

Frontiers

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“Dedication to your profession affects more than you.”

—William Vawter, Titusville, Fla.



DEDICATION RECOGNIZED

Just a comment on the individual on Page 20 of your February 2008 issue: Bob Robinson is, without a doubt, one of the most dedicated people on this planet. As a Boeing spacecraft technician on the SPACEHAB contract, I experienced the great privilege of observing Bob's dedication and ability to stay focused on a task for hours on end.

Bob came to the SPACEHAB facility in Cape Canaveral, Fla., to upgrade and correct software issues associated with a Shuttle mission. I observed him at work at about 7 a.m. tapping away on the keyboard and intently focused on the monitor in front of him. He was in that spot for more than 13 hours, only stopping long enough to take a restroom break and to grab a drink. When invited to lunch, his response was, "I have to get this done."

More than once, Bob has spent in excess of 10 hours in

front of a monitor making software do its job. His success rate is shown in the history of the SPACEHAB missions.

I am grateful for Bob's incredible contributions to the success of that contract. Boeing has an array of awesome talent, and Bob is a very strong light in that array. Congratulations to Boeing for recognizing that.

Bob may not even remember who I am, but I will never forget the lesson he taught: Dedication to your profession affects more than you.

—William Vawter
 Titusville, Fla.

REMEMBERING THE 707

I enjoyed your Historical Perspective article about the Boeing 707 in your December 2007/January 2008 issue. It stirred some 50-year-old memories. Tex Johnston, Jim Gannet and Tommy Layne were all old friends.

On Dec. 20, 1957, I was home in Brooklyn getting ready for Christmas. I was recently back from three weeks in Seattle where I had been attending Boeing's first jet performance class for the 707, an airplane that had yet to make its first flight. The class was for Pan Am performance engineers and engineering pilots, but there were also included a couple of new members of the Boeing flight-test group. One was Tommy Layne, and the other was Jack Waddell. We would have close

relations with both of them over the years.

On the 707, the pilot who spent more time with us than any other was Jim Gannet. Tex was on at least one of the transatlantic survey flights we conducted in October 1958 before the start of scheduled service.

On all of these flights we were the only airplane in the sky over the ocean at our speed and altitude. I remember one flight returning west-bound from Santa Maria in the Azores. We were halfway across before Ocean Control had our flight plan. A little while later they came back to us, "We now have you as friendly on our circuit." That was a comforting thought, since those were still the Cold War days.

—Bob Blake
 Seattle

EDITOR'S NOTE

This edition of *Boeing Frontiers* features design changes that represent the latest step in the design evolution of the magazine. These changes align with Boeing's brand standards. To learn more about the Boeing brand, including what the brand stands for and how to present it properly, visit the Boeing Brand Center at <http://brandcenter.web.boeing.com> on the Boeing intranet.

Letters guidelines

Boeing Frontiers provides its letters page for readers to state their opinions. The page is intended to encourage an exchange of ideas and information that stimulates dialogue on issues or events in the company or the aerospace industry.

The opinions may not necessarily reflect those of The Boeing Company. Letters must include name, organization and a telephone number for verification purposes. Letters may be edited for grammar, syntax and size.