (Top Rank).

### IRELAND KASPER

Application Highlights:



- ★ Resides in Millerstown, PA and is a freshman at Millersville University, PA, majoring in Early Childhood Education.
- ★ Ireland's grandad, Patrick Kasper, is an RHPBA member residing in Millerstown, PA.
- ★ High School Achievements: Student Council (4 yrs), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) (4 yrs), National Honor Society (2 yrs), Jr Class VP, Sr Class Treasurer, Elementary Teacher Intern (Sr Yr), Cheerleader (3 yrs), Basketball (4 yrs), Unsung Hero Award 2025 plus first ever District Champs, Offensive Unsung Hero Award 2026 plus second ever District Champs, Choir (2 yrs), Lions Club Student of the Month (Sept 2025).
- ★ Excerpt from Letter of Recommendation: *"Ireland is the rare student who brings academic excellence, athletic dedication, and genuine kindness to everything she does. She is not only a high achiever, but also a thoughtful, grounded individual who leads with integrity and heart."* Tracey R. Weller, High School Principal.

**ALEXA TAILLON**

Application Highlights:



- ★ Resides in Danville, IN and is a senior at University of Indiana (IU) Bloomington, IN majoring in Biology.
- ★ Alexa's grandad, Larry Taillon, is an RHPBA member residing in Plainfield, IN.
- ★ College Achievements: Pre-medical student committed to a future career in cardiology. Executive Dean's List (2023-2026), Southern Care Hospice Volunteer (2024-present), Research Excellence Award from IU Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center (2026); Provost Scholarship: Merit-based academic scholarship awarded for strong academic performance, Hendricks Regional Health Volunteer (May-August 2024), Undergraduate Research Assistant at IU School of Medicine (May 2025-Present), Private Tutor (January 2023-Present).
- ★ Employment: Cardiovascular Technician-IU Health Bloomington Hospital (Nov 2025- Present): Perform 12-lead EKGs, Holter and event monitor setups.
- ★ High School Achievements: Academic Honors Graduate: Magna Cum Laude, National Honor Society, Softball (3 yrs), Show Choir (3 yrs), Section Leader, Tutored Middle and High School Students (2023-present).

**CARSON WILLIAMS**

Application Highlights:



- ★ Resides in Montgomery, TX and is a freshman at Oklahoma State University, OK majoring in Management Information Systems.
- ★ Carson's grandad, Richard Williams, is an RHPBA member also residing in Montgomery, TX.
- ★ High School Achievements: Student Council President, Senior Class Vice President, Student Body President, Principal's Distinction Award (5 yrs), AP Scholar with Honor Award, Mr. Leadership Award, Football (4 yrs), Track and Field (4 Yrs), National Honor Society plus Math and Spanish National Honor Society, Small Town Recognition Program, GPA of 3.5 or higher, Top 10% in their state on the PSAT/NMSQT® or PSAT™.
- ★ Live Oak Senior Care Founder: Create fun events for seniors: Turkey Trot, Christmas snowball fight, "Walker-Wash" (a carwash for your walker), Science with Seniors, Mardi Gras Parade, Valentine Gram Party, The Senior Kickball Tournament, and District Tailgate (a district wide event that allows parents to bring and cook their own personal favorites, with all proceeds going to Live Oak Senior Care).
- ★ Lake Creek Brightness of Life Club - Co-Founder.

The RHPBA scholarship program was created and remains focused on offering financial assistance to current dues-paying *REDHORSE and Prime BEEF Association* members and their immediate families seeking to further their education (see By-Laws Article 2, Purpose). Funding support is generated from donations, contributions and fund-raisers throughout the year.

Our Scholarship Committee is privileged to review and assess a number of scholarship applicants each year seeking financial support for their academic programs. Although the applicants present diverse backgrounds, interests and experiences, they all magnificently represent the aspirations of our membership core values, focused on integrity, service before self and excellence in all they do.

We hope every member of this Association shares our immense pride in supporting these talented and deserving family members as they pursue their careers through your continued support. Thank you from your Scholarship Committee.

Don Boone, Chair
Scholarship Committee

Bill Eves, Member
Scholarship Committee

Susanne Waylett, Member
Scholarship Committee

**SPONSORS WANTED!!!**

Last year we awarded five $2000 scholarships to outstanding students. In June of 2027 we will again be awarding scholarships to another group of outstanding students. We hope that you will consider being a sponsor in support of our scholarship program at whatever level you choose. We have sponsorships at four levels for you to choose from.

Platinum: $800; Gold: $600; Silver: $400; Bronze: $200

All sponsors/sponsorships will be recognized at our 2027 RHPBA Convention/Reunion and will receive a commemorative gift at their sponsorship level.

## RHPBA NEWS ITEMS

### TRANSFORMING TYNDALL: THE RECOVERY AND REBUILD FOLLOWING HURRICANE MICHAEL ON OCTOBER 10, 2018

**TYNDAL September 11, 2026, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

Story and courtesy AF photos (unless otherwise noted) provided by Dr. Ronald B. Hartzer, Historian, Special Programs Division (AFCEC/CFD) and BB&E, Inc., Consulting Engineers & Professionals, 102 Checkertail Way, Tyndall AFB, FL 32403-5319. Comm 850-283-6932 DSN 523-6932, ronald.hartzer.1.ctr@us.af.mil.

Provided to RHPBA by Col. Robert L. Bartlow, Jr., Chief, Special Programs Division, Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Office: 850-283-6509, DSN: 523-6509, Mobile: 850-964-2808.

**Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida** is a base that many RED HORSE and Prime BEEF personnel are familiar with because it has been home to the Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) and its many predecessors since 1972 and the Silver Flag Exercise Site since 1993. Tyndall is now in the middle of an unprecedented transformation following the destruction caused by Hurricane Michael. The Category 5 storm slammed into the base with 161 mph winds on 10 October 2018 causing widespread destruction in its path as the eye passed directly over the base. Fortunately, Col Brian S. Laidlaw, 325 Fighter Wing Commander, had issued evacuation orders and everyone safely departed the area, except for a 93-person ride-out team. What those individuals found when they came out of their shelter was a base in shambles. The base was devastated, with widespread structural damage, debris, and loss of power and water.

The amount of damage was staggering. Every building on the base, many of them more than 50 years old, had suffered wind and rain damage. Eventually 594 facilities had to be demolished. If you have ever been to Tyndall, you know that most of it is covered with trees and the majority of them were uprooted or damaged by the wind. The amount of debris collected across the base from these downed trees and building rubble was 20.9 million cubic yards, enough to fill the National Mall Reflecting Pond 60-feet high!

Fortunately, RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Airmen were ready to respond, along with hundreds of other Airmen, Army engineers, Seabees, and contractors. The first to arrive were from the **823rd RED HORSE Squadron** at Hurlburt Field, Florida. They were prepared and were on the road the day after the storm. They convoyed the 80 miles with their vehicles, heavy equipment, and tools and proceeded to the Silver Flag Exercise Site at the east end of the base and home to Det 1, 823rd RHS. They found most of the heavy equipment at the site was in good shape and soon put it to use doing road clearing and debris removal. They also helped set up 56 tents, latrines, laundry, and shower units for the personnel expected to assist in the recovery and named it Camp Meredith, in honor of Brig Gen William T. Meredith. Eventually, members of the 823rd RHS stayed for more than a month at Tyndall doing damage assessment and repairs.



*A damaged airplane hangar is seen on the grounds of Tyndall Air Force Base after Hurricane Michael passed through the area on October 10, 2018 (Pensacola News Journal, Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images, October 12, 2018).*

Prime BEEF teams from nine different bases came to Tyndall for several weeks following the hurricane and assisted in establishing and maintaining Camp Meredith, performing damage assessment, and making facility repairs to prevent further water intrusion and mold growth. These deploying engineering teams described Tyndall as a cross between a bare base beddown and base recovery action. Something they did not expect to do at a CONUS base.

To oversee the immediate recovery of Tyndall, Air Combat Command established Task Force Phoenix, under the direction of Col (now Brig Gen and AFCEC Commander) Patrick Miller. This team brought an organizational stability for the hundreds of people working on the base, making them as efficient as possible, and helped prioritize the diverse recovery work until late November 2018. This was followed by the establishment of a formal Program Management Office (PMO) as part of AFCEC to complete the recovery work and begin the planning and programming work to rebuild Tyndall. The PMO remained until April 2021, when it was replaced by the new Natural Disaster Recovery Division of AFCEC's Facility Engineering Directorate that I am privileged to lead. The NDR was also given responsibility to oversee three MILCON projects at Joint Base Langley-Eustis to accommodate the Tyndall's former F-22 aircraft and a major flood recovery MILCON program at Offutt AFB following severe flooding in March 2019.

When the decision was made to rebuild Tyndall, Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson announced a new mission for the installation.

The former F-22 base would now be home to three F-35 squadrons and would be rebuilt as the Installation of the Future. It would be designed and built as a resilient installation ready to meet current, anticipated, and future mission requirements. The new buildings were to be constructed to withstand 165 mph winds and built at a raised flood elevation to help preclude damage from future hurricane events. Through effective base planning, this was also an opportunity to relocate and consolidate some like functions into new locations promoting efficiency and freeing up valuable space along the flightline.

The MILCON process began at an accelerated pace to design and program for 120 new facilities valued at more than $3 billion. The program was so massive that two US Army Corps of Engineers districts were required to meet the design and construction agent roles. The base was divided into 12 zones to help manage the various contractors and hundreds of workers expected at the base. For the Support side of the base south of Highway 98, the new buildings included a fire station, two dormitories, lodging, 325 FW headquarters, Child Development Center, Civil Engineer Squadron/Logistics Readiness Squadron complex, Chapel, Community Commons, swimming pool complex, and marina.



*Aerial view of Tyndall's new flightline under construction. Zones 1 and 2.*

Underpinning the whole program is Zone 4, the Infrastructure Zone. The contractor for this multifaceted project is responsible for replacing thousands of linear feet of stormwater management systems and electrical distribution, telecommunications infrastructure, water distribution system and pump station, sanitary sewer and sewer lift stations, natural gas, landscaping, and transportation improvements. Ideally, most of this work would have been completed before the construction of the other facilities began. However, because of the tight timeframe involved, this work has proceeded simultaneously with the other projects across the base. This has meant frequent road closures and detours, close coordination with other contractors for the proper alignment of utility connections with the new buildings, and extensive integration with the privatized utility system owners on base. Through a series of Rehearsal of Concept drills, the various stakeholders on base have been kept abreast of the road closures and the operational mission has continued smoothly throughout this whole process. Zone 4 also included the construction of three new entry gates.



*North of Highway 98, the flightline is being completely transformed as nearly all the former buildings were demolished and are being replaced by 17 new state-of-the-art facilities and thousands of square yards of new aircraft apron. These will accommodate the new F-35 mission and the continued mission of Eglin's 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group that operates from Tyndall. The Zone 1 F-35 campus was the largest single MILCON contract in recent Air Force history at $604 million when it was awarded in May 2022. It includes five new hangars, a corrosion control facility, flight simulator facility, Aerospace Ground Equipment building, and headquarters complexes for the 325th Maintenance and Operations groups*. (*Photo Courtesy Jacobs, October 3, 2023).*

One of the many challenges that the program faced occurred early in the Tyndall rebuild as the presence of unknown items buried underground at various construction sites were discovered. As work along the flightline commenced, the contractor began encountering a variety of unforeseen site conditions. This includes items buried up to 30 feet below the surface such as 2,500-gallon underground storage tanks, asbestos containing material pipes, and various concrete elements. This delayed progress for several months as these items were removed.

Currently, the entire NDR program is nearly 50 percent complete with several new buildings scheduled to be turned over to the base this summer, including the first of three new F-35 hangars. The first of three MILCON projects at JBLE, a Consolidated Maintenance and Operations Hangar, was completed in May, and five of the eight campuses at Offutt are complete. Based on the successful management of the MILCON programs at Tyndall, Offutt, and JBLE, the NDR Division has been given responsibility for three new major construction programs at Offutt, Nellis AFB, Nevada; and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska prompting a name change for the division to the Special Programs Division and a long-term commitment to providing enhanced infrastructure for tomorrow's Air Force.



*Construction progresses on Hangar 1 at Tyndall Air Force Base, Panama City, Florida, Jan. 29, 2025. The hangar will be the new home of the F-35 Lightning II and a key project in rebuilding Tyndall following the near destruction of the base following Hurricane Michael in 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Chuck Walker, USACE, Mobile District. Published Feb. 19, 2025).*



*The new Community Commons featuring two restaurants, library, meeting rooms, and bowling alley.*



*325 Fighter Wing Headquarters building.*



*August 2026 photo of the new facility that houses the 325 CES and the AFCEC Special Programs Division (SPD) building (the former Natural Disaster Recovery Division).*



*One of two new dormitories that has 240 single rooms, theater room, and kitchenettes.*



*The new Tyndall Marina. It includes indoor and outdoor dining areas, a bar, 20 boat slips, pontoon boat and kayak rentals, recreational storage, fishing areas, and covered shelters with grills. The first floor is designed as a "sacrificial" floor and can accept a tidal surge during a hurricane without damaging the restaurant and offices on the second floor.*



*A destroyed civil engineering building on Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, was among 1,165 environmental assets evaluated by an environmental recovery assistance team. The team's assessment of the environmental impact of Hurricane Michael on Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, is helping recovery and rebuilding efforts at the base. (Courtesy photo).*



*The Chapel building was just dedicated on September 9th and includes a piece of the stained-glass window from the old Chapel that was destroyed in Hurricane Michael. It features a 200-seat multi-faith sanctuary. While the new chapel is equipped with cutting-edge audiovisual systems, it also holds a deep connection to Tyndall's history. The base's spiritual roots date back to 1941, when the first chaplain arrived on the installation and held services in tents and nearby local bayous. That history is physically represented inside the new sanctuary.*



*Anchored high above the congregation is a stained-glass dove, one of the pieces of art to survive Hurricane Michael in 2018. But the window has an even deeper, multi-generational story. "The person that was installing it is actually the grandson of the person that created it for the first chapel," said Nathan Faehl, 325th Fighter Wing Chapel Superintendent. "So when he went up there and put it in, he came back down and told everybody, 'Hey, you know, my grandfather was the one that actually made this stained glass that was in the original chapel.' "*

**In 2021, Recovery Organization Formalized**
The recovery effort evolved into a dedicated organization supporting construction management, natural-disaster recovery, and installation resiliency.

**2023, F-35A Arrival**
The first F-35A Lightning II aircraft arrived at Tyndall, marking a major step in the 325th Fighter Wing's mission transition.

**ONGOING, Installation of the Future**
Mission, readiness, and quality-of-life facilities continue to be delivered as Tyndall becomes more resilient, ready, and capable.

Tyndall's multi-year rebuild effort includes 44 new military construction projects, providing 120 new facilities; and 260 facility sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects valued at $4.5 billion.

The 823rd RED HORSE Squadron directly helped rebuild Tyndall AFB after Hurricane Michael in 2018, and RED HORSE units have also supported Tyndall in later training and readiness activities.

## EIGHTY YEARS LATER, THE DUTCH STILL TEND SOLDIERS GRAVES

*The story connected with this news article is special*. By Frank Lennon, Veterans Affairs Columnist to the Providence Journal / USA Today Network. May 19, 2026 and Detroit Free Press, May 22, 2026. Excerpts follow; for the story in its entirety: PressReader.com | 80 years later, Dutch still tend soldiers' graves.

**Volunteers Aim to Connect Families of Fallen Americans**

By 1947, some 18,000 American soldiers had been buried at the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten. At the end of World War II, the Dutch shared a simple message: "Leave your boys with us. We will watch over them like our own, forever." They vowed to care for the graves of those who fell while restoring Dutch freedom. In an extraordinary act of gratitude, every single grave had been adopted by local families by Memorial Day 1946. The United States repatriated about 10,000 of those remains between 1947 and 1951. About 8,300 graves are remaining, along with 1,700 markers for the missing 10,000 men, more or less. Today, Dutch adopters (and now their children and grandchildren), visit the graves, lay flowers on birthdays and holidays, and learn the soldiers' stories. Of those 10,000, there are 8,411 adopters who still do not know the families of the soldiers they honor.

With the passage of time, many American descendants are not even aware that a family member is buried at Margraten, and/or that someone has cared for that grave for more than 80 years. A group of dedicated volunteers is working hard to change that.

**Cemetery History**
Margraten is in Limburg, the southernmost tip of the Netherlands, separating Belgium from Germany. American forces liberated the province in September 1944, but at a high cost.

While Allied troops pushed eastward into Germany, thousands of dead soldiers were left along the routes of advance. The Army needed a cemetery as soon as possible.

Capt. Joseph Shomon, commanding officer of the 611th Graves Registration Company, was tasked to find a location. He later described the moment he found about 65 acres in Margraten.

When a local official remarked that it was excellent farmland, Shomon replied, “Even the best ground is not good enough for our dead.”



*Peter DeJong/ANP/AFP via Getty Images*

**Adoption Program**



*The first grave adoptions were informal, made by Dutch families who had housed individual soldiers who were later killed. When word came that “their” soldier had fallen, they would go to the cemetery to claim that grave.*

The Citizens Committee had a bigger vision: assigning all graves for adoption. Adopters were to visit the grave regularly and send photos to next of kin.

Frans Roebroeks wrote, “The Americans agreed and initially provided home addresses of relatives.”

**Clouds on the Horizon**
By the end of summer 1945, the American officers most supportive of the grave adoption program had rotated home. Their replacements did not have the same emotional connection to the process.

**Widow’s Letter Inspires**
Mabel Rose Feil, a 26-year-old widow from Alabama, responded. Her husband, Pvt. Warren Feil, was buried at Margraten. Touched by the mayor’s words, she made a simple request: “I will be grateful to you all the days of my life if you can get me a snapshot of his grave. My husband and I were so young and he was my whole life.”

This request caused the Margraten Grave Adoption Program to explode; thousands more Dutch citizens volunteered.

**Meanwhile, in Margraten**
By Memorial Day 1946, all 18,000 graves had been adopted. Emilie said there were 3,000 more requests than there were graves.

Newspapers across the world reported that 40,000 people had come to Margraten to pay their respects – more than two visitors for every man buried there. The total population of Margraten was about 2,500 people. Even Maastricht only claimed 75,000 residents.

**Repatriation of WWII Dead**
By war’s end, some 300,000 American soldiers were buried in cemeteries worldwide. Truman told American families they could bring their loved ones home if they desired.

This was often a gut-wrenching decision. About 60% (171,000-plus) of families accepted the offer. Almost 120,000 chose to keep their loved ones where they were, including six of the eight who earned the Medal of Honor.

This repatriation dropped the number of graves at Margraten from about 18,000 in 1945 to the 8,301 there today. That number does not include those on the Wall of the Missing.

Many of those graves are still tended by the third or fourth generation of the original 1945-46 adopters.

This desire to avoid reopening old wounds was one of the reasons most often cited by those who did not bring their loved ones back to the United States.

Other families felt their soldier belonged with the men with whom he had fought and died.

If you have a relative who died in Europe during World War II, he may be buried at Margraten, Netherlands. Please connect with the Forever Promise Project. To search the database or learn more, visit foreverpromise.org/the database. For further details or to offer to help, please reach out to info@foreverpromise.org.



*Peter DeJong/ANP/AFP via Getty Images*

**AIR NATIONAL GUARD'S RH AND PB**

**GUAM GUARD ENGINEERS SHARPEN READINESS IN SOUTH KOREA**

By Guam National Guard, an Official website of the United States Government, June 17, 2026, Photo by Mark Scott.



*Kunsan Air Base, South Korea: Engineers from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th RED HORSE Squadron, together with the 8th Civil Engineer Squadron, tackle a backlog of vital maintenance and construction projects, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, June 4, 2026.*

**Kunsan Air Base, South Korea:** Ten engineers from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th RED HORSE Squadron recently wrapped up a critical two-week training deployment in South Korea, bringing a surge of manpower and expertise to Kunsan Air Base while sharpening their own real-world readiness.

The specialized team, deployed May 26 - June 4, included experts across multiple trades, including electrical work, structural engineering, plumbing and heating, ventilation and air conditioning, or HVAC. By integrating seamlessly with the active-component 8th Civil Engineer Squadron on base, the Guam-based Airmen immediately tackled a backlog of vital maintenance and construction projects.

One of the team's major accomplishments was accelerating the renovation of a "C-HUT"; a semi-permanent wooden structure used by the military as a multi-purpose facility. Their hands-on construction and rapid maintenance work cleared out work orders and directly improved the base's daily operations.

By reinforcing Kunsan's infrastructure, the Airmen helped ensure the base remains resilient and ready to respond to emergencies and operational requirements in the region.

For the Guam Airmen, the trip was more than just a work detail; it was a crucible for practicing their trades in a forward-deployed environment. Working under different logistical challenges than they face at their home station allowed the team to refine the critical, rapid-response skills they would need during a real-world crisis.

The experience left a strong impression on the deployed team.

"We got the job done by utilizing teamwork, safe work ethics and most importantly, keeping our morale high," said Airman 1st Class Romi Mendiola, reflecting on the deployment. "Every Airman was assigned a task and created a rhythm that made it possible to complete our objectives. When you see your whole team working just as hard as you, it sustains your hunger to accomplish the overall mission."

Ultimately, the deployment showcased the vital role the Air National Guard plays in supporting active-component missions across the Indo-Pacific theater. By supporting Kunsan Air Base and honing their own engineering capabilities, the 254th RED HORSE Squadron returns to Guam as a highly capable and ready force, prepared for whatever mission comes next.

**PENNSYLVANIA GUARDSMEN STRENGTHEN ENGINEERING SKILLS, PRESERVE REDWOODS**

**Beyond the Beauty: 201st RED HORSE partners with the National Park Service to preserve America's Redwoods while building readiness.**

Joint Force Headquarters, Pennsylvania Air Nation Guard. Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Austin Stern, July 14, 2026 and July 17, 2026.

**Orick, California:** This summer, Airmen assigned to the 201st RED HORSE, 193rd Special Operations Wing and 111th Attack Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, partnered with the National Park Service through the Department of War's Innovative Readiness Training program to complete construction projects throughout Redwood National and State Parks while strengthening expeditionary engineering skills in a real-world environment.

"The purpose of the Innovative Readiness Training program is to train Guard and Reserve units in their wartime mission-critical skills while directly benefiting American communities," said U.S. Army Reserve Col. Stephen Rubright, deputy director of Innovative Readiness Training, Department of War.



*U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 201st RED HORSE, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, install reinforcement plates on roof trusses at Redwood National and State Parks near Orick, California, July 14, 2026. The steel plates strengthened key joints in the roof framing before the structure was enclosed.*

Rubright said the training allows service members to work in joint environments alongside other military units, government agencies and native groups while completing projects that provide lasting benefits to local communities.

While the projects directly benefit the park, the environment itself provides realistic training conditions that challenge Airmen to adapt, solve problems and operate in circumstances similar to those they could encounter during future deployments.

More than 2.5 million visitors travel to Redwood National and State Parks each year to experience one of America's most iconic landscapes, with redwoods stretching more than 350 feet into the sky, waves crashing along Northern California's rugged coastline and elk roaming the open meadows. They don't usually see the work required to keep it that way.

These projects span several locations throughout the park and include transforming a former fish hatchery into a community education center, installing culverts to improve roadway drainage, renovating volunteer housing and repairing facilities at the park's visitor center. Each project preserves the park's history for future generations.

While the projects directly benefit the park, the environment itself provides realistic training conditions that challenge Airmen to adapt, solve problems and operate in circumstances similar to those they could encounter during future deployments.

"The RED HORSE mission is to deploy Airmen downrange and conduct construction in austere environments," said Capt. Colin McNoldy, civil engineering officer in charge of the 201st RED HORSE Innovative Readiness Training project. "The settings we're operating in at Redwood National and State Parks may mimic the situations our Airmen could face, from living conditions and limited connectivity to organizing logistics between remote work sites."

McNoldy emphasized the importance of Airmen learning to overcome challenges and become more experienced in their craft.

"The challenges teach them how to rely on one another, making this invaluable readiness training," McNoldy said.

"My supervisors and everyone above me have stepped aside to let us younger Airmen get after it," said Airman 1st Class Henry Benzin, a structures craftsman assigned to the 201st RED HORSE. "We make mistakes, and they let us figure out how to solve them."

One of the most rewarding aspects of the mission has been working alongside fellow Airmen while completing projects that will benefit the park long after the training concludes, Benzin said.

"I'm most proud of all of our work; the 201st, the detachment and everything we're doing here," Benzin said.

For many junior Airmen, the mission provides opportunities that cannot be replicated during routine training exercises. The chance to learn from their mistakes and build real-world skills prepares them for future deployments in fast-paced combat situations.

"I see it as a good opportunity to improve my skills, learn teamwork and get ready for when we need to deploy," said Airman 1st Class Drissa Drame-Toure, a water and fuel systems maintenance apprentice assigned to the 201st RED HORSE.



*U.S. Airmen assigned to the 201st RED HORSE, 193rd Special Operations Wing, and 111th Attack Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, work on roof structures during the Innovative Readiness Training project at Redwood National and State Parks near Orick, California, July 17, 2026. The work advanced the conversion of a former fish hatchery into a learning center while giving the Airmen hands-on construction training.*

For the National Park Service, the partnership provides critical infrastructure improvements that might otherwise take significantly longer to complete while strengthening relationships between the military and local communities.

“The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve and protect the landscape and historic structures for future generations,” said Patrick Pollard, facilities manager for Redwood National and State Parks.

“It’s been an incredible experience. The RED HORSE groups, specifically, come with a tremendous amount of experience and are highly competent in many different areas,” Pollard said. “They come into the park, and any project we ask them to help us with, they’ve been able to hit the ground running.”

For the 201st RED HORSE Airmen, the mission extended beyond construction. It strengthened military readiness while helping preserve one of America’s most treasured and most visited national landscapes, demonstrating that behind the beauty of the redwoods is the work of those committed to protecting them.

**173RD CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON SECURES CRITICAL EARLY-WARNING RADAR SITE IN REMOTE ALASKA**

DVIDS, Alaska, published July 9, 2026, story and photos by Master Sgt. Daniel Reed, 173rd Fighter Wing, U.S. Air National Guard Courtesy photos.

**Hughes, Alaska:** A detachment of 10 Airmen from the 173rd Civil Engineer Squadron, 173rd Fighter Wing, Oregon National Guard, completed a high-stakes, 13-day deployment to the Alaskan interior, repairing critical utility infrastructure at a remote early-warning radar site while saving the Air Force more than $1.6 million.

Executed as Operation 26-02 Indian Mountain, the mission secured the vital water and fuel systems supporting the installation's Upgraded Early Warning Radar. The radar provides continuous aerospace surveillance data to the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) Region Air Operations Center at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, making the site an indispensable homeland defense asset.



*Squadron members work to fix the sole water line during Operation 26-02 Indian Mountain, at Indian Mountain Long Range Radar Station, in Alaska, July 9, 2026. Fixing the bridge ensured proper sanitation and fire suppression for the nearby facility.*



*173rd CES members rebuilt the bridge holding the sole water source, during Operation 26-02 Indian Mountain, at Indian Mountain Long Range Radar Station, in Alaska, July 9, 2026. Fixing the bridge ensured proper sanitation and fire suppression for the nearby facility.*



*Buildings and a runway sit at the Indian Mountain Long Range Radar Station (LRRS) lower camp, containing living quarters and industrial facilities in order to support an upper camp consisting of a long-range radar site in Indian Mountain, Alaska, July 9, 2026. The 15 radar sites positioned throughout Alaska ensure security from foreign and domestic airborne threats.*

## READY BEFORE THE STORM AND THERE WHEN IT MATTERS

Official Facebook Page of the United States Air Force Civil Engineers, October 16, 2026 by A1C Ian Carton.

**The Florida Air National Guard's** 202nd RED HORSE Squadron (RHS) sprang into action following Hurricane Isaias, executing rapid Homeland Recovery operations to secure vital corridors across Florida.

By executing rapid debris clearance and heavy equipment routing, these combat-ready engineers restored vital logistics routes and proved their capability to quickly open access to isolated environments under crisis conditions.

Recognizing that Homeland Defense starts with resilient domestic infrastructure, the 202nd RHS pre-positioned heavy equipment ahead of the storm. This proactive posture allowed our Airmen to immediately defend critical civilian and military logistics corridors. Their preparation and readiness reflect the U.S. Air Force's commitment to protecting the homeland, supporting civil authorities, and delivering critical assistance during times of crisis.

Domestic disaster response operations serve as a critical, real-world validation of our combat recovery tactics, proving that our RED HORSE squadrons possess the agility to rapidly deploy, establish access, and sustain operations in degraded environments.

Thank you to the Airmen of the 202nd RHS and all those who contributed to relief efforts following Hurricane Isaias. Your service and dedication guarantee the resilience of our homeland when it matters most.











**GUARD CIVIL ENGINEERS FORTIFY AIRFIELDS IN THE PACIFIC (Update on Tinian Island)**

New Hampshire National Guard and 192nd Wing, Virginia Air National Guard, published Oct. 18, 2026 by 1st Lt. Delmy Hernandez and Staff Sgt. Kellyann Elish, 192nd Wing, Virginia National Guard. All photos courtesy photos of the U.S. Air National Guard.

**Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA:** National Guard civil engineers from Virginia, Florida and Montana who are deployed to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, revitalized historic runways and infrastructure abandoned after World War II on the neighboring island of Tinian to prepare the Pacific theater for future operational requirements.

Virginia Air National Guard members assigned to the Virginia Beach-based 203rd Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers, or RED HORSE, 192nd Mission Support Group, 192nd Wing, deployed to Guam and Tinian and traded their traditional red unit caps for the 513th Expeditionary RED HORSE, or ERHS, hat. The deployment unified three distinct units under the 513th ERHS flag: Virginia's 203rd RED HORSE; the Florida Air National Guard's 202nd RED HORSE, assigned to the 125th Fighter Wing; and the active component 819th RED HORSE, stationed at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana.

Together, these Airmen, traditionally nicknamed "dirt boys" for their heavy equipment and pavement specialty, fortified airfields to bring the U.S. Air Force's Agile Combat Employment, or ACE, operational concept to life. The ACE framework relies on dispersing forces rapidly across remote, austere spoke locations to complicate adversary targeting and increase survivability.

"The work is vast in nature and truly historical," said Chief Master Sgt. Neil V. Keane, 203rd RED HORSE senior enlisted leader. "Currently, the deterrence package we are advancing is more than $11 billion to date across the Pacific Air Forces area of responsibility. This underscores the importance of our mission and urgency to 'set and sustain the theater'."

The effort demanded adaptability in civil engineering. Shortly after arriving, the unified squadron sheltered in place as two Category 5 typhoons battered the Mariana Islands. Once the storms cleared, the team pivoted to recovery operations before resuming construction under unforgiving geological and logistical constraints.

"First, the ground here isn't standard dirt – it's near-solid coral and limestone," said Senior Master Sgt. Steven Bond, Guam operations superintendent from the 203rd RED HORSE. "When we tried using our standard dozers, excavators and graders to carve out the airfield ramps, they barely made a scratch. We ended up using an asphalt milling machine guided by 3D GPS to cut through the rock."

Supply chain limitations added another friction point.

"The second major hurdle is our supply chain," Bond said. "We don't have dedicated military cargo planes to move our heavy engineering assets. To get around this, we must rely entirely on civilian maritime vessels to ship our dozers, materials and tools from island to island."

Throughout the storm recovery and construction, the 192nd Wing Chaplain Corps deployed religious support teams to support Airmen on the ground. The first team, consisting of Chaplain (Maj.) Robert Hunter and Master Sgt. Stephen Scull, 192nd Religious Affairs noncommissioned officer in charge, coordinated more than 500 pounds of essential gear and requested supplies to Tinian. The second rotation, consisting of Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Matthew Incorvaia and Staff Sgt. Wleed Muhmmad, 192nd Religious Affairs Airman, assembled and distributed 48-unit morale care packages across the island.



*U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Stephen Scull, left, 192nd Wing Religious Affairs noncommissioned officer in charge, and U.S. Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) Robert Hunter, 192nd Wing chaplain, from the Virginia Air National Guard stand with a local coordinator after delivering morale care packages on Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands.*

The 192nd Wing Chaplain Corps coordinated the shipment of more than 500 pounds of essential gear and requested supplies to support deployed Airmen temporarily stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, who are working on the neighboring island to restore airfields.

“I was amazed by the resiliency of our 203rd RED HORSE members and their willingness to care for one another and the families within these communities while working through their own challenges related to the aftermath of these storms,” Hunter said. “On deployments, sometimes it's the little things that provide a positive morale boost that can make a difference over the weeks and months.”

The squadron’s long-term footprints will outlast the current rotation. Across Andersen Air Force Base, Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan and Misawa Air Base, Japan, engineers are assembling 20 arch-shaped, heavy-gauge steel K-Span warehouses designed to safeguard regional pre-positioned war material kits.

Headquartered at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia, the 203rd RED HORSE is the Virginia Air National Guard’s largest squadron. RED HORSE units operate as self-sufficient, highly mobile heavy-construction teams that can build expeditionary bases, revetments and runways in high-threat, bare-base environments.

“We are directly posturing the U.S. military to provide a combat-credible deterrence in the Pacific,” Bond said. “When my team eventually packs up and heads home, success means knowing these runways and warehouses are going to stand for decades. Even if future priorities or missions change, this infrastructure will be ready.”



*U.S. Air Force civil engineers assigned to the 513th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron, stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, operate an asphalt paving machine to lay down a fresh runway ramp surface on the neighboring island of Tinian. Nicknamed the "dirt boys" for their heavy equipment and pavement specialty, these civil engineers are overcoming severe geological and logistical constraints to restore historic Pacific airfields.*



*The 513th Expeditionary RHS gather around a fleet of skid steers to perform field maintenance during airfield operations on the neighboring island of Tinian. Despite enduring two Category 5 typhoons in the region, the multi-unit squadron successfully pivoted from storm recovery back to primary construction.*



*The 513th Expeditionary RHS transport heavy steel reinforcement bars to a foundational construction site on the neighboring island of Tinian as leadership observes. The airfield infrastructure projects are part of an $11 billion deterrence package designed to "set and sustain" the Pacific Air Forces area of responsibility.*



*U.S. Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) Robert Hunter, 192nd Wing Chaplain, and U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Stephen Scull, 192nd Wing Religious Affairs noncommissioned officer in charge, are being given a tour by U.S. Air Force civil engineers with the 513th Expeditionary RHS of the work they did constructing heavy-gauge steel K-Span warehouse systems on the neighboring island of Tinian.*

*The arch-shaped structures are being assembled at regional sites to safeguard critical pre-positioned war material kits and ensure long-term operational readiness in the Pacific theater.*

**Mission Update** (Rotation 26.2 Closeout): By Staff Sgt Kellyann Elish.

The unified 513th Expeditionary RED HORSE successfully completed its deployment, overcoming a 12-day advanced departure schedule to secure a massive strategic footprint across the Pacific theater before handing operations off to the incoming 27.1 rotation.

Key achievements from the deployment include:

- Tinian airfield rehabilitation: Heavy equipment teams pushed through tough island material limits to complete 99% of the demolition and compaction on Runway Able, while hitting 90% completion on the soil-stabilizing base layer. The squadron received 16,952 tons of asphalt to pave Runway Able and the north ramp. To keep paving operations moving despite a strict local sand shortage, U.S. Air Force civil engineers worked with regional support and contracting officials to secure an alternate hot mix asphalt contract. Airmen also finalized an updated biosecurity plan for local and federal wildlife officials to review. The final paving phase is waiting on a shipment of basalt stone, which will require two weeks of testing before full approval.
- Andersen Air Force Base, Guam: Engineers finished all north ramp K-Span steel building superstructures, erecting the final two in a rapid 24 hours. The Back 40 construction space is fully prepped for two future K-Span structures. One mobile asphalt mixing plant remains on Guam for regional training, while the second prepares to move to the island of Peleliu. The Expeditionary Theater Support Group, through the 513th RED HORSE, has led the batch plant working group.
- Misawa Air Base, Japan: Six K-Span steel buildings are 99% complete, with all outlets, electrical and climate control work finalized.
- Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan: Crews finalized roll-up and personnel doors on three K-Span structures at one site and completed insulation and climate control installation at a second site.

With main troop movements complete, the squadron's hard work directly sets the region up for agile combat employment operations that disperse forces across remote locations to increase survivability. Future planning is already underway as the team coordinates with regional planning and engineering groups for potential joint construction in the Philippines, Japan and Australia, while incoming forces are positioned to immediately continue concrete foundation work, K-Span construction and asphalt paving operations.

## HOW CIVIL ENGINEERS ARE ADAPTING TO MODERN WARFARE

CE Weekly: USAF by HQ DAF AF/A4C Warfighter Communications, published 27 October 2026. USAF video by AF/A4C Warfighter Communications.

**Pacific Theater, Guam:** As a strategic location in the Pacific theater, Guam was the perfect meeting point for the 2026 Indo-Pacific Unity Summit Allies & Partners Engineer Summit (IPU APES) Key Leader Engagement (KLE), bringing together 11 allies and partners to strengthen military cooperation and partnership.




IPU APES is one of many engagements taking place across the region this year, creating opportunities for allies and partners to share knowledge, strengthen relationships, and build the capabilities needed to operate together when it matters most. From construction methods to rapidly repairing airfields under pressure, these conversations help ensure our forces can communicate, adapt, and support one another across borders.

That's the strategic value of engagements like IPU APES: Building the trust, interoperability, and interchangeability that strengthen our collective force, enhance resilience, deter aggression, and ultimately help preserve a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Military engineers from 11 allied and partner nations gathered in Guam for the 2026 Indo-Pacific Unity Summit Allies & Partners Engineer Summit (IPU APES), strengthening an integrated combat engineering network across the Pacific. Focused on rapid airfield repair, expeditionary basing, and shared engineering capabilities, the engagement advanced interoperability needed to recover airfields, sustain distributed operations, and project combat power in contested environments. Visit Facebook link: AF/A4C Warfighter Communications to see how allied engineers are strengthening the partnerships and capabilities needed to operate together across the Indo-Pacific.

## "LEGEND OF CHARGING CHARLIE" POEM

The **"Legend of Charging Charlie"** is a poem written by CM Sgt. Alfred "Lindy" Gothia, USAFR (Ret), to honor the legacy of the 820th RED HORSE and the steed known as **Charging Charlie.** It blends military tradition, personal duty, and the symbolic power of the RED HORSE emblem.




Listen closely, and you can hear the Horsemen [and Horsewomen] of the past,
Their presence are near.
Their banners are placed upon these walls.
Faintly you can hear their footsteps in these halls.
When in ranks, the wind that's felt upon your face,
It's the men [and women] of the past marching by, keeping pace.
Many times called upon to meet the task.
They rode Charging Charlie—those men [and women] of the past.
The legends they made are still being told
About the deeds of the Horsemen [and Horsewomen], and on Charlie who they rode.
To future riders—take heed.
The Horse you are riding is a mighty steed.
If you can't hold the reins, don't take the ride.
Old Charlie has lots of pride.
To each new Horseman [and Horsewomen], you must explain
What it means to carry the RED HORSE name.
We hope you understand, and listened well.
You may have to ride Charlie through the gates of Hell.
The flames will be fanned with an evil wind.
This is one ride Charlie's to win.
Seek you wisdom, and serve with pride.
Then Charging Charlie gives one hell of a ride.
We rode old Charlie.
We paid our due.
Today the reins, we hand over to you.
Take care of Old Charlie, and he'll take care of you.
In the depths of Hell, he will bring you through.
We've given the reins; now you take the lead.
Because it's men [and women] like you that makes Old Charlie "The Mighty Steed"

## AN AIR FORCE MUSEUM UPDATE

By Ken Miller, CTR, FSAME, Versar, Inc., AF/A4CFO, Installation Operations and Energy, Office of the Director of Civil Engineers, email: kenneth.miller.23.ctr@us.af.mil

**Good News!** The Air Force Museum has approved the Enlisted CE Engineers Bench. From the time we issue the notice to proceed, the Schott Monument company estimates 12 weeks to completion. With any luck, we may have the bench in place by the time the CE Summit/March Madness takes place at AFIT.

## RHPBA NOTES, UPDATES and OTHER INFO

1. RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association's Website:

We are sharing our QR code to make it easier for you to find the RHPBA.com website. Use the updated "Membership" tab to complete your application for membership or pay your dues online.

Our "Subscribe" list is growing. Please subscribe to our website so you get notified when something is posted. Simply go to RHPBA.com and click the "Subscribe" tab.

We have gone back and located many of the old "Newsletters", some as old as 2005, and posted them.

> **Reminder:** Whether you are a new or an established member, to ensure that you automatically receive the RHPBA newsletter, please take the action to go into the RHPBA.com website, click on the "Subscribe" tab, enter your e-mail address and click the Subscribe button.

We added a "Contact Us" list to make it easier for everyone to contact us.

We now have 28 unit history posts. We tried to include as much as we could verify was correct in these histories. Much of the content was taken from The Air Force Civil Engineering History book, some was also taken from the Civil Engineering Weekly publications. We are now looking for input from our membership that is documented and can be verified, to ensure we have captured our histories accurately and completely. Please contact us with any feedback or information you may have at reckert@rhpba.com or dwise@rhpba.com.

2. The RHPBA Newsletter:

The RHPBA Newsletter is sent out electronically twice a year. New RED HORSE and Prime BEEF articles are always appreciated and/or any comments or inputs you may have regarding the newsletter are always welcome. Please send articles (include photos if you have them) and any comments to Dick Aldinger at raldinger@rhpba.com. Please add this newsletter to your Squadron Facebook page or through other social media to promote our organization. See red information box at Note 1 above.

3. RHPBA Membership Information:

Joining the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association is a mere $10 for the first year. Have you considered becoming a Life Member? For most of us "old timers" (66 or over) the cost is only $125 and you are then finished paying dues for life. You help us too in that we do not have to send you reminders for dues and you do not have to worry about them ever again".

This is one way that you can keep in touch with what is going on with USAF Civil Engineering Military Engineers today whether it be RED HORSE or Prime BEEF.

See the membership brochure on page 21 and the fillable membership application form on page 22; please send your application to reckert@rhpba.com.

4. RHPBA Membership Updates:

If you think you should be listed below and are not, please contact reckert@rhpba.com to make sure it was just an oversight in collecting this data and not an error in your file.

We would like to welcome to the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association (RHPBA) these new members who recently joined our organization:

| New Member | Joined |
|---|---|
| Carl N. Kueltzo | 09/12/26 |
| Darlene Kueltzo | 09/12/26 |
| Andrew Foltermann | 09/14/26 |
| Mathew Hutchings | 09/23/26 |
| Ralph Dagza | 09/25/26 |

We also congratulate and welcome RHPBA's newest **Life Member**.

| | |
|---|---|
| Bryan Smith | 10/25/26 |

**Silent Hooves:**

In reflecting on our sixty-one plus years, we honor all RED HORSE and Prime BEEF personnel that have gone before us. For a view of our Silent Hooves page on the RHPBA website, copy/type (https://rhpba.com/taps-2/) to your browser. We regrettably bring this current list of BEEFers and Horsemen/women who have passed away these past months. For a complete list go to our website and look in "Silent Hooves". Our "Silent Hooves" listing on the website is updated as we receive information.

If you hear of the passing of a BEEFer or Horseman/woman, please send an email to dwise@rhpba.com with the full name of the individual, units they served in, and their date of passing. Also, if you have their obituary, please provide the link.

| Name | Unit(s) | Date of Passing |
|---|---|---|
| Fenstad, Terry M. | 554th | 19 July 26 |
| Gilliand, James A., 'Andy' | 823rd | 10 Apr 26 |
| Herod, James Michael 'Mike' | 307th | 7 Sep 26 |
| Maranto, Michael A. 'Mike' 'Bull' | 819th | 8 Jun 26 |

**Terry Morton Fenstad**

**September 9, 1943 – July 19, 2026**



Terry Morton Fenstad, Colonel, USAF (retired of Amherst passed away peacefully from cancer on July 19, 2026 at the age of 82. We are grateful for his life and remember him as an exceptional leader and dedicated husband, father and grandfather.

During his 26 years of Active Duty service with the Air Force, Terry fought in the Vietnam War with the 554th Red Horse Civil Engineering Squadron (earning a Bronze Star Medal), earned a master's degree at Texas A&M, served the USA and NATO for 11 years overseas in four European countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy), and commanded Civil Engineering Squadrons at two USAF airbases throughout the Cold War.

**James A. "Andy" Gilliand**

**Oct 1, 1949 – Apr 10, 2026**



James A. "Andy" Gilliland, 76, of Dayton, passed away April 10, 2026. Andy was born in El Centro, California on October 1, 1949

He is survived by loving wife, Susan Gilliland; daughter, Kristy Gilliland; son, Andy Wayne (Morgan) Gilliland; 7 grandchildren, Destanee, Andy Wayne Jr., Heather, Zoe, Mylah, Victoria and Brianna; 3 great-grandchildren, Jocelyn, Kingsley and Victor.

He retired from XPO as a truck driver. Andy was also a United States Air Force Veteran, a member of the 823rd RED HORSE.

**James Michael "Mike" Herod**

**August 19, 1960 – Sept 07, 2026**



James Michael "Mike" Herod, passed away on September 7, 2026, in Plano, Texas at the age of 66.

A proud veteran of the United States Air Force, Mike served from 1978 to 1984 in the 307th division of RED HORSE. He was honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant. The unofficial RED HORSE motto, "Lead, Follow, or Get the Hell Out of the Way," became a personal motto he carried throughout his life, one that many around him came to know well. Through his loyal service he was awarded a medal of Patriotism from the Cherokee Nation.

**Michael "Mike" "Bull" Anthony Maranto**

**June 7, 1947 – June 8, 2026**



Michael "Mike" "Bull" Anthony Maranto, 79, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, passed away on June 8, 2026. Mike was born on June 7, 1947 in Baton Rouge. He attended Redemptorist High School and graduated in 1965. After graduation, Mike enlisted in the United States Air Force and served honorably from 1966 to 1970 with the 819th, including two tours of duty in Vietnam. He remained proud of his military service throughout his life.

# RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association

The RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association is an organization representing the professional and personal interests of more than 600 Active Duty, Retired, Veterans, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve of the United States Air Force RED HORSE and Prime BEEF units









### 1. Single-Service Orientation...
Our single-service orientation means we only work for YOU, the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF (RHPBA) community.

### 2. Fun and Keep in Touch…
Members reconnect with old friends and create new friendships by attending RHPBA gatherings in historic and memorable settings.

### 3. Camaraderie…
Cultivate and maintain good relations with community, foster patriotism, pride, and fraternity.

### 4. Scholarships…
Annual scholarships for members and their family.

### 5. Great web site…
Well maintained with current information an historic photos. Keep those "special memories" alive by finding airman from your previous assignments.

### 6. Informative Newsletter…
Membership includes semi-annual issues of our newsletter, with interesting articles and official notifications of planned gatherings.

### 7. Affordable…
Four categories of membership. Opportunity to become involved in committees, fund raisers, event planning and the RHPBA.

### 8. Creditable…
A professional, legitimate, active, involved, established and well working Association that is desirable to belong to.

### 9. Worthwhile…
Community programs that help those in need

### 10. Or just because you want to join

## 10 REASONS

Why the RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association should be your Military Organization of choice...

**JOIN**

**US**

**TODAY**

rhpba.com

Semper Simul
Always Together

*This Newsletter Is Dedicated to Air Force Military Civil Engineers (RED HORSE and Prime BEEF) Past, Present and Future.*

# RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Association

701 Center Drive, Palmyra, PA 17078, 717-269-3914
reckert@rhpba.com / Web Site: https://www.rhpba.com

**Regular or Life Membership**: Shall be open to all military members who have or are serving in the USAF Civil Engineer field, or in a USAF Civil Engineering unit, which includes the ACTIVE, AFRC, and ANG units, or their predecessor service; Aviation Engineer Force and SCARWAF Engineer Force.

**Affiliate or Life Affiliate Membership**: Spouses, children, parents or guardians of those persons, who are or were members eligible for membership, shall be eligible.

**Associate Membership**: Those persons, who do not qualify for regular membership, but have an interest in RED HORSE or Prime BEEF, may be considered for Associate Membership.

Please provide the following contact information:

Proper Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Nick Name: _____

Street address: _____

Address (cont.): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Highest Military Rank: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Unit _____ From ____/____ To ____/____ Base _____ Combat tour ☐

Unit _____ From ____/____ To ____/____ Base _____ Combat tour ☐

Unit _____ From ____/____ To ____/____ Base _____ Combat tour ☐

Unit _____ From ____/____ To ____/____ Base _____ Combat tour ☐

**Please indicate the membership or renewal level**

☐ Regular Membership, First Year $10

☐ Regular Membership, Renewal $20

Affiliate Membership (Dues will be equal to the sponsoring member)

☐ Current Active Duty, $10

☐ Life Membership (please use the schedule at the right) $_____

I would like to be considered for Associate Membership in the RHPBA

☐ Associate Membership, First Year $10.00

☐ Associate Membership, Renewal $20

rhpba.com

Make it easier to read, complete this form on line.

Pay on line by credit or debit card at htts://www.rhpba.com.

**DUES / FEES**

*Regular Memberships:*
First Year: $10.00
Annual Renewal: $20.00

*Active Duty Military:*
$10.00 per year as long as you are on active duty.

*Life Memberships:*
Age 45 and under: $250
Age 46 to 55: $215
Age 56 to 65: $180
Age 66 and above: $125

*Associate Membership:*
First Year: $10.00
Renewal: $20.00

Applications received on or after August 1st will be credited to the next full year.

Please include your check or money order and mail to the address above.