



# THE READY ROOM



MAY 2023

Heart Of America Wing Est. 1982

Vol.3, Issue 5

A **ready room** is the room on a Navy aircraft carrier where air crews hold their pre-flight and post-flight briefs. Crews serving during WWII considered the ready room to be a clubroom.

"The funny thing about a ready room is that you get attached to the hole. As much as you are attached to the ship. It's more than sentiment. It's an urge for protection. The loneliest feeling in the whole of a carrier pilot's world is when he's at sea with the gas running low, and he can't see his carrier. You think of the ready room then, and the noisy guys who make it the most desirable place in the world. It's your office, you live in it, it is the big thing in your life. [...] You sweat and worry in it, and grouse and argue, and you get mad at it when you can't hear yourself speak because everyone is yelling at once, but you're deeply attached to the place.

— Tommy Booth

*"Wildcats" Over Casablanca*

## Wing Leader's Report

We continue to have great speakers at our monthly meetings. Dave Dyer does an excellent job of lining up folks with an interesting story to share. I know the summer months are a busy time, but I encourage you to attend if you can.

Last week we almost did a flyover for the "Run to the Wall" event. It is a group of motorcyclists traveling from California to Washington DC to honor veterans. I say almost, because they were early and they had already gone through our pickup point by the time that we got there, so we ended up flying over their lunch spot in Concordia Missouri. They were grateful and even sent us some gas money to help with the fuel costs. We had 3 airplanes on this trip: Brian VB and John E. in Brian's PT-26, John W. and Joshua E. in the Stearman, and myself and Rick S. in my Birddog. We flew a total of about 2 hours each. Thanks to Bob Robinson for getting this set up

We also had an event at the hangar last week. It was a FAA FAAST seminar. The featured speaker was helicopter pilot Johnny Rolands of KMBC News Channel 9. The Aviation Weather Center was also involved to explain how aviation weather works. There were about 60 people in attendance and the weather was great, with a thunderstorm to kick the meeting off!

The second Open Hangar Day is June 3rd. We will be celebrating the U.S. Army's birthday. Please come out and help if you can. The first OHD was the first weekend in May, and was a great start to this year's events. If you would like to help, reach out to Jesse Plous and he will get you set up.

In the next couple of weeks we will be taking the PT-19 to a shop in Junction City, where they will finish up the restoration process. We will need a few bodies to load the trailers and drive them to Junction City. Let me know if you want to help and I will try to notify you of our planned schedule.

Hope to see you at a Staff meeting or Monthly meeting soon.

**NEXT MEETING:**

**17 JUN, 10:00**

**EDUCATE – INSPIRE – HONOR**

-- Steve Zimmerman

## OPEN HANGAR DAYS – 2023 KICK OFF!

We kicked off our Open Hangar Day season on May 6th. Education Officer Jesse Plous spearheaded a very successful first event for 2023. **"Always and Furever"** pet rescue shelter brought a display, encouraging visitors to adopt a "vintage" pet as their own (Always and Furever specializes in older dogs looking for adoption). It was good to see our friends from the **Heart of America Free Flight Association (HAFFA)** again. The HAFFA volunteers showed young visitors how to make balsa-wood framed and tissue covered model planes. One of their most popular activities is showing young visitors how to make their own airplanes from Styrofoam plates. A measure of how popular those airplanes are is that when we clean up after an OHD, we may find paper, trash, and sometimes toys around the hangar, but we never find abandoned Styrofoam planes. The kids love to take them home!

While it was too windy to fly the Stearman, volunteers from VVA243 were able to open up the

Huey helicopter and fire up its custom-built sound system. Interspersed between recordings of the distinctive Huey "whop, whop, whop" rotor sound they played a variety of 1960s music. The Huey worked great to provide a musical background for OHD.

Of course, we grilled hotdogs and served up snacks and drinks, made dogtags, painted faces and sprayed "crazy hair" hair color on those wanting it, fired up our flight simulators, and showed visitors around our hangar and museum. It was a great event, but we couldn't do it without the tireless efforts of CAF-HOA members and non-CAF volunteer friends. Thanks to all who helped with the myriad of tasks required to put on an Open Hangar Day.

Everyone seemed to have a great time at our first Community Outreach event for the year. We'll see you all in June!

-- Brian VonBevern



Brian Von Bevern sitting with volunteer Patty Osbern... it's nice that the Wing has friends who help out!!



Hotdogs cooked to order... rare, medium, or way too well done!



Can't have an OHD without a debrief! Celebrating a successful day.





Our friends from HAFFA were back for 2023. Good to see them again!

How many CAF-ers does it take to grill a hot dog???



**OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Steve Zimmerman, Mark McMahon, Brian VonBevern, and I took a field trip to Junction City, KS to interview and make preparations to transfer all PT-19 components for re-assembly to flying condition. Details to follow from Maintenance, but this project could begin pretty soon and with any luck, our #19 might be airworthy this time next year! Interesting side note - the green Interstate L-6 shown in the photo used to belong to one of the earliest HOA Wing members, Bruce Mitchell. Small world!



A couple of days ago, John Wittenborn and I had breakfast with Dale Warman, the founding force behind the Lineman's Rodeo now held in Bonner Springs, KS. Our Wing's relationship with Dale and the Rodeo can be measured in decades. John and I were finally able to give Dale his Christmas presents as he was unable to attend our gathering last December. October 14th is the next scheduled event and we hope the weather permits our annual flight to salute the Lineman teams from around the world.

The weather is starting to warm up but the winds continue to be cantankerous. This month got its name because it May storm, it May snow, it May be hot, it May be cold, etc. We have been able to give our first ride of this season a few weeks ago and more are on the horizon.

(NOTE: Congrats to Jesse Plous on passing his Private Pilot checkride, & Joshua Ehrenfield on his 1<sup>st</sup> Solo!)

Upcoming events:

July 6-9 - Wings over Wichita. Joining up with the B-29 DOC in their splendid hangar to sell a few rides.

August 18-20 - Kansas City Air Show at New Century Air Center. We hope to have a display on the ramp and will need many volunteers.

October 14 - Lineman's Rodeo.

**Wing Staff Meeting**  
**1 Jun, 7 PM**

**Break out your sunscreen (but don't put your sweater away quite yet) and come join in on the fun.**

-- Bob Robinson



## FACILITY RENTALS UPDATE

The HOA has been honored over the last few years to provide the facilities for various events. The HOA has helped with weddings, fund raisers, birthday parties, corporate meetings, birthday parties, Top Gun parties, dances, shrimp fest, kid's activities, just to name a few. On Saturday April 22th, the Hangar had the privilege to host something entirely different from the norm.

Master Chief Petty Officer Christopher "Rabbit" Beeding held his retirement ceremony in the HOA Hangar. The ceremony was impressive! Chris, and his wife Corynn, are both graduates of Olathe schools. Family and friends from all parts of the country were in attendance, with a special crew from Whidbey Island, WA. Chris and family look forward to retirement here in Olathe and are eager to embark on his next career.

-- Jim Neese





## MONEY MATTERS

Hello HOA members and friends.

We have some good financial results so far this year. For the first four months, our revenue is up about 52%, and our net income is up about 15%. This is primarily due to renting our hangar for weddings and special events. The Wing is in good shape on a cash basis, with more funds in our checking account as of April 30<sup>th</sup> than at this time last year, primarily due to revenues from the AAA event, and funds from upcoming hangar rentals.

We had a successful "Open Hangar Day" on May 6<sup>th</sup>, the first of this year, with a total of \$560 in revenue. Thanks to all who participated!

We are so happy to see the new pavement on the North side of the hangar. As Finance Officer, I am so glad that

the Wing did not have to pay for this work! (It was paid for by the Johnson County Airport Commission.)

Thank you to those who have paid your 2023 HOA dues. If you have not yet paid, please submit your 2023 annual dues to both our Heart of America Wing, and to CAF National in Dallas. As of today, our Wing has received dues payments from about 75% of a total of 113 members who were active last year.

If you pay the HOA dues with cash or a check, the cost is \$50, the same as last year. However, if you pay on-line, the cost is \$52. If you want to pay on-line, here is the link: <https://square.link/u/PZ0y5yh8>

Let me know if you have any questions!

-- Mark Schlicht



*Not many people realize that the aviation weather forecasts and reports for the whole nation---and much of the rest of the world---originate here in Kansas City at the Aviation Weather Center (AWC). The AWC is located about 3 miles southeast of the Kansas City International Airport, co-located with the National Weather Service (NWS) Central Regional Headquarters and the NWS Training Center. On May 24th, we hosted a seminar at the hangar featuring meteorologists from the AWC.*

*The AWC is getting ready to launch the new version of their website---[www.https://www.aviationweather.gov](https://www.aviationweather.gov) they came to the CAF-HOA to explain the improvements the new site will bring, as well as explain what services they offer to the flying public.*

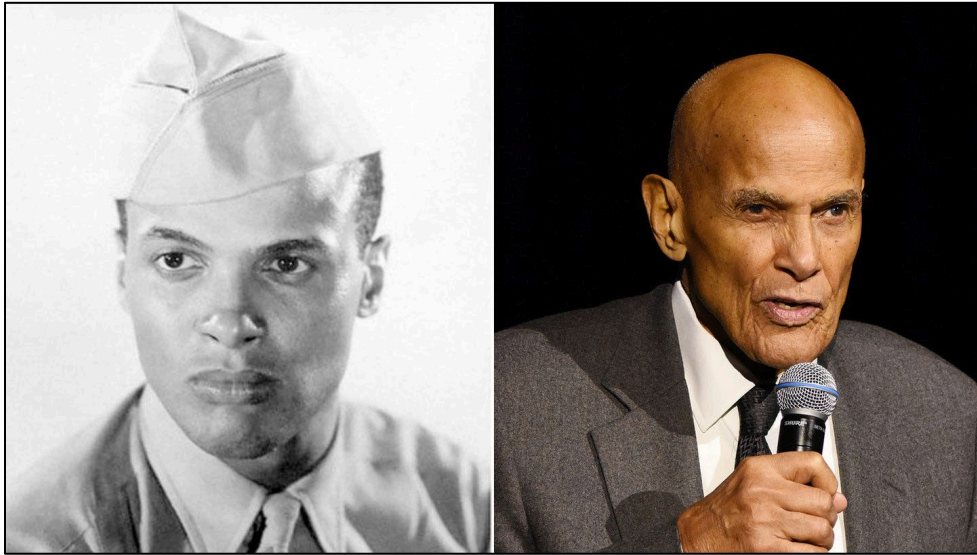
*Johnny Rowlands, longtime Kansas City area helicopter pilot and airborne television reporter, was the featured speaker at the event. Johnny often reports on the weather from his unique perspective above the city in his helicopter NewsChopper 9.*



## Famed Calypso singer, Navy veteran, and civil rights activist Harry Belafonte passes away

Harry Belafonte joined the Navy in 1944 one day after his 17th birthday.

BY JEFF SCHOGOL | PUBLISHED APR 25, 2023 4:02 PM EDT



Famed Calypso singer and civil rights activist Harry Belafonte, who served in the Navy during World War II, died on Tuesday (25 Apr 2023) at the age of 96. Belafonte, whose repertoire of hit songs includes “Jump in the Line” and “Banana Boat Song,” left high school in 1944 to enlist in the Navy on the day after his 17th birthday. His time in the Navy proved to be a difficult experience, where he faced the institutionalized racism that he would later fight against.

The U.S. military was racially segregated at the time, and black service members were officially treated as unequal to their white counterparts. Most black sailors were assigned support roles, and Belafonte was assigned to Port Chicago, California, to load ships taking part in the Pacific War, according to a Feb 2022 Defense Department news story about Belafonte. He arrived at Port Chicago not long after the base was severely damaged by an apocalyptic explosion that took place on July 14, 1944, as two ships were being loaded with munitions. Two-thirds of the 320 people killed by the blast were black sailors. Another 290 people were injured.



An explosion at Port Chicago while loading ammunition onto ships killed 320 people on July 17, 1944 (Photographer Unknown/San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images)

“It was the worst home front disaster of World War II, but almost no one knows about it or what followed,” Belafonte described the disaster, according to the Defense Department news story. Shortly after the disaster, 328 ordnance battalion sailors refused to work until conditions at Port Chicago improved. Ultimately, 50 of the sailors were referred to a general court-martial for mutiny and sentenced to prison. Those sailors were later

released in January 1946. It's clear Belafonte was deeply affected by what happened at Port Chicago. On Tuesday, a Navy spokesperson provided Task & Purpose with a statement in honor of Belafonte's life and legacy. "We're thankful for his service to the Navy and nation," the spokesperson said. "As we wish another member of the greatest generation fair winds and following seas, we remember his legacy of service – both in an out of uniform."

After the war, Belafonte used his GI Bill benefits to take classes at the New York School Dramatic Workshop and began singing at nightclubs to help pay the bills. His first major hit was "Calypso" in 1956. Belafonte also became an active civil rights activist, working with Martin Luther King Jr., although he later became estranged from King's children. He also became such an outspoken critic of President George W. Bush that in 2002 he called Secretary of State Colin Powell a "house slave" for serving in Bush's cabinet.

Among those who paid tribute to Belafonte on Tuesday was Bernice King, the youngest child of Martin Luther King Jr., who also tweeted a picture of Belafonte accompanying her mother Coretta Scott King at her father's funeral. She also recalled how Belafonte would pay for babysitters to watch the King children, adding: "I won't forget...Rest well, sir."

[https://taskandpurpose.com/news/harry-belafonte-navy-veteran/?utm\\_campaign=dfn-ebb&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=sailthru&SToverlay=2002c2d9-c344-4bbb-8610-e5794efcfa7d](https://taskandpurpose.com/news/harry-belafonte-navy-veteran/?utm_campaign=dfn-ebb&utm_medium=email&utm_source=sailthru&SToverlay=2002c2d9-c344-4bbb-8610-e5794efcfa7d)



This is a link to a great story, but it just WAY too long to put in the newsletter. Copy and paste the link into your internet browser to read it... <https://www.vintagewings.ca/stories/piper-cubs-of-the-luftwaffe>



VINTAGE WINGS OF CANADA  
LES AILES D'ÉPOQUE DU CANADA

## PIPER CUBS OF THE LUFTWAFFE

Dave O'Malley



In my mind, there are not many aircraft from the past 114 years that are a perfect distillation of all that is wondrous, beautiful and simple about powered flight. Some are damn fast, many lethal. Some are sexy like an Italian sports car, some boring like a city bus. Some extraordinarily complex and breathtakingly large. Some can do things even birds cannot, but not without the aid of computers. Some don't even need the pilot. But few represent the joy, the purity, or the avian soul of powered flight like the Piper J-3 Cub. Painted in the cheeriest of yellow hues, emblazoned with the cutest red bear cub symbol imaginable, the typical Cub is the very essence of flight. With a broad straight wing, a perky set of wheels, just enough instruments to keep you from killing yourself, and open to the world on both sides on a warm and fragrant day, the Cub is recognized for its greatness and its goodness by even the most jaded warbird or airline pilot...



# On this day in history, March 13, 1942, US Army K-9 Corps begins training dogs to fight in World War II

## Chips heroically forced enemy machine gunners to surrender on Sicily; 25 canines killed on Guam fighting with Marines

By [Kerry J. Byrne](#) | [Fox News](#)

The U.S. Army K-9 Corps, which trained more than 10,000 dogs to serve several branches of the American military in World War II, began barking orders to its four-legged foot soldiers on this day in history, March 13, 1942. "Dogs have been associated with the United States Army since its inception, but their role has been primarily that of a mascot or in some other unofficial capacity," Dr. Arthur W. Bergeron Jr. of the U.S. Army Military History Institute wrote in 2016. He added, "Not until World War II did the Army make the connection



official."

**(Original Caption) 11/3/1945-WAR DOGS RETURN... First members of infantry scout dog platoons to arrive from overseas get back their land legs by limbering up with their masters, as this one does here. He returned with over 90 dogs that served with the 5th Army in Italy. (Getty Images)**

The American Kennel Club organized a civilian group called Dogs for Defense in January 1942, in the frantic weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor that roused the righteous might of the American people — and American pups. Lieutenant Colonel Clifford C. Smith of the Army Quartermaster Corps became aware of the American Kennel Club effort and ran the idea of the K-9 Corps up the flagpole with Major General Edmund B. Gregory. The unit

won approval of Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson and began training dogs for the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, in addition to the Army.

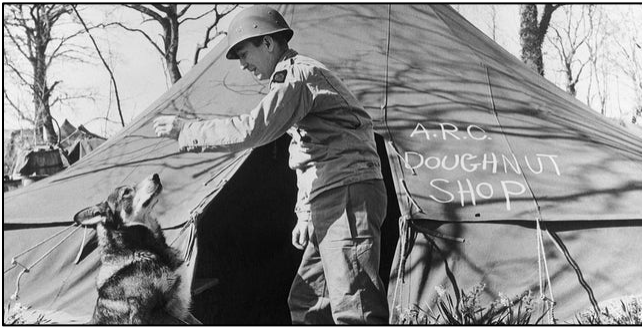
"The K-9 Corps initially accepted over 30 breeds of dogs, but the list was soon narrowed to seven: German Shepherds, Belgian sheepdogs, Doberman Pinschers, Collies, Siberian Huskies, Malamutes and Eskimo dogs," reports The U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum of Fayetteville, North Carolina. "Members of the K-9 Corps were trained for a total of 8 to 12 weeks. After basic obedience training, they were sent through one of four specialized programs to prepare them for work as sentry dogs, scout or patrol dogs, messenger dogs or mine-detection dogs."

**"Dogs have been associated with the United States Army since its inception." — U.S. Army Military History Institute**

Dogs in active duty combat served as scouts and sentinels, patrolling the movements of enemy forces or warning of potential surprise attacks. Chips, a combat canine serving with the 3rd Infantry Division in Sicily in 1943, became a U.S. Army legend when the dauntless dog attacked a machine gun emplacement and — despite suffering a gunshot wound — forced the garrison to surrender.

"Among the troops that hit the beach was the 3rd Military Police Platoon, 30th Infantry Regiment, containing Pvt. John R. Rowell of





**Chips, a war dog who was recommended for gallantry in the Sicilian campaign, is shown getting a donut from a GI. (Getty Images)**

Arkansas and his sentry dog, Chips," states the Defense Media Network.

**"I saw one Italian soldier come out with Chips at his throat ... Three others followed, holding their hands above their heads." — Pvt. John Rowell**

"As dawn broke, the platoon was working its way inland when a machine gun nest hidden in what appeared to be a nearby peasant hut opened fire. Rowell and the rest of the platoon immediately hit the ground. But Chips broke free from his handler and, snarling, raced into the hut ... The soldiers heard someone inside the hut fire a pistol." Said Pvt. Rowell of the incident, "Then there was an awful lot of noise and the firing stopped."

"I saw one Italian soldier come out with Chips at his throat. I called him off before he could kill the man. Three others followed, holding their hands above their heads." The wounded Chips was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star and the Purple Heart — though the awards were later rescinded by Army policy, which opposed such commendations for animals.

Dogs served heroically in the Pacific Theater, too, most notably in the Battle of Guam in 1944.

"Kurt, a Doberman Pinscher, was a scout dog during WWII and is estimated to have saved the lives of 250 Marines on Guam," writes the website of the National Services Animal Monument, which has been proposed as a way

to honor America's K-9s. "He was mortally wounded when he went ahead of the troops to alert them to the dangers ahead."

An incredible 25 members of the K-9 Corps were killed in Guam, making it perhaps the deadliest engagement for dogs in American history. The National War Dog Cemetery was dedicated at Naval Base Guam in 1994 to honor the sacrifices of the brave American troops.

Dogs have served the United States Armed Forces since the earliest days of the nation. The American Battlefield Trust traces canine service to country to the American Revolution and "Father of the American Foxhound" — George Washington himself. Foxhounds bred by Gen. Washington in Mount Vernon were "a smarter and faster variant of its French and British counterparts," boasts the trust. "The breed was officially recognized by the American Kennel Club in 1886. The American Foxhound is now the official state dog of Washington's home state of Virginia." Dogs had emerged as a formidable fighting force in Europe in World War I, when more than 1 million dogs served on all sides of the conflict.

**"As the first animal movie star, Rin Tin Tin made the little-known German Shepherd breed famous across the country." — U.S. Army Airborne Museum**



**"Dog of the Regiment" poster starring Rin Tin Tin, 1927. (LMPC via Getty Images)**

"The most famous dog to emerge from the war was Rin Tin Tin, an abandoned German war dog found in France in 1918 and taken to the United States, where he made his film debut in

the 1922 silent film 'The Man from Hell's River,'" writes The U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum. "As the first animal movie star, Rin Tin Tin made the little-known German Shepherd breed famous across the country." Rin Tin Tin reportedly won the first-ever Oscar for Best Actor in 1929, only to have the reward rescinded and given instead to German actor Emil Jennings. "It has been seen as one of the darkest scandals in Academy history: the tale of a cherished Hollywood star, robbed of his rightful best actor Oscar by a craven Hollywood establishment," the Guardian of London reported in 2012.

The story cited Rin Tin Tin biographer Susan Orlean as one of the sources of the rumor of injustice.

The U.S. Army states that it employed 1,500 dogs during the Korean War, 4,000 in the Vietnam War and hundreds more in Iraq and Afghanistan. Dogs of war provide service to troops in ways that cannot always be encapsulated in a combat report or pop-culture honor, writes the American Battlefield Trust. "In wartime, dogs would help hunt and act as couriers, but they also provided a much-needed morale boost to the homesick injured, and disillusioned soldiers."

<https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/this-day-history-march-13-1942-us-army-k-9-corps-begins-training-dogs-fight-world-war-ii>



This video is almost 2 hours long and tells the story of the glider mission during WWII. Copy and paste the link into your internet browser to watch it. <https://youtu.be/SPkHHkGR-Es>



## **CC: Silent Wings - The American Glider Pilots of WW II EVENTS CALENDAR**



Jun 3	Open Hangar Day
Jul 1	Open Hangar Day
Jul 6-9	Wings Over Wichita
Jul 14	Hope Kids (at the CAF Hangar)
Jul 15	Dinner/Dance at CAF Hangar
Aug 18-20	Kansas City Air Show at New Century Airfield
Sep 2	Open Hangar Day
Oct 7	Open Hangar Day
Oct 14	Lineman's Rodeo

**Wing Elected Staff Officers:**

**Wing Leader:** Steve Zimmerman

**Executive Officer:** John Wittenborn

**Finance Officer:** Mark Schlicht

**Operations Officer:** Bob Robinson

**Maintenance Officer:** Mark  
McMahon

**Safety Officer:** Bill England

**Adjutant:** Debbie Atcheson

**Development Officer:** Jim Neese

**Education Officer:** Jesse Plous

**Wing Appointed Staff Officers:**

**Guest Speaker/Veteran Outreach:**  
Dave Dyer

**PIO:** Brian VonBevern

**Open Hangar Day Operations:** Jesse  
Plous

**Facility Rentals:** Jim Neese

**Wing Newsletter:** Anita Mack

**Museum & Library Curator:** Darren  
Roberts

**Photographer:** John English



**COMMEMORATIVE  
AIR FORCE**