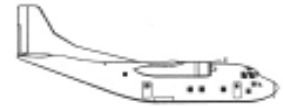




# AIR AMERICA FOUNDATION

## **THE** Provider Weekly



**G**reetings everyone. Well we had a short day at the C123 today, but we managed to get a couple of things done.

The work on the prop hoist is progressing. The wiring is complete however the unit is still not safe to use. We are adjusting the brakes so we can control the unit but there is still much that needs to be done.

We have replaced several bolts that have worn out and rusted through. We now have to machine link pins that have been lost and replaced with improper substitutes.

The heat makes this work difficult as it becomes much too warm to work during the day. We do however manage to make small amounts of progress. Another task that was completed today was doing some weeding around the aircraft. Being Florida it does not take long for weeds to grow through the tarmac especially with all of the recent rain.

The Buda tug started today with little difficulty however the forklift was problematic. We were able to charge the battery while we were at lunch today and upon our return were able to start the forklift.

When we don't use these pieces of equipment each week they become stubborn and uncooperative. It would be nice to get them inside out of the weather.

We also have a golf cart that has been rebuilt, but it is in need of batteries. We would like to find somebody that can donate a set of batteries even if they are used ones so we can have usability of the golf cart.

Our facebook page continues to attract some attention and we have a few more "likes" on the page. I also believe people are starting to find our new website which is great. We need to find new and exciting ways to get the word out about the foundation and the work we are doing.

Once the temperatures become cooler I think that we can once again return to painting inside the aircraft and finish the interior. We would like to have the inside completely done by next airshow.

Another project that has been crossed off the list is the proper storage of our flight control surfaces. We were given a rack to house them properly. This takes the stress off the aluminum and helps to prevent damage.

I would like to thank Joshua for taking the photos today. It is one more thing that I don't have to remember to do while we are at the plane. I just have to remember to take one of him once in a while. I am hoping we can find some other jobs for him soon.

*Continued...*

July 17, 2011



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What's

**NEW** This

**Week**

- ◆ Message from the editor
- ◆ Photos, we got photos
- ◆ Work update
- ◆ Storage locker clean out
- ◆ Flickr link
- ◆ Foundation updates
- ◆ General nonsense

*The Air America Foundation  
is a 501 (c) 3 organization.*

# THE Provider Weekly



Please feel free to forward the provider out and among your e-mail contacts. The farther we can spread the word the better.

We are currently working on the reinstatement of the membership program. We are hoping to have a board meeting soon so that the board members can review and decide upon membership levels and rewards for those membership levels, so that hopefully we can have some funds coming in each year.

We will of course honor all lifetime members, so if you are a lifetime member, please let me know so I can cross reference our records. Remember, be honest!

By having a recurring membership base this will allow us to create a yearly budget that we can use to plan the years expenditures of materials and foundation necessities such as insurance.

This has been difficult lately because we cannot predict from where and when our funds will come.

We will be working this Saturday at the C123 if you are in the area and would like to stop by. We are planning on continuing work on the prop hoist and also Cal is trying to ferret out a hydraulic fluid leak. These could both be hot jobs tomorrow if we don't get a break on the heat.

The Air America Foundation is a member of the Titusville Chamber of Commerce. I have a display case inside the Chamber that I rotate displays from the Historical Society in. This time I took a different approach. I placed a display of items belonging to the foundation.

A couple of models, challenge coins, a mug and hat, a C123 foundation patch and several Hmong items.

These include the traditional headpieces, and clothing as well as fabric artifacts created by the Hmong peoples.

I have also put on display a photograph of the memorial bronze listing the names of all the fallen Air America pilots and the framed pages of the magazine article the foundation was featured in.

It turned out to be a nice little display and hopefully we will get some calls and inquiries about us. It certainly can't hurt. I am also working with several other locations for display cases and large photos for the Historical Museum and perhaps the foundation can benefit as well.

Thanks for taking the time to read "The Provider Weekly" See you next issue.

Historically Yours,

*Some of the big tasks left...just in case you were wondering.*

- Re-build the port side main strut.
- Finish final paint work - interior
- Finish final paint work - exterior
- Fabric cover flight controls
- Hang flight controls
- Hang props and IOC's
- New tires
- Fuel bladders
- Pre-oil engines
- Repair and hang new jet pod
- Rewire entire aircraft from flight deck

...and this is just a quick list of the major work that yet needs to be done. There is much more that needs to be accomplished.

We need your support. Whether it be time, knowledge or monetary contribution, we cannot complete this restoration without your help.

We hope that you will continue to support the foundation in our mission. All donations are tax deductible. Not sure how to help? Give us a call! We can find something that is right for you.



**Air America stuff online to check out!**

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/ed\\_kindle/sets/72157624712147513/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ed_kindle/sets/72157624712147513/)



**Got an idea?  
Let us know!**

**Got a question?  
Ask us!**



[www.airamfoundation.org](http://www.airamfoundation.org)



Ed B. on the Buda Tug - "Beep Beep Beep"  
Back her in easy Ed.



Cal & Brad work on the forklift.



The forklift's battery and the charger having an intimate moment.



What could possibly  
be so interesting?



I like this shot - I don't look so fat.

I don't like this any more than you do! But when no one volunteers, sometimes you have to tuck your common sense in your back pocket and go for it. (Actually I did have a bit of a safety belt on)



Denis - One of the new guys.

# Shot down, pilot runs for his life

By JACK FOISIE

Los Angeles Times

LONG CHENG, Laos — Jim Russell is a lucky fellow. He is 49 years old and beefy but he outran North Vietnamese soldiers for two miles through Lao jungle and was lifted to safety by a fellow Air America pilot.

James W. Russell has been a pilot for seven years with Air America, often called the CIA airline because it is reputed to be financed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for transportation and supply deliveries in Laos. He makes about \$40,000 a year for doing what almost cost his death.

"It was one of those bad days, maybe the worst," he said.

Authorized by his Air America bosses to talk about it, Russell, a soldier-of-fortune type, related how his small Swiss-built Porter transport plane had been destroyed by mortar fire after landing on a remote dirt strip 100 miles northeast of the Laotian capital of Vientiane Thursday.

He and five Laotians who were his "customers" ran through mortar and rifle fire for more than an hour.

"They set a trap to catch an American pilot on the ground and they almost succeeded," Russell said of the North Vietnamese troops.

"It was a classified operation and I didn't know any of the passengers."

"I was working with a Lao who I know only as Swamp Rat. He said to shut down the engine while they got some bundles ready for a paradrop.

"The moment my prop stopped turning, the bad guys knew they had me on the ground — and that's not my element.

"The first mortar riddled the aircraft, the second dropped me to the ground. Swamp Rat and the others and I started running for the jungle.

"They knew they had an American and those little fellows took after us. They were shouting and shooting. It was tough getting through the bamboo. I cursed myself because I had been slipshod.

"I hadn't my gun strapped on and I didn't have any smoke (to signal a rescue chopper). But I knew where I was and I headed for some high ground with a bare spot on it."

Russell activated his pocket emergency radio and contacted a helicopter. It was flown by his fellow pilots, "Frenchy" Smith and J. J. McCauley.

"They said they were coming to pick me up," he said. "It's lucky we all know the area."

Russell and the five Laotians reached a clearing by the creek. Two of the Laotians formed a rearguard team to hood off the North Vietnamese.

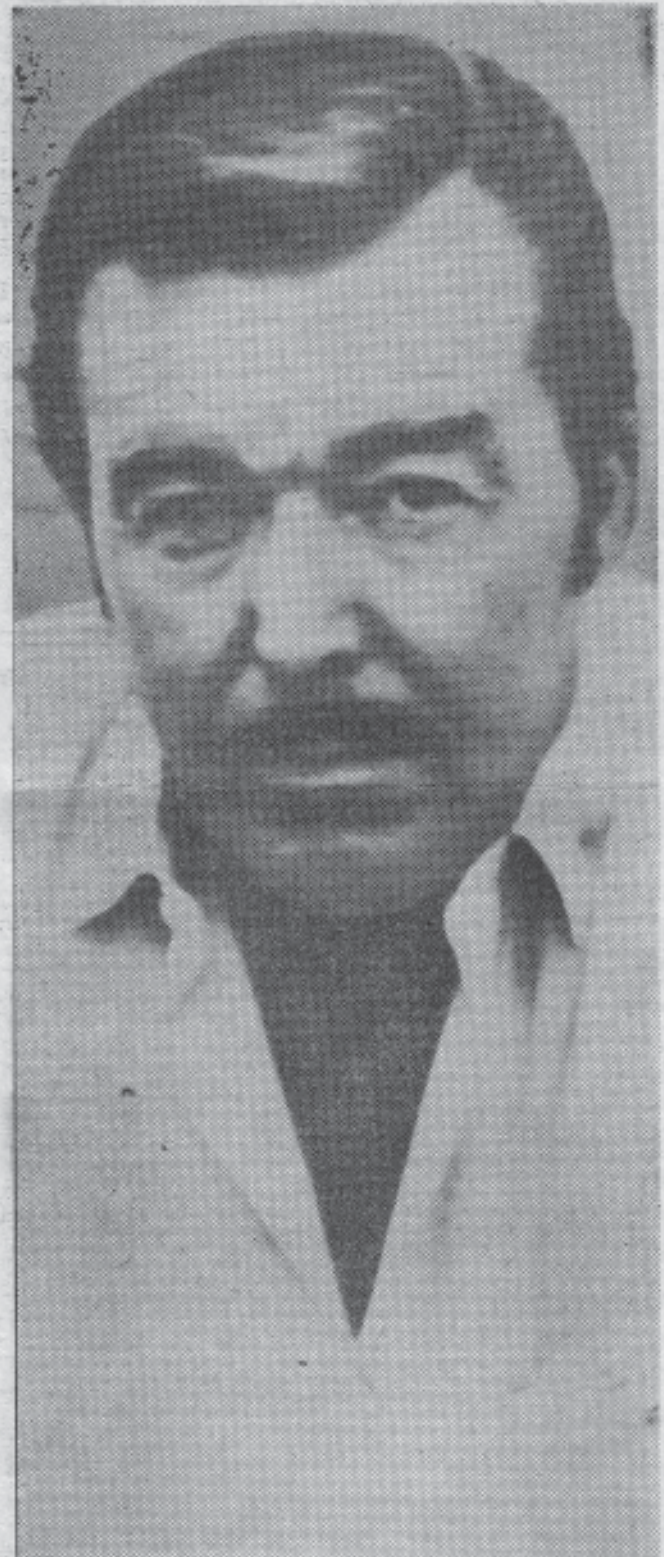
Russell plunged into the creek.

"Man, I'd been running for an hour," he said. "I was so dehydrated I drank the jungle water." They could hear the North Vietnamese crashing through the bamboo.

"But Frenchy and J. J. got there first," Russell related. "They hauled me up on a cable. It broke when they tried to pick up my customers but another chopper came and got them, too."

By his own account, Russell had a World War II career in which he piloted B-24 Liberators, won the Silver Star and two Distinguished Flying Crosses, was wounded once and sank a Japanese ship off the Borneo coast.

"But I never had to run around on the ground trying to save my life," he said.



—AP Wirephoto

Air America pilot James W. Russell

Thanks to Weird Neil for this one.