

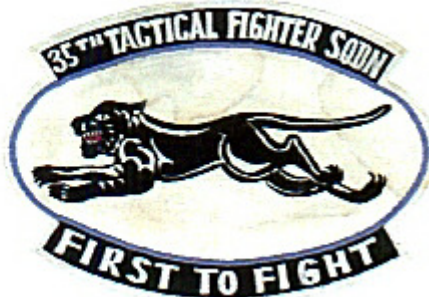
Pilot Profile: Ken Ceranski

by Russell Knetzger

Ken, 56 and a member since 1986, is like several other aviation modelers in our club: he is building a full size plane at his home. He lives with his wife Sandra in NE Muskego. The plane will be powered by a modified Volkswagen car engine, though it is probably 3 years away from completion. If he can retire at age 58, that may speed the day to its test flight.

A graduate of West Allis Central High School in June, 1971, on August 6th he enlisted in the US Air Force and took Basic Training at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. By 1972 he was in Da Nang, Viet Nam with its "wet-hot" weather, as a bomb and ammunition loader on McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantoms. Ken handled 20mm cannon rounds to 500-pound bombs.

**U.S. AIR
FORCE**



After his 4 years of service, Ken added one year with the Air Force Reserve, the old 440th Transport Wing at Milwaukee's Gen. Mitchell Field. He used his G.I. credits to attend MATC to learn electronics and instrumentation. That landed him a job with Honeywell Controls, (industrial heat treating ovens at Allis Chalmers, J.I. Case, plus Johnson Wax in Racine.) Military contract work with Louis Allis in New Berlin involved Navy variable speed drives, and de-Gaussing (demagnetizing) for mine fields and mine sweeper ships.



Above: Artist's rendering of the Thatcher "cx4 Sport Aircraft" being homebuilt by Ken Ceranski. It will be 18 ft. long, 24 ft. wingspan, weigh 850 lbs;125 mph cruise, 65 hsp. hor.4 cyl. Volkswagen engine.



Above: Ken Ceranski standing in front of his model of a Cessna 172 (L-19) Bird Dog US Air Force observation plane, holding a Curtiss P-40 War Hawk fuselage, in post-Chinese Flying Tigers nose colors.

This educational and work background led Ken 30 years ago to the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) as the huge "deep tunnels" project was underway. These are 30+ miles of large diameter caverns, several hundred feet under area rivers, where sewage and surplus street runoff is stored during heavy rainstorms. Once the storm ends, the sewage is pumped for treatment through the Jones Island and South Shore plants, before release into Lake Michigan. To lift the 60 million gallons a day of sewage the 300 feet up to each plant, 4000 hsp. Japanese pumps must be instrumented, operated, and maintained. That is where Ken becomes involved, plus other controls on plant operations. MMSD has privatized staff like Ken to Veolia, a French company, who now is his actual employer.

Other interests of Ken include the American Legion post in adjacent Hales Corners, where he has been Commander. Ken's late father, Michael, introduced Ken to control line flying, and Art Schmidt was one of Ken's Milwaukee County RC Field instructors.

RAMS HORN, April, 2010, Russell Knetzger, Editor
Rainbow Aero Modelers Society, Franklin, Wisconsin