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Answer: Yeah, 110 octane, aviation fuel.

Question: Good for cooling beer, I hear.

Answer: (laughs) Well, we had 305 gallons internally and 100 gallons externally, so I think he just had too damn much weight, and then on top of the weight, why then he -- just too damn -- just too damn much weight. And then he's put the prop wake -- you don't take much prop wake -- well, even so, they still tell you to be careful about taking off after another plane because they'd lost a few planes, I think, out of Seattle and up in here. Just, you don't have the lift out of the air that should be. But then there was others -- two other pilots. One of them was -- picked up some damage over Rota and flying back to Saipan, why, his engine stopped. And he had to bail out, a guy by the name of Cobra, one hell of a good pilot. So that would be seven. And number eight was Viles. He was probably, well there was two guys. Viles -- were the two top pilots in the squadron. Viles, why he'd done some dive bombing on the edge of a cliff, or hillside. And (gestures) did the same thing as I did. Dropped his bombs and pulled out and mashed on down into the hillside.

Question: So when you -- when you think of the -- the guys -- these guys that you lost and all that, in your mind, I mean, I don't know if you -- if you do think --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Are they still -- when you see them, are they still the --

Answer: Always the same age.

Question: Twenty-seven year old kids that are --

Answer: Yeah, yeah, oh, yeah, 27-year old kids. But Viles and Cope -- . Still it's -- God-damn it, they were the best pilots in the world. Hell, they'd think nothing at all of flying a plane, and roll her over and back down on the airstrip at 58 high or so or --

Question: Just one of those that --

Answer: Yeah, just one of those things.

Question: -- luck of the draw or whatever.

Answer: Yeah, yeah.

Question: Huh.

Question: Was that -- what was the worst part of war for you? Was that the worst part of war? Or --

Answer: Oh, I -- I don't know. I -- I -- you know, as you look back, why, like I say, you hate like hell to kill somebody. But, that's all part of your job. You don't -- you don't worry about killing somebody else, specially if they're trying to kill you.

Question: Now you -- I'm trying -- you enlisted or you were drafted?

Answer: No, no, I was -- I enlisted.

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Question: You enlisted.

Answer: They always used to call me a draft dodger. I enlisted before they could draft me. (laughs) Well, it's true. That was the way with all of us, really.

Question: And was that because you -- you wanted to go do your duty or why?

Answer: Well, I -- we knew we'd all have to go in the Service if you're able bodied at all. And I'd a hell lot rather fly than being in the Infantry.

Question: What was the best part of being in the Service?

Answer: Oh, I think the friends you met, probably all your buddies. The good times we had.. hell yes.

Question: How do you describe it, cause in a way, I mean, there's this very romantic part of war, in contrast to this very tragic part. You have friendships, probably,

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Question: -- and I'm guessing, that I will never ever experience.

Answer: Yeah, yeah, because you're -- you're putting your life in their hands, and they're putting their life in your hands. And it's -- it's just a feeling that -- well, it's just -- you know, I think a lot of the pilots, including myself, why, we're closer than say my brother and I who was -- brothers and I would ever be. My flight leader is speaking down at the Ramada in Laughlin on the 22nd of May. I'm all set to go down there and see that. I hope some of the other guys will get down there, too. I'm not real sure. But I'd spoken down there last March and they asked me if I knew anybody else that might -- might possibly speak. I said well I don't know, get ahold of my flight leader because he was around a lot longer than I in combat.

Question: And I assume that was somebody you had to have ultimate respect for, or trust --

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah. I -- he had a job to do and we all -- we all did our job. Well, just like looking after little Kindle. I didn't have to do that. But it's just one of those things you -- if there's any chance at all. Now I could have maneuvered around until I get in the right position but hell, by that time, he'd have been gone. So you don't even think about it. Oh, you know, oh, I can do that, and zip down and do it. But that's -- that's -- you don't even think about it. If you can do it, why you do it. I don't know what the hell I'd done if I didn't think I could do it. (laughs)

Question: Thank goodness that thought didn't enter into your --

Answer: Yeah, yeah.

Question: Cause it's not -- you know, you hear people talk about their heroes of World War II. And there were some people that truly were --

Answer: Oh, yeah, sure.

Question: -- but what you were doing in your mind wasn't --

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Answer: No, hell, no. You didn't do that to be a hero or anything else. All you're trying to do is keep your buddy from getting shot down. And it's just as simple as that.

Question: When you got in the Service, were you going to fight a country or people or a person or - what -- what was your view of the enemy at that time?

Answer: Ah, I, I don't know. I suppose to get in and do my share to get the war over is all, I suppose. I hadn't -- I -- now my dad, now, his job at one time, why he -- he knew some Japanese. In fact, well, I'll take it back. He didn't know the Japanese. It was a neighbor that worked for my dad. And the guy had died and so we went up, talked to the guy's wife and family. And there were some Japanese kids playing across the street, playing baseball. And so I went up to play baseball with them -- about their same age. God, they were husky guys. About my age. And they were short and husky, I suppose I was probably eight or ten, I suppose. God damn, muscle like this, you know, eight, kids eight or ten years old. And I was telling my dad about it afterwards. Oh, he says. those are Japanese, he says, they're built that way. Christ, all I can remember is short and real, real super husky. God, they -- they sure hit that baseball. (laughs)

Question: It's amazing how much the world has changed, isn't it?

Answer: Oh, yeah.

Question: It's that international aspect.

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Question: That was probably a real novelty for you, then?

Answer: Oh, yeah. I'd never played with any Japanese before. There was none around Olympia, at least when I went to school here. I don't remember of any of them at Washington School.

Question: Yeah, it's interesting and that how we -- the internment of the Japanese citizens here and all that was a --

Answer: Yeah, yeah. That was kind of a shame. But I -- I guess -- well, in a way, I -- I suppose probably made fools of the Americans altogether, maybe a little bit more at the time. But as you look back, it was a hell of a shame that -- to treat the Japanese that were American citizens like that.

Question: So you, now, 50-some years later, do you hold any animosity towards --

Answer: Oh, no, no, no, no. No, not a bit. I was real surprised, on Saipan, when the people were so damn nice to me. And then, well, when we -- I flew out of SeaTac, I was the only one flew from here and then like I said, Jim Weir from Pittsburgh, he was the second -- the only two pilots of our three squadrons that went over to that reunion. I -- I flew in from SeaTac then to Narita, out of -- a little ways out of Tokyo, and the Japanese were -- hell, they were all real, real friendly there. Stayed in Northwest Hotel there in Narita, and then the next day, why, caught the plane on down to Saipan, then. But hell, the Japanese were real, real pleasant. No, they -- down there the Chamorros are pretty smart. They -- like I said, their -- it's Commonwealth of Saipan now, and Japanese, why they wanted to build some hotels along the beach. Sure, go ahead. We'll give you 25-year lease or 50-year lease. I don't know what they -- you know, what it cost them or anything. Probably couldn't have been too much.

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Only thing is, after that 25-year lease is up, why the hotel goes to the Chamorros. Now maybe after all that salt water, 25 or 50 years, maybe wouldn't be too much, but the Chamorros, why they -- they'll get the hotels sooner or later.

Question: Was it weird to go back to a -- I mean cause when you were there it was a war zone. A Oh, yeah.

Question: I mean it was an island that you were like -- remodeling and --

Answer: And just -- yeah. And then when I went back, why, hell, just like Hawaii was 50 years ago. It -- lots of sunshine and nice -- Christ, the streets were all paved, and shopping center and big hotels along the water. My God, what a change. I never expected. Well, I had no idea -- I never expected to see something like that.

Question: Must have been hard to -- to believe that there actually had been a war there.

Answer: Yeah. but if you knew were to look, you could still see -- still see a few remnants of the old war. People there are real, super friendly. God, they -- the Chamorros -- oh, Jesus, it -- how come you're so friendly with us people? I said, you know, you only see us here once in 50 years and I say, hell, you treat us like long -- long lost relatives. And well, they said it's simple. If you hadn't been here, why we wouldn't be here. And, but God, the people were super friendly. Real super friendly.

Question: That must have made you feel good to hear.

Answer: Yeah, is there anything you want -- anything we can help you with? Anything you want to know about? Oh, well, no. Yeah, well, over at Kegman Field, I was over there and there was a -- one of Chamorros came over. He had a pickup and about three-quarters of the way rusted out just from the salt water. And -- anything I can do for you fellows? Yeah, I says, how do we get down to the beach, down there at Magigienne Bay? Oh, he said, follow me. So I -- I didn't think this old pickup would make it down there. But anyway, he went up to the end of the field and passed the golf course and down over the hill and followed him around and pretty quick, just a minute or two, here we were down at the water. Anything else I can do for you -- show you anything? Oh, no, we're okay. Hell, he stayed there and visited with us quite a while.

Question: So you actually stood on ground that you flew off of and

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Question: -- you lived on and --

Answer: Yeah, oh, yeah, yeah. I'd like to go back over, one more time yet.

Question: Was it a -- was it a -- I guess for everybody it would be different. Was it a happy time

Answer: Oh, yeah.

Question: -- or a sad time or --

Answer: No, no, no, real happy time. It was nice, you know, nice to see what it had became.

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Question: Wow.

Question: Do you think that for the generations to come, that there's a message that should be left from World War II for kids that you and I will never meet?

Answer: Ah, if I were to do that, I'd say that war is hell. You know, it's -- it's just one of those facts of life, and I -- I don't know that -- well, we did. We had no choice. On -- on -- so far as fighting that. But I think it's about time that people in this whole world realize that it's time for everybody to start thinking as one -- one human race. All these airplanes and munitions and guns and everything else to kill everybody, I don't think we're gaining anything. All we're doing is killing people. It don't make any difference whether it's American or Japanese or -- oh, hell, there's -- everybody seems like they got to have more guns and more planes and bigger and this and bigger that. They kill more people. And we're only one people, and we're only all going to live so long.

Question: What do you think we were fighting for in World War II?

Answer: I think we were fighting for -- for our -- probably for our country. To make it what it -- what it is today. And now that we're there, why we're not satisfied with being there. We've got to reach a higher point, have bigger planes and faster planes and so we can kill more people. And I don't think we're getting where we want to go. But we've got to -- we've got to probably do that. But everybody else has got to -- they've got to be up there to. They've got to be able to -- well, just like Russia and China and everybody else. They figure, well, United States got more planes and more guns and more bombs and more everything than this. And for us to be there, why we got to do the same thing, too. I think it's time for everybody to start pulling in their horns a little bit and maybe try to start getting along in this old world. Well, that's my personal opinion. I -- I -- hell, I'm just one person.

Question: That was -- there was a lot of one persons that made our country what it is. I mean, that's what --

Answer: Yeah. yeah. We've lost a lot of lovely, wonderful people in this old world. Fighting a war and trying to fight a war. And it's a hell of a way to end your life, just because -- not that you hate the enemy but it's the fact that, and I don't think they hate you. But it's the fact that they're fighting for their country and you're fighting for your country.

Question: That's the hardest, I mean, especially if you break it down to that level, on one to one. It really is -- there was Japanese or German or whichever soldier, there's an American soldier, they're doing what they thought was their duty and --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: -- we were doing what we thought were our duty, and you know, when you break it down to that level --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: I know in World War I, I guess there was a -- a Christmas they had stopped the fighting and they came in and had a Christmas party. Well, the people met each other, and when they went back they couldn't fight each other because --

Answer: Yeah.

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Question: -- it was just people.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: So, of course, the military said, you know, no more Christmas parties, but -- yeah, huh.

Answer: Yeah, yeah. Karl, you've got a pretty good slant on that. I --

Question: I just -- it's one of those ones that -- well, it's cause, you know, you can beak it down to a very trite thing -- but I always tell people that call me that are working for work. I say, if you just send me a resume, it's easy for me to say no to a resume. But if you walk in my office and I meet you, boy, that's real tough. And that's why I'm always curious of -- when people went to war, what they saw the enemy as. Was it a country -- was it -- I mean, some people, it was dictators. They were out to fight the dictator. So it wasn't these people that they were fighting.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: They were fighting this one person who was --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: -- pushing them.

Answer: But not only this country lost a lot of wonderful people but also the Japanese; they lost a lot of wonderful people, too, I'm sure. Tail end of Saipan, we didn't see it. But just the tail end of the war there up in what they call the Suicide Cliffs, why, a lot of the men had their families there with them. And they weren't going to give up to the Americans. I guess they figured -- we'd I don't know what they figured we'd do to them. So the women pushed the kids off of the cliffs onto the rocks down below or into the water. And then the husband would push the wife off and then he'd either shoot himself or dive off afterwards, too.

Question: I talked to a Nisei veteran and -- and what he said the reason that happened was -- and you almost got to it -- was that they thought that if we captured them, that we were going to torture and kill them. That was why.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: And also the idea of losing face --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: -- of saving face by doing this. But that was -- they were really afraid of being captured and tortured because there was some of that. I mean we -- it sounds like, didn't always treat our POWs --

Answer: Oh, no, no, no.

Question: -- the way that, you know. But also, on the other hand, the Japanese, one -- in fact I talked to one Japanese prisoner and he said they treated us terrible, but you want to know something, they didn't treat their soldiers any better than they treated us.

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Answer: Yeah.

Question: And he said that there was this commanding officer that was walking along and this guy couldn't keep step with them or whatever it was, and the officer just boom, shot him. Japanese to Japanese. He said they treated them terrible.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: They treated us the same. So --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Well, thank you very much. See, that was more than five minutes. (laughs)

Answer: Yeah. (laughs) Well, I told you all I knew, must have taken ten.

Answer: Oh, they'd set up a catapult on the field back on the East Coast, Maryland, some place back there, so that they could show fighter plane pilots, you know, if -- like we were in that position, what it was like, you know. Well, hell, they had it all set up in the field and everything. Took pictures up and everything. The only thing is the day that they showed it to my squadron, I was in the dentist's office. I had -- I had broken a tooth or something so --

Question: So was that a -- when they just put you in some kind of cart or something that they threw you up --

Answer: Well, what they'll do is -- they'll -- they'll tow you -- well, usually they'll get about a dozen or 15 guys, and they'll just roll you up into position where they want the plane. And then like I say they hook the cable on and then -- on the front part, and then there on the tail, they had a little cable there and they had a little ring about as big -- they said a little bit bigger than a wedding ring. And what you do then is run your plane wide open, that wedding ring's got to be able to hold the damn thing. And then once it catapult, once it gives that quick jerk, why it snaps the ring that hold the tail down. But hell, you're going down the runway so damn quick, you don't have time -- hey, let's stop and talk this over fellows, I don't know if I want to do this or not. You're gone. (laughs)

Question: See that's where -- you know, I know they always talk about the fly boys, and they always had a different mystique to them and all that. And I could see where you'd have to have a little bit of a cockiness.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Cause you had to, well like you said, what -- what would happen if you thought you couldn't do it?

Answer: Oh, hell, well, hell, sooner or later, why you'd come to the time, why, I don't think I can do that, you know. And our commanding officer, not our flight leader, squadron leader, why MacAfee, why he says now anytime you fellows feel that you don't want to fly anymore, he said, why let me know and we can take you off the flying and take your wings and put you down in the Infantry. And who in the -- who in the hell would want to do that? I --

Question: Did you ever lose pilots that did -- that did get to that point?

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Answer: No.

Question: That said can't do it anymore?

Answer: No, no. A guy by the name of Angeal, now he probably came about as close as anybody. Now that same day that I came back and called in Mayday to -- because my radio was shot out. Guy by the name of Angeal down in Louisiana, his dad was the sweet potato king, amazingly enough, down there at that time. But he was French, what else, maybe just straight French. But anyway on this same flight, why, same time, why he came in and landed. I think -- I think he had to go back around. He'd put his wheels down and pulled them back up to go around because I was making an emergency landing. And when he came around the next time why he forgot to put his wheels back down. Of course that ruined -- and I guess they were putting the old -- flashing the red light at him and everything to go around, go around, and on the radio. And he came in and bellied her in anyway, and Christ, the next day, he was on the way back to the States. CO -- he no more than -- he no more than came into the flight shack there and CO took him over someplace. And called him -- by that time he was like this here (gesture) -- nervous wreck. Well, anyway, he got back to the States and had his leave and he never went back to combat again. What he did, though, is he flew what they called a target plane, towing targets. And that sort of thing back there -- well, he was just -- well, you can't blame the guy, it's -- it's just one of those things that happens.

Question: That's -- I talked to a WASP and she towed the targets; that was one of her duties. And she said she loved it. But she said, but the pilots that were training didn't like doing it because they didn't want to get over and fight -- they didn't be towing this thing.

Answer: Yeah, oh, yeah.

Question: But she was like, this was great. I got to fly.

Answer: Oh, yeah. Well, he was flying -- I forget what he was flying towing targets, but that's what his job was. He'd take off, tow it, pull it up in the air, and the guys making passes on the damn thing. And -- until the tail end of the war. Well that was -- we were getting along pretty well anyway, I suppose. Probably another six months or so is what he did that. Never went back out to combat. It was just too much for him was all. He was kind of a nervous guy anyway.

Question: Huh.

Answer: Had lots of money. But it don't do you any good --

Question: Now you were single while you were in the Service?

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Question: You weren't married?

Answer: I wasn't married, hell, no.

Question: What did you do when you got out? Did you get out right after the end of the war or when did you --

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Answer: I got out -- well, I had, I think another month's leave time or something like that from -- well, I went to McCaw -- that's where the doctor told me, well, let's see, let's just kind of hang tight on that. And from there I went to Ft. George Wright out of Spokane, that was a convalescent center. And I was there probably oh, three months, I suppose, maybe three or four months. And then with the leave time, made getting out was just early part of January of '46. So then from there I came on back home to Olympia, and oh, I worked around my folks' farm, it's out here between Tumwater and Black Lake. At that time it was. Now there's a great big housing development out there. But anyway, milking some dairy cattle, and then come summertime, why I decided to go to college. Back to college. I had about two and a half years or two and two thirds years already.

Question: GI Bill? Did you go back on the --

Answer: Yeah, yeah. Went back there just one quarter, that was summer quarter, and then I -- from there I transferred over to Washington State.

Question: Smart man.

Answer: Well, no, I think -- (inaudible) Ellensburg --

Question: Stick with me on this one, smart man. To go over to Wazzu.

Answer: I liked it, hell, I --

Question: I went to Wazzu so --

Answer: Yeah, I kind of figured. (laughs) But it was --- it was a good school. Damn right. Lots of good people over there.

Question: And at that time there were a lot of veterans?

Answer: Oh, yeah, lots of veterans.

Question: Yeah. So the GI -- I mean, when you look at the plus and minuses of war, to come out, and the GI ill, after having come out of the Depression, you know --

Answer: No, I had been finished so far as running. I tried running over there when I got back, fall of '46. It just bothered my back too much. I, oh, Jesus Christ, I was '42, '41, well hell, I was undefeated half-mile, I think. And, but in the half mile there at Ellensburg. I was conference champion. And, what the hell, our miler was undefeated, our quarter-miler was I think, undefeated, so hell, between the four of us, why hell, we went undefeated in our relay team.

Question: Huh.

Answer: But I just couldn't do it anymore. Too much pressure on the nerve, on the back. So I run that one fall, cross country, and tossed the jock up at the old coach over there, figured it's a little late, you son of a bitch. But I -- I couldn't do it anymore. Well, different things are important in life, I guess.

Question: Did that -- did the war change your life?

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah, there's no doubt about it, sure.

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Question: Is there a way of putting it in your words -- what your perspective --

Answer: Oh, I -- I -- it's completely different because you feel differently, a lot. You know, all I could think of when I was going to college there at Ellensburg was, you know, graduating from school and go into coaching, which I did. I was lucky, I -- but after -- no, your attitude and your -- I suppose your attitude and things are just completely changed after you got a little more mature, I guess from the military. Things you liked to do as an underclassman, go out and have a few beers, why you did that a little bit yet. But nothing at all like -- like you'd done before. I didn't drink much anyway in college. I was too young for it. I -- like I said, I didn't see much sense to it. Hell, go out and drink half a case of beer or case of beer and smoke, why, like crazy, you had no brains.

Question: I've heard a couple people talk about -- that was it -- they'd been in college beforehand and you know, they were just kind of in college to be in college --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: -- but when they came back they -- they knew more where they were headed and --

Answer: Yeah. Got better grades. I got fair grades in college at Ellensburg, but I got better grades over at Washington State. Because I worked a lot harder at it. Had to. Christ, everybody else was working for grades. I had to work harder too.

Question: I talked to one guy that said when he was at Wazzu and when they came back, there was a requirement for PE classes. And at first they made a -- and you got your card punched when you attended PE class. So they made a little fake punch. Well then the Dean found out that had a punch, this guy was skipping classes. And finally, according to this gentlemen, the vets got together and went to the Dean and said you know, hey, we were over -- we were at Iwo -- we've had our physical fitness and we're not going to take anymore, okay? And I guess that was the end of the requirement for that PE class.

Answer: I'll be damned. I -- now I was at Washington State -- I had to take a -- I don't think I had to have a regular PE class except for they wanted me to take swimming. And I don't know what the hell it was -- was it the chlorine or what in the hell it was. But I had a hell of a time with my sinuses. And so they finally said oh, you don't need to swim anymore anyway.