



# Chino Valley Flyers

## Official Club Newsletter



December 30, 2022

Volume 25 Issue 12

www.chinovalleyflyers.org

*"To create an interest in, further the image of, and promote the hobby/sport of model aviation"*



### Bill Gilbert Selected for Club's Annual Jay Riddle Perpetual Club Award



See pages 4 & 5

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#### Quote For the Month:

These organizations scored higher on national surveys than the airlines:

*Domino's Pizza  
The Post Office  
The IRS*

#### Support our Local Hobby Shop

They support Us



Also, Check out

**RCBATTERY.COM**

### Dave Bates EDF T-33



Photo by Al Weikart

Dave has a nice collection of EDF's in his hanger. On days when Dave is flying, our pit area looks like a very busy jet ramp at a large airport or military installation.



# Bill Gilbert: CVMA President's Message



I hope everyone is enjoying the Holiday Season with friends and family!

We had our final club event of the year, the Annual Christmas Banquet. A good time with club friends, a gift exchange, and an opportunity to recognize members that have made a difference to our club this past year. See further in this issue for Dr. Bob's write up on club awards winners. Thanks to all of you for helping make our club the best it can be!

We have been spared snow so far, but the colder mornings and cold breezes are now with us, which will curtail flying at the field some. Hopefully we will get

some clear, sunny days that will enable us to get some flying in.

We will be expanding indoor flying opportunities during the week at an additional venue to be able to fly out of the inclement weather this winter and spring, at minimal cost. This would be in addition to monthly indoor flying with CdA, and will help satisfy our RC "itch".

On a positive note, the conditions are good for building; if you wish to enter the annual Build n Fly competition, this would be a good time to start a build. Or just build, upgrade or repair your aircraft for spring-time goes by fast!

I'll leave you all with a big thank you again for the excellent support shown to the club this past year, and wishes for even greater flying enjoyment at the club in the coming year!

Happy Holidays!

*Bill*



## Flight Instructors

- > Al Mareello Chief Flight Instructor
- > Randy Meathrell - Control Line Flying
- > Marc Nelissen-Basics
- > Jack Potter-Gliders

## NEWSLETTER

AMA Chapter #3789  
Published Monthly

## WHAT AIRPLANE COCKPIT IS THIS?



See Page 8.

President — *Bill Gilbert*



Vice President — *Mark Lipp*



Treasurer — *Don Crowe*



Secretary — *Bob Steffensen*



Safety Officer — *Rick Nichols*



Chief Flight Instructor — *Al Mareello*



At Large Member — *Dan Avilla*



At Large Member — *Gary Cosentino*



Newsletter Editor — *Bob Shanks*





“And they say electric cars aren’t practical.”

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

*Events for 2023  
Coming Soon*



## WERE YOU BORN IN A BARN?

IF YOU ARE THE LAST ONE TO LEAVE THE FIELD CLOSE & LOCK THE GATE.



# SAFETY FIRST

*Rick Nichols Club Safety Officer*

### Editor's Note:

*Our safety officer put together a nice review of what has transpired in safety at our flying field for 2022. We have had a good year for safety.*

*The first part of this review was in the November newsletter, here's the second part.*

### 2022 Safety, a Year in Review Part II

#### **May. 22**

May was again time to remind members of fire conditions and Restrictions during Code Red alerts. We pointed out the tools available on the cart. We also talked about welcoming members of the CdA club as they have recently lost their flying field.

#### **Jun. 22**

In June we discussed restrictions for flying past the East end of the Runway and flying near the gun range hills. Fly well to the North of the runway centerline when flying at the East end.

#### **Jul. 22**

July, I reminded pilots to please keep **YOUR** low high-speed passes well to the North side of the runway when other pilots are actively flying. Some members do not wish to engage in conversation while flying. Please do not converse unless you know the pilot is not obverse to conversation.

#### **Aug. 22**

August was a reminder of the June column. We had a pilot fly over the restricted gun range hills area and he drove over to the police gun range area and asked them to hold off their practice until he retrieved his airplane. We do not need another occurrence of this. Stay away from that area.

#### **Sep. 22**

The use of the fire cart was again talked about and also locking up the hangar and gate. I thanked everyone for the safe manner

that was seen at our Steve Crowe fun fly.

#### **Oct. 22**

The requirement that we should not rotate our airplanes until we have passed the last active pilot on the line was the subject. I also mentioned that during the Build and Fly event a member corrected me on a Safety error that I was doing. Remember that none of us are perfect and we are all Safety Officers.

#### **Dec. 22**

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year to each member and your families and loved ones. Have a safe and very healthy 2023.

*Rick*



## 2022 Chino Valley Flyers Christmas Party Held at Prescott Mall's "Goods from the Garden"



2014 - Jay Riddle  
2015 - Jerry English  
2016 - Bob Shanks

*The front of the trophy has the date and names of each recipient.*

The 2022 Christmas season is occurring right in the middle of high inflation and skyrocketing prices for everything; however, the Chino Valley Flyers club still held a well-attended annual Christmas Banquet this year. The banquet was held at the Prescott Mall in the "Goods from the Garden" restaurant. Several awards were also given out for membership contributions. Our M.C. was **Rick Nichols** who has been our Master of Ceremonies now for a number of years. Great job and thank you so much Rick.

Members who made major 2022 contributions to our organization were, **Mark Lipp, Bob Steffensen, Bob Vaught, Mike Benner, Corky Stone, Bob Shanks, and Bill Gilbert.**

**Mark Lipp** kept abreast of the construction needs as we expanded adding a second field Cabana. **Bob Steffensen** stayed on top of all the legal and tax documentation and issues we faced in 2022. **Bob Vaught** creates a monthly photo and video Journal. **Mike Benner** and **Corky Stone** kept our field expertly mowed and looking beautiful. **Bob Shanks** continues to produce our journalistic formatted newsletter each month for membership to read concerning flying at the field as well as other general civilian and military aviation articles since many members are retired pilots and former military members.

Of course, we also have awards given out each year for those unexpected and strange happenings at the flying field by members who make mistakes and get caught in funny situations. We have a over 150+ members and are completing a very safe flying 2022.

A surprise gift was given to newsletter editor **Bob Shanks** by some of the club members, a foam control line P-39. It has a transmitter trigger used by RC cars to shut down the motor to land if getting dizzy. Bob's dad was a fireman with an Army P-39 squadron in WWII stationed on the Island of Attu in the Aleutian Islands. A total unexpected surprise for the editor and humbly appreciated. The model was cut out and constructed by member **Steve Zingali.**

Each year we also give out the "Jay Riddle Perpetual Trophy Award". For new members, this award honors former club president **Jay Riddle** who was responsible for many of our field improvements. Jay and his wife Barbara gave so much to the club helping our flying field become what it is today, the steel tables, the hanger, and solar panels to name just a few items he helped us obtain. A list of honorees is on the front of the award by date. Each year the date and new honoree's name is engraved. Each winner also gets to keep the engraved award list for that year when a new person is added for the next year. (See photo above.)

Our honoree this year is **Bill Gilbert** who enters his fourth year as club president. He has taken three years of his life improving the club organization making it a budget conscious club and helping with our future expansion projections. He has spent many hours at the field and of his own time corresponding with the AMA and also helping us achieve the Silver Leader Club and AMA club of the month for November 2022. As our M.C. **Rick Nichols** said at the banquet, *"It is a privilege and our honor that we present this coveted trophy to our current president Bill Gilbert for 2022."*

Huge amount of food items were brought by members to the Christmas party to help the Yavapai County Food bank. A very large cart of canned and dry food items were collected to assist those living in our county who have some real needs. A portion of the donations can be see at right. Thank you members.



A huge donation for the Yavapai Food Bank.



# More on the Club 2022 Christmas Banquet



The photo at right shows our club's turn-out for this year's banquet. A very nice group of members were present. The gift exchange was conducted using lottery ticket numbers and is always filled with fun antics and gift switching among members.

Those members present mentioned on page four were honored along with some fun awards for crazy field flying.

Below and right, **Randy Meathrell** was given two awards for some of his antics at the C/L circle, far right, **Steve Zingali** received an award for demolishing his wing during the C/L balloon busting event but kept flying his plane anyway. **Mark Lipp** was given an award for his expert fastening job (not) on our signs placed in town announcing our events. **Bob Shanks** was awarded a certificate for trying to pylon race with a pusher prop on his plane.

Vice President **Mark Lipp** with his award is pictured next to the gift table for all his constant follow-up in keeping our field expansion on track. **Mike Benner** is in the photo next to editor Bob, for his tireless work keeping our field trimmed and looking so good, nice work Mike.



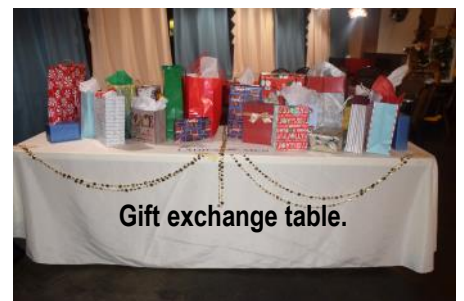
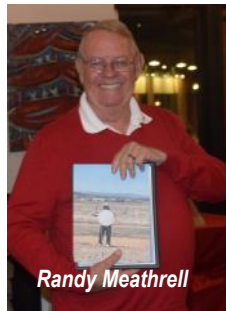
Randy Meathrell



Mark Lipp



Steve Zingali



Gift exchange table.



Pylon racing with a pusher prop?



Mike Benner and his award

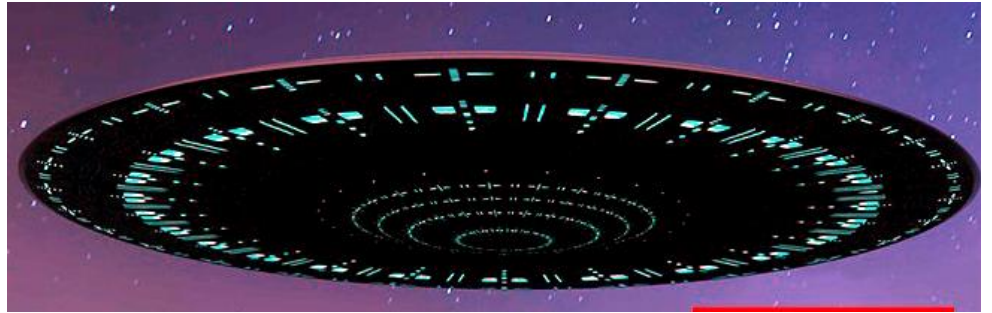


A large gift box was given to editor Bob, stuffed in between packing paper was a very nice foam P-39 Aeromaster modeled after the WWII fighter bomber.

## The Mystic and Wonder of Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon (UAP) Better Known in the Past as Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO)

By Bob Shanks

In the pages of this newsletter your editor has included a variety of articles, photos and other scientific research as well as some wild theories on the “Flying Saucer” phenomenon. What I believe as editor of our newsletter is not important, I only cover the topic out of an interest in what is seen flying in our atmosphere and reported in the media here and world wide.



For years the U.S. government denied the existence of these strange flying objects seen around the world but now has done an amazing about-face and is starting to more seriously study these flying objects. Because of this government denial and the resulting backlash of ridicule if you believed in UFO's the transition from the acronym UFO to UAP has helped restore some scientific credibility to finding out just what these aerial phenomena really are. Other countries have been more open to investigating UFO/UAPs, particularly in South America.

Part of the confusing problem with UAPs and UFOs in the past, is all of these ideas and theories have been hijacked for movies books and other fictional entertainment. So what is scientific data and what isn't can make it a difficult topic to handle with credibility. Some well trained and educated individuals in the scientific community see the acronyms UFO or UAP and immediately become skeptical and subconsciously seem to refuse to consider whether there can be any new science developed or discovered. Even some very credible scientists such as Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) astronomer Seth Shostak have made disparaging remarks about UFOs and UAPs without even attempting to include any data to validate their remarks.

Adding to the confusion are individuals like the discredited Bob Lazar who has made claims he worked for the government on UFOs but no record can be found of his involvement further hampers real scientific growth in information on determining just what are people seeing. Then there are the wild movies, alien abduction stories and fantasies. Trying to get an accurate perspective on just what unidentified aerial phenomenon are becomes challenging, difficult and almost impossible.

Your editor's opinion is that some TV programs on the Science and History Channels actually are beneficial in helping to remove the negative stigma. Well researched and produced programs like Giorgio A. Tsokalos Ancient Aliens program and the History Channel's program on what some South American Countries are doing in researching UAPs adds scientific credibility. Former US Army Counter Intelligence operative Luis Elizondo had also been featured on various news programs as well sharing his experiences with UAPs. Believe it or not even some politicians have even added credibility bringing this to the public. The NASA program “Unexplained Files” has been a surprising rational focus on UAPs.

The Project Blue Book was the initial start in the right direction in the 1950's. So whether you agree or disagree on just what UAPs are or are not, your editor will keep looking for stories and data on unidentified aerial phenomenon to share for newsletter issues coming in 2023.



## U.S. Special Operations Command Selects the AT-802U Sky Warden\*

The U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) announced on Aug. 1, 2022, the selection of the AT-802U Sky Warden as the winner of the Armed Overwatch program, beating the AT-6E Wolverine and the MC-145B Wily Coyote. The indefinite quantity, indefinite delivery contract awarded to L3Harris Technologies and Air Tractor includes the delivery of up to 75 aircraft, with an initial award of 170 million USD and a total potential value of up to 3 billion USD.



The aircraft is the militarized variant of the well-known Air Tractor AT-802, commonly used as agricultural aircraft and as firefighting aircraft (aka the AT-802 Fire Boss). Among the heavy modifications of this variant, which is already in service in Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, are sensors, communications equipment, and weapons systems. SOCOM expects an initial operating capability in 2026, with full operating capability following in 2029.

L3Harris says Sky Warden's name commemorates two best-in-class, multi-mission special operations combat platforms, merging the deep history of the Vietnam era A-1E Sky Raider with the present-day U-28, which uses the call sign "Warden" during combat operations. Sky Warden combines their heritage and capabilities to collapse the stack, providing one aircraft capable of multiple mission roles.

Built on the rugged, reliable Air Tractor AT-802U platform, the company says that thanks to the STOL capability and small support footprint, aircrews will be able to co-locate with the disaggregated ground units they support. Speaking of support, the multi-mission aircraft features, according to the company, great persistence, and payload, with a 6-hour loiter at 200 nm combat radius and a 6,000 lb flexible combat load-out.

The fleet of modern multi-mission aircraft will address SOCOM's need for a deployable, sustainable single-engine fixed-wing, crewed and affordable aircraft system. It will provide close air support, precision strike, armed intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), strike coordination and forward air controller requirements for use in austere and permissive environments. The aircraft will be also used in irregular warfare operations.

*"Armed Overwatch answers a critical need for U.S. Special Operations Command to conduct a wide range of operations globally in support of the National Defense Strategy,"* SOCOM Commander Gen. Richard Clarke said in a release. *"This rugged, sustainable platform will operate in permissive environments and austere conditions around the world to safeguard our special operations forces on the ground."*

*Gen. Clarke told lawmakers last year he envisions four operational squadrons of 15-Armed Overwatch aircraft with one deployed at any given time while the other three train, recover and are maintained at home, and a fifth squadron dedicated to training.* This will allow the Air Force to shift its more complex and expensive-to-operate fighter jets from operations in permissive environment like the Middle East.

L3Harris said in the press release that expects to rapidly modify the AT-802U demonstrator into the production configuration and provide for customer weapon system testing in approximately six months. The production of new, fully modified, Armed Overwatch mission-configured aircraft will finally begin in 2023. Air Tractor will build the base aircraft at its facilities in Olney, Texas, while L3Harris will modify them to the final configuration at its facilities in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Six new aircraft will be delivered under the low-rate initial production Lot 1.

*"I think we can do [the program] at relatively low risk based on what we've seen from the vendors who have indicated that they intend to bring platforms to demonstrate for us in the coming months,"* AFSOC commander Lt. Gen. James Slife said earlier this year, he also said *"The whole reason we're doing this is because the National Defense Strategy talks about the need to do cost-effective [counter-violent extremist organization] operations, cost-effective irregular warfare."*

The Armed Overwatch aircraft organization aims to replace the U-28 Draco, even after the Sky Warden is delivered. So, Special Operations Command might still need the U-28 to provide ISR for some type of operations like search and rescue and humanitarian relief according to L3Harris company contacts.



\* <https://theaviationist.com/2022/08/04/at-802u-sky-warden-selected-by-us-socom-for-armed-overwatch/>

# Mystery Cockpit: A-37B Dragonfly

<https://www.hurlburt.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Fact-Sheets/Article/204578/oa-37b-dragonfly/>

The A-37 Dragonfly was developed in 1963 by modifying the Cessna-built T-37 trainer. It sported two General Electric J85-GE-17A turbojet engines, which developed 2,850 pounds of thrust. The wingspan of this plane was 35 feet, 10 inches. Its length was 29 feet, 3 inches and the plane's height was 8 feet, 10 inches. The aircraft weight 14,000 pounds fully loaded. Its maximum speed was 507 mph at 16,000 feet with a range of 460 miles. The ceiling for the Dragonfly was 41,765 feet. The armament of the A-37 consisted of a 7.62mm minigun mounted in the nose capable of firing 6,000 rounds per minute. The aircraft had also been modified by mounting eight hardpoints on the wing, which could carry up to 4,800 pounds of ordnance. Different configuration consisted of two machine gun pods, two 2.75-inch rockets and four bombs; or in place of the gun pods, two 250-pound bombs or four Sidewinder missiles. The aircraft had a crew of two. Cessna built 577 A-37s over 10 years. Production ended in 1977.



As communist-sponsored insurgency grew in the 1960s, the Air Force delved into creating a low cost, efficient aircraft to counter this threat. The increase in guerrilla type activity around the world necessitated a response by free society. Using a more expensive plane to deal with two or three dissident wasn't economically feasible, hence the Dragonfly. Vietnam became the proving ground for the A-37. The plane was refitted with a refueling probe in the nose; reticulated foam was added to the self-sealing fuel tanks to protect against fire or explosions if hit by incendiary anti-aircraft rounds. The cockpit was armor-plated and the undercarriage was strengthened to carry greater weight and to enable the aircraft to operate off rough remote airstrips.

The 604th Air Commando Squadron, in Operation Combat Dragon, moved from England Air Force Base, La., to Bien Hoa, South Vietnam, and was tasked to test its a-37s in combat over three months. The pilots knew this plane well, having "cut their teeth" on the T-37 trainer. The squadron initiated its test Aug. 15, 1967, flying 12 combat sorties a day in support of ground troops and against enemy supplies being shipped into South Vietnam. The daily sortie reached 60 by the end of September. In October, some of the planes were shipped to Pleiku where pilots began flying armed and visual reconnaissance missions and night interdiction flights in Tiger Hound. Tiger Hound was an area roughly 90 miles long in Laos bordering on South Vietnam territory used by the North Vietnamese to infiltrate troops and supplies. It was also the code name of a special Air Force, Navy, Marine and Army task force that began interdicting southeastern Laos. When the testing period drew to a close, the Dragonflies had logged more than 4,000 sorties without a single combat loss. One plane went down as a result of an unfortunate maneuver after the aircraft returned to its home base. The squadron was then attached to the 14th Air Commando Wing at Nha Trang. The unit however, continued to fly out of Bien Hoa.

The test proved to be a huge success. The pilots were pleased with the planes' maneuverability. It accelerated and decelerated rapidly and its combat delivery system was highly accurate. The maintainers also heaped their praise on the aircraft. It was easy to fix. Turn around times often averaged just over 90 minutes between missions. Although the Air Force sought to purchase more A-37s than originally planned, the plane was subsonic and didn't fit into Tactical Air Command's long-range plans to develop an attack aircraft capable of meeting contingencies throughout potential world combat theaters. This wasn't the first time special operators were flying "low and slow," so to speak.

The A-37 made its debut in the special operations arsenal in 1967 when the 4410th Combat Crew Training Wing began training U.S. and Vietnamese Air Force in the A-37B. The first A-37B arrived at Hurlburt Field in December 1969 for the 603rd Special Operations Squadron SOTS. In July 1970 the 427th Special Operations Training Squadron assumed transition training in the A-37. When the 427th SOTS inactivated July 15, 1972, the mission of training Dragonfly pilots fell on the 6th Special Operations Squadron, which was redesignated the 6th SOTS. The mission now included all A-37B training for the Air Force military assistance program. Eventually the 6th SOTS became a part of the 1st Special Operations Wing.