

## AmCan woman garners Air Force title

Knight to be named 'Honorary Commander'



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She's a Napa Valley College trustee, an event organizer and a motivational speaker, and now Brenda Knight has a new title to add to the list. Friday evening Knight will be inducted as an Honorary Commander at Travis Air Force Base.

Honorary Commanders are selected from leaders in business, education, non-profit agencies, municipal and professional organizations and local elected officials, according to an Air Force email informing Knight of her selection. The purpose of the program, the email said, is to foster links between the airbase senior leadership and civilian supporters, generate civic appreciation of the need for and value of the Air Force and sister services and to showcase the vital roles Travis AFB play in fulfilling its mission to protect the nation.

The program also allows civilians who have no prior military connections to learn more about the

Air Force, something Knight looks forward to, although she admits it's a little intimidating.

"When you have an opportunity to learn something totally new that is out of your realm ... I don't have a clue, but I'm excited," Knight said.

Knight was recommended for the honor by Jowel Laguerre, Solano Community College superintendent and president. Laguerre, a Haitian native, first met Knight at a meeting of her Ladies In Red group after the devastating Haitian earthquake in 2010. They knew of each other because of their academic administrative ties.

"I invited him to Ladies In Red to make a donation (to Haitian earthquake relief)," Knight said. "After he spoke," Knight said, "500 woman took out their cell phones and made a donation."

Reached by telephone, Laguerre said Knight was well-qualified for the position.

"Having someone with her background and experience and community involvement I thought was very valuable," Laguerre said.

Made aware of Knight's efforts to send knit watch caps to troops in Afghanistan several years

ago, Laguerre said it added to his conviction she was right for the job. Knight organized the “beanie” drive after her son, who was serving there in the Navy at the time, told her of the war zone troops’ need for warm winter headgear.

In addition to her son’s service, Knight said her only other military tie was through her father, a World War II Army veteran.

Laguerre said the position serves as a conduit for the Air Force to the community and vice versa.

“It is really an effort for the Air Force to connect with local citizens,” Laguerre said. “Travis AF Base plays critical role in whole area.”

Knight is a good ambassador, Laguerre said, because she is a good communicator.

“As you know, she’s not bashful at expressing herself,” Laguerre said. “I think we will all be well served to have her in that position.”

In addition to her position on the college board, Knight is perhaps best known to American Canyon residents as the organizer of an annual series of fall concerts in Main Street Park.