

THE RESCUEGRAM



The Official Information Publication of the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard

April 2008

Lives Saved
558

These Things We Do...
That Others May Live...



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Nigerian Air Force visits 129th Rescue Wing 129th Public Affairs Office



Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir

Group Captain Son Igwe, along with members of the Nigerian Air Force, met and toured with 129th Maintenance Group personnel during their visit to the 129th Rescue Wing. Nigeria is one of California's military exchange countries.

Airmen stationed here from the 129th Rescue Wing Maintenance Group put down their wrenches to help promote democracy and build relations with their Nigerian counterparts March 1-2, 2008.

This visit marked the first engagement for the Nigerian Air Force with the California Air National Guard, said Capt. Clayton Smith, California National Guard International Affairs Specialist.

The 5-person Nigerian delegation arrived in the United States Feb. 27 for a six-day visit in California, and during their stay, the officers briefed with maintenance personnel, toured maintenance and operations facilities, and even observed a squadron change-of-command ceremony.

"We are here as part of an aircraft maintenance familiarization workshop," said Group Captain Son Igwe. "We came to understand how your logistics and maintenance operates. We've seen how information technology has aided aircraft maintenance, how you continue to improve, achieve perfection and consistency."

The Nigerian Air Force benefited from the exchange due to their own work with C-130s.

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THE RESCUEGRAM

is published by the Public Affairs Office, 129th Rescue Wing. This official newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 129th Rescue Wing. Its contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or the California Air National Guard.

The mission of the 129th Rescue Wing is to provide highly trained and well-equipped rescue resources, able to respond to and sustain the state mission of furnishing trained personnel for state emergencies, such as natural disasters, and to assist civil authorities in the enforcement of the law.

When called to active duty with the Air Force, we provide manpower, material and equipment resources to conduct and complete combat and search rescue operations world-wide. We provide manpower, material and equipment to conduct and complete peacetime search operations.

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New earned income credit rules lucrative for some Airmen

by Master Sgt. Scott Wagers
Air Force News Agency

RAMSTEIN AIR
BASE, Germany (AFPN)
-- Filing his family's
taxes each year online,
Master Sgt. Ron Przy-
sucha says he normally
receives about \$3,000
in tax returns. This year
however, he was taken
by surprise when the
same Web site he tradi-
tionally uses calculated
his return at nearly
\$8,000.

"I immediately
thought it was a mis-
take and I didn't want
to owe the government
money so I went to the
IRS Web site to verify
the information for
military members and
it told me that there
was a change in the
(earned income credit
) rules," said Sergeant
Przysucha, who is a
television broadcaster
assigned to Air Force
News, Det. 4.

The tax laws affecting
military taxpayers have
changed significantly
over the last few years,
said Capt. Mary Ellen
Payne, the officer in
charge of the tax center
at Ramstein Air Base.

"In the past, military
pay allowances such as
variable housing allow-
ance and cost-of-living
allowance were tradi-
tionally included as part
of your earned income,
even though those al-
lowances weren't taxed.
This would put most
military members over
the annual income
threshold of qualifying
for the earned income
credit," Captain Payne
said.

"Also non-taxable
combat pay is no longer
included in your annual
earned income. If some-

one was gone to the
desert for a significant
period of time then his
or her annual income is
going to be significantly
smaller which may
better qualify him or
her for earned income
credit," she said.

"Your best chances of
qualifying are if you're a
couple filing jointly with
two children have an
annual income thresh-
old of around \$39,000,"
Captain Payne said.

There are six differ-
ent income thresholds
based on the structure
and employment status
of each family as well as
the number of children
included in the family.

The earned income
credit is a law that
was created to give
tax breaks to working
families. It's a refund-
able credit meaning
that even if you have no
tax liability -- in other
words, you don't owe
taxes for the year and
you're scheduled to
receive back everything
you paid out over the
calendar year, you can
still qualify to receive
earned income credit on
top of the money that
was withheld through-
out the year. The maxi-
mum amount of income
credit being paid out is
\$4,716.

"The last thing that's
important to know is
that it's difficult for the
tax office to estimate
how much people will
receive on their return
without using a certain
type of software because
there are many vari-
ables that affect what
you qualify for," Captain
Payne said.

"That said, we en-

courage people to
come to us and we'll
help them understand
exactly how much they
qualify for," she said.

Other mandates for
earned income credit
qualification:

-- You cannot file
"married, filing sepa-
rately" to qualify for
earned income credit.
Partners must file
jointly.

-- Both partners filing
jointly and all claimed
children must possess
a U.S. issued social
security number.

-- If you have a for-
eign spouse, he or she
must possess a U.S.
issued social security
number (not an "ITIN"
-- Individual Tax Identi-
fication Number).

-- You have to have
lived in the U.S. for at
least six months out of
the year.

-- Military assigned
to overseas bases qualify
for 6 months U.S. oc-
cupancy.

-- Civilians working
at overseas bases do not
qualify for U.S. occu-
pancy.

Visit cont. from page 1

The exchange was part of a California State Partnership Program exchange between the California National Guard and Nigerian air force. According to the California National Guard Office of International Affairs' website, the SPP brings the other partner country's officers to the United States for information sharing to assist with its armed forces re-structuring, modernization, and strengthening principles of democracy and free market economies. The California National Guard has partnered with both Nigeria and Ukraine.

"I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the American government and the commander of the 129 Rescue Wing for making the tour an enlightening one," Group Captain Igwe said. "We're very grateful for this partnership program and hope it continues."



Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir

"Everybody here was happy to help and interested in providing answers," said Capt. Mike Sampognero, 129th Maintenance Officer. "The Nigerians were very interested in the integrated maintenance data systems, our computerization of maintenance records." The Nigerians hope to acquire the same type of system through their own government.

Welcome Home Event

The 129th Rescue Wing Family Readiness Program will participate in a VA Homecoming Event and you are invited!

May 10, 2008
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Chase Park
Moffett Federal Airfield

Send questions to:
Romeo Horvath
Event Coordinator
(650) 493-5000 x67285
Romeo.Horvath@va.gov

Food & Refreshments • Door Prizes • Live Music • Bay Area Sports Players & Alumni • Children's Entertainment

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

Please provide your first and last name, city, and the number of people who will attend.

You must bring your Driver's License or Military ID with you on the day of the event in order to enter Moffett Federal Airfield.

For more information, visit
<http://www.palo-alto.med.va.gov/WelcomeHome.asp>

Professional Portrait



Photo by Senior Airman Joshua Kauffman

Senior Airman Mark Finney, 131st RQS

What is your favorite memory in the AF?

First High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) parachute jump at US ARMY HALO school Yuma, AZ.

How has being an Airman changed your outlook on life?

Becoming part of the military family has shown me how much we look out for each other.

What's the most important lesson you've learned in the military?

No matter what obstacles present themselves the mission must be accomplished.

If you could deploy anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Germany, I have never been there

Where did you grow up?

Danville, CA

What is your job in the civilian world?

Worked sales for a major telecommunications provider before enlisting, currently full time pararescue.

What are your hobbies?

Mountain biking, surfing, skiing, and softball.

Professional portrait is a monthly profile of an outstanding Staff Sgt. and below. Nominations will be routed through the squadron and group commanders.

Squadrons 'pass the flag' in change of command ceremonies



Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir

(Left) Lt. Col. Taft Aujero accepts the guide-on from Col. Mark Sheehy, symbolizing his acceptance of his new command of the 129th OSF Commander. The tradition of passing the flag dates back to the 18th century.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino

(Top) The 29th Operations Support Flight and the 129th Rescue Squadron acknowledged new commanders in a change of command ceremony March 1, 2008. Pictured are: (from left to right) Col. Mark Sheehy, 129th Operations Group commander; Lt. Col. Steve Butow; Lt. Col. Taft Aujero, new 129th OSF commander; Major Tom Roberts; Lt. Col. Daniel Lapostole, new 129th Rescue Squadron commander.



Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir

Col. Mark Sheehy congratulates Lt. Col. Daniel Lapostole as the new 129th Rescue Squadron commander.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino

Members of the 129th Operations Group stand in formation to witness both change of commands.

G-RAP Program provides incentive for new ANG officers

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program is excited to announce a new Officer promotion that will allow Active Recruiting Assistants (RAs) to receive \$4,000 for their qualified Officer accessions. RAs will receive an initial \$2,000 payment if their Potential Officer enlists on or between the promotional periods of 1 March 2008 – 30 September 2008. RAs will receive a subsequent \$2,000 payment upon the completion of a Prior Service Officer's 90-day affiliation. For Non-Prior Service Officers, a second payment of \$2,000 will be made to the RA upon their nominee's successful shipment to the Academy of Military Science (AMS)*.

A nominee must have an enlistment date of 1 March 2008 – 30 September 2008 to qualify for the initial \$2,000 incentive.

*Non-prior Service members must ship to AMS by 31 Oct 08 to be eligible for the second \$2,000 payment.

Please contact a member of the G-RAP team at 866-566-2472 with any questions regarding the qualification criteria.

** Applies ONLY to new Officers joining the ANG. Current ANG Airmen commissioning as an Officer in the ANG are not eligible nominations for the promotion. Shipments occurring on or after 1 Nov 08 will not qualify for the additional incentive compensation. Enlistments that occur within the promotional time-frame but do not result in an AMS shipment by 31 Oct 08 will be considered paid in full upon the \$2,000 enlistment payment. Enlistment dates are confirmed through both the AFRISS and MilPDS systems. The RA must fulfill their G-RAP obligations outlined in the training module "Responsibilities of a Recruiting Assistant" prior to the disbursement of payments. Potential Officer nominations made prior to the effective dates of the promotion are eligible provided that the enlistment occurs during the promotional time period.

**Train to succeed
- and they do**

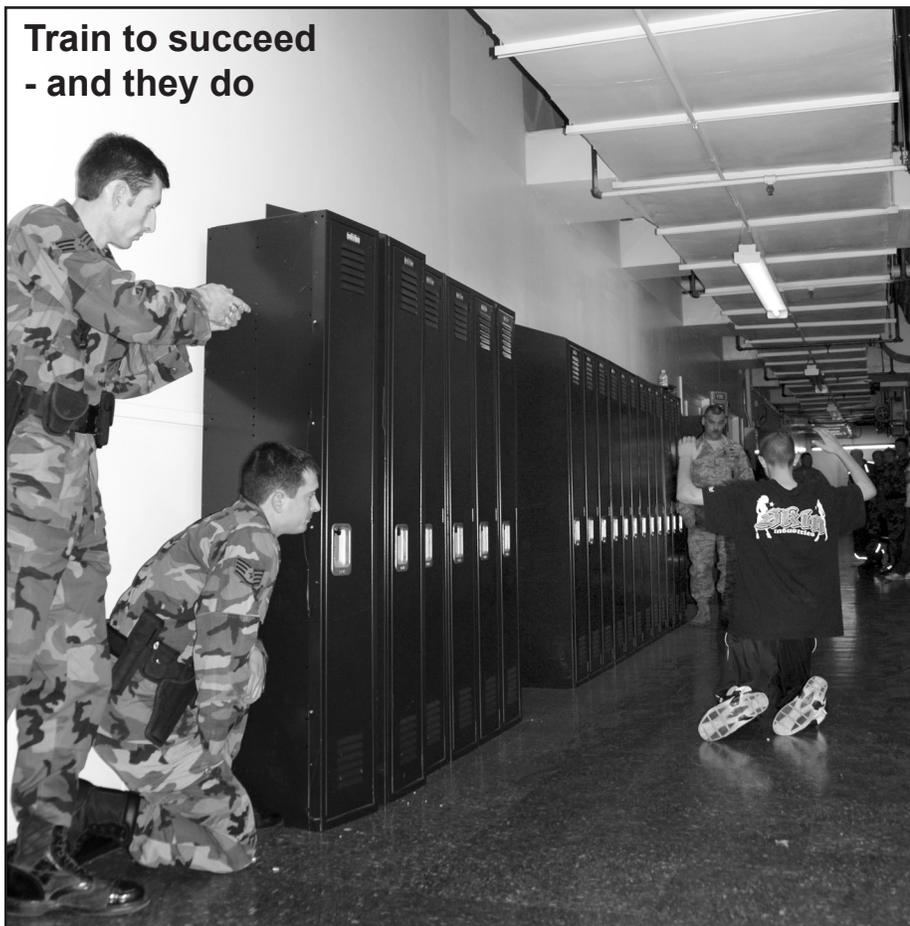


Photo by Senior Airman Kelly Hobby

SSgt Aaron Vlasek (kneeling on left) and Senior Airman Christopher Orehek of the 129th SFS apprehend 'suspect' Nicholas Morgan in the hall of Bld 669 March 1, 2008 during Phase 1 integration into the unit of different hand cuff techniques and tactics to apprehend compliant and non-compliant suspects.

129th SFS continues their winning legacy

**129th Public Affairs
and 129th SFS**

In late January 2008, the NGB notified the 129th Security Forces they were selected as one of the two 2007 ANG Security Forces Units of the Year.

As the selection committee narrowed the competition from over 85 eligible SFS units to 19, the 129 SFS along with Illinois' 183rd SFS, were selected as the ANG Security Forces Units of the Year.

The winning unit will compete against the Security Forces Reserve Unit of the Year for the Air Reserve Command Unit of the Year.

The National Guard Bureau named the 129th SFS Outstanding Security Forces Squadron of the Year in 2005 and 2006.

Varied and numerous deployments, along with constant training and outstanding leadership within their ranks, keeps this motivated squadron in the upper echelon of Air Force standards and spirit.

(Pictured below) Col. Mark Allen, ANG Director of Security Forces and Chief Master Sgt. Obetz, ANG Security Forces Manager, visited Moffett in March to validate the award packages submitted by the 129th SFS for the 2007 ANG Security Forces Unit of the Year.



Photo by Senior Airman Kelly Hobby



Photo by Senior Airman Joshua Kauffman

Major Thomas Venable, 129th SFS commander, presents Chief Master Sgt. Rodney Lockett with a shadow box displaying some of Chief Lockett's many achievements during his military career. Chief Lockett guided the 129th SFS to receive the ANG award of Outstanding Security Forces Squadron in 2005 and 2006.

News and notes

Citibank wins GTC contract

On January 15, 2008, the Department of Defense (DoD) awarded the tailored task order under the General Services Administration (GSA) SmartPay® 2 contract to Citibank. The award announcement was made by Sheila M. Earle, Principal Director, Military Personnel Policy and Acting Director, Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO).

The DTMO, which provides oversight of the DoD travel charge card program, has been preparing for this award for over a year. The new travel charge cards provided by Citibank will support the mission needs of over 1.2 million travel charge cardholders in DoD.

The estimated value of the DoD travel card task order over a 10-year period is \$40 billion, based on projected travel card spending. DTMO travel card program managers have been working closely with the Services and Agencies to ensure that requirements meet high DoD standards. DoD travelers will continue to benefit from the travel card through ATM cash advances, insurance benefits, delayed late fees and the convenience of using a charge card as opposed to purchasing via personal funds or credit card(s).

Under this new task order, current DoD travel charge cards issued by Bank of America will deactivate on November 29, 2008 and the new travel charge cards issued by Citibank will activate on November 30, 2008.

ARPC releases 2008 Guard, Reserve Personnel Fact Sheets

The 2008 Fact Sheets are a desktop reference to issues affecting all Air Reserve component Airman. It includes information on such topics as Retirement Benefits, Survivor Benefits, Activation and Deployment Checklists, and Retired Pay Formulas. The publication is available online at www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-080205-035.pdf.

Operations Group

Do you think you have what it takes to be a leader, an example for everyone around you, superiors and subordinates?

The Operations Group is currently looking for an outstanding NCO to be the 1st Sgt.

If you are interested please contact Command Chief Ramos at 650.603.9202 or liliana.ramos@camoff.af.mil for an application package.

Religious Services

Your Chapel Program provides services for you and your families. We exist because of the first amendment and your constitutional right to freedom of religion. Our mission is to provide you spiritual care and the opportunity for worship. Please let us know how we can assist you. It is our honor to serve you!

We provide: Worship Services, Non-denominational Sundays at 1100 in Bldg "650, Room 135. Catholic Mass: call for times and locations. Our office extension is x9140

ANG Bass fishing tournament

The 13th Annual ANG Bass Tournament, hosted by the 117th ARW, will be held 14-17 April 2008 on Lake Mitchell, Alabama.

The tournament website with all the info is <http://www.angbasstourney.com> There are more than 40 boats registered so far, so expect this tournament to be one of the best ever - we may even have an entry from Alaska (that has to be one dedicated fisherman)!

Cell phone usage

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

Everyone must have a hands-free device when driving and talking at Moffett FAF, or subject to a ticket. July 1 is the deadline for a hands' free device with cell phones, however cell phones can still be used in emergency situations.



Ethnic Observance Committee needs motivated volunteers

Come represent your group! Please contact Staff Sgt. Jeannie Wong to sign up: Ms.Jeannie.Wong@gmail.com

July 2008

European American Heritage Month

September 2008

Hispanic Heritage Month

November 2008

Native American Heritage Month

February 2009

African American/Black History Month

March 2009

Women's History Month

May 2009

Asian Pacific Heritage Month

Keep OPSEC in mind, even online

Operational security is important at any time. Two of the most popular free social-networking sites are MySpace and Facebook.

Personal information combined with information on what you do, where you do it and where you are going next can be very dangerous. A person who is looking for sensitive information can piece together small bits in order to complete a larger picture.

Any information can be sensitive, particularly information that relates to the mission of an active-duty member's unit. Family members who have profiles on public Web sites should also be careful about the information they post about their active-duty sponsors.

Rescuegram Deadline

We want to hear from you! Please submit your articles, notices, photographs or story ideas to us.

Please send them to drew.hughan@camoff.af.mil and jill.jamgochian@camoff.af.mil by 1000 Sunday of drill. The Rescuegram is edited during drill one month in advance of the print date.

News and notes cont.

2008 UTA Schedule

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

Kids Operation Purple Summer Camps-National Military Family Association (NMFA)

Following is information to provide to your families who may be interested in signing their child(ren) up for a National Military Family Association (NMFA) Purple Camp this summer. While actual enrollment for the camps will start 24 March - 5 May 2008, families can sign up NOW to receive e-alerts from NMFA regarding the camps and enrollment. To sign up for the alerts:

Go to NMFA website: <http://www.nmfa.org> <<http://www.nmfa.org>>

- Click on blue "Youth Initiatives" link on left

- Next click on red "Operation Purple link"

- Sign up for alert (at bottom of page)

WELCOME NEW TROOPS!

FEBRUARY ENLISTMENTS

A1C	Andrea Passmore
SrA	Erin Gramke
A1C	Holly Durkin
SrA	Gary Palmero
TSgt	Todd Fleming
SrA	Jonathan Whitney
TSgt	Rachel Taylor
SSgt	Vinh Taylor
A1C	Mandy Powers
A1C	Kayla Sather
TSgt	Brendan O'Hara
SSgt	Sun Tai

Half-Price Sabercats tickets available

Dallas Desperados vs San Jose Sabercats Arena Football

Half Price Tickets - \$9.00

The indoor Arena Football league San Jose Sabercats is offering 129RQW members and family half price group tickets to the Saturday March 22 game against the Dallas Desperados. Tickets are \$9 each and are in the lower reserved Endzone non-club section. The San Jose Sabercats will be providing the same offer for every home game this season.

Game Dates:

March 22
April 12 & 26
May 17 & 24
June 14 & 21

The 129 Services Flight is only providing distribution of the order form and has no control or access to ticket purchases.

AFA announces scholarship opportunity

The Air Force Association recently announced that it will award five \$3,000 AFA-FCEF Air Force Excellence Scholarships. U.S. Air Force service members, their spouses and dependent children (under the age of 23) of active duty and Air Force Reserve/Air National Guard personnel may apply for the scholarship.

Applicants must be enrolled or planning to enroll, full time or part time in the fall of 2008 in an undergraduate or graduate program of studies leading to an Associates, Bachelors or Masters Degree at an accredited college or university.

Applicants must submit the Scholarship Application Form and three essays to the Air Force Association no later than April 30, 2008. The scholarship application can be downloaded at <http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/afexcel.asp>.

AWARDS, SEPARATIONS AND RETIREMENTS

Meritorious Service Medals

Lt Col	Stephen Spillane
MSgt	Robert Anderson
Maj	Antonio Rodriguez
MSgt	Gary Flossman
MSgt	Liliana Ramos
1Lt	Mario Montero
SMSgt	Kristina Keck

Air Force Commendation Medals

Capt	Timothy Tapia
1Lt	Mario Montero
SMSgt	Maria Myaskovsky
MSgt	Fred Baluyot
MSgt	Michael Bowers
MSgt	Reuben Cortez
MSgt	Mark Gudelunas
MSgt	Leon Hernandez
MSgt	Boyd Johnston
MSgt	Kevin Montgomery
MSgt	Regina Morf
TSgt	Michael Bannister
TSgt	Ernesto Godinez
TSgt	John Golos
SrA	Pablo Villa

Air Medals

Capt	Damon Foss
1Lt	Douglas Lutz
MSgt	Eric Degner
MSgt	Robert Gregg
MSgt	Michael Malloy
TSgt	Michael Bendle
SSgt	Darren Pon

Separations / Retirements

TSgt	Rebecca Dura <i>ETS</i>
Capt	William Gentry <i>Transfer to 149th</i>
SSgt	Lawrence Johnson <i>Transfer to Army Guard</i>
SSgt	Christina Matthews <i>ETS</i>
2Lt	Matthew Richardson <i>Transfer to Channel Island</i>



Photo by Senior Airman Joshua Kauffman

Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Commander, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Liliana Ramos present Domingo Ramos, Chief Ramos' husband, with a Certificate of Appreciation for his support during his wife's 30-plus years of military service at her retirement ceremony in February.

129th RQW/PA
MOFFETT FAF, CA 94035

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

These Things We Do, That Others May Live...