

## Pilot Profiles: Jerry Muth & Bryan Lorentzen

by Russell Knetzger

These aircraft modelers are profiled together because they are related by marriage (Jerry is Bryan's father-in law), and by their shared interest in flying. Bryan is captivated by combat. Jerry has broader interests as shown by the helicopter in his photo. Jerry has also owned two full scale-aircraft, hangared at adjacent old Rainbow Airport, and at Capitol Drive Airport, in Brookfield.

Bryan, at 53 being the younger, has led the simpler life. He grew up in South Milwaukee, and went into his father's business, which he now owns, still in that city's downtown. It is Parkway Floral. With four full time employees plus part time employees, Bryan has some free time to be in aeromodeling. His home near 84<sup>th</sup> & Puetz Rd. backs up to the picturesque storm water pond in the photo, and makes Bryan one of the closest pilots to the Milwaukee County R/C flying field.

While Bryan did the usual youthful rubber powered modeling, a joint venture with his brother got him into R/C. Bryan built an **Aquila** glider for soaring off the Lake Michigan bluff winds in South Milwaukee. His brother built the HeathKit radio system. But Bryan tired of bluff and thermal soaring. He drifted out of model aircraft into bicycling and volley ball.

Marrying Jerry's daughter reignited Bryan's flying interest. But not in dull soaring. Going the other extreme, he now is an avid Combat builder/pilot. Both models in his photo are variations of .15 cu.in. powered SSC-"Slow" Survivable Combat. Not pictured is the "Zagi" electric version. Bryan regularly "combats" with Bill Geipel, Andy Runte, & Bob Maciejewski, each trying to cut off the other's trailing ribbons.



**Above: Bryan Lorentzen** in his backyard with 2-1/2 lb. .15 cu.in engine Combat models, one with builtup taperwing; one with a 3/16" flat board wing of plastic coroplast.



**Above: Jerry Muth** holding .15 cu. in., 2-1/2 lb. Combat model. On the table a .60 cu.in. **TCPM Fury** helicopter

Like Bryan (left), Jerry, 66, also had a relative assist him into model aircraft. That was Jerry's dear uncle, Bufford Bodds, back in birthplace Muscoda, on the Wisconsin River in Crawford County. Bufford enjoyed life to age 86 in 1998. Even though Jerry's parents brought him to Milwaukee as a youngster, and Jerry married early at 19, the family traveled "back home" often enough that Bufford, an avid modeler, helped Jerry through all modeling phases. That included control line, model boating, early reed, then bulky tube-set radio control. In 1975 when Jerry got his MRC proportional R/C system into a Midwest Sweet Stik, he and Buford fitted pontoons to it and flew off the river.

Jerry frequented Driggett's bicycle and hobby shop in Shorewood and Brautigam's Wisconsin Hobby at N. 19<sup>th</sup> & Fond du Lac. Another mentor who helped Jerry was Harry Hopper. When Jerry built his home on S. 95<sup>th</sup> & Howard, Harry was operating a field at Hwy 100 & National, later near Muskego H.S., then near Waukesha at CTHs F & I. Jerry flew these fields before changing to the County field in 1997.

A southside home made sense because Jerry's entire 44 yr.-3 mos. working life was as a machinist at **Oilgear**, near 51<sup>st</sup> & Lincoln. His sole training was Milwaukee's Boys Tech H.S., however, his father had been a machinist at Brunswick since WWII. Even now Jerry has a shop-sized lathe in his basement. Oilgear makes large hydraulic pumps, such as for dams, Navy ships, Bucyrus Erie giant cranes.

Jerry uses his machining skills to restore old outboard motors. He and his three sons are outdoorsmen, especially bow & arrow hunters. Jerry's full sized aircraft owned after 1981 were a Grumman Yankee, then a Piper Warrior to 1997. Sale monies bought a motor home to tour the US with wife Donna.

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