

AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 77
ISSUE 1
JANUARY 2025



2025 ARA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Mike Tillema President

Mandy Hutchison Vice President

Brad Dow Secretary

Todd Prejean Treasurer

Bob Remey Historian

Greg Gaunt Plans & Programs

Gene Manner Public Relations

Rick Sheets Member-At-Large

Tony Ray Member-At-Large

Marie Murray Editor

Published by
the

**Air Rescue
Association**

www.usafrescue.org

Contact:

info@usafrescue.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...2
SYMPOSIUM PHOTOS...3
2024 AWARD WINNERS...5

PRHA MESSAGE...9
TOMLF HANGER...10

RESCUE STORIES OF
TODAY...14
& YESTERDAY...16

ANNUAL MEETING MINS,
TREASURER REPORT...19
NEW BOARD
MEMBERS...20

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Mike Tillema, ARA President



Happy New Year, ARA Family!

I hope this finds you and your families well and happy. Also hope your holiday season was full of joy and love. We continue to pray for our military women and men who are deployed around the world and those prayers include their families at home.

Our Rescue Symposium in Oct in DC recognized the winners of the awards we sponsor. They include Capt Brad Joyal, recipient of the Kight Award, Pedro 11 flight, Witchdoctor, and King 91 who won the Jolly Green Rescue Mission of the Year, and 58th Rescue Squadron who won the Rescue Squadron of the Year. Citations and pictures follow in the newsletter. We gave out a brand-new trophy for the JGRMOY...a huge Jolly Green Giant holding a globe! It's fantastic and thanks to our artist and sculptor Nate Aderman for the incredible work. He's the man who also created an exact replica of the Kight award angel, and now our Kight winners and their squadrons take home and keep their own Kight Trophy! Huge congratulations to our winners. Welcome as a lifetime member of ARA to Capt Joyal...one of the benefits of winning the Kight.

I would like to recognize and welcome the 84 members of the Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association as new lifetime members of the ARA. Thanks to current PRHA President, Rick Sheets, for the tremendous help and support making this happen, and also for saying yes to being an ARA Board member. These H-43 Huskie Airmen are truly a bunch of heroes, icons and have certainly helped pave the way for our current operations today. I continue to learn more and more of the history of our original Pedros and think it was quite the honor that we used their callsign in Afghanistan during the Global War on Terror. Welcome and thank you Pedros!

We are introducing a new ARA Award and will be working with the Pentagon Air Staff on the proposal. Our maintainers have always been a crucial member of the Rescue team and it's time to formally recognize them. So hopefully in Oct 2025, you'll see our first USAF Rescue Maintainer of the Year! I would like to recognize one of our new board members, too. Thanks for saying yes, CMSgt (Ret) Tony Ray (and great idea Mandy Hutchison). Tony is a career Rescue maintainer, and he and board member/fellow career maintainer Greg Gaunt have created a nice package to send to the Air Staff. Thanks gents! Wish us luck!

Thanks again for being members of the Air Rescue Association...our 49th year! Happy 2025! Little 10 year old Mikey T in 1975 often thought about the 2020s and 2025. He thought that there would be flying cars around, easy trips to the moon and back, and beaming me up Scotty. Not so much.

Bless you all and may 2025 be a wonderful and prosperous year for you and your families.
Mikey T

2024 ARA SYMPOSIUM PHOTOS

Washington, D.C.





2024 AWARD WINNERS AND CITATIONS

Congratulations to our award winners!

THE AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION 2024 RICHARD T. KIGHT AWARD

Capt. Bradley T. Joyal



Captain Bradley T. Joyal distinguished himself as Chief of Standardization and Evaluations, 79th Rescue Squadron, 563d Rescue Group, 355th Wing, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, from 01 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. Captain Joyal led nineteen aviators through the execution of 2,100 hours of uninterrupted Combat Search and Rescue alert coverage in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE. He directed five alert launches, two casualty evacuations, 127 sorties, 323 combat hours, and organized forty-two members in a directed dispersal where he oversaw the organic establishment of a forward operating site, generated six missions, and mitigated threats from the onset of the Israel-Hamas conflict. The distinctive accomplishments of Captain Joyal reflect credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

THE AIR FORCE JOLLY GREEN

2024 RESCUE MISSION OF THE YEAR AWARD

Pedro 11 flight, Witchdoctor, and King 91

for superior airmanship epitomizing the motto
“THESE THINGS WE DO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE”



Pedro 11 flight, Witchdoctor, and King 91 distinguished themselves on 25 Aug 2023 while assigned to the 303rd, 82nd, and 81st Expeditionary Rescue Squadrons, 449th Air Expeditionary Group, 435th Air Expeditionary Wing, Camp Lemonnier, Republic of Djibouti. On that day, Pedro 11's flight of 3 HH-60Ws and King 91's HC-130 launched on a no-notice casualty evacuation of twelve critically wounded soldiers on a six-hour mission. Through adverse weather, aircraft malfunctions, and a dynamic threat picture, Pedro 11 flight landed and egressed in reduced visibility while Witchdoctor administered lifesaving care and King 91 coordinated overhead. Pedro 11 flight pushed beyond reserve fuel to ultimately save all 12 lives. The distinctive accomplishments of Pedro 11 Flight, Witchdoctor, and King 91 reflect credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.



AIR FORCE RESCUE SQUADRON OF THE YEAR AWARD TO 58th Rescue Squadron



58th Rescue Squadron, 563d Rescue Group, 355th Wing, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. During this period, the 58th accepted a short notice six-month deployment and six-month alert for Human Space Flight Support despite a one-third loss of its Unit Type Codes as it began a service-directed inactivation. Moreover, the squadron stood-up Special Warfare Team One for an eighteen-month effort to integrate Guardian Angel and Tactical Air Control Party to solve near-peer problems for the Combat Air Force. Finally, the 58th demonstrated novel maritime tactics in the Indo-Pacific, gaining the Pacific Air Force Commander's immediate request for operational support of Special Warfare Teams. The distinctive accomplishments of the 58th reflect credit upon itself and the United States Air Force.



SAVE THE DATE!

2025 Air Rescue Association Symposium and & Reunion

9-12 Oct, 2025

Ft. Walton Beach, FL

Island Hotel

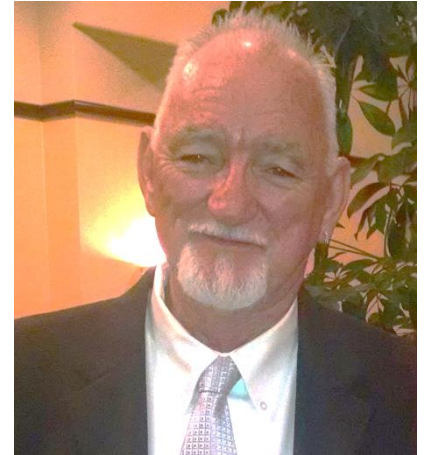
Stay tuned for more details and registration!

GREETINGS FROM PEDRO RESCUE HELICOPTER ASSOCIATION

Rick Sheets, President, PRHA

PRHA is excited to merge our membership with ARA. The members took a vote with unanimous consent to move forward with this merge. I am Rick Sheets and am currently serving as President of the PRHA. It is my great pleasure to introduce PRHA and its membership to you.

PRHA was conceived in 1999 by our treasurer and his father, TSgt Taylor, deceased. TSgt James A. Taylor contacted a few other members. TSgt Taylor began contacting those who would be our first members. With Don VanMeter's assistance, Chris Taylor began the work of incorporation and the Association was incorporated in the State of Washington on January 28, 2000.



The idea was to form an association for the purpose of education. A comment was made by one of the USAF Museum Administrators at the first reunion that people forget there was another group of folks that performed rescue in SEA. That often forgotten group was Pedro.

Pedro, HH-43 has a large and storied history regarding its work in SEA. The history of the men that crewed the HH-43 may be even larger. A couple of facts, the HH-43 had more saves in SEA than any other single helicopter. It was the first in and last out. One of our current members Lt. Col. Fred Bergold (Retired) flew the final mission in 1975. One of our members is Col. (Retired) Tom Curtis; he spent 7 ½ years as a POW after being shot down while attempting a rescue of an F-105 pilot. Along with him was his co-pilot 1st Lt (KIA) Duane Martin and AIC Bill Robertson, crew chief and A3C Neil Black, PJ. The last 2 were POWs as well.

The PRHA placed 4 monuments, 1 each at The Enlisted Heritage Hall, U.S. AF Academy, Lackland AFB, and the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. The monuments pay respect to William Pittsenbarger a PJ and Medal of Honor recipient and gives a brief history of the HH-43. I would encourage you if the opportunity arises to seek on out and look at it. A picture of each side of the monument is included. They are designed very well and will make you proud that we are part of ARA soon.

We look forward to seeing you at the Symposium in October of 2025 at Ft. Walton Beach.

I want to acknowledge Chris Taylor for assisting with this article.

To learn more about PRHA, visit <https://www.pedroafrescue.org/>



TOMLF HANGER

Supporting USAF Rescue Warriors and Families since 2002



Hello ARA! As we welcome 2025, I am pleased to share the progress and developments at That Others May Live Foundation (TOMLF) since our last report in July.

WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We are honored to welcome three exceptional individuals to the Board of Directors at TOMLF:

Linnaea Hance. Linnaea brings a wealth of experience in intelligence analysis, operations, and program management. She currently manages a portfolio of software development projects for the Advanced Technology Prototyping Directorate at BAE Systems. A graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and Georgetown University, Linnaea's leadership and strategic expertise make her a valuable addition to our mission.



Erik Ruiz. Erik is a distinguished U.S. Air Force veteran and helicopter pilot with extensive experience in project and operations management. As a former Director of Operations for the USAF, he oversaw critical aircrew training programs. Erik's leadership has driven significant advancements in logistics, training, and budget optimization throughout his military career. He also brings corporate insights from his fellowship at NetApp.

Matt Lowe. Matt is the Director of Special Missions at Air Center Helicopters, where he leads international contingency and training programs. With a long-standing career in military aviation, including roles as an RPA pilot and Director of Safety, Matt has a deep understanding of operational challenges and solutions. His educational background includes a master's degree in military Operational Art and Science from the Air Command Staff College.



These accomplished individuals bring diverse expertise and a shared passion for supporting U.S. Air Force rescue personnel and their families. We are excited about the impact their leadership will have on our mission.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

As we move forward into the new year and a new chapter for the foundation, we would like to acknowledge **Terri Wallace**, who recently left TOMLF to pursue other opportunities. Terri dedicated four incredible years to the Foundation, helping us expand our reach and deepen our impact. We thank her for her unwavering commitment and contributions to our mission and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

We are pleased to welcome **Sarah Lively** as the Interim Executive Director. Sarah has been with TOMLF for three years as our Programs Director, where she played a pivotal role in managing all four of our key programs:



- **Scholarship Programs:** Providing full post-secondary education funding to surviving children of fallen rescue heroes and merit-based scholarships for children of current and past warriors.
- **Tragedy Assistance:** Delivering immediate financial support to families in times of need.
- **Visible & Invisible Wounds Support:** Offering advocacy, guidance, and assistance to those affected by visible and invisible wounds.
- **Warfighter Support:** Enhancing the well-being and mission readiness of rescue personnel and their families.

Her dedication, leadership, and comprehensive understanding of these critical areas make her the ideal person to guide TOMLF into 2025. We are confident in Sarah's ability to achieve great milestones for the Foundation and the families we serve.

GRANT FROM NAPE EXPO CHARITIES

We are excited to announce that TOMLF has been selected as a 2025 recipient of the prestigious NAPE Charities grant. This generous support will significantly enhance our programs, allowing us to better serve the families of U.S. Air Force rescue heroes. As part of our **Visible & Invisible Wounds Program**, we will provide Resiliency Retreats and additional resources to support the well-being of rescue heroes and their families.

This grant aligns closely with the mission of NAPE Expo Charities, which is dedicated to promoting the recovery of U.S. veterans, aiding their transition in coping with service-related injuries, and helping them successfully acclimate to civilian life.

We are deeply grateful to NAPE Expo Charities for their unwavering commitment to our mission and their invaluable support in helping us make a lasting impact.

You can learn more about their initiatives at the NAPE Expo Charities website (<https://napeexpo.com/nape-charities>).

LOOKING AHEAD

As we embark on this new year, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission. The addition of our new board members, the leadership of Sarah Lively, and the generous grant from NAPE Expo Charities position us to expand our reach and enhance our support services. We are deeply grateful for your continued support and dedication to the That Others May Live Foundation. Together, we honor the sacrifices of our rescue heroes by ensuring their families receive the care and assistance they deserve.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to a great 2025.

Respectfully,



Wade Koch, Chairman

That Others May Live Foundation

That Others May Live Foundation

871 Coronado Center Drive, Suite 200 | Henderson, NV 89052 | Office (702) 956-0713

www.thatothersmaylive.org | EIN 88-0487308 | CFC #61226

2025 JOLLY GREEN MERIT SCHOLARSHIP LAUNCHING SOON!

That Others May Live Foundation



TOMLF is thrilled to announce the launch of the **2025 Jolly Green Merit Scholarship on January 30th!** This scholarship offers merit-based financial assistance to the children of current and past U.S. Air Force rescue warriors, supporting their pursuit of post-secondary education.

The **application window will be open from January 30th to April 30th.** Interested applicants should visit the TOMLF website at www.thatothersmaylive.org/scholarships to download the application and find additional details about eligibility and submission requirements.

TOMLF is also seeking **volunteers to serve as evaluators** during the selection process. If you would like to contribute your time and expertise, please contact **Sarah Lively** at sarah.lively@thatothersmaylive.org.

Thank you for supporting this impactful program. Together, we can help our rescue community achieve their educational dreams!

That Others May Live Foundation
871 Coronado Center Drive, Suite 200 | Henderson, NV 89052 | Office (702) 956-0713
www.thatothersmaylive.org | EIN 88-0487308 | CFC #61226

RESCUE STORIES OF TODAY

“Hiker Rescued by USAF Team,” originally published November 14, 2024 by 1Lt Will Witherow, 58th Special Operations Wing, Kirtland AFB, NM

<https://www.kirtland.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3964885/hiker-rescued-by-usaf-team/>

On 26 October 2024 a hiker in the Caldera Mountain range suffered a nearly 30 foot fall off a ledge on the side of the trail. The injured hiker’s companion then called local emergency responders for help since he could not reach him down the cliff. After responding to the scene, the local emergency team decided that the injured hiker needed to be airlifted to a hospital. With the fall happening at a dangerous and remote location, the teams that would normally respond to this situation were not able to provide the airlift.

The call came in to the 58th Special Operations Wing at 1750 that the hiker needed to be rescued and taken to the hospital. Major Joshua Hartmann, Detachment 2 Director of Operations, took the call and immediately began coordinating between Detachment 2 and emergency personnel to get a UH-1N “Huey” team to the scene. A brave team made up of Major Kevin Cornell, Mission Commander and Pilot, Captain McClain Cardoso, Co-Pilot, and Staff Sergeant Robert Benson, Special Missions Aviator, stepped up and volunteered to be the rescue team. Due to the extensive injuries and precarious spot on the mountain, the rescue team was augmented to include the 351st Special Warfare Training Squadron. Technical Sergeant Roman Ramirez, Pararescueman Instructor, heroically joined the rescue team.

After getting the necessary approvals to complete the mission, the rescue team of USAF Rescue 65 took off from Kirtland Air Force Base for a 1-hour flight to the mountain range. From the beginning, the team knew that they would be limited by fuel issues but bravely pushed on anyway. They arrived at the injured hiker’s location to find that he was on a steep slope and only 50 feet from the edge of another cliff that he was lucky to not have continued his fall down. SSgt Benson began assessing the situation with the team, determining an inability to land and being forced to hover 40 feet from the side of the mountain. “The terrain was extremely dangerous to try to maintain a hovering position with the wind from the mountain and having to dodge fallen trees to find the right spot to lower Ramirez,” explained Capt Cardoso.



Photo of injured hiker being transferred to hospital staff. Photo by 1Lt. Witherow.

Aiming in between the trees, TSgt Ramirez was lowered down 120 feet and made his way up the slope through extremely slick terrain to reach the hiker. Luckily, the local emergency responders had provided the hiker with initial medical attention, so TSgt Ramirez was able to focus on getting the hiker ready to be hoisted to the Huey. Ramirez assessed that the hiker had sustained a possible broken back, broken right ankle, multiple broken ribs, and a broken wrist so he had to be placed on a stretcher to be loaded into the Huey. While Ramirez was on the ground trying to get the hiker ready to be transported, the aircrew team was constantly fighting the terrain to maintain their hovering position and had to make two passes before they were able to get back in position to receive the stretcher and hoist Ramirez back into the aircraft.

Benson was constantly monitoring the fuel levels and knew they needed to head to the UNM Hospital in Albuquerque immediately after Ramirez made it back into the aircraft. They began their flight to the hospital and landed at nearby Johnson Field where they were met by the hospital's medical team to receive the hiker at 2233. Once they ensured the hiker was safely transferred to the hospital staff, the team headed back to the base where they landed with only 4 minutes of fuel left in the Huey.

This mission shows how the USAF training programs are producing the highest quality Airmen in the world that always stand ready to answer the call of our nation. Our members are trained to adapt to whatever the situation calls for and can work as an effective team to rise to the challenges they face. The 58th SOW is incredibly proud of our members for their heroic actions and honored to work with our partners at the 351st SWTS.



Photo of team from USAF Rescue 65. Photo taken by 1Lt Witherow.

RESCUE STORIES OF YESTERDAY

“First Rescue Mission into Laos: 18-19 November 1964,” originally published in “Pedro News” issue January 2005, written by John Christianson

<https://www.ragay.nl/hh-43-sea/nkp>

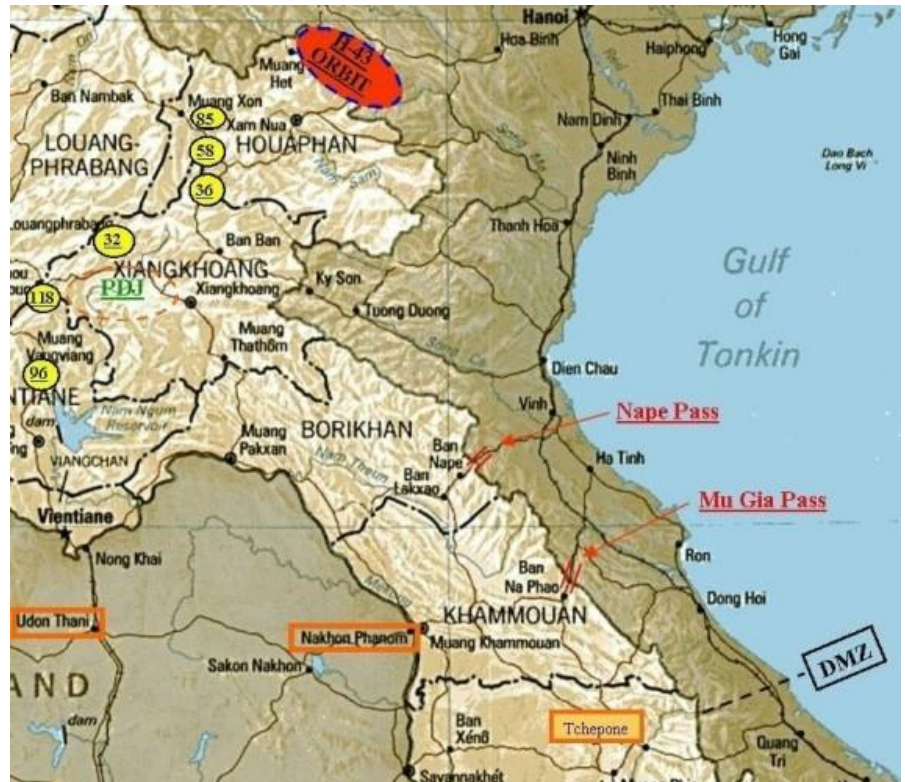
Area of operations Thailand, Laos, & North Vietnam – published in “Pedro News”, Jan2005

On 18 Nov64 “Ball 03”, one of two F-100Ds escorting a “Yankee Team” RF-101C reconnaissance mission, was shot-down while exchanging fire with an enemy anti-aircraft gun position. “Ball 03”’s Wingman called “dropkick” (a distress signal used in place of mayday to confuse any listening enemy troops) to the Air America Air Operations Center in Vientiane, reporting that “Ball 03” had crashed just south of Ban Senphan in central Laos near the North Vietnamese

border. The Air America Operations Officer in the Operations Center diverted a C-123 to reconnoiter the area and act as an Airborne Controller until relieved by a USAF HU-16B from Korat AB. Once in position, “Tacky 44”, the HU-16B, requested that US Navy A-1 Skyraiders fly to Ban Senphan, to search for wreckage and the pilot, and suppress any enemy opposition if it were encountered.

Within minutes of their arrival on the scene, the Navy Skyraiders received ground fire from Pathet Lao emplacements near the location that “Ball 03” was believed to have been shot-down. The A-1's attacked the gun positions taking minor flak and small arms hits to their aircraft. During the action, one of the Skyraider pilots spotted what appeared to be a burning crash site in the jungle approximately five miles away from the coordinates originally furnished.

Two HH-43B's were put on alert and launched with DET. Prov.3, PARC crewmembers (those TDY from 33 ARS, which were being replaced by DET. Prov.2 crews around this date), then proceeded the 10 miles to the Mekong River near Nakhon Phanom and Thakhek, Laos. At that time, the US Ambassador's permission was required to cross the Mekong River into Laos and the



crews did not receive this permission during their holding orbits on the Thai side of the river. Running short of fuel, both aircraft returned to NKP for refueling.

At the same time, a C-124C landed at NKP with departure destination Naha AB, Okinawa (returning the aircraft and crews to 33 ARS).

TWO of the original pilots, knowing that they were being replaced by the DET. Prov.2 guys, asked Jim Sovell and myself if we would take their place. Jim and I said yes. They got on the C-124C and went home and a few minutes later both aircraft were launched, this time with clearance to cross the Mekong and with Jim and I on board as co-pilots. I believe Jim Crabbe was Aircraft Commander, TSgt Reed was the Flight Engineer and SSgt Bennett the PJ.



HH-43Bs "Pansy 88" and "Pansy 89" at NKP 18 Nov 1964 - Alerted for a downed F-100D "Ball 3" over Laos - LtoR: 1Lt John Christianson (CP), Capt Jim Crabb (RCC, 33ARS), TSgt Reed (FE, 33ARS), SSgt Robert Bennett (PJ) - photo coll. J.Christianson

Shortly after we crossed the Mekong River, we picked up two U.S. Navy A-1 Skyraiders for cover. We were sent to investigate a fire in the jungle which approximated the shutdown coordinates. The call-signs for our two HH-43Bs were "Pansy 88" and "Pansy 89". We flew blindly into Laos with no intel as to where the bad guys were. To our knowledge, we encountered no groundfire nor did we see any bad guys. The fire was just that - a jungle fire and not one caused by a crashed F-100D. We made our way back to NKP without any complications.

Before darkness temporarily ended the rescue efforts, the HU-16B coordinated thirteen F-105s, eight F-100s, six Navy A-1's, two HH-43Bs, and a pair of Air America Sikorsky H-34 's in a concerted effort to find and rescue the downed pilot.

The coordination and control of these diverse elements provided a preview of SAR efforts that would be conducted over the next decade



HH-43B "Pansy 88" or "Pansy 89" at NKP 18 Nov 1964 – LtoR: SSgt Robert Bennett (PJ), Capt Jim Crabb (RCC, 33ARS), 1Lt John Christianson (CP) – photo coll. J.Christianson

19 November 1964 : Airborne at first light, "Tacky 65", another HU-16B, pilot Capt. Weeden, from Korat AB, and four F-105s returned to the Ban Senphan area. At mid-morning the On-scene Commander in "Tacky 65" sighted the pilot's parachute and the wreckage on a rocky outcropping only fifty yards from the nearest anti-aircraft position. As the F-105's attacked the gun position, "Tacky 65" ordered the HH-43Bs at Nakon Phanom and their propeller driven escorts to be launched. However, poor weather conditions kept the helicopters grounded for nearly two hours, before a pair of Air America H-34's took off and joined four American piloted T-28s out of Savannahket. "Tacky 44", a second HU-16B, pilot Capt. Kaiser, relieved "Tacky 65" as the On-scene Commander and began to control the rescue effort. Upon arrival at the crash site the co-pilot from one of the Air America choppers was lowered to the ground. He found that the pilot had died of injuries sustained when he landed on the karst. The pilot was recovered, wrapped in his parachute, and flown to NKP. "Tacky 44" flew the remains to Don Muang AB, Bangkok.

When the Air America H-34 pilots dropped into NKP prior to their mission, they asked if we had any weapons that they could borrow, as, at the time, they carried none. We loaned them a couple of BARs and carbines. They also informed us when we told them of our mission the previous day, that we were very lucky guys as the route we took in and out was right through "Injun Country" and loaded with bad guys. Ignorance is bliss, sometimes. Someone was looking out for us.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

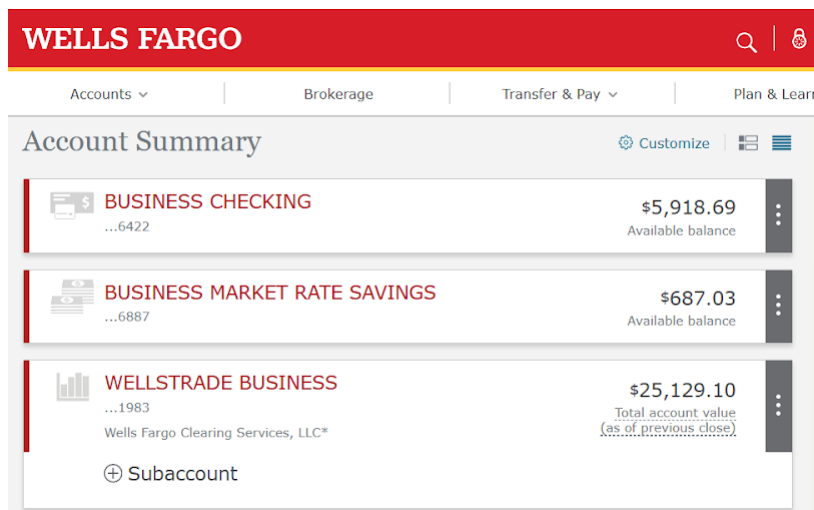
Brad Dow, Secretary

19 Oct 24 / 0900-1000

1. **Attendees:** Chris Barnett, Mike Tillema, Brad Dow (virtual), Greg Gaunt, Gene Manner, Terri Wallace (TOML-F) and approximately 30 members.
2. **Agenda:** Meeting focused on annual update on the status of the organization to the membership.
3. **Discussion:**
 - a. Skip opened the meeting with a discussion on the future of the organization. The mission of the ARA centers on connecting generations of Rescue Airman, to that end, the board remains focused on recruiting the next generation from the active-duty force. Brig Gen Choquette and Brig Gen Creel will join the board in an advisory role to aid in this effort.
 - b. In-line with the By-Laws, Skip's three-year term as President has come to an end. The membership thanked Skip for his service and voted to elect Mike Tillema as the next President. Mandy Hutchinson will assume the role of Vice President.
 - c. Mike provided a financial and membership update. The organization remains on solid financial ground with approximately \$35K in available funds. Membership remains strong with continued growth in 2024.
 - d. Expect changes to the Board of Directors composition as the organization continues it's focus on recruiting the next generation of Rescue Airman. Expect the board to evolve to a more task-oriented structure.
 - e. The 2025 venue has been selected, look forward to seeing everyone in Ft Walton Beach! Exact dates coming soon.

TREASURER'S NOTES

Todd Prejean, Treasurer



Account Name	Balance	Balance Type
BUSINESS CHECKING ...6422	\$5,918.69	Available balance
BUSINESS MARKET RATE SAVINGS ...6887	\$687.03	Available balance
WELLSTRADE BUSINESS ...1983 Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC*	\$25,129.10	Total account value (as of previous close)

NOTE FROM ARA PRESIDENT MIKE TILLEMA: *Our ARA funds are okay, but we got hit with a \$5,000 penalty charge for having alcoholic beverages in the hospitality room during the Oct 2024 Symposium in Washington, D.C. The contract stated absolutely no alcohol in the room. Steps have been taken to ensure that we don't incur penalties such as this again.*

MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS



TONY RAY, Member-at-Large

Tony is retired USAF CMSgt and was a helicopter crew chief with 29 years experience in the AF rotary wing community. Following retirement he began volunteering as an Ambassador for the “That Other May Live Foundation” in Valdosta, Georgia. Tony currently continues to serve the Rescue community as an Equipment Specialist for the HH-60W at the System Program Office at Robins AFB.



RICK SHEETS, Member-At-Large

Rick is married to Tara, he has 3 children and a host of grandchildren and 2 great grandkids. He is a 1968 graduate of Frankford High School, Frankford WVA. He enlisted in the USAF immediately after High School and after basic training became a firefighter. He participated in Operation Crested Cap 1 in support of NATO shortly thereafter. In 1970 he went to Ubon, Thailand and there became a member of the Pedro Rescue Detachment. He left Ubon in 1971 for Holloman AFB, NM where he became a Flight Instructor and a Flight Examiner and assisted in opening a new Rescue Detachment. Shortly thereafter he received orders for NKP Thailand and left in 1972 and he served there with Pedro till 1973. He has had multiple assignments and positions as a firefighter and finished his AF career in 1989 as a recruiter. Rick also served 30 years with a non-profit Community Action Agency as a Director of multiple programs. He serves as President of the Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association and Goodview Baptist Church.



MARIE MURRAY, Editor

Marie Murray grew up in an Air Force family and is the proud daughter of Kim and Michael J. Tillema. Her favorite tour was Kirtland AFB in Albuquerque, NM, where she was awed by the Balloon Fiesta and made her first memories of snow. She studied biochemistry and pharmacy at the University of Texas at Austin, where she met and married Daniel Murray. She is now a full-time stay-at-home mom and homeschool teacher to their four young children in New Braunfels, TX.

MEMORIAL ROSTER

We have been notified of the passing of the following member since the publication of the last Newsletter.

John Lucas

May he rest in peace



Colonel John Paul Lucas (retired) passed on October 18, 2024, from his home in Las Cruces, New Mexico. John was born in Massachusetts to Jean and Paul Lucas and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. He attended the University of Cincinnati and joined the USAF after graduation. John served his country for 30 years beginning as a helicopter pilot in Viet Nam where he received a Silver Star for gallantry and devotion to duty in connection with military operations on Koh Tang Island in the Gulf of Thailand on May 15, 1975. He was a jet plane instructor pilot in Arizona and finished his military career as Safety Director at Cape Canaveral, Florida. After his retirement in 2001, he worked as a government contractor with DynCore where he worked with the State Department in Central and South America until moving to Las Cruces in 2019.

John loved fishing, gardening, running, karate, and beekeeping and was a member of Holy Cross Catholic Church. After moving to Las Cruces, John checked out the lakes and mountains of New Mexico and provided homegrown tomatoes, squash, and some great watermelons to his extended family. He and his wife enjoyed exploring the Mesilla Valley and surrounding mountains with their two dogs. During Covid, John participated in a virtual Bataan Death March. On his 75th birthday, John told his surprised family that he wanted to try a parachute jump; his huge smile when he landed was evidence of how much he enjoyed his birthday gift.

John is survived by his wife of 46 years, Susan, his daughter Catherine (Andy) and his granddaughter, Lily Setlak of Seattle, Washington, and his brother Michael Lucas of Tucson, Arizona. John was a quiet, self-contained man who was loved by his family and friends and will be missed by all who knew him.

Source: <https://www.getzfuneralhome.com/obituaries/john-paul-lucas>

Please notify the ARA Board via Gene Manner (info@usafrescue.org) if you are aware of the passing of any ARA members.

REUNION SITES

1985	Seattle, WA	Al & Gladys Scott	2009	Philadelphia	Ron & Peg German
1986	Williamsburg, VA	Bob & Alice Mennell	2010	Sacramento	Bill & Marcie Farnham
1987	Honolulu, HI	Bob & Jake Dyberg	2011	Branson	Gatherings Plus (Sandy G.)
1988	Dallas/Fort Worth	Bob & Dorothy Walsh	2012	Chattanooga	Walt & Mary Eleanor Hines
1989	Hyannis, MA	Vince & Ginny McGovern	2013	Fort Worth, TX	Gene & Jeanette Lewis
1990	San Francisco, CA	Verd & Fran Rasmussen	2014	Charleston, S.C.	Bill & Mary Severns
1991	Denver, CO	Lou & Dee Sacane	2015	San Diego, CA	John & Eleanor Colombo
1992	Tucson, AZ	Don & Kathleen Godbey	2016	Las Vegas, NV	Walt Hines/TOMLF
1993	Hot Springs, AR	Marge Tuck	2017	Melbourne, FL	920 Rescue Wing/Walt Hines
1994	Portland, OR	Joe & Dory Herrmann	2018	Westhampton, NY	Walt Hines/Mike & Carla Cassels
1995	Nashville, TN	J. B. McCarley	2019	Tucson, AZ	Heidi Meisterling
1996	Orlando, FL	Sandy & Gina Gonzalez	2021	Ft Walton Beach, FL	Dan Beatty
1997	Orlando, FL	Ted & Bev Tatum	2022	Valdosta, GA	Dan Beatty
1998	Catskill Mtns, NY	Bob & Jake Dyberg	2023	Las Vegas, NV	Vic Peirera
1999	San Diego, CA	Ed & Dorothy Uranich	2024	Washington, D.C.	ARA Board

KIGHT AWARD WINNERS

2024 Bradley T. Joyal

2023	Caranda M. Gerke	2008	Stephen H. Thackery	1993	Keith A. Sullivan
2022	Leslie Weisz	2007	Jason E. Snyder	1992	Karen A. Pickering
2021	Matthew C. Blankenship	2006	Eric T. Trocinski	1991	Michael A. Wayt
2020	John H. Konkol	2005	Trevor J. Boyko	1990	Michael Callahan
2019	Mark E. Fraser	2004	John B. Creel	1989	Terry L. Muncy
2018	Dustin Jespersen	2003	Keith A. Sullivan	1988	Dell T. Hamilton
2017	Kevin M Rynbrandt	2002	Robert H Walker	1987	Timothy P. Malloy
2016	Maurice Muro	2001	Randall R. Nelson	1986	William H. LeRoy
2015	Brian Scott	2000	Kevin P. Mullins	1985	Carl R. Binford
2014	Brandon T Casteel	1999	John McGonagill	1984	Bruce C. Johnston
2013	Brian R. Dicks	1998	Robert G. McNeil	1983	Lee A. Roberson
2012	Jose L. Cabrera	1997	Crews of AF Rescue 206/212	1982	Joe Martinez
2011	Matthew C. Leigh	1996	Crew of AF Rescue 986	1981	Richard G. Flaherty
2010	Salvatore L. Portelli	1995	Crew of AF Rescue 26114	1980	Jay G. Jinks
2009	James E. Hangsleben, Jr.	1994	Crew of AF Rescue 811	1979	Louis DeMartino
				1978	Robert L. LaPointe

BECOME AN ARA LIFETIME MEMBER

Tired of having to get reminded about annual dues?

Become an ARA Lifetime Member!

Lifetime Membership One-Time Fees:

Under 60 years old - \$300

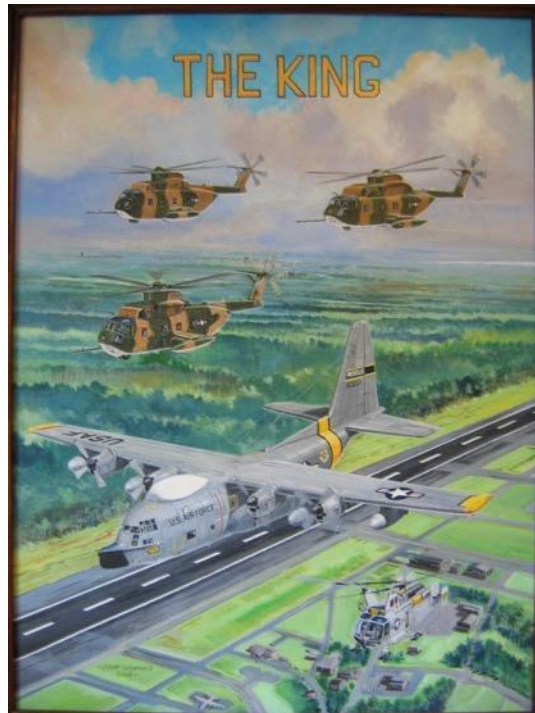
Age 60 to 69 - \$200

Age 70 to 79 - \$100

Age 80 and up – free

Contact Gene Manner (genemanner@gmail.com) for the application. If you've already paid for this year, we can deduct that amount off the total. Life Memberships also include the member's spouse!

Come on in and join the ARA Lifetime Member team!



AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Since 1976, and 47 successful reunions later, the Association still seeks and accepts eligible persons who wish to enjoy the camaraderie of “rescue” people. As stated in the bylaws, “Membership in the Association is open to all persons, regardless of grade, rank or position who were or are assigned to the USAF Air Rescue Service or its antecedent and descendent organizations. Other military personnel, government civilian employees, or contractor representatives who were associated with Air Rescue; current and former members of the U.S. Coast Guard and Civil Air Patrol; plus any persons who have been rescued, recovered, or rendered emergency assistance by Air Rescue are also eligible and welcomed for membership. Adult close family members (parents, spouse, children and siblings) of those eligible for membership in accordance with the foregoing are also eligible for regular membership in their own right.” If interested in becoming a member, please supply the information requested in the form below, with a brief summary of applicable Air Rescue service and other pertinent information.

Join online at the following link: <https://www.usafrescue.org/membership>



AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please check all applicable: New Member ____, Update Dues ____, Update Contact ____, Other ____

Dues \$_____ for ____ years. (\$10.00 per year [including Spouse] up to 5 years in advance).

Individuals who are at least 80 years old, or have hosted an ARA Reunion, or have paid dues for at least 20 years, or were Life Members of the Jolly Green Ass'n are eligible to become ARA Life Members. (Member must notify the ARA VP, Sec'y or Treas of their eligibility).

Life Memberships are also available to those at least 70 for \$100.00; for those at least 60 for \$200.00 and for all others for \$300.00. Memberships also include the member's spouse.

My check # _____ for the total amount of \$ _____ is enclosed. (No cash, please).

Last Name First Name Spouse Name (if applicable)

Address (City, State & Zip)

Home Phone Cell Phone Email Address

Air Rescue Assignments (Yours or relative's) Include Unit, Base, State/Country, Years There

Unit 1: _____
Unit 2: _____
Unit 3: _____
Unit 4: _____

If New Member, how did you hear about us?

Mail this form and check (no cash, please) to:

Air Rescue Association
8226 S Diamond H Ranch Place
Vail, AZ 85641

ARA STORE

If you'd like to purchase some cool USAF Rescue swag, please go check out Undaunted Apparel at <https://undauntedclothing.com/product-category/collections/air-rescue-association/>

There are great items including hats, mugs, coins and more!



Air Rescue Association Hat
\$15.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options



Air Rescue Association Hat 2023
\$28.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options



Air Rescue Association Hat White Wave
\$15.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Add to cart



Air Rescue Association Polo
\$30.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options



Air Rescue Association T-shirt
\$20.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options



Air Rescue Association TOML Coin
\$15.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options



Air Rescue Association Travel Mug
\$25.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Add to cart



Air Rescue Association White Polo
\$30.00
by AIR RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Select options

2023 ARA Reunion & Symposium Book

Buy [2023 ARA Symposium Photo Book](#)