

Skipper's Column

by Capt. Dave Edgecomb



Edgecomb

It is once again that time of year when we gather with family & friends to celebrate our favorite holidays.

I would like to wish you all the best during this holiday season – but please be safety conscious.

Nothing can ruin a good family reunion like a trip to the Emergency Room.

So please keep these safety tips in mind.

First, if you are planning to feature a deep fried turkey for your holiday dinner, please take a few moments to read the article on page 16 from our Fire Department about the

dangers of turkey frying.

Even if you are not frying, don't forget kitchen safety in the hustle and bustle of holiday cooking.

Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment.

Safety experts recommend having activities that keep kids out of the kitchen during this busy time, like games, puzzles or books.

Kids can get involved in Thanksgiving preparations with recipes that can be done outside the kitchen.

Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop; stay in the home when cooking in the oven and check it frequently.

Everyone enjoys holiday decorations – but there too, safety experts advise you to be smart with them.

Almost half of all home decoration fires are started by candles; half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations

Have Fun, Safe Holidays

are too close to a heat source. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.

Check lights; some are only for indoor or outdoor use – use the right ones.

Replace and string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.

Turn off lights and blow out candles when you leave the house or go to bed.

Test your smoke alarms (you did change your batteries when you changed your clocks, right?)

Whether you are driving across country or just to a friend's home for the evening, remember that alcohol and driving are a bad combination.

Don't drink and drive.

Period.

And don't text and drive, or fumble with a cell phone – it's now illegal in Corpus Christi and other communities just as it is on base.

I want everyone to have an enjoyable – and safe - holiday season.

Chaplain's Message The Holidays

by Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Warne, Chaplain

The season is upon us – the time of year to plan our various holiday meals and celebrate with family, friends, and religious communities.

Among these glorious holidays is a day to recognize all veterans who have served our great nation. On Monday, Nov. 11, our nation honored the service, commitment, and sacrifice of these great patriots.

I always enjoy hearing the great stories of veterans and will occasionally share a few sea stories of my own.

I have read great accounts of perseverance and determination of those we honor on this great Holiday.

Although Veterans Day has passed for this year, I encourage each of you to continue seeking out veterans (past and present) and extend a simple "thank you."

Perhaps one of the most noted American holidays around the world is Thanksgiving; a

time to reflect upon past and present blessings.

The iconic turkey, annual football game, a meal fit for a king; all are part of the tradition that is enjoyed on the fourth Thursday in November.

We gather around tables to offer prayers of thankfulness for our blessings and prosperity.

If it weren't for the Pilgrims reliance on God and their Native American neighbors, many of the traditions we celebrate on Thanksgiving Day would not exist.

Furthermore, if it weren't for the determination and sacrifice of those we honor on Veterans Day, the freedom and prosperity we enjoy as a nation would not exist.

I encourage you to continue to remember and be thankful for these great contributions from those who have paved the way for this great Holiday.

But have you ever considered the future of Thanksgiving?

We can always celebrate what was, but we must keep our focus on what is to come.

If we only focus on past events and celebrate holidays as such, we will eventually lose touch with why we celebrate.

Holidays are meant to keep us focused on the future; to inspire to us to grow in our faith and in our national heritage and identity.

I encourage everyone this year to not only be thankful for past blessings, but pray for blessing and prosperity to come.



Warne

Editor's Corner

by Rod Hafemeister



Hafemeister

Every once in a while, reality slaps you in the face.

Happened to me recently when one of the kids asked what all the JFK stuff was about – and I realized that not only for them, but for my wife and

for most of my readers, the John F. Kennedy administration and assassination are "just" history – something that happened before they were

born.

So allow me to wander into "Old Geezer" territory for a bit.

As a kid, I heard (more than once) the shock my parents and other grown-ups experienced when they heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor on the radio.

It was at least recent history for me; I was born five years after the war ended, and grew up with television shows and movies about World War II.

But my equivalent searing memory came on Nov. 22, 1963, when the teacher walked into my combined seventh and eighth grade class (small school) in tears – and announced President Kennedy had been shot.

I was in the second row from the left,

To Some, History is Memory

third seat back – it's the only solid image of that classroom I retain to this day.

I'm not sure if it was the shock of hearing the president had been killed, or the shock of seeing a tough-as-nails nun, who was built like a linebacker for her beloved Chicago Bears, crying her eyes out.

Regardless, it's an image I expect to carry to my grave.

And when something like this 50th anniversary of the assassination comes around, it conjures up other images from that time.

School was going to be out for Thanksgiving Week anyway; we were glued to the televisions as the three networks (no

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Wingspan

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Wingspan is published every other week by D.J. Young Publishing, 145 Naples, Corpus Christi, Texas 78404, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Navy, under exclusive written contract with Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

The editorial content is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas. Stories and photos not otherwise attributed are written by the *Wingspan* staff. The address is: Commanding Officer, NAS Corpus Christi, Attn: *Wingspan*, 11001 D St. Suite 143, Corpus Christi, Texas, 78419-5021. All news releases should be sent to the above address.

Please call (361) 961-2674 for deadline information.

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 cable back then) engaged in what may have been there first wall-to-wall coverage of an event.

We saw Lee Harvey Oswald on his one and only “perp walk” for the media – get shot and killed by Jack Ruby.

We watched the funeral coverage, my first real appreciation of how mournful “Taps” can be.

And we wondered how this could happen. There are a lot of similarities to the responses to 9/11.

Including the plethora of conspiracy theories, many of them contradictory, surrounding the event.

I’ve no idea if any of them come anywhere near the actual truth, but they certainly have provided fodder for books, documentaries, and fiction, even for programs as different as “Quantum Leap” and “Red Dwarf.”

But at various times in my life I’ve been a journalist, a historian and a scientist – and a common thread for all three is that “extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof.” And to date, I haven’t seen the proof.

What’s more interesting, intellectually, is the question of what would have been different had JFK not been assassinated.

For years, he was revered as the first president in most people’s living memory who was assassinated, as the youngest ever elected to the Oval Office, as the man who stared down the Soviets over missiles in Cuba.

The myth of Camelot has become somewhat tarnished over the years, as details of affairs, his hidden health problems, and the back-door deal about the missiles in Cuba have come out.

Reality seems to be, he was human – he had good points and bad points, as do most of us. But his assassination undoubtedly changed at least some of the history that followed.

Historians and pundits still argue about whether or not JFK would have become deeply involved in Vietnam, the way Lyndon Johnson did.

You apparently can find evidence to support either proposition.

But if he had not, an entire generation would have grown up differently. And the politics would have been focused on other things than a controversial war and its great expense in treasure and blood.

Another question – a big one – is where JFK would have gone with civil rights and social reform.

It’s not likely he would have fully embraced the “Great Society” ideas that LBJ put forward.

And there’s serious doubt that, as a New England Democrat, he could have pushed through something like the Civil Rights Act – that almost certainly required someone like LBJ, a canny politician from a former slave state.

So when you see all the various programs the next couple weeks, consider tuning into one or two of them.

Regardless of how historians consider his presidency in future years, there’s no denying that the assassination of JFK had a profound effect on the people of the United States and the politics that followed.

People that say
 “money can’t buy
 you happiness”
 have never paid
 an adoption fee.



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