

W.A.S.P.S. Buzzworthy News

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Wellsville Area Small Plane Society is now on the web:
www.wasp.amadistrictii.org

In Memory Of David W. Decker

By Vo Vann Decker

Bob Sanders came up with the idea of doing an article on members who are no longer with us. The first installment will feature the person I knew best, my dad David Decker. I'll have to depend on all of you to come up with an article for the other members no longer with us. Thanks for the idea Bob!

A bit of background info... My dad retired an ARMY Lt.Col. He spent time fighting in both Korea, and three tours in Vietnam where he met my mom, Hanh. When they came back to the states in 1973, he was in command at Ft. Indiantown Gap in PA, and then bought the Wellsville Bakery on Main Street.

I remember when I was a kid, my dad would finish his deliveries for their bakery, and we'd head up to the airport where he was a student pilot. I was able to ride along with him several times. His favorite plane was the Piper Warrior II... N1400H. Sadly the cost of becoming a licensed pilot kept increasing, so he had to quit before his solo. (Even more sadly, his friend later died in that plane at the Wellsville airport along with two other people while he was instructing instrument flying).

When the dream of

piloting full scale planes started to fade, he looked for another avenue to engage his love of aviation, and wanted a way to share that with me. We picked up a Montgomery Ward catalog, and they had several RC airplanes made by Cox. My 6th or 7th birthday was around the corner, so my mom and dad bought me a Cox American Eagle sailplane. It was a single channel glider that came with a hi-start, and we both learned how to fly that single channel glider behind the high school and behind the elementary school in Wellsville. Later on, Dave Hyde noticed us flying behind the high school and told my brother to give us his number. My dad called, and we then learned about all the folks flying in Shongo, NY.

My dad and I met up with Dave Hyde in Shongo one day, and met Mike Vossler, Rick Fitch, Jim Hand, and a couple other folks (Buck 'Skylark Confetti' Daisley, Dale Palmatier, Eric Baker, and many more...) and were hooked from that point on. My dad built an Ace All Star Bipe for his first airplane, simply because it looked nice. We were pointed in a different direction shortly afterwards because we didn't realize it would be a relatively hot biplane to fly,

even for seasoned pilots.

Years passed, and we eventually ended up with about 45 airplanes, with about 15 or so ready to fly at any given moment. With my dad in my corner, we participated in many air shows, some regional AMA pattern events and fun fly competitions, and one IMAC event. We also attended the Kitchener-Waterloo Air Show in Canada several times.

His favorite airplane was an RCM Funster that still hangs in my basement to remind me of him and those days of flying together. We would take turns trying to see who could have the best and smoothest landing.

In 1990 he was diagnosed with cancer, and had successful surgery and with chemo therapy/radiation was given a clean bill of health. Our family made plans for the future but sadly in December of 1993, he passed away from a relapse of cancer.

I can honestly say that this hobby kept us both close till the end. It was a perfect father/son hobby, and gave us many years of memories together of which I am very thankful for. One of the biggest reasons for my love of flying today is that it is simply my way to honor my dad, and keep his memory alive.

Sincerely,
Vo Decker

Upcoming Events

STARS
Scale Rally
(Olean Airport)
July 17 - 18, 2010

WASPS Fun Fly
August 1, 2010

Freefall Oz
(Ceres, NY)
August 20-22, 2010

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Wellsville Area Small Plane Society

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W.A.S.P.S. Member



(Above) Dave Decker with our first three airplanes.
(Below) Dave Decker with the Scout 15 after we re-covered it on Billings Hill Road in Hallsport.



Mowing Schedule

June 2010

June 3 through 5
Bob Theroux
June 10 through 12
John Tucker
June 17 through 19
Mike Vossler
June 24 through 26
Bill Willson

July 2010

July 1 through 3
Vick Whitney
July 8 through 9
Bob Saunders
July 15 through 17
Vyle Bundy
July 22 through 24
Dale Butts
July 29 through 31
Clark

Editors' Note

Happy spring/summer! Hope you're all enjoying the sunshiny days of warmer weather and getting lots of flying time in at the field! Sorry for the delay in getting these out - it's been a busy time of year. We're in desperate need of ideas/newsletter content for future editions. Please send anything you'd like included to Vo (via email). We'll need more articles "in memory of" and still haven't hi-lited all WASPS members. Enjoy the summer and here's wishing you safe flights and happy landings! Until next time ...

Vo and Rebecca

