

Note:

All obituary submissions for Air Force retirees must be accompanied by the full name, correspondence address, and daytime telephone number of an information point of contact. Submissions will only be accepted by email. Please, no acronyms. Obituaries will remain posted until space limitations require removal.

June 2018

Retired Chief Master Sergeant Norman Burgo, born May 2, 1934, passed away June 28, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Antoinette.

February 2018

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Blaine R. Means of Oak Island, North Carolina, passed away Feb. 3, 2017, after a seven-month battle with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis.

Means was born in Los Angeles, California on Jan. 30, 1947, to the late Bevo L. Means and Betty (Detwiler) Means. He graduated from Simi Valley High School and immediately joined the Air Force to begin his 30-year career. The chief proudly served in Vietnam as an air transport specialist.

Upon his return to the United States he was stationed in Oklahoma and became a loadmaster. After a couple years, he returned to California and assumed duty at Travis Air Force base. He attended the NCO Academy and the SNCO Academy.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with one device, Air Medal with two devices, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one device, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with one device, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with seven devices, National Defense Service Medal with one device, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two devices, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon with six devices, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, NCO Professional Military Education Graduation Ribbon and Air Force Training Ribbon.

The chief is survived by his loving wife of 24 years, Donna Crawford Means; his devoted daughter, Amanda Means Castro; his special stepdaughters, Kristen Corley (Robby) of South Carolina, Robin Palumbo Thompsons (Tommy) and Angela Palumbo Hastings (Allen) of Delaware; and six granddaughters and three grandsons. He will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

December 2017

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Arthur Fetskos passed away Dec. 13, 2016. He was the deputy director of Florida's Patrick Air Force Base Retiree Activities Office where he volunteered for more than 25 years.

Born in 1923 in Albany, New York, Fetskos joined the Army in 1942 after getting his mother's signature and permission to do so. His desire was to fly planes despite his mother's objections. He traveled to Fort Dix in New Jersey for initial processing and to await orders for the pre-flight pilot training program at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

Fetskos flew PT-13s then relocated to Waco, Texas, for basic bomber flying training on the AT-6. Unfortunately for Art, he washed out along with many others as the war was drawing down. He still wanted to fly, and was assigned as a gunner on the B-24 Liberator. In England, he was assigned to the 445th Bomb Group with B-24s at Upper-Heyford-Tibenham. Lt. Col. Jimmy Stewart – the actor – was his commander. The commander would fly his P-47s alongside the B-24s as they departed on a bombing mission into Germany, said Fetskos, who flew on 17 combat missions January through April 1945 as a left-gunner.

He was discharged from the Army Air Force in 1945 and settled in to civilian life, but was recalled to active duty in the Air Force in 1950 in the air-refueling field. For the next 25 years, Fetskos flew on KC-97s and later on KC-135s. As a boom operator, he was stationed at many different locations including Bermuda, Thailand, Newfoundland, England, and several locations in the United States. His service took him through the Korean War and Vietnam Conflict. During the Vietnam Conflict, Art flew on 41 combat missions.

In August 1975, with 28 years and 13 days of combined active duty, Fetskos retired from the Air Force at Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire. He and his late wife, Helen, moved to Merritt Island near Patrick AFB in 1976. After being in their two-bedroom house for a while, his wife ordered him to "get out of the house and find something to do," said Fetskos. With that encouragement and direction, he visited the newly formed RAO where he said he found his new military home and went on to volunteer close to 12,000 hours. According to his co-volunteers, those hours are ones recorded – there could possibly be more than twice that number of actual hours devoted to the RAO. He enjoyed assisting retirees with obtaining their records, processing ID cards, and wading through other government issues.