

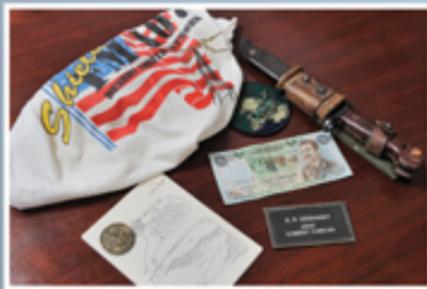
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PRESENTS

# PIONEERS IN BLUE



photos by Ken Hackman

## DAVID GEBHART



### BIOGRAPHY

**Colonel (Ret.) David Gebhart** is a 20 year Air Force veteran that served from December 1978 to August 1999. Gebhart served as commander of several audiovisual squadrons and communications squadrons throughout his career. "My most memorable moment was my first day of duty after being assigned to the Pentagon," said Gebhart. "My biggest accomplishment was Being assigned as the Operations Officer to lead and serve with members of the 1615th (P) Audiovisual Squadron in the Gulf during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM."

Gebhart is currently the Deputy Director of Defense Media Center, Riverside, California. The Defense Media Center operates the American Forces Network, which provides "a touch of home" for U.S. service members and their families overseas through the delivery of stateside commercial radio and television programming services.



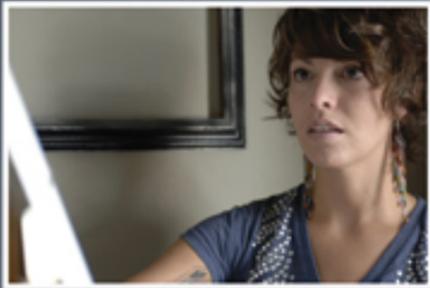
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photos by Tech. Sgt. Anika K. Williams



## JACQUELINE GONZALES

### BIOG RAPHY

**Jacqueline Gonzales** is a 4 year Air Force veteran who served from February 2006 to March 2010 as a broadcaster. "One of the things I cherished most while in the Air Force was being close to my family. While stationed in Bitburg Air Base, Germany, my dad (52nd Operations Group Superintendent) was 20 minutes away at Spangdahlem Air Base and my sister, a DGS-4 communications support administrator was 90 minutes away at Ramstein Air Base, Germany," said Gonzales. "As a military brat it was a challenge to make close friends because we moved around a lot. So my family became my closest friends." Gonzales is grateful for her time in the service and how it shaped her work ethic. "I feel that the Air Force engraves a sense of accountability in all Airmen. Whether it is a project, team assignment, or job position, I will make it my baby," said Gonzales.

She is currently a full-time student working towards her Bachelor's degree in Nursing at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah.

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photos by Jose Lopez



## KEN HACKMAN

BIOG  
RAPHY

**Airman First Class (Separated) Ken Hackman** is an Air Force veteran with over 40 years in the service. He spent 5 years on active duty and another 35 as a civilian employee. Hackman was a photographer and later a photographic manager. As a civilian photographer, he covered Air Force operations during the Vietnam War. "The biggest accomplishment in my career was getting the Air Force to agree that we needed to educate our photographers and not merely train them. This resulted in our participation in university level education that began in 1971 and continues to this day," said Hackman. Other highlights include covering military participants in five summer and three Winter Olympics, documenting the last series of above-ground atomic tests in the United States, photographing numerous Presidential Inaugurations, and flying most of the aircraft in the Air Force inventory from 1960 to 1995.

Hackman continues to mentor, inspire and stay active within the military photojournalism and multimedia community.

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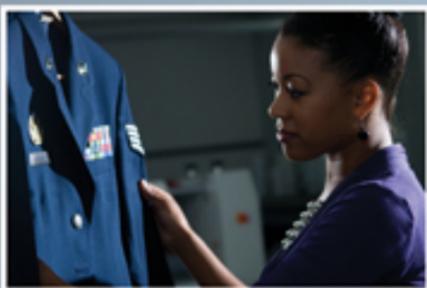
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photos by Master Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo

## BILLEE HENNINGTON



### BIOGRAPHY



**Staff Sergeant (Separated) Billee Hennington** is a 10 year Air Force veteran who served as a Visual Information Specialist during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Her most memorable experiences in the Air Force came from her 20 months spent at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea. "I went through more military exercises and inspections than I can count - doing seemingly never-ending Unexploded Ordinance practice sweeps on stifling summer days in full Mission-Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) gear or protective chemical suits, sweating profusely into my gas mask for hours. That has certainly seared itself into my memory. But I'd gladly do it all over again," explained Hennington. "My time in the Air Force has granted me an understanding of the many overlooked sacrifices servicemen and women accept in order to serve our country. It became a part of who I was - it had quietly etched itself into my identity. It is something I didn't fully realize until I separated... that was tough," said Hennington.

Hennington is currently working as a civilian in the Headquarters Air Force Information Management Multimedia Services, Pentagon, Washington D.C. as a visual information specialist.

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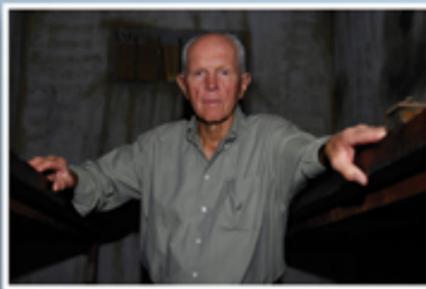
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photos by Staff Sgt. Tim Chacon

## JAY HESS



### BIOGRAPHY

**Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Jay Hess** is a 20 year Air Force veteran, serving from 1953 to 1973. Hess was a pilot on the Republic F-105 Thunderchief while stationed in Thailand. In August of 1967 while on a mission, his jet was shot down. Hit by enemy fire while pulling off a target, the airplane caught on fire and went out of control. Hess ejected, and upon landing was unconscious for several hours. "The enemy captured me and that was the beginning of five and a half years in a North Vietnam prison," said Hess. "I thought about that blue car pulling up in front of the house and my family finding out that I'm not coming home. I kept thinking, I gotta get out of here before that blue car pays my family a visit," said Hess. "Nothing can equal the joy and excitement of being released from POW camp, being free," said Hess. "It sounds crazy but the POW experience made me appreciate things in a way that I would never have appreciated them before," said Hess.

"I'm glad for what I had learned but I would never want to go through that again. It's been an honor to serve!"



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photos by Master Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo

## ADRIENNE JACKSON

### BIOGRAPHY



**Staff Sergeant (Separated) Adrienne Jackson** is an eight year Air Force veteran who served as an Information Manager. "While working alongside senior non-commissioned officers in Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, I learned leadership traits, the importance of a college degree and a profound commitment to the Air Force as a whole," said Jackson. In Kirkuk, Iraq, deployed in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Jackson supervised Honor Guard repatriation ceremonies of fallen Soldiers in the war. "I can recall being on the flight line in formation holding back tears as caskets of Soldiers were loaded onto planes to be sent home to their loved ones. I could not help but wonder if I would make it home safely," Jackson said.

Staff Sergeant Adrienne Jackson is originally from Birmingham, Alabama. She is currently an Executive Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Chief of Staff, Strategic Deterrence & Nuclear Integration (AF/A10) Pentagon, Washington DC.

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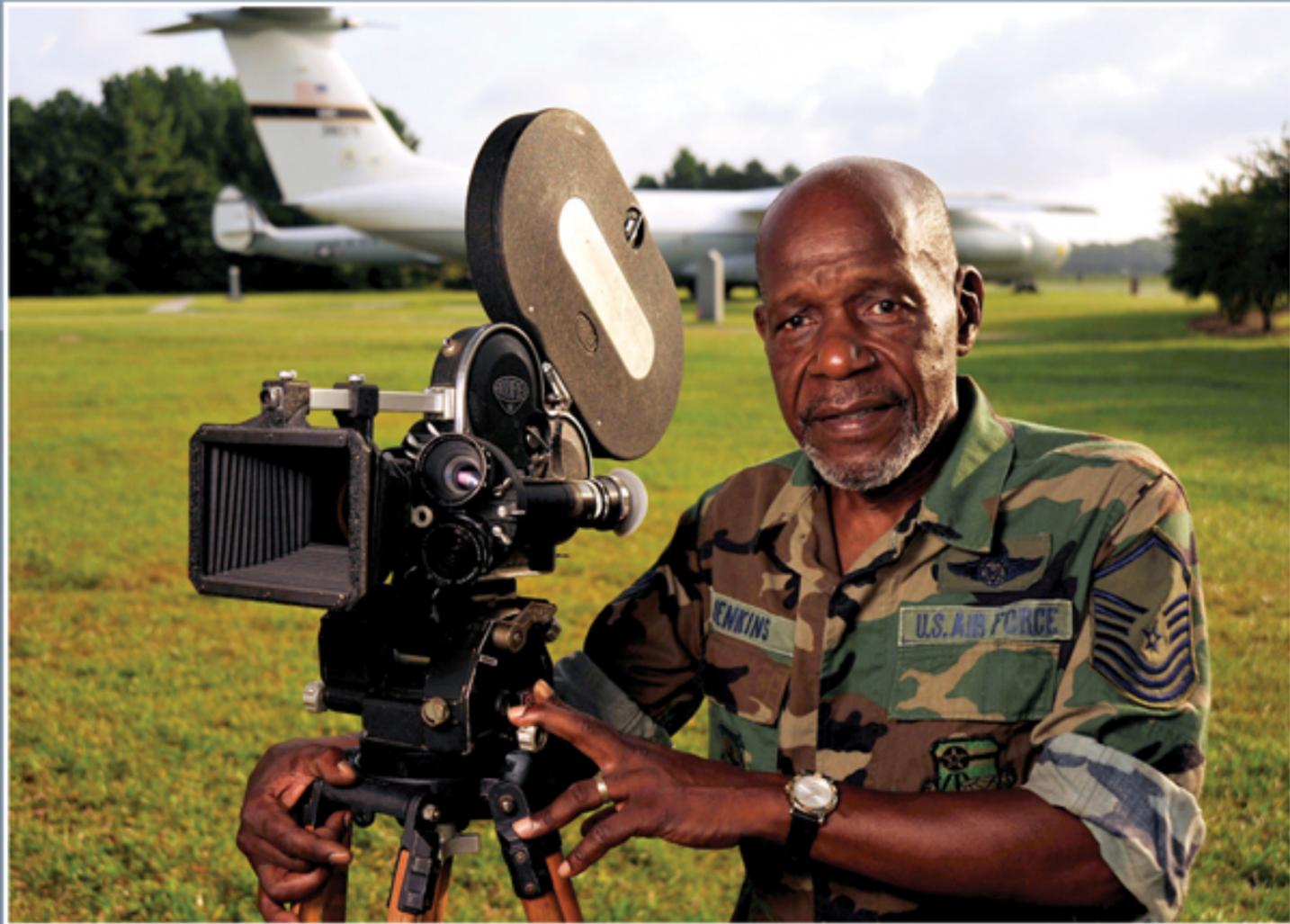


photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita M. Lawrence

## MITCH JENKINS

### BIOGRAPHY



**Senior Master Sergeant (Ret.) Mitchell Jenkins** is a 21 year Air Force veteran who served as a combat videographer from 1968 - 1989. He served two tours of duty in Southeast Asia as an aerial and ground combat documentation cameraman. He flew over 5,000 hours, 100 combat missions in 10 different air frames. As an E-4, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, four Air Medals, and the Outstanding Unit Citation with "V" device. Sergeant Jenkins' primary duty was Battle Damage Assessment Photographer with the 16th Special Operations Squadron onboard a C-130 Gunship. His secondary duties included being the alert photographer for air rescue missions onboard H-53 helicopters. He participated in countless medical and humanitarian missions, documenting wartime operations in Vietnam. In addition, he voluntarily flew Air America missions to capture the actions of U.S. Forces in Southeast Asia.

Jenkins is currently working as a Resource Management Officer for the 1st Combat Camera Squadron in Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina.

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photos by Master Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo

## U.S. CONGRESSMAN **SAM** **JOHNSON**



### BIOGRAPHY

**Colonel (Ret.) Sam Johnson** served in the Air Force for 29 years as a highly decorated fighter pilot. He flew combat missions in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars and was a POW in Vietnam's Hanoi Hilton for nearly seven years. He flew 62 combat missions in his F-86, and during his 25th combat mission on April 16th of 1966, he was shot down over North Vietnam. Johnson suffered a broken right arm, dislocated right shoulder and a broken back. Enemy captors would use these injuries in their constant efforts to extract information from him. Later forced into solitary confinement, Johnson committed 374 names to memory by tapping a special code on the prison wall. "We were all trying to memorize names in case anybody got out," Johnson remembers. A decorated combat veteran and war hero, Johnson was awarded two Silver Stars, two Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, a Bronze Star with Valor, two Purple Hearts, and four Air Medals.

After completing a distinguished Air Force career, he started a home building business from scratch and was later elected as a congressman for the Third District in Texas.



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photos by William Belcher

## EDWARD JOLLY



### BIOGRAPHY

**Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Edward Jolly** is a 30 year Air Force veteran who served as a Cryptographic Specialist during the Vietnam War. He enlisted in 1954 and retired in 1984. Jolly encoded messages using the encryption and decryption machine, SIGABA (Air Force designation was GORGON), the vintage cryptographic workhorse of the time. The Electronic Cipher Machine (ECM) Mark II/SIGABA was an electromechanical, rotor-based cipher machine that used rotating, wired, removable and interchangeable rotor wheels. During World War II, the Germans were never able to break SIGABA codes and the Japanese simply gave up, due to their complicated, seemingly random nature of the stepping. The SIGABA codes were never broken during their service lifetime and no machines were ever captured by the enemy.

Mr. Edward Jolly is currently assigned to the Air Force Intelligence, Reconnaissance, and Surveillance Agency, A6 Directorate, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.



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photos by Senior Airman Jonathan Lovelady

## BRIAN JONES

### BIOG RAPHY

**Master Sergeant (Ret.) Brian Jones** is an Air Force veteran who served 22 years in the supply and public affairs career fields as an Inventory Management Specialist.

His favorite assignment was a temporary duty assignment to the Saudi Arabian embassy. He enjoyed working in a joint environment where he experienced interaction with new cultures. During his deployment he was featured on the cover of the Air Force Times for helping find homes for cats and dogs orphaned by the devastating terrorist attack on the Khobar Towers.

Jones is currently working at the 628th Logistics Readiness Squadron as the Mobility Bag Manager in Charleston, South Carolina.



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