

THE RESCUEGRAM



The Official Information Publication of the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard November 2008

Lives Saved 598

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



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Remain 'on guard' to save lives at home and abroad

By Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Rescue Wing Commander



We've run the gambit this year...two 500 mile over-water rescue missions this summer, deployment of type II firefighters, and several

firefighter saves and medevacs during the Northern California wildfires. Oh, by the way, we also dropped more than 150,000 gallons of water over the fires.

Soon after we had a pause in the fire business, we responded to another disaster. Labor Day weekend we got the call for help from Louisiana as Hurricane Gustav was making its way towards the Gulf Coast region.

With the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina still on our minds, more than 80 unit members swiftly deployed to Ellington Field in Houston, Texas. The 129th Rescue Wing force formed and led Joint Task Force 129. Our rescue brethren from the 106th Rescue Wing from Gabreski Airport in New York, and the 176th Wing from Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska, were also part of the rescue task force. Luckily Hurricane Gustav caused less damage than originally predicted after it swept through the region.

But the mission was not over because Hurricane Ike was on a path predicted to devastate Galveston, Texas. Our forces

remained in Ellington and then moved out of the path of the storm to Kelly Field in San Antonio. As Ike was about to make landfall, we flew into adverse conditions and did what we do best.

This professional and highly-skilled team of citizen Airmen demonstrated our unit's life-saving capability to respond anytime, anywhere. JTF 129 picked up 48 people and 13 dogs, and a majority of these saves, 34 people and 11 dogs, were credited to 129th RQW rescuers. This is exactly why we're consistently called upon to perform rescue operations in natural disasters.

To be able to quickly deploy, whether it be for hurricanes, fires or combat, we must maintain a high level of readiness. If we don't keep current on ancillary training, war skills training, dental examinations, and fitness tests, our community and nation lose an important life-saving capability.

Although unit combat capability is a commander responsibility, we all have a personal responsibility to be ready to deploy. Just as a chef "steels" his knife prior to using it, we must hone our skills, get all the required training, and comply with deployability directives when not performing the mission. We need to be proactive in getting prepared so we can concentrate on the mission when called.

Our disaster response operations may have calmed down for now, but as you all know, in the rescue business we can be gone

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THE RESCUEGRAM

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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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Air Guard recruiting: We are all recruiters

by Tech. Sgt. Rick Williams, 129th Rescue Wing Recruiting

As the California Air National Guard enters another challenging year of recruiting the brightest and best men and women to serve their state and country, recruiting's base and national support continues to grow.

As 129th Rescue Wing members take advantage of the \$2,000 paid to those who help friends enlist through the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program, the spotlight also shines on the Air National Guard with nationwide recruiting commercials aired during prime-time programs such as Monday Night Football.

"The best frame of mind for everyone in the 129th to remember is that we are all recruiters," said Tech. Sgt. Bill Todd, an Air Guard recruiter for the 129th since 2007. "Every time we wear our uniform in public, who knows? You may just be noticed by someone that could lead to them joining the Air Guard somewhere down the road."

"If everyone reached out to their family and friends to tell their own Air Guard story and spread the good word about what we do at the 129th Rescue Wing, who knows how many future enlistments that could lead to?" he added. "Word of mouth is a powerful communication tool."

Traditional methods of informing the public about what a potential employer can offer - the first step in any recruiting process - have included tried-and-true airshow presentations, career fair displays, and walk-ins who see the Air National Guard sign on the downtown Mountain View recruiting office. As technology marches on, recruiting tries to march along with it.

"We get good interest in the Air Guard from the www.goang.com web page along with our 1-800-TO-GO-ANG phone line," said Master Sgt. Rex Aquino, an eight-year veteran of Air Guard recruiting. "The young people today are so computer savvy. They do their research online, see all the excellent benefits and bonuses offered by the Air Guard, then by the

time they call or visit us they have a better awareness of what we're all about. A more-informed applicant is a happy applicant that will hopefully lead to them becoming a new recruit."

Many potential recruits are found in the Air Guard's comrades in arms, including the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and their corresponding Guard/Reserve forces. With a highly visible search and rescue mission that often leads to publicity in national media publications, the recruiters hope this can help spark interest among current or former military members who may be looking to transfer to the 129th.

"There are plenty of people looking to make a difference," Sergeant Aquino said. "With almost 600 lives saved by the 129th Rescue Wing over the years, our unit is a great place for potential recruits to do just that, in a wide variety of jobs. Every career field we offer, from logistics to operations to support to medical, is a vital part of our search-and-rescue mission. No single career field is more important than another - everybody plays a part in our mission."

HH-60G pilot openings

The 129th RQS is looking for qualified candidates to fill traditional positions operating the HH-60G. Here are some of the requirements:

- Age 28 1/2 or younger
- Bachelor's degree
- Pass a USAF Flying Class 1 Physical and vision requirements
- Pass a Secret clearance investigation
- Pass the AFOQT and meet minimum scores in core areas
- No past UCMJ action, DWI/DUI, or drug usage
- Live within 150 miles of Moffett Field or commit to relocate
- No GTC revocations or overdue balances

For more information contact Capt. David Weidman at x9340 or david.weidman@camoff.ang.af.mil

JTF 129 Airmen rescue civilians stranded in Galveston

by Capt. Alyson Teeter, 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Editor's Note: This is the first article of two that document the 129th Rescue Wing's participation in Hurricane Ike rescue missions. Photos and videos are available at www.129rgw.af.mil and www.youtube.com/129thRescueWing.

California Air National Guardsmen from the 129th Rescue Wing here deployed to Kelly Field in San Antonio for Hurricane Ike search and rescue support operations rescued eight people Sept. 12 in Galveston, Texas.

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter on search and rescue patrol spotted unevacuated civilians waving from a bridge on the Bolivar Peninsula near Galveston. Flooding conditions due to Hurricane Ike severed an access road onto the peninsula and the civilians were stranded. USCG and Texas Army National Guard helicopters picked up approximately 30 people.

Soon after the bridge rescues, a USCG helicopter and four Joint Task Force 129 helicopters, including two 129th RQW HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and pararescuemen, arrived on scene to assist.

During the aerial reconnaissance the crews found no one else on the bridge because it was under water, said Maj. Matthew Thomas, 129th Rescue Wing pilot and co-pilot for Jolly 92.

The USCG then dispatched the JTF 129 helicopters to a home nearby on the northeast side of Galveston. The house was flooding and a call for help had been made to the Coast Guard. According to Major Thomas, the stranded civilians had called their relatives in Illinois for help. The relatives then called the Coast Guard.

The Pave Hawk, Jolly 92, landed in a small grassy area and pararescuemen, also known as PJs, went to the house to rescue the four stranded civilians. "The area where we landed was under water 10 minutes later," Major Thomas said.

A second JTF 129 helicopter, Jolly 91, was hovering nearby during the rescue, and the sound of the helicopter prompted additional unevacuated civilians to leave their homes, said Capt. Brian Finnerty, 129th Rescue Wing pilot and flight lead for Jolly 91.

Two PJs rappelled from Jolly 91 and attempt-



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Wally Bacio

Joint Task Force 129 crew, Jolly 92, rescues a family of four in Galveston, Texas, Sept. 12.

ed to convince civilians that they needed to evacuate. Some civilians refused to leave and opted to stay in their homes, Captain Finnerty said. The PJs hoisted two people and two dogs into the Pave Hawk, and the crew eventually dropped them off at Ellington Field in Houston.

While Jolly 91 picked up the two civilians, Jolly 92 was hovering nearby with the family of four. The crew picked up two more people and pets. The crews spotted one man with a spotlight - his house was surrounded by water. The PJs hoisted the man up in to the helicopter.

Jolly 92 headed to Ellington Field with the six rescued civilians and pets. The helicopters then returned to Kelly Field. "Winds at that point were at 60 knots and visibility was low - it was time for us to go," Major Thomas said.

Overall, four Air National Guard Pave Hawks and JTF 129 personnel saved 15 adults, one child, and four dogs Sept. 12.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Wally Bacio

Joint Task Force 129 crew, Jolly 92, flies over a yacht warehouse fire in Galveston, Texas, Sept. 12.

129th rescuers excel in Hurricane Ike aftermath

by Capt. Alyson Teeter, 129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Brock Woodward

129th Rescue Wing crews witness Hurricane Ike's aftermath in Galveston, Texas, Sept. 13.

California Air National Guardsmen from the 129th Rescue Wing here deployed to Kelly Field in San Antonio for Hurricane Ike search and rescue support operations continued their search Sept. 13 for stranded victims near Galveston, Texas.

Four Joint Task Force 129 HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters, including two from the 129th RQW, departed from Kelly Field at 10 a.m. Overall, JTF 129 members saved 48 people and 13 dogs in response to Hurricane Ike.

The crews knew they had a busy day ahead of them. "We were told that more than 200 911 calls were made in the morning," said Maj. Rhys Hunt, a 129th RQW pilot. "When we got to Galveston, it looked like a war zone. There were four or five houses on fire, Galveston Airport was completely underwater, most of the city was flooded, and several piers were demolished."

Instead of being tasked with picking up victims in specific locations, the helicopters trolled low and slow. The crews hoped the sound of the rotor blades would prompt survivors to come out of their homes and seek help in evacuating the area. It wasn't long before sur-

vivors did just that.

Aircrews aboard the HH-60G spotted a woman poking her head out from her porch. Two pararescuemen rappelled down to convince the woman to evacuate. The helicopter then landed in a baseball field near her house and discovered two elderly women and a middle-aged man stranded in the house. The survivors asked to be evacuated because one of the women was sick and needed treatment.

The three people loaded on the helicopter and crews promptly transported them to Texas City High School, a main collection point for survivors.

The aircrew returned to the air and disaster area and proceeded to troll over the Bolivar Peninsula near Galveston. The crews were stunned by the destruction witnessed overhead. "Half of the houses appeared flattened in Crystal Beach," Major Hunt said.

The aircrews continued their search for survivors and came across a man, woman and their dog wading through the water. The helicopter landed on a dry road near the trio and picked them up. The man and woman provided information about additional victims requiring evacuation.

Based on this tip, the helicopter took off and found the home. An elderly man, two of his family members and a dog were stranded. The pararescuemen rappelled down to the house and used the hoist to pluck the family from danger.

After dropping off the group of survivors, the HH-60G crew searched for people in Gilchrist on the Bolivar Peninsula. They came across small groups of people sitting on porches and balconies. Surprisingly for the crews, when asked to evacuate, the people opted to stay put.

At the end of the day, searching for survivors and performing rescues was a grueling but very gratifying mission for the JTF 129 Airmen. "All the crewmembers were glad to be there and help when people needed it most," Major Hunt said.

"The task force members did an incredible job over the past 48 hours flying in extremely violent conditions," said Col. Mark Sheehy, the 129th RQW Operations Group commander and JTF 129 commander. "They epitomize the Air Force rescue motto of 'These things we do that others may live.'"

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to respond to another disaster tomorrow. We also have our AEF deployments quickly approaching, so this gives further impetus for remaining 'on guard' and ready to save lives.

Your nation, communities, families and co-workers greatly appreciate your service and dedication demonstrated when assisting your fellow citizens. Thank you for everything you do, so that others may live.

Portrait of a Professional -- Senior Airman Mark Deimling, 130th RQS



What is your favorite memory in the AF?

My first SAR, #560. A fisherman fell into fish hold, and I deployed to support the PJs and refuel HH-60s.

What motivated you to enlist in the AF? I always wanted to be in the military.

How has being an Airman changed your outlook on life? I have gained an appreciation for the things that I have and broadened my perspective as to what others do not.

What's the most important lesson you've learned in the military? Attention to detail.

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

If you could choose any AF job, which would it be? Why? A loadmaster; getting to throw stuff out of an airplane is satisfying.

Where did you grow up? San Jose

What is your job in the civilian world? Santa Clara County Deputy Sheriff

What would people be surprised to know about you? No surprises here!

What are your hobbies? Mountain biking, off road driving, 4WD.

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

First Sergeant positions available

The 129th Rescue Wing has First Sergeant opportunities available. First sergeants communicate with unit leadership, supervisors and members to ensure discipline is equitably maintained and morale, welfare, and health needs for the enlisted force are met.

The first sergeant serves as the commander's advisor on personnel programs, career progression, family needs, financial matters, family and unaccompanied housing, details, Professional Military Education (PME), recognition programs and any additional needs required by the commander.

Submit application packages to 680 Macon Road, Mail Stop 12, Moffett Federal Airfield, CA 94035, Attn: CMSgt Kristina Keck. Application deadline is Nov. 2, 2008

Please feel free to direct any questions to Chief Master Sgt. Kristina Keck at x9202.



Apply for 129th Alumni Heritage scholarship by November 8

The 129th Alumni & Heritage Association (AHA) provides Educational Scholarships to unit members each year.

Applicants need to be currently enrolled in an educational program. A current transcript, a statement of work in progress from the educational facility or other evidence of program participation is required for all applicants.

Applications can be obtained online at <http://www.129aha.org/ScholarAppl.htm>.

Completed applications must be submitted to the 129th Alumni & Heritage Association Scholarship Chair, Lt. Col. Cynthia Kepple, at cindy_kepple@yahoo.com or by mail to her home at 2221 Walnut Grove Ave., San Jose, CA 95128-1241. Applications can also be submitted to CMSgt Kristina Keck in the Headquarters Building.

The deadline for submitting scholarship applications is the close of business Nov. 8.

News & Notes

ARPC announces new weekend schedule

Starting Oct. 4, Reserve Personnel Contact Center customer service counselors will be available the first three Saturdays of each month to support Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve unit training assemblies from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. MT. While federal holidays may alter the schedule, this enhanced customer service gives drilling Citizen Airmen the opportunity to speak with a customer service counselor during their UTA weekends.

Counselors can be reached by calling 1-800-525-0102 (preferred) or DSN 926-6528. Airmen can always request assistance 24/7/365 by logging onto virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve, the customer service Web portal for personnel support, online at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/>.

More documentation necessary to replace, renew ID cards

Homeland Security Directive 12 now requires retirees and family members seeking to renew or replace a military identification card to provide two types of ID. Retirees and family members needing identification cards must have two of the following types of current identification, one of which must include a photo:

- Driver's license or ID issued by a state
- ID card issued by federal, state or local government agencies or entities
- School ID card with a photograph
- Voter's registration card
- U.S. military ID card
- U.S. passport
- Certificate of U.S. citizenship
- Certificate of naturalization

For people younger than 18, who are unable to present a document previously listed, they may bring:

- School record or report card
- Clinic, doctor or hospital record
- Day-care or nursery school record

The listing above is not all inclusive. A list of acceptable documents can be found <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-9.pdf>

DANTES/CLEP opportunities

The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education support (DANTES) provides a variety of examination programs through which an individual may:

- Earn a high school credential
- Satisfy undergraduate and graduate level college admission requirements

- Earn college credit
- Gain professional certification

Most tests are offered at DANTES Test Centers on a funded basis for eligible military personnel.

The DANTES testing facility for the 129th members is located at the Travis AFB education center, Base Library 530 Hickam Ave., Travis AFB, CA

DANTES testing days at Travis: Tue., Wed., Thur.

Time:

0800 & 1000 (by appointment only)

DSN: 837-3444/1733

Comm: 707-424-3444/1733

GTC switch from Bank of America to Citi Bank

The Government Travel Card through Bank of America is being replaced with Citi Bank. Citi Bank will become the new GTC provider and the transition date is scheduled for Nov. 30, 2008.

On Nov. 30 the Bank of America GTC will no longer be acceptable/used. At 12:00 a.m. EST the Citi Card will be the Government Travel Card for the Department of Defense.

It is imperative that all cardholders that have credit balances on their current Bank of America GTC call the bank as soon as possible in order to have this credit balance paid back to them, the cardholder. The deadline for this is Nov. 28.

Most importantly, organizations must take care of ALL balances BEFORE Nov. 28 to ensure a smooth transition to the Citi Bank GTC.

If you are TDY during the transition date, ensure you carry both the Bank of America and Citi cards with you. If you have any questions, please contact your Agency Program Coordinator.

Register now for the 2009 OAY Banquet

Chief Master Sergeant Deborah K. Lott, Command Chief Master Sergeant of the California Air National Guard cordially invites you to the 2009 Outstanding Airmen and First Sergeant of the Year Banquet, Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009, in Riverside, Calif.

The Banquet will be held at the Riverside Convention Center. The military dress is Mess Dress or Semi-Formal. Pre-dinner drinks and hors d'oeuvres begins at 5 p.m. and the introductions and dinner will be served at 6 p.m.

RSVP by Jan. 2, 2009 by going to <https://einvitations.afit.edu/OAY565/index.cfm>. You can also register at

<https://wwwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/ASPs/CoP/EntryCoP.asp?Filter=AN-OT-01-80>.

Two \$500 MOAA scholarships available to 129th personnel

The Silicon Valley Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America will award two \$500 scholarships to 129th Rescue Wing personnel. Scholarship candidates must meet the following requirements:

1. Enlisted member of the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard.
2. Candidates selected to receive the awards must be currently enrolled at an accredited Community College or University for the purpose of obtaining a Baccalaureate Degree.
3. A 3.0 grade point average or better on official transcripts.
4. Enrollment must be a minimum of one class of 3 or more credit units.
5. Candidates must have demonstrated to his or her immediate Commanding Officer a high degree of moral character, dedication to duty and perseverance in furthering his or her career over the preceding twelve months.

6. Previous awardees will not be considered.

If you meet all of these guidelines, please contact Capt. Alyson Teeter at x9152 by Jan. 5, 2009, to apply.

News & Notes cont.

Welcome new 129th members!

Capt. Charles Phillips
Tech. Sgt. Adrielle Cabatian
Tech. Sgt. Sean Carroll
Staff Sgt. Tony Rivera
Staff Sgt. Brandon Sheldon
Senior Airman Shane Burke
Senior Airman Christopher Guidry
Airman 1st Class Silivino Reyes

The following member was recently promoted to their current rank. Congratulations!

Tech. Sgt. Erik Anderson
Tech. Sgt. Geoffrey Norton
Staff Sgt. Marcos Berrios
Staff Sgt. Brian Strukan
Senior Airman Henry Wright

The following members have retired, separated, or transferred to another unit. We wish them well and thank them for their service.

Chief Master Sgt. Alfred Cortez
Chief Master Sgt. Louis Hernandez
Senior Master Sgt. Igor Myaskovsky
Senior Master Sgt. Ruben Rodriguez
Tech. Sgt. Glenn Brakel
Tech. Sgt. Neal Ericksen
Staff Sgt. Erik Blackburn
Staff Sgt. Bernard Brown
Staff Sgt. Ryan Gille
Staff Sgt. Clayton Kramer
Senior Airman Anthony Nuno
Senior Airman Christopher Orehek
Senior Airman Pablo Villa

Discounted 49ers tickets available to military members

The San Francisco 49ers would like to offer you a limited time, special \$17 priced game ticket as a way of saying "Thank You" for the job you do in making this great country of ours a better place. This price is made possible only through your relationship with the team and because of the role you play in supporting our community.

There are only a certain number of tickets that we can offer at this price, so you are limited to purchasing four tickets per game. Because the number of total tickets available is limited, please do not share this offer with others outside of your organization.

Please click on the link below and enter the password "America" to receive the reduced price for your 49ers tickets: <http://www.ticketmaster.com/promo/pzyix5>

Home Community Care Program

The Home Community Care Program is a free UTA child care service open to military members who participate in a UTA weekend. The program is open to children two weeks to 12 years old. Because the child care provider is full during the week, no care can be provided for RUTAs and AT.

Reservations will be confirmed only when the Home Community Care Parent Statement and state registration forms are completed in their entirety and received by the Services Flight. The forms must be submitted during the UTA prior to be eligible for the next UTA.

For more information and access to the required forms, please go to the Services CoP on the Air Force Portal at <https://wwwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/ASPs/CoP/OpenCoP.asp?Filter=AN-OT-02-14>

FOR THE LATEST
129TH RQW
NEWS, GO TO:
www.129rqw.ang.af.mil

Suicide Prevention: Speak up so others don't act out

Suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility. Intervention is critical, because it can help change the perception of a person contemplating suicide who thinks of taking his life as a long-term solution to what may be only a short-term problem.

Signs or symptoms of someone contemplating suicide can include withdrawal from society, giving away personal belongings or actions as obvious as saying final goodbyes. If someone indicates he or she is contemplating suicide, help ensure that person receives counseling. And once someone is identified and receiving treatment, it is important to keep track of how they are getting along.

The good news about suicide prevention is that it works. For more information about suicide prevention, visit:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Army Behavioral Health:

<http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil/sprevention/index.html>
Suicide Prevention Resource Center:
http://www.sprc.org/library/event_kit/index.asp#gen_info_factsheets.

TDY per-mile rate increases

In response to the mid-year rise in gasoline prices, General Service Administration officials raised the temporary-duty mileage rate from \$0.505 per mile to \$0.585.

The increase applies to all uniformed personnel and civilian employees traveling on official business by privately owned automobile or motorcycle, effective Aug. 1.

Enhancements improve evaluation forms

New technological enhancements have been made to four Air Force evaluation forms:

- Air Force Form 910 Enlisted Performance Report (airman basic to technical sergeant)
- Air Force Form 911 Enlisted Performance Report (master sergeant to chief master sergeant)
- Air Force Form 931 Performance Feedback Worksheet (airman basic to technical sergeant)
- Air Force Form 707 Officer Performance Report (lieutenant to colonel).

Improvements include upgrading the forms' digital certificate preferences, standardizing font sizes for the various signature blocks, clarifying the text in some of the boxes and streamlining sign-in privileges.

The use of the revised forms, dated June 18, will start immediately. Reports currently in coordination do not need to be redone.

The new evaluation forms are located at the Air Force e-Publishing Web site at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/>.

November UTA Menus

Saturday: Italian Touch
Sunday: Standard Lunch

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Recruiting Assistance Program



Earn up to \$2,000 for each new recruit who enlists and reports to Basic Training. For eligibility information please visit <http://www.guardrecruitingassistant.com/>.

129th Alumni and Heritage Association

Do you belong to the 129th Alumni and Heritage Association? You don't need to be an alumni to be a member, currently we have about 300 members, total! Our goal is to continue the ongoing heritage of the 129th through current and past members. We support the wing during deployments and homecoming and have an annual scholarship for wing personnel or their families attending college. Please see your Chief for details. Continue your legacy....please support the AHA.

2008 - 2009 UTAs

2008

1-2 November
6-7 December

2-3 May
6-7 June
11-12 July

2009

3-4 January
7-8 February
7-8 March
4-5 April

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

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

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