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**(Museum Coordinator)**

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## Estrella Warbird Museum

# The EAGLE

**Honoring the Past—Inspiring the Future**  
 NEWSLETTER Vol. 16, Number 11 Paso Robles, California,  
 November 2011

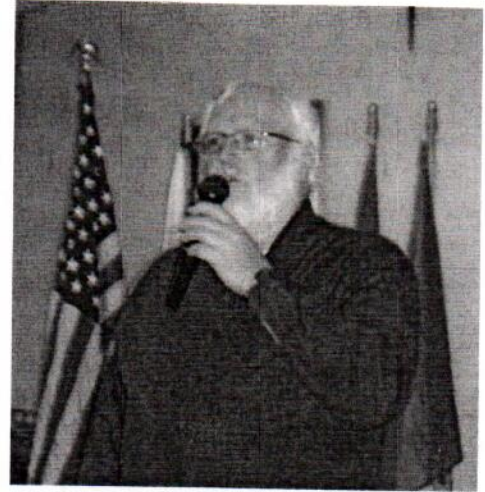


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## The Prez Sez...

By Estrella Warbird President  
 Rob Kinnear

*Happy Thanksgiving* to you and your loved ones! The holiday season is upon us, and I hope you had many interesting Trick or Treater's visit you this Halloween.



October speaker Joy Becker gave us a splendid presentation on the Veterans History Project that interviews our veterans on video for the Library of Congress. She had many fascinating stories to tell us about the veterans she interviewed. Larry Eastwood and his crew also served up a delicious Swiss Steak for dinner.

We have many wonderful people at the Museum who work hard to make it the attraction that it is. **Charmaine Peckinpaugh** is one of these people. She is our Library Manager and with the able assistance of her husband **Don**, she has organized an excellent library. Charmaine and Don joined us in 2004. Over the years we had a number of books donated to the Museum, but at the time we only had a storage room to keep them in. She took on the daunting task of organizing and cataloging the books, finding shelves and putting it all together. She and Don did a marvelous job. Most of you know that the library is upstairs in Thomson Hall. If you have not visited it, you should. Currently it is open only on Saturday. The plan is to move the Library to Freedom Hall where it will occupy the current Gift Shop area and Curators office, after the new **Hind Pavilion Entrance Hall** is built. The **Gift Shop** will be moving into the **Hind Pavilion**, along with some awesome displays, the Link Trainer and the F-18 dual cockpit exhibit.

The **Brooks Building** extension will be completed soon. The electrical is going in and after that inspection we will be putting up the drywall.

The **F-16B** aircraft delivery is unfortunately still delayed with a projected delivery date for December. However, we recently added a **MIG-15** loaned to us from Tom Smith. He bought the aircraft several years ago and put it in flying shape. This MIG was originally built in the USSR as a single seat fighter. This is the jet that gave us a bit of a shock in the Korean War. It was later converted to a 2-seat trainer.

Remember, we can always use more Docents and volunteers. We also have a number of projects in restoration that are waiting for someone to pickup and work on. We have artifacts that need to be taken care of. If you have some spare time come out and have some fun with your friends, plus you will meet new folks.

**Rob**



**Wednesday  
November 2, 2011  
MENU**

Roast Turkey  
Larry's Special Stuffing  
Seasonal Veggie  
Mashed Potatoes  
Turkey Gravy  
Seasonal Salad  
Rolls  
Jan's Choice of Dessert  
Ice Tea & Coffee  
**\$17.00 pp**  
(Includes Tax & Gratuity )

***Reservations Please***

**By Monday October 31**

805-227-0440 press \*2 when  
asked & follow instructions

or

Use Our Website Link :

[www.ewarbirds.org/dinnerrsvp.html](http://www.ewarbirds.org/dinnerrsvp.html)



**Social Hour 6:00pm  
Dinner 7:00pm**



Estrella Warbird Museum

PROGRAM

**BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN S. GONG**

***"Operation Enduring Freedom --  
From an Intelligence Gathering Perspective"***

Born in Canton, China in 1947, Brigadier General Gong began his military career as an enlisted soldier in the California Army National Guard on 21 June 1968 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on 14 August 1971 upon graduating from the California Military Academy's OCS Program.

As a newly commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, Brigadier General Gong's first assignment was with the 1498th Transportation Company serving as a Truck Platoon Leader. He later assumed command of the Heavy Maintenance Detachment, 118th Maintenance Company, responsible for the operational readiness of M48A5 and M60A3, Patton Series, Main Battle Tanks. While in this assignment, Brigadier General Gong was subsequently promoted to the rank of 1st Lieutenant in 1974.

In 1975, Brigadier General Gong was then assigned to the 351st Supply and Service Company, under the 115th Area Support Group, serving as a Supply Platoon Leader. In 1976, he assumed the duties as a Supply Officer (S4) in support of the California Military Academy and was subsequently promoted to the rank of Captain.

During the ensuing years Brigadier General Gong held a variety of assignments within the State Area Command (STARC) in support of the United States Property and Fiscal Office at Camp San Luis Obispo, California. His assignments included: Supply Management Officer, Transportation Officer, Comptroller, Chief Contracting Officer, Chief Internal Auditor, Executive Officer, and finally, as the Commander/Director. Brigadier General Gong received his field grade promotion to the rank of Major in 1981 and was promoted to rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1987 while still assigned to the State Area Command.

From 1992 to 1994, he commanded the 240th Forward Support Battalion in the 40th Infantry Division (M), located in Long Beach, California. A few short months later, Brigadier General Gong led a sizable task force, to include elements of his support command, in Operation Garden Plot / Los Angeles civil disturbance.

Following this successful command, Brigadier General Gong assumed the position of Executive Officer for a Divisional Support Command (DISCOM) from 1994 to 1996. Upon concluding the assignment, he was then reassigned to the STARC where upon he was promoted to Colonel. In 1999, Brigadier General Gong returned once again to the 40th DISCOM, this time to assume command of the brigade. In November 2000, Brigadier General Gong was appointed Deputy Commander – Support, 40th Infantry Division (M), Los Alamitos, California. Serving in this capacity, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in October 2001. From February 2004 to March 2006, Brigadier General Gong deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo (GTMO-6), Guantanamo Bay, Cuba as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in which he served as the Deputy Commanding General for Intelligence and Detainee Operations in connection with this nation's global war on terrorism. After more than 38 years of meritorious service to State and Nation, Brigadier General Gong retired from military service on 16 October 2006.

Brigadier General Gong is the recipient of the following military awards: The Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (with 3 Oak Leaf Cluster); Army Commendation Medal (with 2 Oak Leaf Cluster); Air Force Commendation Medal; Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters); the National Defense Service Medal; Armed Forces Reserve Medal (with Silver Hour-glass device); the Army Service Ribbon; and numerous state decorations to include the Order of California, as well as the Order of Saint Martin presented by the Quartermaster Association of the United States, and the Order of Saint Barbara presented by the Army Field Artillery Association.

Brigadier General Gong and his wife, Betty, reside in Atascadero, California. They have two daughters, Kristie and Harmony.

His talk is titled: "Operation Enduring Freedom -- From an Intelligence Gathering Perspective."

He will speak primarily of his on-the-ground experience as the Deputy Commander for Intelligence and Detainee Operations at GTMO (Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.) The general will touch on four sub-components to the mission: detainee operations, medical treatment, intelligence gathering and processing, and some of the legal ramifications. This presentation will serve as "the rest of the story" about Guantanamo, a first-person perspective the general public has not heard. Some information will be humorous, some will be perplexing, and some will simply blow your mind!



## MUSEUM MUSINGS

By Jeanne Thiebaud, Museum Coordinator



We have really seen an increase in our visitors to the Museum. Our latest count from July 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011 is **2662** which is a increase of 559 over the previous period!

Our visitors from California totaled 2346 with 908 from SLO County. The largest number of folks came from the following states: 27 visitors from Washington, 23 from Texas, 19 from Oregon, 15 from Michigan, 12 from Nevada, and 11 from Florida.

Visitors from other countries were also increased with some of the highest counts from the following: United Kingdom—42, Germany-21, France-10, Australia-7, Italy-6, Isreal-6, Switzerland-6 and Canada-5. Other countries with 4 or less were Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, and the Ukraine.

We have also seen an increase in our Volunteer Hours with an increase of 594 hours for a total of 2449 Volunteer Hours from July 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011! You all are awesome! We all thank you soooooo much for your effort to make your Museum such a popular attraction!

## Who's WHO Contact Information

### Acquisitions (Macro)

Gary Corippo 805-712-1222

### Aircraft Restoration—

Al Schade 805-927-8303

### Car Club Liaison

Howard Love 805-466-4483

### Catering

Larry Eastwood 805-238-3988

### Curators

Betty Miller 805-471-0472

John Gramentine

JohnGramentine@hotmail.com

### Docent Coordinator

Jeanne Thiebaud 805-238-3897

### Facility Rental

Betty Miller 805-471-0472

### Fund Generation

Gary Corippo 805-712-1222

### Gift Shop Manager

Jackie Brooks 805-462-8141

### Ground Support Equip.

Dave Geiger 805-239-1598

### Grounds Maintenance

Yardvark The Weedeater

805-238-7354

### Group Tours

Jeanne Thiebaud 805-235-0163

### Health & Welfare

Judy Corippo 238-2090

### Insurance

Bramar Associates 805-237-0666

### Librarian

Charmaine Peckinpaugh

805-239-9919

### Membership

Bob Kelly 805-462-9128

### Museum Member Bus Tours

George Taylor 805-448-7402

### Museum Vehicles

John Everett 805-237-9523

### Movie Night

Hal & Margi Bauer 805-466-4440

### Newsletter

Betty Miller 805-471-0472

Penny Takier

### Programs

George Marrett 805-466-7640

### Public Information Officer

Sue Dollemore 805-239-7675

### Refreshments

Rick Brandt 226-8605

Rosalie Joyce 805-226-0376

### Webmaster

Peter Visel 309-831-5682



## MOVIE NIGHT

Wednesday, Nov. 9

6:00 pm Pizza & Popcorn ~ 6:30 pm Movie Time

### THE COURT MARTIAL OF BILLY MITCHELL

Directed by  
Otto Preminger

Starring

Gary Cooper, Ralph Bellamy, Rod Steiger, Elizabeth Montgomery, Jack Lord, Peter Graves,  
Darren McGavin

COLOR, 1955 100 minutes

The true story of General Billy Mitchell, a pioneering crusader for the Army's fledgling air corps. In spite of an impressive performance during the First World War, the commanders of America's armed forces still think of the airplane as little more than a carnival attraction. Even after sinking an "unsinkable" captured German battleship from the air, Mitchell sees funds dry up and friends die due to poor equipment. He is court-martialed after questioning the loyalty of his superiors for allowing the air corps to deteriorate.

**The Movie is FREE, but there is a minimal charge for Popcorn or Pizza**

## Gift Shop Gab

By Jackie Brooks



Come early and visit your museum Gift Shop *before* Dinner on Wednesday, November 2 to see the new arrivals for **Christmas Giving**. There are many new items under \$20.00 that will please the most discriminating recipient!

We have a new line of costume jewelry with aviation themes that will certainly attract attention when you wear it to your next holiday party. Check out the enamel airplane earrings and the delicate crystal necklaces with a biplane in full flight.

Don't forget the grandkids, we have a new arrival of Kids Table Ware Sets in stock consisting of a divided plate, bowl, cup, spoon and fork with really cute airplanes on them. We also have a "sippy cup" with a floating airplane for the younger set. The older kids love the NASA space shuttle sets with all the related items to launch their own space adventure.

Kids Flight Jackets have been selling like mad, so get yours now. We are also open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 4 pm.

