

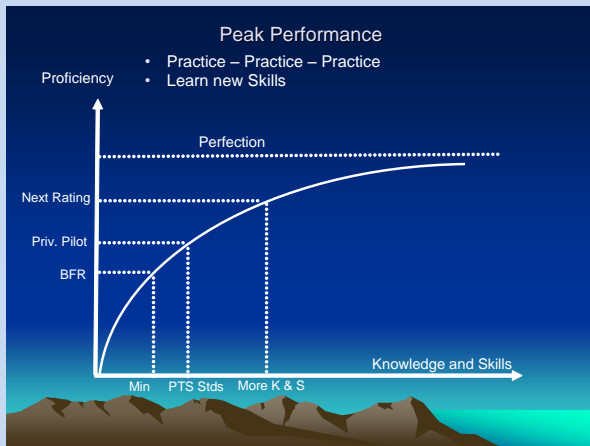


## PUTTING WINGS ON

## YOUR DREAMS

VOLUME XIII

ISSUE 4



What does it take to become and stay proficient at something ?

I heard a catch phrase once; what does it take to get to Carnegie Hall?

Practice Practice Practice.

No matter what one's endeavor, in order to get good at something, especially flying, it takes lots of training, knowledge, skill, and practice. Once a certain level of proficiency is reached, will it be maintained if we don't keep at it?

I don't think so.


I saw this diagram at the Art and Science of Flying seminar a few weeks ago that illustrates the concept of proficiency as it pertains to flying. The Y scale represents the level of proficiency. The X scale represents the level of knowledge and skill. There are no units on this chart, but one can easily get the idea that with a higher level of skill and knowledge, one's proficiency will increase.. After reaching a certain level of proficiency, if one does not keep practicing, atrophy sets in and we slip in proficiency. In order to become more proficient it takes additional knowledge, skill and practice.

There are a few benchmarks, as it pertains to flying. When one obtains a private pilot certificate, the FAA has determined a minimum set of standards for knowledge and skill that we're tested on during our check ride, which results in a certain level of proficiency. What happens after the check ride is up to us. Do we gain and seek a higher level of proficiency, or do we slip and get rusty. Having given several BFR's, I've found that many pilots slip to a lower level of

proficiency. They may be safe for the type of flying they do, however I worry sometimes of what would happen in an emergency.

Ask yourself where you think you are on this chart. What are you doing to maintain or improve your level of proficiency? Would you be able to handle an emergency? Do you need some remedial training to get back to where you were when you got your certificate? Wouldn't it be fun to work on a new skill like a tailwheel endorsement, backcountry training, or an IFR rating? Some things to think about.

Fly Smart, Fly Safe, Have Fun, and don't forget the

"This is Stupid" Abort Now.  Button

Jim Hudson  
Safety/Membership Director

## FAA News:

### New Student Pilot Certificate

Some of you may know that the FAA changed the student pilot certificate. Effective the first of April the student pilot certificate is no longer issued by a medical examiner as part of a medical. It is now applied for through the FAA by the applicant and instructor and looks similar to any plastic certificate. Greg Myers is the first I know in our club to obtain the new certificate. It was projected to take 3-4 weeks to obtain one, but Greg's came in a couple of weeks. The new student pilot certificates do not have an expiration date, whereas the older paper versions expire when the medical expires.

### Flight Watch 122.0 Discontinued

Some of you may not know that the FAA has discontinued the universal Flight Watch frequency 122.0 MHz for in-flight weather services on Oct.1 2015.

Weather services provided under the Flight Watch program En route Flight Advisory Service (EFAS) will continue to be provided via FSS RCO frequencies to obtain weather information, open and close flight plans, and for updates on notams and temporary flight restrictions (TFRs). Pilots also may continue to use the universal FSS frequency 122.2 MHz.

### T-Craft Events to look forward to for the upcoming year.

June 7- Shortfield landing Techniques  
MAF - John Hook  
June 10-11- Garden Valley Fly-in  
October - Plane wash and Fall Wx Class

### May 2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	8	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Calendar of Events for May:

5/10/2016 – Board Meeting.  
5/31/2016 – General Membership  
5/10/2016 - Accounts due  
5/20/16 - Accounts past due

### **Fuel Reimbursement**

\$3.50 per gallon.

The fuel account balance as of 03/20/16 was 7739 gallons.

### **Top flyers for the month\***

Zach Quinn	11.2
Dennis Wheeler	11.0
Jason Jesser	6.2

### **Highest billing aircraft\***

67375	\$ 1,980.00
7593S	\$ 1,744.00
9989E	\$ 1,594.00

### **Hours flown for aircraft\***

67375	51.1
13686	32.3
7593S	23.3

These figures are reported at the directors meeting earlier in the month.

### **Accomplishments:**

SOLO's  
Brian Paige

### **THANK YOU;**

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who turned out for the plane wash last Tuesday.

## Breakdown of Membership

### **93 Members**

03 Social Members (non flying)  
39 Class I Members (40%)  
55 Class II Members (60%)

## Ratings

17 Student Pilots  
59 Private Pilots  
01 Recreational Pilots  
09 Commercial Pilots  
06 Air Transport Pilots  
26 Instrument Pilots

### **Welcome New Members:**

Van Turney Class II  
Rolland Steadham Class I  
Steve Moore Class II  
Greg Myers Student Class I  
Cale Dobson Student Class I  
Andy Toth Class II ATP

### **Congratulations to:**

### **BFR's**

If you've achieved a new rating, BFR, Solo, or other significant accomplishment, please inform the Membership Director Jim Hudson, or Secretary/Newsletter editor Bert Osborn

If you have news or pictures that you would like to have included in the newsletter please submit them

to Bert Osborn at  
1berto@cableone.net

### Hourly Rates



**N1227G**  
**\$48.00**



**N67375**  
**\$55.00**



**N4464R**  
**\$68.00**



**N13686**  
**\$70.00**



**N1891X**  
**\$99.00**



**N9989E**  
**\$107.00**



**N7593S**  
**\$109.00**

### SQUAWKS

All aircraft remain available for flight. April was a busy month for flying. Some trips were canceled because of inclement weather. We have a record number of student pilots.

**7593S** had been throwing oil from the prop. Jim had the prop pulled, delivered it to the shop and within 3 days the prop shop had it fixed. With our credit at the shop the cost was \$874.10. There is a new squawk on 93S. You may want to hook up your portable PPT switch if you will be flying through Boise airspace.

**9989E** still has two minor squawks appearing on Schedule Master. One deals with the Garmin and the other with the PTT.

**13686** went through its annual. It is available for flight and the WAAS certified Garmin 430 is installed and working well. Gordon Hall signed off on the new Garmin so it can now be used for precision GPS approaches.

**1891X** is still flying without any squawks.

**67375** has the MX 385 radio installed. It has been repaired and replaced in 67375. The radio appears to be working, both in Nav mode and in Com mode.

**4464R** The new yoke grips have been ordered for 4464R. The PTT is built in to the grips and they should be here within a couple of weeks.

**1227G** has its annual scheduled for June 1 through June 9. It will probably be done before the 9th but that is the scheduled time.

To illustrate the service that Mike Metcalf provides, one morning 27G was squawked at 8:30 a.m. because the battery was not charging. When the bird was hangared Jim Eyre called AeroServices. Mike Metcalf found a broken wire leading to the alternator. That was repaired, the battery was charged and the bird was back online for the next flight at noon. Mike doesn't normally work on rag and tube aircraft but has been willing to work on 27G from the firewall forward.

#### **ADS-B REPORT**

Member Gordon Hall reported on the ADS-B updates. Gordon reported that the committee had met 6 times over the year and had set an implementation schedule for 5 of the aircraft. 93S has been upgraded. 686 is in the process of being upgraded. 89E, 64R and 375 will follow. T-Craft will try to upgrade 2 aircraft per year. The committee did recommend upgrading 27G because it won't be flying in controlled airspace. A decision on 1891X won't be made until 2019. The club may decide to trade it for a new aircraft or may upgrade it. The cost of the ADS-B upgrades will be from \$3,000.00 to \$7,000.00 per airplane. We will be installing ADS-B out only. If you want ADS-B in, you can utilize your iPad with a Stratus receiver to get ADS-B in.

## **HATS OFF TO:**

Thanks to Jim Hudson for putting on the annual back country seminar. The program had the highest attendance ratings and the people who saw the program agreed that it was an excellent presentation.

## **MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Effective February 1, 2016 membership dues dropped to \$60.00 per month. That rate combined with the newest low hourly charges for the airplanes makes T-Craft the leader in high quality, low cost flying.

PLEASE REMIT PAYMENT IN FULL BY THE 10TH OF THE MONTH.

Your account will be PAST DUE if not received by the 20th and there will be a \$10.00 late fee. There will be a finance charge if your account is over 30 days past due and flying privileges will be suspended.

## **REMEMBRANCE**



**By Jim Eyre**

During my time in South Viet Nam I was involved in several major Air Cavalry Operations including the April 1968 incursion into the A Shau Valley (Valley of Death) a mile-wide slash of flat bottomland covered by rain forest & elephant grass (long sharp blades) wedged between misty mountain ranges along the Laotian border. Approximately 4 miles across at mountain tops, the valley floor is less than a mile wide & just above sea level. The tallest peak is at 7000 feet. The entire area is surrounded by dense triple canopy jungle (almost 300 feet of tree). The South China Sea is 30 miles east. Valley terrain is inhospitable & formidable as any in Vietnam. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) took control of the Valley in 1966 and used it as their primary staging area for the assault on City of Hue during Tet-1968. The main artery of the Ho Chi Minh Trail comes out of Laos & runs through the valley as a hardened dirt road, reinforced by sections of logs, mud & steel planking with trees along each side tied together at the top to form a concealing canopy. Because of its location & jagged topography, the monsoons bring heavy rains, hail, & unpredictable storms raging thru the valley making it difficult to impossible to navigate by air. Long-range forecasts predict April as the last month of favorable weather



before the monsoons prevent helicopter flight in the valley. The transition period of mid-April to mid-May offer the only respite. This proves to be wrong. The pre-monsoon interval of fog & low clouds produce worse flying weather.



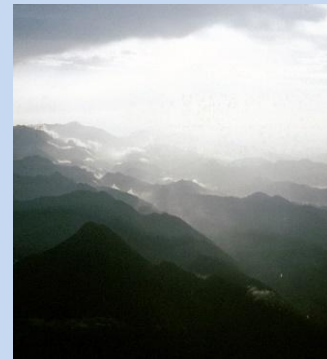
**APRIL 17** – Intelligence on the enemy is very meager. Operational planners can only guess at NVA dispositions inside the valley. Aircraft overflights to determine extent of enemy fortifications is challenged by heavy cloud layers. Division is sure there are nests of Soviet built 37mm antiaircraft positions throughout the valley in addition to .51 caliber like we found around Khe Sanh not to mention probably several thousand NVA. 1/9<sup>th</sup> (recon unit) has mission to find & fix the enemy locations especially heavy & light antiaircraft weapons. They fly both the OH-6 “Cayuse” & the OH-58 “Kiowa” along the steep mountain slopes in marginal weather. These guys are some of the bravest (or just don’t know any better). B-52s were dropping 10K pound blockbusters to create Landing Zones (LZs). These are the largest bombs dropped in VN & make one hell of a large crater. Combat Engineers, with chain saws strapped to their backs, rappel down on long ropes into the craters to clear debris so helicopters can unload troops. Many of these heroes were later brought out in a body bag. Some of the LZs are at the 4,000-foot level and since the majority of our flying has been in the coastal low-lands this will be a test of pilotage in air that is very humid & thin where a helicopter runs out of power quickly. Our aircraft loading is cut from 8 to 5 troops. Majority of LZs slope toward the valley floor at 30 degrees or more making the chances of actually setting down zilch. Get a low rpm warning light in the LZ & your day just got worse. My Company is on stand-down today so maintenance can ready our tired UH-1 “Huey”. The maintenance officer (my hero) job is to keep as many birds in the air as possible. Crew Chiefs (more unsung heroes) work thru the night using flood lights run by noisy Army generators. Our birds are a mix of strong & weak machines some sporting patches that cover battle damage. I returned to home base so many times with holes in airframe that maintenance starting calling me magnet-ass. On several occasions my helicopter looked like a sieve. Tonight I walk the flight line discussing the status of his ship with each crew chief. I pat each bird on the cold skin of her nose understanding that some of us may not be returning safely from the valley.



**APRIL 18** – A lazy quiet day around the Company area. I write letters to family members w/o mentioning the impending battle or this might be the last letter I will ever write. Whatever happens fate will have taken its course by time my family receives these letters. I have been nervous before but this is different. No one can tell us for sure what reception the NVA has prepared. Higher command can only guess by judging the enemy forces coming out the south end of valley. But of course the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav is considered to be one of the toughest divisions with super helicopter crews & troopers able to triumph over whatever. We are told the Air Force will drop a directional beacon (ADF) onto the valley floor to help us locate our LZs. Being a low-wattage line of sight nav aid we hope we can pick up the signal as we clear the 7,000 foot ridge of the Eastern mountain chain. Meteorology indicates a 90% chance we

will have low cloud layer with tops near 6,000. We will fly west, hopefully pick up the ADF, let down through any holes in clouds & head for assigned LZ. That is the plan anyway. I believe command expects some helicopters not to make their assigned LZ. This is a calculated cost of playing war. My 10 ship flight has assigned LZ Vicki high on the ridge in the opening section of the valley. Flight time from troop pickup to first mountain range is roughly 35 minutes over that dense jungle I mentioned earlier. Available fuel for flight home could get critical (comes into play for me later). I mark the coordinates, frequencies & call signs on my map with grease pencil even if it is a no-no as map might fall into enemy hands but I want this info at my fingertips & not on several scraps of paper floating around the cabin. Word comes down that the 1/9<sup>th</sup> has gotten kicked harder today than yesterday. Rumor has it aircraft were hit by heavy 37mm & small arms fire. The Division will be raiding under marginal weather & beyond supporting artillery fire. This is a first for the Cav – inserting troops w/o a proper artillery prep of the LZs. We would pay dearly for this omission in lives and hardware.

**APRIL 19** – Morning brings thick ground fog & low-hanging clouds blanketing the landscape. Helicopters from 3 Battalions (3 Companies each) are in various pickup zones (PZs). The hub of activity continues as troop loads are sorted & fueling completed. My Battalion (229<sup>th</sup>) Company (C) consists of 2 flights. We will follow A & B Companies of 2 flights each. Each flight is composed of 10 helicopters & given a color call sign. I'm lead for Orange flight. We will be lifting elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade. As cavalymen clamber aboard our helicopter the shrill whine of starting engines (the sound of a "huey" is music to my ears even today) becomes a deafening roar as hundreds of rotor blades whirl into life. Soon the largest cavalry raid in American history will commence. My flight departs the PZ in loose trail formation &



climb individually through low hanging ceilings reforming into flights of two once on top. Feats of shear flying heroics by so many young aviators will take place today. In all there are 180 or more helicopters departing from various PZs. If the enemy doesn't get you, flying into another aircraft is a possibility. (Local KMAN pattern is not much different at times!). You can imagine the radio traffic. We break out of the soup into clear air & climb to 7,000. Below us is a shiny blanket of white clouds spread from horizon to horizon. Air is cool & crisp compared to muggy tropical air left behind. I spot several other flights as they break thru the cloud layer. Miles ahead peaks rocket skyward above the clouds. Our ADF needle has been wavering unsteadily but as we near the tops of mountain range it becomes fairly steady. I best guess our position on my map.



I ask my crew how they're doing and get "scared shitless, Sir". I hope my voice didn't give away the fact that I felt the same. This valley is hell on earth just waiting to claim my soul. Early in my yearlong tour I made peace with myself knowing that whatever is going to happen will. All I can control is my ability to fly this machine & staying alert. The troopers we haul depend on us. I must & will give them my best. In the far distance is a Sikorsky CH-54 Flying Crane with a large object slung underneath. We witness a Sikorsky CH-47 Chinook high above us hit & plunge earth bound with tail section blazing like a burning cigar. Once past the near mountain chain my flight will descend into the gloomy mists of the overcast valley. After descending to 6,000 we take up what I hope is a good heading. Orange flight is now skimming the top cloud layer that obscures what lies beneath. We must find that "sucker hole" to get to LZ Vicki. The clouds in the valley are perfectly flat while behind us are rolling cumuli. Helicopters are everywhere like ducks in a pond to get shot at. A wall of red tracers suddenly rips thru the formation at my front. Flights in front of us are getting ripped apart. We see a huey take a direct hit as its luck runs out. Another is hit, enters the clouds nose first & disappears. Another & then another take violent hits & are gone before my eyes in trails of smoke & jet fuel fire. Another is apparently hit by shrapnel from other aircraft in formation & disappears out of view into the clouds below. This is for real! I radio my flight about the 37mm fire in front of us as if they hadn't seen it themselves. Radio comes alive with so many acknowledgements that it quickly becomes only a squeal of feedback. All flights are diving instinctively into the overcast for cover. I put my huey into a screaming dive with vertical speed pegged down. Airspeed goes above red line. Short roller-coaster ride then follows until I regain control straight & level. Going in & out of the clouds I have little idea where we are in relation to the mountains on both sides. For sure I am not taking flight back on top. Orange 10 announces that somehow my flight is back in formation & thanks me for leading them on the roller coaster ride. I reply "you're welcome". Each Orange Aircraft Commander (AC) has Vicki plotted. Division orders are to insert troops into LZ at all cost. If your helicopter is hit going into an LZ you are to attempt to depart the LZ so as not to block further insertions. One such scenario plays out over the radio as a ship takes several hits while off-loading troops. The crew follows orders, lifts out of the LZ & explodes in thick jungle. Some aircraft never make it out of their LZ. As we descend thru 4000 white clouds give way to dark gray rain clouds as sheets of water droplets engulf us. We are truly in

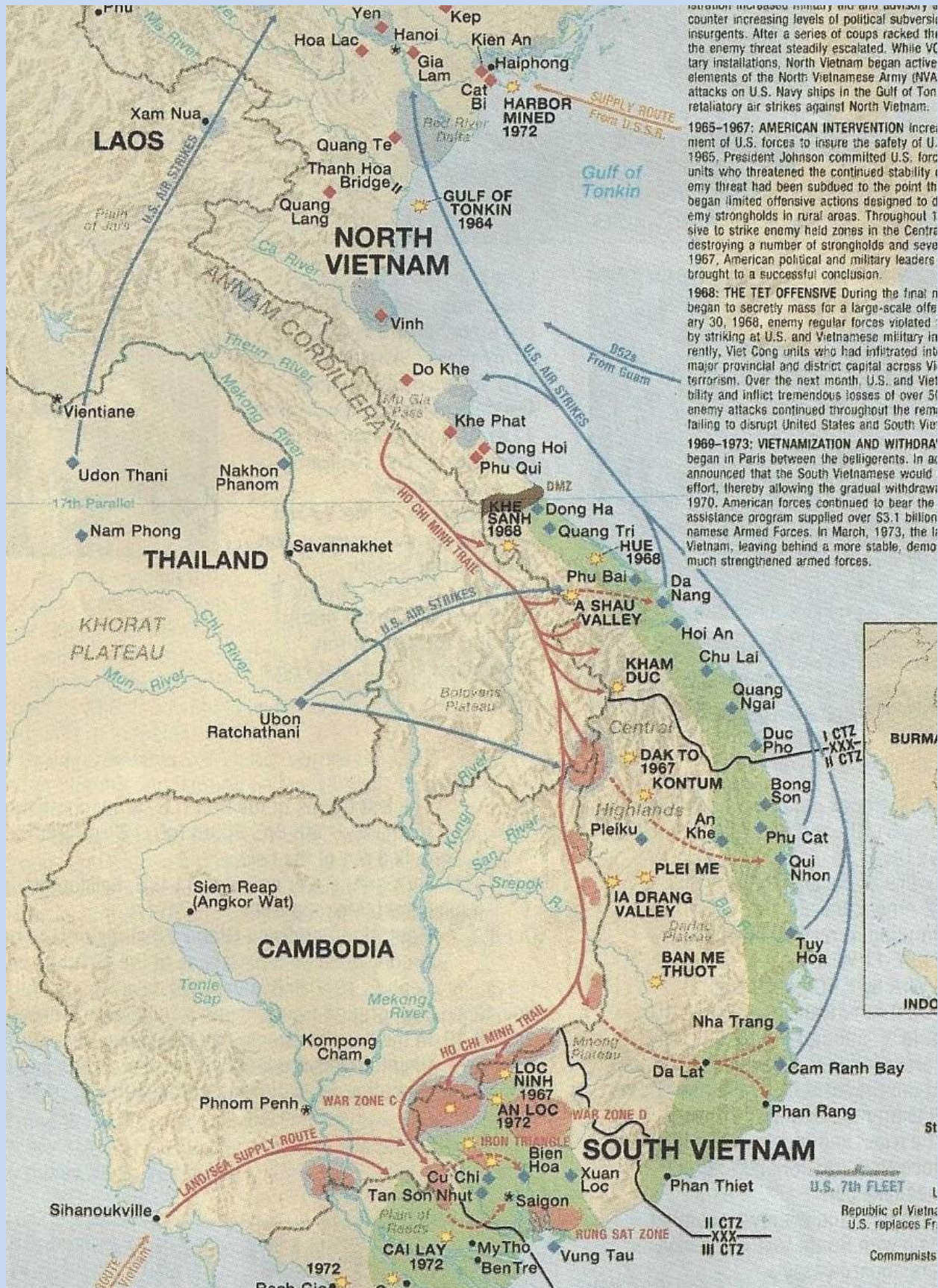
Satan's backyard. At 3500 feet the grey clouds begin to break up. There is a sense of relief that we have not hit anything & nothing has hit us. The valley is cloaked in eerie-looking vapor that rises out of the jungle on each side. Reminds me when summer rain hits hot afternoon pavement. The brightness of above is gone as very little light penetrates the thick rain clouds overhead. We are further north than I anticipated (yes I'm reading my map as no GPS in this decade). Our LZ should be at 3000 feet on mountain side to our right. We change course. I have flight go to trail formation with 30 second interval. During the past half hour or so I have completely forgotten about our passengers. I glance back & meet distraught faces showing concern about what the hell we just went through. They have not been privy to any radio conversations. My 19 year old crew chief yells to the young troopers that we are 2 minutes out & LZ is most likely hot. We approach the ridgeline barely skirting bottoms of cloud layer overhead (no FAA cloud clearance here). Based on my excellent map reading & the ADF needle, in theory we should be seeing a large opening in jungle as result of Air Force bombs. We find our Vicki littered with downed trees & debris. I pick the most open spot & make my approach as crew chief & door gunner spray the area with M-60 hot lead. NVA gunners open up on us (guess they were pissed off us shooting at them). I can only come to low hover so troopers jump with M-16s blazing causing helicopter to shift as I work to maintain hover stability. Less than 15 seconds have passed as I pull collective to get going. Orange 2 is on short final. More AK-47 fire pinging & popping against our airframe. Orange 2 lifting out as Orange 3 short final. All of us drawing sporadic fire. Orange flight continues to insert troops. An LZ is not completely secured until as many troops as possible are on the ground. So many helicopters in the valley that it is hard to keep track of who's who. Orange flight is becoming scattered. I radio my flight to find a wingman no matter if from different flight & head back to home plate. Basically each AC was on his own getting out of the shooting gallery. Thus far a spirit greater than any of us has watched over Orange Flight. However my getting out of the valley is interrupted when I see an aircraft hit & heading toward valley floor. I instinctively bank hard to follow the crippled aircraft down. Leave no one behind comes to mind. **TO BE CONTINUED**



**Addendum:** In March 1966 Bernie Fisher of Kuna earned the Congressional Medal of Honor landing his A-1E Spad Sky Raider in the A Shau Valley picking up another AF pilot who was shot down. Bernie's Spad resides in the National AF Museum in Dayton, Ohio. He wrote a book – "Beyond the Call of Duty" describing the events in the Valley of Death.







counter increasing levels of political subversion and insurgents. After a series of coups racked the enemy threat steadily escalated. While VC tary installations, North Vietnam began active elements of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) attacks on U.S. Navy ships in the Gulf of Ton retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam.

**1965-1967: AMERICAN INTERVENTION** increment of U.S. forces to insure the safety of U. 1965, President Johnson committed U.S. forc units who threatened the continued stability i emy threat had been subdued to the point it began limited offensive actions designed to demy strongholds in rural areas. Throughout I sive to strike enemy held zones in the Centra destroying a number of strongholds and save 1967, American political and military leaders brought to a successful conclusion.

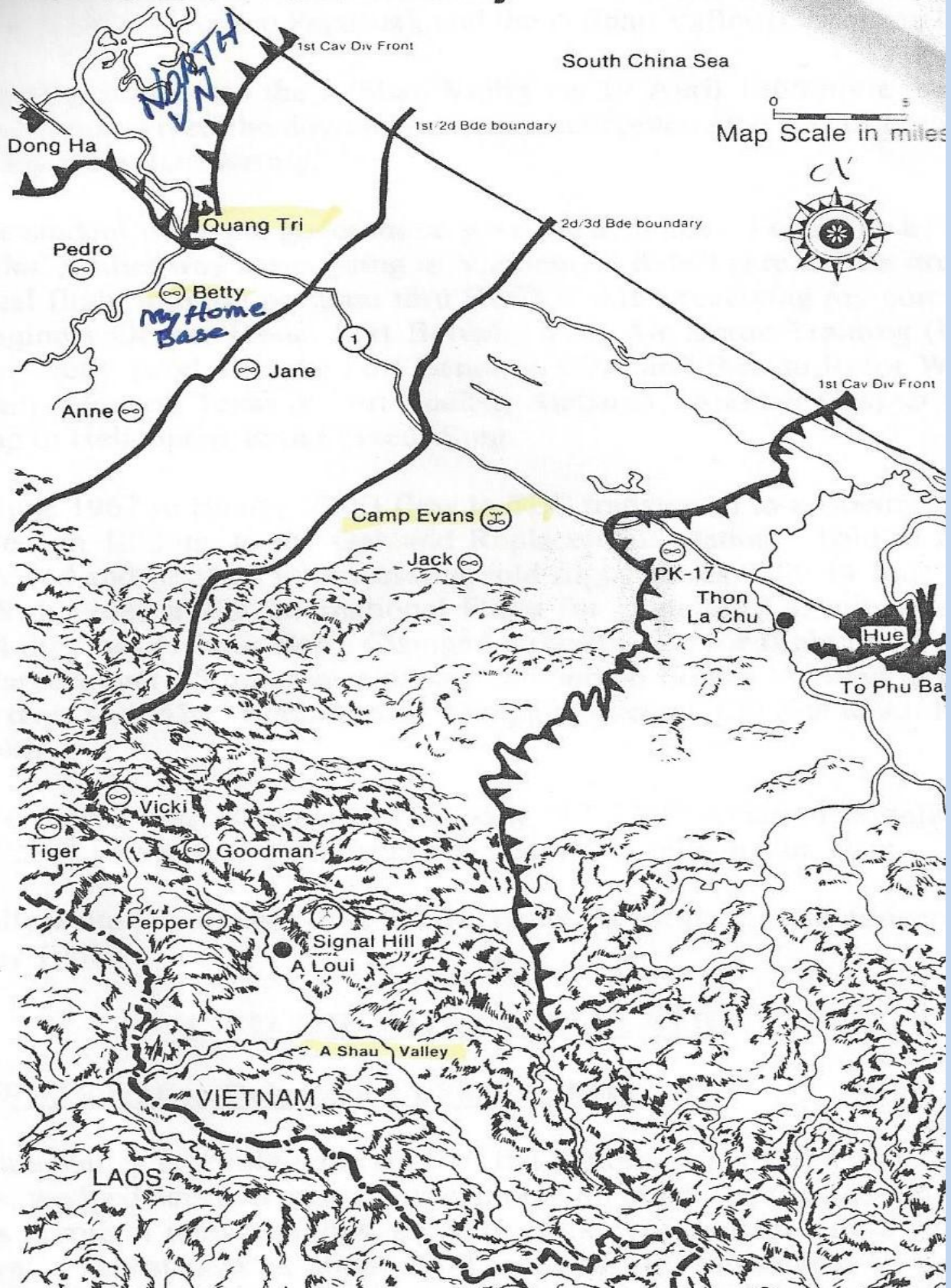
**1968: THE TET OFFENSIVE** During the final n began to secretly mass for a large-scale offe ary 30, 1968, enemy regular forces violated : by striking at U.S. and Vietnamese military in rently, Viet Cong units who had infiltrated into major provincial and district capital across Vi terrorism. Over the next month, U.S. and Viet bility and inflict tremendous losses of over 51 enemy attacks continued throughout the rem failing to disrupt United States and South Vie

**1969-1973: VIETNAMIZATION AND WITHDRAW** began in Paris between the belligerents. In an announced that the South Vietnamese would effort, thereby allowing the gradual withdraw 1970. American forces continued to bear the assistance program supplied over \$3.1 billion namee Armed Forces. In March, 1973, the i Vietnam, leaving behind a more stable, demo much strengthened armed forces.



# Tet-68 and A Shau Valley

Map by Shelby L. Stanton





We are seeing the backlog created by the government ADS-B mandate. It's good that we aren't waiting until 2019 to convert our aircraft to ADS-B. Jim reported on the meeting where club members were allowed to peek under the bonnet of 13686.



### PLANE WASH PHOTOS









