



Army Engineer Spouses' Club Castle Gram

Volume V, Issue X

May, 2015

Inside this issue:

The Gavel	2-3
May Board Mt.	4
AESC Board	5
AEMA Awards	6-13
Castle Boutique	13
Memorial Day History	14
Obituary	15
Events	16
Member Celebrations	17
Upcoming Events	18
Around the World with our Engineer Family	19



Memorial Day History

Three years after the Civil War ended, on May 5, 1868, the head of an organization of Union veterans — the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) — established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the war dead with flowers. Maj. Gen. John A. Logan declared that Decoration Day should be observed on May 30. It is believed that date was chosen because flowers would be in bloom all over the country.

The first large observance was held that year at Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. The ceremonies centered around the mourning-draped veranda of the Arlington mansion, once the home of Gen. Robert E. Lee. Various Washington officials, including Gen. and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant, presided over the ceremonies. After speeches, children from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphan Home and members of the GAR made their way through the cemetery, strewing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves, reciting prayers and singing hymns. (Continued on page 14)

**"Keeping our worldwide Engineer family connected -
through the years and across the miles."**



THE GAVEL

Letter from the Editor:

This month, Connie is enjoying some well-deserved family time with her husband, who is home from Afghanistan. We are thrilled for all of the Semonite family! We appreciate Connie's many contributions to AESC, and we are excited that she has agreed to continue as the AESC President for the 2015-2016 year.

I have enjoyed editing the Castle Gram for the past two years. I have learned so much about newsletter editing and about the Army Engineers. I have met wonderful people and attended great events. But now it is time for me to pack up and experience a new location. My husband has been reassigned to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Camp Shelby is a small National Guard Training facility located near Hattiesburg, Mississippi. My husband will be working for an Engineer Battalion (3rd-315th), and I am looking forward to meeting some new Engineer friends there.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Castle Gram editor. I plan to continue my involvement with this wonderful organization, and I hope to be back in the National Capital Region in the future.

Have a wonderful summer!
Karen Anderson



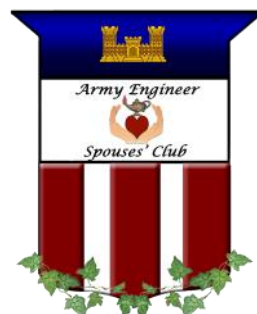
THE GAVEL

May 8th: Military Spouse Appreciation Day

Celebrated the Friday before Mother's Day, Military Spouse Appreciation Day celebrates the sacrifice and support of military spouses. The holiday began in 1984 under Ronald Reagan, and subsequent presidents have begun the day with speeches or proclamations.

May 16th: Armed Forces Day

Celebrated on the third Saturday of every May, Armed Forces Day honors Americans serving in the military. It was originally designed to replace the days celebrating each individual service, but those days are still observed. The longest running celebration sponsored by a city is held in Bremerton, Washington. 2012 marked its 64th celebration with a parade.



MAY BOARD MEETING/ 2015-2016 BOARD

The May AESC Board Meeting

was held on

May 6, 2015

from

10:00 am - 12:00 am

at the

Fairfax Village Neighborhood Center

Congratulations to the 2015-2016
Elected Board Members for AESC:

President – Connie Semonite
Vice-President--Maggie DeMello
and Dominique Wilt
Secretary— Lisa Stevenson
Treasurer—Jessica Gregris
AEMA Chairperson—Erica Shaw

2014-2015 AESC BOARD

Elected Officers

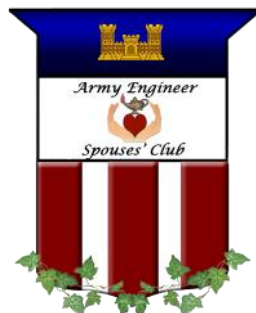
PRESIDENT – CONNIE SEMONITE
 VICE-PRESIDENT – ALLISON CHAMBERLAYNE
 SECRETARY – MAGGIE DEMELLO
 TREASURER – KATHY MOAKLER
 AEMA CHAIRPERSON – HOLLY SCHERER

APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS

PARLIAMENTARIAN – ROZ RILEY
 MEMBERSHIP – JACKIE CALDWELL
 HOSPITALITY – LYNDA FLOWERS
 AEMA SCHOLARSHIP – ERICA SHAW
 MEDIA TEAM: PUBLICITY/HISTORIAN – GLENDA HUDSON
 NEWSLETTER – KAREN ANDERSON
 WEBMASTER – LAURA PUTNAM
 FACEBOOK – LISA STEVENSON
 CIRCULATION – KARA ANDERSON
 RESERVATIONS – ANITA LINK
 WAYS AND MEANS – SHEILA KELLY
 WELFARE/SERVICES – KIMBERLY OBORSKI
 LIAISON CHAIR: KNOLLWOOD – VACANT
 FAIRFAX – JOYCE REBH AND KAY BURLIN
 KNOLLWOOD BAKE SALE – PRISCILLA NOAH
 NOMINATIONS – BETTE MEULENERS
 AD HOC VOLUNTEER—PAT O'NEILL AND
 BETH MAZZANTI

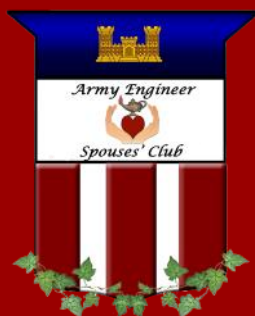
ADVISORS

RENEE BOSTICK - SPOUSE, CHIEF OF ENGINEERS
 VICKY GRONINGER - SPOUSE, CSM OF ENGINEERS
 JACKIE CALDWELL- SES SPOUSE, DIRECTOR- MILPO
 JOAN STOCKTON-SES SPOUSE, DIRECTOR-CEO



2014-2015 AESC BOARD

AEMA AWARDS



2015 Army Engineer Memorial Awards

On Sunday, May 3, 2015, the AESC enjoyed an Army Engineer Memorial Award Luncheon at the Fairfax at Belvoir Woods. We were pleased to have LTG Thomas Bostick as our guest speaker. During the luncheon, the Memorial Award recipients were named. This year, three of our top awards were given in memory of CSM Micheal (Mike) L. Buxbaum, Kristine (Kris) Joy Watson, and Betty Swygert. These three wonderful people are described on these two pages. On the following pages, please enjoy photos of the recipients of the 2015 AEMA Awards.



CSM Micheal (Mike) L. Buxbaum

CSM Micheal (Mike) L. Buxbaum served his country with distinction for 33 years. Achieving the rank of Command Sergeant Major, CSM Buxbaum was stationed throughout the United States and overseas during his career. CSM Buxbaum retired in June 2012, as the 10th Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Most recently, he was employed a defense services company supporting U. S. Forces worldwide. He died of natural causes, while in Afghanistan, where he was working as a contractor supporting the fight and the needs of deployed Soldiers.

CSM Buxbaum was born Dec. 31, 1959 in Manitowoc, WI. He spent his childhood and formative years in Wisconsin. He entered the Army in September 1978 under the buddy system with his best friend, serving as a U.S. Army Combat Engineer. In 1982, Mike married the love of his life, Roberta Reiter Buxbaum (Bobby). Bobby was his true "battle buddy", a tireless advocate for Soldiers and families, wherever the job took them. She was instrumental in helping the Army Engineer Spouses' Club transition from an officer spouse's club to an all-inclusive Army Engineer Spouses Club with spouses from all ranks as well as spouses of civilians who work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Our entire Army Engineer family!

Mike and Bobby shared a long and happy marriage. Together, and with great joy, they raised two wonderful daughters, Katie and Christina, of whom Mike was an incredibly proud father. The Buxbaum girls were a stalwart Army family who steadfastly supported the career of this great American Soldier. Mike is also survived by his parents, sisters, brothers-in-law in Wisconsin; a sister-in-law in California; a brother-in-law in Indiana; many nieces and nephews; his loyal pet cat, Breacher; and all of his Army friends and family.

All who had the privilege to know and work with CSM Buxbaum knew him as a passionate advocate for the Army, his Soldiers, and Corps of Engineers civilians, a legacy that will live on in the people he touched and mentored throughout his life. With ultimate honors, CSM Buxbaum was interred at Arlington National Cemetery.



Kristine (Kris) Joy Watson

Kristine (Kris) Joy Watson was a true Red, White, and Blue Army wife. Kris met her West Point Cadet husband in 1982, being introduced by Bryan's roommate. The meeting was just a beginning of a long love affair with a Soldier and his job. The Watsons married in 1984 and began their nomadic lifestyle in Germany. There she got her first real taste of the Army, the caring embrace of an Army Family, the camaraderie of Army "sisters" and the adventure of moving and shopping on new frontiers.

Her Army family grew quickly over the years, as did her reputation as an Army Spouse, a community volunteer, a leader among wives, and a staunch advocate of Army Families. She also became renowned for the way she could light up the dullest Hail and Farewell or Spouse's Coffee.

Her talents were endless, her efforts tireless. Kris taught Army Family Team Building to spouses, was a leader in Girl Scouts for nine years, was a Family Readiness Group leader from Com-

pany through Division, facilitated Army Family Advocacy Program seminars, and was a member or Chair of many spouse organizations, to include Army Engineer Spouses Club (formerly Army Engineer Officer Wives Club). Her bright smile, quick wit, full belly laugh, and caring leadership reverberated throughout the Engineer Regiment. Tons of Army wives – and those of other services – were coached, mentored, and loved by Kris and today many of those 'pay it forward' to by her example.

Kris's love for military families and her servant legacy lives on with donations in her memory to Fisher House Foundation, Inc., which provides free housing for families while visiting wounded Service Men and Women. She is interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

Betty Swygert

Betty Swygert began her over 50-year association with service in the Army Engineer Officer Wives Club and continued, as the club became the Army Engineer Spouses Club. She served in numerous board positions, including President, Vice President of the AEOWC. She served most recently as Knollwood Liaison keeping the AESC and Engineer families living there connected. Her warm, sage advice, her years of experience serving with AEOWC/AESC, and her most timely sense of humor earned her the friendship and respect of all with whom she served. She offered unwavering support to the Board members and the general membership of the wives/spouses club. Betty, herself, was an energetic board member until her recent illness. She and her husband, COL (R) Don, were social stalwarts at every club function.

Betty was born in Statesboro, GA, grew up in Chicago, IL and Savannah, GA. She went to Wesleyan College in Macon, GA receiving a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. She began her career as a teacher at Savannah High School. While a teacher there, Betty met then First Lieutenant Donald R. Swygert, a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers officer who was stationed with the Corps' Savannah District. She would soon agree to become a camp follower with marriage to that young Lieutenant. Betty was a loving and caring mother who successfully nurtured her four children to adulthood, sometimes in the prolonged absence of their father who was on an unaccompanied military assignment or away at war. In addition to raising her children in a difficult military lifestyle, other personal accomplishments include deliberately sharing her love of nature and locations with her children and her artistic ability to translate the beauty living around her into oil and watercolor works of art.

Betty and Don's happy marriage endured for almost 59 years, being terminated by Betty's death after a long illness. Betty, Army Engineer Spouses Club member, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, great-aunt, and friend is interred at the West Point Cemetery at West Point, New York.



AEMA AWARDS

AEMA AWARDS

2015 Award Recipients



Joseph Roberts

Award Amount: \$4,000

Given in memory of CSM Micheal Buxbaum and in honor of AESC member: Bobby Buxbaum

Son of: Col(R) Jeffery and Yoskana Roberts

Attending: River Bluff High School in Lexington, SC

Features: National Honor Society, National Society of High School Scholars member, AP Scholar, Top 10% of Class, Varsity Cross Country, Lacrosse, and Soccer, Active Community Volunteer.

Will attend: Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Major: Business/Law



Grace Finley

Award Amount: \$1,250

Given in memory of AESC member: Kristine (Kris) Watson

Daughter of: LTC(R) Natalie and Rex Finley

Attending: Yelm High School in Yelm, WA

Features: Girl Scouts' Silver Award, National Honor Society, AP Scholar, National Merit Semi-Finalist, Co-Captain of Varsity Girls Wrestling , Individual Academic Achievement Award, Black Belt (2nd degree) in Hapkido, Black Belt (2nd degree) in Tae Kwon Do, All-District Honor Band, Saxophone Section Leader, Fastpitch Softball, and Track and Field, Active Community Volunteer

Will attend: Indiana University

Major: Kinesiology/Health Fitness Specialist

2015 Award Recipients

David Rapp

Award Amount: \$1,250

Given in memory of AESC member Betty Swygert

Son of: MG William and Deborah Rapp

Attending: Trinity High School in Camp Hill, PA

Features: Eagle Scout, National Honor Society, Marguerite Scaffati Award of Academic Excellence, AP Scholar, Varsity Athletic Letter in Soccer and Rowing, VA Boys State, Student Government Freshman Class Representative, Sophomore Class President, Key Club. Active Community Volunteer

Will attend: United States Military Academy, West Point, NY

Major: Mechanical Engineering/Political Science



AEMA AWARDS

Ashton Cloud

Award Amount: Geraldine K. Morris Nursing Award

Daughter of: LTC Noah and Catherine Cloud

Attending: Weisbaden High School, Weisbaden, Germany

Features: Piano Competition, Awarded Superiors Varsity Sports- Tennis and Volleyball. Lead in the Musical- Aida (Amneris). Rho Kappa Honor Society, German Honor Society, National Honor Society, Model United Nations Delegate, Model United States Senate Delegate. Varsity Athletic Letters: Volleyball (co-captain, letter) Tennis, and Recreational Soccer. Active community and church volunteer.

Will attend: Brigham Young University, Provo, UT

Major: Nursing





AEMA AWARDS

2015 Award Recipients

Caroline Dorko

Award Amount: \$1,000

Daughter of: MG(R) Jeffrey and Amy Dorko

Attending: Bishop Ireton High School, Alexandria, VA

Features: DeSales Scholarship to Bishop Ireton HS, National Honor Society, Beta Club, Model United Nations Delegate, Marguerite Scaffati Award for Academic Achievement, VA Girl State, Excellence in Religion Award, Ruth and Bill Collins Scholarship for Excellence in Dance, AP Scholar with Distinction, Senior Captain at Chris Collins Dance Studio, Active Community and Church Volunteer, Leader at Kairos Retreat.

Will attend: Boston University

Major: Nursing



Abby Fenn

Award Amount: \$1,000

Daughter of: LTC(R) Michael and Lori Fenn

Attending: Osbourn Park High School, Manassas, VA

Features: Girl Scouts Bronze and Silver Award, Key Club, Leadership Seminar, National Math Honor Society, National Honor Society, Complete BAE Systems- Women in Technology Program, Dancer with Manassas Ballet Academy's Professional Division (studied Modern, Pointe, Lyrical, Jazz and Contemporary dance). Active Community and Church Volunteer.

Will attend: University of Pittsburg, Pittsburg, PA

Major: Environmental Engineering

2015 Award Recipients

Karli Hakala

Award Amount: \$1,000

Daughter of: Karl and Robin Hakala

(Karl is the Operations Project Manager with USACE Baltimore District)

Attending: Mountain Ridge High School, Frostburg, MD

Features: National Honor Society, AP Scholar with Honors, Model United Nations Honorary Delegation, VA Girls State, Speaker at Chesapeake Bay Foundation Leadership Summit, Track and Field, Student Member of Board of Education, Actively involved in numerous community projects, Leader of Environmental Club

Will attend: Smith College in North Hampton, MA

Major: Biology/Osteopathy



AEMA AWARDS

Zachary Lacroix

Award Amount: \$1,000

Son of: Gary and Dulcey Lacroix

(Gary is the Branch Chief with USACE New England District)

Attending: Littleton High School, Littleton, MA

Features: Eagle Scout, National Honor Society, National Merit Scholarship, Academic Commitment Awards, Academic Excellence Awards, Babe Ruth League Baseball, Engineering Club, French Club, Video Production Club, Theatre soundboard operator and production manager, Active community and church volunteer,

Will attend: Husson University, Bangor, ME

Major: Live Sound Technology



AEMA AWARDS

2015 Award Recipients

**Shelby Stevenson**

Award Amount: \$500

Daughter of: LTC Brian and Lisa Stevenson

Attending: Hayfield Secondary School, Alexandria, VA

Features: National Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, French Honor Society, Academic Letter, Student2Student- founding member, student leader Catholic Youth Group Co-Leader: Ft. Belvoir Catholic Community, Hayfield Secondary School Wind Ensemble, Varsity Cheerleader –Varsity Gymnastics- Captain Senior year, Active Church and Community Volunteer

Will attend: Marymount University

Major: Education

**Mateo Rosa**

Award Amount: \$500

Son of: Simon and Juliet Rosa
(Simon is a GS-14 employee at HQ USACE)

Attending: C.D. Hylton High School, Dale City, VA

Features: Drum Major for HS Marching Band, 1st Chair Saxophone in Symphonic Band, Class Representative of Center for International Studies and Languages Student Council, Conference Chair and Crisis Manager for Model United Nations, Counselor for HS Diplomats at Princeton University, Black Belt (2nd degree) Tae Kwon Do, Crew Coaches Award, Varsity Letter for Crew Team, Active community and church volunteer.

Will attend: Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

Major: Mechanical Engineering Minor: Public Health

Olivia Manous

Award Amount: \$500

Daughter of: COL(R) Joe and Stephanie Manous

Attending: West Potomac High School, Alexandria, VA

Features: National Honor Society, National Vocational Technical Honor Society, Honor Roll, Virginia Athlete Scholar Award, All Conference Cheerleader, Student Government Association, Student Advisory Council, Peer Mentor, Varsity Letter in Cheer, Gymnastics, and Softball, Cheer Co-Captain Senior year. Active Community and Church Volunteer, Camp Counselor

Will attend: Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV

Major: Photography and Computer Imagery



CONGRATULATIONS!

Castle Boutique:

Visit our Members Only section on our website for

EXCLUSIVE Castle Boutique Items!

www.armyengineerspouses.com

CASTLE BOUTIQUE



The History of Memorial Day (Continued from page 1)

By the end of the 19th century, Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. State legislatures passed proclamations designating the day, and the Army and Navy adopted regulations for proper observance at their facilities.

It was not until after World War I, however, that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress, though it is still often called Decoration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May, as were some other federal holidays.

Gen. Logan's order for his posts to decorate graves in 1868 "with the choicest flowers of springtime" urged: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. ... Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was approximately the same size as those that attend today's observance, about 5,000 people. Then, as now, small American flags were placed on each grave — a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. In recent years, the custom has grown in many families to decorate the graves of all departed loved ones.

The origins of special services to honor those who die in war can be found in antiquity. The Athenian leader Pericles offered a tribute to the fallen heroes of the Peloponnesian War over 24 centuries ago that could be applied today to the 1.1 million Americans who have died in the nation's wars: "Not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions, but there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men."



Source: US Department of Veteran's Affairs, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

<http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday/history.asp>



Donna Jean Winzenried

Mrs. Donna Jean Winzenried passed away on May 24, 2015, after a fight against Pancreatic cancer. Mrs. Winzenried was born in 1957 in New Jersey. She married Command Sergeant Major (retired) Robert Winzenried, in 1975. Command Sergeant

Major (retired) Robert Winzenried served as Command Sergeant Major of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers from May, 2005 until January, 2008.

Donna was a military spouse during her husband's 37-year career in the Army, and lived all over the world, from Germany to Korea and all points in between. She supported her husband through numerous deployments and separations, all the while being a strong advocate for military spouses. She worked tirelessly for military families, serving on many senior Army and DOD level advisory boards to include several forums with the First Lady Michele Obama and the Vice presidents wife, Dr. Jill Biden. She was a proponent for revamping military child care and worked at several Child Development Centers, insisting on improving standards of care everywhere she worked.

Donna was also passionate about physical fitness and proper nutrition, founding KOPIK (Keep off Pounds in Korea) to assist those assigned to Korea keep fit. She became an accomplished Zumba instructor and loved to dance whenever the music hit her (which happened quite often).

Her most important passion however was her sons and especially her grandchildren.

They were the light of her life and she loved them all dearly.

She is preceded in death by her father and mother, Donald and Arlene Manning and is survived by her husband Bob, son Bobby, son Zebulon and his wife Joanna, son Josiah, her grandchildren Jacob, Cadence and Temperance, and her brother Ronald Manning. We at AESC appreciate her many contributions to the military Community, and to our organization.



RED HOT BLUE FUNDRAISER

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE RED HOT & BLUE AESC FUNDRAISER! AESC MEMBERS, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS ENJOYED A DELICIOUS MEAL AT [RED HOT & BLUE](#), RANKED AMONG THE TOP 3 BBQ CHAINS IN THE NATION. THE FUNDRAISER SUPPORTS THE AESC SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

AS PART OF OUR CORPORATE MISSION, WE ARE COMMITTED TO HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY. FROM PARTNERING WITH NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS TO SPECIALLY THEMED NIGHTS OR EVENTS, WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENCOURAGING COMMUNITIES TO COME TOGETHER WHILE ENJOYING GREAT FOOD IN THE COMPANY OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS!

Birthdays.....

May

Karen Voigt	May 1
Allison Chamberlayne	May 2
Linda Stockton - Liedl	May 5
Claire Strand	May 7
Kathy Candido	May 9
Lynda Flowers	May 13
Ruth Bond	May 18
Pam Jacobson	May 21
Kathy Moakler	May 22
Debbie Rapp	May 26
Bette Meuleners	May 28

June

Harriett Connell	June 1
Anne Yankoupe	June 8
Leslie Hufstedler-Alvarez	June 10
Kimberly Oborski	June 12
Rosemary Davis	June 12
Alicia Hite	June 18
Heidi Dillard	June 21
Tish Anderson	June 22
Sally Hannan	June 22

July

Estelle Gibson	July 08
Kay Burlin	July 16
Kathie Lauzon	July 17
Connie Semonite	July 19
Kathleen Whittle	July 20
Shannon Austin	July 22
Deborah Butler	July 24
Margaret Agostini	July 25
Julie Morrison	July 27
Emma Wanamaker	July 28



MEMBER CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday

Save the Date



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 28: Please save the date:
We will be saying “Farewell” to
our fabulous advisor, Vicky
Groninger, this summer. Please
save the date for a farewell event
on June 28. Look for further
details in an email or on the
Facebook page!

August 7, 2015: *Castle Ball*

Where do you hang your Engineer Flag? We at AESC would love to share photos of Engineers and their flags or castles around the world. Please submit your photos to the AESC Facebook page!

AROUND THE WORLD WITH OUR ENGINEER FAMILY



ABOVE:
PRISCILLA NOAH
ENJOYS EXOTIC
TRAVELS!





AESC
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Alexandria, VA 22306-6332