

# WINGS



# News

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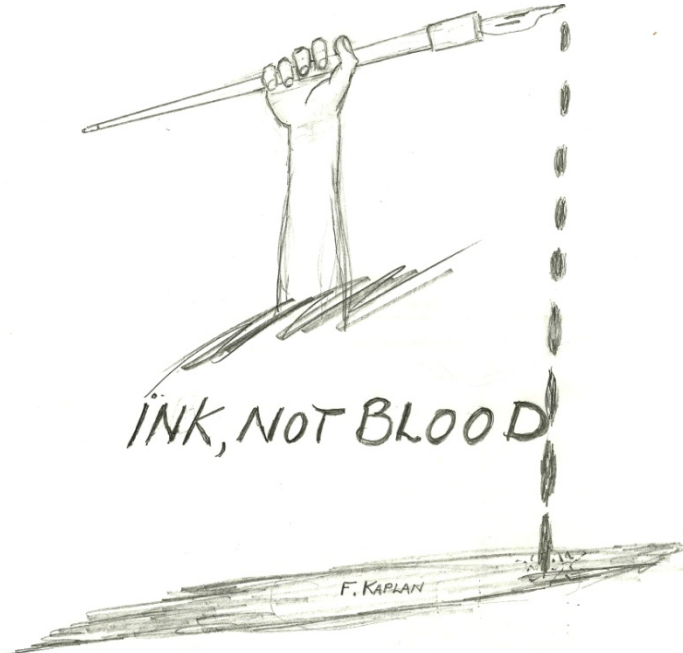
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Fred R. Kaplan Editor

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With reflective humility I am grateful for my life in this place and time.

Appreciative for our right to assemble here at Wendy's every Monday morning

Thankful for letting me stand against bigotry and censorship as a free aging citizen of these United States of America.

I was honored to defend our freedoms in my youth and now pleased to be part of this publication and to distribute our values in this newsletter.

Always optimistic that the current administration in Washington will uphold and strengthen our constitutional rights and that I, like my predecessors will retain the prerogative to freely vote the BUMS out

This is a priceless American heritage that I share with family and friends. Along with my good health, none of this should be taken for granted.

Freedom is not free!

Je Suis Charley

Fred Kaplan Editor

-----Merci -----

## CELESTIAL FLIGHT

With the passing of **Darrell Huston**, I recall other members of WOW and colleagues who served their country as pilots. In my life there was Darrell Huston, Hal Knowles, Clyde East, Chuck McClure, Ernie Naumann, Al Perez, Art Adams, plus a few whose names I cannot remember.

I often visualize the last verse of a poem written by WASP and pilot, Elizabeth MacKethan Magid. She wrote the poem for her good friend, fellow WASP and pilot, Marie Mitchell Robinson. On October 2, 1944, Marie was killed in a B-25. Elizabeth wrote "Celestial Flight." The last verse reads:

"So all you loved ones, dry your eyes, yes,  
it is wrong that you should grieve  
For she would love your courage more,  
And she would want you to believe  
She is not dead.  
For you should have known  
That she is flying higher,  
Higher than she's ever flown."

Ed Moreno

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Bradley Geber-February 2, 2001
- Richard Raskoff-February 4, 1938
- Mort Green-February 6, 1933
- Jane Leisure-February 6,
- Alice K. Stone February 8, 1924
- Leon Frank-February 11, 1923
- David Alvarez-February 13, 1947
- Brittany Coronilla-February 15, 1989
- Thomas Derango-February 16, 1926
- Warren King-February 16, 1924
- Richard Comberg-February 18, 1954
- Richard O. Kinder-February 21, 1922
- Ramoth Mosley-February 22, 1930
- Paul Boghossian-February 27, 1947
- Boyd T. Davis-February 28, 1946
- Hugh Stevens-February 28, 1923

# Happy Valentine's Day!

## Fleet Admiral Chester William Nimitz (1885-1966)

### A Brief Overview

"He had the capacity to organize both a fleet and a vast theatre, the tact to deal with sister services and Allied commands, the leadership to weld his own subordinates into a great fighting team, the courage to take necessary risks, and the wisdom to select, from a variety of intelligence and opinions, the correct strategy to defeat Japan."

— Samuel Eliot Morison, American maritime historian on Nimitz

Admiral Chester Nimitz, as Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC), led the Americans from humiliation after Pearl Harbor to a resounding victory over Japan four years later.

Nimitz, a Texan of German descent, was commissioned in the U.S. Navy in 1907. After a shaky start (he grounded a destroyer), he rose to prominence in World War I as a submariner. In 1939, now an admiral, he was appointed head of the navy's Bureau of Navigation, a key administrative post in which he oversaw the service's rapid expansion in 1940-1.

Within weeks of Nimitz's appointment as CINCPAC, he had transformed his men's morale, infecting them with his own calm confidence in a final Allied victory. He also started to gather a team of gifted subordinates — such as the brilliant strategist Rear Admiral Forrest Herman.

From April 1942, as Commander in Chief Central Pacific Area, he shared with General Douglas MacArthur responsibility for the conduct of the entire Pacific war. In December 1944 he was promoted to Fleet Admiral, the U.S. Navy's highest rank, and in September 1945 was one of the Allied team that took the official Japanese surrender aboard the *USS Missouri*.

— From *the World at Arms: The Reader's Digest*

*Illustrated History of World War II* edited by

Michael Wright & published by The Reader's Digest

Association Limited, London, © 1989. Excerpted from

Chapter 12: Turning the Pacific Tide, page 158.

The following story reveals Nimitz's optimism, even from the earliest days after Pearl Harbor:

Tour boats ferry people out of the *USS Arizona* Memorial in Hawaii every thirty minutes. We just missed a ferry and had to wait another 30 minutes. I went into a small gift shop to kill time. In the gift shop, I purchased a small book entitled *Reflections on Pearl Harbor* by Admiral Chester Nimitz.

Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 — Admiral Chester Nimitz was attending a concert in Washington D.C. He was paged and told there was a phone call for him. When he answered the phone, it was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the phone. He told Admiral Nimitz that he would now be the Commander of the Pacific Fleet.

## Will miss you Darrell Huston

Admiral Nimitz flew to Hawaii to assume command of the Pacific Fleet. He landed at Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1941. There was such a spirit of despair, dejection and defeat — you would have thought the Japanese had already won the war. On Christmas Day Admiral Nimitz was given a boat tour of the destruction wrought on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Big sunken battleships and navy vessels cluttered the waters everywhere you looked.

As the tour boat returned to dock, the young helmsman of the boat asked, "Well Admiral, what do you think after seeing all this destruction?"

Admiral Nimitz's reply shocked everyone within the sound of his voice. He said, "The Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could ever make, or God was taking care of America. Which do you think it was?"

Shocked and surprised, the young helmsman asked what those mistakes were. Nimitz explained:

**Mistake number one:** The Japanese attacked on Sunday morning. Nine out of every ten crewmen of those ships were ashore on leave. If those same ships had been lured to sea and been sunk — we would have lost 38,000 men instead of 3,800.

**Mistake number two:** When the Japanese saw all those battleships lined up in a row, they got so carried away sinking them; they never once bombed our dry docks opposite those ships. If they had destroyed our dry docks, we would have had to tow every one of those ships to America to be repaired. As it is now, the ships are in shallow water and can be raised. One tug can pull them over to the dry docks, and we can have them repaired and at sea by the time we could have towed them to America. And I already have crews ashore anxious to man those ships.

**Mistake number three:** Every drop of fuel in the Pacific theater of war is in top of the ground storage tanks five miles away over that hill. One attack plane could have strafed those tanks and destroyed our fuel supply. That's why I say the Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could make, **or God was taking care of America.**

I've never forgotten what I read in that little book. It's still an inspiration as I reflect upon it. In jest, I might suggest that because Admiral Nimitz was a Texan, born and raised in Fredericksburg, he had to be a born optimist. But anyway you look at it, Admiral Nimitz was able to see a silver lining in a situation and circumstance where everyone else saw only despair and defeatism.

President Roosevelt had chosen the right man for the right job. We desperately needed a leader that could see silver linings in the midst of the clouds of dejection, despair and defeat.

There is a reason that our national motto is "**In God We Trust.**" Why have we forgotten? Pray for our country!

Boyd Davis

## Our condolences to you Elmo on the passing of your wife

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