

Ode to William R Anders
By Jeffrey G Price
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Smokin and jokin an dance a little jig while humming words of a British ditty! He would perform this ritual many times and in many places. It would happen behind the 906/907 aerial port hanger while we celebrated with a keg or two at unit social or in the rear of a C-123K on a low level over the hills of Southern Ohio on a night mission. Part of a cigar clamped firmly into side of his mouth, headset on, that squint of a smile evident in his eyes; the ramp open, checklist count down "ten minutes" to DZ!



Bill in 2002 at Wright
Patterson AFB

That was typical William R. Anders, Loadsmasher. He was in his element, always! "Can do easy, GI". We frequently greeted each other William R and I was Jeffrey G when enroute to fly mission together. We did frequently and famously ply the skies over Ohio an many distant missions such as a night flare mission over Louisiana. We both were flare qualified an we're supporting troops maneuvering on the ground aka Vietnam style to work in the night with flare ship above. Never routine working tricky unpredictable flares. We had the aluminum launcher clamped firmly in the jaws of the ramp, twisting bouncing an yawing aloft. We were prepared to launch a full load of four flares, red-green-whites an just when we hit the sweet spot, one flare instead of launching out of the aircraft, launched inside. Our concern was that we had pallet full of flares just at the edge of the cargo floor an were working the ramp area. That silly flare was sputtering an moving like a whirling dervish all over the ramp area while Bill and I were trying to corral that dangerous piece of ordinance. We grabbed that hot, burning tube of potential death to our aircraft and slivered it outside the aircraft between the launcher an corner of ramp. Hair raising an inside aircraft full of acrid smoke we starred at each other grin to grin knowing we had just pulled an iron out of the fire!

La Kay e Dom mama San, Vietnamese for what's a Mother to do was another Andersism. A favorite expression of his. We were both instructors and Stan/Eval and employed different techniques to inspire student/LM's to fly safe, know ur emergency procedures, an get mission airdrop done right. Then we would flip and evaluate each other's student for upgrade. After all one ethically couldn't instruct and evaluate the same student during phase I and II. Bill an I would compare notes an discuss the weak areas of students in progress an find out were there areas that we needed to fix so next batch of students were wired better in working knowledge.



Bill always tan wore his shades or eyeglasses plastered up close to his eyes like a younger Teddy Roosevelt. Cigar in place a couple of "HeeHees" uttered he was ready to hit the links, a passion with him when he wasn't flying. He was great at hitting the long ball. He had this huge, sculpted upper torso and could smack the golf ball. I am certain in Tiger's waning



1976 - Charleston, S.C. - Tom Kumlien, Bill Anders, Sam Houston, Blaine Bermed

years Wild Bill could easily out drive him. I never witnessed him missing his T-shot or for that matter any rough or fairway. When he stood over the ball that baby was gonna be launched. He enjoyed playing with fellow soldiers like Blane Bermed, Tommy Kumlien and was always favored to be their partner in a game. He taught his younger brother Gary the game of golf and was so proud when his

brother gave him a run for his money. Playing for money was de rigor for golf. Later he helped mentor Gary towards a semi-pro career as golf pro. A proud and rewarding experience for Bill to be a part of.

Bill owned this Olds Cutlass Coupe and he literally lived out of this car. It was a mess inside and if he gave you a lift you had to clear a spot to sit. He would always lament he just had 37 more payments to make to pay it off! The joke was this Olds was already nearly 10 years old!

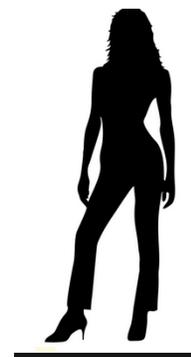


Only 37 More Payments

A bachelor by choice, he wanted the freedom to do whatever he wanted when he wanted. Yet it was thought he had met his match with a stunning Italian with long black hair and a identical to Sophia Loren look, attractive red lips and dancing eyes just enough Italian accent to get ur blood pumping when Sherry would open her mouth an speak. She did speak and



could order and alter Wild Bill's behavior.....maybe some. She was a stunner an all thought this was the gal that was gonna put a ring in Bill's nose. But no famous friends but no cigar, they dated off and on any many times she would come out to RAFB an pick Bill up. I can still see him, blue polo shirt, kaki pants, loafers, his dark hair slicked backward, cigar unlit firmly in the side of his mouth, glasses plastered to his face and a smile ear to ear.....one last word " Can do easy, GI" as he entered the passenger seat!!



“Can do easy, GI”