



# UN-SCRAMBLE



The Official Newsletter of the Valiant Air Command, Inc.  
6600 Tico Road, Titusville, FL 32780 - (321) 268-1941  
website: <http://www.valiantaircommand.com>  
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## 3rd Quarter Review - July, August & September 2016



Killer Bee lost her stinger! Tom Reilly removed the tail section for inspection and maintenance.



Chef Matthew preparing a delicious omelet as others wait their turn at the Fly-in Breakfast.



Fantastic food is being served at the Fly-In Breakfast. Omelets made to order, bacon, sausage, fresh fruit, Danish, coffee, orange juice. Crepes were served this morning...delish!

MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP - OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK - 9AM TO 5PM

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day

Adults \$20.00 - Senior or Military \$18.00 - Students 13 to 18 years old \$10.00

Children 5 to 12 years old \$5.00 - Children under 5 years old FREE - Special Tour Rates Available

### *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.*

501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization Museum Recognized by the Internal Revenue Service

## Future Events • 4th Quarter • 2016

Oct 8	Fly-in Breakfast - 8-10:30 Vietnam Hangar	Dec 7	Remember Pearl Harbor
Oct 18	Board of Director's Meeting	Dec 17	VAC Christmas Dinner 5:30 pm
Nov 11	Veterans Day - No Open House Nov 11th!	Dec 20	Board of Director's Meeting
Nov 12 & 13	Veterans Day Weekend Open House 9-5	Dec 24	Christmas Eve - Museum Closes Early
"	No Fly-in Breakfast - Yes, Fly-in Lunch	Dec 25	Christmas - Museum closed
Nov 15	Board of Director's Meeting	Dec 31	New Year's Eve - Museum closes early
Nov 19	Volunteer AirShow meeting 11:30 w/lunch	Check the VAC website for late, breaking dates & cancellations	
Nov 24	Thanksgiving - Museum closed	<a href="http://www.valiantaircommand.com">http://www.valiantaircommand.com</a>	



### Commander's Report

*Norm Daniels, Commander*  
 Email: [Commander@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:Commander@valiantaircommand.com)  
 (321) 268-1941

It has been a long, hot summer and a busy one. Our flagship C-47, TICO BELLE, is undergoing its required 100 hour maintenance to make it ready for an aggressive appearance schedule beginning October this year. Charles Hammer, Director of Maintenance, is ramrod on this project. Tom Etter, Facilities Officer, has had his hands full this summer dealing with roof leaks, air conditioning issues, fire and alarm inspections - in short keeping us up and running. Bob Frazier, Procurement Officer, has his eye on an unusual aircraft that we may soon have in our stable of warbird aircraft. Newly elected to the Board of Directors is Mark Adema as Operations Officer who, as part of his duties, oversees the continuing process of certification of pilots who fly our aircraft. Also elected to the Board of Directors is Tracy Bohrmann who as Finance Officer oversees and manages all the various accounting functions and financial controls of the organization. Bob Boswell, Public Relations Officer as well as 2017 Airshow Director, is knee deep in negotiations with performers, vendors and suppliers in preparation for the event and

yes, the USAF Thunderbirds are coming. Karl Holly has been elected by the Board to be Executive Officer, as such, one of his roles is to coordinate and focus all the activities of the organization to help showcase the VAC and its growth. We are searching for a Personnel Officer to fill the vacant slot.

Jim Owens has taken on the task of potentially making our Link Trainer a workable teaching exhibit. Volunteer Richard Jones continues his superior connectivity abilities relating to our reformulated website and communications issues making them user-friendly. Shortly, advance air show tickets will be available online. This is the time of year when letters will be sent requesting donations to support the 2017 TICO Warbird AirShow and the VAC. As always, these donations are tax deductible; hurry and write those checks to beat the year-end date for tax deductions. We need your support!

The Board of Directors wants to thank and to acknowledge the efforts of our volunteer guides and the restoration team as they continued to work in very

uncomfortable temperature conditions.

A thank you to Phyllis Lilienthal for her graphics design skills covering marketing materials for the 2017 AirShow.

I can't close without a special thank you to Anita, Lorraine, Louise and Richard for managing the VAC gift shop, merchandising, stocking, restocking, selling and interfacing with our guests to make their visit memorable.

*Norm*

9-8-16 The VAC Volunteers were treated to a Hot Dog lunch with all the fixin's.

Bob Foraker cooking the dogs.



Lorraine & Patti tending to the fixin's





## Executive Officer's Report

Karl Holly, Executive Officer

Email: ExecutiveOfficer@valiantaircommand.com

(321) 268-1941

Welcome to the Fall Unscramble and your latest update from the Valiant Air Command. You will see some new names and/or positions associated with the Board, and I hope you will take the time to come in and meet everyone. Get to know the new ones, and as always, provide your thoughts and ideas for the betterment of our Museum. Again, OUR MUSEUM. I will cover that in more depth in a few moments.

As you may have noticed, my name has moved from Operations to Executive Officer. I'm assuming that position from Jim Owens, who resigned due to health concerns. Those who know me, know how much I enjoyed being in Operations, but we felt it was critical to not leave these positions unfilled, especially with our upcoming Air Show approaching. As invaluable as Jim Owens is to our museum it is fortunate for all of us, that he has agreed to stay involved, and will help me navigate the duties associated with my new position. Of course, Genie Owens remains out front, running the front office, so you can be assured that we have great people looking after our best interests. We had already identified a terrific candidate to take on Operations. I was hoping to have him step into the role in a couple of years, so all we really did was move up the timetable. I hope you will come in and meet Mark Adema in the Operations office so that you can see what a hard working and enthusiastic person he really is.

We have successfully navigated through the doldrums of summer and are now starting to see some of

our Snow Birds returning from up north. It is great to see the old faces around the hangar, and I really am looking forward to restarting our friendships. We've missed you and are happy to see you back.... now get busy! The summer has been a very lean one, and we are stepping up operations and events, to help get more visibility, traffic, and revenue into our museum. Our Operations Director will fill you in on some of the upcoming events, but we are also very involved in ramping up our preparations for our Tico Warbird Air Show on March 10-12, 2017.

I mentioned earlier about how this is OUR MUSEUM. I firmly believe that our museum can't be successful without your involvement. This goes beyond the Air Show and includes our daily operations at the VAC, as well as other events that we send representatives and aircraft to. Bob Boswell is crafting a terrific and ambitious show for our 40th Anniversary, and we really do need your support. Everyone who attended this year's Night Show raved about how great it was, so we are continuing our plans for this to be part of next years show. It takes much more work and additional financial commitments, but it also garners much more excitement and attention for our event. In addition, we are also hosting the USAF Thunderbirds at our show, which coincides with the 70th Anniversary of the Air Force. This is a terrific opportunity to really shine, and make this event successful with so many great tools to work with. But here again, I need to bring out that this is  
*continued page 4*

A special get well wish to Karl Holly, our Executive Officer

Karl,  
Sorry to hear about your unexpected trip. Everyone at the Valiant Air Command wishes you a speedy recovery.



### Tour Guides Needed

The Valiant Air Command is in urgent need of Volunteer Tour Guides. We currently have 26 open positions; it is open for both Men and Women. Don't worry if you have no knowledge of aircraft...We will train you.

Contact Jem Golden, Tour Guide Coordinator at the Valiant Air Command Warbird Museum. 321-268-1941

Would you like to be part of the volunteer restoration crew? Fill out an application on our website or stop at the Gift Shop and get an application.



The Official Newsletter of the Valiant Air Command

The Un-Scramble Team

Lorraine Juhl - Louise Kleba - Phyllis Lilienthal - Genie Owens

1st Quarter - Jan, Feb & Mar

Submission deadline - Mar 27th NL Published - April 1st

2nd Quarter - April, May & June

Submission deadline - June 25th NL Published - June 30th

3rd Quarter - July, Aug & Sept

Submission deadline - Sept 25th NL Published - Sept 30th

4th Quarter - Oct, Nov & Dec

Submission deadline Dec 24th NL Published - Dec 31st

Please note: Items submitted after the submission deadline will not be published or will be published the next month if applicable.



## Executive Officer's Report - continued from page 3

OUR MUSEUM. We need your support. We're sending out the first round of letters requesting donations in support of the Air Show, and I'm asking you to step forward. Your donation, regardless of amount, would be of great value to us. Think of the old "Uncle Sam Wants You" posters, and put the VAC (or Norm Daniels' face) in the poster, with the finger pointing at you.

We are pushing for more involvement from our membership and volunteers. It seems like some of the fun seeped out over the last couple of years, which resulted in less interest from our membership. We are committed to restoring some of that fun and excitement and want to make you part of that adventure. There is a small core of individuals who seem to do the majority of the work. We need to give them some relief and support, with more people willing to come in and help with an event in the hangar, or down the road. With more help, we can successfully add more events to our calendar, as well as sponsor command functions that our membership would enjoy participating in.

I'm going to leave you with a series

of questions. Please take a look at them, and think about your responses. I hope you can see that there is real value here and that you are happy to reaffirm your support for our wonderful organization. Please come in and bend my ear. I want to hear your thoughts and ideas on how we can make our organization more successful and fun to be involved with.

Have you renewed your membership? We have restored the option to have a lifetime membership, which is a great way of showing your commitment to your fellow members.

Have you brought any friends or family into the museum recently? We are still fighting the lack of recognition in the community, although we are seeing signs of improvement. We still hear about how amazed a person was by what we offer, and yet, how they weren't aware of our presence. Pass on the knowledge and excitement.

When was the last time you came into the museum? We have made real progress on some restoration projects and are working on how we present some of our newer aircraft.

Would you be willing to make a donation to the Air Show itself? Or even be a sponsor? There are terrific options in sponsorship for varying levels of benefits based on the donation. Call the office, and ask for any of us on the second floor, and we will email you a copy of our Sponsorship Packet.

Would your company be interested in sponsorship or advertising in our Air Show Program? The Air Show is a terrific opportunity for a business to provide an exciting benefit as a reward to their employees. Certain sponsorship levels give them the opportunity to provide a full day of entertainment, food, and drink, in an exhilarating environment that is so rare in today's world. Demographics show that people attending air shows are a great target for businesses seeking exposure and revenue. Our programs are seen by tens of thousands of people. People who are interested in aviation and fun. Call us, or stop by and give us your ideas, and we will send out a team to your business and share our enthusiasm for creating a fun event for them.

Thank you for your time and support.

Nina Martin, winner of the VAC Warbird's donated door prize, at the 20th Annual Teacher Open House at Brevard Zoo.



TICO BELLE getting her required 100 hour maintenance plus a carburetor overhaul. "TICO" will be back in service very soon.





## Facilities Officer's Report

Tom Etter, Facilities Officer  
Email: [FacilitiesDirector@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:FacilitiesDirector@valiantaircommand.com)  
(321) 268-1941

Much has been done this quarter but most importantly, we passed our Fire Marshall Inspection and alarm and fire main inspections have been done. The roofs of our buildings have had a number of leaks some of which are fixed and others are defying me, all depending on the wind direction. The main hangar roof is a very thin membrane that has tears, and earlier repairs are leaking. Emergency lights and Exit signs are now all working and a number of ceiling lights were replaced. Two air handler systems backed up and now they both have injection points for chemical cleaning of mold that caused the original back ups. We supported some needs of the PX. We have worked on a number of toilets and washbasins and a new sink was installed in the main hangar to keep the visitor's bathrooms cleaner. We fixed an 110v outlet

in the entry. We also fixed the flag pole.

We got the flat tire on the crane fixed on the second try. Joel has been working on all of our mobile equipment and the man-lift of late. John, Joel and the C-47 crew have been junking the junk as we go along. As the temperatures come down we will do more on ramp cracks, weeds out back and organizing containers.

The C-47 crew has been supporting many operations such as jacking the Canberra, work on L-13, and work on A-4C, supporting the Ghost Party, a wedding, Fly-in Breakfasts, the Women in the Armed Forces photo shoot, the repair and 100 hour work on the C-47 and other things I have forgotten. Charlie, Jim Towe, Chris, Terry, Roger, Joel, Jim Owens, Harry, and others have been super helpful to the

VAC in getting my jobs done. We have been very lucky to have this core crew available when the C-47 did not need their help.

I have been working with the Docents to address some of their concerns and listening to their needs (the air conditioner was a priority for them). I look forward to working together to make our Visitors' stay safer and more enjoyable so that the word will get out for others to come and visit.

I would be remiss not to mention the Restoration crews who always are willing to give me a hand or solve my (VAC) problems. I feel that when we combined forces to obtain the Canberra and so became one (VAC Volunteers vs. we and them as in the past), we really made great progress and I intend to continue that synergetic relationship.

We should thank Norm Daniels for covering much of my new job so as to not drown me all at once with my new duties.



## Finance Officer's Report

Tracy Bohrmann, Officer  
Email: [FinanceDirector@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:FinanceDirector@valiantaircommand.com)  
(321) 268-1941

Hello to all! I look forward to serving the members and the VAC as the new Finance Officer. We have just sent out letters to all members asking for your help donating to the Tico Warbirds AirShow 2017. Please give as generously as you can to this event! Membership donations and support help make this event happen every year. Please know that every dollar donated to this cause helps and no amount is too small (or too large). We also welcome pledges of effort to help

at the VAC in the run-up to and during the AirShow event days.

As many of you may not know me well, I invite you to stop by the VAC and meet me. I am eager to meet more and more members of the Valiant Air Command and look forward to hearing your thoughts and opinions on taking the VAC forward in the future. I can be found most days either upstairs in the office or on the hanger floors sweeping or cleaning this or that. Please feel free to stop by and talk.

Tracy

Once again, The Warbird Air Museum will be an official "Toys For Tots" toy drop off.

Please bring a new, unwrapped gift



The drop off boxes will be available Mid-November in the VAC lobby.



## Maintenance Officer's Report

Charlie Hammer, Maintenance Officer  
Email: MaintenanceDirector@valiantaircommand.com  
(321) 268-1941

For the Tico Belle, the past 3 months has been all about the 100-hour maintenance inspections, an important and required aspect of keeping the plane flight worthy. This long and involved process started with the removal of the left engine carburetor and sending it to California to be rebuilt. A process that takes 8 to 10 weeks. We anticipate getting the carburetor back before our flight schedule for October begins.

Another major component that needed care was the left outboard wing flap. Our inspection revealed the need for a structural repair on one of the flap support struts. We transported the flap to Tom Reilly in Georgia and

it has been completely rebuilt, repainted, and will be back on the plane in short order. Without Tom's generous assistance and expertise this would have been a time-consuming and costly repair. The Valiant Air Command, and I, would like to say Thank You Tom for your assistance and support. It is truly appreciated.

The A-4C Skyhawk and the TBM have had to take a back seat to the efforts on the C-47, so their status has not changed since my last report. However, we intend to return the TBM to its fully assembled, display status and hold off on further repairs for the time being. We will, however, take the plane out and run it regularly to keep it in good health.



## Procurement Officer's Report

Robert Frazier, Procurement Officer  
Email: ProcurementOfficer@valiantaircommand.com  
(321) 268-1941

FOUGA MAGISTER FM-170  
We have been advised of the location and availability of this Finland Air Force fighter. It was originally designed by France. The airplane as reported by Tom Reilly, is located at the Kissimmee, Florida airport. My on-site inspection showed that even though stored

outside, the airplane is complete and in good display condition. Planning is underway to move the airplane to the Museum.

### FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

The possibility of the Museum obtaining the loan of a USAF F-89 and a F-84F has been put on hold. The cost of relocation and disassembly exceeds current plans.

### DONATIONS

Donation of aeronautical parts and related equipment continues at a significant level. Records of personnel will now again be included in this report.

Monetary: Elizabeth Clarke, Karl Holly.



*File photo of a Fouga Magister*

Women In Service spent the day at VAC with 4 models





## Operations Officer's Report

Mark Adema, Operations Officer  
Email: [OperationsDirector@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:OperationsDirector@valiantaircommand.com)  
(321) 268-1941

Just a quick introduction and then on to the fun stuff: I live locally with my beautiful wife and our 1 and 2 1/2 yr old boys, fly as a B777 FO for United, and owner of the Gitmo SNJ and a Seabee. I truly enjoy our museum, our volunteers and I am happy to be our new Operations Director.

Now to the fun stuff. We are still in the transition stage with Karl getting me up to speed to fully take over his role. Karl has done an amazing job maintaining and improving our museum's operations. His heart and energy are seen in everything he works on and I look forward to continuing that process.

It's about to get busy.

**Oct. 13-15** NPTC (National Parachute Test Center) in Dunnellon. C47-Fly out on the 13th and flying jumpers all day Friday and Saturday.

**Oct. 21-23** Florida International Air Show. SNJ-Fly out on the 21st for static and Airshow.

**Oct. 28-29** Page Field Aviation Day. C47-Fly out on the 28th and then static display.

**Nov. 3** Tico C-47 flight for Insurance and Business Investors.

**Nov. 4-6** Stuart Airshow. C47/SNJ-Fly out on the 3rd or 4th and static and possibly revenue rides.

We are still pushing forward on C47 Champagne Flights in period attire. This aircraft is such an amazing piece of flying history. I enjoy watching the VAC guests, volunteers, maintenance and pilots

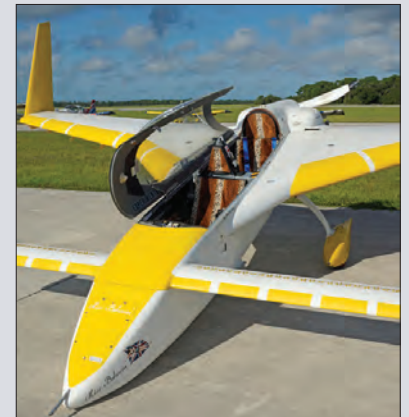
all politely show her the respect an aircraft of this stature has earned. Those that get to see her displayed at Airshows also see how much the crowds love her.

At one point we were a leader in the organization of nationwide standards for Warbird formation training. In an effort to regain that status we are looking into various times to host formation clinics. To start things off we are planning on a T-28 and T-6 formation clinic two days prior to our 2017 AirShow. Our members that have other aircraft groups interested please contact me about scheduling.

The only thing prettier than seeing a Warbird is seeing a Warbird FLYING...Our big 40th Anniversary AirShow is very much in the works. For all those who have been involved in any or all of our 40 years of Airshows, I humbly say thank you. Like every year it's a huge joint effort that can not be done without all the volunteers. We will make sure our planes both flying and static are ready for what will be a historic 40th anniversary show!!

Now the disclaimer: Karl has organized our museums into a well run, safe and legal flight operation. I'm now just starting the process of building on his hard work. I'd really like to hear your concerns and suggestions so please don't hesitate to contact me. See you at the VAC.

Long Ez, Miss Behavin', flew in for breakfast. She was parked in her grazing position while her pilot had breakfast



Martin Hulme, Long Ez Pilot  
Zepherhills, Florida

Build finished in 2009 after it was stored 15 yrs as a project. It has flown to Oshkosh, many Sun n Funs, and the eastern states. It cruises at 160Kts at altitude. Dry weight 915Lbs  
Powered by 160HP Lycoming, it uses latest generation glass panel instruments and autopilot.

**VAC CHRISTMAS DINNER • DECEMBER 17, 2016**  
Call the VAC Gift Shop for more information and to make your reservations. 321-268-1941 • No Reservations = No Food



## Public Relations Officer's Report

*Bob Boswell, Public Relations Officer*  
*Email: PublicRelations@valiantaircommand.com*  
*(321) 268-1941*

In spite of the high heat and almost daily rain, it has been a busy summer for the VAC. Aircraft acquisitions and restorations have continued and we have hosted and supported a number of community events.

Our Monthly Second Saturday Fly-In or Drive-In Breakfast continues to bring in old friends and first-time visitors. Our new Chef Matt Walter and his wife Jaime provide an attractive table display and their food rotation continues to please everyone. We have hosted one to three of our member authors at each breakfast with their books available at signing tables. The next breakfast is set for Saturday 8 October. Bring airplane enthusiasts and join us from 8:00-10:30. There will not be a Fly-In Breakfast in November as that is our Veterans Weekend Open House. Members are encouraged to Fly-In for Lunch that weekend.

Speaking of Veterans Day, come out to our Veteran's Day Weekend Open House Saturday and Sunday 12 and 13 November at the Warbird Museum. Remind your friends that there is FREE admission for all Military Active or Retired and all Florida Residents, with an ID. In addition to our own 47 military aircraft on display, we will have the Model Club, the Radio Control Club with their aircraft and simulators; trains, cars and entertainment. A Hot Dog and Hamburger lunch will be available and there will be Ice Cream and other vendors to choose from. This is a local

Community Event and once again we will require a good number of volunteers to assist with this open house. Please call the Museum Gift Shop, (321) 268-1941, and let them know you're available.

Preparations have begun for the TICO WARBIRD AIRSHOW 2017, March 10, 11, & 12th. The USAF Thunderbirds will be our headline act. A reminder to those who intend to volunteer to work, you must sign-up in advance and be assigned to a team to receive your AirShow Credentials. If you are not getting notices of our AirShow meetings, or would like to join the AirShow Team, please go to the Volunteering Tab on our VAC Website and fill out the application; or call the VAC and provide your name, contact information and area of interest.

This three-day AirShow will run Friday through Sunday, the same as last year. Friday will be an afternoon/evening show with the gates opening to the general public at Noon so they can visit Warbird Alley, Static Displays and our Concessions. Warbird Alley will close at 3:00 PM. From 3:30 to 4:30 the Thunderbirds will be flying and from 5:00 to 6:30 we will fly an afternoon show followed by a twilight & night performance ending with fireworks around 8:00 PM. We have a great list of participants starting with the Aeroshell 4-Ship Aerobatic Team and Matt Younkin in his Twin Beech 18 along with many other flight demonstrations. A key part of our Warbird AirShow is our member performers flying

everything from Biplanes to Jets. Planned for this show will be the first flight demonstration by our recently restored TBM. The Sky Soldiers will return with their Huey and Cobra aircraft. For those who would like to fly on one of these warbirds they will be selling rides; as will the C-47 and SNJ. Be sure to bring your camera as our ramp will be loaded with over 60 warbirds. Help boost attendance by telling everyone about our Advance Discount Tickets that will be offered online at a deep discount. Keep an eye on our website as we develop the AirShow Page and look at local advertisements for additional information as we get closer to the show date.

The holiday season will be here before we know it. Mark your calendar for our Christmas Dinner that will be held in the Warbird Museum Hangar on Saturday, 17 December. A social gathering with hors d'oeuvres will start at 5:30 PM followed by an exceptional dinner and dessert. This year there will not be a gift exchange, however, we will be accepting gifts for Toys for Tots at the Museum Gift Shop. At the dinner, there will be multiple drawings for door prizes. We are looking for volunteers to help with this event. Make your reservations and volunteer to help by calling the Gift Shop: (321) 268-1941.

A big congratulations to all volunteers and staff of the VAC as our Warbird Air Museum was just voted as a Best of Brevard Attraction!

Thank you for your membership and continued support!

Merry Christmas





## Gift Shop News

Anita, Louise, Lorraine, Rich  
Email: VAC-PX@valiantaircommand.com  
(321) 268-1941



Hi Everyone,

Is it that time again??? Didn't we just have Christmas a few months ago??? We are looking forward to some cooler weather - think snow.

We have some new toys that arrived in time for the little tykes to enjoy for Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Birthdays, etc.. While implemented for our high-end ticket items, the Gift Shop can do layaway on our moderately priced items too, or you can bundle a number of smaller items.

Not sure what to get for

that someone special on your gift list, consider giving a Gift Certificate; they can visit the museum and choose their own gift. Funny how no one ever returns a Gift Certificate.

Another very popular gift is a Valiant Air Command Membership; it is a gift that gives all year long. Also, consider giving AirShow tickets. You can upgrade the regular AirShow Tickets to include the Beer Garden.

You will have fun, fun!  
Happy Holidays from Anita, Louise, Lorraine and Rich.

Unique one of a kind leather bomber jackets are reduced by 35% until Dec 24th with a valid VAC Member ID.

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**35% OFF**  
All Bomber Jackets with Member ID



*Do Your Christmas Shopping Early  
And Do It At The VAC Gift Shop*



**LAYAWAY AVAILABLE UNTIL DECEMBER 24TH**

**DON'T KNOW WHAT TO GIVE  
FOR CHRISTMAS**



*T-shirts - Pull Back Toys  
Model DYI Planes - Paintings  
Scale Model Planes - Signs  
Posters - Photos - Toys  
Puzzles - Jackets - Hats*

**10% DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS**

**GIFT CERTIFICATES ARE ALWAYS  
GOOD AND NEVER RETURNED**



# AVIATING WITH EVANS

## *Thoughts From Bud.*

When I look back on the many years of my aviation career I can't help but wonder why I never once questioned my decision to fly many of the combat or test missions I was assigned. Even after being shot down and after many near disasters which I suffered in flight testing, I have concluded that each of us has a path in our life that when you are fortunate enough to find the profession that fulfills the goals, you know you are where you are suppose to be. Each one of us has, in my opinion, a purpose in our lifetime to fulfill a goal and if you are fortunate enough to find that profession early enough you will feel as I have about your job. Every morning when I looked in the mirror while shaving I told myself how lucky I was to be able to look forward to my getting to work. At night I was thankful for being fortunate enough to have a job that gave me the feeling of having contributed a small bit to the future of my chosen profession. Finding and recognizing problems with new jet designed aircraft before they manufactured them for others to fly is a dangerous but also a personally rewarding feeling.

When I graduated from the USAAF flight training I was primed to get right into combat. Although I was given a couple of stateside assignments I managed to get a combat assignment and finally was on my way to England only to be turned around before arriving there a few days before the war in Europe ended. I was further frustrated in my efforts to volunteer for combat duty in the Pacific by a policy that only pilots who had seen combat in

Europe or the Pacific could volunteer for combat duty.

If I am honest about my flight test career, I have to say that it started when I was assigned to one of the first Fighter Groups to fly the Jet Fighters. When the Korean War began I was one of the first Americans to fly combat in a jet aircraft. Development of jet aircraft was a whole new technology so that in those early days finding many of the problems were more heavily dependent on the first operational units. During the F-80's first few months, I was selected to test the F-80's ability to carry and deploy various weapons along with making the first jet aircraft landing on a steel mat runway and also the first ever take-off with a full combat load of 2- 500 lb bombs, 4- 5" rockets, 6 fully loaded 50 caliber machine gun and two large "Misawa tip tanks".

After extending for a second tour I was shot down and my Guardian Angel came once again to my rescue. Following my return to the States and after three years I was guided to my true purpose in life, which was flight testing newly designed aircraft for the Air Force, although I did not have the required Aeronautical Engineer Degree. After spending many hours of extra study and a natural recognition of flight characteristics I successfully completed the course and entered the wonderful world of experimental flight testing which lasted for the next for the next 37 years of my life.

Those of you who have read some of the more than 100 stories I have written for the Unscramble during the past 14 years have joined

me on my exciting experiences while testing many of the 204 types of aircraft which I have flown. After literally a hundred or more requests from you, the readers, I have finally published my first book encompassing my 23 years of military flying including the last 11.5 years of military flight testing. My book has many of my stories that have been written for the "Unscramble" of adventures while testing aircraft for various aircraft manufacturers which include 7 "First Flights" on newly designed aircraft. I hope to continue to write more stories for the "Unscramble" if you, the members, enjoy them.

N. C. "Bud" Evans



The book "Aviating With Evans" is now on sale at the V.A.C. P. X.. This first book are stories from my entry into to the USAAF in WWII through my retiring from the USAF. My next book will consist of stories from my next 27 years of civilian flight testing; if you enjoy reading the first book I can assure you that you will enjoy the second book.

N. C. "Bud" Evans

*Editor's Note:*

*Bud has been a contributing writer for the Unscramble and the Scramble (AirShow Program) for many years. If you enjoyed his articles, you will love his book.*

# F9F-5 Panther

*Dr. F. J. E. Kramer, Warbird Historian*

*"When the Korean War began at 04:00 AM, Sunday, June 25 1950, the F9F Panther comprised the vast majority of the US NAVY carrier based aircraft. Monday morning, July 3, 1950 dawned bright and warm on the Yellow Sea, 180 miles southwest of Incheon, South Korea. The Korean War was just 10 days old, as the US Navy Carrier Valley Forge steamed north at high speed toward the 38th parallel. At 09:35 hours she began launching aircraft. Jet engines began winding up from a high-pitched scream to a thunderous roar and one by one the catapult shot them forward and off the deck, clawing for altitude. Lt. L. Plog and Ensign E. W. Brown were sent to wreak havoc on the enemy aircraft based on the North Korean airfield at Pyongyang. They located a pair of Russian built YAK-9 piston engine fighters taking off. It was Ensign Brown who fired a stream of 20mm cannon shells into one of the YAK's, which disintegrated. It was the very first kill by a Navy jet, being the Grumman Panther." (Author: Earl Swinhart in Warbird Magazine).*

On November 9 that same year, an F9F pilot became the Navy's first to shoot down a jet fighter when he destroyed a MiG-15.

The Air Force had the F-80 Shooting Star and a few F-82 Twin Mustangs, which were more than a match for the North Korea's piston engine fighters. But when the Chinese Communists began acquiring Russian built MiG-15's and pilots to fly them, the technological balance shifted toward the enemy. The F-80 and F-82 fighters were totally outclassed by the sleek, swept wing Russian fighter.

Panther was born in the latter stages of WW-II, at the time when the turbojet engine was just beginning to take shape. The US Navy recognized that the day of the piston-engine

fighter was drawing to a close. Having supplied the fleet with famous fighters like the Wildcat, Hellcat, Tigercat and Bearcat, Grumman began design work on a carrier-based non-supersonic jet fighter, featuring a conventional design with straight wings and excellent low-speed characteristics. Wingtip fuel tanks were deemed essential, considering that carrier-based aircraft often operated over large spaces of endless oceans. The result was added weight that unexpectedly increased the roll-rate of the airframe, which proved an added advantage in close-range combat situations. Wingtip tanks were mounted in a fixed position which were not intended to be jettisoned. The fuel stored in these tanks allowed the pilot to loiter an extra 40 minutes over target.

Carrier trials were completed in March 1949 and the new jet was cleared for service in September of that year as the F9F-2 "Panther". A Pratt Whitney J42-series turbojet engine became the basic power plant, producing 5,000 lbs thrust — in fact the license-built British "Nene" turbojet. Performance statistics included top-speed of 575mph, service ceiling of 44,600



ft. and range of 1,353 miles. Empty weight was 9,303 lbs and max-take off weight mounted to 19,434 lbs.

The F9F-5, the version of the Panther featured in the Valiant Air Command

collection, was the last version and the most widely produced. Built concurrently with the dash-4, a total of 616 dash-5s and forty dash 5Ps were produced by December 1952 when production ended. The F9F-5 was effectively an F9F-4 with a stretched fuselage, taller tailfins, and an improved derivative of the "Nene" turbojet engine, known as the Rolls Royce "Tay" and built under license by Pratt & Whitney as the J48-P-6A. When installed in the F9F-5, this engine provided 6,250 lb dry-thrust and 7,000 lb wet-thrust. Some sources hint that the Tay/J-48 had afterburning capability, but this claim is hard to confirm.

Other stats for the improved F9F-5: max speed 604 mph., service ceiling 42,800 ft., range 1,300 miles, empty weight 10,147 lbs and max weight 18,721 lb. featuring a climb rate of 6,000 ft/min.

The F9F-5 generally replaced the relatively underpowered F9F-2 and went into combat in Korea in late 1952. A total of 616 F9F-5's were built, as well as 36 F9F-5P unarmed photoreconnaissance aircraft. It is interesting to notice that the latter included an autopilot to provide a more stable platform during photo shoots. As an additional requirement, the Navy wanted the jet-powered fighter to be equipped with radar for self-tracking of potential targets, in addition of capability for combat service in both day- and night-environments and all-weather scenarios.

The F9F's panthers acquired initial success in Korea because American pilots arrived with ample experience gained during the latest world war, while Korean pilots lacked jet proficiency — MiG-15 fighters were mainly flown not by Korean but by Chinese and even Russian pilots. From combat sorties it appeared that

## F9F-5 Panther *continued*

the non-supersonic underpowered F9F-2 Panther with its straight wings was not really a good match in dogfights against the very maneuverable MiG-15. However F9F-2/5 straight wings provided an excellent stable platform for bombing and reconnaissance missions, and for bringing Panthers safely back home to their aircraft carriers.

The USAN and USMC used F9F Panther extensively during the Korean War. The carrier-based Panther became not only the first jet-powered Navy fighter, but also the first jet fighter successfully designed, developed and produced by Grumman. It was also the first jet used with the US Navy's Blue Angels aerobatic team until 1954.

F9F-5 Panthers were gradually taken out of fighter duty and re-molded into a formidable ground attack weapon. For this task the F9F-5's were very well adapted. Their impressive armament consisted of four 20 mm cannons, two 1,000 lb bombs or six HVAR rockets. The Panthers were able to sustain attack-operations even in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire. Eventually F9F-5's were pulled from front-line service in 1956 in favor of swept-wing Cougars.

While the US Navy withdrew the type from frontline service, it remained active with the Marine Corps until the following year. Though used by reserve formations for several years, the Panther also found use as a drone and drone-tug into the 1960s. In 1958, the United States sold several F9Fs to Argentina for use aboard their carrier

ARA Independencia (V-1). These remained active until 1969.

The technical performance of the F9F Panthers may be summarized as follows:

### Pros:

- Maneuverability at higher speeds
- Excellent roll rate
- Low altitude performance
- Large armament with a high rate of fire
- Larger fuel capacity in comparison with other fighter jets

### Cons:

- Poor high altitude performance
- Poor low speed maneuverability
- Poor top speed

Panthers carried an outstanding record and had the reputation of being the most reliable carrier-based jet fighters in the Korean War. Moreover, Panthers were credited with 78,000 combat missions, representing almost 50% of all combat sorties in Korea.

It can be taken for granted that America's future astronauts Neal Armstrong and John Glenn, both Panthers "drivers", certainly have appreciated two very innovative features of this Navy aircraft: the ejection seat, made by Martin-Baker, and the luxury of an air-conditioned cockpit!

A successful aircraft for Grumman, the F9F Panther was the first of a sequence of fighter jets the Long Island company designed for the US Navy, with the most famous being the F-14 Tomcat.

Our F-16 Fighting Falcon that is on display in the main hangar was scrambled and flew over Manhattan, NY on 9/11. Don Leathers, Museum Curator, set up this display in memory of that day.



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