Welcome to 2016

A lot of new things in the coming year, and some “old” ones, as well. Immediately, you’ve noticed the “look” of your newsletter has changed. Well, that’s because the Editor has changed. After countless years providing Flight 18 with a top quality newsletter, we’re finally letting Ger Spaulding take a break. His humble replacement is your former Flight Captain, Roy Poole. Roy has a long background in newsletter and magazine publishing, and took over the editor’s desk while continuing to heal from his 2015 bout with the nasty colon infection, C diff.

Another change is pictured above. With Roy stepping down, Yumper Black has once more agreed to serve as Flight Captain. From left to right above: Roy Poole, newsletter editor; Yumper Black, Flight Captain, Tim Conklin, vice Flight Captain; Dale Boggie, Provost Marshal; and Walt Wise, Adjutant. Missing, but continuing their service: Bill Greener, Scholarship Chair; and Spencer Mamber, Treasure.

Be sure and thank all for their work, making Mile High Flight 18 one of the best across the nation.
Sad to report that Betty Thompson, widow of the late John Thompson, passed away early Thursday morning 3 Dec. She was 95.

For our newer members, John was a highly decorated veteran of WWII who led what came to be known as “The Mission that Saved Guadalcanal” during the Battle of Bloody Ridge in 1942. John’s desperate, scraped-together mission of three P-400s turned back a force of 6,000 Japanese troops who were positioning to overrun the 850 Marines defending Henderson Field at that time.

The irrepressible and always upbeat Betty, who was living happily in the Meridian Retirement Community in Englewood, had been dealing with congestive heart failure in recent months. Characteristically, though, her spirits remained high. Sincere condolences to Betty’s family and may she rest in peace.

I will firm up the dates of these events for late spring and early fall by the next newsletter.

Also, we will stress our beating-the-bushes and dragging those potential new members into our organization, kicking and screaming if we have to. So drag your buddies to some of our meetings where we can convince them to join up. Our goal is to have as a minimum, ten new members by the end of the year.

We shall also be investigating being able to use credit cards in the near future to pay for our lunches and dues in lieu of cash and checks...which will always be welcome.

So welcome back and here is to another exciting new year for Mile High Flight 18.

VOLABAMUS VOLAMUS

Lt Col GREGORY "YUMPER" BLACK, USAF (Ret)
January 1st, 2016 - Your dues are now due

http://www.daedalians.org/BallotDues.htm

2016 FLIGHT DUES - $15 (Due 1 Jan, as are National dues paid to HQ in San Antonio)

Please mail this coupon along with a check for your 2016 plus any delinquent Flight dues you owe. Add any amount you desire to donate to the Scholarship Fund. NOTE: Daedalian Life Members (LMS) and Daedalians whose National dues are current may purchase Flight 18 Life Memberships. If you choose this option, please select the appropriate dues amount from the above schedule, enter that amount in the FLM space below and include it in your check.

Name: _____________________________ Daedalian # _________ Home Phone: (______)____________
Address: ________________________________ e-mail:______________________________

Amount enclosed for: [2016 Flight Dues $15.00 or FLM DUES $_________] + Flight Dues for prior years + Scholarship Fund $_________ = Total Enclosed $_________

** Make check payable to: DAEDALIAN FLIGHT 18
** Mail to: Flight 18 Treasurer, 7544 S. Rosemary Circle, Centennial, CO 80112

Flight 18 Life Membership Dues Effective Jan 2012

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Carl was a member of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society Hall of Fame (1997); past chairman and board member of the Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum; former member of the board of directors of the U.S. Aerobatic Foundation; also a member of the President's Council of Experimental Aircraft Association; former member of the Advisory Committee on Finance to the Centennial Airport Administration; and Vice Chairman of the Jack Swigert Memorial Commission, which funded and acquired the Jack Swigert statue that resides in the U.S. Capitol Building.

On top of all that, he donated to the City and County of Denver a 1930 Eagle Rock airplane, which is on display at DIA.

Born in Douglas, Wyoming, on November 9, 1928, Carl enlisted in the Air National Guard in 1951 and applied for Air Force pilot training. He graduated with Class 52-D at Goodfellow AFB, then headed for duty at Cannon AFB, New Mexico, where he flew the F-51 Mustang. He continued flying F-51s, along with F-80s, for the 187th Fighter-Bomber Squadron in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He separated from the ANG in 1958 with 800 hours of military flight time under his belt.

He also earned a Doctorate of Jurisprudence (yes, he became a lawyer), but opted to go into the cable TV business in lieu of practicing law. In 1968, he was elected to a four-year term in the Colorado senate. (He may have been one of the first, but as we all know, he was not the last ANG pilot to enter politics!) Later, he was a financial investor.

Over the years, Carl has owned and flown a wide variety of civilian aircraft, accruing some 3,000 flight hours and three years experience flying competitive aerobatics.

Carl made his final flight, surrounded by family, on November 27, 2015.

He is survived by Ginny Williams; daughter Elle P. Williams and her husband Greg Eggert of Sedona, AZ and Mike and Deepali Williams of Denver; and his grandchildren Michael, Cody and Lee.

A Memorial Service was held Friday, December 4, 2015 at St. John's Cathedral, 1350 Washington St., Denver.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are being made in Carl's name to Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum.
Shall we play a game?


Sure! Nothing like this could ever happen. Or did it?

In fact at least one such incident occurred during the Cold War, but the Red Phone call did not go to the President. It went to a national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was awakened on 9 November 1979, to be told that the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the combined U.S.–Canada military command–was reporting a Soviet missile attack.

Just before Brzezinski was about to call President Carter, the NORAD warning turned out to be a false alarm. It was one of those moments in Cold War history when top officials believed they were facing the ultimate threat. The apparent cause? The routine testing of an overworked computer system.

Declassified documents about this incident and other false warnings of Soviet missile attacks delivered to the Pentagon and military commands by computers at NORAD in 1979 and 1980 were published by the National Security Archive.

The erroneous warnings, variously produced by computer tests and worn out computer chips, led to a number of alert actions by U.S. bomber and missile forces and the emergency airborne command post. Alarmed by reports of the incident on 9 November 1979, the Soviet leadership lodged a complaint with Washington about the "extreme danger" of false warnings.

While Pentagon officials were trying to prevent future incidents, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown assured President Jimmy Carter that false warnings were virtually inevitable, although he tried to reassure the President that "human safeguards" would prevent them from getting out of control.

For decades, the possibility of a Soviet missile attack preoccupied U.S. presidents and their security advisers. Because nuclear hostilities were more likely to emerge during a political-military confrontation (such as Cuba
1962) the likelihood of a bolt from the blue was remote but Washington nevertheless planned for the worst case. Under any circumstances, U.S. presidents and top military commanders wanted warning systems that could provide them with the earliest possible notice of missile launches by the Soviet Union or other adversaries.

By the early 1960s, the Pentagon had the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWs) that could provide about 15 minutes of warning time. By the mid-to-late 1960s, forward-scatter systems (so-called "Over the Horizon Radar") could detect missile launches within five to seven minutes from while, the 474N system could give three-to-seven minutes of warning of launches from submarines off the North American coast.

In 1972, the North American Aerospace Command (NORAD) began to network warning systems into at "interlinked system" operated at its headquarters in Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado. A complex computer-based system always bore the risk of failure, breakdowns, or errors. Even before networking emerged, false warnings emerged as early as 1960 when a BMEWs radar in Greenland caught "echoes from the moon," which generated a report of a missile attack which was quickly understood to be false. During the Cuban Missile Crisis false warning episodes occurred, some of them involving NORAD, that were virtually unknown for many years.

The Events of 1979-1980

As he recalled, Brzezinski was awakened at three in the morning by [military assistant William] Odom, who told him that some 250 Soviet missiles had been launched against the United States. Brzezinski knew that the President's decision time to order retaliation was from three to seven minutes. Thus he told Odom he would stand by for a further call to confirm Soviet launch and the intended targets before calling the President.

Brzezinski was convinced we had to hit back and told Odom to confirm that the Strategic Air Command was launching its planes. When Odom called back, he reported that “2,200 missiles had been launched.” It was an all-out attack. One minute before Brzezinski intended to call the President, Odom called a third time to say that other warning systems were not reporting Soviet launches.

Sitting alone in the middle of the night, Brzezinski had not awakened his wife, reckoning that everyone would be dead in half an hour. It had been a false alarm. Someone had mistakenly put military exercise tapes into the computer system.

This was not a matter of a "wrong tape," but software simulating a Soviet missile attack then testing NORAD's 427M computers "was inexplicably transferred into the regular warning display" at the Command's headquarters. Indeed, NORAD's Commander-in-chief later acknowledged that the "precise mode of failure could not be replicated."

The information on the display simultaneously appeared on screens at SAC headquarters and the National Military Command Center (NMCC), which quickly led to defensive actions: NORAD alerted interceptor forces and 10 fighters were immediately launched. Moreover, the National Emergency Airborne Command Post (NEACP), used so the president could control U.S. forces during a nuclear war, was launched from Andrews Air Force Base, although without the president or secretary of defense.

About seven months later, U.S. warning systems generated three more false alerts. One occurred on 28 May 1980; it was a minor harbinger of false alerts on 3 and 6 June 1980. According to the Pentagon, what caused the malfunctions in June 1980 was a failed 46¢ micro-electronic integrated circuit ("chip") and "faulty message design." A computer at NORAD made what amounted to "typographical errors" in the routine messages it sent to SAC and the National Military Command Center (NMCC) about missile launches.

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While the message usually said "000" ICBMs or SLBMs had been launched, some of the zeroes were erroneously filled in with a 2, e.g. 002 or 200, so the message indicated that 2, and then 200 SLBMs were on their way. Once the message arrived at SAC, the command took survivability measures by ordering bomber pilots and crews to their stations at alert bombers and tankers and to start the engines.

The Soviet nuclear command and control system that developed during the 1980s provides an interesting contrast with the U.S.'s. While the United States emphasized "human safeguards" as a firewall, the "Perimeter" nuclear warning-nuclear strike system may have minimized them. In large part, it was a response to Soviet concern that a U.S. decapitating strike, aimed at the political leadership and central control systems, could cripple retaliatory capabilities.

According to Bruce Blair, writing in the early 1990s, warning system failures continued after 1980, although they did not trigger alert measures. The U.S. nuclear incidents that have received the most attention have not been false warnings, but events such as the Air Force's accidental movement of nuclear-tipped cruise missiles from Minot AFB to Barksdale AFB in 2007 and the mistaken transfer of Minuteman nose-cone assemblies to Taiwan in 2006.

Wings is proud to present the Distinguished Lecture Series, which offers inspiring talks by some of our state and nation’s top leaders, scholars and military professionals. These lectures are FREE to Wings members. General museum admission fees apply to non-members. Boxed lunches are available for an additional $10.00 for all attendees. Early reservations are encouraged.

Schedule

11:30 AM | Lunch
12:00 – 1:00 PM | Lecture in the Harrison Ford Theater

Lecturers

Wednesday, February 17
Dr. Ron Sega — Director, Systems Engineering Programs and Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Colorado State University. Dr. Sega, who is a pilot, astronaut and scientist, will speak on STEM and its importance for American students in their formative years.

Wednesday, March 9
Dr. Bob Wettemann — The “Max F. James” Distinguished Researcher in Character and Leadership Development in the U.S. Air Force Academy, Center for Character and Leadership Development. Dr. Wettemann will speak on Innovation and Creativity of American warriors during WWII.
LIVING IN THE AGE OF AIRPLANES

It was once very challenging to travel between continents. Now, on any given day, 100,000 airplane flights transport people and products between any two points on Earth in a matter of hours.

This new IMAX epic is nothing less than a history of the human race’s progress, beginning hundreds of thousands of years ago and ending in speculation about the future. In less than an hour, it squeezes a parade of momentous inventions into a peppy list of discoveries.

The film, which journeys to 95 locations in 18 countries and spans all seven continents, has been in the making since 2009.

Narrated by Harrison Ford.

See “living in the Age of Airplanes” at Denver’s IMAX theater in the Museum of Nature and Science from January 29 through June 30.