



# STRAIGHT SCOOP

Volume XVII Number 10 October 2012

To promote the acquisition, restoration, safe operation, preservation and display of historic aircraft, preserve aviation history and provide an educational venue for the community

## In Case You Missed It: September 19 Member Meeting Guest Speaker Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Wayne Laessig and the AC-119 Gunship

Our guest speaker at the member meeting on September 19 was Lieutenant Colonel Wayne Laessig USAF (Ret.) As Wayne puts it, the Air Force can be very adaptable at times, putting older or unusual aircraft to use in unexpected ways. Case in point: the story he told us of the AC-119 gunships he flew with an Air Force Special Operations Squadron during the Vietnam War. The AC-119 never received the recognition of its younger and older siblings, despite doing a superb job.

The Air Force was initially extremely resistant to the concept of a "gunship" but eventually bowed to the constant pressure exerted by one Captain (later Colonel) Ron Terry. He executed his own unique bureaucratic and tactical end-around to demonstrate their efficacy in combat in late 1964. This resulted in the well-known AC-47. After its success, the plan was to produce the AC-130 but the C-130s necessary were required in their intended role as transport planes. So some older C-119 "Flying Boxcar" transports were converted by adding four 7.62mm miniguns and various infrared and other sights and detectors. A more complete history can be found here:  
<http://www.theaviationzone.com/factsheets/gunships.asp>



AC-119K "Stinger". The pods hanging from the wings are jet engines. The dark protrusion on the plane's port side is radar. Just under the radar you can see one of the two 20mm Vulcan cannons.

### All is Not as it Initially Seems

At first he was naively exuberant at being assigned to C-119 cargo planes flying out of San Francisco. To him it sounded like a life of milk runs. That was until an older and wiser flier explained that it was actually AC-119G "Shadow" gunships and that the reference to San Francisco really meant a trip to Vietnam.

(Continued on Page 3)

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

(707) 575-7900

## The Pacific Coast Air Museum

**Location:** At the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport, North of Santa Rosa, West of Highway 101, at 2230 Becker Blvd, off North Laughlin Road.

**Hours:** Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. 10:00am—4:00pm.

**“Climb Aboard”:** A selected aircraft is available to “Climb Aboard” the third weekend of each month (weather permitting). Please visit our web site at [www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org](http://www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org) or call 707-575-7900 for details or further information.

**Member Meetings:** Normally held on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm at Mesa Beverage Company, Inc. 3200 N. Laughlin Road, Santa Rosa, CA

### “Straight Scoop”

The museum newsletter, “Straight Scoop” is published monthly and is available online on the museum’s web site. Members are highly encouraged to submit articles for possible publication. The deadline is the 26th of the month prior to publication. All articles in the newsletter are covered by copyright. If you wish to submit articles or use any of the content, please contact: [Peter Loughlin](mailto:Peter.Loughlin@loughlinmarketing.com), Editor, in care of the Pacific Coast Air Museum, 2230 Becker Blvd., Santa Rosa, CA 95403, [pcam-news@loughlinmarketing.com](mailto:pcam-news@loughlinmarketing.com), 707-575-7900.

### Membership Renewals:

\$30 per year individual; \$45 per year for families. Send renewals to the museum, address below.

**Address Corrections:** Please send to: Pacific Coast Air Museum, 2230 Becker Blvd., Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Please visit our web site at [www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org](http://www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org) or call 707-575-7900 for details or further information.

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### September 19 Member Meeting Guest Speaker, continued

Wayne soon found himself in Southeast Asia, learning from those who had already learned the hard way. He served there and flew during 1972 and 1973. They were flying numerous night missions, often supported U.S. fire bases, and the truck busters even had a successful tank busting mission over the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

As the new guy he was put in the co-pilot's seat. The gunships flew low and slow, and when they fired it flew in a 30 degree left bank, slowly circling the target. Every seventh round fired was a tracer which made it easier for the pilot to see what he was hitting. The tracers also disclosed the plane's exact location, which unfortunately made it easier for enemy anti-aircraft crews. Too many gunships were lost to triple-A or missiles.

#### Flying a Transport Like a Fighter

AA fire directed at the gunship could actually be seen by the plane's crew, and experienced spotters could judge whether the fire they saw was a threat or not. They would call out directions to the pilots, telling them in no uncertain terms to break left or right. Wayne's colorful account made it clear that the degree of urgency in the voices of the spotters translated proportionally to the degree of bank required and the dispatch with which it should be executed. It seems a docile C-119 could be pitched around the sky when the pilots were properly motivated and thrown 90 degrees up onto one wingtip or the other. At least two were unintentionally flipped onto their backs and recovered via split-s. Later "K" models (named "Stinger") had a jet engine under each wing, and some co-pilots would even idle one and go full on the other to assist in turns.

A few pilots executed a "hover" maneuver when both break left and break right were called simultaneously. They threw the engines to idle, pulled the yoke straight back, added some bank, and stalled the plane so it would drop, hopefully out of the zone of AA fire. Wayne had some rather wry comments about what all this was like for the gunners servicing the weaponry in the back of the plane, and the effect of a sudden 2G turn on a 150-pound 20mm ammo can. Somehow the planes' G-meters "disappeared..." (They didn't want to know how badly they were overstressing the planes and it avoided trouble with maintenance crews.)

When warned about approaching MiGs, the enterprising gunship pilots turned so their left flanks were broadside on to the fighters and ready to start firing. To Wayne's knowledge no enemy aircraft were ever shot down like this but it kept them away. The North Vietnamese pilots turned back and left them alone.

#### AC-119 Gunship Association and Reunions

The pilots and crews of the gunships were an unusually close-knit team. Everyone relied heavily on everyone



The three types of gunships carried various combinations of miniguns, Gatling cannons, and other high-powered ordnance firing out the left side of the plane, roughly parallel to the wing. They would circle the target in a bank, with their guns in theory retaining their aim on one point. Every seventh round was a tracer. Think about that as you look at this picture of the cone of fire, and imagine the immense "weight of broadside" these ships could hurl.

## September 19 Member Meeting Guest Speaker, concluded

else, to warn of enemy fire, to warn of sudden turns, to keep the guns served, and to keep out of the trees. All told, over 5,000 men flew, manned, maintained, and managed the AC-119s between 1968 and 1973. In the 1990s the AC-119 Gunship Association was formed. They've held eleven reunions so far, and the most recent was September 26 – 30 of this year.

### The Last Remaining AC-119

Of the 52 AC-119s there is only one known to have survived. It was discovered sitting neglected on the ramp of what is now Tan Son Nhut Airport, by someone poring over a 2006 Google Earth satellite image. Clandestine ops by an unnamed person or persons sympathetic to the cause provided photos that proved that it is indeed an AC-119K, tail number 53-7850. Amazingly, this is a plane that Wayne flew.

The AC-119 Gunship Association marshaled its resources and launched a campaign to retrieve and restore this ship to static display condition. They have approached the Vietnamese, who are unfortunately very reluctant to part with it.

They are building a museum where it and other aircraft from both sides of the war would be displayed. However, there are signs that further negotiation could be successful, which is good because the airframe is badly corroded and getting worse all the time. The Association is ready to move the moment they get the word, with shipping containers, transport, and storage all prepared in advance.

We at the Pacific Coast Air Museum thank Wayne Laessig for his excellent presentation. We also offer our best wishes to him and the AC-119 Gunship Association in their efforts to retrieve this historic aircraft. It represents the heroism of an unsung group of dedicated people, and deserves a place among the other icons of America's rich military history.



AC-119K #53-7850 at Tan Son Nhut Airport, in 2010



### About Wayne Laessig

Wayne hails from Magnolia, New Jersey. He received his degree in English from Glassboro College in 1970, so the Air Force made him a pilot, earning his wings in 1971. He later earned a Masters in Communication (people-stuff, not electronics) so the Air Force made him a Manufacturing & Quality Assurance Manager for a while, before they realized his college degrees were better suited to piloting C-5s, in which he logged more than 5,000 hours. After retiring from the Air Force, he's been hunting, fishing, doing organizational assessment consulting (Baldrige if that rings a bell), and working to get the AC-119 into the Vietnam histories. He currently lives in Vacaville, California with Lynette, his wife of 38 years, and Lynette's Mom, who is 92. Their son Robin and daughter-in-law Cathy live a few miles away, and a weekly family night keeps them all close. Wayne is the current "Board Member at Large" of the AC-119 Association.

## October 17, 2012 Speaker Information

“Fasten your designer uniform buttons while author Shelby Valentine takes you on an exciting true-life, Pan Am flight into the world of Iranian caviar and Dom Perignon Champagne.” She and co-author Ramona Fillman join us Wednesday evening October 17 to talk about their book, **Pan Am Unbuckled**, which chronicles Shelby’s flying experiences with Pan Am from 1969 through the airline’s last days in 1991.

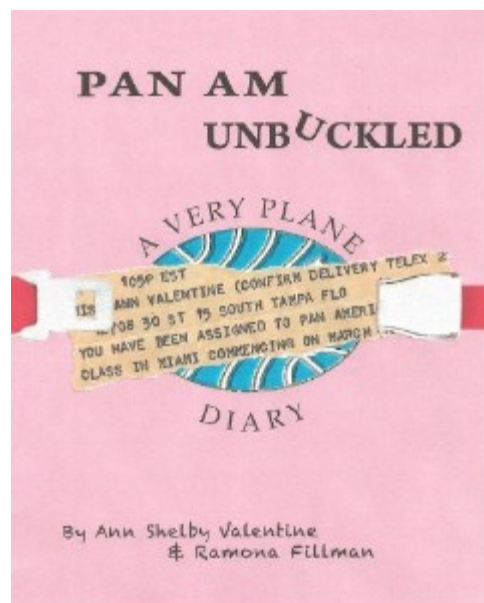
**Pan Am Unbuckled** relates the author’s adventures as a stewardess/flight attendant. It details how the airline gave her global access - from her first assignment for a round-the-world flight aboard the Boeing 707, to hosting planes full of military servicemen on leave from Vietnam, to taking these same servicemen back to the U.S. after their tour of duty was over. When speaking about the Pan Am flight attendants, Shelby philosophizes, “We are like Shakers. When we are gone, it’s all over. There will never again be another group of Pan Am flight attendants.”

There will be autographed book sales at the meeting and the authors have graciously agreed to donate a significant portion of the sales to the Pacific Coast Air Museum.

### About the Speakers

Ms. Valentine resides in Calistoga and is a Pique Assiette Mosaic Artist. She spent 25 years in Palo Alto, moving to Calistoga in 2008 with her husband Doug Molitor. Her mother took her and her sister to the Middle East in the early 1960s, where they rode camels into the desert to view the pyramids. She went to school in Switzerland. She worked as a flight attendant for Pan American beginning in 1969, and they sent her to the University of Moscow for language studies, hiring her because she spoke Russian. She has raised three children, now in their 20s and 30s. She was active in the Friends of the Palo Alto Library, and now serves as the Calistoga Commissioner to the Napa City-County Library – and she also sits on the Mosquito Abatement Board. She also spent years as the Governor’s Appointee to the Area Board 7 on Developmental Disabilities, partially because of her eldest son’s developmental disabilities.

Ms. Fillman grew up in the small town of Myrtle Creek, Oregon. She has degrees in Physical Therapy and Hospital Administration from Loma Linda University. She raised her daughter, Tiana, with her husband, Orvin, in Hawaii-- where she was involved in pediatric orthopedic research with Shriners Hospitals for Children. Her writing interests include screenplays and she is a certified producer at 'Olelo Community Television in Hawaii. She recently moved to Calistoga in Napa Valley.



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## New Members

Arvid Sorum – Santa Rosa

Phil Johannes – Sonoma

## Announcing the Second Annual Aviation Scholarship Deadline for Application: November 30, 2012!

For the second year running, the Pacific Coast Air Museum is offering a \$1,000 scholarship for a student working towards a vocation in aviation. They can be studying in a wide variety of fields: flying (ground school / flight training), avionics, A&E, A&P, air traffic control, and more. The scholarship is funded through the earnings of the Educational Department and the generous support from board members and the membership.

The candidate must be a member of the Pacific Coast Air Museum and be enrolled in an institution of higher learning. Their major can be technical, vocational, or academic. They can be nominated by a PCAM member or they can apply in writing themselves, describing their major and goals related to aviation. All applications must be received by Nov. 30, 2012.

Last year, the scholarship went to Emily Dryer, a student of Aeronautical Engineering at the Embry/Riddle University, Daytona, Florida.

Applications are available from the Educational Department of the Pacific Coast Air Museum and other rules and restrictions may apply. For more information, Contact Allan Morgan at [Amrgn@comcast.net](mailto:Amrgn@comcast.net) or any board member.

### *Wings Over Wine Country*

#### **Air Show Volunteers: Your Honorary BBQ is Oct. 5**



To honor and thank all who volunteered for last month's 2012 Wings Over Wine Country Air Show, there will be a volunteers' pork barbeque at the Museum on Friday October 5. It starts at 4:00 and concludes at 7:00, and there will be plenty of great food, wine, and

beer. No reservations are necessary. Just show up with your appetite and air show stories.

Don't miss it! This is your party and your time to celebrate. The show was a great success and we want to show our appreciation to all who made it possible.

#### **Veterans Luncheon November 8**

All veterans are invited to attend the annual 12th Annual Tribute Honoring Our Veterans presented by the Rotary & Kiwanis Clubs of Santa Rosa.

**When:** Thursday November 8, 11:30—1:30

**Where:** Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Hall  
1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa

**Tickets:** \$15.00. Ask for them at PCAM, or ask for Bob Conz at 707-575-7900. You can also get tickets at Rotary or Kiwanis meetings.

This year's speaker will be Retired Marine Corps Lt. General Jack Klimp (at right).

If enough PCAM members let Bob know in advance, he will see about reserving a row of seats so you can all sit together.



## PCAM Seeks New Executive Director: Deadline Announced

As you may have heard, PCAM's Executive Director of seven years Dave Pinsky has retired from the position. His contributions have been many and admirable, and we will all miss him. We are now looking for a similarly qualified individual to fill the vacant position. If you or anyone you know are qualified and interested, please contact President Allan Morgan at [amrgn@comcast.net](mailto:amrgn@comcast.net). **DEADLINE: October 31 2012.**

The Pacific Coast Air Museum (PCAM) was founded in 1989 and is dedicated to promoting the acquisition, restoration, safe operation, and display of historic aircraft; preserving aviation history; and providing an educational venue for students and the community. PCAM is a non-profit 501-3C Organization that operates almost entirely through volunteer support.

We are currently seeking the following:

**Job Title:** Executive Director, Museum Operations

**Reports To:** PCAM Board of Directors, along with four other Division Directors

### Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Directs the day-to-day Museum Administrative Functions and Facilities Maintenance.
- Oversees the Gift Shop Operations, in conjunction with the Gift Shop Manager.
- Interfaces with and seeks input from our vast volunteer network in conjunction with our Volunteer Chair and Coordinator.
- Brings forth ideas that will help achieve our financial and general obligations.
- Oversees all Membership activities. Works to meet PCAM's Mission and Vision.
- Prepares, in conjunction with the CFO, the annual budget; monitors it, and reports the monthly status to the Board (for all divisions).
- Conforms to the Board's Bylaws and Governance Standards.
- Plans and coordinates with staff, volunteers, and the Airport Manager; special events and other gatherings at the museum.
- Directs and coordinates the day-to-day Communications, Safety, and Security functions.

### Qualifications

We seek an individual with proven management experience. Specifically, we are looking for the following:

- A team builder and problem solver.
- Strong communications and organizational skills.
- Experience with budgets and financial statements.
- Knowledge and proficiency with computers, databases, and the Internet.
- Experienced in community and personnel relations
- Prior business experience would be a definite plus.

**Compensation:** Negotiable.

Please send resume to Allan Morgan, President, Pacific Coast Air Museum, [amrgn@comcast.net](mailto:amrgn@comcast.net)

## Announcing 2012 Elections for Board of Directors

Each year three members of the Board of Directors are elected to serve three-year terms. The terms of directors Morgan, Green and Hunt will expire December 31, 2012. All three are eligible to seek re-election if they choose to run. Elections will be completed during the next few months. Two of the directors will be elected by the membership and one will be elected by the Board of Directors.

Our Bylaws require that candidates for the board of directors be **General Members at the time of nomination**. Before or after nomination, the Nomination Committee will determine whether candidates are qualified to serve. (Incumbent directors are presumed to be qualified and their candidacy is not evaluated by the Nomination Committee.) In making its determination the committee considers at least the following:

1. Is the candidate a General Member?
2. How long have they been a member?
3. Why do they want to serve as a director?
4. How do they see the position of director?
5. Have they ever served as an officer or director of any non-profit organization?
6. Are they presently serving as an officer or director of any non-profit organization?
7. If so, how long have they served and what office do they hold?
8. What is their present or former employment?
9. Will they be able to regularly attend board meetings?
10. Will they be able to regularly attend member meetings?
11. Will they be able to commit at least a few hours per month to Museum business outside of the meetings?
12. Will they be able to assist at the air show?
13. Do they have ready access to email?
14. What qualities do they possess that will make them an asset as a director?
15. Does the candidate appear to be someone who will be able to get along in a group of eight other strong personalities?
16. Is the candidate willing to assume responsibility for a major project or division of the Museum?
17. Does the candidate understand the board's policy concerning conflicting interests?

To be elected, a candidate for director must be nominated. This includes incumbent directors. Nominations may be made in one of three ways:

1. You may nominate yourself.
2. You may nominate another.
3. The nomination committee may nominate one or more candidates.

The nominations may be in the form of a written nomination, on a form provided by the Museum, or verbally, no later than at the November 21 general meeting, 7:00 pm, at Mesa Beverage Company, Inc. 3200 N. Laughlin Road, Santa Rosa, CA.

If you intend to run for election or intend to nominate someone else, please be sure to do so no later than the end of the time provided at the November meeting. *If you intend to nominate someone else please discuss it with them first as they must be willing to explicitly accept the nomination, either in writing or verbally at the November meeting.*

*All candidates will be given an opportunity to make a brief verbal campaign statement during the November meeting.*

Concluded on next page



### Announcing 2012 Elections for Board of Directors, concluded

After the time provided for nominations has passed, the Nomination Committee will complete its evaluation of all candidates who have accepted nomination. Those candidates who are deemed qualified will be so notified and included on the ballot.

Each candidate appearing on the ballot will be given the opportunity to submit a written statement to be included with the ballot. *Submission of the statement must conform to these rules:*

1. You must submit your statement no later than 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 21, 2012.
2. All statements must be *submitted electronically, via email*, to the following address:  
admin@pacificcoastairmuseum.org.
3. *Statements may not exceed 100 words*, including your name. For any statement exceeding 100 words, only the first 100 words will be printed. You may use any legible style of font, not greater than 12. (If you are using Microsoft Word, you may use the “word count” feature by clicking on Tools” and Word Count.”)
4. Other than adjustment for font size and the 100-word restriction, *your statement will be printed as submitted.*

If you are considering being a candidate, you are urged to prepare this statement now as it will be of help in making your verbal statement at the November meeting.

If you have any questions concerning the nomination or election process, please call President Allan Morgan at 707-575-7520.

### Big Changes for PCAM Corporate Structure: New Directorships Added

Your museum has been growing! Our membership, collection, air show, activities, and other elements have outgrown our previous corporate structure. So the Board of Directors made the strategic decision to foster this constant expansion by adding four new directorships to the existing two, all of which report to the President’s office. As of now, the six divisions are as follows:

Operations	Existing	<b>Position Open:</b> Executive Director
Air Show	Existing	Lynn Hunt, Director
Marketing & Business Development	New	Doug Clay, Director
Education & Special Events	New	Allan Morgan, President & Director
Aircraft & Exhibits	New	Ron Stout, Director
To Be Announced	New	To Be Announced

We are currently recruiting for a replacement for Dave Pinsky who recently retired from the role of Executive Director where he led Museum operations. A job description for Executive Director is on page 7. You will also notice that one directorship is still to be announced; we have some exciting news about this coming in the near future, so keep your eyes and ears open!

These changes help to de-centralize the executive leadership, making it easier for all leaders and their staffs to focus more on their particular area, and to enable more rapid progress in a number of areas including income generation. It should also make it easier and more rewarding to engage our own membership and volunteers, and to keep the museum growing.



"Halloween Trick or Treating"

Climb Aboard

IL-14 Crate

October 20—21

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### REMEMBER THESE DATES

Thursday, October 4	11:30 –1:30	Hot Dog Thursday
Wednesday, October 12	8:30 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting at the Museum
There is no Executive Director's staff meeting this month.		
Wednesday, October 17	7:00 p.m.	Membership Meeting

**PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM**

**2230 Becker Blvd.**

**Santa Rosa, Ca 95403**