



# **AIRCREW LIFE SUPPORT/ AIRCREW FLIGHT EQUIPMENT VETERANS AND RETIREES NEWSLETTER SPECIAL 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

*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](http://www.usafals-afe.net)**

**Jun 2023 Edition**

### **Looking Forward**

*By Dave Chitwood, Group Vice President*

This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our career field! When I first joined in 1975, we had already had a few name changes and our supply accounts still started with PE, but we were starting relatively fresh with something called Aircrew Life Support. Our CCAF degree was in "Survival and Rescue". Now we are Aircrew Flight Equipment. This year's reunion promises to be very special as we partner with the SAFE Association and celebrate 70 years of keeping aircrew safe!

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.

And with that being said, I think it's fitting that we honor our 2022/2023 fallen right from the start.

### **FINAL ROLL CALL**

CMSgt (Ret) Bruce Yarwood	Jan 2023
SMSgt (Ret) Larry Dutton	Jan 2023
SMSgt Dennis Hughes	Jan 2023
MSgt (Ret) Ivan Metz	Dec 2022
LtCol (Ret) Stephen Roberts	May 2022
CMSgt (Ret) Vernon Croft	Jun 2022

We offer our sincere prayers and condolences to the families of our dear departed.

## One Of Our Own In Local News



Frequent reunion attendee Alan Hollosy, reached a milestone on Saturday, April 22, when he umpired his 2,000th high school baseball game.

The feat attracted attention on social media. Roosevelt High of Eastvale baseball tweeted two photos of Hollosy and the message, "Congratulations to umpire Alan Hollosy on his 2,000th game! Fifty years on the field!"

In addition to his baseball umpiring, he refereed football for 42 years and officiated basketball for 35 years. Two thousand games comes out to 40 games per year for a half-century!

Awesome job! Next time you see him at a Life Support reunion, be sure to congratulate him!



### **From the Dinosaur Den**

*By Al Loving  
Chief Dinosaur*

As most of you know, the Order of Life Support Systems Dinosaur's (OLD) has been reactivated to once again recognize those individuals who have served at least 25 or more years within any of the Life Support Systems professions and community.

Membership is comprised of all the various services, civilian and military, as well as members of industry. It includes the Life Support Systems, Egress

Systems, Oxygen Systems, Program Management, Engineering and other related Aircrew Protection professions.

One-time membership dues of \$25 per member has been established to cover expenses such as the member certificate, lapel pins, and postage. An individually numbered Membership Certificate is prepared and provided to each new member along with lapel pins to recognize each OLD member and their spouse.

Our 2023 meeting will be held during the upcoming 61<sup>st</sup> Annual SAFE Symposium being held October 10-12, 2023, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, Virginia Beach, VA. The annual meeting is held to recognize our new members, gather new members, and network with Club members in attendance.

The meeting will take place at the VBCC on Tuesday, October 10, at 2:00 pm in Ballroom One. This information will also be included in the 2023 SAFE Symposium Program and Schedule and posted in the SAFE Registration Lobby. All current and eligible OLD members are asked and encouraged to attend.

For those current and eligible OLD members who are not able to attend the meeting, your comments regarding the Dino Club can be provided electronically to the Chief Dinosaur, Al Loving, at:

Email: [aloving@cox.net](mailto:aloving@cox.net)

Mobile Phone: (757) 218-8560

Please provide your comments **no later than October 1, 2023.**

Of particular note this year, 2023 is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the existence of the USAF's Personal Equipment, Aircrew Life Support (PE/ALS) and now the Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) career field.

Over the years there has been a 25<sup>th</sup> and a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the career field and now it is time to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebration along with the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual USAF ALS/AFE Reunion will take place in conjunction with the 2023 SAFE Symposium in Virginia Beach, VA, in October 2023.

We look forward to welcoming you our 61<sup>th</sup> Annual SAFE Symposium and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the USAF's PE/ALS/AFE career field's existence.

## **Chili Sez!**

*By Bob McElwain*



### **Our Annual Reunion**

We have decided to shorten this year's reunion by one day. Reunion 2023 will be held Tuesday, October 10, 2023, and Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center (VBCC) in downtown Virginia Beach, VA.

We are teaming up with this year's annual SAFE Association Symposium as we celebrate the career field's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Reunion lodging will be at the Double Tree by Hilton located at 1900 Pavilion Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, a SAFE Association contracted hotel. The rate is \$117 per night. SAFE has four contracted hotels, but rather than have the reunion attendees scattered around at the four hotels, we ask all reunion attendees to book their room reservation at the nearest hotel to the VBCC, the DoubleTree by Hilton, which is across the parking lot from the VBCC

Book your rooms as soon as possible to ensure you get a room reservation at the Double Tree. Hotel check-in is no earlier than 4 PM; check-out is not later than 11 AM.

To make your reservation click on the following link: [SAFE 2023 GOVERNMENT \(hilton.com\)](https://www.doubletree.com/SAFE2023GOVERNMENT). Their central reservation phone number is 757- 422-8900 and the group code is SGB.

If for some reason you cannot make your reservation at the DoubleTree, information for

reservations at any of the other SAFE-contracted hotels is provided below.

### **Courtyard Virginia Beach Front - North & South**

[Book your group rate for SAFE Association 2023](#)

### **Holiday Inn**

Central Registration 1 800-465-4329

[SAFE Association - Standard Room Booking Link](#)

Group Code: SFE

### **Hyatt House**

Central Registration 1 800-886-0451

[SAFE ASSOCIATION 2023](#)

Group Code: G-SAFE

Room Reservation must be received on or before September 8, 2023, to be able to receive the negotiated 2023 SAFE Association room rates.

**Cancellation policy:** All reservations must be accompanied by a first-night room deposit or guaranteed with a major credit card. Hotels accept all major credit cards for deposit, which is refundable if cancellation is made 72 hours prior to arrival. The deposit guarantees the sleeping room until 12:00 Midnight on the scheduled arrival date. If guest will arrive after midnight, they must call to assure the room is held.

Shuttle buses will be available to transport symposium and reunion attendees from the various SAFE block hotels to the VBCC. These will run more frequently during peak times. You can also download the app 'Freebee' which offers free on-demand transport around VA!

We invite all current and former members of the career field and their guests along with anyone who worked or is working in any profession related to the aircrew protection business to come join us.

We will be celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the USAF Personal Equipment/Aircrew Life

Support/Aircrew Flight Equipment career field and enjoying a great time of coming together while remembering and honoring those we lost since our first reunion in 1996.

## **TENTATIVE REUNION AGENDA**

### **Monday, October 9, 2023 – Travel-In Day & SAFE Golf Tournament (Best Ball Format)**

(Reunion attendees who arrive early and want to play in the SAFE tourney are welcome.)

**FEES/LOCATION/TEE TIME: To Be Announced (TBA)**

### **Reunion/Symposium Registration (SAFE Registration Lobby - VBCC)**

(Pick up reunion nametag, SAFE badge, and handouts)

### **Hospitality Suite Opens (Location TBA)**

### **Tuesday, October 10, 2023**

**1300: Reunion Opening (VBCC - Room Location TBA)**

### **Visit SAFE Exhibit Hall (VBCC)**

**1600: SAFE Networking and 70<sup>th</sup> Career Field Anniversary Social (SAFE Exhibit Hall - VBCC)**

### **Wednesday, October 11, 2023**

#### **General Session & Elections**

#### **Farewell Dinner (DoubleTree-Cedar Room)**

*Civilian Dress: Coat & Tie Preferred, but not absolutely necessary.*

*Military Dress: Equivalent Uniform Preferred*

### **Thursday, October 12, 2023**

#### **Travel-Out Day**

## **THE SAFE SYMPOSIUM OPENS ON TUESDAY, October 10, 2023.**

The SAFE Association is presenting its 61st Annual Symposium. Composed of Government, Military, Industrial, and Academic interests, SAFE represents aviation, space, land, and marine safety disciplines for the protection of users worldwide.

The Symposium provides an internationally attended marketplace for the exchange of technical information, product and service exhibitions, and the showcasing of industry capabilities for meeting challenges in vehicular occupant protection and personnel-worn safety equipment.

The Symposium is comprised of industry exhibits, technical paper and panel sessions, workshops, lectures, and product demonstrations over a three-day period. The SAFE Symposium is attended by acquisition and technical leaders from worldwide industry, governmental, and military agencies.

SAFE offers a diverse attendee demographic with approximately 50% industry and 50% customer group with nearly all the suppliers serving the markets identified.

Many safety and survival attendees make SAFE their #1 priority meeting each year, with many scheduling design reviews, technical interchange meetings, and supplier coordination meetings during this event.

Papers, Panels, Workshops, and Product Demonstrations are planned at the SAFE annual event.

### **Click on the following link to register for the Reunion/Symposium:**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/safe-symposium-2023-tickets-597653075437>

Online registration is now open so hurry and make your reservations. To do so you must visit the Eventbrite page linked above. You will need to select the **'One Day Pass – Tuesday'**. At "Checkout" enter the promo code **'USAFREUNION'** in order to receive the \$25 agreed registration rate. Please do not share this promo code with anyone outside our group. The \$25 charge is usually \$200, with a reduction of 85% for our group. Our fee is to cover catering at the Symposium.

**Symposium Cancellation Policy:** Attendees may cancel their registrations to attend the

symposium by submitting written notice to the SAFE Administrator (Stacy Stuber at [admin@safeassociation.com](mailto:admin@safeassociation.com)) no later than Midnight, Eastern Standard, October 3, 2023. If a registered attendee cancels, SAFE will charge a 10% administrative fee of the total registration rate until Midnight, Eastern Standard Time, October 3, 2023. Symposium attendance canceled after Midnight, Eastern Standard Time, October 23, 2023, is NOT refundable.

**Reunion Opening & Welcome** will be held at the opening on Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM in the VBCC. The SAFE Networking and the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration reception will be held beginning at 4 PM on the evening of October 10<sup>th</sup> in the SAFE Exhibit Hall located in the VBCC. The reception will be informal with food and drinks, a bar, and maybe a free drink ticket or two.

Our reunion **Farewell Dinner** will be held on Wednesday evening at 6:00 PM in the Doubletree Hotel in the Cedar Rm. The annual dinner is an honored tradition that dates back to our inception in 1996 and held every year since! Coat and ties or dresses or even nice casual are perfectly fine as well. We will commence with a pledge of allegiance followed by a special memorial service that honors our departed. A featured speaker and historical question and answer session will be held with prizes in honor of the career field's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. A delicious meal will be featured with a cash bar on site for those wishing to purchase wine, beer, or spirits on their own during the dinner. The cost is \$60 per person. You can sign up for the Farewell Dinner on the registration form.

Please note that membership in SAFE is in no way required to attend the reunion.

**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.**

**Air Travel to the Reunion:** If you are traveling by air, Virginia Beach is approximately 17 miles from the Norfolk International Airport and approximately 42 miles from the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport. Servicing airlines include American, Delta, United, and Southwest Airlines with year-round and seasonal nonstop flights.

**Ground Transportation to the hotels and VBCC:** Although not recommended due to its high cost, on-site **rental car** companies are available at both airports. [A taxi ride from the Norfolk International Airport takes around 20 minutes and costs around \\$30.](#) Lyft and Uber Share Ride services are also available and are highly recommended.

### **Voting for Office**

According to our By-Laws, some seats on the Board of Directors of our group are open for nomination and re-election. The normal term of office is three years (2020-2023). The following Board seats will be open for service: President, VP, and Assistant Secretary. If you have an interest in our group; as well as, a desire to be a part of a team effort to lead and guide the future governance of this legacy organization then please consider volunteering your skills by serving on the Board of Directors. Submit your name for nomination to any of the positions listed to [bmcelwain@charter.net](mailto:bmcelwain@charter.net) NLT1 Sept 2023.

**Corporate Sponsorship:** If your company or business is interested in helping support this year's reunion, please send a check or money order payable to our Reunion Committee Chairman, Mr. Bob McElwain and address it to the address below. For your contribution, a board will be proudly displayed at the hotel entrance recognizing corporate and individual generosity. The amount you send is *entirely up to you*, but please mail it by 1 Sept 2023.

Bob McElwain

12320 Roadrunner Ln  
Victorville, CA 92392

### **My Closing**

Come on out and join us at this year's reunion and possibly see someone you haven't seen in years. We will be celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the USAF Personal Equipment/Aircrew Life Support/Aircrew Flight Equipment career field and enjoying a great time of coming together while remembering and honoring those we lost since our first reunion in 1996.

By not attending our last reunion you didn't get to reacquaint with or meet and talk about old times with last year's first-time attendees. Listed below are those who joined us for the first time at reunion 2022.

- Brockington, Chris
- Dutton, Larry & Debbie

- Kaye, Perry & Gina
- Robbins, Ron
- Santerre, Kevin
- Scott, Randy & Barbara
- Stanton, Andre

Will you miss seeing someone from your past by not showing up at this year's reunion?

### **Final Word**

*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 Virginia Beach this October! The registration form is attached!

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*Be sure to visit our Group website ([www.usafals-afe.net](http://www.usafals-afe.net)), and on social media.*

# 26th Annual USAF Aircrew Life Support/Flight Equipment Reunion

10 – 12 October 2023

At The Virginia Beach Convention Center in Virginia Beach, VA

Held in conjunction with the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual SAFE Symposium with lodging at

The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel

1900 Pavilion Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

## Registration Form

Registration fee includes one U.S. Military Active Duty, Veteran, National Guard, Reservist, and one family member or guest. It also includes one civilian working in any profession related to aircrew survival/protection and one family member or guest.

YOUR NAME (as you want it on your name tag) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF YOUR ATTENDING FAMILY MEMBER/GUEST \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU OR YOUR GUEST NEED ONE OF OUR NAME TAGS? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE SAFE GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Information on the golf tournament will be in a future announcement

### **SEE NEXT PAGE FOR HOTEL REGISTRATION AND CANCELTION INFORMATION**

**SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION:** Click on the following link to register <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/safe-symposium-2023-tickets-597653075437> To purchase tickets for Tuesday's opening event, you must visit the Eventbrite page linked above. You will need to select the 'One Day Pass – Tuesday'. When it comes to checkout please enter the promo code 'USAFREUNION' in order to receive the \$25 agreed rate. Please do not share this promo code with anyone outside our group.

***Did you (and your guest) register for the SAFE Symposium?*** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**REUNION REGISTRATION AND CANCELTION:** Complete this form and mail it along with a check or money order payable to Bob McElwain to the address below before 15 Sept 23. To cancel your reservation and avoid a loss of your banquet fee, contact Bob McElwain NLT 30 Sept 2023 via email at [bob.mcelwain@charter.net](mailto:bob.mcelwain@charter.net) or at 760-684-3790.

**REUNION REGISTRATION FEE (Covers handouts, refreshments, &, etc.):** **\$50.00**

**BANQUET FEE: \$60.00 Per Person Times the Number of People** \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form and mail it NLT 15 Sept 23 with a check or money order payable to:

BOB MCELWAIN  
12320 ROADRUNNER LN  
VICTORVILLE, CA 92392

CELL PHONE: 760-684-3790  
Email: [bob.mcelwain@charter.net](mailto:bob.mcelwain@charter.net)

Confirmation of your reunion registration will be made by email or phone after your payment is deposited. Refunds less than the dinner fee will be made for cancellations before September 30, 2023.

## **HOTEL REGISTRATION AND CANCELTATION**

**HOTEL REGISTRATION:** The rate per night is \$117.00 plus tax for Sunday, 8 Oct 2023, thru Thursday, 12 Oct 2023 for single or double occupancy. Travel days are Monday, 9 Oct, and Thursday, 12 Oct 2023. The special rate is available for those who wish to arrive earlier. Lodging will be at a SAFE-contracted hotel. Four hotels are available but rather than have the reunion attendees scattered around at the four hotels, we would appreciate it if everyone would make their reservation at the closest hotel to the VBCC, the DoubleTree by Hilton Virginia Beach. The DoubleTree is adjacent to the Virginia Beach Convention Center and is 1.1 miles from Virginia Beach.

To ensure availability and group rate, reservations must be made before Friday, 8 September 2023 by [clicking here](#). You may call into Doubletree Reservations instead at **757-422-8900** and reference the group code **SGB**.

**Cancellation policy:** All reservations must be accompanied by a first-night room deposit or guaranteed with a major credit card. The hotel accepts all major credit cards for deposit, which is refundable if cancellation is made 72 hours before arrival. The deposit guarantees the sleeping room until 12:00 Midnight on the scheduled arrival date. If you arrive after midnight call to assure the room is held.

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Central Registration 1 800-465-4329

[SAFE Association - Standard Room Booking Link](#)

Group Code: SFE

### **Hyatt House**

Central Registration 1 800-886-0451

[SAFE ASSOCIATION 2023](#)

Group Code: G-SAFE

## ***Which hotel did you make your reservation?***

**Doubletree** \_\_\_\_\_

**Courtyard Virginia Beach Front - North & South** \_\_\_\_\_

**Holiday Inn** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hyatt House** \_\_\_\_\_

**N/A Staying elsewhere in the local area** \_\_\_\_\_

Several shuttle buses will be available throughout each day to transport guests from the various SAFE block hotels to the Convention Centre. These will run more frequently during peak times. You can also download the app 'Freebee' which offers free on-demand transport around VA!