

Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs' Network
QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWS



*Legendary Retirees Who Reminisce About the Past
But Focus on the Future*

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

Editor: Charlie Richardson, clardb@att.net

Associate Editor: Richard Duncan, r.duncan1949@vahoo.com

Associate Editor: Raymond Porter, afchief911@yahoo.com

Associate Editor: Hoyd Sanders, Sandy6T5@comcast.net

Associate Editor: Jim Carroll, carrolljd@homesc.com

"Final Wordsmiths": Milt & Helen Puckett

helmilpuck@comcast.net



Volume 1 2013

Founded by: Doug Courchene CMSgt, USAF, Retired

January-March 2013



Hopefully by now all of you know that Mr. Jim Podolske was selected as the new Air Force Fire Chief. Congratulations Jim. I do not know of anyone more deserving of the title.

Another year is here and it's time to gather again. We will meet in Wilmington NC on August 6-8. If you are thinking about joining us, please make your hotel reservations early. The more rooms that are filled the better deal we can negotiate. The hotel has a liberal cancellation policy; so if anything comes up preventing you from making the reunion; you have 48 hours prior to cancel with no obligation. We have lots on the agenda this year, like how often do we want to meet and where. Chief Ed Wolbert from the National Guard has been very helpful in filling us in on what they are doing and other great ideas. Hopefully, he will be at our August meeting to fill us all in on their program. There is more information on the reunion at the end of this newsletter.

Spring was late this year; but it finally arrived, and the weather is getting better. Time to get something in the garden.

Jim Carroll has published a roster of Retired Fire Chiefs. It will be included with the email copies. I will send the snail mail copies once the email edition has been out for a few weeks and Jim has the time to update them as needed. If you have any information you would like to have included please contact Jim at Jim Carroll carrolljd@homesc.com or 843.830.5400

It is certainly a pleasure to pass along a heartwarming story about some generous and unselfish folks who were willing to get involved to make a handicapped young person truly happy. During a Sunday morning church service in early November, our pastor recognized several folks in attendance and talked about their occupations-- both past and present. Our congregation has a wide



IFRFMIAH SIMS

variety of folks who are presently working or retired from different occupations. He mentioned me and spoke of my 47-year career in the fire service and talked of me serving as Fire Chief at several locations. We have a handicapped boy in our church named Jeremiah Sims. After service he came to me and

through his dad was able to communicate a question to me "do you have a fire engine at your house"? I replied "No, Jeremiah, I do not have a fire engine at my house." "Why not" was his reply. I later learned that prior to his hearing about me being in the fire service, the local fire department had an engine company visit his school and he had become a "Super Fan" of the fire department. In subsequent discussions with Jeremiah he told me he wanted to "save the baby from the burning house." Even though he is mentally and physically challenged and is limited in his communications skills, he has made a lasting impression on me with his desire to be a firefighter and his wanting to be able to help others. Jeremiah loves anything associated with fire departments. I went through all the paraphernalia I had tucked away in boxes and drawers and gave him several items, hat, patches, badges, necktie etc. but his big thing was a fire department T-shirt. All the T-shirts I had were given to my grandsons, and I knew I had to get Jeremiah one. So, I reached out to some friends with intentions of getting him a couple T-shirts. The outpouring of fire department "Stuff" was unbelievable. It was close to Christmas and it was overwhelming what the following folks did.

Chief Bill Moore - Japan (Army)
Chief Forest Johnson - Warner Robins AFB GA
Chief George Hall
Chief Rod Coleman - Dover AFB DE
The DeLay Family - Wamengo KS
Fire Station #1 - Fort Sill OK
Asst Chief Don Ballard - Fairchild AFB WA
Tom Smith - Fire Equipment Co.
Orange County FL Fire Rescue
Chief Wayne Kee - Kennedy Space Center
Chief Terry Ford - Tinker AFB OK
Col (Retired) Steve Hoarn - MacDill AFB FL
Chief Dave Mounsey - Sheppard AFB TX
Chief McHudson Theodore - MacDill AFB FL
Chief Mark Giuliano - Eglin AFB FL
Asst Chief Ron Martin - Luke AFB AZ
Kim Bushong - Glendale AZ Fire Department
Chief Ren Mateo - Yokota Air Base Japan
Bradley Nicholson - United States Army

I fear I might have overlooked someone who participated in this effort; and if I did, please forgive me. The first fire department T-shirt arrived on a Saturday afternoon. So, Sunday morning when it was time to get dressed for church, Jeremiah's Mom was faced with a problem. Jeremiah would not have it any other way except to wear his newly arrived fire department T-shirt to church. His Mother did compromise and allowed him to wear it under his white shirt. During church Jeremiah certainly made sure everyone could see his Fire Department T-shirt under the white shirt. It was like a flood gate opened with packages of T-shirts, patches, coins, sweat suits, badges, pins, honorary membership certificates, hats, etc. Jeremiah's Mom related that he could hardly wait for the mail to come each day leading up to Christmas. I recall early on when I reached out to friends for help I received an almost immediate response from every one. It was, however, a few days before I received a call from Tom Smith who was in the process of relocating to Germany. His words were "I just got the message concerning Jeremiah and I want to be involved." He told me he would make a call to the office in Georgia and Jeremiah would receive something soon. A 9-11 343 helmet arrived very soon after the call. Jeremiah's Dad told me he would not take the helmet off and even tried to sleep with it on. Life for the Sims family has not always been easy. They have received lots of lemons in life; but, because of their resilience, they take the lemons and make lemonade. The Dad is almost blind and is unable to work or drive and Mom works long hours at a hospital. Their outlook on life and their coping skills encourage me to be a better man. A couple days after Christmas we came home and found a message on our answering machine. It was Jeremiah and his Dad wanting to thank everyone for the things they had sent. I could not understand Jeremiah very well but the tone of his voice and his excitement while attempting to say thank you was awesome. His Dad said " I cannot believe there are people that do not even know us that would take time and be considerate enough to send all these things so Jeremiah could have the best Christmas he ever had." (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders Sandy6T5@Comcast.net)

TAPS



CHIEF VICTOR B. ROBINSON, JR. FEBRUARY 27, 1926-MARCH 24, 2013

On March 24, 2013, Victor B. Robinson Jr. passed quietly at home in Springfield, Virginia. He was 87



years old. He is survived by his daughters Jane R. Austin and Laura R. Bache, their husbands Stephen Austin and Stephen Bache, and grandchildren Victoria, Stephen and Olivia Rose. Other surviving family

members include Sandra Brooks, Jay Davenport, Carter Brooks, Frank and Mary Robinson, and Charlotte Smith.

Vic was enlisted in the Navy during WW II and served on the USS Romulus. He then began his career as a civilian in the USAF. He came up through the ranks serving most of his career in the Far East. He served as Fire Chief at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and then went on to serve at Andersen AB in Guam, Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Johnson/Tachikawa Air Base in Japan, Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. He also served at PACAF Headquarters. Chief Robinson served at the old USAF airfield across the river from Reagan IAP in DC, and the Pentagon. He also worked at the Civil Engineer Center at Wright Patterson Air Force Base Ohio, and when the Center moved to Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, Vic stayed in DC, by special consideration and retired in 1978. He settled finally in Alexandria, Virginia and worked for the USAF at the Pentagon until his retirement. After that time he went on to provide consulting services for Monaco Enterprises.

Vic was a quiet, gentle man and perhaps the first individual to hold The Air Force Fire Chief position, even though the title would have been different in those days. He was a dedicated USAF firefighter, as was his father before him.

Vic was a lifelong Mason becoming an active member while serving in the Philippines. He was predeceased in 1998 by Rose S. Robinson, his wife of 41 years and in 1984, by his son Michael Victor Robinson.

PATRICK JOLICOEUR, MSGT, USAF (RETIRED)

APRIL 10, 1931 - MARCH 1, 2013

Patrick Jolicoeur, Sr., 81, formerly of Flagstaff,



Arizona and Riverside, California passed away March 1, 2013 at Brooks Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. He was born April 10, 1931, to Edward and Cora Jolicoeur in Waverly, Minnesota, and

also raised by Arthur and Rose Moline of Howard Lake, Minnesota. A Vietnam veteran, he served in the United States Air Force from 1947 to 1974. He was educated in the local school system in Waverly, Minnesota and graduated from High School at Hollywood, California, in 1946. Patrick was a Crash Rescue Firefighter for a total of 44 years, 26 of which were in the United States Air Force and stationed in several locations around the world, such as Adak, Alaska, March AFB, California, Bergstrom AFB, Texas, Clinton Sherman AFB, Oklahoma, RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge, United Kingdom where he was the Fire Chief for the two bases, and Bien Hoa Air Base in the Republic of Viet-Nam where he was awarded the Bronze Star. He received many awards and commendations during his 26 years of service before retiring from the USAF in 1974 at the rank of MSgt. From that point, he just picked up where he left off and began an 18-year civil service firefighter career reaching the rank of Captain at Norton Air Force Base, California.

He was predeceased by his loving wife of 54 years, Marina Burrows Jolicoeur (2007) of Ipswich, England; his parents Edward Jolicoeur (1973) and Cora Jolicoeur (1938), and Arthur and Rose Moline of Howard Lake Minnesota; two brothers James and Tom Jolicoeur; and two sisters Donna Dugas and Mary Jane Meyer. He is survived by his daughter Donna Silva and husband Ezequiel of Flagstaff,

Arizona, youngest son James Jolicoeur and wife Donna Bandera of San Antonio, Texas, and son Patrick Jolicoeur, Jr., and wife Susan of Easthampton, Massachusetts. Along with grandsons (USAF) MSgt Christopher Andrew Jolicoeur of Easthampton, Massachusetts, PFC Craig Jolicoeur of Fort Bliss, (US Army) Texas, Ezequiel Silva Jr., of Hayward, California, and granddaughters Shannon Silva of San Diego, California, & Amanda Jolicoeur and, Travis Powell of San Antonio, Texas whom he admired very much; and, of course, his very close friends whom he used to enjoy meeting at the local Denny's restaurant for breakfast to reminisce over their past career experiences and the current hot news topics & politics of the day. He also leaves a great granddaughter Kennedy Rae Powell and great grandson Nicholas Jolicoeur.

He was interred at Flagstaff's Citizen/Military Cemetery next to his wife, Marina Jolicoeur.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Where is Wayne M. Kee, CMSgt, USAF (Ret)?

Mr. Editor (Charlie), thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to communicate with the brethren and for your diligence in keeping this QNN afloat. After an exciting career in Air Force Fire Protection, working with and for some great Chiefs in the profession, like Chiefs



Morris Eidson, Earl Walsh, Luke Singleton, Rod Winningham, Ralph McHenry, Leo Dewey, Larry Mundy, Bruce Sincox, George Hall, Don Spitzer, Leroy Osbourn, James Garrett, Charles Cain, to name a few, I retired from the Air Force, July 1, 1990. After a 9 -month break trying to get back in the system, and selling Oldsmobiles, Buicks and Mitsubishis, I was blessed to land a position with NASA, John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) FL, (thanks to the late Rod Winningham who was one of the most humble servants I ever knew).

At KSC, I was hired as a GS-11, Fire Protection Specialist Contract Monitor for our Fire Protection Contract. At the time, we had 3 Fire Stations and a 160-person department. In 1992 the Director of Emergency Management for KSC retired, and I was asked to keep the program afloat until a replacement could be hired. After several years of doing both jobs, and riding out 4 or 5 hurricanes as the Incident Commander, I was promoted to Director of Emergency Management for KSC and to my current grade of GS-14. I love my job. I have now been at KSC almost as long as my Air Force career of 24 years. At 64, I figure I may as well make it a combined 50 years, Lord willing, that is my plan. I absolutely love getting up every day and making that drive across the causeway, looking at a beautiful sunrise over the water and giving thanks for my many blessings. NASA was nice enough to send me back to school, where I earned a BS in Fire and Safety Engineering, (University of Cincinnati) as well as achieving National Certification as a Certified Emergency Manager.

In 2005, as some of you know, I lost Lynda to a dreaded autoimmune disease called scleroderma. After 5 years of being single and professing that I would never remarry, God brought an angel into my life. Suzi and I met in Bible study class in March 2010, and we eloped on Thanksgiving Day to Key West and were married in a small Baptist Church on 5th Street. Life is grand; it truly begins in your 60s. We stay very busy with church, yard work, traveling, sewing, cooking, and soon to be back in the saddle again Harley riding. My days have not all been without trials; I have had 14 surgeries over the years, but thanks to God I am in relatively good health, minus a kidney, obtaining pins and screws in both shoulders and a cadaver repair left knee and ACL/LCL; Okay, old folks can't get together without talking about their aches and pains. All kidding aside, I never felt better. "Where are they now"? Well, we live at 976 Whetstone Place, Rockledge, FL 32955, 18 minutes from the beach, 40 minutes from Disney, and 55 minutes from the Daytona Speedway. (321-431-4985) It has been a pleasure letting you know where Wayne M. Kee, CMSgt. USAF (Ret) **IS** now. God Bless You All!

Editor's note. Thank you Wayne, now who will volunteer to be the next Where are they? Send your information to me and I will get it in the next QNN. ANYONE? Charlie Richardson clardb@att.net

Reunion of the Wiesbaden Air Base Firefighters

The first reunion of firefighters assigned to the 601st Civil Engineering Squadron, Wiesbaden AB, Germany, was held 26-29 Jan 2012 in Las Vegas NV. All these firefighters were assigned to Wiesbaden when the US Air Force turned the base over to the US Army in late 1976. A few of the firefighters had remained in contact throughout the years, but it was not until Facebook became popular that enough contact could be made to lead up to a reunion of them and their spouses (a few of the spouses had also been with their husbands in Germany).

MSgt Bill Hutfilz, USAF (Ret), developed a group on Facebook in late 2009 and the hunt began to find previous members of the WABFD. So far only 16 members have been located and 14 are members of the Facebook group.

As the adage goes, members of the military can reunite years later and seem as though it was only yesterday they separated. Well after 35 years for most of this group, it held true and the bond was still there. Our first meeting was held at Hofbrauhaus Las Vegas for a traditional German celebration.

You may recognize some of these names below:

Bill Bennyhoff, Anchorage, AK
Bill Hutfilz, Las Vegas, NV
Bob Rutherford, Great Falls, MT
Braulio Solano, Humble, TX
Dave Tatum, Cocoa, FL
Glenn Tepler, Minot, ND
Jim Carroll, Moncks Corner, SC
Mitchell "Marty" Martinez, Los Angeles, CA
Pierre Thode, Owing Mills, MD
Steve Riddle, Antioch, CA
Timothy Donath, Mystic, CT
John Karegeannes, Greenfield, WI (not attending)
Mark Cushmanick, San Antonio, TX (not attending)
Timothy McPheron, Mecca, OH (not attending)
We are currently planning a reunion every two years.

So if any of readers were previously stationed in Wiesbaden or know of anyone, please let me know. Jim Carroll carrolljd@homesc.com or 843.830.5400

Editors Note. A picture was sent with this article but for some reason I was unable to include it. Charlie clardb@att.net

FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH DEPARTMENT FROM AROUND THE NET

As I said earlier I'm not a big fan of Facebook but there seems to be a lot of interest from some of you on Retired Air Force Fire Officers and Air Force Fire Dogs pages.

Just found out that CMSgt Ben Partin (Ret) had a bypass operation and is expected to be out on the town shortly. Best of luck and hope to see Ben at the reunion.

togetherweserved.com is a website for all military and ex-military. They also have a USAF Firefighters page. Check it out!

For those of you who have access to the Air Force Magazine, the April 2013 edition has our reunion listed on page 82. It should be listed in the VFW and American Legion magazines May editions.

Other organizations you may be interested in:

National Association for Uniform Services
5535 Hempstead Way
Springfield, VA 22151-4094
www.NAUS.org

Veterans of Foreign Wars
406 W. 34th St,
Kansas City, MO 64111
www.vfw.org

Air Force Association
1501 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22209-1198
www.afa.org

PUBLISHING AND MAILING FUND



The QNN is privately funded by members' contributions. All donations are strictly voluntary as no membership fees are charged. We started off last quarter with a total of \$1378.91. The cost of printing and postage for the last QNN and the extra edition was \$98.42. In addition it was agreed on at the December reunion to pay for the gift presented to Mr. Warner on his retirement at the cost of \$106.50. Leaving a total of \$1174.49. During the past quarter a total of \$70.00 was donated by Chiefs Doug Courchene, Marty Jester, Gene Courtemanche and Glenn Cloud for a new total of \$1244.49. I will keep the total posted in each edition so you know where we are on fiscal issues.

PEDRO'S CORNER

'Len' Shults,
SMSgt. USAF Ret.

April 2013, Greetings to all. The Pedro Corner, is to provide the reader with information about the doings



of the Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association. Our small group meets every other year. In the off year many attend the 'Jolly Green reunions or the Air Rescue Association Reunions. We

have open membership to all who have served or were associated with the HH43s at any time in their career. Contact Neil McCutchan, the secretary, njmcc33881@gmail.com or me, Len Shults, at: sugardaddyfor1@gmail.com We can send you the application via e-mail. Our dues are \$10.00 a year. Our reunion in June 2014 may be at the Air Force Academy. We are looking to giving a monument to

the AF Academy. We have one at Maxwell/Gunter, Enlisted Heritage Hall Museum.

On 15 February 2913, I was invited to attend the dedication of a new display of a former enlisted man, William 'Bill' Robinson, A1c, Flight Mechanic (Crew Chief) of an HH 43 in SEA. In 1966 while on a rescue mission, it was shot down. The crew was captured and paraded around before being imprisoned. Bill was a POW for 7 years. The Enlisted Heritage Museum at Gunter Annex/Maxwell AFB Alabama, created a replica of his cell at the Hanoi Hilton. February 15, 2013 was the 40th anniversary of the release and homecoming of the Vietnam Veterans. It was a fitting tribute to Bill Robinson, who was regularly promoted while in prison and after release was commissioned a Lt. He has been a featured speaker in many military schools, veterans groups, and public events across our nation.

Bill spoke to the large group and the class of the Senior NCO Academy and First Sergeants school. I enjoyed meeting him and sharing the Pedro Organization's doings. He was pleased with the monument and with the 'Challenge Coin' I gave him. It was an honor to be in the celebration and support the Enlisted Heritage Museum. Again, if you are ever in the area of Montgomery, Alabama, do not fail to check out the changes at Maxwell AFB and visit the Enlisted Heritage Museum at the Gunter annex. If you were ever in the area and have not been back in some years, you are in for a surprise at what has been done to the Area along Bell Street going to downtown.



Here is the photo taken at the dedication at the Enlisted Heritage Museum, Feb. 15.

YOUR WORD

UPDATE. Greetings from "Sweet Home Alabama." Chief Charlie Richardson asked that I provide an update on my status because he had received numerous inquiries about my well being. I am not real sure how to respond. Chief Richardson did not say how the inquiries were worded. There could possibly be two ways to look at what may have been asked. One would be "did he finally die" the other could be "is he still alive." Both could have a negative connotation. I certainly appreciate those of you who

continue to be concerned about my well-being. Knowing that friends and former colleagues are thinking about me and offering prayers have served as a great strength over a long period of time while coping with severe health problems. As some of you know I have been battling cancer and numerous other health issues since 2001. Cannot recall how many rounds of chemotherapy I have gone through. My last treatment concluded July 2012. This was followed by biopsy in September with all tissue being benign. I continue with exams and tests each three months. To have gone through and continue to survive over eleven years fighting cancer and other unfavorable health conditions, I still believe I am truly blessed. I feel like I am standing on the top limb waiting for another to grow out. Miss Evelyn and I live in Dothan, Alabama. I am sure everyone has heard of the "Deep South" well, Dothan I would say is the deepest place in the South. Folks still smile and speak to you when you pass them on the street or sit across from them in a restaurant. The terms "yes maam and no maam, yes sir and no sir" have not been banned from the English language like it has been in most other locations of our country. However, we do continue to reserve the right to make three syllables out of one syllable words. Folks are not ashamed to talk about the Bible, not afraid to ask you to pray for them, and still believe Sunday is a day set aside to attend Church. Men still open the door for ladies. The words "thank you" and "may I help you" are said with sincerity. Reciting of the pledge of allegiance is still in style and folks know which hand to hold over their heart "unlike most of our leadership in Washington DC." Drivers continue to stop their cars on the highway to honor the passing of a funeral procession. Men, women, and children will stand in honor of the flag when it passes during the 4th of July parade. We do however, have five seasons in Alabama unlike the rest of our nation. They are: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall and Football Season. Quasi State law requires everyone living in Alabama to declare support for one of two football teams, Auburn University or the University of Alabama. I feel sure those of you who are fans of teams other than Alabama and Auburn are very familiar with the win/loss records of these teams from two great schools. "Roll Tide" "War Eagle" Bottom line... I continue to have health issues and will until I die but, I am blessed to live in this great Republic called America where a place like Dothan, Alabama, continues to exist and Americana is still alive and well. (Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders
(Sandy6T5@Comcast.net)

Reprinted from The VVA Veteran Locator: Seeking fellow firefighters who served at Bien Hoa AB in 1965. Contact: Warren Driver, 1415 W. Ball Rd., Apt. 352, Anaheim, CA 92802-1749; 562-338-9800; warrendriver007@gmail.com

Charlie.... Thank you for the QNN Extra. Certainly sorry I was unable to attend the Panama City meeting. Hopefully Don will have a great retirement. I want to applaud everyone's effort to recognize Chief Doug Courchene for all he has accomplished and the work he put into establishment of the QNN. He and Miss Evelyn are most deserving of recognition.

I reviewed the program which you provided for the upcoming reunion. I most certainly concur with the two hours allocated to recognize Chief Courchene. However, from arrival time on Tuesday through departure on Friday minus the two hours to recognize Chief Courchene, it appears we will be a bunch of old retired fire folks doing the tourist thing. I was looking forward to a time set aside to discuss what I read from the Panama City meeting. "At our reunion in Panama City FL, we agreed that we need to redefine who we are." I am aware of ideas some folks have and we should find some time to explore those and define who we are and where we want to go in the future. I envision this being a jumping off point for the establishment of an organization which can accomplish great things and become an adjunct support system to Air Force Fire and Emergency Services.

Not trying to throw a wet blanket on the fire but believe we still as a group have much to offer. I may be old (71) but I still have a 25 year old trapped in this old body. Bottom line I do not make a good tourist. Please understand where I am coming from. With warm regards.... Sandy

Hey partner;

Happy New Year. The December QNN was one of the best. I like the way you have come up with new ideas on various articles. Many thanks for your service and those who assist you.

Hello to your lovely wife.

Best regards. Pete Semanick

Charlie,

Thanks for a very good QNN. Please let me know if I can ever do anything to help you.

Your Friend, Tom Smith

If you are planning to attend the reunion, please book as early as possible. Here is the information.

To book a SUITE, guests can choose from one of the following options:

Via the Internet: www.homewoodsuitesmayfaire.com

-
- Choose your dates and click on “ADD SPECIAL RATE CODE”
- Under “GROUP CODE” put **AFR** and click on “Check Availability”

- Your group rates will populate and continue booking as normal

Call the hotel directly and speak with a Guest Service Agent onsite. The number to call is: (910) 791.7272. Please be sure to advise the Guest Service Agent of your 3 digit code (AFR) and or the group name in order to receive the preferred group rate.

AFR and USAF Retired Fire Chief Reunion

Personalized and secured booking link catered to your event. Guest can simply click on the link below.

<http://homewoodsuites.hilton.com/en/hw/groups/personalized/I/ILMMTHW-AFR->