



Official Bulletin of the VALIANT AIR COMMAND, INC.  
(a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization  
Space Coast Regional Airport, Titusville, FL 32780-8009

# UN-SCRAMBLE

Volume 25, Issue 5

May 2003

## HOW DID YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?????

Bed a little lumpy? Toss and turn any? Wish the heat was higher? Maybe the A/C wasn't on.....Had to go to the john? Need a drink of water?????????



**THINK OF THEM PROTECTING YOUR FREEDOM!!!**



# Valiant Air Command

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## 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.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

MAY 13, 2003

12:00 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARD ROOM

JUNE 10, 2003

12:00 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARD ROOM

### AIRSHOW DEBRIEF/MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MAY 17, 2003

12:00 NOON

VAC HANGAR (POTLUCK--PLEASE BRING YOU FAVORITE DISH.

VAC WILL PROVIDE ENTREE. CALL 268-1941 TO LET US KNOW YOU WILL ATTEND.)

## PROCUREMENT - Bob Frazier

Things have been busy this month with meetings and the Easter holidays. However, the T-2C Buckeye arrived by truck on April 17. It was immediately unloaded by the in-resident crew and attempts to reattach the wings were initiated. The crew will be identified and thanked next month following completion of these efforts. To date, the airplane is complete except for the engines and looks good for static display.

The VAC signs for I-95 have been approved by the Florida Dept. of Transportation's various departments. The modified configuration of the VAC sign design has been completed. Final approval of the VAC design and material procurement will follow.

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICER - Hal Larkin

We had a lot of activity in the restoration area this past month. The "O" rings for the nosewheel strut arrived, thanks to VAC member, Don Guisler, and were installed. The lower nosewheel strut has been reinstalled and is now in decay test. Rework of the bomb racks is on hold as George Doris had knee surgery on April 7.

The top side of the Panther's left and right wings have been primed. After we rotate them, the bottom sides will be primed and painted their final color. The molds for the left and right side windshield panels arrived--it sure took a bunch of manhours to make them! Now we have to find a vendor that can heat and mold the two panels of 1/2-inch Plexiglass. After the Plexiglass has been molded, they will have to be fitted to the windshield frame.

You never know where you will find the parts that you need! After publication of the list of instruments that we need for the Panther, VAC member Mike Brooks called to tell me that he found two of the instruments--the air speed indicator and the radio altimeter indicator. Let's see if we can find more; look in the garage and all those closets.

The boarding step that drops down when you depress the foot kick plate did not operate. Investigation revealed that the bell crank in the foot kick plate that releases the boarding step was broken. We now know that the installation is one Grumman design that was never intended to be reworked in the field! We have the whole assembly out, but it was quite a task--biggest problem was no room to access the kick plate well. The assembly is now in the rework cycle.

Although we received a canopy from Pensacola, it is missing the locking assembly and the antenna for the ARN-6. Although the ARN-6 unit has been removed, the antenna is very visible in the canopy. We are in the process of fabricating the antenna.

The J-48 engine rework is moving right along. All flex lines are being replaced and the engine will be painted to look like new. However, for the J-48 engine we need a tail cone, a Pratt & Whitney part, plus a tail pipe, a Grumman part.

Both wings for the ME-208 have been painted on the bottom. The German insignia is in the process of being painted. However, it takes two colors which require a 24-hour cure time for each color, which comes to 2 weeks for us as we only work on Thursday. After the insignias are complete, we will rotate the wings and install them. The ME-208 will then be sitting on its landing gear for the first time in a long, long time.

## OPERATIONS - Mike McCann

I have spent the last month or so figuring all of the show accounting, which is now complete. Due to the adverse weather that affected the show on all three days, the revenue was not what we would have liked. In fact, it appears that the show actually lost money. I went ahead and figured out what every pilot was due anyway, and the VAC made the corporate decision to go ahead and reimburse every pilot all that was claimed (subject, of course, to the \$500 limitation on enroute fuel, which affects a small percentage of you). This means that we will have to go beyond the airshow account balance, which is now essentially wiped out, and dip into some VAC savings accounts to reimburse these monies. My feeling, and those of the majority of the directors, is that our members shouldn't have to take it in the shorts due to the vagaries of the weather and the resulting impact on attendance. Especially when so many of you made the extra effort to get to TICO while dealing with the low ceilings and rain (plus we want you to come back next year). Some interesting facts: show fuel due totaled \$5,650, enroute fuel was \$8,196, and hotel reimbursements totaled \$4,100. The checks will go in the mail the last week of April. As usual, I will cheerfully absorb any darts that may arise concerning the accounting. Should you have any comments or questions on any of this, please don't hesitate to contact me.

I feel it important to once again reiterate how much the VAC appreciates each and every one of you who make the effort to attend and fly. Remember, this is your organization and your show. I personally try to speak to each of you over the weekend and express our gratitude for your efforts, but I find I am usually so busy taking care of details and working last minute problems (especially this year) that I know I miss some of you. Nevertheless, we greatly appreciate ALL of you who take the time out of your busy schedules to bring your warbirds to TICO. I would like to especially recognize the following individuals who graciously declined to accept the fuel reimbursement this year: Eliot Cross (P-40), Jim Goolsby (CJ-6), Denny Labbe (O-2), Paul Pefley (OV-1), and Kermit Weeks and the Fantasy of Flight (AN-2).

I am proud to announce a new and exciting addition to the activities here at Headquarters. We are in the process of concluding an agreement whereby new member Don McDuffie and crew will begin operating a T-6 ride business from the premises. Don has gone to the effort to set up a very professional operation featuring an immaculate SNJ (N101RF), which is now residing in the hangar. He and his crew of Eric and Paul will be offering sightseeing rides, acrobatics, T-6 checkouts and, soon, formation training. We have concluded a sublease agreement, which is now in the final coordination stages with the airport authority. I fully expect him to be up and running by the time you read this. I feel this is a major coup for this organization, as we will realize additional foot traffic through the facilities as a result of his

advertising activities. Plus we will realize an additional income stream. And there is the intangible benefit of having the noise and the smoke from a real warbird just outside. Real airplanes that really fly, not just cobwebs. It is a synergistic effect, and will certainly help generate additional interest in our activities. And I must admit I derive a certain sense of satisfaction from being able to help out someone who shares the same love of vintage military aircraft as I (and you) do. We are all in this together, folks.

Congratulations to Ray Daur, Denny Labbe, Pat Phillips, and Gerry Walbrun who were recognized by the EAA Young Eagles Program for flying '10 in 2002'. I'm sure I missed a few of you out there, my apologies in advance.

*The emergencies you train for almost never happen. It's the one you can't train for that kills you.* Ernest K. Gann, advice from the 'old pelican'

#### UPCOMING AIRSHOWS OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS:

May 3-4, 2003: Ft Lauderdale Air and Sea Show, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact Leni Smith (954) 467-3555. [www.nationalsalute.com](http://www.nationalsalute.com).

May 3-4, 2003: May Fly Air Show, Florence, SC. Contact Julie Davis (843) 665-0515.

May 24-25, 2003: Miami Wings over Miami Museum is holding its Annual Memorial Day Warbird Fly-in and Bike Extravaganza, this year titled "Salute to America". Airshow is at the museum location at Kendall-Tamiami Executive Airport (KTMB). FMI, call Vincent Tirado (305) 233-5197 or Walt Orth (305) 233-5197. [www.wingsovermiami.com](http://www.wingsovermiami.com).

June 7-8, 2003: Asheboro, NC. North Carolina Aviation Museum's Warbird Airshow. Info: Museum number (336) 625-0170.

June 25-July 4, 2003: World Aerobatic Championships Competition to be held at Lakeland, Florida - The International Aerobatics Commission (CIVA) announced that the United States has been selected as host country for the XXII World Aerobatic Championships in 2003. The championships will be held June 25 through July 4, 2003, at the Sun 'n Fun Fly-In campus at the Lakeland Linder Regional Airport in Lakeland, Florida. Between 800-1000 pilots, officials and judges from 15-20 countries are expected to participate, along with the top aerobatic pilots from around the world. [www.sun-n-fun.org](http://www.sun-n-fun.org).

July 2-6, 2003: Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. Orlando, FL. Contact Don Royce (407) 870-5367.

July 29-August 4, 2003: Oshkosh, WI. 51st Airventure 2003. Celebrating 100 years of flight this year. FMI: (920) 426-4800. [www.airventure.org](http://www.airventure.org).

ICAS has received notification of the following air show cancellations:

5/10, Charleston AFB Air Expo, Charleston AFB, SC

5/17, Dyess AFB Open House, Abilene, TX

5/17-18, Wisconsin 128th ARW Military Display, Milwaukee, WI

6/7, Beale AFB Open House, Beale AFB, CA

6/14 -15, Air Show, Loveland, CO

6/20-22, Wings Over Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

6/28-29, Niagara Air Show, Niagara Falls, NY

7/23, Terrace-Kitimat Airshow Society, Terrace, BC

8/16-17, Syracuse Hancock International Air Show, Syracuse, NY

8/23-24, Thunder on the Rock, NAS Whidbey, WA

9/20-21, Central Valley LeMoore Air Show, NAS Lemoore, CA

9/27, Air Show, Charlotte, NC

10/11, Maxwell AFB Open House, Montgomery, AL

11/1-2, Lake Havasu Land & Sky Powerfest, Lake Havasu City, AZ

**Members Mike Keenum and Chuck Scott had every intention of attending TICO 2003 with their immaculate F-86 to pay tribute to the late Jimmy Rossi. Unfortunately, it could not be brought out of maintenance in time to make it. They did, however, make a \$150 donation in his honor. We are very grateful. Thank you, Mike and Chuck.**

## AVIATING WITH EVANS - Bud Evans

**Hitting the real enemy:** In October of 1950, the United States was worrying about the Russians or the Chinese coming into the war to support North Korea. They were already supplying arms and some volunteer forces to bolster what was left of the North Korean Army. We were running them across the Yalu River into China and from the lowly fighting man's point of view, we were sure the war was won. My Squadron Commander had even volunteered our 9<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron to go to Indo-China and help the French fight the Viet-Minn. On this particular day I was given a secret briefing on a mission to an area we had not flown to before. It was in the northeastern-most corner of North Korea and was at the very maximum range of our F-80. I was told that because of the extreme range the only ordnance we could carry were four 5-inch rockets and our six 50-caliber machine guns with full ammo load. An intelligence source had reported a large number of aircraft on a field at the end of the peninsula. After my surprising the 36 Soviet-made aircraft on the airfield at Pyongyang, we suspected they were sending another group of aircraft to support the North Koreans. The weather was forecast to be lousy all the way to the target area (this was their best guess). The wind aloft at 30,000 feet would be 100 knots on my nose enroute to the target which meant a long flight to get there, let down in the blind to a target area we were unfamiliar with, and hope to find the field. If there were aircraft on it, we were to attack and destroy all that we could.



L-R: Diefendorf, Evans, Quanbeck and Watson

I briefed my flight: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alton Quanbeck, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Allen Diefendorf and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Billy Watson. It was Quanbeck's 25<sup>th</sup> mission, Diefendorf's 5<sup>th</sup> and Watson was an old timer with over 50 missions. I assigned Quanbeck to lead the element with Diefendorf on my wing and Watson in the no. 4 spot. (Diefendorf had just arrived in the theater from flying with the "Acro-Jets" (the

pre-Thunderbird USAF demonstration team). After computing our time to target and suiting up, we were ready to Rock-n-Roll. My takeoff was fine but Watson had an engine fire and had to abort. Things were starting off badly! Quanbeck joined up on my wing and the three of us climbed into the solid overcast at 1200 feet. Somewhere about 8-9,000 feet I detected a high frequency vibration that was not normal. I checked my engine instruments and all the needles were in the green. Our machines were being held together by an act of God and a fine group of maintenance men. The higher I climbed the more pronounced the vibration became and, when we broke out between layers at 21,000 feet, I knew I was in trouble. I advised Quanbeck that he had the flight and I throttled back to reduce the aircraft shaking and made my 180-degree turn while descending back into the clouds. By now my instruments were beginning to fluctuate. My back and seat were getting a great massage. The one consolation was the 100-knot tailwind should get me back to K-2 in a hurry. I set up a pretty rapid rate of descent and kept waiting for my ADF needle to begin homing on the Teague radio beacon. I waited and waited and then decided it must be off the air. I was certain that I should be very close to it and didn't want to over-fly Teague and have to fight the headwinds trying to get back to the field with my sick machine. I didn't know until I called K-2 and asked for a DF steer that I was still north of the base. Something was drastically wrong as I knew I had reduced power but my airspeed was still close to normal as I was descending to get down on the ground as fast as I could. I leveled off at 10,000 feet and flew and flew and vibrated, but by this time I was getting a signal from Teague radio which was still in front of me. My engine overheat light was on and as soon as I passed over the beacon I made my rapid "Evans Designed" instrument approach. I was greatly relieved when I touched down on the rough metal runway at K-2. The fire trucks followed me to the parking ramp where maintenance discovered my engine had shed a large number of "turbine buckets".

I was certain our wind information was wrong and I began to worry about Quanbeck and Diefendorf. I was upset at first when I had to abort (my only one in both tours). I figured I would miss out on knocking out some more of their aircraft before they could do any harm to our troops. As time (2 hours and 45 minutes) passed with no word from my boys, I climbed up in the control tower to wait for any calls from them. That would have been the length of a normal max-range mission if you dropped down on the deck and made several attacks on a target. Three hours passed without any word. We checked with all of the other bases in Korea but no one had any contact with them. We were certain that they were down somewhere and could only hope it was in friendly territory. I left the tower and had just reached the Operations Office when the tower said that they had radio contact with the flight! That was super news but hard to believe they could still have enough fuel to still be airborne. In fact, they came in over the runway, pitched out, and landed without flaming-out. I was the first to meet the aircraft and to get the story from Quanbeck. He said they had found the airfield and were being fired on almost immediately after they broke out from under the clouds. The airfield was right where it should have been and there were lots military aircraft parked on it. They expended all of their ordnance in three passes and climbed away into the overcast heading for home. They cruise-climbed to 45,000 feet expecting to pick up some radio beacon without success. They figured with the 100-knot tailwind they should be over Japan when they finally received a reply to their calls to K-2 tower. They were directly west of Teague about 80 miles, and the tower gave them DF steers until they arrived over the field. I

walked with them to the de-briefing and discussed the fact that the wind information must have been 180 degrees inaccurate. A quick glance at the map made it look as though they had gone 300 miles or so beyond the target when they found the airfield that they attacked. The only possibility was the military air base at Vladavostoc, USSR. We kept that information to ourselves but Quanbeck and Diefendorf were flown to 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force HQ in Japan for detailed de-briefings. The Russians didn't report or complain to the UN for 3 days following the incident. Both pilots were taken out of combat and given jobs in Japan where they were soon promoted to Captain. Our Group Commander was relieved of command. Nothing was done to our Squadron Commander, and I was quietly notified that I would not get my promotion to Captain that I was scheduled to receive. As far as I know the weather folks responsible for giving us the wrong winds (100 knots at 180 degrees in the opposite direction) were not punished. It has been speculated in recent years that the attack was planned that way by a higher command to let the Russians know that we had jet fighters capable of reaching their large base at Vladavostoc if they decided to come into the conflict to help North Korea. A week or so later the Chinese crossed the Yalu River and we were suddenly at war with China (even though our politicians would not recognize it).

**DID YOU KNOW THAT THE  
ENTIRE UN-SCRAMBLE IS  
AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE  
IN PDF (printable) FORMAT????**

**GO TO**

**[WWW.VACWARBIRDS.ORG](http://WWW.VACWARBIRDS.ORG)**

**EDITOR'S  
CORNER**



Thanks to Jan Catherwood for helping put mailing sealers on last month's issue. Bob and Nita did the folding, labeling, and mailing.

We received some very nice airshow photos from member Jim Brown of New Smyrna Beach. Since we originally planned to publish this issue in black and white (to lower costs) and that wouldn't do them justice, we postponed using them. Then, by the time we decided on color, it was too late to incorporate any of them. We'll plan on doing that in a future edition, however. Thanks for your contribution, Jim.

We'll again send out a plea for replacements as Editors. As stated before--you could do it from anywhere--you do not have to live in the Titusville area. Please consider how you can help your organization and let us know....

# THE CENTERFOLD THIS MONTH FEATURES SOME OF THE VOLUNTEERS WHO KEEP THE VAC RUNNING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR--AS WELL AS AT AIRSHOW TIME!!!

**MIKE MC DONOUGH**, originally from Pittsburgh, then 4 years in the Navy, and still thinks the only football game worth watching is the Army/Navy game (last year was superb)! After the Navy, he graduated from Penn Technical Inst. of Pittsburgh and enlisted with IBM for 30 years.



In the R&D labs in upstate New York, helped launch such domestic computers as the /360 and /370 series, among others. A current member of the National Warplane Museum in Elmira, NY, gets some air time in the B-17 *Fuddy Duddy* along with smaller stock, a T-6 and a J-3, and of course pays his dues with hangar toil. Mike has been a member of the VAC since 1992,

mowed grass to start, then migrated to the C-47, and has served as crew chief and flight engineer since 1996. With well over 200 flights and well over 300 hours in the *Belle*, with tours to Oshkosh, WI, and Guantanamo Cuba, the loss of the *Tico Belle* was a hard hit.

**JOSH EILING** began his aircraft experiences in New Knoxville, OH, in his father's airplane when he was six years of age, with subsequent right-seat time in KingAirs and Barons up until 1982. Moving into his father's medical supply business, he attended college and eventually served overseas with the Army Corps of Engineers. He spent some time barnstorming with a buddy, Jerry Churchill--just like the real old days--at county fairs, giving the folks rides, not in an old Jenny but a Bell helicopter. Josh says that it was fun times. In 1991, Josh, along with unnamed friends, "borrowed" his father's Beech and got his first jet time. Our thanks to his tolerant wife, Shirley, who shares his time with the VAC. Josh in one of those young guys not only full of great enthusiasm but with a lot of years ahead to help maintain and fly these airplanes that are our responsibility for the future.



**JACK DORRELL**, originally from Long Island NY, Jack is retired from the appliance sales and service field where he owned his own business. He and his wife, Joan, put in many hours at the hangar--Jack toiling in the hangar and Joan in the topside offices. Now from Melbourne, FL, the Dorrells are an integral part of the organization. Occasionally, the two other Dorrell brothers, Pearson and Ed, a former crew-guy, make appearances. When the C-47 was active, Jack was usually manning the jump door for skydiver deployment. Jack is a rare veteran of both the Navy (seeing destroyer action in the Pacific) and the Air Force (as a B-29 crewman operating out of MacDill AFB). He holds an instrument rated pilot's license. Along with his many other talents, Jack is our senior aircraft tug operator and is usually called upon for any aircraft relocation and spotting.



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**HARRY MC NAMARA**, a native of Hartford, CT, moved with his family to Florida at age 7. The family settled in St. Petersburg where he attended parochial schools. Harry graduated from Bishop Barry High School, St. Petersburg Junior College, and Florida State University. He began a 40-year career as a journalist at the *St. Petersburg Independent* and later for newspapers in Bradenton, Tampa, Lakeland, and additional stints in New Jersey and Colorado. Harry served in the U. S. Army in Germany from 1961 to 1964 and joined present-day *Florida Today* in 1968. He was with the Gannett Company for 33 years before retiring in 2001. He began flying in 1990 and received his private pilot's license in 1991. He began volunteering at the VAC in February 2002.



**DON RIGGLE**, originally from Apollo in western Pennsylvania, spent his career as an electronics engineer. Don graduated from DeVry Technical Institute in Chicago, IL, began working at Cape Canaveral AFB Test Center in the mid-1950's, and participated in many of the early rocket launches; e.g., Thor, Minuteman, Titan and all of the Apollo program.



He was part of the Space Shuttle program through STS-64 and retired in 1994. He has had an interest in airplanes since childhood and took the opportunity to join the VAC to work on the local Warbirds. It was an

answer to our prayer! A former flight engineer of the flight crew on the *Tico Belle*, Don works diligently trying to restore her to flying condition. Don also is an integral part of the hangar crew and staffs the flying aircraft during the annual Airshow.

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**GORDON BRIGGS**, recently of Providence, RI, "Gordie" is a late acquisition to the C-47 crew and brings some much-needed aviation metalsmith experience with him. Working under Al McQueen, Gordie has bitten

off a big chunk of the skin repair responsibility. He's a veteran of the Air Force and aircraft-related schools with a Rhode Island College degree and teaching background in the industrial arts. He has industrial experience in sales and servicing within his own company--Briggs Oil Service of Providence. His largest chunk of experience was with the Kaman Aerospace Corp. of Moosup, CT, in aircraft systems, with many years as a group leader and foreman for that company. The VAC certainly welcomes Gordie and his wife, Agnes, who assists in the topside office on the days when they come down to the VAC from New Smyrna Beach, FL.



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**IVAN GOMEZ** comes to the VAC by a unique route. Guided and encouraged by both his family in his native Bogota, Colombia, and a personal mentor in California, Ivan became an official U.S. citizen in 1999. He received a degree in aerospace engineering in San Diego in 1989 and moved to San Francisco where he graduated from CCSF with his FAA A&P license. Living in the Bay area, Ivan worked for United Airlines, applying his formal education to the maintenance of Boeing and Airbus aircraft in order to expand his knowledge of aircraft and their engines. He

moved to Florida in 2001, joining the VAC the same year. Even today Ivan still pursues more education at BCC in Melbourne, studying electronics. He is a valued member of the VAC flight maintenance group in that he is one of the younger people on which we will rely in the future to continue the important work of keeping these airplanes available to the public.



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**Norm Lindsay** was born sometime after WWI and before WW II in Pittsburgh, PA. After high school, he joined the U.S. Navy and trained as an aircraft mechanic working on reciprocating engines of the time

(round engines). After his discharge from the service, like most in Pittsburgh, he spent some time in the steel mills. After a few short years and deciding the mills were not for him, he obtained a mechanic's position at the PA National Guard and enrolled in the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics



to obtain his mechanic's certificate. Viet Nam came along, and Norm's National Guard unit was activated in 1968. After discharge, he was offered a mechanic's position at the then Allegheny Airlines, which was accepted. After 30 years and numerous airline name changes, he retired as a maintenance director for US Airlines. Today, along with other dedicated people, Norm spends a few days a week lending his services to preserve history at the VAC.

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**Bob "Doc" Bixby**, originally from Norfolk, NY, is a retired veterinarian, a graduate of Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. In addition to his duties of reconstruction of our

C-47, he provides emergency medical treatment for the crew, and has on numerous occasions! One of Doc's summer upstate hobbies is the restoration of antique heavy equipment: tractors, trucks, cars, anything that has an old engine to work on. With all the tugs, forklifts, and aircraft to be moved around in the VAC hangars, we try to keep the Doc smiling. Also a member of the local R/C flying club, mornings are often taken up punching holes in the blue Florida skies, an effort that had to be forfeited during those cold, northern New York winters.



## MORE OF OUR SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS, CONTINUED FROM CENTERFOLD

**Al McQueen** is a highly experienced Certified Airframe/Power Plant mechanic and is the prime coordinator for the *Tico Belle* repair and reconstruction. Al is essentially from Inverness, FL, and received his certification in 1984 from the King Aeronautics School in Sarasota. He has been keeping many local aircraft structurally sound for many years. He has specialized in aircraft airframe repair from Ft. Lauderdale to Titusville and other venues, and splits his time these days between the VAC and as an independent contractor at numerous other sites in the area. Al and his father, H. F. McQueen, have been associated with the VAC since 1988, and for the past year we have been extremely



fortunate to have him as the lead coordinator for the repair crew for the *Belle*. In this capacity, he has made the reconstruction to flight of the C-47 not only possible but probable, and this is very important to us who work with him.

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**Tom Etter** was born in Ft. Lauderdale, the son of a Navy Chief Machinist Mate on the *USS Hornet CV-8*, and so had a lot of Navy influence. He graduated as a Civil Engineer from Syracuse University, and spent 28 years in the oilfields as a field engineer, instructor, and in management positions in 28 states, Canada, and Nigeria, moving 18 times with the same company! He has extensive experience with explosives and radioactive materials. He was drafted three times but was deferred each time because of his critical jobs. Tom retired at age 50. He helped build and expand the now Mid-America Museum with wide experience as a ramp boss for their air shows which hosted the Thunderbirds and Canada's Snow Birds. Tom is currently a realtor with Century 21 and, with his wife Pat, enjoys their daughter and grandchildren and a firefighter son. Tom manages to squeeze in some days at the VAC among his many other hobbies, and we do appreciate that.



**Readers:** If you have enjoyed this information about volunteers, let us know and we'll do it again. If you know someone who should be featured, please submit the information along with a photo. Board Members and paid employees/members are not eligible.

the Editors

## MAINTENANCE - Bob James

**C-47**--Work on the nose and aft sections is continuing in a steady manner. On the forward end, Al McQueen is nearing the end of the exterior skin work. He has been assisted by Ivan Gomez, "Doc"Bixby, Don Riggle, Mike McDough and John McCoy. These individuals have made doors and panels, then painted (primed) same. Several have been employed bucking rivets. Today (Sat 4/19) Serge English arrived and when asked what he could do was promptly assigned a tough job of mounting the starboard control column pivot. This was followed by adjusting the port, center and starboard pivots to assure that the left/right centering was properly completed. Mission accomplished!

Gordon Briggs was back today also after a few days off betting against the house (Biloxi). Sounds like his better half had all the luck on one quarter and hit the jackpot! I know that the VAC has been lucky to have his services as a highly competent sheet metal mechanic!

**UTVA**--The transponder and intercom installation is continuing. It looks like it's down to some final sheet metal work. After Easter we should have a better idea when Jim Towe will be ready to do a smoke test!

**S2F**--The tracker's battery gave up the ghost and refused to hold a charge. Looks like we'll have to replace it prior to being able to run the engines and cycle the wings.

**TBM**--Things are all quiet on the TBM front. Hope to get some activity going again when we have the man/woman power. Fly and drive safely.

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## FINANCE - Pieter Lenie

Now that filing your taxes is over, perhaps you wish you had a few more deductions to take. Why not think of the Valiant Air Command and the many special projects that are going on? You can prepare now by your donations to the Valiant Air Command Museum, either monetary or memorabilia items. All donations are tax deductible. Also, I remind you that each volunteer mile is deductible at the rate of 14 cents per mile (this year). Those miles add up quickly!!!

I have just received the lists for pilot reimbursement for the airshow, and the checks will be going out today (April 16).

As one of the founders of the VAC, I consider the Airshow a success when it is a safe airshow. That is always my first criteria.



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
**VALIANT AIR COMMAND, INC.**  
**6600 Tico Road, Titusville, FL 32780-8009 (321) 268-1941, 1942**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

My Name Tag should read \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Tag \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Ph \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Children \_\_\_\_\_

Armed Services Time: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Dates \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in: Restoration \_\_\_\_\_ Warbirds \_\_\_\_\_ Museum \_\_\_\_\_ Airshows \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteering \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ M/C \_\_\_\_\_

**This Application is subject to review by our General Staff. YOUR INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL**  
**Single (1) \_\_\_\_\_ \$75/yr Family (2) \_\_\_\_\_ \$100/yr (DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A PILOT OR WARBIRD OWNER TO BELONG TO THE VAC**

**NEW COLONELS**

**C-47 TICO BELLE REPAIR FUND**

Donald Hill	Kissimmee FL
Don McDuffie	St. Cloud FL
Ken Rian	Titusville FL
<b>RENEWALS</b>	
Lester Badger	Cocoa FL
Bryan Blazie	Stuart FL
James Bond	Richmond Hill NY
George Clyde	Melbourne FL
Sam & Diane Daniele	Merritt Island FL
Robert Dawson	Orlando FL
Bruce Goodrich	Titusville FL
James Goolsby	Crescent City FL
Richard Hart	Midland PA
Kevin House	Palm Beach Gardens FL
Ken Kinard	Cocoa FL
Robert & Ellie Kosch	Brooksville FL
Jimmy & Dick Leeward	Ocala FL
Wallace & Esther Littell	Titusville FL
Robert & Camille McCullough	Orlando FL
Joe & Bea Morales	Merritt Island FL
Bob Pacetelli	Deltona FL
Larry & Sherry Sietsma	Indialantic FL
Helen & Lenard Steele	Ft Lauderdale FL
Lee Tannenbaum	Cocoa Beach FL
Richard & Rose Thompson	Orlando FL
Orlando Titus	Titusville FL
Alexander & Jennifer Van Den Berg	Winter Park FL
Paul Woodard	Sebastian FL
Walter Yocum	Titusville FL

As of March 31, 2003, donations to the repair fund totaled \$47,854 with a remaining balance of \$3,984. The donation jugs and memorial cards with original pieces of the airplane skin are providing most of the donations this month. Donations since April 1 have been promising. Additional aluminum sheets, skilled sheet metal workers, and an overhauled engine mount have been recent costs.

Thanks to new donors:

Walter Yocum	Titusville FL	\$1000
Jean & Harry Crocker	Vero Beach FL	\$ 20
Darrell & Dorothy Fisher	Marion IA	\$ 100
Robert Foley	Oviedo FL	\$ 50
"Cap" Capito	Melbourne FL	\$ 100
Steven Grant	Indialantic FL	\$ 10
Don Hussey	N Palm Beach FL	\$ 50
John Prisoc	Jacksonville FL	\$ 10
Joyce Ulm	Tampa FL	\$ 200

**THANKS TO FRIENDS OF THE TBM**

Don Hussey	Palm Beach FL	\$ 50
Forrest Ryan	Winston Salem SC	\$100
Paul Woodward	Sebastian FL	\$100

## Yesterday's Battles: World War Two - Jeff James

### Lightnings in the sky, sharks in the sea

Spring 1943--After an impressive run of victories, Japan's war machine was halted and shoved into reverse by the resilient American military. Seeking to improve the situation, Japan's fleet commander, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, set out on an inspection and morale-building tour of the Solomon Islands. American code breakers discovered these plans and Admiral William "Bull" Halsey ordered that Yamamoto be inter-



cepted. One of his inspection stops would be on the island of Bougainville, in the central Solomon Islands. It would be difficult, but Lockheed P-38 Lightnings, equipped with long-range drop tanks, could potentially intercept Yamamoto, if their timing was perfect. Despite the distance, 18 P-38s set out from Guadalcanal's Henderson Field and intercepted Yamamoto, right on time near Bougainville. Two twin engine Mitsubishi "Betty" bombers carried Yamamoto and his staff, and they were escorted by several Zero fighters. The P-38's roared in and



shot down both of the Bettys, leaving Admiral Yamamoto dead in the wreckage. The Japanese High Command was stunned. One Japanese officer summed it up when he said, "There was only one Yamamoto.... and no one is able to replace him." To avoid tipping off the Japanese about the vulnerability of their naval codes, another force of P-38s was sent to raid airfields in the same area the next day!

While the Japanese were losing control of the skies in 1943, they were also losing control of the seas. American submarines had not done well in 1942, primarily due to faulty torpedoes they had been equipped with. In 1943, that began to change. Led by a man named Dudley "Mush" Morton, the American submarines began tearing huge holes in Japan's Pacific Empire. On his first patrol with the submarine *Wahoo*, Morton snuck into the harbor of Wewak in New Guinea, using only a high school geography book bought by a crewman in Australia! Nine miles into the harbor, Morton traded shots with a Japanese destroyer. The first five torpedoes missed, but the sixth struck home and sank the ship.

Morton then headed north and encountered a four-ship convoy. In the running battle that followed, Morton and the *Wahoo* sank all four ships, including one vital tanker. Out of torpedoes, the *Wahoo* returned to Pearl Harbor, complete with a broom attached to the mast to signify a "clean sweep." On the next patrol, which ended in April 1943, the



*Wahoo* sank an incredible nine ships in ten days. This prompted submarine commander Admiral Charles Lockwood to declare the *Wahoo* a "one boat wolf pack." Tragically, the *Wahoo* was lost with all hands off of Japan in October 1943. To this day it is not known what caused the loss of this "boat" and her gallant crew.

Despite these and other losses, the Pacific fleet's submarines played a huge role in the victory over Japan. In 1943, one American submarine stalked and sank a 20,000-ton Japanese aircraft carrier, in a typhoon! Throughout all of 1943, American submarines logged 350 patrols, fired 3,937 torpedoes and sank 335 ships totaling 1.5 million tons. Incredibly, they would get even better as the war went on. By the end of the war, these sharks of the sea had destroyed a staggering 201 Japanese warships and sent 1,113 transport ships totaling 4,779,902 tons to the bottom of the sea.

## PERSONNEL - Alice Iacuzzo

It is not very often that I get away from the VAC office and take a walk around the hangars. One would have to have a deep feeling of pride about the work that goes on in the Restoration Hangar. The Panther was a hulk the last time I looked at it, the Messerschmitt looked lonesome in a corner, as if to say, "What about me?" They are now taking shape....wings are on. As they finish, they will need volunteers to paint. The cross will soon appear on the Messerschmitt. (This aircraft was willed to the VAC by Karl Schiller to be held in perpetuity. As one of my dear friends, I believe he would be proud of the aircraft when it goes on display.)

Hal Larkin, John Morrison, and the crew are unbelievable in the quality of work that goes into these aircraft. The Restoration Shop is as professionally run as any big aircraft corporation. Each volunteer is busy at an assigned job. A lot of the work goes home with them to be completed during the week. The Grumman Gremlins who work on these aircraft are completely self-sufficient; they not only work on the aircraft, seek out and maintain their equipment, but also raise all their own funds to do the work! If a job needs to be done, they do not use VAC Museum funds; they work on donations. You may want to adopt one of these airplanes and donate toward their efforts. Kudos to the Grumman Gremlins!!!

On the left side of the Restoration Hangar, the grand old "lady" *Tico Belle* stands. It's been months since I have seen it. I must admit it brought tears to my eyes to see how much work has been accomplished. Some of the wounds have been healed but, of course, there is a lot more to do. I had the honor to watch "Rosie the Riveter" at work as each rivet was carefully put into place. It was reminiscent of WWII. We all would like to see her flying again....why not adopt one of the aircraft to help with the funding? We would appreciate any help we can get.

I've adopted the TBM and am trying to raise funds. I visualize it with a beautiful paint job. Can you help? Just let me know which plane you would like to adopt.

The work continues in the library. The shelves are almost finished--thanks to my workers from AARP, Sal Ladho (supervising), Bill Moody, and Guido Franchini. Earle Compton has been working on cataloging the books for 7 years, but has

never had a place to put them. He has found some very interesting and rare books. I now have Joy Testeman (AARP) who will continue on his work while he is gone. We hope to make the library available to members when the work is done.

SNOWBIRDS: Once again it's that time of year when some of our most valuable members will be traveling north for the summer. Mike McDonough and Earle Compton will be leaving the end of April. We look forward to them coming back. We have gained two Snowbirds who will now make their home in Titusville permanently--Dick and Wendy Miller.

In our organization there are many volunteers who are hard at work in the Museum, but you don't have to be there to volunteer. A special thank you goes to Don Hussey and Steve Zatroch. They both continue to volunteer from their northern homes after they leave Florida for the summer. Don continues to work on grants, signage, and letter writing to politicians. He helps the organization while he is up in Michigan. Steve has given us some of the most professional grant material that we have ever had for as long as I have been here. He has worked on so many of the projects for Hal Larkin and others. His grant layouts and pictures are super! Thanks to these two Snowbirds.

We will be looking forward to seeing you all at the Airshow Debrief/Membership Meeting on May 17 at noon. We have found the members like potlucks at the Hangar. It is more relaxed and we have time to get to know each other.



**Mother's Day May 11**



## How To Observe Memorial Day

"...gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime....let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude--the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan." -- General John Logan, General Order No. 11, 5 May 1868

The "Memorial" in Memorial Day has been ignored by too many of us who are beneficiaries of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Often we do not observe the day as it should be, a day where we actively remember our ancestors, our family members, our loved ones, our neighbors, and our friends who have given the ultimate sacrifice:

- by visiting cemeteries and placing flags or flowers on the graves of our fallen heroes.
- by visiting memorials.
- by flying the US Flag at half-staff until noon.
- by flying the 'POW/MIA Flag' as well (Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act).
- by participating in a "National Moment of Remembrance": at 3 p.m. to pause and think upon the true meaning of the day, and for taps to be played.
- by renewing a pledge to aid the widows, widowers, and orphans of our fallen dead, and to aid the disabled veterans.

Also, please consider adding your voice in support of the efforts to restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day back to May 30th (instead of "the last Monday in May"). This would help greatly to return the solemn meaning back to the day, and to help return minds and hearts to think upon the ultimate sacrifices made by those in service to our country. Just one day out of the year to honor our loved ones, our ancestors, our friends who died in conflicts and wars -- not to honor war, but those that died in those conflicts and wars.



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Email: [vacinformation@aol.com](mailto:vacinformation@aol.com)



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