



UP NEXT: EAA Airventure 2025!

Many of our members volunteer all around the field throughout the week of Airventure. Keep reading to find out where you can spot fellow Squadron members while you are on the grounds at Oshkosh. Also, stay tuned to our social media, as we will gather one evening at Airventure to dedicate memorial bricks for our members who flew west this year. As they say "Come for the planes, stay for the people!"



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: Cavalcade of Planes

As always, the Bolingbrook Clow Cavalcade of Planes was well attended. We were there and we greeted many familiar faces, as well as some new ones. Thank you to our volunteers who staffed our tent throughout the weekend, despite the heat and rain! The airport recently expanded the ramp, which allowed for an impressive Warbird lineup. Be sure to continue reading to learn about a T-28 Navy veteran who happened to get reunited with his plane during this weekend!



FROM THE C.O.'S DESK

A MESSAGE FROM BUTCH BEJNA

Hello Squadron 4 members,

With EAA AirVenture 2025 coming up, many of us volunteer and can be found around the grounds. Cavalcade of Planes at Clow Airport was a great time like always. The rain held off on Sunday just long enough to get everything packed up. Nice to see quite a few members there.

Tom Buck's Picnic is set for August 17th at Joliet Airport. The Joliet Airport Fest is on September 21st from 8am-3pm.

We would like to welcome 2 new members to the Squadron, Martin and Kenneth Yokosawa. We're looking forward to seeing your Vinkas flying!

Sadly, Tim Dunavin passed away on June 5th. Tim was known for his model making, woodworking skills and being a WWII re-enactor with his 1943 Jeep.

David Fairbrother passed away on June 29th. David was a fixture with the CAF'S Ju-52 & C-47.

We do have a new venue for our annual Banquet, Prairie Bluff Golf Club. It will be held on Saturday, February 7th.

Butch



Cavalcade of Planes photos by Butch Bejna



A Remarkable Encounter with History: Our T-28 and the Pilot who flew it

By Bill Buchar and Jamie Hagel

Connecting Past and Present Through Aviation

In the world of aviation, moments that bridge the gap between history and the present are rare, but when they occur, they are unforgettable. Recently, Bill and I had the privilege of experiencing such a moment when we met someone who piloted our very own T28 aircraft back in 1964 - a story worth sharing.

The Legacy of the T28

The North American T28 Trojan is an iconic aircraft with a storied history spanning decades. Originally developed in the late 1940s as a trainer for the United States Navy and Air Force, the T28 has served various roles, including combat operations in Southeast Asia. Known for its adaptability, ruggedness, and sleek design, this aircraft has earned a place in the heart of aviation enthusiasts and veterans alike. Our T28, built in 1955 and nicknamed the "Doer Bird," is proudly maintained by us. It serves as a tangible connection to the past, embodying the stories, missions, and memories of those who piloted it. This aircraft holds a special place in our heart, representing not only engineering excellence but also serving as a vessel for human history.



A Chance Meeting

At a recent event at Clow Airport, we had the remarkable opportunity to meet a gentleman who had piloted our T28 aircraft in 1964. While we were securing the aircraft, John Gotta, an attendee at the event, approached us. He informed us that he flew T28's during his training in 1964. Upon mentioning the base location, he smiled and suggested that he might have flown it. As the conversation progressed, he shared his extensive flying history and experience with us. John served in the Navy for four years flying T28s and P3 Orions, followed by a career at Eastern Airlines, and subsequently United Airlines. He continued to share his experiences in the Navy and mentioned that he would consult his logbook to determine if our aircraft, BuNO 138292, was documented within it. We expressed our gratitude for his service and stories.

Several hours later,

We observed John standing beside our plane, holding a logbook and some photographs. He opened the logbook to the entry dated August 10th, 1964, where BuNo 138292 was listed as the first entry. Remarkably, he had piloted our aircraft. He also showed us several photographs of himself standing in front of and in the cockpit of other T28 aircraft. As we listened to John's stories, it became clear that we were establishing a significant connection with the history of our T28. At that moment we understood what needed to be done. Bill patted John on the back and said, "Hey John, let's go flying today". John smiled and accepted the offer. He approached the plane and Bill assisted him in climbing onto the wing once more. John swiftly got into the rear cockpit as if no time had passed since he last flew. Bill then took him up in the skies, allowing him to fly just as he did in 1964. After a while, 87 year old John was making 45 degree banks, holding altitude, and pulling G's. It goes without saying that upon landing, John's smile was from ear to ear. Once on the ground, he mentioned bringing his wife on Sunday to see the plane. On Sunday, John arrived with his wife, carrying a bag. He presented it to us, revealing his original helmet worn during his service in the Navy. He expressed his wish for us to keep it with the aircraft, stating that it had crossed both oceans and truly belonged to the plane. We were deeply honored by his gesture, entrusting us with a piece of his history.

The Human Element of Aviation

For John, the T28 represented more than just a machine-it was a partner, a challenge, and a source of pride. To see someone reconnect with a piece of their own history, decades later, reminded us all of the deep human aspect of aviation. This meeting was not just about nostalgia; it was about honoring the legacy of those who served, trained, and lived through history, using planes like our T28 to forge their journeys. It underscored the importance of preserving these artifacts, not just as museum pieces but as vessels of stories that continue to inspire. Encounters like this one invigorate our mission to preserve and share aviation history. They remind us why we dedicate countless hours to restoring and maintaining aircraft like the T28 - and why we work tirelessly to connect the past with the present.



MERCHANDISE ALERT!



New Squadron 4 T-Shirts are on the way! Check our website and social media for updates on when they will be available for purchase.

SQUADRON 4 AT AIRVENTURE!

We would like to acknowledge our many members who help make AirVenture what it is. Stop by and thank them for what they do while at Oshkosh! Also, be sure to tag us on social media while you're at the show. (Sorry if we missed someone).



Butch Bejna: EAA Blue Barn

John Cecilia: EAA Blue Barn

Brian Churchill: Warbird Camping

Diane Churchill: Warbird Merchandise

John Churchill: Warbird Camping

Jan Currie: Warbird Merchandise

Brian Eltherington: Warbird Tug Team

Leigh Ann Evans: Warbird Judges

Tim Gillian: Warbird Training Command

Glenn Hill: B-25/B17 Crew

Mike Hudak: Warbird Tram

Aaron Kelley: Warbird Auto Parking

Stacy Kolls: Warbird Greeter

Vic Krause: Warbird Tram

Peg Larson: Warbird Merchandise

Ron Liebmann: Warbird Tug Team

Ron McElroy: Warbird Flight Line

Les Moore: Warbird Camping/Tram

Jim Nelson: Warbird Auto Parking

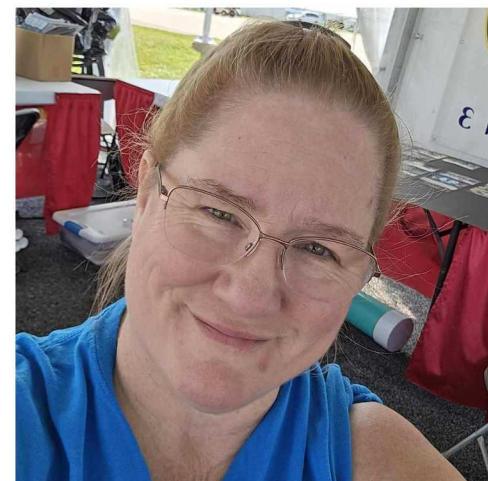
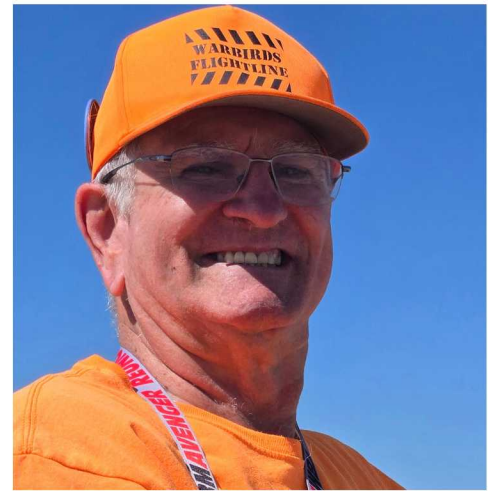
Rob Nelson: Warbird Auto Parking

Rick Siegfried: Warbird Director

Dinah Spadoni: Warbird Jet Line

Dean Stanley: Warbird Tug Team

LeRoy Stuczynski: Warbird Tram



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See you at...



TOM BUCK'S OPEN HANGAR

Event Details

17 AUGUST 2025

FROM 11 AM - 3 PM

JOLIET REGIONAL AIRPORT

- WARBIRDS
- MILITARY VEHICLES
- VETERANS
- FREE, PUBLIC INVITED
- FOOD FOR PURCHASE



ART LEACH (WWII) GORDON MILLERIN (VIETNAM ERA) TED MICCI (WWII)

Fly or drive in!

**4000 W. JEFFERSON ST.
JOLIET IL 60431 (KJOT)**



MORE INFORMATION:

WWW.WARBIRDSQUADRON4.ORG

