THE RESCUEGRAM

The Official Information Publication of the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard — *June 2009*

Lives Saved

602

These Things We Do...
That Others May Live

Inside This Issue:

Commander's Editorial	2
AEF Deployments	3
C-130s go digital	4
Outstanding Unit Award	5
News & Notes	6
Portrait of a Professional	7

Airmen deploy to Djibouti and Afghanistan

Deployments range from 40 days to four months

by Capt. Alyson M. Teeter
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

129th Airmen said their goodbyes to loved ones and shipped off to Afghanistan and Djibouti in April and May.

The first deployment to depart was the 130th Rescue Squadron and various support personnel. More than 50 aircrew members, maintainers and support personnel, and two MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft deployed to Djibouti to provide combat search and rescue support for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.

Two weeks after the Djibouti deployment, more than 65 Airmen and three HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters deployed for two to four months to provide combat search and rescue support for Operation Enduring Freedom. All told, approximately 100 servicemembers are deploying to Afghanistan over the course of their four-month tour.

"After a busy year of saving lives during fires and hurricanes, our Airmen are ready to perform our combat search and rescue mission overseas," said Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Rescue Wing commander.

See DEPLOY, Page 3

(U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Joshua Kauffman)

Members from the 129th Rescue Wing embark on a C-17 Globemaster for their deployment to Afghanistan, May 3.

THE RESCUEGRAM
is published by the Public Affairs Office, 129th Rescue Wing. This official newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 129th Rescue Wing. Its contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or the California Air National Guard.

The mission of the 129th Rescue Wing is to provide highly trained and well-equipped rescue resources, able to respond to and sustain the state mission of furnishing trained personnel for state emergencies, such as natural disasters, and to assist civil authorities in the enforcement of the law.

When called to active duty with the Air Force, we provide manpower, material and equipment resources to conduct and complete combat and search rescue operations world-wide. We provide manpower, material and equipment to conduct and complete peacetime search operations.

Editorial Staff
Commander
Col. Amos Bagdasarian

Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Alyson M. Teeter

Staff Writer
Staff Sgt. Eric Hamilton

Multimedia Staff
Photo
Master Sgt. Dan Kacir
Staff Sgt. Kim Ramirez
Senior Airman Joshua Kauffman

Video
Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino
Senior Airman Shane Burke

Contact Us:
129th RQW/PA
P.O. Box 103, Stop 20
Moffett FAF, CA 94035
Telephone: 650-603-9152
alyson.teeter@camoff.ang.af.mil

Commander's Commentary:
2009 AEF deployments take off

by Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Rescue Wing Commander

The 129th Rescue Wing recently deployed more than a 100 Airmen half-way around the world. At the end of April we sent our aircrews, support personnel and MC-130Ps to Djibouti, and a few days later we went through the deployment process again to get our HH-60G folks out the door to Afghanistan.

All of the deployment groups made it over to their respective areas of operation safe and sound, due largely to our cargo and personnel deployment function staffs. We need to thank the personnel manning the CDF and PDF, as well as the LGRDX folks for truly exceptional service. This was no easy feat due to challenges leading up to the departures of our people and equipment.

This deployment had many variables, from multiple groups moving to different locations on different aircraft, numerous last minute personnel and equipment changes, to airlift slips. With this level of complexity for a deployment, it's imperative that everyone's individual mobilization readiness be in order.

Tasks and training assigned by the unit or IDO must be accomplished promptly in order to have a smooth deployment departure from the base. We need to be proactive in preparing and executing deployments so we can concentrate on the mission when called.

Whether we are involved with combat overseas, hurricanes in the Gulf Coast, or fires here in California, we must maintain a high level of readiness. This means being fit, medically qualified, and being current in your AFSC, ancillary and war skills training, along with maintaining up to date personal information, wills, powers of attorney, etc. From top to bottom, commander to Airman, it's everyone's responsibility to be ready to deploy.

Thank you for your hard work and long hours. We still have a few more deployments to process and the redeployments to execute, keep up the great work.

Lastly, we are at the beginning of the "101 Days of Summer," which started Memorial Day weekend and ends Labor Day weekend. This is a time of outdoor fun, but also a time where many accidents occur. Please be cautious as you enjoy the longer days and warmer weather. Minimize your risks, wear proper gear and perform personal risk assessments. Our nation, communities, families, friends and co-workers depend on your service and commitment, so please be safe in everything you do.

Airmen deploy to Djibouti and Afghanistan, cont. from Page 1

"It shouldn't be forgotten that support from their families and employers are also critical to the success of this deployment," Colonel Bagdasarian added.

The 129th Airmen deployed to Afghanistan hit the ground running once they arrived in country.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lapostole, 129th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron commander, assumed command of the 129th ERQS during a ceremony at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, May 5. The 129th ERQS has the primary mission of performing combat search and rescue tasks. The 129th is the lead CSAR unit in Afghanistan.

The unit surpassed the 600 save mark when members from the 129th ERQS rescued two Afghan National Army soldiers May 15, raising the number of lives saved by the unit from 599 to 601.

"On behalf of the citizens of California, I commend the men and women of the 129th Rescue Wing on their 600th and 601st saves, which demonstrates their continued dedication to saving lives," said California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "From fires and hurricanes to combat operations, no challenge is too great for these Guardsmen."

(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino)

129th Maintenance Group personnel direct an HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopter into a C-17 Globemaster, May 3.

(Courtesy photo by Sagar Pathak)

Capt. Patrick Slavin, 130th Rescue Squadron C-130 pilot, poses with his children before his deployment to the Horn of Africa, April 21.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Kim Ramirez)

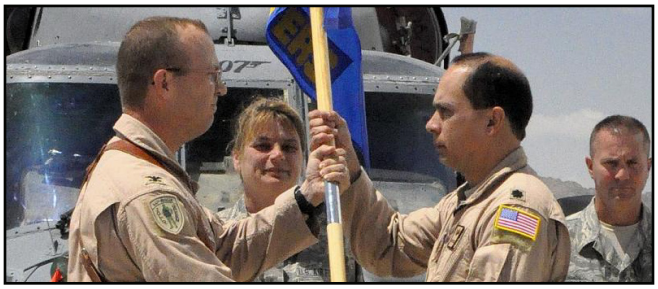
Staff Sgt. Ernesto Godinez, 129th Maintenance Group HH-60G helicopter crewchief, embarks on a C-17 Globemaster for his deployment to Afghanistan, May 3.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Dan Kacir)

Staff Sgt. Sean Pellaton, 129th Rescue Squadron aerial gunner, embarks on a C-17 Globemaster for his deployment to Afghanistan, May 3.

(Courtesy photo by Sagar Pathak)

Master Sgt. Miguel Toro, 130th Rescue Squadron loadmaster, spends time with his children before his deployment to the Horn of Africa, April 21



(U.S. Air Force photo by Guillermo Rivera

Lt. Col. Daniel Lapostole, 129th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron commander, receives the unit guidon from Col. Richard E. Donnelly, 451st Air Expeditionary Group deputy commander, during an assumption of command ceremony at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, May 5.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino)

The C-17 Globemaster and its crews from McChord Air Force Base, Wash., arrived at Moffett to pick up passengers and equipment deploying to Afghanistan May 3.

Silicon Valley rescue C-130s go digital with data link

by Capt. Alyson M. Teeter
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Nestled in the center of the world's technology epicenter is the 129th Rescue Wing of the California National Guard. Search and rescue is the wing's primary mission, which often involves low-tech but courageous life-saving actions.

The mission is about to get a high-tech boost from an innovative communication format called Situation Awareness Data Link, or SADL. A test version of the system was recently installed and evaluated on a 129th MC-130P Combat Shadow tanker.

Similar to the Link 16 format used by other Air Force platforms, such as F-15 Eagles, SADL is a military communications system that supports the exchange of tactical information between air and land assets in near real time. Operators can digitally access this information from command and control systems instead of receiving verbal reports and then annotating the information on paper. The system is already in use by A-10A/C Thunderbolts and some F-16C Fighting Falcons.

"When the 129th Rescue Wing responds to crises such as the California wildfires and Hurricane Ike last year, a significant observation was the need for a self-contained airborne network capability to facilitate digital communications between rescue aircraft, pararescue forces, and distant command centers," said Lt. Col. Steve Butow, 129th Operations Group deputy commander. "These rescue forces will no longer be constrained to voice only communications in their life saving mission."

Also recognizing this need for digital airborne communications were participants in the Guard and Reserve Weapons and Tactics Conference (WEPTAC), which takes place annually at the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Test Center (AATC) in Tucson, Ariz.

"The Situation Awareness Data Link was on the primary objective list during WEPTAC the past four years," said Maj. Jose Agredano, 129th Operations Group chief of tactics and 2008 WEPTAC chairman. "We were able to bring the major players together last year and brainstorm a walk-on solution."

The service's need for the system coupled with the 129th RQW's operational experience provided momentum for generating a solution at WEPTAC. "The data link is one of the Air Force's highest priorities for today's joint fight," Colonel Butow added.

The 129th RQW was one of three units evaluating a more permanent SADL solution. The 129th, along with C-130s from the West Virginia Air National Guard's 130th Airlift Wing from Charleston and Air Force Reserve Command's 910th Airlift Wing from Youngstown-Warren Air Reserve Station, Ohio, participated in an Operational Utility Evaluation with AATC at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., April 13 to 17.

"The exercise was a huge step for not only this unit but for every unit that participated," said Tech. Sgt. Elliott Paige, 130th Rescue Squadron radio operator with the 129th Rescue Wing. He was the first 130th RQS RO trained on SADL and coordinated the SADL channels with the Western Air Defense Sector for training here and at the OUE.

"There were Reserve and Guard units working side-by-side to prove the interoperability of this highly capable system, and develop TTPs [tactics, techniques and procedures] and a working solution for aircrews operating this system," Sergeant Paige said.

"It's only fitting that Silicon Valley's specialized rescue force be amongst the first to go digital."

After testing SADL at Davis-Monthan, 129th RQW operators came home with a sense of accomplishment and are excited about the positive impact SADL will have on future missions at home and abroad.

"Rescue MC-130Ps will serve as a digital gateway for other military aircraft and land forces during disaster response operations such as a Bay Area earthquake response," Colonel Butow said. "It is only fitting that Silicon Valley's specialized rescue force be amongst the first to go digital."

In the coming years, HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and the Guardian Angel pararescue weapon system will also be equipped with SADL. All three rescue weapon systems will have the ability to share digital information, which will enhance the unit's ability to save lives.

"SADL will revolutionize rescue," Major Agredano said. "The possibilities are endless."

Snapshot of the unit's star performers

Carolann Wunderlin, 129th Family Programs: Winner of the 2008 TAG Award for Excellence in Family Readiness.

Tech. Sgt. Fernando Wilkins, 129th MXG: Winner of the 2009 National Image, Inc. Meritorious Service Award.

Lt. Col. Jack O'Neill, 131st RQS: Winner of the Silicon Valley Red Cross' Real Hero Award, Military Category.

Staff Sgt. Sean Pellaton, 129th RQS: Winner of the 2008 Staff Sgt. Henry E. "Red" Erwin Award, Airman Category.

129th receives Air Force outstanding unit award

by Capt. Alyson M. Teeter
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Members of the 129th Rescue Wing were notified April 30 that the wing was the recipient of the 2008 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

"It is my pleasure to notify all members of the 129th RQW that we have received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for 2008," said Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Rescue Wing commander. "This is a great achievement and directly reflects on the professionalism and dedication of all our members."

The award was granted for meritorious service during December 2006 to November 2008. During this period, the 129th Rescue Wing was credited with saving 40 lives under extreme conditions. From the high desert mountains of Afghanistan to remote areas more than 500 miles off the Pacific Coast, the safe and successful conduct of each operation is a testament to the unit's experience and leadership.

Examples of the unit's outstanding performance during the award time period:

- The wing received an overall Excellent rating during a phase two operational readiness inspection in December 2006. With 14 areas rated outstanding and 38 areas rated excellent, this was the highest point score awarded to a Combat Search and Rescue unit to date.
- More than 70 Airmen and three HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters deployed for 120-days to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan in April 2007 to perform combat search and rescue and joint personnel recovery operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.
- In May 2007 more than 50 Airmen, along with two MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft, deployed to Djibouti for in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.
- During the 2008 Northern California firefight, Operation Lightning Strike, two HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and aircrews were certified to perform water bucket drops on the fires for the first time in unit history. Overall, the crews dropped more than 150,000 gallons of water.
- Crews stationed in Redding during Operation Lightning Strike landed in rugged Northern California terrain to medevac injured firefighters.
- The unit assisted the Gulf Coast region in 2008 during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, saving 34 people and 11 dogs.
- Along with responding to state emergencies, rescue crews performed two long-range over water missions. The first was a June 2008 mission 550 miles off the coast of California for a critically ill crewmember aboard a cargo vessel.
- In July 2008, while still immersed in firefighting operations, crews saved a Canadian fisherman aboard a fishing boat 600 miles off the coast. Both patients were transported to the Regional Medical Center of San Jose.

This was the seventh time the wing has been awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

"The competition was extremely keen, and each winner is commended for having been selected from an outstanding group of nominees," said Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt, III, director of the Air National Guard.

News & Notes

FOR THE LATEST NEWS:

WWW.129RQW.ANG.AF.MIL

Welcome new 129th members!
Capt. Daniel Drag
Staff Sgt. Adriano Dela Cruz
Staff Sgt. John Nguyen Fulgar
Staff Sgt. Maria Navarez
Staff Sgt. Brian Roshon
Senior Airman Joseph Almony
Senior Airman Renzo Delia
Senior Airman Edward Drew
Senior Airman Howard Kim
Airman 1st Class Heather Frost
Airman 1st Class Jimmy Panyanouvong
Airman 1st Class Daniel Tejera
Airman 1st Class Lynn Visitacion

The following member were recently promoted to their current rank. Congratulations!
Chief Master Sgt. Chris Hartman
Tech. Sgt. John Anderson
Tech. Sgt. Matthew Aviles
Tech. Sgt. Walter McCaffrey
Tech. Sgt. Even Poole
Staff Sgt. Brett Dietz
Staff Sgt. Christopher Laynes

Academy of Military Science graduate
2nd Lt. Michael Foust

Community College of the Air Force graduates
Chief Master Sgt. James Alsobrook
Senior Master Sgt. Forest Fernandez
Master Sgt. Adan Carrillo
Master Sgt. Christopher Dattolico
Master Sgt. Nicole Jackson
Master Sgt. Rosemarie Stokes
Tech. Sgt. Bret Carroll
Staff Sgt. Theresa Hechler

The following members have retired, separated, or transferred to another unit. We wish them well and thank them for their service.
Col. Thomas Gross
Col. Lori Marion
Capt. Waseem Iqbal
Capt. Shawn Perceful
Capt. Charles Phillips
Master Sgt. Barbara Apkarian
Staff Sgt. Johnny Asbury
Senior Airman Paul Geer
Senior Airman Richard Kimbrel
Senior Airman Thomas Ray

Religious Services Schedule
Services take place every Sunday morning of UTA drill weekend in Building 650.
Schedule of services
Catholic: 10:15-10:45
Non-denominational: 11:00-11:30

2009 Moffett Field Commissary Sidewalk and Case Lot Sales
June 5-7 - Sidewalk & Seafood
July 17-19 - Sidewalk
Aug. 14-16 - Sidewalk
Sept. 4-6 - Case Lot
Oct. 2-4 - Sidewalk & Seafood
Nov. 6-8 - Sidewalk & Seafood
Dec. 4-6 - Sidewalk

Moffett Field Museum free for military and dependents
The museum is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and is located in Building 126 next to Hangar One. Admission is free for military and accompanied dependents. For more information, go to www.moffettfieldmuseum.org or call 650-964-4024.

Home Community Care Program
The Home Community Care Program is a free UTA child care service open to military members who participate in a UTA weekend. For more information and access to the required forms, please go to the 129th Services CoP on the Air Force Portal or call Services at 603-9291.

1st annual Central Calif. Aviation Adventure Teen Camp
Where: 144th FW ANG Base and Camp Gaines at Lake Sequoia
When: July 23-26, 2009
Activities will include: Paintball, Rock climbing, High Ropes, Kayaking, Flight Simulators, Rifle Range, and many more!
To sign up or for more info please contact Senior Airman David Oakley at 559-454-5258, david.oakley@cafres.ang.af.mil or Barbara Draughn at 559-454-5383, barbara.draughn@cafres.ang.af.mil. Slots are limited so sign up now!

LRS commander opening
Applications are now being accepted for the position of commander, 129th Logistics Readiness Squadron. All interested personnel must submit a resume to Lt. Col. David Jaurique, 129th MSG/CD, via email to david.jaurique@camoff.ang.af.mil no later than June 6. Resumes are heavily weighed by the appointing authority and are used in determining overall eligibility.
Any questions may be referred to Lt. Col. Jaurique at 650-603-9191.

Marriage Enrichment Seminar openings available
When: July 18-19
Where: San Diego
Who: National Guard couples who have previously not attended the Marriage Enrichment Seminar
How: Register at http://www.prestoregister.com/cgi-bin/order.pl?ref=Readyfamilies&fm=2

AF officials announce new discrimination hotline number
The Air Force Discrimination Hotline has a new toll free number that will serve the total force, active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian members. The hotline number will ensure all unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment concerns are quickly identified and addressed.
The numbers are 888-231-4058, 210-565-5214 or DSN 665-5214. The staff at equal opportunity operations is reminding all units to update their policy letters and official postings to reflect the new numbers.

2009 Calendar

June 6-7: UTA

July 11-12: UTA

Aug. 1-2: UTA

Sept. 12-13: UTA

Oct. 3-4: UTA

Oct. 3: Family Picnic

Nov. 7-8: UTA

Nov. 7: Wing Awards in service dress

Dec. 5-6: UTA

News & Notes cont.

VA welcomes veterans home with new Web site, blog

The Veterans Affairs Department has launched a new "Returning Veterans" Web site to welcome home veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts with a social, veteran-centric site.

www.oefoif.va.gov focuses on the needs and questions of returning veterans, featuring information on benefits, videos, veterans' stories and a blog where veterans are encouraged to post feedback.

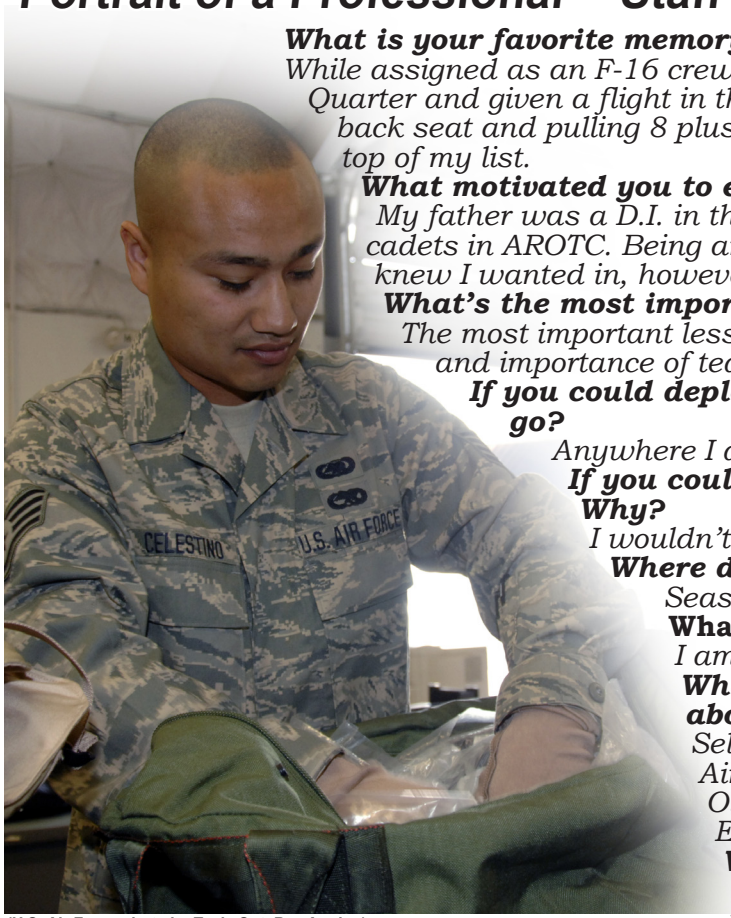
129th Alumni and Heritage Association

Do you belong to the 129th Alumni and Heritage Association? You don't need to be an alumni to be a member. Currently, we have only about 300 members, total!

Our goal is to continue the ongoing heritage of the 129th through current and past members. We support the wing during deployments and homecoming and have an annual scholarship for wing personnel or their families attending college.

Please see your Chief for details. Continue your legacy, please support AHA.

Portrait of a Professional -- Staff Sgt. Jesse Celestino, 129 LRS



(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Ray Aquino)

What is your favorite memory in the AF?

While assigned as an F-16 crew chief at Luke I was awarded Airman of the Quarter and given a flight in the aircraft I worked on. After jumping in the back seat and pulling 8 plus G's I would have to say that memory is at the top of my list.

What motivated you to enlist in the AF?

My father was a D.I. in the Army and continues his career training cadets in AROTC. Being around him influenced me at a very young age. I knew I wanted in, however he ultimately helped me decide to "go blue".

What's the most important lesson you've learned in the military?

The most important lesson I have learned in the military is the value and importance of teamwork.

If you could deploy anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Anywhere I am needed to support the mission.

If you could choose any AF job, which would it be? Why?

I wouldn't mind taking the stick in an F-16 again.

Where did you grow up?

Seaside, Calif.

What is your job in the civilian world?

I am employed full-time at the 129th.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

Selected twice in the sport of wrestling to the Air Force Sports Program, coached by two-time Olympic coach and retired USAF Master Sgt. Rich Estrella.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy riding my motorcycle, working on cars, fishing and traveling.

Portrait of a Professional is a monthly profile of an outstanding Staff Sgt. and below. Nominations are routed through the squadron and group commanders.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. Mat Wenthe)

Training for war

Staff Sgt. Joseph Kenney, a HH-60G Pave Hawk flight engineer from the 129th Rescue Squadron, carries a simulated injured Airman during the Advance Operator course near Las Vegas, Nev. in March 2009. They were put into varying levels of stressful situations that resemble what they may encounter overseas if forced to land in a non-permissive environment.

129th RQW/PA
MOFFETT FAF, CA 94035

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

"These Things We Do…That Others May Live"
Download the newsletter at **www.129rqw.ang.af.mil**