

THE RESCUEGRAM



The Official Information Publication of the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard

August 2009

Lives Saved
659

These Things We Do...
That Others May Live



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Djibouti deployers return home

by Capt. Alyson Teeter,
129th Rescue Wing Public
Affairs

Air National Guardsmen from the 129th Rescue Wing returned here after a 40-day deployment to Djibouti June 13 and 18.

Thirty-seven aircrew members, maintainers and support personnel returned June 18 via two MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft. They were deployed to provide combat search

and rescue support for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. All told, more than 50 Airmen returned from Djibouti by means of commercial and military airlift.

Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa conducts operations to strengthen partner-nation and regional security capacity to enable long-term regional stability, prevent conflict and protect U.S. and Coalition interests.



Personnel from the 129th Rescue Wing deployed to Djibouti pose in front of an MC-130P Combat Shadow. The aircrews, maintainers and support personnel were deployed in support of Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa from April to June 2009.

THE RESCUEGRAM

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The mission of the 129th Rescue Wing is to provide highly trained and well-equipped rescue resources, able to respond to and sustain the state mission of furnishing trained personnel for state emergencies, such as natural disasters, and to assist civil authorities in the enforcement of the law.

When called to active duty with the Air Force, we provide manpower, material and equipment resources to conduct and complete combat and search rescue operations world-wide. We provide manpower, material and equipment to conduct and complete peacetime search operations.

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Commentary: Why do I serve?

by **1st Lt. Johnathon McCashland, 129th Rescue Squadron**

As cheesy as this may be, June 10th marked the 12th anniversary of my entrance into the United States Air Force. I was looking back on the last decade wondering where the time went. I have gotten to do a lot of cool stuff and see a lot of cool things...things some people are only lucky enough to read about in books. I have been all over the world and seen a variety of people, places, cultures, and religions. I have worked with some of the best people and some of the worst. So here is how I can sum up all those years that seem to pass by so darn quick....

I have had days that I hated my job. I've been shot at countless number of times, been ordered to do some absurd stuff such as flipping mulch over, piece by piece, so it looks new. And I've been away from my family for quite some time now.

So why do I do it? It's the people. The Air Force is filled with some of the best people I have ever been around, with a well-rounded diversity of backgrounds and experience. The smart ones will listen to the advice given by the experienced people and tuck it away for a rainy day. The people that surrounded me are responsible for me being where I am today. I am a blessed man and truly believe in the power of personal relationships. I think the world would be so much better if people would take the time to get to know the people around them.

When it's all said and done, life is not measured by your accomplishments or the amount of money you made, it's about how you treated the people around you. How do you want to be remembered?

Here's to 12 years in the service and many more to follow!

Bay Area Combined Federal Campaign thanks the California Air National Guard for support

by **Staff Sgt. Eric M. Hamilton, special to the 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs Office**

The Bay Area Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) director, Michelle Walker, and CFC Bay Area Administrator Dee Sutton sent a letter thanking the members of the California Air National Guard at Moffett Federal Airfield for contributions to the 2008 Bay Area CFC.



The letter outlined how 22 of the wing's Guardsmen contributed measurably to last year's successful campaign, which raised a total of \$3,906,338 in pledges. This money goes specifically to help fund non-profit organizations not only within the Bay Area, but across the nation.

Tech. Sgt. Mark Vindiola was specifically commended for his time and hard work in coordinating the CFC effort here. This dedication, as well as the support of local leadership, was cited as playing a "major role in the success of this year's Campaign."

Regional CFC representative Dee Sutton shared with Sergeant Vindiola that, in 2008, the 129th RQW nearly doubled its contributions from the previous year.

The next Combined Federal Campaign here is preparing to gear up for the Fall 2009 drive, so each group will need a CFC POC, said Col. Wayne Albright, the 129th RQW vice wing commander.

For information about the Combined Federal Campaign, go to:

www.opm.gov/CFC/.



Student flight: a leadership opportunity awaits you

by Staff Sgt. Eric M. Hamilton, special to the 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs Office

Perhaps you recently completed your professional military education and pinned staff sergeant rank on. Or maybe you've recently commissioned. One thing all military members have in common is this: We were all once new to the military.

And with that in mind, you might want to hear of an opportunity to put your leadership skills into practice.

"We need more people out there to support the student flight," said Master Sgt. Alan Munro, superintendent of health services for the 129th Medical Group—during the week, that is.

On drill weekends, Sergeant Munro is an entirely different person. He steps out of his career field and draws upon his four years' experience as a Training Instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, he said.

"I'm not trying to introduce and welcome them to the Guard. I'm introducing them to what they can expect at Basic Military Training," Sergeant Munro said. This leaves other non-commissioned officers free to support student flight in more familiar roles of mentoring and integrating these newest Airmen into the wing.

NCOs are needed especially with introducing and reinforcing the new military ideas trainees need to learn: customs and courtesies, drill and ceremonies, and attention to detail, along with wing-specific information needed to help them better support and contribute to the wing. Sergeant Munro added, "There's a lot of memory work to do, like chain-of-command and rank recognition." A good NCO can help keep this information deluge from becoming overwhelming.

Maj. Tanya Lee, officer in charge of personnel and readiness, runs student flight. "I'd love to have a sharp NCO...who can handle a high-maintenance



(Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir)

Master Sgt. Alan Munro provides verbal motivation and encouragement to members of the student flight.

job," Major Lee said.

Currently, three or four NCOs volunteer some time on drill weekends, including Sergeant Munro, Major Lee said. Ideally, each unit would provide a subject-matter expert to provide a briefing or training.

"This is a great opportunity to learn and practice your skills as a leader," Sergeant Munro said. Whether full-time or traditional, officer or enlisted, you can help.

"If you graduated BMT only six months ago, you know what it's like today. With 19 years' experience, for example, you might have much broader military knowledge, but your BMT memories might be a bit hazy."

Interested in volunteering? Contact Major Lee at tlee0526@gmail.com.

Ask a trainee...

Look, you're only new once. This column is in place to get to know those newest Guardsmen to join the 129th family. The responses are genuine, and have only been edited for space and to correct errors.

What do you think about student flight and the training provided by Sgt. Munro?



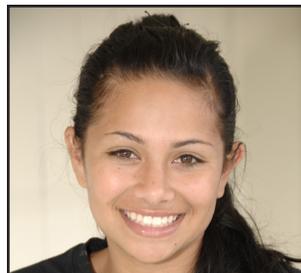
A1C William L. Helton
(HH-60 crew chief)

"This is just preparing us for success for passing BMT, and we can't have it any other way. He does a great job with student flight. Well done, Sgt. Munro!"



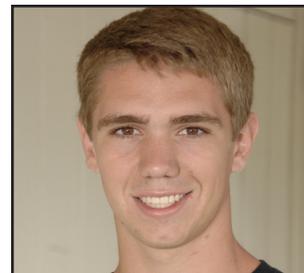
A1C Hai Huynh
(communications/nav)

"Everything about student flight is good. Master Sgt. Munro is a godsend. Although my knees won't stop rattling, I know he's making me a better man."



A1C Elizabeth Cunningham
(communications)

"Master Sgt. Munro has been incredibly... helpful. He gives great constructive criticism and teaches and prepares."



A1C Kevin MacNiell
(avianoics comm/nav)

"I am going to Basic Training this month and Master Sgt. Munro has given me a little taste of what is to come. Maj. Lee also does an amazing job."



The 129th Rescue Wing in the news abroad

Flight engineers: Critical component to combat search, rescue

*by Staff Sgt. Stacia Zachary
U.S. Air Forces Central
combat camera team*

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan (AFNS) -- If the actions of a combat search and rescue crew were viewed as a symphony, flight engineers would be the conductors. They are experts on the aircraft's weapons systems, know how to operate the hoist, serve as radio operators and operate the .50 mm-caliber machine gun. In many ways, it's man in harmony with machine.

As members of rescue operations in the Helmand province of Afghanistan, flight engineers are required to stay familiar with the assigned HH-60G Pave-Hawks in use there. They need to know the helicopter's strengths and weaknesses, its capabilities and the small differences that separate one helicopter from the next.

For the rest of the article, go to: <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123157520>.

Airmen rescue aids in 'Golden Hour' recovery of coalition forces

*by Staff Sgt. Stacia Zachary
U.S. Air Forces Central
combat camera team*

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan (AFNS) -- Racing against the clock, rescue flights launch into action to retrieve wounded servicemembers and other battlefield casualties. As the helicopters hover over a hostile area, the Guardian Angel team rushes out to retrieve the wounded - often risking their own lives "so that others may live."

The 129th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron here responds to emergency medical evacuation calls within Helmand province. The detachment covers the dual role of providing casualty evacuation and personnel recovery/combat search and rescue in the Helmand province. They support Regional Command South...

For the rest of the article, go to: <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123157388>.

Aerial gunners provide cover for lifesaving mission

*by Staff Sgt. Stacia Zachary
U.S. Air Forces Central
combat camera team*

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan (AFNS) -- Air National Guard combat search and rescue crews on HH-60G Pave Hawks fly throughout Afghanistan to provide airlift and medical care to servicemembers wounded on the battlefield.

More often than not, this requires them to fly into and operate in extremely hostile and precarious situations and locations, so aerial gunners are charged with protecting their combat search and rescue teammates and help bring everyone on the helicopter back safely.

"The HH-60s need to be able to land virtually on top of the (point of injury) to quickly recover the wounded," said Tech. Sgt. Scott Matthews, an aerial gunner with the 129th...

For the rest of the article, go to: <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123157152>.

MXG and LRS undergo LSEP inspection

*by Staff Sgt. Eric M. Hamilton, special
to the 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs
Office*

A contingent of Logistics Standardization Evaluation Program inspectors visited the 129th Rescue Wing July 8 to 13 to evaluate the maintenance group and the logistics readiness squadron.

Thirty-six inspectors looked at the maintenance group and the logistics readiness squadron's duties, programs, adherence to operating instructions and local procedures, said Capt. Mike Sampognaro, an officer with the 129th Maintenance Squadron and inspection action officer.

An LSEP inspection is accomplished to prepare units for a Unit Compliance Inspection, according to Lt. Col. Henderson, the 129th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander.

The 129th Rescue Wing's UCI is scheduled for February 2010.

"This is essentially a very in-depth Staff Assistance Visit, and even though no actual grading takes place, units will know exactly where they rated had the inspection actually carried a grade," said Colonel Henderson.

Preparing for the LSEP has been on-going for the past year and a half, and is "quite in depth," according to Captain Sampognaro.

"In most cases, documentation proved to be the key to success or failure," said Maj. Al Yeh, 129th Logistics Readiness Squadron logistics manager. "As the saying goes, 'you've got to dot all your i's and cross all your t's'...I can vouch that the inspectors will get this detail-oriented. Ultimately, the key to success is that all the wing's units must cooperate with one another to fix compliance issues that cross over between two or more units."

Stay tuned for more information regarding preparation efforts for February's UCI.



Portrait of a Professional -- Senior Airman Darius Abasta, 129th CEF

What is your favorite memory in the AF?

Being TDY to Spangdahlem AB, Germany in Feb. 2003 and visiting other European countries (France, Belgium, and Netherlands).

What motivated you to enlist in the AF?

After completing six years active duty in the Navy, I wanted to learn what the Air Force had to offer.

How has being an Airman changed your outlook on life?

It has given me a more positive attitude.

What's the most important lesson you've learned in the military?

Try to do something the right way the first time.

If you could deploy anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Any place in Europe.

If you could choose any AF job, which would it be?

My current AFSC, Electrical Power Production, because I like working on generators.

Where did you grow up?

San Jose

What is your job in the civilian world?

Full-time Power Pro technician with CE.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

I like singing karaoke at family parties.

What are your hobbies?

Buying and collecting anything electronic, such as digital cameras, video recorders, MP3's and iPod's, video games and consoles.

Portrait of a Professional is a monthly profile of an outstanding Staff Sgt. and below. Nominations are routed through the squadron and group commanders.

(Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino)

PJs reconnect, train with Canadian counterparts

by Capt. Alyson Teeter, 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Seven members from the 129th Rescue Wing, including a combat rescue officer, four pararescuemen and two parachute riggers, trained with the 442nd Transport and Rescue Squadron on Vancouver Island in Comox, British Columbia, June 21 to 27.

"The goal of the trip was to connect and reestablish ties with the Canadian rescue forces," said Capt. Damon Foss, a combat rescue officer from the 131st Rescue Squadron and project officer for the trip. "In the past we would participate in search and rescue exercises with the Canadians, but after 9/11, the joint training ceased because of our high operations tempo."

The 129th PJs linked up with the 442nd Transport and Rescue Squadron, a Royal Canadian Air Force rescue unit based out of Comox. The squadron operates a CC-115 Buffalo fixed wing aircraft and CH-149 Cormorant helicopter - both fit for SAR missions in rugged terrain.

According to Captain Foss, the Canadian search and rescue technicians, or SAR Techs, are similar to Air Force pararescuemen, but are conventional rescue professionals - they do not perform combat search and rescue missions.

The 129th contingent and the 442nd had planned a robust exercise but the training events were scaled back due to real world rescue missions and inclement weather, Captain Foss said. But the training was still worthwhile as the rugged outdoors

of British Columbia provided the ultimate location for high-angle mountain climbing and swift water rescue training.

For the high-angle rescue training, the group traveled to nearby Lake Comox where there's a 2,000 feet, multi-pitch ridge called "Devil's Ladder." This was ideal for technical rescue training, which involved using ropes and pulley systems.

"It was the perfect place to train because the location was close to the 442nd, and all of the components needed for a high-angle scenario were available," said 129th pararescueman, Tech. Sgt. Sean Kirsch. "Devil's Ladder was also high enough to feel like a real-world rescue situation."

The idyllic training conditions coupled with the 442nd's extensive experience provided valuable training tips that can't be picked up in the classroom at formal training schools.

"In this type of environment you can glean little tricks while watching how people tackle problems. It gives you a different perspective," Capt. Foss said.

After two days of high-angle rescue training, the PJs and SAR Techs moved on to swift water rescue training. Working out of the Puntledge River, east of Lake Comox, they used snag lines and rafts to simulate complex rescue scenarios.

Overall, the PJs anticipate that the exchanges will become a regular occurrence. Not only do the 129th Airmen gain valuable training, but the Canadians do as well. "The SAR tech program is evolving, so we're able to offer some advice on what we've learned throughout the years," Captain Foss said.

News & Notes

Welcome new 129th members!

Master Sgt. Christine Wood
 Staff Sgt. Owen Flores
 Staff Sgt. Latausha Freeman
 Staff Sgt. Jimmy Howard
 Staff Sgt. Brock McNabb
 Senior Airman Alan Bowers
 Airman 1st Class Jason Arcilla
 Airman 1st Class Aaron Foote
 Airman 1st Class Joseph Herryty
 Airman 1st Class Jonathan Li
 Airman 1st Class Destiny Nowlin
 Airman 1st Class Ashley Sturgis

The following members were recently promoted to their current rank. Congratulations!

Tech. Sgt. Angela Cobra
 Tech. Sgt. Clay Franklin
 Tech. Sgt. Alfonso Martinez
 Staff Sgt. Jennifer Parks
 Senior Airman Jeffrey MacNeill
 Staff. Sgt. Jorge Cruz

The following members have retired, separated, or transferred to another unit. We wish them well and thank them for their service.

Lt. Col. Mark Glatt
 Lt. Col. Timothy Kelley
 Capt. Brian Fair
 2nd Lt. Brian Cooney
 Master Sgt. Garry Delrosario
 Master Sgt. Paul Garcia
 Master Sgt. Jill Ransom
 Senior Airman Jonathan Plambeck
 Airman 1st Class Christina Alvarez

2009 Moffett Field Commissary Sidewalk and Case Lot Sales

Aug. 14-16 - Sidewalk
 Sept. 4-6 - Case Lot
 Oct. 2-4 - Sidewalk & Seafood
 Nov. 6-8 - Sidewalk & Seafood
 Dec. 4-6 - Sidewalk

The 129th is on the Web!

YouTube: www.youtube.com/129thRescueWing
 Twitter: www.twitter.com/129RQW
 Delicious: www.delicious.com/129RQWPA

FOR THE LATEST NEWS:



..... WWW.129RQW.ANG.AF.MIL

Event Calendar

Oct. 3: Family Picnic
 Nov. 7: Wing awards ceremony in service dress
 Jan. 16: OAY Banquet

Volunteer as a Victim Advocate

Victim Advocates provide essential support, liaison services and care to a sexual assault victim. They are military personnel selected by the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator and who have completed a 40-hour training course. Victim Advocates are volunteers who must possess the maturity and experience to assist in very sensitive situations.

Responsibilities include:

- * Crisis intervention, referral and on-going, non-professional support
- * Providing information on available options and resources to assist the victim
- * Services will continue until the victim states support is no longer needed
- * May accompany the victim, at the victim's request, during investigative interviews and medical examinations
- * Does NOT provide counseling or other professional services

For more information on becoming a Victim Advocate, please contact Capt. Alyson Teeter at 603-9152.

Home Community Child Care

The Home Community Care Program is a free UTA child care service open to military members who participate in a UTA weekend. For more information and access to the required forms, please go to the 129th Services CoP on the Air Force Portal, or call Services at 603-9291.

Theater clearance required for travel to USSOUTHCOM AOR

The U.S. Southern Command requires that all DoD military and civilian personnel traveling on leave in the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility submit a theater clearance request to USSOUTHCOM for leave travel. This requirement does not pertain to travel on cruises.

For more info., see the Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide at <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm> before planning any leave to countries in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

The USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility includes: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad, Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The requirement for Theater Clearance does not pertain to Mexico and the Bahamas, nor does it apply to Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, which are U.S. territories.

The theater clearance request is to be entered in the Automated Personnel and Aircraft Clearance System 30 days prior to travel. You can log onto the APACS website at <https://apacs.dtic.mil> to create a personal account, and then create and submit a clearance request. This is for personal leave only. Please contact the USSOUTHCOM Force Tracking Office at 305-437-3713, 3714, 3909 or DSN 567, with questions on this policy.

Religious Services Schedule

Services take place every Sunday morning of UTA drill weekend in Building 650.
 Catholic Mass: 10:15-10:45
 Non-denominational services: 11:00 -11:30



News & Notes, continued

Moffett Field Museum free for military and dependents

The museum is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and is located in Building 126 next to Hangar One. Admission is free for military and accompanied dependents. To learn more, go to www.moffettfieldmuseum.org or call 650-964-4024.

2009 UTA Schedule

Aug. 1-2
Sept. 12-13
Oct. 3-4
Nov. 7-8
Dec. 5-6

Perks: a new section

Although everyone has different reasons for joining the Guard and staying in, it's nice to know about opportunities that come with Guard service. There are the most well-known fringe benefits that come as part of military service, like space available travel (Space-A) or tuition assistance.

However, there are also lots of local and not-so-well known benefits. For that reason, "Perks" is a new section created for wing members to share their experiences with benefits that came to them because they were in the Guard. The success of this section will stem directly from your feedback.

So what are we looking for here? You be the judge—if it's close, send it. For example, "I heard that Chevy's restaurants are offering 50% off their regular lunch menu prices for military personnel. Is this true?"

If there's any question about the value or legitimacy of a perk, the public affairs staff has services to fall back on. Services has agreed to help us put out the straight skinny on what the deal is.

To submit your "Perk," fill out a feedback form at www.129rqw.af.mil/main/contactus.asp.



Carry on military tradition by joining honor guard

by Staff Sgt. Eric M. Hamilton, special to the 129th RQW Public Affairs Office

Bringing the military "snap" and professionalism to most solemn, patriotic moments, the honor guard provides a challenge that isn't for everyone.

"But if you're high-speed and value prestige and esprit-de-corps, we're looking for you," said Tech. Sgt. Rachel M. Velasco, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 129th Rescue Wing's honor guard.

Honor guards details typically include posting the colors at sporting events and military celebrations, flag-folding at retirement ceremonies and veterans' funerals, and appearing at a variety of other appropriate occasions.

Sergeant Velasco said that in the three years she's been serving

in the honor guard, she's gotten a lot of opportunities to meet a variety of people, such as the time she was part of the honor



guard serving at an Outstanding Airman of the Year banquet in St. Louis. "It was cool to hobnob with all the generals," she said. It also means a lot to her to render honors for veterans' funerals.

"A lot of people think they don't have time for it," Sergeant Velasco said. "But you don't have to volunteer for every single detail we have."

She added that she's managed to get her preparation time down to "about an hour" before starting a detail.

In fact, that's the primary reason that the honor guard is looking for members. With only four members, the honor guard is currently at the minimum size it can operate at. Should even one member call in sick, the honor guard is unable to complete

the mission. Ideally, the honor guard would consist of eight to ten trained Airmen.

With more members come more opportunities to serve. Sergeant Velasco said that the goal is to orient details to the regions in which members live, thus cutting down on travel time. Details typically cover an area from Los Altos to San Jose.

If you're a detail-oriented individual interested in the honor guard, Sergeant Velasco said to fill out an application form, have your supervisor and commander sign it, and forward it to her. She added that there is no minimum rank for honor guard, but you should complete your 5-level CDCs first.

If approved for the program, you'll go to Travis Air Force Base for a 5-day training program, where you'll receive your honor guard uniform.

There are significant benefits for honor guard members: special recognition, additional pay, travel opportunities and awards. Sergeant Velasco added that the best reasons for being in the honor guard are personal pride and a desire to preserve the military traditions of honor and respect.



Afghanistan deployers receive heroes' welcome

Nearly 30 Airmen returned here July 9 from a two-month deployment to Afghanistan. Here to welcome them were family, friends, co-workers and the Patriot Guard Riders.

(Photos by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino)

129th RQW/PA
MOFFETT FAF, CA 94035

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
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