



The Flyer

February 2006
Vol. Fourteen, No. 2

High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-563-5112

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

This year's High Sky Wing Awards Banquet at Clear Springs Café was well supported by members with 75 people in attendance. It is always an exciting event as we reveal our highest awards. Spirit of the Eagle recipient is Mary Alice Tidwell and Colonel of the Year recipient is Ed McElrath. Congratulations to Mary Alice and Ed on exemplary service to the High Sky Wing and the CAF.

The Banquet also was the place where a new outpouring of generosity came forward as individuals pledged to pay the Hangar rent for 2006. Thank you to the following "Paid the Rent" members for their pledges and checks: \$500 members – Dan Linebarger, Clyde Watson, Davy Roberts, Randy Wilson, Blake Cowart, Mary Alice Tidwell, Carol Claussen, Gena Linebarger, Phyllis Stine, Jim Moore; \$250 members – Bill Coombes, Bobby Merony, Danny DUEwall, Harry Hugley, Bill Stella. Additional pledges and donations are gratefully accepted and names will be added to the "Paid the Rent" Club.

Also at the Banquet, the Lounge presented a framed and signed print of the Lima Lima team who performed at last year's AIRSHO. It was the first time a live auction had been conducted and results were worthwhile. I believe the auctioneer (aka your Wing Leader) kept the audience well entertained as the bids rose to \$500 for the print. Thank you to Dan Linebarger, the proud new owner of the print.

If you weren't at the Banquet you missed Becky Carter's recap of the Wing's year of activities in her annual "poem". Becky, as usual, held a captive audience as she did an outstanding job of roasting and toasting members and was applauded by all.

As we go forward in 2006, please keep fund raising for most in your thoughts. Let's be creative and seize every opportunity for the Wing.

[Look for other pictures taken by Col H. A. Tuck and others at the Awards Banquet inside. *Ed.*]



Wing Leader Gena Linebarger presents Col Ed McElrath with the High Sky Wing Colonel of the Year award (above) and the Spirit of the Eagle award to Col Mary Alice Tidwell (below). Both awards are very well deserved and we all wish to say thanks to Mary Alice and Ed.



Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

We have lots of good things happening or being planned. The routine is returning to High Sky Wing with our February 23rd Wing Meeting. Jesse Flores, from the Texas Veterans Administration will be our speaker for the meeting. He will be able to tell us what Texas veterans have available to them. There are other matters that need our attention and will be discuss at the meeting. Come find out how you and BINGO can help the wing. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the dinner and meeting February 23rd.



A belated gift for his service as our past Wing Leader were presented to Col Ralph Gillette (right) by one of his staff officers, Col Randy Wilson. The Wing also provided a donation towards having the print framed



Each year Col Becky Carter (standing) takes time to write a poem about the year's highlights and also about some of our more "outgoing" members. Here you can see just a part of the crowd at the Awards Banquet enjoying Becky's dry and not-so-subtle humor. As usual, your newsletter editor did not fail to be mentioned! We hope Becky will keep up the tradition for years to come.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Happy New Year and all that jazz....the first maintenance column of 2006 is an easy one to write because all of Wing-assigned airplanes are up and flying with nary a squawk. All three of our flying machines were exercised on 4 February, with Danny getting his 24 month check ride in the PT-19, Randy doing his three bounces in the SNJ, and yours truly tempting the Fates in the Tarbaby. It was nice to see all of them flying at the same time, and it was nice to have a large number of High Sky Wing members out to help move them in and out of the hangar.

Steve Bolin and Lance Sommers are ready to get their checkouts in the PT, each waiting for March and the new insurance year to begin. It will be nice to have two more pilots for the Wing's airplanes. And kudos to Randy and Pat Wilson and Davy Roberts for putting down sponsorships for the SNJ and PT-19. Now all the airplanes have positive fund balances in the aircraft accounts at Headquarters, something that is encouraging (my General Staff view) and practical (as the Wing maintenance officer) for us to do.

I approached several of you with the idea of forming a sponsor group (with the HSW as a part of that group but not the lead) so that the Cessna O-2 FAC airplane now up for assignment could stay in Midland and fly with the HSW. Further research has revealed that the airplane is in need of engine overhauls (running OK, just at their TBO time), so I believe the consensus was to pass on the opportunity. However, a new airplane just arrived in the main hangar, donated by the late Bob Reiss's estate to the CAF. It is a Stinson S-105, a high-wing, two place, GA airplane used extensively in the war in the CPTP program and also used by the Civil Air Patrol for coastal patrolling early in the war. It is in fantastic shape, and would be a complement aircraft to the Tarbaby. If you are interested in joining with me in pursuing assignment of the airplane, talk to me at the wing meeting or email me.

At our next staff meeting in March I will be suggesting listing all the airshows and fly-ins that we want to try to make with the airplanes this Spring and early Summer. In the past few years we haven't done as well as we need to in getting the airplanes out to the public (part of the CAF "mission"), so I hope we can do a better job this year. I believe we have several

members with GA airplanes who would be willing to go on these adventures as well, thereby providing additional seats to Wing members. Look in the newsletter, or better still check the flight ops schedule in the hangar to see when and where we want to go.

Attention! Because of various conflicts, the March, April, and May Seminar Series programs will either be in our hangar or will involve the HSW in providing lunches prior to the programs. These lunches will provide us some fund-raising capability, something vitally important this year since we are not doing our Clay Shoot. The first one, March 25th, will be a program featuring noted author Barrett Tillman and three veterans of the Mariannas Turkey Shoot, one of the most famous air battles of the Pacific war. Prior to the 2 pm program the HSW will sell lunch to (hopefully) several hundred patrons, with catering provided by (again, hopefully) a “major restaurant chain.” I can’t tell you which one right now, but, trust me, if things go according to preliminary plans, you won’t want to miss either the lunch or the program!

Finally, let’s all keep our Wing Leader in our thoughts and prayers as she goes in for knee replacement surgery. She’s going to be “hor’s d’combat” for the next four or five months, so all of us are going to have to step up our involvement and efforts for the Wing and the CAF. Gena, we’re thinking about you!

Until the meeting, remember, lefty-loosey, righty-tighty.

Keep ‘Em Flying!

Being Safe!

by Col Lyle Thornton

Many people prepare for a project the same way I prepare for my Granddaughter’s 4th birthday party. Open the door, close your eyes, and hope for the best!

Unfortunately, most of us don’t have the superior reflexes and strength that we once had, (or thought we had) in high school. In order to complete a project safely, more detailed planning is required. I’m not trying to tell you that you have to have a multi-page planning document to be safe. If so the U.S. Government should be the safest group on earth.

To be safe is to use our common sense and avoid actions that may cause harm to yourself and/or others. Thinking and acting safely might take a little extra time, but I think we are worth it. Please be safe.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

As Col Coombes notes, all three HSW aircraft are currently operational and flying. This week I’m scheduled to give a recurrency ride in our SNJ to a visiting Colonel and we are also looking into holding a TraRon formation clinic in Midland sometime early this spring. This would allow pilots from the surrounding area to have a chance to get their formation ratings or renew or update them without having to travel so far.

There are a number of changes that have been made recently or are in the progress of being finalized regarding aircraft and pilot data reporting and also with regard to CAF pilot currency checks. I’ll have a brief report on all these matters at the next Wing meeting and will let you know when the updated regs are available for download from the CAF members-only site at <http://ghostsquadrone.org>.

Possible web site changes

by Col Randy Wilson

One of the other hats I wear is the Chairman of the CAF Internet Committee, which is charged with adding new content and capabilities to the existing CAF web sites in the next few months. I think it is also time to look at reworking our own Wing’s web site to not only give it a cleaner look but also update a lot of the older information on it with current photos, etc.

This would also be a chance to redo the members-only section of our web to be a bit more user friendly, and make the printing of newsletter and other labels and also membership cards easier. I’ll keep you informed of any progress or changes in the near future.

If any members want to help and have talents using various web design tools, feel free to contact me and I’ll provide more technical info on what’s up.

What Is It?

This one shouldn’t be too hard. For the answer, come out to the Wing meeting. See you there.



HIGH SKY WING - CAF
Post Office Box 61064
Midland, Texas 79711-1064

PX Stuff for Sale!

Don't forget that the High Sky Wing still has a number of items available for sale to our members. These include HSW golf shirts for \$25, HSW hats for \$10, HSW patches for \$3 and HSW decal/stickers for \$1 each.

We also have 2006 Ghosts calendars available for just \$10 and American flags for the same price, \$10.

If you are interested in any of the above items, please speak up at the next Wing meeting or the next time you are out at the hangar or contact any of the Wing staff and we'll try and get what you need.

Don't Forget!
Your 2006 Wing Dues Are
Now Due

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Gena Linebarger - 528-0997 cell

Executive Officer: Ted Claussen

Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell

Finance: Bob Stine

Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell

Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home

Safety - Lyle Thornton

Hangar Phone: (432) 563-5112

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Feb 23 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Feb 25 - On Silent Wings (2pm)

Mar 4 - Wing staff meeting (10am)

Mar 16 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Mar 25 - Mariannas Turkey Shoot (tba)

Apr 1 - Wing staff meeting (10am)

Apr 15 - Open Cockpit Day

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday February 23rd 7:00 pm at the Hangar
