



Jack B Webb

As an Alaskan, I was born to fly. In fact, my first flight was from Fairbanks to Nome as a two-week-old infant. As a toddler son of a bush pilot station manager in Nome, I even stowed away on a flight; my love of flying was honestly earned. After one year at University of Alaska, Fairbanks, I entered the USAFA Class of 1968, and headed straight to the Aero Club and earned my Private Pilots license. I fell in love with the Soaring Club, completing the first USAFA Diamond Altitude glider flight. I was hooked and still love gliders! I graduated with a Commercial Glider License and, oh yes, a BS with Economics and Engineering Management majors. With no thanks to the USAFA eye doctor, I went to Undergraduate Navigator Training. Happily, I selected a Weapons Systems Officer slot in F-4 Phantom. Unhappily, I was assigned back home to Alaska with the rest of my F-4 Class. ASAP, I applied for UPT and, on graduating, picked the F-106 Delta Dart and spent three snowy years in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, went to Maintenance Officers School, learned the immense value of senior NCOs, picked up a MS degree, and still flew the F-106!

My most exciting assignment came next as a USAF Exchange Officer in England with the Royal Air Force flying front seat in their F-4; with TDYs to Germany and Cypress and even a few Russian navy ship and bomber intercepts! Great RAF professionals and party people! Sadly, I left for Air Command and Staff College, followed by a "hardship" tour to Turkey, with great memories of the Turkish people and their culture.

Next, I returned to the F-106 at Rome, NY, eventually as the 49FIS Operations Officer. One fateful Friday night at the Officers Club, I met the love of my life, a Public Affairs officer with a love of adventure, travel and sailing. Less than a year after marrying, I was sent to Air War College, my third in-residence PME. We both volunteered for Pentagon assignments and I went to the Air Staff Plans office for Middle East and Africa. After three years, facing another geographic separation PCS, I decided to retire. By sheer luck, Continental Airlines was hiring! I flew Boeing 727, 737, 757, 767-300/400 and DC 10s out of Newark, Houston, and for four years out of Guam, while my wife was assigned at Andersen AFB, Guam.

We then bought a sailboat, renovated it and explored Md. for a few years. We both retired, sold the house, and sailed from Maine to Mexico, through the Caribbean to Trinidad, Bonaire, Colombia and through the Panama Canal to Costa Rica and shipped our boat to Canada. I also sailed across the Atlantic from Florida to the Azores, to Portugal, and my wife brought needed parts. We sold the boat after 16 years but we still love to travel: flying to Alaska in summer, warm ports of call in winter, and renovating a log house near Gettysburg, Penn., each spring and fall. I am happy I completed my USAF career where flying was fun but retiring from the staid commercial flying lets us travel worldwide today.

This leads us to today's gifting of my USAFA saber to you! As I'm sure you've also learned while at the Academy, ALWAYS keep your sense of humor; ALWAYS be ready for change. No matter what the assignment, do it to your best ability and be ready to move on. Enjoy your career and be sure to keep in touch if you ever want to chat, go gliding, see Alaska, etc., but, REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!