

MILE HIGH FLIGHT 18

Order of Daedalians

Newsletter

Aug 2007

Thompson promotion comes thru

Better 60 years late than never

Remaining 2007 Flight Schedule

Flight 18 normally meets on the third Friday of each month. Exceptions are announced in the newsletter and through the caller phone tree. Your caller should contact you via phone/e-mail 7-10 days prior to each meeting. If not, please advise Flight Adjutant Ron Smith.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Speaker/activity</u>
21 Sep	Aurora Hills*	LTC Patterson-COANG
19 Oct	Aurora Hills*	TBA
16 Nov	Aurora Hills*	Annual Business Mtg
12 Dec	Aurora Hills*	Christmas Party

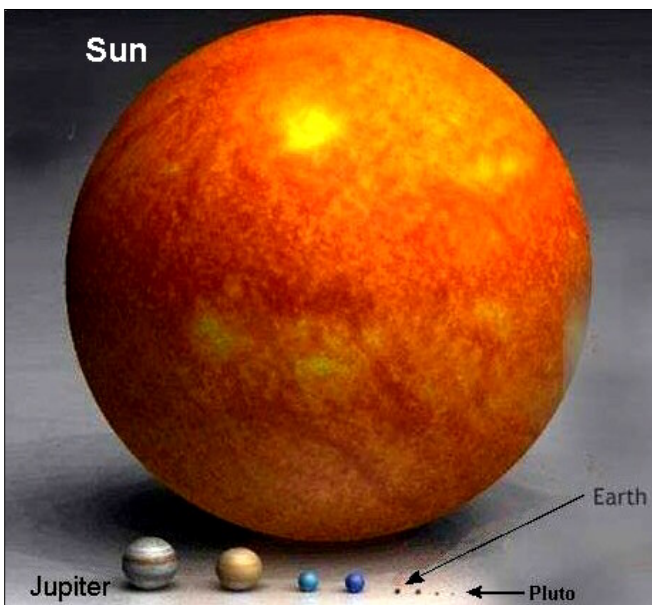
* Aurora Hills Golf Course Tin Cup Bar & Grill



BGen Gordon and Betty Thompson doing the overdue honors

Perspective:

Man's influence on global warming



Even though John Thompson's Presidential Citation proclaims his appointment to the rank of colonel in the Army Air Corps effective July 29, 1947, somehow the Army just never got around to promoting him. Nor did the Air Force when the fledgling service medically retired him in 1949.

Having contracted tuberculosis in 1947 while assigned to Gen Douglas MacArthur's post-war occupation headquarters in Tokyo, Thompson was transferred to Fitzsimons Army General Hospital in Aurora, CO for treatment. He was still convalescing there two years later when the Air Force directed his medical retirement as a lieutenant colonel.

He tried unsuccessfully over the intervening years to have his service record corrected, but was unable to provide documentation that would bolster his request. Only

See *Overdue promotion* page 4

From the Flight Captain



Fellow Daedalians:

Heroes – every one of them. We lost several of our long time Flight 18 members this year. All of them were part of the “greatest generation” who protected our nation during its greatest threat, World War II. As a member of the leading edge of “baby boomers” (I was born in 1946 – guess what Dad had in mind when he got back from the war?????), I grew up reading about the exploits of pilots in all theaters of the war. These were my boyhood heroes. Unfortunately the ravages of time are rapidly depleting their ranks. Gentlemen, I salute you every day that I can celebrate the freedom that you gave to my generation. “To those who have gone before.....”

Well, I survived my first Daedalian National Convention in Colorado Springs in June. Quite a show! We got a first-hand tour of the Northern Command and Space Command Facilities. We also got to see the latest hardware including F-22’s and Predators. The technology is most impressive with many combat operations being controlled from half way around the world. The only scary part is that it seems that we pilots are rapidly becoming obsolete in combat operations. We are rapidly being replaced by computers and remote control!

Kudos to Falcon Flight 11 for an outstanding effort!

Not too much new came out of the Flight Captain’s meeting. The greatest concern seemed to be our aging and declining membership. Some Flights are down to 30–40 total members. The change in membership requirements allowing separated former pilots to join has greatly increased our potential

member pool. When talking to former pilots, I am often surprised, and disappointed, that they have never heard of us. When you encounter a former pilot eligible for membership, I strongly encourage you to invite him or her to our next meeting.

I would like to express my appreciation for the masterful job Ed Cutler, Flight 18 Treasurer, has done with managing Flight 18’s Life Membership funds. He has established a conservative, but effective program to produce a steady income with very low risk. Good job Ed!

We are rapidly coming up on the time to elect flight officers for next year. Before I appoint a committee to select officers, I would like to solicit volunteers for each position. I would be honored to be your Flight Captain for another year, but if anyone else really wants the job, we can negotiate over a bottle of scotch. If you are interested in an officer position, please contact me at (303) 730-0311 or by e-mail at thomas.martin@comcast.net. If we have more than one volunteer for a position, we will have an open election with all names appearing on the ballot. We’ll let the membership decide. If we don’t get volunteers, then I’ll turn the “headhunters” loose!

So far no one has stepped up to take on the job of Newsletter Editor, or even offered to help carry the load. If you’d like to try your hand at writing for the newsletter—on either a regular or occasional basis—please contact our current (but not for long) editor.

Volabamus Volamus

Tom

Thomas C. Martin, LTC, USAF (Ret)
Flight Captain

Sign posted in place of business

I’ve gone to look for myself.
If I should return before I get back,
KEEP ME HERE!



Welcome Aboard

...to our newest Daedalians and newest members of Flight 18:

Warren F. Weikle, LTC, USAF (Ret)

and

Albert R. Sundine, Capt, USAF (Sep).

You’ve joined a proud fraternity, and we welcome your comradeship.

Air Force discontinues use of base decals

Citing cost, lack of utility and long-term threats facing bases, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley recently ended use of the base sticker, officially called a DD Form 2220, on Air Force installations.

“The decal was developed in the 1970s as part of a vehicle registration and traffic management system, not to bolster security,” said Col William Sellers, USAF chief of force protection and operations for security forces.

Laws now require motorists to have a legal driver’s license issued by a state, proof of vehicle ownership/state registration, evidence of insurance, and safety and emissions inspections. A national vehicle registration system is used by all civilian and military police departments in the country.

Security forces and gate guards now check the ID of each person entering an Air Force installation, Sellers said. This provides better security than a base decal ever did because: the vehicle displaying it could have been sold with the decal on it; its owner may have left the service and not removed the decal; the number on the decal could be duplicated; the decal could be counterfeit; the decal may have been taken from another vehicle; or, the vehicle may have been stolen.

Air Force officials have asked the other services to allow entry of its people to their installations without decals for shopping (or official business).



Final Flights



Benjamin E. Colkitt, Jr
CDR, USN (Ret)
Jan 23, 1921 – May 4, 2007

Born in Mount Holly, NJ, six-year-old Ben found himself a part of the cheering throng at a triumphal parade in Philadelphia for Charles Lindbergh following Lindy's 1927 solo trans-Atlantic flight. The experience sparked a love for flying that would burn intensely in Ben for the rest of his life.

Already a private pilot, he was recruited while in college by the Navy, which insisted that he graduate before reporting for Preflight training in May 1942. He was so slight, he had to force feed bananas in order to make minimum weight. After designation as a naval aviator in May 1943 and a year instructing at Saufley Field, "Bones" eventually reported to VF-1 aboard USS *Bennington* (CV-20) operating against the home islands of Japan. On 2 Sept 1945, he participated in a 1000-plane flight over USS *Missouri* during surrender ceremonies in Tokyo Bay. Subsequently, he flew photo-recon missions over Japan locating POW camps.

During the Korean War, he served as Air Ops Officer aboard CVE 116 operating off the west coast of Korea. After he retired from the Navy in 1964, he became a simulator instructor at the United Training Center in Denver and spent the next three decades involved with commercial and civil aviation. In addition to Daedalians, he was a member of the QBs, Tailhook Association and the Assn of Naval Aviation.

Survived by Donna, his wife of 57 years, a son, three daughters and 11 grandchildren, he was interred at Ft Logan.



Theodore J. Kuhlman
LTC, USAF (Ret)
Nov 15, 1918 – Jul 2, 2007

A former Flight Captain who tended to Flight 18's corporate legal requirements for years, Ted was a Colorado native who flew as an A-20 pilot during World War II and became an attorney after the war.

He was born in Telluride, grew up in Colorado Springs and graduated from Colorado College in June 1941. He entered flight training a month later. While in basic at Gardner Field in Taft, CA, his class was given a dinner dance in a Bakersfield hotel and invited to spend the night. Aroused at 2:00 AM by some burly MPs, they were ordered into a waiting truck and hauled back to the base—a freezing 30-mile ride. Finally, they were told why they'd been rounded up: the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.

Nevertheless, flight training continued as before, and Ted graduated with his class at Luke Field on Feb 6 1942. He would fly A-20 combat missions from Thelepte, Tunisia until Rommel was dislodged from North Africa, then moved to Malta to bomb Sicily. Then it was on to Sicily, from where his squadron became among the first to bomb Italy. After 51 missions, Ted was sent home and was assigned as an instructor pilot at Morris Field, Charlotte, NC. It was there that he met and married Jean Hunter in 1945.

Ted graduated from DU Law School in 1948, practicing law in Denver until his retirement in 1998. He and Jean raised three sons before Jean's death in 2005. He became a Daedalian in 1982 and served as Flight Captain in 1991.

Former Flight 18 member **BG Williams, LTC, USAFR (Ret)**, took his final flight on Jun 14, 2007 following a lengthy illness. A veteran of WWII and Korea, he was 87.

FORGET TO PAY YOUR 2007 FLIGHT DUES?

Please mail this coupon along with a check for your 2007 plus any delinquent Flight dues you owe. Add any amount you desire to donate to the Scholarship Fund. *Only Daedalian Life Members (LMs) are eligible to purchase Flight 18 Life Memberships and stop paying annual dues. If you qualify and choose this option, please contact the Treasurer to determine the correct amount to include in the FLM space below.*

Name: _____ Daedalian # _____ Home Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____ e-mail: _____

Amount enclosed for: [2007 Flight Dues \$12.00 or FLM DUES \$ _____] + Flight Dues for prior years @ \$12.00/yr \$ _____ + Scholarship Fund \$ _____ = Total Enclosed \$ _____

** Make check payable to: **DAEDALIAN FLIGHT 18**

** Mail to: **Treasurer, Mile High Flight 18, P.O. Box 472976, Aurora, CO 80047-2976**

Overdue promotion from page 1 recently did he locate his 1947 Presidential Citation and other supporting documents. Armed with this long misplaced paperwork and with the aid of a friend with the right experience, he finally got the attention of the Air Force Board of Corrections.

Finally, after 58 years of retirement as a lieutenant colonel, the 94-year-old Thompson received a letter from the Air Force dated March 30, 2007, informing him that his records had been corrected to show that, indeed, he had been retired as a full colonel since 1949. While the letter made no reference to 1947, it did advise him that he would be reimbursed the retired pay differential he'd been shorted for nearly six decades.

In a brief, bittersweet ceremony conducted during Flight 18's 20 July luncheon meeting at Aurora Hills, retired Air Force Brig Gen Mortimer Gordon read the promotion order aloud to about 50 attendees. Then the general and John's wife Betty pinned shiny new eagles on the shoulders of Thompson's dress blue uniform, given to him by close friend and fellow Flight member Ralph "Salty" Saltsman especially for the occasion.

The festivities concluded with a champagne toast: "To Colonel John Thompson, age 94, living proof that good things can come to him who...outlives the bastards."

He led decisive "mission that saved Guadalcanal" in 1942.

Eight months after Pearl Harbor, U.S. Marines wrested Guadalcanal from the Japanese as part of the August 1942 invasion of the Solomons, America's first offensive operation of WWII in the Pacific. The Allied "island-hopping" campaign toward Japan was underway, and John Thompson would emerge as one of its heroes.

The Marines required only one day to capture their most important objective on Guadalcanal, an airstrip built by the Japanese in the weeks preced-

ing the invasion. The Leathernecks dubbed it Henderson Field in honor of a Marine Corps pilot killed in the June 1942 Battle of Midway. But holding the field against a fierce Japanese counterattack one month later proved to be an almost impossible challenge.

By the early morning hours of 14 September, 6,000 Japanese troops had advanced to within a thousand yards of the airfield and were poised to overrun its 800 beleaguered Marine defenders at dawn. The Marines requested help from the "Cactus Air Force," the name by which Henderson Field's odd assortment of some 60 Army, Navy and Marine Corps aircraft was known. Enter Major John Thompson, commanding officer of a squadron of 14 P-400 Airacobra fighter-bombers stationed at Henderson. The P-400 was the P-39's export variant.

The Cactus Air Force had been grounded by persistent shelling and aerial bombing in advance of the Japanese ground attack, the resultant damage rendering most of its 60 aircraft unusable. Furthermore, there was enough fuel on hand to enable only three of Thompson's flyable P-400s to get airborne.

When told of the Marines' predicament and given a hand-drawn sketch showing the disposition of opposing forces, Thompson hustled back to his squadron, grabbed two other pilots and led a three-plane mission that took off just before dawn to attack the Japanese. Without leaving the landing pattern, the three planes made a combined total of six deadly strafing passes before all were damaged by ground fire and forced to land. But the short-lived mission was enough to disrupt the onslaught and scatter the stunned Japanese back into the jungles. The Marines' Airacobra-aided defensive stand, which came to be known as the Battle of Bloody Ridge, helped ensure that Henderson Field would remain in U.S. hands for the duration of the war.

That afternoon, the Marine general in command told Thompson that his

flight of three P-400s "had just saved Guadalcanal." For this pivotal mission, Thompson received the Navy Cross and each of his wingmen the Silver Star.

Treasurer's interim report

Since the inception of the Flight Life Member program in Nov 2006, Flight 18 has accumulated a total of \$4,044 from 41 members. At the direction of the Flight Officers, the Treasurer was tasked to invest this money for the best possible return with maximum safety and availability. We have therefore bought four \$1,000 CDs from Colorado State Bank and Trust at 5.3% interest. This will bring in more than \$200 per year for our operating fund. The CDs are relatively short term (8 to 12 months) and were bought one per month over four months so that if necessary some money could be available in a fairly short time period. The CDs are FDIC insured, and Colorado State Bank and Trust has been in business for 98 years.

Additionally, we have put our operating and scholarship funds (separately accounted for in-house) into a "Business Money Market" fund at the same bank which allows us to write three checks per month but pays 11 times the interest we previously got at a commercial bank. As a corporation, our Flight is somewhat limited in what type of bank (commercial vs S&L) can accept our money.

This is just an interim report to members; the regular report will be made to the Flight membership before year's end.

Ed Cutler, Treasurer

Life's big questions

Who am I?

Why am I here?

What is my fate?

Where are the cookies?

*** Sea Biscuits and Scufflebutt ***

Air Force reveals new Airman's Creed

Earlier this year, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley announced a new Airman's Creed, which replaces all existing Air Force-related creeds and reads as follows:

THE AIRMAN'S CREED

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
I AM A WARRIOR.
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL.
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,
A TRADITION OF HONOR,
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,
MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD,
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,
I WILL NEVER FALTER,
AND I WILL NOT FAIL.

Some recall Naval Aviators' Code

The origin of the aviators' code (not to be confused with the Naval Aviator's Creed) is unknown. It was posted on a bulkhead at Trader Jon's in Pensacola, Florida, for as long as anyone can remember.

NAVAL AVIATORS' CODE

I am a Navy Pilot,
I will not drink.
But if I do,
I will not get drunk.
But if I do,
I will not get drunk in public.
But if I do,
I will not stagger.
But if I do,
I will not fall down.
But if I do,
I will fall on my face so they
cannot see my wings

The Reunion

His faded blue eyes lost their sparkle as he closed the taxicab door. He could see the place looked quite empty, though he'd never been here before.

Moving slowly toward the front entrance, anxiety was etched on his face;
perhaps he was early this morning, or perhaps this wasn't the place.

Then he saw the sign on the doorway, "Veteran's Reunion Inside," and he took a moment to rally, to stand tall with honor and pride.

He stepped through the entrance smartly, but paused in the dark, empty hall.

Was he the only soul present? Was he the last one, after all?

When they gathered last year for reunion the number attending was slim.
Could it be that his friends couldn't make it...that none would be joining him?

He stood there a moment in sadness, overwhelmed with thoughts of the past...
when his comrades and he faced the enemy and each sunrise might well be their last.

Then he lifted his head and listened...was that laughter he heard down the hall?

Why, that was Tom's voice and the Colonel's...Ah-h-h, he was not the last man, after all.

Marilyn Camden Norton
Hot Springs Village, Arkansas

Mile High Flight 18 - 2007

Flight Captain.....Tom Martin, LTC, USAF (Ret)
Vice Flt Capt.....Don Neary, COL, ANG (Ret)
Adjutant.....Ron Smith, COL, USAF (Ret)
Treasurer.....Ed Cutler, LT, USNR (Ret)
Provost Marshall.....Dale Boggie, COL, USAF (Ret)
Scholarships.....Bill Greener, LTC, USAF (Ret)
Asst Treasurer....Hugh Greenwood, CPT, USAFR (Sep)
Newsletter.....Gerry Spaulding, CAPT, USN (Ret)
(Positions in bold elected, those in italics appointed)

♣ **Flight 18 normally meets the third Friday of each month at the Aurora Hills Tin Cup Bar & Grill, located just north of Alameda and just east of Peoria. Social hour at 11:00, lunch at 12:00. Exceptions via newsletter.**

♣ **The newsletter is published quarterly. Contact the ed. at (719) 638-5786 or via e-mail at gerkar@comcast.net.**

Web site:

<http://www.ghspaulding.com/orderofdaedalianshome.htm>