

The Lobster Run

Hello. Does anyone remember the Lobster Runs to New Hampshire and Maine? Paul Lavin had family there. So this is in memory of him. Whenever Paul got the chance to pilot and could choose where to go (Sometimes, we got to choose, other times we were directed for specific missions.), he chose to go to Pease Air National Guard Base, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, close to Maine. Sometimes it would be very cold. He loved going in the late fall, early winter. We'd get to do our mission, planning, and training, and after we'd stay over and go out to eat. As a group, if any of you remember. Paul would get to meet with his family. Sometimes they joined us. As a group, we'd go into Maine, find a local seafood shop on the water. Evening sunset, water glistening, sounds of seagulls all around. Sometimes local music playing. We sit on wooden tables and sometimes red checkered table clothes and we'd order a feast of seafood. The smell was so aromatic and the food was so delicious. Sometimes, we'd get a variety and pass it around to share, family style. Other times, by our self. We could laugh and tell stories about the flight that day, and plans for tomorrow's missions.



Sometimes, we'd hear stories from others. I suppose being a local Ohio girl, I didn't get to the ocean often, so these were especially wonderful times for me. So much better to me than the frozen fish sticks, I was used to. This was fresh fish, oysters, clams, and lobsters, with the butter to dip, of course, a variety of anyone's choosing. They were wonderful memories for me. After all the long, hard work we had done of the missions, preparations, training, learning, taking live patients across country for treatment, finishing paperwork and reporting. So much for the serious stuff. What a gift to be able to spend night time with others around the tables, sharing and laughing. And why not continue the fun. We had to ask to take some lobsters' back with us to Ohio.

Usually going home there was room. We could get them boxed up in white coolers, with ice, dry ice, to keep them cold and asleep. We'd tie the boxes down in the back of the plane. Off, we'd head for home. Problem was, sometimes, the little critters woke up, change in altitude and all. Something they probably had never experienced. Sometimes, you'd hear an occasional yelp. We'd focus on the mission. Not much we could do for them, but hope and pray they would be alright and last until we got home. They all did. Sometimes I would get orders from people at work. I'd buy, bring them to them, they'd pay me back. They got Wonderful Live Lobsters, (before Red Lobster and other food chains had them readily available). This was a rare treat! Excited and enjoyed! It was so fun to be able to share my adventure.

Turned work into sometimes fun, and sharing our bounty.

Chris Butterworth