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September 2003

## The Air Guard's First Combat Save – 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing

By TSgt Andrew Hughan

As Published in *The Grizzly* August 2003

Bashur, Iraq – It really was a dark and stormy night when an HH-60G Pavehawk crew from the California Air National Guard's 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing made history by flying the first combat rescue by an Air National Guard Unit. The 129<sup>th</sup> aircrew saved the life of a critically injured soldier in the field by flying him to an Army Field Surgical Team for emergency evaluation.

The 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing is one of only three ANG Rescue Units in existence. When Operation IRAQI FREEDOM started, HH-60 helicopter crews from the 129<sup>th</sup> were positioned inside Northern Iraq to stand the alert in the event allied aircrews were shot down or needed evacuation. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, that expertise and experience were called into play.

An Army private performing field training with his unit fell and was thought to have ruptured his spleen, and received other possible internal injuries. The on-site medical teams determined the soldier needed immediate care and the call went out for Air Force Rescue.

At the alert facility, Major Taft Aujero and his crew from the 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing were playing cards and relaxing, until the detachment commander, Major Steve Spillane, came in and told Major Aujero to prepare to launch a mission. In addition to Major Aujero as pilot and aircraft commander; copilot Capt Curt Green; Flight Engineer TSgt Christopher Lasater; Gunner TSgt Lee Sharpe; Flight Surgeon Maj (Dr.) Tom Gross; Pararescuemen TSgt Eric Burke, TSgt Kevin Jackson, and SSgt T.J. Conklin were ready and prepared to go. They loaded the Pavehawk with a full combat load and at 11:30 p.m. took off into the night. It was only 20 minutes from notification to takeoff.

The flight to the injured soldier was made more challenging by a series of factors: the weather was marginal. The temperature was 50 degrees, it was raining, and thunderstorms were in the local area. The aircrew was forced to fly at or below 500 feet to find holes in the clouds to guide the 20,000 pound helicopter through, while flying low-level and looking out for ground fire around them. This was a tactical mission all the way.

The crew landed near the injured soldier, Dr. Gross evaluated him during the one-hour transport, then passed the patient and critical medical information to the Army Field Surgical Team, where the soldier received immediate attention. A mission is not over until the crew returns safely, and that posed another challenge.

The weather had deteriorated even more on the return flight to Bashur. Pilots Aujero and Green had to switch control of the aircraft back and forth to keep the high ground on the pilot's side of the aircraft – then the windshield wiper motor burned out.

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## The Prez Sez

*The President's Column*

**Lt Col Jesse Craddock (Ret.)**

September is here and time again to take pen in hand and prepare a President's column. I trust you all enjoyed a relaxing summer, but one that passed by all too quickly.

The Board circulated a flyer requesting membership participation in manning the September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Moffett Air Show beverages booths. A number of members have responded. If your schedule would permit participation for a whole or half day please, contact Ken Moore (510) 656-1529, or John Ruppel (209) 869-2879 to volunteer. The proceeds from this volunteer effort support the Association Scholarship Program.

Lt Col Jim Rommelfanger is organizing the Association Golf Tournament to be held on Friday, October 24, at the Moffett Field course. Tournament registration details and information can be found in the Newsletter. Members and guests are most welcome.

Commencing October 1, the 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing will undergo a change in gaining commands leaving the Air Combat Command (for some of us better known as the Tactical Air Command) and joining the Air Force Special Operations Command. The change is part of an Air Force reorganization placing all rescue assets under Special Operations.

The Board has ordered a new supply of baseball caps emblazoned with a revised Association logo patch. The caps can be purchased for \$8. We will have Polo shirts with the revised patch available for the golf tournament. If you are interested in purchasing one of these items or ordering an Association jacket please contact Don Delucchi (925) 689-2683 or email [nonononi@aol.com](mailto:nonononi@aol.com).

Over the last several months those individuals who have been deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom have returned safely home. The Wing honored many of them as part of the Family Day activities and the Association extends a well done!

*continued*

*The Prez Sez - continued*

The Board is considering offering a picture collage of the 129<sup>th</sup> assigned aircraft from 1955 to the present and possibly including the Wing Commanders and Command Chief Master Sergeants. If you would be interested in purchasing a picture, please let us know. Further details regarding price and availability will appear in the December Newsletter.

One problem with preparing the Newsletter is the deadline. The June Newsletter contained uncaptioned 2003 Old Timers' lunch pictures. The Newsletter had been proofed and was being sent to the printer when the pictures arrived. The editor decided to include the pictures knowing that there would only be time to reformat the edition. We understand this made identification difficult and understand Lynda Fawcett's reason for including the pictures. The Board is certainly most appreciative of all Lynda's efforts in producing a splendid Newsletter.

There are still a few members whose 2003 dues require attention. If your name appears in the delinquent section, please forward your \$10 check. The Association now accepts advance dues payments for up to five years.

If you attend the Air Show or Golf Tournament please be sure to say hello!

*Jay*

## The Air Guard's First Combat Save *(continued from page 1)*

With five miles to go, the valley they needed to get into was socked in with fog and rain. The crew tried several times to get through with no success. They then circled and climbed over a 7,000 foot peak which enabled Flight Engineer Lasater to see the lights of the landing zone and guide the pilots to them.

After what many would call an adventurous flight, the crew returned safely to the landing zone, and into Air National Guard History – completing the first combat save in the history of the Air National Guard.

The mission, motto, and commitment of Combat Search and Rescue teams describes the daily life of the men and women of the California Air National Guard's 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing: These things we do, that others may live.

# Family Day 2003



First Save Crew – Lt Col Bruce Driscoll, Lt Col Geary Tiffany, MAJ Charles Baker, Col John Ruppel, SMSgt Bert Bartholomew, SMSgt Richard Wagner, not present MSgt Gus Pappas.



The Commanders  
Col Wayne Albright – Logistics Group  
Col Jeffrey Stuard – Support Group  
Lt Col Thomas Saxe – Operations Group  
Col David Walton – Medical Squadron



Presentation of the Colors



300<sup>th</sup> Save Banner  
TSgt Natalie Clayton  
Col Tommy Williams RQW/CC  
Ms. Julie Miller, Mayor of Sunnyvale



The 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing

## Space-A Travel Update

*Presented by CCMS Ed Boddington*

**Space A Travel Test:** Recently the assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense approved a one year test evaluation program expanding Space A privileges for dependents within continental United States (CONUS). The test began April 1, 2003, and will end April 1, 2004, and allows dependents of retired members to travel on stateside to stateside flights when accompanied by their sponsor. Note: retired members may continue to sign up 60 days in advance.

**An Overview of Space A Travel:** Space A travel is a benefit that many of our membership do not take advantage of because of misconception and lack of current knowledge of how the system works. I feel it is relevant to outline the basics of space A Travel especially for our retired membership. Military air bases offer more opportunities than commercial gateways. For flights to Europe there are more flights from Dover AFB, DE, than from Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI). Your travel eligibility is for all DOD-operated or controlled aircraft.

Flights to Germany are easier to obtain than flights to Australia or New Zealand. Travel to Alaska remains relatively easy when departing from the West Coast (Travis AFB or McChord AFB). Infrequent flights to South America are primarily cargo missions and offer few seats for passengers.

On overseas flights from foreign countries (when traveling on a passport), you may return to CONUS only through authorized ports of entry where customs and immigration clearance is available. While you may depart from any location in CONUS, re-entry locations for passport holders are limited.

You may check two pieces of luggage at up to 70 pounds per person. You may hand carry only what fits under your seat or in the overhead compartment, if available. Sweaters/jackets are recommended for military aircraft that are not always heated to the extent of civilian flights. Pocket sandwiches and or box lunches are also recommended.

There is a head tax on CONUS outbound or a federal inspection fee on CONUS inbound international commercial carriers.

Be flexible on your travel plans. To get to Germany if no direct flights are available, try a flight to Mildenhall, UK, and then try for another flight bound for Germany. It is best to plan travel at off-peak Space A travel periods and avoid the heavily traveled summer months, school breaks, and the Christmas holiday season. February, March, October, and November remain the best months to travel.

Reserve members with a DD form 2 (red) identification and DD Form 1853 may fly to, from, and between Alaska, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and CONUS. Family members with a valid ID may travel to, from, and between overseas locations, but not within CONUS (note this rule is under consideration for change and currently involved in a test program) unless manifested on domestic leg accompanied by their sponsor to fly Space A.

All travelers remain on the terminal register 60 days after registration or until they are selected for travel. Revalidation has been eliminated. The register in each terminal is organized alphabetically by priority and date/time of registration for travel. It is updated on a daily basis and subject to your review so that you may evaluate your opportunities for travel. When you approach the top of the list, it is a wise procedure to stay close to the terminal since the on-duty personnel will not attempt to locate you other than making announcements over the PA system.

The self-signup is a program that allows passengers to sign-up at the terminal without waiting in line. The instructions are easy to follow. Questions may be answered by an on-duty passenger service representative at the Space A counter.

You may sign up for five different countries rather than five different destinations. You are also eligible to sign for "all" which makes you eligible for all Space A destinations served. This gives you a greater selection of destinations from which to choose.

There is a remote sign-up that permits passengers to enter the waiting list for travel by faxing copies of proper service documentation, along with desired country destinations and family members' names, to the aerial port of departure. The fax data header will establish your date/time of sign-up. However, AMC is not responsible for faxes not received or illegible copies.

*Continued on Page 5*

## Space-A Travel Update

*Continued from Page 4*

Some AMC terminals now accept e-mail sign-up. Contact the terminal from which you expect to travel to get more details or visit the AMC website at <https://public.amc.af.mil>. The site provides excellent info to include terminal telephone numbers, AMC and non-AMC Space A info, updates, policy and more.

The original date and time of sign-up will be documented, and will stay with the passenger until his/her destination is reached. On reaching the destination, the passenger may sign up for Space A travel to return to home station. It is recommended that you complete your return sign-up immediately upon your arrival.

If your travel will take you to a foreign country, be sure that your documentation (passport, visa if required, inoculations, etc.) and border clearances are up to date.

I highly recommend taking a Space A flight to Hawaii or Alaska for first time travel. The AMC personnel at Travis AFB are very accommodating and helpful.

Look for more military travel info in upcoming issues of our Ol' Timers Noozze.

## Col Ed Lewis

*Farewell Dinner*

Col Ed Lewis, the Wing's Operation Group Commander, has been appointed ANG Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command. Col Lewis assumed the position June 1. John Ruppel represented the Association at Col Ed Lewis' farewell dinner. The Association presented Col Lewis with a picture collage of the 129th aircraft. We wish Ed success as the Air National Guard Assistant to the AFSOC Commander.



Col Ed Lewis with the Ops Gang

## Cold War Certificates Still Available

Army News Service reports that service members, veterans, and federal employees who served between Sept. 2, 1945 and Dec. 26, 1991 are still eligible for a Cold War Recognition Certificate. In 1998, the Secretary of Defense approved awarding the certificate to personnel who served during the Cold War. Thus far, about one million people have responded out of the 22 million entitled to receive the certificate, officials said. An application for the Cold War Recognition Certificate can be found on the Internet at <https://coldwar.army.mil/>. The Website informs applicants about the correct procedures and the required documentation to receive a certificate. An acceptable supporting document includes any official government or military document that contains the recipient's name, Social Security Number or Military Service Number or Foreign Service Number, and a date showing at least one day of service during the Cold War era (September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991). Applications will only be accepted by fax or mail, officials said. More information on the certificate can be found on PERSCOM's Cold War Web site or by calling customer service at 1-703-325-5864.

This is the only official site on which to request Cold War Recognition Certificates. This site is operated by the United States Army, the executive agency for the Cold War Recognition Program. Cold War Recognition Certificates are available to qualified individuals at no cost. Any other site offering these certificates or replicas for sale or purchase are not official sites and are not approved or endorsed by the US Army.

Due to the remarkable success of this program, turn-around time for mailing certificates will be a **minimum of 6 months**. The CWRS Operations Team is working as fast as possible to clear the backlog. Please do not request feedback prior to 6 months from the request date. Thank you for your patience and interest in the Cold War Recognition program.



# Application for Cold War Recognition Certificate U.S. Residents



Instructions: Fill out this application and mail or fax to the Cold War Office with your proof of service. An acceptable supporting document includes any official government or military document that contains the recipient's name, Social Security Number or Military Service Number or Foreign Service Number, and a date showing at least one day of service during the Cold War era (September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991). Examples include DD Form 214, a Leave and Earnings Statement, and the Standard Form 50.

You must certify your honorable service by signing and dating the application and returning with supporting document to:

CDR, PERSCOM - OR - Fax 1-800-723-9262  
Cold War Recognition, Hoffman II  
Attn: TAPC-CWRS, 3N45  
200 Stovall Street  
Alexandria, VA 22332-0473

Recipients Name: (First, MI, Last): \_\_\_\_\_

ID Type: SSN MSN FSN ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name (Enter ONLY if different from Recipient's Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant or Recipient E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*I confirm my (or the recipient's) faithful and honorable service to the nation during the Cold War Era.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the application, sign, **attach supporting document**, and mail or fax to the address listed above.

# Annual NASA Air Show



Saturday, September 13, 2003

Sunday, September 14, 2003

Moffett Federal Air Field

Static Displays

Food & Drink

Souvenirs

The Association will have

Ball Caps

for sale &

will be taking orders for

Polo shirts.



## Back & Blue

By Capt Anni Mu Loeb

As Published in *The Grizzly* August 2003

When terrorists hijacked commercial airliners and crashed them into the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon, they failed to accomplish their mission, because an act designed to instill fear roused patriotism instead.

And Lisa Williams, executive secretary to Headquarters, California Air National Guard, responded. After a nearly 12-year layoff, Williams decided to rejoin the California Air National Guard on September 13, 2001.

That night her son Bryan, 18, and five of his best friends were watching the news about the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and discussing how they would not want to be in the military right now! They might get sent overseas.

"I hope people wake up and defend our country," Williams said. "Terrorists will keep coming back and you'll end up fighting them on our soil! I wish I could go back in, I'd fight."

The kids were silent. The next day Williams told an officer that she wanted to rejoin. The officer told her that she could come back in if she could accumulate 20 years service by age 60 and lose 75 pounds. Williams set her mind and body to the goal of joining the Air National Guard.

Nearly 19 months later and 75 pounds lighter, Lisa Williams became Senior Airman Williams. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> made her realize that she still had a lot to contribute to the military. After serving more than eight years on active duty, she separated in 1989. But the journey back wasn't easy and it required discipline, dedication, and commitment.

Williams attended a nutrition and physical conditioning class, joined "Weight Watchers," and participated in an exercise regimen. She started walking a few minutes two to three evenings a week. Williams graduated into running and now runs five to six days a week for about an hour. The next hurdles were to pass the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery, an entrance physical, and to find a military position. She accomplished all three.

*continued*

## Back & Blue *(continued)*

William's civilian boss, Major General Daniel Gibson, Commander, California Air National Guard, enlisted Senior Airman Williams during a special ceremony at the headquarters in April. Williams' husband, friends, and co-workers were there to support her. She is currently assigned to the 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing, Moffett Federal Air Field, CA.

Williams' example has inspired other people. Of the six teenagers at Williams' house on September 13, 2001, two are now Marines assigned in the Middle East, One is in the Army, one is in the Air Force, and one is in the Navy.

### Welcome to the 129<sup>th</sup> RQW Senior Airman Lisa Williams!

## Delinquent Dues

### *Past Due Memberships*

The following members have not paid their 2003 membership dues. If your name is on this list, please forward your check or money order for \$10 to:

129<sup>th</sup> Alumni & Heritage Association  
c/o Col John L. Ruppel, Jr. (ret)  
6718 Zerillo Dr.  
Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

If you, for whatever reason, do not wish to continue your membership in the Association, please contact Col Ruppel at 1-209-869-2879 to discuss the procedures for terminating your membership in good standing.

Aldape, Roberto	Gonsalves, Gilbert
Haack, Lou	Hemphill, Shirley
Houtz-Messina, Alice	Kurata, Kenichi
Madrid, Douglas	Onderko, Ellen
Rogers, Kenneth	Shriber, Joseph
Simmons, William	Sober, Valerie
Wagner, Richard	Wheeler, Donna
Winfrey, Mary	



# 129<sup>th</sup> ALUMNI & HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

In Conjunction With

## MOFFETT FAF GOLF COURSE MGMT

Invite You to Play In the 2003

### GOLF TOURNAMENT (FORMAT TO BE DETERMINED)

**Moffett Field Golf Course**  
**24 October 2003, 11:00 A.M.**

**\$40.00 (Per Player)**  
(Power Carts Not Included)

### REGISTRATION CLOSES 18 October 2003

Barbeque at the golf course after the tournament

POC: Lt Col Jim Rommelfanger – 2578 Maraschino Court – Union City, CA 94587  
1-510-489-4365 (home) or 1-650-603-9110 (work)

-----Cut here and return to POC-----

Send check payable to 129 AHA, with registration form, to the POC.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Status: AD Reserve Retired Civilian

Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Power Cart: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ You will pay for the cart at tournament check-in

Extra Dinners for a spouse / guest - \$8.00 each: Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a caddy or a walker? \$8.00 each - Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign up your own foursome or request pairing with a playing partner. (List below):

\_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Return Registration Form To POC As Soon As Possible!**

# WE DID IT!

Never let it be said that Steven and I do things quickly...after 14+ years, we were married in a *very* private (only the flower girls were invited and they happened to be Kali and Whitney and the AF-renowned photographer, Sue Castro) on

**25 June 2003 in Old Towne, Alexandria VA**

As proof, see below



**CELEBRATION PARTY TBD SOON**

## New to the Gang

*Our Newest Members*

*SMSgt Al Cortez*

*Mrs. Charles W. Koenig*

# 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!

## 129<sup>th</sup> AHA Jackets Available Again

*Customized with your name and rank!*

After much searching we have found a new supply of the MembersOnly jackets - so we are taking orders for the jackets. We have a limited number of jackets in sizes Med. thru XXL.

The left breast has the new AHA Logo patch with 129AHA embroidered below. The right breast has the new Air Force Patch with your name and status, i.e. ANG or RET, embroidered below. A second embroidered line (COST EXTRA) is available to show your job title, Rank, Call Sign, Aviation Qualification Badge, etc. 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](mailto:Nonononi@aol.com)

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 2003 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!!**

**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  
J-L.RUPPEL@worldnet.att.net

**DIRECTORS**

CCMS Edward L. Boddington – (209) 536-1777  
GOBODDsER@bigvalley.net

LTC Cindy Kepple – (650) 996-7241  
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

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Lynda Taft Fawcett – (916) 349-1019  
LTFAWCETT@hotmail.com

**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.

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

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

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
RIVERBANK, CA  
PERMIT #20

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**Don't Forget the Air Show!**