



Jan-Mar 2017

LI 202 AFA news

Chapter Officers

Fred DiFabio	President
Steve Latus	Vice President
Ray Donnelly	VP Corporate Development
Cathy Ward	Secretary
Bill Stratemeier	Treasurer

Visit us on the WEB:

LIAFA.ORG

Visit us on FACEBOOK:

Long Island Air Force Association – LIAFA

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2017

Vietnam Medal Ceremonies:

Feb 18, 2017

Cradle of Aviation Museum
Garden City
11:00 AM

Apr 8, 2017

Museum of American Armor
Bethpage
11:30 AM

Jun 10, 2017

LI State Veterans Home
Stony Brook
2:00 PM

Jul 20, 2017

Shootout for Soldiers at Town of
Oyster Bay Field of Dreams
Massapequa
5:00 PM

Sep 9, 2017

Cradle of Aviation Museum
Garden City
11:00 AM

Nov 4, 2017

Museum of American Armor
Bethpage
11:30 AM

Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony (Dropping of the Roses):

Dec. 7, 2017

American Airpower Museum
Farmingdale
10:30 AM

President's Message

As 2017 rolls in, our Long Island Air Force Association chapter has embarked on a very aggressive schedule. We are restructuring and streamlining the chapter with new ideas and more membership involvement.

We are hoping to have more members involved in the program and ceremonies through the coming year. It's a great time to get involved.

Last year our 50th Vietnam Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremonies presented 450 medals honoring Long Island veterans; this was a great success. We were fortunate to have Congressmen Israel and Zeldin, Congresswoman Rice, Senators Martins, Venditto and Crocci, and Suffolk County Executive Bellone assisting in the presentations.

Also assisting in the medal presentations from the military side were Major General Kropp (USA Ret), Brigadier General Owens (ANG), Col. Bank (ANG), Col. Canders (ANG Ret), Col. Broccoli (ANG), and Col. Stratemeier (ANG Ret).

Our 75th Pearl Harbor Memorial (Dropping of the Roses) on December 7 at the American Airpower Museum was an overwhelming success with a record turnout. The chapter also dedicated a Pearl Harbor Plaque to the memory of the Pearl Harbor Survivors. The plaque is actually 3 separate plaques mounted on a common base. The middle (and largest) one shows the history of the Dropping of the Roses Ceremony, while the other 2 flanking plaques list the Long Island Pearl Harbor survivors and the supporters who made it all possible. The plaque is on permanent loan to the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale.

Please see the picture on the following page.

Don't waste your Air Force talents by sitting home. Get up and get involved. You'll be glad you did!

Fred DiFabio, President



Pearl Harbor Plaque

More on the 75th Pearl Harbor Memorial (Dropping of the Roses) on December 7, 2016

We were honored to welcome Pearl Harbor survivors Gerard Barbosa (gunner's mate on the light cruiser USS Raleigh) and Seymour Blutt (of the 11th Bombardment Group, Army Air Corps, Hickam Field) as well as Pearl Harbor survivor widows Debby DuBrul, Rosemary Halleran and Joyce Tupper.

During the ceremony, AFA Northeast Region President Maxine Rauch presented Fred DiFabio, President of LIAFA and chief organizer of this event, with a plaque commemorating his winning an AFA Exceptional Service Award for 2016.

After the colors were retired and the indoor ceremony ended around noontime, 76 roses (75 red roses, with 1 white rose for 9/11) were presented to the pilots of the GEICO Skytypers, who then departed to drop the roses over the Statue of Liberty at 12:55 PM to mark the exact time of the Pearl Harbor attack. That was the plan, anyway, but due to inclement weather, the actual dropping of the roses took place the following day.

Some pictures from the event are on the following pages.



(Seated, L to R): Pearl Harbor survivors Gerard Barbosa and Seymour Blutt

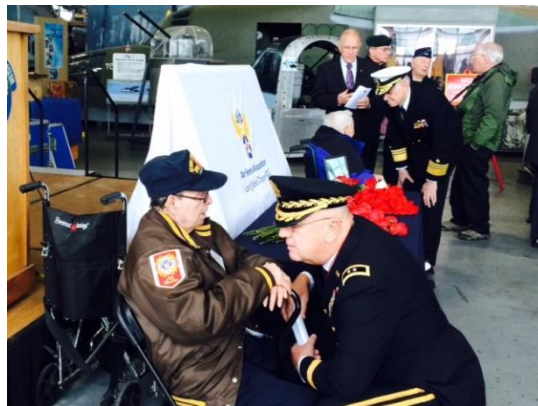


The audience inside the hangar.



In plane: pilot Jim Record, backseater Joe Daly

(L to R in review line): Fred DiFabio (LIAFA president), Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Anthony Kropp, Col. Nicholas Broccoli (Vice Commander, ANG 106th Rescue Wing), Domitilo Pastorin (Commander, USN Operational Support Center Long Island) and Col. (Ret.) Bill Stratemeier (LIAFA Chief of Staff and Treasurer).



Maj Gen Kropp with Gerard Barbosa

Hail, Farewell and Welcome!

The Long Island Air Force Association would like to express its heartfelt best wishes and Godspeed to Joe Battaglia on the occasion of his recent retirement as the President of Telephonics. Mr. Battaglia's successful leadership of Telephonics and long career in the defense industry was recognized in his receiving the prestigious Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Award presented by the US Navy League to an individual or organization that has made an exemplary contribution to the enhancement of U.S. maritime strength and, in turn, to the national security of the United States.

We are grateful to Joe and Telephonics for their steadfast support of the LI Air Force Association since 2005 and wish him all the best in the next chapter of his life. At the same time, we offer hearty congratulations to the incoming President of Telephonics, Kevin McSweeney. Kevin, who most recently served as Chief Operating Officer for Telephonics, joined Telephonics in 2004 as the Vice President and General Manager of the Radar Division. The LI Air Force Association looks forward to a strong continuing relationship with Telephonics as the company goes from strength to strength under Kevin's leadership.

DATELINE 19 APRIL 1967: Skies over Vietnam - 50 Years Ago

Over North Vietnam, Air Force Maj. Leo K. Thorsness, from the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron, and his electronic warfare officer, Capt. Harold E. Johnson, destroy two enemy surface-to-air missile sites, and then shoot down a MiG-17 before escorting search-and-rescue helicopters to a downed aircrew. Although his F-105 fighter-bomber was very low on fuel, Major Thorsness attacked four more MiG-17s in an effort to draw the enemy aircraft away from the downed aircrew. Awarded the Medal of Honor for his courageous action this day, Major Thorsness did not receive his medal until 1973—on April 30, 1967, he was shot down over North Vietnam and spent the next six years as a prisoner of war. Upon leaving the military, Thorsness served as Director of Civic Affairs for Litton Industries from 1979 to 1985. He then served as a State Senator in Washington and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation.

Fourteenth 50th Anniversary Vietnam Commemorative Medal Ceremony

February 18 at 11 AM at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City. In addition to the medal, each veteran being honored will also receive a citation from Ed Aulman, who will be representing Congressman Tom Suozzi. Ed is the Treasurer of the United Veterans Organization of Nassau County (UVO).

Veterans News on Public Access Cable TV

The program airs on Cablevision channel 20 on Mondays at 7:30 PM and on channel 115 on Fridays at 5:00 PM. It's also on Verizon channel 37 on Tuesdays at 9:30 PM and any time on YouTube (enter "Veterans News UVO").

Veterans Health Alliance Symposium

The Alliance will be hosting a symposium at the Ruth S. Harley University Center at Adelphi University on March 14 at 8:30 AM (registration and sign-in starts at 8:00 AM). The keynote speaker will be Terri Tanielian, Senior Behavioral Scientist at the RAND Corporation. Topics of discussion will include veterans and hospitals, crisis services, substance abuse, and the future of veterans' organizations. Go to http://events.adelphi.edu/au_event/veterans-mental-health-conference-2017/ to sign up.

PFC Joseph Dwyer Program – Veteran Peer Support

The Nassau County Mental Health Association runs roundtable discussion groups at various locations throughout Nassau County. Go to <http://www.mhanc.org/?PageID=900> for details on meetings in your area.

AAAFES (Army & Air Force Exchange Service) welcomes home all of America's veterans with online shopping benefit

Shopmyexchange.com will open to all honorably discharged veterans on Veterans Day, November 11, 2017.

Disability claims and appeals, and discharge upgrade assistance

The Veterans Law Clinic at Hofstra University is holding Military Mondays at the Uniondale (Hempstead Turnpike) Starbucks from 6 to 8 PM for free advice and counsel appointments. Contact them at lawclinic@hofstra.edu or call (516) 463-5931.

Veteran status designation on a New York photo document

If you are a qualified U.S. military veteran who was honorably discharged, and you have a NYS driver license, learner permit or non-driver photo ID card, you can have the word "Veteran" printed on the upper left hand of your photo document.

There is no additional fee for the veteran status designation on your document, but all regular transaction fees will apply.

Go to <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/veteran-status-designation-photo-document> for more information.

**Francis S. Gabreski and Alphonse A. Parise
\$1,000.00 Scholastic Grants—Eligibility for each grant.**

Grant Application & Requirements

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS:

Offered to graduating seniors living in Nassau and Suffolk Counties of Long Island

APPLICANTS MUST BE:

- Children of active Air Force, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve
- Children or grandchildren of retired Air Force or honorably discharged Air Force Veterans
- U.S.A.F. Auxiliary (CAP) Cadets
- Air Force Junior ROTC Cadets

STUDENTS INTERESTED IN APPLYING:

- High school senior (male or female) with a minimum 80% cumulative average
- Must be accepted and matriculated in either a two- or four-year program at a nationally or regionally accredited institute of higher education anywhere in the U.S.
- Must demonstrate involvement in extracurricular or community activities (certificates, letters, articles accepted to confirm participation)

DEADLINE: JUNE 30TH OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR

Application and requirements are on the LIAFA.org website under Education.

We welcome all who meet the above requirements.