

THE GOLDEN EAGLES



Golden Contrails

August



2020



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**FOR THE SECOND PART OF
THIS QUARANTINE DO WE
HAVE TO STAY WITH THE
SAME FAMILY OR THEY'RE
GOING TO RELOCATE US?
ASKING FOR A FRIEND**

If you wear your jeans 5 days in a row, they become all baggy and it looks like you're losing weight. Follow me for more quarantine life pro tips.

First day back at school after lockdown 🤔😞👧🎒



**It takes a village to
raise a child.
It takes a distillery
to homeschool
one.**

Editor's Notes

This is the next to last printed version of the Golden Contrails, under our reformulated business plan, with the final "hard copy" to be produced for the December edition.

Even though I am generally comfortable with technology, I have always liked "paper" for reading, but this will follow a trend with other print media over recent years. As mentioned previously, we took the decision to go to "electronic only" (PDF) publication to reduce costs in alignment with our suspension of dues, which in turn was the result of making the continuation of the Golden Eagles more sustainable long term from a labor perspective.

This edition contains another installment from our Len Morgan "borrowed" library, thanks to the continued generosity of Captain Morgan's daughter, Kathy Haynes and the Braniff List archives made available by Captain John North. We have a great story provided by Captain Bob Pearce on page 28, and another by our Membership Chairman Captain Mark Sheprow on page 12. As always, thanks to Bob Beavis on the UALRETUP forum for sharing his research and supply of interesting material.

As I am writing this in late June for publication by the end of July, we are still in various phases of "lockdown" throughout the country. As you have undoubtedly experienced over these past few months a measure of frustration, there has been a bounty of humorous postings relating to the quarantine. I am including a few of them in this edition before they lose their timeliness.

While I generally have an assortment of aviation and humor related pieces that can be used according to space available, the highest priority will always be given to the stories or anecdotes that you send from your personal experiences.

We have decided that since the next edition will be the last paper version, we are going to use that volume to re-print all of your photos that we have in the database AND also print the contact roster for ease of reference. To that end, please send us your photo if you have not already done so, or feel free to send an updated one. You can look in our photo roster on the website AND your contact information to see what we currently have. If we don't have your photo there, then it will not be printed in the December edition. Spouses, please lean on your mate to get this done. Last time we printed "mug shots", we had several inquiries from wives as to why their "pilot's" photo wasn't included.

For our final "mailing" in December, we are going to send the paper version to ALL members regardless of your existing preference for print or PDF. Accordingly, please make sure that we have your CORRECT address. I will try to get it out a bit early to avoid the holiday mail crunch at the post office,

Gary

Send a Photo TODAY!!!
For the final printed edition

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Executive Vice President (Dave Newell):	davebnewell@gmail.com
Secretary (Dave Rossetter):	drossetter@yahoo.com
Treasurer (Bruce Sprague):	brucesprague@mac.com
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Membership Chairman (Mark Sheprow)	marksheprow@optonline.net
Event Chairman (Lloyd Robeson)	loydgeagle@gmail.com

Officers' Reports

President

**MY MOM
ALWAYS TOLD ME I
WOULDN'T ACCOMPLISH
ANYTHING BY LAYING
IN THE BED ALL DAY
BUT LOOK AT ME NOW
I'M SAVING THE
WORLD.**

As you probably know, I assumed the “working title” of President on May 1 in concert with the beginning of the new business model which was approved without opposition by the membership. I follow a long list of fellow Golden Eagles who have “stepped up” and given their time to make possible a means to continue the bonds created during a life of exhilarating moments of pure flight, as well as times of less pleasant emotions. Our most recent and now officially Past President, Tom Doherty, along with Jamie (Past President of the Ladies' Auxiliary) gave so much of their time, that it seems unfair to seek their counsel going forward,...but we will.

After much harassment by Bruce, I posted a new “President’s Message” on the website, which most of you will have already seen, but is available at <https://www.thegoldeneagles.org/presidents-message.html> if you missed it.

Dave always beats me to the good stuff with his Monthly Updates or other announcements, but I want to re-announce the fact that Captain Loyd Robeson has agreed to join our board, initially as Event Chairman, to provide some focus and structure to our goal of holding “reunion-like” events to replace the social atmosphere of our previous conventions. So just when we thought we’d never see another “volunteer”, we were fortunate to get Loyd. (I won’t tell you how much arm twisting that took).

I’d like to also report that the following sterling aviators have joined our ranks as new members: Craig McDonald, Mark Macario, Bill Bulfer, John Benson, Gary Sachs, Bruce Stone, Morrie Weiner, Roger Grimsley, Toby Pechanec, Ken Quick, John McCartney, John Embler, Paul Evangelista, Dana Floyd, Bill Bella, Bill Autrey, Ed Woodson, Kevin Larson, Sandy Salibo, Keith Thompson, and Robert Haven.

If I’ve omitted anyone, it’s probably due to the time lag between writing this and publication date. Or maybe I’ve come down with the “virus” and don’t know it.

Hopefully, by the time this reaches your “in box” there will be a bit more normalcy in our daily lives and wishing that we all make the most of it!

Gary



Reunion alert!!!

Please pay attention to the information on following pages concerning our first (hopefully of many) re-imagined Reunion style events to be held in October. Notice of this with available details will appear in more than one place in this publication. They “ain’t” exactly Easter Eggs and are NOT hard to find...but look for them anyway!

Executive Vice President / Email Coordinator

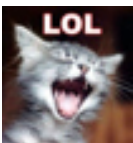
Dear Golden Eagles friends,

For the EVP/Email Coordinator report for the August issue of the Golden Contrails magazine, I would like to share my thoughts on why the Golden Eagles organization was initially created and why it exists in its present form today as an important benefit to its members. As you know, we have discontinued our annual conventions/reunions and have in their place proposed to have occasional regional reunions in certain areas in which many of our members reside. This concept of having “gatherings of eagles” was the original reason for establishing the retired Continental pilots’ organization called the Golden Eagles. The pilots felt that the friendships and bonds formed with their fellow pilots during their flying career were important enough to make an attempt to preserve them going forward through personal interaction and communication, thus the Golden Eagles was formed.

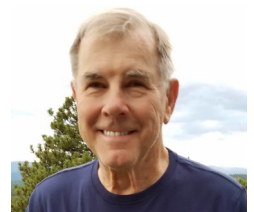
Back then, the pilot group was much smaller than it is today, and having these gatherings, in the form of annual conventions, was a fairly simple event to manage. It was also relatively easy and inexpensive to communicate with the pilot group via hard copy means with the Golden Contrails magazine, and even verbally on occasion with a phone call.

As the organization grew over the years, it became obvious that organizing and managing an annual convention and communicating with the large number of members became much more complex and difficult. However, with the advent of the internet and email, communication among large groups of people became much more doable and efficient. Recently we embarked on a new concept of regional reunions in addition to the Local Area Chapters (LAC) lunches and breakfasts in hopes of maintaining the friendships and relationships formed during our flying careers. By utilizing the advances in online communications, we have attempted to maintain a largely “real-time” and informative communication link with our membership. So by having continuing gatherings of our members and by communicating regularly with the members we feel that we have maintained an atmosphere within the organization that promotes and preserves the spirit of camaraderie and friendship that we all value and enjoy. This then, is the core reason for the existence of the Golden Eagles.

I would suggest to our members that if you value the friendships you formed during your airline career, it would be to your benefit to not only participate in the functioning of the Golden Eagles, but that you encourage other airline friends who are eligible for Golden Eagles membership to consider becoming a member. We have had a good number of new members in recent months and it is hoped that this influx of new folks will enhance the benefit that Golden Eagles membership provides for all its members.



Stay safe, well and happy....and don't forget to laugh often,



Dave Newell

Reunion Bar B Que....October 21 in the Texas Hill Country
More details elsewhere!

THE GOLDEN EAGLES TREASURER / WEBMASTER UPDATE *Bruce Sprague*

HOME MEMBERSHIP LAC REUNIONS CARE TRAVEL CONTRAILS CART(0)

Well, hopefully everyone is doing ok getting thru this once in a century pandemic situation. Let's all hope by next year things will get back to normal. Stay safe!

As your GE Treasurer, I can report that our finances are doing just fine.

In May, The Golden Eagles made one final donation of \$1,300 to the United CARE account. We no longer accept CARE donations, however you can make donations directly yourself to the United CARE program (a good cause)...see details on how to do this on our website (under the CARE menu tab). We have closed out our CARE savings account.

We have also closed out our general Savings account, and have rolled those funds directly into our *Bank of America* checking account. As of July 7, 2020, our checking account now has \$51,749 on hand, which should fund our organization for many years into the future. If you are reading this, then you are no doubt now a paid up GE member with no more dues or fees for the rest of your life!

As your GE Webmaster, I can report there have been a few major changes on our website. No longer will you see the menu tabs CONVENTION, INPUT, or STORE.

The CONVENTION menu tab has been replaced by a new website page called REUNIONS (go check out the next Reunion scheduled). The INPUT menu has been replaced by a "link" on the home page called "Crew Room Update Form", and the STORE is now only viewed once by new members signing up for membership, to make their one time membership fee payment. The CART(0) menu tab remains, but is only used by the new members paying their one-time fee.

We also have some recent new features on our website. On the HOME page, there is a list of "Quick Action Links" for the more commonly accessed website pages. One of those links is "Announcements", and that page has current notices posted. Other home page "links" include downloading the rosters, updating your roster information, looking up archived blast emails, downloading the Golden Contrails (this magazine!), crew room updates, and of course, how to "Join" the GE.

Under the HOME menu tab, are many updated page tabs. Gary has posted an updated "President's Message", the latest "Board of Directors" and "By-Laws" are posted, and the "Photo/Video Archives" has new archival material added.

Be sure to check out the LAC menu, to watch for future events / reunions scheduled by the various Local Area Chapters (LAC) around the country.

Your website is updated every week with new information....so be sure to bookmark this site on your computer browser!

NEW and RE-JOINED GE MEMBERS:

(March 3 thru July 7, 2020)

Mark Macario, Bill Bulfer, John Benson, Gary Sachs, Bruce Stone, Morris Wiener, Larry Camden, Roger Grimsley, Robert King, Maurice Saroni, Gary Duggins, Richard Nunn, Tobias Pechanec, Kenneth Quick, John McCartney, Johnny Embler, David Judson, Paul Evangelista, Dana Floyd, William Bella, William Autrey, Edward Woodson, Kevin Larson, A C Salibo

"Welcome Aboard!"

I hope everyone is having a great Summer and a great upcoming Fall season!

Bruce



www.thegoldeneagles.org

email: brucesprague@mac.com

NEW PASSWORD: *altimeter* (all lower case)

You **DO NOT** need this password to login to our website!
It is **only** needed for the "Roster", "Golden Contrails",
"Officer Documents", and the "Archived Blast Emails".

Secretary

We are “enjoying” a very hot summer here in Tucson. Hopefully, the monsoon rains will start soon and give us some cooling showers each afternoon. This is a wonderful place to retire but I highly recommend escaping to more northerly climes in June and July. Hopefully, that will be easier and safer next year.

We tend to walk our dogs around 0600, have a nice breakfast, then escape to our computers to get useful chores in the air conditioning. The afternoon siesta is the best part of the day!

My Golden Eagles work is much easier now that we have changed to a one-time dues payment system. We have picked up several new volunteers so I am not too worried about being assigned a lot of new work (don't get any ideas, Gary!). My favorite part of my job is entering new members into the database. So many of my “old” friends have decided to retire this spring/summer. And many are joining the Golden Eagles! Thank you.

Don't be afraid to drop me a note if you have any questions about your membership status. Or just say “hi”!

David Rossetter: Secretary, Golden Eagles



**Remember to send us an “ID” style
photo to David at:**

drossetter@yahoo.com

**NO LATER than November 1 if you
want your mug shot included in the
Grand Finale hard copy of the
Golden Contrails Photo roster.**

**If we already have it, no need to send another, unless you got “purtier”.
WIVES get tough on your husbands to get this done. don't blame us if his
photo isn't included.**

*I don't think I am being gender exclusive in this because I believe that we already DO have all
of our lady pilots included.*

Reunion News!!!

From Golden Eagles Event Chairman Loyd Robeson

Greetings Golden Eagles members,

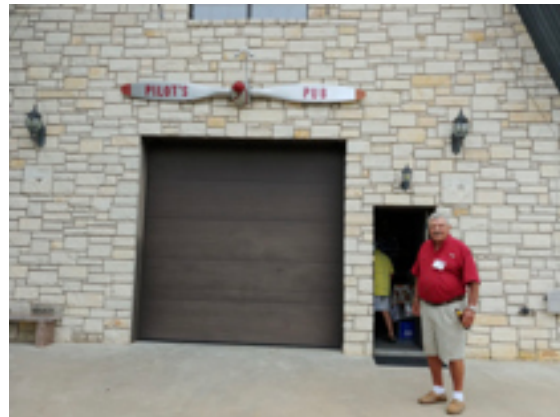
Since we are replacing our annual conventions with occasional regional reunions, we are launching this program by inviting all Golden Eagles members to attend the Hill Country LAC annual barbecue at Captain Ray Booth's party barn, "Pilots' Pub", at Pilots' Landing on Lake Travis.

We realize that not everyone will attend this event, but we are inviting all GE members in hopes that those in the SW US area and even from out of town nation-wide will make an effort to join in the fun. It is hoped that this will enable all of our Golden Eagles members to congregate as we have done at our past conventions, but without the historical complexity and expense to the organization.

Here are some tentative plans/suggestions/ideas for your consideration and planning:

1. WHEN: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at approximately 3:30 PM plus a few extra days as desired.

2. WHERE: Ray and Mary Booth's place in Spicewood, TX, near Marble Falls, TX in their large party barn, Pilots Pub. Address is 155 Contrails Way, Spicewood, TX 78669. A map will be provided.



3. COST: Food and drink at the BBQ on Wednesday are provided at no cost by the Golden Eagles.

4. Here is a rough description of how attendees may spend their time at the event and this can of course be modified as desired as things evolve.

Attendees arrive on Tuesday, October 20 OR Wednesday, October 21. Arrivals on Tuesday may meet for cocktails/dinner in Marble Falls or Ray Booth's Pilots Pub for drinks and snacks with dinner in town - to be coordinated and announced.

Wednesday - cocktails 3:30-5:00, barbecue dinner 5:00-7:00. Out of towners may coordinate evening social gathering at local hotel or restaurant/bar if desired after barbecue dinner. To be announced.

Thursday - Individual day trips or other activities as desired or depart for home:

Fredericksburg, TX, Nimitz War of the Pacific Museum.

Luckenbach, TX, Saloon, Wayland & Willie memorabilia

State Capitol and Texas History Museum, Austin, TX.

LBJ Presidential Library, Austin, TX.

LBJ State Park, Johnson City, TX.

The River Walk and Alamo, San Antonio, TX

Other attractions as desired. Possible lake cruise on Ray's party barge pontoon boat.

Friday - Personal desires - depart for home or more sight seeing, visiting, etc. Evening social gathering at location of choice for drinks and dinner for out-of-towners continuing stay in area if desired, to be announced.

Dress, of course, is casual: Western style if desired. And always, always bring your swim suit, just in case....you never know when there might be a pool party! It should be nice pool weather in October in the Hill Country and many of the hotels in the area have pools and hot tubs.

We recommend those from out of town who will need hotel accommodations to go online at one of the discount

travel sites, such as Travelocity, Expedia, Hotels.com, etc., and find a good price for a hotel in Marble Falls or adjoining localities. There are a number of hotels in the area with a variety of amenities and prices. They range from the Horseshoe Bay Resort on Lake LBJ at about \$195 per night to standard motels (Holiday Inn, Quality Inn, Best Western, La Quinta Inn and other local hotels and resorts in Marble Falls with prices from around \$75 to \$150 per night. There are other options such as private homes and condos that sleep several couples. All would likely offer some discounts for seniors and military vets and maybe an airline ID. There are many good restaurants in Marble Falls for social gatherings and meals. It is a beautiful area with lots of rich history and scenery. Once you have accessed one of the discount travel internet sites, just enter the city or town you wish to visit and the dates of the stay and the site will provide a list of available hotels and the prices.

As you can see the concept is to allow attendees maximum flexibility in determining their own schedule of activities aside from the barbecue dinner. The event should be viewed as a day or two or three stay in the Hill Country to tour the area, enjoy the sights and attractions and to visit with friends plus enjoy a great barbecue dinner and social gathering. The idea is for members to coordinate with their friends before or after arrival to plan activities they would like to share, such as social hours, meals and sightseeing trips. It is assumed that those who fly in will obtain rental cars which are available at the Austin airport, about an hour from the Booth's and Marble Falls. Hopefully even some of the local folks will consider getting a hotel for the event to join in and make the party last longer...There is an airport right next to Ray's place suitable for those who may choose to fly in. It is the Spicewood Airport, its designation is 88R and here is a link to its website:
<http://www.spicewoodpilots.org/>.

So, grab your partner and come on to Ray's Pilots Pub in October for some fantastic barbecue and all the fixin's. There will be lots of cold beverages of your choice and some good old Country & Western sounds to liven things up. And remember, Everything at the barbecue dinner is on the house!

Y'all come, ya'hear! Ray and Mary want you to enjoy the Pilots Pub party barn and their beautiful home, and the Hill Country is beautiful in October. Hope to see you there.



RAY and MARY BOOTH



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Dave Newell
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Edith White, World War II 'Code Girl,' Dies at 96

15 Jun 2020

The Virginian-Pilot | By [Katherine Hafner](#)

When Forrest “Hap” White was young, a naval officer in a limousine pulled up outside his house in Norfolk’s Algonquin Park neighborhood in full gold braid uniform with a box of chocolates under his arm. The officer came to the door and asked for Lt. Reynolds. Hap was confused, not knowing a lieutenant or a Reynolds in his home. Then he realized it was his mother. Reynolds was her maiden name. It was the first time Edith Reynolds White’s family learned about her time in the Navy’s secretive and successful women’s codebreaking unit during World War II.

She and the Navy officer who came to the house chatted about the last time they’d met, during the war. He had traveled to Washington with a dripping wet Japanese codebook recovered out of a sinking submarine. Edith, a shift commander, strung up the book on a clothesline and started cracking the code with the other women in her unit. It would help with efforts in the South Pacific, including the Battles of Leyte Gulf and Philippine Sea. After meeting her husband shortly after the war, Edie White moved to Norfolk, where she lived for over six decades and became a force in local education, literary, arts and civil rights scenes. She helped fight Virginia’s Massive Resistance to school integration, brushing aside the torrent of threats that followed. White died June 6 in Williamsburg from complications following surgery. She was 96. Her life was marked, family and friends say, by an unfailingly positive outlook on the world and its potential to change for the better. “She taught me to look at things from a different perspective,” said daughter Elizabeth “Barry” White, 66. “And she also gave me her sense of justice and outrage at injustice.”

Edith Reynolds was born in New Jersey in 1923. She lost her father at 16 and relatives wanted her to stay home and care for her mother, but she wanted to go to college, Barry said. She’d skipped two grades and was just 16 when she convinced Vassar College -- then a women’s only school -- to give her a scholarship. In the summers she did some modeling for department stores in New York. Edith was 20 and in her senior year when she received a summons from the Navy, which had been seeking women with good math and language skills for its new WAVES unit -- Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service.

“Your country needs you, young ladies,” a Navy captain told Edith and a few of her classmates, according to “Code Girls,” a 2017 book by Liza Mundy about the unit. Soon she was staying in a brownstone in Georgetown and training in cryptography. When not working to break Japanese codes, the women went to USO dances and bars together, Mundy wrote. “One group agreed that if anybody ordered a vodka Collins when they were out at a bar together, that would be their signal that a stranger was showing too much curiosity about their work, and they were all to disperse to the ladies’ room and then flee.” They worked “around the clock and often didn’t know whether to eat breakfast or dinner when they finished a shift.” WAVES twice earned commendations for breaking Japanese codes that led to American victories in the Pacific, Hap, now 72, said.

“If there’s a theme to mom’s life, she learned in the Navy what a group of college educated women could do if they focused on a problem,” he said. After the war, Edith was posted to a tuberculosis hospital in New York, where she worked with young men who had contracted the illness while on duty in the South Pacific, according to an oral history interview with Old Dominion University. She helped them transition to life afterward. There, she met Dr. Forrest White, who was finishing his medical internship. They married in 1946 and moved to Norfolk a few years later. It was his hometown. When the doctor showed his wife and two young children around Lafayette Park one day, Edith pointed to a “whites only” sign and said, according to Hap, “This has got to change if this is going to be my home city.” Soon she was fighting for better facilities at Booker T. Washington High School, which was then for black students only.

The Whites helped found and lead the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, which opposed Virginia’s Massive Resistance. A committee lawsuit helped force the desegregation of six Norfolk schools. Hap remembers driving around to pick up black voters and help them fill out registration forms exactly right, in a time when white officials would find any discrepancy to invalidate a black person’s right to vote. Their work -- in addition to having black friends over for tea -- drew the ire of neighbors and community members. Some women stopped playing tennis with Edith. Burning crosses showed up on their doorstep. Barry doesn’t

remember seeing a fire, but was struck by the scar one left on the lawn. But Edith had a thick skin and just kept going, shrugging off any hateful acts. One day, Hap said, his sister came home from school and asked their mother what an N-word lover was.

“Mom said you can’t change what the words mean to other people, but you’re in control of what they mean to you. Tell them, ‘I’m a lover not a hater. I feel real sorry for you haters.’” The family consistently received threatening phone calls at home. Barry said she remembers her mother never returning any of the callers’ anger, but rather deflecting it with light humor. “She’d start chatting away about her day,” Barry said with a laugh. “She’d say, ‘Oh dear do you have a cold? You sound congested.’”

Edith also helped organize Norfolk’s League of Women Voters and campaigned for a woman running against the powerful “Byrd Machine.” She also returned to the workforce for a time, when her husband developed polio soon after their marriage. It took time for him to recover. Hap recalled hearing about how she went in for an interview at a bank where a several-page test, intended to take an hour or so, had applicants match up numbers. They were shocked when she finished in minutes. “I’ve had some training in pattern recognition,” she responded, according to her son’s version.

Edith also had a lifelong passion for art and literature, making abstract watercolor paintings, endowing the ODU Literary Festival and serving as the first woman board member of the Virginia Symphony. She wrote book reviews for The Virginian-Pilot, traveled to local schools as a

storyteller and was passionately involved with the Larchmont United Methodist Church. For two decades she worked as head librarian at Norfolk Academy, where students used to call her “Comrade Edie,” Hap said. “I’d forgotten that,” Patricia Hume, a retired longtime English teacher who worked with Edith, recently said with a laugh. “She didn’t mince words. She was feisty.”

Hume said Edith “kind of took me under her wing” when the young teacher started at the school in the late 70s, giving her extra tickets to local shows and a heads-up on the latest new books at the library. She encouraged Hume to go to her neighborhood council meeting and become civically engaged. “She was always so curious about people,” said Hume, now 73. “She wanted to know who you were. I admired her so much in addition to liking her.” Hume said when hearing of Edith’s passing, she instantly had memories from decades earlier: “how brilliant she was, how kind she was to me, how dedicated she was just to making life better to people she was around.”

On her 80th birthday cake was written “It could be worse,” because she was always saying that, Barry said. “We used to call her the terminal optimist,” she added with a laugh. Edith lived in Norfolk most of her life but moved to the Morningside of Williamsburg assisted living facility in recent years to be closer to Hap. She left behind four children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

“Mom was ahead on the arc of history curve,” Hap said. “She was way ahead of her generation and she brought other people along.”

Member PHOTOS in the December Edition

Send in a photo if you want to be included

Start thinking REUNION - October 21 in the Texas Hill Country

A Welcoming Embrace to CAL- My Day One

By Mark Sheprow

Sometimes, your day doesn't go as expected. I'll start out by saying I got hired at New York Air in late 1981. Just recently out of the Air Force, from where all airlines sort of looked the same from the outside, as long as they flew jets someplace and actually offered you a job. It took a while for the, um, differences in working conditions, pay, security and corporate attitude amongst airlines to make themselves known (to me at least). But PATCO was on strike, no one was really hiring, or even replying to those written requests for an application, and this year-old company gave me a call, so there I went. I'll elide over the events of the next few years, and just get to January 1, 1987. Our first flying as CAL pilots occurring that day, and my first flights too, a EWR-TPA-EWR turn, on an MD-80.

The transition to CAL had gone pretty smoothly in the weeks leading up to that day. By which I mean, we hadn't gotten our new pubs yet, next-to-no real information as to how things would work, minimal orientation, and so on. Very reassuring. Ours was an early morning departure, maybe 7 am. A very cold, but clear early morning. Get to the airport early, pick up whatever required pubs we needed to possess to be legal CAL pilots, go to the gate and plane, and start the day. The only initial glitch was a lack of any flight papers. But I was assured we had the right flight, right plane, and so on, and we'd be okay. We went through the normal preflight, boarded the passengers, departure time getting close, but still no paperwork. Repeated radio calls requesting same, and just about scheduled push time, I got told the papers were printing out. I ran off the plane, outside, downstairs to the ramp and the Ops office, signed the release, and while hustling back to the plane, saw that the release was not for our aircraft. So, back on the radio. What was the problem here? And where was the other airframe? The problem was that on the evening of Dec. 31st, New York Air prepared one plan for which planes would fly which trips on New Year's Day, and CAL prepared another. And of course, there was no coordination. EWR went with the NY Air plan, and CAL Ops went with the CAL plan, and we were on one plane, while the paperwork was for another. Ok, let's change airplanes! What gate is the

other plane on? None. It's parked across the airport, if you're familiar with EWR, nowhere near B Terminal but out against the blast fence near the NJ Turnpike. Where, you might remember, DHL parked a 727 every morning, until they needed it that night, intentionally getting free advertising displayed to all the traffic on the Turnpike. And our MD-80 hadn't been touched since the day before. Dead cold. It'd be a couple of hours before we could fly it. Dispatch then says that's ok, they've changed the tail number and fixed the paperwork, and we were good to go. No copies to us though, but really, everything is fine if I'd accept a verbal change to the Release, and we could get out just late, not REALLY late. So, what the heck. (I'm counting on there being a Statute of Limitations here somewhere.) Push back and off we go! Get the numbers over the radio while taxiing out, and confirm it's for the actual tail number, the plane we're actually on. Oh, for sure! Thanks! And so ensues an uneventful flight to TPA.

Getting into TPA VHF range, make the arrival radio call. Oh yeah, tell them we had an aircraft number mix-up out of EWR, so please confirm the return flight is for the correct tail. Land, taxi in, walk around, and go get the TPA-EWR paperwork. And find out "you flew the wrong airplane. Dispatch know nothing about it, and you could be in big trouble!" But before the big trouble, "you wouldn't mind doing the return flight, would you?" What a teamwork concept going on here! Anyway, return paperwork all ok. Inbound EWR, informed that we're going to get an Inaugural Day opportunity to visit our new base Chief Pilot! An honor! We're sure! Just run by his office before you go home, ok? Wonder if we'll have some Day-One-Cake or something?

A nice, friendly, first meeting! Why did you deliberately fly the wrong airplane? Why are you saying Dispatch assured you the flight paperwork had been corrected when they're saying they have no idea what you're talking about? What was the name of this imaginary Dispatcher who supposedly told you everything had been corrected and refiled? Do you know you could get fired for this? And further pleasantries. No need to say much here about my

new, understanding, people-oriented and supportive boss at EWR, although I had heard previously that he was an expert at telling the difference between runways and taxiways, and I was tempted to take the opportunity to ask if he'd share the benefits of his expertise in that area. Decided I'd wait for our next chat.

Friendly tete-a-tete over, (or maybe a tete-a-tete-a-tete, since the FO also eagerly participating), head for the door with (presumably) last advice that this might not be over. Almost to the door! Wait! Just one more thing! How much duty time do you both have left to fly today? Huh? You mean, we might not be fired until after we've volunteered to fly a plane that our new crew scheduling failed to crew? And then we can get fired? Sure, why not. What's the trip? Well, first limo from EWR to Islip, Long Island, and then ferry a plane back to EWR that got forgotten yesterday. Uh, we fly MD-80s and NYA didn't fly MD-80s to ISP, ever, so it must be a 737-300. Oh no, this is a MD-80. Nah, really, believe us, it's a 737. No, you're wrong, it's definitely an MD-80. Well, could you just call over there and make sure before we limo an hour and a half to get to ISP, and then find out it's a 737? Okay, I'll do that. Oops, sorry, it's a 737. Just for a second, just a split second, I thought that since we'd already flown an airframe with the wrong tail number, maybe we could go for flying a whole wrong airplane, and get ourselves battlefield type-ratings.

In the end, we never heard another word. Probably lucked out, and in only a few or 10 years or so, things actually became a whole lot better, and overall, it was just another adventure in a great career. I did however, get names from that point on, whenever things went odd.



Remember...your Board of Directors is the sole governing body of the Golden Eagles. This is where all the big "Captain" decisions are made, like war and peace... and also when to turn off the Seat Belt Sign!

You too can participate in these momentous acts simply by volunteering to be on the Board.

All we ask is that you let us know, and be prepared do do a little (gasp) work of some kind.

WWII: The Only Person To Shoot Down A Plane With A Handgun

One Of Those Stories For The Ages. It Goes Without Saying But We'll Do It Anyway.

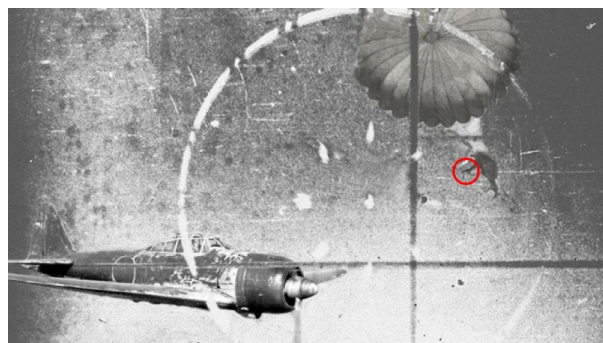
World War II was the bloodiest conflict in the world, sending the most amount of soldiers to a fight which ended with the greatest civilian and military casualties ever recorded. That's saying a lot. There are a myriad of books written about this war in general, but since there were so many people involved, there are even more books written about their personal accounts. There Are So Many Takes On This Horrendous Time In Our History But Think About The Small Incidents Too. There Were Probably Hundreds Of Thousands Of Acts Of Heroism That We'll Never Hear About And Maybe Even More Miracles That Went Unnoticed. We're Glad To Say That We Found One Of Those Stories That Include Both. Owen John Baggett was born in 1920 in Graham, Texas. By 1941 he graduated from college and went on to work on Wall Street, but by the following year, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps (now USAF) when the United States entered the war.

A studious man, he graduated from pilot training in just five months and was sent to Burma, flying a B-24 Liberator. What he happened the following year is one of those stories we just described. On March 31st, 1943, Baggett and his squadron were sent on a mission to destroy a bridge of strategic importance. On their way, the B-24s got intercepted by Japanese Zeros which hit the squadron hard. Baggett's plane was riddled with bullets to such an extent that the crew was forced to bail out. While parachuting, a Japanese pilot decided that downing the plane wasn't enough. He circled around and started shooting at the bailed out pilots, killing two of the crew. Seeing this, Baggett did the only thing he could. He played dead.

Not convinced Baggett was dead, the Zero pulled up to him at near stall speed, the pilot opening his canopy to check on his horrendous work. Not wasting any time and thinking on his feet (no pun intended), Baggett pulled out his pistol and shot the pilot right in the head.

This is considered the best shot by a Caliber .45 M911 pistol of ALL TIME.

The last thing he saw was the Zero spiraling toward earth. When he landed, he and the other bailed out crew members were captured and sent to a POW camp where they remained until the end of the war. They were liberated by OSS agents (World War II version of the modern CIA) and Baggett was recognized as the only person during the war to shoot down a with a pistol!



**How about another "Reminder"?
Reunion October 21
and
Get those PHOTOS sent in...TODAY!**

THIS IS A CONVERSATION BETWEEN A MAN AND HIS WIFE. PLEASE NOTE THAT SHE ASKS SEVEN QUESTIONS, WHICH HE ANSWERS QUITE SIMPLY. BUT THEN SHE IS SPEECHLESS IN TRYING TO RESPOND TO ONLY ONE QUESTION FROM HIM.

Wife: DO YOU DRINK BEER?

Husband: YES

Wife: HOW MANY BEERS A DAY?

Husband: USUALLY ABOUT THREE.

Wife: HOW MUCH DO YOU PAY PER BEER?

Husband: \$5.00 WHICH INCLUDES A TIP (THIS IS WHERE IT GETS SCARY!)

Wife: AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DRINKING?

Husband: ABOUT 20 YEARS, I SUPPOSE.

Wife: SO A BEER COSTS \$5 AND YOU HAVE THREE BEERS A DAY WHICH PUTS YOUR SPENDING EACH MONTH AT \$450. IN ONE YEAR, IT WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY \$5,400 CORRECT?

Husband: CORRECT!

Wife: IF IN 1 YEAR YOU SPEND \$5,400, NOT ACCOUNTING FOR INFLATION, THE PAST 20 YEARS PUTS YOUR SPENDING AT \$108,000 CORRECT?

Husband: CORRECT! Thanks

Wife: DO YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU DIDN'T DRINK SO MUCH BEER, THAT MONEY COULD HAVE BEEN PUT IN A STEP-UP INTEREST SAVINGS ACCOUNT AND AFTER ACCOUNTING FOR COMPOUND INTEREST FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS, YOU COULD HAVE NOW BOUGHT AN AIRPLANE?

Husband: DO YOU DRINK BEER?

Wife: NO.

Husband: SO WHERE'S YOUR AIRPLANE?

**I see people
around my age
mountain climbing,
I feel good getting
my leg through my
underwear with
out losing my
balance**

ED. *This story has a bit of personal meaning for me, because my Navy squadron was involved in the evacuation of Saigon in 1975. We flew the C-2, Carrier On board Delivery (COD) and shuttled primarily between Cubi Pt NAS in the Philippines and the two aircraft carriers just off the Viet Nam coast that were receiving evacuees via helicopters, small boats and in one case a light Cessna. Many of us were also "acquainted" with some of the World Airways Flight Attendants who would visit us from Clark AFB via the Aero Club planes some of us would use for that purpose. Our own (Continental) Mac operation undoubtedly had some fascinating stories, but that was a bit ahead of my time, and I have no current information on that. For sure though, these cockpit and cabin crews performed at the highest levels of professional competence, even though they were mostly really young... but hell, we all were! What they did routinely for our troops, and especially in this story should receive official recognition. I received this story WITHOUT permission to publish it, but am doing so anyway, to honor the courage and compassion shown by this crew. These brave actions are so compelling, it's a story that NEEDS to be shared.*

The last flight of refugees out of Da Nang in 1975

Early in 1973, a woman named Jan Wollett applied for a job as a flight attendant with World Airways, based in Oakland, California. Her previous job had been as a secretary for the actress Jennifer Jones; she loved to travel and felt that working for an airline would give her a chance to see the world while earning a living.

Wollett had marched in demonstrations against the Vietnam War as a college student in the late 1960s, and like millions of Americans, she assumed it was all finally ending as the last American troops now came home. It was not. The Vietnamese continued to fight and die. America continued to provide arms to the South, and the Soviet Union and China gave them to the North and the Vietcong. World Airways, owned by Edward J. Daly, happened to be a principal charter airline for the American military forces in Asia, flying routes between Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa, Thailand, and Vietnam. Wollett completed her training in March and was assigned to World's Asian route in July.

She paid little attention when, in early March 1975, the North Vietnamese launched a major offensive in the central highlands, broke through the South Vietnamese lines, and began a rush to the coastal cities of Da Nang and Nha Trang. She had six weeks of vacation coming and had invited her father to visit her in Asia. He made the trip, and they went fishing together in Thailand and then returned to her home in Japan, planning to travel to South Korea for more fishing. Before they could depart, Wollett received a call from a World Airways dispatcher.

"Jan, I've got a big favor to ask," he said. "You know we're under contract to USAID [the State Department's Agency for International Development], and we have these special flights running in Vietnam to bring refugees from Da Nang down to Saigon. We are short-staffed here, and we really need you." The dispatcher promised to double her vacation time and fly her father to Korea if she would go. She agreed.

She flew to Saigon the next day. Charles Patterson, one of World's vice presidents, had been on the flights to Da Nang to bring down refugees and government officials, and that night he warned Daly that the situation at the Da Nang airport was getting out of hand. He feared that a flight might be mobbed on the ground and prevented from taking off by panicky civilians and soldiers trying to escape the North Vietnamese army. Daly listened to Patterson's warning and decided not to fly to Da Nang again. But, Patterson says, "There was part of Mr. Daly that was John Wayne, and there was part of Mr. Daly that was the caring individual," and those parts apparently won out over caution. Early the next morning Daly decided to make one last run to collect refugees, presumably mainly women and children, who would otherwise be overtaken by the North Vietnamese army.

Daly gathered together a veteran flight crew consisting of pilot Ken Healy, copilot Charlie Stewart, and flight engineer Glen Flansas. He brought along three flight attendants: Jan Wollett, Val Witherspoon, and Atsako Okuba. He also invited along a CBS news crew consisting of Bruce Dunning, Mike Marriott, and Mai Van Due. Daly's assistant Joe Hrezo also went on the flight, as did a UPI reporter, Paul Vogel.

Wollett expected the flight to be simply another normal shuttle. It was not. On the morning of March 29 she and her fellow crew members on World's last flight to Da Nang confronted the war face-to-face. And in the space of only a few minutes, Wollett's life was changed forever.

I first met Jan Wollett in the fall of 1984, when I began research for my book *Tears before the Rain: An Oral History of the Fall of South Vietnam*, which was recently published by Oxford University Press and includes her story. When I met her, Wollett was living alone in eastern Washington State. She had no telephone. She did not maintain contact with anyone from World Airways. She still often thought about the events of March 29 and she hoped that by talking about the flight she might at last free herself from the some of the images and faces that returned to her again and again in the night. This is how she remembered it.

I was supposed to get a wake-up call at my hotel in Saigon at five in the morning on March 29, 1975. I was to be the senior flight attendant on a flight up to Da Nang and back. I never got the call.

At six o'clock I got a call from Val Witherspoon. She asked me to be in the lobby in five minutes. So I jumped into my uniform and hurried downstairs. Mr. Daly and Val, who was another one of the attendants on the flight, were waiting for me. Bruce Dunning of CBS News was in the lobby too, and we chatted with him for a few minutes. I told Bruce that we were flying up to Da Nang, and he said that there were rumors that the city had already fallen to the North Vietnamese. I said, "Well, I'm sure we wouldn't be going up there if it had fallen." Bruce then asked if he could come along on the flight, and Mr. Daly told him to be at Tan Son Nhut Airport in an hour. "You get there, then you're there," Daly said.

Bruce rounded up his cameraman, Mike Marriott, and his sound man, Mai Van Due, and brought them out to the airport. We all boarded the aircraft, a World Airways 727. As the senior flight attendant, I had been informed that we would be carrying one or two Vietnamese flight attendants as interpreters and that we would also be accompanied by guards for crowd control since there had been some difficulty with crowds in Da Nang on the previous day. We were also supposed to be carrying soft drinks, orange juice, and sandwiches for the passengers.

Once we were on the plane, I told Val and Atsako Okuba, the other flight attendants, to check and see what we had on board. Well, we discovered that the aircraft had not been catered. That was our first sign

that there was something very strange going on. There were no soft drinks, no orange juice, and no sandwiches on board. And there were no Vietnamese flight attendants and no guards either.

There was a discussion on the plane as to what we should do-whether or not we should make the flight. Daly and the flight crew were on board by that time, and so were Dunning and his CBS crew. Eventually, two officials from USAID came on board and assured us that everything was fine up at Da Nang and that we would not need the guards and could make the trip.

By that time it was already eight in the morning-much later than we had planned to take off. And Mr. Daly decided that we would go up to Da Nang and pick up some refugees, women and children, and bring them out.

So we took off. And the flight up to Da Nang was very good. We also took along with us a British newsman and another man from UPI. We chatted casually on the way up.

Then we started our descent into Da Nang. About twenty minutes behind us was another World Airways 727, flown by Don McDaniel, and behind him was yet another 727, flown by Dave Wanio. We figured that we would be on the ground for ten or fifteen minutes, load and take off, and then the next plane would land, and then the third. That way we could bring out three plane-loads of people in less than an hour.

When we landed, it was very strange because we did not see a soul at first. Nobody. It was just as if the entire airfield was deserted. And then, as we started to taxi, it seemed as if a massive swarm of people came up and out of bunkers. Thousands-and I mean literally thousands-started racing toward us. They were running, they were on motorcycles, they were in vans, they were in jeeps and cars and personnel carriers, they were on bicycles. They were coming out to us in anything they could find.

We had a plan. Mr. Daly and Joe Hrezo, a station chief for World, would get off the plane first and line up people on the back air stair. I was to stay in the forward part of the plane, Atsako would stay in the middle, and Val would be in the aft.

We started a slow taxi. I was standing in the cockpit door, looking out the front window. Then I realized that something really bizarre was going on. A group of people raced up next to the aircraft in a little truck. And a man jumped off the truck and ran up in front of us. I was looking down at him as we were slowly taxiing, and he took out a pistol and started shooting

at us. Suddenly I had the fantastic feeling that I was in the middle of a John Wayne Western. And I thought, "Why are they shooting at us? We're the good guys."

We taxied past the man with the gun and slowed down further. I was now waiting for the first people to come on board. We were going to put them in seats starting at the front of the aircraft and then keep going back and fill up the seats in an orderly fashion.

Then the people started coming on board. They were running. And they were just wild-eyed. And they were soldiers. About nine soldiers came on board, and I seated them. Then a tenth came on, and he wouldn't sit down. He was hysterical, and he kept running up and down the aisle, screaming in English, "Take off! Take off! Take off! They're rocketing the field!" He was just screaming it over and over again. And I grabbed him, and I shouted, "Shut up and sit where I tell you to sit!" I pushed him into a seat.

Still, there were surprisingly few people getting on board the aircraft. So I thought I'd better go to the back and see what was happening. When I got to the back, I saw Mr. Daly at the bottom of the air stair, and he was being mauled. His clothes were in tatters. And Joe Hrezo was gone. Val was trying to help Mr. Daly and was trying to pull people onto the air stair as the aircraft continued moving down the taxiway. At the bottom of the air stair were hundreds of people, all desperate and crazy and screaming and clawing at Val and Mr. Daly. You could see no end to those people. They were running to the air stair from every direction. I climbed down on the stair and tried to help.

Mr. Daly was at the very bottom of the air stair, waving a pistol in the air, trying to restore some kind of order. Val was helping people climb over the side of the stair onto the steps. I went to the bottom of the stair next to Mr. Daly. A family of five was running a few feet from me, reaching out for help to get on board. It was a mother and a father and two little children and a baby in the mother's arms. I could see the fear in all of their faces as they ran and reached out for me. I reached back to grab the mother's hand, but before I could get it, a man running behind them shot all five of them, and they fell and were trampled by the crowd. The last I saw of them, they were disappearing under people's feet. There were just several loud shots, and they were gone—all five of them. And the man who shot them stepped on them to get closer to the air stair. He ran them down and jumped onto the air stair and ran up into the aircraft. And everything was so chaotic and insane, I remember registering in my mind at that mad moment: "I'll deal with that later." And I just kept

pulling people onto the stair.

I felt a woman pulling on me from the side of the stair. She was trying to get over the rail, and she grabbed my arm. I wanted to help her on, but I also had to worry about getting pulled off the stair. I turned and grabbed her arms and tried to pull her over the rail, but a man behind her grabbed her and jerked her out of my arms, and as she fell away, he stepped on her back and on her head to get up and over the railing. He used her as a stepping stone. Mr. Daly saw that happen, and as the man swung his leg over the railing, Mr. Daly smashed him in the head with his pistol. I remember suddenly seeing a sheet of blood splash across everything and I saw the man fall off and people trample him, and I remember thinking, "Good." That was just my reaction at that moment. The man disappeared under the feet of the mob.

By that time people were streaming into the plane, so I ran back inside to see what was happening. Atsako grabbed me, and she said, "Captain Healy needs you." So I went to the cockpit and knocked on the door. It opened, and Captain Healy told me, "Joe Hrezo has been separated from the plane. When he's back on board, you let me know." I said okay.

What had happened during all of this was that Joe and the British newsman had been pulled off the plane by the mob, and then they couldn't get back on. We lost both of them. Joe had run to the tower, and the guy operating the tower let him in. Joe then called the plane, and Ken Healy said he would taxi over onto the taxiway. He told Joe to make a run for the plane when we came by. We would not be stopping at any time. The moment Joe was on board we were going to take off. Captain Healy told me, "When you know for sure that Joe's on board, just pound on the door."

I went to the back of the plane and told Val, "Watch the air stair, and when you see Joe step on it, raise your arms in the air and I'll signal Ken."

While we waited to go by the tower, people kept getting on the aircraft. We were just shoving them into seats—five and six people in three seats. I remember asking as I directed them to the seats, "Where are the women and children? Where are the women and children?" It turned out that 11 of our first passengers were soldiers. Later we found that we had eleven women and children on board, but that was it. The rest were soldiers.

People on the aircraft were sitting in their seats totally in shock. And this one fool kept yelling over and over again, "Take off! Take off! take off! Take off!"

Then, as we taxied by the tower, Mr. Daly was still somewhere on the bottom of the air stair, pulling people on. A moment after we passed the tower, Val turned around and raised her arm in the air, and I turned around and started to pound on the cockpit door. As I did, I heard the engines start to roar and we started to gain speed. Then this man who had been yelling for us to take just started shrieking. "Oh, no! We're taking off on the grass!"

What had happened was that we were taking off from the taxiway, and Ken had gunned the engines to warn people to get out of the way or we would run over them. The reason we were on the grass was that the taxiway ended and the grass began and there was no way for us to get back on the runway at that point. We gained some speed and lifted off, and as we did, we hit a vehicle and then a fence pole, which did considerable damage to the wing. There was more damage to the aircraft from bullets and from a grenade that went off under one wing. But inside the aircraft we couldn't see the damage, so we didn't really know how bad the situation outside was. But Captain Healy was aware of it.

In any case, we were airborne. We had gotten out of Da Nang. I never really thought we would not make it out. You don't have time to think about things like that in the midst of so much confusion. But I discovered later that we almost didn't make it. We ended up with all that damage and with 358 people on board. We had 60 people in the cargo pits, and we had people in the wheel wells. The plane was supposed to carry 133. Ken Healy later sent Boeing all the statistics from our takeoff, and they ran them through their computer and told us that according to their figures, our plane could not possibly have taken off. Ken sent Boeing a telegram later that said, "You build one hell of an aircraft."

As we took off, I was standing in the front of the plane, and I started looking at the passengers and counting them. At that moment I noticed a man sitting in the front seat who was very pale and who had been badly injured. His intestines were hanging out. I took my hand and just shoved them back inside, and then I ripped a towel off somebody's neck and tied it around his waist to keep his intestines in. Then I realized that we were going to need a lot of first-aid stuff. I grabbed the first-aid kit and found that it had been looted on the ground in Saigon. We had no medical equipment on board. None. There were no supplies of any kind anywhere on the aircraft. No bandages. Nothing.

When I finished helping the guy in the front row, I looked down the aisle and saw a man crawling toward me. I recognized him right away. His whole head was caked with blood, and there was blood all over his face. It was the man who had pulled the woman out of my arms-the man Mr. Daly hit with his pistol. The last time I had seen that woman she was just pulp and cotton on the ground. And the last time I had seen the man he was being trampled. But he had managed to get on board, and now he was crawling up the aisle toward me. I knew he was coming to me. And that was the only moment I remember saying a prayer that day. I asked, "Oh, please, God, don't have him come to me." And he crawled up to me. And he grabbed my pants leg, and he looked up at me, and he just said, "Help."

So I grabbed somebody and pulled him out of a seat, and I helped this man into the seat. His head was laid wide open and I could see inside his head, and it was just a bloody, pulpy mess. I had nothing to stop the bleeding with. I knew that if I didn't stop the bleeding, he would die right there in my arms. A soldier next to the man had on a flak jacket. So I ripped open the flak jacket and grabbed the sawdust stuffing and pushed the sawdust into the man's wound to try to stop the flow of blood. I just kept packing the wound with sawdust. I am sure that the American Medical Association would have been shocked by what I did. But it worked. I ripped off another man's shirt, and I tied it around the wounded man's head in order to keep the sawdust in and in order to keep his head in one piece. He made it through the flight alive. He must have been very strong. He never even went into shock.

I then went to the back of the plane once more. I saw Val and Mr. Daly and Joe Hrezo working to free a man who was trapped in the aft air stair. The aft door could not be closed. The man stuck on the air stair had broken his leg. They finally got him loose and brought him inside the aircraft. Val and I tried to put together a splint for his leg. Joe then told me that the British news guy had never made it back on the plane. He had stepped off onto the runway in Da Nang to film the crowd and was unable to get back on board in the panic. He was in the tower back there, and Ken Healy promised him that an Air America chopper would come in and pick him up. Later that day it did, and he made it safely back to Cam Ranh Bay.

Val and Atsako and I just kept working and repairing the obvious damage to the people on the plane. That consumed most of our time. I guess we had been airborne for about an hour when I started looking at the passengers who weren't wounded. And I saw this horrible look on their faces. Finally they had realized what they had just done. And the questions started. "Will another plane come?" We lied and assured them, "Yes, there will be other planes." They realized that they had shot and killed their own people to get on board our aircraft. Now they were sorry. So we lied to them. We knew there would be no other flights to Da Nang. We were the last.

The people left behind would not get out. In fact, Ken Healy had talked to Don McDaniel on the next 727 and told him to wait for us over Phan Rang, and he radioed Dave Wanio and told him to go back to Saigon to prepare for an emergency landing. We had quite a bit of damage to the aircraft, and Ken was not sure that the landing gear would come down when we tried to land in Saigon. I knew what that would mean.

In the meantime it got incredibly hot inside the aircraft, even though the aft air stair was down and the door was wide open. With that number of people in the plane you just could not breathe. It was incredibly hot. We had Due, who was the CBS sound man, keep announcing over the PA system in Vietnamese, "No smoking!" We could not have dealt with a fire and we knew there would be one if some of the passengers started smoking.

After working on the first-aid stuff for the passengers for a while, I noticed that there was nothing for these people to drink on the aircraft. But there was a drawer that had been full of ice, and it had melted, and now the drawer was filled with cold water. I asked Bruce Dunning to rip up the galley curtains into little squares, about four or five inches square, and to soak them in the water. Then I took them and I walked up and down the aisle passing out little wet pieces of galley curtain so people could mop their faces. They all were just sweating like crazy. And we'd go along and pat their shoulders, and I told Val and Atsako to do something to bring up the morale of these people. The shock of what they had done to their friends and comrades seemed to be destroying them slowly. They had left their families behind them on the ground. They had run over each other and shot each other to get on this plane. Now the panic was disappearing, and the realization of the horror of what had happened-of what they had done-was starting to sink in. So we went around and talked to them and patted them on the shoulders and wiped their brows and their hands and tried as well as we could to comfort them.

I was dying of thirst myself by that time. And Mr. Daly came up to me and opened his shirt and showed me some Coke bottles. He said, "Go to the cockpit." I went up the cockpit and sat down on the observer's seat, and Mr. Daly came in with the Cokes, and he opened one and gave it to me. I remember putting the Coke to my mouth to drink, but everything went down my chin and onto the front on my uniform. I couldn't swallow. We passed that one Coke bottle around the cockpit. And once more Ken Healy told me about the damage to the aircraft. He said he was not sure about the nose gear on the plane coming down, and if it did come down he was not sure that it would hold. He warned me to be ready for anything when we came down in Saigon.

I returned to the cabin to do whatever more I could do for the passengers. Then there was a startling moment when everyone on the plane suddenly looked over to our left and there was a great deal of excitement. What had happened was that we had finally arrived over Phan Rang, and Don McDaniel and his crew had been sitting up at thirty-five thousand feet waiting for us. They finally saw this little dark dot way down below them, and they thought it might be us. And they came down to us. We looked out the window, and there against the gorgeous blue sky and the big puffy white clouds was this beautiful red and white World 727. I know that there was suddenly a terrific feeling that went through the aircraft at that moment-and I know that it certainly went through me-a feeling that our sister ship had found us and that we were going to be safe because she was going to escort us home.

So Don flew his aircraft all around ours and assessed our damage. That's when he told Ken Healy, "It looks like you have a body hanging out the wheel well." And Ken asked him about that. One person did get crushed as the wheels were retracting. But his death saved the other eight people in the wheel wells because his crushed body stopped the gears and did not let the wheels fully retract. The others were saved when he was killed.

So by that time we knew we were possibly going to have a problem with all the wheels, and we knew also that the cargo doors were open and that the aft air stair was hanging down and the back door was open and the air flaps were shot and we would not have them to assist us in landing. We were in very serious trouble.

We continued on to Saigon. I said to Val at one point, "Come on, Let's go into the lavatory and have a cigarette." So we went into the lavatory and we both smoked a cigarette, and I told her all about the problems with the aircraft. During the landing I was going to be sitting in the front seat over the nose gear. And she was going to be sitting in the aft of the aircraft. I told her I did not know if we were going to make it. So I told her what I wanted her to tell my family if she made it and I did not. And she told me what she wanted me to tell her family if I made it and she didn't. I remember saying to her, "Just tell my family that it was okay. I didn't have any fear." I didn't cry, and she didn't either. You don't have time for emotions that are obviously there at a time like that. You keep them hidden.

So then it came to the final hour of the flight, and I was again in the aft of the plane. I started walking forward, and a man handed me his M-16. He didn't speak English and I didn't speak Vietnamese, and I was not quite sure what he wanted. But I knew he wanted me to take it. So I put that damn gun on my shoulder, and as I walked, people started handing me things. When I ended up at the cockpit, I had a couple of M-16s hanging off my shoulders and a bandoleer full of bullets and a handful of loose bullets. Some of the men handed me one or two bullets, and some handed me more, and I had two pistols hanging on my little fingers.

There I was holding that little cache of bullets and weapons, and there was suddenly the most obvious feeling: that the war was over for these people. They didn't want their guns or their bullets or anything anymore. And it was so poignant. They were finished with it. Then, as I was walking toward the cockpit, this one fool put a hand grenade on top of the pile in my hands. And I looked down and I thought, "That's a hand grenade!" My instinct was to turn around and toss it out the back of the plane. But I was afraid it would hit the air stair and explode, and I thought then, "My God, what am I going to do with all this stuff?"

I made my way up to the cockpit and kicked on the door, and Charlie Stewart, our flight engineer, opened it. I can remember saying to him, "Charlie, take this thing!" I was terrified of that hand grenade. I had never really been exposed to a hand grenade before. Charlie took it. Then he and Mike Marriott took electrical tape and started taping all the stuff. They taped the hand grenade and the bullets and whatever else I had carried in. The reason for this was that if something went off, they wanted to deaden the impact as much as possible.

When it came time to land in Saigon, I checked out

Mike Marriott on the side by the galley door. I showed him how to open it in an emergency and how to inflate the emergency slide. Normally that would have been Atsako's seat, but she was a fairly new flight attendant, and her English was not that good, and I wasn't sure at that point how she would perform in a real emergency. So I wanted Mike there.

I was sitting on the front jump seat with Bruce Dunning when Mr. Daly came out of the cockpit and asked Bruce to sit in the back of the aircraft. We wanted Bruce to put the film of the Da Nang landing in the back because we figured that if anything survived from the flight, that film would, and there was this strong feeling among all of us that the world should know what had happened to us that day.

Mr. Daly sat down on the front jump seat with me and asked me if I knew the condition of the aircraft, and I said I did, and then he asked me if I was afraid to die, and I said, "No, I'm not afraid to die." Then he put his arm around me and said, "Good girl. I'll buy you a drink if we make it to Saigon." And I said, "Mr. Daly, if we make it to Saigon, I want you to buy me a case of beer." He laughed at that.

Then Mr. Daly said to me, "These people don't know that my gun is empty." He had shot off all his bullets on the air stair trying to maintain order in Da Nang. And he said, "I'll hold it on them when we land and give you time to open the door and pop the slide." And I said, "Fine."

So we started the long descent into Saigon. Of course, we were coming in much faster than we should have because we could not adjust the flaps or anything. And the front jump seat was right over the nose gear. I could feel it if it came down and if it didn't hold. I felt the main gear touch the ground, and I watched the airport go flying by. I kept waiting to feel the nose gear touch the ground. Ken held the nose of the plane off the ground for so long. I don't know how he did it. All of a sudden I looked at the buildings flying by, and we were running level, and I knew then that the nose gear was down and that it was holding. I hadn't even felt it come down. That's how gently Ken put that 727 down.

We raced along the runway because we couldn't stop really well. Thank God they had a fourteen-thousand-foot runway in Saigon. There were fire trucks racing along next to us. And at the last minute we turned onto the taxiway. Then we stopped and had no visible sign of an emergency. I threw open the door, but I did not pop the emergency slide. Joe Hrezo was on the ground already. He'd run out the aft air stair. Joe and I both yelled at the same time, "We need an ambulance

and stretchers." Then we waited for them to bring a stair up to the front door. The people inside stayed very calm. Due told them over the PA to stay seated and not to move. Nobody moved. Finally we started getting people off. I remember that one man lit a cigarette, and as he got to the front door, I told him that he couldn't have the cigarette because of the fuel. And he dropped it and stepped on it. I saw he was barefooted. And I thought, "Oh, my God, that must hurt." But he wasn't feeling anything anymore. Not many people on the plane were.

Most of our passengers were herded off to a side area. Stretchers were brought on board, and they carried out the man who had the bad wound in his head and the other man with his intestines hanging out. When everyone was off, we started to check out the inside of the aircraft. Val and I walked through it and started picking up guns and bullets and hand grenades left in the seats. I realized that there was far too much for us to carry out. So I said to Val, "Never mind. Just leave this stuff. Somebody will come and take care of it."

Then Val and I got off. We were the last two people off the plane. We looked at the damage to the aircraft, and we were really quite appalled at how torn up the metal was and at the bullet holes in the wings. And I said to Val at that time, "It's amazing that this plane could fly."

Val and I were picked up and taken to flight operations and then to the Caravelle Hotel. We were escorted to Mr. Daly's suite, where NBC was interviewing all of us. I was sitting on the couch drinking beer as they made their film. There was a room next door and a suite where there were several dozen reporters waiting for us. They all wanted an interview. I asked Mr. Daly, "What should we say about the flight?" He said, "Just tell the truth."

Mr. Daly took us all out to dinner that evening. When we got back to the hotel, I took a long shower. Then I lay down on the bed to sleep. But I couldn't sleep. I kept seeing the people from that morning in Da Nang. I saw the woman trampled to death, and I could see her clothes and the bloody pulp of her body. And I saw that family of five again, all shot in the back and falling. And the man crawling down the aisle to me. I realized that I was not going to sleep at all that night.

I got up and went over to the desk. I thought maybe I could write it all down. I tried writing. I got some of it. But it was really frustrating because it was too big for words. I didn't know how to write it down like it really happened.

Time went by. I had lost my conception of time. All of a sudden the phone rang. I answered, and the operator told me that I had an international call. I looked at the clock and realized it was seven in the morning. Then a woman came on the phone from a radio station in Los Angeles. She wanted to interview me. She had seen the CBS film of the flight from Da Nang on the news. So I told her what had happened. And at the end of the interview, she said the dumbest thing I ever heard anybody say in my whole life. She said, "Miss Wollett, it sounds to me like you're still upset." Many things went through my mind at that moment. But all I could say was, "Let's just put it this way. It's not the kind of thing you see every day."

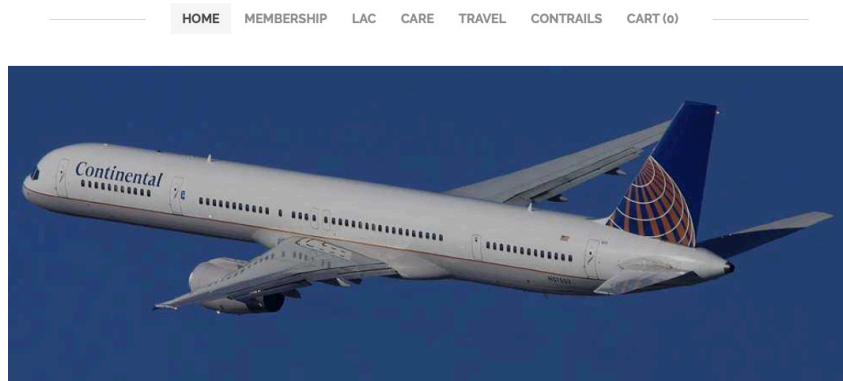
Then she said, "Well, thank you, Miss Wollett. And by the way, have a happy Easter." Only then did I realize that it was Easter Sunday.



**Don't forget to send
those photos for the final
hard copy edition of the
Golden Contrails**

Remember...to check the Rosters for your photo and contact info:

Go to www.thegoldeneagles.org and click on the Roster Download link (you will need the password on PAGE 6 of this Edition). If you need to change any info, click on the UPDATE Your Roster Information Form



Quick Action Links:

[Announcements June 9, 2020!](#)

[How to Join \(or re-join\) GE Membership!](#)

[Roster Download](#) (password needed)

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[Crew Room Update Form](#)

Once the wings go on, they never come off whether they can be seen or not. It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear and adrenaline, and no one who has ever worn them with pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the 'call of the wild' that wafts through bedroom windows in the deep of the night. When a good flyer leaves the 'job' and retires, many are jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder. We wonder If he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know. We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, It will remain as a longing for those past times. We know in the world of flying there is a fellowship that lasts long after the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet. We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and in his heart, he still is.

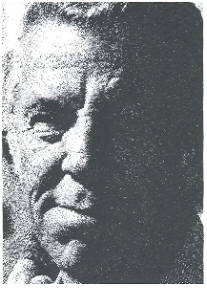
Because we flew, we envy no man on earth.

(submitted by Mike Lichtenfeld

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Author Unknown)

The Len Morgan Archive - Faster is Better!



BRITISH AIRWAYS FLIGHT 9092 WAS gently nudged from its gate right on time. My ticket read 11:30, and that was precisely when we moved-not a minute sooner or later.

That's the way to do it. An on-time departure means the airline cares, that it takes pride in its service, and suggests that the rest of the trip will be marked by the same attention to detail. Weather and traffic can unavoidably delay an arrival, but a push-back 10 minutes late is the trademark of slack planning. Aside from a mechanical problem or a gate-hold ordered by ground control, there is little excuse for not blocking out on the dot.

We slowly taxied along Kennedy's uneven taxiways, paused while a DC-10 started its roll, then took position on Runway 22R. A minute passed. I glanced about the lean 100-seat cabin. The comfortable pewter leather seats looked brand-new. The carpeting could have been laid yesterday. There was none of the worn appearance usual in older airplanes. This ship might have been delivered last week. In fact, it has logged hundreds of transatlantic crossings in the last two decades.

But G-BOAC is no ordinary airliner, and Flight 9092 is unique travel, which suggests a special effort at punctuality. G-BOAC is a Concorde. The muted turbine rumble increased to a growl and then a distant roar. Afterburners on, brakes off. The rate of acceleration was impressive, and the time spent gathering speed even more so, but we had been advised we would need 215 mph to fly.

The cabin tilted sharply, the last few feet of concrete flashed past, and we swept across Jamaica Bay nose high, rapidly gaining altitude. What a sight we must have been from below. At speeds less than 300 mph on the bulkhead display, there was the mild shuddering felt in conventional types with flaps extended. It's a low-speed characteristic of its delta wing; Concorde has no flaps. Once above 10,000 feet and well south of Long Island, speed rapidly built, and the ride became rock-solid. Our seats could have been bolted to the hangar floor.

Five years ago my wife and I took the Queen Elizabeth II to England and returned on Concorde. It was a post-retirement treat, a once-in-a-lifetime adventure for two travel aficionados. The round trip by sea and air was a marvelous success, something to be remembered forever. Our son, Terry, watched our videotape, heard our enthusiastic account and said, "I'm envious!" I never dreamed of repeating any of it, and he couldn't manage it then, being fully occupied rebuilding a flying career shattered by Braniff's collapse.

His life, like that of many other pilots since deregulation, has been dives and zooms, which, if plotted on a graph, would resemble a roller coaster. Uncertainty goes with the job. He's a USAir captain today and a 737-200 check airman. When he said, "Let's go to London on Concorde," I said, "Give me five minutes to pack."

The Mach number reached .82, a velocity familiar to subsonic jet pilots, and maintained its steady advance to .9, .95, .99. "Incredible!" said Terry as it flicked to 1.0, 1.2, 1.3. "I'm not believing this." We were passing through 37,000 feet in the slow climb that would continue until descent began.

"Try one of these cheese things," I said, passing the canapé tray. "They're quite good."

"How can you sit there talking about food when we're going faster than the speed of sound?"

"What? It's one point five, is it? Good show. Now we'll really get cracking," I said, mimicking my RAF

cohorts of long ago.

My casualness was pretended. The second time around was every bit the fun of the first. On Concorde you feel a part of something extraordinary, of experiencing flight as it was meant to be-and of course you are. We should have much more supersonic air travel.

One of my DC-7 skippers was incensed by the circuitous routings and reduced speeds enforced at busy terminals. "Damn it!" he'd howl as we entered a holding pattern with a 45-minute EAC time. "An airplane is supposed to go direct from A to B at full speed!" By the same token, why are we plodding along at 600 mph when the British, and French proved 20 years ago that 1,350 is feasible?

The Russian Tu-144, the first supersonic airliner, first flew on New Year's Eve, 1968; Concorde 60 days later. Our entry was to have flown in 1972, and what a magnificent aircraft it would have been. Characteristically, Boeing thought big. Its 317-ton 2707-300 was to be 62 feet longer than the 747, cruise at Mach 2,7 and seat from 250 to 320 passengers. Projected seat-mile operating expenses promised reasonable fares for long international trips.

President Nixon gave the go-ahead for construction of two prototypes. The federal backing required was to be repaid upon delivery of the three-hundredth airplane. If as many as 500 were built. the government would realize a \$1 billion return on its investment. With 122 orders in hand from 26 airlines, the designers went to work. Then, shamefully, the Senate voted not to fund the project.

The Tu-144 proved unsuccessful and was abandoned. We refused to try. Concorde is a galling reminder of what we should have done. Britain and France are justifiably proud of it. If their marvel had received the welcome accorded American airliners in Europe since before World War II, more carriers would have flown it. In fact. 16 airlines placed 74 orders for Concordes, but landing rights at New York and Washington were bitterly opposed. Had the petulant busybodies who protested been around in 1903, Orville and Wilbur would have been evicted from

Kitty Hawk for disturbing the seagulls.

Oceans cover three-quarters of the globe. Supersonic passenger service across them is practical and inevitable. The question is not if there will be more SSTs, but who will build them.

For lunch I had the "Maine lobster with king prawns, cooked in a mild curry-flavored sauce and garnished with 'basmati rice," while Terry chose the "fillet of beef seared on a hot griddle and seasoned with pistachio butter'," both complemented by exceptional vintages. The cabin service was superb in all respects.

Capt. Mike Riley invited us up front. He's a Concorde instructor whose unpublished manuscript on Concorde piloting is fascinating. We were creeping through 56,000 feet with autopilots slaved to Mach 2 and altitude slowly in creasing as we grew lighter. "On this run we'll burn about the same fuel as a 747," he said, It is surprisingly quiet in the cockpit; there is little air 10 miles up to create wind noise. On the other hand, skin friction lengthens the fuselage 10 inches and leaves cabin walls warm to the touch.

First Officer Alan Atkinson penciled In our 22.5-miles-a-minute progress on, his chart as casually as I used to note three miles accomplished by a DC-3 in the same time. As a boy, my father was thrilled by mile-a-minute trains, yet he lived to travel 10 times as fast in a 747. I remember airliners that did two miles a minute and lived to see Mach 2 passenger service. What will my grandchildren see during the next half century? The tantalizing challenge is to do still better, and it will not be ignored. Some of the solutions should be stamped, "Made in USA".

Second Officer Phil Newman lives with his wife in southern California and commutes to London. He's flown 4,000 supersonic hours in 12 years. His complex engineer's panel makes it easy to believe Concorde crew training requires six months.

Our ship, G-BOAC, has logged 13,000 hours and completed more than 5,000 "cycles"-takeoff and landings. British Airways' seven Concordes have racked up a total of 85,000 hours and 31,000 cycles.

Yet supersonic air travel remains a novelty. The challenge is to make it economical.

All too soon it was over, and we began descent. Speed rapidly dwindled to familiar subsonic Mach numbers and then with gear extended, to the slow velocities that pleased us in piston days. We banked

around the famous courts at Wimbledon, rode smoothly down final at 150 knots and settled ever so lightly onto 28L at Heathrow.

I made a note. "JFK-LHR: 3:35" and thought again, "Now, that's the way to do it."

A young politician decided to get his first tailor-made suit. So he went to the finest tailor in town and got measured for a suit. A week later he went in for his first fitting. He put on the suit and he looked fabulous, he felt that in this suit he can do business.

As he was preening himself in front of the mirror he reached down to put his hands in the pockets and to his surprise he noticed that there were no pockets. He mentioned this to the tailor who asked him, "Didn't you tell me you were a politician?"

The young man answered, "Yes, I did."

To this the tailor said, "Whoever heard of a politician with his hands in his own pockets?"

Dead Horse Theory

The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from generation to generation, says that "When you discover that you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount."

However, in government more advanced strategies are often employed, such as:

1. Buying a stronger whip.
2. Changing riders.
3. Appointing a committee to study the horse.
4. Arranging to visit other countries to see how other cultures ride dead horses.
5. Lowering the standards so that dead horses can be included.
6. Reclassifying the dead horse as living-impaired.
7. Hiring outside contractors to ride the dead horse.
8. Harnessing several dead horses together to increase speed.
9. Providing additional funding and/or training to increase the dead horse's performance.
10. Doing a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance.
11. Declaring that as the dead horse does not have to be fed, it is less costly, carries lower overhead and therefore contributes substantially more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses.
12. Rewriting the expected performance requirements for all horses.

And, of course...

13. Promoting the dead horse to a supervisory position.

**Have you heard about the
REUNION October 21?**

Useful Aviation Terms

AIRSPEED – Speed of an airplane. (Deduct 25% when listening to a retired fighter pilot.)

BANK – The folks who hold the lien on most pilots' cars.

CARBURETOR ICING – A phenomenon reported to the FAA by pilots immediately after they run out of gas.

CONE OF CONFUSION – An area about the size of New Jersey located near the final approach fix at an airport.

DEAD RECKONING – You reckon correctly, or you are.

DESTINATION – Geographical location 30 minutes beyond the pilot's bladder saturation point.

ENGINE FAILURE – A condition that occurs when all fuel tanks mysteriously become filled with low-octane air.

FIREWALL – Section of the aircraft specifically designed to funnel heat and smoke into the cockpit.

FLIGHT FOLLOWING – Formation flying.

GLIDE DISTANCE – Half the distance from an airplane to the nearest emergency landing field.

HOBBS – An instrument which creates an emergency situation should it fail during dual instruction.

HYDROPLANE – An airplane designed to land long on a short and wet runway.

LEAN MIXTURE – Nonalcoholic beer.

MINI MAG LITE – Device designed to support the AA battery industry.

NANOSECOND – Time delay between the Low Fuel Warning light and the onset of carburetor icing.

PARASITIC DRAG – A pilot who bums a ride and complains about the service.

RICH MIXTURE – What you order at another pilot's promotion party.

ROGER – Used when you're not sure what else to say.

SECTIONAL CHART – Any chart that ends 25 nm short of your destination.

SERVICE CEILING – Altitude at which cabin crew can serve drinks.

SPOILERS – FAA Inspectors.

STALL – Technique used to explain to the bank why your car payment is late.

STEEP BANKS – Banks that charge pilots more than 10% interest

TURN & BANK INDICATOR – An instrument largely ignored by pilots.

USEFUL LOAD – Volumetric capacity of the aircraft, disregarding weight.

WAC CHART – Directions to the Army female barracks.

YANKEE – Any pilot who has to ask New Orleans tower to "Say again".

Strange Events - by Bob Pearce

During and after my time as a flight instructor I was occasionally called by scheduling to ferry or do a test flight.

Scheduling called to ask if I would be so kind as to do a test flight on a 737 coming out of check. I foolishly said sure, this was the Wednesday before thanksgiving. What could possibly go wrong with an aircraft coming out of major check.

After I had accepted the challenge the scheduler said "by the way it is scheduled for 0530 on Wednesday morning", that in itself should have been a dead giveaway. Having flown several test flights, I knew they were rarely on time and sometimes not at all. I was given the co-pilots name which was not familiar and phone number at my request. I tried to get ahold of him to no avail the night before, called again at some 4:30 no answer.

I called maintenance at 5 am and told them who I was and would the airplane be ready. Of course not, maybe 9:30. I told him I would see him at ten am. As I expected I arrived at 10 am and the aircraft would not be ready till maybe 11 am and they wanted to get the seats into the aircraft. After about 15 minutes I ask the maintenance chief if we could go and get some guys to put the seats in while we were airborne and save some time, sure why not. We got plenty of volunteers ten or fifteen do it up quick in the air and get back and go home. Told the copilot sorry tried to get ahold of him to let know it would probably be very late leaving that morning, he had arrived at 0430.

We got the aircraft preflighted and departed as quickly as we could. Beautiful day perfect for our test flight. Four guys in the cockpit and a bunch in the back. Short flight over to Palmdale, guys in back put a bunch of seats in place and arriving at Palmdale asked the guys in the back to take a seat as we climbed to 35000 ft to do the necessary checks. We made a descent as smoothly as possible to about 5000 feet ran a couple of more checks and it was about time to leave. A nice route heads out to the ocean make a left

turn to go south and then the star arrival into LAX. As we proceeded to cross the hills an overheat light comes on the number two engine. Parameters seemed ok, so I decided to shut the engine down and notify center we needed to make a quick trip to LAX with an engine out and requesting runway 24 keep us in tight if possible.

They said stay the route and they would work something out. Overheat on number one now, "Center Continental now declaring emergency with possible fire on the number one engine. What are your intentions Continental. We can't come to LA too much fuel and not a good plan we would like a right turn and head out over the ocean and see about landing at Point Mugu. Made an easy turn back west and stayed out over the ocean till we could pick up Point Mugu. Told the co-pilot to alert the guys in the back if for any reason we had to ditch know where the vests are and exits. Suddenly a bunch of heads were looking in the cockpit and then running for their seats.

Worse case scenario if number one started to burn I would relight number two and shutdown number one. Turned north and tuned in the VOR for Mugu. Clear day so we picked it up pretty quick. Navy never had the concept of ILS, so you were always on your own except occasional GCA. Very occasional, the approach and landing was uneventful just glad to be on dry land. Phoned the company and brought them up to date and they promised to send some engine mechanics out as soon as possible. The mechanics loaded up and since it is over an hour drive decided to stop at MCD's for lunch. They were supposed to be advised the aircraft needs to be airborne by 5pm or spend the entire next four days at Pt Mugu.

After much begging when 5pm came and went, we told the tower just ten more minutes and then 10 more and by 6pm we were airborne and back to LAX and then the evening traffic, which seemed welcoming at that point. Just another day in the world of aviation.

Airline Pilots' Nightmare

I had a bad dream last night. In it were: the FAA, crew scheduling, bad schedules, bad management, self-serving unions, unserviceable aircraft equipment, changing weather, no extra holding fuel, ever-changing procedures, endless flight manual revisions, dead heading in the middle seat, broken luggage, lost luggage, nasty passenger agents, crabby OLD flight attendants, all-nighters, foreign countries, sleep deprivation, mergers, seniority squabbles, company threats, food poisoning, no food, bad coffee, bidding, separation from my family for weeks at a time, fleabag hotels, late cabs and maniac cab drivers, vacation bidding, waiting for gates, weather, low visibility approaches, aircraft de-icing, PCs, Gestapo check airman, medicals, commuting in unspeakable weather, the parking lot from Hell, parking lot buses, inter-terminal buses, spring break, Christmas rush, Thanksgiving rush, PA announcements, insurance, drug and alcohol testing, noise violations, customs lines, dry cleaning, terrorism, security passes, rude airport/TSA nonsensical security personnel, high gas/oil prices, pay cuts, rush hour traffic, that infernal alarm clock, crash pads, catching cold away from home, lackadaisical crew members, sexual harassment threats, flight attendants and co-pilots implying that they are a gift to aviation after being there three years, back biting, gossip, cell phones, aircraft cram courses, plus laying my job on the line several times a year with simulators, endless procedural memorization and Annual Recurrent Training days.

Then I woke up and joyously found myself still retired!

Two female teachers took a group of students from grades 1, 2 and 3 for a field trip to Southwell Racecourse. When it was time to take the children to the 'bathroom', it was decided that the girls would go with one teacher and the boys would go with the other:

The teacher assigned to the boys was waiting outside the men's toilet when one of the boys came out and told her that none of them could reach the urinal.

Having no choice, she went inside, helped the little boys with their pants, and began hoisting them up one by one, holding on to them to direct the flow away from their clothes and shake them dry.

As she lifted one boy up, she couldn't help but notice that he was unusually well endowed. Trying not to show that she was staring at his equipment the teacher said. 'You must be in Grade 3?'

'No ma'am', he replied. 'I'm riding Black Caviar in the next race, but I really appreciate your help.'

Walking on the Grass

The room was full of pregnant women with their husbands.

The instructor said, "Ladies, remember that exercise is good for you. Walking is especially beneficial - strengthens the pelvic muscles and will make delivery that much easier.

Just pace yourself, make plenty of stops and try to stay on a soft surfaces, like a grass path.

"Gentlemen, remember - you're in this together. It wouldn't hurt you to go walking with her. In fact, that shared experience would be good for you both."

The room suddenly became very quiet as the men absorbed this information. After a few moments a man, name unknown, at the back of the room, slowly raised his hand.

"Yes?" said the Instructor.

"I was just wondering if it would be all right, if she carries a golf bag?"

Brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it? (THIS LEVEL OF SENSITIVITY CAN'T BE TAUGHT)

Bubba - The Special Forces tiger! True story!

Credit to helicopter pilot Dennis Winningstad who posted this on Facebook:

We lived with and flew in support of these Green Berets out of Forward Operating Base (FOB)-2 in Kontum, Vietnam 1967-1969.

Here is a re-post on Bubba:

We got him in Laos after his mom tramped on a land mine. He was only two days old, but I had him in my jungle jacket wrapped in a towel and when we were extracted we fed him milk and got him on his way.

He did well because he got much larger than an Asian Tiger usually grew to.

His weakness was real beer (He had two cans a day) which he slurped down, went to a corner of the hooch, rolled on his back, and snored like the last day!

If the Bubster wanted to get in your bunk with you, you just rolled over and dealt with it.

It's such a shame so many tigers were killed over there because most were killed for sport and not in human defense.

When we cycled out, the question was what the hell do with Bubba?

He couldn't survive because he only knew SOG (Special Operation Group), Special Forces, Seals etc.

Here is where we got creative. We had access to things normal military didn't.

A phone call was made to a research zoo in Sidney, Australia and we asked if they wanted a free tiger. When the lady at the other end realized we were for real she pissed her pants and said, "Yes, but how do we get him?"

I don't want to reference Air America, but we flew the "Bubster" to his new home and I got off the airplane with him walking beside me like a dog on a leash.

They all went nuts when he walked to the lady and heeled by her side looking at her for instructions.

He must have had a very good time and life there because he sired tons of babies.

When I was back to Sidney in 1987, I saw a bronze plaque telling about the SF Tiger that came to them in 1969.

That part of my life is gone like Bubba who lasted to 1985, but every time I hear a Tiger make those special noises my head and heart goes back to a tiny little baby we found in Laos in 1968.

God I miss him! By The Way, the Bubster never lived in a cage. He was always shown love from a bunch of very dangerous men whose hearts melted when they met him.

To discipline him you grabbed a handful of hair and flesh on his shoulder and simply said, "no". He never retaliated. He just complied.

When I said he never lived in a cage, the decision about the zoo where he ended up was a research zoo that was very excited because of gene diversity. It also had the new concept of no animals in cages.

People were the ones in cages or behind glass.

It took a bit for him to get back to being a tiger, but after he figured out the male female thing, nature took its course and he was off to the races and made a ton of tiger babies who are in zoos around the world.

God Bless. To my knowledge, he was the only Special Forces tiger in the history books.

An interesting side note is that SF and MAC V were in many ways involved with the CIA, the coats and ties back in Langley, VA couldn't understand how our Intel was so accurate.

Picture a NVA prisoner strapped into a chair and questioned. Also picture the prisoner telling us in multiple languages to go "F" ourselves. So, a hood goes back on and the prisoner was told to spill the beans or we were going to feed the zip to our tiger

They all laughed and said we were crazy. Enter the Bubster and have his head about two feet from the prisoner and pull the hood off. At the same time I would pinch the back of Bubba's neck. The prisoner soiled his pants or worse while Bubba roared in the his face with his extremely nasty tiger breath. The POW would sing like a Choir.

God I miss that stuff. BTW, our Intel was so accurate the pencil necks were amazed and never found out why!

Nine Important Facts

Number 9 - Death is the number 1 killer in the world.

Number 8 - Life is sexually transmitted.

Number 7 - Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Number 6 - Men have two emotions: hungry and horny, and they can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich

Number 5 - Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

Number 4 - Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.

Number 3 - All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Number 2 - In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

Number 1 - Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do today might burn your ass tomorrow.

... and as someone recently said:

Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last that long .



A Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper, Guido, has cheated him out of \$10,000,000.00. His bookkeeper is deaf. That was the reason he got the job in the first place. It was assumed that Guido would hear nothing and would therefore never have to testify in court.

When the Godfather goes to confront Guido about the missing \$10 million, he takes along his lawyer, who knows sign language.

The Godfather tells the lawyer, "Ask him where the money is."

The lawyer, using sign language, asks Guido, "Where's the money?"

Guido signs back, "I don't know what you are talking about."

The lawyer tells the Godfather, "He says he doesn't know what you are talking about."

The Godfather pulls out a pistol, puts it to Guido's head and says, "Ask him again or I'll kill him!"

The lawyer signs to Guido, "He'll kill you if you don't tell him."

Guido trembles and signs back, "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed at my cousin Bruno's house."

The Godfather asks the lawyer, "What did he say?"

The lawyer replies, "He says you don't have the balls to pull the trigger."

Don't you just love lawyers?

The Infamous Airline Interview

I walked into the interview with a great deal of confidence and enthusiasm. Flying airplanes was my one true passion in this life. This was my big chance to merge my occupation with my love. I would become an airline pilot.

“So you want to be an airline pilot?” the interviewer inquired.

“Yes, sir, more than anything else I have ever wanted,” I replied, realizing I sounded like an anxious adolescent.

“Well, great, welcome aboard,” the airline executive said.

“You mean I’m hired?!” I cheered.

“You bet, we’re glad to have you. Actually, we’ve had trouble finding good pilots to hire,” the exec explained. If I was surprised, it was overshadowed by my joy of reaching my dream.

“Let’s just go over a few points before you sign on the dotted line,” the company man chortled. “We’re going to send you to the world’s most renowned medical center. They’ll spend two days probing your body orifices, draining and analyzing your blood, and administering psychological exams. They’ll literally take you apart and put you back together. If they find any hint of current or future problems, you’re fired and can find your own ride home.”

“Gee, I think my health is OK,” I nervously choked out.

The manager went on, “Good, next we’ll evaluate your flying skills in an aircraft you’ve never been in before. “If we don’t like the way you perform, you’re fired,”

I was confident with my flying, but this guy was making me nervous.

He continued, “Next, if you’re still here, we’ll run you through our training program. If during any time in the next 10 years you decide to leave the company, you’ll have to reimburse us \$20,000, or we’ll sue you. Also if you fail to measure up during training, you’re fired.”

The man who had just given me my dream job listed still more hurdles. “Each time, before we allow you near one of our multimillion dollar aircraft we’ll X-ray your flight bag and luggage, because we don’t trust you. Also we’ll ask you to pass through a magnetometer each time. If you fail to do so, you’ll be arrested and jailed.”

“When you’ve completed your flight, we’ll have you provide a urine sample, because we don’t trust you to not take drugs. Very soon, we plan to take a blood

sample to look for more drugs. “Also if you ever fly with another crew member who may have used drugs or alcohol, you must report to us immediately. If you fail to notice that anyone has used these substances, you’ll be fired, have your license to fly revoked, and be fined \$10,000.”

“Every six months, we want you to go back to the medical center for another exam. If they ever find a hint of a problem, your license to fly will be revoked and we’ll fire you. Anytime you see a medical person, you must tell us about it so we can see if you need to be grounded and terminated. Also, we need to examine your driving record, and you must tell us if you have even any minor infractions so we can remove you from the cockpit as soon as possible.”

“At any time, without notice, a special branch of the government will send one of its inspectors to ride in your aircraft. The inspector will demand to see your papers and license; if your papers are not in order, you’ll be removed, fined, terminated, and possibly jailed.”

“If at any time you make an error in judgment or an honest human mistake, you will be terminated, be fined tens of thousands of dollars, and be dragged through months of court proceedings. The government will make sure you never fly again for any airline.”

“You will be well out of town most holidays, weekends, and family events – half our pilots are always on the job at any point in time.

Smiling an evil smile now, the airline hirer went on.

“Oh, and one last thing to cover. Occasionally, we in management fail to see a trend and screw up royally or the country’s economy falls flat on its face. If as a result of one of those events the corporation begins to lose money, you as an employee will be expected to make up the losses from your paycheck. Of course, management will not be held to the same standards. Oh, and one last thing – if we negotiate pay and work rule concessions from you in the in exchange for a better pension plan, we probably won’t fund that pension plan agreement (unlike the management pension plan and golden parachutes) and will likely have yanked it away from you.”

“Now sign here,” he pointed, grinning as he handed me a pen.

I faked a sudden nosebleed. Holding my head back and pinching my nostrils, I hurried from his office.

When I got to the hall, I began to run. I ran all the way to my car. I figured if I hurried I could still get to the county vocational school before 5:00 and enroll in the industrial welding career program.

Why do Boeing models start with the number 7?

It seems like the Boeing name is inseparable from the number 7 and rarely anybody asks why. It's one of those questions where you can wave it aside and tell yourself "that is just how it is".

But the reality is far more complex than that. Throughout the ages, the question sat behind multiple secretive walls that would protect the secret behind Boeing's naming formula.

However, as time went on, the world became more open. The Berlin wall fell and subsequently, various organizations and government officials would reveal more and more information about their history.

Like the wall up North, Boeing's protective wall also fell.

The whole world finally knew why every single commercial Boeing aircraft starts with a 7 and ends with a 7.

From Model 40 to the 307
Barring the epic introduction into the article, the reality is much simpler and less, much less exciting.

It does go back to Boeing's history, as the company always named their aircraft sequentially.

Before the Second World War, such aircraft as the Model 40, the first Boeing aircraft that carried passengers, the Model 80, the first American plane built to carry passengers, represented Boeing in the commercial sky. At the time, the Seattle-based manufacturer built mostly military aircraft – that was the company's bread and butter.

Boeing Model 40 At that time, Douglas had a firm hold of the commercial aviation market with their DC-2 and DC-3.

However, slowly but surely, Boeing started gaining traction in the commercial market. Firstly with the 307 Stratoliner, and then, after the war ended, Boeing came out with the 377 Stratocruiser. The year was 1947 when the Stratocruiser made its debut flight with the now bankrupt Pan American. However, Boeing's commercial aircraft saw fairly limited success. At that time, Boeing mainly focused on military aircraft. Yet changes were about to come.

From the 367-80 to the Boeing 707

As the War ended, Boeing's president named William Allen decided the company needed to diversify its portfolio. To avoid confusion within the company and when communicating with Boeing's customers, the engineering department classified their products as

follows:

300 and 400 were designated for commercial aircraft;
500 would mean turbo engines;

600 were allocated to the rockets and missiles departments;

And Boeing assigned the number 700 to jet engines.

That's why Boeing called the Stratoliner and Stratocruiser the Boeing 307 and Boeing 377 respectively.

BOAC Boeing 377
Stratocruiser



The first aircraft to bear the number 7 at the start was The 367-80. While it does sound confusing at first, but the prototype for Boeing's first was called the 367-80. After a successful period of test flights, Boeing assigned the number 700 to the model, as it had a jet engine.

Nevertheless, this is where the magic of the naming formula comes true. As the first commercial jetliner was about to change revolutionize, Boeing's marketing team thought that the name 700 sounded quite boring. So instead, they suggested changing the name to the 707, as it sounded much better.

While it might be not so magical or exciting, the reason was a pure marketing one. But if you're looking for a more exciting story than how the 7x7 designation came to be, the history of the Boeing 707 is much more exciting. You can find our article about the 707 right here.

Qantas' Boeing 707

So, to sum up, Why do Boeing models start with a 7? The engineering division dedicated the number 700 to jet-engined aircraft. Boeing's marketing division realized that the name 700 for their first jet aircraft would sound boring, so they suggested the name to be the 707, which had quite a nice ring to it.



And sometimes a story needs exactly one thing – that it would have a nice ring to it.

The Eager Beavers

First, let's get this out of the way. Jay Zeamer wasn't a photographer by trade. He was mostly a wanna-be pilot. He looked good on paper, having graduated with a degree in civil engineering from MIT, joining the Army Air Corps, and receiving his wings in March, 1941. He was a B-26 bomber co-pilot when World War II started.

His classmates all rapidly became lead pilots and squadron leaders, but not Jay. He couldn't pass the pilot check tests despite trying numerous times. He was a good pilot, but just couldn't seem to land the B-26. Landing, from what I've read, was considered one of the more important qualifications for a pilot. Stuck as a co-pilot while his classmates and then those from the classes behind him were promoted, he got bored and lost all motivation.

Things came to a head when co-pilot Zeamer fell asleep while his plane was in flight. Not just in flight, but in flight through heavy anti-aircraft fire during a bombing run. He only woke when the pilot beat him on the chest because he needed help.

His squadron commander had him transferred to a B-17 squadron in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea where he was allowed to fly as a fill-in navigator and occasionally as a co-pilot. He was well liked and popular - on the ground. But no one wanted to fly with him.

Zeamer finally managed to get into the pilot's seat by volunteering for a photoreconnaissance mission when the scheduled pilot became ill. The mission, an extremely dangerous one over the Japanese stronghold at Rabaul, won Zeamer a Silver Star - despite the fact that he still hadn't qualified to pilot a B-17.

Zeamer became the Operations Officer (a ground position) at the 43rd Air Group. Despite his lack of qualification, he still managed to fly as a B-17 fill-in pilot fairly often. He had discovered that he loved to fly B-17s on photoreconnaissance missions, and he wanted to do it full-time. There were only three things standing in his way: he didn't have a crew, he didn't have an airplane, and oh, yeah, he still wasn't a qualified pilot.

He solved the first problem by gravitating to every misfit and ne'er-do-well in the 43rd Air Group. As another pilot, Walt Krell, recalled, "He recruited a crew of renegades and screwoffs. They were the worst - men nobody else wanted. But they gravitated toward one another and made a hell of a team."

The plane came later. An old, beat-up B-17, serial number 41-2666, that had seen better days was flown into their field to be scavenged for spare parts. Captain Zeamer had other ideas. He and his crew decided to rebuild the plane in their spare time since they weren't going to get to fly any other way. Exactly how they managed to accomplish their task is the subject of some debate. Remember, there were so few spare parts available that their 'plane' was actually brought in originally to be a parts donor.

But rebuild it they did. Once it was in flying shape the base commander congratulated them and said he'd find a new crew to fly it. Not surprisingly, Zeamer and his crew took exception to this idea, and according to Walt Krell, the crew slept in their airplane, having loudly announced that the 50 caliber machine guns were kept loaded in case anyone came around to 'borrow' it. There was a severe shortage of planes, so the base commander ignored the mutiny and let the crew fly but generally expected them to take on missions that no one else wanted. The misfit crew thrived on it. They hung around the base operations center, volunteering for every mission no one else wanted. That earned them the nickname The Eager Beavers, and their patched up B-17 was called Old 666.

Once they started flying their plane on difficult photoreconnaissance missions, they made some modifications. Even among the men of a combat air station, the Eager Beavers became known as gun nuts. They replaced all of the light 30 caliber machine guns in the plane with heavier 50 caliber weapons. Then the 50 caliber machine guns were replaced with double 50 caliber guns. Zeamer had another pair of machine guns mounted to the front of the plane so he could remotely fire them like a fighter pilot. And the crew kept extra machine guns stored in the plane, just in case one of their other guns jammed or malfunctioned.

As odd as all this sounds, the South Pacific theatre in the early days of World War II was a chaotic area scattered over thousands of miles with very little equipment. Having a plane with an apparently nutty crew who volunteered for every awful mission not surprisingly made the commanding officers look the other way.

In June, 1943, the U. S. had secured Guadalcanal in the southern Solomon Islands. They knew the Japanese had a huge base at Rabaul, but were certain there were other airfields being built in the Northern Solomon Islands. They asked for a volunteer crew to

take photographs of Bougainville Island to plan for an eventual invasion, and of Buka airfield on the north side of the island to assess for increased activity there. It was considered a near-suicide mission - flying hundreds of miles over enemy airspace in a single, slow bomber. Not to mention photoreconnaissance meant staying in level flight and taking no evasive action even if they were attacked.

The only crew that volunteered, of course, was Jay Zeamer and the Eager Beavers. One of the crew, bombardier Joseph Sarnovski, had absolutely no reason to volunteer. He'd already been in combat for 18 months and was scheduled to go home in 3 days. Being a photo mission, there was no need for a bombardier. But if his friends were going, he wanted to go, and one of the bombardier's battle stations was to man the forward machine guns. They might need him, so he went.

They suspected the airstrip at Buka had been expanded and reinforced, but weren't sure until they got close. As soon as the airfield came in sight, they saw numerous fighters taking off and heading their way. The logical thing to do would have been to turn right and head for home. They would be able to tell the intelligence officers about the increased number of planes at Buka even if they didn't get photos.

But Zeamer and photographer William Kendrick knew that photos would be invaluable for subsequent planes attacking the base, and for Marines who were planning to invade the island later. Zeamer held the plane level (tilting the wings even one degree at that altitude could put the photograph half a mile off target) and Kendrick took his photos, which gave plenty of time for over 20 enemy fighters to get up to the altitude Old 666 was flying at.

The fighter group, commanded by Chief Petty Officer Yoshio Ooki, was experienced and professional. They carefully set up their attack, forming a semi-circle all around the B-17 and then attacking from all directions at once. Ooki didn't know about the extra weapons the Eager Beavers had mounted to their plane, but it wouldn't matter if he had; there was no way for a single B-17 to survive those odds.

During the first fighter pass the plane was hit by hundreds of machine gun bullets and cannon shells. Five crewman of the B-17 were wounded and the plane badly damaged. All of the wounded men stayed at their stations and were still firing when the fighters came in for a second pass, which caused just as the first. Hydraulic cables were cut, holes the size of footballs appeared in the wings, and the front plexiglas canopy of the plane was shattered.

Zeamer was wounded during the second fighter pass, but kept the plane flying level and took no evasive action until Kendrick called over the intercom that the photography was completed. Only then did he begin to move the plane from side-to-side allowing his gunners better shots, just as the fighters came in for a third wave of attacks. The third pass blew out the oxygen system of the plane, which was flying at 28,000 feet. Despite the obvious structural damage Zeamer put the plane in an emergency dive to get down to a level where there was enough oxygen for the men to survive.

During the dive, a 20mm cannon shell exploded in the navigator's compartment. Sarnovski, who was already wounded, was blown out of his compartment and beneath the cockpit. Another crewman reached him and saw there was a huge wound in his side. Despite his obviously mortal wound, Sarnovski said, "Don't worry about me, I'm all right" and crawled back to his gun which was now exposed to 300 mile an hour winds since the plexiglass front of the plane was now gone. He shot down one more fighter before he died a minute or two later.

The battle continued for over 40 minutes. The Eager Beavers shot down several fighters and heavily damaged several others. The B-17 was so heavily damaged, however, that they didn't expect to make the several hundred miles long flight back home. Sarnovski had already died from his wounds. Zeamer had continued piloting the plane despite multiple wounds. Five other men were seriously wounded.

Flight Officer Ooki's squadron returned to Buka out of ammunition and fuel. They understandably reported the B-17 was destroyed and about to crash in the ocean when they last saw it.

The B-17 didn't quite crash, though. Zeamer had lost consciousness from loss of blood, but regained it when he was removed from the pilot seat and lay on the floor of the plane. The copilot, Lt. Britton, was the most qualified to care for the wounded and was needed in the back of the plane. One of the gunners, Sergeant Able,

had liked to sit in the cockpit behind the pilots and watch them fly. That made him the most qualified of the crewman, so he flew the plane with Zeamer advising him from the floor while Britton cared for the wounded.

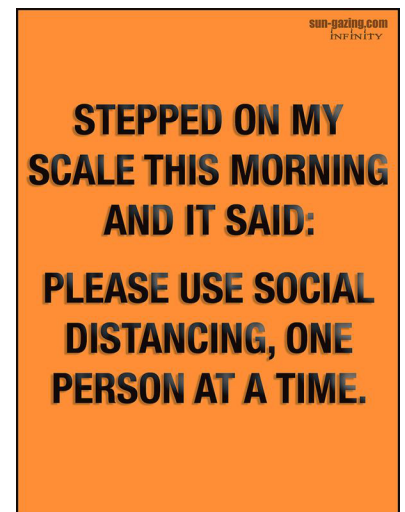
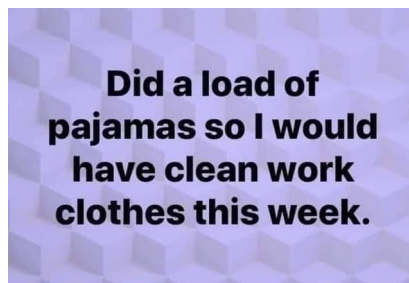
The plane made it back to base. (Britton did return to the cockpit for the landing.) After the landing, the medical triage team had Zeamer removed from the plane last, because they considered his wounds mortal. Amazingly, the one thing on the plane not damaged were the cameras and the photos in them were considered invaluable in planning the invasion of Bougainville.

All of the wounded men recovered, although it was a close thing for Captain Zeamer. In fact, a death notification was sent to his parents somewhat prematurely. He spent the next year in hospitals recovering from his wounds, but lived a long and happy life, passing away at age 88.

Both Zeamer and Sarnovski were awarded the Medal of Honor for the mission, the only time in World War II that two men from one plane ever received America's highest medal for valor in combat. The other members of the crew were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, second only to the Medal of Honor as an award for bravery. So, somewhat surprisingly, the most decorated combat flight in U.S. history didn't take place in a major battle. It was a photo-reconnaissance flight; the flight of 'old 666' in June of 1943.



The TP Patrol



An old tired-looking dog wanders into a guy's yard. He examines the dog's collar and feels his well-fed belly and knows the dog has a home. The dog follows him into the house, goes down the hall, jumps on the couch, gets comfortable and falls asleep. The man thinks its rather odd, but lets him sleep. After about an hour the dog wakes up, walks to the door and the guy lets him out. The dog wags his tale and leaves.

The next day the dog comes back and scratches at the door. The guy opens the door, the dog comes in, goes down the hall, jumps on the couch, gets comfortable and falls asleep again. The man lets him sleep. After about an hour the dog wakes up, walks to the door and the guy lets him out. The dog wags his tale and leaves. This goes on for days. The guy grows really curious, so he pins a note on the dog's collar: "Your dog has been taking a nap at my house every day." The next day the dog arrives with another note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with four children -- he's trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?"

Taps

If any of you have ever been to a military funeral in which taps was played; Here is something Every American should know.

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, 'Taps...' It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes.

But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings:

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Elli was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the a narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Elli heard the moans of a a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral.

The the request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate.

But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

The wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know 'Taps' used at military funerals were born.

The words are:

Day is done. Gone the sun. From the lakes From the hills. From the sky. All is well.

Safely rest. God is nigh. Fading light Dims the sight. And a star. Gems the sky. Gleaming bright. From afar. Drawing nigh. Falls the night

Thanks and praise. For our days. Neath the sun Neath the stars. Neath the sky As we go. this we know. God is nigh

**Reunion October 21 Don't pretend
that you didn't know about it!**

ED. This has been posted on Facebook and other sites. Hopefully not fake news as it is an amazing story.

Leica and WWII Jews

The Leica is the pioneer 35mm camera. It is a German product - precise, minimalist, and utterly efficient.

Behind its worldwide acceptance as a creative tool was a family-owned, socially oriented firm that, during the Nazi era, acted with uncommon grace, generosity and modesty. E. Leitz Inc., designer and manufacturer of Germany's most famous photographic product, saved its Jews.

And Ernst Leitz II, the steely-eyed Protestant patriarch who headed the closely held firm as the Holocaust loomed across Europe, acted in such a way as to earn the title, "the photography industry's Schindler."

As soon as Adolf Hitler was named chancellor of Germany in 1933, Ernst Leitz II began receiving frantic calls from Jewish associates, asking for his help in getting them and their families out of the country. As Christians, Leitz and his family were immune to Nazi Germany's Nuremberg laws, which restricted the movement of Jews and limited their professional activities.

To help his Jewish workers and colleagues, Leitz quietly established what has become known among historians of the Holocaust as "the Leica Freedom Train," a covert means of allowing Jews to leave Germany in the guise of Leitz employees being assigned overseas.

Employees, retailers, family members, even friends of family members were "assigned" to Leitz sales offices in France, Britain, Hong Kong and the United States, Leitz's activities intensified after the Kristallnacht of November 1938, during which synagogues and Jewish shops were burned across Germany.

Before long, German "employees" were disembarking from the ocean liner Bremen at a New York pier and making their way to the Manhattan office of Leitz Inc., where executives quickly found them jobs in the photographic industry.

Each new arrival had around his or her neck the symbol of freedom - a new Leica camera.

The refugees were paid a stipend until they could find work. Out of this migration came designers, repair technicians, salespeople, marketers and writers for the photographic press.

Keeping the story quiet The "Leica Freedom Train" was at its height in 1938 and early 1939, delivering groups of refugees to New York every few weeks. Then, with the invasion of Poland on Sept. 1, 1939, Germany closed its borders.

By that time, hundreds of endangered Jews had escaped to America, thanks to the Leitzes' efforts. How did Ernst Leitz II and his staff get away with it?

Leitz, Inc. was an internationally recognized brand that reflected credit on the newly resurgent Reich. The company produced cameras, range-finders and other optical systems for the German military. Also, the Nazi government desperately needed hard currency from abroad, and Leitz's single biggest market for optical goods was the United States.

Even so, members of the Leitz family and firm suffered for their good works. A top executive, Alfred Turk, was jailed for working to help Jews and freed only after the payment of a large bribe.

Leitz's daughter, Elsie Kuhn-Leitz, was imprisoned by the Gestapo after she was caught at the border, helping Jewish women cross into Switzerland. She eventually was freed but endured rough treatment in the course of questioning. She also fell under suspicion when she attempted to improve the living conditions of 700 to 800 Ukrainian slave laborers, all of them women, who had been assigned to work in the plant during the 1940s. (After the war, Kuhn-Leitz received numerous honors for her humanitarian efforts, among

them the Officer d'honneur des Palms Academic from France in 1965 and the Aristide Briand Medal from the European Academy in the 1970s.)

Why has no one told this story until now? According to the late Norman Lipton, a freelance writer and editor, the Leitz family wanted no publicity for its heroic efforts. Only after the last member of the Leitz family was dead did the "Leica Freedom Train" finally come to light.

It is now the subject of a book, "The Greatest Invention of the Leitz Family: The Leica Freedom Train," by Frank Dabba Smith, a California-born Rabbi currently living in England .

Naval Aviator Eye Exam

The School of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania conducted a survey called, "What really do you see?"

Study the picture for 5 seconds. What do you notice? Think about it; what is odd?



Here are the results of the Survey:

1 100% of Male Naval Aviators failed this test. They were distracted by the woman's large bosom

2 100% of the female Naval Aviators also failed this test. They were distracted by the wide choice of doughnuts.

The answer:

There's a mouse on one of the doughnuts. Don't tell me you saw it.
I won't believe you!!

WWII AvGas

This is a declassified article by the British Society of Chemists (Declassified in 2014)

It seems that the German and British aircraft both used 87 Octane Gasoline in the first two years of the war. While that was fairly satisfactory in the German Daimler-Benz V-12 engine, It was marginal in the British Rolls-Royce Merlin XX engine in British aircraft. It fouled the spark-plugs, caused valves to stick, And made frequent engine repair problems.

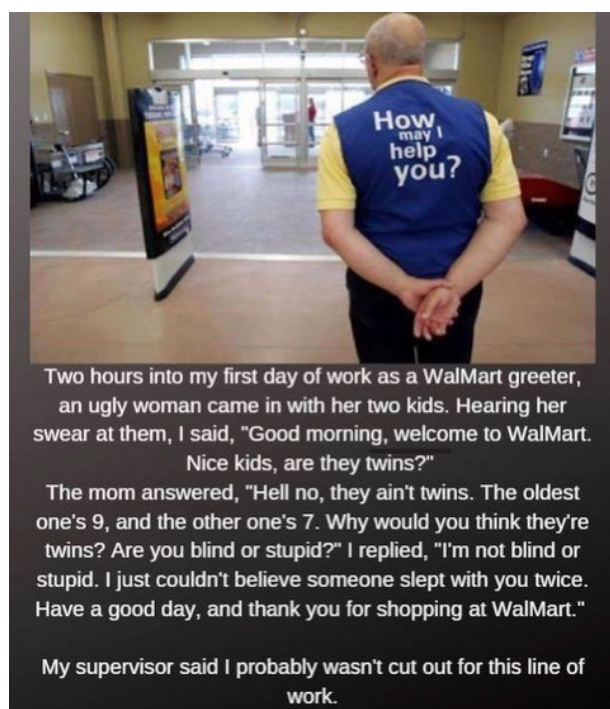
Then came lend- lease and American aircraft began to enter British service in great numbers. If British engines hated 87 Octane gasoline, American, General Motors Built, Allison 1710 engines loathed and despised it. Something had to be done!

Along came an American named Tim Palucka, a chemist for Sun Oil in their South East Texas Refinery. Never heard of him? Small wonder, very few people have. He took a French formula for enhancing the octane of Gasoline, and invented the "Cracking Tower" and produced 100 octane aviation Gasoline. This discovery led to great joy among our English Cousins and great distress among the Germans.

A Spitfire fueled with 100 Octane gasoline was 34 miles per hour faster at 10,000 feet. The need to replace engines went from every 500 hours of operation to every 1,000 hours. Which reduced the cost of British aircraft by 300 Pounds Sterling. Even more, when used in 4 engine bombers. The Germans couldn't believe it when Spitfires that couldn't catch them a year ago started shooting their ME-109 E and G models right out of the sky.

Of course, the matter had to be kept secret. If the Germans found out that it was a French Invention, They'd simply copy the original French patents. If any of you have ever wondered what they were doing in that 3 story white brick building in front of the Sun Oil Refinery on Old Highway 90, that was it. They were re-inventing gasoline.

The American Allison engines improved remarkably with 100 Octane gasoline, but did much better when 130 octane gasoline came along in 1944. The 130 Octane also improved the Radial Engine Bombers we produced. The Germans and Japanese never snapped to the fact that we had re-invented gasoline. Neither did our "Friends" the Russians. 100,000 Americans died in the skies over Europe. Lord only knows what that number would have been without "Super-Gasoline". And it all was invented just a few miles west of Beaumont, and we never knew a thing about it.



A letter from: Shirley Musser
Subject: Annual Surviving Spouse Outreach

Always thankful to be able to still read and get the Golden Eagles Magazine sent to me by mail as my age is now at 85 & a half years old. My how time flies but I am still on my family farm renting out my land and living alone in a large farm house that my Grandfather built my parents when they got married, My Grandfather owned three farms on this Co Rd and was a devoted God loving Man. Ralph was born just a mile and a half away from me on his parents 120 acre's of land which was his Great Grandfather land and went down through the years...

Ralph learned to fly at 16 and never stopped loving it...Became a instructor at our local Airport and then joined Continental Air Lines in 1957 Flew till the strike and it was the hardest thing for him too do as he was always proud of Continental when Mr. Six owned it...Things changed and you all know the rest...As instructor in past he never wanted to desert the younger pilots who was on the strike line and stayed with them till the end. Very proud of the choice he made and his said it was a moral issue with him. Ralph's health went down fast when we decided to sell our beautiful home in Fountain Valley and move too the farm we had here that my father left me. I home cared for Ralph till the end. Which was in 2012 of Feb.29th. Our two sons are still in the Fountain FV. Area. And the Oldest helps me with all the problems that arrive here on the farm. So Thankful the boys love.

Know you don't have room for the magazine for this, I just think often of the one's that knew and flew with him! Ralph never had a bad thought of anyone who flew with him. Only wanted the best for the men with him in the cockpit.

Thank you both for reading this and God Bless you All!

Shirley Ann Musser

A letter from Virg Hemphill

Hi Gary & Dave, Good job on the April Golden Eagles Magazine...really Nice.

Regarding "The First FIFTY YEARS of Continental Airlines" display we recently finished... The museum added this commercial aviation educational display because CONTINENTAL AIRLINES was headquartered 19 miles East of our location, with the first flight- takeoff in 1934.

The purpose of the non-profit Museum is basically to preserve & present 36+ historical aircraft, 50+ classic/antique/military vehicles, along with many other associated subjects for education-enjoyment -etc. for present & future generations.

With the present Covid-19 situation, naturally the Museum is closed until more favorable times... Hopefully in the brighter future, Golden Eagles Members driving I-10 thru West- El Paso will stop by & enjoy a few hours at THE WAR EAGLES AIR MUSEUM

Be Safe/ Be Healthy - Virg HEMPHILL

The Crew Room

From Kevin Stevens.

What Have You Been Up To?

Retired early, 63.5 years old. Due to the present turmoil and my past medical history.

That being said, I look back to many extremely wonderful memories of flights and crews at Continental, and, then, a few years of putting up with the total BS at United.

Thankfully I am healthy, and cancer free presently. Also I have my FAA first class medical once again allowing me to fly the Cessna if I desire.

I will be riding my Harley Road King often, and spending time with Amy, our family and friends in this next chapter in my life.

Safe travels to all.

Kevin Stevens B787 CA Scottsdale

From Dave Newell

What Have You Been Up To?

Since the heat is rising here in the San Antonio area, Kay and I are heading for the Colorado mountains near Denver for the summer. We do this every year and enjoy visiting Kay's sons and their families, my daughter and her husband who now live in Colorado Springs and long time friends who live in the area. Jim Farrow and I plan on doing some more motorcycle rides this summer and I always look forward to those trips. Have a great summer. Dave

From Gary Sachs

What Have You Been Up To?

For those of you that may be or are being forced to use the loss of license insurance due to medical issues. I have been forced to use it for a long time and will be happy to help with the ins and outs of the system and point out some of the pitfalls of its use.

Please only serious requests only.

I only wish there would have been somebody there when my time came, as the devastation that occurs when you loose flying privileges due to medical issues can be overwhelming.



Added since the April Edition

- *Denotes Golden Eagles member*

Daniel King	Feb 15, 2020	Alex Alexander	May 20, 2020
Ray Shubert	Mar 08, 2020	Bill Darrow*	May 29, 2020
Thomas Lund	Mar 11, 2020	Barry Schultz	June 2020
Dave MacCormick	Mar 30, 2020	Paul Britton	June 18, 2020
John Nelson*	Apr 01, 2020	Mike Perry*	July 03, 2020
Billy Ray Mills	Apr 30, 2020	Emily Howell-Warner	July 04, 2020
Claude Perret*	May 14, 2020		

High Flight

by John Gillespie Magee Jr.

"Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered
wings;

Sunward I've climbed and joined the
tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds -
and done a hundred things You have not
dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
high in the sunlit silence.

Hovering there I've chased the shouting wind
along and flung my eager craft through
footless halls of air.

"Up, up the long delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy
grace, where never lark, or even eagle, flew;
and, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
the high un-trespassed sanctity of space,
put out my hand and touched the face of
God."

Golden Contrails

C/O Gary Small
5504 Luna Del Oro ct. NE
Albuquerque NM 87111

www.thegoldeneagles.org

WESTBOUND		EASTBOUND	
FLY 1	FLY 2	FLY 3	FLY 4
9:45	4:15	3:30	6:55
10:10	4:40	4:00	7:20
11:25	5:50	4:50	8:30
11:55	6:25	5:20	9:00
12:15	6:45	5:40	9:20

Light Type—A-M
Read Down
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