

Name:

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Branch of Service:

'USAF'

Service Dates:

'April 1967-June 1972'

'I was a 1967 Distinguished Graduate from the AFROTC unit of Miami University, Oxford, OH. During that Vietnam era we had over 500 cadets enrolled in the unit, the largest public university detachment in the nation. I received a regular commission in the Air Force and entered undergraduate pilot training (UPT) at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. Our class theme was "Prior Et Meloir," "First and Best" because we were the first pilot training class to receive all of our training at Randolph. In order to meet an early assignment date upon graduation from UPT, I was graduated and given my wings ahead of the rest of my class. As such, I am the first person to receive all of his flying training and graduate from UPT at Randolph. That and \$2 will get you a cup of coffee at Beare's - includes tip. Of course, I had to "give my wings back" later so that my wife, Joyce, could pin them on me at the official class graduation. After graduation from UPT, I returned to Randolph as an instructor pilot in T-37s - the flying dog whistle. In the fall of 1969, I was transferred to Columbus AFB, Mississippi, as part of the first wave of instructors charged with changing that base from a SAC base to a pilot training base.

While at Columbus, I transferred to the academic squadron where I taught instruments, navigation, and mission planning to UPT students. I also taught the Instrument Refresher Course for rated pilots. Vietnam was winding down in 1972 but we were still "trip-turning," i.e. flying 3 sorties a day rather than the normal 1-2 sorties every other day. I queried my Squadron Commander as to why since we already had too many pilots in the Air Force at that time. For instance, there were as many as 7 pilots in C-130s at Little Rock AFB all logging time simultaneously (one as pilot, one as co-pilot, one as an instructor pilot, etc.) on each flight in order to meet their minimum 4 hours per month. As my CO explained it, it took them 5 years to gen up the war and it will take 5 years to wind it down.

As such, we had an overabundance of personnel with majors performing airmans' jobs and little room, as a young captain, for advancement. Therefore, I resigned my commission and departed the service in June of 1972. During my last year or so of service, I started my own business selling and designing industrial automated manufacturing equipment. During that time I sold two pieces of automated equipment to a nearby Walker Exhaust manufacturing plant. I spent my weekends and holidays designing the equipment that was eventually delivered and installed in the plant.

It was also during my time at Columbus, that I loaned my dad the downpayment on Lot 77 in Lakengren. The first time I visited Lake Lakengren, on one of my flights to Wright-Patterson AFB, there were still bulldozers where the lake was supposed to be. Joyce and I built our first home in Lakengren from 1979-1983 and officially moved with our four children, later five, to 76 Lakengren Drive in August of 1983.

Almost 20 years after I left the service, I returned to Columbus AFB to give my wings to our eldest son, Steven, upon his graduation there from UPT. He served 10 years on active duty and went on to fly C-141's, KC-10's, and eventually T-1 trainers back at Columbus AFB. He departed active duty from Columbus, taking his current civilian job as a commercial airline pilot with NetJets, owned by Warren Buffett. Steven stayed in the Reserves, however, and is currently a Lt. Colonel flying C-5s out of Wright Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH. Steven is also a Miami ROTC graduate.

Currently, Joyce and I still live in Lakengren along with son Steven and his family, son Rick and his family, plus daughter Kimberly and her family. That includes nine of our fifteen grandchildren. '