Ode to E Pluribus Unum for Sunday January 5 2025



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New Image of Deep Space Taken By the Webb Telescope



NASA

The James Webb Space Telescope has been blowing minds since it went into operation in July of 2022. Located nearly 1 million miles from Earth, the massive mirrors allow us to peer way back in time, to some of the earliest moments of the universe.

A brand new image was just shared from the telescope, taken in the star cluster NGC 602. It's approximately 200,000 light years from us, and was taken with Webb's NIRCam (Near-InfraRed Camera) and MIRI (Mid-InfraRed Instrument.

https://bit.ly/4f9WHAL

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2,100-Year-Old Temple from Ancient Egypt Discovered

The temple is located close to Luxor and was possibly dedicated to the lionheaded goddess Repit.



(Marcus Müller, Athribis Project)

Archaeologists have unearthed an ancient Egyptian temple hidden in a cliff face. The temple dates to around 2,100 years ago and was discovered at the site of Athribis, located about 125 miles (200 kilometers) north of Luxor.

While excavating the temple, which is made of stone, the team found the remains of reliefs showing King Ptolemy VIII (reign circa 170 to 116 B.C.) offering sacrifices to the lion-headed goddess Repit and her son Kolanthes, the team said.

https://bit.ly/3Bbs0wc



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Lava Destroying Parts of Iceland's Famous Blue Lagoons

Iceland is known as the land of fire and ice. It's also known for the famous Blue Lagoon, a geothermal spa, which has a high silica content and gives the waters their trademark blue color.



A NASA satellite image shows a fissure of lava encroaching on Iceland's famous Blue Lagoon, as well as the small town of Grindavík.

While the Blue Lagoon is temporarily closed for caution, they're optimistic that the lagoons themselves will be spared, and the facility will reopen in the near future.

https://bit.ly/4f1Tn9O

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Raptor-Inspired Drone Could Lead to Increased Maneuverability



Tail feathers contribute to inducing banking motion.

Credit: Hoang-Vu Phong

A pair of aerodynamic researchers at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland have created a raptor-inspired drone that uses its tail feathers to control bank, rather than wingtip feathers mimicked by ailerons on airplanes. Hoang-Vu Phan and Dario Floriano built a feathered drone with morphable wings and a twistable tail that they have shown can induce bank angle.

The pair published a paper in the Science Robotics technical journal describing how they built their model and how well the model performed in wind tunnel tests. Just a slight twisting of the tail feathers could initiate asymmetric wind flow over the wings, as well, resulting in bank angles and turning motion.

https://bit.ly/49i7RkV

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Comments on Last Week's Ode

AI Search for Brain Tumors

That is a solution looking for a problem. On MRI scans, even the most subtle changes are ever so obvious.

It was not always so. When we had the first CT scanners, resolution was really, really poor. One young researcher – I think his name was Horton -- figured out a way to make subtle abnormalities more conspicuous. He even wrote a paper about it which got him the highest award in our field. Something about "finding the grain in the stone."

I still have one of his original pictures.

BUT – who knows where this Research will go. So I'm not anti-Research. I am against advertising stuff before it has shown any utility, and especially before they have been corroborated by other researchers. Yes, I know they are advertising so they will get a grant, but nonetheless...

As for brain tumors, not metastasis, they are exceedingly rare. There will be about 45 primary brain tumors in San Diego county next year (where about one percent of the American population lives). Strokes, on the other hand – we will have about 4500. Something to think about.

Charles Kerber MD

Dr. Joseph Horton is also an Odester, often appearing under the banner of **Jester's Cap**

Human Evolution

Excellent summary article in your Ode today on existing knowledge of human evolution.

As far as new research is concerned, evidence for modern humans in China as early as 300,000 y.a. (as early as the recent finds in North Africa) suggests that the traditional "out of Africa" theory on human origins is not the whole story.

I have been communicating with a Chinese geneticist, Shi Huang, who maintains that eastern Asia may actually be the cradle of mankind, and that the migration of hominins proceeded from east to west rather than the opposite (he, of course, may be biased in favor of Chinese origins). Much yet to discover.

Kay Martin, Phd. Whose most recent book, <u>The Wrong Ape for Early Human Origins:</u> <u>The Chimpanzee as a Skewed Ancestral Model</u>, stands in the middle of the raging controversy on human origins.

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Have We Uncovered a New Species of Ancient Humans?

Could this be the latest relative added to the human family tree?.



Homo juluensis may be the latest relative added to the human family tree. Image Credit: JuliusKielaitis/Shutterstock.com

Researchers describe a new species of human that hunted horses in northeastern China.

Were you to time travel to Asia in the late Middle and early Late Pleistocene periods, some 300,000 to 50,000 years ago, you would discover a melting pot of different human species – from the diminutive Homo luzonensis in the Philippines to the Homo longi (or 'dragon man) inhabiting the frigid climes of Northern China. Now, scientists believe they have discovered a new human species that they have named Homo juluensis.

Intriguingly, the study authors believe another group of early humans, the Denisovans, are not a separate species but members of Homo juluensis. Remains of Denisovans are notoriously sparse and their origins remain mysterious. According to the study, comparative analyses of Denisovan fossils to those of <u>Homo juluensis</u> presented

similarities in the jaws and teeth that suggest a certain level of familial resemblance. However, as the researchers themselves explain, more research is needed in order to confirm the relationship.



Was 2024 the Year We Finally Started to Understand Dark **Energy**?

"Up to this year, most observations were consistent, with dark energy being the cosmological constant. Nonetheless, 2024 was full of hints pointing out this might not be the case."



An illustration of dark energy expanding a cosmic structure that resembles the symbol for infinity

(Image credit: Robert Lea (created with Canva))

Imagine giving a child on a swing a single push, watching their motion come to a halt, and then, for no discernible reason, they start swinging again, and this motion gets faster and faster.

This late-time acceleration was discovered in 1998 by two teams of astronomers making distance measurements using supernovas in faraway galaxies. "Dark energy" was just a placeholder name granted to the force driving this acceleration, with the hope that, eventually, a more accurate concept and name would emerge.

Though 2024 didn't deliver a more conclusive answer to this mystery than any of the 25 years before it, a significant chink has appeared in the armor of dark energy, a tantalizing hint that could put scientists on the right path to solving this pressing cosmological puzzle.

https://bit.ly/402mZOS

Paris Company Planning Stratospheric Proposals



For those with the means to go all out on a special occasion...

Planned to feature 360-degree views from stratospheric altitude, a company is proposing the ultimate proposal experience.

As befits the current season of elegant celebration, a Parisian company that specializes in arranging over-the-top marriage proposals announced today it is now planning to offer "an intimate dinner in space" for customers to pop the big question. Scheduled to be available at some time in the coming year, ApoteoSurprise is offering a flight in a pressurized capsule carried aloft by a stratospheric balloon to an altitude of 35 kilometers (115,000 feet).

On board, an AI-driven robot (named StellarEmbrace) will "adapt to the emotions and desires of the couple, providing a truly unique interaction." After an approximately twohour ascent, with 360-degree views revealing the curvature of the Earth, the robot will serve a leisurely five-course meal over the next three hours prepared by a French chef with two Michelin stars, including fine wine and champagne.

At a strategic moment, the robot will interrupt the meal prompting the suitor and presenting a glowing box with a secret code. Inside he will find a case containing the engagement ring. According to the ApoteoSurprise announcement, "The man will then propose to his beloved, sealing his love in the eternity of space."

An email inquiry from AVweb regarding details such as the pressurization differential and humidification level of the capsule and the projected price of the experience was not immediately returned.

For those with a desperate need to join the 25+ Mile High Club.

Mark Phelps for AVweb

Moderate Drinking Linked to Lower Overall Mortality Rate

WHO and JAMA studies contradict decades of research by the National Academy of Science that identified a U-shaped relationship in which mortality is greater for both non-drinkers and heavy drinkers than it is for moderate drinkers.



(Emilyprofamily | Dreamstime.com)

A new report reviewing evidence on moderate alcohol consumption and health outcomes issued earlier this month by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) concludes that the WHO and the JAMA researchers are wrong. Moderate drinking is associated with some health benefits, with one notable exception. Some evidence suggests that moderate consumption is associated with a higher risk of female breast cancer.

With respect to comparing moderate alcohol consumers versus lifelong non-consumers, no association between moderate alcohol consumption and colorectal, oral cavity, pharyngeal, esophageal, or laryngeal cancers can be made. And no conclusions could be drawn regarding the association between weight-related outcomes and moderate alcohol consumption compared with never consuming alcohol.

https://bit.ly/4iRdbA5

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Holiday Feast Featuring Cats and Dogs

Cassic promotional video for Freshpet, that had 13 dogs and a cat at a dinner table, eating with human hands.



Freshpet

From the German shepherd brother to the boozy bulldog, to the sulky teen golden retriever in a hoodie, the addition of human hands while the dogs enjoy a holiday feast is comedy gold. Check out the videos.

https://bit.ly/3DuX3UF

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Go Inside Amazon's Largest Fulfillment Center in Washington State

kgw.com

https://youtu.be/_x48tY5sfYM

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Chords & Riffs

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)



wallofcelebrites.com

The American composer is considered among the most expressive representatives of the lyric and Romantic trends in 20th-century classical music. His style was distinctive and modern but not experimental. He established his reputation with his overture to

The Snohomish County facility employs 2,500 people and can store 40 million items.

The School for Scandal (1933), based on Richard Sheridan's comedy by that name, and with Music for a Scene from Shelley (1935), inspired by the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley's Prometheus Unbound.

In 1936 Barber composed his String Quartet. Its slow movement, arranged for string orchestra, was performed under the title Adagio for Strings

Barber's Symphony No. 1 (1936; rev. 1942) is in the Romantic tradition. In the Symphony No. 2 (1944; rev. 1947), commissioned by the U.S. Army Air Forces (which he had joined in 1943), Barber introduced an electronic instrument imitating radio signals for air navigation, an effect replaced in the revised version by an E-flat clarinet.

Barber also wrote a Violin Concerto (1941) and a Cello Concerto (1946). His Piano Sonata (1949) is a monument of 20th-century American piano music. His other compositions include Dover Beach, for voice and string quartet (1931); three vocal works with orchestra, Knoxville: Summer of 1915 (1948), Prayers of Kierkegaard (1954), and Andromache's Farewell (1962); and Medea (1947). His opera Vanessa, with libretto by longtime partner Gian Carlo Menotti and produced by the Metropolitan Opera Association, New York City, in 1958, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize.

Barber's Piano Concerto (1962) brought him new international success and another Pulitzer Prize. His opera Antony and Cleopatra inaugurated the new auditorium of the Metropolitan Opera Association at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in 1966.

Adagio for Strings

I'm going to present three different versions of Barber's <u>Adagio for Strings</u>, the first by string quartet, the second by voice, and the third by symphony orchestra. I encourage you to listen to—at least sample—each in order to sense the work's simple but enduring majesty.

Agnes Dei <u>https://youtu.be/fRL447oDId4</u> Cypress String Quartet <u>https://youtu.be/cTtAo-iFscY</u> Detroit Symphany Orchestra <u>https://youtu.be/N3MHeNt6Yjs</u>

Larger Works

Violin Concerto Op.14 Anne Akiko Meyers <u>https://youtu.be/AOrN0dY4NUs</u> The School of Scanda <u>https://youtu.be/HHAyPB4q0rg</u> Piano Concerto Sora Park Shephard <u>https://youtu.be/a-Fw6Q6HSPg?t=24</u> Barber is (IMHO) the most consistently overlooked composer of the 20th century. Why? Perhaps it's because he's an American and largely attuned to academic pursuits rather than the better-known show business world. That said, Adagio for Strings was featured in and was the only good thing that could possibly be said about the abominable motion picture Platoon... a piece written nearly 30 years before the Vietnam War.



U.S. Air Force Testing New Sensors on the F-22



U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptors assigned to the 27th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron and Philippine Air Force FA-50PH light jet fighters conduct joint combined exchange training, above Basa Air Force Base, Philippines, on Aug. 9, 2024. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Mitchell Corley)

The F-22 recently tested multiple new sensors as part of the modernization, with plans for a rapid prototyping effort to field them and expand the capabilities of the jet.

"The F-22 team is working really hard on executing a modernization roadmap to field advanced sensors, connectivity, weapons, and other capabilities," said Brig. Gen. Jason D. Voorheis, Program Executive Officer for Fighters and Advanced Aircraft. "The Raptor team recently conducted six flight test efforts to demo advanced sensors."

https://bit.ly/4dEx7TF

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Radical Theory Could Lead to More Powerful Quantum Machines

Scientists have just theorized how to connect quantum processors over vast distances to form a giant quantum computing network that acts as a single machine.



By giving each qubit extra frequencies, scientists can get them to work together to process calculations as if they were a part of a single quantum computer. (Image credit: Getty Images/Eugene Mymrin)

The new theory, outlined in a study published May 21 in the journal <u>PRX Quantum</u>, proposes linking qubits, the fundamental workhorses of quantum computers, over vast distances to work as if they were part of a single super-powerful machine.

Where bits are used in classical computing to process data in binary states of 1 or 0, and in sequence, quantum computing uses qubits (which rely on the laws of quantum mechanics) to encode data in a superposition of 1 and 0. This means data can be encoded in both states simultaneously. Each qubit operates in a given frequency.

https://bit.ly/3MCFray



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Fish Have a Brain Microbiome. Could Humans Have One Too?

The discovery that other vertebrates have healthy, microbial brains is fueling the still controversial possibility that we might have them as well.



Scientists have discovered the strongest evidence yet that healthy vertebrates can have brain microbiomes. https://bit.ly/4qm0Ly1

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Sophie & Thomas – To Me You Are Beautiful

varietyshow

https://youtu.be/i6hWWtsvw9U?t=2

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What a Year It's Been for Sports.

Between the Summer Olympics and the unprecedented surge of enthusiasm for women's sports, there was no shortage of cheer-worthy headlines to choose from for today's sports edition.



With Simone Biles Leading the Charge, Paris Will Go Down as the "Mental Health Olympics" Jamie Squire/Getty Images

Perhaps no athlete received more visibility during the 2024 Olympics than Simone Biles. Her story of resilience and perseverance, combined with her boundary-breaking, gravity-defying athleticism, catapulted her to the pantheon of single name icons. Say "Simone" to anyone in Paris, and they'd know exactly who you're talking about.

When the world's spotlight was shining the brightest on Biles, hours after she triumphantly won gold in the women's gymnastics individual all-around, the 27-year-old took to her Instagram to make her first public statement on social media. The message? "Mental health matters."

She's among a growing host of elite athletes who have publicly shared their own mental health experiences, including Michael Phelps, Sha'Carri Richardson, Naomi Osaka, Sunny Choi, Tara Davis-Woodhall, Raven Saunders, Adam Peaty, Kimberley Woods,

Caeleb Dressel, Tom Daley, and Katie Moon. And with each day of the Olympics, the list seemingly grew longer.

Nice News Olympics correspondent Raymond Braun chatted with some of the athletes putting their mental health first, including Ariana Ramsey, of U.S. women's rugby, and tennis star Novak Djokovic. <u>Read his full article</u>.



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FAA Recommends Adding AoA To All Airplanes

Angle of attack indicators are more reliable at warning of an impending stall.



A prominent proponent of angle of attack (AoA) indicators is applauding the FAA for recommending they be installed in all airplanes. The agency published a special airworthiness information bulletin (SAIB) recommending AoA systems be installed as standard equipment in new airplanes and retrofitted in the existing fleet. The full document is reprinted below. "Outstanding step forward by the FAA, recognizing the importance of AoA systems in keeping the pilot better

informed on where the wing is operating relative to the stall," said Paul Dye, a serial homebuilder and former NASA Flight Director who has been promoting the tech for years. "Increasing the use of AoA systems—and training pilots to use them —will never

prevent all accidents. But it is a definite step in the direction of reducing the number of loss of control mishaps."

"AoA offers an extra level of awareness for pilots that they are operating near the stall. Airspeed is not a reliable indicator," Dye said. "The AoA for stall is always the same, whereas the airspeed for stall varies with G-load, so that the ASI is 'the gauge that lies' when the aircraft is in a turn or other maneuver where there is more than one 'G' of loading on the wing." The SAIB notes that flight deck displays of AoA indicators vary widely, making training a challenge. "This poses the question of whether AOA presentation in the flight deck should be standardized," the SAIB says. "Whether AOA displays should be standardized and to what standard remain open questions."

In the video, Dye demonstrates "flying AoA" and discusses its benefits.

It's only taken FAA the better part of a century to get around to this.

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Decoding Math's Famed Fractal: The Mandelbrot Set

f_c=z^2+c



themancave-rayc.blogspot.com

The Mandelbrot set is a special shape, with a fractal outline. Use a computer to zoom in on the set's jagged boundary and no matter how deep you explore, you'll always see near-copies of the original set — an infinite, dizzying cascade of self-similarity and novel features. The Mandelbrot set is a perfect example of how a simple mathematical rule can produce incredible complexity.

This video covers how the Mandelbrot set is constructed by iterating a quadratic function on the complex plane. It also delves into the connections between Mandelbrot and Julia sets while explaining the mechanics of how they both work. We also retrace

the history of the discovery and exploration of these important sets, including current research on solving the key Mandelbrot Locally Connected conjecture (MLC).

https://youtu.be/u9GAnW8xFJY

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Fast Company's 10 Best Ads Of 2024 (Plus, One That's Really Bad)



FastCompany

We're all confronted with gajillions of advertising images every single day. Most of it can be generously categorized as cultural wallpaper. At the very least, these select few pieces of brand work not only weren't a waste of time, but in fact might make laugh, think, and, yes, maybe even shed a tear.

https://bit.ly/4gT3CPe

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Postal Service Debuts New Electric Ride to Workers' Delight



Oshkosh Defense

A special delivery is coming to the streets: Earlier this year, the U.S. Postal Service debuted its much-anticipated electric vehicles in Athens, Georgia. And so far, it seems the wait has been worth it.

The new vehicles will replace 30-year-old mail trucks that have a reputation for being noisy, smelly, and gas-guzzling, getting just 9 mpg. They also don't have many safety features, ample room for drivers to stand, or air conditioning. On the flip side, the updated trucks tick all the boxes, as they're quieter, more spacious, loaded with modern safety features, and, perhaps most importantly for drivers, equipped with air conditioning.

"I promise you, it felt like heaven blowing in my face," postal worker Avis Stonum told the Associated Press. Another driver said a roomier ride helps him avoid back problems from crouching. While the EVs are just in Georgia for now, keep an eye out for them in your neighborhood soon: They'll be rolled out across the country within the next few years, and they're definitely hard to miss.

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Monte Carlo Simulation Opens the Door for TCAS Upgrade



More sophisticated collision-avoidance software is on the horizon.

Now decades old, TCAS technology could be displaced with an upgrade. Credit: Wikipedia

The National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) is reporting on a recent FAA Advisory Circular (AC) that refers to a new generation of collision avoidance technology. The AC, itself, "provides an acceptable means to address operational use of collision avoidance systems (CAS), including ACAS and traffic alert and collision avoidance systems (TCAS)."

"ACAS" is the generic term used to refer to collision avoidance systems in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations as well as among the international community.

According to Richard Boll, chair of the NBAA Domestic Operations Committee, Airspace and Flight Technologies Subcommittee, the FAA AC introduces a new, upgraded collision-avoidance platform. "ACAS X is the next generation of software replacing TCAS," he said. "ACAS X is more sophisticated than the TCAS systems we use now. The technology and algorithms currently used date back to the 1970s. This new system can evaluate threats and, through a Monte Carlo simulation, process hundreds of scenarios and determine the 'least cost' or lowest risk, most efficient option for collision avoidance.

According to the NBAA statement, ACAS X is not mandatory at this time, but the association predicts that the technology will be introduced over the next few years.

Mark Phelps AVweb

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The Man Who Lived With No Brain

Lev Zasetsky's life was a complex mix of scientific oddity and miracle.



mindmatters.ai

How do you live in a world that makes no sense at all? How do you exist when every second of your life is an unsolvable puzzle, and the tiny bits you do manage to recognize can't come out?

That was the life of Lev Zasetsk, a man who suffered a brain injury fighting in World War II. The 3,000-page diary Zasetsky kept following his injury became one of the most valuable, insightful texts on the study of the human brain in the history of biological science. Zasetsky suffered from aphasia, a disorder that impairs a person's ability to understand and communicate. Zasetsky's form of aphasia resulted in him being able to write, but not read his own writing or even understand all of what he had written.

https://bit.ly/3ZLyCuR

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COVID-19 and Your Brain: What You Should Know

neuroscience news

About 1 in 7 people who've had the COVID-19 virus have developed neurological side effects or symptoms that affected their <u>brain</u> function. While the virus doesn't directly attack your brain tissue or nerves, it can cause problems that range from temporary confusion to strokes and seizures in severe situations.

This trend is like other "brain fog" complications seen in previous viruses, such as SARS and H1N1. It may take months for experts to discover the reasons behind these issues. But they suspect it has largely to do with the stress of living through a pandemic paired with the physical toll that the COVID-19 virus takes on the body.

https://www.webmd.com/covid/covid-19-your-brain

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My Walking Thoughts



For Sunday January 5 2025

Nothing Quick and Dirty in Postflight Debriefs

The morning's preflight brief had taken slightly more than an hour, pretty typical of what was common practice in flight training. My flight log shows the flight itself-- commencement of takeoff to landing--was accomplished in 1.8 hours. The debrief on this occasion lasted for more than two hours, and was in many respects more important than what had come before.

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Lieutenant Crayton and I sat in silence while he looked at notes he had written on his kneeboard during the flight. At last he looked up, studied me for a moment, then began the debrief with the invitation that I talk my way through the entire evolution-- start to finish--highlighting things I felt had gone well as those that hadn't.

"I felt comfortable during the aircraft preflight," I began, adding that I thought the ground school instructor who took us through the process had done a good job. Crayton nodded slightly, though I wasn't sure whether it was an acknowledgement of my performance or that of the ground school instruction.

"Strapping in, I felt pretty nervous," I admitted, beginning to settle into my role in the debriefing process. "But it wasn't long before I realized I was rushing things too much," remembering how I had neglected checking that the oxygen system was working, and how at then that point I had stopped, taken a few deep breaths, and started all over again.

I thought that my radio communications and taxi from the flightline had gone more smoothly than I feared—talking on the radio for everyone in the world to hear didn't cease to concern me for several more weeks—but once in the runup area I had again found myself in the hurry-up mode.

"I don't think I made any mistakes," I admitted, but in the future I will take more time.

Then came the takeoff and my surprise at how gentle it seemed, disguising how rapidly the Cougar accelerated once we were airborne. "It seemed we were almost to the coastline before I was settled in the seat," I admitted, the recognition more out of amazement than shame. Other than my screwup on my first barrelroll where I wasn't thinking about my lack of airspeed, I thought the rest of aerobatics had been reasonably acceptable given my lack of experience. Here, Lieutenant Crayton added a note to his list.

In truth I had more to say about each of the maneuvers, comparing the aircraft performance with my expectations, but I had the feeling he was less interested in these than I. Ditto my response to the mildness of the sequence of stalls and recoveries.

While I admitted my luck in recognizing the little town of Driscoll, I managed to overlook my last second reprieve from setting up for the wrong runway by turning first to the checklist requirement to check ATIS for Kingsville information.

Instead, I opted to focus on my field entry and landings where my performance had been far less than had been my expectations.

Finally with meaningless thoughts on shutdown and postflight inspection, I sat back, pretty much pleased with my debrief performance.

"You done?" Lieutenant Crayton asked, straightening himself to signify his taking over the debrief. With that he ticked down through his notes, pointing out a variety of things either I had forgotten or never realized during the flight, but when at last he pushed his lest aside, he came to the crux of his comments.

"Not bad for a FAM I transitioning to a jet from a prop plane, but..." and it was quite a but.

"You need to move your focus our from where you are, to where you're going to be sometime in the future...even before you release the brakes for takeoff."

"*No kidding,*" I thought, realizing how unprepared I had been, right from the start, and how I had been playing `catch-up' from there on out.

"What you need to do is establish checkpoints both as to where your are at the present moment and where you expect to be at several points in the future. "He used as his example what he (and subsequently I) call the three minute twitch.

It was a life-changing moment...one that from that time forth became a cornerstone of my approach not only to flying but to life, so that to this day, I still find myself responding to some ephemeral tickle every 180 seconds requiring me to update my awareness of where I am and where I'm headed.

That's the hidden power of briefs and debriefs, which I've tried to incorporate into my private and professional life ever since... occasionally with some semblance of success.

In any event, Lieutenant Crayton will forever be in my pantheon of heroes.

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Phantoms from Vietnam



At long last, my novel, <u>Phantoms from Vietnam</u> is for real... first published last week on Amazon as an electronic Kindle, along with Softcover and Hardcover print editions. It should be available from Barnes & Noble and other retail booksellers shortly...perhaps even this next week.

What's it about?

Severely scarred in the wake of three years in a Vietnamese POW camp, Gordon Talbott returns home buoyed by the desire to rebuild his life and reap the expected rewards for his service. Instead, he finds himself overwhelmed by drastic changes not only in his personal circumstances, but to that of the nation to which he now finds he scarcely belongs.

Obsessed with the desire to find some meaning in his life's wreckage, Gordon engages in a series of

dead-end pursuits rather than confronting the phantoms he brought back with him from the war, until... well that's really what the story is about.

<u>Phantoms from Vietnam</u> addresses the plight of the nearly three million American service men and women who, after answering the call to carry out the nation's policy in Vietnam, returned home to find their sacrifices ignored—even demeaned—by the same society that sent them.

They and their families and loved ones are overlooked in reports on casualties of the war, yet many — perhaps most — suffered irreparable losses not only while there, but in unrealized opportunities then and upon their return.

It is *these* costs of war—all wars since the dawn of mankind--that can never be recovered ordse repaid.

It goes without saying that I hope you'll read <u>Phantoms from Vietnam</u>, perhaps take the time to review the book for others and then get back to me with your thoughts on the story itself and how well I presented it.
