



Volume 16, Issue 2

May 2012

## Updates & Notes

Have you seen or heard from one of our comrades we don't have contact information for? Talked to someone from the past? Travelled and seen something that others in the membership might be interested in?

We would like to have a column or page in each newsletter with notes and updates from the members. To make this work, I need to have emails and pictures from you.

If you are interested in seeing this type of information in our quarterly newsletter, please send me an email with the particulars – who, what, when, where, and why – and include a picture or two if you have them.

I will gladly set aside a column – or page – for you all to share information and news.

*Lynda*

[LTFawcett@hotmail.com](mailto:LTFawcett@hotmail.com)

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## A FOND FAREWELL

This past month we said farewell to Colonel Mark Sheehy and his family in a superb gathering of Alumni, current members of the unit and many family friends. Mark has spent most of his career with the 129<sup>th</sup>, the last seven year heading up the 129<sup>th</sup> Operations Group during a most challenging period in history. His retirement ceremony held in Hangar 4 was a fitting tribute to his leadership as attested to by Colonel Steven Butow, 129<sup>th</sup> RQW Commander.

From Colonel Sheehy's finis flight in the HH-60 to his retirement dinner that evening, friends and alumni nationwide converged on Moffett, many for the first time in years. We saw SMS William Wunderlin and the 129<sup>th</sup> Color Guard do a moving flag ceremony culminating in the flags presentation to Colonel Sheehy. We saw the changes as the unit drives the last mile to their ORI in June. We saw colleagues from years gone by who are now the movers and shakers in the unit. We got to share in Lt Col Darwin Foote's humor as he MC'd the retirement dinner. Most of all we got to share in the moment of Col Sheehy's life that all of us have had when we transitioned from the military back to our civilian roots.

What an evening! Although many folks were from the Operations side of the house, I would be remiss if I didn't say that many folks were from the other disciplines of the organization. We had people come from Florida, New Jersey, Maryland, Arizona, Texas and other places I'm sure I'm missing. A list of attendee's last names would fill this column. Suffice to say you would have been at home at the event. Happy Hour was too short to visit with everyone and many stayed after the event to "catch-up". For each attendee you would have had a story.

For Mark, Linn and family, we will miss you and honor the sacrifices you made for so long from multiple deployments to commuting from Houston. The constant in a military life is change and the baton has been passed. Your legacy however will continue and is now part of the history books (if we had a historian that is to record it).

It was an honor to be there.

Best Wishes Mark. See you at the next farewell.

***Brig Gen Steven Speer (AF, Ret)***

## The Prez Sez

### *The President's Column*

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

The Old Timers lunch was attended by 130 members and guests. Col Jay Craddock discussed the 129<sup>th</sup> founding history and the California Air National Guard's 1950 creation. Col Steve Butow updated attendees on the Wing's activities and the current USAF 2013 Defense Budget on the Air National Guard. The Association awarded six Wing members \$ 1,000 Scholarships. The Annual 129<sup>th</sup> Medical Group outstanding airmen award, named in honor of Col Paul Lavoie, was presented to TSgt Jose Sarmiento.

The Newsletter contains two op-ed articles. Col Steve Butow, 129<sup>TH</sup> RQW CC, discusses the recent decision by the NASA Director to declare the non-Ames property excess. The second article, by MG David Baldwin, the CNG TAG, discusses the importance and strategic role the National Guard plays in the current economic environment.

BG Steve Speer submitted a farewell message commenting on the activities surrounding the retirement ceremony and dinner for Col Mark Sheehy. General Speer's submittal, together with notes from Col Mark Sheehy and TSgt Roberta Textor, are examples of material that we would like to include in a quarterly membership column. Submission details are included in the Newsletter.

If you received a second dues notice and haven't yet sent a check, please do so. We would appreciate you informing the Association if you do not wish to continue your membership so that valuable time and money are not expended.

An electronic Association Membership Roster will be distributed in the next few weeks. We are working on roster corrections to assure the most accurate information, particularly email addresses. If you have changed your contact information, please use the membership update form or send an email and let us know.

Cheers!

*John*

## Thank You

**COL Mark Sheehy (Ret.)**

To the Members of the 129<sup>th</sup> Alumni & Heritage Association:

I want to thank you for the beautiful trophy you presented to me upon my retirement from the California Air National Guard. As a long-time member of the unit, I appreciate the heritage and history represented by the AHA, and I think the trophy captures it perfectly. I further appreciate you having a representative at my retirement ceremony and dinner, and all you did to get the word out about the events. The strong showing of so many AHA members at my dinner is a testament to the strong organization you have created and the bonds you maintain with current members of the unit.

The gift is priceless to me and will remind me constantly of those who came before me and how much they have taught me. Please extend my sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to this fine gift.

Sincerely,

**Col Mark Sheehy**





*Ken Moore & Cub Jack*



*Marvin & Barbara Lum*



*Tom & Patti deTar*



*Jim Badgrow, Dusty Rhoads  
Jim Rommelfanger, Larry Rengstorff*



*Roy Francis, Bob Koenig,  
Jim Rommelfanger, Kimberly Koenig*

**2012**  
**Ol' Timers' Lunch**  
**March 13, 2012**  
  
**Pictures by**  
**Ed Summers**



*Mel Woolcock & Jim Moore*



*De & Russ Padula*



# 129<sup>TH</sup> ALUMNI & HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL DAY HONOR ROLL



*Day is done.  
Gone the sun  
From the hills,  
From the sky.  
All is well.  
Safely rest.  
God is nigh.*



MSGT Pastor D. Abelaye	SRARacann M. Cordova	TSGT Joe Hernandez	COL Ralston D. McKee	MSGT Thomas Santiago
BGen Harold A. Aherns	SSGT Steve Courtney ★	MAJ William "Bill" Horky	SGT Kevin McKenna	BGen Albert R. Santos
SSGT Harry Ahlborn	LTC William E. Cox	TSGT John E. Horton ★	MSGT Edwin D. McNemar	CWO John D. Schary
TSGT Gary R. Albertson	LTC Gene Cunningham	LTC James A. Hunt	LTC Charles Means	SMSGT Don Shanks
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COL John R. Breeden	SSGT Johnny Forlanda	A3C Alan A. Kelley ★	COL Ralph L. Nobriga	LTC John A. Vinther
MSGT Tommy D. Brooks	LTC Billy Freeman	LTC John W. Kenney	LTC Frank Odde	SSGT Edward C. Vittorio
TSGT Greg Brown	CWO+ William Gateley	SMSGT Michael "Kip" Kenney	LTC John W. O'Sullivan	MSGT Bobby Joe Wagner
LTC Joseph J. Budro	MAJ Russ Gibeson	MSGT Henry Kern	LTC Edmund M. Petracek	MSGT Clarence W. Wagner
MSGT Sam Burgess	SMSGT Howard L. Gibson	BGen (Chaplain) James Kintzi	SMSGT Michael Patterson	LTC Louis F. Wang
SMSGT Fredrick E. Burkett	SMSGT Arch R. Girvin	BGen Charles W. Koenig	COL Fred H. Petersen	LTC James Ward
TSGT Larry Butts	SMSGT Wallace J. Glabor	COL Charles J. Kuban	MSGT Leon Pope	CWO+ Albert S. Warnick
TSGT James A. Calvin	MSGT Clarence F. Gruenert	SRAMary Lou Lara	LTC Leonard J. Pringle	CWO+ Edward C. Wiemken
LTC Malcom B. Campbell	SMSGT Blaine D. Hall	LTC Thomas J. Laut	Marge Rainsford	CWO+ Edward
LTC Neil Campbell	MAJ Carl Haller, MD	COL Paul Lavoie, MD	LTC John Reading	SMSGT Paul F. Wilkins
SGT Steven Carlyle ★	MSGT Lloyd Hamilton	TSGT Sandee Lawrence	Ms. Helen Reed	LTC Don F. Winters
1LT Desmond Casey	MAJ James H. Harshman	MSGT Bartley J. Lee	Ronald Roach	Chew Ty-ren Yuen
LTC Paul Chabot	LTC Glen E. Hatley	Bgen Walter C. Leonardo	COL Joseph W. Rodricks	SSGT George Zozula
CAPT Stephen H. Church	COL William Hein	COLEdwin W. Lewis, Jr.	A1C Robert R. Rossie ★	A1C Larry Zimmerman ★
SMGT Robert Clayton	Mrs. Shirley L. Hemphill	CMSGT Joseph Martin	COL Lina S. A. Ruppel	MSGT Donald H. Zumsteg
SMSGT Vaughn H. Clearman	CPT Phil Hepner ~	MAJ Lawrence Mauch	MSGT Frank M. Sacramento	★Killed in Action

# **Moffett Field a Priceless Lifeline for Bay Area**

***By Col. Steven Butow***

***Commander, 129<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing***

NASA administrator Charlie Bolden's recent decision to designate Moffett Federal Airfield as excess property has far-reaching implications for the local economy, disaster response and quality of life for residents of the Peninsula. The decision to "excess" Moffett was made with little consideration of these factors and must be reversed to mitigate serious long-term consequences.

Among those directly affected will be the Silicon Valley defense industry, which uses Moffett to transport cargo; the California National Guard 129th Rescue Wing, which provides specialized air rescue and emergency response capability; and Bay Area residents who are accustomed to the limited air traffic and reduced road congestion enabled by preserving Moffett under the current arrangement.

As the largest tenant of the airfield since 1978, the 129th Rescue Wing may have the carpet pulled out from beneath it just two years after the same NASA administrator approved a 50-year lease with the Air Force establishing Moffett as the wing's permanent base. The Air Force has since obligated \$40 million in new construction projects that are bringing much-needed jobs to the Bay Area.

The wing's lease was secured thanks to the fortitude of Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, who fought for nearly 15 years to get it. It also was championed by Pete Worden, the NASA Ames Research Center director, in order to share costs and increase collaboration between agencies.

While other NASA centers struggle to define their role in the post-space shuttle era, Ames has evoked the tenacity of a Silicon Valley startup, boasting achievements that include finding ice on the moon, discovering planets around other stars and redefining commercial architecture with sustainable engineering practices. The wing is one of only three units in the Air Force with the principal responsibility of conducting its lifesaving search-and-rescue mission. Moffett is the wing's main base for rapid response to earthquakes, fires, hurricanes and other crises. As members of California's National Guard, the wing is uniquely positioned to respond to emergencies affecting the 7 million Bay Area residents and is able to rapidly deploy beyond that range when called upon.

The wing has been credited with 951 saved lives in its 34-year history, more than 600 of those accomplished since 2006. It also responds to long-range overwater rescues that are beyond the reach of the U.S. Coast Guard, including the rescue of two severely burned Chinese fishermen 700 miles off the coast of Mexico in March.

California and the federal government have spent the past decade developing capabilities and strategies to use Moffett to support response and recovery operations following an earthquake or other regional disaster.

Declaring the property excess places these efforts at risk and forces local governments to fill gaps when they clearly do not have the means to do so.

In addition to supporting innovative research and technology development, Moffett serves as urban open space that mitigates Bay Area road traffic and air quality. The wing was one of the major proponents for the extension of the Bay Trails behind Moffett and the preservation of the San Francisco Bay wetlands.

The creation of Moffett in the orchards of Santa Clara Valley ushered in a culture of innovation and exploration that still leads the nation and fuels the global economy today. Those of us who understand Moffett and call it home believe the destiny of the airfield should be purposefully determined by our elected representatives with input from users, innovators and the community.

*Written for and published in the San Jose Mercury News eEdition West Valley / Peninsula Edition 05/23/2012*

# **The National Guard: Grounded in America's Past, Essential to Its Future**

***By Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin  
The Adjutant General, California National Guard***

Challenging budgets and global conflict have become prevalent themes in our national dialogue. Americans expect their government to fulfill its fundamental responsibility of ensuring the nation's security while rightfully demanding a high return on their hard-earned tax dollars. This expectation is critical to the debate over the future of our Armed Forces, and is the reason the National Guard stands at the forefront of that debate as an indispensable, efficient, combat-tested solution both globally and locally.

After more than a decade of combat operations, the experience and readiness of our Soldiers and Airmen is at an all-time high. More than 50 percent of the nation's Guard forces are combat veterans, standing confident and ready to meet the demands of commanders overseas, as well as governors at home. It is because of these men and women, and for them, that congressional leaders, governors and others have rallied behind the Guard in the face of dramatic cuts to our force. At the conclusion of previous wars in our history, the Department of Defense has sought to save money by slashing the budget of the National Guard and relegating it to service as a strategic reserve. That unfortunate tradition continues today as significant elements of the Guard are at risk of being cut dramatically or eliminated entirely.

Following this course of action in today's fluid strategic environment would constitute a striking failure to capitalize on Guardsmen's experience, capability, and low cost. Primarily a part-time force, brought to duty only to maintain proficiency and when needed for operations, the Guard is an extraordinarily cost-efficient solution in the dialogue on how to best spend defense dollars. Evolving from its roots in colonial militias, today's National Guard retains its community mission while simultaneously maintaining readiness to deploy whenever and wherever the need arises. Unlike other military forces the Guard is directly responsive to the state. Guardsmen are familiar faces alongside other emergency forces when disaster strikes, demonstrating their dual utility for American taxpayers.

The ground truth is that the Guard does more with less at a time when such efficiencies are desperately needed. The Air component of the National Guard currently accounts for only 6 percent of the total Air Force budget but makes up 19 percent of its personnel and provides 30 to 40 percent of its total fighter, tanker and airlift capacity. Likewise, the Army component accounts for less than 11 percent of the Army budget but makes up 32 percent of its personnel and more than 40 percent of its operating forces. The Commission on the Guard and Reserves, which was created by Congress, reported that members of active duty branches are four times more expensive than reserve component members when not deployed.

There is, and will always be, a need for a strong active duty force. At no time in recent history have the bonds between active and reserve forces been as strong as they are today. Serving alongside one another, and shedding blood on the same ground has fostered a mutual respect and admiration that makes us better as a military. Our active component forces are the foundation of the finest military force on the planet, bar none. But the reality is that large standing militaries cost money, not just in current years but down the line as those personnel retire.

Funding a part time force at a fraction of the cost makes sense. The vision of an active military that is lean and agile supported by a robust capability resident in the Guard is a model that addresses our fiscal realities without losing sight of our strategic priorities. To make this vision a reality a fundamental shift in thinking must occur, one that will effectively reverse the current balance of forces from a large active force with a small supporting reserve to the opposite model where the majority of the capability is resident in the Guard and distributed in communities throughout the country.

This vision can and will work for our nation. It is fundamental to our heritage and increasingly part of our fiscal imperative. It is a solution already embedded in every American town and city, where our Soldiers and Airmen stand ready to meet the call, in peace or in war. Putting capability in the Guard maintains key defense requirements, available for active service when needed, without the massive cost that comes with a large standing military. Many of us believe this is the right model at the right time for our nation and it deserves serious consideration in the current debate over our military's future.

*Maj. Gen. Baldwin is adjutant general for the California National Guard, the nation's largest and most frequently deployed National Guard force.*

<http://TheHill.com> 5/22/2012

## **DFAS Warns Service Members of Scam Emails**

*TSgt Benjamin Rojek*

*Defense Media Activity*

Release No. 04-08-12 April 23, 2012

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. (AFRNS) -- Defense Finance and Accounting Service official recently released a statement warning of email scams targeting military members, military retirees, and civilian employees.

According to the statement, the most recent email scam indicates that individuals who are receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs may be able to obtain additional funds from the Internal Revenue Service, but only if they send copies of their income tax information.

Scammers have even gone so far as to "spoof" DFAS email addresses so that the recipients would think it was actually coming from DFAS personnel. In a spoofing email, the scammer makes it appear that the message is coming from a legitimate source. This is to try to lure the reader into believing it's genuine.

"(Scammers) manage to find a way to appear legitimate when they're not," said Edward Peace, the senior cyberwarfare instructor for the 39th Information Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla. "In some cases, it looks like it's from a legitimate source, but in other cases if you inspect it just a little bit deeper, just looking at where the email came from you would be tipped off right way. But most people don't look at it; they just look at the content, it looks legitimate and they go from there."

To fool people, Peace said, the scam artist may create a server so that the URL is close to that of a legitimate site, for example using .mic instead of .mil at the end of the Web address. People can avoid these scams by closely reading the address from which the email was sent.

Though these scam artists have found ways to spoof the DFAS email address, this does not mean that customer accounts were compromised.

"We have not had an incident that has threatened our security or the accounts of our customers," said Steve Burghardt, a DFAS media relations officer. "We are always on the lookout. And we're taking steps to (educate) folks."

To that end, DFAS officials are developing pages on their website to highlight their official email policy, examples of scam emails and law enforcement agencies that can initiate an investigation.

DFAS officials are also trying to make this information readily available via myPay, Burghardt said.

"That's our biggest concern," he said. "As long as you keep your login credentials private and to yourself, then your account is pretty much assured a fairly decent amount of security. But if you give that away or give out that information that people can use to get new credentials ... I can always impersonate you and say, 'I lost my login credentials, get me a new one.'"

Besides getting their personal information stolen, people can also fall victim to computer attacks by even opening these emails.

For example, if there are HTML attachments or links in the email, they can drop malware on the computer, usually a Trojan horse, Peace said. If this happens, the Trojan will call out to wherever they want it to and start to do series of different things, such as loading more malware on the computer or turn the computer into part of a botnet. In the latter scenario, one's computer is taken over by a hacker, made part of a larger network and used mostly for nefarious purposes.

In order to avoid falling victim to these computer viruses and malware, people using commercial email accounts should immediately erase these scam emails, Peace said. Service members who receive these types of email on their .mil accounts should immediately notify their network administrator.

For more information on the DFAS email policy, click [here](#).

# 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 Liliana Ramos 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 and vests 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

[LilRamos@pacbell.net](mailto:LilRamos@pacbell.net)

or online at

<http://www.129aha.org>

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>SIZES</u>
Logo Jacket or Vest	\$65 - \$80	
Logo Polo Shirts - Men's & Ladies	\$22	M, L, XL, & 2XL
Logo Baseball Cap	\$15	
Large Jacket Patch	\$10	
Small Shirt / Hat Patch	\$5	
Logo Pin	\$5	

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

**All profits are used for 129 AHA benefit projects.**

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 2012 Dues \$15.00

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!!**

Form is available at [www.129aha.org](http://www.129aha.org)



## New to the Gang

*Our Newest Members*

MSgt Ronald Biggs                      SrA Holly Durkin  
MSgt Randall Johnson                      MSgt Sean Kirsch  
SrA Mandi Powers                      TSgt Jose Sarmiento  
SrA Leonard Tran

## 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!

Application form is available at

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

## Scholarship Thank You

### SMSgt Donald Delucchi Scholarship

*TSgt Roberta Textor – 561<sup>st</sup> Band*

*Major – Court Reporting*

25 March 2012

Please pass on my appreciation to the 129<sup>th</sup> AHA for the generous \$1,000 awarded to me recently. I have used the money to pay off my stenograph machine – which I have been renting until recently. Later I plan on applying the purchase price of \$950 as a trade-in for a professional model with more bells and whistles!

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

*Roberta (Bobbie) Textor*

**OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION  
AND  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**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 – nor do they return it to us. They charge us 75¢ for providing your forwarding address. Then we update your file, but you do not get a newsletter until next edition unless you request an electronic copy. 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@ATT.NET](mailto:J-L.RUPPEL@ATT.NET)



School's Out!  
Have Fun & Watch the Kids!



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

129<sup>th</sup> Alumni & Heritage Assn.  
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Riverbank, CA 95367-2122

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