

July 25, 1999

Dear Harold,

"How sad!"

"How tragic!!"

"How could something like this happen anyway?????"

This is the complexion of comments and questions tossed at me by locals who know I am writing "something about the Kennedys" and think, therefore, that I am privy to that family's goings-on!!

I tell these people to visualize an old-fashioned teeter/totter (a see-saw) which begins in perfect balance. Then start stacking on one end (the same end) the elements of disaster without counter-balancing them on the other end. Now, add on the unknown elements!! And there were unknowns, such as a flight of birds. That happened recently here when a bird at dusk went through a plane windshield and badly injured the student pilot. The instructor was able to save the day. Years ago when I was returning to Korea from an R&R to Tokyo, I was 8mm filming out the window of a C124. Sighting along the right wing, I had earlier filmed Mt. Fuji after its first snowfall of the year. I was filming the east coast of Korea as we flew over the mountains when suddenly a large red blotch appeared on the leading edge of the wing. As often as I have studied the film, I can only conclude it was a bird!!!

The question, "How could it happen??" is not the key query for it was doomed as soon as the starter button was pushed!! The really important questions are Why did the plan for a co-pilot get scrapped? and Why was there a take-off on such a lousy night???? It seems that the passengers had some input on those issues. Only professional psychologists can attempt to reconstruct those preflight moments and through hindsight try to arrive at the influences on those key issues. As the information unfolds, it appears that this was a Show-and-Tell flight with the wife orchestrating to show the sister that the husband was an adequate pilot and could use himself and his plane to fly the sister to her business meetings instead of taking commercial flights!! That good Morgan Stanley/Dean Witter money could help pay for the costly toy (plane). \$300,000 is an expensive "toy" to pay for especially when it is all outlay!!!

The August 3 GLOBE on page five quotes Carolyn telling her sister, "..... I could probably fly the thing myself." With confidence like that, who needs to hire a co-pilot??? Also, the flight had to take off- how else could the sister be convinced???????

I wish not to distract from the professionalism of the sisters but, in working in the financial field for years, I found that in the financial community, like banks, everyone is a vice president!!!

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WEISBERG 2-2-2-2-2

In reading about this disaster all week, I read somewhere that someone said JFK, Jr. should have been in bed that night instead of flying!!!

Hindsight always seems to have an answer!!! If. As I was told over-and-over again by a former lady-cop friend, "If was a stiff that stands in the corner!!" How true - how true!!

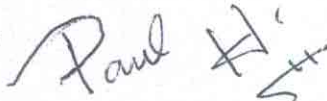
George M. Evica will make much of this at the Lancer99 - you can bet on that!!! Early books on the event will automatically bring in bucks and Evica won't want to miss out!!!/

I just mailed off a very tough letter - to my little Mexican girl-friend (now 8 years old) to let her know I will not be at her first communion July 31!! Fast mail to Mexico City costs \$15.50, but, the important thing is will she get it??? I sent a gift last week and also a gift for her grandmother's 75th birthday. I could not send it priority, or insure it or get a receipt!!! She loved my Polaroid One-step camera so I sent her one with film. Might be very tempting to rip off!!!! I don't know and no longer trust the ~~air~~ mails!!! I can only hope!!!!

Enough of this stuff. how are you and Lil doing with your problems??? I can imagine and feel for your situation after having taken care of my late brother for 3½ years!! As I wrote before, an old kraut friend in Minnesota always said, "Getting old is horse s--t!!" And someone else said (probably Ogden Nash), "Youth is so wonderful - it's a shame to waste it on children!!" And as I also wrote, "One must play the hand one is dealt!!" I know you have worked hard on getting Lil home - the stay in a nursing home is far from the same!! Do take care and remember that hopes and prayers are with you both!

My very best,

Paul Haller



P.S. With \$150 million, JFK, Jr. could have hired a pilot or even a taxi to take him on his trip! He probably was already eying a \$1.4^{million} twin-engine Lear jet and a seat on the first public excursion to the moon!! A single seat is \$50,000????

Radar records seem to indicate that young JFK was a "decent" pilot since his flight path and ETA were "right on." And the same records seem to show he was "coming down" to catch a view of the airfield landing lights!!! What is the old saying??? Close only counts in horseshoe???