



AIRCREW LIFE SUPPORT/ AIRCREW FLIGHT EQUIPMENT VETERANS AND RETIREES NEWSLETTER

News for the men and women who served (civilian, government or industry) in the Personal Equipment (PE), Aircrew Life Support (ALS) or Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) professions. The views expressed herein are that of the individual mentioned and do not represent the views of the retired, active duty, ANG, Reserves, or veteran members of the PE, ALS, or AFE career fields.

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Visit our web site at www.usafals-afe.net

Feb 2022 Edition

Looking Forward

By Dave Chitwood, Group Vice President

We hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and this new year is starting off with good health and happiness!

We skipped our regular Summer Newsletter but we're back and looking forward to a brighter 2022! After all, we're finally going to have our 25th Reunion 20-24 June in Laughlin Nevada! The perfect opportunity to get out and reconnect with friends old and new.

This Newsletter contains details on lodging, registration, tours, and of course, our annual James Rooney Memorial Golf Tournament. The Registration Forms are attached to this newsletter so please fill them out and send

them in early. There is a great deal of planning that goes into the reunion. To make sure everyone has a great time, and the events go off without a hitch, we need to know how many participants to expect.

I've mentioned before that time is relentless. Every year we lose more and more people we loved and admired. This past year we continued experiencing devastating losses, including the driving force behind creating our very first reunion...Kemper Kinchen.

As the years go by, our opportunities to reconnect become fewer and farther between. Please don't let another year go by without making it to one of our reunions. Believe it or not, there are people there who would love to see you.

I think it's fitting that we honor our 2021 fallen right from the start. In the past year we lost...

FINAL ROLL CALL

Maj (Ret) Richard (Dickie) Fallon	Jan 2021
SMSgt (Ret) Danny Keith	Jan 2021
SMSgt (Ret) Kemper (KB) Kinchen	Feb 2021
MSgt (Ret) David Wurdinger	Mar 2021
Herman "Jethro" Geiser	May 2021
CMSgt (Ret) Bob Wright	July 2021
CMSgt (Ret) Jamie Guile	Sep 2021
MSgt (Ret) Greg Hectorne	Oct 2021
MSgt (Ret) Dan Neddo	Oct 2021
CMSgt (Ret) John Henry Harris	Nov 2021
MSgt (Ret) Willie Harris	Dec 2021
TSgt (Ret) Frank Provenzano	Dec 2021
TSgt (Ret) Jerry Lee	Jan 2022
MSgt (Ret) Michael A. Knox	Jan 2022
SMSgt (Ret) Melvin Swope	Jan 2022

We offer our sincere prayers and condolences to the families of our dear departed. Our reunions will never be the same without them.

Active Duty Chief Promotions

Congratulations to our new AFE CMSgts!

- Chief Alvin W Edmunds
- Chief (sel) Daniel Hall III
- Chief (sel) Brian Alvin Holmes

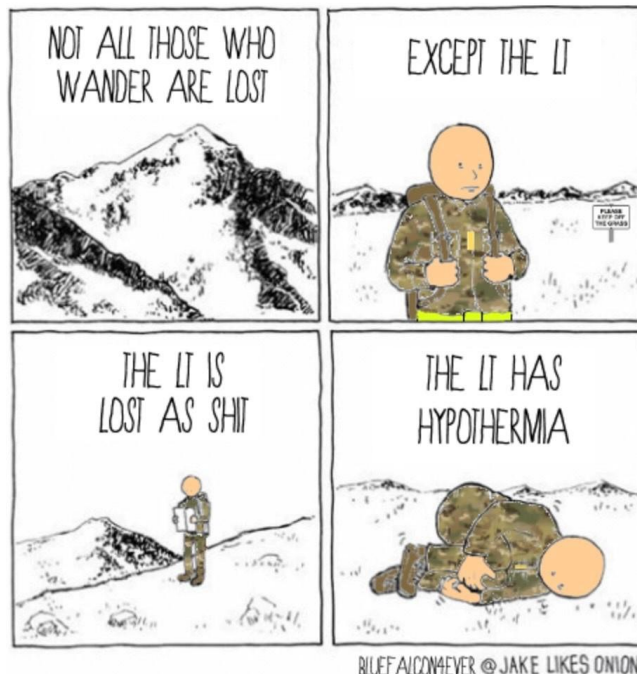
We wish them all the best as they continue to serve, and we hope to see them at future reunions!

From Tommy Tompkins:

Within the margin of error as they say, Chief Edmunds will be the 259th LS/AFE Chief, Chief Hall 260, Chief Holmes 261. Chief Leaster Williamson remains our Senior Chief followed closely by Chief Bill Lynn!

I have been working on some cleanups on the Master Listing with help from the active Chiefs and Terry Ache, Les Davey and Dan Chambers. The Line Number Sequence is mostly correct but since I stopped traveling and

working with Koch and Gentex I don't get the actual promotion dates. Actually I have a few that I don't know when they were promoted although I have their line number and year correct thanks to Al Loving. This year I plan to work on the Guard Chiefs and add them in where appropriate. I have a handle on the NGB position, but I need some help the unit promotions. Any help is appreciated! Contact Tommy at either tombob@shawneelink.net or tombob3406@gmail.com



LOOKING FOR OLD BUDDIES

Received the following from Sam Spade:

"With this amount of people in this group it is hard to believe that no one is still alive that was in the 56th Weather Recon Squadron in October 1958. I sure would like to contact someone who was there at that time. The NCOIC was Verlin E Cooper, TSgt. Everyone might be dead by now except me. I remember a Sgt Cowen. I would give anything to contact someone from that shop." If you have any info that would help, please contact Sam at: handjeannettespade@att.net

Active Duty Update

By Chief Christopher Randel

I'm happy to report that AFE is doing well! We are at the cusp of publishing our first legitimate manpower standard since the ALS/Survival Equipment merger in 2008. It's been a long time coming but dialing in all the things we do and validating the time to do them has taken some effort. Additionally, we are very close to a tech school modernization decision that will see a significant change in how we prepare our AFE technicians to meet the demands of today's Air Force. Very exciting times for sure!

Chili Sez!

By Bob McElwain



The 25th Annual USAF Personal Equipment/Survival Equipment /Aircrew Life Support/and Aircrew Flight Equipment (USAF PE/SE/ALS/AFE) Reunion will be held this year!

Finally, our 25th Annual USAF PE/SE/ALS/AFE Reunion will happen after a two-year delay. It's scheduled to be held at the Golden Nugget Hotel & Casino in Laughlin, NV Monday, June 20 through Thursday 23 June 2022. Attendees will travel to the reunion on Monday, June 20, and return home on Friday, June 24, 2022. Start making your plans to attend now. For those of you who would like to arrive a day early (Sunday, June 19th, 2022) you will get the discounted rate listed below in the hotel registration paragraph as long as you indicate you are coming in for the reunion. All military active duty and veterans, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel who worked or are working in the aircrew protection profession or members of other branches of the US military who are working or worked in related

professions and their guests are invited to attend.

Government and industry representatives interested in attending should complete the Vendors Registration Form included in this newsletter and email Bob McElwain as soon as possible if a briefing is planned with the following information:

- Topic/subject of briefing
- Audiovisual requirements

GOLDEN NUGGET HOTEL HEALTH AND SANITATION GUIDELINES

Reunion attendees will be expected to comply with whatever the Golden Nugget Hotel protocol for Covid-19 protection is in place during our reunion. Currently, that policy is:

All vaccinated and unvaccinated guests are required to wear a face mask while in this establishment. Masks must be worn over the nose and mouth unless actively eating, drinking, or smoking.

The first day of the reunion (Tuesday, 21 June) will be the annual business meeting. This meeting provides an opportunity for industry partners and AFE members to exhibit, present information of interest to attendees, and bring the group up-to-date on the latest program developments and equipment issues. Presenters are requested to ensure the information they provide is unclassified and in the public domain. Presenters are to hand carry their presentation in electronic PowerPoint format on a portable external drive and are encouraged to bring "hard copies" of their presentation to the reunion for distribution.

RIVER BOAT CRUISE

Our reunion includes a cruise down the Colorado River to see what the casinos look like from the water. Take a great break from the casinos and relax and enjoy the cruise while taking in beautiful views. Please indicate

on your registration form whether or not you and your guest will join us on the cruise.

JAMES ROONEY REUNION GOLF TOURNAMENT

Our annual golf tournament will be held on Thursday, 23 June 2022. There will be longest drive, and closest to the pin competitions and an all-round great time! Please contact Dave Chitwood NLT 31 May 2022 to let him know if you intend to play. Rental golf clubs are not included in the golf fee and must be requested. A golf registration form is attached to this newsletter and can be sent to Dave at 9792 Corbett Place, Manassas Park, VA 20111. Email: pantoum5@gmail.com

IF YOU ATTENDED ONE OF OUR PREVIOUS REUNIONS AND STILL HAVE YOUR REUNION-ISSUED NAME TAG, BRING IT WITH YOU! NEW NAMETAGS WILL ONLY BE ISSUED TO FIRST-TIME ATTENDEES OR ATTENDEES WHO INDICATE ON THE REGISTRATION FORM THAT THEY NEED ONE. GUEST NAMETAGS WILL BE ISSUED TO ANYONE WHO DOES NOT HAVE A BADGE.

HOTEL REGISTRATION: The rate per night is \$44.00 plus tax for Monday, 20 June thru Thursday, 23 June 2022 for single or double occupancy. The \$44 includes a resort fee of \$7.99. Reservations must be made before midnight PST Friday, May 20, 2022, by calling Hotel Reservations at **1-800-950-7700** and using group code **GUSAF21** or mentioning the group name: **USAF Veterans and Retirees Group**. Hotel cancellation without penalty must occur at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled arrival date. The guest will have up to the time of check-in to amend their departure date without penalty. After this time, should the guest depart earlier than indicated there will be a \$50.00 early departure fee?

REUNION REGISTRATION: Complete the attached form and mail it along with a check or money order payable to Bob McElwain to the address below NLT 01 May 2022. Payment can also be made by emailing this completed registration form to bob.mcelwain@charter.net,

followed by sending the payment electronically. To do so download the app "Cash App" to your Android or iPhone, link it to your debit card, open the app, enter the amount you're sending, tap pay, enter the email address bob.mcelwain@charter.net, and tap pay again. To cancel your reservation and avoid a loss of your banquet fee, contact Bob McElwain NLT 1 June 2022 at 760-684-3790 or email him at bob.mcelwain@charter.net

TRANSPORTATION TO LAUGHLIN

Air travelers will need to fly into McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas and take ground transportation to Laughlin.

There are several choices for transportation from McCarran International Airport, in Las Vegas NV to the reunion hotel and return. Three of them are listed below, and the best choice might be this one about a tour bus out of Laughlin. An offer has been made to transport groups of reunion attendees from McCarran Airport to Laughlin, NV and back for a fee. The fee can't be determined until we tell them how many people are interested in using this service. If this is you please let John Patti know ASAP by calling him at 864-245-0715 or email him at johnpatti7@gmail.com. When you get your airline reservations, he'll need to know your arrival date and time and your departure time and date right away.

Tri-State Shuttle offers ground transportation to Laughlin from the McCarran International Airport for a fee of \$50 per person. Please call their office directly at 1-928-704-9000 ext. 101 for current schedules and rates and to make your reservations.

Tri-State Shuttle
Bullhead City, AZ 86442
Ph: 928-704-9000
Email: info@tristateairportshuttle.net
Website: www.tristateairportshuttle.net
Mobile iPhone or Android Users:
<http://www.tristateairportshuttle.com/>

Car rental service is another option. The driving distance between Las Vegas to Laughlin is 97 miles. It takes approximately 1 and ½ hours to drive from Las Vegas to Laughlin.

PROPOSALS FOR THE LOCATION OF THE NEXT TWO REUNIONS

We are accepting proposals for reunions 2023 and 2024. If you are interested in having the reunion in your local area or elsewhere, please [download](#) our Reunion Worksheet and complete it with the help of hotel management. Email the completed worksheet to bob.mcelwain@charter.net NLT 1 May 2022. Your proposal (worksheet) will be reviewed by our 2022 reunion attendees for consideration of the location of our next two reunions. The two proposals with the most votes will determine the location of those reunions.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It's time to start thinking about nominating new board members for the USAF ALS/AFE Retiree and Veteran's Group. Due to COVID and the lack of any activity by the group since 2019, current members have been asked to stay in their positions for another year which will terminate at reunion 2023. At that time, we need to have a new list of candidates for office. Are you interested in helping lead the group and stimulate and maintain the camaraderie and brotherhood within the Aircrew Life Support (ALS) and Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) community? We are seeking eligible candidates (members who attend or pledge to attend our annual reunions regularly) for election to the offices of President, Vice President, and Secretary.

Nominations for office and Members who have interest in an elected office are to contact Bob McElwain NLT 1 June 2023.

THE ALS/AFE 25TH REUNION ANNIVERSARY COIN



The 25th ALS/AFE Reunion Anniversary Coin as displayed above will be available for sale at our reunion. Orders for the coin can be taken now for delivery after our June 2022 reunion.

The coin memorializes our 25th career field reunion and binds together the members of the USAF Aircrew Life Support/Aircrew Flight Equipment Retirees and Veterans Group. It sells for \$16 each plus a shipping and handling fee of \$4.00. The coin represents the history of our reunions, the members we lost during the past 25 years, and the future of our group. It also serves as a group membership coin. You are encouraged to purchase one to be considered a member. They are sequentially numbered to track ownership and add a unique identifier for our group as it grows. Members can identify with future coins, and identify themselves by the order number on each coin. The lower the number, the more senior the membership.

Tracking who has what number will be done by yours truly and posted on our website. To place your order, email me at bob.mcelwain@charter.net I will email you back with payment instructions.

THE USAF ALS LAPEL PIN



If you are interested in purchasing one of our ALS lapel pins (pictured above), be advised that we have sold out and your order will place on our backorder list.

WEBSITE SECURITY

Our website's URL started with HTTPS but was identified as Not Secure. Because of security concerns, some visitors to the site avoided conducting any sensitive transactions including logging in or providing personal or payment information. This is no longer the case. I have taken the necessary steps to secure the connection to our website.

MY CLOSING COMMENTS

By Bob McElwain

When KB, and I started our annual reunions and the retirees and veterans group back in 1996 I had no idea having a reunion each year would last this long. My thought was once folks of my generation are no longer supporting the reunions, the reunions as we know them would cease to exist. I'm glad I was wrong. Over the years younger retirees such as Dave Chitwood, Steve Wyatt, Al Loving, John Patti, and a few others came on board and the reunion and the organization enjoyed continued success. This is because of the increase in reunion members. Members are the lifeblood of our organization. If we don't have new members to replace the folks that we

lose over the years our reunions will no longer exist. We can't let this happen!

Of the over 500 registered members of our website, only 30 or so are frequent attendees of our reunions. Without them, there would be a small number of attendees at our reunions. When those frequent attendees can no longer support our reunions, it will slowly cease to exist!

This is where the active-duty community can help us. When you get your retirement or separation orders stop by our website and fill out the registration form. Once you're settled into the next phase of your life visit one of our reunions and see what we're all about. Our aging reunion group is at the point where we desperately need you. When you get started in your second career that additional paycheck will help financially with travel expenses to and from our reunions.

As someone from a younger generation, you will bring in new ideas and your professional connections, both of which are needed. If this is you, please accept our personal invitation to join us and help with the long-term success and growth of the group. Join us and **bring one of your AFE buddies with you.**

Don't let what started over 25 years ago fade away.

In Closing

By Dave Chitwood, Vice President and Newsletter Editor

Please do your best to attend this or a future reunion. Whether you made it a career, did one hitch and out, active duty, Guard, Reserve, or Civilian you are welcome. Don't be afraid you won't know anyone! We are family and you will instantly feel the camaraderie you felt so many years ago. Hope to see you in June!

Be sure to visit our Group website (www.usafals-afe.net), and on social media.

James Rooney Memorial Golf Tournament

June 23, 2022 Laughlin Ranch Golf Course

Name _____

Do you need rental clubs? (not included in fee)

Yes - Right or Left?

No

Greens fee: \$75

Rental clubs: To be paid at clubhouse.

Total enclosed: _____

Please send check payable to David Chitwood

9792 Corbett Place

Manassas Park VA 20111