

## The WHF Hangar

March, 2010

Volume 4, Number 1



The Foundation F-86 Sabre flies over Lake Michigan.  
Photo by Liza Eckardt

Greetings from the staff at the Warbird Heritage Foundation and welcome to the latest edition of the WHF Hangar!

The year 2009 was a very busy one for all of us at WHF, and it was filled with several unique events and accomplishments. The 2009 airshow season saw our aircraft at eleven different shows around the country. Not only did we perform at shows in the Midwest, but we also participated in shows as far away as Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas.

Airshow performances last year included a new F-86 Sabre aerobatic "TAC DEMO" routine. Wherever we flew, you can be certain that we were the hit of the show! To re-create the feel and excitement of

this awesome experience, we have produced an F-86 Sabre Airshow Demonstration Video. To view this short three minute video, click [here](#).

Again this past year, both Steve Kirik and Paul Wood re-qualified to fly with the Navy in formation with F/A-18 Hornet fighters as part of the Navy's Legacy Flight program. There are only 14 civilian pilots from the entire country who participate in this program, so it is quite an honor to continue to be in such an elite group. Last summer we flew the T-2 Buckeye in the Legacy program at several shows around the Midwest.

As many of you know, we have been hard at work on the restoration of our Douglas A-4 Skyhawk. We are happy to announce that after over two years of hard work by our maintenance staff led by David Staffeldt, Sean Roarty, and a group of volunteers, **our A-4 Skyhawk has returned to the skies!**



A United States Navy F/A-18F Super-Hornet and the WHF T-2B Buckeye fly as part of a 2009 Navy Legacy Flight formation.  
Photo by Rob Edgcumbe

On December 1, 2009, the Skyhawk made its first post-restoration flight at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh. The aircraft had last flown over seventeen years ago! After an extremely successful test flight, the Skyhawk continued home to the Warbird Heritage Foundation later that same day.

To see photographs of the first flight day, click [here](#).

We have also put together an eight minute video containing the highlights of the day's activities, including the pre-flight preparations, the engine startup, the test flight, and the flight to Waukegan. To view this video, click [here](#).

There are still a few additional cleanup items left to be completed on the Skyhawk before we consider it operational. You can expect to see it flying regularly around the Midwest later this year.

We introduced the A-4 to the public for the first time at Oshkosh last summer at the "Warbirds in Review" Forum. We were fortunate enough to have with us Cmdr T.R. Swartz, USN(ret.). Cmdr. Swartz flew a



The Foundation A-4 Skyhawk flies home from Oshkosh.  
Photo by David Staffeldt

A-4 Skyhawk, AD-1 Skyraider, T-2 Buckeye, T-28 Trojan, and L-39 Albatros. The Sabre, Skyraider, and Albatros flew as part of the airshow several times during the week.

In another unique milestone this past year, our Demonstration Pilot and Safety Officer, Steve Kirik, was awarded an Experimental Type Rating in the Sukhoi Su-27 "Flanker". The Flanker is a modern front-line fighter flown by the Russian Air Force similar in many ways to the F-15 Eagle flown by the US Air Force.

Steve is the first and only civilian pilot to receive such a rating. He says that flying this aircraft



A Sukhoi Su-27 Flanker rotating - piloted by Steve Kirik  
Photo by David Jacobson / [www.airshowstuff.com](http://www.airshowstuff.com)

reminds him very much of his days in the Air Force when he flew missions in his F-15 Eagle during the first Gulf War. For more information and pictures of Steve and the Su-27, click [here](#). Congratulations to Steve on such a unique accomplishment!

We hope you continue to check our website over the course of the year. We are constantly putting up new photographs and other information on the website in order to keep everyone up to date on our activities. Our 2010 Airshow schedule will be updated as soon as it becomes finalized.

In addition, we have added a "Photographer's Corner" section where we feature well known aviation photographers who have made significant contributions to our website. Included for each photographer are a BIO, samples of their work, and links to their individual websites for your convenience. To visit the "Photographer's Corner" click [here](#).

So please take some time to re-discover our website. We are averaging over 1,000 visitors each month and guests have signed our guestbook from 27 different states and six different countries from around the world. When you do check in, please remember to sign the guestbook and download our free screensaver. Since the last newsletter, we have released Version 2 of the screensaver with more new and exciting pictures. To download and enjoy Version 2 of our screensaver, click [here](#).

We are looking forward to another exciting and eventful summer airshow season and hope to see many of you over the course of the year.

variety of aircraft during his naval career, including the A-4 Skyhawk during the Vietnam era.

Our aircraft is painted exactly like the one that then Lt. Cmdr. Swartz flew when he was credited with the only air to air victory by an A-4 Skyhawk in the entire Vietnam conflict. Cmdr. Swartz spoke in front of a capacity crowd at Oshkosh, with our aircraft as the backdrop, as he discussed his experiences flying the Skyhawk.

Speaking of AirVenture Oshkosh 2009, the Warbird Heritage Foundation had a record number of aircraft on display, and in the air, during the event. Present at Wittman Regional Airport were our F-86 Sabre,



Cmdr. T. R. Swartz, USN(ret.)  
Speaking at AirVenture Oshkosh 2009  
Photo by Henning Henningsen

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So for now, regards from the staff of the Warbird Heritage Foundation.

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