

Flight Line

The Official Publication of the CAF

Southern California Wing
455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 482-0064

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Visit us online at www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal



© Photo by Chris Luvar



**Col. Ken Kramer, Crew Chief extraordinaire of our Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat.
See his story on Page 8 of this issue.**

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, November 8, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the
CAF Museum Hangar, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport**

THE CAF IS A PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMBAT AIRCRAFT

November 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday & Wednesday and major holidays						1 Work Day
2 Daylight Savings Time Ends	3 Museum Closed	4 Work Day Election Day VOTE!	5 Museum Closed	6 Work Day	7	8 Work Day Staff Meeting 9:30
9	10 Museum Closed	11 Work Day Veterans Day	12 Museum Closed	13 Work Day	14	15 Work Day
16	17 Museum Closed	18 Work Day	19 Museum Closed	20 Work Day	21	22 Work Day Wing Staff Voting Deadline
23	24 Museum Closed	25 Work Day	26 Museum Closed	27 Thanksgiving Museum Closed	28	29 Work Day
30	Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday & Wednesday and major holidays					

STAFF AND APPOINTED POSITIONS				IN THIS ISSUE
Wing Leader	* Steve Barber	(805) 485-5405	f8f2cat@gmail.com	Wing Calendar 2
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Operations Officer	* Gary Barber	(805) 659-4319	bearcat69@pacbell.net	Help Keep the CAF's F-82 Flying 5
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HANGAR PHONE (805) 482-0064 HANGAR FAX (805) 482-0348 WEBSITE www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal				Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing 455 Aviation Drive Camarillo, CA 93010-9501
* Denotes Staff Position				

Finance Officer's Report by Casey de Bree

Those of you who are regulars at the hangar have asked me quite a few questions about the wing's finances as a result of a number of rumors that have circulated, the closing of our hangars to the public last year by the Fire Department, and our construction activities to be in compliance with the terms of the stay of the closure order. I will attempt to bring all of you up to date in this message.

This message is less about financial nuts and bolts than about challenges and triumphs. Some have complained that the Wing Staff does not share enough with the membership, so I have agreed to post the monthly financial reports and commentary that I provide to the Staff each month. We have tentatively decided to post these in the tool room, next to the coffee maker, so take a look there if you are interested in the financial details.

It is no secret that the Southern California Wing has been struggling financially for the past 12 months as we deal with large expenditures for architectural and facility construction services, and the totally unexpected ANUAC assessment from CAF Headquarters this year, which went from \$12,500 to \$32,500 in one jump. At the same time, the price of oil, and aviation fuel along with it, went through the roof and air shows, which were a major source of our income, quickly dried up. We operate aircraft with big, thirsty engines, and the high fuel prices hit us hard. The closure of our museum to the public the last 6 months of 2007 also caused a large drop in income.

The result of these events was a negative cash flow of some \$64,000 in 2007 and a projected negative cash flow of some \$70,000 for 2008.

How did we manage these huge loses? We drew down our cash reserves. Fortunately, our Hangar improvement fund had some \$45,000 in it which could be used for the architectural and construction work, we realized some income from the sale of assets, and a group of generous Wing members donated some \$20,000 to the hangar fund. We also came to realize that we had about \$200,000 banked in our aircraft's MCRP accounts at headquarters, which are intended as "rainy day" reserves if an expensive repair to an aircraft was needed. We reluctantly took the drastic step of drawing down these accounts, not only for new engines for both of our SNJs, but also for more routine expenses in order to keep the wing solvent. We don't normally waste much money, but we tightened our belt a notch further to cut expenses to the bone. We also looked at our headquarters billings for ANUAC and insurance, and were able to reduce these billings by about \$10,000 by correcting the classification of some of our aircraft that had been incorrectly classified. We were also able to replace almost all of the lost air show income with motion picture and television commercial work.

What does 2009 and beyond hold for the Southern California Wing? We must, like many of the other CAF wings, reinvent ourselves to be successful in the realities of today's economy. This means that we must look to more non-aircraft related activities to generate the income we need. We have a 100' x 150' museum hangar which we have been renting out for events for a number of years.

We need to more actively promote the hangar as a event venue to increase revenue from this wonderful asset. Wing Leader Steve Barber and son Steve Jr. have organized a Wing golf tournament for next year which we believe will bring in \$15,000 or more in revenue, and probably more in future years as we get the hang of how to do it correctly. We now have a sign on the 101 freeway, with six street signs along the way, directing people to our museum from all directions. These have brought new visitors. We started selling rides in our SNJ last November and added our PT-19 to the ride program early this year. We have sold more than 100 rides in these aircraft, which has greatly helped our revenue picture. The Ventura County Star newspaper has been supportive and helped us with advertising. So there is no one thing, but a whole series of ideas and innovations that became part of the reinvention process.

Not all of our members were initially happy with the reinvention. Some rebelled at the needed changes, and standard category ride aircraft meant that our ride pilots and mechanics must submit to an FAA-mandated drug testing program, which was offensive to some. However, we took a page from Lee Iacocca's book and told everyone to either lead, follow, or get out of the way. Some members took up the challenge and led, others followed, and some got out of the way. And some had to admit afterwards that we would have failed had we not persevered and done what was originally unpopular.

Are we out of the woods? Not yet, but many of us feel that we know where the woods end and that we can get ourselves there. The Southern California Wing is an organization of people who joined to show the public our wonderful museum, and to fly, restore, and maintain our ten aircraft. And they are very good at what they do. They did not join the Wing to find events to hold in our hangar, to find golfers to pay and play in our golf tournament, write grants, or to ask people for money, but enough of us have come to realize that we can't have one without the other, and keeping our wing healthy and growing is what we really want to do.

How will we do in 2009? The ANUAC formula applied to aircraft like our C-46, as well as the 160 gallon/hour fuel burn, apply a large financial penalty to operating such aircraft, which have poor income-producing potential. I have obtained Staff agreement that a plan be developed by May 30, 2009 to determine if sufficient revenue can be generated to cover the expected \$65,000 cost to operate the C-46 for a year. We are also looking at our other aircraft to make sure they will bring in the needed revenue.

On the plus side, I have done extensive analysis of which parts of our wing produce income and which parts produce losses. Our primary loser is the money being spent on architectural and construction work, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year, and will therefore not be a factor next year. Our museum income pretty well pays for our facility, and a moratorium has been placed on the use of Wing cash for the restoration aircraft. Our flying aircraft made a little money last year and are expected to do so again in 2009.

I am optimistic that we will succeed.

Wing Staff Election

by Dave Flood

On November 22, 2008 we will count the ballots submitted by paid-up members, and we will have new Staff Officers in the positions of Wing Leader, Executive Officer, Maintenance Officer, and Safety Officer.

Joe Peppito and his Nominating Committee, including Sib Bosso and Les Bedding, have come up with four candidates for the four positions.

For Wing Leader, Steve Barber is running for another 2-year term, while Robert Albee is also running for this top position. For Maintenance Officer and Safety Officer, we have one candidate for each position – namely Joe Peppito and Norm Swagler, respectively. See the explanation under “Executive Officer” for the reason there is no candidate for this position.

The Wing Staff Election Ballot is printed on the last page of this newsletter. We want all of you to vote this year, a crucial one for our Wing – either in person in the Restoration Hangar or by mail. **Please follow to the letter the instructions on Page 14 which are printed along with the ballot.**

Here are bios of the four candidates:

Wing Leader

Steve Barber

USMC, 1966-1970; Vietnam, 1969-1970. Steve has been a member of CAF for almost eighteen years. He has served on the General Staff for nine years, and was Chief of Staff in 2003.

Steve flies many CAF aircraft, including the F6F, F8F, SB2C, SNJ/AT6, Zero, Spitfire, C-46 and others. He holds an Unlimited LOA for single and multi-engine aircraft. He is a CAF fighter Check Pilot, SNJ Check Pilot, and a TRARON Formation lead pilot. He founded the Navy Tailhook Legacy Flight program along with Admiral Mike Bowman in 1999. Steve has sponsored several CAF aircraft, and has donated many thousands of dollars to the cause.

Steve has been the SoCAWing Wing Leader for the past two years, and had served as Wing Leader previously for a four-year period.

Steve is a Senior Vice President of investments for Stifel Nicolaus & Company, Inc. He has two grown children, Stephen (30) and Shellie (36). His wife, La Tanya, worked for CAF at HQ in Midland for six years.

Robert Albee

US Army, 1964-1966. Bob has been a member of CAF for six + years. He is currently our Wing Adjutant.

He is the Crew Chief for our Fairchild F-24R Argus, and directs a crew of approximately eight men. He also is the owner and pilot of an Aeronca Champ, and occasionally flies aerobatic maneuvers over northern Ventura County.

He was a banker for forty years, and is now retired.

Bob has been instrumental in developing a business plan for our Wing. He has been married to Lilie for 35 years, and they have two daughters and five grandchildren.

Bob's reason for running for Wing Leader: “To give our members a choice of who will direct their Wing for the next two years.”

Executive Officer: None

Section 3.F.3.c.(2) of the CAF Unit Manual reads in part:

“This officer may be appointed on an annual basis by the Unit Leader and serves as a voting member of the Unit Staff.

However, if the Unit Leader chooses to appoint the Executive Officer, the Unit Leader sacrifices his regular voting privilege and can only vote in the case of a tie.”

Maintenance Officer: Joe Peppito

USAAF, 1943-1946 – Eglin Field Proving Ground Command; Maxwell Field; B-29 Flight Engineer School.

Joe graduated from the Manhattan High School of Aviation, and worked for the War Department at Wright-Patterson Field & Topeka AFB, 1941-1943.

After his stint in the Air Force, Joe went to the Roosevelt Aviation School and earned an A&E License. He worked for TWA – Chicago's Midway Airport; John Wilson Cessna Dealer – Northbrook, IL; American Airlines – Chicago Midway Airport & L.A. Airport; North American Rockwell (F-86, F-100) in logistics & documentation; Rocketdyne – rocket engine documentation for the Mercury, Atlas, Thor and Saturn Programs, and Logistics Manager for the Saturn SII Stage, Apollo, and Shuttle Vehicle.

Joe has been the Wing Leader of the SoCAWing (1999-2002) and was previously the Wing Maintenance Officer (1983-1998). He has been the Crew Chief of our SNJ-4 #N6411D and the Wing Stock Room Manager.

Joe has seventy years of aircraft and aerospace experience to call upon. He wants to again put all this experience to work for our Wing as our Maintenance Officer.

He has been married to Marge for 62 years, and they have had four children, ten grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Safety Officer: Norm Swagler

U.S. Navy, Korean War, 3 years, Reserve, 4 years.

Norm has been a CAF member for about five years. He has devoted many hours to the restoration of our Fairchild F-24R Argus. He has also been our Personnel Officer for two years.

Norm worked as an electrical engineer for General Dynamics; Servo Corp. of America; and Grumman – serving with the latter for thirty-five years, six years in Bethpage, LI, NY and the remaining twenty-nine years at Point Mugu. Norm worked on the F-14 Tomcat program, as well as others for Grumman.

Norm and his wife Patience have been married over 50 years, and have three sons.

He wants to work closely with the Maintenance Manager and the Crew Chiefs, as well as the Museum Director, in establishing a Safety Program for the Wing.

Please commit to voting in our Wing Election to fill these important positions on the Staff of our Wing. It is most important to have your support in choosing our leaders and in backing them up as they attempt to conduct the business of our Wing during the next two years.

There may prove to be a “rocky road” ahead for our Wing, so we need all of you pulling together along with our Wing Staff Officers to make sure we can continue to “Keep ‘Em Flying!”

All completed ballots are due by Nov. 22!

Help Keep the CAF’s F-82 Flying !

The CAF is asking all members to urge their state representatives and senators to support the CAF in its efforts to maintain possession of its F-82B Twin Mustang and restore this historic aircraft to flying condition. Here are some points to make:

- (1) The CAF has legally owned the F-82B since it was officially donated without conditions by the USAF in 1968.
- (2) In December, 2002, the USAF Museum demanded the return of the F-82B. On July 1, 2008, the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Ohio /Western Division ruled in the USAF Museum’s favor.
- (3) The CAF has stood and stands ready now to negotiate with the USAF outside of the courtroom – with the goal of returning this aircraft to flyable status in the perpetual care of the CAF.

(4) For 51 years, the CAF and its member-volunteers have worked tirelessly to save vintage military aircraft, spending tens of millions of dollars and working hundreds of thousands of hours to keep these rare and historic aircraft flying.

(5) A non-profit educational association, the CAF is dedicated to honoring American military aviation through flight, exhibition and remembrance by maintaining a flying museum of classic military aircraft.

Additional information can be found in a press release on the CAF’s Website : http://www.commemorativeairforce.org/news_details.php?newsid=109

You can find the names and addresses of your state representatives and senators at the following websites:

Representatives: www.house.gov/writerep

Senators: http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Go to the websites, find your representatives and your senators, and send them a message with the above information, asking them to help our patriotic organization to Keep Our Military Aircraft Flying !

Thanks for your help. If the USAF Museum can bypass the legal process whereby the CAF has obtained these rare warbirds, and confiscate them for static display in their museum in Dayton, then what may happen to many other warbirds in our possession? Please act now !



© Photo by Dave Flood

New member Dave Casey’s Morrissey 2-seater trainer. Dave is now a frequent worker in our Restoration Hangar, and flies down from Santa Maria. Welcome to our Wing, Dave, and thanks for “Keepin’ ‘Em Flying!”

Museum Update...

by Sarah de Bree

Isn't it a shocking reality that here I am writing the November update to the Museum column? I'll repeat what everyone is thinking, "where did the time go...?"



© Photo by Dave Flood

New look to WWI Museum display

The above photo, and the one below, are depicting the great work done by Shirley Murphy and Ron Fleishman in putting a new face on the WWI and Charles Lindbergh display cases by rearranging the placement of the displays into a more time accurate phase so that the story continues in a smooth flow and enables our visitors to be educated, as well as entertained, as they pass through the display room. Shirley is the Museum's display coordinator and Ron is our Lead Docent as well as our knowledgeable 'go to guy' in all things military.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Charles Lindbergh and his contributions to air power.

The Museum Gift Shop is of course suffering from the effects of our downward economy and this will impact the amount of funds that can be made available to the operation and maintenance of the Wing. In an effort to curtail the amount of outlay of funds that are used for stocking merchandise, including CAF items, it becomes necessary to change how we do business. We no longer stock all sizes of clothing items such as tee shirts, Wing

polo shirts, children's clothing, etc. (we do have plenty of sizes left over from Air Expo) This includes different profiles of Wing hats. For example, if a member or visitor want a particular item, in a size not in the gift shop, I will order the item requested. Lead time for most items is usually 2 to 3 weeks, if available from the suppliers. This is not an efficient distribution of shipping and handling cost (I too went to business school) but until such time that we, along with millions of other people, feel we are more economically stable, this is our process.

Again, due to today's economic conditions, the profile of suppliers and their merchandise is constantly changing and this will continue. Some toys that were always standard items are no longer being carried by the suppliers. It has become clear to them that their rising cost of items can no longer be passed on to their buyers, and then on to our customers. The final cost is more than our customers will pay.

On that note, we currently have a plethora of unsold C-46 tee shirts after responding to numerous requests that I restock them with refreshed artwork. However, please support your Wing and come by for your beautifully illustrated C-46 tee.

On a good note, our number of visitors to the Museum has increased during this fuel cost challenged time. Maybe staying close to home has resulted in interest in what the local community has to offer but, for whatever reason, we welcome the change.

I want to stray for a moment to our own community. Our Wing Community. I observe what I can only describe as a general apathy among our daily members and, maybe those afar also. We seemed to have strayed from the concept of 'Our Wing' and drifted into a more 'personal consideration' as to what is important to the wing's operation and survival. I, and others, have witnessed a lack of caring about one another...a little too much 'pilots, maintenance personnel and museum people' rather than as Southern California Wing Members. If we can't leave our egos at the door how can we care about Our Wing? Less I. More we. Maybe I'm just asking that we cross the lines that divide us and meet as one Wing and that, as one unit, we work hard to do what is necessary to get Our Wing healthy, monetarily secure and any other way that makes us stronger together today and growing for tomorrow..

A great example of someone who gave just because she saw a need is our own Ceci Stratford. We booked an event that would have given the Wing a much needed \$3,000. However, the potential damage to our hangar was such a strong issue that we agonized about it through way too many meetings. To avoid the damage possibility, she gave the Wing the same amount to cancel the event. To her, the Wing came first. "That's what I'm talkin' about...".

Thank you for time with my thoughts.

New Items in Gift Shop:

2009 Ghost Calendars	C-46 Tees	Bearcat Tees
Amelia Earhart Tees	Hellcat Tees	
B-29 Flying Fortress Tees	Cute Holiday Tree Decorations	

Until next time...

Wing Photo Page I



© <http://www.sp-photo.com>

© Photo by Eric Van Gilder

David Price's P-51D Mustang "Cottonmouth" was a very welcome visitor at our Museum for a month, and several members got the thrill of a ride in this warbird!



© Photo by Dave Flood

The P-51 "Par Excellence" pilot for the rides was our Senior Pilot, Gary Barber. Gary provided memorable rides for the members who were lucky to ride with him



© Photo by Dave Flood

Docent Al Watts was all smiles after his ride with Gary!



© Photo by Dave Flood

Norm Swagler got his "air legs" in the P-51's rear seat!



© Photo by Dave Flood

Dan Cuvier says to Gary, "Let's go up again!"



© Photo by Gene O'Neal

Dave Flood was "shoe-horned" into the rear seat for his once-in-a-lifetime ride. Thanks, Gary, for the memories, and thanks to David Price for his generosity!

Ken Kramer Remembers



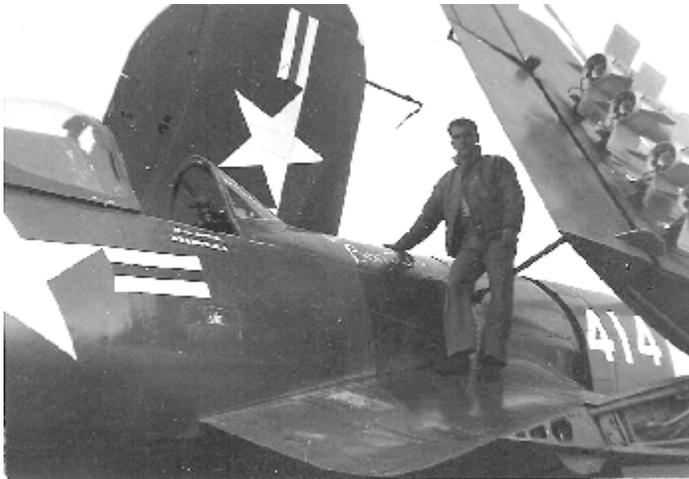
© Photo by Frank Mormillo / *Pacific Flyer*, Nov. 1995

CAF Bearcat Crew Chief Ken Kramer relives a moment from his past in the cockpit of the fighter as it sits aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson – CV-70 on October 6, 1995 during the Navy’s Annual Fleet Week activities in San Francisco Bay.

After having been craned aboard the Carl Vinson at NAS Alameda, the CAF’s F8F-2 Bearcat was launched off the carrier about 40 miles west of the Golden Gate Bridge. Bill Montague was the pilot, having earned that honor from his experience as a Navy pilot flying Hellcats, Skyraiders and Cutlass jets off aircraft carriers.

A number of our Wing members were part of the Navy’s Annual Fleet Week activities in the San Francisco Bay area in 1995. Three B-25J Mitchells, an FG-1D Corsair, and our F8F-2 Bearcat were the vintage WWII aircraft participating, along with an FA-18 Hornet and an F14 Tomcat.

They were launched out at sea because of a fog bank that settled just west of the Golden Gate Bridge. Safety factors made the launch inside the Bay untenable.



Crew Chief Ken Kramer with Chance-Vought F4U Corsair on board USS Boxer – CV-21 in Sea of Japan during Korean War, 1951.



© US Navy Photo

Here is Ken’s carrier, the USS Boxer, CV-21, off Korea in 1951. Note the Corsairs making their approach for a landing aboard the carrier – after combat operations.



Ken in Grumman F8F Bearcat cockpit on board USS Shangri-La – CV-38, en route to Sydney, Australia, 1947.

The Shangri-La was actually named after the mythical land in James Hilton’s novel, “Lost Horizon.” When asked by the press corps where the Doolittle bombers that staged the surprise attack on Japan had come from in 1942, FDR simply said, “Shangri-La.”

Ken Kramer has been our Crew Chief with the Bearcat for a long time, and his relationship with the ‘Cat goes way back to his involvement with the F8F in the months just prior to the end of WWII. Ken, with the able assistance of Gary Barber and previously with Dean Browne and Joe Peppito, has kept our Bearcat flying high for many years, with more to come!

Many thanks, Ken, for your continued service to our Wing! You are definitely one of our mainstays in helping us to “Keep ‘Em Flying!”

Wing Photo Page II



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

The new skin on top of our C-46 *China Doll* after the last rivet was bucked – ready for painting.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Our new neighbor, owned by the American Aeronautical Foundation, was recently flown in from Canada. The C-47 has had stints in Italy in WWII and in Israel.



© Photo by Ken Calman

The Martin 404, now stationed at Planes of Fame Museum, Grand Canyon, Arizona – shown just three days after her arrival on the flight from Camarillo.



Photo courtesy of Scott Drosos

Newly promoted Captain Scott Drosos in the left seat of his Atlas Air Cargo 747-400. Way to go, Scott !



Photo courtesy Mike Connor

Our Spitfire Mk XIV in the air over Cranfield, England. The pilot is Mike Connor, a recent visitor to our Wing.



© Photo by Colin Bedding

Mike Connor, on right, worked closely on the restoration of our Spitfire with Craig Charleston, after receiving the aircraft in derelict condition from India. It was a thrill for Les Bedding, the Spitfire's Crew Chief, and his son Colin to meet and talk with Connor.

All Alone In The Vast Pacific

Returning to his base on Iwo Jima in his P-51 Mustang, Lt. Arthur A. Burry, a Seventh Air Force fighter pilot from Davenport, Iowa, who had just participated in a raid by B-29s on Osaka, Japan, found himself in trouble in bad weather and with an engine malfunction. The date was June 1, 1945.

He was forced to bail out at 2,000 feet. When he hit the water, he inflated his rubber life raft and climbed aboard. Later, he saw his flight returning from Japan. A B-29 passed overhead, but the crew failed to see Lt. Burry's signals.

Two days later, still adrift in the vast Pacific Ocean, Lt. Burry saw another B-29 mission on its way to Tokyo. This time he used smoke bombs, flares, sea dye marker, and even shot tracer bullets from his .45 pistol – but again to no avail.

On the fourth day, he worked on his emergency water kit and made a pint of water that saved his life. He tied the container to the raft so that it would keep cool.

The fifth day was uneventful, but in the early hours of the sixth day a storm of typhoon proportions hit. "The waves were like mountains," Lt. Burry said. His raft capsized five times and all of his provisions and equipment, with the exception of the pint container of water, were lost. Somehow he managed to hang on and ride out the storm.

On the sixth night, exhausted, but still riding the storm, he became delirious. His mind wandered and he imagined he was attending a party at his officers' club. Faces and people were very clear, even those comrades who had been lost over Japan. Drinks would be offered to him, but then disappear before he could take them.

"I imagined I saw one man who worked in the control tower. He assured me that I was safe and would be picked up the following morning," he said.

At sunrise, Lt. Burry seemed to hear singing and the voices of men and women. "I imagined that these voices were from the rescue party coming for me, just as the control tower man had promised," he said.

These hallucinations lasted until about 11:00 o'clock that morning, June 7, when suddenly he was rescued by a submarine which had spotted his raft. As he was picked up, a formation of B-29s, escorted by P-51 Mustangs of his own squadron, roared overhead on their way to Japan.

The submarine which picked up Lt. Burry was the *Trutta*. It was credited with sinking twelve Japanese vessels. The typhoon that Lt. Burry had survived was the one which damaged 21 U.S. Navy ships on June 5, 1945.

Lt. Burry had been on his eighth mission to Japan. He was awarded the Air Medal, Purple Heart and battle stars for his participation on attacks on Iwo Jima and Japan.



Lt. Arthur A. Burry, 7th Air Force, USAF

Note: Thanks to Hollis Judkins, of Monclair, CA, a recent visitor to our Aviation Museum, for this story.

Wing Wish List

by Dave Flood

Here are a few items that we would like very much to have. If anyone out there has one (or more) of them, or knows where we might get one as a donation, please get in touch with Sarah de Bree, our Museum Director. Her number is (805) 479-0982.

- (1) A Dog-Tag making machine. We would very much like to have one in our Museum for making dog tags for visitors. It would be a great way for us to make some extra money for the Museum.
- (2) A projector which could project DVDs and CDs. We would like to show movies on perhaps a monthly basis, and would like a projector which could provide a large screen picture for an audience of perhaps 50-100 people.
- (3) To go along with the projector, we would like to have a large screen capable of showing a large picture for the above-estimated audience.

Currently in Sick Bay

Please remember these members who have been, and still are, to a certain extent, "under the weather."

Dave Long, John Deakin, Al Smith, Charlie Valentine, Gary Koch and Ron Fleishman. Get well soon, colonels!

France Lauds Ex-GI Resistance Fighter

Stephen Weiss enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943, and, after his training, was sent to England. He was involved in the D-Day invasion of Europe in June, 1944, assigned to the 36th Infantry Division. His outfit came ashore at St. Raphael, France. After nine days of intense fighting against the Germans, he and seven fellow GIs found themselves cut off from their outfit.

A small irrigation ditch became their protective cover for the night, and then they were able to retreat to a French farmhouse. The farmer hid the soldiers in his hayloft. "The stress in the hayloft was so thick you could cut it into blocks with a knife," said Weiss.

The farmer informed the local French police that he had eight American soldiers hidden in his barn. The police produced some uniforms to disguise the soldiers as policemen, and drove them to safety across the Ardeche River. Weiss is thankful that the farmer and policemen risked their lives for the American soldiers. He later learned that, for every Allied soldier who was helped to escape, a resistance fighter died.

In 1999, Stephen Weiss, then 74 and a Beverly Hills psychotherapist and London-based university lecturer and author, was awarded the French Legion of Honor, becoming the first American to be granted that distinction for having risked his life with French Resistance fighters during World War II.

At the ceremony honoring Weiss, Claudette Reynaud, 66, whose father was the farmer who hid Weiss and his seven fellow soldiers from the Nazis in 1944, said, "I have felt a lot of emotions thinking about those Americans who came to save us. With this medal today, it is all of those Americans who are honored."



© Photo courtesy of Stephen Weiss

Stephen Weiss (right), in 1999, receiving another medallion from the President of the National Resistance Assoc., a former French Superior Court Justice. Weiss's daughter Alison is in the foreground.

After their safe trip across the Ardeche, Weiss was introduced to a captain in the Resistance, Francois Binoche, who had lost his arm in a gunfight. With only three years of French language training at his Brooklyn high school to help him communicate, Weiss was taken along on a mission to blow up a road bridge and on an expedition to hunt for enemy stragglers.

Later that August, he was recruited by a captain in the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the precursor of our CIA) – for behind-the-lines missions with the French.

After that, Weiss helped to cut telephone lines in Southern France in order to disrupt enemy communications; guarded the OSS's radio operators; and went on night missions to recover material dropped to the Resistance by parachute.

As Dr. Weiss was decorated, his chin trembled with emotion. Still so touched by events more than half a century ago, he cries when recalling how a favorite sergeant was killed in action – and says he was accepting the honor in part for his comrades-in-arms, both American and French.

Note: This story was provided by our own Col. Robert "Bob" Smith, who is a Docent in our Aviation Museum. He is a friend of Dr. Stephen Weiss.



© Photo by Gene O'Neal

Col. Mike Greenhill, working like a surgeon, applying paint to *China Doll's* new "skin" with much TLC. He and Gene O'Neal came in after hours over two nights and accomplished the task of painting the old girl.

Staples Rewards Cards

by Ceci Stratford

If you do any shopping at Staples, please use the CAF 'phone number on your rewards card – (805) 482-0064.

Also, bring in your used HP, Dell, Lexmark, and other used printer cartridges and give them to me in the Museum Hangar. We get credit for those used cartridges, too, at Staples.

Thanks for helping us to balance the budget !

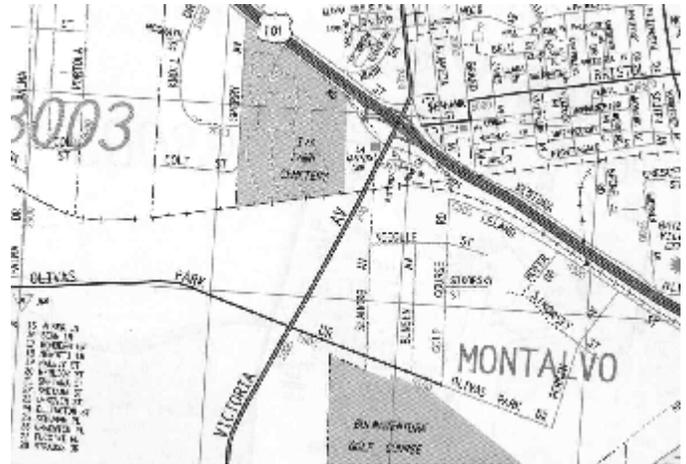
Wing Christmas Party by Casey de Bree

Our Christmas Party is set for Thursday, December 4, 2008 at the Wedgewood Banquet Center, 5880 Olivas Park Drive, Ventura CA 93003. The banquet center is located at the Buenaventura Golf Course. The social hour will start at 6:30 with dinner served at 7:30. We will wrap up by 10:00 PM. Our annual auction will follow the dinner. Cost is \$35 per person

The dinner will be a buffet featuring barbecue chicken, tri-tips of beef, salads galore, garlic bread, roasted red potatoes, and beverage. There will be a no-host bar.

Mail or drop off your reservation with a check made out to "Southern California Wing" to Casey de Bree at the hangar, 455 Aviation Dr., Camarillo, CA 93010. The map at right provides driving directions to the Wedgewood

Banquet Center. The Buenaventura Golf Course is at the lower center of the map.



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(Cut here)

OFFICIAL BALLOT

Southern California Wing
455 Aviation Drive
Camarillo CA 93010
Attention: Election Committee

Southern California Wing Staff Election – November 2008

Office	Candidate
Wing Leader	Steve Barber Robert Albee
	_____ (write-in)
Maintenance Officer	Joe Peppito
	_____ (write-in)

Office	Candidate
Executive Officer	Unit Manual Regulation, Sec. 3.F.3.c.(2), to take effect. New Wing Leader to appoint the Executive Officer
Safety Officer	Norman Swagler
	_____ (write-in)

Only Colonels whose dues are current are eligible to vote

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 22, 2008

Voting instructions:

1. Vote for one candidate for each office by circling the candidate's name, or write in the candidate's name in the space provided
2. Place completed ballot in a sealed envelope. Mark this envelope "Ballot." Do not put your name or any other info on this envelope or on the ballot itself. Any ballots or ballot envelopes received with names will be discarded.
3. Place "Ballot" envelope inside another envelope, and seal this 2nd envelope.
4. Voting in Hangar Ballot Box: In the upper left corner of the 2nd envelope put: your name & colonel number. In the center of the envelope mark: "To Election Committee." Put envelope in ballot box in the Restoration Hangar on the desk near the coffee maker.
5. Voting by Mail: Follow instructions #1,2,3,4. On the 2nd envelope mark your name and colonel number in the upper left corner, plus your return address. Address the envelope to: Commemorative Air Force, Attn: Election Committee, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010.
6. All ballots must be received by November 22, 2008.