



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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Active/Guard/Reserve Promotions

Newest Senior Master Sergeants

George C. Anthony -Mildenhall
Marc A. Molands
John W. Rozell
Lawrence E. Settle
Steve R. Summers- Scott
George P. Truini

Newest Master Sergeant

John J. Baker-Seymour Johnson

Newest Chief Master Sergeants

Tracy Kopp-10th AF
Don Braken-Montgomery Guard
Dennie Richardson- NY Guard
Don Lee- Kansas Guard

Chief Cathy Cox retires 1 Jun 07

Congratulations to all!

I had planned to dedicate this edition to all of our Life Support Officers. I sent out a few emails requesting some stories because I knew for sure that there had to be some great Al Schneider, Jimmie Bainter, Gunner Massen, Jerry Miknis, and Dickie Fallon stories out there. I did not get much in the way of replies so below are two I did get followed by a few of my own.

Maj. Dave Whitley was the HQ MAC LSO in the early 80s. When we traveled to key Life Support Conferences with all the other MAJCOMs participating, the HQ MAC crew would get a Lincoln Town Car and pay the difference out of our pocket. When Chief John Shields and the other MAJCOM Chiefs would ask: "Your command lets you get a Town Car?"Maj. Whitley would calmly say "Absolutely....doesn't yours?" Ha....they were green with envy thinking MAC took better care of their troops!!!!

*CMSgt (Ret) Bill Wood
HQ MAC Life Support Manager (Mar 82-May 86)*

The Best Damn LSO I Ever Knew!

Someone at a reunion asked who the best LSO I ever knew. The question was easy for me to answer. It was Ken Molly. But I felt bad that he was not rewarded for what he had done. We were together at George, and as stated before he was the best LSO I ever knew. Major Molly was responsible for standardizing F-4 egress training. I had been there a year or more when he arrived from Boot Strap with a master's degree. I had been around fighters most of my career but the F-4 was a bit different. I thought he was just another LSO that I was supposed to train. I sure was wrong. I was accustomed to answering all messages on LS matters and he had been there about a week when I found myself stumped for a reply to ether a 12th

AF or TAC message... After pondering a reply for more than a day, I decided to see if he had any ideas. It was late in the day and he read it over several times and put it in his desk. The next morning he came in, had coffee, read the message again and after a while he said "Chief what do you think about this". He had the answer perfectly and I was asking myself why I didn't see this. He came in another day and asked is I had checked the egress training in all the squadrons. I said sure all the time. He said "did you notice that they all teach it differently" and I said yes, but they are covering everything. There were no guidelines at the time. He said, "Do you think it would be good to have it taught the same in all squadrons"? Standardized egress training was born. We made up checklists and soon everyone in TAC wanted copies. We also made up checklists on parachute and kit installation and removal. Again, everyone wanted copies. It wasn't long until we had checklists on everything we did in the shops. When TAC saw this they said you guys did such a good job, now get them in the F-4 series T.O.'s. so everyone in the AF can benefit.

Ken Molly was the force behind this .Before he left for Ramstein, He had arranged with Hill AFB to do the F-4 T.O. review and changes to take place at George. This had an impact AF wide. Checklists became part of the T.O.'s on new aircraft also. Before this everything was done differently everywhere. That's not all he did at George. I could tell you about what he did when we were putting the rocket on the seat and the installation of the C-9 parachute canopy to get another second opening. Brian Seth played a big hand in this also. I learned everything I knew about the F-4 from Seth.

Ken Molly should have been awarded the Legion of Merit. He got nothing. I didn't know what was required for such an award

at the time. Later I found that it had to have an impact AF wide. I knew a lot of LSO's and to me he did more for Life Support than anyone I knew. I could have done a better job at saying this but, know you how it is with old folks.

Jimmie Cartwright CMSgt USAF Retired

My First LSO (actually the Survival Training and Personal Equipment Officer) was 2nd Lt Ellsworth J. McCoy. Lt McCoy was a RO at Goose Bay in the F-94 and F-89D. Besides being a super troop he knew how to fill an A-3 Bag at the Class 6 store for us young airmen. Lt McCoy left Goose to attend Pilot Training at Hondo, TX and that's the last I heard of him. Another early LSO was Capt Holoviak at Eglin and Mr. Anderson who visited some from Chanute. Mr. Anderson (CWO4) in the 56-59 time frame sent newly graduated students down to Eglin for OJT prior to their first assignment. Eglin had at that time the first "consolidated life support shop" and led the AF and APGC/AFOTC in quality care of LSE.

John Waddell and Ron Weninger were also two great LSO's at Bitburg. Ron worked also at the Command Post which resulted in two great opportunities. One, he could effectively cut off Maintenance Control during the middle on the night when in reality what ever was wrong could be taken care of first shift the next day and secondly, he was always first in line for a racket ball court for Roger May!

I will never forget Greg Dean, Pete Hanley, George Braue, Jess Jenkins, Steve Ulosavich, Terry Corrigan, Bob Hudson, Bill Harrison, Chuck Lehman, Cal Crochet, Don Muir, Bob Fessler, David Poff, Jim Downey, Al Homestead, Bill Strunc, Steve

Roberts, Jake Yacobi and Phil Neely for all they did to foster Life Support!

Let me hear your thoughts for the next Newsletter!
Cheers, Tommy

CHILI SEZ



The Merger

The 1 Oct 07 kick off date for the Life Support and Survival Equipment merger is not far off. I wonder if there is going to be a celebration to welcome in the new career field name, or maybe a wake to put the old name to rest. A "Passing the Torch Ceremony" like we (the retirees) did at our 50th Anniversary celebration would be nice.

Aircrew Flight Equipment will be the new name for the career field. As a matter of fact, the guys at HQ ACC are already answering the phone with that name. I stopped by their office back on 9 May and was surprised when they told me that.

The latest from CMSgt Dave Chitwood on the merger is as follows:

The merger is plugging away - one obstacle after another. AETC decided they didn't have the money to combine the tech school this October, so we will probably go with shreds using the same training pipeline until we can get the merged course in the POM. That way we can still make sure we get the right mix for assignments. The draft program guidance letter is in top line coordination and will be signed by CSAF, Gen Moseley. It's like herding cats though. The name is still Aircrew Flight Equipment -

I liked Aircrew Protection or Performance Equipment but either one of those would have left us with the acronym APE and no one wanted to be an APE.

So, Tony Sanchez is the winner of our "Guess What the Name of the New Career Field Will Be" contest. Tony, send us your address and so we can send you your prize.

As expected, we have received a lot of comments about the merger. Some of the comments expressed are as follows:

I sure am glad the Fab guys are coming to OPS and not the other way around. I hope they keep the Life Support name, but if they don't they can never take it away from us.

Michael A. Sartwell, MSgt USAF Retired

I was surprised to see that the merger will finally take place after all these years of talk. I hate to see "Life Support" be dropped from the career field title. It is and will be a new era in this historic career field. Oh well, I was glad when they changed our field from Protective Equipment Specialist....time will tell....and time has told the Life Support story....the most unique and closest field in the USAF.

Gary L. Dvorcek, SMSgt, USAF Retired

So the powers to be finally got their way. I was wondering when things would change for Life Support. Hopefully it's for the better. There will always be a way to make it work, but it doesn't mean people will always be happy with it. They talked hard about putting Life Support under Maintenance when I was at Tinker.

Walt Thompson, CMSgt, USAF Retired

I must say that it was sad for me to hear of the Life Support and Fabric Shop consolidation. So Life Supporters will sew, do flotation, and pack chutes along with the other duties? No more flight-line work...that hurts. Combining life Support and Egress I can see, but not the other way. At least the guys will remain under Operations. Maintenance always wanted us and I thought they were a little jealous. Now I have had my bitch for the day and will get off the box. It's just that I was always so proud of my career field. We really had it good. Or at least that is the way I remember it. I know we must be flexible and change with the times.

Larry Parker, MSgt USAF Retired

Guys, I fully can understand the way people feel and some of the misgivings they may have. I think in a perfect world we would have preferred to keep things the same. However, there is a HUGE push to whittle down the 200+ AFSC the USAF has now down to around 100 or so. In some ways, because of huge budget crunches and the need to modernize I think the leadership feels they have no choice but to break the mold and create a new mold with what can be picked up. In fairness, if you read the latest, the AF is being asked to sacrifice more to fund the increase in personnel in the Army and Marines. Personnel is such a huge cost in percentage and continues on after the folks get out and retire. With cuts in personnel in ALS at 15% or more and INCREASED crew ratio in some cases, something had to give. I think some things are going to have to change, to include just not doing some tasks. The guys in the USAF have a tough way ahead. I just hope we all can help them in anyway we can!!

Mike Freebury, CMSgt, USAF Retired

Sick and Shut-Ins

The Nances are under the weather in Abilene, TX. Jimmy and Fannie were in a terrible accident in Vicksburg, MS back in March of this year and are not looking too good. Recovery looks to be a long time. MacDonald Nance was hit by a car in April and is recovering slowly with lots of months ahead for total recovery.

Time in Service Leader

In our last newsletter I suggested that Dan Chambers is the leader for time in service as a life supporter. I have been corrected. It looks like Chuck Warren has the most time. Chuck entered the AF in Jan 1958 and retired in Sep 1999, and spent all those years in Personal Equipment/Life Support. This brings up two more questions. Who is the leader with the most combined time working in life support in the military and as a civilian? Is it Jim Hurst or Lee Wise, or someone else out there? Also, who has been retired the longest from the AF Life Support Career Field? If you know the answer to either of these questions let me know, however, be prepared to back up your claim.

Taps

After a long sickness Senior Master Sergeant Arlyn Rappe, who was the initial NCO in the TAC Requirements Position, passed and was buried at the Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery at Dixon, CA on 27 February 2007.

I received a lot of e-mail expressing sympathy for the passing of George Ellis, a man who was a lot of things to a lot of life supporters, but mostly he was a leader. Below are a couple of the e-mails I received.

I was saddened to a point of tears about my AF father, mentor, and guidance counselor. George paved the way for the rest of the Air Force to follow suit. Well! All I can tell you at this point is George will be surely missed, I couldn't thank him enough for all he did for me. George, THANK YOU! You deserve a well rest in the hands of our maker. GOD BLESS! From all you have touched in your life.

Dominic D. Rinaldi "D-Man".

Sergeant Ellis was a good man and a hell of a Life Supporter! I had known him in the Philippines when he was the boss at the 3rd TAC Fighter Wing, and I was in the adjoining shop at the 21 TASS. I went to AWACS after Clark and I was passing through the Philippines after a TDY to Saudi Arabia and went to his shop to visit. I will never forget his booming voice, and he tells me..."John Greene, you better straighten up and tell all your buddies to straighten up there at Tinker AFB...because I got my orders...and I am coming there to be Supt.!!" Oh my God, I went back there and told those guys, hey, you had better watch out, there is a guy coming here that is as strict as they come!! Fair but STRICT!! He came there and really did a good job, but boy he stayed on our asses with regularity! I know none of us are going to be here forever, but he really is a special individual. He used to make it a point to tell me he started in the Air Force the year I was born, 1956.

John Greene

Life Support Coin

Once again I am out of coins! If you did not get one you'll have to let me know how many you want and I'll order more if the combined totals for all requests add up to 300 or more.

Tech School Photos

Thanks to everyone who sent in their class photo. The thing that really jump started this project was the pictures that I received from the school house. I can't thank TSgt Larry Gerberg who is an instructor at the school enough for his support. He sent me so many pictures that I still have not posted them all. Hopefully, I should have them all on the web site by the time you receive this newsletter. Check the site out to see if your photo is on there. If it's not and you still have a copy, instructions are on the site for getting it to us.

Award Winners

Our hats are off to our own KB Kinchen for being the winner of the 2006 HQ AFMC Civilian of The Year Award. The Air Force civilian winners for 2006 are Ed Kishbaugh, 8 FS Holloman AFB, NM and Dave Reeves, 463 OSS, Little Rock AFB, AR. We applaud you guys for still caring the torch and for doing it so well.

Reunion

Reflect, reconnect, and relax at this year's reunion in Laughlin, NV. The Annual Life Support Reunion will be held at the Aquarius Casino Resort (formerly the Flamingo Hotel) from 17 – 20 September.

The Aquarius Casino Resort features over 60,000 square feet of exciting casino action; luxurious hotel accommodations with over 1,800 rooms and 90-suites. The resort's amenities include seven restaurants; a fitness center; swimming pool; lighted tennis courts; Business Center; Wedding Chapel; showroom and outdoor amphitheater with an outlet mall and golf courses nearby. The Aquarius Casino Resort offers Laughlin's largest meeting and convention facilities,

featuring a 20,000-square-foot Ballroom and six separate meeting rooms.

If you are staying for the entire affair, remember Monday 17 Sept and Friday 21 Sept are travel days. Our golf tournament is scheduled for Wednesday, 19 Sept. If you plan on participating please contact Ed MacKenzie via email at 2macks@hughes.net or by phone at 702-682-6485. Ed needs the golf fees before 31 August so he won't have to pay for them out of his pocket. As always, we are accepting prizes for our tournament from all who wish to donate. We desperately need the MAJCOMs and vendors to help us out. So far Shirley Farkas has sent in some really nice things for prizes. Prizes should be sent to:

Ed MacKenzie,

255 South 2nd West St,

Bunkerville, NV 89007

All former, retired, active duty, guard, reserve, and civilian personnel working in the Aircrew Life Support business, and their families are invited to attend. To register you must send in the attached registration form to KB Kinchen by the date indicated. The following information is provided for all who are attending for the first time:

- Laughlin is located 90 miles south of Las Vegas and is easily accessible via car or RV.

- Air travelers can fly directly into the Laughlin/Bullhead City Airport on many major airlines, commuter flights or private charters.

- Reservation cannot be made with hotel personnel (unless you are attending on official military orders). They must be made with KB!

- Confirmation of your reservation will not be mailed out unless asked for.

- Rooms will not be available for check-in until 3 PM, 17 Sep 07. Early check-in is allowed if your room is ready.

- A special area will be set-up in the hotel lobby from 2PM - 5PM for reunion attendees to sign-in.

- After checking in, don't forget to stop by our hospitality room after 5PM for some libations, and snacks.

Sad News

As we were finalizing this newsletter an e-mail came in notifying us that CMSgt Harry Walker, the LS Superintendent at Grand Forks AFB, suffered a heart attack Wednesday, 30 May and passed away while enroute to the hospital. We send condolences to his family.