

# ***FORWARD in FLIGHT***

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Winter 2009



**Wisconsin's  
Space Cowboy  
Mark Lee**

# FORWARD in FLIGHT

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l-r seated Gunter Voltz, Bill Bordeleau, Mary Jacobs. Back row Paul Johns, Tom Thomas, "Duffy" Gaier, Duane Esse, Robert Clarke, Joel Meisenheimer, Archie Henkelmann, Helen Reller.



"Suspicious Alsatian"  
moves to Milwaukee



How a small-town  
boy got to space

### *Forward in Flight*

#### Sharing Wisconsin aviation stories—past and present

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**The Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame is a membership organization** with a mission to collect and preserve the history of aviation in Wisconsin, recognize those who made that history, inform others of it, and promote aviation education for future generations.

#### On the cover:

With clouds about 130 miles below him, Astronaut Mark Lee, a native of Viroqua, Wisconsin, floats freely—without tethers—while testing NASA's Simplified Aid for EVA Rescue (SAFER) system, a unit that he helped design. Learn more about Mark's history, and how he got the nickname, *Space Cowboy*, in this issue of *Forward in Flight*.

NASA photo.

# President's Message

## ~ by Rose Dorcey



Rose Dorcey

**It's** been an exciting fall for the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame, as you'll discover in this issue's pages of *Forward in Flight*. In the last year-and-a-half or so, your WAHF board members, led by Michael Goc and Tom Thomas, volunteered hundreds of hours to create a successful celebration and commemoration of Wisconsin's Centennial of Flight. Their work led to a greater appreciation by many of our state's aviation origins, favorable publicity for aviation at a time when it's needed more than ever, and greater visibility for your organization. What's even better is that hundreds of youth were inspired to learn more about aviation through the presentations they heard and the hands-on activities they experienced. I hope you'll join me in thanking the board for the work they did on behalf of aviation and the organization.

Of course, there were dozens of partner organizations and individuals who helped. I'll begin with the dedicated EAA Chapter 60 members from Beloit/Janesville, the Beloit Historical Society, Visit Beloit employees Martha Mitchell and Therese Oldenburg, Dr. Tom Crouch of the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum, the Wisconsin Air National Guard, students and staff at Morgan Elementary and Beloit College, Bob Bauer of Slipstream International, and Beloit residents Dr. Bob Schwaegler and Wendell Witten. Representative Gary Hebl led a successful effort in Madison to proclaim November as Centennial of Flight Month in Wisconsin, and other legislators played roles in promoting this event, as well.

It was also a great pleasure to meet Steve and Robin Newquist. Steve is the great-grand-nephew of A.P. Warner, Wisconsin's first aviator. He took time off from his special effects work in Hollywood to travel to Beloit and participate in the events that honored his great uncle's achievements. The WAHF board was happy to share some Wisconsin hospitality with Steve and Robin.

There are many more to thank...too long a list to include in this short column, but the WAHF board appreciates the efforts, small and large, of all those who shared of their time, talent, and treasure. We are fortunate to have such dedicated partners.

The WAHF board isn't resting easy since the culmination of the centennial events in November. The inductee nominations committee will meet before Christmas to review nominations, and in January, the board will begin planning for WAHF's 2010 annual awards banquet. In addition to that, 2010 is a significant year for WAHF; the organization will celebrate its 25th anniversary. Watch for information on some special events and projects designed to celebrate this milestone.

At our annual meeting, held before our 2009 banquet on October 17, we said good-bye to WAHF Board Member Keith Glasshof, who served WAHF for 17 years, including two years as president. As Keith enjoys his semi-retirement, he will offer his volunteerism toward organizations that are closer to his home in Eau Claire. With Keith's departure, Rich Fischler of Oconomowoc was elected to the board of directors. Rich has been a long-time member/supporter of WAHF, often volunteering at events and recruiting new members. You'll learn more about Rich in the Spring 2010 issue of *Forward in Flight*.

Speaking of the banquet, there are several WAHF members who helped out and deserve our thanks: Marion Marotske, Jeanne Thomas, Bob and Carrol Kunkel, Gretchen Glasshof, and Tina Swain. Also, our '09 banquet included a special guest speaker, Jeff Skiles. Thanks, Jeff, for being there to do some 'hangar flying' with our guests and to congratulate our inductees. Thanks, too, for becoming a member/supporter of WAHF.

Finally, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate our 2009 Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame inductees: Paul Johns and Gunter Voltz, along with the families of Jack Jerstad, Vern Reller, and Gilles Meisenheimer who were posthumously inducted. The inductees' presenters offered fitting tributes to the achievements each inductee made and how their efforts enhanced aviation and brought honor to our state (read more on pages 4-7). Being recognized as an inductee is an extraordinary event, and we're honored and humbled to play a role in an occasion that means so much to them. 🐾

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# Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame Welcomes 2009 Class of Inductees

## Meet Five Inspiring Aviators

The Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame honored five Wisconsin aviators for their accomplishments in enhancing aviation in Wisconsin at its 2009 induction ceremony and banquet. John Jerstad, Vern Reller, Gunter Voltz, Paul Johns, and Gilles Meisenheimer were inducted at the ceremony, held on Saturday evening, October 17. The inductees were chosen for their significant contributions to the development, advancement, and promotion of aviation in Wisconsin, and for achieving a high degree of excellence in their aviation endeavors.

A near-record crowd of 247 attended the twenty-fourth annual event, held at the EAA AirVenture Museum in Oshkosh. Eight previous inductees: Jean Hauser, Harold "Duffy" Gaier, Bill Brennand, Bill Bordeleau, Robert Clarke, Duane Esse, Tom Thomas, and Archie Henkelmann were on hand to welcome their fellow inductees into the hall and congratulate them on their achievements.

### 2009 INDUCTEES John "Jack" Jerstad

Born and raised in Racine, Wisconsin, and a graduate of Northwestern University, John Jerstad was a junior high school teacher when he enlisted as an aviation cadet in July 1941. Thirteen months later, he was in Britain, piloting a B-24 Liberator on missions over Nazi-occupied Europe. By April 1943, he had completed 25 missions and was eligible for reassignment home, but he chose to continue to serve his country in combat.

Transferred to North Africa, he became one of the mission planners for the Ninth Air Force's daring low-level B-24 assault on the oil refineries at Ploesti,

Romania. He did not have to go, but he sought out and found a slot as co-pilot on Colonel Addison Baker's B-24. Overcoming navigation problems on the 1,400-mile flight from Libya to Ploesti, the 179 B-24s in the strike force encountered an unanticipated volume of anti-aircraft fire. Baker's and Jerstad's Liberator was hit hard by ground fire and burst into flames while still three miles away from its target. They held their course, dropped their bombs on target, and then went down in flames.

John Jerstad was one of five airmen to earn Medals of Honor at Ploesti and one of two Wisconsin-born Army Air Force officers to be so honored for ser-

vice in World War II.

WAFH Member Gary Dikkers, who nominated Jerstad for induction, gave a riveting presentation about Jerstad's life before presenting the induction plaque to Jack's, Mary Jacobs, who resides in Racine.

### Vern Reller

A man who "always wanted to fly," Minnesota born Vern Reller soloed in a Piper J-3 at age 19 in 1944. He went to work as a corporate pilot, air show flyer, flight instructor, and charter pilot in his native state and in Wisconsin. In 1966, he became one of the first pilots for Air Commuter Airlines, shuttling passengers in a

Courtesy of Mary Jacobs



Gary Dikkers photo



Courtesy Reller family



Jack Jerstad (above) was inducted for his heroism in World War II. Accepting his induction plaque was Jack's sister, Mary Jacobs (center). Far right is 2009 Inductee Vern Reller, who was sometimes known as "The Governor's Pilot."



Helen Reller, widow of inductee Vern Reller, shows the plaque that honors her husband. Gunter Voltz, age 94, accepts his plaque with great appreciation.

Beech Queen Air to and from Sheboygan and Chicago.

Along the way, he built a Smith Mini biplane and acquired his commercial certificate with instructor, multi-engine, instrument, airline transport, seaplane, and glider ratings.

By 1970, he had logged more than 11,500 hours and was ready for a new career. He was hired by the Aeronautics Division of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation as chief pilot. He was responsible for the entire state airplane fleet and the pilot for state officials, including every Wisconsin governor from Warren Knowles to Tommy Thompson.

Vern Reller died in 1995, after completing 25 years in state service. In the words of Governor Thompson, "he was consistently the personification of professionalism, dedication, and exemplary skill as a pilot."

Vern's son, Bill Reller, gave a brief yet dignified presentation about his father's life, and then presented his father's induction plaque to his mother, Helen.

### Gunter Voltz

Born of a British mother and German father in Erfurt, Germany, in 1915, Gunter Voltz began his long career as a glider pilot in the 1920s. He earned a C-Badge rating after completing three solo flights of more than five minutes.

Drafted into the German air force in 1939, Voltz logged 1,800 hours in the multi-use, short takeoff, short landing Fieseler Storch on the Eastern Front. He survived the war and remained in Germany until 1951, when he and his wife Ruth moved to Milwaukee.

He soon returned to his aviation roots in gliding. Starting at the West Bend airport, and then moving to Hartford, Voltz established a reputation as one of the finest gliding instructors in the United States.

He soloed more than 400 glider pilots and trained more than 30 certificated flight instructors. He served as Midwest representative for the Soaring Society of America and has been inducted into the Society's Hall of Fame.

In 2008, Gunter became one of the few Americans to receive the FAA's Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The award is presented to aviators who have made significant contributions to safe flight operations for at least 50 years.

Gunter Voltz is first and foremost a glider pilot. As he has said many times, "The only real test of a pilot's skill is flying gliders. There are no second chances."

### Paul Johns

Born in Indiana, raised in Illinois, Paul Johns spent his adult years in Wisconsin—when he was not flying an airplane somewhere else in the world.

He began his 66 years as a pilot in 1929 when he soloed in a glider at age 15. Two years later, he soloed in a Curtiss Junior. In another year he had his limited commercial and airline transport ratings and was a working aviator at the airport that later became Glenview Naval Air Station. He joined the Naval Reserve and acquired radio and aircraft engine and maintenance licenses that opened the door to a career running a Link trainer for the Navy, and later for United Air Lines, but what he really wanted to do was be a line pilot.

He took a step in that direction in 1939 when Pan American hired him to set up an instrument training program for pilots ferrying aircraft to Europe via South America. With the program up and running, he achieved his dream to become a line pilot, flying DC-3s in the Caribbean and South America. In 1944, he transferred to Pan Am's Pacific fleet, piloting PB2Y3 flying boats and the fabled Boeing 314 Clipper. As a senior pilot, and as a navigator who mastered celestial navigation, he completed 220 flights on the longest over-the-water route flown by any airline.

A growing family brought him home to Racine in the late 1940s where he became a pilot for J.I. Case and Walker Mfg. Twenty years passed, and facing mandatory retirement as a corporate pilot



2009 WAHF inductee Paul Johns.

at age 60, Johns transferred to Walker's research department.

Paul Johns never lost his love for flying. At age 75, he decided to build a Kitfox and completed it within a year. He flew the airplane until 1995, when he grounded himself after 66 years of flying.

Paul's longtime friend, Bill Kinsman, presented a biography of Paul's career. Paul received a standing ovation upon receiving the honor, and then briefly yet earnestly thanked those who made his induction possible.

### PIONEER AWARD Gilles Meisenheimer

The Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame recognizes aviators who made significant contributions to aviation prior to Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight in 1927. Those recognized are given Pioneer Awards. Our 2009 Pioneer inductee is Gilles Meisenheimer.

Born in Milwaukee in 1894, Gilles Meisenheimer was a Marquette University student in the summer of 1916 when he was called up for active duty on the Mexican border with the 1st Cavalry Regiment of the Wisconsin National Guard. He was a cavalryman who discovered what he really wanted to do was fly.

Unable to train as a pilot in the United States, Meisenheimer went to Canada and



Gary Dikkers photo

Joel Meisenheimer accepted his grandfather's induction plaque.

joined the Royal Flying Corps. He completed flight training, qualified as an instructor, and trained Canadian pilots until the end of World War I.

In April 1919, he returned home to Milwaukee in the cockpit of an OX-5 powered JN-4D. It had been purchased by an auto dealer named George W. Browne, who had just become the "western agent" for the Curtiss Aeroplane Co. and the first airplane dealer in Wisconsin. Meisenheimer was Browne's chief pilot and soon became the most prominent aviator in Milwaukee.

When Milwaukee County established

its first airport in the fall of 1919, it hired the Browne agency as operator and Browne put Gilles Meisenheimer in charge. He thereby became the first manager working for the first fixed base operator of the first publicly funded, full service airport in Wisconsin.

He managed the county airport until it moved to its present location in 1926. Gilles Meisenheimer then left aviation, entered the family printing business, and died in 1963. Gilles' grandson Joel, who lives in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, accepted the plaque.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

The 2009 banquet including several special guests that made for an especially memorable evening. Jeff Skiles, a Wisconsin native and the first officer on US Airways Flight 1549 that successfully ditched into the Hudson River last January, saving the lives of all 155 crew and passengers onboard, received the Wisconsin Airport Management Association's (WAMA) Aviation Person of the Year award. WAMA's Dave Jensen presented Skiles with the award, saying, "It is for the professionalism displayed by Mr. Skiles; the honor and recognition he has given to aviation, his profession, and his home state of Wisconsin, and for his contributions in building morale among



Rose Dorsey photos

2008 WAHF Inductee Jean Hauser (above, left) attended the 2009 banquet, providing a ray of sunshine with her brilliant smile. A near-record crowd attended—almost 250—including Carroll Rands, Ron Wojnar, and Tony Wojnar.



Tom Thomas photo

Jeff Skiles, above, left, with Dave Jensen. Jeff received WAMA's Wisconsin Aviation Person of the Year.



No introduction necessary; Jeff Skiles (left) talks with 2009 WAHF inductee Gunter Voltz. Voltz provided Skiles with flight instruction early in Skiles' career.

his fellow aviation professionals and the general public since the incident, that it is our honor to name Jeff Skiles Wisconsin Aviation Person of the Year." Skiles then gave a captivating and at times amusing presentation that touched on the days immediately following the Hudson River landing and how his life has changed since then.

In addition to Skiles' attendance, the event was extra special because eight previous inductees were present. Jean Hauser, Bill Brennand, Bill Bordeleau, Harold "Duffy" Gaier, Robert Clarke, Duane Esse, Archie Henkelmann, and Tom Thomas welcomed the '09 inductees. George Cudahy, a '98 inductee who resides in New Mexico, called to share his congratulations with the group. "The Gingersnaps," Lindsay Cummings and Nikki Schommer, provided live music before and during dinner, along with a lovely rendition of our National Anthem to begin the program.

### Silent Auction

Annually since 2003, a silent auction has been held during the social hour that precedes the banquet. In 2009, more than \$2,000 was raised in just over an hour, helping to ensure that WAHF's outreach and educational programming will continue. More than 45 businesses and individuals contributed generous donations of cash, merchandise, and talent to assure the event's success.

### Thank you to the following contributors:

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### SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Three students enrolled in aviation degree programs received \$2,000 in scholarship awards at the 2009 WAHF banquet.

#### Robert Klevgard

Robert Klevgard received the \$500 Jerome Ripp Memorial Scholarship. A student at Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, Klevgard's career goal is to become a professional pilot. He is also studying to become an aviation technician.

#### Eric Beilman

Also a student at Blackhawk, Beilman is the recipient of the \$500 Thiessen Field Scholarship, funded by Baraboo pilot and aircraft owner Jerome Thiessen. Beilman is enrolled in the Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Mechanic program with a goal to become, "one of the best on-call helicopter specialists in the area," he said.

#### Nate Hinton

A student at Fox Valley Technical College in Oshkosh, Nate Hinton received the \$1,000 Carl Guell Memorial Scholarship. Completing both A&P and pilot training, Hinton plans to return to Africa as a missionary pilot when his schooling is complete. He said that winning the scholarship is "a huge encouragement to me, and another affirmation that I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing." 🐾



The 2009 WAHF scholarship recipients (l-r): Robert Klevgard, Eric Beilman, and Nate Hinton.

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Warner Aeroplane, Beloit, Wis.

Photo by Wright.

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## State Centennial of Flight Celebration Concludes in Beloit

By Michael Goc



**The Wisconsin Centennial of Flight celebration wrapped up on a high note in early November, when hundreds of Beloit-area students and adults learned about the birth of aviation in our state. The celebration in Beloit was the culmination of a year of planning by the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame, in cooperation with EAA Chapter 60 Beloit-Janesville, and Visit Beloit's Therese Oldenburg and Martha Mitchell.**

WAHF's Centennial of Flight exhibit, including a quarter-scale model of the first airplane that flew in Wisconsin, along with educational display boards telling the story of our state's first aviator, A.P. Warner, had been on tour throughout Wisconsin since its debut in May at the Wisconsin Aviation Conference. After traveling more than 1,500 miles on Wisconsin roads, from Eau Claire to Janesville, Wausau to Manitowish, Oshkosh to Sheboygan, and many points in between, the airplane was on display in La Crosse for the month of August. The Centennial team took a few breaths before plunging into the busiest weeks of the entire project when the events in Beloit took place in November.

On September 1, Tom Thomas, Wynne Williams, this reporter, and the ever-reliable trailer on loan from Emil Thomas, journeyed to La Crosse to remove the exhibit from the La Crosse Historical Society's Swarthout Museum. After receiving a \$200 donation from the Society to help defer Centennial expenses, we were back on the Interstate,

bound for the Wisconsin Aviation terminal at Dane County Regional Airport (MSN) in Madison. Tom and Wynne assembled the exhibit near the glass wall fronting on the runways so visitors could see—at a glance—the beginnings of aviation in Wisconsin and its current state.

With help from longtime WAHF member Don Winkler, Tom was able to make presentations on A.P. Warner to students from Sun Prairie High School and the Madison CAP Cadet Squadron. A former Madison CAP Commander, Tom felt right at home with today's generation of cadets.

The exhibit stayed at Wisconsin Aviation for three weeks, where it was viewed by the hundreds of aviators and non-airline travelers who use the terminal every day. Tom and Wynne then moved the show to Crites Field-Waukesha County Airport (UES), where they were warmly greeted by Airport Manager Keith Markano. The setting was more than appropriate since the airport's namesake, Dale Crites, had built and flown a Curtiss Pusher in the 1970s very similar

to our Warner Curtiss. John and Rose Dorsey traveled from Oshkosh to Waukesha on September 29 to tell the story of Wisconsin's first flight and A.P. Warner to an interested crowd of visitors.

John and WAHF Board Member Chuck Swain picked the rainiest day of a very rainy month to move the exhibit from Waukesha to the EAA Museum in Oshkosh for our induction banquet on October 17. Wrapped in plastic and protected by its sturdy shipping crate, the model airplane arrived in Oshkosh dry as a desert rock. It was a once-in-a-century addition to our annual induction event.

Two days later, Tom and Wynne brought the exhibit from Oshkosh to the Capitol in Madison for the final showing of our centennial tour. With the help of Representative Gary Hebl's aide Kate Battiatto, who was always able to summon a crew of young, energetic aides—who happened to be male—Tom and Wynne got the exhibit inside the building and up the stairs. It remained in the rotunda beneath the capitol dome until Tom, Wynne, and Kate and company

removed it for its journey home to Beloit.

At the end of the month Tom and Wynne (with Emil's trailer) made the final move of the exhibit to EAA Chapter 60 headquarters at the Beloit Airport (44C). The members who had built the model wanted to spruce it up before the Centennial events in early November.

While the exhibit was progressing toward the big days in November, so were other Centennial items. In cooperation with Martha Mitchell and Therese Oldenburg of the Visit Beloit organization, we worked on the programs for November 4 and 7. Publicity was important and we used all media, from old fashioned print to today's Twitter and Facebook. Colorful postcards were sent to a selected mailing list of 1300 historically and aviation-minded people. Email re-

tional artistry and diligence in building a one-quarter scale model of the first airplane to fly in Wisconsin." The other plaque was a bronze marker presented to the City of Beloit to be mounted on the A.P. Warner Historical Marker. Since the actual celebration of the Centennial on November 4 would take place at the Morgan School, we drew up a program with Principal Tina Hansen. We wanted to include the 350 students at Morgan as much as possible. The school's Drama Club gave a wonderful rendition of the Star Spangled Banner to start the event, and they proved to be enthusiastic and inquisitive spectators.

In addition to the students, more than 200 people came to Morgan School. Among them were A.P. Warner's closest living relative, Steven Warner Newquist,

first, but cleared just as WAHF President Rose Dorcey started the program with a salute to armed forces veterans and a "don't let anyone crush your dreams" message to the students, inspired by A.P. Warner's story. Beloit City Manager Larry Arft and Assembly Representative Chuck Benedict spoke on the contributions of A. P. Warner before Rose rededicated the Wisconsin Historical Markers that commemorates Warner's flight. Standing near a life-size reproduction of the historical marker, Rose presented a rededication plaque to Arft, who promised to attach it to the original marker so that Beloit's residents and visitors would be reminded of this important event in the city's history.

The twin highlights of the show were the "reenactment" of A.P. Warner's flight

*Safety being more important than ceremony, Bob taxied around the field and hopped briefly into the air. The kids clapped and cheered, all the while chanting, "Fly, fly, fly..."*

mindings were sent to those on the WAHF mailing list. News releases were sent to newspaper, radio, online, and television outlets. An article was written for publication in the *Northwest Quarterly* regional magazine with circulation in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin.

As we moved closer to the event, articles appeared in the Beloit Daily News, Janesville Gazette, Stateline News, and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. EAA Radio, Wisconsin Public Radio, and Janesville's WCLO broadcast interviews with WAHF board members and Wisconsin Public Television ran an updated version of its earlier "In Wisconsin" feature about the Centennial. On November 4 and 7, in addition to the Beloit Daily News, television stations from Rockford and Madison, and Beloit's Public Access station came to the centennial events and aired event coverage. Caryn Melton of Visit Beloit played a key role in linking us to the radio and television stations.

We also designed and ordered centennial plaques; one to be presented to EAA Chapter 60 "in appreciation for excep-

who came from Pasadena, California, with his wife, Robin. They had been contacted and were escorted by Warner Electric retiree Wendell Witten. Wendell was also responsible for WAHF receiving a \$1,000 donation from Warner Electric, the company founded by A.P. Warner.

The weather was cool and cloudy at



A 1909 photo of A.P. Warner's Curtiss aeroplane on the previous page...and above, the 2009 quarter-scale model of the same plane, built by members of EAA Chapter 60. The model visited several locations throughout Wisconsin, as shown in the map.

by Beloit aviator Bob Bauer in his ultralight and a flyover by Wisconsin Air National Guard aircraft. Bauer, whose Slipstream International makes and markets light-sport aircraft and ultralights in Beloit, was game to try taking off from and landing on the school soccer field, the approximate site of Warner's historic flight, but a line of trees crossing the field prompted second thoughts. Safety being more important than ceremony, Bob taxied around the field and hopped briefly into the air. The kids clapped and cheered, all the while chanting, "Fly, fly, fly..."

Wisconsin Air National Guard veteran Tom Thomas worked for months to obtain all the permissions and clearances for two F-16s from Madison to fly over Morgan School. It seemed all set until about one week prior when we learned that President Barack Obama would visit Madison on November 4. The airport would be closed and the F-16s grounded. For months we thought the only variable we would have to worry about was the weather, not the President. As it turned out, in a few days we learned that the President would not arrive in Madison until several hours after our event, so the F-16s could fly. They rocketed over the crowd just as Bob Bauer was taxiing, giving us a vivid demonstration of 100 years of progress in aviation.

After the ceremony the crowd dispersed, and our school program began. From 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., with a break for lunch, students from kindergarten to the fifth grade entered the gym to see our exhibit. They were greeted by John Dorcsey, who gave a series of grade-specific presentations that held every kid's attention. Combining the story of A.P. Warner with some aviation history and a little flight training, John delivered our message to a new generation. By the time he was finished, he could have enrolled about 300 kids for flight instruction. It was a great ending to a great morning. Then Tom Thomas iced the cake by presenting aerial photos of Morgan School to Principal Hansen, her faculty, students, and staff.

At 5 p.m. we assembled again, this time at the Beloit Historical Society Museum. Here our mission was to present



WAHF's John Dorcsey gave four grade-specific talks to the students at Morgan Elementary School. The kids were attentive, fascinated, and inquisitive, asking dozens of questions. Each student received a balsa glider printed with the Centennial of Flight logo.

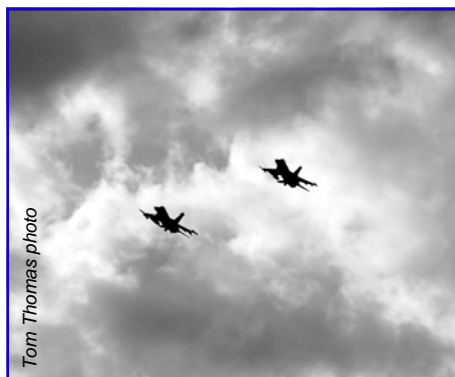
the exhibit for permanent display there and to show our appreciation to EAA Chapter 60. We said good-bye to the model, the panels, and the traveling display crate, knowing they would be in good hands. EAA Chapter 60 members will return to the museum to suspend the model airplane in the atrium.

Dr. Tom Crouch, senior curator at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, landed in Madison at midday on November 5. Tom Thomas met him at the airport and pointed him toward Beloit. That evening, EAA Chapter 60 members, with John and Rose Dorcsey,

took him to dinner. Crouch came to Beloit one day early to spend Friday, November 6, at Beloit College. He spoke to students in two classes; Physics and Museum Studies, and viewed our Warner Curtiss exhibit at the historical society.

Crouch had agreed to donate his time to speak at our Centennial. His only special consideration was a request for a bicycle. Thanks to Dr. Bob Schwaegler of the Beloit Society of Learning Unlimited, Crouch was provided with a bike and a guide for a morning ride around Beloit. With temperatures in the mid-60s, the weather could not have been better.

About 100 people attended Crouch's lecture on the afternoon of November 7, held in the Eaton Chapel on the Beloit College campus, and it was my personal pleasure to introduce him. Just as we had hoped, he reviewed the events of 1909, placing A.P. Warner and his flight in historical context, not only with the Wright Brothers and Glenn Curtiss, but also with the European pioneers who made that year one of aviation's most memorable. With his lecture, questions afterward, and additional conversation at





Morgan Elementary students sang the National Anthem to kick things off. Right, Dr. Crouch dramatically explained wing-warping at his presentations in Beloit. Right, Dr. Crouch looks on while EAA Chapter 60 member Al Draeger demonstrates the controls on the model of the 1909 Curtiss Pusher that Al and his fellow chapter members built.



the reception that followed, Dr. Crouch talked aviation history for a good 3 hours.

Crouch is a rare scholar who can readily share his knowledge with non-scholars. Perhaps the best review of his presentation came from Tina Swain, wife of WAHF board member Chuck Swain. "I've been involved in aviation through Chuck for 50 years," Tina said. "No one helped me understand Chuck's passion as Dr. Crouch did today." No more need be said.

...Except to say thank you to the many people from all over the state, especially in Beloit, who made our Centennial celebration a great success.



EAA Chapter 60 President Ken Brooks displays the State of Wisconsin Citation of Commendation the chapter received for its role in the commemoration of Wisconsin's Centennial of Flight. Right: a reception with Dr. Crouch took place after his lecture at the Beloit College Wright Museum of Art.





Rose Dorsey photo

The final days of the Wisconsin Centennial of Flight celebration began early Wednesday morning, November 4, at Morgan Elementary School in Beloit, the site where A.P. Warner made Wisconsin's first flight 100 years ago. Archie Henkelmann (left), along with his fellow EAA Chapter 60 members, set up the quarter-scale model of the aircraft Warner flew in the school's gymnasium.

Below left, Beloit City Manager Larry Arft shows the rededication plaque he received that will be permanently attached to the Wisconsin Historical Marker that commemorates Warner's accomplishments.

Below, Wisconsin State Representative Chuck Benedict addresses the crowd of about 500. Rep. Benedict was one of many state legislators who contributed their time to the event and its promotion.

Bottom, local pilot and entrepreneur Bob Bauer of Slipstream International taxis down the field that A.P. Warner flew from 100 years ago. While it wasn't truly a reenactment of Warner's flight, whose first flight was at an altitude of 50 feet, the crowd loved it, especially the students.



Gary Dikkers photo



Gary Dikkers photo



Gary Dikkers photo



Gary Dikkers photo



Rose Dorsey photo

At least a dozen media outlets, including television, radio, newspaper, Internet, and other media sources covered the centennial celebration, both pre- and post-event, sending a positive message about aviation throughout Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Above, WAHF's Vice-President Michael Goc is interviewed for a Madison television station broadcast.

Above right, nearly 500 students received balsa gliders printed with the WAHF and Centennial logos.

Right, WAHF President Rose Dorsey addresses the crowd, while special guests Steven Warner Newquist and his wife Robin (seated), of Pasadena, California, look on. The sign in the background is a vinyl reproduction of the Warner historical marker, produced because the actual marker is close to a busy street and its location didn't allow room nor safe surroundings from which to rededicate it.



Gary Dikkers photo



Tom Thomas photo

EAA Chapter 60 members were honored by WAHF in front of a crowd at the Beloit Historical Society. (l-r) Glenn Phillips, Bob Rauscher, Al Draeger, Archie Henkelmann, Simon Smith, Tom Jenks, Gene Calkins, Rick Leys, Jeff Good, and Paul Dries.

# Increasing Useful Load

## My six month weight loss program to fly an Ercoupe

By Dr. Tom Voelker, AME  
email: [DrAlphaMike@yahoo.com](mailto:DrAlphaMike@yahoo.com)

Hello, fellow airmen. I hope you've enjoyed your summer—all two weeks of it this year! With the coming of winter, a new year arrives and with it the opportunity for new resolve. With that in mind, and thinking about your health, let's discuss an issue that has become dear to me: *useful load*.

About three years ago, our local flight school acquired an Ercoupe. I thought it would be fun to fly and get a checkout. The first step in getting into a new plane is reading the Pilot's Operating Handbook (POH). That's where this adventure started. The Ercoupe looked to be easy to fly; it seemed 70 mph covered just about all of the operating speeds, such as rotation and approach speeds. When we got to the weight and balance, however, I had a problem.

With my instructor in the right seat and me in the left, we could get about four gallons of fuel in the tanks before we reached maximum gross weight. Since we would burn, if I remember correctly, about seven gallons of 100LL up front every hour, that gave us VFR reserves in the tanks, with zero hours to spare. We would be able to taxi to the runway, then turn around and taxi back for more fuel! My instructor was a slender man. If you're getting the picture...you'll realize there was only one place we were going to find more useful load.

That was three years ago. When we couldn't fly that little plane I resolved to lose some weight. I figured I had about 20 to 30 pounds to give, and that would get me at least a half-hour of useful fuel in the Ercoupe, probably enough to do some pattern work and get my checkout. "I'm going to go on a diet—next week," I said. About 120 "next weeks" later, nothing had changed, not my weight, and not my resolve to lose weight.

Please allow me to give you my testimonial, and what I, as a doctor, have

learned along the way.

You may recall from my last column that I had a busy summer. In addition to my trip to Europe, I had another adventure. A friend asked me to climb a mountain. We had climbed Mount Kathadin in Maine the previous summer; the climb was doable but extremely difficult. This time it would be Long's Peak, the tallest peak in Rocky Mountain National Park at over 14,000 feet. The climb would be tougher than Mount Kathadin, with a similar elevation gain of about 5,000 feet, but this time we were starting at 9,000 feet mean sea level, as opposed to essentially sea-level the year before. I knew that if I wasn't in good shape and at least 40 pounds lighter, I wouldn't make—and quite possibly wouldn't survive—the climb. I needed to start my program now—not next week.

The result? I lost 60 pounds in six months and am now in the best shape of my life. Once I started, it was easy! And the climb was phenomenal.

### Lesson 1

The prime lesson I learned on my weight loss adventure was the need for a motivator. I'm convinced that almost anyone can lose weight if they are motivated enough. I have shared my experience with many of my patients who are obese, and several of them are finally losing significant weight, after months or years of "trying." Many of us would like to lose a few pounds, but that's not enough. In my case, the motivator was either the desire not to fail on the climb (and let Jim down) or simply acknowledging that I could *die* from my obesity. Whatever it was, it got me over the hump. I don't necessarily know what would motivate any individual person, but once it's found, the pounds can start to come off. If you want to lose weight, start by identifying *why* you want to lose, and firmly

commit yourself to it. If you are committed enough, you'll be able to stick to the plan. In addition, it has to be you who wants the weight loss, not your spouse or your doctor. Do it for yourself!

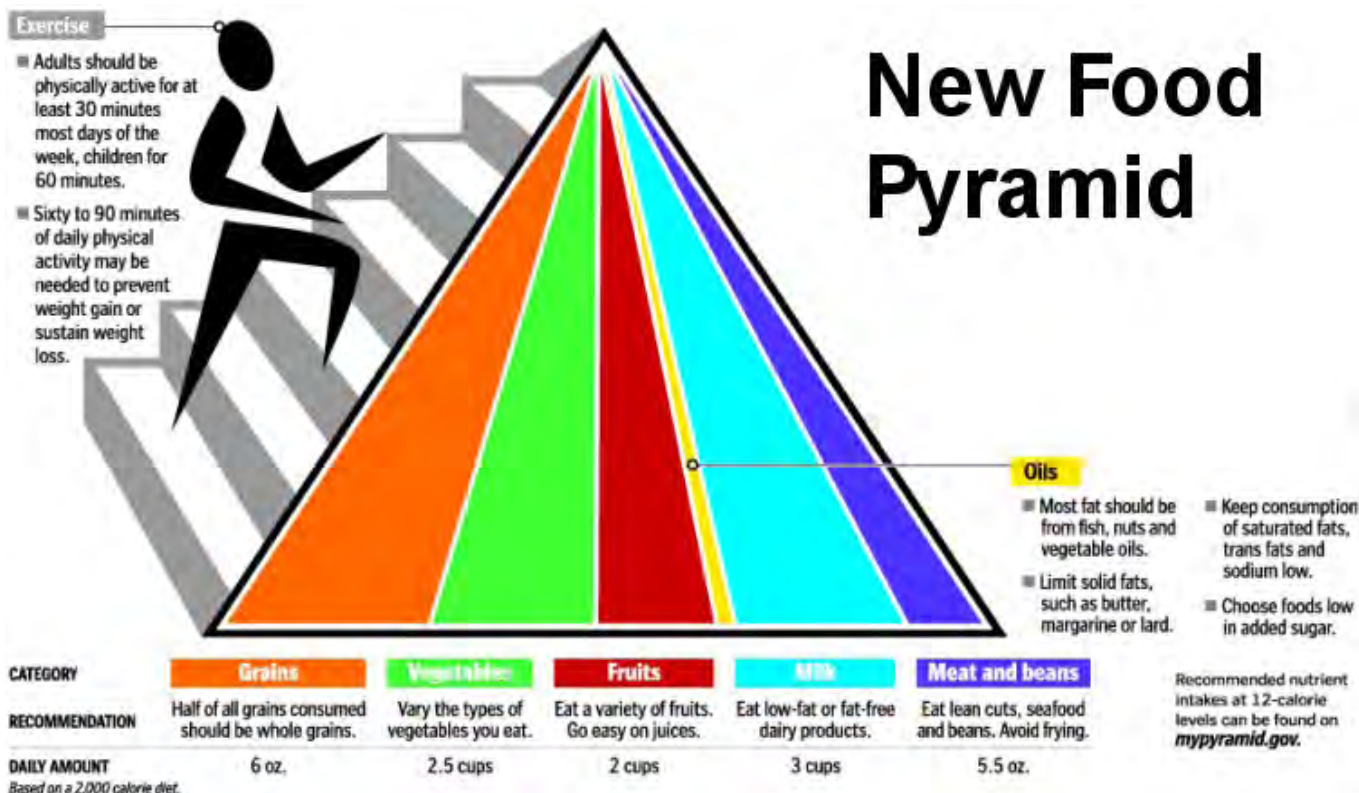
### Lesson 2

The second point is this: if you think you're overweight, then you are, and you're probably obese. I knew I could lose a few pounds. My acquaintances thought I was "heavy" or "solid." The BMI (body mass index) charts said I was definitely obese—at 36. A normal BMI is 20-25, and 30 or greater is considered obesity. The darn charts said I had to lose 60 pounds! You know what? They were right. Even after losing 40 pounds, while feeling a whole lot better, I knew I still had 10 or 20 to give.

Visit [www.NHLBISupport.com/bmi](http://www.NHLBISupport.com/bmi) to calculate your body mass index. Enter your height and weight and believe the numbers. If your BMI is 30 or greater, then you are obese. No ifs, ands, or *butts* about it! The cutoff for obesity is based on the effect of weight on your health. If you are obese, admit it, and make that your motivating factor. Get healthy!

### Lesson 3

Don't go on a diet. Just "eat right." Over the three years of "trying" to lose weight (and off and on over previous decades) I had tried various diets. The Adkins diet was great for my carnivorous nature, but it didn't work. It also has potentially detrimental health effects. (Dr. Adkins suffered a heart attack, congestive heart failure, and had high blood pressure.) The only diet program in a recent study that has been shown to yield sustained weight loss is Weight Watchers (about 10 to 15 pounds kept off after two years). None of the other programs worked long-term. Weight Watchers probably has a better success rate because it is not a diet *per se*,



but a healthy way to eat. It's intended to be a lifestyle change, not a temporary fix.

#### Lesson 4

The key to the whole program (after you become motivated) is *portion control*. Before I eat I decide how much of each item I am going to eat, and I stick to it. I never say I can't have a particular food, but I do limit the size of my serving. Before I eat I have a very good handle on how much I *should* eat, but after I've started it all gets a little fuzzy. Make your decision and stick to it. This is where being truly motivated is essential. And here's where I came up with a new philosophy, which is keeping me motivated: If I eat less and continue to watch my portions, I'll live a lot longer and I get to have many more meals in the long run. Now, for someone who likes to eat as much as I do, that's a motivator!

Finally, we need to consider the contribution of exercise to the weight loss program. I put in about one hour of exercise (a combination of weight lifting and vigorous walking on the treadmill) three or four times a week. To get in mountain-climbing shape (and to increase strength)

exercise was essential. From a weight-loss standpoint it was also important, though perhaps less so. The number of calories burned in exercise is not nearly as great as the calories that can be avoided by limiting dietary intake. (It would take 35 miles of walking or running to lose one pound.) Nonetheless, being more active is still an important piece of the pie (so-to-speak). I also took other steps to burn more calories. Since February I have *never* taken the elevator if stairs were available, and I try to park farther away from the door while shopping, taking the opportunity to burn a few more calories.

Unfortunately, the Ercoupe is now for sale and no longer insured, so I may not get that checkout. But when I fly my Comanche, 42-Papa, I can carry that extra hour of fuel or another 60 pounds of luggage. Now that's useful load.

For those of you with load to spare, consider getting motivated and freeing up some your aircraft's payload. If you follow my lead, drop me a line and let me know how you do.

Good luck and safe skies this winter.

—Alpha Mike

#### 10 Tips for Eating Healthy

- 1) Six ounces of fiber and complex carbohydrates daily—half of all grains consumed should be whole grains
- 2) Eat a variety of vegetables—2.5 cups daily
- 3) Two cups of fruits are recommended daily
- 4) Eat low-fat or fat-free dairy products
- 5) Add beans to your diet
- 6) Eat seafood and lean meats
- 7) Most fat should come from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils. Limit solid fats
- 8) Choose foods that are low in added sugar
- 9) Drink plenty of water
- 10) Exercise daily

Learn more at [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) or visit the National Institutes of Health website at [www.NIH.gov](http://www.NIH.gov) for more information.



Dr. Tom Voelker is a family practitioner in Wisconsin Rapids and flies N6442P, a Comanche 250, out of South Wood County Airport (ISW).

# Stepchild Pilot

## “Suspicious Alsatian” is a guy named Joe

By Frederick Beseler

Clara Hammon of Onalaska, Wisconsin, loves history, volunteering once a week as a docent at the La Crosse County Historical Society. She also loves books, and one of her treasures is a signed copy of Joseph Doerflinger's book *Stepchild Pilot*. Says Clara, “I don't know how many copies were printed. Not many. 400 sticks in my mind, but don't quote me on that. I was one of the few I know of who bought a copy from Joe.”

Clara worked with Joe Doerflinger at the A.C. Spark Plug Division of General Motors in Milwaukee some 50 years ago. At the time she was working her way through school, getting a degree in business administration and learning all about a new technology called computers.

Although they worked for A.C. Spark Plug, Joe and Clara weren't making spark plugs. “We worked at the A.C. facility on the corner of Prospect and Kenilworth Streets in Milwaukee,” says Clara, “It was very high tech work. Joe was an inspector and I was doing what I guess you'd call assembly work—but it wasn't the usual kind of assembly work! We were modifying B-47 Stratojet navigation systems for use in the new B-52 Strato-Fortress bombers that were just then coming into service. It was very precise work. I can still see Joe with his penlight inspecting the various components.”

Later on, A.C. Spark Plug in Milwaukee built the inertial navigation systems used in America's Cold War ICBMs and in the Apollo space capsules. During World War II, the company built Norden bombsights.

Clara adds, “Joe didn't take to a lot of people. It's not that he was antisocial, he was just all business. I guess I was one of the fortunate ones that he befriended. He'd talk a little about his earlier flying, but mostly he'd talk about his wife and



Joseph  
Doerflinger  
1959

kids.”

The story of Joe's flying career is contained in the previously mentioned *Stepchild Pilot*, published in 1959 by the Robert R. Longo Company of Tyler, Texas. It's Joe Doerflinger's own story of an aviation career that spanned the earliest days of powered flight and whose later work at A.C. helped put man on the moon. Copies of the book are scarce but can be found via the Internet and used book dealers.

Born in the Alsace region of France in 1898, Doerflinger literally grew up with aviation. As a boy, he hung around the Habsheimer airfield, watching the airplanes and pilots. He flew kites and climbed trees. “I dreamed of flying, perhaps even stowing away in a plane,” he wrote in his autobiography. In 1914 when World War I started and at only 16 years of age, he volunteered for the German Flying Service. Deemed too young, he was trained as a machine gunner in the infantry and served on both the Western and Eastern fronts.

Three years later, he tried again for the flying service. He was sick of the trenches. “I had behind me three years of muddling, trenching, killing, blood, devastation, filth and disease, and foul smells ...my senses were numbed, my perspective distorted and my sense of values completely muddled.”

Doerflinger survived numerous battles, including what he called “the hell-fire of the Verdun sector,” and was finally accepted into flying school in December, 1917. He survived numerous training flights in a variety of flimsy, dangerous training planes in observer's school.

Eventually he was assigned to pursuit training, and then one day, transfer orders came for Doerflinger and the other students. Doerflinger wrote, “I found my orders. I sat down to read them. It was well that I did. I looked and stared. I didn't know whether to cheer or cry. The message said simply, ‘Sergeant Joseph Doerflinger of



Joe Doerflinger and a Ryan monoplane.

Pursuit School No. 1: Transferred to the Squadron of Richthofen.”

\And so began Joe Doerflinger’s combat flying career. By the summer of 1918 when he arrived at Manfred von Richthofen’s “Flying Circus,” the Red Baron had been dead a couple months. Doerflinger flew under the command of the later infamous Hermann Goering.

Flying the Fokker D-7 with its powerful Mercedes engine, Doerflinger participated in many missions over the Western Front. He not only contended with Allied fighters and flak, but even had to contend with his fellow flyers. Since Doerflinger wasn’t German, the other officers in the Richthofen Squadron were “suspicious of the Alsatian”—thus the title of his book. Nevertheless, Doerflinger counted as his friends the legendary Ernst Udet, Germany’s second-highest-scoring ace of World War I.

Following the Armistice that ended the “Great War,” Doerflinger flew his Fokker home to Alsace—where everyone was celebrating the French victory. Doerflinger joined in the celebration by tying French flags to his Fokker’s struts and performing aerobatics for the joyous crowds below.

Although he had flown for Germany, Doerflinger became an instructor for the French Air Force and later became one of the first pilots for what became Air France. He flew a variety of aircraft on dangerous routes from France, across mountain ranges and the Mediterranean, through all kinds of nasty weather, to places like Casablanca and primitive airfields in North Africa. Doerflinger survived several mishaps, including capture by menacing Moors. He was devastated by the loss of his brother-in-law who was also a pilot and was killed in a crash.

In 1928, Joe Doerflinger left his wife and children behind and sailed for the United States, eventually arriving in Chicago. Here he became a pilot, flying Hamil-

ton Metal Planes for what was called United Air Line—later Universal Airline. Among the many friends he made was the famous Milwaukee pilot Lester Maitland, who in 1927 completed the first trans-Pacific flight from California to Hawaii with Lt. Albert Hegenberger.

After his stint with Universal, Doerflinger got into aircraft sales as a representative for Great Lakes Aircraft Corporation, demonstrating Great Lakes Sport Trainers. He wrote, “We went from city to city and I had to give good exciting demonstrations. Prospects got free rides. I am sure that was all most prospects wanted. They would appear interested while the salesman told his story about the plane. Then the salesman would go into the second part of his act and extol my virtues; review my record with the famous Richthofen Squadron and list my records while flying in Africa. Then with the stage set the prospect was invited to climb in and have a ride. When the ride was over the prospect would step out and say he would have to think it over. And that would be the end of the prospect.”

Doerflinger added, “The sale of these planes was disappointing. We had keen competition from several other manufacturers. And while it was early in 1929 and the market had not crashed, there did not seem to be much private money available for the expensive luxury of flying.”

Nevertheless, there remain today numerous original Great Lakes 2T-1 and 2T-1A “Sport Trainers” still on the FAA’s registry—some of which Joe Doerflinger may have flown or demonstrated to prospective customers. (The EAA AirVenture Museum in Oshkosh has an original Great Lakes 2T-1 Sport Trainer, read more about it at

[www.AirVentureMuseum.org/Collection/Aircraft/Great%20Lakes%202T-1A%20Sport%20Trainer.asp](http://www.AirVentureMuseum.org/Collection/Aircraft/Great%20Lakes%202T-1A%20Sport%20Trainer.asp).)

In August 1929, Joe went to the Wrigley building in Chicago where he met with John B. Kohler, who was in the process of starting a “flying bridge” across Lake Michigan between Milwaukee and Grand Rapids. Kohler Airlines officially took off on September 1, 1929, with Joe Doerflinger as the pilot of the Loening Air Yacht amphibian that left



Joe Doerflinger with a Great Lakes 2T-1 Sport Trainer, 1929.

Grand Rapids, Michigan, carrying Mr. Kohler and his brother, Daniel Hoan, the mayor of Milwaukee and the postmaster of Grand Rapids.

Joe wrote, "Upon landing in Milwaukee, we listened to speeches...followed by a banquet at which Mayor Hoan gave a fine address, pointing out in fitting words the significance of this day, the great progress in passenger air traffic and the pleasure of an air trip over the blue mirror of Lake Michigan."

Subsequently, two flights a day between Milwaukee and Grand Rapids were made, weather permitting. Eventually the route was expanded to include Detroit. In November 1929, John Kohler sold his airline to Northwest Airlines—now owned by Delta Airlines. Kohler put the Loening amphibians up for sale, one of which was purchased by a woman from Norway who had the airplane shipped to Norway and hired Joe to go to Norway to fly it for her. Joe flew tourists through the fjords and over the glaciers. Joe describes the fjord flying as hard work. "Sheer, rocky mountains rose several thousand feet from the water and the fjords were comparatively narrow. The water was slick as oil and there is nothing worse for flying 'ducks.'...Calm, slick water makes the hull stick....I did not always have a lot of space to get enough altitude to get above those mountains. The Loening was not new and it labored at times."

The Norwegian venture was not at all profitable for Joe and it came to a sinking halt. While landing one day the Loening hit some crates in the water that a freighter had dumped overboard. The hull split and the airplane sank, taking with it the aerial tour business. "No plane, no money, a squabble about the plane's

insurance, and my Norwegian flying was over."

Catching a ship for the U.S., Joe added, "I cannot describe the joy I experienced nine days later when the Statue of Liberty came into view."

Joe wasn't finished with flying however. "In the summer of 1937, I barnstormed through Wisconsin in an old Ryan. Finally, I became a ground instructor at a government school at General Mitchell Field in Milwaukee."

Joe taught aerodynamics, navigation, rigging, and repair of aircraft. "We repaired planes for sportsmen pilots and after the start of World War II, the planes for members of the Civil Air Patrol. The owner furnished the material; we, the labor. This way both profited. Before the ships were returned to the owner, I test flew them."

In May 1943, the school was closed. Joe stated that most of the students had joined the Army, Navy, or Army Air Force. "It was also the end of my flying career."

It's not clear when Joe went to work for A.C. Spark Plug in Milwaukee, but he retired in July 1966. The September 6, 1966, Milwaukee Journal newspaper announced that Joe Doerflinger would be the parade marshal for the Jaycee's air show that weekend at General Mitchell Field. The article describes the parade as including "more than 60 units, including 15 floats, seven drum and bugle corps, clowns, and 14 marching bands including those of the 5<sup>th</sup> Army and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. Members of the Thunderbirds, the Air Force precision flying team, and the Golden Knights, the Army's parachute team, will also march in the parade. They also will per-



***Stepchild Pilot*, published by Robert Longo Company, 1959. The cover illustration is by Bjorn Karlstrom who was well-known for his aviation artwork, particularly his aircraft center spreads for *American Aircraft Modeler* and other magazines. Right, a Kohler Aviation Company Loening Air Yacht taking off from the Detroit River. Photos courtesy *Stepchild Pilot*.**

form both days of the air show.

“Carried on the floats will be a choral group from Allis Chalmers (watch for a future *Forward in Flight* article about Allis Chalmers and the aviation industry), a Gemini capsule, missiles, an experimental helicopter, a World War I Fokker Triplane, and the Stits Sky Baby, the world’s smallest airplane.

“Doerflinger was named marshal because of his long association with aviation. He retired in July from AC Electronics where he inspected the AC-built guidance and navigation systems for the Apollo program.”

Joe Doerflinger, whose aviation career spanned Fokker biplanes to Apollo spaceships, passed away in Milwaukee in October 1970. Here is what he wrote in the 1959 epilogue of his book:

“My thoughts dwell on the memories of my earlier flying activities. Memories of the hollow, wooden landing wheels on German aircraft, splintering into a thousand pieces when they were landed hard upon the frozen ground; the rotary motor without idle, the contact button on the control stick. Memories of night flights without lights or flares; the discomforts and loss of passengers over the Spanish mountains. Memories of winter flights in metal ships without de-icers, where the pilot held a yardstick out the window to reassure himself that no ice was forming on his wings; the ‘scientific’ navigation over Lake Michigan.

“The waiting rooms of the large air terminals throughout the land are crowded with passengers destined for all parts of the world. The engines of the huge multi-motored planes, with

their elegant cabins fitted up with all the comforts of our day, are droning outside on the flying field. From time to time, a soft voice over the public address system announces the flights.

“Passengers get on or off. The strains of an orchestra are wafted in the wind before they are swallowed up by the monotonous humming of the motors.

“Good-bye! Good luck!

“One of the giants of the air ascends and in a few minutes disappears from view. My heart is strangely touched and expands at this sight. A great silent joy comes over me. Good luck!” I repeat musingly.

“A feeling of pride swells my breast as the thought that I, too, was privileged to have had a share in this huge task; that I, too, contributed a small part to this tremendous success, this still unfinished step in the progress of civilization. Would that all the brave pilots who gave their lives in sacrificial devotion to the cause might arise for a brief time to enjoy the fruits of their work and be convinced that their sacrifices were not made in vain.”



*Frederick Beseler has been a private pilot since 1978, and is building a Pietenpol Air-Camper. He serves as president of EAA Chapter 307 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and has worked for the Trane Company for more than 30 years.*

*Contact Fred at [TBYH@aol.com](mailto:TBYH@aol.com).*

# Wisconsin's Space Cowboy

With a little push from Pernille Parker, Viroqua's Mark Lee goes into orbit

**On** May 5, 1961, third-grader Mark Lee sat in the one-room Davis School outside of Viroqua, Wisconsin, with his classmates and watched a fuzzy, grainy, black-and-white television image broadcast from a La Crosse station. Pernille Parker, the teacher at that one-room school, had gathered her students to watch Mercury astronaut Alan Shepherd become the first American in space.

STS-82, with payload commander Mark Lee on board, makes a rare night launch from the Kennedy Space Center on February 21, 1997.

NASA photo

Mark was so impressed with what he saw, that in the days that followed he led a classmate in making model rockets from wet modeling clay and began launching them inside the school, where they stuck to the ceiling. Over the next few days, as the clay dried and lost its grip to the high ceiling, model rockets randomly dropped onto the floor of the Davis School with loud *thunks*. As 'punishment' and to teach Mark a valuable lesson, Mrs. Parker told Mark to read a book about Sir Isaac Newton and give a report to the school on the effects of gravity. Mark did as assigned—and never looked back. After watching Alan Shepherd become the first American in space and reading about Sir Isaac Newton, Mark decided he would become an astronaut.

Many young boys and girls have dreams of what they want to be when they grow up. Mark was one of those few with the dedication, motivation, and—as he will admit—a bit of the luck needed to make his dream come true. He has always credited that teaching moment with Mrs. Parker, and the life lessons he received from his parents, Charles and Ruth, growing up on a farm just outside Viroqua, as giving him the drive and tools to make his dream come true.

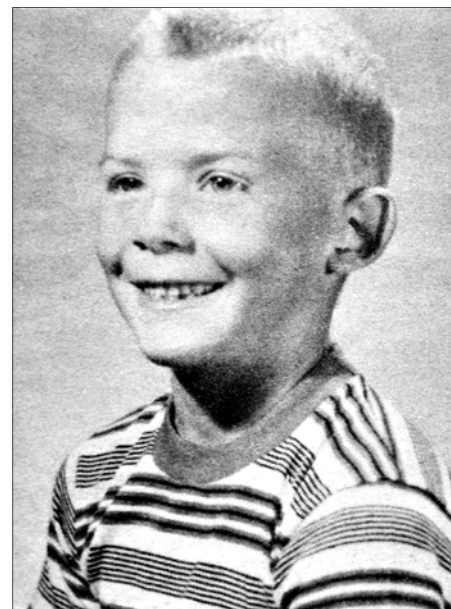
For the rest of his career as an Air Force pilot and NASA astronaut, Mark remembered the catalyst of his Viroqua upbringing, and made it a point to stop by and visit Pernille Parker whenever he came back to Viroqua while on leave.

### Roots in Viroqua

Mark grew up on a milk farm just outside Viroqua in a large, supportive family. Besides Mark, Charles and Ruthie had three other sons, Brian (who attended West Point



Vernon County Observer-Censor



Vernon County Observer-Broadcaster

**Mark Lee's second grade photo (above) at Viroqua's Davis School. It was at the Davis School while watching Alan Shepherd become the first American in space that Mark decided he would become an astronaut. Mark (left) during his Eagle Scout ceremony.**



Mark Lee collection

**Mark flew both the F-4 and F-16 (above) while he was a U.S. Air Force fighter pilot.**



NASA photo

*It was during one of those spacewalks that Mark said he experienced his most terrifying moment as an astronaut.*



**Mark arrives at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida from Houston for his flight on the shuttle Discovery for STS-82 in 1997. NASA astronauts use the T-38 as a commuter and training aircraft. During his time as an astronaut, Mark logged almost 3,000 hours in the T-38, making numerous trips between NASA flight centers in Florida, Texas, Alabama, New Mexico, and California, as well as visiting NASA suppliers across the country. While an astronaut, Mark said he even flew the T-38 into Rockford, Illinois, to meet with engineers at the Sundstrand Corporation.**

and was a career Army officer), Tim, and Jay; and two daughters, Deb and Carrie. Mark decided early he wanted to fly and one of his earliest memories of airplanes were the low-level military jets that flew over the mink farm his family lived on.

While in high school, Mark was popular and active, lettering in three sports: football (he was quarterback), wrestling, and track. He served as vice-president of his graduating class and was selected for the National Honor Society. His teachers remember the dedication he gave to studying. His wrestling coach, Mr. Ted Harris, recalls how Mark would bring his books to wrestling matches and work on his homework when he wasn't wrestling. One of his best friends in high school, Dan Jacobson, remembered that Mark probably wasn't the smartest kid in their class, but that he was the most dedicated and the hardest worker.

Mark's father, Charles, also attributed Mark being a Boy Scout as a positive experience on his life. Like many astronauts, Mark became an Eagle Scout. He was also selected for the Scout's national honor society—the Order of the Arrow.

Knowing that the best route to becoming an astronaut was through being a fighter pilot in one of the military services, Mark decided early that he would attend the U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. He applied for and received a Congressional nomination to the Academy from Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire. After Senator Proxmire's office had received his application, one of the Senator's aides called to ask

why he hadn't put down a second and third choice, such as the Military or Naval Academies. Mark told the aide, "I don't have a second choice. I'm going to the Air Force Academy."

Although he had long known he wanted to fly, Mark didn't have that opportunity until he flew in a military airplane as a cadet at the Air Force Academy. Mark says that not flying earlier was never a drawback, and that, "I didn't think I had to fly to know I wanted to fly."

As in high school, Mark did well at the Academy, earning recognition on the Dean's List each of his eight semesters, as well as receiving the top award in mathematics during his freshman year. He majored in civil engineering after receiving advice that the space program would need civil engineers to design and build infrastructure on the Moon.

Mark said that upon arrival at the Academy he was at first intimidated to be among a select group of students whom had nearly all graduated at or near the top of their high school classes; many who had been class presidents and Eagle Scouts; and most who had been top-notch athletes in high school. "I felt awful because I had only nine letters in high school, and only a 3.6 GPA," Mark said. "I thought I was the low man on the totem pole." Mark said he was very relieved to find that his roots and education in Viroqua made him competitive at the Air Force Academy. "You find Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Upper Midwest have much better educational systems than most places around the country," Mark explained.



NASA image

**Egress wire training. Mark Lee is far right. This was real "slide for life" training. In the event of an emergency prior to blast-off, astronauts would have to slide in a special basket down a 1200-foot cable from the 195-foot high level of the shuttle to a waiting armored personnel carrier in which they would dash away from the launch site. Mark says that training for the emergency slide down the egress wire was scarier than his four liftoffs or the many spacewalks he made.**

After graduating the Air Force Academy, Mark attended Undergraduate Pilot Training at Del Rio, Texas, where he again excelled and received an assignment to fly the F-4 Phantom II. After operational training in the F-4 in Arizona, he was assigned to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, where he spent two and one-half years flying the Phantom. Mark's most memorable flights in the F-4 were those that took place when he was a functional check flight (FCF) pilot. As an FCF pilot, he flew the Phantoms to ensure they were ready to go back to operational status after coming out of heavy maintenance. One part of the FCF flight profile is to push the throttles full forward and let the airplane run out to its maximum speed. Mark said he liked to find a cloud deck for the tremendous impression of speed he got while skimming across the cloud tops at Mach Two (more than 1,300 knots).

While assigned to the F-4 squadron, he applied directly to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to study graphite/epoxy advanced composite materials. After Mark won a scholarship from MIT, the Air Force agreed he could attend. Upon receiving his master's degree in mechanical engineering from MIT, he worked in the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) program office at Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts before returning to active flying status.

In 1982, he became an F-16 fighter pilot flying the "Viper" at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. While at Hill, he now had the academic and flying experience to apply to NASA for its 1984 as-

tronaut candidate class. Out of more than 5,000 pilots and scientists who applied, Mark was one of only 17 that NASA selected in its tenth class of astronauts. Finally, he was about to make his third grade dream become true.

### NASA Experience

After his selection as an astronaut candidate, Mark began the rigorous, yearlong training and evaluation period NASA puts candidates through before assigning them to a mission. That first mission was STS (Space Transportation System)-30, a May 1989 launch of the shuttle *Atlantis* to deploy the Magellan exploration spacecraft to Venus. Magellan rendezvoused with Venus in August 1990 and became one of NASA's most successful scientific missions, returning valuable information about the Venetian atmosphere and magnetic field.

Mark returned to space three years later as a crewmember on STS-47, a launch of the shuttle *Endeavour*, where Mark was the payload commander of a joint United States-Japanese mission that included 44 different life science and materials processing experiments.

Of the long gaps between selection and going into space, and the intervals of years between subsequent missions, Mark says the life of an astronaut was not always as glamorous as the media and Hollywood movies make it appear. Much of the daily schedule is devoted to numerous meetings and repetitive training, and as they get close to an assigned flight, there are few



The mission patch for NASA's STS-82.



The crew of STS-82 (seated front l-r) Kenneth D. Bowersox, commander; Steven A. Hawley, mission specialist; and Scott J. Horowitz, pilot. Back row (l-r) are Joseph R. Tanner, mission specialist; Gregory J. Harbaugh, mission specialist; Mark C. Lee, payload commander; and Steven L. Smith, mission specialist.

opportunities for relaxation. “Nobody thinks astronauts do boring work and that it’s all fun, but it takes years of intense, not-so-exciting work to get to your mission,” Mark said.

### The SAFER Mission

On STS-64, his third flight into space, Mark made probably his biggest contribution to the space program when he tested the Simplified Aid for EVA (extravehicular activity) Rescue (SAFER) outside the shuttle *Discovery*. SAFER is a small, self-contained backpack that fits onto the back of a spacesuit and provides free-flying mobility while outside the shuttle during an EVA. Mark helped design the SAFER and led the engineering team through its development, which naturally made him the astronaut to test it in orbit.

Wearing a SAFER, whose small rocket engines are powered by high-pressure nitrogen, astronauts can maneuver themselves through roll, pitch, and yaw while maintaining a set attitude. SAFER provides a way to move around while outside the shuttle, and also provides rescue capability should an astronaut’s tether snap or come loose—it gives them a way to get back to the shuttle. For the SAFER test, Mark went outside the *Discovery* untethered and maneuvered several meters away from the shuttle to test the system he had helped design. Did Mark feel any apprehension about stepping outside the *Discovery* without being connected to it? “No,” he said. “I helped design it and I knew the engineering and testing it had gone through during development. I knew it would work.” Even so, fellow astronaut Carl Meade was standing by on the shuttle’s robot mechanical

maneuvering arm to fetch him if needed. During STS-64, Mark logged a total of 6 hours and 51 minutes outside the space shuttle during the SAFER testing spacewalk.

The SAFER is now standard equipment on the International Space Station (ISS) in the event one of its astronauts breaks free during a space walk and there is no shuttle nearby to help with the rescue. The ISS carries three SAFER units, and the unit is on board for each space shuttle mission. For his work designing and testing SAFER, the Air Force awarded Mark the Distinguished Flying Cross, a medal that is rarely awarded during peacetime.

### The Hubble Repair Mission

Mark’s last shuttle mission was STS-82 in February 1997. On that mission Mark was again the payload commander as part of NASA’s second repair trip to the Hubble Space Telescope (HST). After an initial glitch with its optics, the HST has been one of the most spectacularly successful of NASA’s projects and has returned to earth thousands of beautiful and inspiring images of deep space that has increased humankind’s knowledge of the age and size of the Universe. To keep the HST in prime working order, NASA has periodically sent a shuttle to rendezvous with it so astronauts can repair, replace, and update the optics, computers, software, and scientific packages on the HST. During STS-82 Mark made three space walks, logging 19 hours and 10 minutes outside the shuttle while working on the HST.

It was during one of those spacewalks that Mark said he



*Mark said that for three complete orbits ...he sat in the Atlantis as though he was alone in space, and looked down on the Earth below—an experience that he says will live with him forever.*



**Left: Mark Lee outside the shuttle Discovery testing the SAFER self-contained, propulsive backpack astronauts can use for free-flying mobility. Mark's SAFER spacewalk was the first untethered spacewalk in ten years. The Air Force awarded Mark the Distinguished Flying Cross for this mission—a rare peacetime award of the medal.**

experienced his most terrifying moment as an astronaut. While outside the shuttle and moving into position on the HST, he says he looked down at the Earth and got an overwhelming sense that he was about to fall. He became covered with goose bumps and began shivering. After a short recovery period, he was able to continue with the mission as though nothing had happened. Discussing what had happened later with fellow astronauts, he discovered that his experience wasn't uncommon. He said many astronauts have had similar experiences during EVAs where for a few seconds they experience a sensation they are falling to Earth.

While discussing his brief moment of terror, Mark also touched on his best experience as an astronaut. This took place during his first mission when the shuttle *Atlantis* carried the spacecraft *Magellan* aloft and sent it on its way towards Venus. Once *Magellan* was on its way, Mark said his duties were mostly over and that he actually had time to relax and look around. During a sleep cycle while the rest of the crew rested for reentry, shuttle commander David Walker told Mark he could remain awake and move to a position where he could watch the Earth below. Mark said that for three complete orbits (four and one-half hours) he sat in the *Atlantis* as though he was alone in space, and looked down on the Earth below—an experience that he says will live with him forever.

Out of curiosity, I asked him what kind of tool kit they carried on the shuttle to handle routine repairs and emergencies. He

said it was equivalent to 3-4 drawers of tools that most pilots have in a hangar or garage, and that any general aviation (GA) pilot would recognize what it contained. Mark said their tool kit has common things, such as ViseGrips, wrenches, pliers, Velcro, bungee cords, and lots and lots of duct tape.

### Return to Wisconsin

Upon retiring from NASA, unlike many astronauts who remain in Houston or Florida to become consultants with the NASA vendors, Mark said he wanted to return to the state he loved and where he was raised, and get back to the engineering profession he studied while at the Air Force Academy and MIT. Mark is married to the former Paula Marie Simon of Chicago, and they have three boys, Erik, Matthew, and Jonathon. Mark works for Affiliated Engineers (AE) of Madison, and among his many interests are jogging, swimming, carpentry, furniture refinishing, and farming. At AE, he works on high-end projects that need advanced environmental controls and has been helping design workspace at the Kennedy Space Center for its new space vehicles.

Since returning to Wisconsin, Mark has also been active in the Rockets for Schools program at Sheboygan, the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium, and has given his expertise to development of Spaceport Sheboygan and the Wisconsin Aerospace Authority.

Besides living in Middleton, Mark and his family have a



## Mark Lee's Challenge to Kids

Astronaut Mark Lee has issued a standing challenge to school-age kids worldwide. Mark will send a set of the patches from his four shuttle missions and an autographed picture to those who read 200 books appropriate for their grade level on science, technology, engineering, mathematics, biographies, history, geography, etc. in a six to nine month period. Kids who accept and complete the challenge should have a teacher, librarian, or their parents verify the list of books read, and include the titles and authors' names.

**Send the list to Mark in care of:**  
 Affiliated Engineers  
 5802 Research Park Blvd

**Mark's current, official NASA photo. His space suit shows the patches from the four shuttle missions on which he flew. Even when retired, NASA keeps the biographical information of its astronauts up-to-date.**



house on 17 acres near Viroqua that he built and furnished with his own hands. While an active astronaut living in Houston, he was part owner of a Mooney, and would at times fly his Mooney from Houston to Viroqua to spend several days working on his house as a way to relax. Although Mark no longer has a share of the Mooney, I asked him what he thinks of GA flying today. He told me that more than anything else, he greatly enjoyed the freedom of being able to go anywhere he wanted in his Mooney while being able to land anywhere, without the need to follow a carefully rehearsed script while scores of flight control technicians looked over his shoulder, recording and second-guessing every move.

Mark is also partial to Black Angus cattle, and for several years raised them on land he owned near Viroqua, and even raised some bulls that received top honors in competition at Platteville. Fellow astronauts gave Mark the nickname *Space Cowboy* after NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin, who was visiting the training simulator facility, noticed a detailed line drawing on a bulletin board showing Mark wearing a cowboy hat with the SAFER jet pack. Goldin told them, "I don't want a bunch of space cowboys flying around in the jet pack."

I asked Mark how he felt about the ending of the space shuttle program. (After the November 2009 mission when *Atlantis* resupplied the ISS, only five missions remain.) Mark said the shuttle was an amazing vehicle with an impressive list of accomplishments—and failures. He also said that most Americans have not lived in an era when the space shuttle didn't exist, but

that it has gotten too expensive to fly, and has a poor safety record. Mark said that the Ares/Orion rocket NASA is now planning is the next logical step to get back to the Moon, and even to Mars.

Mark is proud to be from Wisconsin, and has always attributed the values and education he received growing up in Viroqua to his success. Mark did become the astronaut he set as a goal in the third grade, and went on to make four space flights. He has traveled more than 13 million miles in space, circling the world 517 times, logging 25 hours and one minute of EVA time; and being one of the select group of astronaut technicians to perform repairs on the magnificent Hubble Space Telescope (HST) so it can keep returning spectacular images of deep space to Earth.

Not bad for someone who started in a one-room school outside of Viroqua. 🇺🇸



*Gary Dikkers was a Forward Air Controller and fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force. After retiring from the Air Force, he and his family settled in Madison. He is now with the Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation's Bureau of Aeronautics and is Wisconsin's airspace manager.*

# Aviation in the Classroom

## May help pilot population grow

By Duane Esse

What has happened to the pilot population? We hear speakers and read in publications the problems employers face in finding qualified applicants for vacant positions. We've heard for years about the graying of the pilot population. We've seen a decline in pilot numbers since its peak in the mid '70s.

What happened? A number of things... There are liability concerns from aircraft manufacturers, fixed base operators, flight instructors, and aviation maintenance technicians. Years ago, kids could go to the local airport, sit on a bench and watch aircraft activity, or help wash an airplane in exchange for a ride. That's almost an impossibility now due to airport fencing, which supposedly prevents terrorist attacks, and lawsuits in case a kid gets hurt on the airport.

At the peak of general aviation activity in the mid to late '70s, aviation and space education programs were on the rise in all levels of education from kindergarten through university levels. I had the honor and pleasure of working with middle and high school programs during that timeframe. In the mid '60s, I helped write a proposal under the Elementary Secondary Education Act, and received a three-year grant to develop and offer a high school aviation program at Onalaska High School. The program involved eight surrounding schools, and sent students to Onalaska for the classroom phase. Each of those students received 10 hours of flight instruction at the La Crosse Municipal Airport (LSE). During the three-year program, 280 students participated. The objectives of the program were to make students aware of the employment opportunities in the aviation and aerospace industries, to experience flight, and to understand the importance of the airport to the community and in their lives. Parents were heavily involved in all phases of the program.

In follow-up with students after they had graduated, I found that about 20 percent continued with their flight training. Years later, I learned that former students were employed as air traffic controllers, working

at Northwest Airlines, flying as corporate and airline pilots, working in fixed base operator repair shops. Some flew for pleasure and owned aircraft. Some of the parents even became pilots and a few purchased aircraft.

After the federal grant expired, Roland Solberg, Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) Administrator in the La Crosse area saw the value in the Onalaska program. He appropriated CESA funding to purchase a new aircraft to offer flight experience to students at participating schools. Schools purchased a share of the aircraft and paid an hourly rate for its use. The program was highly successful, with a number of schools signing on, and it continued for several years.

*Aviation/space courses are truly interdisciplinary. I have personally seen students who had underachieved for several years in school become top students once they were into an aviation/space course.*

In 1964, the Wisconsin Aerospace Committee was formed, with members coming from all levels of education, government, FAA, and industry. The committee was appointed by the state superintendent of public instruction, with the primary task to advise the state superintendent on aviation-space education. Through the years, the various state superintendents were supportive of aviation-space programs. Aviation-space education increased dramatically in Wisconsin in the late '60s, '70s, and beyond. More than 40 high schools offered aviation-space programs throughout the state, with many offering flight experience. Other educators were infusing aviation-space concepts into existing classes from kindergarten through high school.

Borghild Olson, elementary teacher and later an elementary school principal in La Crosse, was one of the early elementary educators who saw the benefits of aviation-

space education. Marilyn Peters and Donna Kauper were also early elementary teachers who were involved. Donna continues to this date. Ellen Baerman was not only an elementary aviation-space educator in Brookfield, she worked with WAHF Inductee Earl Pingel in developing and conducting university workshops to prepare educators for introducing aviation-space concepts into classes and developing and conducting standalone aviation-space courses. Ellen was also a backup in the Educator in Space Program in Wisconsin. Sharon Ryan has had an extensive community based aviation-space program in Wausau for years, with NASA and industry support.

There have been many high school avia-

tion-space programs, with each offering special emphasis. Larry Scheckel, Tomah, integrated physics; Bud Rogers, Madison LaFollette, involved aircraft construction; Mike McArdle, Madison East, developed technical school credit toward the aviation programs at the Wisconsin technical colleges offering aviation programs. Other courses were offered in places like Clintonville, Shawano, Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls, Green Bay, Chetek, Madison Memorial, three Eau Claire schools, and nine La Crosse and Coulee-region schools. Dr. Hildegard Kuse, UW-Stevens Point; and Dr. Jack Kirby, UW-Platteville, offered summer aviation-space education workshops for teachers on their respective campuses. Earl Pingel and Ellen Baerman offered programs through UW-Milwaukee, and Dr. Louise Yeazel infused aviation-space concepts into summer mathematics workshops for middle school students at UW-Madison.

Some people have opposed standalone aviation-space courses in schools, saying they are frills that we don't need. But, to quote educator Ed Colbert from the article written about him in the Fall 2008 issue of *Forward in Flight*, "...where can you find another course that involves mathematics, science, communication, history, economics, etc..." Aviation/space courses are truly interdisciplinary. I have personally seen students who had underachieved for several years in school become top students once they were into an aviation/space course. Flight experience certainly can add excitement to the learning process.

In the 1980s, the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) developed up to eight career-day programs held at larger airports around the state. Students from surrounding schools were bussed to the airport and had heard from a variety of specialists in aviation and saw a variety of aircraft. As many as 3,500 students participated at these locations. Then in the early 1990s, the Wisconsin BOA teamed up with the Wisconsin Air National Guard to develop Rockets for Schools for secondary education. The Air Guard was able to acquire Super Loki rockets from Florida and an annual launch was made on Lake Michigan shore in the Sheboygan area. Students from each congressional district in Wisconsin participated in preparation, launch, and follow up.

The Super Loki rockets are no longer launched, but the program continues with students from Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan building rockets and firing them. The program now has participation from the following: NASA, U.S. Coast Guard, Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics, state legislators, Sheboygan businesses, and the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium. Up to 500 students are involved each year. Further information is available at [www.Rockets4Schools.org/](http://www.Rockets4Schools.org/).

Another program that has shown success is employment of high school students at local airports. That has been going on for years, however, it took a big jump with the inception of the Milwaukee Aviation Careers Education (ACE) program. The state Bureau of Aeronautics initiated the program with the cooperation of the Milwaukee School System, General Mitchell International Airport, and numerous employers. Students were



While there are many programs that help introduce youth to aviation, bringing it into the classroom may be of the greatest benefit to help the pilot population grow, says Esse. Here, John Dorcey speaks to a group of junior high students about aviation history.

given meaningful jobs with various employers during the summer. Employers saw the value in the program and have continue to participate.

What do all of those aviation-space educators and programs have in common? They found a better way to make learning more meaningful. A teacher uses the wind triangle to show the effects of wind on an aircraft, flying from point A to point B, when teaching vectors in physics. Or, using the economic benefits of an airport to the local community in teaching economics.

In recent years, many of the high school aviation-space programs have been dropped by schools. There are several reasons: The teacher left and a replacement was not available to teach the course; school administrators who supported the program left, and budget reductions, which many schools face.

Losing these programs has been a big factor in the diminished pilot population. What will it take to turn around the trend? Efforts by the Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagles program, the AOPA Project Pilot mentor program, and FBOs that offer tours and speakers for schools are great efforts. Many educators, business people, pilots,

and others spend a lot of time mentoring kids and giving them rides in aircraft. They are to be commended for reaching out to help kids learn and hopefully get them thinking about the possibility of future employment in the aviation/aerospace industries.

What can you do? Encourage educators to include aviation concepts in their classes. Material is available through NASA, FAA, aviation organizations, state bureau of aeronautics agencies, and many other sources. Many aviation employees, government officials, FBOs, EAA chapters, and local pilots are all willing to participate if asked. It takes a "sparkplug"—someone to initiate the process. Contact your local school and offer to assist in arranging for speakers and aviation resources to provide this aviation expertise. If you succeed, you'll find it rewarding to see the impact it will make on the students, and feel the satisfaction in knowing you have given back to aviation.

Even before my grandson, Soren, turned one, he would stop whatever he was doing to watch an aircraft take off, land, or fly overhead. That fascination of flight can continue into adulthood and can be used to enhance learning.

## Meet a fellow WAHF member...

### Richard "Dick" Adduci

**Occupation:** Retired from General Electric Healthcare. Former field engineer and Service Manager (Medical Diagnostic Imaging Equipment: CAT Scanners, Nuclear, X-Ray, Ultrasound).

**What I enjoyed most about my job:** The technical challenges and world travel.

**In my free time I'm:** Reading, watching movies, observing the sky (amateur astronomer), photography, talking to folks in other countries via ham radio (license K9XU), trying keep up with my 16-year-old son.

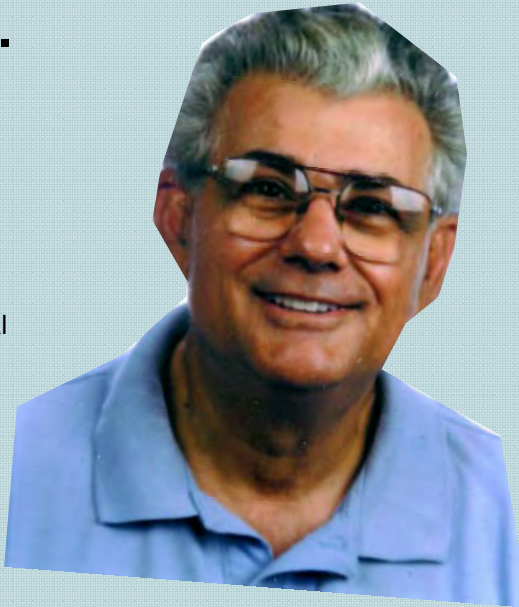
**Aviation affiliations:** EAA member, Secretary and Newsletter Editor for EAA Chapter 1177, Palmyra, 88C.

**One person from history I would like to meet:** Chuck Yeager—his record of accomplishment in aviation speaks for itself.

**Favorite airplane:** SR-51 Blackbird and Cessna 152.

**How I got interested in aviation:** I always have been and now I follow my son, who soloed in January '09.

**One thing most people don't know about me:** My educational background: BA in Economics (1983), MS in Management (1985), and MS in Astronomy (2006) ...and that I'm a great guy!



**My greatest accomplishment in life so far:** My children, Deborah, Richard, and Alex.

**One thing I want to do before I die:** See the Amazon basin before it is destroyed by civilization.

**The person I most admire:** My wife, Jacki.

**Favorite words of wisdom:** From my late father-in-law: Do you want to be right or do you want to get the job done?

**Why I became a member/supporter of the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame:**

Very few people know of the rich history of aviation that is a Wisconsin heritage. Although I am not a pilot, my son Alex is, which kindled an awareness of our state's aviation heritage. I believe in supporting an organization focused on awareness and preservation of that heritage.

## Have You Sent In Your Member Spotlight form?

All WAHF members receive a Member Spotlight form when joining or renewing. Please complete yours and return to the address below, or just answer the questions that Dick did and email them to WAHF.

Send it soon, along with a photo, so that you can be featured in a future issue of *Forward in Flight*. Then Dick can read about you! Send to:

Rose Dorcey  
Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame  
3980 Sharratt Drive  
Oshkosh WI 54901-1276

Or email to:  
[flyer@aviationhalloffamewisconsin.com](mailto:flyer@aviationhalloffamewisconsin.com)

## Looking for a speaker for your next event?

Contact WAHF so that your group can have a few laughs while learning about Wisconsin's rich aviation history. Presentation topics can be tailored to your area of interest. Call WAHF at 920-385-1483 to get in touch with a speaker in your area.



## Address Changes

Moved recently? Are you a snowbird? Please inform WAHF of your address change. Send a note to the address above.

Meet your fellow WAHF members in each issue of *Forward in Flight*.

# Boris Lugoviyer, 1909 - 2009

By Frederick Beseler

Like his family and friends, I was very much looking forward to sending Boris Lugoviyer a birthday card congratulating him on his 100th birthday on November 7, 2009.

Unfortunately, Boris passed away on Saturday, October 31. A devout member of the Jewish faith, Boris was laid to rest on Sunday, November 1.

I had interviewed Boris exactly a year earlier, to the day, with his daughter Busya translating, for a *Forward in Flight* article about Boris, "An Ally of the Great Patriotic War" (Winter 2008). It was a bright, sunny Friday morning as we talked and drank tea and enjoyed the dried ginger candies that Boris liked so much. We looked over mementoes of Boris' days as a pilot in the Russian Air Force before and during World War II. He flew a variety of airplanes including the famous IL-2 Sturmovik attack plane and saw a great deal of combat. On one mission, Boris managed to crash land his shot up and burning "Ilyusha," saving the life of his gunner. For that Boris was awarded the Order of the Red Star at the Kremlin—just one of many decorations that he earned for his service.

Boris laughed when I told him that one of my early ancestors had deserted the Russian army—for good reason, I might add—while driving Napoleon from Russia. After our interview last year, I told Boris that I was going flying that very afternoon. I asked if he would like to go along. He said with a smile, "No, I think I will sit and enjoy the sunshine—but good luck!"

One thing Boris did not want me to mention in last year's *Forward in Flight* article was that his family was virtually annihilated by the Nazis when they invaded Boris' hometown in Western Belarus. Boris was afraid that "some readers might think I am bitter about the war," he said.

At Boris' memorial service, Rabbi Saul Prombaum, spiritual leader of Con-



Boris Lugoviyer

gregation Sons of Abraham in La Crosse, related how this past summer one of Boris' grandsons came to visit Boris. One afternoon the grandson noticed Boris sitting in the sun out on the patio, deep in meditation. He asked his grandfather what he was thinking about.

Boris replied, "I am thinking about how I can be a better person!" As Rabbi Prombaum noted, Boris believed that it is never too late to improve one's self—even at 99 years old!

This past Memorial Day, Boris attended the services at the Jewish Cemetery, as he had every year since coming to America in the 1990s. This time, Boris was unable to make the walk up the slope to the flagpole where his congregation gathered to honor the war dead. He sat at the edge of the grounds, surrounded by family, and observed, his war medals catching the sun.

And so it was five months later that Boris was laid to rest in that same

cemetery. He had traveled a long trail—survived the First World War and survived many battles of the Second World War fighting the Nazi holocaust.

Despite the loss of most his family during the war, he picked up the pieces and moved on to raise a wonderful family. After his wife passed away and a son and daughter came to America, he followed and became an American citizen. Boris always sought to be a good friend, a good father, and a good citizen. By every account, he succeeded. Boris always had a smile for everyone and very often a big Russian hug and kiss—for males and females alike!

As we gathered at the Jewish cemetery I thought of the wonderful line from Boris Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*. "Nobody loves poetry like a Russian."

I asked Rabbi Prombaum if I

## High Flight

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds  
of Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-  
silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the  
tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds — and done a  
hundred things  
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and  
soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence.  
Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along,  
and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls  
of air...  
And, while with silent, lifting mind  
I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand  
and touched the face of God.*

—John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

## James P. Coughlin

James P. Coughlin, "Mr. Winneconne," age 91, passed away Saturday, November 21, 2009, with family at his side. James was born on September 10, 1918, the son of James M. Coughlin and Rose (Holtz) Coughlin. James graduated from Winneconne High School in 1937. Later in life he funded several scholarships through the Winneconne school system. For many years, he owned and operated Coughlin Corporation Real Estate and Development Company, which helped to make Winneconne what it is today.

James was an avid Wisconsin history book collector. His collection is on display at the Rose Coughlin room at the Winneconne Village Library. James was a proud and outstanding citizen of Wisconsin. His life and career stands as an example to all in public service. He always said that he was proud to be an Irish Democrat in Winneconne.

His lists of accomplishments are many and varied: Winnebago County Executive, 1977-1985; Village President of Winneconne, 1959-1995; Wisconsin League of Municipalities, Winnebago County Board, Wisconsin County Board Association, Winneconne Men's Club, Charter Member of the Winneconne Historical Society, Charter Member of the

Winneconne Chamber of Commerce, Serra Club of Oshkosh, Life Member of the Elks Club.

James is survived by two sisters, Rosemary Palmer, of Midland, Michigan and Katherine, of Winneconne; one brother, Patrick, of Appleton; thirteen nieces and nephews; and his special friends, Michael and Joan Meyer; and Marge Eid. James was preceded in death by his parents, Rose and James; and brothers, Father Martin Coughlin, Edwin, Bernard, Thomas, John; and sisters, Eileen and Marie; sister-in-laws, Julia, and Catherine "Kate"; brother-in-law, William; and a niece, Margaret Stark.

A Funeral Mass that celebrated James' life was held on Friday, November 27, 2009, at St. Mary Catholic Church, 210 Pleasant Drive, Winneconne, with Fr. Doug LeCaptain and Sharon Baker officiating. Burial was at the Winneconne Cemetery.

*A note from Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame Vice-president Michael Goc: An old friend of mine and of WAHF died last Saturday. He was James Coughlin, longtime Winnebago County political leader and history lover. Jim was the first client of New Past Press back in the early*



James Coughlin

*1980s. We became friends, published many books together, and Jim became the first person to donate money to the WAHF book project, Forward in Flight, the History of Aviation in Wisconsin. His \$1,000 donation was the first and the largest donation at the time. In terms of aviation history, Jim was chairperson of the Winnebago County Board Aviation Committee in late 1960s-70s, when Paul Poberezny was thinking about making Oshkosh and Wittman Regional Airport the home of the EAA.*

## Robert H. Eskuche

WAHF Member Robert H. "Bob" Eskuche, died on Monday, August 31, 2009, at the age of 92 years. Preceded in death by his beloved wife of 57 years Janice A. Buening. He was the father of Mark (Mary) and grandfather of Peter (Kristin) and Matthew. Great-grandfather of Ellie and Lauren. Dear brother of the late Frances Econom. Further survived by other relatives and friends.

Bob graduated in 1935 from Shorewood High School, and in 1939

from the University of Wisconsin. He served his country in the Army Air Corps in WWII. He worked for US Steel and retired after 27 years, as regional sales manager, from Alleghany Ludlum Steel Corp., (now Alleghany Technologies).

Bob's passion was flying. He flew his own plane for almost 50 years, making many friends at the fly-ins that he attended. At the age of 89, he flew solo to the Sun 'n Fun Fly-in in Florida. This

year's EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh saw him in his VW Camper Bus. He also enjoyed woodworking and outdoor sports, especially golf and skiing. His life was spent making friends due to his positive attitude, dry wit, and helping hand.

Bob will be warmly remembered in the hearts of many. A memorial service was held on Tuesday, September 8, at Trinity Village Chapel, 7300 W. Dean Rd., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with Chap-

## Kids: Enter the Wisconsin Aviation Art Contest

"Flying with the Sun" is the theme of the 2010 Wisconsin Aviation Art Contest. The contest brochure asks children age 6-17 to imagine what the skies will look like in the future as new technologies merge with traditional solar fliers and take to the air. How will we travel and play in the solar-powered skies? Give that some thought, and then grab your



favorite artist's tools and create a poster for this year's competition. State entries in each of three age groups (6-9, 10-13, and 14-17) will be judged and state winners and runners-up will be selected. Winners will receive a certificate and recognition from their state. The top three entries in each age group will be forwarded to Wash-

ington, D.C., to be judged in the national competition. Contact Karen Valley at 608-266-8166 or [Karen.Valley@dot.wi.gov](mailto:Karen.Valley@dot.wi.gov). Entries must be postmarked by January 15, 2010.

## Deke Slayton Museum Wants Aviators' Stories

The Deke Slayton Museum in Sparta, Wisconsin started a project several years ago of collecting information on aviation enthusiasts connected to Monroe County. The project is designed to encourage youth in the field of aviation and show them the broad field that is open to them in aviation careers. Kay Bender, the museum's director, is reminding people to pass along the names of Monroe County aviation enthusiasts, young and old, so that she can record their history and involvement in aviation. She reminds people that "aviation enthusiasts" is deliberately broad so that she can collect a wide-range of aviation careers and hobbies.



The museum is also collecting funds for archival binders to store the information. If you can help, please make your checks out to: MCA Binder Fund and mail them to Deke Slayton Museum, 200 West Main Street, Sparta, WI 54656.

## Gary Dikkers Wins AVweb Photo of the Week Contest

A timeless photo of some P-51 Mustangs parked in the warbird section at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2009 has earned Gary Dikkers an AVweb photo of the week cap.

Dikkers is a longtime WAHF supporter and frequent contributor to *Forward in Flight*, so you're probably not surprised to see that his excellent photography skills earned him the win. He said he took the photo as he was walking around the Warbirds area taking photos at the end of the day. The award came in November during a special veterans-themed edition of Photo of the Week as AVweb paid salute to the men and women of aviation who serve their countries. View it online at [www.AVweb.com/newspics/potw/large/potw01\\_1545.jpg](http://www.AVweb.com/newspics/potw/large/potw01_1545.jpg).



## 55th Wisconsin Aviation Conference May 3-5, 2010

The 55th Annual Wisconsin Aviation Conference will be held at the Ramada Convention Center in Waukesha from May 3-5, 2010. The conference committee is planning an informative



conference of interest to all areas of the aviation community, from private pilots and corporate flight departments to general aviation and air carrier airports with airport management and commissioners, fixed base operators, and other aviation service providers. "The conference planning committee is committed to developing a quality conference," said John Reed, president of the Wisconsin Airport Management (WAMA), one of the event's co-hosts along with the Wisconsin Aviation Trades Association and the Wisconsin Business Aviation Association. The conference will kick off Monday, May 3, with two fun-filled events, including golf or a round of sporting clays.

To learn more, email Pete Drahn at [daredem@verizon.net](mailto:daredem@verizon.net). Registration forms and more conference information is available on the WAMA website at [www.WIAMA.org](http://www.WIAMA.org).

## 17th Annual Wisconsin Light Aviation Safety Seminar

The 17th annual Wisconsin Light Aviation Safety Seminar has moved from Wisconsin Rapids to the EAA AirVenture Museum in Oshkosh for 2010. Set to take place on March 13, the event is free and runs from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. All sessions break for door prize drawings and lunch is available on-site at a modest cost. Contact Steve Krueger at 715-536-8828 for more information.



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## Magnificent Desolation

### By Buzz Aldrin

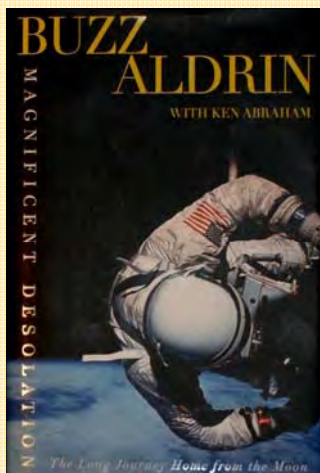
Reviewed by Tom Thomas

After meeting Buzz Aldrin at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in 2008, I'd wanted to look into Buzz's most recent book. My Aunt Frances (Tommy) Conners, a fellow WAHF member who lives in Huntsville, Alabama, had taken me to the Space Center's museum that day. She recently sent me Buzz's book, *Magnificent Desolation*. Cutting to the chase, if you're interested in the space program, buy the book and read it—you won't be disappointed.

Few people recall that Buzz Aldrin worked with Jim Lovell, a Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame inductee, on Gemini 12. In the book, Buzz refers to his Gemini days and how he was ultimately selected for our first moon shot. The first three chapters give specific details about his background and how he got into the space program. After achieving several great feats, culminating with landing on the moon, he returned to a life that was much less demanding professionally, but in some ways, much more demanding on his personal life.

The ups-and-downs during the years that followed his moonwalk make up the bulk of the book. It is filled with messages for all readers and what makes them interesting is they could be said to be "moon based". One interesting tidbit about Buzz's life is that his mother's maiden name was "Moon". Read the book and see how this influenced his life, starting with Gemini 12.

Buzz Aldrin obtained a PhD from MIT, his doctoral thesis covering the subject of orbital rendezvous. He is an intelligent man who overcame great scientific, physical, and mental challenges. *Magnificent Desolation* shows you how he did it. It's a good read.



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### Enjoyed Mitscher Article

I always look forward to receiving my quarterly issue of *Forward in Flight*. The Summer 2009 issue had an interesting article about Admiral Marc Mitscher. Many naval aviators thought of him as a pilot's admiral. He had been a naval aviator since the beginning of his naval career. He understood a pilot's mind and needs. What makes this article hit home for me is that my late father, Fritz E. Wolf, served under him when he commanded TF 58.

My father joined the Navy in 1939 to become a naval aviator. After receiving his Wings of Gold in 1940 he was assigned to Air Group 3 aboard the USS Saratoga as a Dive Bomber pilot. In the summer of 1941, he resigned his commission to volunteer for duty in China with the American Volunteer Group, better known as the Flying Tigers. After his tour with the AVG, he returned to his home, got married, and re-enlisted into the Navy. His first assignment was to train fighter pilots. After this, he returned to the Pacific in late 1944. He and his team were assigned to the USS Hornet as replacement pilots.

On February 1, 1945, Lt. Commander Fritz E. Wolf was transferred from the USS Hornet (VF-11 Sundowners) to the USS Yorktown to command a newly formed squadron VBF-3. (The Hornet and the Yorktown were part of TF58.) VBF squadrons were established in early 1945 because so many F6F Hellcats were being sent to the Pacific. The administrative requirements of dealing with six dozen aircraft and 100 or more pilots finally led to the establishment of these fighter-bomber squadrons. The Navy divided VD-3 into two squadrons. One was VF-3, commanded by Lt. Commander E.H. Bayers, USN, and the other, VBF-3, commanded by Lt. Commander Fritz E. Wolf, USNR.

VBF-3 was established on 1 February 1945 by the commanding officer of the USS Yorktown in accordance with a secret dispatch by the Navy Department. Within a short time after establishment of VBF-3, the squadron shoved off for the Ulitihi Lagoon to join up with other battle groups that were preparing to attack Mainland Japan and to give support to the invasion of Iwo Jima.

On 16 February 1945, the pilots of 2-A Flight from the USS Yorktown were the first Navy fighter pilots to attack and bomb mainland Japan. Flight 1-A was launched earlier but never made it to the target because of bad weather. Lt. Commander Fritz E. Wolf was the leader of 2-A Flight. At the end of the attack, he had officially shot down his fifth plane, making him an Ace. For his courage and airmanship, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The squadron was given a Presidential Unit Citation.

*"...We were shooting rockets within 100 feet and it got pretty dangerous..."*

The following is taken from a newspaper clipping dated 4 March 1945, "Airplanes from the famous carrier (Fighting Lady) shot down 62 Japanese aircraft in 2-1/2 days of attacks upon Tokyo without the loss of a single pilot. Lt. Commander Fritz E. Wolf, skipper of VBF-3 from Shawano, Wisconsin, said the Japanese had a full-size plastic dummy of a B-29 at the Tsukuba Airfield. He said the plastic B-29 was apparently used for bombing practice. A similar dummy was seen in Formosa. Wolf also told of seeing a tony fighter drop a dummy in a parachute and a black box after a head-on attack. The dummy was intended to deceive his opponent but the black box was a mystery. 'Japanese tactics are very poor,' Wolf said. 'Although they had a number of the newest type fighters, they were the dumbest pilots I have ever run into and I have met some dumb ones as well as some very good ones in China. We divide Jap fliers into students and instructors. Occasionally you run into an instructor. That's the way it's been all along.'"

After the 2-1/2 day attack on Japan, the Yorktown's battle group sailed back to Iwo Jima to give support to the Marines landing on the island. On the 20th and 22nd of February, VBF-3 joined in direct support of missions over Iwo. Wolf said, "The Marines were down below being held back by concrete pill boxes and we were shooting rockets within 100 feet and it got pretty dangerous. Thank God that all went well with no Marines



Fritz Wolf

being killed by friendly fire."

After the last support mission, the Yorktown sailed back to Japan to make more attacks. Once again Lt. Commander Wolf led additional attacks against the Tsukuba Airfield. They rocketed hangars and parked aircraft, and strafed extensively. After a short time back in Japanese waters other missions were cancelled and the fleet withdrew. Yorktown returned to Ulitihi Lagoon, thus ending the brief tour for VBF-3. Lt. Commander Wolf transferred to the USS Lexington for his return to the States. He ended the war at Brown Field, Chula Vista, California, as Executive Officer. When it was all said and done, Fritz Wolf officially shot down five enemy aircraft with three probables.

—Rick Wolf  
Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

I found the article "Father of Naval Aviation" by Gary Dikkers [Summer 2009 *Forward in Flight*] very informative and it brought back memories of an event that I have related many times. When I was in the U.S. Navy, my group was the honor guard when Admiral Mitscher was laid to rest at Arlington Cemetery in 1947. For an 18 year old, it was a very impressive and memorable event.

—Frank B. Baker  
Madison, Wisconsin

### From WAHF Facebook Page...

Good articles in the Fall issue of *Forward in Flight*. The DC-3 and Air Force Academy articles...very interesting! Imagine if the Air Force Academy would've ended up in Stevens Point!

—Pete Jacoby  
Stevens Point

## Freedom Honor Flights

On June 20 of this year I went to Washington D.C. on the Freedom Honor Flight to visit the World War II War Memorial with a World War II vet. I accompanied Mr. Louie Lautz, who was a Navy fighter pilot that flew Hellcats (F6Fs) as a Night Fighter. Louie is a personal friend of our family. It was an honor to go with him. We flew out of La Crosse on a chartered Sun Country airplane. The cost of the one day flight was \$500 for me (as a guardian) but all vets went for free through donations contributed by many people in western Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota.

We visited the WWII Memorial, the Viet Nam Wall, the Korean War Memorial, and the Iwo Jima Memorial, and drove by the new Air Force Memorial. Flights came in that day from Pennsylvania, Ohio, California, and Minnesota, and everyone was met by Senator Bob Dole at the WWII site. What a great day it was! Upon returning to La Crosse we did a fly-by, not normal for civilian aircraft. Around 10:30 p.m. we exited the aircraft and I met Louie's family, and then I had to retire—totally bushed.

Sincerely,

Bert Sasse, La Crosse



(l-r) Louie Lautz with Bert Sasse.

Bert Sasse photo

*Editor's Note: Freedom Honor Flight is a La Crosse-based organization formed in April 2008. Its goal is simple: to fly every World War II veteran who is able and willing to Washington D.C. to visit their memorial before veterans of that war pass away. The La Crosse group is an affiliate of the national group, Honor Flight Network, which began flying with commercial charter aircraft in 2006 from Dayton, Ohio. There are now about 40 cities around the country from which these flights originate. Learn more about the program at [www.FreedomHonorFlight.org](http://www.FreedomHonorFlight.org) and [http://WWIIMemorial.typepad.com/my\\_weblog/2009/06/20/index.html](http://WWIIMemorial.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/06/20/index.html).*

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Walter Watson			

—Thanks for coming on board!

**Congratulations** to 1998 WAHF Inductee George Cudahy, who received the FAA's prestigious Wright Brothers Master Pilot award in October. The award recognizes pilots who have contributed to and maintained safe flight operations for 50 or more consecutive years of piloting aircraft. A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Cudahy received a commission as Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force and has flown the F-86 Sabre and F-102 Delta Dagger, the F-10 Delta Dart, North American F-100 Super Sabre, Lockheed's T-33 Shooting Star, and the F-4 Phantom II. He flew 186 combat missions over Laos and 20 over North Vietnam during his tour in South East Asia. Today, Cudahy is president and CEO of American Eagle Brick in New Mexico, a company he founded in 1990.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to our WAHF members and friends.** Looking for a great gift? Three women from Wisconsin aviation history are included on Powder Puff Pilot's Page-A-Day 2010 desk calendar: Pinky Pinckert, Libby Parod, and Jean Hauser. Order at [www.PowderPuffPilot.com](http://www.PowderPuffPilot.com) or call 720-256-3442. (A subscription to *Forward in Flight* also makes a great gift!)



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