



ASSOCIATION OF NAVAL AVIATION
**GRAMPAW PETTIBONE
SQUADRON**



www.GPSANA.org

Operations Plan – September, 2006

GPSANA is the professional, non-profit, educational and fraternal society of Naval Aviation, whose main purpose is to educate the public and our national leaders on the vital roles of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Aviation as key elements of our national defense posture. GPSANA continuously seeks to elucidate the key current issues impacting Naval Aviation through published writings, symposia, speeches and discussions with various interest groups. GPSANA also seeks to foster the strong pride, esprit and fraternal bonds which exist among those associated with Naval Aviation.

GPS MEETING: THURSDAY, 14 September, 2006 – [RSVP Online Here!](#)

GARDEN GROVE ELKS LODGE (intersection of TRASK & NEWHOPE)

Hangar doors open at 1130, Luncheon is at 1200, secure at 1330

\$15.00 for reservations made before **10am on the Monday** prior to the Meeting

\$17.00 for reservations made thereafter or at the luncheon

RESERVATIONS: 562-431-3780 – Speak Slowly & Clearly

BRIEFING: Commanding Marine Aircraft

**PRESENTER: Col. James L. Stalnaker
CO Marine Aircraft Group 11**



Colonel James L. "Balls" Stalnaker graduated from Drake University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism. He was commissioned through the OCC program in April 1981, graduated from the Basic School September 1981 and designated a Naval Aviator in May 1983.

After completing his A-6 training at VMA AW 202, 1stLt Stalnaker reported to VMA AW 224 at MCAS Cherry Point in December 1983. During his tour with the Bengal's "Balls" served as the Adjutant, Personnel Officer, CMCC, S-2, Power line Officer, LSO and was designated a Nuclear Delivery Pilot in 1985. 1stLt Stalnaker completed two WES/PAC deployments. In January 1986,

Stalnaker was promoted to the rank of Captain.

In December 1986, Captain Stalnaker reported to NAS Oceana to join CVW 13 on board USS Coral Sea, for a Navy Exchange Tour. His duties were CVW Assistant Operations Officer and Wing LSO, while his flying duties were with VA 65 Fighting Tigers. During this time he augmented as training LSO for VA 42 the East Coast Navy A-6 RAG. He completed two sets of work-ups and one MED Cruise.

In May 1989 Captain Stalnaker reported to VMFAT 101 for F/A-18 transition training. Upon completion of training in November 1989 he stayed with VMFAT 101 as a Flight Instructor, Schedule Writer and Training LSO.

On August 13, 1990, Captain Stalnaker was directed to join VMFA 235 Death Angels, which were being deployed to the Persian Gulf for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. His duties included Maintenance Quality Assurance Officer and Assistant Admin Officer. During the Gulf War Captain Stalnaker flew 36 combat missions. In April 1991, Captain Stalnaker reported to VMFA 323 "Death Rattlers". His duties were Airframes

Officer and Assistant Maintenance Officer.

In March 1992, Captain Stalnaker attended Tactical Air Control Party School at NAB Coronado, San Diego California where he finished as the number one graduate of the course.

In April 1992 Captain Stalnaker reported to 1st Battalion/5th Marines/1st Marine Division Camp Pendleton California as the Air Liaison Officer. After one month with 1/5 Captain Stalnaker assumed the billet of the S-3 until the end of his tour. As the S-3 officer Captain Stalnaker trained the Battalion to deploy to WESPAC and join the 31st MEU.

In January 1993 Captain Stalnaker reported to VMFA 323 Death Rattlers. Captain Stalnaker was promoted to the rank of Major, March 1993. Major Stalnaker served as the Aircraft Maintenance Officer and the Operations Officer. This tour included a cruise on board USS Constellation in the Persian Gulf where he flew 23

combat sorties in support of Operation Southern Watch.

In July 1996 Major Stalnaker attended the Army's Commanding General Staff College (CGSC). While at CGSC he also received a Masters in Business Management at Saint Mary College Leavenworth, KS.

In June 1997, Major Stalnaker reported to VMFAT 101 to refresh in the F/A-18C. Upon completion of his training in October 1997 he reported to VMFA-323 Death Rattlers as the Executive officer. He was promoted to the rank of LtCol, February 1998. During the 1999 cruise on board USS Constellation in the Persian Gulf he flew 9 combat sorties in support of Operation Southern Watch.

In January 2000, LtCol Stalnaker reported to MAG 11 as the S-1 Officer. LtCol Stalnaker assumed command of VMFA 314 "Black Knights" on September 8th 2000 and led them on a six and half month deployment to the North Arabian Sea

flying 32 combat missions over Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He reluctantly relinquished command of the Black Knights on 28 June 2002.

In June 2002 LtCol Stalnaker reported to National Defense University where he earned a Masters Degree in National Security Strategy. In June 2003, he reported to the Joint Theater Air Missile Defense Organization as the Chief of Ballistic Missile Defense, Joint Staff/J-8. LtCol Stalnaker was promoted to his current rank of Colonel July 2003.

Col Stalnaker's personal awards include Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Single Mission Air Medal with Combat V, Strike Flight Medal with Numeral 7, Three Navy Commendation Medals, one with Combat V. COL Stalnaker has flown 4200 hours, 100 combat missions and 728 carrier landings.

GPS Skipper Message

Mel Locke

GPS members who attended the August luncheon were treated to a great program by Fred "Crash" Blechman. He is a fortunate individual to walk away from five Corsair accidents. Please invite your prospective members to our September meeting to hear another outstanding presentation.



Mel Locke
GPS Skipper

Our hats are off to the "Good Guys" who make donations to the Grampaw Pettibone Squadron. This helps with the squadron cash flow. We salute you for your generous donations. Read the names of the "Good Guys" in the OP-Plan each

month, then personally thank them for their contributions... better yet, become a "Good Guy" yourself. Thought: "It is through giving that we receive."

Former Commanding Officer Dave Newbro and his Nominating Committee consisting of Dick Martin and Bud Kretsinger are working on the slate of GPS staff members for 2007. If it is complete by press time, it will be published in this Op-Plan.

GPS Executive Officer

Bud Kretsinger

This month, I thought I might bring to mind a small group of people who do a great deal for Gramps, but receive little recognition. Without these few, some of you guys would have to step forward. And we already know that is a near impossibility. It requires "volunteerism," and an interest in NAF/ANA. The few I'm talking about are the ladies who assist.

I'll start with Peri Tooker. Few of us knew Peri, but everyone knew Don. When Don left, Peri volunteered her services. She took over Earl



Bud Kretsinger
Exec. Officer

Skinner position in making sure that the luncheon meals came off on time. She also took over a position that was jointly held by Don Palmer and Hal McDonnel. Every Monday, before the luncheon, she travels from her home to the NWS SB, to gather the names of those folks who have called in their reservations. In short, Peri makes sure all reservations are recorded, and makes sure you have your meal at the luncheon. Further, she assists at the

sign in desk, and makes sure everyone who shows up, gets fed, whether they called in a reservation or not.

The next lady is that person that lives for anything Blue Angel. I refer to Delores Hardy. Has anyone ever seen a frown on Delores' face? She always has this smile, and greets all members attending. Delores assisted Andy Andresen for many years as the Assistant Treasurer. To this day, she still takes care of the reservation monies, accounting for all attending.

The next person I wish to recognize is Marian Locke. When Mel, our CO, had the horrific accident in the area of Palm Springs some

months back, a great deal of our luncheon material was in the vehicle with him. The Bell, table flags, table numbers, the list goes on. All of this equipment was scattered all over the roadway, and pretty much destroyed. Remember, it had been raining pretty hard, and everything was mud splattered. Marian took upon herself to repair and replace all the items. And she did this while trying to care for Mel, take care of the accident incidentals, and make arrangements for Mel's recovery and therapy. As they are now down to just one car,

since Mel's recovery, Marian has taken on the additional responsibility of making sure Mel gets to the Staff and Luncheon meetings on time, as well as taking care of her church responsibilities.

Finally, I'd like to recognize my wife, Chris, for all her assistance while I've been fighting my medical problems. She stepped forward and conducted a sale of the items we received from ANA. In so doing, she improved our Treasury by nearly \$300.00 dollars. She reads and corrects all my columns, so I don't

appear to be the village idiot that never completed school. She personally greets all the wives, or other attending female guests, as they come to our luncheon. She fills in when needed, and always with a smile.

The next time you see one of these ladies, why not go up to them and thank her for her service. As you can see, where would we be without these "volunteers?"

Last Month's Briefing

Dr. Richard Fields
PA Officer



Dr. Fields
PA Officer

"Corsair Pilot and Enemy Ace"

Fred "Crash" Blechman



We have had many speakers with many different impressive titles speak at our meetings. Our August speaker, however, came with a new title --- or nickname --- that is probably the most fitting of all we have heard. He was Fred "Crash" Blechman, a Corsair pilot and an enemy Ace! Incidentally, he has written over 1000 magazine articles and 8 books. Fred was



introduced with the topic of his talk stated as, "How to Crash Corsairs Without Receiving a Scratch."

Fred started Navy flight training in Stearmans and soloed, but went inactive for two years on the Holloway Plan. When he returned to flight training in November 1948, the primary trainer had changed: it was now the SNJ, the former advanced trainer, also known as the AT-6 by the Army. He completed his training flawlessly with 183 SNJ flights and made his six carrier traps.

Crash # 1. He then was assigned to Corpus Christi for advanced training in the Corsair. After making some 100 field carrier landing flights on terra firma, he went to sea to make the required six carrier landings. The first four went just fine but on the fifth he was given a wave-off and when he vigorously applied power, old Mr. Torque rose up and bit him! The left wing hit the ground – **Crash # 1.**

Crash # 2. He returned to terra firma for another 100 flights and then went back to sea for carrier qualification. He had been in training for 21 months and was then in the same class as Neil Armstrong. Fred made four uneventful carrier landings, but during the fifth the aircraft was off to the right so Fred slipped to the left but broke the left landing gear strut on touchdown. Although a crash, it still counted as a landing! He then got carrier landing # 6 in August of 1950 to earn his Wings of Gold.

Crash # 3. Fred was then assigned to an east coast unit flying the F4U-5, a Corsair with "advanced" automated controls that made flying it intensely unpleasant. Since there was

no manual override, the pilots had to compromise their flying to take into account the idiosyncrasies of the beast. While there, Fred made progress toward his "Ace" status. During a night flight, the preceding aircraft did not clear the runway as planned and Fred attempted high speed "S" turns to create clearance and avoid hitting the other aircraft. During heavy braking the aircraft nosed over and suffered a prop strike: **Crash # 3.**

Crash # 4 occurred on board a straight deck carrier where the procedure required the pilot to trap then taxi across the barrier area as quickly as possible. Fred was in the process of being directed to do so, but



when given the stop signal no amount of brake would stop the aircraft and it hit a parked airplane and cut the tail cone off. It turned out that it had rained and the deck was wet --- that's the reason but it still counted as **Crash #4.** 80% of Acehood.

Crash # 5. While relaxing aboard a CVE with a 550 foot deck, Fred was called to duty as an emergency substitute for a three hour flight. He responded without his usual flight gear so as to not delay the launch and was returning to the carrier after the

mission. Receiving the cut signal, he dropped the nose but was late dropping the tail, bounced and then caught the # 8 wire that allowed him to hit the barrier for a 2 blade prop

strike. **Crash # 5.** Fred was then an ACE! (But for the wrong side).

Fred's talk was very much fun with some good stories and jokes amongst the flying tales. We are grateful to him for the presentation

and great entertainment. (I can't repeat some of his jokes about Navy pilots because I am frequently surrounded and outnumbered by them)

WEAPON STATION SEAL BEACH SAILORS OF THE QUARTER.

At the August 10th luncheon GPS was honored to recognize two Naval Weapon Station Seal Beach sailors.



Master At Arms First Class Miguel A

Diaz and Torpedoman's Mate Second Class Robert C. Carias were recognized for the outstanding performance that resulted in their selection as Senior and Junior Sailors of the Quarter for 2nd quarter 2006. GPS Bud Kretsinger presented the awards as GPS Staff member Bob Olds narrated the event and summarized their achievements. Each received the GPS's congratulations, a GPS Certificate of Achievement, and a monetary gift from the GPS membership (\$100 for the Senior SOQ and \$50 for the junior SOQ). The Junior SOQ also received a \$50 gift certificate to the Crab Cooker restaurant (donated by restaurant owner and GPS member Jim Wasco). We also gave GPS's



"Fair wind and following seas" to CAPT Fowler and CMDRCM Reed, whose next duty stations are Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head, MD, and Combat Helicopter Wing Pacific, respectively.

Membership Officer Fran Pieri



Fran Pieri

To all of you who have returned the renewal form, Thank You. There are still many of you who haven't sent them back to me. I know it's been very hot these past two months and for some of us a little extra activity is

tiring. So; wait for a cool day or night and then fill out the form and mail it back to me. If you've misplaced the form, let me know and I will mail you another one. I always bring extra ones to the luncheon so you could pick one up then. "Better yet", fill out the renewal form at the luncheon; write the check there and save the postage. The next luncheon is Thursday, August 10th. We dine at noon. Please

bring a guest and show them the camaraderie of everyone in our Gramps Sqdn. Here are some of our new members. Dr. Brian Pepper, Mr. Alan Foreman, Mr. Joe Ruthenberge and Mr. Paul Pudenz. "Welcome Aboard" guys. Thanks to their sponsors Mel Locke and Dr. Rupp. If I've forgotten to recognize anyone, please let me know. Keep The Blue Side Up.

GOOD GUYS – May & June

Clift Nord
Tom Whitlow
Bob Helton

Bill Grizzell
Hal Vincent
John Herbert

Mel Locke
Harold Muckenthaler
D. W. Christensen

Joe Edone
Jim Menees
Marshall Austin

JET PROPULSION LABORATORY TOUR

Submitted by Andy Gilcrest

The Jet Propulsion Laboratory tour for August 29th had to be postponed until Thursday, October 26th. The tour will start at 1300 and last to 1530. Afterwards, we will enjoy a served group dinner in a private dining room at the La Canada Flintridge Country Club and arrive back at the Elk's Lodge at approximately 1930. These time slots give us the opportunity to avoid peak traffic in both directions and hopefully we can hear some more good "Sea Stories" during the cocktail period. I have two slots for the 1300 tour so we can accommodate up to 80. **I currently have 39 sign-ups but I need 50 for the trip to go. If interested, please sign-up by the September luncheon meeting. Friends are encouraged.** I think this field trip will be similar to the Reagan Library tour in that it should be of interest to both the women and men. The tour consists of the following:

- Von Karman Auditorium – A multi media presentation – "Welcome to Outer Space"
 - Von Karman Visitor Center – View a full scale model of the Galileo Spacecraft and the new Mars Rover Display as well as other displays and exhibits
 - Space Flight Operations Facility – visit the viewing gallery of the main mission control room
 - Spacecraft Assembly Facility – visit the largest clean room high bay where most of the spacecraft go through assembly and final testing
- Cameras are permitted. **Everyone must have a government issued picture ID. Drivers License, Military ID, and a Passport are all acceptable.** Minors do not need a picture ID, but my manifest list has to include minor ages.

The bus or buses will leave the Garden Grove Elks Lodge at 1030 and return at 1930. We will be at JPL from 1230 to 1530 but we will stop at a fast food place located near JPL for a snack (on your nickel). We will have a served dinner at the La Canada Flintridge Country Club from 1600 to 1815. Menu selections are **Prime Rib, Citrus Salmon, and Napa Valley Chicken**. The trip cost is \$77/person and includes bus fare, a served dinner, all gratuities, and snacks/soft drinks/water on the bus. Please make checks payable to GPS and pay by the September meeting or mail to Andy Gilcrest, 2 Lyra, Irvine, CA 92603. (949-854-6617)

2007 SLATE OF NOMINEES FOR GPS OFFICERS

Pursuant to the by-laws of the Grampaw Pettibone Squadron, a slate of nominees for squadron officers for the year 2007 has been drawn up. All nominees have volunteered to serve GPS for the year 2007. The election will be held during the 12 October 2006 luncheon meeting at the Garden Grove Elks Club. Please plan to be there to vote or mail your ballot to GPS Nominating Committee c/o David Newbro, 2016 Vista Cajon, Newport Beach CA 92660, for his receipt no later than the October luncheon.

Melvin E. (Mel) Locke, Commanding Officer
Joseph L. (Bud) Kretsinger, Executive Officer
Richard C. (Dick) Martin, Operations Officer
Alan R. (Al) Foreman, Asst. Operations Officer
Francis P. (Fran) Pieri, Membership Officer
Timothy D. (Tim) Brown, Asst. Membership Officer
James (Jim) Manees, Treasurer
Dolores M. Hardy, Asst. Treasurer

Peri J. Tooker, Personnel Officer
Dr. Richard S. (Dick) Fields, Public Affairs Officer
Ray E. LeCompte, Op Plan Editor
Robert B. (Bob) Olds, GPS/NAF Coordinator
Harold A. (Hal) McDonnel, Data Base Manager
David G. (Dave) Newbro, Communications Officer
Dr. Robert (Bob) Helton, Flight Surgeon
Andrew S. (Andy) Gilcrest, Special Projects Officer

Planes of Fame

Fran Pieri

"Air War Over Korea" will be the subject of the monthly special event to be hosted by The Air Museum "Planes of Fame". The museum is located at

the Chino Airport in Chino, Calif. The event will be on Saturday, August 5th, 2006. It will begin at 10:00 am with a seminar given by veteran aviators who will describe air battles that took place over Korea in the early 1950s. It

will conclude with a flight demonstration by jet fighter planes of the Korean War era. Possibly the F-86 Saber and the Mig-15. Come early and get a good seat.

Seeking Aeronautical Experience

Ray LeCompte

My son is starting on a new creative project and he would like to meet some folks with experience or knowledge of aeronautical

engineering, structures, and flight characteristics. General knowledge is great, but anyone who has any specific information on the Grumman Albatross would be excellent. Operating manuals and/or flight experience on the Albatross would also be helpful.

If you are interested or know some one with such information please contact me at by email at opplan@gpsana.org or by phone at 562-760-0343.

Thanks Guys!

Videos Again For Sale

Andy Gilcrest

I now have available videos of our fieldtrips, speakers, and life stories of some of our members. Also, I have videos of many aircraft museums and some air shows. Since I am now working only with DVD's, I can reduce the price to only \$5 for up to a two hour DVD. Even at this low this price, I can still make some additional money for our Grampaw Pettibone Squadron. Net proceeds will be split between the GPS and the Aviation Familiarity Programs that we run for the Marine Junior ROTC at Orange High School and the Navy Junior ROTC at Santa Ana High School.

These videos include both still photos and video footage.

The DVD's that will be available in July are as follows:

Field Trips

Ronald Reagan Library and Sea Stories at the Odyssey Restaurant
Day cruise with Flight Ops on the USS Constellation and the National Training Center
Air Force Weapons Demonstration at Nellis Air Force Base

Speakers

Fred "Buck" Dungan – WWII Night Fighter Ace
Ted Heineman – Wright Brothers
John Durant – Berlin Airlift
Royce Williams – Korean War shoot down of multiple MIG's with Russian pilots
Hal Vincent – Aircraft Testing Experiences
Fred Marsh – B-17 Pilot and History of Modern A/C Navigation Systems
Charles Stevens – B-17 Navigator Experiences in WWII

Life Stories

Mel Locke – WWII and Korean War Fighter Pilot Experiences
Brad Hovey – WWII Dive Bombing Pilot in the Atlantic & Fighter Pilot in the Pacific

Air Shows

VE Day Anniversary at Duxford, England (2005)
Chino Air Show (2004 & 2006)

Aircraft or Related Museums

Naval Air Museum, Pensacola
National Air and Space, Washington, DC
National Air and Space, Dulles, Virginia
Chino
Air Force Museum, Dayton, Ohio
Air Force Armament Museum, Florida
American Air Museum, Duxford, England
Imperial War Museum, Duxford, England
Imperial War Museum, London, England
Royal Air Force Museum, London, England
Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovil, England
Shuttle Worth Estate Museum (specializing in early A/C), England

Note: Many of these museum videos will not be available until later this summer.

STAFF OFFICER MEETING: Thursday, September 7, 2006 – Los Alamitos Military Golf Course on Orangewood, west of Valley View. A light lunch is available for purchase during the meeting if you wish.

GRAMPS ASKS:

Please call in your reservation/cancellation to GRAMPS on **562-431-3780** as soon as possible, and at the very latest by **1000 the Monday before our Thursday Noon LUNCHEON**. Your cooperation is needed and greatly appreciated. PLEASE - GRAMPS has to pay for your meal when you DO NOT cancel your reservation!

You can call GRAMPS number **562-431-3780** and listen to the recorded message for the next meeting time, place, and program. If you need to send a message to a GPS Staff member, all GPS Officers will be glad to hear from you. [See the "Officer" page of the website for more information.](#)

WRITING TO GRAMPS:

- Please email your correspondence to the appropriate officer's email address [See the "Officer" page of the website for more information.](#)
 - Articles should be emailed to the editorial staff members Ray LeCompte at OpPlan@GPSANA.org
 - Please keep gramps advised of your current mailing address.
 - Mail Donations or general correspondence to: Harold McDonnel, 1516 Camino Loma, Fullerton, CA 92833-1920
 - You may call your address changes to gramps on **562-431-3780** or by mail to Harold McDonnel, 1516 Camino Loma, Fullerton, CA 92833-1920 or Email your information Admin@GPSANA.org
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