



# The Flyer



August 2009 Issue, Vol. Seventeen, No. 8  
**High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force**  
**On the Web at [HighSkyWing.org](http://HighSkyWing.org)**  
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

## **Next Wing Meeting is Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m. in the Hangar**

### **From the Lead**

by Col Randy Wilson

Thanks to a lot of work by a number of High Sky Wing members, our Stinson 105 (right) is back in service with a fresh annual and newly repaired and painted nose bowl. Thanks to Cols Jim Moore, Tom Kingon and Bobby Meroney, both our tugs have received some TLC recently, too, with a rebuilt starter for one and alternator repair on the other. Thanks to everyone for their hard work.

Talking about aircraft, we have submitted our requests for the assignment of three available CAF aircraft, a PT-17 Stearman, T-28A and L-17. We expect to hear the final results within the next week or two. We will have more information at the next Wing meeting.

With our first Fly-In Breakfast scheduled for Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> and AIRSHO just a few weeks after that, it is time to have a good hangar and house cleaning on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:00 a.m. Let's all pitch in together to get our hangar, the Ready Room and our grounds ready for visitors. Dave Linebarger has some more info in his safety column and will be cooking to help feed everyone who shows up to work. We will have a list of chores at the Wing meeting. I encourage everyone to put aside flying or other projects for one day and show that we are all members and can always work together to keep our home clean and safe. Thanks in advance to all.

At our next Wing meeting next Thursday, we will have more information on volunteer jobs for both our Fly-In Breakfast and also AIRSHO 2009. One area we need to identify helpers is the AIRSHO Cantina that we operate for lunch on Wednesday through Friday before AIRSHO. This is not just a huge service to CAF members and workers setting up the show but it also is a good fund raiser for the High Sky Wing.

Another event we are helping with is the annual



AIRSHO Volunteer Dinner, which will be held Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Commemorative Center hangar at 6:00 p.m. The HSW cooks for this event, too, which is yet another fund raiser for us, plus a thank you in advance for many of the local volunteers that make AIRSHO happen. I hope to see a lot of you there.

Note that due to a rental in the ComCtr hangar, our September 24<sup>th</sup> Wing meeting will be held upstairs in either the Gunfighter Pub or O'Brien Hall. We will let you know more in the next newsletter.

Our Mission 200 recruiting program continues to bring in new members, with our current count at 177 HSW members, last I checked. Some of our newest members are Cols Jarrett Vick, Bryan Allen, Paul Cooper, Drew Diggins, John Echols and Bill Hendon. Col Brad Bond also renewed his Wing membership for two years just the other day!

I hope to see you next Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup> at the Wing meeting in the ComCtr hangar. Please remember to bring a covered dish or favorite deli item to share. Our speaker is Michael Shapiro and we also have a lot to talk about as we get closer to AIRSHO.

## Executive Offerings

by Col Rick Peterson

Joining us as our guest speaker for the August 2009 Wing Meeting will be Michael Shapiro, whom most of you know from his restaurants in Midland of the same name.

Michael began his Air Force training at Craig AFB, near Selma, Alabama which was a U.S. Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) facility that closed in 1977. When active, the base had two 8,000 foot parallel runways, a large aircraft parking ramp and several large maintenance hangars. Michael later moved to aerial tanker training, spending three years in Wichita, Kansas. After flying tankers in Vietnam, Michael left the service in 1974.

He was then involved in the oil business for ten years, starting as a landman. Later, in 1983, he decided to open his first restaurant in Midland. Today, there are two Michael's Restaurants in town.

As your XO, I always gladly consider any suggestions for future speakers at upcoming Wing meetings, so let me know if you have someone you would like to speak to us. Please join us at the August Wing meeting and remember to bring a covered dish. See you then.

## The Safety Corner

by Col David Linebarger

High Sky Wing members, all is going well with the safety at the hangar. We do seem to be over run with spiders and other small critters. I sprayed the hangar on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of August to see what we can get rid of. Thanks to the ones that work in the hangar in keeping the used drink cans thrown away as this helps to keep the critters down also. We do have a new lawn mower and weed eater. Both are battery powered so we do not need a gas can for them or extension cords.

We have been in the hangar for about a year now and it is getting time to do a hangar annual clean up. Staff picked the date of Saturday August 29<sup>th</sup> to do this. There are quite a few things that need to be done and we are making a list of the jobs. Some of the jobs are easy and there will be something for everyone who comes out to do. Some of the tasks that need to be done are clean the windows in the Ready Room and dust, straighten up the kitchen, spray weeds, and many more. We are doing this to get ready for the Wing's fly-in on September 12<sup>th</sup> and the AIRSHO just a few weeks after that.

This is our home and we all want to be proud of our house and show it off to everyone who sees it. Lunch will be provided by the Wing for those who come out and help out with this non-airplane day project. So lets get out gloves and hat on and head to the Wing that Saturday morning and get "our house to shine for all to see". If you want to bring your tools to help with the yard or special cleaning towel please do so. Hope to see a great turn out for this event!



Our area off the patio has come a long way due to the hard work of many HSW members, with Col Dave Linebarger often in the lead. Great job by all!

## HSW History - Part One

by Col Randy Wilson

I thought it was time to review how and why the High Sky Wing came into existence and why we are an important asset to the CAF here in Midland. This is the first part of our history, and there will be more in future issues.

When the CAF determined to move to Midland in 1989, a group of existing and new CAF members wanted to form a CAF unit in Midland but with the existence of the Desert Squadron just a short distance away in Odessa, there were some problems. Normally, CAF guidelines prohibit a new unit from being established too close to an existing one, to prevent possible competition and other types of friction between the units. In addition, being in the midst of West Texas, it was felt by many in the CAF that the new Midland unit should be formed as a West Texas Wing squadron, just like the Desert Squadron.

The Midland or "High Sky" group as they called themselves, had already shown a great deal of support to CAF HQ by helping pack and transport load after load of parts and other material from Harlingen

to Midland. They wanted to be an independent CAF Wing and not subordinate to another unit such as the West Texas Wing. Part of the solution to achieve independence was by setting the goals of the new High Sky Wing to include a substantial amount of support to CAF HQ and the museum in the future, both with manpower and fund raising and financial help.

Below is the text of the letter that accompanied the High Sky Wing's petition to be a CAF Wing, signed by Col Ernie Webb, the Acting Wing Leader. Beside the standard petition form, a total of 106 signatures of CAF Colonels supporting the petition was included. The letter was addressed to the CAF General Staff and dated June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1992.

Dear Fellow Colonels:

We respectfully submit for your consideration, the enclosed petition with 100 plus signatures for the formation of the High Sky Wing to be located in Midland, Texas. We already have over 100 Colonels who have paid their dues to belong to this new unit, and we expect to top 150 by year's end.

These are all current CAF Colonels who share a desire to be a part of a "go-getter" unit, which the High Sky group has proven to be over the last several months. Most of these Colonels have not been previously associated with any other Squadron or Wing; therefore, we feel we are only strengthening the CAF as a whole.

Among the goals that we have set for the High Sky Wing are the following:

1. Recruit and host aviation and military unit conventions such as the recent "Hump Pilots Association" convention with over 150 attendees.
2. Create and develop fund raising programs for
  - a. Retirement of CAF long term debt
  - b. Aircraft acquisition and endowment of the fleet
3. Develop a protocol program in cooperation with headquarters for foreign dignitaries, VIPs and visitors.
4. Create and suggest world class marketing strategies to headquarters for consideration and implementation.
5. Maintain a talent pool heretofore unequalled in the history of the CAF.
6. Select and acquire a worthy aircraft to carry the theme, "Spirit of Midland."
7. To be of special services to CAF headquarters and the American Airpower Heritage Museum when skills and talents are needed that are outside the realm of the current V-Corp.

We urge you to approve this group, who have always come forward when needed, both in and for the community, as well as the CAF.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1992 the formation of the High Sky Wing as an independent CAF unit was approved with the following initial Wing staff officers: Wing Leader

Jim Moore, Executive Officer Bob Walker, Adjutant Laurie Schwab, Finance Officer Clyde Watson, Operations Officer Jim Curfew, Safety Officer Scotty Alcorn and Maintenance Officer Bob Hansen.

I'm happy to say that of the 106 charter members of the High Sky Wing, many are still active, including myself. When time permits, I will publish a complete list of charter members on our web site. I will continue our history in a future newsletter, including the gift of the Gillespie hangar, our initial attempts to restore the B-23, and our assignment and purchase of other aircraft. If some other HSW members wish to contribute their memories of the early days of the Wing, please feel free to write away!



The inspection of the T-28A showed the airframe was in good condition for its age but the engine was making metal and in need of an overhaul. Thanks to T-28 guru Bill Muszala we knew the exact condition of the plane before making our request for assignment. More at the meeting.

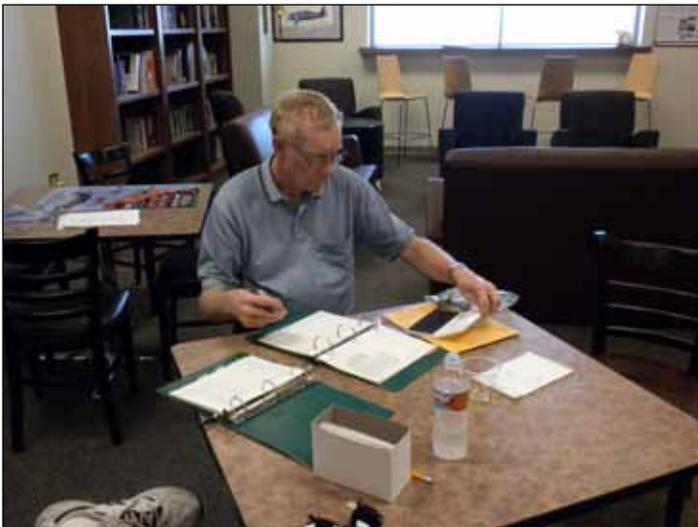


Here I am the hydraulic pumper for the gear swing tests as we didn't have the correct fittings for the mule.

Where did James go?  
He was just here a minute ago?  
Oh no, the elephant ate him!



HIGH SKY WING - CAF  
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 Midland, Texas 79711-1064



Col Bob Keating tackles the seemingly endless job of keeping the paperwork up to date on our Wing aircraft. Here he is working on logging the annual and repairs to our Stinson 105. With his help and that of our other maintenance team members, lead by Maintenance Officer Lance Sommers, we still **Keep 'Em Flying!**

### High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell  
 Executive Officer: Rick Peterson  
 Adjutant: Lauri Skinner - 553-2316 cell  
 Finance: Steve Bolin  
 Operations: Ronnie Jones  
 Maintenance: Lance Sommers  
 Safety - David Linebarger

### New Hangar Phone: (432) 561-5581

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

### What's Happening & When

Aug 27 - Wing meeting (7pm)  
 Aug 29 - Hangar Clean Up Day (9am)  
 Sep 1 - Wing Staff meeting (6pm)  
 Sep 4 - First Friday in the Ready Room (5pm)  
 Sep 12 - HSW Fly-In (8am - Noon)  
 Sep 22 - AIRSHO Volunteer dinner (6pm)  
 Sep 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)

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