



The sad news that former Continental Airlines pilot and Golden Eagles member Captain Romain Nelsen has flown West was just received from his wife Pamela. Romain passed peacefully at home with his family on October 11, 2024.

The Golden Eagles sends condolences to Romain`s family and we wish them peace and comfort as they grieve their loss. May Romain have favorable winds, smooth air and clear skies for his flight West. Rest in peace Captain Nelsen, and Godspeed on your final journey.

Captain Nelsen`s obituary is posted below:



**Captain Romain Nelsen**

*Dec. 14, 1935 — Oct. 11, 2024*

Romain Oliver Nelsen, 88, succumbed to senescence on Oct. 11, 2024, at home in Davis, CA , where he has shared the last quarter-century of life with his beloved wife, Pamela Marie LaCore Anthony. He often professed to being the luckiest guy he knew.

A not inconsiderable share of his life's pleasure came from their five children, Toni Anthony of Boulder, Colo., Kay Nelsen of Elk Grove, Ann Aguilar of San Jose, Susan Nelsen of Sacramento and Christopher Palmer Nelsen of Denver; his two cherished sisters Karen Lea Eason, who predeceased him, and Cynthia Kay Young of Tustin; and his honored former spouse, Carol LaJean Graham of San Jose.

Romain first took breath on Dec. 14, 1935, at Spenser, Iowa, the locale necessitated by winter travel in a Model T Ford. When the blizzard eased, his parents, Palmer Granville Nelsen and Stella Margarete Johnson Melum Nelsen, plowed onward to his maternal grandmother's small acreage at Beloit, a village on the Iowa side of the Big Sioux River, immediately south and across from Canton in South Dakota. He spent his unnoticed early

boyhood poverty there, under the influence of his beloved grandmother JoNettie Ranum Melum, a Norwegian immigrant, who stressed exemplary conduct to Romain, but with limited success.

Soon after the outbreak of World War II, the family moved to Sioux Falls, S.D., where Romain's father worked as a firefighter at the temporary Army Air Forces training base. With war's end, the family returned to poverty again, living a trailer-house life, as his father worked road construction across the western Dakotas, a study itself.

His formal education began slowly. He graduated from Sioux Falls Washington High School in 1953 and attended South Dakota State College without graduating. Facing the draft, he enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1956 as an aviation cadet, to become a radar interceptor operator. He went on to graduate with honors from USAF Undergraduate Pilot Training in 1962, later became a distinguished graduate in the F-102A Fighter Interceptor Program, and then an expert-level instructor graduate of the USAF Interceptor Weapons School. During more than 15 years of active and Air National Guard service, he attained O-4 rank, concluding service with the 196th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron of the California Air National Guard. He neither gave nor took a hostile shot.

In 1966, Romain joined Continental Airlines as first officer and flight engineer positions on Boeing 707 and 747 aircraft, before going on to achieve captain and check airman ratings on Boeing 727 and Douglas DC-10 equipment. When Continental fell victim to a hostile takeover, he retired at year-end 1981 to avoid post-merger turbulence.

While flying a first officer schedule with Continental, Romain completed an L.L.B. and J. D. from Whittier College School of Law, followed by admission to the California Bar in 1974. He practiced insurance defense and insurance coverage law on a national scale for the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies through his Los Angeles firm. After year-end 1999 he retired to the pleasure of continuing college courses through the UC Davis Open Campus program, followed by a 10-year last act in service to and for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UC Davis, interspersed with hobby woodworking.

Romain truly enjoyed an exceptional ride, on the generosity and forbearance of others, and so has requested no service, but encourages whatever gift may serve his memory, by giving to the "least of these," this world's needy.

Full disclosure: It will surprise no one who knew him that Romain authored his own obituary, lightly edited by Pamela. Romain observed that he was "not a humble man, though some thought he should be." He will be dearly missed by family and friends.



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