



Silver Eagles Newsletter

August 2017

Silver Eagles,

We have no new member this month. Oh, and I will not be sending a newsletter next month! I'm heading for my big Bucket List item – a month exploring Australia and New Zealand. This gives you two whole months to send news!

New Members: None

Board News: None

Fiftieth Reunion News: None

Member News:

Betty Scott forwarded this: **Peter Goelz** posted the information below on his Facebook page on July 16, the anniversary of the TWA flight 800 accident.

I thought it was a good support of the hard working NTSB employees.

TWA Flight 800

21 years ago today TWA Flight 800 crashed off the coast of Long Island with 230 fatalities. It was the longest and most expensive investigation in the history of the NTSB and it was watershed accident in a number of ways. First the accident was the stimulus for the passage of the Family Assistance Act which set the standard worldwide on the treatment of family members and victims of mass casualty events. A week after the accident President and Mrs. Clinton visited the families and what was scheduled to be a 1 hour meeting stretched into almost 4 hours. The President and First Lady spoke with each and every family member there. Shortly thereafter Clinton issued an Executive Order giving the NTSB authority to assume responsibility for briefing family members and for seeing that they were treated with respect. The Congress went on to fast track the enabling legislation (Yes, Congress could once act quickly and in a bi-partisan manner on behalf of the best interest of the people.)

One of the more interesting aspects of the tragedy was that the coverage foreshadowed the “alt news” environment that we see ourselves in now. This was the first highly covered news event (It

was the AP number 1 story in 1996) that had the significant involvement of something called the “internet.”

Interestingly it caught the attention of the far right as well as poor old Pierre Salinger. The NTSB was attacked by some moth-eaten old alt-right groups like Accuracy In Media as well as some new ones and some citizen “experts” looking to expose a government cover up. Although the theories shifted through time the first was the most outrageous—that the US Navy had mistakenly shot down the plane while conducting live fire exercises off the Hamptons in the middle of the summer. That there were no Navy surface vessels within 200 miles did little to tamp down the conspiracy theorists. Over time the theories shifted as they bucked up against facts. The usual approach was to identify one small piece of the investigation puzzle, cherry pick the facts and then flood their “analysis” with techno jargon. In the end no matter how thinly sliced it was all baloney. The aircraft had sat on the hot runway and its center wing tank became heated to the point of flammability and an errant electrical charge ignited the fumes, the resulting explosion tore the aging aircraft apart.

The conspiracies continue to this day with one prolific bottom feeder publishing a number of books, producing documentaries -developing a virtual cottage industry exploiting this tragedy. But when pressed they always come up short with an explanation that holds up.

I was privileged to work with a lot of good men and women who put their hearts and souls into this investigation.

I remember the investigation and nonsense press very well, although I was working the ValuJet crash into the Everglades at that time. 21 years? I don't think so???

Nancy Mason sent the following with the photo below: Val and I are having lunch at San Antonio's Grill in Northeast Washington, DC. We were catching up what we have been doing since we both have retired. We have been friends for 30 years. Val retired from American Gas Association.



“Be The Change You Want To See”

Miscellaneous:

Please keep the news coming! Workshops? Volunteer work? Vacations? Please! Please!

Don't forget the Silver Eagle Website: www.precisionwrite.com/SilverEagles.html

Have a Happy Labor Day or Rosh Hashanah! Hey, you could celebrate my 70th birthday tomorrow! Presents, like fun news tidbits gratefully accepted! Last Month Scott talked about an Atlantic crossing, well, my wife, Cindy and I are about to start a Pacific crossing – by air! There won't be a newsletter in September because we will be exploring Australia and New Zealand. You probably should friend me on Facebook to see the journey, although we don't post photos until we return. No sense everyone knowing that we are out of town – even with my sister house-sitting.

Jim Henderson