VOLUME 24, ISSUE 10
October 11, 2026

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Special points of interest:

Our next gathering will be on Monday, October 19, 2026, at 7:00 pm. MC/VMC Clubs meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. The final Young Eagles Rally & pancake breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, October 17, 2026. We're always looking for good ideas for programs. Please contact Chris St. Germain with your information.



Jim Brady

SOLO!

When your instructor finally trusts you enough to take the family airplane around the patch all by yourself, you are on Cloud 9! We are delighted to announce that our newest Ray Scholarship winner, Luke Zystra, achieved that important benchmark on Saturday, October 3. Here Luke completes the necessary "paperwork" to commemorate his accomplishment. While we were helping Young Eagles and raising money for Special Olympics, Luke was making us proud. Congratulations, Luke. Great work!

President: **Rob Schmitt**
Vice President and Young Eagles Coordinator: **Chris St. Germain**
Secretary: **Becca Weskamp**
Treasurer**: Sandy Rice**
Board: **Jim Brady, Larry Rhoads, Phil Ishmael, Griff Pickett, Tom Licata, & Alexandro Paredes**
Tech Counselors: **Bill Gill, Mark Burrow, & John Rice.**
Flight Advisor: **Bill Gill**
Program Chairman: **Chris St. Germain**
Maintenance: **Tom Licata**
Newsletter: **Bruce Hood**
Web Editor: **James Perkins**
Eagle Flight Coordinator: **Matt Williams**

President's Corner

EAA Chapter 91 president Rob Schmitt

Finally, the weather has cooled off, and it is a great time of year to fly again. I do love it how my aircraft performs in the cool morning air.

September sure was busy for our EAA chapter. Many thanks to the tremendous volunteers of our chapter who supported multiple events on September 19. It was a hot day, but we did our job well supporting Young Eagles, a pancake breakfast, and a Special Olympics event all in the same day.

October 17 will be our final Young Eagles event of this season. Setup will be on Friday, October 16, at 1 pm. Don't forget our potluck dinner that night as well. The theme for the potluck dinner is Italian. The chapter will be providing spaghetti with a variety of sauces. Please bring a side dish or dessert if you can.

This fall's $2,000 Hedrick Scholarship will be awarded at our monthly gathering on October 19. We have several awesome candidates, and the committee is currently reviewing them for the award. We will be raising money at the December 21 chili dinner for the Hedrick Scholarship fund. Lots of awesome aviation memorabilia is being donated by Chris Hope to raise money for the scholarship. We will also be conducting an AED/CPR class this winter, with the date to be determined. Our EAA chapter will also be hosting a Leadership Bootcamp on March 21.

Upcoming Chapter 91 highlights include:

- IMC/VMC Club, Monday, October 12, 7 pm.
- Hangar setup and potluck dinner, October 16. 1 pm for setup, 6 pm for potluck.
- Young Eagles/pancake breakfast, Saturday, October 17.
- Chapter monthly gathering Monday, October 19, 7 pm.
- Next board meeting, Monday, November 2, 7 pm.



EAA CHAPTER 91 GATHERING
MINUTES

September 21, 2026

I. The meeting was called to order by President Rob Schmitt with a warm welcome to all our new members and guests, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Rob provided the president's announcements and reviewed all the previous month's events. In the past month, members had attended the Zenith Open House in Mexico, MO; volunteered for the Special Olympics event held at LXT; attended the KR Gathering in Mount Vernon, IL; and supported Challenge Air. The chapter is working on organizing an AED training class this winter, courtesy of Jo Nelson. The RC Build and Fly program will resume once all of the parts and supplies become available again. The meeting minutes from August's gathering were approved with a motion by Bruce Hood and a second by Forest Stewart. The motion passed. The brick for Bill Hayden has been ordered, and the chapter is awaiting confirmation that it has been finished. New nametags have been received as well! Please contact Becca Weskamp if you are in need of one. Chris St. Germain provided the Young Eagle's report from the September 19 event. Due to the shortage of pilots, the event was restricted to first-timers only, and twenty-eight kids were flown. Our final Young Eagle event for the year will take place on October 17. All volunteers past and future are appreciated!

II. Old Business: Jim Brady presented the Ray Scholarship hat to Luke Zystra, and it was shared that Luke has his solo checkride scheduled. Congrats and good luck, Luke! The Hedrick Scholarship is now open, and all applications are due by October 1. One $2,000 scholarship will be awarded this fall, and the winner will be announced at the October gathering. A signup sheet was passed around for the Young Eagles event and pancake breakfast on Saturday, October 17. The hangar setup and potluck dinner will be on Friday, October 16, and the theme will be Italian. Rob provided an update regarding openings on the hangar waiting list. Currently, there is one spot open in the Eagle Hangar. Chapter 91 will be hosting a leadership bootcamp for the EAA on March 20, 2027. Phil Ishmael provided information regarding the Pulsar fly-in, which will take place the last weekend of September. There are currently ten planes confirmed. Rob shared that the Special Olympics volunteers had a great time. Sadly, the turnout was likely suppressed by the heat, but despite only breaking even, the chapter did a great job serving food!

III. New Business: Officer elections are taking place for the Jan. 2027 through Dec. 2028 term. All are invited to run for office, and nominations are currently open. Voting will take place later this fall. It was also shared that Paul Rodriguez's Zenith project has been picked up from the hangar. The owner was unable to take all the tools and donated them to the chapter. Hangar tenants have first chance at them, but for more information, contact Rob. Mujahid reported on the National Air Races in Roswell. Tom McNerney, who is from our airport and a former Chapter 91 Young Eagle, won the Sport Class. Tom and Michael O'Neill brought the trophy home in the Bonanza, as it wouldn't fit in Tom's plane. Chris also shared that Mujahid will be the guest speaker for October's gathering.

IV. Calendar: Pulsar gathering: Sept. 24 - 27. October board meeting: Monday, October 5, 7 pm. IMC/VMC Club: Monday, October 12, 7 pm. In-person only. Hangar Setup: 1 pm. Potluck: 6 pm, October 16th. Theme: Italian. October Young Eagles/pancake breakfast: October 17. October chapter gathering: Monday, October 19, 7 pm.

V. Presentation: Pete Langworthy, a CFI from Summit Flight, spoke about flying in Alaska.

Our next meeting of the VMC Club will be **Monday, October 12th at 7:00 p.m.**

Untowered airports – we don't have to love them, but if you want to fly in the Kansas City area you need to know how to live with them. We all know the rules in the AIM regarding operating at untowered airports, but how do you react when another pilot does not follow those rules. Especially when it is your plane that is about to be hammered? Come join us and learn what your fellow pilots have done to save themselves. Or, come share your own story so that we all might learn some survival techniques.

We meet at the Chapter 91 EAA hangar at the Lee's Summit Airport. Driving directions - take I-470 to Exit 9, Douglas Drive / Lee's Summit Drive, and turn north. At the bottom of the hill, turn right and follow the road to the end. The Larry Young Eagle hangar is on the west side of the parking lot next to the Cessna on a Post.

There is no cost to sit in on our monthly meetings. VMC membership is free to EAA members and guests. Not an EAA member? Ask me about a free six-month EAA membership.

Chris Hope, CFI-I, IMC Club Facilitator
2018 FAA Flight Instructor of the Year, Central Region

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM







What does a native Alaskan think of flying in the Midwest? That's what we learned at September's chapter gathering when Pete Langworthy explained it to us. Pete did not come here to bask in our warm weather, though he does enjoy it. But seriously pursuing an airline career made it more advantageous in the lower forty-eight. And since his wife is from Knob Noster, this area was a natural.

Not surprisingly, Pete grew up flying and bought his dad's Cessna 182 for $1.82. You can't beat that price! He has extensive experience flying in Alaska, and emphasized some interesting points. Alaskan flying requires good fuel planning and management, since availability is sparse, inconsistent, and more expensive, with current prices closer to $10 or $11. Consequently, pilots store additional fuel. Plus, state law mandates that they carry certain survival gear.

Certainly, the contrasting day and night times play important roles, as does the fact that ATC coverage is very limited. In fact, most pilots routinely monitor 121.5 just to communicate with ATC. Flight following is not very effective, and VFR flight plans tend to be verbal arrangements with neighbors, friends, or family. The weather was clearly another topic. There are far fewer reporting stations, but a strong network of cameras broadcasting live local images makes things much better. While not as common here, they are rapidly becoming more so.

Cold-weather flying comes naturally to Pete. He has experienced temperatures of minus twenty, and density altitudes, like -5,000 feet, are very impressive. He also said that inversions are common, with strong warming above 6,000 MSL. He emphasized that with the dynamic nature of the weather and other natural maladies, TFRs tend to pop up frequently.

Pete is finalizing his dream employment, but has enjoyed instructing for local flight schools. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

Only someone living under a rock would not have heard of the "impossible turn" controversy. For some reason, it has become far more visible lately, and it's certainly something we pilots need to learn more about. With rapidly encroaching urban areas around the Kansas City Lee's Summit Regional Airport and the resulting loss of safe buffer areas, we need to take a serious look at what courses of action we have after taking off. When is it safe to turn around and head back to the runway? Or should we even consider it? What other reasonable options do we have? These are real decisions we may have to make should we lose power shortly after leaving terra firm. That's why you will want to attend our next chapter gathering on Monday, October 19, starting promptly at seven p.m. Our speaker, Dr. Mujahid Abdulrahim, who has studied this topic extensively, will present some thought-provoking ideas to help us make the proper determinations. Now, we need to understand that since Mujahid studies these kinds of things for a living and teaches at the UMKC School of Science and Engineering, we're going to get some in-depth, clearly presented, easy-to-understand information we can use.

Mujahid is an active Chapter 91 member and CFI who takes a serious interest in aviation safety. That makes him both a solid classroom professor and a more effective flight instructor. So, if you've ever thought about what you would do with a loss of power shortly after takeoff (And who hasn't?), you will not want to miss this talk. Mujahid is easy to listen to, and he's extremely knowledgeable. Plus, he has a great sense of humor, so you can relax and enjoy his talk on this critical topic. Be sure to come stake out your seat early. We expect a full house for this one.

It all starts at seven p.m. at the Chapter 91 clubhouse at KLXT. Just head for the Cessna 150 perched high on a post. And feel free to bring a friend or relative with you. We think everyone will enjoy this program – even non-pilots.

Rob will handle the short business meeting to report on recent and upcoming chapter activities you will want to know about. We hope you will be able to join us on Monday evening, October 19, starting at seven p.m.

SOME OF LAST MONTH'S YOUNG EAGLES




















SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES

RAY SCHOLARSHIP





Our latest Ray Scholarship winner, Luke Zystra, has reached that first big benchmark on his way to the private pilot ticket – solo. Ray Scholarship Coordinator Jim Brady submitted the photo gracing the cover of this newsletter, and informed us of the achievement. At our last chapter gathering in September, Jim presented Luke with the traditional ball cap which we can see above. Luke is on a solid progression pace, and we look forward to hearing of his accomplishments as he proceeds toward that coveted prize. Good luck, Luke!

HEDRICK SCHOLARSHIP

Chapter president and Hedrick Scholarship Coordinator Rob Schmitt has announced the receipt of three applications for this year's award. He and his selection team are currently analyzing the data and interviewing applicants to see who will be the lucky winner. Rob will make the final announcement at our next gathering, Monday, October 19. We hope you will be there to hear the good news.



NEXT YOUNG EAGLES

October marks the end of our highly successful Young Eagles season. This will be the sixth session for 2026, and we look forward to closing the run on a high note. The chapter holds Young Eagles events starting in April and running through October, with July being our bye month thanks to the massive outflow of members to AirVenture in Oshkosh.

Chapter coordinator Chris St. Germain reported that last month was a rarity in that we had a large reduction in Young Eagles flights thanks to an unusually limited roster of pilots and airplanes. The fact that we had to redirect some of our resources to the Special Olympics event, and with the annual Challenge Air program in full swing at MKC, we were just unable to host our normal contingent of pilots and airplanes.

Nonetheless, we still flew close to thirty kids, and are preparing for this month's onslaught. By all accounts, we expect this one to have a full manifest of kids, and our typical number of pilots and airplanes. Chris has instigated a new system which gives priority to new, first-time fliers, and it seems to be having a positive effect. We still encourage repeat flyers to come, but we are also trying to allow newer youngsters to have a chance as well. So far, it seems to be working.

We would love to have you join us for this final event of the year. We still have a few needs that most anyone – pilot or non-pilot – could fill. So, if you are so inclined, please come join us on Saturday, October 17, to help us close out the season. After that, our next Young Eagles rally will be Saturday, April 17 of next year. Now, that's a long time to wait, so please join us for this one!

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PULSAR REUNION HOSTED

By Phil Ishmael








The Pulsar gathering started a day earlier than expected, as weather systems swept across the Midwest. Pilots west of Lee's Summit dodged storms to arrive on Wednesday, October 23, in anticipation of a total washout forecast for Thursday. Pilots east of KLXT were blocked completely by the storms and resorted to flying either commercially or driving. Builders came from as far north as Lake Elmo, MN, south from Picayune, MS, east from Frenchtown, NJ, and west from Big Bear, CA. In the end, of the ten Pulsars expected to make the event, five reached their destination along with twenty attendees. The participants represented many flying Pulsars as well as projects in process, ranging from one year on task to over thirty-five. (Yes, he has learned to tolerate the mild ribbing we give him each year.)

A new build arrived for its first fly-in this year. It was a Pulsar III powered by the ninety-horsepower engine.

Presentations on Friday included a Garmin representative who discussed their product offering for experimental aircraft, including their new AXIS flight display system; the new owner of Sonex Aircraft who discussed his future plans following its bankruptcy last spring; a former F-15 pilot who discussed the recent avionics update to his twenty-five-year-old Pulsar; and many others.

As with last year, attendees raved about Chaptee 91's facilities and hospitality, and how it has inspired them to take some of our practices back to improve their own chapters. We're now looking forward to our next get-together.

AED DONATED

Chapter 91 is committed to the health and safety of our members and guests. In that vein, we have been providing a couple of AEDs, heart defibrillators, should anyone require. These devices, while ubiquitous and necessary, are actually quite expensive to purchase and to maintain. The specialized batteries and other accessories are time-limited, and require updating. That's not cheap, and the chapter works hard to stay current and legal yet fiscally responsible. Recently, we were honored and pleased to receive a new AED graciously contributed by Dr. Darryl Johnson and his wife, Jo Nelson, RN. Clearly, these folks understand the value of such equipment, and we are honored that they have chosen to make this significant contribution. If that weren't enough, Jo has offered to conduct a CPR/AED class for us, which we are in the process of scheduling for early next year. If you have the opportunity, please pass along your thanks to Darryl and Jo.

NEXT POTLUCK COOKOUT

As you probably know by now, the chapter does two things on the day before our Young Eagles rally and pancake breakfast. First, at one o'clock we move the airplanes and set up the hangar for the next day's event. Then we host a social potluck dinner for anyone who helped and for anyone who did not! Yes, whether you assisted with the physical labor or not, you and your significant other are always welcome to join us on Friday evening, October 16, at six p.m. This month, our entrée will come with an Italian accent. The chapter will provide the spaghetti and meatballs. Teresa Schmitt and Janet Pickett will be handling those details, so we know everything will be tasty. If you would like to come, please bring a dish to share with the others. We hope you will join us.

THE OLIVE BRANCH
ANTIQUITIES & ODDITIES
EST. 2017

TIM'S PIZZA
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EAA LEADERSHIP BOOTCAMP SCHEDULED

The weekend of March 20, 2027, Chapter 91 will host an EAA Leadership Bootcamp where new, prospective, and even current leaders receive training on how to run and build a chapter. We held one back in 2020, and had both an excellent turnout and great results. It is important to understand that many chapters have folded, primarily from a lack of leadership, so this event has real significance. While it's easy to think of Chapter 91 as typical, it is not. We are truly an outstanding organization, and the reason for that is specifically thanks to some exceptional leadership in the past and present. We have been very lucky, but we want to ensure our luck does not run out. This program can help immensely in that area. Again, EAA's Director of Chapters Charlie Becker will bring his able stable of presenters to help unleash our growth and sustenance potential.

Many chapters from the area will be invited, so you will get to meet a number of likeminded advocates. The cost for this leadership bootcamp is nothing. Zero. Not one dime out of anyone's pocket. We have more than enough time to preplan your schedule for March of the coming year, so please give some serious thought to joining us for this impressive program. It is not a boring academic lecture you will look forward to forgetting. In fact, it's truly eye-opening, so you will learn a lot. The future of our chapter is within the membership now, and we will always need qualified leaders to step up to keep us viable. Even if you have no thoughts of becoming an officer, please consider investing a few hours to learn more about what makes and keeps these chapters running. We'll keep you informed as the time draws closer.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS FUNDRAISER













Saturday, September 19, Chapter 91 members faced a very busy day. Not only was our regular Young Eagles rally and pancake breakfast on the schedule, but we also had agreed to participate in a fundraiser for Special Olympics. Since the two events overlapped, we had to find additional volunteers willing to focus their efforts to help out with one or the other. The Special Olympics program was hosted at Hangar 1, a few hundred yards east of our facilities. We provided lunch and snacks.

While we succeeded in covering both programs, a combination of unseasonably warm weather plus several other citywide events dampened the attendance. The main attraction – the corporate-jet pull – didn't happen. My guess is an insurance company interceded and suggested that might not be the best idea. So, someone rustled up a big, heavy fire engine to deliver the challenge. While we don't have a picture of the actual competition, three teams went head-to-head for the honors. I didn't get any names, but I did spot several sweaty people lounging in the shade of the fire engine, looking a bit worse for wear. But I also heard their efforts raised a nice, tidy sum for the organization, and that's what it's all about.

As for Chapter 91, we'd like to give some well-deserved thanks to Mike Dooley, Rob Schmitt, Mike Ketteman, Charlie Licata, Theresa Schmitt, Cecelia Schmitt, Cormac Schmitt, Paige Maggott, and Stacy Whitney. Some manned the food tent, some helped with setup, and a few handled both. Our hats are off to everyone who assisted – and that includes our Young Eagles pilots and helpers who would have been there had we not side-tracked them for the kids. Great work, everyone!

CHAPTER ELECTIONS COMING

It's time to start thinking about whom you would like to have for officers and board members for the next two years. Yes, our bylaws tell us to hold chapter elections in the even-numbered years, and 2026 is it.

At a recent board meeting, Rob indicated he would be willing to serve another two-year term, but that will be his last one. After he asked if anyone wanted to vacate his or her current position, no hands went up, so on the surface, we have an initial slate of candidates.

However, anyone may jump in and seek election, so it's still open. The offices are: president (currently Rob Schmitt), vice president (Chris St. Germain), secretary (Becca Wescamp), and treasurer (Sandy Rice). The board members are Larry Rhoads, Jim Brady, Phil Ishmael, Griff Pickett, Tom Licata, and Alexandro Paredes. Alexandro was not at the meeting, so we really don't know his preferences.

So, be thinking about the chapter's leadership. We would welcome nominations from the membership, and who knows? You might win! The election will be held in November with the new term beginning in January 2027. That means you still have a couple of months to decide.

If you would like to know more about the various offices, feel free to contact any officer or board member to find out. As an aside, while the position of newsletter editor is appointed and not elected, your current editor is willing to pass along those duties to another member. He would also be happy to help with the transition for however many months it might take. The editor also serves on the board, but it is a non-voting position. But the board meetings provide much clarity for what goes into the newsletter, so they are a valuable resource, not to mention very interesting. Please give it some thought. Thirteen years really is long enough, and it's time for someone else to take over. Please feel free to ask any questions of me or any of the current officers or board members.

THE PAX BRIEF

by Earl Downs

If you have been following some of my articles, you may remember the one when I confessed that I had become distracted while performing a preflight that led to a problem immediately after takeoff. Well, I'm going to admit that isn't the only thing I've learned the hard way. A proper passenger briefing is also a really good idea.

Back in the early 1960s, I was an instructor at Van Nuys Airport, which is located just north of Los Angeles. One of my students was a fellow by the name of Jimmy Dean. Yep, that's the brand name of popular frozen foods today. However, Jimmy was better known at that time as a very popular country-western singer and actor who was currently entertaining in a Las Vegas show. He invited me and any guests I wanted to take with me to come to his Las Vegas show at no cost and with good seats.

I had access to a Piper Aztec (twin-engine, 6-place plane), and I decided to load it up with some of my airport friends and head for Vegas. We left one evening after work, enjoyed the show, and headed back to Van Nuys at about 1 a.m. the next day.

We had been airborne for about fifteen minutes and were heading over the mountains toward home when suddenly, the left engine quit. No warning; it just stopped running. I told the passengers we had a problem and immediately started a 180 turn back to Vegas.

I quickly noticed there was no fuel flow to the left engine and turned on the fuel boost pump; no help. The Aztec has four fuel tanks (two in each wing) with a switching system that allows you to feed any tank to either the left or right engines. I reached for the fuel control panel to cross feed the left engine to the right-wing tanks, and then I saw the problem. The main fuel valve to the left engine had been shut off . . . in flight!

Just before the engine failure, my right front-seat passenger asked me how to adjust her seat. I told her to reach under the seat and pull up on the bar, and then she could slide it back and forth. The fuel selector system on the Aztec is located between the two front seats, not on the instrument panel or the sidewall. The shutoff valve is not a twist knob; it is a lever that must be pulled up before it can be moved forward or aft to the on or off position. My passenger had moved the wrong lever. After restarting the engine, we did another 180 and flew back to Van Nuys.

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When it comes to the issue of briefing your passengers, we sometimes run through it quickly. Bad idea! A good briefing should start before a passenger even gets into the airplane. Is the ramp area safe? How do you open the door? How do you crawl into and out of the cockpit? What is okay to grab onto and what is not? Some airplanes require double-locking the door; explain it to them. Introduce them to the control systems. Explain the intercom volume control. Explain evacuation procedures. Seat belt operation. I could go on and on with this list, but I hope you get my point. I should have briefed the seat adjustment on the front seat before takeoff.

The lesson I learned from this incident is that you should develop a briefing checklist that begins before the passengers even get into the airplane. Remember, you are the flight attendant as well as the pilot.

> ***<u>Editor's note</u>: Earl told me a bit more about some of the celebrities he taught to fly back in Los Angeles. One student in particular caught my attention, James Arness, who played Marshal Matt Dillon on my dad's favorite TV show, Gunsmoke. I'll bet Earl has a lot of stories he could tell, and with some encouragement from chapter membership, maybe he would be willing to do that. When we see Earl, mention it. Maybe we'll get to learn more.***

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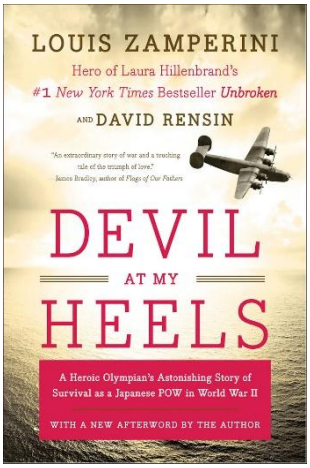
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Devil at my Heels **b**y Louis Zamperini / David Rensin
Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption **b**y Laura Hillenbrand

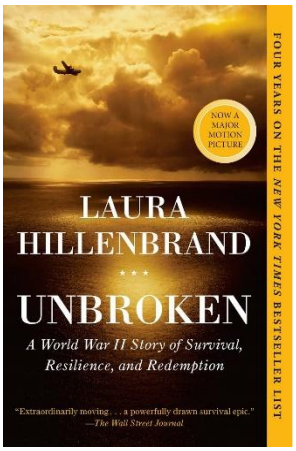


Reviewed by Chris Hope, Master CFI

Two book reviews for the price of one this month. Although they both deal with the same subject, they are both worth reading.

If you fly in the Los Angeles area, you might come across Zamperini Field (KTOA) in Torrance, CA. And you could be excused if you don't know the story of the airport's namesake. But everyone in the 1930s and '40s would have known exactly who Louis Zamperini was.

If you lived in Torrance in the early 1930s, you would know Louis as the young kid who was always in trouble with the law or with the neighbors. And if you were into track and field athletics a few years later, you would recognize the name as the man most likely to break the four-minute-mile mark. And if you followed the 1936 Olympic Games, you would have known that this was the young man who won Olympic Gold in the 5,000-meter race, a distance that he had only started running a few months earlier. And in the war years of the early '40s, you would have been reading about him in the newspaper as "Olympian Luis Zamperini feared dead in Pacific."



While Louis' name faded from view when his B-24 disappeared on May 27, 1943, near a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean, his life was taking a new direction. The first step in his new life was the forty-six days that he floated in a raft in the ocean, only to rescued by the Japanese. The next step was the two years that he spent in Japanese POW camps, where he was starved and continuously beaten.

During these two years, he could think of little else but how he much he hated the worst of the Japanese guards. And when the war ended, and he came home, those thoughts continued. And with that hate came the drinking, the nightmares, the sleepless nights. And out of this, eventually began what I think is the most remarkable phase of his life.

Louis lived until age ninety-seven and spent the last sixty years of his life improving the lives of others. What made him change from hating to forgiving the guards who had beaten him? This is the most remarkable part of Louis' story.

When Louis came back home in 1945, he was hailed as a hero by the nation. So, in 1956, he wrote his story, *Devil at My Heels*. Reading it is like sitting in a room with him,

Continued on next page . . .

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listening to him tell stories. Some stories are funny, some are grim, many are just amazing. But these are his stories, told in his own voice.

His story was published in 1956, but fifty years later, he felt that there was more to say. And so, he added to his story and republished it in 2011.

But a funny thing happened as Louis and his co-author were putting the final touches on his updated autobiography. He received a package from Laura Hillenbrand, a young woman who had written a best-seller, *Seabiscuit*, the story of the famous racehorse of the 1930s. She asked if she could tell his story.

According to Louis, he was at first reluctant. He felt that there was nothing left to tell. But Laura persevered, and it is good that Louis eventually agreed. Laura is a first-rate storyteller. She tells Louis' story, but she also puts each point of his life in perspective, showing what else was happening in the world at the time. She talks about his flying experiences, but also the dangers to all air crewmen during the war. She talks about his POW experience but also describes the bigger picture of the war in the Pacific.

Where Louis describes his life during and after the war, he is quite modest about some of his experiences. Laura, not so much.

Luara and Louis sat through some seventy-five discussions, ranging all over his life. Additionally, Louis and his family saved everything. So, Laura had all the first-person research material an author could wish for. Laura's version of Louis' life was first published in 2010, about the same time *Devil and My Heels* was republished. There is about a 90% overlap of the facts of the story (no contradictions, of course), and the two books came out about three years prior to Louis' death.

There is also a movie version of *Unbroken*, which I watched and enjoyed until almost the end. The movie tells of Louis' life until the close of World War II. And then it ends, leaving the most important part of the story untold.

Read the book – either one, or both.

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THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
EAA CHAPTER 91
October 11, 2026

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