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### Museum Info

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\*FAX 238-9317\*

Can also be used to reach  
personnel at Museum

#### Hours

Saturday 10am - 4pm

Sunday 12n to 3pm

Estrella Warbird Museum, Inc.

# *Estrella Warbird Museum*

## *Estrella Squadron Newsletter*

Vol XIV - 11

All the news that's fit to print and then some



Volume ~~XVI~~ Number ~~11~~

Paso Robles, California November 2003

### November Meeting

The November Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5, 2003 at Thomson Hall with Social Hour beginning at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm. Chef John and Crew will be offering our annual Thanksgiving Dinner with turkey all the trimmings!! This is always a great gathering so be there with your friends!

Our program for the evening will be nothing short of fabulous. Our speaker will be Captain George C. Watkins, U.S.N. (ret.), Naval Aviator, whose biography cannot be reduced to a few lines. Consequently it will appear as received on page 8. It is an incredible story.

### Super Sock Hop!!

Our long awaited "Juke Box Jive" Sock Hop On October 25 turned out to be a really fun affair. Good music, Chad Stevens, a great DJ,, lots of dancing, good food and drink and a chance to have a bunch of friends get together and have a good time. As one of the attendees said, "There wasn't a person in the place who didn't have a big smile on thier face". And one of the best parts is that we actually made some money which the Musuem can certainly use.

We would like to give special thanks to our Sponsors who provided items for our drawing:

Ultimate Car Audio for JVC Car Stereo,

Sensations Apparel for Jukebox Jive T-Shirt Art Work. (These can be purchased for \$12.00 w/tax at the Gift Shop),

Longs Drug Store (Atascadero) Car Care accessories,

D.P. Industries for donating a 5 inch ac/dc black and white TV, (great for motor homes and keeping kids entertained in the back seat!),

A & W Root Beer for a \$20.00 gift certificate.

Many. many thanks to all of you!

As usual, much help from a lot of our own. Cathy, Michelle and David Paine for all the time, work and creativity that went into the decorations for the night.

Also, Ron and Jackie Brooks, Linda and Arnold Hermansen, Tom and Carol Weiss, Paul Clark, Chuck and Betty Miller, and our kitchen crew, John & Mira Himes, Ed Chidlaw, Dick Kinsey and Bob Chambers.

Funny how the same names keep popping up when help is called for!!!



The Estrella Squadron  
Newsletter

is published monthly as an unofficial and voluntary contribution. Contents and opinions, other than by-line columns, are the sole responsibility of the Editor,  
Bruce MacE. Toomey, unless otherwise noted

Submissions for inclusion are not only welcomed but solicited, including articles, display and classified ads, etc. Please send all submissions to the Editor at P.O. Box 3065, Paso Robles, CA 93447 or FAX to 238-9516 or e-mail to  
btoomey@tcsn.net



Final hand folding sealing and stamping of the newsletter as well as the cost of mailing is being paid for as a donation from Pete Johnston and his helpful crew at Pete Johnston Chevrolet Cadillac.

Pioneer Day Parade Winners!!!

We are delighted to report that the Estrella Warbird Museum was awarded the "Queen's Cup" for their participation in the Pioneer Day Parade! The Parade led off with our WWI 1912 Model T Ambulance towed by Conrad Martin in our new tug, with passengers Ron and Jackie Brooks dressed in WWI attire. The Marine Corps Jeep was piloted by Gary Corippo and Al Schade. The Marine Weapons Carrier was driven by Karl Gage with passenger, Arnold Hermansen. The Navy Jeep was driven by Kevin Craig with passenger Linda Hermansen. The U.S. Army Jeep was driven by Fred Hahn. John Cromwell's MP Army Jeep was driven by Chuck Miller with passenger Betty Miller, both dressed in military uniforms. The F-4 Cockpit was towed by Forest Johnson.

The fly-over was provided by Glen Thomson, George Marrett, Obbie Atkinson, MD, and Obbie Atkinson Sr., as well as Bob Foote and Doug Erway.

It should also be noted that the Grand Marshall for the Pioneer Day event was none other than our own member and good friend, Dave Rowe! Were we well represented or not!!

A great showing guys and gals that really let the townsfolk know that we are definitely an entity!!

More Big Winers in the Colony Days Parade

As if the above were not enough, the Museum was awarded 2nd Place in the Vehicle Division of the Colony Days Parade!! Our thanks to Ron and Jackie Brooks who wore WWI costumes of a

Doctor (Ron wore an actual WWI Officers uniform donated by Ed Chidlaw whose Great Uncle was a Doctor in the U.S. Army in WWI - thanks Ed!) and a WWI nurses uniform created by Jackie with an authentic nurses cap loaned by Maggie Classen Rice Vandergone. Ron and Jackie were a big hit as they rode in the Model T Ambulance towed by Chuck and Betty Miller!

Thanks also to Gray Corippo. Fred Hahn, John Cromwell with their military Jeeps and Linda and Arnold Hermansen dressed as a U.S. Navy Cadet and Army PFC respectively who rode with Gary and John.

Forest Johnson towed the F-4 Phantom and really looked sharp dressed in brand spanking new BUD's!!

Another great promotion for the Museum by our constant volunteers!!

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!!

GIFT SHOP PRE-CHRISTMAS SALE!!

**NEW WINDBREAKER JACKET  
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CLEARANCE ITEMS

**MISC. COLLECTABLE TIE-TACS  
AND RELATED ITEMS  
WWII FIGHTERS - ON CD ROM**

Jackie Brooks, our Secretary, Gift Shop Manager and Everything Girl will run the sale at the November 5th Meeting as well as the December Meeting.

**Get in there and BUY!!  
Think of your kids, think of your Grandkids. They love "stuff"!**



## Committee Chairpersons

### Program

George Marrett  
466-7640

### Dinners

John Himes  
466-6680

### Membership

Obbie Atkinson  
238-9212

### Gift Shop

Jackie Brooks  
462-8141

### Grounds

John Kendall  
239-8029

### City Liaison

Chuck Miller  
466-1212

### Ground Equipment

Dave Geiger  
238-1598

### Insurance

Brian Webster  
237-0222

### Refreshments

Rosemary Netto  
467-3521  
Cathy Neitz

### Activities

OPEN

### Photo

Wally Engle  
227-0245

### Site Maintenance

Glen Thomson  
238-4858

### Newsletter Editor

Bruce Toomey  
238-9266

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## Membership News

Obbie Atkinson  
Membership Chairman

### The Stars Are Brighter Now

Joining the number of members this month who support the Museum financially at the "Star Life" member level is Al Schade. More than supporting the Museum financially, as Restoration Chairman and Board member no member gives more of his time and talents than Al. What a Shining Star! And are we proud!! With members like Al, we are without limit as to what, together, we can achieve.

Al, congratulations and thank you from all of us for your devotion to our Museum!

### Last Call

Last Call for extending credit for previous paid "Membership" to "Life Membership" or Star Life Membership" in the "Lightening Flight." No more dues, ever! For those members who are able, three Membership "tiers" were created for two important reasons. One, to provide needed funds for future Museum growth, and two, to honor those members for their gift during their lifetime and to permanently honor their gift as an inspiration to future generations to share.

Again, "Life Membership" is \$500. and "Star Life Membership" is \$1,000 for each Star" level up to five "Stars."

To receive credit for current paid dues, make your upgrade payment payable to the "Estrella Warbird Museum" no later than the next meeting date of November 8, 2003. You'll smile again at tax time.

## Some Serious Considerations

Our ongoing relationship with the City of Paso Robles has been one that has given our Museum a tremendous lift. The City's cooperation and help has been instrumental in making the Museum the success that it is. Obviously, this is a two way street as we try to be something of which the City and its citizens can be proud.

Recently, the Museum Board was the recipient of a letter from the Office of the Public Works Director regarding our lease site. While acknowledging our growth and continuing accumulation of aircraft and artifacts they expressed their dissatisfaction with the appearance of the site, citing the number of derelict vehicles that were plainly in view of the public as well as the accumulation of just plain junk to the east of the Museum building and in other areas on the site.

In view of the fact that we are in constant communication with the City with regard to our status on the field as well as the possibility of expansion, this letter would seem to be a clarion call for ACTION for us to CLEAN UP OUR MESS!!

The City itself is concerned about the undesirable practice of storing junk in the open and has received criticism from citizens for allowing this condition to continue.

The Board of Directors have gratefully accepted the offer of Betty Miller and Gary Corippo to survey the items in question and come up with a means to rid ourselves of this accumulation of unnecessary item ASAP!.



Granted, we have some who are old car buffs and others who love stuff like the old fire engine and some of the other trucks. Let's face it, they have been sitting there for YEARS and since those who express an interest have not made any effort to do anything about them, LET'S GET RID OF THEM. This goes too for the accumulation of old tires and rotting wood on the east side of the Museum along with rusty parts to God knows what as well as empty drums, twisted pipe, old doors, empty paint cans and on and on.

If this rubs some of you the wrong way, please feel free to voice your opinions to any Board member and you can be assured of a hearing but, PLEASE, lets get with it!

### Donations of Items

Along with above we would like to make another plea, as we have done in the past, about bringing items to the Museum before contacting a Board member as to their worth. We are constantly finding things that have been left that are of questionable value to us and seem to represent the old feeling that "they are too good to throw out but I just don't want them any more." I think all of us can understand this and I fully admit that I have been guilty of the same thing. HOWEVER, we just don't need a lot of this stuff and we ask that you seriously consider asking before delivering!!

This is not intended as a slap to anyone and it should be obvious that there are all kinds of things like personal memorabilia, something belonging to a loved one who was in the service, for instance, that we

would love to have and can make a place for in our displays when we rotate the various subjects for interest value. But, please, folks, ask before you dump.

### Other Considerations

I am please to acknowledge the fact that I am a member of the California Pilots Association. They are a great "grass roots" group that really is working to save our airports from encroaching developers and others. Like most associations of this type, all volunteers, like our Museum, they also have their problems with who does how much work and having to listen to those who talk a lot about what "should" be done but don't do much themselves.

I usually leave my copy of their newsletter on the counter at the Museum for anyone to read. Fred Hahn, Board member and previously a long time member of the Camarillo CAF group pointed out a nifty little article that I had overlooked. I think it is very worthy of consideration and include it as written.

### Rules For Organizational Failure

1. Don't go to meetings.
2. If you go, be late.
3. If it is bad weather, don't even think of going.
4. When you do attend a meeting, find fault with the president and other officers.
5. Never accept an office - it is much easier to sit back and criticize.
6. If you should be appointed on a committee, don't go to the meetings.
7. When your opinion is asked, reply that you have nothing to

say, and then after the meeting tell everyone how things should be done.

8. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary. But when others do the lions share, tell everyone how a clique runs the organization.
9. Don't worry about paying your dues; wait until you receive two or three notices; that will keep the organization from running out of anything to do and getting lazy.
10. Don't bother getting new members. Let the ones who do all the other work do that too.

Tough talk but worth thinking about. We have one hell of a great crew but we can always use additional help. Give it a thought!



Judy Corippo  
Travel Consultant  
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## News From Our Advertisers

From Soaring Eagle Press  
Templeton, CA

### Dr. Martha Expands Practice

Dr. Martha Bordonaro of the Templeton Family Chiropractic and Natural Health Care Center announced last week that she was bringing in Dr. Craig Beuttler to share the practice.

"Dr. Craig is a true partner who shares the vision we always had," said Bordonaro. "And that is creating a place that offers natural health care to our patients with an emphasis on the quality of life."

Several months ago, Bordonaro received a letter from a doctor in Virginia who wanted to move his family back to California and was looking for a practice.

"It turned out that this doctor was a classmate who sat right next to me all through Chiropractic School," said Bordonaro. "This is a dream come true and I'm very excited that Dr. Craig and his family are here."

Beuttler brings over 21 years of Chiropractic experience to the practice that includes teaching chiropractic technique at Palmer College.

"I specialize in what I call a gentle, non-force chiropractic technique," said Beuttler and I am a certified acupuncturist."

"I bring acupuncture as well as a knowledge of allergy elimination technique, nutritional support and overall balancing of the bodies energies," continued Beuttler.

He went on to say that he and his family were glad to be back in

California and near to family again. As for being in Templeton, "It's a very nice community - my wife and I are just really enjoying the people here."

### K. Page Roofing Receives High Approval From Member

Rosemary Netto, our Treasurer and long-time member, informed your Editor that she called K. Page Roofing to work on her house recently because he was an advertiser in our newsletter as well as a member. Her family home, which was built in 1910 by her grandfather, had had a number of repairs over the years but was getting to the point where it needed a complete re-roofing job.

According to Rosemary, Kevin Page took a keen interest in doing the job and he and his crew arrived promptly and commenced to work. It was discovered that there were four distinct layers of roofing material that had been applied over the years which required a mammoth amount of work to scrape off and haul away! Kevin was greatly concerned that the job be done properly and went to extreme lengths to avoid any damage to plantings and structures around the house during the removal of the old material.

The new roofing, again according to Rosemary, looks absolutely perfect and she is very pleased. She went on further to say that she was astounded at the amount of care the crew took in cleaning up after the job. Not only was there not a spec of old material left anywhere but they went over the complete area around the house and driveway with a large bar magnet to pick up any

nails or other metal objects that might have been left!

It seem as though we have a member and advertiser from the "old school" of contractors who knows what quality work is all about.

A Great example folks. Patronize Our Advertisers!!!

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**Estrella Wardbird Museum**  
**Minutes of Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday -- October 15, 2003 -- 5 p.m.**

The meeting opened at 5:05 p.m. by President Paul Clark. Others Directors present were: Obbie Atkinson, J. Brooks, R. Brooks, Ed Chidlaw, Gary Corippo, J. Cromwell, Wally Engle, Fred Hahn, Dave Highland, Conrad Martin, Betty Miller, Rosemary Netto, Al Schade, Glen Thomson, Brian Webster, Tom Weiss. Guests: Chuck Miller, City Liaison; Bruce Toomey, Editor; and Dave Holton, Credit Card Service Rep.

**The November 12 Board Meeting will be at 5 p.m..**

First on the agenda was Dave Holton, from CARDSERVICE International. He gave us an over view of monthly cost and the benefits of a Credit Card Machine. He is willing to donate the installation and machine to EWM for our use. **MOTION:** Fred Hahn moved to have the Executive Committee take the credit card information under consideration. Second by: Wally Engle. **CARRIED.** Guest Dave Holton was thanked and he left the meeting.

**Minutes:**

The minutes of the last meeting, were e-mailed ahead of time. **MOTION:** Glen Thomson moved to accept the September 17 minutes. Second by Ed Chidlaw. **CARRIED.**

**Treasurer Report** was handed out and reviewed. Discussion followed regarding the increase water usage compared to last year. The water subject was *tabled*. **MOTION:** Glen Thomson moved to accept the Treasures report. Second by: Ed Chidlaw. **CARRIED.**

**Correspondence:** read by President, Paul.

**Letter from:** 1) Joe McGregor of NCCP (No. Co. Cloud Clippers), thanking us for participating in Airport Days 2003.

2) Harold Schusher: WWII support committee lunch November 3, \$10.00 each.

3) Pioneer Day Parade we were awarded the Queen's Award.

**Committee Reports**

**Facility Betty Miller reported:** 1). We have the deposit from Quota Club. They will be here Monday to finalize their arrangement details for the Nov 1st rental. 2). A call was received from a Heritage Ranch group. They want a lunch here in January. (We will charge \$10.00 each, minimum of 35 people. \$7.00 profit).

**Docent Info:** Jackie distributed a copy of current **Docent Duties** to all interested Board members. And announced she has a Jan/Feb/Mar Docent schedule ready. Contact Jackie to reserve your day & time before Al Smith assigns current Docents their dates.

**Job Descriptions** Rosemary e-mailed the next 3 job descriptions to the Board. **MOTION:** Ed Chidlaw moved we approve the three Job Descriptions with the following correction under: **Aircraft Maintenance Director**. The last line to read,- "This also includes the mobile equipment." Second by: Conrad Martin.



Motion CARRIED (NOTE: This completes seven (7) job descriptions)

**Old Business**

**Hanger Removal**--Chuck Miller reported the hanger is completely moved & on our property.

No action at this time from the City, on acquisition of adjoining property.

**New Business:**

Copies of a letter received from **City of Paso Robles** was handed to board members and read by President Paul. Subject: "Lease Site Condition". Report followed by Betty Miller & Gary Corippo regarding their progress in conducting an inventory and clean-up investigation of our property.

President Paul was excused from the meeting. Ed Chidlaw, 2nd. Vice President presided for the balance of the meeting.

**Membership** Chairman Obbie distributed and presented a proposal for a new Membership category for Veterans. It was agreed to continue pursuing this idea.

**MOTION:** Al Schade moved we allow a cat to be on the property to patrol the Restoration Hanger. Also that we donate \$25.00 to the HARTS Assn in Cambria for the cat. Second and CARRIED.


**MOTION** Gary Corippo moved we go ahead with the EWM Brochures art work, with Jessica Main. Second by: Tom Weiss. CARRIED (cost \$725.-- Less a \$200 discount if we provide a Donation Letter for her records. Total \$525.00).

**OTHER:** Ron Brooks mentioned the need for Signage on the North side of our hanger, facing the airport terminal. Information was finalized for Colony Days Parade this Saturday, October 18.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Submitted by,  
Jackie Brooks, Secretary

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## Brief Bio of Captain George C. Watkins, U.S.N. (ret.)

George Watkins was born in Alhambra, California on March 10, 1921. He attended the San Diego Army Navy Academy, The Citadel and the U.S Naval Academy. **He graduated in June 1943 with the class of '44, which was graduated early to join WW II. George proceeded to the Western Pacific to join USS Pennsylvania (BB-41) as a main Battery Turret Officer.**

Nine battles/invasions later he departed the Pacific for flight training in Ottumwa, Iowa and from then to Corpus Christi, Texas, where **he received his 'Wings of Gold' in October 1945.**

After completing operational training in TBM's in Florida and accomplishing his initial six carrier landings on the Ranger (CV-4), he proceeded to his first operational squadron, VT-41 at NAS North Island. (Via the West Coast Replacement Squadron, VT-98 at NAS Los Alamitos).

Following this squadron tour of flying ASW missions from Badoeng Strait, Bairoko and Rendouva, George spent the next two years on two Carrier Division Staffs, making a WestPac deployment in USS Princeton and a Mediterranean deployment in USS Leyte. (He also managed to fly TBMs with the deployed squadrons).

**In the summer of 1950, George attended the Test Pilot School at Patuxent River and graduated in February 1951 with class number Five.** The next two and a half years were spent in the Flight Test Division, flying a great variety of flying machines.

George Departed Patuxent River in the late summer of 1953 to join VF-24 as Operations Officer, deploying to Korea with the navy's first swept wing fighter squadron in USS Yorktown. With the end of the Korean War, George detached from VF-24 and headed to the Mediterranean for duty on the Sixth Fleet Staff. He served on several heavy cruisers, but he still managed to fly both Cougars and Banshees from different carriers deployed to the Mediterranean.

**In 1955, George returned to Flight Test at Pax River.** And for the next three years he participated in some of the finest flying projects known to mankind during that Golden Age of Aviation. The Navy was testing seven Fighters, four Light Attack, various Seaplanes and numerous 'cats and dogs'.

**In 1956, in a Super Tiger, George set an unofficial World Altitude (73,000ft.) and a World Speed Record (1210 mph) on the same flight.**

**In 1958, in the F11F-1F using a J79 engine that the GE people said would not run above 70,000ft., George established an Official Worlds Altitude Record of just under 80,000ft.**

George next took command of VF-191 and deployed to WestPac in USS Bon Homme Richard, flying both day and n night missions off the carrier. Following this cruise he returned to the Western Pacific to join USS Lexington as Air Officer.

George was then given orders to the Naval War College, but BUPERS called the CO of he Lexington telling him not to detach Cdr. Watkins 'yet'. Rather, he should go to Pensacola for an interview with the Naval Air Training bosses. War College was soon to begin and George was still not sure of his next duty assignment. He was called back to Pensacola for a 'final interview', and then a trip to Andrews AFB to find out what was going on! George was in Washington DC long enough to attend a party to celebrate his new job, 'Orders to Command the Blue Angels'. However, on returning to San Diego, George found that his orders to the War College and the Blue Angels had been canceled and instead George had to proceed to Jacksonville, Florida to put into commission a new Air Group.

**It was September 1961 and George had just ninety days to get Air Group 'Thirteen' combat ready.**

Air Group Thirteen was assigned to the brand new aircraft carrier, USS Constellation. It was during this tour that George made a number of 'firsts' . . . first landing on the Constellation, first centurion landing on the Constellation, and the first 1000<sup>th</sup> carrier landing for George, who actually became the first US aviator to achieve one thousand carrier landings. During this tour, night and day landings in each of the Air Groups different aircraft (six) were made while deployed.

Next for George was a three-year tour in the Strike Warfare Division of OPNAV at the Pentagon. George had additional duties as a White House Social Aide for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. During this time in early 1965, George became the OPNAV coordinator of the A6 Intruder Program. The program was bogged down with 'Track Radar' problems prior to the Intruders deployment to Vietnam, and as program troubleshooter, George was able to solve most of the problems. During this period George also managed to deliver some 52 aircraft, flying for the Ferry Command, and he managed to fly some T-1A's (later T-28's) at Andrews.



**In the fall of 1965 George departed the Pentagon for WestPac, via Ream Field for some Helo 'instruction', and reported to USS Mars (AFS-1) as the new CO. The second day after taking command, George announced the start of 'night-flying' - to start that very evening. The embarked CH-46 detachment would continue flying at night until all four pilots in the detachment felt ready to conduct Night Vertical Replenishment Operations. After the shock had worn off, the flying began! And in April 1966 USS Mars set a replenishment record . . . during one 30-day period, 186 ships and stations were replenished, over 50% at night. Shortly after that, Night Operations became standard operating procedure in both WestPac and the Med.**

**George returned to the Pentagon in 1967 and into the Navy Office of Information, and once again he had additional duties as a White House Social Aide, for President Johnson and then President Nixon.**

**In the summer of 1969, George returned to the Naval Air Test Center as the Deputy Commander and enjoyed some of the most enjoyable flying in the Navy: Test flights, Helo work and carrier suitability work, including carrier landing systems.**

**At the conclusion of this job George estimated he had flown 36 different models of Navy aircraft, from 36 different aircraft carriers. He had flown over 200 different aircraft models, and had accumulated 1,418 carrier landings and over 11,000 hours of flight time.**

**George's final tour was with Commander Amphib Force Atlantic, in Norfolk, involving a study of the Amphib Force for the 1990's. During this final tour with NATOPS quals., in all six of the (then) current fighter and attack squadrons, he was able to fly a great deal with both East and West Coast Ferry squadrons, delivering some 70 aircraft to their ultimate destinations.**

**On July 1, 1973, just one hour before his appointed hour of retirement, George landed an Israeli Skyhawk at Norfolk, Virginia.**

**That closed the book on George's Naval Career and George quietly took his leave.**

**The next chapter of George's life, although different, continued to be fruitful. He opened a landscaping business. He married, and he took up gliding as a sport. He soared over the mountaintops in his ASK24, he soared in wave and after having been flipped on his back in mountain wave, he became more interested in glider acrobatics and the fact that most glider pilots do not have the skills of aerobatics.**

**In 1991 he bought a large, established glider operation in the high desert of his home state of California, and began to concentrate of aerobatic instruction, as well as soaring. He continued to accrue many flight hours. He purchased a Fox glider, the best two place acrobatic glider in the world, and assembled an enthusiastic group of acrobatic competitive glider pilots.**

**In 1998, at the urging of his wife, George changed locations and moved a much smaller operation to the Lompoc Airport near the coast in central California. It is not the location for ridge or thermal soaring but it is a wonderful place to live and to fly acrobatics.**

**To date, December 2001, George has accumulated another 5,200 hours of flying (power and glider). He and his 'Fox' acro team compete annually in five contests around the US and have been winners many times. In the 2001 National contest in Dennison, Texas, George's students took first place in the Sportsman Class, first and second place in the Intermediate Class and George took second place in the Unlimited Class. When the contest director asked his age because he may be eligible for the Old Buzzard Award (the oldest of the winners) George retorted, "I am not going to tell you my age and I am not interested in the Old Buzzard Award.**

**Sort of sums up George's life: With 16,400 flight hours and 26,000 individual flights, he continues to fly in the Spirit of a United States Naval Aviator.**



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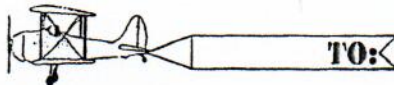
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