



GOLDEN CONTRAILS

... and oft' the setting sun is pleased to trim the clouds with molten sails,
and lace the way of passing jets with golden condensation trails.

August, 2002



© Philip Makanna

THUNDERBOLT

Republic P-47D "Thunderbolt"

WING SPAN:	40 feet, 9 inches
LENGTH:	36 feet, 2 inches
HEIGHT:	14 feet, 2 inches
WING AREA:	300 square feet
POWER:	One Pratt & Whitney 2800-59 2,535 h.p.
GROSS WEIGHT:	19,400 pounds
MAXIMUM SPEED:	428 m.p.h.
SERVICE CEILING:	42,000 feet
RANGE:	475 miles

Captain's Corner

As the heat of summer continues, we eagerly look forward to the cooler days that lie ahead. Many of us in the South are traveling to take advantage of cooler climes elsewhere; maybe it's time to visit Cape Cod or the Pacific Northwest!

Whatever your plans for summer, please also look ahead and plan to join us in Las Vegas on October 9 & 10. If you plan to play in the Golden Eagles Golf Tournament at the Primm Valley Resort and Golf Club, the first tee off is at 10 AM on Tuesday, October 8. You'll need to get your reservations to Paul Grover by September 23; details are inside.

Our Hospitality Room at the Tropicana Hotel will be open at 1 PM on Wednesday, October 9, for signing in with our group and visiting with friends. Be sure to join us there to pick up your name tags and programs and to get started visiting!

Our rooms at the Tropicana this year are \$75 plus tax per night, for single or double occupancy. These rates are good for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. If you want to stay longer, the price goes up to \$129 for Friday night. Please contact the hotel directly at 800-634-4000 to make your reservations, and tell them you're with the Continental Golden Eagles.

Reservations for the ladies' luncheon and for our banquet dinner should be made with Charlie Starr. See his Treasurer's page in this issue for more information. Your Golden Eagles staff is working hard to make this convention all it can be, but the real purpose and success of our gathering lies with you!

If you know someone who is eligible but has been reluctant to join the Golden Eagles, please personally invite them to become a member. As we lose more of our friends and acquaintances to the ravages of time, it becomes even more satisfying to meet with and enjoy those who are able to attend our reunions.

We look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas in October. Please come and encourage all of your Eagle friends to come and enjoy the camaraderie. If they aren't yet members, but are eligible, Charlie would just love to sign 'em up!

Your Web site at www.thegoldeneagles.org has just undergone a complete renovation by our Webmaster, Birdie Bertrand. Check out the new look and all the improvements. If you need complete information on the convention and golf tournament, it's all there!



Roland Brown



Convention 2002 Schedule of Events

Wednesday, October 9

1:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Hospitality Suite Open – Come on in!

3:00 pm: Hotel room check in available

Thursday, October 10

7:30 am – 9:00 am: Hospitality Suite Open

10:00 am: Golden Eagles Business Meeting

10:30 – 11:30 am: Ladies Business Meeting

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Ladies Luncheon

1:00 – 5:00 pm: Hospitality Suite Open

6:00 – 7:00 pm: Reception and Cash Bar

7:00 – 8:00 pm: Welcome and Banquet

8:00 – 8:45 pm: Guest Speaker

8:45 – 10:00 pm: Announcements and Raffle

Thursday, October 11

7:30 – 9:00 am: Hospitality Suite Open

11:00 am: Hotel check out time

BANQUET PROGRAM

Our 2002 guest speaker will be Robert Ettinger, Colonel, USAF (Retired). You may have seen the results of his work in the news, as unmanned aircraft performed not only reconnaissance but also launched missiles in combat in Afghanistan. After a long and distinguished flying career as a combat fighter pilot and test pilot, Colonel Ettinger is now the Manager of the Global Hawk Flight Test program for Grumman Unmanned Systems at Edwards AFB, California. As one of the newest wrinkles in aviation, the Global Hawk is an unmanned full scale aircraft, capable of flying 14,000 nautical miles, reaching 65,000 feet and remaining aloft for 42 hours!



RESERVE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

30TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OCTOBER 9 & 10

With summer coming to an end and fall approaching, it's time to start planning to go to Las Vegas for the Golden Eagles Convention October 9&10, 2002 at the Tropicana Hotel. We encourage anyone who can swing a golf club to join us October 8 & 9 to play golf, shop & fellowship at Primm Valley prior to the convention.

This has certainly been a year we will never forget. Yes, September 11, 2001 will stay in our memories for years to come. The tragic and unnecessary deaths of the people in the world trade center, the passengers and the flight crews really hits close to home for all of us. It has certainly taught us that with all our freedom in America, we are not as safe as we once thought we were. We surely will treasure all the days of our lives and strive to see that nothing so terrible happens again.

Each year we lose more of our valuable members due to illness, accidents and old age and many will no longer attend our convention due to your health, etc. Our **Golden Contrails** and web site- thegoldeneagles.org are two wonderful means of keeping you in touch. Remember the web site contains a lot of information and forms that you might need.

We are most fortunate that our membership continues to grow and we appreciate the financial support of all our old and new members but would really like to have you attend our Golden Eagles convention.

Please send any suggestions and comments on how to improve the organization to Roland (rollbrown@juno.com 512-301-3824) or me (bmmcgolf@aol.com 936-448-1386). We will try our hardest to fulfill your request.

You are missing a great time for you and your spouse or significant other. There will be the usual meeting for the pilots and meeting and luncheon for the Ladies Auxiliary again this year. The convention could not happen without our partners. They are the real work force in making this convention a success.

Looking forward to renewing our friendships.


Ben McKenzie

EDITORS' CORNER



FRONT COVER... The striking action picture of the Republic Aircraft P-47 THUNDERBOLT is copied with the permission of "(c) Philip Makanna/GHOSTS". Please visit their website at www.ghosts.com.

COLONEL FRANCIS S. GABRESKI... This comprehensive obituary would seem to be the perfect tribute to the ace of aces who mastered the art of aerial combat using the best attributes of the large, powerful, well armored P-47 to the chagrin of some RAF pilots and the consternation of many experienced pilots of the Luftwaffe.

RAPA... Thanks to Captain Bob Heimstra for the words of General Douglas MacArthur. Without further comment we must agree that he was one of this country's greatest orators.

HOUSTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT MUSEUM... once again we express our gratitude to Mr. T. J. Zalar, Curator of the Museum, for an informative article. Please take time to visit the website given in the text of his message... it presents us with some very interesting material.

BACK COVER... color pictures used here show your "stuff 'n mail" gang hard at work in the home of Dick and Sue Grigsby.

Shown are Captains Ray Melberg, "Bim" Richards, Bill Childress, Gene Newman and, working all by himself, Dick Grigsby. Not shown is one of the regulars, "Barney" Barnwell.





Col. Francis S. Gabreski

On January 31st we got word that Top Living Fighter Ace Colonel Francis S. "Gabby" Gabreski had Gone West at 83, due to a heart attack. While scoring 28 victories in WWII P-47 Thunderbolts of the 56th Fighter Group, Colonel Gabreski, led his 61st Squadron to victory with 17 Aces, then went on to add another 6.5 victories in his F-86 Sabrejet in Korea, for a tally of 34.5 victories. Colonel Gabreski has since stood as our National Hero, who we have admired immensely as America's "Top Gun" for nearly 60 years.

How can we add more to all that has been said about such a great Fighter Pilot, who set such a great standard in his determination to defend America, a man known and admired around by the World? He was an outstanding combat leader, whose success contributed immensely to the advancement of tactical air power. More importantly, his examples were

emulated by many other fighter pilots, who went on to become great military leaders.

Colonel Gabreski grew up in a religious family in Oil City, PA, where he was taught to love America and to respect the freedom, privileges and opportunity that ordinary Americans enjoy. As a young boy of 13, his father took him to see Jimmy Doolittle fly the little Gee Bee Sportster R-1 to frame in the 1932 Cleveland Air Races. Following the example of his older brother, he went to Notre Dame, but after a couple of years, in July 1940, he signed up with the U.S. Army Air Corps for flight training at Parks "Air College, at East St. Louis. In November 1940 he went to Gunther Field and Maxwell Field in Alabama for advanced training. On March 14, 1941, he graduated with Class 41B, was commissioned a 2nd Lt. and was assigned to the 15th Fighter Group, Wheeler Field, HI. There, he was promoted to 1st Lt. and met a Colonel's niece, Kay Cochran, who he would later wed.



In June 1942, the 56th had begun a five month operational test and evaluation of the first production P-47B Thunderbolts, made by Republic Aviation in Farmingdale, NY. Their job was to find design problems that needed corrected, in preparation for combat. Flying out of fields at Bridgeport and Bradley, CT, eighteen pilots had been lost. In late 1942, they packed up and, on January 6, 1943, they embarked on the Queen Elizabeth from Pier 90 in New York with 12,000 Americans onboard. In his book *Thunderbolt!*, 27 victory Ace Bob Johnson, described the horrendous six day crossing through the sub infested and stormy waters of the North Atlantic. German Sub commanders would have had a bounty on the Queen. Bob related, "The first grim touch of war came home on the night of January 9th. Shivering in the howling wind and sleet that whipped into the bridge, I noticed the darkened form of a ship sliding by the racing Queen. Thirty minutes later the radio room crackled with an SOS call from that very same vessel, her holds shattered and her back broken by the crash of torpedoes into her hull. The Queen immediately heeled hard over on her side in a straining turn to the south. The next night, the Officer of the Guard lost footing on the sleet and snow covered deck and was blown over board." The 56th disembarked at Gourock, Scotland on January 12, 1943.

At the end of January, their new P-47 Thunderbolts arrived in England, ready for their Trial by Fire. The newly formed 8th AF, at this time, had only two other fighter groups, the 78th Group, also fresh from the States, and the 4th Fighter Group, made up from experienced combat pilots of the American Eagle

Squadrons flying with the RAF. All three received the Thunderbolt. Top spitfire pilots told them the Thunderbolt would never have a chance against the experienced Nazi pilots. The Thunderbolt was said to be too big, too heavy and could never turn with the ME-109 and FW-190. Throughout the war, the 56th flew only the thunderbolt, affectionately called the "Jug." The German Nazi pilots were in for a surprise. Gabby and his fellow pilots explored the combat capabilities of the heavy, powerful and heavily armed Jug. They found it was rugged, could take a beating and still bring home its pilot. They developed combat tactics to take advantage of its best characteristics and to avoid its short comings. Its turbosupercharger provided sea level performance up to 30,000 feet. It could out dive any plane of WWII, a terrifying experience, for the first time. Jug pilots found themselves among the first to encounter the effects of compressibility, as they approached 550 mph. Henry Lederer described his experience in a full power dive on his third combat mission. "On the Wing of his Lead at 30,000, they were jumped by ME-109s and within seconds they were going straight down with full power and guns blazing at the 109, which lost control, plunging into the ground." Henry said, "In the thin air, the Jug accelerated like a bullet and within seconds hit compressibility, with controls frozen, the 2,000 hp screaming, while the structure and flight control



surfaces were pounded by outside forces. Pulling the stick with all of your might, with feet on the instrument panel, was useless. Then, in the heavier atmosphere between 8,000 and 12,000, the nose gradually started coming up in a high-G pull out 4,000 to 5,000 feet and a zoom climb back up to 17,000 feet, with another ME-109 in his gunsight." The 56th pilots worked as a team, developed combat tactics to take advantage of the P-47s best characteristics and to avoid its shortcomings. They learned when to press, when to back off and how to avoid risks. Gabby and his fellow pilots became feared by the Nazi pilots, and their success was phenomenal.

On May 15, 1943, he flew his first combat mission in the Jug. By the war's end, he and his fellow 56th pilots were credited with downing 1,006 Nazi aircraft, with an 8:1 victory-to-loss ratio, the best of the war, and 40 pilots became Aces. Gabby's 61st Squadron had 17 Aces and had the honor of being the first in Europe credited with 100 victories.

While shaving, at 7:50 AM on Sunday, December 7, 1941, he heard the Japanese attacking Pearl Harbor and Wheeler Field. He volunteered for assignment in England and being fluent Polish; he requested assignment with a squadron of Polish fighter pilots flying out of England. He was called to the Pentagon, where he was asked for briefings on the Pearl Harbor attack. To his surprise, the Pentagon Brass promoted him to Captain, in preparation for his Polish Squadron assignment. First, he ferried newly delivered planes out of Prestwick, Scotland. In December 1942 he began flying Spitfires with the Polish No. 315 Squadron and gained his first combat experience. Soon afterwards, on February 27, 1943, he was assigned to a new unit just arriving in England, the 56th Fighter Group, where his tactical skills as a fighter pilot would become a major influence in winning WWII. The highly disciplined 56th Group, commanded by Colonel Hubert Zemke, was known as "Zemke's Wolfpack." This was a match of the very best with the very best. Captain Gabreski was assigned Assistant Operations Officer of the 61st Squadron. The 61st was a close knit squadron with many older 1st Lieutenants, but his combat experience and flying skills, soon earned their respect. He was elevated to Squadron Operations Officer and soon became Squadron Commander, with a promotion to major.

Unfortunately, his last ten months of WWII was spent in a German POW camp. The Press had flashed the news of his 28 victories across America, he had orders to go home, but he decided to fly on more mission, his 194th, on July 20, 1944. Returning from the mission, they strafed bombers on an airfield near Koblenz. He violated his own rule, went back for a second pass, got too low, hit his prop on a rise at the end of the field and had to make a forced landing. In Stalag Luft I he found his good pal Jerry Johnson, who had also gone back for another strafing pass on a train. Former 61st C.O. Mac McCollom was there. The 8th Air Force had transferred Hub Zemke to a new P-51 Group having command problems, the 479th.

On April 30, 1945, Colonel Zemke convinced the German Commandant to relinquish command of the 10,000 POWs. On May 12th, the evacuation began, with B-17 bombers and C-46 transports. Soon afterwards, Gabby made his way back to England and

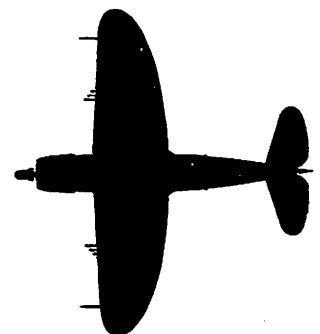
flew back to LaGuardia Airport on a C-54 transport for a reunion with his family and on June 11th, 1945. Gabby and Kay were married.

During the rapid succession of events, from the Pearl Harbor attack to July 19, 1943 to July 5, 1944 he would score 28 kills. The following year, he was promoted to Colonel and went on to Wing Commander assignments with the 51st in Korea, the 354th at Myrtle Beach, the 56th at Selfridge, the 19th at Kadena in Okinawa and the 52nd at Suffolk County, where he retired from the Air Force in 1967. He went to work for Grumman and retired as a Vice President. From 1978 to 1981, Colonel Gabreski was president of the Long Island Railroad. This was a time when the railroad had been run down and about the time that conditions began turning for the better. Sadly, his wife Kay was killed in an auto accident in Oshkosh, WI in 1993.

Colonel Gabreski contributed much to the founding of the Air Force Association, the Aerospace Education Foundation and establishing the AFA Iron Gate Chapter, of which he was a past president. He was the recipient of Jimmy Doolittle Fellow and an Ira Eaker Fellow. He was a member of the P-47 Pilot's Association, and supported several organizations dedicated to education in aerospace and preservation of aerospace history, including the P-47 Alumni Association and the Long Island Early Fliers. In 1951, he was voted "Man of the Year" by the American Jr. Chamber of Commerce. In 1955, he was elected to the Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall of Fame. In 1968, he received the first "Outstanding Citizen" award from the American Polish Council of Long Island. He was enshrined in the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1978. In 1992 The Suffolk County Airport was Renamed "The Colonel Francis S. Gabreski Airport." Colonel Gabreski was a great credit to the U.S. Air Force and, in a time of national distress, he made Americans proud. It can, with certainty, be said that "the brilliant mind and sound body entrusted to him by God was used to the benefit of humans everywhere."

At his funeral service, Colonel Gabreski was honored by the presence of Air Force vice chief of Staff General Robert H. Foglesong. At the cemetery, he was honored by a flight of four F-15 Eagles in a missing man formation. eFlow P-47 pilots present included General Mike Jackson, Stuart Moak, Humphrey Patton and Henry Lederer.

The rest of the story is well documented in Colonel Gabreski's 1991 book "Gabby," Lt. General Gerald W. Johnson's 1996 book "Called to Command," and Colonel Robert S. Johnson's 1958 "Thunderbolt!"





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Dear Readers:

I have not written a RAPA report since the organization has been quite stagnant these last three years. The only activity evident has been the establishment of a web-site by Shad Shadowens, who is also editing the RAPPORT. Hopefully, Shad's efforts may enable us to hang on until a new president takes over.

Would appreciate your mentioning www.rapa.org in the CONTRAILS.

Also, I suggest, as CONTRAILS material, the following first lines of General Douglas MacArthur's farewell address to the West Point Corps of Cadets shortly before he died in 1964:

The shadows are lengthening for me. The twilight is here. My days of old have vanished, tone and tint; they have gone glimmering through the dreams of things that were. Their memory is one of wondrous beauty, watered by tears, and coaxed and caressed by the smiles of yesterday.

These eloquent words seem to thoroughly express our own thoughts as, each year, we meet with our fellow Eagles to share our own "smiles of yesterday".

Weren't we fortunate to have enjoyed such satisfying careers with such wonderful people?

Best regards,

DEAR LADIES,

HERE IS THE OUTLINE OF THE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR OUR GATHERING IN LAS VEGAS. PLEASE KNOW THAT SOME OF THE DETAILS MAY CHANGE BETWEEN NOW AND THEN, SO REMEMBER TO CHECK THE NOTICE BOARD IN THE HOSPITALITY SUITE FOR THE DAILY UP-DATE.

BOARD MEETING: OCT 10 ROOM TO BE ANNOUNCED

DIG UP SOME OF THOSE GREAT STORIES YOU HAVE OF YOUR AIRLINE LIFE...AND RETIREMENT. BE READY TO SHARE.

LUNCHEON: FOLLOWING BOARD MEETING

THE MENU

CHILLED CHICKEN CAESAR

GRILLED BREAST OF CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD
SERVED ON A BED OF ROMAINE, CROUTONS AND CAESAR DRESSING
ROLLS AND BUTTER
FRESH FRUIT TART
COFFEE OR TEA
\$16.00 PER PERSON

PLEASE RSVP TO CHARLIE STARR WITH YOUR CHECK

DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF NAPKIN FOLDING 101 AT THE LAST MEETING WE WILL HAVE THE ADVANCED COURSE THIS MEETING.

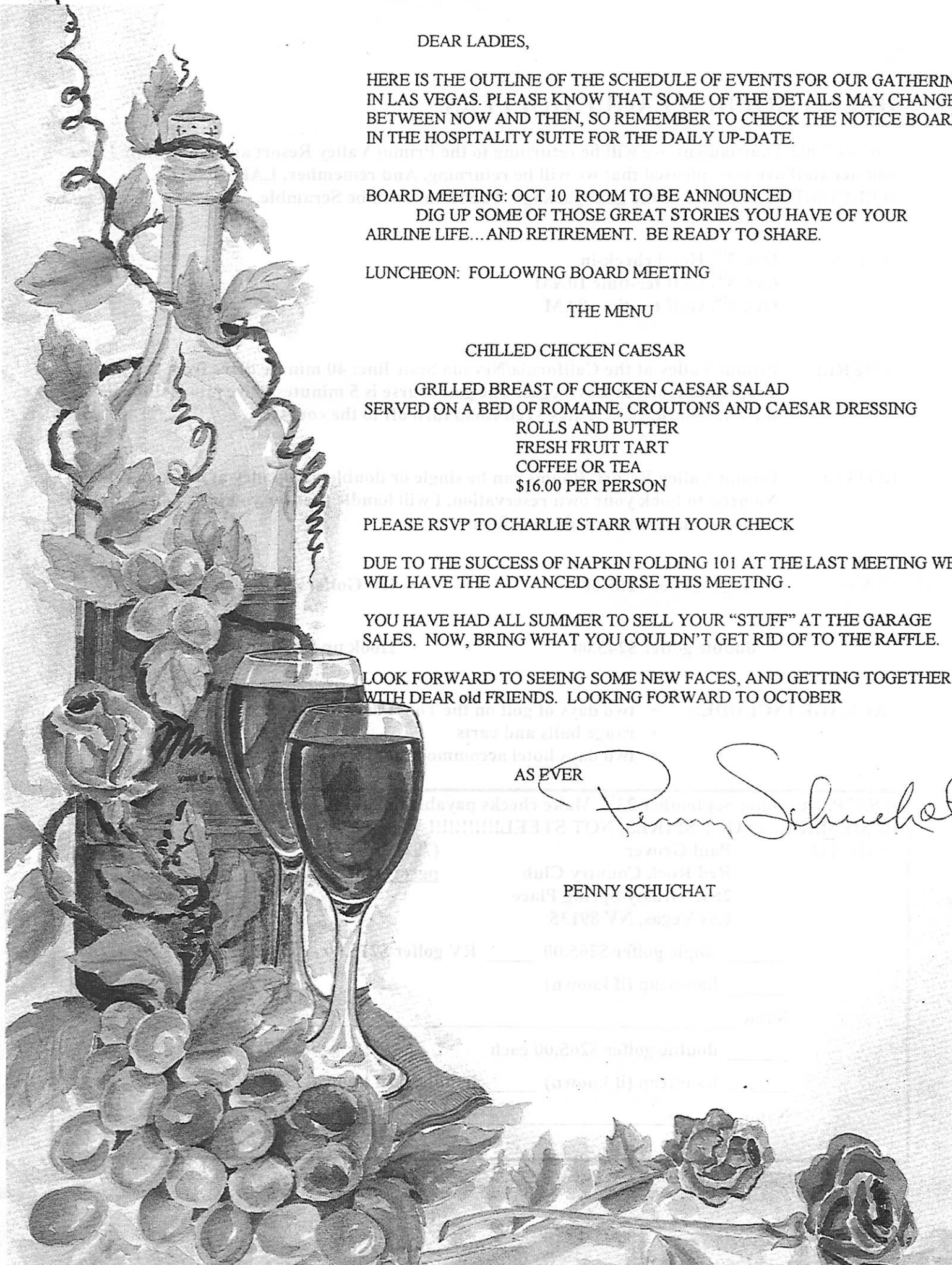
YOU HAVE HAD ALL SUMMER TO SELL YOUR "STUFF" AT THE GARAGE SALES. NOW, BRING WHAT YOU COULDN'T GET RID OF TO THE RAFFLE.

LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING SOME NEW FACES, AND GETTING TOGETHER WITH DEAR old FRIENDS. LOOKING FORWARD TO OCTOBER

AS EVER



PENNY SCHUCHAT



HELLO GOLDEN EAGLE GOLFERS:

For the 2002 Tournament, we will be returning to the Primm Valley Resort and Gold Club. Erica and her staff are very pleased that we will be returning. And remember, LADIE'S ARE WELCOME to be a part of the gold package. The format will be Scramble.

DATES: Oct. 7th. Hotel check-in
Oct. 8th. Golf tee-time 10AM
Oct. 9th. Golf tee-time 8AM

WHERE: Primm Valley at the California/Nevada State line: 40 minute drive from the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas. The golf course is 5 minutes drive into California off the I-15 South. Take Yates Well Road turn off to the course.

HOTEL: Primm Valley Resort. Rooms can be single or double occupancy at no extra charge. No need to book your own reservation. I will handle that for you based on your response on the returned entry form.

COST:

- single golfer \$265.00
- double golfer \$245.00
- RV Golfers \$215.00
- Hook up \$15.00 per night

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- two days of golf on the Tom Fassio designed course
- range balls and carts
- two days hotel accommodations

R.S.V.P. Deadline: September 23rd. Make checks payable to Paul F. Grover
REMEMBER... SOFT SPIKES, NOT STEEL!!!!!!!!!!!!

MAIL TO: Paul Grover (702) 253-5236
Red Rock Country Club pgroverluv2sail@aol.com
2585 Grassy Spring Place
Las Vegas, NV 89135

_____ single golfer \$265.00 _____ RV golfer \$215.00

_____ handicap (if known)

Name _____

_____ double golfer \$265.00 each

_____ handicap (if known) _____ handicap (if known)

Name _____

The Start of A Great Thing

By T.J. Zalar, Curator
1940 Air Terminal Museum

As I continue to read about the development of our aviation heritage, and the fearless people who helped develop this amazing industry, I am continually mystified when I think of how fragile the beginnings were. How quickly we have gone from motored "kites" to the giants that seemingly float into the air. Each state has its own aviation story. A few are exciting but for the most part, due to the lack of vision on the part of the public the majority of early aviation events received little coverage in the local "mackerel wrapper." That is, unless there was a good pile of rubble in a small crater to spark a reader's scan. What occurred in Texas is one of the great exceptions to aviation mediocrity in the very early dawn of flight.

Everyone worth his stick or rudder remembers the famous date of December 17, 1903, when the first powered, controlled flight is now measured by the wingspan of a Boeing 747. Or maybe another aviation milestone on October 14, 1947, when the sound barrier was finally broken. An event in aviation history perhaps equal to these great milestones occurred in Houston, Texas in the fall of 1910.

To fully understand the magnitude of the event we must first examine the motivating factor. A crowd gathered on February 18, 1910, on the outskirts of Houston at the corner of Route 3 and Spencer Highway close to Houston's Hobby Airport to watch Louis Paulhan, a barnstorming French aviator fly a Farman biplane powered by a Gnome rotary engine. Paulhan declined to fly over the city because he recognized the safety issue, and also declined to fly to neighboring Galveston Island for an exhibition because it was too far. About 2,500 people paid \$1 each to witness the event. In the crowd was a young, fearless 21 year-old man who truly believed in the enormous potential of aviation. Following the air show L.L. Walker, with the aid of two other spectators, L.F. Smith and Guy C. Hahn began plans to design, build and fly an airplane. Walker bought a Kemp Gray Eagle, a four-cylinder, air-cooled engine that produced around 40 horsepower. The airplane was a mono-wing that resembled a Bleriot, but that's when the similarities stopped. Walker later described his *Apollo Zero* as a big kite with a motor and a seat. It was built in a garage in Houston, and towed to the same field where Paulhan had wooed the crowd in February of the same year. Walker successfully soloed his airplane without any instructions. Since the fanfare was nonexistent with a few of the local gentry watching out of curiosity, the exact date and time of the event is lost in time. Even Walker and his two cohorts didn't remember the date, only that it was in the fall, 1910. Walker never flew higher than 300 feet. He once commented that a middling-fast horse could usually outrun the plane, though it had a theoretical top speed of nearly 30 mph.

continued overleaf

One of his more ambitious plans was to do what Paulhan was afraid to do – fly to Galveston Island. Shortly after his first historic flight, Walker attempted the feat. The full-power takeoff consisted of Smith and Hahn holding the aircraft back with a rope while Walker revved up the engine. At just the right moment the rope was released and Walker screamed south at the breakneck speed of 26 mph. Whizzing passed La Marque, Texas, well over halfway to his destination, his sense for self preservation suddenly kicked in. Walker abruptly decided that perhaps Paulhan, with all his vast experience was right – Galveston Island was too far. He returned to Houston robbing himself of one of aviation's first records. Feeling the exhilaration of being bitten by the aviation bug Walker built and flew several airplanes, and continued working in the aviation industry servicing propellers and other aviation related gear. He died August 5, 1960, at the age of 71.

Why is L.L. Walker important? The Smithsonian Institution appreciated his work enough to request the engine of his first airplane be preserved for all time. But even more importantly, L.L. Walker is the first person to build an airplane in his garage and successfully fly it. Today as kit-planes continue their popularity, the eyes of the aviation industry are always on those who try out new adhesives, tinker with new innovations in building spars, or try new, creative ways to use composites. The true inspirational base of our cutting-edge technology that America enjoys can be found in the kit-building enthusiasts. We who love airplanes know this. The next time you see the bright glow in a garage, smell glue or epoxy drifting through the neighborhood, and hear the soft drone of late-night radio, think of the man who helped start it all with a dream and fearless ambition – L.L. Walker, the “patron saint” of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA).

The 1940 Air Terminal Museum is located at Hobby Airport, Houston, Texas. The terminal building is one of only a few left on active runways that represent the birth of our commercial aviation heritage. It is a national treasure that is being preserved as a vibrant, active terminal representing early commercial aviation at its finest.

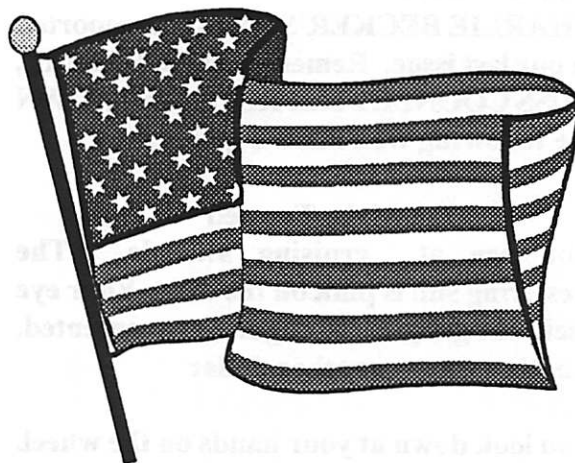
For information regarding membership, and other information about the 1940 Air Terminal Museum project, please visit our website at www.1940airterminal.org or contact us at 8601 Travelair, Houston, Texas 77061, or contact Drew Coats at 281/367-7732.



GOLDEN EAGLES TREASURER'S REPORT

3/09/01 - 7/15/02

Balance from 3/09/02	\$ 9,919.53
Income 3/09/02 - 7/15/02	
Dues	\$ 2,465.00
Postage donations	\$ 625.00
Total Income	\$ 3,090.00
Disbursements 11/09/01 - 3/09/02	
Golden Contrails	\$ 2,585.40
Bereavement Donations	\$ 75.00
Web site update	\$ 441.06
Total Disbursements	\$ 3,101.46
Asset - deposit for golf** (+) to be returned by convention date	\$ 2,500.00
Balance 7/15/02 (incl golf deposit)	\$ 10,255.26



Thanks to some very generous postage fund donations from some very generous members, our balance continues to be healthy, though the costs of printing and mailing our fine *Golden Contrails Magazine* continue to rise. Perhaps it's time to give thought to a dues increase next year. To all who have donated to the postage fund - a big **THANK YOU!**

Remember, \$20 annual dues are payable by the first of each year. Please take a moment to look at the **red number** on your mailing label. If it's a number less than **2002**, you are **not** current in your dues. The costs of printing and mailing is such that you are subject to removal from the roster if you are in arrears. Please bring your status "current" by sending your check for \$20.00 per year. If your dues records are different from those shown in **RED** on your mailing label, please let me know so that I can correct them.

Included with this edition are updates of e-mail addresses received since the last magazine was published.

Please continue to send me any mailing address, phone or e-mail address corrections or additions

Charlie Starr, Treasurer/Membership
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Niceville, FL 32578-4820
phone 850 897-0898
e-mail cws1932@cox.net

A special welcome to our new members

Andreas, Eddie
 Conlin, Mike
 Dickson, Dan
 Lehman, Shannon "Dan"

Orozco Dave
 Owens Terry
 Templeton, Cal
 Zavitz, Steve

Postage Fund Contributors

The following have made donations to the postage fund since the last publication. A huge **THANK YOU** for your generosity!

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 Doyel, Monte
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 Whittlesey, Andrew

GONE WEST:

CHARLIE BECKER'S death was reported in our last issue. Remembering **CHARLIE**, **RUSS COONLEY** sent **ROLAND BROWN** the following well known poem:

One of the Trusted

You are at cruising altitude. The westering sun is pink on the disk. Your eye flicks the gauges, the engines are contented. Another day – another dollar

You look down at your hands on the wheel. They are veined and hard and brown. Tonight you notice they look a little old. And, by George, they are old, but how can this be?

Only yesterday you were in flying school. Time is a thief. You have been robbed. And what have you to show for it? A pilot – a senior pilot – but what of it – just a pilot. Then the voice of the stewardess breaks in on your reverie. The trip is running full, 84 passengers; can she begin to serve dinner to the passengers? The passengers – oh, yes, the passengers. You noticed the line of them coming aboard – the business men, the young mothers with children in tow, the old couple, the two priests, the four dogfaces.

A thousand times you've watched them file aboard and a thousand times disembark. They always seem a little gayer after the landing than before the take off. Beyond doubt they are always somewhat apprehensive aloft. But why do they continuously come up here in the dark sky despite their apprehension? You have often wondered about that. You look down at your hands again, and suddenly it comes to you.

They come because they trust you – you,

the pilot. They turn over their lives and their loved ones and their hopes and dreams to you for safekeeping. To be a pilot means to be one of the trusted. They pray in the storm that you are skillful and strong and wise, To be a pilot is to hold life in your hands – to be worthy of faith.

No, you have not been robbed. You aren't "just a pilot," your job is a trust. The years have been a trust. You have been one of the trusted. Who could be more?

"That was **CHARLIE BECKER**. Godspeed, my friend!" **Russ Coonley**

H. M. "JIM" BAUER died Wednesday, May 15, 2002. In addition to flying the line, **JIM** served as Director of Flight Crew Training from Aug. 15, 1965 to Dec 31, 1972. He retired March 18, 1987 with 36 years of service and 28,500 hours. After retirement **JIM** lived at the Bauer Family Ranch located on the Umpqua River in Roseberg, Oregon.



BIRDIE BERTRAND wrote the following about non member **JIM**. "I was probably the last **CAL** pilot to see **Jim Bauer**. I spent the day with **Jim** in January at his house (which is) just outside Elkton, Oregon.

As you may know, **Jim's** wife, **Marilyn**, passed away about 4 years ago. **Jim** had found a real nice gal, **Charleen** (can't remember her last name), from Salem Oregon, and she had moved in with him. I

think, but don't know for sure, but I think they were planning to get married.

I talked to Charleen when I was in Oregon. Jim had been diagnosed with cancer. He had just started chemo; in fact he had just had his first treatment. Charleen said it immediately (the same day) made him very sick. He was up in the night and Charleen had found him in a very bad way, in the family room. She called 911 and Jim was transported to the hospital in Sutherlin, some 20 miles north of Roseburg. They had stabilized Jim and he was in good spirits.

Charleen was talking with him and things were going good. About 3 hours later, suddenly, Jim just passed away. That is as much as I know. Charleen said the service was real nice. (Monday, May 20th, in the Kellogg OG cemetery, on Highway 138, between Elkton and Sutherlin).

(Jim's dog), Kaizer was truly a piece of work and was crazy about Jim.....A side light to the story...Kaizer died two days after Jim passed away. Kaizer just went to be with Jim."

JIM's brother, BOB BAUER, is a Golden Eagles member, and lives in Rancho Palos Verdes.

ROBERT BUFORD "BOB" SWAN passed away (age 63) on June 4, 2002, in Houston, after a courageous battle with cancer. BOB



was born in 1939, graduated from St. John's Military Academy, attended the University of New Mexico, and served his country as a member of the U.S. Marines Reserves.

BOB was hired as a copilot for Trans

Texas Airlines, and flew for Continental Airlines when the two airlines merged. He retired in January, 1999 after 34 years of service.

BOB is survived by his wife, ELAINE, and daughter, JESSICA. Funeral services were held at the Schmidt Funeral Chapel in Belleville, TX on Tuesday, June 6, 2002, with many relatives and friends attending.

The following poem graced his Remembrance Folder:

God hath not promised
Flower-strewn pathways
God hath not promised
Joy without sorrow,
But God hath promised
Rest for the labor
Grace for the trials
Unfailing sympathy
Skies always blue,
All our lives through,
Sun without rain,
Peace without pain,
Strength for the day,
Light for the way,
Help from above,
Undying love.

LORENE McNULTY (wife of JIM McNULTY) died, following a stroke, on March 31, 2002. LORENE willed her body to the University of Texas medical school, and she requested that only family members attend her memorial service.

JANE RICHARDS (wife of BIM RICHARDS) died April 22, 2002. Years ago JANE fell, fracturing her spinal bone, which resulted in severe back pain. And, for more than a year, JANE had been in a nursing home. JANE and BIM had been married for 60 years. Memorial services were held for family members only.

ILLNESSES/SURGERY:

JOHN CAMPBELL sent an e-mail to **DICK GRIGSBY** on 04/30/02 as follows:

"About 3 weeks ago I had my ruptured appendix removed, and I feel better than I have in years. I think I have had a low grade infection there for a long time because after the operation my lower back and hip pain went away. My complexion cleared up, and my dandruff is cured. (The Doctors say this is unlikely, but I know how I feel.) McKenzie, and Grover are in trouble at Primm Valley come October. Ann is doing great and life is good. I wish everyone the kind of blessings that I have had. John Campbell."

(Dick Grigsby e-mailed back, "Why didn't you do that sooner? You would have been a lot easier to live with!")

LEE MEYNERS is the subject of an e-mail by **KEN ALRICK**, dated 05/27/02: "Hello everybody on this Memorial Day. Had a call from **PAM MEYNERS** this morning. Seems **LEE** has had what they call a small stroke. It showed up as a shading in his vision, much like a retina problem, but they determined it was a stroke. No other complications as far as I know. He is being administered coumadin, and will be hospitalized for a couple of days for observation. **PAM** expects he will be there for a very short time and says that calls can be directed to his home phone in a day or so. She sounded quite up beat, and said further info will be forthcoming when he gets home."

FRANK RHODES' wife, **ARLENE**, and daughter, **KAREN**, sent the following e-mail to **KEN ALRICK** on 06/04/02: "Thank you very much for your inquiry on Dad. I am very happy to report that Dad is doing very well!!! His tumor has shrunk and continues to stay stabilized. His short

term memory still has some lapses but the lapses are usually worse when he is tired. And he is regaining strength every day. During Dad's third chemo treatment he became unable to walk and with therapy and a lot of determination he has regained use of his legs.

He usually uses a walker and he does have an electric wheelchair that we usually use only when we go somewhere where he will have to walk a long distance. But Dad is determined that he is going to keep getting stronger and be able to lose the walker altogether!.

Dad has periodic MRI's to ensure that his tumor does not have any unknown activity and his next one is scheduled for next week. It has been approximately 4 months since his last MRI and we always breath a sigh of relief when we hear great results!

We want to thank everyone who has sent messages and called throughout Dad's ordeal. He appreciates very much knowing how much his friends care. As a matter of fact, Dad's plans at this time are to see you all in October. Again we would like to thank everyone for all their prayers and good wishes." Sincerely,
Arlene & Karen (secretaries for Frank/Dad)

TOM SCHUCHAT suffered a mild heart attack; while mowing the yard he became suddenly tired and weak. Fortunately, **PENNY** was not on a trip, but home; she immediately got him into the emergency room. The doctors located the blockage and placed a stint. **TOM** has been doing well since the surgery. (From L. Thornberry)

"**CHARLIE STARR**, Golden Eagles Treasurer, is having a cardiac catheterization procedure tomorrow, (Thursday, July 18) for treatment of ongoing chest pains. Among other things,

this will scrub his plans to attend Oskosh this year - bummer! Please keep Charlie, his family, and his medical team in your prayers for a complete and speedy resolution to his condition. Roland Brown" (e-mail, dated 07/17/2002)

JOAN JONES (Wife of HERB JONES) is recovering from surgery for removal of kidney stones. HERB has been an excellent nurse through it all.

(From La Verne Thornberry)

**READERS ARE INVITED TO SEND
NOTES OF SYMPATHY,
CONDOLENCE, ETC.**

THIS'N THAT:

**NEW WEB SITE: (Edited e-mail from
Birdie Bertrand, dated 06/07/02)**

"The new Web site is published and on the web. PLEASE read this e-mail in its entirety before going to the site. The protocol for accessing the site remains the same. (www.thegoldeneagles.org)

.....There are downloadable forms and other information (zip files) which everyone should be able to click on, and/or take into their word processor and print, or just read. But you (everyone) must have a zip program to accomplish this. (Birdie states the cost is about \$29.00).

NOTE: Version 4.6 and below of the Netscape browser will not download the zip files....Microsoft's browser works fine.

E-mail prompts (hyperlinks) should trigger each individuals e-mail program so messages should be easy to compose and send by those reading the web site.

.....This site can and will be "file" driven for the most part, to offer flexibility through the download protocol. Much information can be loaded on the site in the appropriate places within each topic, and can be made available either through

download and/or printable procedures. The downloadable files on the site are in Microsoft Word, but should translate to most word processors. But, as previously stated, you will need a zip program on your computer....About zip files - this method of downloading and printing a file allows the file to be stored in your computer as well as print it.

This means that if you want a letter published on the site, send me a file, not a hard copy, of what ever you want on the site.....It should be in a file form over the e-mail and in the format and language that you want it to appear.....That's it for now - stay in touch....." Birdie

HARDING LAWRENCE: e-mail from Dick Grigsby, dated 07/17/0:

"Harding L. Lawrence, former executive vice-president for Continental Airlines under president Robert F. Six, is dead at 81.

Lawrence left Continental to become president of Braniff Airlines where he initiated such innovations as the painting of jetliners in bright colors ("Chicago center, this is Big Blue over Peoria, ready for descent,") and dressing flight attendants in designer uniforms.

Lawrence died of pancreatic cancer, at his residence in Mustique, St.. Vincent, West Indies. He presided over the growth of Braniff from a regional airline into a trendsetting international carrier. He became Braniff's president and chief executive officer in April, 1965. By the time he retired in December, 1980, as chairman and CEO, he had transformed Braniff into a world-class carrier operating on four continents."

Dick Grigsby

LaRUE (HART) PIERCE wrote Dick Grigsby, on 07/16/02: "Once again I owe

you a big thank you,—I really enjoy the Golden Contrails. I can't believe how things have changed. This month PAM (LaRue's daughter) had a trip to Narita, then London, and was there the day of the Queen Mother's Funeral. She traded a trip to Honolulu, so she could be free to take the Inaugural Flight to Amsterdam on the first. Wow! And I thought Denver to Kansas City, and Denver to El Paso/San Antonio was covering ground. (Ha.) I hope everything is fine with you, and thanks again." (La Rue)

AGE 60 RULE MAY SOON BE HISTORY:

A fellow pilot sent this e-mail to Jim Minor, who sent it to Ken Alrick, who sent it to us, 04/01/02:

"For decades, the FAA has required airline pilots to end their careers the day before their 60th birthday. But last week, the FAA Office of the General Counsel issued a statement indicating that the forced retirement was arguably a violation of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 USC 6101), and recommended that the agency drop the policy. Actual lifting of the "Age-60 Rule" will require an order signed by the Administrator, and such an order is expected shortly."

AND GRAYBEARDS MAY DISPLACE NEW-HIRES:

"AVweb contacted several major U.S. Airlines to find out their reaction to the policy change. None were willing to be quoted, but most told us, off-the-record, that they welcomed the experience of the returning pilots and would most likely hire them back immediately, and restore their previous seniority numbers. When asked if this meant that there would be furloughs for some of their younger pilots, one industry spokesman said that would seem

inevitable." George Paul Bird
www.babesandairplanes.com

There is in each of us

The strength to FLY,

The LOVE to support us,

The VALKYRIE and the Dream

To make us succeed!

— end —

BOB WAMPLER: e-mail from Ed Gorman to Roland Brown, dated 04/23/02:

"Roland, I received this note from Capt. Wampler's son, John. I'll copy Dick Grigsby so he can include it in the next Contrails and to Charlie Starr so the records on Bob's phone number can be corrected. We surely should try to coax Capt. Bob to our next convention, if possible. Best regards, Ed.

Hi Ed, Just a note for the newsletter, if you could pass it on. Bob celebrated his 92nd birthday on Wednesday, April 8. Shooting in his trap and skeet club's tournament that day (The Payson "Bird Busters") he broke 99 out of 100 clay targets to win the tournament. Always great to see my old pop can still take me....Last week, I completed in the Louise Mandrell Celebrity Shoot held here in Ft. Lauderdale and wound up in an 8 way tie with a 96. I am no slouch either!

For the better part of the month of May, I will be delivering a 54 Neptunus motor yacht from Ft. Lauderdale to Granada. As you know, I am a professional yacht delivery captain and currently pilot in a Learjet 31A.

Still trying to talk Bob into coming to the convention this year (I would love to attend with him), Bob can be reached at 928-474-0762. His area code has changed (whose hasn't?) so I thought I would pass it along to update the membership roster (again

please pass it on).

I get all of Dad's old Golden Contrails and really enjoy the articles. Most interested in stories about MAC and early Air Mike days. Never did hear back from anyone about the Flight 11 question (outcome of FBI investigation)."

Regards, John G. Wampler (conceived in the DC-3).

K.D. THOMPSON: e-mail to Ken Alrick, dated 02/13/02:

"Hi Ken: In looking over new roster, I noted that my old no. for Green Valley, Ariz. was listed. Would you please shoot a message to members that new winter no. in Ariz. is (520) 625-2646.

Thanks, K.D. Thompson."

CURATOR T.J. ZALAR, HOBBY AIR TERMINAL MUSEUM. e-mail to Dick Grigsby, dated 04/07/02:

"Dick, Thanks so much for including us in your fine publication. You did a superb job of putting it together. Let me know if you have room in future issues. I can give you updates regarding progress on restoration of the building. Thanks again for the opportunity to contribute.

T.J. Zalar. (Editors' Note: We hope to receive additional information from Mr. Zalar for use in this issue.)

FROM NORM MEYER

READERS' VERSE

You've flown a lot thru snow and ice,
and often when it's raining,
but the time has come again, my friend
to bust your butt while "training".

First, there comes the oral
and, like I told my pard,
the questions are all easy

it's the answers that are hard.

They've simplified the mental quiz
and they've plugged a lot of leaks
so if you hit the books real hard
you can get it —in two weeks.

Now if you pass the oral
you've gained a little ground,
but you get another chance to flunk
when you do the walk-around.

What is that? What's in there?
How much air is in those tires?
Makes a person long again
to hear the wind sing thru the wires.

What's behind? What's up front?
You nearly, almost guessed
this is the one that's standardized,
different from the rest.

Now if you pass the walk-around
try and conceal your fright
You now have won the golden chance
to go up for your flight .

The time has come to do your best
and, to keep from getting tired,
you have to demonstrate your skill
to someone that you hired.

The flight is always lots of fun
there really is no heat,
the reason that you sweat so much
is cause you like to eat.

You have to do the stalls, while clean
and then again, while dirty
which is just about like it was
back in nineteen thirty.

Watch your heading! Hold it straight!
Don't you know your proper powers?
How in heck did you slip by

for twenty thousand hours?

Your past is all forgotten
and your future ain't too bright
if you should flub the contest
on the ground or up in flight.

But, if you're full of answers
then you allay their fears
and you're allowed to carry on
what you've done for thirty years!

Capt. C.H. Ferguson (AWI, Retired)

THE LIGHTER SIDE
From THE BARNSTORMER
(Colo. Wing of OX5 Av. Pioneers)

Never let it be said that the ground crews and engineers lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual logged maintenance complaints and problems known as "squawks," submitted by QUANTAS pilots and the solution recorded by maintenance engineers. By the way, QUANTAS is the only major airline that has never had an accident.

NOTE:

P=The problem logged by the pilot

S=The solution and action taken by the
engineer

Logged items:

P: Left inside main tire almost ready for
replacement

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: No. 2 propeller seeping prop fluid

S: No. 2 propeller seepage normal. Nos.
1,3, and 4 propellers lack normal seepage

P: Something loose in cockpit

S: Something tightened in cockpit

P. Dead bugs on windshield

S: Live bugs on back order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode

produces a 200-fpm descent

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing
gear

S: Evidence removed

P: DME volume unbelievably loud

S: DME volume set to more believable
level

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to
stick

S: That's what they're there for

P: Suspected crack in windscreen

S: Suspect you're right

P: Aircraft handles funny

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly
right, and be serious

P: Number 3 engine missing

S: Engine found on right wing after a
brief search

P: Target radar hums

S: Reprogrammed target radar with
words

P: Mouse in cockpit

S: Cat installed

—end of Norm Meyer Notes—

FROM La VERNE THORN BERRY

ALICE POWERS has her order in for
the ladies' favors for the Eagles' Banquet,
and plans to join the Gathering in Vegas.
PENNY SCHUCHAT plans to come out

and help ALICE with the wrapping. ALICE would like so much to join one of the local groups, but the distance is a little too far from Fallbrook or San Diego for her to attend.

JIM MAGEE had a trip to San Francisco on Continental to visit his two nieces and their families. One of the Attendants on the flight has been with C/A 33 years. She and JIM learned they had flown together during his flying days, tho both had changed a bit; they had a very pleasant visit, as they reminisced about their travels through the years with Continental JIM still operates his farm and tends his 50-herd of cattle which he enjoys very much.

LEM BELL and three of his Korean buddies have kept in touch through the years. While in the shower one of the guys fell and broke his leg; his wife did a beautiful luncheon and got them together to cheer the victim. It was a wonderful day for all!

CARMEN & JIM MINOR entertained many friends with a giant B-B-Q yard party. The tree-shaded yard reached the lake, flowing with cool-clear water. CARMEN's broken hand did not prevent them from having tables laden with attractive and delicious food and drinks. The chicken and ribs on the grills filled the air with that good-smelling mouth-watering B-B-Q. Everyone arriving AT and staying TIL, reported a day to remember of good food, fun, and fellowship.

BETTY & LEON GREEN are very busy as delegates, and working in the Republican Campaign in their District. They have also been occupied with summer house guests — seems a lot of people are enjoying their lake visit and boat rides around the lake, with their generous hosts.

NORM MCGOWAN continues to be faithful in his work with the Commemorative Air Force (CAF'S new

name). RUSS COONLEY coordinates time with flying and operating the farm near Decatur. Of course, his partner, BONNIE, makes it all much easier "keeping the farm with RUSS" and especially, during his absence. They both love being on the farm.

MARTHA & LIN WRIGHT are running around having a lot fun in their latest auto purchase, a bright red Volkswagen Beetle. They have purchased acreage adjoining the ranch of their daughter and her family, and visit often, especially for their grandchildren's activities. They were blessed this past year with two great-granddaughters and one great-grandson! Lin is again starring in The Promise, which opened June 7, and will run through the fall months, every Friday and Saturday night. The Promise production in Branson is a branch of this one and pays royalties to the Glen Rose Promise. Lin recently contributed his antique sailboat to the Promise. He said the old wooden boat had been modified, made more ancient looking, and is used in the play, with the fishermen and Jesus, when He calmed the waters. Lin said he would be glad to get tickets for anyone who wants to go; there is a group rate, also. Lin says he is wired for sound, as his pacemaker and he are doing well.

NEE NEE & BILL EATON's grandson, who lives next door, came over and tilled grandpa's garden, so Bill will soon begin planting. They are so smart and lucky to have a vegetable garden with Bill to be able to work it. Nee Nee always gets some of those nice veggies into the freezer for the winter months. They are both doing well, except Nee Nee's back continues to bother her since she had the fall...She will see her doctor again soon and hopes he can prescribe some new therapy or drugless treatment which will give her much relief.

End of La Verne THORN BERRY Notes

— end of THIS'N THAT —



“STUFF ‘N MAIL” GANG