

	<p><b>RETIRED AIR FORCE FIRE CHIEFS' QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWSLETTER JULY-SEPTEMBER 2002</b></p>	
	<p><u>Bob Barrow</u>, Editor Associate Editors: <u>Gus Hunter</u> &amp; <u>Douglas Courchene</u> <i>for QNN copies &amp; more</i> <a href="http://www.dodfire.com/index.htm">http://www.dodfire.com/index.htm</a></p>	

**MEMBERS' COMMENTS: Chain of Command Addressed by Chief Joe Jarrell-  
[firechief6736@aol.com](mailto:firechief6736@aol.com)** - Chief Courchene you did an outstanding job as founder and Publisher of the QNN. Your mission seems to have been to keep each Retired Air Force Fire Chief informed on subjects of common interest. The support you received from those heeding your call for help has been a heartening incentive to the Retired & Active Chiefs during the past eleven years. You have expressed your ideas clearly without redundancy. Thus succeeding in touching our consciousness, by feeling the will of your readers. Your style of writing left little room for criticism. We wish you and your family God's blessing. **MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!** Now for Chief Barrow, I wish you much success as you perform your new duties as QNN editor in chief! Your first issue rates an A+. It is newsy, filled with historical data, and with a first page logo "that should capture the attention of your fellow firefighters". You are to be highly commended for taking on the time consuming tasks of editing and publishing the 21<sup>st</sup> century editions of the QNN. I predict you will build upon Chief Courchene's mentoring and rise to the occasion. Your performance will be at a level that will satisfy you and your readers. I talked with Chiefs Val Allen, Mickey C. Butler and W.A. York in April 2002. All had received the QNN and appreciated your (Chief Barrow's) interest in their welfare. Chief York has had a hip replacement and seems to be very pleased with it. Mickey has slowed a bit from his recent operation, but Val was still going strong. I remember well working with Chief Val Allen, as Assistant Chief at Bergstrom AFB, from 1951-1953; being the NCOIC of Gary AFB fire department under Chief York (53-54), and the NCOIC of Foster AFB fire department under Chief Butler (56-58). My association with these Chiefs and others over 40 years of fire service always brings back fond memories. P.S. Chief Barrow, I appreciate you taking time to talk with me, from time to time, about subjects of mutual interest. I have sent a picture for my fire chief's ID card. It was taken in 1954 while assigned to Headquarters 20<sup>th</sup> air force, Kadena Air Base, Okinawa (now Japan). Best regards for continued success, Chief Joe Jarrell, 8306 Stillwood Lane, Austin, TX78757 (512) 459-6055. **EDITOR's comment: Joe thanks for the kind words concerning Doug & I. I think it is great that the**

four of you have remained close friends for over 50 years. Looking forward to making an ID card for you and Val. I have Val's photo taken in 1944 just after his participation in the "Battle of the Bulge" during WW II. Thanks again for being my TEXAS connection.

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**STAMP FUND CONTRIBUTORS:** Chief Joe Jarrell- [firechief6736@aol.com](mailto:firechief6736@aol.com); Fire Chief Jim Carroll- [carrolljd@homexpressway.net](mailto:carrolljd@homexpressway.net); Fire Chief Jack Bol- [Jrbol@hotmail.com](mailto:Jrbol@hotmail.com); Fire Chief Robert Turner- [taurus1938@msn.com](mailto:taurus1938@msn.com) -; Fire Chief Jimmy McKay- [jmckay@erinet.com](mailto:jmckay@erinet.com)

*EDITOR's comment: The QNN is privately funded by members contribution and is most appreciated. Stamps increase June 30, 2002 from .34 to .37 for regular mail. If the QNN runs more than 4 pages, front and back, postage is more. That is the reason email is used when possible. Printing and reproduction cost take a big chunk, 3 to 5 times stamp cost. \*\*\*\*\**

**Ramey AFB Historical Association - Fire Chief Joe Cherniga- [JOESKIPP@aol.com](mailto:JOESKIPP@aol.com); wrote:** USAF firefighters in a combat zone are now receiving well deserved praise as "first rate troops" by the Assistant Editor of the Airman Magazine... Firefighters who may have been some of our own from Eglin AFB, Hurlburt AFB or Duke Field...and elsewhere were complimented for their forward base protection and humanitarian support under austere conditions. MSgt Louis A. Arana-Barradas [www.af.mil/news/airman](http://www.af.mil/news/airman) (currently serving as Assistant Editor with the AIRMAN Magazine) and then TSgt Joe Cherniga, NCOIC Technical Service Branch, Base Fire Department were at Ramey AFB in 1962. Louis was a grade school student and Joe was SPARKY the Fire Dog then participating in base fire prevention week program activities. I served at Ramey 15 Dec 59- 15 June 63 and left there as a proud MSgt. My personal accomplishments at Ramey were the most rewarding of my many tours of duty as a firefighter. God Bless! **EDITOR's comments:** MSgt Arena's father is a Retired Air Force CMSgt and was then Tech. Sgt. Louis A. Arana -- in Ramey's CES squadron back in 1962. SMSgt Joe Cherniga USAF retired as Deputy Fire Chief at Eglin AFB and established a successful Fire Service business in the Fort Walton Beach area after his military retirement. Chief Leroy Osborn- [losborn@redoak.heartland.net](mailto:losborn@redoak.heartland.net) CMSgt USAF Retired who served at Ramey has made contact with Chief Cherniga, both are QNN members. Please contact Joe for more information about RAFBHA.

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**OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM BRIEFING:** Twenty-seven Chiefs and eight wives of the EGLIN-HURLBURT Fire Fighters group enjoyed the fellowship and delicious breakfast buffet at the Golden Corral on a beautiful Saturday morning, April 13, 2002 in Fort Walton Beach. Battalion Fire Chief John Picciuto, ACC Station, Eglin Fire Department introduced his special guest, MSgt Robert A-----, Eglin Operations Assistant Fire Chief. Robert headed up an Eglin Fire Team that was mobilized and sent to set up Fire Operations at a forward operating location in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Condor. The team had just returned after five and a half month TDY, providing first-class Aircraft Crash Fire Fighting protection in a very active and hazardous combat zone of operations. An unclassified briefing was given of the team activities and how they coped with the austerity and often-deplorable conditions common to that theater of operations. Those in attendance gave "Bob" a resounding round of applause for his fine briefing and asked that the other team members be given our appreciation and thanks for a job well done. In true humility Chief Bob A---- replied he would take care of that pleasant task, but it was his honor to address the Retired Fire Chiefs and Fire Fighters that have defended this great nation in the past... **Editor's comment: For more FIRE FIGHTER-OEF stories check out AFCESA Fire Division Web Page: <http://www.afcesa.af.mil/Directorate/CEX/Fire/default.html>**

Then scroll down and select the “Kyrgyzstan Firefighter Story” takes a while to load. Air Force News Link at: [http://www.af.mil/news/May2002/n20020514\\_0776.shtml](http://www.af.mil/news/May2002/n20020514_0776.shtml) and [http://www.af.mil/news/May2002/n20020521\\_0821.shtml](http://www.af.mil/news/May2002/n20020521_0821.shtml)

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**TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE-Chief Don Warner’s Apr-Jun QNN Article** invoked some interesting remarks. **Chief Jim Carroll** [carrolljd@homexpressway.net](mailto:carrolljd@homexpressway.net) remembers that a 750A Pumper driver operator must be a good “double-clutcher” if he was to get any good response time with that big rig. Jim thought of himself as pretty good with the 750A. After all, he was only 140 pounds soaking wet, back then in 1966. As a young A/IC, he had to standup and put his full upper body strength into steering around many of the curves and obstacles on Orlando Air Force Base as a young A/IC. Backing that big box into the Fire Station stalls was another story. You had better have two good vehicle spotters! Jim remembers that the 530B as a second out structural pumper equipped with a fabricated quick attack hose bed on front of the vehicle for a straight lay to the fire scene. The second out was usually the first in. This left the 750A crew task to make a double reverse lay, but fortunately the 530B Crew usually had the fire extinguished before the hose bed load was wetted. **Chief Bob Remel, Niceville, Florida** remembers one particularly hot pit fire. Several 55-gallon drums of FUEL were at the pits flightline disposal area. The FireFighters were not aware of the type of fuel in the drums. After lighting-off the unknown fuel, it was apparent this was not the usual JP4. The harder the aggressive fire teams fought the fire the hotter and brighter the fire became. A survey of the fronts of the P-4s, 0-6 and P-2 vehicles attested to the volatility of the fire by their heat shattered window shields and burned paint. Further investigation found that an unscheduled SR-71 visit had generated more starter fuel and JP-10 than was needed. Needless to say the Vehicle Maintenance Commander and Fire Chief were not amused by this fine show of firefighting. But how many times have FIRE FIGHTERS been told they were not close enough? Too often. Therefore, Chief Remel’s fire teams did a good job... **Chief Milton Wallace-**[Mickeywla@yahoo.com](mailto:Mickeywla@yahoo.com) reading Chief Warner’s Down Memory Lane was wondering-- How many remembered rolling 55-gallon barrels into the burn pit? Then removing the bung plug and watching hydraulic fluid, gasoline, oil or any other waste that would burn spill out into the pit. What if the bung plug could not be loosened? Then the old crash axe was used to make holes and the FIRE FIGHTERS watched the gook gush out before lighting. How in the world we ever got by with only a few blistered feet, I’ll never know. That’s why we had to have the ambulance with medic standing by. Who said those were the, “The good ole days”. Milton Wallace, Fire Chief at the former England AFB, La. **Editor’s comment:** I remember well rolling drums that exploded from stray ignition sparks causing the pucker factor to go sky high. There is no resemblance in today’s training areas and training methods as compared to the early make do and do it as cheap as possible approach. The best was the “Hot Pit Fires” using AVFUELS. Today it is controlled propane burners and simulated smoke. Any Chiefs wanting to witness a training exercise today should contact the nearest Base and coordinate a date and time with the Training Assistant Fire Chief.

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**NETWORKING Is The QNN Format:** email addresses are used when possible, to promote “Networking” with one another. Constructive comment/suggestion on the QNN format are welcomed. Many Chiefs send valuable timely information that QNN translates to easy

reader's use. Following websites contain Veterans/Retirees legislative issues that need your response to our congressional representatives. Contact the Editor if more detail info is needed. <http://capwiz.com/troa/issues/alert/?alertid=186016> and <http://www.dav.org>

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**TAPS:**

**Click on O-10...**

**John E. Keys - age 88 of Riverview, Florida** died at home April 27, 02. Proceeded in death by his wife of 44 years, Florence I. Moore Avery Keys. 3 children; eight grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and four great great grandchildren survive them. Keys was born Dec. 2, 1913 in Washington, D.C. and retired as Fire Chief from MacDill AFB, He had served as both an enlisted and civilian Federal Fire Fighter, Fire Chief and TAC Inspector from Dec. 4, 1941 through Feb. 26, 1977. . Chief Keys was your Editor's Fire Chief 55/59 at Hqs Air Research & Development Command, Baltimore, MD. He served later as Hurlburt Field Fire Chief 60/64 before moving to Hqs Tactical Air Command. His last assignment was as MacDill AFB Fire Chief where he made his home in nearby Riverside, Florida. Your Editor and his family enjoyed many visit with John in his retirement years. He was a close associate for over 25 years. He was a true Fire Protection Pioneer landing a job at Fort Belvoir Army Engineering Lab in 1942 with the task to develop and improve Crash Fire Rescue equipment for the Army Air Corp Fire Departments during WW II. Following the war, he was appointed to a Civil Service Supervisory Fire position at Camp Spring, Maryland (Andrews AFB predecessor) developing fire equipment and programs for the newly created U.S. Air Force Fire Departments. John loved the Fire Service and he gave back his talents to the community throughout his latter years. He was a fine humanitarian and great friend that will be truly missed. **WROTE: Bob Barrow, Editor.**

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**VA's Agent Orange Registry Opens to Veterans Outside Vietnam Era.** The Veterans Affairs is now offering registry examinations to any veterans exposed to A.O. and other herbicides during testing, transporting or spraying for military purposes. This could be important to Fire Fighters that preformed standbys, wash downs or emergency responses on these cancer causing agents outside of the Vietnam. Type 2 diabetes and other late on-set diseases including certain nervous system damage maybe eligible. County VA and National Service Organization Service Officers can help determine eligible, documentation and preparation to access VA. **Chief Guy J.Wills Jr. - [chiefwills@aol.com](mailto:chiefwills@aol.com)** CMSgt USAF Retired, researched this information for a serviced-connected claim going back to the late 1960s at Eglin AFB. Fire Fighters' exposure to A.O. and other herbicides was frequent when C-123 aircraft required cargo bays to be washed out due to hazardous spills. Special precautions that would be mandatory today were sadly lacking. Ref: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

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**4<sup>th</sup> SAC FireFighters Reunion set for Vandenberg AFB in September 2002. Chief John C. Eliseo- [homesafe@best1.net](mailto:homesafe@best1.net) -phone:(805) 937-4670 and Chief Jack B Schneider- [jack@drruth.net](mailto:jack@drruth.net) -maintain a list of over 200 SAC FIRE FIGHTER's names. Jack is the**



editor "SAC Smoldering Embers" newsletter. John and Jack would appreciate hearing from interested SAC Fire Fighters, ASAP. Dates and agenda to be announced soon.

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**DoD FIRE ACADEMY at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas, is the home of the Military Firefighter Heritage Foundation. Please checkout website - <http://www.dodfire.com/heritage/index.htm> - Chief Randy Moore, President, Board of Directors and the group at the Fire School are off to a great start and need our support. They had the opening dedication May 15, 2002 for the first vehicle pavilion to display a restored TYPE 0-11A. Several Retired Chiefs have express our group supporting a "Heritage" program like this one... any suggestions? The Foundation is in its infancy and needs all the help it can get to sustain it. The Foundation will depend on private funding.**

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**"PIONEERS WITH INTENT." Proposed title of Chief Doug Courchene's book.** Chapter I begins in 1937 - the time Chief J.K.Schmidt modified a 750 pumper for aircraft fire fighting. Chief Schmidt's modified pumper was a Peter Pirsch and sprayed water fog, a first for aircraft fires. The period and material in other chapters include Air Force Fire Protection through the 40s to the 70s concerning R&D, training, operations, and crash trucks up to the P-15 generation. Doug is hoping to have the book published in time for Christmas. I know I will have one on my wish list, as will most military fire fighters. The photographs alone will be worth the price... Book Excerpts can be found in the QNN January-March 2002 issue. Now here is a Doug truism: "If we let terrorists terrify us, our lives will become worthless." Write on Doug and thanks for taking the time and effort to capture our rich fire fighting heritage. Email Doug [dougecourchene@aol.com](mailto:dougecourchene@aol.com) to get on the advance wish list.

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**DoD Fire & Emergency Services Training Conference  
August 23-26, 2002, Kansas City, MO.**

<http://www.iafc.org/conference.shtml>

**AIR FORCE PIONEERS DAY is not planned this year at K.C. However, Dallas 2003 looks good. It is early but how many retirees believe they could be at next year's Dallas 2003 "Air Force Pioneer Day"?**

52 retirees attended the DALLAS World-Wide in 2000. But only a handful was at NEW ORLEANS in 2001. In DALLAS 2000, there were over 900 AF active-duty Firefighters, with at least a hundred attending the Pioneer's Day gathering with the 52 Pioneers. The Fire folks at Tyndall believe DALLAS 2003 in August of next year will be the best bet for their support. So, drop me a line if you are serious about next year. The numbers will be needed for planning purposes. Most of us are not getting any younger and each year our numbers diminish, so the sooner the better. **This much I do know for this year's K.C. event, The ICHIEFS have a one day pass to their opening session and the Fire Exposition (500 vendors) to be held on August 23-24-25, 2002. Members planning to attend K.C., if**

you email your plans to [chief.one@cox.net](mailto:chief.one@cox.net)- I will send you FREE an ICHIEFS one day pass application for their Opener and Big Expo, courtesy of the ICHIEFS for the Retired Air Force Chiefs. The application must be returned by you NLT July 30<sup>th</sup>.  
 August 27, 0700 to 1130 is "Air Force Day" and 1130 to 1300 "Awards Luncheon" for \$30.



**SICK CALL:** Chief Guy J. Wills- [chiefwills@aol.com](mailto:chiefwills@aol.com)- has begun a course of chemo treatments while working full time as Ocean City-Wright Fire District Chief. Chief Jim Cooper's- [fdchief1@cox.net](mailto:fdchief1@cox.net)- wife, Phyllis, has also started her chemo treatment as an outpatient and still holds down an Eglin Hospital volunteer job-prepping patients for surgery and during their recovery period. Hats-off to these two close friends and God Bless their speedy recovery. Chief Hugh Ackers- [hbakers@knology.net](mailto:hbakers@knology.net) reports his wife Stephanie's Alzheimer condition has worsened and doctors are advising she is now in need of a nursing facility to provide round the clock care. Hugh has been at her side the past two years providing almost constant care. Hugh stated "What a sad and overwhelming condition; breaks my heart that she doesn't know me. Thought, I had been thru HELL in Korea and Vietnam, this does not compare...Love youse guys...Hugh". Chief Joe Jarrell- [firechief6736@aol.com](mailto:firechief6736@aol.com) checked on long time friends Chief W.A. York and Chief Mickey C. Butler, I52 Wampum Way, Sequin, TX 78155 and found Mickey's recent operations and medical conditions has left him in a weakened condition. Chief York, Staples, TX 78670 is also having residual problems from a recent shoulder operation. Chief Doug Courchene wrote that his friend Chief Dick Waller- [MW11936@aol.com](mailto:MW11936@aol.com) is recovering from surgery that has left his hands and feet numb. Doug remembers Dick as the premiere fire prevention expert at Headquarters Alaskan Air Command in 1968, while he was Chief at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Editor's Comment: My good friend "Rick" Richardson's physical condition has worsened. Rick spend 20 years as a military FIRE FIGHTER and 20 years a civil service FIRE FIGHTER. At 73 years of age, Rick's wit & memory are still sharp and conversation lively. Hope you can send a "Get Well" card to 3064 Stamp St, Crestview, FL 32536. The power of prayer in numbers and faith in the Heavenly Father works miracles. Let everyone pray for the sick and their families for "His" blessing. A wise person once said, "...you gotta know what sadness be yours and what be somebody else's..."

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**Bob's wit:** "Learning is the progressive discovery of your own ignorance."  
**Will Roger's witticism:** "If you get to thinking you're a person of some influence, try ordering someone else's dog around."  
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Check out Don Warner's DODFIRE website at <http://www.dodfire.com/index.htm>. Click on Retirees, then Pioneers for the Retirees Newsletters and the pictures taken at DALLAS 2000. Don has a great website and just recently revamped and updated the articles. Be sure to check out the Fire Truck History Libraries and Fire Links sections.

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**NOMADS Corner:** Having worn out several motorhomes and a couple of RVs, Nan (Gypsy) and yours truly, really enjoy hearing from Fire Chiefs still living the nomadic life style on

the roads and “super slabs” of this beautiful country. Most big rigs now have computers or at least the campgrounds will accept and send emails for their campers. **Chief Roy D. Johnson-** [smokierdj@prodigy.net](mailto:smokierdj@prodigy.net) and wife “Sweet Thing’s” happy-camped out along the Texas Panhandle trails this past winter soaking up the sun, when the worse thing happened. Their 5<sup>th</sup> wheeler was bulging at the seams from overload. They decide it would be best to head for the home forty in Colorado after 3 months. They had just collected too much good stuff on this trip, stated Roy. Besides most of the Snow Birds had flown the coop and this RV Park was looking bare. “Sweet Thing” honey-do list of things to do at home will keep me busy till it is time to hit the road again. Keep the QNNs coming. **Chief George Cannode-** [firepup@qwest.net](mailto:firepup@qwest.net) and wife, Pat, emailed “will be pulling my motorhome into Kansas City in August for the Air Force World-Wide Fire Protection Conference. Hope to see some of the “Pioneers” there. Take care and keep in touch”. Enjoy the QNN very much... **Chief Myrl C. Jaquith-** [mjaquith@gtcom.net](mailto:mjaquith@gtcom.net) and wife, Carolena, wrote. “The QNN by e-mail is best because we travel by RV during the summer. E-mail while on the road is a nicety we must have.” Port St Joe, Florida is a favorite roost when they are not at home in Vermont. While at HQ AFCESA, Tyndall AFB, they got sand in their shoes, bought a piece of land near the Gulf of Mexico to park their motor home. **EDITOR’s comment: Keep in touch when you can and the QNN can be sent to your destination choice. Nan and I enjoy reading about the RV life and relive many of our own camping experiences. So throw another log on fire for us. Hope to catch you on the flip side and may all your days be happy and safe ones.**

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**NEW MEMBER COMMENTS:** The QNN has 236 member email and 78 snail mail addresses. Thanks to members spreading the word and Don Warner’s DoDFIRE web survey the list continues to grow. **Kenneth Ploense-** [chiefkcp@aol.com](mailto:chiefkcp@aol.com) will have 40 years military and civilian time as firefighting Jun 02. There isn't anything I would rather do in life than being a fireman. Presently serving as MacDill Chief of Training. **Robert W. Greer-** [greerr@cnrf.navy.mil](mailto:greerr@cnrf.navy.mil) retired Air Force 1982, worked for some of the finest, Art Hill, Leroy Osborn, Charley Bird, Wolf, and others, I'm currently the Fire Chief at NAS/JRB Fort Worth. **Ed White-** [ed.white@bos.johnston.af.mil](mailto:ed.white@bos.johnston.af.mil) USAF 1965-1969, Doug Courchene was my last active duty fire chief while I was on active-duty in Alaska. After my discharge I was civil service from 1969-2000, as AC at Robins AFB; then Fire Chief at Fort Hood. Since then Johnston Island Fire Chief (Contractor) until Sep 02, 2002. Looking forward to my 3<sup>rd</sup> retirement and hearing from my friends. **Paul H. Gilmour-** [phgsmgt@yahoo.com](mailto:phgsmgt@yahoo.com) Sept 61-Sept 87, Retired as Senior Master having served in all fields of Air Force Fire Protection from handlineman starting at RAF Sculthorpe to Base Fire Chief RAF Lakenheath. Also combat crewmember on HH-43B&F starting at Ramstein AB, Plattsburgh AFB and Ubon RTAB. Glad to see someone has taken the time to write about the many unsung hero's who stood watch all hours of the day and night over our bases and people. Hope to hear from any pals out there who served with me. **Charlie Huff-** [huffc@netusa1.net](mailto:huffc@netusa1.net) joined the Air Force and the Fire Protection Career Field in 1957. Spent most of my career overseas including: England (3), France, Korea (2) and Thailand during the war; 3 yrs at Chanute as an Instructor; 1 yr at Air Defense Command; retired at Wurtsmith AFB in 1985... Spent a short period in Saudi Arabia and returned to seek a position in Civil Service... Don Smith hired me as an Assistant Fire Chief (Ops) Carswell in early 1987, remained there until July 1994... I was selected as Fire Chief, Grissom ARB, IN. Retired in Aug. 2000 with 43 years combined service. My most enjoyable accomplishment was to obtain a congressional insert for the new 28,000 sq. ft. Fire Station at Grissom. My only hope is that in some small way, I made an impact on Fire Protection... **Charles “Pete” Peters-** [Cpeters@navsuppact-midsouth.navy.mil](mailto:Cpeters@navsuppact-midsouth.navy.mil) - Bob, it looks like I might finally retire after 56 years in the Fire Service. My wife wants me to take it easy and try to enjoy life as a retiree. However, you know me and I don't think I will be happy just sitting around. I noticed that in the April/June QNN letter that Art Hill and his wife Bennie are taking it

easy, now that Art is retired. Art and I served together at Sidi Slimane back in the early 50's- we had quite a softball team. He was a terrific pitcher and I was his catcher. We worked for Dan Nevins in those days. MSGT Nevins headed back to the states and CWO Leeds took over as Officer In-Charge. Bob, do you remember CWO DeShazio, I remember him from my day's at Barksdale under the late Fire Chief J. Harold Roy, who later transferred up the street to 2nd Air Force Headquarters. J.P. McConnell was the headman at 2Af in those days. I25 crash trucks (bean and Hardie pumps), the I50 Cardox (Reo and Sterling) and the open cab I55 crash trucks with twin turrets on top and the "tunnel line behind the crew chief'/driver were the big guns in those days. Barksdale was great duty.

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**EDITOR's CONFESSION:** I must confess a longstanding bias. I have been praising Fire Fighters deeds ever since climbing on the back of a big red fire truck. That would have been 1948 when I joined the Odenton Volunteer Fire Company. January 1950, I was lucky to land an Army Airfield/ Structural Fire Fighter job at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. The pay was 2876 dollars annually for a 168-hour pay period. The civil service grade was Collective Protective Custodian CPC-6. That would be a GS-4 in today's terms. They furnished a tailor-made double-breasted blouse with 8 silver fire scramble buttons and 2 pairs of matching trousers. This was topped off with a stovetop hat and official breast and Maltese hat badges. I was living in tall cotton and assigned as first out on one of the two Mack 750 Class "A" pumpers in like new condition. The Fire Fighters trained until they were a well-organized firefighting force, to the point where each of the 5 man crews could anticipate one another's tasks. Each pumper had 4 All-Service breathing apparatus assigned. The canister type mask had a collective use of one hour, with the last user noting the time used on the canister. I cannot remember ever wearing an All-Service during a fire incident, since the apparatus did not filter but minute particles of CO gases and none of the more hazardous vapors from the air you breathe. Each station had 2 Self-Contained breathing apparatus, supplied by 30-minute canisters of pure oxygen. The pure O2 was great for early morning hangovers. Back then FIRE FIGHTERS were known for eating smoke. The more smoke the better the firefighting abilities. CTC (carbon tetra-chloride) was another FIRE FIGHTER/GI favorite before they mixed in red dye to curb unauthorized use. Soaking Class-A uniforms in CTC and then airing them out in the open, helped save on the dry cleaning cost. Every Friday, station stalls and floors were stripped with CTC, prior to placing a high-gloss shine on them. Inhaling unheated CTC vapors indoors was more intoxicating than drinking that good old mountain dew... My bunk was located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor beneath a turnout bell and just a few steps from the brass-sliding pole used for fast egress. The sound of the bell would have awakened the dead and the electrical fire flew out 2' from the bell, lighting up the entire bunkroom. Many was the time I was jolted awake; jumped into my bunker gear; slid the 20' brass pole; climbed on the big red fire truck; and was half way to the fire call before realizing what was happening. The Airfield Fire Station had a Class 125 Hardie High Pressure Fog rig and a Class 135 front-mounted pump. An old reserve Class 100 "USA" pumper was on standby. It was an enormously big truck that had been used as a first-out pumper prior to the new MACK arrivals. The Fire Chief gave permission once a week to take the big rig off base for a high-speed ops check. It was an awesome sight to see. November 1951, with the Korean War heightening, I volunteered for a hitch in the Air Force. I was sent to Sampson AFB and issued one brown and one blue Class "A" uniform. **But that is another story for later on. Stay tuned and keep write on! A big thanks to all the contributors, materially & monetarily for making this possible.**

**My deepest appreciation to Retired Fire Chief Ed Sams for proof reading this issue of QNN.**



