



FREMONT COUNTY CRUSADER

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12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association commemorates its 19th anniversary in Fremont County

by Charlotte Burrous

It may not be the same as it has been for the past 19 years, but the sentiment is still there.

This year because of Covid-19, members and their invited guests could not attend the 19th annual 12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association reunion in Fremont County. Instead, associate members traveled to the Fremont County Airport, where they placed a wreath while standing a few moments in silence, remembering the many sacrifices these veterans gave for their country. The only sounds heard were the vehicles on the highway and the flags waving proudly in the air.

The idea began when members of the "12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association discovered the F-4C Phantom fighter aircraft on display at the Colonel Leo Sidney Boston War Memorial Park at Fremont County Airport," a press release said. "They decided to arrange for engraving memorial bricks at the park with the names of the 109 Air Force members of the 12th who lost their lives in the Vietnam War."

It made perfect sense "because one of those members was Cañon City native Captain Ronald L. Packard, who was killed on July 30, 1967, as a pilot flying an F-4C on a combat mission to destroy enemy targets in North Vietnam," a press release said. "Captain Packard was flying an aircraft exactly like the one on display at the park."

When the engraved names were completed, the 12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association members gathered to dedicate the memorial. It wasn't easy for the members to attend the first dedication because the planes were grounded after the 9/11 attack. But 12th Association members from all over the U.S. faithfully gathered on Sept. 16, 2001, to participate in the dedication ceremony. In conjunction, they were supported by local government, veterans' organizations and the Air Force Academy along with numerous local people attending the ceremony.

Since then, the 12th Association has regularly contributed toward the maintenance of the F-4C aircraft, and members from

all over the U.S. have annually travelled back for a reunion and re-dedication ceremony, the release said. Because of Covid-19, a formal re-dedication was not practical this year. Instead, 12th members Charlotte and David Burrous, a Florence residents, conducted an informal re-dedication by placing a wreath at the War Memorial Park.

The memorial commemorates the sacrifice of members of the U.S. Air Force 12th Tactical Fighter Wing, who flew F-4C fighter aircraft on air interdiction, ground support and reconnaissance missions from Cam Ranh Bay Air Base (1965-1969) and Phu Cat Air Base (1970-71) in Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

The 12th Association members greatly appreciate the Colonel Leo Sidney Boston War Memorial Park and the hospitality of Fremont County, and look forward to continued future return visits, the release said.

Information provided by Major Ron Doughty, U.S. Air Force (Retired), President, U.S. Air Force 12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association.



Photo by Charlotte Burrous

For 19 years, members of the 12th Tactical Fighter Wing Association have met to rededicate the wall in the Colonel Leo Sidney Boston War Memorial Park at Fremont County Airport. This year, associate members placed the wreath to honor their service to America.

Curtailed Apple Day festivities offered in Penrose

by Charlotte Burrous

It may not be the same, but Apple Day festivities will be offered on Saturday, Oct. 3 in Penrose.

The day kicks off at 7 a.m. when participants meet in Penrose Park at 401 Park Place in Penrose, where residents will participate in a Giving Back to the Community with a trash pickup event at 7:05 a.m. in Penrose.

At 7:15 a.m., the VFW District 2 Warriors will present the *National Anthem* in front of the VFW.

Then the 5K Fun Run will begin at 7:20 a.m., where participants are invited to walk, run, bike or ride horses. The event will end across the street from the Penrose VFW at 405 Broadway. Horses and bikes will need to stay on the roads, a press release said.

In the meantime, the VFW Auxiliary will serve breakfast from 7-11 a.m. at 405 Broadway Ave. in Penrose. Breakfast will consist of biscuits and sausage gravy, scrambled eggs and cheese, fruit, yogurt, coffee and juice. Meals are \$7 for adults, \$5 for 5K partici-

pants and \$3 for kids 12 and under.

Later in the day at 5:30 p.m., the Penrose Chamber of Commerce and Penrose Parks & Recreation District will host a Picnic in the Park in Penrose Park. The members will serve hot dogs, hamburgers, salad and apple pie, which is free.

The day will culminate with a dance, featuring the music of Atomic Fireballs at VFW Post 2788 at 402 Broadway. The dance is free for everyone. Members noted that the VFW is always open to the public.

The idea of Apple Day began in the fall of 1935 when Penrose School planned to host a Rural Invitational Softball Tournament, which according to the website was a highly competitive battle for the title of Fremont County School League Champions.

During that time, the Penrose PTA decided to provide the food, entertainment and prizes for the 15 softball teams and spectators who arrived in the little hamlet. The organizers settled on Penrose's famous

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HOME of the FREE BECAUSE of the BRAVE



Pray for our Nation II Chronicles 7:14



SFC Archuletta Memorial Highway Sign Dedication scheduled

Sgt. 1st class Ray Adam Archuletta, a native of Florence who was a decorated Vietnam War veteran and who died in that war, will be remembered with the dedication of memorial signs designating Colo. 115 near Florence in his honor.

The Colorado State Legislature paved the way for this recognition in April 2019 when it adopted House Joint Resolution 19-1012, providing that a State Highway in Florence, Colorado will be dedicated in honor of SFC Archuletta. Honorable State Senator Leroy Garcia and State Representative Donald Valdez sponsored this legislation.

Born and raised in Florence, SFC Archuletta was a graduate of Florence High School. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1954 and served until his death in 1967. During his military career, he received numerous awards including:

- Two Purple Hearts
- Three Silver Star Medals (Silver, First Oak Leaf Cluster, and Second Oak Leaf Cluster)
- Bronze Star for Heroism

The City of Florence has embraced this Resolution and will rename a park "SFC Ray Adam Archuletta and Other Veterans." Currently, the park is officially known as "Husky Park" aka "Skater Park." Many family and friends are proud to memorialize these honors on a life dedicated in service to family, community and country. His parents, Michael Tony and Flora Archuletta, lived in Florence since the early

1900s and chose to work and raise their family there until their deaths. The Archuletta family moved to Southern Colorado when it was a territory.

In addition to SFC Archuletta, his surviving brothers Retired MSG James Archuletta, Louis Richard Archuletta, and Michael T. Archuletta also served in the Army during the Vietnam Era.

A dedication ceremony is scheduled at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26, in the Rialto Theater at 209 W. Main St. in Florence. A virtual option is also available through Zoom. Please call Frances Natividad Coleman at 303-935-2260 to obtain the Zoom link.

The family continues to raise funds to cover the dedication expenses. Contributions are appreciated and can be sent to Rick Archuletta.

