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August / September 2008

VA Reaching Out to Vets With Mortgage Problems

The Department of Veterans Affairs is reaching out to veterans, both those who use the VA home-loan guaranty program and those who don't, to keep people in their homes. Depending on a veteran's circumstances, VA counselors can intercede with the borrower on the veteran's behalf to pursue options that would allow a veteran to keep his or her home.

To obtain help from a VA financial counselor, veterans can call 877-827-3702. Information about VA's home loan guaranty program can be obtained at www.homeloans.va.gov.



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Air National Guardsmen Called to Assist Ground Firefighting

Capt. Alyson Teeter

MOFFETT FEDERAL AIRFIELD, Calif. - The 129th Rescue Wing is mobilizing approximately 30 Airmen to provide direct ground support to help CAL FIRE with the current wildfire threat in Northern California.

CAL FIRE has trained the 129th Airmen on firefighting techniques. This group of 129th Airmen is part of the 2,000 Guardsmen ordered by the Governor to provide ground support.

Personnel reported to the Wildland Fire Training Center (WFTC) at McClellan Air Park July 23 to train on fire behavior, fire safety, and how to create fire containment lines using hand tools. After completing training, the Guardsmen are available to support CAL FIRE, and the firefighter training remains current for one year after completion.

In addition to ground support personnel, the 129th also provided two HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters for fighting various northern California wildfires. Since July 3, the aircraft and crews have dropped more than 150,000 gallons of water. One aircraft remains stationed at Chico, Calif.

An MC-130P Combat Shadow tanker and crew stationed here remains on stand-by to support firefighting operations. The 129th Rescue Wing and California National Guard works in support of the Governor and civilian responders and will continue to be deployed in the affected area as long as needed.

For more on the recent fire fighting and rescue activities of the wing go to The Rescuegram.

<http://www.129qw.ang.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-080728-028.pdf>

The Prez Sez

The President's Column

COL John L. Ruppel, Jr. (Ret.)

The Heritage Aircraft Model Display was dedicated August 2nd. Thanks to all the Association and Wing members whose contributions helped complete the display. Special thanks to the Wing Chief's Group for funding the display case. The Newsletter contains several dedication photos as well as a photo of the nine aircraft models. The display is located in the Wing Headquarters foyer next to the Wing Commander's office. Next time you are at Moffett, drop by and have a look!

Three Association members were recently promoted; CMSgt Todd Hern, SMSgt David Burkhalter and SMSgt Chris Underwood. The Association extends congratulations on their new rank.

Col Paul Hargrove assumed command of the 146TH Airlift Wing August 2nd. He previously served as the 146TH Operations Group Commander. Col Hargrove will take a military leave of absence from United Airlines.

Liliana Ramos is now the Mercantile Store Manager. She is in the process of purchasing a new blue ball cap, ladies polo shirts, and has located a possible new Association jacket resource. If you have suggestions for Mercantile Store merchandise please let Liliana know.

A new state law effective September 1 makes the disposal of home-generated hypodermic needles and other medical sharps waste in the trash, home recycling containers, or green waste containers illegal. If you have a medical condition requiring hypodermic needle or other sharp medical waste use you can go to the California Integrated Waste Management Board's Medical Waste Disposal Directory at: <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/HHW/HealthCare/Collection/> for information on proper disposal.

Since the last Newsletter two members have passed away. Lt Col James Pringle died June 1, 2008. Col James Newton died August 23, 2008. The Newsletter contains a piece on Lt Col Pringle and Col Newton.

Do not forget to vote, we all served to protect this right.

Cheers!!!

John

Guard and Reserve Get New GI Bill

Terry Howell

Members of the Guard and Reserve are slated to get a brand new GI Bill benefit that surpasses anything offered to Reserve Component members in the last 20 years.

This benefit will not go into effect until August 1, 2009. Many details are still being sorted out.

Many Guard and Reserve servicemembers and veterans activated since Sept. 11, 2001 will soon see a new package of education benefits. This new Post 9/11 GI Bill boasts a comprehensive education benefits package and, best of all, it offers National Guardsmen and Reserves the same benefits as their active-duty counterparts.

The new bill goes well beyond helping to pay for tuition; many veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001, will get full tuition and fees, a new monthly housing stipend, and a \$1,000 a year stipend for books and supplies. The new bill also gives Reserve and Guard members who have been activated for more than 90 days since 9/11 access to the same GI Bill benefits.

If you are in the Guard or Reserve or are a veteran who served at least 90 consecutive days on active duty in the Armed Forces since Sept. 11, 2001, you're eligible. However, the amount of benefits you receive under this program are determined by the actual amount of accumulated post 9/11 active-duty service you have. To be eligible for the **full benefit**, you must have 36 months of active duty service since Sept. 11, 2001 or have been discharged due to a service-connected disability.

Unlike the Montgomery GI Bill, the new GI Bill will allow you to use this benefit for up to 15 years from your last period of active duty of at least 90 consecutive days.

<http://education.military.com/money-for-school/gi-bill/new-gi-bill-overview>

WING HERITAGE AIRCRAFT MODEL DISPLAY

CCMSgt Ken Moore (Ret)

The Association has completed a heritage project to provide the 129TH Rescue Wing with models of Unit assigned aircraft. The models are finished in the Wing paint scheme and markings. The Board ordered nine custom made models: C-46 Commando, SA-16 Albatross, U-6 Beaver, U-10 Courier, C-119G Flying Boxcar, HC-130P King Tanker, MC-130P Combat Shadow, HH-3E Jolly Green, and MH-60G Pave Hawk. Association members and members of the Wing have contributed to the project and the display case. The aircraft models are displayed in the Wing Headquarters foyer. We dedicated the display at Family Day, August 2, 2008.



C-46
Commando



SA-16
Albatross



U-6
Beaver



U-10
Courier



C-119G
Flying Boxcar



HC-130P
King Tanker



MC-130P
Combat Shadow



HH-3E
Jolly Green



MH-60G
Pave Hawk



The Display Case & Models

The Donor Plaque



John Ruppel & the Dedication Crowd



Ed Boddington & C-119G Flying Boxcar

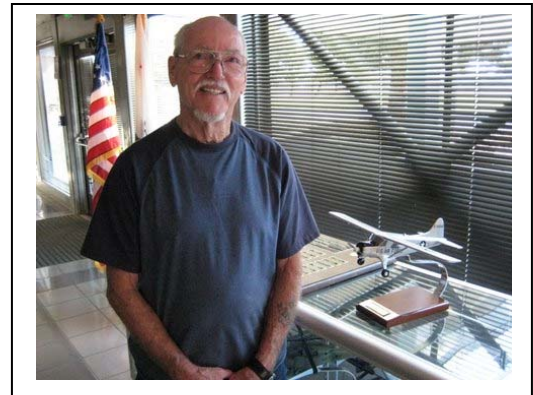


The Passing of the Keys Col Bagdasarian & Col Ruppel



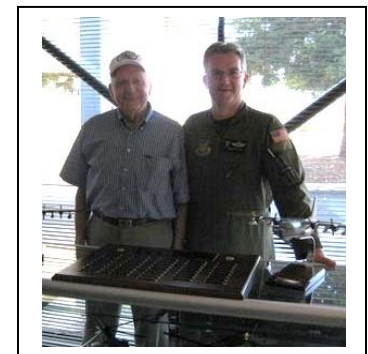
Jim Badgrow, Jay Craddock, Liliana Ramos, Ken Moore, Ed Boddington, Steve James, John Ruppel, & Lyle Davis

Lyle Davis & U-10 Courier



John Ruppel & the Display

Jim Badgrow & Stu Loux



Pictures courtesy of 129th RQW PAO & Morry Davis

Col James Michael Newton

23 June 1947 - 23 August 2008



Jim was born in Minot, North Dakota on 23 June 1947. In 1948, his family moved to California where he attended St. John School, later graduating from San Lorenzo High School in 1966, and California State University Hayward. In 1971 Jim graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant from the Laughlin US Air Force 3646 Pilot Training Wing, Undergraduate Pilot Training in San Antonio, Texas. It was there he materialized his long-held dream of flight. He broke the sound barrier with the F4 and flew the curvature of the earth. For the following 20 years he proudly flew the C130 as a search and rescue pilot for the California Air National Guard. Jim retired from the military as a Colonel in 2000.

*The circle is now complete
A life that once began
With thrashing arms and feet
Now rests so still.*

*He grew, determined in his plan,
Swam, ran, even soared in flight,
In working his plan, became a man,
Lived it full as was his right.*

*Time has stopped, one final act undone,
A life fulfilled, no more to roam,
A smile rests now upon his face,
In peace at last, he's flying home.*

Barnard S. Adams

In 1987, he married his lovely bride, Marilyn, in Napa, California, at which time he became the proud stepfather of Scott Soares. He was later blessed with two beautiful grandchildren, Vinny and Paolo, and a lovely daughter-in-law, Ula Soares.

In addition, Jim is survived by his parents, Lorna and Barnard Adams; sisters, Penny Newton-Tibbetts, Phyllis Newton-Carpenter, Patricia Newton-Suda, and Paula Newton-Molgaard; and many nieces and nephews.

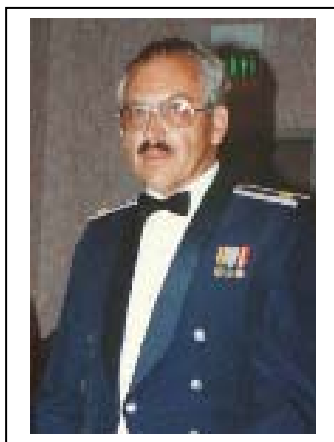
Jim faced many challenges with his diabetes, none of which deterred him. In 1998, he participated in a cutting edge experimental gene therapy trial at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, Boston, Mass. Jim later volunteered at the Chabot Space and Science Center. As a docent, he shared his vast knowledge of space and quantum physics.

Later what brought Jim his greatest joy were the children in his life. He lived each day for the opportunity to share treasured moments, knowing they were fleeting.



Lt Col Leonard James Pringle

22 March 1943 – 1 June 2008



Leonard James Pringle, Lt Colonel, Retired, USAF/ANG was born on March 22, 1943, in Spencer, Iowa. He passed away on June 1, 2008, in Concord, CA. His wife of 38 years, Chloe, and his two sons, James and John, survive him. Len was an extremely active person working a full time job for many years with Motorola Communications and then his own business. All this time he was an active HAM Radio Operator using the call signs of K6JJC, KH8A, W6LT and W7NZ to communicate with others all over the world. He was an Air National Guardsman for over 31 years being recalled for the Pueblo Crisis. He was commissioned and served as the Communications Flight Commander for the Reno Air Guard, the Director of Operations and Squadron Commander for the 234th Combat Communications Squadron, Squadron Commander for the 216th Electronic Installations Squadron, and was the Deputy Commander of the 162nd Combat Communications Group at the time of retirement. A memorial service was held at the Chapel of San Ramon Valley on June 8th and internment service was at the Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery with Military Honors provided by the Travis AFB CA honor guard.

2008-2009 UTAs

2008

6-7 September
4-5 October
1-2 November
6-7 December

2009

3-4 January
7-8 February
7-8 March
4-5 April
2-3 May
6-7 June
11-12 July
1-2 August
12-13 September
3-4 October
7-8 November
5-6 December

McKinley Named Chief National Guard Bureau

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates recommended the Air National Guard's director for a promotion that would make him the first four-star general in National Guard history. Pending nomination by President Bush and confirmation by the Senate, Air Force Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley would become the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

McKinley would succeed Army Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum. Gates has recommended that the president nominate Blum to be deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

As director of the Air Guard, McKinley has been responsible for overseeing all policies, plans and programs affecting more than 104,000 Guardsmen in 88 flying units and 200 geographically separated bases in the United States and its territories.

The independent Commission on the National Guard and Reserves recommended the chief of the National Guard Bureau be a four-star position. Congress agreed and made the recommendation law as part of the fiscal 2008 National Defense Authorization Act.

The promotion also recognizes that the chief will serve as a bridge for the states to the federal government and the active components of the military. McKinley "will provide the leadership that will take the National Guard to the next level," Blum said in a written message to Guard units today. "He is a competent, caring, and proven leader."

Veterans History Project Allows People to Share Experiences

Air Force Retiree Service, Randolph Air Force Base

SAN ANTONIO (AFRNS) -- The Veterans History Project collects and preserves the remembrances of American war veterans and civilian workers who supported them. These collections of first-hand accounts are archived in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress for use by researchers and to serve as an inspiration for generations to come.

The program is designed to preserve the legacies of America's aging veterans who are dying at the rate of about 1,500 a day.

"Getting these oral histories now is important, because once they are gone, their stories are gone forever," said Steve Hollingshead from the Department of Veterans Affairs' Media Services Division.

The project collects remembrances of veterans who served in World War I, World War II, the Cold War, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), or Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present). Citizen civilians who actively supported war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, defense contractors, etc.) are also invited to share their valuable stories.

Interviews taped through the program go on file at the Library of Congress, where they are available for researchers, and the veteran gets a personal DVD copy, Mr. Hollingshead explained.

But while the program initially focused on older veterans, Mr. Hollingshead said, he is increasingly seeing veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan participating in the project.

The younger veterans' stories are different from those of earlier generations, Mr. Hollingshead said. They served in different wars, carrying out different missions and applying different kinds of warfare. Their wounds are different today, with traumatic brain injuries and amputations more prevalent than in the past.

But despite these differences, Mr. Hollingshead said, he sees a common thread among the veterans he interviews. Whether they served in World War I or Operation Iraqi Freedom, or in some conflict in between, all recognize that "they were there, fighting for their country," he said.

"All of them love their country and are here for all the right reasons," Mr. Hollingshead said. "The patriotism you see in these people is just phenomenal."

All Americans, including students and grandchildren, can participate in documenting the lives of the nation's war veterans, Mr. Hollingshead said.

The history project relies on volunteers throughout the nation to collect veterans' stories on behalf of the Library of Congress. These stories are made available to researchers and the general public, both at the library in Washington and via the VHP Web site at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/vets-home.html>.

The U.S. Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. The authorizing legislation (Public Law 106-380), sponsored by Representatives Ron Kind, Amo Houghton and Steny Hoyer in the U.S. House of Representatives, and Senators Max Cleland and Chuck Hagel in the U.S. Senate, received unanimous support and was signed into law by President Clinton in October 2000. (Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service, contributed to this article.)

DONDI'S MERCANTILE STORE

129th AHA Merchandise & Apparel

If you would like to order a 129th 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 129th AHA? Dondi's Mercantile Store has a healthy stock of 129th 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 Liliana Ramos at:

(408) 263-5352
or online at

LilRamos@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 th Aircraft Collage	\$10	
129 th 50 th Anniversary Commemorative Coin	\$5	

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 129th who isn't a member yet?

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / CHANGE OF INFORMATION FORM 2008 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!!**

New to the Gang

Our Newest Members

*CMSgt Louis Hernandez
Lt Col James Kinsey
TSgt Allan G. Perry
SMSgt John Wilson
SMSgt Frank Woolson*

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!

Final Fly-By In Memoriam

Col James Newton
Lt Col Len Pringle



VA Raises GI Bill Payment Rates

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that the Montgomery GI Bill will soon be increased by 20 percent -- a total increase of nearly \$220 a month increase over last year's rate. The full-time student payment rate of \$1,321 multiplied by the 36-month brings the GI Bill to over \$47,500. If you are GI Bill eligible and have benefits remaining, you get this increase no matter when you became eligible or begin using it.

[Read more on Military.com.](http://education.military.com/money-for-school/gi-bill/va-increases-gi-bill-rates) (<http://education.military.com/money-for-school/gi-bill/va-increases-gi-bill-rates>)

Retirees Eligible for Payments

Former Airmen receiving military retired pay who served less than 20 years may now be eligible to receive Air Force [Combat-Related Special Compensation](http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/special-pay/combat-related-special-compensation) (<http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/special-pay/combat-related-special-compensation>). If you receive retired pay, have a compensable VA disability of 10 percent or higher, and your retired pay is reduced by VA disability payments, then you should submit your CRSC claim if you have not already done so. For more information and claim forms, visit the [AFPC Public](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/) (<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>) website under "Former Airmen Information," or contact the 24-hour Air Force Contact Center at (800) 616-3775.

[Read the full article on Military.com.](http://www.military.com/news/article/more-retirees-eligible-for-crsc-payments.html) (<http://www.military.com/news/article/more-retirees-eligible-for-crsc-payments.html>)

USAA Expands its Membership Eligibility

Now all military retirees, servicemembers honorably discharged after 1995 and their families can join USAA for insurance, investments and banking products as well as financial planning and advice. Citing steady growth in financial strength and operational capacity, USAA announced that effective immediately, association membership is now expanded to include: military retirees, regardless of when they retired, military personnel who were honorably discharged on or after Jan. 1, 1996, widows or widowers of military personnel killed in action, spouses and children of the above once they become a member.

[Learn more on Military.com.](http://www.military.com/Finance/content/0,15356,173580,00.html) (<http://www.military.com/Finance/content/0,15356,173580,00.html>)

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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 42¢. Then we update your file, put your newsletter in an envelope, put a 42¢ 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.

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It's Back to School Time Drive Carefully!

