



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 26, Issue 10

November 2004



Read More About our Latest Addition  
 on Page 3

## UPCOMING AIRSHOWS OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS:

**November 6 - 7, 2004:** Greater Orlando Rotary Airshow. Orlando Executive Airport, FL. Waivered airspace, aerobatics and statics. Pat Phillips (407) 425-7676.

**November 6 - 7, 2004:** Celebrate Freedom 2004. Woodward Field, Camden, SC. Mr. Phillip L Catham (803) 530-8687. [cslll@aol.com](mailto:cslll@aol.com).  
[www.celebratefreedomfoundation.org](http://www.celebratefreedomfoundation.org).

**November 11 - 13, 2004:** Blue Angels Homecoming Airshow. Pensacola NAS, FL. Lt Mike Hanson. (850) 452-8161.

**November 13 - 14, 2004:** Stuart Airshow. Walt McGlynn. (772) 286-1844. [www.stuartairshow.com](http://www.stuartairshow.com)

**February 24 - 27, 2005: NWO - National Warbird Operator Conference - 2005. Seattle, Washington.**  
 This is a must attend event for all operators, owners, technicians and enthusiasts. National Warbird Operators Conference. Over 160 people from all parts of the country attended the 2003 and 2004 conference. For more information, please go to [www.warbirdconference.com](http://www.warbirdconference.com). More details posted soon.



## Fall VAC Social Events:

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**October 30, 2004 (Sat):** Membership dinner. Wear those UNIFORMS AND COSTUMES of the 40's. Dress as your favorite flying hero, or Movie Star! PRIZES AWARDED - be creative!

5:30 Cocktails  
 6:30 Dinner  
 7:00 Awards presentation

**Special Guest Speaker:** Larry and Sherry Sietsma will give a talk on their recently completed 'round the world flight in their Beech Baron.

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**November 13, 2004 (Sat):** Airshow Meeting.

1:00 VAC Library. Refreshments.

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**December 10, 2004 (Friday):** CHRISTMAS PARTY & DINNER

5:30 Cocktails  
 6:30 Dinner



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**January 22, 2005 (Sat):** Membership dinner with speaker: Lt Col, USAF (Ret) Hiram Mann, Tuskegee Airman. He flew the P-51 (Red Tail Angels), P-40 Warhawk, P-47 Thunderbolt, and co-pilot time in B-25's, the C-47 and C-45.

5:30 Cocktails  
 6:30 Dinner  
 7:00 Program

All members and guests welcome. VAC hangar. VAC members - dinner \$13. Non members - \$15. **Please call museum for reservations.**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# 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.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 9, 2004

12:00 NOON

VAC BOARD ROOM

DECEMBER 14, 2004

12:00 NOON

VAC BOARD ROOM

## Maintenance - Bob James

C-47 - At the current time I'm working on arranging minimum cost transport for our first engine from Basler Turbo Conversions (Oshkosh, WI.). We hope to have the engine delivered by mid November. The sheet metal repairs on the horizontal stabilizer have been completed. Work on prepping the bottom side of the stabilizer for a coat of primer is continuing with some of the local college aerospace students providing the man & women power. Work on the left engine firewall and J-box is continuing. Norm Lindsay has been working this effort. Some minor corrosion was found in the leading edge along a rib in the wing center section (both left and right sides). Repairs to both sides have been completed as of today (10/21/04) thanks to Dick Hart.

TBM - work on the bomb bay is going slowly, however I just received word that the necessary piano hinges will be shipped shortly. Other clean up efforts continue in the nose cowling area.

Some of our snowbirds are returning to their southern abodes, and their help will be greatly appreciated. Please remember that the James Bond dollar for dollar donation challenge is on going, so any donations to the engine fund are doubled up to a total of \$2,000 dollars. Thanks again for all your support.

### WHAT IF YOUR AIRPORT CLOSED TOMORROW?

Ask yourself this: Has nearby residential development, economic and political pressure, or bad public relations about my airport affected me and other pilots who fly? If you answered yes, your airport has a problem and needs an Airport Support Network volunteer. Ensuring the health and vitality of your airport is up to you, and we can help. Join the AOPA Airport Support Network today. Every day, more than 1,400 Airport Support Network volunteers at the local level are working with AOPA headquarters to help save their airports. We need more! Below is a short list of airports where an ASN volunteer could make a difference.

**In Your Area – ASN is looking for volunteers at several airports in Florida—**Including, Avon Park Municipal, and New Smyrna Beach Municipal.

## Executive Officer - Hal Larkin

Well, the Florida weather sure created a slow down in the restoration hangar. We lost three work days in September. Now several of our volunteers are still missing due to severe damage to their homes.

The Panther is ready for engine installation, which should be completed in the next two weeks. After that we have to paint the stars and bars on the left and right of the fuselage. Then all we have left is the cockpit, which still requires seven engraved plates for the last console. We did locate a gun sight, however it is in Minnesota, so we are trading some F6F Hellcat parts for the gun sight, tow bar and two instruments. Right now we have a deal to get the parts to us without cost. The person that has the parts we need has a friend who comes to Florida every other month to pick up parts from Jay Wisler (VAC member) in Tampa. We will take the F6F parts to Tampa and pick up our parts. You sure get some funny deals in restoration.

The Me-208 has been dormant for the last month due to the weather. We still need the top piece of plexiglass for the windshield.

The Northrup-Grumman F-5E came to use with the center section and wings removed. It requires a special fixture to reinstall the center section and wings. Without the wings, you don't have landing gear. Northrup-Grumman in St. Augustine has a fixture but will not loan it to us. The other fixture I located is with NASA and is in Houston. To fabricate a fixture to reinstall the center section and wings requires a considerable effort, but will allow us to get the F-5E into the restoration hangar. We used the trailer wheels that were on



## Executive Officer - Hal Larkin - cont.

the Me-208, made a few modifications, bought some angle iron and installed the trailer wheels and axel on the F-5E. It is now in the hangar. It has all the removal panels and duct tape covering all the seams and has been in the hot sun and all the adhesive is still on the airplane. We are now in the process of removing it. We also had to fabricate a set of jackpads. The aircraft must be level to install the center section and wings. This is a one-of-a-kind aircraft and will be an asset to the museum when complete.

We have started some repair of the flight controls for the TA-4J, Bu No 152867, which came to us disassembled. We have to attach the fuselage to the center section, then we can move the TA-4J into the restoration hangar.

## Procurement - Bob Frazier

IM & L S - The Institute of Museum and Library Services under their Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) conducted an evaluation of our museum this month. The program, which was funded by a grant from IM&LS, does a detail assessment of how we preserve and then conserve (maintenance) our artifacts and restorations. Ed McManus, Chief Conservator for the National Air and Space Museum in Washington D. C., conducted the assessment. He evaluated the museum's light, heat, humidity, insects and spacing effects on each of our artifacts. An interesting example is strong light causes fading in cloth, flags and banners. Plus flags and banners should never be folded or creased as with time they will deteriorate at the crease line. Valuable flags and banners should be mounted on acid-free matting and framed like art paintings. Report results should be available in a month or two.



GALLERY OF AVIATION MUSEUM - Inventory, appraisal and a narrated video taping of the contents continues at a very slow pace. This is to firm up the donation to the VAC.

AIRPLANE/WW II BOOKS - In addition to the books Ms. Doof donated in May she has now given us 63 more new and used books. The books covering aviation and WW II history are from her late father's collection. With the help of James Bond we were able to pick up the books in New Jersey and transport them to the VAC. THANKS TO 007.

# Welcome Colonels

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Chuck & Nancy Tanner Greenville, SC

**RENEWING:**

Jeff & Carolyn	Boyken	Viera, FL
Bud & Nancy	Evans	Indialantic, FL
Harold	Ewing	Hopkins, SC
John & Patty	Faulk	Melbourne, FL
Reid & Jeffrey	Garrison	Anderson, SC
Pieter & Betty	Lenie	Melbourne Bch, FL
Sam	Lorino Jr.	Cocoa, FL
Ron	Madonia	Titusville, FL
Anthony & Marian	Mercurio	Punta Gorda, FL
Tom & Theresa	Meyer	New Smyrna Bch, FL
Dick	Thurman	Louisville, KY
Jim & Mararet	Towe	Cocoa, FL

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I wish to thank those members that have responded to my letters for the C-47 Restoration Fund. I apologize to Bob Nishimura for not listing his name and donation. Bob is one of those members that have answered the needs of The Valiant Air Command for the past twenty years. (And yes, he /S a licensed pilot – my humble apologies, editor)

<b>C-47 DONATION LIST</b>			
Eugene	Moriarty	Waddington, NY	\$100
James	Eubanks	Snelville, GA	\$100
Robert	Nishimura	San Jose, CA	\$500

**C-47 TICO BELLE REPAIR FUND**

A THANKS is due to all for the September donations, which totaled \$1,000. This effort was undoubtedly hurt by the damaging visits of four (4) hurricanes. The donation grand total is \$79,122, plus the \$10,000 VAC transfer. With \$25,000 in escrow for the first R-1830 engine this leaves us with a working balance of \$5,326.



Some of this will be needed for shipping costs.

- BOB FRAZIER

**World War II - The Battle of Leyte Gulf**

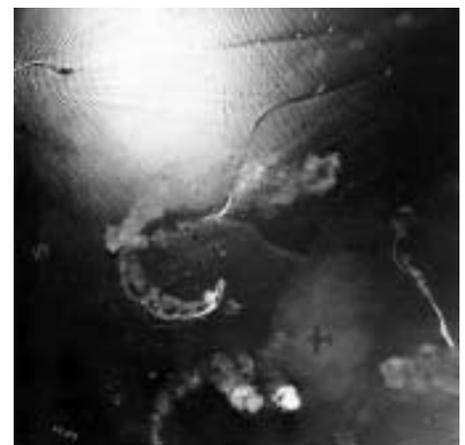
Fall 1944 - As American forces neared the Philippines in late 1944 the Japanese Naval Command realized that desperate measures were required. With their carrier aircraft virtually nonexistent after the previous Battle of the Philippine Sea in June 1944, a radical strategy was needed to hold on to the Philippines. A daring plan, called "Operation Sho-1" was put into action. After American forces landed in the Philippines, Admiral Ozawa would take Japan's four available aircraft carriers and lure the US Navy away to the north. This would then allow Japan's battleships to sneak in and smash the invasion fleet at anchor off the beachhead. Although the strategy would call for the deliberate sacrifice of the carrier forces, it came amazingly close to victory.

Things started off badly for the Japanese. Lead by the massive 72,000-ton battleships Yamato and Musashi, the main surface force headed northeast from Indonesia toward the Philippines. The American submarines Darter and Dace soon detected them. They moved into position and launched a deadly swarm of torpedoes. Two heavy cruisers (including



Admiral Kurita's flagship) were sunk and a third was badly damaged. Admiral Kurita was fished out of the water and transferred his flag to the mighty Yamato. Warned of their presence, American Admiral William "Bull" Halsey then moved his carriers into position to hit the Japanese battleships as they steamed through the Sibuyan Sea northwest of the invasion beachhead at Leyte. Successive waves of American naval aircraft battered his fleet and sank the Musashi, although

it took an incredible 17 bombs and 19 torpedoes to do it! After this pounding, Kurita reversed course to the west. Halsey, who was puzzled by the lack of any Japanese carriers, concluded that the battleships were no longer a threat. Then, when the Japanese decoy force of Ozawa's four carriers and their escorts showed up, Halsey raced north to take the bait. The decoy carriers paid dearly for this success as all four were sunk. But now the invasion beachhead was largely unprotected, and Kurita had reversed course again!



Admiral Kurita burst out of the San Bernardino Strait in the

## Yesterday's Battles - Jeff James

central Philippines and raced southeastward toward the Leyte beachhead. In his path stood three small groups of "jeep" carriers and their diminutive escort ships. This was a force designed to assist troops ashore but was never intended to fight enemy battleships. When the Japanese were sighted Admiral Sprague ordered all aircraft to attack and crawled southward at 14 knots, which was the jeep carrier's top speed. The Yamato could do 27

knots and the Japanese cruisers over 30. Defeat seemed inevitable. The navy classified jeep carriers as "CVE's." The crewmen joked this meant "combustible, vulnerable and expendable!" But despite the odds the small naval force fought on. After the carrier planes used up their limited arsenal of torpedoes they reloaded with fragmentation bombs, depth charges and fifty caliber bullets. Eventually they were reduced to making dry runs over the Japanese battleships after all bombs were expended. Although one carrier and three escorts were sunk, the Japanese suffered heavy damage and were stunned by the intensity of the

air attacks. They thought they were engaging the American fleet carriers, not the little jeep carriers. Finally, Kurita decided to break of the battle, and due to diminishing fuel supplies retreat back through San Bernardino Strait. As they turned away, a voice on Admiral Sprague's bridge was heard



Kamikaze strikes the USS Essex on November 25, 1944. Photographed from USS Langley.



## Yesterday's Battles - Jeff James - cont.

to yell, "Goddamnit boy they're getting away!" Truly a shining example of America's never say die attitude.

*Princeton* burning soon after she was hit by a Japanese bomb while operating off the Philippines on 24 October 1944. This view, taken from *USS South Dakota (BB-57)* at about 1001 hrs., shows the large smoke column passing aft following a heavy explosion in the carrier's hangar deck.

Kurita's withdrawal effectively ended the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Although he had come close to a stunning victory, the end result was a devastating defeat. Kurita's main force had suffered heavy damage. The decoy carrier force was virtually annihilated and a smaller force of two battleships and their escorts in the southern Philippines had been pulverized. In all, the Japanese lost four aircraft carriers, three battleships, six cruisers and 12 destroyers. In contrast, the Americans lost one light carrier, two "jeep" carriers and three of their escorts. Japan's navy would never again have the strength to



challenge the American fleet in battle. However, an ominous new weapon made its appearance at Leyte Gulf. It was the kamikaze.

### Airshow News - Lloyd Morris

Due to Lloyd Morris previous commitments he has had to resign as Airshow Chairman but he will be working with us during the show. He has volunteered to do the parking of cars and laying out the field. (No easy job) If anyone has done that job, we know it takes a lot of work. So we appreciate his volunteering. Also if you are planning to volunteer for the airshow, call the museum or fill out the volunteer form at the Gift Shop.

Welcome back Dick and Wendy Miller; they will be covering the finance office for the airshow. Dick and Wendy are now permanent residents of Florida.

### Thunderstorms

“Don’t mess with Mother Nature!” Whoever came up with that slogan as an advertisement probably had no idea what truth there was in the realities in a pilot’s life. I have learned throughout my many years of flying that there are three things over which as pilot has little control and which can cause you extreme heart-burn. They are fog, ice and thunderstorms. The story I am about to relate is about the latter. During the 8 years I spent at Edwards AFB, California as an Experimental Test Pilot in the Fighter Section we unfortunately lost a number of good pilots and good men. When a deceased pilot was buried, as many of the pilots and other flight test personnel who could get away, would climb aboard a base provided transport aircraft and be flown to the site of the funeral. On the occasion of my incident the pilot was a good friend and one of the pilots in the fighter section killed in the crash of an F-104A. The funeral was to be held at the Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

The C-54 carrying a large number of Edwards’s troops departed early one morning but because of a scheduled test flight on an F-104, which was my test program, I couldn’t make the flight. The Center Commander authorized an F-80 Shooting Star from Base Flight for me and as soon as I finished my test flight I climbed into the old jet and headed east. The weather across the middle of the U. S. was dotted with thunderstorms so I was forced to take the southern route stopping at Perrin AFB in Texas and Shaw AFB in South Carolina. I knew there was a fast moving squall line moving into the D.C. area so I quickly refueled and took off en route to Andrews AFB.

Approaching Richmond, Virginia it was obvious to me the squall line was hitting Washington and I had to penetrate it if



Nice Color View of an F-80 3-Ship

I was going to make it into Andrews. Washington approach vectored me over Patuxant Navy Base, east-southeast of Washington and then turned me towards Andrews. I was down to 20,000 feet when I made the descending turn and punched into the maelstrom. Thunderstorms were familiar too me as I had flown through a few in my flying career and entering this one in an aircraft that I had flown through every kind of weather and combat condition possible seemed to be “Just another instrument letdown”! Boy was I wrong!

The time was late afternoon and the sun had long disappeared behind the 50,000 feet plus squall line so when I stuck the nose of the F-80 into black clouds it was just like night. That lasted for a few seconds until the lightning began flashing and the turbulence began to try and tear my trusty steed to pieces. I had lowered the speed brakes and concentrated on keeping the wings somewhere near level. That turned out to be impossibility! My sturdy Shooting Star was tossed around like a feather in a

tornado and my helmet was crashing against the canopy like a ping-pong ball in a Chinese table tennis tournament. The continuous brilliant lightning flashes were so brilliant that it blinded me so it was all I could do to see my attitude indicator. Most of what I did was to try to keep some semblance of control while feeling as though I was in a boxing match without much protection to my head. My helmet was banging both sides and the top of the canopy with eye-flashing impacts and my VHF radio was picking up nothing but ear shattering static. I kept telling myself that I had to break out any second but the storm only continued and seemed more intense than ever.

I finally decided the only thing I could do was make a 180 and try to fly back towards Patuxant. I was certain that I must be over Andrews. I made my turn and endured the battering for several more minutes when I suddenly broke out the side of the wall of weather. I was surprised that it had gotten completely dark in such a short period of time. The flashes from the lightning illuminated the surface below me and I was confused by my inability to see any lights on the ground. I was certain that I would be able to spot the Virginia or Maryland shoreline up ahead of me but there were no lights anywhere. My mind was unable to orient myself, which for me was a rare occurrence. I had always been able to navigate visually or compute time and distances in my mind fairly accurately. When I tried to adjust this time, my mind just could not comprehend what I was experiencing; I was without a doubt, defi-



## Aviating with Bud Evans -cont.

nately confused. It should have been a matter of less than ten minutes that I had entered the storm and flown back out of it. It had been light when I entered the jaws of the storm and it was completely dark when I retreated from it. The air was smooth and the lighting no longer brightened the sky behind me. Everywhere I looked below was pitch black! I knew that I should be somewhere west of the Maryland/Virginia shore but there was nothing to indicate where it was.

I became aware that there was some radio conversation and I attempted to reach Andrews Approach Control. After several attempts I was contacted by Norfolk Navy and asked my location? I had to respond that was not certain as my ADF needle was pointing behind me towards the storm. I was asked to make a turn to the South and transmit for 5 seconds and then hold my course for another 2 minutes and transmit again. This upset me some as I was running low on fuel but I complied. I couldn't believe their instructions as they told me to take a heading of 270 degrees. That should have taken me back towards Andrews but after flying for several minutes I could see a long ribbon of lights that were un-mistakenly the Eastern coastline. It was incomprehensible that I could be that far out to sea! It meant I had been almost 100 miles east of the coast when I turned south at the Norfolk Navy controller's request. It seemed to me that I would never reach the coast but as I got within 35 miles I could make out the several beacons from the airports in the Norfolk area. I was vectored to Langley AFB just north of the Norfolk area and landed on fumes. My flying time had been 2 hours and 45 minutes on a planned flight of just a little over 1 hour.



I was really beat from the long day and traumatic events of the last flight, so I grabbed a snack at the base café and checked into the VOQ with an early morning wakeup call. I removed my Dehner custom fitted flight boots (one of the only perks given to Edwards Test Pilots along with custom fitted Lombard helmets) and my shins were badly bruised and painful. During the battering the F-80 took in the storm my feet were repeatedly thrown upward from the rudder pedals causing my shins to impact the bottom of the instrument panel with terrific force.

The next morning I was up before daylight and after a quick bite to eat I filed for Andrews, which was below minimums due to fog. It was breeze with only the low visibility to worry about. I made it in time to catch the bus taking the rest of the Edwards troops to Arlington. I have never been able to ex-

## Aviating with Bud Evans -cont.

plain that "Time Warp" between the time I entered the squall line and when I broke out far out to sea. I have tried to understand how strong the wind would have had to be to blow me that far in such a short time. I can only guess that my keeping my airspeed fairly low during my penetration to keep the aircraft from being torn apart, that I might have been pushed backwards if the winds had been somewhere near 200 MPH. I'll never know for sure so it will always remain one of the strangest unsolved mysteries in my life. The F-80 was never the same.

Bud With a Framed Momento From This Flight. It's The Intake of the F-80 (or What's Left of it)



## From the "Could This Happen Here?" Department

### YANKEE AIR MUSEUM BURNS IN HANGAR FIRE



Southeastern Michigan lost an important part of its aviation history when a hangar erupted in flames last Saturday evening at Detroit's Willow Run Airport. Luckily, volunteers at the Yankee Air Museum were able to push its three flyable aircraft—a B-17, B-25, and C-47—to safety. But lost in the fire were reference materials, memorabilia, and aircraft under restoration. The hangar itself dated back to 1941 and was used to train B-24 mechanics. The cause of the fire is under investigation. Museum President Jon Stevens said that the museum does have some insurance, but it was unclear as to how much it would cover. Donations can be sent to the Michigan Aerospace Foundation, Yankee Air Museum Recovery Fund, Post Office Box 8282, Ann Arbor MI 48107-8282. The museum can be reached by telephone at 734/483-4030.



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### Who needs a 150' or 200' wide runway?

Actual shots are from a fairly impressive landing operation. One of SAA's first B-747s retiring to Rand Airport, South Africa (elevation 5,568 feet with 4898 long x 50 feet wide runway!) The 747-100 outer-to-outer main gear tire width is 41.33 ft. Empty aircraft Vref was 115 kts! Right on the centerline. An inch is as good as a mile. Nice work. Photo 1 seems to indicate a crosswind too!!