



## Richard Barcheski

July 22, 1917 - March 15, 2021

The men and women who grew up in America during the Great Depression and fought during World War II are the people who embodied traits distinguishing that generation: work ethic, frugality, faithful commitment, personal responsibility, humility and integrity. Everyone sacrificed and persevered during that time and are part of what has been coined: The Greatest Generation. Richard and Genevieve, embraced these traits which were also a part of their Polish heritage and a keystone of their lives.

Richard's father William J. Barczyzewski traveled from Poland arriving in America at the age of 6 with an Uncle. His Mother, Josephine Gordon, was born in America, and her parents also were from Poland. Genevieve's Polish paternal Great Grandfather, Ignatz Lama, arrived in America with family in 1884. Her maternal Polish grandparents, Peter Skajewski and Mary Ann Repinski/Rsepinska, also immigrated to America.

Richard was born the youngest child of William and Josephine Barcheski. His siblings, William and Angela, were close throughout their lives. Bill and Richard were active in barbershop groups in Chicago. He followed and enjoyed barbershop quartets all his life.

Richard and his siblings grew up helping their parents survive through times of shortage and the Great Depression. Richard seized every opportunity presented to him.

While still a teen, Richard and his brother became recipients of the New Deal and the Civilian Conservation Corps. (CCCs). Established in 1933 with camps run by the U.S. Army, President Roosevelt's primary goal for the program was to take unemployed youths out of the cities, build up their health and morale while contributing to the economic recovery of the country. These youths were housed, well-fed, and paid a modest sum, most of which was sent home to families.

Sent from their home in Chicago on their first train ride, the brothers went to Washington State where they worked on the grounds of a national park. They had a flair for landscaping as their supervisor had them design and plant the landscaping around the

superintendent's home. Then they were sent to Oregon and Crater Lake National Park, where they landscaped the entrance to the park. Richard felt that the CCCs gave him and others a sense of country and community, and each other. The impact of bringing all these young men together changed them and our country for a generation.

World War II brought an end to the CCCs and Richard was eager for his next opportunity: Army Air Corps Cadet Training in Arizona. He had always wanted to fly but how?

In 1939 Richard, 22, worked for the International Harvester Company, then for the Chicago Pipe Company. Both companies were making equipment for the military exempting him from the draft. His mother called him at work: the Navy was taking applications and administering tests for pilots.

At the Navy recruiting office, he took the test and was one of 13 of a 100 who passed. Because he had not gone to college, a requirement, he left that page of the application blank. They still swore him into the Navy that day. He asked when he would be called up. They didn't have anything scheduled – they were just lining up troops.

The next day the Army Air Corps Cadets were taking applications. Again he was one of 17 out of 100s to pass. Those other 16 young men had an average of two years of college, a requirement. Again, he had left that page blank. When he was told that he would be called up for training immediately, he expressed a problem: he was already sworn into the Navy. The Army wanted him and swore him in.

He flew B-24s in the Army Air Corps in the Pacific theater. His navigational maps of the whole pacific islands during World War II and his B-24 operational manuals have been donated to the Pacific Aviation Museum of Hawaii.

After the war had ended, and already working for Hawaiian Airlines, Air Force Reserve pilot Barcheski volunteered himself and his unit to fly the Berlin Airlift in 1948. He was one of a few “green card” check pilots that flew with the crews and supervised training. Richard wrote the training manuals and instructions used for instrument landings and take-offs at Tempelhof. The challenge was to train pilots for the short runway at Tempelhof Airport with C-54 aircraft carrying around 70,000 pounds of needed goods.

He related this story to his children while standing in Berlin's Tempelhof Airport 1962: Planes from Frankfurt and Wiesbaden took off every three minutes and slotted in between each other at one and one-half minute intervals to fly down the “air corridor” to Berlin, Germany – flying so low that all the pilots were able to throw candy to children who

gathered at the fence of the airport grounds. Bull dozers sat at the ends of the runway to gently push aside any straggling aircraft to keep the line going- it could not be stopped. The airlift provided life and sustenance to the people of Berlin during that winter.

Richard began his career with Hawaiian Airlines (HAL) in 1947. He was an Airline Pilot Association (ALPA) chairman and member of two or more committees every year for 30 years. He was an active member as a pilot on two safety committees: International Airline Pilots Association (IALPA) and Hawaiian Airlines.

Early in HAL's existence, "Bart" saw a need for a more personal approach to advertising for the new airline. As the airline was initially seasonal, there were furloughed pilots eager to see the airline grow and employ them continuously. Bart negotiated with management to put these pilots to work as an extended sales force going around the community talking about the airline. It worked. The airline grew.

Meanwhile, those same HAL pilots on furlough had families to support and needed work. Bart went to management at Sears, Roebuck & Company and negotiated positions in the major appliance department – with a twist! He saw to it that full time positions would be filled on a rotating basis with furloughed pilots. Sears put out a schedule and Richard made sure pilots signed up and showed up. In return, Sears had a highly motivated, intelligent workforce with excellent work ethics.

In the beginning of HAL, Richard initiated the idea of inter-airline pass exchange agreements, first with PanAm and TWA. He wanted all employees to benefit, not just the pilots. He followed through, forging those agreements with other airlines that were to be replicated across continents.

Captain Barcheski established a pilot team of advisers to assist then Chairman and CEO Magoon on the purchase of new aircraft for the airline. In one such purchase he became the first pilot from the United States to be certified in the Japanese YS-II. He subsequently led the team of pilots to ferry the purchased aircraft from Japan to Hawaii.

He was persistent in his vision to expand the airline operations beyond the islands. He helped establish the airline's Military Air Charter (MAC) operations using purchased surplus DC-6 aircraft. This successful program became the basis for other opportunities to expand the airlines' route structure.

Richard proposed a program to consolidate the Flight Engineer and Mechanic positions. Mechanics were given assistance from the airline to acquire pilot's licenses and become

Flight Engineers. This effort was a cost savings measure for the company. Many of those who participated extended their pilot careers - eventually becoming Captains.

Captain Barcheski was instrumental in introducing simulator training for HAL pilots. He negotiated with Continental Airlines to use their simulators, located in California, for Hawaiian Airlines pilots' training. This saved the company money and further enhanced the airline's coveted industry leading safety record.

Captain Barcheski saw a need in the islands: an air ambulance service for preemies and the critically ill. In his retirement and again using furloughed pilots to be certified and on-call, he leased and outfitted an aircraft for those purposes in 1979. It was the first in the islands. Limping along financially, Bart tried repeatedly to arrange for funding from the state. He was turned down. Unfortunately, that wonderful idea had to die for Bart. Years later, the state did fund another group. There are six in operation today.

Richard Barcheski and Joe Kealoha organized a pilot retirement group that got together at the Hale Koa. Captain Barcheski also created and wrote a newsletter for HAL retired pilots. Later, the retired Flight Attendant's association asked him to help them form a retirement group. He did and was always included and felt honored to be with his former colleagues.

Richard was proud to also be included in the Honolulu Hanger of QBs (Quiet Birdmen), a social group of retired pilots (military and commercial) that got together for luncheons and/or dinners.

Barcheski was instrumental in the creation of Hawaiian Airline's Archival Department. As a retiree he was visiting a HAL building during a major move of people and furniture and noticed a dumpster filled with old memorabilia-including airplane models of the types flown at its inception. He "rescued" the dumpster and went to management with a proposal to begin the department.

Richard was one of the first to successfully challenge the Hawaii status quo of leasehold property in Hawaii. A leasehold property is one where the land and the buildings on that land have different owners. The traditional 30-year leases were coming due and the home owners were facing large increases in premiums. The lease companies were forced to establish a fair purchase value for the land. Instead of offering homeowners the ability to purchase the land on an individual basis the Trustee companies offered purchases on a block by block basis. Everyone on the block had to agree to purchase the land under their

homes or there was no deal. For his block, Richard established a “Hui” (a club, an association) with all the homeowners to finance the project to complete the deal and allow the neighbors to have five years to find individual financing. Years later he was instrumental in accomplishing the same objective for his fellow apartment owners of Harbor Square in downtown Honolulu.

Richard was very proud of his accomplishments with Hawaiian Airlines, the Berlin Airlift, and the Air Ambulance. To Richard leadership was about self-sacrifice, personal responsibility, and doing right by family, community, and country.

Richard first met his lifelong love, Genevieve, when they were 16 years old. He acknowledged that it was Genevieve who was his biggest supporter, and her love and direction guided him to be his best self. Richard always attributed his longevity, success, and happiness to having her in his life.

Richard and Genevieve were married on June 5, 1943 in Arizona. They were married for 65 years before Genevieve’s death in 2008. When Genevieve developed Alzheimer’s Richard was never far from her side. Richard always attributed his longevity, success, and happiness to having her in his life.

When Richard flew in the Pacific during WW II and fell in love with the islands, Genevieve and Karen, their first child, joined him at Hickam Air Force base in Hawaii. This was to be their home. He retired as a USAF Major and continued to be active in the Reserves.

Integrity became a way of life and led to the 1957 Hawaii Family of the Year award. They were involved in the PTA, the Olympic fund drive chairmanship for the Hawaii Swim club, Cub masters for boy scouts, and the Indian Guides for the YMCA and more.

Richard and Genevieve wanted their children to have the opportunity to travel and see the world. They started with trips across the contiguous United States. They would typically buy a car or a camper and pick a route that touched places like Williamsburg, VA; Washington, DC; Mount Rushmore, SD; Yosemite National forest; Sequoia National Forest, CA. Then they would sell the vehicle, which would pay for the gas for the trip.

There was a popular book by Arthur Frommer: “Europe on Five Dollars a Day” that guided their lodgings and eateries for that family trip. They spent almost three months travelling through ten countries. A VW Square-Back was purchased in Copenhagen and was, not only their transportation, it was their “accommodations” for the family of six on some nights. That red car returned with the family to the islands.

Besides the beautiful and scenic places in those ten countries, one of the more sobering places the family visited in Germany was Dachau. Erected in 1933, Dachau was the first Nazi concentration camp in Germany. The kids were standing at a fence and next to them was a man who said "They should not have planted grass and flowers here." Richard was not far behind, watching and listening. He then followed the man to his waiting taxi and asked about his involvement in Dachau. The man was a surviving prisoner of the camp.

Richard designed and built several of their homes in Hawaii. A snapshot of his skills and creativity: in one home by the entrance, he fashioned and cut a fish and a palm tree out of metal and embedded them in the hollow cement blocks welcoming friends. In another home his design was ahead of its time with the open concept kitchen, living, dining rooms, master bedroom on one side and a kid's wing on another side. He designed bumped-out-under-the-eaves built in desks, dressers, and window seats. He incorporated lava rock in the see-through fireplace, which he built himself.

Two special traditions occurred during the Christmas season: Polish Pierogis and painting the picture windows of our Kahala home. Every Christmas dad would prepare the pierogis from his mother's recipe, and the children would be part of the process of putting them together. Another creative innovation was to enlarge Christmas cards to trace onto the picture windows where the children would paint, snow spray and spotlight them for everyone to enjoy.

Richard and Genevieve grew up in the Catholic faith and both had a deep and abiding love for the church. Early on at Star of the Sea Catholic church, they donated hours of time during the initial building of the church and school. Richard was the team captain of the fund drive. He and Genevieve raised \$750,000.00 alone in the parish, setting a national record. He was the Star of the Sea school PTG Vice President and the PTG Youth Athletic chairman when the children were younger.

A trip to Rome in 1997 came about when Richard asked the Bishop for a letter to meet the Polish Pope. Richard, Genevieve and the two oldest children were given special seating for Pope John Paul II's audience and received special individual blessings. Those blessings were commemorated with photos and rosaries for the family that Richard and Genevieve cherished. He always had that special rosary the Pope blessed. He was never without it or his faith.

Later in life, Richard looked forward to mass every Sunday at Mary, Star of the Sea Church. He made and kept some exceptional friends in the last years of his life. That and

his connection to Tripler Army Medical Center and the special people there filled his heart with friendship.

Richard and Genevieve Barcheski are resting together at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific-Punchbowl

Richard and Genevieve are survived by Karen S. Rinehart, Richard T. (Becky) Barcheski, Renee L. (Stan) Bruske all of Colorado, and Randall G. T. (Linda) Barcheski of Maui, Hawaii. Also survived by 10 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren and extended family across the U.S.

Donations may be made to the “Richard Barcheski Memorial Fund” St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at [giftfunds.stjude.org](https://giftfunds.stjude.org)

# Comments

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“ Our deepest sympathies from the family of Capt. Howard Phillips. So sorry to hear of your dad's passing. Our parents are also resting at Punchbowl. I've run across several pictures of our dads when cleaning out after my parents passings. True cornerstones of Hawaiian Airlines history.

Cindi Phillips Seminara - June 17 at 03:34 PM

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“ 23 files added to the album Richard Barcheski Family Album



ksr\_inc - June 10 at 03:01 PM



“ We're so sorry for your loss, and send our warmest love and Aloha. Bart was a dear friend to our family and we miss him every day. We have a lifetime of memories with Bart, my parents, and his friends at Harbor Square. We recently had lunch with some gals that retired at Hawaiian Airlines, and we all spoke of special memories of his wonderful life. Your photos and tribute to him, show a timeline of his amazing life and achievements that are very impressive. It's comforting to know that Bart will be at Punchbowl with Genevieve. Sylvia & Rick Farias

sylvia farias - June 17 at 05:10 PM