

CAPT CRAIG A MUELLER 9/23/2007 San Diego Union Tribune

Captain Craig A. Mueller, consummate pilot and sailor, passed away on Saturday, September 8, 2007. Mueller was born in Fresno, California on September 27, 1943, the son of Arthur E Mueller and Beatrice Johnson Mueller. He was raised and educated in Wisconsin, but was drawn back to the sunshine and surf of California and was a San Diego resident for the past 39 years.

Captain Mueller was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay (UW-GB). He played high school football on Lambeau Field. He was a proud Green Bay Packer fan. Mueller began his professional flying career in 1979 with Jimsair Aviation in San Diego. He was a division Chief Pilot for Wickes Corporation, flew as a DC-9/B-727 Captain for Orion Air, and in 1991 began flying around the world as a DC-8 Captain for Emery Worldwide Airlines (EWA).

Mueller was critically injured in 1998 in a near-fatal accident on the tarmac at the Dayton, Ohio airport when he was run down, dragged, and crushed by a giant forklift. His indomitable spirit, the skills of his medical providers, the love of his family and friends, and the prayers of thousands of people helped pull him through that horrible event. A proud member of the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA), he received ALPA's "Air Safety Recognition Award" upon his retirement in 2001. The EWA-ALPA pilots also presented him with the "Eagle Award" for his "tenacious grip on life." Captain Mueller was also recognized by Sharp Hospitals in 2005 for his strength and determination to regain his independence after the accident with the "Victories of Spirit - Eagle Spirit Award."

Mueller learned to sail in the Great Lakes and Green Bay. He put his sailing skills to use as a grinder on several America's Cup boats, especially his favorite blue boat, Stars & Stripes. He was a member of Team Dennis Conner's America's Cup Challenge in 2003. In 2000, Captain Mueller found his dream classic wooden sailboat "Brushfire." He could be seen on San Diego Bay with his devoted crew nearly every Wednesday for the "Gentlemen's Race" and participated in numerous charity regattas through the years. His bookcase is filled with awards and trophies reflecting his sailing prowess.

Mueller was former Commodore of the Kona Kai International Yacht Club. He was a member of the International Order of the Blue Gavel, Southwestern Yacht Club, and the Sparkman & Stephens Association. He was also a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association, San Diego Maritime Museum's Heritage Society, double Centurion and CAG-41 member of the Midway-San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Founders Association Niagara Society, and former board member of the Fritz Theatre. Mueller was also involved with Challenged America, the Cabrillo Festival, the Heath Davis House, and the National Theatre Workshop for the Handicapped in New York City. In Green Bay, Mueller was involved with many charities including the Ray Nitschke Celebrity Golf Classic benefiting Options for Independent Living.

Captain Mueller is survived by his sister Marcia Mueller (Issaquah WA); his uncle and cousins in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Indiana; and a multitude of treasured friends.

A "Celebration of Life" for Captain Mueller will be held aboard the **Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 30, 2007**. Please wear low-heel or flat shoes and bring a jacket.