

# BRAVO 369 Flight Foundation

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Press



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## Contact Information

Jeff Geer  
BRAVO 369 Flight Foundation  
<http://www.bravo369.org>  
360-922-0036

Craig Lang  
BRAVO 369 Flight Foundation  
<http://www.bravo369.org>  
360-201-1917

## For Immediate Release

### **BRAVO 369 TO PRESENT “WARPLANES TO SIBERIA” AT THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM**

“The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man, or one party, or one nation... it must be a peace which rests on the cooperative effort of the whole world.”

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

#### **Bellingham, Washington, USA. March 2014**

The BRAVO 369 Flight Foundation announced today that it will be discussing the flight re-creation and film documentary *Warplanes to Siberia* to an international audience during the Mutual Concerns Convention on April 14, 2014 at the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC.

According to Jeff Geer, executive director of the foundation, “ours is a story about the secret delivery of nearly 8,000 military aircraft to the Soviet Union during World War II along the Alaska-Siberia Air Route (ALSIB) that runs from Great Falls, Montana through Canada and Alaska, across the Bering Strait and through Siberia to Krasnoyarsk, Russia.” As part of the Lend-Lease program under the Roosevelt administration, it was one of the great logistical efforts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Geer said “what is so amazing is the majority of the world has never heard of it or knows of the major role that it played during the war in helping the Soviet Union. What makes our project so special is we are actually re-

creating the flight using same aircraft types that flew the route 70 years ago. Our goal is to be as historically and technical accurate as possible.”

*Warplanes to Siberia* is the story of the cooperative efforts of Russia, Canada, and the United States both then and now. Geer, who will be leading the U.S. flight segment, said “a project of this magnitude cannot be achieved by one person, one organization, or one country acting alone. This will be the first time that a joint Russian and U.S. team will be making the flight to Krasnoyarsk and Moscow together over the ALSIB route. During World War II, U.S. pilots delivered the aircraft only as far as Fairbanks and then the Soviet pilots took the aircraft the rest of the way to Krasnoyarsk. It is as large of a logistical effort now as it was then to move aircraft and crews over the 6,000 mile (9,700 kilometer) route with difficult terrain and flying conditions.”

The BRAVO 369 Flight Foundation recently partnered with the Moscow-based Russian Aviation Company, Ltd. (RUSAVIA)—one the largest suppliers of aviation parts, instruments, and equipment for Russian-built aircraft worldwide to produce the flight re-creation and documentary from the Russian side. According to Sergey Baranov, RUSAVIA’s general director, “(2015) - The 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, or the Great Patriotic War as it is known in Russia, promises to be a landmark event. This is the last major commemoration that will be attended by veterans who served in the war. It is our chance to say goodbye and pay honor to the last of these brave men and women. *Warplanes to Siberia (ALSIB 2015)* will tell their story and, as such, deserves to be supported.”

In the summer of 2013, the BRAVO 369 team successfully flew the first leg of the ALSIB route to Fairbanks in preparation for the 2015 flight to Krasnoyarsk and beyond. While in Great Falls, the team visited the Malmstrom Air Force Base as well as The History Museum and discovered a treasure trove of Lend-Lease artifacts. During a filmed interview for the documentary, Jim Meinert, executive director of

The History Museum emphasized “that museums are there to protect and preserve items with the hope that someday they will tell a story that will inspire and educate people.”

The Mutual Concerns Conference will provide an ideal forum to introduce *Warplanes to Siberia* to historians and museums throughout the world. Geer concluded “This is a story that must be told and preserved for future generations.”

Joining Jeff Geer and the BRAVO 369 team during the conference will be: Sergey Baranov, general director, RUSAVIA, Moscow, Russia; Jim Meinert, executive director, The History Museum, Great Falls, Montana; and Allan Snowie, retired Air Canada captain, Bellingham, Washington.

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