30TH FLIGHT AVIATOR'S LOG
JANUARY 2026 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FLIGHT CAPTAIN: COL TONY BOWEN
VICE FLIGHT CAPTAIN: BGEN RICO APONTE
TREASURER: COL BRIAN DELAHAUT
PROVOST MARSHAL: COL CHARLES HALE
ADJUTANT: COL BOB HERMES
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: LTC WILLIAM HEITMEIER
MEMBERSHIP: OPEN
PROGRAMS: COL TONY BOWEN
SCHOLARSHIP (ROTC): LTC MARY GOLDSMITH
SCHOLARSHIP (DVT): BGEN RANDALL BALL
CHAPLAIN: LTC ERIC GRUENLER
RESERVATIONS: LTC JEFF SCHALL

30th Flight
WE FLEW WE FLY
"Hap" Arnold
Order of Daedalians, INC

Vol. XLXV NO. 1

VOLABAMUS VOLAMUS

CW4 RANDY ZAHN, USA (Ret)

"Hunter/Killer Helicopter Teams in Vietnam"

11 FEBRUARY 2026 SPEAKER

Snake Pilot: Flying the Cobra Attack Helicopter in Vietnam

October 1, 2005

by Randy Zahn (Author)

Based on audiotapes he recorded during the war and sent home to his family, Randy Zahn's Snake Pilot recounts his experiences flying AH-1 Cobra helicopters during the Vietnam War. First deployed in Vietnam in 1967 and loaded with a formidable arsenal of weaponry, the Cobra was the first helicopter designed from inception as an attack aircraft. It dramatically changed the nature of the war in Vietnam by the Army, for the first time, its own powerful and highly accurate weapons platform for close-air-support missions. Randy Zahn arrived in Vietnam shortly before the 1970 U.S. invasion of Cambodia, one of the most impressive demonstrations by the Cobra in the war. He describes his stunning transformation from a naive, middle-class teenager from southern California to a hardened killer during his tour in Vietnam. Unlike the pilots who flew the fast-moving strike jets, Zahn experienced the war "up close and personal," witnessing the grisly effects of the Cobra's firepower on enemy soldiers.

The author does not glorify killing but rather explains in sharp relief the kaleidoscope of emotions associated with combat: fear, revenge, hate, remorse, pity, and even ecstasy. He captures many of the ironies and nuances inherent in Vietnam, especially during the final years of the conflict. Zahn displays a sensitivity rarely found in memoirs written by battle-hardened warriors. This human element, combined with the vast amount of archival research and interviews with members of his former unit, ensures that Snake Pilot will become the definitive account of the role helicopters played in Vietnam.

30th "Hap" Arnold Flight, 2026 Century Club

The 2026 Scholarship Fund has started. We appreciate those that have given to this point. The fund as of 1/22/2026 is $1,000.00. Six members have donated to the Flight's Scholarship Fund. Recognized below are those who so generously donated $100 or more. There are some great new scholarship ideas that are being considered, and your donations can help make these a reality.

30th "Hap" Arnold Flight 2026 Century Club Aces

NONE

30th "Hap" Arnold Flight 2026 Century Club Note: Donations less than $100 not shown

LTC JOHN C. FISCHER $250	COL PAUL GILL $250	COL ROBERT HERMES $200
LTC WILLIAM HEITMEIER $100	COL RICHARD BOUSMAN $100	COL GEORGE DUGARD $100

Important Note

Please contact the Treasurer, Brian Delahaut or the Adjutant, Bob Hermes if you require a Century Club donation form. Donations can be mailed to the Flight's address (see below) or brought to a luncheon. We are experiencing a very low donation rate and your help is greatly appreciated.

Order of Daedalians, 30th Flight
17050 Arnold Dr, Box H-101
Riverside, CA 92518

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Many thanks to the California Civil Air Patrol Group 7 Wing Commander Col Craig Newton for presenting during our January luncheon. He brought two amazing CAP Cadet Captains. They talked to the Flight about their flight training with CAP and left us all quite impressed. One avenue for the future of Military Aviation may well be through cadet aviation training program within the Civil Air Patrol units. This is something National is exploring and we are looking into as well. More to follow on that.

Fellow Daedalian CWO4 Randy Zahn will be speaking to us on the utilization of Army helicopter Hunter-Killer teams in Vietnam. This will be a luncheon presentation you don't want to miss.

We will be voting on our nominated Officers and Board Members for 2026 – 2027 at the luncheon. If approved, they will be sworn in and take over thereafter. Thanks to all the members who have volunteered to lead us for the next two years.

See you in February.

COL CRAIG NEWTON

WING COMMANDER "CALIFORNIA CIVIL AIR PATROL"

14 JANUARY 2026 SPEAKER

Col Craig Newton (R) talked about the California Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, a USAF Auxiliary. As of 2024, the wing had 1,992 adult members, 2,238 cadets, 382 aircrew personnel, and 2,559 emergency responders. There were 77 squadrons statewide with 25 single-engine aircraft, 3 gliders, and 54 vehicles.

There were 6,801 total hours flown which included 1,933 hours of cadet CAP, Air Force ROTC, and Junior ROTC cadet orientation flights.

Their missions included search and rescue, counterdrug and drug interdiction, air defense intercept training and evaluation, plus numerous others.

LEFT: (L-R): CAP Cadet Captains Ava Firnkoess and Braden Drewitz, with Lt Col Haines Gridley.

RIGHT: (L-R): Cadet Drewitz, Cadet, Firnkoess, and CAP 45th Composite Sq Public Affairs Officer, 2nd Lt Julia Firnkoess.

L-R: Col Tom Johnson, Col Charlie Hale, Col John Allevato, Col Newton, Cadet Drewitz, & Cadet Firnkoess

BG Rico Aponte on the left with Col Charlie Hale

L-R: LTC Jon Goldenbaum, Col Newton, and Bob Cable (owner of Cable Airport)

L: Katie Donovan with Sandy Hermes

L-R: Col Allevato, Col Newton, Cadet Drewitz, Cadet Firnkoess, and Mr. Pete Beatty

On the left Shirley Strzemieczny with Stephany Brower

Ace of Spades Head Honcho

LTC Nilo de los Reyes

You Could Be The Next Winner

Col Newton with Flight 30 Flight Captain, Col Tony Bowen

Need a Daedalian Shirt?

See LTC Bill Baltazar

FLIGHT 30 BLASTS FROM THE PAST -- DEC 2014

Left: Outgoing Flight Captain, Col Dan Oplinger

Right: Incoming Flight Captain, LTC Alan Leach (2015—2016)

Lt Don Brower and his wife, Stephany

Lt Col "Stretch" Alan Strzemieczny and his wife Shirley

Carmela Bowen and her husband, Col Tony Bowen with LTC Bill Heitmeier enjoying a libation

Col John Kerr and his wife Barbara

Note: All pictures from Flight 30's 2014 Christmas Dinner and Dance

The 2014 Scholarship fund total stands at $19,010. As of 12/20/2014 seventy-one members, widows, family members and friends donated to the Flight's Scholarship Fund this year.

FLIGHT 30 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS 2014

Flight 30 awarded two AFROTC Scholarships to two California State University San Bernardino, San Bernadino, CA AFROTC cadets. Cadet Matthew Fry and Cadet Elizabeth Beck were each awarded a Flight 30 $2,500 scholarship and both were recommended to Daedalian National for matching scholarships.

FLIGHT 30 CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026

(Note: Flight 30 Board Mtgs are the first Wed of every other month starting in Feb.)
(Note: Flight 30 Luncheons are the second Wed of every month except for Aug, Nov & Dec.)
Speaker/Program Recommendations. Contact: Col Toney Bowen, 951-445-1324 or tbone46@gmail.com.

JANUARY 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 14 Jan @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: Col Craig Newton, "California Civil Air Patrol".

FEBRUARY 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 4 Feb @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Luncheon: Wed, 11 Feb @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker. CW4 Randy Zahn, USA (Ret). "Hunter/Killer helicopter teams in Vietnam".

MARCH 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 11 Mar @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Program: Flight 30 AFROTC Cadet Scholarship Awards. Plan to attend to meet and congratulate the scholarship awardees.

APRIL 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 1 Apr @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Luncheon: Wed, 8 Apr @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: Grant Williams, USMC (Retired). CH-46 Pilot, CEO "Flying Leatherneck Museum"

MAY 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 13 May @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: Dr. Bill Patton

JUNE 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 3 June @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Luncheon: Wed, 10 June @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: TBD

JULY 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 8 July @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: TBD

AUGUST 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 5 Aug @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Luncheon: Dark. Enjoy a summer vacation

SEPTEMBER 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 9 Sep @ 1100—Hap Arnold Club

Speaker: TBD

OCTOBER 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 7 Oct @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Luncheon: Wed, 14 Oct @ 1100—Hap Arnold club

Speaker: TBD

NOVEMBER 2026

Board Mtg: None

Luncheon: Wed, 11 Nov @ 1200—Victoria Club

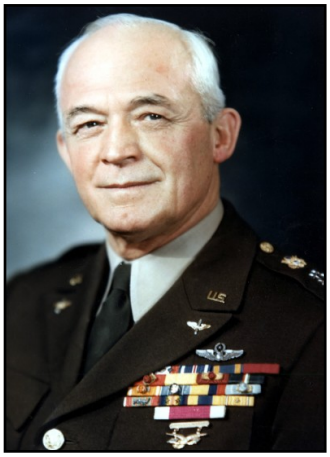
Program: 11 Nov 30th Flight Veteran's Day Celebration at Riverside National Cemetary starting @ 1100, luncheon to follow at the Victoria Club @ 1200. Speaker: TBD

DECEMBER 2026

Board Mtg: Wed, 2 Dec @ 1000—Hap Arnold Club

Dinner: Date: TBD @ 1730—Victoria Club

Program: Flight 30 Christmas Dinner and Dance



General "Hap" Arnold

30th Flight

WE FLEW WE FLY

"Hap" Arnold

Order of Daedalians, INC

March Air Reserve Base Flightline

NOTIFICATION

In the event of an Emergency, or when a member of 30th Flight has passed on, please notify our 30th Flight Adjutant, Col Bob Hermes, 207-214-5079 or adjutant30flight@yahoo.com.

11 FEBRUARY 2026 LUNCHEON

HAP ARNOLD CLUB

WED — 11 FEB 2026

START ENGINES 1100 — LUNCHEON 1130

MENU: Start with a Green Garden Salad. 1. Old fashioned meatloaf with whole green beans and buttered mashed potatoes. 2. Vegetarian: Chef's Choice. Finish with a Gourmet Fresh Baked Peanut Butter Cookie.

Additionally Rolls, Butter, Coffee, and Ice Tea plus White & Red Wine for Toasting.

RESERVATIONS: Your name and guest(s), if applicable:

1. Email Jeff Schall: mjmschall@gmail.com or call 714-686-2702 with Meal Choice if Vegetarian. 2. Pay at the door or prepay with Zelle. Do not mail reservations or checks to Jeff or the Flight mail box.

3. Reservation Deadline: Make or cancel your reservation not later than 1200 Hours, Sat, 7 Feb 2026 (NOTE: A reservation made is a reservation paid.)

4. Ensure Jeff has replied and confirmed your reservation or cancellation and meal choice if vegetarian.

5. Cost: $35. Pay at the door with check, cash, credit card, or Zelle. Or prepay with Zelle using:

Zelle email: flight30treasurer@gmail.com

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