

USAF Recruiting Alumni Association Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2024

Meeting was called to order by President Matt Macho at 10:10 am. Members present were: Matt Macho, Bob Cantu, Billy McAllan, Mary Gandolfo and Stan Staples via telephone. MSgt Chris Balderas was in attendance representing Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS). Members absent were: Tino Tinoco, Carl Childs, Andy Coppi, Dale Ullrich, Greg Valdez, Danny Roby and Ed Curbelo.

Minutes from the March 13, 2024 meeting were reviewed and approved.

There was a death in our membership, Vermelle Smith. She will be mentioned in the TAPS section of our next newsletter. There was also a suicide reported in AFRS, a recruiter in Montana. Our heartfelt condolences go out to their families.

Stan reported that we are in good standing financially, all liabilities have been paid. The current bank account balances are as follows: \$2,444.73 in the general fund, \$20,883.92 in our blue suit fund and \$33,351.76 in our monument fund. We currently have 62 members paid in full. We need to recruit members!

Brigadier General Lisa Craig's retirement ceremony is this Friday, May 10, 2024 at 10:00 am. It will be held on Randolph AFB in Hangar 5. All members were invited to attend.

Thank you letters for the Blue Suit XLV celebrations were sent to Brigadier General Amrhein and Clarence Kahlig.

A review of the Blue Suit week was done starting with arrival day. Pick up from the airport and delivery to the hotel went very smoothly. The combination of active-duty Chiefs and retired members was a good combination. The vehicles from North Park Lincoln were outstanding!

The La Margarita dinner was again a success. Next year we need to make sure a seating chart is available for all attendees to actually see. It would be a help in making sure everybody gets their information clearly. Also, make sure the Air Force and US flags get into the center pieces.

The official welcome at AFRS went well. It was mentioned that everyone should be able to ring the bell.

The Chamber of Commerce evening went very well. Matt Macho and Andy Coppi represented the Air Force Recruiting Alumni Association (AFRAA) that evening.

The next day was the ranch ... which was a huge success. The only glitch this year was no flyover due to mechanical difficulties and weather. The food was great and well planned ... only 6 meals left.

The trip to Lackland went well also but the schedule was really tight. It was suggested that next year we sponsor a barbecue lunch at the school so some of the events can be consolidated and put a little more flexibility in the schedule. Students, Blue Suit winners and their guests and AFRAA members would be invited to attend. It was also mentioned that AFRS leadership should be included in the invitation.

The banquet was very nice. The photo booth went over very well and the food was good. The meal was served to tables this year, not a buffet service.

We will be planning a picnic at the Cantu Ranch after next year's Blue Suit. This will be an opportunity to say thank you and recognize all the time and effort spent in making Blue Suit a first-rate event.

The next order of business was the Bag Dragger newsletter. Due to illness, it was not published on time so we will publish a Blue Suit focused newsletter this time in early June. All articles were requested to be submitted to Mary Gandolfo by May 15, 2024. Future articles were also requested so next time there won't be any issues with getting the newsletter published in a timely manner. For the June issue the following was requested with a May 15 deadline:

Matt Macho President's Notes
MSgt Balderas access to the Blue Suit pictures
Stan Staples article about Vermelle Smith

For the September issue the following was requested:

MSgt Balderas Resilience Article
 Miss America article
 New Vice Commander Biography

Matt Macho President's Notes

The final bits of business included the website ... more about that next month. We will also include discussions about the monument and the school. It was decided that we would not continue our membership with the Hispanic Chamber of San Antonio.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2024 at the Cantu Ranch at 10:00 am. President Matt will forward an agenda to the board prior to the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Mary Gandolfo

Secretary, AFRAA