

Retired Air Force Fire Chief's Network
QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWS



Legendary Pioneers Who Reminisce About the Past but Focus on the Future

Editor: Bob Barrow, chief.one@cox.net

Associate Editors:

Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders, Sandy6T5@comcast.net

Charlie Richardson, clardb@695online.com

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



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Founded – 1990 by Doug Courchene

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Happy New Year – 2007. AS THE QNN begins its seventh teen years in publication, the QNN Staff thanks everyone who contributed over these many years with stories, financial support and networking to help one another. -Bob Barrow, Charter Member

QNN Delayed. Please note that circumstances due to changes in wife, Nan and my health have caused a delay in this issue. This is the reason for combining the first two quarters of 2007 in this issue. See "Sick Call" section for explanation. The next QNN for the 3rd Quarter will be due out July 1st. Please except my humble apology for not letting you know sooner. This has been a new chapter in my life, especially for the family, your understanding is appreciated. -Bob Barrow, Editor

Lasting Friends. Pete Semanick (L) & Charlie Richardson.(R) Both are Retired CMSGTs and Civil Service Fire Chiefs. Chief Pete Semanick wrote Hello Charlie: Boy, when was the last time we crossed paths? Was it Rhine Main



back in the 80's? A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then. I am still here in New Mexico after retiring the second time in 1992. I am spending the retirement money wisely...four trips to Europe since 1998. Times sure have changed



over there since our early days. In 1998, I arrived at Rhine Main and visited with Bryce Mason who has since retired and is still there. During that trip, I was able to go to Vienna and meet with an Austrian civilian who was an alarm operator at the air base where we were stationed in 1949-1952. This was the first time we had met since then. My main purpose in going to Europe was to find possible relatives from my Slovak heritage. I was lucky and in a village of 400 people, I found the mayor to be a cousin. I went again in 2001 with one of my daughters and had a great trip throughout Europe and showed her where she was born in 1960 (Truer, Germany) and visited Spindale where she lived for 10 months. In 2004, the same daughter, along with my grand daughter and I, we spent 30 days visiting Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia. This year I took my grandson over and visited the same countries. Each trip was just great. I went down to Tucson a couple of months ago and stopped at the fire station. It has not been upgraded since we were there. It is so crowded some of the trucks have to be parked outside the station. The chief was one of my young airmen from my early days there. The chief before him was also one of my young airmen. I guess we did something right in training them. It made me feel good to see their success I guess we did something right in training them. Drop me a line when you have time with an update on your last few years. - Best regards. Pete

Charlie Noted: I was Pete's Deputy at Davis-Monthon AFB, AZ 1979-80. It was a fun filled two years. I learned a lot from Pete. We had a TAC IG inspection and USAF ACRFAET. We

passed both inspections with flying colors. It was sure great to hear from him again.

Stamp Fund Contributors:

The QNN is privately funded by members' contributions. During the two past quarters contributors are: Mrs. Anna Brown in memory of her husband Chief Jim Brown of Colorado Springs, CO, Chief Ed Sams and wife 'Rosie' of Yreka, CA. Chief Leo McCarty of Wilma, AR, Chief Marty Jester of Deland, FL, Chief Doug Courchene of Mount Olive, NC. Chief Glen Cloud of New Bruansfield, TX Chief Gene Courtamanche genecourt@webtv.net , and Chief Charles Traylor Charlestraylor@sbcglobal.net .

Email addresses are listed when known; otherwise, hometowns are shown. Donations are voluntary as no membership fees are charged. Contact the Editor if more information is needed.



TAPS

Hugh Amos Pike, CMSgt, USAF (Retired) July 7, 1941 to April 5, 2007



We bid farewell to Chief Hugh A. Pike, CMSgt, USAF (Retired), who died on 5 April 2007 of natural causes after a short illness. Chief Pike's career spanned more than 43 years of

military and civilian service in every position in the fire protection organization, for firefighter to the Chief of Air Force Fire Protection.

Most firefighters that have been in the Department of Defense for more than four years either know or know of Chief Pike. As the Father of the DoD Fire & Emergency Services Certification System, he impacted the lives of all DoD firefighters, past, present and future. Yet, this was but one example of the positive difference he made to Air Force Fire Protection.

Those that have had personal contact with the Chief can testify to his *no nonsense* persona. But if you didn't know him well, you may have missed his passion for the well being of firefighters and the training that must prepare them for their dangerous job. He excelled at correcting you if you messed up but would support you to the end if you were right. He adamantly upheld one of the most sacred traditions of a military leader - run interference for your troops! There was no better person to have on your side.

Because of his many contributions to Air Force and DoD Fire and Emergency Services, Chief Pike will be honored throughout the Air Force as follows:

FIRE SERVICE flags will be lowered to half staff at every AF fire station for 30 days following his death (through 5 May 07).

Firefighters wear wear a black band on the firefighter badge until his interment (noon central daylight time, 10 Apr 07).

A Moment of Silence and a Last Alarm Ceremony was conducted in every fire station in the Air Force on 10 Apr 07..

In lieu of flowers the family asks that you make a donation on his behalf to the Alpha School FFA, P.O. Box 67, Alpha FL 32421.

Please include a note letting them know that your donation is being made to the Alpha School Future Farmers of America in Memory of Mr. Hugh Pike.

I attended Hugh's graveside funeral on 10 Apr 07 in Fountain FL. He was sent off in appropriate style and with honors that included bagpipes, bugler, fallen firefighter ceremony, 21 gun salute, and honor guards (military and firefighter).

Hugh's family was very pleased with the turnout of many of his friends and associates from the fire community. At his request, he was the first to be interred in a new family cemetery on his ranch.

Personal Note – It was my great honor to have known Hugh for more than 30 years. I worked with him twice but we had frequent contacts throughout the years. At Eglin in the mid-70s, he was the deputy chief and I worked for him as an assistant chief. Then at AFCESA, we worked together the last year before his retirement in 2003.

Hugh was one of those unique individuals that you never forget. We meet many people in life but we forget most of them. But Hugh...you never forget. I learned very early that Hugh was a no-nonsense type of man. Everyone, friend or foe, black or white, had a job to do and he expected you to do it and do it well. In retrospect, I believe his passion for firefighters was his motivation and that he know their proficiency was key to them doing their job safely.

Then, in the early 90s, he became convinced that training needed to be standardized and improved. He realized that an accredited certification system was the only practical way to

achieve it. I believe that Hugh Pike was the only person that lived that had the fortitude and tenacity to see it though. And he did...in 1993, the DoD Fire and Emergency Service Certification System was born. Not many people would have put up with all the shenanigans that transpired during initial grandfathering. It was a pleasure to watch...people trying to get out of certification, trying to get credit for training they had not received, and on and on. Thank God for Hugh Pike! Today, we have the largest, most recognized certification system in the world. And we continue to watch out for the shenanigans!

-- Donald Warner

Hurricane Katrina *along the Mississippi Coast by Sandy Sanders.*



What a storm... I worked two years behind this storm trying to help people get their lives back together. It is amazing what damage was done to the Mississippi Gulf Coast area. My Brother in Law is a pastor at a Church that was blown away, along with his home and the family's personal belongs, in that area. Too bad New Orleans got all the headlines and most of the money from a self-inflicted wound because they failed to maintain the levees over the past 50



years. QUESTION... Where did all the money go that was budgeted for the New Orleans Levee Board for years and years? A

Orleans Levee Board for years and years? A

man in Magee, MS where the eye of the storm passed through made these pictures. The beauty of Katrina as she exited the Mississippi Coastline at Magee, MS.

Networking Results: Chief Courchene inquires about friends that he stays in contact with. He requested that the QNN be mailed to his good friend Chief Roland Gray, formally of Smokey Hill Army Airfield and Ellsworth AFB SD. The QNN Mailing List has 78 Retired Chiefs and their Widows that receive the QNN each quarter. Chief Gray wrote after receiving several issues, that he did not recognize anyone in the QNN and that a postage stamp could be saved by taking his name off the list. That worries me somewhat; when Pioneers of Chief Roland's caliber feels he is forgotten. I remember him from firefighters that served with him by reading their performance reports and the most favorable stories they told about the training and comradeship they gained under his supervision. In Chief Courchene's *Pioneer With Intent* on pages, 37 & 38, wonderful accounts of Chief Gray and his firefighters are documented. Chief Gray's knowledge of fire tactics and resourcefulness is told in a B-52 crash at Ellsworth that resulted in loss of the burning aircraft, but the saving of all nine-air crewmembers. This crash occurred in the late 1960s, Chief Gray had been at Ellsworth since 1949, the Chief's intensive training program prepared his fire crews well for this life saving event. The B-52 was landing with a declared in-flight emergency "engine problems. Crash Fire Rescue Crews took up emergency standby positions along the active runway. A hard landing caused the aircraft to veered off the runway, head towards the flightline hangars, when it struck an aviation fuel pump house, ripping the fuselage open, sheering off the right wing, causing an explosion with burning fuel fire around the aircraft. The fire crews quickly setup with CO2 and protein foam fire extinguishing agent, to cut a rescue path for injured aircrew members. Three air crewmembers where trapped and injured inside the B-52. The tail gunner was trapped in the tail's ball turret, now laying on the ground

surface. Chief Gray quickly directed that the TYPE 0-6 Card ox Truck to ramp the tail area. After three attempts, the ball turret moved enough to allow the tail gunner to be rescued. The rescue operation at the nose of the aircraft was a bit more complex while searching for the two missing crewmembers. The co-pilot and navigator were trapped in the wreckage and cover with thick protein foam cover them from sight for more than 30 minutes. Both were rescued and survived. The fire operation lasted more than 2 hours. Chief Roland Gray stood tall and proud that eventful day, along with his firefighters. The Chief's comments after the fire were, "It is the Firefighters that make the fire department and the Fire Chief look good". When asked by HQ SAC Director of Civil Engineering, General Archie Mays "what would was needed to better protect both nuclear weapons and crew?" he answered, "Give us AFFF". In very short order, Aqueous Film Forming Foam was delivered to all SAC bases. Chief Gray's remarks expedited delivery of AFFF to all Air Force Bases. Protein foam was retired and AFFF became the standard for Aircraft Crash Fire Rescue. In addition, a special thanks to Chief Gray for the fine firefighters and NCOs produced under his control. I have had the pleasure of working with many of them. One that comes to mind in his younger days is retired CMS Dennis "Sparky" Sparks, who was there at Ellsworth that eventful day and was recognized with the Airman's Medal for Valor in saving the aircrews lives. Our Pioneer Day Gatherings main purpose is to recognize our Fire Pioneers and provide a gathering were they may meet with one another and there active duty counterparts. Some of the Pioneers are seeing one another for the first time in over 50 years. What a great reunion! Should any QNN readers have stories of these Retired Fire Chiefs to share please email chief.one@cox.net or send by regular mail to Chief Bob Barrow, 126 Clements Street NE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548.

Chief Ronald "Red" Rainey of San Antonio, TX, surprised Nan and me with a stop over visit at Nan's room in the Fort Walton Beach Medical Center, 23-24 March 2007. This pleasant surprise

was a most welcome raise in Nan's spirit. Red introduced Nan and me in June 1955, at the



Edgewater Army Arsenal, MD fifty-one years ago. At the time, Nan and Red were serving at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds Area. I was stationed at New Castle County Airport,

DE seventy miles away, protecting Air Defense Interceptors (F-94C). Nan was at Travel Clerk Pay Specialist in the Post Finance Office and Red was a firefighter in an Air Force Flight Detachment assigned to the Army Air Field. I married Nan in an Army Chapel, September 2, 1955. Red was my close friend before I met Nan, going back to April 1952. We were firefighters assigned to the 75th Air Depot Wing at Kelly AFB, TX. The Wing was in a training status for an overseas PCS to Korea. The move involved over 3,000 personnel of which 38 were firefighters. At Kelly, we received the best Crash Fire Rescue training in my lifetime. The Wing Fire Department became at very cohesive efficient unit. We trained 8 hours daily, for 9 months at Kelly and spent 12 months together in Korea. The Wing mission was recovery, repair of battle damages aircraft, and depot level repairs through out the Far East Command. Lasting relationships formed the 75th Air Depot Wing Association that holds annual reunions for past members. Thanks, Red for the memories.

SICK CALL – PRAYERS URGENTLY NEEDED

I HAVE BEEN BATTLING Stage IV Kidney Failure since 2004, successfully holding off End Stage Renal Failure (Stage V Kidney Failure) that now requires dialysis, 4 hours a day, 3 times weekly beginning in 2007. This live saving

treatment will be necessary until a kidney donation becomes available for a transplant operation. At my age, 76, that is not very likely. The good news is I have had 2 years to prepare for dialysis with the help of a good doctor and the Lord Jesus, who was given the praise for the healing care I need. I feel so much better and stronger on dialysis so far.

My wife, ***Nancy Barrow***, was in the hospital three different occasions since September 2006 due to accidental falls at home. She was recovering nicely from the 1st fall that resulted in a repaired broken left hip, when she fell in February 2007 and factored the right hip and arm. An operation was not possible on the fractures and they have to

heal on their own. The result is a very painful injury now. Nan is still hospitalized and expected to receive therapy when the underlying causes of the falls are determined and



she is strong enough to receive PT. We appreciate the cards, phone calls and prayers receive during this time.

Chief Doug Courchene Dougecourchene@aol.com. Doug wrote: I learned my hearing has gone south - severe hearing loss in both ears. Today, I called the VA., Durham, NC. I waited 20 minutes to get someone. Once contacted, I was told, unqualified for hearing aids. I explained 42 years on the flightline. It did not matter. This is not the last page in the book.

Chief Joe Jarrell Family firechief6736@tahoo.com has had their share of sickness these past months. He and his wife, Ruth, have been cooperating from major surgery at home.

Mrs. Phyllis Cooper, wife of Chief Jim Cooper fdchief1@cox.net. Cancer has returned after a

long remission period, she needs your prayers and fellowship. She has decided to use hospice care.

Marina Jolicoeur - CaptBligh31@aol.com, Chief Patrick Jolicoeur, whose wife, Marina, suffers with alchemizes wrote: My wife is about the same, good days bad days, but I'm with her every day and thank the Lord for each day that I can still hold her in my arms and in my heart. She is in a memory care facility in Arizona.

- God bless you both, and you are in my prayers.

Chief Jesse Munoz jmunozjr@comcast.net wrote: I am still recouping from knee surgery and after seven months, it still giving me lots of problem and I may need further surgery. I have an appointment April 19th with a doctor that did the surgery and I'm hoping he can find what the problem is so I can get well. We will see.

New Associate Editor. QNN Staff change effective this edition. Welcome, Chief Hoyd Sanders Sandy6T5@comcast.com as an



Associate Editor. Sandy wrote: I am now retired fully and living in Dothan Alabama. Chief Doug Courchene suggested I might want to get with you and get involved in the newsletter by helping

out where possible. Let me know what you think.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Your offer is very timely and a God send for Chief Milt Puckett and me. Milt has been asking for a replacement for about a year, with the understanding he is still available for planning "The Pioneer Day Gatherings". He will also remain the "point of contact" with HQS Air Force Fire Protection for the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs activities. Milt's knowledge about planning the "Pioneer Day" goes back to our gatherings in Memphis, TN in the 1970s. I am going to need to get less involved down the road and need to start handing

editor assignments over to the associate editors. I will stay as the QNN Editor for now.

New Fire Station for Seymour Johnson AFB.

Airman 1st Class Garrett Heaton, left, 4th Fighter Wing Commander Col. Steve Kwast, Seymour Johnson Fire Chief Thomas Wade Jr. and Assistant Chief Michael Joseph uncouple two sections of hose during the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Seymour Johnson AFB's new fire station Tuesday. The 42,000-square-foot facility was constructed over the past



two years as part of an \$11 million project that also included construction of a state-of-the-art satellite firehouse. Both buildings are equipped with high-tech communication centers, living quarters and training areas. Officials said the new



stations would improve the quality of life for Seymour's firefighters and shorten response times. Retired Chief Doug Courchene, former SJAFB Fire Chief was a special guest at a ceremony that he found very moving.

The Fire Department Honor Guard performed a modified "Fallen Firefighter Ceremony" accompanied by the National Anthem and Bagpipes. The ringing of an antique fire bell nine times to symbolized the retiring of the old 1956 fire station with a new modernized fire station filled with hi-tech equipment and fire apparatus. Chief Courchene

remembered the WW II wooden clapboard stations he was stationed at, in the 1940s through 1990s. Doug said, "With enormous changes in fire station design comes equal changes in mobile fire equipment and their firefighting agents." Doug was accompanied by his former Group Commander Colonel Kleber, USAF, retired.



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Thanks Doug for a great story. Wow! A 20 Bay Station for fire trucks. I highly recommend that our Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs visit bases close to them to note the tremendous changes in Fire Emergency Services of today. I am so proud of the young men and women that wear the Fire Badge. Take a good look at Airman Heaton, one of Air Force's newest firefighters and Fire Chief Tom Wade. Very sharp! Also, want to thank the news media for the coverage of this event "Goldsboro News Argus and SJAFB Newspaper".



Current fleet of AF Fire Vehicles



P-23 (3300 gal)



P-23 (3000 gal)



P-19 (1000 gal)



P-19 (1500 gal)



P-19 (1500 gal)



P-19 (1500 gal)



P-26 Tender (5000 gal)



P-26 Tender (4000 gal)



P-18 Tender (2000 gal)



P-22 Version 1



P-22 Version 2



P-22 Version 3



P-21 Aerial



P-21 Quint



P-28 Rescue