

# COMBAT

## AIR MUSEUM

February 2020 | March 2020  
Vol. 36, No. 1



USAF photo

### By Dennis Smirl

# The Life and Times of General Curtis LeMay

Dr. John Curatola was the featured speaker at our December, 2019 members' luncheon. He is currently teaching military and aviation history at the School of Advanced Military Studies, an educational unit within the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Dr. Curatola was an active duty Marine Corps officer, retiring in 2009 as a lieutenant colonel after 22 years of service. He earned his doctorate from the University of Kansas in 2008.

His presentation at our meeting was a fascinating look at one of America's most controversial military officers, General Curtis E. LeMay of the United States Air Force.

Curtis Emerson LeMay was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1906, the eldest of six children. After graduating from Ohio State University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Air Corps Reserve in October 1929 and received a regular commission

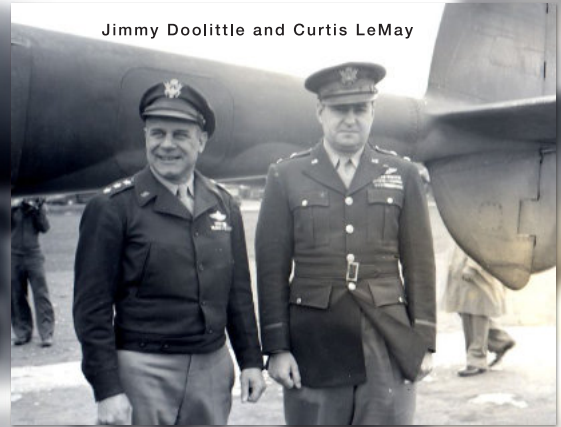


in the United States Army Air Corps in January 1930. LeMay took flight training at Norton Field in Columbus in 1931.

LeMay became a pursuit pilot and one of the first members of the Air Corps to receive specialized training in aerial navigation. An exceptional navigator, in May 1938 he navigated three B-17s over 610 miles of the

Atlantic Ocean to intercept the Italian liner Rex and illustrate the ability of land-based air power to defend the American coasts.

LeMay believed training was the key to saving lives so when his crews were not flying missions, he subjected them to relentless training. "You train as you fight" was one of his cardinal rules. It expressed



Jimmy Doolittle and Curtis LeMay

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# PLANE TALK

COMBAT  
AIR MUSEUM

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TOPEKA REGIONAL AIRPORT THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

## COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

### Topeka Regional Airport

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Mike Madden ~ Ted Nolde ~ Dick Trupp ~ Mike Welch

### MUSEUM HOURS

#### January 2 - February 28/29

Mon.-Sun. Noon - 4:30  
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 Years Day, Easter,  
Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

**PLANE TALK**  
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**

## From the Chairman's Desk

By Gene Howerter, Chairman, Board of Directors

I trust all of you had a Happy New Year and have laid out a few good resolutions for 2020. I am reminded of the woman who, when asked if she had any New Year's resolutions, said instantly and profoundly, "YES!" "Would you like to share one with me?" She said, "Yes. My resolution and goal is that my husband will lose ten pounds this year." This reminds me of the saying I often heard in my youth: "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." People often bombard us with their wishes here at the Combat Air Museum (CAM); however, as we begin a new year at CAM, let's consider some resolutions which we can and should work on this year.

What is our most urgent need in 2020? First let me say the Museum is doing well in almost all facets. We have an amazing office staff which conducts more business daily than most individuals would know. After all, this is a business and the Museum needs to conduct itself in that manner. We are a volunteer organization for the most part. Funds raised in house as well as those generous donations from our members are what keep us in business. Please continue your support as you have in the past.

If funding for the museum is our number one need, staffing our gift shop with volunteers is certainly right up there with it. We have lost some key volunteers in our gift shop recently for various reasons,

including an untimely passing. We dearly miss these volunteers but we need to replace them immediately. If you live in the Topeka area and have any interest in supporting us as a gift shop volunteer worker, I would like to hear from you soon. You can call CAM and ask for our office manager, Nelson, or myself. Within the past two years the Museum has acquired a new Clover credit/cash register system which is fantastic for carrying out transactions. If you can handle a smart phone, you will find this system pretty straightforward. One of the best personal rewards of working the gift shop is meeting visitors from all over Kansas and the other forty nine states, as well as people from around the world. I hope to hear from you soon if you think this is a task that interests you.

As we begin a new year at the Combat Air Museum, we are really feeling good about our 2019 museum paid attendance. For the first time in a number of years, CAM broke the 11,000 mark last December. We had been averaging around 10,000 paid visitors in past years. I feel we should aim for 12,000 paid visitors in 2020. Please help us reach this goal by telling everyone you know to visit our Museum. Trust me, we can do it, all we need to do is spread the word!

We have already begun planning our two major fundraisers for 2020. The Annual Celebrity Pancake Feed

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## Museum Notes

**Topeka Capital-Journal features Combat Air Museum...** Brianna Childers edits the Food and Fun column in the Topeka Capital-Journal; she visited CAM recently and described her experience in an article dated January 12. You can see the article at <https://www.cjonline.com/entertainmentlife/20200111/brianna-childers-combat-air-museum-soaring-sight> ♦



**Library documentation...** The library is the best kept secret at the Museum, but Steve Wodtke is doing his best to change that. Steve is assembling a database of our library, book by book. In mid-January, he estimated he was halfway through the collection with over 1,100 entries. Once he completes his work, we'll devise a system to allow Museum members to see what's available and check out items. ♦

**Young Aviators Class 20-A begins March 9...** Our first Young Aviators Class of the year will take place March 9-13. Youngsters aged 9-13 attend class from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and participate in a number of STEM activities and field trips. The cost of the class is \$60 and you can download the registration form from our website at <http://www.combatairmuseum.org/education.html>. For more information, contact Nelson, our office manager, at 785.862.3303 between 9 a.m. and noon Monday through Friday. ♦



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

Ed and Lee  
from  
JB Turner  
and Sons

**JB Turner to the rescue...** CAM is fortunate to have many corporate partners who help us when needed. Right after Christmas, we discovered a significant water leak in the roof of hangar 604. JB Turner and Sons Roofing & Sheet Metal, our neighbors at Topeka Regional Airport, have done countless favors for CAM over the decades and were up to the task again. Randy Wilson, maintenance director at Turner's, came over immediately and dispatched two of his technicians, Ed and Lee, to fix the leak. They quickly repaired the roof and then Randy informed us the work was a Christmas present to CAM from John and Lori Turner! We are grateful once again for their support! ♦

**Hail and farewell, sort of...** After serving on the Museum's board of directors for the last three years, Bill Stumpff has stepped down. He continues to volunteer in the gift shop and we're all grateful for his past and continued service. The board elected Mike Madden as its newest member. Mike is retired from the Kansas National Guard where he was an inflight refueling specialist before he commissioned and served in several capacities in the Air National Guard and Joint Force Headquarters. Mike has helped with many projects at CAM as a member of the Capital Projects Committee and has assisted Nelson sort out our new flight simulator. ♦

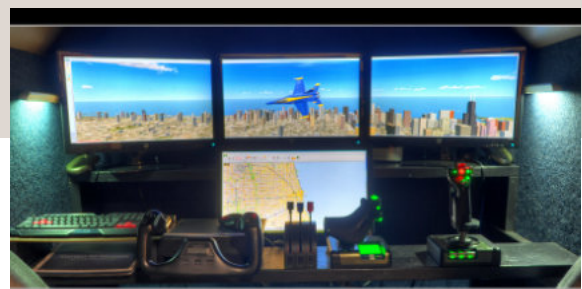




Photo by Klio Hobbs

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**Flight Simulator update...**CAM Office Manager Nelson Hinman, Jr. has returned the flight simulator to service, and he continues to work on a number of minor problems that remain. ♦

**Capital Projects Committee...**This group of volunteers meets on "Fix-It Fridays" to repair and improve the Museum's infrastructure. Nathan Benfield and his wife Beth led the team as they replaced the carpet in the Bob Dole Education Center. Stu Entz donated the carpet squares and they transformed the appearance of the room, so much so that our next project became repainting the room. You can see the results of their work for yourself at the membership luncheon on Monday, February 10. The second and fourth Fridays of each month are "Fix-It Fridays" and we welcome anyone's help. ♦



Nathan Benfield, Joe Turner and Beth Benfield install new carpet squares

Photo by Kevin Drewelow

# New & Renewing Members

**New:**

- Dr. Ronald Barrett
- Chris Fein & family
- Henry Hickey
- Bruce Nall & family
- Gordon Self & family

**Renewing:**

- Ted & Cindy Berard
- Michael & Candace Bush
- Les Carlson
- Duane Coash & family
- Bob & Carol Courtney
- Leonard Faulconer
- Frank Holsburg
- Hal & Nice` Loney
- Edward Navone
- Mary Ann Naylor
- Loren Otis
- Michael Rockefeller & family
- Dennis & Galene San Romani
- Donald & Bonnie Schonasky
- Dick & Jeanne Trupp
- Dr. Howard & Marilyn Ward
- Chuck Watson

*Your* **EVENTS**

at **COMBAT AIR MUSEUM**  
(Fri) 1000 W. 13th St., Topeka, KS 66604

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**BOB DOLE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE ROOM**  
Room: Maximum 70 people

**Requirements:**

- Skirts: Full Price: \$200 (includes 100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- Carpet: \$100 (includes 100 sq. ft. of carpet)

**Includes:**

- 200 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)

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**HANGAR #602 BAY**  
Room: Maximum 200 people

**Requirements:**

- Skirts: Full Price: \$200 (includes 100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- Carpet: \$100 (includes 100 sq. ft. of carpet)

**Includes:**

- 200 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)
- 100 sq. ft. of carpet (100 sq. ft. of carpet)

Please call Office Manager at (785) 562-3333 for Facility Agreement and other information.

Continued from cover pg

his belief that, in the chaos, stress, and confusion of combat, troops or airmen would perform successfully only if their individual acts were second nature, performed almost instinctively due to repetitive training.

When the U.S. entered World War II in December 1941, LeMay was a major in the United States Army Air Forces commanding the 305th Bomb Group. He took this B-17 unit to England in October 1942 and led it in combat until May 1943, notably helping develop the combat box formation. He personally led several dangerous missions, including the Regensburg section of the Schweinfurt–Regensburg mission of August 17, 1943. In that mission, he led 146 B-17s beyond the range of escorting fighters, and, after bombing, continued on to bases in North Africa, losing only 24 bombers in the process.

In August 1944, LeMay transferred to China to lead the XX Bomber Command. In January 1945, LeMay became the commander of the XXI Bomber Command in the Marianas Islands where he was in charge of all strategic air operations against the Japanese home islands.

He became convinced that high altitude precision bombing was ineffective, given the cloudy weather over Japan. Furthermore, bombs dropped from the B-29s at high altitude were often blown off of their trajectories by a powerful jet stream over the Japanese home islands. Because Japanese air defenses at lower altitudes made daytime bombing too perilous, LeMay finally switched to low altitude nighttime incendiary attacks, a tactic senior commanders had been advocating for some time. Japanese cities were largely constructed of combustible materials such as wood and paper. A senior staff officer told LeMay that bomber pilots were turning back from these low altitude bombing runs due to heavy anti-aircraft fire. He suggested to LeMay that crews who achieved successful strike rates should be rewarded by being released from their deployment. LeMay implemented this unorthodox plan and the strike rate went up to eighty percent.

LeMay commanded subsequent B-29 Superfortress combat operations against Japan that included the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This included the firebombing of Tokyo which proved to be the single most destructive bombing raid of the war.

After World War II, LeMay transferred to the Pentagon. In 1947, he returned to Europe as commander of USAF Europe, heading operations for the Berlin Airlift in 1948 in the face of a Soviet blockade of the Western occupation zones of Berlin. Under LeMay's direction, Douglas C-54 Skymasters that could each carry 10 tons of cargo began supplying the city on July 1.

In 1948, he returned to the U.S. to lead the Strategic Air Command (SAC) at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. When he took over command of SAC, it consisted of little more than a few understaffed B-29 bomb groups. Less than half of the available aircraft were operational, and the crews were poorly trained. After ordering a mock bombing exercise on Dayton, Ohio, LeMay learned that most of the strategic bombers assigned to the mission missed their targets by one mile or more. It had to be fixed.



LeMay implemented tests of 24-hour bomber and tanker alerts, keeping some bomber forces ready at all times. LeMay headed SAC until 1957, overseeing its transformation into a modern, efficient, all-jet force, the development of a strategic ballistic missile force, and establishment of a strict command and control system.



President Kennedy and General LeMay at LeMay's swearing in ceremony as Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force (National Archive photo)

## Projects Update

**Boeing CH-47D Chinook...**Museum volunteers took advantage of a beautiful and warm day in early January to make progress on some of our aircraft. Chinook restoration director Deb Lamere trained Don White and Kevin Drewelow on the proper servicing of CH-47 tires...after Joe Wulfkuhle and Danny San Romani coaxed our portable air compressor into life! After minding the Chinook, the team serviced the nose tires on the Lockheed EC-121 Warning Star. Deb has been researching the service history of our Chinook and, through social media and personal contacts, has uncovered a lot of information about 85-24346. She was stunned to learn the Army disposed of 346's official records in 2017 but hopes to find some records at other related maintenance agencies.



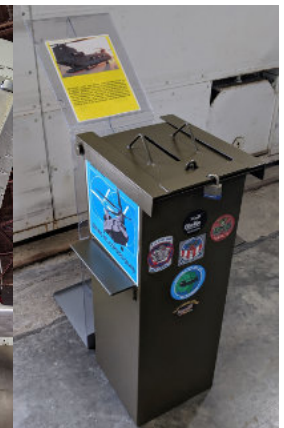
Deb Lamere (left) and Don White service tires on the Chinook



Joe Wulfkuhle fits a fairing to the F-86H



The result of their time and trouble.



Our Chinook now has its own donation box.

Photos by Kevin Drewelow

**North American F-86H Sabre...**While Deb, Don and Kevin serviced tires outside, Joe Wulfkuhle and Danny San Romani installed panels on the aft fuselage of the Sabre. Danny spent considerable time cleaning and repairing some of the panels before installing them. Work continues on other access panels, something they can accomplish in the heated workshop during these frigid winter days! ◆





# In the Hangar: The B-29 and its Other Brothers Part I

From the prototype to the Super Guppy, the Boeing B-29 has been one of the most influential aircraft of the 20th century. Born of a need for a long-range, super heavy bomber, the B-29 first flew in 1942. Getting the aircraft ready to fly and fight in the war in the Pacific was not without its challenges. The B-29 emerged from a requirement put forth in 1939 for a super bomber that could exceed 400 miles per hour and carry a bomb load of 20,000 pounds in excess of 3,000 miles. This was a daunting requirement, considering that powered flight began fewer than 36 years earlier.

Boeing, Consolidated, Douglas and Lockheed submitted state-of-the-art design proposals. Out of that competition, there was one winner and one also-ran.

Consolidated produced the also-ran as the XB-32, an aircraft that resembled the earlier B-24 in many ways, especially in the incorporation of twin tails, rather than one large vertical stabilizer and rudder. The XB-32 was a good enough airplane that it was ordered into development as a back-up aircraft in case the XB-29 did not live up to expectations. It was never produced in large numbers—only 118—and got into the conflict very near the end of the war.

During the evaluation period, Boeing engineers worked their way through several possible designs for the XB-29. The first proposal, the twin-tailed and somewhat smaller model 334, depended on the development and subsequent availability of a radical new horizontally opposed engine proposed by Pratt and Whitney. That powerplant was never produced so Boeing went in a different direction.

Boeing's model 334A was far more conservative and traditional. Its main drawback was the selection of Pratt and Whitney's R-2800 Double Wasp as a source of power. Engineers soon discovered the need for even more power and then chose the Wright R-3350 for the new Boeing model 345, which eventually became the B-29.



Boeing XB-29-BO, 41-002, the first of three prototypes. (USAF photo)

The first XB-29, serial number 41-0002, rolled out in September of 1942, painted in olive drab and featuring three-bladed props on its four Wright R-3350 engines. It went into flight testing almost immediately. Utilizing a tricycle landing gear and incorporating pressurization in manned areas of the fuselage, it was a streamlined bullet, a far cry in appearance and performance from the earlier B-17 Flying Fortress. But development of the B-29 was not without setbacks. An inflight engine fire, the first of many to plague the development of the new bomber, led to the loss of the second XB-29 with its crew including famous test pilot Eddie Allen. So many problems arose in production and flight test that this period became known as "the Battle of Kansas" with serious consideration given to cancelling the program altogether. Indeed, with a program cost of \$3 billion, the B-29 was the most expensive American weapon of World War II. Still, the remaining XB-29 had great promise and flew so well that Boeing and the Army pushed for development of the experimental aircraft into a useful weapon of war.

Eventually, the B-29 project met the extreme challenges of producing such an advanced aircraft. Its defensive armament was a huge leap forward, using radar to guide the .50 caliber machine guns (in remote turrets) against attacks by enemy fighters. The engines were upgraded, fitted with four blade propellers, and produced 2,200 horsepower each. Having met the criteria set forth by the U. S. Army, the B-29 with its two huge bomb

## Ways You Can Support the Combat Air MUSEUM



Photo by Nels Anderson

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### Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Every item available for purchase on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) is also available on AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) at the same price. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile. On your first visit to AmazonSmile [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), select "Combat Air Museum" to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation. To get started, visit [https://smile.amazon.com](http://https://smile.amazon.com) ♦

### Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

If you are eligible to donate through the Combined Federal Campaign, please consider contributing to the Combat Air Museum. Your donation will be put to good use in one of our education, restoration or maintenance projects. Be sure to add our Museum's CFC code number, 59834, when making your donation. ♦



### Dillon's Community Rewards Program

If you shop at Dillon's and have a Plus Shopper's Card, you can help support the Combat Air Museum with just a phone call or a few keystrokes. Dillon's Stores donates millions to non-profit organizations. Our Museum benefits from CAM members who have registered with Dillon's Community Rewards Program. Enrolling in this program will not increase your grocery bill and will not affect your fuel points.

Enrolling in the Community Rewards program is a one-time event and no longer requires annual registration. If you've already signed up, no further action is required. Go to

<https://www.dillons.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>

to create a Dillon's account before enrolling in the Community Rewards program. You can also call 800.576.4377 and the Dillon's customer service representative will register you. You'll need to provide them with the Combat Air Museum's five-character Non-Profit Organization (NPO) account number, GA302. Thanks to your generosity, each quarter the Museum receives a check from Dillon's that really helps us maintain the collection and facilities and provide the classes and service our visitors enjoy. Last year, Dillon's donated \$851 to CAM; that amount is less than the previous year because we have fewer donors than before. If you haven't joined, why not take a few moments now to do so: Dillon's and CAM will do the rest! ♦



## Calendar of Events



### March

- 1-Normal hours resume, Museum open  
Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,  
No visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.; Museum  
open Sun noon-4:30 p.m.
- 8-Daylight Savings Time begins
- 9-13 Young Aviators Class



### April

- 12-Easter, Museum closed
- 13-Membership Luncheon
- 25-Celebrity Pancake Feed

### May



### June

- 1-5 Young Aviators Class
- 8-Membership Luncheon



### July

- 6-10 Young Aviators Class



### August

- 3-7 Young Aviators Class
- 10-Membership Luncheon



### September

- 26-Combat Air Museum Winged Foot  
5K/10K Run & 4K Walk



### October

- 3-Girls in Aviation Day
- 12-Membership Luncheon



### November

- 1-Daylight Savings time ends
- 26-Thanksgiving, Museum closed



### December

- 14-Membership Luncheon
- 25-Christmas, Museum closed

### February

- 1-Winter hours continue through the end  
of the month
- 10-Membership Luncheon

### March

- 1-Normal hours resume, Museum open  
Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,  
No visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.;  
Museum open Sun noon-4:30 p.m.
- 8-Daylight Savings Time begins
- 9-13 Young Aviators Class

### April

- 12-Easter, Museum closed
- 13-Membership Luncheon
- 25-Celebrity Pancake Feed

## CAM Visitors



855 people from 31 states, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Italy, Mexico, Paraguay and Spain visited the Combat Air Museum in November.

In December, 616 visitors from 25 states, Australia, Colombia, Ecuador, Great Britain, New Zealand, Taiwan and Thailand toured your Museum. ♦

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## The Life and Times of General Curtis LeMay



Douglas C-54 Skymaster

Following his service as USAF Vice-Chief of Staff (1957–1961), LeMay became the fifth Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force. His belief in the efficacy of strategic air campaigns over tactical strikes and ground support operations became Air Force policy during his tenure as chief of staff.

Because of his unrelenting opposition to President Johnson's Vietnam policy and perceived hostility to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, LeMay was essentially forced into retirement in February 1965. Three years later, LeMay became the running mate for Alabama Governor and infamous segregationist

George Wallace and his American Independent Party. As the campaign unfolded, Wallace's staff began to consider LeMay to be politically tone-deaf and LeMay did nothing to diminish the perception of extremism that most American voters had of the Wallace-LeMay ticket. After losing the election, General LeMay moved to Newport Beach, California and into retirement. He died October 1, 1990.

Dr. Curatola's insightful presentation brought General LeMay to life and drove numerous questions from the Museum members present. ♦

★

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## In the Hangar: The B-29 and its Other Brothers Part I

bays went into production. Over 2,500 B-29s were built, more than any subsequent model. Most of the airframes were constructed in Wichita, Kansas, with others being built in Renton, Washington and Marietta, Georgia.

The B-29A Superfortress was an improved version of the original, especially in the wing structure. A single one-piece wing section was installed through the fuselage, with the outer wing panels attached to that midsection a short distance from the fuselage. The new structure was stronger, resulted in an extra foot in the wingspan of the aircraft, allowed more load-carrying capability but with slightly reduced fuel capacity. In addition, the forward top turret featured four .50 caliber guns, rather than two, and gave the crew a better defense against frontal fighter attacks.

The B-29B Superfortress was developed at the insistence of Major General Curtis E. LeMay for firebombing attacks against Japanese cities. These raids were to be carried out at night, at low altitude and at high speed. LeMay wanted a lighter, faster aircraft, and to get that, several turrets with their .50 caliber machine guns were stripped from the aircraft with the openings faired over. The increase

in speed offset the lack of defensive armament, and LeMay had what he wanted for the final conventional raids against Japan.

The F-13A Superfortress came about in response to a need for a long-range reconnaissance platform. These aircraft were regular B-29s carrying full defensive armament but no bombs, and loaded with cameras and photographic specialists. Fast and long ranged because they weren't so heavily laden, they captured and returned images of Japanese military movements and emplacements that no other airplane at the time could have. Continental Airlines' Denver Modification Center completed the necessary modifications to the mostly brand new aircraft. The F-13As flew from both China and the Marianas Islands until the war ended.

Hostilities against Japan ended after the employment of two atomic bombs in August of 1945. The first bomb dropped on Hiroshima from a B-29 named "Enola Gay." "Bock's Car" dropped the second bomb shortly thereafter on Nagasaki, and the Japanese empire capitulated. Had all the B-29s been sent to the bone yard at the end of the war the contribution of the basic airframe would have been legendary; however, the story of the B-29 had only begun! ♦

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## From the Chairman's Desk

## In Memoriam

### Dan Pulliam

CAM member #3414  
March 21, 1946–December 6, 2019

**George Daniel “Dan” Pulliam joined the Combat Air Museum in 1997.** Dan had a passion for airplanes and rarely turned down an opportunity to take a flight in one. He often attended air shows on weekends as support for the American Flight Museum’s AC-47 “Spooky” at Topeka Regional Airport. When he was invited to fly as a guest in “Doc”, one of only two B-29’s still flying, he jumped at the invitation. The training mission from Topeka to Wichita was one of the highlights of his life. Dan loved volunteering at the Combat Air Museum where he worked each Tuesday as the gift shop operator. Interacting with the public was another one of his passions at the museum.



Dan was an accomplished musician and music educator in Topeka. He belonged to several music groups and was very active in his church, devoting his time to both the Celebration Worship Team and the Soul-full Singers, who perform annually at the Combat Air Museum’s Celebrity Pancake Feed.

Dan had a very delightful soft sense of humor and wit. To know him was a pleasure. Dan is dearly missed here at the Combat Air Museum. His family has suggested memorial contributions to the Combat Air Museum. ♦

\*.....

### G. M. “Bud” Spencer

CAM member #1547  
August 12, 1923–January 14, 2020  
A CAM member since 1988



will take place on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 7 a.m. until noon. We plan to line up some really great celebrity flippers again this year as well as have some excellent entertainment and aircraft displays, along with another Fly-In Market. This is a good time to start cleaning out your closet to find items to donate to the Fly-In Market.

We will hold our 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Combat Air Museum Winged Foot 5K/10K Run and 4K Walk on the last Saturday in September. Mark the date on your calendar: September 26<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. All is going well with this event and we need to set our sights on attracting more walkers and runners. This is where you can help: tell your friends, family, club and church members who might want to participate and get them to register early. This year I would like to see a big increase in walkers. Registering as a walker is a great way for those folk, who don’t like running, to support the Museum. In the past we have had walkers who were well into their eighties! Last year we shortened the walking course to 4000 meters which is more manageable for all ages. Finally, don’t forget to sign on as an event sponsor again this year. See you soon at the Combat Air Museum! ♦

*Gene*





COMBAT AIR MUSEUM  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66619



PLANE TALK

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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Permit #181

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

## Have I Ever Been to War?

By Ryan Hill, Lt. Col, USAF



*Generations have voiced through pen and art, the glorious horrors of war  
Stories are told, some without words, of men changed down to their core*

*I've been and seen and felt and feared, but my story is not the same  
With a different view of the battlefield, I'm wary of what I claim*

*I have dented the earth and bent the air inside the enemy's door  
But I cannot help but ask myself, Have I ever been to war?*

*I've topped the heights and flung my craft into valleys in the black of night  
But the intimate pain and guilt in death remained outside my sights*

*I've squeezed the trigger that ended men's lives but did not witness the gore  
So again I have to ask myself, Have I ever been to war?*

*I've seen the ghost of my imminent end  
but never the face of a dying friend*

*I've seen the hopeless green smoke rise  
but never the suffering it disguised*

*I've heard the whistling rounds drop in,  
without a clue of where they'd land*

*But I've never felt their sting before,  
And so I ask, Have I been to war?*

*I don't carry a load, nor am I lost between the darkness and the light  
I'm the same as the man who left to go, but I question if that's right*

*To all those who there remain, and to those who've gone before  
I joined you in that hellish place, but I'm still not sure I've been to war.*

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