

Dredging

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Back in Cambridge, I am trying to re-adjust to my fall/winter/spring life (remembering to put the trash out on Monday night, instead of driving to the dump on Tuesday), field the demands of new-book-promotion (interview Monday with Entertainment Weekly; interview two weeks from Friday with NPR), prepare for a 14-city book tour that starts October 1st, seeing friends I haven't seen since spring, doing the dentistry/mammogram/eye exam/car service juggle, catching up on DVR'd TV shows (a whole season of "Newsroom"...AND I have vowed to go through this house bit by bit and dispose of accumulated stuff, in preparation for selling it next spring.



With that in mind, this morning I opened the drawers of this pretty little chest that has sat in my dining room for years....with its drawers unopened. Inside I found lots of candles. Hmm. I haven't entertained much, in the formal sense, in a long time. So I had forgotten about candles. Do I save them? Give them away? THROW them away? Or put them back in the drawer and close the drawer. Three guesses.

But I also found some interesting memorabilia. Here is a Christmas card...no date. Maybe 4 years ago. I'll insert it here as a mystery item so you can guess whose daughters* these three gorgeous girls are.



And finally (I'll provide the answer to the above mystery in a minute), same drawer, a newspaper clipping. A photo of my son (far right) and an article about the high quality of USAF

pilots in Europe. "Captain's Lowry's flight evaluation noted that he flew a flawless mission by flying instrument approaches throughout different European bases during his instrument evaluation." He worked so hard to be flawless in a job that demanded it, and it was a hideous irony that he later died when his plane crashed because of a mechanic's error.



From left, Maj. Robert J. Hoover and Capt. Derek Meyer, 525th Tactical Fighter Squadron; Capt. Jeffrey J. Rust, 52nd TFS; and Capt. Donald G. Lowry Jr., 22nd TFS. The four pilots were rated "exceptionally qualified." (U.S. Air Force photo by A1C Bill Gomez)

Pilots earn high marks in USAFE inspection

by Tina Coorsen
(AFC, assistant editor)

The 36th Tactical Fighter Wing received an overall excellent rating from the Headquarters U.S. Air Forces in Europe Standardization and Evaluation Inspection, conducted July 18 through 22.

Maj. Ron Lips, 36th TFW chief of standardization and evaluation division, said, "The wing was evaluated on three different flight areas: flight evaluation, instrument/qualification and emergency procedures and the wing's standardization and evaluation program."

Flight evaluation consists of tactical evaluation of the fighter squadrons, large package intercept, escort and distant aircrew combat training missions.

Instrument/qualification consists of pilots being evaluated on instrument procedures and overhead pattern procedures and landing.

Emergency procedures evaluation is done in the simulator. A number of emergency procedures are simulated in combat conditions.

Maj. Lips said, "Each pilot has a tactical evaluation and an instrument/qualification evaluation every 17 months from the wing stan/eval office and the wing has a major command inspection every 18 months."

Four pilots were cited as exceptionally qualified. The evaluation division of 36 flights

exceptionally qualified. They were Maj. Robert J. Hoover and Capt. Derek Meyer, 525th Tactical Fighter Squadron; and Capt. Donald G. Lowry Jr., 22nd TFS. Six pilots received emergency procedure evaluations and one, Capt. Jeffrey J. Rust, 52nd TFS, received an exceptionally qualified rating.

Maj. Hoover was noted for outstanding flying ability in the execution of precise instrument procedures under both normal and simulated emergency situations.

Captain Meyer's flight evaluation was recognized for outstanding instruction and execution of an F-15 tactical mission using NATO and 36th TFW wartime plans and procedures.

Captain Lowry's flight evaluation noted that he flew a flawless mission by flying instrument approaches throughout different European bases during his instrument evaluation.

Captain Rust was recognized for his exceptional knowledge during his emergency procedures evaluation in the simulator.

Lt. Col. James Watkins, 36th TFW assistant director of operations, said, "These four pilots shone in the last few weeks. A pilot spends a lot of time preparing for a flight, but it all depends on how well he does that day, that minute the evaluator is checking him out."

Another notable mark for the wing was that all standardization/evaluation flight numbers received excellent ratings. They are Major Leonard Carson, Mike Woodfield, Jon

So: how do I go about downsizing when even the smallest stuff has meaning? Grit my teeth and crumple? No, the clipping will go into a box filled labeled with his name—GREY—and when I move the box will move with me.

The Christmas card with the beautiful daughters of *Susan and Jeff Bridges? Guess I can toss that, and hope they'll send me an update, maybe with beautiful grandbabies.

Tags: Untagged