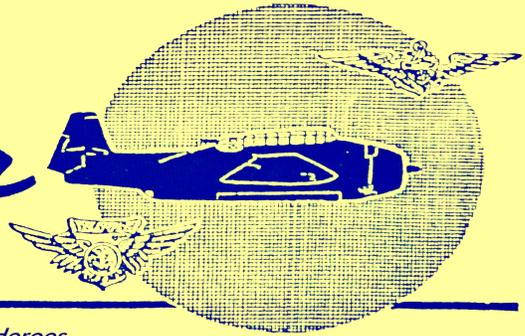


The Avenger

U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION - FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



Educating . Preserving . Remembering the Heroes

Newsletter of the NAS Fort Lauderdale Museum

March – May 2012

Website: www.nasflmuseum.com

E-mail: nasftlauderdalemuseum@netscape.com

Into The Future: *Making Strides*

It might have begun with an empty, shuttered building, a handful of volunteers, a \$200,000 grant and hand-me-down equipment, but in time, and layer upon layer, the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum is shaping into an institution where history can be found, experienced and enjoyed. Allan McElhiney, a former sailor stationed at Port Everglades during WWII, began his quest—over the course of 30 years— as a public historian inspiring people to get to know the story of the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale. Thanks to his efforts, an Historical Association was formed and the Link Trainer Building #8 (our current Museum) was preserved and added to the National Register of Historic Places.

For many years, this building served solely as a private repository of thousands of historical pieces of paperwork and photography that McElhiney collected, as well as donations of WWII artifacts. Many years went by and the dream of opening to the public became stagnant. The challenges were many and supporters moved on, gave up, or forgot, but McElhiney remained faithful to his cause. Then, a fresh wave of inspiration began taking place with a renewed interest in making this Museum accessible to the

general public. These words describe our current goal: *Educate, Preserve and Honor the Heroes*. With rapidly changing technologies comes a new way of learning and growing, and the Museum is moving forward with renewed strength, a clearer vision, and more cohesive goals. These recent changes will help us move along:

A new Board of Directors	Updating the regulations, permits & certificates
Volunteers on regular basis	Training of Docents
Outreach Programs	Streamlined Exhibits
Digital Advances	Grant Proposals

Many more challenges remain on the horizon, but we are closer to the goal of having a modern Museum. We have a unique history, and if you haven't visited in awhile, this would be a good time to set aside a Saturday afternoon and drop by for a couple of hours. Volunteers are encouraged to contribute their time or ideas or organize an event. There is something for everyone. While you're enjoying the past, you'll get a glimpse at the future of this Museum too.

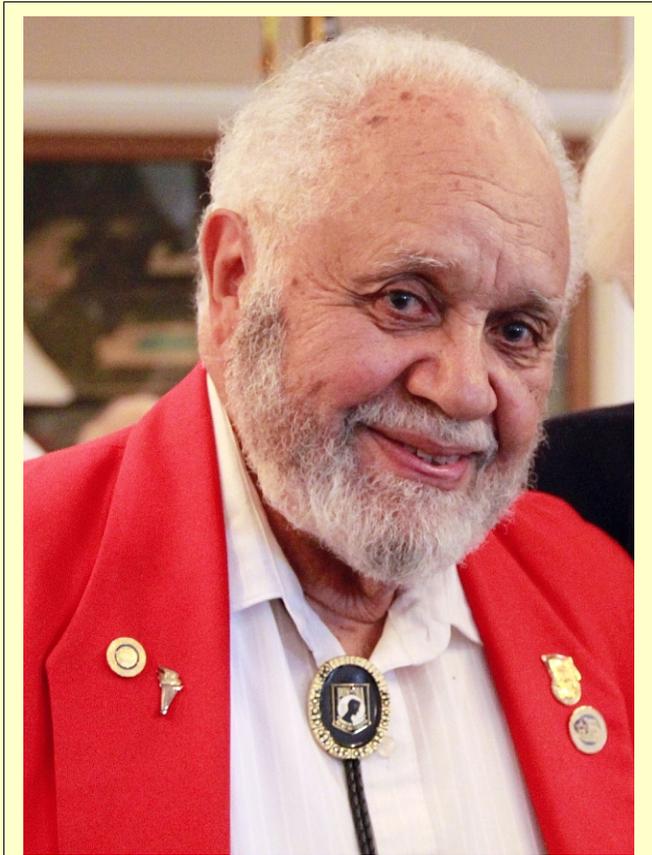
NAS Fort Lauderdale Historical Association & NASFL Museum - New Board of Directors

As of April 14, 2012:



Allan McElhiney.....President
 Karl Bork.....Vice-President
 Donald Prichard.....Executive V.P. NASFL Historical Association
 John Bloom.....Executive V.P. NASFL Museum
 Debbie Hamilton.....Secretary
 Dorothy Riser.....Treasurer
 Nels Pearson.....JAG Officer
 Anthony Atwood
 John Casey
 Noreen Damico.....D. Hamilton takes her place until her return.
 Jeff Finder
 Ben Langley
 Russell Liddick
 Michael McGee
 Virginia Montalvo
 David White

February 2012 Luncheon Tuskegee Airman Lt. Col. Leo R. Gray



Lt. Col. Leo R. Gray

The Speaker for our February Luncheon was Col. Leo R. Gray, a Tuskegee Airman. Lt. Gray's life and achievements have been an inspiration to many. He has made significant contributions to the United States throughout his military and civilian careers. Lt. Gray talked about his life during WWII and about his challenges and experiences as part of the Tuskegee Airmen, who were the first African American military aviators in the United States Armed Forces.

During World War II, African Americans in many U.S. States were still subject to the Jim Crow laws. The American military was racially segregated, as was much of the federal government. The Tuskegee Airmen were subject to discrimination, both within and outside the army. Despite these adversities, they trained at Tuskegee Army Air field in Macon County, Alabama, and flew with distinction.

Photos: Minerva Bloom

The Master of Ceremonies for this event was the Military Historian CWO Anthony Atwood



Lt. Col. Gray with his fiancée Dianne L. Bays



Lt. Col. Gray with artist Fran Scheffler



Debbie Hamilton, General Manager of NASFL Museum



Charlie Schaus donated an exhibit of USS Barton to Museum



Col. Virginia Montalvo – Board of Directors



Tom O'Brian US Coast Guard



R.L. Landers US Coast Guard WWII

April 2012 Luncheon: Captain Richard M. Kenin Chief of Staff Seventh Coast Guard District



Captain Richard M. Kenin

The Speaker for our April Luncheon was Chief of Staff of the Seventh Coast Guard District, Captain Richard M. Kenin. Captain Kenin has been married to Sherry for 23 years and through 14 Coast Guard moves. He is the father of two boys ages 15 and 11. He grew up in a small southern town and set an early goal in life to be a Coast Guard officer. His favorite tour in the Coast Guard: Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Air Station Miami, where he got to fly helicopters on a regular basis (his passion), and interact continuously with the fine men and women of the United States Coast Guard.

Captain Kenin's goal today is to explain the benefit American taxpayers get from the dollars they invest in the Coast Guard and the pride in public service displayed by every Coast Guardsmen. With this goal in mind, Captain Kenin prepared a special presentation for the NASFL Museum Association and enlightened the attendees with his interactive Operations Overview report.



Jordán Morgan, Richard Haddad & Jack Effird



Master of Ceremonies, Donald Prichard
Executive Officer for Broward Sheriff &
Executive V.P of NASFL Historical Assoc.



Theresa Reynolds, Melinda Barnes,
Jack Cawley WWII Veteran and Rusty Barnes



Bobbie Price, Gary Killbride & Mrs. Giambrone



Nels Pearson Hank Petri w/caregiver & Architect Paul Bradley



Joseph Giambrone, Broward Navy Days



Member Spotlight



Lt. David White

Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale
Senior Flight Instructor
& Search for Flight 19

David White was born in Detroit Michigan, and at 18 yrs old he volunteered for the Aviation Program. At first, David trained on the Stearman (Boeing) Model 75, a biplane used as a military trainer aircraft. After the required training, he got his wings at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas and was called to active duty in 1943.

David met his wife Tish in Detroit, quite by accident, at the Wayne State University Library. Tish came into the library and as she opened the door, it struck David on the head and that was it— *"love at first sight"*. They married in Detroit in 1945, and together they arrived in Florida to begin life as a military couple. They lived on base at NAS Fort Lauderdale in 1945 and 1946, where David became an Instructor at the age of 21. He would become an experienced pilot in the TBM/TBF Avenger aircraft as a Senior Flight Instructor. After the war ended, as fate would have it, on 5 December 1945, Lt. White became a participant in one of the greatest mysteries in aviation: the disappearance of Flight 19. He remembers that fateful day— as he was playing bridge— when he heard a knock on the door of his friend's house:

"It was the duty officer, and he said all flight instructors were due at the hangar at 5 am because five planes were missing." For the next three days, White, his assistant instructor and 20 of his students flew up and down the Florida coast at low altitudes, but they couldn't find a trace of the airmen or the wreckage. Today, he's convinced the planes rammed into rough seas about 60 miles east of Daytona Beach: "I don't think anybody got out of their planes at all. I don't think anybody survived." He likened hitting the ocean at high speed to "hitting a brick wall." White remains mystified as he has mentioned: "The leader was an experienced combat pilot, these were reliable planes in good condition, and it was a routine training mission. We were alerted to look around the islands and to keep searching the water for debris. They just vanished. We had hundreds of planes out looking, and we searched over land and water for days, and nobody ever found the bodies or any debris." David White continues to be interviewed for documentaries, books and articles relating the disappearance of Flight 19.

David and Tish moved from NAS Fort Lauderdale in 1946, to Oceana, VA, then Maryland, California, and Memphis—in all 13 moves around the country. They raised three boys through it all, and during the Korean conflict, David continued to serve in the military and moved to places like French Morocco, while Tish stayed in the USA taking care of their boys. She would visit David and together they managed to travel throughout Europe. As he said: *"We had so much fun."*

During the war years, David got experience in Electronics, Personnel, Administration and Flying Instruction. And while in the Navy, David also enrolled in College and got a BA degree from the University of Michigan. He got his discharge from the Navy in 1954, and then went on to work in the field of Retirement Planning in Detroit, Michigan. In 1973, Tish and David bought a home in Hillsboro, Florida and they would commute back and forth for several years, until they finally settled in Florida in 2007. His beloved Tish passed away recently. A magnificent and compassionate woman. A great loss for all of us. We will miss her dearly.



David White with students, 1945. Top row, 4th from left

Jim L. Farrell, Jr.
USMCR on FT-41

William Earl Lightfoot
Pfc. USMCR on FT-81

Robert F. Cornehl
Pvl. USMCR on FT-117

Robert F. Gallivan
Spt. USMC on FT-117

Hart Edward Babik, Jr.
Svc. USNR Radioman on FT-3

George R. Penness
Spt. USMC-Radioman on FT-36

THE SQUADRON

TBM AVENGERS

FT - 28
FT - 36
FT - 81
FT - 3
FT - 117

Leslie Joseph Tipton Bossel
USNR - pilot on FT-3

Lt. Charles C. Taylor
Flight Leader on FT-28

George F. Drwlin
ADM3c, USNR Gunner on FT-28

Howell Orin Thompson
Spt., USMC - Gunner on FT-36

Capt. George William Silvers, Jr.
USMC - pilot on FT-117

Flight 19 - The Lost Squadron

On December 5, 1943, a Squadron of 5 TBM Avenger airplanes with 14 men from the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale vanished in the Bermuda Triangle. A massive search and rescue ensued. 13 other men aboard a TBM Martlet from the rescue mission also disappeared. No trace was ever found. Flight 19 remains one of the great aviation mysteries.

Crew of Flight 19



David White and his wife Tish at a NASFL Luncheon in 2011



David White at the NASFL Museum

Member Profile



Jack Cawley

AMC 2nd Class
NASFL Wing Shop

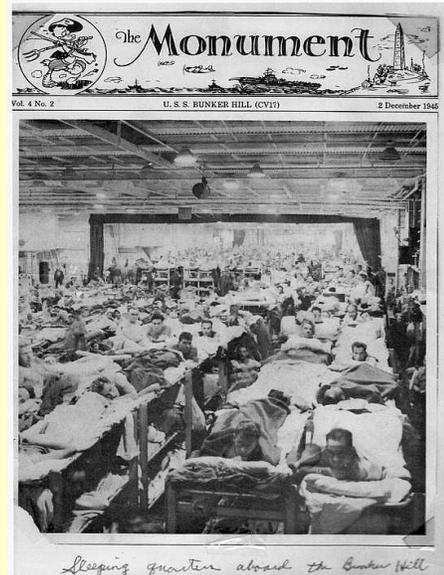
In 1942, **Jack Cawley** left his small town of Whitinsville, Massachusetts to join the Navy. Jack went into training as an Aviation Metalsmith at Newport, Rhode Island, and later transferred to NAS Oklahoma. Then in 1943, about 100 Metalsmiths were sent from Oklahoma (Jack among them) to work at the *Wing Shop* of the newly constructed NAS Fort Lauderdale in Florida. Upon arrival Jack remembered seeing about 32 planes that couldn't fly, and some 102 airplane wings strewn all over the fields. They had plenty of work repairing Avenger aircraft from the first day on. On his free time, Jack enjoyed sports and participated in the NASFL softball team. Jack went on to marry his high school sweetheart Marilyn Flagg on Good Friday, 7 April 1944, in a private ceremony in Washington DC. On December of that same year, Jack took a train to San Francisco to board the USS General O.H. Ernst (AP-133), as part of a 100 Ship Convoy to the Philippines. On their 3rd day out, a Japanese submarine began an attack of the convoy, and the ships separated in different directions. It took 2 and a half days to get the ships back together.

His ship made stops in New Hebrides, New Caledonia, New Guinea, and when they arrived at Leyte Gulf in the Philippines, he witnessed the busy preparation maneuvers for the Battle of Okinawa. As he remembers: *"I've never seen so many ships in my life."* Upon arrival, Jack and a group of sailors were placed on an open barge, with a 5 gallon drum of hot water (from being in the sun), and rations of canned food. They were to remain on the barge for two days, until they were assigned to a new location. Finally, they were taken to Samar Island, and his team got busy fixing airplanes, until the end of the war. Jack came back to the US from the Pacific aboard the *"Magic Carpet"* USS Bunker Hill and was discharged from the Army December of 1945. He remembers the excitement and commotion of all the sailors returning home: *"When we arrived, we then had to find our Sailor's bag among a mountain made of thousands of bags. I was lucky. I found mine right away. Others weren't so lucky."* He then took the train to New York to meet his wife at Central Station. When he arrived, he had her name announced through the loudspeaker. At last, they could start a normal life. Jack & Marilyn began civilian life in January of 1946. They soon had a daughter and Jack found work at the Ford Garage in Washington, D.C. where he worked for about a year, before moving to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

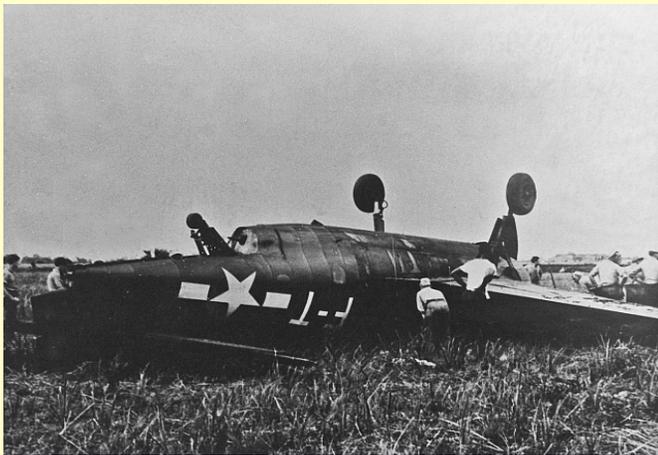
Jack built his own home in Wilton Manors and their daughter Kathe was born in 1949. In January of 1955, Jack and Marilyn opened their own Garage "Northwest Auto Repair" that they operated for about eight years. Through the years he also worked at a Chevrolet dealer in Fort Lauderdale, William Lehman Buick in North Miami Beach and City Bumper in Fort Lauderdale doing body work. Jack retired in 1994 and enjoys his hobby of making latch hook rugs. He has completed 125 rugs, which he gives as gifts, including friends as far away as Russia and India. Each rug takes him 6 to 10 weeks to complete. When not working on rugs he enjoys bingo and watching sports on TV such as golf, women's basketball, baseball, Hockey and, of course, football. Until recently he enjoyed playing golf in Milwaukee and was a long time member of the now closed Oaktree Golf Club where he and Marilyn were members for many years. Jack now shares his time between South Florida and Wisconsin, where his daughter and two of his grandchildren live.



Jack & Marylin on their wedding day, 1944



Aboard the USS Bunker Hill (submitted by Melinda Barnes)



1944, an Avenger hit the sand and flipped over in front of Wing Shop



The Salvage Gang of the NASFL Wing Shop

Travel Channel: Mysteries at the Museum

Flight 19 Mystery



The Travel Channel visited NAS Fort Lauderdale Museum March 18 to film a documentary segment for their series "Mysteries at the Museum" hosted by Don Wildman. They filmed on location all day and used several artifacts and photographs for their story. Each episode has three segments. The episode with the Flight 19 story will be the 9th episode of the current season. This episode is scheduled to be broadcast on **Tuesday, June 12th on the Travel Channel at 9pm.** Please check your local listings.

*"Never tell people how to do things.
Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." -George S. Patton*

»»»»»»»» MUSEUM NEWS ««««««««

War Memorial Auditorium: "Save Our History Show"



Mai Hibler, Karl Bork, John Casey and Debbie Hamilton

The NAS Fort Lauderdale Museum had a large exhibit at the War Memorial Auditorium on February 10, 11 & 12, courtesy of Florida East Coast Collector, Inc. We brought in several mannequins, vintage photograph displays about the Naval base and Port Everglades during WWII, poster boards relating to the history of the Museum, Flight 19 videos and NASFL memorabilia.

We met many attendees who were very interested in our exhibit. Some of them remembered going to high-school at the naval base, and others (or their relatives) had been stationed at the base. It was a good exchange, as they were able to connect once again with their history. We received a very positive feedback and everyone enjoyed hanging around our

booth. **Thank you to our volunteers:** Allan McElhiney, Debbie Hamilton, Russell Liddick, Fran Scheffler, John & Minerva Bloom, Dorothy Riser, Karl Bork & Mai Hibler, John Casey and David Epstein.

Our Poetic Tribute to Amelia Earhart *Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of her Disappearance*



Part of the group of contributing Poets

The Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum showcased "Our Poetic Tribute to Amelia Earhart" in honor of April 2012 National Poetry Month. Produced by Broward County, Florida Poet-in-Residence Anastasia Clark, who worked for a year bringing awareness, readings and workshops around South Florida. Many of the poets that participated got to see the poetry collection before it leaves on its way to the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum, in Atchison, Kansas.

The heirloom quality album features three original artworks by Shae Leighland-Pence; and the works of 42 emerging and established poets with 49 poems from South Florida, California, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia and Utah. The cover for this

collection was hand-crafted by LeatherScrapBook.Com, Inc. Copies of this special collection will be available for display at several Museums around the USA. A permanent display of this collection is also on exhibit at our Museum. There were also live performance of the participant poets at Studio 18 in the Pines.

Congratulations Allan McElhiney for your Freedom Award!



Allan McElhiney, President NASFL Museum

The 2012 Freedom Awards for Broward Navy Days took place on March 23 at the Fort Lauderdale Yacht Club:

"Saluting those who defend our freedom and support our men and women in uniform."

The honorees were:

- Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Seventh District **William D. Baumgartner.**
- **Larry Burchfield**, Senior Executive, South Region, Human Military Healthcare Services.
- **Allan McElhiney**, President of the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum.
- **Ron Perkins**, Chaplain, Seafarers' House.

Broward Navy Days Mission Statement: to assist with the morale, welfare, & recreation needs of the crew members of our nation's seagoing services: The Navy, Coast Guard and Marines. To raise awareness and to enlist public support for our mission throughout the year and annually organize and coordinate *Fleet Week Port Everglades*. Established In 1990 as a nonprofit corporation, Broward Navy Days, Inc. is a 501(c)(3).

>>>>>> OUR THANKS TO <<<<<<

- **Jeff Finder**, from Nexus Marine Corp. donated and installed Wi-Fi for the Museum. Jeff is one of our new Directors.
- **Richard Haddad**, for donating countless hours and materials and doing landscaping of the grounds: pruning and trimming overgrown bushes, trees, and adding mulch all around.
- **Charlie Schaus**, for donating a great exhibit of his ship the USS Barton (on exhibit now).
- **Tom Sheridan**, Officer at Broward County Aviation Department for donating two 14 inch model ships: the USS Montrose, and the USS Pine Island are now on exhibit at the Museum.
- A WWII Aircraft Torpedo Camera Type 1 was shipped and donated by **John D. Bauer** from Boulder Colorado. It is in mint condition and it's now on exhibit.
- We thank **Bob Morris** for introducing us to **John Ray**, owner of Sonitrol Electronic Security. Mr. Ray donated and installed a state of the art alarm system. He also monitors, at no charge to keep our Museum safe. If you need an alarm system, we highly recommend him. (954) 772-9700.
- **Ray Rivera** our Maintenance Officer & his son **Larry**, for painting the torpedoes and pressure cleaning the sidewalks.
- **Peter Accornero**, our newest member and volunteer, for refurbishing the building's support pillars. The five

pillars are from the now extinct Dade County pine. They were stripped of the old particle board, holes filled, sanded and then shellacked. They were beautifully restored! Peter also helped with painting the baseboards, ramps, rails and steps, along with **Ray Rivera** and a group of volunteer sailors.

- **Mr. Erwin Seftin & Capt. Brian Fulford** from Broward Navy Days, for organizing a group of 14 sailors from the USS Gettysburg. They did a great job in painting several areas inside and outside the Museum!
- **John & Minerva Bloom** and **Richard Haddad & Jordán Morgan** (welcome back!) for their knowledge and hard work.
- **Donald Prichard**, for helping as a Master of Ceremony at our April Luncheon. Donald is our new Vice-President. He is also Executive Officer for Broward County Sheriff.
- And many thanks to the **Members and Friends** that made monetary donations. You know who you are!



John Bloom, Jenni Yurina & ADM Yurina



Volunteer Sailors from the USS Gettysburg

Rear Admiral Michael Yurina visited the Museum with his wife Jenni, mom and dad, and nephew Austin Scott as we had a group of sailors from the USS Gettysburg doing volunteer community service. He has been Director of Strategic Planning and Communication of the Submarine Warfare Division and Chief of Naval Operations Staff. The Museum was in a state of commotion, but he really enjoyed himself talking to the group and exploring the exhibits. He gave Allan McElhiney a beautiful Challenge Coin, as he expressed his thanks to Allan for his military service and dedication to the preservation of this historic Museum. ADM Yurina and John Bloom are friends from Saint Coleman's Grade School and Cardinal Gibbons High School. It was nice to see you Admiral!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Toni Kissel, Mary Harding, Michael St. John, Anne Brooks, Clive Taylor Jr., Jeff & Lonnie Tait, Peter, Andrea & Andrew Accornero, Jordane Morgan, Richard Haddah, Elen B. Kirby and Life Member Scott Gooding.

Honoring WWII Veterans at our Website:
www.nasflmuseum.com/member-spotlight.html

New MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS of the following WWII veterans were created for our website: **Allan McElhiney**, USNR; **William J. Hopwood**, NASFL Communications Officer; **Sgt. Paul Bradley**, US Army and **David Epstein**, USNR Parachute Rigger. Check them out!

Preserving and Educating: School Projects

*This project was featured on the Eagle Point Elementary School Newsletter.
Website: eaglepoint.browardschools.com*



We received a letter from Mr. Carlos Chatara who brought his son Giancarlo to the NASFL Museum to research for his School project. Young Giancarlo was very interested with all the artifacts and he was most impressed "to meet a real WWII hero" in Mr. Allan McElhiney, who was a WWII sailor. It was a pleasure to meet the Chatara family and to remind us that the Museum's vision is to Preserve, Educate and Honor the Heroes. Below, is an excerpt from their letter and photos of Giancarlo's project:

"March 28, 2012

Dear Debbie and Allan:

Thank you for taking the time to teach us about the Naval Air Station of Florida during WWII, especial thanks to your Dad, he is a real hero not only because he was in the war but to keep and maintain

all this valuable information in the Museum during all this time to show to the new generations. Because my son had this project for the school and the information you provided us, my son's project was one of the 3rd best in his class."

The School is: Eagle Point Elementary in Weston

Teacher : Michelle Laudanno, 4th Grade

Attention: NAS Sanford Reunion

From June 22–24, 2012 including an Open House at the Sanford Museum on Saturday May 23 from 1:00–4:00 PM.
For more information go to their website at: <http://www.nassanfordmemorial.com>

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enclosed is our Membership Application, if you need to renew this year— better yet, use it for a gift to someone or pass it around to friends who might be interested. The NASFL Museum is a Non-Profit Organization. All proceeds go directly to the NAS Fort Lauderdale Historical Association which oversees this Museum. **We are running low on funds for 2012. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated.**

- Membership Prices -

Standard One Year Membership \$35	Family Membership One Year \$60
Corporate Membership One Year \$100	Lifetime Membership \$250
Student Membership One Year \$10	Or Charitable Donation (tax deductible)



Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE MUSEUM
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please fill in your information where applicable

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

Zip Code: _____ TEL: _____ E-mail: _____

I wish to apply for (check-mark the appropriate space)

STANDARD MEMBERSHIP \$35 (1 Year) _____

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$60 (Members of one family (1 year)) _____

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP \$100 (1 year) _____

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP \$10 (1 Year) _____

Save Money Apply for:

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP \$250 (One time charge) _____

CHARITABLE DONATION (Tax deductible) _____

If you have any questions call: (954) 359-4400

Make checks payable to: **NAS Fort Lauderdale Historical Association or NASFLHA (for short)**

Mail to: 4000 W. Perimeter Rd. Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315

OFFICE USE ONLY

ADD TO: NASFL Roster _____ E-mail List _____ Payment: Check # _____ Cash _____

LABELS:

Reg. Address _____

Luncheon _____

Newsletter _____

Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum

4000 West Perimeter Road Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

Newsletter Staff: Allan McElhiney & Minerva Bloom

E-mail: nasft.lauderdalemuseum@netscape.com **Phone:** (954) 359-4400

Website: nasflmuseum.com **Gift Shop:** zazzle.com/nasfortlauderdale