

# The SPACE COAST AVIATOR



**January 2024**

**Fly Inn**

**Saturday January 13, 0830 EST  
Southern Sisters Cafe 2242 Sarno Road**

**Membership Renewal**

**Please renew for 2024**

**F**rom all the board volunteers, to everyone, a Happy New Year for 2024. Please accept our sincere “thanks” for your support this past year and a special “thanks” to those of you who have already renewed. The annual dues is the associations’ only income and it all goes back in sponsored activities and aviation safety. During 2023, again we sponsored the **Cocoa Beach Airshow** with six members, each winning a pair of tickets. MAPA sponsored the **Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT), ATC Briefing and FAASTeam Safety Seminars. MAPA provides the ATC feed for MLB Tower and Orlando Approach Control to [LiveATC.net](http://LiveATC.net).** Each month MAPA represents the GA community at the Melbourne Airport Authority meeting, the monthly tenant meeting, and frequently addresses Board and Staff members on GA issues.

**FIT Aviation** honors current members with a **.25¢ per gallon fuel discount**, which alone can pay for your dues. **Falcon Aviation Pilot Shop** also offers member discounts, and **Modine Aviation** offers member discounts as well. Remember to check the newsletter “NOTAM” section each month for new items for sale, service, and freebie stuff.

You can renew through Pay Pal. Go to the [MAPA](http://MAPA) website and click renew/join via Pay Pal. You do not have to belong to Pay Pal, use any major credit card. So please renew online or by sending your **\$15 check** payable to “MAPA” and mail in to P. O. Box 702, Melbourne, FL 32902.

Again, thank you for your continued support of MAPA and aviation safety. →

[www.mlbilots.org](http://www.mlbilots.org)

## **Collings Foundation Grounds Air Tour for WWII Aircraft**

**Sadly, the road tour of historic aircraft has ended.**

**T**he recent Collings Foundation, American Heritage Museum newsletter begins, “In the wake of the 2019 B-17 Flying Fortress “Nine-O-Nine” accident, we are moving forward on our long-term plans to bring the aircraft from a nationwide flying exhibition to permanent display here in Massachusetts.”

For decades, the Wings of Freedom tour brought World War II aircraft to thousands of aviation fans and WWII vets, at airports across the country, offering rides for a price aboard the Boeing B-17G, B-25, B-24, and P-51D. The rides offset the cost of flying the aircraft on tour. Seat prices ranged from \$325 on the B-17 to \$2,200 on the P-51. As the foundation is a 501(c) (3), the money was considered a donation. The Collings Foundation was operating under an FAA exemption as part of a Living History Flight Experience (LHFE).

The Nine-O-Nine accident at Bradley Int’l Airport (BDL) put the coup de grace on the flying tour. In its report, NTSB criticized the FAA’s inadequate oversight of the Collings Foundation’s ineffective safety management system (SMS), which failed to identify and mitigate safety risks. The FAA has denied the Foundations request for renewal of the LHFE exemption.

The foundation settled legal claims with a number of passengers aboard Nine-O-Nine when it crashed. Moreover, the FAA has grounded all the remaining airworthy B-17s. We believe only four B-17’s are airworthy. Some in storage and many on display in museums.

The Collings, American Heritage Museum, is located in Hudson, Massachusetts, and includes “a collection of military vehicles spanning the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard and other nations, as well, with 50 aircraft and over 90 vehicles in addition to large artifacts such as the rebuilt Hanoi Hilton POW cell and a part of the Berlin Wall.” → [Flying](http://Flying)

## Hartzell Buys Kelly Aero An ignition component manufacturer

**H**artzell Engine Tech has acquired Kelly Aero a leading OEM for aircraft aftermarket magnetos, replacement parts and ignition harnesses.

Tailwind Technologies Inc. is the parent company of Hartzell Propeller and Hartzell Engine Tec, and has been an active acquirer of companies and product lines since 2004.

Kelly Aero offers FAA/PMA approved replacement parts for engine's ignition system. They are the largest provider of ignition components, mag parts, and repair kits for **Slick, Bendix** and **Continental Motors**. Acquisition of Kelly adds manufacturing capabilities for aircraft ignition products to its existing lines of engineered firewall forward engine accessories at Hartzell.

Beginning in early 2024, and after a technical evaluation and receipt of PMA approval — Hartzell Engine Tech will rebrand the newly acquired products as PowerUp Ignition Systems. They will become the company's largest operation in its product portfolio, which also includes Janitrol Aero, Fuelcraft, Plane-Power, Sky-Tec and AeroForce Turbocharger Systems.

Customer direct magneto service work will be accomplished at Quality Aircraft Accessories, Hartzell Engine Tech's sister company in Tulsa, OK, and Fort Lauderdale, FL. → [GANews](#)

## Ensuring Your Well-being Near Wind Turbines Do not throw caution to the wind

**W**ind turbine technology can do wonders for our ability to harness renewable energy, but it also introduces some unique challenges for the aviation industry. With more than 72,000 wind turbines throughout the U.S., it is more important than ever, for pilots to be aware of how they are marked, lighted, and charted. Overall, the turbine's tip height is about 650 feet, AGL [the tallest is 800 feet AGL] and the steel yaw-bearing connector alone is about 48 feet in diameter. Installed in the higher elevations these turbine farms rise to over 4,000 MSL.

Learn more about how to safely avoid encounters and play an active role in the wind turbine evaluation process in the article "The [Winds of Change](#)" at [medium.com/faa/the-winds-of-change-b49520f350ed](https://medium.com/faa/the-winds-of-change-b49520f350ed) in the Nov/Dec 2023 issue of [FAA Safety Briefing](#). →

## Van's entering Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Pending approval of the bankruptcy court

**O**n October 27, 2023, Van's Aircraft announced it was suspending business while they dealt with a 'serious cash flow issues'. Founder Richard "Van" VanGrunsven made an announcement on Van's website about suspending business as usual, for a company audit. Since they have enlisted the assistance of Hamstreet & Associates to address the issues and offer solutions to keep the company afloat.

On December 7, with a video apology to its customers, Mr. VanGrunsven, and Hamstreet & Associates, announced the plan to file protection under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy code. "A key step in reorganizing the company."

The official announcement included, "Over the past few years, the company has faced a handful of complex issues, including unprecedented supply chain challenges throughout COVID, faulty primer that led to corrosion problems on quick build kits, and problems with laser-cut parts that were manufactured in response to high demand," company officials said when announcing the bankruptcy. "As a result of this combination of issues, the company experienced serious cash-flow problems from which it could not recover through the normal course of business."

"The purpose of the Chapter 11 filing is to allow Van's to continue to provide ongoing support for its customers, suppliers, and employees for many years to come," officials continued. "We understand that this situation creates a hardship for everyone involved. However, without these changes we do not see a viable path forward that would allow Van's Aircraft to remain in business and support its customers."

The company announced following the internal assessment and cost review, they are increasing most of their kit prices approximately 32%. Van's customers can see the plans at [VansAircraft.com](https://VansAircraft.com) → [GANews](#)

## All Ospreys Grounded

### Eight die in CV-22B off the coast of Japan

**W**hen the U.S. military took the extraordinary step of grounding its entire fleet of V-22 Ospreys the first week of December, it was not reacting just to the recent deadly crash of the aircraft off the coast of Japan. The aircraft has had a long list of problems in its operational history. All branches of the U.S. military and the Japanese SDF operate the V-22 Osprey or a variant. Japan grounded their V-22 variant after the November crash.

Contrivensary has surrounded the aircraft for years, primarily due to cost. However, there have been persistent questions about mechanical issues, one with the clutch that has troubled the program for a decade, or more. Further, there have been questions as to whether all parts of the Osprey were manufactured according to safety specifications, and as those parts age, whether they remain strong enough to withstand the significant forces created by the Osprey's unique structure and dynamics of tiltrotor flight.



According to Aviation Safety Network (ASN) database the Bell-Boeing V-22 Osprey, has had 54 known events with 62 fatalities. Since government aircraft are “Public Aircraft”, the results of accidents or events are not investigated by the NTSB and information from occurrences is not publicly available. Therefore, incident information is gathered from news reports and is unofficial and incomplete.

The 54 known occurrences have resulted between 11 June 1991 and 29 November 2023. Investigations are believed to be ongoing on a number of these accidents. → [ASN](#) [V-22 Osprey](#)

## Coast Guard Grounds C-27J Spartan

### Fatigue cracks

**T**he U.S. Coast Guard has grounded its fleet of 14 Alenia C-27J Spartan fixed wing surveillance aircraft following a call by manufacturer Leonardo directing operators to inspect for cracks. The Alert Service Bulletin issued by Leonardo calls for inspections looking for cracks in the area where the horizontal and vertical stabilizers attach to the aircraft's fuselage.

The bulletin prompted the service to ground its fleet of C-27J for thorough inspections. A Coast Guard spokesperson said, cracks “of varying degrees,” were found in all of the service's aircraft. However, according to Leonardo if an issue is detected a repair solution is already identified. “The application of such repair can be performed at customer premises by the Operators and does not require significant effort. The reported issue is therefore not expected to affect planned aircraft operations.”

The medium range C-27J variants primary mission with the USCG is maritime patrol, surveillance, search and rescue, drug and migrant interdiction, and disaster patrol. Variants of the Spartan are also in service with the U.S. Army Special Ops and formerly with the USAF but removed from service due to budget cuts. → [US Navy](#) [SF.com](#)

## The X-37B is heading back to space

### Thanks to SpaceX

**T**he Space Force X-37B is back into orbit, with a boost from SpaceX and its Falcone Heavy booster. The U.S. Space Force typically does not disclose the classified aspects of X-37B missions. As such, little is known about the types of activities the robotic vehicle carries out in orbit. According to a brief Space Force statement, the mission, designated USSF-52, will conduct a wide range of tests, including operating the reusable spaceplane in new orbital regimes, experimenting with space-domain awareness technologies, and investigating the radiation effects on materials provided by NASA.

SpaceX was awarded a \$130M to launch the X-37B on mission USSF-52. The mission delayed from earlier launch this year by payload and range availability and earlier this month scrubbed due to poor weather.



The Boeing built military Orbital Test Vehicle (OTV) spaceplane is on its seventh mission to orbit. The vehicle is a reusable robotic spacecraft that returned to the Shuttle Landing Facility at the Cape from its last 909-day journey in space on 12 November 2022. → [Reuters](#)

## DOT Fines Southwest \$140M for the 2022 Meltdown

### Only obligated for \$35M

**W**hile DOT issued a \$140 million fine, Southwest will only pay \$35 million to the U.S. government. The airline received a \$72 million offset for setting up a compensation system for Southwest passengers in the future and received a \$33 million credit against the penalty for issuing reward points to affected Southwest passengers early this year.

But the fine means that DOT's investigation into Southwest's scheduling practices has concluded without a finding. DOT said it is "closing the unrealistic scheduling investigation without making a finding as its goal is to obtain quick relief for the public." In addition to the fine, DOT said Southwest is setting up a \$90 million compensation system for future vouchers that would be issued to Southwest customers who experience a controllable cancellation or delay. Southwest will provide a \$75 transferable voucher if a passenger arrives at their destination more than three hours after their original scheduled arrival time.

That voucher is in addition to rebooking, hotel and food provided during a delay. → [Politico](#)

## SIMCOM Aviation Training opens new facility

### Lake Nona Training Center

**I**n December, SIMCOM Aviation recently opened its new simulator training center in Lake Nona, FL, adjacent to Orlando Int'l Airport (KMCO). The 95,000-sq-ft facility at 6480 Nemours Pkwy just off the 417 can accommodate up to 12 full-motion simulators and 6 non-motion devices.

Available are five CAE-manufactured full-motion simulators—one each for the Gulfstream G650, Bombardier Challenger 3500, and Embraer Phenom 300, and two for the Embraer Praetor 600 are operational at the center. Those for the Pilatus PC-12 series 9, PC-12 NG, and the Daher TBM 700, 850, and 940 have been relocated to the facility.

Lake Nona Training Center will be their fourth training center two others in Orlando. Lee Vista Training Center and Parksouth Training Center and one in Scottsdale AZ. → [SIMCOM](#)

## UAS Update

### Reminder remote ID is in effect

**M**any UAS operators are already in compliance with Remote ID, but some are having a more difficult time of it. There may be some relief possible through March 16, 2024, depending on the particular UAS application.

FMI: [https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting\\_started/remote\\_id](https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/remote_id)

1. If you have not been to the [FAA UAS](#) website lately, please take-a-look! [FAA.gov/uas](#) →

## FAA Approves Testing Landmark for Unleaded Avgas Contender

### Another dog in the hunt

**O**n November 29, the Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions (EAGLE) team announced that the first high-octane unleaded aviation fuel has reached an FAA milestone. According to an FAA announcement, the agency "has approved the advancement to full-scale engine and flight testing of unleaded UL100E aviation fuel for piston-engine aircraft developed by LyondellBasell Industries/VP Racing. The UL100E fuel successfully passed a 150-hour engine durability test under the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative (PAFI), a collaborative industry/government testing program."

LyondellBasell is an international petroleum processing company with refineries in Germany, the Netherlands, and four in Texas. VP Racing specializes in competition racing fuels, including supplying high-octane fuel for competitors in the Unlimited Class at the Reno Air Races.

The next phase of PAFI testing involves full-scale engine and airframe testing and is expected to last 12 to 18 months. The UL100E fuel happens to be one of four unleaded fuel candidates within the test program. Now, if one of the fuels completes testing successfully, and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) publishes a production specification, the next step for the FAA would be to issue a fleet authorization, similar to that which it has already presented to GAMI for its G100UL. → [AVweb](#)

## NASA will roll out its X-59 in January

### The quiet supersonic flight demonstrator

**N**ASA plans to unveil its X-59 quiet supersonic technology (Quesst) demonstrator aircraft in mid-January at the Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works facility in Palmdale, CA.

Lockheed Martin has been developing the X-59 alongside NASA since 2016, and the first flight of the supersonic aircraft had been anticipated to take place this year. However, in October, agency officials delayed the inaugural flight to 2024, citing "several technical challenges identified over the course of 2023," including "intermittent issues with some of the safety-redundant computers." A firm date for the first flight will be scheduled after a flight readiness review.



Earlier this year, the Quesst team moved the X-59 out of the assembly room and onto the ramp to proceed with ground testing in preparation for the first flight. The X-59 then went to the paint barn at Skunk Works in mid-November for a fresh paint job and new livery that will be revealed at the rollout.

NASA says the aircraft will produce a much quieter "thump" as it breaks the sound barrier, and plans to fly the aircraft over communities in the U.S. in 2024 to collect data on how residents perceive the noise. It will then share that data with regulators who may want to reconsider bans on commercial supersonic flights. → [Ainonline.com](https://ainonline.com)

## NetJets - Pilots Rhubarb

### NetJets and the pilots union are in a dispute over pay and working conditions

**I**n November, there was a breakdown in negotiations between the independent union NetJets Association of Share Aircraft Pilots (NJASAP) and the Columbus, Ohio-based provider of private jet flights, owned by Berkshire Hathaway.

Pilots at NetJets say they are increasingly intent on leaving the carrier due to the low pay. But NetJets says pay rates have not increased because the union won't accept its mid-contract offer of a 52.5% raise.

A just-released survey of pilots, taken for the union, shows that two-thirds of respondents no longer view NetJets as a career destination and 40% expect to leave the company within a year due to the failure of negotiations to produce a better contract. The University of New Hampshire Survey Center surveyed about 500 of the company's 3,100 pilots in September and October.

According to Capt. Paulette Gilbert, the union's vice president and with NetJets 22-years, "We have not been a stepping stone," Gilbert said. "I spent 22 years trying to make NetJets the best it could be, but now even people in my demographic are looking at leaving because NetJets does not offer a competitive contract. You might make 60% less than the majors pay." Annual salaries at NetJets range from about \$77,000 for new hire pilots to about \$200,000, the union said.

NetJets Inc sells fractional ownership shares in private business jets. Founded as Executive Jet Airways in 1964, it was later renamed Executive Jet Aviation. Recognizable by the "QS" in the registration that stands for "Quarter Share". NetJets became the first private business jet charter and aircraft Management Company in the world. It launched its fractional ownership business in 1986 and became a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway in 1998. →

[Forbes](https://forbes.com) [ainonline.com](https://ainonline.com)

## No clues on the missing Gulfstream G-III

### Disappeared into thin air

**A** Gulfstream GIII, N337LR departed Canouan Island Airport in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on December 22 and disappeared. ATC lost contact with the business jet about seven minutes after takeoff on an afternoon sightseeing flight.

No debris field, fuel, or other evidence of the aircraft has been found in the waters where the airplane may have come down. On board were two crew and one passenger. The 1981 aircraft was registered to Jetstream Aviation, a corporation based in Cheyenne, WY.

Alluding to the possible transportation of illicit drugs or other nefarious purposes, local media have reported that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines authorities speculate that the aircraft may have deliberately cut ATC contact and headed for a private strip in Venezuela. However, at this time there is no confirmation of these allegations. →

[Ainonline.com](https://ainonline.com)

# Aviation History for January

## Speed-read or click the date

- [Jan. 1, 1941](#). First mobile Ground Controlled Interception (GCI) radar station, at RAF Sopley, is sited and staffed.
- [Jan. 2, 1945](#). Japanese aircraft attack USAAF B-29 Superfortress bases on Saipan for the last time.
- [Jan. 3, 1953](#). First flight of the Cessna 310, first twin-engined aircraft that Cessna produced after WWII.
- [Jan. 7, 2013](#). A Japan Airline 787 Dreamliner caught fire while parked at the gate at Boston's Logan airport due to a malfunctioning lithium-ion battery. Passengers and crew had already departed the aircraft.
- [Jan. 8, 2003](#). Air Midwest Flight 5481, a Beechcraft 1900, crashes on takeoff from Charlotte, North Carolina in the United States; all 19 passengers and 2 pilots are killed.
- [Jan. 9, 1990](#). Launch: Space Shuttle Columbia STS-32. Mission: SYNCOM IV-F5 satellite deployment, LDEF retrieval, IMAX.
- [Jan. 10, 1990](#). First flight of the McDonnell Douglas MD-11, a USA three-engine medium- to long-range wide-body jet airliner based on the DC-10.
- [Jan. 11, 1968](#). Lockheed SR-71B, 61-7957, Article 2008, one of only two dual control pilot trainers, is lost on approach to Beale AFB, CA, due to fuel cavitation induced engine failure. Instructor pilot and student eject safely.
- [Jan. 11, 1996](#). Launch: Space Shuttle Endeavour STS-72. Mission: Retrieve Japanese Satellite. Astronaut Winston Scott local resident completed nearly 7 hours EVA.
- [Jan. 12, 1997](#). Launch: Space Shuttle Atlantis STS-81. Mission: Shuttle-Mir docking.
- [Jan. 13, 1982](#). Air Florida Flight 90, a Boeing 737, crashes into the frozen Potomac River after takeoff from Washington National Airport; five on board survive; 78 on board and 4 on the ground die, including one initial survivor who dies after ensuring that the other crash survivors are rescued from the frozen river.
- [Jan. 14, 2019](#). The last airworthy Boeing 707 on a cargo flight operated by Saha Airlines crashes in a runway overrun at Fatah Air Base, in Iran. Fifteen of 16 die.
- [Jan. 15, 1992](#). USAF loses a Lockheed U-2 in the Sea of Japan
- [Jan. 16, 2003](#). Space Shuttle Columbia STS-107. Mission: SPACEHAB; Loss of vehicle and crew on 1 February 2003 during reentry. Cause; damage to the left wing's edge by debris from the external tank during launch.
- [Jan. 17, 2013](#). The EASA endorses the FAA's grounding of Boeing 787 Dreamliners. Pending investigation of the possibility of a fire hazard posed by their lithium-ion batteries.
- [Jan. 18, 1982](#). The 1982 USAF Thunderbirds Air Demonstration Team Diamond Crash involving four show aircraft
- [Jan. 21, 2010](#). Cargolux Flight 7933, a Boeing 747 struck a vehicle on landing at Luxembourg International Airport. The van suffered major damage and the aircraft sustained a damaged tire. ATC error.
- [Jan. 22, 1971](#). A US Navy P-3 Orion sets a distance record of 7,010 miles for an aircraft in its class.
- [Jan. 23, 1982](#). World Airways Flight 30, a McDonnell-Douglas DC-10, overshoots the runway at Boston, MA; two passengers were reported missing and never found.
- [Jan. 23, 1990](#). Mid-air collision between two Blue Angels F/A-18 during a practice session at El Centro. Angel Number 2, aircraft destroyed. Pilot Capt. Chase Moseley ejected. Angel Number 1 badly damaged but managed to land safely. Both pilots unharmed.
- [Jan. 25, 1990](#). Avianca Flight 52, a Boeing 707, runs out of fuel and crashes while attempting to land at JFK International Airport in New York. Of the 158 people on board, 85 survive
- [Jan. 26, 1990](#). The first of two new Air Force Ones, VIP variants of the Boeing 747-200, for the use of the United States President and his staff, are delivered.
- [Jan. 27, 1985](#). Landed: Space Shuttle Discovery STS-51-C. KSC, Runway 15. Mission: First classified DoD mission; Magnum satellite deployment.
- [Jan. 28, 1986](#). Launch: Space Shuttle Challenger STS-51-L. Mission: Planned TDRS deployment, Loss of vehicle and crew on launch. This was Teacher in Space Flight – Christa McAuliffe.
- [Jan. 29, 2005](#). A Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet crashes into ocean while landing on USS Kitty Hawk. The No. 3 arresting wire snapped, resulting in the plane plunging into the Pacific Ocean 100 miles SE of Yokosuka, Japan, hitting an SH-60F and an EA-6B Prowler en route to the water. Crew ejected safely.
- [Jan. 30, 1976](#). A Convair PQM-102A Delta Dagger, '627', converted from F-102A, belonging to the Fairchild Corporation according to a press report, crashed on landing at Bob Sikes Airport, Crestview, Florida when the landing gear collapsed. Airframe destroyed by fire. Sperry Flight Systems pilot, Earl C. Pearce, was unhurt.



## Outtakes

Applications for over \$1M in aviation scholarship money from EAA now accepted until March 1, 2024. [EAA.org](#)  
Valdor Aircraft has an STC to replace the radial in a DHC-2 Beaver to a P&W turboprop. [Valdor](#)  
Youtuber Trevor Jacob gets 6-months in Federal prison for bailing out of T-craft in 2021. Few condolences. [AVweb](#)  
US Air Force raises aviator retention bonus from \$15K to \$50K per year for 12-year commitment. [Flying](#)  
U.S. Air Force is shopping for sensors to locate/track balloons and small UAS. [AviationWeek](#)  
L3Harris plans next electronic warfare Viper Shield in December to go on block 72/72 F-16s. [L3Harris](#)  
SpaceX postpones launch of US military's secretive X-37B spaceplane for ground checks. [Reuters](#)  
Alaska's U.S. senators oppose the EPA from eliminating 100LL avgas too soon. [AVweb](#)  
NASA will unveil the X-59 Supersonic flight demonstrator in January. It's a Boomless supersonic. [Ainonline.com](#)  
Uh oh, Southwest Airlines is fined \$140 million for 2022 holiday meltdown, and failing to provide adequate customer service assistances. [DOT.gov](#)  
A new volcanic eruption in Iceland poses no threat to aviation services, so far. [AviationWeek](#)  
Embraer to double its service center capacity adding 3 MRO facilities. One at Sanford, FL open in 2Q 2024. [Embraer](#)  
Southwest Pilots salaries will increase by 50% over next 5 years. Amounts to a cumulative \$12B agreement. [AVweb](#)  
The NetJets union representing 3,100 pilots are in a rhubarb with Berkshire Hathaway over a pay hike and improved working conditions. [Forbes](#)  
United pilot ratified a new 4-year contract that ups pay 40.2% over life of the agreement. [Reuters](#)



## Florida Airshows 2024

For your calendar

Jan. 27	Aerospace & Aviation Day (KSFB)
Feb 18	Daytona 500 Thunderbird Flyover (KDAB)
Mar 23-24	The Great Florida Air Show (KMLB), - <b>Cancelled</b>
Mar 23-24	Space Coast Warbirds Airshow (KTIX), - <b>Cancelled</b>
Mar 29-31	Tampa Bay AirFest (KMCF) Thunderbirds
Apr 5-7	New Smyrna Beach SkyFest (KEVB)
Apr 9-14	50 <sup>th</sup> Sun-n-Fun Aerospace Expo (KLAL) (Thunderbirds)
May 3-5	Vero Beach Air Show (KVRB) (Blue Angels)

## “Say Again”



## “There I was”

The Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) publishes monthly their popular safety newsletter “Callback” written by pilots, controllers or aviation personnel and encourages reproduction as lessons learned. To protect anonymity the narratives are cleansed.

## “I Should Have Turned Around”

An instrument rated, but not IFR current, this DA40 pilot got caught between converging cloud layers.

■ *I would normally do any type of cross-country flying under IFR, but my IFR currency had lapsed. Preflight weather briefing called for VFR conditions along my route of flight with ceilings...gradually decreasing to 3,500 feet at my destination.... Initial cruising altitude was planned to be 5,500 feet and descend as needed to maintain VFR.... Approximately 50 NM from my destination, an overcast layer formed about 2,000 feet below me. I was VFR on top of the layer. ATIS at my destination was reporting a scattered layer around 2,600 feet. I made the decision to continue on until the layer broke up.*

*“I continued on between two layers, still in VFR conditions. In the distance it appeared that the lower layer was breaking apart and I believed I could break through.*



*“As I began descending, it was thicker than I had anticipated. I was able to maintain VFR cloud clearance, but I was down to 1,800 feet MSL and there were still clouds below and in front of me. I did not want to scud run or descend any further. I turned back to the north, where it was VFR between two broken layers. As I climbed, it appeared that the layers were converging and there would be no space to maintain VFR. With no remaining safe options, I called Approach and told them I was declaring an emergency, was unable to maintain VFR, and needed a pop-up IFR clearance to my original destination.*

*“By this time I was in solid IMC. I climbed to 4,000 feet and advised ATC of my altitude.... ATC asked me to verify I was IFR trained. I responded that I was instrument rated, but neglected to tell them I was not current. I flew an ILS approach and landed without any problem.*

*“There were many signs of this problem arising. First, when I read the weather briefing, there were parts of my flight that were at my minimums for VFR flight. I softened my VFR minimums even though I was not IFR current. Furthermore, as I began seeing overcast cloud layers above and below me, I continued on because I thought my destination would have a layer I could break through based on the ATIS. I had neglected to consider that ATIS information is sometimes up to an hour old and based on what I was seeing out the window, I should have turned around into better conditions and landed to reassess the situation.*

*“The lessons are to set strict minimums for VFR and IFR and don't violate them. Continuously analyze evolving weather conditions during flight and proactively deal with them. Make sure you are prepared for the worst-case scenario. Have a lower threshold for turning back into better weather conditions and land at a suitable field if you can't. I should have told ATC that although I was instrument rated, I was not current.”*





## Accident Report

*Accident reports are provided by the NTSB and offered here as an educational tool, intended to help pilots learn from the misfortunes of others.*

On August 2, 2016, about 2025 CDT, a Cessna 414A, N2735A, was destroyed when it impacted the Gulf of Mexico shortly after takeoff from Destin Executive Airport (DTS), Destin, FL. The commercial pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated under the provisions of Part 91. Dark night VMC prevailed and an IFR flight plan filed for the personal flight, which was destined for Abbeville Chris Crusta Memorial Airport (IYA), Abbeville, LA.

Between 1430 and 1440, the pilot arrived at DTS with several passengers. FBO personnel said the pilot went to the crew lounge to rest, then borrowed a crew car and obtained food. During the time, the aircraft was refueled with 100 gallons of 100LL. At 2001, the pilot spoke with a son for about 6 minutes.

Then an FBO security camera shows the pilot walking to the airplane. The navigation and strobe lights illuminated, consistent with engine start. The pilot obtain his IFR clearance at 2018:26 from Eglin Approach, which the pilot correctly read back; the controller instructed the pilot to hold for release. The airplane moved from its parking spot on the ramp about 2019, and at 2022:10, the pilot advised Eglin Approach Control he was ready to depart from runway 14. The controller verified the runway, and then advised the pilot to turn right on departure to a heading of 240°, and climb and maintain 2,000ft; the controller then released the airplane for takeoff. The pilot acknowledged, and at 2023:04, broadcast his departure on runway 14 on DTS CTAF. A tour helicopter gave his position and advised he'd be no factor. The accident pilot said, "do appreciate that." There was no further communication from the accident pilot on the CTAF or Eglin Approach Control.

Another pilot preparing to depart said he had a direct view of runway 14 as the accident airplane departed and it "looked and sounded normal." The only other activity in the airport traffic pattern was a tour helicopter. The pilot of the tour helicopter saw the accident airplane as it departed, and estimated that the airplane was between 200 and 300ft at the departure end of the runway. He said it continued climbing over condominiums south of the airport to an estimated altitude of 1,000ft. During his next two flights with passengers, Eglin Approach Control asked if he still had visual contact with the accident airplane; he reported that he did not.

Radar returns recorded by Eglin Approach Control recorded several targets associated with the accident airplane. The first four, had no altitudes but showed the airplane on runway heading. The fifth radar return was over water west of the extended runway centerline and no altitude. The next target depicted the airplane at 900ft and entering a descending right turn, with the last target at 2025:01 at 300ft on a westerly heading. The average calculated descent rate, rate of turn, and groundspeed between the last 2 radar returns was 4,800 fpm, 6.4° per second, and about 252 knots, respectively.

Most of the aircraft was retrieved from about 55ft of water 1.23nm from departure end of runway 14. The airplane descended at a steep rate and impacted the water in a nose-low attitude. Post-accident examination of the recovered wreckage, including flight controls, engines, and propellers revealed no evidence of preimpact failure or malfunction.

Four witnesses on a beach near the accident site saw the airplane flying in a southerly direction, then enter a right turn; one witness described the airplane's wings as being "near vertical" during the turn. The airplane continued west, parallel to the shore, for a short time as it descended and then impacted the water at an approximate 45° angle. One of the witnesses indicated that the airplane appeared to roll to a wings-level position before it began descending.

The pilot, age 63, held a Commercial certificate with AS/MEL/SES and instrument airplane. His most recent time-limited Special Issuance FAA Class II medical certificate with a limitation to wear corrective lenses was issued on August 18, 2014 and not valid after December 31, 2015. The pilot was not issued a subsequent medical certificate.

Family members reported that the pilot had over 15,000 total hours of flight experience, was in good health, and to their knowledge, was not taking any medication. They indicated he was in the process of obtaining a new medical certificate. He was the pilot for the co-owners of the airplane.

According to records provided by SimCom, Orlando, FL, the pilot obtained recurrent training in the Cessna 414 and 421 during a three-day period between July 22 and 24, 2016.

Although the pilot was instrument rated and had recently completed instrument currency training, the dark night conditions present at the time of the accident combined with a further lack of visual references due to the airplane's location over a large body of water, presented a situation conducive to the development of spatial disorientation.

Instructed by ATC to turn southwest after takeoff, then the continuation of the turn past the intended course and the airplane's steep bank angle and excessive rate of descent are consistent with a loss of control due to spatial disorientation.

The NTSB determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's loss of control due to spatial disorientation shortly after takeoff, while maneuvering over water during dark night conditions. ERA19FA234

## Mystery Airplane

### Can you identify this airplane?



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**C**ongrats to **John Twitchell** for identifying the **Grumman F9F Panther** as the December mystery airplane. It was Grumman's first jet-powered fighter and the first jet fighter operated by the U.S. Navy. Grumman first flew the XF9F-2 prototype on 21 November 1947.

Initial issues in testing were with directional and longitudinal stability and were quickly rectified. During one early land-based arresting gear test, the detachable rear section of the aircraft got yanked off; remedial changes were made to avoid any future recurrence. At that time, the few American engines that were available for use, such as the Allison J33 and Westinghouse J34, were not considered to be sufficiently reliable; thus, the Navy specified the imported Rolls-Royce Nene turbojet, which was also more powerful, at 5,000lb of thrust. Production aircraft were also powered by the Nene, built under license by Pratt & Whitney as the J42.

Since there was insufficient space within the wings and fuselage to provide enough fuel for the thirsty jet engine, the design team opted to add wingtip fuel tanks. The tip tanks had incidental advantage by providing a better roll-rate. The wings featured another innovation in the form of leading edge slats that generated additional lift while landing; speed brakes were also present on the underside of the fuselage.

In May 1949, carrier suitability trials began. By September 1949, the F9F was cleared for flight from aircraft carriers. The Panther saw its first combat on 3 July 1950, flying strikes from USS Valley Forge (CV-45). During the Korean War, it saw combat with both the Navy and Marines, notably scoring the first jet vs. jet kill in U.S. Navy history on 9 November 1950.



Classified as a carrier-based day fighter the F9F-5 powered by a Pratt & Whitney J48 turbojet, with up to 6,250 lbf thrust. Max speed 503kts, cruise 418kts, range 1,100nm, Service ceiling 42,800ft, climb 5,090ft/min. Crew 1, Armament: 4 x20mm cannon. It had eight hardpoints with 3,485lb capacity.

It was the widest used Navy jet fighter of the conflict, cumulatively flying 78,000 sorties. F9F-2s, F9F-3s and F9F-5s, as rugged attack aircraft, were able to sustain operations despite being frequently opposed by intense anti-aircraft fire. The air-conditioned cockpit, made for a welcome change from the humid environment of piston-powered aircraft

On 18 November 1952, the aircraft carrier USS Oriskany and three other carriers were operating in the Sea of Japan conducting air strikes against the North Korean city of Hoeryong. Lt Royce Williams and his wingman identified seven Soviet Naval Aviation MiGs heading towards the task force from the Russian mainland. The naval commanders ordered the two F9Fs to position themselves between the MiGs and the carrier. Four Soviet MiG-15s opened fire, despite the fact that the countries were not at war. Williams opened fire on the tail MiG, which dropped out of formation and was followed down by Williams's wingman. What followed was a 35-minute dogfight between Williams and six MiG-15s. The MiG-15 was a more capable plane, but Williams succeeded in shooting down three more. He attributed this to the Soviet pilots making mistakes. While heading back to the carriers, Williams was out of ammo, but still had one MiG on his tail. The re-appearance of his wingman on the MiG tail then scared this one off. By that time Williams's plane was so damaged that he could not turn anymore. The USS Oriskany was aligned with the plane, so he could land. After landing, his Panther had 263 hits by cannon shells or fragments and was beyond repair. It was pushed overboard.

Neil Armstrong, John Glenn and Red Sox Ted Williams were USMC pilots that flew the F9F during the Korean War. Withdrawn from combat service in 1956, the Panther remained active with the Naval and Marine Reserve units until 1959. The Blue Angels demo team used the Panther from 1951 until 1955. Their first jet.

A number of F9F variants are on display in museums. Likely only a couple are airworthy while others are in storage or being restored for display. →

Dick Peiffer



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**Avionics: ADS-B.** We have started to receive the first of the new Garmin ADS-B systems and have completed our first installation. These systems come in a variety of configurations including ADS-B out only, ADS-B out/in both options can either include a built in WAAS GPS or can take a GPS feed from a GNS430W or GTN series navigator. The ADS-B in can be displayed on a GTN or on an iPad with an optional wireless connect adapter.

**Bendix King KT74.** A popular direct slide in replacement for the KT76 series transponder. We have had a few of these out in the fleet paired with GNS-430Ws for a couple of years with perfect service records. Still the cheapest ADS-B out solution if you already have a WAAS Navigator.

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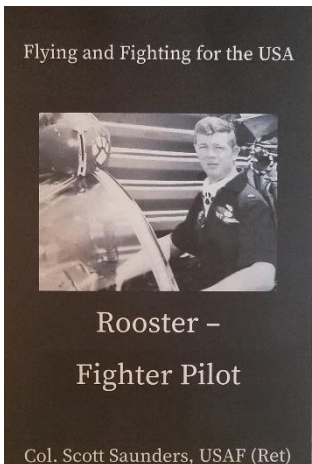
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Photos Here: <https://jimmygarrison.smugmug.com/N4014H/n-QnDj2/>. Contact Scott Saunders at 321-576-7076 or [scott01s@wmconnect.com](mailto:scott01s@wmconnect.com).

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