



SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL
OLIVER S. PICHER**

U.S. AIR FORCE

Lieutenant General Oliver S. Picher

Lieutenant Oliver S. Picher arrived at his first duty station, Wheeler Field, in Hawaii in 1930. He had no way of knowing that two of the squadron commanders; Lt. Hoyt Vandenberg and Lt. Nathan Twining were destined to become Chiefs of Staff of the Air Force. Nor did Lt. Twining then know that in the not too distant future he would be best man at the wedding of Oliver Picher and Marion Lewis of Honolulu.

Lieutenant General Picher was born in Pasadena, California, in 1905, and was raised in Joplin, Missouri and Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from Harvard College in 1928, cum laude, with a degree in Geology. But it was Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic that inspired him to learn to fly and he met the challenge.

In reminiscing about his days at Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas, he recalled the Curtis P-1 which he described as a lovely airplane - indestructible, reliable but with no brakes. They were required to take off and land each day in formation. They did vertical eights in close formation twenty feet above the ground and at 10,000 feet in close formation they rolled over on their backs and came straight down. In May 1930, Oliver S. Picher received his commission in the Regular Army as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps when there were only 1,800 regular officers.

When World War II broke out he was in the Operations Division of the Army Air Corps in Washington, D.C., and was quickly promoted from Major to Lieutenant Colonel and in January 1942 to Colonel. In 1942 he was ordered to the XIII Bomber Command of the 13th Air Force to command the 307th Bombardment Group based on Guadalcanal. Each group had four squadrons with twenty B-24's to a squadron, which incredibly flew 24 planes in

combat every day. These missions were over water extending as far as the Japanese oil refineries in Borneo. He flew 34 combat missions as Group Commander or Bomber Commander adding up to 205 hours of combat flying. When he returned to Washington in March 1945, he was assigned to the Operations Division of the War Department General Staff. In 1946 he graduated in the first class from the National War College at Fort McNair.

In 1948 as a new Brigadier General and Director of Operations of the also new Headquarters of the Air Force, his first job was to mobilize C-54 transports from all over the world to break the Russian blockade of Berlin. Needless to say, it was done. In 1949, General Picher was ordered to Southern Japan to command the 315th Air Division of the 5th Air Force. Later he was transferred to Tokyo, headquarters of the Far East Air Force, as Inspector General. When the Korean War began, he was made the Director of Personnel.

In 1952 he returned to the Pentagon and was made Assistant for Programming to the Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, a very demanding job which he held for three years - a record at the time. In 1955 he became Director of Strategic Plans for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and in 1958 Director of the Joint Staff.

General Picher was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit with two clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with four clusters and numerous campaign medals.

He retired from the Air Force in May 1960 after 31 years of active duty. He died in July 1984 and is survived by his wife, Marion, his son, Dr. Lewis Picher, and daughter, Sarah Kniering.

Dear General Bellis,

I am proud to sponsor a Falcon Foundation Scholarship in memory of my husband, Lieutenant General Oliver Stanton Picher, who distinguished himself in positions of great responsibility in the United States Air Force. By his forceful leadership, outstanding ability, and complete objectivity he was singularly successful in his contribution in the service of his country.

Through this scholarship, I am pleased to assist others to follow in his footsteps.

Sincerely,

Marion L. Picher

Marion L. Picher



The Falcon Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit foundation. Its purpose is to provide scholarships to College or Preparatory Schools for motivated young people seeking admission to USAFA and a career in the Air Force.

Although it is a separate organization, the Falcon Foundation works closely with USAFA.