

Voices

Weekend Tourist

By Linda Koutsky



# Into the wild blue yonder

Is *Top Gun* your favorite movie? Do you want to sit in a cockpit and turn all the dials? Ever wonder what it's like to climb aboard a Lockheed C-130 "Hercules" military transport? Here's your chance to be part of it. The Minnesota Air National Guard Museum has more than 20 aircraft on display and you still have time to make one of their Open Cockpit Events — the only time the grounds are open to the public.

The Air National Guard is a reserve unit of the Air Force. Their mission is to have well-trained, well-equipped units ready for action during times of war or national and state emergency. Minnesota's 133rd Airlift Wing is based on the northeastern side of MSP airport. Within the property is the Minnesota Air Guard Museum — the largest collection of military aircraft in the five-state area.

A dozen or so airplanes are outside with a few to climb inside of or peer into from ladders. There are fighter planes, cargo planes, helicopters, utility aircraft from before WWII to those used today. Signage next to each plane lists the number of crew, wingspan, armament, how fast it flies, what it cost to build, and other facts about the plane or its history or manufacturer. You can walk all around them and get up close to the landing gear, engines, exhaust pipes, propellers, rockets (!), and even see the carrier landing tailhooks. My group's favorite planes were the North American P-51D "Mustang," Douglas C-47 "Skytrain," and the North American AT-6 "Texan."

Volunteers who work for the museum



A converted commercial plane, several fighter planes, a couple helicopters, flight training simulators, and lots of artifacts, from before WWII through today, make this a captivating museum for all ages. Photo by Linda Koutsky

restoring aircraft mill about telling stories of their times in service. We met a Vietnam-war photographer who sat behind the pilot documenting bombing sites moments after the clouds of dust settled. These planes have seen and heard a lot.

A large exhibit area inside an adjacent airplane hanger is filled with more planes, parts of planes, helicopters, a Jeep, a M61A1 20 mm Vulcan machine gun, and weaponry from WWII to today. Several flight-training simulators show the evolution of training technology. A colorfully painted 1943 pilot trainer looks like a piece of playground equipment but was state-of-the-art in its day. Another cockpit in the back corner of the hangar is covered in dials and levers and gauges with a nice desk for navigation.

A side building contains exhibits with photos and smaller artifacts including a parachute log book, emergency signal mirror, WWI leather flying helmet, model planes, and exhibits on the Doolittle Raid and the WWII production of gliders.

Being that the museum is essentially on MSP's runway, the sound effects are authentic — airplanes take off and land nearly every minute. This museum is for kids of all ages. Bring the whole family. Bon voyage!

Send your comments or tips to [WeekendTourist@mnpubs.com](mailto:WeekendTourist@mnpubs.com).

## OPEN COCKPIT EVENTS

Minnesota Air National Guard Museum, 631 Minuteman Drive, Minneapolis

9:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

Free, but donations accepted

- July 19 and 26,
- Aug. 9 and 23 (call to verify)
- Sept. 6 and 27
- Oct. 11 and 18 (call to verify)

For more information call (612) 713-2523

## ENTRANCE TIP

Take Hiawatha Avenue south, cross over Hwy 62, turn right just before the light rail station (Minuteman Drive isn't really marked with a sign). Stay in right lane and drive to check-in building. Everyone should have a driver's license or government ID. The car interior, trunk, and motor will be inspected (this is a military base).

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

**ACROSS**

- 1 Just the right amount of tight
- 5 Hip-hop's Run-\_\_
- 8 Significant
- 14 \*Approach
- 16 \*Overly ornate
- 17 Beef at the dinner table
- 18 Provoke
- 19 Sports drink suffix
- 20 Healing aid, briefly
- 21 Some August babies
- 22 Cyrus the Great's domain
- 24 \*Messing with one's head
- 28 Right in an atlas
- 29 Author Dahl
- 31 Cease, with "off"
- 32 High-tech debut of 1981

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62						63						
64						65				66		

- 34 Butcher's offering
- 36 What the answers to starred clues are comprised of
- 40 Dressing vessel
- 41 "Oh, yeah!"
- 42 Minor concern, maybe
- 43 In a way, informally
- 45 Cries of pain
- 49 \*Tom Wolfe coinage for the 1970s
- 52 "60 Minutes" first name
- 54 Choice usually made secretly
- 55 Minute measures: Abbr.
- 56 Rehab concern, familiarly
- 57 Like old videos
- 60 Zealous to the extreme
- 62 \*Drink of the gods
- 63 \*Simple forecasting aid

- 64 Eucharist plates
  - 65 Suffix for Brooklyn or Manhattan
  - 66 "Lemme \_\_\_!"
- DOWN**
- 1 Tough spot
  - 2 "I'm stumped"
  - 3 Earthy colors
  - 4 Angela Merkel's country: Abbr.
  - 5 \*Sell weaponry
  - 6 Like the days of the week, in Span.
  - 7 Old PC component
  - 8 Transgress
  - 9 \_\_\_ insurance
  - 10 Asian menu assurance
  - 11 Gold or silver source
  - 12 Pie holder

- 13 D.C. summer setting
- 15 "The Little Red Hen" denial
- 21 Short, for short
- 23 Michael of R.E.M.
- 24 Gruesome
- 25 Hand lotion ingredient
- 26 \_\_\_ best friend
- 27 Major TV logo
- 30 Go (for)
- 33 AI game competitor
- 34 Play (with)
- 35 Annual celebrations, casually
- 36 Impulse
- 37 Took to court
- 38 Housing plan unit
- 39 \*Appalachian resource
- 40 Rotating piece

- 43 Half-goat creatures of myth
- 44 Lines of praise
- 46 Dated
- 47 Sloppy kiss
- 48 Nervous \_\_\_
- 50 Cybernotice for a party
- 51 Late-night host O'Brien
- 53 Business sign abbr.
- 55 IOU
- 57 Econ. yardstick
- 58 "In Dreams" actor Stephen
- 59 Fake being
- 60 Doughboy's conflict, briefly
- 61 Actress Mendes

Crossword answers on page B11

# SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

Inspired by kids. Powered by parents.

The Southwest Foundation's mission is to enrich academic excellence at SWHS through funding of tutoring, ACT preparation classes, Project Success, the Link Crew, and student clubs and activities. Engaging parents, alumni, and the community in this effort through local events that feature our talented students has been particularly successful. Last spring, local businesses and fellowship raised \$3,000 essential to our school's success. Southwest's **Yonci and The Footprints** and **The Cosmic Troubadours** performed at Harriet Brewing for those who braved the spring snow for an evening of fantastic food, great music and camaraderie. Thanks for the support, **Harriet Brewing** and **Simply Steve's Food Truck!** "It is because



of you we are able to offer quality programs to our students," says Principal Dr. Bill Smith. Watch for upcoming events at [southwestfoundation.org](http://southwestfoundation.org).



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