

# THE WING SLIP



**AVIATORS' POST NO. 743 / AMERICAN LEGION**



**P. O. BOX 609 / HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK 11743-0609**

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## NEXT MEETING

**Friday, 16 November 2012 [ Members and Guests ]**

**Lunch Meeting: 1200 hrs -- The International Buffet  
1100 Stewart Ave, Garden City, NY 11530**

[ Directions: Meadowbrook Parkway north or south to Exit M3W. Cross over Stewart Avenue; the restaurant is the first building on the right; park on the right just after passing the restaurant. Look for our private room inside the restaurant. ]

We will have two speakers for this our Veterans Day meeting.  
**The Honorable Charles Lavine, New York State Assemblyman, 13<sup>th</sup> District.** He is an advocate for disabled veterans and small business owners. His talk will be about how we are supporting veterans.

**Frank T. Hayes** was assigned to the RB-45C/RB-47E equipped 91st Strategic Recon Wing from 1951 to 1955. Later, as a engineer, Frank worked to resolve in-service problems on the F-84F, U-2, F-105B & D, F-105F/G Wild Weasel, A-10A, and T-46A military trainer. He became program manager for Fairchild's Space Station design effort, and a design engineer for hypersonic wind tunnel tests of air-breathing scramjet engines.

*On 8 May 1954, a 91st RB-47E piloted by Captain Hal Austin overflew the Soviet's Kola Peninsula from Murmansk to Arkangelisk, was intercepted five times, and with MiG17s on his tail, exited over Finland for a safe return to RAF Fairford. Frank's talk will be on Recon and RB-45s/47s.*

## 2012-2013 SCHEDULE

**FRI. 25 Jan 1200 hrs. Greenvale Townhouse**

**FRI. 22 Feb 1200 hrs. International Buffet**

**FRI. 22 Mar 1200 hrs. Greenvale Townhouse**

**The Only Post Exclusively for Military Flying Personnel**



# AVIATORS' POST No. 743 / AMERICAN LEGION

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## COMMANDER'S LETTER

Dear Fellow Legionnaires/Aviators:

### What goes out...

The word *sophomore* in Greek means 'wise fool'. I remember when I was a sophomore at the University of Maine. I thought I knew everything but I was indeed a fool. I had just finished a course and the professor handed out blank sheets of paper and asked the class if we would evaluate his class.

I did not like the class. I did not like the professor, (I thought he was boring). I did not like the text book, (I thought it was boring as well; he was the author). I did not like the hour that we met on Wednesdays and Fridays, (8 AM). I liked absolutely nothing about that course.

I dug out my red pen and decided to "bleed" all over that evaluation sheet, and I did. I knew I would never see him again so I wrote and wrote and wrote. My evaluation was merciless. I told the professor that his course was not worth a bucket of warm spit. I signed my name and handed it in with a smile.

Three years later, I was completing an application to the University of Maine Masters' Degree Program. I was granted an interview and guess who the brand new Dean of the Masters' Program was? I felt weak as I entered his office.

He said, "Come in Mr. Rundle and please close the door behind you." I stood before his desk, meek. He said, "How I remember well your graphic evaluation of my course which now presents me with a question; can you tell me, as you notice that I am sitting in this chair behind this desk which may be affectionately referred to as the 'driver's seat', why I should, as the occupant of this driver's seat, allow you to come into my, which is the key word here, MY Masters' Program?"

I was humble, very humble. I tried to formulate an answer in my brain but there was nothing. Then suddenly, as if it were divine inspiration, I answered him:

"Professor Stratton, when I took your course three years ago, I did not enjoy any of it. I did not like your teaching method, nor the text, the agenda, the curriculum, the prelims, the final exam...nothing. I felt that you taught me nothing.

I realize now that perhaps you have taught me one of the greatest lessons in life. What goes out may come around and slap you right side of the head!" He smiled. I was accepted into the University of Maine Masters' Program and every year since then, we exchange Christmas cards.

Let me pass that gem of wisdom on to you. ***You are evaluated on how you evaluate.*** Be kind and ever ready to say, "Thank you."

I met and spoke with Joe Reale today. He is the County Commander for the American Legion. He told me about his job and what it entails. He puts in many hours, as other members of the American Legion do, and it is all voluntary.

In my mind, I thought, "here is a dedicated man committed to helping others and spending much time and energy in his pursuit.-----I was quick to sincerely say, "Thank you for all that you do Joe."

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## **MINUTES of POST MEETING**

**Lunch Meeting: 11:30 am -- The Greenvale Townhouse  
49 Glen Cove Road, Greenvale, N Y • 516-625-5300**

**Friday, 26 October 2012**

**Members (and Guests): L. Cunningham, S. Greenberg, D. Greene (1), M. Mangan,  
G. Mulch (2), A. Muller, J. Plackis, N. Plackis, G. Rundlett (1), & G. Sunshine.  
Post Guest: Joe Reale, N.C. Cmdr & Frank Neal, N.C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. Cmdr.  
Friends of the Post: H. Sidor (1), A. Stuart (1) [20 Total in Attendance]**

**1220 hrs.** After a period of social interaction, **Commander Buzz Rundlett** opened the meeting.

**Chaplain "Buzz" Rundlett** read the following prayer.

Dear GOD, we are meeting today to conduct matters of business.  
Guide our hearts and our minds in the spirit of fairness, right thought, and speech.  
Impart your supreme wisdom upon our activities so that our affairs may reach a  
successful conclusion.

Guide our nation in the upcoming elections so that fairness, strength, and humility  
of spirit will prevail.

Guide our men and women of our armed forces. Protect them as they defend us.

Thank you for being our source of guidance today and every day. Amen.

**Buzz** led those assembled in the **Pledge of Allegiance**. Then **Linda, Buzz's wife**,  
placed the **POW / MIA Flag on an empty chair at the front of the room**.

**Joe Reale**, N.C. Commander, and **Frank Neal**, N.C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Commander, and all  
other guests were introduced.

**1230 hrs.** **Treasurer Gabe Sunshine** presented a positive Treasurer's Quarterly Report.  
**Past Commander Sam Greenberg** noted that Member Phil Schwartzman had relocated to  
the nursing home at North Port V.A. Medical Center.  
**Adjutant Gordon Mulch** introduced New Member **Leo Cunningham**.  
**Commander Joe Reale** reminded us that November is Membership Month.

The **Commander** noted that the USS Michael Murphy was commissioned in NY City on  
6 Oct 12. The destroyer was named in honor of Long Island native, Navy SEAL Lt.  
Michael P. Murphy, slain in a 2005 Taliban ambush. Murphy posthumously received the  
Congressional Medal of Honor, and was interred at Calverton on Long Island.

**1245 hrs.** **Lunch Orders were taken.**  
Our 50/50 Winner was **Dave Greene's wife Renee**.  
**Sam Greenberg** announced that the Air Power Museum is free to veterans on 11Nov12.



**1300 hrs.** An excellent meal was commenced with soup and salad.

**1330 hrs.** **Buzz** started a very interesting movie about historic **WWII aircraft**, that included discussion and comments by some of the people that had actually flown them.

Then **Gordon** coordinated comments from our WWII veterans present.

**Nick Plackis** talked about his experiences in flight school, and his experiences flying the B-17. It was a tough bird and always brought him home.

**Dave Greene** talked about his experiences signing up, and his efforts to not be selected as a Navigator, as he had scored to high on the written test. Then he spoke of his experiences and curious route to becoming a B-24 pilot.

**Al Muller** talked about his path through flight school, and about flying the C-47 inter island in the Pacific, and his experience landing at Tinian.

**Jim Plackis** told how he had become a **B-24 Aircraft Commander** at the age of 19. He stated that the B-24 could carry more bombs further than the B-17, but that it was also more fragile than the B-17, especially with some fuel tanks in the fuselage.

**1430 hrs.** **Buzz** closed the meeting with the following prayer.

Dear GOD, we thank you for these members and friends of the American Legion, Post 743, and ask your continued blessing upon them until we meet again.

We thank you for each and every blessing. Amen.

Respectfully submitted, **Gordon Mulch, Adjutant**

**Note 1: With the passing of General John F. Flanagan, we each lost a wonderful friend, and we pray God's support for John's Wife Mari-Jo.**

**Note 2: Sandy was a terrible storm to endure. It is our prayer that each of you and your families are safe and well.**

**It is a week since the storm. We all lost power and heat for days, and my power and heat are both still off. I am working on my computer and using a 5 HP generator for power. I hope it works.**

**We are limited in our proof reading, so if you find errors in this Wing Slip, please let them slid.**

**Thank you, Gordon Mulch**





## **BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN F. FLANAGAN, JR.**

### **Celebration of Life**

Brigadier General John F. Flanagan, Jr. (USAF- Ret) passed away on October 21 after a valiant battle against lung cancer. John packed more heroics, made more friends, positively impacted more people, had more laughs and contributed more to his country during his seventy three year lifespan than Walter Mitty ever dreamed possible.

John was born and raised in White Plains, NY where he graduated from Archbishop Stepinac High School. He then attended the University of Pennsylvania for one year before receiving an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in 1958. While at the Academy, John was a member of the Academy's undefeated football team that was ranked 6<sup>th</sup> nationally and played in the Cotton Bowl. John majored in political science and graduated in 1962 as a second lieutenant. He immediately entered pilot training, and upon graduation, was assigned as a combat crewmember at Otis AFB, where he began his life-long love affair with Cape Cod.

In 1965, in the very early stages of the Vietnam War, John was among the first to answer the call to combat, volunteering for duty as a Forward Air Controller supporting elite Army units in close combat. John flew over 300 combat missions and, in recognition of his heroism and gallantry, he was awarded the Silver Star, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, twelve Air Medals and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

General Flanagan left the active Air Force in 1968 but continued his military career in the New York Air National Guard in a succession of key command positions in flying operations. In January 1986, he was appointed the Deputy Commander of the 6000 member New York Air National Guard and was promoted to Brigadier General in March 1989. John retired from the military in 1995 after 33 years of active, reserve and standby reserve service. He was a Command Pilot with over 4400 flying hours and, at the time of his retirement, was the most highly decorated officer in the New York ANG.



(BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN F. FLANAGAN, JR. - Celebration of Life Cont'd)

John was equally distinguished and accomplished in his parallel business career where he held a series of demanding jobs in the transportation industry. He played an essential role in the introduction of the 747 airliner into commercial service with American Airlines; served as CFO of a Hertz trucking company in Europe; as Vice President and Treasurer of Holland America Lines; and in liquidating, as a Trustee, a failed common carrier.

General Flanagan held an MBA from Boston College, is a graduate of the National Defense University and a Distinguished Graduate of the Air War College. He was an accomplished author and sought-after military commentator. His seminal work, "Vietnam above the Treetops", chronicled his exploits as Forward Air Controller in combat and was a Military Book Club main selection. His radio and TV interviews on military affairs have been featured on broadcast networks. Upon moving permanently into his Cape Cod summer home in Falmouth, John served as a Professor of Transportation and Logistics at Massachusetts Maritime Academy. He reveled in this job because it allowed him to share the importance of duty, integrity and commitment with the midshipmen he was instructing.

John always emphasized the importance of community service and involvement as well as the virtue of giving back to society. He twice ran for Congress in New York; he has been a major financial benefactor of the Air Force Academy; and has generously donated his time and effort to Otis-related community service activities; the Wounded Warrior Foundation, as well as serving as the Chairman of the Falmouth Transportation Commission. An avid golfer, he organized the first and now annual TGC for the Troops charity golf tournament at his beloved home course, The Golf Club of Cape Cod in Falmouth.

John has skied the Alps; soared the Rockies; surfed the Pacific; golfed in Bermuda; and parachuted into the South China Sea- feats most people only read about. But he never lost sight of the importance of nurturing and protecting his family and friends. In this vein he will be remembered for his bright blue eyes, his wry Irish smile and his open extended hand to those he felt he could help. John made all who knew him better and his memory will long endure.

John is survived by his wife, Mari Jo Flanagan of Falmouth; his daughters Regina Flanagan of San Francisco, CA and Monica Flanagan Dapolito of Patterson, New York; his stepson, Lt. Colonel Nathan Scopac of Alexandria, VA; and his grandchildren, James Dysart and Noah and Olivia Scopac.

Burial will be at the Bourne National Cemetery on November 12. A memorial scholarship has been established in John's memory and the family has requested that donations in lieu of flowers be made to the General John F. Flanagan, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund administered through the Cape Cod Foundation.  
([www.capecodfoundation.org](http://www.capecodfoundation.org))