

May 2025

SQUAWK



UFO President. From the Port Side

by Kenneth (Brownie) Brown



Renewal

May, the month of renewal, growth, awakening and fresh beginnings. As we celebrate the “renewal” of our flower beds, and the polishing of the airplane, let us also remember to get out the WD-40 and spray the pilot, to remove the rust from the long winter hibernation.

As we are aware, things get a little slower as the number of rotations around the sun increase, and so we need to brush up on the basics. It is also a good time to do flights with other pilots, besides just being fun, but an extra set of eyes.

Last month was Sun-N-Fun, and I hope all of you who attended were able to meet up and greet each other. If you attended and have pictures, we would like to put them in the SQUAWK, as well as on the website.

The board has recently proposed a Grant Scholarship Policy for awarding money for Aviation educational purposes. This is a pilot program and is being evaluated.

Longer days, better weather, and the smell of Avgas in the air is the time to get in your plane, take a friend or two and go have coffee at that airport just over the horizon. While you're at it, call some local UFOs and AW and make it a destination flyout for lunch. If you're not flying any more, or have sold your plane, call the local UFO's and have a coffee withing driving distance. The purpose of our organization is to keep our pilots active and talking about the common thread, AVIATION.

If you have some time and desire to serve, we have openings which could use some help. Just let us know you are interested in helping and one of our board members

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will be in touch with you. Tell us what you would like to do, and we will get you connected.

This month was the first annual UFO Carolina Fly-in held at the Cape Fear Jetport (KDUT) in Southport, North Carolina. The host and organizer is Art Falk. From the pictures I received, it was a successful event. Thank you Art.

June will be the Annual Danbury gathering on Wednesday June 18th at KDXR Danbury Municipal Airport, CT. Brownie will be there to meet all you East Coasters. Let's set a record with more members in attendance than ever. RSVP to Dick Wedemeyer weapex@aol.com.

Have you checked out the UFO calendar? <https://www.ufopilots.org/upcoming-events>. If you want to have an event, large or small, put it on the calendar. If you need help, just ask and the board will be available to help.

AirVenture July 21-27,2025. Looking for a helper at this event to hold a meet 'n greet at the Heritage Barn Wednesday/Thursday/Friday for conversations and pictures. Simple, no fuss, just meeting our people. Proposed 1300-1500.

KFHR Friday Harbor September 3rd, 2025 Fly-in. Details follow. This is typically the largest UFO Fly-in on the West Coast. In the past we have had our Northern neighbors flying down to the States as well as from Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Eastern WA. Looking forward to lots of planes and people. This is a Fly-In, Boat-in only gathering; however, the locals get to drive to the airport.

Brownie

president@ufopilots.org





Insurance Questions

We keep getting queries from our UFO members about insurance for their airplanes.

Some of us are finding that their policies are not being renewed, and no other company is willing to pick up their business. Some are finding new restrictions on how they can fly; for example, the insurance company restricting them to having a second pilot in the right seat or requiring at least a 3rd class medical certificate. Some are finding that a new-to-them airplane is uninsurable. There are other issues, but you get the idea.

There are few options to keep flying once your insurance policy is terminated, even if you're willing to take the risk and fly without liability and/or hull protection. If you're at an organized (say, county) airport, they will almost always insist on a liability policy for you to keep your airplane there. And if you're based at a friendly farmer's grass strip, are you willing to expose the owner to the risk of a lawsuit from the estate of one of your passengers if you have an accident there?

Unfortunately, there isn't much our organization can do, other than argue that publicly available statistics don't show that aging pilots pose a significantly higher risk. Finding the right broker won't help. He just fills out an application form and shops it around to the insurance companies. The underwriters at the insurance companies are given some discretion but are bound by company policies, which are based on the company's proprietary data on its own loss experience. If that data shows that pilots of our age group are costing them more than younger pilots, it makes business sense to limit their risk in that area. The voice of UFO, representing fewer than 2,000 members, is like a pebble in the ocean. You might have a better chance with Avemco, which allows you to bypass the broker and make your case directly with the underwriter. But keep in mind that he or she will still be bound by the same company policies.

That is not to say that, given the right circumstances and a lot of effort, an organization with enough members couldn't bend the needle. Bonanza pilots had a bad reputation for accidents some years ago. Their airplanes were known as doctor killers. Then came the American Bonanza Society, which introduced an aggressive safety education program whose results allowed their leaders to make a case to higher-up underwriting

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executives that their participants should be given some additional credit when underwriting decisions are made. It took, and still takes, a lot of effort. We're not that organized yet.

The "rules" seem to be:

- By age 70, there start to be restrictions, and applications for new policies are scrutinized much more closely.
- By age 75, being able to get a new policy becomes very difficult.
- By age 80, it is almost impossible to get a new policy unless you have a lot of hours in type and are flying a simple, numerous and still in production airplane like a Cherokee 140, Cessna 172 or perhaps a Cessna 152. They're easy to repair, lots of parts available, they have a good safety record, and they're slow and simple enough that very few accidents are fatal. (No tailwheels or retractables). Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and it's not entirely unheard of for an 84-year-old to get accepted for a new policy.

To keep your existing policy:

- Don't change the airplane, unless you're downgrading, say from a retractable to a fixed gear in which you have lots, and recent, time in type.
- Actively participate in safety programs. Get a certificate or logbook sign-off. (Avemco offers a 5% discount for a new phase of Wings and up to 10% for some other activities.)
- Fly with an instructor. Get a BFR every year. If you want to keep flying IFR, get a 1111an IPC every year.
- Get a medical exam every year, even if you're on basic med.
- Keep flying often and regularly. Once a month is not going to cut it.

That's about it. I'm sorry the news isn't better. It is what it is, and there's no insurance company willing to step forward and solve our problem.

Egon Frech, editor@ufopilots.org



ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Atrial fibrillation and atrial flutter (AF) are abnormalities of the heart rhythm which becomes increasingly more common as people age. They affect as much as 14% of people over age 80 years. So, one or the other has undoubtedly affected some UFO members. Both conditions are medically disqualifying, but the FAA will usually issue a Special Issuance letter, depending upon the details of each case.

In normal sinus rhythm, the heartbeat originates in the sinoatrial node in the left atrium, one of the two upper chambers in the heart. This causes both atria to contract, sending its blood to its respective ventricle, the lower chamber of the heart. The electrical impulses also travel to the ventricles, causing them to contract. The right ventricle pumps its blood to the lungs and the left ventricle pumps its blood to the rest of the body.

There are other sites from which the cardiac rhythm can originate, primarily in the veins carrying blood from the lungs to the left side of the heart, the left atrium. These sites may lie silently for many years and then become active. They suddenly start generating electrical impulses at up to 500 per minute. This overpowers the normal rhythm. Some of these electrical impulses randomly go into the ventricles, causing them to contract very irregularly and usually quite rapidly. In 1876 this very irregular pulse was called *delirium cordis* or crazy heart.

The two atrial chambers are just quivering. They are not rhythmically filling and pumping blood into their respective ventricle. It is just flowing through. The ventricles are therefore sometimes not filling adequately before pumping their blood out. The person may feel weak and may get easily short of breath with a little exertion, such as going up stairs. Some people feel the difference in heart beats, called palpitations. Some people feel no symptoms and AF may just be discovered on a routine physical examination..

Another problem, unrecognized for a great many years, is the increased risk of strokes in AF. Each atrium has a little appendage attached to it, the auricle. Normally, this



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empties with each contraction of the atrium. In AF this does not happen. The blood just sits there. Eventually, the blood clots. After four hours, the risk of clotting significantly increases. When this clot leaves the auricle there is a high risk it will go to the brain, causing a stroke. With some exceptions, patients with AF are treated with anti-coagulants to prevent such clots forming.

Sometimes the AF stops without therapy. Sometimes it stops with medication. If not, cardioversion may be used. This involves sedating the patient and stopping the heart electrically. When it restarts it is usually in normal sinus rhythm. Medications may keep the AF from recurring. Sometimes it may not be feasible to convert AF to normal rhythm and then medications can be used to keep the heart rate acceptably slow.

If AF recurs too frequently or is continuous, destruction (ablation) of the originating site(s) may be indicated. This involves passing catheters through the veins into the heart. The abnormal rhythm site(s) are eliminated with microwave energy. There is a 10% chance of more sites arising later, so the procedure may need to be done more than once.

Risk factors for developing AF, besides just growing older, are many. Smoking, excess alcohol intake, obesity, lack of exercise, hyperthyroidism, diabetes, hypertension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) are all modifiable risk factors. Various heart diseases and various lung diseases may cause AF. AF in a parent increases the risk of AF 40%.

This has been a “brief skip through the tulips” about AF. If more information is desired, Wikipedia has a quite extensive writeup on the topic.

Keep flying.

Harry Wander, MD, AME

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BY MICHAEL AND STEFAN STRASSER





Hi,

An insurance question as you seem to know your insurance stuff. Question is on coverage for retrieval of an aircraft post accident from a crash out on a coastal island. I know that pilot rental policies do not offer coverage but what about policies for owned a/c?

On my flights to places like MVY, ACK, BID etc. wrecked aircraft seem to remain on that airport for a long, long time. Quite complicated as such an island accident would involve imported labor, ferry or ship removal etc..

Any thoughts?

Ralph Bennett

Ralph,

If the owner has purchased in-motion collision insurance, the insurance company is obligated to either have the crashed airplane restored to its pre-crash condition or pay the owner the amount for which it's insured. It doesn't matter whether transportation to a repair shop is needed. I've seen them fish a floatplane out of a lake.

If the cost of moving and repairing it, minus the salvage value, exceeds the insured value (not the market value) and payment is made to the owner, the insurance company will take possession of the wreck. Then they will try to sell it.

If nobody buys the wreck because it would be too complicated to move, it will likely stay there and rot. Same result if the owner didn't buy collision coverage and is facing higher repair costs than he can financially tolerate. Of course, the longer it sits there, exposed to the elements, the less it is worth, so it's a vicious circle. I've seen planes at small out-of-the way airports with trees growing through them.

By the way, my policy has a provision that if I make an emergency landing and the airplane is undamaged, the insurance company will relocate it to a place where it can be repaired, but only up to a cost limit of \$15,000.

Egon



I am still searching for:

UFOs to Attend our June 18th Danbury Fly/Drive IN!

Bob Barker, our President Emeritus
Is offering a \$50 Valued Prize to the Pilot who flies.
the longest Distance!

10:00 – 11:00 Arrive for Coffee & Donuts.

11:00 – 12:00 Hangar talk by our President – “Brownie”

Hopefully we will have an additional guest speaker.

12:00 – Lunch at the Olive Garden – a 3–5-minute walk

Cost - \$35.00 Cash only – includes choice of 4 entrees,
Beverage, choice of soup, dessert, and includes gratuity.

Meet at: Business Aircraft Center, (by the Tower) located 81 Kenosia Ave. Danbury, CT 06810.

Last year we had about 60 people who actually showed up, at the present time, only 40 plus have confirmed their attendance. (Weather permitting.)

Sign Up!!

Any Questions? Ask!

Dick Wedemeyer

weapex@aol.com

973-722-9491



Carolina Fly-in

On May 10th we held the first UFO Carolina Fly-in at the Cape Fear Jetport (KSUT) in Oak Island, NC. In spite of questionable weather we had 14 pilots and guests, with a majority from North and South Carolina. However 2 were from California who were in the east visiting relatives in the area. This was especially good since it meant Susie

Newman Harrison and Rob Harrison came to the event. Susie is an event planner and was a tremendous help in setting up the event and Rob was one of our two speakers. Rob is 84 and still flying Airshows. He is known as the Tumbling Bear. He talked about the effects of age on flying aerobatics and what he did to accommodate



for this and keep performing. The other speaker was more local, Howie Franklin, Director of the Cape Fear Jetport. Howie served in the US Air Force and became the Chief Steward for Air Force One. He was the first to serve under five Presidents including Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and Bill Clinton. We then all shared our aviation experience and discussed topics relative to UFOs such as insurance and the handling of hearing loss. Going forward we decided to hold Zoom meetings to stay connected and plan future events. In that vein we discussed changing the name from Carolina Fly-in to the mid-East Coast and expand the attendance. I want to thank everyone who came and helped with the event.

Art Falk



California Central Coast

April 23 started out with low stratus ceilings that promised to hang on through mid-day. The Central Coast has been having a lot of foggy mornings, and sometimes the fog is slow to burn off.

We had been looking forward to sharing lunch at Jerry Long's hangar at Santa



Ynez. By 11:30 my home base, KSBP, was VFR, but the ceiling was still 2200 feet, about the same at Santa Ynez, but not much terrain between. It was a short flight in my Cessna 172 with two passengers, Liz Dinan and Jan Dungan who is new to the UFO. We arrived just in time for lunch. The flight was a little bumpy under the clouds. The view was lovely and the hills were lush and green. There were

not many wildflowers to see this year, and I did not knock over any cows on the way.

Paul Trent drove in from Santa Barbara. The clouds were too low to get through the San Marcos Pass. Bill Krauch and Mike Makowski, both locals, joined the fun. We enjoyed our lunch and had some time for hangar talk. By that time the sky was blue without a cloud in sight. It was a lovely flight home and we skimmed over the hills marveling at the spring hillsides.

We decided that the next meeting at noon on Wednesday, July 23, should be at Santa Paula KSZP. It is a fun place to land, the restaurant is great, and maybe more UFO members from south of Santa Barbara can attend.

More good times and opportunities to fly ahead!

Grace Crittenden



GA Safer Than Ever Despite Recent Accidents

Accidents down 21 percent so far this year, continuing downward trend

By Jay Wiles, AOPA

A continuous stream of stories about aircraft accidents and incidents has been dominating the news and social media. But if you look past the headlines and viral videos, what many non-aviators don't realize – and what many in the general aviation community may forget – is that GA is still safer than ever.

The latest series of high-profile accidents that started last week included a helicopter crash in New York City, a Cessna 310 crashing after takeoff in Florida, and a Mitsubishi MU-2B crashing in upstate New York while attempting a second approach.

Each of these is a tragedy, and many lives will be forever changed as a result.

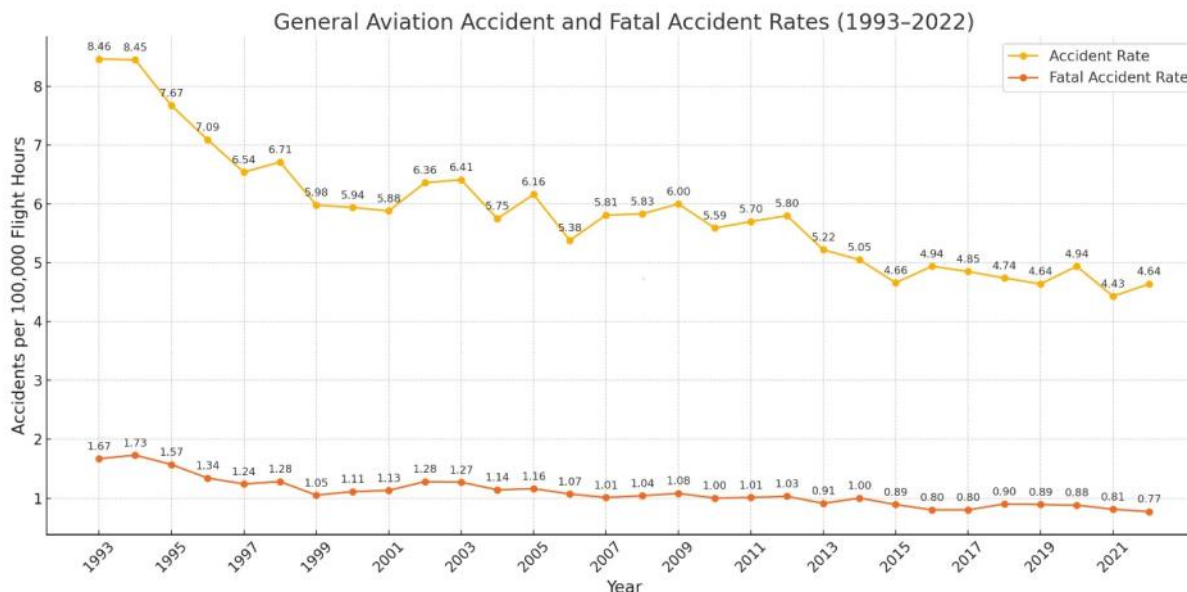
"Our hearts are broken for the families of those who died in these recent accidents," said AOPA Air Safety Institute Senior Vice President Mike Ginter. "Aviation safety is under a microscope by the public at large, and understandably so. While it's important not to speculate on what caused these crashes until the NTSB has completed their investigations, it's also important to remember that, overall, general aviation has never been safer."

The AOPA Air Safety Institute has analyzed NTSB data and found that, as of April 13, GA accidents as a whole – and the number of fatal accidents – are both down 21 percent year-to-date when compared to 2024. In addition, the number of fatalities also dropped 16 percent over the same period.

The Air Safety Institute publishes the [Richard G. McSpadden Report](#) annually, which reviews GA accidents and analyzes trends in the data.

"These numbers are no fluke," Ginter added. "General aviation has seen a declining accident and fatality rate for more than 30 years. Since the early 1990s, the accident rate has dropped 45 percent, and the rate of fatal accidents has fallen even more – 55 percent."

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This graph shows the total accident and fatal accident rates for general aviation since 1993. Source: AOPA Air Safety Institute, NTSB.

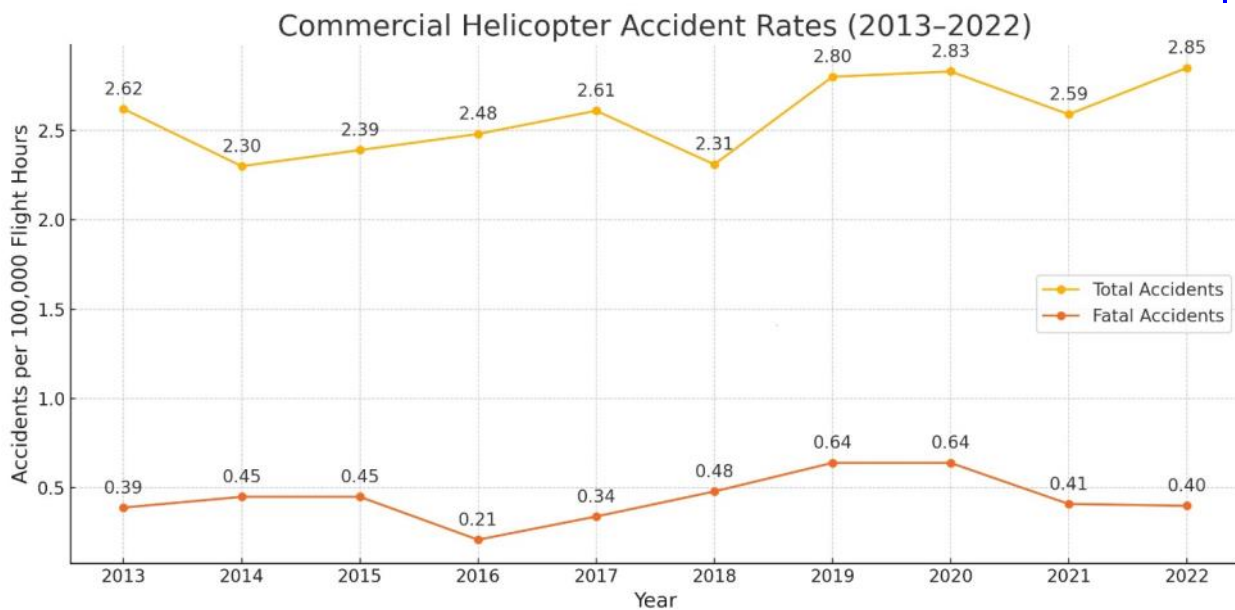
The McSpadden Report breaks down the types of accidents to discover trends in that data as well.

After the helicopter crash in New York City, some have pointed to past efforts by the City Council to shut down helicopter operations at two city-owned heliports. But the data show commercial helicopter flights tend to be safer when compared to other GA operations, even though the accident and fatal accident rates have fluctuated in recent years.

The graph on the next page shows the total accident and fatal accident rates for commercial helicopter operations between 2013 and 2022. Source: AOPA Air Safety Institute 'Richard G. McSpadden Report'.

While these data trends are encouraging, many non-aviators still worry they are likely to be injured or killed by a GA aircraft accident while they're on the ground. But the numbers don't support that they are likely to be injured or killed. The McSpadden Report breaks down the types of accidents to discover trends in that data as well.

First, let's talk about the amount of GA activity. As of 2023, there were more than 214,000 GA aircraft, according to the FAA General Aviation and Part 135 Activity Survey. While it's impossible to calculate the number of GA flights every day, collectively, the FAA says 78,000 GA pilots fly 28.5 million hours each year.



Most are recreational flights, but this number also includes tens of thousands of aircraft used for flight training, medical transport, firefighting, and business.

Between 2013 and 2022, NTSB numbers show 25 GA accidents and incidents resulted in someone being killed on the ground. (That number includes cases where the aircraft was also on the ground.) During that same period, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says 374,159 people died in vehicle crashes. The odds of being killed by lightning are even greater – between 2013 and 2022, the National Weather Service says 216 people were killed by lightning.

“While general aviation safety has continually improved for more than 30 years, there is always work to be done,” Ginter said. “The AOPA Air Safety Institute is dedicated to improving general aviation safety. That’s been our mission for the past 75 years.

While we have seen considerable progress since then, there is always opportunity for improvement.”

On April 1, the Air Safety Institute – with support from more than two dozen other organizations and the FAA – launched the National Pause for General Aviation Safety. Over a six-month period, pilots are being asked to take a few minutes to focus on safety and review a variety of videos, courses, and articles that cover every type of GA flying. Pilots are encouraged to visit [GAsafe.org](https://www.GAsafe.org) to learn more.

**Rick H McClure**

Tallahassee , FL

rickrows@hotmail.com

Aircraft type : American Champion Decathlon; various sailplanes

Skills & Experience : 900 hrs mostly tailwheel; SEL rating. Still flies regularly.

1100 hrs sailplanes; glider commercial and CFI

Ron Dennison

San Jose, CA

ron@rondennison.com

Still flies regularly in a Comanche 260B

Joseph L Wesley

Newtown, PA

jwesley@hqfarm.com

Aircraft type : Embraer Phenom 300; Cessna C208B w/Floats

Skills & Experience : Flight Instructor; Airline Transport; Commercial. Still flies regularly.

Dean Storms

Millersburg, MI

dstorms@i2k.com

Aircraft type: Quad City Challenger

Skills & Experience: Single engine, multiengine, instrument, single engine seaplane, tailwheel. Still flies regularly

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**Eric P Yould**

Palmer, AK

epyould@gmail.com

Aircraft Type: Cessna 172

Skills & Experience: Taildragger, back country and ski flying. Still flies regularly.

Matthew P O'Connell

Midlothian, VA

mpo182@live.com

Aircraft: Cessna 172 typical. Still flies regularly.

Skills & experience: Private pilot, single engine land, basic med

John L Hammerstrand

Alpine, CA

abonanza@earthlink.net

Aircraft type: A-36 Bonanza, C-150, C337G Skymaster.

Skills & Experience: ATP, CFI. CFII. ASEL, 14,500+ hours. Still flies the cloudy and clear skies of the world as a pilot and flight instructor.

John W Brantigan

Shaw Island, WA

jbrantigan@rockisland.com

Aircraft type: Citation CJ2, Bell 407

Skills & Experience: ATP, still flies regularly

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George Schuit

Australia

George@coppercreek.com.au

Moving back and forth between Europe and Australia to have eternal summer conditions.

About 19,000 hours in 2-, 3-, and 4-engined airliners to gliders and light stuff. Still flying singles and light twins plus gliders and tugs. No intention of stopping yet.



Carroll Teitsworth

Groveland, NY

Carrol@Libertyballoon.com

Still flies regularly in hot air balloons. US Navy (P3), Gold Seal instructor, airplanes, 50 years running a hot air balloon business.

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Final flight plan filed and completed

Joseph Watson,

Wales, UK

I am writing to let you know that my husband, Joseph Watson, died in April, so regrettably, you will have to remove him from your membership list.

He really enjoyed being a member of UFO.

Sincerely,

Margaret Watson

Joseph Clement Gilliland

Dayton, OH

January 18, 1929 – March 28, 2025

Served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He lived life to the fullest, engaging in water skiing, boating, miniature Indy car racing, flying as a private pilot, shooting, fishing and bowling. He was also National Ski Patrolman for 45 years. He was honored as a veteran with an Honor Flight to Washington, DC in 2014.