



GOLDEN CONTRAILS

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

April, 2007



Michael Nichols

PADDLING THROUGH TIME

By Dennis Pistoll

The Captain's Corner

Once again I find myself asking the question, "where has the time gone?" It seems we were just celebrating the Holidays and now St. Patrick's Day (one of my favorites) is hard upon us. It is time to start planning for the annual Golden Eagles convention to be held in Houston this year (hurricanes permitting) and plans are definitely well along. The Houston Airport Marriott has again been selected as the site of the convention due to its easy access from the terminal and its amenities, not the least of which is the hospitality room with its sweeping view of the airport.

The dates for the convention will be September 21 and 22, a Friday and Saturday with checkout on Sunday the 23rd. The hospitality room will open on the 21st at 1PM and will be the place to register for the convention and to meet and greet old friends until late in the evening. This has always been the most popular function of the convention and I trust it will remain so this year. Food and refreshments will be available and a good time should be had by all.

Saturday morning, the 22nd, we will have the Golden Eagles Business meeting followed by the Ladies Auxillary Business Meeting and Luncheon. The Hospitality room will be open for a light breakfast snack prior to the meetings and open immediately following the men's meeting.

Saturday evening will start off with a no host cocktail reception followed by the banquet. Following the banquet, the hospitality room will again be open until ??.

Sunday morning will find coffee and pastries available in the hospitality room prior to guests checking out and saying our farewells for another year.

We will also have our usual golf tournament and information on that will be available on Bob Shelton's The Reserve Captain's Corner. All convention information that does not make it into this issue of The Golden Contrails will be available later on the Golden Eagles Website (www.TheGoldenEagles.org)

Once again, I urge each and every one of you to attempt to bring one new member to the convention. Your Board of Directors is attempting to find new ways to attract new members in order to keep our group growing and you can be of immeasurable help by just calling one potential member you know and letting them know about us.

Have a good summer and I look forward to seeing all of you in Houston this coming September.

Shaun

Greetings everyone,

After reading about the company's decision to provide fee-waived First/Business First passes to retirees with 25 or more years of service, I took it upon myself to send the enclosed email to Mr. Kellner. Hope this is alright with you but I thought it should go out immediately. To be honest, when I filled out the survey, I didn't think we stood a chance of anything like this!

Lets have the next board meeting in Paris!!!!!!!

Shaun

Dear Mr. Kellner,

I am sure I speak for all the Golden Eagles when I say "Thank you" to you and the senior management team that reviewed the Employee Pass Survey and included the retirees as well as the active employees. Your decision to provide fee-waived First/Business First passes to retirees with more than 25 years of service serves to demonstrate your concerns about the morale not only of the active employees but of the many who helped carry this company through some of its toughest years and who had a very active role in helping Continental become the outstanding airline that it is today.

The company has come a long way since the 80's and is one that we can all say with pride, "we were part of that effort". I am sure that the coming years are going to present many interesting challenges to you and your team but with the help of your highly motivated employees, I am sure you will be equal to the task.

We thank you again and wish everyone at Continental the best of everything in the future.

Yours very truly:

Shaun Ryan
President, The Golden Eagles



RESERVE CAPTAINS CORNER

It's never too early to start making plans to attend the Convention in Houston this September. It is my hope that the Hurricane season will pass us by and we will proceed as scheduled. Just as a reminder the dates are the 21st and 22nd at the Houston Marriott.

Rooms at the Marriott will be available on the 20th at the prearranged rate of \$99/night and don't forget to mention that you are with the Golden Eagles for that rate. The toll-free number is 1-800-228-9290 or the local number 281-443-2310. The cut-off date is September 06, 2007.

The golf tournament will start on the 20th and I am proud to announce that Sid Alexander has some great plans for those that play this year. See Sid's letter for further info. Remember that rooms will be available at the Marriot on the 20th.

There will be a sheet published in the Golden Contrails so that you may make your reservations for the Golf, the wives luncheon and the evening banquet on the 22nd.

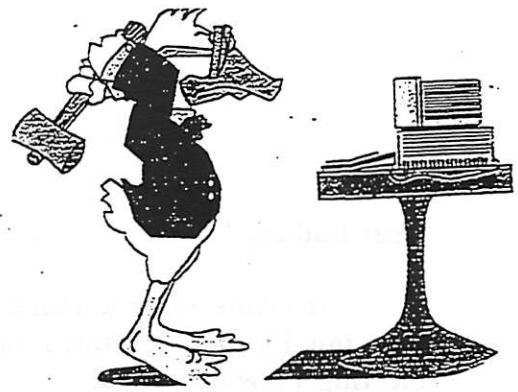
Birdie Bertrand is also very good about getting things published on the web site, www.thegoldeneagles.org.

Remember, you are very important to the success of our organization and our meeting so plan to join us.

I wrote this in large print so hat when I go to read it I don't have to use my cheaters. Makes me feel young.

Bob Shelton





EDITORS' CORNER

FRONT COVER.... This thrilling view of Marble Canyon was captured by Mr. Michael Nichols, staff photographer for National Geographic Magazine.

It adds zest to Denny and Nydia Pistoll's report of their wonderful adventure kayaking and rafting through our natural wonderland, The Grand Canyon.

Geographic invites us to view more of Mr. Nichol's record of the Colorado and its carvings.

Please enter ngm.com/0601 into Yahoo or Google to download exotic canyon pictures, even setting your choice as background on your monitor.

"PADDLING THROUGH TIME".... We must compliment Denny upon his writing skills as he holds our attention through several pages of fun and education. Thank you, Denny and Nydia for sharing your adventure with us.

SPEAKING OF FUN.... Color pictures on the back cover were supplied for our benefit by Dennis and Nydia Pistoll. You will recall that Denny did an article for us recently on hang gliding which entertained us immensely!

This e-mail message was passed on by Charlie Starr.. Ed.

Charlie, I continue to enjoy the publication - especially the aviation history articles. I have a large collection of aviation history publications, from the early Aeroplane Speaks by Barber to a bunch more recent. I have spent a lot of time in used bookstores, and now of course I can scan the internet.

John McCroy mccrosand@sbcglobal.net

Dear Ladies,

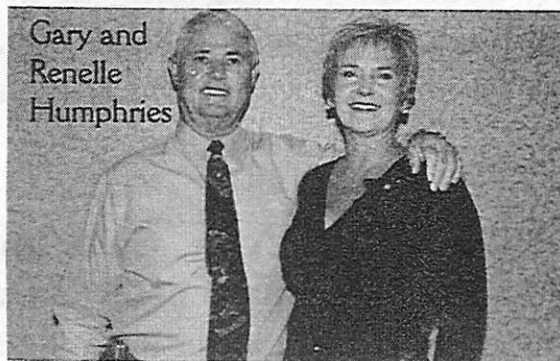
It's time again to mark your calendars for our annual convention in Houston. I know everyone is looking forward to catching up with old friends and meeting a few new ones!

B.J., Cynthia and I will be planning a special time for all. Who wouldn't enjoy an evening at Moulin Rouge? We can always use more input and extra help though, so if you can volunteer to help out, please contact me. We really do have a great time pulling things together.

Once again this year we will be placing a box at the Business Meeting and Luncheon to collect donations for the We Care Fund from our Ladies Auxiliary. This is another way for us to participate in this fund raiser for the Golden Eagles.

I will be outlining details of our agenda in the next issue of the Contrails. In the meantime, please make your plans to join us and if you know a new member, or maybe someone that has not participated in our Ladies Auxiliary before, please encourage them to come join in the fun. It is a great time to swap stories and have some laughs together!! (and gentlemen...please show this to your lady!!) Feel free to contact me with news, suggestions or comments anytime. I look forward to seeing all of you!

**Sincerely,
Ranelle
281-357-4454
ranelle4@hotmail.com**



March 19, 2007

Greetings Members:

If by chance any of you may have missed it, Continental issued the results of the pass survey taken in Oct. & Nov. The following will be implemented in April 2007.

Fee-waived First/BusinessFirst Travel for retirees with 25 or more years of service

Of course now all you have to do is find a flight with F/C seats available, right?? I have thought of a couple questions which will probably come up and called Houston to get an updated. The questions are as follows:

- 1). When a spouse is traveling by his/her self and on a SA-4P classification, are they entitled to same F/C upgrade? **Yes, Both the Retiree and their eligible pass riders will travel fee-waived.**
- 2). Are surviving spouses of deceased retirees entitled to upgrade? **Yes, the spouse receives the same lifetime travel privileges until he/she remarries.**
- 3). If you have listed F/C, checked in online (24 hrs. before departure), you are #1- SA4R, printed your boarding pass go to gate and F/C is not available. Will the computer automatically roll you to #1-SA4R in coach for that flight? **If you list for First/BusinessFirst and if not available you'll automatically be rolled to coach. Boarding is based on check-in time.**

Best advice is to log on to coair.com, employee RES., book your itinerary, request F/C and at end check the summation of charges. If there are no F/C Upgrade Charges listed you are good to go. **If there are charges listed and you feel this is an error, do not put in your Credit Card information, cancel the listing and forward an email with your name and ID number to the Employee Travel Center at etc@coair.com.**

In addition, I have just learned that the UK has doubled their Airport Departure Tax effective Feb.1, 2007 - coach 40GBP, approximately \$78.60 USD and F/C 80GBP, approximately \$157.17 USD. The only exception is if you are merely transiting the country by **air only** and stay for less than 24 hrs. If you are transiting simply present your boarding pass to the gate agent prior to boarding and you should not have to pay the departure tax. If for some reason you are charged, be sure to keep your receipt and all your inbound, outbound info. to obtain an exception or refund from Employee Travel Center within 2 weeks of your return trip. France is still- coach approximately \$25 USD & F/C approximately \$75 USD.

In closing about all I can say is: get on old computer, ck your flights, dates, & destinations carefully & often. For those of you that are eligible for travel other airlines get some Zonal Discount tickets on other carriers as a back up and be ready to change your plans & Good Luck,

K. D. Thompson
Travel Liaison

Class of MAY 20, 1968

Paddling Through Time

Kayaking the Grand Canyon

By Denny Pistoll



D. J. PISTOLL

I am standing on a perch of rock overlooking the largest runnable section of whitewater on the North American Continent. My pulse is throbbing. After 14 days on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon I can't really believe that I am about to paddle through this roiling tempest called Lava Falls.

The original name of the Colorado River was actually the Grand River but it doesn't take too much imagination to see how the canyons of the Grand morphed simply into the Grand Canyon. However the origin, the name GRAND truly trumps all other adjectives and is an appropriate descriptor of the magnificent canyon I was privileged to be immersed for almost 3 weeks.

Our trip began in Lee's Ferry, Arizona. This site on the Colorado River was founded by a renegade Mormon in the mid-1800s. On the run from a massacre in which he participated, Lee settle here and established a river crossing point which was used extensively during the gold rush days. Despite the fact that he was ultimately captured and hung for his crimes, the location still bears his name.

Our trip, which involves 16 people for 18 days in the wilderness, is a huge undertaking and the final day of preparation and loading is a logistical headache of the first order. When one views the amount of equipment, food and duffel required for a trip of this size and duration it is a daunting sight. Nonetheless, the process of rigging, sorting, loading and securing moved forward in crisp military fashion. Considering all that has to be accomplished, it is completed rather quickly.

The night preceding our launch we camped in the shadow of the Vermillion Cliffs, so named because of the vivid purple hues that glow along the mountain range at both sunset and sunrise. It is a beautiful place and suitable pre-courser of things to come.

The following morning we receive our check-out & briefing from the park ranger and I am handed the highly coveted Private Boater's Launch Permit. The certificate, though singularly unimpressive, nominally represents 12 to 15 years of waiting and a year of planning. For me, since I picked this launch permit up on a cancellation, the process consisted of 7 years of waiting and 6 six weeks to put the trip together. If this was football, I got the GO signal during the 2 minute warning.

With soaring expectations we shore-up the last of the packing straps, shove off the gravel bar and begin our 225 mile paddle into what John Wesley Powell described as the most fascinating journey on the continent. The high walls quickly envelope us...we are underway!

With some feeling of anxiety we enter a new canyon this morning. We have learned to observe closely the texture of the rock. In softer strata we have a quiet river, in harder we find rapids

and falls. Below us are lime stones and hard sandstones. This bodes toil and danger. - Powell Report 1869

Day 1

Our private party group consists of 6 rafts, 8 kayakers and 2 passengers. We have 12 men and 4 women.

The river builds as we go and the cliffs close in on us almost immediately. We are stunned by the majesty. At times the cliff tops resemble the crenulated battlements of an ancient crusader castle, at other times a palisaded city from a fairy tale. The scenery is always changing, always unique and forever breathtaking.

Out on the horizon is Badger Rapid. Badger so named by the 1869 Powell expedition for a badger that was shot by one of the men for dinner. Badger is big water and a good introduction to the nature and character of what was to come. On the Grand one hears the rapids' roar long before actually seeing them. In typical fashion the drops begin with a set of glassy waves which gradually increase both in size and intensity. Gradually, the lateral waves from each side converge into an explosive chaos of surging whitewater with deep troughs and soaring crests. The run-outs spawn huge whirlpools that tend to hold and twirl a boat around before giving way to the main current of the river. Badger Rapid and Lava Falls were prominently featured in the IMAX film, Grand Canyon. Though we wouldn't encounter Lava Falls for 2 more weeks, all ran Badger well - we are off to a very good start.

We camped that night at Soap Creek bathed in waxing moon that illuminated the surrounding cliffs with silvery luminescence.

Day 2

We rode through a section called the roaring 20's - a continuous series of drops and pools that run from approximately Mile 19 to Mile 30. Camp was at Shinumo Wash. This evening we are treated to the first of many evening concerts. In our party we have two guitars, a Jew's harp, three very talented players and several good singers.

A word of introduction for a few of our more colorful boatmen, without whom, this trip would not be possible. In addition to being highly skilled raft captains, they are all very unique characters in their own right:

Bob Finkbine, 73 years young, a retired history teacher, author, poet, a former football player and coach was making his 41st trip down the Grand. "Fink" is an indefatigable spirit, an inspiration to everyone and a bona fide river legend. I consider it a privilege to be in his company.

Jimmy Jensen, affectionately known as "JJ". JJ is character right out of central casting from a John Wayne cattle drive. Small with the wiry build of a bull rider, he sported a full beard, close cropped hair and always wore a floppy felt hat with a cigarette dangling from the middle of his mouth.

Winner of our Shakespeare Award, JJ was the master of the pithy retort. He could say

more in one sentence than most could say all day. Someone once asked him why he was so slow. In typical laconic style JJ stared down the questioner with his penetrating blue eyes and, after a pregnant pause, slowly drawled, "Well...I was born 2 weeks late...I suppose I just never caught up."

Steve England is, a lean man with a passionate love for the desert. With his self-studies coupled with desert survival courses, Steve is a walking encyclopedia of the desert's flora and fauna as well as the geologic history of the region. He over came his earlier maladies of being a sickly kid to become a very resilient outdoorsman. An additional attribute is that Steve never stops smiling. Even after being scoured several times by a scorpion that climbed up his pant leg, Steve never broke character and kept smiling. Being in Steve's upbeat company was a pleasure throughout.

Day 3

On our third day we encountered our first thunderstorm and what a show it was. Not only the lightning flashing but the thunder crashes resonating through nature's greatest amplifier created an unearthly cannonade. Like almost everything in the canyon, one felt truly small and insignificant beneath the throes of such unbridled force. For me it was one of the more unforgettable canyon experiences.

This is a slow water day made slower by up-river winds but an opportunity to gaze up at the massive walls that enclose us. We are in the section known as Marble Canyon which is considered by many as the most beautiful part of the entire canyon.

We stop at Vasey's Paradise which has a crystal clear stream flowing out of a cliff face some 150' above the river bed. As it cascades out and over the ledges it has an almost Christmas tree-like effect. It truly is a paradise as well as an opportunity to refill our water supplies without having to pump a filter.

Day 4

After breakfast we hike back into Buck Farm Canyon. It is a lush canyon with a profusion of wild flower, cacti and birds. This hike, like almost all the Canyon hikes, is part walking, part rock scramble, part rock climbing, and always has some elements of high exposure along narrow ledges with precipitous drop-offs. Hiking here is not a place for the acrophobic.

Once again underway, we encounter very strong headwinds that very nearly stop our forward progress. Because of the very strong up-river winds, 4 of the rafts lash together to form one long line to make a more aerodynamic craft with the 4 boatmen all pulling together. What would normally be a short 2 hour float to our next camp, takes all day. As with everything in the Grand Canyon; the River gives and the River takes away.

Camp tonight is at a place called Nankoweap that sits beneath its namesake Anasazi ruins, the destination of our next hike. Little is known of the early inhabitants who occupied this area. We have evidence of their presence and know that they occupied certain sections for almost a 1000 years but little else is known about their mysterious existence or why they disappeared in the 1300s. The granary storage huts which sit about 800' above our camp is one of the best preserved sites of this vanished civilization.

The hike up to the Anasazi granaries is worth every step from not only from a historical perspective but for the view of the Canyon and the river which carved it. It is THE not to miss photo-op spot.

Tonight is poetry night around the campfire. Those who can remember and recite do, and we have readings for others.

Day 5

My journal reads, "A chilly but crystal clear dawn..."The weather throughout this trip was beyond wonderful, it was ideal – clear hot days, cool evenings perfect for sleeping and wonderfully crisp mornings.

It is with strong anticipation that we approach the Little Colorado River. The LCR is not only the largest tributary of the Colorado within the Canyon but whether or not it is flooding will directly determine the clarity of the Colorado River from this point on. Up to now, the Colorado has been running crystal clear which is not only delightful but fairly unusual.

Typically, the flooding side streams turn the Colorado in the color of a chocolate milkshake. On this trip, however, our river is running crystal clear. The rapids explode into sparkling white billows and one can see the boulders far underwater that form the waves. We are grateful for everyday as we realize it is a condition that could change at any moment.

Eureka, the LCR runs clear! This calls for a lunch stop and hike up the Little Colorado side canyon.

The LCR is unique in its own right. It carries with it large amounts of calcium carbonate which form crystal white formations called Travertine. These formations build in a similar manner as do coral reefs. In this case they closely resemble a large opened oyster shells. The water color is a deep, rich aquamarine and with the combination of the water tripling over these numerous Travertine waterfalls, is a magnificent sight.

Mud baths also adorn the side banks which beckons a few of us to experience the cleansing effects of a natural LCR spa treatment. After a few rolls in the mud, a bake in the sun and cleaning off once again in the cool waters of the Little Colorado, we are refreshed and ready to press on. Life is good!

Day 6

The dawn once again breaks clear and crisp as we gather in the 'kitchen' for our traditional coffee talk. Today there is much to discuss for this is going to be a BIG water day – infamous drops such as Hance, Unkar, Sockdolager and Horn await us. We are both jubilant and nervous.

Also on this day we stop off and pay a visit to Phantom Ranch. Phantom was established as a watering station and stop-over for thru-canyon hikers as well the burro trains which carry visitors from the south rim. Teddy Roosevelt visited this site in the early 1900's and for a while thereafter the name was changed to Roosevelt Camp. As Teddy faded from popularity and public view, the name reverted back to its original and remains today,

Phantom Ranch is a pleasant oasis but after being in the wilderness for 6 days it has, to me, a sense of unease about it. I don't find the pleasures of civilization pleasurable nor do I particularly enjoy the polite chit-chat with tourists from the rim. I find I have become somewhat of a hermit curmudgeon in less than a week! I am ready to move on.

The day of big water went well for all. Two of the big drops required a scout to check out the various running options but once complete, all runs went well and were run clean. We camp along a beautiful beach called, Rattlesnake, and once again enjoy the music of our floating troubadours.

Day 7

Big water continued today but was also accompanied by very strong up-river winds. We went through a section called the Jewels so named because of the rapids associated with this section – Crystal, Ruby, Granite, Sapphire...Tuna...OK, so the early namers weren't perfect! These are really sensational drops separated by long pools and wonderful scenery. It would be hard to imagine a better day than this on the river.

We pull into camp, Ross Wheeler, named after his 1928 expedition abandoned a boat, which is still intact, at this site. The canyon opens up here to permit a view of a stunning sunset.

Day 8

Day 8 began earlier than I had planned as I was awakened around 1:00 am by the sting of a scorpion on my neck. My wife, Nydia, and I had elected not to set up the tent this night and camped within a grove of trees which is also the hunting habitat for the scorpion – it was 100% my fault for not considering this.

The sting, not unlike a wasp, lasts 100 times longer. Being a neuro-toxin, within a few hours the side of my face, shoulder and upper chest became numb much like the effects a Novocain shot. Overall it took a couple of days for the effect to wear off but otherwise created no muscular encumbrance.

Today we pass through a section called Furnace Canyon. It is a place where the soft (dox) limestone deposits have eroded away opening up the broadest section of the canyon and exposing large faces of black Vishnu schist. These 2.8 billion year deposits are some of the oldest exposed rock on the planet. Through Furnace Canyon we also see large formations of columnar basalt which resemble oversized square telephone poles. These geometric extrusions lie about in random profusion giving the shoreline an almost surreal appearance. No longer shadowed by the towering cliffs, the sun boils down. The entire section very closely resembles in both name and feeling similar locations in Death Valley. Leaving Furnace Canyon the walls once again narrow in as we now enter the inner gorge and the deepest part of the canyon. The steep walls provide a much appreciated cover from the sun.

Our next stop is Elves Chasm. Elves is a stream that flows through and over a series of boulders that tumbled into its path and have been eroded over millions of years. My

journal reads: A fantasyland within a wonderland. It is a remarkably unique place.

A few of us take a climb up to "Level 5" which requires more unaided technical climbing than I've done since college. Two in our party who are accomplished technical climbers take these scrambles and transits along narrow ledges with very high exposures all in stride. Although I thought the climb was enjoyable, I also consider that particular outing the most dangerous of the entire trip.

Below Elves we pull into Blacktail Canyon and camp astride the opening. After quickly setting camp, margaritas are mixed and chips and salsa are pulled out...it is Concert Time!

Blacktail is narrow canyon that by virtue of the erosions has become a nearly perfect amphitheater with wonderful acoustics. With the assist of bongo drums, castanets our guitarists and singers regaled us with music. We sing, dance and drink the early evening hours away. What a way to end the day!

Day 9

A wind storm comes up during the night and everything within miles becomes coated with a thin layer of fine sand. In the Canyon you become at ONE with the sand but never more so than after a wind storm.

This morning over coffee talk we come to a consensus for a specific objective for tonight's camp - Tepeats Creek. Like real estate everywhere, location dictates its desirability and the same rules apply in the Canyon; Tepeats is highly coveted by all who pass. En route, however, we must first pass Bedrock Rapid. Bedrock is benign enough for the nimble kayak but, for heavily laden rafts, Bedrock is a nightmare. In the middle of the rapid the river bends to the right. In the center of the river (at the bend) there is a huge pour-over rock that must be avoided. As one maneuvers to the left around the rock a significant flow of the river washes left and to the left side of a gigantic granite monolith named, Bedrock. The left channel beside Bedrock is a seething roil of ledge drops, undercut rock and re-circulating eddies - it is a very nasty place.

Three of our rafts are swept left and one flips initially trapping the boatman underneath. Though he quickly extricates himself, it is a battle royal to right the heavily laden raft and re-rig. Wow, are we ever ready for a beer-thirty!

On this evening we see the last of our waning moon. Having moonlight, I always felt, enhances any trip. However, as the moon waned it was a pleasant change to be able to view the constellations in southwest sky with brilliant clarity. The change was welcomed as spring welcomes summer - another cycle of nature.

Day 10

We are planning to stay two days in this camp, or as we language it in the Canyon, we are Laying Over. This is a welcomed decision as we all really need a day to re-coup.

The Canyon environment is fairly harsh. After a week or so the river leeches the oils from the skin that, in conjunction with the hot sun, wind, sand and low humidity, turns one's skin into something resembling wax paper stretched over a dried log - cuts refuse to heal, bruises and burns become more abraded. Also it's nice to contemplate a break from the

routine of making and breaking camp, packing duffle and rigging rafts.

A day of rest was the theory; reality had a slightly different agenda. We were in Tepeats Creek which is the primo staging area for a hike up to one the true wonders of the Grand Canyon, Thunder River.

After great breakfast of hotcakes and sausage, rest was put on hold as we fill water bottles and head out for a 5 hour hike. The trek was worth every step. Thunder River is spectacular! It is the only river in the world that flows into a creek. Semantics aside, the sight of a river jetting out of a hole high on the canyon wall is awesome. As the water makes its descent over ledges and boulder piles, it creates a myriad of waterfalls and crystal clear pools. The water is ice cold and after the heat of the hike, it is delightful just to stand in the vortex of the cool mist.

On the way back we met two backpackers who, we were later to learn, were college professors on an 8 day trek. Recalling a long ago courtesy extended to me and two friends on a self-contained kayak trip in Idaho, I invited the guys to our camp for a beer (or three!!) and for dinner. This offer was, of course, hungrily accepted and they were wonderful company.

As a tribute for the evening's festivities, which included more music & song, they insisted on doing the dishes. I love these guys!

Day 11

This was day of mini stops.

We explored Christmas Tree Cave which is a huge cave just off the river and has unique configuration of stalagmites that very closely resemble its namesake. We also stop a Deer Creek and hike up the steep incline to a high bench of rock called 'the patio'. The view is breathing taking as is the hike further up the canyon along Deer Creek.

Upset Rapid was next and has the reputation of being a raft muncher. The left line is challenging as it requires one to thread the needle along crashing waves while keeping off the canyon wall on the left and at the same time avoiding the huge hydraulic reversals on the immediate right. Another factor that makes holding your line a little more difficult is the fact that waves are constantly crashing over you, obscuring visibility as you plunge into the troughs of the breaking waves. It's a HOOT!

As Steve England and Nydia approached the entry, Steve slightly over corrected his cataraft and face-plants his front quarter into the left wall. With alacrity, both Steve and Nydia hi-sided the raft – meaning that they jumped to the portion of the raft coming up and used their weight and leverage as a counterbalance and kept the raft from flipping. Their efforts paid off and after swinging off the wall they held the left line like pros. Good job!

Late that afternoon we pull into Ledges, another very unique campsite comprised of horizontal terraced sandstone smoothed by the millennia of the river's inexorable erosions.

There are many feelings the Canyon evokes in the course of paddling is length. It is a truly spiritual place, and as such allows opportunities for deeper introspection. In the shadow of

the huge walls the first feeling that comes upon me is one of insignificance. I write this sentiment not in a negative way but as a means of contrast to human efforts and human frailty juxtaposed to the unbridled forces of nature. In the modern world we have the self-deluded sense that we actually controlling these forces. Every once in a while when even a moderate earthquake erupts, it gives us pause to see just how impermanent human permanence can be.

In the Canyon it is also easier to see ourselves as just another creature on a parallel journey through existence with all others – separate, of course, but inextricably linked. Being here allows me to better comprehend the web of life and as much as we like to see ourselves as apart and different – perhaps superior – that we are but a small part of a much larger pattern.

The Canyon also provides a visible time line and just how recent the emergence of man is to the planet. In one portion the canyon shows us exposed rock on Earth billions of years old. Everyday observations reveal creations and occurrences of merely a 100 million of years ago. Seeing this gives us a realization that our true limitation on this earth is time and how little we actually have of it.

Day 12

We begin the day with an easy float down to Havasui Creek. Before floods in the early '90s removed them, Havasui use to have the most extensive Travertine formations on the river. Today one must hike many miles upstream to see them, which is what we did on the afternoon of Day 12. The hike up to Beaver Falls was tiring but like all the other which preceded this, worth the effort.

Along the way we encounter a Mojave Rattler, distinguished by its beautifully green markings. Although the Mohave is the deadliest snake in the southwest, he give us a courtesy warning with his rattle and when the opportunity arises does is best to go his own way and away from all we snooply bipedal intruders.

After the hike we paddle another 9 miles and arrive just before dark into camp at Tuckup Canyon. This will be another layover and we really need it as we are exhausted.

Day 14

Day of truth! Expectations rise once again as we pass Mile 180 and paddle towards the infamous Lava Falls, one of the largest runnable drops in North America.

Lava Falls is the result of a lava build-up that actually dammed the Colorado, backing it up as far as Moab in eastern Utah. Over time, as fissures weakened the impoundment and the pressure from behind grew, the lava dam finally gave way in what Powell characterized as..."a cataclysm that must have shook the earth."

As we scout the drop from a rocky perch high above the river Lava Falls is a daunting sight. The entire Colorado nozzles over a huge ledge forming a series of holes that would swallow a city bus. To the right of main hole is another, slightly smaller, but only slightly, and equally nasty. Below that is a roiling chaos we named the V wave as it resembles a towering, whirling pyramid of pulsating waves. Below the V wave is a 17' crashing wave we dubbed, The Monster, which is capable of throwing 18' rafts up on a slanting

gnarl of rock referred to as the Cheese Grater.

The crux move is the entry. The trick is to cross and punch the river right lateral wave at the correct spot and that would then position one to thread between the two holes at the top of the rapid. Once through that, the rest of the run should work out OK. One additional problem is that the river drops so steeply that once on the river you CAN'T SEE over the edge to gauge if your entry line is set correctly or not. As Shakespeare might put it...tis a puzzlement.

Two paddlers elect to carry the drop and position themselves below should a rescue be necessary. The presence of these excellent boaters poised for rescue is reassuring.

As we approach our boats, the tiny 8 foot kayaks seem wholly inadequate for the task ahead. It is a heavy moment of decision as none of us have ever boated anything like this before. We each have a slightly different perspective as to how to set-up our line. When a boater goes over the threshold, because the drop is so steep, he completely disappears so there is no gauge for the next boater to adjust his run for a better shot at a clean run. On this rapid each boater is on his own and the decision is completely individual. We space ourselves out so that there is a good interval between us. Bad as it would be to wash into one of the holes, worse yet would be to have two boats foundering in a hole at the same time.

I paddle to where I think the line is and punch the right-hand lateral. It is a big wave, far larger then it looked from the heights of the scouting perch. Slashing into it with my paddle my vision is momentarily blurred. As I come through, the tumbling chaos looms before me and it appears as though I have a good line between both holes. Few sensations in life come close to the exhilaration of sliding over the entry wave and into the maw of Lava Falls. Threading between the holes I enter the pulsating V wave. I am leaning forward and digging hard with my paddle but my boat reels back into a near vertical tail stand and pirouettes completely around. I lean downstream and brace on the paddle and simultaneously pull the blade toward me straightening my course and align the boat down river - somehow I made it through the dreaded V wave. I am now focused on the next obstacle, the Monster and see the waiting Cheese Grater in my periphery. As I approach the Monster I do so dead center, lean into it, pop up and over. I am through Lava which is followed by a wave train that trails out below. WOW!!!

As it is, everyone has a pretty good run. Two kayakers flip but all caught their rolls and made it through just fine. We camp that night at Mile 186 and with frozen margaritas celebrate "ABL", Alive Below Lava, as the evening sky is enlivened with shooting stars and the melodic strains of a guitar fills our camp.

Day 15

We paddle to a place called Granite Park and plan for a third layover day. While there we hike to nearby cave where we find a number of ancient artifacts including tool pieces as well as shards of painted pottery; quite a remarkable find.

A canyon rattler, we discover, is also a resident in this camp. He was ensconced right along one of our well used pathways. After a display of curiosity both from him and us we all went about our business. He would retire to his burrow by night but would be poised out

on his lair by day observing our strange comings and goings and was seemingly undaunted by our intrusions into his camp. Later that evening we see a Gila Monster near our campsite as well. These rarely seen, colorful creatures are poisonous but they are also very beautiful. It was an unusual and thrilling sighting.

Day 16

Tonight is dress-up night where we don costumes that speak to our inner self. The concoctions are hilarious. We also conduct a River Communion where we'd each pass the bottle – sipping was optional – and share something personal with the group. The sharing took the form of remembrances, reflections on the trip and insights to one's philosophy. It was warm interlude of camaraderie a chance to share feelings we normally don't have the opportunity to do.

Day 17

As we leave Granite, we stop at Pumpkin Springs to admire the travertine formation it has formed and head on down to our last camp at Mile 220. No big rapids to be concerned about, just a nice float of a day.

Day 18

We hit a good brace as we approach Mile 225, Diamond Creek and the planned take-out for our trip. The Canyon has not let up on its beauty, the rapids continue and the peaks soar. There is another 35 miles of river before the waters of Lake Mead wash back against the Canyon walls but this is our point departure from this special place.

De-rigging and packing our equipment is the immediate business at hand but before we turn to that task we take a brief interlude to warmly embrace one another. It has been, truly, a trip of a lifetime and one of good fellowship throughout. It has been an opportunity to meet new friends and cement bonds with old ones. It has been a very unique experience and above all, it has been a precious moment in time, in this timeless of all places, the Grand Canyon.

The relief from danger and the joy of success are great. The river rolls by us in silent majesty; our joy is almost ecstasy. - Powell Report 1869

FROM YOUR TREASURER

—

Charlie Starr

As I write this report, it's early March, and I want to thank all who have renewed their Golden Eagles membership dues for 2007. Our membership roster is almost 750 strong and growing steadily. In each of my treasurer's reports, I try to spread the word that dues notices are not sent out each year; rather, a dues renewal reminder notice is included in the December issue of *Golden Contrails* along with the form for renewing these dues and for updating your personal information. Unfortunately, each year there are an ever-increasing number who seem to overlook this notice. Yes, I know, (and I'm in the same category) - these sort of things just seem to slip through the cracks of our "golden years brains". The sad fact though, is this makes it necessary to print, label, and mail individual notices to the more than two hundred that let this "slip through the cracks of our golden years brains". A lot of work; and a large cost to the Association and unfair to those who did send their dues on time.

As you can see by the Treasurer's Report, our Association is in pretty good financial shape. This should enable us to publish an even better Golden Contrails magazine, put on a bigger and better annual convention and to bring better services to our members, along with expanding our GOLDEN EAGLES CARES program. Remember - the GOLDEN EAGLES CARE FUND is a separate account and your tax deductible donations to this fund allow us to support a number of charitable causes. Over the past several years The Eagles were able to make sizable donations to the *Continental Cares* program which, in turn, helps many of our fellow Continental friends and their families who suffered devastating losses from the storms and other misfortunes of the past several

years. Please continue to send your contributions to "The Golden Eagles Care Fund", and help us continue this work.

Keeping track of our ever-moving and mobile group is a constant problem. If you move, please don't forget to include The Golden Eagles in your change of address list. Each year we waste hundreds of dollars in postage forwarding mail to members who don't send us a change of address form. The post office will only forward mail free for a short time. E-mail is even a bigger problem. E-mail is never forwarded; when you change e-mail providers or change addresses, unless you send us this change, we have no way of contacting you.

Two other things, then you can go on to reading the many interesting articles in this magazine. My tired old eyes just can't seem to make out your handwriting sometimes -- PLEASE PRINT when you send in a form to me. It's time to start making your plans for the 2007 Golden Eagles convention this coming September 21st - 23rd at the Houston Airport Marriott Hotel. Banquet reservations forms and hotel information will soon be available for downloading on the Eagles Webb-site www.thegoldeneagles.org and this form will be printed in the next issue of the Contrails. And finally; Land a new member - we all know someone who should be a Golden Eagles member. A new member application form is included in this magazine -- If every current member would recruit just one new member - we would be almost 2,000 strong. Thanks, and I hope to see each of you in Houston in September!

Charlie Starr - Treasurer

cut or  tear

REMINDER - - ANNUAL DUES FOR 2007 ARE PAYABLE JAN. 1st - - PLEASE REMIT

Dues Renewal or Information Update Form

Dues are \$30 per year

For Associate Members - magazine only - \$20.00 per year

PLEASE PRINT

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If making a dues payment or postage fund donation, please make checks payable to **GOLDEN EAGLES**, mail form to:

GOLDEN EAGLES
C/O CHARLIE STARR, TREASURER
4328 SUNSET BEACH CIRCLE
NICEVILLE, FL 32578-4820

phone: 850 897-0898
Email cws1932@cox.net

If making a donation to The Golden Eagles Care Fund, please make a separate check payable to **Golden Eagles Cares Fund**, and mail it to the address above - Thank you!


GOLDEN EAGLES CHECKING

Balance from 11/01/2006 (checking)	\$ 21,853.01
Inflows (checking) 11/01/2006 - 3/05/2007	
Dues Received	\$ 10,045.00
Postage Fund Contributions	1,525.00
Mis-directed CARE Fund contributions	70.00
Total Inflow this Period	\$ 11,640.00
Disbursements (checking) 11/01/2006 - 3/05/2007	
Golden Contrails Printing & Postage	\$ 5,762.60
Office Supplies	115.91
Remembrance Donations	100.00
Mis-directed CARE Fund transfers	70.00
Printing & mailing of dues arrears notices	135.56
Loan to Auxiliary for purchasing pins	562.00
Dues refund	10.00
Total Disbursements this Period	\$ 6,756.07
Balance (checking) 3/05/2007	\$ 26,736.94

GOLDEN EAGLES CARE FUND

Balance from 11/01/2006	\$ 872.69
Inflows 11/01/2006 - 3/05/2007	
Donations Received	905.00
Misdirected donations transf'd from checking	70.00
Interest Income	16.13
Total Inflows this period	\$ 991.13
Disbursements 11/01/2006 - 3/01/2007	
none	0.00
Total Disbursements this period	\$ 0.00
Balance CARE fund 3/05/2007	\$ 1,863.82

POSTAGE FUND CONTRIBUTIONS

The following have very generously contributed to the POSTAGE FUND during this period. Their donations, along with postage donations made throughout the year, and the many mailings made by your officers, have helped greatly to defray from the ever-increasing costs of postage and have save your Association many dollars. A BIG THANK YOU to all who have contributed.

Bob Appleton
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Steve Condrey	Dick Hillman	Bonn Tanner
James "Hal" Dennis	Paul Kalisch	John Williams
Bill Dillon	Dennis McDonald	Jeff Yoshida

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6	Bertrand	J.T.		tibertrand@roadrunner.com
7	Boudreau	Dick	Dianne	bouda@houston.rr.com
8	Buchanan	Rex		rexb84@msn.com
9	Burrows	Don	Patti	Dirtypatti@gmail.com
10	Cameron	Harold	Sharon	hecameron@suddenlink.net
11	Chancy	Gene	Donna	eugenechancy@bellsouth.net
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13	Childers	Andy	Donna	andychilders@mccoymail.net
14	Collins	Annette	Jack	jack.annett.collins@verizon.net
15	Condrey	Steve	Mamie	steveedd@aol.com
16	Coonley	Russ	Bonnie	coonleyfarms@aol.com
17	Copp	Bruce	Tracy	captbopp@yahoo.com
18	Dennis	James "Hal"	Jo	hjdennis@aol.com
19	Domschke	Carl	Luann	clipwing@comcast.net
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22	Ernst	Cliff	Patricia	pemst@kic.com
23	Evans	Jim	Sonya	jimandsonya@gmail.com
24	Ferree	Bill	Angela	bferree8@yahoo.com
25	Ferris	Evans	Myrte	meferris@cox.net
26	Freeman	Gene	Phyllis	glpifree@msn.com
27	Furuli	Dave	Jackie	djfuruli777@centurytel.net
28	Gamble	Jim		jimgamble@aol.com
29	Graunke	Jan		jgraunke@gmail.com
30	Greve	Reinie	Barbara	reiniegreve@msn.com
31	Griffin	Don	Sue	donindfw@verizon.net
32	Grigsby	John L.	Virginia	jgrigby@sbcglobal.net
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38	Jaeger	Keith	Selena	kjaeger@hughes.net
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40	Jellander	Herb	Pat	jellanders@roadrunner.com
41	Johnson	William	Carol	hiffyer002@aol.com
42	Killough	Lori	Cynthia	c121-rudder@comcast.net
43	Kinsey	Robert	Jan	janet@kinseyfamily.org
44	Lakes	Kenneth	Sue	k.lakes@sbcglobal.net
45	Long	Tom	Dee	tomlong@montrose.net
46	Masini	Joseph	Charlotte	jemasini@gmail.com
47	McAllister	Hershel	Laura	wmcalister@stx.rr.com
48	McCrary	John	Marilyn	mccrosand@sbcglobal.net
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50	Miller	Mark	Debbie	calcapt@sbcglobal.net
51	Moore	E. R., Dick	Brenda	erbrendamoore@aol.com
52	Oberlander	Don	Azizah	donaziza@bellsouth.net
53	Painter	John	Jan	johnfpainter@comcast.net
54	Pistoll	Dennis	Nydia	dennyandnydia@gmail.com
55	Pratt	John	Candice	jbpratt777@gmail.com
56	Richards	B.M "Bim"	Doris	benness1@verizon.net
57	Riebe	Don	Maryann	donriebe@comcast.net
58	Rovetto	Gary	Katy	garyrovetto@hotmail.com
59	Ryan	Harold "Spider"	Cheri	spiderflight@yahoo.com
60	Saroni	Maurice	Sonja	msaroni@comcast.net
61	Savinsky	Martin	Mary Ann	finagle@hotmail.com
62	Schuring	Jane		planejane_tx@yahoo.com
63	Schwarzkopf	Jean	Roxanna	n5lnc@sbcglobal.net
64	Smith	Dick	Karen	r.ksmith@roadrunner.com
65	Sullivan	Jim		jetcaptainjim@aol.com
66	Tanner	Bonn		bonn1109@earthlink.net
67	Walker	Robert		bobwalk@cox.net
68	Waters	James	Nancy	old9erpilot@yahoo.com
69	Whittlesey	Andrew	Audrey	a.whittlesey@sbcglobal.net
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3	Bergner	Bob	Jeanine	Box 728	Buffalo	WY	82834	650 222-1054
4	Cann	A. J. (Amous)	Laveme	30725 Sorrel Lane	Canyon Lake	CA	92587	951 244-5715
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6	Chapman	Craig	Susanne	84-770 Kili Dr. # 1839	Makaha	HI	96792-1589	808 695-9724
7	Coffin	Bruce	Judy	PO Box 3529	Montrose	CO	81402-3529	970 249-5545
8	Condrey	Steve	Mamie	582 Thorn Cove Dr.	Chesnee	SC	29323-0582	864 461-8422
9	Conwell	Hal		2800 Lake Rd.	Huntsville	TX	77340	936 295-3601
10	Cooper	H.A. "Coop"	Brenda	7807 Eagle Ln.	Spring	TX	77379	281 435-9166
11	Copp	Bruce	Tracy	500 Contrails Way	Spicewood	TX	78669	281 536-8218
12	Dahse	Richard		777 Quartz PMB 7749	Sanday Valley	NV	89019	702 743-1440
13	Davis	Jim		PO Box 89	Ennis	TX	75120	972 878-1111
14	Dennis	James "Hal"	Jo	7270 Outpost Cove Rd.	Hollywood	CA	90068	323 876-8444
15	Domschke	Carl	Luann	5521 Reid Dr. NW	Gig Harbor	WA	98335	
16	Doyle	Mike		2632 Tanglewood Dr.	Grapevine	TX	765051-6048	817 875-6079
17	Evans	Jim	Sonya	39 NW 48th Blvd.	Gainsville	FL	32607	352 226-5973
18	Gamble	Jim		1437 W. Lomita Blvd., Ste. 317	Harbor City	CA	70710	310 980-1993
19	Gentry	Don		3015 Hemingway	Montgomery	TX	77356	936 537-8707
20	Graunke	Jan		7125 E. Sabino Vista Cir.	Tucson	AZ	85750	520 885-3801
21	Gunther	Don	Sherry	110 Oak Place	Houston	TX	77006-1635	713 529-4869
22	Hopper	Bill	Vicky	7911 NE Loowit Loop #40	Vancouver	WA	98662-7937	360 213-4527
23	Hundley	Richard "Rick"	Joy	4003 Walham Ct.	Kingwood	TX	77345	281 360-8461
24	Johnson	Kay	Mardean	1200 Marigold Ave.	Fruita	CO	81521	970 275-1909
25	Killough	Lori	Cynthia	7112 Rockcress Ct., NW	Albuquerque	NM	87120-4103	505 328-4237
26	Kincaid	Russ	Marlene	3101 Peninsula Rd. #212	Oxnard	CA	93035-4209	818 879-8115
27	Lichtenfeld	Mike	Deborah	1460 So. Ocean Blvd. #1503	Lauderdale-by-the-Sea	FL	33062	561 702-6213
28	Long	Tom	Dee	15501 6260 Rd.	Montrose	CO	81401	970 249-6792
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30	McKean	Jim		175 Ridgepoint Dr.	Livingston	TX	77351-7654	
31	McNulty	James		244 Poor Farm Rd.	New Ipswich	NH	03071	603 878-2437
32	Meyer	Mark	Pat	10289 Paradise Valley	Conroe	TX	77304-4687	
33	Morehouse	Gary	Linda	3828 E. Longridge Dr.	Orange	CA	92867	714 865-8695
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38	Oberlander	Don	Azizah	3630 Coldwater Ct.	Cumming	GA	30041-2876	770 205-2454
39	Olsen	Walter	Chanel	17817 Villa Club Way	Boca Raton	FL	33496	561 234-0241
40	Pratt	John	Candice	1545 E. Coast Dr.	Atlantic Beach	FL	32233-5539	904 534-8801
41	Richards	B.M "Bim"	Doris	874 No. Beverly Glenn Blvd.	Los Angeles	CA	90077-3104	310 474-9705
42	Riebe	Don	Maryann	PO Box 370492	Denver	CO	80237-0492	303 324-2906
43	Ryan	Harold "Spider"	Cheri	143 Joshua Smith Ln.	Bastrop	TX	78602	512 321-4512
44	Saroni	Maurice	Sonja	1724 S. 6th Avenue	South Tucson	AZ	85713	520 906-4365
45	Sayan	Susan		1935 Four Mile Dr.	Kalispell	MT	59901-7113	
46	Schwarzkopf	Jean	Roxanna	3800 N. Mesa St., Suite A2 PMB319	El Paso	TX	79902	915 838-9970
47	Seifert	George	Stormy	7332 Huntsmen Cir. A	Anchorage	AK	99518-2742	907 344-4994
48	Skmetta	Ron		1306 Government St. Apt. C	Ocean Springs	MS	39564-3833	228 327-7001
49	Swanson	Art	Beverly	10964 Golden Hills Dr.	Yucaipa	CA	92399	
50	Tanner	Bonn		PO Box 1793	Humble	TX	77347-1793	281 441-7736
51	Thompson	K.D.	Casey	1204 W. Circulo del Norte	Green Valley	AZ	85614	520 625-2646
52	Walker	Robert		18213 Ridgewood Ave.	Choctaw	OK	73020-7311	405 454-0006
53	Williams	John		PO Box 130153	Houston	TX	77219-0153	281 496-0439
54	Wood	Dave	Janet	517 NW Bluelake Dr.	Port St. Lucie	FL	34986	772 878-3708

HELP US KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU

DON'T FORGET TO SEND A CHANGE OF ADDRESS

GONE WEST:

CAPTAIN ZIA SHEIKH died January 20, 2007. (E-mail from Continental Airlines, via **DICK GRIGSBY**, dated 1/23/07:) EWR-based 757 Captain Zia Sheikh suffered a suspected heart attack Saturday, during a flight, and died after the flight diverted to McAllen, Texas (MFE).

Zia was in command of CO flight 1838, operating between IAH and Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, (PVR). CO diverted the flight to MFE, and the co-pilot safely landed the flight, which carried 210 passengers.

We are saddened by this tragedy, said Larry. On behalf of my 44,000 co-workers, I offer my condolences to his wife and their two children.. Continental has lost a valued pilot who served more than two decades, and he will be missed.

CO also arranged for Zia's casket to be released, and requested the airports to make water salutes of the aircraft with the fire engines, as the plane was taxiing to arrive and depart.

When the aircraft arrived, a group of CO pilots stood by the luggage belt as the casket was removed from the plane.

(The funeral service was scheduled for Wednesday.)

CAPTAIN RAY H. MELBERG died on February 2, 2007.

An obituary, sent by the family follows:

Raymond Henry Melberg, Sr. died five days before his 95th birthday, Friday, February 2, 2007, at home in Thousand Oaks, California, where his family has resided for 45 years. He was born in Loup City, Nebraska, February 8, 1912.

Ray was born with flying in his blood. Early in life he began designing and building model airplanes. At the age of 15, one of his models won first place in a local model airplane contest. For that, he received his first ride in an airplane. From then on he hung around the airport every spare

moment he could. There he landed a job with a barnstormer, flying out to rural counties where Ray collected fares while the pilot gave airplane rides to the locals. He got a few airplane rides that way.

At Denver's Stapleton Airfield Ray traded odd jobs for flight time and soon flew solo in a small aircraft. Because he had dreams of designing and building his own real airplane, after high school he applied and got hired as a mechanic's helper. His skill in mechanics and his understanding of aerodynamics developed rapidly. In off-hours, after he obtained his Aircraft and Engine Certification, he and a friend set about building a biplane of Ray's own design. Within six years they turned out three successful biplanes, one of which is still flying today.

During WWII Ray taught young men to fly who were going into the war. In 1941 he was appointed to be an Instructor in Aircraft Operations in the Civil Pilot Training Program of the University of Denver. He also served as a test pilot for bomber modification operations in Denver.

Ray was always active in the Christian Church. In his twenties, he was president of the young-adult group in his church in Denver.

There he met his wife, Trova Lodholm. They were married in 1941. Soon after marriage, in 1942, Ray became a commercial airline pilot for



Continental Airlines. He flew Lockheed Lodestars and DC-3's while stationed in Denver; Convairs and DC-6's while in El Paso, Texas; and the new Boeing jets in Los Angeles. He served on Continental's Safety Committee and the Concord Committee. He retired from Continental in 1972 after 29 years of service.

All through his life Ray taught flying to aspiring students. In retirement he continued this activity along with designing and building more airplanes and maintaining his own cars and motorcycles. He had a well-equipped shop at his home in Thousand Oaks.

An enthusiastic sportsman, Ray played softball and horseshoes with other retirees in his community. In quiet hours, Ray loved to play the piano, paint with oils, and play with his children and grandchildren. Ray is survived by his wife Trova Lodholm Melberg; four children, Karen L Davidson of Port Orchard, Washington; Ray, Jr. of Lake Forest, California; Glen M. Melberg of Bishopville, South Carolina; and Steese Ann Koukl of Thousand Oaks, California; fifteen grandchildren, and eighteen great grandchildren. *Editor's Note:* Also Ray's work in Aviation won him an award as an Honorary Member of the QB's (Quiet Birdmen). At least 150 relatives and friends attended Ray's Memorial Service at the Christian Church of Thousand Oaks on February 17, 2007.

E-mail from CHARLIE STARR dated 2/18/2007: By US mail, I'm sending the obituary and picture of Capt. L. V. "Baily" Gordon - a Golden Eagle member who passed away earlier this month. Bailey was the second captain I flew with, as a new-hire in 1956, and he talked me out of quitting after my first scheduled trip with a tyrant of a captain who did not speak one word to me on that first trip.

Bailey and I became good friends and

shared many a good time together over the years. Bailey first worked for Pioneer Airlines, was furloughed and joined Trans Texas Airways. He retired in 1982 about the time of the merger and the labor problems. He was a friend to all regardless of their views about the airline.

Charlie Starr

Edited Obituary mailed by CHARLIE STARR follows:

L. BAILEY GORDON, JR. 84, of Dallas. Born Oct 23, 1922 in Dallas TX and passed away February 20, 2007. Bailey was a member of Northway Baptist Church. He retired from Texas International Airlines (Continental) in 1982 as a pilot. During WWII, he flew fighter planes for the US Army Air Corps. Preceded in death by his



wife, Sue Gordon. He is survived by his wife Lee Gordon, son, Dr. Robert B. Gordon and wife Cindy; daughter, Susan Baker; daughter Martye Bradley, and husband Keith; 4 grandchildren, Eric and Jessica Bradley, and Matthew and Katy Gordon....Memorials may be made to the Northway Baptist Church, 3877 Walnut Hill Lane, Dallas,, TX 75229.

Edited obituary mailed by CHARLIE STARR follows:

Charles E. Eberhart died Thursday, February 22, 2007 in Irving, TX. He was born to Joseph and Eula Moore Eberhart on August 14, 1917 in Maysville, GA. Charles served as a pilot and Captain in the Army Air Corps. during World War II, flying the "Hump" between China and India. He was a professional airline pilot for Trans Texas Airways for 29 years. He was a Mason, an Elk, and a member of the QB's. His hobbies included golf, reading, mind games, and traveling with wife Dixie, with travel trailer in tow.

Charlie was a devoted husband, beloved role model for his children and grandkids, and a dedicated professional airline pilot. He constantly displayed the highest level of honesty and integrity, with very little deviation. He was considerate of others, helpful to friends, and supportive of his family. He will be missed.

Survived by his wife, Dixie of Irving, son C. Scott, and daughter Cindy, and two grandchildren.....

E-mail from KC THOMPSON and DICK PEKRUL, dated 03/10/07: It is with much sadness that I write to all of you—we have lost another good friend, Retired CAPTAIN ROBERT (BOB) FINLEY. To many that flew with him, you will remember him as the ever joking, smiling, wild & crazy guy we called "Filthy". Many of you also know his wife CO F/A Susan Finley and kids—Michelle and Matthew.

When I spoke to Susan today, she said Bob had an operation recently and yesterday his blood sugar dropped dramatically. They took Bob to the hospital and after stabilizing his vital signs he was released. Unfortunately his sugar level dropped again, and this time stopped his heart. Bob passed away in his sleep at around 2:30 AM. When Susan found him hours later, she administered CPR, but it was too late.

Bob will be honored & remembered on Tuesday morning at a memorial service in Buchanan, MI. Details still pending....

Flowers, donations, or cards can be sent to their home. If you have any funny stories you'd like to share with the family, please send them to their home or e-mail address. They'll be checking e-mails often and would love to hear from you. Here's the address and numbers:

Susan Finley,
3028 East Riverside Road,
Buchanan, MI 49107
269-695 -8311

Susan's Mobile 269-506-2133

ERMA (KATIE) NEWMAN died Dec. 15, 2007. ERMA was born on August 20, 1920, near Hanover, Germany. Six years later, her parents, Frederick and Dora Soth brought ERMA and her younger sister, **DOROTHY** to live in Detroit, Michigan,

Perhaps going to school, not knowing a word of English, helped ERMA develop her "positive attitude and zest for life" for when ERMA, (who had been entered in the Miss Michigan Beauty Contest by neighborhood young men) did not win—she was happy that she had placed among the top twenty!

When ERMA was turned down for a Flight Attendant Position with Northwest Airlines because she was too tall—she was not discouraged; she joined the Navy as a Wave !

Again, after her Navy Service, ERMA began taking flying lessons, and when she couldn't solo, she married her flight instructor, **TED JANCZAREK** !

After Continental Captain **TED JANCZAREK** died of lung cancer, ERMA soon began playing bridge three times per week, when she wasn't taking world wide trips with her Flight Attendant daughter, **KAREN** !

Next, when **GENE NEWMAN**

started to woo her with flowers and butterscotch chocolates, ERMA, aware of his dull life, married him, so that she could provide him with some fun and excitement!

True to her resolve, ERMA was responsible for lots of fun and excitement! In their eight years together, the pair took two Princess Cruises, two River Boat Trips on the Rhine and Danube, spent eight days with ERMA'S cousin and his wife in Aachen, Germany, and frequently visited the San Francisco area to see ERMA'S daughters, KAREN and JAYNE, and grandchildren, and great grandchildren,

Add annual trips to Minnesota to visit GENE'S brother, and to go fishing, numerous dinners with friends, plus annual Halloween visits all over town, to cheer the

elderly, especially those who were housebound. (ERMA dressed as a clown, with an orange colored mop of hair, ugly mismatched stockings, etc.)

In conclusion, ERMA was a loving wife, a

caring mother and grandmother, a good Lutheran, and a friend to all, whether rich or poor. She loved life and those around her! She died at home in her sleep, after a series of strokes. She will be missed!

LOVE

Gene

From the January, 2007 Golden Tale,
written by La Verne Thornberry:

We extend deepest sympathy to MARTI TRECKMAN in the loss of JOE, her precious husband and father of her of their five daughters. One daughter and her husband live in Austin, TX, and Marti also has a nephew in Austin. Soon after Joe's death, before his Memorial, a son-in-law was in a serious motorcycle accident. He is improved but will need quite a bit of time for healing.

ILLNESSES/ SURGERY:

E-mail from K D THOMPSON, dated 11/20/2006:

Hi All, talked with Diane Ballard yesterday morning. Don having hard time of it., Had hip replacement surgery last Tues. and Weds. Thurs. she reports that he was having tough time coming out of anesthesia etc., doing a lot of rambling and very lethargic so Friday they took him off his medications and now suffering a lot of pain and discomfort from hip surgery.

K D

E-mail from K D THOMPSON, dated 12/02/2006:

Hi All; talked with Diane Ballard this evening and happy to report that the "Old Redhead" is coming back AGAIN !!!!

After hip replacement surgery on Nov 21st, went through week of hell coming out of anesthesia and pain, etc. Stabilized and was moved to Rehab. last Sun. and been there since and coming along although sloooow. She reports his patience running thin, can't imagine that of Good Old Mild Mannered Easy Going Redhead ????? However, nurses telling him to slow down and take it easy.

Diane hopes to have him home by next week sometime.

K D

E-mail from K D THOMPSON, dated



12/10/2006:

Greetings All, I spoke with Diane Ballard yesterday and happy to report that the Old Redhead is still on the recovery road.

He had a complete\ left hip replacement on Nov. 21st, and post surgery developed a large hematoma somewhere on his left thigh, which was very painful. Finally got under control-- the pain is subsiding and has been in physical therapy doing great and only problem Diane reports is that the therapist cannot get him to slow down and take it easy!!!!

He is set to be discharged on Wed., will go home and continue therapy there until which time they feel that he can come to facility to continue therapy there. Naturally he is happy with that .

K D

E-mail from K D THOMPSON, dated 12/17/2007:

Hi All, talked with Don last Friday and happy to report that he is finally back home and sounded considerably better then he did a month ago, pre-surgery. Pain and discomfort getting under control.

He will be receiving in home physical therapy for a while until they feel he is O.K. to go to facility for continued therapy and then continue with that . All in all sounded very good and certainly glad to be home and out of hospital. Been a tough year on the Old Redhead as it has been for a lot of our friends who have been getting up there.

These "Golden Years" are not for whimps !!!

K D

E-mail to GENE NEWMAN from PAT STARKE-BROWN, dated 12/04/2006:

Dear Gene,

I was sorry to read about your wife's poor health. I certainly hope she gets better. I finally retired after forty-five years, plus

seventy years of age. I was so pleased to meet Dick Grigsby and his wife at one of my husband's Shriner events. I believe Dick received his fifty year pin that evening. Time has passed quickly since our chance flight together. (A flight from Houston to Raleigh NC, when F/A Starke was instrumental in upgrading me to first class!). Strangely, I don't miss the rat race, only the people.

I wish you both well. Please have a Happy Holiday.

Sincerely,

Pat Starke-Brown

DICK GRIGSBY is slowly recovering from his bad fall that was reported in an earlier issue. He walks with a cane, and leaves most of the driving to his wife, SUSAN.

Formerly AMOUS CANN needed help to get out of a chair, but now he can get up by himself. He has very little energy and does not walk much, but he has less pain, and is feeling better every day.

THIS'N THAT:

E-mail from DICK GRIGSBY, dated 12/01/2006:

Thanks to the help of Gene Newman, Kurt and Haldis Toppel, and Bim Richards, the December issue of Golden Contrails is on its way this date.....

Dick Grigsby

GENE NEWMAN thanks his many Continental friends for their cards of sympathy and condolence.

DON GRIFFIN has resigned as Widow's Aid Chairman, and SHAUN RYAN has volunteered to replace him. Good for you SHAUN!

E-mail from K D THOMPSON, dated 2/2/2007:

Almost 18,000 co-workers responded to the pass travel survey that was conducted in October and November. The employees provided CO with their views on the current Pass Travel Program, and provided feedback on possible program modifications.

The survey showed that co-workers are quite satisfied with the Pass Travel Program as it is, said Human Relations and Labor Relations Sr. VP Mike Bonds.....

As a result of the survey, the following Pass Travel Program changes have been approved:

Provide fee -waived First/Business First passes to retirees with 25 or more years of service. (implementation April 2007)

Allow co-worker's children ages 21-25 on active military duty to travel as a dependent (completion 3Q 2007)

Allow buddies of international based co-workers to travel unaccompanied out of their base country, not just city, to the United States and return (implementation April 2007)

Provide vacation ePasses to new co-workers at six months of active service (completion April 2007)

NOTES FROM LA VERNE THORNBERRY

From past issues of THE GOLDEN TALE

Forty four ARECAs and guests enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Luncheon which was hosted by our Prezes PENNY & TOM SCHUCHAT. Everyone was so festive with decorative tables, great prizes and um-umm good and attractive food, by a local caterer, topped with an array of marvelous desserts.

Yes, the ARECA ladies can cook !

DENA & JIM BRYANT had their first

meeting with the Eagles in Las Vegas, and enjoyed it immensely. They have enjoyed living in McKinney, near their daughter and family. The time has been great with their grandsons who are now grown up. One is a senior in high school; the other three are in college. Their son, Randy and his wife live in Guatemala; they have two sons, a 3 year old and a 5 month old. Randy is a teacher in missionary work, and their lifestyle in this third world country is interesting and much different from ours. Dena & Jim are having serious thoughts about moving to Guatemala to have time with these grandsons and the family, as the little ones grow into big ones..

About 170 members, wives, and guests attended the 2006 Golden Eagles gathering in Las Vegas on October 20 and 21. In accordance with tradition, CLIFF PLEGGENKUHLE gave his personal invocation, and during the evening the Pleggenkuhle table was visited by many members, all expressing congratulations and warm feelings of friendship.

Thank You

This thank you note from Dave Streit is dated January 31, 2007.

DEAR DICK —

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE CARD AND THE THOUGHTS FOR HELENE.

WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN WITH YOU AT CANYON LAKE. I SEEM A BIT ISOLATED HERE IN MONTANA.

SEE YOU IN HOUSTON!

End

Dave

