

# War hero visits Shaw

## Former POW speaks to 55th FS about duty, honor, country

By Senior Airman Susan Penning  
Staff writer

Former prisoner of war and 55th Fighter Squadron pilot, retired Col. George "Bud" Day, visited Shaw Oct. 1. During his time here, he shared memories of his more than 30 years of military service, and spoke about what it means to serve with honor.

Col. Day flew the F-84 and F-100 with the 55th Fighter Squadron, when it was based at the Royal Air Force Station in Wethersfield, England.

He has also flown all of the modern Air Force jet fighters, including the F-80, F-101, F-104, F-105, F-4E, A-4J Mongoose, A-7, F-106, FB-111, F-15, F-16, CF-5, CT-33 and CF-18.

In 1967, his plane was shot down in Vietnam. He



Photos by Staff Sgt. Josef Cole

Retired Col. "Bud" Day talks to members of the 55th Fighter Squadron about what it was like when he flew aircraft with the squadron.



Retired Col. "Bud" Day meets with Col. Philip Ruhlman, 20th Fighter Wing commander, Oct. 1.

was taken captive by the Vietcong and held as a prisoner of war until he managed to escape from his captors for 12 days. Severe injuries and starvation overtook him and he was recaptured, beaten and tortured, and finally released in 1973.

"When I was taken captive in Vietnam, then recaptured so near to freedom, it was truly a very discouraging moment in my life. But I had a really strong belief in God, and a really strong belief in my country. I knew I had to be accountable for my actions. I had to survive, and above all, come home with my honor. I was going to come home with my honor or not come home at all," he said.

Col. Day holds every significant combat award and is the nation's most highly-decorated officer since Gen. Douglass MacArthur. Of the nearly 70 military decorations he received during his time in the service, he said the Medal of Honor means the most.

"I got that on behalf of a lot of brave men who didn't make it home."

Col. Day said the training he received in the Air Force was vital to his survival during captivity.

"All military training is important and, when the chips are down, you will do what you're trained to do. When I was captured, I never had any questions. I always knew what I should do."

When asked what changes have occurred since he was in the service, and how Airmen today would perform if they were put in his situation, Col. Day said, "Across the board, troops are smarter, better-trained and better-educated."

He mentioned that Airmen now have a lot of stress due to frequent deployments, but said they should remain vigilant.

"We are at war, and war demands a great deal of sacrifice. We have to perform what we're trained to do," said Col. Day.

He also said public opinion has changed a lot since he was at war in Vietnam.

"The public has a better awareness today of the role of the military, and everyone seems to know someone who's sacrificing," he said.

Before Col. Day's trip to Shaw came to a close, he offered some words of wisdom for young Airmen.

"Aim high, get your education and have a good attitude. Be positive and good things will happen," said the retired colonel.

## Col. "Bud" Day: a biography

Retired Col. George "Bud" Day was born Feb. 24, 1925. He dropped out of high school in 1942 to join the Marine Corps, where he spent more than two years overseas in the Pacific area of responsibility. He left active service in 1945 and joined the Army Reserve.

He married his childhood sweetheart, Doris Sorensen, in 1949 before being recalled by the U.S. Air Force as a second lieutenant in 1951. There, he attended jet pilot training and subsequently completed two tours in Korea and four years flying fighter planes in England, where he made Air Force history with the first no-chute bailout from an F-84-F in 1957.

The Days adopted all four of their children before Col. Day was assigned to fly an F-100 fighter bomber in South Vietnam. After seventy-two missions, he was reassigned as commander of MISTY, the first jet FAC unit flying in North Vietnam. He was shot down while striking a missile site. During ejection, his arm was broken in three places and his left knee dislocated. When he reached the ground, he was taken captive by the Vietcong.

In addition to the Misty and Eagle squadrons, Col. Day commanded several Vietnamese prisons, including the Zoo, Heartbreak Hotel and Skidrow. He was incarcerated for five years and seven months, and made the only successful escape from North Vietnam into the South. He was recaptured near Quang Tri City, South Vietnam, after about two weeks of freedom. He was shot in the left leg and hand, and had shrapnel wounds in his right leg. As punishment for his escape, he was tortured, hung up, and his arms were broken and paralyzed.

As commander of the Barn in the Zoo, he was forced to endure a four-month stretch in irons, solitary confinement and massive beatings with a fan belt and rope. Of six, he was one of three who survived from Heartbreak Hotel. He was released to return home March 14, 1973.

Col. Day has written two books, "Return with Honor," and his most recent, "Duty, Honor, Country."

His nearly 70 military decorations include the Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Purple Heart, POW Medal and other Vietnam service awards and medals. He also received numerous awards and medals prior to Vietnam.

The Days reside in Florida, where Col. Day is a practicing attorney. (Information courtesy of the Prisoner of War Network at [pownetwork.org](http://pownetwork.org).)

# 20th CMS flight performs 'precisely' right

## TMDE shop gets tested, receives highest rating

By Mrs. Tarsha Storey  
Correspondent

Maintenance on F-16's can be an intricate business; one false measurement or diagnostic can make or break a mission and endanger Air Force resources, including lives.

All systems aboard an F-16 must be calibrated and tested to ensure effectiveness. For example, when an F-16 touches down on the runway, the landing gear must touch down and balance precisely, or the jet will tip and possibly crash.

The focus of the 20th Component Maintenance Squadron's test, measurement and diagnostic equipment flight is to test diagnostic equipment and ensure it is performing up to proper regulations as set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The NIST is responsible for promoting measurement, standards and technology to increase

productivity, trade and the quality of life in the United States.

From something as important as landing gear to the smallest torque wrench exerting the proper force, the people in the TMDE flight help keep Team Shaw and other regional customers regulated.

According to the 20th Maintenance Group, Shaw's TMDE flight has been evaluated by the Air Force Metrology and Calibration Program in four areas and received their highest rating.

The areas evaluated are the lab's quality system; their calibration methods, systems, products and technicians; compliance with quality program requirements; and compliance with environmental and facility requirements.

"Our TMDE professionals have consistently surpassed every performance standard in one of the most tightly-regulated disciplines in the maintenance complex," said Maj. Mike Costello, 20th CMS commander. "Their commitment to excellence and teamwork are second to none."

Master Sgt. Ernest Young III, 20th CMS TMDE laboratory chief, explained the need for TMDE in daily life can be compared to a hair dryer. When you dry your hair, you



Photo by Mrs. Tarsha Storey

**Staff Sgt. David Plemen, 20th CMS TMDE flight journeyman, works on a drag-race fixture used to test an F-16's landing gear.**

don't want to scorch it, but if your hair dryer doesn't have enough heat, it won't dry your hair properly. It has to be calibrated to the optimum settings to do the job properly. All the systems TMDE tests and cali-

brates must be set in the same way.

"We are a very cohesive team. Most of our customers have extensive needs on a specific time table. Our TMDE flight performs exceptionally," said Sgt. Young.

# Hispanic Heritage Committee raises awareness year-round

By Senior Airman Susan Penning  
Staff writer

Team Shaw is committed to embracing the heritage of all races and nationalities. This month, Hispanic heritage is the focus of attention.

Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated Sept. 15 - Oct. 15. Although many events are planned to highlight Hispanic culture during this month, Shaw's Hispanic Heritage Committee has been working hard the rest of the year to raise awareness and unity among the base and community.

They accomplish this in a variety of ways. One is by volunteering their time to help out in the community. Currently, they are renovating the home of an underprivileged family in Sumter.

They also organize various Hispanic-inspired events throughout the year.

The next event is a Hispanic Heritage Dance, set for today at 10 p.m. at Club Shaw. All Shaw members are invited to attend and admission is \$5.

Staff Sgt. Vince Jervier, 20th Comptroller Squadron, is president of the Hispanic Heritage Committee. He said the committee allows him and other Shaw members to give back and keep busy doing something positive. He invites anyone who is interested to join.

"I don't have Hispanic heritage, but I'm the president of the club. It's open to anyone," he said.

The club meets the first and third Fridays of every month at 2:30 p.m. in the Community Center.

In addition to the dance, Sgt. Jervier said the

BX and Hispanic Heritage Committee are sponsoring a farewell event to Hispanic Heritage Month. It is set for Oct. 30 in the BX parking lot. Food, games, music and prizes will be available.

For more information on the Hispanic Heritage Committee or its sponsored events, call Staff Sgt. Jose Maldonado at 895-9675.

### *Did you know?*

Hispanics introduced the cowboy and his hat, boots, lassoes, chaps, spurs, saddle, cattle, rodeos, ranches and even the horse to the North American continent.



## Spirit Spotlight



### Airman 1st Class Robin Ewen



**Organization:** 79th Aircraft Maintenance Unit  
**Duty title:** Maintenance scheduler  
**Job duties:** Schedule maintenance on jets and build flying schedules  
**Hometown:** Woodstown, N.J.  
**Time in service:** Two years  
**Family:** Husband, Senior Airman William, 79th AMU, and daughter, Olivia  
**Off-duty interests:** Spending time with family and friends and scrapbooking

**Words I live by:** "God won't give you anything that you can't handle."

### 2nd Lt. Billy Jeffords



**Organization:** 55th Fighter Squadron  
**Duty title:** Adjutant  
**Job duties:** Manage command support staff and handle all administrative correspondence  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas  
**Family:** Wife, Petra  
**Time in service:** 11 years, nine months  
**Off-duty interests:** Golfing, reading, traveling and studying history

**Words I live by:** "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." -- Philippians 4:13.