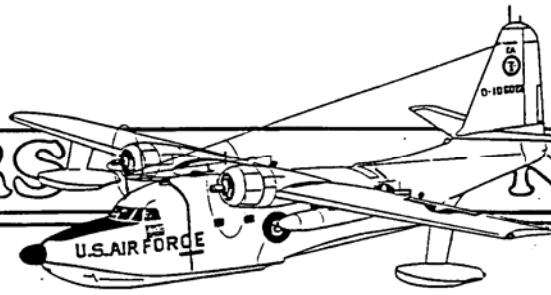


# OL TIMERS NOOZZE



Volume 9, Issue 4

December 2005

## 2006 UTA Schedule

No drill in January

9-12 February Phase II ORE (4 Days)

4-5 March

1-2 April

4-7 May Phase II ORE (4 Days)

3-4 June

No drill in July

5-6 August

9-10 September

12-15 October Phase II ORE (4 Days)

4-5 November

30 November - 3 December Phase II ORI (4 Days)

All 129<sup>th</sup> RQW members will be on military status during any ORE or ORI. Technicians are authorized Military Leave (com LM), Annual Leave (code LA), Comp Time Taken (code CT), or Leave Without Pay (code KA) to maintain military status for ORE's and ORI's.

## Board Elections - Officers

*March 2006*

An election for the three Board Corporation Officers - President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer - is scheduled for 2006. The AHA Corporation Bylaws proscribes that Officers are elected in even number years (2006) and Directors are elected in odd number years (2007).

The AHA President, Jay Craddock, appointed an Election Committee composed of Director Steve James; the Secretary-Treasurer, John Ruppel; and association member at large, LTC Jim Rommelfanger. The committee will be responsible for gathering nominations, distributing, collecting, and counting the ballots. The newly elected Officers will be announced at the Association's annual meeting, the Annual Old Timers Lunch, scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2006, at the Castro Valley Loyal Order of Moose Hall, 20835 Rutledge Road, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

Any AHA member in good standing may serve as an Officer. Individuals interested in serving as an Officer should complete the form included in this issue. Return the completed form (or a reasonable facsimile) no later than January 20, 2006, to:

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

Nominations must be received by January 20, 2006, to be valid. All nominations will be included on the ballot. Ballots, a self-addressed stamped postcard, will be mailed to all members, with information regarding the Old Timers Luncheon, no later than February 10, 2006. There is no write-in provision. Ballots must be returned no later than March 17, 2006, to be valid. The nominees with the highest number of votes for each office will be declared Officers, and will be announced and begin their two-year term at the Old Timers Luncheon

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## The Prez Sez

### *The President's Column*

LTC Jesse Craddock (Ret.)

With Thanksgiving concluded, we now look forward to the holiday season. We are approaching the end of another year. The year 2005 marks the 129<sup>th</sup>'s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Wing is publishing a special Rescue West to commemorate the date. The Association is considering developing a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative coin.

Sunday, November 3, the Wing celebrated Troop Appreciation Day, welcoming home Wing personnel who participated in the AEF deployment.

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo and MG William Wade, the new TAG, honored the Wing's AEF and Katrina service. The Wing was credited with 21 AEF combat saves and an additional 210 saves for Katrina raising the credited saves to 550.

The September Newsletter contained a report on the Association's deployment bag project. Lynda Fawcett, at the Wing's request, assembled an additional eighty bags. The Association distributed 200 bags to Wing personnel participating in the AEF and Katrina rescue operation. Board members attending the Troop Appreciation event received numerous appreciative statements from individual deployed Wing members.

We have lost two old friends whose service dates back to Hayward and the original 144<sup>th</sup>. Joe Rodricks and Board Director Don Delucchi have left us. Joe was a comrade and personal friend who will be missed, but not forgotten. Don was part of the original 129<sup>th</sup> AHA organizing committee and an original Association Director. He organized the mercantile store, procured the items offered to the membership, and made the Travis trek to have the Association jackets embroidered. Don's support, advice, and dedication were integral to the Association's growth. Don was a friend, colleague, and comrade who will be missed. The mercantile store will, as a tribute to Don, continue to be known as "Dondi's Mercantile Store". The Newsletter contains memorial pieces on Joe and Don.

SMSgt Paul Wilkins, a veteran Wing supply member, passed away after a long illness. The Newsletter contains a memorial.

### ***The Prez Sez - continued***

The Board selected Lt Col Steve James to fill the vacant Board Director's seat. Steve served as the 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron Commander prior to retiring. He provided the Newsletter an introductory biography.

The Association will conduct a March Officers' election. The Newsletter contains election procedures information and a nomination form. The Association utilizes a self-nominating procedure. All nominees' names will appear on the ballot. This is your opportunity to participate in the Association's management.

We are already planning our annual Old Timers Luncheon which is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2006. The next Newsletter will have full details.

I want to wish all Members a Happy Holiday Season and thank you for your support in 2005.

*Jay*

## MXS Change of Command



*Lt. Col. Cindy Kepple turns over the 129th Maintenance Squadron command flag to Master Sgt. Christopher Underwood, who passed it on to the new Commander, Maj. Charles Pratt, at the MXS Change of Command ceremony in the hangar Nov. 6. Lt. Col. Kepple leaves the 129th after 19 years of distinguished service in a variety of posts. Maj. Pratt comes to us from the 144th Fighter Wing at Fresno. Lt. Col. Jerry Gallmeister, Maintenance Group Commander, observes the ceremony.*

*Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Larson, 129th Communications Flight*

Have some good ideas about things the 129<sup>th</sup> AHA should do?  
Want to make changes in the way things are done?  
Want to be more involved in the day-to-day operations of the  
AHA?

Then nominate yourself to become an Officer of the Association!  
Any member in good standing (that means your dues are paid) can  
run for and be elected to the Board of Directors. Officers are  
elected in even years (2006). Directors at large are elected in odd  
years (2007).

**Now is your chance!**  
**Let your voice be heard!**  
**Choose to become involved!**

## NOMINATION FOR CORPORATION OFFICER

Yes! I want to be more involved in the 129<sup>th</sup> AHA!  
Place my name in nomination for Corporation Officer.

\_\_\_\_ President      \_\_\_\_ Vice President      \_\_\_\_ Secretary-Treasurer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Service in 129<sup>th</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Must be received no later than January 20, 2006. Mail to:

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

## SMSgt Paul F. Wilkins

*08 December 1948 – 08 November 2005*

Paul Frederick Wilkins, a Fremont resident for 35 years, died November 8, 2005, at his home. He was 56.

Born December 8, 1948, in Alameda, Paul joined the Air Force in 1971, and after training at Lackland and Lowry, he and wife Becky were sent to Minot, North Dakota where the saying was that "only the best go north." They returned to California in 1972, where Paul left active duty for the California Air National Guard stationed in Hayward. He joined them as a civil servant in 1974. In 1984 he became an AGR, and remained in that status until his death. Paul had a distinguished career with the Guard and achieved the rank of Senior Master Sergeant in the supply field. He was honored with a 21-gun salute at the time of burial.

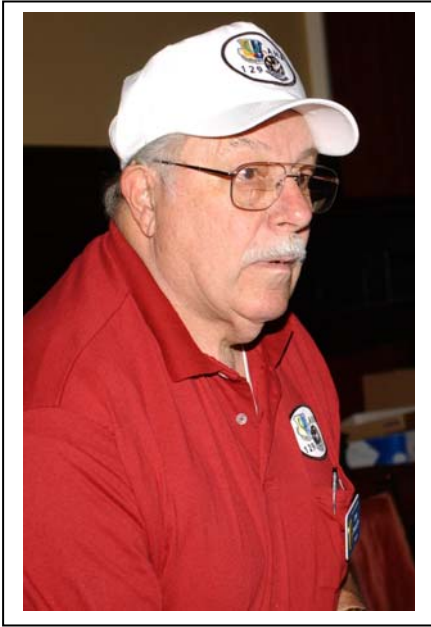
Paul enjoyed bowling for the ANG and bike riding at Harbor Bay Isle, but his real love was watching baseball games and, later, San Jose Sharks hockey games. He followed the Giants from the time they came to the Bay Area in 1958 and attended all A's World Series games. He was in the stadium the night of the Loma Prieta earthquake.

Paul visited many ballparks, including Fenway Park and Wrigley Field, but his biggest thrill was going to the Baseball Hall of Fame this past May. He and Becky had many wonderful trips to such places as Hawaii, Alaska, Vancouver, a snowy visit to the Grand Canyon, and many enjoyable visits to Portland and the Oregon coast.

Paul was truly an old-fashioned gentleman who opened doors and gave up his seat for others. He was a wonderful host and made countless guests comfortable in his home. His kindness will be missed by friends, acquaintances, coworkers, and anyone lucky enough to come near him.

Paul is survived by Becky, his wife of 35 years; his daughter, Kareasa, of San Francisco; and his sister, Linda Bramante, of Alameda.





## SMSgt Don Delucchi

*By Col William E. Ignatow (Ret)*

On October 9, 2005, the Guard Family said goodbye to one of its most supportive members. SMSgt Don Delucchi (Ret) fought a long, hard battle with cancer, never losing his spirit, despite many setbacks. He leaves his wife Marg, son Larry, and daughter Donna.

I first met Don in the spring of 1972. I was a traditional Guardsman and Don was the Training Technician at the 129<sup>th</sup>. It turned out that we shared a common interest in duck hunting. That fall we went on our first duck hunt together at his Father-in-law's "private club" in Los Banos. While I was truly honored and excited about the prospects of hunting on a private club, I was also nervous. Always having been a "refuge duck hunter", this amounted to taking

the blue collar beer drinker to the stock broker's private club for lunch. Although we only shot one duck and that day, and the private club could be more adequately described as a flooded cow field with a shack on it, this first hunt spawned a friendship that would find Don and me in a duck blind together, each weekend, all winter, for the next 32 years. Don loved to hunt, whether it was ducks, doves, or pheasants. Whenever I would call to ask if he was interested, all he wanted to know was where we would meet.

Over the years, Don and I had many disagreements, but none when we were hunting. They were mostly about my inability to properly maintain AF Form 623s on the Airmen that I was responsible for (this of course was "Properly - According to Delucchi"....) All those who were in the 129<sup>th</sup> back then know what I mean. Trying to explain to Don that I was confident that those Airmen had the requisite skills necessary to perform certain tasks meant nothing if I couldn't show that it was clearly documented in the AF 623. My argument that I was too busy training to have to stop and write it all down never did go over very well, and anyone who ever got into a loud conversation with Don would quickly realize they were woefully out-gunned (but back then, I was dumb enough to try...).

Then there were the dogs. Don's love, next to his wonderful wife Marg, was his dogs - Mingo, Duke and Rose. We hunted with all of them over the years. They were wonderful hunting dogs. Wonderful hunting dogs, to those that don't know, means they are great hunters in the field, but at home are just a little more obnoxious than the sounds your not so favorite Uncle makes when he falls asleep in the easy chair after Thanksgiving dinner. But you still find some way to love them, even when their feed bill exceeds your whole family's in the middle of the summer. I gave Don his current dog, Rose, who was with Don at the end, and I'm sure is being a comfort to Marg now. I don't know how many pictures Marg has sent me over the years of Rose curled up in Don's lap, both sound asleep.

Don was sometimes critical of how the Guard was being run, as we all are from time to time. But Don never let his critical views get in the way of his passion for staying involved with the 129<sup>th</sup>. The positions he has had over the years with the AHA were time consuming and at times frustrating, but Don always believed that the best way to make things better was not to talk about it, but to get involved and do something. Don was a doer.

Not a week goes by where I don't catch myself half way through the telephone dialing sequence, calling my friend Don. It's winter now and it just doesn't feel right, not sitting in a duck blind next to my friend. Don and I shared a lot of stories and secrets over the years, and we were good about not ever revealing these to others. But as I finish this, I will let one out. I know my friend, that even in Heaven, you still can't hit a dove flying from right to left. We have said goodbye to a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and friend.



## Col Joseph W. Rodricks

Col Joseph W. Rodricks has recently passed away. Col Rodricks served in the Air National Guard for over 20 years. He was the DCM and flew C-47s out of Fresno. He transferred to the 349<sup>th</sup> Air Reserve Wing at Hamilton Air Force base prior to retiring.

Joe was a supervisor at the Alameda Naval Air Station for over 30 years.

Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Virginia. His son, Rion, lives in Idaho.

The picture of Col Rodricks was taken in Boise, Idaho, sometime in 1953.



Senior Airman James Sanderson  
129<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron

## 129<sup>th</sup> RQW

2005

### Outstanding Airmen of the Year



Tech Sergeant Ericka Anderson  
129<sup>th</sup> Medical Group

### OAY Banquet and Awards in Fresno

This year's Outstanding Airman of the Year awards banquet will be hosted by the 144th Fighter Wing on Saturday, Jan. 21 in Fresno. This is the biggest and best gathering of the year for the California Air National Guard. It's a fun time and a chance to meet other Airmen from around the state. Talk to your 1st Sgt. or Chief for tickets and details. Come and support the 129th, and show pride and enthusiasm in our wing!



Senior Master Sergeant Nora Lemmon  
561<sup>st</sup> Air Force Band



Master Sergeant Byron Yerzy  
561<sup>st</sup> Air Force Band

## Lt Col Steven L. James

*The Newest Member of the Board*



Steven James is co-founder and directs the operations and marketing efforts for Background Profiles. Steven's background in information services began in 1983 while

joining Chilton Corporation in their mortgage credit reporting division. Upon Chilton's acquisition by TRW in 1989, Steven held the position of Area General Manager in their Denver based central processing center, overseeing sales, marketing and operations for the Southwest region. He accepted the role of Regional Sales Manager for TRW Real Estate Loan Services, directing multiple product sales for the Northwest region. In 1990, Steven left TRW-RELS to co-found Lenders Information Systems (now Background Profiles) where he directs the operations, quality control and finance departments. Steven holds a BS in Business Management from the University of Nebraska, Kearney, and is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Air Command and Staff College. He was a command pilot and squadron commander for the 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron, Moffett Federal Airfield, CA., and held numerous command and staff positions in both the U.S. Army and U.S. A.F. through out his military career. He retired in October 2000 as a Lt. Colonel with the U.S.A.F. (CA ANG).

### **CERTIFICATE & RATINGS HELD:**

- Commercial Pilot
  1. Rotorcraft – Helicopter
  2. Instrument – Helicopter

### **U.S. Air Force (CA ANG)**

- Commander, 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron 1997 – 2000
- Director of Operations, 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron 1995 – 1997
- Flight Commander HH-60 Section, 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron 1993 – 1995

### **U.S. Army (Most current ARNG)**

- Staff Officer, 3/140<sup>th</sup> Avn Bn, Lathrop, CA (CH-47 Chinook Helicopter)
- Commander, C Co, 2/135<sup>th</sup> Avn, Aurora, CO (AH-1 Attack Helicopter)

### **AERONAUTICAL RATINGS:**

- USAF Command Pilot 28 Jan 98
- USAF Senior Pilot 30 Apr 91
- US Army Pilot in Command 10 Jun 85
- Pilot 28 Jan 83

## Group and Squadron Commanders

*Do you know your chain of command?*

There have been many changes in the wing structure and leadership. Here are the Group and Squadron Commanders. Do you know your chain of command?

<b>Ops Group CC:</b>	Col. Mark Sheehy
<b>Air Operations Officer:</b>	Lt. Col. Steve Spillane
<b>129th Ops CC:</b>	Maj. Tom Roberts
<b>130th Ops CC:</b>	Lt. Col. John O'Neill
<b>131st Ops CC:</b>	Capt. Jeff Borg
<b>Maintenance Group CC:</b>	Lt. Col. Gerry Gallmeister
<b>Maintenance CC:</b>	Maj. Charles Pratt
<b>AMXS CC:</b>	Maj. James Henderson
<b>MOF CC:</b>	Capt. Mike Sampognaro
<b>MSG CC:</b>	Lt. Col. Danner (deployed)
	While deployed
<b>acting MSG CC:</b>	Lt. Col. Tim Kelley
<b>acting MSG Director:</b>	Lt. Col. Angela Alexander
<b>CES Flt CC:</b>	Maj. Richard Maddox
<b>LRS CC:</b>	Lt. Col. David Jaurique
<b>SFS CC:</b>	Capt. Tom Venable
<b>Services Flt CC:</b>	Capt. John Tran
<b>Mission Support Flt CC:</b>	Capt. Roxanne Stern
<b>Comm Flt CC:</b>	Capt. Garrick Yokoe
<b>Medical Group CC:</b>	Lt. Col. Lori Marion
<b>561st Band CC:</b>	Lt. Vu Nguyen



# A Christmas Poem



The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,  
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.  
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,  
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.  
Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,  
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.  
The sparkling lights in the tree, I believe,  
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.  
My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,  
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.  
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem,  
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.  
The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,  
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.  
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know,  
Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.  
My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,  
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.  
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,  
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.  
A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old,  
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.  
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,  
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.  
"What are you doing?" I asked without fear,  
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!"  
"Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,  
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"  
For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,  
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts,  
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light,

*Remember all our troops  
this holiday season.*

Then he sighed and he said, "It's really all right,  
I'm out here by choice, I'm here every night."  
"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,  
That separates you from the darkest of times.  
No one had to ask or beg or implore me,  
I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.  
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam,  
And now it is my turn and so, Here I am.  
I've not seen my own son in more than a while,  
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile."  
Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,  
The Red, White and Blue...an American Flag.  
"I can live through the cold and the being alone,  
Away from my family, my house and my home.  
I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,  
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.  
I can carry the weight of killing another,  
Or lay down my life with my sister and brother  
who stand at the front against any and all,  
to ensure for all time that this flag will not fall.  
So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,  
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."  
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,  
Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?"  
It seems all too little for all that you've done,  
For being away from your wife and your son."  
Then his eyes welled a tear that held no regret,  
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget  
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone.  
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.  
For when we come home, either standing or dead,  
To know you remember we fought and we bled  
is payment enough, and with that we will trust,  
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us.



# Notes and Updates from Military.com

## REQUEST TUITION ASSISTANCE ONLINE

Airmen can now request financial support for their college education through the tuition assistance feature on the Air Force's virtual education center. The center helps active-duty, Guard and reserve Airmen pursue their off-duty education from a computer. Air Force Tuition Assistance is capped at \$250 per semester hour -- \$166 per quarter. Along with tuition assistance, Airmen can use the Website to check their Community College of the Air Force progress, request transcript and civilian course conversion tables, distance learning information, DANTES and CLEP test results and more. The Air Force Virtual Education Center link is available through the Air Force Portal at [www.my.af.mil](http://www.my.af.mil). To learn more about education benefits visit the Education Benefits for Military Service webpage at [Military.com](http://Military.com)

## TRICARE VS. MEDICARE PART D

Tricare-for-life beneficiaries are encouraged to weigh the facts before deciding whether to sign on to the new Medicare part D plan. Coverage under the new prescription drug plan begins Jan. 1 and is open to anyone already enrolled in Medicare. However in most cases, there's no added value for Tricare beneficiaries to buy the new Medicare prescription drug coverage. Tricare generally pays as much or more than a standard Medicare prescription plan. In addition, there's no cost for prescription drugs received at military treatment facilities, officials noted. Tricare offers Medicare Part D educational and enrollment information to help eligible Tricare beneficiaries which plan is best for them. This information is posted on the Tricare Medicare Part D webpage and Medicare website or by calling (800) MEDICARE (633-4227). The enrollment period for the prescription drug coverage plan continues through May 15. After that, eligible beneficiaries will have an annual window between Nov. 15 and Dec. 31 to sign up.

## MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM ENTERS NEW ERA

The Department of Defense has launched of AHLTA, a global electronic health record system, at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda last week. AHLTA is the largest, most significant electronic health record system of its kind with the potential to serve more than nine million servicemembers, retirees and their families worldwide. When fully implemented, about 60,000 military healthcare professionals at DoD medical facilities in the United States, and 11 other countries will use this electronic health record system. Beneficiaries' health records will be available around the clock and around the world, available to healthcare providers, and protected from loss and unauthorized access. Full deployment of the system in DoD's 800 clinics and 70 hospitals will be complete by December 2006. More information on AHLTA can be found on their [Website](#).

## REVAMPED AIR FORCE PORTAL

The Air Force Portal is now more user-friendly and effective. The portal gives Airmen the ability to accomplish anything from like ordering replacement parts to processing, the forms when they go on leave. In addition, the portal has a new color scheme and an upgraded search engine. Users can customize the portal so they can have the information and links they use on a regular basis always in the same location. The Air Force Portal also features an instant messenger system, which allows for real-time chat between people who are collaborating on a project or just keeping in touch. To find out more about the improvements follow the links on the main page, downloadable instruction files and or watch the video. To access the Air Force Portal, visit <https://www.my.af.mil/faf/FAF/fafHome.jsp>.

# Dondi's Mercantile Store

129<sup>th</sup> AHA Merchandise & Apparel

If you would like to order a 129<sup>th</sup> AHA jacket, we again have jackets in stock. Please contact Ken Moore for ordering information.

Want to own a really unique & distinctive shirt or cap to show your affiliation with the 129<sup>th</sup> AHA? Dondi's Mercantile Store has a healthy stock of 129<sup>th</sup> AHA related items. Jackets are customized with your name and rank.

All merchandise can be ordered by phone or on-line. Items and prices are shown at right. Shipping and handling are EXTRA.

Order from Ken Moore at:  
(510) 656-1529  
or online at [sirsgtst@pacbell.net](mailto:sirsgtst@pacbell.net)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>SIZES</u>
Logo Jacket!	\$70 - \$75	
Logo Polo Shirts	\$22	M, L, XL, & 2XL
Logo Baseball Cap w/ Embroidered Logo	\$10	
Logo Baseball Cap w/ Silk-screened Logo	\$5	
Large Jacket Patch	\$10	
Small Shirt / Hat Patch	\$5	
Logo Pin	\$5	
129 <sup>th</sup> Aircraft Collage	\$10	

All items can be shipped. Shipping and handling are EXTRA. All items are sent via U.S. Mail.

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

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / CHANGE OF INFORMATION FORM 2006 Dues \$10.00

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

RANK: \_\_\_\_\_ 129<sup>TH</sup> SERVICE DATES FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the above information and mail to:  
129<sup>th</sup> 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!!**

## New to the Gang

*Our Newest Members*

*MSgt George Rodrigues*

## Welcome!

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

## Final Flyby

In Memoriam

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

SMSgt Don Delucchi

SMSgt Paul Wilkins

COL Joe Rodricks



## AFA News

### CRSC APPROVAL RATE HITS 68 PERCENT

It's not a sure thing, but an approval rating of 68 percent should make it worth the short time it takes to apply for tax-free Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The 68 percent rate is the figure derived by the CRSC staff at the Air Force Personnel Center, basing it on the approximately 21,000 applications submitted since June of 2003.

Those who have been approved for 10 percent or more, are, or will be, reaping the benefits of additional tax-free compensation ranging from \$108 to \$2,249 per month for 100 percent combat-related disabilities, according to Kathy Garfield, CRSC Processing chief. The basic qualifications, Ms. Garfield explained, are:

- Be retired with 20 (or more) years of active duty or retired at age 60 from the Guard or Reserve;
- Be receiving military retired pay;
- Have a compensable VA disability of 10 percent or higher and military retired pay is being offset to receive the VA disability compensation (VA Waiver).

"Disabilities from injuries or illnesses incurred during armed conflict, due to exposure to Agent Orange, combat training, aircrew duties, simulated war exercises, parachuting, munitions demolition, instrumentalities of war, etc., **potentially** qualify for compensation," said Ms. Garfield. She emphasized the word potentially since not all injuries and illnesses will qualify, although they may have the ring of combat-relatedness to them. "In case of a retiree's uncertainty, submit a claim, Ms. Garfield said. "Let the CRSC staff make the determination."

Retired members thinking they meet the criteria should complete an application, make copies of required documents and mail the package to HQ AFPC/DPPDC (CRSC), 550 C Street West, Suite 6, Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4708.

The CRSC team needs copies of the DD 214 or retirement order as well as VA rating decisions addressing the disabilities claimed and any other available documentation. Retired members who do not have their rating decision letters should make that known when submitting the application. The CRSC staff will work with the VA to obtain rating decisions.

For more information and an application, call the CRSC staff at (210) 565-1600 or the AFPC Contact Center at (800) 616-3775). Questions and a request for an application may also be sent by E-mail to [AFPC.DPPDC.AFCRSC@randolph.af.mil](mailto:AFPC.DPPDC.AFCRSC@randolph.af.mil). Also, information and applications are available online at <http://www.dod.mil/prhome/mppcrsc.html>.

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION  
AND  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

LTC Jesse Craddock – (650) 968-0446  
B25jay@sbcglobal.net

VICE PRESIDENT

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

SECRETARY - TREASURER

Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. – (209) 869-2879  
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ADDRESS SERVICE 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 37¢. Then we update your file, put your newsletter in an envelope, put a 37¢ 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 129<sup>th</sup> AHA when you notify your correspondents of your new address. A member information form is included in every issue, and is available online at:

[www.129AHA.org](http://www.129AHA.org)

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# Happy Holidays!

