



# THE GRAPEVINE



EAA CHAPTER 663 Livermore, California

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There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."

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## PROGRAM

Our June meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. on the 1st of June in the Terminal Building at the Livermore Airport. Our program will be presented by Ron Jones and Ping Gamboa of Legacy Innovations. They will present information on how to make custom composite parts for your Experimental aircraft. Ron Jones is a former Air force pilot and current 777 Captain with United, Ping Gamboa formerly ran Lancair's composite factory in the Philippines.

### MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING EAA CHAPTER 663, 05/04/06, 7:30 PM, TERMINAL BUILDING LVK.

Chapter president Bob Farnam called the meeting to order.

Guests present were: Rob Goldman, Roy Samuel-

son, Mike Doorward, Wes Isberg, Monika Bastista and Will Spencer.

Treasurer's report: Bill Bunce reported the chapter has \$4,347.22 in funds.

New business: Brad Olsen has reserved 1/2 of the large hall at the Robert Livermore Hall on East Avenue for the January dinner.

Bill Bunce reported the new member name badges will cost \$7.99 each.

Ralph Cloud asked for new members to E-mail him at [webedaaa663@flash.net](mailto:webedaaa663@flash.net) with your information for the chapter web site and for current members to update their profiles.

Gordon Jones found a good LCD projector for chapter use at Costco for \$800.00. Discussion ensued if the chapter should purchase the projector, a motion was made by Dick Jennings to buy one in the \$1,000.00 range. The motion passed with 15 yes votes against 4 no votes.

Dick Jennings put out the call for project pictures for the chapter scrap book.

Barry Weber asked for a show of hands of chapter members that are interested in a formation flying clinic, about 10 members raised their hands.

Program: Geoff Rutledge presented a slide show on hand gliding that covered the origins of hang gliding up through the current high performance rigid wing carbon fiber hang gliders. Geoff had many personal photos of himself hang gliding over the years at many varied and interesting locations. I for one was very impressed and wanted to go learn how to hang glide after listening to Geoff's presentation.

Meeting adjourned for pie at 9:50

**MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING, 05/18/06 7:30 PM, BOB FARNAM'S  
HOUSE.**

Present: Bob Farnam, Bill Bunce, Scott Alair, Geoff Rutledge, Dick Jennings, Bill Jepson and Ralph Cloud.

Treasurer's report: \$4,799.86

Possible tools for chapter purchase to be discussed at the June meeting are: spark plug cleaner/tester, tube bender, tire bead breaker, tire balancer and bore scope.

Bill Bunce is putting together a chapter budget for the rest of the year so we will know how much of the chapter funds are available for purchasing tools.

Bob Farnam and Geoff Rutledge volunteered to organize the repair of the chapter trailer.

Bill Bunce is placing the order for the new chapter name badges with the EAA.

The chapters Young Eagle flights are on the following dates at 10:00 am: June 24th, July 22, August 26th, September 23, October 14th and November 4th.

The next chapter meeting is on Thursday June 1st at 7:30 and the next Board meeting is on Thursday June 15th.

Meeting adjourned for pie at 9:00 pm.

Your Secretary, Scott Alair, Life's short, Fly fast.

**AIR FORCE VS NAVY, CONTINUING...**

A favorite story from former CNO  
Admiral Jim Holloway, USN Retired.....

One thing about Air Force pilots is that they lie a lot. You simply can't trust them at all. We had an argument one night at the Belvedere Inn, across from the main gate at NAS Pax River, a bunch of our F-14 Tomcat Pilots at Strike were arguing with some F-15 Eagle drivers from Langley about who was better at what and which airplane was better. Well, we decided to settle it the next morning in the restricted area over the Chesapeake Bay.

This is where we found out about how much Air Force pilots lie!!! We all agreed to meet nose on at 35 thousand and settle it once and for all.

Don't you know those lying, sneaky b...rds showed up at 40 thousand. God, what a bunch of lying, low lifes those Air Force types were, showing up with a 5 thousand foot altitude advantage.

Hell, if we hadn't been at 45 thousand, those lying Air Force dirt-bags would have had us for breakfast!!!!!!!

"If It Weren't For The United States Military,  
There Would Be NO United States of America"

**WARD CARROLL: SUNSET GLOWS ON  
THE TOMCAT**

(About the Author: Ward Carroll served in four different F-14 squadrons based at NAS Oceana and was the operations officer for Carrier Air Wing One. He was editor of Approach magazine and is currently a contributing editor for Naval Aviation News. His three books about a Tomcat pilot -- Punk's War, Punk's Wing, and Punk's Fight -- have been widely praised for their realistic portrayals of a Naval Aviator's life. His latest novel, The Aide, was recently published by Signet.)

August 10, 2005

They're coming one after the other now. Each day seems to bring another heartache - articles in professional journals, invitations for "the last of" events, order forms for coffee table books. I'm beginning to realize that there's no putting off the fact that one of the most revolutionary, capable, and elegant airplanes ever to dominate the skies is going away.

I refer, of course, to the F-14 Tomcat. Over the next number of months the grand old boy will take his leave. With the F-14 goes the notion of swing wings, variable geometry intakes, radar intercept officers, and 1.8 indicated Mach number on the airspeed gauge. And with the F-14 also goes a big part of what made my life noteworthy, dare I say, the stuff of novels.

The Tomcat had an amazing run: thirty-plus years, three wars, dozens of brush fires and contingencies, and one popular - albeit hokey as pozz - movie called "Top Gun." Few airplanes in the history of aviation have adapted as well to the tactical landscape over their years in the inventory. The F-14 was designed around the AWG-9/Phoenix missile system, a long-range air superiority fighter that pushed out the boundaries of fleet defense. The early portion of my flying career was about launching on the Alert 5 and escorting Soviet bombers and transports. Those were the days of the 1+45 cycle, the days when the Tomcat was the fuel critical jet in the air wing. The thought of dropping bombs was anathema to us then.

But the threat changed as the post-Cold War defense budgets shrank, and the F-14 morphed into an attack platform. A few years after that the LANTIRN pod was strapped onto a wing station and strike planning doors that had once been shut to the Tomcat community came flying open. Suddenly the Tomcat, with its two-man crew and newly received high-resolution displays, was the platform of choice for culturally sensitive or hard-to-find targets. System by system (including the flight controls), an analog airplane turned digital.

And none too soon. Precision bomb delivery along with the refinement of the photo reconnaissance mission and the addition of roles such as FAC(A) came just in time to serve in the wake of 9/11. Six-hour missions to Masir-e-Sharif? No problem. Same goes for the way the airplane was employed during the opening months of the Iraqi War. A flexible, capable platform combined with resourceful aviators is a great pairing in the face of a dynamic battlefield. Ironically, perhaps, as the Tomcat got older, it got better. In sum, it's safe to say that the American taxpayer was well served by this asset.

But now the F-14's time is nearly over. Emotions stir in the face of this reality. Thousands of hours of my adult life were spent strapped into the back seat of the "Big Fighter." It was there that challenges were met, friendships were forged, and the nation's will was carried out. From that lofty perch I looked up at the heavens and down on hostile lands. I didn't always realize it then - youth, of course, is lost on the young - but each sortie was a gift.

So, too, was the time spent in the company of greats. I think back on chain-laden plane captains who loved the airplanes as much as we did, those who kept the aviators going with their enthusiasm in the face of long days that promised nothing but more hard work. I remember the maintenance master chiefs who taught me not just how the Tomcat works but how to be an officer and a man. And for their caring they asked for nothing in return. In their countenances I saw my responsibilities.

Anyone familiar with my Punk series of books knows that the years I spent riding in the back gave me a de facto doctorate in pilot personality types. Any RIO with 1,000 hours or more in the airplane possesses a similar degree. And as I flip through the pages of my weathered logbooks and read the names - Orr, West, Davison, Owens, Daill, Alwine, and hundreds more - I think of their skill, skill that boggles the mind even now, and the teamwork between cockpits that made flying the F-14 rewarding. I know few things as surely as I know that U.S. Navy carrier-based pilots are the best in the world.

And what of the down times between sorties? In my mind's eye I conjure up a gathering in the eight-man stateroom where problems are broached, dissected, and solved. This is where I learned about trust. This is where I realized I could survive the trial that was life at sea - hell, life period.

Now I close my eyes and hear the clack, clack, clack of the shuttle as it moves aft for the next launch. The exhaust from the powerful and reliable F-110 engines fills my nostrils until we drop the canopy and bring our jet to life. Air roars through the ECS. Systems power up. Soon we're parked behind the cat, waiting our turn. I roger the weight board - 68,000 pounds, buddy, 68,000 pounds. Grasp that, if you can. The jet blast deflector comes down and we taxi into place, my pilot deftly splitting the cat track with the twin nose tires. And then - even after decades of doing the same thing - the adrenaline starts to flow as we go through the deck dance unique to the Tomcat:

The nose strut compresses, giving the fighter the look of a rail dragster; the launch bar comes down. Wings spread. Flaps lower. Outboard



**WING FORWARD, TAIL HOOK DOWN, BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO LAND  
ON THAT THING, ARE WE?**

spoiler module circuit breaker goes in (an RIO gotcha). Our hands go up as the ordies arm the missiles, bombs, and gun.

There's the signal from the catapult officer. My pilot puts the throttles to military power and wipes out the controls - stick forward, aft, left, and right; rudder left and right.

"You ready, Mooch?" he asks.

I run the fingers of my right hand across the top of the lower ejection handle (for orientation purposes) and answer, "Ready."

He salutes. We both lean forward slightly. (No self-respecting Tomcat crew would take a cat shot with their heads against the headrest, not to mention that would be a good way to get your bell rung because of the way the airplane surges down before it starts moving forward.) A couple of potatoes later we're off. Airborne.

And for the next hours we stand ready to bring this machine, this manifestation of American know-how, to bear however it might be required. Or maybe today isn't our day to save the world, so we accommodate one of the small boy's

requests for a fly-by or break the sound barrier just because we can (and we're far enough above our fuel ladder to get away with it).

We're flying a Tomcat. And we're getting paid to do it.

Alas, I speak of days gone by. What remains of what once gave my working life purpose will soon only be found in front of main gates, aviation museums, and VFW halls around the country. In the blink of an eye I have become the guy with the ill-fitting ball cap and the weathered flight jacket who bores young ensigns (and anyone else who happens to make eye contact) with his tales of derring-do. "VF, dang it!" I rail. "Those were real fighter squadrons." And they were. Swordsmen, Pukin' Dogs, Grim Reapers, Diamondbacks - mascots of an adventure. At the center of it all was the airplane itself, and when an airplane has so much heart, personality, and character it ceases to be inanimate to those who climb into it on a regular basis.

So it's goodbye, dear friend. Forgive my depression. I've heard the promises of a brighter future, but my time in the arena was with you. I watch you zorch into the sunset and wonder how

it all could have passed so quickly. It doesn't seem like that long ago when we were together, inextricably linked, one defining the other. Ours was a world of unlimited possibilities and missions accomplished. Ours was a world of victory.

So goodbye, Big Fighter, blessed protector of the American way and our hides. We who knew you well will miss your class, your swagger, your raw power. Even in the face of technological advances you bowed to no other. Thanks for the memories. They are indeed the stuff of novels.

### HELL??

(An exam question...)

The following is an actual question given on a University of Washington chemistry mid-term exam.

The answer by one student was so "profound" that the professor shared it with colleagues, via the Internet, which is, of course, why we now have the pleasure of enjoying it as well.

Question: Is Hell exothermic (gives off heat) or endothermic (absorbs heat)?

Most of the students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law (gas cools when it expands and heats when it is compressed) or some variant.

One student, however, wrote the following:

First we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate at which souls are moving into Hell and the rate at which they are leaving. I think that we can safely assume that once a soul gets into Hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving.

As for how many souls are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Most of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell.

Since there is more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all souls go to Hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially. Now we look at the rate of change

of the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand proportionally as souls are added.

This gives two possibilities:

1. If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.

2. If Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it?

If we accept the postulate given to me by Teresa during my Freshman year that, "it will be a cold day in Hell before I sleep with you", and take into account the fact that I slept with her last night, then number 2 must be true, and thus I am sure that Hell is exothermic and has already frozen over.

The corollary of this theory is that since Hell has frozen over, it follows that it is not accepting any more souls and is therefore, extinct...leaving only Heaven thereby proving the existence of a Divine Being which explains why, last night, Teresa kept shouting "Oh my God!"

THIS STUDENT RECEIVED THE ONLY "A"

### FORTUNE COOKIE TIME

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt and leaky tire.

It is always darkest before dawn. So if you're going to steal your neighbor's newspaper, that's the time to do it.

Don't be irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.

America is a large friendly dog in a small room. Every time it wags its tail it knocks over a chair.  
~ Arnold Joseph Toynbee



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