

John Carlen spent 20 years in Air Force; Flew Boeing 707's

By: LaRAYNE WATTS

John H. Carlen comes from strong immigrant roots; both of his parents came to the United States from Scandinavian countries and lived long lives. His father, John T. Carlen, was born in Solleftea, Sweden, on October 31, 1899, and passed away at the age of 96+ on January 3, 1996. His mother, Helga V. (Ostergard) Carlen, was born on September 17, 1903, in Vasa, Finland, and passed away at the age of 92+ on February 11, 1996. Both came to America in the mid-1920's and met in Aberdeen, Washington. They were married July 2, 1932.

John H. spent his early childhood in Aberdeen, then moved to Raymond when he was in the 7th grade. He graduated from Raymond High School in 1951 in a class of 40 students.

During his younger years in Raymond John remembers working for his father in his logging company. He remembers one other employee particularly. This logger had only one hand and a hook for the other hand. He said, "This logger didn't let that handicap deter him in any way from doing his work, or anything else, for that matter, in his daily life. That man was Woody Clements, whose wife Edith and family still live in the Harbor area."

During high school he participated in all the sports, except track, and in student government. He says, "Participating in sports has been a very important part of my life. As I near age 70, I still participate in sports (tennis and jogging) on a daily basis. I plan to continue as long as possible."

When asked about his high school teachers, John replied, "I had no favorite teachers. I enjoyed them all."

After graduation, John attended Washington State College. In 1954, while attending WSC, he had the opportunity to become a United States Air Force pilot. He says, "I had been fascinated with airplanes through all of my childhood, and I always wanted to be a flyer." He graduated from the USAF Aviation Cadet Program on May 16, 1955 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force as a pilot.

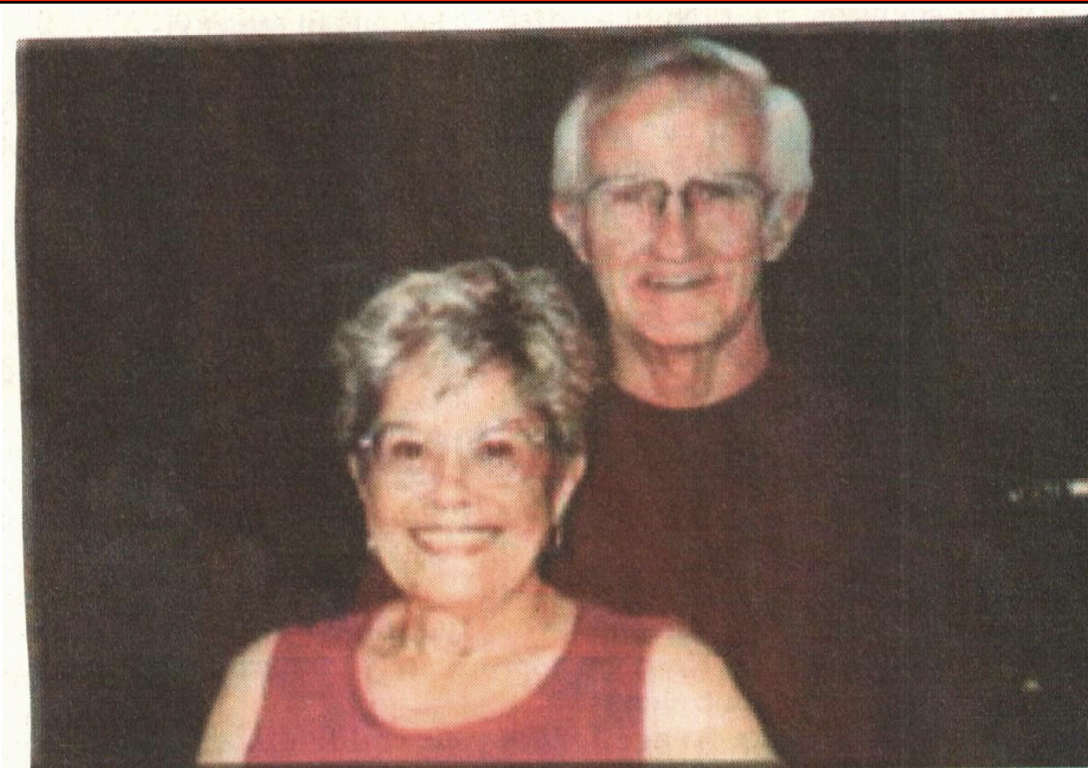
After serving 20 years, he retired from the Air Force on March 1, 1974 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was hired as an airline pilot (Boeing 707 Captain) and flew until his retirement in December 1993.

He met and married Eloise Davis in 1957. They have two daughters, Shauna and Taunya. During John's aviation years the family lived in California, Idaho, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Nebraska, New York, and Washington. He currently resides in Sacramento, Calif.

John says that he is often asked where he has traveled during, and after, his working years. "It is easier," he replies, "for me to say where I haven't been: Antarctica. As a military and airline pilot there aren't many places that I have not seen or visited. My worldwide travels have left me with one constant reminder: How lucky we are to be Americans!"

John says that in retirement he is a private investor/trader in stock market equities.

When asked his advice to this year's seniors, John replied, "Do everything possible to stop the growth of "Big Government." If the growth continues, plan on living as a socialist society; plan on losing more and more individual freedom; plan on paying more and more taxes; plan on losing individual privacy; plan on attaining less wealth; plan on the "dumbing down" of your children; plan on the constitution of the United States of America being trampled upon daily by your politicians and courts!"



RHS Alumnus John Carlen, 1951, with his wife Eloise