



Veteran of the Month May 2003

Congratulations to Fred Athans!

In partnership with the Veterans Coordination Commission, I am pleased to present the May, 2003 Veteran of the Month - Fred Athans. Fred Athans was born in Stafford Connecticut and attended Milford High School graduating in 1951. Shortly after, he was drafted into the Army but chose instead to enlist in the Air Force. After Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base, he was sent to Shepard Air Force Base receiving advance specialty Training as an Aircraft Maintenance Specialist on the F-106 and T-33 Airframes.

In 1954 Fred was selected as a member of the highly trained Maintenance Standardization Team to evaluate maintenance practices, training and documentation ensuring aircraft maintenance and training are being followed per the order and directions of the Secretary of the Air Force. While stationed at Minot AFB, North Dakota during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Fred was one of the Airframe Crew Chiefs. He flew as a Maintenance Specialist with one of the F-106 whose mission was to fly protective cover over the United States. His direct involvement in this mission-helped avert the potential attacks from Cuba. He has accomplished logging almost 2000+Hrs of airtime in an F-106 and T-33 aircraft.

In 1970 The Department of State selected Sgt Athens as the Procurement NCO for the coordination of military equipment between the government of Taiwan and the United States Military. During this time, he helped the Taiwan government procure all the necessary equipment to protect their borders if ever there was a potential attack from Mainland China.

Fred Athans retired from the Air Force in 1972 but his devotion to service did not stop there. Fred went on to become a two-term National President for The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA). He was instrumental in reorganizing the National TREA organization into a powerful lobbying group for all Veteran issues. Fred helped write and got passed the health program, TRICARE for Life for all Military retirees and dependants on Medicare, and he presently sits on the board for the Senior Citizens League and is National Political Action Committee Treasurer.

During his tenure in the United States Air Force Fred Athans earned the Air Force Good Conduct Medal with six palms, Joint Service Good Conduct Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with palm, Airmen's Medal with palm, and Bronze Star with Valor, National Defense Medal and the Order of the Star from the Taiwan Chinese Government.