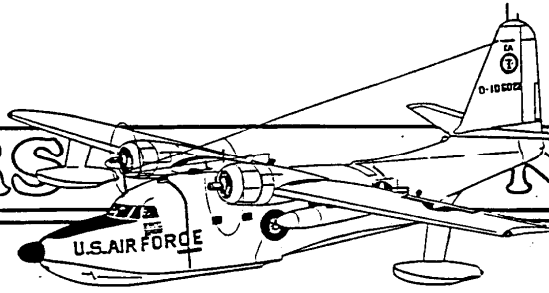


OL TIMERS' NOOZZE



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December 2001

Lt Col Koenig Retires

Lt Col Robert Koenig has retired! After 38 years, he has finally had enough and decided to call it a career.

Bob is only one of at least four Koenigs who are or have been associated with the 129th. His father, Col Charles W. Koenig, was the second commander of the 129th from 1958 through 1973. Brother Bill (Lt Col Charles W. Koenig, Jr.) served with the 129th from 1965 through 1991. But Bob beats them both for time served with the Wing - from 1963 through 2001. That comes out to 38 years with this organization!

However, his retirement does not leave the Wing without any Koenigs. Lt Col Koenig's lovely wife, Cpt Kimberly Koenig, who joined the unit in 1981, is still with the 129th RQW.

A celebratory dinner was held at the Wyndam Hotel, and the banquet hall was filled with well-wishers, friends, family, and co-workers.

Good luck, Bob, and have fun playing with your cars!

The Prez Sez

The President's Column

CMS Ken Moore (Ret.)

As the year draws to a close, it is time for all of us to reflect on the events of this past year.

The Association membership now stands at 268, with 22 new members during 2001. This is a fantastic rate of growth, and we welcome all the new members. Please continue to encourage all past and present members of the Wing to join our ranks.

The Wing had a successful deployment to support the North/South no-fly zone. We are glad they are all back safely at home.

The Association now has its own official web site - thanks to the hard work of Lt Col Michael Martini. Please be sure to "surfing" and take a look at the site. You will find the latest newsletter, the minutes from the Board of Directors meetings, and links to other military sites. Please note this is an independent site - we have registered the domain name. So log on and go directly to:

www.129AHA.org

As the current war on terrorism progresses, we face the possibilities of more deployments, and many of our active duty, guard, and reserve counterparts are being deployed in support of this latest conflict. Please keep these young men and women and their families in your thoughts and prayers - especially in this holiday season. Hopefully, they will all be home again safe and sound before too many months pass.

The Board of Directors and I wish you all the best for a happy and safe holiday.

Ken

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129th Rescue Wing Alumni Association

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www.129AHA.org

Welcome to the newly established domain of the 129th Alumni and Heritage Association!

This site has all the information about the 129th AHA, including our purpose, membership requirements (you can even download a membership application!), meeting schedules, the phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the Board of Directors. The most recent edition of the newsletter can be found there, as can the minutes from the Board Meetings. Links have been established to the Wing website, as well as other military organizations.

The "Remember When" and "Profiles" pages are still under construction. The Profiles page will initially have biographies and photos of the original members of the unit. Col Eugene Ignatow and Col Charles Koenig are slated to be the first on this page. If you would like to contribute a biography and photos for this page, please let us know. As time (and information) become available, we will begin to include profiles of recent and current members.

The Remember When page will be a bulletin board type area where stories, inquiries, and requests for information can be posted. This could become a way to find a long-lost buddy or locate/exchange some unit memorabilia you are interested in.

Check out the site, and let Lt Col Martini - the webmaster - and the Board know what you think. Happy Surfing!

Door Guard Assistance

Your Help Is Needed

CMS Liliana Ramos

The 129th Rescue Wing is currently in Force Protection Bravo with added precautions. An additional tasking, since September 11, has been answering the door and checking ID cards. If you would like to help the Wing by volunteering your time to cover some of the buildings, the members would be appreciative. This would effectively allocate personnel to mission essential jobs; as well as accomplish these tasks in a timely manner. It would also allow our customers to have better service. There have been times at the headquarters where customers have had to ring the doorbell a couple of times before someone heard it and answered the door. So if you have time to help with the doors or anything else to assist the mission, please contact CMSgt Liliana Ramos at 650-603-9403.

129th Members on Duty

The War Against Terror

The 129th Rescue Wing is actively involved in the War Against Terror. We currently have approximately 60 unit members activated for duty in support of Active Air Force missions. Several members are providing armed security at San Jose International Airport. They are among 800 personnel deployed statewide since October 5 for airport security. Exact numbers and missions of those deployed have not been provided for security reasons.



'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS,
HE LIVED ALL ALONE,
IN A ONE BEDROOM HOUSE MADE OF
PLASTER AND STONE.

I HAD COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY
WITH PRESENTS TO GIVE,
AND TO SEE JUST WHO
IN THIS HOME DID LIVE.

I LOOKED ALL ABOUT,
A STRANGE SIGHT I DID SEE,
NO TINSEL, NO PRESENTS,
NOT EVEN A TREE.

NO STOCKING BY MANTLE,
JUST BOOTS FILLED WITH SAND,
ON THE WALL HUNG PICTURES
OF FAR DISTANT LANDS.

WITH MEDALS AND BADGES,
AWARDS OF ALL KINDS,
A SOBER THOUGHT
CAME THROUGH MY MIND.

FOR THIS HOUSE WAS DIFFERENT,
IT WAS DARK AND DREARY,
I FOUND THE HOME OF A SOLDIER,
ONCE I COULD SEE CLEARLY.

THE SOLDIER LAY SLEEPING,
SILENT, ALONE,
CURLLED UP ON THE FLOOR
IN THIS ONE BEDROOM HOME.

THE FACE WAS SO GENTLE,
THE ROOM IN SUCH DISORDER,
NOT HOW I PICTURED
A UNITED STATES SOLDIER.

WAS THIS THE HERO
OF WHOM I'D JUST READ?
CURLLED UP ON A PONCHO,
THE FLOOR FOR A BED?

I REALIZED THE FAMILIES
THAT I SAW THIS NIGHT,
OWED THEIR LIVES TO THESE SOLDIERS
WHO WERE WILLING TO FIGHT.

SOON ROUND THE WORLD,
THE CHILDREN WOULD PLAY,
AND GROWNUPS WOULD CELEBRATE
A BRIGHT CHRISTMAS DAY.

THEY ALL ENJOYED FREEDOM
EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR,
BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIERS,
LIKE THE ONE LYING HERE.

I COULDN'T HELP WONDER
HOW MANY LAY ALONE,
ON A COLD CHRISTMAS EVE
IN A LAND FAR FROM HOME.

THE VERY THOUGHT
BROUGHT A TEAR TO MY EYE,
I DROPPED TO MY KNEES
AND STARTED TO CRY.

THE SOLDIER AWAKENED
AND I HEARD A ROUGH VOICE,
"SANTA DON'T CRY,
THIS LIFE IS MY CHOICE;

I FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,
I DON'T ASK FOR MORE,
MY LIFE IS MY GOD,
MY COUNTRY, MY CORPS."

THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER
AND DRIFTED TO SLEEP,
I COULDN'T CONTROL IT,
I CONTINUED TO WEEP.

I KEPT WATCH FOR HOURS,
SO SILENT AND STILL
AND WE BOTH SHIVERED
FROM THE COLD NIGHT'S CHILL.

I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE
ON THAT COLD, DARK, NIGHT,
THIS GUARDIAN OF HONOR
SO WILLING TO FIGHT.

THEN THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER,
WITH A VOICE SOFT AND PURE,
WHISPERED, "CARRY ON SANTA,
IT'S CHRISTMAS DAY, ALL IS SECURE."

ONE LOOK AT MY WATCH,
AND I KNEW HE WAS RIGHT.
"MERRY CHRISTMAS MY FRIEND,
AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT."

GOD BLESS ALL OF OUR SOLDIERS,
AIRMEN, AND SAILORS THIS
HOLIDAY SEASON.



Col Eugene J. Ignatow

Colonel Eugene J. Ignatow (CA Ret) passed away on October 14, 2001, at age 80. Gene's military career spanned 4 decades, starting with Army basic training in La Junta, Colorado in January 1941. During the war he saw combat in Germany with the 78th Division. He was discharged as a Master Sergeant in October 1945. He joined the 159th Infantry Regiment of the California Army National Guard as a Warrant Officer in 1949 and served in that capacity until 1950, when he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. In June 1951, he joined the California Air National Guard, starting with the 144th Air Base Group, then the 129th Air Resupply and Communications Group, and then back to the 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno. He remained in the 144th until he transferred to the Air Force Reserve in 1972 where he served as an IMA until his retirement in July 1978. Gene was the founder and president of Gene's Office Supply, Inc. located in Hayward. His younger son, Steven, is now running the business. Gene's older son, Bill, is a Colonel at the Office of the Adjutant General, serving as the Director of International Affairs. Gene leaves his wife of 54 years, Merian. A private military service was held at the San Joaquin National Cemetery.

Final Flyby

In Memoriam

We bid farewell to two of our members who have departed on their final journey.

Col Eugene Ignatow

Col Herman Vandever



If you do not have inter-net access, contact:

Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. (ret)
6718 Zerillo Drive
Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

(209) 869-2879

New to the Gang

Our Newest Members

TSgt Pat O'Brien
Cpt Gerald Schreve

Welcome!

Do you know someone who has been affiliated with the 129th RQW or its predecessor organizations - and is not a member of the Association? Let's get them signed up!

129th AHA Jackets Available

Customized with your name and rank!

After much searching we have found a new source of MembersOnly jackets - so we are once again taking orders for 129th AHA jackets. Order forms will be available at the Old Timers Luncheon.

Want to own a really distinctive jacket to show your affiliation with the 129th AHA? Order your navy blue, MembersOnly, summer-weight poplin jacket today. The left breast has the current wing patch and the original troop carrier group patch (now worn by the Rescue Squadron), with 129 AHA embroidered below. The right breast sports the Air Force Patch with your name embroidered below. Jackets are available for \$70 (\$35 deposit per jacket required).

Order your jacket from Don Delucchi at:

(925) 689-2683
or online at Nonononi@aol.com

Have you moved? Know a former member of the 129th who isn't a member yet?

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / CHANGE OF INFORMATION FORM 2002 Dues \$10.00

NAME: _____ SPOUSE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP+4: _____ + _____

TELEPHONE: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

RANK: _____ 129TH SERVICE DATES FROM: _____ TO _____

Please complete the above information and mail to:
129th Alumni & Heritage Association
c/o Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. (ret)
6718 Zerillo Dr.
Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

**If your personal information has changed,
PLEASE USE THIS FORM AND NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY!!**

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION
AND
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

CCMS Ken Moore – (510) 656-1529 – kande@pacbell.net

VICE PRESIDENT

Ltc Jesse Craddock – (650) 968-0446 – B25jay@aol.com

SECRETARY - TREASURER

Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. – (209) 869-2879
J-L.RUPPEL@worldnet.att.net

DIRECTORS

CCMS Edward L. Boddington – (209) 536-1777

Ltc Cindy Kepple – (408) 241-2670

Cindy_kepple@yahoo.com

SMS Donald Delucchi – (925) 689-2683

Nonononi@aol.com

Col Tommy Williams – (650) 603-9129

Tommy.Williams@camoff.ang.af.mil

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Lynda Taft Fawcett – (916) 349-1019

LTFWCETT@hotmail.com

129th Alumni & Heritage Assn.
C/O Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. (Ret)
6718 Zerillo Drive
Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Are You Missing in Action?

Dead Letter Department

Have you moved recently - or not so recently? Do we have your correct mail and e-mail addresses & phone number? Please let us know when you move.

The newsletter is mailed out with a request for address correction. The post office does not forward the newsletter to you. They return it to us - and charge us 34¢. Then we update your file, put your newsletter in an envelope, put a 34¢ stamp on the packet, and mail it out to you. Total additional cost to the association is nearly \$1.00 per returned newsletter.

Please take a moment to remember the 129th AHA when you notify your correspondents of your new address. A member information form is included in every issue.

Col. John L. Ruppel, Jr. (Ret.)
6718 Zerillo Drive
Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

E-mail: J-L.RUPPEL@WORLDNET.ATT.NET

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Happy Holidays!

