



# UN-SCRAMBLE

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE VALIANT AIR COMMAND, INC.  
SPACE COAST REGIONAL AIRPORT, TITUSVILLE, FL 32780-8009

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## Celebrating America's Freedom

**THE ORIGINS OF VETERANS DAY** - In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington, became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans.

Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France, where an unknown soldier was buried in each nation's highest place of honor (in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe). These memorial gestures all took place on November 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 a.m., November 11, 1918 (the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month). The day became known as "Armistice Day."

Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar Congressional action. If the idealistic hope had been realized that World War I was "the War to end all wars," November 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. Sixteen and one-half million Americans took part. Four hundred seven thousand of them died in service, more than 292,000 in battle.

**ARMISTICE DAY CHANGED TO HONOR ALL VETERANS** - An answer to the question of how to pay tribute to those who had served in this latest, great war came in a proposal made by Representative Edwin K. Rees of Kansas: Change Armistice Day to Veterans Day, and make it an occasion to honor those who have served America in all wars. In 1954 President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day.

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## FROM THE COMMANDER

Lloyd Morris

Believe it or not, the cooler weather has returned to Florida!!! It is amazing to me that the men and women have continued with their restoration and maintenance programs through those hot days of summer without air conditioning in the hangars. I am proud of all the members who contribute their time and effort each and every week.

We are all excited this week with the roll-out of the Crusader. Quite a few Crusader pilots have been invited along with other guests.

The first Airshow meeting will be held at the Museum on November 16 at 12 noon. We will be serving pizza to all you hard-working Airshow volunteers. There are several positions which need to be filled. I especially need someone who can work all three days of the Airshow with some preliminary work before the show. If you would like to co-chair the Airshow with me, please call the Museum. I can use all the help I can get. I will look forward to hearing from you!



**NOVEMBER 5**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 12, 2002 AT 12 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARD ROOM

DECEMBER 10, 2002 AT 12 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARD ROOM

### AIRSHOW AND GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

NOVEMBER 16, 2002 AT 12 NOON

VAC MUSEUM MEMORABILIA ROOM

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 6, 2002 AT 5 PM FOR COCKTAILS, DINNER AT 7 PM

VAC MUSEUM MEMORABILIA ROOM

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The VALIANT AIR COMMAND was formed to perpetuate the history of aviation, to encourage gathering of men and women in camaraderie, research, and Warbird restoration, to serve as an educational tool for young and old alike, and to assure that the memory of those who gave their lives in service to their country shall not perish.

### WEB and E-MAIL INFORMATION

The new web page is still in the works. However, you can access the current site at [www.vacwarbirds.org](http://www.vacwarbirds.org)

Email can be sent from the current web site, or to

[VACinformation@aol.com](mailto:VACinformation@aol.com) or

[vacinfo1@aol.com](mailto:vacinfo1@aol.com)

## **MAINTENANCE**

**Bob James**

Since the last issue of the *UN-Scramble* I have been to several airshows (via the airlines) that were noteworthy. The first was the Indianapolis show at the Mt. Comfort airport. Vought aircraft sponsored the "gathering of Corsairs". They had hoped to have up to 16 Corsairs. While only seven made it in, they were still an awesome sight to behold. The "heritage flight" of four or five Corsairs with an F/A-18 of the current VMF-214 squadron was unique. I had not previously seen more than two or three Corsairs in formation. A Friday night dinner with members of the WWII VMF-214 Black Sheep squadron was very entertaining as each pilot related a "war story", some humorous and some that left you wondering how they survived up to three tours of combat. All of them left me with a deep appreciation for the sacrifices that they and their fellow pilots and ground crews made in the defense of freedom.

To add to the evening we (wife Ann and son Jeff) were privileged to sit next to Bob Johnson and his wife. He was a VMF215th squadron member during WWII and had seven confirmed kills.

The other show of note was the "grandfather" of all warbird airshows--none other than the CAF (now Commemorative Air Force) at Midland-Odessa, Texas. They had the greatest variety of warbirds I've seen (with the exception of the four hundred or so warbirds that show up at Oshkosh). They do put on a great show.

On the VAC work front, I'm eagerly anticipating the arrival of our "snowbirds" by late October or early November. The work pace will pick up and I hope we can attend some airshows to help supplement the donations to fund the C-47 repair effort. I'm open to ideas that can increase the repair fund, and I would like to thank all of you who have donated in cash or service to the effort. The near term goal is to repair the forward fuselage area (under the cockpit). As mentioned in the previous issue, we have a need for a professional sheet metal mechanic to do the repair on the nose section as all the controls go through that area. We have a bid that is reasonable (\$6,000 to \$8,000); however, the C-47 repair fund is currently about \$2,700.

TBM--Work on the fuel system (AN pressure lines) and the oil system is continuing. The bomb-bay work is still

primarily in the research and parts acquisition stage but is making slow progress.

UTVA--One of my old friends from Rockwell, Jim Towe, recently joined up and was looking for something to do. I promptly assigned him to the UTVA as he has experience in the avionics world (old Navy type). He is working on the positioning of the electronics and generally cleaning up the interior of the aircraft. Jim found that the original ADF shows some signs of life; however, it needs a sense antenna. The comm and nav radios are to be donated by our local radioman; however, his time is very limited due to illness in his immediate family. The cable wiring will require a lot of work, thus we will see some delay on this part of the project. I hope that we will have the UTVA in the air by the first of the new year!

## **PERSONNEL**

**Alice Iacuzzo**

Welcome back, Snowbirds: Dick and Wendy Miller from Oregon. Dick has already volunteered to continue as a tour guide on Friday mornings, and both Dick and Wendy will run the Finance Department for the Airshow as they did last year. They did a great job! We are also expecting the Bixbys to be back on the 21<sup>st</sup>. I know the C-47 volunteers will be happy to see him.

Thanks to Guido Franchine for repainting all the doors in the Museum. Guido is fluent in Italian and Spanish. This helps when we have patrons who do not speak English. Pieter Lenie is also fluent in Spanish and we find ourselves calling on him, too.

Did you know we have special programs for children and adults to tour the Museum? If you have a child in school or pre-school, or know of an organization that would like to tour, let us know and we will send them the information. There are special rates for 10 or more patrons.

There are quite a few attractions in the area near the Museum: Kennedy Space Center, Astronaut Hall of Fame (about 3 or 4 miles from and on the same road as the Museum), Sterling Cruise Lines which has gambling boats that go out twice a day--FREE. These are just a few of the attractions in the area.

Do you have something you can donate to the auction for the upcoming Airshow? Remember, anything you donate is tax deductible and will help you when you are preparing next year's income taxes.

We are all looking forward to the upcoming roll-out of the Crusader on October 26. There will be a report in the next edition of the *UN-Scramble*.

Remember to mark your calendar for December 6<sup>th</sup>. We will hold the Christmas party in the Museum memorabilia room. We can use your help—you can volunteer by calling the Museum or sending an e-mail.

## FRIENDS OF THE 'AVENGER' TBM

**Alice Iacuzzo**

The Valiant Air Command has recently acquired a WWII TBM "Avenger." The restoration crew has spent many hours on the aircraft replacing parts, etc. The "Avenger" is in dire need of paint to help restore it to its original beauty. Your donations will help us preserve this aircraft. **PLEASE HELP!!!** All donations are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: VAC - Friends of the Avenger  
We also can accept donations via Visa or Mastercard.

### Donations to Date

Bob Jourdain	Miami FL	\$100
Fran Palka	Worcester MA	\$100

## FOR SALE

**MAKE A SIMULATOR KIT** Would you like an aircraft simulator? Or one to go with your computer and those flight games? Or one for the grandchildren? Make an offer for one of the T-2B aircraft fuselages. We can cut the front fuselage/cockpit off one of them; you restore and rebuild to your liking. What a great rainy day project!!!

**T-2B AIRCRAFT** The VAC recently received a donation of seven demilitarized long-term stored North American Aviation T-2B Buckeyes. We relocated them from north Florida to the Museum. They are now available for sale. One or two will be retained by the Museum for future restoration. The aircraft are in rough shape, having been cut apart by the military rather than disassembled and stored. The aircraft are generally complete including aux tip tanks and some internal components. However, they lack nose gear, canopies, and engines. We have not established a sales price but suggest a bid offer. A prior inspection is suggested. Other than that—**first bid, first choice!**

**PLEASE CONTACT BOB FRAZIER FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

## PROCUREMENT

**Bob Frazier**

Sorting, retrieving, and transporting Bob Rawls' estate aviation donations has been a major and time-consuming effort this month. Six trips to Ft. Lauderdale and five to the VAC have now moved 4000 videos, hundreds of reels of 16 mm movies, hundreds of boxes of 35mm slides, cartons of uniforms/hats, 600 neckties, 30 or 40 years of *Life*, *Time*, and *National Geographic* magazines, old photographic equipment and other items. These items will be used in the memorabilia room, PX, and auction. If you are interested in any of these, please contact me. For instance, we have a never-used, adult-sized MOBILE HYDRO-THERAPY unit commonly called a whirlpool bath.

A South Carolina gentleman has offered to donate a B-25 to the VAC. While desirable, the need to retrieve it from a deep water lake (100 ft.) and transport it to the VAC will exceed our financial capability. It will be investigated further, however.

As advised last month, the F-105 arrived last month and was partially reassembled. Later, through the generous effort of the Worldwide Aircraft Recovery Co., its employees returned and installed all the main tail surfaces "gratis". To date the main tires have been repaired and a search for a nose wheel is underway. Nose wheels and axles are in extremely short supply and any help in locating them would be appreciated.

Minor detailing work on the F-8K Crusader and planning for the October 26 roll-out continues.

## C-47 TICO-BELLE REPAIR FUND

**Bob Frazier/Alice Iacuzzo**

Rebuilding and repair of the Tico-Belle has now entered Phase II, starting with reconstruction of the nose/cockpit section. The necessary replacement parts will be removed from the C-47 hull that was recently purchased in Miami. However, the effort will require some new materials and some professional assistance. While donations to the fund totaled \$37,455 as of the end of September, purchasing the C-47 hull, transporting it, and purchasing landing gear and support materials result in a current balance of just a little over \$2,700. At this point of the restoration, new or additional donations are needed and will be appreciated.

### Donations to Repair Fund This Period

Ralph Mathers	Melbourne FL	\$100
Irina & Rich Davis	Miami Bch FL	\$250
Bill Miller	Cocoa Bch FL	\$ 35

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**N. C "Bud" Evans**

We are approaching the season when all of the active volunteers are planning and working on the 2003 Air Show. It is another special year in aviation history--the "100<sup>th</sup> Year of Powered Flight." A quick study of the major advances in the technology of flying reveals that military aviation has always been the leader. Our goal has been to educate the public about that history and display the aircraft and memorabilia that helped to make today's military aviation as great as it is. All of you members are a part of that grand effort and our Museum and Airshow keep the public aware of that history. It doesn't happen by magic and all of you who work for months ahead of time make it the traditional success it has been for 26 years! Those members who are not in a position to physically participate are also an integral part of our organization through your membership dues and donations. Without that we would not be able to continue with the success we have had and the continued efforts in making this a world class organization.

The F-105D Thunder Chief (THUD) has arrived and, when it is restored to display condition, it will be a great asset to the Museum. The F-105 made its name "THUD" known in the Vietnam War and bore the brunt of the bombing attack in the North. Our new arrival will need some dressing-up and we will be looking for some of you members who flew the F-105, or have friends who did, to help in our sponsorship drive to return it to the show room appearance that this "Real Warbird" deserves! At present we need a nose wheel and tire. Any of you warbird owners who have sources for surplus parts able to help us in this search???

By the time this month's *UN-Scramble* is out to the membership, we will probably have had our grand roll-out party for the F-8K "Crusader". Bob Frazier has done an outstanding job, with the help of Dossie Purcell and other VAC members, in setting up a great program. Several Navy and Marine pilots are scheduled to be there as VIPs and will comment on their experiences in that sleek-looking and fast-flying Marine/Navy aircraft.

I am pleased to know that our Museum is getting compliments from foreign as well as from our U.S. visitors. I just received a couple of e-mails from Mr. Roy Collins from England complimenting us on our "cracking fine" Museum. He tells us that he is recommending to all of his friends that they visit us when they come to the States. He lived next to the airfield where the RAF ran tests on Sir Harry Whittle's jet engine (he was England's inventor of the jet engine). If you didn't know, we have one of those engines in our museum. It was the first U.S. jet engine, built under license by G. E. and it powered our first jet fighter, the Bell P-59. I believe ours is one of the best of those engines on display anywhere!

*Continued next column*

I especially wish to give my thanks, and I'm certain all of you members will join me in applauding Bob and Nita Kison for the terrific job they are doing with the *UN-Scramble* news letter. We had become so complacent about the editing and publishing of our outstanding monthly periodical that when Jim Hawkins, who had started and produced the paper from its inception, was no longer able to continue we didn't know to whom we could turn! Bob and Nita offered to give it a try and my hat is off to both of them for the outstanding job they are doing. Take the time to drop a note or e-mail to both of them and express your appreciation.

## **WELCOME ABOARD**

**by Alice Iacuzzo**

### **New Colonels**

David Edkins	Ocala FL
Ed Mehler	Titusville, FL
Thomas Schroder	Stemwede, Germany

### **Renewals**

Mike & Amy Brooks	Orlando FL
John Cottingham	Cape Canaveral FL
Phil & June Gaarder	Indialantic FL
Reid Jeffrey Garrison	Anderson SC
Don Geisler	Plant City FL
Ivan Gomez	Melbourne FL
Bob Jourdain	Miami FL
Carver Kennedy	Fayetteville GA
Dennis & Teri Kranz	Portland OR
Rodger & Jean Lyons	Titusville FL
Ron Madonia	Titusville, FL
David Michael Marco	Atlantic Bch FL
Joe D. Matheny	Titusville FL
Robert & Camille McCullough	Orlando FL
Chuck & Jennie McElwee	Potomac MD
Bill Miller	Cocoa Beach FL
Andrew Montague	Orange Park FL
Terry (Landis) Neighbours	Orange City FL
Walt & Bobbie Orth	Coral Gables FL
Harry & Joan Osbun	Edgewater FL
Fran Palka, Jr.	Worcester MA
Dennis & Sharon Sherman	N Palm Beach FL
Al & Ginny Sherrill	Melbourne FL
Helen Snapp	Merritt Island FL
David & Denise Wall	Ocala FL

## FINANCE

Pieter Lenie

With the economy of the country on a down curve, our organization is still a going concern due to the success of the last Airshow, which means that we were able to allocate those funds for much needed repairs and new acquisitions. The downside is that we are not getting the visitors to the Museum that we need to be comfortable with our financial responsibility. It will take a concerted effort by all the members involved in the operation of the Museum to keep us operational. By cutting expenses and not contracting for any more new expenses, our existing funds are allocated and will be sufficient to pay for the outstanding obligations. The good news is that we are in better shape than a lot of other businesses and organizations who have to depend on their daily cash flow and are now in the process of going bankrupt and closing down their operations. If another big calamity befalls us due to the terrorist activity and the tourism activity slows down any more, we may be in trouble.

## TRANSPORTATION & FACILITIES

Bob Kison

The lawn maintenance people I hired, New Life Lawn Care (Ph. 321-264-7077), are doing a fine job for us at a reasonable cost and pulled weeds in the planting area this time for nothing. They will continue the weed control now for a nominal cost on a monthly basis.

After discussing our tree problems with BIOS Botanical Services, I have come to the conclusion that we need to address these problems. My biggest concern is the oaks along the parking area. Erosion into the "pits" has covered the lower trunk crown; this will eventually destroy the tree. My thought is to excavate around the trunk to expose the crown to a diameter of 4-6 feet and then install a retaining wall to prevent further erosion into the pit. Has anyone out there ever had this problem and found a good solution?

The roof inspection by Richard J. Charbonneau Associates, Inc., has revealed considerable deterioration and corrosion. I will invite Mr. Charbonneau to the next board meeting to discuss our options.

I am a firm believer in: "If it isn't broken, don't fix it" and KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid). However, I also believe we are approaching some items that are severely bent, and will be easier to fix soon rather than wait until they are broken.

**Be Safe**

## EDITOR'S CORNER



We were appalled at the quality of the graphics in the October issue. The printer we had been working with assured us he could print from our CD, but did not use the CD for the October issue. To ensure the CD was in fact usable, we took it to another print shop which was able to print copies of the newsletter with much clearer graphics. So, we now have a new printer!!! We hope the graphics in this issue will be noticeably superior to last month's and apologize for that issue. We are keeping our fingers crossed that we have that problem solved.

We would welcome feedback as requested in earlier editions of the newsletter. Write to us at:

Bob and Nita Kison, 7230 Mourning Dove Ct., Titusville, FL, or fax your comments to us at 321-383-4137

We have been remiss in thanking folks who have helped put out the *UN-Scramble*. Leo Kordick and Laura Carlson helped apply labels to the September issue; Jan Catherwood is helping with proofreading, both last month and this. We appreciate others who have volunteered and, don't worry, we'll be calling on you!

All copy for the December issue must be in on or before November 19; we plan to construct the newsletter, have it printed, and get it in the mail before the Thanksgiving holiday. All of the contributors have been submitting their articles in a very timely manner and it certainly helps in meeting the deadlines. Thanks for your cooperation.



**HAPPY  
HANUKKAH**

**November 30**

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Hal Larkin**

The P&W J-48 engine has arrived at the VAC. After installation of the stabilizer and elevators, now in prime paint, we will convert the mobile stand that is now supporting the stabilizer to an engine stand. We will have to scrounge some steel for the conversion. We made an "A" change to the tail stand, found some heavy duty casters, and installed them on the tail stand. The tail stand is now mobile, so we pushed it outside and pressure-cleaned the inside. After installation of the refurbished tail hook, the inside of the tail section can be primed. I just scrounged some work tables that we were in need of. Started rework of the wings. The fairings for the wing fold fittings have to be fabricated, plus several hand hold covers. All the machine screws that attach the wing fold fairings have been broken off and will have to be drilled out. The left aileron has completed the rework cycle and is ready for prime. The right aileron will have to be removed and put in the rework cycle. Rework of the vertical pin is also complete. The two main fuel tank covers have been installed and cleanup of the cockpit continues. The L/R blow-in doors and the L/R access doors just aft of the cockpit have all been reworked and installed.

Restoration of the ME-208 is moving right along. The cockpit side panels and the instrument panel are in the rework cycle. With the just acquired work tables, we will rearrange the work area. We will put the ME-208 wings on mobile tables and use the heavy duty table for the Panther wings.



### **TAIL SECTION OF F-9F PANTHER ON MOBILE BASE**

Photo by Bob Kison

## OPERATIONS

**Mike McCann**

Work continues on preparation for TICO 2003. I have been in collaboration with fellow member Dennis Labbe about the possibility of bringing in the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation program. They operate at least one of nearly everything the Army has flown in the past 25 years or so and put on a terrific Vietnam-style infiltration/extraction exercise that is supposed to be very good. Success will hinge in partnering with other Florida shows around the time as ours to reduce the transportation costs involved with this contingent. I am going to put out the usual plug now for volunteers to help me with the myriad of tasks involved with setting up the show. While several warm bodies are always nice to have on the days of the show, what I really need are a few good folks who have a little drive and leadership skills to handle a few areas or programs in the months leading up to the show. I am looking for someone who can handle some of the following tasks:

- Warbird ride raffle chairman. These rides are a great way for the VAC to make some additional money on the show. We have many pilots who will volunteer to give a few rides during the 3 days, but they need to be marketed properly. Raffle tickets need to be sent out several months prior.
- FAA waiver. Not a particularly hard or time-consuming job.
- Military liaison. I would like help with inviting units to bring their aircraft here. They need accommodations, cars, welcome packets, etc.
- Patrick AFB liaison. We always end up having to obtain numerous servicing items from the base.
- Thursday luncheon director. I think we might have the option of returning to the 4th Fighter Group Restaurant in Orlando again.

Most of these tasks involve some planning and legwork, and they typically need to happen months before the show. The first Airshow meeting is scheduled for Saturday, December 6th. Unfortunately, my attendance is in doubt due to VA Tech playing Miami U that weekend (go Hokies!!). You know how to reach me.

I have received two insurance quotes for the UTVA. As we get close to getting the aircraft certified we will put a policy on the plane. I have been making some usable checklists for it. Our new goal is now January 1, 2003. Please get in touch with me if you would like to be a sponsor of this plane.

For all you L-39 jocks out there, I have a copy of the FAA's new Advisory Circular on the recommended inspection program and component overhaul times. Ask and I will forward a copy to you.

## Yesterday's Battles: World War Two "One if by Land, Two if by Sea"

Jeffrey James

Fall 1942--By mid-1942 the Axis forces were in an enviable position. Germany had conquered most of Europe, had the Soviet Union teetering on the brink of collapse and menaced the vital Suez Canal in Egypt. Similarly, the Japanese Empire stretched from the steaming jungles of the South Pacific to the windswept Aleutian Islands off Alaska, and included much of China and Southeast Asia. Yet in a few short months of late 1942, the tide would turn against the Axis powers on all fronts.

After capturing the British fortress of Tobruk, Libya in June 1942, Germany's Erwin Rommel, the legendary Desert Fox, was poised to invade British-held Egypt. If he could overrun the Suez Canal and take the vital oilfields of the Middle East, the allied position in that area would be reduced to a shambles. Rommel got halfway across Egypt, to a little village called El Alamein, before lengthening supply lines and renewed British resistance brought him to a halt. Unable to break the British lines, Rommel shored up his defensive positions, including the planting of 445,000 landmines! However, Egypt ranked well behind Russia on Germany's list of priorities, so supplies and reinforcements were slow in coming. By the time the British counter-attacked, they had 195,000 troops versus 104,000 German and Italian soldiers. Nevertheless, Rommel had defeated numerically superior allied forces many times before. But, he had never met British General Bernard Law Montgomery before!



**Montgomery briefs his staff November 1942**

When the British launched their offensive on October 23, 1942, Rommel was on leave in Europe (much like he would be on leave on D-Day, June 6, 1944). The allies had superiority in tanks and a devastating air force of 1,200 planes! Montgomery could not break through, so the struggle soon evolved into a battle of attrition. This clearly favored the Allies. Montgomery then launched another major assault on November 2nd. By this time Rommel had only 35 operational tanks (down from 496 when the battle began!) and he had no choice but to withdraw. He now began a long retreat, all the way across Libya to the relative safety of Tunisia. Left behind



in the retreat were five Italian infantry divisions, 30,000 prisoners and nine generals. Axis power in North Africa had been broken, but Rommel still had one more deadly surprise to spring, much to the dismay of the green American troops he would meet in Tunisia.

Meanwhile, half a world away, Japan was intensifying its attempts to retake the island of Guadalcanal and its vital airstrip, now known as Henderson Field (after a Marine pilot killed at the Battle of Midway). Although the Japanese were continually frustrated on land, they had scored considerable successes at sea. On September 15, 1942, a submarine sank the new aircraft carrier *Wasp*. During the naval battle of Santa Cruz on October 25-26, the carrier *Hornet*, centerpiece of Jimmy Doolittle's Tokyo raid, was sunk by Japanese forces. The damaged *Enterprise* was now the only operational carrier in the South Pacific.

The Japanese Navy also stepped up the pressure on Henderson Field. On October 13th, two battleships smashed the airfield with their powerful 14-inch guns, firing hundreds of one-ton shells. After the 90-minute bombardment the airfield was a disaster. The main runway was torn up, most of the aviation gasoline had burned and over half the 90 planes based there were destroyed.

On November 12th, two more battleships and 11 escorts attempted to repeat the maneuver, but this time they met the U.S. Navy. However, the American fleet boasted nothing larger than 8-inch gunned heavy cruisers vs. two 14-inch gunned battleships. Despite the odds, the Navy sailed out to defend the airfield. The action that followed could only be described as a barroom brawl in the dark. Japanese ships fired on their own ships. American ships did likewise. U.S. sailors fired at battleships with machine guns due to the point blank ranges involved. Torpedoes failed to explode because they had not had sufficient running room to arm themselves. One Japanese battleship was unable to hit an American destroyer because it was so close the 14-inch guns could not be depressed low enough to hit their target!

By the battle's end, the Japanese had lost the battleship *Hiei* and two destroyers. The U.S. lost two light cruisers and four destroyers. One of the cruisers was the U.S.S. *Juneau*. Designed as an anti-aircraft cruiser, it was supposed to protect aircraft carriers from enemy planes. So desperate was the situation, it was sent to face the Japanese surface force. After taking a torpedo hit, the ship limped away from the battle. While retiring to the south it was again torpedoed, this time by a submarine. The ship was literally vaporized. So cataclysmic was the explosion that nearby warships figured there could be no survivors and did not stop. Perhaps 100 of her 700-man crew survived the blast, but only ten were ever saved. Tragically, none of the famous "Fighting Sullivans", five brothers who all served on this ship, were among the survivors.



Continued page 9

Two days later, the battleship *Kirishima* and additional escorts returned to try again. However, this time they met two American battleships. One of them, the U.S.S. *Washington*, used its superior radar and fire control to creep in close to the *Kirishima* before opening a devastating barrage. *Kirishima* was soon reduced to a blazing, sinking wreck by *Washington's* mighty 16-inch guns. This would be the last time Japanese battleships would venture near Guadalcanal. With the airfield safe from surface attack, the fourteen Japanese troop ships bound for Guadalcanal were in grave danger. Planes from Henderson field and the incredibly resilient *Enterprise* sank seven of them, and blasted the other four on the beaches while they were being unloaded. This round of the battle convinced the Japanese that Guadalcanal could not be recaptured. Resistance would continue until February 1943, but Henderson Field was now safe. Unfortunately, Guadalcanal would be only the first of many, many difficult island battles on the road to



USS Washington

### GONE WEST

Tom Righetti, a 61-year-old physician from Miami, was killed recently in the crash of a vintage Soviet MIG-15 in North Carolina. Although Dr. Righetti was not a member of the Valiant Air Command, he was often a participant in the annual airshow.

Investigators said at the scene the plane crashed after encountering bad weather. On his way to perform in the 2002 Neptune Festival Air Show in Virginia Beach, VA, Righetti had taken off from Myrtle Beach after a brief stop.

Our heartfelt condolences to his family.

### UPCOMING AIRSHOWS OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS

**November 1-2, 2002:** Melbourne Airport Extravaganza. Friday and Saturday, 1000 to 1700. This is a static show only. Fuel and rooms may be available. Contact Cliff Graham, One Air Terminal Parkway Suite 220, Melbourne Florida 32901 or via fax (321) 674-5791 or email [clgraham@mlbair.com](mailto:clgraham@mlbair.com).

**November 1-3, 2002:** NAS Jacksonville Air Show, Jacksonville, FL. Amy Cimino, (904) 542-3577

**November 8-9, 2002:** Blue Angel Homecoming. NAS Pensacola, FL. Contact Ed Dee, (850) 452-3806.

**November 9, 2002:** Sat., Embry-Riddle Celebrates the Centennial of flight. Static displays on Saturday. Daytona Beach, FL. Mr. George M Clarke, AFOTC Det 157 Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University 600 S Clyde Morris Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114. (386) 226-6880. [clarkey@erau.dh.edu](mailto:clarkey@erau.dh.edu)

**November 9-10, 2002:** North Florida Charity Airshow, Lake City Municipal Airport, Lake City, FL. Mr. Douglas E. Vernon, (904) 758-1010 ([vernond@isgroup.net](mailto:vernond@isgroup.net)).

**November 9-10, 2002:** Stuart Airshow. Stuart, FL. Contact Walt McGlynn, (561) 286-1844.

**November 9-10, 2002:** Hendricks Field, Sebring (SEF) Barbeque Feast, Aviation Display. Rotary Clubs of Highlands County, <http://communities.msn.com/HFAirfest> or e-mail [HFAirfest@hotmail.com](mailto:HFAirfest@hotmail.com). Beverly Hunt - HFAirfest Secretary (863) 386-8547 [beverlys@hin.net](mailto:beverlys@hin.net). HF-Airfest, P.O. Box 312, Lake Placid, FL 33862.

**November 30, 2002:** Punta Gorda, FL, EAA Warbird Squadron 24 meeting, 0930, at EAA Chapter 565 building on the Punta Gorda/Charlotte County Airport. Contact Commander Earl Walsh, (941) 590-9885, or Linc Dexter, (941) 995-5922.

**December 2-5, 2002:** ICAS Convention, Rio Suites Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas. (703) 779-8510.

**December 5-8, 2002:** Vintage Weekend at Ocean Reef Club, Key Largo. (07FA) Concours d'Elegance of Automobiles, Yachts, and Aircraft. Ocean Reef Club.35 Ocean Reef Drive, Suite 200 Key Largo, FL 33037. (305) 367-2611, (305) 367-3690 or toll-free (800) 741-7333. Fax: (305) 367-5958. E-mail: [dmoore@oceanreef.com](mailto:dmoore@oceanreef.com), [www.oceanreef.com](http://www.oceanreef.com). Call Marcy Aultman (305) 367-5874.

**December 7, 2002:** Merritt Island Airport (COI). 0800-1100. Toys for Tots Fly-In Pancake Breakfast. The price for the breakfast is a new, unwrapped toy to be donated to the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. Sponsored by the Brevard Aviation Association and Merritt Island Air Service. Contact Bobbi Lasher (321) 636-5346. [b9191@att.net](mailto:b9191@att.net)

**December 28, 2002:** Punta Gorda, FL, EAA Warbird Squadron 24 meeting, 0930, at EAA Chapter 565 building on the Punta Gorda/Charlotte County Airport. Contact Commander Earl Walsh, (941) 590-9885, or Linc Dexter, (941) 995-5922.

**January 18-19, 2003:** Pompano Air Fair 2003. Pompano Air Park, FL. Static's. Contact Mr. Robert Tash, 650 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Pompano Beach, FL 33060. (561) 694-3557. [tashhome@attbi.net](mailto:tashhome@attbi.net).

**February 22-23, 2003:** Florida International Air Show, Charlotte County Airport, Punta Gorda, FL. Contact Mr. Thomas W. Garrard, 520 East Olympia Ave., Punta Gorda, FL 33950. (941) 639-7020. [GARA@sunline.net](mailto:GARA@sunline.net).

**March 7-9, 2003:** Valiant Air Command's TICO Warbird Airshow 2003. Space Coast Regional Airport, Titusville, FL. Contact Mike McCann (321) 259-0587. [mikewizmcc@aol.com](mailto:mikewizmcc@aol.com).

**March 22-23, 2003:** Ft Myers EAA Open House. Page Field. Warbirds wanted. Possibility of room/car/dinner/fuel. Contact Dennis Labbe, (800) 237-4472 (work), (941)-481-0898 (evenings). [DLabbe@32f.rjt.com](mailto:DLabbe@32f.rjt.com).

**March 29, 2003:** Open House & AirShow at Albert Whitted Airport, St. Petersburg (SPG). We Need Your Help to keep this airport open! Mail your donation check to: Aviation Day, Albert Whitted Airport c/o Jack W. Tunstill, 9132 124th Way N. Seminole, FL 33772. Cell: (727) 415-3357. [warjacaviation@aol.com](mailto:warjacaviation@aol.com)

**AIRSHOW 2003—MARCH 7, 8, & 9**

# AVIATING WITH EVANS

Bud Evans, Public Relations Director

*Please give the editor some feedback as to whether you want this column to continue each month. I enjoy relating some of my stories but only if you readers are interested in them. B.E.*

I keep repeating that war is a terrible way to create the most vivid memories that stay with you all of your life, probably because it is true! I guess that any event which places you in the situation of life and death on a second-to-second basis becomes indelibly etched into your memory bank. I know that I can remember just about every aspect of all of my nearly 200 combat missions. The one that I am about to relate is one of those that is especially stored in great detail, only because of the enormous amount of damage it caused. Also because it was a mission that history seems to ignore. I am referring to the recent historical summaries of the Korean War which state the U.S. Navy controlled all of the waters around South Korea and had no naval engagements. The statement indicating there were no engagements with North Korean ships was probably true as far as the Navy was concerned, but not for the USAF and the Army Air Corps!

Just a few days following the invasion of the North Koreans into South Korea, I was assigned a late afternoon mission to fly from Itazuki Air Base in southern Japan and attack a large supply depot which had been captured by the North Koreans. It was located a little south of Seoul and near the port of Incheon. There were a number of warehouses, revetments, and a large petroleum "Tank Farm". B-26's and F-51 Mustangs had strafed and bombed the tanks with no success as far as creating any fires, which meant the fuel had been removed and stored elsewhere. I was briefed to attack anything suspicious plus strafe and rocket all of the warehouses.



During my descent to the depot area I saw the large 3-story headquarters building with a large circular drive and a flag pole in the center in front of the building. I also spotted a jeep heading towards the circle at high speed so I placed my gun-sight pipper just slightly behind him as I flew into range. Before I had a chance to fire I was amazed to see the jeep hit the curb, still traveling full bore, and leap into the air as it tumbled end over end spilling its human cargo out in all directions. I was so transfixed by this bazaar display that I damn near flew into the flagpole. I recovered quickly enough

to spot the opening to a high walled revetment about 1 mile ahead giving me time to push the nose of my F-80 toward it and the line of soldiers in the entrance. They never knew what hit them as I concentrated a quick burst from my six 50 caliber guns, tearing a path through those troops in the entrance. My wingman had time enough to get a better angle across the opening to the long building inside the revetment. The line of soldiers ran from the entrance and then down the side of the building, entering it from the far end. I could see all of this as I pulled up from my first pass and directed my Nos. 3 and 4 to attack from the end of the building, 90 degrees from the direction my wingman and I had made our attacks. I had climbed to the "high cover" position and watched while the poor North Koreans were torn apart by the other two F-80's.

While I was orbiting looking over the carnage, something caught my attention about the headquarters building. Although it was a white building and the sun was low in the sky on a bright day, the west side of the building was dark as though in a shadow. The nose of my F-80 was drifting down toward the building as I turned to make another pass on the revetment. That black side of the white building just didn't add up with the sun shining directly on it so I fired a short burst at the building. I was rewarded by huge flames belching from it as my API bullets hit the hundreds of 55-gallon barrels of fuel that were stacked all the way up to the top and all of the way down the side of the building. I had found the secret of the disappearing fuel from the fuel tank farm. My wingman saw what my bullets had done to the north side of the building so he fired into the south end with like results.

F-80's in flight, USAF file photo



At about the same time I was admiring my handiwork, I received an urgent call from an Army observation aircraft asking for any fighter aircraft in the Incheon Harbor area to answer. We were only a few miles from Incheon so I responded giving my location and advised I had four F-80's with 5-inch rockets and 50 caliber guns in my flight. He excitedly explained that he had just spotted three troop ships about 4 to 5 miles offshore unloading troops that were heading toward Incheon Harbor. I signaled the flight to rejoin me and pointed the nose of my F-80 toward the west and the China Sea a few miles away.

Crossing the coastline I could see the silhouettes of the three single-stack ships set against the horizon which was highlighted by the low-setting sun shining on the water. There was smoke rising from each of the ship's stack and I was certain they had not planned on staying in position very long.

*Continued page 11*

The Army spotter plane pilot (call sign "Pineapple") was excitedly telling me that he had flown close enough to see they were lowering long boats and filling them with soldiers and supplies. He also said he saw what he believed were Chinese flags on the ships. They were almost lined up so the closest to shore was just inside the second ship and the third ship just beyond the second ship.

I positioned my flight to head straight for the first ship and told my No. 3 and No. 4 to hit the second ship as my wingman and I hit the first one. All the time my mind was recalling the horrendous amount of firepower naval ships put up when attacked by aircraft during WW-II, and I kept waiting for the sky to light up with their guns firing at us!

Pressing in on the first ship, I locked my eyes on my gun sight and placed the pipper on the ship's bridge. I fired two rockets and a short burst from my guns. One rocket spun off into the water but the other hit directly on the upper bridge. My wingman put both of his rockets into the midship where they were loading troops and equipment into the long boats. When I pulled up from my pass I told No. 3 and No. 4 to fire all four of their rockets on their first pass while my wingman and I attacked the third ship with our remaining four rockets. All of our rockets hit the third ship in varying places, and when we pulled up from our pass I had a chance to survey the results. All three ships had small fire and smoke rising from them. About that time "Pineapple" reminded me there were about a dozen or so fully loaded long boats heading for shore.

Climbing to a good attack position I called for each of the F-80's to hit a long boat. I would take the one closest to the shore and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 would each hit the next one in line. The results were devastating. The long boats were crammed with troops who had no place to hide. As we strafed each boat, men and equipment were blanketed with murderous 50-caliber machine gun fire which tore the boats and occupants apart. We each managed two passes which sank at least eight long boats carrying 30 to 40 troops each. On my second pass I was able to fire on two boats, as was my wingman; however, the other two aircraft ran out of ammo after their second pass. We were all low on fuel but no one wanted to leave until all their ammo was gone. As we climbed away from the area, I looked back to see smoke still coming from the rocket hits on all three ships and the water filled with debris where the long boats had been. To our left I could see the sky filled with heavy black smoke and red flames burning brightly from the depot building where the fuel had been stored. We had done our job on this mission.

"Pineapple" was going wild with congratulations and reporting what he saw as a result of his finding the ships and our damaging them. To the best of my knowledge the ships didn't fire any shots at us. I'm sure their captains had not read their tidal charts or hadn't expected an Army observation plane or a flight of fighters to be in the area that late in the day. The Inchon area was very shallow at low tide and that was why the ships had to offload their troops far from shore.

We made it back to Japan after dark and by the time we debriefed with the intelligence folks, had dinner, and read the morning mission schedule, we were ready for bed. Most of the pilots in the tent were asleep so there was little chance to tell about our naval victory. However, everyone had stories to tell after each mission in those early days of the Korean War since there were so many North Koreans and so few of us.

## WASPs



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### VALIANT AIR COMMAND PHOTO SITE

Museum...Hangar...Flightline...Aircraft Restoration  
<http://community.webshots.com/user/mustang32>

Photo Site Author: VAC Col. Ed Ehrenspeck  
skybase@earthlink.net



**HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

*P.S. The Editors Sometimes Eat Turkey!!!*



**CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE  
AIRCRAFT AND OWNERS?**  
Hint: Airshow 1985  
**LET THE EDITORS KNOW**



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**F-15 OVER SHUTTLE LAUNCH AREA**

Contributed by Mike McCann