



**Robert Ffield, Capt. USN (Ret.)**  
**“Ice”**

Hometown:

Born in Buffalo, New York and grew up in Orchard Park, New York.

High School and College Career:

Graduated from Orchard Park High School in 1977 and attended Clarkson College of Technology from 1977 to 1981 and graduated with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. Graduated from the U.S. Naval War College with a Masters in 2007.

Dates of Active Duty: March 1982 - July 2009

Date Commissioned/Source: March 1982/AOCS

Date of Winging: June 1984, Kingsville, TX

Approximate Flight Hours: 7,500

Jet: 5,500      Prop: 70      Helo: 35  
 Tail Dragger, Single/Multi-Engine Piston: 1,900

Carrier/Shipboard Landings: 934

Combat Tours:

VFA-131 (FA-18A) Op. El Dorado Canyon: CV-43, 03/1986 to 04/1986, Mediterranean Sea, Gulf of Sidra  
 VFA-136 (FA-18C) Op. Southern Watch: CVN-74, 03/1998 to 08/1998, Arabian Gulf  
 Op. Southern Watch: CVN-69, 05/2000 to 07/2000, Arabian Gulf  
 CVW-7 (F-14B, FA-18C) Op. Iraqi Freedom: CVN-73, 03/2004 to 06/2004, Arabian Gulf

Total Combat Missions: 6

Commands:

VFA-136: 06/1999 to 09/2000  
 NFDS (Blue Angels): 11/2000 to 11/2002  
 CVW-7: 06/2004 to 08/2005



Awards:

Defense Superior Service Medal (2)  
 Legion of Merit: (2)  
 Meritorious Service Medal: (3)  
 Air Medal (3)  
 Navy Commendation Medal (1)  
 CNAL Pilot of the Year 1987  
 ANA Tactical Pilot of the Year 1993

**Duty Assignment Chronology**

03/82-06/82      Aviation Officer Candidate (AOCS)  
 06/82-07/94      VT-27, VT-23. VT-21 (T-28, T-2, TA4),  
                          Student Naval Aviator  
 03/94-09/84      VFA-125, Lemoore, CA (FA-18A/B),  
                          Replacement Pilot  
 09/84-09/88      VFA-131, Lemoore, CA and Cecil Field, FL  
                          (FA-18A), JO Pilot, LSO, Training Officer  
 09/88-10/91      TOPGUN Miramar, CA, (A-4, F-16N),  
                          Instructor Pilot  
 10/91-02/92      VFA-106 Cecil Field, FL, (FA-18 A/B/C/D)  
                          Replacement Pilot  
 02/92-02/94      VFA-105 (FA-18C), Department Head  
 09/94-10/96      Instructor, TOPGUN Miramar, CA (A-4,  
                          F-16N, F-14, FA-18), Instructor Pilot  
 12/96-03/97      VFA-106, Cecil Field, FL (FA-18C/D),  
                          Replacement Pilot  
 03/97-09/00      VFA-136, Cecil Field, FL and Oceana, VA,  
                          (FA-18C), Executive Officer and Commanding  
                          Officer  
 09/00-11/02      Blue Angels, Pensacola, FL, (FA-18A) Flight  
                          Leader, Commanding Officer  
 02/03-03/03      VF-101/VFA-106, (F-14B, FA-18C).  
                          Replacement Pilot  
 03/03-09/05      Carrier Air Wing 7, Oceana, VA., (F-14B,  
                          FA-18C, FA-18E/F, S,-3, E-2, SH-60), Deputy  
                          Commander and Commander  
 09/05-09/07      Joint Staff, Pentagon, J-5 Division Chief,  
                          Exec to J-5  
 09-07-10/09      NORAD, US NORTHCOM, Executive  
                          Assistant to the Commander

## Summary of Significant Career Events

- 1) Attended Aviation Officer Candidate School, Class 19-82
- 2) My first flight in the Navy ended prematurely when my instructor and I experienced an engine failure in our T-28B after my first touch and go at Waldron Field. He took the airplane and after landing safely, we got a ride back to VT-27 at NAS Corpus Christi in the bed of the crash crew's pickup truck.
- 3) After completing T-2 and A-4 training in Kingsville, TX, I was fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time to be given orders to VFA-125 as one of the first initial classes of FA-18 Nuggets.
- 4) A Plank Owner and "Rocket 17" during the standup of VFA-131 Wildcats. We were among the first set of AIRLANT FA-18 squadrons to deploy on the USS Coral Sea and conduct MiG intercepts and combat operations against Libya during Operation Eldorado Canyon. FRS student production did not keep pace with requirements at the time, my orders were extended for four years, during which I was able to attend TOPGUN as a student—one week after the movie TOPGUN came out—having a callsign of "Ice" was not an advantage on my first 1v1 hop.
- 5) Reported to TOPGUN as an instructor at NAS Miramar flying A-4s and F-16Ns. I was given the "Training Officer" lecture as my first instructor project. One of the outcomes of my Training Officer lecture murderboard was a realization by the TOPGUN staff that we could improve Fleet training effectiveness by formalizing Fleet Tactical Training and the career paths of the TOPGUN graduates. Several years later this vision developed into today's Air Combat Training Continuum and the supporting Strike Fighter Weapons and Tactics Instructor course. My additional instructor duties during this tour included leading Night Fighter Tactics development and the Adversary program.
- 6) I joined the VFA-105 Gunslingers for my department head tour just as they received new FA-18Cs. The Gunslingers had strong traditions and an inspirational culture of excellence. Led by a string of stellar CO's and fellow department heads, the squadron won three sequential Battle "E" awards in a row.
- 7) I returned to the TOPGUN staff for a follow-on department head / XO tour. At that time, the staff was putting the final touches on the Air Combat Training Continuum and Strike Fighter Weapons and Tactics Programs that we had started several years earlier. These programs were fully implemented as we bid farewell to NAS Miramar and moved TOPGUN into the N-7 Department at the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center at NAS Fallon, NV. During this tour, I gave the F-14 and FA-18 1 V 1 lecture series.
- 8) After attending Naval War College and a quick FA-18 refresher at VFA-106, I checked in as the XO of VFA-136, while on deployment in the Arabian Gulf aboard the USS John C. Stennis. After completing missions in Iraq, we

finished around the world deployment in San Diego, CA. After taking command, we conducted work-ups and combat deployment aboard the USS Dwight D, Eisenhower. Our airwing was instrumental in developing Fleet Tactics Techniques and Procedures for JDAM employment, which we used successfully in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.

9) I checked aboard the Blue Angels in the Fall of 2000 and took over as the Commanding Officer and Flight Leader in November. We had two successful show seasons in 2001 and 2002. Beyond the privilege of being part of such an incredible group of professionals, the highlight of this tour was witnessing the overflowing patriotism and national pride as we represented the Navy and Marine Corps at show venues across the country post 9-11.

10) My next tour was DCAG and CAG of Carrier Air Wing SEVEN with Combat missions into Iraq from the Arabian Gulf. As CAG, I was able to fly all the airwing type model series aircraft and flew combat missions in both the F-14 and FA-18.

11) After a Division Chief tour in the J5 Joint Staff, I moved to Colorado Springs as the Executive Assistant to the Commander NORAD, US NORTHCOM. I had my last flight on active duty when my Boss and I flew two Canadian FA-18s from the back seat above the Arctic Circle. The flight occurred mostly at low level and included air-refueling. (I was grateful for the Canadian pilot letting me fly chocks to chocks.)

## Summary of Post Military Work

(1) Founded CATSHOT Group in 2008. CATSHOT Group currently has 50 highly experienced Naval Aviators and Aerospace engineers on staff. The current focus is in helping the Navy accelerate unmanned air systems from concept to Fleet operational readiness.

## Association Membership Boards

- (1) Blue Angels Association Board
- (2) Blue Angel Association
- (3) Lifetime TOPGUN Association member
- (4) Lifetime Tailhook member

## Personal

(1) My wife Mona, is an amazing partner since we married in 2013. She is pursuing her second career after a retiring from the USAF as a COL, where she flew a variety of aircraft and commanded a KC-10 combat squadron. She finished her Air Force career as a Group Commander and Deputy Wing Commander while simultaneously raising our two amazing children Evalyn (15 August 2015) and Robert (13 February 2019). We are blessed to have rounded out our family with

my older girls, Kara, Heidi and Alexandra and their husbands. Mona continues to pursue her love of flying through her business and owns her own aircraft.

(2) As a side note, I was made aware of an interesting family factoid by my parents after I received my wings that I had a great uncle, Victor D. Herbster, who was designated Naval Aviator No. 4 on February 28th, 1912. He was the first Naval Aviator to drop a weapon from a naval aircraft.