

Great view! The non-commissioned officers "Bamboo Viper" Club at Phan Rang; Spike Boyle's club card.

Different breed

We had a different breed of cats when we got the Guard over here. You know these airline pilots . . . have been flying instruments all of their lives. We have to spend a lot of time getting people the way they can fly. These kids (in the regular Air Force), we have to watch like hawks. We don't have to do that with the Air Guard. We can turn them loose. Their average pilot time in the F-100 is 1,000 hours. In my squadrons here, my average time in the F-100 is 150 hours!

Gen. George S. Brown, 7th Air Force Commander



Over the hump: Crew chiefs Simpson and Erickson help Capt. Wilson celebrate the first aircraft to fly 100 missions.

"Close-air support accounted for a majority of our sorties. The load might be low (slick) or high-drag bombs, napalm, rockets and cluster bomb units (CBU) dispensers, or a combination. One of the most common missions was a strike from the alert pad, carrying two 500-pound 'Snake Eye' high-drag bombs, two cans of napalm and a full load of 20mm cannon shells. These scrambles were usually in response to urgent calls from troops in contact needing help.

"Air cover to suppress hostile ground fire while escorting C-123 "Ranch Hand" aircraft on defoliation runs, cargo birds,

The sharks carry AK-47s! Craig Iverson, Galen Smith, Jack Wilhite and Stan Wood. A sniper-infested banana grove stood between the base and the South China Sea beach.



What do you need from Hong Kong on this trip?
 SSgt. Amado Sanchez in his trusty C-47 *Gooneybird*. Nearly 400 members of the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron served with "distinction, dignity and honor" in Vietnam . . . representing their state and the Air National Guard in exemplary fashion.



Life's a beach

A big, 5-ton cattle truck used to haul us back and forth about four miles down the road to the beach. It was a marvelous beach, with corrugated iron roof shelters, nice sand and warm water. They also had a little shop there where we could buy a Coke. About 50 of us were walking toward the water once, when we heard this "pingggg." I wish I had a picture of it, because everybody just froze. Nobody dropped to the ground, we just froze comically in mid-stride. Without turning his head, Clyde Seiler said, "Was that what I think it was?" It sure was. Somebody on top of one of the hills had cooked off a round, hitting the top of one of the corrugated iron jobbies.

But, like slow motion, everyone's feet started moving out across the beach again to go swimming. It was just ho hum. I don't know what we'd have done if somebody had got hit. After we were done swimming, we got back on the cattle truck and went back up the hill.

Maj. Gen. John L. France

A few Colorado Air Guard related tales from the combat zone . . .

Operation Bolo

In 1967, F-105s were launched out of Korat and Tahkli Air Bases in Thailand. They would come up through Laos, make a right turn and come down what was called Thud Ridge to attack targets in and around Hanoi . . . at the end of Thud



Thunder from above: 8th TFW Commander and World War II ace Col. Robin Olds, minus his famous handlebar mustache, congratulates future Colorado Air Guardsman J.B. Stone in Saigon (right) on Jan. 3, 1967, the day after perhaps the most famous air battle of the war . . . "Operation Bolo" (note inscription on photo). Seven of North Vietnam's inventory of 16 MiG-21s had been wiped out in a single blow. Other USAF Southeast Asia combat-tested pilots to later serve with the Colorado Air Guard include: Gary Armentrout, Charlie Betts, Fred Buhl, Sam Hunter, Cliff Montgomery, Larry Peters, Scott Ralston, Larry Sadler, Jose Thomas, Dick Tucker, Mason Whitney and the present 140th TFW AF adviser, Bill Gordon and commander, George Franzen. Dan Moore, also a member of the 120th TFS, flew with the Navy.

Triple Nickle: Bill Gordon (center in photo), now the 140th TFW Air Force adviser and a lieutenant colonel, flew Ubon-based F-4 *Phantoms* with the famous 555th TFS. John Logeman, left rear, is now a USAF brigadier general heading AWACs operations. The 17 MiG kills shown on the flag had been increased by three the day before . . . Oct. 26, 1967.



Ridge. Books have been written about it. Basically, the routing, targets and weapons were all tasked out of the Pentagon. They flew the same altitude, same air speed, same formation . . . using the same identification squawk pattern on each mission. Capt. (at the time) J.B. Stone was on active duty, flying F-4s out of Ubon.

J.B. came up with this idea to take the F-4s into that same air space and act like 105s — same altitude, air speed, identification, etc. As opposed to having bombs on board like the 105s, they would be loaded to the gills with air-to-air *Sparrows* (AIM 7s) and *Sidewinders* (AIM 9s). The objective was to knock out some MiG-21s coming up to intercept the F-105s. It was a hell of a deal and involved a lot of airpower.

The plan was to have seven flights of four F-4s out of Da Nang accompany seven flights of four *Phantoms* out of Ubon. Col. Robin Olds led the fighter force of 56. Some of the F-105s were used for SAM site suppression. J.B. came up with the call signs — different makes of automobiles with "Olds" leading the first wave out of Ubon. Col. Chappie James, call sign "Ford," led the second wave and "Rambler" J.B. Stone the third. They launched about two minutes apart on Jan. 2, 1967, made the turn and flew down Thud Ridge toward Hanoi, waiting for the MiGs to come up. Sure enough, they flushed a bunch of MiG-21s ready to take on the 105s coming up on North Vietnamese screens.

The North Vietnamese controllers caught on quickly and got their airplanes back up in the clouds. The F-4s out of Da Nang never got into the action. But those first three *Phantom* flights out of Ubon — loaded for bear — saw plenty. When the dust settled, Olds' group had downed three to MiGs, Chappie James' group got one and Stone's wave picked up three more . . . seven enemy aircraft in 11 minutes! J.B. shot one of them and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for that, and for writing the ops plan for Operation Bolo, one of the most famous air war battles in the war. It was the 103rd mission over North Vietnam for Stone, who retired as the Headquarters COANG, director of operations, in 1986.

Maj. Scott Ralston

helicopter troop drops, or resupply operations were also frequent. Tasked for a landing-zone preparation, the F-100 sometimes became an airborne bulldozer, loaded with four 750-pound bombs with 'daisy cutter' fuses. The bombs exploded a foot above ground, which would flatten the trees and brush, opening a zone large enough for choppers to land troops or set up a fire-support base.

"Although we were not tasked for downed aircrew rescue missions (RESCAP) they were one of the most urgent and dan-

Stone's slogan

I always admired J.B. Stone's completely honest combat fighter pilot philosophy: "If you have to cheat to win, win!"

Maj. Buck Buckingham



Longest mission: Dwight "Crow" Wilson (above) was on the rescue mission led by Arnie Clark in No. 970 (right), one of the longest combat missions ever flown by a single-seat warplane. The COANG acquired the A-7 after its distinctive tour of duty in Vietnam.

The longest mission

Nov. 16, 1972 — the last F-105G lost in Southeast Asia was shot down near Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam. The stage was set for what became known as "The Longest Mission." Leading the 60-aircraft rescue mission, two days later, Arnie Clark flew an A-7D, tail number 970 (now one of ours). Also on the rescue mission, was Crow Wilson — who later served as Air Force adviser to the Colorado ANG.

Continued rescue efforts had failed because of thick cloud cover and enemy defenses, but a determined Arnie Clark succeeded, at last, in marking their position. Clarke wanted to lead rescue helicopters down into the valley for the pickup, but the overcast dangerously obscured the mountain peaks. He descended through the clouds alone, popping out under the overcast in a valley. Though he knew he was close to the men, he was forced to abort his descent several times; several more times, he popped out in the wrong valley. A run in from the coastline failed, also.

Several frustrating hours later, after midair refueling, Clarke found a hole in the clouds and led a rescue chopper into the correct valley.

Other aircraft were eventually talked into the narrow valley and, while the helicopter picked up both crewmen, they strafed enemy positions on a slope, just above the pickup site. As Clarke covered the rescue chopper on the way out of the valley, his right wing was hit, knocking out all of 970's instruments. With Crow Wilson's help, Clarke was talked down, landing successfully at Da Nang, after flying for nine hours over hostile territory.

The "Longest Mission" was over. Arnie received the Air Force Cross and old 970 now proudly flies with the 120th TFS.

But 970 never trimmed exactly right after the damage to its right wing. The A-7 flew sideways, until 1977, when Joe Thomas backed it into a revetment at Gilze-Rijen AB, Holland, straightening it out, at last. If those old planes could only talk.

Maj. Mike Paradise

gerous of any mission procedures. The A1E "Sandy's" and other aircraft would locate the bailout area (and hopefully the pilot), keep the enemy off his back until a chopper picked him up, then protect the rescue aircraft until they were out of danger. This mission was taken very seriously: fighter pilots were number one prizes for the Viet Cong and it could be one of us down there.

"Then, there were the night missions. Vietnam nights were very dark with few reference lights in the jungle. No one wanted anyone else to know where they were. We arrived in the target

"For those who fight for it, life has a flavor the sheltered never know."

Pinned to a notice board at the US Command Post at Khe Sanh

Hometown news release: Bill Gordon and his *Phantom* backseater Fran Marquette, both from Wethersfield, Conn., inscribe a MK-82 bomb with a special message, January 1968.

War is ugly

War is an ugly thing but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth fighting for is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight and nothing he cares about more than his own personal safety . . . is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.

120th TFS pilots lounge





All bombs will be on the target! Maj. John France, Capt. Jim Fletcher, Lt. Col. Ron Jankovsky and Maj. Bill Neuens discuss their close-air-support mission . . . "dropping explosives on targets you could not see, firing rockets at an elusive foe."

area, contacted the FAC (who was flying with no lights) and were advised there was a blacked-out C-119 'shadow' or a C-47 'spook' gunship in the area to drop flares, plus one or more other fighter flights gunning around in the murk, sans lights. Throw in some clouds and the pucker factor went off the scale!

"The FAC marked the target, the gunships dropped some flares and we were cleared in, unable to see our gauges or the ground (except in the eerie circle of swinging flare light) or the other aircraft. We flew into the light, dropped our bombs, and came away partially blinded, hoping we wouldn't hit the ground or someone else until we could see our instruments and regain our night vision. The most visible image was ground fire coming up at us. Fortunately, we usually dropped 'nape' on the first pass and the resultant fire gave us some orientation and steady illumination.

"On most of these missions, our troops were in real trouble and needed the stuff close to their positions; so, we really had a lot of pressure to deliver on target. These were the times in which Silver Stars were earned.

Maj. Gen. John L. France remembers . . .

Did you anticipate the Vietnam recall?

I was fairly well convinced we were going and I'd be able to put some of the skills I'd honed all those years into action. When President Johnson decided to use us, the tempo really picked up. We went to Cannon AFB, N.M., for "Operation Top-off" live-fire training and Homestead AFB, Fla., for water survival school. Then we deployed to Vietnam; Bob Cherry led the first cell and I led the second.

What was Phan Rang like when you arrived?

The reception on the ground was fantastic. There were three USAF F-100D squadrons there. We had our flight jackets on and they were laughing about that, because it was about 140 degrees on the ramp . . . the usual temperature at Phan Rang. We were put in hooches . . . big, square-block buildings with no air conditioning. The enlisted people were in a big double-decker, built on the French pattern of tropical buildings. They were miserable. The commander and the operations officer, Cherry and Jankovsky, lived in a double-wide trailer up on Commanders' Hill.

Thinking about what we do today with "Checked Flag," do you feel you were prepared enough professionally for what it was like in Vietnam?

Yes, I was and the squadron was . . . up,

down and crossways. We virtually took over Phan Rang. The senior guys ran nearly every shop — engine shops, test flying, etc. Every single pilot was a qualified flight leader.

How about your knowledge of the country and the kind of environment you were going to be in?

We weren't prepared for the heat. The base, after the first month or two, was anything but austere. We had good food, good water, but there was no real way for us to prepare for the geography or how to put in jungle strikes; that took us a while to get in our brain.

When did you start flying missions?

We started to fly the day after we got there. Each of us had to be checked out by an instructor pilot in a two-place F-model. Then, we started flying missions by ourselves in two-ship flights. We were all checked out within two weeks. But the first guys to get checked out flew sorties right away. Frag orders came in every night and we'd put a schedule up; the dawn patrol came into operations about 0400 for a 0530 takeoff. Depending on the frag, we'd usually fly 36 sorties a day, turning the airplanes one time. Some had to be turned more, because planes were in maintenance. Before the month was up, we started sharing alert duties: two planes on 24-hour alert and pilots in eight-

hour increments. The alert pad was a trailer, set out away from just about everything on the runway, all revetted, sand-bagged and protected — with a hot line from the command post. That's the way we would scramble. There was a total of six pilots on alert, two Guardsmen and four regular guys.

How about the attacks on the base while you were there?

We had a lot of mortar and rocket attacks — five-inch rockets painted gold. The Korean White Horse Division protected the base and they did a pretty damned good job. But the base was hit . . . one rocket would come in flashing and banging, or two or three mortar rounds. One night the Viet Cong tried to come through the fence, hitting the base real hard with rockets, and that's where we lost our first airplane.

What happened?

At that time, the revetments weren't covered; they were just big steel walls filled with sand. They got a direct hit on one of our C models. I was on alert, probably 50 yards away, when the thing blew up. It was loaded wall-to-wall, with 750-pound Mark 82 bombs on it. It was the loudest sound I've ever heard in my life. A thousand rounds of 20mm started exploding, raining crap all over. The bombs went off, in what they call a low-yield explosion; the cases burst and a fireball went up. It

"The 120th proved over and over again that the experience we had in the F-100 paid off. Regardless of the outcome of the war, we did our job well, gaining much respect in the process. We went into combat prepared and came home winners!"

Back at Phan Rang AB

The 120th was visited by many dignitaries including Theatre Commander Gen. William Westmoreland; USAF Chief of Staff, Gen. John P. McConnell; the 7th Air Force Commander, Gen. George S. Brown; NGB Chief, Maj. Gen. Winston P. Wilson; National Guard Association President, Maj. Gen. James Cantwell; Colorado's adjutant general; and various TAC commanders. The NGB Chief's visit — along with Moffitt's in October 1968 — came during tropical storms; nine inches of rain fell in five days. During combat operations in Vietnam, Col. Coomer, Col. Stevens and Lt. Col. Littlefield visited the 120th, flying several missions with the unit.

Aircraft modification and depot level inspections were timed to coincide with unit rest and rehabilitation (R&R) periods —

VIPs: Colorado Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Joe Moffitt; National Guard Association President, Maj. Gen. James Cantwell; and National Guard Bureau Chief, Maj. Gen. Winston P. "Wimpy" Wilson (right to left, here in October 1968) were among the many distinguished visitors during the squadron's tour of duty at Phan Rang AB.



allowing 120th personnel to visit family in Hawaii, Tokyo and other spots.

On Dec. 29, Capt. Joe O'Neill was shot down while hitting a hot target near Binh Thuy in Vietnam's southern territory. Able to eject, he was picked up (under heavy fire) by an Army helicopter . . . 15 long minutes after he went down. He was back at Phan Rang in time for dinner.

Maj. Clyde Seiler flew the squadron's 5,000th combat sortie Jan. 30, 1969, hitting a VC target six miles north of Tay Ninh.

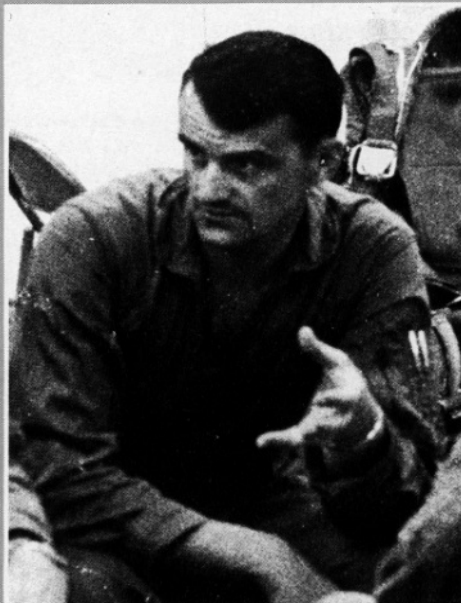
burned up another airplane and looked like it was going to take out a bunch more, until they put out the fire. We were attacked something like 117 times at Phan Rang that year.

What about the other losses?

We were within a month of coming home. Clyde Seiler and Don Neary were on a mission together; Clyde got shot down and went into the jungle . . . no parachute, he didn't get out. Col. Cherry was in Malaysia on R&R. When he got off the airplane, I had to tell him we lost Clyde. He was devastated. Bob Cherry was a very strong man, but that was a scene. Preceding that, Joe O'Neil was shot down, but got out and a helicopter picked him up. He wasn't hurt, but we lost his airplane, Clyde's, and the two in the revetments. Then we lost Perry Jefferson a few days after Clyde. It was a rough time.

What was the flight home like?

It was a drunken brawl. We got into Guam, stayed two nights and went crazy. Then we got the airplanes rounded up and went into Hickam for the same thing. The night we got into Guam, we ran into George Gobel at the club. We all were dying for any kind of entertainment and he had all of us lying on the floor at the bar. His friends and some of the people in the show were trying to get him out of there. We all started telling stories — any kind of dirty joke we could think of — and he was telling stories. He told us one about flying B-26s when he had a taxi accident. In the flying business, there is no excuse for a taxi accident. Zero. Absolutely none! George



Maj. Gen. John France was the 120th TFS operations officer in the unit's tour of duty in Vietnam. He later commanded the 140th Tactical Fighter Wing (from 1974 to 1981), and has served as Colorado's adjutant general since 1979. This interview, conducted by CMSgt. Joseph Ashby, continues in the 1970s chapter of *Colorado Pride*.

said he pulled out on the runway in formation and ran into the airplane in front of him. He stood in front of his commander, who asked, "All right, George, what the hell happened?" His answer was, "Well sir, the son-of-a-bitch backed into me." Of course, the B-26 didn't have reverse props or anything; we roared. We stayed in the bar until four or five in the morning. His friends finally left in disgust. We finally got off from Hawaii, headed for home and got our last refueling some place out over Nevada. The weather at Buckley was a

blinding blizzard. Zero-zero. I was leading the second cell, Buckley was below minimum, so we diverted to Colorado Springs. When we landed it was 35 degrees, with a north wind blowing about 20 knots. We had on Vietnam flight suits that were about one-tenth the weight of regular flight suits. I've never been so cold in my life. We had a C-54 at Buckley and a couple of Continental pilots with "8 billion hours" of flying time. They got that hummer out, got airborne, and came down to Colorado Springs to pick us up. They made an instrument landing at Stapleton, where we had a GI bus waiting, and we finally made it to Buckley, plowing through the snowdrifts.

Not exactly like a *Guns Smoke* homecoming was it?

No, it wasn't, but the hangar was full of happy families with lots of food and refreshments.

Looking back on Vietnam and its impact on your families, any reflections?

Before Vietnam, many of the squadron pilots would have their wives come out to the club the evening of drill and we'd all go out to a restaurant, directly from drill. We were in uniform and everyone would have a good time. When we got back from SEA, our wives would bring civilian clothes out to us because it was hostile to go into a restaurant, downtown or anywhere, with your uniform on. It was unfortunate, but a reality. The times, as they say, were changing.

Dan Partner

Dan Partner was the military reporter for the *Denver Post*; he was a great friend of the Guard. He went to several summer camps with us, eventually winding up in Vietnam with the 120th. The first briefing Col Cherry gave in Phan Rang was, of course, a closed-door, classified situation. Dan Partner was there in his usual spot at the back of the room, a testimonial to the trust and respect we felt for him. He was a great journalist and told the story straight without ever compromising that trust and respect.

Brig. Gen. Donald David

Barry Trader

The Colorado ANG had a dedicated friend in the person of Barry Trader, military reporter for Denver's Channel 4. He accompanied the 120th to Vietnam and sent back film and interviews for the evening news. On one occasion, with approval from 7th Air Force, Barry flew a combat mission. Lt. Col. (later general) Tom Knoles, who commanded a sister squadron, flew a two-seat F-100F with Barry in the back. The mission, planned as a "safe" flight, was diverted to a combat zone where Barry ran his camera during repeated attacks. A former SAC B-47 pilot, Barry loved the action. His reporting via videotape was a great morale booster for the folks back home.

Col. Bob Cherry



Combat news correspondents: Military reporters Dan Partner (*The Denver Post*) and Barry Trader (KOA radio/television) filed their Theater reports from Phan Rang AB. Veteran newsman Partner died in 1977. Pilot Trader retired from the USAF in 1982; he died in early 1986. Their combat stories were a great boost to squadron morale.

Four days earlier, on the unit's recall anniversary, Phan Rang was attacked in force at 0030 hours; 66 rounds of 82mm mortar and five rounds of 107mm rockets hit the base. Attacks were usually limited to mortars and rockets; but, in this instance, the perimeter defense was infiltrated — leaving 15 U.S. personnel wounded, 16 Viet Cong dead and one VC captured.

A violent enemy offensive commenced in the days immediately following the 24-hour Tet Truce ending Feb. 17. On the night of Feb. 23, 100 different locations in South Vietnam were attacked, including Phan Rang. Until the end of the 120th's tour, attacks in the area of the base were frequent. On April 8, 1969, the last combat sortie was flown by the 120th.

Not all of the men returned home. On March 28, 1969, Seiler was killed after being hit by enemy ground fire during an F-100 strafing mission. A few days later, April 3, Capt. Perry Jefferson failed to return from an intelligence-gathering flight in a light observation plane. Ironically, both men were lost within three weeks of the unit's departure date for Colorado. The F-100 static display at Buckley ANG Base's main gate is dedicated in their memory.

Return home

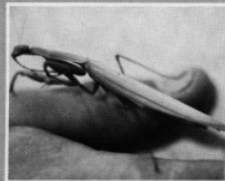
By the time the Colorado Guard prepared to depart Phan Rang, most of the 35th TFW key supervisory positions were held by unit personnel, another tribute to Guard capabilities. On April 11, 1969, most squadron personnel returned home to a huge welcoming party at Buckley ANG Base.

Four days later, the squadron's F-100 fighters touched down, after retracing the deployment route, again taking three days to make the flight. However, fate and the peculiarities of Colorado weather dulled the luster of their "hero's welcome" . . . echoing, although unintentionally, the nation's forgotten fanfare for the Vietnam vet. The F-100s diverted to Peterson AFB due to severe weather at Buckley. The weary pilots had to be bused, several hours later, to their waiting families and friends. "Certainly an unbecoming end," remembers Col. Wilhite, "to a very successful year of combat."



Lights out: A ceiling lamp fell on Larry Jacobson (left) during the attack.

Stupid pet tricks: Praying mantis (below).



Mickey Mantis

The praying mantis is the only insect with an articulated, movable head. We took the biggest ones and had mantis fights in Nam . . . not that we were bored or anything. Lots of money changed hands. I called my insect "Mickey Mantis"; he won several contests until he was eaten by an opponent. I remember one fellow got so upset over his losing streak that he bit his bug's head off . . .

Sgt. Jim Patsey

The unforgettable night . . .

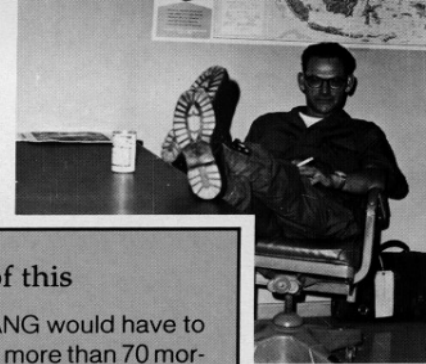
Jan. 26, 1969, was unforgettable. It was the worst attack we sustained during our tour. It was about 0130 and we had some crew members working. At least one of our F-100s took a direct hit in its revetment — totally destroyed. Several 500-pound bombs sitting in the area blew, a full load of 20mm ammo cans cooked off and several F-100s caught fire. What a night of fireworks! The lights also went out on Larry Jacobson. He was on duty in the orderly room when we took the hit. A ceiling lamp fell, hitting him in the head before he could get his helmet on. Amazingly, no one else was injured or killed.

Sgt. Jim Patsey

Enemy memento: Capt. Al Gardner with a Viet Cong AK-50 captured after the January sniper attack.



Jan. 26, 1969: 1st Sgt. Walt Leiker (right). COANG F-100 destroyed in V.C. attack on the base (below anecdote).



Memories are made of this

My most memorable day in the COANG would have to be Jan. 26, 1969. Any day you get hit by more than 70 mortar and rocket rounds in 13 separate attacks makes for a memorable occasion.

CMSgt Walt Leiker

Whom do you trust?

Jan. 26 — we'd been up all night. The Air Force first shirt in our squadron handed out M-16s to everyone. There were a bunch of Viet Cong snipers, carrying grenade-filled satchel charges, trying to penetrate the base and get to the planes. Sixteen were killed that night. We saw them the next day. Some had been hit and were pretty hard to identify; but I recognized two of them — one worked in the base laundry and the other one was my barber.

SSgt. Ray Johnson



Survivor: Capt. Joe O'Neill (below left) made it home after ejecting over a rice paddy near Binh Thuy in late December 1968.

Casualties: Wingman Maj. Glenn Kowal, crew chief A1C. Phil Gohn and 35th TFW Commander Col. Frank Gailor toast **Maj. Clyde Seiler** (below) after the squadron's 5,000th SEA mission, Jan. 30, 1969. On March 28, Seiler, at age 38, became the 120th TFS's first casualty. 37-year-old Capt. Perry Jefferson (bottom with Army Capt. Kent Brown) failed to return from an observation mission on April 3, 1969.



Worst of times

The loss of Clyde Seiler and Perry Jefferson was certainly the low point in our Phan Rang tour. Perry was everybody's friend. He somehow had a steady supply of Coors beer coming in and always had a "cold one" waiting for you. He took off in an O-1 on a normal observation run and never returned. He just vanished. His MIA status wasn't changed to KIA until much later. We knew where Clyde went down but the area was completely controlled by the V.C. It was a year before U.S. forces could get in there and pick his body up. It was a sorrowful time when he finally came home, but we were all grateful that he wasn't left behind.

Maj. Gen. John France

Quiet night

I was tending bar at the FANG RAM Inn the night after we lost Clyde Seiler. It was a quiet night; most of the men stayed in their hootch. The few that came out that evening toasted Clyde and threw their glasses behind the bar.

SMSgt. Donald Ford



Homeward bound: 120th TFS fighter pilots (above) receive the traditional champagne and hose down after their last mission. Back row, left to right . . . Joe O'Neill, Bill Wilson, George Sayre, Tom Risen, Ron Jankovski (ducking), Buck Rennick, Tom Emmett, Jack Wilhite, Bob Beabout and Jim Fletcher; Front row, left to right . . . Bob Cherry, D.O. Neary, John Houser, Al Gardner (head down), Bruce Hansen, Galen Smith, John France, Craig Iverson, Bill Neuens and Bud Mechling; Missing . . . Glenn Kowal (photographer), Bob Flick (PCS), Dudley Bailey, Wayne Sagar (PCS), Stan Wood (PCS), Clyde Seiler (KIA) and Perry Jefferson (MIA).



Mission complete: Maj. France congratulates squadron commander Lt. Col. Cherry after their last sorties (left). 35th TFW mission record (below).



Return from Vietnam

I think the biggest party we ever had was when the guys returned from Vietnam. The hangar was open around the clock; we met every plane at any hour of the day or night. We put a 40-foot bar and a red carpet at the east end of the hangar. There were gifts for the kids and plenty of food and soft drinks. Coors gave us all the beer we could drink. The Officers' Association donated \$500 for food and non-alcoholic beverages. We asked the wives to give us their commissary receipts, gave those receipts to the Association and used the money to buy booze.

CMSgt. Tom Linam

Take me to your leader

The media was very interested in the unit's return from Vietnam. The exact return date was not released and I kept pestering Gen. Moffitt for an ETA, but he told me he wasn't sure about the exact time. "I'll tell you what," he said, "If you really want to know, just call one of the wives. They know everything." He was right and I was there for the story.

Al Nakkula, Rocky Mountain News reporter

An American militiaman

I am not a professional warrior. I suppose I am best described as an American militiaman — fighting when I was needed, called back to active duty in time of emergency and national peril, leaving active duty for civilian pursuits at the end of hostilities — the classic pattern of military service by our nation's militiamen.

James H. Doolittle upon receiving the U.S. Military Academy's 1983 Sylvanus Thayer Award

Just prior to noon, April 30, 1969, Colorado Air National Guardsmen, called to active duty 15 months before, were demobilized and returned to the governor's command authority.

Said Cherry, "The year had proven, once again, that the citizen-airman can match — and even beat — the regulars at their own game. The dedication, expertise, esprit de corps and 'one-for-all, all-for-one attitude,' so prevalent in a peacetime environment, really came to the forefront during the war."

Numbers can never completely tell a story; but, a few graphically show Colorado Guardsmen's accomplishments:

The 120th flew more than 10,000 hours and 6,127 sorties, of which 5,905 were combat missions. They dropped 5.9 million pounds of 500-pound bombs, 8.2 million pounds of 750-pound bombs, 5.5 million pounds of napalm and fired almost 1.8 million rounds of 20mm cannon. Their accident rate was zero; aircraft operational ready rate — 86.9 percent (USAF standard = 71 percent); abort rate — 0.5 percent (7th AF standard = 3 percent); weapons release rate — 99.7 percent; and weapons reliability rate — 98.9 percent.

Every measurable efficiency rate, as computed against USAF standards, was exceeded. During their tour, the squadron compiled the lowest abort rate and highest

When there is a visible enemy to fight in open combat . . . many serve, all applaud and the tide of patriotism runs high. But when there is a long, slow struggle with no immediate, visible foe, your choice will seem hard indeed.

*President John F. Kennedy
Address to the Graduating Class
U.S. Naval Academy, June 1961*

Colorado gratitude: Maj. Gen. Moffitt and Colorado Gov. John Love at the return party, the most joyous celebration ever at Buckley ANGB.



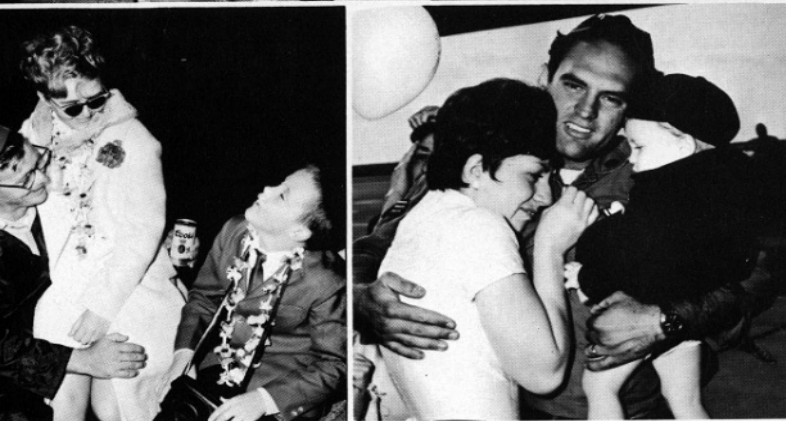


Colorado rock at last! Maj. Gen. Moffitt and Lt. Col. Walt Schreiber greet Pete Valentin, Bill Haggerty, Jim Fisher and Vern Marooney upon their arrival from Vietnam.

munitions-reliability rate of any other flying unit. Colorado Air Guardsmen — some of the best ever assembled in one fighting force — proved their value to the nation during their South Vietnam duty tour and, in so doing, achieved recognition throughout the Air Force.



Homecoming: Tony Lucero (top), Art Sharpley (left) and Ray Johnson (right) celebrate with their families their return from Phan Rang AB.



What a party — where's daddy? Family and friends await the returning troops (both photos below) on April 11, 1969. Squadron F-100s were diverted to Colorado Springs due to a blinding snowstorm four days later.



Thank God, they're home

Thank God, they're home . . . home from a hellhole called South Vietnam. Many of them left good jobs to stand beside our Uncle Sam and slug it out with the enemy. And some of them didn't come home. But they gave a good account of themselves. And, as of this moment, I'm particularly happy. My son, Sgt. Brian Timothy Fenwick, is back at the old homestead. He and his buddies are safely home in good old Colorado.

Tim's pert, capable little wife, Rosemary . . . had been working on a hunch — a wife's intuition. She knew weeks ago when her husband would arrive home. She knew the exact number of weeks, days and hours it would take. And her intuition was good. She had named it to the very hour. Thursday night she was up late. She painted a huge sign and pasted it up almost the width of the house. It said, "Welcome Home."

Then she and my daughter made a placard for Rosie to carry at Buckley when the plane landed. It wasn't a placard to protest anything. It didn't insult anybody. It didn't hide behind liberty to knife freedom in the back. On the placard was emblazoned only one word — Fenwick. Rosie contrived it to attract the attention of her man and to get him through the crowd as quickly as possible.

Buddy, that placard carried meaning, and it worked. God bless 'em — our boys are home again.

Red Fenwick, Denver Post columnist

Distinction, dignity and honor

The first contingent of Colorado's own fighting men — 219 members of the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron of the Colorado Air National Guard — came home from the war Friday. They touched down in their chartered DC-8 jetliner at 3:28 a.m. on the runway at Buckley Air National Guard Base . . . in the ghost-light of predawn, four officers and 215 enlisted men bounced down the ramp to be greeted by what must have been the most festive, joyous group ever to gather on the flightline at Buckley.

The loved ones who had stood behind a rope in the chilly air pressed forward, many of them already crying, then broke and ran to their men, greeting them with kisses and embraces that had been dreamed of for a year.

Maj. Gen. Joe C. Moffitt, state adjutant general and highest officer of the Colorado Guard, and Gov. John Love were the first to say hello and shake hands with the men as they got off the plane. "How you doing?" Moffitt said, "Welcome home — great job," as he reached for each hand. Gov. Love addressed the group, saying, "Once again you have served your country with distinction, your state with dignity and your community with honor."

*Bob Saile, Denver Post staff writer
(April 12, 1969)*



COANG Activation Roster

Jan. 26, 1968

Abbott, William H. - CONUS
 Aciermo, William R. - SEA
 Adams, John S. - CONUS
 Agnew, Kenneth A. - KOREA
 A'Hern, Neal A. - KOREA
 Alberts, Ronnie - SEA
 Alexander, James - SEA
 Alford, James B. - GNLND
 Allen, James R. - SEA
 Amato, Robert J. - CONUS
 Anderson, Edward J. - CONUS
 Anderson, Gilbert C. - SEA
 Andrews, Andrew J. - SEA
 Applegate, Gary L. - SEA
 Applegate, Lowell J. - SEA
 Armstrong, Phillip M. - CONUS
 Arnold, Richard D. - SEA
 Ashby, Arthur W. - SEA
 Ashley, Jerome L. - KOREA
 Axton, William S. - CONUS

Bailey, Dudley L. - SEA
 Bailey, Mervin R. - KOREA
 Baker, Donald L. - CONUS
 Baker, Gerald M. - SEA
 Baker, Rob E. - SEA
 Bakke, Jay S. - SEA
 Balkenbush, Kenneth L. - SEA
 Banach, Daniel J. - CONUS
 Bargman, Larry D. - SEA
 Bargmann, Alvin W. - CONUS
 Bargmann, Dale A. - CONUS
 Barker, Robert J. - SEA
 Barnes, Homer E. - SEA
 Barron, Ronald L. - SEA
 Barrow, James L. - CONUS
 Bash, Donald I. - KOREA
 Bates, Benson G. - CONUS
 Bath, William H. - CONUS
 Batliner, Daniel M. - SEA
 Bauer, Dale L. - KOREA
 Baugh, Gary W. - SEA
 Beabout, Robert G. - SEA
 Beals, Eddie R., Jr. - CONUS
 Beasley, Jesse L. - SEA
 Beaufils, Clarence R. - CONUS
 Bechard, Leon C. - CONUS
 Bedan, Samuel A. - SEA
 Beedy, Robert D. - SEA
 Belles, Howard W. - KOREA
 Bender, Jack L. - CONUS
 Berndt, John E. - KOREA
 Berquist, Harold J. - KOREA
 Bertsch, Sanford P. - KOREA
 Beye, Richard L. - SEA
 Birza, Bruce E. - CONUS
 Birza, Donald B. - CONUS
 Bisgard, Larry G. - CONUS
 Blackwell, George I. - CONUS
 Blazer, Kenneth E. - SEA
 Blazer, William D. - SEA
 Blea, John C. - CONUS
 Bleeker, William L. - SEA
 Bloom, Gary L. - SEA

Blumenthal, James R. - SEA
 Bol, Jack R. - KOREA
 Bolshoun, Harvey - KOREA
 Boom, Richard A. - CONUS
 Borega, Paul S. - CONUS
 Bouska, Myron R. - KOREA
 Bowers, Kenneth L. - KOREA
 Bowland, Robert T. - CONUS
 Boyle, Wayland D. - SEA
 Bracken, Ronald H. - SEA
 Bradford, Lyle V. - SEA
 Bragg, Douglas E. - KOREA
 Braley, Roger L. - SEA
 Breen, Donald D. - CONUS
 Breheny, Joseph - CONUS
 Brewer, Harold - SEA
 Brink, Allen W. - SEA
 Brink, Glen D. - SEA
 Brock, Terral B. - SEA
 Brocker, Glenn H. - SEA
 Brokaw, Larry D. - CONUS
 Bromley, Larry E. - SEA
 Brooks, Eugene A., Jr. - SEA
 Broom, Joseph A. - CONUS
 Brouwer, Fred - CONUS
 Brown, Barry C. - SEA
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 Brown, Harold, Jr. - KOREA
 Brown, James L. - CONUS
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 Bruce, Robert J., Jr. - SEA
 Brumbach, Don P. - SEA
 Bruckhardt, Donald D. - SEA
 Buch, David G. - SEA
 Buck, Frank D. - CONUS
 Buckley, Donald M. - KOREA
 Buckley, James W. - CONUS
 Burch, Richard I. - KOREA
 Burgess, Wendell L. - KOREA
 Burke, Neil B. - SEA
 Burton, George W. - CONUS
 Butler, Dudley J. - KOREA
 Byma, Harry G. - CONUS

Cady, Dan J. - CONUS
 Calabro, Anthony D. - CONUS
 Caldwell, Arthur W. - CONUS
 Camacho, Medard R. - KOREA
 Campbell, Maynard C. - SEA
 Candelaria, John P. - SEA
 Carbone, Joseph P. - SEA
 Carlisle, Donald J. - SEA
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 Carlson, Ronald A. - CONUS
 Carlton, Wayne W. - SEA
 Carter, James A. - CONUS
 Cash, Norman E. - CONUS
 Catlin, Lawrence A. - CONUS
 Chambers, Boen A. - CONUS
 Chambers, Don - KOREA
 Chaney, Chris - KOREA
 Charles, John E. - SEA
 Chatman, David N. - SEA
 Cherry, Parley E. - CONUS

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 Chrisman, Burt H., Jr. - KOREA
 Christensen, Arnold N., Jr. - SEA
 Christenson, Larry G. - SEA
 Chrysler, Barry B. - SEA
 Chrysler, Sheldon A. - CONUS
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 Cleaver, Leon W., Jr. - CONUS
 Clements, Robert E. - KOREA
 Cline, Roldin R. - CONUS
 Cochran, Raymond L. - SEA
 Cody, William J. - SEA
 Coffee, Paul B. - SEA
 Cogil, Gary D. - SEA
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 Conger, Allen W. - SEA
 Cook, Stan H. - CONUS
 Cook, Thomas C., Jr. - SEA
 Cook, Thomas M. - CONUS
 Cook, William S. - SEA
 Coomer, Winett A. - CONUS
 Coomes, William G. - CONUS
 Corn, Robert O. - KOREA
 Corrado, Robert T. - CONUS
 Couch, Michael E. - KOREA
 Coughlin, Dennis F. - KOREA
 Cross, Don L. - SEA
 Crow, Charles P. - CONUS
 Culbertson, John W. - CONUS
 Curran, Kenneth J. - SEA
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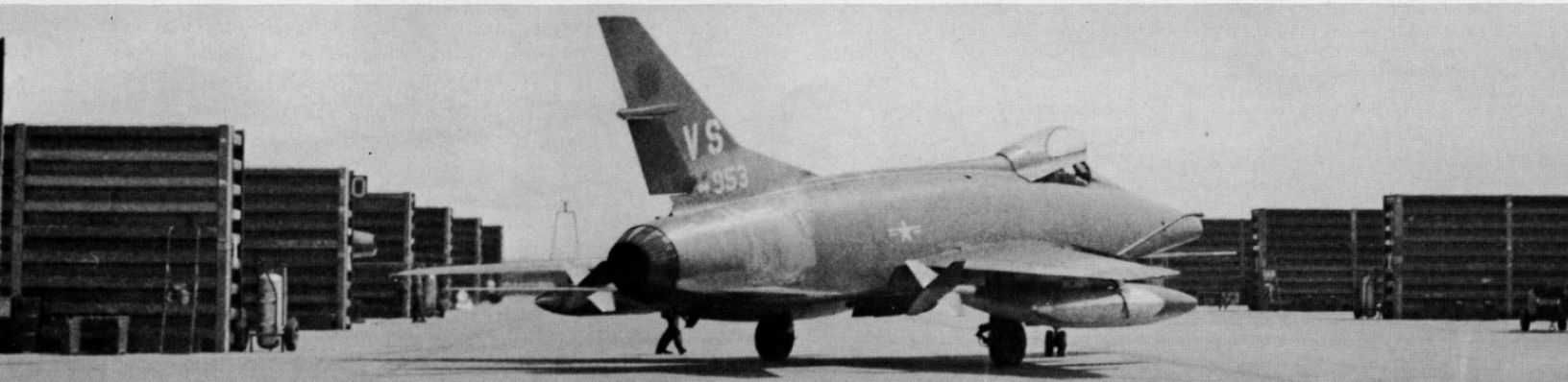
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 De Baca, Robert C. - CONUS
 DeBerard, Arthur C. - CONUS
 DeBerard Kenneth A. - CONUS
 Degner, Paul A. - SEA
 DeMooy, Harold A. - CONUS
 Deshotels, Joseph M. - SEA
 DeWeese, Charles - SEA
 D'Haillecourt, Robert - CONUS
 DiCroce, Donald L. - KOREA
 Dix, Marion O. - KOREA
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 Donnelly, Michael R. - KOREA
 Doty, William J. - CONUS
 Douma, Robert W. - CONUS
 Downs, James E. - CONUS
 Dowson, Stephen H. - CONUS
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 Dreher, Ronald J. - SEA
 Duggins, Leon - SEA

Dumas, Nick J. - CONUS
 Duncan, Fred E. - CONUS
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 Duncan, Hamilton R. - CONUS
 Dunn, Terrance K. - SEA
 Durkop, George M. - KOREA
 Dutro, Claud E. - KOREA
 Dymek, James - SEA

Earle, Francis III - SEA
 Eastman, Gary E. - KOREA
 Easton, James R. - CONUS
 Eckert, Charles R. - SEA
 Ecklund, Philip C. - CONUS
 Eddy, Eugene E. - SEA
 Ehredt, William F. - SEA
 Eichman, Henry J. - CONUS
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 Elliott, Kenneth E. - CONUS
 Elzea, John S. - CONUS
 Emmett, Thomas R. - SEA
 Endersen, Robert F. - KOREA
 Engel, Lawrence R. - KOREA
 England, Alexander - SEA
 Englen, Delmore M. - KOREA
 Erickson, Craig W. - CONUS
 Erickson, George W. - SEA
 Ernst, Howard C. - CONUS
 Erpelding, Alan J. - SEA
 Estala, Apolonio R. - KOREA
 Etchells, William A. - CONUS
 Etter, Marvin O. - SEA
 Evans, Max L. - SEA

Fairfield, Michael E. - SEA
 Falagrady, Ernest D. - KOREA
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 Farmer, Russell E. - SEA
 Farr, Stanley S. - CONUS
 Fenwick, Brian T. - SEA
 Fisher, David M. - CONUS
 Fisher, James W. - SEA
 Fishkin, Ely M. - CONUS
 Flaxer, Michael J. - CONUS
 Fleming, William J. - CONUS
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 Flick, Robert A. - SEA
 Flowers, John B. - SEA
 Ford, Donald H. - SEA
 Fouts, Danny L. - SEA
 France, John L. - SEA
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 Frazier, Hugh J. - SEA
 Freeman, Thomas G. - SEA
 Freiberg, Kenneth J. - CONUS
 Frey, Gordon W. - CONUS
 Friesen, James E. - CONUS
 Frigon, Merlyn D. - KOREA
 Fuchs, Frederick A. - CONUS
 Fuller, David L. - SEA
 Funk, Herschel L. - SEA
 Fuqua, Robert L. - KOREA

Phan Rang AB, Vietnam: The 120th TFS compiled a remarkable record of flying nearly 6,000 combat sorties while having the lowest abort rate and the highest munitions reliability rate in theater. The unit was awarded the AFOUA with the "V" device for valor.



Gabrys, Roger A. - CONUS
 Gaer, Glenn G. - CONUS
 Gallegly, Charles R. - KOREA
 Gardner, Elbert W. - SEA
 Garretson, Tearl A. - CONUS
 Gart, Marvin R. - CONUS
 Gaudreau, Laurent - CONUS
 Gay, Robert D. - SEA
 Geels, John - CONUS
 Geist, Donald W. - CONUS
 George, Charles M. - SEA
 Gerber, Charles F. - KOREA
 Germano, Ronald M. - CONUS
 Getter, Philip S. - SEA
 Getz, John C. - SEA
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 Gill, Douglas E. - CONUS
 Gillett, Gary N. - SEA
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 Gilpin, David R. - CONUS
 Giuzio, Ronald E. - CONUS
 Glade, Gerald L. - CONUS
 Glenn, William T. - SEA
 Goe, Donald K. - CONUS
 Gohn, Philip R. - SEA
 Goldman, Terrall M. - SEA
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 Gregory, Stanford W., Jr. - KOREA
 Guerrero, Richard - KOREA
 Guida, Ronald G. - CONUS

Haaf, Fred J., Jr. - KOREA
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 Hardy, Rollan E. - CONUS
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 Hargis, Richard C. - CONUS
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 Harnke, Eugene R. - CONUS
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 Hartmeister, Louis N. - SEA
 Harvey, John P. - SEA
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 Haugen, Martin L. - CONUS
 Haulman, Dennis R. - CONUS
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 Haywood, Beryl L. - CONUS
 Hazel, James A. - SEA
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 Hiester, Richard C. - CONUS
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 Holm, Kendall H. - KOREA
 Holoubek, Steven R. - SEA
 Hoops, Victor J. - KOREA
 Hopper, Richard M. - KOREA
 Horivchi, Karl M. - CONUS
 Horn, Ronald V. - KOREA
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 Hubner, Larry D. - SEA
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 Humbert, Ralph L. - CONUS
 Hurst, Sterling V. - CONUS

Indorf, Michael R. - SEA
 Iverson, Craig R. - SEA

Jaccaud, John T., Jr. - CONUS
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 Jackson, Charles - KOREA
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 Jarrett, Bruce H. - SEA
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 Jefferson, Perry H. - SEA
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 Joslin, Jerry W. - KOREA

Kalcevic, Joseph H. - SEA
 Kaminsky, David A. - KOREA
 Kamla, Kent E. - SEA
 Kaplan, David P. - KOREA
 Kelly, Keith R. - CONUS
 Keesen, Larry E. - KOREA
 Kent, Charley T. - SEA

Kerr, James J. - KOREA
 Kilgore, Maurice B. - CONUS
 Killmer, Howard P. - CONUS
 King, Donovan W. - SEA
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 Kinloch, James M. - KOREA
 Kinney, Leo A., Jr. - KOREA
 Kittleson, Blair J. - CONUS
 Klann, William H., Jr. - SEA
 Klap, Herman E. - CONUS
 Knapp, James G. - CONUS
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 Korf, Ronald L. - CONUS
 Kosanke, Robert C. - KOREA
 Kowal, Glenn A. - SEA
 Kramer, Larry N. - SEA
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 Krushenisky, James J. - CONUS
 Kully, Michael P. - CONUS

Lammey, Larry D. - CONUS
 Lancaster, William J. - CONUS
 Langfelder, Normand - SEA
 Larock, William B. - KOREA
 Larson, Daniel L. - CONUS
 Laughlin, William L. - SEA
 Laulo, Wilbur M. - SEA
 Ledbetter, Robert A. - SEA
 Lee, Herbert I. - CONUS
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 Leeds, Warner M. - SEA
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 Leonard, Stephen E. - CONUS
 Leopold, Gary A. - KOREA
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 Lieblein, Edward M. - SEA
 Linam, Thomas W. - CONUS
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 Lovell, Samuel H. - KOREA
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 Lucas, David T. - KOREA
 Lucero, Antonio D. - SEA
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 Lungwitz, Ted B. - SEA
 Lutzow, John C. - CONUS
 Lynch, Charles L. - CONUS

MacLeod, Ira A. - CONUS
 Manasil, Robert L. - KOREA
 Mantych, David G. - CONUS
 Marlowe, William M. - CONUS
 Marooney, Vern T. - SEA
 Marquardt, James E. - SEA
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 Mathias, Monroe G. - CONUS
 Matthews, James M. - CONUS
 Mavrakis, Harry P. - KOREA
 Mayne, Karl G. - SEA
 McAreavey, Nancy A. - CONUS
 McCabe, Pat - SEA
 McCaleb, Elman R. - CONUS
 McCarley, Henry H. - SEA

McCash, Marvin R. - KOREA
 McCleanahan, Charles E. - CONUS
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 McHenry, John A. - JAPAN
 McKeon, Daniel F. - CONUS
 Meade, Thomas E. - SEA
 Mechling, Martin W. - SEA
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 Merten, Frederick R. - SEA
 Mestas, Gerald P. - SEA
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 Novak, James R. - CONUS

- Oakley, William L. - KOREA
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 Patsey, James D. - SEA
 Patsey, John F. - SEA
 Patsey, Thomas E. - CONUS
 Patterson, James E. - CONUS
 Paul, David L. - CONUS
 Payne, Robert A. - CONUS
 Payner, Robert E. - KOREA
 Pelon, Jack H. - SEA
 Perdue, Gary L. - SEA
 Perry, Louis M., Jr. - CONUS
 Persons, Grady L. - KOREA
 Peters, Gerald A. - CONUS
 Petersen, Dan R. - KOREA
 Peterson, Erwin C. - SEA
 Petrie, Patrick S. - CONUS
 Phillips, James W. - CONUS
 Pietramale, Raymond S. - KOREA
 Pigford, George H. - CONUS
 Plantell, Kenneth F.E. - CONUS
 Plese, James A. - CONUS
 Plunkett, Ronald D. - CONUS
 Pollice, John A., Jr. - SEA
 Polski, Robert C. - CONUS
 Poole, Stephen K. - KOREA
 Pottenger, Dennis E. - SEA
 Powell, John, Jr. - SEA
 Powell, Ray - CONUS
 Preisser, Chester J., Jr. - CONUS
 Prentiss, James D., Jr. - CONUS
 Price, Dale F. - SEA
 Pritchard, Russell J., Jr. - SEA
 Propp, Darryl D. - KOREA
 Proulx, Normand A. - CONUS
- Quinn, Richard L. - SEA
- Radetsky, Richard L. - SEA
 Rahn, Warren I. - SEA
 Raiford, Raymond F. - SEA
 Ramsey, Martin L. - CONUS
 Ranum, Kenneth E. - SEA
 Rathbone, Michael E. - SEA
 Rausch, Ralph W. - CONUS
 Rennick, Alan L. - SEA
 Reposa, Robert G. - SEA
 Reposa, Robert J. - CONUS
 Rensvold, David F. - CONUS
 Rensvold, Sandra L. - CONUS
 Rice, Steven J. - CONUS
 Rich, Jerald C. - CONUS
 Richards, Arthur W. - KOREA
 Richards, Lloyd O. - CONUS
 Rickloff, John H. - CONUS
 Riedel, Richard C. - SEA
 Riggs, Raymond D. - SEA
- Rikli, Roger A. - KOREA
 Risan, Thomas J. - SEA
 Rizzuto, Gerald A. - CONUS
 Robinette, Robert D. - CONUS
 Rogge, Richard J. - CONUS
 Roose, Jerry W. - SEA
 Roosbold, Ivo - CONUS
 Rosamond, Jack M. - CONUS
 Rosen, Gerald F. - CONUS
 Rosenberg, Gary L. - KOREA
 Ross, Kenneth E. - SEA
 Rossiter, Victor L. - KOREA
 Rossow, Eldon D. - SEA
 Rothenberg, Frederick - CONUS
 Rowan, Michael P. - SEA
 Rowland, Jackson B. - CONUS
 Roybal, David F. - SEA
 Roybal, Ernest J. - SEA
 Rubeck, David R. - CONUS
 Rurup, Leo A. - KOREA
 Rushmore, Marvin F. - SEA
 Ruybal, Dario, Jr. - SEA
- Sachs, Jeffrey H. - CONUS
 Sagar, Wayne E. - SEA
 Sage, Albert T. - KOREA
 Sanchez, Amado H., Jr. - SEA
 Sanchez, Moses B. - SEA
 Sanfilippo, James S. - CONUS
 Sanford, James R. - CONUS
 Sarmo, Thomas G. - CONUS
 Sater, Wayne A. - SEA
 Saucerman, Richard J. - KOREA
 Saunar, Percival T. - CONUS
 Savage, Daniel P. - CONUS
 Sayre, George M. - SEA
 Schlager, Lawrence R. - CONUS
 Schlechten, Mark A. - SEA
 Schell, William C. - CONUS
 Schmidt, Lail W., Jr. - CONUS
 Schneider, Duane L. - CONUS
 Schoech, Thomas C. - SEA
 Schreiber, Walter - CONUS
 Schroeder, Eugene A. - SEA
 Schubarth, Donald J. - SEA
 Schulz, Rudolf - SEA
 Schupback, Norman W. - KOREA
 Scott, Charles A. - CONUS
 Scott, Harry D. - CONUS
 Sefcovic, Robert S. - SEA
 Seiler, Clyde - SEA
 Selders, Vernon H. - CONUS
 Sentz, Richard P. - KOREA
 Serra, Harry A. - KOREA
 Seymour, Chalmers B. - CONUS
 Shafer, Dallas E. - CONUS
 Shank, Terry A. - CONUS
 Sharpley, Arthur E. - SEA
 Sharpley, David R. - KOREA
 Shay, Stephen A. - CONUS
 Sheldon, John M. - CONUS
 Sherlock, Robert J. - SEA
 Sherman, Donald G. - CONUS
 Sherr, Robert D. - CONUS
 Shidler, Zalle - KOREA
 Shook, George M. - SEA
 Sill, Roger C. - SEA
 Silvants, Ronald R. - SEA
 Simpson, Glen G., Jr. - SEA
 Sims, Robert L. - CONUS
 Simsick, Joseph R. - SEA
 Singer, Arnold E. - SEA
 Singer, Paul D. - CONUS
 Sjoberg, Charles D. - CONUS
 Slack, Richard K. - SEA
 Slatkin, Sander J. - SEA
 Slatton, Harley G. - SEA
 Sluss, Lawrence A. - CONUS
 Small, Robert E. - SEA
 Smith, Donald E. - SEA
 Smith, Galen J. - SEA
 Smith, Kenneth L. - SEA
 Smith, Raymond C. - CONUS
 Smith, Robert C. - SEA
- Smith, William R. - KOREA
 Snodgrass, Charles E. - SEA
 Snyder, Donald R. - CONUS
 Snyder, Leonard J. - SEA
 Snyder, William R. - KOREA
 Solberg, Ralph M. - SEA
 Soll, Richard D. - CONUS
 Soltis, James M. - SEA
 Somers, Gerald F. - CONUS
 Sorensen, Stuart J. - SEA
 Sorenson, Michael L. - SEA
 Spainhower, Burl E. - SEA
 Sparks, Richard R. - KOREA
 Spesshardt, William - CONUS
 Spurlin, Melvin D. - CONUS
 Spurling, Thomas E. - CONUS
 Stallsworth, John W. - CONUS
 Stamps, Lee R. - CONUS
 Stanley, Reynolds D. - CONUS
 Starcevic, Andrew R. - KOREA
 Stark, Stephen M. - CONUS
 Stavola, James F. - CONUS
 Stein, Barry S. - CONUS
 Stein, Sanford N. - CONUS
 Steinmetz, Jon H. - SEA
 Steller, Gary E. - CONUS
 Stertz, Herbert E. - CONUS
 Stevens, David A. - SEA
 Stevens, Gale D.V. - KOREA
 Stevenson, Robert C. - SEA
 Stewart, Robert J. - SEA
 Stipp, Clouris S. - SEA
 Stone, Ewel H. - SEA
 Strickland, Harvey L. - CONUS
 Stritt, James C. - SEA
 Suhr, William F. - SEA
 Summey, Jimmy E. - SEA
 Surprenant, Thomas R. - CONUS
 Suson, Irwin J. - SEA
 Sutherland, Gary R. - SEA
 Svoboda, James E. - CONUS
 Swan, Harry A. - KOREA
 Swenson, John E. - SEA
- Talbot, Lauren S. - SEA
 Taylor, Joseph E. - CONUS
 Taylor, Michael M. - KOREA
 Terhark, Scott A. - SEA
 Terroux, Gordon - SEA
 Thebado, Frederick A., Jr. - SEA
 Thomas, Charles G. - CONUS
 Thomas, Rodney C. - KOREA
 Thomas, Theodore J. - SEA
 Thomas, Victor C. - CONUS
 Thomas, William M. - CONUS
 Thompson, Donald W. - CONUS
 Thompson, Larry V. - CONUS
 Thornal, Roye G. - SEA
 Tikal, Kenneth J. - SEA
 Timm, Gloria A. - CONUS
 Timm, Henry H. - CONUS
 Tober, John M. - SEA
 Tobias, Pedro - SEA
 Tobin, Martin - CONUS
 Todd, Timothy W. - SEA
 Toles, Ronald E. - SEA
 Tongish, Marion J. - KOREA
 Travis, Jack E. - CONUS
 Travis, Richard D. - SEA
 Trout, Walter E. - SEA
 Troxell, Donald V. - SEA
 Troxler, Lowell W., Jr. - SEA
 Trujillo, Herman B. - SEA
 Tucker, William T. - SEA
 Tuft, Edward S. - CONUS
 Tulloh, Bruce A. - CONUS
 Turner, Kenneth M. - SEA
 Turner, Robert M. - SEA
 Tweeddale, Thomas J. - CONUS
- Ulrich, Gurney A. - CONUS
 Underhill, Robert E. - CONUS
 Urioste, Thomas J. - KOREA
- Valente, Larry F. - CONUS
 Valentin, Peter A. - SEA
 Valentine, Arthur D. - CONUS
 Valiant, Michael J. - SEA
 Vandapool, David R. - SEA
 Vandeest, Theodore W., Jr. - SEA
 Venderweit, Stanley J. - SEA
 Van Lewen, Melvin C. - GNLND
 Vargason, Jon C. - SEA
 Vaughan, Michael W. - CONUS
 Venden, Darwyn L. - CONUS
 Viau, Jean P. - CONUS
 Viera, William J. - CONUS
 Villani, Nicholas E. - CONUS
 Virden, James M. - SEA
 Vogel, Kenneth W. - CONUS
 Votaw, John F. - SEA
- Wade, Donald D. - SEA
 Wade, Ronald R. - SEA
 Wagner, Jerry H. - CONUS
 Walker, Gerald W. - CONUS
 Walter, Terry M. - SEA
 Wallingford, Jerry L. - KOREA
 Walpole, Edward J. - CONUS
 Waltz, Robert J. - CONUS
 Wamser, Richard G. - SEA
 Warner, Robert E. - KOREA
 Warren, David K. - KOREA
 Warren, Ronald E. - CONUS
 Waugh, John L. - CONUS
 Weader, Ammon E. - CONUS
 Webb, Sidney L. - CONUS
 Weckbaugh, John K. - SEA
 Weckbaugh, Walter S. - CONUS
 Weeaks, Roy L. - SEA
 Weiss, Joseph D. - KOREA
 Welborn, Larry E. - CONUS
 Wells, Curtis W. - CONUS
 Welp, Dennis L. - SEA
 Welp, Mervin D. - CONUS
 White, Donald L. - SEA
 White, Orlando M. - CONUS
 White, Ronald - CONUS
 Wicks, Ronald A. - CONUS
 Wieder, George J. - SEA
 Wieder, Lewis A. - SEA
 Wieder, William O. - CONUS
 Wiest, Richard L. - SEA
 Wiley, Gerald H. - KOREA
 Wiley, Sidney K. - KOREA
 Wilhite, Jack E. - SEA
 Williams, Gordon A. - SEA
 Williams, Jefferson - KOREA
 Williams, Jerry L. - SEA
 Williams, Walter E. - CONUS
 Willis, Wilburn E. - SEA
 Wilson, James C. - SEA
 Wilson, William J. - SEA
 Winters, Donald L. - SEA
 Witten, Thomas A. - CONUS
 Wittstock, Michael J. - SEA
 Wolach, Barry S. - KOREA
 Wolf, Timothy A. - CONUS
 Wolken, John P. - SEA
 Wood, Donald N. - CONUS
 Wood, Stanley C. - SEA
 Wood, Willard C. - SEA
 Woodward, Dean A. - SEA
 Woodward, William R., Jr. - KOREA
 Worden, Frederic G. - CONUS
 Worley, Martin J. - SEA
 Wormus, Dale L. - KOREA
 Wright, Lawrence D. - SEA
 Wyckoff, Dan L., Jr. - SEA
 Wyckoff, Russel N. - CONUS
- Yandell, Jack H. - KOREA
- Ziemer, David G. - KOREA
 Zinko, Donald J. - SEA
 Zorens, Ray E. - SEA
 Zweygardt, John A. - SEA

God's love is present

I have 25 years of memories that stir up a wide spectrum of emotions as I reflect on how I tried to bring God to people and people to God. They range from:

Fuel tank explosions to refuelings over the Pacific
Plane crashes to rides . . . halfway around the globe,
Fatal auto accidents to bus rides to the range,
Marriages that blossomed to divorces that left scars,
Monotonous UTAs to exciting deployments,
Hilarious Dining-Ins to mess-hall table talk.
We cried together and laughed together,
We worked together and played together,
We planned together and prayed together.

We left a little bit of ourselves in each other and received a blessing. We discovered that it was people — Colorado ANG people — that made it all worthwhile.

God's love is present . . . as we are Colorado Guardsmen together.

Chaplain (Col.) Victor Hoops (1988)



Buckley wedding: Chaplain Victor Hoops conducted vows for Sgt. Harley Slatton and Judith Rose at the base chapel in 1969. Spike and Marie Boyle participated in the ceremony.

Back at Buckley

The Guard's attention shifted away from Vietnam and back to more mundane, but important, issues. Women became "equal partners" in a totally integrated force. SSgt. Virginia McCann took the enlistment oath in May 1969, becoming the first COANG female enlisted member. McCann, who transferred from the Air Force Reserve, was sworn in by Maj. Donald J. David, chief of personnel.

Two other personnel changes occurred a month later. Maj. France took charge of the 120th TFS and Williams, 140th TFW commander, and Marooney cut away Bob Cherry's silver leaves and replaced them with colonel's eagles.

Appropriately, the year ended with a humanitarian mission in

"Flintstone Airlines": Tour for Navajo children after C-54 relief mission to their Farmington, N.M., reservation, 1969.



Dynamic duo

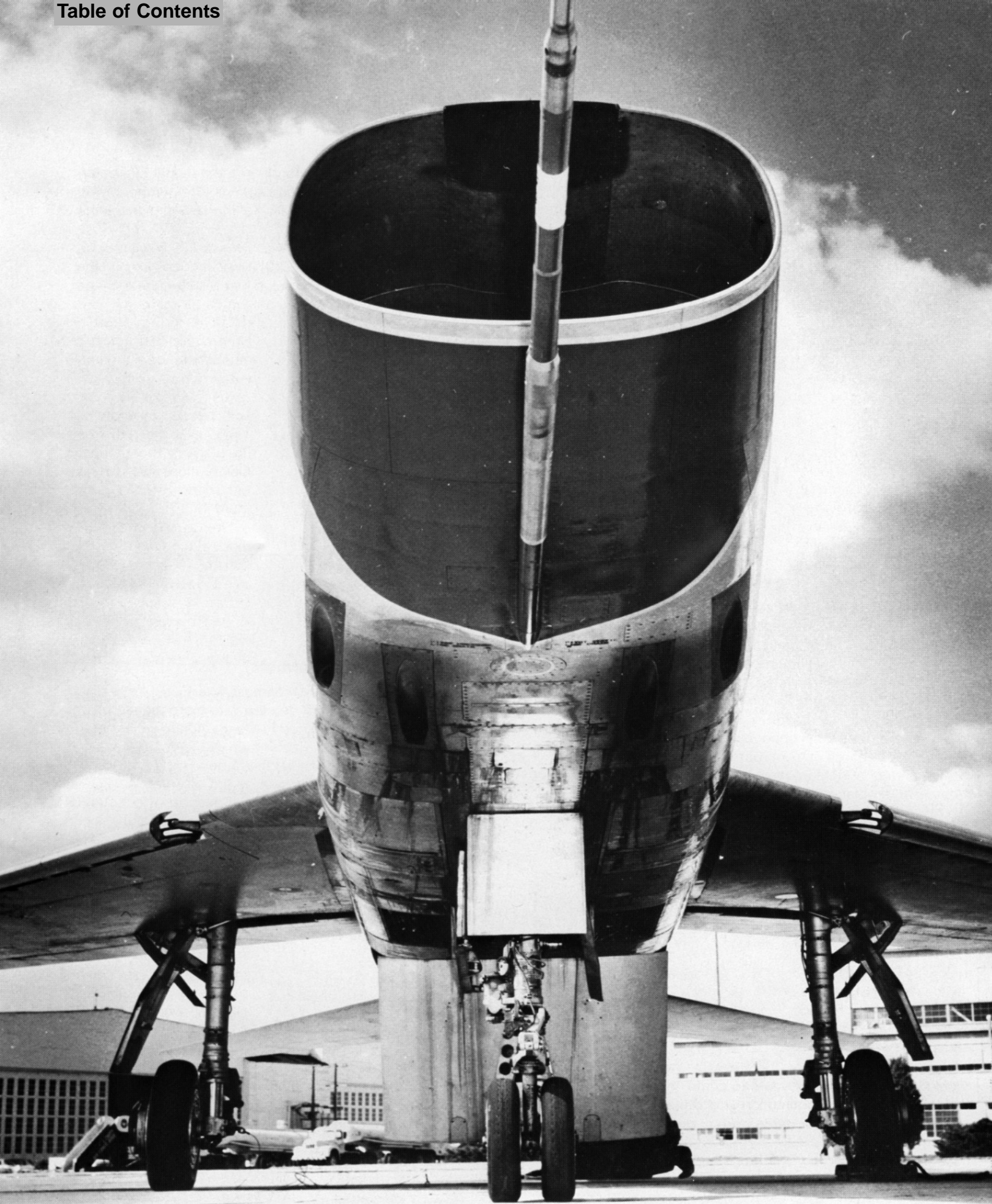
The good Lord and Uncle Sam have been good to us.
Col. Edward J. Villano

the "spirit of the season." In December, Maj. Gen. Moffitt made a trip with the Guard's C-54, loaded with more than 2 tons of food and clothing, to assist needy Navajo Indian families at the Baptist Shepherd Mission, Farmington, N.M. A similar mission had been flown two years earlier to Window Rock, Ariz., during an eight-day snowstorm that isolated the reservation.

The Navajo relief mission ended a decade of substantial impact on the Colorado ANG. Buckley came into its own as an ANG base. The "Old Guard," with its rich heritage, began to relinquish control to an equally capable and innovative "New Guard." Through the use of inflight refueling, the Air Guard conquered the world . . . nonstop. Skills were honed and tested going in, and coming out, of Vietnam. Thus, the Colorado ANG gained eminence as a combat-ready, worldwide-deployable organization.

First woman: Maj. Don David swears in Virginia McCann, first COANG female (non-nurse) enlistee, May 1969.





Gone but not forgotten: Last used by the Colorado Air National Guard in 1974, the *Super Sabre's* service, as a peacetime deterrent and wartime weapon, earned the "Hun" an everlasting place of honor in the annals of military aviation history.

The Seventies . . . historical overview

The 1970s was a decade of disillusionment, political instability and economic difficulty for the country. The war in Vietnam dominated the early years. Although the number of U.S. troops in Vietnam fell below 400,000 in 1970 (from a 1969 high of 543,000), war protests at home reached tragic proportions. In May 1970, four students were killed at Kent State University in anti-war rioting and during that same year nearly 450 colleges and universities closed or were disrupted by strikes. It was no longer possible for the average American to be unconcerned about the war.

1971 saw the release of the secret Pentagon Papers and the conviction of 1st Lt. William Calley, Jr. for premeditated murder in the massacre at My Lai. Three Soviet cosmonauts died when their *Soyuz II* spacecraft depressurized on its return from space. In an effort to end the Vietnam War victoriously (the "light at the end of the tunnel"), U.S. forces began bombing Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam, further dividing the citizens at home. Nevertheless, President Richard Nixon easily won reelection in 1972 over Democratic anti-war candidate George McGovern. By the end of 1973 a cease-fire agreement had been signed with North Vietnam and U.S. troop strength was below 24,000.

The United States was officially out of the war with the withdrawal of the country's last civilians from Saigon in April 1975, but the memory of Vietnam would be bitter for many years to come. In its wake the 26th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, giving 18-year-olds the right to vote, and the military draft was phased out. The nation's attention slowly, but dramatically, shifted from war to politics in the early '70s.

In 1972, five men were arrested inside the Democratic National Headquarters in Washington's Watergate complex. Congressional hearings on the break-in began later that year before Federal Judge John J. Sirica and the investigations

that followed opened new wounds in the national character. The investigations led to the resignations of a number of top presidential aides and eventually to the resignation of the president in August 1974.

Gerald R. Ford, who became vice president following Spiro Agnew's resignation in October 1973, succeeded Nixon in the White House and began the long, difficult task of healing the nation's spirit. In the process he would grant a full and controversial pardon to Nixon, extend limited amnesty to Vietnam draft evaders and military deserters, survive two assassination attempts in 1975, lead the nation in its glorious Bicentennial Celebration, and lose his bid to be elected president in 1976.

The country chose former Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter to be its 39th president. Leonid I. Brezhnev became head of the Soviet state as well as general secretary of the Communist Party. In 1978, *Double Eagle II* made history's first trans-Atlantic balloon crossing.

Under President Carter, the U.S. signed a 15-nation nuclear proliferation pact in 1977 and the SALT I agreement with the Soviet Union in 1979. Carter also brought Israel and Egypt together to sign the historic framework for peace at Camp David in March 1979. But these efforts, along with major advances in environmental protection legislation, were overshadowed by the spectres of inflation and unemployment

which reached staggering levels by the end of the decade. On top of this, 52 Americans were taken hostage at the American Embassy in Teheran, Iran, and Carter's inability to free them made the country look and feel weak and ineffective.

The nation cried out for new leadership which would restore its self-confidence and pride and return it to a stable economy. By the end of the decade, America was ready for a change.



wings of the Rockies over Holland

May Get Long-Awaited Aircraft

... of the Colorado Air National Guard...

General Praises A7D Jet

General Praises A7D Jet... The A7D is a... Colorado Air National Guard...

Colo. Guard Seeks Technicians To Service New A7D Planes

Colo. Guard Seeks Technicians To Service New A7D Planes... The Colorado Air National Guard...

Nixon resigns

Ed Mack Miller Dies at 56

Nixon resigns... Ed Mack Miller Dies at 56... A Colorado Air National Guard pilot...

Pilot parachutes to safety

FAT, DUMB AND HAPPY

FIFTY-TWO MONTHS! Four and a third years without an accident, flying sixteen tons of iron with no flaps! The 140th is the proverbial 40 pound robin when it comes to our accident...

et peace accords reached;

Ws to be released in 60 days



It's a magnificent airplane... you can drive nails with it!

Remember a time when it would move over to make it...

Air Guard Goes to Turkey

Air Guard Goes to Turkey... The Colorado Air National Guard...

Scores dead, hundreds hurt

n Big Thompson flash flood



Amerikaanse weekend-vliegers

boven Nederland

Colorado Air Guard

First Ready in A7D

BUCKLEY REX RILEY RATED



Moffitt Will Retire

s Adjutant General



Air Guard Ready



Super Bowl bound!



Pilots killed in Vietnam are honored



Buckley Fuel-Tank Blast Kills Five

Buckley Fuel-Tank Blast Kills Five... The Colorado Air National Guard...



Oefening van 12 tot en met 16 september

Amerikaanse luchtmacht bij toeval in „Cold Fire”

Amerikaanse luchtmacht bij toeval in „Cold Fire”... The Colorado Air National Guard...

citizen-soldier unit from Colorado and





A-7 Corsair II: Rated at the time as one of the nation's most accurate navigation and weapons delivery systems, the first single-engine, single-seat, close-air-support A-7D *Corsair II* arrived in Colorado in late 1973. In 1975, the 140th Tactical Fighter Wing became the *first* A-7D Air National Guard unit to attain full combat-ready status.

The Seventies

During the Colorado ANG's 11 months of Vietnam service, they established a reputation as one of the best tactical fighter squadrons in the theater — a distinction not lost on the other Air Guard units that went to Vietnam. Colorado proved the combat-ready status and professionalism of the Air Guard.

New challenges faced the organization in the 1970s. As with every previous deactivation and subsequent loss of personnel, the COANG turned its attention to rebuilding the fighter wing. Also, a new tactical control group was established at Buckley in late 1971. A major base maintenance and operations distinction that year, the Rex Riley Award, was followed by a new generation of aircraft — the A-7 *Corsair II* — in 1974. A year later, the 140th TFW became the first ANG A-7 unit to attain full combat-ready status. The control group and fighter wing participated in many exercises and deployments during the decade, increasing their viability as members of the total force. The 140th TFW became the first Air Force or ANG unit to deploy to a Dutch base when they went to Gilze-Rijen AB in the Netherlands in 1977. Deployments to Panama and Turkey late in the decade secured the COANG's reputation as a "wheels up" worldwide mobile unit.

Rebuilding Process

Re-enlistments in the Air Guard dropped off following the unit's return from its South Vietnam active duty tour. 140th TFW Commander Brig. Gen. Walt Williams recalled the late 1950s as he looked toward rebuilding the unit: "We had a serious recruiting problem then — there was an anti-military environment that made it difficult to get good men into the organization. There's a similar environment today and the prospect of a zero draft presents a real challenge for us to keep fully manned and retain a high readiness level." Williams began an intensive recruitment program, aimed primarily at men with prior armed forces service. Said Williams about the prospect of a no-draft, all-volunteer environment: "It presents a challenge to us to provide better management, better training and more interesting and rewarding duty for our people."

In an unfortunate, but necessary, outgrowth of the era of civil protests, about 700 Colorado National Guardsmen and 200 Denver policemen stood guard at the University of Denver campus in May 1970 while workmen tore down "Woodstock West." Although there was no violence as a result of the anti-war demonstration, several individuals were arrested at the shantytown

site. Gov. John Love had called up the Guard to deal with the four-day campus disturbance.

In 1970 and 1971 the unit took part in exercises in Puerto Rico and Alaska. In October 1971, the 120th TFS received 22 F-100D

Super Sabres from the 48th TFW at RAF Lakenheath, England, as replacements for 23 "C" models. During the same time frame, Lt. Col. John L. France was appointed commander of the 140th TFG, succeeding Col. Bob Cherry, who became



Long legs: In a vivid testimonial to the Air Force's total force concept, the COANG took its fleet of A-7s worldwide in the late 1970s, deploying to Gilze-Rijen AB, Netherlands, in 1977, Howard AFB, Republic of Panama, in 1978 and Merzifon AB, Turkey, in 1979.

Aviation Perspective

The war in Vietnam lingered into the 1970s, with increased air strikes on the North. 1972 became the "Year of the Aces." Flying a 555th TFS F-4 *Phantom* out of Udorn Royal Thai AFB, future Colorado Air Guardsman Capt. Steve Ritchie became the first and only Air Force *pilot ace* in Southeast Asia. The Thailand-based "Triple Nickel's" status as the war's top-scoring squadron was further enhanced by the second and leading Air Force ace, Capt. Charles DeBellevue, with six confirmed kills.

Just as the three five's proved lucky for Ritchie and DeBellevue, the normally unlucky number 13 proved fortunate for Capt. Jeffrey Feinstein of the 13th TFS, as he became the third and final Air Force ace of the war.

The talk of the decade was Lockheed's C-5A *Galaxy*, the largest aircraft in the world. Although the giant transport posed some maintenance problems upon entering service in 1969, by the mid-seventies it was being flown routinely, frequently into Buckley ANGB. Operating under the premise that "bigger means better," MAC sent its entire fleet of 270 mission-proven C-141A *Starlifters* back to Lockheed for extension modification as "stretch" C-141Bs. The first C-141B flew in 1977.

With the end of Vietnam came the push for a Total Force. By the mid-'70s the ANG and Air Force Reserve were picking up a larger percentage of the Air Force's overall global commitment. Beginning in the late 1970s, the air defense of the Panama Canal was accomplished entirely with Air National Guard tactical resources on a monthly rotational basis, named "Coronet Cove." MAC's Guard and Reserve C-130 "Volant Oak" mission provided airlift support. SAC Reserve units also entered the picture by providing inflight refueling capability with KC-135 *Stratotankers*.

The late 1970s sat on the cutting edge of technology. Many experimental aircraft were introduced at air shows around the world and a few, like the McDonnell Douglas F-15 *Eagle* and Fairchild's A-10 *Thunderbolt*, made it into the Air Force inventory. Neither a fighter nor an attack plane, the E-3A with its definitive radome became an essential part of the TAC fleet, providing Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) services in complex air-combat scenarios.

With high-tech aircraft such as these, the Air Force was clearly in step with what would come in the next decade.



Coveted honor: Lt. Col. Sidney Webb accepts the Rex Riley Transient Service Award, an Air National Guard first.

140th TFW director of operations.

The wing furnished the command structure and three fighter squadrons for "Sentry Guard Strike IV" in 1972, an ambitious and highly successful Army and Air Guard training exercise. Directed by Williams, more than 35,000 men from 15 states participated in the huge war exercise designed to improve the working relationship between air and ground National Guard forces.

Rex Riley Award

In early April 1971, Buckley ANG Base was selected to receive the *Rex Riley Award*, which has been maintained to the

Recruiting assistance

Several years ago, the recruiters made up cards that read, "You've just been assisted by a member of the Colorado ANG . . . have a good day." It was a pretty good recruiting tool. I remember Herman Klap gave those cards out to lots of people, including many attractive young ladies. Funny thing, we weren't recruiting women back in those days.

Col. William McGaffin

Woodstock West: "Super recruiter" Herman Klap issuing riot gear to SMSgt. Tom Linam and TSgt. Frank Stevens.



Col. Mason remembers

Making the trip to Buckley NAS in June 1956 was one of my most intelligent decisions. The people, the experience and the places all added to a continuance that has been rich. People, like Moffitt, Williams and Marooney, passed on to us a grand heritage that continues today with a high standard of excellence that is rare and priceless. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be a part of the Mile High Militia.

Col. Arvey Mason

present. In an article which originally appeared in the *Denver Post*, veteran staff writer Dan Partner described the accomplishment:

"Rex Riley is a mythical Air Force character who carefully inspects crews and equipment at transient bases and recom-

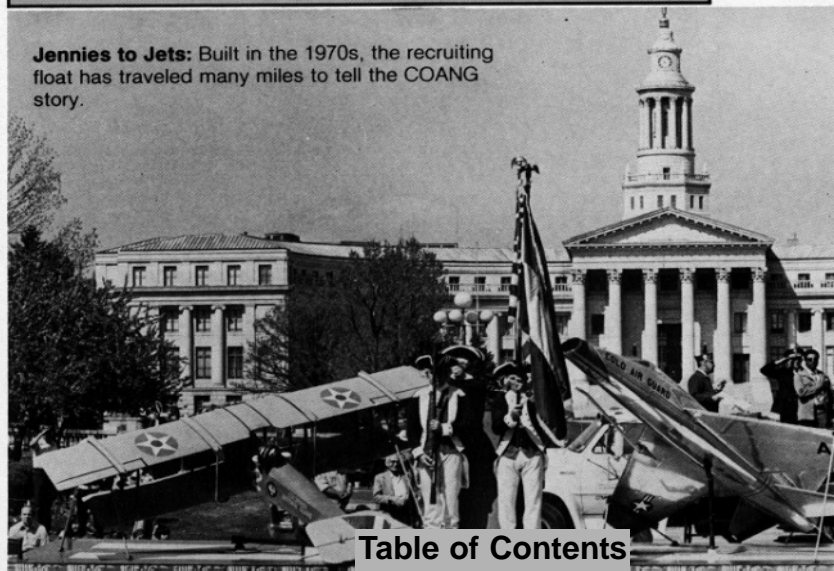
A tale about four Guardsmen

Once upon a time there were four Air National Guardsmen — *Somebody, Everybody, Anybody and Nobody*. They were odd people and hard to understand. Some of their attitudes about recruiting and retention were a shame, and *Everybody* knew it. *Somebody* was always running down anything *Anybody* tried to do for recruiting and retention, and *Everybody* knew it was wrong. *Everybody* should have helped, *Anybody* could have helped, but only *Nobody* cared.

All four Guardsmen belonged to a unit that had a critical manning problem. *Everybody* realized the importance of the problem. *Somebody* wanted to recruit but couldn't because he wasn't talking to *Anybody*. *Nobody* was faithful at recruiting and retention, and *Nobody* used the recruiting and retention materials available. *Everybody* thought *Somebody* was recruiting and *Everybody* should have helped, but *Everybody* thought *Anybody* could do better than he could. A fellow Guardsman's enlistment was up and *Everybody* thought *Somebody* should talk to him about re-enlisting. *Anybody* could have made the effort, but didn't. Do you know who finally talked to him? *Nobody*.

MSgt. Bill Stark

Jennies to Jets: Built in the 1970s, the recruiting float has traveled many miles to tell the COANG story.





Bunny bar: Official representatives from Denver's Playboy Club visit the Officers/NCO Club's Perry Jefferson Room, 1970.

... And one giant leap for ...

Before Tommy Joe Nicholson was famous for jumping out of A-7s, he was world famous for jumping over bars . . . not high bars, beer bars! This man, with springs for knees, could jump so high his head made skid marks on the ceiling!

Maj. Mike Paradise



Keep your tips up: Brig. Gen. Walt Williams at water survival training, USAF Academy, early 1970s.

Water sports

We were on water survival at the Air Force Academy. John France pushed me in and I pulled in Bill Wilson with me. Wilson couldn't swim a lick. He climbed up on me and used me as a ladder to get out. I had my camera with me and it ended up on the bottom of the lake.

Col. Jack Wilhite



Flintstone mercy mission: Incubator containing 4-pound premature "Baby Sanchez," suffering from a breathing defect, is loaded aboard the COANG's C-54 for emergency flight from Grand Junction to Denver Children's hospital. Loadmaster Howard Bellis at the hatch, aircraft commander Bill Axton on the right, crew chief Larry Sell assisting, September 1970.

Baby Sanchez

We made a lot of mercy flights. Several months after we took a premature baby to Denver's Children's Hospital, we received a letter from the parents telling us that Baby Sanchez was doing well. The flight was routine but it was a nice feeling to be a part of the baby's survival.

Lt. Col. Bill Axton

mends awards by the Office of Aerospace Safety. The awards always go to regular Air Force bases — that is, until Buckley Air National Guard Base broke the pattern. As a result of outstanding service to Air Force and other transient military aircraft, crews and passengers, Buckley now has the unique distinction of being the only Air National Guard base displaying the Rex Riley award. Experience of maintenance personnel was the key to the superior service evaluation.

"The 24-hour operation that handled 9,534 aircraft last year is manned by the base maintenance division, commanded by Lt. Col. Sidney L. Webb. SMSgt. Kenneth Balkenbush is aircraft maintenance NCOIC for the 84-man unit that supports all transient operations. All operations fall under Buckley's commander, Col. Walter Schreiber. During a 30-day period, almost every type of military aircraft makes a stop at Buckley. Carrier-based Navy fighters and bombers refuel on transcontinental flights as they shuttle from fleet to fleet, and Marine Corps fighters are seen frequently. Aircraft belonging to government agencies also are serviced at the field.

"NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) planes have been regular visitors, as Martin Marietta Corp. and Ball Brothers Research Corp. have major contracts in the Skylab space project. The largest aircraft serviced by the transient alert crews are the Air Force C-5A and the *Super Guppy*, which are used to transport Skylab units and the Titan space booster.

Space base

I worked base security mids in the late '70s. It was a strange shift. An individual showed up at the main gate once, telling us he had scheduled a rendezvous with a flying saucer. On another occasion, we received a call from the passenger terminal, asking us to come get a retiree . . . trying to catch a hop to Mars.

TSgt. William Pelletier