

MILITARY TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND ACRONYMS

JINTACS: acronym for the Joint Inter-operability of Tactical Command And Control System

Joe: Army term for a soldier, shortened from G.I. (Government Issue or General Issue) Joe

John Wayne: a small finger-held can opener (also known as P-38) or a soldier who does not have his helmet chinstrap buckled (much like the actor would have done in his 1960s war movies)

JOPES: acronym for Joint Operation Planning and Execution System



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Words to Ponder:

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

~ Harry S. Truman

Pray for our Deployed Members:

Chaplain Brian Palmer and Family: US Army, serving the Lord in Fort Hood, Texas

Together in Scripture Reading:

This month: the book of Genesis



A Load of Hay

"Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now. I don't know if you fellas ever had a load of hay fall on you, but when they told me what happened yesterday, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me." These were the heartfelt sentiments of the newly sworn-in President Harry Truman as he spoke to reporters on April 13, 1945, the day following the unexpected death of then President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Harry S. Truman became the 33rd president of the United States during one of the most critical junctures in our history. America was heavily involved in World War II - fighting Nazi Germany in Europe and the Empire of Japan in the Pacific. The Nazi war machine was in its last throes of life and "Victory in Europe (VE Day)" would come May 8th, 1945. The complicated Allied partnership of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia was a diplomatic high wire act that quickly set the stage for what would become the "Cold War" in the years following the end of World War II. In the Pacific, the United States was bearing the lion's share of the fighting against a fierce and determined enemy. The Japanese Navy had been decimated but forcing them from territories they had captured was a slow, arduous, and costly process. The "island hopping campaign" was effectively pushing Japan back to their home island, but the high cost in American lives was multiplied with each island captured. Plans were being developed to invade the Island of Japan and finally force "unconditional" surrender. However, the "island hopping campaign" had proven that Japan was prepared to fight to the bitter end. It was estimated that an Allied invasion of Japan would cost up to a million Allied lives and even more Japanese lives before they fully surrendered.

When President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, Harry Truman had served 82 rather un-eventful days



Cpt. Truman, c. 1918

as vice-president. Truman was not involved in the inter-sanctum of the Roosevelt administration because President Roosevelt did not see the need to have his vice-president involved in the daily planning and decision-making process that was taking place in the White House. Truman was seldom invited to key meetings and had little knowledge of war plans; diplomatic proceedings and initiatives; or more importantly "classified" information related to the prosecution of the war efforts.

Upon taking the oath of office as President, Truman was truly in the dark on many critical issues on which the fortunes of America and the lives of so many rested. Until he was sworn in as president, Truman had no knowledge of the "Manhattan Project" which was the "Top Secret" development of the atomic bomb. Truman reaction to the news of the atomic bomb was recorded in his journal: "We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It may be the fire destruction prophesied in the Euphrates Valley Era, after Noah and his fabulous Ark." The knowledge that he alone would bear the burden of decision of whether to deploy this apocalyptic weapon would wear heavily on his mind. It was a terrible responsibility.

Harry Truman's background gave little indication of the historic responsibilities he would hold in the coming years. In 1884, he was born in Lamar, Missouri, to a farmer and livestock dealer. Following a short stint in college, he worked as a timekeeper for the Kansas & Santa Fe Railway and often slept in hobo camps near the rail lines. He joined the Missouri Army National Guard in 1905 and served until 1911. When America entered World War I, Truman joined back up and was eventually sent to France. Captain Harry Truman served as commander of Battery D, 129th Field Artillery, 60th Artillery Brigade, 35th Division.

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Colonel Steve Martin

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'Harry Truman's background gave little indication of the historic responsibilities he would hold in the coming years.'

Did You Know: 15 Astonishing Facts: America

Editor's Note: This month we celebrate America's 242nd birthday, so we wanted to share this submission from Col. Martin.

1. The current 50-star American flag was designed by a 17-year-old as a school project in 1958; he got a B- on that project!
2. There is enough water in Lake Superior to cover the entire landmass of North & South America in one foot of liquid.
3. Meanwhile, we sell enough pizza to cover 100 acres.
4. The largest air force in the world is the U.S. Air Force. The world's second-largest air force: the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps combined.
5. Three of the world's five oldest rivers flow here: The New, the Susquehanna, & the French Broad Rivers are VERY old.
6. But our nation is young: the government is still paying one pension on behalf of a Civil War veteran (to his 85-year-old daughter).
7. Statistically, the deadliest job in America is ... president. Of the 44 men who've held the post, four have been assassinated while in office; a rate of roughly 9% killed on the job.
8. The only US president to own a patent and a saloon: Abraham Lincoln. His patent was for a device to lift boats over sandbars. His saloon, however, was a miserable failure.

Photo of Lincoln's patent



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A Load of Hay

In the "Battle of Who Run," in the Vosges Mountains, Truman's unit was hit in the middle of the night by a German attack. Completely surprised, Truman's men began to run. Truman, a life-long Baptist, launched into a profanity-laced tirade using words and phrases he first heard while working on the railway. His men were so surprised that it jolted them from their retreat and turned them back to fight and hold their position. Truman's artillery unit, in fact, fired some of the last shots of World War I before fighting ended on the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month in 1918.

Following the war, Harry Truman returned to Independence, Missouri, and married Bess Wallace. Shortly thereafter, he became a partner in a haberdashery in Kansas City which eventually went bankrupt during the recession of 1921. In 1922, Truman was elected as a county court judge in Jackson County. This position was like what we would know as a county commissioner and was an adminis-

trative rather than judicial position. It was Truman's first foray into the political arena. Truman held various political appointments until 1933, when he was named Missouri's director of the Federal Re-Employment program which was part of the Civil Works Administration. In 1934, he ran for United States Senate and was elected as US Senator from the State of Missouri. Always one to "vote his conscience," Truman began to make his mark in the US Senate.

During the election of 1944, Franklin D. Roosevelt chose Harry S. Truman as his vice-presidential running mate. It had been assumed that the Vice-President Henry Wallace would remain on the ticket with Roosevelt. Democratic Party leaders thought that Wallace was too far left and in recent years had begun associating himself too much with labor unions and their causes. Through several back-office deals and meet-



ings, Truman emerged as the only candidate agreed upon by both Roosevelt and the party leaders to run as the vice-presidential candidate. In what became known as the "second Missouri Compromise," Harry S. Truman ran with Franklin D. Roosevelt and was elected as Vice-President in November 1944.

Harry Truman's presidency ran from 1945 to 1953. He, however, played a significant role in world history and critical decisions made by him continue to shape the world stage even today. His decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought a hasty end to World War II and forced the Japanese into unconditional surrender. It also ushered in the "Atomic Age" and the political landscape brought about by nuclear weapons still dictates the terms of diplomatic relations worldwide.

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America's Last Fighter Pilot Ace (Conclusion)

Editor's Note: This is the conclusion of the four-part story of Eddie Ritchie as told to author Bill Robinson.

After Ritchie's return from Vietnam in 1972, he left active duty in 1974 to run for the US Congressional seat from his native North Carolina. "I ran at the suggestion of Sen. Barry Goldwater, who told me he felt I'd 'be of more service to the military and country as a member of Congress.'" Ritchie lost, ostensibly because of the Watergate scandal and the severe effect it had on Republican candidates, among a number of other reasons. That may have been the first time Ritchie lost at anything big in his life.

The General did not rest. At various times in his post-Vietnam career, he was appointed by Ronald Reagan, director of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, reporting to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Ritchie was later assigned to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. In 1999, Ritchie officially retired.

Hitting the road and speaking became the General's passion, Ritchie

quickly found that he loved giving talks to all groups of people: community groups, business conferences and most of all, the military. He traveled exhaustively telling his stories of the military life, dogfights, shooting down MIGs and fighting Communism.

'Speaking became the General's passion; (he) quickly found that he loved giving talks to all groups of people...'

But that wouldn't be his last flight by any stretch of the imagination. The General's old friend takes one last flight, returning full circle back to the place Ritchie learned to fly, at the USAF Academy to rest in honor. Pike's Peak in the background greets her.

"Isn't she a beauty?" Ritchie asked.

Then, in April 2010, General Ritchie received an interesting letter to say the least. In the course of writing this article, Ritchie kept saying to me, "Have you received the letter I sent yet?" and "You have to read the letter." Well, I began to think, enough with the letter already. But when I read the letter, I realized that it was one of the most important letters I'd ever read. And I cried.

This letter would have an indelible

and momentous effect on the General and his life. The writer wanted the General to come and speak at her daughter's school. "We don't have any money," Mariana told Ritchie, "we can't even pay your expenses."

Of course, the General did go out to Seattle to speak to Mariana's daughter's class. But something special was started with that school address to children ... something much more chemical, romantic and enduring. The letter's sender, Mariana Mickler is now Mrs. Ritchie.

The General and Mariana were married on March 4th, 2011 in the Nellis AFB Chapel on the same day that Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy married 59 years earlier. Mariana's daughter, Jessica was the maid of honor while the General's son, Matt was best man.



Gen. Ritchie with Gen. Schwarzkopf, c. 1999

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America's Last Fighter Pilot Ace

(Continued from page 2)

The couple honeymooned at The Mission Inn in Riverside, California in the same suite Ronald Reagan and his new wife Nancy did in 1952, the "Reagan Suite" now. Who knew? No less than nine Presidents have been to the inn and that Richard and Pat Nixon were also married there. The next day, the General took his new bride to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library for a surprise visit. You can see and feel the thread of mutual adoration between both the General and Mariana and them toward Ronald Reagan, whose memory they both revere.



Gen. & Mrs. Ritchie, c. 2015

I asked the General when he knew he was going to marry Mariana. He didn't hesitate for an instant. "As soon as I read the letter," he said firmly, sounding as if he was grinning. And when did you know Mariana? "The first time I was fully aware that Ste-

ve was the one was when I received his email at work that he was coming out to Seattle to speak to the class. His email said 'I will come. After that letter, I cannot say no. I will be there and I won't accept anything in return.' I broke out into tears right at work; people were asking if I was OK. I knew right then that he was the one. That this was going to be the man that I marry."

As "The Letter" states so resolutely, Mariana unconditionally loved Reagan while growing up behind the Iron Curtain (of shame and despair) in Timisoara, Romania. And it makes perfect sense that she did and does, because after all, it was Reagan who first had the guts, the steadfastness and caring human vision to state at the Berlin Wall, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

Then, General Ritchie gives me the perfect closing quote from him. "When you've lived through 339 combat missions, you're very humble. Especially, when so many died. My best friend died. There were tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people working on the ground and in the air. I was fortunate that I had five wins but that never would've happened without all those other people working so hard and risking their lives. My heart is filled with gratitude and so humble." It's seems rare to find a humble fighter pilot.

Well, that's my story about General Steve Ritchie, America's Last Ace. He's certifiably one of America's great heroes. And I hope this story lived up to the quote that began it. To me, Steve Ritchie's story certainly is one of "love and courage." For him, the courage came first and the love followed.

For more information, visit www.huffpost.com

Did You Know: 15 Astonishing Facts: America

(Continued from page 2)

9. The only president who was an executioner: Grover Cleveland. As sheriff of Erie County, New York, he hanged a murderer.
10. An estimated one in ten of Americans living today could be a blood relative to one of the original 102 pilgrims on the *Mayflower* in 1620.
11. And roughly one in three of us has his or her fingerprints on file with the FBI.
12. According to the World Giving Index, Americans are the most likely people in the world to help a stranger.
13. Case in point: slightly more than 69% of firefighters in the US are volunteers.
14. Our real Independence Day (the day Congress voted us free from British rule) is July 2, 1776. July 4 is just when John Hancock put the first signature on the Declaration (**Editor's Note: See other article on p. 3 of this issue**).
15. Finally: What about the REAL acme of the American justice system? That would be the basketball court on the fifth floor of the Supreme Court building. It's known as (wait for it...) the highest court in the land!



Sources: todayifoundout.com, seagrant.umn.edu, fbi.gov, wsj.com, thewire.com, cafonline.org, nfpa.org, usnews.com, reddit.com, national-interest.org, navy.mil, smithsonian.com, knowledgenuts.com, washingtonpost.com, theMayflowerSociety.com, and atlasobscura.com

Independence Day: July 4 or July 2?

Valerie Strauss

Editor's Note: Adapted in honor of our nation's 242nd birthday coming up on July 4th (or is it the 2nd???)

On July 3, 1776, John Adams wrote a letter to his wife Abigail with this prediction: "But the Day is past. The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoch, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty."

Why July 2nd? Why did he not write her another letter, on July 4th, and say he had been premature? Because it was on July 2, 1776, that the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia voted to approve a resolution for independence from Britain.

On that same day, the Pennsylvania Evening Post published this: "This day the Continental Congress declared the United Colonies Free and Independent States." So why do we celebrate July 4th as Independence Day in this country? We do this because of a little thing called the Dec-

laration of Independence.

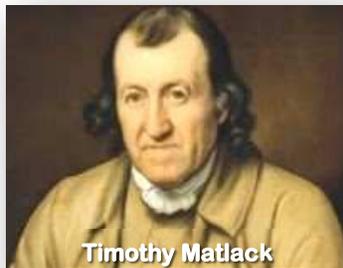
The document was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4th. The first draft of the declaration was written by Thomas Jefferson, who gave it to John Adams and Benjamin Franklin for editing. (You can read about it at the National Archives Web site.) Jefferson then took their version, refined it further and presented it to the Congress.

Scholars don't even think the document was signed by delegates of the Continental Congress on July 4th. The huge canvas painting by John Trumbull hanging in the grand Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol depicting the signing of the Declaration is, it turns out, a work of imagination. In his biography of John Adams, historian David McCullough wrote: "No such scene, with all the delegates present, ever occurred at Philadelphia."

It is now believed that most of the delegates signed it on Aug. 2. That's when the assistant to the secretary

of Congress, Timothy Matlack, produced a clean copy. John Hancock, who was the president of the Continental Congress, signed first, right in the middle of the area for signatures. The last delegate to sign, according to the National Archives, is believed to be Thomas McKean of Delaware, sometime in 1777.

The city of Philadelphia, where the Declaration was signed, waited until July 8 to celebrate, with a parade and the firing of guns. The Continental Army under the leadership of George Washington didn't learn about it until July 9.



Timothy Matlack

As for the British government in London, well, it did not know that the United States had declared its independence until August 30.

About the author: Valerie Strauss covers education and runs *The Washington Post's* long-running *Answer Sheet* blog and has been with the publication since 1987.



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JULY BIRTHDAYS:

- Heather Folz - 7
- Brian Palmer - 11
- Nathaniel Palmer - 23

JULY ANNIVERSARIES:

- Joe & Rose Wilson - 27



THIS MONTH IN MILITARY HISTORY

1 July 1911 - Glenn Curtiss, aircraft designer, makes his first flight in the US Navy's first aircraft, the Curtiss A-1, at Lake Keuka, NY, then prepares LT Theodore G. Ellyson, the world's first naval aviator,

for his two solo flights in the A-1.

14 July 2001 - The United States launched a prototype missile interceptor from the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean and successfully struck a mock warhead launched

from Vandenberg Air Force Base, 4,800 miles away in California. This was the fourth such Pentagon test. Unfortunately, a \$100 million prototype radar failed to detect the strike.

MILITARY DISCOUNT OF THE MONTH:

Blue Star Museums is a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Dept of Defense, and more than 2,000 museums across America to offer free admission to the nation's military, from Memorial Day thru Labor Day. Visit www.arts.gov, search Blue Star Museum free admission.

A Load of Hay

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Truman eluded to the terrible decision a few years later:

"As President of the United States, I had the fateful responsibility of deciding whether or not to use this weapon for the first time. It was the hardest decision I ever had to make. But the President cannot duck hard problems - he cannot pass the buck. I made the decision after discussions with the ablest men in our Government, and after long and prayerful consideration. I decided that the bomb should be used in order to end the war quickly and save countless lives - Japanese as well as American."

On May 14, 1948, eleven minutes after Israel declared itself a nation, Harry Truman recognized the State of Israel, against the recommendation of some of his closest advisors. Without United States recognition, it would have been almost impossible for Israel to stand as a nation in the world court of opinion and influence. In his memoirs, Truman wrote:

"Hitler had been murdering Jews right and left. I saw it, and I dream about it even to this day. The Jews needed some place where they could go. It is my attitude that the Ameri-

can government couldn't stand idly by while the victims of Hitler's madness are not allowed to build new lives."

President Truman faced what every American president has faced before and after him: tough decisions based upon their limited estimate of what was best for our nation. The leadership role of the president is often a lonely burden to bear. The problems faced are always diverse and complicated, and often don't have clear-cut answers. The decisions are always second-guessed by political pundits and are so often criticized by politicians and the press. Harry S. Truman was a flawed man. Many of our leaders have also been deeply flawed throughout our history. However, we must remember that God is in the business of using deeply flawed leaders. The Bible is full of examples of the deeply flawed who were used by God to achieve His purposes. King David, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses immediately come to mind.

Our nation is so politically divided that our president is often spoken of in vile and hateful terms. As Christians, we should immediately see this as a tool of Satan to divide and

plunder our nation and its values. When we see these things in the news media and social media, it should remind us of the tremendous pressures associated with this office (see I Timothy 2: 1-3). We know from scripture that God can turn the hearts of kings (Proverbs 21:1). As Christians, we should be fervent in prayer for not only our president, but for our leadership at all levels. We should pray, not only, that they will be surrounded by wise, Godly counsel, but that they themselves will seek God's wisdom through Biblical understanding, personal prayer, and most of all that they will have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I close this with a prayer used by Harry S. Truman throughout his life: *"Oh Almighty and Everlasting God, Creator of Heaven, Earth and the Universe: Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right; make me truthful, honest and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor and without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with my fellow men - help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings - even as Thou understandest mine!"*

Prayer Notes, Event Announcements

Please continue to keep our missionaries, Brian and Ivey Palmer, in your prayers as they minister to our service members at Fort Hood, Texas. NOTE: If you have a friend or relative who is deployed into a combat zone, on active duty, or at a military training school, please let us know so we can include them in our prayer list.

~ Colonel Martin

Coming Up Next Month:

- The Origin of the Jeep (Five Theories)
- Ten Tips to Help Prevent Identity Theft



The Brian Palmer Family

