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Rotary Club of Apex

"SERVICE Above Self"

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**APEX ROTARY NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 6, 2008**  
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The following is a quote from a personal eulogy given by a past member of the Apex Rotary Club for a deceased member at gravesite. A concept by which we members should all abide.

"For those of us who remain, and especially for our fellow Rotarians, we should always be mindful of this life well lived, a life of service above self, a life in which service to God, service to country and service to family was an unending mantra. Would that we all live such a life!"

The Basics



I received the following email from Barbara Weaver about Jim being honored by having his name emblazoned on an F3D-2 "Skynight" jet of the type flown by Jim in Korea. The airplane is a new addition to the USS Intrepid Aircraft Carrier Museum docked in New York City. Barbara commented as follows,

"I thought you might enjoy seeing these pictures. I am going up to New York along with Kim and her husband for the dedication which is on November 10th, which is the Birthday of the Marines. I think the dedication of the USS Intrepid itself is going to be on Veterans Day, Nov. 11."

For those new members who did not have the privilege of knowing Jim Weaver (aka "The Colonel"), he was a charter member of Apex Rotary and had perfect attendance until his death this year. His generosity and service to the Club was a monument to the type of man he was. To quote a club member at Jim's funeral. "a life well lived, a life of service above self, a life in which service to God, service to country and service to family an unending mantra."



THE STORY ABOUT THE PLANE AND THE MAN



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During the Korean War, the key to destroying North Korea's factories and other valuable assets was being able to put a large number of B-29 Superfortresses over these heavily defended targets without incurring significant losses. Since WW 11, the Communists had been able to build a small industrial section in the extreme northwest corner of North Korea close to the Yalu River. U.S. Bomber Command learned quickly that it was very dangerous to send bombers over this area during the day, so the solution was to switch to night operations. This cut down on losses, but another major problem evolved-a problem caused by Soviet--designed radar systems. A new Marine twin-jet-engine night fighter soon solved the problem. Brought to Korea to protect the bombers, the new Douglas F3D Skynight with its sophisticated radar could intermingle within the bomber streams.

The enemy GCI could not distinguish between the B- 29s and the F3Ds. With this advantage, the F3Ds racked up several night kills without a single loss. The stubby little fighter was affectionately referred to as "Willy the Whale."

**Pilot Capt. James R. Weaver** and his radar observer M/Sgt. Robert Becker flew a large number of these missions with VMF(IN)-513's "Flying Nightmares." On the night of January 28, 1953, they made their mark in the Marine history books. Capt. Weaver recalls that night.

"The MiG-15 action at night against the B-29s was picking up considerably over Sinuiju, up on the Yalu River. On this particular night, the weather was good except for a mid-altitude layer of scattered clouds that didn't have much effect on our visibility. After checking in with our ground-control radar unit, I was vectored into a position between the first flight of B-29s and the river, well above 20,000 feet. I remained in this position until the bombers had completed their runs. It looked like the bombs had impacted right on the target, and everything had been quiet up until this point."

Regardless of the MiG activity or the intensity of the antiaircraft fire, the bombers could not take evasive action when they were locked on their targets. When the bomb runs were uncontested, the B-29s knew they would probably catch hell when they made the turn to head home. The MiGs were laying back, waiting for their chance, and they were aware that there were Marine F3Ds in the formation, so it developed into a cat-and mouse game with very high stakes.

"During the bombing run, apparently there were MiGs trailing the formation, far enough back so as not to attract our attention. As the bombers exited the area, our radar operator on Chodo Island directed me to an unidentified aircraft, and as there were no friendlies in the area, it had to be hostile. My R/O, M/Sgt. Becker, had a solid lock-on at about fifteen miles out. As we got closer, I could make out what appeared to be the glowing tailpipe of a single-engine jet. At that point, I dropped the nose slightly and increased speed to close quickly on the bogey. I had already gone 'guns free, cleared to fire.' My dive was getting steeper and steeper, and the target started moving to my left, at a little less than a mile's distance."

There was a good reason that the enemy interceptors were usually scarce when the B-29s were close to dropping their loads. At this time, the searchlights and antiaircraft would open up, and anything within their range was fair game. In one incident reported by an F3D pilot, the MiG-15 slowed down deliberately to lure him into a flak trap. Fortunately, it did not work, but the Skynight and crew could have disappeared without a trace.

"I closed the gap to within an easy firing range. I used three second bursts and yelled to M/Sgt. Becker to keep his lock on, even though I had a good visual; it was hazy, and we didn't want to lose him. The tailpipe fire was growing and becoming ragged as we pursued the MiG toward the ground. By this time, I had probably fired five or six bursts. Suddenly, there was a huge explosion and ground fire in front of us. We leveled out of a steep dive and were in a slight turn and passing by the ground fire on our left. We were so low that only luck prevented us from either hitting the ground or drawing a lot of antiaircraft fire from a close range. The damaged MiG had hit the ground at a very high speed with a massive explosion. Fortunately, we were far enough behind it that we had time to pull out."

Later, Weaver was giving the radar unit on Chodo Island an account of what had just happened. A B-29 crew flying in the area was listening, and they complimented Weaver and his R/O for successfully preventing one of the formations from suffering any losses; however, their formation had not been as lucky, as they had lost one to a MiG-15. After Weaver and Becker finished debriefing, they drank a toast to the B-29 crew that had been shot down that night.

## Special Notes

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**Make Ups:** Please remember to submit all make- up notifications to the Club Secretary as soon as you can. They can be submitted two weeks before and/or two weeks after a missed meeting.

**Guests and Visiting Rotarians:** We are always excited about having guests and visiting Rotarians to our weekly meetings. Please share the names of your guests with the Club Secretary each week. We do keep a record of who attends and this information will help with the book keeping.

**Using the Microphone:** Whenever you are speaking to the Club, whether it be as a speaker, making announcements or any other address to the Club, please come forward and use the microphone. Not only are there hearing impaired members, there is the problem with the Restaurant's kitchen fans blasting away so that the tables near the kitchen miss half or more of what you will say. Some of you feel you have loud voices. What you do not know is that when you start off, it's fine but as you go on, your voice gets lower and softer. You don't hear it but we do. Thanks for your cooperation.

**Apex Rotary Member Database Update:** You can update your personal data as follows:

1. Go to [www.apexrotary.org](http://www.apexrotary.org).
2. Click on "Membership"
3. Insert your email address (the one you used when you joined). In "Password", enter your Rotary ID number leaving out the first zero digit and click "Login".

4. Go to "Members" (top left) and click on "View My Data". It will automatically find your file.
5. Click on "Edit Member" and update your data.
6. On completion, at the very bottom of your data file, Click on "Update".

**The weekly newsletter** can now be viewed on our web site [www.apexrotary.org](http://www.apexrotary.org), click on "Newsletters". The file is in PDF format and you will need to have *Acrobat Reader* installed. If you do not have it, download it free at [Acrobat Reader](#).>

**Speaker Schedule** is now posted on the Club's web site <http://www.apexrotary.org>. Click on "Club Documents and then on the "Speaker Schedule 2007-2008".The file is in PDF format and you will need to have *Acrobat Reader* installed. If you do not have it, download it free at [Acrobat Reader](#).

**Apex Rotary Web Site News:** Click on the **NEW "Club Documents"** link on the Apex Rotary web site to see and have the option to download & print forms and copies of important club documents. The files are in PDF format and you will need to have *Acrobat Reader* installed. If you do not have it, download it free at [Acrobat Reader](#).

**Communications Officer Contact Information**

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 Email Address: velsorb@gmail.com
 Phone Number: (919) 601-8105
 Website Address: <http://www.apexrotary.org>
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