

Retired Air Force Fire Chief's Network
QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWS



Volume 4, 2006

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

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Founded in 1990 by Chief Doug Courchene
<http://www.dodfire.com/Retirees.htm>



October-December 2006

A Gathering...

Fifty-two Air Force Retired Fire Chiefs, their Pioneer Families and friends met 15-16 September 2006 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in downtown Dallas, Texas. See roster in this QNN. You may review this year and past events at: <http://www.dodfire.com/Retirees/Retiree.htm> (A picture is worth a thousand words).



A Professional Group Photo Will Be Available for Anyone Wanting a Copy When Received from the ICHIEFs.

Numerous compliments by those in attendance have been received. Chief Gene Courtemanche Genecourt@webtv.net emailed: "Dear Bob, I just got home a few minutes ago, and am not even unpacked, but I had to sit down and send you this message. As we age, we often tend to lose some of our thoughts. I realize that I do not possess the authority to speak for the attendees at this excellent 2006 Pioneers Day Gathering in Dallas. However, I'm going to take the bull by the horns and speak in behalf of those in attendance. If they complain, they can throw the stones at me. Those who were not blessed with the opportunity of attendance must be apprised of the festivity by those who had the privilege of assemblage, and perhaps encourage their future participation in 2009. Those that I talked with were highly impressed and appreciative of the outstanding expertise, efforts and dedicated work that went into the planning and execution of this gala event. The results were reflected in the informative presentations and events that were handled with flair & professionalism. The refreshments and the tokens of esteem in the form of prizes will carry a memory of the festivity in the hearts of those attending the Pioneer Day activities, till they are "called" for that Final Alarm. We well realize that this effort took the combined effort of many dedicated people that work in the background. Their trials and tribulations were conducted without fanfare, just pure devotion to their former comrades. Wouldn't it have been just great if someone had captured these precious moments on video for those who follow us to view in awe. I have purposely kept the most important facet of our very existence to the end. It encompasses the extreme esprit de corps and camaraderie that was endured over many years in our chosen field of endeavor -- that being "BROTHERHOOD" and "Sisterhood". Thanks for a job well done. Gene Courtemanche.

Editor's Comment: Thanks Gene for the capturing the spirit of "Brotherhood" and "Sisterhood" that was evident throughout the 2006 Gathering. There was a great mix of those attending. For some their first Gathering, for other their first time since their latest retirement and for most those that have supported The Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs Gatherings since our first one in 1987 at the Holiday Inn "Rivermont", Memphis, TN.. Our next Gathering will be held in August 2009, hopefully in the same location at Dallas. The key to the Gathering is the planning necessary to

QNN, Volume 4, 2006

Partner with the US Air Force and the International Association Fire Chiefs (IAFC).

The next IAFC/DoD Conference will be 21-25 August 2007, Hilton Atlanta, Atlanta, GA. Since we meet every three years there will be no plans for our group's attendance.



Chief Sandy Sanchez eulogized 30 Chiefs at a "Fallen Fire Fighters Ceremony" performed by the Scott AFB Fire Department Honor Guard. "Sandy" had prepared the eulogies with Chief Milt Puckett, who had developed a photo software program that displayed each Chiefs photo as their eulogy was read by "Sandy". "Sandy" did a superb job of pinch-hitting for "Milt" who had the task originally; however, his Wife, Helen had an emergency operation the week before the Gathering and he had to stay home.

I AM HONORED TO HAVE BEEN ASKED TO MEMORIALIZE ALL THE FIRE CHIEFS THAT HAVE ANSWERED THEIR FINAL ALARM IN THE PAST THREE YEARS. SOME I WORKED WITH, SOME I KNEW AND SOCIALIZED WITH AT CONFERENCES AND OTHERS I RECALL HEARING THEIR NAME IN CONVERSATION, BUT NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET. BY ONLY READING A CONDENSED VERSION OF THEIR CAREER BIOGRAPHY, I VISUALIZE THEM ALL AS DEDICATED MEN OF STRENGTH AND COURAGEOUS INDIVIDUALS WHO DEVOTED THEIR LIVES TOWARDS SAVING LIVES AND PROTECTING PROPERTY, NOT ONLY IN THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY, BUT IN THE

COMMUNITIES THEY WORKED AND RESIDED IN. THEIR COURAGE, STRENGTH AND DEDICATION WAS NOT ONLY FOR THE FIRE PROTECTION PROFESSION, BUT THEY HONORABLY SERVED TO PROTECT FREEDOM AND LOVED THEIR COUNTRY. I SALUTE THEM ALL. Chief Sandy Sanchez bigfiredog@att.net

Editor's comments: The Fallen Fire Fighters Ceremony has been a tradition of the Fire Service and a highlight at our Gatherings. It provides a means of closure for our families, dear friends and comrades that many of us worked with over the years. Over half of those honor this year, I counted as a close friend. The other half I knew by reputation. Having the family members during the ceremony was so nice and added to this solemn occasion. The Retired Fire Chiefs appreciate the sacrifice each one made to attend and the contributions your love one made during their life time. Our thanks to Gwyneth Smith and Guy Wills for the following remarks.

- Mrs. Gwyneth Smith gwyneths@swbell.net widow of Chief Don Smith wrote: *"I would just like to thank you for the great Pioneer Day get-together. The ceremony for the fallen fire chiefs was excellent, and we all enjoyed it thoroughly, even though tears were shed. They were all totally honored. I miss Don a whole lot and it did seem strange to be there without him. He was always the perfect host and always enjoyed those get-togethers. His daughters, Donna and Cindi, enjoyed chatting to some of his old friends, and they shared great memories with them. It was obvious that a lot of hard work went into it, and I hope you continue to hold those get-togethers for a long time. Please thank Chief Puckett for the individual photos shown during the ceremony. The Smith Family"*

- Col Guy Wills III, USAF (Retired) gjw512@cox.net wrote: *"Chief thanks so much for reminding us about the Dallas event... Very moving ceremony and we are privileged to know such men of honor and character! A great event and thanks for all your work! The Wills Family"*

Extracted from the "Fallen Firefighter's Ceremony, September 16, 2006:

OUR LAST PIONEER DAY WAS HERE AT THE ADAM MARK IN 2003. IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, THIRTY OF OUR RETIRED FIRE CHIEFS ANSWERED THEIR FINAL ALARM FOR THEIR GREATER REWARD. ALTHOUGH, WE MAY NOT HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO KNOW THEM ALL PERSONALLY; THEY ARE SORELY MISSED BY THE FIRE PROTECTION COMMUNITY. THROUGH THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, WE WERE NOT AS SUCCESSFUL IN OUR GOAL AS WE HOPED. SOME INFORMATION OBTAINED WAS SCARCE, AND WE WERE UNABLE TO OBTAIN PHOTOS OF EVERYONE. SOME OF THE PHOTOS WE RECEIVED WERE NOT OF THE BEST QUALITY. HOWEVER, EACH ONE DESERVES AND WILL BE EQUALLY RECOGNIZED TODAY. WE DO NOT INTEND TO SLIGHT ANYONE OF THEM BY GIVING MORE TIME AND RECOGNITION TO ONE THAN ANY OTHER. EACH ONE WILL BE RECOGNIZED BY OUR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF EACH AND THE INFORMATION WE RECEIVED FROM FAMILIES OR FRIENDS. I'M POSITIVE WE COULD TALK FOR HOURS ON THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS. BUT THE TIME ALLOTTED RESTRICTS US. WE KNOW EACH ONE IS SORELY MISSED BY THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. HOWEVER, WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE SOME FAMILY MEMBERS WITH US TODAY. WE WELCOME YOU AND WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WE CONSIDER THE LOSS OF YOUR LOVED ONE A GREAT LOSS TO OUR AIR FORCE FIRE CHIEF FAMILY. EACH ONE WILL BE MEMORIALIZED BY THE DATE THEY ANSWERED THEIR FINAL ALARM.

CHIEF GUY J. WILLS, JR. 3 DEC 34 – 5 MAR 04
CHIEF WILLS RETIRED FROM THE AIR FORCE AS CHIEF

MASTER
SERGEANT AFTER
32 YEARS OF
DEDICATED
MILITARY
SERVICE. HE
THEN
CONTINUED HIS
CAREER WITH
THE OCEAN CITY-
WRIGHT FL FIRE
CONTROL
DISTRICT IN FORT
WALTON BEACH
FLORIDA CHIEF. WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO



HAVE SOME OF HIS FAMILY WITH US TODAY. WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED. THANK YOU. CHIEF WILLS WAS A WELL RESPECTED AND DEDICATED INDIVIDUAL WHO WAS VERY OUTSPOKEN. IF YOU ASKED HIS OPINION, HE WOULD NEVER HESITATE TO GIVE IT TO YOU REGARDLESS OF RANK OR YOUR POSITION. AT TIMES HE WOULD GIVE IT TO YOU WHETHER YOU ASKED OR NOT. HIS ANSWER WAS NOT ALWAYS WHAT HE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO HEAR BUT HIS TRUE HONEST OPINION. HIS SON, COL GUY WILLS III, DESCRIBED HIM AS M&M CANDY--HARD ON THE OUTSIDE AND SOFT ON THE INSIDE. DURING THE CHURCH SERVICE AT HIS FUNERAL HE DESCRIBED HIS FATHER AS A SILENT MAN ABOUT MANY OF HIS EMOTIONS, VOCAL ABOUT HIS OPINIONS AND EVEN BULLHEADED AT TIMES. CHIEF WILLS WAS A PROUD FATHER AND VERY MUCH A FAMILY MAN. BOTH OF HIS SONS GRADUATED FROM THE US AIR FORCE ACADEMY AND BOTH OBTAINED THE RANK OF COLONEL IN THE US AIR FORCE, ONE OF WHICH IS WITH US TODAY. THE OTHER IS PRESENTLY STATIONED IN HAWAII AS THE PACAF INSPECTOR GENERAL. HE OFTEN JOKINGLY SAID THAT HE COULDN'T TAKE CREDIT FOR HIS SONS' SUCCESSES AND ALL THE CREDIT MUST GO TO THEIR MOTHER. HIS SUCCESS IN LIFE AND THE RESPECT HE GAINED FROM OTHERS PROVED THE KIND OF INDIVIDUAL HE WAS.



Chief Bob Barrow and MSgt (Select) Paul Barker USAF. Sergeant Barker was our feature speaker on Iraqi Crash Fire Rescue Operations. He told of the special combat and terrorist training his Air Force Rescue Mobility Squad (RAMS) team received prior to In-Theater Deployment to Balad AB, Iraq. The



RAMS team was assigned to an Army Helicopter MedEvac Unit part of Operation Anaconda, a joint-operation responsible for off-base rescue throughout Iraq. Sergeant Barker was

awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor. Chief Barrow presented him a pair of Firefighter's Wings on a PEDRO Unit Cap that was presented to former PEDRO HH-43 Huskie Firefighters upon completion of their specialize training as Airborne firefighters. Replica of PEDRO Cap with Airborne Firefighter's Wings.

-Source: Military Firefighter Heritage Foundation.



Registration duty was handled by Chief Charlie Richardson clardb@695online.com Also please to announce that Charlie has accepted a position as a QNN associate editor. Note QNN heading.



Chief Fred Owens C@fireweb.com handled the Master at Arms duty and presented the beautiful “Hawaiian Lies” to the 18 ladies attending. Both Charlie and Fred were recruited for these duties at the last hour due to cancellations of others originally assigned. Thanks for volunteering fellows for jobs well done.

STAMP FUND CONTRIBUTORS:

The QNN is privately funded by members’ contributions. During the past quarter contributors are: Mr. Clarence Monaco the refreshment funds for the Gathering, Mrs. Lue Goodwin the “Hawaiian Lies” uses at the Gathering in memory of her husband Chief Bill Goodwin, Chief Tom Smith the “Fire Pioneer” hats and door prizes. The Wills Family in memory of Chief Guy J. Wills Jr., Chief “Pete” Peters, Chief Ed Lee , Chief “Sandy” Sanchez ; bigfiredog@att.net, Chief Joe Jarrell; firechief6736@yahoo.com and son Mike Jarrell.

Editor’s comment: Thanks to all the Chiefs who brought gifts from their home States for the door prizes and to Chief Milt Puckett for the 911 pins that were added to the name tags. Also to Chief Ted Taipualus and Chief Ben Partin for their Company’s Hospitality Rooms enjoyed by all.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE
Thank God for the sense to remember these "3" steps, S T R. Read and Learn!

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a

bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

S - Ask the individual to SMILE.

T - Ask the person to TALK,

R - Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS. If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

{NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out their tongue... if the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other that is also an indication of a stroke}



SICK CALL: Chief Bill Moore William.moore@hickam.af.mil reports on Chief Tony Bamer’s stroke recovery progress. He still is unable to communicate. He still attempts to talk and it appears that he is getting through, but that’s not the case. His caregiver told me they are considering sending Tony to a different speech therapist in hope that they will be able to make improvement. Tony is physically fit and able to feed and bathe himself. He uses his putter in the living room and shows good putting stroke skills. He has attempted to use his computer but coordination with the mouse isn't good and he ends up with several screens open. His doctor has indicated that he would be fit to live alone but since he's unable to communicate by phone or e mail that he would not be able to let anyone know if he was experiencing difficulties. Please keep Tony in our prayers and hope that eventually he will break through and be the old Tony that we knew before his stroke. Aloha, Bill.

Editor’s comment: Thanks Bill for keeping us informed. The Power of Prayer is miraculous in the Hands of our Savior. We will keep the prayer coming. God bless our Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs, it was so good to see so many of them at the Gathering, even through many were attending in pain. I know as I was one of them. Their camaraderie was contagious; it made us feel young again.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!



Seniors in the U.S. Army

Following news:

The U.S. Army is now accepting older recruits so that enlistment goals can be met.

SENIORS IN THE U.S. ARMY

ENLIST NOW!

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE



**Over 65? We still want you
for the US Army!**

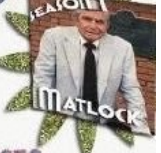
Why Join?

Our Country Needs

- * Excellent medical and prescription benefits
- * \$2,000 sign on bonus
- * Free Pikachu Keychain while supplies last



Sign up Now and get Season
one of **Matlock** on DVD Free!



Look, Uncle Sam is getting desperate here. We need soldiers ASAP. Legally blind, senile, whatever, as long as you can fire a gun and can communicate somewhat coherently we need you. We've lowered our training and education standards so we might as well change the age restrictions, too. So be a part of something great, join the US Army!

ENLIST NOW!

Submitted by Chief Sandy Sanchez. Any Takers?...Prior Service Acceptable.

2006 Attendees (Excludes the greatly appreciated team of supporters):

Name	Location	Name	Location
CHIEF BOB BARROW	FLORIDA	MRS TINA MASON	GERMANY
ASS'T CHIEF FRANK BARROW	FLORIDA	CHIEF BRYCE MASON	GERMANY
CHIEF CHARLES HUFF	INDIANA	CHIEF BEN PARTIN	VIRGINIA
CHIEF FRED OWENS	TEXAS	MRS BERNICE PARTIN	VIRGINIA
CHIEF TOM SMITH	GEORGIA	CHIEF ED LEE	TEXAS
CHIEF TED TAIPALUS	TEXAS	MRS ALICE LEE	TEXAS
CHIEF FREDDIE HARPER	LOUISIANA	MRS KIMI WILLS	FLORIDA
CHIEF BOBBY FLANAGAN	LOUISIANA	COL GUY WILLS III, USAF RET	FLORIDA
CHIEF JOHN MEEKS	TEXAS	CMSGT RONALD WILLS, USAF RET.	FLORIDA
CHIEF DONATO JASO	TEXAS	MR RICHARD WILLS	TEXAS
CHIEF JOE JARRELL	TEXAS	MRS MICHELLE WILLS	TEXAS
ASS'T CHIEF MICHAEL JARRELL	TEXAS	MRS GWYNETH SMITH	TEXAS
CHIEF LARRY TAYLOR	TEXAS	ASS'T CHIEF HELEN COVEY	TEXAS
CHIEF VIC ROBINSON	VIRGINIA	MR MIKE SUTTON	TEXAS
CHIEF GENE COURTMANCHE	FLORIDA	MRS CINDI SUTTON	TEXAS
FIRE LT CURTIS DUNN JR	TEXAS	MR MARK YELMOKAS	TEXAS
CHIEF LENNIE BLAU	TEXAS	MRS DONNA YELMOKAS	TEXAS
CHIEF BILL BENIKER	TEXAS	MRS ANNA BROWN	COLORADO
CHIEF NORRIS "SANDY" SANCHEZ	COLORADO	MR RICHARD BROWN	CALIFORNIA
CHIEF WL JENNINGS	COLORADO	MR GARY DANAKER	TEXAS
CHIEF JIM DEAL	OKALAHOMA	MRS BEVERLY DANAKER	TEXAS
CHIEF PHIL BOYER	MASSACHUSETTS	MR SHAUN DAVID	TEXAS
CHIEF CHARLIE RICHARDSON	FLORIDA	MRS BRITNEY DAVID	TEXAS
MRS LINDE RICHARDSON	FLORIDA	MS DOMINIC DAVID	TEXAS
MRS TONI GARRETT	FLORIDA	MRS IRENE DICKMAN	COLORADO
CHIEF JERRY GARRETT	FLORIDA	MRS MARIE WALLER	TEXAS





*Merry Christmas
and Happy New
Year*

*May you walk in
God's Great Love
throughout 2007!*



The QNN Staff and Editors