

# COMBAT

## AIR MUSEUM

June 2019 | July 2019 | Vol.35, No. 3

### Seaman High School History Day Presentations

By Dennis Smirl

The April membership luncheon featured video presentations from Seaman High School history students. Seaman High School history teachers Susan Sittenauer and Nate McAlister accompanied the students. Chairman Gene Howerter informed the audience that Seaman High School students have been bringing their History Day competition presentations to April luncheons at CAM since 2000. Susan Sittenauer has been there for twenty years, and Nate McAlister is on his second year, ensuring the continuity of this worthwhile program into the coming decades.

All the Seaman High School teams competed at Washburn's Kansas History Day on April 27th. The competition is open to entries from all middle and high schools in Kansas. Two winners are selected in each history category, and will then be eligible to compete at the National History Day.

Photo by Kilo Hobbs



This event will be held in June at the University of Maryland in College Park, just outside Washington, D. C.

**Katelyn Glenn and Alyson Shchi** were our first presenters. Their video enlightened the group on "The Angels of Bataan," an almost forgotten part of World War II history. The video narrative began with the surprise attack by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, followed by attacks on the Philippine Islands the next day. Japan's invasion followed a bombing campaign that caught U. S. forces unprepared.

The nurses who came to be known as "The Angels of Bataan" were members of the United States Army Nurse Corps and the United States Navy Nurse Corps. These women did not evacuate since



continued on page 10



INSIDE

**2** From the Chairman's Desk  
Gene Howerter

**3** Museum Notes  
Kevin Drawlow

**4** New Members | In Memorium

**5** In the Hangar: The J34 Engine  
Kevin Drawlow

**7** Young Aviators / Pancake Feed

**8** Pilot's Notes: Top Gun  
Reviewed by Chuck Watson

**12** Volunteer Spotlight

PLANE TALK



## From the Chairman's Desk

By Gene Howerter,  
Chairman, Board of Directors



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Stu Entz - Ted Nolde  
Bill Stumpff - Dick Trupp  
-Mike Welch-

### Museum Hours

**January 2 - February 28/29**

Mon. - Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.  
Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

**March 1 - December 31**

Mon. - Sat. 9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.  
Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.  
Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

Closed

New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

Newsletter Layout & Design  
Nels Anderson

Plane Talk, the official newsletter  
of the Combat Air Museum  
of Topeka, Kansas,  
is published bi-monthly.  
We welcome your comments.

Your membership is  
important to us.  
Join the  
**COMBAT AIR MUSEUM.**

All of us here at the Combat Air Museum have had a very busy early spring season. For many years my heart's desire has been to build a new vestibule at our north entrance. This would make a very attractive addition to our Bob Dole Education Center. One of the major issues which kept us from building this addition was the cost of the concrete porch and walkway work which needed to be done before construction of the structure. The cost of having this work done by contractors was more than the Museum could afford. In late spring, Museum board member and structural engineer Ted Nolde designed the vestibule and porch, including proper ADA-compliant switchback wheel chair landings and walkways. After Ted completed the design, I couldn't express my gratitude enough for the many talented individuals who showed up with shovels, lumber and tools to pave the way for the concrete work, no pun intended. When they finished, the porch looked as if professionals had done it. You will need to come and see for yourselves!

We did not want to start the construction of the vestibule

until after our annual Celebrity Pancake Feed. Then it was time to begin what I always called the "room built around a door." Several years ago, a local hospital asked us if we would like to have a free door. It turned out to be identical to those which were used in the construction of the education center. City Glass and Mirror installed the door and told me it would cost about \$3000 if purchased today. Again, if we would have had to purchase the door the project could not have taken place. So Ted designed the vestibule to incorporate the door as the entire front facade for the room, which is in fact a beautiful door. It was our plan to complete the construction in about a week; however, rain interfered with the plan and it took a bit longer. We will hold a brief ceremony to celebrate the grand opening of the vestibule at the membership luncheon on Monday, June 10. I would like to thank all of the great volunteers and professionals who lent a hand to make this addition to the Museum possible. You will find a list of the companies who donated materials, supplies and time listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

# Museum Notes

By Kevin Drewelow

## Boeing CH-47D Chinook:



The Combat Air Museum is closer to adding a Boeing CH-47D Chinook. Gary Naylor, Danny San Romani and Kevin Drewelow traveled to Army Aviation Support Facility Olathe, home of Bravo Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, United States Army Reserve. There they met with members of Bravo Company and Jason Casto, owner of Casto Trucking LLC, Meriden, Kansas. Mr. Casto assessed the Chinook, serial number 85-24346, and later provided his estimate of \$1500 to load and deliver the Chinook to CAM. Museum board members accepted his bid and Bravo Company will prepare the Chinook for transportation. It will take time to fit 346 into Bravo Company's maintenance schedule, as it will to complete the transfer process through the Army Reserve and the General Services Administration. Mr. Charles Scott of the Topeka Federal Surplus Property office is assisting CAM with this process. The Museum is seeking donations to cover the cost of moving the Chinook; as *Plane Talk* went to press we had received \$1290 towards the cost of transportation. If you would like to help defray the Chinook's moving expense, please visit the Museum's Facebook page or website to donate online or mail a check to the Combat Air Museum.

We continue to research the history of this particular Chinook, but we know it has the distinction of having served in combat in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Boeing Vertol built this helicopter as a CH-47C in 1967 and sent it straight to Vietnam. In 1985, Boeing upgraded it to a D-model and issued its current serial number, 85-24346. 346 went on to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan before its flying days and Army career ended in 2014, the Army



choosing not to upgrade it to the F-model standard. 346 has a remarkable service history and its service will continue at the Museum as it informs the public and honors veterans from three conflicts. [Correction: in the February-March issue of *Plane Talk* we incorrectly referred to this helicopter as a MH-47D, the special operations version of the Chinook; it is actually a CH-47D.]

## Washburn Tech<sup>and</sup> the Weasel



**Washburn Tech students work wonders on our Weasel:** Last January, students and instructors from Washburn Institute of Technology's automotive collision repair class took our World War II vintage M29 "Weasel" cargo carrier to their shop to clean, repair and repaint the small, tracked vehicle. They completed their work and returned the Weasel in mid-May. We didn't recognize it when they turned into the Museum parking lot! The students took great care in masking items as needed and even restored the various data plates and placards. Eric Showalter and Emiliano Arzate, technical instructors at Washburn Tech, led the team of students throughout the project and delivered the Weasel to CAM. We only need to add markings and insignia to complete the job. The Washburn Tech students transformed an overlooked and rough vehicle into an exemplary exhibit! The Combat Air Museum is grateful to the students and staff of the Washburn Institute of Technology and we are fortunate to enjoy their support. The Weasel is now displayed in hangar 604 in front of the Beech RU-8D's right wing.

## New & Renewing Members

NEW

Jeremy Anschutz & family  
Bridget Campbell & family  
Jim Coen & family  
Leon Dultmeier  
Beverly Foster & family  
Randall Gregory & family  
Thomas Gutierrez & family  
Michael & Carol Martin

Justin Nusz & family  
Gayle Smith & family  
Jessica Romesburg & family  
Robert Runion  
Joe & Peggy Turner  
Daryl Weibel & family

RENEWING

David & Lucinda Bainum  
Bruce Baker  
David Baker  
Gary Bender  
James & Mary Frances Braum  
Marty Braum & family  
Hector Camacho & family  
Allen Corzine  
Michael & Tammie DeBernardin  
Mark Fewell & family  
Tom & Diane Gorrell  
Jane Holley  
Philip Hotzel

Col. Paul Idol & family  
Mike & Karen Madden  
Trevor Michaelis & family  
John & Rita Moyer  
MSgt. Gary Naylor (Ret.) & family  
Bill & Toni Newman  
Ted & Sharon Nolde  
John Plumb  
Danny San Romani  
Tom & Carole Rost  
Chris Rundel & family  
Darrell Schmitz

## In Memoriam

**Tom Witty, Jr.**

March 13, 1932 – April 11, 2019

CAM #2903



**Tom Witty** built many of the exhibits visitors enjoy at the Combat Air Museum. In the August-September 2009 issue of *Plane Talk*, CAM Curator Emeritus Danny San Romani said of Tom, "Putting a few hundred man-hours into one exhibit was not uncommon at all for Tom, and the payoff is quite evident in the quality of the exhibits he has built." Tom spent 34 years as an archeologist; he was named the first Kansas State Archeologist in 1960. He joined CAM in 1993, just before he retired. He began building exhibits for CAM in 2002 and created over 30 exhibits before he moved to Lincoln, Nebraska in 2009.



Learn more about Tom and his methods of creating his exhibits in the full article at <http://www.combatairmuseum.org/newsletter/images/2009/PlaneTalk%20AugSept09.pdf>

## Visitors



**In March, 1232 people from 23 states.**

**In April, 1337 people from 37 states.**

1232 people from 23 states, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Russia and Switzerland visited the Combat Air Museum in March.  
In April, 1,337 visitors from 37 states, Canada, Ecuador, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland and the United Kingdom visited your Museum.

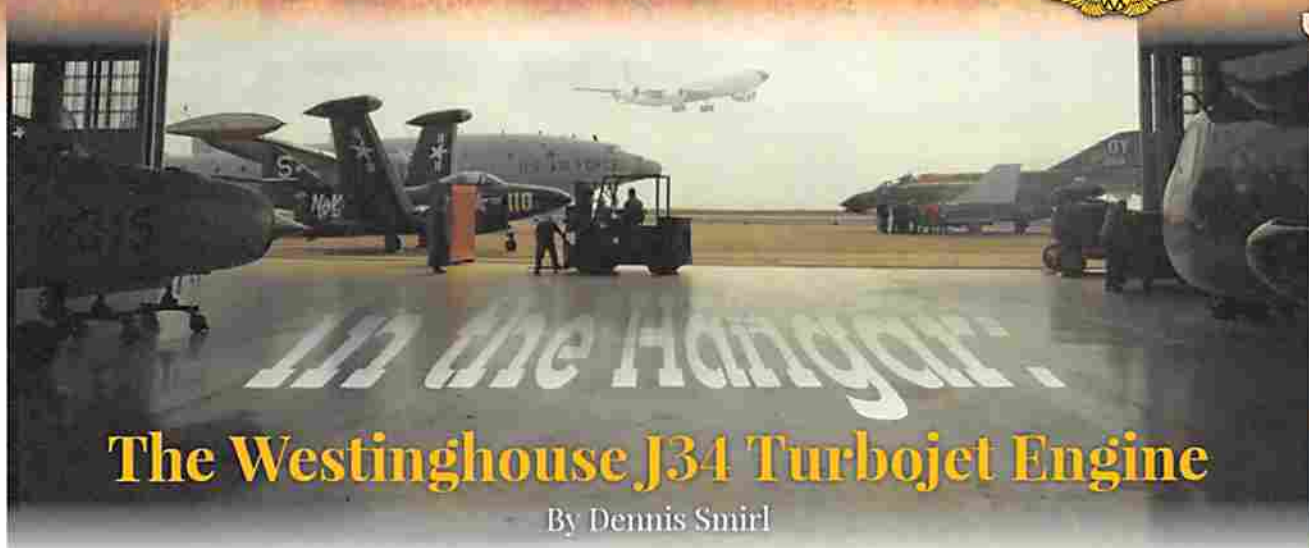


Photo by Nels Anderson

## The Westinghouse J34 Turbojet Engine

By Dennis Smirl

One of the real treasures in the Combat Air Museum's collection is its Westinghouse J34 turbojet engine. Displayed beside the Douglas F3D/F-10 Skyknight and partially cut away to reveal some of its internal parts, it is a reminder of the early days of American jet-powered aviation.

The J34 was a true success story when it was used to power two of the great airplanes of the Korean War, the McDonnell F-2H Banshee and the Douglas F3D Skyknight.

The Banshee was in service during the same period as the Museum's Grumman F9F Panther. Both aircraft flew from carriers, dropping bombs and napalm and strafing the Communist troops pushing down the Korean Peninsula.

The F3D, designed as a radar-equipped night fighter, shadowed and protected our Boeing B-29 Superfortresses as they conducted nocturnal bombing raids on North Korean targets. Powered by a pair of J34s, the Skyknight had an odd quirk. Lightly loaded, it sat level

when parked, but a full load of fuel and ordnance compressed the aircraft's main landing gear struts, resulting in a tail-low stance that



Photo by Dennis Smirl

pointed the exhaust pipes at the ground or carrier deck immediately behind.

This was not a great idea in 1948 when the Navy conducted F3D carrier qualification trials; the Skyknight's super-heated exhaust quickly set fire to the wooden-planked deck! Fifteen years later, Skyknights were refitted for electronic warfare, re-designated as EF-10s and sent to war in Vietnam. Due to high temperatures, extreme humidity and anemic thrust, the heavy EF-10s required all of the runway Da Nang had to offer, including the over-runs!

The EF-10s would trundle out to the last inch of the over-run, turn into the wind and sit for a while, brakes locked and throttles to the maximum. Oddly, the J34s would spool up to 103% revolutions per minute if allowed a bit of time to heat the engines to their limits. With the exhaust pointing at the asphalt overrun for an extended time, the pavement would melt and occasionally catch fire.

Those were the success stories, but the J34 had a dark side. The Douglas X-3 Stiletto was a notable disappointment. The Stiletto was designed to collect data at speeds between Mach 1.5 and Mach 2, but the pair of afterburning J34s could only get the X-3 to a maximum of .9 Mach in level flight. Despite its power handicap, the X-3 provided some useful data, especially for the Lockheed F-104 and its tiny wings, and it survived to spend its retirement in the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Dayton, Ohio.

continued from page 3

## Museum Notes

### New Vestibule at Hangar 602



Photos by Dave Murray

Thanks to members of the Museum's Capital Projects Committee and the generosity of several local businesses, hangar 602 now features a vestibule at the north entrance to the Bob Dole Education Center.. Ted Nolde, a member of the Museum's board of directors, spent valuable time designing this addition with input from the Museum's Capital Projects committee.

Many of you have seen this project progress from the initial demolition and excavation to the pouring of the new concrete wheelchair accessible ramp and elevated pad. Now, despite the deluge that plagued us in mid-May, the vestibule is complete. Thanks to the leadership, vision and expertise of Museum member Charlie Reichenberger (see Mike Welch's feature on Charlie elsewhere in this issue), the vestibule structure went up quickly. Volunteers then installed wiring, lights, switches, outlets, insulation and siding and painted the new addition. Technicians from City Glass expertly installed and glazed the exterior door and frame that has been stored in the Museum's mower shed for decades, a match to the doors inside the conference room. Lastly, an expert team from Gardner Roofing installed the metal covering on top of the structure.

The vestibule is wired to accommodate an electric sliding door should we decide to install one. This addition will improve access and comfort for visitors and eliminate the outer door opening and slamming during windy days. This project would have been impossible if the Museum had to contract all of the labor and materials. The knowledge, expertise and professional skills of several Museum volunteers saved us a lot of money, as did the labor contribution of many more CAM members. The Museum certainly benefitted from the benevolence of the

following local contractors and suppliers who readily supported this project: BRB Contractors, Inc.; City Glass & Mirror, Inc.; Gardner Roofing, Inc.; The Home Depot; Kansas Sand and Concrete; Lesser Electric, Inc.; Lowe's; and McCray Lumber and Millwork. CAM is fortunate to have friends like these. Stop by the Museum soon to see the new addition for yourself!

### Scout Aviation Merit Badge



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

**Scouts earn Aviation merit badge at CAM:** Eight Scouts earned their Aviation merit badge during an overnight stay at the Combat Air Museum in late March. Scoutmaster Pete Lee of Troop 262, Lee's Summit, Missouri, brought 15 scouts and some adult leaders to CAM on a chilly weekend; it was a long weekend as a lot of time and work goes into achieving this merit badge, but the boys enjoyed their time at the Museum. Although only eight of the scouts were seeking the badge, all enjoyed the activities, including tours of the Forbes air traffic control tower and Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority Fire and Police Department. The scouts flew the Museum's flight simulator, created and flew foam plate gliders and toured the museum. They enjoyed a movie before sleeping in the Sikorsky CH-53 Sea Stallion. The next morning, all eight candidates successfully passed their knowledge review with CAM Director and Aviation merit badge counselor Kevin Drewelow.

## Young Aviators Classes Take Off at CAM



Photo by Kevin Drevilow

School is out, summer approaches and the Combat Air Museum has already graduated its first Young Aviators class of 2019!

These prospective pilots split their time between the classroom, the Museum and on trips to nearby military aviation units, the Topeka Regional Airport air traffic control tower and the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority Police and Fire Department.

In the classroom, the students learn about aviation history, the forces of flight, aerial navigation, meteorology and the phonetic alphabet. They tour the Museum and spend time in the flight simulator. On field trips to the Museum's Kansas National Guard neighbors, the 190<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling

Wing and 108<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, the children learn about the missions of the units and go aboard a Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker and a Sikorsky UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter.

Young Aviators classes are open to students between the ages of 9 and 13 and the cost is \$50 per student. Parents are encouraged to attend and there is no fee. These classes are quite popular and the 20 seats fill up fast, but space is still available in the remaining two classes to be held July 8-11 and July 29-August 1.

For more information, contact the Museum's office manager between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at 785.862.3303 or visit <http://www.combatairmuseum.org/education.html>

## Combat Air Museum 2019 Celebrity Pancake Feed

Over 500 people took advantage of good weather to attend the Combat Air Museum's Celebrity Pancake Feed on April 27. The event was extremely successful thanks to local celebrities and especially Bob Carmichael of Perkins Restaurant and Bakery; he provided on the job training and mentoring to our celebrities, listed in the order of their appearance:



Photos by Kilo Hobbs



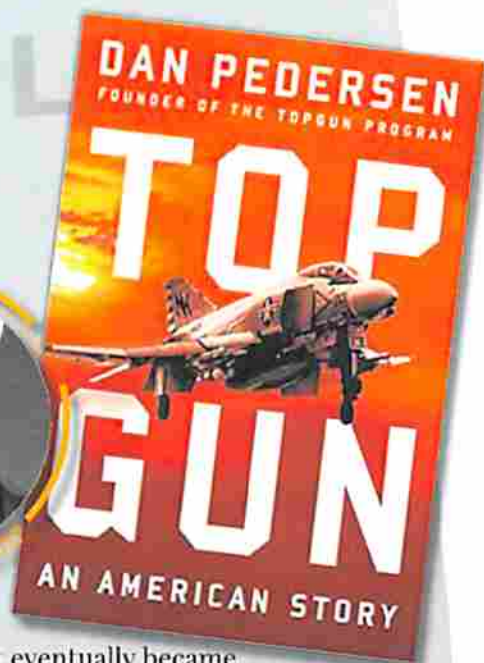
**Herman Jones**, Superintendent, Kansas Highway Patrol; **Ken Corbet**, Kansas House of Representatives, District 54; **Dr. Jerry Farley**, President, Washburn University; **Mike Bell**, Vice President of Sales, Visit Topeka; **Steve Watkins**, US House of Representatives, 2nd District of Kansas; **Bill Cochran**, Chief, Topeka Police Department; **Brett Oetting**, President, Visit Topeka; **Larry Mah**, Treasurer, Shawnee County; **Kevin Cook**, Shawnee County Commissioner, District 2; **Derek Schmidt**, Kansas Attorney General; **Mike Kagay**, Shawnee County District Attorney; **Bob Archer**, Shawnee County Commissioner, District 3; **John Nave**, Kansas AFL-CIO; **Chris Fisher**, WIBW-TV; **Brenda Dietrich**, Kansas House of Representatives, District 52; **Major Joe Blubaugh**, 190<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard; **Lamar Hunt, Jr.**, Owner, Topeka Pilots Hockey Club; **Simon Watson**, General Manager and Head Coach, Topeka Pilots Hockey Club; **Ted Ensley**, former Shawnee County Commissioner; **Jace Mills**, KSNT-TV.

## Pilot's Notes: A Book Review

PILOT'S NOTES  
GENERAL**"TOPGUN:  
An American Story"**

by Dan Pedersen

Reviewed by Chuck Watson



This summer's must-read aviation title tells the definitive story of how the US Navy's Fighter Weapons School began, as told by the man who formed and led it. Retired Navy Captain Dan Pedersen learned the fighter business during the early days of carrier jet operations flying F3H Demons, F4D Skyrajs and early F4 Phantoms, the latter on combat operations in Vietnam.

His first person accounts of the dangers involved are mixed in with pleasant personal memories of a naval aviator's life during those formative years. His accounts of pilots' illegal and unauthorized secret dogfight sessions that predated the Navy's realization of their need are both humorous and exciting. Like most pilots from the early Vietnam years, Pedersen was appalled at the Navy's lack of serious training for air-to-air combat; after the Aull report shook some sense into the Navy's brass, he received a rare opportunity as a junior officer to write the syllabus, pick the first seven instructors

and start what eventually became known as Topgun. [Editor's note: the Navy used one word; Paramount Pictures used two words to title their famous movie.]

For an institution that went on to such fame and importance, the Topgun school started with a hijacked small trailer, borrowed aircraft, lots of roadblocks and little expectation of success. When the early trainees started trickling back to the fleet, Navy kill ratios went from abysmal to outstanding and Topgun became a showcase for Navy air superiority. Pedersen follows Topgun's history from its early days through succeeding commanders, politics and, of course, the Hollywood treatment that gave the program worldwide fame.

Pedersen has written a book that is informative but enjoyable and hard to put down. "Topgun: An American Story" will greatly impress any military aviation enthusiast.



## MISSION STATEMENT and GOALS of the COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

"Through the efforts of dedicated friends and volunteers, our mission is to provide a center for education and for the preservation of military aircraft and artifacts by showing their importance to the world today."



# 2019

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

### June

- 3-6—Young Aviators Class
- 10—Membership Luncheon

### July

- 8-11—Young Aviators Class
- 29-Aug 1—Young Aviators Class

### August

- 12—Membership Luncheon

### September

- 28—Winged Foot Run
- 5K/10K and 4K Walk

### October

- 5—Girls in Aviation Day
- 14—Membership Luncheon

### November

- 3—Daylight Savings time ends
- 28—Thanksgiving, Museum closed

### December

- 9—Membership Luncheon
- 25—Christmas, Museum closed

Continued from page 7

Finally I would like to thank all of those volunteers who helped make this year's Celebrity Pancake Feed fundraiser a success. As it was a beautiful day, there were many other events and activities taking place in our community which decreased our attendance accordingly. You will also see more about this event in another section of *Plane Talk*.



Photo by Nels Anderson

We are always looking for more volunteers at the Combat Air Museum. I would like to thank all of you who signed up as members at the Pancake Feed or in our gift shop over the past few weeks. Several people who expressed an interest in becoming volunteers have been through training; thank you for your support. Don't forget to tell a friend about our Young Aviators summer classes. Call the museum at (785)862-3303 for more information.

We hope to see you at the Museum soon and have a great summer!

*Gene*

**Fix-It-Friday  
Volunteer**



## Museum Wish List

Thanks to Karen Waller  
for the brand new  
shop vacuum cleaner!!

Thanks!



continued from page 1

## The nurses who came to be known as “The Angels of Bataan”

transportation was not available. As the Japanese army pushed forward, the women moved to the island of Corregidor. During the Battle of Corregidor, the nurses served in the hospital and wards in the underground tunnels connected to the Malinta Tunnel. Eventually, however, Corregidor fell; the Japanese captured almost all of the nurses and transferred them to Manila in May of 1942.

The video presentation covered some of events and hardships the nurses endured during their captivity, most of whom were imprisoned under

brutal conditions in Santo Thomas internment camp in Manila. Their eventual release came on February 3, 1945 when Allied forces drove the Japanese from the Philippines. The video included several excellent excerpts from interviews with these “Angels of Bataan,” adding texture to the overall presentation. Alyson and Katelyn’s presentation took second place in the “Senior Group Documentary” category in the Kansas History Day Contest, so these two ladies will go on to compete at the national level.



## It began with warnings from the National Weather Service



**Josh Duncan was our second presenter.** He produced a very informative video on the events surrounding Hurricane Katrina. As the event was closer to present day than World War II, the quality of the video included in Josh Duncan’s presentation was excellent. It began with warnings from the National Weather Service, and scenes of evacuation as it became obvious that the storm was going to make landfall directly over New Orleans, Louisiana. His video presentation continued with scenes of the storm and its destructive power, and then went into the aftermath of the devastation. He finished with interviews of people who had

survived the storm and others who were making plans for rebuilding New Orleans and improving the infrastructure so that future storms will not result in such a widespread catastrophe. Josh took first place in the “Senior Individual Documentary” category at the Kansas History Day Contest and will travel with Alyson and Katelyn to Maryland in June to compete in the National History Day Contest.

Afterwards, our members had many excellent questions for the students and offered some suggestions for minor improvements on each presentation.

continued from page 5

## Another significant failure using the J34

Another underachieving oddity was the Convair XF2Y Sea Dart. A flying boat with two J34 engines, it was to be a supersonic fighter for the U.S. Navy. The wind tunnel data said the airframe was good for Mach 1 plus, but the feeble J34s just couldn't get the job done.

The McDonnell XF-85 Goblin was even stranger. Designed with



folding wings so it could be stored in one of the bomb bays of a massive Convair B-36 Peacemaker bomber, the tiny XF-85 was powered by yet another J34. The aircraft was so small that the pilot sat only inches from the engine, and the floor of the cockpit was a convex structure curved to fit right over the engine. The XF-85 program had several launches, and some interesting performance data (because it was a very small airplane with lots of thrust), but multiple attempts to retrieve the aircraft in flight met with frustration and failure. The test flights took place over Edwards Air Force Base in California and the Goblins made safe landings on the lake bed. Wisely, the Air Force cancelled the program and the XF-85s became museum displays.

The McDonnell F-88 Voodoo

used two J34s in each of the two test aircraft. Westinghouse could provide engines but they could not, or would not, provide afterburners. McAir, a division of McDonnell, built their own afterburners for the F-88, but the aircraft were only useful as test items. The program gave birth to the F-101 series, but wisely, McDonnell built the F-101s with Pratt & Whitney J57 engines.

Another significant failure using the J34 was the Lockheed F-90 penetration fighter. The aircraft was designed to escort B-36s on long range missions. The two test items were big airplanes with lots of room for fuel, and weighed 29,000 pounds fully loaded. With its two J34s combining to produce a total of only 6,000 pounds of thrust, performance was undesirable. On the first flight,



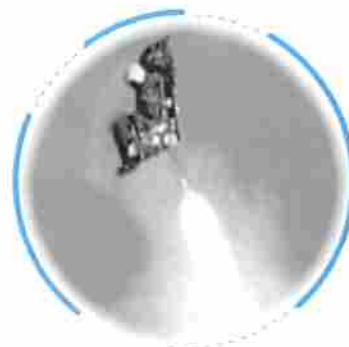
the XF-90 was so underpowered that it flew for several miles in ground effect before it burned enough fuel to lighten the aircraft enough to climb. All subsequent XF-90 flights used small solid fuel rockets - RATO (Rocket Assisted Takeoff) - to augment the J34s on departure.

Finally, the Chance Vought XF7U-1 Cutlass was an extremely unsuccessful airplane. With a thick wing and no horizontal

stabilizers (the wings included flaperons to control pitch) the aircraft was underpowered even



though the dual J34s were equipped with afterburners. Desperate to make the basic design work, Chance Vought produced the larger F7U-3 Cutlass with two Westinghouse J46 engines, a bigger version of the J-34. It was barely successful but saw some service with the U. S. Navy. Thrust was so low that the F7U-3 pilots knew that if they had to make a single-engine approach to a carrier, the only possibility was to engage the afterburner of the engine that was operating. Most pilots faced with that bleak scenario chose to ditch or abandon the aircraft.



Huge successes and spectacular failures defined turbine-powered fighters of the United States during the early jet age. Having an example of one of the more interesting engines from that period is to the credit of those who have assembled the collection of the Combat Air Museum.



**COMBAT AIR MUSEUM**  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka KS 66619-1444



PLANE TALK  
June 2019 | July 2019 | Vol.35, No. 3

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**ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED**

*Visit the Combat Air Museum for fun, information and an educational experience.*

## Volunteer Spotlight **Charlie Reichenberger** *by Mike Welch*



Photo by Dave Murreay

Combat Air Museum visitors and volunteers will soon enjoy the new appearance of the north entrance to the Bob Dole Education Center in hangar 602. Ted Nolde's outstanding design became reality due to donors, volunteers, contractors and suppliers. Thanks to all of these community-minded people, but without the skills, work ethic, community spirit, and leadership of Charlie Reichenberger, the quality and swiftness of construction would not have occurred.

Charlie graduated from Pittsburg State University in 1976 with degrees in Industrial Arts Education and Wood Technology. He tried student teaching for one semester and then decided to try another occupation. Charlie took a job with a framer until his paychecks started bouncing.

Charlie, with little experience, started his own framing business in late 1976 so

he could write his own salary, take tax deductible vacations, buy a fishing boat for business, and be his own boss. He ran a good business but after framing about 600 homes in 43 years only found time to take one vacation, never had time to buy a boat, and found that every client was his boss...but he did write his own salary!

He married Jan, his college sweetheart, in 1976. She is a registered nurse. They have four children: Julie, Emily, Chelsey and Adam. Their grandchildren Katie, Haley and Ella would like a boat or wave runner for Grandpa, and maybe even a cabin near a Colorado ski resort. Charlie and Jan are going to Washington State in July for Adam's wedding.

Thank you Charlie for being a great builder and an enjoyable volunteer!