



# Safeside Newsletter

The Safeside  
Association, Inc.

Reunion  
Edition

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## Why does the Safeside Association Celebrate their reunions at Moody AFB?

Why does the Safeside Association celebrate their reunions at Moody AFB? Because the 820th is situated at Moody AFB, and so are the squadrons that are following in the footsteps of the Safeside Vietnam Combat Veterans. This photo says it all. No names needed; just the fact that a seasoned Safeside Combat Veteran is chatting with another Safeside Combat Veteran, young enough to be his grandson. Hooah!



Ken Groom, retired Safeside member, and a member of the 823rd Base Defense Squadron share a laugh after a capabilities demonstration, Nov. 8, 2017, at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. Safeside reunions are biennial and scheduled around the 820th Base Defense Group's high-ops tempo. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Daniel Snider)

## Rogers Rangers Standing Order #1

Don't fergit Nuthin

## TAPS

### Final Guardmount

Colonel (Ret)  
Michael I. Wheeler,  
822nd Combat Security  
Police Squadron



An Airmen folds a flag during a Safeside reunion memorial, Nov. 8, 2017, at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. Biennially, the

Safeside Association holds a reunion to interact with and honor their past and present comrades from the 820th Base Defense Group. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Eugene Oliver)

## From the Prez...



My Safeside Brothers and Sisters,

Wow, 2017 was a great year for our Association. There were a number of important actions by

the Association that I would like to cover with you. As always it's been an honor to serve as your President and I am looking forward to the events we have planned for this year. This will be a great year for Safeside!

We had our Safeside reunion in November at Moody AFB, GA. The 820<sup>th</sup> BDG was our host and went out of their way to ensure everyone enjoyed themselves. It was abso-

lutely great to see everyone and spend time with them. The day at Moody AFB, we started with a memorial service in honor of the Safesiders that paid the ultimate sacrifice. It was a solemn event that was well planned and performed magnificently. We had a morning of superb demonstrations, static displays and fun was had by all. I continue to be amazed by the capabilities of the warriors, they are the best. This was followed by a **BBQ** that was great. There was an awards presentation that included presentation follow-up article of medals for service in Vietnam to 11 members of the 823<sup>rd</sup>. There will be additional details in an article in this newsletter. Special thanks to Col Walker and CMSgt (Ret) Rick Parsons for their outstanding support.

In October, Sherry and I, along with several other members, attended the Vietnam Security Police Association in San Antonio, TX. Anytime in

downtown San Antonio, TX is always fun. We spent a day at Lackland AFB and visited with students at the Security Police Academy and the Security Forces Museum, which is now called the Annex. Our host was the Security Force Center. SMSgt Sandy Morris did an outstanding job of planning, coordinating and ensured the event went well.

As you may know, on July 11, 2018, we will dedicate the Safeside Bench at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. This will be a special occasion that ensures the Legacy of what we accomplished in Vietnam and what we have done in the deployments of the 820<sup>th</sup> BDG. This was a dream and now it is going to happen. It is something that all Safesiders can be proud of. Hopefully we will have a large contingent of members present at the dedication. There will be more details about the event in a follow-up article in this newsletter. I urge all members to

## Vietnam Veterans Decorated After 48+ Years!

A most memorable and moving event took place at the 820th BDG Headquarters On November 8, 2017. Colonel Walker presented Medals honoring ten Vietnam veterans of Operation Safeside, Section 9, Flight C, 823rd Combat Security Police Squadron.

After more than 48 years the men were recognized for their performance during the Vietnam War. Medals presented were:

The Bronze Star for the late Staff Sergeant Charles R. Layton, was presented to his next-of-kin, his Brother, Robert, (Bobby) Layton.

Air Force Commendation Medal, was presented to the late Sergeant Jack G. Daniels. His medal was accepted by his Grandson. Elias Gianopolis.

Also receiving Air Force Commendation Medals were Sgt Wilfred, (Will), Brown, Sgt Bruce E Kathary, Airman Kenneth, (Ken), W Lamborn, Sgt John M Morrison, Sgt Terry R. Usrey, Sgt Randolph (Randy) W. Vuletich, Sgt Joseph (Joe) C. Weil, and Sgt Warren P. Wright.

(Continued on Page 3)

## Vietnam Veterans Decorated After 48+ Years! (Continued)

According to Chief Master Sergeant (Ret), (Technical Sergeant at the time), Lyle Brakob, Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge of the unit in Vietnam, twenty-one medals were approved for the men in his unit by Air Force and Congressional officials. In addition to the ten medals presented at Moody, Air Force Commendation Medals have been mailed to Commanders at near-by bases for presentation to Sgt Larry D. Cullazzo and Sgt Eric C. Resigner

Sgt James R. Frederick Jr, was presented the Air Force Commendation Medal at Veterans Day ceremonies. Sgt Michael (Mike) R. Johnston, will be presented his Air Force Commendation Medal during the Safeside Association Bench dedication ceremony at the Air Force Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, July 11, 2018.

Arrangements continue for presenting medals for Sgt Jack H Heagy, Sgt John, (Jack) J Theriault Jr, and Sgt Howard K Wright.

Efforts continue to locate next-of-kin, to accept medals for the following deceased 823rd CSPS members: Sgt Elton R Hobbs, Sgt Charles (Chuck), Maultsby, Sgt Larry L Reese and Sgt Roy (Ron)



Chief (Ret) Brakob expressed how proud he is of these men. The recognition for their service in Vietnam, so long ago, is deserving, rewarding and memorable to them and their families."

"I wish to thank everyone who helped to locate twenty-one members of Safeside's 823rd Combat Security Police Squadron, Section 9 who, after 48 plus years, had medals approved for their service in Vietnam.

Special thanks to retired Brigadier General Dick Coleman, and retired CMSgt Jerry Nelson for the much needed guidance to jump start the process through Air Force and Congressional channels.

I also want to thank Lt Col (Ret) John Hartman, his daughter Kristina, Rick Adams, Col (Ret) John Decknick, the late Major Frank Willingham, his daughter Crystal, Donald Moore, my Sister Carolyn Halvorson and my wife Margaret. With their help and that of others, these men have been deservedly

**Below: Col Kevin Walker presented medals to Vietnam era Safesiders or their next of kin.**





# Reporting for Duty



I have the honor and privilege to be your new Vice President of the SAFESIDE Association.

I can only express my sincere gratitude to all those from my past and present who supported me in the 820<sup>th</sup> Base Defense Group and the SAFESIDE Association. I hope to represent all of the SAFESIDE members to the best of my ability to enable us to thrive as an association that takes care of their own; provide recognition for those who sacrifice to defend the force; and grow the association into the future from the foundation of our SAFESIDE Warfighters, lest we forget.

A short story of the events which led us to the 820<sup>th</sup> BDG. My wife Charlotte and I grew up US Army green from birth and know of no better life than our career in both the Army and USAF. Little did I know that one Spring day in 1999 I would be approached by Brig Gen Coleman in my office in the 16<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida, where I was the Operations Superintendent. General Coleman asked me to lead a bed down team to create/build the 820<sup>th</sup> Security Police Group at Moody AFB, GA. The first

thought was, “how do you say “no” to BG Coleman and survive?” Then, the history of the group guided my direction to PCS to Moody AFB, GA, by the way...”what was a Moody AFB,” was my next thought. I informed Charlotte to start planning and packing our household goods, daughters, the bird, and the guinea pig.

The team of NCOs we had on the ground were the best. They came from several different Air Force specialties, with the knowledge and expertise to build and obtain facilities; establish relationships and programs; move vehicles/equipment/supplies; create the training regime; and organize, train, and equip of a group staff and three squadrons. While we established the group, personnel were already being trained and equipped to deploy, demonstrating the urgency of the group’s mission.

A few years later, I made the decision to culminate my AF career on a high of building the 820 BDG and retire from the AF in Valdosta. Again as fate would guide me, the group was not done with me. I was asked to work as a contractor to support the group and its growing contingency mission requirements which ultimately

led to the next step in a full time career in AF civil service. I continued to enjoy the camaraderie and the ability to support our BDG Defenders until April 2014 when I made the decision accept a position at the Air Force Security Forces Center (AFSFC) to impact the capabilities of all Defenders. It’s where I currently serve, with a staff of great Defenders, who all have the same focus...support our SF Warfighters.

Over these years the history and passion of the SAFESIDE Association grows in us all who “Joined To Fight” and our goal should be to ensure that SAFESIDE remains a living legacy in the Air Force Security Forces and the United States Air Force. I will support the intent

Over these years the history and passion of the SAFESIDE Association grows in us all who “Joined To Fight”

of our Association and our President Jerry Nelson. A big thanks to Pete, Gary and other executive board members who have mentored and supported the group

and myself. Again, Tango Yankee to you all as we plan the event to position the SAFESIDE Memorial bench in it’s rightful place with the Defender statue at the Air Force Museum at Wright Patterson AFB, OH. Hope to meet you all there.

“JOINED TO FIGHT”—Bobby Le Fever

## 105th BDG Airman Receives Sgt Major Frink Award

Senior Airman Daniel S. Abbatiello, 105th Base Defense Squadron (ANG), received the Sergeant Major Robert Frink award, at ceremonies conducted at Moody AFB, on 8 Nov 2017. According to Airman Abbatiello's nomination:

During his tenure in the 105th Base Defense Squadron, SrA Abbatiello has proven himself an absolute asset to the organization. Shortly after his arrival, SrA Abbatiello was deployed with the 105th Base Defense Squadron in conjunction with the 823rd Base Defense Squadron to Al Assad Air Base, Iraq in support of Combat Operations INHERENT RESOLVE. During this period, while exposed to hostile small arms fire

and mortar attacks, SrA Abbatiello contributed in an exceptional manner enabling the fortification and finalization of the installation perimeter expansion project. His efforts enabled the repurposing of the walls entailing a focus of 5,000 feet of concertina wire, which provided security for the camp of 2,200 coalition partners including Special Forces from 6+ countries in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE. He provided security for 500+ million dollars in protection level assets which in turn provided a direct hand in the execution of 5,400 combat sorties in support of liberating the city of Mosul and its citizens from death and despair by terrorist groups. Finally, SrA Abbatiello played a

critical role in the creation of two restricted areas when he fortified two parking ramps by leading the installation of 10,800 feet of concertina-wire, 674 barriers and four defensive fighting positions. His actions in Iraq directly contributed to the 33 percent increase in Combat Search and Rescue abilities of the coalition forces on the ground in Al Assad. In his short five year career he has been involved in 1 Deployment to Al Assad, Iraq, 4 Mission Readiness Exercises creating bare base strategies directly integrating with both the 823rd and 824th Squadrons of the 820th Base Defense Group, 1 Field Training Exercise at Camp Smith, and 1 International Mission Readiness.



L to R: Safeside Association President CMSgt (Ret) Jerry Nelson, SRA Abbatiello, Colonel Kevin Walker, Commander, 820th Base Defense Group, Colonel (Ret) Paul Kasuda, Past Commander, 820th Base Defense Group and Colonel (Ret) Don Derry Past Commander, 820th Base Defense Group.



## 823rd BDS NCO Receives Brigadier General Coleman Award

During ceremonies at Moody AFB, Master Sergeant Jonathan Elder received the Brigadier Richard A. Coleman award. This is the Safeside Association's most prestigious award.

During his tenure in the 823d Base Defense Squadron, MSgt Jonathan L. Elder was vital to all the successes of the unit. Shortly after his arrival he immediately filled the role as Flight Chief. Within one month he began prepping his flight for the unit's upcoming mission readiness exercise. His, and his team's, efforts were validated with their certification and subsequent deployment.

While deployed, to an undisclosed location, he assisted in the development of the logistic support area defense plan which enabled 1,000 combat sorties and provided security for 800 coalition personnel. By his direction his team completed 365 joint patrols, 1,000 Random Anti-Terrorism Measures and 200 security actions. Upon his return, he was selected to fill the role of Superintendent of Logistics and Readiness. During this time he again proved invaluable when he actioned the Group's first Global Response Force tasking. He readied 63 personnel and two military working dog teams to support Incirlik Air Base during a military coup. Additionally, he was the Air

Force's GLOBAL EAGLE Exercise Logistics and Readiness lead. He provided support for 3 Wing's and 290 multinational personnel over the 18 day exercise. His actions led to his selection as a superior performer by the Royal Air Force Wing Commander. Finally, due to his superior leadership he was the easy choice to fill the duties as an enlisted Defense Force Commander at Al Assad Air Base Iraq. In this demanding role he directed 65 outside the wire security missions and stood up the first tactical operation center on the base. He penned and actioned the installations security plan which enabled 3,000 close air support missions covering 400,000 square miles and the elimination of 2,900 enemy personnel.



L to R: Safeside Association President CMSgt (Ret) Jerry Nelson, MSgt Elder, Colonel Kevin Walker, Commander, 820th Base Defense Group, Colonel (Ret) Paul Kasuda, Past Commander, 820th Base Defense Group and Colonel (Ret) Don Derry Past Commander, 820th Base Defense Group.

## Former VEEP Speaks

Pete Villarreal, Vice President Emeritus

### SAFESIDERS!

We had a fantastic reunion and I want to express my appreciation to Col Walker, Rick Parsons and the Reunion POC – MSgt Paul Kalle. It was not an easy task dealing and coordinating all of the activities with President Nelson and myself, but he did it, with a smile. Paul Kalle is a wonderful young man; and his team was outstanding. The team he had for the golf tourney, the Memorial Ceremony, the informal dinner and the BBQ/Awards Ceremony were eager to help, and it showed. Thank you!

It has been my distinct pleasure serving all of you as the Vice President these past 13 years. I have decided that its time to turn the position over to the new breed. I tried to renew my contract but the Safeside Board of Directors would not provide the salary I needed. They kept offering me twice of what I've been earning – and that was not enough. Two times zero is zero.

By now you know that I'm joking about the salary. The Board does not earn any salary. We donate our time and I did that as it was a passion of love.

I was elected in 2004, and thirteen years is enough. Its time for a younger Safesider to take over. During my tenure I have established a very close relationship with Jerry Nelson; he and I have become the best of friends. Its incredible that we think alike; we made a great team in focusing the Association in the right direction; and when it came to the work involved with Reunions we clicked. We took care of the hotels, buses and coordinating all with the 820<sup>th</sup> Group. And the Board that we have has always done their best – Rick Adams has been the Membership Chair for many, many years and has increased the number of members

through his efforts. And Gary Jones – the guys we go to whenever we are in trouble – and there were plenty of times. He took over as Secretary many years ago, helped develop a professional website and helped anyone with computer issues.

We have brought the new breed on board. We have many members from the Group, and we have Squadron representatives from each unit at Moody. Every Commander of the 820<sup>th</sup> is a Life Member. So now I turn the reins over to Bobby LeFever.

Bobby was one of the original Safesiders that stood up the 820th Security Forces Group at Lackland in 1997. He was with the team that arrived at Moody to start getting all the facilities up and running for the transfer of the Group from Lackland to Moody. He retired and got hired as a civilian with the 820<sup>th</sup> and worked himself up to the Deputy Commander of the 820<sup>th</sup>. All in all he spent 99 years with the 820<sup>th</sup> before he took a job with the Security Forces Center at Lackland. He is more than qualified to take over my job. I will help him along as he takes over but I'm confident that he will be on top of everything before long.

My wife Gloria has stood by me all of these years. She has embraced our Association and fell in love with our young Safeside troops back in 2005 when VSPA/Safeside had their joint reunion at Moody AFB. She treated our young troops as her children. Thirteen years later they are like our grandchildren. She joined me when we adopted deployed troops, baking brownies and sending Care Packages. She knitted Prayer Squares for deployed troops. I owe her my gratitude for not ever complaining about

my dedication to Safeside. She and I meet the true definition of a TEAM! Thank you honey!

My last assignment is working with Jerry Nelson on the Unveiling Ceremony of the Safeside Memorial Bench. The event is slated for July 11, 2018 at 9:30 AM at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton Ohio, which houses the National Museum of the United States Air Force. We have a reception (snacks and pay as you go bar) scheduled for Tue, July 10, at 7 PM. We have secured the Holiday Inn and the menu for the dinner on July 11. I have already secured two buses that will transport us from the hotel to the Museum at 8:30 AM and drop us back at the Hotel at 1:30. Those that elect to stay at the Museum can catch a cab or Uber back to the hotel. What is important, real important, is for those that have yet to commit to the ceremony's dinner, email me at [vil-la@santnet.org](mailto:villarreal@sanet.org) with names that will be dining with us, as we need to know how many C-rations to order (lol). I will then have your email address to keep you informed of plans or changes there to. So don't assume that by posting your intentions on Facebook will reserve you a place – it will not! EMAIL ME! Anyone with questions can email me.

Thanks again for the privilege of serving you for all these wonderful years.

Joined to Fight! SAFESIDE!!!





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Ms Jessica Hoover



Assistant Editor

Mr. Gary Jones

## 820th Base Defense Group takes second at Leapfest

By Airman 1st Class Daniel Snider, 23d Wing Public Affairs / Published August 10, 2017



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Preston Parham, 822d Base Defense Squadron fire team leader, left, Staff Sgt. Mark Melchiori, 822d BDS fire team leader, center left, Tech Sgt. Christopher Zavala, 822d BDS squad leader, center right, and Staff Sgt. Colt B. Crowe, 820th Base Defense Group parachute program manager, pose for a photo after winning second place at Leapfest, Aug. 6, 2017, in West Kingstown, RI. The Rhode Island National guard hosted the 34th annual event, which is the largest international static line jump competition in the world. Team Moody's Airmen represented the only U.S. sister-service team and earned second place among 70 participating teams. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Daniel Snider)

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## Rogers Rules for Rangers

**#19: Let the enemy come until he is almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it and jump out and finish him up with your hatchet.**