

LIFT

The alumni magazine of
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

For Tom O-lalobo ('68, DB), life has been a round-trip adventure

A combat injury couldn't keep Ryan Kelly's ('06, PC) dreams from taking flight

Oscar Garcia ('02, DB) puts his trust in the Embry-Riddle alumni network

The Sky's the **Limit**

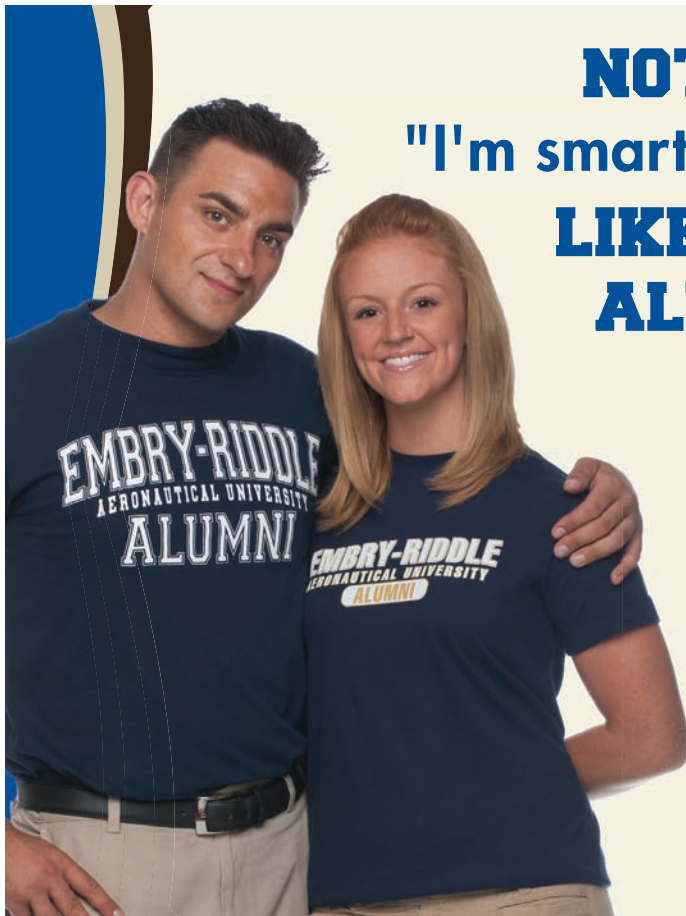
Aviator and skydiver
CHERYL STEARNS ('80, '85, WW)
keeps soaring to new heights



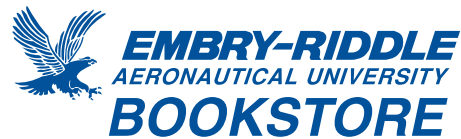
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CONTEST**

QUESTION:
What other name was the former Embry-Riddle Aviation Building (pictured above in Miami, circa 1941) affectionately known as?

Are you an Embry-Riddle History Buff?

Then here's your chance to show us your stuff! Enter our Mystery History Contest for a chance to win your own inscribed copy of *Embry-Riddle at War: Aviation Training During World War II*, written by Embry-Riddle Professor Stephen Craft, Ph.D. (Retail value \$35. Prize sponsored by the Alumni Association.)

To Win: Submit your answer via email to WingsofLegacy@erau.edu or by calling the Alumni Relations Office at 800-727-ERAU by April 1, 2010. Your correct entry will be entered in a random drawing to be held after April 1.

Embry-Riddle's Heritage Project is dedicated to bringing the university's rich history to life through memorabilia collections in the archives, historical exhibits, oral histories, and publications. *View thousands of historical photos from Embry-Riddle's past at www.erau.edu/archives.*

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

THIS FALL IN A special ceremony, Embry-Riddle had the pleasure of taking possession of a 1928 WACO biplane Model 10—one of the first airplanes purchased by T. Higby Embry and John Paul Riddle when they began the great venture that would become today's Embry-Riddle.

We are proud to take a lead in preserving such a historic reminder of our past, especially because it shows just how far we have come. Back in 1928, the Embry-Riddle Company delivered the U.S. mail, sold airplanes and taught people how to fly. Today, we prepare pilots, engineers, air traffic controllers, meteorologists, MBAs and even the scientists who will one day land humans on Mars.

In this issue of *Lift*, you will meet alumni who have used that Embry-Riddle education to make a little history of their own.

Cheryl Stearns used her degrees—and a good dose of nerve and determination—to become a pilot for US Airways, a national champion skydiver and the first-ever female member of the U.S. Army's Golden Knights parachute team.

Ryan Kelly was injured in combat in Iraq and lost part of his right leg. He is using his Embry-Riddle degree to

achieve his dream of becoming a pilot and, as part of the Wounded Warrior Project, he successfully lobbied Washington to secure disability insurance for veterans, a landmark achievement.

These stories represent a phenomenon that has been going on for decades: One by one, year after year, Embry-Riddle graduates are using their degrees to make history and shape a brighter future for us all.

I feel certain that, whatever challenges lie ahead in our future, one thing will remain constant: Embry-Riddle and its alumni will continue to set the standard for leadership in aviation and aerospace by meeting the challenges head on with determination, innovation and the pioneering spirit that, from the very beginning, has been a part of our great history.

Warmest regards,

John P. Johnson, Ph.D.
President

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Brothers of the Wind

Historic African-American student organization helped propel one alumnus to career success



Appearing with the Brothers of the Wind in 1983 is Dr. James Plinton, a Tuskegee Airman and a vice president of Eastern Airlines at the time. Plinton, front row, second from the right, was the first African-American Board of Trustees member at Embry-Riddle. He was an instrumental resource for the Brothers of the Wind, often organizing participation and support from industry leaders and university administration. Also pictured is John Paul Riddle, front center.

Dennis Henderson's ('84, DB) dream to fly, while not so different from any other typical student's, came with a special challenge: He was among a small but growing number of African-American students pursuing that dream in the early '80s. While he was not surprised to be in the minority, he was thankful to find out he was not alone.

"There weren't a lot of black students trying to do what I was doing," recalls Henderson, who was one of only about 200 African-American students at Embry-Riddle at the time. "To help make the transition of integration easier, many students like me became involved with Brothers of the Wind."

Brothers of the Wind was an African-American student organization established in 1974 to promote aviation in the minority community. Initially created as a collaborative effort with the Veterans Association, the organization existed as mostly a social and community service-oriented group. Among their many activities, members volunteered with kids in Embry-Riddle's

"Upward Bound" summer program, tutored in the community, and conducted outreach in local churches.

For Henderson, it was a time to enjoy the camaraderie of other African-American students and obtain valuable leadership skills, including a stint as president in 1984. "It was a lot of work to lead [Brothers of the Wind], but it was an experience I wouldn't trade for anything. It taught me a lot about developing projects and working with people—skills that I've used throughout my career."

Those life and career skills paid off in a big way. Since 1989, Henderson has been flying for United Airlines and today is a captain on the B-767. Looking back, Henderson credits the Brothers of the Wind—and the larger brotherhood of aviation students—for keeping him focused on the prize.

"Because we all had a common interest in aviation and race really wasn't an issue on campus, I was unaware about how the odds were against me in the industry," he says. "Had I known how limited the opportunities were back then for me, I might not have stayed the course and worked as hard as I did to graduate and succeed."

SHARING BROTHERS OF THE WIND MEMORIES

The Embry-Riddle Archives has an online database at www.erau.edu/archives featuring thousands of historic photographs from all aspects of the university's past. If you have photos or memorabilia from your involvement with Brothers of the Wind, or if you'd like to share your stories and memories with us, please contact Robert Rockett, dean of the Heritage Project, at **386-226-6026** or e-mail WingsofLegacy@erau.edu.

If you'd like to reconnect with members and friends of Brothers of the Wind, visit the alumni online community at www.ERAUalumni.org/BrothersoftheWind.

By Marci Stappung and Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB)

Astronaut Nicole Stott's three-month mission on the International Space Station

In August 2009, astronaut and College of Engineering grad Nicole Stott ('87, DB) took her first spaceflight, launching to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard STS-128 Space Shuttle *Discovery*.

The *Discovery* crew delivered 33,000 pounds of equipment to the ISS, including science and storage racks, a freezer to store research samples, a sleeping compartment and a treadmill.

Stott made her first-ever spacewalk on Sept. 1, when she and a fellow astronaut replaced a tank of ammonia, which is used to cool the ISS and expel the heat generated by its residents and systems. During the six-hour spacewalk, they also retrieved science experiments for *Discovery* to take back to Earth for analysis.

In other work, Stott used the space station's robotic arm to grapple and retrieve a Japanese cargo ship, the first time this procedure has been accomplished at the space station. Stott also helped assemble the treadmill delivered to the ISS aboard *Discovery*, a complex piece of equipment to put together in a weightless environment.

Stott returned to Earth on Space Shuttle *Atlantis* on Nov. 27. She is the final astronaut to be both delivered to and retrieved from the ISS via Space Shuttle.



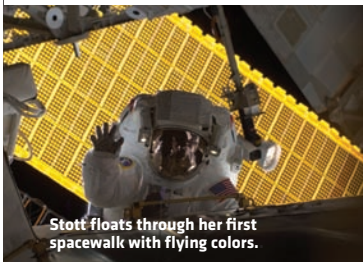
Nicole Stott receives the Eagle of Excellence Award from President John Johnson.

In a recent interview, Stott said Embry-Riddle played a "huge role" in preparing her for a career with NASA. "The College of Engineering faculty have valuable hands-on experience in the industry that they transmit to students in the classroom

and through research projects," she said. "At Embry-Riddle, I also learned how to function as part of a team, one of the core skills NASA requires of astronaut candidates."

Since her selection as an astronaut candidate in 2000, Stott has visited the Daytona Beach Campus many times to speak with incoming students, including a recent "visit" from space (see "Nicole Stott inspires students from space" on next page). She also serves as a member of the College of Engineering's Industry Advisory Board.

During her February 2009 visit to campus as the guest speaker for Embry-Riddle's National Engineers Week, she received the Embry-Riddle Alumni Eagle of Excellence Award in recognition of her professional accomplishments.



Stott floats through her first spacewalk with flying colors.

A room with a view

For students, alumni and staff who wanted to know what it was like to live on the ISS, astronaut Nicole Stott had plenty of observations to offer. Here are some of the highlights:

On what she enjoyed most about being in space: "Floating and flying to get around and doing Earth observations through the windows."

On what space smelled like: "It smells like a mild version of an overheating car radiator."

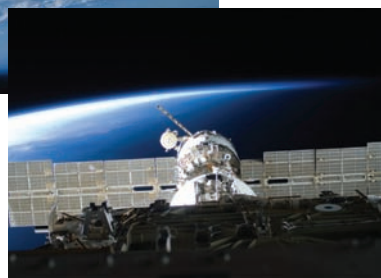
On what Earth looks like from space: "It's like a big, glowing, colorful light bulb against the blackest black I've ever seen."

On what was the hardest thing about daily life in space: "Pulling myself away from the windows to actually get to work. It's just so spectacularly beautiful. Every place you look on the planet has some beautiful thing to see."



Above: View from Space Shuttle *Discovery* as it departs ISS.

Right: A view from the ISS.



Photos courtesy of NASA

Nicole Stott inspires students from space

Orbiting 200 miles above Earth at more than 17,500 miles per hour in the International Space Station (ISS), astronaut and engineering grad Nicole Stott ('87, DB) took a few minutes to share her otherworldly experience with Embry-Riddle students, faculty, staff and the Daytona Beach community.

An estimated 200 people gathered in the Willie Miller Center on Nov. 5 to hear Stott spend a much-too-brief nine minutes responding to questions posed by Embry-Riddle students. The signal, relayed from a ham radio operator in Australia who contacted the ISS while it passed over the continent, came through loud and clear as Stott described what few have had the privilege to experience (see "A room with a view" on page 4 for highlights).

Stott also had a few encouraging words for students who might be thinking about a career in space. When asked about Embry-Riddle's role in her success, Stott was quick to point out the importance of her Embry-Riddle education.

"[Embry-Riddle] is a place from an educational and social standpoint that will prepare you for whatever it is you want to do," Stott said. "Just the fact that I very fortunately chose Embry-Riddle was the first big step for me. And [as students] you have already made that step by being there."

While not every student scheduled was able to ask a question before radio contact was lost, all were thrilled to hear Stott's firsthand account of space. Divya Kamania, a freshman with an interest in a space career, said it best: "Every second we had with her was inspirational."



Nicole Stott shows her Eagle pride with an Embry-Riddle alumni flag, which will be signed by the entire crew and returned to the Alumni Association to be framed and displayed in the Alumni office.

ALTIMETER

More news and events at Embry-Riddle this quarter:

- **Jamail Larkins ('07, DB) was ranked #1 among *Inc. Magazine's* 30 Under 30 list of America's Coolest Young Entrepreneurs.**

- ***U.S. News & World Report* ranks Aerospace Engineering program at Embry-Riddle Best in Nation for 10th straight year.**

- **Space physicist Katarina Nykyri wins prestigious NSF CAREER Award for research on giant space hurricanes.**

- **The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) honored Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Science Professor Thomas Connolly with its Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award.**



Embry-Riddle students could soon learn to operate unmanned aircraft like the Predator B (above), thanks to a new simulation program being developed by university researchers.

Unmanned flight operations training goes virtual

Embry-Riddle researchers develop unique blend of simulations for Unmanned Aerial Systems with real-time air traffic

Embry-Riddle may soon be training the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) operators of the future, thanks to a new program developed by university researchers.

Using flight simulators that can bring together real-world air traffic with simulated UAS operations, flight students and researchers will have a level of aircraft operation experience that is not available anywhere else today.

Embry-Riddle aircraft equipped with Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) will play a central role in training. Using ADS-B, Embry-Riddle aircraft are actively tracked on a graphical overlay of the airport and airspace that's updated every second. By providing the UAS pilot with live aircraft traffic and weather information, the operator can see a three-dimensional graphical adaptation of the aircraft, the airport and the surrounding area.

This concept also will be used to study how to keep piloted and unpiloted aircraft separate in the busy National Airspace System (NAS).

"This type of research benefits the whole flying community by increasing safety through realism and reducing the costly development process by fielding tools and procedures that have been thoroughly vetted," says Ted Beneigh, Embry-Riddle aeronautical science professor.

Keeping to the flight plan

With the help of his Embry-Riddle education, Tom O-lalobo ('68, DB) maps out a successful course in life

When Tom O-lalobo ('68, DB) attended Embry-Riddle in 1967, he thought he would just learn how to fly. But for the past 42 years, he has used that education to help him persevere through many challenges in his life, including, among other things, raising eight children, surviving exile from his home country and becoming a successful entrepreneur.

"The skills I learned to be a pilot at Embry-Riddle changed my life," says O-lalobo, who is from Gulu, a large district in northern Uganda. "They taught me to be more aware of what everyone else is doing and to realize how all the parts work together."



Tom O-lalobo is teaching others to produce crops like those on his property in Gulu (above).

HIS CAREER TAKES OFF

At first, all the parts of O-lalobo's career plan were working together as expected. In just one year, he completed the advanced Professional Pilots program at Embry-Riddle through the USAID program offered by East African Airways. "I attended as one of the first East Africans to be trained as a pilot for the commercial airlines," O-lalobo explains. "One year later, I became a pilot for East African Airways and flew DC-9s and other jets."

But O-lalobo's commercial flying career was short-lived because of the conflicts between Uganda and Tanzania, which eventually led to the Uganda-Tanzania War. "When a military coup took over the government in Uganda, I left the airline and joined the government of Tanzania," O-lalobo says. "I became a corporate pilot and flew senior government officials and other dignitaries."

He tried to return home in 1985, but soon discovered that it wasn't safe to stay there with his family. "Because my family was in politics in Uganda, we suffered a lot and I knew we couldn't stay there," explains O-lalobo, who lost several family members in the war. "I didn't see a future for raising my children there, so we moved to the United Kingdom."

While a difficult decision, O-lalobo, ever the pilot, waxed aeronautical about his options. "Life is like flying—we must plan well, know our destination airport and possible emergency landing areas, in case things don't go as planned," he says.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

For the next 20 years, Europe was the emergency landing area for O-lalobo, his wife, Rose, and their eight young children. "Life was very difficult for us there with such a large, young family," O-lalobo says. "Although my kids grew up in Europe instead of Africa, we stayed close together and managed to bring them up well."

By Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB)



Left: While hosting dinner at his house in Gulu, Tom O-lalobo (left) was surprised to meet a fellow Embry-Riddle alum, Daneen Leidig ('98, DB), who was serving as a volunteer in the area.

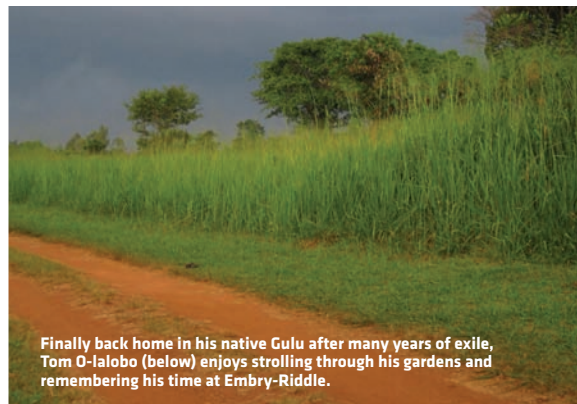
Today, the O-lalobo family has returned to Gulu and is helping rebuild their society. "After 25 years of conflict and war, our people have suffered a lot," O-lalobo explains. "I am working to develop entrepreneurial skills to help others learn to enterprise. We have to bring this country out of such levels of dependence."

To date, he has helped his wife open a bakery to provide Gulu and the surrounding districts with fresh bread. "We are now the bread supplier in Gulu, with the next closest bakery 300 kilometers away," O-lalobo says proudly. "Everyone likes it and it keeps my wife busy."

Other family members are getting into the act too. His son Tom has opened a café, another son, Obadiah, has started a food processing business, and his son Apolo is working toward developing an agricultural program for the community. "I'm very proud of my kids, and I'm working to teach others in Uganda to produce crops as well," he says.

LIFE COMES FULL CIRCLE

With all this family business activity, O-lalobo still makes time to enjoy finally being back home in Gulu. "It is much more relaxed



Finally back home in his native Gulu after many years of exile, Tom O-lalobo (below) enjoys strolling through his gardens and remembering his time at Embry-Riddle.



here, and not as hectic as it is in Europe and America. It is nice to sit back and remember the 'good old days.'"

In fact, while hosting a dinner at his home for a group of Americans, he was reminiscing about those good old days at Embry-Riddle when he was surprised to meet another alumnus, Daneen Leidig ('98, DB), who was serving as a volunteer with the Invisible Children's Teacher Exchange Program.

"During dinner, he said he learned to fly at Embry-Riddle. I almost jumped in front of him!" Leidig exclaims. "We were like instant best friends."

Leidig is looking forward to her return visit to spend time with her new-found fellow alum and his family. "I'm planning to go back to Uganda for a year," she explains. "Tom and his family are so welcoming that I feel like I have family over there."

Tom hopes that he and Rose will visit his Embry-Riddle family, too, someday. "I enjoyed the time I spent in the U.S. and still remember a lot of my flights," he says. "Rose and I want to travel all over and, of course, visit the Daytona Beach Campus and see how much it has developed."



BACK IN THE SADDLE

by Rebecca Douglas
photos by Troy Aossey

After losing half of his right leg in combat, Ryan Kelly ('06, PC) revives his childhood dream of becoming a pilot

RYAN KELLY always considered flying the ideal career. But his dream remained dormant until a degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University made it possible. Then, not even a life-changing injury sustained in Iraq could stop him.

After 18 months of classroom study and flight training, Kelly is living his boyhood dream. As a helicopter pilot for PHI, he transports workers and cargo to oil and gas rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

“IT feels like this is where I’m supposed to be,” Kelly says. His previous career as an Army Reserve staff sergeant took him overseas twice; as a civilian in Texas, he worked as a paramedic.

“I wore glasses, so I didn’t think I’d be able to fly in the military,” he explains. Instead, he focused on civil affairs.

During a half-year tour in Bosnia, Kelly supported reconstruction efforts and helped resolve local issues. “It was exciting to be a small spoke in the wheel of change,” he says.

After returning stateside, Kelly earned his EMT and paramedic licenses, two related associate degrees and a full ROTC scholarship to the University of Utah. Just 10 days into the EMS Management degree, however, his Reserve unit was called to Iraq.

“I didn’t want to let my unit down, so I left school,” he explains. “I just couldn’t sit this one out in a dorm room.”

Kelly’s unit arrived in Iraq shortly after the famed toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue. He enthusiastically recalls nation-building assignments in Ramadi, Fallujah and throughout Al Anbar Province: mapping power grids, assessing water plants and assisting the mayor’s office with judicial matters. “We were kind of jacks-of-all-trades,” he muses.

Kelly’s tour ended abruptly three months later, en route to a conference about rebuilding Iraq’s schools and hospitals.

“We were driving down the highway, when three artillery shells detonated next to our vehicle,” he recalls. Kelly’s right leg took the brunt of the improvised explosive device and was eventually amputated below the knee. After treatment in the tents of a desert field hospital, he was airlifted to Baghdad, then to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. After 22 days in the hospital, Kelly spent an entire year in intense physical therapy and prosthetic training.

CHANGING COURSES

Despite the fulfillment and heartache of his military service, Kelly’s desire to fly professionally still simmered. “I had almost written the whole idea off until I started at Embry-Riddle,” he recalls.

Securing a bachelor’s degree in Aerospace Studies with minors in helicopter flight, safety and international relations happened faster than he expected. “Embry-Riddle is known for supporting the military, but they really hit a home run with me,” he notes.

Kelly credits the university’s admissions staff for helping identify military service and previous coursework that fulfilled various requirements. “I finished my degree and earned all my helicopter ratings in just one and a half years, and I didn’t have to take heavy class loads,” he reports. “They found me a full semester of credits I didn’t know I had.”

And all of his hard work at physical therapy paid dividends during flight training. He was so proficient



During a half-year tour in Bosnia, Ryan Kelly supported reconstruction efforts and helped resolve local issues. “It was exciting to be a small spoke in the wheel of change.”



RYAN KELLY

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER PILOT, PHI

- Flies Bell 206L4 Long Ranger
- Recipient of Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Distinction for Valor
- Currently earning Helicopter ATP and Commercial Airplane SEL
- Volunteers with the Wounded Warrior Project

with his new prosthetic limb that he didn't encounter any major physical obstacles in the cockpit.

After graduating, Kelly almost invested in a local flight training business. He was initially disappointed when plans didn't materialize, but now feels as if he dodged a bullet: "The local landing market collapsed and a lot of businesses suffered. I'm so glad we didn't get caught in the middle of it.

"Maybe later in life I'll want my own business," he adds. "Right now, I'm thankful to have the opportunity to be flying full time."

MR. KELLY GOES TO WASHINGTON

During his recovery at Walter Reed, Kelly was so touched by efforts of the Wounded Warrior Project, he later volunteered for the nonprofit organization and eventually joined its staff full time.

"In the Army, you get the best medical care in the world, but the extra stuff that helps you heal isn't always there," he explains.

Hospital visits from the organization's founder pulled Kelly through some of the darkest parts of his transformational recovery. "It helped to talk with someone who really knew what I was going through," he recalls.

Kelly has since made similar visits to other wounded veterans.

"Sometimes, they don't even feel human," he notes. "They won't see their family, but someone with a similar combat injury can break through. We talk about things no one else could understand."

In the hospital, for instance, Kelly threw out his right shoe thinking he would never need it again. "That tells you what my state of mind was," he explains. "I wanted to be there for someone when they needed help."

He also helped the organization secure disability insurance for veterans, a landmark improvement in military benefits. The lobbying efforts of Kelly and two other Wounded Warriors succeeded in just 14 days—lightning fast by Washington standards, but painfully slow to them. "We were fresh out of combat and thought it was shameful families were going broke while wounded veterans recovered," he explains. "We wanted it fixed."

On staff, Kelly organized alumni programs to help wounded veterans integrate back into society and move on with their lives. He knows firsthand how rewarding events with physical challenges can be. In 2006, he biked across the nation in one of the organization's first Soldier Rides—4,200 miles in 58 days—just as he finished his degree at Embry-Riddle.

TYING THE KNOT ACROSS EIGHT TIME ZONES

It sounds like a topic for Jerry Springer's talk show, but it's not nearly as scandalous as it sounds. While recovering at Walter Reed, Ryan Kelly married his mother-in-law—but only because she was the legal stand-in for her daughter, who was serving in Iraq.

Kelly met his wife, Lindsey, while serving in the same Texas-based Army Reserve unit. When the unit deployed to Iraq, they talked about getting married, but decided to "be practical" and wait until after their tour. The couple accelerated their plans, however, after Kelly was severely injured by an improvised explosive device. Being married helped expedite Lindsey's return to assist with his recovery.

Because Kelly was at Walter Reed in Washington, D.C.—one of the few U.S. jurisdictions that allow "proxy marriages"—a judge was able to perform their long-distance nuptials over the phone.

"It was surprisingly easy," Kelly recalls. "Lindsey's mom stood in for her, so that was a big joke around the hospital!"




Ryan Kelly's wife, Lindsey, helped him through his physical and mental recovery.

LIFTING

THE SKY LIFE



BY LAURIE DAVIES
PHOTOS BY TROY OSSEY



Aviator and skydiver Cheryl Stearns ('80, '85, WW) keeps soaring to new heights

They say the sky's the limit. But what happens when the sky has a glass ceiling?

If you're Cheryl Stearns, you fly over it and then skydive through it. A 24-time U.S. Women's Parachuting Champion and first female member of the U.S. Army's elite Golden Knights parachuting team, Stearns has been shattering ceilings—and records—her entire life.

An Embry-Riddle Pope Air Force Base graduate (B.S., Aviation Administration '80; Master, Aeronautical Science '85) and US Airways Boeing 737 captain, Stearns is also an accomplished pilot. But even 21,000 flight hours, 18,000 freefall jumps and 30 world records aren't enough, as Stearns hopes to complete a record-smashing jump from 110,000 feet. The mission, called StratoQuest, aims to pioneer the development of escape systems for high-altitude travelers. Oh, and Stearns will break the sound barrier, hurtling through the skies at a top speed of 800 miles per hour.

Welcome to her stratosphere. It's one thrilling ride.

LIVING THE DREAM

Beginning at age 8, a recurring dream sparked Stearns' lifelong passion for skydiving. "In the dream, I stood on a ledge overlooking total blackness. I would leap off the ledge but there was no sensation of falling, no fear," she says.

As the dream captivated her subconsciousness almost nightly, Stearns yearned to skydive. At age 17, she persuaded her mom to sign a release form and give her the initial \$40. Soon, she was hooked.

"Back then it cost \$1 per every thousand feet. If you wanted to jump from 3,000 feet, it was \$3," Stearns says. She packed jumpers' rigs for \$1. When jumping, she made \$1 bets that she'd come closest to a target. "That's how I got really good in accuracy," says the 24-time style and accuracy champion. "I needed to pay for my jumps."

Meanwhile, in an unsuccessful effort to deter her from skydiving, her dad paid for her private pilot's license. To log flight hours en route to her commercial license, she once again hatched a plan for others to help foot the bill. In 1973, she advertised sightseeing tours for college students. "It cost me \$20 to rent a Cessna 172 four-seater. I'd fly three people at \$5 each to Weaver's Needle, and then I put \$5 in. I had a lot of takers."

In 1975, Stearns wrote world-renowned skydiving coach Gene Paul Thacker in Raeford, N.C., for help: "I have 450 flying hours and 450 jumps. I have no money, and I want to be a world champion. Can you help me?" Before long, Stearns was on her way to work at Thacker's skydiving center in Raeford—the home of Fort Bragg and the U.S. Army's Golden Knights parachute team.



INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

On Feb. 27, Cheryl Stearns will speak to Embry-Riddle alumni at the Women in Aviation International Conference at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. "I'll tell humorous personal experiences and encourage others to overcome obstacles to success," she says.

Here are a few of her credentials:

- Embry-Riddle Wall of Fame in Daytona Beach
- Diplome Leonardo da Vinci, the world's highest award in aerospports
- Amelia Earhart Pioneering Achievement Award
- Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame



ADRENALINE JUNKIE

Normally, it takes 300 to 500 feet for a skydiving canopy to open. So what Cheryl Stearns pulled in the middle of the night 15 years ago in Fayetteville, W.Va., was self-admitted insanity.

A friend persuaded her to jump from 200 feet. He held the canopy. She jumped.

"My feet flew into my face. It was like a 6G opening," she says. "It was enough adrenaline for 40 years."

The next day was Bridge Day in Fayetteville, an event where hundreds of jumpers plunge 876 feet into New River Gorge with rapid-deployment parachutes. "Everyone wanted to see how I would handle this 800-foot jump," Stearns says. "After the night before, it was nothing."

MEETING HIGH EXPECTATIONS

To call Stearns resourceful doesn't quite hit the mark. She's a scrappy mix of grit and never-say-die determination.

When her goal to join the Golden Knights was met with, "You can't because you're a woman," she made her case in the air. In 1976, at age 21, she won the U.S. Parachuting Association Nationals, and took second in the world. The next year she set a world record in accuracy. And by 1977, she became the first-ever female member of the Golden Knights.

"When you drill and grind to excel like Cheryl, it's a sweaty battle," says Sean Capogreco, the Golden Knights' freefall photo/videographer. "She rose to a level that a lot of men had to work to keep up with."

Later, when 20/400 eyesight and—once again, being female—slowed her path to becoming an airline pilot, she had radial keratotomy to surgically correct her vision and earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees at Embry-Riddle. "To

get hired for the airlines I had to have a master's degree. Because I was a woman I had to be twice as good as the men," she says.

Her time at Embry-Riddle prepared her for a career in aviation and bolstered her determination to get in the door. In 1986, she was hired by Piedmont Airlines, now US Airways, and she has been flying—and jumping—ever since.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Thirty-eight years after Stearns' first jump, her mother, Joan Stearns, remembers the first time she watched. "Cheryl said she'd be the first one out of the plane," she recalls. Unbeknownst to her, a wind streamer—which she mistook for her daughter—went first. "I was thinking, 'Open, open, OPEN!'"

The terror of that moment has long subsided. Still, she wishes her 54-year-old daughter would retire.

Others say Stearns won't quit until she's completed her jump from 110,000 feet. "It's kind of like Amelia Earhart going around the world. Why didn't she stop? You don't stop when you have that kind of drive," says J. David Johnson Jr., a friend and pilot who flew Stearns when she set a Guinness World Record in 1995 with 352 jumps in 24 hours.

To Stearns, StratoQuest (www.stratoquest.com) is simply the next step in a career whose heights keep soaring to new altitudes. "StratoQuest is the ultimate challenge," she says. "And I love a good challenge."

The Embry-Riddle Trust

Oscar Garcia ('02, DB) hedges his bets in the high-stakes, high-wire aviation industry by investing his time, resources and trust in Embry-Riddle's alumni network



For Oscar Garcia ('02, DB), an Embry-Riddle Executive MBA alum and the founding partner, chairman and CEO of InterFlight Global Corporation (IFG), operating an aviation and aerospace consulting firm with global reach has its share of risk. But, like all successful entrepreneurs, Garcia knows a thing or

two about managing business challenges in today's global marketplace. One of the first things you have to do, he says, is establish a strong network of people you can trust.

"Today, more than ever, it is important to have a network to intellectually, professionally and commercially support each other," Garcia says.

That's one of the reasons he has taken such an active role in supporting Embry-Riddle and its alumni network. "If our alumni network is active, no matter where we go or end up, we'll have a professional support system," he says. "We all must do our part."

For his part, Garcia is pursuing a vision to expand his company's reach from its headquarters in Miami to several continents, in particular North America and South America. "Since my business was started here in 2002, I have watched Miami continue to grow as a trading and finance center for North and South America, the Caribbean and Europe, and recently Asia. Miami would be the

equivalent of what Hong Kong is to Asia, or Dubai is to the Middle East and India," Garcia says. "I think Miami will be the aviation and aerospace gateway city that leads to the Americas, and this is why I chose to put my business here."

A GLOBAL VISION

Garcia's global vision isn't limited to his own company. As a member of the newly established Alumni Advisory Council, he hopes to contribute his international perspectives to benefit other alumni, the university and its students. "I am very happy



Oscar Garcia ('02, DB) proudly holds the Eagle of Excellence Award he received at the 2009 NBAA Alumni Reception. Pictured with him (left to right): IFG Executive Director Yvette Garcia, Executive Director Cyntia Garcia ('09, DB) and Embry-Riddle student Associate Director Intern Megha Bathia.

By Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB)

to be a part of this group, and I think we can bring insights and feedback from the outside world to the university leadership to do a lot of good things,” he says. “Because my business projects and clients are all over the world, I want to bring a global vision of how aviation and aerospace are perceived worldwide and how we can internationalize even further the Embry-Riddle brand.”

Helping to spread and strengthen the Embry-Riddle name is a big goal for Garcia, who gives credit to his education for his career success. “My Embry-Riddle education has made a profound impact on the way I look at the aerospace and aviation industries and has no doubt been instrumental in the growth of my consulting and advisory firm,” he says. “I want to give back to the university for everything I have learned.”

LEARNING TO INVEST IN OURSELVES

In recent years, Garcia has developed a new appreciation for the ways in which a thriving alumni association can play a role in helping professionals weather the ups and downs of the aviation and aerospace industry. “In our industry, especially in today’s economy, many people will change jobs and career paths, and it is more important than ever to keep the value of our degree,” he says. “Everything we do will be an investment in ourselves and our future.”

Garcia has experienced firsthand the benefits of investing in a strong and stable alumni network. When he started his company in 2002, he had already made a key alumni connection that changed the course of his business. “Originally, I was going to open a subsidiary of my company in Dubai,” Garcia explains. “It would have taken me about three years to learn the culture and successfully start over there. But, I was able to open it in a joint venture with a fellow ERAU EMBA alum and, in only three years, we were operating seamlessly in Dubai, catering to the Gulf region and India.”

Opening in Miami has been a good move for Garcia and his company. Not only does he have the support of two Embry-Riddle Worldwide campuses and a thriving South Florida Alumni Chapter, but his company also is ideally situated near Miami International Airport, among such aviation and aerospace giants as Airbus, Bombardier, Embraer, GECAS,

Boeing and others. “Miami is definitely a hot spot for global aviation and aerospace, and it keeps growing,” Garcia says.

IN RIDDLE WE TRUST

While Miami and the Embry-Riddle alumni network have been good for Garcia, Garcia has been great for Embry-Riddle and its alumni. At his own firm, he continues to build what he calls “a fraternity of Embry-Riddle alumni.” To date, at different times, he has hired 15 alumni as full-time employees, consul-

tant contractors, instructors and student interns. In addition to having a joint venture with the aforementioned Executive MBA alumnus at his Dubai office, Garcia will open an office in Madrid, Spain, in June 2010 with a fellow Eagle MBA at the helm.

“I enjoy hiring other alumni because they are academically qualified, they speak the same language as I do, and truly share my passion for aviation and aerospace,” Garcia says. “But most importantly, I can trust them personally and professionally. We have a code of ethics because we all know we’re part of a bigger picture and the Embry-Riddle family.”

Cynthia Garcia (’09, DB) is one such alumna who shares Oscar Garcia’s “big picture” perspective. The recent Embry-Riddle MBA grad and

InterFlight Global executive director has been working at IFG since she graduated in May 2009, and she can already see the advantages of working with a fellow alumnus.

“It has truly been a fulfilling experience,” says Cynthia Garcia. “Oscar is not only an outstanding professional, he is also an excellent person, and so is the rest of the team. At IFG, we all have a lot in common and work very well together, and I feel that our common Embry-Riddle heritage has a lot to do with that.”

This common bond of trust is the central thing that motivates Oscar Garcia to stay engaged and give back to his alma mater in many ways. “I can go anywhere in the world and find Embry-Riddle alumni to work with and trust them to deliver an outstanding and passionate work product,” he says. “This is most important to me.”

“I can go anywhere in the world and find Embry-Riddle alumni to work with and trust them to deliver an outstanding and passionate work product. This is most important to me.”

Meet Embry-Riddle's Alumni Advisory Council

In October 2009, Embry-Riddle convened its Alumni Advisory Council (AAC). Comprising many of Embry-Riddle's most involved and active alumni, the AAC's mission is to help support a vision for the Alumni Association by engaging, coordinating and serving the university's 95,000-plus alumni. *Lift* is pleased to introduce its AAC members:



Ken Dufour ('85, '89, DB) serves as the chairman of the Alumni Advisory Council, as well as a member of the Embry-Riddle Board of Trustees. He is the president of Aviation Management Consulting Inc., which he established seven years ago in Rockford, Ill.



Andrew Broom ('97, '00, DB) is vice president of communications for Aircraft and Owners Pilots Association (AOPA). He is an instrument-rated flight instructor and commercial pilot, rated for both land and seaplanes. He also has worked as the director of Embry-Riddle's Career Services department.



Oscar S. Garcia ('02, DB) is the founding partner, chairman and CEO of InterFlight Global Corp., which he started in 1992 in Los Angeles, and moved to Miami, in 2002. Oscar also serves on the Space Florida Advisory Committee and Embry-Riddle College of Business Industrial Advisory Board. He is the past president and chairman of the Aerospace Committee of the Greater Miami Aviation Association. (Read more about Garcia on page 15.)



Alvin Jackson ('90, DB) serves as vice president of sales and government relations for Insitu, a leading provider of unmanned aircraft systems. He is also a member of the Embry-Riddle President's Advisory Board.



Rick Larsen ('78, '79, DB) has served as EAA's vice president of marketing and communications since 2004. Prior to EAA, he spent 13 years with ATA Airlines as vice president of marketing. Rick also serves on the Embry-Riddle President's Advisory Board.



Janet Nortrup ('06, DB; '09, WW) currently works as a program manager for PAC Seating Systems. She also has worked with her husband, **Peter Nortrup ('04, DB)**, to establish and develop the Alumni Association's successful South Florida Chapter.



Amanda O'Brien-Brown ('02, '05, DB) works for TD Securities as a vice president in the investment banking group. She serves as co-president of the Embry-Riddle NYC-Area Alumni Chapter and is a member of the Wings Club of New York City.



Michael Pepin ('86, DB) and his wife, **Joyce ('81, DB)**, own Pepin Realty in Ormond Beach, Fla. He has previous experience in marketing with General Electric, Grumman Aerospace and ADT Security Systems.



Tim Perry ('86, PC) began his Air Force career at Embry-Riddle's Prescott Campus. As an ROTC student he was honored as the USAF Cadet Commander and graduating class speaker. He is employed by Zurich Financial Services with the Human Resources Group.



John Phillips ('90, '92, DB) became Embry-Riddle's first-ever director of sports marketing and promotions in 1997 and is currently the associate director of athletics. While a student at Embry-Riddle, he was a member of the baseball team.



Lisa Spencer ('99, DB; '03, WW) is an instrument-rated, commercial pilot. She is currently the director for TransSolutions, Washington, D.C., branch. She has more than 16 years of experience in business development, with more than eight years specifically dedicated to the aviation industry.



Wendy Stanley ('09, WW) is a former regional airline pilot and certified flight instructor. She currently works as an aviation analyst for PAI Consulting Inc. Wendy is an authorized OSHA outreach trainer for the general industry and holds a certificate in Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response.



James Sterioff ('83, DB) is a captain with Delta Air Lines and resides in Atlanta. He and his wife own MSK Concepts LLC, which is the lead supplier for Embry-Riddle Alumni Association gifts and supplies.

Financial angel among us gives back

Former marketing executive helps U.S. servicemen and servicewomen succeed with Embry-Riddle degree

Leon R. Noe, a lifelong pilot and retired president and founder of several marketing publication companies, understands what helping students can accomplish for the betterment of all. As a young man, Noe was influenced by a gentleman who was always willing to help young people get the right start. That gentleman made a lasting impression and instilled in him the importance of “giving back.”

Now, many years later, Noe is giving \$100,000 to help Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University students in Prescott, Ariz., get the right start with their education and career plans.

Noe, who relocated to Prescott after a thriving career in the publishing industry, became acquainted with many Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University students through a common interest in aviation. After many conversations with students working in the community, as well as their employers, Noe was impressed by the students’ focus, determination and work ethic. “Employers tell me they seek out Embry-Riddle students for their reliability and intelligence,” Noe says.

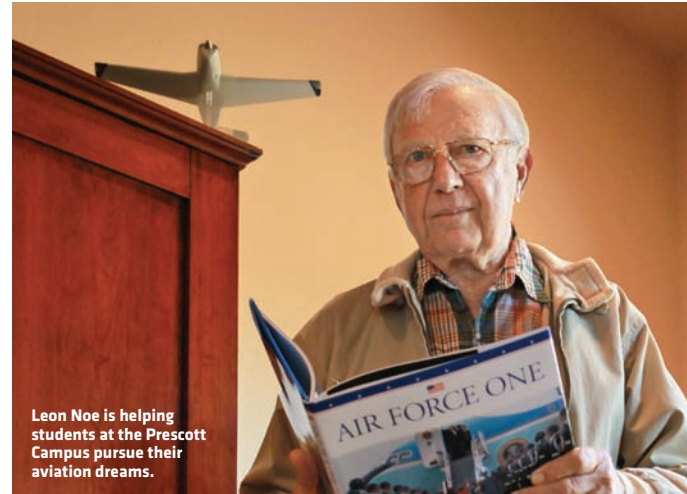
He started looking for ways to help these up-and-coming leaders in the aviation industry. As a perennial supporter of the U.S. military, Noe’s search led him to take advantage of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill’s Yellow Ribbon Program.

“I have always been a proud patriotic American, having served in the Army paratroopers with the 82nd Airborne Division,” Noe explains. “I am an enthusiastic supporter of all veteran programs.”

Noe directed his gift to support returning servicemen and servicewomen seeking a degree at Embry-Riddle’s Prescott Campus, as well as senior-level students who need financial help to continue at the university.

While Noe downplays his own generosity, he acknowledges the importance of giving at all levels. “Small is my contribution, compared to others, but the sum of many small efforts can be huge,” he says.

Photo by Quang Nguyen



Leon Noe is helping students at the Prescott Campus pursue their aviation dreams.

Students inspire Daughters of the American Revolution Scholarship

What began as renting apartments to students has evolved into scholarship support for nearly two decades, thanks to the generosity and vision of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Captain James Ormond Chapter.

“In 1992, our scholarship chairperson and her husband rented their apartments to Embry-Riddle students and saw their great character and ambition, but also their financial need,” explains Linda Giovanni, the chapter’s current scholarship chairperson. “She wanted to create a way to help these students, so we partnered with Embry-Riddle and created the [Daughters of the American Revolution Scholarship]. Today, it is still the high quality and integrity of Embry-Riddle students that makes it our privilege and honor to be a part of this.”

This year’s recipient, Ross Malugani, a junior ROTC student pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Applied Meteorology, plans to use the scholarship to help earn his degree and join the U.S. Air Force as a combat weatherman. “Because of this scholarship, I can become a better student, a better officer and a better person, and I believe that is what is most important in this world,” Malugani says.



Donor Relations Coordinator Maxine Sowinski (left) and DAR Scholarship Chairperson Linda Giovanni (right) present Ross Malugani with a DAR Scholarship award.

OctoberWest highlights



Senior Allen Thompson (at left), Amie Davis and Michael Phillips ('03, PC) were among the students, alumni and industry representatives who showed up in record numbers for the Networking Reception at the Hassayampa Inn in downtown Prescott.



President John P. Johnson and Vice President of Institutional Advancement Dan Montplaisir joined current student Evan Molloy (at left) and alumnus John Molloy ('82, PC) (at right) at Talking Rock Golf Club for the annual Alumni Golf Tournament.



Russ Leighton ('89, PC), who brought his two daughters from their home in northern Maine, won the award for traveling the farthest to attend OctoberWest.



Recent graduates Brian Truong ('09, PC) and Mariel Hennig ('09, PC) enjoyed the Mexican-themed Alumni Reception on Friday, Oct. 2.

Letter from the Executive Director

What an exciting year it has been for the Alumni Association! We have moved to a more central location on the Daytona Beach Campus and now have a comfortable place for our alumni to visit, relax, have meetings and conduct business while they're on campus.

We've redesigned the eaglesNEST to make it more user-friendly, and we encourage you to log on often to see what news, events and photos have been posted, as well as keep in touch with other alumni. Also, be sure to join the Embry-Riddle Alumni Association fan page on Facebook and follow our official Twitter page, "ERAU_Alumni."

In October, our Alumni Advisory Council met for the first time. You can find out more about this dedicated team of volunteers on page 17.

There are even more exciting changes on the horizon, including the return of the "Wings & Waves" air-show next year in Daytona Beach! We're also launching a new Alumni Awards Program. Get involved and nominate a deserving fellow alumnus—details can be found on the eaglesNEST.

Our Alumni Relations team is committed to providing you with the best service possible. We want you to be proud of your alma mater. Remember, you are "Forever an Eagle!"

Sincerely,

Michele Berg
Executive Director, Alumni Association



Homecoming Weekend highlights



(Back row, left to right) Charles Pittinger ('71, DB), Heritage Project Dean Bob Rockett, S. Ray Ellington ('59, MC), Lamar Hopkins ('57, MC), University Archivist Kevin Montgomery, Dr. Stephen Craft, (front row, left to right) CM Sgt. Bob Whitney ('42, CF), Harold Kosola ('63, MC), Richard Cooper ('43, MC) and William Mills ('53, MC) enjoyed a special 1940s-'60s heritage alumni reunion on the Daytona Beach Campus.



Reid Tyre ('54, MC) (at left), Antonio Bolet ('62, MC) and Harold Kosola ('63, MC) reunited and reminisced at the Alumni Awards Brunch.



Following the Embry-Riddle Men's Basketball game, Ryan Giampietro ('95, DB) (at left), Tammy Giampietro, Mark Busch and Owen Busch ('94, DB) celebrated at the inaugural Eagle Night alumni party.



Alumni were invited to walk in the Homecoming Parade and receive an alumni T-shirt, while Grand Marshal Bob Whitney ('42, MC) and his wife, Mary, rode in style across campus.

Alumni give back on International Eagle Day 2009



On International Eagle Day, the Prescott Chapter adopted a local road (above), the National Capitol Area Chapter prepared holiday cards for military service men and service-women (below) and the Atlanta Chapter cleaned up a local playground (bottom).

Embry-Riddle Alumni Chapters around the world gave back to their local communities in celebration of International Eagle Day on Oct. 24, 2009. Here are some of the highlights from around the country:

San Diego Chapter: Assisted in the Vought F4U-4 Corsair and the Cessna o-1 Birddog restoration projects at the USS Midway Museum.

Wichita Chapter: Helped prepare a new exhibit room at the Kansas Aviation Museum.

Atlanta Chapter: Cleaned up the playground at Fulton County Airport-Brown Field (pictured below). "I appreciate everyone who donated their time and money to make this a great event," says Kevin Wisneski ('98, DB), Atlanta Chapter leader.

Daytona Beach Chapter: Cleaned up a stretch of beach.

Prescott Chapter: Adopted a local road to clean (pictured above). According to Mary Catherine Tennant ('88, PC), Prescott Chapter leader, "We picked up over 100 pounds of trash along a 2-mile segment of our road."

Sikorsky Chapter (Connecticut): Cleaned and landscaped at a local animal shelter. Chapter leader Beth Joseph ('99, DB) says, "It was a very rewarding experience, and a great feeling to give back to our community."

National Capitol Area Chapter: Gave back to the country's military servicemen and servicewomen by preparing holiday greeting cards to be delivered overseas (pictured at right).

Chicago Chapter: Partnered with Habitat for Humanity to help build a home. "It was great to share a cup of hot coffee and doughnuts while we hammered, stapled, painted and sided a home that will care for a family going through a challenging season," says Chapter leader Tim Perry ('86, PC). "We were so thankful to be part of this wonderful event."





Bill Nagy ('04, WW) was reunited with his C-123K Provider 43 years after he flew the aircraft in Vietnam.

Alumnus rediscovers plane after 43 years

One day while searching on the Internet for news related to his service during the Vietnam War, Bill Nagy ('04, WW) stumbled across a picture that was strangely familiar. "I was on the Air Mobility Command Museum's website and found a picture of a C-123K Provider—the exact plane I flew as a crew chief in Vietnam!" Nagy recalls excitedly. "I immediately contacted the director of the museum to tell him about my exciting discovery."

After verifying Nagy's information, the museum director invited him to be a special guest at the museum's upcoming open house and air show, where he spoke with visitors about his experiences during the Vietnam War. Held on June 20 and 21, 2009, at Dover

AFB, the event gave spectators the opportunity to learn about Nagy and tour the plane that he flew during many dangerous missions. "I spent most of Sunday meeting and greeting thousands of people, telling stories about me, the airplane and our missions," Nagy says.

People enjoyed his stories of low-altitude airdrops, flare kicking and more. Nagy enjoyed telling his stories as much as spectators did hearing them. "I felt like it had only been a few days since I was in this airplane, but it has actually been 43 years since I last stepped aboard," he says. "I must have had several hundred pictures taken of me with the visitors. I have never had the quality handshakes I did this day."

NBAA 2009

Joe Radosky ('00, WW), Central Florida Alumni Chapter leader, was among the many alumni who attended the alumni reception hosted during the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) conference on Oct. 20, in Orlando, Fla. "It was great to reconnect with old acquaintances and make new friends," Radosky says. "As always, I was interested to learn of the developments and the direction of the university from our president." Peter Norstrup, South Florida Alumni Chapter leader, was impressed with the networking opportunities. "From corporate leaders to entrepreneurs and young professionals, it was clear that the alumni network reaches deeply into the industry," he says.



Joe Radosky ('00, WW) (at right) reconnects with a fellow alumnus at the NBAA Alumni Reception.

New eaglesNEST design

Your alumni online community, the eaglesNEST, has been redesigned with a fresh look and improved services. Go to www.ERAUalumni.org to find more photos of alumni in action, improved navigation to get involved with Chapters and Groups, more links to your social networking sites, a "Notable Alumni" page where we put YOU in the spotlight, and more. Take a moment to check out the new design and enhanced features online at the eaglesNEST and let us know what you think.



Grad combines flying with saving lives

By Bob Smietana, on behalf of Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)

John Hook ('75, DB) has always loved flying and saving lives. In Vietnam, he was an Army helicopter pilot and had the opportunity to rescue injured soldiers. "In Vietnam, we'd fly the injured back to a MASH unit, and the doctors would save their lives and put them back together," Hook recalls.

After Vietnam, Hook heard about Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) and realized he could use his flying skills to save lives in the civilian world. "I loved flying and knew this is what I wanted to do," he says.

Because MAF pilots work in remote areas of developing countries, they must be trained as both a pilot and mechanic. Hook knew that Embry-Riddle was the right place to train for this unique career path. "I went to Embry-Riddle because I wanted to get the best training available," says Hook, who credits his time at Embry-Riddle with giving him the skills he needed to succeed as a pilot in remote parts of the world.

After graduating from the Daytona Beach campus in 1975, Hook and his wife, Nancy, joined MAF and were assigned to Indonesia, where they lived for 22 years.

During those years, Hook flew bush planes and helicopters in challenging conditions—with no flight controllers, and usually landing on remote grass or dirt airstrips. He ferried missionaries, Bibles, doctors, patients and medical supplies to remote parts of Asia, Africa and South America.

In the 1990s, Hook returned to the U.S. to train MAF pilots. Today, he is a 37-year veteran with MAF and shares his time between flying eight-week-long assignments overseas, bringing relief supplies to isolated places and recruiting MAF pilots.



John Hook ('75, DB) and his wife, Nancy, sit in front of the Nate Saint plane exhibit at MAF headquarters in Nampa, Idaho.



Dr. John P. Johnson, along with Worldwide Senate Faculty Chairman Dr. Thomas Sieland (at left), Michele Berg and Atlanta Chapter Leader Kevin Wisneski, present an award of appreciation to Delta Air Lines COO Stephen Gorman.

President tours Atlanta and Phoenix

During the 2009 Presidential Tour, University President John Johnson visited alumni and friends in Atlanta and Phoenix

Nearly 100 alumni gathered at the Delta Heritage Museum in Atlanta on Sept. 29, 2009, to hear from the president and guest speaker Stephen Gorman, chief operating officer of Delta Air Lines. "The venue provided a great background of aviation history with beautifully restored aircraft spanning many decades of flight," says James Sterioff ('83, DB), who attended the event with his wife, Regina. "The interaction with alumni from widely varying backgrounds, along with Dr. Johnson and Delta Air Lines executives, was an informative and rewarding experience."

The next day, alumni and friends gathered at the Sheraton Hotel Downtown Phoenix, where special guest Rob Wilson, president of Business and General Aviation at Honeywell Aerospace, shared his insight and answered alumni questions on the state of the aviation industry in light of the current economy and new legislation.

Have News?

To be sure your announcements are included in the next issue of *Lift*, become a member of the eaglesNEST, the FREE online community created exclusively for Embry-Riddle alumni at www.ERAUalumni.org. Members can post their career news, wedding announcements, family updates and more at the eaglesNEST “Class Notes” pages at any time. Please also submit them to Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB) at ashlee.ilg@erau.edu to be included in *Lift* magazine.

Career News

1960s

Nathan Davis ('68, DB) retired from the maintenance department after 40 years of service to Petroleum Helicopters Inc. He and his wife, Phyllis, live in Daytona Beach, Fla.

1980s

Esteban Oquendo ('80, DB) is a flight simulator instructor with Flight Safety International in Orlando, Fla., and has been with the Learning Center since the first day of operations.

CAMPUS LEGEND:

MC	Miami Campus
DB	Daytona Beach, Fla.
PC	Prescott, Ariz.
WW	Worldwide Campus (previously named Extended Campus)
WWO	Worldwide Online

Agkarajit “Peter” Panomwon na Ayutthaya ('82, DB) retired early in November 2008 and moved to look after and develop his properties and assets in Thailand, after more than 26 years with the national carrier of Thailand assigned in 10 countries. Prior to retiring, he was granted his third royal decoration, Companion (Fourth Class) of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand, by H.M. the King.

Sherry Cartwright ('83, DB) has worked for American Airlines for 25 years and is currently a flight attendant based in Chicago. She lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Mark Berry ('85, DB) was accepted into Fairfield University's Low Residency MFA Creative Writing Program, and has begun a memoir for class in addition to his two previously completed novels.



1

He also continues to fly as an MD-80 captain for American Airlines and lives in St. Louis, Mo.

Larry Weisman ('85, DB) is working at Janney Montgomery Scott LLC, a financial services firm based in Philadelphia. He is the branch office manager in Ponte Vedra, Fla., where he and his wife, Stephanie, live with their three children.

Stephen Blanchette ('86, PC) has been elected to the Associate Fellow grade in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) and was recently named deputy chief engineer for Army Programs at the Software Engineering Institute.

Curtis A. Wood ('87, WW) was promoted to colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. He is stationed in Kaiserslautern, Germany, on a three-year tour serving with the Defense Logistics Agency supporting Europe and Africa. In summer 2009, he completed his master's in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He has been deployed on active duty since December 2003, and has served two tours in Iraq along with commanding units at Fort Bragg, N.C., and Fort Stewart, Ga. He also has been awarded two Bronze Star Medals, two Army Meritorious Service Medals and the Joint Commendation Medal.

Russ Leighton ('89, PC) is the director of safety for International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) Local 1224, and has been selected to represent the IBT on the FAA's Aviation Rulemaking Committee.

1990s

Philip Jufko ('90, WW) has been promoted to principal in the LPA Group Inc., based in Tampa, Fla. He has been with the firm for more than seven years.

Michael Petridis ('91, WW) published his first book, *Fighter Pilot Follies* (Xlibris Press), which is a series of humorous anecdotes from his days flying in the Cold War. He also published an article on high-altitude flying in *Professional Pilot Magazine* in the September 2009 issue.

Dave DeFossey ('92, DB) left United Airlines after 15 years to join South African Airways as its director of National Sales in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Julie Seigler ('93, PC) accepted a promotion to manager of Program Management with Jamco America, a commercial aerospace interiors company in July 2008.

1990s continued

Christopher Kroen ('97, DB) has been serving as the chief pilot of JGD Transportation Inc. for three years. He flies a Gulfstream V as an international captain and is heavily involved in corporate aviation. He is married and lives in the New York metro area.

SSgt. James Spillane ('98, WW) was awarded a Mike Mansfield Fellowship and has begun a year of full-time Japanese language and area studies training in the Washington, D.C., area, followed by a year in Japan gaining practical experience in the Japanese government.

2000s

1LT Ernest Poe ('01, DB) graduated from the U.S. Army Flight School in Fort Rucker, Ala., as a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter Pilot on Oct. 29, 2009. He was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky., and will be completing a master's degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle.

Jamail Larkins ('07, DB) was featured in the article "America's Best Young Entrepreneurs 2009" in the October 2009 issue of *BusinessWeek*.

Carl Olson ('07, WWO) was assigned in April 2009 as the division chief for the Utility Helicopter Division (UHD) at USAALS in

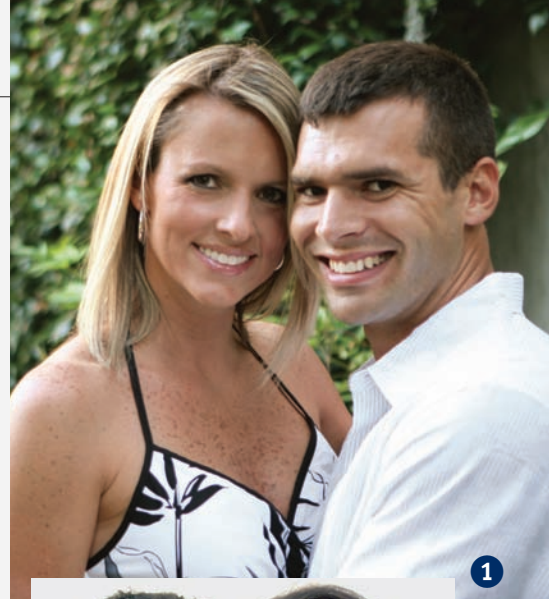
Fort Eustis. He is responsible for the proper training of all UH-60 Black Hawk Repairer students, including UH-60A/L and UH-60M.

Jaime Spurgeon ('08, WW) has served more than 20 years of active duty in the U.S. Navy and is the lead NROTC scholarship coordinator for NRD Dallas. He and his wife have two sons and live in Carrollton, Texas.



Retirements

1 Fred Mirgale (Department Chair of Aviation Maintenance Science, DB) retired after 33 years of service to the university. During his tenure, he was an instructor, associate professor, program chairman and department chair at Embry-Riddle. He also was a designated mechanic examiner for the FAA through Embry-Riddle.



Weddings/ Engagements

1980s

Lisa Baumgardner ('85, WW) married Jonathan Priebe on their shared birthday, Nov. 28. They run a business together and just bought 80 acres of retirement property in the mountains.

2000s

1 Michael Berceli ('05, DB) married Mindy Martin on Nov. 7, 2009, in Savannah, Ga. They traveled throughout Italy for their honeymoon before returning home in Savannah, where he works as a design engineer for Gulfstream Aerospace.

2 Gianluca Puliti ('06, DB) and Miriam Reyes were engaged in front of the Trevi Fountain in Rome on Dec. 15, 2008. He is pursuing his doctorate studies in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Notre Dame, and they plan to get married in the spring of 2011.

John Mello ('08, WW) married Lisa Bohne of Kamloops, B.C., on Sept. 5, 2009. They live in Kalispell, Mont., where they plan to work in the aviation field.

Births

2000s

1 **Tim** ('02, DB) and **Jen** ('02, '04, DB) **Bailey** had a daughter, Kara Grace, on July 22, 2009. She was 6 pounds, 6 ounces and 19 inches long. They live in Titusville, Fla.



1940s

Harry Leeks ('41, MC) Aug. 15, 2009

1 **Elias "Babe" Krinock** ('48, MC)

May 27, 2009

John Leming, Sr. ('49, MC) June 15, 2009

1950s

Donald Kraft ('51, MC) Sept. 25, 2009

Emanuel Michael Mendes ('56, '57, MC)

June 25, 2009

1960s

Neal Gauer ('60, MC) Aug. 14, 2009

Robert "Bob" Liddiard, Jr. ('62, MC)

Oct. 29, 2009

1970s

John McMillen ('70, DB) Aug. 5, 2009

Martin Fitzgerald ('73, WW) Aug. 25, 2009

1980s

Edward Hetsko, Jr. ('81, WW) Aug. 15, 2009

Ray Gonzalez, Esquire ('82, DB) Aug. 1, 2009

IN MEMORY

Stanley Strzelecki ('83, DB) October 2009

George Maddox, Sr. ('88, DB) Sept. 4, 2009

Dr. Ernest Dammier ('89, '08, WW) Aug. 23,

2009

1990s

Christopher Cunningham ('95, DB) Sept. 9,

2009

Andrya Mae McGarry ('95, DB) June 17, 2009

Maj. Steven Carter, USAF (Ret.) ('96, WW)

June 30, 2009

2000s

Capt. Mark Zampogna ('00, WW) July 11, 2009

Gabrielle Arnone Hawkins ('01, DB) Oct. 31,

2009

Andrew Long ('01, WW) June 9, 2009

CWO4 Michael Montgomery ('02, WW) Nov. 2,

2009

Capt. Nicholas Giglio ('03, DB) Oct. 15, 2009

Drew Hunter ('03, DB) June 4, 2009

George Dodgen III ('05, DB) March 25, 2009

Joshua Nichols ('07, '08, WW) Sept. 4, 2009

Robert Johnson ('09, WW) Aug. 19, 2009

Francesca L. Martino ('10, DB) Oct. 19, 2009

Michael Patrick O'Brien ('11, DB) May 28, 2009

Other

Dr. Bruce Rothwell (Dean of the Central Region, WW) Nov. 14, 2009

Edward W. Stimpson ('74, Hon.)

Nov. 25, 2009

For two decades, Stimpson was a member of the Board of Trustees at Embry-Riddle, serving as chairman from 1987-1994. He also served on the university's Executive Committee. In honor of his service, a residence hall and laboratory are named for him on the Daytona Beach Campus.

"Ed Stimpson was a wonderful man," says President John Johnson. "He was a real leader in the field of aviation, who served on the Board of Trustees and also the President's Advisory Board. We're going to miss him a great deal."

Stimpson was the founding and longtime head of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA). After GAMA, Stimpson went on to become the U.S. representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and finally chairman of the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF).

During his long career, Stimpson received numerous awards, including the National Business Aviation Award for meritorious service and Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy for lifetime achievement.





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