



# ***THE LIFE SUPPORT NEWSLETTER***

*News for the men and women who served in the USAF or civilians who work in Government or industry in the Aircrew Life Support business.*



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Reporters: Tommy Tompkins \* PO Box 372 \* Equality, IL 62934 \* Email: [tombob@shawneelink.com](mailto:tombob@shawneelink.com)  
Bob McElwain \* 17149 Forest Hills Drive \* Victorville, CA 92395 \* Email: [bob.mcelwain@charter.net](mailto:bob.mcelwain@charter.net)

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## ***Tommy's Comments***

I take this opportunity to congratulate Dan Kalsow, Gil Guzman and Martin Austin on their selection as the newest Chief Master Sergeants. Chief Dan is stationed at Geilenkirchen Germany, Chief Gil at Barksdale and Chief Martin at Randolph.

I had the opportunity to attend Chief Steve Skaggs Retirement. SMS Rick Murray, SMS Dave Murray, MSGT Matt McMullen, MSGT Steve Summers and MSGT Rick Burke did an excellent job. It was an outstanding ceremony, each one that I have the opportunity to go to is better than the last. It was a super Job by Steve's Staff. The highlight to me was the singing of the national anthem by Steve and Valerie's youngest daughter. Also the U.S. Flag Presentation was outstanding and culminated with Steve's brother Chief Petty Officer Jeff Skaggs, USN, Retired presenting the folded flag to Steve.

Other retired Life Supporters in attendance were Chief and Mrs. Dave Delano, SMS Bobby Clark and SMS Brett Curran.

Chief Rich Robichaud attended Chief Todd Nelson's retirement and provided the following.

"I had the opportunity to attend Chief Todd Nelson's retirement the afternoon of 20 Jun 05. Chiefs (retired) Bill Wood, Bryan "Beetle"

Bailey, and Randy Loving were in attendance as well. The SERE folks assigned to JPRA did an outstanding job sending Todd off into retirement. JPRA honored Todd by showering him with gifts and all the directors had kind words to say about him because all of his accomplishments while assigned to JPRA...he increased unit morale and enlisted promotion rates. The ceremony was great, and Todd's youngest son Jack provided additional entertainment throughout the ceremony. The best part was when Col Ellis (JPRA/CC) was highlighting Todd's career; Jack walked up and sat in Col Ellis' chair next to his Dad as if the chair was reserved for him"

There are some retirements planned this year but to my knowledge nothing yet firm but I look forward to all three new Chiefs moving into more challenging positions.

I also thank Chief Dave Chitwood for taking the time earlier this year at the 2005 Life Support Reunion to present what was one of the best ever presentations from the Active Duty perspective. We "old" retirees and families really enjoyed the presentation. Dave has a great sense of humor that really kept the crowd on their toes!

SAFE this year is in Reno and will be held in conjunction with active duty workshops. Looking forward to seeing several hundred active duty life supporters there. Our Reunion this

year is also planned in Reno and during the same time as SAFE. We hope to be able to arrange some cross talk and visits between SAFE, Active Duty and Retirees. We will keep you posted. SAFE will be at the Reno Hilton. I have opened discussions with the SAFE Leadership to try to schedule a Retirees Appreciation Day during SAFE and perhaps get a one day or one afternoon pass to the Exhibit Floor. Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> of October is the day I will be shooting for!

Chief Jimmie Cartwright passed on that he had learned of the death of SMS Retired Leonard Robb in October. Robb and I both worked for Jimmie years ago at Eglin. He will be missed.

## *CHILI SEZ*



Another great reunion was held last year and now we're looking forward to descending on Reno. As Tommy said, this time we're joining up with the attendees of the SAFE Symposium and our fellow active duty life supporters. The active duty folks will be there for their worldwide workshop (formerly known as the World Wide Life Support Conference). The SAFE Symposium is attended by acquisition and technical leaders from worldwide industry, governmental, and military agencies. In other words, there is going to be a whole lot of people there! We (retirees) will be at the Nugget hotel and everyone else will be at the Hilton. We'll be using hotel shuttle service to get back and forth between the two hotels. The reunion will be held 23 – 26 Oct 2006. Full details will be included in our June 06 newsletter.

While I'm on the subject of the reunion, below are some comments from Jim Rooney on last year's event.

### **The 2005 Life Support Retirees Reunion Golf Tournament**

Our 2005 Retirees Golf Tournament held during the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Life Support Retirees Reunion was held at the Mojave Resort Golf Course in Laughlin, Nevada. Ed Mackenzie, once again, did a superb job in setting up the tournament and insuring all participants enjoyed our morning of golf. Well Done, Ed.

Throughout the years, we have been fortunate in receiving support from various sources that donate prizes that support our tournament. This year was no exception and we would like to acknowledge the following individuals and corporations that supported this year's tournament.

CMSgt Rich Robichaud, HQ USAF Life Support; CMSgt Dave Chitwood, HQ AFSOC Life Support; CMSgt Chris Holt, HQ ACC Life Support; Tactical & Survival Specialties; East-West Industries; Gentex Carbondale; Gentex West; Al Loving; Tommy Tompkins; Cal Crochet; Mark Jones; Bill Lynn; Hamp Hampton; Beetle Bailey; and Jim Rooney

This year we fielded five teams to participate in our annual "Scramble". The reverse order of finish was as follows:

**Fifth Place: Bill Lynn, Jim Rooney, Tom Rooney and Shelley Pace**

**Fourth Place: Don Muir, Jo Muir, John Weir and Al Schneider**

**Third Place: Al Loving, Reggie Sheppard, Hank Abraham and Ellen Abraham**

Second Place: Vern Croft, Gary Winchester, Dan Pace and Hamp Hampton

First Place: Ed MacKenzie, Dave Chitwood, Mike Rossmiller and Will Oost

Our lady golfers, Jo Muir, Ellen Abraham, and Shelley Pace were presented special gifts donated by Chief Rich Robichaud and Chief Bill Lynn. Prizes were also presented to the following individuals:

Longest Drive on Hole #7: Gary Winchester

Closest to the Pin on Hole #8: Ed MacKenzie

Longest Drive on Hole #10: Hamp Hampton

Closest to the Pin on Hole #17: Jim Rooney

The Life Support Retirees Perpetual Golf Award is a trophy that is annually presented to a "worthy" life support retiree. This trophy is entrusted to the selected individual for a one year period and is to be returned to the Reunion the following year for presentation to another "worthy" recipient. This year, in recognition of his longstanding support to the Reunion and to the Golf Tournament, the trophy was presented to Ed MacKenzie.

Current information indicates that our next reunion will be held in conjunction the SAFE and the 2006 WWALS Workshop at Reno, NV in Oct 06. Ed and I will be corresponding on possible golf options for our Reunion. More to follow on that issue. Hope to see everyone in Reno – Jim Rooney

## COINS

Although I have not had enough requests to justify ordering more of the "Commemorative 50th Anniversary Life Support Coin", the life support community has talked me into doing just that. I placed an order for 300 coins and expect delivery around mid February. They will again sell for \$5 each. I have a list of the folks who have placed an order with me and will fill their requests first. After that it's first come first served.

## SICK & SHUT-INS

Don Muir suffered a heart attack during the Christmas week and is at home recuperating from quadruple bypass surgery. I spoke with him right after Christmas and he seemed to be doing very well.

I received word from John Weir's bride, Lou that he (John) has been diagnosed with lung cancer! I spoke with John and he sounded upbeat and positive that the tumor can be removed. He and Don Muir seem to be handling their situations very well. Should anyone want to speak directly with them Don can be reached at (512) 864-0207. John can be reached at 803-452-5106. I am sure they would appreciate the call.

## E-Mails

E-mails received since the last newsletter that may interest you are as follows:

Just a note to let you know that I'm doing great and living in Wasco, CA. I'm currently managing a storage facility and taking life easy. I was working at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV as a parachute rigger for the Navy for 14 years. I got tired of the Navy

and the cold weather there so I retired Jan 03. I tried the retirement life for a year, but got tired of that and had to go back to work. I'm into street rodding and as such, attend a lot of car shows all over the place. I have a 1937 Chevy Coup Hot Rod. I've been receiving the newsletter and have always wondered where people are and how they are doing. So, if any of you remember me send me an e-mail or letter. It would be great to hear from some of the guys.

*Oscar Noble*

\* \* \* \*

Thanks for adding me to your organization. I think Jimmie Cartwright told you about me. He and Bill Barbour were my first NCOICs at Eglin AFB. I've been retired from the AF since April 1974. I took a round about way to get into life support. I was sent to tech school for Personnel Specialist at Scott Field, IL. I eliminated myself from that AFSC because I didn't want to punch a typewriter. I used the excuse that my amputated right index finger would be a handicap. From there I was sent to Eglin as a medical supply tech cross trainee. There a SSgt hit the ceiling saying, "What dumb so and so did this? There's more typing in this AFSC than the other one". He handed me a notebook with all the AFSCs and said, "Pick one!" I felt like a little lost child. I never made top rank because I took every opportunity to travel so I wasn't around much for promotions. My last assignment was Peterson AFB, Co. My last two years there were the best I ever had. I was NCOIC of the Life Support Continuation Training School. I'm not bragging, but I was a dammed good instructor. I worked 22 years as a NC Corrections Officer and sergeant. I was in uniform for 42 years! Can anybody top that?

*Kelly Tuck*

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I'm sorry to hear Tom Lujan passed away. I should have known something was wrong when I didn't receive a Christmas card from him last year. Tom and I first met in Thailand in 1969 and later he and John Shields worked for me at Shaw AFB in 1974. I started out in Personal Equipment in 1953 in England at the RAFB Manston. I used to work in the 512th FBS Supply Squadron then cross trained into PE. I remained in the career field until I retired in 1976. I worked for McGarvey, Struble, John Weir, Spider Webb, and Arlyn Rappe, just to name a few. All these Supers were great guys... Hank Counts too! It's so nice to hear about some of the old guys with whom I had worked for and with during my 24 year tenure in the career field.

MSgt (retired) Richard Bingaman

I also received a surprising e-mail from Jerry White. Jerry was stationed at Langley in the mid 80s and from there went to the 474th and 57th wings at Nellis AFB before transferring to Ramstein and the USAFE IG team. Jerry ended up as the Task Force LS Superintendent while over there.

Jerry, Oscar, Kelly and Richard would love to hear from anyone who remembers them. Their e-mail and phone numbers are listed on our web site.

### *Lost and Found*

Besides Jerry White, other life supporters who have found us via the retiree's web site are: Tom Calhoun, Frank Cosmen, Bob Costa, Mickey Harper, Glenn King, Jay Leonard, Frank O'loughlin, Larry Parker, William Plunk, Richard Price, and Ron Watson. Contact information for all these guys is listed on our web site.

If you are not on line and would like to have a copy of our address list drop me a line and I'll mail one to you.

## TAPS

SMSgt Robert "Bob" Brickner, Air Reserve Technician at the 303<sup>rd</sup> fighter squadron, 442<sup>nd</sup> fighter wing, Whiteman AFB MO passed away this month losing his battle with cancer. Bob had planned his entire civilian and military retirement from the AF Reserve for November 2005 and was diagnosed with cancer in late September 2005. Bob moved his retirement up by one month so he could start his chemo and after only 2 chemo treatments he had lost nearly 80 lbs. It is so sad...he never got to enjoy any retirement.

Dennis Lewis collapsed Sunday, 23 Oct and died a few days later. Dennis worked as a civilian and later as a contractor in Life Support at Vance AFB for many years. He was planning on retiring in a few years.

## *DID YOU KNOW???*

### *Household Goods Moved Years After Retiring - Save Thousands!*

When you retire, you have one year to execute your household-goods move under your retirement orders. Unlike PCS or ETS orders, where the government pays only up to your "Home of Record's" distance, you get to move anywhere in the country you choose as your "Home of Selection."

What happens if you retire but do not make your move within the usual 12-month period? If you visit most Personal Property/Household Goods Offices, they will tell you -- if you ask them -- that they will extend your move authorization for an additional

year. You must usually give them a reason, such as you or a family member need to finish an educational program or that there was some other personal or family hardship that made moving impractical.

The real problem is when the Personal Property Office will not give you a one-year extension or you want more time. From personal experience over the past year, I learned that the one-year move period can be extended in some worthy cases to at least three years. Each person's case is different, so there is no guarantee.

When I retired in 1999 and decided to stay where I was, for personal and professional reasons, relocation was out of the question when I subsequently needed to move to Virginia in 2003. A local Personal Property Office told me there was nothing they could do for me. But being a former JAG officer taught me that 'no' was a relative term. I found out that if I could get the Board for Correction of Naval Records (BCNR) to direct the Navy to extend my currently expired retirement move, they would make it happen. (Note: All branches of service have their own service specific Boards for Correction. Please consider any reference below to BCNR to apply to them as well.)

That same day, I went to the BCNR Web site ([www.hq.navy.mil/bcnr](http://www.hq.navy.mil/bcnr)) and got the required DD Form 149 for the BCNR application and filing information. All services use the same form and the form has all the service branches' mailing addresses on it. I typed it up that same day and faxed it to BCNR. A mere 13 days later, BCNR issued me a 100 percent favorable decision. They apparently do this fairly regularly, which is why it went through so quickly. I was able to use the decision not only to get my household goods moved at government expense, but payment for the three separate cars that I, my

wife, and daughter drove to Virginia over the next few months.

If you decide to have your retirement move extended, here are ways to be successful:

When filling out the DD Form 149, explain your case in detail.

List "extenuating circumstances" for you and your family -- like education, illness, job search, deaths, accidents, or other decisions.

Explain also what has made it more practical or valuable for you to move now or in the near future.

Include a copy of your retirement orders and your DD 214.

Specify that you wish to extend household goods shipment and all related travel costs for the family's drive to your new home.

Remember mileage and per diem for you and family members.

Submit multiple travel claims for each family member.

If this applies to you, delaying further may not be in your best interest. BCNR panels are composed of different members and you do have to provide extenuating reasons why you did not move in the first year. However, if you have not moved and had some logical reason for not doing so, but now want to move, you at least should try the BCNR.

Lastly, if you have moved on your own because your one-year retirement move has expired, you too should file a BCNR petition. You have nothing to lose and several thousand dollars of possible gain. I say this because

subsequent paperwork that I received from the DFAS indicated that if I had already moved on my own, they would reimburse my moving costs up to what the government would have paid to do it. *Commander Wayne L. Johnson, JAGC, Navy (Retired) of Alexandria VA*

That bit of news is too late for most of us, but perhaps it will benefit an active duty life supporter who is about to retire.

## New Online Military Records Request

The National Personnel Records Center is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to get copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents, including Discharge Documents DD 214. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's mailroom processing time. Former military personnel and their dependents can get more information at:

[www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs)