closed until we got on the ground, and he should sit down and fasten his seat belt. And then, unladylike, I hit him again."

Captain Ator wrote that the passenger finally yielded and sat down "...after a few lefts and rights by Miss Storer and a general razzing by the rest of the passengers."

Flight 183 made "a normal engine out landing" at 2010 MST. As the DC-6 rolled to a stop, the stewardesses, as planned, initiated an emergency evacuation, and things went very well - with one exception. Of the man who'd wanted to jump, Miss Storer said, "He didn't want to get out. He wanted to jump 18,000 feet, but he didn't want to jump 6 feet."

Captain Ator praised the cabin crew, writing that upon "...going back to tell them not to rush as there was no immediate danger, I found Miss Storer and Miss Wheelhouse had the passengers so well instructed and so well under control that they had already evacuated sixteen passengers with no excitement at all. They also did a wonderful job taking care of the passengers while on the ground."

Many passengers praised the crew for their valor and courage during the approach and landing at Columbus, and American awarded each the Distinguished Service Award (DSA) for Valor. Captain Ator later wrote a letter to the DSA board regarding the outstanding performance of his crew. The letter went on to say that, "for excitement," he had "...taken up bullfighting... My first round was a 2,000 pound bull - Results: Bull OK; Ator four broken ribs and two weeks in the hospital. So it looks like the bull won the first round."

Danger, conflict, humor, and courage all figured in the story of flight 183 - along with an ironic twist: the DC-6 that Captain Ator guided to a safe landing in far south-western New Mexico that night was NC90733...*Flagship New Mexico.*

Note — Thanks to Greg Kennedy of the American Airlines C.R. Smith Museum for information provided for this article.

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