



The Flyer

January 2005
Vol. Thirteen, No. 1

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

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org



New Wing Leader Gena Linebarger (left) is warmly welcomed by outgoing leader, Ralph Gillette.

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

Here we are up and already running in 2005. The annual Awards Banquet in January was a well-attended event with approximately 75 people gathering. Our two prestigious Wing awards were presented. The Colonel of the Year recipient is Col Bruce Wallace and the Spirit of the Eagle recipient is Col Randy Wilson. Congratulations to both of these well deserving gentlemen for the honors.

First and foremost on the agenda for 2005 is the on going challenge to raise sufficient funds for the High Sky Wing. The Staff welcomes all of your suggestions and ideas. The only unsuccessful event is one that we fail to pursue. At this time plans are already underway for the 2nd annual Iron Eagle Shootout scheduled for May 21st. Look for more info about the clay shoot in this newsletter.

During the Awards Banquet, a challenge was made by Col Dan Linebarger to “pay the hangar rent” for 2005. This challenge was met by an outpouring of generosity by 12 individuals who pledged \$500 each to cover the rent expense. Thank you to the following

new or renewing *I Paid The Rent* club members: Col Morris & Pitricia Basham, Cols Ted & Carol Claussen, Cols George & Alice Coombes, Col Blake Cowart, Col Tom & Evie McKown, Col Dan Linebarger, Col Davy Roberts, Col Bill Stella, Col Mary Alice Tidwell, Col Clyde Watson, Cols Randy & Pat Wilson & The HSW Lounge. Any additional contributions for rent will be gladly accepted and members added to the Club.



Your Wing Staff for 2005

From left to right, Wing Leader Gena Linebarger, Operations Officer Randy Wilson, Adjutant Mary Alice Tidwell, Finance Officer Bob Stine, Safety Officer Lyle Thornton, Maintenance Officer Bill Coombes and Executive Officer Ted Claussen.

The next Staff meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 5th at 10:00a.m. Just a reminder, all HSW members are welcome to attend any of the Staff meetings where you will gain first hand knowledge of issues and decisions concerning your Wing.

Thank you Ralph Gillette for your leadership of the High Sky Wing over the last 2 years. I'm counting on your continued support, as well as the support of the Staff and each member, as I look forward to being Wing Leader in 2005 & 2006.

Determination – The race is not always to the swift... But to those who keep on running.

Don't Forget!
Your 2005 Wing Dues Are Now Due

Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

The news from the exec is rather slim this month. What I recommend is that you stay aware of events appearing on the calendar. We do have speakers lined up and we will also participate in some of the special events arranged by Col Bill Coombes. Saturday, January 29th, 2005, will be an opportunity to share an evening with Adrian Cronauer when our High Sky Wing hangar becomes the site of a 6:00 pm social hour and 7:00 pm dinner catered by Michael's Charcoal Grill. Admission is \$20 which includes the price of your dinner. Make reservations by calling 563-1000 ext 2260 (CAF Headquarters) by January 28th. From what I hear, Mr. Cronauer is a lot more than "Good Morning, Vietnam."

Our next regular Wing meeting will be February 24th. We hope to see you all then.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

A short column this month, as the holiday season and winter's temps have limited activity at the hangar. The motor pool boys have been much more active than the airplane drivers (they must be of hardier stock). The Tarbaby continues to spruce up the appearance of the main hangar, but the other airplanes in the fleet have returned to our hangar, so we will be running them up, checking fluids, tire pressures, etc. Hopefully we can get airborne again soon.

I wanted to let you know of all the great things that happened at the first General Staff meeting I have attended as a "member," but basketball interfered and I was unable to make the official Saturday meeting. I did, however, participate in the Thursday-Friday planning and brainstorming sessions, and that was very interesting. Essentially, the General Staff redefined it's role in the organization and surrendered much of its day-to-day involvement in the operations of the CAF. I think this is a wise move and I supported it. There will be several other announcements that will be made at the Winter Staff meetings in February which will be greeted with general agreement as well. The organization is prepared to embark on a new direction, one that will make the CAF operate more like a business than a flying club. Oh, and dues will NOT be increased this coming year.

One thing that became apparent to me, as I sat in

those meetings, is the passion that those men have for the CAF. They have, in many cases, invested huge amounts of time and money to see it succeed. I want us, the members of the High Sky Wing, to have that passion for the organization that I saw and felt in those meetings. I think we do a poor job of injecting enthusiasm into our new members: for most of our Wing's history we didn't even send "newbies" a welcome-to-the-Wing letter! Joe Cope, Sam Strahan, H.A. Tuck, Gregg Baiano and Ron Stacks are our newest members, and they will be the first to get a welcome aboard letter from our Wing leader. I hope, for the long-term success of the Wing, that they get involved in a big way in what we do. New blood (and young blood) is simply vital.

Spring is coming, and that means airshow season. Stay tuned to find out where we will be going this year. The General Staff has mandated that the CAF's airplanes must be more visible to the public, and that means we must get them out on the road. That, in turn, means support from many of you.

In the meantime, righty-tighty, lefty-loosey.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

As Bill says, we have done very little piloting due to the weather this last two months but hopefully the sun will warm things up enough to get back to normal operations in the next few weeks. Hopefully by next month we will have more operations to report.

Iron Eagle Shootout 2005

The Iron Eagle Shootout, our major Wing fundraiser, will be held May 21st, 2005. The first meeting of the clay shoot committee was held on Jan. 18. Last year's event netted \$5000 for the Wing. We're expecting bigger and better results this year and are excited about the challenge.

The next committee meeting will be Tuesday, February 15th, 7:00 p.m. in the hangar. All interested members please try to attend as flyers/entry forms will be ready for distribution. It's now time to get serious about securing underwriters for the event along with 4 man teams to shoot. For more info please contact: Jeremy Linebarger, Chairman 528-9642; jlinebarger@cox.net or Gena Linebarger 528-0997; iblast4fun@cox.net.



Wing Awards Banquet

by Col Randy Wilson

If you missed it, the awards banquet was a great success. Thanks to Col. H. A. Tuck for taking many of these photos, with a few of my own added.

Continued on page 4



Just a part of the crowd at the awards dinner, with Col Dan Linebarger starting donations for our hangar rent that raised \$6000. Below, Col Bruce Wallace was named **Colonel of the Year**. Duck? What duck?

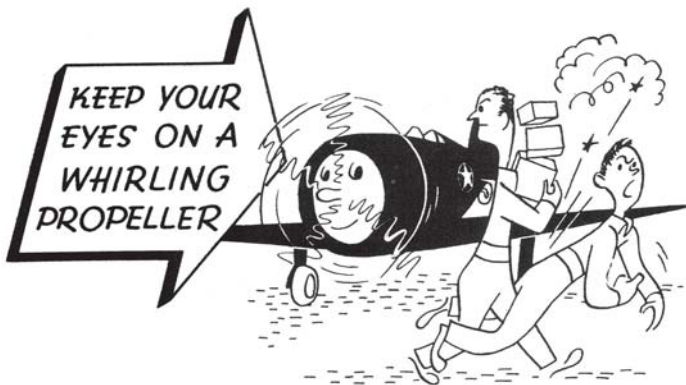


Safety Is No Accident!

by Col Lyle Thornton

Safety is not something that you can buy at Wal Mart. It is a state of mind, an attitude that you take with you in everything that you do. Just as a pilot checks out his aircraft before taking a flight, we need to think about what we are about to do and how to accomplish that task without hurting ourselves or others. We tend to think of safety in terms of being in the hanger, but more accidents happen around the home than anywhere else. Please be careful out there.

[The photo above is of an SB2C Helldiver immediately after a ramp strike on the USS *Shangri La*. Believe it or not, the pilot was unhurt! Cartoon below is from the P-47 pilot's manual. Ed.]



Lest We Forget!

Continued from page 3

Col Dan Linebarger asked other members to consider joining the *I Paid the Rent* club to help defray our hangar rent in 2005 and twelve generous folks stepped up to help. Way to go gang!



Col Randy Wilson is presented the *Spirit of the Eagle* award by outgoing Wing leader Ralph Gillette.



Col Blake Cowart is another past Wing Leader who isn't afraid to get his hands dirty around the hangar or elsewhere. From cleaning carpets to setting up for meetings and events, Blake is a "can do" Colonel.

Get to Know Your Fellow Colonels

We thought we would take this opportunity to highlight a few of our Wing members who help keep the High Sky Wing going. This is by no means all of them and we will try and publish more photos in the next issue. This is also a good way for new (and some old) members to learn how to put faces and names together!

Keep 'Em Flying!



Col Jim Moore was our first Wing Leader and has never failed to step up and grab a rag, mop or whatever tool is needed to help out. Way to go Jim!

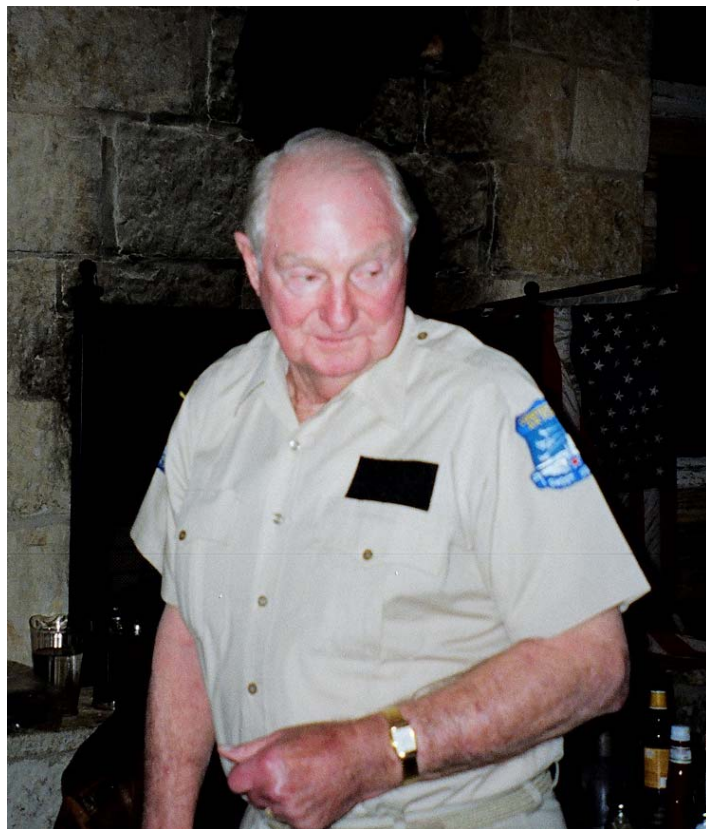


Col Ed McElrath runs the Wing lounge for all meetings and events, keeping the place stocked with everyone's favorite beverages. No Ed doesn't wear that hat regularly as this was taken at the Mardi Gras party. Col Becky Carter (right) is his able assistant and a charming bartenderess.



From left to right, Cols David Linebarger, Ted Claussen and Randy Skinner do much of the cooking for Wing events and are also there to help with many other tasks throughout the year. OK, Ted is a Wing officer but he gets his picture shown twice - what I really need is a picture of his hard working wife Col Carol Claussen and many of the other women members who work so hard behind the scenes - this is a hint H. A. or other photographers!

**Don't Forget!
Your 2005 Wing Dues Are Now Due**



Col Bill Stella is the Wing's "Can Man", taking care of collecting and hauling our trailer full of aluminum cans to the recycling center and returning the money earned to the Wing's coffers. Bill is a quiet worker but an example of the body and soul of the High Sky Wing.



Part of our Motor Pool but also two very hard-working and dedicated Cols are Tom Kingon (left) and Bobby Meroney. They, along with newly appointed Safety Officer Lyle Thornton seem to form the nucleus of our dedicated truck restorers, with other help, of course.



You may not see Col Sue Becraft out at the hangar too often unless you are there at odd times, when she comes in to help take care of the Wing Library. Sue is another of our quiet workers, so be sure to say hello to her the next time you see her, and be sure to visit the library.

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

Last Month's Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

Last month's mystery plane is a Berenznyak-Isayev (also known as Bolkhovitinov) BI-1. The BI-1 was the first rocket-powered fighter built in the Soviet Union. Most of its structure was of wood covered with fabric, while the rocket engine was a Dushkin D-1A, which in its later versions provided 1,100 kg of thrust. First powered flights were in early 1943 and later that year a top speed of nearly 560 mph was recorded.

On 27 March, 1943, on the seventh flight, the BI-1 crashed, killing noted test pilot G. Ya. Bakhchivandzhi. A replica of the aircraft is on display at the museum in Monino, Russia.

We didn't have a regular Wing meeting this month and I didn't have anyone offer a guess to the mystery plane, so I'll give you all a bit of a rest from further mysteries for a month or so.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Gena Linebarger

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

Jan 29 - Adrian Cronauer Dinner (6pm)

Feb 5 - Wing Staff meeting (10am)

Feb 12 - Dust-Offs & Gunships (2pm)

Feb 19-20 - CAF Wing Staff Conference

Feb 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Mar 5 - Wing Staff meeting (10am)

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, February 24th at 7:00pm in the Hangar
