



# UN-SCRAMBLE



The Official Newsletter of the Valiant Air Command, Inc.  
6600 Tico Road, Titusville, FL 32780 - (321) 268-1941  
website: <https://www.valiantaircommand.com/>  
email: [warbirds@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:warbirds@valiantaircommand.com)

**4th Quarter Review - October, November & December • 2022**

**Phase II is completed • The new ramp is BIG**



**The RU-1A is out of restoration and on the new ramp**



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

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day

Adults \$22.00 - Senior 60+ or Military \$20.00 - Students 13 to 18 years old \$10.00

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

### *Statement of Purpose*

*The Valiant Air Command Inc. 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 • January • 2023

Jan 1 New Year's Day, Warbird Museum Closed  
Jan 10 VAC BOD Meeting, 12 Noon  
Jan 14 Fly-In / Drive-In Breakfast, Museum, 8-10

*Please check the VAC website or with the event  
for last minute changes before going!!!!  
(www.valiantaircommand.com)*



## Commander's Report

Norm Daniels, Commander  
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To our members, volunteers, and friends, the year is over, and I am happy to report that it was a good one. Yes, all costs are up, especially insurance. However, due to an increase in visitors, financially we are in good shape. Event bookings had increased during the year, and many are already booked for 2023. Donations have also increased this year vs the prior year.

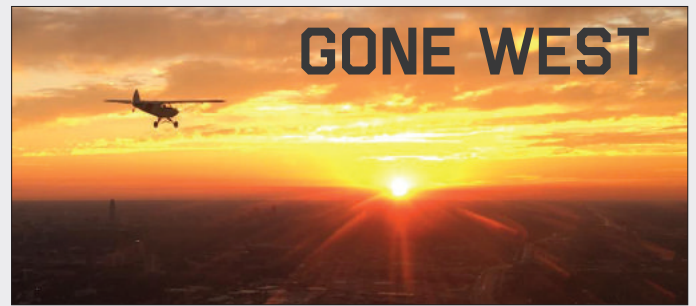
Our marketing and advertising efforts, along with LOCALiQ farming information about the VAC to the social media sites, also contributed to the year ending in the black.

As to our expansion plans, we are happy to report that the new connector and ramp pad has been completed and is already in use to ease the wing-tip to wing-tip space problems in displaying our growing number of warbird aircraft.

We lost about a year and a half of time in moving forward with expansion plans due to COVID, Gopher Tortoise relocation, and stormwater issues that had to be resolved. The State of Florida's rules and regulations in dealing with tortoise relocation to approved sanctuaries had to be met. The Indian River Lagoon issues with pollution and lagoon degradation necessitated complex engineering plans in satisfying St. Johns Water Management District requirements for controlling the quality and quantity of stormwater entering the lagoon.

This month we have issued a contract for the creation of the Architectural and Engineering plans necessary for the long-awaited Event Center/Hangar Project; the final phase of our growth plan. Design is already underway. We now have a new website that can be accessed simply by typing in: [www.valiantaircommand.com](http://www.valiantaircommand.com) you will be directed to the new site. Volunteer Martin Pring drove the process over a 6-month period to make it happen.

Our C-47 Tico Belle early this December flew to the Cayman Islands to participate in their airshow originally scheduled in early June to *Continued on pg 3*



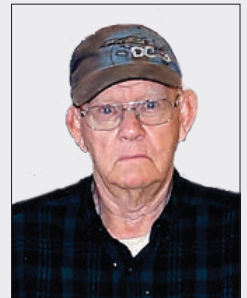
## GONE WEST

### Robert "Bob" Wesley Hamilton

4/13/1930 - 11/3/2022

Robert Wesley Hamilton, age 92, passed away November 3, 2022.

"Bob" was born in Stockton, Missouri on April 13, 1930 and grew up in Garnett, Kansas. In 1950, Bob joined the United States Air Force and he honorably served his country as a top-notch aircraft mechanic and retired after 29 years with the rank of Chief Master Sergeant.



He received a black belt in judo; He obtained a Japanese Captain's license to pilot small vessels; he could ride a unicycle; he was an experienced square dancer; he dove the reefs of the Florida Keys; he rode in ultralights, he parasailed; he ran Warrior Dash mud runs; he volunteered weekly at the Valiant Command Warbird Air Museum; and he skydived multiple times, including once on his 80th and once on his 85th birthday. All who knew him knew his motto: "Keep moving, Jackson!" He will be missed by all.



## UN-SCRAMBLE

The Official Newsletter of the Valiant Air Command

1st Quarter - Jan, Feb & Mar • **Submission deadline - Mar 24th** NL Published - April 1st  
2nd Quarter - April, May & June • **Submission deadline - June 24th** NL Published - June 30th  
3rd Quarter - July, Aug & Sept • **Submission deadline - Sept 24th** NL Published - Sept 30th  
4th Quarter - Oct, Nov & Dec • **Submission deadline - Dec 22nd** NL Published - Dec 31st

Editor: Phyllis Lilienthal

Unscramble Crew: Louise Kleba and Lorraine Juhl

Photo Credits: Randy Black, Marvin Juhl, Lorraine Juhl,

Phyllis Lilienthal, Hawk Moore and Larry Titchenal

Please note: Items submitted after the submission deadline will not be published or will be published the next quarter if applicable. The Editor reserves the right to not publish submitted items.

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## Commander's Report

*Continued from pg 2*

celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne in 1952. The airshow had to be rescheduled due to a hurricane before Queen Elizabeth II passed. Subsequently, she passed away before the rescheduled air show. The Government of the Cayman Islands decided to proceed with the airshow in her honor.

The Board of Directors this last quarter was exceptionally busy. Bob Boswell, XO, has been busy working with our event planner Jolene Clark and is already planning the next Airshow. Marvin Juhl, Procurement Officer, has been overseeing several restoration projects in addition to procuring aircraft as well as related parts and pieces. Richard Jones, Personnel Officer, has had challenges keeping all our systems up and running and monitoring our security and safety challenges. Leigh Lewis, Flight Operations Officer, has been extremely busy arranging appearances for our aircraft as well as orchestrating parachute drop events. Tracy Bohrmann, Finance Officer, has handled the daunting tasks of controlling expenditures, payables, receivables, and money management so the Board knows our financial position on any given day. David Shores, PR and Marketing Officer, has negotiated and planned our advertisements in various publications at very favorable rates and continues the never-ending job of Public Relations with many different entities to keep our name on their calendars. Terry Rush, Maintenance Officer, continues to keep our C-45 aircraft in flying condition and just completed flying in the Sanford FL Airshow. Considering how the aircraft looked when we acquired it, Terry made it look like it rolled out of the factory. Hawk Moore, Facilities Officer, has more tasks on his plate than normal; our aging, leaking roof is a major issue, the logistics of moving aircraft for events takes planning and execution skills, and overseeing the repair and maintenance of aging equipment among other issues that need attention. Jem Golden, Curator, Malcolm Carter and Christine Reynolds have outdone themselves in reconfiguring

memorabilia items in the Main Hangar and the Viet Nam Hangar to better tell the stories. When visiting you will notice mannequins dressed in period-correct attire placed at strategic points; very nice additions that enhance our aircraft and memorabilia. Kathy Lowe has made great headway in growing the STEM program. There is now a waiting list of young people wanting to sign up for the learning programs. Look for more information from Kathy.

Louise Kleba, Recording Secretary supports the Boards efforts in communicating as well as managing the FAST program for both Jet and Piston pilots that engage in formation flying.

Kenita Bushee continues her role as assisting Bob Boswell in his endeavors as well as working with exchanging information to and from various groups wanting to schedule tours.

Once again, a thank you to Phyllis Lilienthal for her editing submissions and creating the UnScramble every quarter and making sure that our brochures, display board, and rack cards have the latest correct information.

A great deal of our success goes to the PX team who are the first group that visitors see and have contact with when they arrive at the Museum. The team, Maureen Laury, Rich Cariseo, Lorraine Juhl, and Sheryl Sanford are ready to serve you.

Larry Mathis lead painter and Tom Wilke continue their excellent work in helping restore and paint our aircraft. Many positive comments have been received about the quality and correctness of the completed work. A great big thanks to the entire Restoration Crew as they attack other aircraft issues: corrosion, dents, missing parts, and pieces making them ready for paint.

A special thanks to the Tour Guides who provide the verbal narrative that tells the stories of our warbirds that information cards do not; we receive many letters and emails extolling the quality of information exchange between them and our visitors.





## Procurement Officer's Report

Marvin Juhl, Procurement Director  
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This is the time of the Holiday Season when families and friends can get together to enjoy and reminisce about how this year has brought us all so much happiness and joy in life. We know there were times when we have come across hardship and disappointments. But we will persevere because this is the time of the season we come together to plan our next new adventures with our hopes and dreams for a more healthier and prosperous upcoming year. May you all have a blessed Holiday Season.

VAC New Acquisition Aircraft: In mid-1989 a private company was formed with a startup of four Cessna 337-G aircraft, each mounted with an infra-red camera with secured communications to provide aerial surveillance around the Kennedy Space Center and its Atlantic downrange as well around Vandenberg Air Force Base and its launch facilities in California. Work at both launch sites kept the downrange areas clear of intruding shipping and some cases provided coverage and security against breaches by groups protesting military launches. And, for many launches, they were able to pinpoint the splashdown of boosters for recovery in the early days of the shuttles and other programs.



I'm sure many remember the movie Bat 21, which is a Cessna 337-A and B model that served in Vietnam as the O-2 FAC (Forward Air Controller). The rear of the plane was laden with UHF, VHF, HF, and FM radios that were quite heavy in those days. That array of communication gear allowed the FAC to coordinate strikes with ABCCC (C-130 Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center), with fast-moving fighters, with Army artillery units, and with beleaguered ground troops. Unlike *Continued on pg 5*



## Charles "Chuck" Melvin Tanner

6/13/1940 - 10/10/2022

Charles Melvin Tanner, age 82, of Greenville, South Carolina, passed away October 10, 2022, in Rockledge, Florida.



Charles was born in Chicago, IL to William Doak Tanner and Cecilia Langston. He and his family later moved to Florence, SC, where he graduated from McClenaghan High School.

He served in the U.S. Navy from 1959 to 1964, serving the last 3 years at NATO Headquarters in Naples, Italy. After the Navy, he was employed at Grumman Corporation in the Aerospace Division, working with the Lunar Module for the Apollo missions at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. He was later employed by Agfa-Compugraphic Division as a Senior Field Service Engineer.

Charles was a member of Kiwanis in Rockledge, FL, American Legion in Florida and Greenville, SC Post #3, and the Rockledge Centennial Commission. He was a member of Buncombe St. United Methodist Church, and was a lifetime member of the Valiant Air Command Warbird Air Museum in Titusville, FL 32780.

Charles is survived by his wife Nancy Perry Tanner (VAC lifetime member), his daughter Melissa Ann Dietel (Warren) and his grandson Tanner Blake Dietel.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Charles may be made to Miracle Hill Ministries, 490 S. Pleasantburg Dr, Greenville, SC 29602, or Valiant Air Command Warbird Museum, 6600 Tico Rd, Titusville, FL 32780.

# Procurement Officer's Report

*Continued from pg 4*

the O-2 equipment, the 337-H was laden with 5 radios, three in secure mode and with the capability in obtaining full frequency ranges, all with considerably less weight than the O-2's

C-337-H push-pull Skymaster became its first and only platform choice for covert operations with the company. Its high wing allowed both aircrew good visual coverage of the ground. It also provided a sturdy hard point under its wing for mounting multiple types of sensor equipment such as EO/IR (electro-optical or TV / infra-red), radar, and lidar for ISR (Intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) including target acquisition. The high wing also allows, (downlink antenna mounted on the bottom of fuselage), less interference of transmitting video, EO/IR, in real-time feed with extending range.

The C337-H has a crew of two, a Pilot and an SO (Sensor Operator). Aircrews manned by experienced personnel well-trained in the latest airborne surveillance ttp's ("tactics, techniques, and procedures"). Most all aircrews were made up of those who had prior military experiences in similar operations such as AC-130 gunship, Navy P-3 Orion, and UAV SO. Even after selection, all had to go through special company training for two to three weeks to meet the company ttp's mission close observation and surveillance requirements. It became imperative that the Pilot and the SO worked as a team. In doing so the missions were very effective and were well received. Due to our capabilities and efficiencies, we were requested by many of the ground forces for support over the UAVs.

In a very short period of time, the company grew to twenty-plus Cessna 337-H aircraft that has served in many countries (South America, Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the U.S.) under covert operations. The Cessna 337-H aircraft that VAC acquired, was modified with upgraded engines that have served in Macedonia and Iraq enabling it to move quickly out of harm's way.

For over a decade the company served Federal, State, and Local wildlife agencies in surveying numbers of deer, elk, antelope, burros, and cattle on leased government lands. They located leaking mine vents, spotted forest fires, and aided law enforcement in apprehending fugitive criminals. A number of agencies

learned of the success of the company and made contact. The company was also implicated in air surveillance operations over Macedonia as part of a contract in support of NATO interference in the civil war in former Yugoslavia. Fitted with special equipment including a FLIR ball under the port (left) wing and a weather radar under the starboard wing. At least a part of the "take" of the company flights was transmitted through the commercial Telstar 11 satellite TV relay, along with other imagery gathered by U.S. Army and U.S. Navy surveillance units. That surveillance was used to monitor terrorist activities, to keep suspects in sight, and for counter-trafficking operations support through broadcast channels of Telstar.

Overseas they protected United States oil companies from theft on oil rigs; in Colombia, they deterred the destruction of oil pipelines by the violent revolutionary group FARC; worked for our State Department over Kosovo attempting to keep warring factions at arms' length; in Bosnia, they led the search for the two genocidal generals, Karadzic and Mladic; and in Iraq, for over ten years the company positioned over two dozen surveillance aircraft at eight bases to provide the most requested and respected supporting asset of our United States Military.

With the pilot, sensor operator, and on occasion military observer on board, (Iraqi call sign W- - - d nn) flew over thousands of airborne ISR missions and over a hundred thousand flight hours with no losses, and protected and saved uncounted American and coalition lives.

This Cessna 337 Skymaster which was donated to Valiant Air Command, is represented as one of the twenty-five aircraft that operated ISR missions in the Iraqi skies. Also, this aircraft served surveillance missions over Kosovo, Bosnia, and Macedonia skies. The camera mounted on the left wing is a Wescam MX-15 with four focal lengths in IR, TV with zoom range along with low light and laser eliminator with range finder and with a spotter scope that has 360 degrees in azimuth, etc., costing seven times that of the basic aircraft.

This aircraft with others, before its deployment overseas, underwent a power plant upgrade from a Continental TSIO-360 (Turbo-Supercharged-Injected-Opposed 210 horsepower) to TSIO-550 with a horsepower of 350. With the end of our nation's heavy involvement in Iraq, the aircraft was returned to the U.S. and the assets were eventually sold



## Facilities Officer's Report

Hawk Moore, Facilities Director  
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Things continue to stay busy for the Facilities Team, with ongoing infrastructure issues, Hurricanes Ian & Nichole, supporting daily operations/VAC special event rentals/setup/tear-down with aircraft movements (with Jolene), and supporting periodic C-47, C-45, B-25, etc. flight operations.



*Tom Etter in his new office*

Tom Etter (Facilities Officer Emeritus Supreme), David Shores, Terry Nies, Roger Tonovitz, Joel McGinley, Jim Bowers, Larry Dickinson, Tom Wilkey, Charlie Meyers; Greg Goetz, Curt Reus, and Rob Shaw continue to provide great support to the team. Charlie Hammer also provided assistance often when his big guns were needed.

Hurricane Ian on September 29, 2022, drove in a fair amount of rain through the window frames on the front of the museum and through roof weak points. Midwest Roofing came out and provided assessments of the Main Hangar roof with me, but to date has not provided an estimate for a roof replacement. Hurricane Nichole tore off three areas (blue metal flashing and top metal skins) of the upper Main Hangar roof on the east side.



*Roof damage from Nicole*

On Thursday, 10 November 2022. Leigh Lewis linked me up with Mark Adema and two of Mark's warehouse guys. They did an outstanding job on four occasions (including during our Veterans Day Weekend Open House) to help stop the huge flows of water. Other roofing companies would not have been able to get crews out for at least a week or two to even assess the damage. The biggest concern continues to be an area above our Main Hangar electrical/fire/security panels. Mark Adema, his team, and I are adamant that the VAC needs to make the Main Hangar roof repair/replacement a priority. When we do replace the roof, we will leave the existing metal roof in place and install metal skins over all the skylights, a hat channel over the existing metal skins, and then a new roof on top of the hat channel. The hat channel creates a vapor barrier between the old roof and the new roof which increases the R-value of the roof and makes it more efficient. To maintain requisite lighting in the hangar, fixtures that have not been converted to LED lights will need to be converted to add light and lessen electricity usage.

On December 9th, Tecta America provided an estimate on the cost to replace the roof with a white 60mil TPO membrane that is being used everywhere like Walmart, hospitals, buildings/warehouses, etc. The roofs come with a manufacturer's 20yr warranty.

The storms on December 12, 2022, produced new, heavier leaks over the library, the shorter roof in front of the Main Hangar. We continue to chase leaks, but we are to the point that it's like putting lipstick on a pig. If anyone wants to donate or knows someone who wants to donate to the roof cause, please contact Norm Daniels or Hawk Moore.

The Titusville Fire inspectors stopped by for our annual fire inspection on the first week of November. No specific write-ups, but we do need to treat and repaint our fire escape stairs on the north and south sides of the museum front building.

ADS Fire Security inspected the fire panels on November 7, 2022. Several backup batteries had to be replaced since they had expired. ADS Security also came out after Hurricane Nicole since the security alarm system could not communicate with their operations center. They had to replace the small cell phone communications box after the water deluge from leaks over the electrical/fire/security alarm panel (another reason, besides personnel and aircraft safety, as to why we need to replace the roof). ADS *Continued on pg 7*

## Facilities Officer's Report

*Continued from pg 6*

had to send another technician out to troubleshoot an intermittent fire panel communications problem on 2 December 2022. It is working again.

Tom Etter continues to provide outstanding support at the drop of a hat. Tom has stayed ahead of the eight HVAC systems by applying vinegar to the drain tubes. Tom and I painted many of the tie-downs in front of the Restoration, NE Main Hangar, and north driveway with yellow and red paint. Tom continues to put out figurative fires as they pop up.

In October, the team rerouted ethernet cables and placed additional cameras in three locations. Jim Bowers has done welding and lathe work over the past three months as well as getting the large Detroit diesel generator working on the old MD-3 trailer. It is available for use with a 50-foot remote power outlet box so the unit can be outside and provide power inside the building. He added an additional extension box of 25' with four 115VAC outlets giving the output a total of 8 outlets. He added instructions on how to start the unit at the top of the control panel and adjusted the output levels.

The Facilities team assisted with the movement of helicopter parts from shelves, clean up, etc. to numerous pallets so the buyer could move them out and transport them north. The team helped shuffle aircraft in the Restoration Hangar on several occasions so that the F-11 could be painted, the BT-13 could be moved into the back of the hangar, the Skymaster could be worked on, and the Red Baron Stearman's wings could be removed for the addition of a trapeze.

The team moved aircraft out and in for numerous events over the past three months including fly-in, drive-in breakfasts, the Space Coast Porsche Club of America, wedding receptions, Veterans Day Open House, Corn Hole Tournament, Museums of Brevard event, an Arnold Air Society function, the SpaceX Christmas party, VAC Christmas party, etc.

The Facilities team and docents cleaned up debris around the museum after Hurricane Nicole in preparation for the Open House. Roger Tonovitz continues to replace fluorescent lights and converting many to LED across the entire campus. He also fixes and assembles equipment for the museum.

Larry Dickinson's and Howard Clark's baby, the C-123 was moved over from the other side

of the FOB where it has been for years and years to the new tarmac behind the Vietnam Hangar on October 26, 2022. The C-123 is always a hit for those touring the aircraft on the tarmac, especially when they have it open.



*Larry Dickinson and Howard Clark, and C-123 on new ramp*

The F-101, Canberra, RU-21, and S-2 were moved over to the new tarmac on 3 November 2022.

When Hurricanes Ian and Nicole headed our way all aircraft that would fit, were properly stored in the hangars. Tie-downs/tugs for the C-123, Canberra, RU-21, F-101, S-2, Fouga, and Mohawk were checked before the hurricane's arrival. Things that could be blown around were stored inside the hangars. Thankfully, no damage was noted to any aircraft from Hurricanes Ian or Nicole.

Joel McGinley and Jim Bowers continue to work miracles to keep our VAC motor pool equipment in working order, including the crane, the 6K forklift, the man-lift, tugs (brakes, carbs, etc.), and any other vehicles that need TLC. Joel was able to go to Batteries+ and get them to warranty replace the batteries for the floor cleaning Zamboni that was dying in less than 30 minutes when Greg Goetz cleaned the hangar floors. Greg is extremely happy with the way the Zamboni is running now. Joel and Jim are getting the big Entwistle tug back in working order by fashioning a bracket with two fans to replace the single cooling fan blade that disintegrated after the May 2022 airshow.

Jim Bowers and Hawk Moore replaced the broken American flag halyard and re-hoisted the American flag in front of the museum. Terry Nies replaced the tires on the F-104 and has assisted greatly with many of the event setups with

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## Facilities Officer's Report

*Continued from pg 7*

aircraft movements and table/chair setups. Rob Shaw has also assisted with many event preparations and is quickly picking up on how to move aircraft. Tom Wilkey has mowed, edged, and hedge-trimmed numerous times. I help on occasion. Tom always does a super job keeping the grounds looking well.

Joel and Jim have been working with Kathy Lowe on STEM projects to teach piston engines to the students. Jim did a demonstration for STEM on the big Lathe by making a bushing with a shoulder and answering questions. He also gave a talk about various types of welding equipment and how each worked. He permanently fixed the Fuel locker door with two new hinges on December 3rd. Jim also worked with Tom

Reilly and Terry Rush on the annual inspection for the B-25. Jim fashioned a pin for one of the jack-stands on the lathe.

On Friday, December 2nd, the north-middle door was rammed into the door stop, breaking the top rail, and making it impossible to close the middle doors without using the man-lift to re-align the split rail. We hope to have the doors and railings fixed by the time this UnScramble is published.

I appreciate all the assistance from our team members to keep many seen and unseen things in working order for the museum. Many don't realize the magnitude of the entire Facilities team's support, day in and day out. Great teamwork!

We are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested, please send me an e-mail or stop by and see me at the museum.

### ***Aircraft that have been moved to the new ramp***



***F-101 Voodoo***



***RU-21A UTE Beechcraft***



***TT18 British Canberra***



***S-2F Tracker***





## Operations Officer's Report

Leigh Lewis, Operations Director  
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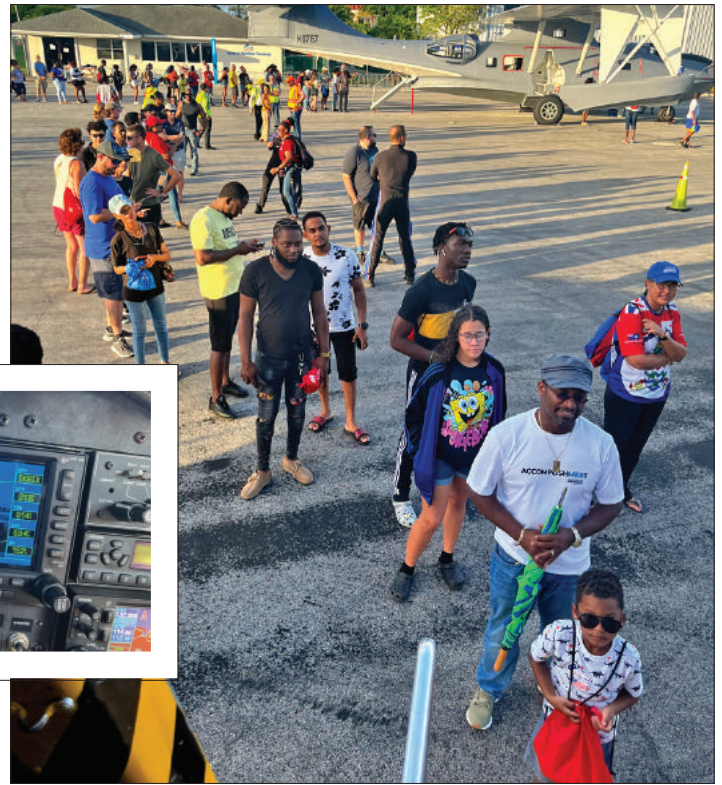
Seasons greetings from Flight Operations. We have had a very busy and successful quarter with Ft. Ops, ending with an airshow in the Cayman Islands. Our C-47 left VAC on 1 Dec. with full tanks of fuel and stopped in Key West for fuel top-off. Captains Mike McCann and John Makinson manning the flight, took off to Caymans only to be turned around by Cuban ATC. They had proper overfly clearance and transponder but Cuban radar was not operational. They diverted to Turks and Caicos to go around Cuba. After an overnight and fuel top-off, they arrived in the Cayman Islands Friday. Saturday and Sunday they flew for the airshow, dropping parachute jumpers and doing flybys. They gave tours both days with lines 50 people deep. Monday morning they departed for Melbourne and had a successful Cuba overfly, cleared customs, and came home by 1 pm. Another plane (PBY) in the

show left at 1 pm from Cayman with the intent to come to VAC but had an engine failure off the north coast of Cuba and instead of going to Key West they turned around and landed in a remote Cuban airport. BIG PROBLEMS to get new engine and permits. Good luck to them. N9767 (PBY Catalina) is from Eugene Oregon and plans to come to VAC when repaired. The Cayman people loved our plane and invited us back next year. A VERY successful trip for us. We also had another successful event with the Phantom Airborne Club doing night parachute jumps over Zephyrhills. Some great infrared videos are on their website. We are down for the next month for a mandatory 5-year inspection on propellers. We have a very busy schedule coming up starting in February. As usual, this couldn't be accomplished without outstanding maintenance. Thank you for your support in reelecting me to this position. I will continue to make sure we are SAFE and LEGAL to the best of my ability. I have included some pictures of the Cayman expedition.

Thanks. Leigh Lewis



Cayman's tower



Line to see "Tico Belle"



Looking pretty on the ramp



Returning from parachute drop



## P R Officer's Report

David Shores, Public Relations Director  
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Our ad is up on the wall of Melbourne Airport on the wall of the international luggage carousel. We are the only advertiser there along with TUI.

We are now getting 5-10 visitors a week from Tui's website in Europe. Visitors can now buy our admission tickets directly on their website.

Press releases have gone out for fly-in/drive-in breakfast as well as the Museums of Brevard display.

Washington University in St. Louis had 50

alumni tour the museum on a Saturday with a tour of the Kennedy Space Center on Sunday.

Our new website ([www.warbirdairmuseum.com](http://www.warbirdairmuseum.com)) is completed and up and running.

We are now advertising to attract visitors from the Sunrise Palms RV Park in their handout to folks as they arrive. We continued our ad in the Space Coast Visitors Guide as well as the Space Coast Visitors Map.

We have a new State Representative Chase Tramont. We will contact his office soon to invite him to visit the museum.

Our revenue from Groupon is now around \$25,000 a year to date.



## Gift Shop News

Maureen Laury, PX, Manager  
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Hello all,

What a Veterans Day Open House we had this year! Hurricane Nicole tried to stop us but didn't succeed. We did close on Friday due to roof damage and we had no internet connection, but we had a great turnout on Saturday and Sunday.

I want to thank everyone who brought a non-perishable food donation. Please read Bob Boswell's article to see where the food went. A very good cause.

I would like to take the time and give a big thank you to Rich Cariseo for all his help in getting everything ready for Open House weekend. I couldn't have done it without him. Also, Lorraine Juhl who is always here helping in any way she can. We appreciate you! We also have a new addition to our gift shop. Come by and say hi to Sheryl Sanford. She truly is a big asset to our team.

I was very surprised and happy to meet two of our T-shirt vendors, Ralph Labusch and Joe Hamilton.



It's always nice to put a face with a voice. He is working with us on some special shirts unique to our museum. Please see our new C-47 Tico Belle shirt (picture below). Ralph does excellent work, and we have a few more t-shirts in the works.



Front



Back

Please don't forget about our breakfast on the 2nd Saturday of every month. It's a great deal. You get an excellent breakfast and tour the museum for \$12.00. Hours are from 8 am to 10 am for that price.

Hope everyone enjoys the Holidays and has a Happy 2023 New Year! As always thank you for your support!



Bicycles for Toys For Tots



## Executive Officer's Report

**Bob Boswell, Executive Director**  
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2022 is rapidly ending and I would like to take time to reflect on the past quarter's activities.

As we continued coming out of the "Pandemic", October saw the beginning of a landslide of events hosted at the Warbird Air Museum: in the same week the Central Florida Ferrari Club visited for a tour, pictures, and lunch, the William R. Boone High School JROTC arrived by bus for a tour, and on Saturday evening we hosted approximately 200 guests for a local high school reunion. In the second half of October, the Space Coast Porsche Club of America arrived on Saturday for a tour, picture session, and pizza lunch. The next day was the Jerry Lewis tour and reunion dinner followed by a Celebration of life on Monday. Saturday the Eric Heney ADS Corporation with 100 guests enjoyed dinner in the Vietnam Hangar and the last Saturday saw another 100-person reception there.

The first Saturday in November, the museum was the venue for 200 guests attending a Space-X wedding party. 11-13 November was our Annual Veterans Day Weekend Open House. This was a great event with good attendance. Our volunteers at the food service line could hardly keep up with the hungry crowd. Canned foods collected for the Open House were donated to a local High School's Food Pantry that provides for needy students.



The following Saturday, Washington University visited the museum for a tour and lunch. One Saturday we hosted a Cornhole Tournament in the Vietnam Hangar and on that Sunday, we hosted the Museums of Brevard Showcase featuring representatives and displays for 20 local Brevard Museums.

The first two weeks in December were filled with daily tours. Evening events started on Friday, December 16 with the EELV Air Force Arnold Air Society Holiday Dinner with 120 guests in the Vietnam Hangar. Then on Saturday, the museum was the venue

for the very large Space-X Holiday Party that filled the Vietnam Hangar and our new aircraft parking ramp. At the same time, the VAC hosted our very own Member's Appreciation Dinner in the Main Hangar. This event was well attended (130 guests) and enjoyed by all.

During this same time, daily museum tours continued as did our Second Saturday Early Bird Fly-In/ Drive-In breakfast from 8-10.

I do not usually recount past events; however, I did this to let everyone know how very busy the staff has been with all the activity. The one person I need to rave about is our Events Coordinator and Caterer, Jolene Clark. All of this would not have been possible without her enduring support.

As the new year begins, best wishes to all, and may 2023 bring in good health and happiness.



# Tom Reilly is honored by the EAA Hall Of Fame



Tom Reilly, Lifetime VAC Member, whose flying and restoration accomplishments are legendary within the warbirds community, was inducted into the EAA Warbirds of America Hall of Fame on November 10 in Oshkosh.

Tom's flight experience began with a natural feel for flying, as he soloed his first aircraft after less than five hours of instruction and earned his private pilot certificate just 16 days later. Since then, he has more than 5,500 hours logged as pilot-in-command, primarily in warbirds, with more than 2,600 hours in North American B-25 bombers including his own B-25 named Killer B.



He has also instructed more than 20 pilots through their B-25 ratings.

Along with his flying accomplishments, Tom is equally as renowned for his restoration work on more than 20 warbird and vintage aircraft. The crown jewel of those restorations was the recent completion of the rare North American XP-82 Twin Mustang, which earned Grand Champion honors at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh and the SUN N' FUN Aerospace Expo in 2019, as well as the Golden Wrench and Phoenix awards at Oshkosh that year.



Tom has accumulated more than 50 years of warbird restoration without a maintenance accident and continues to be a much sought-after expert for a new generation of aircraft restorers.



**B-25 Mitchell, Killer Bee on display at VAC**



**P-82 Twin Mustang on display at VAC**

# Beechcraft C-45 - Expediter

This Veterans Day weekend a few member working volunteers were treated to a short ride in our C-45 as a thank you for their hard work, many hours, and support of the VAC.



Getting ready for flight



Topping off the oil



Terry Rush, Pilot - Jack Major, Co-pilot



We checked on the passengers now let's fly



Louise Kleba and Kenita Bushee



Kenita Bushee and Malcolm Cater



The port



Back to the hangar

## FROM THUDS TO PROVIDER

(Or how I went from the fastest single-engine fighter to the slowest four-engine cargo plane)

Norm Daniels asked me to write up that strange transition for publication in the UNSCRAMBLE, but I have to go back to how I got to fly the Thud. Following pilot training at Williams AFB AZ (1962), I became an instructor pilot in the T-37 at Laughlin AFB TX. Then, in May 1986, I was assigned to the T-41 (C-172) at Del Rio Int'l as a representative of the Base and one of three Laughlin IPs overseeing the contract training program there. In October that year, I got orders to head to McConnell AFB KS to checkout in the F-105. Thus, I was going from the smallest single-engine aircraft to our biggest!

Both the C-172 and the F-105 made their maiden flights in 1955, but there any comparison ends! The contrasts are shown here along with figures for the C-123.

	<u>C-172</u>	<u>F-105</u>	<u>C-123</u>
EMPTY WEIGHT	1,691	26,855	36,366
MAX GROSS WEIGHT	2450	52,838	60,000
VN	163KIAS	810	198
Wing Load #/sq ft	14.1	93	49

Going through my head at the time of the assignment was the fact that the first eleven instructor pilots from Laughlin to head off to Southeast Asia from late 1965 until May 1966 had died in O-1, C-47, A-1, and C-123 aircraft, and I was going to Hanoi in a single seat, single-engine aircraft where there were more guns than around Berlin in 1944!

The time for me to get to the C-123 was a bit longer. After my Thud tour, I returned to Laughlin and again flew the T-37 and the T-41. Then, from our little 6,000-pound Dog Whistle, I went to the F-111 at RAF Upper Heyford UK. Following Staff College, I was back in the Aardvark in Thailand. From Korat AB there I flew the last fighter combat sortie in South East Asia. in the Mayaguez Affair on May 15, 1975.

After instructing at our Staff College in Montgomery AL, I went to Iran as an advisor to their Staff College and remained there until twelve days after the Khomeini revolution was complete in February 1979. I finished my USAF flying at Holloman AFB NM on January 1, 1982, instructing soon-to-be fighter pilots in the AT-38 (regular trainer, but with a bomb rack, mini-gun, and bomb sight.)

Six years later I was bored and called a fellow Thud Driver to see if he knew of anything happening in aviation. He put me in touch with his brother who asked, "Have you flown the C-123?" "No." "No sweat, you can check out in a couple of weeks. I have something going six hundred miles south of your location (I was living in Destin FL then.) All friendly skies, but if you cross the border you will be well compensated."

Of course, the "something" was the Contra Airlift into Southern Nicaragua. A C-7A Caribou had been making deliveries of two tons per load out of the Contra airstrip at Aguacate in Southwest Honduras along the river border with Nicaragua. The C-123 then began to carry ten thousand pounds of "hard rice" from El Salvador south to cross Costa Rica and fly up into southern Nicaragua.

That's how it happened. I flew twelve sorties into Nicaragua; got paid well; and got enough hours that I was hired later to do C-123 anti-drug logistic flights in Peru and Colombia. But that's another story.

John Piowaty Lt Col USAF (Ret)

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### INTERESTING ORIGINS OF N674JK or USAF 54-0674 or HP825

The Organization, as US Marine LtCol Ollie North called the arms deliveries to the anti-communist Contras in Nicaragua, began in February 1986 with a CIA airdrop from a C-130. That was followed by the arrival of a C-7 Caribou, a medium-sized cargo plane, that made air drops along the Honduran/Nicaraguan border from the SECRET airstrip at Aguacate, Honduras.

By April 1986 deliveries to the Southern Front in Nicaragua were being planned. Drops there would originate at Ilopango Air Base in El Salvador. LtCol North had assured the Costa Rica government that, even though we would pre-position loads at a truly secret airstrip in the northwest of that country, we would not cross the border to Nicaragua. Rather, we would cross their country to the Atlantic Ocean and fly north abeam Nicaragua and enter the Southern front to the west.

Retired Major General Richard Secord had been hired by North to oversee the operations. Secord contacted former Air America Lead Pilot Jim Rhyne to find a C-123 pilot and manager. He hired Air America vet Bill Cooper. Together they picked up a C-123 from Doan Aviation in Miami. (That was the same plane that Barry Seale [movie "American Made"] flew in a drug stung targeting Nicaragua's president *Continued on pg 15*

## FROM THUDS TO PROVIDER

*Continued from pg 14*

Danny Ortega and his brother Umberto.) That plane arrived at Ilopango in early April 1986.

By July the operation was growing and there was a need for a second Caribou. It arrived from Canada and was put to work. A search for a second C-123 found five of the venerable aerial trucks for sale; one was at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas with a failed starter; one was at a flying school in Panama with damage to the right flap; three were in the civilian parking area adjacent to the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center, more commonly known as The Bone Yard.

On July 1, 1986, Bill Cooper and John Piowaty, pilots in the operation, traveled to Tucson to take a look at the three planes there and chose N674JK as the best of the three based on engine overhaul times. On the 2nd they met the owners, Darryl Greenameyer, Ascher Ward, and Al Hansen, and settled on a price of \$250,000.

On the 29th of July, with the word that the money had been forwarded to the partners, pilots John McCrainey and John Piowaty headed to Tucson. The deal was consummated and on the afternoon of July 31 the pilots lifted off for their first leg of flights to Miami. They got only as far as Junction, Texas on the first leg, with Engine No 1 (left) running very rough and No 2 nearly empty of its 40 gallons of oil.

The next morning they limped into Austin, Texas where they left the plane with fuel leaks, a

rough-running engine, and an engine that used oil at an alarming rate. Eventually, the plane was repaired enough to be flown to the Southern Air Transport (SAT) maintenance facility in Miami. It was worked on some more and eventually arrived at Ilopango on the 8th of September.

The plane made four munitions runs into southern Nicaragua before being flown north to Southern Air for maintenance around the end of September.

A few days after the other C-123 was shot down October 5, 1986, McRaney and Piowaty were called to SAT and on the 10th flew the plane down to the Contra airstrip at Aguacate where it was left.

When the operation ended with the election of Violetta Chamorra, the wife of an assassinated anti-Ortega journalist (a parallel to Corazon Aquino, the wife of Begnino Aquino, an anti-Marcos journalist who also was assassinated being elected president of the Philippines), Contra Lt Colonel Lopez took control of the plane. When, later, he died in a C-47 crash, his wife took the plane. It was then sold to a Honduran bank, then confiscated by the Honduran government, and finally bought by Bob Matthews, owner of the Parachute Testing Center in Dunnellon, Florida. He bought the plane and flew it to Titusville, Florida. He was unable to start the right auxiliary jet engine and the plane has remained at Titusville where it is today.

History by John Piowaty

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## A Ron Dixon Snippet

### *How I met Jackie Kennedy*



I began my career as a Flight Line Mechanic at American Airmotive in Miami, FL. In the spring of 1961, I was hired on the Goodyear Blimp as an Airship Rigger. The Chief Pilot, Vern Smith taught me the skills needed to safely hover the airship. One day we flew over his home to pick up the lunch his wife prepared. He asked me to hover the blimp while he talked to his wife and drop a rope to haul in lunch. Vern decided that I should go into pilot training since I was competent at hovering. While I was still in pilot training we flew to Newport, Rhode Island

to cover the America's Cup Race. Jackie Kennedy was in attendance and she walked over to the blimp which was tethered and asked if she could take a ride. I had to advise her that we were grounded as the winds were over 20 knots. She said that she was disappointed but understood and thanked me. I was fortunate to see the USA from the Blimp's vantage point. We flew the Blimp from coast to coast many times making 30 MPH on a good day.

I was about 13 hours away from qualifying as a Captain when I was contacted and hired by Oak Ridge National Laboratory and spent 15 years there as an engineer and machinist with the development department. After that, I was hired by Lockheed Martin and spent 43 years as a Weapons Coordinator: Missiles, Space, and Submarines before retiring.

***Editor's note: Ron is a VAC Member and a working Volunteer.***

# 2023 VAC Officers



**Norm Daniels**  
Commander



**Bob Boswell**  
XO



**Hawk Moore**  
Facilities



**Tracy Bohrmann**  
Finance



**Terry Rush**  
Maintenance



**Leigh Lewis**  
Operations



**Richard Jones**  
Personnel



**Marvin Juhl**  
Procurement



**David Shores**  
Public Relation

# 2022 VAC Member Christmas Party

Photos courtesy of Larry Titchenal



Great turn-out • A good time was had by all  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



They keep things running smoothly  
l to r: Patti Champion, Kathy Lowe and Louise Kleba



Norm Daniels (standing), VAC Commander, visits tables



A beautiful, snowy village was part of the party's  
decorations





# STEM

by Kathy Lowe

Autumn has passed quickly and the holidays are upon us. We are continuing to acclimate and grow the VAC STEM program. Thank you to the parents, VAC volunteers, and presenters who have dedicated their time and talents. The support of the VAC officers and Board of Directors is greatly appreciated.

A number of elements influenced the formation of the current STEM curriculum. Most importantly, we desire for the students to enjoy while learning. Compelling activities are on the calendar for the spring session!

On December 17, 2022, it was an honor for our STEM students and parents to volunteer with Wreaths Across America at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. On a beautiful and cool day, we, as a community, gathered to remember our veterans with a ceremony, and by placing wreaths on their graves.

On the first Saturday of December, our students had a treat with a tour of the machine shop. Thank you to Jim Bowers for a demonstration and Dan McAlexander for facilitating our class on engines. The students assembled a model motor engine. This will prepare them for upcoming lessons in disassembling and then reassembling working lawn mower engines. With this knowledge, the students will understand the concept of aircraft engines.

Not only does our program touch on science, technology, engineering, and math. VAC STEM is fortunate to have volunteers who share military history. Chief Ken Peck presented the history of WWII paratroopers and incorporated our C-47 (Tico Belle) into the lesson. We were delighted when Pilots Leigh and John gave a tour of the aircraft and fired up the engines!

Among our talented STEM students is an inspiring writer. Hannah Downs has authored class summaries and titled them STEMories. They will be available in the near future on our website. Included are several from this quarter.

11/5/22 - Ms. Jayme DiGennaro came to speak about the importance of observation. She works at the American Police Hall of Fame as the Educator, as well as the leader of the LEO Lions club, a group that

meets monthly to learn about the different aspects of law enforcement.

Ms. Jayme opened the STEM Class by mentioning detectives. One of the most important marks of an efficient detective, she explained, is a keen attention to detail. This, she added, is also important in a witness.

In order to hone the students' observation skills, Ms. Jayme brought several "tests". One was a picture of a crime scene. After studying it for thirty seconds, the image was removed, and we answered questions about the details and contents of the drawing we had just seen. Other activities included Encyclopedia Brown-style scenarios, as well as a timed "spot the difference" between two photos. It was a surprise when given a sheet with pictures of one real penny and fourteen fakes, it took us a while to decide on the actual one-cent piece.

Ms. Jayme says anyone can increase their observation skills. Take any room in your house, study it for a minute or so, and then leave and write down every object in the room you can remember. Eventually, you will notice things automatically, and keen attention to detail will become a rewarding habit.

11/19/22 - Today Mr. James "Rawhide" Washington spoke at our STEM Class. "Rawhide", as he is called at USATS (US Aviation Training Solutions) Flight School where he is Chief Flight instructor (training both flight students and instructors.)

Today, Rawhide explained to us the different rules and requirements for each type of pilot certificate, from a recreational pilot to the "doctorate" of pilots, the Airline Transport Pilot certification.

Mr. Washington also entertained us with both his jokes and his stories of different flights he had taken. The longest flight he has flown was from California to Texas. Once, he was flying a plane when his landing gear didn't go down, and he had to make what is called a gear-up landing. He also explained the process he worked through in an emergency, mentioning the codes used to communicate problems to the control tower. He stressed the importance of knowing these codes, as well as being able to troubleshoot the problem from the cockpit

This STEM Meeting was enjoyable, and Mr. Washington will be back later this year to teach us more about aviation.

## Our C-123 Has Come Home



The C-123 was moved from the other side of the airport to its permanent home on the new ramp and is now open for visitors

## View Of The New Ramp From The Vietnam Hangar



You will gain access to the new ramp through the Vietnam Hangar rear doors

***Valiant Air Command, Inc.***

6600 Tico Road, Titusville, Florida 32780 - 321-268-1941

Website: [www.valiantaircommand.com](http://www.valiantaircommand.com) - Email: [warbirds@valiantaircommand.com](mailto:warbirds@valiantaircommand.com)

# Veterans Day Weekend Open House

## November 11, 12 & 13th, 2022

4th Quarter Unscramble Supplement



I to r: Lorraine Juhl, Monica Alberico, Joanne Baxter, Linda Hammer, Patti Champion, Shirley Juhl, Barb Rathborne



Norm Rathbourne cooking hamburgers



Titusville Play House



The Big Red Bus looking for your blood



This guy is looking for your blood too

# Veterans Day Weekend Open House

## November 11, 12 & 13th, 2022

4th Quarter Unscramble Supplement



Top Gun Author Dave Baranek (right) with the lead instructor (left) from USATS



John Musselman, Author of two great books



Louise Kleba at the membership table



Space Coast Model Group



Blue Angel's car on display



Beautiful restorations - both plane and car

# Veterans Day Weekend Open House

## November 11, 12 & 13th, 2022

4th Quarter Unscramble Supplement



Bob Boswell, VAC XO, checking operations



Bounce House - very popular



Veteran's Corner. Good place to get info



Guarding the Veteran's Corner



Military Patrol on duty