

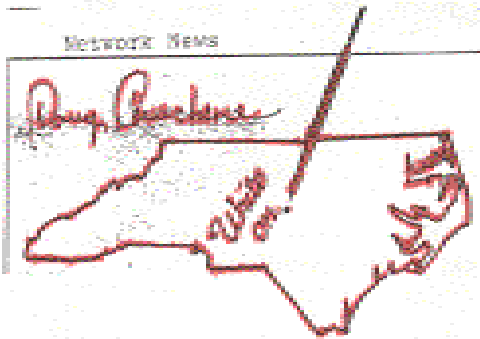


RETIRED AIR FORCE FIRE CHIEFS'

QUARTERLY NETWORK
NEWSLETTER (QNN)

Jan – Mar 2005

“LEGENDARY PIONEERS WHO
REMINISCE ABOUT THE PAST, BUT
FOCUS ON THE FUTURE”



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QNN Founder 1990

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Happy 2005! Another year has passed...and with it comes new opportunity to reflect on the past and the future...and a chance to say hello to friends and wish them the best in the New Year.

The QNN has been a wonderful networking tool for the Retired and Active-Duty Air Force Fire Chiefs. Each quarter, new and old relationships are kindled. Over 500 Fire Chiefs read the QNN now. My good friend from past years, Chief Pete Semanick, CMSgt, USAF (Retired) - psemanic@swcp.com of Albuquerque, NM spotted my e-mail address from another Chief and inquired if I might be the CWO4 that visited Kirtland AFB so often. Pete is like a talking History book, back to the late 40s and 50s in Fire Protection. He had just talked to Chief Joseph P. Odea, CMSgt, USAF (Retired) in Slidell, LA, living in a retirement home. He lost his wife in 1993. He sounds very good and has a vivid memory. We go back to 1950 when I attended one of his crash fire courses at Erding AB, Germany near Munich. He has just obtained a computer and is learning. His e-mail address is: jpodea01@charter.net. Chief Odea is believed to

be the 2nd E-9 in Fire Protection. I was able to connect both of these fine Chiefs with dozens of long lost acquaintances that they to can catch up on through the QNNs. Excerpts from some of the chiefs' letters this past quarter are:

Fire Chief Pat Jolicoeur, CMS USAF Retired- CaptBligh31@aol.com, was glad to receive the past QNNs by mail, since I can not download from the web. So sad to read about the "last alarm" for so many great individuals. Fire Chiefs, Fathers and Husbands. I worked with CWO Val Allen while at Bergstrom AFB, TX from 1968-70. I have so many wonderful memories about Val...his kindness, his humor and then there were the details; details; details....when Val would come into my office and ask what do you think about this Sarge? He already knew the correct answer, but by the way he went about getting your thoughts on the subject, you would think it was your idea in the end. Keep up the good work Bob, I have enclosed a little something to feed the kitty - I know it has been awhile since we have sent anything. I have been busy at the Veteran's Center helping Vets with their VA Rating Claims, especial the new applications for Combat Related Service

Connected claims. I am rated at 100% Unemployable and 90% Combat Related.

Fire Chief Art Hill of Lompoc, CA wrote Bob, you continue to provide excellent information on the Retired Air Force Chiefs. Bennie and I enjoy the QNN very much. It keeps me up on the fire folks. Keep up the good work, enclosed is a donation for the stamp fund.

Fire Chief Charlie Cain, CMSgt, USAF (Retired) - Charles.cain@randolph.af.mil wrote: Some of us not so old forget, too. Thanks for the reminder that the "Kitty" needs feeding. Find enclosed donation.

Fire Chief Bruce Sincox, CMSgt, USAF (Retired) - SincoxBT@state.gov: I didn't know that was Chief Courchene in the QNN October photograph, but I assumed it had to be someone special. Sharp indeed! Those stripes look great. I guess I'm "old school" in so far as the original chevrons - hated the newer versions. Bob, you and Doug have my deepest respect for what you've done in the past, and I take my hat off for



aircraft from HQ SAC to Castle AFB in 1963. The Command Civil Engineering team headed by Colonel Fremow made a brief stop for the presentation, on our way to conducting PACAF Inspections. Base Fire Chief Glenn Mullins and Technical Services Chief Ed Sams standby as the Base Commander (foot in cast) with his adjutant a CWO-4 accept the Award. Below, Ed & Rosie Sams' letter above.

the wonderful means of communication the QNN provides. My best to you and yours. Enclosed, a little something to feed the kitty. Bruce.

**A Merry and Blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year**
December 2004




Dear Bob & Nan,
(Merry Christmas from our home to yours. As I (Ed) write, I can look out my window at the snow on the ground. It has been snowing mostly all day. I am pretty well burned out from the projects I worked on during the year. (My doctor says it is "old age.") However, I needed to enclose a contribution to the AF Newsletter so here it is. This year Rosie will do most of the writing since I am worn out. If you are not into Christmas newsletters, you can stop here. Otherwise, Rosie will take over. This is a letter we sent to friends and family.)

Dear Friends and Family,
We have enjoyed the letters and cards received from you last Christmas. Seems like the year has flown by so fast for us—how about you? This year has been a busy one—Ed with his projects and me with my gardens. Last January Ed assembled a greenhouse from a kit (Chinese-built with Chinese instructions) that he had given me for Christmas. The temperatures ranged from freezing to the forties so he worked on it in the garage with what seemed like a 1,000 parts and 10,000 nuts and bolts. When finally assembled, we moved it out of the garage on dollies (see photo). Having the greenhouse allowed me to get started on my garden with seeds. The results were real good and I had a great garden. We had the biggest and most plentiful tomatoes we have ever had.

In the spring, Ed decided to replace the redwood planking on our large sundeck with the new type of "last forever" very heavy material. This would eliminate maintenance and staining twice a year. This did him in. While installing new joists to support the heavy decking and working in 12 - 14 inch crawlspace (see photo) after a night of rain, he compressed a vertebra in his back. A summer of tests followed with the result that he was diagnosed with the fractured vertebra, osteoporosis, low bone density, Leukemia and (again) "old age". The doctors' prescription—"Ed, change your life-style."

In November, Ed was back with another Chinese kit. This time for a metal shed to store his "junk" in a side yard. Again, the shed had a thousand parts, screws, nuts and bolts. With the temperatures now down in the 30s and low 40s, I had to help him a lot as his fingers got so cold he couldn't hold the nuts and screws. We finally finished the shed the day before Thanksgiving. He has promised me that he will never order another Chinese kit and will spend the rest of his life working only on his final book, "MY LIFE, HERS, AND OURS—It Was Worth It All".

What is for the next Year? Well! I guess we will take it "one day at a time". We enjoy our town, church, mountains, and home. Ed, also, enjoys his computer and its opening to the world. There will be lots of basketball as Joel is playing his final year for Yreka High School (see photo). Our friends who started the Atwater Church with us are proposing another get-together for "old-timers" of the Church in May. We hope to go to that if we are able. What else is anybody's guess. One thing, there will be no more Chinese Kits.

Again, we wish you a blessed Christmas and a bright new year to come. Keep looking up!

With much love to you all,
Ed and Rosie

Castle AFB rec'd 1st Place Award from NFPA. The CMS on the right is Douglas E. Courchene, our QNN Founder, who brought the plague on a Command

“Two Fire Chiefs Laid to Rest in this Quarterly”



Chief Curtis Dunn, USAF (Retired)

February 8, 1929 - December 18, 2004



Chief William Walter Thomas, SMSgt USAF (Retired)

July 16, 1928 - 13 Nov 2004



Last Alarm!

Chief Curtis Dunn, (75) USAF (Ret) answered his Final Alarm at age 75. Curtis, a widower, was preceded in death by his loving wife “Dorothy” on October 28, 2004. He died of heart failure at the USAF Medical Center-Wilford Hall, Lackland AFB, San Antonio, Texas, on December 18, 2004.

He began his Air Force Firefighting career by enlisting on June 28, 1948, and received an honorable discharge in 1974. His first Crash Fire Rescue assignment was at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin, TX, where he met the love of his life, Dorothy Horton. They married, had four children and spent 52 years together. Chief Dunn retired from Lackland AFB Fire Department and lived with his family in San Antonio. He served at numerous Air Base Fire Departments including Yokota AB, Japan, Chanute, and Lowry AFBs. Upon retiring he was selected as the Leon Valley Fire Chief, a suburb of San Antonio, where he served for the next 20 years. I had the pleasure of meeting Curtis and his son Curtis, Jr. at the Fire Pioneer Day Gathering at Dallas, Texas, August 2000.

His burial was at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, 1520 Harry Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, Texas, on Wednesday, December 22, 2004 at 1115 hours. His son, Fire Lt. Curtis L. Dunn Jr. has an email address: CLDUNFIRLT@aol.com for anyone that knew his father and would like to make a comment. A copy to chief.one@cox.net for the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs Newsletter would be appreciated, also.

The Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs extends condolences to the family.

Last Alarm

Chief William Walter Thomas (76), SMSgt USAF (Retired)...A Pioneer died of a heart attack at The Plains Regional Medical Center in Clovis, New Mexico. He was born July 16, 1928. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1947 and transferred to the newly formed Air Force Fire Department in 1948. He retired at the rank of SMS and earned a degree in Fire Protection engineering prior to retiring in 1969. Shortly after his assign to the Civil Service 081 series he was appointed Fire Chief of Webb AFB. He taught Fire Protection Engineering courses at Howard College, in Big Spring, Texas during his off-duty hours prior to transferring to Cannon AFB, NM in 1976. He was quickly selected as Cannon’s Base Fire Chief and remained at Cannon until his retirement in 1992. He was a big fan of the Dallas Cowboys and the Atlanta Braves and spend much of his time with the local Model Airplane Drivers Society. He was a member of the Modeling Academy of Aviation. He was also an avid golfer and spends time with family and friends in his wood shop modeling projects. His survivors include his wife, Adeline Charizia, married November 1, 1949, 3 sons, a daughter, 14 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. He was buried with full military honors at Lawn Haven Memorial Gardens of Clovis.

Editor’s Note: Thanks to Fire Chief “Chuck” Hemphill- hemper@3lefties.com

SMS USAF Retired of Clovis, NM for sending this obit. "Chuck" also asks if anyone remembered the T-38 Thomas Tool that was widely used though out the Air Force. Chief Thomas was credited with making the proto type tool and was honored by the tool carrying his name. Anyone with a picture and story about the tool can send to the QNN Editor chief.one@cox.net. Chief Doug Courchene wrote of Bill: "I knew Bill Thomas at Cannon AFB, NM. I made a staff assistance visit while at Hq TAC, 1980. Bill ran a solid fire department. I would suggest you contact Chief Spitzer, Shaw AFB SC. I believe Bill's wife and Spitzer's wife may be related. Not sure though." Chief Don Spitzer -donald.spitzer@shaw.af.mil, SMSgt, USAF (Retired) wrote, that his wife, Peggy and I were very close to Bill and Adeline through the years. Peggy's sister

was married to Adeline's brother and I was stationed with Bill Thomas at Bolling AFB in 1949 and the four of us ran around together until they went to Bermuda in late 1951. We have stayed in touch through the years until he retired in 92. We will miss him a lot.. Wish we could be there for Adeline but not enough time. Thanks Bob for putting him in your news letter. Editor's comment - wonder when Chief Don Spitzer might retire? If I figure this right he has to have 55+ years of continues fire service for the Air Force....brown shoe, black shoe and Fire Chief. Way to go Don! Our years at Pope AFB, NC in the 60/70s bring back fond memories.

STAMP FUND CONTRIBUTORS: The QNN is privately funded by members' contributions. Most members have good intentions to feed the kitty, but like the Editor who is getting older and some forgets the last time they send the kitty anything. Contributors (15) for the past quarter are: Chief Pat Jolicoeur, Chief Gene Courtemanche, Chief Art Hill, Chief Bruce Sincox, Chief John T. Wright, Chief Charlie Gain, Chief Dan Nevins, Chief Doug Courchene, Chief Leo McCarty, Chief Ed Sams-

rosened2@concentric.net, Chief Hugh Pike-h.pike@att.net, Chief Bob Borges-beckborges@cox.net Chief Bill Ryan-ChfChf1@aol.com Mrs. Kathleen Rushin in memory of her husband Chief Bob Rushin and Colonels Steve and Guy Wills in memory of their father, Chief Guy Wills. Address checks: Bob Barrow, 126 Clements St NE, Ft Walton Bch, FL 32548. Thanks, the kitty is back in the black.



Nancy Barrow - I am pleased to report that my wife, Nancy Barrow had her gall bladder removed without complication, December 15, 2004 and is recovering nicely at home.

Chief Bob Barrow - My operation for December 23rd was changed to January 13, 2005 at the Fort Walton Beach medical Center. Hopefully it will be day surgery and recovery will be short. The

procedure called a "fistula" is to prepare me for dialysis if my kidneys fail. The "fistula" needs to cure 8 to 10 months prior to the Stage IV kidney failure. In the interim I am under the care of Nephrologists (doctors who treats disease of the kidneys). The "fistula" is like an insurance policy. Hope you never need it. However, if you do it will prevent many of the complications associated with

dialysis. I know from first hand experience, my good friend Chief Bill Wilson has had with dialysis this past year, it is not a fun thing. However, it has to be better than the alternative, death in less than 2 weeks. A kidney transplant is the best alternative if there is a donor, but at Bill and my age they are rarely done. Keep us in your prayers.

Chief Don Smith - donchief@swbell.net- some of you may know I was diagnosed with esophageal cancer. My oncologist is Dr. Becerra at UT Southwest in Dallas has stopped his chemo treatments and is administering a new protocol of antibody cancer injections to shrink the tumors in the esophagus and liver. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers while I receive these treatments. Don and Gwyneth Smith.

Editor's comment: Come on Chiefs, know that you know "PoP = "Power of Prayer."

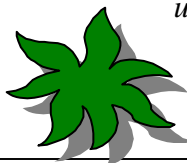
Chief Bill "W.A" York - of Staples, Texas has not been feeling well since his return with Bonnie and

his summer vacation to Denver CO. Bonnie reports his weight has dropped to 135 pounds. It seems to have started as a reaction to prescription antibiotics for a gastric problem. Get well cards can be sent to his home at, P.O. 249, Staples, TX 78676.

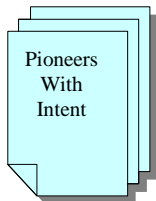
Chief Joe Jarrell – firechief6736@yahoo.com- of Austin, Texas, who severed with Chief York was rushed to the ER Room with a high fever from pneumonia. He is now home recuperating with his wife, Ruth. Ruth is scheduled corrective surgery from a previous operation. Prayers are needed for these families.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23



"PIONEERS WITH INTENT," - Chapter V, *Wives and Widows*, by Nancy Barrow.



Dear Chief Doug Courchene, I really appreciate the work you have done as founder and editor of the Quarterly Network

Newsletter (QNN) for The Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs and their families. Bob and I have had the pleasure of knowing so many Air Force Fire Chiefs the past 49 1/2 years of marriage, most of them during Fire Conferences and other occasions where Fire Chiefs meet.

Memphis, Tennessee was the best! The Annual Air Force Fire Chiefs Conferences were held there in late February of every year up until the mid 1970s. I attended every Memphis hosted conference from 1957 to 1976. I would go with Bob to the opening sessions in Cook's Convention Hall. At lunch time the Memphis Fire department served everyone free of charge, to a sat down meal inside of the huge hall. Vendors setup their wares inside the lobbies

downstairs and around the outside of the hall were Fire Equipment and demonstration displays.

Remember the "Quickie" Rescue Tool-Everyone Loves a Quickie?" The Quickie salesman let the firefighters cut the front fenders off of his new Cadillac automobile. He sold a lot of "Quickies" that year. Memphis lived up to its reputation as "The Best Big City with the Friendliest Small City attitude" each year. The Memphis Fire Department did everything within their power to see that their attendees had a great time in Memphis. Memphis usually lived up to its reputation of having something interesting happening, too. Like the year the Catholic Nuns and the Fire Chiefs met at the same time downtown. Fire Chiefs were trying to look up their skirts or chasing them down the city streets! The garbage strike was the worse, with garbage backing up in the streets and around the motels. No one will ever forget Martin Luther's assassination the night before the Chiefs scheduled departure for home or the time a record snowfall blanketed the State on our last night in Memphis. A Fire Chief in the hotel room above ours had a bad fire about 5 AM and we had to evacuate.

Everyone got to see the MFD. in action, plus a little early morning quarterbacking, The Memphis Fire Demos were usually a vendors' worse nightmare. Remember the time low-expansion foam generators set up for demonstration would not control a two-story residence? Results - the house burned down! Or a new Airfield Fire Truck using a foam that was suppose to be better than AFFF was being demonstrated at the fire training grounds? A salvaged aircraft being used as a mock-up was set on fire and the Vendor's demonstration team never could put it out. Memphis Fire Department had to use AFFF to stop the burning.

Some of the best times were the informal bull sessions held in someone's hotel suite or at one of the famous Memphis tea-dance establishments. All the solutions to fire protection problems could be found at these impromptu meetings. I must mention Akron Brass Hospitality Suite's corn-beef sandwiches and cold drinks as the greatest and provided a wonderful space for the Chiefs and wives to socialize. The Peabody Hotel was the place to be, mid morning and late afternoon, to witness the grand entrance/exit of the famous Peabody white ducks. The red carpet was rolled out for the ducks to waddle from the elevator to the lobby fountain to swim in during the day and then they returned to roost upon the roof at night. Peabody management was quite upset one year

when a Fire Chief added light-water extinguishing agent to the pool's water and a bunch of other Fire Chiefs standing nearby had to rescue the sinking ducks. Mouth to mouth resuscitation had to be preformed on some of the ducks, however none were lost and all were good as new the next day, after a good bath to remove the light-water agent.

Late night dinners at the Rendezvous full of Fire Chiefs was were we ate the best ribs in Memphis and told war stories to the wee hours of the morning. Wouldn't it be great to have one more rendezvous in Memphis with the Fire Pioneers and their ladies? Bob and I remember the Pioneers with so many fond memories. Met J.K. Schmidt in 1957 and was so impress, that I told Bob why can't you be a Fire Chief like J.K.? Little did I realize Bob would be J.K.'s replacement 13 years later. Doug thanks for publishing "Pioneers With Intent" and for asking that I be part of its memories.

Editor: QNN request for your favorite Fire Service stories. Doug and I will spit polish them a little without changing the story and always with your approval. Wishing you and yours a health and happy New Year in 2005. In the meanwhile Doug and I will keep carrying write on from North Carolina to Florida.





PSALM 100

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD, ALL YE LANDS.

SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS: COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH SINGING.

KNOW YE THAT THE LORD HE IS GOD: IT IS HE THAT HATH MADE US, AND NOT WE OURSELVES; WE ARE HIS PEOPLE, AND THE SHEEP OF HIS PASTURE.

ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE: BE THANKFUL UNTO HIM, AND BLESS HIS NAME.

FOR THE LORD IS GOOD; HIS MERCY IS EVERLASTING; AND HIS TRUTH ENDURETH TO ALL GENERATIONS.



Mosul Fire Department, Iraq