



THE GRAPEVINE



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

Vol. XXVIII,



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Officers

President Ralph Cloud 449-1048
Vice President Don Smith 785-5824
Trea\$Urer Mark Palajac 454-0627
Secretary Kirk Knight 510-390-0840
Program Co-Ord Don Smith 785-5824
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Tech Counselor Gordon Jones 447-1549
Tech Counselor Bob Sinclair 935-7465
News Letter Emeritus John Meyer
News Letter Editor Jeffry Larson 209-608-5981
Flight Advisor Barry Weber 963-0824
Flight Advisor Bob Farnam 449-1513
Young Eagles Eric Helms 373-0137
Librarian Alan Thayer 582-7274
Web Editor Brad Olson 866-9289



Important NOTE:

Membership renewal –2010

People can start sending me their membership renewal checks. It is \$30 for 2010. My address is 25 Jacaranda Drive, Fremont CA 94539. I don't need the forms unless it is a new member.

Now accepting checks for the annual dinner in January. Aviatin writer Lane Wallace is the guest speaker and it will be worth the price of admission. If her presentation is similar to Oshkosh, discussing her flying in Africa you really don't want to miss it.

Mark Palajac

Treasurer, EAA Chapter 663 Livermore

MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING, EAA CHAPTER 663, 11/5/2009, 7:30 PM, TERMINAL BUILDING KLVK.

Chapter president Ralph Cloud called the meeting to order.

There were no guests.

The minutes for the October meetings were approved as printed in "The Grapevine".

Treasurer Mark Palajac reported \$3544.51 in chapter funds. He is accepting dues (\$30) for 2010, checks only.



Board Of Directors

Bruce Cruikshank 510-886-6897
 John Goldsmith 925-447-7362
 Brad Oliver 925-443-1135
 Bob Farnam 449-1513
 Dick Jennings 862-2345
 Bob Cowan 373 0555



December Meeting And Program

NOTICE: Our December meeting will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 3rd of December. The meeting will be at the terminal - KLVK.

Calendar:

Month	Date	Speaker	Topic
Dec	3	Special Presenter	Special Presentation
Jan	7	Chris Lowrey	Aviation Fuel Expert

Our December Program will feature a special presentation. Remember the "What is it" contest requires you to be present to win. Aircraft Spruce has graciously agreed to continue their sponsorship so check out this month's picture, send an email with the correct answer and show up at the meeting to collect your prize.

Business: There was a lengthy discussion about the proposed changes to the airport operating rules. Of particular concern to us are restrictions on building and maintaining our aircraft. As originally proposed, there was a limit of 36 months with a possible extension of another 12 months. It's understood that this will be eased. There are other concerns about the sharing of the large square, "commercial" hangers. The comment period ends on Monday the 9th. There is still time to send an email to the manager through the Livermore Airport website.

Attitude Aviation is hosting a free barbeque open to the airport community on Saturday the 7th 5 pm. Rich Perkins is putting it on so that the various factions can get to know each other and share our common concerns. Dave Dent moved and Dick Jennings seconded that the chapter contribute \$200 to help with the expenses of the gathering. After discussion, it passed with 2 dissenting votes. Bob Buckthal urged all those who could to attend.

Plans for the Annual Dinner January 23, 2010 are pretty well set. Price will be \$25 per person. The food and place are the same as last year. Aviation writer (Flying) Lane Wallace will be the speaker. Subject of her talk is open, but leaning toward her experience flying in Africa, a presentation she made at Oshkosh. Her flying experiences are as varied as anybody on earth.

Eric Helms, our Young Eagles coordinator, left word with Ralph about a one day event possibly in May where a Boy Scout Troop will come to the airport for gaining Aviation Merit Badges. The plan is break into small groups and cover all phases of general aviation to included aircraft construction, aircraft preflight inspection, flight planning, operation and navigation. There was some debate about giving airplane rides. More details will come.

Ralph made an appeal for members to send pictures of their projects/aircraft to pictures@eaa663.org for the chapter website.

Announcements: The next board meeting will be 11/19, 7:30 at Ralph's place.

The Annual Dinner: 1/23/2010

Break and then Program: I talked, with pictures, about my experience as a Marine A-4 pilot in Vietnam.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 11/19/2010, 7:40, RALPH'S PLACE.

Ralph Cloud, Dick Jennings, Bob Farnam, Mark Palajac, Bruce Cruikshank, Bob Cowan, and John Goldsmith were present.

Mark reported \$3847 in chapter funds and 12 dinner reservations.

There was discussion of the airport rule changes.

Ralph is working getting the digital picture frame working again. The power supply needed replacing and Ralph is working improving the selection of pictures.

Annual dinner planning: Bob Farnam has confirmed the caterer; the menu will be similar to last year. Bob Cowan has confirmed the speaker, Lane Wallace. There was a discussion of finding a new venue due to the high cost of the current location. The Sunol Jazz Club received honorable mention.

The program for the December meeting has yet to be determined. Trusty Don Smith is tied up in Italy on business. There will be a program. It may be hot air ballooning in Turkey; no really.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Cruikshank, Secretary

Feedback/Questions/Suggestions

Any and all feedback is welcome. In order to make the newsletter entertaining, informative and above all else, something that you enjoy reading every month please take a few minutes to send suggestions, tips, corrections or any other feedback to: jeffrylite@comcast.net.

Mailbag:

This month's article is a continuation of the story started last month from a true American hero. I hope you enjoy it.

Doolittle Raid on Tokyo:

This is a really excellent first-hand account by the pilot of aircraft #13 on the Doolittle Raid off the Hornet in 1942. Take the time and enjoy a bit of history.

Within a few days of returning to our base in Florida, we were abruptly told to pack our things. After just three weeks of practice, we were on our way. This was it. It was time to go. It was the middle of March 1942, and I was 30 years old. Our orders were to fly to **McClellan Air Base** in Sacramento, California, on our own, at the lowest possible level. So here we went on our way west, scraping the tree tops at 160 miles per hour, and skimming along just 50 feet above plowed fields. We crossed North Texas and then the panhandle, scaring the dickens out of livestock, buzzing farm houses and a many a barn along the way. Over the Rocky Mountains and across the Mojave Desert dodging thunderstorms, we enjoyed the flight immensely and although tempted, I didn't do too much dare-devil stuff. We didn't know it at the time, but it was good practice for what lay ahead of us. It proved to be our last fling. Once we arrived in Sacramento, the mechanics went over our plane with a fine-tooth comb. Of the twenty-two planes that made it, only those whose pilots reported no mechanical problems were allowed to go on. The others were shunted aside.

After having our plane serviced, we flew on to Alameda Naval Air Station in Oakland. As I came in for final approach, we saw it! I excitedly called the rest of the crew to take a look. There below us was a huge aircraft carrier. It was the USS Hornet, and it looked so gigantic! Man, I had never even seen a carrier until this moment. There were already two B-25s parked on the flight deck. Now we knew! My heart was racing, and I thought about how puny my plane would look on board this mighty ship. As soon as we landed and taxied off the runway, a jeep pulled in front of me with a big "Follow Me" sign on the back.

We followed it straight up to the wharf, alongside the towering Hornet. All five of us were looking up and just in awe, scarcely believing the size of this thing.

As we left the plane, there was already a Navy work crew swarming around attaching cables to the lifting rings on top of the wings and the fuselage. As we walked towards our quarters, I looked back and saw them lifting my plane up into the air and swing it over the ship's deck. It looked so small and lonely. Later that afternoon, all crews met with **Colonel Doolittle** and he gave last minute assignments. He told me to go to the **Presidio** and pick up two hundred extra "C" rations. I saluted, turned, and left, not having any idea where the Presidio was, and not exactly sure what a "C" ration was. I commandeered a Navy staff car and told the driver to take me to the Presidio, and he did. On the way over, I realized that I had no written signed orders and that this might get a little sticky. So in I walked into the Army supply depot and made my request, trying to look poised and confident. The supply officer asked, "What is your authorization for this request, sir?" I told him that I could not give him one. "And what is the destination?" he asked. I answered, "The aircraft carrier, Hornet, docked at Alameda." He said, "Can you tell me who ordered the rations, sir?" And I replied with a smile, "No, I cannot." The supply officers huddled together, talking and glanced back over towards me. Then he walked back over and assured me that the rations would be delivered that afternoon. Guess they figured that something big was up. They were right.

The next morning we all boarded the ship. Trying to remember my naval etiquette, I saluted the Officer of the Deck and said, "Lt. McElroy, requesting permission to come aboard." The officer returned the salute and said, "Permission granted." Then I turned aft and saluted the flag. I made it, without messing up. It was April 2, and in full sunlight, we left San Francisco Bay. The whole task force of ships, two cruisers, four destroyers, and a fleet oiler, moved slowly with us under the Golden Gate Bridge. Thousands of people looked on. Many stopped their cars on the bridge, and waved to us as we passed underneath. I thought to myself, I hope there aren't any spies up there waving.

Once at sea, **Doolittle** called us together. "Only a few of you know our destination, and you others have guessed about various targets. Gentlemen, your target is Japan !" A sudden cheer exploded among the men. "Specifically, Yokohama, Tokyo, Nagoya, Kobe, Nagasaki, and Osaka". The Navy task force will get us as close as possible and we'll launch our planes.. We will hit our targets and proceed to airfields in China." After the cheering stopped, he asked again, if any of us desired to back out, no questions asked. Not one did, not one. Then the ship's Captain went over the intercom to the whole ship's company. The loudspeaker blared, "The destination is Tokyo !" A tremendous cheer broke out from everyone on board. I could hear metal banging together and wild screams from down below decks. It was quite a rush! I felt relieved actually. We finally knew where we were going.

I set up quarters with two Navy pilots, putting my cot between their two bunks. They couldn't get out of bed without stepping on me. It was just fairly cozy in there, yes it was. Those guys were part of the Torpedo Squadron Eight and were just swell fellows. The rest of the guys bedded down in similar fashion to me, some had to sleep on bedrolls in the Admiral's chartroom. As big as this ship was, there wasn't any extra room anywhere. Every square foot had a purpose. A few days later, we discovered where they had an ice cream machine!

There were sixteen B-25s tied down on the flight deck, and I was flying **number 13**. All the carrier's fighter planes were stored away helplessly in the hangar deck. They couldn't move until we were gone. Our Army mechanics were all on board, as well as our munitions loaders and several back up crews, in case any of us got sick or backed out. We settled into a daily routine of checking our planes. The aircraft were grouped so closely together on deck that it wouldn't take much for them to get damaged. Knowing that my life depended on this plane, I kept a close eye on her. Day after day, we met with the intelligence officer and studied our mission plan. Our targets were assigned, and maps and objective folders were furnished for study. We went over approach routes and our escape route towards China. I never studied this hard back at Trinity. Every day at dawn and at dusk, the ship was

called to general quarters and we practiced finding the quickest way to our planes. If at any point along the way, we were discovered by the enemy fleet, we were to launch our bombers immediately so the Hornet could bring up its fighter planes. We would then be on our own, and try to make it to the nearest land, either Hawaii or Midway Island.

Dr. Thomas White, a volunteer member of **plane number 15**, went over our medical records and gave us inoculations for a whole bunch of diseases that hopefully I wouldn't catch. He gave us training sessions in emergency first aid, and lectured us at length about water purification and such. Tom, a medical doctor, had learned how to be a gunner just so he could go on this mission. We put some new tail guns in place of the ones that had been taken out to save weight. Not exactly functional, **they were two broom handles, painted black**. The thinking was they might help scare any Jap fighter planes. Maybe, maybe not.

On Sunday, April 14, we met up with Admiral Bull Halsey's task force just out of Hawaii and joined into one big force. The carrier Enterprise was now with us, another two heavy cruisers, four more destroyers and another oiler.

We were designated as **Task Force 16**. It was quite an impressive sight to see, and represented the **bulk of what was left of the U.S. Navy** after the devastation of Pearl Harbor. There were over **10,000 Navy personnel** sailing into harm's way, just to deliver us **sixteen Army planes** to the Japs, orders of the President.

As we steamed further west, tension was rising as we drew nearer and nearer to Japan. Someone thought of arming us with some old .45 pistols that they had on board. I went through that box of 1911 pistols; they were in such bad condition that I took several of them apart, using the good parts from several useless guns until I built a serviceable weapon. Several of the other pilots did the same. Admiring my "new" pistol, I held it up, and thought about my old Model-T.

Colonel Doolittle called us together on the flight deck

We all gathered round, as well as many Navy personnel. He pulled out some medals and told us how these friendship medals from the Japanese government had been given to some of our Navy officers several years back. And now the Secretary of the Navy had requested for us to return them. **Doolittle wired them to a bomb** while we all posed for pictures. Something to cheer up the folks back home!

I began to pack my things for the flight, scheduled for the 19th. I packed some extra clothes and a little brown bag that Aggie had given me, inside were some toilet items and a few candy bars. No letters or identity cards were allowed, only our dog-tags. I went down to the wardroom to have some ice cream and settle up my mess bill. It only amounted to \$5 a day and with my per diem of \$6 per day, I came out a little ahead. By now, my Navy pilot roommates were about ready to get rid of me, but I enjoyed my time with them. They were alright. Later on, I learned that **both of them were killed** at the Battle of Midway. They were good men. Yes, very good men.

Colonel Doolittle let each crew pick our own target. We chose the **Yokosuka Naval Base** about twenty miles from Tokyo. We loaded 1450 rounds of ammo and four 500-pound bombs. A little payback, direct from Ellis County, Texas! We checked and re-checked our plane several times. Everything was now ready. I felt relaxed, yet tensed up at the same time. Day after tomorrow, we will launch when we are **400 miles out**. I lay in my cot that night, and rehearsed the mission over and over in my head. It was hard to sleep as I listened to sounds of the ship.

Part 3

Early the next morning, I was enjoying a leisurely breakfast, expecting another full day on board, and I noticed that the ship was pitching and rolling quite a bit this morning, more than normal. I was reading through the April 18th day plan of the **Hornet**, and there was a message in it which said, "**From the Hornet to the Army - Good luck, good hunting, and God bless you.**" I still had a large lump in my throat from reading this, when all of a sudden, the intercom blared, "**General Quarters, General Quarters, All hands man your battle stations! Army pilots, man your planes!!!!**" There was instant

reaction from everyone in the room and food trays went crashing to the floor. I ran down to my room jumping through the hatches along the way, grabbed my bag, and ran as fast as I could go to the flight deck. I met with my crew at the plane, my heart was pounding. Someone said, "What's going on?" The word was that the Enterprise had spotted an enemy trawler. It had been sunk, but it had transmitted radio messages. **We had been found out!**

The weather was crummy, the seas were running heavy, and the ship was pitching up and down like I had never seen before. Great waves were crashing against the bow and washing over the front of the deck this wasn't going to be easy! Last minute instructions were given. We were reminded to avoid non-military targets, especially the Emperor's Palace. Do not fly to Russia, but fly as far west as possible, land on the water and launch our rubber raft. This was going to be a one-way trip! We were still much too far out and we all knew that our chances of making land were somewhere between slim and none. Then at the last minute, each plane loaded an extra ten 5-gallon gas cans to give us a fighting chance of reaching China.

We all climbed aboard, started our engines and warmed them up, just feet away from the plane in front of us and the plane behind us. Knobby, Campbell, Bourgeois and me in the front, Williams, the gunner was in the back, separated from us by a big rubber gas tank. I called back to Williams on the intercom and told him to look sharp and don't take a nap! He answered dryly, "Don't worry about me, Lieutenant. If they jump us, **I'll just use my little black broomsticks to keep the Japs off our tail.**"

The ship headed into the wind and picked up speed. There was now a near gale force wind and water spray coming straight over the deck. I looked down at my instruments as my engines revved up. My mind was racing. I went over my mental checklist, and said a prayer? God please, help us! Past the twelve planes in front of us, I strained to see the flight deck officer as he leaned into the wind and signaled with his arms for **Colonel Doolittle** to come to full power. I looked over at Knobby and we looked each other in the eye. He just nodded to me and we both understood

With the deck heaving up and down, the deck officer had to time this just right. Then I saw him wave **Doolittle** to go, and we watched breathlessly to see what happened. When his plane pulled up above the deck, Knobby just let out with, "Yes! Yes!" The second plane, piloted by Lt. **Hoover**, appeared to stall with its nose up and began falling toward the waves. We groaned and called out, "Up! Up! Pull it up!" Finally, he pulled out of it, staggering back up into the air, much to our relief!

One by one, the planes in front of us took off. The deck pitched wildly, 60 feet or more, it looked like. One plane seemed to drop down into the drink and disappeared for a moment, then pulled back up into sight. There was sense of relief with each one that made it. We gunned our engines and started to roll forward. **Off to the right, I saw the men on deck cheering and waving their covers!** We continued inching forward, careful to keep my left main wheel and my nose wheel on the white guidelines that had been painted on the deck for us. Get off a little bit too far left and we go off the edge of the deck. A little too far to the right and our wing-tip will smack the island of the ship. With the best seat on the ship, we watched Lt. Bower take off in plane number 12, and I taxied up to the starting line, put on my the brakes and looked down to my left. My main wheel was right on the line. Applied more power to the engines, and I turned my complete attention to the deck officer on my left, who was circling his paddles. Now my adrenaline was really pumping! We went to full power, and the noise and vibration inside the plane went way up. He circled the paddles furiously while watching forward for the pitch of the deck. Then he dropped them, and I said, "Here We Go!" I released the brakes and we started rolling forward, and as I looked down the flight-deck, you could see straight down into the angry churning water.

As we slowly gained speed, the deck gradually began to pitch back up. I pulled up and our plane slowly strained up and away from the ship. There was a big cheer and whoops from the crew, but I just felt relieved and muttered to myself, "Boy, that was short!"

We made a wide circle above our fleet to check our compass headings and get our bearings. I looked down

as we passed low over one of our cruisers and could see the men on deck waving to us. I dropped down to low level, so low we could see the whitecap waves breaking. It was just after 0900, there were broken clouds at 5,000 feet and visibility of about thirty miles due to haze or something. Up ahead and barely in sight, I could see **Captain Greening**, our flight leader, and **Bower** on his right wing. Flying at 170 mph, I was able; to catch up to them in about 30 minutes. We were to stay in this formation until reaching landfall, and then break on our separate ways.

Now we settled in for the **five hour flight**. Tokyo, here we come! Williams was in the back emptying the extra gas cans into the gas tank as fast as we had burned off enough fuel. He then punched holes in the tins and pushed them out the hatch against the wind. Some of the fellows ate sandwiches and other goodies that the Navy had put aboard for us. I wasn't hungry. I held onto the controls with a firm grip as we raced along westward just fifty feet above the cold rolling ocean, as low as I dared to fly. Being so close to the choppy waves gave you a true sense of speed. Occasionally our windshield was even sprayed with a little saltwater. It was an exhilarating feeling, and I felt as though the will and spirit of our whole country was pushing us along. I didn't feel too scared, just anxious. There was a lot riding on this thing, and on me.

As we began to near land, we saw an occasional ship here and there. None of them close enough to be threatening, but just the same, we were feeling more edgy. Then at 1330 we sighted land, the Eastern shore of **Honshu**. With Williams now on his guns in the top turret and Campbell on the nose gun, we came ashore still flying low as possible, and were **surprised to see people on the ground waving to us** as we flew in over the farmland. It was beautiful countryside.

Campbell, our navigator, said, "Mac, I think we're going to be about sixty miles too far north. I'm not positive, but pretty sure." I decided that he was absolutely right and turned left ninety degrees, went back just offshore and followed the coast line south. When I thought we had gone far enough, I

climbed up to two thousand feet to find out where we were. We started getting fire from anti-aircraft guns. Then we spotted Tokyo Bay, turned west and put our nose down diving toward the water. Once over the bay, I could see our target, **Yokosuka Naval Base**. Off to the right there was already smoke visible over Tokyo. Coming in low over the water, I increased speed to 200 mph and told everyone, "Get Ready!"

Part 4 will continue in next month's Newsletter. Stay tuned.

"Grapevine Talking" This month is on hold again this month due to some scheduling difficulties. For those of you that haven't taken the opportunity, experience breakfast with the chapter every Saturday morning at 8:00 AM. If you haven't been to the chapter [website](#) lately, take the opportunity to stop by and view the excellent work by Brad Olsen.



Cool video's found on the internet.

[Almost a bad day at work](#)

[And you thought you have every bell & whistle on your RV?](#)

[Airventure 2009](#)

[He takes to the air with the greatest of ease.](#)

[One heck of a flying boat](#)

[Flying the RedBull in Barcelona](#)

**What is it? From last month
Sponsored by:**



Last month there were several that correctly identified this aircraft. Mike Francis was first in the inbox, followed by Dan Shumaker, neither of whom made the chapter meeting. Dave Dent was next but he politely declined adding another clock to his collection so it's available for this month's winner. Thanks Dave, appreciate the "team" spirit. It is a Russian craft, the Ekranoplan Caspian Sea Monster.

Thanks to those that called Aircraft Spruce and mentioned this contest in the newsletter as they have agreed to continue their sponsorship. Prizes are available thanks to them. Please give them a call with your next order and tell them how much you appreciate their generous donation to our monthly newsletter.

Submit your answer to the newsletter editor to be eligible for a prize to be awarded at the regular chapter meeting. **You must be present to win.**

Winning entries will be decided by the email that is received with the earliest time stamp and the correct naming of the make/model of the pictured airplane. Winners that correctly identified the winning make/model that do NOT attend the meeting will forfeit the prize to the next available submission.

The correct, first answer that attends the monthly meeting will be declared the winner. You will be notified of the winning entry at the monthly meeting. The winning entry that DOES attend the meeting will receive his/her prize at that time. Should no one correctly respond with the winning make/model, the prize will be returned to the sponsor(s). Being part of a "group" really does make a difference. Join us for the regular chapter meeting and see what prize might be coming your way. I'll give you a hint, it will definitely be aviation related. Don't be late and check your email for the newsletter.

If anyone has something they think is new or unique, send it along. Special prize consideration will be given even though you will be ineligible for the monthly award, but you will have the thanks of the other chapter members for your CONTRIBUTION.

Now, break out your knowledge base and your experience and take a gander at this month's photo.

What is it?

Sponsored by:



I hope you enjoyed reading this month's newsletter as much as I had in doing it for you. If you have any suggestions to make it better or any feedback, please send to me at the following....jeffrylite@comcast.net.



It's a physiological fact, you can only do one thing at a time. If you spend too much time doing one thing in an airplane, know that something else is probably going to hell.

For those that are flying....keep doing it and be safe out there. For those that are building, keep at it regularly, pretty soon it will become an airplane and all your hard work will be rewarded. For those of you sitting on the fence, come on, jump in the water's warm...(my favorite line from the Mac/PC ads)...trust me. Jeffry



16610 Von Sosten Road
Tracy, CA 95304
jeffrylite@comcast.net or
President@eaa663.org