

SENIOR LIFESTYLES

Businessman proves honesty brings success

By Robert Pfohman
Catholic News Service

McMINNVILLE, Ore. — Del Smith left a Catholic orphanage in Seattle with adoptive parents when he was 26 months old, and by the time he was 10 years old he already had taken out his first business loan.

He piloted fighters in the Air Force, and went on in 1960 to build Evergreen International Aviation, the world's largest privately owned air cargo business. He started with two helicopters.

The 70-year-old Catholic entrepreneur says he is successful because he tried to follow the Ten Commandments and to live his life by the credo that "you do what's right."

Two executives now oversee his company's day-to-day activities and its 4,500 employees, while Smith concentrates on strategic planning and the corporate vision.

These days Smith wants to spend more time with his wife, but he also is focusing his considerable energies on a new non-profit warplane museum being built across the highway from his company's headquarters in rural McMinnville. It's named for his eldest son, Michael, a former Air Force pilot who died in a car crash five years ago.

When the museum opens at year's end, it will showcase Howard Hughes' famous Spruce Goose, the largest plane ever flown. It also will house about 40 World War II-vintage restored warplanes, including the only still-usable Messerschmitt; Hitler built 33,000 for use in World War II.

Smith says his company has had to work much harder than the competition to be successful because it chooses to operate honestly in what he describes as a cutthroat business milieu.

"It's God's law you need to be mindful of," Smith told the *Catholic Sentinel*, Portland archdiocesan newspaper.

Smith likes to tell visitors about the 10 graduate business students who came to study Evergreen's business practices. They asked Smith whether anyone can be honest and still succeed in business nowadays.

"Absolutely, yes!" thundered the hard-driving executive, who demands the best from his global work force.

"We have to teach our young people that they must believe in themselves and God," said Smith, who maintains his military command presence even though he has been out of uniform for 40 years.

The walls in Evergreen's entry foyer are covered with military memorabilia, a reminder of the still-close ties Smith and his company have with the U.S. defense establishment and the State Department.

When no one else would help the cancer-stricken shah of Iran, the onetime U.S. ally, Smith's crews flew him out of Panama, the only country that would take him when he went into exile.

Evergreen also came to the aid of Haile Selassie, the late Ethiopian ruler who was forced out by Marxist rebels. Smith himself would fly into Calcutta, India, and visit with Mother Teresa.

He counts the humanitarian missions his company has flown as the largest contribution he has made toward bettering society.

Smith said he has held talks with Vatican cardinals about a not-for-profit plan of his to station a cargo plane in, say, Nairobi, Kenya, that would be continually loaded with disaster aid supplies to allow aid workers to respond to emergencies on the continent.

He said the United States used to be able to respond faster to worldwide emergencies, but now faces political obstacles and bureaucratic red tape. As a privately owned company, Evergreen can respond sooner, he says.

Evergreen cargo jets played a major

role in the West's early response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and his threat to neighboring oil-rich Saudi Arabia. Evergreen's fleet of two dozen heavy-lift jet cargo freighters on "hot missions" ferried in tons of war materiel to the volatile Persian Gulf to bolster the first U.S. units deployed during the opening days of Operation Desert Shield.

After the Persian Gulf War ended, Smith's jets flew in specially trained firefighters to extinguish the 700-plus oil wells that Saddam's retreating troops had

set afire.

Evergreen's helicopters continue to play a major role in eradicating the black fly that has blinded 6 million Africans living along waterways in 13 West African countries.

Last year, Smith provided a 747 jet and crew to Father Mike Maslowsky of Portland to haul \$1.1 million in medical and relief supplies that Oregon Catholics donated to Kosovar refugees teeming into Albania.

Father Maslowsky speaks highly of

Smith, calling him "a 'doer' whose faith is reflected in his works."

During his career, Smith has provided mentoring and financial help to a number of young people, believing that "the spark of an individual moves mankind."

Young people need to realize each of them can make a difference in the world, he said.

Smith looks forward to the day when there is less conflict worldwide, when charity, peace and unity are the motivating forces in creating a global community.

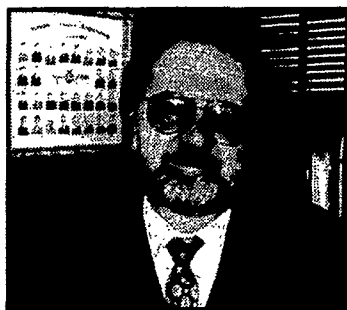
Have prescription, will travel



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Brighton residents Grace Meade (center) and Anne Gitlin (far left) talk at a send-off June 5 of a bus taking seniors to Montreal to purchase cheaper prescription drugs. U.S. Rep. Louise Slaughter and Public Citizens' Congress Watch organized the trip to draw attention to the need for lower medications costs. It left from the Brighton Rec Center. At right, Betty Highland, of Rochester, and Erika Reiber, of Brighton, show their support.

Thoughts to Consider



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When a person dies at home, what would you do?

You can call your funeral director for specific directions but here is a general procedure. First, contact your physician or emergency team. If the death is unexpected you should notify the police who will in turn notify the coroner. This will also assure that medical help can be given should there be confusion as to whether the person is dead. If the death was expected notify your physician for verification of death. If you wish, contact your clergy and relatives or friends who are close to you. When all medical and legal matters are cared for contact the funeral director who will take your loved one to the funeral home and provide you with support and assistance for the next several days.

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