



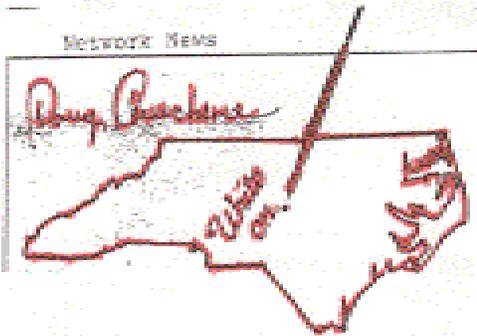
RETIRED AIR FORCE FIRE CHIEFS'

QUARTERLY NETWORK
NEWSLETTER (QNN)

January-March 2006

Volume 01 2006

"LEGENDARY PIONEERS WHO
REMINISCE ABOUT THE PAST BUT
FOCUS ON THE FUTURE"



Bob Barrow, Editor
chief.one@cox.net

Associate Editor
& QNN Founder -1990

Douglas Courchene
dougecourchene@aol.com

for QNN copies click on

<http://www.dodfire.com/index.htm>



A gathering of Air Force Retired Fire Chiefs/Pioneers is planned for 15-16 September 2006 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in downtown Dallas, Texas, near the Dallas Convention Center. You may review past events in 2000 and 2003 at this web link: <http://www.dodfire.com/Retirees/Retiree.htm> (a picture is worth a thousand words).

For our opener on 15 September 2006, retirees will be admitted FREE to the ICHIEFS' (International Association of Fire Chiefs) "Fire Rescue International and Exposition Hall-2006" inside the Convention Center. The initial planning for this gathering was held 10 December 2005 with Chief Don Warner, Chief Milt Puckett, Chief Dick Duncan, Chief Ronald Rainey, and your editor in attendance.

Chief Puckett, helmilpuck@comcast.net, will be the Retirees' point of contact (POC) with the Air Force. The Air Force will attend the DoD Fire & Emergency Service Conference-2006 preceding the Retirees' gathering this year. More on these events will be in the next QNN Vol. 2 and Vol. 3 2006 issues. Mark your calendar for 15-16 September 2006 and contact your QNN editors for help if needed. Also anyone who can donate door prizes of unique nature found in your State, please contact the Editor: 126 Clements Street NE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548 or email chief.one@cox.net.

Corporate sponsors would be much appreciated to defray some of the costs of the food provided by the Adam's Mark Hotel during the Pioneer Day activities on 16 September 2006.



Merry Christmas



One activity during Pioneer Day is the Fallen FireFighter Ceremony preformed in remembrance of deceased Air Force Fire Chiefs since our last gathering in 2003. This year there are 22 Chiefs so far to be eulogized. The list below shows names and dates of birth and death:

- Stanley Mateunas: 20 May 26-2 Apr 03;
- Albert Wise: DOB unk-27 Feb 04;
- Louis Libby: 1 Oct 04-7 Apr 04;
- Guy J. Wills Jr.: 1 Oct 34-7 Apr 04;
- Valton Allen: 31 Jan 21-15 Jul 04;
- Bill Goodwin: 21 Sep 26-22 Jul 04;
- Glen Cocherell: 19 Jun 30-31 Jul 04;
- Fred Elkins: 8 Oct 29-30 Sep 04;
- William W. Thomas: 16 Jul 25-21 Sep 04;
- Curtis L. Dunn Sr.: 8 Feb 29-18 Dec 04;
- Harold "Fred" Belt: 1934-23 Dec 04;
- Ross Stephens: 10 Apr 10-10 Jan 05;
- Don Smith: 27 Feb 33-21 Jan 05;
- William A. York: 26 May-31 Jan 05;
- Kenneth L. Erwin Jr.: 5 Aug 30-10 Mar 05;
- Richard L. Waller: 2 Jun 20-22 Mar 05;
- Charles "Ed" Chedd: 9 May 16-6 Apr 05;
- Irwin R. Brown Jr.: 28 Apr 25-12 Jun 05;
- Keith Moser: 11 Jul 42-24 Jul 05;
- Robert W. Vreeland: 24 Jun 14-10 Aug 05;
- Robert A. McAllister: 1936-10 Nov 05;
- John C. Eliseo: 29 Mar-21 Nov 05.

Surviving family members are invited to attend this ceremony. Captain Randall W. Erwin (USAF Chaplain and son of Kenneth Erwin) and Fire Lieutenant Curtis L. Dunn, Jr., have indicated they will attend. Captain Erwin will give the Invocation and the Benediction at the gathering. Lieutenant Dunn, with the Arlington Fire Rescue Services, will offer his appreciation to our group for coming to the Dallas Metropolis. Other family members who would like to attend should notify the QNN editor and be in attendance at least for the "Pioneer Day Gathering" at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 16 September 2006, from 8 AM to 5 PM.



Aerospace FF Honor Guard w/MSgt Hall and some of the 50 Pioneers in 2003

Shades of PEDRO! A recent news article reported 16 AF FFs in Iraq had been assigned to a joint service task force to conduct air rescue services in country.

The Army provides helicopter support, pilots and medical technicians. However, there is no airborne fire suppression kit (AFS). Remember the Fire Suppression Kit assigned to the HH-43 Husky's with call sign PEDRO and the firefighters attached as airborne rescuemen/firefighters from 1959 to 1975. Air Force Chief of Fire Protection, Don Warner, confirmed the need for this task force that has proven most valuable for rescue beyond the Base boundary. AF FFs were picked for their extensive rescue and forcible entry skills.

The AF Museum curator recently inquired about Firefighter Wings worn by PEDRO firefighters. Chief Marty Jester, USAF Retired, furnished a picture of his FF

Wings, given to him and other firefighters who graduated from the Airborne Firefighting School at Stead AFB, Nevada. They wore them on their flight caps and suits. They were never authorized for wear on the Class "A" uniform.

The editor remembers this type wing available for sale in Japan at off base military uniform stores during the 1950s and purchased a pair of wings as a souvenir. The editor, as a Base Fire Chief, also remembers FFs in his Fire Department wore AF Aircrew Wings when assigned, and they were authorized to wear them on their Class "A" uniforms.



Pictured are Chief Jester's FF Wings and MSgt Terrell Elliott, USAF Retired, in his Class "A" uniform proudly wearing his "Senior Aircrew Wings" earned as a PEDRO FF during 2 tours in Vietnam and at Clark AB. Chief Jester served PEDRO tours in Vietnam, Hurlburt Field, and Langley AFB. Both were awarded the Silver Star Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Vietnam's Cross of Gallantry 2, and Purple Heart for their heroic actions in Vietnam.

STAMP FUND CONTRIBUTORS: The QNN is privately funded by members' contributions. Most members have good intentions to feed the kitty, but they sometimes forget the last time they sent the anything. During the past quarter contributors are: Mrs. Kathleen Rushin, widow of Chief Bob Rushin, Montgomery AL wrote "Enjoy the newsletter and sharing with my FF grandson, enclosed a few dollars for the kitty and a Merry Christmas to all"; Chief Glenn Cloud, New

Braunfels TX sent a check to support "The Snail Mail." He enjoys the QNN news about old friends but is saddened by the news of those who have passed on. "Hope to see you in Dallas, September 2006" Fire Chief Joseph M. Haider Jr.-steve.fordman@verizon.net wrote "Really do appreciate the QNN for keeping us informed about our fellow firefighters. Our prayers are with those who are sick or have lost a love one." Chief Haider enclosed a check for \$100.

*******NEW POSITION OPEN*******
NO PAY, BUT EXTREMELY SATISFYING. APPLY
TO QNN EDITOR, NOW

I've pondered over the decision to resign as Associate Editor. When I began publishing the quarterly newsletter, July 1990, I had 41 retired fire chiefs on my mailing list. The late Chief Bob Vreeland, West Coast, and Chief Gus Hunter mid-west, were two able associate editors whom I relied upon for news items.

Eleven years later, I had 178 retired chiefs; I knew them all! They financially supported publication.

Chief Bob Barrow assumed responsibility for editing and publishing the quarterly newsletter, January 2002. At that time, I agreed to remain as associate editor.

Then too the retiree list is longer, and I don't know a great number of them. Besides you must know characters before writing about them.

In other words it's time for me to step aside; let another generation carry the editorial torch.

I learned a lot about do's and don'ts of common writing. . . like hair and toenails, they cannot be denied their normal growth, but reason and good taste suggest that they be trimmed before they turn ugly.

*My friends, I've had a wonderful journey. ----
--Doug Courchene*

Responses to Doug's resignation
received on December 16, 2005.

As the QNN editor I am in shock but believe I

understand Doug's decision He has done a most incredible service of holding the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs together and in touch with their active duty counterparts. Best wishes for future health and happiness to Evelyn and Doug and thanks for all you have done.
-- Chief Bob Barrow

*Thanks Doug. I for one salute you on your accomplishments. It was job well done and passed on as a badge of distinction for those who ensue.
You have set your mark in concrete and will not be forgotten. Yes, my friend, history moves on, and it is time for the next generation to continue the excellence. I respect your diligence and dedication to the fire service. It is time to sit back, reminisce, and rest on your laurels, knowing that you gave your best. Your fine book*

"Pioneers With Intent" holds a place of privilege on my coffee table for all to view. I wish you well, and Godspeed. Please stay in touch.
-- Chief Gene Courtemanche.

I sincerely thank Doug for the great job of keeping retirees informed and together by establishing and publishing the QNN. All retirees owe him a great deal of gratitude. I first became involved in helping Doug in his endeavor in 1978 when he hosted a breakfast for retirees at the AF Fire Protection Conference in Memphis TN. I, like Doug have always believed that retired firefighters are like a big family. I know Doug will continue to be active in our reunions and activities when he can. Without him there, things would not be the same. Doug has done more than his share in keeping retirees in touch and has earned a well deserved rest from this task.-- Milt Puckett

A FRIENDSHIP LASTING OVER 50+ YEARS!



Royal Air Force Station Sturgate, England, 19 July 1955. L to R: USAF Master Sergeants (Top NCO rank in 1955), Fire Chief Douglas E. Courchene, Assistance Chief Joseph E. Haider, Jr. and Chief Fire Officer Wadlow of the British Fire Brigade, Gainsborough, England and other Fire Brigade members. Not identified on the front row kneeling are, USAF FireFighters. Please let QNN know if you can ID others. Background TYPE 0-11A CFR Vehicle and a British Quad Fire Apparatus. The base was under HQ SAC, 7th Air Division supporting F-84G & F-84F Fighters. Captain Prouty, 3928th Civil Engineering Squadron, shown standing by the O-11A driver's door and Mr. Bert Kwist (not shown) was the Command Fire Protection Engineer at the time.

Joe's and Doug's (both now 77 years old) paths crossed many times during their military careers. Both retired as Chief Master Sergeants (E-9) and then went on to accept USAF/Navy

Civil Service positions as Fire Chiefs. Doug retired at Seymour-Johnson AFB in North Carolina and Joe retired at NAS Whidbey, Puget Sound Naval Area, Washington. Joe now lives at 18024 49th Place West, Lynnwood, WA 98037, and Doug lives at 104 Meredith Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365 They still maintain a close bond of friendship through the FFs Brotherhood. Doug provided the story and Joe provided the photo, with a most generous contribution to the QNN fund.

Joe and Doug were most impressed with the British Fire Brigades. They were well trained and highly competitive. Their Mutual Aid Agreements worked extremely well on both the fire and training grounds. The British learned during WW II the advantages of Mutual Aid and standardized hose fittings and equipment throughout England.

Prayers are requested that Joe's health condition improves to allow travel. At this time he is still recovering from the debilitating results of a stroke in 1998. His daughter, Tracey, and son-in-law, Steven Spraque, are the loving caregivers and may be reached at steve.fordman@verizon.net to relay messages to Joe.



TAPS for JOHN CARL ELISEO - 1933-2005 "A Firefighter at Heart." [full obituary](#) - John was born 29 March 1933, in Youngstown, Ohio. He died 21 November 2005, with the quiet dignity and resolve that exemplified his life. Surrounded by his family, he drew his last breath at Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara, CA as a brilliant pink sunset ignited the sky over the

ocean and mesa outside his window. After completing high school, he enlisted in the Air Force in 1950 and had a long and distinguished career in the firefighting and missile safety fields until his retirement in 1971. His military career included service at March Air Force Base, Greenham Common Air Force Base and Upper Hayford Air Force Base in England, and Vandenberg Air Force Base. He continued in the field of safety engineering with Guy F. Atkinson Construction between 1972 and 1974, followed by 21 years with the Federal Civil Service as a GS-13 "Systems Safety Engineer," during which time he served as a Complex Safety Officer working on the Titan Satellite program, among many other projects. Between 1987 and 1989, he was an engineer and ground safety manager refurbishing C-130 aircrafts at Detachment 36 of the Italian Air Force Base located in Brindisi, Italy. During his long and distinguished career he received numerous awards and honors, including an Air Force Commendation Medal.



TAPS for KEITH L. MOSER July 11, 1942-July 24, 2005. Keith was a Retired Chief Master Sergeant who spent his entire career in fire protection. He held positions as Fire Chief, did a tour on the USAFE IG team, and spent time on the staff at USAFE Fire Protection Headquarters. He rounded out his Fire Protection career by working six years as Chief, Fire Protection Operations for Civil Aviation in Saudi

Arabia as an employee of The International Civil Aviation Organization, a Special Agency of the United Nations. Keith led a rather quiet life near Cincinnati, Ohio after retirement, where he lived with his daughter, Susan, and her two sons, Chase and Conner, and his younger daughter, Miranda. He was laid to rest in the Dayton Ohio National Cemetery. Susan had these words to say about him: "He was a great man and an even greater father. He was an Air Force Retiree, a wonderful cook, and an exceptional woodworker". We will miss him'



SICK CALL-PRAYERS URGENTLY NEEDED.

My wife, Nancy Barrow, was in the hospital twice in November 2005 due to blood pressure and a stomach disorder. She has been doing much better since her last discharge from the hospital. My Stage IV kidney failure has improved to a high Stage III condition. My son-in-law, FF Andreas Bernt at MacDill AFB, FL, was taken ill December 2005 and rushed to the Saint Joseph Hospital ER where he was admitted. He is currently in their cancer ward receiving chemo treatment.

Mrs. Phyllis Cooper's knee infection has cleared to allow a total knee replacement (TKR). She is doing very well on the new TKR. Her cancer remains in remission. Chief Bill Wilson recently tripped and injured his legs due to Home Depot carpet installers leaving the job unfinished, without any work done in the past 4 days. They pushed his furniture into the middle of the floor, where he fell over it. Bill's eyesight is very poor and he is very weak from his dialysis treatments 3 times weekly the past 3 years. Bill enjoys visitors, except Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays (the days he is taking dialysis).

The QNN staff sends its best wishes for a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" to all our QNN readers. Keep Our Lord Jesus Christ as the main focus of this season, celebrating His life and His birth over 2000 year ago.



Mr. George Hall, HQ AFCEA/CEXF (AF Fire Protection Office) observing the 30 degree tilt table test for the AF's newest Crash Truck - the Oshkosh TI-3000 in Oshkosh WI. George conducts first article testing for every type of fire truck bought by the AF.

Great news! I have found out the status of our friend Chief Joseph P. Odea, CMS USAF. I have been calling him on and off and finally got in touch with him today, December 19, 2005. He said, he was doing fine or as well as could be expected due to old age problems and Parkinson's Disease, which prevented him from writing. But otherwise was in good spirits and said he was not affected much from Katrina at his home in Sidell, LA... He said to give each of you his best regards and best wishes for the holidays. He gave me his Cell Phone # (985) 774-7323, his home phone is still (985) 641-4193.

I am relieved that he (my former Fire Chief) is alive and doing O.K. and pray to God to keep him well and the same goes for both of you.

With best wishes,
Jesse Munoz, MSGT USAF Retired

Remember our Firefighters. As we begin the New Year – 2006 – let us all remember that our beloved AF firefighters are paying the penalty for our freedoms every day. They are in very dangerous places, doing heroic work and seeing awful things that will affect them the rest of their life. They are scared; want to come home; yet most are young enough to still think they're invincible. They are young, old, novice and experienced. They are our son, our daughter, and our grandchildren that we bounced on our knee and spoiled rotten. They are now men and women; our finest; our most precious possessions, proudly wearing United States Colors, protecting us, dying for us. Let us constantly keep them in our prayers and in our hearts. – *Donald Warner*

Memorializing AF Fire Pioneers. We now have a few biographies/autobiographies from our Pioneers and retirees. We started with Pioneers, now we need to expand it to all retirees.

In the near future, we will begin the process of honoring those for which information has been written. And, we now have another very good reason why we need the professional lives of our Pioneers documented.

Recently, we instituted an AF-wide process to "Honor or Fallen Firefighters." The process includes a Moment of Silence, final alarm and flying flags at half. The honors given depend on the status of the deceased, whether they died on duty, in the line of duty, or were retired. For retirees, it is my role to determine the honors to be provided. I make this decision based on the deceased contributions to Air Force Fire Protection. Since I don't know every retiree, a biography would be very helpful.

When a death occurs, a scramble for information usually occurs because honors begin 3 days after the death. I prefer not to bother the family during this time so the biography would be very much appreciated.

Who better to write your story than you? You know things about yourself than no one else knows. You know what you would like to be remembered for. As retirees, we should tell our own story. – *Donald Warner*

"Oh Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth."

