

## **456th FIS Reunion Newsletter # 4 - February 8, 2003**

Hi Fellow 456th Alumni & Friends,

### **The 456th Loses a Fellow Member**

It is with deep sadness that we report the loss of former 57-2520 crew chief Bill Eldridge. Bill died on January 16, 2003 from complications following a ruptured aneurysm. Jim and Sheri Arnold had just visited him a week before in the hospital. Bill was very happy to make contact with friends from the 456th and was looking forward to the reunion.

### **Start Making Your Plans to Attend the Reunion**

Our reunion is scheduled for May 30-31 & June 1, 2003 and we've included a list of local Merced/Atwater hotels. We recommend you start calling soon to make motel and travel reservations. Hotel owners have told us that this weekend is looking good for reservations but don't delay - so far, we have over 110 people attending the reunion and rooms could get booked up pretty quick. Click [here](#) to see the listing of accommodations from the Merced Conference & Visitors Bureau or scroll to the end of this mail note to see our customized list.

### **The 456th FIS is in the Merced Sun-Star Newspaper**

#### **Delta Dart returns to Castle at noon today**

Saturday, December 21, 2002

By Stacey Wiebe

*CASTLE — The excitement in Joe Pruzzo's voice could not be dulled by miles. For months, the Morgan Hill resident and die-hard aviation enthusiast had been jumping hurdles to bring a rare warbird back home. Originally housed at Castle Air Force Base, an F-106A Delta Dart — number 155 of just 277 manufactured — has been acquired from Davis Montham Air Force Base in Arizona.*

*When Castle's F-106A rolls through the museum's gates at noon today, Pruzzo's dedication to the museum's "Save-A-Six" project will pay off. "It looks quite impressive going down the road," he said Thursday, from somewhere on the roughly 800 miles of road connecting Castle Air Museum and Tucson, Ariz. "We're getting quite a few looks from onlookers."*

*Communicating via cellular phone, Pruzzo, a member of the museum's executive board, said the going was slow but steady. "We can only go about 20 mph," he said. Jameson Harvesting Inc. of Turlock donated time and transportation to bring the aircraft back to Castle, carrying the fuselage and disassembled wings with a semi-truck and two trailers. "It took close to three days to get it loaded correctly," said Pruzzo, who left Arizona with his precious cargo Wednesday night.*

*The Save-A-Six Fund was established in March of 2002 [actually started, in April 1999 with a check from Jim "Arnie" Arnold for \$106]. Castle's F-106A, serial number 580793, had been stored at Arizona's Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center after its retirement in 1998. For a grand total of about \$30,000, the craft was disassembled,*

*demilitarized, crated and transported to Atwater, said Amy Rose, the museum's special events and marketing coordinator. "It was mainly what the 456th did," she said, of efforts to raise funding. "They were very dedicated to it."*

*The "456th" was the 456th Fighter Inceptor Squadron, the men who, along with the 84th Squadron, manned the six to 12 F-106's [actually 16-20 F-106's] based at Castle in its heyday. The F-106A being carted back to Castle was delivered to the Air Force in 1959 and, at the time of its retirement, was one of the last flying F-106s. Designed solely as an interceptor, the F-106 was deployed during the Vietnam War and cruised the West Coast during the Cold War. "They (aircraft) are living testimonials, just like many of our national symbols," Pruzzo said in July. "They are a symbol that there's a price to be paid for maintaining our liberties."*

*About half the funding needed to completely demilitarize and restore the aircraft has been raised. Donations are still being accepted to help the museum cover the cost of restoring the aircraft, said Jean Astorino, interim chief executive officer of the museum. The public is invited and encouraged to attend the free ceremony to welcome the F-106 back to Castle on Saturday. For more information, contact Astorino at (209) 723-2178.*

### **F-106 Homecoming photographs at Castle**

F-106 # 58-0793 arrived at Castle Air Museum December 22, 2002. This aircraft served at Castle with the 84th FIS. See the pictures by clicking [here](#) . A big "Luther Salute" to John Marcotte, Dean Rager and Bill Emery for taking the "arrival" pictures and to Erv Smalley for putting them on his web site. See more pictures at the [456th FIS](#) web site courtesy of our own Webmaster, Bob Justus. And finally, special thanks to former crew chiefs Bruce Gookin and Jim Arnold and CAM Board Member Joe Pruzzo for making this "homecoming" a reality. Without them, this "homecoming queen" would still be sitting in the Arizona desert.

Here's a prayer written and delivered by CAM Board Member Sandi Tavolario at the arrival ceremony: *"O God, our greatest provider, who knows our needs before we understand them ourselves, we ask your blessings and protection for this F-106. In the days ahead, many will give of their sweat and talents to restore this aircraft to benefit future generations. Keep them faithful in their labor, and may the work of their hands bring them great pride. May future generations look back to this day and understand it took the work of many to return this aircraft to Castle Air Museum. We thank you for those who dreamed the dreams and made the efforts to bring this F-106 home and to the many contributors of time and money who made this day possible. We pray in thanks and gratitude in your holy name. Amen."*

The Restoration Team at CAM says the F-106 will be on display for the Memorial Day 2003 Open House, which is the week-end before our reunion. She'll be painted in 456th colors with Commander's markings courtesy of Bill Emery and Joe Pruzzo. See a sample of Bill's work by clicking [here](#).

### **CAM Welcomes New CEO**

Jack Gotcher former CEO has moved on to a new private sector challenge and has been replaced by Jean Astorino. Jean has broad leadership experience and we are looking forward to working with her on the reunion and in the continuing role we'll play with fundraising for CAM via donations and gift shop sales of 456th/F-106 gift items. In Fall 2002, the Castle Air Museum was declared the permanent home base of the 456th FIS. If you have any 456th memorabilia you'd like to donate please contact curator Dale Griffin at 209-723-2178 or e-mail [cam@elite.net](mailto:cam@elite.net) .

### **456th Gift Item Update**

We just received the Luther lapel pins which will go on sale soon at CAM. They are beautiful (see the attached picture)! We will be sending a complementary pin to each person who sends their reunion dinner deposit within the time allotted. More on that in the March Newsletter. The price at the door for the reunion dinner will be about \$10 higher per person than deposits paid in advance. Hopefully this will minimize problems we had last time with late, unreserved arrivals.

We continue to work on sourcing ball caps, T-shirts, patches and mugs with the Luther and F-106 images on them. We're also working to develop a F-106 poster. Bruce Gookin has found suppliers for elegant F-106 Lithographic prints and wooden models. Bob Justus has found a source for 2-D and 3-D images set into lead crystal. The lithos and wooden models will have custom 456th colors and will be more expensive gift items as will the crystal. Ball caps, T-shirts, patches, pins, mugs, plastic model kits and posters will be inexpensively priced in line with similar CAM gift shop items. The Alumni Committee has asked model maker Revell-Monogram to re-release the F-106 1/48 scale model in 456th colors.

Click [here](#) to see samples of the wood models or see the picture at the end of this mail note. The standard offering wood models on this site are less expensive than the models with the custom 456th FIS paint. Click [here](#) to see samples of Sam Brandt's photo, litho and poster work.

### **F-106 Items on Sale Every Day at ebay.com**

Did you know that E-bay has new F-106 auctions every day? Go to <http://www.ebay.com> and search on F-106. There are pictures, books, patches, rare model kits and other items. Recently a seller auctioned a 16 foot long mock-up of a F-106 cockpit once used by Convair to test instrument placement. It did not sell this time so it'll be back (couldn't everyone use one of these in your backyard?).

### **456th FIS Web Site Expands**

Bob Justus, our 456th Webmaster, has greatly expanded the 456th FIS web site. Click [here](#) and you could spend hours checking out all the new information. Bob has included an extensive set of links to other aviation sites that will keep you busy for days. If you have any pictures of the 456th or F-106 you'd like to share, let Bob know by leaving a message for the Webmaster when you visit the site. Don't forget to sign the guest book and please leave some messages or "war stories" from your days with the 456th.

In the next newsletter, we'll send you more details on the reunion and request your dinner deposit. In the meantime, if you have any questions please contact me at:

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**God Bless America - Arnie, Bruce, Bob, John and Pat**

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**Favorite web sites for your surfing enjoyment:**

456th FIS web site by Bob Justus

<http://www.456fis.org/>

don't forget to sign the guest book

Pat's World F-106 Delta Dart

<http://www.f-106deltadart.com/index1.htm>

sign the 456th Alumni Registration page - check out the Sixer Forum

Erv Smalley's Convair F-106 Delta Dart

<http://convairf106deltadart.homestead.com/index.html>

sign Erv's guest book

Castle Air Museum

<http://www.elite.net/castle-air/>

sign the guest book

456th FIS 2001 Reunion Pictures

<http://community.webshots.com/user/popperry>

Chris Slack's AMARC Experience

<http://www.amarcexperience.com/Default.asp>

sign the guest book

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**456th Alumni Listing Updated to Reflect Job Assignments**

Our latest Alumni listing shows each person's job assignment at the 456th. Please let me know if I need to make any corrections. If there's not a plus (+) after your first name, I haven't yet heard from you. ***If I don't hear from you by March 15, I'll assume your are not coming.***

Attend Y-N-M First Name Last Name E-mail Address City St Job

Y Jim + Arnold [arnie@dpc.net](mailto:arnie@dpc.net) Morton IL Crew Chief

Y Jean Astorino [cam@elite.net](mailto:cam@elite.net) Atwater CA CEO CAM  
Y Bill + Barton [Great Falls MT 32251](mailto:Great Falls MT 32251)  
Y Dale + Barton [mariondale@charter.net](mailto:mariondale@charter.net) Coos Bay OR Weapons  
Y Richard + Boutelle [SPIKR46@sbcglobal.net](mailto:SPIKR46@sbcglobal.net) Auburn CA Jet Engine  
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Y Keith + Kell El Cajon CA Crew Chief  
Y Paul + Ketchum [paulk42@pacbell.net](mailto:paulk42@pacbell.net) Clovis CA MA-1  
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Y Dean + Rager [meandean47@hotmail.com](mailto:meandean47@hotmail.com) Modesto CA Crew Chief  
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Y Robert + Smith [vsmith@kcoe.com](mailto:vsmith@kcoe.com) Derby KS Crew Chief  
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Y Thomas + Steele [pksteele@excite.com](mailto:pksteele@excite.com) Weatherford TX Pilot  
Y Don + Tharp [dwtharp@attbi.com](mailto:dwtharp@attbi.com) Castro Valley CA Pilot  
Y Harry + Thompson [SCDHIA@aol.com](mailto:SCDHIA@aol.com) Atwater CA Crew Chief  
Y Chuck + Torpey Centennial CO Acft Mech  
Y Michael + Trefethen Las Vegas NV MA-1  
Y Henry + Tucker [htucker@aol.com](mailto:htucker@aol.com) Springfield VA Pilot  
Y Mike + Woloszyn Chowchilla CA Crew Chief  
Y Keith + Young [maykry@lynchburg.net](mailto:maykry@lynchburg.net) Moneta VA Pilot  
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N Elvis + Crooks Scottsdale AZ Pilot  
N Glen + Dunaway Austin TX Pilot  
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Max \* Mullen Marble Falls TX  
Anthony Muoio Escondido CA  
Minor Nelson Colorado Springs CO  
William Nerpel West Richland WA MA-1  
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Wilbur O'Neal Atwater CA Alert Cook  
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Val Paniccia [vpaniccia@socal.rr.com](mailto:vpaniccia@socal.rr.com) Chatsworth CA Egress  
Donald \* Parker Victorville CA  
Mrs. Jackie Paterson Panama City FL Pilot  
Kenneth Pearce Colorado Springs CO Pilot  
Paul Phillips Vallejo CA Crew Chief  
Robert Plowden Pawley's Island SC Pilot  
Mrs James Price Colorado Springs CO Pilot CO  
Joe Pruzzo Morgan Hill CA CAM Board  
Iris Rayford Alexandria LA Pilot  
Allen Reilly Kimberly OR Acft Mech  
Donald Richey Brookings OR  
Samuel Rios Camarillo CA Weapons  
Albert Roberts [robbiedee@worldnet.att.com](mailto:robbiedee@worldnet.att.com) Tallahassee FL  
Jody Roberts [bettyjody55@msn.com](mailto:bettyjody55@msn.com) Hendersonville NC Acft Mech  
Jerry Robinette Austin TX Pilot  
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Jerry Rokes [rokesatw@earthlink.net](mailto:rokesatw@earthlink.net) Atwater CA Pilot  
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Alan Yarbrough [a.yarbro@verizon.net](mailto:a.yarbro@verizon.net) Lompoc CA Crew Chief

### **Hotel / Motel / Bed & Breakfast / RV Parking Listing**

From the Merced Conference and Visitors Bureau

#### **Hotels & Motels - Merced**

##### **BEST WESTERN INN**

1033 Motel Drive (209) 723-2163

##### **BEST WESTERN SEQUOIA INN**

1213 V Street (209) 723-3711

##### **HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS**

730 Motel Drive (209) 383-0333

##### **VAGABOND INN**

1215 R Street (209) 722-2737

##### **MOTEL 6**

1410 V Street (209) 384-2181

##### **PS HAPPY INN**

740 Motel Drive (209) 722-6291

##### **RAMADA INN**

2000 E. Childs Ave. (209) 723-3121

##### **SANDPIPER LODGE**

1001 Motel Drive (209) 723-1034

##### **SIERRA LODGE**

951 Motel Drive (209) 722-3926

##### **DAYS INN**

1199 Motel Drive (209) 722-2726

**SUPER 8**

1983 E. Childs Ave. (209) 384-1303

**THE COTTAGES AT  
STEVINSON RANCH**

2700 North Van Clief Rd.

Stevinson, CA (209) 668-8200

(has golf course (209)-668-8820)

**TRAVELODGE**

1260 Yosemite Parkway

(209) 722-6224

**Hotels & Motels - Atwater****APPLEGATE INN**

1501 Sycamore Ave (Hwy 99 at Applegate)

209 357-0202

**Bed & Breakfasts - Merced****RAMBLING ROSE****BED & BREAKFAST**

436 West 20th Street

Merced, CA (209)723-4084

**HOOPER HOUSE - BEAR CREEK INN**

575 W. N. Bear Creek Drive

Merced, CA 95340

(209) 723-3991

**VICTORIAN STATION BED & BREAKFAST**

408 W. 25th Street

Merced, CA 95340

(209) 722-232

**RV Parking****Castle Air Museum's Family Camp**

(209) 723-2178

**Merced River Camp Grounds**

(209) 634-6506

**Modern Trailer**

(209) 722-1395

**Rancho Grande Mobile Park Home**

(209) 358-6881

Pictures below:

1- Luther lapel pin

2- Wood Model of F-106 (standard offering is less expensive than custom 456th)

3- Flight of four F-106s over Lake Tahoe courtesy Paul Ketchum MA-1 Shop