



Charles F. Stender, Capt. USNR (Ret.)
 “Tuna”

Date of Designation: 01/08/1964 NA# V-20710

Date Commissioned Source: 09/01/1962/NROTC

Dates of Active Duty: 09/62 to 07/72.

Total Flight Hours: 9800

Carrier/Ship Landings: 409

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 8600 Prop: 800 Helo: 400 VA: 2300 VAH: 1700
 VF: 1000 VT: 400 VS/VP: 100 Civil/Experimental: 2300
 Civil/Other: 1600

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: VA-163(A-4E)/USS *Oriskany*(CVA-34)
 05/1965 to 11/1965 130 combat missions

Commands:

08/76-03/77 VA-1419 NAS Point Mugu (A-7A)
 03/77-03/79 VA-1476 NAS Point Mugu (A-7A/B)
 04/79-12/79 VAQ-309 NAS Whidbey Island (EA-6A)
 01/80-09/81 NWC 0276 NAS Point Mugu

Awards:

Distinguished Flying Cross (3)
 Air Medal (13)
 Navy Commendation Medal (Combat “V”)

Duty Assignment Chronology

09/58-09/62 Midshipman, Penn State University Regular
 NROTC Program.
 09/62-01/64 Naval Air Training Command. (T-34, T-2,
 TF-9J, AF-9J, F-11A).
 01/64-06/64 VA-125, A-4 FRS NAS Lemoore. (A-4B/E).



06/64-01/66 VA-163, Air Wing Sixteen/USS *Oriskany*
 (CVA-34) 130 combat missions (A-4B/E).
 02/66-01/67 VA-34, Air Wing Three/USS *Saratoga*
 (CVA-60). Mediterranean deployment (A-4C)
 02/67-10/67 U. S. Naval Test Pilot School, Class 47
 (A-4, F-8, T-1, TF-8, U-1, S-2, T-28, B-26,
 H-34, H-13, F-4, OV-1).
 11/67-09/69 Naval Air Test Center Weapons Systems Test
 Division, Ordnance Branch (A-4, A-6, A-1,
 F-8, T-39, S-2, A-3, F-4, P-3, A-7, P-2, OV-10,
 H-3, H-1).
 11/69 VF-11A1, NAF Andrews AFB. Selected
 Reservist. Gunnery deployment to
 MCAS Yuma AZ.
 04/70-06/70 VF-34W2 NAS Willow Grove. Selected
 Reservist (F-8L).
 07/70-07/72 VX-5, Naval Weapons Center China Lake.
 Project Test Pilot (A-4, A-7, S-2, F-104).
 08/72-06/73 Volunteer Training Unit, NAS Point Mugu.
 Project Officer.
 07/73-09/75 VA-305 NAS Point Mugu. Selected
 Reservist/Instrument Flight Instructor (A-7A).
 10/75-07/76 VA-1519 NAS Point Mugu. Executive
 Officer (A-7A).
 08/76-03/77 VA-1419 NAS Point Mugu. Commanding
 Officer (A-7A).
 03/77-03/79 VA-1476 NAS Point Mugu. Commanding
 Officer (A-7A/B).
 04/79-12/79 VAQ-309 NAS Whidbey Island. First
 Commanding Officer (EA-6A)
 01/80-09/82 NWC 0276 (NAVAIRSYSCOM support)
 NAS Point Mugu. Project Officer,
 Commanding Officer.
 10/82-09/89 Individual Ready Reserve Van Nuys Reserve
 Center, Van Nuys, CA.
 10/89 Retired - Capt. USNR

Summary of Significant Career Events

VA-125:

- (1) Longitudinal stick disconnect in first flight of A-4(B). Made for interesting fam 1.
- (2) NORDO on downwind just prior to first night CV landing. Made approach with lights flashing and expected bingo signal, but much to my surprise LSO continued to landing.

VA-163:

- (1) Received VA-163 "Top Gun" award while still in FRS but TDY to squadron for Fallon weapons deployment.
- (2) Flew 130 combat missions in Southeast Asia. Awarded 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 13 Air Medals, and Navy Commendation Medal.
- (3) Led squadron with highest night boarding rate for '65 cruise (also led in night #1 wires).
- (4) Combat exploits documented in the following books and articles:
 - Foster, Wynn F. Captain Hook: A pilot's triumph and tragedy in the Vietnam War. 1992
 - Levinson, Jeffery L. Alpha Strike Vietnam: The Navy's Air War 1964 to 1973. Chapter 5 1989
 - Merskey, Peter. US Navy and Marine Corps Units of the Vietnam War. 2007
 - The Hook Winter 1990/The Skyhawk Association Quarterly Fall 2005 "The Saints of VA-163" by Capt. Wynn F. Foster
 - Fey, Peter Bloody Sixteen: The USS *Oriskany* and Air Wing 16 during the Vietnam War. 2018

Naval Air Test Center:

- (1) Certified safe weapon carriage and release envelopes for A-7, A-4, F-8, F-4, A-6, S-2, P-3, and P-2 aircraft.
- (2) F-8/Sidewinder flutter test resulted in aircraft malfunction/significant damage requiring safe emergency landing.
- (3) Developed minimum release interval equation for A-7 multiple weapons release as a function of G, thereby assuring safe bomb-to-bomb separation distance.
- (4) One of first Navy pilots to fly A-7E during Board of Inspection and Survey Trials in July 1969.

Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Five (VX-5)

- (1) Project Officer for A-7E Operational Test and Evaluation.
- (2) Wrote Advanced Evaluation Notices and portions of A-7E Tactical Manual. Hosted Tactical Manual Conference.
- (3) First flight of A-7 towing gunnery banner.

Summary of Post Active Duty Activities/Career

07/72-04/77 Grumman Aerospace Corporation

Point Mugu CA Experimental Test Pilot (F-14A)

- (1) Flew large majority of initial flights proving safe separation of air-to-ground weapons and fuel tanks from F-14.
- (2) Demonstration pilot for F-14 air-to ground weapons delivery accuracy.
- (3) Demonstrated safe separation of F-14 external fuel tank at M1.7.
- (4) Flew first F-14 night flight and first F-14 maximum gross weight (72,000lb) takeoff.
- (5) Many flights in F-14 for weapons system development.

01/80-11/97 Hughes Aircraft Company, Point Mugu/Van Nuys, CA. Experimental Test Pilot, Chief Test Pilot, Manager Aeronautical Operations (F-14, T-33, CV-240, N-265, A-3, CE-500, A-26, LR-JET, R-22, HB-206, UH-60, CH-47, MH-6, HB-222, CE-421, T-38, BE-200, B-707, DA-20, B-720, DC-10, L-1329)

- (1) Flew F-14A and NTA-3B on AWG-9/Phoenix/APG-71 prototypes.
- (2) Flew N-265 (T-39) Sabreliner on many experimental projects.
- (3) Flew developmental test flights for Maverick missile and LANTIRN in Douglas A-26 Invader and Convair 240 aircraft.
- (4) Became helicopter qualified and flew US Army MH-6, UH-60, and CH-47 for testing of Hughes Helicopter Night Vision System.
- (5) First flight and developmental flights of NTA-3B modified with prototype APG-71 radar.
- (6) First flight of EA-3B modified with F-15 nose and developmental flights of prototype APG-70 and APG-63(V)1-3 radars.
- (7) Flew developmental flights in NRA-3B for Tomahawk, AAMRAM and AIM-9X missiles.
- (8) Flew developmental flights in EA-3B of TierII+/HISAR sensor system for Global Hawk and BAMS (Triton).
- (9) Flew developmental flights in Boeing 720 for DARPA Airborne Infra-Red Measurement System (AIRMS). The aircraft housed a 24-inch aperture IR sensor in an open port cavity.

(10) Flew Douglas DC-10 on classified radar development program.

12/97-12/09 **Raytheon Corporation**, Van Nuys CA.
Chief Test Pilot. (DC-10, A-3, N-265, LR-JET, S-211, HB-206, DHC-6, G-520, BE-200).

- (1) Continued EA/NRA-3B developmental flights for APG-63(V)/1-3, AAMRAM, and AIM-9X.
- (2) Flew first flight and all envelope expansion flights on the highly modified DC-10 Widebody Airborne Sensor Platform (WASP) for the Missile Defense Agency. The aircraft was modified with the world's largest (at the time) open to the atmosphere cavity, containing optical and IR viewing sensors for observing missile intercept tests.
- (3) Flew DeHavilland DHC-6 Twin Otter on US Army radar development.
- (4) Flew Grob G-520 Egrett on Navy classified flight test.
- (5) Flew developmental flights in King Air 200 for AARGM program.
- (6) Oldest pilot (67) to fly A-3
- (7) Retired 30 yrs. combined Hughes/Raytheon.

(10) Have identified 32 aircraft on display (poles or museums) that I have flight time in.

- (11) Holder of FAA Airline Transport Pilot Certificate with Type Ratings on Douglas DC-10, Boeing-707/720, North American Sabreliner, Cessna Citation, Douglas B26, Lockheed Jetstar, and Lear Jet. Commercial Privileges for Rotorcraft-Helicopter, Instrument Helicopter, and Glider.
- (12) Still serving our country as US Coast Guard Auxiliary Coxswain, Operational Facility(Boat) Owner/Operator, Communications Watchstander, and Past Flotilla Commander.

Personal

- (1) Hometown: Native of Manasquan, New Jersey
- (2) BS Civil Engineering, Penn State University
- (3) Married to Phyllis(dec) 52 years.
Three children (incl Naval Aviator son).
Four granddaughters
Married Marcia 6/23/24
- (4) Selected for screening at JSC for 1980 Group 9 Astronaut class.
- (5) Delivered 3 A-7H's to Hellenic Air Force (KNBE-LGSA)
- (6) Flew Navy jets in 42 of 48 career flying years.
- (7) Have flown over 100 different models of aircraft
- (8) Elected Fellow, Society of Experimental Test Pilots.
- (9) Member of Tailhook Association, Association of Naval Aviation, Skyhawk Association(BoD, A-7 Corsair II Association, F-14 Tomcat Association, and A-3 Skywarrior Association.