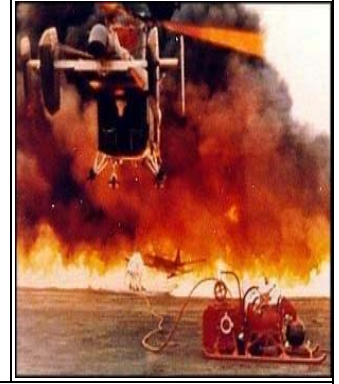


**Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs' Network**  
**QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWS**



*Legendary Pioneers  
 Who Reminisce About the Past  
 But Focus on the Future*  
<http://www.dodfire.com/Retirees.htm>  
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**Computer Technical Support: Steven Markham**



Volume 3 2010

Founded by: Doug Courchene CMSgt, USAF, Retired

July-September 2010

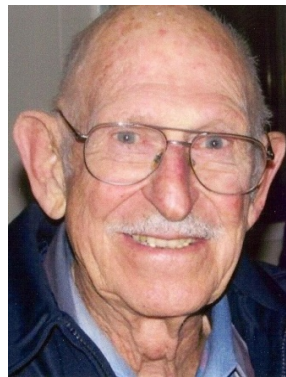
As you will notice, I have vacancies for four Associate Editors. I have been having great difficulty getting the QNN put together on time, every time. So, this is my call for help. Those of you who are **seriously interested** and want to get involved please contact me as soon as you can. I would like to discuss what we can do together to make the QNN a better product. . I am looking forward to hearing from those of you that want to get involved.

Further please notice above our "Final Wordsmiths," Milt and Helen Puckett. They are doing a great job and have provided much support to the QNN. Further, I solicited a good friend, Steven Markham, who owns and operates a computer business in Houston, Texas, for assistance. When we have computer issues he has agreed to be the "go to" guy. I believe Steve will provide much to the final product each quarter. Lastly, I am also looking for an Assistant Editor. If something should happen to me, this will be the person who will assume duties as Editor for the QNN. The way I got the job as Editor for the QNN was totally unexpected. We did not expect the loss of Chief Barrow who was doing a great job on the QNN. He just asked me to fill in for a couple editions while he had surgery and recuperated. So, I need someone to volunteer or be nominated for the position. Again, I do appreciate very much the patience each of you have shown and the encouragement I have received by phone and e-mail. So, please continue sending me suggestions and inputs. Again, thank you.  
 (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders, CMSgt, USAF Retired, 334-792-3521, [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))



**TAPS**

**Edward (Ed) Linden Sams**  
 14 January 1921-9 July 2009



Edward (Ed) Linden Sams peacefully went to be with his Lord on 9 July 2009, with family at his side. Ed was born on January 14, 1921, in Long Beach CA to Dr. Frederick and May Sams. He attended schools in Valley Center, Escondido, and Pasadena CA. Ed met Rosemary Dryden in May 1939, and

they were married 7 April 1940, in Yuma, Arizona. They recently celebrated their 69<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. He enlisted in the US Navy in the spring of 1944 and served on the World War II rescue and salvage ship USS Seize, deployed to the South Pacific. He was honorably discharged in February 1946 and returned to his wife in Escondido, California. Ed had a



distinguished 35-year career as a civil servant, retiring in 1976 as Chief Fire Protection Specialist, Alaskan Air Command. His career began as the first civilian firefighter to be hired on the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base. His career led him to becoming the Assistant Fire Chief at Castle Air Force Base in Atwater, California; Assistant Fire Protection Specialist at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska; and Fire Chief at Edwards Air Force Base in Edwards, California.

Ed was preceded in death by his parents; son, Lauren; granddaughter, Debbie Sams Phillips; and siblings Richard, Ted, John, Shirley, Loren, and Lorna. Ed is survived by his wife Rosemary; son Michael Sams of Escondido CA; daughter and son-in-law Donna and Roland Tamayo of Encino CA; son and daughter-in-law Doug and Dee Sams of Porterville CA; son and daughter-in-law David and Tomi Sams of San Ramon CA; and son Gary Sams of Yreka CA. He leaves two sisters, Sylvia Robertson of Chico CA and June Wilcox McMahon of Grants Pass OR. Ed also leaves 20 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

His life's passions were his wife, his family, writing, and serving his Lord Jesus Christ. Much of his personal time was spent serving the Lord as a charter member of Emmanuel Faith Community Church in Escondido CA. During the last 12 years Ed was actively involved in the Yreka Berean Community Church. For the past 20 years he dedicated himself to researching and writing numerous books about his family genealogy and life experiences. His latest publication prior to passing was titled *My Life, Hers and Ours: It Was Worth It All*. Whenever family members inquired about the family history, Ed would always respond, "It's in the book!" The Sams family requests any donations be made to the following:

Madrone Hospice	United Indian Missions
255 Collier Cir.	P.O. Box 6429
Yreka, CA, 96097	Glendale, AZ 85312-6429

Yreka Berean Community Church  
203 Wetzel Way  
Yreka, CA, 96097

Ed leaves a legacy of unconditional love for his family, friends, and his Lord Jesus Christ.

How sad to hear about my friend, Ed Sams, passing. Retired Chief Ed Sams mostly spent his fire service career in Strategic Air Command, namely Castle Air Force Base CA. I first met Ed in 1959 during a

Headquarters 15th Air Force Safety of Flight Staff Visit. At that time he was Deputy Fire Chief under Chief Glenn Mullins. My primary job was NCOIC March AFB CA Fire Department. My fire friends (SMSgt Bob Dunn and Bert Kwist) at Headquarters 15th Air Force would have me augment headquarters' teams to conduct inspections of command bases. I was TDY often, too often. Castle AFB Fire Department was one of the best of 57 base fire departments in Strategic Air Command (SAC).

The second time I saw Ed Sams was during a stop on my way to Guam with a Headquarters Strategic Air Command Staff Team. We stopped briefly to present an award to the Castle Air Force Base Fire Department for having the best Command Fire Prevention Week Program. The next time we met, Ed was a Fire Protection Specialist serving in Alaskan Air Command (AAC) Headquarters, and I was Base Fire Chief, Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage AK. Ed was truly a professional, extremely dedicated, and served his country and his profession with honor. I pay tribute to a man of enormous character. Ed was known as an erudite man for command of the English language. He was a proven leader, an excellent writer, and an author. (Doug Courchene CMSgt, USAF, Retired [DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com](mailto:DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com))

***Editor's Note:*** *I never had the opportunity to meet Chief Sams. However, I was stationed in Alaska Air Command when he was serving at the Headquarters. Everything I ever heard about him was very positive. His consistent support for all fire protection organizations within the command was well known. He certainly garnered a reputation as a professional leader. Air Force Fire Protection was well served by Chief Ed Sams, and his contributions were many.* (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF, Retired [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

### **Paul David Sutphin**

8 September 1945-26 June 2010



Paul David Sutphin, 64, of Panama City, Florida, passed away Saturday, June 26, 2010. Born in Ashland KY, Paul resided in Panama City for over 25 years. Paul proudly served his country in the United States Air Force for 29 years in fire protection, retiring as a Fire Chief in the rank of Chief

Master Sergeant. He received numerous medals during this service, to include the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal. Paul was an active member of the Shriners in the Hot Rod Group, VFW Post 8205, and American Veterans Association Parker, Florida, Lodge 142. He is survived by his wife, Chong (Charlie); daughters, Kelley and Yvette; son-in-law, Dave; grandson, Jayden; brother, Jim; and sisters, Joanne, Billie, and Jessie. He was preceded in death by his mother, Helen; father, Lawrence; and brother Richard.

I was certainly saddened to learn that my friend Paul D. Sutphin, CMSgt, USAF (Retired), passed away peacefully in his sleep at 0330 Saturday morning, 26 June 2010. During his almost 30 years of honorable service to his country, the US Air Force, and the Fire and Emergency Services community, he established many long-lasting friendships. He leaves behind a legacy of significant contributions and was admired and respected by his peers. Sut often referred to himself as "SOAPVCM": short for "Son of a Poor Virginia Coal Miner." He departed the Coal Mountains of Virginia in the mid-1960s, entered the Air Force, and journeyed to far and distant shores in service to his country. He lived a good life and shared his happiest moments with his wife Charlie for the past 35 years. He was my lifelong and closest friend, and I shall miss him. It has been an remarkable and enjoyable journey through life. You may send condolences to:

Mrs Charlie Sutphin  
5108 Hickory Street  
Callaway Florida 32404

(GEORGE F. HALL, CMSgt, USAF, Retired  
[IFAC@COX.NET](mailto:IFAC@COX.NET))

Thanks Chief for the update, although we did not want to hear about the passing of Paul Sutphin. We have great memories of Sut and Charlie since they came to K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base MI. At that time he was a MSgt and served as Deputy Fire Chief. Additionally, I worked closely with him when he was assigned to the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency (AFCESA). Sut had great influence on AF Fire Protection and many young firefighters. He will be greatly missed. (Duane Morgan, [firechiefone@charter.net](mailto:firechiefone@charter.net))

Unfortunately I didn't get to know Paul until the latter part of my active duty career and my short time at the Air Force Research Laboratory He was the consummate Chief, a great guy, and a true

friend to me in my transition from active duty. I pray for Charlie and all his family members. (Paul R. Kempton Jr., CMSgt, USAF, Retired, [chiefbills@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chiefbills@sbcglobal.net))

Sandy, Thanks for keeping me informed about Paul's passing. Paul was a super person and a very good friend. Paul and I came from the same part of the country. I came from Wise VA, and Paul came from Pound VA--about three miles apart. He always told me he could throw rocks at me very easily because his home was on higher ground. The bad thing about passing away is you will be missed by your family and friends. There will be lots of us missing Paul, but I am sure he is in a better world than we are. (Tom Smith, [TomSmith@TomSmithFire.com](mailto:TomSmith@TomSmithFire.com))

Very sad news concerning the loss of Paul Sutphin. Great Chief. His family will be in my prayers. John Cook CMSgt, USAF Retired, [john.h.cook@us.army.mil](mailto:john.h.cook@us.army.mil))

CMSgt Paul Sutphin. . .Nothing worthwhile comes easily. Half effort does not produce half results, it produces no results. Work, continuous work and hard work, is the only way to accomplish results that last. Work and success best describe Chief Sutphin. (Doug Courchene, CMSgt, USAF Retired, [DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com](mailto:DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com))

Our family had the good fortune to have known "Sut" and Charlie for many years. We have loads of memories and cherish the friendship we shared. Many thoughts and prayers are with you Charlie during this difficult period. (Jerry Garrett [J.Garrett07@comcast.net](mailto:J.Garrett07@comcast.net))

Sut was a good man and friend, dedicated to his family and country. I was so glad to get to visit him and pray with him in the hospital before he left us to be with his Lord. (Milford Puckett CMSgt, USAF Retired, [helmilpuck@comcast.net](mailto:helmilpuck@comcast.net))

I am deeply saddened at the loss of such a great American and fine human being. I had the privilege of serving with Sut for several years and appreciated his counsel, humor, and friendship. Words cannot possibly fill the void the family is experiencing with his passing. Know this: he is in a good place, and he touched many in a positive manner. (Mike Doris CMSgt, USAF Retired, [FormerILEM@aol.com](mailto:FormerILEM@aol.com))

## John Alden Hamre

16 January 1931-24 July 2010

It will be hard to imagine a world without Paul. His professional abilities, as well as his wit, will be sorely missed. He was a friend to all that knew him, and he leaves a hole that will not be easily filled. I send my condolences to "Charlie" and the rest of his family. (Ray Porter [afchief911@yahoo.com](mailto:afchief911@yahoo.com))

We will always remember Paul as a person of fun and laughter. He always greeted us with a smile and took the time for some pleasant conversation. Paul was also one of the smartest Fire Officers that I have had the honor to serve with.

Freddie Thompson CMSgt, USAF Retired,  
[Freddie.Thompson@eu.navy.mil](mailto:Freddie.Thompson@eu.navy.mil))

Sut was a friend to me for over 30 years. He always had something positive to say about any situation and found humor in the most difficult challenges. He will be missed; our fire protection family has lost a shining star. He was the best instructor I ever had at Chanutte AFB IL Fire School.

Wayne Kee, CMSgt, USAF, Retired  
[Wayne.M.Key@nasa.gov](mailto:Wayne.M.Key@nasa.gov))

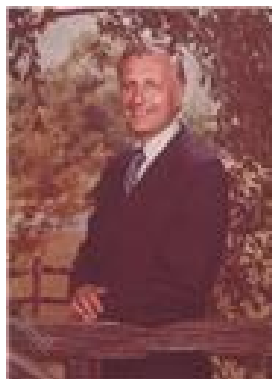
I'm shocked to hear of the passing of Paul Sutphin. Our thoughts and prayers are offered for his family. Paul and I were never assigned together during our military careers. However, I initially met him at Fire Conferences and of course, during his assignment at AFCEA. Paul always demonstrated the qualities of a professional in the Fire Protection Community.

Norris "Sandy" Sanchez CMSgt, USAF Retired,  
[bigfiredog43@msn.com](mailto:bigfiredog43@msn.com)

**Editor's Note:** *What great memories I have of Sut. During the time we served together we established a long-term friendship. I truly enjoyed working and traveling many miles with him. Sut was a "one-of-a-kind cut of cloth." He was certainly a true professional, and I admired his ability to always find something to laugh about when seemingly everything was spinning out of control. Sut loved America and served it with Honor, Dignity, and Respect. He honored each of us in Fire and Emergency Services with his continuing effort to make it better. Sut will be missed by his friends, family members, and especially by his wife, Charlie. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.*

(Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF Retired,  
[Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

John Alden Hamre, 79, of Panama City FL passed away on Saturday, July 24, 2010. He was born on



January 16, 1931, in Madison WI and moved to Panama City in 1965. He was preceded in death by his parents, John I. Hamre and Myrtle Norwick Hamre; a brother, Donnie Hamre; and a son, Daniel Hamre. Mr Hamre was a veteran of the Korean War and was the

retired Assistant Fire Chief of the Tyndall AFB Fire Department. He was also retired from the Air National Guard as Chief Master Sergeant and was a school bus driver for Bay County Schools for 10 years. He served as Elder at Trinity Lutheran Church for 45 years, where he touched and shaped many lives and brought the ministry to many. Mr Hamre is survived by his wife of 55 years, Phyllis M. Hamre; children, James Hamre (Mary Jane) of Atlanta GA, Becky Hubbard (Bryan) of Washington DC, Andrew Hamre (Cindy) of El Paso TX, and Liz Redding (Chad) of Panama City FL; 18 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren, and 6 sisters. He was a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather and will be truly missed by those who knew him.

**Editor's Note:** I had the opportunity to work with Chief Hamre for a short period of time. He was one of the most pleasant individuals I have ever met. Nothing alarmed him. He was very knowledgeable and was quick to share with others. It was an honor to know him.

(Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF Retired,  
[Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

### **FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH DEPARTMENT**

While at the computer thoughts cross my mind. I offer this: "Austere Time . . . The Strategic Air Command (SAC) Roving Fire Department Trophy.....Fifty-seven command fire chiefs donated enough money and purchased and headquarters presented trophy to the best fire department annually." Folks, that's when money was very tight. We were so broke we could not pay attention, literally. I hope today's departments are mindful of the taxpayers. (Doug Courchene CMSgt, USAF Retired, [DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com](mailto:DCOURCHENE@nc.rr.com))

**Did You Know . . .**

CMSgt Larry R. Daniels became the first Chief of Enlisted Matters for Engineering and Services (later just Civil Engineering). Maj Gen Joseph A. Ahearn created the position in September 1989 and selected Chief Daniels as part of his effort to highlight the role of the enlisted force and chief master sergeants. General Ahearn named his first year as The Civil Engineer as "The Year of the Chief."



**Editor's Note:** *What a "Great Team"! Our enlisted force is still reaping benefits from what these two individuals accomplished. I was fortunate to work with Chief Daniels and General Ahearn. Their*

*focus remained consistently "on the troops."*  
(Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF Retired, [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

CMSgt Richard L. Etchberger posthumously received the nation's highest military tribute, the Medal of Honor, from President Obama on Sept. 21. After more than four decades, Etchberger was finally recognized for the conspicuous gallantry he displayed in combat on March 11, 1968, when North Vietnamese soldiers overran Lima Site 85, a secret Air Force Radar Facility in the Laotian mountains. During the desperate battle, Etchberger, a ground radar superintendent, kept the enemy troops at bay with an M-16. His courageous action allowed seven of the 19 Americans there to be rescued, but Etchberger was mortally wounded as he boarded the rescue helicopter. Although Etchberger was posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross, the White House at the time declined to award him the Medal of Honor, as it did not want to attract attention to the presence of the clandestine US site in a supposedly neutral country. For more, read [The Fall of Lima Site 85](#) from the *Air Force Magazine* archives.



**Editor's Note:** *Not a Firefighter but "one team, one Fight." Chief Etchberger gave all as firefighters are willing to do; another Air Force member receiving the Medal of Honor. I read the story "The Fall of Lima Site 85" in the Air Force*

*Magazine. Great read . . . it will certainly make you proud to have people on our team like Chief Etchberger."*  
(Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF Retired, [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

Sandy, I'm honored to announce that the Air Force Firefighter Heroism Award has been renamed the "Air Force Robert A. McAllister Firefighter Heroism Award." The first award will be presented at this year's Fire Conference in Chicago. Chief McAllister was honored largely because of his heroic actions in Vietnam. While serving at Tuy Hoa Air Base, Vietnam, he was credited with saving 17 lives and earned 2 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Stars, one with Valor, and 33 Air Medals! By the time he retired from active duty in 1980 after 28 years of service, he had also earned 4 Meritorious Service Medals and 4 Air Force Commendation Medals. Chief McAllister is thought to be the most decorated firefighter in Air Force history. Following his retirement from active duty as a Senior Master Sergeant in 1980, he rejoined the Air Force as a civil servant at Columbus Air Force Base MS in 1981. He served at Columbus until he retired in 2002. During that time, he rose to the position of fire chief in 1992 and had numerous accomplishments. He succumbed to cancer on 9 Nov 2005. Chief McAllister was an humble man. But for his comrades who had personal knowledge of his great achievements, this hero would have remained unsung. I am pleased he was nominated for this honor and look forward to receiving nominations for the many other unsung achievers in the fire emergency services profession that have faded into the sunset without due recognition. We have eight other generic awards to be renamed in honor of worthy candidates. If the readers know of individuals who made significant contributions to Air Force Fire Protection (now called Fire Emergency Services), please contact me for instructions on how to nominate them.

(Donald Warner CMSgt, USAF Retired, The Air Force Fire Chief [Donald.warner@dodfire.com](mailto:Donald.warner@dodfire.com))

Edging past more than 500 fire departments, the Vandenberg Fire Department was named the 2009 Department of Defense medium-unit fire department of the year at the annual DOD Fire and Emergency Services Award Banquet in Chicago August 27. The DOD award for the medium-unit fire department of the year is a competition between all branches of the military and is intended to recognize a unit's heroism, devotion to service, and skill. "The award is very much earned," said Mark Farias, Vandenberg AFB Fire Chief. "We have a

strong desire to consistently improve, and by doing that, we prove that we're the best." Although humbled by the award, Chief Farias marvels at the accomplishment. "It's especially hard to win because we don't have aircraft assigned here," he said. "Most Air Force bases have aircraft, and their fire departments are recognized for extinguishing aircraft fires. We had to fight extra hard to prove that we're the best, despite our lack of aircraft." Traditionally most of the Vandenberg fire department's experience comes from wild land fires. Until 18 months ago, wild land fires weren't classified as serious fires. "Being able to convince our peers that we are worthy of an award has been a challenge," Chief Farias said. "Our team has worked tirelessly, and I am so proud of them for winning this award." This award was the department's fourth since 2003, and Vandenberg AFB's fire department last earned the award in 2007. Each year a fire department earns the award, it is ineligible the following year. Since 2003, the department has won the award every year it was eligible. "Once in a while you get lucky and make it to the top," Chief Farias said. "Luck is great, but it takes skill and dedication to remain on top. If you can beat out 500 departments once in 20 years, that's great. But if you can do it more than once, that's just amazing." Chief Farias attributes the team's dedication to its ultimate goal: serve, save and survive. "Other bases have skill and talent too," Chief Farias said. "However, it's all about the heart. I'd compare it to the Olympics. The difference between the gold and silver medal winners is the heart," he said. "It's about how bad they want it. We wanted it, and we got it--again."

### **LIFE SAVED**

Although highly skilled with many hours of training under their belt, Luke Air Force Base firefighters don't get a lot of chances to practice their skills. Instead, most of their calls involve alarm activations, small fires, and other nonlife-threatening calls. But, May 29 was a very different day. It was a day four firefighters and two medics had the chance to use their training and save a life. David Givens, 56th Civil Engineer Squadron assistant fire chief, said his team had to respond to two emergencies at the same time that day. "First, we sent firefighters out to Surprise to help with a local fire," he said. "Then, just a few minutes later, we received a phone call from a hysterical woman in base housing saying her (husband) was unresponsive." Cyndi Belcher, 56th CES fire captain, said they rushed to the residence. "When we arrived at the scene, we found lying on a bed a

24-year-old active-duty male who appeared to already be dead," she said. "He wasn't breathing, he didn't have a pulse, and his skin looked gray and pale." Ms. Belcher said although this type of emergency almost never happens on base, the team worked very well together and knew exactly what to do. "We pulled him onto the floor and began CPR," she said. "Then, I inserted an artificial airway while Staff Sgt Shella Valdez, 56th Medical Group medic, continued to perform chest compressions. Next, I inserted an IV and gave him fluids while we waited for the off-base ambulance to arrive." Ms. Belcher said after just two rounds of CPR, he regained a pulse of 125. "Sometimes we receive calls like this but never without a pulse," Ms. Belcher said. "I have never seen anyone regain a pulse from CPR alone in my entire career. He was very lucky." The entire team credits Staff Sgt Anthony Shamblen, 56th CES Fire Dispatcher, with doing the most important part in saving this man's life. "Sergeant Shamblen was on the phone with three individuals at the same time," Mr. Givens said. "He was handling the fire in Surprise, speaking with the wife of the unresponsive Airman, and calling in the off-base ambulance." Mr Givens said Sergeant Shamblen's quick dispatching was the first and most crucial step in saving this life. "Within a couple of minutes, this man could have been brain dead," he said. "But, thanks to our outstanding team of firefighters and medics, he survived."

### **READERS' COMMENTS**

Chief, how have you and Mrs. Sanders been? My mom is doing well. Just a note: I will be officially retired from the military as of 31 Aug 2010. Four years of active duty with the 3d CES Clark Air Base, Republic of the Philippines, 16 yrs with the 932d Reserves at Scott AFB IL, and 9 1/2 yrs with the 126th Illinois Air National Guard at Scott AFB—a total of 28 years 11 months. I appreciate you sending a copy of the newsletter. It is very informative and it is nice to hear what others are doing. Thanks. (Quin E. Cayson, CMSgt, USAF Retired, [Quin.Cayson@scott.af.mil](mailto:Quin.Cayson@scott.af.mil))

**Editor's Note:** Congratulations on your retirement. You have done well Grasshopper! Chief Quin Cayson is the son of the late Hamp Cayson. Quin was a young Airman in the Department at Clark Air Base, Republic of the Philippines, while I was Fire Chief. Additionally, John Taipalus, the son of Ted Taipalus, was there at the same time. Both of these individuals were a value added to our Department. (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF, Retired [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

Chief, thanks for e-mailing me the copy of "Pioneers with Intent." I graduated from Chanute in December 1983; and at my first assignment, Eglin AFB, Florida, I served with a couple of great pioneers (Fire Chief Bob Barrow and Assistant Fire Chief For Operations Cooper). In 2000 I was assigned to the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency working for Chief Jim Podolske as a Career Development Course (CDC) writer and helping with the Fire Fighter Certification System. I retired in 2003 and now serve as Deputy Program Manager at The Center for National Response. We train military and civilian first responders and provide scenarios for response. We are much like an Air Force Exercise Evaluation Team (EET) but on steroids. Thanks for the QNN. (Ralph McNemar, [rwmcnemar@yahoo.com](mailto:rwmcnemar@yahoo.com))

Sandy, hope all is well with you and the family. I am just starting to get up and around again after almost five month of recuperating. I had four rods put in my lower back, then got a staph infection. Not much fun! Could you change my email address. Thanks again for your efforts to keep us old guys connected. (Ray Porter, [afchief911@yahoo.com](mailto:afchief911@yahoo.com))

QNN: Two Huge Thumbs UP! (Douglas J Smith, USAF Retired, [Douglas.Smith@luke.af.mil](mailto:Douglas.Smith@luke.af.mil))

Sandy, thanks for the QNN. I have been on distribution since Chief Doug Courchene founded the QNN many years ago. In fact, I asked Chief Courchene if he would mind my using his format to start our own newsletter. Of course, he agreed and we have been sending items back and forth since then. This also included your predecessor QNN Editor Chief Bob Barrow. Your QNN continues to have great items and stories as they have had since the beginning of the newsletters. Many of the folks who send in items are very familiar to me as I had the pleasure of working with so many Air Force Chiefs including my time on active duty. Quality and true professionals one and all. Take care and keep up the good work.

Ed Wolbert, CMSgt, USAF Retired, [ewolbert@comcast.net](mailto:ewolbert@comcast.net)

Chief, thanks for all you continue to do for Fire and Emergency Services. Hope you and Ms Evelyn are doing well.

(Forest Johnson, SMSgt, USAF Retired, [Forest.Johnson@robins.af.mil](mailto:Forest.Johnson@robins.af.mil))

The Tampa FL Police Department escorted a fallen warrior and his family "home." Service members and civilians from MacDill Air Force Base and

throughout Tampa showed their respect by saluting or placing their hand over their heart during the



"procession of the fallen soldier." Private 1st Class Paul O. Cuzzupe II died 8 August 2010 in Akhtar-Mohammad-Khan, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained

when insurgents attacked his unit. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany, but is from the Tampa area. It was a sight to see!

(Steven E. Hoarn, Colonel, USAF Retired, [Steven.Hoarn@akimafacmgmt.com](mailto:Steven.Hoarn@akimafacmgmt.com))

### **LOST & FOUND DEPARTMENT**

Sandy, any chance you or any readers of the QNN may know how I can contact then MSgt John D. Carroll formerly stationed at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. Anyone having contact with John, please provide him my address and ask him to contact me. Further, if you would like to provide me the information that will be fine. I and a few others would certainly like to get in touch with him. (C. F. "Chuck" Hemphill, [hemper@suddenlink.net](mailto:hemper@suddenlink.net))

### **DON'T YOU JUST LOVE IT WHEN A PLAN COMES TOGETHER**

Chief Sanders, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Bill Paul, and I am the collection manager with the Museum of Aviation located at Robins AFB, GA. I am writing in hopes you can assist us with an exhibit we are working on. We are currently reworking one of our display hangars; and when completed, it will be devoted entirely to the USAF in Vietnam. One of the displays will be about Air Force firefighters and features a restored O-11A fire truck. While researching airfield firefighting during Vietnam, I ran across the July-September 2008 issue of the QNN, and I saw your article about A1C Martin P. Jester and A2C Eugene J. Traczyk and their actions during the attack on Bien Hoa AB on 1 November 1964. We would like to include their stories in our exhibit. I saw in another addition of the QNN that Martin Jester is a member of your organization. We would like to make contact with Mr. Jester for his permission and to find out more about his service during Vietnam and after. I realize you cannot give out the contact information for your members, but I was hoping you could forward our request to Mr. Jester and let him decide if he wishes to talk with us. I appreciate

your assistance in this. If you have any questions or would like to know more about the Museum, please feel free to contact me at (468) 926-5196 or at our website [museumofaviation.org](http://museumofaviation.org) (Bill Paul, Collections Manager, Museum of Aviation, Robins AFB GA, [bill.paul@robins.af.mil](mailto:bill.paul@robins.af.mil))

Sandy, just opened your e-mail from Mr Bill Paul and am honored to have him include our story as part of the exhibit in the Museum of Aviation at Robins AFB GA. I am sure Marty feels the same. I spoke with him, and he agrees has no problem with Mr Paul including our story. Once again Sandy, we are so proud to have been part of the USAF fire protection team and to be recognized at the Museum of Aviation. Feel free to contact me if you need additional information or if I can be of any assistance. (Gene Traczyk, USAF Retired, [gtraczyk2001@yahoo.com](mailto:gtraczyk2001@yahoo.com))

Chief Sanders. I'm sorry I wasn't able to get back with you sooner, but I've been out of the office and am just now getting caught up. I want to thank you for putting us in touch with Gene Traczyk and Marty Jester. Their help will do a lot to enhance the exhibit. I've attached a short article for inclusion in the QNN. If it's too late, I completely understand. I've also attached a photo of our O-11 to give you an idea what we've done so far. Thanks again for all your help.

(Bill Paul, Collections Manager, Museum of Aviation, Robins AFB GA, [bill.paul@robins.af.mil](mailto:bill.paul@robins.af.mil))

I would like to thank Chief Sanders for the opportunity to tell you about an exhibit we are building at the Museum of Aviation at Robins AFB GA. We recently began reworking one of our exhibit buildings, changing from a mix of displays representing different of periods into a gallery devoted entirely to the Vietnam War. Our first exhibit in this new area is titled "Shadow War: USAF and the Unknown Heroes of Vietnam" and will focus on the little known and often overlooked missions and duties carried out by US Air Force personnel in support of the combat troops during the conflict. Some of the subjects we are planning to cover include psychological warfare, aeromedical evacuation and of course, fire protection. The centerpiece of the firefighter section is a diorama featuring a restored O-11 fire truck with its crew set up as though they are just arriving on the scene. A series of storyboards will use text and photos to tell the visitor about the O-11 and the firefighters who

operated it. We also want to include a tribute to the 19 firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty in Southeast Asia. In addition, as part of our education program, there will be an interactive activity aimed at students in which they will learn the physics of fire and the science behind firefighting. We plan to open the exhibit in 2011. We need your help to make this exhibit a success.



Having the vehicles and bunker clothing is great; but by themselves, they are just pieces of metal and cloth. One of the things we try to do in our exhibits is to tell the stories of the men and women who used the items on display. In doing so, our visitors are able to make that connection between man and machine and in the process bring the events that object is associated with to life. That is where you can help. We are looking for photos and stories about your experiences in Vietnam and Thailand. In addition, we would appreciate any technical information about the O-11 and how the equipment on board worked. You guys are the experts; you were there, and we want to be sure we get things right. To give you a little background about us, the Museum of Aviation opened in 1984. Since then it has grown to become the second largest USAF museum and the fourth most visited museum in the Department of Defense system, averaging over half a million visitors a year. The Museum has over 90 aircraft on display along with 174,000 square feet of exhibit space. We are one of only four aviation museums accredited by the American Association of Museums. If you would like to know more about us, please visit our website [museumofaviation.org](http://museumofaviation.org). I look forward to working with you. If you have any questions or any ideas for the exhibit, please feel free to call me at (478)926-5196 or e-mail me. (Bill Paul, Collections Manager, Museum of Aviation, Robins AFB GA, [bill.paul@robins.af.mil](mailto:bill.paul@robins.af.mil))



## **PUBLISHING AND MAILING FUND**



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**Editor's Note:** Recently I asked CMSgt Doug Courchene for permission to include excerpts from his book "Pioneers With Intent" in the QNN, and he readily agreed. I asked for a little background as to how the book came about and he provided the following: "In 1978 Tactical Air Command hosted a conference in Memphis TN. The conference included inviting retired Air Force Fire Chiefs to attend. Twenty-eight came to the meeting. I spoke to them at a breakfast hosted by Tactical Air Command Fire Chiefs. Chief Milt Puckett was also there at my request. I told them some day I would write a book and they would be in Chapter 1. I also told them the book was not profit motivated, not a best seller but a best giveaway. I kept my promise, and the book was published by the Air Force Civil Engineer Historian. Additionally, my personal thanks go to Chief Don Warner for all his support of this effort. The response and feedback have all been favorable." (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders CMSgt, USAF Retired, [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net))

### **PIONEERS WITH INTENT**

In the lives of most people, they find that a yearning for historical understanding swells up inside them. For years they coast along, vaguely aware that people such as our fire pioneers did not drop out of outer space onto the Arizona desert floor. As the years penetrate time, our values solidify. That is

why so many firefighters, especially older firefighters, begin to research the pioneers of our profession. They search, research, and look for storytellers to get a better grip on whom they are and why they turned out as they did. The lights of the inner person always seem to glow, then these stories begin to be unearthed. Even those who are ahead of their time, or of another generation, don't escape the influence of historical context. Looking at the past can both humble and make proud. A sense of humility arises as today's firefighters come face to face with giants of the past, upon whose broad shoulders we stand. They enable us to see that which had not been seen before. Without the giants of yesterday, visions would be shortsighted and nearby shrubs would be mistaken for giant redwoods. A book such as this is always a collaborative effort. Behind every writer or writing team there are others whose names seldom appear in print but whose support is absolutely essential for a book's success. As authors, we know that it is impossible to thank all of our many collaborators by name. But we do want to say that we have felt support of the entire Air Force Fire Protection Family, and we want you to know that your support has been important to us in a thousand ways, large and small. I am also grateful to the History Office and the Fire Protection staff at the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency for undertaking to edit and publish this book. Without them, it might never have become a reality. It has been a great joy to work with all of you."

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Chief Douglas E. Courchene is a self-taught writer with 42 years of experience in Air Force firefighting. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps on April 17, 1946, and retired as a chief master sergeant in June 1966. His last military assignment was in HQ Strategic Air Command Fire Protection. Among Chief Courchene's many assignments were: Lowry Fire School; Alamogordo Army Air Field; Fort Worth Army Air Field; Fire Chief, Fort Hood Army Air Field; Noncommissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC), Dow Air Force Base (AFB); Fire Chief, RAF Station Sturgate, England; NCOIC, Dyess AFB; NCOIC, March AFB; and Fire Chief, Moron Air Base (AB), Spain. After his military retirement, he served in civilian capacity as a fire inspector at Vandenberg AFB, as fire chief at Elmendorf and Seymour Johnson AFBs, and as a fire protection specialist in HQ Tactical Air Command (TAC). Chief Courchene graduated from the Writer's Digest School, Cincinnati, Ohio, writing to sell nonfiction, in September 1986. He was editor and publisher for almost 12 years of the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs'

Quarterly Newsletter (now called *Quarterly Network Newsletter*), from which many of the accounts and stories in this book were drawn.

### IN THE BEGINNING . . . THE PIONEERS

The first airplane flew at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903. That was the beginning of heavier-than-air powered flight. Thirty-four years later, **Pioneer Fire Chief J. K. Schmidt**, at Eglin AFB (AFB), Florida, demonstrated the first U. S. Army Air Corps crash fire-fighting truck using high-pressure water fog to fight airplane fires. The Wright brothers' first airplane could be described as a frail contraption, made of wood, wire, and cloth. Almost the same could be said for that first crash truck, a modified contraption that sprayed high-pressure water. Chief J. K. Schmidt, never a *braggadocio*, is the first to give credit to other pioneers who searched and experimented with the earliest fire trucks, fire-extinguishing agents, and tactics to fight airplane fires. "No one person could be stuck on oneself," he said. This book has been written to honor a handful of determined pioneers who achieved what could be described as an impossible dream. It involves unheralded figures who lived and worked during a relatively unexplored period of historical significance. These pioneers preceded the Greatest American Generation, referred to by Tom Brokaw, only to become a part of it. They started with ideas and hardly anything else. In a literary sense, the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs' *Quarterly Network Newsletter* is the embryo from which this book evolved. The reaction from readers helped gauge the appeal that the book might have. This book is the first to document the joys and pains of Air Force Fire Protection, and it describes some of our early pioneers in all their glory. In 1937, Fire Chief Schmidt modified a 750-gallon per minute (gpm) Peter Pirsch Pumper as the first crash truck under the auspices of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Instead of the usual space for the fire hose, it had a 250-gallon water tank and rigged plumbing that produced water at the nozzle. The high-pressure Bean nozzle used by Florida citrus growers to spray their trees became the standard nozzle for Air Force crash trucks. The Bean nozzle was also the first adjustable nozzle to produce high-pressure water fog. Chief Schmidt recalled how firefighters practiced by forming a "V" and attacking two burning 55-gallon oil drums on the aircraft flight line. The lead fire fighter wore an asbestos suit and acted as rescue man. "Asbestos suits came in two sizes those days, big and too big," Chief Schmidt said. The Army Air Corps, to be sure, was poorly equipped to fight airplane fires. The Air Corps

desperately needed better crash trucks, fire fighter protective clothing, fire-extinguishing agents, training, and fire tactics. New airplane designs dictated that crash trucks and trained fire fighters stay abreast of accelerated military flying operations. Chief Schmidt, Chief Paul Odell, Chief Glifford Cook, and engineer Ray Smith were among the first to combine their knowledge and design newer crash fire trucks for the Army Air Corps. The U. S. Army, in step with Holabird Quartermaster Motor Base, designed and built the Standard Class 100 crash truck. The Class 100 produced foam at the nozzle and was equipped with carbon dioxide extinguishing agent. The earlier Class 100 crash trucks had a special foam generator that chemically produced foam by introducing powdered chemicals into the water stream, in place of the liquid foam solution.



*Fire Chief J.K. Schmidt (left), Eglin AFB FL, receives a commendation for exceptional performance of duty when, on March 31, 1958, an explosion and fire occurred in the pumping compartment of the alcohol trailer being used to fuel a Redstone missile.*

As new equipment was developed, Chief Schmidt conducted tests at the proving grounds at Auxiliary Field #8, Eglin Field. In 1947 he conducted fire tests on eight B-17 bombers with 25,000 gallons of fuel. The premixed water and foam solution they used meant pouring protein foam from 25 five-gallon cans into the 1,000-gallon booster tank of a Class 155 crash truck. That series of tests proved that crash trucks lacked foam-metering devices for exact mixtures of foam and water and that firefighters needed better nozzles to deliver the desired foam solution. Pioneers focused on developing crash trucks with powerful turrets that had the capability to approach and attack burning airplanes without endangering the turret operators. In short, they wanted a crash truck that could attack and extinguish fires at close range.

### TO BE CONTINUED NEXT EDITION

**MY FIRST OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT**  
**CMSGT CHARLIE RICHARDSON**

As with most things in life you always remember the first of anything. While talking with Bruce Brown (Commander, US Navy Ret) recently at the local VFW, I was surprised to find out that Bruce had been stationed on an Air Force base. As we talked more, he said it was at Nakon Phanom (NKP), Thailand. How the Navy got there is another story. We compared dates and, sure enough, we were there at the same time. However, the talk sure did bring back lots of memories. In July 1966 I was assigned to Detachment 1 444th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at New Hanover County Airport, Wilmington NC, when I received orders for NKP Thailand. I had a two day-TDY on the way at Hamilton AFB CA for small arms training (M-16, 50-cal machine gun, etc.) Then it was off to Travis Air Force Base CA for the flight to Thailand. First they canceled our flight and then they found us a hop on a C-141. We made stops in Hawaii, Wake Island, Clark AB, Republic of the Philippines, and then Bangkok, Thailand. We processed in at Bangkok and then had to wait for a week for a flight to NKP. I was really looking forward to being stationed on a "real" air force base. I started my career at Hancock Field, Syracuse, New York, and over a year of TDY at Burlington Municipal Air Port, Vermont, and finally at New Hanover County Air Port, North Carolina. When I arrived NKP had a pierced steel plate (PSP) runway and aircraft parking ramp. When I got off the C-130 and looked around I saw A-26s, T-28s, O-1s, O-2s, C-123s, A-1s, and two H-3 Jolly Greens. Everything had propellers. All that was missing to make this a World War II set was John Wayne. The fire station was a three bay shack with the crash vehicles parked outside. There was an O-10, O-11A, and a water tanker . . . that was it. We did not have enough bunker gear (protective clothing) for everyone so we switched at roll call each morning. The installation water system consisted of rubber bladders located throughout the base. Units at NKP when I arrived were the 37<sup>th</sup> Air Rescue Squadron, flying the famous HH-3 helicopters (*Jolly Green Giants*), the 602d Fighter Commando Squadron, flying the also famous A-1E Sandys and A-1H Sky Raiders in support of search and rescue missions. Also assigned were the 606<sup>th</sup> Air Commando Squadron flying an armed version of the T-28 training aircraft (call sign *Zorro*) on attack missions and the C-123 two engine cargo aircraft (known as the Candle Sticks) on night combat missions. Additionally

assigned was the 609<sup>th</sup> Air Commando Squadron, (called the *Nimrods*) flying A-26 attack aircraft, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Tactical Air Support Squadron (the renowned *Nails*) flying the converted civilian O-2 aircraft as Forward Air Controllers. NKP was a relatively new base when I arrived. The initial dirt runway was constructed in 1963 by the US Navy's Mobile Construction Battalion Three. The first US Air Force personnel arrived in 1964. The PSP used on the runway and aircraft parking ramp was later replaced with aluminum planking coated with an antiskid compound. A new fire station was under construction, and it was occupied about two weeks after I departed. NKP was a sleepy base when I first arrived, but it did not stay that way for long. Sometime in the fall of 1966 the 56<sup>th</sup> Air Commando Wing was formed and things really changed. It started to feel like a real Air Force base. After 53 weeks I left NKP and headed for Hurlburt Field FL. Hurlburt was a lot like NKP as far as the assigned aircraft; it was the main training base for Air Commandos. (CMSgt Charlie Richardson, CMSgt, USAF Retired, [clardb@att.net](mailto:clardb@att.net))

**SICK CALL**

Please keep CMSgt Gary Schott and his wife Dottie in your thoughts and prayers. Both have had serious medical problems in recent months.

**EDITOR'S CORNER**



USAFA Retired, [Sandy6T5@comcast.net](mailto:Sandy6T5@comcast.net)

I thank each of you for your continued support of the QNN. As you know I am a little behind; however, I am trying to get back on track. God bless each of you.

(Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders, CMSgt,



*Sandy & Evelyn Sanders*  
*50 years together*  
*1960-2010*