

Along with Tuttle, another Calaveras County resident, Joseph “Topper” Huberty, of San Andreas, was on the mission. He later became a Calaveras County Superior Court judge.

The B-24s were equipped with extra fuel tanks in their bomb bays to increase capacity to 3,100 gallons.

Of the 178 planes that took off, only 88 would return—55 of which were damaged during the mission.

The formation crossed the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas and the Pindus Mountains in Albania before crossing into Romania, where they dropped to low altitude to avoid detection by German radar.

Mission commanders ordered complete radio silence for the duration of the flight. Despite these precautions, the Germans became aware of the approaching American planes. Due to an inability to communicate effectively, the formation of planes had become scattered and flew off course. Even though everything hadn’t gone according to plan, the mission moved forward.

When nearing Ploiesti, a navigation error caused a group of planes to follow the wrong railroad tracks toward the objective. This caused the planes to fly through an extensive air defense system around Bucharest before they even reached the defenses protecting the oil refineries.

“It was supposed to be a surprise, but there was no doubt they were ready for us,” Tuttle said.

The mission has been described as an “aerial Gettysburg.” One pilot likened the raid to “driving down the main street of your hometown with everybody shooting at you.”

“In order to be on target, we followed railroad lines for 35 miles on the way in,” Tuttle said. “We were coming in on a straight line, which made us sitting ducks for the flak gunners.

“I was standing between pilot and copilot. The top turret gunman was above me with his knees on my shoulders. I could look out at the No. 3 engine through a little window. I saw the tracer bullets going by, some making an impact.

“We were as low as we could get without crashing.”

With so much anti-aircraft fire directed at his plane, Tuttle said he didn’t know if he was going to survive, but he was sure of one thing.

“This was it, this was what I joined the war for,” Tuttle said. “I spent three years in the goddamned military to do some good.

“I was scared,” he continued. “But that’s what courage is—even when you’re scared, you go on fighting.

“We had all 10 machine guns firing at once and the entire plane was vibrating,” he said, adding the continuous fire was so intense the gun barrels were in danger of warping from the heat. “One formation went in with 13 planes and only six came out. They hit us hard. I had a 20 mm cannon shell lodge in my radio transmitter right by my toe. It came within about three inches of my foot.”

After running the railroad gauntlet, Tuttle’s B-24 reached the target refinery and he remembers seeing quite a few cables holding up towers in the area.

“We snapped the cables with our plane,” he said. “Unfortunately, sometimes the cables snapped the plane. See, we lost a lot of planes. We dropped all the bombs right on it. That’s why we went in low—so we could be accurate. Some of the bombs had delayed fuses so they went off maybe 20 or 30 seconds later.”

After delivering the payload, Tuttle’s plane peeled off and “got the hell out of there.

“We stayed down low. This made it much harder for fighter planes to hit us,” Tuttle

said. “If they made a pass and missed, they’d hit the ground. We had a long way to go—over the Balkans, across the Mediterranean and back to Libya.”

A tally of the flight log totaled about 16 hours in the air.

Looking back on the mission, Tuttle said it was unlike any other.

“It was the greatest air-to-ground combat in history,” he said. “There’s never been another one like it, because everything has changed.”

While it may have been one-of-a-kind, the mission was very costly. During the mission, 310 airmen were killed and 108 were captured as prisoners of war.

Tuttle flew 19 other missions during his time in the service—well 18 and a half, because he was shot down on a mission to Wiener Neustadt, Austria, on Oct. 1, 1943.

“I dropped bombs on Germany all over the place,” he said. “I never got injured, but one time a bullet passed so close to my big toe it raised a blood blister.”

On the day he was shot down, the pilot had just dropped the plane’s complement of bombs on a German fighter plane manufacturing plant.

“We dropped all the bombs, which was good because the bomb bay was clear when it came time for me to bail out,” Tuttle said, adding the plane was at about 19,000 feet. “The co-pilot gave me the thumbs-up and I rolled out of the bomb bay. I was going to delay opening my chute, because it enhanced my chances of surviving the jump.”

Tuttle said he watched his plane spiral downward until it crashed in a fireball into the Austrian countryside.

“Four guys went down with the plane,” he said, shaking his head at how quickly his world changed from thinking he might die to having hope for survival after he jumped out of the plane.

“All of a sudden I’m over an Austrian meadow, two or three miles up, floating gently in the breeze looking around at the peaceful countryside, and I thought, ‘Hell, I might survive this war.’”

Tuttle touched down in the middle of a thicket, rolled up his chute and concealed himself under bushes until enemy soldiers started yelling nearby. Concerned they might begin shooting into the thicket, Tuttle opted to surrender.

“I thought I better get out of there,” he said. “I came out with my hands up and said, ‘You got me.’”

Tuttle was taken to the infamous Stalag 17 camp and spent 19 months there as a prisoner of war.

“We were not treated well,” he said. “I got down to 137 pounds from 175.”

Tuttle remembers sleeping on burlap nailed to a wooden frame without sheets or pillows. He and his compatriots called the beds “fart sacks.”

“We often ate what we called ‘wet dog soup.’ It smelled like a wet dog. It was a real favorite,” he with a sarcastic laugh. “Sometimes we got a few turnips and potatoes. It was not good.”

The occasional book that was sent into the camp and a secret radio smuggled to him by allied forces that kept him up to date on the war were small comforts to which Tuttle clung.

When the war ended, Tuttle was released from the camp and walked down a road in Austria. That’s when he saw the first American soldiers he had seen in many months.

“They were throwing German guns into piles. I was so glad to see them,” Tuttle said, his voice choked with emotion and tears welling in his eyes. “The war was over.”

Tuttle was taken to a hospital in England to “get fattened up” and later returned to the U.S., where he had a long career serving

as a distinguished attorney and superior court judge.

Just a few years ago, Tuttle wrote down his experiences at Ploesti within the context of his autobiography, “Nevada City and Beyond, an Unscripted Life.”

Tuttle plans to live out the remainder of his days in Mokelumne Hill with his wife Sally.

“During the war, I gained a better understanding of life, what it means and why some values are worth fighting for,” Tuttle said. “Looking back, I’m proud of what I did. Damn proud.”

HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS WEEK

(Mr. GRIJALVA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, during Hispanic Heritage Month, I would like to take the time to honor Hispanic-Serving Institutions across this country. These educational institutions—like in my home State where there are 10 of them—are institutions of higher learning, with enrollment of at least 25 percent of undergraduates being full-time Latino students.

At a time when the population of the Latino community continues to grow, it is essential that we invest in education and that we support institutions that promote that education and provide for these students the opportunity and the access for them to go on and be great contributing members to our country.

President Obama proclaimed the week of September 15–21 as Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week. It is with this sentiment in mind that I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the wonderful job these institutions do by supporting the Preservation Research at Institutions Serving Minorities Act. This act would effectively amend the National Historic Preservation Act to guarantee Hispanic-Serving Institutions get equal access to technical or financial assistance to promote professionalism and the preservation of our natural resources, historic buildings, and artifacts throughout this country. With that, let me again say thank you to the Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

(Mr. GARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARCIA. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week. We recognize the important roles these institutions play in educating our future leaders. With more than 60 percent Hispanic enrollment, Florida International University has made tremendous contributions to my district, among those my own father, who graduated from there. And Hispanic-Serving Institutions are not

only a boon for our community but for our Nation.

Just this month, FIU received an \$11 million grant benefiting the south Florida community and transportation. It was also featured on NBC's Today show as they began operating the Aquarius Reef Base. I believe in the future of FIU and have no doubt that it will continue to build on its past achievements in order to reach greater heights. In closing, I would like to thank all Hispanic-Serving Institutions across the Nation.

EVENTS OF THE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, today was a big day for the people of the United States of America. Some of us had tried to warn our friends across the aisle that back 3½ years ago, when ObamaCare was being passed, that there would be dire consequences. It would not just hurt the economy but it would hurt people's health.

We were assured, No, we've got to do this bill that most people hadn't read. A precious few had read. I had read it. Some said, we have to pass it so we can find out what was in it, which was diametrically opposed to what the Founders wanted to see done. Though Thomas Jefferson was not at the Constitutional Convention, he did write later that he approved of the work. But if he had one thing that he could add, it would be the requirement that no bill could be passed until it had been on file for a year.

If ObamaCare had been on file for a year, I really don't have any question that it would never have passed. Because whether Members of Congress read it or not, people across America would have read it and would have found out what was in it, would have realized that if they like their insurance policy, they are likely going to lose it. If they like their doctor, they are likely going to lose their doctor. People would have figured out that the consequences that are now being borne out would be coming down the road.

There were union leaders that just couldn't rush fast enough down to the White House to express their support for a bill that they clearly did not read. They relied on representations that turned out to be totally untrue. But we were trying to get across to union leaders, to Americans that this is a bad bill for union members. If they like their insurance—which most did—they would not likely keep it.

We were told, This has to be done for the 30 million or so that don't have any insurance. And now today, we see people losing their insurance right and left that they liked, losing doctors they liked.

A doctor in my hometown had told me about having done a surgery just

recently. He helped a woman, and he said, you know, it was one of the best jobs I have ever done. Just a tiny minimal loss of blood. It was done in 61 minutes. They have to keep track of those things. And because of his many years of experience, it paid off, and a patient got great help.

But because so many parts of ObamaCare have been going into place, he got a call the very next day from a Federal bureaucrat who called from clear across the country to tell him that he was reviewing the information about the surgery the day before and that the average time for that surgery was around 3 hours and that, you know, 61 minutes was just way too fast, that he was way below the average. And normally, they lose three pints of blood, and he didn't hardly lose any. Therefore, they were going to have to dramatically dock the compensation only down to about 40 percent. He was told how he could change the record and get full compensation. But this is an honest and honorable doctor, and he was not about to do that. But what it did result in is, he has given his notice. He is giving up his practice. And because of the government's heavy-handedness, after this year, patients will not be having the benefit of his incredible experience, expertise, and training because this is where government control of health care goes.

You run off doctors who care more about their patients than they do the government. And they're not going to stand for this kind of intrusion by some bureaucrat that didn't have any idea what good surgery was, telling him he couldn't be compensated because he did what, in effect, was too good of a job.

These stories are being born out across the country. When the government starts taking over health care more and more, it is a disaster. And, of course, the government gets to know everyone's most personal secrets of their own physical body.

I would have thought that over the years, since Roe V. Wade and so many friends across the aisle were screaming about privacy rights, that surely, they would not want either Democratic or Republican bureaucrats or elected officials knowing every detail of their private bedroom lives. And now we find that Democrats, without a single Republican vote, passed a bill that is going to give the Federal Government full power to know every detail of what goes on in someone's bedroom. I mean, I would have thought that this was something that Republicans and Democrats could have come together on. I'm greatly appreciative of the Democrats that voted with us today. And I know there's one reason they would have voted with us today, and that is that they have been home.

I love August because most of the people here spend that time as they should. And they hear from people in their districts and across the country, letting them know what's a proper

thing to do and what's not a proper thing to do. And who's suffering for what decisions of Congress.

I love it when we come back in September, and Members of Congress have been hearing from people across the country, especially in their districts. It's a great thing. It seems like we get a lot more things done that really are good for America. And today was one of those things. Every Republican standing together and some Democrats because everyone who voted for this continuing resolution—they had stuff in there I was not in favor of. But to bring help to the American people who are already hearing—we've had personal stories about people being told, well, that after the first of the year they're not going to be able to get their pacemaker, they're not going to be able to get the medical device they needed, they're not going to be able to get the back surgery they need. They're already hearing these things from health care providers that because of ObamaCare kicking in the first of the year, they will no longer be able because they're just too old. So we're going to throw them out to pasture and not let them have the health care they need for a good quality of life and for the long life that they should be entitled to. This was a good vote today. And I appreciate our Republican leaders for managing things to the point where we can be here today and do that.

Now, if the Senators just straight down that hall, if the Senators at the other end of the hall had to go back and listen to town halls and had to listen to their constituents the way Members of the House do, then there's no question in my mind they would have been rushing down here to work with us to say, How can we stop this disaster that is creating so much harm to people's health across America that it's only just going to multiply exponentially come January?

But because of the 17th Amendment and because State legislatures no longer select the Senators, as the Founders had established, Senators get elected at large. And there's a lot of benefit to having people accountable to all the voters in the State. But there was also benefit when the State legislatures selected the Senators because that was the Founders' check and balance to make sure Senators did not just totally take away the powers that the Constitution gave to the States and the people under the 10th Amendment.

Everything that is not specifically enumerated as a Federal power or prohibited to the States and the people was reserved to the States and the people under the 10th Amendment. That meant that before the Federal Government started getting its heavyhanded hands all over education, that local governments and local school boards could make decisions on what their schools needed.

But Congress got involved. We had set up a multibillion dollar department