

WWII Combat Aviators Honored with Missing Man Formation

By Nick Welsh (Contact)

Two decorated World War II combat aviators were given ceremonial send-offs in Santa Barbara over the past week, both with four planes — with one space left conspicuously vacant — flying in formation over the South Coast. Elmer Koonce, a major player in real estate and Republican Party circles, died recently at age 96. Koonce saw major action in the South Pacific for which he was awarded the Bronze Star, among other medals. Bill Davis, who died in May, was awarded the Navy Cross for flying over 50 combat missions and shooting down seven enemy aircraft.