



Honor, integrity, pride, fellowship — The rEAL Flight Crew!

THE rEAL WORD



Official Newsletter of the The Silver Falcons

Volume 8 Number 1 & 2

www.silverfalcons.com

Winter/Spring 2004

Congratulations



CAPTAIN JOHN LUNDBLAD ARRIVING HOME ON FLIGHT 1413, HIS FINAL FLIGHT FOR AIRBORNE EXPRESS, IN A B767-200 FROM BFI (SEATTLE'S BOEING FIELD) TO ILN (AIRBORNE AIRPARK, WILMINGTON, OHIO) ON FEBRUARY 10, 2004. CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES, CAPTAIN, ON A JOB WELL DONE.



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The opinions expressed in The rEAL Word are the opinions of individual members and do not express the opinions of the BOD or the organization.

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The Silver Falcons is a group of former Eastern Airlines Pilots and Flight Attendants who honored the picket line in 1989. It is incorporated and registered as a nonprofit organization in the State of Georgia. The Silver Falcons is also registered as a tax exempt organization with the IRS.

Dues are \$25 per year for a Charter member and \$10 per year for an Auxiliary member. A life membership may be purchased for \$500 for a Charter member and \$200 for an Auxiliary member. Dues and all correspondence should be mailed to: The Silver Falcons, P.O. Box 71372, Newnan, GA 30271.

A quarter page ad for one year (Four issues) is \$250. A half page ad, either horizontal or vertical, is \$500 a year. Every attempt will be made to put these ads on the outside of the page rather than toward the middle. The back cover and the inside of the front cover will be offered for full page ads only and will cost \$1000 a year. If you have a special event that needs attention for a short time, we will accept single issue ads at \$62.50 for a quarter page, \$125 for a half page, and \$250 for a full page (if available). We will not decrease the content of the newsletter, but will increase its size to accommodate our advertisers. Every attempt will be made to insure that there is no more than one ad per page. The editor will have the right to reject any ad that he deems objectionable, although we do not anticipate this as a problem. All ads must be in black and white since we do not have color capability at this time.

It will be the responsibility of the advertiser to supply a print ready ad to the editor at least thirty days prior to publication of the newsletter. Every effort will be made to accommodate any specific requests you may have. Publication dates are January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15 each year. All materials can be mailed to The Silver Falcons, P.O. Box 71372, Newnan, GA 30271, or contact Dick Borrelli at this address, by fax at (770) 254-0179, or by E-Mail at conob@numail.org if you plan to participate. Deadline for ads is at least 30 days prior to the publication dates stated above.

From the President



Ladies and Gentlemen of The Silver Falcons,

First I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year! As your President, I wish to thank all the previous Board members for their hard work, diligence, and devotion in keeping our fine organization going and financially solvent. Also, please

welcome **Captain Gil Gilbert** as your new Vice President and **Captain Gray Bailey** as your new Secretary. We shall endeavor to meet the challenges of the coming year to the best of our ability.

A big, big Thank You and Kudos to **Denny and Peggy Cholley** and all their volunteers for making our 2003 Orlando Convention such a wonderful, outstanding success! We all had such a good time and so many of the attendees kept saying they wished the "Grand Party" could just go on forever!! My non-Eastern friends are always so amazed that after all this time we still go on and on, every year, and remain so connected, together, and committed to keeping the great name of Eastern Airlines alive. I believe there is a bit of envy in the fact that we have so much darn fun doing it!

I would like to make you aware that **Captain Al Haynes**, (UAL Retired), our most inspirational speaker in Orlando, has a most personal crisis in his life. His daughter, **Laurie Haynes Arguello**, has been diagnosed with Aplastic Anemia and is in dire need of a bone marrow transplant. The family needs to raise \$300,000 - \$150,000 immediately- to cover the shortfall from what her insurance will pay. We all know about the health insurance fiasco that affects us daily. I will approach the Board about making a donation from The Silver Falcons. However, if any of you desire to make a personal contribution you may do so by making checks payable to: NFT for Laurie Arguello, P.O. Box 7781, Covington, WA 98042. Please be sure to mention that you are a member of The Silver Falcons.

We will have an interesting and fun year ahead of us I hope... I am open to all suggestions, comments, ideas, and thoughts about how to make us a better organization than we already are, so please don't hesitate to communicate with me. We are all looking forward to party time again in Seattle and our thanks go to **Jim and Cheryl Furlong** for all the hard work that's already being done! Let's support them and cooperate in our usual great manner.

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Dick Borrelli** and family for a speedy recovery... we also include all other members who may be on the sick list. Let's all "Think Healthy" for 2004.

My parting thoughts are to remind you to send in your annual dues (They were due in JANUARY!) and to also encourage any qualified (non-scab) crewmembers to join our fine organization.

May our troops come home from Iraq as soon as possible to be reunited with their families and get on with their lives. Peace be with you!

Doyne Langrell
President
The Silver Falcons

DOGFIGHT

by Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker



It seems only yesterday that I walked into the hangar of the 94th (Hat-In-The-Ring) Squadron at Villeneuve, France, and stepped aboard the little French single seater Nieuport biplane that was to take me through scores of aerial dogfights. The Nieuport was a fairly “Hot” airplane in March, 1918. It had a rotary type engine, a ceiling that varied from 16,000 to 20,000 feet depending on how the airplane felt that day, a hair-raising

speed of 120 miles an hour with a following breeze and it could outdive the enemy’s famous Fokker—provided the fabric didn’t peel off the wings in the process.

The fabric hazard was no joke. It brought a number of our group fluttering down in crashes. The first time it happened to me, I was roaring in on a flight of three armed German Albatros photographic planes headed for the Allied lines north of St. Mihiel, and closed in on the trailing plane until, at fifty yards, the pilot saw me and went into a dive. I was on his tail in an instant and, as he came into line with my sights, my tracers ripped along the fuselage until they disappeared into the back of his seat. His plane careened earthward out of control.

Then I eased back on my stick to pull out of my dive—too late. With a ripping crack, my lower right wing collapsed and the entire spread of taut canvas on the top wing tore loose and went flapping away in shreds. I fell into a spin and spiraled downward for 10,000 feet. In desperation, at 3,000 feet, I gunned the throttle. Amazingly enough, it brought the crippled ship into horizontal position and kept it there until I skimmed over the hangars of our aerodrome and onto the runway amid a cloud of dust, noise, and debris. How I walked away from that mess without a scratch is a thing no mere man can explain.

Thinking back on those action-filled months when my squadron mates and I flew the 94th’s collection of nuts, bolts, struts, and wires to many victories and our share of defeats against the finest that Von Richtofen’s Flying Circus could put in the air, brings a man up with a jolt. When we stepped into those rickety crates back in 1918, it was a 50-50 chance that if a sharp German pilot didn’t knock us from the sky, the plane would fall apart under us. Yet we thought they were as nearly perfect as planes could be.

Now, 34 years later, we talk in terms of gleaming, dart shaped aircraft that pierce the ether at speeds faster than sound, pull out of power dives intact under pressures that can crumple steel, and climb more than four miles high....

World War I not only demonstrated the potentialities of the airplane as an implement of war, but it forced the United States and its allies into a competition with the enemy to produce better airframes and engines. The “Flying Machine” grew up into an airplane.

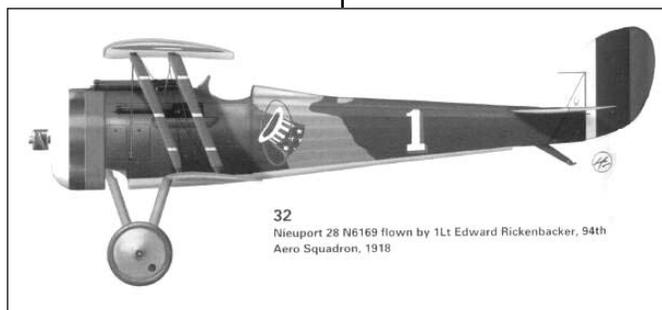


By the middle of the war the German Fokker appeared on the scene. It was a real plane in every sense, with a cruising speed respectable even today, plus rugged climbing and diving ability. It ruled the skies through 1916-1917. In the race to outdo it, the French built the little Nieuport, which could outmaneuver it. Then came the Spad to outspeed, outdive and outclimb the German menace. The British developed the SE-5 which could outmaneuver and outdive the enemy, but couldn’t outrun him. The British also had the Camel and the Snipe, barely off the drawing boards, which bettered all the planes in many respects. The latter was rumored to have the unheard of ceiling of 33,000 feet and a speed upward of 250 miles an hour.

In the 94th, we used to sit around our Nieuport at the airdrome—a tiny sod area no more than a half mile square accommodating about 80 aircraft—and eat out our hearts for these new “Hot” biplanes. We finally got some Spads, but for the first few months we fought in the old Nieuports. Though we grumbled about them, there were some real advantages to these kites. You could roar earthward with the plane in almost any condition of disintegration short of afire and stand a good chance of walking away from it.

In one running fight with an Albatros I wouldn’t have given much for my life. Right in the middle of the dogfight, with my sights lined up on the enemy, my guns jammed. I jarred them free with my “Jam hammer” and tried again. They jammed again at the crucial moment. Then to top it all, my oil ran out and the engine froze solid. I slid off in a dive, got away from the Albatros, hedgehopped over some barbed wire and was able to set the plane down in a perfect landing on a narrow field.

In spite of this hair raising era of “Growing Up,” the airplane was here to stay. When we entered the war on April 6, 1917, the air arm was still the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps and consisted of 35 pilots, 1987 enlisted men, and 55 training planes. The Navy had 35 officer pilots, 163 men, and 54 airplanes. By the time the armistice was signed, the Army Air Force consisted of 20,568 officers, 174,456 men, and 8403 planes. The Navy had built its air strength to 2853 officers, 32,873 men, and 2127 planes. In addition there were 282 officers and 2180 men in Marine Corps aviation.



About the Convention

Barring any earth shaking developments, the 2004 Convention will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center in beautiful downtown Tacoma, WA. The dates to remember are September 13, 14 and 15 for the usual two day convention. However, Cheryl and I are planning around a week long period from 9/11 to 9/17 to accommodate those who have the time to arrive early or stay a little later. We can't stress too highly the notion of planning for a longer stay in the Northwest or scheduling an Alaska Cruise just prior to the convention. We have already contacted an agency to help us negotiate a group or interline rate for a cruise the week prior. More info will follow on the Web site as we have progress to report. Stay tuned!

Those planning to drive can finally stop to see all of those National Parks they've always wanted to see but never quite had the time for. We will be suggesting side trips in the Northwest for those who have the time.

From Mt. St. Helens to the San Juan Islands, there are sites in this area that can't be found anywhere else in the world. Depending on the response we get, we may be at the hotel to open registration the weekend before and have scheduled events at group discounts Sunday and Monday preceding the convention. These might include such things as the Spirit of Washington Dinner Train, Tillicum Village Salmon Feast, Argosy Dinner Cruise on Puget Sound and numerous Gray Lines Tours. I will post web addresses on the web site shortly so you can check out these attractions. Most require 20 to 50 participants to obtain the group discount. Obviously, we'll need to know if you plan to come early to get the best deal for everyone. Those planning to do the Alaska Cruise will be arriving early also. We'll try to have something for everyone.

Hank and Darlene Sanak will be publishing their itinerary for the RV crowd and will be inviting others to join the caravan en route. Since this is the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, I suggested a route that would roughly follow the Oregon Trail route. **Hank** is the Wagonmaster. Send him your thoughts.

We are always open to your suggestions and questions and will be glad to help individuals who are interested in special tours, B&Bs, etc.

—Jim & Cheryl Furlong

Places to Visit

Plans are well underway for a convention that we hope will be only a part of a bigger Northwest Adventure for you this fall. I would hope that most attendees have the time to book an Alaska cruise before or after the convention or plan to stay in the area for a few weeks to take in the sights. Cheryl and I will be glad to do a bit of travel planning for you by recommending some of our favorite places and tours that can be done in from one to five days. We are also negotiating with some of these resorts for discounts. Naturally, the more interest you show, the better our chances to work a deal for the group. We have made initial contact with Kenmore Air and Rosario Resort for a package deal.

This is a beautiful old mansion converted to a hotel on Orcas Island. Kenmore flies from downtown Seattle (Lake Union) daily. And, it is only a short flight from here to downtown Victoria, British Columbia and could be a nice trip with two or three days in each before the convention. The Northwest has many such hotels and resorts. These include the famous Timberline Lodge on Mt Hood and numerous seaside retreats on the Oregon and Washington coasts.

Numerous day trips to Mt Rainier, the Olympic National Park and Mt St Helens are also within reach. There is the Northwest Trek Wildlife Park and Zoo featuring animals native to the area and museums and historic sights abound. Shoppers will find a great selection of fine stores, (Nordstrom, REI, and Eddie Bauer are all based here). There are many outlet malls and the famous Pike Street Market. This is also the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Drivers might want to follow the route that they took on your way here.

Other links:

Argosy Cruises
www.argosycruises.com
Tillicum Village
www.tillicumvillage.com
Gray Lines Tours
www.Grayline.com
Mt Rainier Tours
www.MtRainierTours.com
Mt. St. Helens
www.mount-st-helens.com
Seaplane Tours
www.kenmoreair.com

Dinner Train
www.SpiritofWashingtonDinnerTrain.com
More Cruises
www.waterwayscruises.com
Museum of Flight
www.museumofflight.org
Area Photos
www.islandcam.com
Canada ala Carte Vacations
 800-430-9001

Links to these and many other sights will be posted on the website and we will be saying a little more about some of these in future. I believe Hank Sanak will be organizing a RV caravan for those who feel like forming a modern wagon train.

The convention will be a little different than what we have done in the past. Final plans have yet to be made, but the banquet will not be done at the hotel and there will be no guest speaker. This year, dinner will be served aboard the Emerald Star as we cruise the Puget Sound. I saw this ship today and she is beautiful.

She is 105' long with large picture windows and an open deck on the upper aft section. Spacious interior seating is available on both decks for dinner. We will finalize the menu when we have a better idea as to the numbers, but will feature fine Northwest cuisine and local wines. The ship has just finished a complete overhaul and the interior picture shown below is a little out of date; but it does give an indication of the roominess.



There are many other details that are still being worked out. Cheryl and I value the input we get from others and it isn't too late to make suggestions for the spousal lunch or some other part of the convention. I particularly need to here from the golfers about trophies, type of match, etc. I know nothing about golf.

Please get your registrations in as soon as possible and reserve your rooms with the Tacoma Sheraton online at www.sheratontacoma.com or call 888-627-7044 and tell them you are with the Silver Falcons. They have been nice enough to extend the \$79 rate to both the week before and after the convention to accommodate those who wish to spend more time in the area. See you in September!

Jim & Cheryl Furlong

The Alaskan Glacier Cruise

The cruise is scheduled to depart Seattle, WA on September 5 and returning on September 11, just in time to enjoy the convention. The ship is the Norwegian Star of the Norwegian Cruise Line and has been on line for two years. This is considered "a Free Style Cruise". This puts you in control of your cruise by dining where you want and when you want, with whom ever you want. You are able to wear casual clothes while dining or you can Dress to the nines and be catered to. This should be an excellent way to relax and enjoy a cruise without being regimented.

We selected three different types of cabins but you can choose another one of your liking if you prefer. The following are the different state rooms we have selected. AF Mini Suites, Ocean view room w/Balcony, or Ocean view State room. The prices range from \$1,520 to \$1,058 which includes Taxes and Port charges. If you are interested there are still staterooms available. Please contact Sybil at CRUISE VACATION CENTER, 1-800-803-7245 ex 121, and tell her you would like to join the Eastern Airlines Silver Falcons group.

What to on the Rest of Your Trip

I think Saturday, the 11th, would be a good day to go on a driving trip to Mt. St. Helens with a stop at the Centralia outlet stores on the way back for those ladies who think shopping is the only reason to travel.

It's about a two hour drive to the Visitor's center closest to the crater. It takes a full day not to be rushed.

On Sunday, the 12th, I think there should be a number of brunch options. For those who just want to rest up, there's the Lobster Shop on the water a few miles from the hotel. Great buffet and a very reasonable price. If you like Dungeness Eggs Benedict, they cook that to order as part of the service. The Spirit of Washington Dinner Train runs a Sunday Brunch also. The train leaves Auburn at 11am and lasts a little over 3 hours with a stop at the Columbia Winery. There is also the Tillicum Village Sunday Dinner. That ferry leaves Seattle Pier 55 at 11:30 am for a short cruise to Blake Island. They serve a traditional Indian Style baked salmon dinner with a native show. I can get us a discount for groups of 15 or more. I'm not

sure about the discount for the dinner train.

Kenmore Air may provide us with a discounted air tour of the area in a TurboBeaver/Otter floatplane if enough people show an interest. Monday would be a good day to do this and visit the Pike Street Market afterward for lunch and shopping.

After the convention, the same tours will be available to those staying awhile or killing time waiting for a cruise.

If the Rosario Lodge, or other San Juan Island lodging is appealing, I highly recommend booking a Kenmore Air package that would fly you to the islands for one or two nights; continue to Victoria for a couple of nights and fly back to Seattle. If driving, the same can be done utilizing the Washington State Ferry system, but the sailing times are limited.

Hope this helps. The key is to get this done early if you plan to need reservations. The trip to the mountain is no problem, but the others will fill up quickly and I would expect real problems trying to book after June 1st.

Jim

The following is a list of cruise attendees.

Hank & Darlene Sanak	Roy & Nila Wren & Daughter
Ron & Judy Shoop	Bill & Linda Frank & Daughter
Don & Marlene Teel & Daughter	Bob & Lil Ayers
Ales & Gail Borrego	Paul & Duane Fisher
Kenneth & Rachel Anderson	Dennis & Kathy Scharr
Don & Carol Thompson.	

Dick if you think we need any other information give **Darlene** a call, she will be able to answer any questions about the cruise.

Hank

GRANDBABY UPDATES

**Tower, this is Jonah
flight 925 wishing
Captain "Papa J" a
Happy Birthday—do
you copy, over?**



**Mario Pizer,
Grandson of
Jim Holder.**



**Georgia Irene Wade, age
2, Granddaughter of
Dave and Shay Hamon.**

**Jonah Mattingly,
Grandson of Bud and
Adolyn Robbins.**

HOUSEKEEPING AND SUCH...

1. The Atlanta South Side Breakfast Group which formally met at Melear's Barbeque in Fayetteville now meets at Becky Sue's Restaurant in Fayetteville every Friday morning at 9 A.M. Becky Sue's is located next to the Fayetteville Burger King, facing the street in Back. The parking lot can be entered from Highway 85.
2. If you move, change your phone, or E-Mail please let **Joe Zito** know. We normally receive at least three returns on newsletters and mailings which requires additional postage to remail.
3. In reference to the above, we have three lost boys. If anyone has knowledge of the current whereabouts of **Victor Voras**, **Ed Cawthorn**, or **Tom Brandt** please let us know. All correspondence from these gentlemen is being returned, addressee unknown and their phone numbers and E-mails no longer work.
4. Our Web Master, **Jerry Frost** would like everyone to review the web site and contact him with suggestions for improvement in appearance, content, and organization.
5. We have included a nominating ballot with the newsletter. Please give this careful consideration and return it as soon as possible.
6. The Silver Falcons are now in the data base for the Tacoma Sheraton. Please make your reservations as early as possible. In the event you cannot attend they can be cancelled. Review all the options available at this convention and plan to arrive early and perhaps stay late to take advantage of the many side trips being offered. If you have never taken a vacation in the Pacific Northwest, you have missed visiting one of the most beautiful areas in the world. The Alaskan Glacier cruise is a once in a lifetime adventure. A trip to Vancouver, British Columbia and perhaps a side trip to Vancouver Island and a stay at the Empress Hotel is a vacation you'll never forget. Remember, we can book rooms at the hotel at the convention rate for one week prior to the convention until one week after, so don't delay, book today!
7. We have not printed a layabed list in this issue since no one has notified us of any ill members. You can all send a card to **Ron Shoop** for practice, if you'd like.

THE EDITORIAL

I would like to thank all of you who took the time to call, visit, send cards, and E-Mail during my recent illness and convalescence. Both Jane and I truly appreciate the outpouring of affection and concern expressed by so many of you and it will not be forgotten!

“The rEAL Word” is and has been a forum for the members to express their personal views and it is not the intention of the editor to ever restrict any member from doing this. For this reason I have printed the entire correspondence concerning REPA submitted by **Dick Nellis**. Dick has been a faithful and participating member of The Silver Falcons and has supported us since the organization was founded. He has attended all our conventions. He was one of the most active and vocal of our leaders during the conflict in 1989 and he is a personal friend. Our views of REPA are diametrically opposed, and I present his correspondence for you to read and for you to draw your own personal conclusions. It is not my intention to join REPA. That is a personal choice and I neither recommend it nor condemn it for any of you.

For the past few years The Silver Falcons and REPA have been operating under an undeclared truce and mutual cooperation. As an example, our Christmas dinner in Atlanta is open to all Eastern crewmembers (With a few obvious exceptions!) and the annual Atlanta Flight Operations picnic has become a joint venture. All of us have good friends who are not Silver Falcons and are longtime REPA members and these friendships will continue to grow and mature as we age. Many of you are members of both groups. This is a matter of personal choice. Due to the distinctly different origins of the two groups and also due to the vastly different political agendas involved in their founding, as well as specifics outlined in The Silver Falcons Bylaws, the possibility of an eventual merger is nil to nonexistent. REPA was organized to honor the memory of the Eastern we once knew and the founders who made it great. It was created because Eastern was a family. The Silver Falcons was organized to honor the crewmembers who sacrificed their careers to fight a management that had prostituted all the ideals that REPA had been founded for. The Eastern

Family no longer existed except on the picket line. The Silver Falcons have become the Eastern Family. All replies and rebuttals concerning this correspondence will be printed in the April newsletter.

I have been in pretty constant contact with **Jim Furlong** in Seattle and the 2004 convention is taking shape nicely. His plan is to have the original three day core convention as we now know it as well as planned extra activities on a pay as you go basis both before and after. These will probably include Alaska cruises, seaplane tours, Salmon bakes, Dinner trains, moonlight cruises, and a variety of other things that are explained elsewhere in this newsletter. A list will be published as the information becomes available and you will all be given the opportunity to sign up. Updates of activities will be published on our web site and more information will be available in the July newsletter. For further and continuing information contact **Jim Furlong** personally. His contact information is in the current roster, but his area code has changed. The phone number is now (253) 925-1905 and his E-mail is jfurlong1@earthlink.net. The hotel rate has been booked for seven days before the convention until seven days after for this reason and the hospitality suite will be available from the Sunday before until the Friday after the convention begins. For the first time in our history we will have a choice of rooms at special convention rates. The standard room, which is extremely nice, will be \$79. Attendees may upgrade to a Deluxe King room for \$109 and a room on the Club Level for \$119. This is an option we have never had before. SEATAC in 2004 is well on it's way to becoming the convention of the century for us and I hope you all plan to attend.

As always, the opinions expressed in the editorial are those of the editor and do not express the opinions of the Board Of Directors and are not Silver Falcon policy. Replies and rebuttals are welcome and will be published in the next issue.

Dick Borrelli
Editor

A LETTER FROM DICK NELLIS

Dear Silver Falcons,

Our recent convention in Orlando was, as usual, a great success. Our hosts, Denny and Peggy Challey and all of the other volunteers who helped put the gala event together certainly earned our heartfelt gratitude. Our annual conventions never fail to recharge our batteries and remind ourselves of the strong bond that exists between all rEAL pilots.

Additionally, I am grateful that the Silver Falcons allowed Jim Holder and me to once more make a pitch to members at the SF Business Meeting to please join or rejoin REPA. The point that Jim and I tried to make was that the leadership of REPA is now under the control of rEAL pilots and we want to ensure that it remains that way.

During the discussion, we talked about the fact that **Colonel Frank Borman** has been removed from the ranks of Lifetime Honorary Members of REPA and how that took place. In fact, I wrote an article that is scheduled to appear in the next edition of REPAtee and I have sent it to **Captain Dick Borrelli** and asked him to include it in a future edition of “The rEAL Word” because I believe all SF members should know what took place regarding Borman.

In closing, I would like to, once again, emphasize that the rEAL pilots of REPA have no intention of trying to merge the two groups. On the contrary,

we see a definite need for both groups and remain dedicated to the agenda of the Silver Falcons, which is to honor those who honored the strike. At the same time we ask SF members to recognize that the REPA agenda is in no way in conflict with the SF agenda but instead is dedicated to keeping the name and history of Eastern Air Lines alive as long as possible and without your help REPA will die before it's time. To drive that point home, all you have to do is to go to the website www.repaonline and click on Memoriam Section to view the staggering number of our brothers who have flown their final flight West. With that thought in mind, I'm asking that you put aside the anguish that previous REPA leaders caused us and join your fellow rEAL pilots as well as the pioneers who we grew up under at our beloved EAL.

If any SF pilot member wishes to join or re-join REPA all you would have to do is send me, as REPA Treasurer, a check for \$40 dues for the year 2004. The usual application form would be waived because obviously any SF pilot member would be more than welcome without the formality of filling out a form. My address is 9547 Mariner's Cove Lane, Fort Myers, FL 33919.

Fraternally
Dick (Richard) B. Nellis
EAL Capt. (Ret), REPA Treasurer



THE BORMAN DISCUSSION

by Dick Nellis

The “Business Meeting”, which is the meeting of the regular pilot members in attendance at this year’s annual convention in Nashville, TN, was especially interesting. That was because of the discussion pertaining to **Col. Frank Borman**. In accordance with REPA Bylaws, two members submitted separate resolutions more than 90 days in advance of the Business Meeting that requested the membership consider removing **Borman** from the ranks of REPA Honorary Members.

The discussion began with a member accusing the Executive Board of violating the Bylaws and thus preventing the membership from being involved. That was not an accurate statement because the intent of the Executive Board was to allow the membership to be completely involved and to, in the end, vote the resolutions to remove **Borman** either up or down at the Convention Business Meeting. However, when **Borman** was contacted regarding what was to take place, he took the matter out of the membership’s hands by resigning.

After that misunderstanding was cleared up, a member offered a resolution that requested **Borman’s** resignation be denied and that he be notified that he was reinstated as an Honorary Member. A lengthy discussion ensued with members offering opinions on both sides of the issue. It became apparent that members who were in favor of reinstating **Borman** came from the group who were not on the property when **Borman** and the Eastern Air Line Board of Directors sold out to **Frank Lorenzo** and the Texas Air Corporation (TAC). Those members were obviously unaware of the historical facts that surrounded the questionable midnight sale. Among those unbelievable and unscrupulous details is the well publicized information that TAC was paid a \$20 million nonrefundable inducement by EAL to simply make an offer to buy the airline. On top of that TAC paid only \$615 million for EAL of which EAL financed \$110 million in EAL cash and \$230 million in EAL preferred stock. Also, no other bids could be entertained by the EAL Board. Small wonder that it was later revealed that EAL’s top management had been given extremely lucrative “golden parachutes”. **Borman’s** parachute for helping TAC arrange this bogus, so-called sale exceeded \$1 million. All of those disgusting particulars became known after the fact and the employees who owned 30% of the common stock were completely disenfranchised without any knowledge beforehand of this bizarre, inexplicable transaction.

On the other side of the argument were the members who were still active when **Borman** conspired with **Lorenzo** prior to the so-called sale. A number of those members offered facts regarding the misdeeds of **Borman**, including the fact that he later went to work for **Lorenzo** by serving as Vice-chairman on the TAC Board of Directors.

After this lengthy and emotional discussion, it was requested that the resolution that called for **Borman’s** reinstatement be once

more read. When that was done, the pilot who initially seconded the motion withdrew his second and the motion died for lack of a second.

At that point, several pilots who were originally in favor of the motion got up and commented that now that they were aware of the facts, they agreed with the Executive Board’s decision to accept **Borman’s** resignation. A member then offered a motion that the membership accept and approve of the Executive Board’s decision and the motion passed with an overwhelming majority being in favor.

This whole discussion brought home the sad fact that a large number of pilots who had retired prior to the **Lorenzo** takeover were grossly misinformed regarding what actually took place during and after the so-called sale of our esteemed corporation. They obviously still held **Borman** in high regard in spite of all the facts that were a matter of public record that told the true story of how he had betrayed us.

Even sadder is the indisputable fact that too many of those same pilots seemed to be misinformed about the whole “Lorenzo era”. They apparently have fallen prey to a lot of the myths that surrounded the strike. For example, too many believe we joined with the machinists and that is simply not factual. The truth is the pilots never had a strong relationship with the IAM led by **Charlie Bryant**. All the pilots who were on the property in 1983 should be able to vividly recall how the pilots let **Borman** know we were fully prepared to cross the IAM picket line if they carried out their threat to strike. **Borman**, after assuring the pilots the company would resist the strike changed his mind at the “midnight hour” and instead of doing what he promised, gave the IAM a 30% increase in wages and benefits.

By 1989 everything had drastically changed. After **Borman** colluded with **Lorenzo** in 1986 to arrange the duplicitous sale the stage was set for the corrupt management that took over, to dismantle EAL and move our assets, including cash, to Texas Air Corporation (TAC). In March of 1989 **Lorenzo** prompted the strike by locking the IAM out and left the pilots and flight attendants with no viable option other than to not cross the picket line established by the IAM.

On the 4th of March 1989 the Eastern pilots, in almost unanimous solidarity, refused to cross the IAM picket line. Only 212 Eastern pilots out of approximately 3600 pilots opted to defy their own brotherhood by choosing to collaborate with the marauding management team that had taken over our beloved company.

On the 5th of March 1989 the president of REPA sent a letter, speaking for the Executive Board, stating that REPA was going to remain neutral in the strike. Needless to say, that came as a tremendous shock and disappointment to those of us who had

THE DUCKHAWK FLIES AGAIN

from William L. Hirsch

no sensible alternative other than to leave the property in an effort to stop the well documented rape of EAL. At this point, a number of highly respected REPA members wrote a letter to the Executive Board that opposed the president's letter and stated in no uncertain terms that REPA should remain steadfastly behind the pilots who had left the Eastern cockpits in a last ditch effort to stop the systematic dismantling of the Eastern assets. That caused the REPA president to rescind his earlier letter and write a new letter that supported the striking pilots. Unfortunately, in future actions the REPA leadership of that time continued to send the wrong message to the striking pilots and caused some, in frustration, to create the "Silver Falcons", an association to honor those who honored the strike. As a matter of fact, all but one member of REPA's current Executive Board is also a "Silver Falcon" and while we have no intention of trying to merge the two associations we are certainly going to make every effort to bring them back into REPA and to likewise encourage all REPA members who believe in the Silver Falcon's agenda, to join that very worthy organization.

All of the foregoing is not just opinion but rather a matter of public record and that drives home the point that REPArtee and our Web site, www.repaonline.com should, in the future, pay more attention to the "Lorenzo era" so that the myths that have surrounded the strike of 1989 can be laid to rest.

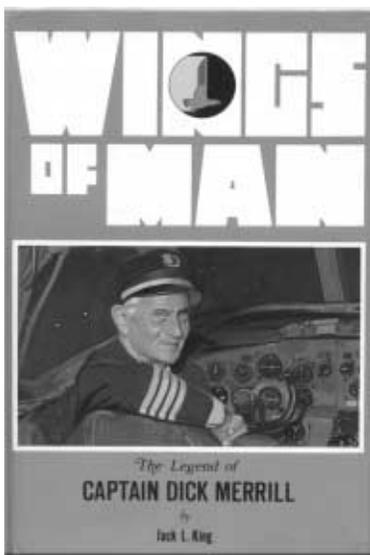
Surprisingly today there are about 12 Martin 404 aircraft that still exist and out of those 12 aircraft 6 are ex-Eastern. As many of you know and have seen our Martin 404 registration # N450A serial # 14141 is owned and operated by the Mid Atlantic Air Museum, based at Reading, Pennsylvania.

Another EAL Martin 404 registration # N487A serial # 14235 underwent Restoration beginning in 1997, it was restored to US Coast Guard design. And in early February 2004 N487A was purchased by a group that is restoring the original Hobbie (sp?) Field Terminal in Texas. N487A will be ferried from California to Galvston, Texas by the son of former EAL Captain Whitesell during the week of February 9th, 2004. At that time the aircraft will be stripped of its US Coast Guard colors and will be restored to its original all silver "Silver Falcon" delivery paint scheme with full authorization from Eastern Air Lines and re-registered back to it's Eastern tail number N487A. This will now be the fourth ex-Eastern aircraft to again wear the proud Eastern Logo and Name.

Eastern Air Lines may be down, but they will never be able to eliminate the name of Eastern Air Lines and the proudest Airline Family to ever serve the public.

BOOK REVIEW: WINGS OF MAN

by Jack L. King



This book about Eastern Legend Dick Merrill should be on every pilot's bookshelf. It not only tells the story of an Eastern Pilot, but gives an exciting picture of the birth of commercial aviation and a great history of Eastern Air Lines. Published in 1981, it is still available on E-Bay, Half.Com, and Amazon, as well as the occasional used book store. The old Eastern pictures (And this book is full of them!) are worth the purchase price whether you bother to read the book or

not. Well written, it's a wonderful way to spend the evening as you reminisce and dream of past layovers, thunderstorms, tight approaches, and all those delicious and delightful crew meals. It

has a forward with comments by **Ernest Gann, Robert Serling, Arthur Godfrey, and Jim Bishop**. No pilot's story is really true. We all have a habit of embellishing events—was the approach really that tight? Was the storm really that rough? How many engines did you lose? How many Flight Attendants—Oh, well, you know what I mean! Non the Less, this is the story of a man bigger than life, a legend in his own time, a gentleman, and a sport. Great reading—Try it!



CHRISTMAS 2004—PETIT AUBERGE

A great time was had by all as we met for our annual Atlanta area Christmas Dinner at Petit Auberge in Atlanta. It was complete with a private dining room, a cash bar, and loads of good cheer and Christmas spirit. Our President, Hank Sanak, provided a number

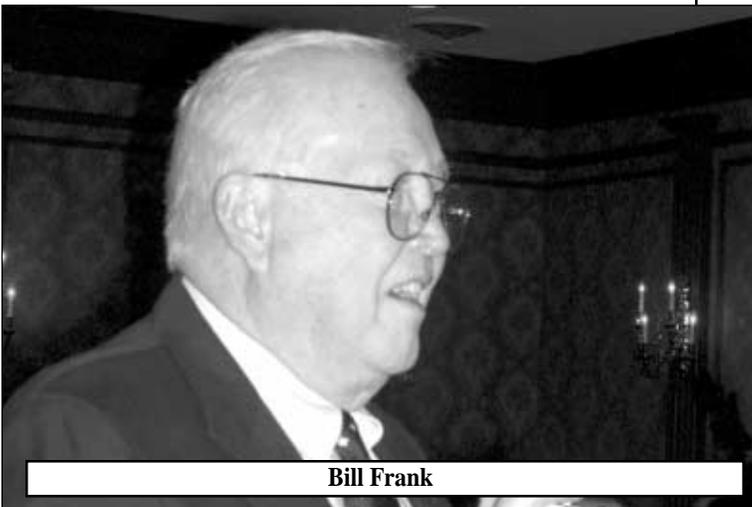
of door prizes (Big, but cheap!), and he was awarded a plaque of appreciation by The Silver Falcons for his two years of service to the group. We had a total of seventy seven people in attendance.



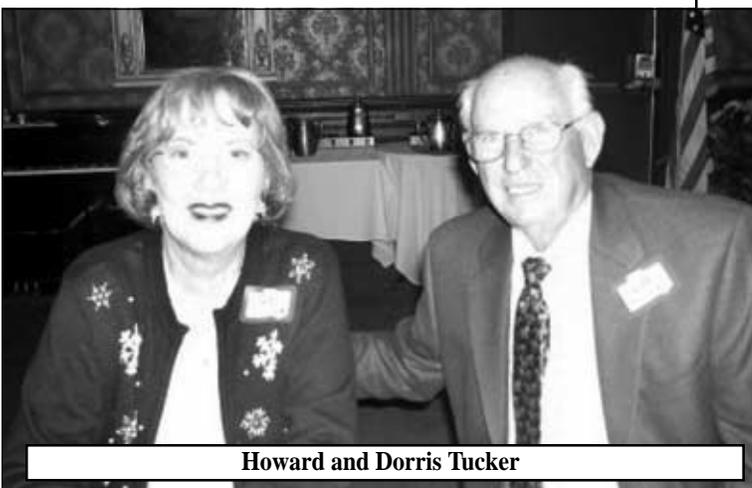
Anne and Frank Morgan



Eileen Zito



Bill Frank



Howard and Dorris Tucker



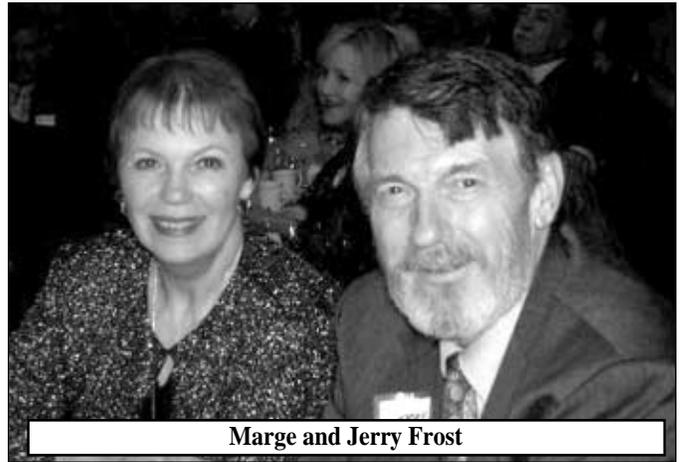
Duane Fischer



Joe Zito



Joe and Sandy McCann



Marge and Jerry Frost



Leah McCullough



Paul Fischer



Captain Byron Ellis once again displaying those skills learned at Eastern to an appreciative FedEx DC-10 crew.

EAL FLIGHT OPERATIONS ANNUAL PICNIC

This year's Annual EAL Flight Ops Picnic and Fly-in will again be held at Eagles Landing airport, SW of Griffin. The date is Saturday, May 29th, 2004. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR.** Plan to be there, it is great fun! **Virgil Tedder** is in charge. Copy the coupon below and send with your money, **Virge** will send you a complete flyer with all the particulars in your return envelope along with your winning tickets for the raffle and barbecue meal tickets.

NAME _____

Number of tickets @ \$13.00 _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Make check to REPA-ATL and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope

Send this to: Virgil Tedder, 2987 Margaret Mitchell Court, NW, Atlanta, GA 30327, Tel: 404-351-4960

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A HAIR-RAISING EXPERIENCE

This from Jim Holder. The author is not a Falcon, but the experience is hair raising enough to be printed here.

Shortly after midnight on 10-June 1969, I was the pilot of a single-seat A-7 Corsair light-attack aircraft that departed the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Constellation and plunged into the Pacific Ocean some 60 miles off the coast of Southern California. The mishap occurred at the end of a marathon 23-hour day that culminated with the first of six scheduled night carrier landings. The event was to have marked my final night of initial carrier qualification training as a fleet replacement pilot.

The voice of Connie's final approach controller came through the headset loud and clear, "Corsair 202 is on course...on glideslope at three-quarters of a mile...call the ball." That was my cue to get off the instruments, and fly the final few seconds of the approach visually. A light drizzle was falling from the low hanging overcast just above the landing pattern, but the visibility was good underneath and the sea state calm. The A-7 aircraft strapped around my waist was the Navy's newest light-attack carrier jet and I was proud to be one of first-tour pilots selected to fly it. "Two-Zero-Two, Corsair, ball, fuel state 4.0," I replied as my scan shifted outside the cockpit to the "meatball" of amber light beaming aft from the optical landing mirror on our four-acre flight deck. The seat of my pants told me the plane was too high...but the ball was centered on the mirror to confirm I was on glideslope. My 4,000 lbs of fuel was a comfortable reserve... ample to make it around the landing pattern a couple more times and still have enough fuel to "bingo" to the primary divert field at NAS Miramar if I didn't get aboard. "Roger ball- keep it coming," the Landing Signal Officer acknowledged from his platform on the port side of the flight deck. The voice was not as relaxed as the LSO who had "waved" the class every night for the past month in training at Lemoore.

More than two years of flight training at five bases in four states were riding on this event. Tonight was the long awaited "graduation exercise" from the training environment into the fleet...the final rite of passage into the Navy's elite fraternity of tailhook carrier pilots. In a few short months, I'd be flying combat missions in Southeast Asia from an aircraft carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Scheduling such a significant event at the trailing edge of a grueling 16-hour day should have raised caution flags somewhere, but not with me. The instructor pilots had primed the class for months with sea stories about night carrier landings separating the "men from the boys"—now it was my time to prove I could fly with the eagles. The adrenaline was pumping.

The nonstop day that began with a 0330 wake-up call back home in Lemoore had been a test of endurance. But long days are part of the normal routine aboard carriers at sea. Besides, we were training for combat, and "hacking the program" was part of that training. This was the Navy...not the airlines. And the squadron's mission was to pump out combat replacement pilots for NavAirPac's light-attack Corsair squadrons...and pilot output was running behind schedule. Pressure was on from the top down...to catch up. And in the light-attack community... "death before dishonor" was the unwritten code. Begging off the flight schedule, especially with a flimsy excuse like fatigue, was a sure way to be branded as "not able to hack it" for the rest of your career.

The final half-mile to the ship was over in a matter of seconds. And it happened so fast that the tricky "burble" of turbulent air at the fantail passed practically unnoticed. But the bone jarring jolt of the 25,000 pound Corsair coming down at 650 feet-per-minute to collide with the ship's steel deck didn't go unnoticed. I knew it was coming, but it still got my attention. The harness straps dug deeply into my shoulders as the plane decelerated from 135 knots to a screeching halt in three seconds flat. The first night

"trap" had lived up to its billing. It was a cross between ecstasy - and a head-on collision with a freight train.

"Piece of cake," I thought. "Five more and your on you're way to the fleet." The landing was on speed and on glideslope, and the tailhook had engaged the targeted No. 3 wire. All was not well, however, as the plane was drifting fast toward the port catwalk. On this, the fifth man-up, third launch and eighth trap of the extended day, fatigue had finally overpowered my adrenaline. I had become so focused on flying the ball... that the landing centerline had momentarily dropped out of my scan. As the plane decelerated down the angled deck, a late lineup correction set up a roll out...right-to-left. The plane skirted the port deck edge like a tightrope walker on a high wire before stopping painfully close to the deck edge catwalk.

I couldn't believe this was happening to me...I could already hear the lecture on lineup from the LSO at my debrief. The cockpit then jolted hard as the plane's left main landing gear dropped off the deck. As luck would have it, the protective steel scupper plate guarding the deck edge had been removed and not replaced during the ship's recent maintenance trip to the shipyard. In less than a heartbeat, the plane was precariously perched on the edge of the flight deck.

With no visible horizon, it was hard to tell the plane's exact attitude, but the fuselage was turned at least 60 degrees left-wing-down. To eject now would be suicidal...the trajectory of the ejection seat's rocket motor would send the seat skipping across the water like a flat rock thrown on the surface of a pond. If the tail hook remained engaged with the arresting gear cable, the situation might still be salvageable. As my mind suddenly shifted into slow motion, the magnitude of the moment settled in. Strangely enough, there was no panic. At least not yet.

My thoughts were surprisingly calm and clear as I instinctively pulled the throttle aft and "around-the-horn" to shutdown the engine. If the hook should release from the cable and the aircraft went over the side, the prospect of cold sea water combining with its hot power plant was a recipe for an even more explosive situation. Anyway, the engine was of no use now.

As the engine spooled down through sixty-five percent rpm, the generator dropped off the line and cut off all electrical power. As the radio and interior lights went out, total darkness instantly enveloped the cockpit. All contact with the world outside was lost. Except for the pounding in my chest...there was only dead silence and it had a deafening sound. If this was a dream, it was a nightmare! Unfortunately...I was not dreaming. The momentary stillness was soon shattered when the aircraft lunged forward and down. The worst had happened. The tailhook had "spit-out" the arresting cable. The plane tumbled off the flight deck and plunged downward some 60 feet before impacting the water below...it was like falling into a black hole.

We had learned that a ditched aircraft normally sinks at about 10 feet per second. And after 100 feet, survival is highly unlikely. If I were going to get out of this mess alive, I figured I had about 10 seconds to do it. Using the ejection seat seemed to be my only chance...a slim one. Only a handful of pilots had ever attempted, much less survived an underwater ejection. There was also the chance I might eject myself directly into the ship's passing steel hull...or even worse - into the path of her massive propellers. So, I intentionally delayed the inevitable to allow the ship to pass clear. Then, like a death-row prisoner condemned to throw the switch on his own life, I reached down between my knees for my seat's alternate ejection handle, the one we'd trained to use when time was critical.

Images of my wife and baby flashed through my mind. How would she react when the skipper and chaplain came to the door? Realizing this might be my last conscious thought, I grasped the ejection handle, closed my eyes

and, expecting the worst, I pulled straight up. Nothing happened. Time stood still. I decided the ejection seat was not going to work and I could see myself drowning or crushed to death in the depths . . . when a sudden blast of brilliant light blinded me. Following a built-in sequencing delay, the seat's rocket motor now fired.

In an instant, I was out of the cockpit, clear of the seat, but submerged in the dark water. It was as if I had been shot out of a high-powered cannon into a pool of jet-black ink. The underwater ejection had forced my oxygen mask down around my chin. I couldn't breathe and I was totally disoriented. I couldn't tell up from down. And for the first time panic set-in. In less than a minute, I had gone from being a cocky, self-assured carrier pilot to a desperate young 25 year-old Navy LTJG fighting for his life.

I had to do something fast or it was all over. Just then, a cluster of lights flickering on the surface above me, caught my eye. As an 80,000 ton aircraft carrier cutting through the water at 30 knots doesn't stop and turn around on a dime, the flight-deck directors had tossed their lighted watertight flashlight wands over the side to mark my plane's location for the plane-guard destroyer and the rescue helicopter. Though I was still underwater, the lights reoriented me. Instinctively swam up toward them.

As my helmet broke the surface I gasped for air. It felt great to be alive. But that lung full of fresh sea air was accompanied by an excruciating pain as if a butcher knife had been plunged and twisted between my shoulder blades. Something was seriously wrong with me, but I now had an even more pressing problem. My parachute's altitude-sensing device had activated and the parachute had partially opened. The canopy and its nylon shroud lines were streaming behind me, overpowering my frantic efforts to keep my head above water.

I grabbed for the nylon toggles that inflate the lobes on the survival vest, but they weren't where they should have been. Panic began to set in once again, and time was running out. I was fast losing the struggle to keep my head above water. It took all the strength I could muster just to stay afloat. The parachute was winning, and I was on the verge of being dragged under.

My body suddenly went numb with apprehension as something below the surface brushed against my feet. During the ejection through the plastic canopy, my left forearm had been sliced open and was bleeding profusely. The survival vest contained shark repellent but I was too busy trying to keep my head above water. When the object brushed against me again, I realized that it was my plane. It had impacted the water with minimal force and was virtually intact. With its wing fuel bladders and half of the fuselage fuel cells filled only with air, it was floating upside down just beneath the surface. I had surfaced alongside the aircraft and my legs had brushed against it. Hanging onto the aircraft for support, I finally located the life vest's inflation toggles which had wrenched around to my side during the ejection. Grasping a lanyard in each hand, I pulled down and away . . . and whoosh, the flotation lobes inflated instantly.

The parachute had streamed out like a huge sea anchor. Should it sink, even the fully inflated vest wouldn't help. I glanced around just in time to see the plane-guard destroyer bearing down on me. From my water-level perspective, the "small boy" looked anything but small, and if she didn't change course, this rescue would be over and the salvage operation would begin. Using techniques we had learned in water-survival, I rolled over on my back and reached upward along the parachute risers until I located the Koch release connecting to the parachute. I lifted up on the cover, pulled, and the chute was gone.

Moments later, I was floating center stage in a large beam of bright, white light shining down from the ship's SAR helicopter that hovered noisily overhead. The destroyer had veered off yielding to the helicopter. I had

never fully appreciated helicopters except when they brought the mail. And they had always been high on my list of low-priority aircraft. Never again! Just now, that homely, wind-blowing, water-churning contraption looked like an angel of mercy. Nothing could have been more beautiful. Minutes later, a rescue swimmer from the helicopter was in the water next to me. "You okay, sir?" he yelled over the din of the thrashing rotor blades. "I'm okay," I yelled back, "but it hurts to breathe." I didn't tell him that it also hurt to yell. "All we've got is a horsecollar, but it'll get you out of here," he shouted as he guided my arms through the opening in the pear-shaped rescue sling that nestled under my armpits.

As the hoist began lifting us slowly out of the water, my body dangled helplessly from the horsecollar. Weighted down by soaking flight gear and steel-toed flight boots—whipped about by the helo's downdraft—my back pain became almost unbearable. The next thing I remember was sprawling on the deck of the helo's cargo cabin, throwing-up salt water.

Moments later, the helo recovered aboard the carrier and I was transported to sickbay on a stretcher. The alternate ejection seat handle expedited my exit from the cockpit, but at a painful price. Reaching down between my knees to grasp the secondary handle in an inverted, submerged cockpit had placed my spine in a vulnerable and dangerously curved position. The brutal G-force of the ejection seat firing had broken my back.

Three days after the mishap, the ship's medical officer arranged to accompany me ashore on a MedEvac flight to nearby San Diego. By coincidence, the flight was scheduled with the same helicopter crew, and aboard the same helicopter that had rescued me earlier.

Just prior to boarding, a casualty on the flight deck had created an unexpected dilemma, because the helo was configured to carry only one patient. Needless to say, I wasn't happy to learn my name was scratched from the helicopter's manifest only moments before its launch.

About an hour later, an out of breath young corpsman came running onto the ward. From the look on his face, I knew something terrible had happened. The corpsman blurted out, "You're either living right or "somebody's looking after you", Lieutenant. That helo had engine problems. It went down in the water about halfway to the beach. Another helo found the wreckage right away . . . but there were no survivors."

I respectfully declined a second chance to MedEvac ashore, electing instead to ride the ship back into port. Shortly after Constellation moored at at North Island, the corpsmen carried me ashore on a stretcher to be transported by ambulance the short distance to Balboa Naval Hospital.

Naval Aviation had turned out to be as dangerous as it was glamorous. In three short days, I had cheated death twice. And, in the process, I learned that the thrill of flying jet aircraft off carrier decks sometimes demands a hefty personal price from the pilot. I now understood why guys get paid for a job that most of us would gladly pay for the privilege of doing.

Whether my survival was fate or just sheer good luck is debatable. Or maybe the corpsman was right—maybe 'someone' was looking after me. But one thing is for certain, without the first-class water survival training all tailhookers receive as they earn their wings, I would have had a memorial service rather than being honored at my Navy retirement ceremony, years later.

Every day, since 10 June 1969 has been a gift of life . . . for which I am thankful.

*by CDR. Russ Pearson, USN (Ret.)
The Hook magazine (abridged)*

SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

Silver Falcon Members:

For those of you in Orlando you will remember our discussion about the "Social Security Offset" as it applies to our A Fund.

I had lots of discussions with many people about this and decided to try and research and find out what I could. Please bear in mind that this information is as only as good as the individual I got it from.

I asked **George Smith** what he knew about it and he advised he would research the blue book and let me know. He did so and advised that he felt the best person to talk to was **Steve Hodgson** at ALPA national who was the ALPA Retirement and Insurance guru.

I called **Steve** (his dad was an Eastern DC-10 Capt. who retired about 1987) and picked his brain. In a nut shell we are stuck with it. The original amount that would be withheld from our A Fund check when we reach "normal" Social Security retirement age was \$267 plus or minus. In 1986 ALPA National and the MEC wrote on the back of an envelope an agreement to increase this to \$367 and change and this was "deemed to be one-half of a normal social security check."

According to **Steve** the PBGC has all of our names and social security numbers and when we reach our normal social security retirement age they are SUPPOSED to automatically deduct the \$367 from our A Fund check. In some instances they do and in some they do not. If you are like **Hank Sanak** and they do not when they figure it out they will come after you and want their money back.

I wish I had better news on this, but it was a contractual agreement and we are stuck with it.

Thanks to **Bob Wilbur** for encouraging me to do this and I recommend if you have any questions you call Steve at ALPA National and have him explain it to you. He was very friendly and seemed to enjoy talking to an old Eastern pilot.

*Sincerely,
Gil Gilbert*



**Grease job, Charlie, you are
SMOO-O-O-O-O-TH!**

HISTORIC FLOOD OF RED INK INUNDATES PENSION INSURER

The Federal agency that insures private pension plans ended fiscal year 2003 with a deficit of more than \$11 billion—the biggest in its history!

The red ink reflects the gap between what the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) expects to have to pay in pension benefits and the funds it has to cover those obligations.

"PBGC has sufficient assets to pay benefits to workers and retirees for a number of years," Steven A. Kandarian, the agency's executive director, told reporters in releasing the figures in January. Even so, he added, "The growing gap between our assets and liabilities puts at risk the agency's ability to continue to protect pensions in the future.

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

Just heard about the 3rd monthly North Central Florida Area Silver Falcon Luncheon. It was in Dunnellon, Florida hosted by **Captain Jack Gordon**.

They had 19 attendees from the surrounding area and the **Cholleys** commuted up from Kissimmee. "Great turnout, great stories, great memories. We will continue in March on the 13th. It will hosted by **Captain Jim and Linda Lauderdale** in Bushnell. We would like to invite all Silver Falcons in the area to come join us. For more information they can call me at 352-465-7465. And if you really want to look ahead, April's luncheon is scheduled for the 24th and hosted by **Captain Ed and Katie McGarvey**. Thanks,

Dues were due and payable January 1. If you have not paid your dues this will be the last correspondence you will receive from The Silver Falcons. If we have not received your dues your name will not appear on the new roster and you will not receive one.



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THE DEVIL'S IN THE DETAILS: THE HEALTH CARE TAX CREDIT REVISITED

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many have received mailings from the IRS about 'HCTC'. It offers a phone number (1-866-628-4282) and website references. On the phone choose '0' and get to a human for specific questions if you still have doubts about eligibility.

I have just received another HCTC notice from IRS, but I'm inelible for the program because I'm on Medicare, they should know that! That's just one of the exclusions that lurk in the typically convoluted program legislated and written by bureaucrats.

The attached text is a revisitation of some qualifications for "HCTC" as composed by Silver Falcon **Captain Ron Mussig**. It clarifies facts for some of us to consider, based on our individual situations.

Bold typeface has been added by your scribe to get your attention to key phrases.

Ron is a partner in: Andrews, Giuliano & Mussig, Financial & Tax Consultants, 1820 The Exchange, Suite 450, Atlanta, GA 30339 and has

expressly written this document for the edification and enlightenment of our members. A.G. & M. phone numbers are: 770-303-0600 or 877-720-3673(toll-free)

Sandy McCulloh

It doesn't make us happy to correct our former information, but it appears that we have to do just that. The three of us thought that we understood the "Health Care Tax Credit," but it now appears that we misspoke. I noticed an article on the subject in the January 25 New York Times, and one of you called with pointed questions. That caused us to dig beyond the 20 or so pages of material we had previously reviewed. **Does BOHICA sound familiar?**

While those of us drawing a PBGC check, over age 55, and paying a lot for our medical insurance MAY meet the qualifications of the Tax Credit, the way we are paying for our insurance MAY NOT. (Bold added)

There are four acceptable ways to purchase medical insurance and qualify for the credit. They are: be making COBRA payments, continue insurance you had obtained out of your pocket at least 30 days prior to your last day on a payroll, through a state qualified health plan, or through your spouse's employer.

We all probably remember COBRA payments and few if any of us make those kinds of payments now. Few, if any of us are still making premium payments on an individual health plan (not a group plan) we have been enrolled in since retiring, or losing our jobs. That eliminates the first two options.

The third, a state qualified plan is an option, but there are few such plans available. For instance, the State of Georgia has none and Florida has qualified only Blue Cross, Blue Shield of Florida. If you are enrolled in a state-qualified plan, we believe you qualify for the credit. The IRS web site will lead you to the list if you think you might be enrolled in one. Go to irs.gov, click on "individuals" and the screen offers a link to the Health Care Tax Credit. Then you can locate a list of all the state plans.

Some of us may qualify if we have working spouses who are paying at least 50% of the cost of group health insurance that covers both spouses and even eligible family members.

You are not covered by the credit if you managed to retire from a company that provides you with company sponsored health insurance even if you are paying more than half the cost of that insurance. **You don't qualify if you are paying 100% the cost of health insurance through a plan that is not state qualified. (Bold added)**

It doesn't seem fair, or even logical that a working spouse can give you the credit, but paying your former employer doesn't, but that's the way we see it now. (Bold added)

We sure are sorry to have gotten your hopes up. As a minor consolation, it effects the three of us negatively too. We are seeking further information, but at the present, we believe we understand the law better. It appears to have been written to cover those employees whose jobs went with Ross Perot's "great sucking noise" to Mexico after the passage of the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) and not those of us whose jobs went to the Frank Lorenzo's of the world.

Once again, this should not be taken as tax advice. Please contact your tax advisor for further information.

Ron Mussig
Andrews, Giuliano & Mussig Tax & Financial Planning

Andrews, Giuliano & Mussig

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THE AXIS OF EXCESS

By Joe Brancatelli

April 24, 2003 — You can't watch the unfolding saga of corporate greed and malfeasance in the executive suites of the Big Six airlines without immediately thinking of snappy joke lines.

You know, stuff like Monkey See, Monkey Steal. Flying Pigs at the Trough. Or, my personal favorite: Barbarians at the Boarding Gate.

But this is not funny. While the greedy, amoral men who run the nation's largest carriers are looting their airlines, shareholder equity is being destroyed, good jobs are being lost, surviving rank-and-filers must bear draconian pay cuts, taxpayer dollars are being squandered and the nation is watching a huge portion of its airline infrastructure disintegrate.

It is a disgusting display. The buccaneers who run the nation's Big Six carriers are the American equivalent of the street mobs who looted the Baghdad Museum of its cultural treasures.

There's no difference between Delta chief executive Leo Mullin, who paid himself \$100,000 in cash bonuses for every \$100 million the carrier lost last year, and a street thug who stole a priceless Sumarian pot from the Baghdad Museum. United chief executive Glenn Tilton, who lived in an \$18,000-a-month condo on the company tab while the airline was hemorrhaging \$20 million a day during the winter, is no less reprehensible than the looter who carried Babylonian treasures out of the broken front doors of the Baghdad Museum.

Mullin, Tilton, Continental bully-in-chief Gordon Bethune, the current roster of fools who run Northwest and US Airways and even American chairman Don Carty, who these days looks more like a lost soul than a master corporate schemer, are all the same. They dress better than Baghdad street looters, but their mentality is the same. They are thieves.

The men who are running the Big Six into the corporate grave form a repugnant Axis of Excess. Nothing matters to them except lining their pockets and their retirement portfolios. The Axis of Excess has no sense of personal shame, no sense of fiduciary responsibility and absolutely no agenda except cashing out.

In case your attention has been diverted by the war in Iraq or the spreading SARS epidemic, let me give you a brief carrier-by-carrier recap of what has been learned as the Big Six have filed their proxy statements, 10-Ks, annual reports and other required Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) documents.

AMERICAN AIRLINES American's parent, AMR, lost \$3.5 billion last year and yesterday it reported a \$1 billion first-quarter loss. After weeks of negotiations, promises that executives would share in sacrifices and threats of a bankruptcy filing, the airline secured \$1.8 billion in annual concessions from pilots, mechanics and flight attendants. Then the agreements imploded when

American admitted in delayed SEC filings that it had shielded some of the pensions of the airline's top 45 executives from the effects of a bankruptcy filing. The top six executives were also offered "retention bonuses" of nearly twice their base pay to stay with the airline. Earlier this week, Carty cancelled the retention-bonus plan and apologized for misleading the unions, but he didn't repeal the trust that protects the executive pensions nor did he apologize for allowing the executive booty in the first place. Ironically, American has traditionally paid its top executives less than most other airlines and the newly disclosed perks pale in comparison to the lush programs offered to top officials of the other carriers.

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES After rashly promising that Continental would be in the black by last year's second quarter, the airline reported losses in excess of \$450 million in 2002. Last week it reported a first-quarter loss of \$221 million, sharply higher than last year's first-quarter loss of \$166 million. The airline now admits there is no chance for profit this year or 2004, either. How has Continental management reacted to the huge—and, to them, unexpected—losses? Well, Bethune gave himself a pay package of about \$7.6 million last year, more than 82 percent above his 2001 compensation. Along with stock options and other perks, Bethune's 2002 compensation was \$11.9 million. The airline's other top executives were proportionately rewarded.

DELTA AIR LINES I detailed the lavish awards made to Delta's top five executives in a column posted last month. But just to recap: The carrier has lost \$2.5 billion in the last two fiscal years, including \$1.3 billion last year, when Mullin paid himself a \$1.4 million cash bonus. The excesses at Delta led Congress to write some minimal rules about executive payouts into its latest airline bailout package, but Mullin and crew seem blind to the rebuke. After taking a cosmetic pay cut last month, Mullin defended the airline's egregious pay packets and "retention" bonuses, claiming he needed to keep the executive team together. In other words, an airline that lost \$466 million in this year's first quarter—or the equivalent of more than \$5 million a day—just can't afford to lose the crack executives who are responsible for the carrier's alarming cash burn.

NORTHWEST AIRLINES Northwest was long ago looted by the departed Al Cheechi and by current chairman Gary Wilson. During the 1990s, they funneled tens of millions annually out of Northwest to their private companies, claiming the payments were personal management fees. New management is no less abusive, however. The carrier lost \$798 million last year, yet chief executive Richard Anderson paid himself a cash bonus of 50 percent of his annual salary of \$500,000. He also received a retention bonus of stock worth almost \$2 million more. Northwest also paid out millions in retention bonuses to dozens of other top managers. This week, a Northwest filing with the SEC revealed that former Northwest chief financial

officer Mickey Foret has been hired as a consultant. Foret was paid an up-front fee of \$240,000 and he draws a monthly stipend of \$80,000 through December, 2004. By the way, last week Northwest reported a first-quarter loss of \$396 million, more than double last year's first-quarter loss of \$171 million. It is also negotiating with its labor unions and rank-and-file workers, demanding almost \$1 billion a year in concessions.

UNITED AIRLINES United Airlines paid new chief executive Glenn Tilton nearly \$12 million to join the sinking ship last fall. He promptly ensconced himself in an \$18,000-a-month condo on the company expense account. Since his arrival, the airline has filed for bankruptcy and reported a 2002 loss of more than \$3 billion. His recovery plan for the carrier has been ridiculed by the government agency that administered the 2001 loan-

guarantee program, United's bankruptcy-court judge and virtually any analyst that has examined it. He is also paying the McKinsey consulting firm a monthly fee of about \$1 million to help him develop a carrier-within-a-carrier even though United has already failed with an earlier attempt to create a low-fare unit. Meanwhile, United employees, who once owned 55 percent of the carrier in exchange for massive wage and benefit concessions granted in the 1990s, have lost all their equity. They have also been forced to accept billions more in concessions as United used the shield of bankruptcy court to break or renegotiate their contracts. Of course, all this comes against the backdrop of the tens of millions former United boss Steve Wolf paid himself while he ran the company.

USAIRWAYS US Airways was driven into bankruptcy by the aforementioned Wolf and his team of cronies. They paid themselves hundreds of millions of dollars during their disastrous six-year regime. They subsequently retired, but not before the airline paid out \$35 million in lump-sum retirement benefits to Wolf, former chief executive Rakesh Gangwal and Larry Nagin, the airline's former top legal official. After declaring bankruptcy, the airline terminated its pilot's pension fund. Retired US Airways pilots now face pension cuts in the neighborhood of 70 percent. Meanwhile, the new management team continues to reward itself lavishly. The current chief executive, David Siegel, received 2002 compensation of \$533,000 in salary, a cash bonus of \$750,000 and more than \$160,000 in other compensation. Other notable figures in the airline's SEC filings: US Airways paid Siegel \$68,000 in moving expenses last year. The new chief financial officer, Neil Cohen, received \$40,640 in moving expenses. That's about the same amount a senior flight attendant at US Airways now earns.

One final note. Remember that 2001 taxpayer-funded airline bailout of \$4.5 billion? Hawaiian Airlines received about \$30 million of it, but that didn't help the carrier avoid a bankruptcy filing last month. Boeing, which is one of Hawaiian's biggest creditors, wants the carrier's management removed. Boeing claims Hawaiian's management paid out more than \$25 million via a tender offer last year as a "reward" to shareholders. In a filing with the bankruptcy court, Boeing adds that members of Hawaiian's management and their affiliates received more than 69 percent of the \$25 million tender. In other words, Boeing believes Hawaiian's management personally pocketed more than half of the \$30 million in taxpayer grants.

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Special thanks to Silver Falcon Jim Holder for his support in a recent mission trip. To view photos, visit <http://www.bethel-gmt.onestop.net>.

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LETTERS, LETTERS, LETTERS

Folks....

At the Atlanta REPA Luncheon on January 13th Ed Bruce announced to the group that he just became aware that Acordia, who handled (as I understand it) the Eastern employees' insurance in the latter stages has some monies left over after all the payments were made. Apparently they plan to distribute these funds to certain Eastern employees.

One of our attendees decided to check it out and follows below is an EM I just received from him.

I would say that if you dealt with Acordia you might want to call them!

Jim Holder

"J.B.,

When it comes to money I had to check it out. I had not received a letter from Acordia so I called them and I'm glad I did because they did not have my address change. I talked to a nice lady named **Sheila Kerekes** who said indeed there were surplus funds to folks who were still eligible for benefits when the plan terminated around Nov. 1998. I was not eligible because I went on Medicare the previous June, but my wife was.

Sheila said that anyone who thinks that they are eligible should call her at 1-800-332-4732 ext 8819 to check their status and update their addresses if necessary.
Jim"

From a Retired Airline Pilot to His Peers:

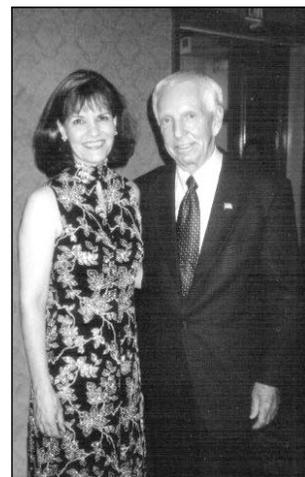
Here is a home study simulator course for those who still hunger for the romance and adventure of airline flying. It will all come back to you if you practice the following at home:

1. Stay out of bed all night.
2. Sit in your most uncomfortable chair, in a closet, for nine or ten hours facing a four foot wide panoramic photo of a flight deck.
3. Have two or three noisy vacuum cleaners on high, out of sight but within hearing distance and operating throughout the night. If a vacuum cleaner fails, do the appropriate restart checklist.
4. Halfway through your nocturnal simulator course, arrange for a bright spotlight to shine directly into your face for two or three hours, simulating an eastbound flight into the sunrise.
5. Have bland overcooked food served on a tray midway through the night.
6. Have cold cups of coffee delivered from time to time. Ask your spouse to slam the door frequently.
7. At the time when you must heed nature's call, force yourself to stand outside the bathroom door for at least ten minutes, transferring your weight from leg to leg, easing the discomfort. Don't forget to wear your hat.
8. Leave the closet after the prescribed nine or ten hours, turn on your sprinklers and stand out in the cold and "rain" for twenty minutes, simulating the wait for the crew car.
9. Head for your bedroom, wet and with your suitcase and flight bag. Stand outside the door till your wife gets up and leaves, simulating

- the wait you'd have while the maid makes up the hotel room.
10. When your spouse inquires, "Just what in the hell have you been doing?" just say, "Recalling the allure of all night flying to romantic places" and collapse into bed.
 11. If you are a purist, do this two nights in a row.

-Captain Tom Kearny (ret.), United Airlines

In our last issue we showed Al Haynes with the Eastern Pilots attending the convention that currently fly for United. Here is a picture we left out; Leann Harris, an Eastern Flight Attendant, now a Flight Attendant for United. No insult intended, Gents, but Leann makes Al look a lot better than you did!



I won the 1st door prize at the Silver Falcon's convention in Orlando, it was donated by Tom Reilly's museum and restoration which included 9 days of restoration ground school and a ride in a B-25. Attached is a picture of me in front of the B-25 that we flew on Veteran's day. I also attended the ground school and it was very rewarding. Jim Sandusky

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PAYING BACK A HERO

Those attending our Orlando Convention surely remember our guest speaker **Al Haynes**, and likely every aviator knows the story of the crippled United DC-10 and the crash at Sioux City from which so many survived.

The link below is to a website with an update to an earlier posting, which is also just below, seeking help for Al's daughter Laurie. It is also my understanding that her story was written about in People Magazine not long ago. That article spoke of 'Paying back a hero,' and dealt with Laurie's courageous fight with cancer. <http://www.friendsforlaurie.com/>

The original posting:

"I am writing this letter on behalf of a very good friend of mine (pictured on the left), and a wonderful person, who deserves a chance at a long and healthy life with her family and friends. Her name is **Laurie Arguello (Haynes)**, a 39 year-old married woman, and mother of 1 son. **Laurie** graduated from Tye High School in Seatac, Washington. **Laurie** was diagnosed with Aplastic Anemia, a disease that has threatened her life, and fortunately, there is a treatment, which could greatly improve Laurie's chance of survival. **Laurie** is a candidate for a Bone Marrow transplant at the University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle. Even though **Laurie** has partial insurance coverage, the hospital is still requiring a deposit of \$156,000 before she can receive her life-saving transplant. She will then be required to raise an additional \$100,000 to cover her portion of the physicians' fees, hospital costs, medications, and post-transplant care.

This is where you and I can be of help. **Laurie's** family, friends and other caring and concerned volunteers in the Seattle area have united to raise the \$250,000. that is needed for the out-of-pocket transplant related expenses. We are working in conjunction with National Foundation for Transplants (NFT), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. NFT's involvement ensures that contributions are tax deductible and will not be used for any purpose other than to pay for Laurie's transplant and related expenses.

Your donation, large or small, will be greatly appreciated, and will help to provide the support that is desperately needed now. Every dollar donated will bring us closer to providing the financial support that is required to save her life. Enclosed, you will find a donor response slip and a self-addressed envelope for returning a contribution. Your check can be made payable to "National Foundation for Transplants" with the added notation that it is for the **Laurie Arguello Fund**. Donations may also be made using your MasterCard, VISA, or American Express credit card (details on the enclosed donor slip.) While I hope your donation will be led by your heart, I remind you that your donation is tax deductible. NFT will send a receipt for tax-reporting purposes to all contributors of \$250 or more. If you need a receipt for a donation of \$25.00 or more, please make a notation on the donation slip and the treasurer will make sure you get one.

If you are receiving this by email, please be sure to print the donation slip and enclose it with your donation. You may also donate on line at www.transplants.org. Just look under patient donations and click on **Laurie Arguello (Haynes)**.

Additional verification from NFT regarding **Laurie** and/or this fund-raising campaign effort may be obtained by calling (800) 489-3863.

Thank you for your consideration and hopefully, your help. Also, please feel free to pass this letter to your family and friends."

PBGC

It seems that PBGC may not have sent some 1099's, or at least it seems that they may not have, to a substantial number of Eastern pilots. Perhaps the postal ship foundered or got lost after it left the PBGC? In any case, they were to have been mailed in January, so if you don't have your PBGC 1099, you probably want to contact them soon! They will only send out a "second" copy if you request it. Contact the PBGC at 1-800-400-7242 and follow the prompts.

OBITUARIES

CAPTAIN THOMAS R. CRANE

We announce with deep regret the passing of **Captain Tom Crane**, 83 on Sunday March 14. **Tom** retired at age 60 after a career of thirty five years. During this time he flew as a pilot for Colonial Air Lines as well as a Captain for Eastern. An avid union member, **Tom** served as chairman of the Eastern MEC. After leaving Eastern he instructed on the Airbus A-300 in Toulouse, France. As a bomber pilot **Tom** served in the Army Air Corps both in World War two and the Korean conflict.

He is survived by his wife **Joy**, two sons and two daughters. The family has requested that contributions be made in **Tom's** name to the Monmouth Beach First Aid Squad, Monmouth Beach, NJ 07750.

Go in peace, **Tom**.

MRS. JANICE BOETZ

Mrs. Janice Boetz, 65, wife of retired Eastern **Captain Ernie Boetz** passed away. March 18, 2004. Paralyzed thirty years ago from the chest down by a spinal aneurism, **Janice** still managed to teach school, tutor girls with learning disabilities, and helped establish Dial-A-Ride for the disabled. She was a tireless advocate to make public spaces easier to reach for the disabled.

Mrs. Boetz is survived by her husband, **Ernest**, and two sons. The family has requested that contributions in her name be made to the Gateway House-Shelter For Battered Women, P.O. Box 2962, Gainesville, Georgia 30503.

An angel has come home.

THE MATH FILES ALL THE NUMBERS ADD DOWN FOR THE NATION'S LOW-COST CARRIERS

By Keith L. Alexander

Washington Post Staff Writer Sunday, February 29, 2004

The nation's low-cost carriers are profitable even as the venerable "legacy" airlines barely tread water. How can they make money while offering fares that are 40 to 70 percent lower? The reasons are many—cost of labor is a big one—but here are 10 major differences between the cheeky upstarts and the big boys.

1.3 million

That's the minimum number of potential annual airline passengers a city must offer before a low-cost carrier will consider it as a destination. Airline industry consultant Michael Boyd of the Denver-based Boyd Group says low-cost carriers avoid smaller cities and target only those areas where they can get the highest revenue. Airports within a 45-minute drive of such locations are sought out by the carriers.

Low-cost carriers, Boyd says, have no plans to take their large jets into such cities as Ithaca, N.Y., or Lubbock, Tex. "All these small communities want low-cost carriers, but they're more likely to get a moon launch than service from one of these airlines," he said.

84.6

That's the number of employees per aircraft at Southwest Airlines. And it's the figure the industry uses to measure employee productivity.

Compare that number with 116 employees per plane at United Airlines, a number the airline achieved last year during its bankruptcy reorganization. The United number had been 173 in 2002, said airline analyst Vaughn Cordle of Airline Forecasts.

Small wonder the so-called legacy airlines are trying to get that number down to get productivity up, Cordle says. The United reduction resulted in a savings of about \$2 billion and boosted productivity by 33 percent.

2%

That's the percentage of ticket sales that JetBlue Airways makes through traditional travel agents. By contrast, travel agents sell 61.2 percent of US Airways tickets. The number is about 50 percent for American Airlines.

Selling airline tickets via the Internet, on an airline's own site or on a site like Expedia.com is the lowest-cost channel for an airline—and that's where the majority of the low-cost carriers do most of their business. In fact, it costs an airline only about 1 percent of the ticket price to sell it online.

While legacy carriers have drastically reduced the commissions they pay travel agents, selling the traditional way remains the most

costly method — between 7 and 9 percent of ticket value. And the big carriers still offer some of the largest agents steep discounts in exchange for moving market share to that airline.

The legacy carriers are looking for ways to attract travelers to their sites by offering steeper discounts, bonus frequent-flier miles or other incentives.

Also, low-cost carriers such as Southwest were among the first to implement electronic ticketing to avoid the costs of printing and mailing. During the past two years or so, legacy carriers have expanded their use of electronic ticketing as well.

40%

That's the percentage of American Airlines passengers who connect to another flight to reach their final destination. The number is significant because routes that include connections are more expensive than direct, nonstop flights.

In general, the low-cost carriers have set up their schedules to focus on point-to-point flights. Southwest Airlines calculates that only 10 percent of its passengers connect to another flight to get where they're going, in large part because the airline focuses on flights to and from destination cities. In essence, the burden for any onward travel is on the passenger to arrange, not the low-cost carrier.

Nonstop, direct flights are cheaper for several reasons. First, because airline employees are paid by the hour and connecting flights take longer to get to a destination, there is extra pay for flight attendants and pilots. Also, connecting flights require more manpower, says American Airlines spokesman Tim Wagner. Remember, bags have to be loaded, then offloaded on the first leg, then reloaded and offloaded again on the final leg of each flight. Also, taxiing for each takeoff and landing burns more fuel than flight time does, Wagner said.

As they grow and add destinations, low-cost carriers such as Southwest and AirTran will offer more connections. And airline consultant Boyd says that as the number of connecting flights increases, so will any airline's costs. Also, of course, a limited number of flights means that a carrier such as JetBlue simply does not need as many employees as a larger airline does.

23 and 0

This is the number of U.S. cities and foreign countries that JetBlue Airways, the nation's 11th-largest carrier, serves. It's a far cry from the 109 cities and 23 foreign countries reached by the nation's second-largest airline, United. And even those large amounts exclude United's code-sharing alliances with other airlines.

Legacy Carriers continued.

By focusing their routes on U.S. flights, low-cost carriers avoid the costs associated with flying into foreign countries. These longer-distance flights require larger, more expensive aircraft. Also, the airline's workers at a foreign destination are governed by that country's labor rules, some of which, in Europe especially, restrict hours and call for generous benefits.

\$215,000 a year

That's the average salary for a captain at Delta Air Lines. In contrast, captains at low-cost carrier AirTran earn, on average, \$135,000 a year, although they also receive stock options.

Overall, pilots are the highest-paid labor group in any airline, and labor represents the biggest cost for a carrier. Salaries are often based on a pilot's seniority, which points up another cost advantage the small new airlines have over the legacy airlines. Delta's 7,500 pilots — 3,500 of whom are captains, the highest rank — range in seniority from five years to 35 years, said Delta spokeswoman Karen Miller. By contrast, the majority of low-cost carriers are less than about 10 years old. The average seniority for AirTran's entire work group is two years, said spokesman Tad Hutchinson. Four hundred fifty of AirTran's 850 pilots are captains.

As part of its drastic cost-cutting measures, Delta — which lost about \$3 billion during the past three years — is trying to persuade its pilots union to agree to substantial cuts in their pay and benefits. Delta's pilots are among the highest-paid in the industry.

As seniority increases at low-cost carriers, so will salaries. Pilots at Southwest Airlines, which turns 33 this year, already rank among the highest-paid in the industry, attributable in large part to their seniority and their stock options.

\$9.99 an hour

Of the industry average total compensation of \$31.23 an hour, \$21.24 represents wages and \$9.99 goes to benefits, according to compensation consultants Watson Wyatt, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Bureau statistics show that in general industry, benefits put an employee's total compensation 38 percent above his or her wage base. In the airline sector, in general, benefits add 47 percent to salary.



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Employee benefits obviously affect every company's bottom line, and the older airlines simply offer more of them. Delta, for instance, offers medical benefits and a 401(k) savings plan to its workers in addition to a traditional pension plan.

The low-cost carriers generally do not have traditional, defined-benefit pension plans, but most offer medical insurance and 401(k) plans, which are far cheaper than pensions, even when the company matches employee contributions with a contribution of its own.

0

The number of downtown ticket offices low-cost carriers such as Southwest, JetBlue and AirTran operate. US Airways alone has 13 such offices.

The majority of legacy carriers — Delta, American, Continental and United — operate these ticketing offices, where passengers can purchase tickets, make travel changes or just get information. US Airways said it costs about \$2 million a year to operate the offices, including rent, personnel and other expenses. As part of its cost-cutting move, Northwest Airlines recently announced it would close all 25 of its ticketing offices by the end of March.

\$21 an hour

This is the average base pay, excluding benefits, of one of US Airways'

1,930 telephone reservation agents. Before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, US Airways had 3,762 reservation agents.

The average pay for one of JetBlue Airways 700 reservation agents, by contrast, is \$8.25 an hour. JetBlue's agents also receive benefit packages that include a 401(k) plan and medical insurance, but they work from home, saving the airline rent on a reservation center.

1

This is how many types of planes JetBlue flies — the Airbus 320 jet, period. In 2005, however, the airline will begin taking delivery of 100-seat Embraer 190 regional jets as the airline begins flying into secondary markets.

Delta, on the other hand, flies 16 kinds of aircraft.

It's because, the legacy carriers explain, they fly longer routes and more transcontinental and international flights. Such long-haul travel as across the Pacific and Atlantic oceans calls for larger, more expensive planes. So the equipment is inherently costlier.

But, in addition, moving a pilot from one category of plane to another requires about eight weeks of training. That entails the cost of training the pilot as well as the cost of covering the pilot's existing route during training. Because the low-cost carriers have only one type of aircraft, they require little additional training and fewer arrangements because of that training.

THE WORK OF STEVEN WRIGHT

If you're not familiar with the work of Steven Wright, he's the guy who once said: "I woke up one morning and all of my stuff had been stolen...and replaced by exact duplicates."

Here are some more of his gems:

I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Borrow money from pessimists. They don't expect it back.

99% of lawyers give the rest a bad name.

42.7% of all statistics are made up on the spot.

A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good.

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.

All those who believe in psychokinesis, raise my hand.

WANT ADS

I am looking for a EAL Connie manual myself for my aviation library. I think I have all the others, but the co. used to raise such a ruckus about not turning them back in to the company library that most people gave them back and then the damn company just threw them away and kept the binders! I of course want to pay for the manual, just need to find someone that will part with the thing.

Thanks for all your good work. I appreciate it a great deal. All the best to you and all the rEAL gang.

Wayne Van Valkenburgh

Our Own Carole Reynolds is Wed

Sending you our best Holidays wishes. We are now back from our honeymoon and ready to start this new chapter in our life as Mr and Mrs Don Thompson. We leave for Fla. tomorrow to pack up the rest of Don's stuff. His house sold in three weeks.

*Happy Holidays,
Carole and Don*



The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

I almost had a psychic girlfriend but she left me before we met. OK, so what's the speed of dark?

How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?

If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

Ambition is a poor excuse for not having enough sense to be lazy.

Hard work pays off in the future, laziness pays off now.

I intend to live forever—so far, so good.

If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?

Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.

What happens if you get scared half to death twice?

My mechanic told me, "I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder."

Why do psychics have to ask you for your name?

If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.

To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism; to steal from many is research.

The problem with the gene pool is that there is no lifeguard.

The sooner you fall behind, the more time you'll have to catch up.

The colder the x-ray table, the more of your body is required to be on it.

Everyone has a photographic memory, some just don't have film.



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They may be
gone if you wait.**

We are pleased to be sponsoring your convention again this year.

Please take a moment to review our current monthly newsletter.

If you are considering making a change, give us a call. We will review your current plan and recommend changes to get you back on course.

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