

Peter S. Sperazza

**General Foreman, Sheet Metal
Dept.**

1937 to 1972

Peter S. Sperazza began his service to the Company in 1937, when Chance Vought Aircraft was located in East Hartford, Connecticut. Pete worked on the F4U, operating a large stretch press, at a time when the country was heavily involved in World War II. In 1939, Pete and his family moved from Hartford to Bridgeport. In August 1948, he and his family were given the opportunity to relocate with the Company to Texas, where they thrived.

Pete Sperazza's family originated in Pittston, Pennsylvania, where Pete was one of 13 children in a very close-knit family who spent much time together, even after the siblings were adults. Large family dinners were always held at their parents' home, with all the food being prepared by the matriarch of the family. In the 30's, seven children (who were married) lived within one block of their parent's home, and frequently enjoyed the fruits of their mother's great Italian cooking.

All the men in the family worked in the coal mine. After a hard day in the mines, Pete would rush home, clean up and go dancing.

Pete's father, Angelo Sperazza (an only child) was born in Montedoro, Italy. Upon his arrival in the U.S., he slipped his interviewer \$15, following the advice of friends. Things went well for him, and he was able to find work in the coal mines. Pete's father had no education whatsoever but eventually had 25 people working for him. Part of his job included issuing a weekly payroll. He couldn't read or write but this did not intimidate him in any way because he was a whiz with numbers and had an incredible memory. Pete's father would mentally keep track of the amount of work performed by each employee and, at the end of each week, Pete's oldest brother Sandy, who worked in the mines with his father, would make out the payroll as directed by his father.

Pete's mother, Concetta Alfano, was also born in Montedoro, Italy. She enjoyed cooking but her true pleasures in life were the times she shared with her very large family, and always looked forward to their visits. She had an amazing memory and up until the day she died (at age 92) she could tell you the name and birthday of every sibling in the Sperazza family, which at that time totaled 72 people.

During the time Pete worked in the coal mine, he held a part-time job at an automobile body shop. These two occupations provided much of the training needed to embark upon a new career after finding work at Chance Vought. An accident at the mine, which hospitalized him for three months, convinced Pete to seek other employment. He went to visit his brother-in-law in Connecticut in search of a better job. While there, he met Al Mastrianni, who was supervisor over the heat treating/processing departments at Chance Vought Aircraft. He was told they would call him when an opening became available. He soon got the hoped-for call, and started work for Pop Reichert in the Experimental Shop. His later experience also included work in the Press Room and in Assembly. Pete's energy and enthusiasm contributed toward a long career from apprentice to General Foreman of the Sheet Metal Department. Pete enjoyed playing dominoes every day during lunch with Del Benetti who worked in Inspection. These very heated games came to be known by everyone as the "Battle between Inspection and the Shop."



Pete retired in 1972, after thirty-five years with the Company.

Pete married his lovely wife of 55 years, Mary Graziano, April 16, 1932. Mary also worked at Chance Vought in the 50's and 60's, stamping parts in the Paint Shop. She was a league bowler and won numerous trophies. Their marriage was filled with family events and recreational activities such as camping in Arkansas, Niagara Falls, and Colorado (where they met many people with similar interests and backgrounds), and yearly trips to Laughlin, Nevada where they enjoyed trying their luck at the casinos. Dancing continued to fill their lives, as well. Mary Sperazza passed away in 1987, after fifty-five wonderful years of marriage.

Pete and Mary had two children, Connie Singleton, and Phyllis Campbell. There are four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren. In addition to family activities, Pete stays busy and fit with yard work, monthly bus trips to the casinos in Bossier, and his favorite pastime, dancing at various area Senior Citizens' Centers.