

DECEMBER 2012

...... 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























Spirit of the Convention

On the front cover:

I chose this picture for the front cover of our Convention Issue because George and Gloria Vermef personify the spirit of the Golden Eagles. George suffered a serious fall while doing some photography and now needs a wheelchair to get around. That did not deter George and Gloria from attending this year's convention in Las Vegas. and enjoying the company of old friends and flying companions. Everyone had a great time at this year's get-together but we missed those of you who could not attend so try to make it a date for our convention next year in Houston. The more people attending, the more fun we all have.

The Golden Eagle Golfers



From the Publisher:

the Golden Eagles I can only say "WOW". For those a festive evening. of you not in attendance, the convention was moved back to the Tropicana as the usual hotel, the Sahara, is closed and scheduled for demolition. Despite this minor problem, I can say that Paul and Gail Grover gave us one of the most enjoyable conventions I have attended.

It all started with the golf tournament –a two day affair at the beautiful (but treacherous) Angel Park Golf Club and organized by Ben McKenzie. We had a nice turnout and the weather could not have been better. Judging from the comments at the bar following the first day of play, everyone was enjoying the event and the caustic remarks flowing between the foursomes added just the right amount of spice. For those of you who enjoy golf but who have not played in this event, I urge you to give it a try next year. It is totally Shaun a fun event and open to all.

After the second day of play, most everyone adjourned to the hospitality room for an afternoon and evening of swapping stories, catching up on old friendships and of course some liquid refreshments and good food. The usual volunteers assisted in keeping the bar open and the food table fully stocked and we should all give these folks our heartfelt thanks for their hard work.

Thursday morning brought the eagerly awaited business meeting for the pilots and the official business was dispensed with in the usual efficient and professional manner. (see the minutes of the meeting in this issue). I am happy to report that when the meeting was adjourned that the pilots demonstrated that they still had the know-how to evacuate a full airplane in less than 30 seconds!

The banquet on Thursday night was the highlight of the convention and Gail Grover outdid herself with a

Luau themed event with a tropical buffet, a great tribute to the pilots who have taken their last flight west, Hula dancing and a great orchestra. The fact that everyone got to wear muu-muus and Aloha shirts and Freshly back from the October 2012 Convention of received leis at the door gave the finishing touches to

> I also have to give a special thank you to B.J. Bellerue for her hard work in the role of staff photographer. She has provided me with the great photos that you find published in this issue. Well done BJ!





THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Dear Golden Eagles:

The convention in Las Vegas had an awesome turnout with perfect weather for golfing, touring, shopping or sunning by the pool.

Thank you to Ben McKenzie and Don Gentry who put together the 2 days of golf with perfect weather each day. The tournament this year was dedicated to the founders of the Golden Eaglle Golf, Amous Cann and Don Ballard. No doubt they both were smiling down upon the great turnout—Amous especially because of Laverne's ability in past tournaments to win every trophy we could pass on. I also want to thank Diane Ballard for the touching letter she sent us in rememberence of Don.

This year's theme, Hawaiian Luau, was stunningly presented thanks to the hard work of the Ladie's Auxiliary and I think all attendees would say it was a great success.

Our business meeting had its best attendance in many years and the bylaws were updated to deal with our merger involvement and a new board member position was added as we welcomed Bill Chambers to the board.

Our 2013 convention will be held in Houston at the Double Tree Hotel on October 25 thru the 27th and I understand it will be a casual, BBQ style gathering with a twist I'm sure.....

Stay active, stay informed and above all...be safe and have great holidays.

Paul F. Grover III
Golden Eagles President

THE CO-PILOT'S CORNER

Its that time again. Just a quick update on what has transpired since our last news letter. We had our yearly reunion in Las Vegas and it could not have been better. The Grovers really put on a show. The banquet was a Hawaiin Luau, inclusive of Leis flown in from Hawaii for the ladies. The band was great and everyone seemed to dance the night away. Pam Myners did a great job with the raffle. The United company store in Denver donated a beautiful 787 model. Pam with Bob Shelton and Ben McKinzie help auction the model off, and Bob Warner was the high bidder. Thank you United and Bob, the money went into our general fund. We kicked off the convention with a two day golf outing at the Angel Park Golf club. Ben McKenzie put together a good golf tournament. The ladies as usual had a lot of fun at their luncheon. No shortage of laughs. We had a good turnout for the men's meeting. The revised By-Laws, which had not been changed since October of 2003 passed with a unanimous vote. The board proposed a dues increase from \$30 to \$35 and it passed as well. We had not had a dues increase in over twenty years. The members seemed to like the local Chapter concept and instructed the board to pursue the concept. As usual we had a good turnout at the hospitality suite, where everyone seemed to enjoy renewing old friendships. You can start looking forward to and making plans for our 2013 reunion in Houston. It will be at the Double Tree Hotel on the 25-27th of Oct. More information and registration forms will follow. Remember to take care of your dues as soon as possible. Till later then, your Co-pilot wishes you well! **Don Gentry**



NOTES FROM YOUR SECRETARY - Charlie Starr

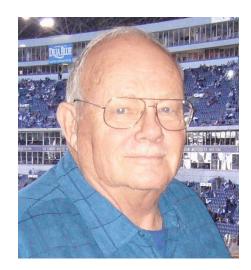
First, let me wish all of you the very best of the Holiday Season It's really a time of the year to be thankful for our many blessings, to appreciate being in a country where we are free to celebrate however our beliefs lead us, and to be able to join with our families and friends in our celebrations.

In October many of your Golden Eagles friends gathered in Las Vegas for our 39th annual Convention and Reunion. Our president, Paul Grover, with great assistance from the Ladies Auxiliary president, Gail Grover, along with help from many of our convention regulars, put together one of the most enjoyable Conventions ever. Our new "digs" at the Tropicana proved to be wonderful, and they were most gracious hosts. The hospitality room was well stocked and served as a central gathering place. The Luau banquet both beautiful and delicious, entertainment, exceptional. At the annual business meeting, several items were discussed and voted on. The most important being the adoption of a muchneeded set of revised by-laws, the voting of two life memberships, the election of Bill Chambers to the new post of Executive Vice President, and a slight increase to the annual dues

Bob Shelton & Gary Humphries, both past presidents of The Golden Eagles, were voted lifetime memberships. Bill Chambers will represent us in many the many dealings and negotiations, as our new

Executive VP. Dues, having remained unchanged for over twelve years were increased by \$5 to reflect the ever increasing costs. For those of you who missed this reunion, you missed a great time. In fact, now would be a good time to mark your calendars for October 25th – 27th of 2013 and start planning to attend the 40th reunion/convention in Houston.

While speaking of dues, let me remind everyone that 2013 dues are payable on January 1st, and the dues are \$35 per year. Please look at the mail label on this magazine to see if your dues have been paid. If the label shows a year of 2012 or earlier, please send your renewal form and check to our Treasurer, Tom Doherty. A renewal form is provided below. To help our mailing process and reduce costs, **if you know your 9 digit zip code, please provide it.**



IMPORTANT: New password for viewing roster and Contrails is: wingflap

Dues Rene	ewal and personal information change	PLEASE	E PRINT	·	
Last Name	First Name		Nic	k Name	
Spouse Name	Phone (_)			
Address	City				
State Zip + Dues are \$35 per year	+ Email \$20 per year for Associate Members		eligible	for regular	r membership)
Mail to: Tom Doherty - T	reasurer, 7 McCormick Way, Salem NH	[03079-2	816	email:	ikated@aol.com

THE TREASURER'S CORNER



Jom Doherty

Greetings from sunny Naples, Florida. It was good to see so many Golden Eagles members in LAS. We had a great time at the banquet from the hula dancer to the delicious buffet to the entertainment by Russ Davis to dancing the night away. There were many great raffle and cash prizes, and, no, I did not win anything as my luck usually runs. Thanks to all those who worked tirelessly to make the convention a success. Plans are already in progress for the 2013 convention in Houston. More information will be forthcoming as plans are finalized.

After LAS, my wife and I visited the Grand Canyon for a few days. As many times as I have flown over it, it was even more spectacular seeing it from the ground. We stayed in a lodge on the south rim and began our visit by watching the sun rise over the canyon. It was a trip we'll never forget.

More recently we made our annual pilgrimage from New Hampshire to Florida by way of the National Air and Space Museum at IAD and Colonial Williamsburg. We left the northeast in the snow and arrived in southern Florida in 80 degree temperatures. Now, down to business!

At the business meeting at the convention, it was voted to raise annual dues to \$35.00. There has not been an increase in dues in 12 years and it was necessary in order to provide the services that we all enjoy. As usual, donations to the postage fund are appreciated. Dues are due and payable effective January 1, 2013 and should be mailed to:

Tom Doherty
7 McCormick Way
Salem, NH 03079-2816
E-mail jkated@aol.com



To make the payment of dues more efficient, please **DO NOT** send checks to Charlie Starr as he is now Secretary.

The password for Contrails and the roster is now: wingflap (all one word, lowercase).

LADIE'S AUXILARY

Dear Ladie's Auxiliary and Golden Eagles: A HUGE Mahalo to each of you who attended the Vegas gathering. Because of your spirit and enthusiasm the event was so special and memo-The Ladie's Auxiliary really "hit it out of the box" and I am so grateful to all who stepped up to cover the bases. Francia Gentry and Pam Myners, my "go to" girls...Penny Pekrul and Penny Schuchat, my "crafts 101" girls (all the glittery orchids we danced upon), Chris McKenzie, Sharon Clough and Carol Shelton at the Hospitality Table checking everyone in with name badges and raffle tickets a very big job. And to our dear past President BJ Bellerue for her guidance in helping me with ladies meeting format and specifics that I was not so "specific on". Alice Powers—you always come through with a treat for us ladies along with a whimsical package from Penny Schuchat and team.

Our Hospitality suite really "rocked" this year with all of the "stories" and great bartending by Gentry, McKenzie and Shelton. It is not an easy job to know what and how much to buy in the "BEV" department for the group. Also, my old BFF, Charlie Starr despite not feeling well, always lent a car and a kiss and his expert advice. My new BFF, Tom Doheerty, the GE treasurer handled the financing of this event as tho he had been doing it from day one.

I know you are all busy planning for the holidays so I will close with my wishes for a really enjoyable and treasured time with family and friends. Until we meet again in Houston....

Gail 7. Grover Ladies Auxilary President ggskyhag68@cox.net



FROM YOUR BEAN COUNTER (aka: TREASURER'S REPORT) 7om Doherty - Treasurer

Report Period 7/09/2012 - 12/03/2012

CHECKING ACCOUNT	
Bal. (Checking) from 7/9/2012\$	15,692.43
Inflows (checking)	
Membership bacs	990.00
Postage Contributions	
Banquet/Luncheon Deposits	5,735.00
Raffle Receipts	1,034.00
Hospitality Bar Donations	303.00
Golf Deposit Refund	500.00
CARE Fund (for Transfer)	281.00
Convention Hotel Deposit Refund	1,000.00
Jewelry Sales	1,040.00
Total Inflows This Period\$	11,158.00
Outflows (checking)	
Contrails Printing\$	1,248.75
Contrails Postage	,
Convention notice printing & postage	
Convention Meals	
Hospitality Food & Beverages	
Raffle Purchases	
Convention Miscl	
Convention Room Fees	
Remembrance Donations	
Convention Decorations	
Convention Entertainment	
Convention Cancellation Refunds	301.00
2013 Convention (IAH) Deposit	
Miscl. Mailings	
Office Supplies\$	
Total Outflows This Period\$	
Bal. (checking) 12/03/2012\$	6,640.78

IMPORTANT NOTE NEW PASSWORD

Effective with the date of this edition, the password to view GOLDEN CONTRAILS magazine and the roster on the website will be:

Wingflap

You will want to write this down somewhere

CARE ACCOUNT	
Bal. (CARE) from 7/09/2012\$	121.12
Inflows (CARE)	
Contributions\$	0.00
Interest Earned	0.02
Total Inflows This Period\$	0.02
Outflows (CARE)	
None\$	0.00
Total Outflows This Period\$	0.00
Bal. CARE 12/03/2012\$	121.14

SAVINGS ACCOUNT Bal. (Savings) from 7/09/2012\$	18,096.11				
Inflows (Savings)					
Interest Earned\$	5.08				
Total Inflows This Period\$	5.08	4.			
Outflows (Savings)					
None\$	0.00				
Total Outflows This Period\$	0.00				
Bal. (Savings) 12/03/2012\$	18,101.19				

Please remember to advise of any changes of your information such as address, phone number, e-mail address, etc. When sending any information updates or dues renewal forms, please include your full 9 digit zip code – the post office requires this for bulk rate mailings.

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE POSTAGE FUND!

A Special welcome to our NEW MEMBERS

Charlie Boone Lonnie Brauner
Don Catalano Michael Collins.
Edward DeChant Paul Hubbert.
Ede Simon George Vermef, Jr.
George Wroten

AN AIRLINE - THEN AND NOW

By Charlie Starr

While many of the "more mature" (I don't like using the term "older") members of our Golden Eagles group can probably tell even more interesting stories from their early experiences – perhaps some of our younger members will simply get a laugh or two, and say "Oh, yeh, sure". But, so help me, most of it's true!

As I look back on my years in the airline industry, and the 'flying' industry in general - it's remarkable to compare "then" (when I started with an airline, in '55), to "another then" (when I finally retired in '97), and to "now". Of course, I'm a bit out of touch with "now". having retired before 9/11 and all of the security issues that ensued, and with the technical advances of modern equipment.

clock – be a bit younger". And, sure, I'd love to have tion – like the triple seven (Boeing 777) or the new Dreamliner B-787, with their fancy computers and elecactually able to fly the B-777 simulator for a few minutes, some years ago, during a visit to the Continen-And, though I certainly never fully understood the workpanel, I was very pleased that I could still manage to get in spite of a couple of abnormal events that our host siminstructor threw at us (at least we didn't break the simulator). And, yes, there are other, much older airplanes, that I wish I could have flown – besides an array of WWII fighters and bombers, I would have loved to have been able to fly a Lockheed Constellation or DC-7.



My last "ride" Continental Flt. 11 Paris – Houston 8/17/92

But in just looking at the "then's" and "now's" - dating back to my early days – the differences would be almost incomprehensible to a modern day airline pilot.

Unfortunately (though it has never seemed to be much of a physical handicap), I was born with a vision defect that almost excluded me from any type of flying. In fact, I still have little vision in one eye (testing at about 20/200 - legally blind to some). At about age 6 or 7, on my birthday, my dad treated me to a sight-seeing flight in a small airplane at my hometown airport in Louisville KY. Needless to say, I was hooked! But in growing up and Of course, most everyone would love to "turn back the knowing of my vision problem, I tried to focus on other endeavors - early on, I even had dreams of being a conhad the chance to fly some of the new marvels of avia- cert violinist (however, in spite of ambition and practice, the lack of any real talent doomed that dream). Then later, I studied to be a chemical engineer (boring! – though tronics. I (along with several other pilot retirees) was during my college days I did learn that there were such pleasantries in life as 'girls and beer'). But as a young teenage kid, peddling my bicycle to the local airport after tal Airlines (now United Airlines) training department. school, I sort of became the "airport brat" - hanging around one of the FBO's (that's aviation talk for a 'fixed ings of all of the new-fangled gizmos on the instrument base operation' or aviation company), making enough of a pest of myself so that they would finally ask me if I the beast off the ground and back on in one piece - and, wanted to "make some money" by washing airplanes or mowing some grass. Of course, they didn't actually pay you in money, but would let you ride in an airplane and get some sort of "instruction" – occasionally.

> I was, somehow, able to pass a Class III FAA physical, get a student pilot license, and managed to solo (fly by myself) on my 16th birthday, then get a private pilot license on my 17th birthday. My dad had refused to sign a consent to fly (being a minor, this was required), so I learned how to sign his name even better than he could,

can remember his surprise when I offered to take him for waiver and rescinded their interview offer - and that, too, an airplane ride after I got my private license. I don't wasn't a bad event for me, as it turned out). And at that know if he ever realized that I had forged his name on time, Delta, besides still being a fairly small airline, and the consent form. I eventually obtained a commercial still in the cotton spraying business, had gone through a license and a Class II physical (with a medical wavier merger with Chicago & Southern, and advancement opfrom the FAA for my defective vision) along with an portunities didn't seem to be bright – so I declined their instrument rating.

Losing any desire to be a chemical engineer, and – after a couple of years in the army during the Korean War, Training at small airlines in the mid 50's was a lot differduring those summer months.

Somehow, I even managed to get a Class I physical in 1955 - though it did require another vision wavier from the FAA (this would make an interesting story in itself). This Class I medical certificate enabled me to submit applications to almost every airline in the world - though few were hiring, and even fewer wanted a pilot with de- My airline indoctrination and training that one afternoon, fective vision.

Somehow, my application with "a medical wavier" slipped through the cracks of a few airlines, and I was eventually offered a job with a small local service airline in Texas - Trans Texas Airways. Several of my former students had already been hired by Trans Texas, and they painted glowing pictures of expansion and rapid advancement. I eagerly accepted a 'hire date' and headed for Houston Texas and a new life as an airline pilot. Just before leaving Kentucky for Texas, I had actually received three letters from other airlines offering either interviews or a job. But with visions of rapid expansion at Trans Texas, I declined them all. Looking back, my decision was not the worst I've ever made. One offer was from Braniff Airways (and we know now about their demise); another was from a freight carrier in Nashville flying C-46's (gone from the scene in a few years), and the other from Delta Airlines (actually there was an-

and somehow "forgot" to tell him I was learning to fly. I other from Pan American, but they discovered my vision employment offer. Probably not one of my better decisions. But as they say in Las Vegas, 2 out of 3 ain't bad!

where I served as an aircraft and helicopter mechanic ent than it is at today's airlines. At Trans Texas, I was (finally was promoted to the rank of corporal before be- given two small mimeographed manuals to read and ing discharged) – I got a job as a flight instructor and learn; each no more than a few pages. One, sort of, desometimes-charter-pilot at an FBO in Louisville. This scribed the system operations of a DC-3 (the only airwas during the height of the GI Bill after the Korean plane in the Trans Texas fleet, and the systems were few War, and I found that flight instructing was hard work, and not very complicated). The manual did give such with long hours of teaching students during the summer critical information as "how many bolts hold the wing months, and cold dreary days in the winter, usually spent on" (stock answer: all of them, I hope) and "what is the repairing airplanes that had been well-used or damaged prop's engineering drawing number" (just how this series of numbers and letters mattered to a pilot, I can't say - nor has anyone else been able to explain). The other manual was about some new radio gadget, called a VOR (now almost obsolete), that was going to revolutionize navigation. Trans Texas was installing some of these new radios in their airplanes.

> from Trans Texas at their Houston headquarters, consisted of about 45 minutes of off-and-on -again conversation and instruction from the chief pilot's unsmiling secretary (the chief pilot was out of town and I actually never met him until about 14 months later when he asked me who I was), during which she explained how to fill out the aircraft log during a trip; explaining in some very colorful words, like: "learn this, boy, and don't f k it up, because this is how the captain gets paid". She then directed me to go over to the terminal building, across the street (which is now a museum at Hobby Airport in Houston), and tell the captain of an inbound flight that I required 3 take-offs and landings to be legal to fly as an airline pilot.



Trans Texas DC-3

Eventually, an hour or so later, a DC-3 pulled up to the nearly deserted terminal where I stood by the gate (no loading bridges or secure areas around a terminal in those days); 2 or 3 passengers got off the DC-3 (arriving - I believe - from Victoria TX) and went inside the terminal. Finally, what looked like the captain, deplaned, arm around a young lady in a hostess uniform (that's what they called them back then). I remember, saving "Capt., my name is Charlie that's all I said before he told me that "son, your luggage can be claimed inside the terminal building". When I was able to explain that, as a new employee, I was supposed to have him give me my 3 take-offs and landings, I learned some new cuss good part of the night from Houston to Corpus Christi, words that I'd never knew existed. He whispered something in the young lady's ear, then yelled at a mechanic.... "to put 420 #%@! gallons of gas on that *&%#\$ airplane", and then for me to get my butt in the &?\$\%# cockpit. Well now, that really put me at ease!

When he returned to the cockpit a bit later (where I was trying to locate all of the knobs, switches and dials that I'd seen in the skimpy manual, and was trying to figure out how to adjust the seat) – and still muttering under his breath – he said that he would make the first take-off and landing - I should just watch - 'don't touch anything'. I watched as he flipped a variety of switches and pushed some knobs that started the engines, listened as he talked to the tower on the radio, and intently watched as he taxied to the runway and made a take-off, flew around the pattern and landed – never once did I touch a control just as he had instructed. For the second trip around the A few hours later, a blue and white Trans Texas Airways traffic pattern - he advised me to 'very lightly follow- DC-3 pulled up to the ramp - arriving from Harlingen in through' with my hands and feet on the controls, "VERY the Rio Grande Valley. One of the first to deplane was a

ond landing, he stuck his head outside the cockpit window, looking at a perfectly clear sky and almost unlimited visibility, and announced that he'd sign off my "3 bounces" (as they were called) – since the weather was getting too bad for the third one! I believe I saw him hurrying off in the direction of a local, well known, icehouse to meet his stewardess friend. That was the sum total of the training program to become an honest to goodness real airline pilot.

As darkness began to settled over the airport, I took a copy of the completed aircraft log sheet – verifying that I had officially received 3 take-offs and landings – back to the chief pilot's office, and to the unsmiling secretary who was well past 'ready to go home' (fortunately, my instructor pilot had filled out the log sheet, since I hadn't absorbed all that I had been told to learn just a few hours before). She asked me if I had a car; to which I replied that, indeed, I did. "Good, drive to Corpus Christi, the crew base where you'll be stationed; you'll relieve a copilot there tomorrow morning". I really don't what would have happened if I hadn't had a car to drive, since there were no more flights to Corpus that evening.

Fearing loss of my new profession, I dutifully drove a and somehow found the airport and the parking lot. Since it was too late to find a hotel (and I was too broke to really afford one), I slept a few hours in the back seat of my car. At the old airport in Corpus Christi (the airport is now a golf course), the Trans Texas ticket office and waiting room consisted of a small out-building. At about 6:30 an agent finally showed up, opened the building and turned on some lights. I knocked on the door and was told that he didn't actually open for about another 45 minutes; but when I explained to him who I was and what happened, he graciously opened up, gave me a cup of much appreciated coffee from his thermos and even shared a doughnut or two that he brought with him. He was also kind enough to tell me that I'd better move my car to an "employee area" or it would be towed off by a not too friendly airport cop.

LIGHTLY"! As we taxied off the runway after this sec- pilot in a wrinkled uniform, who ran inside to see if his

'replacement' copilot was there (he was at his maximum up" – I reached down and tugged at the gear handle. duty limit for the week). After assuring him that I was Nothing moved! "Gear up" he yelled again as I again really his replacement, his words were: "....great, you tugged at the handle. With a look of disgust that would can have that SOB, I'm out of here!" I soon found out melt an iceberg and a slow sideways shake of his head, that the SOB he was referring to was the Captain.



My present "Ride" - It isn't a B-777 but I built it from scratch (all 20,000 rivets). A Murphy Super Rebel

Still in civilian clothes (I didn't get a uniform for several weeks) I introduced myself to the captain who finally walked in to the small operations area of the building. He grunted and nodded, but really didn't speak to me as he went about operations to get some paper work, Carrying my small flight bag and suitcase, I climbed into the cockpit - trying to look like I really belonged there, and on the way, introduced myself to the stewardess, who also said nothing to me. The weather that morning in Corpus was not the best, with a low ceiling and limited visibility. Back then there was no radar, very few of the new VOR's or ILS radios; most navigation was on what That was "then"! Fast forward about 42 years. By then I was called 4 course radio ranges or by a non-directional had seen the DC-3 come and go, along with the Convair radio beacon, and ATC (air traffic control) clearances 240, and turbo-prop Convair 600, DC-9, MD-80, Boeing were sometimes very complicated and lengthy. Luckily, 727, Boeing 747 and DC-10. From a small Texas local I had done a bit of single-pilot instrument flying during service airline, Trans Texas had gone through a tremenmy charter pilot days in Louisville (delivering cartons of dous growth, spreading routes from coast to coast and smelly baby chickens to places in the mid-west in an old into Mexico. The airline underwent twin Cessna (a UC-78 - known as a Bamboo Bomber) and I was sort of used to copying ATC clearances - as I dutifully did that morning, reading it back to the tower. Shoot, this airline stuff isn't so complicated after all!

I even spoke to the tower on the radio, with a degree of confidence, requesting taxi instructions, reading back the clearance, acknowledging our take-off clearance - man, I was on a roll! On take-off, as we entered the overcast at a couple hundred feet, and the captain called for "gear

he leaned down, flipped the unlock lever, and yanked the gear handle up (no one had ever explained to me that there was a unlock lever – though every DC-3 pilot learned to do this in his sleep). This trip lasted two days, landing at a number stops in Texas and Louisiana, overnighting in Shreveport (in those days the Captain and copilot shared a room), and I don't believe he spoke three words to me the whole time. By the time I got back to Corpus Christi the next day, I was ready to quit and go back home (maybe I could learn to play the violin after all).

Fortunately, I was assigned a trip with another Captain the following day, and the whole experience changed from night to day. This guy was pleasant, helpful; a patient teacher - and eventually became one of my best friends (fortunately, maybe I wouldn't have to learn to play the violin after all). Learning to be an airline pilot, back then, was really an "on the job" process. Fortunately, the majority of the captains were patient and nurturing; passing on their bits of instruction and experience – unlike my first experience. One learned by example and even by a bit of trial and error - fortunately there were few errors, and most of those errors are now only humorous stories.



A Rolls-Royce powered Convair 600

national, and finally a merger of sorts with Continental lengthy traffic circumnavigation over Canada – had Airlines (actually, TI bought Continental though Conti- turned a normal 11 hour flight into one closer to 14 nental was the surviving company and their 'pride cul- hours (no relief pilots in those days). A good friend of ture' would become the airline of the future).

There was a lot that happened between the mid 50's and when I finally retired in '97 (after turning the then mandatory retirement age for pilots of 60, I continued to fly for Continental as a S/O - or flight engineer - and check airman for another five years), but those are stories for another time. The above just gives a small hint of how training has changed from "then" until what is "now". Today's airline training is a many-months-long procedure involving, not only learning the systems of an aircraft and how to fly it (usually with computer learning systems and a very realistic aircraft simulator rather than the real airplane – in fact, today, one can be almost fully trained and never have flown the real airplane before the first actual line flight) - and there are also courses in company policy, crew coordination, security, survival training, and much more.

fly'. Undoubtedly, the DC-10 would be the answer. wife). With nothing to do for the over water crossing I can't think of any airplane that was more enjoyable, my wife, with lots of attention from the cabin crew. Our even the 747 came close.

People also ask what it was like on your last airline flight. I can certainly remember my last flight(s). That's plural, since after I turned the then required retirement age of 60. I was able to continue working 5 more years as a S/O or flight engineer. My last flight as a pilot was a Houston Paris Newark Paris Houston, six-day, trip. Many of my family were on board (with them enjoying a few days in Paris while I made the Newark and back to Paris flights). Back then we were able to choose our crew for our last flight, bring our family along, and enjoy a great party both in Europe and back home when you returned. It was even customary, back then, to make a "low pass" down the runway before landing on the final leg, at home. This final leg, that day – because of a long

a number of iterations, becoming TTA, then Texas Inter- taxi delay in Paris, very strong headwinds and a very mine was working in the control tower that day in Houston, and cleared us for the "low pass". It never happened, since I believe everyone on board had enough (except maybe me). I'll have to admit that it was pretty hard to taxi the last few feet to the gate, with a few tears obscuring my vision – knowing that I would probably never be able to do this again.

When I finally did decide to retire in '97 as a S/O, my last flight was a Newark-London- Newark trip. Again, my wife was along for the festivities (though, by now, airline economics had made the celebrations and parties a thing of the past). All was well until the final leg home. The inbound flight to London (which was the aircraft we would use) was delayed about 8 hours, and our flight home canceled, with all of the passengers rerouted on other airlines. We were to ferry the airplane Some have asked me 'what was my favorite airplane to back to Newark late that night (with one passenger, my While I've flown, literally, hundreds of different air- (the DC-10 requires very little attention from the engiplanes (and still fly a small one that I built from scratch), neer), I enjoyed a very nice 1st class cabin dinner with comfortable, easy to fly, with just enough of the gee-wiz arrival in Newark was in the early morning hours, with equipment, and gave a more rewarding feeling. Not no welcome, with no fanfare, no celebration, no congratulations. Just ride the bus to the employee parking lot, drive home and get some sleep. So much for a 42 year

> One more short, almost humorous tale – at the end of my career, and just after retirement, my wife and I moved from New Jersey to Florida. I had just renewed my FAA Class I medical certificate - with the vision wavier (allowing me to fly a jumbo jet) – but the state of Florida would not issue me a driver's license without a special review of my vision and driving ability. Our government at work!

> > Charlie Starr

Minutes of the 39th Annual Meeting of THE GOLDEN EAGLES

October 18, 2012 Tropicana Hotel Las Vegas NV

(1) Meeting called to order by President Paul Grover at 10:05 AM with 56 members in attendance

President Grover welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation. Other officers and committee heads were introduced.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the 2011 annual meeting, as previously published and distributed to the membership. Being no discussion, vote to accept passed.

(2) Committee Reports:

Finance – Treasurer, Tom Doherty reported our balances, though slightly declining, were still healthy. Checking account (after anticipated convention expenses) is about \$7,000.00; savings account is about \$18,000.00; CARE account about \$125.00 (note: CARE program temporarily suspended at the 2011 business meeting, pending finalization of UAL/CAL merger and a new joint charitable program)

Email Liaison – Dave Newell reported that the program seemed to be working well. He has asked for guidance as to types of messages to be circulated. Decision by the Executive Board is to forward items about or of special news-interest to Golden Eagle members and their immediate families; items about non-Golden Eagle fellow pilots. While events concerning non-member's family may be of interest to all, there is simply too much involved to convey these. The importance of updating e-mail address changes was emphasized. The group thanked Dave for an excellent job.

Travel Liaison – Bill Chambers was unable to attend. Bill has done much work in representing the Golden Eagles in the new UAL pass travel program. While there have been some problems with the system, it is still an ongoing evolution, with hopefully some refinements still to come. The vacation pass, enrolled friends, and positive space discount programs are just several of the improvements.

Web Master – No report

Historian – Dick Grigsby has requested to retire from his position and that we appoint someone to assume his position. In recognition of Dick's service, over many years, as publisher of Golden Contrails and in maintaining historical records, the Executive Board has named Dick as Historian Emeritus. The Board has also named Bill Leeper as the new Historian. Bill is working with the UAL Historical Society to assure the continuance of Continental history and memorabilia.

(3) Old Business: None

(4) New Business:

(A) The Executive Board proposed that the bylaws (Article VII, miscellaneous, Section 2) be amended as follows:

Written proxies from dues current eligible members may be used in all Golden Eagle voting, but there shall be a maximum of five (5) proxy votes allowed per eligible attending member. Proxies must be in written form and name the member authorized to vote.

Motion made from the floor and seconded. Being no discussion, vote to pass was unanimous.

(B) The Executive Board proposed, having sent the bylaw change proposals to all members by the approved electronic means, that the bylaws in their entirety be amended as proposed (copy of these changes was available to the membership). This change would also incorporate the previously passed amendment to allow proxy votes.

A brief explanation of the major parts of these changes, and the need for them, was made; and several questions answered. Motion made from the floor to amend the bylaws as proposed, and seconded. Being no further discussion, vote to pass was unanimous.

- (C) The Executive Board entertained a motion that the position of Executive Vice President (created by the above bylaw changes) be filled by Bill Chambers. A motion to name Bill Chambers as Executive Vice President was made from the floor and seconded. Being no discussion, vote to elect was unanimous.
- (D) Motion made, in recognition of their outstanding service to The Golden Eagles, to elect Bob Shelton and Gary Humphries to Life Membership. Motion seconded. Being no discussion, vote to elect was unanimous.
- (E) An explanation of the concept and advantages of Local Area Chapters (LAC) was given by Don Gentry. It was noted that many of our new Golden Eagle members have come from local groups meeting in the Houston area. Any areas where groups of former CAL/UAL pilots live (such as Denver, Newark, LA) are places for LAC's.
- (F) A discussion of holding conventions in places other than Houston and Las Vegas followed. It was explained that this is always possible, even doable, but requires someone, or a group, willing to do the research, advance planning, and negotiating (all very extenuating and intensive tasks, and must be done far ahead of time). We are presently in negotiations with the DoubleTree Inn in Houston for the 2013 convention (after researching several properties).
- (G) A discussion was opened as to whether dues should remain the same or be increased. It was pointed out that our dues have remained unchanged for over ten years, while all costs have risen dramatically. Printing, postage, web fees, convention costs, etc., have all risen. The negative aspects of raising dues was also pointed out. Motion was made to raise dues by \$5 annually, beginning in 2013, with no increase to be charged for those who have already paid for future years. Motion was seconded, and, being no further discussion, the motion passed.
- (H) The group was reminded that Golden Contrails editor, Shaun Ryan, is always looking for articles, short stories, or news of interest from the membership. There is a treasure of stories that members could tell please send all submissions to Shaun.
- (5) Being no other business, motion was made to adjourn, motion was seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:24 AM

Submitted by Charlie Starr -- Secretary



Paul & Gail Grover



Pam & Lee Myners



Marty & Sandy Noonan



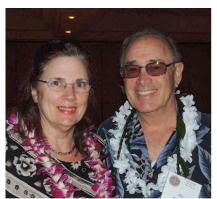
Linda & Mike Wade



Laverne Cann & Gail Grover



Ken, BJ & Brian Bellerue



Cornelia & Jim McMekin



Jim & Carolyn Farrow



Jeannie & Jack Hooke



Jan & Larry Nelson



Jack Johnson, Marie Diaz, Ralph & Sandy Bellerue, Ranelle & Gary Humphries



Ben & Chris McKenzie



Yasmin & Curt Forney



Tom Doherty & Hans Muller



Tom Buckley & Paul Grover



Terry Owens & Dick Floreani



Shaun & Linda Ryan



Sharon & Dave Clough



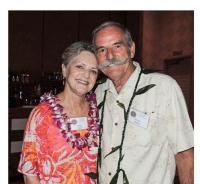
Scott Tomlinson, Ken Bellerue & Pete Linzmaier



Sandy Roth, Carole Shelton & Sandy Hallee



Jay Welch



Sandy & Bernie Hallee



Sandy Noonan, Laverne Cann & Penny Pekrul



Penny & Tom Schucat



B J Bellerue &Bob Pearse



Blake Lamar



Bob & Carol Shelton



Bob & Joyce Sykes



Bob Warner & Elizabeth Leen



Bobby & Joyce Glau



Brian & B J Bellerue



Carol Ann Muller, Francia Gentry & Jamie Doherty



Brian, Sandy & Ralph Bellerue



Bruce Harris, Larry Neglia, Bernie Hallee & George Hemminger



Carol Ann & Hans Muller



Cathy & Bill Lewis



Gary & Keri Small



Francia & Don Gentry



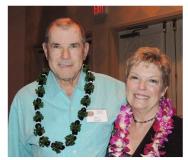
Dr. Lawrence & Joan Maranelli



Doug Bodkin & Tom Horne



Don Gentry & Paul Grover



Dave & Kay Newell



Dave & Jackie Furuli



Chuck Hammer & Don Gentry



Cathy Lewis & Jeannie Hooke



Gail Grover



Bill Bauer & Sandy Noonan



John Solomon, Jim Caldwell, Ben McKenzie & Bob Shelton

A Desert Christmas by Captain Dick Grigsby -circa 19<mark>56</mark>

The full moon o'er the desert hangs
As many years ago
The star hung over Betheleham
Where cradled far below
The babe in humble glory lay
"Mid straw and angel-glow.

While shepherds plodded to'rds the star
And wise men gathered 'round
And angels "Halleluia" sang
For joy at what was foundThat God his gracious love had poured
On Davids 's holy ground.

Now Christmastime to many folks
Means holly-wreath and snow
And evergreen, and frosty air
And sprig of mistletoe
And cozy hearth with stockings hung
And fireplace aglow.

But Christmastime, it seems to me, Means desert, still and bright. The brilliant star, the balmy air, The moon's white-bathing light Where angels can come down and sing, And sheperds watch the sight. **Golden Contrails**

C/O Charlie Starr

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