



THE LEGION POST

OTIS SAMPSON POST 59 STOUGHTON, WI
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August/September 2014

Commander's Report

2014-2015 OFFICERS

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1st Vice Commander

Vik Malling

2nd Vice Commander

Mary Lloyd

3rd Vice Commander

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Dale Seffens

Finance Officer

Jim Oler

Historian

Lenny Swingen

Adjutant

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Terry McCardle

Chaplain

Rich Fries



Greetings,

Feels like fall is in the air already and next comes that dirty word called WINTER! Let's enjoy and savor each and every day as long as we can. The rain has come around when we need it, so that is a blessing for everyone especially the farmers.

We have had many good comments regarding the Don Heiliger Day and what a day it was. The Post was packed with

200 people honoring Don and the very good program. It is amazing what Don went through and that he can talk about his captivity—not to mention all the other accomplishments in his life. What an outstanding man!

We are still making improvements at the Post. The remainder of the building will soon be all painted on the outside and with our new awnings it looks very nice. We are going to build on another enclosure for the back door which will also be automatic closure. This will be done before winter as it will keep much of the cold air from

rushing in when the inside door is opened, saving on the heating bill.

We are planning a **Fish Boil** soon. We are working around the churches so we don't conflict with their planned dates. Hope to have a good turnout and the date will be posted on our new sign out in the front of the Post and in the Great Dane.

We have lost four more of our Post members recently. Our prayers go out to the families of Sigurd Olson, Butch Arnold, Dan Judd, and Denny Maerz. They will be greatly missed.

Commander continued from page 2

Auxiliary

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873-7397

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Elvera Phelps

2nd Vice President

Linda Swangstu

873-9428

Secretary

Linda Schmidt

205-2517

Treasurer

Alice Moen

444-7320

Chaplain

Sharon Silbaugh

873-3927

Sgt. at Arms

Pat Christensen

873-7479

Historian

Sherry Leick

873-6687

Auxiliary News



Hello American Legion Family,

Hope everyone is enjoying the summer. It is going way to fast.

I want to thank everyone who helped at the garage sale and those who brought items. It was a lot of work but we had a good time visiting with people that came to the sale. We made \$486.00. The items that didn't sell were picked up by the people for Relay for Life and will sell at their garage sale. Thanks again.

I hope a lot of the members attended Don Heiliger Day. It was a tribute to Don, who was a POW for six years in Vietnam. He is a

Legion member and his wife Cheryl is a member of the Auxiliary. A wonderful dinner was served by JR Richards. Don gave a great talk about being a prisoner of war and all what he went through. It was very moving. He also showed some slides. There was around 200 people that attended the dinner and program. I want to thank everyone who attended. He was very pleased with the big turnout. We can't forget to thank the members from the Legion, VFW, and Auxiliary who organized the day. It took a lot of planning— working out the menu, program, getting the dignitaries, and decorating, etc. There also were two other POW's there.

I would like to congratulate Jim Roh, who won two free Friday Night Fish Fry dinners, from the June breakfast raffle. Congratulations Jim!

We had to cancel the VA Hospital Ice Cream Social because we couldn't enough help. The hospital was quite full, so they needed at least 10 or 12 people to help.

President continued from page 2

CALENDER OF EVENTS

- August 17 - Legion Breakfast
7:00 – 11:00 am
- August 22 - Blue Moon Karaoke
8:00 pm - midnight
- August 24 - County Jam Session with Mikey Fuss
and the Cherokee Three - 2:00 – 6:00 pm
- August 26 - Legion Dinner – 6:30 pm
- September 1 - Labor Day
- September 6 - Blue Moon Karaoke
8:00 pm – midnight
- September 13 –Northern Lights –
8:00 pm – midnight
- September 21 - Legion Breakfast
7:00 – 11:00 am
- September 23 - Legion Dinner – 6:30 pm
- September 26 - Blue Moon Karaoke
8:00 pm – midnight
- September 28 - County Jam Session with Mikey
Fuss and the Cherokee Three - 2:00 – 6:00 pm

Event Pricing

Post Dinner: 6:30 pm \$11.00

Breakfast: 7:00-11:00 am
\$8.00 adults, \$4.00 children

Commander continued from page 1

Thank you to all of our great volunteers! You are very much appreciated by all. Volunteering is most important in our organization to keep it successful. If you would like to make a difference and play a part, let us know and we will find a task of some sort. Only an hour here and there of volunteering will help. We could use some organization in our supply room for example. Helping with some cleaning, windows (inside and out), organizing the pantries, cleaning out the refrigerator, wiping down bar stools and chairs. We do have Marlene Judd handling a lot of the hall and hall bathroom cleaning, but she could use some extra help. More hands make a difference and people don't become burned out. Let's be proud of our establishment as we have had many good remarks from our customers regarding the cleanliness and friendliness at the Post. Stay well and take care,

Commander Sonny

Senior Humor

Statistics show that at the age of 70, there are five women to every man.
Isn't that an ironic time for a guy to get those odds?

Hall Rentals

Call Julie Nygaard at 608.333.9577

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou

If you know of anyone who is hospitalized, or in need, please contact Rich Fries at 608.273.8758.

President continued from page 1

We enjoyed having some of the girls that attended the Badger Girls State come to our July meeting. They each told us about the experience they had. They really enjoyed it because they had no idea what it was about. Each said they learned a lot about county and state government. They would encourage other girls to attend next year.

We will be starting in August having raffles again at the Sunday breakfasts.

The newsletter will now be coming out every two months.

Volunteering - The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.

President Marlene



F-105 jet is in the background.

Thank You

We wish to thank the American Legion Post 59 Members, Ladies Auxiliary, Honor Guard, and VFW for making our Don Heiliger Day Event such a success. Your dedication and support are unsurpassed.

Thank You.

Event Co-chairs: Jim Oler and Steve Grady

The SR-71 Blackbird

From and SR-71 pilot and Kelly Johnson and the gang at Lockheed Burbank's SKUNK WORKS.....Very interesting read....the SR-71 Blackbird.

In April 1986, following an attack on American soldiers in a Berlin disco; President Reagan ordered the bombing of Muammar Qaddafi's terrorist camps in Libya. My duty was to fly over Libya, and take photographs recording the damage our F-111's had inflicted.

Qaddafi had established a 'line of death, a territorial marking across the Gulf of Sidra, swearing to shoot down any intruder that crossed the boundary. On the morning of April 15, I rocketed past the line at 2,125 mph.

I was piloting the SR-71 spy plane, the world's fastest jet, accompanied by a Marine Major (Walt), the aircraft's reconnaissance systems officer (RSO). We had crossed into Libya, and were approaching our final turn over the bleak desert landscape, when Walt informed me, that he was receiving missile launch signals. I quickly increased our speed, calculating the time it would take for the weapons, most likely SA-2 and SA-4 surface-to-air missiles, capable of Mach 5 - to reach our altitude. I estimated that we could beat

the rocket-powered missiles to the turn, and stayed our course, betting our lives on the plane's performance.

After several agonizingly long seconds, we made the turn and blasted toward the Mediterranean. 'You might want to pull it back,' Walt suggested. It was then that I noticed I still had the throttles full forward. The plane was flying a mile every 1.6 seconds, well above our Mach 3.2 limit. It was the fastest we would ever fly. I pulled the throttles to idle, just south of Sicily, but we still overran the refueling tanker, awaiting us over Gibraltar.

Scores of significant aircraft have been produced, in the 100 years of flight, following the achievements of the Wright brothers, which we celebrated last December. Aircraft such as the Boeing 707, the F-86 Sabre Jet, and the P-51 Mustang, are among the important machines that have flown our skies. But the SR-71, also known as the Blackbird, stands alone as a significant contributor to Cold War victory, and as the fastest plane ever, and only 93 Air Force pilots, ever steered the 'sled,' as we called our aircraft. The SR-71 was the brainchild of Kelly Johnson, the famed Lockheed designer, who created the P-38, the F-104 Starfighter, and the U-2.

SR-71 continued on page 6

Monthly Post Meeting Schedule

Legion – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

Auxiliary – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

SAL – 2nd Wednesday – 7:00 pm

Meetings are held at the Post.

All members are encouraged to attend.



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SMALL ON STATURE – HUGE ON COURAGE



The Sperry ball turret was very small in order to reduce drag, and was typically operated by the shortest man of the crew. To enter the turret, the turret was moved until the guns were pointed straight down. The gunner placed his feet in the heel rests and then crouched down into a fetal position. He would then put on a safety strap, close and lock the turret door. The gunner sat in the turret with his back and head against the rear wall, his hips at the bottom, and his legs held in mid-air by two footrests on the front wall. This left him positioned with his eyes roughly level with the pair of light-barrel .50 caliber machine guns which extended through the entire turret, and located to either side of the gunner. The cocking handles were located too close to the gunner to be operated easily, so a cable was attached to the handle through pulleys to a handle near the front of the turret. Small ammo boxes rested on the top of the turret and the remaining ammo belts were stowed in the already cramped turret by means of an elaborate feed chute system. A [reflector sight](#) was hung from the top of the turret, positioned roughly between the gunner's feet.

The turret was directed by two hand control grips with firing buttons similar to a one-button [joy stick](#). Hydraulics normally powered elevation and azimuth. Hand cranks were available for backup. The left foot was used to control the reflector sight range reticle. The right foot operated a push-to-talk intercom switch.

On the B-17 the turret was close to the ground, but had enough clearance for takeoff and landing. However, the gunner did not enter the turret until well into the air, in case of landing gear failure. There was no room inside for a parachute, which was left in the cabin above the turret. A few gunners wore a chest parachute.

Rest in peace Butch and thank you for your service.

SR-71 continued from page 4

However, flying at 2,000 mph would create intense heat on the aircraft's skin. Lockheed engineers used a titanium alloy, to construct more than 90 percent of the SR-71, creating special tools, and manufacturing procedures to hand-build each of the (40 planes—wow!!! 40 planes—I thought only 7.) Special heat-resistant fuel, oil, and hydraulic fluids, that would function at 85,000 feet, and higher, also had to be developed.

In 1962, the first Blackbird successfully flew, and in 1966, the same year I graduated from high school, the Air Force began flying operational SR-71 missions.

I came to the program in 1983, with a sterling record and a recommendation from my commander, completing the weeklong interview, and meeting Walt, my partner for the next four years. He would ride four feet behind me, working all the cameras, radios, and electronic jamming equipment. I joked, that if we were ever captured, he was the spy, and I was just the driver. He told me to keep the pointy end forward!

We trained for a year, flying out of Beale AFB in California, Kadena Airbase in Okinawa, and RAF Mildenhall in England. On a typical training mission, we would take off near Sacramento, refuel over Nevada, accelerate into Montana, obtain a high Mach speed over Colorado, turn right over New Mexico, speed across the Los Angeles Basin, run up the West Coast, turn right at Seattle, then return to Beale. Total flight time: two hours and forty minutes.



One day, high above Arizona, we were monitoring the radio traffic, of all the mortal airplanes below us. First, a Cessna pilot asked the air traffic controllers to check his ground speed. 'Ninety knots,' ATC replied. A Bonanza soon made the same request. 'One-twenty on the ground,' was the reply. To our surprise, a navy F-18 came over the radio, with a ground speed check. I knew exactly what he was doing.

Of course, he had a ground speed indicator in his cockpit, but he wanted to let all the bug-smashers in the valley, know what real speed was, 'Dusty 52, we

show you at 620 on the ground,' ATC responded. The situation was too ripe.

I heard the click of Walt's mike button in the rear seat. In his most innocent voice, Walt startled the controller by asking for a ground speed check from 81,000 feet, clearly above controlled airspace.

In a cool, professional voice, the controller replied, 'Aspen 20, I show you at 1,982 knots on the ground.' We did not hear another transmission on that frequency, all the way to the coast.

The Blackbird always showed us something new, each aircraft possessing its own unique personality. In time, we realized we were flying a national treasure. When we taxied out of our revetments for take-off, people took notice. Traffic congregated near the airfield fences, because everyone wanted to see, and hear the mighty SR-71.

You could not be a part of this program, and not come to love the airplane. Slowly, she revealed her secrets to us, as we earned her trust.

One moonless night, while flying a routine training mission over the Pacific, I wondered what the sky would look like from 84,000 feet, if the cockpit lighting were dark. While heading home on a straight course, I slowly turned down all of the lighting, reducing the glare and revealing the night sky. Within seconds, I turned the lights back up, fearful that the jet would know, and somehow punish me. But my desire to see the sky, overruled my caution, I dimmed the lighting again. To my amazement, I saw a bright light outside my window. As my eyes adjusted to the view, I realized that the brilliance was the broad expanse of the Milky Way, now a gleaming stripe across the sky. Where dark spaces in the sky, had usually existed, there were now dense clusters, of sparkling stars. Shooting Stars, flashed across the canvas every few seconds. It was like a fireworks display with no sound. I knew I had to get my eyes back on the instruments, and reluctantly, I brought my attention back inside. To my surprise, with the cockpit lighting still off, I could see every gauge, lit by starlight. In the plane's mirrors, I could see the eerie shine of my gold spacesuit, incandescently illuminated, in a celestial glow. I stole one last glance out the window. Despite our speed, we seemed still before the heavens, humbled in the radiance of a much greater power. For those few moments, I felt a part of something far more significant, than anything we were doing in the plane. The sharp sound of Walt's voice on the radio, brought me back to the tasks at hand, as I prepared for our descent.

In the first 100 years of manned flight, no aircraft was more remarkable. The Blackbird had outrun nearly 4,000 missiles, not once taking a scratch from enemy fire.

On her final flight, the Blackbird, destined for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, sped from Los Angeles to Washington in 64 Minutes, averaging 2,145 mph, and setting four speed records.



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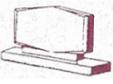
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Stuffed Pork Chops
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Editors Cliff Maerz and Tim Carter: C_Maerz@msn.com