

AFTAC Alumni Association

West Coast Chapter

161 Southcreek Circle, Folsom CA 95630-1510

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2000

We're Going to have a Picnic

SUBMITTED BY JOE JOHNSON (CHAP PRESIDENT)

- When:** Sunday, June 25th, 1 pm to 7 pm.
- Where:** Orangevale Community Park, Orangevale CA. Between Sunrise Blvd and Folsom- Auburn Rd. just 4/10ths mile east of Hazel Ave.
- Parking:** In the large gravel parking area on the south side of Oak Ave. The community park opens at 8 am so anyone arriving early or bringing an RV can set up as soon as they open.
- Picnic Site:** Across the fence from the parking lot, in the covered area with a large barbecue and 4 picnic tables seating about 24 people. Also there are tree-shaded areas for people to gather and a water fountain.
- What to Bring:** Food for your family; charcoal for the barbecue (if you plan to cook); soft drinks, beer & whatever to drink (glass containers not allowed); ice chests; chairs, portable tables and/or blankets; and eating utensils for your family. If you wish to get together with others with a dish to pass, that would be super.
- Cost:** Park registration & insurance cost us \$64.00, so we'll split that among the attendees, but in no case will it cost more than \$4.00 per family. We'll collect the appropriate amount before you leave.
- How Many:** We hope to see about 50 families. Don't disappoint us. Come out and enjoy visiting with old friends.

How to get there:

- 1. From Greenback Lane:** Take Hazel Ave north to Oak Ave and turn right (east). Park is 4/10ths mile on the right.
- 2. From Interstate 80:** Take Douglas Blvd East exit. Travel east on Douglas Blvd to Sierra College Blvd. Turn right (south) on Sierra College Blvd which turns into Hazel Ave. Continue on Hazel Ave to Oak Ave and turn left (east). Park is 4/10ths mile on right.

Memorable Clear Lake Boat Cruise

SUBMITTED BY GEORGE THOMPSON (CHAP VICE PRESIDENT)

Our April 29th boat cruise was a resounding success. Everyone had a great time. The only near mishap was a misunderstanding by the cruise bartender, Donna Rae, who thought the cruise was at 10:30 PM instead of 10:30 am. Arriving an hour late, she did an excellent job of keeping our bar patrons happy. Everything else went smoothly. The weather cooperated with a beautiful sunny day and little wind. The scenery around the lake was great and the sailboats from Konocti made a spectacular sight.

The three-hour cruise went by quickly. The boat owners, Harvey & Roberta Welter and their crew did an excellent job. We received many positive comments. I'm all for doing it again.

Alumni present on the cruise were Harm & Donna Aning, Richard & Sharon Black, Clifford Ferris, Robert & Darlene Fitzgerald, Frank & Irene Goodreau, Arthur & Gloria Houston, Joe & Gayle Johnson, Bill & Jean Johnston, Dale & Rose Klug, George & Jan McKeel, Walter & Tanoa Partridge, Dave & Nancy Price, Orville & Carol Pritchard, George Thompson, and Tom & Susan Wentz. Bill Johnston was the longest retired member (1965).

SEO Reunion

SUBMITTED BY CAROL & ORV PRITCHARD & TONY VALENTINE

After hearing a couple of rumors of a desired reunion of Special Equipment Operators, a question was sent to the AFTAC Alumni web site and a positive response was received. Since there is not enough time to organize a formal reunion for the desired date, we have put an impromptu reunion together and hope as many as possible can attend.

"200th day (18 July, Tuesday), year 2000, main lobby of the El Dorado Hotel, Reno, NV, high noon. Wear your wings, name badge and bring your war stories. In addition, John Roberts invites all AFTAC SEOs to his home on Sunday, Jul 16th at 12 noon, for a "pre-day-200-reunion" get-together. John lives at 5405 Vinewood Circle, Fallon NV 89406, Phone 775-423-1205

Reno was chosen because it is centrally located, as is the El Dorado Hotel. It is co-joined with Circus Circus and the Silver Legacy with enclosed walkways. Phone numbers are: El Dorado, 1-800-648-5966, Circus Circus, 1-800-648-5010, Silver Legacy, 1-800-687-7733, for reservations. Ask for discounts and room and show packages, if interested. For other accommodations in the area call: Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority at 1-800-FOR-RENO.

We're also inviting all the "F Troopers" and any other AFTAC flyers to join us. Would love to have them. Since we're not sure of who all you SEO's, F Troopers and other flyers are, we would like you to get the word out to those you know. Any questions, please contact us.

Tony Valentine, (SEO 20) SEO20@worldnet.att.com 210-408-0910
Carol & Orv Pritchard, ("Pritch", SEO XXVI, '56 - ' 70) carporv@aol.com
George Thompson, (SEO XVII, '56 - ' 68) 707-994-4143

Buster Jangle Reunion May 2 – 5, 2000

SUBMITTED BY JOE JOHNSON

Former AFTAC, 1009 Special Weapons Squadron members who participated in Operation "Buster Jangle" in 1951 attended a reunion in Las Vegas, NV May 2nd –5th. Operation "Buster Jangle" consisted of a series of seven atomic detonations at the Nevada Test Site, about 80 miles north of Las Vegas. 1009th SWS personnel monitored these tests using seismic equipment placed at 40 odd sites located on a north/south line from Reno, NV through NTS to Kingman, AZ.

The highlight of the reunion was a bus tour through the test site. The tour included driving down into the largest atomic explosion crater (1800 feet in diameter) on the site. Unfortunately, since the "Buster Jangle" series occurred almost 50 years ago, the exact "ground zero" point for these tests was unknown to the tour guide who only worked at the site since 1959. Attendees were amazed at the development within the NTS (an area larger than the state of Rhode Island). In 1951 the area, as people remembered it, was open desert with a few dirt roads. Now, paved roads and power lines seem to be everywhere. There are the remains of many different types of structures that were built and subjected to the effects of atomic explosions. Most were badly damaged or reduced to rubble.

Another interesting part of the tour was a visit to the crater created in the "Plow Shares" test where atomic explosions were to be used for peaceful purposes, such as creating canals. For this test a 100-kiloton atomic device was detonated at 635 ft underground. The resulting crater is over 1200 ft in diameter and over 300 ft deep. Dirt is piled 20 – 100 ft high above the surrounding desert floor.

Those attending the reunion represented one-third of the 1009 SWS enlisted personnel who participated in the 1951 operation. All (including wives) enjoyed themselves and plans are already underway for a repeat performance at some other meaningful site. Attendees were Al & Joann Allender, Lee Barbour, Bob & Barbara Boster, Bill & Marge Brankman, Ed & Betty Carty,

Jerry & Kathy Collins, Ned Derkovits, Ray & Arlene Hild, Bill Johnson, Joe Johnson, Henry Koons, Norm & Jan Negrette, Lou & Laura Orsatti, Charlie & Joan Soucia, Bill & Shirley Sullivan and Don Vernon.

WORDS FROM THE PREZ' BY JOE JOHNSON

COME ON OUT FOR AN ENJOYABLE PICNIC AT ORANGEVALE PARK. VISIT WITH FRIENDS AND MAKE SOME NEW ONES WHILE ENJOYING A SUNNY SUMMER DAY. ANY SUGGESTIONS ANYONE HAS FOR FUTURE OUTINGS OR GET-TOGETHERS ARE CHEERFULLY WELCOME. JUST WRITE, CALL OR E-MAIL US.

YOUR CHAPTER OFFICERS WANT TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR ALL THE MEMBERSHIP TO ATTEND OUR MEETINGS. SINCE IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE TO NOTIFY EACH OF YOU OF EVERY MEETING, WE HAVE SET UP OUR MEETINGS FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR. THE TWO REMAINING QUARTERLY MEETINGS FOR 2000 ARE SCHEDULED FOR AUG 28, AND NOV 27. OTHERS WILL BE HELD AS NEEDED. MEETING LOCATIONS AND TIMES ARE NOT FIXED; SO IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND, CALL ME AT 916-783-8676 JUST PRIOR TO A SCHEDULED MEETING AND I'LL GIVE YOU THE TIME & PLACE INFORMATION.

"EXTREEMELY IMPORTANT" PLEASE NOTE OUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS. MAIL TO THE OLD ADDRESS WILL BE FORWARDED FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY, SO SEND FUTURE MAIL TO:
AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, WEST COAST CHAPTER ,161 SOUTHCREEK CIRCLE Folsom CA 95630

THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE (\$5.00) IS DUE IN APRIL EACH YEAR. **YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE IS PRINTED ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL. THOSE WITH A "05-01-00" DATE ON YOUR LABEL, THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER UNTIL YOU RENEW.** LIFETIME MEMBERS (**\$50 LIFE MEMBERSHIP**) EXCLUDED OF COURSE. NEW MEMBERSHIP CARDS ARE PRINTED AND MAILED AFTER DUES ARE RECEIVED. PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE STILL ON A LEARNING CURVE HERE AND THE US MAIL IS NOT INFALLIBLE, SO IF YOU DON'T GET OR HAVEN'T RECEIVED A MEMBERSHIP CARD, LET US KNOW.

WE HOPE FOR A GREAT TURNOUT AT THE JUN 25TH PICNIC. I'LL BE THERE. HOW ABOUT YOU?

EDITOR'S NOTE: ANY IDEAS FOR FUTURE GATHERINGS OR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

Mail Call

Don't forget our E-Mail address: TOD.Alumni@bigfoot.com

RALPH SIMONTON SAYS: MY E-MAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED TO ralphs@peoplepc.com. RALPH SIMONTON, 44939 N 16TH ST WEST, LANCASTER CA 93534

John Weigelt says: Enclosed is a check for next year's dues. I wasn't even aware there was a West Coast chapter until I saw the article in the Florida newsletter. I've been a member of the Colorado chapter for several years, figuring that was the closest one to California. My experience with AFTAC was not all that extensive. A few years as an "I" person at Det 436 in Ipswich, Australia, and after we closed that place down I spent a year at Patrick on the "T" system. I finally realized that if promotion was to be my future, it wouldn't be as an AFTAC member. So I returned to my true love, aircraft avionics, and finished out a rewarding career, retiring in Dec 1992. Nevertheless, I occasionally run into old AFTAC'rs and still keep in touch with a couple Det 436'rs. John Weigelt, 1133 West Ave S-14, Palmdale, CA 93551

Nick Pliketza says: A former neighbor of mine, George McKeel, at "Splinter City" trailer park at McClellan in the late 60's gave me your name & address. I would like to be informed of any reunion activities you may be aware of involving my old outfit, 1155 TOS. I ended my 4-year hitch at McClellan as a SSgt, working as a chemistry technician in the lab. Nick Pliketza, 5136 North Ave, Carmichael CA 95608, E-mail: PKETZA@JUNO.COM

